

**What's Jewish About Hanukkah Gifts?
An Exploration of Holiday Gift Giving Practices
In North America**

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This thesis came about in response to a conversation with students in my Introduction to Judaism class about Christmas and Hanukkah gifts. I'd like to dedicate this thesis, not only to the students in my class, but to all those who struggle to navigate Hanukkah and Christmas practices with a multifaceted Jewish identity.

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Introduction

Teaching Introduction to Judaism has been one of the most formative and rewarding experiences I've had during rabbinical school. I've met, heard the stories of, and learned from a group of interesting and thoughtful individuals who each chose to explore Judaism for a different reason. The majority of the students were couples in interfaith relationships that chose to learn about Judaism together. Many of the non-Jewish partners were considering or actively working toward conversion. I connected deeply to the various issues my students explored because of my personal experience growing up in an interfaith family and also marrying someone who converted to Judaism.

Last year, during a session on Hanukkah, one of my students asked me whether Hanukkah gifts were really Jewish. I had no idea how to answer the question. I told her I wasn't sure, but knew that the extravagance of gifts today was a response to Christmas. I mentioned a few things I knew about *gelt* and then asked her why she asked the question. Her response recounted her challenge navigating Christmas gifts with her in-laws and trying to figure out how Hanukkah gifts fit in. The ensuing conversation lasted the rest of class. We each shared our holiday gift giving traditions and the struggles we faced navigating gift giving for Hanukkah and Christmas. I shared that my family has never been a big gift giving family. I received Christmas gifts when I was little, and a few Hanukkah gifts, but to a much lesser extent. At some point during middle school, all holiday gifts stopped and it's remained that way ever since. That is, until I met my husband. His family has the exact opposite attitude toward gifts. Christmas gifts are big and personally meaningful. The ritual of gift giving on Christmas morning is an important piece of their family story.

When my husband told his mom that he was going to convert to Judaism, the first thing she said was, “What about Christmas?” She wanted to know what he was going to do with the 30 ornaments he had received as Christmas gifts each year since he was born. Could she keep giving him ornaments? What about any future grandchildren? I shared this story with my class and admitted that my husband and I still don’t have a solid answer for how to approach Christmas and Hanukkah gifts for our future daughter (I was six months pregnant at the time). Needless to say, the discussion struck me on a personal level. When I got home from class, I did some research about the history of Hanukkah gifts. I didn’t find much. There were a number of obscure references but I didn’t find what I was looking for: a brief article documenting the history of the practice that I could forward to my class.

Coincidentally, I had just received an e-mail reminding me to start thinking about my thesis proposal. I decided, with little hesitation, that I wanted to discover the answer to my student’s question: are Hanukkah gifts really Jewish? I wanted to do this, not only out of personal interest, but also for the purpose of helping other Jews, particularly Jews by Choice, their families, and those in interfaith relationships, to navigate this complicated and sensitive practice.

I hope that through education, people will feel more confident making informed choices that reflect their values, relationships, personal experiences, and identity. This thesis is not only for those who struggle with Hanukkah and Christmas gift giving, it is also for the Jewish professionals and lay leaders who support their communities during Hanukkah and throughout the year. As it turns out, this work is not a one-page answer that can be forwarded to students in

an Introduction to Judaism class. Still, I hope people will engage with the material as a jumping off point to engage in these critical conversations.

My goal in this work is four-fold. First, I will explore the ancient roots of Hanukkah gift giving in the original stories and early celebrations of the festival I will argue that though gift giving did not take place in the way it does today, there are a number of interesting points of connection. These connections can guide us toward reclaiming contemporary practices through Jewish tradition. Secondly, I will explore how gift giving evolved into what it is today. I will argue that the contemporary practice is a result of Jews' changing roles in American society; highlighting the effect of interfaith families and Jews by choice. Hanukkah gifts would not exist without Christmas. That said, Jews (particularly Jewish professionals) not only drove the practice within Jewish circles, but they also contributed to the development of the larger holiday ritual. Thirdly, I will analyze a survey that asked people to report how and why they engaged in gift giving for Hanukkah and Christmas. I will argue that different factors like life stage and Jewish engagement corresponded to the likelihood that a person participated in different aspects of the ritual. Finally, I will synthesize all this information in order to make suggestions for how Jews can reclaim Hanukkah gift giving through Jewish tradition. I will provide points of connection and suggestions for how Jewish professionals and lay leaders can guide Jews toward deepening the gift giving experience and holiday celebration as a whole.

Chapter One: Early Elements of Gift Giving in the Original Stories of Hanukkah

The contemporary practice of giving gifts to family and friends for Hanukkah developed alongside Christmas gift giving practices in North America during the 20th century. Before this time period, however, various elements of the contemporary practice existed in association with Hanukkah. These elements did not include gift giving in the way we understand it today. They do, however, allow us to reclaim the contemporary ritual by connecting it to different pieces of the ancient story. These different pieces included gifts to facilitate sacrifice at the altar, the introduction of *gelt* (Jewish coinage), and the practice of borrowing foreign customs and making them Jewish. While none of these things directly led to contemporary gift giving practices, they enabled Jews to reclaim contemporary gift giving practices through the lens of Jewish history and tradition.

First, we will explore the gifts the Maccabees gave to God through sacrifice as a precursor to determining how they are similar to gifts we give today during Hanukkah. Sacrifice was a central part of the original stories of Hanukkah. The first references to sacrifice are in First Maccabees where the Greek ruler, King Antiochus IV Epiphanes, eliminated the practice as part of his regulations on the Jewish community. These references show that the king knew about this practice and noted it as offensive to his regime.

In First Maccabees 1:41-50, King Antiochus sent messengers to Jerusalem and Judea to enforce a decree to abandon their particular customs and embrace customs that unified the entire kingdom. His first decree was to institute pagan sacrifice. This act asserts that he did not have a problem with sacrifice, but rather with sacrifice to one exclusive deity. Immediately following

this decree, he stated that people are forbidden to offer burnt offerings, grain offerings, or wine offerings to the Temple. Finally, he told the people to set up pagan altars and sacrifice pigs and other unclean beasts. In addition to laws regarding sacrifice, King Antiochus also forbid circumcision, commanded the people to profane the Sabbath and Festival days, pollute the Temple, and raise their children in manners of uncleanness and profanity. He wanted the people to forget the laws of their particular community, and identify solely as members of the greater kingdom. The penalty for disobeying one of these decrees was death.¹

It is interesting that King Antiochus addressed sacrifice so extensively in his decrees, mentioning it three separate times over the course of a few verses. This tells us that sacrifice was a common and well-known practice in and outside the Jewish world. The king could have highlighted any number of practices. The fact that he focused on sacrifice suggests that he knew it was a foundational practice for the Jews. By replacing sacrifice to God with idol sacrifice he acknowledged that sacrifice, in itself, was not bad. What was bad was that Jews participated in the practice in their own particular way. The king felt threatened by the particularity of Judaism and wanted to control the practice in a way that also provoked the Jewish community.

Many scholars find King Antiochus' laws curious since he was raised and educated in a culture of religious tolerance. Victor Tcherikover suggested that a combination of a number of factors led him to attack the Jews so harshly. He said that Antiochus was known for his enthusiasm for Hellenistic culture and particularly committed to having his citizens live "according to the customs of the Greeks." On top of this, he was known to have a strange character and exerted

¹ First Maccabees 1:43-50.

behavior that was “full of contradictions and sudden surprises.” He was the type of person who, given the right provocation, had the personal capacity to carry something like this out.² This assessment helps us immensely. It shows that King Antiochus’ behavior in Maccabees was consistent with what we know about him as a person. While other rulers might have also built up hostility toward the Jews because of their differences, his unpredictable personality led him to act on those sentiments in an extreme way.

As the story continued, King Antiochus enforced his laws by setting up an abomination on the altar of the Temple to be used for pagan sacrifice on the 25th day of the month.³ Many biblical scholars find this act peculiar. Elias Bickerman points out that the standard way to abolish a group’s sacrificial practices was to destroy its altar, as mentioned in Judges 6:25 and First Maccabees 14:33.⁴ The fact that King Antiochus set up an abomination instead of destroying the altar signifies that his actions were about more than just eliminating the practice. Bickerman then described the form of the abomination, explaining that Greek altars at the time took the form of a sacrificial rock. The rock was where the sacrificial animal was slaughtered and became the locus for worship. Antiochus, therefore, set up a rock on the altar to signify the Greek god, Zeus Olympios, whom he said banished the God of Israel that dwelt in the holy of holies. For this reason, this act became known as the “abomination of desecration.”⁵ These actions reflect King Antiochus’ insistence to punish the Jews as much as possible. He not only replaced the altar with pagan sacrifice, but he also claimed to have banished the Jews’ God!

² Victor Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1959), 175-180.

³ First Maccabees 1:54-59.

⁴ E. J. Bickerman, *The God of the Maccabees: Studies on the Meaning and Origin of the Maccabean Revolt* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 69.

⁵ Bickerman, *The God of the Maccabees*, 70-71.

Later in First Maccabees, the king's officers went to Modi'in to enforce the new laws of pagan sacrifice. They demanded the Maccabean ruler Mattathias to step forward to offer the first sacrifices at the pagan altar. Mattathias refused and declared his dedication to the laws of his fathers. When he saw another Jew came up to offer sacrifices at the pagan altar, he became so infused with anger that he killed his fellow Jew, as well as the officer who told him to do it. The text said that Mattathias became zealous for Jewish law and urged others to follow him to the desert to support the covenant.⁶ This story highlights the extent to which the issue of sacrifice divided the Jewish community. Elias Bickerman said, "The Maccabean movement was, above all, a civil war, a religious struggle between reformers and orthodox."⁷ What he means by this is that the war was not initiated because the Jewish community came together around a shared cause. Instead, there was a small group of religious extremists, known as the *hasidim*, who came out against the majority of the Jewish community. This majority, as cited in Dan 9:27, I Mac 1:43, 52, 2:16, 23, and 6:21, actually sought assimilation and were comfortable following King Antiochus' decrees if it meant that they would be accepted as equals.⁸ They were, like the Jew in the story, more willing to transgress Jewish law in order to live peacefully besides the Greeks. Historians described these Jews as Hellenizers because of the way they embraced Greek culture alongside Judaism. It did not necessarily mean that they dismissed their Jewish identity, rather that they sought to change what it meant to be Jewish in order to incorporate Greek life and culture.⁹ Mattathias' act was as much a response to these Jews as it was to King Antiochus and his followers. Mattathias and the *hasidim* possessed a great deal of power in the community

⁶ First Maccabees 2:15-28.

⁷ Bickerman, *The God of the Maccabees*, 90.

⁸ Bickerman, *The God of the Maccabees*, 90.

⁹ Shaye J. D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987), 27-36.

because so many of them were priests. They had the monetary resources and political power to rally together in opposition to the Hellenizing Jews who were willing to go along with Antiochus' decrees.

It is not surprising that the tipping point for Mattathias happened around the issue of sacrifice. While he was aware of the way Hellenizing Jews engaged in Greek culture, it was not until he actually witnessed another Jew making pagan sacrifices that he stood up in an act of war. His act showed a commitment to maintaining the sanctity of sacrifice over the sanctity of human life, something that his Maccabean followers also embraced. Later, the rabbis of the Talmud turned this sentiment into law by declaring that there are three sins for which a person is required to die rather than transgress: idolatry, adultery, and murder.¹⁰

Sacrifice remained a central issue throughout the war. At one point, the Maccabees gathered in Mitzpeh, turning to God for help and guidance. They brought garments of the priesthood and the first fruits and tithes and cried out to God. They asked God what to do with the offerings and where to take them now that the sanctuary was destroyed and the priests humiliated. They asked how they would be able to withstand the invading army if God did not help them.¹¹ This is significant because it expressed a belief that sacrifice leads to physical protection from God. They were concerned that without sacrifice, God would not help them and they would die.

God did not respond to their cries. Instead, the story continued. Judah appointed leaders and told the people to prepare for battle, stating that it is better to die in battle than to see the misfortune

¹⁰ Sanhedrin 74a.

¹¹ First Maccabees 3:46-54.

of the nation and the sanctuary.¹² This story tells us about the nature of God at the time of First Maccabees. Elias Bickerman notes that the God of First Maccabees did not directly intervene in history even though the people prayed to God before every victory, recalling miracles that God performed in earlier times.¹³ This changes the way we understand the significance of sacrifice for the Maccabees. In earlier biblical books, people performed sacrifices to bring divine intervention. In First Maccabees, however, sacrifice was a way to invoke and praise God.

It is also important to keep in mind that First Maccabees was a Hasmonean text written from the perspective of the Maccabees. This means that the text framed the Maccabees as innocent heroes and all other groups as disturbers of the peace. They described the Greeks as initiating the war and described all other Jews as “the Godless of Israel” or “renegades.” There was no acknowledgement that many of these Jews joined them in fighting against the Greeks.¹⁴ The fact that the Maccabees recorded their own story reminds us not to read this text as a factual historical record. Instead, the text tells us what the Maccabees valued and how they wanted to be remembered. There is no doubt that they wanted their legacy to show a commitment to worshipping God through sacrifice. It is not surprising therefore, that the focus of the story after the victory was restoring sacrifice through rededicating the altar.

The first thing First Maccabees reported after the war was the Maccabees’ preparation for rededicating the altar. This included cleaning the sanctuary, tearing down the old altar, and then building a new one. They also rebuilt the sanctuary and brought holy vessels, a lamp-stand, incense, and a table into the Temple. Then, priests burned the incense and lit the lamp-stand,

¹² First Maccabees 3:55-60.

¹³ Bickerman, *The God of the Maccabees*, 17.

¹⁴ Bickerman, *The God of the Maccabees*, 18-19.

giving light to the Temple.¹⁵ Eventually, light became a central focus of the holiday; both in the way the story was retold and also in the things people did to celebrate the holiday. Here, however, it was one in a list of many things the priests did as a way to prepare for the rededication of the altar. After this list of preparations, the text finally mentioned the actual rededication. We learn that on the 25th day of Kislev, the same day the King forced Jews to offer idol sacrifices two years earlier,¹⁶ the people rededicated the Temple by offering sacrifices.¹⁷

Sacrifice was the central element of the rededication despite the fact that God did not appear through any sign, miracle, or prophet. Shaye Cohen highlights this fact, stating, “there was no prophet to approve their work and no miracle to assure them that the temple was once again the abode of God...The Maccabees installed themselves as high priests, although they were not of the high priestly line.”¹⁸ This only reaffirms that the Maccabees lived in a world where they felt they had the authority to make religious decisions of this magnitude without signs or reassurance from God.

They may have made these decisions for a number of reasons. First, this is the only way they knew how to be Jewish and relate to God. It was too soon for them to process the experience they just went through and to create new rituals that reflected any changing attitudes they might have toward God. More than this, it is likely that they didn’t actually have any changing attitudes toward God. Perhaps they believed that God helped them preemptively and now

¹⁵ First Maccabees 4:42-50.

¹⁶ First Maccabees 1:59.

¹⁷ First Maccabees 4:53-56.

¹⁸ Cohen, 126.

expects sacrifice in return. Their decision to enter the war was based on restoring sacrifice so it made sense that it became the central focus of the rededication of the altar and the Temple.

Second Maccabees affirmed this sentiment through a letter written by the Jews of Jerusalem to the Jews of Egypt, telling them what happened. The letter described how God saved them and drove out those who fought against them.¹⁹ It explained that they instituted a new holiday celebrating the purification of the Temple and urged the Jews in Egypt to celebrate two festivals in support. The first festival was Sukkot, and the second was a festival called “Feast of the Fire” that recalled Nehemiah’s sacrifices.²⁰ The text explained how Nehemiah orchestrated the sacrificial offerings at the Temple. It said that many years ago, during a time of persecution, priests hid fire from the altar. Later, during Nehemiah’s time, God told Nehemiah to order the descendants of the priests to find the fire. They found liquid instead of fire and then Nehemiah gave instructions for them to offer it as a sacrifice. He told them to sprinkle the liquid over wood when the sun came up. When they did, a great fire started and everyone sang out praises to God in awe. After the sacrifice was consumed, Nehemiah ordered the priests to pour the remaining liquid over large stones. A flame arose but went out as soon as the light from the altar shown upon it.²¹

These accounts add a great deal to our understanding of what sacrifice looked like during this time period and why the Jews of Jerusalem were so intent on encouraging others to celebrate the new festival with them. First, the text reminds us that the Jewish community was not centrally located in Judea. Jewish Diaspora life was strong and primarily centered around commerce.

¹⁹ Second Maccabees 1:11-12.

²⁰ Second Maccabees 1:18.

²¹ Second Maccabees 1:19-32.

Though each community interacted with Greek society in a different way, they each faced Hellenization to some extent.²² It is not surprising then, that there was also a desire to unify the geographically diverse Jewish world. The fact that they chose to unify around the practice of sacrifice only reinforces the widespread nature of the practice. Sacrifice, according to this story, involved interplay between different physical elements, like liquid, fire, wood, stone, and light. The priests gave liquid to God by placing it on wood or stone. God then consumed the gift through fire and completed the consumption through light. The process was about giving and consuming and the purpose was to praise and placate God.

The idea that giving can placate the recipient was also at the heart of gift giving practices between humans in the Bible. There were two major thematic uses. The first were gifts offered by one party in hopes of appeasing a second party. The most well known example is when Jacob gave a gift of reconciliation to Esau in Genesis 32 and 33 before reuniting with him after many years. Nahum Sarna described this gift as “a diplomatic initiative aimed at softening Esau’s anticipated hostility.”²³ The gift served as a form of payment in exchange for Esau not attacking him. A study of the Hebrew words for gift across biblical literature (*mincha*, *bracha*, *matanah*, *mohar*, *nachalah*, and *t’shurah*) shows that each time a person gave a gift, they tried to appease a political or religious superior. Another example is in Second Kings 5, where Na’aman gave a gift to the prophet Elisha so that he would heal him from leprosy.²⁴

The second category of gifts offered between humans in the Bible were gifts given in hopes of

²² Victor Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1959), 333-345.

²³ *The JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 225.

²⁴ Second Kings 5.

establishing a relationship. These include cases of inheritance gifts and gifts for a *mohar*, or bride price. One example is in First Samuel 18:20-27, where Saul set a *mohar* for David in order to acquire his daughter Michal. Instead of a standard *mohar* of money, Saul asked for a *mohar* of 100 Philistines' foreskins, something that Saul did not think David could acquire.²⁵ This example showed that the gift exchange occurred between the husband and the bride's father, and both parties benefited in one way or another. The recipient benefited by acquiring a wife and the giver benefited by acquiring a sum of money, or in this case a bounty of war. The same is true for gifts of sacrifice in First Maccabees, where God benefited by receiving the sacrifice and the giver benefited by receiving God's protection. The purpose for giving gifts in the Bible, whether it was to God or another human, was to establish a relationship through the exchange of something physical. This element of gift giving serves as a critical point of connection to contemporary practices, something we will explore in greater depth as we discuss how to imbue contemporary practices with ancient rituals.

Later in Second Maccabees, the text described what happened during the rededication of the Temple. According to the text, "they made another altar of sacrifice, then, striking fire out of flint, they offered sacrifices, after a lapse of two years and they burned incense and lighted lamps and set out the bread of the presence."²⁶ The text goes on to state that the festival lasted eight days, just like Sukkot, and that a decree was made for all Jews to observe these days every year.²⁷ This account added important details for how the festival of Hanukkah developed in the years following the war. First, it tells us that the festival of Hanukkah was considered a significant festival at the time in which it was instituted. The fact that they instituted a new

²⁵ First Samuel 18:20-27.

²⁶ Second Maccabees 10:3.

²⁷ Second Maccabees 10:6-9.

festival at all tells us that they believed they possessed the authority to do so. Bickerman reminds us that all previous festivals were prescribed in Scripture and that this act tells us the Maccabees believed they were the “true Israel.”²⁸ The fact that they modeled the new festival after Sukkot also speaks to its significance. The community was not able to celebrate Sukkot during the war, so this new festival served as a delayed Sukkot. Sukkot, one of the three harvest festivals, was and still is, considered one of the most important holidays on the Jewish calendar. At the time of the book of Maccabees, it was probably the most significant holiday because of the importance of agricultural rituals, including the prayer for rain.²⁹ Sukkot reminds us that there was a time when Jews wandered the desert and could not make sacrifices to God at the holy altar. Similarly, Hanukkah reminds us that the Jews could not make sacrifices for two years when they were at war with the Greeks. King Solomon also dedicated the First Temple during Sukkot,³⁰ making Hanukkah an appropriate model for a festival of rededication. Sukkot and Hanukkah remind us that there was a time that Jews could not offer sacrifices, and therefore, Hanukkah celebrations should express a sense of gratitude for the opportunity to again offer sacrifices to God.

It is clear that sacrifice was the central focus of the restoration of the Temple and therefore the central focus of the celebration. What is not explicitly clear is why the focus on sacrifice existed during the biblical era. This isn’t discussed in First and Second Maccabees because the practice was well established. For this reason, it is worthwhile to look back at the institution of sacrifice as a practice in Jewish tradition. Given that the Maccabees never witnessed a rededication

²⁸ Elias Bickerman, *The Maccabees*. (New York: Schocken, 1947), 43.

²⁹ Marvin Tameanko, "CHANUKAH GELT -- The American Israel Numismatic Association," section goes here, accessed March 05, 2013, http://www.theshekel.org/articles_chanukah_gelt_1.html.

³⁰ Second Kings 8.

ceremony, they were likely influenced by two previous ceremonies. First, they were influenced by Solomon's dedication of the Temple, and second, the dedication of the Tabernacle in the desert. Since Solomon was himself influenced by the dedication of the Tabernacle it makes sense for us to examine this text.

Numbers 7 discussed the dedication of the Tabernacle in the desert. The process began after Moses completed setting up, anointing, and sanctifying the Tabernacle. The *n'si'ei Yisrael*, chieftains of Israel, brought furniture, the altar, and the vessels that they anointed and sanctified. They also brought *korbanot*, offerings before God, consisting of carts and oxen that they presented before the Tabernacle. Next, God told Moses to take these *korbanot*, and give them to the Levites so that they may use them in their *avodah* (service). Moses then took the gifts and distributed them to the Levites, first to the sons of Gershon and then to the sons of Merari. He did not give them to the sons of K'hat because their service involved the most sacred objects (not carts and oxen). In addition to these gifts, each of the 12 chieftains brought *hanukkat hamizbeach* (dedications for the altar) and *korbanot* (offerings) for the dedication of the altar on 12 consecutive days. The gifts for *hanukkat hamizbeach* (the dedication of the altar) included silver bowls, silver basins, and gold ladles. The gifts of *korbanot* for the altar included bulls, rams, lambs, and he-goats. Finally, after these offerings, God told Moses to instruct Aaron on mounting and lighting the menorah.³¹ There is no doubt that this account of the dedication of the Tabernacle in the book of Numbers served as a foundation for Solomon's dedication of the First Temple and for the rededication of the Second Temple in the book of Maccabees. This account offers many interesting insights about the nature of dedication and how it relates to the contemporary understanding of gift giving.

³¹ Numbers 7:1 - 8:3.

First, it is important to determine what a *hanukkah* (dedication offering) actually was. The JPS Torah commentary suggests that *hanukkah* should actually be translated as an initiation offering because it reflected a time when gifts are brought to a structure upon its initiation. A dedication offering, on the other hand, involved anointing with oil. The note tells us that the Hebrew Bible records a number of initiation ceremonies, including initiation ceremonies for homes (Deut 20:5), temples (I Kings 8:63), altars (Num 7:10-88 and 2 Chron 7:9), and city walls (Neh 12:27). The note then explains that the festival of Hanukkah celebrated the re-initiating of the altar at the Temple and that the re-initiation can be compared to the examples in these proof texts. The example in I Kings 8:63 explained how King Solomon offered oxen and sheep as sacrifices of well-being to God, thus enabling the king and Israelites to *vayachn'chu*, dedicate or initiate, the Temple.³² This provides a picture of what the ceremony might have looked like during the time of the Maccabees. Going forward, it makes sense for us to still use the term “dedication” instead of “initiation” because this is the standard translation used today. We do so, however, with an understanding that it refers to bringing physical items to the altar, not to anointing with oil.

This description is interesting for a number of reasons. First, it highlights that the altar was rededicated, not the Temple in general. This is an important distinction because people usually talk about Hanukkah as a rededication of the Temple, not the altar. The difference is that the Temple was used for many other reasons where as the altar was used specifically for sacrifice. In First Maccabees, it was the altar, not the entire Temple that was desecrated.³³ This means that the central focus of the celebration for the Maccabees is not that they regained control of the

³² JPS, *JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers* (Philadelphia, PN: JPS, 1996), 54.

³³ First Maccabees 4:53, First Maccabees 4:59, and Second Maccabees 10:3.

Temple, but that they regained the ability to offer sacrifices at the altar.

Second, this note reminds us not to generalize all sacrifice into one broad category. Sacrifices are all gifts, but they have different uses and purposes in the Hebrew bible. This is important given that we are working off a Greek translation of First and Second Maccabees that does not distinguish between the many different words for sacrifice in Hebrew. Though First and Second Maccabees were originally written in Hebrew, these copies of the text were lost and so we're left to rely completely on the Greek.³⁴ It is interesting that the initial gifts brought to the chieftains were actually given to other humans, not to God. The gifts were used as *avodah*, holy work, which consisted of transporting the dismantled Tabernacle.³⁵ It is also interesting to reflect on the distinction between the types of gifts that each of the chieftains gave. They each gave two types of gifts, *hanukkat hamizbeach* (gifts for the rededication of the altar) and *korbanot* (offerings). The gifts for the rededication of the altar consisted of silver or gold items that were used to prepare and offer the offerings. The actual offerings consisted of various types of animals. This means the gifts for the rededication were not the offerings themselves but rather the items used to facilitate offerings. According to this understanding, gifts given to other humans for the purpose of serving God were in effect, gifts to God. This opens up an interesting point of connection to the way one could give gifts today, something we will explore in greater depth later on.

In addition to First and Second Maccabees, the celebration of Hanukkah was recorded in three other places: the book of Daniel, the works of Josephus, and Tractate Shabbat of the Babylonian

³⁴ J. C. Dancy, *A Commentary on I Maccabees* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1954), 8.

³⁵ JPS, *JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers*. 53.

Talmud. Scholars believe that only part of the story of Hanukkah was recorded in the book of Daniel because the book was finished in 165 BCE, during the midst of the war. The book of Daniel knew about the first successes of the Maccabees but did not know that the war ended or that the Temple was restored.³⁶ The book shared a unique side of the story, as it is a prophetic composition whose central message is that the Jews were being persecuted because of their sins. Bickerman described how Daniel did not pay attention to the details of the oppressor, but saw the war as necessary and without need of explanation.³⁷ In regards to sacrifice, Daniel discussed the destruction of the Temple three times, in Dan 9:27, 11:31 and 12:11. The words he used to reference sacrifice were *mincha* in 9:27, and *tamid* in 11:31 and 12:11. Interestingly, *mincha* was also one of the words used to refer to gifts given between humans throughout the Bible and specifically in the case of Jacob and Esau in Genesis 32 and 33. This means that the Hebrew word *mincha* had two different meanings, first a specific type of sacrifice, and second, a gift given from one human to another. This point of connection furthers my thesis that sacrifices to God and gifts to human beings are related.

Josephus provided an account of the story of Hanukkah and the subsequent celebration in chapter twelve of his book, *Antiquities of the Jews*. His account of the celebration is different from the account in Maccabees in a number of ways. Instead of stating what took place, Josephus provided his interpretation for why the Jews celebrated in the way they did. He said that the people were so happy to have unexpectedly regained the freedom to restore their Temple worship.³⁸ Though one could infer that the people were happy to have regained their freedom,

³⁶ Bickerman, *The God of the Maccabees*, 93.

³⁷ Bickerman, *The God of the Maccabees*, 93.

³⁸ Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987), *The Antiquities of the Jews* 12:316-326.

Josephus added that the victory was unexpected. This added detail suggests that the Maccabees might not have been as confident as they made themselves seem in First Maccabees. What Josephus says next is most interesting:

From that time to the present we observe this festival, which we call the Festival of Lights, giving this name to it, I think, from the fact that the right to worship appeared to us at a time when we hardly dared hope for it.³⁹

This is the first time we see Hanukkah referred to as a Festival of Lights. Josephus admitted that he did not know why it was called this and that he can only guess. His guess did not mention the lamp lighted during the rededication at the altar but rather emphasized the unexpected nature of their victory. This represented a radical shift of the core meaning of the festival. Josephus suggested that “The Festival of Lights” focused on the victory that led to the freedom to sacrifice, not on the sacrifice itself. This highlights how the holiday developed after the war, emphasizing victory and leaving the importance of sacrifice behind.

As time went on, the holiday continued to develop as “The Festival of Lights.” The rabbis understandably embraced this focus of the festival as a way to play down the emphasis on sacrifice and the military victory. In their understanding, however, they gravitated toward a different notion of light that centered on the laws surrounding the lighting of the menorah. The rabbis introduced a new story for why we light the menorah that shifted the emphasis of the festival in yet another direction. The rabbis taught that the Greeks destroyed all the flasks of oil in the sanctuary and when the Jews returned they only found enough oil to light the menorah for one day. God, however, performed a miracle with the oil and it kindled the lights for eight days.⁴⁰ This story enabled the rabbis to shift the focus of away from the Maccabees’ victory and

³⁹Josephus. *The Antiquities of the Jews*, 12:316-326.

⁴⁰ Shabbat 21b.

toward God's miracle. Shaye Cohen explained why the rabbis didn't spend more time addressing the theological crisis that could have accompanied the destruction of the Temple. He said that even during the Second Temple period, a number of Jews had an ambivalent attitude toward the Temple and the *chasidim*. They focused on daily prayer, Torah study and observance of commandments and were already prepared for life after the Temple. These Jews, many of whom went on to found rabbinic Judaism, were not concerned with the theological issues posed by the destruction of the Temple and wanted to move away from these discussions. They did not approve of these sects or the way they used war as a means to glorify God.⁴¹ Michael Strassfeld explained how the rabbis of the Mishnah likely felt pressure to downplay a story of a successful revolt by a small number of Jews against a powerful enemy given their own political climate. They were writing during a time when the Romans were a powerful and dangerous force. They didn't want to celebrate a story that might inspire Jews to rise up against the Romans.⁴² The rabbis might have also disapproved of the Maccabees because they combined priesthood and kingship rather than keeping religious and political powers separate. For all of these reasons, the rabbis used the story with the oil to shift the focus away from issues that made them uncomfortable. Sacrifice became irrelevant despite the fact that it was the original impetus for creating the festival. It makes sense then that gift giving, as a symbol of sacrifice, did not develop as a Hanukkah practice. Instead, practices focused on lighting the menorah as a way to remember the miracle that God performed with the oil.

It is generally understood that any form of gift giving in connection to Hanukkah disappeared

⁴¹ Cohen, 211-220.

⁴² Michael Strassfeld, Betsy Platkin. Teutsch, and Arnold M. Eisen, *The Jewish Holidays: A Guide and Commentary* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), 163.

until the introduction of *gelt* (coins) in Europe during the 16th century.⁴³ Many believe this custom arose because Jews in the rabbinic period made the etymological connection between Hanukkah and Jewish education. *Chinuch* (education) shares the same Hebrew root (*chet/nun/chaf*) as Chanukah (dedication), creating the connection between Hanukkah and the freedom to educate oneself Jewishly. In the original story in Maccabees, the Greeks prohibited Jews from performing sacrifices in hopes that they would forget their laws. They tore and burned books and forbid anyone from possessing a book of the Covenant.⁴⁴ The festival of Hanukkah, then, became an opportunity to celebrate the Jews' ability to once again study Torah. This connection between Torah study and Hanukkah was highlighted in a number of ways during the rabbinic period. In the section of Talmud where the rabbis discussed lighting the menorah, the text said that lighting Hanukkah candles would result in sons who are Torah scholars.⁴⁵ Light was seen as the spiritual illumination of Torah and lighting candles became akin to spreading Torah in the world.⁴⁶ Torah study, therefore, became an established practice of the festival in the rabbinic period and was understood as the ultimate expression of victory over the Greeks. In addition to engaging in Torah study during the festival of Hanukkah, Jews also thanked God for the ability to study Torah again in the prayer *Al Hanisim*. This prayer referred to the Greek strategy to "cause the Torah to be forgotten and the Law to be abandoned."⁴⁷ For all of these reasons, engaging in Torah study became a common practice during the festival of Hanukkah.

Historian Eliezer Segal suggests that by the medieval period, families began to use these

⁴³ Tameanko.

⁴⁴ First Maccabees 1:49 and 1:56-57.

⁴⁵ Shabbat 21b

⁴⁶ Don Blumberg and Chaim Gross, *Nissim V'niflaos: Halachic Perspectives on Chanukah and Purim : Based on the Shiurim of Harav Don Blumberg* (Southfield, MI: Targum Press, 2009), 41-42.

⁴⁷ Blumberg and Gross, 41-42.

Hanukkah study sessions as an opportunity to give gifts of money to teachers, who were otherwise prohibited from accepting money for teaching Torah. Parents would give their children coins to give to their teachers, and eventually, Segal suggests, the children began to ask for the coins themselves. This, he said, might be the origin of giving *gelt* during Hanukkah.⁴⁸ Some say that this practice began in the 16th century when parents would give their children money on the 5th night of Hanukkah. It is not clear why the 5th night was chosen for this particular custom.⁴⁹ Others date it later, to the 18th century.⁵⁰ Regardless, this custom became entrenched in Jewish communities around Europe and spread to Israel and the United States as Jews immigrated to these countries in the 19th and 20th centuries. Many believe that the purpose of giving *gelt* to children was to help sweeten, or reward, the process of Torah study.⁵¹ As we will discuss in the following chapter, many still uphold this tradition today as the only Jewish way to give Hanukkah gifts.

There are some, however, who suggest that the origin of *gelt* dates back to the Maccabean period. In “The Original Chanukah Gelt,” Marvin Tameanko argued that *gelt* dates back to the very first Hanukkah festival celebrated by the Maccabees. He described the common practice of taking war booty, saying that when the Jews destroyed the Greek armies, they took weapons, armor, horses, and money. First Maccabees, he said, described the bags of Greek coins that the Jews took as war booty.⁵² Tameanko went on to say that these coins were distributed to victorious soldiers in the same way we honor soldiers with a medals that resemble coins today.

⁴⁸ Leah Koenig, "The Gelt Chronicles," *Haaretz.com*, December 8, 2009, <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/features/the-gelt-chronicles-1.2555>.

⁴⁹ Tameanko.

⁵⁰ Koenig.

⁵¹ Arthur Ocean Waskow, *Seasons of Our Joy: A Handbook of Jewish Festivals* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1982), 98-99.

⁵² First Maccabees 3:41.

In addition to distributing coins to soldiers, they were also given to widows and orphans of the dead, as well as the general population, including children. Tameanko suggested that this could be the origin of Hanukkah *gelt*.⁵³ Though this argument may accurately describe a common practice of war at the time, it is important to note that Tameanko made a leap in describing this practice through the language of *gelt*. While they may have distributed coins to soldiers or their families, there is no evidence that says this custom was anything more than a common war practice. Though interesting, it is unlikely that the Maccabees understood this as a new custom in relation to Hanukkah.

Tameanko also discussed the nature of the coins that Jews took as war booty and distributed as gifts. Since Jews were not minting their own coins at the time, the coins were from the reign of Antiochus IV and earlier Greek kings. Even though we know that Jews used these coins for commerce and to pay taxes for the Temple, it is striking that they would have given them as gifts. The coins had images of the reigning king on one side and of the Greek God Zeus on the other. Tameanko said, “It would have been poetic justice for the Jews to use the coins of this monarch as Chanukah Gelt to commemorate the Jewish victories over the armies of his predecessors.” This interesting but farfetched perspective suggests that the gift was intended to conjure up memories of their victory by giving something that reminded them of a time when they were oppressed.

He then described how a number of years later, in 138 BCE, Antiochus VII issued a decree allowing Jews to mint their own coins, which freed them from taxation.⁵⁴ Even though he

⁵³ Tameanko.

⁵⁴ First Maccabees 15:6.

evoked this decree later on, eventually Jews did mint their own coins. Simon Maccabee, who lived during the time of Antiochus VII, did not take advantage of this decree, but his son, John Hyrcanus did. He minted a coin with the emblem of the Seleucid dynasty on one side and a lily, the symbolic flower of Judea, on the other. These coins were very low denominations and became very popular amongst the Jewish community, who recopied them for many years. Tameanko suggested that these coins were given to children as Hanukkah *gelt* as a way to celebrate the victory of the Greeks.⁵⁵

Bernard Hoeing also suggested that Hanukkah *gelt* arose during this time period, but a few years after Tameanko suggests. He looked at the same text in First Maccabees 15:6 where King Antiochus VII allowed Jews to create their own coinage. Hoeing said that Antigonus II Mattathias in 40 BCE was the first to create a coin that was intended to remind people of Hanukkah. This coin had a seven-branch menorah on one side and a table of showbread on the other. The coin, he said, was intended to instill pride and self-reliance in the people and also to encourage *tzedakah*. He mentioned that Jews also produced it as a way to encourage independence in the face of new threats from the Romans. Hoeing said that after the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 CE, the minting of Jewish coinage for the purpose of commerce stopped until the founding of the state of Israel, but the practice of giving Hanukkah *gelt* continued in different communities.⁵⁶ While Tameanko and Hoenig provide an interesting new way of thinking about Jewish coinage in the Maccabean period, it is important to note that other biblical scholars do not support their projections. Though it is probably true that these communities used and even minted the first Jewish coins, they likely did not think about these

⁵⁵ Tameanko.

⁵⁶ Bernard Hoeing, "Chanukah Gelt: Jewish Tradition, or Pagan Practice?," *Jewish Life Journal* V: Numbers 2 and 3 (Summer 1981): 67-69.

coins as Hanukkah *gelt*, in the way that we understand *gelt* today.

It is interesting, however, to think about the nature of the coins during this period. The first coins had Greek symbols on both sides, the second coins had a Jewish symbol on one side and a Greek symbol on the other, and the third set had Jewish symbols on both sides. They were all intended to celebrate the triumph of the Jews over the Greeks, but did so in different ways. The first did so by flaunting something that was considered foreign and profane. The second did so by taking that foreign thing and embracing it as Jewish. John Hyrcanus' choice to mint one side of the coin with the Seleucid emblem reflected his acculturation into Hellenistic society. Elias Bickerman reminds us that Hyrcanus was born years after the persecutions and grew up to be a Hellenistic prince like his contemporaries and rivals.⁵⁷ His choice to mint one side of the coin with a Seleucid emblem showed his desire to integrate with greater society. The third coin, minted by Antigonus II Mattathias, celebrated the triumph of the Jews over the Greeks by specifically recalling the rededication of the altar. He used items mentioned in Second Maccabees 10:3 that were used in preparation for the rededication. These images mark a significant ideological shift. Hyrcanus' use of the flower was a safe and uncontroversial choice that wouldn't have offended the Seleucid Empire. It was an ancient symbol that celebrated Judea and Jerusalem generally without invoking anything overtly Jewish. Mattathias' coin, on the other hand, not only invoked strong Jewish imagery, but imagery that flaunted the victory of the Jews over the Greeks. His coins did much more than just take a foreign custom and make it their own. They actually turned the custom on its head by taking something that typically had images of Greek Gods and put symbols of the rededication of the altar on it instead. By doing this, they not only celebrated the centrality of sacrifice but also did so in a way that taunted those who tried

⁵⁷ Bickerman, *The Maccabees*, 77-78.

to take it away from them. It is important to note that while they might have been flaunting their victory in the face of their oppressors, they did so at a time when their own power was waning and Rome was on the rise. They might not have felt comfortable taking this stance in a climate where the Greeks could easily rise up against them again. The evolution of these coins, even if they were not given as Hanukkah *gelt*, suggests that coins have the potential to instill a sense of pride. Later, we will see how the Bank of Israel celebrated this sentiment in connection to Hanukkah.

The fact that coins were not originally Jewish objects, but rather took on Jewish meaning after Jews adapted them introduces the third and final section in this chapter.

In his book *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays*, Irving Greenberg said that “Hanukkah is the paradigm of the relationship between acculturation and assimilation where each generation has interpreted Hanukkah in its own image, speaking to its own needs.”⁵⁸ He said the story of Hanukkah began because there was a blending of Greek and Eastern cultures. Hellenism attracted the Jewish elite and many Jews even favored aggressive assimilation.⁵⁹ Shaye Cohen agreed and added that Jews’ relationship with Hellenism was much more complex than it may appear. He said,

For most Jews, the ideal solution was to create a synthesis between Judaism and Hellenism... Since the definition of Hellenism is complex and elusive, as I discussed above, the statement that the Jews were influenced by Hellenism does not necessarily imply that they consciously and purposefully imported material from abroad. For some Jews, especially in the Diaspora, the adaptation of Judaism to contemporary culture may have been a conscious process. For others it was not. Sometimes its hard to determine whether a phenomenon that appears in both Judaism and other forms of Hellenistic culture is to be attributed to the influence of one upon the other or to parallel development. As a participant

⁵⁸ Irving Greenberg, *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays* (New York: Summit Books, 1988), 277.

⁵⁹ Greenberg, 277.

*group in Hellenistic culture, the Jews gave and received.*⁶⁰

This assessment reflects how the story of Hanukkah is actually an acute reflection of how contemporary Hanukkah practices, particularly gift giving, have developed today. One could seamlessly substitute “American culture” for Hellenism as a way to describe how gift giving has developed alongside Christmas. This is something we are going to explore in greater depth in Chapter Two, but it is important to highlight that this phenomenon is not unique to the modern period. In addition to the adaptation of coins, there is another interesting example from the Maccabean period that highlights how Jews in this period embraced, adapted, and influenced the greater culture in connection to Hanukkah.

Second Maccabees mentioned lighting lamps during the rededication ceremony as a way to worship God at the altar. This is slightly different than First Maccabees, where the lighting of the lamp-stand was done in preparation for the rededication ceremony, not as part of it. It is possible that this development signified a changing understanding of the significance of lighting lamps for Hanukkah. Arthur Waskow posits that the practice of lighting lamps developed because of the time of year of the festival. He suggests that the Greeks might have chosen the 25th of Kislev to desecrate the Temple intentionally because it was a time of lunar and solar darkness. The Jews, in turn, might have rededicated the temple on this day for two reasons. The first reason was to reclaim the 25th of Kislev as a day of victory instead of destruction. Placing Hanukkah intentionally on the darkest day of the year provided the opportunity to assert a hope for renewed light. The second reason was to win the support of Hellenized Jews who were

⁶⁰ Cohen, 34.

accustomed to practicing the pagan solstice festival at this time.⁶¹ The thought was that Hellenized Jews might be more open to embracing the Jewish festival of Hanukkah if it was similar to a festival that the greater culture participated in. By focusing on light, they were able to draw connections between Hanukkah and the solstice. As we will see in chapter two, this tactic is undeniably similar to the attempt Jewish professionals made in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to introduce Hanukkah as an alternative to Christmas. It reflects the notion that Hanukkah has always been a time for thinking about what it means to be a free people who also live and participate in greater society.

As we transition to examining how contemporary Hanukkah gift giving practices emerged, it is important to keep all three of these ancient elements of the practice in mind. While these early practices did not necessarily lead to contemporary gift giving practices, they each serve as an interesting point of connection that we can draw on to reclaim the practice through Jewish tradition.

⁶¹ Waskow, 92-93.

Chapter Two: Historical Development of Contemporary Practices From the 1850s Until Today

The contemporary practice of Hanukkah gift giving started in the early 1900s. It is grounded, however, in Jews' increased participation in European and North American society in the mid-1800s. As Jews started to assimilate into American society, tensions arose about how to maintain a Jewish identity amidst the temptations of greater American culture. Jews disagreed about what this balance should look like and how they should engage in various rituals, including giving gifts on Hanukkah.

In his article, "Folk Judaism, Elite Judaism and the Role of Bar Mitzvah in the Development of the Synagogue and Jewish Schools in America," Stuart Schoenfeld created a new paradigm to understand these disagreements. He described two types of Judaism: folk Judaism, which is inhabited by the masses, and elite Judaism, which is inhabited by rabbis, other Jewish professionals, and some lay leaders. In his article, he wrote about how these two groups disagreed about Bar Mitzvah practices and influenced one another in the development of the ritual.⁶² The same paradigm can be applied to the development of the practice of Hanukkah gift giving.

Since the mid-1800s, folk Jews have sought ways to fit into American society around Christmas time and have explored what it meant to be Jewish on Christmas. Elite Jews have responded to these desires and practices by either refuting them, or infusing them with Jewish tradition,

⁶² Stuart Schoenfeld, "Folk Judaism, Elite Judaism and the Role of Bar Mitzvah in the Development of the Synagogue and Jewish School in America," *Contemporary Jewry* 9, no. 1 (1987): doi:10.1007/BF02976671.

values, and in some cases, *halacha*. As we will see, Hanukkah gift giving practices have been driven by these two groups at different points in history. As we explore these different practices, we will see that many of the issues Jews faced in the 1800s still exist today. We will explore Jews' changing attitudes toward Christmas, consumer culture, childrearing, and the psychology of gift giving, as we seek to understand how and why Jews have given gifts for Hanukkah.

The first instances of Jews giving Hanukkah gifts in the early 20th century can only be understood in the context of the changing historical circumstances for Jews toward the end of the 19th century. Jews in Germany, and German Jews who immigrated to North America, believed they could be fully German-American and fully Jewish at the same time. They assimilated into society and adopted practices of the greater culture. At the same time that Jews were assimilating into German and American society, Christians started to embrace the secularization of Christmas. In his book, *Merry Hanukkah*, Rabbi Eli Plaut explained how religious rites that celebrated Jesus' birth gave way to family celebrations, visits from Santa Claus, and holiday gift exchanges.⁶³ In his book *The Modern Christmas in America*, William Waits described the evolution of Christmas gifts during this time period. He wrote that prior to the 1880s, Christmas gifts were small and handmade, noting that farmers had time to make gifts after the fall harvest. That changed as America became industrialized and urbanized at the turn of the 20th century. American culture transformed and consumption values infiltrated all aspects of society, including Christmas.⁶⁴ To emphasize the dramatic shift that occurred, Waits cited journalist Margaret Deland who in 1912 said, "Contrast the number of gifts we feel we must make with the number

⁶³ Joshua Eli. Plaut, *A Kosher Christmas: 'tis the Season to Be Jewish* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 45-46.

⁶⁴ William B. Waits and William E. Hammond, "The Modern Christmas in America," *History: Reviews of New Books* 22, no. 2 (1994): 1-2, doi:10.1080/03612759.1994.9948844.

we made 10 or 15 years ago.”⁶⁵ Then, Waits said that the level of effort, money, and attention Christmas started to receive should be considered “one of the significant developments of recent American history.” He then posed a number of questions, including, “How are developments in Christmas related to developments in American culture generally?” This question also lies at the heart of the development of Hanukkah. The introduction and rise of Hanukkah and Hanukkah gift giving was a reflection not only of the way that Jews assimilated to American society, but also to the way they contributed to it. Hanukkah gift giving was not simply taken and adapted from Christianity. Instead, the two practices emerged side by side. At times, Jews directly borrowed Christmas customs, but at other times Jews contributed to the larger cultural phenomenon. Given that these motivations occurred simultaneously, it is difficult to identify which forces were at play at different times. As we go forward to explore the evolution of Hanukkah gift giving, we will attempt to determine how Jews borrowed, adapted, and contributed to the changing American Christmas culture.

First, it is important to explore the roots of the practice in Germany in the 19th century. In Germany, Jews recognized that Christmas was not Jewish. Still, they believed they could celebrate the cultural aspects of the celebration without compromising their commitment to Judaism. Gershom Scholem, the famous writer and scholar of Jewish Mysticism, talked about having a Christmas tree at home and described how his parents told him, “Christmas was a German national festival celebrated by all German citizens, including Jews.”⁶⁶ Even Theodor Herzl, who became one of the most esteemed leaders of the Zionist movement, was proud of his Christmas tree in his home in Austria-Hungary. He recalled an encounter with a friend, saying,

⁶⁵ Waits and Hammond, 1-2.

⁶⁶ Plaut, 19.

“I was just lighting the Christmas tree for my children when Gudemann arrived. He seemed upset by the ‘Christian’ custom. Well, I will not let myself be pressured! But I don’t mind if they call it a Hanukkah tree - or the winter solstice.”⁶⁷ These attitudes show that even the most prominent Jews of the time expressed a belief that Christmas could be celebrated without compromising Jewish identity. Herzl’s comments are interesting because they show that Jews were starting to talk about Hanukkah alongside Christmas. He didn’t care about calling his Christmas tree a Hanukkah tree, but recognized why this was important for others. This tells us that Jews at the time disagreed about the secular nature of Christmas and the importance of exclusively celebrating Jewish holidays.

The same discussion took place amongst German Jews in North America. Rabbi Joshua Plaut wrote, “For German Jews in America in the 1800s, Christmas signaled a festive time in which they gladly participated as both a reflection of their status and a means to assimilate into American society.”⁶⁸ He said that they had Christmas trees, sang Christmas carols, and exchanged gifts.⁶⁹ Jenna Weissman Joselit affirmed this practice in her book, *The Wonders of America*. She described how Jews in the late 1800s and early 1900s were more inclined to experiment with Christmas than Hanukkah. She quoted Eastern European immigrants from *The Jewish Daily Forward* saying, “The purchase of Christmas gifts is one of the first things that proves one is no longer a greenhorn.”⁷⁰ These examples show that Jews actually gave Christmas gifts before they gave Hanukkah gifts. This means that Jews did not believe that certain Christmas rituals compromised their Jewish identity; they were simply an expression of

⁶⁷ Plaut, 19.

⁶⁸ Plaut, 15.

⁶⁹ Plaut, 15.

⁷⁰ Jenna Weissman Joselit, *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture 1880-1950* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), 232.

American identity. Gift giving was both non-threatening to Jewish identity and attractive to the modern American. By participating in Christmas, average American Jews created a new standard for what it meant to be both Jewish and American.

Rabbis and other leaders in the Jewish community responded to this new standard in a variety of ways. First, there were some who, like Theodore Herzl, believed that Jews could and should participate in certain Christmas rituals alongside Hanukkah. A few rabbis and their congregations actually brought Christmas into the synagogue as a sign that Christmas symbols and practices (like gift giving) did not threaten Jewish identity and could actually enhance Hanukkah celebrations. In 1878, the magazine *Jewish Advance* described how Sinai Congregation of Chicago brought congregants together around the Christmas tree in their synagogue to sing Hanukkah hymns.⁷¹ In 1883, Rabbi Dr. Solomon Sonneschein of Temple Shaare Emeth in St Louis delivered a lecture from his pulpit, saying, “Can the American Jew Keep Christmas? I say he can, without in the least disgracing his religious convictions or interfering with the building up of a stronger and nobler Judaism.” He went on to say that Christmas was a national holiday and that Jews should celebrate Hanukkah on December 25th regardless of when it fell on the calendar. He reasoned that Hanukkah fell on the 25th of Kislev and that Jews could better appreciate both Christmas and Hanukkah if they shared a mutual date.⁷² Rabbi Julius Eckman of Temple Emanuel of San Francisco acknowledged and affirmed that many of his families celebrated Christmas with “presents to their children and illuminations in their parlors.”⁷³ Each of these rabbis and their congregations reflected the view that Christmas symbols, like the Christmas tree, and other practices like gift giving, could actually enhance

⁷¹ Plaut, 23.

⁷² Plaut, 25-26.

⁷³ Plaut, 25-26.

one's potential to be both Jewish and American at the same time. They met their congregants where they were and affirmed their beliefs that Christmas was American, not Christian.

Other rabbis of the time embraced the idea that one could be both American and Jewish but found Christmas symbols troubling. They acknowledged the desire to engage in these practices and were the first to introduce the idea that Jews could embrace the meaning behind the practices through the celebration of their own holiday, Hanukkah. What Christmas was for American Christians, Hanukkah could and should be for American Jews. Some Reform rabbis became the champions of this cause, attempting to reclaim the story of Hanukkah according to their time. Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, the founder of Hebrew Union College, was the first to take on this task with vigor. He told American Jews that reformers had regenerated and rejuvenated Hanukkah as a way to regenerate and rejuvenate Judaism. He praised the Maccabees' tenacity and strength to save Judaism from extinction and claimed that Jews today should strive to be modern Maccabees.⁷⁴ In 1860 he wrote a romantic fiction based on the Maccabean revolt, casting the revolt in popular language that would appeal to modern Jews. He published the story over 39 issues of his magazine *The Israelite*, which reached more Jews than any other publication of the time. His goal was to introduce Hanukkah as a worthy and relevant holiday for modern American Jews.⁷⁵ In many ways, Wise was responsible for bringing Hanukkah to the consciousness of modern American Jews.

⁷⁴ Dianne Ashton, *New Essays in American Jewish History: Commemorating the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Founding of the American Jewish Archives.*, 197-288 (Cincinnati, OH: American Jewish Archives of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 2010), 209.

⁷⁵ Ashton, 209.

Rabbi Emanuel Schreiber took Wise's convictions one step further, saying that Reform Jews were modern Maccabees because they were the only ones willing to transform the religion to meet the needs of the time. Without this transformation, he said, Judaism would have died in America.⁷⁶ Jews' affection for Hanukkah increased, enabling rabbis in the late 1800s and early 1900s to encourage their congregants to celebrate Hanukkah as a way to fulfill their desires for Christmas. In 1871, The Synod of Reform Rabbis in Germany tried to counter the trend of Jews having Christmas parties and exchanging gifts, by recommending that Jews celebrate Hanukkah instead.⁷⁷ Others did the same in North America, particularly at the turn of the 20th century. By 1910, an editorial in *The Forward* wrote, "There's nothing sadder than a Jewish kid at Christmas. It's even more difficult in America, where the barrier between Jews and others is not as big. But there is a cure for what ails the Jewish child. It's Hanukkah! Does this holiday not fall around the same time as Christmas? And is this holiday not better than Christmas?"⁷⁸ *The Forward* was a popular Yiddish newspaper distributed amongst Eastern European immigrants. This tells us that the issue was no longer limited to German Jews. Efforts like this were the first of many to put Hanukkah on par with Christmas. Not all Jews and Jewish leaders, however, agreed that Hanukkah should fill the role of the Jewish Christmas.

Many traditional Jews also looked for ways to promote Hanukkah, but did so with a different goal in mind. Professor Dianne Ashton writes,

Both reformers and traditionalists claimed to be Maccabees for the modern era, heroes saving Judaism from extinction. Tradition-minded Jews believed the talmudic method, by which rabbis long had adapted biblical law to changing historical

⁷⁶ Ashton, 198.

⁷⁷ Plaut, 15.

⁷⁸ Plaut, 46.

*circumstances was the best model. Reformers asserted that American values matched Jewish values and that Jews could remain loyal to both.*⁷⁹

Even though traditional Jews were less influenced by the popularity of Christmas, it was becoming increasingly harder to avoid, especially for children. It is interesting that both groups looked at gift giving as an opportunity to bring Jews closer to Hanukkah. Jenna Joselit said that both reformers and traditionalists “saw the value of promoting gift-giving as a means to entice children to celebrate Hanukkah.”⁸⁰ Without the symbols of a Christmas tree or Santa Claus, gift giving, in and of itself, was a neutral practice. It could enhance, as opposed to threaten, Jewish identity. Gift giving, particularly for traditional Jews, was not an end in itself, but rather a tool to bring people closer to the true meaning of Hanukkah.

While Hanukkah gift giving started in the early 1900s, it exploded in the 1920s and 1930s. A variety of factors contributed to this explosion, both within the Jewish community and from greater American culture. William Waits described the parallel shift in the evolution of Christmas gifts. Before 1880, people gave small handmade gifts. Between 1880 and 1910, people gave what he called gimcracks, in addition to handmade gifts.⁸¹ Gimcracks were small, inexpensive items that served no practical function. According to his description, gimcracks are similar to the Yiddish word *tchotchke*. After 1910, manufacturers, retailers, and shoppers were ready to move away from gimcracks, seeing them as unprofitable and undesirable. Two new types of items took their place, Christmas cards and expensive and useful items, like household appliances.⁸² Christmas cards fulfilled the personal aspect of homemade items while expensive items fulfilled the needs of a growing consumer culture. These shifts brought an even greater

⁷⁹ Ashton, 216.

⁸⁰ Plaut, 46.

⁸¹ Waits and Hammond, 50.

⁸² Waits and Hammond, 52-54.

level of attention to Hanukkah, as Jews also took interest in consumerism. Waits also described another trend that took place during this time period, the feminization of Christmas. He noted that since the 1880s, women took on the primary role for all Christmas practices, particularly gift giving. He described how women not only dominated Christmas shopping, but also started to dominate shopping year round.⁸³ This shift took place for Jewish women as well, as they started to take on a new role both in American society and within the Jewish community.

Jenna Joselit described this shift in her book, *The Wonders of America*. She noted how American culture in the 1920s and 1930s built motherhood up as an ideal in a new way. Popular magazines like *Good Housekeeping* and *Woman's Home Companion* described motherhood as an object for scientific study. Mothers had to be educated in the meaning of motherhood and felt immense pressure to meet a high cultural standard.⁸⁴ This cultural shift affected second and third generation Jewish mothers who wanted nothing more than to fit in as good American moms. Jewish mothers started to gain a reputation for taking this ideal to an extreme, and various positive and negative stereotypes started to emerge about the loving and overbearing Jewish mother.⁸⁵ American manufacturers capitalized on this trend and Jewish women became the focus of advertising campaigns. Jewish professionals took note as well, and started to target women in different ways.⁸⁶

Jewish professionals set out to educate women so that they could create a Jewish identity for their children. They insisted that a Jewish woman's primary function was to safeguard her home

⁸³ Waits and Hammond, 81.

⁸⁴ Joselit, 59.

⁸⁵ Joselit, 68-68.

⁸⁶ Joselit, 154.

and make it Jewish.⁸⁷ In 1925, The Synagogue Recorder wrote, “The ideal Jewess is a homemaker - regarded as serious and complicated.”⁸⁸ Mordecai Kaplan delivered a lecture entitled, “What To Aim At in the Upbringing of the Jewish Child.” Other rabbis talked about balancing the demands of public school, sports, and music lessons, with the desire for children to feel a life long attachment to Judaism.⁸⁹ These conversations, while new for their time, became an ongoing conversation that continues to this day. At the time, the attempt to have a Jewish home was not always able to compete with the desire to have an American home. Women felt that Jewish items were old fashioned and clashed with modern decor, and a 1931 study found that “manifestations of Jewishness” were barely visible in the Jewish home.⁹⁰ This is interesting because it suggests that women were not necessarily opposed to Jewish items, as long as they were not old fashioned. This realization paved the way for a new, fresh market for Jewish products that appealed to the tastes of the modern American woman.

Jewish leaders urged women to celebrate the physical charm and beauty of Jewish material culture and to fill their homes with Jewish items. Rabbis and Jewish professionals wrote guidebooks like, *ABC of Jewishness*, *The Religious Duties of the Daughters of Israel*, and *The Three Pillars* to instruct women on how to have a Jewish home. Jewish women bought into this effort and flocked to buy them for themselves and their daughters. Some even said that these books “served as an appropriate Chanukah present for young girls.”⁹¹ These guidebooks inspired the masses, and soon enough the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods and the Women’s League for Conservative Judaism got involved. They gave lectures on Jewish art and created a

⁸⁷ Joselit, 70.

⁸⁸ Joselit, 58.

⁸⁹ Joselit, 84-85.

⁹⁰ Joselit, 148.

⁹¹ Joselit, 72.

sentiment for Jewish objects, introducing the Art Calendar that would become a staple in many Jewish homes.⁹² These efforts reflected the success of Jewish leaders to identify and address the desires of the masses. Jewish women were ready and willing to have conversations about their home and eagerly engaged in discussions about how to integrate Judaism in a way that also felt American.

These conversations drifted to the practice of gift giving for Hanukkah. As early as 1910, giving gifts was a popular practice within middle class American society, in part because of the increasing affordability of small items. Joselit said, “every social event included gift giving and no wedding, birthday, dinner party, or holiday celebration was complete without presents.”⁹³

The philosophy of presents and the etiquette of gift giving emerged as popular topics in magazines like *Harper’s Weekly* and *American Home Companion*, which discussed when to give, what to give, and to whom.⁹⁴ These conversations transferred over to Jewish circles and created the first real distinction between Hanukkah gifts and Christmas gifts. Christmas gifts at this time were typically secular gifts, the same type of thing that you might give someone for their birthday. Christians by and large did not give religious gifts for Christmas. Jewish leaders, on the other hand, saw Hanukkah as an opportunity for their congregants to give religious gifts. In 1930, an editorial in *Outlook Magazine* explained that, “This season of the year, when there is a general exchange of gifts, is your opportunity to make somebody’s home more Jewish... For Jewish occasions, let there be Jewish gifts!”⁹⁵ These statements speak to Jewish leaders’ determination to take an American custom and make it Jewish. It is perhaps one of the prime

⁹² Joselit, 154-155.

⁹³ Joselit, 157

⁹⁴ Joselit, 158.

⁹⁵ Joselit, 158.

examples of many modern Jewish leaders' assertions that one could be both Jewish and modern. We do not know to what extent this trend was embraced by the masses. What we do know, however, is that Jewish leaders saw this as an opportunity to infuse the practice with Judaism.

Manufacturers noticed this new frontier and within years, an entire industry of Jewish toys and books emerged. Jewish children now had their own version of all the most popular products. There was a book called *Mother Goose Rhymes for Jewish Children*, with clever poems like, "Jack Spoons could eat no prunes, his wife could eat no quinces, but when Shavuot came around, they both enjoyed their blintzes."⁹⁶ Noah's Ark and Promised Land were spoofs on Candy Land and Monopoly and one entrepreneur even created a set of Bible Dolls dressed in authentic biblical garb.⁹⁷ Many of these products were developed and marketed as gifts for Hanukkah. In 1937, one Jew said, "A year ago, it was impossible to secure a fitting gift as a Chanukah present for a Jewish child, now fortunately, there are new books, games, and Palestinian products."⁹⁸ These items represented a new type of Jewish item. They were, in many ways, a response to the negative associations Jews had with Judaica from the old world. These products, on the other hand, spoke to the modern Jew through their connection to popular culture. We do not know how many people bought these gifts, but the fact that they were even an option says a great deal about the development of Hanukkah gift giving. Jewish adults also gave both religious and secular gifts to one another. Companies targeted Jewish consumers around Hanukkah with advertisements in Yiddish newspapers for waffle irons, perfumes, shaving emollients, dental creme, automobiles, and mahjong sets.⁹⁹ These advertisements show

⁹⁶ Joselit, 78.

⁹⁷ Joselit, 81.

⁹⁸ Joselit, 81-82.

⁹⁹ Joselit, 233.

that adults bought into the practice of gift giving, not just to appease their children, but as a worthy and enjoyable American custom for themselves. They too wanted to experience the Christmas spirit.

