



# The Jew Within: Self, Family, and Community in America

*Steven M. Cohen, Arnold M. Eisen*

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"Cohen and Eisen have written that rare work, a book that really matters! With clarity and grace, *The Jew Within* tells the story of how American Jews live and understand their Judaism over the span of their lives, in their families, and among their friends." ?Riv-Ellen Prell

"... a marvelous book. The authors have succeeded in conveying in a very convincing manner the meaning of Jewish identity, Jewish belief, and Jewish practice among a most... important sector of American Jews: the baby-boomer generation." ?Charles S. Liebman

Rocked by reports of soaring intermarriage rates, rampant assimilation, and diminishing population, the American Jewish community has been concerned with issues of Jewish identification and continuity. What factors shape, nourish, and sustain Jewish commitment? What leads some Jews to place Jewish commitment at the center of their lives, while others consign it to the margins? What matters most to American Jews and why? Through in-depth interviews with Jews across the country, Arnold M. Eisen and Steven M. Cohen, two of the keenest observers and analysts of American Jewish life, probe beneath the surface to explore the foundations of belief and behavior among moderately affiliated American Jews. Among their thought-provoking conclusions are that the construction of Jewish meaning in America is personal and private and that communal loyalties and norms no longer shape Jewish identity as they did several decades ago. The rich and moving personal narratives presented by the authors, accompanied by insightful analysis, raise important questions for all those concerned with the meaning and future of Judaism in American life.

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