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The Direction of Denominational Switching in Judaism^{a,b,c}

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Abstract

This paper examines patterns of denominational switching and the characteristics of switchers within Judaism in the United States. Viewing Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform Judaism and a fourth “non-specific” group as categories that range from the most traditional to the least traditional respectively, it focuses on the movement of individuals toward or away from a more traditional denomination in comparison with remaining in the same denomination in which they were raised. Data used to conduct this study are drawn from the National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01 (National Jewish Population Survey [NJPS] 2003).

We found that 62% stay within the same group, 29% move away from tradition, and 9% move to a more traditional denomination. Multivariate logistic regression analyses show that a lower level of Jewish background, higher previous travel to Israel, a greater extent of organizational affiliation, and a higher level of spiritual feelings and beliefs are associated with moving to a more traditional denomination whereas a higher level of Jewish background, lower previous travel to Israel, and a lower level of spiritual feelings and beliefs are associated with moving to a less traditional denomination. In addition, a few sociodemographic factors (previously married, has a child at home, lives in a Western state) are associated with movement toward tradition whereas others (older age, female, not living in the Northeast or West) are associated with movement in the other direction.

KEY WORDS: switching, denomination, Judaism, NJPS

The Direction of Denominational Switching in Judaism

Denominational switching has been a significant area of social scientific study of religion. Such research makes it possible to examine the direction and extent of movement, the social processes that enter into the flow between denominations, and how denominational identification changes over time (e.g., Newport 1979; Stark and Glock 1968; Roof and Hadaway 1979). Although a considerable body of literature has examined switching between Protestant denominations, there is a paucity of studies of switching among Jewish denominations.

There are three major distinct denominations or movements in Judaism. Orthodox Judaism adheres most strictly to the stipulations of Jewish law as articulated in the Torah and interpreted by the rabbis of the Talmud (the “oral law”) and later codified and expounded upon. The Reform Movement accepts the Torah as a “living document” that makes it possible for adherents to adapt to social changes and incorporate innovations that may conflict with rabbinic law (Central Conference of American Rabbis 2004). The Conservative Movement lies in between these two groups with its acceptance of Jewish law in principle but allowing for elasticity in interpretation (Raphael 1984). In addition to these major organized movements, some Jews identify with smaller movements or self-identify as Jews but not with any specific movement.

Publications based on data from the early 1990s provide descriptive information about switches from the Jewish denomination in which respondents were raised to their current denomination. Using the National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS), conducted in 1990, Lazerwitz (1995) found that 34% of those surveyed moved to a less traditional denomination and 10% switched to a more traditional group. Using the New York Jewish Population Study of 1991, Hartman and Hartman (1999) found that 41% of Jews moved to a different denomination.

Of the movers, 56% switched to a less traditional denomination and 10% moved toward tradition. Although these findings on the rates of denominational switching are informative and the authors' respective studies shed additional light on switching, neither of these studies comprehensively examined the factors associated with movement toward or away from traditional Judaism.

Studies of switching among Protestant denominations suggest a number of important factors that are associated with religious switching. Among these are religious background factors (Hadaway 1980; Loveland 2003) and spirituality or religious fervor (Hadaway and Marler 1993). Sociodemographic factors associated with switching or staying in the same denomination in which one was raised include age (Newport 1979; Stolzenberg, Blair-Loy, and Waite 1995), education (Roof and Hadaway 1979), gender (Sandomirsky and Wilson 1990), and region of the country (Hadaway and Marler 1993; Roof 1989), marital status (Musick and Wilson 1995; Newport 1979), and parental status (Hout and Fischer 2002). Studies of Protestant groups have also assessed church attendance and activity (e.g., Hadaway and Marler 1993).