One of the most overt attempts to take a Christmas gift giving tradition and make it Jewish involved the Christmas tree. The Christmas tree was, and still is, one of the most powerful ritual symbols of Christmas. Christmas gift giving would not be the same without a Christmas tree to put gifts under. Dra-Dell Corporation noticed this gap in the ritual of Hanukkah gift giving and released a product to take its place. They came out with a four-foot-tall dreidel called ‘The Maccabee,’ under which Jews could put their Hanukkah presents. Dra-Dell said that The Maccabee “expresses a true holiday spirit in the home... it becomes a center for holiday gift giving... It decorates and illuminates the season of proud tradition and joy and is a fine addition to the Chanukah atmosphere.”¹⁰⁰ The Maccabee did not catch on and one would be hard pressed to find any American Jews who still maintain this tradition today. The sentiment, however, reflected the desire of Jews during the 30’s and 40’s to adapt Christmas traditions to Jewish practice. It showed how deeply they wanted to elevate Hanukkah to the same level as Christmas so that their kids would be excited and proud of their Jewish identity. This sentiment carried on for many Jews, and years later Jews introduced “the Hanukkah bush” that served the same purpose as the Maccabee. Jewish professionals came out strongly against what they considered a Christmas tree with a Hanukkah name. In her book, *Choosing a Jewish Life*, Anita Diamant named this tradition as one of many that rabbis discouraged as inappropriate for the Jewish

¹⁰⁰ Joselit, 80-81.

home.¹⁰¹ In 1983 there was even a children's book called, *There's No Such Thing As a Chanukah Bush*.¹⁰²

Instilling a sense of Jewish pride in children during the 1930s and 1940s became the primary motivation for the elevation of Hanukkah and Hanukkah gift giving. The authors of a guidebook on modern Jewish living said, "If ever lavishness in gifts is appropriate it is on Hanukkah. Jewish children should be showered with gifts, Hanukkah gifts, as a perhaps primitive but most effective means of making them immune against envy of the Christian children and their Christmas presents."¹⁰³ This expression is an example of Jews intentionally borrowing a Christmas practice in order to give children an equally powerful experience. It is interesting that it describes Hanukkah gifts as primitive but effective. This attitude suggested that gift giving was not necessarily Jewish, but could be used to bring one closer to Judaism. In an article in *Tribe Magazine*, Wendy Jaffe shared that Jewish psychologists at the time wrote about how to keep Jewish kids psychologically healthy during Christmas. She also said that rabbis promoted gift giving as a way to keep kids happy.¹⁰⁴ These efforts to spread Hanukkah for the sake of Jewish children apparently worked wonders. By the 1950s and 1960s, Hanukkah had achieved a high status in the Jewish community and had even seeped into the consciousness of average American citizens.

¹⁰¹ Anita Diamant, *Choosing a Jewish Life: A Handbook for People Converting to Judaism and for Their Family and Friends* (New York: Schocken Books, 1997), 33.

¹⁰² Susan Sussman and Charles Robinson, *There's No Such Thing as a Chanukah Bush*, Sandy Goldstein (Niles, IL: A. Whitman, 1983).

¹⁰³ Joselit, 235.

¹⁰⁴ Wendy Jaffe, "Christmas-izing of Chanukah," Jewish Journal News, November 19, 2010, [://www.jewishjournal.com/tribe/article/christmas-izing_of_chanukah_20101119](http://www.jewishjournal.com/tribe/article/christmas-izing_of_chanukah_20101119).

Jenna Joselit described Hanukkah as “fulfilling a viable cultural substitute for Christmas, and that Jews no longer had to dread the cruel month of December.”¹⁰⁵ She described Hanukkah as “one of the few Jewish ritual practices actually to grow rather than diminish in the years following World War II, when it emerged not only as the Jewish antidote to Christmas but as its functional equivalent. It was relevant and attractive to modern Jews.”¹⁰⁶ Sociologist Marshall Sklare said that Hanukkah had become the Jewish Christmas and noted that yoking the two together was a demonstration of America’s oneness. He noted that public schools started to have “holiday assemblies” with a Christmas tree next to a menorah.¹⁰⁷ This effort to set the two holidays side by side came not only from public officials, but also from Jewish leaders who sought to elevate public awareness about Judaism. The Central Conference of American Rabbis partnered with the Jewish Chautauqua Society to produce a holiday special on television that showed scenes of Christians and Jewish neighbors exchanging gifts and visiting one another’s homes as a way to show the harmony between Christmas and Hanukkah.¹⁰⁸ These efforts reflected a larger cultural shift that took place in the post-war years. Jewish children who grew up in the 1920s and 1930s reaped the benefits of their parents’ efforts to assimilate into American society. These Jews felt fully American and followed their Christian neighbors to the suburbs to create a comfortable life for their own emerging families. Their neighbors were now used to living alongside Jews and it is not surprising that they made an effort to publicly display these relationships. Hanukkah became a perfect opportunity to pursue and celebrate these relationships, both for children and for the culture at large. It is important to note that not all Jews or Jewish leaders believed that Hanukkah, or Judaism in general should take a prominent

¹⁰⁵ Joselit, 239.

¹⁰⁶ Joselit, 229.

¹⁰⁷ Joselit, 239-241.

¹⁰⁸ Joselit, 239-241.

role in the public sphere. These Jews believed in a true separation of church and state, meaning that instead of putting a menorah next to the Christmas tree, we should remove all religious symbols from the public sphere. This issue was, and still is, a point of contention amongst Jewish leaders today.

Jewish leaders who tried to place Hanukkah on par with Christmas did so with the intention to retain a Jewish spirit of Hanukkah. Jewish leaders, perhaps at an even greater level than before, saw Hanukkah as one of the prime opportunities to enhance Jewish identity. They knew their congregants expected to provide their children with a parallel experience to Christmas, and took advantage of their eagerness to participate in a Jewish ritual. They continued to assert that Hanukkah gifts should be Jewish. This assertion was a reflection of the greater belief that Jewish mothers could transform Judaism through the home and that a proper Jewish education was the key to a vital Jewish future. Judaism took on a child-centered approach that celebrated and encouraged a resurgence of home ritual items.¹⁰⁹ All of these factors led to the introduction of a new institution in Jewish life, the synagogue gift shop.

Pioneers in synagogue gift shops described the impetus for the creation of these shops through the following equation: “Attractive Jewish ritual items in the form of a gift + educated Jewish recipient = increased Jewish practice in the home, which further leads to committed Jews who will support the healthy future of American Jewish life.”¹¹⁰ These gift shops were unbelievably successful. The first recorded synagogue gift shop opened in 1948 and less than ten years later

¹⁰⁹ Joellyn Wallen Zollman, "The Gifts of the Jews: Ideology and Material Culture in the American Synagogue Gift Shop," *American Jewish Archives Journal* 58, no. 1-2 (2006): 52.

¹¹⁰ Wallen Zollman, 51.

the Women's League for Conservative Judaism counted 530.¹¹¹ They fulfilled the needs of a changing Jewish demographic and completely transformed the practice of Jewish shopping and gift giving. Before the synagogue gift shop, the only place Jews could buy religious items were Jewish bookstores in urban, traditional Jewish neighborhoods. Young Reform and Conservative Jewish mothers who lived in the suburbs did not want to return to these neighborhoods to do their shopping. Joellyn Wallen Zollman, who studied the gift shop phenomenon, stated that even when a synagogue gift shop sold the exact same item as an urban bookstore, the item took on a different meaning.¹¹² What she meant was that physical objects held deeply significant value beyond the item itself. Context was important and the need to fit in was essential, both for parents and for children. Not only did children want to receive gifts that were on par with their peers, but mothers also wanted to buy gifts where others were buying them. A menorah from a synagogue gift shop was beautiful and modern while the same menorah from an urban bookstore represented the old world. Perception was critical and Jewish mothers in the 1950s and 1960s saw the synagogue as an appropriate place to do their Jewish shopping.

This fact affected Hanukkah gift giving practices in a number of ways. In some ways, synagogue gift shops appealed to Christmas gift giving rituals and traditions, and in other ways they made a distinction between Christmas and Hanukkah. Synagogue gift shops embraced Christmas sales techniques like helping children create a Hanukkah list, making a countdown of shopping days until Hanukkah, and extending business hours as the holiday approached.¹¹³ These tactics created a build up to the holiday, similar to the build up that existed for Christmas.

Hanukkah became part of the larger holiday season where all Americans prepared their lists,

¹¹¹ Wallen Zollman, 52.

¹¹² Wallen Zollman, 60-61

¹¹³ Wallen Zollman, 63.

counted down the days, and did last minute shopping in anticipation of their holiday. It also created a sense that, like Christmas, gift giving was the central ritual of the holiday. People did not count down days to light the menorah; they counted down the days they had left to buy their presents. The fact that synagogues endorsed this message made a powerful statement about their values. It said that they were willing to embrace a borrowed practice to achieve a greater end.

That greater end, for synagogues, came in the purchase of Jewish ritual items that would increase participation and Jewish identity. This was how synagogues continued to differentiate Hanukkah from Christmas. Christian children in the 1950s did not typically receive religious gifts, but rather secular gifts in Christmas-themed wrapping paper. Jewish kids received both secular gifts in Hanukkah-themed wrapping paper, *and* religious gifts.¹¹⁴ It is interesting that this ideal carried its way over from the 1930s and 1940s. Perhaps parents felt sentimental about the Jewish gifts they received as children. Alternatively, synagogue leaders were simply successful in convincing Jews that Hanukkah was similar but different from Christmas. It proved that assimilated American Jews still cared about their Jewish identity and Hanukkah gift giving was a simple and enjoyable way to express that identity. While we do not have data about the percentage of people who bought items from synagogue gift shops, we know that they were popular amongst certain crowds. Even if it was just members of the sisterhood who shopped at these gift shops, it was enough to keep them going for years and to make a strong impact on synagogue and Jewish culture.

The objects in synagogue gift shops were reflections of the ideologies of the synagogue and its leaders. Scholar Ann Smart Martin said, “Objects sold in gift shops are symbolic bundles that

¹¹⁴ Wallen Zollman, 63.

reflect a particular stance regarding the practice of American gift shops. They tell us not only about differences in denominationalism, American Jewish aesthetics, but also American Jews' attitudes about the State of Israel."¹¹⁵ Not surprisingly, there were great differences between the objects in Reform and Conservative gift shops. Beyond the fact that they each sold their own movement's publications, they also sold items that reflected the different ideologies of their movement. Reform synagogues focused on items that helped one celebrate holidays in the home. They sold items for Hanukkah, Purim, Passover, Shabbat, and the High Holidays. Conservative synagogues sold ritual items that one would never find in a Reform gift shop at the time. They sold *tallitot*, *tallit* bags, *tefillin*, *tefillin* bags, *yarmalkes*, chapel caps for women, Kosher cookbooks and towels with an M for *milchig* and F for *fleischig*.¹¹⁶ This is interesting, but not surprising based on what we know about the values and practices of the two movements at the time. What is most interesting is that the synagogue saw the gift shop as an effective vehicle to further their ideological agenda and values. This meant that not only did many Jewish kids receive different gifts than their Christian neighbors, the presents they received were actually quite different depending on what synagogue their parents belonged to. For example, a child from a conservative synagogue may have received a kosher cookbook while a child from a reform synagogue was more likely to receive a menorah.

Both Reform and Conservative synagogue gift shops sold Israeli objects at unprecedented levels, completely changing what it meant to own something from Israel. Israel was available to the masses, not just those who could afford to travel there.¹¹⁷ The availability of Israeli art and objects had a deep impact on American Zionism. Jews no longer had to go to the synagogue to

¹¹⁵ Wallen Zollman, 54-55.

¹¹⁶ Wallen Zollman, 56-59.

¹¹⁷ Wallen Zollman, 66.

hear or think about Israel. Instead, they fantasized about and immortalized Israel in their living rooms. Receiving a gift from Israel became a way to create connections to Israel for those who didn't have the means to go. As much as these gifts encouraged stronger connections to Israel, they also projected Israel as an exotic and mystical land. Today, one could look at these objects as contributing to the Zionist propaganda associated with that era.

It is important to note that not all Jewish leaders in the 1950s and 1960s welcomed gift giving as an appropriate practice for Hanukkah. *Jewish Life*, an Orthodox publication, came out against the practice and urged readers to infuse Hanukkah with an authentically Jewish spirit.¹¹⁸ This attitude is a reflection of most Orthodox Jews at the time that rejected efforts to make Hanukkah practices more like Christmas. Some traditional Jews, in an effort to appeal to the American infatuation with gifts, tried to make Purim the big gift giving holiday based on the connection to *mishloach manot*. While this tradition exists today in some more traditional circles, Joselit suggested that it didn't catch on with the larger, more liberal Jewish community simply because of an "accident of timing."¹¹⁹ Without Christmas, Hanukkah gift giving might have never developed. It is interesting that this accident of timing actually led to an increased connection to Judaism through the giving of Jewish items. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, Hanukkah traditions, including gift giving, were normative in the non-Orthodox American community. Jews participated in the practice to varying degrees, but the practice was standard and accepted by average Jews and Jewish leaders.

¹¹⁸ Joselit, 241.

¹¹⁹ Joselit, 246.

Changes in American society and within the Jewish community from the 1970s until today affected Jews' attitudes toward Hanukkah and the ritual of gift giving. Many issues remained, and many practices prevailed with a new, modern flavor. There were two important factors, however, that led to significant changes in Hanukkah gift giving practices. First, the liberal Jewish community got comfortable in American society. Many Jews didn't feel as threatened by Christmas and started to urge others to avoid the temptation of Christmas. For the first time, liberal Jews started to question the relevance of giving gifts for Hanukkah. Second, the make up of the Jewish community started to include a greater number of Jews by choice and interfaith families. This demographic created a new set of issues about how to navigate gift giving for Christmas and Hanukkah.

First, we will explore how Hanukkah gift giving trends grew from the 1970s until today. By and large, the Jewish community continued to look for ways to elevate Hanukkah in comparison to Christmas, but in a distinctly Jewish way. The 1960s and 1970s were a time of increased ethnic Jewish pride, in part due to the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars. This Jewish pride was especially celebrated during Hanukkah, where Jews in Israel and in the United States saw the Israeli soldier as the true modern Maccabee. In 1988, Irving Greenberg described how Hanukkah challenged modern Jews to question the extent to which they accepted cosmopolitan culture over their connection to Judaism while at the same time, not ignoring the surrounding culture. He described how the Arab-Israeli wars proved that when faced with a test of survival, Jews band together in the same way that Jews came together in the Hanukkah story.¹²⁰ It is interesting to think about how Greenberg's model of the modern Maccabees in the 1980s compared to Isaac M. Wise's model in the 1860s. Both described modern Jews as heroes saving

¹²⁰ Irving Greenberg, *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays* (New York: Summit Books, 1988), 279-280.

Judaism from extinction, but did so in very different ways. For Wise, American Jews were saving Judaism by adapting it to modern times. For Greenberg, Judaism had already adapted to modern times. Therefore, the modern Maccabees were the ones who remained committed to their Jewish roots regardless of how they assimilated into modern society. This meant that for many Jews, Hanukkah celebrations became even more Jewish than they were in the postwar era.

The process of buying Jewish gifts for Hanukkah also evolved alongside the changing consumer culture in North America. While Jews in the early 20th century shopped for Jewish gifts in traditional urban bookstores, and Jews in the mid-twentieth century went to the synagogue gift shop, innovations in consumer culture in the late 20th and early 21st centuries changed the way Jews shopped for gifts once again. The 1980s and 1990s saw the popularization of the mail order catalogue. In 1988, Herschel Strauss, the owner of a Judaica gift store in Chicago, distributed a full color, direct mail catalogue to 650,000 Jewish customers to kick off the Hanukkah shopping season. He said the catalogue celebrated an increased creativity of Jewish artists, and a variety of Jewish products in a wide price range.¹²¹ These catalogues represent the transition to online culture that enabled Jews to shop without leaving the comfort of their own home. By the early 2000s, Jews did extensive Jewish shopping online. The Internet not only opened up the variety of Jewish gifts, but it also provided a quick and easy way for Jews to shop. Today, there are endless sites online that sell various Jewish products, many of which are made in Israel.

¹²¹ Barbara Revsine, "Shops Display Creativity in Gift Selection for Hanukkah," *Chicago Tribune*, November 11, 1988, sec. 11.

In 2003, Arik Barel, who owns JudaicaWebstore.com said that “90% of his customers are American and European Jews buying holiday gifts.”¹²² This statement highlights the extent to which Jews shop online for Jewish gifts. In the same way that synagogue gift shops normalized Israeli gifts in the 1950s, the Internet has made Israeli products and unique Jewish gifts immediately accessible to the masses. A quick Internet search of “Hanukkah gifts” reveals a virtually endless list of sites that provide gifts ranging from expensive Judaica, children’s toys and books, to funny gag gifts. The popular shopping site Amazon.com offers 31,175 products categorized as “Hanukkah Gifts,” the majority of which are connected to some type of religious symbol or theme.¹²³ A similar search for “Christmas Gifts” yields 2,442,890 hits.¹²⁴ Though the majority of these items are secular, many also reflect the wide industry for Christmas themed gifts, some of which have religious undertones. The industry for Christmas books and toys is similar to the one for Hanukkah books and toys, only on a much larger scale. The different result from this search primarily tells us that people associate the phrase “Christmas Gift” with both religious and secular gifts while people associate the phrase “Hanukkah gift” almost exclusively with religious gifts. While there are some websites like Christianbook.com that sell religious oriented gifts,¹²⁵ this is not the primary orientation of the masses. I will explore this concept in greater depth in chapter three.

This new world of online shopping means that Jews no longer have to go to the synagogue to buy a Jewish gift. This loss of the communal shopping experience centered on the synagogue,

¹²² Jessica Steinberg, "Gelt for Gifts," *Jerusalem Post* (Jerusalem), December 19, 2003, sec. 20.

¹²³ Amazon.com, Hanukkah Gifts, accessed February 25, 2013, http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias=aps.

¹²⁴ Amazon.com, Christmas Gifts, accessed February 25, 2013, http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_1?url=search-alias=aps.

¹²⁵ ChristianBook.com, Children Christmas Gifts, accessed March 01, 2013, http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/easy_find?event=HPT.

means that synagogue leaders had to change to remain relevant to their congregants during this season. At one time, synagogue leaders encouraged people to celebrate Hanukkah by buying Jewish gifts at the synagogue gift shop. Today, a Jewish leader might do the same by retweeting advertisements for Jewish gifts online. This shift reflects the larger trend away from the synagogue building as the center for Jewish life. As we will soon see, the information revolution had an impact not only on how Jews buy gifts, but also on what they buy.

Arik Barel's statement also shows that Americans and Europeans engage in the practice of gift giving on a significantly higher level than those in Israel and other countries. A study in 2003 revealed that though some Israelis gave small gifts, most gave children *gelt* (money). She cited a study by Panorama Market Research that found that 61% of Israelis spent less than 100 shekels on Hanukkah gifts (including *gelt* money). By the end of 2003, this was a value of approximately \$450.¹²⁶ In comparison, a study done by Maritz Research found that the average American spent \$754 on holiday gifts.¹²⁷ Before we glean too much from this comparison, it is important to keep in mind that Maritz Research's study did not differentiate between Christians and Hanukkah. We have no way of knowing what American Jews spent on Hanukkah gifts in comparison to what American Christians spent on Christmas gifts. What we can determine from the comparison, however, was that the cultural expectation was significantly different in North America than it was in Israel. Even if Jews in North America spent less than their Christian neighbors, they were still inundated by the cultural norm to spend excessively. This further proves that American consumer culture and infatuation with the holiday season remain the significant driving forces for Hanukkah gift giving.

¹²⁶ "Israeli Shekel," Israeli Shekel, accessed December 20, 2012, <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/israel/currency>.

¹²⁷ Israeli Shekel

Many others came to this conclusion as well. Wendy Jaffe, writer for Tribe Magazine, also claimed that Hanukkah is still a response to Christmas.¹²⁸ She suggested that Hanukkah is “primarily driven by the presence of children. Jews with children at home may celebrate [Chanukah] more intensely so their children do not feel left out and/or because they are concerned their children will convert or intermarry.”¹²⁹ This reflects the continuation of a motivation that arose in the early 1900s. Jews remain attracted to Hanukkah as a way to instill Jewish pride in their children in the face of Christmas.

Similarly, Rabbi Plaut suggested that from the 1970s until today, the impetus to celebrate Hanukkah as an alternative to Christmas exploded in regards to “participation amongst Jews, public awareness in greater culture, and commercialization.”¹³⁰ He highlighted a number of innovations in consumer culture that show this explosion. In 1995, an art and Judaica show in San Francisco displayed 125 menorahs, ranging from \$350 to \$3000.¹³¹ Even if it wasn’t the cultural norm to spend this much on a menorah, the show affirmed that some Jews in North America spent excessively on Hanukkah. Jews who purchased these menorahs made a statement about their values, declaring that having beautiful Jewish ritual items in the home was an expression of their Jewish and American identity. Plaut also wrote that in 1997, 11 million Hanukkah cards were sold.¹³² This number is staggering, given the fact that in 1997 the Jewish population in North America was somewhere between 5.5 million (1990) and 5.2 million (2000-

¹²⁸ Jaffe.

¹²⁹ Jaffe.

¹³⁰ Plaut, 56.

¹³¹ Plaut, 56.

¹³² Plaut, 56.

2001).¹³³ Again, we have to be careful in gleaned too much from these statistics. We don't know how many of these cards were purchased by Jews and how many were delivered to Jews in the United States. We also don't know how many Jews received more than one card. Still, it is striking that this many Hanukkah cards were sold. This custom is one aspect of gift giving that is completely borrowed from the larger consumer culture. While the first recorded Christmas card was given in London in 1843, the greeting card industry was popularized in America in the early 1900s, as discussed above.¹³⁴ The popularization of Hanukkah cards by the 1990s is yet one more example of Hanukkah as an outgrowth of Jews' acculturation to American Christmas culture.

During the past twenty years, there has also been an explosion in consumer products, music, and videos for Hanukkah that try to compete with Christmas. These innovations adapted Christmas traditions and appealed to popular cultural references. Some built on traditional Hanukkah symbols, while others did not. Some even combined Hanukkah and Christmas symbols, something that I will discuss in greater detail later on. Some of the more memorable and lasting innovations of the 1990s and 2000s were Saturday Night Live's *Hanukkah Harry*¹³⁵, Adam Sandler's *Chanukah Song*¹³⁶, South Park's *A Lonely Jew on Christmas*,¹³⁷ and the game *No Limit Texas Dreidel*.¹³⁸ For younger children, products emerged like the movies *A Rugrats*

¹³³ Berman L. Mandell and Edward H. Kaplan, comps., *The National Jewish Population Study 2000-01*, report (New York: United Jewish Communities, 2003).

¹³⁴ "About the Industry," GreetingCard.org, section goes here, accessed January 7, 2013, <http://www.greetingcard.org/AbouttheIndustry/History/tabid/72/Default.aspx>.

¹³⁵ "Hanukkah Harry," Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanukkah_Harry.

¹³⁶ "The Chanukah Song," Wikipedia, accessed January 3, 2013, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Chanukah_Song.

¹³⁷ Southpark, "Kyle - I'm A Jew On Christmas," YouTube, accessed February 15, 2013, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EP1gNYU27Tk>.

¹³⁸ Plaut, 56.

*Chanukah*¹³⁹, *Eight Crazy Nights*¹⁴⁰, and books like *Elmo's Little Dreidel*.¹⁴¹ Since 2010, there has been an explosion of Hanukkah YouTube parodies adapted from pop songs. The Maccabeat's *Candlelight* was one of the first and most popular videos, receiving more than 8,300,000 hits by February 2013.¹⁴² While some within the Jewish community were critical of a number of these innovations, many more celebrated them as a healthy expression of satire. Rabbi Plaut said, "By using parody to comment on the pervasiveness of Christmas in American society, Jews can advantageously communicate a range of attitudes, from assimilation defense to cultural pride."¹⁴³ Here, Rabbi Plaut introduced satire as a new frame in which to understand Hanukkah practices that relate to Christmas. This said a great deal about where American Jews, and American society, has come in their appreciation of Hanukkah and Christmas. In the early and mid-20th century, Jews still felt vulnerable next to their Christian neighbors and elevated Hanukkah as a way to fit in. The people who bought the The Maccabee in the 1940's did so with an earnest effort to place Hanukkah on the same level with Christmas. Those who wore blue Santa hats to SantaCon in New York City in the 2000's¹⁴⁴ did so as an expression of satire. This difference is significant and represents the shift that took place in America at the turn of the 21st century. Satire can only exist if one does not feel an immediate sense of threat to one's identity. The emergence of humor and satire suggested that Jews felt comfortable enough in society to poke fun at themselves. It also speaks to the fact that this generation of Americans, not just American Jews, prizes satire and cynicism.

¹³⁹ David Stern, writer, "A Rugrats Chanukah," in *Rugrats*, Nickelodian, December 4, 1996.

¹⁴⁰ *Eight Crazy Nights*, by Seth Kearsley, perf. Adam Sandler (Happy Madison Productions, 2002).

¹⁴¹ Naomi Kleinberg and Christopher Moroney, *Elmo's Little Dreidel* (New York, NY: Random House, 2011).

¹⁴² *Candlelight - Hanukkah*, perf. The Maccabeats, Youtube.com, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qSJCSR4MuhU>.

¹⁴³ Plaut, 113.

¹⁴⁴ Plaut, 106.

Most Jewish Americans who grew up between the 1980s and 2000s understand Hanukkah as part of a larger holiday season. They are more likely to embrace their identity as a minority, and therefore more likely to embrace the satirical innovations of their time. The success of these products, songs, and videos suggest that younger Jews today seamlessly weave together the different elements of their identity. This naturally integrated and multifaceted identity is something that has also allowed new attitudes toward Hanukkah and Hanukkah gift giving to emerge amongst leaders in the Jewish world.

In the early 1990s, historian Jonathan Sarna said, “American Jews have a Christmas problem... the fundamental dilemma produced by Christmas’s unique status in the American national calendar remains unresolved.”¹⁴⁵ Sarna’s understanding of Jews’ relationship with Christmas as a problem was not new. It did, however, represent a greater shift that took place amongst professional Jews. By the 1980s and 1990s, many Jewish leaders addressed the challenges of Christmas in a more reluctant and admonishing tone than they had in previous years. Their challenge was no longer how to elevate Hanukkah in relation to Christmas. Instead, the challenge was what to do with the fact that it already was. One example of this admonishment came after Anne Roiphe published an op-ed article in the *New York Times* in 1978 entitled; “Christmas Comes to a Jewish Home.” She received an “avalanche of letters of protest” from Jews who scolded her celebrating Christmas as a Jew.¹⁴⁶ These responses reflected the dramatic way attitudes toward Christmas had changed over the course of the 20th century. In a relatively short period of time, Jewish leaders went from encouraging Jews to participate and adapt

¹⁴⁵ Plaut, 4.

¹⁴⁶ Eli Evans, "Looking for Roots," *The New York Times*, June 07, 1981, <http://www.nytimes.com/1981/06/07/books/looking-for-roots.html>.

Christmas traditions to questioning and admonishing them for the same acts. Many of these responses dealt directly with gift giving.

In 1985, Michael Strassfeld briefly acknowledged the challenge of gift giving in his book *The Jewish Holidays: A Guide and Companion*. He said that Hanukkah was a minor holiday and should not be in competition with Christmas. The only time he mentioned Christmas was in a discussion of gifts where he said parents would have to consider how they wanted to handle them. He did not give suggestions other than to say, “the visual bombardment of Christmas may require some discussion.”¹⁴⁷ This response was reflective of Strassfeld’s time. Writing in 1985, Strassfeld felt comfortable introducing Hanukkah as a minor holiday that should not try to compete with Christmas, something that authors of guidebooks from the 1920s and 1930s never said. At the same time, he did not feel completely comfortable admonishing those who give gifts. He left it open for parents to discuss with their children, lightly encouraging them to think carefully about what they want to do. He was in between two distinct eras and his words mark the transition to a movement against gift giving.

Another part of this transition involved the suggestion that gift giving was okay, only in moderation. Not surprisingly, this conversation arose in Jewish circles at the same time that the question arose amongst Christians. In 1998, Rabbi Chaim Lindenblatt wrote, “How much should Jewish families allow presents to take the spotlight at Hanukkah? It's the same question Christians face at Christmas. Gifts add a little joy, but it's never meant to be extravagant.”¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ Michael Strassfeld, Betsy Platkin. Teutsch, and Arnold M. Eisen, *The Jewish Holidays: A Guide and Commentary* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), 173.

¹⁴⁸ Dave Munday, "Heritage, Faith, Giving All Part of Hanukkah," *The Post and Courier* (Charleston), December 13, 1988, sec. 1.

Similarly, Rabbi Anthony Holtz wrote, “exchanging presents is not an integral part of Hanukkah, but it's part of the culture.”¹⁴⁹ In 2003, *Tikkun* magazine published an article written by Christian psychotherapist Thomas Moore who made an argument to reclaim Christmas gift giving in the spirit of Christianity. He said bestowing small gifts is appropriate but warned people against spending too much money.¹⁵⁰ All of these religious leaders acknowledged that gift giving was embedded as part of holiday culture. They affirmed the desires of the masses but urged people away from extravagance. These reflections are part of a larger movement against excessiveness in consumer culture.

Other leaders encouraged *gelt* as the only acceptable Jewish gift on Hanukkah. Even while attitudes toward Hanukkah gift giving changed dramatically throughout the 20th century, Hanukkah *gelt* remained a popular gift across Jewish denominations. It saw a major resurgence in liberal communities in the 1920s with the introduction of gold and silver wrapped chocolate *gelt*. Rabbi Debbie Prinz suggested that companies drew their inspiration from chocolate coins that were given to children in Belgium and the Netherlands in connection to the St. Nicolas holiday. Regardless of the inspiration, various companies jumped on board and the chocolate coins soared in popularity through the 1950s until today.¹⁵¹ Today, Hanukkah *gelt* is the least controversial Hanukkah gift. Many Jewish leaders push *gelt* as the one of the authentic Jewish ways to engage in the practice. As previously discussed, it also remains the primary mode of gift giving in Israel.¹⁵² The historical connections to *gelt* discussed in chapter one, allow even

¹⁴⁹ Munday.

¹⁵⁰ Thomas Moore, "The Eternal, Holy Night," *Tikkun*, November/December 2003.

¹⁵¹ Leah Koenig, "The Gelt Chronicles," *Haaretz.com*, December 8, 2009, section goes here, <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/features/the-gelt-chronicles-1.2555>.

¹⁵² Koenig. "The Gelt Chronicles."

skeptical Jewish professionals to indulge people's desires to participate in the holiday season by buying and giving *gelt*.

The 1970s and 1980s also saw an increase in the extent to which people understood Hanukkah and Christmas as a time to give back to those in need. Waits reminds us that charity has been part of Christmas celebrations since before the 1800s. He cites Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* as the most popular and transformational work to promote Christmas charity in the middle of the 19th century.¹⁵³ He said that Christmas charity really peaked in the early 20th century, where families focused efforts on helping poor families and poor children celebrate the holiday.¹⁵⁴ As time went on, and spending for Christmas presents increased, so did Christian charity. Today, there are numerous organized charitable efforts that not only raise significant amounts of money, but also provide opportunities for people to volunteer their time during the holiday season.

The same efforts arose in the Jewish community, but through the language of *tzedakah*. We don't know exactly when the concept of Hanukkah *tzedakah* started, but we know that it became prominent in the 1980s and 1990s. In one article, Dasee Berkowitz of the *Washington Jewish Week* noted the irony of Hanukkah as a holiday that celebrated distinctness over assimilation. She charged her readers to ask what makes Jews distinct over others and then encouraged them to share that distinctiveness with the world. Her answer was *tzedakah* and her proposal was to give a different type of *tzedakah* each night instead of giving gifts.¹⁵⁵ The great irony of her argument is that giving back during the holidays is not actually something that makes Jews distinct. It is true that *tzedakah* is a unique framework to understand giving back, but she did not

¹⁵³ Waits and Holland, 164.

¹⁵⁴ Waits and Holland, 165

¹⁵⁵ Dasee Berkowitz, "A Twist on Chanukah Giving," *Washington Jewish Week*, November 25, 2010.

acknowledge that Christian leaders have been encouraging this concept since the mid 19th century! It is interesting that even this innovation in Hanukkah gift giving cannot be understood outside of the larger context of Christmas culture. While it may not have been directly adopted, there is no doubt that Christmas charity had a strong influence on Hanukkah *tzedakah*.

Others provided different rationales for promoting *tzedakah* as a gift giving alternative. Mark Mietkiewicz from the Canadian Jewish News reminded readers that the rabbis of the Talmud were actually the first to say that one should give *tzedakah* during Hanukkah. He explained how Jews were required to give *tzedakah* to other Jews in order that all Jews could afford to buy candles so that they could fulfill the mitzvah of lighting candles on Hanukkah.¹⁵⁶ While Mietkiewicz is correct that giving *tzedakah* on Hanukkah originated in the Talmud, it must also be understood in context. This type of giving was not expansive in the sense that one should give back to the world. Instead, it ensured that all Jews could light the menorah.

Today, giving *tzedakah* on Hanukkah is about much more than fulfilling *mitzvot*. Lawrence Bush wrote an interesting article in *Tikkun* that presented a unique perspective on reclaiming Hanukkah gift giving through the lens of *tzedakah*. He admitted that Christmas had a more natural connection to giving to others, stating that Christmas was about embracing the redemptive kindness that Jesus showed to others. Hanukkah, on the other hand, was about national redemption through military struggle.¹⁵⁷ Instead of embracing *tzedakah* generally, he suggested that Jews highlight eight different themes of the holiday to guide them toward a sense

¹⁵⁶ Mark Mietkiewicz, "Chanukah Gelt and the Internet," *Canadian Jewish News*, November 21, 2002, sec. 23.

¹⁵⁷ Lawrence Bush and Jeffrey Dekro, "From Gelt to Tzedakah," *Tikkun*, November/December 2000.

of *Tikkun Olam* for each of the eight nights.¹⁵⁸ This suggestion reflected a larger trend to infuse the gift giving ritual with deeper meaning and creativity. Numerous other leaders suggested making intentional and creative choices around gift giving that celebrate the true meaning of the holiday. All of these efforts to reclaim Hanukkah gift giving still acknowledged Jews' desire to participate in the popular practice and attempted to offer a middle road. We don't know how prevalent this trend was but know that it was embraced in a number of Jewish circles. It is interesting to note that there have been no known attempts to reclaim gift giving through the lens of sacrifice to God during the time of the Maccabees. This is something I will explore in greater depth in the conclusion of this work.

Other Jewish leaders understood gift giving through a more extreme lens, either rejecting it as antithetical to Hanukkah or embracing it as embodying the spirit of the holiday. In 2002, Reform Rabbi Daniel Schiff wrote that "gift giving is really the undoing of Hanukkah. It has effectively made it into the Jewish Christmas."¹⁵⁹ Conservative Rabbi Alvin Berkun disagreed: "One of the geniuses of Judaism for thousands of years is the way we've been able to take things out of the society in which we find ourselves and Judaize them, make them something of our own."¹⁶⁰ For this reason, Berkun encouraged gift giving for what he called a reverse form of assimilation.¹⁶¹ It is interesting to hear these extremes from leaders within the non-Orthodox Jewish world. Rabbi Schiff showed a willingness to go against the popular sentiment of his congregants by urging them to give up a practice many of them already engaged in. He wanted to disregard the evolution of the holiday over the last two hundred and fifty years and return to the traditional

¹⁵⁸ Bush and Dreko.

¹⁵⁹ Jeffrey Cohan, "Some Jewish Leaders Bemoan Increase in Practice of Gift Giving for Hanukkah," *Knight Ridder Tribune Business News* (Washington), November 29, 2002, sec. 1.

¹⁶⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁶¹ Cohan.

way the holiday was celebrated before the Jewish Enlightenment. This is a somewhat abnormal stance for a Reform rabbi and we don't know how successful he was in his efforts. Rabbi Berkun, on the other hand, acknowledged and actually celebrated the fact that the practice was borrowed and "Judaized." He argued that the process of borrowing and adapting made the practice Jewish. This assertion actually has its roots in the Hanukkah story, as discussed in chapter one.

The second major factor that changed Hanukkah gift giving from the 1980s until today was the drastic increase of interfaith families across North America. Rabbi Plaut said that Jewish organizations and mainstream American businesses noticed this trend and responded in various ways.¹⁶² In 1989, greeting card companies introduced a new line of cards that combined Christmas and Hanukkah symbols. According to Plaut, "these novel images anticipated a new age in Jewish-Christian relationships in the United States by envisioning the two religions coming together in a joint celebration of the holiday season."¹⁶³ This sentiment was dubbed 'Chrismukkah' in the 1990s, a term that was later made popular in an episode of the popular TV show, *The OC*, in 2004."¹⁶⁴ In the 1990s, children's books like *Hanukkah and Christmas at my House*, sent the message that being in an interfaith family was a blessing because children had the opportunity to celebrate two cultures and two holidays.¹⁶⁵ Many manufacturers came out with "Hanukkah ornaments" to appeal to families who wanted to make their Christmas tree more Jewish.¹⁶⁶ CafePress.com currently sells a whole line of products called "Hanukkah gifts" that

¹⁶² Plaut, 5.

¹⁶³ Plaut, 137.

¹⁶⁴ Plaut, 137-141.

¹⁶⁵ Plaut, 141.

¹⁶⁶ "Hanukkah Tree Topper," Skymall.com, accessed December 20, 2013, <http://www.skymall.com/shopping/detail.htm?pid=204072528>.

have a logo saying “I Celebrate Both” above a Santa hat hanging over a menorah.¹⁶⁷ Though it may seem as if these innovations share a connection to the way Jews’ participated in Christmas in the late 19th century, they actually reflect a stark difference in how Jewish identity has developed. At the turn of the 20th century, the notion that one could be Christian and Jewish did not exist. Jews who celebrated Christmas did so with the understanding that Christmas was secular and did not threaten their Jewish identity. Today, identity is much more fluid, not only for interfaith families and Jews by choice, but for larger American society as well. This means that people approach identity in very different ways. Some people eagerly embraced “Chrismukkah” while others spoke out strongly against it. Reactions varied, not only from Jewish leaders, but also from Jews by choice and people in interfaith families.

Another term, “December Dilemma,” entered the lexicon as a way to encapsulate the challenges of navigating Hanukkah and Christmas. It refers to the challenges, and also the potential benefits, that interfaith families and Jews by choice face this time of year. Over the last 30 years, the message Jewish leaders have sent to Jews by choice about various December issues, including gift giving has changed dramatically. We can see this shift through the examination of introduction to Judaism books targeted at those in the process of converting. In 1981, Lydia Kukoff entitled a section in her book, *Choosing Judaism*, “Holidays – Theirs, Ours... Mine?” In it she wrote, “It is important for you to realize that Chanukah is not a Jewish Christmas. It should not become a compensation for the loss of Christmas in your own life. It is not about buying silver and blue wrapping paper instead of red and green, or Chanukah decorations instead of Christmas wreaths. It is a completely different holiday, and you must learn about it so that

¹⁶⁷ "Hannukah Gifts. I Celebrate Both T-shirts and Gift," CafePress.com, accessed February 20, 2013, <http://www.cafepress.com/inktees/4075513>.

you can celebrate it on its own terms.”¹⁶⁸ This assertion speaks not only to the way many Jewish leaders understood issues facing Jews by choice and Jewish families but issues facing the broader Jewish world around Christmas. Her message suggests that gift giving and decorating were inappropriate Hanukkah customs that did not reflect the spirit of the holiday. She encouraged her reader not to adopt these practices when they converted to Judaism. Fourteen years later, Rabbi Wayne Dosick’s introduction to Judaism book, *Living Judaism*, reflected the slowly changing attitude of Jewish leaders. Like Kuloff, he asserted that Hanukkah and Christmas should not be compared and that the only thing they had in common was the time of year. He said that Hanukkah should stand on its own merit. That said, he also recognized the role that Christmas played in elevating Hanukkah as a Jewish holiday, saying that the reason children receive lavish gifts for Hanukkah is because Hanukkah became what he called the “Jewish answer to Christmas.” He also said that it is customary to give small gifts of *gelt* to express love and affection, but encouraged people not to let these gifts get out of hand.¹⁶⁹ His response reflects the shift taking place in the 1990s toward interfaith families. He still upheld the assertion that Jews by choice should understand Hanukkah on its own right, but acknowledged the role Christmas has played in elevating the holiday. He did not outwardly reject gifts, but rather encouraged people not to let them get out of hand.

Jewish leaders today continue to write and talk about these topics in Introduction to Judaism classes, sermons, articles, and blog posts. In an article in *The Telegram* in 2010, journalist Greg Mellon quotes Rabbi Howard Laibson of Shir Chadash in Lakewood, CA, “Americans are gift

¹⁶⁸ Lydia Kukoff, *Choosing Judaism* (New York, NY: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1981), 69-70.

¹⁶⁹ Wayne D. Dosick, *Living Judaism: The Complete Guide to Jewish Belief, Tradition, and Practice* (San Francisco: HarperSan Francisco, 1995), 154.

givers. It's been a big part of the American culture for a long time. As (gift giving) has become more important to the American culture, it has become more important in the Jewish culture."¹⁷⁰

While this article was not directed toward those in the process of converting, it does speak to the fact that some Jewish leaders are more accepting of Hanukkah gift giving and approach the issue in a more nuanced way.

Jewish leaders also contribute to the website InterfaithFamily.com, which serves as a sounding board for Jews by choice and those in interfaith families to share their personal stories and struggles. One section of the website is entitled 'December Holidays' where readers can look at educational resources, books, videos, and links to a blog that has collected 133 articles on the topic.¹⁷¹ The articles were written by a variety of people: Jews who married Christians, Christians who married Jews and converted, some who didn't, grandparents, as well as rabbis and other Jewish professionals. Many articles demonstrated a very nuanced understanding of the topic and reflected the vastly different ways that couples approach this time of year. Some authors wrote about the struggles of letting go of Christmas,¹⁷² while others wrote about how they found a way to integrate Christmas without threatening Jewish identity.¹⁷³ These different responses reflected a demographic of people who, while dealing with similar issues, approached them according to their own experiences and feelings. One of the biggest "takeaways" from

¹⁷⁰ Greg Mellen, "Hanukkah Influenced by Gift-Giving Culture," *Press - Telegram* (Long Beach, CA), November 30, 2010.

¹⁷¹ "Hanukkah and Christmas," InterfaithFamily.com, accessed December 20, 2013, http://www.interfaithfamily.com/holidays/hanukkah_and_christmas.shtml.

¹⁷² Janet Silver Ghent, "Giving up Christmas and Celebrating Ourselves," InterfaithFamily, accessed December 20, 2013, http://www.interfaithfamily.com/holidays/hanukkah_and_christmas/Giving_up_Christmas_and_Celebrating_Ourselves.shtml.

¹⁷³ Brianne Kruger Nadeau, "Jewish Plus Christmas," InterfaithFamily.com, section goes here, accessed February 03, 2013, http://www.interfaithfamily.com/holidays/hanukkah_and_christmas/Jewish_Plus_Christmas.shtml.

these articles is the extent to which holiday practices were driven by personal and emotional experiences. People tended to make decisions about Hanukkah and Christmas based on feeling rather than reasoning.

A number of these articles addressed the issue of gift giving. In one article, a Jewish woman wrote looking for advice after her Jewish son asked her to stop sending his Christian children Hanukkah gifts.¹⁷⁴ In another, a father talked about his struggle with how to label presents after his four year old daughter asked questions about which gifts were for Hanukkah, which gifts were for Christmas, and whether Santa would bring her presents, even if she was Jewish.¹⁷⁵

While there were endless articles that related interfaith couples' personal experiences and challenges with gift giving, one theme prevailed. In multiple articles, people either offered or shared advice they received about their approach to gift giving and the holidays in general. Over and over, the advice read something like this: "One day out of the year isn't going to make or break their Jewish identity. It's how you raise your kids as Jews the other 364 days that counts."¹⁷⁶ While this advice does not directly address how to deal with the challenges of gift giving for interfaith families, it puts the discussion in the larger context of identity formation. The evolution of gift giving as a Jewish practice is complex enough to begin. Interfaith families who are trying to navigate complicated identity formations add an entirely new level of complexity to the issue. Arguing that one day in the year doesn't make or break Jewish identity

¹⁷⁴ Wendy Weltman Palmer, "Dear Wendy: Christmas or Hanukkah Gifts?," Dear Wendy Christmas or Hanukkah Gifts, accessed December 20, 2013, http://www.interfaithfamily.com/relationships/grandparenting/Dear_Wendy_Christmas_or_Hanukkah_Gifts.shtml.

¹⁷⁵ Jim Keen, ""Will Santa Bring Me Presents, Even If I'm Jewish"" - InterfaithFamily, November 1, 2012, http://www.interfaithfamily.com/holidays/hanukkah_and_christmas/Will_Santa_Bring_Me_Presents_Even_If_Im_Jewish.shtml.

¹⁷⁶ Keen.

gives families the green light to make decisions that might otherwise go against the identity formation they are trying to inhabit or provide for their children. It is an understandable response given the high emotional stakes involved. That said, this attitude toward gift giving stands in contradiction to the otherwise highly intentional and oftentimes radical choices Jews made in the past. Jews never tried to hide or downplay their attachment to gift giving. Instead, Jews have celebrated gift giving as an integral part of their changing identities. For Jews in the 19th century who celebrated Christmas in their home, this meant assertively declaring that one could be both Jewish and American. For Jews in the 1920s and 1930s, this meant openly encouraging women to take a greater role in the identity formation of their children by giving them Jewish gifts. In the 1950s and 1960s, it meant elevating Hanukkah gift giving to the same level as Christmas, in the Jewish home, the synagogue, and greater American society. For Jews today, it means struggling with what to do with the fact that Hanukkah, and Hanukkah gift giving, have in many ways achieved an equal status to Christmas. This struggle means different things to different people, and is particularly complicated for Jews by choice and those in an interfaith family who have emotional connections to Christmas. As we go forward to think about how Jews today might imbue their current practice with Jewish tradition, it is helpful to get a better sense of how and why people engage in the practice today.

Chapter Three: Analysis of Contemporary Practices

Introduction

Giving Hanukkah gifts is one of the most pervasive practices for liberal American Jews. While the practice developed as a response to Christmas, Jews today participate in the practice for a wide variety of reasons. Many are still deeply motivated by Christmas while others are now carrying forward their own personal and emotional connections to a practice they grew up with. Regardless of the motivation, the way one engages in the practice (even through abstention) is an expression of one's Jewish and American identity. In Chapter 2, we explored how Jewish professionals since the 19th century have tried to influence this practice as a way of impacting Jewish identity. To compliment this research, I created a survey that asks people how and why they engage in the practice today.

My survey is not a comprehensive study of the American Jewish community. The survey had 825 respondents, 706 of which completed the entire survey. 199 respondents (25%) are part of an interfaith family, and 78 respondents (10%) converted to Judaism. 52% of respondents are from the Northeast, 72% are women, and 65% are affiliated with the Reform Movement.

When we compare these numbers to the 2000-2001 National Jewish Population Study, we see that our survey is disproportionate to the greater Jewish population. In the NJPS, 43% from the Northeast¹⁷⁷ and 34% are affiliated with the Reform Movement.¹⁷⁸ This means that our survey has slightly higher participation from Northeast Jews and significantly higher participation from Reform Jews. In terms of intermarriage, the NJPS measured rate of marriages that occurred

¹⁷⁷ Berman L. Mandell and Edward H. Kaplan, comps., *The National Jewish Population Survey: 2000-2001*, report (New York: United Jewish Communities, 2003), 6.

¹⁷⁸ Jonathon Ament, *American Jewish Religious Denominations: United Jewish Communities Report Series on the National Jewish Population Survey 2000-2001*, report, vol. 10 (United Jewish Communities, 2005), 7.

between various years as opposed to total number of people who are in an interfaith marriage. They discovered that between 1996 and 2001, 47% of marriages were intermarriages.¹⁷⁹ While this number cannot be directly compared to our number, it does tell us that our percentage of interfaith families is much lower than the general population. The NJPS did not report the breakdown of respondents by gender, but it can be assumed that it was significantly closer to even. These limitations mean that we cannot make overarching statements about the scope of the practice for American Jews today, we can glean a multifaceted picture of how many liberal American Jews, interfaith families, and Jews by choice, approach the practice. We can use the data collected through this survey to expose trends that might help us think particularly about the liberal Jewish community.

There are other studies that have addressed Hanukkah practices in general, but none have focused solely on gift giving. For the past eight years, Interfaithfamily.com has distributed a survey about Hanukkah and Christmas practices. They said the goal of these surveys was to use the results to empower interfaith families and advocate on their behalf. Their 2011 survey had 484 respondents with 144 people in interfaith relationships.¹⁸⁰ Another survey, the 2011 Jewish Community Survey of New York, was more comprehensive, interviewing 5,993 people. The only question they asked about Hanukkah practice, however, was if respondents lit candles in their households. 68% of their respondents answered affirmatively, an 8% drop from 2002.¹⁸¹ According to their analysis, Hanukkah engagement dropped. It would have been interesting to

¹⁷⁹ Mandell, 16.

¹⁸⁰ Edmund Case, "What We Learned From the Eighth Annual December Holiday Survey," InterfaithFamily.com, 2011, <http://www.interfaithfamily.com/files/pdf/WhatWeLearnedfromthe2011DecemberHolidaysSurvey.pdf>.

¹⁸¹ Steven M. Cohen, Jacob B. Ukeles, and Ron Miller, *Jewish Community Study of New York: 2011: Comprehensive Report.*, report (New York: UJA Federation of New York, June 2012), 114.

know how many of their respondents gave Hanukkah gifts and whether that number stayed the same over the course of the last ten years. One wonders whether Hanukkah engagement actually dropped or if it was just the practice of lighting Hanukkah candles that dropped. Asking more expansive questions about gift giving allows us to examine non-traditional ritual practices that touch American Jews in a different and more expansive way than lighting candles.

The goal of this survey is to examine what factors led people to participate in different elements of the gift giving ritual so that we can better understand what people are doing and why. This will shed contemporary light on various issues that arose in the second chapter, including giving Judaica, giving *tzedakah*, and the wide variety of issues facing interfaith families and Jews by Choice. I hope to use this information to help people deepen their gift giving practice through Jewish tradition as a way of solidifying and enhancing identity. I looked at how a person's Jewish education, involvement in Jewish life, age, marital status, and whether they have children in the home impact their participation in a number of areas of the practice.

We will frame this discussion through the following four topics:

1. The prevalence of Hanukkah gift giving.
2. The types of gifts that are given for Hanukkah.
3. The extent to which *tzedakah* is given as Hanukkah gift.
4. How Christmas and Hanukkah practices compare for interfaith families, Jews by Choice, and Jews who were born Jewish *and* are currently single or married.

Overall, those between the ages of 30 and 59, who are married, and with children in the home participated at higher levels than those in other life stages. More involved Jews who were proud of their Jewish identity participated in the practice more than those who were minimally engaged. Interfaith families and Jews by choice understood celebrating Christmas as distinct from giving Christmas gifts. More people in both groups celebrated Hanukkah more than Christmas but gave Christmas gifts at higher levels than Hanukkah gifts. Throughout the analysis, we will explore each of these findings in greater depth as a way to pull out meaning, particularly in the context of what I discovered in Chapter 2.

Giving Hanukkah Gifts

Overall, 89% of total respondents reported giving gifts for Hanukkah. This number is high for participation in a religious ritual. Respondents also answered questions about what else they did to celebrate Hanukkah. Only two other practices, lighting candles (97%) and eating special foods for the holiday (90%) were higher than gift giving. The next most popular practices were: attending or hosting a party or dinner (56%) and decorating the home with Hanukkah decorations (54%). This is fascinating because it shows how quickly a custom can rise in popularity. While eating special foods and lighting candles have been connected to Hanukkah celebrations for years, gift giving didn't take hold until the 20th century. The fact that it arose as part of larger American culture signifies the extent to which American Jews are influenced by greater American society.

It is important to note that 89% participation is significantly higher than participation levels reported in the 2011 Jewish Community Study of New York. As stated above, only 68% of their

respondents lit Hanukkah candles. This practice was second only to those who attended a Passover Seder (69%).¹⁸² These numbers were consistent with the 2000-2001 NJPS, even with the ten-year gap. The NJPS reported 72% who lit candles and 77% who attended a Passover Seder.¹⁸³ This means that my study, which reported 97% participation in lighting candles, pooled from a generally more active population. As we go forward, we must not make overarching statements about the Jewish community as a whole. Of the 3% (34 people) who did not light candles, 65% gave gifts. Though a small sample of people, this data tells us that there are at least some people who give gifts but do not light candles.

We will start by examining how life stage impacted whether one gave Hanukkah gifts. Overall, it was not a determining factor but there were a number of interesting trends. Married individuals between the ages of 30-59 with children living at home were the most likely to give Hanukkah gifts. Of these three groups, those with children in the home were by far the most likely to give gifts (97%). Of all the other groups, single people were the least likely to give gifts (80%). In this case, age was probably less a factor in itself and more attributed to the fact that age also corresponds to whether one has children in the home. For example,

The fact that those 29 and under gave so infrequently (82%) is likely attributed more to the fact that they are also less likely to be married and have children in their home than to their age.

These findings align with what was discovered in chapter two. Since the beginning of the 20th century, Jewish professionals encouraged Hanukkah gift giving as a way to foster Jewish pride in children who saw their peers receiving Christmas gifts. Though manufacturers also marketed

¹⁸² Cohen, 6.

¹⁸³ Mandell, 7.

(and still market) to adults, gift giving is still primarily understood as a child driven practice to the point where almost all Jewish leaders who addressed the topic talked almost exclusively about its impact on children. This will be significant when we start to think about ways to infuse the practice with Jewish tradition.

Similar to life stage, one's involvement in Jewish life was not a huge factor in determining whether one gave Hanukkah gifts. That said, there were a number of interesting findings and one significant exception worth exploring. Not surprisingly, those who reported average or high Jewish involvement participated in the practice the most (92%). There was also a high correlation between Jewish education and gift giving. Jewish professionals were slightly more likely to give gifts (91%), followed by those who attended religious school (90%), camp or youth group (89%), or who took an adult education class (88%). Those with no Jewish education participated in the practice less (85%). This data shows that while the form was not important, Jewish education was a factor. While 85% participation is still high, it is a significant drop from those who had various educational experiences.

Table 1a: Percentage of those who gave Hanukkah gifts according to life stage	
29 and under	82%
Ages 30-59	93%
60 +	88%
Married	93%
Single	80%
Children living in Home	97%
No children Living in Home	84%

This shows a positive correlation between Jewish education and gift giving and suggests that gift giving is very highly associated with Hanukkah observance. It is particularly interesting that Jewish professionals participated in gift giving at the highest level given the number of leaders who have discouraged the practice in various articles and blog posts. The data serves as a reminder that a few strong voices are not always reflective of popular opinion.

The most interesting result is the comparatively low participation (55%) of Jews who are minimally active and do not connect strongly to their Jewish identity in comparison to the average participation (88%) of Jews who are minimally active but are proud of their Jewish identity. Both groups are minimally active, which means that participation in Jewish life had almost no impact on whether a person chose to give Hanukkah gifts. The determining factor was Jewish identity. Those who are proud of their Jewish identity gave only 1% less than respondents as a whole while those who do not connect strongly with their Jewish identity gave 34% less than respondents as a whole. This data suggests a number of things. First, for those who are minimally active but proud of their Jewish identity, Hanukkah gift giving is one of the few Jewish practices they engage in all year. This means that there is something more compelling about this practice than other aspects of Jewish life. My guess is that the popularity of Hanukkah and the larger holiday season in American culture was an influential factor. Participating in Hanukkah, for these people, is a way to express their Jewish identity at a time when others are expressing their Christian identity by celebrating Christmas. For whatever reason, those who are minimally active and do not connect strongly to Judaism did not feel as compelled to participate in this otherwise overwhelmingly popular practice. It is also interesting to note that 46% of these Jews are members of an interfaith family. This means that for this

46%, their spouse's religion may be the dominant household religion and that they give Christmas and not Hanukkah gifts. It could also be that these people are simply not interested in religion or do not support the commercialization of the holiday season.

Table 1b: Percentage who gave Hanukkah gifts according to Jewish education and Jewish identity	
No Jewish Education	85%
Attended Religious School	90%
Attended or worked at Jewish summer camp or Jewish youth group	89%
Took Jewish classes as an adult	88%
Jewish Professional	91%
Described Jewish involvement the rest of the year as “very or somewhat active”	92%
Described Jewish involvement the rest of the year as “minimally active but proud of Jewish identity”	88%
Described Jewish involvement the rest of the year as “minimally active and do not connect strongly to Jewish identity”	55%

It is also important to explore the reasons why people reported giving gifts for Hanukkah. As we look at the responses to Question 23 of the survey below, we must acknowledge that respondents could check more than one answer. We do not know how many people chose multiple answers or how these people might rank certain reasons over others. We must also acknowledge that this chart does not describe how various cohorts answered this question, making it harder to determine conclusive statements about what factors might have led people to answer the way they did. That said it still gives us a broad understanding of why people participate in the practice. Significantly more people reported giving gifts because it is enjoyable or personally fulfilling than because it creates a connection to Judaism or Jewish identity. This affirms the

extent to which gift giving has seeped into American culture as an enjoyable and fulfilling ritual. For many people, Hanukkah is an excuse to participate in a practice they enjoy regardless of whether the practice feels Jewish. Even though Jewish professionals encourage people to give gifts as to enhance Jewish identity, most people do not operate through this framework.

It is interesting that only 18.9% reported that Hanukkah gift giving makes them feel Jewish, while 30.9% reported that it is a way to instill a positive Jewish identity, particularly at this time of year. This would suggest that while the process isn't Jewishly meaningful for them personally, they hope it will be for the person who they are giving to. Only 33.3% said they believe gift giving reflects the spirit of the holiday, suggesting that the majority of respondents recognize that gift giving was not an ancient Hanukkah custom. This shows a willingness of the majority of respondents to embrace a custom that is not directly connected to the holiday. It is also interesting that so many more people said that they give gifts to instill a positive Jewish identity, particularly at this time of year (30.9%), than those who said they gave gifts because

23. Why did you give Hanukkah gifts to friends and family? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
I genuinely enjoy picking this out/creating something special that I know my loved ones will like	422	68.6%	Total Responses	615
I love the feeling of seeing others happy	390	63.4%		
It makes me feel Jewish	116	18.9%		
I believe it reflects the spirit of the holiday	205	33.3%		
I don't want my children to feel left out during the Christmas season	60	9.8%		
It is a way to instill a positive Jewish identity, particularly at this time of year.	190	30.9%		
I know that others are going to give to me, so I want to give to them in return	165	26.8%		
I don't want to give gifts, but I know that it is the cultural expectation and I don't feel like I have a choice	71	11.5%		
Other	44	7.2%		

they don't want their children to feel left out during the Christmas season (9.8%). This is a significant difference that speaks to the way Hanukkah developed during the 20th century. As

discussed in chapter two, Jews in the early and mid 20th century fought hard to elevate Hanukkah to the same level as Christmas. Today, however, American Jews are more secure in their religious difference and do not feel threatened by Christmas.

Giving Jewish Gifts

Throughout the 20th century, Jewish professionals have encouraged Jews to buy Jewish-specific gifts for Hanukkah for two primary reasons. The first was to increase Jewish identity throughout the rest of the year, and the second was to differentiate Hanukkah from Christmas since Christmas was traditionally not centered on giving religious gifts. While we know manufacturers produced these products and synagogue gift shops sold them, we do not know how many Jews actually gave Jewish items during Hanukkah. In this section, we seek to discover the extent to which Jews today have embraced the concept of giving Jewish gifts for Hanukkah.

Before we explore how many people gave Jewish gifts, it is important to note that there are many different categories of Jewish gifts that have changed over time. *Gelt* has historical connections, both to the book of Maccabees and to the 18th century, when it was introduced as a way for children to honor their teachers. Today, it is a popular holiday chocolate that is wrapped in gold foil and resembles money. The menorah is the most ancient ritual item, dating back to biblical times. The rabbis of the Talmud instituted extensive laws regarding the menorah, and the tradition of lighting candles is one of the most popular practices amongst Jews today. The game of dreidel is not actually Jewish in origin, but borrowed from an English and Irish game called Totum that became popular around Christmastime in the 1500s. European Jews adopted the

game, changed the name and the words on the side of the dreidel.¹⁸⁴ The game was played during Hanukkah because Hanukkah was an exception to otherwise forbidden laws against gambling.¹⁸⁵ Today, dreidels have exploded in popularity and have also become popular gifts on Hanukkah. The last category of Jewish gifts, Hanukkah books and toys, arose in the 20th century as a way to engage American Jewish youth. Endless manufacturers are producing these books and toys and selling them on popular sites like Amazon.com

Jewish professionals encouraged all these gifts as a way to differentiate Hanukkah from Christmas given that Christian children did not typically receive religious gifts. That said, today there is a massive market for religious Christmas gifts and even though there is no data documenting how many people buy these gifts, there is undoubtedly a solid population of people who buy them. Not surprisingly, many of the religious Jewish gifts for Hanukkah have a Christian equivalent. One could compare *gelt* with candy canes, Hanukkah books and toys with Christmas books and toys, menorahs with Christmas trees, Advent calendars, or Nativity scenes, and non-Hanukkah specific Judaica with Christian icons, like the cross. There is no Christian equivalent to a dreidel in American culture today, though one could compare it to Elf On A Shelf. Elf On A Shelf is a book and an interactive hide-and-seek type game introduced in 2004 to encourage children to behave well so that the Elf will report their behavior back to Santa.¹⁸⁶ Though different from dreidel, the game aspect of it, along with its immense popularity, bring the two together. On the other hand, Elf on the Shelf has a moralistic and religious undertone

¹⁸⁴ David Golinkin, "The Origin of the Dreidel," My Jewish Learning, section goes here, accessed March 1, 2013,

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/holidays/Jewish_Holidays/Hanukkah/At_Home/Dreidel.shtml.

¹⁸⁵ Michael Strassfeld, Betsy Platkin. Teutsch, and Arnold M. Eisen, *The Jewish Holidays: A Guide and Commentary* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), 168.

¹⁸⁶ "Elf on the Shelf," section goes here, accessed March 1, 2013, <http://www.elfontheshelf.com/en-us/home.aspx>.

while dreidel is a simple game of chance. Though these are all postulations that cannot be measured, we must acknowledge their potential influence as we explore the results from the survey. For example, the fact that *gelt* is the most popular Jewish gift may be due in large part to the fact that *gelt* is sold alongside candy canes in many grocery stores during December.

