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Young Metropolitan Anglo-Jewish Masculinities:

A qualitative interview study investigating
intersectionality between Jewishness, Britishness,
and masculinity

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Thesis submitted for PhD

Birkbeck, University of London

I declare that the research presented in this thesis is my own

.....

Anthony J S Nicholls

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Abstract

My thesis is an empirical study of young British Jews, exploring their experience of being Jewish, British, and male in society today given the fluid nature of each of these aspects of their identity. As society has changed over the last half century each of these aspects which had normative monocultural taken-for-granted expressions have been repeatedly deconstructed, examined and re-built, and I argue that in the process they have emerged as fluid entities. It is in negotiating these fluid aspects that today's young male Jews ask, what does it mean to be a Jew, what does it mean to be British, and what does it mean to be male as they try to make sense of their lives. The method chosen for this study has been the in-depth interview which I conducted with a sample of 16 interviewees chosen to reflect the diverse range of religiosity, age and intellectual ability which is apparent in the heterogenous nature of the Anglo-Jewish community supplemented with a group discussion. I have produced an interview tool of overlapping coloured discs representing the three aspects I am studying as an aid for the interviewee to think and talk about themselves. I have transcribed the interviews and used constructionist thematic analysis to advance my argument. I argue that Jewishness is constructed between extremes of adherence to halachic requirement on one hand and a Jewishness experienced as cultural affinity to history, family, and tradition without recourse to halacha on the other hand. I argue that Britishness is being experienced between varying degrees of nationalistic localism against cosmopolitan liberalism played out against a backdrop of Britain contrasted with the rest of the world and also London against the rest of Britain. With regard to being male, I have rejected the view that masculinity is constructed in the inherently unstable terms of physicality against intellectualism. Instead, I argue that it is better considered as lying in a range between competitive hegemonic masculinity on the one hand against a cooperative model with which physicality and intellectualism can combine to produce a more stable and emotionally satisfying mode of living. I argue that young Jewish men inhabit a fluid three-dimensional matrix being aware of the pitfalls of particularism, xenophobia, and misogyny as they negotiate their relationships with their families, communities, and wider society to construct their Jewish British masculine identity.

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Preamble

This thesis is an empirical study of contemporary young male British Jews researching the intersections of three aspects of their identity. The aspects studied were their masculinity, their Jewishness, and their Britishness and how each of these impacted upon and reacted to each other. I have used a social constructionist approach arguing that these aspects are not fixed but operate in a range as young male Jews construct and understand what being a man, being a Jew and being British means to them in their daily lives. I have used my observation of the change in society since I was an adolescent and some background information on me is necessary to understand my position and motivation to do this study.

British society has changed enormously from when I was a teenager and young adult. I was born in 1944 and the Britain of the 1950s and 60s was popularly assumed to be predominantly mono-cultural white. My formative years were in Hull attending an all-boys grammar school where I gained my British identity. For my Jewish identity I attended one of the three orthodox synagogues in the city where I tended to sit with a group of elderly men who told me about their experiences in the trenches in the First World War. I also went to the Jewish youth groups in Hull: Habonim Dror, a left-wing Zionist quasi scout movement where I learnt to tie knots, Maccabi, – a right-wing Zionist sports club, to learn how to swim, and B'nai Brith Youth Organisation, which did not have any particular political allegiance, to learn about girls. I read Medicine at Westminster Medical School, University of London graduating in 1968 and worked in hospital practice for seven years, mainly in Paediatrics, before entering suburban General Practice in 1975 and I retired in 2009. Wanting a complete life change, I did a Masters in Jewish Studies at King's College, London which included modules on Jewish History, Philosophy, Bible, and Ethics with a dissertation on *The Dialogue in Jonah Through the Lens of Transactional Analysis Compared with Three Medieval Rabbinic Texts* and graduated with Merit in 2011.

The last quarter of the 20th century has seen tremendous change in society. There has been a dramatic increase in cultural diversity, especially in the larger cities and changes in transport, media and popular culture and the emergence of second wave feminism (Humm, 1995 Page 252). The availability of contraception and abortion, the end of censorship of books, theatre and films, the decriminalisation of homosexuality, all of these have changed attitudes towards sexuality and authority. The internet and multiple ways of communication mean that young people are growing up with many more influences than previous generations.

So, I was wondering how young male Jews were faring in modern Britain; what did they think about their future, what did they think about their social environment? Does religion have

any relevance for them and is Judaism worth continuing? Does any form of nationalism have any meaning now that our lives are governed commercially by multi-national corporations and politically by multi-nation organisations such as the United Nations, NATO and, at the time of the study, the European Union? Britain is a nation built upon successive waves of immigration, the forebears of Anglo-Jewry among them, so what does it mean to be British in a cosmopolitan milieu where a substantial percentage of the population does not have English as its first language? What does it mean to be a male when the duties and privileges of patriarchy have been undermined by changed employment opportunities and the emergence of feminism? How can masculinity be constructed in the absence of the challenge of physical prowess in conflict and the dismantling of the traditional heterosexual gender identity?

To date nobody has asked young Jewish men what they think about all this. My research questions are: -

- **How do young Jews understand and perform Jewishness and masculinity in contemporary Britain?**
- **How do they talk about their experience of being a young Jewish male in Britain and what are their concerns?**

Mine will be the first qualitative study of young male Jews in this country and I stress, 'qualitative'. I have conducted in-depth interviews with 16 young Jews chosen to be representative of a diverse range of religiosity and academic ability to reflect the diversity of the target demographic to gain an idea of the range of opinions.

Chapter 1 Anglo-Jewry: Historical background

Before describing the study this chapter reviews the history of the contemporary Jewish community which emerged from the immigrant generations of the late 19th century and 20th century to show how 'Britishness' became incorporated into their Judaism and the impact that had on their construction of masculinity.

The intersection between Jewishness and Britishness was a controversial issue in the early stages of the entry of the immigrant cohort of Jews into British public space in the late 19th and early 20th century. The Jewishness of the immigrants was adapted by contact with the British establishment as the host orthodox communal infrastructure had developed following British models the Chief Rabbinate and Bet Din having been modelled on the Church of England hierarchy and Ecclesiastical Courts to the extent that Jewish clergy had adopted canonical garb and the lay leadership top hats and pinstriped trousers¹ (Black, 1988 Page 27). The traditional liturgy was modified so as not to offend non-Jewish sensibilities and the Orthodox Ashkenazi Minhag Anglia (Custom of England) is slightly different from that of the rest of the Ashkenazi world. An authorised daily prayer book (the Singer's Siddur) was first published in 1890 included a prayer for the sovereign and since 1948 a prayer for the State of Israel and continued until 2006 when it was completely revised by Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks. This revision was partly to counter the influence of the Artscroll Mesorah² Series from America which had a shift from the distinctive British Jewishness and had become popular in the United Synagogue. There has been a similar competitive discourse regarding festival prayer books where the original English 'Routledge' series that had started in 1900 was being superseded by Artscroll from 1987 until Sacks produced a series in 2011 emphasising Minhag Anglia.

1.1 Introduction

The Island of Britain has absorbed waves of immigrants for over 2,000 years. Some, such as the Romans, stayed for a century or more; in this instance the majority left when the Roman Empire collapsed. Others, such as the Angles, the Saxons, the Jutes, the Danes, and the Normans came and were gradually absorbed and over the centuries the different ethnic boundaries disappeared to produce a mainly homogenous monocultural population who

¹ These customs have only recently been jettisoned in all but the most formal synagogues.

² Artscroll has been criticised for sacrificing grammatical accuracy in favour of imparting positive messages and omitting anything controversial (Levi, 1981). The United Synagogue is also trying to counter the use of Artscroll's Pentateuch replacing the traditional Pentateuch of Chief Rabbi J. H. Hertz which has been in use since 1936.

thought of themselves as 'British' albeit taking pride in the area in which they lived.³ Since the end of the Second World War the normative monocultural nature of the country has been altered by large-scale immigration from countries which were former colonies of the British Empire and since the 1970s from mainland Europe when Britain joined the European Union.⁴ The result of this immigration is that the country, especially the larger towns and cities, has become multi-cultural and multi-ethnic but this has not generally adversely affected the identification of these newer arrivals as 'British.' Immigrants quickly learn English and have shown willingness to represent Britain; one has only to look at the sportsmen and women competing in international competition to see the range of ethnicities of the competitors. This project is looking at a small segment of the population –Jews⁵ – which somehow seems to have defied historical precedent by largely maintaining a boundary between themselves and the general population and currently they are one of the oldest ethnic minorities in Britain (Gidley & Kahn-Harris, 2012). The specific question that this project seeks to address is, how young male Jews are negotiating their masculinity and Jewishness in contemporary Britain. British society has not been static and is continually evolving and the way that young Jews have thought of themselves has changed with that evolution. It is therefore necessary to examine the historical experience of the Jewish community through the lens of masculinity to understand the social dynamics that have been and are influencing these young Jewish men in order to set this empirical study in context.

The Jewish community had evolved a sophisticated infrastructure prior to the mass immigration of the 1880s and the concern that the communal leaders of that time had was to present to the general population the face of a unified law-abiding group willing to accept the standards of behaviour of the host society and not draw adverse attention to themselves. Within the community that unity was frequently lost as individuals disagreed over policy regarding the direction the community should take in response to the circumstances occurring during the 20th century. There was competition between individuals who had differing visions for the community and they vied for prestige and power within the community.

³ G.M. Trevelyan Page 136 'Britain developed a nationhood based on peculiar characteristics laws and institutions after the Norman conquest.' See also Liah Greenfeld (Greenfeld, 1992)

⁴ At time of the research the United Kingdom was negotiating to leave the European Union

⁵ It is also interesting to note that Jewish respondents are more likely to report a British identity than the Christian default group even though few Jewish people in the UK could trace their UK roots back more than 4 or 5 generations – this gives an insight into cultural assimilation over 100 years or more.(Manning & Roy, 2010)

1.2 Jewish Masculinity at Different Points of Anglo-Jewish History

Although some Jews may have come to Britain with the Romans it is generally accepted that the first organised, self-professing Jews came to Britain in 1066 with the Norman conquest from Rouen and there were communities in several cities: London, York, Lincoln, Norwich, and Northampton. The Jews were expelled by the king's order in 1290 and although there were a few individuals or groups of secret Jews or Marranos⁶ dissimulating their Jewish observances there was no organised community. Open Jewish resettlement was permitted by Cromwell in 1656 and by 1880 the Jewish population was about 60,000 mainly due to immigration from Holland. Since 1880 there have been two major waves of Ashkenazi Jewish immigrants fleeing economic and physical persecution; the first, a larger wave (estimated between 120,000 and 150,000) at the end of the 19th century came from Eastern Europe and Russia. They were mainly from non-industrialised small towns and villages and mostly, but not exclusively, fundamentalist religiously orthodox. The second, smaller wave was from central Europe escaping Nazi persecution in the decades around the Second World War and the number that remained in Britain in 1950 was estimated at between 40,000 and 55,000.⁷ These were mostly professional, successful members of society, consisting of doctors, lawyers and academics who, if they arrived before the Nazi currency restrictions were imposed in 1938, were able to bring their assets with them (Newman, 1985). There have also been Sephardi Jews from Turkey following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War and from Arab countries in North Africa, the Eastern Mediterranean, Iraq and Iran having been expelled from these countries after the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. In the last five years there has been a significant influx of Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews from France.⁸ The youth of the current Anglo-Jewish population is largely derived from the descendants of these immigrant waves and the participants for the study of this thesis, and in most cases also their parents, were born and educated in Britain.

The relative security of Anglo-Jewish integration reflects the fact that in the last 350 years in Britain there have been no bloody revolutions, pogroms, or major civil disruption, by Britain's settled relationship between monarchy and parliament, and by a generally liberal public attitude. In England, in contrast to nearly all of mainland Europe, the Jews were under the protection of the law, could settle anywhere they pleased and enjoyed virtual social equality

⁶ Cecil Roth quotes Lucien Wolf *Marrano Community in Tudor England* (C. Roth, 1978)

⁷ It is believed that 90,000 came but many moved on to other countries.

⁸ "London becomes a leading destination for French Jews after attacks." *New York Times* 22nd April 2016. Probably less since the UK left the European Union

(Roth, 1978 Page 204). The immigrants from Eastern Europe came to a Jewish community in which there already existed an established, Anglicized Anglo-Jewish community which had grown up during the course of the nineteenth century (Livshin, 1990 Page 80). By describing the pre-1881 Anglo-Jewish community as bourgeois and respectable, Todd Endelman understands that these settled Jews had allied themselves completely with Victorian values of respectability (Endelman, 2002 Page 92 et.seq.). Vivi Lachs comments that the Anglo-Jewish elite was composed of English people with English values and mores who were practising Judaism (Lachs, 2018 page 6). However, only a small elite had entered high society and enjoyed its privileges. Beneath that elite there was an emerging middle class, but the bulk of the population was still eking out a living as street pedlars pushing their wares or petty criminals and pickpockets and living in poverty. The models of masculinity at that time were varied, the elite trying to be indistinguishable from their Gentile neighbours in manners and attitudes, but the general population had no such qualms. Athleticism was not a general feature, but one notable exception was Daniel Mendoza (1764-1836), a boxer who helped transform the popular English stereotype of a Jew from a weak, defenceless person into someone deserving of respect.⁹

English Jewry of 1880 had not expected the huge influx and showed no pleasure in their arrival (Gartner, 1973 Page 49) and there was disagreement between leading families over the attitude towards the immigrants.¹⁰ There was even a call from Chief Rabbi Hermann Adler to his counterparts in Eastern Europe to prevent the continued out-movement of these migrants. This influx, untouched by bourgeois standards of decorum and respectability, shattered the calm of Anglo-Jewish life and injected a vitality without which would have caused the native community to wither and die (Endelman, 1990 Page 173). The immigrants were initially concentrated in the larger towns - in the East End of London, Strangeways in Manchester, Brownlow Hill in Liverpool, Leyland in Leeds, and the Gorbals in Glasgow but over time the majority moved out of the inner cities to the suburbs. This was parallel to upward socio-economic mobility and their assimilation or integration into the wider society of a large proportion of this population. This movement has been accompanied by a tendency to re-

⁹ Michael Berkowitz makes a case that boxing and its memory are integral to the Jewish historical experience (Berkowitz, 2011).

¹⁰ Rothschild, Montefiore and Mocatta would give no encouragement and as little aid as possible but Samuel Montagu, Herbert Bentwich and Leopold Greenberg defended the cause of alien immigration. Anglo-Jewish agencies returned thousands of would be immigrants to Eastern Europe if they were deemed useless or helpless (Feldman, 1994 Page 302).

group into the new locations and to re-create communal institutions such as synagogues, schools, and retail food outlets (Newman, 1985).

1.2.1 Anglicization of immigrants 1881 to 1920

The general consensus in the ethnological literature of the late nineteenth century was that Jews had 'black' skin or at least were 'swarthy' (Gilman, 1993 Page 20). In popular culture Jews were depicted as old, dirty, and disfigured and the phrase "dirty Jew" came to sum up the stereotype to contrast with the youthful beauty of true manliness.

The popular view of these Jews, down-trodden, dirty, and disreputable, does not recognise that these people had showed great initiative by their decision to leave areas in which they had lived for many generations. These immigrant Jews were in the main poor and exhausted by their travels having been forced to flee by persecution and adverse economic pressures. They had endured a hard, overland journey from their homes to the embarkation ports and a further journey over the North Sea in overcrowded, unsanitary boats arriving with little knowledge of English and very few possessions. Lachs notes from a study of the Yiddish song lyrics that many families had to take in lodgers to supplement their income and that masculinity and power relations between husband and wife were affected by the migration experience (Lachs, 2018 Page 157). They set about making new homes and retaining their language (Yiddish), diet (multiple Kosher food outlets) and religion (the home ceremonies of the Sabbaths and Festivals and the communal mode of worship in small groups) (Kershen, 2006 Page 96 - 113).

The desire to be Anglicised came from within the immigrant community (Lachs, 2018 Page 13) and they set great store on their children speaking English and adopting English customs (Lipman, 1954 Page 145 quoting a Royal Commission of 1902) and the receiving society of English Jews vigorously promoted the immigrants' anglicisation (Feldman, 1994 Page 291). To encourage the immigrants to speak English the Russo-Jewish Committee began to hold English classes and in 1894 published a Yiddish-English manual (Feldman, 1994 Page 309). Between 1880 and 1920 the dominant concerns for the children were education (Kirsch-Greenberg, 1988 Page 111) and 'social rescue' (Bunt, 1975 Page 162). These concerns were the focus of provision of formal education and a network of out-of-school activities by various youth clubs. The engagement with young people was considered an integral part of religious community building practice (Mills, 2015).

The Anglo-Jewish leadership sought a unified Anglicized community to transform the Yiddish speaking immigrant children into English Jews. “A young Pole can be placed in the Jews’ Free School and will be turned out a young Englishman.”¹¹ Anglo-Jewry preached self-help, Jewish observance, and British patriotism creating institutions¹² to socialise and maintain order and discipline (Black, 1988 Page 38 et.seq.). National education at the end of the 19th century was shaped by a number of Education Acts whereby public secular education had expanded and Jewish children were able to attend the public and private schools without a religious test (Lipman, 1954 Page 178). The 1870 Education Act had provided non-denominational (Board) schools in areas where the Church-affiliated voluntary schools could not provide sufficient places. Subsequent acts abolished fees for these schools so that all children could receive elementary education. The Jewish Education Aid Society was established in 1896 with the aim of helping promising Jewish junior pupils go on to secondary education and later widened its scope and in 1908 it provided financial help for the artists, Mark Gertler (MacDougall, 2002 Page 27) and David Bomberg (Cork, 1987 Page 22), to attend the Slade School of Art.

Living conditions were poor with extreme overcrowding due to high fertility rates; large families were common. Sidney Bunt notes the communal concern that lack of space at home forced children onto the streets to play where they were picking up anti-social habits such as swearing, betting and some petty crime (pickpocketing) although drinking was not a problem and girls especially were seen to be in ‘moral’ danger. In addition Bunt notes that there was the activity of Christian missionaries who were enticing children to come to church activities (Bunt, 1975 Page 16). Contrary to popular belief, the immigrant Jews were not uniformly observant in their religious practice; it was estimated that more than half of London Jews worked on the Sabbath although they still attended a synagogue on the High Holydays – New Year and Day of Atonement (Gartner, 1973 Page 195). There had been a notable drift away from strict observance even in their previous habitations and many followed the lead of the receiving society many of whom had become lax in their religiosity (although many had not). Young people, more than their parents, had to “harmonize Englishness and Jewishness, hearing Yiddish at home and English outside; a religious upbringing which flew in the face of

¹¹ *Jewish Chronicle* 12th August 1881

¹² The Board of Deputies of British Jews (1760), The Anglo-Jewish Association (1871), Synagogue Associations (United Synagogue 1870), The Jewish Board of Guardians (1859), Jewish Religious Education Board (1878), and committees for loans (1859). Reform Jews had been excluded from the Board of Deputies but were brought on by Sir Julian Goldsmid who also negotiated Reform Jews taking part in the Jewish Religious Education Board (Black, 1988 Page 14).

the requirements of holding a job” the meticulous practices of Judaism seeming stale and outdated (Gartner, 1973 Page 173).

Out-of-school clubs and associations were extremely important factors in the process of socializing and developing a British version of masculinity in Jewish boys. The initial focus was to occupy children and keep them off the streets and reinforce good behaviour. Boys’ clubs were set up, the Brady Street Lads’ Club founded in 1898 had a library of over 1500 books covering literature, history, sport and basic economics and the Stepney Jewish Lads’ Club had set up a thrift group (Bunt, 1975 Page 19). Camping was a feature of many clubs with a 10-day large annual camp under canvas for boys (mixed camps only came in in the 1950s). This was an agency to promote personal and communal hygiene with tent inspections and helping with kitchen duties. Also discipline was instilled with extra fatigues for misdemeanours (Bunt, 1975 Page 31). A Jewish branch of the Scouts Association was set up in the early 1900s and a Jewish Athletic Association was formed in 1899 to organize Sunday sports meetings.

Of particular note is “The Jewish Lads’ Brigade” (JLB), officially founded by Colonel Albert Edward Goldsmid in 1895 (Kadish, 1995; Voeltz, 1988) and was directly modelled on “The Church Lads’ Brigade” – one of a number of uniformed youth groups which had sprung up towards the end of the 19th century. Voeltz postulates that there was a pervading fear among the English upper and middle classes that the British race was becoming degenerate and that there would not be enough soldiers to protect the British Empire in the future, (Voeltz, 1988 Page 120), so manliness/masculinity was not a solely Jewish concern. In the case of the JLB, upper class, well-educated Jews felt an obligation as Jews and patriotic Englishmen to help “Anglicize” and assimilate into English society those Jewish boys who were now living in the poor immigrant areas. The masculinity being promoted was that of the “public school ethos” and the introduction of military drill and discipline. The JLB became increasingly militarily focussed in keeping with other Edwardian groups as Britain came to see such groups as pools of potential soldiers. JLB was also concerned about getting youth into employment and in 1902, in combination with the Jewish Board of Guardians, an initiative – the Jewish Lads’ Employment Committee - was set up to arrange apprenticeships for boys; by 1907 it was arranging 300 apprenticeships a year (Bunt, 1975 Page 19). The JLB was helped considerably in the early years by The Maccabeans¹³ who gave financial support. The brigade soon enjoyed the support and encouragement of the Jewish press – the *East London Observer* called it “one

¹³ This was a society of English Jewish intellectuals and professional men who supported Jewish culture. It was formed in 1891.

of the community's most useful institutions," the *Jewish Chronicle*, "it is impossible to praise too highly the conduct and spirit of the boys or the loyalty and self-sacrifice of the young officers" and the *Daily Telegraph* commented that the brigade, by attending to physical exercise and fostering a spirit of loyalty was helping these "young Orientals planted in Occidental surroundings"¹⁴ to overcome their difficulties and improve the "physique and morale of Jewish lads throughout the land." The JLB was active in promoting athletic contests and an annual athletics meeting was established in 1911. Sportsmanship was regarded as "playing a key role in the production of an Anglicised Jewish man" (Voeltz, 1988 Page 121 et. sec). The military ethos was utilised with the onset of the First World War and many former brigade members enlisted and 535 ex-JLB men were killed. In a review of the Jewish soldier in the British army in the Boer War and World Wars One and Two, Gavin Schaffer argues that the idea of the 'muscle Jew' can be better understood as a reflection of the desire for European integration, an attempt to present Jewish soldiers as equal to their non-Jewish equivalents (Schaffer, 2012). Within one generation foreigners were turned into English Jews and a study of Manchester children revealed a decline in the ability to speak Yiddish with their parents (Livshin, 1990 Page 87).

The First World War was a watershed that changed society and warfare, as well as re-shaping the dominant forms of masculinity. Previously wars had been fought by full-time professional soldiers who did not stop being soldiers after their battles and their home societies celebrated their exploits singing and boasting of their experiences. This war was fought with volunteers and conscripts who had to change their identities from civilian to soldier in a matter of weeks. They had to acquire in a short time techniques of repressing fear and guilt which professional armies instil in recruits over years (Leed, 2000). For Jews there was a dilemma because although many wanted to demonstrate loyalty to Britain by joining the army there was reluctance to join an alliance with Russia, a country with a long history of antisemitism, against Germany where Jews had been relatively well treated (Efron, Weitzman, Lehmann, & Holo, 2009 Page 337). The refusal of Russian Jews to enlist was a source of communal and mainstream hostility but many of these men had deserted from the Czar's army and did not want to enlist in a war allied to their previous antisemitic overlords (Kadish, 1995 Page 60).

In the context of perceptions of masculinity, young men who had been socialised in the Victorian/Edwardian models of masculinity to conceal emotion were faced with almost constant threat of death. The previous quasi-military experience in Boy's Brigades and school

¹⁴ *Daily Telegraph* 22nd January 1910

cadet corps was hopelessly inadequate to prepare them for trench warfare and continuous bombardment. The normal healthy man arriving at the front showed definite signs of physical fear when first coming under fire which shortly wore off to be replaced by a type of callousness, a military mask of masculinity designed to contain fear and to suppress emotions (Leed, 2000 quoting the 1922 *Report of the War Office into Shell Shock*). George Mosse writing about the relationship between masculinity and militarism noted that for the Edwardian middle classes war was an important test of manliness (Mosse, 1996 Page 108-112). Michel Roper argues that, beginning just after the war and continuing up to the last quarter of the century, there emerged among the British middle class a means of reassessing the codes of manliness, two important aspects of this were the widespread experience of fear among frontline soldiers in the war and the post-war gradual acceptance of psychological factors affecting human behaviour and feelings (Roper, 2005). The Jewish contribution to the disillusionment with the war expressed in the field of the arts was by the poets Siegfried Sassoon and Isaac Rosenberg and the artists Mark Gertler and David Bomberg. Siegfried Sassoon was from an old established Anglo-Jewish family who wrote an open letter of protest to his commanding officer complaining that the war was being prolonged and Isaac Rosenberg, the son of immigrants, who wrote of the trench conditions and also being sneered at because he was Jewish. Mark Gertler was associated with a group of conscientious objectors and his painting *The Merry-Go-Round*¹⁵ demonstrated a vision of cultural disintegration (MacDougall, 2002 Page 128) being a powerful image satirising militarism. It depicts figures in naval and military uniform spinning on fairground horses and one of them seems to be screaming silently. The painting was considered so shocking that it was never sold in his lifetime and was kept hidden for many years. David Bomberg was deeply affected by his experience as a private in the trenches and altered his style from the simple angular shapes for the human form to a more figurative impressionist technique. His pre-war (1912) painting, *Vision of Ezekiel*, showed the angular figures leaping with the ecstasy of being alive and refusing to accept the finality and deprivation of death (Cork, 1987 Page 41). In 1915 he drew *Billet* depicting a tangled heap of bodies with only one soldier depicted and his face shows grim resignation and exhaustion seemingly mourning his lost civilian freedom (Cork, 1987 Page 104). His post-war disillusionment was expressed in his 1920 painting *Ghetto Theatre* where, in contrast to his pre-war exuberance, the drably dressed spectators have mask-like faces and closed body language indicative of his dismal post-war vision.

¹⁵ See Appendix for this work and the other works mentioned

1.2.2 First generation to have been born in Britain 1920-1940

David Cesarani characterises this period as “20 years of intra-communal strife” (Cesarani, 1990 Page 116) between the old established families who controlled the Board of Deputies representing their section of the community who excluded the mass of the community derived from recent immigrants (who formed the provincial representative councils, the Jewish friendly Societies and the B’nai Brith) from representation on the Board and its sub-committees. This process of political exclusion meant that the Board had ceased to be representative of the mass of British Jewry. The rift was compounded by a change in pattern of philanthropy in the community. Previously the donations of the elite for local causes had bought prestige and authority to them but that wealth had been reduced by taxes and death duties. The new generation contained a number of entrepreneurs who contributed to Zionist and other non-British causes and they were perceived as the next generation of communal leaders.

The community became wealthier in the 1920s, with many moving out of their enclaves into the suburbs; there was the fear among some of the older communal leaders that the general public would believe that the improvement had come about by dubious business practices. The youth clubs cautioned against ostentatious displays of wealth, sharp practice and aggressive behaviour which they believed would provoke antisemitism (Bunt, 1975 Page 162). The focus of the clubs moved from anglicisation to recreation and some political, that is, Zionist activities. Habonim came into existence in 1929 and the Maccabi movement founded in 1921 in Czechoslovakia came to Britain both aimed to strengthen Jewish inheritance (Bunt, 1975 Page 174). The interest in Zionism was an expression of an emerging Jewish nationalism which did not necessarily require these young men to emigrate to Palestine, although a few did. The presence of Zionist youth movements was not universally welcomed as those who identified with the mainstream community considered any form of Jewish nationalism to be opposed to emancipation (Bolchover, 2003 Page 80; Lebzelter, 1978 Pages 136-154). Basil Henriques, who had been very influential in the early club movement, did not believe that there was a place for Jewish nationalism in Britain, and he did use his influence to obstruct Zionist movements arguing that as Jews in Britain they should not divert loyalty away from Britain. In this attitude Henriques was confirming the philosophy of denationalising Jewry, defining Jewishness in terms of a purely religious affiliation. In the 1930s as the population drift to the suburbs continued the youth clubs associated with the synagogues had not moved with the times. The young people preferred city centre entertainments, expensive clothes, and cars whilst the club leaders still had the mentality of charity workers. When Jews

encountered antisemitic refusal to being admitted to sporting clubs,¹⁶ they set up their own clubs.

The rise of Nazi theology in Germany in the 1920s with the accusation that the Jews were parasites in society and that this was due to their racial inferiority did feed into a tradition of British race science started by Francis Galton. The historian, Cecil Roth, sought to counter the racialism of the emerging Fascists by highlighting the contribution that Jews had made to civilization thereby using the very same concept of race that the Nazis had used (Lawson, 2008). Elisa Lawson claims that Roth proposed that Jews' physiological and psychological characteristics were determined by their history of dispersion among the nations. In this model the negative aspects of their character were a result of external forces (being subject to oppression and discrimination for example) and their positive traits to internal factors (the way Jews lead their lives). Using this model Roth was very keen that Jewish youth be educated about their religious and cultural heritage to appreciate what he called "the miracle of Jewish existence" (Lawson, 2008).

Hitler's ascent to power in Germany in 1933 was immediately followed by a wave of attacks on Jews in Germany. Jews in London responded by organising a protest march to the German embassy on 24th March (Gewirtz, 1991) and a general boycott of German goods was proposed. This was a 'grass roots' movement and it brought into focus a clash of attitudes between the mass of working-class Jews and the Anglo-Jewish establishment of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and its president Neville Laski. As conditions for German Jewry deteriorated the boycott movement continued despite Laski's opposition. Although the boycott movement failed in its stated objective of bringing down the Nazi government of Germany it nevertheless demonstrated that the mass of ordinary Jews was not content to leave matters to what they perceived as an unrepresentative elite. The emergence of organised British fascism by Oswald Mosley's formation of the British Union of Fascists constructed the 'Black shirted body' in the movement's emphasis on the embodiment of their political religion through sport, physical fitness, and public display of offensive and defensive violence. The 'Blackshirts' in Britain presented a direct challenge to the Jewish population having taken their inspiration from the National Socialists of Germany with their focus on aggressive masculinity and body image (Gottlieb, 2011). This movement emerged in the 1930s at a time of mass unemployment due to economic depression which had affected the working class young male population who

¹⁶ The *Jewish Chronicle* mentioned Jews excluded from table tennis clubs (9/12/32), motor clubs (29/12/33) and a country club (31/8/34).

were also coming to terms with the recently acquired political power of women (as they had been granted the vote on the same terms as men). The stylised violence and sport display of Mosley's rallies were also racialised and gendered, as images of healthy fascist bodies were constantly juxtaposed with their stereotyped antitheses, the most frequently being the physically weak and morally diseased urban Jew. Choosing to have it both ways, fascist propagandists acknowledged the forceful physical reaction mounted by British Jews against the fascist speakers, while simultaneously repeating the antisemitic images of the physically frail and slovenly Jew. The *Jewish Chronicle (JC)* of October 2nd, 1936, carried an 'Urgent Warning' notice advising Jews to keep away from a proposed march by the Blackshirts through the East End of London to take place on 4th October (incidentally during the Festival of Tabernacles). The march was not banned in spite of a petition of 100,000 organised by The Jewish People's Council Against Fascism and Antisemitism and a visit to the Home Office by Laski. The following week the *JC* reported that the march had been abandoned due to obstruction by 'tens of thousands of people' Jews and non-Jews combining in spite of repeated baton charges by police¹⁷ who had been charged with forcing a route for the marchers. Eventually Sir Philip Game, Commissioner of Police, ordered the march to be stopped and the *JC* reported that immediately the tension lifted, and the police strolled away, and the crowds followed them in a 'sea of friendly humanity.' The London District Committee of the Communist Party issued a statement that 'East London workers, Jew, Gentile, Catholic, Protestant, Labour and Communist, determined that Fascism shall not pass here. The stay-at-home policy has been decisively rejected and victory has been won by united action.' There was a conflict in perception of how to deal with the fascist provocation. The Anglo-Jewish establishment were fearful that violent opposition to the fascists would play into the hands of the fascists and fuel antisemitism, so they relied on appeals to the Home Office to ban the march. The Home Secretary John Simon declined claiming that he did not have the power to do so and that free speech was paramount, and it was only the violent opposition that caused the police to halt the march. Naomi Cohen argues that a show of Jewish special interests would adversely affect their declaration of loyalty to the state; they dreaded the label 'International Jew' used in conspiracy theories by antisemites (N. W. Cohen, 2002). In terms of masculinity the reliance on, and faith in the non-violent legal civil authority that Laski espoused and worked vigorously for (the *JC* reported many meetings and rallies that he addressed) was ineffective and lost out to the active aggressive force mustered by a coalition of communists, socialists, Jews, and their allies.

¹⁷ This disorder became known as 'The Battle of Cable Street'.

1.2.3 Second World War and its aftermath; Shoah and Israel 1940 to 1960

This period saw the Jewish community trying to cope with the Second World War and the aftermath. The Nazi persecution of the Jews before and during the second world war was known by the British government and was widely reported in both the national press and the *JC* from as early as December 1939. Richard Bolchover stresses that every turn and every stage of the Nazi extermination was reported in Britain (Bolchover, 2003 Page 12) but there was a deliberate government policy of downplaying the Jewish suffering (Kushner, 1996 Page 246). Even though Anthony Eden (Foreign Secretary) spoke in Parliament on 17th December 1942 about the slaughter of Jews in the Baltic and Poland which caused the Commons to rise for a minute's silence, the general British establishment was deeply antisemitic at this time. Selig Brodetsky (president of The Board of Deputies of British Jews) claimed not to have realised the extent of annihilation of European Jewry until the Nuremberg Trials in 1945-46.¹⁸ Isaiah Berlin, the Jewish diplomat in Washington, made scant reference to what was known about the wholesale murder of European Jewry in his weekly dispatches back to the Foreign Office (FO) in London. He was privy to all the intelligence that had been gathered and a summary of the newspaper reports in America so he must have been aware of the mass killings. David Herman suggests that he was unwilling to draw attention to his Jewishness (Herman, 2018) and advances the theory that Berlin was anxious not to antagonise the FO in case that prejudiced his post-war career and that his silence over the holocaust reflected his anxiety over what sort of Jew he was; was he a Latvian *Ostjude*, an outsider to high society, or an Oxford don welcomed at High Table in England and high society in Washington? In agreeing with the general thrust of Herman's view, Michael Fleming uses Isaiah Berlin as a case study of how a diplomat may isolate decision makers (in this case Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden) from pressure to alter the established FO view that only by winning the war could Europe's Jews be saved (Fleming, 2018). In the context of examination of Jewish masculinity, the behaviour of Isaiah Berlin – downplaying his Jewishness in order to advance his career and not upsetting the general thrust of his employer's policy – could be considered analogous to the medieval 'Court Jew,' useful and tolerated in society but only on the terms of his social superiors. Being pre-occupied with the difficulties of day-to-day living in wartime Britain, Anglo-Jewry as a whole, failed to appreciate the reality of what was happening in mainland Europe and there was an additional psychological avoidance as the community was disturbed by British antisemitism.

¹⁸ Brodetsky memoirs quoted by Bolchover.

During the war, the institutions of Anglo-Jewry - the Board of Deputies, the Anglo-Jewish Association, and the British Section of the World Jewish Congress - failed due to internecine rivalry and disagreement over Zionism to produce a co-ordinated pressure on the British Government to respond to the destruction of European Jewry.¹⁹ The chaos of the communal organisations tended to instil a degree of despair for individual Jews. A notable exception was Rabbi Dr Solomon Schonfeld whose attempt to lobby parliament to allow temporary refuge for endangered persons was blocked by Brodetsky. Schonfeld had prior to the war organised trains to bring Jewish children to Britain (Bolchover, 2003 Page 37 and 169). The long history of Jewish suffering frequently depicted the Jew as a powerless supplicant, and this had fed into the antisemitic stereotype of cowardice and lacking manhood. There was need for an alternative depiction of the Jew; one who resists his persecutors both mentally and physically.

The physical resistance to the Nazis found expression in the instances of revolts in the Warsaw Ghetto, at Bialystok and at Treblinka which, although eventually futile, drew on the example of Bar Kochba's revolt at Massada (Steinberg, 1967). The desire of British Jews to prove themselves loyal servant of the crown and to counter accusations of shirking found expression in the exploits of Jewish servicemen that were published prominently by the *JC*²⁰ and these were psychologically important in helping to refute charges of Jewish passivity. There was pressure to form a Jewish military unit, but this was resisted by the War Office due to reluctance to countenance a separate unit on religious grounds.

There was considerable hostility, especially among the Anglo-Jewish establishment, to separate treatment or categorization of Jews in the British military. The idea that there should be special Jewish regiments, with a different brief to general forces, was bitterly opposed by many within the community on a matter of principle, in both the First and Second World Wars. In both conflicts, however, despite opposition within and beyond Anglo-Jewry, small distinct Jewish units were formed (Schaffer, 2012). Eventually a Jewish Brigade was formed in August 1944 and served with the British Eighth Army in Italy suffering 83 killed in action, 200 wounded, 78 mentions in dispatches and 20 decorations.²¹ After the war the Jews who had served in the war formed the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen (AJEX) and have a separate Jewish remembrance parade at the Cenotaph in Whitehall the Sunday after Remembrance

¹⁹ See *British Jewry and the Holocaust* (Bolchover, 2003) for an account of communal discord and personal rivalries for example the personal animosity between Sir Robert Waley-Cohen (president of the United Synagogue) and Chief Rabbi J.H. Hertz (Page 39)

²⁰ Five front page stories of the *Jewish Chronicle* of 27th August 1943 featured reports of awards of decorations for heroism in battle.

²¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_Brigade

Sunday. This parade was evidence that there could be a balance of acknowledging Jews as both part of and discrete from the generality of the military.

For Jewish education in Britain, the war was a period of extensive crisis. Pre-war there had been several national and local Jewish education bodies serving both part time (after regular school) and full time Jewish schools but pupil numbers had been falling, there was chronic underfunding and educational standards were falling (Steinberg, 1967). Children were being evacuated from the cities and this caused further disruption to the part time classes but the Jewish schools fared slightly better if it had been evacuated *en-bloc*. The educational bodies realised that their fragmented organisation was inadequate and under the auspices of the Board of Deputies a single Joint Emergency Committee (JEC) was formed²² and it was able to manage the situation better than the fragmented situation that existed pre-war. Children dispersed into regular schools were receiving Jewish education from peripatetic teachers supplied by the JEC and as the school leaving age had been raised from 13 to 15 by the 1936 Education Act, for the first time, children over 13 were receiving Jewish education on a regular basis. A survey by Nathan Morris of the JEC revealed that more Jewish adolescents were serious about learning Hebrew and attending religious services than before the war and within groups of these adolescents, study circles formed and from these circles the Jewish Youth Study Group Movement evolved (Steinberg, 1967). The entire educational system of Britain was reshaped towards the end of the war with the 1944 Education Act and there was provision in this act for non-denominational religious instruction to be given under more favourable conditions than before.

Kushner suggests that Anglo-Jewry was left deeply shocked by the revelations (Kushner, 1996) and the shame of their inaction led to a silence that lasted many years described by Chief Rabbi Sacks as one of the great silences of Jewish history (Sacks, 1992 Page 25). In the aftermath the responses to the Holocaust included this was punishment by God for Israel's sins such as Zionism (not waiting until divine release from exile)– Joel Teitelbaum²³ and the opposite, not taking the opportunity to emigrate to Palestine when it was possible – Menachim Hartom.²⁴ For Jewish men, who had served both in the forces and doing essential war work on the home front, their priorities were readjusting their lives, returning to education, starting businesses, getting married and starting families. They were resetting

²² The JEC officially came into being on 21st July 1941.

²³ Joel Teitelbaum -The founder and first Grand Rebbe of the Satmar Hasidic dynasty.

²⁴ Menachim Hartom - Chief Rabbi of the Venice and Turin Jewish Communities

their masculinity to normal civilian life. The city centres which had housed a major proportion of the Jewish population had been badly damaged by the systematic bombing during the war and this accentuated a move to the suburbs.

The post-war political scene was dominated by argument over the Palestine Question and the debate between Zionism and its opponents intensified. British Jewish anti-Zionism was centred around The Jewish Fellowship set up in 1944 by Basil Henriques and Sir Robert Waley-Cohen who were members of long-standing prominent Jewish families but this petered out after the founding of the State of Israel in 1948 and was disbanded (Miller, 2000 Page 82 et.seq.). The question of 'dual-loyalties' occupied both pro and anti-Zionists who were concerned that their emancipated status might be endangered (Aridan, 2005). There were a number of Zionist organizations which had originated in Europe before the war. Hashomer Hatzair had been imported by German and Austrian refugees in 1939; it combined the scouting tradition of Baden-Powell with Socialist Zionism and Marxism (Gledhill, 2015) and this philosophy connected with the existing Jewish radicalism in London. By being autonomous from adult control the organisation allowed space for Jewish youth to form an identity which promoted the 'pioneer' model of masculinity for young Jewish men over the perceived passive models of the scholar or the victims of the Nazis who had been killed without apparently putting up any fight. Other Zionist youth organisation were Habonim, B'nei Akiva, and Brit Haluzim Datiim. They were all socialist in nature but Habonim was secular whereas B'nei Akiva and Brit Haluzim Datiim were religious. Idealisation of the pioneer found expression in this period in the Passover Haggadah which includes four archetypal personalities personified by the 'four sons,' one wise, one wicked, one simple and one who does not know how to ask²⁵ sometimes pictured in printed editions, their portrayal reflecting understandings of types of manhood (see Appendix for illustrations). The traditional illustration of the wise son is of a scholar of various ages from young Yeshiva student to an old sage. The wicked son was traditionally depicted variously as a soldier (denoting a life of violence), a gambler or other similarly unflattering character. The simple son has been shown as someone with the superficial trappings of Judaism but no serious substance behind or someone engaged with the world but no spiritual backing and the one who does not know how to ask is shown either as a simpleton or a country bumpkin. In this period however a Zionist Haggadah was produced which showed the wise son as a pioneer farmer but also very much an observant Jew and the wicked son as someone who relies on military might alone.

²⁵ Mechilta d' Rabbi Yishmael

1.2.4 The end of deference 1960 et seq.

This period was characterised by the children born post war challenging previous behavioural norms. Society in Britain was changing the process having started in the late 50s. The country's ethnic composition was changing with significant numbers of West Indian, Pakistani and Indian immigrants coming to Britain and settling in the larger cities; Britain was less monocultural and more multicultural. At the same time many of the previous prohibitions in personal behaviour and in the public space were relaxed so homosexuality was decriminalised and the law governing adultery and divorce altered. Censorship of books, theatre and cinema were all but abolished. Youth culture was much less deferential, and this was reflected in taste of music, fashion, sexuality, and media. An example of the way in which young people demonstrated their rejection of previous norms of synagogue dress was the fashion of 'mini-skirts' which provoked a lively correspondence in the *JC* (Plant, 2015). The youth column of that paper reported an increasing widespread prevalence of pre-marital sex amongst Jewish youth in no way different from what was happening in general society. In the Jewish religious world this lack of deference was reflected in a split in the community with the 'Louis Jacobs affair' in 1964 when Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie barred Rabbi Louis Jacobs from becoming principle of Jews' College because he had questioned the divinity of the Pentateuch. Rabbi Jacobs was also prevented from taking a position at the New North London Synagogue by Chief Rabbi Brodie. The era when a congregation would have accepted such a pronouncement without question were long since gone and that community left the United Synagogue and formed the Masorti (lit. *Traditional*) movement.

Educational policy in Britain was profoundly changed by the election of a Labour government in the general election of 1964. It was the policy of the new administration to change the previous system of division of children at the age of 11 between those of more academic ability going to grammar schools and those who failed the 11+ going to secondary modern schools. The new policy was to accommodate all the children into much larger comprehensive schools. It was noticed that there was a sudden increased demand for places in the Jewish secondary schools as the non-denominational grammar schools were being phased out. David Mendelsson argues that the driver for the expansion in the Jewish secondary school was the concern that parents had that academic standards would be lower and the general conduct of the pupils would be worse in the larger, more impersonal comprehensive school (Mendelsson, 2009). There was also an impression that most of the teachers subscribed to a Marxist, anti-elite philosophy that was incompatible with the aspirations that Jewish parents had for their children. There was also social pressure from the

parents for their children to pass the 11+ examination; Rima Roland, a columnist for the *JC* asked, “Why must our children be given a complex and made to feel that they have failed themselves and brought shame on their families if they do not reach grammar school standard?”²⁶ In a survey in Edgware in 1963, 85% of Jewish parents of children under 15 wanted their child to go onto higher education (Krausz, 1969) and in Wembley a comparative study of Jewish and non-Jewish families, matched for social class, noted a significant difference between the educational and occupational aspirations between the two groups (Cromer, 1976). Prior to the government’s pressure to abolish the grammar schools, Jewish parents were happy to send their children to the non-denominational grammar schools for what they perceived as the best academic opportunity and they encouraged the children to attend Jewish youth groups and organisations to ensure that they had Jewish friends.²⁷ Jewish education was catered for by Sunday morning and after-school Hebrew classes, at least until their Bar-mitzvah (for boys at 13) and Bat-mitzvah (for girls at 12).

The 1967 Six-Day War in the Middle East was a watershed in the perception of Israel, and by extension, of Jews, many of whom felt a surge of Zionist enthusiasm realised by consumption of Zionist pop cultural products (music, film, food) and visiting Israel as tourists (Hakim, 2015). Jews were no longer considered passive and weak but were now powerful; Jews in Britain, bathing in the reflected glory of the Israeli armed services, became more visible in that young Jewish men felt able to wear a headcover in public whereas before they would have felt embarrassed to do so. Not only was a head covering worn but it was the knitted ‘kippa seruga’ of the Modern Israeli and not the discrete black cloth of the past. Modern Hebrew pronunciation started to be used in synagogues replacing the Ashkenazi version which was associated with Eastern Europe Yiddish culture. However, the religious education for children did not benefit from the improvement in mood of the Jewish community as the children were more interested in secular extra-curricular activities than synagogue and Hebrew classes (H. Miller, 2001). The Jewish Educational Trust was launched in 1971 to raise the profile of Jewish education and Miller charts the rise in the proportion of Jewish children receiving full time education in Jewish schools.

An analysis of Jewish religious education in the 1970s by B. Chazan noted that 30% of the children aged 5 to 17 did not receive any Jewish education, 50% had only part-time and rather poor quality Jewish education supplementary to their regular secular school and 20% attended Jewish day schools (Chazan, 1978). The youth clubs and organisations were popular and for

²⁶ *Jewish Chronicle* 1964 November 6th P 35

²⁷ See my own experience on Page 11

children who had not had much exposure to Judaism they proved an important resource for forming and confirming Jewish Identity. Chazan quotes a 1977 report on the Association of Jewish Youth that “There is now a general dedication in the United Kingdom for turning young Englishmen into young Jews; the reverse process worked all too well.” In 1975 approximately 20% of Jewish children (11,000) received full time Jewish education and 25 years later the number had grown to 22,620 which is 55% of the current total number of Jewish children in Britain (Miller, 2001 quoting a *JC* report of December 2000). With their child(ren) attending a Jewish school there was less incentive for the child to go to out-of-school Jewish activities as they made their Jewish friends at school and there has been a noticeable decline in popularity of these activities. The particular accusation that Jewish schools promoted bigotry by Jews towards the general population is not supported by the longitudinal UJIA study of children in these schools by Helena Miller which found that “Jewish students had no difficulty expressing themselves and functioned within their British identity” and that “British identity is not developing at the expense of a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish People with a stable and consistent support of Israel” (H. Miller & Pomson, 2014).

The community at large was becoming increasingly secular and as secular educational standards increased more Jews were going to university and thus engaged with the non-Jewish world. In the early 1990s out-marriage rates were a cause for concern. In America, a National Jewish Population Survey found that 52% of Jews were marrying outside Judaism and it was suspected that unless something dramatic was done there would be the same in Britain. In 1991 Jonathan Sacks became Chief Rabbi and he encouraged the Jewish community to confront the challenge of declining engagement with Judaism. Ben Gidley and Keith Kahn-Harris characterise this period as a shift in emphasis of Anglo-Jewish leadership (Gidley & Kahn-Harris, 2012). Prior to 1990 the concern of Anglo-Jewish leadership was to make Jews in Britain as similar as possible to the host nation to be secure and loyal British citizens in a monocultural society; they characterise this phase as a ‘strategy of security.’ From 1990, concomitant with Britain becoming a multicultural society, they noted that concern had shifted to awareness of trends of antisemitism on the part of sections of the general population and apathy on the part of the Jewish community towards religious observance and out-marriage. By stressing the possibility of the shrinking of Anglo-Jewry, the leadership had fostered a ‘strategy of insecurity.’

1.2.5 Popular media representation

In contrast to America where Jews were prominent in popular culture, the British experience has been more subdued until relatively recently. Currently there are a number of events which have become part of the established British Jewish scene, such as Jewish Book Week, the UK Jewish Film Festival, Limmud (which started as an educational conference and the model has now spread internationally) and JW3, a Jewish cultural centre in London NW3. Ruth Gilbert regards the current representations of British Jewishness, while in many ways reflecting a buoyant, celebratory, and often playful sense of what it means to be both British and Jewish, are also marked by a seam of underlying and deep-rooted ambivalence. In this context what a notion of visibility really means is complex (Gilbert, 2014). In the 1960s mass entertainment turned from theatre and film, where people had to make a special visit to theatres and cinemas, to television which allowed entertainment at home with less effort than heretofore the effect of which was that a large audience could be engaged much more rapidly than previously and thereby the influence of a particular programme or genre was that much greater. A very popular TV genre was comedy, either in isolated plays or in series of situation comedies and not infrequently Jewish characters either featured in these programmes or a specific Jewish family was the subject of the programme. A full review of how Jews have been portrayed in literature, theatre, film, and television is beyond the scope of my thesis²⁸ but in the context of a study of contemporary British Jewish masculinity, I have observed that the Jew, especially the Jewish male, is frequently depicted less favourably than the other characters for whom he was a foil although sometimes the Jewish female also suffered the same treatment and I present three examples of this genre.

The first is *'Bar Mitzvah Boy'* – a 1976 film for television which depicts a working-class Jewish family in the excitement of the imminent 'Rite of Passage' of the young son, Eliot. I give this example because it demonstrates a Jewish family balancing Jewish ritual - the up-coming Bar Mitzvah and the synagogue service - with their social concerns - the etiquette regarding invitations and embarrassment at being seen to drive to the synagogue on the Sabbath. The inability of the rabbi to deal with a chaotic situation is also acknowledged. Eliot's pretentious parents bicker endlessly over the smallest details of the menu for the forthcoming party but don't hear their son's ambivalence about entering traditional Jewish manhood. Eliot's elder sister (Lesley) has a boyfriend (Harold) a few years older than Eliot and he is depicted as weak and trying in vain to have a more physical relationship with Lesley. Unable to cope with the

²⁸ See for example the work of Nathan Abrams [Nathan Abrams - Google Scholar](#)

pressure to perform, Eliot runs out of the synagogue just as he is about to be called upon to perform his section. That he eventually recites his section – whilst standing on his head in the park – enables the rabbi to declare that he is indeed a Bar Mitzvah allows the planned party to go ahead. Eliot is the only balanced Jewish male in the film, his father being anxious and henpecked, the boyfriend weak, ineffectual, and sexually frustrated and the rabbi is at a loss in trying to help this family. The female characters are similarly unsympathetic in that mother is a snob and the daughter completely self-centred.

The second is *'Suzie Gold'* a 2004 film about a 24-year-old Jewish girl – Suzie Gold - in Hampstead Garden Suburb, North-West London and is an example of a contrast between Jewish and non-Jewish masculine social performance. Suzie's younger sister is getting married to a Jewish man with a very ostentatious wedding celebration. The family's expectations are that she should also marry a Jew and a suitable man - Anthony Silver – is on the scene. However, he is a self-opinionated and rather shallow insensitive person and Suzie meets, and falls in love with, a non-Jewish man – Darren (his surname is not mentioned in the cast list). Whilst the film concentrates on the comedic interactions between the Jewish characters, all of whom are exaggerated stereotypes, for my project it is the contrast between Anthony Silver and Darren that is my focus. The absence of a surname for Darren makes him anonymous and thus he cannot be pigeonholed unlike Anthony and this makes Darren the mysterious 'other' in a Jewish milieu where it is usually the Jew who has that role in society. It is Darren's unpretentiousness and having come from a less wealthy background that is his attraction. When Darren sees the enormous refrigerator in the Gold's kitchen he exclaims, "This isn't a fridge, it's an ecosystem!" The Jewish man is the unattractive foil which makes the non-Jew a more superior character.

The third example is the sitcom, *'Friday Night Dinner'*, started in 2011 and its fifth series concluded in June 2018. I have included this in my thesis because it demonstrates a family whose Jewishness is performed culturally rather than halachically. This will be mentioned briefly in 3.2 page 67 and in more detail in 5.1 page 127. It depicts a secular Jewish family of two parents and their twenty-something two sons. Its Jewish content is not obvious with only indirect references to Jewishness, such as the location in North-West London, the Friday night traditional meal, a platted loaf (challah) on the table, and candles discreetly in the background but no other overt demonstration of Jewish ritual. Only a viewer sensitised to Jewishness would identify the Jewish differences, so the Jewishness is unspoken; there and not-there. This tension is explored through the eyes of the non-Jewish next-door neighbour whose intrigued ignorance functions as an amplified but effective comic device and perhaps also

speaks to the mainstream, non-Jewish viewer who might be equally confused about what exactly it means to be Jewish in twenty-first century suburban London. In this way the program addresses the Jewish viewer, who is able to recognize the Jewishness that it presents at a subtly coded level, and the non-Jewish viewer, who might or might not see the Jewishness of the situation (Gilbert, 2014).

1.3 Recent Significant Social Trends

Twenty-first century society has seen a number of sociological changes from the society of late 19th century Britain and three particular factors stand out. They are attitudes towards; religion, feminism and sexuality/sexual orientation and their influence on masculinity in general and Jewish masculinity in particular cannot be ignored. Whilst these movements pose a different set of questions to young Jews there has also been something of a ‘backlash’ against challenge to Rabbinic Judaism in the Ba’alei Teshuva²⁹ movement and resurgence of Hasidism that has spread from Israel and America.

Furlong quotes a youth survey of religious attitudes which reveals a more fluid approach to religion than hitherto. They believed that religion was a choice rather than an obligation and they rejected denominational labelling. Personal integrity was more important than an externally imposed authority and they were tolerant of other views, aspects of which they occasionally adopted, to produce a hybrid identity (Furlong, 2013 Page 140).