Because Jews constitute an ethnic as well as a religious group, the factors associated with Protestant switching need to be modified and additional cultural factors need to be added. This paper examines denominational switching within Judaism in the United States. Using data from the recent National Jewish Population Survey of 2000-2001, a large nationally representative sample, we will identify patterns of denominational switching and compare them with patterns reported in earlier surveys. In addition, using a set of indexes that we created, we will analyze the factors associated with switching. Viewing Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform Judaism and a fourth "non-specific" group as categories that range from the most traditional to the least traditional respectively, we focus on the movement of individuals toward or away from a more

traditional denomination in comparison with remaining in the same denomination in which they were raised. We are hypothesizing that a higher level of Jewish background, more cultural identification, a greater extent of organizational affiliation, and a higher level of spiritual feelings and beliefs are associated with moving to a more traditional denomination whereas a lower levels of these characteristics and beliefs are associated with moving in a less traditional direction. In addition, sociodemographic factors such as older age, being married, not living in the Northeast, and having a child at home will be associated with movement toward tradition.

Methods

Study Population and Sample Selection

The National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS) 2000-01 is a study of the demographic, social, religious, communal, and attitudinal characteristics of American Jews, conducted by the United Jewish Communities, the umbrella organization of the Jewish Federation system. Initially a screening interview was conducted using a random digit dialing procedure in which 177,219 households were called. The NJPS survey was then administered in a follow-up telephone interview to the 5148 individuals classified as Jewish ($n = 4484$) or People of Jewish Background (PJB, $n = 664$) in the screening interview. Classification as Jewish was based on having a Jewish parent, having been raised Jewish, and/or considering oneself Jewish. Those categorized as PJB may have had a Jewish parent or were raised Jewish but did not consider themselves Jewish or had an incompatible theology (NJPS/NSRE 2000-01 Datafile User Guide; Schulman 2003).

The sample used for our analysis was created from respondents who answered two questions with a specific or non-specific denomination within Judaism. The first was, "Thinking

about Jewish religious denominations, do you consider yourself to be Conservative, Orthodox, Reform, Reconstructionist, Just Jewish, or something else?” Those who had indicated that they were raised Jewish in the screener or a prior question in the survey were then asked, “Thinking about how you were raised, were you raised as Conservative, Orthodox, Reform, Reconstructionist, Just Jewish, or something else?” If the person responded with “something else,” he or she was asked, “What would that be?” Accordingly, both questions left room for unusual and hybrid responses such as “Conservadox.” All responses that were within Judaism were recoded as Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, or No specific Jewish denomination.¹ Those who refused, did not identify with a Jewish denomination or Judaism, or did not provide responses to one or the other or both questions were excluded. Our final study sample included 3369 persons reporting current and past Jewish specific or non-specific denomination and no other religion. Note that all denominational categories represent *denominational identification*, and not necessarily membership in a synagogue.

We used this information to construct a table showing rates of retention and switching between denomination raised and current denomination (see Table 1). The shaded cells along the diagonal of Table 1 denote those people who, as adults, have remained in the same denomination in which they were raised, 62% of the sample. The remaining 38% switched. The 6 cells above and to the right of the shaded areas describe those who moved from a more traditional denomination to a less traditional one, 29% of the sample; the cells below and to the left of the

¹ The recoded categories consisted of the following:

Orthodox: Orthodox, Hasidic (including Lubavitch and Satmar), haredi (“Ultra-Orthodox”), and Sephardic.

Conservative: Conservative, Reconstructionist, “Conservadox,” and traditional.

Reform: Reform, Jewish Renewal, and combination of Reform and Conservative.

No specific Jewish denomination: “Just Jewish,” post-denominational Jew, liberal, spiritually connected to Judaism, no Jewish denomination, other Jewish, secular, ethnically/nationality Jewish, culturally Jewish, humanistic Jew, non-practicing Jew, and Jewish by background/birth/heritage.

For hybrid or combined responses such as Conservadox and combination of Reform and Conservative, we recoded to the less traditional category.

shaded area show those who have become more traditional (9%). Our primary dependent variables are derived from the three sectors depicted in Table 1. The groups created were: 1) those who moved to a more traditional denomination (n = 303), 2) those who stayed in the same religious group (n = 2048), and 3) those who moved into a less traditional group (n = 1018).

Based on social scientific studies of Christians and Jews, we operationalized a series of indices from questions in the NJPS to represent the factors known or thought to be associated with denominational switching.