Overall, there were a relatively large number of people who gave Jewish gifts. The chart documenting responses to question 18 shows that *Gelt* was the most popular Jewish gift (28%), followed by dreidels (19.8%), Hanukkah books and toys (18.7%), non-Hanukkah-specific Judaica (11.1%), and menorahs (9%). While these numbers do not compare with secular books (68.9%), toys (52.8%), and clothes (55.6%), they still show that many people engaged in the practice. It is not surprising that *gelt* was the most popular Jewish gift given how prevalent and inexpensive it is. *Gelt* is also disposable and must be given each year, where as all the other items can be kept from year to year. Dreidels, *gelt*, and books and toys are not only cheaper than menorahs and other Judaica, but they are more enticing children's gifts, which could be why they were more popular.

18. What types of gifts did you give for Hanukkah? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
Toys	328	52.8%	Total	621
Books	428	68.9%	Responses	
Jewelry	225	36.2%		
Clothes	345	55.6%		
Money	222	35.8%		
Home-made gift	163	26.3%		
Donation to a charity	182	29.3%		
Gelt	174	28.0%		
Dreidel	123	19.8%		
Menorah	56	9.0%		
Hanukkah specific books or toys	116	18.7%		
Other Judaica not specific to Hanukkah	69	11.1%		
Other	133	21.4%		

The data from the survey also provided interesting insight into the various factors that led Jews to give different types of Jewish gifts. As we look at table 2a, it is important to acknowledge that the percentages are only reflective of those who gave Jewish gifts, not of all the respondents in the survey. To illustrate this point, the table shows that 17% of the respondents who gave *gelt* were 29 years old or younger. This can only be understood in light of the fact that 29% of all those surveyed were of the same age category. This means that this age group gave correspondingly less *gelt* than would have otherwise been expected per their percentage of total respondents (29%). Those 29 and younger were underrepresented in all categories of Jewish gift giving. This was particularly true for Hanukkah books and toys, where they represented only 6%. Those between the ages of 30 and 59, on the other hand, were correspondingly more likely to buy Jewish gifts, particularly Hanukkah books and toys (76%), than would have been expected per their percentage of total respondents (57%). Overall, those between the ages of 35 and 59, married, and with children in the home, gave correspondingly more Jewish gifts than their counterparts. It is not surprising that these are the same cohorts who were most likely to give gifts in general. Once again, those with children in the home were the most extreme. Only 38% of all survey respondents had children in the home, but these respondents accounted for 59% of those who gave Jewish gifts! This shows that giving gifts, particularly Jewish gifts, is still centered on children.

Each life stage group gave the various types of Jewish gifts at relatively similar rates, with a handful of exceptions. One might think that having children in the home would lead to giving Hanukkah books and toys at a higher rate. This group, however, gave books and toys at a comparatively similar rate to all other Jewish gifts (approximately 62%), with the exception of

menorahs (50%). This tells us a number of things. First, it tells us that no one type of Jewish gift is particularly dominant over others for those with children in the home. This is significant because it suggests that parents embrace different Jewish elements of the holiday and place almost equal importance on Judaica as they do on *gelt* or toys. This shows that this cohort of people have embraced the message set forth by Jewish professionals to use Hanukkah gift giving as an opportunity to increase Jewish engagement in a variety of areas.

Table 2a: Who gave Jewish gifts for Hanukkah *% Determined per gift category, not according to total number of respondents							
		% of total respondents	Gelt	Dreidel	Hanukkah books or toys	Other Judaica	Menorah
Age	29 and under	29%	17%	15%	6%	16%	18%
	30 - 59	57%	69%	72%	76%	65%	63%
	60 +	15%	14%	13%	18%	19%	18%
Marital status	Married	65%	80%	82%	88%	75%	84%
	Not married	35%	20%	18%	12%	25%	16%
Children in the home	Yes	38%	59%	64%	63%	60%	50%
	No	62%	41%	36%	37%	40%	50%

Cohorts grouped according to Jewish identity and synagogue affiliation gave Jewish gifts more consistent with their corresponding percentage of total respondents. The variations highlight how active Jews gave various types of Jewish gifts. Active Jews were correspondingly 4% less likely to give *gelt* but 12% more likely to give Judaica. This is interesting because it shows that, unlike people with children in the home, they place different value on different types of Jewish gifts. They place the highest value on Judaica (+12%), followed by Hanukkah books and toys and menorahs (+8%), followed by dreidels (+2%), and then *gelt* (-4%). This is in many ways a reflection of the position laid out by Jewish professionals in chapter two, who encouraged Jews

to use Hanukkah gifts as an opportunity to increase Jewish participation and identity throughout the year. It shows that many active Jews have embraced the message by giving non-Hanukkah specific Judaica.

There was a positive correlation between synagogue affiliation and giving Jewish gifts. While only 67% of total respondents are affiliated with a synagogue, these respondents were between 11% (*gelt*) and 20% (Judaica) more likely to give Jewish gifts. This suggests that, like active Jews, the message put forward by Jewish professionals is getting through to those who belong to congregations. It could also be that those who belong to congregations are also more active, and that their responses are a greater reflection of their involvement than their affiliation.

Table 2b: Who gave Jewish gifts for Hanukkah *% Determined per gift category, not according to total number of respondents							
		% of total respondents	Gelt	Dreidel	Hanukkah books or toys	Other Judaica	Menorah
Jewish identity	Very active	46%	42%	48%	52%	58%	52%
	Somewhat active	27%	35%	36%	30%	32%	34%
	Minimally active but proud of Jewish identity	22%	18%	14%	15%	7%	11%
	Minimally active and do not connect strongly with Jewish identity	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Synagogue affiliation	Yes	67%	78%	80%	86%	87%	80%
	No	32%	22%	20%	14%	13%	20%

Giving Tzedakah

Though the practice of giving *tzedakah* dates back to biblical times, giving *tzedakah* as a way to celebrate Hanukkah arose in the 20th century as part of a larger trend to give back during the holiday season. Many Jewish professionals and lay leaders have encouraged Jews to embrace this aspect of the holiday spirit. There have been numerous articles and sermons urging Jews to either replace or supplement giving gifts to friends and families by giving *tzedakah*, both to other Jews in need and to the greater world. This sentiment has seeped into the consciousness of American Jews in a number of ways.

Overall, 45% of total respondents gave *tzedakah* as a way of celebrating Hanukkah. This means that people gave *tzedakah* less than they gave gifts generally (89%), but more than they gave Jewish gifts (average of 17%). It is interesting that more people have embraced *tzedakah* than Jewish gifts as a way to infuse gift giving with Jewish tradition. This likely speaks to the pervasiveness of giving back during the holiday season in greater American culture. Stories of giving to those in need are more likely to touch emotions than stories of giving ritual objects.

There were a variety of factors that affected whether a person gave *tzedakah*. Life stage had a similar effect on how one gave *tzedakah* as it did for both general and Jewish gifts. Married individuals between the ages of 30 and 59 with children in the home were most likely to give *tzedakah* for Hanukkah. It is interesting to compare how Jews in these various life stages also gave *tzedakah* throughout the rest of the year. According to the 2011 Jewish Community Survey of New York, older Jews were most likely to give and youngest Jews were least likely to give.¹⁸⁷ This is a point of contrast from my survey and suggests that while older Jews give more *tzedakah*

¹⁸⁷ Cohen, 198.

throughout the year, they have not embraced the assertion that *tzedakah* is connected to Hanukkah to the same extent as middle aged Jews. If middle aged Jews who are married with children in the home give at the highest rates, it means there is potential for growth in the area. The message is clearly getting through at relatively large rates.

Table 3a: Percentage of those who gave <i>tzedakah</i> according to life stage	
29 and under	34%
Ages 30-59	51%
60 +	43%
Married	47%
Single	39%
Children Living in Home	50%
No Children Living in Home	42%

Jewish engagement had varying degrees of affect on whether one gave *tzedakah* for Hanukkah. There was a positive correlation between Jewish identity and synagogue affiliation, while Jewish education was not significant. The most fascinating result from table 3b is that people who reported no Jewish education gave *tzedakah* at the highest rate (51%), even higher than Jewish professionals (48%)! Across the board, all educational experiences were close to the average rate of all respondents (45%), suggesting that Jewish education was not a determining factor. The fact that Jewish professionals were less likely to give *tzedakah* than those with no education could mean a couple of things. First, it could highlight the wide range of opinions that exist amongst Jewish professionals about whether *tzedakah* is actually connected to Hanukkah. Though Jewish professionals are unlikely to ever discourage *tzedakah*, some make a conscious effort to emphasize other elements of Hanukkah. This data could also suggest that Jewish

education is either not a forum through which Jewish professionals encourage *tzedakah*, or it is an ineffective forum.

This does not mean that Jewish engagement was not a factor in determining whether one gave *tzedakah* for Hanukkah. There were significant differences between active and affiliated Jews in comparison to minimally involved and unaffiliated Jews. This means that formal education experiences are not nearly as important as affiliation or active participation in Jewish life beyond Hanukkah. In thinking about how to reach out to people who are already Jewishly engaged, it is more effective to relate *tzedakah* to what it means to live an active Jewish life. For these people, who are already familiar with the notion of *tzedakah*, the task is to help them determine if and how *tzedakah* can enhance their celebration of Hanukkah in a Jewish way.

Table 3b: Percentage who gave <i>tzedakah</i> according to Jewish education and Jewish identity	
No Jewish Education	51%
Attended Religious School	42%
Attended or worked at Jewish summer camp or Jewish youth group	44%
Took Jewish classes as an adult	48%
Jewish Professional	48%
Described Jewish involvement the rest of the year as “very or somewhat active”	50%
Described Jewish involvement the rest of the year as “minimally active but proud of Jewish identity”	32%
Described Jewish involvement the rest of the year as “minimally active and do not connect strongly to Jewish identity”	25%
Affiliated with a synagogue	55%
Not affiliated with a synagogue	29%

It is also interesting to consider why Jews reported giving *tzedakah* for Hanukkah. As we look at the chart below, it is important to note that respondents could choose more than one answer. We do not know how people might have ranked these reasons in order of importance. Not surprisingly, the highest number of people (41.1%) said that giving *tzedakah* on Hanukkah is an extension of their commitment to giving *tzedakah* throughout the rest of the year. This affirms that if the goal is to increase the number of people who give *tzedakah* on Hanukkah, one might focus on those who already give *tzedakah* throughout the rest of the year. It is fascinating to explore the people who said that they give *tzedakah* because they believe it reflects the spirit of the holiday. While Jewish education was not related to whether one gave *tzedakah*, it was related to whether a person believed it reflected the spirit of the holiday. Of those who believed it did, 70% attended religious school, 66% took classes as an adult, 54% attended summer camp or youth group, 36% were Jewish professionals, and 5% had no Jewish education. This suggests that Jewish education positively influences a person to believe accepted truths that seem feasible but are not historically accurate. Once that person reaches a higher level of Jewish education, however, many commonly held beliefs start to fall apart. While many make the argument to reclaim *tzedakah* in the spirit of Hanukkah, historically it has not been an integral theme of the holiday. Somehow, thanks to a handful of well-meaning Jewish professionals and lay leaders seeking to play down consumerism and increase good deeds during the holiday

25. If you gave *tzedakah* (money for a charitable cause in pursuit of justice) or participated in a social justice project for Hanukkah, why did you do it? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
I did not give <i>tzedakah</i> for Hanukkah	219	45.9%	Total Responses	477
I believe it reflects the spirit of the holiday	103	21.6%		
I believe I have a responsibility to give <i>tzedakah</i> on Hanukkah (and throughout the year)	196	41.1%		
It makes me feel good about myself	90	18.9%		
It is an important lesson for my children	124	26.0%		
Other	19	4.0%		

season, the belief that *tzedakah* reflects the spirit of Hanukkah seeped into the consciousness of many educated Jews.

The role of Christmas

This section examines how different demographics of people celebrate and give gifts for Christmas in comparison to Hanukkah. The different demographics include interfaith families, Jews by Choice, and Jews who were born Jewish and are not part of an interfaith family. The sample sizes are smaller, which means these findings are not reflective of these populations as a whole. 172 people reported that not all members of their immediate family were Jewish. Going forward, I will refer to these people as those in an interfaith family. The respondents could be the Jewish partner, the non-Jewish partner, the children of a non-Jewish parent, or the parents of a child who left Judaism. We will be talking about these people as a group but it is important to acknowledge that the person's role in the family might have had an effect on how they responded to the questions. 70 people reported converting to Judaism and 487 people reported that they were both born Jewish and that all members of their immediate family are Jewish. I did not ask questions about the level of Jewish engagement of a person's spouse, children, or parents, which are all factors that could have had an effect on how a person responded to these questions. I will do my best to glean information based on the data I do have.

Those who are part of an interfaith family

Overall, 52% of all interfaith families in this survey celebrate Christmas. We do not know whether multiple people from the same family answered this survey. If this occurred with frequency, it could distort some of my findings. Based on the data I collected, the demographics

most likely to celebrate Christmas were those 29 and under (59%), those with children in the home (57%), and those minimally active but proud of their Jewish identity (64%). Those least likely to celebrate Christmas were those over 60 (39%) and those who were somewhat or very active Jewishly (64%). This data may be a reflection of the different roles a person inhabits in the family. Those under 29 are more likely to be children of interfaith families and are therefore reporting a continuation of a practice they experienced as children. Those over 60, on the other hand, are not as likely to still have children in the home. They also grew up during a time when there were not as many interfaith families and are therefore more likely to be partners in an interfaith relationship, as opposed to children of one. If this is true, that means the data highlights that children of interfaith families are more likely to celebrate Christmas than their parents.

In regards to Jewish engagement, it is not surprising that those who were more Jewishly active celebrated Christmas less. This suggests what many would already believe. The more time an interfaith family spends doing Jewish things, the more attached they are to Judaism and the less likely they are to feel the desire to celebrate Christmas. Since this is not surprising, it is therefore more interesting to examine the difference between those who are proud of their Jewish identity and those who do not connect to their Jewish identity.

Those who were not connected to their Jewish identity actually celebrated Christmas slightly less (60%) than those who were proud of their Jewish identity (64%). This is the opposite of what one might think given what we discovered from Table 1b, which showed that those who did not connect to their Jewish identity gave Hanukkah gifts significantly less (55%) than those who

were proud of their Jewish identity (88%). Given this, one might think that people who were not active and not connected to Judaism would be the most likely to celebrate Christmas. Instead, however, they actually celebrated Christmas less than those who were proud of their Jewish identity. This suggests that when it comes to celebrating Christmas, Jewish pride was not a significant factor for interfaith families. It is possible that these people are not connected to any religious tradition and chose not to celebrate Hanukkah or Christmas. It is also possible that they participate in Christmas rituals but do not believe that participation in these rituals constitutes celebrating the holiday. The data could also simply be a reflection of the small sample size. Though we do not know the reason why people who do not connect to their Jewish identity celebrate Christmas less than those who are proud of their Jewish identity, it does tell us that for minimally active Jews, Jewish identity was not a significant factor in relation to celebrating Christmas.

The next category in Table 4a measures how those who reported celebrating Christmas did so in comparison to Hanukkah. This data is important because it helps clarify what role the Christmas celebration played for families discussed above. Here we see that Jewish involvement *and* Jewish pride were both significant factors. Involvement was the most significant factor, leading the highest percentage of people (54%) to celebrate Hanukkah more than Christmas. Amongst those minimally active but proud of their Jewish identity, most (55%) tried to celebrate the two holidays equally. 50% of those minimally active and not connected to their Jewish identity celebrated the two equally, 50% celebrated Christmas more, and zero celebrated Hanukkah more than Christmas. This is significant, particularly in comparison to the fact that 28% of those minimally active and proud of their Jewish identity celebrated Hanukkah more than Christmas.

This means that there is a correlation between Jewish engagement and how Christmas celebrations compare to Hanukkah celebrations. Those who were very or somewhat active celebrated Hanukkah more than Christmas at higher levels than those who were minimally active. This could be for a number of reasons. Those who are more Jewishly engaged are more likely to feel a greater commitment to Judaism and thus more committed to celebrating Hanukkah more than Christmas. It could also be because they receive more pressure from their Jewish community to celebrate Hanukkah more. Perhaps they want to send a message to their children that while they celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah is their primary holiday.

Minimally active but proud Jews wouldn't have these same pressures from the community and might not be as invested in elevating their Jewish identity over their Christian identity. Perhaps the reason the majority of this group celebrated equally was because they were intentionally trying to set their two identities as equal. Just because they reported feeling proud of their Jewish identity, doesn't mean that they don't feel equally proud of their Christian identity. It could also be that they were not thinking about the celebrations as a reflection of their identity and that the celebrations simply happened to be similar.

The last category in Table 4a measures how all interfaith families, even those who did not celebrate Christmas, gave Christmas gifts. This is an important distinction from the last category and serves as a reminder that many interfaith families (57%) reported giving Christmas gifts but did not report celebrating Christmas. This means that for these people, giving Christmas gifts does not mean that they are celebrating Christmas. By far the most popular reason (72%) these people gave for giving Christmas gifts was that they were helping their non-Jewish family

members celebrate their holiday. 13% said they had positive memories of Christmas and didn't think there was anything wrong with giving gifts, and 17% said they didn't want to give gifts but felt that was the expectation of their family. The high percentage that said they are helping their non-Jewish family celebrate Christmas means that these people understood gift giving as integral to Christmas. This is an innovative approach to the ritual, suggesting that one can participate as a way to facilitate the celebration for others, not for oneself.

One of the most interesting findings in Table 4a is that across all life stages the majority of people celebrate Hanukkah more than they do Christmas. At the same time, the majority of people gave more gifts for Christmas than they did for Hanukkah. The only exception is that an equal number of people over the age of 60 either celebrated either Christmas or Hanukkah more. Even for this age group, however, a greater percentage of people gave more Christmas gifts than they gave Hanukkah gifts. This is fascinating because it suggests that giving Christmas gifts is not necessarily seen as a determining expression of celebrating Christmas. If it were, these people might have reported celebrating Christmas more than Hanukkah. In the same way that people can give Christmas gifts without celebrating Christmas, people can also give more Christmas gifts than Hanukkah gifts but still report celebrating Hanukkah more than Christmas. This suggests that when determining which rituals to participate in for each holiday, gift giving is associated more with Christmas than it is for Hanukkah. It is important to note that for all life stages other than those between 30 and 59 and people with children in the home, the most popular way of approaching gift giving was to give equally for both. It is interesting that most people with children in the home (and those of an age most likely to have children in the home) gave more for Christmas. This again affirms that when choosing which rituals one will highlight

for each holiday, gift giving is most associated with Christmas, particularly for those with children. The only group that gave more Hanukkah gifts than Christmas gifts were those who were very or somewhat active Jewishly. Even this group only gave more Hanukkah gifts at a slightly higher percentage (37%) than they gave more Christmas gifts (36%), which is not statistically significant. This shows that even for active Jews, Christmas gift giving was nearly equal to Hanukkah gift giving. This suggests that active Jews who try to elevate Hanukkah over

Table 4a: How those in an interfaith family navigated Christmas and Hanukkah celebrations and gift giving								
	> 29	30-59	< 60	Children in home	No children in home	Very or somewhat Jewishly active	Minimally active, proud of J. identity	Minimally active, don't connect to J. identity
Celebrated Christmas	59 %	53 %	39 %	57%	47%	42%	64%	60%
Celebrated Christmas and Hanukkah equally	30 %	37 %	37 %	36%	34%	21%	55%	50%
Did more to celebrate Christmas	30 %	24 %	31.5 %	26%	27%	25%	18%	50%
Did more to celebrate Hanukkah	40 %	39 %	31.5 %	38%	39%	54%	28%	0%
Gave equally for Christmas and Hanukkah	41 %	34 %	40 %	24%	48%	27%	52%	37.5%
Gave more for Christmas	38 %	38 %	35 %	45%	30%	36%	32%	62.5%
Gave more for Hanukkah	22 %	27 %	25 %	31%	21%	37%	16%	0%

Christmas understand Christmas gift giving as a safe and appropriate practice that is perhaps least likely to threaten Jewish identity.

Jews by Choice

As we examine Christmas practices of Jews who converted to Judaism, we must keep in mind that the data does not reflect the larger population. That said, the data still provides a great snapshot of how Jews by Choice who have chosen to identify with liberal Judaism approach the delicate issues of celebrating and giving gifts for Christmas and Hanukkah. In Table 4b, there is no column for those who reported that they were minimally active and not connected to their Jewish identity. This is because zero respondents checked this box. This suggests that the process of converting leads a person to feel pride in their Jewish identity. As we look at the data in Table 4b, it helps to keep in mind that all those who celebrated Christmas or gave Christmas gifts did so with a sense of Jewish pride.

Overall, 27% of all Jews who converted celebrate Christmas. The demographics who celebrated Christmas at the highest rates were those 29 and under (45%), and those who were minimally active (33%). The relatively high number associated with those 29 and under could suggest that people struggle with how to approach Christmas in the first few years after converting. It is possible that with time, and the addition of children, people become more likely to solidify new practices and leave old practices behind. It is also possible that younger Jews by Choice approach religious celebration differently. Perhaps they do not feel the need to exclusively practice one religion, even if that is their primary identification. This would speak to the qualities of a generation that generally approaches identity with greater nuance and complexity.

Of those who celebrated Christmas, those who were most likely to do more to celebrate Hanukkah were those between the ages of 30-59 (72%), those with children in the home (81%), and those who were very or somewhat active (69%). These findings are not surprising. In regards to Jewish engagement, it makes sense that greater involvement in Jewish life corresponds to doing more to celebrate Hanukkah. In regards to life stage, it suggests that once a person had children, they become more likely to enhance Hanukkah celebrations in comparison to Christmas practices. Without children, it makes sense that a person would maintain traditions they grew up with. Once they had children, however, the desire to educate and infuse a Jewish identity for their children was strong enough to encourage a large percentage of people to change their personal practice.

For this reason, it is fascinating to compare how those with children in the home approached holiday celebrations in comparison to holiday gift giving. When it came to celebrating the holidays, 81% celebrated Hanukkah more while 19% celebrated Christmas more. None reported celebrating the two holidays equally. When it came to giving gifts however, 35% gave more Hanukkah gifts, 26% gave more Christmas gifts, and 39% gave equally. This suggests that like interfaith families with children in the home, Jews who converted differentiate between gift giving and celebrating the holiday. There were also significant differences between these two groups. 36% of those in interfaith families celebrated both holidays equally, while none of those who converted did so. This could be because a person in an interfaith family with children in the home might have pressure from a non-Jewish spouse to celebrate Christmas. Those who converted primarily married other Jews. This means they have a Jewish household with Jewish

children. Any external pressure to celebrate Christmas would be coming from immediate family members from their family of origin, not their family of choice. Pressure from a spouse about how to celebrate holidays in your home is significantly different than pressure from a parent or sibling. This difference probably accounts for how the two groups celebrated differently.

The fact that no one who converted celebrated Hanukkah and Christmas equally is also fascinating when we consider that 39% of these same people gave Hanukkah and Christmas gifts equally. Why did so many give gifts equally but nobody celebrated equally and why did 19% celebrate Christmas more? One might think the number would be lower given the fact that the conversion process and their spouse's Jewish identity would lead them to privilege a Jewish identity. While this was true for the vast majority (81%), I would have thought that this 19% would at the least celebrate the two equally. The fact that they did not tells us that as a whole, this group felt firm in their conviction to elevate one over the other. Despite the fact that they made firm decisions about how to celebrate the holidays with their spouse, these people all had non-Jewish parents and siblings who expected them to continue their Christmas traditions to varying degrees. Many saw gift giving as an opportunity to engage with these members of their family. The fact that so many people who did not celebrate Christmas, gave Hanukkah and Christmas gifts equally suggests a commitment to not allow Christmas to take a larger role than Hanukkah, even through gift giving.

Table 4b: How Jews who converted to Judaism navigated Christmas and Hanukkah celebrations and gift giving							
	> 29	30-59	< 60	Children in home	No children in home	Very or somewhat Jewishly active	Minimally active, proud of J. identity
Celebrated Christmas	45%	22%	29%	23%	30%	25%	33%
Celebrated Christmas and Hanukkah equally	25%	17%	0%	0%	35%	9%	44%
Did more to celebrate Christmas	38%	10%	50%	19%	20%	22%	11%
Did more to celebrate Hanukkah	38%	72%	50%	81%	45%	69%	44%
Gave equally for Christmas and Hanukkah	43%	41%	0%	39%	38%	32%	60%
Gave more for Christmas	43%	21%	67%	26%	29%	29%	20%
Gave more for Hanukkah	14%	38%	33%	35%	33%	38%	20%

Of all those who said they did not celebrate Christmas but did give gifts, 90% said the reason they gave Christmas gifts was to help their non-Jewish family celebrate Christmas. 13% said they had positive memories of Christmas and didn't think there was anything wrong with giving gifts, and 16% said they didn't want to give gifts but felt that was the expectation from their families. These percentages are very similar to the percentages for people in interfaith families. This affirms that the primary reason why both groups gave Christmas gifts was to help their non-

Jewish family celebrate. This is significant for two reasons. First, as discussed above, it reflects the understanding that gift giving is a religious and not secular ritual. Second, it reflects the belief that when helping someone else celebrate their holiday, one can participate in rituals without threatening their identity. It would be interesting to find out whether these populations believe that this is true of other rituals as well, or if this sentiment is exclusive to gift giving. My sense is that it does expand beyond gift giving, which means that we are creating a new paradigm through which we understand what it means to participate in ritual. Gift giving is not the only ritual that does not require the giver to participate in any activity that takes on a religious flavor. One could make the same argument for other Christmas traditions like baking and eating Christmas cookies, or possibly even decorating someone else's tree. This is also true for Jewish rituals. At b'nai mitzvahs, many people invite non-Jewish family members to participate in rituals that are deemed acceptable, like English readings or blessings that do not make a declaration of Jewish identity. Despite the fact that there are countless examples of religious rituals that are deemed non-religiously threatening, there is yet no larger category in which to talk about these rituals. Perhaps it is time to create a category of ritual that reflects what it means to participate in rituals for another religious holiday without accepting the yoke of that other religion.

Jews who were born Jewish and who are not part of an interfaith family

Table 4c documents the extent to which Jews who were born Jewish and whose immediate family is Jewish celebrate and give gifts for Christmas and Hanukkah. This data sheds fascinating light onto how this demographic approaches Christmas. 6% of this demographic (30

out of 485 people) reported celebrating Christmas. While this percentage is low compared to interfaith families and those who converted to Judaism, it is still higher than one might think. It is hard to imagine why a Jew who was born Jewish and whose immediate family is Jewish would celebrate Christmas. The most likely scenario is that these people have a close extended family member or friend who has influenced them to celebrate Christmas. Perhaps some of these people have a spouse who converted to Judaism and celebrate Christmas because that spouse is still attached to Christmas. Perhaps they are dating someone who is not Jewish but do not consider them part of their immediate family yet. A third possibility is that these people are simply not connected to Judaism and celebrate Christmas with friends as a way to relate to American society. A fourth possibility is that some Jewish families maintained Christmas traditions that originated in the early 20th century, a time when it was popular for Jewish families to celebrate Christmas. Finally, it is possible that some Jews understood gift giving practices as intertwined with celebrating the holiday. By this logic, giving a Christmas gift, even to colleague or employee, could be understood as a celebration of the holiday. There are likely other possibilities, and we will never know for sure why these people choose to celebrate Christmas.

The only demographic that celebrated Christmas at a significantly higher rate was Jews who are minimally active and do not connect to their Jewish identity. Though we don't know the personal circumstance of these Jews, we do know that Jewish identity, not Jewish involvement, was the primary factor in leading a person to celebrate Christmas. Of those who celebrated Christmas, the vast majority of them reported celebrating Hanukkah more than they celebrated Christmas. The only exception was again those who are minimally active and don't connect

strongly to their Jewish identity. It is not clear why this is, other than that a low sense of Jewish pride leads to a lesser commitment to Judaism, and a greater likelihood of celebrating non-Jewish holidays, like Christmas.

This demographic gave Christmas gifts at a much higher rate than they celebrated Christmas. In total, 35% of this demographic gave Christmas gifts. This relatively high rate can only be understood by examining the reasons this group gave for giving gifts. According to the responses to question 42 below, 57.7% of people who gave gifts gave them to employees in appreciation for their work, 42.9% gave them to non-Jewish family members as a way to help them celebrate their holiday, and 29.4% gave them because they were invited to a Christmas party and understood that gift giving was an appropriate custom. All of these responses must be

42. If you are Jewish and gave gifts for Christmas last year, why did you do so? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
I consider myself both Jewish and Christian	1	0.6%	Total	170
Even though I fully embrace my Jewish identity, I just can't give up Christmas	5	2.9%	Responses	
I have positive memories of Christmas and do not feel like there is anything wrong with giving gifts on Christmas	7	4.1%		
I am helping my non-Jewish family members celebrate their holiday by giving to them	73	42.9%		
I prefer not to, but this is the expectation in my family and I do not feel like I have a choice	5	2.9%		
I was invited to someone's Christmas celebration and understood that this was the custom	50	29.4%		
I want to express my appreciation for all that my employees (including doormen, mail carrier, etc) do	98	57.7%		
Other	23	13.5%		

understood as distinct from responses that suggest people gave gifts as part of their own celebration. These responses highlight the fact that this population also believes it is possible to

participate in the ritual of gift giving, but only as a way to help others celebrate their holiday. This is true not only for extended family members, but also for friends, colleagues, and employees.

Knowing this, it is interesting to look back at Table 4c to examine how Christmas gift giving compared to Hanukkah gift giving for this population. Other than Jews who were 60 and older, all demographics gave equally for Christmas and Hanukkah at relatively high rates. This means that while many Jews only gave Christmas gifts to extended family, friends, colleagues, and employees, they actually spent the same amount on these gifts as they spent on Hanukkah gifts to their own family. This speaks to the pervasiveness of Christmas gift giving in American culture, suggesting that gift giving for Hanukkah is not as important as it is for Christmas. Why else would so many Jews who do not celebrate Christmas give Christmas gifts at the same level that they give Hanukkah gifts?

The data from Table 4c reminds us that interfaith families and Jews who converted are not the only ones who face difficult decisions about how they will celebrate and give gifts for Christmas and Hanukkah. So many more Jews today have non-Jewish extended family members who expect participation in Christmas gift giving rituals.

Table 4c: How Jews who were born Jewish and who's immediate family is Jewish navigated Christmas and Hanukkah celebrations and gift giving

	> 29	30-59	< 60	Children in home	No children in home	Very or somewhat Jewishly active	Minimally active, proud of J. identity	Minimally active, don't connect to J. identity
Celebrated Christmas	8%	5%	6%	6%	6%	5%	9%	25%
Celebrated Christmas and Hanukkah equally	8%	14%	5%	14%	9%	5%	19%	20%
Did more to celebrate Christmas	5%	2%	5%	0%	5%	1%	5%	20%
Did more to celebrate Hanukkah	87%	85%	90%	86%	86%	93%	76%	60%
Gave equally for Christmas and Hanukkah	29%	38%	10%	37%	28%	31%	32%	20%
Gave more for Christmas	22%	17%	25%	22%	18%	16%	24%	60%
Gave more for Hanukkah	56%	45%	65%	41%	54%	53%	45%	20%

Conclusion

The data in my survey provided an interesting snapshot of how a subset of the liberal Jewish world approaches Hanukkah gift giving today. A number of trends emerged that can hopefully guide Jewish professionals toward helping their congregants approach Hanukkah gift giving in a more meaningful and nuanced way.

The two most significant factors in determining how one approached the various subtopics was whether one had children in the home, and how Jewishly engaged a person was. Overall, active Jews with children in the home were more, and in many cases the most likely to give gifts in general, give Jewish gifts, and give *tzedakah*. They were also the most likely to give disproportionate responses in regards to navigating issues related to Christmas and Hanukkah.

Jews by Choice and interfaith families approached Christmas and Hanukkah very differently than Jews who were born Jewish and who are not part of an interfaith family. They celebrated Christmas more and gave more Christmas gifts in comparison to Hanukkah gifts. 52% of interfaith families celebrated Christmas, followed by 27% of Jews by Choice, and 6% of Jews who were born Jewish and are not in an interfaith family. The rate for giving gifts was higher for each group, with 78% participation from those in an interfaith family, 70% from Jews by choice, and 35% of Jews who were born Jewish and are not in an interfaith family. Additionally, we discovered that interfaith families and Jews by Choice celebrated Hanukkah more than Christmas but gave more Christmas gifts than Hanukkah gifts. All of this data shows that all people, but particularly interfaith families and Jews by Choice, created a distinction between giving Christmas gifts and celebrating Christmas. Overall, they were each more willing to give gifts than celebrate the holiday, suggesting that one can give gifts without actually participating in ritual itself. This was particularly true for Jews by Choice, who gave at a significantly higher rate (70%) than they celebrated (27%). This could speak to the fact that Jews by Choice are more committed to expressing a Jewish identity and do this by celebrating Hanukkah more than Christmas. At the same time, they are still intimately connected to their families of origin and

participate in Christmas gift giving as a way to connect to their family. They are navigating a significant identity shift, not only in terms of religious affiliation, but also in how they negotiate commitments to their family of origin. We will keep all these findings in mind as we transition to determining what implications this data has for Jewish leaders who work with each of these populations toward deepening their Jewish engagement.

Conclusion

Are Hanukkah gifts really Jewish? The answer to this question is an overwhelming yes. One might think that the prominent role Christmas has played in the development of the ritual might lead me to answer no to this question. However, the way Jews have engaged with Christmas has actually informed and enhanced the Jewish nature of the practice. Hanukkah gift giving is a beautiful example of the way that Jews create ritual. The process involves weaving together different aspects of one's identity by integrating norms from greater society with Jewish tradition and personal experience. Two Jewish leaders embraced this idea, framing my conclusion that Hanukkah gifts are Jewish specifically because of their connection to Christmas.

First, Rabbi Alvin Berkun described why gift giving is acceptable and appropriate for Hanukkah. He wrote:

*"One of the geniuses of Judaism for thousands of years is the way we've been able to take things out of the society in which we find ourselves and Judaize them, make them something of our own."*¹⁸⁸

Rabbi Berkun's point is true for Judaism in general, but is particularly apropos of the story of Hanukkah, leading to the second idea that frames the conclusion of this work. In his book *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*, Harvard Professor Shaye J.D. Cohen described what it meant to be a Hellenistic Jew during the Maccabean period:

*For most Jews, the ideal solution was to create a synthesis between Judaism and Hellenism... Sometimes it's hard to determine whether a phenomenon that appears in both Judaism and other forms of Hellenistic culture is to be attributed to the influence of one upon the other or to parallel development. As a participant group in Hellenistic culture, the Jews gave and received.*¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ Cohen, 34.

Many of these Hellenistic Jews fought alongside the Maccabees, determined to overcome discrimination and reintegrate into society. Cohen's description of this struggle shows that borrowing, adapting, and contributing to the larger culture as a way to stand up for Jewish identity is a reflection of the Hanukkah story. This means that we should embrace the way Jews have borrowed, adapted, and contributed to the contemporary holiday season, particularly gift giving. We must understand these efforts as a celebration of the spirit of Hanukkah. This understanding should inform the way that Jews approach Hanukkah gift giving, a topic that is widely practiced but does not receive a great deal of attention amongst Jews and Jewish professionals. By bringing attention and intention to the topic, Jewish leaders can help enhance the way Jews engage in the practice. This can be done through education and enhanced rituals.

Education

Since the 19th century, Jews have given holiday gifts as an expression of their changing religious, cultural, and personal identities. Jews in each time period wrestled with what it meant to be Jewish and American, and gift giving served as one of many ways Jews expressed their developing identities. That said, a relatively small percentage of Jews who participate in the practice today see it as an explicit expression of Jewish identity. While 89% of participants in my survey gave Hanukkah gifts, only 19% did so because it made them feel Jewish. This means that there is considerable work to do to help people draw connections between the practice and their Jewish identity. I suggest bringing people together, first to introduce the historical development of the practice and then to ask people to identify how their experiences connect to the Jewish story. It makes sense to categorize the historical development in four distinct eras that Jewish leaders can then present to their communities.

1850-1909: Jewish immigrants (primarily German Jews) saw Christmas as a secular holiday and a way to assimilate into American society. These Jews, including many reform rabbis and leaders, held Christmas parties in their homes, had Christmas trees, and gave Christmas gifts as a way to signify that they were truly American. Jewish leaders also introduced Hanukkah as a modern holiday where American Jews could see themselves as modern Maccabees by adapting Judaism and saving it from extinction.

1910-1939: Jewish leaders encouraged Jews to celebrate Hanukkah as an alternative to Christmas, urging them to engage in parallel rituals that affirmed their identity as both American and Jewish. As the first instances of Hanukkah gift giving emerged, Christmas gifts changed from being small, handmade gifts or inexpensive items to more expensive, useful items. Manufacturers targeted Christian and Jewish women as primary consumers whose primary responsibility was childrearing. Jewish leaders embraced this concept and encouraged women to create a Jewish home and give children Jewish gifts as a way to enhance engagement.

1940-1969: Hanukkah exploded in the Jewish world and reached the consciousness of Americans, elevating Hanukkah as the most popular and well known Jewish holiday. Jews moved to the suburbs alongside their Christian neighbors and the synagogue became the center of Jewish life. This era saw the introduction and explosion of synagogue gift shops as a venue through which Jewish women could buy items to create a Jewish home through gift giving.

1970-today: Jews no longer had to struggle to elevate Hanukkah as an alternative to Christmas and instead struggled with how to deal with the fact that two were seen as equal but different. This time period saw an increase in interfaith families and Jews by choice, contributing to the larger notion that American identity is fluid and complex. Jewish professionals reacted to these changing realities in a wide variety of ways. Many Jewish professionals admonished Jews and interfaith families for adapting or participating in Christmas practices and started to discourage Jews from giving gifts. *Tzedakah* also developed as a popular alternative for gift giving. Today, Jewish leaders talk about these issues with greater nuance and acceptance of the struggles so many face around this time of year.

As leaders facilitate conversations about these eras, they should help individuals discover their story in relation to the history. This means asking people how they identify with the different struggles Jews faced in each era. It also means asking people to uncover their family's gift giving story by encouraging conversations amongst different generations.

My survey also highlighted the fact that people engage in the practice differently according to a variety of factors, including: Jewish engagement, life stage (particularly if they had children in the home), and whether they were born Jewish or are part of an interfaith family. This means that ideally, Jewish education should look different for different groups of people.

Jewish engagement

My study showed that Jewish identity was more important than involvement in determining whether one gave Hanukkah gifts. This is significant for Jewish professionals who often

measure engagement based on participation, not identity. This means that when we reach out to the unaffiliated, we must focus on identity, not participation. Instead of encouraging Jews to give gifts that will then increase their participation in other Jewish rituals, we should encourage them to engage in conversations about how this ritual makes them feel Jewish. Encouraging Jews to name these feelings is a huge first step in deepening engagement, even for those who don't connect to their Jewish identity. The goal is not to convince people to participate more or even to change their identity. The goal is to help people identify where they are and deepen engagement through a shared practice.

Children in the home

By and large, gift giving is still a child-centric custom, both in regards to the way Jewish professionals talk about the topic, and according to participation levels of survey respondents. This knowledge should guide the way we talk to parents with children in the home, parents with children out of the home, and those without children. Meeting with parents with children in the home is a great opportunity to explore any number of topics. It would be interesting to talk about how not only Hanukkah, but also their Jewish lives in general, are centered on their children. Did their gift giving practices change when they had kids? How does this change reflect the greater shift that took place with parenthood? It is also an opportunity to talk about what values and traditions parents seek to impart on their children through the gift giving ritual. How does what they spend, what they give, and how they give it, reflect their values and Jewish identity? Meeting with parents of grown children provides the opportunity to talk about what it is like to celebrate holidays with adult children who may or may not be home for the holidays. Do they still give their children gifts and if so, how has the ritual changed? What does this say

about their changing Jewish identity as older adults? There are also great opportunities to talk about gift giving with those who do not have children. How have they maintained or altered traditions from their childhood and how do those changes reflect their changing Jewish identity? How do they feel about the fact that Hanukkah, and Judaism in general, often seems to be directed toward those with children?

Interfaith families and Jews by choice

Interfaith families and Jews by choice both distinguish between celebrating Christmas and giving Christmas gifts. Most of those who do not celebrate Christmas but do give Christmas gifts did so as a way to help their non-Jewish family celebrate the holiday. This finding relates to the popular idea, expressed on Interfaithfamily.com, that one day a year isn't going to make or break one's identity.¹⁹⁰ While the first idea suggests one can participate in a Christmas ritual without celebrating Christmas, and the second suggests one can celebrate Christmas without compromising Jewish identity, both offer a new framework for understanding what it means to participate in ritual. It would be fascinating to explore this question with interfaith families in an affirming and non-judgmental way.

It would be interesting to ask people what it means to be a participant in ritual. Is there something unique about gift giving that allows us to participate for others without participating for ourselves, or is this true for other rituals as well? If it is true for other rituals, how can we conceptualize this new category of ritual? I would also ask this population how Jewish professionals have helped them navigate the December Dilemma. Have they noticed a shift that

¹⁹⁰ Keen.

has taken place from the 1980s until today? Do they feel affirmed or admonished for the way they approach Christmas personally or with their extended family?

Jewish professionals have a responsibility to acknowledge the role Christmas gift giving plays for many interfaith families and Jews by choice, including active Jews. Instead of telling these families what practices to engage in, Jewish professionals should ask questions and acknowledge the fact that identity is not black and white and there must be room to live with the dissonance that comes from inhabiting a multifaceted identity. I believe it is crucial to encourage people to embrace all activities they engage in, instead of pretending that what they do one day a year doesn't matter. The challenges that come with Christmas, not only for interfaith families and Jews by choice, but for all American Jews, are great and complex. The most critical thing Jewish leaders can offer in the face of these challenges, is a strong sense of what it means to participate in Jewish rituals. While we can and must affirm people's decisions in relation to Christmas, when it comes to Hanukkah, we have the opportunity serve as a guide for enhancing practice and deepening identity through ritual.

Enhancing the Ritual of Hanukkah Gift Giving

Jewish professionals have tried to enhance Hanukkah gift giving in two primary ways: encouraging people to give Jewish gifts, and introducing *tzedakah* as an alternative or addition to gift giving. Both of these options are excellent ways to deepen Hanukkah gift giving rituals in the spirit of the holiday. Jewish professionals have suggested meaningful and innovative ideas for how to integrate these concepts into one's gift giving ritual. Instead of offering my own

parallel suggestions, I encourage people to explore their suggestions and determine how they might work for their lives. For a list of ideas, please turn to pages 7-10 in Appendix A.

My own innovation comes around the notion that we can connect our contemporary practice of Hanukkah gift giving to the gifts the Maccabees offered to God through sacrifice during the rededication of the altar. The ancient story is centered on a return to sacrifice, something that most Jews today don't emphasize given the fact that we no longer long for a return to sacrifice or the Temple period. That said, certain elements of the sacrificial experience remain at the core of who we are as a people and the way we connect to God. Most of my interpretations are based on the understanding that the way we relate to each other is a reflection of the way we relate to God. There are eight characteristics of sacrificial gifts that are connected to the Hanukkah story, each of which has the potential to enhance our ritual today. I'd like to offer suggestions for how to enhance the ritual of gift giving for each of the eight nights of Hanukkah according to the eight characteristics of sacrifice.

1. Sacrifice as a process of giving and consuming. The practice of sacrifice, at its core, involved Jews giving physical items that God would then consume. This practice suggests that God is sustained when we give God physical things that are precious to us.

How can you sustain someone else by giving up something that is precious to you? This could be a gift of *tzedakah* or it could be a personal gift to a loved one. Give a gift to someone that they will consume and sustain them physically and spiritually.

2. Giving sacrifices as an act of gratitude. The sacrifices the Maccabees offered during the rededication were sacrifices of gratitude for the ability to worship God again.

Give a gift of gratitude for someone you appreciate. The gift could relate to a specific act or a general sentiment. When you give the gift, offer a blessing of gratitude to the person either through spoken words or a written card.

3. Giving sacrifices as an act of praise. The Maccabees offered sacrifices praising God for the miracles God performed for their ancestors. The sacrifices praised God for God's glory.

Give a gift of praise to somebody who you think could benefit from words of praise.

Write the person a card telling them why they are awesome and deserving of praise.

4. Giving sacrifices as an act of initiation or dedication. The Maccabees gave gifts upon the rededication of the altar as a ritual act of commemoration.

Give a gift that commemorates a milestone in a person's life. Do you know somebody who just got a new job or promotion? Somebody who overcame a hardship or started a new chapter in their life? Give them a gift to commemorate the event.

5. Giving gifts to humans to facilitate sacrifice to God. In the dedication of the tabernacle, the chieftains gave gifts to others humans so that they could facilitate sacrifices to God. They gave gifts like silver bowls and basins that would then be used to worship God.

Give a gift that helps somebody connect to or worship God. This could be a traditional Jewish gift like a prayerbook or ritual item. It could also be something that speaks to the

way one of your loved ones connects to God. Maybe you want to give a yoga mat, pair of running shoes, or tickets to concert or show.

6. Giving gifts that celebrate our freedom to study Torah and live Jewish lives. The Maccabean victory over the Greeks marked a return to living free Jewish lives. Jews in the middle ages gave *gelt* as a way to celebrate and sweeten the freedom to study Torah.

Give a gift that celebrates your appreciation for a certain type of freedom that you enjoy.

This is a great opportunity to share one of your own passions with someone you love as a way to help them see and appreciate a freedom that you embrace.

7. Giving a gift to appease another person. One form of gift giving in the bible involved giving gifts to appease another. One example is when Jacob gave Esau a gift of reconciliation out of fear that he sought revenge for stealing their father's birthright many years earlier.

Give a gift of reconciliation to someone who you hurt. Offer spoken words of blessing and apology, or write a card that expresses your apology and desire for reconciliation.

8. Giving a gift as a way to establish a relationship. Another form of gift giving in the bible established relationships through exchange of physical items. One example is the bride-price that future husbands were expected to give to their future father-in-laws.

Give a gift that celebrates a new relationship in your life. Did you just meet a new friend or create a stronger connection with a colleague? Give a gift and let the person know what the new relationship means to you.

I hope that these ritual innovations can enable Jews to participate in Hanukkah gift giving practices in a way that reflects the spirit of the ancient story of Hanukkah. I plan to incorporate not only these rituals, but also the broader lessons gained from this work, into my own practice. Throughout the course of my learning, I struggled to determine how all these teachings could translate into the real issues that my husband and I face around the holidays. I've never had a solid answer for how to deal with Christmas and Hanukkah gifts, not only for myself but also now for our daughter whose extended family is $\frac{3}{4}$ non-Jewish. Despite my desire to honor my in-law's deep Christmas gift giving ritual, I've always felt slightly uncomfortable knowing that my daughter will receive many more Christmas gifts than she will Hanukkah gifts. Working on this thesis, however, has transformed the way I think, not only about this issue, but the way I can integrate and embrace my family's non-Jewish rituals for myself and my daughter. I now feel confident in my approach to Hanukkah and Christmas gift giving and comfortable with our participation in Christmas gift giving.

First and foremost, I believe that it is possible to participate in rituals like Christmas gift giving without threatening Jewish identity. It is also possible to participate in the larger American holiday season in a Jewish way. It is critical to embrace these rituals as integral to our Jewish identity, not dismiss them as something we do this one time of year. Being Jewish has always been a negotiation of identity in the face of the dominant culture. I've learned from Jews in the Maccabean period until today that it is possible to borrow, adapt, and contribute to the customs of larger society. Part of being Jewish for me involves having non-Jewish family members. This means that I have an added responsibility to engage in and contribute to non-Jewish practices in a way that feels intrinsically Jewish. It also means I have a responsibility to engage in Jewish

practices in an authentic and earnest way that celebrates the changing meaning of the holiday for Jews across time. I look forward to using Hanukkah gift giving as an opportunity to fulfill this challenge, not only with my family, but also in the capacity of a leader in the Jewish world.

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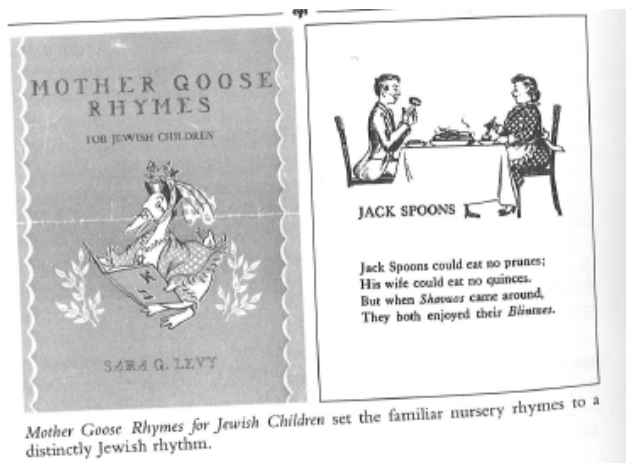
Appendix A



Figure 1.2. The Meschelsohn family and their governess with their electrically illuminated Christmas tree at home, Berlin, 1912. © Jewish Museum Berlin, donated by Hilda Mattei.

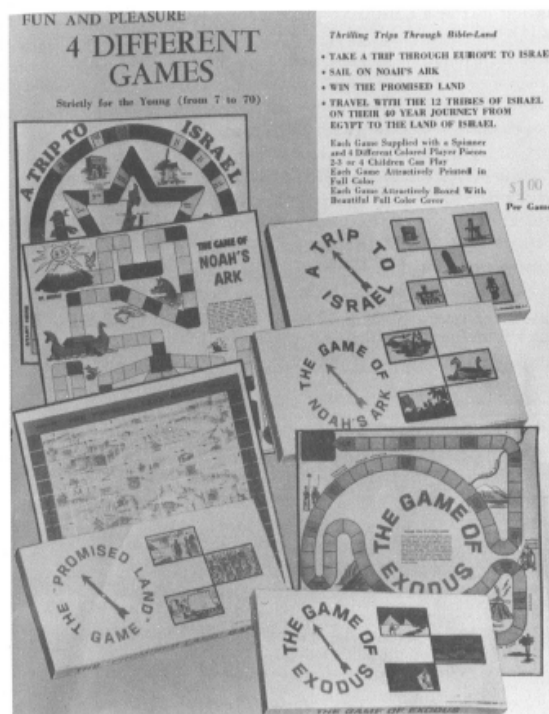
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¹ Jenna Weissman. Joselit, *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture 1880-1950* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), 78.



Mother Goose Rhymes for Jewish Children set the familiar nursery rhymes to a distinctly Jewish rhythm.

2



Board games with Jewish themes vied with Candy Land and Monopoly for the affections—and consumer loyalty—of American Jewish youngsters.

3

² Joselit, 81.

³ Joselit, 83.



4



5

⁴ Joselit, 80.

⁵ "Hanukkah Tree Topper," Skymall.com, accessed December 20, 2012, <http://www.skymall.com/shopping/detail.htm?pid=204072528>.



Figure 4.2. Jews for Santa, at SantaCon, Greenwich Village, New York, December 13, 2009. Copyright and photo: Joshua Eli Plaut.

6



Figure 4.1. Hanukkah Harry, at SantaCon, a mass gathering of people in Santa Claus costumes, parading publicly on New York streets. Washington Square, Greenwich Village, New York, 13 December 2009. Copyright and photo: Joshua Eli Plaut.

7

⁶ Plaut, 106.

⁷ Plaut, 107.

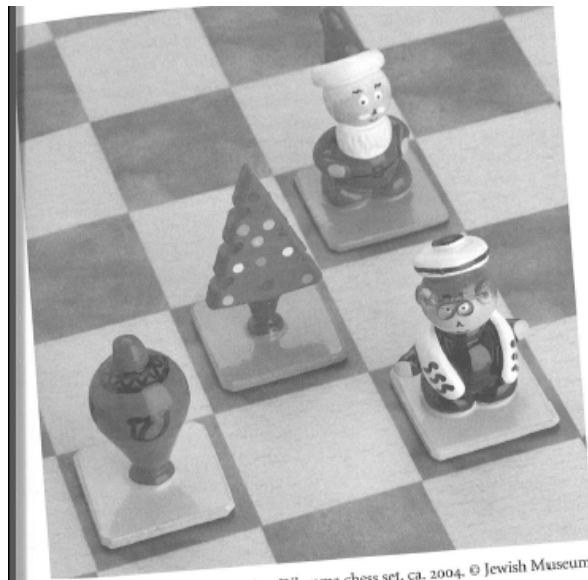


Figure 2.1. Detail from December Dilemma chess set, ca. 2004. © Jewish Museum Berlin, photo: Jens Ziehe.

8



9

⁸ Plaut, 57.

⁹ "Hannukah Gifts. I Celebrate Both T-shirts and Gift," CafePress.com, accessed February 20, 2012, <http://www.cafepress.com/inktees/4075513>.

Dasee Berkowitz, "A Twist on Chanukah Giving," *Washington Jewish Week*, November 25, 2010.

Candle 1: Have an intimate dinner with family and friends. Learn about the issues of most concern to them, then set aside the money you would spend on a material gift to make a contribution to that organization or cause in their honor.

Candle 2: Make a site visit. Follow up on the first night's activity and, if the cause is a local one, arrange to go on a site visit together to learn more about the organization's work and how you can get involved. This activity is especially good for parents with young children.

Candle 3: Be on the lookout for charity events in your area. Plan ahead and bring a buddy to attend the event, and dedicate yourself to expanding your horizons on issues in the world in need of addressing.

Candle 4: Think about someone in your life in immediate need. It might be someone who just had a baby and could use a home-cooked meal. It might be someone in the hospital who could use a visit. Bring them Chanukah-themed treats such as cookies in the shape of dreidels or homemade Chanukah cards.

Candle 5: Get your charitable giving in order. If eight nights of eating latkes and jelly doughnuts becomes too much for you, take the night off and plan ahead for the coming fiscal year. What are the issue areas that you want to commit yourself to this year? How much time or money do you want to give? Make a plan.

Candle 6: Give more than your money and time - give of your values. Think about a value that is important to you that you haven't had time to develop (does the refrain "too busy" ring a bell?) and do an activity that reflects that value with a spouse, child or friend. If it is caring for the environment, find a lecture, watch a movie or canvass for an environmental organization for the day. If the value is eating nutritious food, take a trip to your local grocer to buy nutritious food and cook it together with a friend.

Candle 7: Think about someone else in your life who is too busy to think about holiday presents. Give that person a break. For a busy parent, this could mean providing child care; for a busy professional, it could be giving your time as a coach.

Candle 8: Have a Chanukah party and ask each of your guests to bring a gift that you can pass onto a local charity - a nonperishable food, a children's toy, books or clothing.

Meredith Jacobs, "'Tzecond' Night, Tzedakah Night," *Washington Jewish Week*, December 8, 2011.

Chanukah is a perfect example. True, our Americanized version has become about receiving (perhaps thanks to the proximity of Christmas), but let's begin a new tradition of giving. Let's earmark the second night of Chanukah (this year the second night falls on Wednesday, Dec. 21) and let's call it "Tzecond Night, Tzedakah Night."

Here's how it works. Gather your family around the table. Grab a shoe box, some glue, scissors and a stack of magazines and newspapers (National Geographic is perfect for this project.) As everyone leafs through the magazines, talk about what causes are important to each of you. Perhaps our oceans, coral reefs, rain forests and their possible destruction speaks to your son. Perhaps your daughter learned about genocide or domestic violence at a youth group event and is inspired to do more. Perhaps you are concerned about hungry families in your community. The list of those in need is unfortunately long. Cut out pictures, (polar bears, bottles of clean drinking water, trees, books) that remind you of your causes.

Once you have your clippings, use the glue to affix the images to your shoe box. Now, each night of Chanukah, each member of the family and each guest you may have celebrating with you, should drop some gelt in the box. On the final night of Chanukah, divvy up the contributions and write checks to the appropriate organizations. Or, keep the box out and continue to find reasons to add to it. Make tzedakah part of your Friday night Shabbat dinner tradition by giving tzedakah before lighting candles. Mark special occasions or times of celebration (even a hard-earned test grade) by giving tzedakah and taking note that we remember how fortunate we are and always find ways to help others.

Continue to discuss opportunities to go from tzedakah to tikkun olam and donate time as a family to these causes. Considering taking this year's sixth night of Chanukah (which happens to be Christmas) and help at a food pantry, or celebrate one night of Chanukah at the Hebrew Home and spend time listening to stories of Chanukah memories from the residents. The gift of time is priceless.

Lawrence Bush and Jeffrey Dekro, "From Gelt to Tzedakah," *Tikkun*, November/December 2000.

1. Chanukah coincides with the darkest nights of the year and has roots in ancient winter solstice festivals. Devote a discussion to Judaism and ecological issues--and give tzedakah to an environmental group.
2. Chanukah embodies its symbolism through foods, especially fried potatoes (Ashkenazic) and fried dough (Sephardic) to represent the "miracle of oil" at the rededication of the Temple. Talk about the symbolism of food brands and the realities of food budgets. What does it mean to try to feed a family for 63 cents per person per meal (estimate for a family of four living at the federal poverty level of \$15,100)? Give tzedakah to a hunger relief project.
3. "Women are obligated to light the Chanukah menorah," says the Talmud (Shabbat 23a), "for they took part in the miracle." One story tells of the daughter of the high priest, who, facing violation by the Syrian-Greek governor, shames her brothers into revolt. A second story "borrows" the saga of Judith cutting off the head of the Assyrian tyrant Holofernes. Dedicate one night to a discussion of women and resistance--and give tzedakah to a feminist organization.
4. Chanukah was truly a minor holiday until the new Zionist movement at the turn of the century began promoting an ideal of self-defense. Talk about the meaning of Jewish self-defense and security today--and give tzedakah to an Israeli peace group.
5. The Chanukah menorah is to be publicly displayed in a window or doorway. Discuss the realities of pride and persecution for Jews, gays and lesbians, and other minority groups--and give tzedakah to a civil rights organization.
6. Chanukah is briefly debated in the Talmud: Shammai urges lighting the candles in diminishing order, while Hillel urges increasing the light each night. Discuss the role of interpretation and creativity in Judaism--and give tzedakah to a Jewish arts or renewal organization.
7. Hannah and her children suffer martyrdom; Mattathias and his children make the revolution. Discuss issues of generational differences and continuity in Jewish life--and give tzedakah to a youth-empowering organization.
8. The Miracle of Oil--one day's worth burning for eight days--is a wonderful metaphor for how human beings must pool resources to create prosperity. Have a discussion about the meaning of community--and give tzedakah to a low-income community development project.

Natasha Rosenstock, "Lights, Dreidels... Gifts?," *Washington Jewish Week*, November 19, 2009.

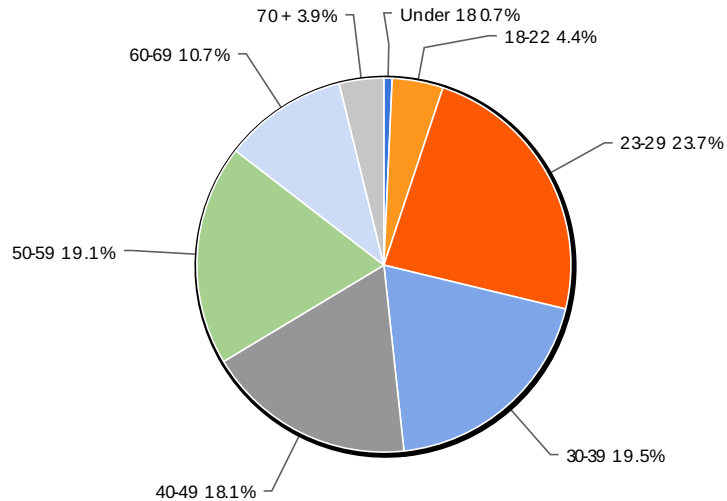
- * Use Chanukah gelt to teach your kids a lesson about spending wisely. They can decide if they want to spend their Chanukah gelt on a toy for themselves, something else, or pool it with their siblings for one larger item everyone can enjoy together.
- * Give your kids one dollar for each candle, each night. At the end of eight nights, they'll receive \$36.
- * Before kids receive new gifts for Chanukah, have them go through their toys and determine what they no longer play with so that they can donate those items. They will recognize that part of receiving gifts is also to give to children who are less fortunate.
- * Use that time of year to collect the money from the tzedekah boxes around your house and have your children help make the decision about where to donate the money. Let them physically donate the money themselves and/or see the effects of their donation.
- * If you do feel pressure to give your kids some type of gift every night, spread out the giving among yourself and other relatives.
- * Gifts can be items you would have bought your children anyway, like new school clothes, pajamas or books.
- * Do not try to compete with Christmas. Tell your children it is OK for others to celebrate their own holiday their way and for them to celebrate their holiday another way.

Appendix B

Summary Report - Mar 12, 2013

Survey: Hanukkah Gift Giving

1. What is your age?



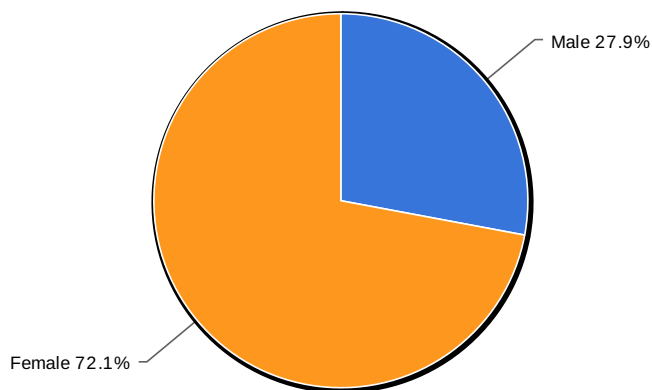
1. What is your age?

Value	Count	Percent %
Under 18	5	0.7%
18-22	31	4.4%
23-29	166	23.7%
30-39	137	19.5%
40-49	127	18.1%
50-59	134	19.1%
60-69	75	10.7%
70 +	27	3.9%

Statistics

Total Responses	702
Sum	26,656.0
Avg.	38.2
StdDev	14.3
Max	70.0

2. Do you identify as male or female?



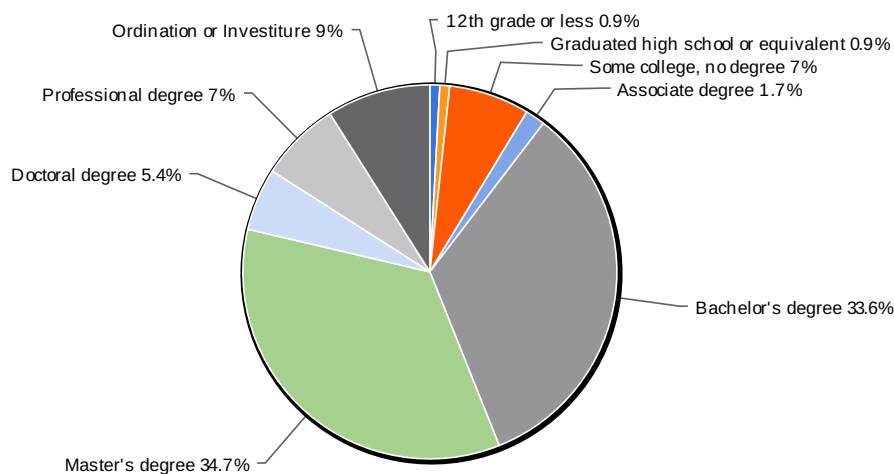
2. Do you identify as male or female?

