Table of Contents

Introduction

Jon A. Levisohn and Ari Y. Kelman

This book is motivated by the deep discomfort that we, the editors, feel with the way that the phrase "Jewish identity" is often used by educators, educational policy makers, and other leaders in the Jewish community, especially (although not exclusively) in the United States. To be sure, we have learned much from colleagues who have written rigorously and insightfully about the ways that Jews understand themselves, about how Jewishness is enacted in contemporary settings, and about the ways that Jewish identity coexists alongside other identities (to name a few key studies: Cohen, 1974, 1983; Cohen & Eisen, 2000; Dashefsky & Shapiro, 1974; Hahn Tapper 2016; Hartman & Hartman, 1999; Hartman & Kaufman, 2006; Hartman & Sheskin, 2011; Horowitz, 1998, 1999, 2002; Pomson & Schnoor, 2018; Sagi, 2016; Sklare, 1967). But we also regularly encounter assumptions about the fixedness of Jewish identity, about the quantifiability of Jewish identity, and especially about the role of Jewish education in strengthening Jewish identity—assumptions that generated the discomfort to which we have already alluded. We launched the project that led to this book when we discovered that the two of us shared this discomfort. We wanted to understand the uses of the phrase "Jewish identity" in Jewish educational discourse, to develop and articulate our concerns with greater precision, to invite others into a conversation about how and why the phrase "Jewish identity" is used, and most aspirationally, to generate alternative ways that we might understand the desired outcomes of Jewish educational interventions.

To be clear, there is no unified definition of Jewish identity and no single discourse (some of the more diverse discussions include Cadge & Davidman, 2016; Charmé, 2000; Charmé, Horowitz, Hyman, Hyman, & Kress, 2008; Cohen, E., 2010; Dashefsky, Lazerwitz, & Tabory, 2003; Gitelman, 2009; Harvey, Cohen, & Kopelowitz, 2001; Herman, 1977; Kaufman, 1999, 2005; Kelman et al., 2017a, 2017b; Liebman, 1999; Magid, 2013; Moore, 2008; Oppenheim, 1984; Prell, 2000; Reszke, 2013; Thompson, 2013). The *haredi*

or utra-Orthodox world eschews the term altogether, and it is less common in the Modern Orthodox community than it is in liberal Jewish communities. Still, there are important patterns and trends. Since the late 1960s, the phrase has grown in popularity and stature, often appearing as an almost self-reflexive rationale for many Jewish educational and communal efforts. "It's Official," trumpeted a headline reporting on a study by Steven Cohen and his colleagues of Jewish summer camps (Cohen, Miller, Sheshkin, & Torr, 2011), "Jewish Camp Strengthens Jewish Identity" (Fishkoff, 2011).

The popularity of the phrase left us feeling more and more uncomfortable with the range of experiences, meanings, self-conceptions, expressions, and affinities to which it seemed to refer. The more popular it grew, it seemed, the less well-defined it appeared to become. As our sense of this development deepened, we were gratified to learn about other scholarly voices that expressed concern with or critical perspectives on the phrase, its meaning and its utility (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Comaroff & Comaroff, 2009; Fearon, 1999; Gleason, 1983; Nicholson, 2008), and we started to gather like-minded fellow travelers. In fact, our work on the project got to the point where some of our colleagues accused us, only half in jest, of starting a movement to ban the use of the phrase "Jewish identity" altogether.

This is not quite accurate. We affirm that there are good and important ways that the phrase "Jewish identity" can and should be used by scholars of contemporary Jewish life. There may even be ways that the term can and should be used by educators and scholars of education; some of these will be suggested in the chapters that follow. If so, then what do we mean when we suggest that we need to go "beyond Jewish identity"? What's wrong with the discourse of Jewish identity that we need to go beyond it? And what might lie beyond? Each of the contributors to this book has their own perspective on these questions, of course. But in general, we can point to some broad themes that tie together the chapters of this book.