The feminist movement is usually regarded as starting in the late 19th century when suffrage movements in America and England created a new political identity for women although there had been prior movements agitating for women’s rights to vote since the mid-19th century. Central to this new movement were the struggles for family allowances, contraception and abortion, and welfare rights. There was also demand for acknowledgement of women’s domestic labour and women’s legal status (Humm, 1995 Page 98). Women, who had been working in the factories during the war, were not content to recede into the background and some men had difficulty acknowledging women’s ambitions. This difficulty was also felt by young Jews who were happy to take advantage of the sexual opportunities afforded by women’s liberation but were reluctant to accept that women wanted equality in all social, economic, and cultural areas. In the specifically Jewish space such initiatives as; women’s tefillah (lit. *prayer*) groups, Megillah Esther readings (Purim), Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance (JOFA founded in 1997), egalitarian communities and ordination of women as rabbis

²⁹ Lit. *Masters of Return* is applied to formerly secular and/or disengaged Jews who decide to change their behaviour and attitude to become strictly observant orthodox Jews.

have been met with the full range of responses from enthusiastic acceptance to outright rejection.

The privilege that heterosexual culture claims to have to be the exclusive model of human association denies any challenge to the wide range of social institutions by people of different sexual orientations. The change in attitude towards gay people has allowed gay Jews to become more visible and challenge the presumption of heterosexuality that traditional Judaism espouses. The liberality towards sexuality and sexual orientation is linked with queer theory; a set of ideas based around the principle that identities are not fixed and do not determine who a person is. 'Queer' in this context refers to "people and ideas that challenge rigid stereotypes, especially assumptions about sexual orientation and gender identity. 'Queer' doesn't simply mean homosexual but transgressive, destabilizing, and mixing up categories," (Zierler, 2013). In the context of my study, The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 paved the way for Jewish same sex couples to request a Jewish marriage ceremony to be recognised as equal in Jewish law to the ceremonies for opposite sex couples. Since 2017 the UK Liberal Judaism Rabbinical Conference has sanctioned such ceremonies³⁰ but this has not been accepted by the orthodox communities. There appear to be two distinct strands of thought in the 'queer camp.' On one side stand queers who link the Lesbian Gay Bi-Sexual Trans-Gender (LGBT) movements with broader social justice issues; and on the other stands a bureaucratic cadre of single issue gay assimilationist organisations who aspire to a place at the policy table (Shepard, 2010 Page 81). The former envisioned their movement as a critique of social, sexual, and economic social norms, subverting these norms and plotting their eventual overthrow and the latter group want to be accepted as normal, "just like everybody else," supporting law and order social policies, access to marriage and all the other rights and duties of civil society; they want to be at the table whereas the former seems to want to break up the table and subvert and challenge accepted norms of gender identification. This latter stance is taken by Michael Warner's criticism of heteronormativity (Warner, 1997 Introduction page xxi). The essays in his work *"Fear of a Queer Planet"* go beyond calling for tolerance of lesbians and gays that the assimilationists campaign for.

In the last 30 years I have seen two trends emerging in the observant community, the Modern Orthodox and the Ba'ale Teshuvah movements (mentioned on page 33). There has been a trend for young people to spend time in Israel, either on 'Israel tour' or for a 'gap year' learning about Judaism and Israel and attending theological institutions (yeshivot or

³⁰ *The Jewish Chronicle* 27th September 2017

seminaries). As the first wave of this group has grown up some of them are sending their children to Jewish schools where some of these young men do go on to university and professional qualifications thereby entering the mainstream of the Modern Orthodox community. Some of the returnees identify as Ba'ale Teshuvah and send their children to schools where the emphasis is on religious textual study to the detriment of secular subjects with the expectation that the boys from these schools would go to more advanced yeshivot and not undertake any secular professional training. The emphasis of this movement is to rebuild what was lost in the Holocaust and can thus be characterised as a response to the secularisation of the community. In the context of masculinity, those in full time yeshiva/kollel are reverting to the rabbinic model described by Boyarin (D. Boyarin, 1997a Page 143) where men would study Talmud and the family would be supported either by parents or the wife.³¹ Where the wife's educational and professional status is higher than her husbands (according to secular criteria) there may be tensions between the traditional ideal and the social reality³². As self-restraint and control of emotion are principle factors in determining Haredi masculinity when the individual man feels that he cannot live up to these expectations he may become violent towards his spouse (Goldberg & Yassour-Borochowitz, 2009). Demographic surveys of the Anglo-Jewish community show that the strictly orthodox population is growing and as they tend to have more children than other groups then this trend is likely to continue (D. Staetsky & Boyd, 2015).

1.4 Current concern of Anglo-Jewry

The history of Anglo-Jewry outlined above showed how the predominant concern of the communal leaders was to emphasise to non-Jews the loyalty and civility of the immigrant Jews and their successors to Britain and to the Jews the necessity of living up to these standards to integrate and fit in socially and economically into British society. One of the consequences of the integration policy was the discouragement of the Yiddish language for the succeeding generations and that loss caused separation from the culture and literary heritage of the Ashkenazi Jews. Language is a powerful connection to a people's heritage as the proponents of preservation of minority languages (Cornish, Welsh, and Gaelic in the UK for example) know. This assimilation/integration policy was very successful but as a consequence the community had become fragmented and in decline with an aging population and a trend for exogamy which seemed to threaten survival of the community. These fears were addressed by Chief

³¹ Boyarin's view of rabbinic masculinity will be described in detail in the literature review. See 2.4.1.

³² The *Jewish Chronicle* of 22nd February 2019 featured an anonymous article describing the spouse abuse and depression among the Haredi community in London which has been hidden for years.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks in his book *Will we have Jewish grandchildren?* (Sacks, 1994) which ushered in a change in communal policy from one of security to one stressing how insecure the community had become (Gidley & Kahn-Harris, 2012; Kahn-Harris & Gidley, 2010). The promotion and preservation of Jewish identity became the main concern and stimulated a range of measures within the community to promote it including Jewish schools, synagogue youth activities (for example *Tribe* for the under 30s and specifically designed for United Synagogue members who are not orthodox and would be suspicious of activities to make them more orthodox), summer camps and short Israel trips (which became a 'rite of passage' for year-11 pupils). The use of Hebrew language terms in the informal setting of these non-ritual activities may be seen as an attempt to connect with modern Israeli culture and reverse the disconnect that had occurred when the Yiddish language was discarded by previous generations. By engagement with the cultural aspect of Jewishness appeal is made to those Jews for whom ritual observance has little relevance to their lives. As well as the discourse of Jewish continuity insecurity from internal causes (apathy, exogamy and demographic decline) the community was also sensitised to a feeling of insecurity from external causes, of being under attack, both verbal and physical, from outside by constant reports in the Jewish press of antisemitic sentiment from politicians and media personalities often couched in anti-Israel terms. Jewish schools, synagogues and public events were deemed to be at risk from attack and required security guards, elaborate entry procedures, CCTV, and even barbed wire fencing around schools. The annual '*March of the Living*' tour of Holocaust sites in Poland culminating at Auschwitz is aimed at high school students for education about the Holocaust and to emphasise that the Jews have survived and strengthen Jewish identity. Holocaust education does feed into the discourse of Jews having been under attack in the past and the danger that it could be repeated.

1.5 Conclusion

For men, the essence of their masculinity can never be static. They have to change and adapt as the circumstances in which they live have changed. The last 140 years has seen great change both in the world political configuration and individual social circumstance. This chapter has sought to identify the macro-historical events in Britain that have caused men to re-assess what society expects of them. Britain, being an island, had a settled national identity following the union with Scotland by Acts of Union in 1706-7 and union with Ireland in 1801 so British nationalism was taken for granted. Furthermore, there is a long history of immigration into Britain from Europe by individuals seeking refuge from religious persecution or for economic reasons. The experience of mainland Europe was different, and the concept

of the nation state was a product of mainland European politics after the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire with the formation of Italy and Germany from previous related but separate provinces. Jews in Europe had achieved a degree of emancipation entering into the higher ranks of society although individually were subject to antisemitism and frequent discrimination. An unfortunate consequence of nationalism was rivalry between the powers for exploitation of Africa and international influence accompanied by a paranoid fear of the ambitions of the neighbouring states. The First World War was a direct result of this international rivalry and the consequences of that conflict affected the rest of the twentieth century.

The nineteenth century Jewish community in Britain was completely transformed by the arrival of the migrant cohorts and as a community Jews proved remarkably adept at adapting to the British way of life and values. The settled Anglo-Jewish community was eager to see integration of the new arrivals and the majority of the latter in turn were eager to be accepted and to contribute to national life. Judaism combines a strong sense of communal obligation with individual responsibility to care for oneself and one's family; Jews, now freed from the shackles of the circumstances of their previous life in Eastern and Central Europe, were able to take advantage of the general liberal philosophy of the country. Jewish men (and to a lesser extent, Jewish women) had opportunities to demonstrate their commitment to the country by their entry into public life and I have demonstrated how they have reacted to the range of events as the twentieth century unfolded.

In this chapter I have sought to give an overview of the history of the present-day Anglo-Jewish community through the lens of masculinity. I argue that this is valid in respect of the competition between sections of the community wishing to enforce its view of behaviour. The concern that the leadership had to avoid antagonising the receiving society caused them to exert influence to curb the instincts of the new immigrants who threatened to disturb the delicate balance that had been achieved prior to the mass immigration. Being grateful for the freedom from state sanctioned persecution experienced in their former countries, the generality of the immigrant community was initially enthusiastic in embracing British values and contributed to the religious, economic, academic, and social spheres of the country. As the community developed, the second generation, those born in Britain, and subsequent generations were less deferential towards the older establishment and the previous passive acceptance of their leadership was increasingly challenged as evidenced by the different responses to the rise of fascism in the 30s and in the religious domain by the split in the centre-orthodox by Rabbi Louis Jacobs. The disagreement in the community between the

Zionist vision for the future of Judaism and those who opposed Jewish nationalism mirrored the contrast between an assertive nature for Jewish behaviour and those whose priority was 'fitting in' with British society. The establishment of the State of Israel has made it easier for those in the community who wish to leave Britain and make their life there but for the majority, supporting Zionism means that they are happy to support Israel politically, culturally and by tourism without formal migration.

For young Jews in today's society the collective memory of the struggles of their immigrant forebears has faded and their British identity is accepted as a matter of fact. Within their Britishness there is a second identity of being Jewish and there is a balance between these two identities, being an outsider and an insider at the same time. The reluctance of certain sections of the political establishment to accept in full the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism³³ and the use of antisemitic tropes in the public space has brought this into focus. The cultural and historical components of their Jewish identity vie with the influences of the non-Jewish world as these young men chart their path. Concomitant with the British/Jewish balance is their masculinity now that societal acceptance of certain masculine attitudes and behaviours has altered in the last 20 years. The casual, almost unthinking, sexism and misogyny that was commonplace in business, the professions and socially that was suffered by women of previous generations has only recently been challenged. This chapter sets the background to the investigation of how they are managing this process which is the subject of this project.

³³ <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism?usergroup=5> but see also David Feldman's critique of the IHRA definition [The government should not impose a faulty definition of antisemitism on universities | David Feldman | The Guardian](#) *The Guardian* 2nd December 2020

Chapter 2 Literature Review: Conceptualising Masculinity

2.1 Introduction

To review the literature pertinent to my thesis I decided to differentiate four areas; general masculinity, youth masculinity, Jewish masculinity, and Britishness. Under general masculinity I shall set out the cultural and historical antecedents that have been influencing how men have viewed themselves as individuals and as a collective in relation to their time, their locale, and their society. I shall show how these views have been constructed and then deconstructed and changed in response to changing circumstances. Because young men occupy the space between dependant childhood and independent adulthood, between being dominated by and usually financially dependent on parents and being able to determine their own agency regarding how they want to lead their lives, their construction of gender differs from their parent's. In this space they are investigating and experimenting with various constructions of their being which includes their notion of gender and how they will perform it.

Jews have a long history of being separate from the rest of society but still part of it. Straddling definitions of race, ethnicity, and religion (all of which are contested terms) they have been seen as the exotic 'other' against which other groups can define themselves – knowing who they are by knowing who there are not. Occupying this marginal space, male Jews have had to develop their own way of being a man, maintaining self-respect frequently in the face of opposition. In addition, Jews are not homogenous and there has been fracturing of the community into various competing factions vying for legitimacy. Consequently, Jewish masculinity has evolved which, although sharing certain features with general masculinity, has produced some distinct characteristics which run counter to the generality.

Britain has similarly fostered a sense of exceptionalism, being part of Western civilisation but also holding itself aloof from both the European mainland and the Americas. The legacy of Empire has meant the propagation of English as an almost universal language but also carries the weight of its historical association with colonialism and slavery. The British population composition has changed from overwhelmingly monoculturally white to a much more cosmopolitan nature, especially in London. All these factors interact to produce a fluid construction of Britishness.

2.2 General Masculinity

There are two important strands in the development of masculinity in Western culture. They are the Judeo-Christian tradition derived from the Bible and the Greco-Roman tradition derived from classical Hellenism.

In the biblical account the creation of the first man, Adam, was at the behest of God. The first woman, Eve, was created as a helper to Adam who thereby occupies a dominant heterosexual masculine position to her but he is inferior to God who occupies the psychoanalytical vision of the father as the source of authority in the family and whose word is law (Seidler, 2006 Page 67). Following the expulsion from Eden (the 'fall' in Christian theology) Eve was told that she will have pain in childbirth, but her desire will be for her husband and he will rule over her. Adam was told that because he obeyed his wife and disobeyed God, he would have to work hard all the days of his life. This set the pattern for 'sex-roles' that was regarded as the accepted model of the conjugal family, of men being active in the public space and women being confined to the private space of the home looking after children and being subservient to her husband.

The patriarchal system that the biblical model institutionalised required that to be a man is to have a particular psychological identity, social role, place in the labour force, and sense of self. In industrial societies, 'real men' defined themselves in three ways. Firstly, they earned money in the public work force and supported their families through that effort (the man as provider and breadwinner). Secondly, they (should) have formal power over women and children in those families (the man as head of the house). And finally, 'real men' were unquestionably heterosexual.³⁴ The emergence of successive waves of feminism and increasing visibility of men who did not fit the biblical model led to a discourse that masculinity was in some form of crisis, men as passive victims of impersonal socialising forces (the male victimisation thesis). In response to this discourse a number of books were published in the popular press (Clare, 2000; Perry, 2016) and academic literature (Horrocks, 1994; Pleck, 1981; Segal, 2007).

Recent investigations into perceptions of gender in the Greco-Roman world have shown that masculinity was viewed as an attribute only partially related to an individual's anatomical sex. Whereas breasts and womb ensured that their possessor would be viewed as essentially feminine, the presence of male genitalia did not automatically confer masculinity which was all but identified with social and political dominance there being no assumption that all males must be masculine. The masculinity of slaves, for example, was by definition impaired. Personal dignity, bodily integrity, and specific details of one's appearance were all factors in individual self-assessment and in men's evaluation of one another's masculinity. Elite men of the day were constantly concerned with the maintenance of their masculinity, because it both displayed and justified their positions of power. Unlike noble birth, which was immutable,

³⁴ Catharine R Stimpson in the Forward to *The Making of Masculinities: the new men's studies* (Brod, 1987)

masculinity was a matter of perception. While elites always represented their masculinity to outsiders as innate, among insiders it was implicitly recognized that masculinity was a performance requiring constant practice and vigilance (Larson, 2004).

An examination of masculinity and manhood in ancient Greece reveals three main modes: Athenian, Sparta and Stoicism (Rubarth, 2013). Athens was an urban metropolitan centre which attracted artists and intellectuals, where every man was expected to engage in political discussion to rule his household, and women had almost no role other than to bear children. She was sequestered at home, not allowed to inherit or do business. The Athenian man was trained in rhetoric for political ends. Sparta was a loose collection of rural villages and the principal occupation was training for battle and the military camp took the place of 'home.' They were famously short on speech. Spartan women, in contrast to Athenian women, led autonomous lives being allowed to accumulate wealth, own land, and be educated. Stoic ethical theory rests on a correct understanding of what is good, what is bad, and what is indifferent. Only virtues, which are forms of knowledge, are good; only vice or ignorance is bad; everything else, wealth, reputation, health, family, property, and even life itself is of indifferent value. True evil is harming one's own soul by ignorantly choosing to do wrong. The Stoic knows that death is in the cards for everyone so the real question is not how to avoid death, but how to die nobly. The Stoic also cultivated the intellect as a primary end but opposed the use of the mind for personal aggrandizement or enrichment. The point of thinking is to learn how the world works so one can live in agreement with it and not be vulnerable to externals.

The norms of masculinity in Roman culture comprised a firm standard of correctness in appearance, deportment, gaze, gesture, and speech which was cultivated by continuous exertion but must never be allowed to appear an act (Gleason, 1995 Page 80). Masculinity was still thought to be "grounded in nature yet it remained fluid and incomplete until firmly anchored by the discipline of an acculturative process."

The subservient position of women in society was discussed by Gayle Rubin (G. Rubin, 1975) who enlisted a Marxist perspective, that women are unpaid labour for the production of capital in that the 'wife' does the housework so that the man can produce the capital; "she does not lead, inherit, or speak to god." Ruben also drew on Levi-Strauss' idea of the essence of kinship being the exchange of women between men, constructing an implicit theory of sex oppression. It places the oppression of women not in biology but in social relations. The division of labour by sex ensures that the smallest unit that is socially viable must contain at least one man and one woman thereby enjoining heterosexual marriage.

In David Clines' introduction to his essay on the biblical King David (Clines, 1995), he tabulates a set of rules to suggest a stereotype of being a man in the modern west: - 1) Don't be female. Whatever women do is *ipso facto* what a real man must not do. 2) Be successful. Men's worth as husbands, friends, or simply as men is determined by their successfulness. The object is, not to be liked but to be envied. 3) Be aggressive. Boys are encouraged to be tough, to fight and not to run away. Sport and military training reinforce this. 4) Be sexual. Men are supposed to be sexually experienced and always interested. Sex isn't a free choice when you have to perform to be a man. 5) Be self-reliant. Men are supposed to be confident and independent. A 'real man' doesn't need others, particularly women. He depends and takes care of himself and relies on nobody. These attributes are similar to those of D. Brannon quoted by Brendon Gough of four traditional male norms: 1) No sissy stuff – avoidance of behaviours characteristically associated with women or femininity, 2) Be a Big Wheel – masculinity measured by success, power, and receiving admiration, 3) Be a Sturdy Oak – manliness predicated on rationality, toughness, and self-reliance, and 4) Give 'em Hell – the rationality of the sturdy oak is balanced with daring, aggression, and risk taking (Gough, 2018 Page 2). These norms privilege young, heterosexual, strong and physical men, and those who deviate from these norms will be characterised as such. This is compatible with the 'Hemingway myth' of brawny masculinity (Horrocks, 1994 page 91 et.seq.; Segal, 2007 page 94 et.seq.).

Gender development was summarised by Susan Golombok and Robyn Fivush in their book *Gender Development* (Golombok & Fivush, 1994) and mentioned the psychoanalytic approaches of Freud, Erikson, Chodorow, Kohlberg, and Gilligan as well as the social learning and cognitive development theories. They argued that as family models were changing gender development did not depend on relationship with parents but a complex interaction between the individual and the wider social environment of which the parents were just one part. Lynne Segal regards the notion of sex roles and sex-role stereotyping such as the social learning theory of Golombok and Fivush, whilst "superficially appealing' has been the object of convincing criticism as it posits a non-existent homogeneity to social life (Segal, 2007 Page 58).

The term hegemonic masculinity was first used by Raewyn Connell in 1982 in a study of sex, gender, and secondary schooling in a pamphlet, *Ockers & Disco-maniacs* reprised in a paper by Kessler (Kessler, Ashenden, Connell, & Dowsett, 1985) and Connell collaborated with Carrigan and Lee in their 1985 paper, *Towards a New Sociology of Masculinity* (Carrigan, Connell, & Lee, 1985). They criticised the sex-role model on several grounds including the observation that although nominally about both sexes there had been exclusive concentration on women's role

to the neglect of that of men. Also, it did not distinguish between the expectations made of people and what they actually do. They observed that feminism, focusing on sexual exploitation and violence, sees masculinity as more or less unrelieved villainy and all men as agents of the patriarchy in more or less the same degree. Another force opposing sex-roles was the increasing political activism of the homosexual community which focussed on the power relations between men. Connell et al concluded that sex role analyses the acquisition of masculinity by means of social learning and conformity to normal models. It is impossible to isolate a 'role' that constructs masculinity (or another that constructs femininity) because there is no area of social life that is not the arena of sexual differentiation and gender relations. Connell's gender order theory recognizes multiple masculinities that vary across time, culture, and the individual. "Hegemonic masculinity is defined as a practice that legitimizes men's dominant position in society, the unequal gender relations between men and women, and justifies the subordination of the common male population and women, and other marginalized ways of being a man." Conceptually, hegemonic masculinity proposes to explain how and why men maintain dominant social roles over women, and other gender identities, which are perceived as 'feminine' in a given society. Men who received the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a strong version of masculine dominance could be regarded as showing a complicit masculinity. It was in relation to this group, and to compliance among heterosexual women, that the concept of hegemony was most powerful. Hegemony did not mean violence, although it could be supported by force; it meant ascendancy achieved through culture, institutions, and persuasion, an idea that embeds certain notions of consent and participation by the subaltern groups (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Connell had further argued that hegemonic masculinity was constructed in relation to three further non-hegemonic masculinities; subordinate masculinities constructed as lesser than or aberrant and deviant to hegemonic masculinity, such as effeminate men; marginalised masculinities are discriminated against because of non-gender factors such as race, class, ethnicity, and age; and protest masculinities constructed as hyper-masculinities formed in reaction to socially disadvantaged positions lacking economic or political power such as the violence that occurs amongst unemployed youth.

Following the model that gender does not reside in the person but rather in the social transactions defined as gendered Will Courtenay used social constructionism to advance the theory that in order to construct their masculinity men were more likely to engage in hazardous behaviours than women. These included the appearance of being strong dismissing any need for help and refusing to take sick leave or consult a doctor. In

institutional social structures, such as the workforce, men have traditionally done the most dangerous physical work (building,³⁵ farming, fishing) and even in office-based work (corporate law and banking) they work excessively long hours which exact a toll on their health.

Courtenay advances the theory that in demonstrating their masculinity men are defined against positive health behaviours and beliefs which account for their higher death rates than women (Courtenay, 2000). So defined, masculinity is unstable and needs continual performance to maintain position in gender hierarchy. Men have been embarrassed to talk about health matters³⁶ as their health is intricately bound up with notions of masculinity and this is particularly the case regarding genitourinary problems. Following licensing of sildenafil (Viagra) in 1998 for erectile dysfunction there was a study about men's expectations about Viagra, what they knew about it, and what were their sources of information (R. Rubin, 2004). The study found that men were generally reluctant to admit taking an interest in sexual problems and any information they did have had been gleaned accidentally. As impotence is generally a result of medical conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, or heart disease, all of which are treatable, Rubin thought this to be a classic case of psychological denial.

Margaret Wetherell and Nigel Edley made a critical analysis of hegemonic masculinity (Wetherell & Edley, 1999), arguing that it was insufficiently developed to understand how men positioned themselves as gendered beings. Their research found three distinctive psycho-discursive practices through which men construct themselves as masculine. The first was the Heroic Position – a particular production of self as being in command and dominant, complicit with hegemonic masculinity and very few men could achieve this. The second was the Ordinary Position, a disavowal of the imaginary position of the exalted male hero. There was no narcissistic merging of self with exalted masculinity and was resistant to hegemonic masculinity. The third was the Rebellious Position, being oneself and not conforming to other's notion of masculinity and having the courage, strength, and determination to engage as men to potentially demeaning activities.

Demetrakis Demetriou (Demetriou, 2001) identified two forms of hegemony, internal and external. "External hegemony" refers to the institutionalization of men's dominance over women; "internal hegemony" refers to the social ascendancy of one group of men over all other men. Demetriou argues that the relationship between the two forms is unclear in the original formulation of the concept and unspecified in current usages. Moreover, internal hegemony typically has been

³⁵ See (Hanna et al., 2020) for a study of masculinities in the construction industry.

³⁶ *"I'd rather die than let a doctor do a rectal examination on me!"*

understood in an "elitist" way. That is, subordinate and marginalized masculinities are seen as having no impact on the construction of hegemonic masculinity. Nonhegemonic masculinities exist in tension with, but never penetrate or impact, the hegemonic masculinity. There is, then, a dualistic representation of masculinities.

Raewyn Connell and James Messerschmidt (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) reviewed the hegemonic masculinity framework and reformulated it to produce a more holistic understanding of gender hierarchy, recognizing the agency of subordinated groups, such as homosexuals, as much as the power of dominant groups and the mutual conditioning of gender dynamics and other social dynamics. They proposed analysing hegemonic masculinity along three lines. Local hegemony was constructed in face-to-face interaction of families, organizations, and immediate communities. Regional hegemony was constructed at the level of the culture or the nation state. Global hegemony was constructed in transnational arenas such as world politics and transnational business and media, as studied in the emerging research on masculinities and globalization.

Thomas Johansson's study of middle-class Swedish men who had opted to spend more time with family and child care revealed a shift from hardcore hegemonic masculinity, described in terms of power, control, and material values to a more humanistic and gender equal masculine and structural position (Johansson, 2011). He suggests that certain changes in societal class structure, particularly state support for fathers taking extended parental leave from work, are contributing to changes in hegemonic masculinity.

Messerschmidt (Messerschmidt, 2012) criticised the tendency of researchers to read hegemonic masculinity as a static character type ignoring the question of gender dynamics. They (researchers) didn't analyse the consequences of how the particular masculine traits legitimate gender inequality and subordinate women, feminists, and nonhegemonic masculinities. Certain men may obtain power over other men (without legitimating patriarchal relations) by constructing dominant and/or dominating masculinities. Dominant masculinities are prevailing in a given social formation and are in that sense authoritative. Such masculinities by definition dominate other masculinities but only in the broad sense that any emphasized norm by definition tends to marginalize the non-normative. Dominating masculinities are involved in more overt, explicit, or brute oppression of men who practice other masculinities. Hegemonic masculinities are characterized by dominance through cultural and discursive consensus as opposed to overt use of raw force, physical coercion, etc. Hegemonic masculinity furthermore legitimizes patriarchal gender relations.

Finding that hegemonic masculinity could not account for the social dynamics of those male peer groups in sport and fraternity settings where the social dynamics were not predicated on homophobia, stoicism, or a rejection of the feminine, Anderson examined the centrality of homophobia to the construction and regulation of masculinities in a series of papers between 2002 and 2010. He also examined the impact on men and masculinities of cultures in which homophobia had decreased. He argued that in the absence of homophobia, men's gender came to be founded upon emotional openness, increased peer tactility, softening gender codes and close friendship based on emotional disclosure. From this work he developed a theory of inclusive masculinities – Inclusive Masculinity Theory (IMT) - which he reviewed in 2018 (Anderson & McCormack, 2018). This body of research has shown that many young straight men reject homophobia, include gay peers in friendship networks, are more emotionally intimate with friends, are physically tactile with other men, recognize bisexuality as a legitimate sexual orientation, embrace activities and artefacts once coded feminine, and eschew violence and bullying. Because homophobia continued to exist in certain groups that were emotionally intimate Anderson introduced the concept of homo-hysteria defined as the fear of being socially perceived as gay. Homophobia only regulates men's behaviours in settings that are homo-hysterical.

Christian Groes-Green introduced the concept of “philogynous masculinities” as part of an exploration of more gender equitable tendencies among young men (Groes-Green, 2012). Working amongst young men in Mozambique he found that whilst some men were dominant, violent, and selfish there were alternative notions of manhood. Philogynous masculinities refer to male narratives and gender configurations which divert from predominantly misogynous masculinities and which delineate forms of manhood that favour female subjects' rights to agency, security, respect, and well-being in gender equitable ways. These alternative ways of relating to women don't preclude patriarchal gender structures entirely but may occur in specific social settings. Groes-Green found that in the context of sex education in secondary schools and also informal social and family situations male partner's violence was considered unmanly and not acceptable. The young men seemed anxious to be seen as respectful towards women and pay attention to his partner to be attentive to her needs and to nourish a relationship. However, Groes-Green also found that some young men's wish to sexually satisfy a girlfriend was embedded in dominant ideals of manhood where virility, potency, and strength were associated with male superiority vis-à-vis women and other men. Concern that the woman should enjoy sex would be symptomatic of the man's desire to demonstrate his potency as a good lover and the woman is objectified. The interest in female satisfaction may for instance be part of an attempt to regain a male

status as a sexual 'conqueror.' Furthermore, the fact that male subjects attempt to become 'a good man' does not necessarily imply that they are in favour of gender equality outside of the sexual domain, that is, in economic, symbolic, or social terms but some might be genuine in their desire for gender equality. However, it may just be a ruse to ingratiate himself with a woman.

In a study of casual sexual activity between heterosexuals not in a committed romantic relationship (hooking up) conducted at a public American university Daniella Currier addresses the underlying heterosexist bias in the definitions of hook-ups. She analysed how the ambiguity of the term "hook-up " serves women and men in different ways and both reinforces and challenges the current gender order, allowing men to conform to and preserve components of hegemonic masculinity and women to conform to and preserve components of emphasized femininity (Currier, 2013). Men were likely to emphasise the amount of sexual activity in order to impress other men and maintain their social status as active heterosexuals. The young women in the study reported walking a fine line between hooking up "enough" but not "too much," always trying to avoid the label 'slut' and exhibit a level of sexual compliance to men by downplaying their own sexual desires.

Ann-Dorte Christensen and Sune Qvotrup Jensen developed the notion of internal hegemony advanced by Demetriou into an intersectional approach to hegemony (Christensen & Jensen, 2014). They argued that gender intersects/interacts with race and class, nationality, or position in the world order. White men's masculinities are constructed not only in relation to white women but also in relation to black men, old age, and sexuality. Class, gender, and ethnicity categories are mutually constituted social systems which can exaggerate, subvert, or cancel each other. Intersectional theory can show how being a man can be a category of disempowerment and lack of privilege rather than a privileged position.

The concept of hybrid masculinities³⁷ critically highlights the emergence of recent transformations of masculinities where elements of identity typically associated with marginalised and subordinated masculinities (and femininity) are selectively incorporated into privileged men's gender and performance identities (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014). Being the prerogative of typically young straight white men the 'New Man' situates poor men, black men, uneducated men, and rural men as possessors of regressive masculinities. A study of vegan men by Jessica Greenebaum and Brendon Dexter suggested that men's adoption of veganism, hitherto associated with the feminine

³⁷ This term is not universally accepted in Men's Studies.

characteristics of compassion for animals, was a form of hybrid masculinity (Greenebaum & Dexter, 2018). The men of the study emphasized the health benefits of a non-meat diet (their improved strength and physical fitness) and “cash in on the patriarchal dividend” by continuing to value masculine traits of strength and athleticism.³⁸ They asserted that veganism was the ultimate expression of masculinity requiring courage and self-control to express compassion and empathy for animals.

In an editorial for *The Nordic International Journal for Masculinity Studies* entitled “Is Masculinity Toxic” – Sam de Boise noted that in January 2019 the American Psychological Association from data from American studies defined Traditional Masculinity as “marked by stoicism, competitiveness, dominance, and aggression which is, on the whole, harmful” characterising it as adherence to a series of gendered attitudes, manifest more frequently in behaviours by men (de Boise, 2019). This, the APA suggested, was actively damaging to both others (violence, transphobic, misogynistic, homophobic, or racist bullying, sexual assault, or harassment) and the people themselves who subscribe to such gendered constructs (excessive drinking, physical injuries from fighting, steroids, body dysmorphia, drug-taking, inability to express emotions). A number of news media picked up this story and referring it as *Toxic Masculinity*³⁹ which itself had a 40-year history. Toxic masculinity used as a pathological term invites measures to overturn it, but it had also been used as lever by certain men’s groups who wished to advocate a return to some form of ‘eternal masculinity’ founded on care and compassion. These groups tended to be patriarchal, reactionary, and antifeminist.

The APA’s advocacy lends institutional legitimacy to the notion that certain gendered behaviours are socially constructed and can, therefore, be deconstructed. The term ‘toxic masculinity’ potentially increases receptivity to the notion that there are harmful and non-harmful forms of masculinity, as well as operating as an analytic tool allowing masculinity scholars to talk in normative terms of what masculinity should be rather than simply describing what it appears to be. The concept of toxic masculinity risks racializing a concept associated with colonialism and race commonly directed at black men regardless of the fact that also young white men are often more likely to be involved in extremist acts. De Boise also notes that toxic masculinity is firmly tied to climate change behaviours in which men take pride ranging from “fierce meat-eating, mechanophilia⁴⁰ and international business travel.” He

³⁸ This has a biblical precursor in the narrative of the Israelite captives, Daniel and others who thrived on a vegan diet in preference to Nebuchadnezzar’s food – Daniel 1. 8-20

³⁹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/22/us/toxic-masculinity.html>

⁴⁰ For example the motor car TV programme *Top Gear* [Home](#) | [Top Gear](#)

believed that the co-optation of the narrative that masculinity is inherently toxic is remarkably effective precisely because of its affective value for those who are already invested in masculinity as a character attribute. Toxic masculinity, however, too, feeds into this narrative whilst reducing systemic problems to decontextualised, interpersonal acts.

Men receive messages from society about how they should behave and appear. Society portrays men as appearing muscular and lean and behaving in ways that are traditionally considered masculine. Many men internalize these messages and conform to these masculine norms to be accepted by society. Nicholas Dawson and Joseph H. Hammer conducted a study that suggested rigid adherence to masculine norms may result in dissatisfaction with muscularity, and this dissatisfaction fuels unhealthy exercise (Dawson & Hammer, 2020). They defined exercise dependence as “a craving for leisure-time physical activity, resulting in uncontrollable excessive exercise behaviour, that manifests in physiological (e.g., tolerance/withdrawal) and/or psychological (e.g., anxiety, depression) symptoms.” This article was accompanied by a ‘Public Significance Statement’⁴¹ that clinicians could discuss flexibility around masculine norms and find more moderate expressions of masculine norms with men who have muscularity concerns. If exercise dependence was a concern for clients, clinicians may need to consult with relevant literature and experts on exercise dependence and/or substance dependence.

Britain, as in other industrial nations, division of labour based upon sex is an intransigent feature of the labour force. The gendering of employment, with women predominantly involved in caring and other service work, reinforces this phenomenon. With decline of some traditionally male dominated jobs increasing numbers of men are moving into what had hitherto been regarded as feminine jobs either by choice or financial necessity. Consciously or otherwise some men in the feminine jobs adopt strategies to underline their masculine difference. Barbara Bagilhole and Simon Cross studied 10 men in a variety of feminised jobs and found that they constructed their identities in contrast to their female colleagues to underline their masculine difference (Bagilhole & Cross, 2006). They found that men in these jobs tended to orientate themselves towards promotion into management positions, referred to as the ‘glass escalator’ where men often rise to higher positions more quickly than women.⁴² In contrast Joanne McDowell’s study of the language use by male nurses working in

⁴¹ Since 2014 the APA has recommended author(s) consider adding a lay statement to a paper to allow greater control of how their work be interpreted by non-specialists.

⁴² These men could be considered as exhibiting hybrid masculinity, taking feminine jobs but achieving masculine positions of power and domination.

mixed-sex teams found that the men adopted typical feminine strategies, such as gossip, small talk, and relational practice, all of which are “strongly associated with female activities and domains, and widely culturally coded as feminine” (Homes, 2006 Page 6 Table 1.1) to emphasise their identity⁴³ as a nurse. They were also using discursive construction of group identity (‘we’ and ‘us’ for the group against ‘they’ and ‘them’ for other groups) to build a Community of Practice with the female nurses with whom they were working (McDowell, 2015).

The main theme in the literature that I have reviewed here indicates that masculinity was a continual performance and hence unstable with men being perpetually watching for threats to their position in a male hierarchy but from this model there appears an alternative less competitive and more cooperative mode of being a man. In cooperative mode there is no need to dominate women or other men to support their masculine position and thus it removes the fear of being seen as a failure by his peers. My own argument is that masculinity resides along an axis between competitive and cooperative masculinities and allows men the freedom to construct how they want to be a man without the fear of failure to conform to any prevailing cultural norm. I shall be elaborating on this later (see 4.11 page 125 and 7 page 211 et. seq.) I now turn to focus on youth.

2.3 Youth Masculinity

Young people grow up in diverse kinds of families and for the ‘postmodern’ family there is no longer a single pattern that is regarded as normal against which other forms of intimate relations are to be evaluated. Within some families there is a clear demarcation of gender roles and gendered division of labour that is unquestioned but as an adolescent experiencing hormonal and bodily changes wider influences from peer groups and general media encourage the individual to explore and discover alternative possibilities of self-expression and subjectivity. Michael Kimmel’s study of young white American college students found a suspended animation between boyhood and manhood (Kimmel, 2008 Page 6). The danger that Kimmel noted was that these young men were more liable to perform poorly academically during this volatile stage having access to all the tools of adulthood with few of the moral and familiar constraints that urge sober conformity (Kimmel, 2008 Page 43). Jinho Kim found that negative association between delinquency and educational attainment occurred only for males but not for females (Kim, 2021). Kim’s study of 12- to 17-year-olds in Seoul, South Korea,

⁴³ In Identity Process Theory (Breakwell, 1985/2015) this behaviour is characteristic of the ‘belonging motive’ for group identity (Vignoles, Chryssochoou, & Breakwell, 2002)

followed for six years looked at siblings discordant in their delinquent behaviour, separately, for brother-pairs and sister-pairs to control family influences.

The change in employment patterns and opportunities in a globalised economy has meant that many young men no longer have traditional jobs to sustain notions of masculinity and they are left with their body as the site within which to affirm male identity (Seidler, 2006 Page 186). Kimmel has noted that young men make up the vast majority of judicial offenders, especially crimes of violence, and have the highest rates of substance abuse, and higher rates of depression and suicide.

The early work on IMT (see Page 46) was done on middle-class youth but in 2016 Steven Roberts started applying this concept to working-class youth which was the basis for his book *Young Working-Class Men in Transition* (Roberts, 2018). This work on working-class young men in South-East England demonstrated that in tandem with the socio-economic changes that had challenged men's traditional positions in the workplace (Roberts Chapter 6) and the home (Roberts Chapter 7), these young men had fostered a move to egalitarianism and more positive forms of masculinity. Roberts quoted a 2016 YouGov poll on strength of gender identity at different ages which showed that young men and women in the 18 to 24 years cohort were disassociating themselves from the concept of being either completely masculine or feminine and that 42% of these young men felt that masculinity had negative connotations. Roberts further challenged the notion that the drive towards progressive attitudes towards gender equality was the preserve of privileged white middle-class men and that working-class men emerge in this research as those better placed to lead transformation in terms of masculinities.

In contradiction to the picture that Roberts paints of contemporary working-class youth, Yosef Bakkali's study of two 'road life' young men indicate that a generation of marginalised young people "dying to live" as they become locked in an existential struggle against a sense of malaise permeating many of their everyday experiences. These experiences of social suffering are conceptualised through 'the munpain'⁴⁴ (Bakkali, 2019). Road life is a UK-based street culture drawing on a USA and Caribbean sources of dress, language, and music. It is not exclusively black and it cuts across both race and gender. The participants of Bakkali's study had been both the perpetrators and victims of knife crime living in a socially marginal space of an inner-city London council estate. Lacking economic and/or political power this form of

⁴⁴ Munpain is a portmanteau word combining mundane and pain.

masculinity is a protest hyper-masculinity as defined by Connell (above) and restated by Messerschmidt (Messerschmidt, 2019). Life in these estates where generations of multi-ethnic, working-class young people have forged and negotiated urban identities in the midst of relative deprivation and ever-changing global cities. Because of this, road culture is predominantly concerned with the 'mundane' practices of urban life such as leisure, friendship, love, and material survival.⁴⁵

Most young people have mobile phones with the ability to take and distribute photographs which have allowed them to take and exchange sexualised images of themselves – sexting. This practice has become a site where young men and women can engage with their emerging sexuality in both positive and negative ways. From a project investigating sexual bullying in the 13 to 18-year-olds Gough, Milnes, and Turner-Moore analysed young masculinities across five European countries - England, Italy, Bulgaria, Slovenia, and Latvia - (Gough, Milnes, & Turner-Moore, 2021). They identified three key themes relating to young masculinities which highlight forms of male harassment against young women and their peers. The first was technology used to pressure and victimise girls conducted in the presence (physical or digital) or recounted for the benefit of their peers thereby acquiring peer approval and reinforcing restrictive masculinity norms. They were pursuing a version of hegemonic masculinity which relies on homo-sociability, heteronormativity and the subordination and objectification of young women. The second theme was homophobic self-policing where young men were invested in heteronormativity and surveillance of self and others for signs of 'gay' practices which could be mocked and punished. The third was downplaying and denying bullying accusations by assuming that young men were at the mercy of their hormones and as a result choice, control and responsibility was diminished. Boys were likely to construe sexual bullying as light-hearted and a joke while girls were likely to over-react, a sex difference which underplays boy's accountability.

The predominant narrative around sexting has been that young men are obliged by biology and their peers to use heterosexual power dynamics to position themselves as agents and pursuers while women are passive objects and receivers. This hegemonic dynamic rewards and empowers the men and polices their masculine heterosexuality while women are

⁴⁵ Bakkali argues that the politics of neoliberalism that broadly included the promotion of free-market fundamentalism with minimal state intervention aside from the maintenance of institutions working to secure private property rights and functioning markets, such as the military, judiciary, and police force. This entailed stripping back state social security services in favour of more limited private alternatives with the poor and lower-to-mid income strata of society bearing the brunt of the cutbacks to public services.

constrained. This form of masculinity has been contested as inauthentic and only a performance (Frosh, Phoenix, & Pattman, 2002 Page 85) and therefore unnecessary in the construction of masculinity. Emily Setty's study of 14 to 18-year-olds (both sexes) from Surrey found that participants positioned young men as accruing value through sexting, including through obtaining, viewing, and distributing images of young women (Setty, 2020). These young people constructed heterosexual masculinity as active and legitimate; however, the demands and standards inherent to sexting meant young men were at risk of social shaming and ostracism for sexting. Shaming occurred when girls duped a young man into sending a picture of his genitalia with the promise of returning a nude picture of herself only for the boy's picture to be shared around the girl's group. If boys were pestering girls for pictures of themselves, they could be denounced as being 'weird' or 'creepy' and ostracised. The young men of this study distanced themselves from sexting and constructed alternative forms of heterosexual masculinity, while continuing to take pleasure in viewing images of young women.

Socioeconomic marginalisation underpinned by race and class inequalities is liable to challenge young men's sense of self-worth and hence masculinity. In a study of coloured teenage boys (aged 15–19) in a Durban township Deevia Bhana and Henry Chen suggested that heterosexuality was a compelling force informed by dominant expectations of how to be a 'real' man (Bhana & Chen, 2020). Relationships with girls were frames for ratcheting up 'compelling heterosexuality' and risky hypersexual performances based on misogyny, the subordination of women and girls, and male sexual entitlement. Heterosexual performances offer ways for perceived male weakness to be mediated through power expressed within oppressive gendered cultures.

In a study of Black mixed-race young men in the UK and US Remi Joseph-Salisbury explored their raced and gendered identities (Joseph-Salisbury, 2019). Given that white hegemonic supremacy is the default position of Western society alternative race/ethnicities may not be allowed to have identities of their own choosing. In response racial minoritized groups are active in constituting and reconstituting their racialised and gendered identities.

Understanding how such a minority is perceived by the majority allows the subordinated group to resist and subvert the threat of 'white gaze'⁴⁶ supremacy. The mixed-race participants of this study were able to resist, modify, and manipulate the 'Black Monster' stereotype when it suited them although it wasn't an accurate depiction of their identity. The relevance of this

⁴⁶ See Franz Fanon *Black Skin, White Masks* (2008)

study for my research is that Jews may be thought of as ‘not quite white’ by the non-Jewish world even though they may claim a hybrid identity. This has echoes of the ‘swarthy’ of the Jew which was the usual description in the 19th century (Gilman, 1993 Page 20). The ability to respond in similar fashion to the response of the mixed-race men of Joseph-Salisbury’s study would be helpful.

The literature on youth masculinity reveals a prevalent undercurrent of sexual anxiety with young men questioning their ability to be man enough to dominate a woman to have sex, not to satisfy her or to satisfy his needs, but to maintain his position and self-esteem in a hierarchy of his peers. This feeds into the competitive mode of masculinity described above. This undercurrent is gradually being challenged by the work of Roberts (see page 49 above). I shall now turn to review the effect that Judaism affects and is affected by masculinity.

2.4 Jewish Masculinity

Religious identity as a particular aspect of a person marks the division between the human and the sacred worlds, person, and God, sacred and profane. It is a discourse of boundaries, self and ‘other’ (Werbner, 2010 Page 233 et seq.) and the different religions vary in the social scripts (beliefs, practice, and culture) that are used for the construction of religious identity. Identity Process Theory (mentioned in footnote 42 on Page 51) is culturally relevant as identification with one’s religious group has positive implications for the ‘belonging,’ ‘distinctiveness,’ and ‘continuity’ principles and motivations of identity (Loewenthal, 2014). Religion per se is not an ethnicity but acts as a foundation of practices and ceremonies whereby cultural and social identity is constructed. Jews traditionally have a belief of being ‘chosen by God’ and thus separate themselves from other nations. This is reflected in much of their liturgy; the ceremony of sanctification of the Sabbath contains the declaration, “For you have chosen us and sanctified us above all the nations.” In return, the societies in which Jews have lived regarded the Jews as ‘other’ against which they were able to define their own identities.

A special influence on the development of Jewish masculinity has been the Biblical Esau/Jacob narrative, “When the boys grew up, Esau became a skilful hunter, a man of the outdoors; but Jacob was a mild man who stayed in the camp.”⁴⁷ This dichotomy, between the hard physicality of Esau and the soft intellectualism of Jacob, was the prototype of the way that non-Jews and Jews have characterised each other; the bluff impulsive one who cannot make

⁴⁷ Genesis 25.27

discriminating choices being outwitted by the calculating one who uses superior intelligence (Elazar, 1994). Jacob continues to display characteristics which were to become the non-Jew's stereotype of Jews while Esau continues to display characteristics which are later to become part of the Jewish stereotype of non-Jews.

As ancestry going back three or four millennia is very difficult to prove, the notion of 'peoplehood' – a group of people claiming a shared ancestry and history which has shaped their identity – and thus combining elements of both race and religion would be appropriate. In the development of the modern concept of masculinity in the late 19th century the Jew was a convenient 'other' for the normative European model of manliness which had derived from the Greco-Roman ideal to be constructed.

The tendency to analyse masculinities as solely constructed along axes of relationships and power between men ignores the axes of male to female power and those relating to the intersection of power relations of religion, social class, and race. While it has been argued that Western masculinity is by and large grounded on a hegemonic concept, 'which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and subordination of women', (Carrigan et al., 1985) Jewish masculinity has historically been constructed as different, in both non-Jewish and Jewish discourse. Studies of it have shown that 'the idea that Jewish men differ from non-Jewish men by being delicate, meek, or effeminate in body and character runs deep in European History' (Baader, Gillerman, & Lerner, 2012 Page 1). The situation of the 19th century European Diaspora male Jew as politically disempowered produced a sexualized interpretation of him as queer, because political passivity was in Freud's world equated with homosexuality (Boyarin, 1997 Page 229). Otto Weininger had defined the Jewish disposition as pervasively feminine (Sengoopta, 2000 Page 62) and this was typical of intellectual opinion in late 19th century Vienna (Mosse, 1996 Page 70).

Jews had found some psychic compensation by elevation of their rabbinical wisdom to near divine status and a projection of their rage on to Jewish women (Brod 1994 Page 90, quoting Breitman). By forcing the value of the mind, the value of the body and physicality is diminished. The tension between Talmudic (Halakhic/Rabbinic) and 19th century Reform – Haskalah is overlaid by European racial/gender interpolation and splinters the Jewish psyche. The racial/gender construct of the 'feminized Jew' is pivotal in negotiating male selfhood during its encounter with modernity, complicated by conflict between passive, pious Jewish masculinity and reform and Zionist revisions. In trying to live with this dichotomy young Jews are pulled between native religious traditions, bourgeois Diaspora liberal humanism on one hand and nationalist (Zionist) defender sensibilities on the other hand (Davidson, 2010 Page 2).

The ideal of the intellectual Jewish male is held so strongly because it emerges both from within the intellectual tradition of Jewish culture and as a defense mechanism against attacks on Jewish men for not conforming to dominant more brawny standards of masculinity (Brod, 1994 Page 91).

2.4.1 Evolution of Jewish Masculinity

The key event which turned Judaism from a localised Eastern Mediterranean cult centred on Jerusalem and the Temple to a worldwide dispersed religion was the destruction of the second temple (70 CE) and the failure of the rebellions against Roman rule (137 CE). The exile from 'Eretz Yisrael'⁴⁸ constituted a severe psychological blow to the Jewish community and for the religion to survive it had to adapt to the new situation of exile. The Roman ideal of the factors which produced Greek and Roman manliness: avoidance of unmanliness, power and dominance, education, and self-control, were suddenly no longer relevant for a subjugated people. As the Jews were without power, they were at the mercy of whoever had power over them and were liable to be subjected to any form of violence, enslavement, and psychological persecution. Having no territorial base, they lacked the means to establish a conventional political and economic structure (Cantor, 1995 Page 13). David Biale takes a different view from Cantor. He argues that the view of the ancient period, that the nation was powerful, is more romantic than historical. Israel/Judea had been under the domination of the ancient empires more often than not and after the destruction of the second temple the Jews enjoyed two centuries of self-government (Biale, 1986 Page 11). Even the historical details of Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai's escape from the besieged Jerusalem and setting up of an academy in Yavneh are unclear and have only come from rabbinic sources (Efron *et al.*, 2009 Page 97; Goodman, 2017 Page 266). Nevertheless, what is clear is that the eventual exile from the land and the end of temple services meant that all the Jews had to bind them together was their religious literature and because of their relationship with the Hebrew Bible and the secondary literature commenting upon every nuance of the primary text, their identity became fused with the text. As Jews were widely scattered it was necessary that knowledge of the religious literature was also common among the populous and this required a higher level of literacy than was present in the general non-Jewish population. From this a tradition of importance of education among Jews, notably the boys, emerged. An important example is the Maimonides⁴⁹ code of law – *Mishne Torah* – was written in a style accessible by anybody with

⁴⁸ 'The Land of Israel' understood religiously.

⁴⁹ Moses ben Maimon (otherwise RAMBAM) 1138 – 1204.

basic literacy as a practical guide for Jewish living as opposed to his philosophical work – *Guide to the Perplexed* - was written in a much more complex style for the intellectual elite.

The biblical legacy that the rabbis inherited combined a messianic hope for the re-establishment of the Temple cult and the accommodation philosophy of the prophets, “Build houses, settle down and pray for the peace of the country in which you live.”⁵⁰ The task of creating a political theory to legitimise and preserve rabbinical power required these two factors to be held in balance. Thus, the period from the destruction of the temple to the end of the Amoraic⁵¹ period in the 6th century CE marked the transition not from power to powerlessness but from the partial sovereignty of the ancient Israel state to the autonomous Jewish communities of the Middle Ages (Biale, 1986 Page 33).

With the unfettered power that the rabbis had, they were able to redefine what made the Jewish man. In their view, having male genitalia might make an individual male but to make him a ‘man’ required this uniquely male trait, self-restraint for the acquisition of virtue, in the pursuit of the divine through Torah (Satlow, 1996). For the rabbis this was a source of constant anxiety. Manliness was never secure; it was achieved through the constant exercise of discipline in pursuit of virtue and vanishes the moment a man ceased to exercise that discipline. He was to be engaged in the real work of improving his mind by lifelong prayer and religious study – usually the Babylonian Talmud. This links back to the primacy of ‘reason’ rather than ‘passion’ and differentiates real men from women and those men who were unable to restrain their passion. Men who did not have the capacity for rigorous study had a duty to support the scholars who did. This attitude is exemplified in Midrash Rabbah XCVIII Para 12 commenting on Jacob’s final blessings to Issachar and Zebulun; “The greatness of Issachar, from whence did all this greatness come? From Zebulun, who engaged in commerce and supported Issachar, who was devoted to Torah.” According to the Talmud, Torah scholars were entitled to exemption from paying tax, “Rava said, ‘A Torah scholar is permitted to say, I will not pay the head tax that was levied on the town since the town benefits from my Torah study.’”⁵²

The notion of ‘rabbinic masculinity’ has been analysed by Daniel Boyarin (D. Boyarin, 1997b). He deals with the formation of gender differences, not by discussing sexual or bodily regulations, as expected, but by focusing on the house of study itself, the Beit Midrash, where

⁵⁰ Jeremiah 29. 5-7

⁵¹ The Amoraim were sages of the third to sixth century CE whose teachings are enshrined in the Talmud.

⁵² Nedarim 62b

the study of Torah was the quintessential performance of rabbinic maleness (Boyarin, 1997 Page 143). Women were excluded from Torah study as a means for the maintenance of a male power structure via the symbolic exclusion of women from the single practice most valued in the culture, the study of Talmud (Boyarin, Page 179). The male Talmudic student's preoccupation with study presents the image of the Jewish unmanly man. His origins were in the Babylonian Talmud and matured to the figure of the Eastern European yeshiva bocher⁵³ (defined by the ethos of Edelkayt⁵⁴), and ultimately its modern rejection, represented in the book by two Jewish movements: Zionism and psychoanalysis (Rosen-Zvi, 2013).

Zionism became a political as opposed to a spiritual force towards the end of the 19th century and the Kattowitz Conference of the Choveve Zion⁵⁵ in 1884 marked historically the organised beginning of Zionism (Weitzmann, 1949 Page 38). The movement lacked practical application until Herzl created the Zionist Conference which first met in 1897 in Basle. The concept of 'Muscular Christianity' was popular in England in the latter part of the 19th century and a Jewish equivalent 'Muscular Judaism' – coined by Max Nordau at that Conference– was regarded as the ideal for the new Jew "A new type of Jew must be created who could end the threat of decadence among the Jews - deep-chested, powerfully built and keen-eyed men"⁵⁶ (Mosse, 1992). Nordau's call for "a new muscle Jew" was based on the degeneration of the Jew "in the narrow confines of the ghetto," but it was not merely the muscles of the Jews, but also their minds that atrophied in the ghetto (Gilman, 1993 Page 105). A brief survey of the visual images of Zionism during its first decades reveals the New Jew as a young Adonis, whose beautiful face and athletic body symbolized his wholesome spirit as well (Peleg, 2006).

The Holocaust had a profound effect on the Jewish world, and I present examples of three genres of academic literature on the intersection of the Shoah with masculinity. They are, from the lived experiences of Jews as victims and the effects on their children, the way that the history has been presented in high school Jewish education, and the legacy of victimhood as has been presented in fiction.