Value	Count	Percent %
Male	195	27.9%
Female	503	72.1%

Statistics

Total Responses	698
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3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?



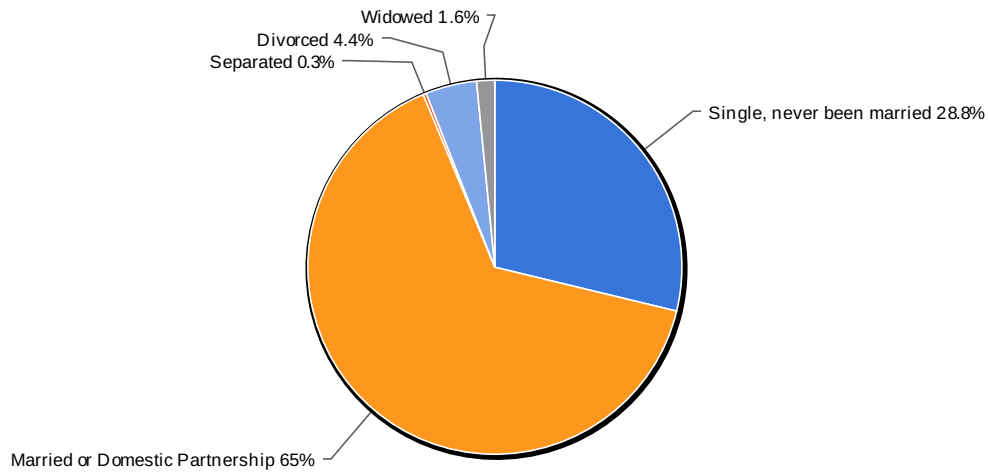
3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Value	Count	Percent %
12th grade or less	6	0.9%
Graduated high school or equivalent	6	0.9%
Some college, no degree	49	7.0%
Associate degree	12	1.7%
Bachelor's degree	236	33.6%
Master's degree	244	34.7%
Doctoral degree	38	5.4%
Professional degree	49	7.0%

Statistics

Total Responses	703
Sum	72.0
Avg.	12.0
Max	12.0

4. What is your current marital status?



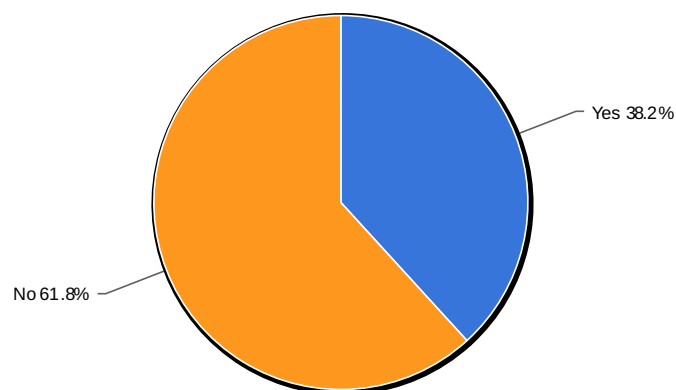
4. What is your current marital status?

Value	Count	Percent %
Single, never been married	202	28.8%
Married or Domestic Partnership	456	65.0%
Separated	2	0.3%
Divorced	31	4.4%
Widowed	11	1.6%

Statistics

Total Responses	702
-----------------	-----

5. Do you currently have children living in your home?



5. Do you currently have children living in your home?

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes	268	38.2%

Statistics

Total Responses	701
-----------------	-----

6. If yes, how old are your children?

Count	Response
1	.5
3	1
1	1 & 4
1	1 1/2
1	1 and 4
1	1 month
1	1 year
1	1&6
1	1, 11
1	1.5 years old
4	10
1	10 (they're twins)
1	10 and 13
1	10 and 5
1	10 months
1	10, 12
1	10, 13, 15
1	10, 14, 16
1	10, 8, 5
1	10, 8, and 6
3	11
1	11 & 5
1	11 and 10
2	11 and 14
1	11 months
1	11, 13 & 15
1	11, 14
1	11, 17
1	11,7,5
2	12
1	12 & 15
1	12 and 10
1	12 and 8
1	12 months
2	12, 10, 8, 4
1	12, 9
1	12, 9, 7
1	12,13,16
1	12,9,6
1	12,9,7

1	12½ & 15½
1	13 and 10
1	13 and 20
1	13 and 9
1	13 months
1	13, 12, 10, 9
1	13, 16, 19, 19, 22
1	13, 17
1	13, 20, 23
1	13,11
1	13,16,17
1	13,17
1	13.5 yo, 12 yo, 5.5 yo
1	14
1	14 & 10
1	14 & 22
1	14 months
1	14 years old
1	14, 11, 8
1	14, 11, 9
1	14, 16
1	14, 2 1/2 year old twins
1	14,14,10
1	14,17
1	14,22,23
1	14-10-7-5
1	15 & 17
1	15 (at home); 21 (away)
2	15 and 17
2	15 months
1	15, 12
1	15, 13, 9
1	15, 18
1	15, 20 (20 yr old not at home)
1	15, 9, 8
1	15,13,9
1	15,14,11,8
7	16
1	16 and 13
1	16 and 14
1	16 at home, 19 at college
1	16 yrs old
1	16, 12
1	16, 7, 4
1	16/19
6	17

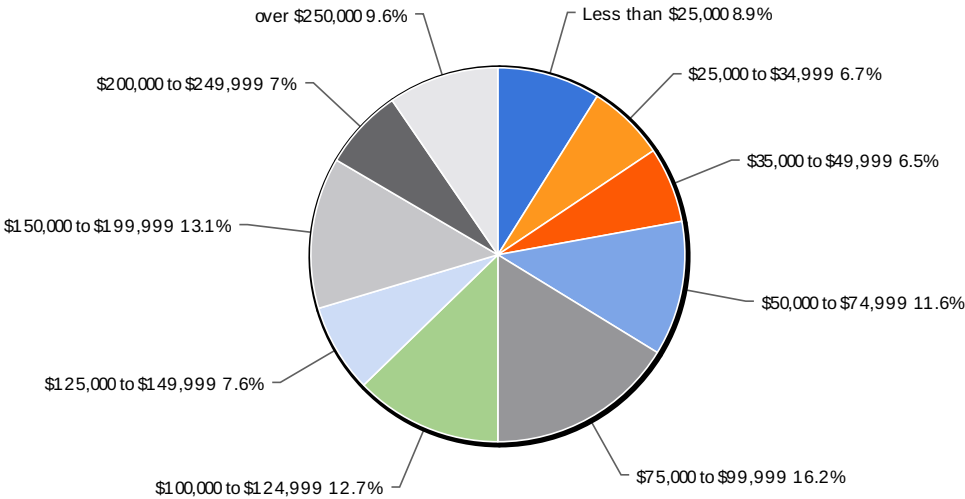
1	17 (and a 20-year-old at college)
1	17 and 14
1	17 months
1	17, 15, 10
1	17, 15, 7
1	17, 19
1	17, 19- college student
1	17, 23
1	17yrs. (at home) and 19yrs. (away at college)
1	18
1	18 & 21
1	18 & 15
1	18 and 14
1	18, 14
1	18, 16
1	18, 20
1	18,15
1	18,21,23
1	18/20
1	19
1	19 months
1	19, 16,15
1	19, 17, 15
1	19, 18, 16
7	2
1	2 and 4 months
1	2 and newborn
1	2 months
1	2 months and 21 months
1	2 weeks
1	2, 4
1	2, 4, 6
1	2, 8
1	2,4, 5
1	2,4,6
1	2.5 and 1
1	20
2	20 months
1	21 & 23
1	21 22
1	21 and 25
1	21 months
1	21, 10, 8
1	21, 16
1	21,19,16
1	21. 23

3	22
1	22, 22, 19, 19 & 16
1	22, 27
1	23
1	23, 17, 12
1	23, 26
1	23, 19
1	25
1	25, 23, 21
2	28
1	28, 30
1	2 years 7 months
1	3 and 5
1	3 and 7
1	3 and 8
1	3 years
1	3, newborn
1	3-13
1	30
1	35, 40, 50
1	36, 38
3	4
1	4 and 1
2	4 and 6
1	4 months
1	4 years, 6 years
1	4 yrs
1	4, 7
1	41, 16, 17
1	46, 7
1	5
1	5 + 5
1	5 and 2
1	5 and 3
1	5 and 7
2	5 and 8
1	5 and 9
1	5 months
1	5, 9, 11
1	5.5 and 7
1	58
2	6
1	6 and 10
1	6 and 4
2	6 and 8
1	6 mths

1	6 weeks, 8, 13, 13
1	6, 4
1	6, 7, 12
1	6,11,18,20,22
2	7 & 3
1	7 and 10
1	7 and 9
1	7 months
1	7, 11
1	7, 13, 14
1	7, 9, 12
1	7, 9, 16, 21, 22
1	7,8
2	8
1	8 & 4
1	8 1/2 and 11
1	8 and 10
1	8 and 4
1	8 and 6
2	8 months
1	8 year old twins
1	8, 10
1	8, 12
1	8, 14
2	8, 5
1	8, 5, 2
2	8.5
1	9
1	9 and 11
1	9 and 5
2	9 and 6
2	9, 11
1	9, 11, 13
1	9, 12 years old
1	9,12,14
1	9,2,6m,6m
1	9,5
1	9,9 and 8
1	Age 7 years, and Age 2 years, both girls
1	From 4 through 12 years old.
1	Newborn + 2
1	Teenagers
1	Twins will be born in Jan :-)
1	almost 2
1	infant (3 months)
1	my son is 2.

1	newborn
1	21, 24 - 21 year old is in college and comes home, 24 year old is in grad school, doesn't come home

7. What is your total household income?



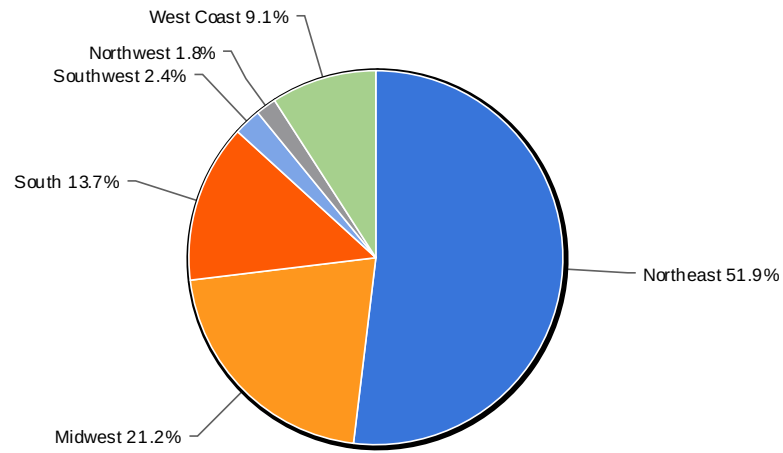
7. What is your total household income?

Value	Count	Percent %
Less than \$25,000	56	8.9%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	42	6.7%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	41	6.5%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	73	11.6%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	102	16.2%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	80	12.7%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	48	7.6%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	82	13.1%
\$200,000 to \$249,999	44	7.0%
over \$250,000	60	9.6%

Statistics

Total Responses	628
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8. What region of the country do you live in?



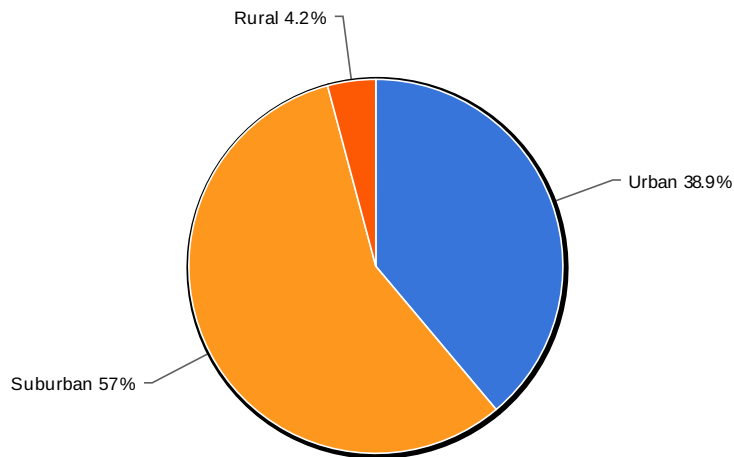
8. What region of the country do you live in?

Value	Count	Percent %
Northeast	353	51.9%
Midwest	144	21.2%
South	93	13.7%
Southwest	16	2.4%
Northwest	12	1.8%
West Coast	62	9.1%

Statistics

Total Responses	680
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9. What best describes your home location?



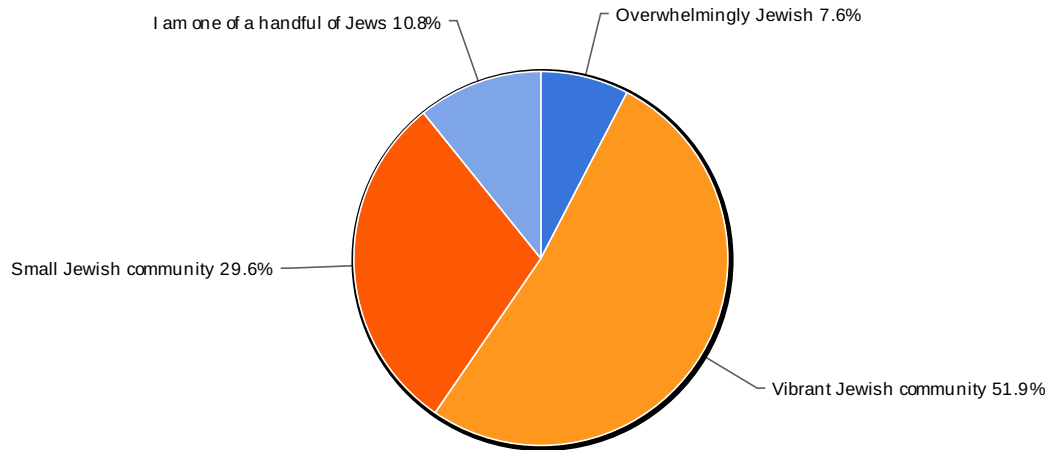
9. What best describes your home location?

Value	Count	Percent %
Urban	271	38.9%
Suburban	397	57.0%
Rural	29	4.2%

Statistics

Total Responses	697
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10. What best describes the make up of your home location?



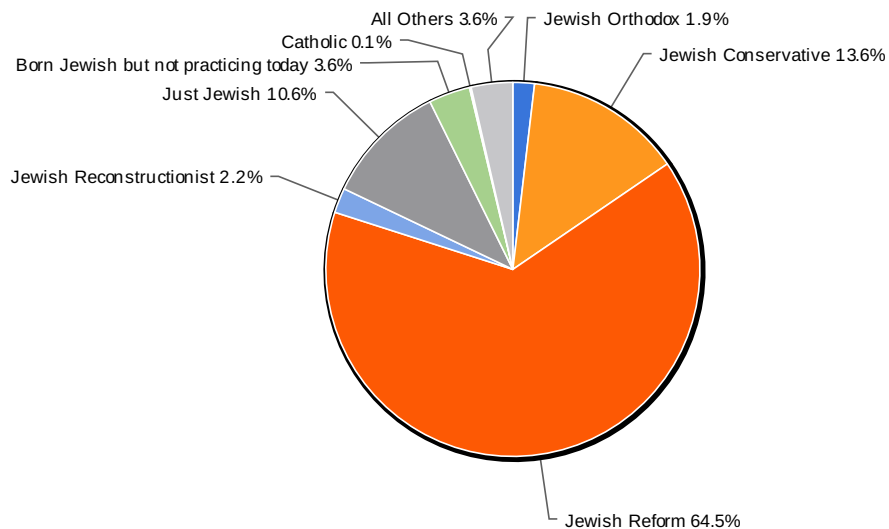
10. What best describes the make up of your home location?

Value	Count	Percent %
Overwhelmingly Jewish	53	7.6%
Vibrant Jewish community	361	51.9%
Small Jewish community	206	29.6%
I am one of a handful of Jews	75	10.8%

Statistics

Total Responses	695
-----------------	-----

11. What is your religious identification



11. What is your religious identification

Value	Count	Percent %
Jewish Orthodox	13	1.9%
Jewish Conservative	95	13.6%
Jewish Reform	450	64.5%
Jewish Reconstructionist	15	2.2%

Statistics

Total Responses	698
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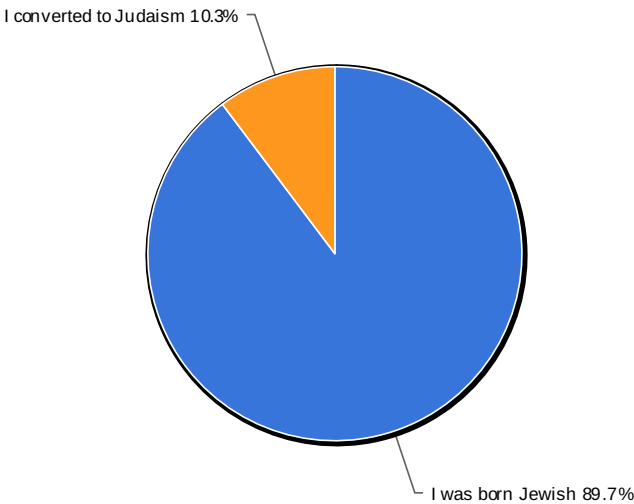
Just Jewish	74	10.6%
Born Jewish but not practicing today	25	3.6%
Catholic	1	0.1%
Protestant	5	0.7%
Muslim	1	0.1%
Buddhist	0	0.0%
Atheist	4	0.6%
Other	15	2.2%

Comments

Count	Response
1	Also practicing Zen meditation for several years now.
1	Blended family. All kids have one non jewish parent.
1	Conservadox
1	Conservadox, Traditional, Egalitarian Movement, you get the idea.
1	Conservadox/Renewal
1	Converting.
1	Culturally (and born) Jewish, but practicing atheist.
1	Don't really affiliate with a movement, but am halachically observant.
1	From a Conservative family.
1	Hindu
1	Husband and children are Jewish
1	Husband is Unitarian
1	I am living in Sydney, Australia
1	I live in Brazil and belong to CIP - in Sao Paulo and also in Curitiba
1	I work in Reform congregations but belong to Conservative since my kids' friends are there
1	I'm a convert (my husband and his family however, were all born Jewish and raised jewish)
1	Interfaith family, husband is Jewish
1	Jewish and go to a traditional synagogue/temple
1	Liberal Orthodox or Post-Denominational Mitzvot Observant
1	Married to a non-Jew.
1	Messianic Jew
1	Messianic Jew (Jew who has accepted Jesus as Messiah/Savior)
1	Mixed reform-conservative household
1	My husband is Jewish
1	My wife identifies as reform, our congregation is affiliated with JRF
1	My wife is Catholic. We celebrate both Christmas and Hannukah.
1	My wife is a Jew by choice
1	Not temple affiliated
1	Raised Jewish non practicing
1	Secular Jewish Family!
1	Somewhat observant Jew but do not identify with a particular movement
1	Torah observant Christian.
1	Traditional

1	We attend the only temple & it's reformed
1	born Conservative, now practicing Reform
1	brought up conservative; now belong to reform shul
1	husband is orthodox
1	husband raised conservative, I'm a converted Episcopalian
1	jewish traditional
1	married to a jewish man and want our kids to experience some jewish traditions
1	my husband is Jewish
1	pluralist serving Reform community elsewhere
1	post denominational, so - just jewish
1	I have strong ties to the Reform movement but like davening in an Orthodox setting where I live (that is, it might not be true in a different community. I have also been a member of a Conservative congregation. It depends on the congregation more than the movement. I am willing to trade off some things for other things.
1	Born Orthodox Jew but of my sexuality I'm not accepted in my religion nor my parents. I converted catholic in 2009
1	Maintained membership and converted through a conservative Temple until youngest child became a bar mitzvah.
1	Actually in between Reform and Conservative, as I grew up in both Synagogues and attended a Solomon Schechter Day School.
1	Bounced around between denominations when I was growing up - Reform, Reconstructionist, Conservative - to find a synagogue that fit both my parents (my mom grew up Jewish Conservative and my dad grew up Protestant Christian) , but I was Bat Mitzvahed in a Reconstructionist synagogue and most identify with Reconstructionism.
1	I identify ethnically and with the traditions of Judaism. I do not subscribe to all of the beliefs. I consider myself Jewish but not in the religious sense.
1	I am a member of a Reform Congregation and I teach there, but I identify as Jewish Humanist. I was most comfortable in a Progressive Unaffiliated congregation I belonged to in Brooklyn.
1	I am a Reform ordained Rabbi, serving a Conservative Synagogue and we often attend a modern Orthodox Synagogue.
1	My thinking is now more in line with Jewish Renewal but i was raised reform and that is what I affiliate with
1	comment here for question 12 - born patrilineally Jewish into a Reform home, mother converted later (Reform), as an adult I made a Conservative conversion because my status was unclear. (Spouse is Conservative)
1	We are a mixed marriage of Conservative and Reform. We belong to a Conservative Shul and the kids are actively in NFTY! They are also in the regional TYG (Reform)
1	Kids go to a Reform Jewish Day School since kindergarten. Before that they went to the JCC for preschool.
1	Was raised in a conservative synagogue, but raised more reform. Moved to reform Judaism after I got married.
1	The reform community is where we practice, however, our practice is a bit more traditional. In prior times, we were more observant. I am a chaplaincy student at the Academy for Jewish religion.

12. If you are Jewish, were you born Jewish or did you convert to Judaism?

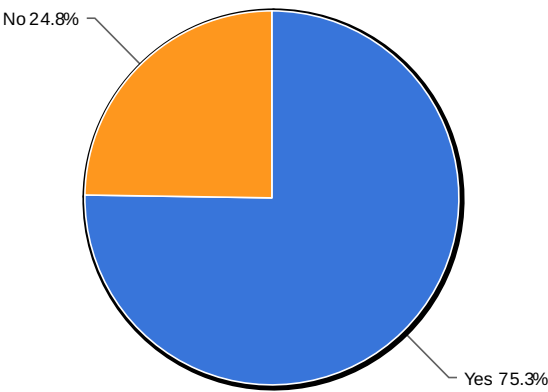


12. If you are Jewish, were you born Jewish or did you convert to Judaism?

Value	Count	Percent %
I was born Jewish	611	89.7%
I converted to Judaism	70	10.3%

Statistics	
Total Responses	681

13. Is everyone in your immediate family Jewish?

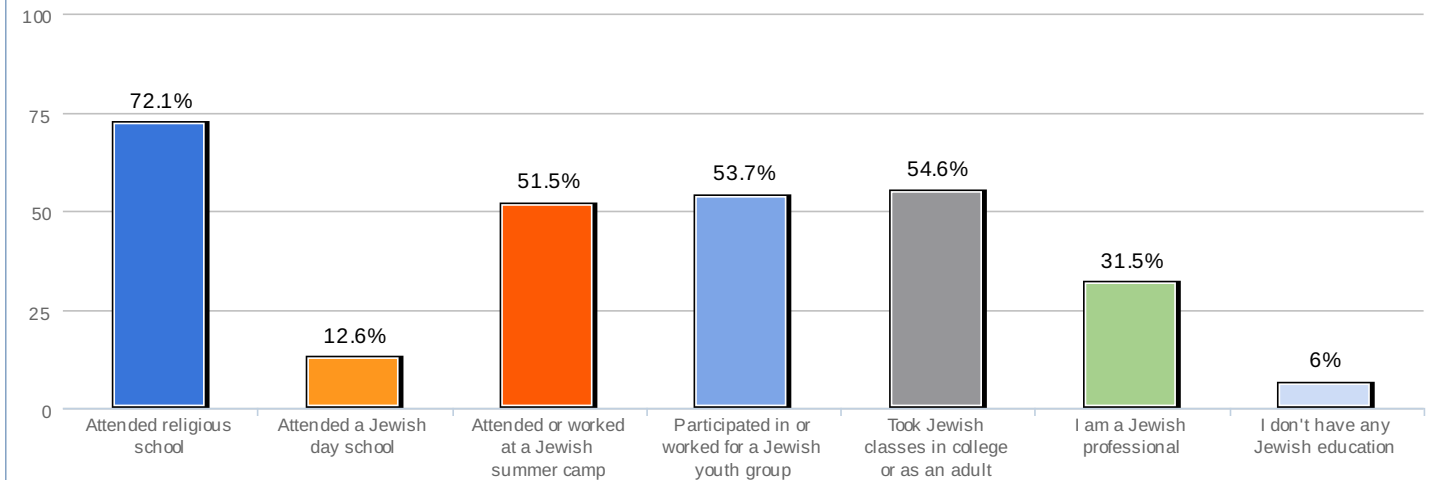


13. Is everyone in your immediate family Jewish?

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes	523	75.3%
No	172	24.8%

Statistics	
Total Responses	695

14. Which of the following Jewish educational experiences have you had? (check all that apply)



14. Which of the following Jewish educational experiences have you had? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
Attended religious school	494	72.1%	Total Responses	685
Attended a Jewish day school	86	12.6%		
Attended or worked at a Jewish summer camp	353	51.5%		
Participated in or worked for a Jewish youth group	368	53.7%		
Took Jewish classes in college or as an adult	374	54.6%		
I am a Jewish professional	216	31.5%		
I don't have any Jewish education	41	6.0%		

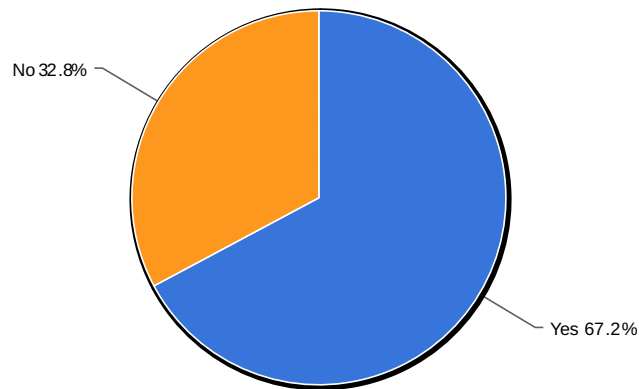
Comments

Count	Response
1	Adult Bat Mitzvah
1	Also attend two yeshivot post college for multiple months at each.
1	Attended Gratz College in Philadelphia.
1	Attended Saturday school at a Reform temple, through confirmation.
1	Attended Sunday religious school.
1	Bat Mitzvah at age 55
1	Co-ordinator for our Temples' Religious School, and PJ Library co-ordinator
1	Conversion classes
1	Formerly a Jewish professional before returning to school for master's degree
1	Full year of weekly classes with the rabbi before conversion.
1	HUC Student
1	Have worked as Jewish professional (but not currently)
1	I
1	I *was* a Jewish professional last year.
1	I also teach at a Jewish Community Day School
1	I am a rabbinical student.
1	I am now becoming a Jewish Professional and work in an interfaith capacity as well.

1	I graduated from Gratz College with a degree in Jewish Studies.
1	I had my Bat Mitzvah at age 46
1	I have a Jewish education, just not a traditional education.
1	I live in Salford, England. UK
1	I teach religious school.
1	I was confirmed with my daughter.
1	I was in the field of Jewish Education for 20 years.
1	Jewish student groups in college! AEPi !
1	Lived in Israel, EIE and jr year at Hebrew U
1	None until I did the High School in Israel program.
1	Not brought up observant but got Bat Mitzvahed as an adult.
1	Once weekly classes with our local Rabbi and self study.
1	Only from conversion classes and being around others and reading books.
1	Part time Jewish professional
1	Previously worked as a Jewish professional, but do not currently
1	Rabbinical student
1	Studied for and became adult bat mitzvah
1	Studied history of Jewish thought in college and continue in Torah study groups.
1	Taught Jewish studies; published books on Jewish subjects.
1	Taught Religious School too.
1	Took one Hebrew language class in college
1	We are marranos & our family has kept some of the Jewish traditions.
1	Worked for jcc, Federation
1	Worked in refugee resettlement for Jewish refugees.
1	grew up in Israel
1	havara
1	i studied indepently
1	informal adult education
1	not a Jewish professional, but have taught in synagogue's religious school
1	I taught myself Hebrew and have independently studied different aspects of Judaism, Judaica, and Jewish history
1	Worked at Eden Village Camp, attended Tzofim as a child, Birthright Israel when I was 18, attend classes as an adult, expecting to be in grad school for Jewish education next year G-d willing.
1	Very limited traditional education, but always identified as Jewish, and brought my daughter up Jewish - she did attend religious school, etc.
1	Pararabbinical program at HUC Cincinnati; Pardes summer program; Hebrew classes at Vanderbilt University; four years women's talmud class with rabbi
1	I spent one year in HUC-JIR's rabbinical school, but then left the program. I am now studying for private ordination while continuing my original career.
1	The camp at which I worked as a counselor, was a Jewish camp for underprivileged children of all faiths, not a Jewish camp for only Jewish kids. There were Jewish kids among the children.
1	I have been a Board member of my synagogue and have other Jewish non-profit connections, and have visited Israel
1	I go to Temple on Friday nights, when I feel like it, makes me feel at home, love seeing our Rabbi, feels wonderful.
1	i had no reral education until 1990s when i studied for my bat mitzvah and became a regular at torah study and services
1	I dropped out of Hebrew School and have taken about 2 quarters of classes from teh Judaic Studies department.
1	I, personally, went to public schools and for a very short time went to religious school but it was small, sporadic, and not established. It eventually closed. I did learn some Hebrew from a young woman who lived in my building for about a year or so.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Raised in a Conservative Jewish home, I did not have a Bat Mitzvah until I was 72, for which I studied for 18 months including learning Hebrew. |
| 1 | Other than what I learned from my home. I was brought up in a Kosher home and had a Kosher home until recently. |

15. Do you belong to a synagogue?



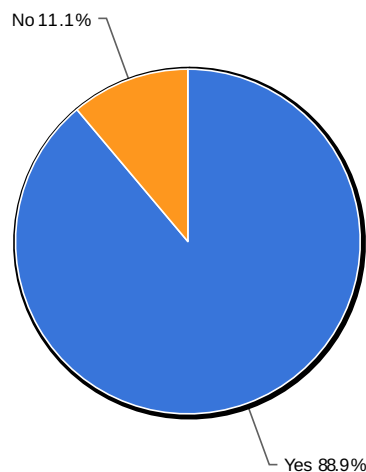
15. Do you belong to a synagogue?

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes	471	67.2%
No	230	32.8%

Statistics

Total Responses	701
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16. Please follow the directions above before answering questions on this page.
Did you give gifts for Hanukkah?



16. Please follow the directions above before answering questions on this page. Did you give gifts for Hanukkah?

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes	623	88.9%

Statistics

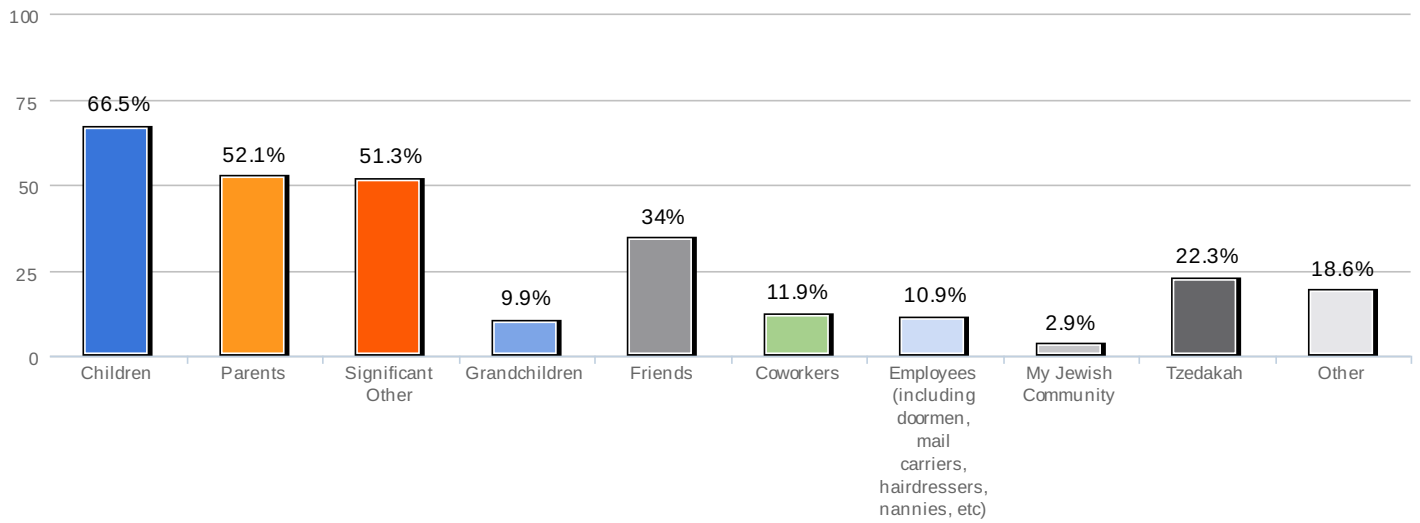
Total Responses	701
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No

78

11.1%

17. Who did you give Hanukkah gifts to? (check all that apply)



17. Who did you give Hanukkah gifts to? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %
Children	415	66.5%
Parents	325	52.1%
Significant Other	320	51.3%
Grandchildren	62	9.9%
Friends	212	34.0%
Coworkers	74	11.9%
Employees (including doormen, mail carriers, hairdressers, nannies, etc)	68	10.9%
My Jewish Community	18	2.9%
Tzedakah	139	22.3%
Other	116	18.6%

Statistics

Total Responses

624

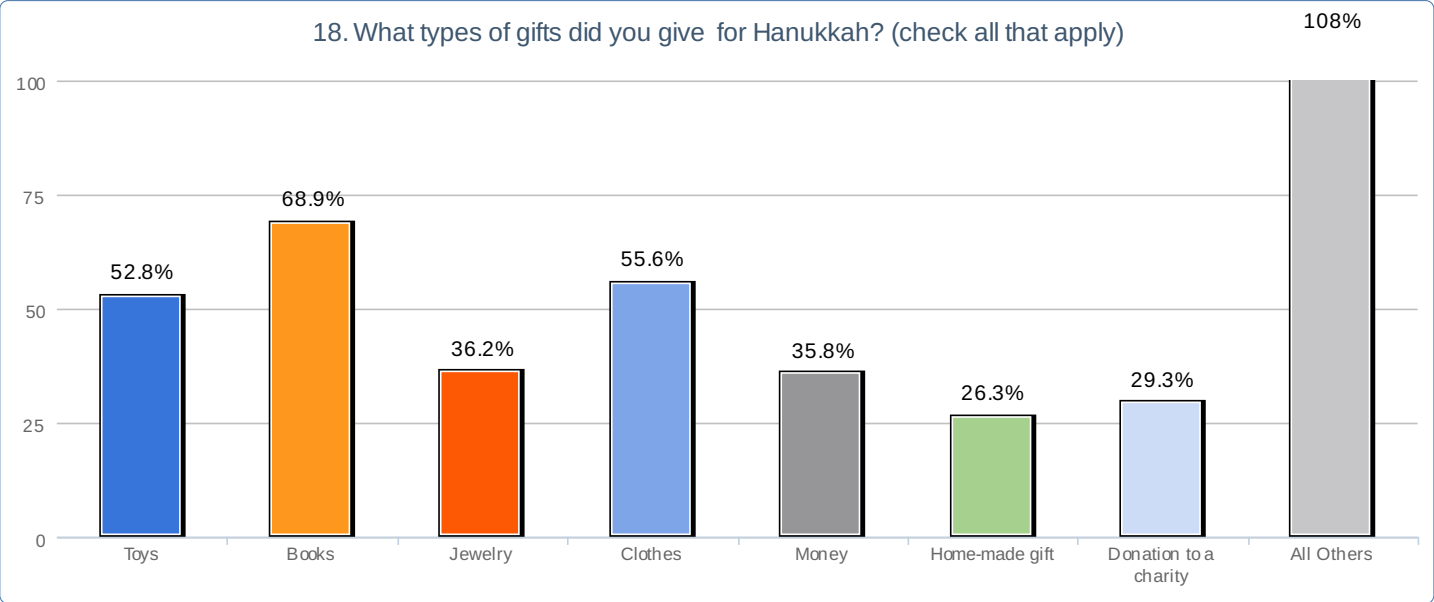
Comments

Count	Response
1	3 yr old niece
1	Also to my younger siblings and other family members (all children)
1	Extended family
1	Family
1	Family of significant other (who is Jewish)
1	Friend and not friends.
1	Gifts to non-jewish people not necessarily hanukkah gifts, but including them here
1	Grab bag at annual family Chanukah party
1	Grandma
1	Grandmother who is Jewish
1	Great grandchild

1	Great nieces and great nephews
1	I gave them to my madrichim who helped me in my 4th grade Hebrew school class.
1	I give christmas gifts to some friends and the non-Jewish grandparents of my grandchildren
1	I give holiday/ thank you gifts to mailman, teachers and others not knowing what they celebrate.
1	Including nieces, nephews and their children
1	Jewish clients
1	Kids Classes
1	My Jewish father-in-law, sister-in-law(though she is not practicing), and niece
1	My children's teachers
1	My siblings
1	Nieces, nephews
1	Neice, Nephew, brother and sister-in-law (who is not Jewish.)
1	Nephew
2	Nephews
1	Nephews, Nieces, Cousins (kids)
1	Nephews, nieces, bro-in-law, sister-in-law
1	Niece
1	Niece
1	Niece & Nephew
2	Niece and Nephew
1	Niece, nephew, cousins
1	Nieces
1	Nieces and nephew
2	Nieces and nephews
1	Nieces and nephews, godchildren
1	Nieces, inlaws
1	Nieces, nephews
1	Nieces, nephews, sisters & brothers and their spouses
1	Other family
5	Sibling
3	Sibling
14	Siblings
2	Siblings
1	Siblings and young cousins.
1	Siblings, cousins kids
1	Siblings, extended family
1	Siblings, grandparents
1	Siblings, nieces
1	Siblings, nieces/nephews, boss
1	Siblings.
1	Siblings/nieces/nephews
1	Siblings; nieces & nephews
1	Significant other's family
1	Sister, Grandmother
1	Sister, brother-in-law, nieces and nephew
1	Sisters

1	Sisters, brothers-in-law, nieces and nephews and their children
1	Sublings
1	Sybling
1	The "parent" is my mother-in-law.
1	We gave to our four nephews and to the children that came to our family Hanukkah party.
1	When kids were younger gave more gifts. Will send gifts to my nieces out of state as well.
1	Young cousins
1	also siblings
1	and my sister
1	brother, sister-in-law, and nephew
1	children in extended family
1	children were my neices and nephews.
1	cousins, aunts/uncles
1	family
1	grandparents, cousins
1	most focus is on the children and family, but will also include a friend's child too.
1	my brother
1	my children's teachers etc...
1	my friend's kid, who is essentially my niece
1	nephews
1	niece
1	nieces
1	nieces and nephew
1	nieces and nephews
1	nieces/nephews
1	other family members
1	partners of my children
2	sibling
10	siblings
2	siblings
1	siblings, cousins, grandparents
1	siblings, nephew
1	sister
1	to my children's teachers; to extended family (nieces, nephews)
1	younger family members (ages 6-11)
1	I give very minimal Hanukkah gifts - only those I "need" to (gift exchanges or work situations) or really "want" to. I guess you can say only extremes.
1	siblings, brother in law, nephews Note also from earlier ? re children at home - I have college age chdrn who are home on Dec. vacations.
1	Granpa, Gifts are minimal since my husband lost job 4 years ago. We are limited and gave few gifts to co workers
1	I give gifts to my great nephews, niece, and some of my immediate family-sister, and sister-in-law and sister-in-law's parents. .
1	Not consistently. If I see something appropriate for a friend, friends' kids, relatives, relatives' kids, or co-workers, I might buy it for Hanukkah.
1	This is something I wrestle with every year. I thought I wanted to give my kids something I didn't have. I also was never taught to do anything different to celebrate.
1	we have established a tradition of giving every other night to a charitable organization, and then exchanging within the

	family on every other night.
1	My husband and I exchanged gifts. Also we gave gifts to our niece. For fun I bought Hanukkah themed socks for my mother in law and sister in law. I was criticized for the socks by my husband who thought it was too closely related to Christmas stockings.
1	I teach in a NYC public school and do a unit on Hanukkah for the pre K and kindergarten kids so they each get a gift of chocolate gelt and a dreidel.



18. What types of gifts did you give for Hanukkah? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %
Toys	328	52.8%
Books	428	68.9%
Jewelry	225	36.2%
Clothes	345	55.6%
Money	222	35.8%
Home-made gift	163	26.3%
Donation to a charity	182	29.3%
Gelt	174	28.0%
Dreidel	123	19.8%
Menorah	56	9.0%
Hanukkah specific books or toys	116	18.7%
Other Judaica not specific to Hanukkah	69	11.1%
Other	133	21.4%

Statistics	
Total Responses	621

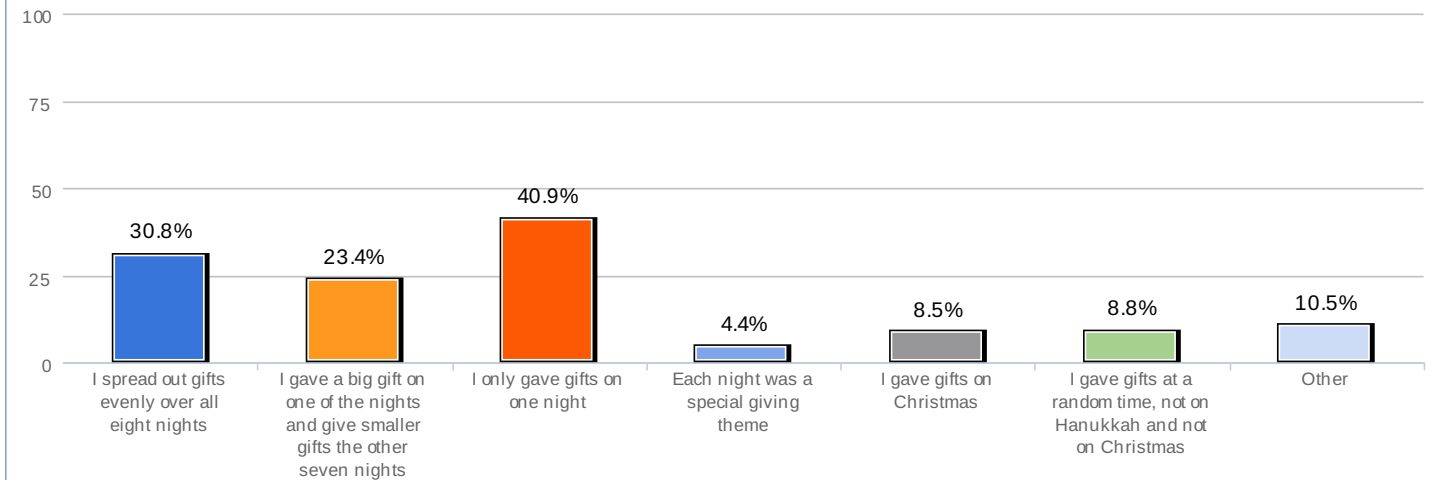
Comments

Count	Response
1	Baked goods
1	Bakeware/cookware
1	Board games and winter coat

1	CD
1	Chanukah bakeware
1	Chocolate gelt.
1	Chocolates
1	Coloring book
1	Computers, electronic equipment, phones, video games
1	DVDs, gift cards
2	Electronics
1	Electronics
1	Electronics but really minimal. get one thing we know they want not a wish list!
1	Electronics, gift cards,
1	Electronics, gift of time (doing tech support)
1	Electronics. Gift cards. Household goods
1	Food
2	Gadgets
1	Games
1	Gelt is the money in Yiddish
2	Gift Cards
1	Gift card
6	Gift cards
1	Gift cards and a new computer for our children
1	Gift cards for movies, restaurants that deliver, massage, electronics, live theater
1	Gift cards to places I know they like
1	Gift certificates
1	Graeter's ice cream packages sent to out-of-state clients.
1	I alway give my children socks, underwear, and towels for Hanukkah.
1	I cant remember
1	I don't remember
1	I don't remember!
1	I give a lot of gift cards to specific places so people can get things they like.
1	I honestly don't remember
1	If I can, a gift card or appropriate book
1	Kindle Paperwhite (for my grandson)
1	Little gifts I find, for my daughter.
1	Money as in Gift cards-not actual cash Jewlery was costume accessories
1	Money. And necessities like socks and underwear.
1	Music
1	Music (Itunes), sports equipment.
1	Ner shel tzeddakah
1	Nothing planned
1	did small toys when the children were young
1	electronic games
2	electronics
1	electronics, bedding, Chanukah candles
1	electronics, music
1	experiences: tickets to see a show, groupon for a gelato-making class, wine tasting kit

1	family gift like a trip to Israel or a puppy
1	food
1	food items
1	food stuffs
1	gift card...I don't know what the "young'ins" are into...let them get what they want
5	gift cards
1	gift cards (nieces and nephews); cooking class
1	gift cards/mugs for teachers
1	gift certificate to restaurant; fruit of the month club
1	gift for the house
1	iTunes cards
1	itunes, gift certificates
1	music, movies, activities, trips
1	theater tickets, itouch,
1	we donate to charities that we believe are appropriate to the recipient
1	Often, I use the time to give things that my kids need or purchase something my kids or husband have wanted that we hadn't purchased.
1	we make sure there is only one gift per night (read: whether from grandparents, friends etc)- it was not until I was at least in my teens that it became popular to give gifts on Hanukkah- it is a small holiday and I resent the xmas-ifying of it.
1	All my kids have Hanukkiot and fancy-pants dreidels, so no Judaica that I can remember last year....
1	I usually buy sufganiot around the time of Chanukah for the Jewish communities that I am a part of.
1	Adults in my family and friends often exchange tzedakah and a token physical gift. We take our kids to the store and have them pick out food bank food for the "Ner Shel Tzedakah."
1	As kids get older, gifts include household or kitchen items. Also gourmet food, nice bath and body products. Gifts tend to be small splurges (high quality chocolate) or useful/needed items . Monetary value per gift is not high. If the kids want more expensive items (e.g., running tights), I might not send 8 gifts.
1	Everyday is "Hanukah"/"Happy Birthday" time for our two sons ~ we adore them! If they want something during the year and we can "swing it" , it is theirs!
1	To emphasize that it is a gift to help others, each evening we unwrap a box with instructions and supplies for the next day for some sort of project like visiting nursing homes or donating to a food bank.
1	Sports equipment. Holiday away. Gift of my or my husband's time. Gift of accomplishing a specific task eg. Mom's taxes. Specialty food item(s) like one of my famous key-lime pie. Promise of a ski weekend planned for the family day long weekend for all immediate family members.
1	I don't remember exactly, but I generally give small gifts (maybe books, something winter-related, chocolate, etc.) to a few close friends and donate money around chagim to social justice causes that I support. There also tends to be a gift-exchange at work, but that's more "winter holidays" in general than Hannukah-specific

19. How did you distribute the gifts you gave for Hanukkah? (check all that apply)



19. How did you distribute the gifts you gave for Hanukkah? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
I spread out gifts evenly over all eight nights	188	30.8%	Total Responses	611
I gave a big gift on one of the nights and give smaller gifts the other seven nights	143	23.4%		
I only gave gifts on one night	250	40.9%		
Each night was a special giving theme	27	4.4%		
I gave gifts on Christmas	52	8.5%		
I gave gifts at a random time, not on Hanukkah and not on Christmas	54	8.8%		
Other	64	10.5%		

Comments

Count	Response
1	As grandparents we leave the eight nights giving tradition to the parents.
1	As i feel like. No order
1	Big gifts are given for birthdays.
1	But this year I plan to give only one night
1	Comments above relate to family practices during childhood.
1	Did the above at different times in the past.
1	Family Chanukah party
1	For children spread out very small gifts evenly over 8 nights. For parents, one big gift.
1	Gave gifts on the first night and some of the other nights
1	Gave gifts when our family was together, as close to Hanukkah as possible
1	Gave the gifts when the children were home from college for the holidays.
1	Gift for children before. Others closer to Christmas
1	I can't remember. Each year we do it differently
1	I don't recall
1	I gave gifts to my children on the nights that we could be together
1	I gave the gifts when I got home from college.

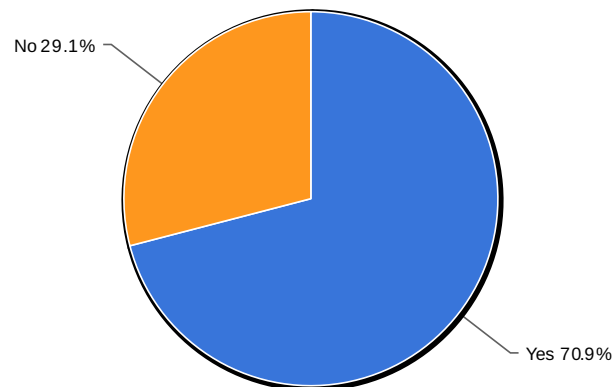
- 1 I gave the gifts when I saw the people which was not necessarily on Chanukkah.
- 1 I give one gift, for Chanukkah
- 1 I'm not with them for the holiday.
- 1 It is the kids' choice as to when they want to open them. They usually choose one a night.
- 1 Just one gift on the first night.
- 1 Mailed across country; no idea when parents had her open it
- 1 Mailed packages, email egift cards, hand deliver when I see someone, or deliver to door.
- 1 More than one night of Hanukah, but not all
- 1 My children are no longer at home and gift giving is more random than in the past
- 1 My kids are both in school so I will give the gifts when I can
- 1 One big gift and some smaller gifts but not every night.
- 1 One gift each night
- 1 One night we don't get gifts, we give tzedakah
- 1 Our families get together one night during Hanukkah and exchange gifts then.
- 1 Parents got gifts when visiting them, child got gifts each night.
- 1 Sent gifts all at once, allowed those receiving gifts to determine when to open them.
- 1 Sent gifts through the mail.
- 1 Sent money and gifts in mail or, children choose gift and I pay.
- 1 Small gifts; last night only (or mailed to out-of-town family)
- 1 Spouse was spread evenly. Those not living at home - one time.
- 1 That was how we did it as kids with my parents... I don't have a method now.
- 1 They received chocolate and other goodies each night after candle light
- 1 This year I did not give gifts every night probably because our income has been down.
- 1 Usually one gift per person for the Hanukkah season.
- 1 We celebrate Chanukah at Thanksgiving, when we are all together.
- 1 We exchange gifts on nights we can all be together - during Hannukah
- 1 We mail all of our gifts. They are given when they arrive.
- 1 We still do a little Christmas with my family of origin
- 1 When children with small theyes got gifts all 8 nights with the biggest on the first night
- 1 Whenever the opportunity arises DURING the holiday.
- 1 at a hanukah party
- 1 family trip was big gift, and then kids got a few other things during the 8 days
- 1 gave a few gifts on random nights.
- 1 gave gifts on a few nights of Channukah, not all 8
- 1 gift-giving varied by age of my children, circumstance, etc.
- 1 it varies year to year and person to person
- 1 just on the first night
- 1 one gift
- 1 small gift first night, small gift last night, most gifts are given on chrstimas.
- 1 spread out gifts, but not necessarily evenly
- 1 usually 1 big gift, several smaller ones - at least one night is for tzedakah
- 1 we brought gifts when we saw the children, for chanukah but not during candle lighting
- 1 when the children were younger, they got a big gift first night and 7 more smaller gifts
- 1 When my children were little I gave them gifts every night. We also gave Chanukah gifts to some of their Christian friends (some of who complained that how come my children get gifts for 8 nights and they get them only on one day). "Santa Claus" also left my children gifts at their Christian friends houses. Now (interfaith) family try to get together one of the nights of Chanukah to eat Latkes and exchange gifts. We also get together for a quiet dinner on Xmas day as

	they have already had their big Xmas celebration with the the Christian part of the family the night before.
1	in the past have given gifts from different relatives on different nights. Ie one night from grandma, one night from aunt, next from uncle, etc,
1	I assume you mean how I gave gifts to my child. We have Magic Menorah who hides a gift per night and gives the child a clue (via the parent--only parents can hear Magic Menorah speak.) Some gifts are larger, some are smaller but I believe we spent a total of about \$120 last year on our child so no really large gift.
1	To immediate family we gave one larger gift and then some other smaller gifts, but not for all seven nights. For extended family, we gave gifts at a family Hanukkah party
1	some nights we don't do gifts. Some nights are tzedakah nights and we go buy gifts for a JFCS family etc.
1	I give the gifts when I see the person, my friend gift I gave a couple of weeks ago, that is when I expected to see him around Hanukkah.
1	All of our children are adults now. We give small gifts on whatever night we are all home during the holiday. We try to get together at least once during the holiday.
1	I only gift my child and husband on all nights; others such as friends, parents, co-workers I gave only once .
1	Both my 20-something daughters live out of town, so I sent presents, which arrived when they arrived and were opened when the kids choose to open them. When the kids were younger, we basically did a present every night. Mainly small, inexpensive gifts.
1	I give gifts on night of family Hanukkah parties.Two this year. (different people will be at each party)
1	Gave gifts when I saw them in person, but i don't remember whether it was during or after the holiday.
1	We were invited to a friend's home on Christmas day and brought gifts for their kids, but for ours as well (so they didn't feel gypped).
1	We have a big family Hanukkah party where we exchange gives. When I was younger and lived at home we were give one small gift each night.
1	I live away from people I gave gifts to and only saw them on Christmas with the rest of my family. I would do 1 a day if I had a choice
1	For my immediate family I give gifts over the eight days. When we get together with my mother and niece/nephews we give presents on one night only.
1	I give one gift, often for the first night, and it is only my children that I give smaller gifts on other nights.
1	We try to have our extended family over as close to the first night as possible and give the majority of the gifts then.
1	I gave gifts to my spouse throughout the 8 nights, and then gifts to family/friends when I was seeing them.
1	When kids were young we gave one gift every night for 8 nights. Last year we only gave a few gifts randomly during the week of Chanukah when everyone was home.
1	our son was given a larger gift and smaller ones each night.. adults all got little items, fun things to open each night - sometimes we took turns who opened on which night.
1	We give one medium gift the first night and one big gift eight night we some small gifts and other surprises on the other nights like Gelt or Ice Cream for desert or playing some family games together.
1	The grandchildren come for dinner and Hanukkah celebration. We give them all eight gifts that night. I wanted to give them to the parents to spread out but they insisted we have pleasure of watching their delight with each of the gifts we gave.
1	We (the parents) buy our kids one gift for one night. For six nights, they receive a gift from a relative. One night we give to a charity we have chosen together.
1	We have changed our practice a lot over the years! With just two parents, and when our child was younger, we distributed it evenly. Now, we are moving toward all gifts on one night of Hannukah.
1	We gave gifts on a few nights in no particular order. We gave gifts to local charity in place of giving to ourselves as well
1	I gave gifts on 3 or 4 nights of Hanukkah, based on the number of gifts I found suitable for the recipients.
1	We have a family get together during or around hanukkah where all the nieces and nephews receive gifts and the grandparents receive a gift.
1	Given your use of past tense, I am having problems deciding if you mean me to answer about my current family or my family of origin. My parents did this differently than I have and I did this differently when my children were smaller.
1	I am long distance from the children, I sent them to their mother who gave them on one night. only gave one other gift,

	don't remember when
1	my kids are 8 years apart so the gift giving is more age specific- the 10 year old got about 5 gifts from us, the 18 year old, 3 or 4
1	Gave during hanukkah, but not every night, just a few and interspersed so we would surprise one another
1	I don't live near them, so it was probably through the mail and whenever it came was when they got it.
1	I gave one big gift. Since I saw my grandkids last week (overseas), they received their gifts far ahead of Chanukah.
1	I always learned that Hannukkah was not a big holiday so when the kids were younger and lived at home I gave \$ 1 each night with an extra \$10 on the last night for \$18 /a chai. My husband was not Jewish so we gave the other presents, toys, etc at Christmas.
1	gelt for the kids the first night, presents whenever the whole family could gather during the 8 days
1	We used to do a gift a night, but as our children are older we give one large gift on a single night.
1	I give the children gifts from relatives for as many nights as possible. Once those ran out, they received gifts from us (parents).
1	We exchanged gifts on the nights we were together to light the Hanukkiot, but also I had sent smaller gifts to my children when they were away so they could open each night, my husband too.
1	Cousins gifts were given at a Chanukah party, my children received a couple gifts from us over Chanukah on a couple nights.
1	My husband and I buy something for us at some time around Hanukkah. My son gets a few gifts, one on each night, but not necessarily 8 gifts. Some of the gifts are not from us, but from his grandparents.
1	I gave my boys one gift on the first night and another on the last night I think (hard to remember exactly)
1	If possible, the entire family opens their gifts from a single person or set of people each night, so that we all open gifts from uncle J and aunt K one night, next night is grandma E and grandpa A, etc.
1	For my family members, I only give one night. My child is not yet one, so we have never celebrated Hanukah with him. I expect we will give him presents each night when he is older.
1	when children were at home, we'd give a "big" gift on one of the nights and more functional or modest gifts other nights. Now that there are far-flung grandchildren, there's one gift at a Chanukah celebration and a lot of playing dreidel! We often ask which charity the adult children and older grandchild would like us to support in their name.
1	We have a family night! We might get theater tickets or go out for dinner together to a nice restaurant We also DO mitzvot and participate in tzedakah since money is tight. The gifts our children get are things they need or secretly desire
1	we do a one night family get together and all distribute gifts. when I was little we did 1 big gift the first night with small gifts the remaining nights.
1	We give our children 1 big gift and a couple of smaller gifts on random nights. We give to a charitable organization, sometimes around Christmas. We give work related gifts before the holiday.
1	There aren't so many of us at home anymore, but our tradition is one big gift and then little things to open every night. The Christian relatives (in-laws) get Christmas presents on Christmas.
1	Husband is not Jewish. When Hanukkah & Christmas overlap we mix things up. Otherwise, small gifts at Hanukkah, usually a theme each night, larger gifts for Christmas
1	When my children were small they each got a gift each night but one night was a big gift and rest small. One night was always a Jewish book whihc they did not appreciate at the time but do now as adults
1	Because kids are grown, gave gifts by mail to them. Significant other received a few smaller gifts on random nights of Hanukkah.
1	depends on "to whom", to kids it was spread out, friends and adult relatives were a "one time thing", usually durign the eight days, but not limited to that tie eframe b/c of location.
1	There is usually one gift that is nicer than the others, but no Big Gift. We also pick one night that instead of exchanging gifts, we wrap gifts to donate
1	I give each person one gift, and don't spend Hanukkah with any of my family usually. So they open their one gift whenever they want. I usually spread out my own gifts so I have one to open every night.
1	When kids were younger tried to give a small gift each night but now we give a few gifts,informally and not every day of Chanukah.
1	Growing up as a child I gave gifts immediately after lighting candles, now I just give them when I see the person.

- 1 The gifts I received were spread out over the 8 nights, the gifts I gave (to parents and sibling and friends were just ONE gift per person)
- 1 gave 1 gift to each individual, but on different nights (not spread out in any particular way, just determined by when I saw those people)
- 1 start small and traditional in our family - Hershey's Kisses and a dreidel, then each night a bigger gift
- 1 When kids were little, we gave gifts with a different theme each night (charity; book; arts & crafts; dvd's; games; toys;money, etc)
- 1 I am a snowbird and must mail gifts to family. Have nieces and great-nieces in the area to gift in person.
- 1 Some people got one gift and my kids got several at once as they are adults and do not live at home.
- 1 When the children were young, we did 8 gifts each, some big, some small. Now we give one or 2 gifts, and only see them one night.
- 1 My children and grandchildren do not live in the same state that I do- I sent the gifts and they distribute them to the grandchildren one on each night. My husband is not Jewish
- 1 When I was younger, we gave gifts during Hannukah. As my sister and I moved out of the house, we have our Hannukah celebration whenever the family can get together, now often on or around Christmas.

20. Did you give gifts immediately after lighting candles?



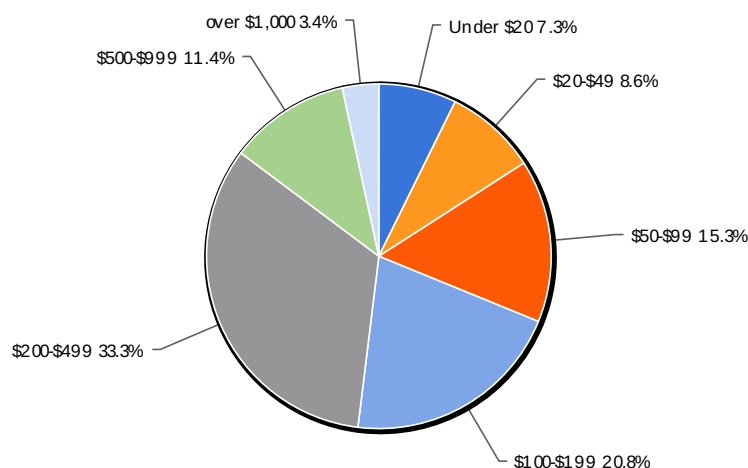
20. Did you give gifts immediately after lighting candles?

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes	437	70.9%
No	179	29.1%

Statistics

Total Responses	616
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21. Approximately how much money did you spend on Hanukkah gifts for friends and family?



21. Approximately how much money did you spend on Hanukkah gifts for friends and family?

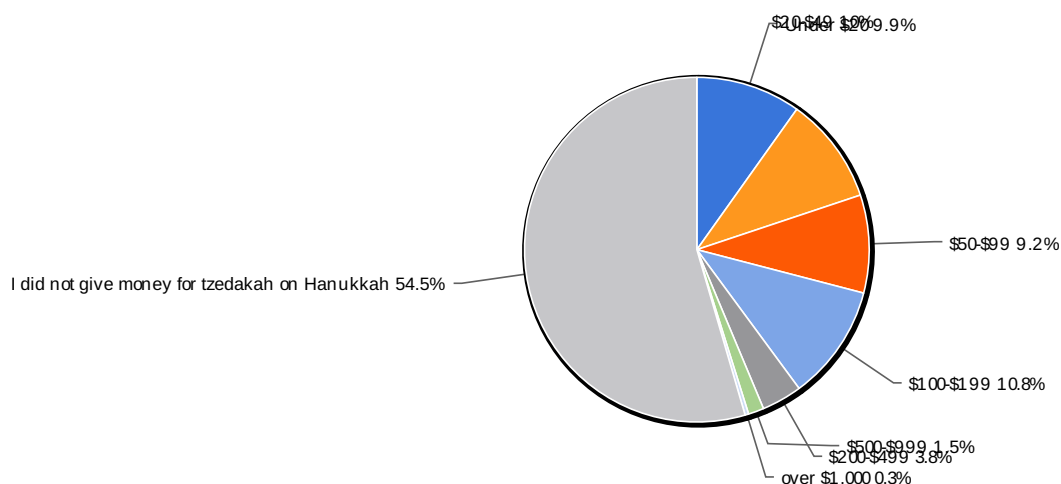
Value	Count	Percent %
Under \$20	45	7.3%
\$20-\$49	53	8.6%
\$50-\$99	94	15.3%
\$100-\$199	128	20.8%
\$200-\$499	205	33.3%
\$500-\$999	70	11.4%
over \$1,000	21	3.4%
I did not spend any money on gifts to friends and family for Hanukkah	0	0.0%

Statistics

Total Responses

616

22. Approximately how much did you give for tzedakah (money for a charitable cause in pursuit of justice) specifically for Hanukkah?