Jewish Background

The first index, *Jewish Background*, denotes earlier Jewish education and socialization to Jewish religious life. Lazerwitz (1995) found that more Jewish education was associated with movement from Reform to Conservative or from no preference to a specific denomination. This index was constructed from 6 items, each converted into a dichotomous variable (1, 0) and added. The items consisted of (1) Hebrew literacy (ability to read Hebrew fluently), (2) Jewish education as a child, (3) Jewish education in high school, (4) Sabbath candles were lit at home age 10, (5) attended synagogue often as a 10-year old child, and (6) had a bar or bat mitzvah. Scores ranged from 0 to 6 with a mean of 3.10 ($SD = 1.81$; skewness = $-.11$; kurtosis = $-.97$). The alpha reliability coefficient is .70.

Jewish Organizational Affiliation

Another index, *Jewish Organizational Affiliation*, looked at membership and participation in specifically Jewish organizations or activities in the last year. Discussions of American Jews and Jewish identity highlight numerous ways of being Jewish but particularly

organizational affiliation, early exposure to Jewish education, and cultural identification (Hartman and Hartman 1999; Heilman 2003-2004; Horowitz 1998). Here Jewish Organizational Affiliation refers to membership in, attendance at, or association with a Jewish communal organization, whether it is a synagogue, an educational program, a Jewish Community Center or the like. Jewish organizational involvement has been found to be particularly high for Orthodox Jews and declines incrementally as one moves into or remains Conservative or Reform (Lazerwitz and Harrison 1979; Lazerwitz, Winter, Dashefky, and Tabory 1998) suggesting that organizational affiliation would be high for those who switch toward tradition. Five items, each dichotomized (1, 0), were included in the index: (1) synagogue membership, (2) synagogue attendance, (3) participation in adult education classes, (4) volunteer work in Jewish organization, and (5) attendance at a program of a Jewish Community Center. The scores of this additive index ranged from 0 to 5, with a mean of 2.12 ($SD = 1.56$, skewness = .23, kurtosis = -1.04). The 5 items in the Jewish Organizational Affiliation Index had an alpha reliability score of .71.

Spiritual Feelings and Beliefs

In an article trying to bring together research on Christian and Jewish religious identification, Lazerwitz (1973: 205) used the term “pietism” to encompass “the feeling of some degree of communion with the divine” or “a private, personal communion with God.” Here the more contemporary term, spirituality, will be used instead and will be defined as a set of feelings and beliefs that are connected with experiencing the sacred in Judaism. Lazerwitz and Harrison (1979) found the proportion of respondents with high levels of pietism largest among those identified with Orthodoxy, with the other denominations successively lower. Another study

found that switchers are more “fervent” than those who stay in the same denomination in which they were raised (Hadaway and Marler 1993: 111). Thus, there is support for the expectation that those who switch to a more traditional Jewish denomination will have higher spiritual feelings and beliefs than “stayers.” One of the authors (R.A.D.), who has been teaching university courses on spirituality over the last 10 years and has lectured on spirituality and Judaism helped choose the variables in the data set that best fit this complex concept. Our additive index was constructed from 6 items, each dichotomized (yes = 1, no = 0). The questions inquired (1) whether the respondent ever prays in his/her own words; (2) whether Judaism guides important life decisions; (3) whether he/she believes that one has a special responsibility to take care of Jews in need in the world; (4) the belief that Judaism involves believing in God; (5) the attitude that being Jewish involves having a rich spiritual life; and (6) personal belief in God. Scores ranged from 0 to 6 with a mean of 3.18 ($SD = 1.73$, skewness = $-.08$, kurtosis = $-.82$). A reliability analysis of the index produced an alpha of $.70$.

Strong Jewish Cultural Identification

Strong Jewish cultural identification—characterized by feelings of connection to the Jewish people and Jewish history—may be at the heart of movement into a more traditional denomination, where one can express these feelings religiously. Danzger (1989) found that the process of religious intensification began with cultural identification for returnees to Orthodox Judaism. The *Cultural Identification index*, was created from 6 questions inquiring how much being Jewish involves (1) remembering the Holocaust, (2) caring about Israel, (3) leading an ethical and moral life; (4) learning about Jewish history and culture, (5) countering anti-Semitism, and (6) connecting to one’s family’s heritage. Participants were asked to respond

according to a scale from a lot (1) to not at all (4); responses were recoded as 1 (a lot) and 0 (else). The Cultural Identification Index had an alpha of .69. Its scores ranged from 0 to 6, with a mean of 3.65 ($SD = 1.80$, skewness = -.41; kurtosis = -.83).

