The Power of Peoplehood:

How Commitment to the Jewish People Undergirds Tzedakah for Jewish Causes

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Peoplehood Research Fundraising Implications

Over the past few years, The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington has been involved in several research projects aimed at understanding what can be done to enhance Jewish charitable giving.

A clear pattern has emerged from these multiple quantitative and qualitative studies. All point to a close relationship between the donor engagement and commitment to Jewish Peoplehood.

A market research study, conducted in 2004 by Arnold Worldwide and involving 40 triad focus groups of people in the greater Washington area demonstrated marked distinctions between donors and nondonors to Federation as to what their respective values are. While neither group had much knowledge about the particular programs and organizations supported by The Federation, donors felt that it was "the right thing to do" to contribute while the non-donors had no such convictions to Federation as to their respective values.

Four years later, the Peer Yardstick Survey (conducted in 2008 by The Jewish Federations of North America) demonstrated that the alignment of Jewish and personal values heavily influences charitable gift increases. Federation Annual Campaign donors of $1,000 to $9,999 who increased their gifts felt a stronger sense of responsibility to support the local Jewish community, as well as Jewish communities in Israel and overseas. The gift increases were greater from the donors who felt that giving to federation enhanced their sense of being part of a community and that there was significant value in giving a single gift to support the entire community. Federations where donors associated their local federation with being instrumental in educating the community about Jewish values tended to see greater increases from their donors.

Recent focus groups conducted by The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington with active and inactive donors as well as with Jews who never contributed to its fundraising campaigns (November 2009) reinforced this finding. Nondonors display minimal familiarity with Jewish values and direct more of their charitable dollars to non-Jewish causes. In contrast, donors who can articulate and embrace Jewish values are also highly concerned with Federation's mission and donate a larger percentage of charitable dollars to Federation and other Jewish causes.

The 2009 Peoplehood Index Study in greater Washington described below clearly demonstrates that individuals with higher levels of Jewish Peoplehood commitment are active donors to Federation with larger gifts. All of these research studies underscore the potential value for Federation to play an active educational role to nurture and sustain commitment to Jewish Peoplehood.

— Dr. Misha Galperin

Preface to the Washington DC Report:

The Peoplehood Index project is pleased to present this study conducted for The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington. We especially would like to thank Dr. Misha Galperin and Marsha Sussman for a wonderful collaboration, and Dr. Steven M. Cohen for his intellectual leadership: designing the questionnaire, overseeing the survey process, and analyzing the results in this report.

This study can be seen in two contexts. First and foremost, the results of this study provide a planning tool for the research department of the Washington, DC federation, with related interest for Jewish community federations and organizations around the country. Secondly, this study should be read in the context of a larger effort to develop the Peoplehood Index (PI), an 18-month old effort to create a general measure of cohesiveness of the Jewish people, and to provide a quantitative reference point documenting the state of intra-Jewish relations the world over. The PI will be based on a standardized survey conducted across multiple Jewish communities around the world, and may include a broader set of measures of inter-communal and intra-communal relationships. The Peoplehood Index project's initial pilot research consisted of bi-national US/Israel surveys conducted in 2008, and presented in February, 2009, at the Herzliya Conference. The Peoplehood Index Project's second prong consists of specialized versions of the PI tailored for the use of specific organizations or programs, to supply them with a new planning and evaluation tool. When completed, these two components of the Project will be mutually reinforcing; the general index is the basis on which the organization-specific surveys are created, and the work with the specific organizations informs the general index and ensures that it remains a living, breathing entity that is anchored in reality. This second study, of the Greater Washington federation donors, is pilot research for this second, specialized deployments prong of the Peoplehood Index.

The project's next stage goals are to synthesize a conceptual framework that will guide the PI going forward; based on that framework, to create a long-term plan for data gathering and analysis; to complete three specialized deployments with operating partners; and to identify its permanent home. The first goal, to develop a conceptual framework, is most crucial, and we have initiated a structured process to elicit feedback and suggestions engendered by the pilot research projects. We would welcome your input. Please be in touch with us with your comments at info@peoplehoodindex.org. For additional information, please visit www.peoplehoodindex.org.

— Dr. Yoav Shoham

The Power of Peoplehood

Dr. Steven M. Cohen

The Questions of Peoplehood

In the last half dozen years, "Jewish Peoplehood" has come to occupy a position of some prominence in Jewish communal policy discourse. It now stands at the forefront of several organizational initiatives in Israel, New York and elsewhere. Among them: The Jewish Federations of North America, the UJA-Federation of New York, Tel Aviv's Museum of the Jewish People; the Avi Chai Foundation; and the Jewish Peoplehood Hub, combining the efforts of the Nadav Fund, the Jewish Agency, and Makom. The creation of the Jewish People Planning and Policy Institute a half dozen years ago also speaks to the observation that "Jewish People" has attained a loftier position in communal rhetoric, if not institutional action. Most recently, "Jewish Peoplehood" as a theme figured very prominently in this past year's General Assembly of The Jewish Federations of North America, as it occupied a specially designated "track" in the formal program, comprised of several sessions with two dozen or so speakers. By any measure, then, organizational and philanthropic investment in Jewish Peoplehood and allied concepts certainly has been growing of late.