22. Approximately how much did you give for tzedakah (money for a charitable cause in pursuit of justice) specifically for Hanukkah?

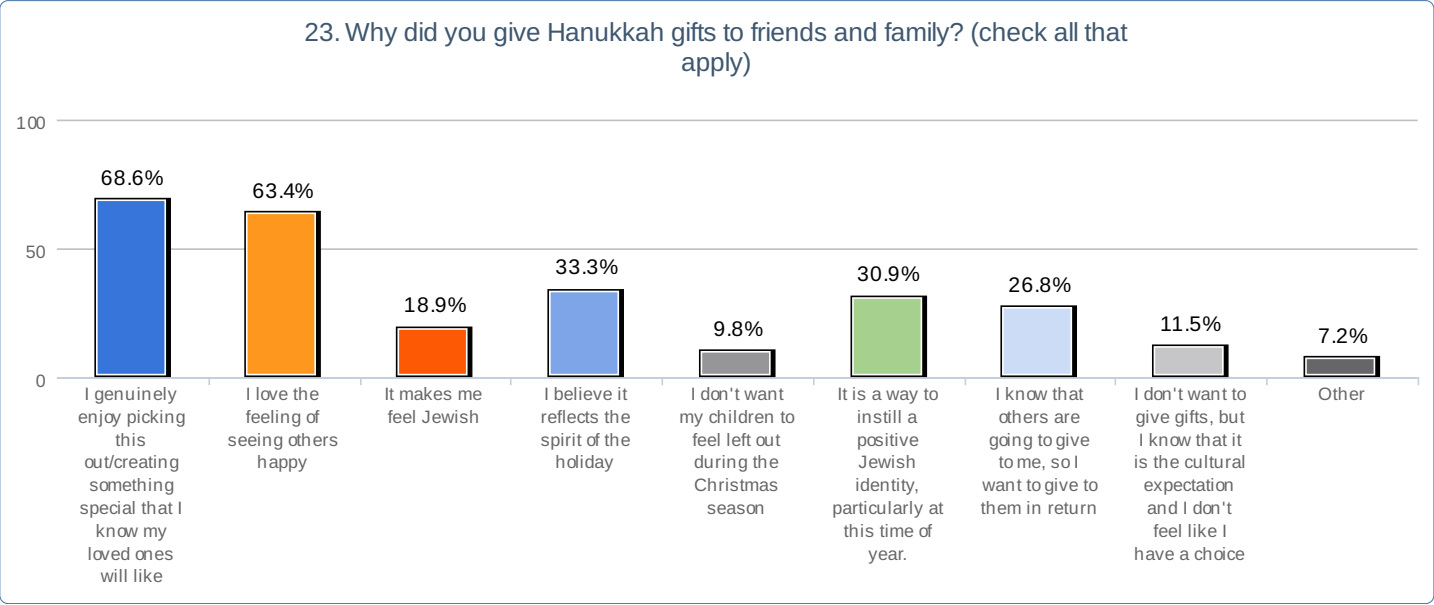
Value	Count	Percent %
Under \$20	60	9.9%

Statistics

Total Responses

609

\$20-\$49	61	10.0%
\$50-\$99	56	9.2%
\$100-\$199	66	10.8%
\$200-\$499	23	3.8%
\$500-\$999	9	1.5%
over \$1,000	2	0.3%
I did not give money for tzedakah on Hanukkah	332	54.5%



23. Why did you give Hanukkah gifts to friends and family? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %
I genuinely enjoy picking this out/creating something special that I know my loved ones will like	422	68.6%
I love the feeling of seeing others happy	390	63.4%
It makes me feel Jewish	116	18.9%
I believe it reflects the spirit of the holiday	205	33.3%
I don't want my children to feel left out during the Christmas season	60	9.8%
It is a way to instill a positive Jewish identity, particularly at this time of year.	190	30.9%
I know that others are going to give to me, so I want to give to them in return	165	26.8%
I don't want to give gifts, but I know that it is the cultural expectation and I don't feel like I have a choice	71	11.5%
Other	44	7.2%

Statistics

Total Responses	615
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Comments

Count	Response
1	As a thank you for the things they have for me all year.
1	Cultural expectation, but I don't mind giving modest presents.

1	I continue to be conflicted over the gift issue
1	I enjoy giving gifts but don't like the seasonal expectation.
1	I grew up with the tradition and have continued doing it now that I have my own children.
1	I have different reasons for giving gifts to different people.
1	I loved receiving Hanukkah gifts as a child and it's a fun part of their Jewish experience.
1	I was raised celebrating christmas and I now do this with my children in addition to hanukkah
1	In our home if you sing you get gifts!
1	It's a family tradition.
1	It's a tradition I was raised with.
1	It's cultural and I like to do it.
1	It's fun
1	It's how we celebrated as children.
1	It's more a sharing than a giving -- we give and get.
1	It's our family tradition to buy one toy and underwear, pjs or other smaller gifts.
1	It's what I and all of my friends and family do- its tradition.
1	It's what my family has always done.
1	It's what my parents did for me and I'm passing the tradition on to my children.
1	It's what we've always done
1	My significant other's family exchanges gifts for Hanukkah and I enjoy joining their traditions.
1	N/a
1	Pretty much a secular tradition in my family.
1	Since I only give selected gifts, its specifically chosen for the intended person
1	Some of my relatives and I arrange a gift exchange with gifts given at a party.
1	This year has been a tough so my kids are not receiving any gifts so we will see their reaction.
1	Tradition! (family tradition, that is)
1	Tradition. I've always given/received gifts on Hanukkah
1	Tradition...my favorite niece and nephew.. my only niece and nephew (ha, ha)
1	Traditional gift exchange
1	continuing a tradition we followed in my family
1	it's a family tradition
1	it's fun
1	nice family tradition
2	tradition
1	tradition and expectations.. although I don't know that socks fit either of these roles.
1	we enjoy the sweets as part of our celebration
1	I checked "It makes me feel Jewish" because it does but I never thought about that as a reason for giving gifts at Hanukkah or at any other holiday.
1	I like giving gifts. It is a nice way to let someone know you appreciate them, it is half way thru the school year so the timing is good, and it would seem odd to buy random gifts at another time.
1	we gave to the granddaughters who are not being raised jewish, but know they are jewish thru their mom. they do light chanukah candles and celebrate christmas. we do not live near them.
1	As an interfaith family, it is a very expensive holiday season. Our children are Jewish which leaves us in a difficult spot when my husband wants to celebrate Christmas. Do we only give at Christmas, as it is so in your face, or just Hanukkah and then upset my husband. It is a difficult balance.
1	When I gift my friends and co-workers that are not Jewish, I always share the story of Chanukah and also share Chanukah traditional foods and games in the sharing.
1	Hanukkah gifts tend to be things I would have given the kids anyhow. My older daughter accumulates/requests things all year that she designates as "Hanukkah" presents. Sometimes she uses them right away, sometimes saves for

	Hanukkah. But basically we do it because it's fun.
1	for my son, i gave him gifts because i love him and want to give him gifts, and to follow tradition. for my in-laws, i gave them gifts because i knew they would be getting me a gift.
1	It reminds me of when I was a child and received gifts for Chanukah. Also, I love to give gifts to my daughter.
1	My ex is not Jewish, so our daughter (who is being raised Jewish) celebrates Christmas from the Santa Clause perspective
1	The kids expect it based on the culture, but as we they have gotten older we focus more on the holiday and less on the gifts. We recognize that it is not the most important of holidays and just enjoy being together with family and friends.
1	Celebrating Hanukkah this way is very American, and has always seemed a way to help Jewish children feel less different; but my favorite reason to celebrate was to go into my children's school and share the stories of hanukkah, Kwanza, las posadas, winter solstice celebrations, and (if it fell during the same time) Ramadan. I enjoy the winter solstice connection of the celebration - enjoying light during the darkest time of the year, inviting friends and families into your home during a time people tend to stay indoors, celebrating the sleep of the earth that is needed for the spring rebirth. It is a wonderful time of the year to celebrate.
1	We started out not giving our kids Chanukah gifts but my older son came home from his Jewish preschool in tears because the other kids told him they got a present every night. So we do small gifts each night now (a book, crayons, mittens, etc.) I would like to phase this out once they are old enough to understand that it's not really part of the holiday.
1	was tradition in my family when I was young to get a gift after playing dreidel and winning 3 gimmels. Continued this tradition with my children
1	my husband grew up Christian and gifts are a difficult thing for him to give up. I did not grow up exchanging or receiving gifts- and we only exchange with his side of the family.
1	Reason varies. For extended family, combination of obligation and helping them. Immediate family - feels good to give them gifts. Charity - always a good thing.
1	I feel like i need to give gifts on channukah since we are jewish and since most of the gift giving in our family revolves around christmas. I make my kids go to religious education so they expect the work AND the rewards of their religion.
1	I don't love it...but it is what Chanukah has become...so we do it and try to make as much meaning from it as possible.
1	There are overlaps in the categories. I used to like shopping for that special something to see the reactions of the recipients. But, I was ambivalent, feeling that all these gifts were overkill (especially when the inlaws tried to outdo one another). When I was a child, I received very modest gifts but enjoyed the candles and unwrapping pretty packages no matter what was inside (even socks!) The identity came from celebrating more than just Chanukah. We liked looking for menorahs in the windows on the way home from Grandma's house never really obscured by Christmas lights. (Ironically, it was the Christian friends who envied us because the gifts went on for 8 nights!)But, the frenzy of unwrapping gifts in a crowd is troubling. I don't see happy faces or Jewish inspiration/identity. If Chanukah is only gifts, there is only present. We also need a past and a future!
1	It has become a family tradition. When I have children, I will continue to give gifts, but on Hannukah.
1	For my wife, I gave a gift because it's 'the gift-giving season'. For my nephews, I gave gifts because they're little kids and it was clear it was expected.
1	I did not grow up giving gifts but my boyfriend did so it was in the spirit of how he celebrates.
1	I have 3 nieces and a nephew all under the age of 9. They all have a strong Jewish identity and since they were born, have dedicated 2 nights of Hanukah each year to giving back on their own with gifts for those less fortunate or with tzedakah (through the \$\$ they get through their allowance). Their parents actually request not to send them gifts but I know that it is an expectation that I send them something, even if its small.
1	It's just tradition - it's not that I don't want to; I don't particularly care either way, but it is an expectation and I feel like it has become part of the holiday.
1	I give to my only Son. My family is gone. I have a brother, not alot for him. I do what I can afford. Its not materialist, its about religion, I was raised Jewish. Proud of that also. Sure miss my Parents,
1	My husband's side of the family (some of which are not Jewish) organizes an obligatory gift exchange yearly. Oy.
1	I was giving my husband his Xmas present and gave my niece & nephew Hanukkah presents at the same time.
1	My children grew up in a very non Jewish area and thought I didn't give large gifts like most of their friends received, I enjoyed giving them a little something each night as small children. Now, I usually give them one gift, something that they "need."
1	I'm very mixed with the whole thing. I feel like there is an expectation for gifts and I don't know how to make the holiday

	more fulfilling and believe my kids will be disappointed.
1	a mixture of don't want my children left out, and the last one. i don't want to give gifts, but my kids will be mad and not understand. we are trying to change that in our home
1	When they were younger I think the kids expected gifts. It would be disappointing to them if they didn't receive something for Chanukah. I don't think it should be an expectation since that is more of a Christian practice, but it is reality, living in the society that we do.
1	When being invited to my significant others' family Chanukah celebration, gift giving is an expectation. However, I usually find something small and meaningful to give that I would not otherwise had the pleasure of giving to loved ones.
1	Chanukah gift getting was an important event in my childhood, I have shared it with my children and grandchildren.
1	I enjoy giving gifts to my nephews. I only give to my boyfriend because he likes to exchange gifts.
1	For me, giving gifts at Hanukkah is a tradition I love, but there is not really a religious component to doing so- Hanukkah is a minor Jewish holiday- it has become more of a social convention for us- we celebrate the way we do because we enjoy it and the Winter months are long and dreary so it is something to look forward to here in the Northeast
1	It has been our family tradition - it was difficult to start the tradition of skipping gifts one night - my parents were hurt that we were changing their tradition. There is some sense of obligation - having to get for all my coworkers.
1	If I give a gift, its because that item is something that would be particularly appreciated by that receiver of the gift. It might even be a joke.
1	We are close with our nieces and nephews who live out of town and enjoy being a part of their Hanukkah. We feel Hanukkah, however, is just for the kids which is why we don't give gifts to adults -- only through college.
1	I do enjoy giving my kids a little something special, but do not like the way that our family Chanukah party has gift-opening as a central theme.
1	Mostly so that my nieces and nephew enjoy celebrating the holiday. They're still too young to appreciate the religious or cultural aspects fully.
1	We do a gift exchange on one side of the family with my first cousins, our parents and our children
1	It's interesting that "it makes me feel Jewish" is a choice. I guess I feel Jewish, so I give Hanukkah presents to my Jewish friends & relatives. It's not "I will buy Hanukkah presents for my Jewish friends and relatives so that I can feel more Jewish."
1	When my kids were little, we started so they wouldn't feel left out at Christmas. Also, at that time, I was married to a non-Jew, and didn't want him to feel sad.
1	I grew up in a small town and we did gifts every night for Hanukkah, little things, but every night.
1	I was born in the USSR and Hanukkah Gelt was only two of holidays (with Passover Matza) that related me to the Jewish
1	it does give us the oppty as a family to identify as jewish. this part we emphasize and discuss the more significant holidays
1	I love to get things for the children. My new family bought me gifts because they love me but more so they thought they should since I grew up with Christmas. I had no gifts for them so it was awkward.
1	My wife is not Jewish and she likes gift giving so we kind transferred some of her celebration of Christmas to Hanukah
1	Despite liking to give gifts and Hanukkah is a good excuse to do so given that I know I will be receiving them, I do not feel comfortable with it given that it is NOT the spirit of the holiday. I wish my family would cease the practice, and I advocate for that, but as long as I am receiving gifts, I will take pleasure in returning the gesture.

24. Did you participate in any type of social justice project specifically for Hanukkah? Please explain.

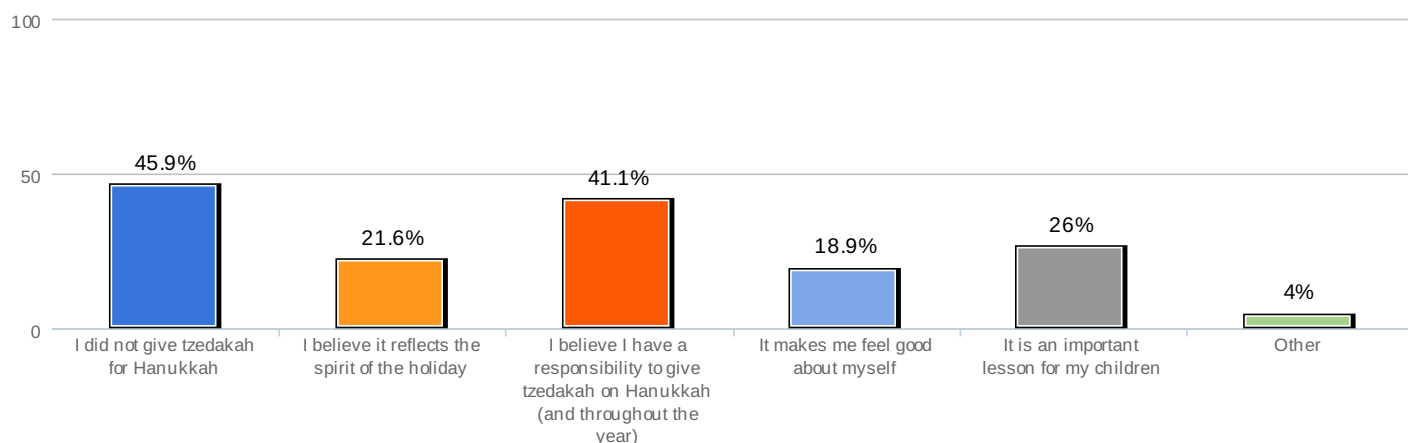
Count	Response
1	JFCS, Minneapolis. chag sameach program
1	Adopt-A-Family with my youth group.
1	Adopted a child for the holiday season
1	Chanukah community crib at our temple

1	Gave to food banks. May be for Christmas, but the giving is very Jewish
1	Gift selection for a boy and girl through the temple that housed our Jewish preschool
1	Hannukah Crib at Temple
1	Helped at various functions at synagogue - i.e. setting up for lunch for disabled.
1	I have volunteered to provide food for shelters in the past.
1	I held a Birhtright NEXT Shabbat dinner during Hanukkah.
1	If it happens to fall on Chanukah then it is a coincidence.
1	Made and donated food for Xmas dinner at local shelter.
1	Mitzvah Day
1	My children chose toys to purchase and donate.
1	My family went shopping for items requested by a local day treatment facility and delivered them.
1	N/A
1	Ner Shel Tzeddakah
46	No
2	No
1	No - but I like the idea :)
1	No :(
1	No but I will this year because we joined a synagogue with a strong social action component.
1	No, I did social justice projects at different times during the year.
1	No, but I do volunteer at a food shelter christmas day.
1	No, but we plan to once the kids are bigger.
11	No.
1	No.
1	No. I try and make social justice apart of my every day life, not a time of year thing.
1	No. Not specifically for Chanukah.
1	No. We do that all year
1	No...
1	No... i served dinner to the homeless for Xmas though
1	Nope
1	Not currently.
1	Not for Hanukah in particular
1	Not last year but in past years
1	Not now. When I was in youth group I think we did, but I don't recall the specifics.
1	Not specifically for Chanukah, but I try to stay involved in the community as much as possible.
1	Not specifically for Chanukah.
1	Not specifically for Hanukah.
1	Not this year. I did for years in religious school and day school.
1	Often I will give to the local food bank as an expression of the "holiday" spirit.
1	Once I created educational content for the ONE Campaign related to Hanukkah.
1	Party, make latkes
1	Planned a Hanukkah event for my campus Hillel
1	Purchased sneakers for needy children in area schools.
1	Raising money at a hanukkah party
1	The Jewish community in Salt Lake City does projects, centered around the holiday season
1	Tzedakah
1	We did gift cards for the federation for those in need!

1	We donate new toys to a toy drive at the kids school
1	We gave to our synagogue
1	We have a Hanukkah blood drive at our temple every year.
1	We participate in an interfaith service and help at a local charity by giving food and gifts.
1	We volunteer every year as part of our Chanukkah tradition...Ronald McDonald House last year.
1	Yes, JAFCO toy drive
1	Yes, as part of religious school collection for Children's Hospital.
1	Yes, through our synagogue.
1	Yes. Soup kitchen helpers.
1	Yes. We do one every year.
1	a community dinner for those that can't afford a big meal.
1	community celebrations
1	don't remember
1	don't you mean "will you" or "do you" since Hannukkah han't happened yet in 2012
1	food drives
1	n
40	no
1	no, but that sounds like a great idea for next year
2	no.
1	not specifically for Hanukkah
1	recipe and gift swap
1	tzedakah project thru shul
1	we teach about chanukah in our children's school and make latkes etc
1	yes, buying gifts for unemployed parents to give to their children
1	yes...we get a profile from JFCS and then buy for it.
1	Our congregation always works at the local soup kitchen on Christmas to cover for employees to have that day off. This is our Hanukkah gift to the community. I have helped with this for several years.
1	Always giving extra to food banks, random dollar bills to random people, domestic abuse agencies, school community service project for the season.
1	There are a lot of Tzedek programs around this time of year because it gets colder but they are not tied to Hanukkah.
1	volunteer at the ARK and donation that were requested by schools, shuls, and party givers in celebration of Chanukkah
1	My synagogue always has a [something] drive to support local service agencies (diapers, food, books, ...); we participate in this every year. We take our children on a special grocery trip to get food for the local food bank.
1	Not specifically for Hanukkah, but I do make end of year donations to Jewish charities, and I do give tzedakah in honor of other Jewish holidays.
1	we do gifts for 7 nights and tzedakah for the 8th - always helping a family in need in our greater community
1	Some years yes (going to soup kitchen for a few days, visiting seniors at nursing home) others no. Just depends on how busy we are and what opportunities there are
1	I collected tzedakah for a charity. Also did a can and bottle drive and gave the money to a homeless shelter
1	More like community service: The kids sell crafts to raise money to help public school children who rely on free lunches to have food over the weekend... Sending care packages to Israeli children who have been affected by terrorism... Donating hand made cards to distribute to critically ill children, etc.
1	We don't really have any sort of organized anything for that in my community, but I like to have people who aren't Jewish over so they can experience the holiday and learn.
1	yes, i organized an event called Fifth Night where children were taught about tzedakah by giving away a gift on the 5th night (rather than getting one)
1	No. I only encourage the use of the 6th night to donate money or time to a specific cause for myself and my family.
1	bringing people on the fringe of society (lonely elderly people, homeless people) together with "regular" people for a

	meal and some conversation
1	No. I barely could support my family. Soviets took all our properties and left us without any capital.
1	Actually its for Xmas -- but as a Jew we have long volunteered at local shelter and hospital to allow Christian staff and volunteers time off
1	We do a Baby Item drive this time of year at my school. I always have items to donate personally.
1	We've given \$ to Hanukkah related appeals, including local requests for gifts for kids. We've also participated for years in our synagogue's Xmas dinner project for local needy people.
1	Donate food to food bank. Some years I've donated toys to Toy's for Tots or Salvation Army toy drive.
1	We always give Toys for Tots gifts especially in Christmas falls after Hanukkah. I let my kids pick out toys that others may want.
1	Yes - we participate in our synagogues social action Hanukkah programs, including collecting and wrapping gifts. We also have our own project - we have a party and invite others to bring a new sweatshirt or jacket for a child in my sisters classroom and then we wrap them. My sister teaches in a very poor school district and we have been able to get new warm clothes for every kid in her class for the last several years.
1	Yes, I worked with college students to visit a Jewish nursing home to celebrate with them. But I didn't attend the event nor did I do anything social action based during the days of Chanukah. My first child was born a couple of days before Chanukah started.
1	A Mitzvah project with my Temple. We sent Jewish soldiers Chanukah menorahs, candles, snacks , etc.
1	I think i participated in a giving program our synagogue had where you filled the needs of a senior.
1	One night of Hanukkah, at least, is about giving back to the community by working at a food bank, soup kitchen or other local project.
1	I made donations to others in need, read stories at Barnes and Noble for Hadassah, was part of community events several places, and we have a Hanukkah House Museum whose admission is a non perishable food for the local food pantry, of which we have a site.
1	not specifically for Hanukkah. During one night of Hanukkah, we discuss the importance of religious freedom and what that means in our culture
1	In the synagogue I serve, we make warm scarves for people in a shelter during our congregational Chanukah party.
1	Yes! Every year on Christmas Day my family participates in the local "Mitzvah Day" and have been for about 12 years now. We generally volunteer at some sort of food bank.
1	Social justice, not necessarily. But I did step up my volunteer work for the homeless and in my local community this time of year.
1	I have volunteered many times, never considered it in connection to the holiday.... thanx for the suggestion1

25. If you gave tzedakah (money for a charitable cause in pursuit of justice) or participated in a social justice project for Hanukkah, why did you do it? (check all that apply)



25. If you gave tzedakah (money for a charitable cause in pursuit of justice) or participated in a social justice project for Hanukkah, why did you do it? (check all that apply)

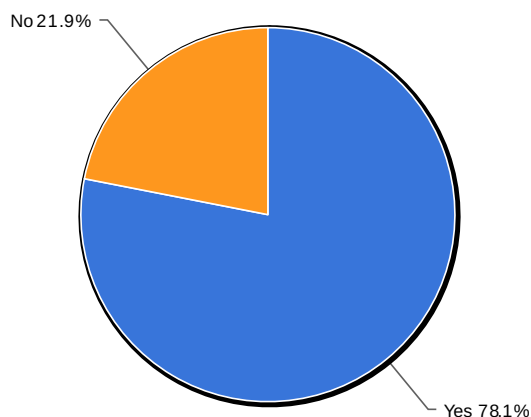
Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
I did not give tzedakah for Hanukkah	219	45.9%	Total Responses	477
I believe it reflects the spirit of the holiday	103	21.6%		
I believe I have a responsibility to give tzedakah on Hanukkah (and throughout the year)	196	41.1%		
It makes me feel good about myself	90	18.9%		
It is an important lesson for my children	124	26.0%		
Other	19	4.0%		

Comments

Count	Response
1	Because I was asked.
1	Family likes it in lieu of a physical gift.
1	Gave tzedakah throughout the year but not specifically for Hanukkah.
1	Give tzedakah throughout year, not specifically on Hanukkah.
1	I did not know that Hanukkah was specifically tied to Tzedek.
1	I give tzedakah, but did not give specifically for Chanukah.
1	I have family the prefer donations to other gifts.
1	I make donations during the year but not specifically for this holiday
1	I want the holidays to be more about giving than getting.
1	It helps those who need it.
1	It's a nice coincidence with the end of the year giving for tax purposes, as well.
1	My husband isn't Jewish but he prefers I give tzedakah rather than giving him Christmas gifts.
1	N/a
1	THROUGH OUT THE YEAR
1	There was a need and wanted to help.
1	We do not believe in only receiving.
1	We give lots of tzedakah, but have never connected it with Chanukah.
1	donation to my temple
1	i gave because others were in need
1	meant to do it sooner, but forgot until then...
1	participated in tzedakah/mitzvah projects, but not necessarily for social justice
1	we give other times of the year and do participate in social justice projects
1	we give tzedakah throughout the year
1	we participate in many chabad events and always contribute to them during the holidays
1	Some of us family members felt giving to charity in honor of each other was more appropriate and a good alternative to giving each other material gifts.
1	We always made one night of Hanukkah a Tzedakah night where we discussed various causes and solicitations we receive at this time of year and make donations
1	I don't think about Tzedakah as something that needs to be connected to Hanukkah. I think about it more as an on-going giving.
1	In addition to Tzedakah that we give to various causes throughout the year we give year-end gifts to a number of

	causes
1	The other teachers at my sisters school know that it is a Hanukkah project that brings in all the sweatshirts and it sends a positive message about the Jewish community to a group who have very few Jewish friends
1	We give Tzedaka many times during the year but we don't look to do this specifically because it is Chanukah.
1	My children like to give Tzedakah--they are old enough that they don't need the lesson anymore but they just know it is right to do it.
1	I give money to charity throughout the year. I don't feel particularly obligated to give specifically on Hanukkah.
1	I don't want all gifts to be personal and want the kids to understand that there are others who are far less fortunate and need our help.
1	I feel that we are mindful of tzedakah and give to a variety of causes, but we don't like that to Hanukkah.
1	Thanks for the reminder about tzedakah. We are so strapped by my spouse's student loans that it ends up low on my list of priorities.
1	My parents and I always set aside one night of chanukkah to give tzedakah. I will do this with my sone one day too, but haven't continued the tradition yet.
1	I like the idea of it. During the holiday season I do look for ways to give but am more likely to put a toy in a bin or "adopt" a family or something like that. If someone asked I would certainly give.
1	We give tzedakah throughout the year, but not specifically for Hanukkah. However, we do our year-end giving at this time of year, and discuss how we prioritize our philanthropic giving with our immediate family.
1	There are all times people need help, especially at this time of year. We need to be active in helping others who are less fortunate.
1	We do this on Christmas morning as part of the Christmas celebration. We celebrate both Hannukah and Christmas but haven't done charitable giving for Hannukah.
1	We have always been as generous as we can be. Know it is important and my kids now give and that makes me very proud.
1	I give to the local community and the Salvation Army Bell Ringers when I am with them. I make sure my daughter knows why I do it.
1	We do toys for tots and other charitable causes this time of year but not necessarily because of hannukah. We try to do things other times of the year also.
1	I think this is a good idea, but just haven't done it in the past. I think it is easier for us to give tzedakah at other times of the year rather than around Chanukah because, although we don't buy expensive gifts, we give presents to quite a few people in December because we buy Chanukah gifts for our kids and my husband's family and Christmas gifts for my family.

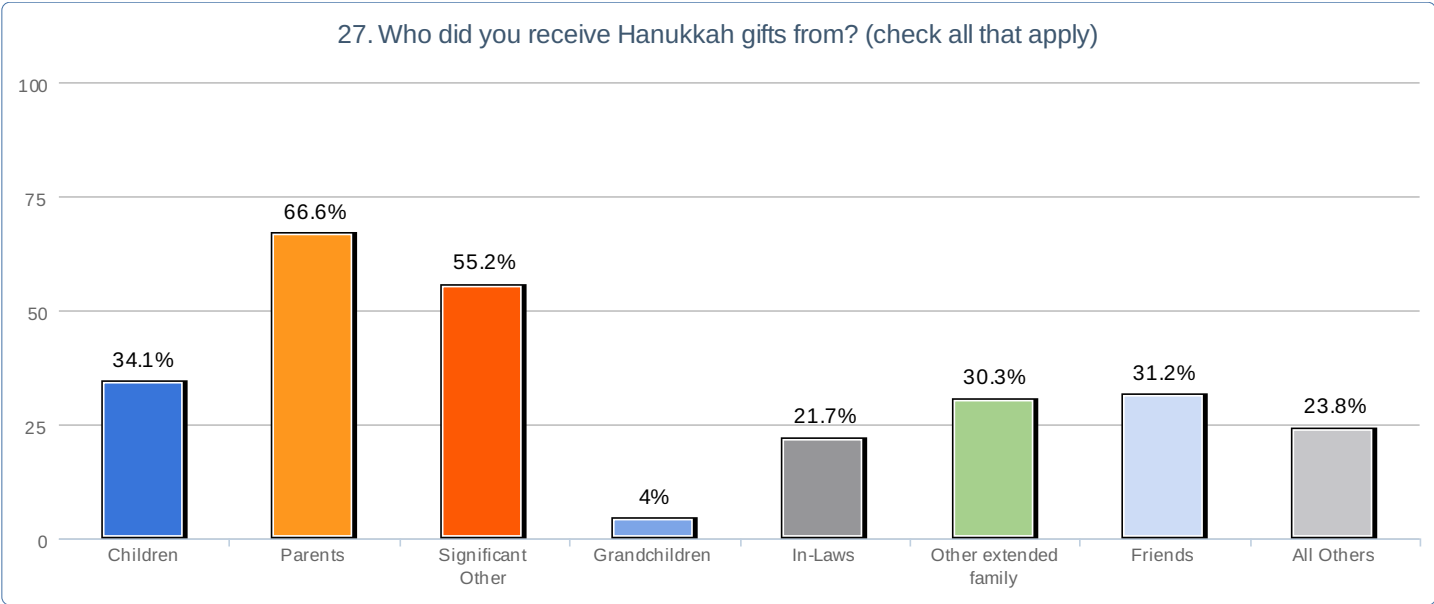
26. Did you receive gifts for Hanukkah?



26. Did you receive gifts for Hanukkah?

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes	538	78.1%
No	151	21.9%

Statistics	
Total Responses	689



27. Who did you receive Hanukkah gifts from? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %
Children	186	34.1%
Parents	363	66.6%
Significant Other	301	55.2%
Grandchildren	22	4.0%
In-Laws	118	21.7%
Other extended family	165	30.3%
Friends	170	31.2%
Coworkers	60	11.0%
My Jewish Community	29	5.3%
Tzedakah	4	0.7%
Other	37	6.8%

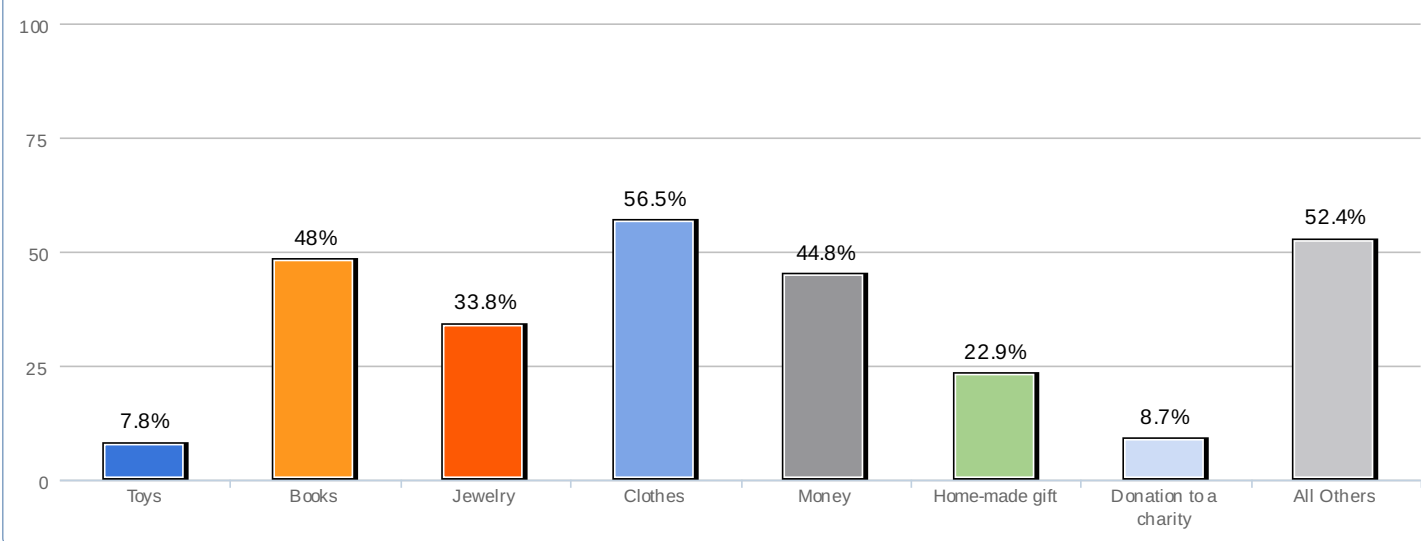
Statistics	
Total Responses	545

Comments

Count	Response
1	At the gift exchange with our extended family
1	Brother
1	Grab bag at annual family Chanukah party
1	Grandmother
3	Grandparents
1	Grandparents and brother

1	I can't remember if I received gifts!
1	I like receiving gifts too but it could be anytime.
1	It was quite a while ago!
1	My grandparents
1	Niece,nephew/brother and Sister-in-law, and my son and his family.
1	None
1	Primarily from families of students I teach.
1	Religious school families
1	Several parents of my students gave me giftcards
3	Sibling
6	Siblings
1	Siblings should be a choice here.
1	Siblings, Aunts/Uncles, Grandmother
1	Siblings, grandparents
1	Sister gave me a piece of jewelry she made and my mom gave me \$100 to spend on me.
1	Sisters
1	Students
1	Students in my religious school class
1	Sybling; grand parents
1	We exchange gifts with my husband's family on Xmas and mine at Chanukah.
1	extended family.
1	from students
1	grandparents
1	my husband
1	myself!
1	sibling
3	siblings
2	sister
1	adult gifts tend to be very limited and as parents age (or pass) they are unable to give, but for most of my adult life, I did receive Hanukkah gifts from my parents. I exchange gifts with some "sick" friends and I consider mine for Hanukkah, but the gifts I give them are for xmas as they are not Jewish.
1	I get presents from my non-Jewish relatives on Christmas, but I also get a Chanukkah card from my in-laws. Some years my sweetie and I get each other presents, but mostly we're nice to each other all year long, and that's pretty much the best thing you could ask for.
1	I tend to buy myself some small splurges at this time of year and designate them as Hanukkah gifts. I don't set out to do this--it just happens. Occasionally a friend gives me something, but not often.
1	My parents and extended family are Christian and we participate in a name draw to exchange gifts. everyone makes an effort to have the gifts arrive for my family during Hanukkah.
1	My in-law family is not Jewish. They give me gifts on Christmas (when we are all together) but consider them Hanukkah Gifts (wrapped in Hanukkah paper, etc)
1	As a child I got one gift from my parents and one from my Aunt and Uncle at Christmas. Sad to say, even though my family is Jewish. As an adult I give and get Hanukkah presents only. We changed over to Hanukkah presents only after my sister had children and wanted to raise them with Hanukkah and the Jewish holidays only.
1	My parents aren't Jewish, but once I converted, my parents stopped with the Xmas and starting sending Hanukkah presents.

28. What types of gifts did you receive for Hanukkah? (check all that apply)



28. What types of gifts did you receive for Hanukkah? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %
Toys	42	7.8%
Books	258	48.0%
Jewelry	182	33.8%
Clothes	304	56.5%
Money	241	44.8%
Home-made gift	123	22.9%
Donation to a charity	47	8.7%
Gelt	41	7.6%
Dreidel	26	4.8%
Menorah	27	5.0%
Hanukkah specific books or toys	16	3.0%
Other Judaica not specific to Hanukkah	45	8.4%
Other	127	23.6%

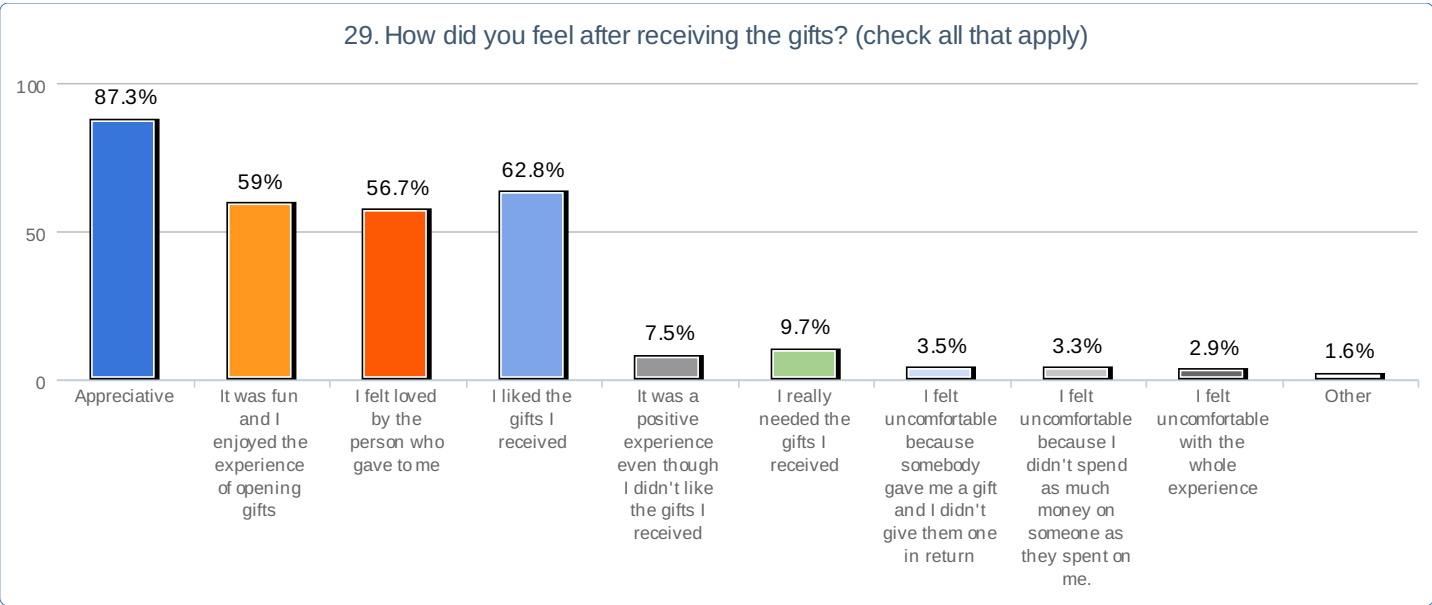
Statistics	
Total Responses	538

Comments

Count	Response
1	Camera, lotion, gift cards.
1	Can't recall all the types of specific gifts.
1	Cooking and hobby items, and a ukulele.
1	DVDs, gift cards
1	Decorative Candle
3	Electronics
1	Food gifts and adult Hanukkah Judaica.
1	Gift Card
1	Gift Certificates
1	Gift card
1	Gift card to resturaunt

1	Gift cards
1	Gift cards and gifts for my dogs.
1	Gift cards for home depot, michael's, other houseware places
1	Gift certificates
1	Gift certificates for massage :) "Goodie bag" from co-worker
1	Gifts vary from year to year
1	I do not remember what I received, other than food items.
1	I don't remember
1	I don't remember the physical ones, probably also got some money
1	I don't remember
1	I think we got a gift card to amazon.com.
1	Inside joke gifts with a \$\$ limit of \$10 is our Hanukah rule.
1	Judaica specific to Hanukkah
1	Kitchen equipment
1	Kitchen items and candle holders
1	My parents always give me a check - however, I think it is because of the ease of the gift.
1	None
1	Something for the house or kitchen
1	Starbucks gift card, Amazon gift card,
1	Starbucks giftcards
1	Theatre tickets
1	Things for around the house & kitchen, fitness, electronics.
1	Travel
1	Useful item I needed
1	Wine
1	beauty products, electronics, music
1	don't know, it's not Chanukkah yet
1	fixing car
1	food
1	food items, calendars, etc
1	gift card
1	gift card (for dining out)
1	gift cards
1	gift certificates (for restaurants and for fitness classes)
1	gift certificates, Chanukah candles, chocolate, cookies
1	gift certificates, dvds
1	gift exchange with co-workers
1	household items that my mom knew I needed
1	i don't remember
1	kitchen--new pots and pans;
1	lotion, tickets to the David Broza concert.
1	misc
1	money for education
1	things I needed
1	treats were given
1	Hopefully my special perfume from my Son, because he knows where to get it, its a secret. But he knows I love that, and

	collect Owls.
1	One year my students at school made me Ha. Since I push in to classrooms their main teacher suggested it but a few made cards on their own.
1	I receive a gift from my spouse and from my parents and his mother. I exchange gifts with my brother. But mostly I get gifts from my Religious School students.
1	when I was a kid, me and my sister always received a new dress or any other cloth from gramma. We loved it. Uselly because it is the beginnning of summer time.
1	Your question doesn't specifically address this, but each year my wife purchases one or more Hanukkah books to add to our family's collection These are always kids books despite the fact that our kids are now 25 and 27 and do not live with us. This year she bought three, including one in French, a language that none of us speak! She asks the kids (now adults) to pick out the new book(s) each year. Amazingly they always guess correctly. It's a great family tradition.



29. How did you feel after receiving the gifts? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %
Appreciative	479	87.3%
It was fun and I enjoyed the experience of opening gifts	324	59.0%
I felt loved by the person who gave to me	311	56.7%
I liked the gifts I received	345	62.8%
It was a positive experience even though I didn't like the gifts I received	41	7.5%
I really needed the gifts I received	53	9.7%
I felt uncomfortable because somebody gave me a gift and I didn't give them one in return	19	3.5%
I felt uncomfortable because I didn't spend as much money on someone as they spent on me.	18	3.3%
I felt uncomfortable with the whole experience	16	2.9%
Other	9	1.6%

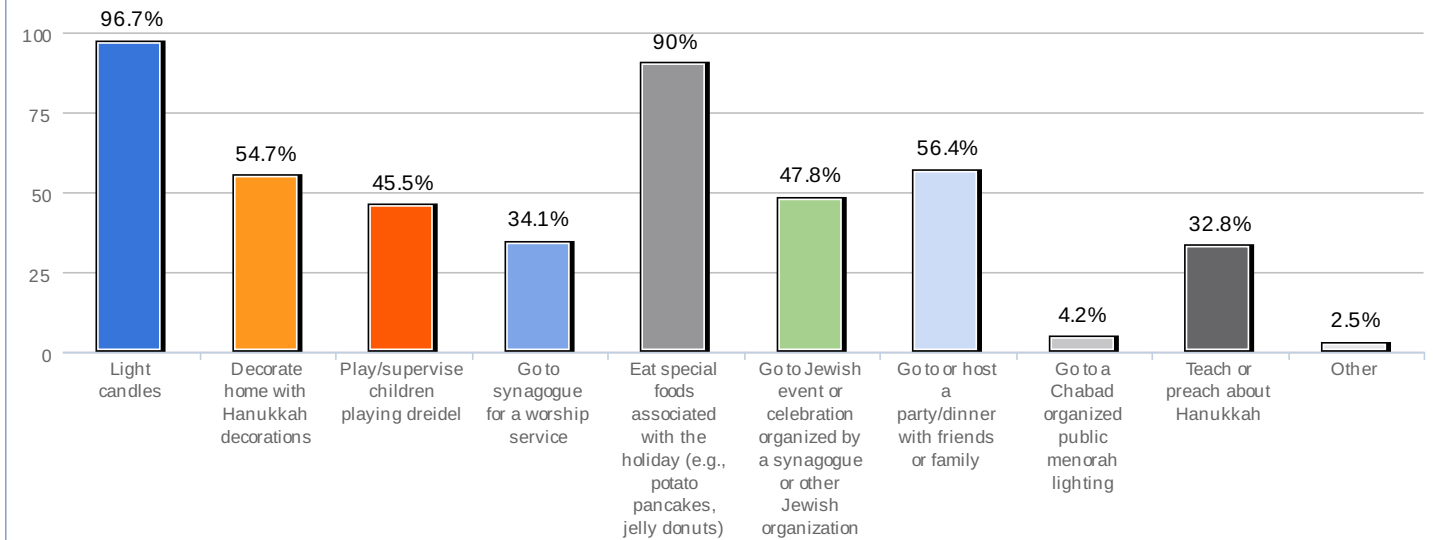
Statistics	
Total Responses	549

Comments

Count	Response
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1	"loved" may be too strong a word. "appreciated" might be better. or "thought about"
1	But it isn't necessary
1	I don't feel it is necessary for adults..just for the children...
1	I love that my parents have supported my conversion by celebrating my holiday.
1	I think Jews should give gifts at Purim and on their birthdays and not at Hanukah.
1	It was quite a while ago!
1	It's a tradition we've done my whole life
1	N/A
1	We only exchange gifts within the immediate family.
1	Wish they would all make donations to Synagogue
1	liked some, not others
1	students and congregants
1	I liked my gifts but don't feel as though I really need or want gifts on hanukkah. I'd prefer just to give to the kids and tzedukah and not receive anything.
1	The family party gets a little excessive (and we've had a death in the family) so we are dialing it down a but this year.
1	Would prefer to eliminate the whole gift giving idea from December altogether. Do not agree with it philosophically
1	I felt uncomfortable because I generally don't like receiving gifts, especially gifts of money. I would rather celebrate and honor sacred times in less materialistic ways.
1	Last year was unusual in that I spent time with a much more diverse group of people for Chanuka. I had gone to NY to visit, pretty much every family member I have. Most of the visits were done during Chanukah, and most felt the need to give me some sort of a gift. I had gone purely to visit, so it was a bit uncomfortable to be given gifts as well.
1	Last year I was uncomfortable with my congregants spending money on gifts for me. This year I have asked them to make donations in my name if they want to show their appreciation of me through Chanukah gift-giving.
1	I was not uncomfortable, but I am not as "into" gift giving as my significant others' family. I enjoy participating (both giving and receiving) but perhaps enjoy it less than others do.
1	It was just fun, like getting gifts on your birthday- nothing was over-the-top expensive- we DO NOT try to "compete" with Christmas- we do what we feel comfortable doing and do not care what our friends or children's parents do to celebrate- we don't try to "top" what others do
1	I look at Chanukah as a counter-Christmas, and a way to promote my grandchild's sense of Jewishness. Thus I don't feel compelled by adult gift-giving.
1	Now that my family has a "next generation," I am ready to give up on gifts for adults, and switch entirely to tzedakah, but others like to give gifts more broadly.
1	I give and accept in the spirit the gift(s) are given and never judge or feel judged or defined by the gift themselves. I think it's more about expressing care for someone with a small gesture.

30. What else did you do to celebrate Hanukkah? (check all that apply)



30. What else did you do to celebrate Hanukkah? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %
Light candles	670	96.7%
Decorate home with Hanukkah decorations	379	54.7%
Play/supervise children playing dreidel	315	45.5%
Go to synagogue for a worship service	236	34.1%
Eat special foods associated with the holiday (e.g., potato pancakes, jelly donuts)	624	90.0%
Go to Jewish event or celebration organized by a synagogue or other Jewish organization	331	47.8%
Go to or host a party/dinner with friends or family	391	56.4%
Go to a Chabad organized public menorah lighting	29	4.2%
Teach or preach about Hanukkah	227	32.8%
Other	17	2.5%

Statistics

Total Responses	693
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Comments

Count	Response
1	8 ft. Chanukiah in our yard
1	Annually I go to my children's school to teach their non-Jewish classmates about our holiday.
1	Chabad event? God forbid!
1	For many years I went to my children's school to teach about Hanukkah
1	Have a Hanukkah celebration at my home for Jewish and non-Jewish friends
1	I did a Hanukkah related project at Merkaz, a once-a-week Jewish evening high school in my county
1	I teach students from preschool to high school so I get a lot of Chanukah at work.
1	I try to educate people on my website www.hebrica.com and facebook page www.facebook.com/hebrica
1	Learn about Hanukkah at synagogue and Jewish community events.
1	Moreso when children were in the house
1	Not all last year, but have done in the past
1	Nothing

1	Other: sing songs after lighting the candles
1	Read articles about Chanukkah
1	Teach Chanukkah songs
1	Usually a Hanukkah event at our temple.
1	Volunteer at synagogue for a Hanukkah program.
1	Watch Jewish TV
1	We have a dreidel collection which we display on Chanukkah
1	We wrapped xmas presents to support a local woman's shelter.
1	When kids were young, we played with dreidels. We also sang many Hanukkah songs.
1	i used to go to the kids school and talk about hanukkah. My husband loves to make latkas
1	none.
1	prepare latkes in my daughters classrooms
1	took a Chanukah-related family picture to send as family holiday card to relatives
1	we make sure we do something family festive every single night
1	I specifically am uncomfortable with the Chabad experience and try to only participate if a friend has invited me specifically to attend a service or event sponsored by Chabad.
1	The instructions here make no sense - "answer questions directly, not according to what you did??"
1	read stories together about Chanukah, bake/cook together special Chanukah treats, sing and dance to Chanukah music
1	Do you mean in general or pertaining to me growing up? Growing up we did not decorate the apartment but I generally put some decorations up since the kids were small. As they get older we do fewer decorations.
1	I do not go to synagogue for a worship service directly related to Chanukah, but I go most/many Saturdays and therefore usually go at least once during or around Chanukah.
1	when my children were in elementary school i used to go t their class and bring latkes, jelly munchkins, hanukkah cookies, dreidels etc... and talk a little about the holiday
1	i don't remember what we id ast year, but we go to services and temple events and we light chanukah candles each night.
1	I am physically disabled, so going places is difficult for me, but we do try to celebrate each night, at home, as a family unit.
1	Some years we're invited to Hanukkah parties; some years not. we enjoy them when we are invited and able to go.
1	Bake hanukkah cookies, cupcakes and make marshmallow dreidels. I go to holiday bazaars specifically looking for Hanukkah crafts. I send out Hanukkah cards to my family. Collect Hanukkah decorations and dreidels and menorahs.

31. Please describe your Hanukkah gift exchange rituals and any special traditions associated with exchanging gifts.

Count	Response
1	Adult passes out hanukkah gifts with youngest children getting to open gifts first.
1	After candle lighting my wife and I give each other gifts.
1	After the candles, everyone opens their gifts simultaneously. No particular ritual.
1	Because we are an interfaith family, we combine the holiday traditions.
1	Both families exchanged birthday and channukah gifts
1	Circle round and have one person open at a time.
1	Coins just afte ligtnng the candles
1	Cook latkes, light candles, give gifts, go to Chanukah parties, repeat!
1	Do not have any

1	Don't give gifts to parents or siblings, but may receive them from friends and parents.
1	Exchange after lighting candles. Nothing special.
1	Fairly normal, my wife and I still try to do 8 gifts for each other.
1	Family get togethers with gift exchange
1	Family party but only kids get gifts.
1	For our kids, we give them a clue each night ending with large family gift.
1	Gifts at amily party planned well in advance attended by people all over northeast.
1	Gifts given on the first night of Hanukkah if possible
1	Give 8 small gifts for each night and 1 large gift.
1	Give gifts to children after lighting candles, eat and play games with chocoate gelt.
1	Grab Bag
1	Have dreidel and Chanukah collection. Created collections for my children.
1	Hide gifts, play hot and cold to find them.
1	Holiday white elephant gift with friends. Family gift exchange.
1	I buy small gifts for my children. They open the gifts after we light candles each night.
1	I determine the gift being given on a specific night
1	I give gifts to my children and grandchildren
1	I give my 25 year old daughter a collectible dreidle each year.
1	I only buy gifts for my nieces. I mail gifts to them because they live across the country.
1	I've been exchanging gifts with my boyfriend for the past few years. No specific traditions.
1	Informal after lighting candles.
1	Just give money to kids
1	Light Candles then give gifts
1	Large extended family gathering
1	Light candles and exchange gifts then have dinner.
1	Light candles, open gifts, eat fried food, participate in community lighting ceremony
1	Light candles, say prayers, open present
1	Light candles, sing song, give presents to kids.
1	Light candles, sing songs , give gifts
1	Light the candles, eat dinner (latkes included), give gifts after dinner.
1	Light the candles, say the prayer and exchange gifts. Usually on the 1st night.
1	Ligth candles, exchange gifts, play Hannukah related games, eat Hannukah foods
1	Live, love, eat and tell stories..
1	Most times dinner with family and close friends.
1	My husband and I send checks or give gift certificates.
1	My parents now give me money. They used to give me gifts.
1	My three brothers and I do a gift exchange where we each give one brother a gift.
1	My would just light the menorah and then open gifts
1	N/A
1	N/a
1	No special tradition, just open gifts after dinner.
1	No specific rituals
1	None
1	None really
1	None, just giving the gifts or mailing them when I have the time
1	None.

1	None. The closest thing we do is eat chocolate gelt (we don't gift it).
1	Nothing special
1	Nothing special. Every gift is labelled for the recipient
1	Now that my children do not live at home, gift exchange is long distance (shipping).
1	Only gifts for children this year
1	Our children choose one item each night from a basket.
1	Pick names out of a hat, and find something for that person.
1	Pretty basic, nothing special. For large celebration, we go oldest to youngest for gift opening.
1	Really just done at a family dinner which included friends.
1	See previous comment about books and decorations.
1	See previous comments.
1	Sometimes my mother and I exchange gifts, sometimes we do not.
1	Swap after prayers
1	The children get a gift each night. I prefer not to exchange gifts with the adults.
1	Usually after lighting candles.
1	Usually first night
1	Usually give extended family their gifts at Thanksgiving.
1	Usually give gifts after the candle lighting.
1	Usually it's lighting chanukiah, singing, and then gifts are exchanged.
1	Very low-key, but associated with a traditional family dinner and menorah lighting together.
1	Very simple.
1	WHITE ELEPHANT FOR HANUKKAH PARTY
1	We always eat Latkes and read the Hanukkah story and light the candles.
1	We always exchange gifts right after the candle lighting.
1	We always light the candles first.
1	We are moving away from decorating and gift giving.
1	We create a box decorated by children for the gifts to be kept in.
1	We exchange gifts after lighting candles.
1	We exchange gifts at a family party
1	We give a family gift to our children. It's not a huge deal and they don't expect anything.
1	We give small gifts; sometimes eight, sometimes not. I typically don't get a gift.
1	We give very small token gifts each night.
1	We have always given money-gelt. Usually on the fifth night
1	We hide the gifts and the children play the hot or cold game to find them.
1	We just exchange gifts right after candles and dinner
1	We light our candles, sing a few songs, read a story about the holiday and then give gifts.
1	We pick a time and meet up and give each other stuff.
1	We place all the gifts on the hearth and take turns opening them each night
1	We play "hot and cold" for the kids to find their presents each night
1	We really have nothing special, per se.
1	We use blue and silver paper to distinguish them from gifts wrapped in Christmas paper.
1	We would get a big gift (usually books/clothing) on the first night.
1	When I am with family, each person opens 1 gift and the others wait to see the gift.
1	When children were young we exchanged gifts following lighting the Hanukkah.
1	When my mother-in-law and my friend see each other we exchange gifts.
1	With family/friends sharing traditions

1	as a kid we did it after lighting the candles
1	as noted on earlier question, gifts given after getting 3 gimmels playing dreydel.
1	described previously (sorry)
1	dinner light the candles exchange gifts
1	each person opens their gift separately from others so family can see and share their gift.
1	everyone has at least one gift
1	extended family came over for dinner and exchanging gifts.
1	give small gifts after lighting the menorah and play dreidel
1	light candles. give gifts.
1	lighting candles, talk about jewish religion and history, give gifts
1	my husband prepares a scavenger hunt with bizarre riddles/clues for each of us
1	no pecial traditions
1	nothing special, but would like to change that, we've moved alot in recent years.
1	now only give to children in the family
1	treasure hunt
1	we don't exchange gifts on Hanukkah
1	we light the nights candles and then share one gift each night while the candles burn
1	we mail them to florida ahead of time.
1	we wait for after candle lighting
1	When I was a child, my parents gave us socks and underwear, gift wrapped. When our daughters were little we would get a big gift and a few smaller gifts
1	My wife's family exchanges gifts at a party on one night after lighting the menorah and sharing a meal. On other nights that we give each other gifts, the two of us usually do so later in the evening--we light candles and sing, read, spend time together then have desert or latkes and gifts.
1	We select one night to celebrate as a family. We enjoy a family meal, candle lighting and gift exchange. All other nights we light candles
1	Because my mother is a convert, we celebrate Christmas with her family and many of our Chanukah gifts are exchanged then. My immediate family lives far away and so we are rarely in the same place for Chanukah, and are instead together during Christmas when our work schedules allowed.
1	We light, we sing, we recite brachot (in Hebrew/English), we open a present if there is one. It's a pretty minimalist holiday, so we don't make a major deal of it. One night (maybe two) we make latkes. And sufganiot if they're around.
1	My wife and I give one or two gifts a night each night around candle-lighting. My family of origin gets together somewhere around Chanukah or Christmas for a big gift-fest. This is a holdover from our childhood Christmases, though now that all the children are older and my dad has converted to Judaism, we call it "Christmas" only for convenience.
1	My daughter gives each of her children a gift the first night of Hanukkah, but my husband & I do not exchange gifts.
1	My family exchanges gifts on the first night of hanukkah. there may be one or two gifts for/from each person. usually the gift giving is done after lighting the candles and eating dinner. on most hanukkah's, i make potato latkes from scratch with my grandmother.
1	When I lived away from my family (college, working after college), my mom would send me a big box of Hanukkah gifts prior to the holiday. Each gift was labeled with a number and I was to open each gift on the designated numbered day. She usually sent gelt, candles, banners and other Hanukkah decorations. It was so fun to look forward to opening the gifts each night, even when I was away from my family.
1	My mom and I go clothes shopping the day after Thanksgiving and then she saves the clothes to give me on Hanukkah-spread out over 8 nights. It works best when Hanukkah is soon after Thanksgiving :)
1	We share Christmas and Chanukah with extended family, Jewish, Christian and Atheist. With my husband's Christian family, we have a gift exchange & shared meal, hosted alternately by us or others, so sometimes with Christmas decor and sometimes w/ Chanukah decor.
1	With friends: host party and do and blind Pollyanna With my family (parents and siblings) everyone draws a name to exchange with. You cannot exchange with your spouse. Everyone gets gifts for nieces and nephews.