The dehumanization of Jewish men under the Nazi regime led to a "de-gendering and re-gendering" of Jewish masculinity among survivors, a response to historical trauma that challenged rather than reified male dominance and superiority. Men's failure to protect

⁵³ Young unmarried student in a rabbinical school

⁵⁴ Lit. "nobility" as a counter to the marker of the noble in romantic culture, i.e. delicacy and gentleness, not bravery and courtliness

⁵⁵ Lit. Lovers of Zion

⁵⁶ This is a quote from Max Nordau's *Zionistische Schriften*

women and children destroyed the myth of male heroism while also exposing the fallacy of masculine strength and goodness.⁵⁷ The post-Holocaust God which had failed to protect the Jews has emerged a weakened and demasculinised symbol of divinity (Jacobs, 2015; Raphael, 2002). This view is challenged in a series of essays by Richard Middleton-Kaplan amongst others who examine and disprove the myth that the Jews went, “like lambs to the slaughter,”⁵⁸ but the stereotype was widely believed (Middleton-Kaplan, 2014 Page 3-25). In the 15 years after the end of World War Two Jewish education dealt with the period of Nazi persecution by emphasising the narratives around Jewish heroes and heroines such as the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and Jewish rescue efforts in Palestine. The Holocaust represented Jewry's strength, victory, and courage more than its victimization, vulnerability, and suffering. Educational materials stressed acts of physical resistance and rescue and emphasized the initiative and self-reliance exhibited by Jews during the war. The loss of six million Jews between 1939 and 1945 recedes into the background of these accounts; the lesson of the Holocaust according to these narratives is that Jews in Europe took control of their own fate and helped to defeat Nazism (Sheramy, 2003). Drawing from the images and values of Cold-War Western culture, teachers transformed the destruction of European Jewry into a saga about democracy, freedom, and anti-totalitarianism. The 15 post-war years was a time of relative silence by Jewish thinkers and commentators reluctant to discuss the Holocaust⁵⁹ and the Jewish world was engaged in embracing Zionism and the newly recreated State of Israel. The physical masculinity of the new Israeli Jew replaced that of the weak, effeminate pre-war Diaspora Jew that had not been able to defend himself or his family. Holocaust survivors only really started to tell their stories after the Eichmann trial of 1961.

The theory that Jewish masculinity is marked by the victimization of the past is developed further in novels by the Austrian writers Doron Rabinovici and Arno Geiger (Matthias Eck, 2016). Eck has assumed that the male characters in literary works are as much constructed by the authors as masculinity is constructed socially. The Jewish male was central to Rabinovici's work and Geiger engages closely with the effect of female empowerment on masculinity. Not only do the second-generation men suffer from the trauma, but the trauma is also passed on to the next generation. The fragile gender identity of these Jewish male characters is not being used here as a strategy to present stereotypes about the Jewish men that Boyarin describes

⁵⁷ See also “*In the city of slaughter*” Hayyim Bialik [www.In the City of Slaughter \(umd.edu\)](http://www.In the City of Slaughter (umd.edu))

⁵⁸ Isaiah 53.7 and Jeremiah 11.19

⁵⁹ See 1.2.3. page 27. Primo Levi had published *If This Is Man* in Italian in 1947 not translated into English until 1959. Eli Weisel wrote *And the World Remained Silent* in Yiddish in 1954 which became *La Nuit* in French in 1958 and *Night* in English in 1960.

(see above); rather it is shown to be the result of the traumatic past and failed communication in the present. For the descendants of Holocaust victims who have no first-hand knowledge of the Shoah, Marianne Hirsch introduced the concept of postmemory, which is distinguished from memory and history by its distance from the traumatic event and lack of direct personal experience. It remains a form of memory in the sense that the process of recollection of the past is supplemented by imagination and creation. Experiences are transmitted to the third generation 'by means of stories, images and behaviours'. However, they are transmitted so profoundly and emotionally that they seem to become a memory, which the later generation believes or feels to be its own. Postmemory is a phenomenon linked to the family in its 'generational structure of transmission' (Hirsch, 2008).⁶⁰ The theory of 'postmemory' is invoked to explore the relationship between parents and children burdened by the unmentioned past which has in turn impacted on the masculinity of the sons. In Rabinovici and Geiger's work, memory as well as postmemory and masculinity are shown to influence each other, and memory emerges as a decisive factor in the construction of masculine identity.

Jewish masculinity has been constructed by intellectualism and is in opposition to physicality and violence and this passiveness has usually been interpreted as weakness and impotence by the non-Jewish world. This was the basis for the ineffectual Jewish male which is still a staple of popular culture described in 1.2.5 page 32-34 above. It was this characterisation which Zionist philosophy opposed and by contrasting the New Jew with the old model sought to portray Jewish masculinity as equal to that of the Gentile. The trauma of the Holocaust presented a challenge to subsequent generations who responded by seeking glimmers of resistance in the memoirs of survivors whilst acknowledging the perpetuation of traumatic memory through generations. I shall now turn to focus on Britishness.

2.5 Britishness

The past and history are the most important conditions for the construction of the present and the future of the nation. Reproducing the national memory in the image of history, the ethnic community preserves the core of its culture, its spiritual wealth and at the same time creates internal sources of dynamics for its further development. After The Second War, Britain's role in the world shrank as the British Empire became seen as increasingly anachronistic.⁶¹

Colonies claimed self-determination and independence as the price for war-time support and disorderly retreat from India and Mandate Palestine left the chaos of Hindu/Muslim

⁶⁰ See also Stephen Frosh in Chapter 1 Postmemory in *Those Who Come After* (Frosh, 2019).

⁶¹ See John Darwin *Britain and Decolonisation: The retreat from Empire in the Post-War World* (Darwin, 1988)

nationalism and Israeli/Arab conflict in its wake. As the USA was the sole super-power left after the war Britain pragmatically allied itself to the US-led neoliberal democratic capitalist project as it sought to recover economically and politically. Britain had cultural and ideological affinities to the USA and the perception that both states shared an interest in promoting the conditions for a liberal international order.⁶² In examining the way British identity was constructed Srdjan Vucetic used the constructionist International Relations (IR) theory of Ted Hopf although the theory had a history going back to the late 1980s (Vucetic, 2016). This theory maintains that international relations are socially constructed and given their form by ongoing processes of social practice and interaction. National identity is constituted through state-society dynamics and discourses of national identity can be operationalised as a set of texts generated at both elite and mass levels. These texts vary according to time and situation and for Britain if defence against a possible threat from a communist country is the concern then being allied to America is important. If, however, the concern is social/sporting (such as the Ryder golf competition between Europe and the USA) the identity switches to Europe. The identity alters to suit the situation.

Vucetic, by examination of political speeches, newspaper articles and letters, high school textbooks and popular novels, and high-grossing films, discerned four major discursive narratives and hence four motifs of British identity. The “Anti-British” identity questions capitalism, materialism, the state and nation, patriarchy, parliamentary democracy, and even Western modernity, the exemplar being the Greenham Common protests against the locating of American nuclear weapons in Britain. The “Modern British” identity, the majority, maintains that Britain is a country that values individual freedoms, political stability, and the rule of law. Modern Britain is also very much Western, meaning claiming political and moral superiority to Islamic theocracies, African dictatorships, Soviet and post-Soviet Russia, and the like. He identified two sub-clusters of Modern Britain, “Globalist Britain” and “Welfarist Britain.” While both subscribe socially progressive ends associated with the liberal democratic social contract and capitalist free enterprise, they propose different means for achieving them. The “Globalist” discourse believes in free, competitive, prosperity-seeking individuals, and freedom of corporations. The “Welfarist” discourse maintains that state authority is essential under the conditions of globalisation and climate change.

⁶² However, 1950 was a crisis year in the Cold War and saw a growing rift between the United Kingdom and the United States over how best to wage it. The events of 1950 amply demonstrated the subordinate position of Britain in the “special relationship.” (G. Warner, 2011)

British national identity was explored in a recent chapter of the British Social Attitude Survey 31 (Kiss & Park, 2014). They recognise the two popular conceptions of nationalism, civic and ethnic, that had become commonly used.⁶³ Civic nationalism is an inclusive formulation whereby a person associates themselves with the citizenry, and the political, and legal institutions of the state, whereas ethnic nationalism emphasises traditions, language, religion, and ancestry. In Western Europe civic identity predominates whereas in Eastern Europe ethnicity is more important. In Britain, Kiss and Park found a mixed picture, with people having a combination of the two concepts. Older people were more inclined to emphasise ethnic factors whereas this was less likely in younger people.

On international social and cultural dimensions Britain is not homogenous, with a resurgence of identities of the countries that make up the United Kingdom e.g. Englishness in England, Scottishness in Scotland and Welshness in Wales (Gidley, Hanson, & Ali, 2018 Page 11). The inhabitants of Northern Ireland are a special case with the Protestant population likely to declare themselves British but the Catholics more likely to refer to themselves as Irish. Ian Cruse produced a discussion paper (Cruse, 2008) for parliament summarising the arguments and opinions around the concept of Britishness but this focussed on British values and the path to citizenship for immigrants. England dominates Britain by virtue of population and history and London dominates England again by size and influence. Vucetic maintains that the British masses have a love/hate relationship to London which is perceived as a neurotic and increasingly foreign megalopolis.

The presence of the four nations, each with quite distinctive cultural characteristics, making up the United Kingdom shows that Britain has a long history of diversity and multiculturalism even before immigration of the last 70 years. The political conversation around Britishness by the Labour government prior to 2011 and the Conservative led coalition subsequently has been centred on how cohesion could be advanced (Uberoi & Modood, 2013). Their study of the speeches, interviews, and policy decisions of leading Westminster politicians argued that they separated "Britain's identity" from "people's British identity" by examining features that are part of the former or the latter such as national institutions, habits, and sensibilities. Both can be described as important, as the features of Britain's identity can cultivate pride and loyalty (in Empire for example) or ambivalence and shame (Colonialism and slavery). Equally, in certain forms people's British identities can provide an identity that all British citizens can share despite differences in race, religion, class and so on, and if meaningful, they can enable

⁶³ Rogers Brubaker cited the work of Hans Kohn (1944) and Anthony Smith (1983) for the civic/ethnic classification but had criticised it on the grounds of ambivalence and ambiguity (Brubaker, 1999)

all British citizens to feel part of a group and thus help them to accept collectively binding decisions and achieve collective goals.

Education can be viewed as a political instrument that is used to advance, support and/or reinforce a national British perspective/identity as can be seen through for example, implementation of the national and citizenship curricula (Ajegbo, Kiwan, & Sharma, 2007) but Uvanny Maylor highlighted the difficulties in teaching British values (Maylor, 2016). It is the problems of teaching British values in a school with a diverse ethnic population where aspects of ethnic culture promote separation rather than integration that concerns Maylor. A striking feature of the government's rhetoric on British values was the assertion that it must be involved in actively promoting equal rights based on sexuality. This was a marked break from the 1988 legislation⁶⁴ which specified that local authorities must not intentionally promote homosexuality (Vanderbeck & Johnson, 2016). Tolerance of diverse views on personal matters of gender and sexuality is widespread among the liberal democracies and is not the sole preserve of British values.

The discussions around Britishness in connection with more visible ethnic diversity in the public space and multiculturalism as a public philosophy had an undercurrent discourse of concern that the population was losing its cohesion and suspicion that minority groups had not embraced what the majority culture felt was the British ethos. Using data on national identity from the UK Labour Force Survey to investigate the determinants of national identity in the UK, Alan Manning and Sanchari Roy found no evidence for a 'culture clash' in general, and one connected with Muslims in particular (Manning & Roy, 2010). New immigrants rarely thought of themselves as British but the longer they remained in the UK the more likely they are to do so. Second generation immigrants were only slightly less likely to think of themselves as British than the white UK-born population and it seems that the gap narrows further with each generation. Manning and Roy further found that assimilation into a British identity was faster for those from poorer, less democratic countries and have suggested that this is because the greater culture clash experienced by these immigrants actually increased their incentives to become British. The data on national identity did not support any alarmism about the effects of immigration in general or Muslims in particular on national identity.⁶⁵

A more focussed study than that of Manning and Roy was that of 34 Muslim men and women between the ages 18 to 34 in Leicester who had been born in Britain by Ambreen Shazhadi.

⁶⁴ Local Government Act 1988 Section 28. It was repealed in 2003 in England and Wales (2000 in Scotland)

⁶⁵ See also Lucinda Platt *Global Exchange Briefing 6/2014* (Platt, 2014)

These young Muslim men and women who, by adopting strict lifestyles and religiously observant dress, demonstrated an explicit and visible sense of Muslim identity nevertheless showed this co-existed without any conscious conflict with British identity (Shazhadi, Smithson, McHugh, & Arun, 2018). These Muslims strictly followed the practices of Islam in their everyday life, opting to wear complete Islamic attire (women wear the face covering Niqab, Hijab and Jilbab and men have a full beard and wear the Jubba). They described themselves as either, British Pakistani, British Asian, British Indian or British Muslim, thus confirming the positive notion of binary or hybrid/hyphenated identities. They are different from other minorities as their identity is defined in relation to religion (and not race or colour). By not adopting the identities of their parents or grandparents they demonstrated that they had made a choice for asserting their ethnicity and distanced themselves from purely ethnic based identities. Having grown up in Britain, these young adults felt British, and they enjoy the liberty and freedom that was aspired to by their parents but at the same time they are aware of the differences that they possess from the majority population due to their perceived racial, cultural, and religious views and their appearance.

London is unique among the cities of the UK in two respects. Firstly, its sheer population of 8.90 million people which is more than twice that of the next most populous, Birmingham which has 4.33 million.⁶⁶ The second factor about London is that it has been a magnet for immigrants the diversity of the number and variety of Londoners' countries of origin,⁶⁷ generating an extraordinary and inspiring range of distinctive looks, life trajectories and cultures in the streets and neighbourhoods of the capital which is unmatched by other cities (Cockburn, 2017 Page 9). Cynthia Cockburn concurs with David Goodhart in the concept of 'citizens of somewhere, citizens of anywhere' where the 'somewhere citizens' are more rooted, socially conservative with greater attachment to tradition and the nation (Fonte, 2017; Goodhart, 2017). John Fonte characterises the citizens of anywhere as individualism, autonomy and mobility having much less attachment to locale. Using this paradigm cosmopolitan Londoners would be in the 'anywhere' category.⁶⁸ The reality of the somewhere/anywhere dichotomy is nuanced with the boundaries of town/country or metropolitan/rest-of-the-country being blurred. The inhabitants of London and the larger

⁶⁶ The three next most populous cities are Manchester has 3.35 million, Liverpool 2.24 million and Bristol 1.00 million and together these five cities comprise just under 36% of England's population.

⁶⁷ The heterogeneity of London's population has been described by Ben Judah (Judah, 2016).

⁶⁸ There are parallels with the Jewish experience in Central and Eastern Europe where country borders were liable to change, and Jews were often denied settled status. The Jews, being 'citizens of anywhere' could be rapidly denigrated as 'citizens of nowhere,' perpetual outsiders.

towns frequently identify strongly with their hometowns and become ‘citizens of somewhere.’⁶⁹

The UK joined the Common Market on 1st of January 1973 and on the 5th of June 1975 voted by a two to one majority to continue membership of the market now named the European Community. An assortment of political parties from the political right (UKIP founded in 1993 and the Referendum Party active between 1994 to 1997) fostered discontent with the now named European Union (EU) and David Cameron felt obliged to promise a second referendum which was held on 23rd of June 2016 which narrowly voted for leaving the EU (52% to 48%). The regional breakdown of the vote showed that of the regions in England, a majority in only Greater London had voted Remain (60/40) whereas the majority in the rest of the country had voted Leave. This pattern had significant local variations at a local geographical level with majorities in Manchester and Leeds voting Remain. This divide reflects on the ‘citizens of somewhere, citizens of anywhere’ discussed in relation to London above. Of the other parts of the UK Wales had voted Leave but Scotland and Northern Ireland had voted Remain. An age breakdown showed that the 18 to 24 age group had overwhelmingly voted Remain by a 70/30 margin and the generational divide is significant due to the centrality of youth for my project. A study comparing the general population’s support for Brexit with that of the candidates at the 2017 General Election it was political opinions – that is, views related to immigration, utilitarian considerations about the expected Brexit effect, and perceptions of how the EU works – that appear to be the main drivers of Leave vote among politicians as well as voters (Trumm, Milazzo, & Townsley, 2020).

2.6 Summary

The literature around masculinity in general and young masculinity as a separate entity tends to focus on the actions and attitudes of men in relation to women with an underlying discourse of men’s oppression to women and those men who do not conform to arbitrary standards. I shall be arguing that an alternative way to look at masculinity is through a dynamic of competitive versus cooperative mode. Being constantly in competitive, hegemonic mode for a man is unstable as it needs constant effort and reinforcement for fear of being displaced.

Jewish masculinity has been framed as anti-physical claiming moral and intellectual superiority through conformity to Jewish law and practice. Not all Jews observe the religious laws and some not at all but nevertheless have a close affinity to the history and culture. Likewise,

⁶⁹ “*Maybe it’s because I’m a Londoner, that I love London so.*”

there are some who are intensely fixated on observing Jewish law but have little interest in the wider culture of the religion. I shall argue that most Jews inhabit the space between the poles of observances and culture and are able to incorporate the religion into their identity in different ways.

Britain's identity as a nation has been one of incorporating diversity from its inception and that tradition has continued and the heterogeneity of the population is experienced in different attitudes regarding localism and metropolitanism as well as race and class. In addition, the identity that British people construct for themselves is influenced by their attitude to the nationalism/internationalism spectrum.

This research seeks to understand how young male Jews in Britain think about their Jewishness, their Britishness and their masculinity in order to make sense of their lives and will be the first such qualitative study of young British Jews and the results will feed into the understanding of general contemporary male identity. Anglo-Jewry is not homogenous but encompasses a wide range of social class, religiosity, engagement with the non-Jewish world and geographical location. Young Jewish men today are negotiating their masculinity in an environment which offers influences and choices that were unavailable to former generations. Identity formation is a core developmental task that becomes urgent in adolescence (Crocetti, 2017). Crocetti reviews the work of Erikson and Marcia in their models of identity formation and building on their previous work proposes a model whereby 'commitment' is related to 'in-depth exploration' in which individuals think about the commitments they have already made, and alternatively commitment is related to 'reconsideration of commitment' where they find that the current state is no longer satisfactory.

My research questions are: -

- **How do young Jews understand and perform Jewishness and masculinity in contemporary Britain?**
- **How do they talk about their experience of being a young Jewish male in Britain and what are their concerns?**

The next chapter will describe how I set about answering these questions.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction.

The literature review in Chapter 2 traced the predominant thinking in Western society about masculinity in general and youth masculinity in particular from its biblical origins in Judeo-Christian tradition and Hellenist origins in Greco-Roman practices to the present discourses of multiple masculinities. The evolution of Jewish masculinity from the biblical pre-exilic mode to the rabbinic replacement of physicality by prioritising textual study and self-restraint has also been traced to the current state where it has been challenged by Zionism. Britishness has altered with the concomitant change from pre-Second World War imperialism to post-imperial cosmopolitanism although this is contested. In this chapter I shall set out the process that I used to examine how masculinity, Judaism and Britishness was being experienced by contemporary young male Jews in Britain.

3.2 Research Question

The gap in the literature identified in the literature review in Chapter 2 that my thesis seeks to address is how these three aspects of identity are constructed and interact with each other to produce the three-dimensional matrix within which the individual negotiates his Jewish British manhood as I shall show in the Discussion. I shall argue that the three aspects are not fixed but are variable across dimensions that might be thought of as binaries. Masculinity has traditionally been viewed as either 'hard' physical or 'soft' intellectual masculinity reminiscent of the Esau/Jacob dichotomy referred to in the literature review on page 55 (Elazar, 1994), but I propose a different paradigm. I argue that masculinity may be either competitive, seeking to dominate either by force or by intellect, or co-operative (which may also be physical or intellectual), seeking common mutually beneficial modes of being. There are many ways of being Jewish depending on the weight an individual gives to conformity with halacha (Jewish law) and affinity with a looser collection of tradition, attitudes, and national and family histories which together form Jewish culture. Britishness exists in a range between nationalism and internationalism on which is superimposed the contrast between cosmopolitan London and the rest of the country. The research questions are: -

- **How do young Jews understand and perform Jewishness and masculinity in contemporary Britain?**
- **How do they talk about their experience of being a young Jewish male in Britain and what are their concerns?**

3.3 Methodological Orientation

To produce an epistemological position for this research I have used Carol Grbich's explanations of common knowledge traditions (Grbich, 2007 Page 3 et.seq.). My research questions focus on the interaction of variable elements of identity in a complex, sometimes chaotic and multiply constructed fashion. Grbich characterises positivism's view of truth as absolute and reality lies only in things that can be seen and deduced through processes of reason. It would follow that every rationally justifiable assertion can be scientifically verified or is capable of logical or mathematical proof. Whilst Grbich agrees that most scientific advances have been made within this tradition the predictable outcome of positivism have come under debate from Einstein's theory of relativity, Heisenberg's uncertainty principle and Sigmund Freud's exploration of the unconscious mind as a source of reality construction. Grbich regards critical emancipatory positions as viewing reality being produced by particular exploitative social and political systems comprising competing interests where knowledge is controlled to serve those in power. The emancipation of oppressed individuals and groups through social transformation is seen as a desirable outcome. I have rejected both these positions, positivism because of the variable nature of the aspects I am studying and critical emancipatory because I did not assume that young British male Jews were oppressed individuals. Instead this study is guided by a social constructionist view (Burr, 1995 Page 3) which questions 'taken-for-granted' assumptions and conceptualisations of the world and highlights that these assumptions are socially and culturally constructed (McDiarmid, Gill, McLachlan, & Ali, 2017). The basic premise of the social constructionist perspective is that experience, knowledge, and practice are constituted through historically specific interpersonal, institutional, and social processes (Georgaca, 2013).

3.4 Research Methods

This is an empirical study which seeks to explore how young male Jews talk about their experiences and perspectives which have shaped their understanding of the aspects that compose their identity. This is a qualitative study seeking to sample as wide a range of experiences as possible rather than making any quantitative judgement about the frequency of opinions in the target population. With this in mind, an interview method was chosen the goal being getting a young man to talk about his experiences and perspectives and capturing his language and concepts and it is his voice that comes across in the transcripts.

Referring to my research questions

- **How do young Jews understand and perform Jewishness and masculinity in contemporary Britain?**
- **How do they talk about their experience of being a young Jewish male in Britain and what are their concerns?**

To find out how they *understand* Jewishness/masculinity, I needed to hear them voice their understandings, for which qualitative interviews are essential. To find out how they *perform* Jewishness, an observational method might have been better, but given the number of participants I needed to observe to get a wide range of performances and the time that the observations would take this was not be feasible so I used interviews to get their own articulated understanding of how they perform it. To find out how they talk about their *experience* and their *concerns* again I need their own accounts.

3.4.1 In-depth Interviews

Hence to address my research questions I decided to do a series of in-depth individual interviews and although I had a list of questions that derived from my research questions and from the literature review, I wanted the participants to be able to raise issues that I had not anticipated. Therefore, I chose a semi-structured format with open ended questions as opposed to either the structured format where I had predetermined the response categories (more suited to large scale quantitative research) or the unstructured format where the interview is participant-led (Braun & Clarke, 2013 Page 78).

3.4.2 Visual Aids

Visual aids, photographs, diagrams and symbols, have generally been regarded as secondary to verbal questions in psychology but they are useful in enabling the expression of everyday experiences. The visual becomes understood as producing or constructing particular realities, and as mediated by culture, ideology and subjectivity (Frith, Riley, Archer, & Gleeson, 2005). Visual methods might offer alternative means of expression to participants and can have the potential of reaching and involving those who are traditionally hard to reach. Young people are often assumed to be challenged in terms of articulating themselves verbally and to respond better to visual elicitation methods therefore visual methods are increasingly seen as valuable tools to understand young people's diversity and agency (Schäfer, 2012). As an aid for the interview I therefore developed a visual tool which some participants found helpful. The three aspects of identity were represented by coloured discs, red for masculinity, blue for Britishness and green for Jewishness. The relative sizes of the discs could be altered to reflect how important each aspect was for them; as one was made larger one or two of the others

would be made smaller. The intersections of the discs could also be explored – Jewish/Masculinity or Jewish/Britishness for example.

3.4.3 Focus Groups

Focus groups are a form of group interview that capitalises on communication between research participants in order to generate data. Group discussion is particularly appropriate when the interviewer has a series of open-ended questions and wishes to encourage research participants to explore the issues of importance to them, in their own vocabulary, generating their own questions and pursuing their own priorities. When group dynamics work well the participants work alongside the researcher, taking the research in new and often unexpected directions. Group work also helps researchers tap into the many different forms of communication that people use in day-to-day interaction, including jokes, anecdotes, teasing, and arguing (Kitzinger, 1995). They may also make a safe space where a shy or reticent person is encouraged to express a view if it had been raised by a more outgoing member of the group that they would not have reported in an individual interview. I sought to set up focus groups, as these can be useful in facilitating discussion around sensitive topics about participants everyday lives (Braun & Clarke, 2013 Chapter 5; Macnaghten & Myers, 2004 Chapter 4). The researcher is more of a moderator than an interviewer as social interaction among group members is central to this method as the participants challenge and discuss the topic. As I elaborate below (in 3.9 Ethical Issues) the group I was able to hold was not as coherent as I had wished although some useful data was obtained (see 3.5 Recruitment). The ambition to have more groups turned out not to be viable due to time and Covid restrictions on face-to-face contact.

3.5 Recruitment

The age range chosen for this study was between 14 and 24 years old because this is the time when many biological, cognitive and social changes are occurring which stimulate adolescents to think and reflect about themselves and what type of person they want to become (Arain et al., 2013; Suleiman, Galván, Harden, & Dahl, 2017). Whilst there does not appear to be a generally accepted age range of ‘youth studies’ my choice has been influenced by two important UK studies: the Office of Communications (OfCom) survey published 2016⁷⁰ has aged 16 to 24 as the youngest cohort, and the Royal Society of Public Health Youth Health

⁷⁰ <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/adults-media-use-and-attitudes>

Movement (#StatusOfMind) conducted in 2017⁷¹ defined youth as aged 14 to 24. Furthermore, the United Nations defines 'youth' as persons between 15 and 24 and all UN statistics are based on this definition (Furlong, 2013 Page 3; Patton et al., 2016). As my research questions focus on the experiences and self-understanding of young British Jewish men, I needed to recruit from this population.

I had intended to recruit participants by circulation of the questionnaire via Jewish schools and Jewish youth and student organisations, but all these entities were reluctant to cooperate in this research. I was told that this reluctance was partly due to the new Data Protection Act (2018) which had left schools and societies who had electronic databases uncertain whether they could cooperate and therefore felt it wiser to refuse. Another factor was that a revision to the Gender Recognition Act (2004) was under discussion in 2018 and as masculinity, a major issue for the study, was the subject of debate in general society, this was also felt to be problematic.⁷² One Jewish secondary school did show some interest but insisted that a teacher sit in on any one-to-one interviews. I deemed this to be unacceptable on the grounds that the youth had to be assured of complete confidentiality and anonymity to be free to express whatever opinion they had. One other Jewish secondary school agreed to my meeting with a group of six year-12 (16/17-year-old) boys with a staff member in the room for 30 minutes. Although this was not a formal focus group (see 3.4 Research Methods above) it did allow me to hear what they had to say and provided some data, although the discussion was not as in-depth as I would have liked. Where I have quoted a statement from this group in the data chapters I have assigned it thus: (*group*).

3.5.1 Demography of Anglo-Jewry

As I wanted my sample to reflect the diversity of the population of young male Jews in the UK and to place that population within that of the general UK, I present here the statistics for Jews in the UK and males aged 14 to 24 in both the general and Jewish populations. The UK population total and the size of the Anglo-Jewish community have been taken from statistics from the 2011 census and the JPR survey. The table shows how many 14-24-year-old male Jews there are out of the total UK population of 14-24s.

⁷¹ <https://www.rsph.org.uk/our-work/policy/social-media-and-young-people-s-mental-health-and-wellbeing.html>

⁷² Personal communications with both a deputy head of a Jewish secondary school and a trustee of a national Jewish youth group.

	UK population	Jews	Percent
Total	63,182,178	271,259	0.43%
Males 14 – 24	4,596,332	16,735	0.36%
Percent	7.27%	6.17%	

Note that the percentage of Jewish 14 to 24-year-old males is less than the general population. This could be an indication that the Jewish population is older than the general UK population and also that young Jewish males are under-represented both nationally and communally. At the group discussion the boys were very aware of their minority position in British society.

3.5.2 Social Class

Social class has been inferred from home ownership; The English Housing Survey from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government estimate that in the general population 64% of households in 2017-18 were owner-occupiers (DCLG, 2015). The participants I interviewed were at least two generations from an immigrant ancestor and most of the participants' parents had higher education. All but two of the participants live in owner-occupier homes so these young Jews are middle-class and not representative of the UK population as a whole.⁷³

3.5.3 Education

The number of Jewish schools have been increasing even though the Jewish population has been decreasing and this increase has been seen in both the mainstream and the strictly orthodox sectors of the community (Boyd, 2019; D. Staetsky & Boyd, 2015). Approximately one in five Jewish children attended a Jewish school in 1970 and that proportion had increased to two out of three in 2015 (L. D. Staetsky & Boyd, 2016). Ten out of the 16 participants had or were attending a Jewish secondary school and this is comparable to the general Jewish population.

3.5.4 Religious Affiliation

Synagogue membership is a marker for degree of religiosity and the 2016 survey by the Institute of Jewish Policy Research (JPR) gave the following breakdown of those Jews who were synagogue members (Casale Mashiah & Boyd, 2017). This table does not include an estimate of the proportion of Anglo-Jewry that is not affiliated with a synagogue.

⁷³ Rob and Gerry were renting.

Strictly Orthodox	United Synagogue Federation and Independent	Reform	Liberal	Masorti	Sephardi
13%	53%	19%	8%	3%	3%

The JPR survey of 2016 looked at household membership so as the Strictly Orthodox have more children than average their percentage may be an underestimate of the population. Of the participants, seven were from families from the United Synagogue, three from Reform, two from Masorti, and one each from Sephardi, Liberal and the strictly orthodox. The remaining one had been Haredi but had left that community. In the table in 3.6 below I indicate that six of the participants are not currently attending a synagogue although their families retain membership.

3.5.5 Geographical Distribution

The JPR survey noted that two thirds of Anglo-Jewry live in London and south Hertfordshire with a particular concentration in North-West London, with 25.4% of the country's synagogue affiliated Jews concentrated in the single London borough of Barnet. By contrast the next proportions are Westminster (8.3%)⁷⁴, Hertsmere (6.2%), Redbridge (6.0%), Stamford Hill (5.2%) and Harrow (4.3%). My sample came predominantly from Barnet and Harrow as I had to resort to direct approach (see 3.6 below).

3.6 The Sample

To overcome the difficulties mentioned (in 3.5 Recruitment above) in finding young Jews to interview for my study I resorted to direct approaches to families I met on social occasions and word-of-mouth recommendation via friends, family, and acquaintances to assemble a sample to study. This method meant that all participants had a link, however tenuous, with some aspect of the Jewish community and yielded the advantage that I could ensure participants that would be representative of a diverse range of religiosity and academic ability to reflect the diversity of the target demographic, not because I needed a statistically representative sample

⁷⁴ In the borough of Westminster there are three synagogues that draw members living at some distance. They are St John's Wood (US), West London (Reform) and the Liberal Jewish Synagogue. They all have large memberships, and this produces a false impression of the distribution of the Anglo-Jewish community.

as in a quantitative study but because I wanted to make sure I accessed experiences and understandings from the range of positions within this population.

Pseudonym	Age at interview	Occupation	Family Affiliation	Religious observance	Jewish schooling ?	Attending community
Otis	16	School	Sephardi/US	Moderate	Yes	US
Alan	19	Student	Ashkenazi/US	Moderate	No	No
David	23	Trainee law	Ashkenazi/US	High	No	US
Simon	23	Student	Ashkenazi/US	Very high	Yes	Independent modern orthodox
James	17	College (special needs)	Reform/US	Low	No	No
Terry	22	Student	Ashkenazi/US	Mild	No	No
Hugh	17	Military college	Ashkenazi/US	Mild	Yes	US
Andy	14	School	Ashkenazi/Adath Yisrael	Very high	Yes	Orthodox Union
Gerry	23	Retail Manager	Ashkenazi/Reform	Low	No	No
Joel	15	School	Ashkenazi/US	Moderate	Yes	US
Mark	15	School	Ashkenazi/Liberal	Very low	Yes	No
Nigel	15	School	Ashkenazi/US	Moderate	No	US
Charlie	15	School	Ashkenazi/Masorti	Moderate	Yes	Masorti
Arthur	15	School	Ashkenazi/Masorti	Moderate	Yes	Masorti
Oscar	15	School	Ashkenazi/Reform	Low	Yes	Reform
Rob	21	Baker/Au pair	Ashkenazi/Hasid	Lapsed high	Yes	No

I had hoped to do 20 interviews but in February 2020 concern over the Covid-19 outbreak led to suspension of all in-person research activity and in a discussion with my supervisors we decided that I should proceed with analysis of the 16 interviews completed as there was a good sample representing London based British Jews⁷⁵ between the ages 14 to 24. Similarly, I

⁷⁵ I would have liked to interview some young Jews from outside London but my approaches to several provincial communal contacts and some provincial Jewish schools were unsuccessful.

had to abandon attempts to arrange a focus group with a group of students from a university Jewish society with whom I had met for a preliminary talk.

The sample is exclusively middle-class and whilst they are not representative of the general population they are a fair reflection of the Anglo-Jewish community. Furthermore, none of the sample were in single-parent families or were affected by long-term unemployment. In the sample ten out of 16 participants had or are attending a Jewish secondary school: - seven Modern Orthodox, two Strictly Orthodox and one Cross Communal. The proportions are in line with the general Jewish population but much higher than the national statistics for faith schools where 1.9 million children are attending faith schools (28% of primary and 18% of secondary pupils) (Long & Danechi, 2019). My sample gets at the core, mainstream community. I didn't have geographical spread, but that gave the study coherence and future research might examine whether e.g. provincial communities generate similar accounts. I shall discuss this further in Chapter 8 – Conclusion and Implications For Further Study.

3.7 The Interview

When someone agreed to see me, I sent the preliminary questionnaire and arranged a time and place for the interview. I conducted most of the interviews at the interviewee's home and if they were under the age of 16, I asked for an adult to be at home, although not in the same room. I did one interview remotely by Skype, two at a local coffee bar, two in the synagogue library and one in a teaching room at Birkbeck College. I explained the nature of the study and I obtained written consent for the interview and its recording. The interviews lasted for about an hour and at the end I asked for consent for the contents to be used for research. I followed up the interview with a telephone call which I also recorded to see if there was anything that the participant wanted to change or clarify and on three occasions I did a second interview necessary which I conducted in the same way.⁷⁶

3.7.1 Opening Question

The opening question was one that allows the interviewee to settle any nervousness or anxiety and a question about his family was helpful in this regard. If he came from a family where there had been divorce or the death of a parent then knowing this at the beginning would prevent me making a *faux pas* later in the interview so, "Would you like to tell me about your family?" was a reasonable opening. Follow up questions clarified events that may be

⁷⁶ My first interview was with Otis which was a 'pilot' and the second was more thorough. Nigel was interviewed by Skype and he could only give me 30 minutes on each occasion. I encountered Alan at a social event about four months after his interview and he asked to see me again which I was happy to do and some additional rich data emerged.

significant in the family history as they tell their story. I endeavoured to build up a non-judgmental rapport with the subject so they did not feel that they had to try to impress me or guess what I might want to hear. It sometimes seemed appropriate for me to mention some features of my own life story if doing so might increase the trust that the interviewee had to talk about himself and his views.

3.7.2 Following Questions

These were put to invite further comments on what they had put on their questionnaire. I wanted to get their views on the following: -

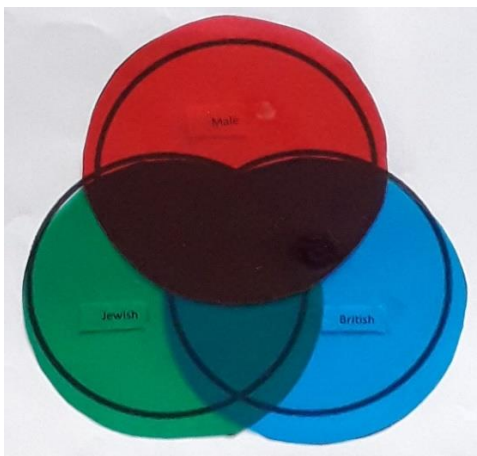
- Their education – What do/did they think about their school/college?
- Where does their Jewish identity come from?
- What do they think about/have they experienced any antisemitism?
- What have their relations been with non-Jews?
- What do they think about girls and what do they think girls think about Jewish boys?
- What do they think about Israel?
- Do they have the same views as their parents?
- What is their vision for their future?
- What does religion mean to them?
- Do they have any particular idols or role models and what appeal do they have?
- What do they think about the way Jews and/or Israel is perceived in the news, the internet and social media, and popular culture?
- Do they have any 'hot topics' that have not been covered?
- In the course of the interview it might have been appropriate to say whether a particular topic or opinion mentioned by the interviewee had been raised by previous interviewees. In such a case I mentioned that I was interested in hearing a range of opinions so that there was no hint of pressure for the interviewee to change his mind unless he wanted to.

I downloaded the recording from the recorder onto my laptop and I copied it to two key drives which I stored in separate locked cupboards and I transcribed the interview for analysis. To

ensure confidentiality I assigned a pseudonym for each participant and I redacted all names and places of school, college, university or place of work.

3.7.3 Visual Aid

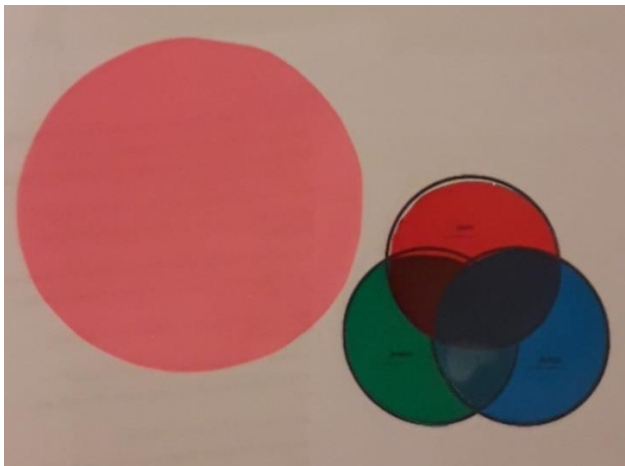
As mentioned in 3.4 above, the interviewee was presented with three coloured overlapping discs to demonstrate the three aspects of identity being studied: red for masculinity, blue for Britishness and green for Jewishness – see figure below. Not all of the interviewees found this exercise helpful, but most did. A selection of these images is in the appendix.



The interview would start with the three discs being of equal medium size but as the discussion continued the interviewee might regard one aspect of their identity as larger or smaller than the others and to demonstrate this larger and smaller coloured discs were available. If there was disparity this would be demonstrated by using one large disc and at least one of the other two would be small. At the end of the interview, when the interviewee was satisfied with the balance of discs – whether equal medium or diverse sizes – then a photograph was taken to represent the relative relationship of the three aspects of their identity.



Some participants mentioned that there was another factor for their identity which they wanted to have recorded and this I did thus: -



3.8 Analysis

As an empirical study the data corpus comprises the whole collection of interview transcripts that I had made. The advantage of my having personally transcribed the interviews is that I was more familiar with their contents than if I had professional transcribers to do this and in the course of the analysis I frequently remembered items the significance of which I had previously overlooked. The disadvantage of my doing the transcription was the time it took for me. I have taken the following definitions from Braun & Clarke (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The aspect data set is all the items from all the interviews which refer to a particular aspect (masculinity, Jewishness, Britishness) the collection of which was the objective of the study. A data item is used to refer to each individual piece of data collected, in this case each interview and a data extract is an individual piece of data – one comment from one interview. The method of analysis I used was Constructionist Thematic Analysis as I shall now describe in the next section.

3.8.1 Constructionist Thematic Analysis

Constructionist thematic analysis examines data, in this case interview transcripts, to identify common topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning in reports of experiences, meanings and the interviewees' reality (essentialist method), and the ways in which these events, realities and experiences are the effects of discourses operating in society (constructionist method).

Themes are identified 'bottom up' where they emerge from within the data (some similarities with grounded theory) by an inductive approach and also 'top down' where the researcher has a preconceived idea of what themes are being looked for, a theoretical approach. Where the analysis is just descriptive (semantic) it looks at the surface of the data and organises it to show patterns in content, and to theorise the significance of patterns and their broader meanings. Where the analysis looks beneath the surface of the data it starts to identify where the fragments of data come from and whether there were underlying assumptions or scripts that shaped or informed the semantic content of the data. This later form is characterised as latent, or cultural analysis.

3.8.2 Cultural Analysis

Associated with constructionist thematic analysis is Cultural Analysis which has been defined as recognition of a shared network of values, norms and beliefs that constructs codes understood by members of a given society. They function as a compass within the collective subconscious, directing the community's members as to how to construct, rationalize and legitimize decision making (Gavriely-Nuri, 2010). Cultural codes are derived, among other things, from the community's common experiences as well its constitutive texts for instance, the Bible, which would be particularly relevant for my study of young Jews at the intersection of their Jewishness with masculinity and Britishness.

3.8.3 Analytic Process

In the first stage of analysis I used a top-down approach and examined the transcripts for data extracts relating to the following topics: - Jewish identity, British identity, masculinity, parents' Jewish identity, childhood experience of Judaism, experience of antisemitism, sexuality, women and girls, media and internet, Jewish and secular learning, religious beliefs, social attitudes, ambitions, and conflicts/uncertainties.

I examined each Data Item in the following manner

- Data Item – Comment.
- Aspect - (Masculinity, Jewishness, Britishness.)
- Theme - What prompted the interviewee to make that comment?

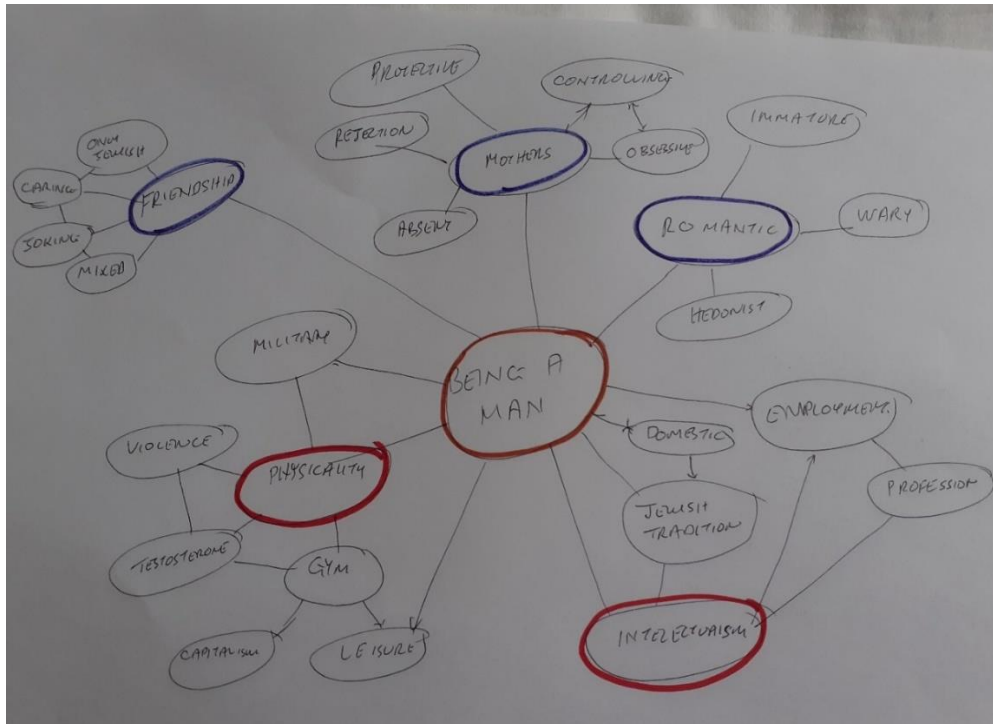
- Cultural – Was there a cultural origin to his comment?

In the next stage I grouped the comments into the three identity aspects, Jewishness, Britishness, and masculinity for further subdivision into data sets and I plotted these on to a spreadsheet to produce the data items for analysis. I tabulated comments relating to Jewishness discourse under the following headings: - Jewish identity, religiosity, belief, festivals, food/kashrut, Israel, antisemitism, intellectualisation, and outlook. I tabulated comments relating to Britishness discourse under the following headings: - British identity, patriotism, loyalty, nationalism, London, and Europe. I tabulated comments relating to masculinity and gender discourse under the following headings: - gender and religion, transgender, sexual orientation, gender and public space, women and religion, women and relationships, and women and non-relationships. I found the data included material relating to education which I deemed to require an additional table for the headings: - first school, secondary school, post-school, secular learning, Jewish learning, and hobbies/interests. The spreadsheets are reproduced in the appendix.

3.8.4 Theme Maps

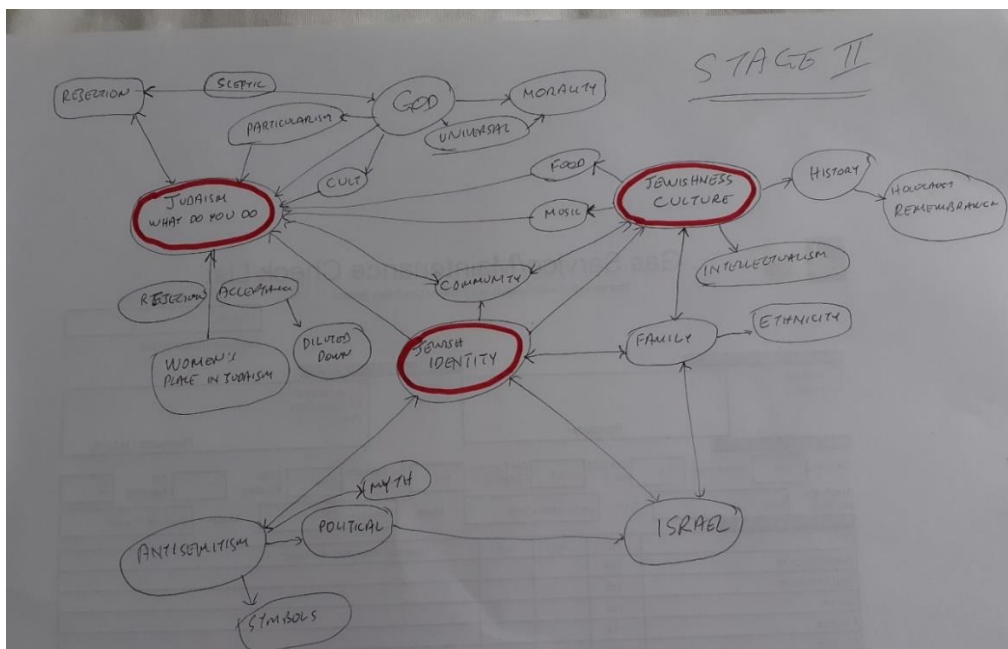
Themes relate to each other and data items may relate to more than one theme. To see how the themes and items relate to each other I find maps quite useful. A theme map (sometimes called a mind map) is a diagram for representing tasks, concepts or items linked to and arranged around a central concept (Braun & Clarke, 2013 Page 232). Thus, a long list of information can be converted into a diagram. In this stage of the analysis I put the aspect at the centre with the main themes radiating from it and sub-themes radiating further. This produces a theme-map with the data items relating to the theme radiating from it and noted connections to other themes in the data.

3.8.4.1 Masculinity



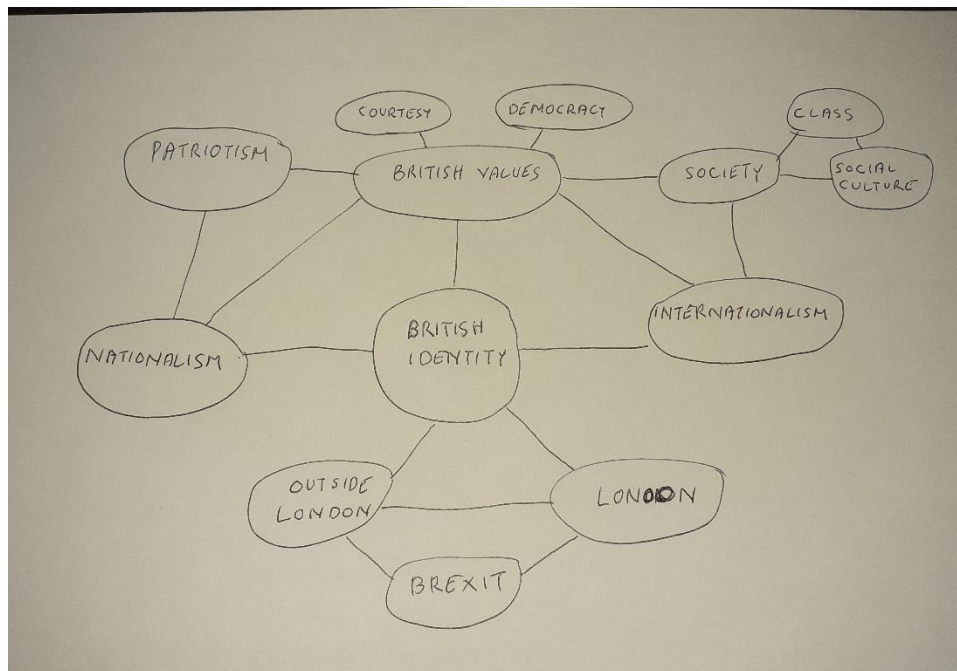
From the central point – being a man – the different themes radiate and connect with each other. The key theme is the split between ‘hard’ masculinity (macho, aggressive) and ‘soft’ masculinity intellectualism but recognising that control and hegemony may be through psychological and non-physical methods. As intellectualism may be used in as fierce competition as physical violence and physicality can be co-operative as in team endeavours I am arguing for a reframing of masculinity into a competitive/co-operative mode dichotomy.

3.8.4.2 Judaism



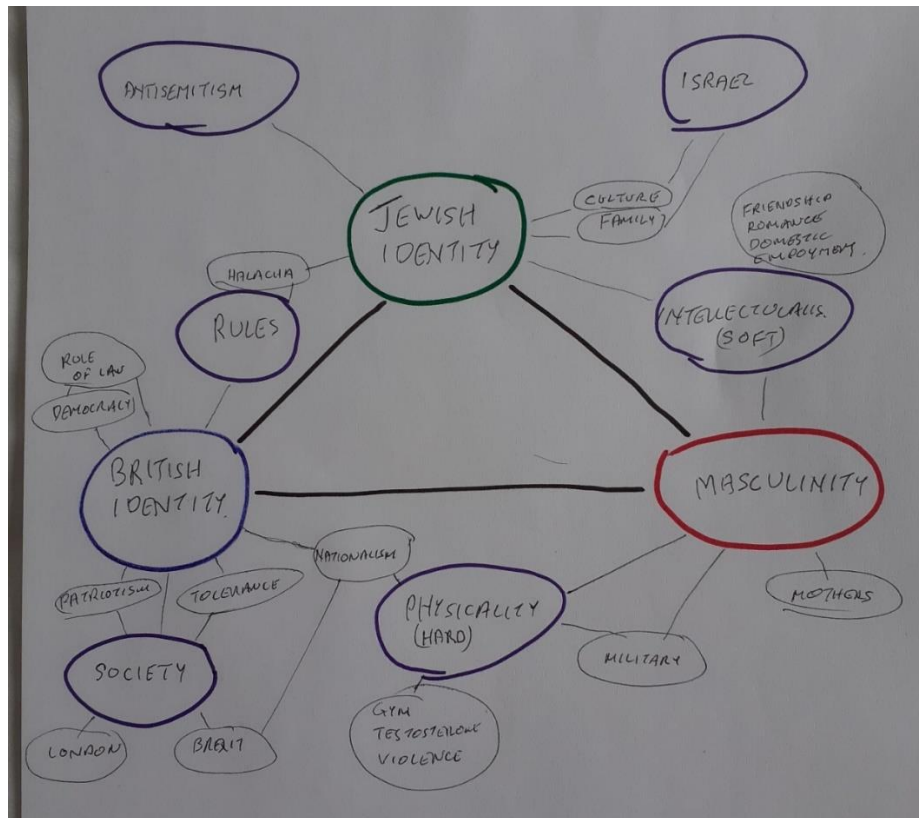
Jewish identity is the central point and as mentioned in 3.2 above I am proposing to separate how the interviewees do this into the dichotomy of Judaism – (what Jews believe and do), and Jewishness – (how they relate to the non-ritual sphere including history and activity). These are the key themes and sub-themes may connect with both of them. From these starting points other factors flow, sometimes reinforcing but also sometimes in conflict. Israel and antisemitism are associated with Jewish identity but are outside the dichotomy.

3.8.4.3 Britishness



The dichotomy for British identity is between what constitutes Britishness as opposed to general liberal values that are common to the Western democracies, the nationalism/internationalism divide that was exposed in the Brexit referendum. Superimposed on this divide is the contrast between London and the rest of the country.

3.8.4.4 Intersection



As I shall argue in Chapter 7 (Discussion – page 212), masculinity, Jewishness, and Britishness influence and are influenced by each other and each of these aspects of identity are variable and that for the young male Jew in Britain there is constant negotiation of his position viz-a-viz these aspects as he tries to make sense of his life.

3.9 Ethical Issues

Guillemin and Gillam made a distinction between ‘procedural ethics’ and ‘ethics in practice’ (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Procedural ethics refers to the ethical procedures that are required by the board of the institution where the research is being conducted (in this case the Ethics Committee of Birkbeck College) which revolve around information sheets, consent forms, and the Disclosure and Barring Service certificate. Ethics in practice refers to the moment-by-moment ethical decisions that take place during the interaction between the researcher, in this case me, and the interviewee with the assurance that the interview can be terminated at any time if the participant feels uncomfortable with the process and the complete confidentiality and security of any comment or opinion expressed. The researcher may also have issues if the interview reveals material that may compromise him(her) or may cause discomfort and I advised my participants that if they were to reveal illegal activity I

would be obliged to stop the interview, delete the recording, and ask them to speak to their parents, teachers or professional advisor.

Research involving in-depth interviews with individuals raise ethical issues and especially so when the participants include children under the age of 16 years. I was able to draw upon my 45 years' experience in medical practice to aid this research as I had worked in Paediatrics in both hospital practice and in primary care settings where I was also a General Practice Trainer for the Vocational Training Scheme. I had participated in regular workshops at the Tavistock Clinic analysing the doctor patient inter-action and in Balint Groups. I am accustomed to talking with and listening to young people revealing sensitive and confidential issues regarding their lives.

The reaction of the participants to the interview varied considerably. For some I had the impression that they had prepared an opening speech setting out their position as if introducing themselves to a selection panel. Some were quite reticent and needed encouragement and reassurance that everything they might say was completely confidential, that I was not going to try to change any of their opinions and that I was interested in what they had to say. For some, this was the first time that they had been able to talk about themselves and their opinions without being interrupted or challenged. By making a safe space it allowed some of them to be vulnerable and to talk about the fear of being a young man on the streets or their experience of receiving antisemitic verbal abuse. Some of them had particular issues tangentially related to my project and by having the fourth disc (see 3.7.3 above) available I was able to allow them to air their concerns.