In parallel, an emerging institutionally-sponsored, scholarly literature attests to the growing Jewish communal interest in Jewish Peoplehood. Among the most noteworthy: *Jewish Peoplehood: Change and Challenge* (Revivi and Kopelowitz, 2008), an anthology that brings together the reflections of a dozen prominent Jewish thinkers; as well *as The Case for Jewish Peoplehood: Can We Be One?* by Erica Brown and Misha Galperin, advancing both an analysis and a program. So too we may add last year's report of two surveys in the US and Israel on Jewish Peoplehood connections (Cohen and Yaar 2009) sponsored by the Peoplehood Index Project and presented at the Herzliya Conference in February 2009 (http://www.herzliyaconference.org/_Uploads/2911shoam.pdf). See also Kopelowitz (2008) and Kopelowitz and Engelbert (2007) and Ravid, et al. (2007) Ravid and Serkin (2008a, 2008b) and Ravid, et al. (2009).

No doubt sparking all this activity, both practical and intellectual, is the sense that the bonds of Jewish Peoplehood are fraying. Over the years, American Jews have been growing more distant from Israel (as Cohen and Kelman (2007) have argued; for a contrary view, see Sasson et al. (2008)). More broadly, and extending beyond the matter of weakening ties to Israel alone, "The once forceful claims of Jewish Peoplehood have lost their power to compel" (Cohen and Wertheimer 2006: 33), as signs abound of "weakened identification of American Jews with their fellow Jews abroad."

But, notwithstanding its attention-grabbing power inside the Jewish communal Beltway, Jewish Peoplehood is not at all well-understood; confusion

about its meaning, measurement, and manifestations reigns supreme (Eisen 2008; Revivi and Kopelowitz 2008). As one on-line commentator wrote as recently as late 2007: "Peoplehood" — the ever present word in Jewish communities, organizations and conferences - is a vague and undetermined buzzword. What is it actually? What does it represent? Who is "entitled" to be part of Jewish Peoplehood? How do you do Jewish Peoplehood? (Moty Crystal on Ynet: http://www.ynet.co.il/english/articles/0,7340,L-3465116,00.html)

In short, we have no widely agreed-upon answer to the question: What, exactly, is "Jewish Peoplehood" commitment? To what extent, if at all, is it about: feelings of kinship with Jews everywhere or "historical familism" (Liebman and Cohen 1990); or an assertion of the primacy of civilization in defining Jewish identity (Kaplan 1959); or a connection with Jews around the globe (Cohen and Wertheimer 2006); a sense of a "a shared history and a shared destiny" translated into practice to a concern "about the health and welfare of Jews and Jewish communities" in Israel and around the world (Ruskay 2008: x). Ephraim Yaar has advanced the notion that Jewish Peoplehood embraces affective, behavioral and cognitive elements — ABC's to a social psychologist — but these conceptual initials have yet to be fully spelled out, so to speak. In short, notwithstanding all the concern about, and all the talk about, Jewish Peoplehood over the last few years, we have little clarity or consensus about the term.

If we lack clarity about the concept, it is no surprise that we are confused about a related issue: What are the markers of Jewish Peoplehood commitment? How do we recognize it when we see it? And, more precisely, how do we measure it, scientifically or otherwise? In short, not only do we lack an agreed-upon substantive definition, we lack an operational one as well.

And, last, "everyone" (or at least everyone in conventional Jewish leadership circles) acts as if Jewish Peoplehood matters. Perhaps it contributes to a shared sense of identity, or an agenda for discourse, or a motivation to action. Some have advanced an educational program in Jewish Peoplehood implying that there's a body of knowledge surrounding this undefined if not undefinable and largely unmeasured if not unmeasurable concept. Clearly affective, behavioral and cognitive elements comprise and embody Jewish People, but does it make a difference in the real world? Does Jewish Peoplehood commitment matter? Do those with more of it somehow act differently in perceptible and measurable ways than those with less of it — whatever it may be, and however we choose to measure it?

Three questions, three answers

This study — based on a survey of donors to the campaign of The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington (http://www.shalomdc.org/page.aspx?id=196452), and continuing the work of the Peoplehood Index Project begun in 2008 — addresses the three key questions posed above:

1. How may we define Jewish Peoplehood commitment?
2. How may we measure it in the Jewish population?
3. Does it have any practical import?

To be sure, this is an exploratory study, part of the larger ongoing effort by the Peoplehood index project. This studies offers tentative and preliminary results rather than definitive answers. We reach no definitive conclusions, but we do aim to contribute to the thinking on these and related issues, providing some tentative insights that may be summarized as follows:

1. Five closely related concepts comprise a preliminary, working definition of Jewish Peoplehood commitment:
   - Pride in being Jewish
   - Attachment to other Jews, both locally and around the world
   - Attachment to Israel
   - Commitment to Jewish group continuity
   - Feeling responsible for Jews in need, locally, in Israel, and around the world
2. A concise battery of 16 survey questions that may be used to measure Jewish Peoplehood commitment on social surveys.
3. Peoplehood commitment matters. Donors with higher levels of Jewish Peoplehood commitment are decidedly more generous to Jewish causes, Federation, Jewish community groups and Israel-related causes than those donors with low levels of Jewish Peoplehood commitment. We also find that Peoplehood commitment bears no relationship with giving to non-Jewish causes, lending some confidence to the results linking it with Jewish giving.