1	Since I have lived away from my parents they usually give me a hybrid "hanukkah/birthday" gift which they mail to me
1	I don't have children and I don't live near my family so gift giving has waned the last few years.
1	When I was a kid, we'd light the candles and then my mom would create scavenger hunts and corresponding rhymes as we raced through the house for our gifts. As I got older, we got fewer gifts - rather one large gift and other small things.
1	Magic Menorah hides one gift per child per night and gives a clue to the parents (only parents can hear Magic Menorah speak.) Then the child finds her gift, brings it back to wherever the menorah lighting has taken place, and opens it. This happens after the menorah lighting and after we sing a few Chanukah songs.
1	At some point our immediate family fell into the habit of giving each other socks during Chanukah -- something we would buy anyway at this time of year, but we take a little extra time to find special socks for each other. It has nothing whatsoever to do with Chanukah, just with our family, I guess.
1	My husband's family comes for Hanukkah dinner and we exchange gifts then. With hmm husband I usually get home one really good gift and a then a number of "practical" things (like socks) - that is a hold over from my childhood.
1	We light menorot, one for each child. We say the prayers. My wife and I give them gifts. One child is usually low key about receiving them. The other is hopped up and gets unpleasant.
1	We choose a different theme for each night of Hanukkah. One night we do a fun activity as a family, one night we make a donation to an organization, usually each kid picks out a gift do donate to children in need.
1	Have a party with my husbands family. Gets excessive so we have a greed to all spend less this year. Plus we are not exchanging with his cousin and his wife going forward. Also celebrate casually with friends And other family.
1	There is always a "book night" where the children receive books and always a gelt & dreidel night. Other nights vary. The past two years we have included a family night at a pizza/game spot as part of our celebration.
1	My daughter and I sing the blessing (usually as soon as she comes home from chorus rehearsal or school) and then I give her her gift for the day.
1	Mostly because we have almost no disposable income, it all goes to bills and my husband's student loans, we give one small gift each night to our daughters. Usually we use the same gift bag (that we have recycled from previous years) each night, because we are weird about the environment and the use of resources. I was hoping when I converted to Judaism that I would be exempt from having to participate in Christmas from my side of the family, because in general I do not like giving gifts or even getting gifts and think it's all a huge bother in a busy schedule.
1	when i was young or with family, 8 gifts were always exchanged. 7 small gifts and one significant. now that im alone, my friends and i dont exchange. imo, gift giving is mostly for the children.
1	None. Chanukah isn't about gifts...that's an Americanized development in reaction to Christmas. I'm uncomfortable with it
1	Goofy Gifts- everyone participating buys something really weird that's not necessarily useful, under \$10 of course. Then on the night of a get together everyone places the gift on a table once they arrive. Everyone sits down and picks a # from a hat (depends on how many participants there are) and in that order each person picks a gift and opens it. The next person can either "steal" that gift or pick another gift. If your gift is stolen you must pick another gift or steal another gift. Gifts can only be stolen once.
1	We light the menorah each night, say the prayer as we are lighting, and exchange gifts. We then have dinner.
1	When kids were younger, I wrote a treasure hunt clue for each night of Chanukah, for them to find the (hidden) gifts. Coming up with different places and a Chanukah-related clue (oil, Chanukah story, etc) for 8 nights for many years was a challenge, but fun!
1	My mom mails me about 8 gifts and I will call her on speaker phone and light the candles and say the prayers and then open 1 present at a time
1	light candles, say Blessings, sing songs, play dreidel, open gifts-small to large family tradition night one is always Hersheys kisses and a dreidel
1	As a child we always got one big gift and smaller gifts the rest of the nights. SOmetimes my mom hid the gifts and we searched for them.
1	We exchange modest gifts on last night of Hanukkah, following candle lighting. Gifts exchanged among adults tend to be tokens or a single larger meaningful gift; we give more to the kids, but it's still just two or three gifts--usually books, educational toys, or clothing.
1	we light candles then give a gift to each of our boys; at least one night giving is reserved for tzedakah - money (or needed/wanted items)

1	My dad makes traditional latkes and my sister makes two other versions - curry sweet potato and zucchini parmesan. I bring the sufganiyot.
1	We light the candles, say the blessing and the children open their gift. They are given one gift per evening that has some kind of theme. For example, "movie night". The kids get a movie and p.j.'s.
1	My parents always got us necessity items and we for them. It was a running joke that my dad would get a pair of tube socks every night. It didn't really matter what we were getting, because it was more about the festivity, an activity that we were doing together. But we still kept the gifts for years and years (even the alarm clock my sister resented receiving when she was 12).
1	I don't have any specific rituals, usually I will give the gift either before or after we light candles
1	My grandparents and parents give us gifts. The kids don't have to give gifts but it is encouraged. We go to my grandparents for one night and get all their gifts in one night, my parents get us one big gift and little gifts for the rest of the nights.
1	We give the kids what they need at Hannukah and I organize the 8 days by theme nights. 1. Tzedakah to their favorite charity (Yad Vashem, IMRIC), 2. Sports equipment 3. Clothing 4. Personal time with Mom and or Dad 5. Book 6. Food 7. Family Holiday night for Feb 8. Money (bond or RESP contribution)
1	The gifts I give to my friends are usually something specific to the person it's for, like something they're really into, something that reflects an inside joke of ours, something I know that they need, etc. Otherwise I don't have any Hanukkah gift exchange rituals. Hanukkah is not really a big deal in my family but my parents sometimes use it as a reason to give me money. Like I mentioned earlier, there's always a gift exchange at work but I feel like it's not really part of my culture and the inclusion of Hanukkah is just for American cultural reasons.
1	We say the blessings, along with special "sayings" for each night from a special "sheet" I read from during my childhood. Then we move to a casual seating area and open gifts, one at a time, so everyone does NOT RUSH. After that, we enjoy a festive meal with latkes, etc. We host dinners and go to dinners for about four of the nights. Sometimes we exchange gifts with other children in the family, but not always. If some families are on a tight budget and don't want to exchange gifts, we are fine with that- they are our friends- it's about being together, NOT about the gifts.
1	My son is now 22, but when he was young, as when I was, our family had a big gathering with extended family and friends on the first night. A big gift was given to the child, with smaller gifts each of the remaining 7 nights.
1	We put all the gifts out as soon as they are wrapped starting about a week before Chanukah. Each night more gifts join the pile. Each gift is wrapped and has a hand made dreidel attached to it with a number from 1 to 8 and the person's name for whom the gift is intended. Each night the children rummage through the pile of gifts to find the number that is the same as the number of candles lit....those are the gifts that are opened that night. We take turns opening the gifts so that everyone gets to see what the person has received.
1	Usually we have a family meal and give gifts either before or after the meal ~ always after lighting the candles on the menorah.
1	When the kids were/are home, we light the candles and wait until they go out before we exchange gifts.
1	When I'm home (and not at my University) we exchange gifts after the lighting of the candles. But at school, I light candles on my own and receive/give gifts when it is convenient.
1	When my children were young I made them reusable drawstring gift bags (I don't like wrapping paper due to environmental concerns) whatever they receive is found in their bag each night. We have dinner, kindle lights, sing...after desert we do gifts
1	as a child, we got a larger gift on the first night, and increasingly smaller gifts on each subsequent night. I don't have a family now, and so don't have any traditions of my own
1	We have never asked our children for a list of items. We try to find something they love (elephants or penguins) and look for something unique to treasure. Our children love books so we find something they usually love. Now that they are older, we keep to something that they would really like and keep to a family do something together. Our children love to play dreidel and sometimes that will be our night of fun without gifts. The job loss has been humbling and the kids are older and understanding.
1	Small gifts, usually books the first night then other nights will be clothing, charity, games, food. Don't always do all 8 nights because we exchange Xmas gifts too.
1	When the children were small, we gave gifts each night, but usually small ones and several were gifts to others: we picked out gifts for Toys for Tots and chose an animal to be a "Zoo Parent" of. Now, we don't play the gift giving.
1	Nothing special -- light candles, and open gifts which were wrapped and left by fireplace in the days before Hannukah.

1	To honor the gift of being able to study Torah freely, each night we unwrap a seasonally-appropriate book to read as a family. The same books can be wrapped each year. Also, as mentioned before, we plan some act of kindness or charity for each if the eight days. I (the mother) plan them in advance and wrap instructions and supplies for each project.
1	Hanukkah gifts are generally not big. The children (who are all in college now) open one present each night, with most nights themed or focused i.e. gifts from Grammy & Pop one night, gifts from Bubby & Pop Pop another, one night is book night and one night is charity night when everyone contributes and we decide which charity to donate to.
1	When the grandchildren were younger, they got little gifts every night and the biggest on the last night. Now that they are tween and pre-teen, they just get one "big" gift.
1	I wrap all the presents at once because when my girls were little I think they liked seeing all the gifts, and now I just do it out of habit. I give them each their present for the night (as opposed to letting them pick the present from the pile) so I can decide what to give them when. They are old enough that sometimes they have told me what they want, yet they still like the surprise of not knowing what everything is.
1	gave/received gifts after lighting menorah and/or at family get-together. Mail gifts to out-of-town family during Hanukkah.
1	In addition to lighting candles and giving our own children chanukah presents. We have one family chanukah party/dinner with all the cousins and exchange gifts.
1	We do it the day that the entire family is in town, whether it's during the holiday or not. We light candles, eat dinner and then open presents after. One person distributes her gifts to everyone and then everyone has a chance to open and show what they got. Then, the next person distributes, until everyone has given their gifts out.
1	When I was a child, I would receive a present from my parents on each night of Hanukkah. While in college, my parents would send me a box with 8 presents in it. Most were small, but usually one or two bigger, more expensive presents each year. Now, I am in my late 20s and I still love receiving Hanukkah presents.
1	Nothing special. Each child opens a gift while the others wait. We usually give the big gift (from us, which isn't always big -- just depends) the first night.
1	Presents are labeled with numbers according to the Hanukkah night. We light the menorah and then open gifts, usually after dinner.
1	When my children were young, instead of exchanging gifts on one night, we would go to a toy store and pick out gifts to give to charity.
1	I am one of 4 children. We all have spouses. We draw names and give a gift to one person (other than our spouse). Our mother draws the names each year and seems to love doing this. She is 91 !
1	My family has a "Chanukah box" from my mom's childhood. We light the candles, then have dinner, and we aren't allowed to open the Chanukah box until all the candles burn out. Once that special family time/waiting is over and the candles are out, one child reaches in to the box without looking, takes out one gift, and gives it to the intended recipient. The children alternate opening the box and distributing the gifts until the box is empty for that night. Then the Chanukah fairy will fill the box again, and you are not allowed to look into the box until tomorrow night's candles are out- or else all the presents might disappear! Sounds a little pagan or Christmassy, huh?
1	Growing up my parents used to give a small trinket for Hanukkah, a necklace or something. As I got older they got me things I needed.
1	Family gets together to spend time with each other and we also hand out gifts to the young children in the greater family.
1	I give one big gift, on the night the family is together. I send 8 small gifts home with my grandchildren for during the week. Also, some family gifts and individual gifts for my children. I always buy a little toy for their cats..as a joke. One night is Sock Night, everyone gets new socks. I also buy "goodies" and fill a basket for the family and a separate one for my grandchildren.
1	My family live in different locations so we Skype with son in Chicago and his family on chosen night and open gifts together. We light candles. We picked names out of hat for gifts and we all gave gifts to childrenx.
1	We give our children gifts right after candle lighting, usually on all eight nights. We don't use wrapping paper. Rather, the gifts are in cloth bags that we reuse every year. They have Hanukkah-themed designs.
1	Our family hides the gifts throughout the house each night and you have to find yours before you can open it.
1	My parents and my siblings now only donate to charity instead of giving gifts. We gather on one night of Chanukah to make latkes, light candles with family and give gifts to the children. My daughter and her husband (not Jewish) and my husband and I will gather to exchange gifts with each other.
1	I always learned that Hannukkah was not a big holiday so when the kids were younger and lived at home I gave \$ 1 each night with an extra \$10 on the last night for \$18 /a chai. This is what my parents did for me. My father and

	grandfather worked in retail so they were usually working during Hannukkah so we used Christmas as our "Winter Family Holiday" and exchanged gifts then
1	We spin the dreidel to see who goes first and the play hot and cold, since we hid the gifts around the house
1	Light the candles while reciting the prayer. Have Hanukkah food (Latkes, etc). Open presents first night. Be with friends and family.
1	We light the candles and recite the blessings, sing off key Maoz Tzur, open gifts and then eat dinner together - during Hanukkah, we automatically schedule dinner together every night
1	Each night, the kids get gifts, either from us or from family members. One night, they open gifts from grandpa, the next night from their cousins, etc. Our nights are about 3 of the 8.
1	My family is rarely together for Chanukah, so we create a mock-Chanukah celebration, usually occurring after Chanukah is over. We light candles, open presents, and eat latkes. It feels like Chanukah, even though it's technically not.
1	We have to do the blessings and sing 3 Chanukah songs before we are allowed to receive presents. I have continued this tradition as an adult.
1	Our son receives 8 gifts - large and small. My husband and I exchange a few small items. I have one friend to who I give 8 gifts.
1	My Fraternity had a gift exchange/Brotherhood event. It's like the Jewish version of Secret Santa. We called it Mysterious Macabee.
1	On one evening during Chanukah, my in-laws invite our family over and we share a traditional Chanukah meal followed by gift giving. For my child and spouse, I try to be creative in giving presentation and themes for each night: book, music, necessities, movie, restaurant, tzedakah(always on 6th night), BIG present, comfort - usual themes in no particular order other than tzedakah.
1	For the last few years, my husband and I have chosen to get something we can enjoy together rather than buying gifts for each other. Those gifts that are given to parents, children, etc. are generally given at the time we light candles. This is usually just before dinner.
1	We focus on our kids. We light candles each night, eat dinner, maybe sing a few songs. Then each child opens one gift and we all hang out while the ids enjoy their gifts.
1	All gifts are out on the table for the first night. Children get to pick which to open on which night.
1	We see it as a fun holiday where we remember the miracle of the oil. The gifts r a creation of our modern culture that I think arises as z result of the gift giving of xmas
1	i designated one night for home-made gifts, one night for books, one night to winter necessities (hat, gloves, etc), and one night to a whole family gift
1	Since my Mom passed away, I usually give only to my Son & something for my brother. I like to mail out a few cards. Makes me feel good to mail, no email, but regular mail. My mom taught me that kindness.
1	We always give gifts with the extended family after a special dinner. We try to give the gifts family ask for or we know they would like. Hand made gifts from our children are popular.
1	We light the candles and give gifts each night. We get together once a year around the hanukkah season with family who live further away, and exchange gifts.
1	If I give the gifts on Chanukkah it usually happens after lighting the Chanukiyah. Aide from that nothing really special.
1	I mostly buy for the children and grandchildren. not for the adults since I have a big family. We have taught our grandson who is not jewish about lighting the menorah and how to play driedel. this year he is going to teach my daughters boyfriends daughter how to play.
1	When I was growing up, mom and sister and I would light the candles then exchange gifts immediately after. My mom usually gave one gift pemy ought to my sister and I, and we usually had only one or two gifts for her.
1	Growing up, Hanukkah was in almost every way the equivalent of Christmas. (Except, you know, the Jesus thing.) So I'd just get a lot of presents at once (as a kid) and give people one main gift.
1	My husband and I exchange gifts (based on a gift list) and my parents give us 8 gifts (usually small things, some larger). When I was little, they had 8 presents and a lottery for picking which one I would get which night. My inlaws give one big gift.
1	My family (brother and sister in law, and my parents) get together one of the nights and exchange gifts and then light the menorah and then sing a few songs (dreidel dreidel, oh Hanukkah oh Hanukkah). When my brother and I were younger we would get small presents every night and sing and light the candles every night. Now that we are older and don't live together, we do it just that one time.

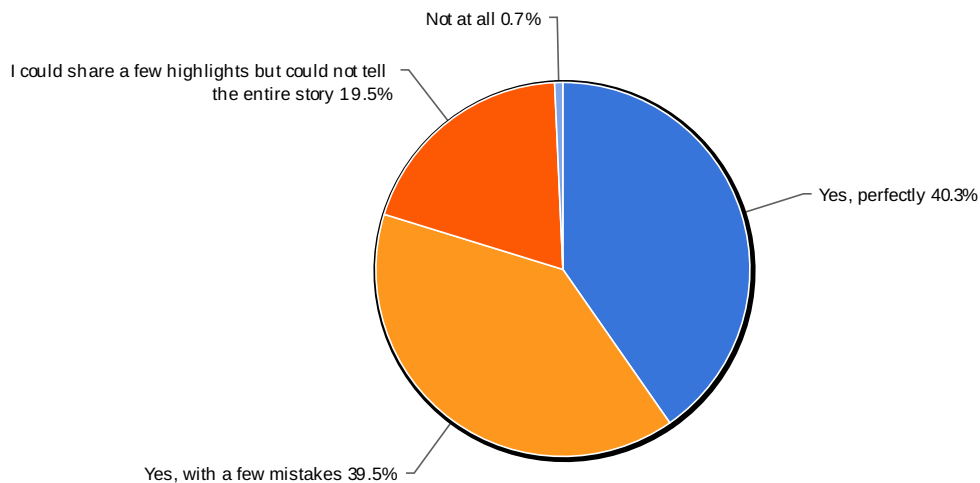
1	My son and his girlfriend exchanged gifts on one night after a meal and the lighting of the candles. On another night, we had our friends with their children come for supper. After the meal and the lighting of the candles, gifts are given to the children.
1	Only the children get gifts after we sing Hanukkah songs. Gifts are not the focus of our celebration
1	give after lighting candles; give on random nights, each person gets to decide what night they will give the gift to the other, to keep it a little spontaneous and fun :)
1	My interfaith group of friends does a secret santa--some people get Hanukkah gifts and some get Christmas gifts, but everyone in the group gets something specifically chosen for them
1	My entire family gets together each Sunday and when it is Hanukkah we celebrate with grandparents, their children and grandchildren. We have Jewish foods, light candles and the children (now young adults) get gifts. My spouse and I also give a gift to my parents. (He has converted so his family celebrates Christmas which we share with them)
1	We don't have any set in stone rituals. But my wife and I normally exchange gifts shortly after lighting candles. If we are hosting a party then we will usually wait until after our guests leave.
1	We usually gather together for dinner and then light the candles and open a gift or two, depending on how many gifts there are. I usually try to make sure everyone has at least a handful of small gifts to exchange.
1	We light candles then exchange gifts. Most nights are small gifts, with a larger gift on the last night.
1	My husband and I don't usually exchange gifts, or if we do, perhaps one very small nominal gift. Nothing elaborate or fancy, but we light the candles every night and have traditional Hanukkah foods.
1	We take turns opening gifts and always go from youngest to oldest person. Other traditions were outlined above.
1	Nothing other than we light candles before dinner and clean up and be ready for bed then open gifts at home.
1	My family never gives gifts for Hanukkah, but gives money (gelt) to the children in the family from all the adults, following the Dmei Chanuka custom practiced in Israel.
1	We started this when my children were old enough to make/buy (with our help) gifts. Each child takes a night of Hanukkah and they give the gifts. It has turned out to be a wonderful tradition where each of my children (3) have a night where they give a gift to everyone and do not receive. It turns out that that is their favorite night which is so interesting since they don't get a gift that night. We also take a night and it is a tzedakah night where we go and do something for a charity or shop (we give them some money and now they take some of their own) and we shop for a food bank. That is a special night for us as well.
1	It is very fluid and flexible and casual mostly we get things for the grandchildren but also we have become forced into Christmas celebration with son in law's family (he is converted) our adult children are trying to change this it is a hard struggle
1	One night is always Book Night. If Christmas overlaps, we light candles at the home of interfaith relatives and give them gifts in Christmas wrapping while receiving blue and silver packages.
1	Because of our blended families it is difficult to establish a ritual to cover everyone. We usually get together with my children and theirs, light the candles, open gifts.
1	display the wrapped gifts the entire holiday, light the candles with song, prayer, games, and stories, and give the gifts with a theme every day
1	Third night = no gifts. What we would spend on gifts goes to a charity the kids pick. I.e., a gift is sometimes something you don't get but give.
1	our extended family picks one night for a big Chanukah dinner and we bring food to our grandmother's house, light candles all together and exchange gifts. my immediate family also lights candles each night together at home.
1	When my children were little I would set up Pam's Teeny Tiny Gift Shop in my bedroom once a year and my children could shop there for one another (bargain prices). It took them a while to realize that what they didn't purchase showed up on another night of Chanukah or in a stocking at Christmas.
1	We wait until everyone is home from work then light the menorah. 1st night is sibling to sibling and parent to parent gifts and subsequent nights are smaller parent to child gifts. We usually give one more significant gift and one larger purchase that entire family can use or enjoy. Holiday gifts to teachers are always in the form of tzedaka to our favorite charity and something homemade.
1	We pretty much just hand the presents to each other after lighting candles... Our son gets to decide which wrapped present he wants each night.
1	I try not to make a big deal out of gift giving for Hanukkah since I believe gift giving has become a tradition because of

	Christmas. We try to stick to lighting candles and eating traditional foods, etc.
1	We usually have dinner at my sisters house. My niece and nephew light the Hannukah candles. We open the gifts after dinner.
1	Always try to give gifts right after candles and blessings. My wife and I don't want to spend too much money on chanukkah, so we have a 8 nights for \$80. It's a challenge to find entertaining gifts within a limited budget.
1	My brother and I always give gifts together to all of our family members. Since we do not live near each other, I don't know how everyone else celebrates. We generally spend the same - about \$25 - on every person. My whole family usually makes individual Amazon wish lists, or at least lets everyone else know what they want. That way, we can make sure that we are all receiving something we will actually like.
1	My sister and I all join together to give one larger gift to my parents. My finance and I choose one night to exchange gifts (changes each year which night we choose).
1	We light the candles and then open gifts each night. Included in the 8 nights are gifts from aunts and uncles.
1	Usually extended family gets together one night and exchanges all gifts. Definitely a spending limit that everyone abides by to prevent awkwardness.
1	One night we have dinner and get together with aunts, uncles, and cousins. Other nights I get together with my closest friends and we have dinner and give gifts.
1	My parents will give myself and my siblings a little money. Otherwise, there is no gift exchange between my siblings or between my siblings and my parents.
1	parents and kids wrap gifts for each other, preent gifts after lighting candles,..at least a few of the 8 nights.
1	After candles + singing we give gifts unless it is relatives oversea in which case send through the mail
1	No special rituals. If we do give a gift to kids it is usually at night some time after candles are lit but not always immediate.
1	We seem to be giving to more family members as the family grows (new family members that are catholic). I don't really like the whole gift giving thin beyond the children. My mother in law has sworn off gift giving starting this year (except the children) and my husband and I agree. We will be giving trees in Israel and rockets into roses key chains.
1	Our specific Chanukah tzedakah is based upon a group discussion between my wife, my kids and myself. One of the gifts I give my wife is always a dreidel (getting a large collection).
1	Less so now that children are "grown" but when younger we would light the candles and the children chose one gift from their pile. They got a gift each night. Some were substantial and some were inexpensive items like a movie.
1	Our family tradition is to sing songs first, maybe just sit around together, then give gifts, to the dogs as well, often they get first. My family tradition was to write a poem or parody for the gift and the person had to read it out loud and guess what the gift was before opening it. We do it some times now but it depends if we are able to be together or not.
1	I give gifts to my Husband, daughter, son, grandchildren, friends children, and a Chanukah grab bag for adults at my yearly party.
1	Since I was a kid, my Bubbe would hide the gifts and create riddles to lead me to the next one. This is the only real tradition to our gift giving. Other than that, it is straight-forward gift exchange.
1	My sister-in-law has annual family get-together...her little ones get gifts from the relatives...Sister in law id's as a conservative Jew..there is NO MEANINGFULNESS in her gatherings,
1	don't think I would refer to it as a ritual - we light the candles and the kids open presents after we light the candles. our ritual is we always take a family photo the last night of Hanukkah in front of all the menorahs (my husband and I share a menorah but each child has her own). we also play dreidel at least one of the nights. one night is game night where the present is a family game and we play.
1	Now that my children are grown, there is far less fanfare-- we light candles and do a simple exchange of gifts.
1	gifts one night with children and their significant others with brisket and latkes served for dinner
1	We try not to go over boar. We try to spend within our means. Because my in-law family is not Jewish we are with them for Christmas. Christmas feels "bigger" somehow, more festive, etc. But I think that is also because that side of the family is bigger and lives closer (easier to get together).
1	Presents are wrapped. We hand them out. They are opened and then we play. All after the candles are lit.
1	my family used to do a lottery with the adults, and who you picked was kept secret up until the family chanukah party.
1	each person is given 2 names of people for whom they will make a donation to an appropriate charity or cause.
1	I'm a college student, so when I'm lucky enough to be home during Hanukkah, we usually gather with several families of

	friends and the parents present the children with gifts.
1	Every other year the gifts are underwear... it's to remember my Mom who always embarrassed all with the practice gift of underwear.
1	My significant other and I often exchange gifts. In addition, his family holds an annual family Chanukah gathering where there is a gift exchange with a spending limit where each individual only gives and receives one gift. However, his immediate family will also typically get gifts for us in addition to the exchange.
1	We just give to the children. The adults don't exchange gifts (although my MIL likes to give us cash every year).
1	When the kids were young, we gave gifts every night, but with themes i.e. books, clothes, tzedakah, small gift, big gift, etc.
1	My family celebrates Hanukkah on Christmas day every year because it is a time that we all have off from work and can be together
1	Now we have a token Hannukah gift exchange and my dad makes latkes, but we only light the menorah if it's actually on Hannukah.
1	Growing up we got one present each night after lighting candles. When I was in rabbinical school four or five of us would go to Target every year around Chanukah and bring \$20. We'd exchange names and then you went shopping. You would spend \$10 on whoever you drew and the remaining 10 split between the rest of the people and the person you drew. Then we'd sit in the Pizza Hut and hand them out. It was very silly and a good time (especially around finals).
1	We try not to make a big deal out of gifts. My husband and I exchange gifts with each other and his family's organized, obligatory gift exchange happens via amazon.com usually since they are all out of town.
1	for first 7 days kids make gifts and give them to us every night, then on last day they get their one gift!
1	We light the hanukiah, saying the prayers, and singing a song or two. On the first night, we exchange the largest gift, and the following nights, smaller gifts. We have latkes at least one night.
1	There are about 30 of us. My grandmother all the way down to 7 of her great grandchildren. We pick names from a hat during the high holidays. For several years the exchange was white elephant or homemade gifts. It changes all the time.
1	candles are lit nightly by the younger children and they recite the prayers...we always tell the story of Hanukkah on the first night...
1	My uncles, aunts and cousins give gifts to the children in the family and all enjoy watching them open them.
1	In my family, we light candles and give gifts a couple of nights. We sing songs, eat special foods, and go to a latke party at a friend's home. At work, we give gifts to all of the staff just prior to the holiday. We hold several celebratory programs for all of the families (I work in a synagogue), and we visit a nursing home.
1	everyone gathers around the menorahs, we light the candles and say the brachas and then we give gifts to the kids
1	We don't have any specific rituals with our own children. Some years we give them very small gifts each night, other years they receive one larger gift, other years they receive a few medium gifts. We exchange gifts with our cousins' children each year, but have begun to "pick names" to decrease the amount of gifts. Each (child) cousin gives one gift to a cousin. The grandparents and great aunts and uncles also give the children gifts.
1	My husband and I exchange gifts with each other, my parents always buy us a dreidel for our collection, my girls get gifts for each other. Growing up gifts were always after dinner and candles
1	We give to our children and children in the family. I like to give gifts, but sometimes send gift cards. We tend to give gifts until they graduate college.
1	With one child in college far from home and the other working in a city far from home, we light candles and then exchanged gifts on video chat. Because some of us really want a more expensive gift, we don't each get one every night.
1	Hanukkah is mostly about the children in our family. We light the menorah each night and afterwards we give the children gifts to open.
1	When I was growing up our family lit candles every night and opened presents immediately after. My brother and I got a small gift on each of the first 7 nights and a large gift on the last night. Sometimes the smaller gifts were clues as to the large gift. This is a tradition I hope to pass on when I have children of my own.
1	no particular gift-giving traditions, just an annual Chanukah party emphasizing food at my aunt's house...
1	one night with each set of grandparents - one (in-laws) that puts more stock in traditional celebration (latkes, checks) and one (mother) that believes in the whim and irony of the holiday (hair products and socks as gifts)
1	Nothing too unique -- after lighting candles with my family every night and singing a few songs, we would then just exchange a few gifts with each other.

1	We stopped doing gifts as a family after high school. Instead we take a family trip to Mexico and that is considered our gift. I've never gotten my brother or parents a Hanukkah gift. This year I have a one year old and might get him one present. He will also probably get gifts from his aunt and uncle and grandparents.
1	My husband and I don't believe that gift giving needs to be a part of Chanukah, we honor it with blessings and eating traditional foods. This may change as our child gets older.
1	I wrap gifts a few days before Hanukah and put them on the piano in plain sight. The kids try to guess what's inside. After lighting candles, the kids open one gift of their choice. We don't always have 8 gifts for every night. We always buy the same number for each child, but when they run out, that's it. The kids know they will receive grandparent gifts, too.
1	I take photographs every single night of each of my kids opening their gifts. I have done so since each of their births! It is fun to look back!
1	We decorate a little. The kids have wanted to put up lights. We have inside but not outside. To me, that feels more like Christmas decorations. We light several Chanukiot and each of the kids light their own Chanukiah. We sing, make latkes some of the nights, open gifts, spend time together sometimes. We place our gifts on the fireplace and each person opens theirs and everyone watches.
1	After dinner we sing songs, then we have dessert & then start the gift giving, opening, and sharing
1	Every year my parents give one dollar on the first night and build up to 8 dollars on the last night. Similarly my grandparents send a card and check of \$36. My mother also distributes gifts randomly throughout the 8 night. However, my dad is catholic and while we are Jewish we celebrate Christmas for him.
1	This year we are doing 1 special night of gifts, and then little sweet somethings the rest of the nights.

32. Could you tell the Hanukkah story right now, without having to look it up?



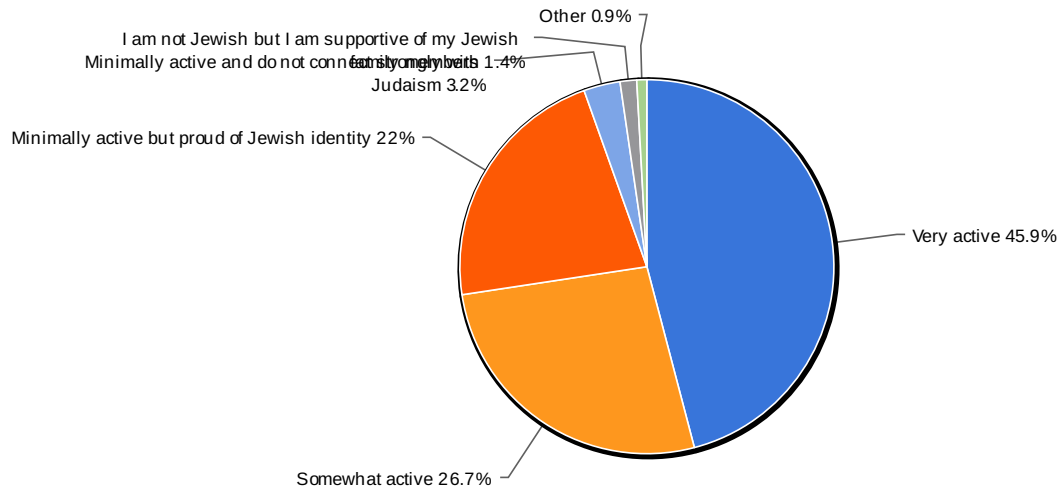
32. Could you tell the Hanukkah story right now, without having to look it up?

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes, perfectly	283	40.3%
Yes, with a few mistakes	277	39.5%
I could share a few highlights but could not tell the entire story	137	19.5%
Not at all	5	0.7%

Statistics

Total Responses	702
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33. How would you describe your Jewish involvement the rest of the year?



33. How would you describe your Jewish involvement the rest of the year?

Value	Count	Percent %
Very active	320	45.9%
Somewhat active	186	26.7%
Minimally active but proud of Jewish identity	153	22.0%
Minimally active and do not connect strongly with Judaism	22	3.2%
I am not Jewish but I am supportive of my Jewish family members	10	1.4%
Other	6	0.9%

Statistics

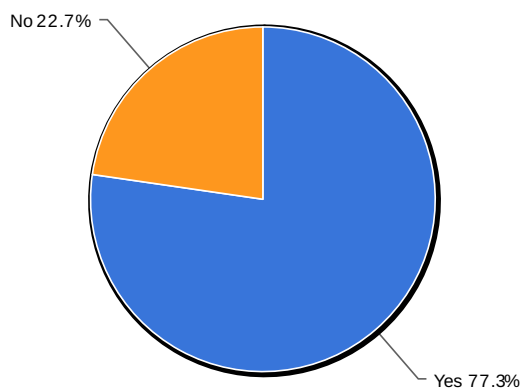
Total Responses	697
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Comments

Count	Response
1	Although I am Jewish, my husband is not.
1	I connect strong culturally, but not religiously
1	I have been on the Board of my Temple for many years, Treasurer for 11 years and am now President
1	I teach religious school and lead services at my synagogue.
1	I the rabbi of a congregation
1	I would say that I am "very active," but I am not Jewish.
1	I'm pretty active but would like to do more when I have more time.
1	Jewish organizations/ culturally- but not religiously engaged
1	Not Jewish, but have friends who are.
1	Not a whole lot of Jewish activity in my area.
1	Not anymore
1	Not at all active, but I pass along events and writings to friends who are more active.
1	Still adjusting to the college experience so haven't become involved in Jewish community yet.
1	although previously very active, age has caught up and slowed me down considerably
1	attend services regularly and participate with friends/ havdallah etc.
1	but we're not halakhic and kind of make our own way through Jewish life
1	depends how you define active and Jewish involvement
1	I am not super strict about my Judaism, but I do keep with many customs and celebrate the holidays as best as I can

	for where I live.
1	I'm the rabbi of a small Reform congregation in western MA that specializes in education (I also have a Masters in Jewish Ed and a personal love of folklore and stories).
1	we do not attend temple as a family that often but at least 50% of the time we do light candles on shabbat and have challah, celebrate holidays.
1	I identify myself as a member of the "nerdlachim" seriously I attend a wonderful Reform congregation and get alot of education , spirituality and meaningfulness from my congregation and Rabbi's...I've learned alot about Judaism in the last 12 years.....
1	One child in Hebrew/religious school (1 morning and 2 afternoons), Shabbat services 2 -3 times/month, occasional cultural and adult ed events.
1	I am not affiliated with a temple but celebrate the major holidays with family friends who are very active and wonderfully generous in including us in their holiday dinners, seders, et cetera.
1	We are lucky to be a in small but vibrant community. I teach with the Orthodox, live with the Conservative and Reform. Our teens read Torah and participate in T'fillah at the Conservative shul, and yet we are not kosher nor shomer shabbos. We have friends who are, and we go by the Shalom Bayit frame of mind. We keep the Jewish peace in our family. We celebrate all the holidays and I am so proud that we live in a community where we can attend all sects of Judaism and evolve ourselves.
1	We go and participate in Friday night Shabbat services. I miss Shabbos morning but now have allowed our kids to play sports and do other things. I miss having a Shabbos community. We host a lot of Shabbatot and Chagim at our home.
1	Love to go to Temple on some Friday nites, I feel good, and my Mom would be proud of me. Sometimes out of respect of my parents, I miss awfully.
1	I am limited due to my disability, so I try to participate when I can from home. But I am always trying to do mitzvahs, even in my limited capacity.
1	I was more active in high school, college and initially post college. I will likely become more involved once I have children.
1	Complicated. I'm a Jewish professional, and for a long time kept kosher, etc, but I'm a secular spree in terms of observance right now, and it feels really right.
1	I am at my temple every week for something ~ either taking a class, going to services, occasionally teaching a class, seeing a presentation, social action, etc.
1	Continuing to learn more Jewish traditions and then participating in them during the course of my relationship with Jewish significant other.
1	Go to all high holiday services and other lesser important events. Go to planned events and Kabblat Shabbat half the time. Join in on other community events especially Shoah events.
1	not sure how to classify -- light Shabbat candles each week but haven't been to a shul in a long time, keep kosher at home...
1	My daughter just started religious school this year. Our involvement is based more around her schedule of activities and the high holidays.
1	I was more involved in our temple before I had a 2-year-old. Now, the distance and his schedule often keep us from getting to services. We're making a concerted effort this year to get to Tot Shabbat, and I'm looking forward to getting involved again once my son is a bit older.

34. Have you ever participated in a Secret Santa/Hanukkah Harry gift exchange with friends or coworkers?

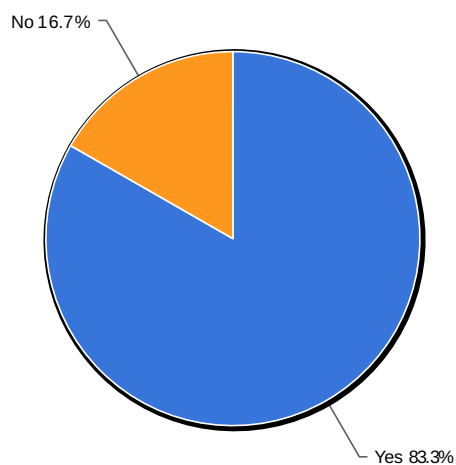


34. Have you ever participated in a Secret Santa/Hanukkah Harry gift exchange with friends or coworkers?

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes	538	77.3%
No	158	22.7%

Statistics	
Total Responses	696

35. Did you give or receive Hanukkah gifts as a young child?



35. Did you give or receive Hanukkah gifts as a young child?

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes	578	83.3%
No	116	16.7%

Statistics	
Total Responses	694

36. How is your Hanukkah gift exchange today similar or different from how it was when you were growing up?

Count	Response
1	- Don't get gifts every night.
3	About the same
1	About the same- more for kids, but not huge gifts
1	About the same.
1	About the same. It's fun but not a super-big deal, unless you're a child.
1	Almost exact.
1	Almost same. the gifts are now more sophisticated. in my days books today computers
1	Almost the same
1	As a child I opened gifts after lighting candles every night.
1	As a child it was all gifts given at once - more like "christmas".
1	As a child until about age 16 I received gifts and gave gifts to friends and family.
1	As a child we had mountains of gifts.
1	As a child we would receive gifts on every single night. It was mostly about giftgiving.
1	As a child, gift-giving was far more one sided than it is now that I am more adult.
1	Basically the same as when I was a child.
1	Basically the same. Gave/received gifts on Hanukkah and Xmas.
1	Converted to Judaism as an adult, thus did not celebrate Chanukah as a child
1	Different
1	Different . Less gifts as a child.
1	Different because I'm not usually with family when they open gifts, due to distance.
1	Don't receive gifts every night of Hanukkah.
1	Exactly the same
1	Exchange Xmas gifts. Husband is non practicing catholic.
1	Fairly similar - one big gift and a number of practical goodies.
1	Fairly similar in that the gift giving was for kids
1	Fewer gifts
1	Fewer gifts from my kids then I received. Otherwise its pretty much the same.
1	Fewer gifts received as an adult, but otherwise very similar.
1	Fewer gifts, less emphasis on the holiday as a whole
1	Fewer gifts. Received one each night as a kid.
1	Fewer items, but "bigger ticket" ones.
1	Gifts are less important now than when I was growing up
1	Gifts everyday as a child
1	Gifts were not costly as a child
1	Give more gifts to my children than I received as a child.
1	Goofy gifts is usually played by people over 16
1	Grew up in a conservative Jewish home and now am more closely affiliated with a Christian church
1	Growing up we received very small gifts and not on every night
1	Growing up we would get one gift each night.
1	Growing up, I got gifts from my parents but didnt give any.
1	Hanukkah is no big deal with no kids around!
1	Have no children and don't give others in my home.
1	I am a convert, and grew up with Christmas.
1	I am more bothered by it now and wish we gave gifts at Purim and birthdays and not at Hanukah.
1	I am no longer envious of Christmas. Gifts are nicer today, feels American not Jewish

1	I celebrated Christmas as a child. Hanukah is much more sane.
1	I converted so no Hanukkah exchange growing up.
1	I converted so wasn't Jewish when I was a child
1	I did not celebrate Chanukah in my home until I was 15 years old.
1	I did not grow up Jewish so there were not Hanukkah gifts in my life then.
1	I did not grow up Jewish, so I grew up opening gifts on Christmas Eve and Day.
1	I do not give gifts anymore or light the menorah
1	I do the same for my kids that my parents did for me.
1	I don't always manage to light the candles every night as we did when I was a kid.
1	I don't have a Chanukah box now, or any other rituals surrounding gift giving.
1	I get gifts from friends, not parents. The gifts are less expensive but more creative.
1	I give less, just to children in my life.
1	I give more gifts to my kids
1	I got Chocolates and Chanukkah gelt
1	I got better gifts than I give my son, although he is still little and that may change in time.
1	I grew up Christian, so we celebrated Christmas and gave gifts then.
1	I grew up Polish Catholic. So it's very different.
1	I grew up celebrating Christmas, so my life is now very different.
1	I grew up in a christian household and converted when I was 23
1	I grew up non denominational Christian
1	I have kept the same customs and traditions.
1	I have no money for this now
1	I have to spend money on presents now!
1	I made Hanukkah cards as a child, but I grew up in a family that have gifts at Christmas instead.
1	I receive fewer gifts and usually all on one day because I do not live near family.
1	I receive fewer gifts, and now I buy more gifts for others.
1	I receive less presents as an adult
1	I received a present every night as a child.
1	I still give to my children and their partners even though they are adults now.
1	I was Christian :-)
1	I was not Jewish growing up
1	I was raised Christian, so I did not give or receive Hanukkah gifts as a child.
1	I'm much more ambivalent. (see other answers above)
1	It didn't exist, since I am a convert.
1	It has not differed
1	It is less consistent and I don't trade gifts with friends very often.
1	It is mostly non existent and not a large part of my life.
1	It is mostly the same.
1	It is not
1	It is practically identical to how it was when I was growing up.
1	It is similar where we got something each night.
1	It is the same
1	It is the same as when I was growing up. My mother invented Magic Menorah.
1	It is the same, we still do it as a family, except now it includes my sister in law
1	It is very similar - gift giving among family, giving gifts for 8 nights.
1	It is very similar to my childhood

1	It was Hunukah gelt and deridels, food and family,
1	It was more based on the rituals of the holiday
1	It was more of a given that we would receive gifts as children.
1	It's almost the same as it was when I was a child.
1	It's different, because I don't have children
1	It's not
1	It's not as frequent as to when I was growing up.
1	It's pretty similar, but I don't really care so much about receiving gifts anymore.
2	It's pretty similar.
1	It's similar
1	It's very similar
1	It's very similar, but now I usually get/give one gift verses many smaller gifts
1	Larger expense
1	Less
1	Less gifts today. I used to get one gift every night.
1	Less now.
1	Less of a big deal; I am rarely with my family for the entire holiday.
1	Lots of decorations and display of presents.
1	Mirrors what I did as a child.
1	More active than as a child.
1	More modest, fewer extravagant gifts (by choice).
1	More now - more stuff, more gifts.
1	More or less the same. There was more of a focus on gifts when I was growing up.
1	More relatives around when I was growing up.
1	More songs now!
1	More textual-based, more ritual.
1	Mostly family growing up. Now family and friends.
1	Much less gift giving and receiving now.
1	Much less involvement today
1	Much less today as an adult than when I was a child.
1	Much smaller gifts when I was a child (factor of our economic situation back then).
1	My family did not celebrate Chanukah when I was growing up.
1	My family exchanges gifts on Christmas.
1	My parents allowed us to open all gifts on the first night. I have changed that tradition.
1	My parents gave me small gifts. My children expect more!
1	My parents had very little money. I do spoil my children and grandchildren more.
1	N/A
1	No
1	No difference
1	No longer receive eight gifts from parents
1	Not as consistent ... not every night.
1	Not as elaborate.
1	Not as much gift exchange
1	Not so intense
1	Not such a big deal when I was younger. Became more important after I had children.
1	Not very.

1	Now that I am in college we are postponing Hanukkah until we are together as a family.
1	On one night since we're all busy / away from home.
1	Presents were small tokens
1	Pretty much the same.
1	Pretty similar
1	Pretty similar to when I was growing up.
1	Pretty similar. Very low key
1	SAME
6	Same
1	Same except used to get one big gift and 7 little gifts.
1	Same, except didn't grow up receiving Judaica as a gift.
1	Same.
1	Same/similar --> when I was younger, I wouldn't GIVE as many presents as I do now.
1	See number 31. We continue to gift our children and parents and they gift us.
3	Similar
1	Similar
1	Similar but we give and receive fewer gifts than when I was a child.
1	Similar in scope of gifts given and in lighting candles then opening gifts.
1	Similar in that it is totally child-centered
1	Similar-one big and several smaller gifts for children, one or two gifts for adult family.
2	Similar.
1	Similar.
1	Similar. Except now that kids are older we only give gifts on one night.
1	Similar. However, I give my friends gifts now, which I didn't used to do.
1	Similar. Not too expensive. Smaller gifts or one larger gift
1	Similar...
1	Smaller
1	Somewhat similar.
1	Somewhat similar. And my dad took pictures, too!
1	Sumilar
1	The family always got together to eat latkas and light the menorah and hand out gifts.
1	The gifts were a bigger deal as a kid and earlier in my kids' lives.
2	The same
1	The same
1	There's more reliance on gifts being money
1	Today I mail the gifts. My grandchildren live in the northwest.
1	Today my family does not place as much emphasis on gifts.
1	Trying to emphasize more on family and togetherness than about gifts.
1	Very different. We had little money. We exchanged gifts one night.
1	Very similar
1	Very similar
5	Very similar.
1	Very similar... Cozy and loving
1	Was more ritualized and practiced when I was a kid
1	Was not Jewish as a child
1	Wasn't Jewish as a kid

1	We are adults now and don't need as many gifts.
1	We are moving away from decorating and gift giving.
1	We concentrate on giving gifts to the kids when we get together at Thanksgiving.
1	We do not exchange gifts
1	We don't do it as much nor light candles each night
1	We give gifts on all the nights, not just one.
1	We give less
1	We had 8 nights of small presents, now we have 8 nights of celebration with no presents.
1	We include more people
1	We never lit candles and the gifts seemed to be given on Christmas!
1	We now exchange one gift versus getting small gifts each night
1	We only celebrated Xmas when I was growing up.
1	We received a lot more gifts as children than we receive and give now
1	We spend a lot more money.
1	We spend more money on gifts then my parents did
1	We try to keep a similar tradition as when I was a child.
1	We unfortunately spend more today on gifts than when I was growing up!
1	When I was a kid it was less formal and less of an event. Now it involves lots of family.
1	When I was a kid, I received gifts. Now, I buy them.
1	When I was little and my kids were little gifts were daily Now not so
1	When growing up, we did it with our cousins.
1	When growing up, we did not receive gifts nightly.
1	While we gave and received gifts in my home as a child, that ritual has fallen off
1	as a child it was things; it is now charity
1	as a child, we did 8 nights of gifts, now it's consolidated to one night for the adults.
1	completely the same
1	didn't have one growing up..
1	different.
1	exactly the same.
1	fewer gifts
1	gifts are less expensive
1	growing up we received small presents every night
1	in Israel there was no real culture of gift exchange
1	it is similar that we light candles and open gifts all 8 nights
1	it is the same, maybe with less gifts.
1	it was more formalized when I was a kid. Now it's fairly offhand
1	less emphasized
1	less likely to get presents
1	less, but more meaningful
1	more actively Jewish
1	more involved when a child or when children were young
1	mostly the same
1	n/a
1	no
1	no kids at home, so hard to compare.
1	no kids, no parents

1	no longer receive gifts on every night
1	now just kids
1	now minimal
1	our family is proud to be Jewish but does not practice it at all
1	parents give to the children, children do not give to the parents
1	pretty similar
3	same
1	same
1	same in my home
1	same,
3	similar
1	similar fun casual little gifts homemade stuff crafts books
1	similar timing
1	similar-low key,
1	today, i giving gifts to my children and staff whereas i was more the receiver when growing up
2	very similar
1	very similar to what it was when i was young, just now includes my partner's family as well
1	very similar, I got presents every night after lighting candles and that is what we do.
1	very similar.
1	very similiar
1	we did none growing up
1	we lit candles growing up but did not receive gifts
1	we wrap all the presents. otherwise similar.
1	We only were given one gift on the first night. We only lit candles the first night. We never read the story.
1	As a child my family lit a menorah each night. I don't remember getting gifts. We belonged to a synagogue. I lived in a VERY Catholic area of NYC. There were only 3 Jewish children my age in my public school. The Christmas assembly included singing religious songs and reading the New Testament story of the birth of Jesus. Chanukah was never mentioned. Chanukah was never mentioned in the newspapers,radio or in the secular world in general.
1	I have never received or given presents for all eight nights. As a child I received something I needed such as slippers or a night gown and gelt (\$10 - for a book) from grandparents. My children receive both practical and frivolous gifts and gelt from extended family.
1	I am the only one in my immediate family who identifies myself as Jewish, so Hanukkah is not a big holiday for me because I have no one to celebrate it with.
1	I grew up totally Jewish with Jewish grandparents who celebrated Christmas for some German reason. My mother made Chanukah stockings (dreidels) and we put presents under a glittery blue Jewish Star. I guess we were confused and mom had to make Chanukah "special" for us. We never asked for anything and we were always surprised by the odd great gifts we received. My parents looked at our interests and treated us to something! We even got socks! They never went into debt, and it was always special...food and all!
1	When I was a child, gifts were very modesdt and mostly things that were needed, like underwear and pajamas. I only received 1 toy. Of course there were oranges, gelt, and playing dreidel and candlelighting.
1	Same, though I'm sometimes at school during Hanukkah. When that happens, I get my gifts when I return home for Winter Break.
1	It's not made into a "big deal" since its really just an Americanized thing we do so the Jewish kids don't feel left out at school while their Christian counterparts are receiving gifts.
1	When I was growing up, we received at least one gift every night of Hanukkah. We lit the candles together as a family, and then opened gifts. I carry on this tradition of lighting than opening, and I still like to spread out the gifts. Something feels a little off to me if it's just candle lighting without gift giving or receiving.
1	I was raised Catholic so we recieved gifts on Christmas only. Not spread out like we do for Hanukkah.
1	In my family only the kids got gifts. Now that my child is an adult I still give her a monetary gift just to keep tradition.

1	We light candles followed by gifts. We don't do latkes at home but do them at the home of family friends.
1	I try to give my sons a gift each night (it won't happen this year), but I didn't receive a gift each night as a child.
1	My mother was adamant about no Hanukkah gifts as were her parents, but other family members did give gifts. It was also a little fuzzy because my birthday is around that time. Now I exchange gifts with my sister and my boyfriend and his family. I am so somewhat conflicted about gift giving and like the idea of tzedakah or social action instead.
1	As a child my mother (the Jewish side of our family) would do a small toy as a gift for all 8 nights. Now we do a couple of small gifts for our kids. Usually 3-4 gifts each.
1	I celebrated Christmas growing up, and it was very elaborate in terms of the gifts, complete overload. My family gave ridiculous amounts of gifts for Christmas, I remember having so many things. I think as an adult it kind of ruined the idea of gift giving as it was overloaded and became almost unappreciated. As a kid with that type of gift exchange, you learn excess and you aren't satisfied unless you have lots and lots, versus appreciating less. I also witnessed how gift giving became a chore rather than a pleasant experience. I also think with how people will readily exchange or return their gifts that it takes the sincerity and appreciation out of the entire experience. Either we are too busy in our lives to take the time to understand and carefully select a single gift that a person would truly enjoy, or we simply have lost touch with each other's true passions and likes. For all of these reasons I have become rather jaded when it comes to gift giving and am far more appreciative in my adult life of appreciating and enjoying the non-tangible aspects of the holiday season.
1	I make a WAY bigger deal about Chanukah since my husband is Catholic and Christmas competes with Chanukah at the grandparents' home.
1	When I was growing up we did not receive Hanukkah gifts from anyone but our parents. We did, however, have a big Hanukkah party with relatives where there was a gift exchange -- every child received one gift. When we got older, we only received gifts on the first night of Hanukkah.
1	I received more gifts at Hanukkah than my son does. When I was growing up we gave gifts when we lit the candles, just as we do now with my son.
1	It's very similar, except that I'm away at school, and so I don't usually get to spend any of it with my immediate family.
1	Similar in traditions that I had as a child that I did with my children when they were at home. Also similar in giving 1 larger gift on the first and/or last night and smaller ones in between.
1	When I was younger and living at home, we very much had a ritual around Hanukkah - lighting the candles every night, then singing songs and then opening presents. One night we'd have members of both sides of my family over, and have a big, festive holiday meal with latkes, play dreidel and exchange gifts. It was especially fun and different because my dad's family isn't Jewish, so it was a chance to share the holiday with them. Now, all of us (except my two parents) live in different cities, so we either send our gifts to each other or wait until we're all together to exchange them. I light candles at home and say the blessings but I don't usually do more than that. When you're older, the presents aren't as exciting, of course, but they're still nice.
1	Huge deal growing up as we did nothing for Xmas. Now we have an Xmas tree cause mom husband grew up catholic and my step daughter celebrates Xmas and then Chanukah too at our house.
1	My family is all over the world now, so we don't light candles together but we do send gifts to each other.
1	It is different in that the gifts we give are smaller and fewer. We try harder to keep with the spirit of the holiday--a minor holiday that is worth telling about.
1	When I was a kid, I might get something small one of the nights of Hanukkah, but the big day was always Christmas.
1	we don't do gifts every night (I think my parents started with that ideal). Also, smaller gifts and no gifts exchanged/delivered on Christmas
1	growing up, there was no feeling of needing to compete or be defensive about celebrating Chanukah. I feel that my children are actively comparing. Additionally, my children are blessed to be surrounded by extended family who give presents and gifts all year long; Chanukah gift giving elevated drastically. My husband & i didn't feel that was necessary, so we made a concerted effort to make Chanukah about GIVING not getting
1	It is the same. As mentioned, my Bubbe always (and continues to) hid my gifts and given me riddles to find them.
1	The gifts when I was a child were much smaller and more of a token. My children received more substantial gifts and their children received even better gifts.
1	As a child I didn't have to worry about the cost of gifts. Now my finances greatly affect my gift giving - what I buy, how many people I can buy for, etc.
1	Growing up (50+ years ago) Hanukkah was minor and I remember getting gelt as gifts and perhaps a toy. Even 25

	years ago when I started my family the gifting was not as big a deal as it seems to be now.
1	I received small gifts (one each night) from my parents as a child. And i received a chEck from my grandparents. Now I receive one big gift from my parents (usually jewelry or clothing) and still get a check from my grandfather.
1	More gifts when I was a child. We did at least one each every night. Nothing big, but something to open each night after lighting candles.
1	As a child I received Christmas presents. Today, unless I am with a group of friends, we don't give/receive gifts. If I go to a non-Jewish relative's home during Hanukkah/Christmas, we exchange gifts, but not expensive ones.
1	Chanukah did not involve gifts as a child, just lighting candles, singing songs and eating latkes!
1	Growing up as the youngest of 4 children (all boys) in a small Jewish community (suburb of Orlando, FL), Christmas was always around the community and very present. However, my parents, who both have very strong Jewish identities (not so much in their religiosity as much as their cultural love and observance of Judaism), always made sure to instill in us that Hanukah is not Judaism's version of Christmas. There was never decorations beyond the family chanukiah (sp.) collection put out. Noone dressed up or tried to make the holiday more like Christmas. We did receive gifts each night (small things, never too extravagant) and one night we would receive one larger gift for all of us to enjoy (ie. ping pong table, super nintendo, etc.). But gift exchange was never the focus of the holiday, even in a community where 98% of the population was not Jewish and that is how I continue to do so with my future wife. We bring out chanukiahs that our grandparents passed down from generation to generation and make latkahs but the gifts are not a major facet of our celebration. We want to ensure that Hanukah, in terms of its importance in Judaism's story, pales in comparison to the importance of other holidays like Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Simchat Torah, etc.
1	I use to get one gift for each night starting very small and getting bigger each night right after candle lighting which was done at night. Today when I teach Hanukkah I give gifts after lighting the candles.
1	My family did very little to celebrate Hanukkah growing up. I do more now and plan to do more as my children get older.
1	We usually received one gift every night, with a large extended-family Chanukah party on one night of the holiday. We're unable to get together for our large Chanukah celebration these days, but we celebrate on our own.
1	We do the lighting, the poems, we do latkes and I grew up with Hanukkah cookies, no fried food. We sing more Hebrew songs and sing longer than when I was a child. The gift giving was getting out of control in my family a few years ago, so we have not cut back some.
1	I do not receive a bunch of small gifts each night from my parents now as an adult. My mom gives several small gifts to my son instead. I get a few items and a large check.
1	We have made it more special- growing up my parents would buy gifts and put them in a pile. We usually ended up opening up all of our gift the first night... In our house, it is more of a surprise as to who is going to give that night. The gifts aren't in sight so we make it more fun that way.
1	it was every night as a child from our parents and is now, one gift each and each sibling also gives everyone a gift on the same night.
1	My first generation parents celebrated by lighting candles for Chanukah and having Santa bring gifts on Christmas morning. Very American.
1	Gifts are usually from the heart, meant to fit the recipient. It's not so much about the price (although a budget is set), rather, thought must go into it. It also has little to do with the story of Hanukkah.
1	As a child we received one small gift for each day and one large gift that my siblings and I shared on the last night. We opened gifts after lighting candles each night. Nowadays we just give random gifts sometime near the holiday.
1	It's not, really. Maybe less emphasis on the gifts. It's not the end of the world if I don't have something to open every night! When I was a kid, it would have been. :)
1	As a child, my family gave gifts most nights after we lit candles during Hanukkah, but we don't really do so now that my sister and I are adults.
1	Although I was born Jewish, we did not observe any rituals when I was growing up. Now I love them!
1	Right now it's fairly similar except that my family sings Hanukkah songs and incorporates more Hanukkah food and the story into the holiday. As the kids get older, tzedakah and social action will play more of a prominent role than it can today, with babies.
1	it is basically the same. Hanukkah party for each side of the family, gift exchange. and exchange gifts with close friends.
1	It's different in that I don't give anyone gifts anymore; I associate it with capitalism and conspicuous consumption.
1	Pretty much the same but now that I'm older the gifts are not as big which is fine. I just do things over the phone now instead of in person and then on Christmas I get together with the rest of my family and give my gifts

1	I try to give my children gifts related to Judaism or money. We got secular items when I was a child.
1	I don't have children so its not very important - it only feels important to give to my young nephews.
1	As a child it was one present each night, now we do an exchange thing where we pick names out of the hat.
1	There was more obligation to give gifts to friends as a child because everybody in school gave gifts to each other (I went to public school) As an adult, my group of friends is on the low-income side and also politically against holiday-season consumerism. Our gifts are small, very specific, and often homemade if at all.
1	Similar: we got one large gift and many small ones. We lit candles first then gave gifts. We sometimes had a Chanukah party with traditional foods.
1	Young, presents every nite. Now a present from my son is just fine, or to see him would be great. My family is gone, so I take care of my son, a few friends at senior center, give a card. Its the thought.
1	I have not given or received Hanukkah gifts for many years, but plan to give a gift this year to my new grandchild.
1	Different. We did not exchange Hanukkah presents much as a child. Instead we celebrated Christmas even though both of my parents are Jewish. And at Christmas, there was an almost pathological amount of money spent on gifts.
1	I grew up Christian so did not celebrate Chanukah. We celebrated Christmas, so it's pretty different.
1	Growing up the 8 cousins would exchange gifts with each other. Now I give a gift or a card to my nephew, but not much else. My cousins and I don't exchange gifts anymore.
1	I remember giving Christmas cards out to friends when I was younger since most people I knew were Christian. I received Christmas cards as well.
1	I opened 1 present/night for 8 nights when I was a child. Now I mostly receive Christmas presents, except for a gift of money from my mother.
1	i do not remember celebrating chanukah as a child in brooklyn ny. mostly everyone we knew was jewish. we had a celebration on the 25th but not for xmas, it was a day off from work for my parents, and mu birthday was coming and alway there was a party of everyone but i have no memoery of chanukah at those events. We were completely jewish but non observant.
1	Growing up I received one small gift each night. As an adult I followed a similar practice with my children. Now we exchange gifts on the day during Hanukkah that they come to visit.
1	Growing up my family gave gifts on Xmas too. (Even though both my parents were Jewish). The culturally changes and comfort level with Jewish identity have led everyone in the family to only now give gifts at Hanukkah
1	We make donations to tzedakah, but we are still figuring out our practice with our kid, whether we will give gifts or just do family celebrations each night. I think I would be fine with that.
1	My parents gave us gifts when candles were lit. Very different experience because we were together for the holidays. Our relatives now live far away from each other.
1	we used to get small gifts when I was a child each night (very small.) light candles and eat traditional foods
1	Pretty similar although things were more frugal in our family when I was growing up and we did not celebrate Xmas. My mother had converted to Judaism so we would often visit her family on Xmas but only celebrated Chanukah at home.
1	Didn't exchange Hanukkah gifts as a child. Got a few Christmas gifts. As an adult it's Hanukkah only. Much happier that way, I felt short changed as a child, as we didn't really celebrate Christmas or Hanukkah. Had few Jewish holiday traditions growing up. It's the complete opposite today, love celebrating Hanukkah and the Jewish holidays!
1	My family doesn't give gifts that much around Hanukkah because I have expressed to them that I don't think Hannukah should be about gift giving.
1	very different. The time is complete different. That time (1950s) to receive or to give a gift was really something special, a special occasion or moment.
1	we really do not emphasize gifts at hanukkah - but do light the candles every night and give a token. Much of the gift giving happens at Christmas because we are an intermarried family.
1	My mother felt very strongly about NOT giving gifts every night. As a parent, I ended up giving gifts nightly, mainly because there were always lots of little things I wanted to give, not out of any principle.
1	When I was young, I received many gifts from my parents on a regular basis. In college, I began exchanging gifts on a yearly basis with friends. Now, I usually only give one or two gifts a year, receiving the same.
1	Different, less about a gift and more about the giving of something significant to someone else that is important
1	Hanukkah is not as big a part of my life in my 20s. With roommates, I made sure always to light candles - and felt sad if I had to light them alone - but the gift aspect of it has really become less important in my adulthood.