The dynamic of the group discussion I was able to have courtesy of the Deputy Head of a Jewish private school was very different from the individual interviews. A 30-minute period had been allocated in the 'General Studies' timetable of the school day for me to meet of six year-12 (16/17-year-old) boys with a staff member in the room. The meeting was on their 'territory' and the group was well established over the previous five years and I was an interloper, a stranger on their space. Consequently I did not have as much control over the group as I would have had if they had not known each other beforehand and had met on my territory, a seminar room at Birkbeck for example. The effect of this was that some of the conversation was rather chaotic with competition for dominance among the boys but in spite of these disadvantages some useful data was obtained and features in the data chapters.

3.10 Summary

My research questions: -

- **How do young Jews understand and perform Jewishness and masculinity in contemporary Britain?**
- **How do they talk about their experience of being a young Jewish male in Britain and what are their concerns?**

These were formulated from the gap in the literature and I have used a social constructionist approach to answer them. Although Jews live in many parts of the UK, by far the bulk of them are in North-West London and it is only from this population that I have recruited for study a sample of young Jews which in their diversity of education and religiosity reflect the target population. I used in-depth interviews facilitated by a visual aid that I had developed. The interview transcripts were analysed by Constructionist Thematic Analysis supplemented by Cultural Analysis using spreadsheets and Thematic Maps.

I present the data in the following three chapters by aspect because it reflects my initial questions in the Preamble (Pages 11-12) which were framed by the changes from my adolescence in masculinity, Jewishness, and Britishness before I had refined my research questions. I wanted to present a brief contrast for each aspect at the chapter introduction before presenting the data items to support the argument that the three aspects of identity, masculinity, Jewishness, and Britishness, are not fixed but are variable across dimensions that might be thought of as binaries to produce a three-dimensional matrix within which these young Jews negotiate their identity.

Chapter 4 What does, “Being a man,” mean today? Competitive or Co-operative Modes of Masculinity

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I shall present the data relating to what the participants did and understood their lives as young men in the course of their education, leisure, family, friendships, and ambitions as they constructed their masculinity and where their Jewishness impacted on that understanding. I shall be demonstrating the themes that the participants use together with the cultural underpinnings of how those themes were constructed. As mentioned earlier in the thesis I shall be arguing that masculinity is being manifest in a range between competitive and cooperative modes rather than the hard physical verses the soft intellectual modes.

What does it mean to be a man? If that question had been asked three generations ago it would probably have been met with incredulity. Once the question had been considered seriously the reply would likely be on the lines of, having a wife, fathering some children, having a job so that he could provide a home and feed his family, and also, if called upon, to serve his country politically or militarily to ensure security for the common good. If masculinity as a concept had been considered separately from ‘being a man’ it would conventionally encompass such things as, not being a cissy/cry baby, being physically and emotionally strong, being successful in business or sporting circles and being self-reliant. These are the attributes described by David Clines (Clines, 1995 Pages 212-243) and D. Brannon quoted by Brendon Gough (Gough, 2018 Page 2) (see Literature Review 2.2 page 43). Physicality and power relations between men were of primary importance of how men have positioned themselves. Their relations with women would be one of domination, of hegemony, ascendancy being achieved through culture, institutions and persuasion though occasionally by force (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). It is likely that men would have been influenced by the ‘Hemingway myth’ of brawny masculinity (Horrocks, 1994 page 91 et.seq.; Segal, 2007 page 94 et.seq.).

Three factors have emerged to challenge this paradigm. The possibility of global conflict has receded with the realisation that a world nuclear war is unthinkable thus removing the opportunity for universal military service as a vehicle for the construction of masculinity, although smaller scale conflict persists. Secondly, industrial globalisation and technological advances have completely changed the pattern of employment for men so that the economy in most western countries has shifted from manufacturing and manual labour to provision of services and knowledge-based skills, this shift thus abolishing what were traditionally regarded

as 'masculine' jobs. Thirdly, successive waves of feminism demanded acknowledgement of women's domestic labour and women's legal status (Humm, 1995 Page 98) and in the 1960s the focus of feminism moved on to personal issues regarding domestic violence and also public issues critiquing the patriarchal, or male-dominated, institutions, and cultural practices throughout society. The new economy, with its emphasis on the softer skills of inter-personal relations, offered more scope for women to be financially independent. In reacting to these changes young men have had to move from the battlefield to the gym and sports field, from the factory to the office, and have had to master domestic skills of the kitchen and nursery. I argue that in negotiating these changes young men are torn between the harder models of competitive masculinity described above, and the newer softer, more cooperative masculinity necessary to thrive in contemporary society. I shall seek to show that the various models of masculinity that young men use indicate that they often occupy a fluid position between these poles and affects the way that the young men talk about what being a man means to them today.

For many young men, their interview with me was the first time that they had talked about their gender having passively accepted being a male as a matter of fact.

Alan *I don't think masculinity's that important. I don't think I'm ever conscious of it. It's not something I worry about.*

Alan received the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a strong version of masculine dominance and could be regarded as showing a complicit masculinity (See 2.2 Page 44)

Joel *I don't really think about being male affects me and stuff and I don't get a strong sense of identity being male, but I do get a sense of identity being Jewish. And I have a British identity as well. Which are both important to me.*

AN *But being male is something that just is?*

Joel *Yea, just is, yea.*

David accepted his gendered position.

David *I guess I am male, Jewishly. I practice as a male, so I would only identify as male. I would guess that I would strongly identify as male but then I don't think committing oneself to be male commits you to any sort of behaviour, or social behaviour. I am what you would say, is fairly metrosexual⁷⁷ but I don't think that's any less male, or masculine.*

⁷⁷ Metrosexual – the term first used by Mark Simpson 14th November 1994 in *The Independent*. It was revised in 2002 to include gay and bisexual men.

He was not inclined to pursue the near obligatory smoking, swearing, drinking, aggressive sexual boasting, or other stereotypical masculine activities. The original description of the metrosexual was a single, heterosexual man who is meticulous in his clothes and appearance. I think David was using the term more as a repudiation of stereotypical aggressive masculine behaviour.

AN *How do you create your gender?*

Gerry *I don't think I create my gender. I think I probably adhere to the norms that society has already created for me.*

AN *Which are?*

Gerry *Probably most are completely subconsciously. So for instance you, it's quite unlikely that you'll ever see me cry or get too emotional in public or even in private in fact. So that's quite a stereotypically masculine trait, erm.*

Gerry presents his gender construction as subconsciously obeying societal norms which is a form of social constructionism and that includes the absence of overt emotional response featured by Clines and Brannon (see 2.2 page 43).

4.2 Intellectual

Gerry *We've always, when you look at the respect that Jews, the Jewish people have for education, reading. Why do we have so many lawyers, for example, and journalists? Cos these are people paid to ask questions, and to debate, and to advocate. That a Jewish value is really, this thirst, passion for learning and education.*

AN *You think Jews are more intellectual than non-Jews?*

Gerry *I think so. I think we have more respect for. I'd distinguish between intellect and intelligence. I don't think Jews are necessarily more intelligent, but I think that in general some cultures value intellect more than others. It's not just the Jewish culture but I think Jewish culture is one of them. We really value learning, education, and that's something I'm very proud of actually.*

Although Gerry has positioned himself outside mainstream Jewry (5.3 page 134), he still uses first person language (we) and is proud of the value Jews put on education.

Gerry *Jewish men tend to be less 'alpha' and probably more intellectual.*

In scientific literature the alpha male is a term associated with zoological study of primate behaviour where one individual dominates the group. In the vernacular, being 'alpha' is not always complimentary being associated with attempts to dominate and/or bully and it is this that Gerry suggests is not an important part of the Jewish psyche.

Rob *My idea of Jewish masculinity is being somewhat educated, having a good job, you know. I feel, taking charge of a situation and trying to make everything okay. I feel it means someone bearing the brunt of certain situations and trying to set an example.*

Rob challenges Gerry's model by appropriating some of the alpha male traits such as leadership, and taking care of other members of the group, by his claims that a Jewish man should take the initiative and not be obsessed by muscularity. He is balancing intellectualism with rationality and self-reliance.

Rob *Non-Jewish masculinity is being like, very muscular, being alpha male, being a hipster, wearing trendy clothes, being tall, being broad. Apparently, muscularity is something gay men and women feel, like, in the air. Maybe more than a soy boy type of character.*

AN *A what boy?*

Rob *A soy boy, that's what a wimpy guy is called in Canada. Jewish masculinity is maybe less muscular in a way to the non-Jewish masculinity.*

He associates homosexuality with the muscularity and dress of the non-Jew, a masculine sexual identity⁷⁸ that stands in opposition to the stereotype of the effeminate homosexual – a soy boy.

Gerry *The rabbis of the Talmud, they're always questioning things. Why do we do this? Why do we do that? What's the reason for this? What is the significance of that?*

Rob *Jewish masculinity is being very skinny, very pale. Sat in a corner of a very big yeshiva and studying all summer.*

Gerry was drawing on the tradition that the Talmudic rabbis were hotly debating how the written commandments from the Torah were to be translated into daily activity and how society was to be regulated. This was an active process and differed from the essentially passive process of studying and accepting the decisions which was how Rob presents yeshiva study. Rob produced an extreme, almost a caricature of the Yeshiva masculinity that he has observed from his experience in the Haredi world. Gerry's model of yeshiva learning is a noisy argumentative space described in the Talmud where propositions and rebuttals are interspersed with *peshita* [simple] and *lo kasha* [no question] in almost derogatory fashion. Many rabbinic sources describe the agonistic atmosphere in the Beit Midrash: a place of winners and losers, anger, insults and shame, and sometimes even physical violence (Rosen-

⁷⁸ The 'Gay Biker Image' of pop music e.g. *The Village People* which subverts the macho masculinity of the Rockers.

Zvi, 2013). Rob describes a more contemplative passive learning experience. Gerry's is the hegemonic competitive pole and Rob is the soft pole of Jewish masculinity.

Gerry *The history of our religion has been intellectualism and open mindedness and curiosity and thirst for knowledge.*

David *You often hear people say that Jews make particularly good lawyers because from an early age we are schooled in a dialectic thinking, from the rabbis of the Talmud. I don't know, I don't know if I agree with that, but a certain level of argument does obviously present in both schools. I like reading at a fairly academic level I would say. But I would consider that part of my Jewishness.*

David takes up the notion of intellectualism and suggests it might apply to the legal profession. The reputation for intellectualism that Jews have acquired is part of the discourse in general society to the extent that finding a Jew in a military college was considered an oddity by Hugh's fellow students.

Hugh *There's lots of stereotypes that always come across. Accountants, lawyers, that sort of thing. They always bring these up. I think that's their opinion of Jews.*

This legacy of primacy of intellect has come down and affects young Jews both positively in encouraging hard work but there is also a negative aspect. Nigel spoke about communal pressure to do well academically.

Nigel *I feel like, there is a certain sense that if you're in a Jewish community there is some sense of being. Of having to work hard just because of the sense of community. And everyone around you is doing that.*

At a focus group of year-12 boys at a Jewish private school one of the complaints that they mentioned was the competitive nature of their communities in this regard. When the GCSE and 'A' level results came out there was intense interest which the boys felt as competitive pressure and fear of not coming up to expectations. For Nigel Jews were not especially intellectual.

Nigel *Obviously, it's not a biological thing, saying that Jews are more studious than other people. And of course, at NJPS⁷⁹ everyone is very studious.*

This could be just that at a fee-paying school they know that as their parents were paying for their education, they felt obliged to work hard but this is not universal as David, at another private school, remarks:

⁷⁹ NJPS - Non-Jewish Public School

David *My school, just in general? Yeah. A lot of money for not an awful lot, I suspect. It was okay. I had a nice time, but I don't think I was probably pushed as much as I could have been. But one has to take some blame for that as well. Yeah, it was okay, it was fine. Not a brilliant experience, not a terrible experience.*

The participants of this study could be described as middle class and most of the parents had been to university or other higher education unlike the grandparents of the interviewees. In 1950 17,337 students were awarded first degrees and by 2011 that number had reached 350,800 (Bolton, 2012). In 1960 only 4% of school leavers went to university rising to about 14% by the end of the 1970s. Currently around 40% of school leavers start undergraduate degrees.⁸⁰ If entry to higher education is a marker for intellectualism then intellectualism is not a specific characterisation of Jews.

AN *Do you think Jewish boys are more studious? Comparing your attitudes with say, those at your rugby club, The boys you're playing rugby with. Do you think there's any difference overall in your attitudes to life in general?*

Oscar *Erm, well I guess probably In JSS⁸¹ they're more studious. They're one of the top state schools. They're more. Guess work harder and focus more on studies and less on. People at rugby, they're more, at rugby they're more, probably want to be more masculine and that stuff.*

The boys at the Jewish secondary school focus more on academic studies whereas the non-Jewish boys at the club want to appear more masculine. This observation does not lend itself to generalisation as it is only boys who were interested in rugby who would join the club and these boys would tend to be 'more masculine'. The cultural script that Oscar was drawing on is that Jewish masculinity was related to study rather than the physicality of the non-Jew and thus the tradition of prioritising intellect that was promoted by the rabbinic tradition. This script is undermined by the importance of academic performance in the general population as increasing numbers of children progress to higher education.

4.2.1 Comment

The blueprint that the Jews had originated in the Hebrew Bible and there is the particular influence of the patriarch Jacob, "the mild man who lived in tents,"⁸² that promoted an intellectual model of masculinity in contrast to the physicality of his brother Esau (2.4 page 55).

⁸⁰ www.theguardian.com/education/2016/jun/24/has-university-life-changed-student-experience-past-present-parents-vox-pops

⁸¹ JSS – Jewish Secondary School

⁸² Genesis 25.27 Jewish tradition holds that Jacob studied at the yeshiva of Shem and Ever for 14 years after he left home.

As mentioned in the literature review intellectualism and study of their religious literature was all that the Jews had to construct their identity and masculinity after their country and mode of worship had been destroyed as they no longer had the security of self-government with power over their own fate and circumstances. For rabbinic patriarchy the central moment in the construction of gender and subjugation of women is the exclusion of women from Torah study (D. Boyarin, 1997a Page 153) that is mentioned by Simon in 5.7 (page 146) and Nigel (5.7 page 148). Hegemonic masculinity was demonstrated by intellectual superiority over women who were not permitted to study and over those men who were not able to study. Intellectualism in preference to physicality may be interpreted as soft but in company boardrooms the skills of debate and argument are deployed with as much rigor as physical combat was ever pursued. In all legal disputes, domestic, criminal, company, and public law the lawyers draw on their intellectual prowess in furtherance of their client's interests and society richly rewards the skilled practitioners of this craft. On a more sinister note, the offense of coercive control as a form of domestic abuse where the victim, usually a woman, is subject to mental torment by the perpetrator, usually a man, has been recognised. The perpetrator uses their intellectual ability to dominate and oppress their victim.

The young Jews of this study had probably been brought up with the expectation of going on to higher education.

Charlie *I think I'll go to university because, in my family, everyone's been to university. I think in my family and amongst my friends it's most common to go.*

As mentioned in chapter 1, Jewish parents drew on their cultural heritage of intellectualism and emphasis on education as a means to leave a lower social class and for this generation of middle-class youth there is still a need to relate education with Jewishness. This expectation applies to both boys and girls and has become internalised so relating to intellectualism is likely to be more a response to their societal and class pressure as much as to their innate Jewishness.⁸³ Within a localised Jewish community some of the youth experienced competitive pressure to succeed academically and this was resented.

4.3 Exercise

4.3.1 The gym

Gerry *I go to the gym several times a week and I lift weights, and I'm surrounded by loads of other men because that's seen to be as big and muscular as possible. I just put my headphones, listen to a podcast. It's not necessarily a social*

⁸³ In the Haredi community boys are encouraged to go to Yeshiva rather than university.

experience for a lot of people. I don't go to the gym to see my mates. I go to the gym to lift weights. I'm addicted to the gym.

The weights area tends to be hostile to women unless she has earned 'honorary male' status by her performance.

Gerry *I speak to girls who don't go to the gym, to my friends, and they say they are intimidated when they go to the gym. Not only by the men, because men can be horrible, but also by other women. There are some boys that find the gym intimidating as well because, they don't want to go to the gym. Like someone could be 'dead weight' lifting 150 kilos and you could only lift 60 kilos. And you stand next to them and you could feel really inferior.*

Gerry is describing the gym as a space which can be either co-operative where men are encouraging each other as the individual is competing against themselves to perform greater feats of strength, or competitive in the desire to outperform and intimidate others. In both models weightlifting is a group activity. By using his headphones, he has distanced himself from this group activity and Terry also declines association with the 'macho' performance of some men in the gym.

Terry *These men just want to drizzle with masculinity, like ooze masculinity almost. For me, I think I'm proud of my personality. A lot of time the ideal British man has become someone who goes to the gym a lot, works out, plays lots of rugby, will go out drinking all the time, has a sort of carefree confidence. And I'm not that person.*

Using the words 'drizzle' and 'ooze' Terry conveys his disgust with that type of 'ideal British man.' He has a contradictory relationship with the gym because whilst distancing himself from the macho he admits:

Terry *I go to the gym now to exercise but what I don't want to bring to the table (is) the kind of toxic masculinity. Because some people who go to the gym effectively what masculinity can become is not just trying to increase your muscles. It's about increasing the amount of testosterone. Being a man, a lot of the time is very scientific because your masculinity I think is controlled by the amount of testosterone you have at any given time.*

Terry has a utilitarian model for the gym. He goes there for solitary exercise to improve his general fitness with no thought of trying to impress anybody or to associate with the rugby playing drinking fraternity.

Alan *You go to the gym is in my opinion. I think it's just ideology, capitalism, not that I'm a huge anti-capitalist Marxist. But I try and see everything for what it is. Oh, you go to the gym. You pay money so that you can have an attractive body so that, you know, because of adverts, because sex sells.*

Alan has read some of Slavoj Žižek's work which criticizes disparate forms of popular culture.

Alan *It's all about ideology. It's all post-modern deconstruction of life and for him, it's politics. But I kind of apply that to individual life.*

Alan is denying the companion/competition model of Gerry and the utilitarian model of Terry in favour of the economic exploitation model of post-modernism. He is arguing that when men use the gym to enhance their sexual attraction he becomes a tool of the capitalist system to encourage more men to buy stuff if it is advertised by an attractive muscular man.

4.3.2 Sport

Outdoor play in large groups tends to be the male pattern in gender development (Golombok & Fivush, 1994 Chapter 7) and football is a key motif in boy's construction of masculinity (Frosh, Phoenix, & Pattman, 2002 Page 12).

James *I love sport, I love football. I love even playing it virtually like, on the console. I love obviously playing it physically and watching it at a stadium and on TV and talking about it and looking up things about it. I love everything to do with it. Obviously, it's hard to play it because I'm not the fittest but that doesn't stop me even if I do, you know, get exhausted after 15 to 20 minutes and I sweat like mad. I'm not going to stop playing, you know. It's the determination, how much I love the sport. I like sport in general, but football is my 'go to' sport. I love it, and I support [redacted] as well.*

James mentioned football many times in the course of the interview and there is a specifically Jewish dimension to this motif as the subject of an exhibition at The Jewish Museum (*Four Four Jew* ed. Joanne Rosenthal, 2013). However Joel prefers rugby which might reflect a class distinction.⁸⁴

AN *What hobbies do you have?*

Joel *I like sport. I haven't been playing that much recently. I like rugby, but I'm not allowed to play that anymore.*

AN *Because?*

Joel *Too many injuries, according to mum and dad. I've broken my finger a few times, and head injury a few times as well and they've kind of said, "No." I was a bit too small as well. Wasn't like, strong enough. I (had) started at [redacted] Rugby Club and then I went to [redacted]. I played full-back or winger. (I was) quite fast, and I could kick conversions and stuff.*

AN *Are you sort of competitive person?*

⁸⁴ Rugby Union is associated with Public Schools whilst Rugby League is associated with working-class Northern towns

Joel *Sometimes. In sport I can be.*

Although saying that being male doesn't concern him (4.1 page 88), his competitiveness shows some stereotypical male characteristics. His persistence despite repeated injuries to return after injury and take responsibility for the team as a place kicker reflects the masculine tendency to ignore health issues as mentioned in chapter 2.2 page 45.

Self-reliance is a feature in solo sports as Mark explained.

Mark *I'm not really as much into team sports. I'd like to play rugby, but I prefer to do extreme sports like mountain biking. I did do some water skiing, but I haven't been for quite a while. Pretty much most sports to get an adrenalin rush.*

Mark's preference for lone activities rather than team sports would correlate with a philosophy of 'self-reliance' which is typically a masculine characteristic (see 2.2 page 43).

Charlie recognises the pressure to conform to the behaviour of his peer group.

Charlie *And there's pressure to try and like the same things that other people like. Such as the same films or the same hobbies that kind of thing. For some people who aren't interested in football, but I've never been good at football, playing it. I think when I was younger there's pressure to enjoy football because that's what people do, who would just go and play football. So, it's tricky because I wasn't into it and I wasn't any good.*

AN *So, how did that make you feel?*

Charlie *It used to bother me that I was I didn't join in football games and stuff like that. It didn't really bother me any more cos it's not such a big thing and it used to be the boy's way of socialising was to play football. Now I think, especially my friends, there's no pressure to do that anymore if you don't enjoy it. I'm friends with a lot of like-minded people.*

Charlie acknowledges the peer pressure to enjoy a traditionally male occupation to which he had no affinity and that had made him feel uncomfortable. He says that he has matured and is confident enough to reject that form of masculinity and has a group of likeminded friends who are happy just to socialise either on-line or in person. He is constructing his masculinity in a non-physical cooperative homosocial fashion.

4.3.3 Comment

Exercise is a common motif for young men and the gym and sports field are the spaces where certain types of gender is constructed. Despite inroads made by women since the early 1980s, the world of elite bodybuilding is still very much a male preserve and the presence of women in elite gyms only serve to heighten the issues of masculinity that bodybuilding deals with (Klein, 1993 Page 14). For men, working out with weights has been found an "ideal pastime

for reducing the anxieties and releasing the tensions that the individual grapples with on a daily basis” (Denham, 2008). Men indulge in heavy exercise in the company of other men who can motivate and encourage each other as an individual can set ever more ambitious targets and achieve the physique they desire, or it may be the means to dominate the other men by outperforming them. Both poles of masculinity are available. Voluntary exercise in the gym is a project of bodily self-governance. To exercise is to follow rules that discipline bodies to conform to socially normative ideals of fitness. The repetitions of exercises form a ritual which mirrors the repetitions of religious ritual, a fixed number and fixed order of weights and exercise machines as rigid as within any authorised prayer book. Hellenised Jews in the Graeco-Roman world emulated non-Jews by going to gymnasia, but this has traditionally been discouraged by the rabbis because of the association with physicality to the detriment of spirituality. Analysis of the comments on exercise shows competitiveness, cooperation, exploitation, and rejection of peer pressure and I shall return to this discussion in chapter 7 (7.3.1.5).

4.4 Military

Hugh is at a military college prior to university.

Hugh *I'd say that [college] is definitely a masculine place. When we get our rifles out and stuff you get all the people repeating the lines from 'Full Metal Jacket'.⁸⁵ Very manly movies. So when we can, when we do the high-risk stuff you get all the men going over the top. Trying to look cool, basically.*

Hugh's group at the military college chant this mantra as they collect their weapons. In the mantra the soldier and his rifle become at the same time fused, the rifle being the phallus but also a separate entity, the best friend. The collective chant is a popular mechanism in the military for promoting esprit de corps. Hugh's college puts emphasis on physicality and leadership. Although the chant ends with a call for peace I have the impression that the rifleman would prefer perpetual war and the thrill of killing.

Hugh *I went to a Jewish Scout Group and there I had been through the ranks, so I was almost a leader at that point when I left. I was able to lead groups of children. We do drill twice a week. You have to do a great deal of PT. We have to do rifle training, do lots of leadership training because I'm training to*

⁸⁵ The Rifleman's Creed. *"This is my rifle. There are many others like it, but this one is mine. My rifle is my best friend. It is my life. I must master it as I must master my life. Without me, my rifle is useless. Without my rifle I am useless. I must fire my rifle true. I must shoot straighter than my enemy who is trying to kill me. I must shoot him before he shoots me. I will, before God I swear this creed: my rifle and myself are defenders of my country. We are the masters of our enemy; we are the saviours of my life. So be it until there is no enemy, but peace. Amen."*

become an officer on the scheme; leadership style training, command and planning exercises and we do lots of team building as well.

The military college has high academic expectations.

AN *Your college. For 'A' levels?*

Hugh *Yes, then go to university and get a degree.*

AN *Which university?*

Hugh *There are 13 universities I can go to that are approved. It's called the DTOEES⁸⁶. The whole system, approved course. Pretty much any engineering course. There's a wide range of universities from Oxbridge down to Portsmouth so anyone can go to any university they want really.*

Hugh is using the military for sponsorship to higher education which Mark is also wanting to do.

Mark *It's most likely I'll be joining the military after uni(versity). I'm not 100% sure yet but one of the engineering courses. I'd probably go for the army and the paras (parachute regiment). I'm quite sporty but nowhere near enough for the parachute regiment yet.*

Mark's motivation for a military career comes from his father.

Mark *Because my dad served in the military I'm going to. And that's something that's really important to me.*

Hugh and Mark aspire to a military career. Hugh's experience in the scouts and Mark's in the air cadets foster the skills of both being a follower and being a leader. Hierarchy and leadership are typically associated with boys play and development (Golombok & Fivush, 1994 Chapter 7) and this is a feature of military training. Leadership relates to the dominance pole of masculinity but has to be tempered with inter-personal skills to command the respect of those who are following. This relates to the softer cooperative pole of masculinity.

4.4.1 Comment

George Mosse writing about the relationship between masculinity and militarism noted that for the Edwardian middle classes war was an important test of manliness (Mosse, 1996 Page 108-112). The reaction by British Jews to the First and Second World Wars was described in chapter 1 (pages 20/21 for the First and page 26 for the Second) and Gavin Schaffer presents Jewish soldiers as equal to their non-Jewish comrades (Schaffer, 2012). Michel Roper argues that, beginning just after The First World War and continuing up to the last quarter of the century, there emerged among the British middle class a means of reassessing the codes of manliness, two important aspects of this were the widespread experience of fear among

⁸⁶ Defence Technical Officer and Engineering Scheme

frontline soldiers in the war and the post-war gradual acceptance of psychological factors affecting human behaviour and feelings (Roper, 2005). The links between army life, masculinity and violence are more ambiguous than they might first appear – there is a taboo on tenderness (Segal, 2007 Page 15) and the attempts to look cool that Hugh noted is a reflection of this taboo.

Jews have served in the armies of the countries in which they lived from the late 1700s when conscription was introduced in many European countries and advocates for Jewish rights presented the Jewish soldier as proof that Jews were worthy of emancipation and social acceptance. Sander Gilman notes that 19th century medical opinion was that Jews were far too weak to be soldiers as evidenced by the prevalence of ‘flat foot’ amongst Jews (Gilman, 1991 Chapter 2). Derek Penslar describes the history of how Jews were enthusiastic members of the armies of their state (Penslar, 2013 Page 2). There are only 100 to 200 Jews currently in the British armed forces⁸⁷ but due to both conscription and volunteering there were substantial numbers in the two world wars of the 20th century, so militarism is a factor in Jewish masculinity. In the present-day military, there is less emphasis on conflict, and amongst serving members of HM Armed Forces there is a sense of internationalism and wishing to maintain international rule of law⁸⁸. As the role of the military has changed so the masculinity associated with it has changed, from the hard aggressive stance epitomized by the rifleman’s creed to a cooperative model where the army is called upon for logistic support of civilian authorities in relief and rescue situations. I shall return to militarism in 7.3.1.2.

4.5 Violence and Aggression

Men were more likely to be victims of violent crime than women (2% of men compared with 1.3% of women). This was true for all types of violence, with the exception of domestic violence, where women were more likely to be victims (0.3% of women and 0.1% of men). The year ending March 2020 Crime Survey for England and Wales showed that stranger violence showed the largest difference in victimisation between men and women (1.2% compared with 0.4% respectively) and 0.7% of men and 0.5% of women experienced acquaintance violence.⁸⁹

Oscar was worried that young men are at risk on the streets.

⁸⁷ Lt. Colonel Danny Sharpe, Chairman Armed Forces Jewish Community in a speech at the virtual AJEX parade 15th November 2020

⁸⁸ Major Adam Shindler, Personal communication.

⁸⁹ Crime Survey for England and Wales [The nature of violent crime in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/crime-and-justice/crime-in-england-and-wales/articles/the-nature-of-violent-crime-in-england-and-wales)

Oscar *Well, I guess just being a young man. About well kind of, the danger of being on the streets, a young man. Cos near my school there's a big, lots of muggings recently. Quite a few people have been mugged in my school. And they've just got some police presence, quite a lot of police there. And in general, in this area, not this specific, but there is quite a lot of mugs, mugging happening here. Sometimes yea, at night.*

By the emphasis that it is young men who were being targeted and requiring uniformed police protection this implies that their masculinity has diminished. Young men who have been victims of assault struggle with a cultural understanding that masculinity is associated with power and strength and 'victim' is associated with weakness and impotence (Burcar & Åkerström, 2009). Although Oscar has not been attacked it is the fear of being attacked that concerns him.

Alan *Let's say, someone says something rude to me on the street. I imagine someone else in my position might want, you know, do what men do. Fight back, eventually get into a fist fight. Cos, "You assaulted my masculinity." I don't care for that at all, but I'm not sure that has anything to do with Judaism. I think it's probably more from my philosophical investigations, slash, beliefs.*

Alan's response is the same as that of Sigmund Freud's father quoted by Daniel Boyarin (Boyarin, 1997 Page 33 referencing Freud *Interpretation*, 197). Freud's father had his hat knocked off by a non-Jew and he just picked up his hat and carried on his way. Boyarin maintains that Freud attributed his father's reaction to his Jewishness the passive response being a refusal to demean oneself by engaging with violence.⁹⁰ Alan attributes his own reaction to a hypothetical attack to his knowledge of philosophy. His restraint is symbolic of soft masculinity which he contrasts with the misogynistic activity that he has observed by some of the male students.

AN *Cos the white native [place] student, I mean, what would they regard as masculine behaviour? And is that any different from what you would regard?*

Alan *Most certainly, erm, most certainly. So, it's, [place]'s a bit of a bubble when it comes to 'Lad Culture.' A lot of it, erm, and it kind of escalates. Because there's such a huge majority of, you know, people like that. No one's going to turn around and tell them to stop.*

AN *By lad culture you mean?*

Alan *Erm, male chauvinism, essentially a huge drinking culture. Which I enjoy, I enjoy that aspect of it. But I've heard some very nasty stories about. Well,*

⁹⁰ The young Sigmund Freud was shocked by this lack of heroism and preferred to identify with Hannibal. *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud* Ernest Jones 1961 Basic Books New York

I've heard some very nasty stories which I attribute to this mindset of male chauvinism. I think it's entitlement. "I'm a 6-foot-tall rugby lad. I go to the gym. I fulfil what I think society deems as attractive. I can do what I want." Force myself on women in a club. It's nasty, very nasty.

Alan is making a sharp distinction between his behaviour and those of his non-Jewish peers. The use of the term 'bubble' to describe the situation of this group of students brings to mind the 'Jewish bubble' that will feature in the Jewishness chapter 5. In both cases the discourse is one of voluntary social isolation from the general population.

Nigel suggests that religion is irrelevant and that all boys have the nature to be aggressive.

Nigel *I know there's a big thing whether you're Jewish or not to be macho and every young man has that whether you're Jewish or not.*

The 'social learning theory' of gender development (Golombok & Fivush, 1994 Chapter 5) maintains that boys are rewarded when they display masculine behaviour (aggressiveness and playing with masculine toys).⁹¹ It would therefore follow that the attitude of the parents would be paramount as to whether a boy would be encouraged to be aggressive in play. Nigel is at a non-denominational all-boys school where his environment prioritises academic ability and as such being Jewish doesn't have a monopoly on intellectualism as everybody is the same. For himself, he does not think that masculinity has a major part in his identity:

Nigel *Masculinity, I don't feel that plays as big a role.*

But the school does have exceptional facilities to cater for his sporting interests; badminton, squash, swimming, water polo, football. Whilst not completely eschewing physicality, Nigel has channelled any aggressive instinct into socially acceptable pursuits. He therefore doesn't feel a need to try to be 'macho' in a conventional aggressive physical way. The discourse that Nigel is rejecting is that his studiousness is in accord with the traditional intellectualism of the 'mild man who lived in tents,' that is, the Jacob figure in the Esau/Jacob dichotomy.

James *I was in a high school called [redacted]. It was a special school. There was not so much like, erm, a personal. It was like, more like a lot of behaviour problems. So then, obviously there were a lot of kids there with autism, including me. But most behaviour, was more about just behaviour as a rule. A lot of people act tough. It wasn't the best school ever and there was at least one fight every day and one closed down. I would be shocked if there wasn't*

⁹¹ Lynne Segal regards the notion of sex roles and sex-role stereotyping such as the social learning theory of Golombok and Fivush, whilst "superficially appealing' has been the object of convincing criticism as it posits a non-existent homogeneity to social life (Segal, 2007 Page 58).

someone being horrible to another person in a day. And like I said, there were a lot of fights.

AN *Did you get into fights?*

James *Nah, I, I, I'm not that sort of person like.*

James has been diagnosed with moderate autism and has some learning difficulties and he spoke quite eloquently and sensitively about the way his brain function differs from the standard thus showing considerable insight. Autism is diagnosed when a person shows abnormalities in social development, communication, and displays unusually strong obsessional interests, from an early age⁹² and the spectrum covers a wide range of intelligence. James has rejected the violent behaviour that was common at his school.

4.5.1 Comment

The refashioning of masculinity undertaken by the rabbis following the destruction of the Temple and failure of the revolts against Roman rule, included the conscious desire to eliminate violence from the Jewish psyche. Aviva Cantor discusses the dynamics of exile in terms of patriarchy whose basis is power (Cantor, 1995 Page 13). As the Jews were without power, they were at the mercy of whoever had power over them and were liable to be subjected to any form of violence and as violence had been found to be ineffective resistance had to be intellectual which fed into the emphasis on intellectualism as has been mentioned above in 4.2 pages 89-92. The participants showed little appetite for violence and aggression and the distaste that Alan had for the behaviour of some of the other students at his university could reflect the cultural antipathy to violence that Judaism espouses; presumably they were of the same social class so that could not account for the different outlook. James was in a situation that was inherently violent and deliberately avoided it. Oscar's concerns are that young men are as likely to be the victims of violence as perpetrators as discussed in chapter 2.3 – the young men complaining of 'munpain' (page 52).

4.6 Domestic Life and Responsibilities

The sexual dynamics of parent/boy interaction are described in Section 4.10.4 page 125 but there are significant comments apart from those.

AN *Tell me a little bit about your family.*

James *Erm, who should I start with? I'm always voicing opinions over, like, my family and friends. I like to show how good they are. Erm, Mum and dad are the best obviously. Do I need to say that? I couldn't ask for anyone better because I*

⁹² *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (4th ed), American Psychiatric Association

couldn't. They're amazing. Sometimes I, I, my fault but it's a different scenario by arguing with my dad too much And it's my own fault obviously.

AN *What do you argue about?*

James *Oh God, like, I, I remember about a year ago, I ended up storming out of the house because he wouldn't let me have a can of coke (Coca-Cola). But, then again, sometimes when I have an argument with my dad maybe, even my mum says, maybe he's being a bit too harsh. But most of the time it's good to be harsh. Shows how much he cares. And yes, I am in the wrong most of the time when I do – and regret it. But obviously, this is part of what I am like, my autism, and need to control it.*

James shows considerable insight into his situation. He admits that he was wrong when he lost his temper over the Coca-Cola and understands that the discipline was for his benefit and the need to control his autism.

AN *Any particular idols, role models that appeal to you?*

Gerry *People I look up to, famous people?*

AN *Or any.*

Gerry *Honestly, my dad, and my mum. But dad's the best teacher I've ever had. And my mum, she really taught me the values that I think I live by.*

When offered the chance to name any role model Gerry proposes his parents in preference to anyone in public life. Gerry had the example of his parents having come from different sections of the community negotiating a compromise solution to what could have been a very divisive issue.

Gerry *My father grew up and attended an orthodox synagogue. Her family were members of a Liberal synagogue. So, when they got married, they met in the middle and joined the Reform Synagogue. My mother insisted on not an orthodox synagogue.*

I suggest that the psychodynamics that allowed his parents to compromise continued into the psychological development of Gerry's masculinity.

David takes a rather detached position not wanting to be like his parents.

AN *Do you have any particular idols or role models from culture or from life?*

David *Err, I mean I don't have any role models in the sense that I look at anyone in my family and want to be like them. That's not to say that I'm not grateful for everything. I don't find anything they have done particularly impressive. I'm proud of them but I don't particularly see them as role models.*

Simon also made a frank comment about his father.

AN *You mentioned about your views and your father's views in terms of what you were doing was slightly different from what he was doing. Any other aspects of that?*

Simon *My father is not an ideologically driven person. He's a practical person, he's not academic whatsoever. Not an intellectual thinker, and as such his views are very much a product of his experiences rather than thinking about things which he has not experienced. Had my father been gifted the opportunities that I have had, going to yeshiva. Had he been gifted that experience then perhaps his views would have been different.*

These two examples reflect psychological development in the parent/child relationship.

Whilst appreciating the care they had received in growing up they were able to balance their love with a realistic assessment of their parents' strengths and weaknesses. Simon's critique of his father's lack of intellectualism is tempered by the realisation that he had not had the same opportunity for advanced Jewish study that he had. David and Simon were breaking free from parental domination and forging their own paths.

A question about internet use threw up a surprising response from Joel.

AN *What do you use the internet for?*

Joel *Sometimes to look up recipes. Yea, I like cooking.*

AN *You like cooking? Are you a good cook?*

Joel *Erm, yes.*

AN *What do you cook?*

Joel *I just cooked dinner.*

AN *What did you make?*

Joel *A pasta salad thing with tomatoes and feta cheese.*

AN *How long have you been so interested in cooking?*

Joel *Quite a long time, a long time. Mum tried to get all of us into cooking I'm trying to make this stuff so it's probably better. Which I think is good cos when I go to university or when I start to live alone It's going to be a useful skill.*

Joel's response to a question about use of the internet is not what I anticipated⁹³ but it showed that he appreciates his mother's encouragement to learn how to cook and this would indicate a softer, more mature masculinity with men not being stereotyped as hopeless in the kitchen. Joel is also thinking long-term to the time when he would have to be capable of fending for himself. Genesis refers to Jacob cooking a stew and he is the prototype of domestic

⁹³ Semi-structuring the interview allowed exploration of an area I had not previously considered.

masculinity.⁹⁴ The relationship between domestic as opposed to professional cookery with changes in masculinity has been explored in the literature (Aarseth & Olsen, 2008; Hollows, 2003). Particular mention is made of Jamie Oliver and his television programmes and cookery books where his cool and laid-back style may be seen as an active attempt at rephrasing masculinity. Domestic cookery was seen as an almost exclusively feminine activity whereas professional gourmet restaurant cookery was a masculine space with a macho aggressive atmosphere in the kitchen with rigid hierarchy.⁹⁵ By converting domestic cookery into a fun leisure activity Oliver attempts to transform the low status drudgery of feeding the family, previously the arena of feminine subjugation, into an area where the new man can show his caring feminine side.⁹⁶

Simon rejects the model where woman's domestic labour is not regarded.

AN *The way that family structures and the multiple family models that have emerged. Do you have any feelings or opinions on this?*

Simon *Yes, so, as you mentioned before conventionally the family model has been the man, so to speak is head of the household and his labour of love – his wife – is kind of, you know, cleaning the house. I don't believe in that. There's definitely equal responsibility. We should very much do the washing up and clean the house and stuff like that. Go out to earn a living. Be a family man Being engaged in studying Torah. Keeping to halacha – keeping to the code of Jewish law.*

Referring to his (future) wife as 'a labour of love' is somewhat demeaning towards women. The phrase originated in 1592 meaning labour voluntarily undertaken or performed without any consideration of any benefit or reward⁹⁷ but I don't think he used it in that sense. It could be that he was joking⁹⁸ but more likely he used it as a rather clumsy term of endearment. "Going out to earn a living" has an undercurrent of it being the man's preserve to be the principle earner in the family and 'studying Torah' is traditionally a male concern which excluded women and was the practice that constructed gender differentiation and hierarchy within yeshiva society (Boyarin, 1997 Page 152). Simon's frequent reference to halacha denotes that he has accepted that his actions, his attitudes, and his thoughts which constitute

⁹⁴ Genesis 25.29

⁹⁵ The height of the chef's hat was a mark of seniority. Phallic symbolism perhaps?

⁹⁶ Alternatively, a man taking a more active role in the kitchen may constitute hybrid masculinity (see page 48) especially if he uses his skill to undermine and/or dominate his wife.

⁹⁷ "Labour of love." Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/labor%20of%20love> Accessed 23 Jul. 2020.

⁹⁸ In Freud's view, jokes happened when the conscious allowed expression of thoughts society usually suppressed or forbade (Freud, 1905).

his personality, are regulated, and controlled by the legal framework that the rabbis have instituted. His masculinity is thus constructed and constrained by his adherence to Jewish law. This attitude has recently been challenged by Rabbi Yehoshua Engelman speaking as a psychotherapist about the conflict between faith and therapy, “Most religions, including Judaism, have a tendency to emasculate people, force all kinds of patterns [of behaviour] on them, bring about a situation in which they lead a false life, managed by rules that don’t allow a person to truly know himself” (Engelman, 2015). Simon is apparently comfortable with his life being managed by religious rules and there is no conflict between his Jewishness and his masculinity.

James was quite sure that previous gender roles were outdated.

AN *What do you think about family models? It used to be – it was a husband and wife It was the man went out to work and the wife stayed home and brought up the children. That was the model 40 to 50 years ago. It’s different know isn’t it?*

James *I think that’s quite good because lots of things are different the old days and stuff. In my opinion right now, I think it would be a lot of opinions, but this is what I am saying. Again, same with the gender sort of thing, whatever you are, even if you are a family, husband and wife, do things equally. You share the house chores. You should like, picking up the kids from school and stuff. You share looking after, staying at home with them.*

James is rejecting the hegemonic masculinity mode of the man dominating his wife and advocating equal responsibility for child-care and housework. Lynne Segal writes about the domestication of men after the Second World War and the way it was portrayed in the popular films of the time⁹⁹ but considers it was largely a myth. Men were at home, putting up shelves and other manly pursuits but not pushing the pram or looking after the children generally (Segal, 2007 Page 4 et. seq.).

An integral part of the patriarchy has been the financial dominance of men over women which had its origin in the biblical model (2.2 page 41) and the Athenian model (2.2 page 42) of family relations. Oscar notes that men were usually the main earners in a relationship which contributed to their masculinity but that is less prominent now.

AN *What do you think being a man is now? What do you think is expected of you?*

Oscar *Erm, well, less nowadays less traditionally male. The differences between men and women is probably less now than in the past.*

⁹⁹ *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, The Tender Trap*

AN *In what way?*

Oscar *Well just traditional ideas of the roles in the family. And I guess masculinity, less certain ideas of it.*

AN *Which ideas?*

Oscar *Erm, well just men being strong and that sort of stuff. I guess there's some ideas that men making money And it's more common for a man in a relationship to make, to have, to make the main money. Probably less so than in the past.*

Terry linked income disparity to outdated religious attitudes.

Terry *The idea of men being, sort of breadwinners erm, I think that distinction probably will be eroding. Which is a good thing that distinction to be eroded. Because particularly I just think at times, this is the UK. It's a changing society, erm, it's a quite liberal society. I think it's time for some Jews, particularly religious Jews like my cousins who lead a very strict life. They just have to realise that this isn't Eastern Europe anymore, And you can't, just traditional maybe, traditions such as, I don't know, having the man being the one with the big job. That would have made sense in Romania, in the second half of the 19th century, But it doesn't actually make sense now when a lot of women should be empowered.*

Domestic power relations are associated with financial input into the family. Oscar and Terry support the notion of women's financial agency and an egalitarian approach.

Arthur suggests that men are now able to do the kind of jobs that they wouldn't have considered before.

AN *What do you think are the expectations on you as a man?*

Arthur *Men can for example, very stereotypical here, work at a nail salon where a few years ago, a decade or two ago, they wouldn't be allowed. Or they'd have to get a more manly job for example or be a builder or something stereotypically a man would do. That's a lot died down a lot since then.*

The discourse here is that men shouldn't feel their occupation or activities restricted by their sex. The Building industry is typically masculine with 99% of the on-site work force being male. The industry as a whole demonstrates several male tropes: there is intense competition in the tender process for contracts, there is the on-site cooperation and homosocial support during working time and after work, and there is the ever present risk of injury (Courtenay, 2000; Hanna, Gough, & Markham, 2020)

Arthur *I think masculinity is you can do whatever you feel is right to do as a man. You could do whatever you feel like and all options are open to you.*

He acknowledges that there are still lingering expectations of a normative masculine occupation involving manual labour but there are alternatives. His citing of work in a manicure saloon makes an extreme case because whilst male hairdressers and chiropodists are commonplace, manicurists are almost exclusively female.

4.6.1 Comment

The key aggregate developments in UK employment include a decisive shift in broad sectoral terms away from agriculture, primary¹⁰⁰ and manufacturing industries towards services (Nolan, 2004) and some men had difficulty in adjusting to this shift. Roger Horrocks described being embarrassed that he was a writer and not something heavy and masculine like a plumber (Horrocks, 1994 page 93). In Luis Jimenez and Valerie Walkerdine's study of young men in a town in South Wales who had been made unemployed by the closure of the steel works they also found that shame and humiliation was prominent when suitable 'masculine' jobs could not be found (Jimenez & Walkerdine, 2011). Arthur expressed no such qualms, and it could be argued that masculinity is better constructed by being a financially independent pizza delivery driver than being an unemployed labourer living off benefits. There are signs from the 2019 Office for National Statistics (ONS) survey of families and the labour market that gender inequality in the home is lessening (ONS, 2019) and the importance of involving men in all aspects of domestic labour and childcare is recognised in the development of a less coercive and oppressive to women form of masculinity. These interviewees acknowledged that housework is something that should not be foreign to them. Some of the participants had ambitions of employment in the professions such as accountancy, law, and engineering but many had not decided what to do after university.

4.7 Leisure

Alan *The interesting thing about masculinity is 50 years ago going to a football match might be considered more masculine than going to an art gallery and I love art. I love watching films and going to galleries - and discussing artwork - we should engage in objectionably morally vicious - art works.*

AN *What does that mean? Morally vicious art works.*

Alan *We should engage in objectionably morally vicious art works. It comes from an essay by David Hume.¹⁰¹ He identifies a paradox and being able to identify when an artwork is 'morally vicious' and by that he means endorses a moral system contrary to our own. And the question is, 'Does the moral outlook of an artwork have any bearing on its aesthetic quality?'*

¹⁰⁰ Examples are; farming, forestry, fishing, and mining

¹⁰¹ David Hume *Standard of Taste* 1757

Alan has identified a change in the public perception of masculinity that allows him to indulge in his passion for art. Alan 'engages' with art, an active process, which he contrasts with 'going to' football which he implies is passive. From my experience of going to football matches to watch Hull City at Boothferry Park I remember an almost exclusively male crowd with the smell of cigarette smoke and I now realise the 'maleness' of the space and the cooperation of the crowd (especially if my team was winning). Engaging with a piece of art requires a different paradigm. It is a solitary pursuit and a mental struggle to deconstruct the work and gender is usually irrelevant.

Shopping is usually thought of as a female interest, but Otis had an alternative position.

Otis *I don't think being a male to me is so important. It's just like being human...it's not even a question.*

AN *So, you don't feel any particular obligations or expectations as a man?*

Otis *Some people do – but me personally, I just ..like.. I don't really care that much about what people think. It's like, He's a man – he should act like a man With the people I mix but like ..I'm guessing a lot of other people would completely disagree with me And say, 'That's not true' but my personal opinion is 'If you think you are a man, you should act just like the way you want.' Like, you are a man you are not allowed to go, I don't know what? Go out and have a coffee with your friends because that's a woman thing to do. It's true, the majority of men would not want to go dress shopping. That's a fact and yes, the majority of women would not want to go and watch a football match. And if a man wanted to go dress shopping, he would be seriously judged. I'm not going dress shopping, but if a man likes dress shopping then why shouldn't he go dress shopping. It doesn't make him less of a man, that's just his personality. Lots of people disagree with me on that but I don't think it's so much a man/woman. It's much more personality based. If you want to put on make-up, you can put on make-up¹⁰² but that doesn't make you less of a man.*

Once again, going to watch football is employed as a male motif and set in opposition to going out for coffee which he characterises as a female motif. Had he used 'going to the pub' for a drink that would be masculine but 'going to a cocktail bar' would be considered feminine.

Otis articulates the metrosexual position more forcibly than David (4.1 page 88).

Otis *I really enjoy clothes shopping, and so do a lot of men now, they love it. It didn't used to be the case but everybody I hear males in school speaking about clothes, more than women. Cos of all of the brands, it's like fashion. And*

¹⁰² A survey in 2013 by closeshave.com showed that the average man spends £590 per year on grooming products, about the same as women.

people are more obsessed with fashion. I genuinely hear more, more boys speaking about wearing clothes, different clothes. Like, what clothes they've bought or the different shoes they got.

This interest was apparently driven by 'brand awareness' and for him it was a transient phenomenon.

- Otis** *I genuinely hear more boys speaking about wearing clothes – different clothes Like, what clothes they've bought or the different shoes they got, The new T-shirt they sold for £40 because that was the new fashion. Re-selling, that's the new thing. Have you heard about 'Quick fashion?'*
- AN** *Tell me.*
- Otis** *So, there are a lot of things that come in one season and go out the next. But it's becoming a bit of a problem because shops selling and then have to throw away because they can't sell them and it's become a big environmental issue. – Quick Fashion – Especially males are more into this 'Quick fashion' is they...*
- AN** *Are you?*
- Otis** *No, I'm really not – I don't really care about the brands, This jumper isn't branded – I just like it – But a lot of people will only wear brands – Skater brands - like Supreme.*
- AN** *We're talking about your contemporaries?*
- Otis** *I just buy clothes because I like them But I'm quite in a minority with that – a lot of people buy them because.*
- AN** *You say people, are these boys?*
- Otis** *Boys. A lot of them will buy them because of the brand and they say, "Oh. That's cool – I want that" for no particular reason, just because of the brand. I used to be like that but then I thought "What's the point?" Just because it has a big logo on it doesn't mean that I need it. Last year I stopped being obsessed with these brands As you get older you get less obsessed with all these brands.*
- AN** *So this is the 14- to 15-year-olds?*
- Otis** *Yea – like from year 7 to year 11 like - people starting to obsessing about a shoe that costs £350. But a really small supply and you have to sit on your phone for about 10 minutes trying to get it and then you get it and you sell it on for £1000.*
- AN** *So people are doing?*
- Otis** *Yes, re-selling. People do buy these shoes for £1000 because,*
- AN** *Who are they selling it to?*
- Otis** *Umm, just – I can show you various Facebook pages that say. Like the shoes are on 'Easy' – 'Easy Talk UK,' I'm selling this for £1000 and people buy them. I mean that's mostly boys .. like .. They are spending that much money on*

shoes and clothes Like...When I go out to London with friends it's like, "Can I go to that shop?" Not "Can I go to this place to eat?" "Let's go out to this shop cos I really wanted to get this" It's the same, similar with girls. It's not only boys, girls are similar.

I have included this extended exchange because it indicates that he and his near contemporaries have an interest in the stereotypically feminine concern of fashion and clothes shopping but there are also competitive elements typically associated with masculine behaviour described amongst his contemporaries. There is the struggle to obtain a rare, desired object – the shoes for £350 – the risk taken in case the investment does not succeed, and finally the triumph when somebody else has been duped into paying £1000 for the article, a three-times return on the investment.

He accepts that as far as general society is concerned, he is in a minority regarding behavioural difference and therefore is at risk of societal censure but does not consider being a male to be particularly important or letting his gender dictate his behaviour. For him, being a male is something merely biological, to be acknowledged and then not thought about further, rejecting hard masculinity completely. He states that his school friends had similar interest in clothes and implies that there is a generational divide with younger people less inclined to accept the established behaviour patterns of their elders.

Rob was also interested in clothes and felt constricted by the dress code of the yeshiva.

Rob *I was very frum [observant] those days and would walk around the mall and I would look at the things and say, "This is nice" and "That's nice" but I can't wear it. We weren't allowed to wear certain trousers. We had to wear black, like black dress pants like, I don't know how you say, you know what I mean, smart trousers. And we had to wear like buttoned up shirts.*

Rob's visit to the mall was reported back to his parents.

Rob *Some people saw me, ladies, and they called my mother, and my mother was upset. And my father said to me I can't go to the mall, it's not allowed, you can't go downtown. You have to stay within this area. And then I didn't know what a cult was.*

Rob had contravened two norms of his community; he had gone to an area deemed inappropriate for a Yeshiva Bocha (although women were allowed to be there), and he had desired clothes that were not what frum young men should wear. This episode was part of the process that cause Rob to leave the Haredi world with its strict dress and behaviour code that he now dubbed a 'cult.' He was beginning to reject the Haredi masculinity model and the rejection was further associated with his sexual orientation (see 5.8 page 156).

Although Andy plays football regularly and, in the past, has done karate and swimming, he inhabits a world where normative masculinity is expressed in the virtual worlds of violent video games (Fortnite) and sci-fi fantasy cinema (The Avengers: Endgame).

AN *And besides football what else do you do?*

Andy *Umm. I like to play games, video games.*

AN *Which video games do you play?*

Andy *I play FIFA and Fortnite.*

AN *Uh ha, so you've got ambitions for the World Fortnite Champions?*

Andy *I wish. One million pounds! I'm generally only allowed like, I'm only allowed at weekends.*

Being immersed in a video game allows the gamer to be both inside the game, colonising it and at the same time being the controller, what Valerie Walkerdine terms, the 'god-trick' (Walkerdine, 2007). The omnipotent fantasy of control, a masculine fantasy of being outside as well as inside is necessary to shore up a feeling of masculinity against its encroachment by the feminine. Fortnite is a third-person shooter last-man-standing game that at the time became the most popular video game in the world¹⁰³ and had pushed aside outdoor sports and was occupying the free time of a large number of boys. Girls found the game much less appealing.¹⁰⁴

Exercise and sport have been mentioned earlier but for Charlie, his circle preferred more mental pastimes.

Charlie *I'm friends with a lot of like-minded people.*

AN *So, what do you do?*

Charlie *What do we do? It's mainly we just like pastimes. We just do like, talking playing games, memes, sending stuff.*

AN *Sorry. Memes?*

Charlie *Memes, a big way like, people communicate now friendships is memes, funny pictures and with captions. And people make memes and send them to other people. And I just don't think there's such, it's such an issue anymore. Because as people grow up, they don't, you know. They're more capable of talking to each other rather than having to play football.*

¹⁰³ *New Yorker* 21st May 2018

¹⁰⁴ *Wall Street Journal* 22nd December 2018

This exchange demonstrated a generational divide in that I did not know that the pictures etcetera on my phone were called memes. Charlie said that he could interact cooperatively with his friends by talking rather than football (4.3.2 page 96). Memes are units of digital information such as pictures, videos, and jokes, which are circulated, imitated and/or transformed via the internet. They usually exist in groups sharing common characteristics of content, form and stance each created aware of others in the group (Shifman, 2014 Page 2).