The Peoplehood survey and the sample of Federation donors

A total of 497 respondents, drawn from the current and lapsed donor lists of The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, completed a web-based survey from September 23, 2009 through October 31, 2009. The survey questions replicated many that had been asked the previous year in the Peoplehood Index Project-sponsored study of the Israeli and American Jewish populations. Conducted by Prof. Ephraim Yaar of Tel Aviv University and Dr. Steven M. Cohen, the results from these surveys were presented at the 2009 Herzliya Conference (see http://j.mp/hertzliya).

In addition to a selection of socio-demographic and Jewish profile items, the questionnaire covered such issues as: attachment to Jews locally, in Israel, and around the world; attitudes toward Israel and to the Israel-Palestine conflict; images of the local Jewish community; and patterns of giving to a variety of causes, both Jewish and non-Jews. The Appendix, below, contains the full questionnaire and detailed frequencies.

The sampling frame consisted equally of three groups of 1,000 each,

numbering 3,000 in all: "big" donors (those who recently contributed $1,000-9,999 to the campaign of The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington); small donors (those contributing $1-999); and lapsed donors (those who had once given to the campaign, but who had not made a donation for at least 3 years). We sent out three e-mail invitations (see Appendix for text) and learned of a small number of bad e-mail addresses. Almost 17% of the original sample frame provided usable completed surveys, with roughly equal rates of return among lapsed, small, and big donors.

It was a short survey: For two-thirds of the respondents, the survey required 6-14 minutes to complete, with an overall median of 12 minutes.

Compared to the public, donors are more middle-aged, affluent, & residentially stable

By design, the sample is a select segment of the Washington Jewish population. This sample of Federation donors differs from the broader Jewish population in much the same way that Federation donors, in general, differ from the larger population from which they are drawn (Cohen 2004). The characteristics of donors here may be compared with the local Jewish population, as reported in The Jewish Community Study of Greater Washington (Sheskin 2004). The contrast between Federation donors and the local rank-and-file Jewish population is clear. Federation donors are more often male, older, married, in-married, and affluent. Fewer donors than members of the Jewish public have recently arrived in the local area (for comparable national patterns, see Cohen 1983; and Groeneman and Smith 2009). Donors and the Jewish public, though, share some features: high levels of Democratic Party affiliation and of US nativity.

Comparing the Donor Sample with the Jewish Public: Socio-Demographic Measures

(All entries are percentages, unless otherwise noted.)

Socio-Demographic Items	2009 Federation Donors, Greater Washington	2003 Jewish Population, Greater Washington
Gender (Male/Female)	60/40	49/51
Age	Median = 56	Median = 46
65+	31	13
55-64	33	17
45-54	20	23
35-44	11	18
25-34	6	18
Under 25	1	10
Total	100%	100%
US-born	90	92
Currently married or partnered	80	63
Spouse or partner is Jewish	90	58
Years living in Greater Washington		
All or almost all my life	21	15
20+ yrs, but not almost all my life	53	54
10-19 years	15	20
5-9 years	7	11
0-4 years	4	17
	100%	100%
HH annual income	Median: $177,900	Median: $95,900
Political party		
Democrat	69	71
Independent	20	18
Republican	11	11
	100%	100%

More Jewishly engaged than the public

In addition, donors are more Jewishly involved than the Jewish public at large. Donors are more than twice as likely as the public to have attended Jewish day school in their childhood, to currently belong to a congregation, and to attend religious services at least monthly. More of the donors attended a Jewish-sponsored overnight camp, and more are Orthodox or Conservative. Moreover, on several measures of Israel connection, donors also, predictably, out-score members of the US Jewish public in a survey sponsored by the Peoplehood Index Project in 2008, and conducted by Professors Yaar and Dr. Steven M. Cohen (Cohen and Yaar 2008). (In study after study, donors out-score the Jewish public on measures of Jewish engagement. See, for example, Cohen (2004).)

All these differences point to the higher levels of Jewish engagement on the part of the donors as compared with the public at large.

In addition, it is reasonable to assume that among those donors invited to participate in the survey, those relatively more engaged by the announced topic of the survey would begin the survey, and those more interested in the survey's contents would complete it. For these and other reasons, it is likely that the respondents are even somewhat more Jewishly engaged than sampling frame from which they are drawn.

The likely statistical effect of these patterns is to produce an upward bias in the levels of Jewish Peoplehood commitment reported below (they're probably more attached to Jewish Peoplehood than those who did not respond). However, the bias toward the more Peoplehood-attached may well produce a downward bias in the extent to which we find Jewish Peoplehood statistically relates to other measures. Generally (but not always), a truncated sample (such as one with relatively few unengaged Jews) produces weaker relationships than one which spans the entire spectrum of the relevant measures. For the purposes of locating and demonstrating a putative impact of Jewish Peoplehood, the likely sample bias, then, operates in a conservative direction in that it reduces the chances of finding a strong relationship between Jewish Peoplehood commitment and other measures.