We are also including a separate variable, apart from the Cultural Identification index, for Prior Travel to Israel. Prior travel to Israel may strengthen ties to Biblical Judaism and thus inspire a switch to a more traditional denomination where attachment to Israel is likely to be high making this an especially important factor potentially associated with denominational switching. Research has shown that involvement with Israel (the number of visits and emotional involvement) is highest for those who are Orthodox, next to highest for Conservatives, and less high for those who are Reform or have no preference (Lazerwitz et al.1997

In addition, a number of sociodemographic variables were examined. These consisted of age (years), gender (female =1), marital status (married =1, otherwise = 0 with single/cohabiting as reference category; previously married [widowed, divorced, separated] = 1, otherwise = 0 with the same reference category); education (bachelors or more = 1; otherwise = 0), child under age 18 living in household (1 or more = 1; none = 0); and geographic region (Northeast = 1, otherwise = 0, with South/Midwest as reference category; Western = 1, otherwise =0, with same reference category).

Analyses

Our analyses separately compare those individuals becoming more traditional and those becoming less traditional to those who stay the same. We use chi-square analyses to test for differences in proportions between the groups and *t*-tests to assess differences in means. We specifically examine the strength of association for each of the four indices and

sociodemographic variables with denominational switching. Multivariate logistic analyses provide odds ratios that quantify the differential impact of each of these independent variables on denominational switching. All analyses use weights provided as part of the NJPS dataset that account for the probability of selection and adjust for non-response.

Findings

From Table 1 one can conclude that among those who are currently Orthodox, most (81%) grew up in the same denomination. There are a few later entrants who came from the Conservative (11%) and other groups. A large proportion of current Conservatives (66%) grew up in the same denomination, 20% grew up Orthodox, and the rest came from the other groups. Among those who are currently Reform, 56% grew up in the same denomination and 26% were raised Conservative. In addition, Reform has acquired members from those who grew up Orthodox and those who had no specific denomination. Reform has the largest proportion of current members (36%), followed by Conservative (32%), a 10% increase for Reform and a 4% decline for Conservative. Although Orthodox has the smallest current proportion (11%), this represents a substantial increase over the 6% reported by Lazerwitz (1995) based on 1990 data.

Table 2 compares the percentages denomination in which one was raised with the current denomination using the results of the NJPS surveys of 1990 (Lazerwitz 1995; Lazerwitz et al. 1997, 1998) and the 2000-01 survey. The table also includes information from the 1970-71 survey (Lazerwitz et al. 1997, 1998). From this table, several trends are apparent. In 1970-1971, the largest proportion of Jews identified with the Conservative movement. Currently, Reform has the largest proportion followed by Conservative. The proportion categorized as No Preference/Non Specific has increased incrementally since 1970-1971. Identification with

Orthodox Judaism declined substantially in 1990 but in 2000-2001 is the same proportion that it was 30 years previously.

From Table 3, it appears that both those who became more traditional and those who became less so differ from those who remained in the same denominational group in a variety of ways. The more traditional group is somewhat older and has a statistically significantly larger proportion of respondents who are women, have been previously married, have one or more children at home, and have been to Israel. This group had a lesser Jewish background but more Jewish organizational connections, greater spiritual feelings and beliefs, and a higher level of cultural identification than those who remained the same. Those who became less traditional are older, more likely to have been previously married, less likely to have a child under 18 at home, and are less likely to live in the Northeast than those who stay in the same denomination. Furthermore, those who move to a less traditional denomination have a higher level of Jewish background and a lesser level of Jewish organizational affiliation and spiritual feelings and beliefs.

The two logistic analyses, which test the hypotheses, are presented in Table 4. The first analysis shows that a lower level of Jewish background, previous travel to Israel, greater organizational affiliation, a higher degree of spiritual feelings, and three sociodemographic characteristics (having been previously married, having a child under 18 at home, and living in the Western part of the U.S) are associated with movement into a more traditional denomination. Cultural identification is not statistically significant. The odds ratio for Jewish background is .71, Jewish organizational affiliation, 1.44, spiritual feelings and beliefs, 1.16, previously married 1.99, child at home, 1.43, and living in the West, 1.55.