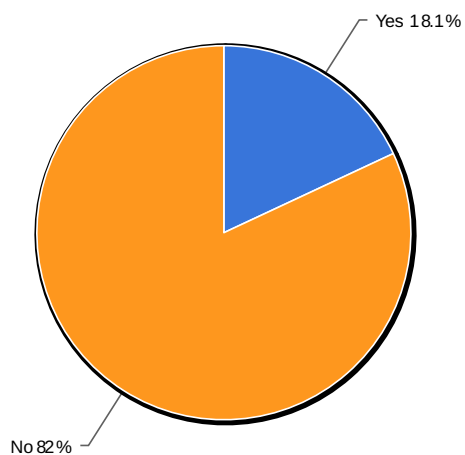
1	My parents gave one gift the first night. I gave my children a gift per night, although the number of gifts increased over time, as did the cost of those gifts.
1	My parents were poor so I usually only received one "big" gift each year. My grandmother had many grandchildren and favored the eldest (not me). She bought something personal and special for the eldest and made identical nightgowns for the rest of the girls. I resented this deeply (I was told that this cousin she got something special because she was the oldest- even as a child I felt this was unfair and there was no reason to give the special gift in front of the other children). I have made it a point to give personal special gifts to my grandchildren.
1	I was bought up differently than my children or my husband. My parents were more religious. We were given gelt as our gift. 25cents. Not like it is today, gifts are bigger and have nothing to do with Hanukkah.
1	Similar -- Family based, gifts after candles are lighted, gifts are mostly small. Not much difference at all.
1	There was no giving to charity. We each only received one gift. Until I was in first or second grade, my secular mother and my non-affiliated father gave us Christmas gifts. I was the one who complained and then we switched to Chanukah.
1	Growing up when I was younger I got 8 small gifts. As I got older I got to choose on some nights (3-5) if I wanted a small, medium or large gift - size didn't have to do with price. Now I get one from my parents.
1	I used to get one gift every night from my parents after each candle was lit, and my family exchanged gifts my father's side on Thanksgiving when we all got together. My mother's side would have a Chanukah and exchange gifts during Chanukah.
1	different - when younger I received a gift each night with a large gift the first night of Chanukah. now we do smaller gifts just once during Chanukah.
1	Now it isn't about physical gifts but rather the spiritual gifts as a family. My freshman year of college my parents sent some of our copies of some of my favorite books to read Hannukah stories out of. When I read them with my friends I thought of times with my family. As a child I was most excited about the gift giving ritual of a new toy, but as I've grown up it's changed when I didn't feel a need to be like all the kids getting Christmas presents
1	When I was growing up we'd get lots of gifts from our relatives and parents on the first night and one or two from our parents for the other nights. Today, we're all grown up and we give one or two gifts to our parents. Mom sends us little things for 6-8 nights.
1	We have tried to take the focus off the gifts - we don't give gifts every night, we pick a night for charity, we don't do as many big gifts as my parents did. Sometimes we open gifts before candles. I give gifts all year to my kids when I see something they would like, not just at Hanukkah. We do exchange gifts most nights like my family did growing up, we try to get together with extended family.
1	Since I am married to a non-Jew, we have more Christmas things as well. Although as a small child, my parents did allow us to believe in Santa. We didn't have a tree, but Santa brought gifts. Later my Dad invented Chanukah Charlie. My one grandson will have Chanukah Charlie this year.
1	When I was younger, it was important to light candles every night. Today I might not even light candles at all. A bigger deal as a child.
1	I celebrated Christmas growing up; if it was prior to my conversion. The celebration was never about the story. My parents would argue about money and stress out about finances and spend so much time shopping and spending money they didn't have.
1	We received gifts on Christmas (!) at the home of my grandparents. We even had stockings. Who knew? We thought this was normal. No one was not Jewish, yet we participated in someone else's traditions.
1	None when I was young; now my mom gives me money. We didn't really know about Hanukkah when I was young -- my family and I are from the former Soviet Union.
1	I spread out gifts over 8 days for my daughter because it is fun and a way to encourage the celebration of the lighting of the candles.
1	We grew up very poor. We always got our gifts after Christmas, when everything was clearance priced, regardless of when Hanukkah actually fell. Today, I can afford whatever I want to buy so no one knows what to buy me. I prefer today but miss the humbler experience of yesteryear.
1	Probably similar but as the adult I spend more \$! Also I try to give my kids gifts that they will enjoy and gifts that are meaningful.
1	we were never a "save all the presents for Hanukkah!" type of family. sometimes you just need new clothes in August or March. but, special things like a gameboy or tickets to a touring musical were saved for Hanukkahs and birthdays. when

	i was in elementary school, i got a small present each night (usually books or creativity supplies) with the special gift(s) saved for the one night we got together with the whole family. now that im grown and live far from my family, my mom and nana usually put together a care package of homemade cookies, a couple shirts that they saw that i might like, my favorite brand of boxed macaroni that can only be found in my home state, etc.
1	I receive fewer big presents from my parents, but they still enjoy giving me presents and I still love to receive them.
1	When I was growing up, we (the kids) got seven nights of small presents and one big present either the first or last night of the holiday. Though we lit candles every night, the big present night was preceded by a dinner full of special Hanukkah foods. The way we'd exchange is still the same with one person distributing at a time. Now it feels like the gifts we receive are more essential to our lives - less just for the fun of it - like gift cards for new clothes, money for travel, etc. Now we do one night of exchange or multiple nights with whoever is home at the time.
1	More pleasurable today We try to give gifts that others would really want. My father used to give us \$5 and then make us put it in the bank and save it.
1	Growing up I would get one gift every night, now it's just once over the course of the holiday. Also, not as important.
1	I used to get a present on each night. Usually one large present and seven small ones. Now I usually just get a few presents. They could be small or sometimes one larger one.
1	many more gifts and much bigger deal now than when I was a kid- I got maybe some chocolate hanukah gelt and at most one small toy or a sweater.
1	When we were younger, we got our "big gift" on the first night and then the subsequent nights were themed - books, cds, pjs, socks. Nothing huge, but it was fun to open a small gift after lighting the menorah each night.
1	I did not exchange gifts as a small child, in high school/college I was very uncomfortable with Christian friends giving me gifts. I dislike the emphasis it has in relation to Christmas instead of focusing on the holiday.
1	Its similar with extended family, but since I have no kids we don't do gifts each night when we light the candles. I do try to light the candles each night though, realistically, we only lite them a few nights.
1	Our kids are grown and out of the house now. When they were younger, we gave them modest gifts each night as well as some gelt - enough to be useful, but not a large amount. When I was young (in the 50s), we celebrated Christmas in a secular manner in our house. As I approached bar mitzvah age, we added Chanukah to the celebrations in our house. My mother always loved Christmas from a non-religious perspective and she continue to celebrate it as my wife and I established Chanukah as the holiday for our nuclear family.
1	In my family Hanukkah was not about giving or receiving lots of gifts, it's always been a small holiday
1	When I was growing up, my parents gave my brother and I gifts. I can't recall if it was one little thing each night or perhaps one big gift. We don't really exchange gifts anymore now that we are adults. When we were younger we would buy our parents little gifts at the Religious School gift fair.
1	Very similar to how I grew up. Everybody in the immediate family exchanges gifts. Some with extended family as well.
1	I always gave my parents expensive gifts that i know they needed. My children tend to give us "token" fun gifts and we give them expensive gifts. It's done with love...so it's all good. We are the generation that had more than our parents...and although our children are also doing well...they still feel like they are the "kids" and they get the gifts. We now have grandchildren....so slowly we will shift more of the gift giving onto the grandchildren and less on the grown children.
1	Perhaps as my son grows older and if we live in the us we will reinstate gift giving, which I of course loved as a child. Because we live in Israel it's simply not de rigeur.
1	focus is/was mainly on children (my own, nieces, nephews). Not too much gift-giving with adult family members, except for parents. Always insert some choc. gelt. Play dreidel when children are home. Hang decorations but not as much as when children lived at home.
1	Although I grew up in a Jewish Household, my parents celebrated Christmas along with Hanukkah, Today, I only celebrate Hanukkah with my children.
1	pretty similar. I assume I will do the same for my children as my parents did for me. They had one gift per night and every night of Chanukah was special.
1	When I was a child, we received Hanukkah gelt (money, not chocolate) from the adults in the family. My family continues this custom for the children in the family.
1	We had little money and very little gift-giving in my family of origin. We had both a Xmas tree (mother's heritage) and Chanukiah, but no gifts.
1	As part of a mixed-religion household, we typically don't give/receive gifts on Hanukkah but instead celebrate in more

	"cultural" ways. As a child, I received gifts my my parents (both jewish), but typically only gave gifts to my siblings. We received a single gift on the first night, with small items afterward.
1	It's probably less significant for me now than as a child... Maybe because our kids are still too young to really appreciate the custom?
1	It was always considered a minor holiday by my Conservatively Jewish Father...very minimal exchange and acknowledgement...candles, some dessert and some small gifts...bigger for the children than for the adults
1	I think it's pretty similar to when I was a kid. My mom still makes a big deal of getting us a present for each night.
1	I am very much more "indulgent", my parents believed that we had to wait until Hanukah and our Birthdays to receive gifts. My adoring Grandparents gave me gifts all the time!
1	It is more involved now, as a kid I recieved a few silver coins from my grandparents and little if anything from my own parents.
1	I did only receiving when young. Chanukkah was made r broken by the "big gift" I got. Now, it more about being entertaining.
1	We do far fewer presents than my parents did for me & my siblings, because we're not as materialistic and consumption obsessed.
1	Similar. I hide the gifts wrapped in a closet and the kids know where they are hidden. I remember where my parents hid our gift and there was something exciting about searching for them and trying not to look.
1	When I was young (before my parents' divorce when I was 8 and my mother remarried a non-Jew), I remember bigger family celebrations at my grandparents, but on one day of Hannukah and more emphasis on the latkes and chocolate gelt. So celebrating every night with candles/gifts was something my husband and I decided to do when we had kids 25 years ago.
1	Pretty similar. But I do recall playing "hot and cold" to find my gifts in the living room after we lit the Hanukkah candles.
1	I used to open one gift per candle. Now I receive one gift but I make my partner open one every night.
1	My gifts were from parents and grandparents as a kid but now they are from my friends and girlfriend. I did not give gifts as a kid but do now.
1	It used to be a big deal in my home, but now that all the kids have grown up and moved on i dont really do much
1	Growing up, my parents (not very observant) asked us when we wanted to receiver our presents and we chose Christmas to be in synch with our friends. There were 4 of us, so there was not a gift for every night for each of us
1	similar- immediate family, a few friends exchange gifts specifically for Hanukkah. Co-workers exchange "holiday" gifts.
1	We decided to stick with the traditional way of giving gelt. We have done this ever since we learned about it and hat the giving of gifts was really introduced from other religions (or hallmark :-) whichever-it's still wasn't the traditional way it was done)
1	When I was younger the gifts where things I wanted like toys or music. Now they are things I need. For example, this year since I live in a foreign country it will be my mother coming to visit.
1	As a mother, I find myself replicating my mother's "chanukah coordinator" role (making sure everyone has the same number of presents, wrapping everything, making sure we have candles, gelt, ...).
1	If I am with my parents, it is still the same. Usually work gets in the way, but I try to get to my parents house for one night to light candles and get presents!
1	I give gifts to my children and grandchild and I light candles; growing up as a Reform Jew in S.Africa we did not observe Hannukkah
1	Growing up we received gifts every night. Usually a "big" gift then little ones the rest of the holiday.
1	Growing up in Central Florida in the 60's and 70's in a very small Jewish environment, with two Jewish parents from Philadelphia, we celebrated Hanukkah but also had presents on Christmas morning with stockings - no tree - Nowadays, we do nothing about Christmas except Chinese food, movies and helping Christians have the day off for their holiday
1	as a kid we only celebrated channukah, not we celebrate christmas which is the bigger gift giving holiday for us.
1	When i was younger, there were many more smaller gifts. Now, the gifts are larger (in scope) and generally more personal and much more meaningful.
1	It hasn't changed very much since I was a little kid, although every year my focus seems to shift more and more from presents to being with family and celebrating together
1	We received gelt (actual \$\$) on Chanukah and got gifts on Christmas Day. With our children we gave gifts each night

	while they were young. Ignored Christmas.
1	It is very similar, although generally the gifts from my parents are smaller. The gifts that my husband and I exchange and along the same kind of theme as those that my parents gave, and are usually smaller as well.
1	Growing up it was more formal and we received 8 gifts each night of hanukah from our parents. Now, we receive one if any.
1	Gift giving is now very low key, more about lighting candles and eating together with friends and family.
1	Similar. Only the children received gifts and usually one large gift and then some small gifts, or clothing and gelt.
1	Growing up we received one larger gift and then very small gifts the rest of the holiday. For example, if I received a barbie doll on the first night, the other nights I received a small accessory for the doll. Now, we get larger gifts on only one night.
1	My home was so secular that we received only token gifts on Hanukkah. My immigrant grandfather, an observant Jew, thought that Xmas was an American holiday so that's when we got "real" gifts.
1	When I was growing up we got gifts every night- one was large and 7 were smaller. We also had Christmas stockings and both of my parents were raised in Conservative Synagogues, one lived with Orthodox grandparents. No- we never carried out this tradition in my home!
1	Very different. I got gifts every night from my mom and from my grandparents. Sometimes from other relatives.
1	Today it is a bit more than it was during my childhood. My mom was not much of an organized religion person, but I do recall lighting candles and also celebrating with my grandparents. I wanted to change that for my daughter and give her more of a Jewish identity, especially because her father's parents are holocaust survivors and I wanted her to learn and understand what they lived through and her heritage. Participating in our local synagogoe, enjoying holidays and becoming a bat mitzvah were all part of that education for her and for me as well.
1	it's very similar. We gave small things each night when the kids were young, and now give one bigger thing and a few small things. We as parents only give a few things, as they will get something from each set of grandparents and some aunts/uncles, to make up the 8.
1	today I think mostly about giving gifts to my nieces and nephews and my partner and immediate family, and often do most of my shopping online, knowing i will not get to spend the holiday with my extended family.
1	I really don't remember. Maybe my mother used to wrap all of my presents which is why i wrap them all ahead of time for my girls? I only remember that we had Christmas stockings when we were little, even though both my parents were Jewish, and as an adult, I can't understand why my parents chose to do that.
1	when my children were younger they received a small gift each night, as I did when I was small - now that they are getting older, it is one larger gift and a few smaller ones, the same as my parents did for me as I got older; eventually it will be just one present, also as my parents did for me
1	When I was a child it was one gift a night for all eight nights, now its one gift that sometimes I pick out for myself
1	Very different in that as a young child we received Hanukkah and Christmas gifts. That stopped when my parents joined a synagogue and I began Jewish religious school at age 7. Not celebrating Christmas at home any more was both confusing and disappointing but we got used to it over time. We then only celebrated Christmas with non-Jewish friends at their homes and later (when I married) with non-Jewish family members. This was never religious in nature but only as a winter holiday get together.
1	We received multiple gifts on each night growing up. Now, because we don't all live in the same place, we generally only exchange one night of gifts and light candles one night if we can't be together for all 8
1	I give fewer gifts and receive fewer gifts. I don't want to receive gifts because of how much my family and friends have done for me. I do, however, continue to eat special food, light candles, and celebrate with friends and family.
1	My background is European. We received no gifts from our parents for Chanukah. Consequently when we had children in America, we ga them small gifts each day of the festival. When they got older, we gifted them with one larger gift that we knew they would appreciate.
1	in past, more clothes and direct from parents now, more Secret Santa/ Channukah Harry style gifts

37. Do you celebrate Christmas?



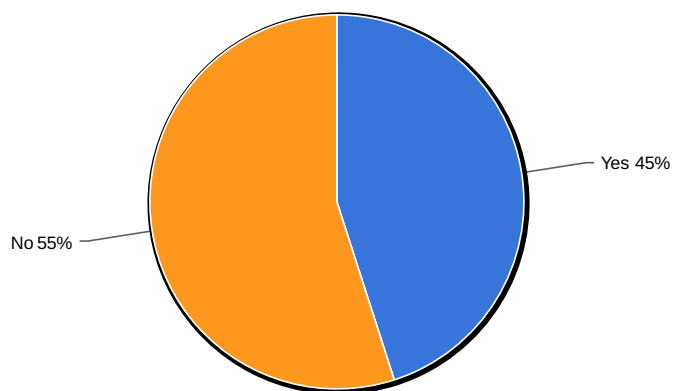
37. Do you celebrate Christmas?

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes	126	18.1%
No	572	82.0%

Statistics

Total Responses	698
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38. Did you give or receive gifts for Christmas last year?



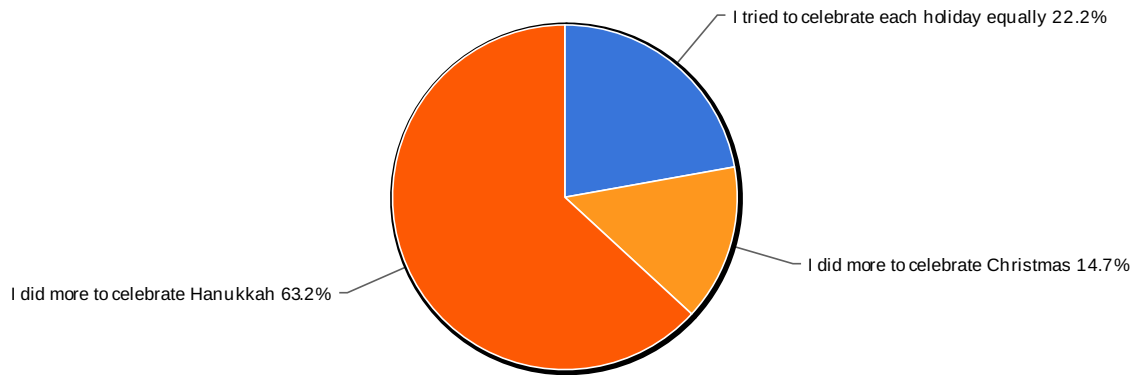
38. Did you give or receive gifts for Christmas last year?

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes	313	45.0%
No	382	55.0%

Statistics

Total Responses	695
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39. If you celebrated Hanukkah and Christmas last year, how did the celebrations compare?

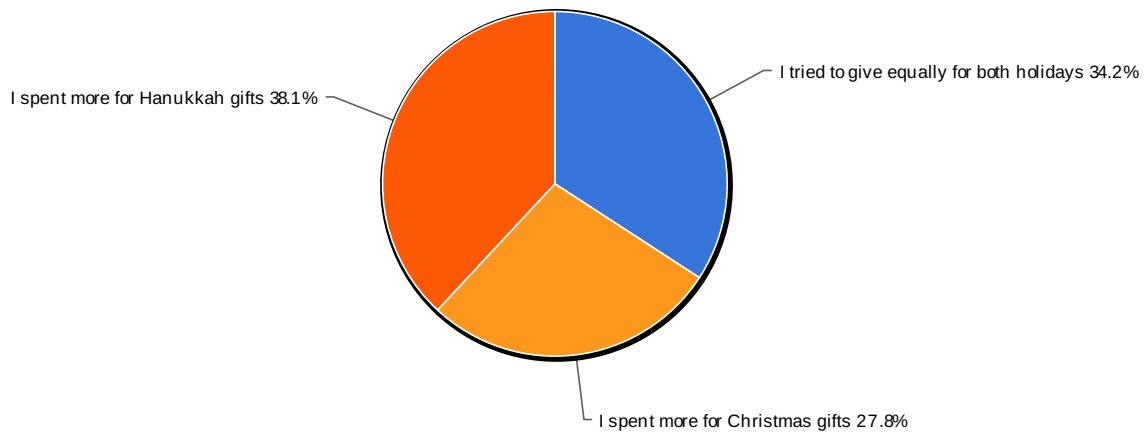


39. If you celebrated Hanukkah and Christmas last year, how did the celebrations compare?

Value	Count	Percent %
I tried to celebrate each holiday equally	59	22.2%
I did more to celebrate Christmas	39	14.7%
I did more to celebrate Hanukkah	168	63.2%

Statistics	
Total Responses	266

40. If you gave or received gifts for Hanukkah and Christmas last year, how did the gifts compare?

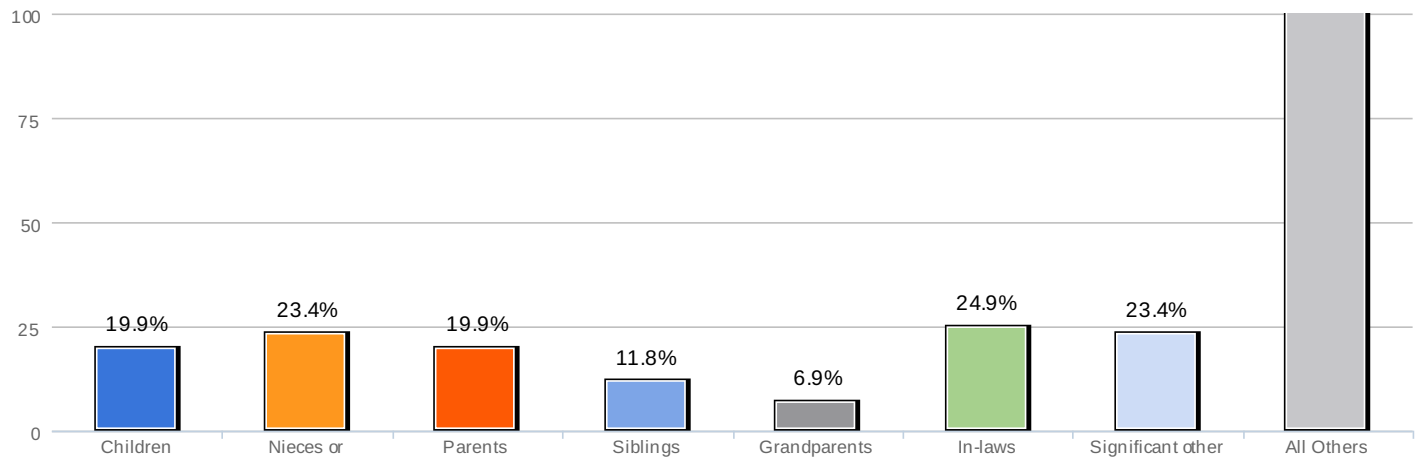


40. If you gave or received gifts for Hanukkah and Christmas last year, how did the gifts compare?

Value	Count	Percent %
I tried to give equally for both holidays	96	34.2%
I spent more for Christmas gifts	78	27.8%
I spent more for Hanukkah gifts	107	38.1%

Statistics	
Total Responses	281

41. If you are Jewish and gave gifts for Christmas last year, who did you give them to? (check all that apply)



41. If you are Jewish and gave gifts for Christmas last year, who did you give them to? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %
Children	64	19.9%
Nieces or nephews	75	23.4%
Parents	64	19.9%
Siblings	38	11.8%
Grandparents	22	6.9%
In-laws	80	24.9%
Significant other	75	23.4%
Other extended family	65	20.3%
Friends	119	37.1%
Coworkers	96	29.9%
Other	118	36.8%

Statistics

Total Responses	321
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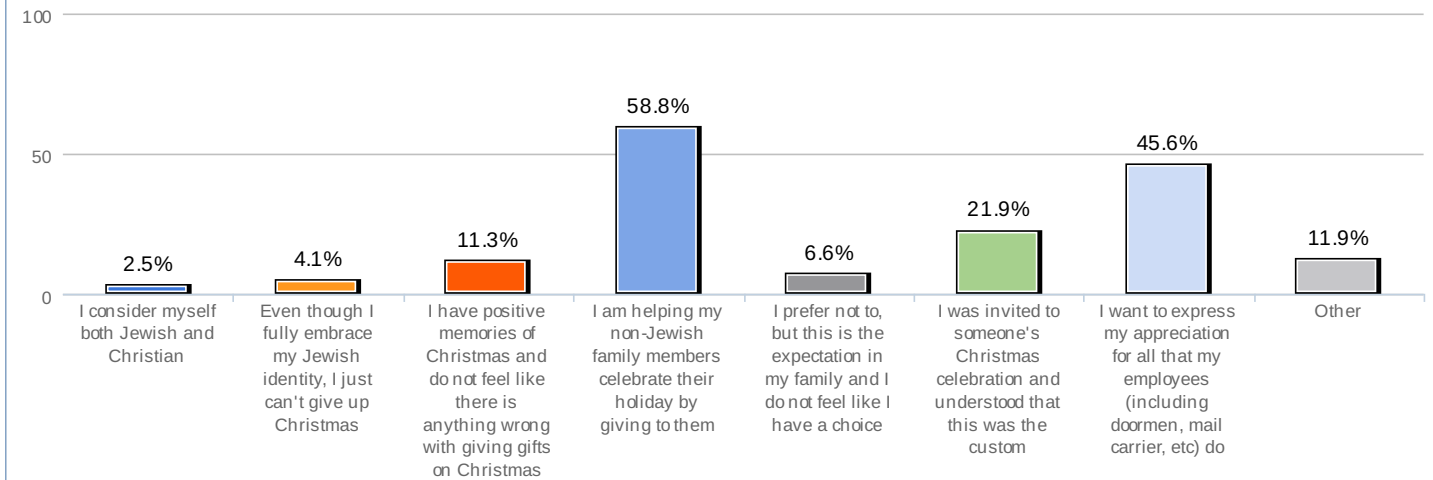
Comments

Count	Response
1	Christmas gifts to Christians
1	Family of significant other
1	Grandchildren deserve a separate heading.
1	I
1	I do give xmas gifts to people who have helped us and are not Jewish.
1	I gave Christmas gifts to Christians and Hanukkah gifts to the Jews...
1	I give Christmas gifts to those who celebrate Christmas.
1	I give Hanukkah gifts to Jewish people in my life and Christmas gifts to Christians in my life.
1	I give gifts to non-Jews out of appreciation and in the spirit of "their" season.
1	I give my wife a Christmas gift to honor her traditions.
1	I give xmas gifts to friends who celebrate xmas in line with the tradition of their religion
1	I have an interfaith relationship. My partner and her son are Christian

1	I only give Christmas gifts to Christians who are celebrating their holiday.
1	I'm not Jewish
1	Kid's teachers, neighborhood children who we are very close with
1	My dad is christian, and so are members of our extended family.
1	My father and stepmother are not Jewish. I give them gifts according to their tradition.
1	My immediate family, husband's parents and a niece
1	My in-laws are not Jewish. My husband converted.
1	My mom is Christian and we have always celebrated both holidays
1	NEIGHBORS
1	One daughter is in an interfaith marriage and we are very close with my son-in-law's family.
1	Secular family
1	Teachers, coaches
1	We give stocking stuffers to immediate family, no big gifts
1	We exchange "holiday gifts" with non-Jewish friends.
1	adult childrens inlaws
1	gave Christmas gifts to my daughter's inlaws and their family.
1	neighbor
1	non-Jewish nieces and nephews
1	only to nieces/nephews who celebrate Christmas
1	teachers
1	to my ex (on behalf of my daughter)
1	I give to local Christmas-themed charity drives (toys/clothes for needy kids). We talk to our kids about this being tzedakah, even if it has a Christmas tree attached!
1	My father and his second wife (a Christian) have always celebrated Christmas in their house. When we visit, we exchange presents.
1	My family is (non-practicing) christians, even though I've converted to judaism, and they give me gifts so I give them gifts in return. They are very thoughtful and always wrap ours in white & blue hannukah themed paper, and we taking joy in helping them to enjoy their holiday even though it is not ours.
1	I converted to Judaism, but my mother is Christian. I give her a Christmas present but do not celebrate Christmas myself.
1	Those of our friends and family who are Jewish receive Hanukkah gifts. Those who are not Jewish receive Christmas gifts.
1	My husband gives something small to the support staff in his office every year (jam, tea, honey). 10 of the same thing, plus one certified kosher for the Orthodox Jew in the group.
1	We spend more on Chanukah gifts per person, but I have a larger (Christian) family than my husband's (Jewish) family, so we end up spending about the same on Chanukah and Christmas gifts.
1	Aunts and uncles- my mom converted from Irish Catholic to Jewish so we still have a large Catholic family.
1	I mark their holiday as it is important for them ;however, my in-laws give me Christmas gifts as they don't want to acknowledge my or our children being Jewish.
1	I am the only Jew in the winter community that I live in. I participate in their Christmas dinner, but light candles, say prayers, and try to explain the holiday.
1	My paternal grandparents and cousins are Unitarian. Dad converted, so we give them christmas gifts and they give us chanukkah gifts.
1	This might seem like splitting hairs, but I answered "no" to 37 even though my immediate family has gone to my dad's family every year for Christmas. My mom has always made it clear that "we don't celebrate Christmas; we help Dad's family celebrate Christmas," My dad's family is very anti-materialistic, so we only exchange very very small gifts, but we go visit them for a few days, have a tree, go to a service, etc. I don't consider my Christmas "celebration" at all personally spiritual or religious, but it was certainly more festive (large family gathering, etc.) than my Hanukkah celebration (lighting candles at home).

1	We respect those that celebrate other holidays and want to share in their celebrations and give to those that worked for us, etc.
1	We celebrate a very atheist Christmas with my in laws. We buy them presents and they give Jax presents but we give our son his presents on Hanukkah.
1	On my side of the family, because I felt it was socially necessary, even though I was annoyed by the whole thing.
1	Your question and options in this category are not well phrased or organized. I am a business person who gives his Christian clients Xmas gifts. I don't consider celebrating Xmas, it's just pandering to the mis-guided masses...LOL
1	In law family is Catholic. We visit them Christmas week. Last year the two holidays coincided as well.
1	I "celebrated" Christmas in that I gave Christmas presents to my non-Jewish coworkers and attended our holiday party that celebrated both Hanukkah and Christmas. They gave me presents on Hanukkah.
1	My children do not live at home and due to work constraints they are usually not able to get home during Hannukkah. Because Christmas it not a work day they are home then. It is our 'Winter Family Holiday'. We celebrate the season. There is no Christian religion in our celebration.
1	I give Christmas gifts to the Christians with whom I work and service people. No celebration involved.
1	My husband and stepmother are christian and we try to honor the family traditions of both sides. I don't celebrate the religious traditions - but family traditions are very important. Hopefully you understand the difference. It's about respecting each other's cultures.
1	My brother-in-laws children are being raised as Episcopal Christians, so we give them Christmas gifts. This does not mean that MY family celebrates Christmas, as questions 39 and 40 might indicate
1	Again, Torah observant Christian, not Jewish, but we receive Christmas gifts from non-observant family. Observant family gives gifts for Haunukkah.
1	Just to comment on the exchange of Christmas vs Hanukkah gifts. I have more Christian than Jewish family, so I gave more Christmas gifts since I am a convert. My husband is deceased, and we had no children.
1	My wife converted many years ago, but my in-laws do a secular family gathering (featuring a meal and exchange of gifts) sometime around Christmas.
1	I am a chaplain and the only Jew in our office, which makes a big deal out of Christmas. Our boss gave me a blue stocking with my name on it. The "tradition" is for each person to give every other person a small gift. I gave each person a dreidel and gelt (that is I gave only Jewish gifts). My boss gave me a felt menorah to hang on the wall and a different inexpensive gift for each night of Hanukkah, which I felt was very thoughtful of her.
1	because they are Christian - you are not asking the right question - do you celebrate Christmas - the answer is no but I respect others people and celebrate the way the are comfortable
1	Spouses family is not jewish. They celebrate Christmas. We participate with stockings (for our 2 children and each other) as my niece on the other side still believed in Santa.
1	As noted, I converted. I still give my family christmas gifts because they celebrate christmas. i also have friends who celebrate christmas. no matter what the holiday, it's nice to give someone something to celebrate their own holiday.
1	part of my family is not Jewish. I celebrate with them and give them gifts for Christmas. They celebrate with me and give me gifts for Chanukah
1	These questions were hard for me to answer. We do not celebrate Christmas in our home, but do celebrate Christmas with non-Jewish relatives in THEIR homes. I would not say that I celebrate Christmas...

42. If you are Jewish and gave gifts for Christmas last year, why did you do so? (check all that apply)



42. If you are Jewish and gave gifts for Christmas last year, why did you do so? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %
I consider myself both Jewish and Christian	8	2.5%
Even though I fully embrace my Jewish identity, I just can't give up Christmas	13	4.1%
I have positive memories of Christmas and do not feel like there is anything wrong with giving gifts on Christmas	36	11.3%
I am helping my non-Jewish family members celebrate their holiday by giving to them	188	58.8%
I prefer not to, but this is the expectation in my family and I do not feel like I have a choice	21	6.6%
I was invited to someone's Christmas celebration and understood that this was the custom	70	21.9%
I want to express my appreciation for all that my employees (including doormen, mail carrier, etc) do	146	45.6%
Other	38	11.9%

Statistics

Total Responses	320
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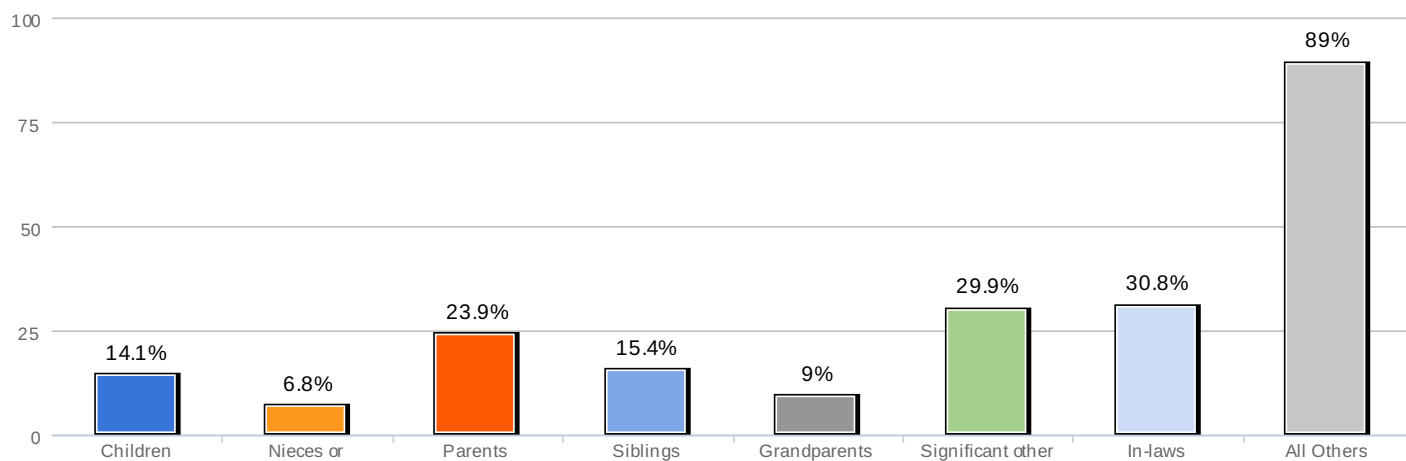
Comments

Count	Response
1	Common practice in my office.
1	Custom of my wife's family.
1	Even though I am jewish, my parents and sister are not.
1	Giving gifts to "employees" I make non religious, i.e . Happy holidays or happy new year
1	I have non jewish friends
1	I think that gifts should be given to a person in respect to their beliefs.
1	I;m not going to ignore other religions
1	My coworkers give gifts to me and I like to reciprocate.
1	My friend is not Jewish and we often exchange gifts during this season.
1	My friends and I give holiday gifts. Christmas is their holiday and I like to help them enjoy it.

1	My husband is Christian so we celebrate with him.
1	My roommates celebrate Christmas and I gave them gifts to show appreciation.
1	N/A
1	See above. I felt that I would have been excluded from the comraderie of the office.
1	Some of my friends and I exchange small gifts. I'm Jewish and they are not.
1	Spouse is Christian and so are children, so celebrate Christmas
1	This more closely reflects what I was commenting on above.
1	This was the expectation where I work.
1	We are an interfaith family and my husband feels strongly about celebrating Christian holidays.
1	We have exchanged gifts with non-Jewish friends for many years.
1	We sponsor a needy family at Christmas and give gifts to them.
1	again, we started this and now want out
1	for friends and co-workers who celebrate christmas
1	my friends celebrate christmas. they respect my beliefs and holiday, and i respect theirs.
1	my husband and brother in law are not jewish so we honor their family traditions as well
1	my husband is catholic and celebrate both jewish and christian holidays
1	my non-Jewish friends get me Hanukkah presents and I get them Christmas presents
1	My in-laws and husband celebrate Christmas and Easter but not for religious reasons. All about the gifts.
1	We are totally non religious in our celebration of Xmas. We use both holidays to teach about family, community, light in the darkness.
1	I include some of my non Jewish friends in my yearly Chanukah party and I give their children gifts
1	I'm Jewish and my wife is Catholic. We are raising our kids Catholic while honoring the Jewish heritage of my family. Christmas was the main holiday for both of our families growing up so that is what we celebrate with our families now. We celebrate Hanukkah with our kids every year because that is a family tradition I cherish having with my mother growing up and want to share with my children.
1	I give teacher gifts at Christmas time and also to some others who do work personally and professionally during the year for our family
1	and also to express my appreciation to some good christian friends if you live in a Christian country you must obey some traditions of this country.
1	"Christmas" gifts in the holiday season given to coworkers and employees aren't necessarily labeled as such, just given with a "Happy Holidays" and no expectation of interpretation one way or the other.
1	I married a non-Jewish man and Christmas is important to him. Thus I celebrate it with him in his family's traditional manner, which includes giving gifts.
1	We don't celebrate Christmas in our house, but we visit my parents to help them celebrate and exchange gifts. It would be very difficult for my family members not to be with their grandchildren/children/nieces/nephews/cousins on Christmas.
1	We are a mixed marriage family and I want to be part of the traditions of my husband and his family. I do not consider myself Christian but enjoy the holiday as a non religious celebration of lights and giving and family/friends getting together.
1	I want to help my friends and their children celebrate their holiday. We exchange gifts. I send them Christmas gifts and they send us Chanukah. We live across the county. It's my best friend and her family.
1	we don't celebrate any religious customs associated with Christmas. To Us it is an american holiday more than religious.
1	I host a Christmas celebration for a friend and her family, as she no longer is able to do it on her own. I give her family Christmas gifts and they give our family Hanukkah gifts, but on Christmas when we get together.
1	My family and my boyfriend's family are both Jewish, but both of our fathers are Jews by choice, so we have extended family who are not Jewish and who we spend time with during the holidays. We ourselves do not celebrate Christmas, but we help them celebrate by being together as a family. Some of our gifts are exchanged at this time, even if they are between two Jewish family members, because it is often easier to get together with people from out of town at this time than during a random weekend that coincides with Hanukkah.
1	We celebrate Hanukah at our home cuz we are Jewish, while we are open to celebrating others' traditions in their

	homes w them.
1	As noted, I converted. I still give my family christmas gifts because they celebrate christmas and i still think it's a lovely holiday that they celebrate that's important to them. i also have friends who celebrate christmas. no matter what the holiday, it's nice to give someone something to celebrate their own holiday.
1	We call the winter gift to our newspaper carrier, house cleaner, daycare provider, ... a "Happy New Year" gift.
1	Appreciation and recognition of friends' holiday. They give us us presents for hanukkah, we give them a gift for christmas.
1	I give Christmas gifts to people who celebrate Christmas, just like I'd expect someone to give me a Hanukkah gift because I celebrate Hanukkah.
1	My husband was Christian so we celebrated Christmas with him. When he died, it seemed wrong to discontinue that celebration. It would be one more thing my children lost with the loss of their father.
1	My fiance's mother and family friends are Christian, it was a part of the celebration for them and to enjoy their company.
1	I converted to Christianity in College and was a practicing Christian for 28 years. My husband is Christian and most of my friends are from my former Church. I give them Christmas presents and receive Christmas presents. It's been difficult enough for them to have a leader in the parish repudiate the faith I preached and taught.
1	The neighborhood kids have a Christmas party and we have a Chanukah party to give the experience of the holidays to everyone.
1	As I stated earlier, I am Jewish and my wife is Catholic. Niether of us wanted to convert when we got married. We think we get the best of both worlds. There is definitely good eating as my wife is Italian.
1	I usually consider it a year-end bonus. Esp. for my Jehovah's Witness house cleaner (they don't celebrate Xmas either).
1	I do not celebrate Christmas at all in any way, except to give a small gift to my co-workers, who in turn give me a small Chanukkah gift
1	I realize I answered a previous question incorrectly and cannot go back to change. I interpreted 'immediate family' as my blood relations. My husband and his family are not Jewish
1	I don't give Christmas gifts to my family, nor do I receive them, but some friends/coworkers are Christian, and we respect that.
1	The "Christmas" we celebrate is strictly about gift-giving. Religious identity, at least in terms of heritage, does not exist in my home.
1	We give Christmas gifts to our close Christian frends, neighbors, daughter in law's parents and hair cutter as well as mailcarrier, trash guys, etc.
1	My extended family on one side is not Jewish and I'm closer with them than the majority of my Jewish family.
1	My parents and siblings celebrate Christmas. We join them on Christmas morning and exchange gifts.
1	my husband is not Jewish & we also have non-jews on my mother's side, so went to my aunt's for xmas growing up.
1	I have positive memories of Christmas and want to share them with my kids but I'm aware it will confuse their Jewish identity somewhat
1	My husbands family celebrates Xmas so I celebrate now with them but I didn't grow up celebrating Xmas at all
1	I was in an interfaith marriage for 18 years before he converted. The children grew up with a tree and gifts. We celebrate with our community of friends who are not Jewish.
1	I exchange "holiday" gifts with a few friends who celebrate Xmas. I don't traditionally do it on 12/25. It's whenever we get together
1	I think of Christmas as a secular holiday. Our work celebrations are called "holiday" parties although the overwhelming majority are Christians
1	Being a Jew does not mean not embracing all powerful positive influences of other religions, especially when they are a significant part of our culture. By participating, it encourages a universal bond of brotherhood, lines do not need to be drawn in the sand for different religions, we are to honor our friendships and wish our friends and family well during this season.

43. If you are Jewish and received gifts for Christmas last year, who did you receive them from? (check all that apply)



43. If you are Jewish and received gifts for Christmas last year, who did you receive them from? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %
Children	33	14.1%
Nieces or nephews	16	6.8%
Parents	56	23.9%
Siblings	36	15.4%
Grandparents	21	9.0%
Significant other	70	29.9%
In-laws	72	30.8%
Other extended family	53	22.7%
Friends	89	38.0%
Employers	46	19.7%
Other	20	8.6%

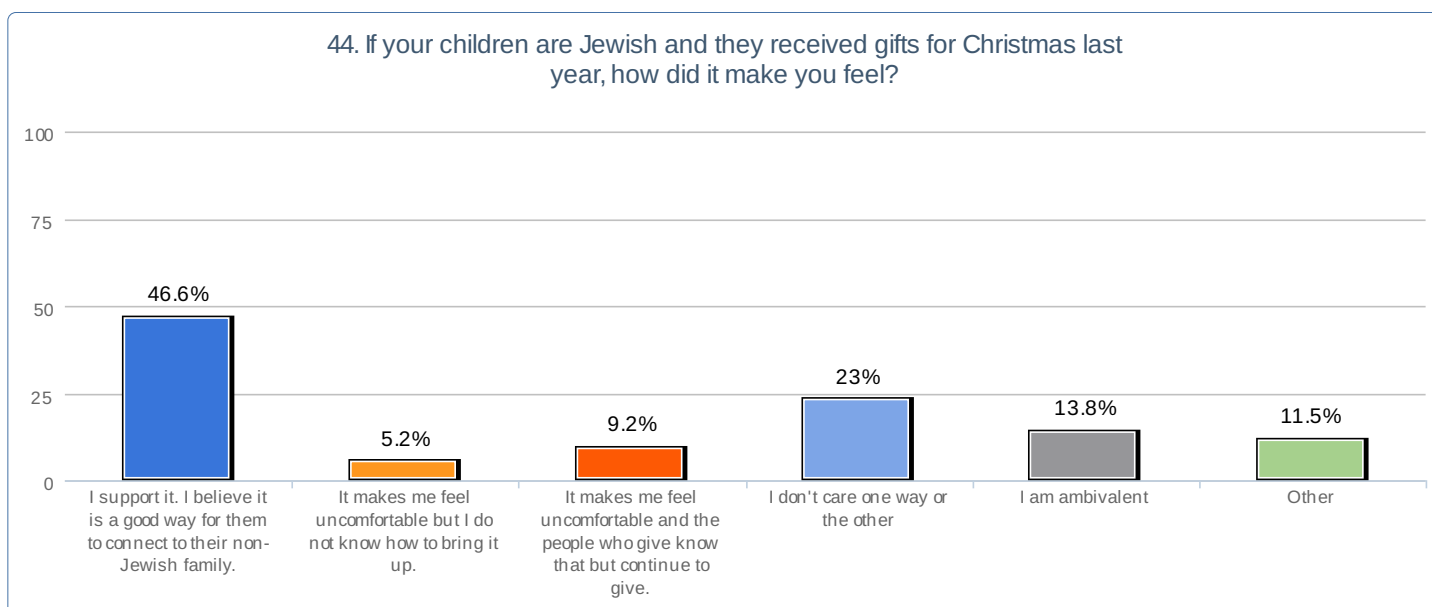
Statistics

Total Responses	234
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Comments

Count	Response
1	A few employees.
1	Aunt also
1	Clients
1	Co-workers
1	Coworkers
1	Did not receive Christmas gifts
1	Family of significant other
1	I a school teacher
1	I am not comfortable receiving Christmas gifts but my family does not understand this.
1	I don't receive Christmas gifts, just give them to Christian friends/coworkers/etc.
1	My father is catholic
1	NEIGHBORS

1	Neighbors.
1	None
1	Patients, clients
1	People who know me give me gifts for Hanukkah (even if they're Christian)
1	Same as above.
1	Sisters & brothers in law.
1	Some of my friends give me xmas gifts, but I try to open them as part of Hanukkah.
1	Students
1	They're in denial and give Christmas "chachkes" to make a point.
1	a coworker
1	childrens inlaws
3	co workers
1	co-worker in gift exchange- nothing personal
2	co-workers
1	coworkers
1	from my machatunim and their family members.
1	same comment as above
1	some people just dont know better, and im not going to be a jerk to someone who is trying to be nice. plus i live in texas -- between november 25 and december 25 everything is christmas.
1	My daughter's boyfriends parents give us fudge and home-baked bread, which they make in quantity every Christmas. I enjoy being included, and it doesn't feel problematic at all. Every year I vow to reciprocate at Purim, but haven't been doing as much for Purim with no kids in the house.
1	Non-jewish friends and my employer. I have learned to live with the fact that they are not as sensitive to my feelings about the holiday as I would like them to be, and I appreciate their thoughtfulness and generosity.
1	Immediate family is Jewish, rest of family is non-denominational, non-practicing Christian or Evangelical Christian.



44. If your children are Jewish and they received gifts for Christmas last year, how did it make you feel?

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
I support it. I believe it is a good way for them to connect to their non-	21	46.60%	Total Responses	174

Jewish family.	31	78.5%
It makes me feel uncomfortable but I do not know how to bring it up.	9	5.2%
It makes me feel uncomfortable and the people who give know that but continue to give.	16	9.2%
I don't care one way or the other	40	23.0%
I am ambivalent	24	13.8%
Other	20	11.5%

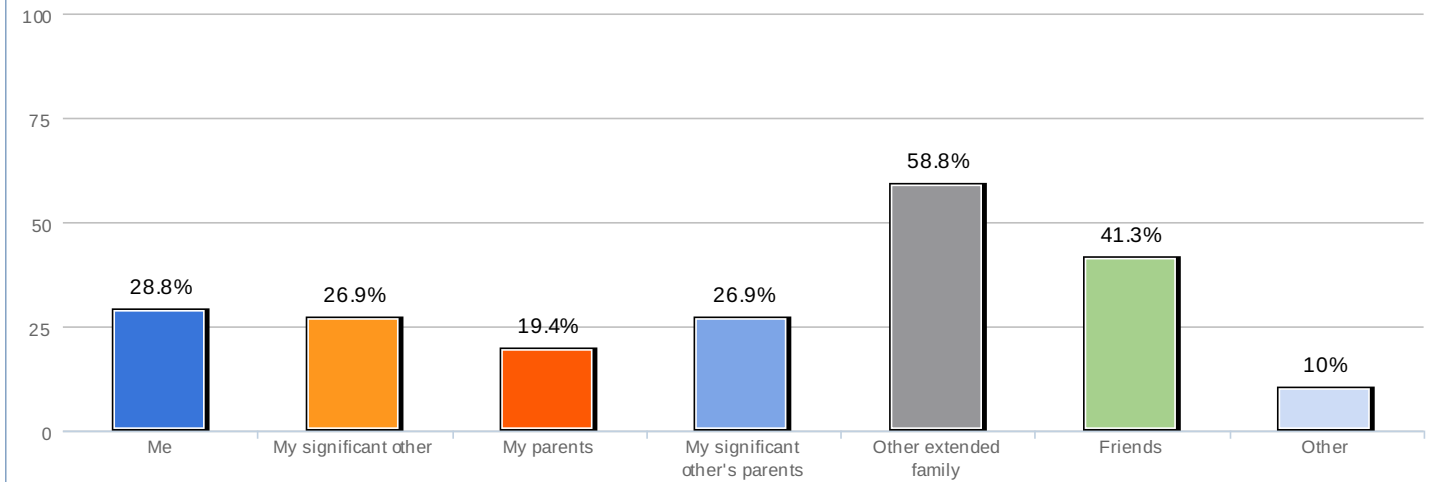
Comments

Count	Response
1	Again, it's honoring the customs of my husband and stepmother.
1	Children did not receive Christmas gifts
1	DOESN'T CHANGE THEIR BELIEFS...JUST FRIENDS
1	Did not receive Christmas gifts.
1	Didn't have children last winter
1	I don't have children
1	I don't have kids I have never been married.
1	I have no children.
1	I support it. It is their other parents' family custom.
1	If they have non-Jewish friends/employers who want to give them gifts, it's fine with me.
1	It goes overboard but my daughter says that I'd how her husbands family celebrates
1	It's important to my husband so I accept it
1	Kids are in their 20s.
1	Maybe I need to get over it and am overly sensitive to it all.
1	My children are adults
2	N/A
1	No children
1	See above.
1	They usually say happy hanukkah
1	We visit the non-Jewish family over Christmas and they gave us gifts.
1	i wish my family would send Hanukkah gifts instead but I'm not offended
2	n/a
1	no children
2	no kids
1	they didn't receive xmas gifts
1	Personally I don't care, but it's important to my husband and his side if the family. Also, I like the tree.
1	This is all about intention and framing. My grandmother sends my son a christmas present, but I explain that it is because grandma celebrates christmas and this is part of her observance (this was more for my own comfort, obviously my 3 month old didn't know what the heck was going on except that he had a bow on his head). I value the Jewish understanding of tokecha, and I do not want to shame someone (especially my grandmother) for giving me or my child a thoughtful gift.
1	Since I have great respect for my husband and his traditions, I celebrate to give him joy and thus show this to my daughter. I do feel some guilt as well as some enjoyment.
1	My mother was initially supportive of my choice to convert to my husband's family's religion but now she is not.
1	When they were younger and we went to a relative's house for Christmas, it was very clear that they were helping their cousin celebrate her holiday. It was never an issue.

1	My son is well rooted to Judaism so I have no concerns. He understands that these are not our customs but we are open to sharing ours friends holiday with them.
1	My daughter is grown up and doesn't get any from my husband's family any more. She may receive them from her own husband's family, but I'm not sure.
1	My kids and their friends also exchange gifts as "holiday" presents without any religious connotations
1	My nieces are not Jewish but their parents give my son a gift for Hanukkah, during the appropriate time, and then my son goes to their home and celebrates Christmas with them. He loves it and has a good time, but he goes to synagogue with us every Friday night. I am fine with this tradition.
1	I can see the big picture and there is nothing wrong with experiencing what the Christian world experiences. Just as I would like them to experience and learn about Hanukkah,...and Kwanzaa, too.
1	It is a non-religious family ritual but Chanukah is our religious celebration through lighting candles, cultural foods and time with friends.
1	niether uncomfortable, nor ambivalent. It's part of my spouse's tradition,...and her family's tradition.
1	I want my children to understand the customs of my parents and siblings. For this reason I am not uncomfortable with the gift receipt. Our children understand it is a custom of the other members of our family and they are fortunate to share in the fun.
1	my children have participated in Secret Santa with their friends but I view it as they are getting a hanukkah gift and giving someone a christmas gift.
1	My parents give my children there Hanukkah gifts when we get together as a family for Christmas Day.
1	Our daughter is Jewish, I am not, and I believe celebrating Christmas help connect her to our non-Jewish family.
1	It is difficult to get the kids to really understand that we are celebrating their grandparents' holiday and not theirs when they look forward to getting gifts.
1	I support it but not so my children can connect with non-Jewish family. it is my husband's family tradition and we honor his family. We still struggle with the religious aspects which make me very uncomfortable
1	Some people just give a gift for the season and it is not identified with a holiday. I think Secret Santa at work, for instance, is really just a way for everyone, regardless of faith, to come together in a friendly way and be inclusive during the winter holidays season.
1	My non-Jewish friends exchange gifts with us on Christmas. We are always invited to celebrate Christmas with them at their homes and this is the way we celebrate with them. We invite friends for Hanukkah and they bring gifts to us at that time. I do have 1 or 2 non-Jewish friends that make sure they get a gift to us during Hanukkah (most don't) and we give them a gift at Christmas. We respect and appreciate each other's religious values and customs.
1	We do NOT celebrate Chistmas in our home, but I have taught my children that it is okay to help their grandparents celebrate THEIR holiday when we visit them. This includes gift giving.
1	Although I support it (half of their family is non-Jewish), I hate how overblown it is and I wish they received fewer gifts.
1	My children and grandchildren and my son-in-law get their gifts on Chanukah. His family get their gifts on Christmas.
1	My Jewish in-laws give my boys gifts on Christmas Day and they don't call the gifts Christmas or Hanukkah gifts. It makes me uncomfortable.
1	Our neighborhood parties are neither on Hanukah or Christmas and the gifts my kids received were wrapped with non Christmas wrapping.
1	If someone wants to give them a gift then I don't object. We can be gracious in accepting others outreach without observing the holiday in the religious sense.
1	I wish my non-Jewish family would explain to the children more about the reasons for the holiday and not just the gifts.
1	I make it clear to my child that this is not our holiday and that we attend to celebrate with non-Jewish family members. We exchange gifts with the family members we don't see at Chanukah, and my parents give small gifts to each of the children because they are grandparents and that's what grandparents do.
1	It's part of who I am. I am Jewish, but I celebrate Catholic holidays because my family is Catholic too.
1	i dont care if the present is for shritmas or channukah since my jewish exstended family just celebrates holiday gift giving with absolutley no connection to either channukah or christmas, just holiday festivites.
1	I don't like it but have no control as my son in law is not Jewish. Although they do not celebrate Christmas in their home, I have no control over his parents celebrating Christmas.

1 my children received gifts on hanukkah from non jewish friends who exchange gifts with a lot of people during the season. I try not to be rude, but we keep the gift giving amongst ourselves to a minimum.

45. If your children are Jewish and they received gifts for Christmas last year, who did they receive them from? (check all that apply)



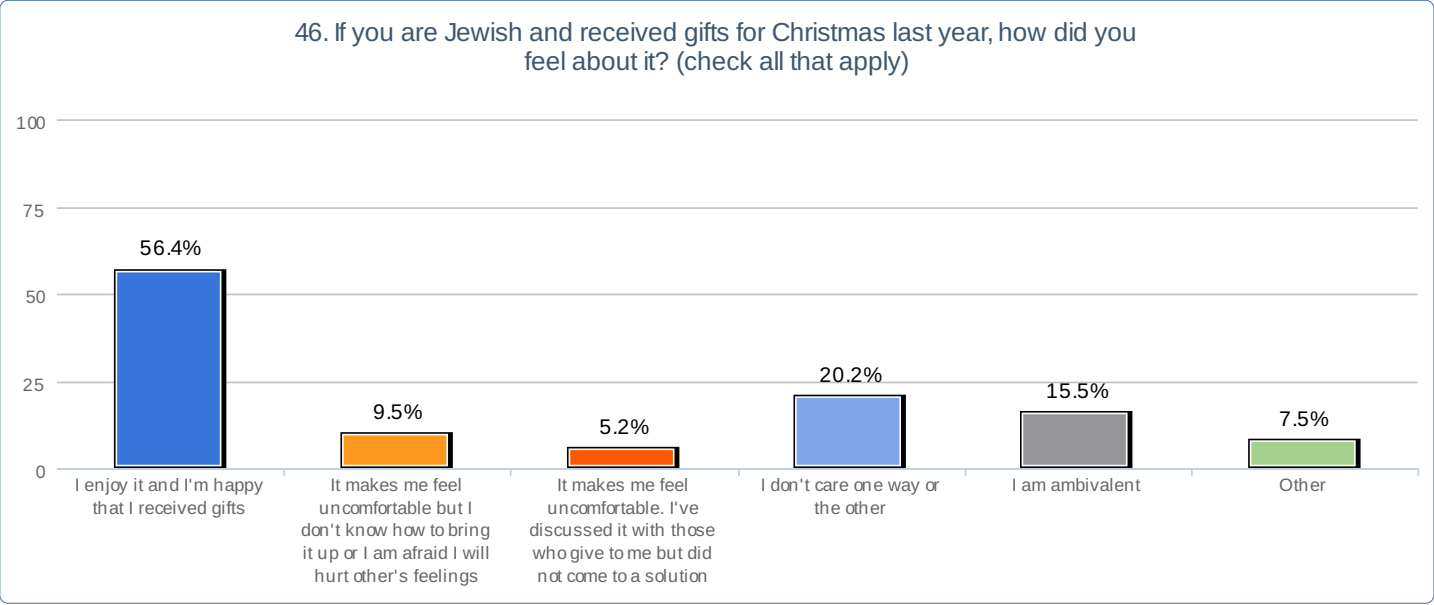
45. If your children are Jewish and they received gifts for Christmas last year, who did they receive them from? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
Me	46	28.8%	Total Responses	160
My significant other	43	26.9%		
My parents	31	19.4%		
My significant other's parents	43	26.9%		
Other extended family	94	58.8%		
Friends	66	41.3%		
Other	16	10.0%		

Comments

Count	Response
1	"Their parents" require a separate category
1	Depends when holidays fall
1	Didn't have children last winter
1	Everyone who gave them Christmas gifts is from my non-Jewish husband's family.
1	Girlfriend (Now fiancé)
1	I could not even imagine, but we are living in Christian country
1	I don't have children
1	My children do not have a clear religious identity at this point.
2	N/A
1	NA
1	Neighbors

1	No children
1	Our non-Jewish daughter-in-law's relatives give Christmas gifts to our Jewish grandchildren.
1	See above.
1	Their non Jewish grandparents and uncle
1	Their other parent and parent's extended family.
1	Their spouse.
1	did not receive Christmas gifts
1	employers and employees
1	from my daughter's in-laws
1	my daughter's non-Jewish parent (my ex)
1	my step sons mother
2	n/a
1	no kids
1	their inlaws
1	they had a gift exchange with their non-Jewish cousins
1	we do the big gifts at Hanukkah & something little for xmas
1	I was pleasantly suprised to see more Chanukkah wrapping paper last year on my children's gifts...It seems that after 6 years, a few members of my husband's family are finally beginning to "get it."
1	My daughter is married to a non Jew, so she celebrates both holidays. She receives gifts from her husband, in-laws, and friends. So do her children
1	They receive Christmas gifts from their grandparents and aunts/uncles/cousins at my parents' house.



46. If you are Jewish and received gifts for Christmas last year, how did you feel about it? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
I enjoy it and I'm happy that I received gifts	142	56.4%	Total Responses	252
It makes me feel uncomfortable but I don't know how to bring it up or I am afraid I will hurt other's feelings	24	9.5%		
It makes me feel uncomfortable. I've discussed it with those who give to me but did not come to a solution	13	5.2%		

I don't care one way or the other	51	20.2%
I am ambivalent	39	15.5%
Other	19	7.5%

Comments

Count	Response
1	did not receive Christmas gifts
1	Although, I do feel a slight guilt being Jewish and celebrating this holiday.
1	Because it is cultural, not religious.
1	Holiday gifts are fun, I don't associate the gift specifically with one holiday or the other.
1	How can you be unhappy about gifts??
1	I checked two conflicting boxes because it depended on who the gift was from.
1	I did have more ambivalence early in my marriage.
1	I understand it is מנהג המקום part of American culture and has no religious significance
1	I'm appreciative that people think of me. We're talking about small gifts-- cookies, a plant
1	It felt normal as I was raised Christian.
1	It is the thought that counted - no ill will was intended.
1	My family is Christian they do not celebrate Hanukkah
1	N/A
1	NA
1	See above
1	See above.
1	See above. I'm comfortable with it.
1	depends on how Christmas - y the gift is
1	I am a little uncomfortable with the gifts, and would rather they did not happen, but since this occurs at work, and the gift is small and comes as a "end of year" gift, and my department and co-workers are very accepting and positive around my being Jewish (I am the only Jew in the department) the entire year, I generally prefer to just let it go, and don't feel that I have any reason to complain. They do make an effort to make my particular gift not overtly Christmas-themed in any way (different colors, wrapping paper, etc.)
1	I love my non-Jewish family members, and them giving me gifts for Christmas is just their way of showing love and affection.
1	With some friends, we now exchange non-religious "Winter Solstice" gifts, making it about the season and our friendship rather than which holiday we observe.
1	My parents are not 100% comfortable with my conversion and I know that their giving of gifts makes them feel good. I would not want to take this from them.
1	I used to absolutely hate it. It would make me angry to have Christmas imposed upon me, even through seemingly innocent gifts. I feel like I have come to peace with it more. It's something that makes distant relatives happy, so I've stopped making a big deal over it.
1	i feel touched that people would think of me, regardless of what color wrapping paper that thought comes in.
1	I don't care about actually receiving a gift, but I am happy to participate in celebrating their holiday (Christmas) with my birth family.
1	the mentioned giving is excessive mandatory and over the top of spending lavish excessive childrens toys
1	I kind of like receiving gifts, but the gifts themselves aren't really that important. It's more about my family's traditions and spending time with my family.
1	My boss brings gifts for the 3 of us who work for her and she calls them 'holiday' gifts out of respect that I'm Jewish, which I think is very nice.

1	It makes me believe that people don't care enough to send me a gift for the right reasons or holidays. Isn't that where the phrase "a goyisha Kup" emanated from?
1	I understand that it is either minhag hamakom of the place (in this case my very non-Jewish office) and that those giving the gifts get pleasure from it. This year I have moved into the supervisor role and would like us to move toward some kind of gift exchange that would limit the gift giving to one item per person, with less emphasis on stuffing stockings with junkie gifts and candy.
1	doesn't matter which it is for, but I appreciate friends who are Christian yet give me gifts on Chanukah.
1	I recognize that this was an end of year appreciation gift from my supervisor, given around the holidays to all her employees in the same manner. I am glad to have appreciative colleagues and am happy not to be given gifts on a different day or in a different way than the rest of my team. Gifts were given in a secular manner on the last day that everyone happened to be in the office prior to taking various winter/Christmas/New Year's vacations.
1	Friends giving gifts think that it's a Hannukah custom too and are really just trying to be inclusive. Also from employers, it's expected whether a person celebrates Christmas or not - holiday bonuses, etc. are an American custom at this point.
1	That's how the future in-laws celebrate at that time of year. I'm not going to upset them over something that isn't an issue for me.
1	It was how I was raised, so it is just a regular routine. In addition, I do not necessarily consider them strictly Christmas or Hanukkah presents, they are holiday presents that my family gives to me on Christmas.
1	It was weird, the influence of Christmas last year. One cousin is in an interfaith marriage and is extremely secular. I slept next to a Christmas tree by her. Another cousin has a Christmas day party, for all of her Jewish friends. It was just an atmosphere that I was not entirely ready for.
1	I'd be happy to skip the gifts, but it doesn't make me uncomfortable. We have opted out of the family secret Santa, but my in-laws still give us (and all the adult kids) Christmas money.

47. If your children are Jewish and they received gifts for Christmas last year, how did it make you feel?

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
I support it. I believe it is a good way for them to connect to their non-Jewish family.	0	0.0%	Total Responses	0
It makes me feel uncomfortable but I do not know how to bring it up.	0	0.0%		
It makes me feel uncomfortable and the people who give know that but continue to give.	0	0.0%		
I don't care one way or the other	0	0.0%		
I am ambivalent	0	0.0%		
Other	0	0.0%		

Comments

Count	Response
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48. If you celebrate both holidays, what do you do when Hanukkah falls on Christmas Eve/Christmas? What does your gift giving ritual look like?

Count	Response
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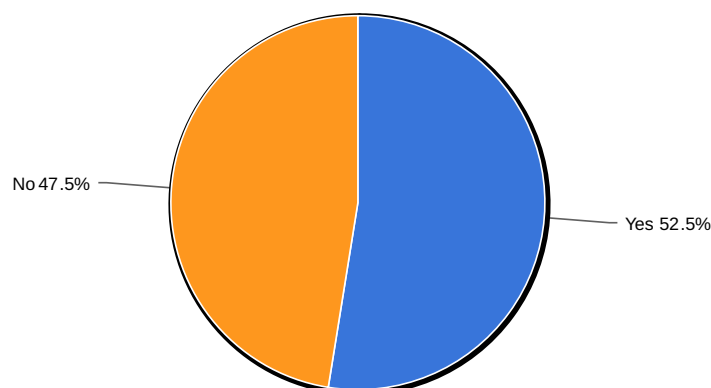
1	Both rituals, give gifts for both.
1	Celebrate both. Last year we lit our menorah before xmas dinner at my in-laws.
1	Celebrate equally
1	Celebrate just xmas
1	Chanukah evening. Christmas am
1	Chanukah tops it!
1	Christmas
1	Christmas comes first because it is a one day thing
1	Christmas take presedence.
1	Christmas takes prescedence. It is only one night and a very important religious holiday
1	Double joy
1	Equal
1	Everyone gets their gifts at the same time, and traditions from both holidays are incorporated
1	Hanukah is the priority
1	Hanukkah always takes priority if I participate in other's celebrations
1	Hanukkah celebrations always come first.
1	Hanukkah presents and Christmas presents are given
1	I celebrate Chanukah the same way even if it coincides with Christmas.
1	I celebrate both. Christmas at non-Jewish family's house and then Hanukkah at my house.
1	I only celebrate Chanukah.
1	I would light the candles and have the regular Christmas celebration
1	I wrapped the gift up in both Hanukkah and Christmas paper.
1	I've only celebrated Xmas for the last couple of years and this hasn't happened
1	If they come together, we do Chanukah at night, Christmas in the morning.
1	It's more jewish than christian. The ritual of hanukkah is stronger for me than Christmas.
1	Just gift giving. Nothing special.
1	Light candles and give gifts for both.
1	Light candles, give Hanukkah gifts.
1	Light menorah, eat latkes, drink eggnog, and open lots of presents
1	Light the candles for Chanukah and give gifts on Christmas.
3	N/A
2	NA
1	One big gift giving (and food) celebration.
1	Open the small gift for Hannukah first then Christmas gifts.
1	Same
1	Same as always.
1	Same. We light the menorah where ever we are spending Christmas, and have gelt and dreidle
1	Since Hanukkah is eight days it's easy to have both holidays.
1	The same as when they are on separate days
1	They are for both holidays simultaneously
1	We celebrate Chanukah. Kids get gifts Xmas morning.
1	We celebrate Christmas and light Hannukah candles. We give gifts for both holidays.
1	We celebrate Hanukkah as usual.
1	We celebrate only Chanukah in our home.
1	We do Chanukah gifts at sundown when we light the menorah
1	We do Hanukkah gifts with the Christmas gifts on Christmas morning.