First, the discourse of Jewish identity tends to treat identity as unified and relatively static. To be sure, Jewish communal discourse often describes or advocates efforts to "strengthen" or "build" identity, so nobody really thinks that identity is absolutely static. If it were, it could not be strengthened! The claim that a stronger Jewish identity is the appropriate desired outcome of Jewish educational projects and programs is predicated on the assumption that those interventions can change identity, somehow, in positive ways. Still, scholars, researchers, communal leaders, and philanthropists often treat identity as if it is a unified thing, which a person simply *has.* That's why studies often seek

to distinguish "strong Jewish identities" from "weak Jewish identities," and why interventions seek to transform the latter into the former. Implicit in this framework is a moral hierarchy between supposed strength and perceived weakness. Having a "strong Jewish identity" comes to mean, roughly, being more normatively involved in Jewish life, or more interested in or committed to Jewish causes, communities, knowledge, etc. In order to measure the relative strength or weakness of an identity, one must first create a series of metrics that suggest objectivity. What often results, however, is the creation of an identity concept that ranks Jewish identities and, in the process, turns a group of people who identify as Jewish into lesser versions of some imagined gold standard of Jewish identity. They literally do not measure up.

Surely, one can *be* Jewish—one can identify as Jewish, one can "have a Jewish identity"—in both strong and weak ways, in combination, conflict, and conversation with other commitments to other identities that one holds. This is the nature of identity. It is not a zero-sum game; there is no finite amount of identity to go around, such that being *more* of *x* (more American or more Western; more of a male or a professor or a musician) means being somehow *less* Jewish. The question, therefore, is not about whether or not one has an identity, but about what conditions bring one to act upon it and not some other identity or combination of identities. Rather than thinking about *having* an identity, it makes more sense to us to think about *enacting* multiple and intersectional identities, in different ways at different times (Brettschneider, 1996; Boyarin, 1997; Crenshaw, 1991; Glenn & Sokoloff, 2010; Silberstein, 2000). This is not to argue that the Jewish community should avoid principled debates over the practices and commitments that it values. Instead, it is to caution against totalizing claims that people who identify as Jewish behave in ways that demonstrate their Jewishness either exclusive of other identities they may hold or in ways that supersede those identities. Consequently, as each of the following chapters examines, we reject the conclusion that identity is the proper or sole metric for assessing articulations of Jewishness.

So the first general critique of the discourse of Jewish identity is that, once we pay close attention to it, it is inconsistent with our best understanding of how identity in general, and Jewish identity in particular, actually works. The chapters in this book develop this critique by drawing our attention to particular ways that the discourse of Jewish identity functions, and to the assumptions that it makes. The closer attention we pay, the more these inconsistencies stand out and the harder they are to ignore.

In addition, a second general critique focuses on the way that the discourse of Jewish identity has become inseparable from Jewish educational interventions. The assumption we seek to destabilize is causal in a simplistic sense: *x* experience leads to *y* outcome. That is, Jewish educational programs, of various kinds, lead to more (or stronger or deeper) Jewish identity. In one sense, of course, this assumption is demonstrably true. Every responsible study of the impact of Jewish education indicates that Jews who participate in Jewish educational projects and programs are affected on pretty much every relevant measure, in ways that suggest a greater commitment to things Jewish: broader institutional affiliation (e.g., membership in synagogues or JCCs), more ritual practice (e.g., lighting Shabbat candles or attending a Passover seder), more communal Jewish involvement (e.g., donating to Federation), stronger Jewish social networks (e.g., percentage of Jewish friends), etc.