4.7.1 Comment

This section counterbalances Exercise 4.3 page 93 et. seq. and amongst these young men there was less concern about compliance with physicality in leisure and they were willing to find alternative pursuits for their free time. Leisure was described in homosocial terms tending to cluster in like-minded groups as shopping and meme creation were described as cooperative enterprises. The exceptions were Alan and Andy who mentioned solitary pursuits; Alan going to art galleries and examining and engaging with the exhibits and Andy's preoccupation with solitary video games.

4.8 Friendship

Same-sex male friendships are characterised by less overt affection than female same-sex relationships and for adolescent boys their peer group pressure may make it unsafe for them to express themselves and to relate to others in ways that support the development of close friendships (Chu, 2005). Male-only associations are solidly entrenched in large scale and Western societies and "Once in a while, we (men) just need to get away and do our own guy thing," (Weibel-Orlando, 2008). As having Jewish friends is a marker for 'moderate involvement' (S. M. Cohen & Kahn-Harris, 2004), for convenience I have grouped the comments to show how the participants have related to Jewish and non-Jewish friends in this section.

4.8.1 Exclusively Jewish

As Judaism is a particularly gendered religion the friendships made between young Jewish males are important for their construction of Jewish masculinity. For the more observant young Jews the fixed schedule of prayer in a group of 10 to form a minyan these gatherings affirm a relationship between them. Simon expressed this: -

Simon *I'm particular to follow the code of Jewish law to the best of my ability which involves praying with a minyan – a quorum of ten men – three times a day.*

Although his conscious focus was to obey the dictate of communal prayer, within that milieu was the mutual support that grew because if one person were missing then the prayer group

could not function; they relied on and were dependent on, each other. From a historical perspective the minyan is an artificial compensation for the loss of the biblical state and temple that ushered in Rabbinic Judaism (J. Boyarin, 2004). The prayer room is typically small and is a direct descendant of the rabbinic study halls from which women were specifically excluded. It is a very intimate male space where 10 to 20 men gather for prayers. This all-male group fosters an atmosphere of a 'boys' club' where the intense relationship the participants have with the text of the prayers¹⁰⁵ is interspersed with occasional silly boyish jokes and banter. A small area may be cordoned off for the few occasions where a woman might come for a service and when women do attend it is usually for a masculine event such as a mid-week Bar Mitzvah or circumcision. One of the opening blessings that the men say thanks God for not making them a woman. Taken overall, the entire ambience is not 'female friendly.'

Although Simon was at university he didn't interact socially with the other students. He had restricted his friendship circle to his co-religionists.

Simon *Contact with the other students was primarily on an academic basis. The relationship was very much academic, doing group projects together and helping each other with homework and the like. It didn't really extend far beyond that. [Redacted] is very multicultural international university and naturally you know for sure that people generally attracted to their own. It sounds horrible but it is kind of a natural human condition. [redacted] multicultural nature didn't really lend itself well to kind of being attracted to different social circles there. There weren't many that were similar to mine. And I don't mean that in a cliquy sort of way but naturally it did not lend itself well to socialising.*

Although Simon denies being cliquy he has deliberately eschewed the opportunity to engage with both groups; the students on his course, and the wider student body. He attempts to justify his exclusivity by claiming that all people were generally only attracted to their own. One of the criticisms of multiculturalism that Jonathan Sacks makes in his book *The Home We Build Together* is the tendency for diverse groups to separate themselves off and not interact at a deep level with each other in building society (Sacks, 2007). Simon is demonstrating this characteristic with his interaction with fellow students on a strictly task orientated, almost contractual, basis and not through any emotional involvement.

¹⁰⁵ Daniel Boyarin writes about the 'all-male grouping structured around intensely eroticized relation to the object of study, the Torah imagined as female, and to each other.' (Boyarin, 1997 page 131)

The gendered nature of Judaism has affected the nature of friendships which David described:

David *I find that when it comes to Jewish women in orthodox circles, they tend to be very parochial, very uninteresting people. Whereas I would say that of my friends, orthodox men tend to have more of an interesting outlook on life which I think is disappointing. I find that men were more interesting and engaged. I suspect that's because in one sense there is a place for them in shul and I don't think there is really a place for women in shul and I think that is very regrettable. And that is one of the downsides of an orthodox shul.*

Enforced separation of the sexes affected David's interaction with, and opinion of women. His gender identity and masculinity are affected by his negative association with women.

The tradition of a Friday night gathering of friends with some of the symbols of the Jewish Sabbath was important for Alan, a student at a university away from home.¹⁰⁶

Alan *We're not going to discuss the parsha and have grace after meals, but we will say the prayers beforehand. We'll light the candles, we'll say the moitzei, maybe wash hands. It's not super-religious. I think it's the middle way which is nice. I think it's important to keep some traditions alive.*

Alan considered the university Jewish Society too lax in respect of observance: -

Alan *I don't think they say the prayers. It's just a social and another dinner they might as well go to a restaurant.*

Although Alan does not do everything in the Friday night ritual, he does enough to associate the gathering with an unmistakable Jewish tradition.

Terry had observed that his mother had deliberately separated herself from the non-Jewish social circle and was determined not to do the same.

Terry *My mum had a really tight circle of Jewish friends at university. Everything she did was with these Jewish friends of hers. I think what they see university as (was an) extension version of London, of London life, you know. "You're Jewish in London and you're the same as that at university." But I would say, "No." because university itself in places like [place] away from London. I'm proud that my university experience wasn't Judaised. I wasn't shoe-horned into trying to be some sort of Jewish student like my parents when they were at university.*

Terry's mother had produced a clique with her friends at university and was the same behaviour that Simon mentioned in his non-relationship with other students described above.

¹⁰⁶ See Sitcom *Friday Night Dinner* 1.2.4 page 33

Terry was asserting his independence from his mother by deliberately widening his friendship circle.

4.8.2 Mixed Jewish and non-Jewish

Alan went to a non-Jewish boys' school albeit one with a substantial Jewish presence and had two distinct groups of friends.

AN *And going to a secular school you had lots of non-Jewish friends? Or did the Jews tend to stick together?*

Alan *Erm - yea - The Jews did generally stick together. But I - I was in my own group, my friends who were not Jewish - Yes - I was kind of 'in between' so I would go out with both - a nice balance and see people I knew and - and meet people.*

AN *Where did you go when you went out?*

Alan *Erm So - with the Jewish crowd - we would go out - well - up to year 11 like every Saturday evening we would go to a house party or someone's house and that sort of going out. But then in the 6th form I went out with the other. What did we do? Erm went to the theatre quite a lot. Usually the National and the Donmar Warehouse.*

The notable feature of this exchange was the importance of space and its relation to his homosociability. He compartmentalised his friendship circles so that the private space association was with his Jewish friends and more public space association with his non-Jewish friends. The subtext appears to be that Jews do not want to be too visible which they believed might provoke antisemitism (see 1.2.2 page 22 for parallel concern). Alan was content with his hybrid position of 'in between' being at different times part of a Jewish group and also part of a non-Jewish group.

Mark is a pupil at a Jewish mixed school and he also has two groups of friends. He moves seamlessly between them.

AN *Can you tell me about your friends.*

Mark *I have a mix of about 50/50 between Jewish and non-Jewish friends. Although the Jewish friends are seen as supposed to be more educated. I'd say they're usually more stuck up. As they're usually kept within the 'Jewish bubble.' However, my out-of-school friends, who may have not had as fortunate backgrounds, may not be mentally smart. But they are more socially accepting through what they've had to experience and they're usually much nicer people.*

The Jewish bubble is related to clique differing in that the bubble includes a geographical space as well as other Jews and a clique just relates to a sub-group of people irrespective of location.

Mark *Things I've kind of realised by having both Jewish and non-Jewish friends. Kind of can see from both inside and outside of what people would call the 'Jewish bubble.'*

AN *Cos you mentioned about the Jewish bubble before. How do you feel about that bubble?*

Mark *I think it may be useful for certain things because there will be antisemitism. But I feel like it's way too prominent as it mostly restricts anybody from having non-Jewish friends from inside with the Jewish group. And when someone does, they usually just have it for 'bragging rights' as I've heard from quite a few people from my school who, when they have one person who is not Jewish as a friend they play that they have a 'road man' friend which is*

AN *A what?*

Mark *A road man, it's a kind of slang.*

AN *Road?*

Mark *Road man, a slang term.*

AN *For?*

Mark *Someone who is usually quite violent. Like track suits, sort of like dodgy type. Even if they really aren't most people would just say they are and so it's more a bragging right type of thing than a friendship thing.*

I was not familiar with the idiom, 'road man,' and interrupted Mark's comments. This demonstrates a generational gap which it would be unwise to deny (see 7.7 page 234). Mark acknowledges that being in the Jewish bubble affords some protection from antisemitism (which he thinks is overstated) and he is rather contemptuous of those Jews who profess friendship with somebody, obviously not Jewish, as a way of looking 'street wise.' The 'road man' is analogous to the 'road life' mentioned by Bakkali (2.3 page 52). Mark is demonstrating that he holds a position outside the generality of Jewish circles and Gerry has taken this further because he does not feel the need to have Jewish friends and has distanced himself from them.

Gerry *I've always, always found Jews to be, Jews my age, at least, to be very cliquy. A little bit socially exclusive and it's not just something that, I'm not saying I've no Jewish friends but just I never really, weren't really my circle, to be honest, never have been.*

Alan and Mark were able to construct two friendship circles, one Jewish and the other non-Jewish. Alan's Jewish circle was firmly lodged in a domestic sphere, a closed group where entry was permitted only on a 'tribal' base, and his non-Jewish circle with an open group in a more public arena. Mark is part of the Jewish bubble with his school, but he also mixes with a non-exclusive group and despite his unfavourable opinion of his Jewish contemporaries he is

able to relate to both groups. The contrast between restricting the friendship circle to Jews and having a mixture of friends is a measure of degree of involvement in the Cohen and Kahn-Harris paper cited above.

4.8.3 Joking

One of the features of male friendships is the use of insults and jokes amongst close friends. This playful derogation among males, an apparently aggressive form of exchange, has a principal aim of reinforcing close affiliation and a secondary function as a way of exerting influence (McDiarmid et al., 2017). Mark demonstrated this: -

Mark *I'd say there have been quite a few like, antisemitic type jokes I've heard with a lot of my friends, both groups. However, usually in the other group. It's pretty much just people make fun of everything. So, it's not aimed at Jewish. The non-Jewish, pretty much joke about everything from Judaism to Islam to Christianity. Just joking about everything to be honest. No offense taken.*

4.8.4 Caring

James has confounded the autism criteria of Baron-Cohen¹⁰⁷ by showing capacity for meaningful relationships.

James *What helps me in life is my best friend, Ollie. He is 2 years younger than me, year 10. He's so clever and gives me such good advice and he puts his arm around me in public and stuff. If I can't like, if I don't know what I'm doing with money he would always, like, calculate it for me. If I'm scared, he would always help me. If I'm losing at games, he really takes the effort to help me. I tried to keep friends, normal mainstream, and stuff because I want to ignore my autism. I also love having friends that might be autistic. It doesn't bother me at all and erm. I get along with everyone.*

Male bonding is not generally a vehicle for male to male emotional relationships (Clines, 1995 Page 212) and the friendship James describes with Ollie is Platonic and caring.

Simon *Socially it was fantastic. A year of maybe 90 boys at the start. Really very solid, very menchdik [considerate] individuals and inspiring people as well and religiously as well it was great.*

As will be mentioned in 4.10.3 page 125, Simon's mother had died whilst he was still at his first school and this was widely known in his community. Describing his year group as "very menchdik" indicates that he had emotional support from them.

¹⁰⁷ "The male brain is defined psychometrically as those individuals in whom systemising is significantly better than empathising, and the female brain is defined as the opposite cognitive profile. Using these definitions, autism can be considered as an extreme of the normal male profile" (Baron-Cohen, 2002). The notion of brain sex differences is rejected by Gina Rippon (Rippon, 2019 Chapter 14).

These two items are example of caring masculinity which relates to Anderson's Inclusive Masculinity Theory (see Page 47).

4.8.5 Friends with girls

There was a general reluctance to answer questions about their relationships with girls and it may be that reluctance was a function of the generational difference between them and myself. Romantic association is analysed in 4.9 page 120 et. seq. but friendship with girls was mentioned in some of the interviews.

AN *Your relationship with girls before college?*

Hugh *I've had friends who were girls before [college]. But at college I'm friends with all the girls in my house and some of the girls from the other houses. But not in a relationship way.*

He did mention the orthodox view about not having physical contact with the opposite sex:

Hugh *I think they know the something – not touching.*

AN *Shomer Negiah?*

Hugh *Shomer Negiah, some of the girls know of that and, like, joke, "I can't touch you," or something, if we're sitting on a sofa in the common room. Some of them are aware of these sorts of things but they only bring as a joke. Not, "Oh, that's a stupid idea."*

Oscar was non-committal regarding his relationship with girls:

AN *Friendship with girls, has this been a brought up at all?*

Oscar *I'm friends with some girls.*

AN *What do you think of them?*

Oscar *Erm, they're nice. (Silence).*

Mark was very reticent on the subject of girls either as girlfriends or friends who happened to be girls and when directly asked, he made a gesture with his open hand, palm down, repetitive twisting a few degrees either way. This gesture usually means that there is something in the balance but he was not willing to elaborate and I did not want to press further in case he stopped the interview (see 3.9 Ethical Issues page 84).

4.8.6 Comment

An important phase of psychological development is the ability to enter relationship with 'non-self,' other individuals, not as rivals or enemies but as someone who has agency and needs as valid as one's own. As a young child, learning how to interact with other children occurs through play and at this stage the playmates are usually chosen by the parents but choosing one's own friends is part of the separation process from parental influence as Terry

demonstrates. Being excluded from a friendship circle at any age, but particularly in childhood, is likely to cause severe distress. Transferring this exclusion onto peoples and perceiving them as 'other' denies the common humanity of mankind. Jews, having suffered exclusion from society in encounter with modernity, have fostered a separatist policy and sought friendship within its own body drawing inspiration from its own tradition (see 2.4 Page 54). It is this policy that influences Simon's rejection of being friends with other students but having said that he is still able to cooperate when tasks require but Jewish dietary law would hinder his 'breaking-bread' with them (see 4.8.1 page 114).

If a study was to be focussed on cross sex friendships then young men might be tempted to be more forthcoming if the interviewer was either younger and/or female and if more than one interview was to be done. Focus group discussions have also been useful in this regard (Frosh et al., 2002 Chapters 4 and 5).

Get yourself a friend¹⁰⁸ was the advice of Joshua ben Perachya in the Mishna and research has shown benefits in that there is more social trust, less stress, better health, and more social support to be had with friendships. These benefits are increased by more frequent contact, a larger number of friends but less heterogeneity of the friends (van der Horst & Coffé, 2012). The friendships mentioned by the participants are those conducted in person. The whole notion of friends has been partially debased by social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram whereby someone might claim 'hundreds' of friends and whilst these young men do use these platforms, that use has been supplementary to regular face-to-face contact.¹⁰⁹ Young men might be reluctant to express closeness directly to each other, but male friendships can be intimate and psychosocially significant as James described explicitly, and Simon hinted at.

4.9 Romantic Association

Charlie recognises that he is expected to begin to socialise in this manner.

AN *What being a Jewish man, being a man? Do you have any thoughts on that? What do you think is expected of you?*

Charlie *I think it's. I think it's tricky because it's expected that. You know, obviously there's amongst young people and my age expected that boys will be interested in girls and whatever. So, there's that kind of aspect of it.*

¹⁰⁸ Ethics of the Fathers 1.6

¹⁰⁹ At the time of writing schools have just re-opened having been closed for 6 months due to the Covid-19 pandemic and in the earlier stages of national lockdown social media was used extensively as the most practical method of maintaining contact.

AN *And are you?*

Charlie *Er, yea but, I am but I think like. The thing is, at my age everyone's just doing, everyone's just like having fun. No one is really in it for a serious like relationship or anything. So, there's that aspect of it and then.*

AN *What do you think about Jewish girls?*

Charlie *What do I think about? Well the thing is I think erm Jewish. I know lots of people, like my older brother and lots of people who say, the thing is that because I go to a Jewish school I don't have that much contact with non-Jews. It's just what I know. But my older brother and people like that say, "Oh yea, I don't want to date any more Jewish girls. I want to leave it." Because it's such a closed community. Everything that happens gets round to everyone else. So, even though like, you know, my grandparents know this person's grandparents who tell them this and this and it all gets back. So, erm, lots of people, lots of people want erm, to leave that. And not, not date any Jewish girls, which is fair. But I think because I don't have exposure to that yet.*

He is aware from his brothers that in the Jewish world gossip is rife. Charlie is commenting on his brother's statement that if he were to form a romantic attachment it would be public knowledge within the community. Generally, Jews committed to Jewish group survival view intermarriage with alarm (Cohen, Kahn-Harris, & United Jewish Israel Appeal., 2004 Page 31) and consequently when a Jewish boy and girl start going out there are discreet enquires about the respective families and subtle pressures applied either to cement the relationship or break it up.

4.9.1 Immature

These two examples where the boys were not mature enough for a relationship.

Alan *I was in a relationship in the lower 6th - about a year - with a Jewish girl I had known for years. The reason she dumped me was - because instead of seeing her I was sitting in my room thinking about philosophy. Every intellectual conversation I had I would say, "Oh, this relates to Wittgenstein."*

Gerry *I've had two Jewish girlfriends. Probably for the first one, who I met on tour. So that was always going to happen (laugh). I was probably too immature to actually have a sustained relationship. I didn't pay her the attention that she probably deserved.*

The above comments from two of the interviewees reflect a pattern described by Golombok and Fivush on adolescent friendships (Golombok & Fivush, 1994 Page 128-9). They maintain that girls have a habit of play and relationships in very small intimate groups, often only two girls who 'take turns' in speaking and share confidences. Boys tend to play in larger more aggressive groups vying with each other for leadership. When adolescent boys and girls start to form relationships, the girls have an expectation from her previous experience which the

boy does not have. The examples typify the boy's inability to relate to the girl in the manner to which she had become accustomed, and the relationship broke down. The boys had not yet acquired the social skills to maintain the relationship.

James recognised that he wasn't mature enough to embark on a relationship with a girl at the moment and that he had other more pressing concerns regarding his education.

James *I have friends that are girls and stuff but at the moment I just don't think I'm mature enough right now. I need to grow a few more years and just finish education first. I think, because girl relationship I think would get in the way of education and starting the real world of work, I think, you know, it could be 19, 20 or 21 or whatever it is, it is.*

4.9.2 Hedonist

Terry *At university there is essentially a one-night-stand culture. That's always going to happen. That's what most people do at university. Relationships are quite difficult to manage. Because when you're working very hard and partying afterwards.*

Terry rationalises the one-night-stand culture as a response to the stress of working hard leading to a hedonism with which he implies the girls are complicit.

Terry *If you are ambitious and want to work hard. You have to go out. You're going to be in a lot of night-clubs. A lot of women at those parties. I mean, university is a time to have fun. You're not going to get married at 22. So, run around, do what you want with anyone. It's fun, it's free time until your past 25.*

Heterosexual performance by men may be viewed as the mainstay of masculine identity (Segal, 2007 Page 178). The hook-up culture among university students is evidence for hegemonic masculinity in the active hyper-heteronormativity expected of men and in how men's descriptions and interpretations of hook-ups often revolved around their relationships with other men and their place in male hierarchy rather than their relationships with women (Currier, 2013).

4.9.3 Exogamy

The fear and concern regarding exogamy has produced pressure because of communal gossip which is resented and can lead to the exact opposite of what the community intended.

Terry *When you have to deal with a Jewish girl you have to perhaps repress your Judaism a bit. Because what these girls don't want, is they don't want to be going for someone who looks like their cousin.*

He cited an instance where this had happened and it caused him to reflect on whether Jewish men had over-prioritised intellectualism and compromised their physical masculinity.

Terry *One girl who I know from North London, she was attractive, a lot of people said, "She's an attractive Jewish girl." But she ended up with – She's still in a relationship with one of these English boys and erm, It's, that can be a bit scary because it makes you look at your own Jewish identity and think, "Are Jewish men living up to the standards of masculinity?" Which are being, I guess, spread and created by British society. By these British people, by white British culture.*

Terry is postulating that this particular Jewish girl had deliberately opted for a non-Jewish boyfriend because he represented something which the Jewish boys lacked. It is speculation but could she have thought that Jewish boys were shallow, in which case she was behaving like Suzie Gold (see 1.2.4 page 33), or had she preferred a non-intellectual boyfriend?

Alan proposes that in the event of him marrying a non-Jew he would still be able to connect to his Judaism although he recognises potential difficulty.

Alan *I can't really help who I fall in love with - you know. It wouldn't be ideal but if it is, it's what it is. In terms of - I mean if you want to keep the ideas alive – I suppose you want to keep the heritage alive - the tradition alive. I think it would be perfectly viable - you know - with a non-Jewish partner. You would have to say, 'I want to say prayers on Friday night.' Take one day a year to fast and go to the synagogue and stuff.*

4.9.4 Comment

As young people enter adolescence, one of their primary tasks is to gain knowledge and experience that will allow them to take on the social roles of adults, including engaging in romantic and sexual relationships. Ahna Suleiman and colleagues regard the cognitive and social-affective development occurring at puberty creates a unique window of opportunity for adolescents to engage in developmentally appropriate learning opportunities relevant to navigating romantic and sexual experiences (Suleiman et al., 2017). The risk areas of the brain¹¹⁰ are active and the adolescent learns by 'trial and error' which activities are conducive to romantic attachment and what mistakes are made (Arain et al., 2013). The experiences of the interviewees negotiating adolescence corroborates the pattern in regard to the development of inter-sex relationships. The gaucheness of early adolescence was being replaced by bravado a few years later.

¹¹⁰This is a contested concept – see Gina Rippon *The Gendered Brain* (Rippon, 2019 Chapter 12).

4.10 Mothers

There are two stereotypes of Jewish mother that have inhabited the Jewish psyche. There are the biblical matriarchs in whose name girls are blessed on Friday nights of whom Rachel is the prime exemplar of self-sacrifice for the sake of her sister and dying in childbirth she weeps endlessly for her exiled children. That mother is an icon that is impossible to emulate (Sered, 2000). Then there is the overprotective controlling obsessional mother described by Philip Roth in *Portnoy's Complaint* (P. Roth, 1969) whose inability to give space for her children to develop their personalities threatens the children's ability to make inter-personal relationships and also affects their son's masculine development.

4.10.1 Obsessive/Controlling

Terry *My mum had a really tight circle of Jewish friends at university. Everything she did was with these Jewish friends of hers.*

Terry suggests that his mother's failure to connect with the wider university community deprived her of broadening her outlook and he took a different path.

Terry *I'm proud that my university experience wasn't Judaised or I wasn't shoe-horned into trying to be some sort of Jewish student, who, Like my parents, when they were at university. So you have to adapt to British culture, British university culture.*

Terry's perception of his mother's university experience was the result of her obsession with maintaining Jewish connections and he was determined not to allow himself to be controlled in a similar fashion. Alan and Terry are brothers and they independently characterised their mother as obsessive and controlling.

AN *When PG¹¹¹ you graduate what do you think you will be doing?*

Alan *Um - There's what I want to do and what my parents want me to do. Err - they obviously want me to be a management consultant or a lawyer or something. I would hate to be a lawyer.*

AN *Your father's a lawyer, isn't he?*

Alan *My dad is and my brother's going to be. I couldn't stand it. Something businessy - Mum thinks I should do. I really would love to write. So I've written - so next term I've written a play which is really exciting.*

At the time of interviews Alan had written and directed a play at university and was resisting his mother's efforts at controlling his future.

¹¹¹ PG – 'Please God' is a figure of speech commonly used in Jewish circles.

4.10.2 Rejection

When Rob's homosexuality became known his mother could not reconcile herself to the situation.

Rob *She really loved me, and she said when he said the word 'homosexual' she let out such a noise that really, for the rest of my life, that will scar me forever. That really, that was horrifying, you can't imagine and that was the defining point where I felt, I don't know, I was so heartbroken. My mother did not speak to me for one year.*

Rob's father wanted to maintain contact and called him clandestinely (phone call from the car), but his mother refused contact and rejected him. The mother's rejection took the form of going through financial records to see if his father was supporting him.

Rob *I thought my father was paying the rent. He couldn't, he had no money. My mother was going through everything to check that he hadn't sent me anything.*

Rob and wanted to maintain family relationship, but it would be at a superficial level.

Rob *I love them dearly, but I can't be open with them.*

Rob had described his mother as a stereotypically anxious Jewish mother and in the context of the family being quite prominent in Haredi circles (his father was a judge in the rabbinical court) Rob's sexuality was a problem. There is a contrast between the responses of his parents which might be a function of his father having to deal with a more varied section of the community and the mother leading a more sheltered life.

4.10.3 Deceased

Simon's childhood was interrupted by his mother's death and the subsequent mourning ritual.

AN *How old were you when she died?*

Simon *I was almost [redacted], yea {silence}*

A room at his first school was dedicated to her memory and the hallway of his home has prominent pictures of his mother so she is both there and not there. Approximately one child in five who have suffered the death of a parent develops psychiatric disturbance beyond the non-specific emotional and behavioural difficulties common in the early stages (Dowdney, 2000) but Simon did not mention any symptoms and the silence spoke for him.

4.10.4 Comment

The Freudian view is that: "The boy must be allowed to want to replace his father (and seduce his mother) but not allowed to do it. Within that male rivalry and identification lies the seed

of the masculine development of the boy” (Horrocks, 1994 Page 72). Roger Horrocks draws on a psychodynamic approach to human personality development and containment of the boy’s Oedipal desires for the evolution of his (the boy’s) masculinity.

From the comments by the participants, elements of the stereotypes were apparent as were the measures that were used to negotiate them. The obsessive, controlling and protective impulses of the stereotype are present, but they are not particularly unusual or excessive and are probably reproduced in all cultures. Those impulses are challenges to the developing masculinity of the sons and by opposing them whilst retaining the affection of the parent a young man does develop an independent sense of self. The rejection that Rob experienced poses a greater challenge because trying to appease the parent requires considerable sacrifice by the child which would be likely to diminish their sense of self. This rejection was to Rob’s sexuality, but it would equally apply to parental disapproval of any aspect of the child’s life, a prospective partner, a career, or place of residence for example. The absent parent in Simon’s case was due to death and was dealt with by memorialisation. If the absence had been due to divorce, particularly if that had been acrimonious, then it might be harder for the child to deal with.

4.11 Conclusion

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter as society has changed so has the way men construct their gender and superimposed on those changes in employment and expectations of what constitutes maleness has been the influence of Judaism. The relationship between gender and Judaism is covered in detail in section 5.7 page 146 et. seq. The Jewish male pre-emancipation had been restricted in how he could enact gender and had developed an intellectual non-brawny mode and traces of this persist.

The concerns that have been raised regarding masculinity are; the pressure to succeed academically, pressure to conform socially and fit-in with what his peers are doing, the danger of being attacked on the streets, negotiating parental pressure regarding future job and to find a Jewish girlfriend, and doubts whether he is masculine enough.

Intellectualism is now more a function of social class than religious tradition and is a consequence of the knowledge-based economy requiring softer skills. Paradoxically the softer skills may be deployed in a hegemonic manner to control or dominate women or other men either domestically or in public and economic life. Even though intellectualism is less related to Jewish tradition young Jews do feel pressure to succeed academically coming from their community and this may cause anxiety.

These young men are finding ways to construct their masculine identity rather differently to previous generations. Exercise and sport both for pleasure and health are still quite important although perhaps less prominently than earlier times. There is a willingness to engage in pursuits previously the preserve of women including domestic responsibilities (cooking, child-care, and housework) and leisure activities such as shopping, interest in the arts, and socialising generally. Their employment prospects have altered in keeping with the general trend towards a knowledge-based economy but engineering at a high academic level (sometimes associated with a military career) has featured so there are echoes of a male dominated profession apparent. Domestic violence in the Jewish community is an ongoing concern (Abramson & Peterson, 2011; *Jewish Women's Aid Annual Review 2017/18*, 2018; Kaufman, 2010) and there is fear that young men are in danger on the street (Bakkali, 2019; Weenink, 2015) regardless of whether they are involved in conflict between rival gangs or victims of antisemitic attacks (see 5.13 page 170 et. seq.)

Masculinity was associated with will power, honour and courage and has been the way men have constructed their manhood (Mosse, 1996). Given the changes in society featured in the introduction men have had to find alternative ways of constructing their masculinity since the options of war, heavy industry and dominance of women have become unavailable or socially unacceptable. What has emerged is a softer less brawny model, but traces of old style hegemonic competitive and/or dominant masculinity persist. A consequence of the instability that is inherent in hegemonic masculinity is the pressure to preserve one's place in the male hierarchy and conform to 'norm' of masculinity (Terry: "Are Jewish men living up to the standards of masculinity?" 4.9.3 page 122).

I have sought to show that in the participants construction of their masculinity they have been able to draw upon the two poles of masculinity, competitive and co-operative in their mental, physical and social settings. These poles exist side by side and young men are drawing on both in a fluid manner, sometimes synchronously and sometimes alternately, as they negotiate their social, domestic, recreational, and occupational lives. I shall be returning to this in chapter 7 – Discussion.

Chapter 5 Jewishness: What does that mean today? Between Halacha and Culture

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I shall present the data on how the participants understood and constructed their Jewishness. I shall demonstrate how they have related to predominant themes of Judaism and how those themes have intersected with and influenced their sense of maleness and Britishness.

Because the subject of this project is “How do young men negotiate their Jewishness, their Britishness, and their masculinity?” how the individuals ‘do’ the Jewish part is important as Jews are not homogenous in their beliefs and practice, especially since the emergence of non-orthodox movements in the last 200 years and this chapter shows how the participants relate to being Jewish. Religion is a means of retaining a connection to one’s family heritage and thus assists in the development of one’s individual identity (Stone & Harris, 2017). Religion is also a way of externally expressing one’s roots which invokes a dual sense of obligation to the past which for Jews consists of both a biological chain of generations going back to the Jewish patriarchs and a religious and cultural chain of tradition preserved by heroic sacrifice and perseverance (Charmé, 2015 page 50). There is a distinction between Judaism as ritual practice and Jewishness which is a conglomeration of folklore involving social attitudes, traditions, and such items as music, food, legend, and theatre, which may be loosely characterised as culture. Is Jewishness, however it is defined and practised, something that one is born with or is it a “lifestyle choice?” I shall argue that Jews may draw upon both aspects (Judaism and Jewishness) for identity construction and, whilst they may have a strong disposition to one or the other, they often exhibit both in varying proportions as the mood or occasion demands. The relationship Jews have with the modern state of Israel in the last 70 years is also a factor available for the construction of Jewish identity. The interviewees are representative of the range of religiosity of that section of the population who identify as Jews.

Prior to the establishment of the modern state, Israel was an abstract concept for most Jews, an imaginary nirvana where Jewishness and Judaism combined to form an idealised Jewish existence. With the development of low-cost travel many British Jews visit Israel several times a year and become EasyJet Zionists (Judah & Glancy, 2015) with Israel becoming their lodestar of Jewish identity. Tours organised by Jewish youth organisations have become a rite of passage for many British young people usually after taking GCSE. All the interviewees had visited Israel at least once and many have family there. These tours are designed to foster

diaspora Jewish youth emotional attachments to Israel's landscape and are rooted in the classic Zionist practice of *tiyul*—"hiking as a ritualized sanctification of space" (Kelner, 2010). The experience of walking through Israel's countryside is an integral part of these tours which are often named "Birthright," out of conviction that every Jew is entitled to claim an inheritance of history, culture, religion, community, land, and country. The organisers of the tours hope the shared experience of the tour would enhance the Jewish identity of the participants and decide to come to Israel to live and work, 'make Aliyah'¹¹² or at least be prepared to support Israel politically, economically, and emotionally. However an objective assessment of these short tours was found to have little or no positive measurable effects on Jewish identity at all (D. J. Graham, 2014).

5.2 Jewish Identity

The default position in Judaism is that if one's parents are Jewish then even without going into the race/ethnicity discussion, that is an identity thrust upon you rather than a choice and theology is irrelevant. How the family performed Judaism, what theology they accepted and what traditions they chose to continue, shaped the environment in which these participants developed and as they had not chosen to be born Jewish, they had a variety of ways of dealing with their Jewishness.

AN *Well, what does Judaism mean to you?*

Gerry *Err, (laugh) a really hard question to answer. Umm, for me, and this is just for me, I'm not being prescriptive about other Jews, it means, it's a racial thing more than it's a religious thing. Err, not just, not just theologically thing. Being Jewish is not something I chose to be.*

Gerry is at the margin of Anglo-Jewry as religion has very little influence on his life but does acknowledge his identity racially.

Race and ethnicity are contested terms and the argument whether Jews are a race or religion harks back to the time of Basil Henriques opposition to Zionism on the grounds that British Jews identity was racially/ethnically British and only religiously Jewish (see page 22). Terry, when meeting non-Jews at university, questioned his 'whiteness':

AN *You said in [place] you had to explain your Judaism to your new friends.*

Terry *Because the non-Jews I want to talk about in [place] are white British people of this country. Because growing up in London, everyone from other minorities backgrounds knew I was Jewish. We'd talk about our own backgrounds a lot*

¹¹² Lit. 'Go up' This is a commonly used term for migration to Israel; the person is said to have ascended spiritually by going to live in Israel.

and we'd have a lot of cultural discussions, but it's more, I felt at times, it's hard. The first time I thought to myself, "Am I really white?" That's an interesting question whether Jews, maybe Eastern European Ashkenazi is whether they're 'white' or not. Because I might not have the same skin tone as maybe someone from Asian backgrounds.

At home Terry identified himself as 'white' in contrast to his school friends of Asian background but when he came out of London and compared himself to the majority of British students he was more aware of his Jewish identity (see 1.2.1 page 17). Ethnicity is important for Terry as he comments about his inherited physical characteristics, thick curly black hair¹¹³, and he had associated this with his Jewish ethnicity thus becoming the defining feature of his Jewish identity.

Terry *I felt at times that I was the. I'd have to attract girls by talking about the fact that I'm Jewish. Cos, I don't know, because at that point I didn't want to verge on exoticism because that was the sort of downside of that because they would say, "[name], your hair is really interesting, really thick and curly." And when I get comments like that from girls I'd say, "Yes, obviously it's because I'm ethnically different to you. I've become, for some reason, very, very conscious of my Jewish identity.*

Terry's hair had become a marker of his Jewishness more than any religious practice. It would appear that in spite of claiming not to want to be seen as exotic he is using his Jewishness to interest and presumably attract non-Jewish girls.

Terry *I couldn't not talk about Judaism and being Jewish because it's a lot more than just the religion, it's the ethnicity. I mean, I don't always keep kosher. There's a lot of rules I don't necessary follow. But I'm ultimately proud to be Jewish because I realise, I can't control my ethnic background and that's the centre of the identity for me.*

Alan attributes his Jewish identity to his forebears but became more aware of his ancestry when he left his home environment and became a minority.

AN *Where do you think your Jewish identity comes from?*

Alan *That's an interesting question. I would say, my ancestry in a sense. The issue is not whether people marry out, it's about whether they care about passing the tradition.*

AN *And your views on this?*

Alan *I'd like to pass on some things – Some ideas. No other religion does this. There's that plus there's 2000 years of not eating pigs so I think that's a nice*

¹¹³ Jewfro – A rounded thick tightly curled Jewish hairstyle popularised by certain American Jewish actors. It is said to resemble the African hairstyle Afro.

way. And I saw it in terms of being Jewish in the university where there are about 50 Jews. So suddenly, because I am being perceived as something ever so slightly abnormal, I think the ultimate conclusion is that my Jewish identity, I've become more conscious of it.

Alan described his mother's interest in family history as an obsession which caused her to persuade his father to do a genetic test.

Alan *My mum's obsession is family history. Caused my dad into doing this 'Trace your ancestry' stuff - and it turns out he's got this - supposed to be a 'Cohen gene' that all Cohens share and apparently if you have it, you're an actual Cohen from Aaron.*

The test specificity and selectivity of the 'Cohen gene' are questionable, and Alan denied that it had any bearing on his sense of Jewish identity.

Alan *This idea that 2000 years ago my ancestors were sacrificing rams on alters and stuff. But that doesn't particularly influence my identity because I do philosophy and identity. The identity which of course I view myself - which is the one I actually - you know - behaviour. I keep kosher but don't go to the synagogue. I don't really do that much to allow other people to identify me as Jewish other than keeping kosher.*

Alan recognises that being born into a religious tradition has shaped his identity but it is in his grasp if he wants to pass on the tradition and an inheritance of two millennia should not be lightly discarded.

David *But then I guess when you're born into a particular culture you're always surprised when other people are ignorant of it given that it is such an important part of your identity. I just think you are a product of your cultural heritage and that's reflected in most people. When I say 'accept' I mean you are born with these obligations on you, or that people put on you, and you can choose, whether you accept them or not, but they're always there.*

David suggests that even if he had rejected practising the Jewish religion, he would still have Jewish identity which might lead others expecting him to keep some items of Jewish law such as not eating pork. He continued:

David *I think just as a Jew, more than a Jewish man perhaps is err, establishing a Jewish family and continuing the generations.*

AN *That's important for you?*

David *Yeah, definitely. That is quite a heteronormative answer. I think Judaism recognises that you are born with certain obligations and you just have to accept that as part of reality. I decided that in order to practise Judaism one needs to keep a certain amount of halacha [Jewish law].*

Framing having a Jewish identity as having a relationship with Jewish ritual obligations indicates that being Jewish is being controlled by Jewish law. This view is not universally accepted by the participants.

Mark *I don't really believe in much religion. I'm pretty much more of a heritage person.*

Having Jewish parents is a matter of fact and whilst some Jews are happy with the non-ritual aspects of Judaism, they find no appeal in conforming to ritual obligations either for philosophical gnostic reasons or for inability to understand the ritual.

James *I love every part of being Jewish but if I go into a synagogue, I don't understand any of it.*

What is being expressed here is an identification with Jewishness that is not related to ritual performance. I argue that there are two positions available independently for the construction of Jewish identity. There is ritual observance which ranges from meticulous conformity with halacha to complete rejection and there is cultural Jewishness ranging from very strong to very weak. Where an individual posits themselves in relation to these two factors may vary with time and personal circumstances.

5.2.1 Comment

These young Jews are at different stages of working through what being Jewish means to them. They pick up cues from how their family perform Jewishness and may copy what is done in the family setting. In turn the family may show approval if the child's actions accord with the family view of how to be Jewish. At some point in intellectual development the individual may make their own judgement regarding how they are going to deal with a religious identity which had been thrust upon them and this may be rejection of the family norms to be either more or less observant than their parents. In negotiating their position they have the two poles of Jewishness before them; either following the dictates of Judaism to a greater or lesser degree or retaining their Jewish identity through cultural loyalty to family traditions, history, and the wider Jewish culture.

The following sections trace the dynamic between these poles.

5.3 Ritual

Simon *In terms of observance say, I'm particular to follow halacha. Follow the code of Jewish law to the best of my ability which involves praying with a minyan – a quorum of ten men – three times a day.*

This comment indicates that there was no external human pressure on Simon to pray other than Jewish law and tradition. Judaism was never overly concerned with logical doctrines but

desired to evolve a corpus of practices, a code of religious acts, which would establish a mode of religious living. Jewish law mandates personal prayer at regular intervals and ideally it should be a communal, not solitary, action (Donin, 1972 page 28). To fulfil the ideal requirements a critical mass – a minimum of ten men – needs to be assembled for the common purpose of prayer but the main objective is prayer as fulfilment of ritual rather than construction of community. An ad hoc minyan is often assembled at an airport departure gate for example, for the purpose of prayer but that group disbands afterwards and do not plan to reconvene, the only lasting community being that of all Jews. Assembling ten men together for prayer anywhere makes that space temporarily holy whereas before it had not been. The words of the prayers had effected that change.

David *I practise more (than my parents). I keep Shabbat and the Yom Tovs. That's the main demarcation between us.*

AN *What do you think is the stimulus for you to do that?*

David *Err, I would say intellectually after my Bar Mitzvah I became more interested (in Judaism). I decided in order to practice Judaism one needs to keep a certain amount of halacha.*

David presents intellect as justification to separate himself from his parents religiously. He suggests that he has a higher degree of religious observance than his parents.

David *I think that Judaism does construct reality in that it creates a 'holy' and 'profane'. You behave in certain ways; you don't do things and you do certain things at certain times of the year and you're constructing reality here.*

The language that David has used is particularly strong because 'profane' implies that halacha has been violated. The emphasis on religious actions and prohibitions creates the separation of activity, the holy from the profane.

Rob has left his Haredi community but still retains connection to his Jewish identity by connection to the cantorial music that he was surprised to find in a non-Haredi setting. That music had the power to recall communal memory rather than personal family memory.

AN *Do you attend a synagogue?*

Rob *Reform/Masorti, I go to a Masorti shul in [place] sometimes. I went there first day Rosh Hashanah, very beautiful. I remember being moved by one of the tefillas (prayers) and a nigun (tune) they sang. I thought it was only something Bobovers¹¹⁴ do and I got so emotional. When I said I don't feel a spiritual connection to Judaism, can I separate that from family? Can I think*

¹¹⁴ Bobov Hasidism is a Hasidic community within haredi Judaism originating in Bobowa, Galicia in Southern Poland and was the sect in which Rob was brought up.

back through the ancestors and generations that survived terrible persecutions, had kept the traditions alive? That made me emotional actually.

Charlie did not usually pray regularly at home.

Charlie *I actually do see the point of prayer and I do enjoy doing it in certain environments. So, on summer camp we did shacharit every morning in which lots of people didn't enjoy. But I really did enjoy it. I think it's a nice thing to do. It's a time when you can just think about something else. Even if you're not saying the words doing or that I just like a time when like, I like being able to think about things.*

The Jewish summer camp had the practice of regular morning prayer. He found that in this environment prayer created a space in time where it was possible for him to reflect and to be in the moment and it suggests it satisfied a spiritual need.

Joel *We had to wear Tsit-tsit (fringes) and each morning you had to pray. And you'd have to pray after lunch and stuff like that.*

Joel recounted his experience at his first school. It was a Jewish school under the aegis of the Chief Rabbi and is part of the mainstream Jewish School system taking children from families of a wide range of religious observance. The school was teaching religious observance to children who would not likely have practised it; he 'had to' wear fringes, he 'had to' pray both morning and after lunch. The enforcement of Jewish ritual was school policy designed to foster Jewish identity by these religious obligations.

Gerry *When I was younger, I did a bit more. I'd go to Shabbat morning services occasionally. I was Bar Mitzvahed. It's now Reform and it's three synagogues joined as one in a weird conglomerate they've got going on there. And I don't attend any more cos, I don't live in the area. To be honest, even if I did I probably wouldn't.*

The level of religious observance is not stable, and this comment indicates that he was an attender at services, albeit irregularly before his Bar Mitzvah. The Bar Mitzvah is an important rite of passage for boys but the phrase, "I was Bar Mitzvahed." is slightly unusual. The usual expression would be "I had a Bar Mitzvah," where 'Bar Mitzvah' is a noun. Turning 'Bar Mitzvah' into a verb, used in the passive voice, would indicate a different relationship to this rite of passage which is that he felt it was something done to him by others, his parents or community, and not something to which he related as coming from within himself. He does not relate to the synagogue describing it as a "weird conglomerate they've got going on there." His language indicates either apathy or rejection because even if it were nearby, he still would not be tempted to attend.

AN *[redacted] Reform, Uh ha, tell me about [redacted] Reform.*

Oscar *It's a nice place. There's a youth programme yea. A lot of people there.*

AN *Is it a big community?*

Oscar *Well it's not so big. I've got some friends there and know quite a lot of the people there.*

AN *How often do you go?*

Oscar *Erm, not very often. Well, for a Bar Mitzvah. Not on a regular basis. First, some festivals, major festival and for Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, yea.*

AN *Tell me about your Bar Mitzvah.*

Oscar *Erm, well we went to shul and a party afterwards.*

AN *What did you do at the shul?*

Oscar *Erm, I did erm, I read from the Torah and well, various, Erm, and a D'var Torah and talked about it. I learnt my piece from someone who'd recently done their Bar Mitzvah, as well as help from the rabbi.*

AN *So, someone who had recently done. A year or so, older than you?*

Oscar *Yea, a couple of years older and I'm now helping people with their Bar Mitzvahs.*

Oscar was decidedly lukewarm about his Judaism and synagogue attendance initially in the interview. He barely remembered what he did in the synagogue for his Bar Mitzvah and only recalled his party afterwards. However, with minimal prompting he did recall that he was helped by a mentoring programme and he is currently involved with helping someone prepare for their Bar Mitzvah.

At the discussion group:

Boy 1 *I love my shul and my community and Judaism, but I don't really go to shul. I don't want to go to the youth service. There's nothing enticing about it. When you sit round the Shabbat table these days, my parents talk about, they say, "It used to be very easy for us to keep Shabbat." But for this generation the technology improvement is so it's easy to fall out of touch with Shabbat. And Shabbat is quite central to Jewish life. Therefore, if you're not keeping Shabbat, it's quite hard to be, like, Jewish.*

He is positive about being Jewish, but it seems to be in spite of the Shabbat synagogue experience rather than because of it. Social media platforms have become so ubiquitous, and the formal services have alienated some of these youth so that attenuates their Jewish identity:

Boy 2 *I think Shabbat is so central to Jewish life. So, if you're not keeping Shabbat you cannot feel as Jewish as previous generations. So you feel less Jewish.*

5.3.1 Comment

As mentioned before, Judaism has a complex set of laws and customs believed to be ordained by Divine will observance of which is mandated by written and oral traditions. According to how a child's family relate to these laws and traditions he or she may be inducted into various aspects of them. As with Jewish identity the child may choose to accept aspects of Jewish law but sometimes they are obliged (as for Joel) if their environment demands it. Central to the performance of Judaism is the concept of holiness which may be of time (the Shabbat), space (either permanent as in the synagogue or temporary wherever a group gathers), and voice (prayer) and relating to holiness is the performance of ritual. For boys the Bar Mitzvah is an important rite of passage to which they may connect with enthusiastically or reluctantly and tends to set their relationship to Jewish ritual. The following section looks at how some of these young Jews related to communal life.

5.4 Community

AN *What do you think being a Jewish man actually means? What does it involve?*

Joel *I'd say it means being part of a community and celebrating stuff together like. So, if someone has a baby, it's great, it's amazing. We should all celebrate together. Also holidays like Pesach or Chanukah or something like that. I think it's great to celebrate together.*

Joel immediately associates being a Jewish man with a collective interest in the lives of his fellow Jews. A seemingly private family matter such as a new birth is a significant event for the community as a whole and is therefore publicly celebrated. This birth is as important for the community as the religious festivals as it indicates a new generation of Jews for the future.

Arthur *I feel like the tragedies that happened in the past have built a really nice, kind, caring community I've grown up in.*

Arthur proposes that the development of community is important for mutual support and this refrain was taken up by Charlie.

Charlie *Judaism faces a big, or maybe the Judaism I have been exposed to, plays a big emphasis on the community around you and supporting others. In the Jewish community everyone's got a lot of friends and I think that's a Jewish value. I think that community is a massive part of Judaism.*

Opinion on the community is mixed with favourable comments interspersed but Nigel is concerned about being insulated from the general population.

Nigel *Growing up in the Jewish bubble doesn't prepare you for everyday life and you expecting everyone to be like you. And of course, not everyone is. (You) should go out into the world. Only knowing Jews and suddenly you're immersed in a different culture as it were, would be a big surprise.*

Having noted the insularity of his experience he balances that negative view with the advantages that he feels his community has given him.

Nigel *I enjoy the sense of tradition. I think that I know that in [place] shul where I go to. It's a really nice sense of community. Going to shul, studying the Torah, saying the Shema¹¹⁵, spending time with your family on Shabbat. I think it's Tzedakah [charity], the Mitzvot [commandments].*

Nigel is using the community to draw on both Judaism, “going to shul, studying the Torah, saying the Shema,” and Jewishness, “spending time with your family on Shabbat,” as he constructs his religious identity in the context of family and community. He is balancing the ritual obligations of prayer and study with fostering family cohesion which ensues from the Shabbat break in the working week. Nigel feels a requirement to pass on the tradition he received from his parents to the next generation:

Nigel *I think that it's very important to continue the tradition. I think passing down tradition to your kids, having a Jewish family yourself and then teaching your kids everything you've learned.*

As Nigel has learnt how to be Jewish from his family and community this is something that he values and wishes to pass on to the next generation. Arthur, and Charlie's enthusiasm for community is a complete contrast with the group and Gerry's apathy and/or rejection. Nigel enjoys his community but has criticism of the synagogue service in general and the rabbi in particular. Nigel has mixed feelings being enthusiastic about his Jewishness but his disappointment with the (orthodox) rabbi is shared with Hugh.

Nigel *I feel like, there is a certain sense that if you're in a Jewish community there is some sense of being. It's a really nice sense of community. My shul youth service that at the moment, I feel like that it's slowly dying down. It used to be that every week 20 to 25 people and we do the service completely by ourselves. However, now we rely on having to get adults from the main service to make up the minyan. There are less activities for the youth and less people go. I think it is the youth leaders. They don't try their hardest to involve everyone and they try their best to keep the people we have but not invite new people which is what is necessary to continue. Rabbi [name] doesn't involve himself much with the youth service which is one of the problems.*

This criticism of the communal leadership was not isolated as other participants mentioned a lack of interest by some leaders in the youth.

¹¹⁵ The Shema prayer is a statement of monotheism and is considered the most important prayer in Judaism.

Hugh *I've spoken to him [the rabbi] a couple of times over the years, but I wouldn't say I have a relationship with him.*

When I raised the topic of the Jewish leadership in Britain at the group discussion the view was negative:

Group *I think there is a lack of interest. The youth are disenfranchised. I don't think shul is cool anymore. Nobody wants to go. Less young people. My parents go to meet their friends, but we don't have to as we can meet up with our phones.*

Communal activity is an important part of the socially supportive aspect of Judaism but these negative comments leave some young Jews trying to construct their Jewishness without communal support. In the UK communal activity functions in parallel with the formal synagogue religious ritual services and for some Jews who are not affiliated to a synagogue the community is still a resource that can be drawn upon for friendship and social events.

5.4.1 Comment

Religious infrastructure may be an important adjunct to Jewish identity and serve the interests of both those attracted to the ritual pole of Jewishness by providing facilities for congregational prayer (see 132) and also social support and cultural activity for those Jews who identify by virtue of cultural affinity. The challenge that the religious and lay leaders of the community face is to engage with young Jews (and some adults) who have little desire to conform to some of Judaism's laws and customs and also have alternative methods of communicating with their friends. I now turn to the issue of Jewish schools which was signalled as important in bolstering the Jewish community (see 1.4 page 37).

5.5 Jewish Schools

I have mentioned the rise in proportion of Jewish children attending Jewish schools as opposed to non-Jewish schools in both the private and state sectors earlier (see 3.5.3 page 73) and the 2016 JPR report (L. D. Staetsky & Boyd, 2016) shows that two thirds of Jewish children now attend these schools. The proportion is actually higher because in the strictly orthodox sector there are an estimated 1,400 children aged 11 to 14 who attend unregulated yeshivot and are thus absent from the Department for Education school census (Boyd, 2019; D. Staetsky & Boyd, 2015). The table of the participants shows that 10 of the 16 were at or had been to a Jewish secondary school and two of them, currently at non-Jewish schools had attended a Jewish first school therefore this sample reflects the trend in the wider Anglo-Jewish community. Whilst Jewish schools are undoubtedly popular with Jewish parents, I found that the interviewees who had attended them were not uniformly enthusiastic.

5.5.1 Very Positive

Simon *Raised in [redacted] went to [a Jewish primary school] followed by [a Jewish secondary school] which you know, is a non-selective Jewish day school. I really enjoyed it. It was wonderful. Academically it was very good. Thank God, I had a really great year, very academically motivated. Socially it was fantastic. A year of maybe [number redacted] boys at the start. Really very solid, very menchdik (considerate) individuals and inspiring people as well. And religiously as well it was great. Because for me it was very much a platform. I was exposed to Talmud and going to the synagogue during the week which was something which I wasn't aware of growing up. And that was a real gift and I enjoyed it tremendously – had a lovely time.*

Simon's mother died (4.10.3 page 125) when he was [age redacted] and both his Jewish schools gave him a very supportive framework to which he responded.

Otis *It's nice to have the Jewish festivals off and also because you can. I see a lot of my friends (in non-Jewish schools) that have to catch up with their work. And they will have to like, Yom Kippur, in September and October time. There are so many holidays that you are catching up so much. It actually, so at Jewish school there is no school and how you can, like. What days you can take off and, on a Saturday, we can't work so there is less work than other schools will give us.*

The great advantage Otis sees in his attending a Jewish school is that he doesn't miss lessons at the beginning of the school year for the major Jewish festivals. He can also observe his Judaism in a context that is recognised and understood without having to 'catch up' with his non-Jewish peers.

5.5.2 Doubtful

Joel *Suddenly there were so many more people, from [numbers redacted] per year. I just remember feeling a bit overwhelmed at the beginning. How many people there were and how much harder the work was. I think that sometimes it doesn't do enough so that we can learn about other religions. Because I haven't learnt about any other religions apart from what we have to learn to pass the religious education GCSE. We have to learn about two religions so, we're learning about Judaism and Islam and stuff. However, they always try to convert it back to Judaism. We can never properly learn about Islam by itself. And we don't often get the opportunity to learn about Hinduism or Christianity or any other religion in depth.*

Joel had gone from a small Jewish primary school to a much larger Jewish secondary school and had difficulty adjusting. His specific complaint was the narrowness of teaching about world religions. As the syllabus had been designed to improve understanding of other religious standpoints Joel suggests that the school was failing in its duty to enhance inter-communal tolerance.

5.5.3 Poor Quality

Andy *Just let's say learning-wise with academic studies, it's not, you don't have. There weren't computing lessons. There weren't much art, science.*

AN *What did you get a lot of?*

Andy *We got a lot of kodesh (Hebrew religious lessons).*

Andy was at a very orthodox school and complained about the narrow range of secular studies.

Rob *I went to [redacted Hasidic school] in America and here (in London) and they have very bad rating on Ofsted, first of all. There were, health and safety was zero. They had health and safety posters, you know, in the building but nobody could read them. There was people who, you know, would come in and inspect the schools. And teachers, English teachers were kind of, they had a very hard time. They couldn't control the classes, the teachers. The children didn't really understand what they were saying. The teachers couldn't speak Yiddish properly. They'd make fun of them. However, you know, they would be very chutzpadik to the English teachers, you know, on purpose. All mostly kodesh but limmud kodesh, limmud chol. There would be counting 1 to 100 or very simple division. I'm not very good at Maths. Small Geography, small History.*

Rob spoke scathingly about the poor standards of the Hasidic schools he attended both in London, where it was particularly bad, but also in America.