1	We do not exchange gifts on Christmas for Hanukkah.
1	We do our best to celebrate both.
1	We do presents with no specific holiday in mind
1	We don't celebrate Christmas
1	We go to Midnight Mass, then come home and exchange gifts.
1	We just exchange gifts.
1	We light the Menorah and tree and unwrap presents!
1	We often wrap Christmas gifts in Hanukah paper.
1	We skip the Hanukkah gifts then and light candles.
1	We still light the candles after going to christmas dinner at my gradparents
2	n/a
1	same gift giving ritual. we do not do christmas gifts on christmas eve
1	we decide on a year by year basis what/when to visit my in-laws related to Xmas.
1	we only celebrate hanukkah
1	We celebrate Chanukah in the evening on those days. We don't have a big Xmas eve tradition, so it works out fine. We also celebrate my mother and daughter's birthday on Xmas and just make a place in the day for each.
1	The inlay family celebrates Christmas and we are in the house, so its a family gathering. We don't sing Christmas songs. We did attend church once to be supportive and to enjoy being with family.
1	We still have Chanukah separately, but we light candles during the Christmas celebration if we are there at sundown.
1	I am fortunate that my husband's family has totally embraced Judaism. We light candles when we are with them during the winter break and they will even light candles when the holiday is prior to our arrival or even after we leave if it is still going on.
1	Celebrate both. It's a difficult situation as I converted and our families are combined Jewish and Christian.
1	We go to my parents house on Christmas morning and open gifts and have breakfast but when we leave, we also leave Christmas behind and go home to be Jewish.
1	though raised jewish, my father's side of the family is catholic. we would always go to that side of the family for christmas eve and day, where we would open presents under the tree, regardless of when hanukkah was. the beauty of an 8-day holiday is that you have plenty of time for everyone!
1	We light Hanukkah candles, go to church, eat at a Chinese restaurant and come home and exchange Hanukkah gifts.
1	We spend Christmas with my wife's non-jewish family. We celebrate hannukah in the evening and open christmas presents in the morning.
1	We always light Hanukkah candles and have a Christmas tree...the gifts are more related to Christmas - Hanukkah we focus on the miracles and light - seems gifts are not as important.
1	We are trying to get out of the Christmas thing but do not know how. Ours is dinner candles a little gift to the kids theirs is a big formal gift affair
1	A combination celebration to celebrate all of our cultures...we are not enemies...we are family and honor each other...
1	Hannukah takes place in our home. The kids will recieve gifts from us and light candles when we are home even if we are visiting others on that day or night.
1	Hanukkah takes precedence for myself, my husband, and our children. We find ways to include both holidays if need be.
1	When Hanukkah falls during Christmas we will bring our menorah to my parents and light the candles. We typically let our kids open there Hanukkah gifts at home before going to their grandparents.
1	We light the menorah and exchange gifts like any other night of Hanukkah. We even travel with the menorah, as we typical are at the in-laws for Christmas eve/day.
1	We celebrate both then. My step-mother celebrates Christmas so she organizes that and then the rest of us organize Hanukkah festivities.
1	I feel like a bit of a meshuganah. It has to be even. We light the candles in the evening, say the prayer, exchange the gifts, and eat. This is Chanukah. We do not celebrate Christmas Eve. The Christmas gifts are shared in the a.m.
1	We light candles in the homes of our friends and in our own homes. We have a 20 year tradition of sharing dinners at Christmas and we do that also.

1	We light candles and keep Hanukkah low key that night. On a different night my in laws make a huge fuss over Hanukkah. They do a better job than I do!
1	we celebrate with our jewish friends and family on one of the other 8 days, but we give our son a gift that is specifically a hannukah gift on christmas/christmas eve
1	We 've never had the 1st night of hanukkah on xmas. we give xmas gifts in the am so would do hanukkah at night & xmas in the am
1	I don't feel exactly like I 'celebrate' both holidays, more that I support and join my non-Jewish family in celebrating their holiday. And they do the same for us; when it is christmas/christmas eve we light our menorahs with them.
1	We continue to light candles on all nights that we can, even if it occurs at the same time as Christmas.
1	We light the Chanukiah and do our brachot, and then whatever the Christmas thing is gets done, too.
1	We celebrate each night of Hanukkah whenever it falls. One celebration does not affect the other. When kids were little, gifts at Christmas were more numerous and expensive than at Hanukkah. Now, it is a little more equal.
1	I don't really celebrate both holidays. I grudgingly attend breakfast or dinner at my parents and am required to arrive with a gift.
1	There are 8 days of Chanukkah so I celebrate and have a dinner party on a day other than Christmas or Christmas ee (if my in-laws are not havingtheir party at that time)
1	We light the candles as normal, and give Hannukah gifts after the candle lighting. My family gives Christmas gifts on Christmas morning. They don't overlap.
1	My family being supportive as they are, go about Christmas in a Chanukah sort if way. We call it "Christmukah". They give me gifts for each day if Chanukah as the "12 days of Christmas" so that it is a mesh of the two holidays.
1	Because Hanukkah runs 8 nights, we had a separate chanukkah celebration on a different night. But on Christmas, we just lit the candles, sang the prayers and songs, etc, but then moved on to my extended family's christmas celebration
1	I don't like it too much when Hanukkah falls on Christmas,...but really, i don't give it too much thought.
1	It depends. My husband's family celebrates Christmas on Christmas Eve.We have incorporated lighting the menorah into their celebration but we would exchange gifts with my family on a different night during Chanukah.
1	We open presents on Christmas morning and then after lighting the candles, kids get one small gift.
1	Honestly, I don't know. It hasn't come up yet. We celebrate Hanukkah small and give big gifts on Purim, there is no real competition between Christmas and Hanukkah in our home.
1	it is the same, we have dinner, celebrate chanukah and then watch Polar Express and have holiday cookies/milk after eating lots of latkes
1	we don't overdo the ritual, we have a nice meal and after that one child picks a gift for someone else, and that person opens their gift, picks one for someone else and so on
1	Our gift giving ritual does not change because we do not exchange gifts on Hannukah. So we light candles for Hannukah and exchange gifts for Christmas/.
1	We light candles and give Hanukkah presents as we otherwise would. We celebrate separately with my parents.
1	When Hanukkah falls at the same time as Christmas, all of my family members respect each other's traditions and we try to incorporate both holidays.
1	We celebrated with our traditions for each holiday separately, even though they fell on the same day (ie- Hanukkah gifts after lighting the menorah & Christmas gifts on Christmas morning).
1	we give extra gifts on other nights, as my daughter is with my ex on Christmas eve & Christmas. Though we (my current wife and I) go to my ex's on Christmas morning to see what Santa brought.
1	We always do Xmas at the in laws, rotate Xmas and Xmas eve. Presents happen after the meal. When Hanukkah happens simultaneously, we bring the hanukiah and our daughters presents, and light candles later in the evening. My noon Jewish parents send my daughter 8 numbered presents.
1	Even when Chanukah and Christmas do not coincide, my mother usually leads us in lighting candles around Christmas time because this is when we are all together. Our house is usually decorated with Chanukah decorations and we were banned from ever having a Christmas tree, although we did have one at my grandmother's house when we used to do Christmas there. She is a non-practicing Christian.
1	We have very specific Christmas eve traditions that include giving gifts from the siblings - I'm 42 and have been doing that since I was 5.
1	We bring our menorah, gelt, and dreidles to my husband's family's Christmas event and light candles, we make latkes,

	and everyone participates
1	I don't celebrate both Holidays, but as a Religious School teacher, it was interesting hearing the students speak up among themselves about how one parents celebrates Chanukah and the other gives out Christmas gifts. While I made some of the moments into educational ones, it was difficult not to speak up each time a comment was made.
1	Light the Chanukah candles, then give Chanukah gifts. Christmas is usually celebrated in my husband's family during the daytime, so there is no conflict in that regard.
1	We do Christmas during the day and light Hanukkah candles while doing the prayers and gift exchange at night.
1	there is a heightened tension. We still celebrate both at the correct times. One cannot trump the other.
1	Last year we brought our chanukiyot to my parents' house and lit them with my family after Christmas Eve dinner. However, we did not bring our children's Chanukah gifts to my parents because we didn't buy Chanukah gifts for their cousins (we bought them Christmas gifts) and because we knew they would already be opening Christmas gifts. We gave our kids their Chanukah gifts on the other nights of Chanukah at our house.
1	No difference. We try to eat latkas at Christmas dinner. The food isn't all that different (ham is avoided)
1	It doesn't change too much. We just arrange the schedules with extended family so we can do both.
1	Hanukkah is only a festival that I enjoy sharing with my children as part of our heritage. Not as important as the birth of Christ
1	Hanukkah would be celebrated in our house separate from Christmas. Christmas is celebrated at my mom's. Gift giving is done separately.
1	Still light the menorah and do traditional Chanukah celebration, but we will have a special meal that is in honor of Christmas
1	We light the Chanukah as a family in the evening at my parents' home and give Chanukah gifts in the evening. My parents give Xmas gifts to the kids in the morning.
1	We are always at my sister-in-law's for Christmas eve (big celebration) and we sleep over and spend Christmas morning with them. When Hanukkah has fallen on Christmas, we bring our Menorah and light it there - in-law family is very supportive and enjoys lighting candles with us. Gift giving is the same as it would be any other Christmas Eve.
1	We celebrate just Christmas because there are eight days of Hanukkah. We do light the Menorah, but not at the Christmas celebration.
1	NOTE: All the celebration of Christmas mentioned above is the family of my wife who has converted to Judaism.
1	We do the same thing that we always do but the kids only get one gift a day so if it falls on Christmas, that is their gift for the day/night.
1	lighting candles and the rest is christmas. we dont do anything for christmas eve, just gift exchange on christmas day.
1	We celebrate with candles every night of Hanukah with one present (small) and on Xmas morning we exchange gifts with non-Jewish extended family. We do not give our children Xmas gifts or each other Xmas gifts, but the grandparents and aunts and uncles give us gifts and we give them gifts in return.
1	If they fall on the same day, we always do Hanukkah. Christmas is not so much about gifts in our family, but rather enjoying a day off with each other, taking a family drive and then having a nice meal. It's not really about gifts.
1	I remember one or two instances where we brought menorahs to my dad's family's Christmas celebration and lit candles in the evening. They often celebrated Hanukkah with us when I was growing up, so it wasn't ever an issue.
1	We still do small gifts at night for Hanukkah and light the candles but do large gifts in the morning.
1	As a cousin was born on Christmas day to the Catholic side of the family, we joke that we are there for his birthday. My family's only Christmas Eve "observance" is the traditional drive to see the houses lit up (and try to spot hanukkiot).
1	We celebrate both holidays that night, and participate in both rituals. We do not give Hanukkah gifts on Christmas, but we also only give gifts 3-4 days on Hanukkah.
1	With my in-laws we have a generic winter gift-giving day - with presents under a tree, but often not on Christmas itself.
1	Good question! We light the candles at home and generally go to a non-Jewish friend's house on Christmas. We have people over another night during Hanukkah.
1	We continue both traditions simultaneously. Usually Christmas gifts are bigger and more costly but there are only 1-2 per person. We give more gifts and smaller ones over the 8 nights of Hannukah.
1	Light the candles at night and do Hanukkah gifts. We do nothing for Christmas Eve. And Christmas, we celebrate in the morning.

49. Did you give or receive gifts for Christmas as a young child?



49. Did you give or receive gifts for Christmas as a young child?

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes	187	52.5%
No	169	47.5%

Statistics

Total Responses	356
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50. How is your Christmas gift exchange today similar or different from how it was growing up?

Count	Response
1	Chose not to celebrate Christmas anymore.
1	Christmas was not celebrated in my family.
1	Did not receive Christmas gifts as a kid...
1	Equals.
1	Have more non Jewish extended family now.
1	I am still growing up.
1	I converted to Judaism and don't celebrate Christmas anymore.
1	I definitely don't give as many gifts now as I did when I was a child.
1	I did not celebrate Christmas growing up
1	I didn't celebrate as a child
1	I don't celebrate Christmas anymore with family
1	I don't celebrate Christmas as an adult.
1	I don't get gifts anymore - but I used to from my fathers family.
1	I gave gifts to Christians friends, as I would do today.
1	I give it to the people in most need
1	I give to different people. same style.
1	I have adopted my husband's Christmas traditions as I grew up in a fully Jewish household.
1	I know longer receive Christmas gifts, so it is much different.
1	I never did anything at all for Christmas as a child.
1	I never participated in Christmas growing up and do now.

1	I no longer celebrate Christmas
1	I no longer exchange gifts for Christmas.
1	I only give Christmas presents now as I can afford them
1	I try not to give Christmas gifts anymore.
1	I was raised Catholic it is about the same
1	I'm Jewish now,so I only give gifts to my non-Jewish family.
1	It exists.
1	It has been adapted only slightly.
1	It hasn't changed.
1	It is basically the same
1	It is less elaborate today.
1	It is mostly the same except that my in laws expect more expensive gifts.
1	It is scaled back
1	It is the same.
1	It's about the same.
1	Less focus on Santa. :)
1	Less gifts.
1	More meaning and discussion, not just stuff.
1	More people that I give Christmas presents too (hairstylist, secretary, teachers et)
1	Much less gift exchange
1	Much less gift giving today. It is a time to be with family.
1	My daughter is married to a Non-Jew so we give them Chanukah and Christmas presents.
1	My father is gentile, so we did more for Christmas.
1	My until I got together with Julia was this part of my routine
2	N/A
1	NA
1	No Christmas anything as a child
1	No Xmas growing up
1	No difference.
1	None as a child
1	None growing up
1	Not applicable
1	Not too different.
1	Not very, we give gifts in a family setting, with my father's family.
1	Only do it for work purposes.
1	Only get/give Christmas gifts due to wife's family. My wife is not Jewish .
1	Pretty much the same
3	Same
1	Same. Santa gives some gifts and mom and dad give some too.
1	See above
1	See above.
1	Similar
1	Similar, though my grandparents are no longer with us but my children are
1	Similar--just give gifts to friends/coworkers/etc who do celebrate Christmas.
1	Similar. Nearly identical.
1	Simlar

1	Slightly more emphasis on Hanukkah.
1	Smaller
1	The adults recived only a small gift or two compared to many as a child.
1	The gifts are more elaborate now. We only got one Hanukkah gift from our parents.
1	The same
1	Very different. Only celebrated Chanukah as a child.
1	We did not celebrate Christmas when i was young.
1	We did not do a gift exchange when I was younger. We only do one now because of my step mother.
1	We don't do Christmas.
1	We give less gifts now.
1	We no longer do Xmas in our home, just at grandma and papa's.
1	With my own children, focussed more on Hanukkah
1	Xmas was one day whereas Hanukkah is 8 nights.
1	Yes
1	didn't exist until i married a Christian.
1	didn't get xmas gifts growing up
1	different
1	less traditional, more intimate
1	not different
1	not much
1	pretty much the same
1	same
1	similar
1	we did not have Christmas growing up
1	we had a big family gift party on Christmas
1	See comment above. Until my son-in-law became a member of the family, we didn't exchange gifts on Christmas.
1	I grew up in a Jewish/Christian family. My family now (husband and kids) are Jewish. We sometimes have a tree (sometimes not), but don't give presents on Xmas unless it is also Hanukkah. But even then it is understood that they are Hanukkah presents.
1	I only received Xmas gifts if the holidays occurred at differing times. My Dad would hang up a pair of his long, black business socks over the fireplace. Socks, but not festive socks. They'd be filled with small toys and he'd give my brother and me \$20 each, "so we wouldn't feel like the goyim get to have more fun."
1	had no xmas growing up, now go to xmas dinner of some relatives. Not my holiday at all but enjoy being with the family.
1	I don't do it anymore. When I was younger it was a big part of our family tradition, even tho we were ALL Jewish.
1	I have really held back from engaging in the gift giving for holidays. I think that the premise and how our society has become so consumeristic has taken the "thought" out of the holiday and the exchange. I am trying my best to appreciate the untangible and I don't believe that a gift has to be a tangible item. I would much prefer sharing an experience or time or good conversation with a family member than exchanging a gift that's appeal lasts very short term.
1	My step grandmother was Catholic - I used to go with my family to New York to celebrate Xmas/Hanukkah with her and my grandfather. My stepmother is Catholic as well and became part of our family when I was 22. We celebrated both holidays with traditional Hanukkah food/festivities/gifts and Xmas food/festivities/gifts. I have been celebrating both holidays since I was born.
1	Growing up, Christmas was for my step-father, no religious meaning for me. Now, much more significant. (not just about gifts and a tree)
1	See earlier comments. I grew up celebrating Christmas in our house (in a secular fashion) and we later added Chanukah in our family tradition. As an adolescent and then into adulthood, I shifted away from Christmas as my Jewish identity strengthened.
1	Growing up, my parents (both Jewish) gave us a few gifts in Christmas stockings on Christmas day so we wouldn't feel

	left out. Hannukah was the more important, more celebrated holiday, though. I don't celebrate Christmas with my spouse, but I feel that what we do with my in-laws - presents under a tree - feels more like Christmas to me than it did growing up because there are Christian members of his family who take it seriously as a religious holiday - even though we sometimes don't do it on Christmas itself.
1	When i was younger, i did not give christmas gifts, only hanukkah gifts (or gifts on christmas to my christian friends/family wrapped in hanukkah paper). now, in order to respect my friends and coworkers who are not jewish, i give "christmas" gifts. the only difference, really, is the paper. the love and intention is the same for either holiday.
1	As a child, the family exchanged gifts on Christmas morning. Now we do my exchange on Christmas at all.
1	I share my holiday spirit of Christmas and my traditions with my Jewish family - that includes decorating a tree and hanging stockings. We do not decorate more than that. Gift giving is the same - gifts under the tree on Christmas morning.
1	Fewer toys, more charitable giving. We all try to make contributions that we think will especially connect with the other person. Santa still fills stockings.
1	I am a convert. As a child, I fully celebrated Christmas, decorating the tree, getting presents from Santa, etc. Now I still exchange presents, but "Santa" does not come for my kids.
1	Christmas gift giving 50 yrs ago in Canada (... which by the way confused me when asked what part of the country I live in. Canada or U.S.A.) was a requirement basically in Public school.
1	Clarification on 48 - in school we had Secret Santas, Christmas concerts and gave Christmas presents to teachers and non-Jewish friends. The big difference is that I'm part of a family where it happens, the part that's the same is it has never been in my house. Hanukkah decorations, but nothing Christmas.
1	I grew up in an interfaith household in the New York Metro with a large extended multi ethnic and multi racial family so it was not unusual to celebrate Christmas as a cultural holiday. As a Jewish adult who is very involved in my religion I choose not to continue my Christmas traditions so as not to confuse my children's Jewish identity. Plus I live in an area where Jews not in interfaith households don't have Xmas trees and decorations.
1	very similar- get a gift from my grandparents and one from all my aunts and uncles (there are a lot of 'grandkids' and this is the family system that ALL kids, regardless of religion follow)
1	It is minimal, just my grandmother/aunt (only non-jewish relatives still living) sending gifts. We don't necessarily open them on christmas. When I was younger it was an elaborate day-long under the tree fiasco.
1	When I was a child my mom would save one small present that she "forgot" to give me on Hanukkah so I would have a little present to open on Christmas, even though we didn't celebrate it.
1	It is a chance for extended family to gather, which is the same. It is not an all day affair, which is different.
1	We don't do Christmas any more and haven't for most of my life but it was lots of fun as a young child. We did not have a tree but my Dad dressed up as a kind of Hanukkah-Claus one year in a blue bathrobe (not red!) and ho-ho-hoed to us a he carried a big bag of presents into the living room by the fireplace. It may sound tacky but for a 5 or 6 year old it was exciting fun and totally unreligious whereas lighting the candles for Hanukkah, even as a child, always felt attached to my Jewishness.
1	We exchange gifts on Christmas - my mother and brother give the kids their Hanukkah gifts on Christmas because that is when we see them (we live in different places and visit over Christmas)
1	In my family growing up, Christmas gifts were given in one huge festival of opening them on Christmas morning. I thought it was fun. But as an adult, I really hate to shop and I don't personally need anything, so I never ask for anything, and receive stuff that I don't really care about or want but then must write a thank-you note. You must think I am the most ungrateful person! I'd really be happy not to participate in Christmas at all.
1	I grew up Catholic but converted to Judaism. Gift giving at Christmas growing up was a must, and everyone always gave everone else too many gifts. We had a *huge* family. Now in my immediate family, it's small, fun, intimate, and only little gifts that are a genuine reflection of the friendship between giver and recipient (not that it wasn't that with christmas as a kid, just that it was unthinkable not to give someone in the family a gift as a kid, so people you only saw once a year and hardly knew ended up with random tins of flavored hot chocolate from pier one, etc.). Now, if we don't see something that really feels like the other person, we don't get it. I think it might be different with a child... I think we're not going to give gifts. Or if we do, it'll probably be one each between me and my husband, and then things like gelt and dreidels for the kids.
1	Not living with my parents anymore, we go there and give gifts. We don't do anything else like stockings, big breakfast, tree, etc that I did as a child.
1	I used to celebrate Christmas Eve with my non-Jewish father, and Christmas morning with my Jewish mother (who just

	happened to enjoy Christmas...And is first generation American.) gifts were involved on both occasions. Now, whenever I can, I join my father and non Jewish siblings for Christmas Eve dinner and gift exchange. Or, we go to my closest (Catholic) friends' home for Christmas eve dinner. We bring gifts for them and their young children.
1	There is no exchange of gifts or celebration of Christmas in our house. Gift exchanges take place at my Christian relatives homes. I spend less money and time on Christmas gifts than I would if I were Christian.
1	Main difference is we live far from where we grew up so we don't see all of our family during the holiday season like we did as kids. Only other difference is that now we are hosting the holiday events as adults and parents instead of running around as giddy kids.
1	WE didn't really have a "gift giving" routine when I was growing up. We received a check from relatives and a gift or 2 from our parents.
1	I did not receive Christmas gifts as a child - now I am married to a guy from a Christian background and participate in extended family events
1	Didn't do Xmas growing up except to decorate my babysitters tree on Xmas eve and watch Charlie Brown Xmas.
1	My dad's family is very anti-materialistic and we've gradually minimized the importance of gift-giving on Christmas, except for the couple young children, who do get fun toys.
1	My stepmother is very connected to the Xmas holiday. I love her and love to see her happy. It is a family-centric holiday for her & does not include going to church. It makes me happy to be with her & my dad during this time.
1	Over time, I've given fewer gifts. But Christmas gifts were always limited to a couple Christian friends.
1	my parents placed 2 record albums at the fire place when my brother and I were young on Christmas. They taught us about the real St. Nicholas, and tried instill in us as young children the positive differences in Christians and Jews. The albums stopped when we were old enough to understand.
1	We do not celebrate Xmas, or ave any decorations in our home. Xmas gift exchange is only for friends and extended family. Most of our friends and our Christian family members try to give us gifts during Hanukkah.
1	When I was younger I received more gifts. We also had a lot more family involved. Now, everyone lives further away and has their families to celebrate with
1	It's held at my (Jewish) parents' home--Christmas wrapping paper abounds, but is typically used for non-Jewish gift receivers.
1	my Dad was not Jewish (but has converted), so his Mother (my grandmother) always had us over on Christmas and gave us gifts.
1	Not much money around when i was a kid. More now, reflected particularly in number. European kids don't receive nearly as many toys as do North Americans.
1	same as when younger. children receive more from everyone. adults small token gifts except for significant others and special gift ideas
1	We didn't have a Christmas gift exchange when I was a child, although sometimes we visited my aunt on Christmas and had dinner at her house. My mother had been raised in an assimilated household & celebrated Christmas as a child.
1	We never exchanged in my immediate family growing up. As an adult, I am married to a Protestant, who is non-practicing in his faith. Christmas is seen as a cultural experience with minimal religious connotation.
1	I don't celebrate Christmas, but I have friend and co-workers who give me gifts and to whom I give gifts.
1	Growing up we did not give or receive gifts on Xmas; we visted my mom's family sometimes but not to exchange gifts.
1	yes except I do not have a Christmas tree, although we had one when I was much younger, until my Jewish mother asserted herself (when I was about 10 or 11) and said we should not have Xmas trees.
1	Similar. Chanukah gifts exchanged within our family. Christmas gifts given to Christian friends.
1	Today I am helping my family to celebrate their holiday, especially because it is a cultural holiday for them more so than a religious holiday, but the difference is that I'm helping them to enjoy it versus celebrating it myself.
1	It is about the same. Almost all of my family members identify as Agnostic or Christian and celebrate Christmas either religiously or just commercially.
1	As a child, extended family would have Christmas celebrations in which I would participate, but as an adult, they casually give gifts sometimes wrapped in Christmas paper.
1	It's about the same-- I exchange gifts with intermediate and some extended family members. Due to parents' divorce, gifts are now exchanged on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day to share the tradition with both parties.

1	My parents celebrated Christmas when I was a child, even though both parents are Jewish. I do not celebrate Christmas with my kids (my wife and I are Jewish). But we retained the tradition of gift giving.
1	We exchanged gifts on Christmas morning when I was a child. Now I go to my sister's home and we exchange gifts there.
1	My dad is catholic and we had a christmas tree growing up & presents under the tree. My wife and I do not have a christmas tree now.
1	Everyone tries to make presents less important/significant for our kids in order to balance Xmas with Hanukah.
1	Did it as a young child only, in the USSR (for New Year's). My family stopped the custom completely after moving to Israel, and we do not do it now - either for Christmas or New Year's, under any circumstances.
1	Husband's family is not Jewish so Christmas gifts are more in quantity and money spent than when I was a child.
1	We celebrated Christmas up until I was 5 or 6. After that it was strictly Hanukkah. Now we get a tree, decorate it with FUN ornaments, and give gifts. there is no religious connection.
1	It's pretty similar to when I was growing up, with a lot of the same traditions, such as Christmas stockings with a Christmas orange in the bottom of each one, little stocking stuffers, and some larger gifts to open on Christmas morning.
1	My extended family is Christian and they did a large scale gift exchange on Christmas morning. Now I don't participate at all.
1	We didn't celebrate Christmas at home but went to neighbors since I didn't grow up in a Jewish town.
1	I give to people over the holidays when we are invited over. I don't say it is Hannukah or Christmas ...just a gift.
1	Same, big family gathering for which i travel and to which I'm looking forward to bringing my kid.
1	My extended family tends to celebrate Hannukah on one night rather than eight. I have a one-year old now though and I want to give her presents for eight nights like i had when I was little (2 big presents for the first and last night and 6 little ones.)
1	It's basically the same - we give gifts to friends and family who are not Jewish and celebrate Christmas.
1	Now my children (Jewish) and I receive gifts on Christmas (with in-law family), though mine are usually wrapped in Hanukkah paper! I wouldn't care if they were wrapped in Christmas paper though...
1	Growing up, I celebrated Christmas. Today, I do not celebrate Christmas but send small, thoughtful gifts for close family members who do.
1	We don't go over to grandma and grandpa's house anymore (live too far away). It used to be we went over in the late afternoon (not on christmas itself) and would have dinner and exchange gifts with the grandparents.
1	My stepfather was Catholic and on Xmas we spent the day with his family, but it was not religious as much as a family gathering with food and presents. Never went to church
1	My maternal grandparents weren't Jewish, and they gave us Christmas presents. I only cared about the present, not the holiday aspect, but now i think it's obnoxious to do that.
1	When i was young christmas was HUGE! tons of presents, decorating of tree, christmas eve and day dinners. Even though the entire family was Jewish. We have completely phased that out.
1	I had a Christmas stocking as a child, when assimilation was very much in vogue in my town. I have never done that with my own children
1	I have no idea why my parents gave us gifts for Christmas. they were totally non-observant Jews, but made sure we knew we were Jewish
1	it is the same. I never received christmas gifts from my family only from non jewish friend who we were invited to celebrate with or who gave gifts to all their friends including their non christian friends

51. Please share any additional comments about how your gift exchange for Christmas is similar to or different from Hanukkah?

Count	Response
1	Christmas was a larger gift giving experience

1	For Hannukah, only children receive gifts. On Christmas, adults give gifts to each other.
1	For christmas i just celebrate the 25 of december
1	I guess it's really different. Hannukah gives more meaning to exchanging gifts.
1	I think it's generally overdone, but i still like it.
1	It is pretty much the same
1	More emphasis on religion for Chanukah. Xmas is no religion. Only santa
1	More gifts per single day & more expensive gifts for Christmas.
2	N/A
1	N/a
1	Not much difference
1	The Hanukkah gift exchange is much more meaningful to me.
1	The family gathering at Christmas is only about food and gifts. It feels a little empty to me...
1	There was a lot more pressure to make Christmas a special day when I was growing up
1	We still try to focus on giving more than receiving.
1	They spend a lot of money. I've tried to keep things less about the money and more about the significance of the holiday.
1	I always think that Chanukah gifts are for children. I think people go overboard with Christmas presents.
1	We are blessed with an amazing interfaith family. They are Catholic. They are totally supportive of their grandchildren being raised as Jews. They came to the bris and the baby namings, have attended myriad Jewish celebrations over the years including Jewish Day School celebrations. And they are probably the only family whose Christmas celebration includes Matza Ball Soup. One cousin came to a Chanukah celebration one year and was VERY disappointed when there was no soup. Thereafter there was always Matza Ball Soup for Christmas. She considers that the way it should be.
1	Chanukah is less crazy and overwhelming. I see my niece with 14 gifts in one day and it is insane. Gifts are also larger for Xmas and the expectation that adults get gifts too made it stressful financially for my family. Chanukah is a blessed reprieve from the insanity, no disrespect intended.
1	If I participate in a Christian friend's holiday celebration, which doesn't happen often, I bring presents. Just like when I go to someone's birthday party, I bring a present.
1	My husband used to give the kids Christmas gifts but he is pretty anti-gift giving since he doesn't bother thinking about what anyone else would want. He leaves it all up to me even for HIS parents!!
1	we usually have one night of Chanukah that is "family night" where everyone all comes together for latkes, dreidle, candles and gifts. on the other nights of chanukah, we do the same (perhaps without dreidle and latkes on all of the nights) and on Christmas morning everyone comes over for a big breakfast and family gift giving (which is usually after the kids open what 'santa' brought)
1	Neither holiday is or should be truly about presents. So it is truly being part of the materialistic machine that is our society.
1	it helps that my in laws are more into the togetherness and traditions of Christmas than the gift giving. J gets a moderate amount of toys and a deposit into his college fund. It also helps that DH's stepad is Jewish and his Dad and Stepmom loved Judaism before they met me!
1	My gift exchange is the same for both. If my friend celebrates Christmas I will give them a Christmas present when they give me a Hanukkah present.
1	My step grandmother was Catholic - I used to go with my family to New York to celebrate Xmas/Hanukkah with her and my grandfather. My stepmother is Catholic as well and became part of our family when I was 22. We celebrated both holidays with traditional Hanukkah food/festivities/gifts and Xmas food/festivities/gifts. I have been celebrating both holidays since I was born.
1	Gift exchange is different because my friends and I exchange gifts when we see each other, not necessarily get together.
1	What is similar is that the adults give to the kids more than the kids give to the adults. I enjoy giving my daughter Hanukkah gifts. I do not enjoy receiving stuff that then has to find a place in my home and so forth. What is different about Christmas growing up was that all the presents for everyone came at the same time all in one morning, but for Hanukkah we give one small gift each evening.
1	We get, and give our kids, Hanukkah gifts, because we are Jewish. We give Christmas gifts to non-Jewish friends and coworkers.

1	I was raised both Jewish and Christian so I have been used to blending them together my whole life
1	i give many more gifts for christmas than i do for hannukah, and my son's "big" holiday present is always a christmas present.
1	I try to give money or gifts of religious or Jewish cultural significance for Hanukkah. I give secular gifts for Christmas
1	We put the major emphasis on Hanukah gift exchange. Christmas is time with the non-Jewish family. So we do stuff with them. For us it is family time, but not worship time. As with Jewish holidays, its mostly about the food... If we were not with them we would do nothing special on Christmas.
1	I remember as a child that gift giving was primarily associated with Xmas. Only my grandparents gave small gifts for Hanukkah.
1	For a few years right out of college, my younger sister and I were living near each other but away from my parents. I knew that she had very strong positive memories of christmas with my non-jewish family so I made sure that we had gifts to exchange. We made a simple but festive x-mas eve dinner, had a fancy christmas brunch and then went to eat chinese food and see a movie. I think we were grasping at some childhood memories despite growing up. We've transitioned out of this and no longer do any observance on our own.
1	house decorated much more for christmas tradition. more talk about religion and history around hannukah than around christmas
1	I continue to give gifts to important people regardless of what I celebrate. It is what the recipient celebrates that is important.
1	feel obligated to givve xmas gifts when going to non-Jews for xmas. Hanukkah gift giving has been smaller gifts, fewer gifts and not extravagant gifts.
1	Gift giving in our interfaith household tend to be based on cultural rather than religious practices
1	When the children were small we usually saved their biggest gift and put it out from Santa. Otherwise we celebrated each holiday with one side of the family and it worked out fine. We did have a xmas tree and would often wait to put it up until Chanukah was over - if we could.
1	Hanukkah is a much smaller holiday and I believe it is the influence of the American culture that has made it more. I do not feel this is a bad thing. Religious holidays all over the world vary in some way throughout the world depending on the location of the culture and cultural differences and cultural norms.
1	we're a blended household: me and my kids are jewish but my husband is christian so we honor both religions, but don't give many gifts for either holiday
1	I only exchange Hanukkah gifts with one person. My family celebrates Christmas and they all exchange Christmas gifts. Most of the time they forget about Hanukkah and I celebrate it alone.
1	Wrapping paper colors signify identity and purpose. (Is it a Jewish gift? A Christmas gift? A neutral snowman "happy holidays" gift, etc?) Hanukkah involves fewer presents because there's no expectation to have a tree with mountains of presents underneath. Gifts are more of an afterthought for Hanukkah.
1	As an adult, the Hanukkah gift exchange got more like the equal of Christmas gift giving. I think it has become part of the American tradition.
1	Because we are with non-Jewish family on Christmas morning my nieces and nephews are receiving their Christmas gifts then. My in-laws (parents and sister) give Hanukkah gifts to my kids then, I give Christmas gifts to their kids...the in-law kids are getting a lot more at that point, but my kids have never minded (even when they were young) they understood that Christmas was not their holiday and that they already received Hanukkah gifts from us. Our kids never believed in Santa Claus, but their cousins did and received gifts from Santa too.
1	It's different because as a child Christmas was the big gift (like a bicycle) while Hannukah was smaller items (clothing, books, toys,etc). Now with in-laws Christmas is multiple items (clothing, toasters, books, etc) big items (vacuum cleaner, BBQ, iPad), and stocking stuffers. It's over the top and commercialized.
1	Our son in law converted and initially it was kind of interesting and fun to go to his parents Christmas but now we have a hard time it is stressful and intense and with grandchildren it has become a problem for our adult children. The other side is Catholic and wants us to celebrate with them...actually they INSIST that my daughter and husband come.
1	When someone outside of my family gives me a gift in this season I express and feel equal gratitude whether they identify it as Christmas or Hanukkah as I know it is given with love and I never quibble with love.
1	I think the main differences are that we give our kids Chanukah gifts, but not Christmas gifts, and that we give our kids their Chanukah gifts at our house, but they get Christmas gifts at my parents' house.
1	Both have been toned down a lot since I was young, but I suppose that's to be expected as part of growing up! :)

1	Very different. Xmas gifts are all from my parents. Chanukah gifts are from me ' my husband. Kids know Xmas is their grandparents' holiday.
1	Our gift giving at Hanukkah is similar to the Christmas exchange of my childhood. We spend too much money. And my son gets worked up about what he got and didn't get it. And then never plays with any of it. My daughter is a bit more low key about it.
1	There is more excitement on Christmas for some reason... maybe because it is one day. It is usually more relaxing since we always have the entire day off of work, school, etc.
1	Because my husband is not Jewish, we started out celebrating both holidays. As the children grew up and became identified as Jewish, they questioned why we did Xmas. It didn't have a lot of meaning to my husband, so we stopped celebrating Xmas.
1	Only give gifts to friends for xmas who celebrate xmas as they give my kids gifts for Hannukah since we are jewish.
1	The biggest difference is that adults also receive Christmas gifts, whereas in our house and at our Chanukah parties, the gifts are only for the children.
1	It's similar...Usually just one big gift...The Christian grandparents call it Xmas gifts, and I call the Hanukkah gifts.
1	Any Xmas gifting is looked at more as a secular way of giving presents and it's not done on 12/25 in particular. If Hannukah falls on Xmas, it's a coincidence but doesn't interfere with lighting candles etc.
1	My daughter and I both believe that religion can be the opiate of the masses. She was adopted from China and had a bat mitzvah at a Chinese restaurant, conducted by a wonderful cantor with whom she studied her Torah portion. I offered to just make her a party but she did it, she said, to make her more part of the family. But she's the only one who did so for at least 50 years.
1	Xmas is a huge extended family extravaganza, by Hanukkah is just the immediate family, and sometimes Skype my mom in.
1	I try to emphasize Chanukah for my daughter while trying not to make my husband feel left out or alienated.
1	I can't remember ever receiving Christmas gifts - even from Christian friends nor can I remember my children ever being given Christmas gifts.
1	In my home community, I would never dream of celebrating Christmas. But because it is part of our family, it doesn't bother me at all. I was living for the last three years in Israel and Chanukah had very little gift giving element; I typically give my partner Chanukah gifts, but no one else.
1	I don't feel much connection to Hanukkah gift-giving. It's probably a combination of my long absence from Jewish communal life combined with the differing theological meanings of the holidays.
1	When I was active in business, I received many business gifts, which I saved and opened on Xmas morning, to humor my then-wife, who resented the fact that I otherwise denied her Xmas.
1	Everybody pretty much knows that I'm Jewish, so I'm either getting Hannukah gifts or "holiday" gifts. Sometimes I get invited to a Christmas party and there is gift-giving, which is a little awkward.
1	When giving gifts to others for Christmas like teachers, and coaches it is just a way to say "thank you" and is customary. It doesn't in any way feel like I am participating in this holiday. I also have nieces and nephews that are not Jewish and I give them presents because they don't have very much.
1	My husband's extended family exchanges names and each person gives a gift to the person whose name he or she drew. The gifts have a theme (one year books, another snowglobes, another, from one's hometown, etc.). There is a limit placed on the price of the gifts. My adult children do not give me anything for Chanukkah nor do my grandchildren
1	We still put gifts under the tree and have stockings while on hannukah we give gifts during by looking for them. Though the large gift tends to be on christmas while smaller gifts are given for hannukah.
1	When my daughter was very young, I gave her one gift for xmas, but it was from "Santa". Until she was old enough to know there was no Santa. All of the other kids had Santa and I did not want to have to explain to her at such a young age, partly afraid she would spoil it for her friends who were not Jewish, or only part Jewish. One year she said, "mommy, look, Santa has the same wrapping paper as us!" That's when I knew it was nearing the time to transition. Otherwise, Chrsitmas for us is not about gifts, except for giving to service people and non-Jewish friends.
1	I do not feel it is similar. I feel that I "had" to equalize Chanukah with Christmas to show my daughter both holidays. Christmas is such a big deal that it can overshadow Chanukah.
1	As a child, Hanukkah was only for parents to give to children, and sometimes for children to give to each other. We were not allowed to buy gifts for our parents. Celebrating Christmas in my significant others' household, everybody buys each other many, many presents. It is a ostentatious affair

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Hanukkah is at night, post latkes & candles, always the "big" gifts with the Jewish family. xmas is morning in pjs & the gifts from the non jewish aunts & uncle & something fun from "Santa" & stockings. |
|---|--|

52. Please share any additional comments about your experience giving or receiving gifts for Hanukkah.

Count	Response
1	Again, I think we shouldn't be giving gifts at Hanukah.
1	Always very fun and happy for whole family
1	BRINGS FAMILY & HERITAGE TOGETHER
1	Channukah gifts have always had much more meaning. Christmas gifts felt like an obligation.
1	Gifts are not considered the most important part of the holiday.
1	Giving always feels nice.
1	I enjoy getting things for my kids, so getting Chanukah gifts has been fun.
1	I enjoy giving and receiving gifts in a non required way only.
1	I enjoyed receiving gifts as a kid, now I enjoy seeing my daughter have a great time.
1	I have none.
1	I like it :)
1	I live in western Canada.
1	I'll like to celebrate the hannuka better than the last year
1	IT is very difficult to get it in every night with everyones busy schedules and homework
1	It has become a me-too holiday.
1	It is generally fun and part of the tradition that has been set with our family
1	It is pretty rote, and not done with much feeling and no ritual, feels both alien and expected
1	It's fun to plan and to give. It's fun to receive.
1	Look for Hanukkah theme
1	My daughter's in-laws give us both Hanukkah gifts and separate Christmas gifts- go figure.
1	My spouse and I don't exchange gifts, it's not necessary. Chanukah has gotten too commercial.
1	None.
1	Sometimes we give gifts to celebrate the Solstice.
1	That's a great topic! The American Hannukah thing is a very strange and special situation.
1	This remind me my grandmothers
1	We celebrate sentimental Jewish events, talk a little about the history.
1	its fun
1	its really a speacial time with the right person
1	We feel it's important to emphasize traditions and togetherness and to minimize gift-giving. We emphasize within our family (and to friends who are not Jewish) that this is not a primary holiday and is not "Jewish Christmas."
1	Gift exchanges should be entirely a personal matter, and should NOT be a mandatory office practice, or a school-based ritual.
1	My girls get what they want and need during the year--they are not spoiled by any means, but they do not want a lot, and so it is hard to pick out gifts for them since I would normally give them what they want. For example, they both want to learn how to ski. I hate to give that as a Chanukah present because to me that is implying that I wouldn't give them lessons if it wasn't the holiday, and that isn't the case; I want to encourage them to stay active and to try new things, so they deserve lessons because they want them, not because it is Chanukah and they need gifts.
1	I am more interested in group gatherings than private gift giving at home. I like the candles, singing, latkes, dreidel--more than the gift part. But i am a parent. The togetherness is very special.
1	I feel I live in a multi-culture environment and I respect others beliefs as I hope they will respect mine.

1	Gifts are really a minor part of the holidays for our family. It's much more about the traditions and spending time with our extended family.
1	I do not feel that gift-giving has any significance for the celebration of Chanukah. If Chanukah occurred in the summer, I doubt that this tradition would have developed.
1	We don't give gifts on Hanukkah, we celebrate the food and candle lighting as well as the story of the holiday.
1	Having grown up with Xmas and Hanukkah, it is hard to give up Xmas -- it is a more overtly celebrated holiday and trying to shut it out leaves you feeling left out. But I am definitely Jewish and so is my husband, so i would am trying to make it so my kids feel Jewish, too. It is tough growing up in a mixed household, so I want Hanukkah to be what they remember.
1	I'm so happy you're doing this survey for your thesis. I'd love to hear the outcome. Candi Wuhrman, candican333@verizon.net
1	I prefer the Hanukkah gift-giving since that's what I grew up with, but have come to enjoy xmas gifts & tree since marriage. Kids like both: Hanukkah food better, xmas decor better.It's the only christian holiday we do.
1	I love it. The kids have zero expectations and are happy with anything they may get. Their needs are met throughout the year so this is all a bonus. They know they will get new to them winter sports equipment over the holidays. They mostly look forward to friends coming over and pigging out on latkes and sufganiot. They love whe I come to their school and teach the kids to play dreidel with candy rockets.
1	We do celebrate Christmas dinner with some Christian friends. We are invited for the evening. I bring Chanukah food and am the hit of the party. It is uncomfortable because it is an intrusion on their time together, but we still participate. We try not to exchange anything. My son truly loves playing dreidel! He makes sure we play each night.Even at 14 it is something he loves and it brings us all together!
1	My step grandmother was Catholic - I used to go with my family to New York to celebrate Xmas/Hanukkah with her and my grandfather. My stepmother is Catholic as well and became part of our family when I was 22. We celebrated both holidays with traditional Hanukkah food/festivities/gifts and Xmas food/festivities/gifts. I have been celebrating both holidays since I was born.
1	Even though I was raised to believe in the miracle of Chanukah and not the war gift giving was never part of the tradition. Our Israeli household celebrated Chanukah by lighting the candles, baking food with lots of oil and singing Chanukah songs.
1	Our son-in-law is not Jewish but is also not a religiously practicing Christian. Because he and our daughter are "cultural" practitioners of Christianity and Judaism respectively, they have a tree and several chanukiyot. I still don't know whether to save his gift for Christmas or to give it on Chanukah. My reluctance to ask is a sign of ambivalence and, probably, some form of "magical thinking"--if I don't acknowledge Christmas, maybe it will go away! Not very accepting, but honest.
1	I live in Salford England UK, I didn't answer all the questions as I didn't feel the need to answer them.
1	It is a great reason for the family to get together and to tell the story of the holiday. I feel that the holiday story would be easily lost if the family did not get together every year.
1	Thanks for doing this survey! It was a good opportunity to reflect, especially before the holiday.
1	I think gift giving is a universal form of reciprocal appreciation & bonding. It is also a way to obtain practical items we may need. I am teaching my children that it is important to both say & show your appreciation for those who make up your community and even they can do so with homemade gifts.
1	We have always tried to stress the 'cultural traditions' of Chanukah (lighting the candles, making potato latkes, decorating the house, celebrating with family and friends) rather than on the gifts. The kids of course love the gifts.
1	For us, it's not about extravagance, it's about the joy of the holiday and doing something fun together. Of course, when my daughter was younger, there was more variety and gifts, but now at 22, we have transitioned to less gifts and more family time.
1	Growing up, my mom (who is Jewish) had a Christmas tree out so that I wouldn't feel left out...we decorated it and "celebrated" on Christmas morning, I believed in Santa. I was one of only two Jewish kids in the whole grade at school, so I think she wanted me to be able to share the experience with the other kids. We never takes about what Christmas really meant or ever mentioned Jesus or the story, just Santa. When I celebrated with my best friend, a Mormon, it was all about Jesus! We also did a very elaborate Hanukkah...i thought it was the most important Jewish holiday of the year.
1	In my opinion, Hannukkah gift giving is a tradition that was created mostly to prevent American kids from feeling at a disadvantage compared to their Christian friends on Christmas. For me, Hanukkah is about the story, the candles and the dreidel, not about gifts.

1	I believe that honoring family traditions is very important. I am raising my children Jewish, but that doesn't erase the family traditions of their father. My children go to religious school every Sunday. They don't go to church. The family traditions that we celebrate are not religious in nature, but a bonding experience for the family - i.e., game playing, gift exchanging, etc.
1	When our children were younger, we tried to impress that Hannukah is an important part of our history, but in the scheme of things, it is not a major holiday. We tried to teach about social justice and feeling good about being Jewish.
1	I realize from my own experience and from that of others I know how challenging it can be to move away (or "let go") of celebrating Christmas when you grow up with that as part of your family tradition. I also feel an ongoing challenge to be open to the widespread celebration of Christmas in our society while embracing my Judaism.
1	Each member of my family gets a dreidle, gelt and a Chanukah pencil. My grandchildren play dreidle with the dreidles their mother used. This is continuity.
1	I love buying gifts for the children but think it's ridiculous to buy for the adults. It's actually a lot of pressure to try to spend the right amount and buy the right thing and in these economic times it is very difficult.
1	Giving gifts on Hanukkah has become an American tradition. While I understand why many people do it, I would prefer to celebrate other holidays with gift giving, such as Purim.
1	Just like the Christians' celebration of Christmas, I believe Jews are moving away from the true meaning of Hanukkah. It is the celebration of their holiday also.
1	I can take or leave the gift giving. When I was a congregational rabbi I got all sorts of junkie Judaica that I would have preferred to have not received. I send out Chanukah cards, just to let people know I am thinking of them. I like getting together with friends, having a meal (with or without latkes) and lighting candles and talking about text and the meaning of Hanukkah. If there are little children present, I enjoy giving a small gift (generally a book or an inexpensive toy). What I dislike is when the Hanukkah celebration becomes about the gifts and children are disappointed because they didn't get some big, expensive item. Last year a couple of kids in my religious school class got iPhones. The kids who didn't get the "big" gift felt awful. That is not the spirit of Hanukkah or Christmas.
1	I have participated in work "secret snowflake" type gift exchanges, with people from a mix of cultures. Now I work at a Quaker institution, so our staff has "Festivus" (from Seinfeld) and it's completely non-religious and lots of fun!
1	My children celebrated all of the Jewish holidays growing up...as such Hanukkah did not need to be in competition with Christmas...gifts could take on a very different role in our life.
1	I think that receiving so many gifts every year helped make our daughter less materialistic, less anxious about having "things", more understanding of deeper values.
1	My husband was never comfortable with the gift giving, always felt awkward about it. I have saved many handmade decorations and use them every year.
1	I come from a family that loves to give gifts for any occasion, so although I recognize that Hanukkah gift giving is a recent import to Judaism, I enjoy it as a way to make others feel special. My husband's family gives gifts only older generation to younger generation (even for grown children), so there is some imbalance in how we celebrate with the two families.
1	I never experienced Christmas celebration until I joined my husband's family (25 years ago). I must say that I really enjoy celebrating Christmas with them. I love the festiveness, the warmth of extended family, the decorations, the food...My family never made much of Hanukkah (other than latkes). Passover was a much bigger deal. I always felt in the shadow of Christmas. Although in my home now we decorate, eat latkes and exchange gifts, I still don't try to compete with Christmas - it still feels more minor in the scope of Jewish Holidays. I think we exchange gifts in our inner family exactly as we would if we were celebrating Christmas, it would just be all on one day. I don't think we would give more or less.
1	We give holiday gifts to appropriate workers (i.e. garbage pick up, mail deliverer etc). When you asked about telling the Hanukkah story I answered I could tell it and I could tell a few "versions" - oil, rededication etc. Most people only know "oil". The monetary value of gifts question is tough to answer specifically because it varies with who the gift goes to. My children and spouse often get one large gift and numerous small ones while my nieces and nephews get one gift. Good luck on your thesis.
1	I enjoy the memory of my grandparents, Holocaust survivors, giving us gelt (and I mean actual money) for Chanukah. It was always such a big deal and such an honor to receive cash! In retrospect, we usually got about \$5 which I could have earned in under an hour of babysitting. But I think it was the excitement and honor of receiving it from my grandparents that was significant. Without having children and without any longer having that older (my grandparents') generation, the experience of gift giving for Chanukah has greatly diminished in significance for me. However, it is nice to

	have an opportunity beyond birthdays to acknowledge friends and family and I usually try to think of it in such a way to give it added meaning.
1	my jewish husband did not celebrate hanukkah as a child and it has been all my idea and work to make hanukkah happen in our house with our kids
1	I really don't like Hanukkah. I don't like any of the winter holidays. It really irks me that Christmas is so commercialized and because Hanukkah falls around the same time, Hanukkah becomes equated with Christmas and therefore Hanukkah becomes commercialized. Though, I probably do have some resentment because I grew up in a very non-Jewish environment and Hanukkah wasn't a big deal in my family -- we weren't given extravagant gifts -- so seeing all that others got compared to me caused a bit of envy when I was a child. But, really it is frustrating that non-Jews think Hanukkah is the "Jewish Christmas."
1	I think my family thinks that all gift giving goes from parent to child or grandchild. They have never given me a Chaukkah gift or even a card. My husband's family does send us cards and I get a gift.
1	When participating in gift exchanges with my Jewish friends, the "ritual" was often called a "White Elephant Gift Exchange." This, in my opinion, helped differentiate the exchange as gift-giving around Hannukah time without imitating a Christmas ritual.
1	I believe that my gift-giving is influenced by the overall consumer-Christmas atmosphere, but we keep it small and it's fun-- it's a way to light up the winter the way the Hunukkiah does.
1	I would ultimately like to forget all gift giving. I think the expectation gets out of hand. Our lawn maintenance people told my husband that he should give him a bottle of alcohol because it was Christmas, and he deserved to be given a gift. Giving tzadaka and gifts to children is fun and makes the holiday exciting for them, but everything else is over done.
1	Hanukah is a fun, religiously "lite" holiday and we just have a good time with it. As it falls in December (usually!) it's a great wind-down time for everyone and nice opportunity to see friends. It's social and culturally religious.
1	I love to give gifts, wrap gifts, choose gifts and accumulate them all year long so that I will be prepared with things that are just right for when the time comes. I also enjoy having presents on-hand just for the fun of giving at no particular holiday but to celebrate "Tuesday", to say thank you, or just to give someone a lift.(I know this is a Hanukkah survey but thought this might be relevant since we are discussing gift giving.)
1	As a child I was given gifts for Hanukkah and I enjoy continuing to celebrate Hanukkah with my children this way.
1	I think what I want to stress most to my children is the importance of giving to people who are less fortunate, regardless of the day.
1	I love the joy of watching children appreciate a gift. It doesn't have to be a bought gift, as I make many gifts myself and the kids in the family understand that it is made with love. Sometimes I buy gifts and of course they like that as well.
1	I do feel pressure to give holiday/Christmas gifts to coworkers who celebrate and exchange gifts, because I receive gifts from them.
1	I wish there was a way to end this practice of give giving for Hanukkah. My understanding is that gift-giving has nothing to do with the holiday. It makes me cranky. I find the commercialism crass. And it certainly doesn't make me feel any more Jewish.
1	I don't mind exchanging gifts - it is an excuse to spoil my kids and husband a bit. It is also nice at work to be exchanging gifts, but it can be a pain and feel like an obligation. I am not against gift giving - it is not a competition with Christmas - but there is something about this season and gift giving. Hanukkah presents are a part of Hanukkah, but not the only part.
1	My parents have a large cardboard driedel that we kept all the presents in. It is a staple of my vision of Hanukkah. In addition, food and my mom's family Hanukkah party that she hosts make Hanukkah as special as it is for our family.
1	In my primary home parents it was fun and casual ...but my grandparents who were Jewish had this big Christmas family party with gift giving. My parents hated the gift part of that my grandparents in all respects were Jewish but they had Christmas???
1	Since my parents are gone, I do what I can from what I learned from Mom. I go to Temple maybe one nite, our Rabbi lights a big Menorah at Mall, the kids put on a cute show. I enjoy that, I feel at home. And my Mom would be proud of me. I do this alone. But its ok., its my turn. My son's usually busy. So I get involved with people around me then. And make sure I have a good nite, and feel good about how I was raised and keep the tradition going. Makes me feel good and how I was raised. Proud to be Jewish.
1	The parent's attitude sets the tone. Holidays are about fun, family, friends and values. Presents are one teeny part of holidays in our family. With 7 grandparents and 8 uncles and aunts we HAVE to de emphasize the gifts or we would need a second house!

1	we love chanukah, we love our jewish heritage and sharing it with our children and also my nephew who is being raised agnostic. we feel it's important to pass along the traditions, meanings, foods, rituals etc so they will feel connected to all of their heritage - good luck and thank you for asking
1	We are secular Jews yet celebrate the holidays in a cultural way. With the shopping frenzy, it seems like all of December is a holiday and holiday gift exchanging (not immediate family) takes place on random days. As Xmas has (for better or worse) lost a lot of its religious connotation, that feeling of being "left out" of what a lot of the world is doing has lessened. One of my sisters in law is Muslim--my brother celebrates Hannukah with her and their son. So in our family celebrations are personalized.
1	I've also heard the Secret Santa gift exchange called White Elephant and seen it in Jewish professional settings in December.
1	When I was a kid we lit candles and made potato latkes but did not exchange gifts. We had limited means and I do not know if this was the reason. My parents were older so it could be that the practice of giving gifts on Chanukah was not yet adopted. Although Chanukah is not considered a major holiday I do believe that because it falls out around the same time as Christmas that it has taken on a Christmas like tradition of gift giving, lights, and singing Chanukah songs, etc. I answered these questions about myself and since I currently do not work outside home I have not received Christmas gifts. I really don't have a lot of Christian friends since my kids go to Jewish schools. At my husband's job there is generally some time of gift giving during Christmas time and the people who know he is Jewish might call it a Chanukah gift and might give a Chanukah card but most cards are Christmas cards.
1	I work in a skilled nursing facility, so although I do not celebrate Christmas personally, I usually make sure that during Christmas holiday celebrations, the Jewish residents receive gifts like everyone else, but wrapped in Chanukah wrapping paper.
1	In my family, I have found the ritual of candle lighting and gift giving to be a meaningful way to spend a special half hour with my husband and children and any guests in the home every night of the holiday.
1	Even though the items may not have been big and expensive, it made Hannukah seem less commercialized and be beyond gift giving.
1	When I was little (as when my son was young and later when my grandkids were young), we lit the candles, and gave small gifts every night until the last night with a big gift.
1	I understand it became a trend during 50's as a result of having Jewish kids not feel left out during this time of year. I believe it's better to give tzedakah in honor of someone. Both Hanukah and Xmas have become outrageously commercial and I would prefer to just be kind to one another and give volunteer time to people and organizations.
1	I don't celebrate my birthday, either. My birthday is in the summer. If anything, I like a special breakfast and then to go on a hike, but I don't like receiving gifts, I don't remember other people's birthdays, and I would generally rather not be bothered by gifts at any time of the year.
1	As a child, we each received a more significant gift the first and last night of Chanukah and small things or gelt (25 cents or 50 cents) the other nights. We took our children to buy gifts to give to Toys for Tots at the Xmas season. Currently, we exchange gifts only one or two nights but light candles and sing all nights. Our older son is married to someone who is not Jewish but they had a Jewish wedding, conducted by a Rabbi in our small temple. Our younger son is marrying someone who is not Jewish in June 2013. Their wedding will be conducted by an officiant with some Jewish traditions included.
1	I will admit that even though I fully consider myself Jewish (my mom is Jewish and I grew up Jewish), the Christmas holiday seems to get more attention since that is when I both see my in-laws and my father's side of the family who are both non-Jewish. It is more about family time for me than Christmas versus Hannukah though - if that makes sense.
1	I believe in the joy and sheer fun of gift giving, esp to children. I think that it's important that aspects of life and of Judaism be joyful and not overly fraught or analyzed. I feel fortunate to live in a time and place where giving without utilitarian purpose can be enjoyed. There are too many chapters in our history where this was unthinkable. Let's be joyous now!
1	living in brooklyn new york, everyone we hung out with was jewish but we did not attend a synagogue except when we went to Long Island where we had relatives who were actively involved. We always went to seders and spent most Saturdays with family, and I was mostly with Jews although there was no prejudice in my family and I had non Jewish friends.
1	I don't care for Hanukkah as a holiday and strongly feel it is overrated and become very materialized and commercialized. Many people think it is a MUCH more important holiday than it actually is -- and more importantly, they do not know the story or the significance of the holiday, which is sad, in my humble opinion. It has become compared to

	Christmas which is a very important and key religious Christian holiday and is not comparable.
1	At my age, gifts don't do that much for me, but I am grateful if I receive something from family or friends.... I'm at the point in the "program" where insight , spirituality and meaning are more important to me
1	I am always happy when Hanukkah is early so we don't have to shop close to Christmas. I am happy we do not give to adults because it is hard enough to get presents for 3 kids and 10 nieces and nephews. I think Christmas has more pressure -- everyone buys for everyone they know.
1	Last year my husband and I agreed to stop giving each other gifts for the first time in the 26 years we've been married. We just don't need them.
1	It is fun, but the same concerns as society on spending money for "stuff" vs. making the world a little better
1	Since we also have a number of December birthdays in the family there was always a lot going on and it could feel like everything got a bit diluted. But we tried to keep it reasonable and looking back, I think we managed to share the traditions that were important to each of us and while gift giving was an important part of it, we tried to keep the focus on family and friends, whatever the celebration.
1	Both my (Jewish) husband and I struggle with Xmas and Hanukah. He doesn't feel presents are an important part of Hanukah, but doesn't want Xmas to overwhelm his kids and become too attractive. I miss Xmas and wish he did not insist that we leave all decorations, music, etc. out of our house. It's hard.
1	over the years my preference for gifts has moved away from things and more towards gifts that we can do as a family such as play a game or go to a show.
1	As I said before, giving and receiving gifts on Christmas had nothing to do with the religious holiday. We just used that day as a day the family gets together and exchanges gifts.
1	We base our Hanukkah gift giving on this passage, making sure that we are symbolically, as well as literally, placing our Hanukkiah in full view of the world. 33 "No one who has kindled a menorah hides it or places it under a bowl; rather, he puts it on a stand, so that those coming in may see its light. 34 The menorah of your body is the eye. When you have a 'good eye,' [that is, when you are generous,] your whole body is full of light; but when you have an 'evil eye,' [when you are stingy,] your body is full of darkness. 35 So take care that the light in you is not darkness! 36 If, then, your whole body is filled with light, with no part dark, it will be wholly lighted, as when a brightly lit menorah shines on you." (Luke 11)
1	Hanukkah is a very social time of the year...lots of latkes and lots of fun with family and friends.
1	I personally wish christmas and hannukah were at different times of the year so that non christians (and some jews) would not feel the need to turn hanukkah into a significant commercialized holiday
1	When I was growing up we would celebrate Christmas with family - when I was young with part of my Mom's family and when I was in college because my stepmom isn't Jewish. So Hanukkah has always been my holiday but I think of Christmas (and the season) as a way to share and celebrate family.
1	Giving and receiving Hanukkah gifts sometimes is relaxing and a nice family event. Other times, depending on the day of the week and what is going on, the gift giving is just a small part of the crazy day and night. With our family tradition though, this adds a nice tradition that we enjoy so much and makes it special for us.
1	Hanukkah seems more like a children's story and children's holiday, since the real story has more to do with the end of a long, bloody siege by the Maccabees against the Greeks and other Jews who didn't feel the same way as the Maccabees. Giving gifts on such an occasion seems odd to me.
1	I played dreidyl with my children and instead of coins we played with M & Ms. Its become a tradition in my family.