When movement into a less traditional denomination was analyzed, a higher level of Jewish background, less travel to Israel, lower spiritual feelings and beliefs, and four sociodemographic variables (older age, being female, not living in the Northeast, and not living in the West) are statistically significant. Again, cultural identification is insignificant. In addition, Jewish organizational affiliation is not statistically significant. The odds ratio for Jewish background is 1.23, has been to Israel, .83, spiritual feelings and beliefs, .87, age, 1.03, female, 1.19, Northeast, .63, and West, .74.

Discussion

This study examined switching to a more or less traditional Jewish denominational group in comparison with remaining in the same denomination in which one was raised. It found that a core of 62% stay within the same group, 29% move away from tradition, and 9% move to a more traditional denomination. These percentages and their direction are similar to those found in comparable studies of the early 1990s (Hartman and Hartman 1999; Lazerwitz 1995). Like Lazerwitz et al. (1998) we found that, regardless of the direction of the movement, the largest proportion of change is by one notch (e.g., from Orthodox to Conservative or from Conservative to Reform). Moreover, continuing a trend found in 1990 data (Lazerwitz et al. 1998), the 2000-01 data also show that if one compares the denomination in which one was raised with one's current denomination, there is an increase in the proportion currently identifying with the Reform and a decline in the proportions of Orthodox (see Table 2). The 2000-01 data show some decline in those remaining Conservative. The proportion currently Orthodox has increased since the previous NJPS study.

Those who moved toward tradition and those who moved the other way have some different social characteristics. The traditionalists are disproportionately younger, female, previously married, educated, and have a child at home. Women with children living with them tend to have higher religious participation than men (Stolzenberg et al. 1995). These parents may believe that it is important to raise their children to identify with a traditional denomination (Stolzenberg et al. 1995). Those who have moved away from tradition are older empty nesters. No longer responsible for guiding a child or, in some cases, no longer linked with a marriage partner, they may no longer feel the need to maintain their previous denominational identification. They are also less likely to affiliate with Jewish organizations. This suggests a later life process of disengagement from traditional denominational identification and Jewish organizations (cf. Cumming and Henry 1961).

The multivariate logistic regression analyses presented in Table 4 partially supported the hypotheses that were presented. The first hypothesis was that a higher level of Jewish background, more previous travel to Israel, a greater extent of organizational affiliation, a higher level of spiritual feelings and beliefs, and greater cultural identification are associated with moving to a more traditional denomination. All the predictor variables except cultural identification were statistically significant. Cultural identification seems to be a common trait that is not related to switching into a more traditional denomination. Contrary to expectations, a lower rather than a higher level of Jewish background is associated with movement into a more traditional denomination. We may have been mistaken in expecting that a higher level of Jewish background (education and practices) would stimulate a desire to switch toward more tradition. Those who move from less into more traditional denominations are likely to have less background knowledge than those who were raised in the receiving group.

The second hypothesis was that a lower level of Jewish background, less previous travel to Israel, a lower extent of organizational affiliation, a lower level of spiritual feelings and beliefs, and a lower cultural identification are associated with moving in a less traditional direction. The findings indicate that a higher level of Jewish background, less previous travel to Israel, and a lower level of spiritual feelings and beliefs were found to be related to switching to a less traditional denomination. The direction of Jewish background was different here, too, from what we had expected. As predicted, less travel to Israel and lower spiritual beliefs and feelings are associated with movement away from tradition. Neither Jewish organizational affiliation nor cultural identification turned out to be characteristic of those who change their denominational identification to one that is less traditional than the one in which they were raised.