In fact, many of us involved in Jewish educational research find ourselves compelled to repeat these well-documented realities in the face of communal voices that worry that Jewish education is a failed enterprise. It is not. The simple truth, repeatedly corroborated, is that investments in Jewish education pay off in terms of Jewish involvements. Participants in Jewish educational programs emerge from those programs—almost all of them, with few exceptions—with more Jewish knowledge, broader Jewish connections, and deeper Jewish commitments (see, e.g., Cohen, 1974; Cohen, 1995; Cohen & Kotler-Berkowitz, 2004; Cohen, 2007). In general, if the question is whether Jewish education has an effect on participants, the answer is consistently positive.

So if we can affirm that Jewish education works to increase or deepen various Jewish attitudes and behaviors, what's the problem? The problem is that there is a world of difference between observing the effect of, say, Jewish camp on campers' patterns of affiliation, on the one hand, and asserting that the goal of Jewish camp, or anything else, is to strengthen Jewish identity. Proposing that the desired outcome of any particular Jewish educational project or program is more or stronger "Jewish identity" has the effect of dumbing down larger educational goals to the most superficial and the least meaningful. It sets a low bar, and fails to capture anything aspirational. At the communal level, Jewish policy makers have long noticed that the the goal of "Jewish continuity" is unhelpful, affirming nothing other than a thin survivalism (see, e.g., Cohen & Fein, 1985). But "Jewish identity" is the corollary, on the individual level, of "continuity" on the communal level, and likewise demands critical re-examination.

We live in a world where those who identify as Jews, even the "nones"—the famous "Jews of no religion," i.e., those who when asked their religion answer "none"—affirm that they are Jewish and proclaim that they are proud to be Jewish in incredibly high numbers: 83%, according to the Pew Report on American Jews (Pew, 2013). With all of the attention to various numbers in the well-reported Pew study of 2013, that number that did not get the attention that we think it deserves. 83% is an astonishingly high number of Jews who feel a sense of pride in their Jewishness. The discrepancy between that figure and the much lower rates of engagement in almost every area of Jewish life suggest both that Jewish identity is strong and, at the same time, that the simplistic understanding of "Jewish identity" tells us precious little about the lives of American Jews.

Consider the obvious point that almost everyone who enters into a Jewish educational program or who responds to a demographic survey or an evaluation already has a Jewish identity. To qualify for participation in a demographic study or a Jewish educational program means that one already self-identifies as a Jew. In this respect, Jewish identity is not an output or an educational outcome; it is a precondition for inclusion. What remains of efforts to measure Jewish identity, therefore, almost always reinforces the idea that Jewish identity can be measured on a scale that ranges from strong to weak, a scale that is imposed by researchers on the subjective experiences of participants. But what about the Jewish identity of someone who is alienated by the bourgeois materialism of her childhood synagogue? What are we to make of the self-described "Tikkun Olam Jews," or even more poignantly, of those who embrace the title of "bad Jews"? How might we understand the relative strength or weakness of someone who hides her Jewishness out of a fear of antisemitism? How might we measure the identity of a vociferous supporter of Israel who does not claim memberships in Jewish organizations of any kind and does not perform any holiday-based rituals? Conversely, how can we disentangle the efforts of Israel's Ministry of the Diaspora to "strengthen Jewish identity" from its effort to promote allegiance to the State of Israel and opposition to its perceived enemies? How should we think about a recovering alcoholic who finds spirituality in AA meetings but not in synagogue? What about Jewish kids who spend time in academic Jewish studies courses on college campuses—according to one study (Sales & Saxe, 2006), the numbers range from 25% of those with minimal Jewish educational background to 50% of those with more intensive Jewish educational backgrounds—courses that are sometimes taught by non-Jews and that typically do not provide opportunities for the expression

of the Jewish identities of the students? How should we categorize the non-Jewish parent of Jewish children who drives them to Jewish youth group events and stands with them on the *bima* at their *b'nai mitzvah*? How might our measures misunderstand the pattern of nonaffiliation and nonmembership, so prevalent among both young Jews and non-Jews? How might these measures miss the life cycle patterns among people who are marrying later and having fewer children? Capturing the various complex modes of Jewish engagement on a hierarchical or linear scale seems impossible.