5.5.4 Reluctance

Mark *If it was probably wasn't for my mum, for myself, I probably wouldn't ended up going for them [Jewish school].*

Mark had been pressured to go to a Jewish school by his mother who was concerned to foster a Jewish identity. Before attending a Jewish secondary school, he had attended a Jewish primary school:

Mark *I didn't really like it. Teaching not very good. Unstructured lessons.*

The teaching he now had was better:

Mark *You have structured lessons and learn things in order. There are some things that could be improved.*

AN *Such as?*

Mark *Due to vaping issues, they took the doors off the entries to the toilets. Not the doors to the actual cubicles, just the toilets. Walking past you could see in.*

Taking the main doors off the entrance to the toilets has been found to reduce bullying in schools (Fram & Dickmann, 2012) so it may not have been just the use of eCigarettes that prompted the school to take this measure.

5.5.5 Negative

Gerry *I read in the Economist that something like 60% of Jewish kids are in a Jewish school. Which I found shocking actually. I see that 60% statistic as evidence that Jewish parents are choosing to segregate their children and in my opinion that leads, not only to increased levels of antisemitism but it could also potentially, and I think probably does, leads to increased bigotry from Jewish people outwards.*

The charge that Gerry suggests is that Jewish parents removing their children from the general school population harms both the non-Jewish children by making Jews strange and therefore threatening, and their own children by fostering a sense of superiority over the rest of the population. His view was supported in some of the comments from the group discussion.

Boy 1 *I don't agree with faith schools. They encourage a Jewish bubble.*

Boy 2 *That seems to be the norm. All Jewish people are going to Jewish schools.*

These comments indicate awareness of the isolationist tendency that Gerry complains of but also that Jewish parents are pressured to send their children to Jewish schools as that is what was expected so that social opportunities would not be missed.

Boy 3 *Because of the Jewish schools, if a Jewish child doesn't go to a Jewish school he's missing out on Jewish social life as well.*

Boy 4 *The reason we go to Jewish school is selective breeding because your parents want you to be in a Jewish bubble because they don't want you to marry out, and your friends remain Jewish.*

Although this might have been said as a joke, he has articulated the common underlying fear of exogamy that most Jewish parents have.

Boy 5 *Don't you think that if you weren't in some sort of Jewish bubble you would be less close to your Jewish identity?*

This is the popular justification for faith schools – that it strengthens the faith identity. But he was immediately challenged.

Boy 6 *If everybody around you is Jewish you feel less proud of your Jewish identity. You take it for granted, especially in Israel. A lot of the most Zionistic people I know haven't gone to Jewish schools. They've had to defend Israel [at school]. For us, Israel is taken for granted.*

This comment suggests the need to encounter a protagonist to construct identity. In a uniformly Jewish environment, there would be no foil for argument.

Charlie *The main downside to my school is that it's a Jewish bubble. And I don't like, I don't believe it. I'm staying to the 6th form so, until university the only education that I'll have had would be surrounded by other Jews. Which*

maybe, not handicapped me, but it does leave me, means I won't have experienced a more wider range of cultures like.

Charlie suggests his lack of exposure to non-Jews hinders his social development which would put him at a disadvantage when he goes to university.

5.5.6 Comment

As described in 1.2.4 page 29 the stimulus for the expansion of provision of full-time Jewish schools came from parental dissatisfaction with the abolition of selective secondary schools and this was given further impetus from the policy of insecurity (Gidley & Kahn-Harris, 2012). Prior to the expansion most of the Jewish schools were conducted on strictly orthodox lines and promoted Jewishness by textual study and adherence to Halacha (the notable exception being the Jewish Free School which had a history of promoting Britishness among the children of immigrants (1.2.1 page 18)). The expansion of Jewish schools has allowed Jewish children from the mainstream community to be educated in an environment where Jewish history, literature, and Hebrew language were taught concomitantly with the national curriculum which fostered Jewish identity through cultural rather than halachic means. The majority of Jewish children are now attending Jewish schools (see 3.5.3 page 73) and whilst the opinion of the participants reflects the ongoing debate about these schools young Jews are presented with both halachic and cultural modes for constructing their Jewish identity.

I shall now turn to the place of theology in the thinking of these participants.

5.6 Theology

The Jew constructs their religious reality by engaging in and refraining from actions following an elaborate code of laws and customs mandated and hallowed by long-standing practice as the means to be closer to God. The written law, the Torah, is amplified by an oral tradition which has been codified and refined over many years and guides the daily life of an observant Jew. Judaism is an embodied experience, a religion where, by physical actions and prohibitions, doing or refraining from something, the observant Jew believes that they are obeying God's will.

AN *If you were trying to explain to someone, not Jewish, about what it's like being Jewish. How do you think you would go about it?*

Andy *So, like. With not Jewish people, what do they do? They go to school, after school university. After university they get married, have children, work. But they have no, at the end, what have they? There's no, they're not. They've not meant anything at the end. When they die, it's not, it's like. That's like there's no meaning to what they've done.*

AN *And if you're Jewish?*

Andy *And if you're Jewish there is meaning. Work towards something. With non-Jews, they, they work for the sake of money. For the sake of, to be supported. To be in a good matter. However, Jewish it all ends up to be to God. Working towards God.*

AN *Does that worry you at all?*

Andy *Not really, no.*

AN *The thought of God?*

Andy *No.*

This is a narrow particularistic view which betokens an isolationist mindset where the discourse is that Jews are special and have a particular role to play in the universe. To fulfil this role, they must remain separate from the rest of humanity and there is fusion of Judaism and Jewishness, it is all one. The relationship to God for some Jews is exclusive and Andy denies that anybody else can have a relationship with the divine and their lives have no lasting meaning. He is defining himself against both non-religious and religious traditions other than his own. This extreme view is probably a mantra that he has imbibed from the teachers as his comments on Reform Judaism show.

AN *I mean, 40 or 50 years ago there was a small ultra-Orthodox and there was a small reform or liberal. But the general mass of people was in the middle. It's now they've got.*

Andy *Everything.*

AN *What do you think about that?*

Andy *What I think about it is, out of these groups there is a certain, I don't know how long it will last for because in a certain amount of time those groups like Reform, give it 200 years, will die out. As research has shown, out of every 100 Reform people four people in the next generation will want to continue. However, I think the only thing that will properly continue is Orthodox Jews. Because if you're not orthodox you either, very not so much. You either go back to being orthodox or in four generations time you won't be Jewish.*

Andy has compounded his particularistic position by denigrating alternative expressions of Jewishness rather than extolling the positivity of an orthodox lifestyle. His use of statistics is more sophisticated than I would expect of a 14-year-old and has probably come from his teachers and/or rabbis rather than his own thought-out opinions. But his antipathy is also based on a substantive point: that without strong practices, it's hard to retain a distinct identity over generations.

The particularistic view was challenged by Rob.

Rob *I believe in God, I really do. I think He wants us to be happy, He wants us to feel and enjoy this life. He created the world to be enjoyed and to set an example and I don't think Jews are better than non-Jews. I think we all have a part to play, and I know we all have individual worth.*

This is a universalist view of God as a presence and the Judaism/Jewishness dialogue plays no part in this philosophical outlook as the rules and regulations required by Simon and Andy are not essential for someone to come close to God. Actions and prohibitions are not mandated by Rob's opinion and there is a benign God being in the background whereas for Simon (see 5.3 page 132) God appears to require certain actions, "follow halacha" suggesting that God needs to be placated by prayer and other ritual activity for a Jew to lead a full religious life.

David favoured the intellectual approach of a Christian theologian, Rowan Williams, over the ex-Chief Rabbi.

David *I got extremely bored of the ex-Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks very quickly. Once you've read one book you've sort of read them all. He's got the same ideas I think, and I don't think he really has penetrating analysis of any particular issue in the same way that Rowan Williams¹¹⁶ work on Faith in the Public Sphere [Square]. He addresses real issues such as social contract.*

David suggests that emphasis on ethics in society is more related to middle-class aspiration and preparation for adulthood than religious sentiment.

David *Without some concept of God there is no morality. We live in a society which doesn't have common values and a common understanding of reality and I think that's problematic.*

This is also a universalist idea of God whose presence is required to enforce moral behaviour, however that is determined, to allow society to function for the common good. This puts God in the place of conscience and predisposes a basic set of values for human behaviour which applies to everybody regardless of religious affiliation and again the Judaism/Jewishness dialogue is irrelevant. This universalism appears different from Rob's in that moral behaviour is mandated whereas this is not expressly required by Rob's model.

Oscar *I do think it [Judaism] should continue. A lot of people who believe very strongly in it, dedicated their lives to it. Well, I get, not definitely believe in God. That sort of stuff as to the things in the Torah that says, [I want] more evidence, like scientific evidence. 'God did specifically' I don't believe in everything like that. Well sometimes, just, I don't really feel that strongly. Not sure really about God.*

¹¹⁶ Rowan Williams: Archbishop of Canterbury

This is his dilemma. He believes that Judaism should continue for the sake of those who are convinced, and he is sufficiently engaged to play a part in the community by helping younger boys with their Bar Mitzvah (see 5.3 page 135). He has difficulty in accepting the basic dogma and wants, “more evidence, like scientific evidence,” before he could accept God. As he, “doesn’t feel that strongly,” he is not particularly concerned about the deeper theology but suggests that Judaism as a way of life has merit and should continue.

Arthur *I feel like I partially believe in God. I’d say in some ways rather than others. I’m very passionate about tennis and every now and again I just think about something and maybe it goes to God or someone who’s up there. I’m not too sure. I wouldn’t say when I’m praying in shul, I feel like I’m praying to God.*

There appears to be a disconnect for Arthur of prayer with religious observance. In the “very passionate” moment on the tennis court, he invokes God to help him without there being any particularly religious significance. It is a common phenomenon that in times of stress or excitement God is invoked as a release of tension, he is summoned up from the subconscious in that moment. The paradox here is that for Arthur the synagogue, which is usually regarded as a holy place, does not function as such whereas the tennis court, usually a secular space, does. This is a marked contrast to the airport departure lounge becoming a holy space when an ad hoc prayer group formed as cited (see 5.3 page 133).

5.6.1 Comment

Discussions on the nature of God are quite challenging in Britain’s liberal, mostly secular society and for this group of young Jews the interview was an opportunity for them to be confronted with this philosophical question.¹¹⁷ A British Social Attitude Survey found that the majority of people who have a religious belief have in mind a rather distant God (Voas & Bruce, 2019 Page 12). In the Jewish tradition the liturgy is framed in a combination of personal prayers and general communal prayers. The separatist philosophy of Judaism (see 2.1 page 40 and 2.4 page 54) could account for the insular view of Andy but the injunction for Israel (read Jews) to “be a light to the nations”¹¹⁸ would support a universal God for all of humanity espoused by Rob and David. In the context of binary argument should Jews be in a competition with the rest of humanity for God’s favour or should Jews be cooperating with all peoples for mutual benefit?

As much of Jewish activity is gender based I shall now turn to what these young Jews said about how women impacted on the construction of their Jewishness.

¹¹⁷ Rabbi Michael Pollak teaches a module on the nature of God at JFS (Personal communication).

¹¹⁸ Isaiah 49. 6

5.7 Women in Judaism

As described in the literature review of Jewish masculinity, gender is very important in delineating the role that a person has in society and women have had limited opportunity to engage with Jewish practice in the public space only leaving their domestic space for commercial and secular reasons. This attitude has been challenged recently most notably by Lindsey Taylor-Guthartz (Taylor-Guthartz, 2021) who has explored the ways that orthodox Jewish women were negotiating their religiosity against a backdrop of male entitlement.

David *I find it difficult in the sense that so much of Judaism is gendered. You know, you have male and female from birth. We were just talking about Brit Milah¹¹⁹ and these signifying things create a man and a woman, to demarcate man and woman. It definitely does not sit easily with reality you know. You know you have transgender people. I'm not quite sure what I think of that in terms of phenomenon*

Jewish masculinity has been constructed in the Beit Midrash (2.4.1 page 58) and is the basis for a cultural taboo against women entering that space and engaging in that performance (Cantor, 1995 Page 105). Breaking that taboo could be perceived by some men as a threat to their masculinity.

The issue of women in Judaism aroused quite divergent views amongst the participants.

AN *Do you have any views about the Jewish Feminism Movement? What do you think?*

Simon *The Jewish Feminist Movement is much more pulled than people realise. Often people will think of Jewish feminists as feminist and put their finger on someone who insists on having a double-barrelled surname or even their maiden name. Who will only attend a partnership minyan at which women are able to leyen [read] – to read from the Torah and lead the service.*

AN *What do you think about that?*

Simon *There are many orthodox feminists who subscribe to a normative orthodox practices. Who are very happy attending ordinary orthodox minyanim but they make more emphasis on say women's learning. That sort of thing and they may be perceived as feminist. But they don't which categorise themselves as feminist. In terms of the third category, namely those who are quite egalitarian, into partnership minyanim and that sort of thing I don't think it's for me to comment on.*

AN *You don't have any views?*

¹¹⁹ Circumcision was long understood as 'completing' the male and essential for male entrance into the covenant of Abraham, the community, and the world to come.

Simon *It's difficult because I can't relate to them. I am not a woman, I'm a man and certain feelings which they have are feelings that I can't relate to just by virtue of being different sexes. If there are things that they do which are outside the boundaries of halacha then you have as an orthodox Jew I would say these are things which really need to be put into question. If there are things that they are doing which are within the boundary of halacha, but new, which have not.*

AN *Such as?*

Simon *Such as reading from the Torah for example. That's something which does not seem to be against halacha. I'm not a rabbi but it would be worth speaking to a rabbi if this goes in as an example. It's something which is not part of what is called the 'mesora' [tradition] not part of the tradition.*

As religious practice is so important to Simon his attitude towards women is coloured by what he perceives as normative, and he does not relate to women who have other views. He has no difficulty with women who are prepared to engage with what he terms 'normative' activity but when he found that Jewish law does not support his view on what he suggests are the inappropriate actions of women in the religious space he invokes 'tradition.' Thus, faced with women taking active parts of synagogue services being within the bounds of halacha as defined by rabbinic authority he uses the more nebulous concept of mesora. The comment about women who hyphenate their name or insist on using their original surname suggests disapproval of their stance against subsuming their identity into their husband's. It would also not take account of those women who had achieved professional recognition prior to marriage.

Andy took a harder line view: -

AN *Some women are wanting to do more in Judaism, to have women's services and women rabbis. What do you think about that?*

Andy *I don't want to be offensive to anyone that's listening but the women who say that aren't really the most religious and don't really follow Judaism. So, let's just say probably don't keep Shabbat as well. Except they want to be rabbis and everything.*

AN *But there are some very observant women who study.*

Andy *I'm not saying they're not allowed to study. They're allowed to teach.*

He presents disapproval of women as religious leaders and makes sweeping assumptions about their level of observance but does acknowledge that women are allowed to study and teach.

Nigel likes his community but realises that he is privileged and suggests guilt about it.

- AN** *What do you think about Judaism and the way it is being practiced?*
- Nigel** *I enjoy it. I enjoy the sense of tradition erm, I think that I know that in [place] shul where I go to It's a really nice sense of community. However, as it's a US synagogue there's much more for men to do that women and some of the stuff shuns women. I don't think that's particularly right in the 21st century world.*
- AN** *Anything in particular that concerns you?*
- Nigel** *I just think that when the boys do Torah reading the girls either stay outside to talk or they have nothing to do. And the boys, although it's our right to do it through the Torah and we just do everything, and the girls just stand there and listen. We have every opportunity, and they don't.*
- AN** *What do you think about those communities where the girls are doing things?*
- Nigel** *I think it's an interesting idea. I feel like, I haven't yet seen a Reform synagogue that doesn't dilute down everything we do. Like, you could do the same things but with women taking part for a more inclusive service. But it doesn't mean you have to dilute down the service.*
- AN** *You been to a Reform or Masorti or Liberal?*
- Nigel** *Just for a Bar Mitzvah for a friend.*
- AN** *And what did you think about it?*
- Nigel** *It was interesting. I liked the idea of it.*
- AN** *What did you like about it?*
- Nigel** *I just enjoyed everyone taking part. It was a new experience. Generally, I just liked the experiences, the way and I thought everyone seemed to be so content with what they were doing. You don't get that in my synagogue at the moment.*
- AN** *What sort of contrast had you noticed? You say they weren't content.*
- Nigel** *Well, I find that in my synagogue often women are complaining that the mechitzas [separation] are too high, or unseeable through. And that when the Torah's passed round they never get to kiss it, see it even. And lots of people don't enjoy that.*
- AN** *But, you know, some women are trying to do more. The women's Megillah¹²⁰ readings and the women's tefilla¹²¹ groups. What do you feel about that?*
- Nigel** *I think it's a great idea. More inclusive the better, they enjoy it, I have no quarrels with it, yea.*

¹²⁰ Megillah (Lit. *The Book of Esther*) is read at the festival of Purim

¹²¹ Tefilla (Lit. Prayer)

Nigel has observed the privilege his gender has accorded him in regard to religious performance and that women have been effectively 'locked out' by being held behind a wall. Whether he would actually leave his community to join an alternative is an open question. Many members of the United Synagogue do not subscribe to the dictates of orthodoxy that the organisation espouses but nevertheless continue membership. This dissonance between personal belief and organisational policy was noted by Jewish immigrants, especially from Germany which had a much larger Reform tradition, who could not understand how non-orthodox British Jews continued to support the United Synagogue.

Regarding treatment of women Terry regards the sex separation in the synagogue as a minor issue compared with behaviour outside the synagogue.

AN *Women's prayer groups and women leading the services. Does that mean anything to you at all?*

Terry *This is an interesting part of my identity. I still see myself quite firmly as an orthodox Jew with an orthodox tradition, and for that reason I probably don't want to sound sexist here, but I can understand obviously where they're coming from, women's prayer groups and role, increased involvement of women at the ritual level. But I don't think it will inevitably take up. I think most Jewish women realise that we can actually keep that men can lead the prayers and women might not lead the prayers. What's most important is that's just in the synagogue. In the synagogue it doesn't really mean anything, what men do, what women do. What's most important is outside the synagogue. I don't think the synagogue is a microcosm of gender relationships between the two genders in later life. For that reason, I think that keeping the orthodox tradition in the synagogue, it's fine if you don't have to analyse the orthodox ritual in terms of "Oh, is it fair to men and women" because what's most important is what actually goes on in society.*

Although he doesn't want to sound sexist his resistance to change in the services is grounded in his orthodox identity which he justifies by downplaying the importance of religious tradition and elevating the importance of gender equality in society.

Societal equality is a theme taken up by Otis.

AN *How do you think it (Judaism) is going forward, in the future? What's going to happen?*

Otis *Oh, I think will be less religious. So, people will still want to hold on to their Jewish roots, keep to their Jewish values. I think orthodox Judaism will start to see a decline and American conservatism will start to grow because that's something people want. To be honest, I go to an orthodox shul, but I don't keep Shabbat so should I really be part of the orthodox community? But I still like the shul service, being in Hebrew, no instruments – I like the idea that the*

men lead the service – they should. Because I just don't see being a man is so different to being a woman but when you see it in the shul services with a man leading the service, it's like your attitude changes. When you step outside obviously men are equal to women and when you step into the shul, women can't lead the service so where are your moral values?

He still likes the services as currently constituted but sees a general decline in orthodox Judaism and acknowledges the moral dilemma of women's inequality in shul.

David is in favour of more women's participation in Jewish religious life. Talking about the gendered arrangement in the synagogue:

David *I find it disappointing that we can't have men and women side-by-side. When I was saying I find that men were more interesting and engaged I suspect that's because in one sense there is a place for them in shul and I don't think there is really a place for women in shul. I think that is very regrettable, and that is one of the downsides of an orthodox shul.*

AN *You have mentioned about the male role in the synagogue.*

David *But I think those roles should be done away with really. If you are willing and able, then read from the Torah if you are a woman or be a rabbi, or whatever. We have enough incompetent rabbis to show that being a male is not a sufficient condition.*

David suggests that if a women was able to hold a prominent synagogue position she should. He prioritises competence over gender.

Joel is friends with a few girls and has listened to their views on the marginalisation of women in Judaism:

Joel *I think some girls think there's more to be done in the Jewish community. I know quite a few Masorti and Liberal friends who feel that being Jewish is part of their identity. And they should be allowed to read from the Torah and be part of the Jewish community in that way.*

AN *What do you think?*

Joel *Yea, I agree with them. I think they should be allowed to read from the Torah and stand on the Bimah and stuff like that.*

Joel does not belittle the Jewish identity of non-orthodox friends and proposes that they should play a full part regardless of gender. Within Judaism Joel supports more opportunities for women to participate in services and abolition of segregated seating:

Joel *I personally say, I agree more with the way the Masorti method of how you run a shul service.*

AN *And how do they run a shul service?*

Joel *With mixed seating. It doesn't matter if it's a man or woman reading from the Torah and stuff.*

Alan regards the subjugation of women as medieval.

AN *The other thing that is coming into society is 'feminism.'*

Alan *I gave a talk at my school – Gender politics – Gender equality – about Judaism and feminism. Women are expected to be relegated, subjugated to the role of mother and cook and cleaner in an orthodox household – It's medieval. Why should men sit and – you know – go to the synagogue on Saturday whilst his wife stays home and cooks a meal. I think it's bizarre in this day and age. What I've always found stuff about mikvehs¹²² is a bit bizarre, archaic. Kind of rooted in this idea that women are kind of inferior to men. I, I don't agree with that at all.*

Arthur observes a conflict between the religious studies teachers and his community.

Arthur *Being Masorti, I don't always agree with a lot of the JS teachers views on things. All of them are very orthodox and stick by the.*

AN *So what sort of things have been raised?*

Arthur *Erm, just kind of their views on women and their role in Judaism. Very different, cos when I go to service at shul you see women praying. You see women being rabbis and doing just as much as the men would do. And I think their views on that are very different to what I've been brought up as. What I've known as right. Not right but what I've been shown as a nice way.*

Charlie's synagogue is not doctrinaire regarding women's participation and it allows individuals to choose which option they attend whilst still being under the general umbrella of the community.

AN *What makes your shul Masorti as opposed to United Synagogue?*

Charlie *Erm, so at my shul there's three different services every Shabbat. There's a traditional service where men and women will sit separately, but there's no mechitzah dividing it and it's not that there's a gallery upstairs. It's equal erm, but women aren't allowed to leyen or anything. So, there's two egalitarian services; one is that young families go, and they all sit together, men and women sit together. And then an egalitarian service for older people.*

¹²² *Mikveh* (Lit. Ritual bath) Women are commanded to have a ritual immersion after their menstrual period before they can resume sexual intercourse.

5.7.1 Comment

Whilst opposition to women's involvement with Jewish ritual was confined to those who identified as orthodox (Simon and Andy) this was not unanimous. Terry suggests that public ritual was not as important as general gender equality and that the intra-community conflict that would arise by allowing women more involvement was not worth the bother. David proposed that services would be enhanced by women's involvement and Joel was also supportive. For Otis and Alan the relegation of women was more a question of morality. Nigel had noted the dissatisfaction of women at his synagogue but criticised the abridgement of the Reform services whilst noticing the happier atmosphere there. Charlie and Arthur and grown up in communities that had a tradition of gender equality and for them it was never an issue.

The divergence of views found reflects Judaism's encounter with modernity and the treatment of women is emblematic of the tensions of that process. Traditions have been credited with the survival of the religion and for a section of orthodoxy adherence to them is essential if Judaism is to continue even if this risks societal stricture. For Jewish men negotiating their masculinity finding a balance between being faithful to the precepts of Judaism whilst discarding misogynistic attitudes towards women's engagement with spirituality is work in progress.

5.8 Lifestyle and Attitudes

Within orthodox communities there are traditional attitudes towards sexuality, sex roles and, education which are increasingly being questioned. In the intersection between traditional orthodox Jewish law and British liberal values there is a conflict on the issue of homosexuality.

The liberal view:

Alan *I don't agree with (Jewish) laws concerning homosexuality. If you sleep with another man, it's an abomination against God. I don't think that has any place in today's society.*

Terry *When it comes to issues of homosexuality, I think I'm very liberal on this point. I can imagine some religious Jews say, "Oh there shouldn't be two fathers raising a child." But ultimately that's the decision of the two fathers whether to raise a child.*

The traditional orthodox view:

Simon *The Torah clearly forbids, not being a homosexual, but the act of homosexuality. That is very clearly forbidden. The Torah called 'toevah'*

which translates as ‘abomination.’ Being a homosexual is not forbidden whatsoever. That is something which is a feature of the human condition but these home models which incorporate two people of the same sex living together and really engaging in (sexual) relations as a product of living together. It’s not okay. It does not fit in with the halachic system. If someone were to say, “How can you say that? We’ve got those feelings.” I wouldn’t know what to answer. There are other people if you want to look into it the book by Chaim Rapoport [Judaism and Homosexuality]¹²³, he would be the one to speak to.

Among Rapoport’s recommendations are; that it is wrong to condemn people for their natural sexual orientation, that homosexuals are confronted with a specific formidable challenge, and the heterosexual community needs to appreciate the difficulties endured by gays and lesbians. These principles have been adopted in the recent guidance by the Chief Rabbi on respect and care of LGBT pupils in schools (Chief Rabbi Mirvis, 2018). The emphasis of this guidance is on the prevention of bullying of LGBT+ pupils and providing pastoral care and support in the schools and community.

Mark has minimal engagement with Jewish practice, and he feels personally uninvolved, but he does show empathy with the friend who finds himself in conflict between his sexuality and his religion:

Mark *And one of my friends, who would probably have liked to be slightly more religious, just refuses to believe any religion. Because they feel personally upset, they can’t be going to heaven if they’re not straight. I feel like it personally doesn’t affect me, but I feel I understand where they’re coming from. It doesn’t really make any sense it’s, ‘If there is a God and He actually created that you could become gay why would He then say, people who said they were gay, why couldn’t they go to heaven?’ Which would confuse me.*

The argument that he has used is that of Chaim Rapoport’s book that ‘Why would God have made the homosexual inclination in mankind only to forbid it?’¹²⁴, therefore the tendency to same-sex attraction is part of the human condition. It is probable that the teacher has used Rapoport’s text in the RE lesson and Mark has remembered it. Mark attends a Jewish school

¹²³ Rapoport wrote, “Homosexual desires may be as natural for a minority as heterosexual desires are for the majority. The reality of life confirms that there are many who strive to perform God’s will yet find themselves trapped in their exclusively homosexual orientation without key or exit. We are thus compelled to accept that God has indeed confronted many of His creatures with this formidable challenge.” (Rapoport, 2004 Page 35).

¹²⁴ Rapoport developed this argument from a commentary by RASHI on a Midrash that Moses justified taking the Torah from the angels by arguing that, as angels did not have parents why should there be a commandment to honour one’s parents and following that, God wouldn’t have forbidden mankind to do something that he was not inclined to do anyway.

which comes under the aegis of the Chief Rabbi and the school would have implemented the recommendations.

Alan *The most interesting question is Judaism updating with sex. Obviously, it's not a problem for Reform because their whole philosophy is 'keep up with the times.' Got to keep evolving reflects modernity whereas the orthodox is interesting. I know this friend of mine at [redacted]. Was actually a friend of my brother's, talked about how he is gay and Jewish and has no interest in going to shul because he knows that people would regard him as some sort of alien. Whether that's just because of society in which they grew up in – Judaism, I don't know but it certainly is an issue. My – err – our cousins are super religious. That's really interesting because it gives me an insight into that ultra-orthodox world – and maybe if my cousin came out as gay he would be thrown out of the family. He'd definitely be shunned by a lot of people – which is so – medieval but it would happen.*

Alan is taking a dispassionate view discussing Judaism's encounter with Modernity and assuming that Reform Judaism has no problem with homosexuality. His insight into ultra-Orthodoxy is through his family and when he talked about a female cousin his disapproval of the rigidity of her upbringing became manifest.

Alan *So, my cousin, who is – she is clever – straight A*s and yet because she is so orthodox is probably going to have 5 kids and not do anything with her education. Which is a shame – she could have been a doctor, a brain surgeon – save people's lives but because of ultra-Orthodox interpretation of Judaism she is going to be relegated to the kitchen which is bizarre. I think there is no place for that today.*

Alan uses exaggeration to make his point. The binary possibilities for his cousin are housewife and mother on one hand against brain surgeon on the other. Brain surgery is a motif for extreme, possibly masculine, anatomical technical ability relegating 'feelings' and 'emotions' associated with the brain to the realm of femininity.¹²⁵

When Gerry did encounter those strictly observant Jews who observe Jewish law as they understand it from their religious sources, he was intensely critical of what he characterises as the narrowness of their world view. He regards the Haredi community as a cult.

Gerry *If you've grown up in that cult with, closed off from the outside world, and that's what they call it, 'The Outside World' implies a different world. It's the attitudes of the people in the community as well which is sometimes so horribly racist and sexist and homophobic. They fundamentally reject civil society.*

Gerry was particularly incensed by censorship of school textbooks.

¹²⁵ Other body parts are also cultural markers, the uterus – husterikos in Greek – hence 'hysterical' for non-rationality popularly ascribed to women in contrast to male rationality.

Gerry *These people don't know how to interact with the outside world because they don't grow up in it. I find that censoring education in these ultra-Orthodox schools. I've seen the books. I've seen them, scribbled out – the pages. I was in the house and I saw copy of Brave New World, and I said, "What's this doing here?" And opened and pages scribbled out. Clearly, they're censoring it. Exams, Biology exams, GCSE exam papers, where teachers are being allowed by the exam boards to eliminate entire sections of the exam paper because they don't want questions on same-sex stuff or evolution.*

The fact that it was a copy of *Brave New World* that was defaced is symbolic of the rejection of the modern world that Gerry observed. The school was seen to be making a half-hearted effort at secular education, but it was to be on their own terms. The narrowness of the curriculum was something that trouble Rob as well.

Rob *I do feel the Hasidish schools and yeshivas are very like cult-like. You can't do anything, you can't ask anything, certain types of questions.*

Concomitant with control of education Rob also felt restricted by the strict dress code of his Haredi community.

Rob *We weren't allowed to wear certain trousers. We had to wear black dress pants like. You know what I mean, smart trousers. And we had to wear like buttoned up shirts. Couldn't be like a tee shirt or tee-shirt shirts. It's no blue or dark colours, it had to be [white]. The kappelch [skull caps] we wore had to be black. Couldn't have any embroidery like embellishments whatsoever.*

In the attempt to preserve their way of life some Jews have voluntarily sequestered themselves in tight enclaves where they perpetuate customs of appearance for men such as beards and sidelocks, uniformly long black coats and large hats¹²⁶ and for women hair covering and extreme modesty of dress. They represent the extreme ritual pole of being Jewish and by their restriction of interaction with outside society to an absolute minimum (strict censorship of books, newspapers, and media) they create their Jewish identity.¹²⁷ In the Haredi world boys' education is heavily weighted to religious texts with very little secular studies (see Andy in Jewish Schools 5.5.3 page 140). For Haredi girls there are slightly more secular studies as they are not deemed capable of advanced religious textual study but opportunities for university and higher education are limited to subjects leading to such careers as teaching. The constraints on secular education for girls Alan believes are a continuation of the closed

¹²⁶ Hasidic Judaism was founded in Eastern Europe, notably Poland and Ukraine in the late 18th century. The traditional clothing stems primarily from Polish nobility standards of dress of that time. The clothing is historic in origin and has no basis in the Torah.

¹²⁷ "For Haredim in general and Hasidim in particular, identifying and fighting against threats to their way of life forms a major part of their identity." Rabbi Natan Slifkin *The Jewish Chronicle* 29th January 2021

patriarchal system of Eastern European Jewry of past centuries which is incompatible with modern society. Gender roles are essential to Haredi understanding of ultra-Orthodox culture.

Rob was in the process of coming to terms with his sexuality and when he came out as gay he was sent for 'help' to a rabbi.

Rob *I said, I told him I'm gay, didn't say these words to him, "I have feelings which I don't think are okay," and that's all I said. And he said, "I thought so" and "You're confirming my suspicions" and he sent me, he called me to his office and screamed and cursed me.*

Whilst respectful close friendship among the students is fostered in the yeshiva world, active homosexuality is regarded as an abomination (see Simon above) and perversion of God's purpose for mankind. The response Rob received from the rabbi is not untypical in those circles. The attitude that Gerry describes is attributed to the isolationist self-aggrandisement policy of that Haredi community that cannot tolerate diversity. The discourse of societal control that underlies Alan, Rob, and Gerry's opinions of the ultra-Orthodox section of Jewry is that any infraction of anything that is accepted as normative, be it education of women or sexual orientation, is not tolerated and whoever violates the norm is liable to ostracism and/or expulsion.

In what are considered more mainstream Jewish circles a less extreme view is being held by some of the teachers which occasionally is in conflict with the attitudes of some of the boys and also some of their parents.

Otis *At my school there are some quite religious boys who don't like the idea of sexuality. The rabbis would say, "It's not such a big deal. If someone says they are gay that's not something we should judge." But I know for a fact that lots of people at my school would be judged. And their parents would judge them if they said that, "I'm gay." Someone said, "This is bigger in the Sephardi community" – There are some Sephardi boys in the school, and they are very proud Sephardi. And they say that if they told their parents that they were gay they would probably kick them out of the house, but I doubt whether they would.*

Otis is commenting on how the teachers of religion at his school are seeking to diminish homophobia, but some parents were likely to take a hard-line attitude.

5.8.1 Comment

I was denied access to young Haredi Jews for this study so I did not have an opportunity to hear directly from them and I am cautious about analysing the comments made by my

participants about very observant Jews. It is striking how often this section of Jewry is spoken about in negative terms as they are not homogenous in their views but are generally wary about the interaction between their social body of very Orthodox Jewry and both the mainstream Anglo-Jewish community and secular society (Kasstan, 2019).¹²⁸ The distrust between different sections of Anglo-Jewry reflects the fragmentation that has occurred in the Jewish polity in the last 50 years. The young demographic that I have studied are similar in liberal outlook to their UK contemporaries in challenging the social norms of previous generations and this is discussed further in 6.3.1 page 192.

5.9 Culture

As stated in the introduction, Jewish culture is a loose association of attitudes and activities which are popularly associated with Jewish people. As Jews have been scattered wherever they have settled they have had to adapt to their host country whilst still trying to maintain links to their origins. Conforming to culture is a way of demonstrating Jewishness even when links with the Jewish community have been broken.

Although Rob has left the Haredi community, he still feels a strong sense of Jewishness.

Rob *Today, I have quite a strong Jewish identity. I feel very Jewish in a way. I would like, one day, to be Shomre Shabbos again. I try to keep kosher and there's certain things I wouldn't eat, of course. There's a lot in Judaism that moves me, music and shul singing, tefillas. You can divide Jewish identity. I like the literature, the arts, comedy. You know, Jewish characteristics that we all have. That my non-Jewish counterparts have all told me, "You're very Jewish." What does that mean?*

AN *Well, I was going to ask you. I mean, what particular characteristics?*

Rob *Well, I like to, I don't know, people might say, I talk with my hands. I was staying by this family in [place] and they are Jewish and frum but the mother wears trousers, an older couple and they have students who live by them.*

Rob acknowledges that his observance has lapsed but expresses his Jewishness culturally. He uses a variety of cultural markers to construct his Jewish identity. He has also mentioned body language, talking with his hands.¹²⁹ He is using language with his speech peppered with Yiddish and Hebrew idioms such 'Mama Loshn' (Mother tongue), 'Shomre Shabbos' (Sabbath observant), 'chutzpadik' (cheeky), 'tefillas' (prayers), 'chasenah' (wedding) and 'sheinecal' (pious young women) which would have been part of his vocabulary when in the Haredi

¹²⁸ See also *Sanity and Sanctity* (Greenberg & Witzum, 2001) for an account of the interaction between Western trained and orientated psychiatrists and the Haredi community of Jerusalem

¹²⁹ Sander Gilman *The Jews Body*. Pages 14-15 1991 Routledge New York

community. Also his phraseology; “I was staying by this family,” and, “have students who live by them.” Using ‘by’ for ‘with’ or ‘to’ is commonly used as in an invitation, “Come by me,, Shabbos.”¹³⁰

Observing the Jewish dietary laws is popularly expressed as ‘keeping kosher’ and Rob is using this, making a point of not having food that is forbidden to Jews. Alan and Hugh are studying away from home and in observing the dietary laws they are demonstrating their Jewish identity.

Alan *Judaism is more of a cultural aspect. I keep kosher but don't go to the synagogue. I don't really do that much to allow other people to identify me as Jewish other than keeping kosher.*

Hugh *When I sit at dinner and they ask, “Why are you having vegetarian?”¹³¹ And I say, “It's because I'm Jewish.” And I start explaining about kosher and can't eat the meat and all that stuff.*

In describing his family as traditional, Oscar highlights keeping some of the dietary laws as on a par with observance of the festivals.

Oscar *Well, traditions, yea. We do follow lots of traditions, my family as well.*

AN *What traditions?*

Oscar *Well, we keep kosher. We don't eat any unkosher food but we don't have to have specifically. So we can have, erm, like beef but not specifically kosher beef but we don't have pork and shellfish and stuff.*

AN *Yes.*

Oscar *And erm, well we celebrate Chanukah and lots of other, the other and the main festivals.*

Otis *My way of looking at it is ‘If I really cared about food and I really, really wanted to try all these things (non-kosher food), then fine, I would stop keeping kosher because I would want to try it. I don't really care that much so I'll keep kosher as that's part of being Jewish. It also creates identity. I can go out with friends who aren't Jewish, and they'll be getting their chicken and things And I'll be getting a salad that's different, and they'll be saying, “Why are you having something different?” And I'll say, “I am keeping kosher.” It creates something proud.*

¹³⁰ Another phraseology is to put the verb at the end of a sentence, “The soup, you like?”

¹³¹ Eating meat is popularly associated with masculinity (Greenebaum & Dexter, 2018) and in the “very masculine place” (see Page 97) of his college Hugh's vegetarianism is considered unusual.

Otis claims that he is not particularly interested in experiencing different foods and so he might as well continue not to eat anything forbidden. He adds as a by-product that keeping kosher creates his Jewish identity.

James has constructed his Jewish identity around food and family time. The festivals are framed by association with particular food.

James *I respect the religion and I love the things you do in Judaism. Things that are special, erm from the food from the festivals, From the family time. So, some of the things I love about Judaism is the foods you wouldn't get normally. Amazing, going away on holiday to Israel.*

AN *You mentioned about the food, any particular food?*

James *Ah, an all-time favourite. You go to a lovely take-away restaurant where they have a massive pitta and you have schnitzel in it, with meat in it. Or you can have falafel, I love that, lots of humus and salad. Traditional Israeli style food. And some of the desserts you can have and stuff. I love ice cream and even er, I've forgotten what the ice cream called we have.*

AN *Parve?¹³²*

James *Yea. That's it, amazing. I love all that, the desserts you have, doughnuts you know, festivals. And I love Pesach because the family gets together.*

James was helping at his synagogue's children's day camp and Jewish songs were part of the programme to foster Jewish identity.

James *There was singing and stuff. Cos this was all about scheme songs. On Friday, at the last day they always do some sort of show for the parents to come and watch and everything and, they have challah at the end of it and stuff. It's all very warming.*

5.9.1 Comment

I have used the term 'culture' to denote habits, interests, and traditions which are typically associated with Jews but have not been specifically mandated by religious law. There is nothing Jewish about hand gestures it is just that at some time the mannerism became commonly used and children copied it from the family in their social development. Particular foods became associated with certain festivals; for example cheesecake at Shavuot (Pentecost) and doughnuts at Hanukah, and because Jewish bakeries used to make those foods only at those seasons, this perpetuated the link between the two. The speech patterns, including Hebrew and Yiddish idioms migrating into English, convey concepts and emotions for which there might not be a precise English equivalent and the word order (putting the verb at the

¹³²Parve – denotes foodstuffs which usually contain milk or meat but are made without either so can be eaten at either meat or milk meals.

end of a sentence) reflect the grammar of the vernacular language translated into English. The literary tradition of Judaism (People of the Book) produced a canon of folk tales and parables which comment on the everyday lives of Jews wrestling with issues such as family, poverty, love, jealousy and many others. As these themes are common to humanity they can transfer to popular secular culture (*Fiddler on the Roof*). Maintaining links with these non-halachic aspects of Jewishness preserves Jewish identity when there is no inclination to conform to Jewish ritual. As festivals are mandated at specific times of the year they feed into the Jewish understanding of time which is the subject of the next section.

5.10 Jewish Festivals

The combination of Jewish observance and Jewish culture is apparent in the home celebrations of festivals. The festivals are days of holiness and are required to be observed at particular seasons of the year. Jews everywhere celebrating the festivals on the same day is a means of both marking the Jewish sense of time in relation to the year and is a powerful symbol of Jewish cohesion and reflects the continuity principle of identity process theory (see Page 55).

Gerry *Actually, it (synagogue attendance) doesn't appeal to me in the same way. But I'll still go to the Seder meal. I'll still read the Ma Nishtanah (the four questions), still the youngest in my family (laugh) I can still read it.*

The Passover evening ritual at home combines the obligation to have certain significant foods with the meal and recitation of the Exodus story. Historically, the annual Pesach (Passover) seder is the most commonly observed Jewish practice and because it generally takes place in the home, involves a family meal and is as much a cultural familial experience as it is a religious one (D. Graham, Staetsky, & Boyd, 2014).

Hanukah is also a home rather than synagogue ritual. As Hanukah is associated with oil for lights then the custom has evolved of having food fried in oil.

Hugh *At Hanukah I brought in doughnuts, they thought that very cool.*

Hugh brought in the doughnuts to the military college as an explanation of the festival to his non-Jewish fellow students.

Otis' family is widespread.

Otis *If you have family across the world you visit them. We'll be in Israel for Pesach; Manchester for Rosh Hashanah and I have cousins in Munich who come over all the time and they would not come over if it wasn't for the Jewish holidays.*

Terry's surname is typically associated with Judaism and this feeds into his sense of identity.

Terry *I am religious to a certain extent. I have the surname [redacted]. If I open a siddur, I believe in God. I believe it's nice, praying. You are engaging with Jewish culture, Jewish traditions, celebrating the festivals and things like that. That's very important to me.*

Saying that he is religious 'to a certain extent' indicates that prayer for him is less about doctrine than about engagement with Jewish historic-religious culture which he elaborates by mentioning tradition and festivals. His balance between Judaism and Jewishness is more inclined to the latter.

5.10.1 Comment

The world-wide commonality of the Hebrew calendar was such an important agent for Jewish cohesion that elaborate safeguards were enacted to preserve the sanctity of the appointed seasons.¹³³ Applying identity process theory, the notable days are important for the continuity principle and this applies to both the positive days (occasions of victory – Passover, Purim, and Hanukah) and days of mourning associated with the destruction of the temple and subsequent exile. Within families and communities traditions associated with the festivals have become so ingrained that preserving them under adverse conditions is important in the construction of identity; Jewish law was being acknowledged by their enactment but experienced by reference to the memory of the various repeated traditions. It is from memory that heritage is produced which leads to the next section.

5.11 Heritage

Heritage differs from History in that it encompasses not only events but traditions and attitudes which help to form the cultural identity of a group.

David *Obviously when you meet another person of the same cultural heritage you've got all that sort of tacit understanding of legacy in the background. I think there's more of an instinctive level of warmth, if warmth is the right word, appreciation. Culturally, the way, the habits of thinking. I just think you are a product of your cultural heritage and that's reflected in most people. I think even those way out in the opposite way and react are still, by reacting, to an extent they are defined by what they're reacting to or from*

There is a broad concordance of outlook consequent of the common cultural heritage which Jews have when meeting someone which is colloquially expressed as Jewishness without being attached to any formal ritual practice.

¹³³ The second festival day of the festivals observed outside Israel was instituted because of doubt over the precise day (Donin, 1972 Page 210)

Mark *I don't really believe in much religion. I'm pretty much more of a heritage person than something I believe in. Quite a few things which don't make much sense about religion.*

AN *Such as?*

Mark *Erm, without humans, there wouldn't be any. So, technically, humans created religion, and religion God. I feel religious education is a bit ridiculous, not technically proven. I'm only really exposed to religion through school and my mum's side of the family.*

Mark is not interested in the ritual aspect of Judaism because of lack of evidence to which he can relate.

Mark *When I was doing the chedar (lit. room – a colloquial term for Hebrew education) for my Bar Mitzvah I'd just not want to go and been forced to go.*

He has attended Jewish schools reluctantly (see also 5.5.4 page 139).

Mark *If it probably wasn't for my mum, for myself, I probably wouldn't ended up going for them.*

Mark's mother appears to be the mainstay of the family's identification with Judaism.

Although it was not part of the formal interview mum did mention that her daughter had a Bat Mitzvah the previous week and the daughter had been very enthusiastic about the ceremony and had been complimented by the rabbi so there is a paradox between what Mark has gained from his parents and that which his sister has. His maternal grandparents are attempting to keep his connection to Judaism alive.

Mark *Well, my entire mother's side of the family is Jewish, and we have Friday night dinner, every Friday when we go round to her parents. We don't have it here. We're doing something which prohibits us from sitting down and eating.*

Mark's comment about the Friday night dinner reflect back to the sitcom of the same name (1.2.5 page 33). He takes a position outside the Jewish bubble. His mother and maternal grandparents are Mark's only affinity to Jewishness.

History, especially family history, is a factor in Jewish heritage and Joel was fortunate in having an elderly relative with whom he could talk and hear about some of the experiences of Eastern European Ashkenazi Jewry.

Joel *Because I like learning about my family's history from my great-uncle [name] and before he died, I used to listen to him talk. And he had so many different brothers and uncles and stuff and what they went through in different countries. I think from near around Russia (and) Lithuania.*

Although the great-uncle may have been born in Britain, he would have had relatives of the previous generation who had lived in Russia and Lithuania and would have told him stories of how they lived their lives there and these stories gave Joel an indirect connection through time and space to the pre-immigration Jewish cultural experience.

Rob had been adopted by a Haredi family.

Rob *But my birth father's family came from Belarus, from Minsk. My mother's family came from Almaty, Kazakhstan. They couldn't tell they were Jewish. There had been Jewish people there for centuries, but they couldn't tell if my mother's line was 100% Jewish. My father, my grandfather, they thought he was because of the family name Yosef Ha Lev.*

There was some circumstantial evidence that he was Jewish, but it was not certain.

Therefore, a decision was made by the adopting parents to remove any doubt and he had a conversion to Judaism.

Rob *But then I converted cos you can never tell.*

Certainty about religious status is important in most Jewish communities but especially so for the Haredim and it was only by the formal process of conversion by a religious court that could remove any doubt when evidence is lacking. Rob could be assured of his Jewish status regardless of his parentage and acquired Jewish heritage by that process.

History contributes to heritage.

Gerry *An unpleasant man in Germany tried to kill people like you and me for something, an accident of birth. And he very nearly succeeded in wiping us out. Something like two thirds of European Jews or something like that I think six million Jews were killed and antisemitism goes, as you know, has a long history before Hitler even came into the picture and it's easy to forget that sometimes. So, for me, being Jewish today, and practising to the extent that I do practise, which, admittedly is not a lot, is about, if you'll excuse the language, putting a middle finger up to anyone. To Hitler and everybody else who has tried to destroy my family, my grandparents, my great-grandparents for who they are. So, it's almost an identity born out of antisemitism in a weird and ironic way.*

AN *You sound like that being Jewish is an act of defiance.*

Gerry *Yea, you know what. That's a fantastic way of putting it. Yea. I was looking for that word, defiance. Yes*

Gerry has minimal contact with Jewish ritual practice framing his Jewish identity as an act of defiance and remembrance of the holocaust.

Rob *Jewish history has been quite sh*t.*

Gerry is directly and Rob is indirectly referring to the Holocaust. This generation of Jews is at least two generations from the Holocaust and as the directly affected generation diminishes the history of past tragedies, to which Arthur alludes (see 5.4 page 136), are kept in the communal memory.

5.11.1 Comment

Heritage is a function of collective memory and the specific transgenerational transmission of trauma was mentioned in 2.4.1 page 60 and for some Jews, the heritage of being a descendant of a Holocaust survivor is the sole marker for their Jewish identity. Whilst none of the participants mentioned Holocaust survivor ancestry, involving young Jews in memorial events such as Yom Ha'Shoah and Holocaust Memorial Day is common practice in the UK and is a method of fostering Jewish identity. Heritage cannot be forced on an unwilling recipient as Mark has made clear but Joel eagerly accepted the opportunity to connect with his family's pre-immigration story.

5.12 Israel

Joel *I think it's good that there is a homeland, that there is a country that is a Jewish state. Because Britain is a Christian country and there are all these other countries that call themselves by their religion and whilst I don't believe that Israel should be only for Jewish citizens, I do believe it's a Jewish country.*

Simon *I love Israel, I think Israel is a place where there is a tremendous amount of energy and its palpable on the streets. I do feel that there's a sense of community in Israel which is unparalleled in the UK and that is primarily down to the fact that the majority of people in Israel are Jewish. They belong to a single culture unlike in contemporary England and there's energy – much more a sense of community.*

These two statements, whilst supporting Israel as a Jewish state, reflect divergent approaches to the country. Joel suggests a somewhat abstract and detached view; Israel should be allowed to call itself a Jewish state because other countries are allowed a religious dimension so therefore Israel should be allowed the same privilege. Attaching a religious characteristic to the country should not preclude people of other faiths, or none, from integrating into the country becoming citizens of Israel with all the rights and obligations that are incumbent upon citizens of any country. Simon presents a much more immersed view of the country identifying with the energy and sense of community in the country and locates them in the Jewishness that is such a feature of his identity. He chooses to believe that Israel has a “single culture” producing greater national cohesion which ignores the heterogenous nature of the population whereas contemporary England has multiple cultures.

Gerry *A beautiful, beautiful country, the culture, food, music and the values and way of life that the kibbutzim promote. Israel is the only really functional democracy in the Middle East. I'd go as far as to say, it's the most democratic country in the world. On the same level as New Zealand and a couple of others and I'm defining that as how proportional the legislature is in terms of the vote share of all of the parties, the coalitions. And it's got a free press as well.*

After praising Israel for its culture and way of life Gerry goes on to praise the democratic nature of the country and its press freedom, but to express concern over the direction this is taking the country.

Gerry *But time and time again the Israelis are voting in far-right governments. I have deep, deep deeply uncomfortable big, big problems with the attitudes, the bigoted attitudes of a significant proportion of the Israeli population. And that's bad. And it makes me, and gets me. I know it makes me really sometimes I'm ashamed. It makes me angry, and it always has been a source of internal conflict in me as well.*

Israel presents Gerry with a problem. The country and the popular culture of the people he finds beautiful and uplifting and he extols the virtue of a proportional representational electoral system. But he cannot understand why such a 'perfect' system produces governments with which he fundamentally disapproves and causes him shame and internal conflict. He finds that he has contradicted himself and this dichotomy was mentioned by other participants.

Joel *I disagree with some of what Israel has done. Such as the corruption of the politicians such as Netanyahu. Also, with, on the West Bank there's things, question about the settlements, how they shouldn't be given free rein to build there.*

At a religious level, Israel represents a kind of paradise, all that is good about being Jewish in a Jewish country. At a political level there are difficulties which the focus group expressed.

Group *Being publicly supportive of the idea of Israel and Israeli culture but not supporting the Israeli government.*

Simon *I think it's very important to distinguish between the political perspective and the religious perspective. Where it comes to Israel politically there are certain things which are not necessarily things that I would like to advocate. Certain things, Operation Grapes of Wrath, certain aspects of the 1982 related to the Lebanon War. I think it's important to separate those things from the religious perspective.*

Charlie has recognised that previous generations did not have a Jewish state which could have been a place of refuge (if he were thinking in pre-Second World War terms) or a geographical

entity which would enhance the prestige of Jewish people worldwide. The establishment of a Jewish state helps to repair the rupture that was suffered when the Temple was destroyed and the majority of Jews dispersed (see 2.4.1 page 56). Jews have the option of coming to Israel if conditions elsewhere become intolerable and no longer be designated 'wandering Jews' without a permanent grounded place to call 'home.'

Charlie *I love the country and I love going there. I think that's amazing. I guess it's nice, the Jewish State and they say you know, any Jew can come and live here. So, I think that's nice. I love falafel.*

However, Charlie does acknowledge Israel's political and social problems.

Charlie *I think Israel is in like a tricky like political state, and I don't support the government. Maybe, but I don't know enough about politics, Israeli politics and formulate properly an opinion. I just know that it's tricky at the moment. I think Israel also has a lot of problems, like. I'm not sure but I know in the West Bank, which is part of Israel, there's huge amounts of poverty.*

He appreciates the country, and the food was mentioned by many interviewees, but he understands that there are social problems.

Arthur is very positive about the country and appreciative of the welcome that Israel gives to people generally as well as Jews.

Arthur *It's quite an amazing country actually. It's really, really incredible in the way that it functions. And how it welcomes lots of different people. I'd say, especially Jews, in the way it welcomes people. I feel like the gist and the way that it works is very good.*

Arthur believes that the news media are generally biased against Israel and do not report the conflict fairly.

Arthur *Yea, in some, in negative, in some ways I guess because of what's been going on and people hear that Israel's been bombing Gaza. That's not necessarily the full story. They don't always hear the other side of the story. So that way they're seen as negatively. I don't think there's too much press about Jews and Jewish people a lot of the time but in some ways, yea. In the way they're perceived in that sense. The way Israel's been portrayed in a lot, in conflict in Gaza, it's been quite bad, and quite biased, of what I've heard anyway. What's been actually happening I feel that all gets lost in the media. The message out of that is, 'Israel is a bad place, and a lot of Jews live in Israel, so a lot of Jews are bad people' in some way. I think like, that a lot of the actual facts get lost and people just kind of make a decision on what Jews are like and they don't feel any need to change their view about it. Unless they meet a Jewish person, who shows them differently.*

He suggests that in the mind of the general public Israel and Jews are perceived as synonymous and if Israel is being portrayed as a bad place then the 'badness' becomes associated with Jews and the discourse becomes 'Jews are bad people and should be held to account for the behaviour of Israel.' This opinion was also mentioned by Otis.

Otis *There's not much negative media (of Jews) about except for Israel. I think that Israel is one of the main things that creates this negative view of Jews right now. Because a lot of the media is quite anti-Israel. Especially in England. If you go outside of England, in America Israel is viewed in a more positive light. It depends on what Israel is doing at the time. Affects how people view Israel and how they view the Jews.*

In general, there isn't much criticism in the UK media of Jews living outside Israel, but Otis has noted that the UK media is more hostile to Israel than American media. Antagonistic coverage of Israel would negatively affect the perception of Jews in the UK.

Nigel recognised that different reports could be made according to the bias of the reporter.

Nigel *I love it, I enjoy going. Generally, it's a nice place but also, I enjoy the idea of a place where everyone around you is Jewish. It's a Jewish place. You feel safe, even if it's less safe than the UK at the moment. It varies on the news report that people listen to. Recently the bombing of Palestine In Gaza and the death of the leader of Hamas and there were lots of reports said Israel bombed the leader of Hamas but more importantly, his innocent wife and child. And then there's the JC [Jewish Chronicle] reporting that Israel was completely provoked, and it was only retaliation. And they warned the mother and child they were going to bomb the house at this time. It's just depending on where you look you find different results. And everything is biased one way or another.*

Nigel has mentioned Israel as a safe Jewish place whilst acknowledging the danger that the conflict poses. He is also affected by the reportage of that conflict and the different perspectives taken by various media and he hints at media bias.