Comparing the Donor Sample with the Jewish Public: Jewish Engagement Measures

Jewish Profile Questions	2009 Federation Donors, Greater Washington	2003 Jewish Population, Greater Washington
Attended Jewish day school, 4+ yrs	19	9
Attended a Jewish-sponsored overnight camp	48	37
Member of a Jewish congregation	78	37
Goes to services monthly or more	51	22
Denomination		
Orthodox	8	2
Conservative	44	30
Reform	25	31
Reconstructionist	5	3
Renewal	1	--
Post-denominational	2	--
Just Jewish	9	34
Atheist but Jewish	5	--
Not Jewish	1	--
Total	100%	100%
	2009 Federation Donors, Greater Washington	**2008 Jewish Population, U.S.**
Close friends, Jewish or non-Jewish, living in…		
Israel	56	25
Been in touch with an Israeli in the last 12 months	63	40
Been to Israel	84	40
In the last 12 months, you…		
Participated in any Israel-related program or activity in your community	58	25
Encouraged friends or relatives to visit Israel	66	36

THE FINDINGS

Defining Jewish Peoplehood commitment: One step forward

Jewish Peoplehood, or any other abstract concept, certainly can be defined by thinkers, leaders, and other experts. Alternatively, or additionally, it can be defined by rank-and-file users. If we want to know what a potentially complex term means, we can seek the advice of the most learned and proficient, or we can closely observe how it is used and what it connotes among "native speakers." Accordingly, to augment, but not supplant, the decades of work by Jewish thinkers since Mordecai Kaplan (1981) in trying to define Jewish Peoplehood, we used the survey to allow the respondents to offer clues as to the components of Jewish Peoplehood commitment.

Those questions and groups of questions which empirically cluster suggest an implicit definition of the overarching term, Jewish Peoplehood. The approach here rests on the assumption is that certain items (individual questions) will cluster together. That is, respondents' answers to one question do a good job of predicting answers on other questions. When they do, when the answers correlate with one another, then it is reasonable to assume that the cluster of questions emanate from a common underlying dimension, be it belief in God, self-esteem, ability to spell -- or attachment to Jews). If, in turn, several concepts (each measured by two or more survey questions) empirically relate to one another, one may reasonably infer that they comprise components of a larger concept, such as Jewish Peoplehood commitment.

Invariably the process of identifying the concepts and building these measures relies on the judgment of the researcher: Does this clustering make sense? How are these words and phrases being understood by the respondents? Does it really seem that these concepts are mutually related and supported? What's the effect of having chosen a few dozen specific questions from the infinite number that could have been asked? And would all of these relationships differ considerably for another population at a different time or in a different place?

There's no way to fully and satisfactorily answer all these questions and reservations. But, notwithstanding the endemic challenges to index-construction, thousands of measures and concepts are developed by social scientists all the time.

The successful endeavors in index-construction are those that "make sense" on their face. They seem to represent reality as expert observers see it and the lay public experiences it; and the resulting index relates to other measures in ways that are understandable if not entirely predictable. For example, a good measure of Jewish Peoplehood commitment should correlate at least moderately well with other measures of Jewish engagement: leadership, ritual observance, Jewish educational experiences, etc.

Invariably, measures become outdated; they require change over time. Advances in research may provoke a re-consideration of prevailing indices. So too may the realization that the very meaning of words and concepts, especially those which are contested, evolve over time (e.g., "pro-Israel," to pick a relevant example, now seems to evoke different associations for older and younger American Jews). But, notwithstanding all these caveats, to get started, we need to start some place. And no one in Jewish social science has yet proposed an index of Jewish Peoplehood commitment; we do so here for the first time.

Based on the foregoing approach, one which combines theory, intuition, judgment and of course the results of the research, we propose five components of Jewish Peoplehood commitment that could be parsed from the available evidence, as follows:

- **Pride in being Jewish**: The sense that one regards being Jewish as important and a source of great pride.
- **Attachment to other Jews**, both locally and around the world: The degree to one feels close to other Jews (tends to be higher for those that are more physically proximate).
- **Attachment to Israel**: Feeling close to and involved with Israel and concerned about Israel's security (but, as distinguished from agreement with Israeli government policies or assessments of the morality of Israeli actions).
- **Commitment to Jewish group continuity**: Concern with one's own family's future connection with the Jewish People and with the overall survival of Jews going forward.
- **Feeling responsible for Jews in need**, locally, in Israel, and around the world: The expression of familial-like caring for other Jews in various locales, near and far.

To varying extents, thinkers and leaders in written and spoken word have seen the foregoing concepts as allied with their notions of Jewish Peoplehood, if not, at times, serving as definitional components of this ambiguous, though widely used, term. The implicit thinking of these respondents on this one survey of donors in Fall, 2009 ought not preclude future efforts to further develop and refine our understanding of Jewish Peoplehood. But the foregoing list of components can — and should — inform that process, one that will need to consider areas that are more challenging, both conceptually and methodologically.

Towards a Jewish Peoplehood measure

In the course of exploring how respondents think about matters relating to Jewish Peoplehood, we identified 16 questions that form a preliminary and tentative survey index of Jewish Peoplehood commitment. An agreed-upon and adaptable measure can help us track levels of Jewish Peoplehood commitment and compare levels of commitment across communities and by interventions.