Whatever the goals of Jewish education may be, either generally or the specific goals of particular projects and programs, they must amount to more than an effort to move the needle of some composite called "Jewish identity." Identity seems both overinflated and ill-equipped to rise to the analytical task of this effort. The chapters of this book will develop this critique, examining a variety of modes in which identity has been understood and operationalized. The second half of the book will also begin to offer constructive alternatives, ways of thinking about our desired educational outcomes that are richer, deeper, more robust, and most importantly, more helpful to educational practitioners and policy makers than "Jewish identity."

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In part one of the volume, contributors explore different constructions of and approaches to the concept of Jewish identity. Each chapter presents a different investigation into the construction or application of Jewish identity and raises questions about the elasticity or applicability of the term. The first two chapters of this section focus on the ways in which our language shapes how we think about Jewish identity, its possibilities and its limitations. In chapter 2, Eli Gottlieb takes a semiotic approach to conceptualizations of Jewish identity, exploring a set of popular metaphors that pervade the discourse. By focusing on the animating metaphors of Jewish identity, Gottlieb exposes some of the hidden logic behind the term, tracing the implications of the ways in which we talk about identity for the ways in which we imagine that it works (or fails to work). In chapter 3, Samira Mehta explores the conceptualization of Jewish identity across a few different sites—the 2013 Pew Report on Jewish Americans, a discussion about multiple identities in the Jewish press, and multiethnic Jewish memoirs—to illuminate how identity, even Jewish identity, can be multiple, and that people who identify as Jewish might, as well, identify as something else simultaneously. Focusing on the conceptual

frameworks of Jewish identity across domains, Mehta argues that Jewish identity is articulated as multiple because it is part of the multiple ways in which people experience it, and that efforts to cleanly segment it sometimes do more harm than good.

Chapters 4 and 5 examine the historical emergence of the concept. In chapter 4, Jonathan Krasner traces the emergence of the concept of Jewish identity from its nascent phase in the 1950s through its growth in the late 60s and into its central locus in Jewish communal discourse in the 1980s and into the twenty-first century. Focusing on the contributions of Kurt Lewin, Erik Erikson, Will Herberg, Marshall Sklare, and others, Krasner offers insights into how the concept of Jewish identity came to occupy the position it does, and what is at stake in maintaining investments in Jewish identity. In chapter 5, Ari Y. Kelman focuses more closely on the emergence of Jewish identity as an educational outcome, highlighting the period from the end of the 1960s through the early 70s. Kelman argues that concerns about identity emerged in response to changes in the politics of college campuses and how those changes appeared to affect Jewish students. Fear of what was happening on college campuses led Jewish communal leaders to posit Jewish identity as a bulwark against the turmoil of social and political currents. Jewish educators responded by promoting education for identity in K-12 classrooms as a way of preparing Jewish youth for college life. Therefore, Kelman observes, the emergence of Jewish identity as a focus of K-12 Jewish education had to be retrofitted from observations of Jewish college students.

While the central focus of the book is on Jewish identity discourse in the United States, chapters 6 and 7 provide a helpful transnational perspective, focusing on Jewish identities in Poland and in between Israel and the United States, respectively. In chapter 6, Katka Reszke explores the experiences of "Generation Unexpected," a term she uses to describe Polish Jews who were raised as non-Jews and only discovered their Jewish heritage as teenagers or adults. Reszke's focus on young Polish Jews highlights the ways in which people come to identify as Jews as adults, and how they explain their Jewishness to themselves and others. Notably, Reszke's interviewees describe their exhaustion, as a result of having to communicate their own Jewish existence to Israeli and American Jews who are routinely surprised to find young Jews in Poland. Reszke's contribution to this volume highlights the very complex and site-specific dynamics of Jewish identity, and the ways in which it almost always bears transnational and historical freight. Shaul Magid then draws the first section of the book to a close with an analysis of the writings

of Rabbi Menachem Froman, a central figure of the settler movement whose unorthodox perspectives on Zionism and Israel, Magid argues, might hold the key to the formulation of an American post-Zionism. Using Froman's writings, Magid critiques what he calls the "dogmatization of Zionism," which has become a kind of litmus test for participation in Jewish communal life in twenty-first century America, and for a normative conception of Jewish identity that Magid wishes to both interrogate and disrupt.