Andy *I know a bit about history of the wars, Palestinians, and things like that. 95% of Palestinians are good people. It's just the 5% that are causing problems, yea. He (a suicide bomber) died, and the mums are not even sad. They're just happy for their sons that he did that. A bit like the Kamikaze.*

Andy suggests that it is a minority of Palestinians who actually perpetuate the conflict and the mindset of those people supports terrorism.

Mark *I think Israel is a state is perfectly fine, nothing wrong with it. I think it's quite good that if they want to, they can have a place they have. Because there are so many countries that are classed as either Moslem or Christian states that why shouldn't Jewish people have one too. Especially something they call the*

Holy Land even though most of the Palestinian countries complained about it they never used (it). They weren't there. It was pretty much a war zone before it was given to the Israelis, between the British and certain forces.

Mark uses a standard pro-Israel account of the condition of the land prior to the waves of Jewish immigration but he has separated himself from the Jewish/Israeli perspective and he speaks in an objective manner using the third person phrase, "if they want to, they can have a place they have." Mark's father was in the military and he has ambitions to be a paratrooper in the British Army, which probably prompted his use of the military expression 'war zone' to describe the area pre-state. Mark enjoyed a visit to Israel but again he appeared to distance himself from 'British Jews' and take a position outside the Jewish community.

Mark *It was after my Bar Mitzvah. It was a gift from my grandparents that they couldn't attend cos they were ill. We went down to the Dead Sea. We went to Jerusalem, and places like that. It was quite nice to see the culture as in Judaism, how Israelis function, how they're different from British Jews. I'd say Israeli Jews are more relaxed with religion and they're usually more welcoming because in Israel they don't have as much to worry about with antisemitism.*

It is possible that his (maternal) grandparents gave him the trip to try and get him to engage more with Judaism and Jewish identity. For the general media, Mark has noticed a bias towards the Palestinians.

Mark *The media, they always try to portray it this is, if I use the example of Israeli versus Palestinians, usually favoured it towards Palestinians. Just because I'm pretty sure, there're more Palestinians who watch their shows because of it.*

Terry has observed the corrosive effect that the continuing conflict is having on the youth of Israel with whom he identifies.

Terry *I will always be attached to Israel because I have most of my cousins and family is in Israel. There's an on-going conflict which is damaging, to not only Palestinians. But for me, what is interesting is following the lives of my second cousins. They have a very difficult time in the army. We've actually got to the point where young Jews can see the effect of the conflict on Israelis themselves. The big issue these days for my cousins is not so much Gaza, but the settlements. The fact there is still occupation in the West Bank. I've got a cousin who's effectively being trained to move Palestinians out of illegal homes and go through the 'home demolition' process. At that point, I think International Law it all blows it away. A lot of what the Israeli government is doing is to satisfy and appease a distinct right-wing block in Israeli politics. That makes it harder for my cousins. They're not massive Zionist ideologues. For them, no matter that they say they're right-wing, vote Likud. But at the end of the day, they just want to live in peace in Nahariya. A place where there is a lot of co-existence between Jews and Arabs.*

Terry identifies with the dilemma of his Israeli cousins having to serve in the army and demolish homes whilst disagreeing with their political leaders. They have a patriotic duty to protect their land and population but have no empathy with the nationalist sentiments that influence Israeli politics.

Terry *I understand, and very much respect the Palestinian cause in the hope of a two-state solution. And the cause of Palestinian human rights which is very important in Gaza and the West Bank. But now it's got to the point where some British people, they go overboard for the Palestinians and they start to ignore the Israeli side. They'll see the Israelis and the whole conflict in a black and white way, and they don't see the grey areas. So now I have a responsibility whenever someone posts about Israel/Palestine. I've had to send messages to people and say, "This headline you saw. It's very unfortunate, but you know it's not just Palestinians who actually suffer from what's going on." It's people like my cousin who gets drawn into the conflict.*

Terry suggests that the nuances of the situation have been lost in the public space.

Rob has lived in Israel for an extended time but being in yeshiva he wasn't in mainstream Israeli society.

Rob *I do support Israel, as a Jew. I lived in Israel for some time. For the Palestinians, I feel very sorry for them but it's their leadership that's taken all their money.*

He did go to Israel for six months and suggests that the way he was treated led to his mental difficulties:

Rob *I went to Israel to yeshiva for six months and that was quite hard for me. I felt very traumatised. I didn't speak Ivrit (Hebrew). The teachers were very rough, and I didn't feel I had kind of protected environment. I felt extremely vulnerable the whole time. I remember being in Israel and having a complete breakdown. I wasn't myself and I didn't know I was ill.*

His relationship with Israel has been difficult. In the abstract he supports Israel and blames corruption by the Palestinian leaders for the continuing conflict. When he was negotiating his sexuality, he thought that he would be supported in Israel but was advised otherwise.

Rob *I've spoken to LGBT from people in Israel and they've told me that Israel just isn't the country for that. Which is surprising to me, I will be honest.*

It is not uncommon for young Haredi men who are questioning their sexuality to be advised to go to Israel, to yeshiva, in the hope that they can be 'sorted out.' Israel generally has a good reputation for tolerance of sexual orientation with Pride marches in Tel Aviv and even Jerusalem, and Rob was disappointed in his expectation of support.

5.12.1. Comment

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter connection to Israel, however tenuous, is a factor in Jewish identity (see 5.1 page 128). There was near unanimity that support for the country did not mean unqualified approval of the actions of the political leaders and this was a dilemma that Gerry felt due to his political activity and Terry felt on behalf of his cousin in the army. Israel has been central to the aspirations of Jews for so long that there is a tendency to romanticise the country and this was apparent in the way these young men spoke. Rob was the only one who had experience of living there rather than just visiting and he was deeply disappointed that his expectations of acceptance in Israel were not realised.

5.13 Antisemitism

Mark *Jews in England, even though they might not have experienced it, they'll still be usually quite defensive about things just because they expect people to be antisemitic. Because there will be antisemitism, but I feel like it's way too prominent.*

By talking about Jews in the third person Mark puts distance between himself and the Jewish community and this has been a recurrent theme throughout his comments on Jewishness. Mark has picked up on, not just actual anti-Jewish sentiment in the public space, but also the expectation by Jews of antisemitism in England which he does not experience himself. He did describe how his non-Jewish friends joke about all religion.

Mark *The non-Jewish, pretty much joke about everything. From Judaism to Islam to Christianity. Just joking about everything to be honest. No offense taken.*

He regards the casual jokes as part and parcel of his interaction and bonding with his non-Jewish peers (see 4.8.3 page 118) and developing the social skills necessary for transition from childhood, through adolescence to adulthood. Jokes are well known as a means of releasing tension and deflating pomposity but also as a means for holding one's own in debate.

Simon *I haven't experienced anything, quite frankly. Yes, sorry to disappoint you (Laugh). I've never had any anti-Jewish sentiment thrown at me whatsoever. [redacted] is perceived to be quite anti-Zionist university; it has some sort of anti-Zionist undertones – some would say antisemitic. But I haven't experienced anything.*

Antisemitism has not impacted on Simon and because of the reputation that his university has in this regard, he finds this absence noteworthy. Although the universities in general, and the establishment that Simon attended in particular, have a reputation for anti-Jewish/Israel activity (Klaff, 2010) this was not experienced by him. I think he thought I was looking for evidence of antisemitism at his university and his laugh would indicate that he was pleased to be able to disappoint me.

David *[Place] university was a very apathetic, politically apathetic, place. So, given, I think that antisemitism today kind of, manifests itself politically, there wasn't really much to be had.*

David's experience at university was similar to Simon's in that antisemitism was minimal.

Alan *There are some jokes, but I don't think that it's antisemitic. I mentioned I was in a kitchen over the summer one of the other chefs, there was this guy, and I said I was Jewish, and I was doing the bacon and ham stuff. I was the breakfast chef, traying up all the bacon and put it in the oven. It was like, grim, and someone was, "You're Jewish, you don't want to be there." And I was thinking 'That's quite funny' I know it's building off a stereotype, but I think that kind of joke in that kind of context - it's pretty harmless. I know there's actual antisemitism that goes on. People get attacked and stuff, actual name calling, and in this context, I don't think it's harmless.*

The discourse that Alan is using is one which is usually described as 'banter' and whilst this is usually harmless with no real offense being given or taken there is always the possibility that banter progresses to bullying. Restaurant kitchens can be highly pressurised work situations and a certain amount of banter between workers is a socially acceptable mechanism to defuse tension.

Alan intends to engage antisemitism through literary parody.

Alan *I want to turn it completely on its head; to essentially mock the antisemitic elements and show how absurd it is. Because there are plays that are homophobic, and misogynistic, and antisemitic. And my response to that, as a Jew, is that we shouldn't just ignore these and try and hold our hands over our ears and eyes and pretend they don't exist. But rather, we should attack them straight on and acknowledge that they existed. You know, antisemitism was a thing. Christopher Marlowe wrote a very antisemitic play that was performed. But we choose to laugh at it, take the 'mick' you know.*

Alan is acknowledging that mores from earlier times condoned depictions of characters which would now be considered unacceptable. He is drawing on his superior intelligence to turn the offensive language/behaviour inwards towards the originator of the piece. The discourse here is that the higher intellect makes a Jew impervious to a crude attack and indeed, turn the attack onto the attacker.

Hugh *I wouldn't say there's any antisemitic problems or like that. But sometimes remarks can be made in a jokey fashion. Just being in the corridor, "Hello, Jew" things like that. I think, I wouldn't say it's a nickname but it because it's sort of their label on me. There's lots of stereotypes that always come across. Accountants, lawyers, that sort of thing. I think that's their opinion of Jews. Everyone has a different reason for being there and I think they just saw me going there. For I want to become an RAF officer and I enjoy this sort of stuff. In my view It's not like you must be a different Jew. So, in the first couple of*

weeks everyone is, "Oh, why did you go here?" and all that. The whole idea of me wanting to be different and not wanting to be an accountant/lawyer got sort of phased out.

Hugh has moved from a Jewish school to a military college and is the first Jew that many of his fellow students have met. His desire for a career in the military challenged the perception of Jews that his fellow students had. After initially being perceived as strange he was accepted into the milieu.

David and Gerry had been to non-Jewish schools and had similar experiences of low-level comments with some antisemitic sentiment but they did not consider it serious.

David *I went to an all-boys private school, lots of different cultures, so there was the odd banter. I wouldn't say anything was particularly malicious. Yea, I probably had the odd heckle once or twice but nothing particularly serious.*

Gerry *To be fair, you get it a bit at school, maybe a little bit. Some of them, boys from Muslim backgrounds, would sort of say things as a joke. They weren't doing it to be horrible to me. They were almost doing it in almost an endearing way to me.*

At multi-cultural, all-boys schools Jews are the subject of banter similar to that meted out to other minorities of race, ethnicity, or religion.

Joel *Coming home from school. A guy, like noted I was wearing (Jewish school) uniform and kind of, wasn't speaking directly to me but so like I could hear like. Talking extra loud to his friend and kept saying, "Oh, look it's a Jewish person." I felt really annoyed and I don't understand why he was doing it. I remember him being quite a bit older. He was like, I was in year 7 or 8 and they were like year 10 or 11 so to me they were quite a bit older youths.*

In this episode, although Joel was not physically attacked, he suggests objectification and therefore diminished.¹³⁴ They were speaking about him as if he were not a human being but something less and that judgement had been made purely on the basis of the badge on his blazer. By using the words 'felt really annoyed' instead of terms like 'angry' or 'furious', the young man does not depict himself as an emotional or even distressed person, perhaps responding to cultural images of emotionality and femininity (Burcar & Åkerström, 2009). In contrast to such images, Joel presents himself as controlled and merely annoyed.

The school badge, which was a symbol to be worn proudly, had been turned into a symbol of shame. The history of such marks for humiliation go back to medieval England where Jews

¹³⁴ There are parallels with "Look, a negro!" Franz Fanon *Black Skin, White Masks* Grove Press New York 1967 Page 112

had been forced to wear a distinctive mark on their clothing (Roth, 1978 Page 40) and culminated in the yellow star of Nazi occupied Europe. The annoyance and embarrassment Joel experienced over this incident was but a fragment of that felt by previous generations. The discourse here is that the Jew must wear a distinguishing mark to emphasise his separateness from the general population; he is the perennial 'other.'

Oscar had not suffered adverse comments but was aware that others of his Jewish school had. The school uniform with its blazer badge is an important feature of secondary education in Britain and its purpose is to instil in the pupil pride in their school and the moral and ethical values of the school (Synott & Symes, 1995).

Oscar *I think some people (from) my school (have had comments) maybe if people recognise our uniform and make comments.*

The insults described are directed not against Judaism as such but against the commonly held myth of the attraction of Jews and money which harks back to medieval times when Jews were barred from the craft guilds and turned to money lending (specifically prohibited by Christianity as understood by Church law). This discourse was immortalised by the character Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* (Efron, Weitzman, Lehmann, & Holo, 2009 Page 154).

James *If you don't like the religion, you don't have to offend someone if you keep it in. It's not a nice thought to have but don't say it out loud. That only makes matters worse. Just like what I had with people calling me 'Jew' and picking a penny up the floor and stuff, not nice, you know. They say, "Jews like money" and stuff like that but anyone would do that. I don't want to target one insult. That's one particular thing that's always been said to me.*

Arthur *Just kind of shouting, "Jews, blah blah, money grabbers." And things like that. It was a little bit. It was quite like, quite like upsetting. A little bit scary because to know that people have these views about Jews and things like that.*

Oscar *Some people give out negative messages, about Jews. Well just the Rothschilds, like controlling the world and there's some ideas about Jews controlling the media.*

Rob *I was working in a bakery and some workers who said, "You Jewish people, you control the world."*

References to the banking family, Rothschild, is generally understood as an antisemitic trope rooted in the notion that there was a Jewish conspiracy to control the world through political and economic means.¹³⁵ Jews being regarded as 'other' and not like 'us' are thus considered

¹³⁵ One of the most well-known sources of this myth is *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a fabricated antisemitic text purporting to describe a Jewish plan for global domination. The hoax, which was shown to be plagiarized from several earlier sources, some of which were not antisemitic in nature, was first

strange and endowed with special power and influence. With this influence any adverse event can be interpreted as the malign influence of a shadowy group organising events for their own profit.

David *I think people often recognise or feel that Jews push above their weight in terms of social contribution, and I think that's probably true in both a praiseworthy sense and also an antisemitic sense. People credit Jews with more than perhaps they are.*

The myth of Jews having a reputation for social endeavours and having particular qualities and professional ambitions is a form of stereotyping.

James *If someone says like, "You're a stinky Jew," or something. That's my religion, and if you think I smell that's alright. I'll try and sort that out for you and calling me a Jew, you know, "Thanks for stating the obvious." In one ear and out the other.*

This medieval myth was that Jews had a particularly foul smell, 'foetor Judaicus' (Jewish stench). This myth was at the heart of medieval Christian theology, concerning the supposed Jewish desecration of the Host in the Eucharist ritual. This was an attack on religious practice because according to this doctrine, Jews needed the blood of Christ to rid them of their supposed 'stink' (Cheyette, 2011).

In the years of Jeremy Corbyn's leadership of the Labour Party (2015 to 2020) accusations of antisemitism within the party were a live issue in both the general and the Jewish press especially during 2018-19 when I was doing the interviews.

Charlie *My mum was worried about Jeremy Corbyn coming into power.*

For most of the 20th century the Labour Party was seen as an ally of Jews but that reversed in the last quarter of the century especially after the 1967 Israel-Arab war. As socialism weakened in Israel and its government was seen increasingly right wing and oppressing the Palestinians the sympathies of Labour, particularly the left wing of the party, were with the Palestinians.

AN *What do you think of the way in Politics? - What happened in the Labour Party.*

Alan *What do I think about that? I think it's not good but it's such a tiny sector of the Labour Party that it just so happens that these things get blown way out of proportion. Especially in relation to Zionism. Obviously, the Labour Party doesn't take an optimistic view about how Israel is currently governed. A lot*

published in Russia in 1903. Recently the anti-vaccination movement has contained material suggesting that Jews are responsible for the Covid-19 pandemic.

of Jews especially seek to accuse anti-Zionists of being antisemitic. That's just plainly wrong and actually quite infuriating. There are two very separate ideas - easily to be a Zionist and a non-Jew and a Jew and anti-Zionist they're not exclusive. It just so happens that a lot of Jews happen to be Zionists and Zionists happen to be Jews, the majority I would say.

Alan appreciates the difference between being anti-Israel and antisemitic and is frustrated that they have become conflated although he admits the commonality of the two.

Gerry *I have found that if you speak to supporters of Jeremy Corbyn, they'll tell you that antisemitism is either been overblown or that it is a smear campaign against the leader. If you speak to the Blairites, the moderate wing of the Labour Party, they'll tell you that antisemitism is rife and it's all Jeremy Corbyn's fault. And a lot of them will say that Jeremy Corbyn is antisemitic and this is a disaster. And what that tells me is that neither of these groups actually care that deeply about antisemitism.*

Gerry presents the argument as a struggle for the soul of the Labour Party between the centre-right Blairites and the left-wing Momentum group and how the issue has become so toxic.

Gerry *This is a comment on political discourse in general, tribal party politics and factionalism in particular.*

Concern about Jeremy Corbyn was also expressed in America as reported by Otis.

Otis *They (Americans) do hear a lot about Jeremy Corbyn, but only in the Jewish community. But if you asked the average American, they have no idea who he is. In the Jewish community, I remember people who came up to us like, "Is it really antisemitic in England?" And you would have to answer, "No." "Cos, I heard about this guy called Corbyn. Have you heard of him?"*

Corbyn became a symbol of something unusual because he was invoked by David when talking about use of social media and not in any political context.

David *What's Jeremy Corbyn tweeted in the last half an hour.*

5.13.1 Comment

Determining whether an activity constitutes antisemitism as opposed to justifiable criticism of Jews and Jewish institutions may be a matter of subjective judgement but the example of the MacPherson Report (1998) (which focussed on racism affecting the police) allowed a prima facie case for the victim to determine whether something was offensive. Historically, due to the 'otherness' of the Jew, some personal or national misfortunes have sometimes been attributed to Jews and contribute to the myth of them having some extraordinary power and/or influence and some of these myths persist although at relatively low levels, as the examples cited above show. There has been ongoing debate as to whether criticism of Israel is part of legitimate international discourse or whether it is antisemitic. The Institute for

Jewish Policy Research (JPR) found that anti-Israel attitudes are not as a general rule antisemitic but the stronger a person's anti-Israel views, the more likely they are to hold antisemitic attitudes (L. D. Staetsky, 2017). Ties between the Jewish community in Britain and Israel have become so close that an attack on Israel is taken by many in the community as a personal affront (Judah & Glancy, 2015).

5.14 Conclusion

The original postulate, there being two factors – Jewish observance and Jewish culture – concurs with the JPR report (D. Graham et al., 2014). Jewish practice is one of the clearest ways in which Jews define themselves and among the prevalent ritual observances, prayer and synagogue attendance, compliance with Jewish dietary laws, and celebrating Shabbat and festivals are all acknowledged even if they aren't observed. Beyond religious practice another means of experiencing Jewish identity is engagement with historical, ethical, and cultural matters. Being the butt of antisemitic and/or anti-Israel remarks enforces Jewish identity regardless of the recipient's level of religious practice or Zionist affiliation. Jewish wedding parties, no matter how secular the couple are, usually feature traditions such as breaking a glass and a circle dance at some point in the celebration in a nod to the cultural antecedents of the occasion. In the past 50 years many British Jews have become, in part, culturally Israeli with the food being part of their daily lives with Yotam Ottolenghi's recipes featuring multiple spices of Middle Eastern origin superseding Florence Greenberg and Evelyn Rose's blander cuisine due to their not having access to those ingredients. Whilst it may be appealing to divide Jews into religious and secular camps, studies have shown a smooth continuum with more Jews in the middle of the spectrum than at the extremes (Cohen & Kahn-Harris, 2004 Page 10) and it is these moderately affiliated Jews that negotiate their Jewish identity between the two poles of Judaism and Jewishness.

The complexity of Middle Eastern politics and the ongoing Israel-Arab conflict played out in the media and public space has produced conflicting emotions voiced by many of the interviewees. In a focus group of year-12 boys at a Jewish school the consensus was that they supported the 'idea' of Israel rather than the government of Israel in whatever actions were taken in the context of the conflict. They proposed support for Israel as a country publicly, but also recognised that there was a wide variety of political views within Israel. The perceptions of both corruption in Israeli public life and oppression of a subaltern minority does offset the generally positive features of Israel which do still form part of the emotional attachment to the country that many of the participants expressed. Anti-Israel activity in universities is featured prominently in the Jewish media and it is a concern that some Jewish students feel unsafe on

campus but this was not experienced by the participants who were at or had been to university.

Antisemitism remained a concern in spite of there being few actual incidents reported by these participants and what there had been tended to be directed against myths and stereotypes about Jews. Antisemitism in political discourse particularly in the Labour Party is an issue and merges with anti-Israel sentiment. Israel is a major factor in Jewish consciousness and reinforced Simon's observance but none of the interviewees expressed a wish to make Aliyah so whilst Zionism as an ideology is supported it was not a major practical consideration.

A subjective assessment of the participants Jewish observance indicates that James, Gerry, and Mark had little, if any interest in the practice of Judaism but that James was very engaged with Jewishness as a concept unlike Mark who distanced himself from the concept. Gerry occupied a middle position being involved politically with Jewish matters. David, Simon, and Andy were strongly committed to Halacha and that encompassed their Jewishness. Hugh and Rob came from very divergent origins and both had quite strong sense of Jewishness with less commitment to Jewish practice. Nigel's sense of Jewishness was very strong, and his observance was also quite high. Otis, Charlie, Joel, and Arthur were moderate for both observance and Jewishness with Alan, Terry, and Oscar slightly less so. I shall be returning to these themes in the discussion.

Chapter 6 British Identity: Nationalism and Internationalism; Cosmopolitan London and “*The Real England*”

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I shall discuss what the participants felt about their Britishness and what impact that had on their identity as Jews. All the participants had been born and educated in Britain but Rob was exceptional in that his parents were not British and his education had been outside the British system. I shall be arguing that Britishness is variable between nationalism and internationalism and there is a further range between cosmopolitan London and the rest of the country.

The concept of the Nation State has been defined as an area where the cultural boundaries match up with political boundaries (“UNESCO,” 1947). The ideal of nation-state is that the state incorporates a common ethnic stock and cultural tradition but in a multi-ethnic world that is no longer possible as nearly every country contains people of a variety of ethnicity and traditions. States may now be defined by geographical boundaries, a common language, and a common sense of purpose for which the inhabitants are prepared to defend with their lives if need be. As an island Britain has had its borders defined by the sea and as the Latin for ‘island’ is ‘insula’ there is a sense in insularity in British society, being cut off from the rest of Europe.¹³⁶ The English language has widespread use due initially to the British Empire but more recently by the cultural hegemony of America and the internet.

How the interviewees interpret a British sense of purpose is the subject of this section of my thesis. If someone were questioned about, “What does it mean to be British?” in the 1950s and 60s their answer would probably be couched in terms of a patriotic normative mono-cultural Christian country that was dealing with gradual loss of Empire, still recovering from post-war austerity and uncertain about how to relate to the European mainland. One of the first stimuli to investigating what it meant to be British was inter-ethnic disturbance in 2000 which led the Home Office to commission a report (Cantle, 2001) which found deeply polarised communities and there was little attempt to develop clear values regarding what it means to be a citizen in modern, multicultural Britain. In the discussion of Britishness in the years following, Parliamentary concern was raised about a mood of separatism which was thought to challenge the integrity of Britain as a ‘United Kingdom’ (Cruse, 2008). Constructing a British identity to incorporate the four nations was the stimulus to define British values as

¹³⁶ “*Heavy fog in the channel. Continent cut off.*” That was the headline in The Times on 22nd October 1957, when air and sea traffic in the English Channel was temporarily shut down.

the glue to unite the kingdom. In November 2014 the Department for Education (DfE) issued guidance for the promotion of British Values in schools which were summarised as, democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (including tolerance of those who had none) (DfE, 2014).

I have referred to the British Social Attitude Survey 31 (Kiss & Park, 2014) in 2.5 page 62 and reprise their concept of recognising the two popular conceptions of nationalism, civic and ethnic, that had become commonly used. Civic nationalism is an inclusive formulation whereby a person associates themselves with the citizenry, political, legal and institutions of the state, whereas ethnic nationalism emphasises traditions, language, religion, and ancestry. The literature generally suggests that in Western Europe civic identity tends to predominate whereas in Eastern Europe ethnicity tends to be more important. In Britain, Kiss and Park found a mixed picture, with people having a combination of the two concepts. Older people were more inclined to emphasise ethnic factors whereas this was less likely in younger people. My study seeks to explore how young male Jews relate to the concept of 'Britishness' in the construction of their identity and because it means different things to different people what may be accepted norms in one individual or generation may be rendered obsolete by vagaries of historical circumstances. Chapter 1 of this thesis narrates the progress of the 19th century immigrant cohort and their descendants as they entered British public space by serving the country, and themselves, by such as taking positions in the forces, the professions, and the economic and academic life of Britain but without losing their Jewish identity. They came as 'strangers' who transformed their abode into 'home territory' but, unlike the model described by Zygmunt Bauman, their 'original home' did not recede completely (Bauman, 1990). In the interviews, I sought to understand how the participants constructed their Britishness from among the range of options open to them. The sample I interviewed are mostly at least two generations removed from their immigrant forebears as they and their parents had been born and educated in Britain and they reflect the Anglo-Jewish community's heterogeneity. Britishness is nebulous and is being continually constructed and de-constructed in an individual's psyche and in society and may be thought of as a varying matrix of societal values, identity, patriotism, and politics reflecting their civic/ethnic balance. These aspects are not discrete and the analysis of what the interviewees said about their relationship to Britain reveals just such a matrix of comments each of which may relate independently to these items.

I wish to argue that there are two poles between which the participants negotiate their Britishness. There is a nationalist pole which is exclusive to Britain and there is a cosmopolitan international pole which positions itself in a family of democracies who have common liberal social values which transcend nationalism. Within this dialogue there is an additional contrast between London, the cosmopolitan capital, and the rest of the United Kingdom as defined by one of the interviewees:

Terry *When they leave London, a whole lot of friends of mine from other, minority ethnic backgrounds they very much see what they regard as the 'real' England, the real UK for the first time and it struck me, I mean, it's quite different.*

Terry has suddenly realised that the ethnic composition of the people of London with which he grew up is different from that of the country as a whole and this was a common experience amongst his minority ethnic friends. In this statement he has identified himself as an ethnic minority member (see his statement in 5.2 page 129).

6.2 Identity, Patriotism and Nationalism

National identity is a matter of dignity giving reasons for a people to be proud (Greenfeld, 1992 Page 487). Patriotism and Nationalism are contested terms normally used in a vague way so that any definition is liable to be challenged (Orwell, 1945). For George Orwell nationalism is inseparable from the desire for power whereas patriotism means devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life, which one believes to be the best in the world but has no wish to force on other people. Michael Billig coined the term 'banal nationalism' to cover the ideological habits which enable the established nations of the West to be reproduced in daily use such as flags at sporting events, symbols on money and implied togetherness in the media (*the prime minister, the weather, our team*) (Billig, 1995 Chapter 5). Billig wished to distinguish these daily mostly benign habits from the extremist variants of xenophobic and separatist movements that Orwell castigated as 'power hunger tempered by self-deception.'

6.2.1 Patriotism

Most of the participants recognised their identity as British but it could either be a conscious sense of pride in being British or it was passive and just an accident of geography.

Mark *I am British, and I grew up in Britain. I support my country. (Points to small Union Jack motifs on his trainers) I feel quite patriotic.*

National symbols such as flags are physical manifestations that reify nation-ness so that it is visible and tangible, and the Union Flag was the most common cultural symbol found on

primary school display boards portraying Britishness (Moncrieffe & Moncrieffe, 2019). In this statement Mark was using his trainers to demonstrate his allegiance to Britain without comparison to any other country. Mark attributes his British identity to his birthplace and domicile unconditionally without feeling any need to justify his opinion.

Mark *I'm British military, which confuses certain people from my school when they say, "You're not going to the Israeli military?" No. Because I am British, and I grew up in Britain. I support my country.*

Here there is a comparison, he wants to join the British Army rather than the Israeli army thus confounding the Zionist expectations of his peers and he has ambitions to be a paratrooper. In regard to the patriotism/nationalism axis his is a fluid position. He is quite irritated by the lack of patriotism he finds in contemporary society.

Mark *I'd say there probably is with patriotism being quite lacking in modern society today. They do not care about their country the modern children which stupidly go and do rallies about things that don't matter. Climate change matters, however what they're doing is stupid and the Extinction Protesters, just stupid.*

He was scathing about a perceived attempt by the LGBTQ lobby to take over the poppy symbolism of remembrance.

Mark *On the lines of LGBTQ, I think it is actually disgusting what they're trying to do at the moment with the rainbow poppy which is completely diminishing patriotism. As they're trying to change the red which represents the blood of (the soldiers) into rainbow colours, which has nothing to do with like gender. They shouldn't disrespect that by changing something that was there to support the families and everyone who suffered because of it. And represents the people who died protecting the country and they can't see passed that.*

His denigration of protest movements, Extinction Rebellion in the case of climate activism and the rainbow poppy in the case of the probability of there being gay soldiers amongst the war casualties, indicate a rather narrow view of how the protests were conducted. What upset him was the disruption to ordered society rather than the cause of the protest. His father was in the military and Mark is an Air Cadet and this background probably has contributed to his attitude to civil dissent. He attributes the rallies and the extinction protestors to a lack of patriotism rather than genuine concern about climate change among his peers and he has no problem with diverse sexual orientation of itself.

Mark *Quite a few of my friends are either bi(sexual) or gay.*

The rainbow poppy¹³⁷ which had sought to highlight diversity of sexuality amongst the fallen military of the wars was the subject of heated debate on social media. He presents the rainbow poppy both as trivialising the sacrifice of the soldiers and an attack on patriotism.

Hugh *Being at a military college you have to be patriotic. I have to support England and not Israel. You have to fit in with that.*

Hugh wants to be an engineer and his chosen route is through the RAF. He enjoys a military ethos having been senior in one of the uniformed youth groups. His use of language, 'have to' being repeated suggests a degree of compulsion even if it is self-inflicted. He 'has to' fit in with the environment and his patriotism is secondary to his career choice. Having said that, his motivation was tested quite severely. For entry to the military college, he had to pass several interviews and a medical before being accepted onto an intensive five-day residential selection course before being granted admission to the scheme.

Mark and Hugh expressed unqualified patriotic support for Britain. They differ in that there is an element of 'performance patriotism' by Hugh because he had to fit in with the atmosphere of the military college. Mark's dismissal of the option to join the Israeli military rather than the British is likely to be related more to his marginal position towards Judaism and the Jewish community (see above) but does have nationalist undertones.

6.2.2 National Pride

AN *How do you feel about being British?*

Oscar *Erm, well yea, erm I erm, I like being British.*

AN *What do you think is good about being British?*

Oscar *I just like the country. I guess I would rather be British than from another country. It's a good culture and I guess entertainment and food. Just general, ideas.*

Oscar's acceptance of identity is based on London (see 6.6 page 204) where he feels comfortable. He surmises that in any other country he would not feel 'at home' in spite of never having lived elsewhere. Contrasting and preferring being British to any other country is consistent with nationalism.

James *I'm very proud to be British. I love how we're one of the smallest countries. Very small compared to India, Russia, China and even countries like France, Germany, and Spain. They're bigger than us as well I just feel that we are a lot bigger than we actually are. We're a small country but I feel like the voice, the noise you make, I feel like the drama that of all the news and that. I really feel*

¹³⁷ <http://www.lgbtpoetlaureate.org.uk/rainbow-poppy/>

we're as big a country as Russia and USA and India and all that cos they're big countries, but I just feel we have a louder population.

James suggests that Britain overcomes the differential in size by the strength of its voice and the vibrancy of the population which compensates for the relatively small size of the country. He speaks with passionate conviction of Britain's superiority over other larger countries.

Nigel *I feel strong connection with Britain. Britain is the country I have grown up and lived in. I'm reasonably patriotic. We're a small country and still get our voice heard, unlike lots of others. We're very small and yet Britain has a massive impact on the rest of the world, having one of the largest economies just because of its history of a massive Empire.*

Nigel uses the same argument as James, that Britain's voice can be heard in spite of size disparity. That strength is evident in his use of the words 'massive' and 'largest' which form a counterpart to 'small' in describing the size of the country. His comments on the amount of influence that he suggests Britain has internationally relate to the imperial past; this would relate to an imperial colonial mindset. Having made the point that he has lived only in Britain, his strength of feeling denotes more than just passive acceptance. He attends a prestigious non-Jewish boy's school (6.3 page 191) founded in 1837, the year of Queen Victoria's accession and the onset of expansion of the British Empire and it is likely that his reference to empire reflects the ethos of the school.

David couches his opinion that Britain is a better country than its neighbours by the civility of the population.

David *I think I have quite a strong sense of Britishness. I would say it's more character traits like order and civility than any kind of patriotism.*

David considers that it is the social behaviour of the people that underpins his identification with Britain.

David *I like a good queue and I like queueing. I mean that I like order and structure and respect for other people. In the queue you have no more rights to something than anyone else. Your priority is determined by what time you turn up.*

The nationalism that James and Nigel also display differs from Oscar, in that they compare Britain to other larger nations and cite the strength of Britain's voice in the world as the basis for their belief in British superiority. David's comment also implies criticism of other nations in regards queueing as a motif for British social civility being contrasted with the aggressive culture of 'survival of the fittest' which is a stereotype of what is the British view of some non-Britons.

6.2.3 Patriotism without Nationalism

Gerry *I feel proud to be British and I do love this country. I feel patriotic and distinguish between patriotism and nationalism. For me, patriotism is love of your country, love of your nation if you will, as well. And that's distinct from nationalism which itself is different. You have far-right nationalism which is the nationalism I would use to describe the occupation and British Colonialism, perhaps, Cecil Rhodes. And then there's civic nationalism which says there are certain values that a society needs to have in common for it to have in order to function and we should respect those values.*

Gerry identifies his love for the British nation as being due to the civil society, the mass of the British people, and not for any notion of inherent superiority of a ruling colonial class. The anti-colonialism that Gerry espouses has the discourse that indigenous peoples should not be subject to invasion by superior forces this being separate from civic nationalism, a universal standard of societal values, which he supports. If he had been aware of Nigel's references to the British Empire he would have disagreed with that line of argument for support of Britain. His distinction between patriotism and nationalism echoes the views of George Orwell (6.2 page 180). The occupation to which he refers is an allusion to his opinion that the Jordanian West Bank is being 'occupied' by Israel¹³⁸ and he is using Cecil Rhodes¹³⁹ as a paradigm of British imperialism and exploitation.

Joel *I think of it as my home a lot. However, some of what it's done in the past and kind of right now with Iran, seizing its tanker, seizing Iran's oil tanker¹⁴⁰ and that stuff, and how it's escalated. I think it could have been done a lot better without leading to war. But me, I don't have many opinions on Britain.*

Joel expresses an internal dichotomy. At a personal level he is comfortable in his British home, but that comfort doesn't require him to give unconditional political approval of the government's actions. He voiced legitimate democratic opposition to the way a particular incident was managed by Britain. He reserves the right to question and criticise government action, in this case the seizure of a Syria bound Iranian oil tanker, regardless of whether such action had been compatible with international law.¹⁴¹ This is a non-military stance that prefers negotiation and opposes violence. National identity is not uppermost in his mind, 'I don't

¹³⁸ Israel disputes this characterisation claiming that the West Bank was part of Biblical Israel and territory intended to be assigned after WWI by the Sykes-Picot accord of 1916 but seized by Jordan when Britain gave up the mandate in 1948. Jordanian sovereignty over the West Bank was never claimed or recognised.

¹³⁹ Cecil John Rhodes' activity was only in southern Africa but the sentiment is applied generally to a perception that indigenous peoples were oppressed and exploited by colonial subjugation.

¹⁴⁰ On 4th July 2019 British Marines seized an Iranian oil tanker (which was suspected of being bound for Syria) in Gibraltar.

¹⁴¹ Syria was subject to United Nations sanctions for actions against civilians.

have many opinions on Britain,' but he reserves the right to question and criticise government policy without being accused of being unpatriotic and this stance is compatible with civil liberty in a democracy.

Charlie *I guess there's a sense that I do (feel patriotic). You know, it's my home. I don't want to leave England. I like it and I guess there is a sense of that, you know, it's where I've been brought up. There's no guarantee that I'll always live in Britain, but I will still be British if I leave Britain.*

Charlie is acknowledging the possibility that he might move from Britain for work or some other reason however, he would still think of himself as British. Considering working abroad does indicate an internationalist mind-set but proposes the essence of Britain is so ingrained that he will always consider himself, and be considered by others, as British. By virtue of liking his home and not having any desire to live elsewhere Charlie is interpreting those feelings as patriotism.

Charlie *It's where I've been brought up. But I don't feel any sense of love for the leaders of the country.*

AN *The leadership (of this country) you talked about, political?*

Charlie *Political leadership. I mean, my mum and family are big fans of the monarchy. They like it, we've had like, royal wedding parties. I don't see a problem with that, but I don't feel any sense of erm, love for them.*

AN *For the monarchy?*

Charlie *For the monarchy.*

Not supporting the political leaders of the country is not remarkable but respect and affection for the royal family has been a lynchpin of British identity and the queen is a very important cultural icon (Moncrieffe & Moncrieffe, 2019) and the focus group mentioned, "Liking the Queen" as important for British identity. Charlie had reservations regarding the political and civil leadership of Britain. As with Joel, not agreeing with political actions is acceptable in a democracy but Charlie takes matters further by his singling out the monarchy as not worthy of his love and respect. Charlie's opinion does chime with a substantial minority in Britain¹⁴² and raises the issue of inherited entitlement to positions of influence and leadership. Whilst all nations need some form of administrative structure to function, having an elite imposed by ancestry and not by will of the people is not the norm for a liberal democracy. Charlie's

¹⁴² The popularity of the monarchy has fluctuated quite widely (Park, Clery, Curtice, Phillips, & Utting, 2014). In 1983 65% of the population said that the monarchy was especially important and that had shrunk to 27% in 2006. There has been a recovery to 45% in 2013.

admission is not outright hostility to the monarchy but rather indifference despite his family's enthusiasm.

Gerry, Joel, and Charlie make the distinction between love and support for Britain as an ideal without denigrating the rest of the world. Gerry is the most enthusiastic but for Joel and Charlie their support is tempered with a background of non-nationalistic ethical behaviour that should be common to all liberal nations.

6.2.4 Passive acceptance

Otis *How British do I feel? I was born here, my dad was born here, both my parents were born here. My grandparents, one of them wasn't born here. It's, I'm British, it's not even a question.*

Because he and his parents were born here it would not occur to him that he would have any other nationality. It is so natural to him that he doesn't even think about it and his identity formation is passive. This passivity has not obliterated patriotism because in connection with the Falkland Islands conflict, he stated: -

Otis *Something that people didn't think that the British Government had the guts to go to war for a few people, a thousand people, if that. Patriotism still up because they realised that Britain was there to protect them.*

Otis relating a relatively small military action that occurred 20 years before he was born is of note. He regarded the invasion of the Islands as giving moral justification for military action and the British public support for that action was generally unexpected by the rest of the world. His language, "having the guts to go to war," denotes approval of the resolve that was shown in that decision in the face of doubts of the rest of the international community. Whilst his passive acceptance of his British identity denotes a less nationalistic stance this altered when Britain was challenged.

Alan *I think just being born here is enough to say that you're British. I'm very much more British than Jewish.*

Alan has considered that his place of birth is all the justification needed for his British identity and that is stronger than his Jewish identity. His somewhat legalistic characterisation is a passive statement of fact. He does feel patriotic in that he wishes to share national achievement in any situation:

Alan *If a British actor or actress won an Oscar. Then maybe, I would be like, yea you know, Britain, we've done well, England. But on a day-to-day basis, that doesn't happen. So, for the most part, no, But sometimes, yes. When the country comes together, like during yesterday, Cricket World Cup. That's when I back the country, today, not so much.*

Celebrating one's country's non-military achievements as a form of patriotism has a history and has been cited as far back as the early 20th century (Everett, 1910) and the focus group commented: "Supporting Team GB at the Olympics." This patriotism is intermittent and conditional only being roused on occasions of national success and there are similarities with Otis.

Terry *They form your identity just through, I guess, through living in those locations, different cultures there, different feelings there. And that goes beyond just the immediate academic experience.*

For Terry, his surroundings whether it was his home in London or the provincial university he attended made his identity. His identity was plastic, or chameleon being influenced by the majority culture of wherever he happened to be. As noted at the beginning of this chapter Terry had remarked on the contrast he found between his Jewish London home and non-Jewish homes both at university and the year he was abroad as part of his course led him to adjust his identity according to his locale.

Andy *I'll go wherever I'm born.*

Andy passively accepts that the accident of place of birth fashions whatever national identity he may have. He is projecting into the future based on something from the past. Andy is growing up and being educated in a very orthodox Jewish community. It is not Hasidic but is on the extreme edge of mainstream orthodox Judaism with minimal engagement with non-Jewish society. He was one of the youngest interviewees and the simplistic nature of his opinion reflects his environment. However, he accepts the notion of having a national identity which Simon rejects (6.2.5 page 188).

The group discussion started with passive acceptance of identity from location of birth: -

Boy 1 *Being born in Britain is the starting point.*

Boy 2 *And being involved in British culture.*

Boy 3 *Associating yourself within the boundaries of British borders.*

The intersection between loyalty to Britain and that to Jew/Israel gets addressed in the question of, "Who do you support if England was playing Israel at football?" This is a very common discussion point amongst Jews and seeks to address the unspoken accusation that Jews have divided loyalties and are thus not properly 'British.' The group defused the accusation when it came up in the group meeting by claiming that it was outdated and redundant: -

Boy 4 *"We're always being asked this question,"*

and the group responded that,

Group *“Of course, England. Because England’s going to win.”*

Andy addressed the possible conflict of loyalty between England and Israel on the football field by justifying his support for England as football was a trivial matter in comparison with his Jewish identity: -

Andy *it’s not something meaningful to Judaism.*

6.2.5 Rejection

Simon *Primarily we are Jewish people, and it happens to be that we live in this country. It would be the same thing if we lived in France, or America or Argentina. We must try and support this nation in any way we can, but it merely is a check point.*

AN *What do you mean by that?*

Simon *I just kind of meant it in, I think, as a virtual journey such that our place in this world is, truth be told, it’s something which is important but it’s not something essential. It’s a journey towards something which is greater after we pass away. There’s something greater awaiting us. Where we are now is not hugely important and I know I feel where we are, much as I have gratitude towards the British Empire, it is just a place where we happened to end up.*

His script seems to be, “I am a Jew and although I am grateful for what this country has done for me and my family and I have a duty to support it I have no deep affinity to Britain.” For Simon, where he lives is not important. He willing to be a law-abiding member of British society and to contribute towards its welfare. His proximity suggests a moral relationship while his remoteness permits a solely contractual one and his true loyalty is elsewhere. He is physically here but spiritually remote (Bauman, 1990). National identity is irrelevant for Simon and he appears to be referencing a Mishna “The world is like an antechamber before the world to come.”¹⁴³ His mention of the British Empire could be symbolic of the secular earthly power of nationalism that he is rejecting in favour of a divinely heavenly power in the afterlife. As mentioned in 4.10.3 page 124, his mother died whilst he was still at his first school so the concept of death was something that he had already closely encountered. Simon is exceptional in that he denied any affinity to Britain and that absence of nationalism would be the same wherever he happened to have been born.

6.2.6 Confused

Rob *I don’t know what nationality I would be. I was born in England and I was adopted. My birth family, my mum’s family are from Kazakhstan, but they were Jewish, but they couldn’t prove it. So, when I was adopted, I converted.*

¹⁴³ Rabbi Jacob – Ethics of the Fathers 4.21

My father's family were Jewish from Belarus. I grew up in a Hasidic community. I used to be very orthodox.

Rob has left his Hasidic community. He was born in England and adopted in England but moved to New York aged five. "We came back to England. I was 13 years old." His birth mother's family were from Almaty, Kazakhstan and his father's family were from Minsk, Belarus. Rob's adoptive father was a Dayan (a judge in the Jewish religious court) and the family moved several times between New York and Toronto when required for work. The family lived amongst their Hasidic sect wherever they happened to be living at the time. In the Hasidic community, the country in which they live is not important, there is no nationalism. They live in the enclave of the community and for a child, there is no difference in schooling whether they are in London, New York, or Toronto.

Rob *When it comes to Englishness, Britishness, I really, you know. When I'm in America, Americans say I sound English. When I'm here, English people say I sound American. So I don't really have a happy medium. So I don't know what nationality I would be. I thought about going to Kazakhstan but I doubt that would be a good idea [laugh].*

AN *Going back and forth internationally, this might sound a banal question, what passport did you use?*

Rob *I used an English passport and then I got a Canadian one. I lived there long enough. My parents were neutralised [naturalised] and that was fantastic and I'm thinking of going to live in Vancouver.*

For Rob, the notion of nationality does not exist, and he is an exceptional case. Although born in Britain, having non-British birth parents and having been adopted into a Haredi community has left him with no innate sense of national identity. International travel passports are an important symbol of national identity and having more than one dilutes nationality.¹⁴⁴ Personal circumstance caused Rob to leave the Hasidic community although he still has contact with his adoptive parents.

6.2.7 Comment

For younger people, national identity is not something that overly concerns them, and generally they do not think about or question their British identity. However, if Britain is involved in some form of international competition then a spirit of national identity becomes more apparent as described by Alan and Otis. By volunteering to join the armed forces there is tacit acceptance of the possibility that the country will call upon individuals to serve the

¹⁴⁴ In the context of Nazi persecution having more than one passport could allow escape from occupied Europe. Lori Palatnik, "A Jew can never have too many passports." Video blog for Aish Hatorah April 2013

country and expose themselves to danger. Mark and Hugh want to make their careers in the military, and they have a stronger expression of patriotism¹⁴⁵ than the rest of the group.

In this small series of interviewees there appears to be an inverse relationship between strength of national identity and religiosity with Mark and Simon being at opposite edges of opinion as shown in the chapter on Jewishness. Simon's religiosity overcame any inclination to regard Britain as anything other than a place of convenience waiting and preparing for an afterlife. An ethos of strong national religion may be a unifying element for a country and has been the cause of some historic wars between states but religion has also been known to split a country as occurred when India was partitioned between Hindus and Muslims.

6.3 British Values

As stated earlier (2.5 page 63) education can be viewed as a political instrument that is used to advance, support and/or reinforce a national British perspective/identity as can be seen through for example, implementation of the national and citizenship curricula (Ajegbo et al., 2007) but Uvanny Maylor highlighted the difficulties in teaching British values (Maylor, 2016). It is the problems of teaching British values in a school with a diverse ethnic population that concerns Maylor.

For those interviewees who had a definite idea of what British values were and whether they were being adhered to, tolerance was the most frequently mentioned but rule of law, fairness and courtesy were also cited. Being tolerant of different peoples and ideas and allowing debate is inherent in the values mention by the DfE. The belief here is that in a society comprising many different viewpoints there needs to be a consensus of what is acceptable behaviour underpinned by rule of law. Once that consensus is universally accepted then the different groups can tolerate each other and co-exist. There has been a long tradition in Britain that respect for individual liberty combined with responsibility to society that has been taken up by liberal democracies worldwide. Liberalism was a common theme among the interviewees: -

Terry *This is the UK. It's a changing society. It's a quite liberal society.*

Gerry gave a rather more detailed response: -

AN *What are British values?*

¹⁴⁵ Amongst serving members of HM Armed Forces there is a sense of internationalism and wishing to maintain international rule of law; patriotism without nationalism. Major Adam Shindler, Personal communication.

Gerry *Great question. I think, and the problem is when you start to think what British values are, it is difficult to distinguish between British values and like, standard liberal values. But I would say, rule of law is a British value, respect for rule of law. It's not enough to have rule of law. It's the respect for rule of law as well. I think that is a British value. I think tolerance is a British value but beyond that, courtesy is I think a uniquely British value, I think. The respect for one another and that's a British value and I don't. It's not a question I've thought about loads, but we were the nation of the enlightenment, or one of them, And there's the values promoted by John Stuart Mill¹⁴⁶ and John Rawls¹⁴⁷ later in the last century are values that pervade British society, erm. So, freedom is another one I think. And, you know, I'd say those are British values.*

Gerry proposes that British values had been influenced by the enlightenment and cited the liberal thinkers John Stuart Mill and Jon Rawls. However despite the efforts of the DfE not all the interviewees accepted that the values mentioned were inherent in British society:

Charlie *I think Ofsted would have you believe that British values are, respecting others, and giving everyone an equal say and no racism. I think that's an idealised version of what British values are.*

Charlie's citing of Ofsted indicates that he was aware of the political initiative to promote British values in school. He accepts that there are certain values that should apply but doubts that they are and suggests that there is a certain amount of wishful thinking on the part of Ofsted. The original understanding, that Britain had obvious discernible values, was questioned:

Nigel *Because I know Jewish values, but I've never actually been taught British values and what they are. I've no idea what British values are.*

As mentioned above in 6.2.2 page 183, Nigel was a year-11 pupil at a non-Jewish prestigious private all-boys school. Within the school his religion meant that he was a minority 'other' and being aware of his Jewishness had incorporated Jewish values into his sense of self. But also within the school he regarded himself as white British and therefore was part of the majority with pupils of non-white, non-British being the minority 'other'. The British icons and symbols were part of his every day existence and the ethos of the school regarding discipline and general behaviour coincided with the qualities that the DfE mentioned. He had to be taught what Jewish values were because those were not so deeply embedded in his sense of

¹⁴⁶ John Stuart Mill (1806-1873): a 19th century English philosopher who believed in liberty and freedom of the individual in opposition to unlimited state and social control.

¹⁴⁷ John Rawls (1921-2002): a 20th century American philosopher who believed in justice as fairness to produce a society of free citizens holding equal basic rights in an egalitarian economic society.

self and although he had not had formal instruction regarding what British values were they were nevertheless inherent in his social and cultural makeup.

The discussion group raised the fact that there were some negative aspects to Britain: -

Group *The bad things that come to mind – Tommy Robinson.*¹⁴⁸

This comment raises the issue of excess patriotism by demonising other peoples. Robinson founded the English Defence League suggesting that it was Englishness that was threatened by immigration especially from non-white Middle Eastern and Asian countries and he was not concerned with the rest of the UK. His focus was on Islam and, under the impression that Islam and Judaism were enemies his script was probably “My enemy’s enemy is my friend.” He sought to enlist Jews to his cause and even had a Jewish division. If this was an attempt to exploit fear and/or bigotry in Jews it failed with this particular group of young Jews as they saw him as the worst of Britain.

6.3.1 Tolerance

AN *What do you understand by the term British values?*

Oscar *Well, maybe just the idea of accepting all races and religions and, erm, well democracy, yea.*

In spite of the rather unsophisticated manner in which Oscar characterised British values he has pinpointed the fundamental principles claimed. Whilst concepts of race and ethnicity are contested terms Oscar suggests that it should be possible for anybody to come to Britain and not be barred on account of their origin or spiritual belief (or lack of belief). While tolerance of religion is necessary in plural liberal democracies, emphasising religion contributes to a reification that religion is the determining identity criteria of concern which may have the unintended consequence of polarising interests and communities (Bowie, 2017).

6.3.2 Sexuality and Gender

LGBTQ rights are regarded by some of the participants as something of a touchstone regarding general tolerance of diversity. Otis charts his change of opinion on homosexuality:

Otis *As scientific research continues, being gay is not so much a choice it’s more it’s part of him, and people should just accept him. That it shouldn’t even be the question. I think a lot of people are torn between their Jewish values and the values of society now. I used to believe that gays were like, “They’re just disgusting people. They’re doing it out of choice, They can choose to be...they don’t.” Like all that kind of stereotypes but when you think, I have a friend and*

¹⁴⁸ Stephen Christopher Yaxley-Lennon, better known as Tommy Robinson, is a British far-right and anti-Islam activist. He is the co-founder and former leader of the English Defence League.

he's gay and he said like, "It's not his choice." Why would anyone judge him because he's gay?

He realises that society values and Jewish values are differing, and he charts his progress from thinking that homosexuality was a lifestyle choice acceptance of his friend's orientation.

Otis *Jacob Rees-Mogg spoke about abortion and gay rights and homophobia.*

AN *So how do you feel about that?*

Otis *I haven't really thought about it. I suppose they should not be different from anybody else.*

This comment denotes a major change in the last 20 years, where a politician who has deliberately cultivated an arch-conservative image, espouses very liberal views denoting that the political establishment has changed.

Gerry *I'm very pro same-sex marriage. I think that's a fantastic step forward for LGBT people but also, a fantastic step forward for the rest of society as well. If you foster the conditions in which people are in general can become more tolerant and forgiving, and less discriminatory then I don't see why that wouldn't apply across disadvantaged groups and minority groups.*

Gerry argues that in the relationship between politics and culture there has been mutual reinforcement, culture influences political opinion and politics influences culture. The homosexual culture influenced political opinion to legislate for equal marriage and that legislation fed back to society generally. By being accepting of this liberality he argues that society has become more tolerant of other aspects of diversity.

Joel *I think it's good that there are the fact families are changing and that same-sex couples and marriages become universally accepted. I think sometimes there is a bit of a way to go with feminism and sexism and also, cultural diversity as well in many places.*

Joel suggests society as kinder and more open to diversity and individuality, but although nominally tolerant, prejudice has not completely eliminated.

Joel *I think there's a lot to be done about equality in the workplace and stuff. Because there is, one, a (sex) pay gap and two, just how many people are saying they're abused or raped and stuff like that in the workplace and are too frightened to speak up.*

Joel is aware of how much disadvantage and abuse is suffered by women at work.

Joel *I think there's so many jobs which are kind of dominated by a certain race. Like, so with teaching I would say there aren't, there aren't sometimes so many black or other racial minorities in teaching. However, that is getting better.*

He is also citing discrimination against black and Asian minority people in teaching as evidence that, in his words, “a bit of a way to go” before Britain eliminates disparity in society.

Hugh spoke about a fellow student at the college:

Hugh *At first, we thought he wasn't gay cos, he seems very straight, you know what I mean? He's not your stereotyped modern gay, bright colours, and all that. He dresses, I would say, normally, a normal person. And he's not very, not touchy-feely. He's very, 'to himself' and keeps all his 'gayness' to himself. But only after people had been talking to him for a while we got to actually know, 'He's gay,' it's stuck. And our perception of him completely changed. At first you would sit in his room and just chat, and then about girls and stuff. And when we found out, he'd not make jokes. Unless you were talking about some girl, he wouldn't listen to this. But we never thought him any different. Not, not allowing him into our conversations, or going out with us. But you were always conscious about it. About that he was gay.*

Hugh was surprised to discover that someone who ‘dresses like a normal person’ and is not very ‘touchy-feely’ could be gay and this challenged his preconception of homosexuality. He suggests that this person was suppressing his sexuality so that he could pass as ‘very straight’ in the male-dominated normative heterosexual environment of the college. The acceptance of his orientation that this student found among his peers indicates that tolerance had penetrated this environment. Once this person’s orientation was known he wasn’t ostracised or treated any differently by Hugh or the rest of the group.