And it can help develop a research tradition that will deepen our understanding of Jewish Peoplehood. The 16 items are as follows:

The 16-Item Index of Jewish Peoplehood Commitment
Jewish pride
1) How important is being Jewish in your life?
2) To what extent do you feel proud to be a Jew?
Attachment to other Jews
3-5) To what extent do you feel close to … the Jewish People? … American Jews? … Jews who live in countries other than Israel or the US?
Attachment to Israel
6) To what extent do you feel close to Israel?
7) To what extent would you say that you are well-informed about Israel?
8) If Israel were to disappear I would feel as if I had suffered one of the greatest personal tragedies of my life
Commitment to Jewish continuity
9) I'd be upset if my child were to marry a non-Jew who didn't convert to Judaism
10) I'd be upset if the number of US Jews declined sharply over the next two generations
11) It is important to me to have friends who are Jewish
Responsibility for Jews in need
12-15) To what extent do you feel that you have a responsibility to the following sorts of people in need: Jews in need in the Former Soviet Union … Jews in need in Israel … Jews in need in the US … Jews in need in Greater Washington
16) I have a special responsibility to take care of Jews in need around the world

As can be seen from the results below, Federation donors in Washington (and presumably those elsewhere as well), out-score members of the Jewish public, both in the US and in Israel, in the three areas where measures of the public are available. Thus, the donors express higher levels of pride in being Jewish and of attachment to Jews elsewhere than the publics in the US or Israel; they also out-score the American Jewish public with respect to attachment to Israel. Presumably, if the results were available, we would also see the donors out-scoring the Jewish publics with respect to commitment to Jewish continuity and feeling responsible for Jews in need.

Responses to Jewish Peoplehood Index questions:

Comparing Federation donors with the Jewish Population in the US & Israel

Peoplehood index questions	Fed. Donors, Gtr Wash., 2009	US Jews, 2008	Israeli Jews, 2008
Jewish pride			
Being Jewish very important	81	69	73
Very proud to be a Jew	87	69	73
Attachment to other Jews			
Feel very close to… to a great extent…			
The Jewish people	88	45	58
American Jews	78		34
Jews who in live in countries other than Israel or the US	43	24	31
Attachment to Israel			
Feel very close to Israel to a great extent	71	27	
Very informed about Israel	56	26	
If Israel were to disappear I would feel as if I had suffered one of the greatest personal tragedies of my life (Strongly agree/Agree)	65/23	32/30	
Commitment to Jewish continuity			
I'd be upset if my child were to marry a non-Jew who didn't convert to Judaism (Strongly agree/Agree)	32/31		
I'd be upset if the number of US Jews declined sharply over the next two generations (Strongly agree/Agree)	42/46		
It's important to me to have friends who are Jewish (Strongly agree/Agree)	43/46		
Responsibility for Jews in need			
Very responsible for…	67		
Jews in need in Greater Washington	59		
Jews in need in the US	50		
Jews in need in Israel	27		
Jews in need in the Former Soviet Union	27		
I have a special responsibility to take care of Jews in need around the world (Strongly agree/Agree)	25/55		

Jewish Peoplehood commitment is strongly linked with Jewish philanthropic generosity

We may be clear about the meaning of Jewish Peoplehood. We may even have an idea as to how to measure it. But does it matter? Do those who are more committed to the Jewish People behave any differently from those who are less committed?

In point of fact, **Peoplehood does matter, and for predicting charitable giving to Jewish causes, it matters a lot.** As we demonstrate presently, **Federation donors with higher levels of Jewish Peoplehood commitment make larger and more generous donations to Jewish causes. Not only do they give more dollars to such causes, but their generosity, as reflected in the percentage of their giving, is substantially greater.**

These findings are reinforced, underscored and validated by another set of findings: Jewish Peoplehood commitment bears no relationship (positive or negative) with giving to non-sectarian ("non-Jewish") causes.

Using the 16-item scale outlined above, we measured levels of Jewish Peoplehood commitment among the sample of current or lapsed donors to The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington. We assigned everyone a score on this scale. We divided this donor-sample into nearly equal thirds, comprising high, moderate and low levels of Jewish Peoplehood commitment. We then examined their levels of charitable giving, finding large differences between those scoring high and low on the Jewish Peoplehood index.

How we measured charitable giving

Using the 16-item scale outlined above, we measured levels of Jewish Peoplehood commitment among the sample of current or lapsed donors to The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington. After assigning everyone a score on this scale, and then divided this donor-sample into nearly equal thirds, comprising high, moderate and low levels of Jewish Peoplehood commitment.

We measured total charitable giving by multiplying total household income (the means of response categories) by the percent given to charity (using an exact figure, or the means of categories).