Several of the sociodemographic variables were related to switching in one or the other or both directions. The odds are almost 2:1 that a previously married person (divorced, separated or widowed) would become more traditional than his or her upbringing indicates. This suggests that a previous marriage has a greater effect on one's denominational choice than the denomination in which one was raised. In addition, having a child at home and living in the Western region of the US are statistically significantly related to movement toward tradition. Older age, female gender, and geographic location (not living in the Northeast or West, i.e., living in the Midwest or South) predict movement toward a less traditional denomination. Older adults may move to a less traditional denomination when the social incentives (e.g., children who require a Jewish education) are no longer present. A previous marriage, having a child at home, gender, and region of the country are consistent with prior research on switchers who were predominantly Protestant (Hadaway and Marler 1993; Hout and Fischer 2002; Newport 1979;

Sandomirsky and Wilson, 1990; Stolzenberg, Blair-Loy, and Waite 1995). In previous studies, however, younger age has been associated with movement away from religion (Newport 1979). The Western region of the US may provide more traditional denominational options than the Midwest or South. Jewish adults who live in the Northeast may have less need to identify through switching to a more traditional religious denomination because of the larger proportion of Jews in this area with whom they may associate. –

Our findings should be interpreted in light of several limitations. First, our data set did not include any information on political views, social issues, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction which may all have enhanced understanding of denominational switching. It is possible that the findings would have differed had we also included current Jews who were not raised Jewish and those who were raised Jewish but do not currently identify as such. Furthermore, we did not measure gradations of intensification or lessening of intensification within denominations. There were also some methodological shortcomings in the data collection process for the survey (Kadushin, Philips, and Saxe 2005). The overall response rate was only 28% and only two-thirds of the interviews in households that identified the presence of a Jewish adult were completed in their entirety (Schulman 2003). To ascertain whether there was a significant methodological bias, a team of researchers reviewed the data collection procedures and methodological follow-up studies. They concluded that despite design errors (e.g., placement of the initial religious preference question too early in the screening interview) and other shortcomings, “these issues will likely have little impact on the analysis of relationships between variables in this dataset” (Schulman 2003: 17). Including the sampling weights in our analysis should also help provide unbiased results. Our analysis also made use of additive indexes in which the conceptual variables represented by the indexes may not be linear.

Additive indexes have been used in a previous analysis of the NJPS (Harrison and Lazerwitz 1982). Furthermore we relied on the advice of Allison (1999) who recommends that when a set of variables can be seen as alternative measures of the same concept it is reasonable to combine the variables into a single index. “When the variables have the same units of observation, a simple sum of the variables may suffice” (147).

The 2000-01 NJPS provided a sample that was sufficiently large and diverse to assess religious mobility among American Jews. Findings suggest a stable core of “stayers,” a significant movement toward liberal denominations, and a small spiritually oriented, highly affiliated sector that has moved into a traditional denomination. Regardless of whether participants remained in the same denominational group in which they were raised or switched toward or away from a traditional one, findings show that Jewish background factors, previous travel to Israel, organizational affiliation, and spiritual feelings and beliefs are key predictors of denominational switching among American Jews and that these factors vary in direction depending on whether respondents are move toward a more or less traditional denomination. Whether these internal and external factors continue to be salient in the context of today’s faith-oriented political climate is a task for analysis of the 2010 National Jewish Population Survey.

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Table 1

Turnover in Jewish Denominations Reported in NJPS 2000-2001

Denomination in which Raised	Current Denomination				
	Orthodox	Conservative	Reform	No Specific Jewish Denomination	Total per Denomination in which Raised
Orthodox	291 8.8%	209 6.3%	113 3.4%	77 2.3%	690 20.8%
Conservative	38 1.1%	692 20.9%	316 9.5	149 4.5%	1195 36.1%
Reform	14 .4%	70 2.1%	681 20.6%	100 3.0%	865 26.1%
No Specific Jewish Denomination	16 .5%	74 2.2%	95 2.9%	377 11.4%	562 17.0%
Total per Current Denomination	359 10.8%	1045 31.6%	1205 36.4%	703 21.2%	3312 100%

Note. Cell counts are in frequencies. The percentages are percentages of the whole (N=3312). All data are weighted; cell weights were rounded to the nearest whole number.