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In part two of the volume, contributors pivot from presenting critical perspectives on Jewish identity and its usages in contemporary Jewish discourse to introducing alternative formulations of the range of Jewish commitments and expressions. In chapter 8, Tali Zelkowicz offers the negative argument that "Jewish educators don't make Jews." That is, Jewish educators often suffer under the delusion that their job is to make their students into Jews, to instill Jewish identity into them or to strengthen it if it exists only in a weakened state. But this, she argues, misunderstands how identity actually works. More importantly, she shows us through classroom examples that the delusion actually undermines their ability to carry out their educational responsibilities. What are those responsibilities? For Zelkowicz, the alternative to producing Jewish identity is for educators to become facilitators, "to help learners develop tools and strategies they need to engage in their own [ongoing] work of becoming Jews."

In chapter 9, sociolinguists Sarah Bunin Benor and Netta Avineri note the common laments about the weak levels of Hebrew proficiency among American Jews, often taken as a kind of proxy for a weak Jewish identity. They introduce us to two linguistic phenomena that are distinct from proficiency (or lack of proficiency) in Hebrew: the "meta-linguistic communities" into which American Jews are inducted (even in those settings where little Hebrew proficiency is attained) and the development of "Jewish English." In each case, we find a phenomenon that is fascinating for scholars, but that is also particularly intriguing for educators and educational policy makers. As lovers of language, they too wish for stronger Hebrew proficiency. But given the realities of language learning in America, they propose that educators might take these two phenomena seriously as goals in themselves, aspiring to induct students into metalinguistic communities and to teach Jewish English, and to do so consciously and thoughtfully. "These concepts represent a reimagining of

the goals of language education," they argue, "a new understanding of the role of language in building community and fostering Jewish self-understanding."

The last three chapters share a common impatience with the generality and generic nature of Jewish identity discourse, and a common desire for specificity in describing educational goals. In chapter 10, Shaul Kelner calls our attention to the phenomenon of the Soviet Jewry movement, often taken as the heyday of American Jewish activism. For one thing, the movement represented a mobilization of Jews—especially young Jews—on behalf of the Jewish people in a way that seems hard to imagine today. More subtly, the movement entailed an astonishing degree of cultural creativity, repurposing sancta and inventing rituals out of whole cloth. Yet, he argues, these efforts always served the larger cause of liberating Jews from behind the Iron Curtain. The cultural engagement and mobilization that emerged were by-products of collective action, and he observes that these successes of the Soviet Jewry movement arose indirectly, not as the focus of the entire effort. Furthermore, he emphasizes the collective nature of the project, as a corrective to the relentless individualism of educational discourse. Finally, and most constructively, he proposes that we aim for "subjectivity," rather than identity, focusing "less on how people think and feel about being generically Jewish and more on training them in specific ways of engaging the world as Jews, and specific ways of behaving with regard to Jewish culture, institutions, people, etc."

In chapter 11, Jon Levisohn contributes an additional layer to the critique of Jewish identity discourse, noting the way that that discourse has the potential to instrumentalize Jewish education, operating as a kind of universal solvent that dissolves the passions and commitments of Jewish educators for their particular domains. Those domains, he argues, are best understood in terms of practices. But beyond proposing that "Jewish practices" is a constructive alternative to "Jewish identity," he also charts the relationship between the two concepts. Practice, after all, contributes to identity: over time, we become what we do, as we start to see ourselves as practitioners of a particular practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). But sometimes, identity precedes practice: we learn to perform who we are, to move from empty affirmations to more robust enactments of those practices that constitute the identity as we understand it. In either case, however, the goal of Jewish education is not to promote or deepen Jewish identity, but to focus on the more specific outcomes of promoting particular Jewish practices.