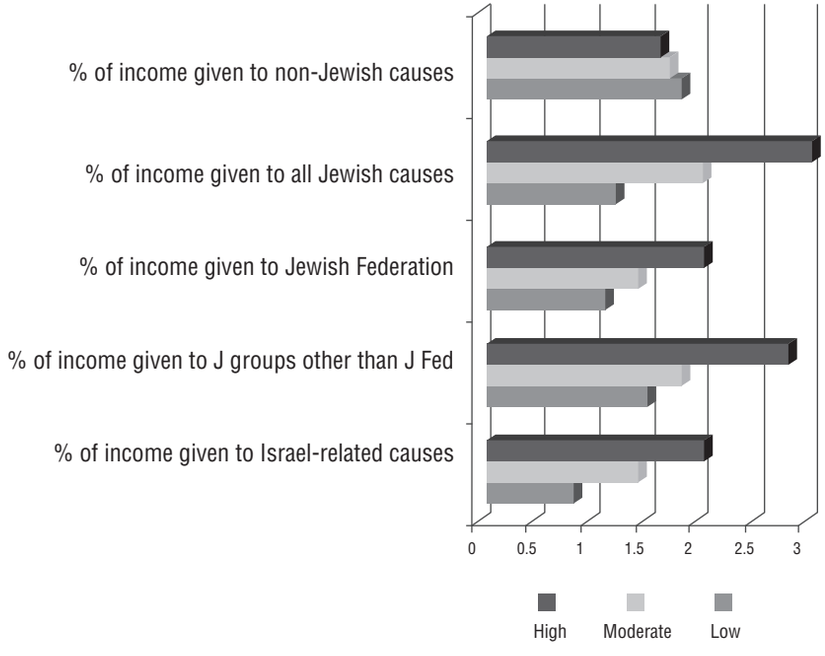
We calculate the percent of income given to specific charities (e.g., "Jewish causes …" or "causes related to Israel." To do so, we multiplied the total percent given to all charities by a numerical expression of the amount given to each specific causes as contained in responses to the question, "About how much of what you contributed to charity in 2008 went to …?" For example, "none" = 0.0, "a little" = 20%, "some"= 30%, "about half" — 50%. If someone reported giving 2.5% of their income to Jewish causes (they answered, "2-3%%) and they reported giving "a little" to Federation, then we would calculate that they gave 0.5% of their income to Federation, since 2.5% X 20% (.025 X .2) = 0.5%, or .005 of their income.

We then calculated actual dollar amounts donated to various causes. We multiplied the estimated percentage of income donated to a specific cause by total household income. Thus, if someone earned $200,000 and donated 0.5% of income to Federation, then we would estimate a gift of $1,000.

All of these calculations are approximations, even loose approximations. However, the more approximate the estimate, the LESS likely are we to find effects. Blurring of any measures diminishes (or attenuates) statistical relationships, introducing a conservative assumption to the analysis: If we do find results of a relationship between Jewish Peoplehood commitment and Jewish charitable giving, we can be reasonably sure that the relationship is "for real" and not just an artifact of these data.

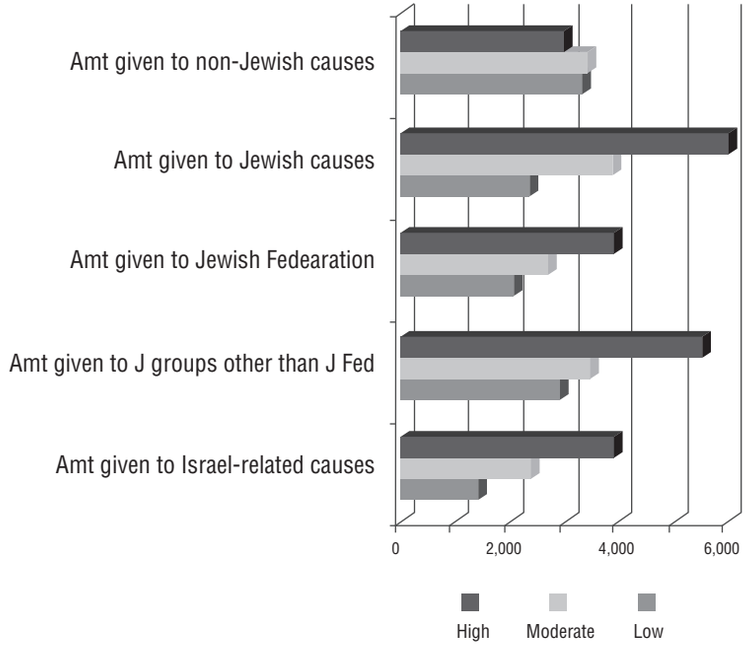
Percent of income donated to Jewish and non-Jewish causes by Jewish Peoplehood commitment level

People-hood Index	% of income given to non-Jewish causes	% of income given to all Jewish causes	% of income given to Jewish Federation	% of income given to J groups other than J Fed	% of income given to Israel-related causes
High	1.6	3.0	2.0	2.8	2.0
Moderate	1.7	2.0	1.4	1.8	1.4
Low	1.8	1.2	1.1	1.5	0.8
Total	1.7	2.0	1.5	2.0	1.4



Amount (in dollars) donated to Jewish and non-Jewish causes by Jewish Peoplehood commitment level

Jewish Peoplehood commitment level	Amt given to non-Jewish causes	Amt given to Jewish causes	Amt given to Jewish Federation	Amt given to J groups other than J Fed	Amt given to Israel-related causes
High	3,000	6,000	3,900	5,500	3,900
Moderate	3,400	3,900	2,700	3,500	2,400
Low	3,300	2,400	2,000	2,900	1,400
Total	3,300	4,000	2,800	3,800	2,500



We found several ways in which Jewish Peoplehood commitment matters:

1. Peoplehood matters for **Jewish giving**: $6,000 for the "highs" and only $2,400 annually for the lows.
2. Peoplehood matters for **Federation giving**: An average $3,900 for the "highs" on Jewish Peoplehood vs. just $2,000 for the "lows," in this donor sample.
3. Peoplehood matters for giving to **Jewish groups** other than Federation: A gap of $5,500 for the high-scorers vs. $3,2000 for those with lower levels of Peoplehood commitment.
4. Peoplehood matters for giving to what donors regard as **Israel-related causes.** Among the "highs": $3,900; for the "lows": just $1400.
5. But, Peoplehood makes no difference in giving to **non-Jewish charities**. The "lows" are just as generous as the "highs." in fact, the "lows" may be slightly more generous (average annual giving of $3,300 vs. $3,000 for the highs — a reversal of all the patterns for Jewish causes).

The reversal of the pattern with respect to non-Jewish giving lends some credibility to the other results, those reflecting the link between Jewish Peoplehood commitment and Jewish giving.

We do know from these results that Jewish Peoplehood commitment and Jewish charitable are closely related empirically. But, as we know, correlation alone does not guarantee causation, and the nature and direction of causation is not intuitively obvious. Does Peoplehood commitment "cause" Jewish charitable generosity? Or do more generous givers acquire a commitment to Jewish Peoplehood over time?

In fact, a more complex relationship may be at work. The Jewish Peoplehood Index is both broad and encompassing. It embraces Jewish pride, attachment to Jews, attachment to Israel, commitment to Jewish group continuity, and responsibility for needy Jews. As such, it probably does exert an independent effect on several behavioral outcomes (charitable giving among them); but it probably also stands for, or in place of, other aspects of Jewish involvement and commitment.

At least as far back as the late 1970s, social science research has demonstrated a clear statistical relationship between measures of Jewish involvement and Jewish charitable giving. Thirty years ago, Ritterband and Dr. Steven M. Cohen (1979) advanced "the more, the more" theory to explain the relationship between Jewish involvement and charitable involvement:

> "The more the more", theory …says that … Jews who take seriously one aspect of Jewish life tend to respond in like manner to other aspects including philanthropy. … The more Jewish one's behavior (however measured) the more likely one is to give, the more one gives, and the higher the proportion of income given. … Jews who are committed to one or another aspect of Jewish tradition or communal life are far more likely to give at all. And when they give, they give much more. (1979: 2, 4, 5).

Conclusions and Policy Implications

Clearly, the organized Jewish community in general, and the Federation movement in particular, has a strong interest in promoting Jewish Peoplehood commitment. Jewish Peoplehood commitment may promote charitable involvement, or it flows from charitable involvement, or, most likely, it reflects the underlying engagement in Jewish life. In any event, a commitment to Jewish Peoplehood, as defined above, is vital for a healthy and powerful Jewish philanthropic community, and more broadly, for a vital and health world Jewish community as well.

The survey found the anticipated relationships between Jewish Peoplehood commitment and the "standard" list of Jewish involvement variables: Jewish education, Jewish affiliation, ritual observance, in-marriage, and in-group friendship. In other words, ongoing experiences with other Jews, especially Jews who share a commitment to things Jewish, serve to nurture, sustain and enhance Jewish Peoplehood commitment — and other positive features of Jewish involvement. Policies which promote Jewish association (informal networks), affiliation (ties to institutions), socialization (organic process of value inculcation), and education work to elevate Jewish Peoplehood commitment, and, by extension, engagement in Jewish philanthropic endeavors as well.

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The 2009 Greater Washington Jewish Connections Study

Sponsors: Peoplehood Index Project & The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington

Investigator: Dr. Steven M. Cohen, HUC-JIR & Berman Jewish Policy Archive @ NYU Wagner

How important is being Jewish in your life?

Not at all important	Not too important	Somewhat important	Very important
2	0	17	81

To what extent do you feel proud to be a Jew?

Not at all	To some extent	To a great extent
1	13	87

To what extent do you feel close to…

	Not at all	To some extent	To a great extent
The Jewish people?	0	12	88
Israel?	2	28	71
American Jews?	1	21	78
Americans in general?	1	33	66
Jews who live in countries other than Israel or the US?	4	53	43
A local Jewish community?	3	28	69

To what extent would you say that you are well-informed about Israel?

Not at all	To some extent	To a great extent
1	43	56

To what extent do you feel that you have a responsibility for the following sorts of people in need?