Table 2

*Comparison between Denomination in Which One Was Raised and Current Denomination,
based on 1971, 1990 and 2000 National Jewish Population Surveys*

Denomination	Current (1970-71)¹	Raised (1990)²	Current (1990)²	Raised (2000-01)	Current (2000-01)
Orthodox	11%	22%	6%	21%	11%
Conservative	42%	39%	40%	36%	32%
Reform	33%	26%	39%	26%	36%
No Preference/ Non-Specific ³	14%	13%	15%	17%	21%

¹ Information on the denomination in which one was raised was not available or reported in Lazerwitz et al. (1997, 1998), which reported findings of a denominational analysis of the NJPS 1971 survey. These sources did, however, report the current denominational preference.

² Percentages for 1990 are based on the analysis of Lazerwitz (1995) and Lazerwitz et al. (1998). There are slight differences between the way Lazerwitz classified groups and the way this was done in the current study. Lazerwitz grouped those reporting their denomination as “traditional” with Orthodox. Here traditional is included in the Conservative category. In both analyses Reconstructionists were categorized as Conservative.

³ Lazerwitz (1997) coded those who described themselves as “just Jewish,” “secular Jews,” or other descriptors that indicate that respondents are not Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, traditionalist, or Reconstructionist as “no denominational preference” in his analyses of 1970-71 and 1990 data (pp. 119-120n), which is comparable to the “non-specific denomination” in this analysis of 2000-01 data.

Note. The percentages reported for 1990 (Lazerwitz 1995) and 2000-01 are based on weighted samples. It is not clear whether the 1970-1971 data were weighted.

Table 3

Comparing Those Who Became More Traditional and Those Who Became Less Traditional with Those Who Stayed the Same

Characteristic	More Traditional n = 303 ¹	Stayed Same n = 2048 ¹	Less Traditional n = 1018 ¹
Sociodemographic Characteristics			
Age (mean years)	49.99**	47.34	56.79***
Gender (% female)	60.5%**	51.6%	51.9%
Marital status ²			
Married	59.5%	61.2%	59.7%
Previously married	22.2%***	13.4%	24.0%***
Any child under 18 home (% yes)	23.1%*	17.8%	11.0%***
Education (% bachelors or more)	61.7%	57.8%	57.7%
Geographic location ³			
Northeast region	49.5%	49.8%	39.0%***
Western region	23.8%	19.1%	18.2%
Jewish Background Factors (index mean)	2.52***	3.08	3.33***
Has been to Israel	53.8%***	43.9%	44.8%
Jewish organizational affiliation (index mean)	2.81***	2.06	2.01
Spiritual feelings and beliefs (index mean)	3.73***	3.18	2.99**
Cultural identification (index mean)	3.98***	3.58	3.69

¹ Numbers are based on the unweighted sample. Statistical tests were performed on the weighted sample. Tests of significance were made between more traditional vs. stayed same and between less traditional vs. those who stayed same. *T*-tests were used to test the significance of group differences for continuous variables (age and indexes); chi square tests were used for categorical variables.

² For each marital status the reference group is single/cohabiting.

³ For each geographic region the reference group is South/Midwest.

* $p < .05$, ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$

Table 4

*Logistic Analysis of Factors Associated with Movement into More and Less Traditional**Denominations*

	<u>More Traditional</u>	<u>Less Traditional</u>
	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>Odds Ratio</i>
<u>Predictor Variables</u>		
<i>Sociodemographic Characteristics</i>		
Age	1.000	1.029 ^{***}
Gender (1=female)	.972	1.194 [*]
Marital status		
Married	.888	.897
Previously married	1.994 ^{**}	1.270
Any child at home (1=yes)	1.423 [*]	.918
Education (1=bachelors+)	1.234	1.062
Geographic location		
Northeast region	1.278	.626 ^{***}
Western region	1.551 [*]	.736 ^{**}
<i>Jewish Background</i>	.711 ^{***}	1.235 ^{***}
<i>Has been to Israel</i>	1.351 [*]	.832 [*]
<i>Jewish Organizational Affiliation</i>	1.443 ^{***}	.971
<i>Spiritual Feelings and Beliefs</i>	1.163 ^{**}	.871 ^{***}
<i>Cultural Identification</i>	1.003	1.027
<hr/>		
-2X Log Likelihood (df)	1591.465 (13)	3412.474 (13)
<hr/>		

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$