Finally, in chapter 12, Jon Woocher (of blessed memory) and Lee Moore share their innovative effort to frame a new way of talking about Jewish

educational goals, an alternative that they call "Jewish sensibilities." They do not claim that these sensibilities are uniquely Jewish, nor do they argue that they capture the essence of Jewishness. But they do argue that the specific sensibilities that they enumerate have a resonance within Jewish history and Jewish tradition. Jewish sensibilities can function as "an overarching goal that involves learners coming to be aware of and to adopt as valuable in their own lives some of the distinctive ways in which Jews have perceived and responded to life's challenges and opportunities over the centuries." And by naming them, we will be able to develop educational programs to promote them directly, and even to assess them in appropriate ways. "Jewish sensibilities," they conclude, "are our language."

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Is there still a place for Jewish identity discourse? There is. Does the phrase "Jewish identity" have a coherent usage? It does. It is perfectly reasonable to talk about Jewish identity in terms of how a person thinks about who she or he is in the world. Similarly, it remains important to invest our energies into understanding how people configure their senses of self in terms of memberships in larger collectives or communities. It also makes sense to consider the ways in which Jewish identity, like other identities, is projected upon individuals and communities by others, whether those others are well-meaning or antagonistic. These questions are closely connected but are not quite congruent. The confusion between them contributes, in part, to the reification of identity and to continued investments in research that seeks to uncover its secret or identify a silver bullet solution to whatever issues appear to afflict American Jews and their communities. Whatever practical or conceptual innovations may be developed that contribute to the flourishing of Jewish individuals and communities, they will not rest on the uncritical use of identity as a formulation for Jewishness.

This volume, while not the first to explore and critique the concept of Jewish identity, makes two important interventions into contemporary understandings of American Jewish life. It is the first collection to critically examine the relationship between Jewish education and Jewish identity. Insofar as Jewish identity has become the most popular way to talk about the desired outcome of Jewish education, a critical assessment of the relationship between education and identity is both useful and necessary. It is useful because the reification of identity has, we believe, hampered much educational creativity in the rather single-minded pursuit of this goal. It is necessary because the

nearly ubiquitous employment of the term obscures a whole set of significant questions about what Jewish education is and ought to be for in the first place.

Second, this volume offers responses that are not merely synonymous replacements for "identity." When we have spoken about this project in Jewish communal organizations and educational venues, we have often been challenged in response by the question, "Well, then, what do you propose as a replacement?" The point here is not to replace the concept of identity with some other term that will, invariably, do the same kind of rhetorical work that identity already does. That would merely be a semantic exercise. By offering an array of responses in conversation with a selection of more critical essays, we hope that we can begin to expand, rather than replace, the array of ideas that the term "identity" is so often used to represent.

As scholars of Jewish education, we hope this volume contributes to any number of new conversations about the relationship between Jewish education and Jewish life. Our intention here is to move from critical inquiry (Part I) to suggestive possibilities (Part II). The true measure of this effort, of course, lies in the hands of our readers, those who will advance our understanding of the complexities of American Jewish education and life—beyond Jewish identity.]

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This volume is a product of a research project at the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis University. The authors shared their initial ideas on the topic at a conference in March 2014, after which they developed draft papers that were then shared with colleagues in a collaborative process. We are grateful to the participants in that conference and in the collaborative process that followed. We are also grateful to the staff of the Mandel Center for their contributions that have enabled our scholarly activity, including Elizabeth Dinolfo, Pamella Endo, Sarah Flatley, and especially Susanne Shavelson, for her editorial acumen and attention to detail. Finally, we are grateful to the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation, for their ongoing support of scholarship on Jewish education, in the service of a thriving Jewish future.