	Not at all	To some extent	To a great extent
People in need in developing countries	11	75	14
People in need in the U.S.	2	59	38
People in need in Greater Washington	3	52	45
Jews in need in the Former Soviet Union	7	67	27
Jews in need in Israel	3	47	50
Jews in need in the U.S.	2	39	59
Jews in need in Greater Washington	2	30	67

Do you agree or disagree:

	Disagree strongly	Dis-agree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
I consider all Jews around the world like family	1	12	12	56	19
If Israel were to disappear I would feel as if I had suffered one of the greatest personal tragedies of my life	1	5	6	23	65
If the American Jewish community were to disappear I would feel as if I had suffered one of the greatest personal tragedies of my life	0	1	4	26	68
I'd be upset if my child were to marry a non-Jew who didn't convert to Judaism	5	14	19	31	32
I'd be upset if the number of US Jews declined sharply over the next two generations	1	3	8	46	42
It's important to me to have friends who are Jewish	1	4	6	46	43
I have a Jewish responsibility to care for people in trouble (as with Darfur or Katrina)	2	10	15	55	19
I feel as moved by the oppression of non-Jews as by the comparable oppression of Jews	1	16	21	51	11
I have a special responsibility to take care of Jews in need around the world	0	4	15	55	25
Jewish charities place too much emphasis on helping only Jews	22	49	18	8	3
I find Jewish organizations largely remote & irrelevant to me	20	48	19	12	3
For me, being Jewish is very personal; it's primarily about my inner self	8	34	16	31	10
For me, being Jewish is primarily about being part of the community & the Jewish People	1	7	11	52	29
On the whole, Israel's actions with respect to the Palestinians have been moral and legitimate	3	12	25	37	23
Israel's actions are so troubling to me that I really can't feel attached to Israel	53	36	8	2	1
When Washington area Jews give charity to Jewish causes, they should focus their giving on causes in the local area rather than Israel & Jewish causes around the world	19	53	20	6	2

Do you have any close friends, Jewish or non-Jewish, living in:

Israel	56
Former Soviet Union	5
Other countries, but not the U.S., Canada, Israel, or the FSU	43

In the last 12 months, have you been in touch by phone or email with any Israeli?

No	Maybe	Yes
35	2	63

Have you ever been to Israel?

No	Once	Twice or more	Lived there for 4 months or more
16	22	47	16

In the last 12 months, have you…

Participated in any Israeli-related program or activity in your community?	58
Encouraged any friends or relatives to visit Israel?	66

In your view, to what extent is the Greater Washington "organized Jewish community" (Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, synagogues, JCC, organizations, etc.)…

	Not at all	To some extent	To a great extent	Not sure
Strange and alien to me	69	23	4	3
Close to where I am, politically and culturally	10	49	32	9
Open to diverse points of view	6	45	25	23
Too focused on itself and Jews alone	59	20	5	16
Exciting and interesting	11	56	22	11

JEWISH BACKGROUND

Growing up, were BOTH parents Jewish (by birth, or by choice)?	97
Did you ever attend Jewish day school for 4 years or more?	19
Did you ever attend a Jewish-sponsored overnight camp, as a camper or staff?	48
Have you ever had a romantic relationship with someone who is not Jewish?	66
In the last 12 months, have you attended an activity at a JCC?	56
Are you a dues-paying member of a Jewish congregation?	78

How much spoken Hebrew do you know?

I'm proficient/fluent	I understand somewhat	I know only a few Hebrew words	None
11	29	51	10

Of your closest friends, about how many are…

	None	Some	About half	Most	All or almost all
Jewish	1	18	24	38	20
Israeli	47	51	1	1	0
Russian speaking	78	20	1	1	1
Active in Jewish community life	6	42	24	21	6

Apart from weddings, bar mitzvahs, or funerals, how often do you go to religious services?

More than once a week	Once a week	Almost every week	Once or twice a month	A few times a year	Never
10	9	21	11	42	6

In which of the following denominations were you raised? Which do you consider yourself now?

	Raised	Now
Orthodox	16	8
Conservative	48	44
Reform	24	25
Reconstructionist	0	5
Renewal	0	1
Post-denominational	0	2
Just Jewish	7	9
Atheist, but Jewish	2	5
Not Jewish	2	1

CHARITABLE GIVING

About what percent of your gross household income did you donate to charity in 2008?

0%-1%	2%-3%	4%-5%	6%-7%	8%-9%	10% or more
9	33	26	11	10	12

About how much of what you contributed to charity in 2008 went to...

	None	A little	Some	About half	Most	Almost all
Charities that are not Jewish in sponsorship?	2	27	44	17	8	2
Jewish causes, including those related to Israel & those benefiting mostly non-Jews but sponsored by a Jewish charity?	8	13	38	15	18	8
The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington?	6	18	58	11	6	1
Other local Jewish groups & institutions, such as synagogues, schools, & the JCC?	7	9	48	20	16	2
Causes related to Israel? [incl. preceding questions]	10	24	54	6	4	1

PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Male	Female
60	40

What is your age as of your last birthday?

Under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over
1	6	11	20	33	31

In general, would you describe your political views as:

Conservative	Moderate	Liberal
15	39	45

With regard to political party identification, do you regard yourself as:

Democrat	Independent	Republican
69	20	11

In what region of the world were you born?

United States	Canada	Israel	Former Soviet Union	South America	Other
90	1	1	2	1	6

Currently married or partnered with someone: 80%

Spouse/partner Jewish: 90%

Has children: 83%

For how long have you lived in the Greater Washington area?

Under 1 year	2-4 years	5-9 years	10-19 years	20 years+, but not almost all my life	All or almost all my life
0	7	15	53	21	4

What is your household's annual income (if you are married, include your spouse)?

Under $40K	$40K-59,999	$60,000-79,999	$80,000-99,999
5	5	6	8

$100,000-149,999	$150,000-199,999	$200,000-299,999	$300,000+
22	18	16	21