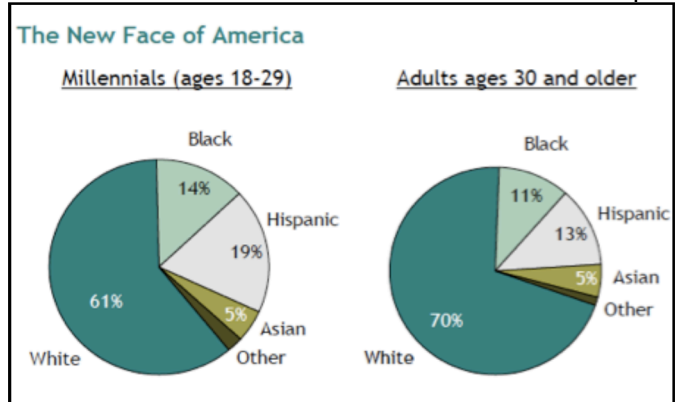


# The Changing Landscape of American Jewish Life

**JEWES ARE PART OF AMERICAN LIFE AND ARE AFFECTED BY SOCIAL TRENDS** - Taboos around interracial and LGBT unions are diminishing, transracial adoption is increasing, and being Jewish is one of many choices. Pew research indicates that the next generations (those born after 1965) in America are more ethnically and racially diverse than previous generations.<sup>1</sup> With a majority of Americans (77%) approving of interracial marriage<sup>2</sup> and given that almost 50% of Jews intermarry, Jewish diversity is likely to increase.<sup>3</sup>

**THE JEWISH PEOPLE ARE MORE DIVERSE THAN MANY ASSUME** -

The Jewish experience is built upon foundations of diversity as old as the Jewish people. Jews have always resembled the peoples among whom they live, whether in Africa, Asia, or Europe. Why should American Jews be an exception? Research reveals that 20% of America's 6 million Jews or 1,200,000 are racially and ethnically diverse, including African American, Asian, Latino, Sephardic (Spanish/ Portuguese descent), Mizrahi (North African/ Middle Eastern descent) and mixed-race by heritage, conversion, intermarriage and adoption.<sup>4</sup>



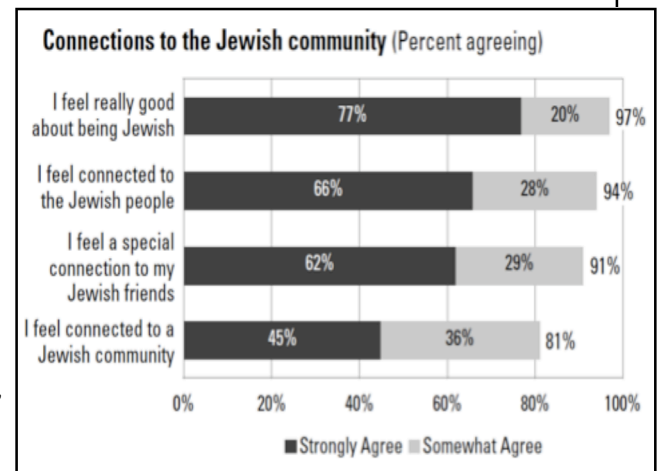
**DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS IS A KEY LENS THROUGH WHICH YOUNG JEWS BUILD IDENTITY** - Globalization and technology expand both our range of choices and ways of identifying ourselves, especially for younger generations of Jews. Effectiveness in attracting next-generation leaders hinges on embracing diversity and inclusiveness, a key perspective from which young Jews build identity and make choices about Jewish engagement.



**HOW DO WE MAKE THE JEWISH COMMUNITY MORE WELCOMING?** - While racially and ethnically diverse Jews feel deeply connected to Judaism and the Jewish people, many may be ambivalent about their connection to Jewish institutions.<sup>5</sup>

Although race presents itself as the most "visible" identity, the reality today is that all Jews have multiple identities. The challenge of making Jewish life relevant is a modern dilemma facing the entire Jewish community.

**THE JEWISH POPULATION COULD GROW** - Jews around the world face serious demographic challenges. Decimated by the Inquisition and the Holocaust, Jews now comprise only 0.2% of the world's people with 13-15 million Jews in the world, depending on who is counting. The Jewish population, through pro-active efforts, could grow if we overcome the significant organizational, cultural and ideological barriers to growth in the Jewish community, and be part of the marketplace of the world's religions.



1 December 2009 Current Population Survey (CPS), Pew Research Center. (Fig. 1)  
 2 Minority Rights and Relations Survey, Gallup, 2007.  
 3 The National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01: Strength, Challenge and Diversity in the American Jewish Population, United Jewish Communities, 2004.  
 4 Survey of Racially & Ethnically Diverse Jews in the United States, Institute for Jewish & community Research, 2001.  
 5 In Every Tongue: The Racial & Ethnic Diversity of the Jewish People, San Francisco: Institute for Jewish & Community Research, 2005. Diane K. Tobin, Gary A. Tobin and Scott Rubin. (Fig. 2)