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Taking Jewish Identity Metaphors Literally

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In "Metaphors we live by," Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue that, "the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor" (p. 3). They support their argument with linguistic analyses of dozens of examples of what they call "conceptual metaphors." For example, "ARGUMENT IS WAR":

> We don't just talk about arguments in terms of war. We can actually win or lose arguments. We see the person we are arguing with as an opponent. We attack his positions and we defend our own. We gain and lose ground. We plan and use strategies. If we find a position indefensible, we can abandon it and take a new line of attack … It is in this sense that the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor is one that we live by in this culture; it structures the actions we perform in arguing. (p. 4)

To drive home their point, Lakoff and Johnson invite us to consider a culture other than our own in which argument is viewed, not as war, but as dance. In such a culture, they suggest, arguers would see themselves as performers, whose shared goal is to create an aesthetically pleasing recital. Participants in such a culture would not only talk about arguments differently to us; they would conduct them differently. In this sense, argue Lakoff and Johnson, the metaphor of argument as war is not "poetic, fanciful, or rhetorical; it is literal" (p. 5).

In what follows, I examine how Jewish educators talk about identity. In the spirit of Lakoff and Johnson, I do this by analyzing the metaphors they use when doing so. To investigate what educators mean by Jewish identity, or by identity education, I consider what it would mean to take their identity metaphors literally.

Metaphors of Jewish identity have multiple sources. Some derive from studies of the self and its development in the social sciences. Others derive from

popular conceptions of learning and Jewishness. Once we put these metaphors to use, however, we are inveterate mixers. Like hyperactive cocktail shakers, we combine our identity metaphors into ever more exotic concoctions. And because we not only talk in metaphors but also think in them and act upon them, our resulting ideas and practice end up being, well, a little mixed up.

Sometimes, more than a little. Sometimes, the metaphors we use to talk about Jewish identity are so thoroughly mixed up that we literally don't know what we are talking about. That, more or less, is my argument below. I begin by comparing and contrasting three metaphors that have dominated the literature on identity development. Next, I examine tensions between these metaphors. I then analyze instances of metaphor use "in the wild" (c.f. Hutchins, 1995). These latter instances are all texts written by educators whose goal is to provide a rationale or framework for Jewish identity education. I conclude with some thoughts about the practical importance of metaphorical coherence.

Theoretical Metaphor I: Crystallization

I begin with Erik Erikson. Not because he said it all first or best (although some argue that he did both), but because his metaphors have stuck. Erikson coined many phrases (e.g., "identity crisis," "moratorium") which have seeped into everyday language. But I want to focus here on a metaphor that underlies almost all of his writing on identity, namely, "crystallization" (see e.g. Erikson, 1968, pp. 160–162). Crystallization is the process by which tentative, fluid elements of personality become a structured and stable whole. According to Erikson, crystallization is not something that happens suddenly, once and forever after. It is an iterative process, in which successive structures are broken down and reconstructed, with each new crisis and reintegration. Indeed Erikson's "eight stages of man" (see, e.g. Erikson, 1963/1950) is intended, among other things, to chart and characterize successive crystallizations.

Crystallization is a dominant metaphor in Erikson's writings in the sense that it pervades his account of identity, even when he does not use the term explicitly. In Erikson's writings, an identity is something that is "formed;" it has structure; it is a coherent whole built of previously disparate parts; it is integral, stable, and unified, as opposed to fluid and tentative.

This motif of structure, stability and coherence is further crystallized (if you'll pardon the pun) in the writings of Erikson's popularizers and appliers. James Marcia's influential operationalization of Erikson's theory, for example, defines four possible identity statuses: diffuse, foreclosed, moratorium and achieved. A person with an achieved identity, according to Marcia, is one who