Following changing attitudes to homosexuality, the phenomenon of gender fluidity, particularly transgender, has emerged and is being discussed in schools both formally in class and informally among friends.

AN *Has the subject of changing gender, changing sex been mentioned at all?*

Joel *I sometimes discuss this with my friends and stuff. Just meeting generally.*

AN *What's the general view?*

Joel *So, some people, some of my friends don't think that trans gender should be a thing. I strongly disagree, there's a debate about that.*

AN *So, he thinks what?*

Joel *That transgender shouldn't be a thing. That people should stick to their assigned gender.*

AN *And you take the view that?*

Joel *If they truly believe that they are either male or female,*

AN *If they've been born in the wrong body?*

Joel *Yes. If they truly believe that then we shouldn't stop them. And say, "No, you can't change." I think that if they wish to and are willing to go through the surgery then I think why should we stop them? It's their choice.*

Joel's peer group is discussing transgender and he expresses strong views in favour of individual choice. Gender fluidity is not uniformly accepted by Joel's contemporaries.

James *I just think it's your choice. Whatever you want to do or be or feel you should be. It's your choice because if you want to change genders and if you have the money for it talk to the family about it. Even if they're negative about it and you have the money do what feels right. If you are like you are and you want to change but not allowed to change how will you ever feel happy in your life?.*

James fully supports the option of life choice and introducing the element of money suggests the decision is reduced to the level of cosmetic surgery. If someone is not content with the size/shape of their nose or breasts and it is causing distress, then surgery is justified to relieve that distress. Similarly, with their gender, if their sexed body is causing distress then it can be changed, and the only question then would be whether it is a charge on the Health Service or paid for by the individual.

Joel agrees with James, that it is a matter of choice, but couches the question as a matter of abstract debate with his friends rather than the practical approach taken by James.

Otis *I think genders are becoming so like a non-thing. Gender is different to sex 'If you are born a certain sex but feel a different gender.' I don't know if I believe in that.*

If for some people gender is not fixed by biology and is to be separated from sex which is located in biology, then gender becomes fluid and, in Otis' words, a non-thing. This would also be challenging for traditional thinking about sex/gender regardless of religion.

David *I also find it difficult in the sense that so much of Judaism is gendered. You know, you have male and female from birth and these signifying things create a man and a woman, to demarcate man and woman. It definitely does not sit easily with reality you know. You know you have transgender people. I'm not quite sure what I think of that in terms of phenomenon.*

David is an orthodox Jew, and his religious practice has constructed his masculinity. Accepting transgender would be difficult for him as it would undermine his own construction.

Charlie *I think everyone should be able to choose whatever they want to be and it's not society's job to decide what gender they are.*

Charlie suggests that individual choice is paramount, and the state/society should have no bar on that. Nigel and Oscar are generally supportive but have practical reservations:

Nigel *And the more people do it, likely other people will start thinking that they don't belong in this body. Maybe I'll try a different gender. I don't know. However, I fully support people who do. However, there's the problem of some men doing it to get into women's changing rooms and stuff like that.*

Oscar *Then I guess if you feel that way but sometimes there's the thing about, for example men who believe they're born as women and then being in woman's sports. I think there's been things about men who believe they're women in men's bodies going into women's prisons and controversies over that.*

They are ready to accept the principle of transgender but raises two problems; firstly transwomen may have an unfair advantage in sports having had the benefit of male physique and strength whilst growing up and secondly of safeguarding women's spaces from possible intrusion by imposters.

Terry shifts the focus on to how the individual with gender fluidity is treated: -

Terry *Some people who will identify in a non-binary manner and then there'll be people who identify as a boy, but I was told formally was a girl. I think in both cases again it's obviously conceded that these people have been oppressed in the past by structures in society and now they need to be treated with dignity and they have to experience equality just like the rest of us.*

6.3.3 Societal Function

Liberal societies are founded on the premise that organised societies need laws to function which are enacted by a legislature, and for them to be respected the populace has to have ownership of the process that produced the legislature this being done by democratic elections. In addition to the formalised legal code there are unwritten conventions of what each society deems correct behaviour, and the participants identified a number of patterns that they attributed to their sense of Britishness.

6.3.3.1 Rule of Law and Courtesy

Gerry had mentioned respect for the rule of law (6.3 page 191) which emphasised the requirement that it was not enough for there to be law but that any legislation had to be manifestly fair to be accepted by the public. This is a warning to any government to refrain from trying to pass any unenforceable law.

Mark's sense of rule of law is related to his disapproval of Extinction Rebellion (6.2.1 page 181). He became quite angry:

Mark *The modern children who stupidly go and do rallies about things that don't matter.*

AN *Such as?*

Mark *Climate change marches. Climate change matters. However what they're doing is stupid and the Extinction protesters, just stupid. Stopping people from getting trains which is a green form of transport. Some of it, green compared to most forms of transport. From getting to work which isn't affecting the pollution. Just affecting people who will then lose their jobs and not be able to make money.*

He regards the rallies and marches negatively because they interfere with the ability of people to go to work to earn a living. He accepted that climate change was an issue of concern but strongly objected to the actions of the protesters which interfered with the good order of society especially as the target of the protest was a form of transport that didn't adversely affect the atmosphere. He could argue that in a liberal democracy the protestors have lawful methods to make their case without disruption and inconvenience to the general public.

Good manners and consideration for others appears in many religions and cultures. In Judaism there are general conventions on respect due to the elderly and to scholars¹⁴⁹ and specific conventions between individuals. These latter may be attributed to Rabbi Hillel: "What is hateful to you don't do to others."¹⁵⁰

AN *What expectations do you have of yourself?*

Joel *Of myself? Umm, to not really try and hurt people. To try not to, to try not to make them feel bad or something like that.*

Joel proposes not to cause someone shame or embarrassment by something he says or does.

Otis commented on the difference in culture between America and Britain.

Otis *An American flag in every room. Every day the raise the flag and say – swear allegiance to the flag but – I -don't.*

AN *You don't feel that way about Britain?*

Otis *I couldn't see it happening because that – Because people wouldn't take it seriously. You don't need to prove to yourself by saying it every morning that I'll swear allegiance to my flag. Because a lot of people here don't feel – like we have – we don't like. In this culture we don't like forcing things on people. We don't like forcing our country. Everyone is very careful about not (offending).*

Otis made this comment about British people generally when describing his experience in discussing how American school children swearing allegiance to the flag would not work in Britain:

¹⁴⁹ Code of Jewish Law Chapters 143 and 144

¹⁵⁰ Talmud Bavli Shabbat 31a

Otis *America is a very different culture, they're very pro themselves. They think they are the centre of the world and everybody else is like under them. It's a very egotistical view of themselves.*

He suggests that children in Britain would not take it seriously and that such a ceremony is unnecessary.

6.3.5 Society – Health

"Mens sana in corpore sano" is a Latin phrase, usually translated as *"a healthy mind in a healthy body"*. The phrase is widely used in sporting and educational contexts to express the theory that physical exercise is an important or essential part of mental and psychological well-being. Attitudes towards health issues, especially mental health have changed, and society is more concerned and tolerant of psychological ill-health:

Terry *And the mental health aspect is very important and luckily that's also good. I think that's changing in British society as well because we have become more conscious of men's, young men's, mental health.*

Terry is concerned about the pressures that young men are facing in society and awareness of mental health was the subject of a British Social Attitudes survey (Dean & Phillips, 2015). That study showed that most people have positive attitudes towards improving their own mental wellbeing but it also revealed perceptions of prejudice against people with mental health problems (less likely to be promoted at work).

David was ambivalent about being open with emotions:

David *I'm quite stoic in certain ways and I don't know if that's a good or bad thing. I used to think that was very good and to be able to show that you weren't too affected by things was a level of authenticity. But now I'm not convinced. Everything has become so much more emotional and everyone has become so much more introspective about everything. I don't know if it has gone too far. I don't know if you are on Twitter but everyone is always talking about how something makes them feel and it makes everything so melodramatic. To me, it still seems so insincere. Often someone goes "it makes me cry" or something and I don't know whether it did or didn't, but the tone of the discourse – when you focus on how people are feeling inside lacks something important.*

He claims that he had an earlier attitude that it was better not to show emotion but he was changing his mind. What hindered that change was the impression that when emotion was expressed via social media it was a charade and not authentic.

James restricted his comments to adverse lifestyle choices:

James *We're more strict on stuff like smoking and alcohol and stuff.*

James suggests that Britain cares more about the welfare of the population than other countries.

6.3.6 Comment

The relationship the interviewees had with the 'British Values' espoused by the DoE refines their notion of their British identity so whilst the country's leaders were regarded with a certain amount of scepticism (Joel and Charlie) this is entirely compatible with an open democracy and holding leaders to account. The conduct of the population was generally valued in that rule of law and respect for the law was noted as was consideration for others (Joel) and general courtesy (David). The civility of society led to the perception that Britain is a calm and law-abiding place:

Rob *If I've been away, I feel so calm when I come back to Heathrow.*

and a country in which it was pleasant to live. Charlie's antipathy towards the monarchy is in contrast to the view expressed in a focus group conducted at a Jewish school where 'liking the queen and supporting the monarchy' was regarded as one of the pillars of Britishness.¹⁵¹

Tolerance is generally defined as a social virtue and a political principle that allows for the peaceful coexistence of individuals and groups that hold different views and practise different ways of life within the same society (Pasamonik, 2004). Barbara Pasamonik highlighted the limits of tolerance in that society can be tolerant of some opinions and behaviours but intolerant of others. If a belief is held because it is considered a revealed truth, whether that belief is religious, political or scientific, then it becomes a dogma and the holder of that belief is likely to be offended by someone who treats those beliefs as ordinary views.

Homosexuality and gender transition were the issues discussed and condemnation was confined to just Simon, who least identifies with Britain. Even he accepted that same-sex attraction was part of the human condition¹⁵² and the Chief Rabbi has promoted tolerance and understanding of LGBTQ issues. However, Mark's opposition to the rainbow poppy could be considered homophobic.

A striking feature of the government's rhetoric on British values was the assertion that it must be involved in actively promoting equal rights based on sexuality. This was a marked break from the 1988 legislation¹⁵³ which specified that local authorities must not intentionally

¹⁵¹ Regard for the royal family as distinct to the concept of monarchy has fluctuated with bad news concerning the royal family contributing to the dip in 2006 before partial recovery.

¹⁵² Simon and Mark are at opposite ends of the religious spectrum, but they agree in this point.

¹⁵³ Local Government Act 1988 Section 28. It was repealed in 2003 in England and Wales (2000 in Scotland)

promote homosexuality (Vanderbeck & Johnson, 2016). Tolerance of diverse views on personal matters of gender and sexuality is widespread among the liberal democracies and is not the sole preserve of British values and therefore could not be a marker for nationalism. There are political parties, notably in the Balkan States, which are nationalist, and they tend to be associated with intolerance to LGBTQ issues.

6.4. Society – Religion

The relationship of the interviewees with Judaism is the subject of a different chapter of this thesis but there is a general point in relation to Britishness and British society.

David *One of the things I like about religion is the communal goal and people aren't just seen as commodities.*

David suggests that religion has the power to enhance societal cohesion and as Joel said: "Britain is a Christian country," in that the mass of people notionally subscribe to Christianity by being aware of Christmas and Easter without the religious connotations of the festivals. Being a Christian was once important in the formation of British identity but has been in decline. In the British Attitude Survey 'National Identity: Exploring Britishness' there was a 32% to 24 % decline from 1995 to 2013 of the proportion of respondents who said that 'Being a Christian' was either a fairly important or very important attribute of being truly British (Kiss & Park, 2014).

Otis thought that religion was less important in Britain:

Otis *The country is less religious, especially in the Christian community. Not so many people are thinking about religion in their daily life. More and more people, they like the traditions but they're not getting into the idea of God.*

However, Christianity in the form of Anglican Protestantism is still part of the British Establishment with the sovereign as head of the Church of England and bishops sitting in the House of Lords.

Alan, whilst talking about his friendships with girls, noted that religion was not a matter of concern for non-Jewish girls and this was a contrast with Jewish girls:

Alan *Err - I don't think non-Jewish girls - I don't think they care if you're Jewish or non-Jewish - I really don't. At least that's the impression I've got anyway. Whereas Jewish girls do seem to care more - you know - of the creed. They seem to care more if you're Jewish - Yea – yea.*

Alan suggests that it was only Jewish girls who were conscious of religion whereas non-Jews, and by extension the non-Jewish world, religion was unimportant and not a vital part of their identity.

When Terry left London to go to university his new non-Jewish friends had never met a Jew before:

Terry *They might expect you to celebrate Christmas or ask you, "Where you're going for Easter?" "No. I'm Jewish, of course I wouldn't do that." but they didn't necessarily understand that.*

Although his friends were not practising religious Christians, they had expected Terry to reference time by the Christian calendar.

The British Social Attitudes Survey on religion noted a decline in proportion of the population of the population who identify as Christian, and this has been attributed to the passing of an older generation who practised normative Christianity and increased multiculturalism and a decline in religious belief in the younger generation.¹⁵⁴

6.4.1 Comment

As noted in 5.6.1 page 145, those of the general non-Jewish population who professed to believe in God have in mind a rather distant divinity, one who exists but that does not seem to influence the thoughts and actions of individuals. The British Social Attitudes survey reported that two thirds of people in Britain never attend religious services, apart from special occasions such as weddings, funerals and baptisms (Voas & Bruce, 2019). Religion in general is not held in high regard as the same survey reported almost two-thirds (63%) believe religions bring more conflict than peace. The same survey reported that among those who declare a religious affiliation there was higher weekly attendance at religious services by non-Christians than Christians which would suggest that members of minority religions are more aware of their religious identity than members of the majority religion. This finding parallels my analysis of the comment by Nigel (page 191/192) that he knew what Jewish values were because being Jewish was a minority position but not British values when he was in a majority position. The participants views on how the population at large are apathetic about religion appears to be justified by this survey.

¹⁵⁴ "Most people show little enthusiasm for institutionalised religion, although there is evidence that the public are, in general, prepared to be tolerant of the faith of others" (Voas & Bruce, 2019).

6.5. Society – University

There is research evidence that Jews are over-represented in the professions and have higher levels of academic achievement than the population at large (S. H. Miller, 2018). To attain this, more Jewish youth stay in education beyond age 17 than the general population and the majority of interviewees expect to go, are at or have been to university. This is a pivotal transition in the life of a young person and for Jews, they are leaving the security of the parental home in which they grew up, and entering the simultaneously daunting and exciting new world away at university (D. Graham & Boyd, 2011). I mentioned Terry's comment on the contrast between his London home and his experience of meeting non-Londoners for the first time in the introduction to this chapter and I am repeating it here to emphasise the contrast in attitudes that he met:

Terry *Jewish people who think about this when they leave London, a whole lot of friends of mine they very much see what they regard as the 'real' England, the real UK for the first time, and it struck me, I mean, it's quite different.*

Part of this new world involves meeting types of people and attitudes that they might not have encountered before.

6.5.1 University - Social culture

Gerry had very positive experience and relished his independence. Leaving their home can be an opportunity for young people to broaden horizons, meet different people and develop their character but some choose not to. Simon chose to isolate himself from university social life.

Gerry *I feel blessed because some people go, most people go, to university and they love it. Most people, they enjoy university. A lot of people, they tolerate the work, they tolerate the course, and they love the social side. I loved and really missed my course. I did Philosophy as well. It never really felt like work. I loved it. I loved the independence that I got that I'd never had before.*

Simon *I'm not an ambassador for the university. I don't spend that much time there, so I don't feel qualified to comment on kind of life for a Jewish person at university. Contact with the other students was primarily on an academic basis. In the Jewish Society, I made some friends, not too many to be honest.*

Simon lived at home during his university course. He did not engage with the wider student experience or even with co-religionists and the language with which he described his relationship with other students as: "Very civil, very cordial – they're very nice," indicates an aloofness on his part.

6.5.2 University - Class

Evidence of a class divide is still found:

Alan *A lot of wealthied old-money types if I can say that. You get your signet rings, your loafers, and your double-barrelled surnames and your horses and cottages in Dorset.*

Terry *I met some very, quite posh people. I was never interested in horse racing, going to Ascot. Some people start going to Ascot horse racing which I thought I'd never be interested in that or taking up something like shooting. There's a lot of gentrification I guess in a lot of these universities now.*

There is a Jewish dimension in that 'old-money' and 'double-barrelled surnames' are class markers inaccessible to even wealthy minority ethnic people. Alan and Terry both found that there was a stratum of British society to which they could not relate in spite of both having had private education and attendance at different Russell Group¹⁵⁵ universities. They were experiencing 'outsider status' for the first time. Going to Ascot requires considerable financial outlay. Shooting is an even more financially challenging pastime requiring expensive equipment, clothing, and access to facilities. Universities vary in prestige and the class distribution in them is not uniform. Many undergraduates would not have the resources to engage in either of these pursuits and for these topics to be mentioned in student circles raises the issues of social class and snobbery (Morgan, 2019 Page 193-213; Savage et al., 2015).

6.5.3 Comment

All the participants of this study have a connection to the North-West London Jewish milieu with limited exposure to people from the rest of the country who have diverse social perspectives such as the cottage in Dorset and going shooting. Simon's choosing not to socialise is similar to Terry's mother (4.8.1 page 114) and the attitude is reminiscent of the barrier very orthodox Jews put up against possible socio-political 'contagion' from outside influences that Ben Kasstan describes (Kasstan, 2019 Introduction). Alan and Terry found the opposite situation, a barrier put up by the signet rings, loafers, and horse racing fraternity which emphasises their (Alan and Terry's) class orientation and exclusion from the rest of Britain.

6.6. London

As noted earlier (2.5 page 64), London is unique among the cities of the UK in two respects. First its population of 8.90 million, more than twice that of the next most populous, Birmingham. The second factor about London is the diversity of Londoners' countries of

¹⁵⁵ The Russell Group is a self-selected association of 24 public research universities in the UK. The group is sometimes perceived as representing the 'best' universities in the country although this has been disputed.

origin. The interviewees (with the exception of Rob) had spent their lives in London only venturing out to the rest of the country either to visit relatives in the provinces or to go to university.

The city's overwhelming dominance of national economic and political life in the UK has been widely documented as Oscar notes:

Oscar *London's more modern than the rest of the country, it's the capital city, the main, the largest, most expensive place.*

The emphasis here is on physicality; modern, capital, main, largest, most expensive, all of which tend to support the separation of London from the rest of the country. He presents a similar cultural divide respecting attitudes towards sexuality in the construction of masculinity.

Oscar *Um, well I think the British male (there is) more range between a London male and other places in Britain. Depends on other parts, probably being a male means different things.*

AN *Such as?*

Oscar *Well in London probably less traditional male values, male ideas.*

AN *Such as?*

Oscar *Erm, well I said about the family, more acceptance of homosexuality.*

For Oscar, London is cosmopolitan and more liberal than the rest of the country and less bound by social conservatism. The sexual cosmopolitanism he notes is an extension of the metrosexual position of David (4.1 page 88) and Otis (4.7 page 109).

Gerry emphasised the multicultural nature of London:

Gerry *The reason London's so liberal and tolerant is because, relative to the rest of the UK, at least, people are generally better integrated there than anywhere else.*

The cosmopolitan nature of London has led to tolerance of diversity which is a contrast to the rest of the country:

Gerry *The places in the UK that are most hostile to immigration among the indigenous population, are also the places with the lowest levels of immigration. So, the bigotry there is born of ignorance.*

Charlie compartmentalises his British identity into his love for London:

Charlie *I live in London. I love London. I think I would hate to live anywhere else. Because I just love the city and I love everything there is to do and the whole environment around it. But I think the rest of Britain is slightly separate to that.*

He comments on the difference between London and the rest of Britain and suggests that it is the activities he can do in London that makes the rest of the country uninspiring in comparison.

Arthur identifies more with England than Britain but expresses his fondness for England in similar fashion:

Arthur *I think it's great. I think I quite like England. The people I know. The way it works, like the city (London), how amazing the city is. I think it's a great place to be brought up. For me personally, a great place to be brought up.*

The implication is that there are more opportunities to be had in London than elsewhere. He is very London-orientated using the words 'great' and 'amazing' in his description. He was rather dismissive of the rest of the country:

Arthur *We've gone to the countryside a few times. It's very nice, lots of greenery.*

There is less enthusiasm in his language; 'very nice' and 'lots of greenery' are rather distant. For him, his focus is on the attractions of London. Others felt differently.

Terry *I definitely wanted to leave London. I think it was important for the student experience is having a small town that's easy to walk around. London has always been a bit of a concrete jungle. Everyone is walking around in corporate attire, commuting in to work every day. In my experience it was better to leave.*

Terry suggests that having only experienced London he felt ignorant of what the rest of the country was like and leaving London would broaden his outlook. This is counter to a popular belief that the provinces were very parochial, the adjective 'provincial' is usually derogatory, and horizons could only be broadened in the metropolis. The size of London is also criticised, and he preferred the 'small town that's easier to walk round.' Describing London as a 'concrete jungle' invokes images of a frightening place where one had to be on one's guard and the 'corporate attire' being a quasi-military uniform for soldiers ready for combat and the daily commute being likened to mobilisation for battle.

Alan presented the difference between himself and his friends from Yorkshire:

Alan *So, a lot of my friends are from Yorkshire. In the way they socialise, the way they look at the world in a very subtle way, is influenced by Yorkshire.*

AN *Do you think that's better than London?*

Alan *No. I think Londoners tend to be more cynical as a breed, I would say. Yea, there's a kind of cynicism but an acceptance of that cynicism. I'm more of a Londoner than a Briton. There's a London, there's an unspoken bond between*

everyone on the very late-night tube. Londoners tend to be more cynical. Weather, queueing, pollution, we accept it, but we love it.

Alan suggests that Londoners behave differently from people elsewhere. Talking about an incident in Brighton:

Alan *I was having a discussion with a friend of mine from Brighton. He's very open to people in public. So, we came across a guy who was blackout drunk, and he immediately went up to help him. And we looked after him for ages. Me, I, I'm far more defensive in public. I'm not going up to. I probably should have done. And that's because I've grown up in London where it's quite scary. He's from Brighton where everyone is friendly. But London, it's not a place where you talk to people in public.*

For Alan London is “scary” and “you don’t talk to people” therefore Londoners are defensive but paradoxically they are united by the “unspoken bond on the late-night tube.” There is a bond in their separateness. When Alan was shown an example of compassion to a drunken stranger by his friend, he felt guilty because he would not have helped someone in that state.

Rob having grown up in a Hasidic community in London, New York and Toronto has no geographical roots. He has a varying relationship to London. On one hand he claims:

Rob *I really like living in England. If I've been away, I feel so calm when I come back to Heathrow.*

Rob values what he perceives as a calmer pace of life in England than in other countries, particularly America and Israel. However, he also says:

Rob *I feel safe in New York but quite unsafe in London if I display Jewishness.*

Rob proposes that because there are more Jews in New York than in London he is therefore less likely to be seen as unusual whereas in London his Jewishness is unusual making him more likely to be attacked.

6.6.1 Comment

Attitudes towards London were mixed. Whilst Arthur and Charlie were enthusiastic about the opportunities and Gerry lauded its diversity and cosmopolitanism, Alan and Terry noted that the differences between London (and its inhabitants) from the rest of the country. This dichotomy supports the argument that there is a cultural divide between London and the rest of the country. This difference was also noticeable in the regional analysis of the Brexit vote with the ‘remain’ voting London at variance to the ‘leave’ vote of the country.

6.7 Brexit

As mentioned in 2.5 page 64 a referendum was held on 23rd of June 2016 which narrowly voted to leave the EU (52% to 48%).

The regional breakdown of the vote showed that of the regions in England, only Greater London had voted Remain (60/40) whereas the rest of the country had voted Leave. At a more localised level there was a metropolitan/hinterland divide where the centre of large diverse cities had voted remain and the more socially conservative rural areas voted leave. This divide reflects on the ‘citizens of somewhere, citizens of anywhere’ mentioned in 2.5 above. Of the other parts of the UK Wales had voted Leave but Scotland and Northern Ireland had voted Remain.

An age breakdown showed that the 18 to 24 age group had voted Remain by a 70/30 margin. Most of the interviewees for this project are in this bracket and they all lived in North-West London where the Jewish community is concentrated. It is therefore not surprising that when the subject of Brexit was brought up, they were generally critical. I have tracked the interviews in time and correlated them with what was happening as the year unfolded.

Otis was interviewed in March 2019 when it still was not certain that Brexit was going to happen or how it was going to happen. Prime Minister Theresa May had lost two votes in Parliament that month.

Otis *Brexit was a political mistake. It was just there to get votes away from UKIP (United Kingdom Independence Party). The referendum was a political stunt to get the Conservatives a majority in Parliament. David Cameron – “Obviously we’re not going to vote leave so let’s just do it anyway.” A lot of Conservative seats were being very closely challenged by UKIP and they didn’t want to lose them, so they said, “Let’s have it,”.*

Otis was quite optimistic about the future:

Otis *The UK will be fine. It will be fine. We’re the fifth biggest economy but only because of the EU. We will be fine in the long term but not in the short term.*

The group meeting that I had at a Jewish school was at the beginning of July and the Brexit vote had seemed to accentuate their British identity but wasn’t discussed in depth. Andy was interviewed late in July a few days after Boris Johnson had become prime minister determined to press ahead with Brexit:

Andy *We’ll definitely leave the EU by the 31st But I don’t know if we’ll get a deal and definitely, I think there will be a period in Britain when the pound will be very low and there’ll be a whole, there will be a ‘bust’ period. So, everything will be*

like 2008 again I think, but then eventually, a few years after that it will become better and stronger after they've dealt with it.

Andy is realistic about the economic consequences but is optimistic.

Joel was interviewed in August. He too did not like Brexit but that didn't stop him liking Britain. He seemed resigned to leaving the EU.

Joel *I don't agree about Brexit but there we go.*

Nigel was interviewed in November and had accepted the situation:

Nigel *I honestly think that we shouldn't have left the EU. I didn't agree with the reasons. However, but now that we've left, I didn't agree with the idea of a second referendum because that's anti-democratic. And we have to agree that the best option is Boris's (Boris Johnson) latest deal and people will just have to take it.*

Charlie was interviewed in December, a week after Johnson had won the general election and was more forthright in his opinion. Charlie suggests his anti-Brexit political views are not the same as the rest of Britain:

Charlie *We just had the elections. I don't like the result at all. I don't like Brexit. My views are not the same as the rest of the country. I just think I lead a very different life to lots of other people in the country.*

Oscar was interviewed in January 2020 had no views about Brexit:

Oscar *I don't really have a strong view. Well, I'm not really sure anymore.*

The interviewees had understood the political arguments and there was progression with time through the year. In March 2019 Otis had accepted the result, acknowledging the manoeuvres that had forced the referendum and was generally optimistic. By August there had been a change of premiership Andy was somewhat optimistic and Joel was resigned to the Brexit process. Parliament had been dissolved and the election campaign was in progress by the time that Nigel was interviewed. Nigel suggests that engagement with the democratic process requires acceptance of the result of a vote even when that is contrary to that he had wished for. Charlie's angry reaction was in the immediate aftermath of the election result and he was forced to accept that his life was not typical of the rest of the country. Oscar did not think there was any point in having strong views on a subject that had been decided.

6.7.1 Comment

As noted before Britain has had an ambivalent relationship with mainland Europe (see 6.1 page 178) and the Brexit vote could be regarded as symptomatic of that ambivalence. Britons have enjoyed foreign holidays thanks to cheap air travel and been welcomed by

Mediterranean hoteliers for their contribution to their local economy. However the holiday makers have brought with them their home culinary habits (fish and chips, beer) indicating that they had not bought into the native culture. Foreign footballers have for the most part been accepted into the English game as have black players (Back, Crabbe, & Solomos, 1999) although there are still some instances of racial abuse (of which the vast majority of football supporters fiercely disapprove). The attitude of the European population towards the British has not been consistently positive and the unpopularity of the Iraq War and Britain's unqualified support of the USA has been cited as reasons for the poor showing of UK entrants in the Eurovision Song Contest. Although this might be considered trivial, Terry Wogan (the UK commentator) noticed the block voting of groups of European nations in the contest and this tended to be replicated in the more important forum of the European Parliament. The legacy of past disagreements such as over the Common Agricultural Policy, the 'Lamb Wars' with France, and Common Fisheries Policy are beyond the scope of my thesis but the unrest in political discourse over European influence in British affairs cannot be ignored.

The economic depression after the banking crisis of 2008 led to a prolonged period of austerity which affected Northern post-industrial communities disproportionately compared to the more affluent cosmopolitan metropolitan elite as noted by the Marmot Review of health inequality (Marmot, Allen, Boyce, Goldblatt, & Morrison, 2020). I argue that the resentment that this disproportionality had built was exploited by sections of the political class who were opposed to the movement for ever closer European integration to mobilise the Leave vote from a section of the UK electorate who had not previously taken any interest in elections.

6.8 Conclusion

From the data that I have produced I have shown the differing ways these young Jews related to the concept of Britishness varying between poles of nationalism on one side with internationalism on the other with superimposed London orientation against the rest of the country. Brexit has profound implications requiring special mention. I said in the introduction to my thesis that Britain is a nation formed by centuries of immigration that coalesced and that Jews came into this country and for the most part managed to avoid being assimilated thus preserving their Jewish identity albeit within a British context (see 1.1 page 14). The interaction of Jewishness and Britishness was not so much a boundary as an area of intersectionality and in a constant state of flux. Due to family connections in other countries coupled with concern for Jews under threat in various parts of the world, Anglo-Jewry has a greater sense of international perspective than that of the general population. I argue that some of these young Jews reflect this international perspective and their default Britishness

from birth was being tempered with varying degrees of supranationalism. This international perspective was not solely a Jewish concern because as the world has become increasingly inter-connected and foreign travel widely available, some sections of British society have become accustomed to seeing and hearing overseas visitors in the UK and many Britons go abroad for work or leisure and this broader experience fosters an international perspective on Britishness. The same process, international travel by citizens of other liberal democracies, weakens the notion of countries having a specific character. Whilst seen from outside a country may display certain characteristics, seen from within the heterogenous nature of populations becomes apparent. Nevertheless national stereotypes do persist because within those stereotypes are certain folk memories generated both within and outside the country that have within them that reflect the residue of social formations and social facts over time.

In discussing what it means to be British the heterogenous nature of British society is such that within even such a small segment of the population as the Anglo-Jewish community there are multiple points of view so there is no consistent answer to the question, only multiple answers. For the younger participants of this study, constructing their Britishness is still a work in progress and their affinity to Britain was expressed in varying degrees of patriotism but that did not prevent them from criticising the country's leadership. The British/Jewish balance was apparent in that when Jewishness was dominant Britishness was diminished almost to the point of disappearance as occurred for Simon and Rob. When Jewishness was only a minor factor for identity then Britishness came to the fore and this was especially so for Mark and Hugh who had military aspirations. When Britain was in competition with other nations, both in minor matters such as sport or culture or in major matters such as armed conflict, then Britishness becomes more pronounced and recedes once the competition has passed.

Differentiating what was specifically British about social values which are common to other liberal democracies was not straightforward. Respect for the rule of law, tolerance of diversity in matters of religion and ethnicity/race, and fair democratic appointment of governments are aspects of society that Britain has in common with many other developed nations. The progress of LGBTQ issues in the last 20 years (see 6.3.2. page 192 et. seq.) indicates how far tolerance has extended in areas of sexuality and gender equality. Courtesy and avoidance of causing offense were cited as particularly British values to be contrasted with the stereotype of foreign brashness.

These young men had a some understanding of being British within their own milieu but little in respect of the rest of the country. Older participants who had left home for study suddenly found attitudes regarding social class (Terry and Alan see 6.5.2. page 203) and behaviour (Alan

see 4.5 page 100) that they had not encountered before some of which were better and some worse. The Dorset cottage, Yorkshire and Brighton friends speak to a London/rest of the country divide that was also voiced by some of the younger participants who were generally London orientated. Contrary to the Goodhart formulation (see 2.5 page 64) for these younger Jews, cosmopolitan London was the 'somewhere' to which they were very much attached.

Brexit was disapproved of by the interviewees which is unsurprising given the overwhelming Remain vote of this age group. The reactions to Brexit seemed to have some similarity to stages of grief with anger, disappointment and resignation being expressed. Reconciliation seems to be some way off especially as the Covid-19 epidemic has further disrupted society.

I shall now proceed to a discussion of how contemporary Anglo-Jewish masculinity is formed in a fluid three-dimensional matrix from my data producing and overall theory of young Jewish masculinity in Britain.

Chapter 7 Discussion

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I shall first summarise the findings from my interviews as described fully in the last three chapters, and then discuss the implications of these findings. I shall argue that these young male Jews are negotiating their identities within a fluid three-dimensional matrix of masculinity, Jewishness, and Britishness. Each of these dimensions are continually constructed and deconstructed along axes between certain parameters relating to my research questions: -

- **How do young Jews understand and perform Jewishness and masculinity in contemporary Britain?**
- **How do they talk about their experience of being a young Jewish male in Britain and what are their concerns?**

7.2 Summary of Findings

The fluidity of the matrix is apparent in the blurring of the distinctions between dimensions of identity for many data items whereby an item may reflect more than one dimension. For example reluctance to show emotion is a feature common to Clines/Brannon masculinity (see 'stereotype of Western masculinity' in 2.2 page 43), Rabbinic Judaism, and the 'stiff upper lip' of Britishness. Allowing for this blurring I summarise the main findings of the interviews as follows: -

7.2.1 Masculinity

The primacy of intellectualism over and rejection of violence associated with overt physicality is still important even though it tends to stereotype Jewish males. This 'brain over brawn' metaphor has a long history in Judaism because it references the Jacob against Esau narrative (see 2.4) which is taught to very young Jewish children. Sex roles are still apparent but not as absolute or distinct in either the home or in employment as was believed in former generations and engagement with the 'feminine' was notable as clothes shopping, cooking, non-sport related pastimes, and childcare testify. Friendships outside the family are important in the construction of identity but this can be compartmentalised with separation of Jewish and non-Jewish circles.

7.2.2 Jewishness

Identity from birth is shaped by family environment but external forces and expectations have a significant influence in the construction of Jewish identity. Where those forces are

negatively discriminatory, as in antisemitism, or promote separateness as in expectation of conformity with Jewish law (e.g. dietary laws) this perpetuates the 'otherness' of the Jew. Jewishness may be constructed by observance of Jewish ritual or by affinity with non-ritual emotional memory (e.g. history, music, food) and frequently by a combination of both. Israel as a country and society is a significant factor for Jewish identity separate from the political direction of its leaders.

7.2.3 Britishness

There is an intertwining of identity, nationalism, and patriotism with a divide between the ruling infrastructure and general society similar to that being expressed about the divide between the Israeli people and culture, and the politics of Israel. National identity does not figure prominently unless stimulated by external competition and in this respect there is similarity to Jewish identity being accentuated by outside challenge. The idea that Britain is better than other countries is counterbalanced by realisation that the liberal democracies have similar traditions of rule of law, tolerance of diverse theological beliefs, and freedom under law for diverse expressions of sexual orientation and gender. London occupies a separate space in the British milieu and this was reflected in the Brexit vote.

7.3 Implications in Relation to Binaries

This section puts the data I have collected into the context of my concept of a three-dimensional matrix within which young Jews negotiate their identity. I am arguing that the categories of masculinity, Jewishness and Britishness are abstract empirical categories whose structure in each case is binary. For masculinity, the binary is between the competitive and co-operative modes, for Jewishness it is between halachic Judaism and cultural affinity with Jewishness, and for Britishness it is between nationalism and internationalism with superadded contrast between London and the rest of the country.

7.3.1 Masculinity

In regard to masculinity there is less emphasis on competitive domination and more on co-operation and relationships with family and friends. The participants have spoken about the change in what constitutes masculinity from previous generations. Whilst they do not anticipate having to contend with major physical threat such as war they will have to acquire intellectual and interpersonal skills to develop relationships and to fulfil their future career ambitions which will inevitably involve a degree of competition. They anticipate having to make a greater contribution to running their future homes than had been the norm in previous generations. Whilst intellectualism was once a key feature of being a Jewish man being

intellectual is no longer such a prominent marker between Jewish and non-Jewish men. However they suggested that being intellectual was still expected of them. Aggressive sexuality was not found to be a feature other than in a small segment of university life and was not admitted by any of the participants. Where romantic relations were mentioned it was of not being ready for a serious relationship. Physicality is not totally absent in that exercise in some form is seen as having health benefits and street violence is still acknowledged to be present. Young men have the flexibility to perform their masculinity sometimes competitively and sometimes cooperatively as circumstances dictate.

The intersection of masculinity with Jewishness reveals that each has influenced the other. Judaism has affected what it means to be male in the priority that intellectualism has been given over brawny masculinity and hegemonic masculinity has affected Jewish attitudes to rabbinic authority and gender relations. In the context of my argument that masculinity is constructed along an axis of cooperative against competitive modes the practice of Judaism feeds into that discourse. The fact that Jews require a community to observe Jewish law and ritual fully, demands that Jews need to work together. It is possible that a sole male Jew can be Jewish relying on their own resources (self-reliance being one of the criteria of the Clines/Brannon formulation of masculinity) by not contravening the negative commandments of Sabbath and dietary observance. However, if he wishes to have a full prayer experience he will need to find at least another nine men to join him. If he wishes to have Kosher meat and wine he will need to be in contact with a rabbinic licencing authority for supervised production and distribution. Similarly getting married, arranging Brit Milah for his sons, getting divorced and having a Jewish funeral, all of these life events require a Jewish community. Whilst there is undoubtedly a hierarchy within Judaism (the primacy of being a 'Cohen' or a scholar in the order of synagogue honours) this would be a dominant rather than hegemonic masculinity (Messerschmidt, 2019) because the hierarchy is related to birth and not to merit so competitiveness should not be an issue.¹⁵⁶ I shall now briefly look at the separate aspects of masculinity in order to demonstrate masculinity construction.

7.3.1.1 Intellectualism

The tradition of Jews being intellectual rather than physical has long fed into the expectation of the non-Jewish world and the comments of the participants showed that this was still the case (see Hugh's comments from his classmates 4.2 page 91). They understood that they were expected to work hard at school to fulfil family and communal expectations. With

¹⁵⁶ This does not preclude some people trying to claim priority because of presumed social standing.

changes in society previously mentioned, mental superiority rather than physical performance as the key to societal success has become the norm; for example, the comments cited by Nigel about his private non-Jewish boys' school suggests that everybody is working hard. Knowing that their school is fee-paying might itself be a stimulus to academic effort, but this is not invariable as David comments on the lack of academic pressure, "I don't think I was pushed as much as I could have been." The state schools that the other participants attended have good academic records and it would be expected that a similar focus on academic success would apply. Academic expectation and ambition have become associated more with middle class attitudes in the general UK population and this has been a change in the last 40 years as the economy has moved from manufacturing to service and knowledge with concomitant changes in employment patterns. Whereas hitherto Jews were marked out for being 'brainy' this is less obvious, and intellectualism has become more of a binary across social class than a Jewish attribute. Relating to masculinity, the competitiveness characteristically associated with physicality may be reproduced in academic competition for university places and jobs in the professions. In a recent UK review of four studies by Stephen Miller, he found that the most academically qualified Jews were, on average, the least engaged in the Jewish community (S. H. Miller, 2018). The implication he drew from the study was that "the intellectual resources available to the community are less than they would have been if the community were equally attractive to individuals at all levels of ability and achievement."¹⁵⁷ Student motivation for learning and engagement with the learning process is influenced by the environment of home and school and also by the wider factors of community and society.¹⁵⁸

7.3.1.2 Military

It is not a common ambition of young Jews to want to serve in the military although for those who intend to emigrate to Israel, army service would be a good way to be accepted into Israeli society but none of my participants expressed such an interest. For young men drawn towards the uniformed team orientated youth movements, progression to a period in the military is a prospect with the opportunity for a military sponsorship for higher education as was the case for two of the participants.¹⁵⁹ The discipline and hierarchical structure of their youth movements together with emphasis on physical fitness, leadership, and weapons training were ideal preparation for their future careers. As mentioned in 4.4.1 page 99,

¹⁵⁷ The occupations of the respondents to these surveys were not recorded and there may be differences between those in academia and those in non-academic positions.

¹⁵⁸ See (Elliott & Tudge, 2012) for Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory – Process -Person – Context - Time.

¹⁵⁹ This is quite common. See <https://apply.army.mod.uk/how-to-join/entryoptions/officer-bursary> for example.

engagement with a military environment is less likely to involve competition in the absence of war and more likely to involve cooperation for logistic operations such as rescue and supply.

7.3.1.3 Violence

There were four mentions of violence reported in the interviews, actual fighting at school, the fear that young men have of violence on the streets, the proposed response to an act of aggression in a public place, and behaviour suggesting that sexual violence was likely. Don Weenink, from an analysis of street violence, has suggested that there were two ideal types of violence discernible: contesting dominance and performing badness. In the contesting dominance type the protagonists are evenly matched and the dispute follows a series of challenges and micro-aggressions to establish dominance. By contrast performing badness involves a physically stronger person attacking a weaker person with the intent of humiliating the victim (Weenink, 2015). The fighting that James observed in the school was likely to have been of the contesting dominance type. The fear that Oscar had about young men being attacked in the street suggests the possibility of their being victims of casual aggression and likely to be of the performing badness type. Public insults (being rude in the street and sexual violence against women at university – both cited by Alan) are also likely to be of performing badness. Many factors such as impulsivity and poor social skills may be linked to adolescent violence (Patton et al., 2016).

7.3.1.4 Domestic life and responsibilities

With the twin stimuli of changing employment patterns from manual to mental occupations and a response to the demands of feminism for the recognition of the value and importance of domestic labour, men have had to adapt and develop new skills. The participants have accepted this change but there is still some expectation of the man being the main financial contributor to the family and given the middle-class status of most of the participants a career in a profession is a common ambition. There were no interviewees from families with long standing employment problems so the challenge to masculinity of unemployment or low status service jobs is absent from this study. As mentioned above (7.3.1), in the home they recognise that they will be expected to be involved with child-care and housework in the future.

7.3.1.5 Exercise and Leisure

Whilst the commonly held view of Jews being reluctant to be involved in physical recreation has never been completely accurate there was undoubted impetus to exercise produced by the Zionist philosophy of creating 'a new muscle Jew' as well as the process of integrating immigrant children into British society described in Chapter 1. The importance of team sports

in the development of co-operative masculinity has been mentioned but, in this study, there was more emphasis on individual exercise. The relationship men have with the gym was explored through the eyes of the interviewees and various distinct modes emerged. The solitary mode of exercise for personal fitness with no ulterior motive, or solitary exercise could be as a way of developing a bodily appearance that would be sexually attractive although concern for physical appearance is usually a feminine matter. There could also be a group exercising either co-operatively for mutual support and encouragement as each man was cheered on by his friends to achieve ever greater feats of strength (thus the competitive element was with himself) or alternatively, the objective was to demonstrate individual superiority over an adjacent exerciser. This mode was associated with attempts to transfer that superiority into other fields of endeavour for hegemonic purpose and the objective is to be envied rather than loved. There is an association of exercise and male hormone (testosterone) production to enhance wellbeing and libido. Terry's comment, "Masculinity is about the amount of testosterone you have at any given time," is supported by the finding that men, training especially with free weights, experience a significant acute increase in free testosterone from before to after workouts (Schwanbeck, Cornish, Barss, & Chilibeck, 2020).

Among other activities apart from physical activity, shopping, clothes, and fashion amongst young men was mentioned by Otis as being relatively new interests more usually considered feminine. The way in which clothes are chosen and worn, the style-fashion-dress code, is related to the department of the public self and embodied practice which play a part in the construction of identity. How people project themselves relates to the Greco-Roman performance of masculinity as described by Gleason (see 2.2 page 42) (Gleason, 1995). This projection of self includes control of emotions such as Gerry's statement that he would be very unlikely to cry or show emotion in either public or private. There is a hierarchy of manufacturers and the objective is to be seen to have the more expensive and recognisable brands for articles and thereby to be envied (also a Clines characteristic) and emulated which in turn creates a competitive distinction of wealth and social class.

The internet has become a major resource for leisure as well as education and communication and it enables somebody to be both a consumer and provider of digital content. Video games provided an outlet for some aggressive impulses and is often a solitary occupation as it was in this study for Andy. Internet collaboration by friends, such as in the production of memes, was presented by Charlie as a way of continuing friendship by talking rather than playing football. There is less restraint on what leisure activities are appropriate for young men of this generation. Socialising without the use of alcohol and going for a coffee or meal with

friends, going to art galleries and cinema/theatre are alternatives to public houses and football matches and are also indicative of a more feminine approach to leisure.

7.3.1.6 Friendship

The proportion of Jews in an individual's friendship circle is an important marker in the construction of the index of Jewish engagement (S. M. Cohen & Kahn-Harris, 2004), the greater proportion being associated with greater affiliation. The phenomenon of the Jewish Bubble was remarked upon by several of the interviewees. The adjective 'cliquey' was used in some of the interviews and is generally pejorative and its use is an acknowledgement that some Jews have restricted their friends and not taken opportunities to enlarge their circle. Where someone has both Jewish and non-Jewish friends there was the tendency to keep the two groups separate and the pattern of activity is also different, the Jewish circle being in private space of homes and Jewish community and the non-Jews in a more public space. Male friendships are typically not especially demonstrative but under stress capable of being very supportive.

7.3.1.7 Romance

These young men use adolescence to negotiate their sexuality and orientation in a Jewish environment which expects them eventually to form long-term heterosexual relationships in order that Jewish society may perpetuate. As mentioned earlier, the emotional component of gender development of boys occurs later than girls and this imbalance means that young men have often not developed the social skills to maintain romantic relationships; this was demonstrated by Alan and Gerry and acknowledged by James. The hedonistic behaviour reported by Terry in the closed society of university reflects the 'hook-up' culture described by Currier in American colleges (Currier, 2013). Exogamy remains a concern and one of the negative aspects of Jewish communal life that these young men are aware of is the pressure that occurs when they start dating, whether the girl is Jewish or not. Ultimately, they indicate that they are probably going to conform to the demands of their families and community and marry within the faith and form their own family.

7.3.1.8 Family

In the context of developing masculinity, the father is initially regarded as the rival for the mother's love by the infant boy but when that resolves he has the potential to be a role model and teacher. The participants' comments were generally respectful and affectionate towards their fathers. The interactions with their mothers that the participants described showed that traces of certain stereotypical maternal behaviour were present and were usually being negotiated successfully, the only exception being that experienced by Rob in the context of his

sexuality. However, the extent of any controlling, protective, or obsessive behaviours were not unusual or excessive and likely to apply equally in whatever cultural milieu the youth inhabit. The importance of parental involvement with their children is a known factor in ensuring that their adolescent children are more prosocial and have better social skills. In addition, parental involvement has been associated with fewer behaviour problems (Schiffrin, Godfrey, Liss, & Erchull, 2015). Parents having difficulty with their child's lifestyle is not unusual and can cause mutual distress. There were no participants who were in single-parent families (as Simon's widowed father had remarried).

7.3.1.9 Round-up

Referring back to the map of masculinity (3.8.5.1 page 82) the themes - intellectualism, military, violence, employment, exercise, friendship, romance, and family - are involved in how young Jews understand how to use the axis between competitive and cooperative modes of masculinity and what being a man means to him. Using this axis and rejecting of that of hegemony with overtones of dominance especially over women would diminish the dangers of toxic masculinity which have particular resonance in Judaism (see 7.3.2.1 below).

7.3.2 Jewishness

Regarding Jewishness I found a number of binary positions apparent of which the most definitive was, those for whom regular prayer with a quorum of ten men was most important were at the ritual pole of Jewish identity and those who prioritised family involvement over synagogue attendance were at the cultural pole of Jewish identity. Other binaries include the public/private practices of Judaism; the public area is the synagogue and community against the private area of the home and the family. In personal theology the binary positions are that on one side God is the particularistic and exclusive preserve of the Jew and requires a prescribed series of actions and on the other side God is a universalist, largely benign influence mandating general morality. In gender relations the binary positions are sharper with the opinion that the exclusion of women from public Jewish life was part of a tradition that had maintained the Jewish people against the opinion that it was both illogical and immoral for women to be so excluded and their spiritual needs denigrated. Many were less inclined to accept the subordinate position of women in religious practice and this tolerance also extends to LGBTQ issues. The performance of Judaism is less dogmatic and these young men were open to engaging culturally with Jewishness through history, music, food, and family tradition. There is a specific complaint about lack of spiritual leadership to supplement their home experience of Judaism. The binary positions regarding Israel are support for the Zionist enterprise that forms much of Jewish identity in the diaspora being opposed by deep

disapproval and anxiety regarding modern Israeli politics. Their Jewish identity is bound up with Israel as a concept but they are concerned that actions by Israel's political establishment are undermining the moral case for Zionism. Antisemitism remains an issue both collectively, as in myths of Jewish dominance of the financial and political world, and personally at the level of individual insults and harassment. Antisemitic discourse in the public space cloaked as anti-Israel, particularly in politics and the media, is a particular concern. They are mostly committed to the continuation of Judaism and anticipate remaining within Anglo-Jewry constructing their Jewish identity within their understanding of their families and communities. I shall now briefly look at the separate aspects of Jewishness in order to demonstrate how being a Jew is constructed.

7.3.2.1 Synagogue and Ritual

As has been previously mentioned, to be able to engage fully with Jewish law requires a Jewish community for formal religious prayer services and other facilities such as kosher food shops. Local communities centred on synagogues are a feature of the structure of Anglo-Jewry serving as sites for prayer and communal social activities. Membership of a synagogue and regular attendance at prayer services are features of engagement with Judaism (Cohen & Kahn-Harris 2004) and some of the interviewees spoke with varying degrees of enthusiasm about their communities. However, a third of the participants were not currently connected to a Jewish community but still had a strong sense of being a Jew. It wasn't only the textual content of the synagogue service that was important as music was a feature noted at some services and this was appreciated as a cultural factor over the text of the service. This was experienced by Rob being emotionally engaged by a melody in a Masorti synagogue that he remembered from his Haredi upbringing and James enjoyed the singing in his synagogue even though he did not understand the service. Belonging to a community has benefits such as the joy at the birth of a baby mentioned by Joel, which became shared by the whole community and was not just a private matter for the family, and both Arthur and Charlie cited the mutual support that the community could give in times of trouble. There were also some negative elements in communal life as mentioned by Nigel and the group in the competitive pressure felt when school and university examination results became known and compared around the community. These young Jews also felt that the rabbis were not making much effort to engage with them as cited by Nigel, Hugh and the group.

The place of women in relation to public Jewish ritual is contentious. Treating them as second-class citizens offended the sensibilities of some of these young Jews, "Where are your moral values?" (see Otis 5.7 page 150) but they seemed powerless to do anything about it.

This dilemma was dealt with by Terry as denial of the importance of the synagogue when compared to everyday life. Women as religious studies teachers does not appear to be problematic but those at the strictly observant pole of Jewishness would not countenance female religious leadership. In relation to my study those who resented the subordination of women were rejecting hegemonic masculinity in this respect and seeking cooperation with women.

7.3.2.2 Theology

A belief in a single all-knowing God is a principle of the Jewish faith¹⁶⁰ and those young Jews who did speak about God did so in a variety of ways. Generally, there was a non-particularistic view, that some concept of God was the source of ethical behaviour and it was a benign presence. Those at the strictly orthodox pole had a more definite concept in that everything had to be done to obey His will and this was the function of Jews whereas those whose Jewishness is cultural rather than tied to halacha were more likely to hold a non-particularistic idea of God. David was an exception in that he felt intellectually that he had to observe halacha to be Jewish but had a more nebulous idea of God as the source of morality. Mark was rather contemptuous of the idea of God claiming it was an artificial creation of humans to fulfil some sort of need. However, most of the interviewees did not comment about God and this would suggest that theology played little part in their Jewish identity.

7.3.2.3 Culture and Heritage

What has become known as Jewish culture mentioned by Alan is a loose collection of attitudes, mannerisms, and tastes which are usually learnt from a very young age in the family setting. The frequent allusions to food as a marker for Jewish identity as well as compliance with dietary law are instances of this process. Joel's interest was in his family's history before migration from Eastern Europe to Britain. The place of music in Jewish ritual has already been mentioned but Gerry mentioned Israeli music, kibbutz culture, and politics, Rob mentioned Jewish art, literature and comedy, and James mentioned the songs at the children's camp. A nation's music is an integral part of ethnic group's culture: musical works convey ideas about important historical events for the community, and also affect group identity (Garifzianova & Ozerova, 2019). Rob's use of Yiddish idioms and body language, in particular his hand gestures, were commented upon by his non-Jewish acquaintances and accentuated his 'otherness' from them as non-Jews.

¹⁶⁰ Moses Maimonides 12th century CE.

Personal family stories and national histories are important elements for the construction of heritage demonstrating the continuity principle of identity process theory. For instance, Joel was able to relate to the pre-immigration experience through a chain of narratives from an elderly uncle. This generation does not have direct experience of the Holocaust and earlier persecutions but knowledge of them is part of their heritage and for some is a lynchpin of their Jewish identity. The absence of Holocaust remembrance in the interviews of the more orthodox participants would indicate that for them it is not a major factor in their identity construction whereas for the less orthodox it may be a more significant factor in their Jewish construction.

Appreciation of family and awareness of the way that religious traditions, especially those relating to Sabbaths and Festivals, are repeatedly enacted creates heritage and is related to culture. By this means religious identity can be constructed and for some of the interviewees there was a desire to pass these traditions on to future generations. As there is a common calendar and similarities in family history there are mutually recognisable traditions across the community which foster a commonality of life experience. Engagement with the family at these occasions such as the annual Passover seder, even in the absence of any other connection to ritual Judaism, perpetuates cultural Jewishness in the home as mentioned in 7.3.2 above.

7.3.2.4 Lifestyle

The issues around lifestyle overlap with discussion on community and the extent of control that the communal norms and expectations have on personal behaviour and choices. Branches of Hasidim are multi-geographically located and they have a different concept of community because it is not confined to one area but of loci which form a seamless continuity across countries and continents. In the very orthodox world, the community is tightly regulated so that many of the cultural stringencies have been elevated to the status of laws which justify restrictions on education, clothing, and expressions of issues of sexuality and gender. These attitudes were generally resented by the participants when they encountered them. In communities other than the very orthodox, there were areas of contention related to sexuality and gender role where orthodox Jewish tradition intersects with and for some, conflicts with, current liberal opinion. Attitudes towards LGBTQ issues by religious authorities are in a state of flux with some liberalisation which most participants were ready to embrace but they noticed that some of their peers and teachers were not. The role of women in both private and communal life is also contentious in that their hitherto subservient position in communities at the orthodox end of the spectrum is challenged. Most of the participants

recognised that inequality on the basis of gender was no longer acceptable in modern society but the process of changing attitudes was likely to be difficult.

7.3.2.5 Education

As mentioned before Jewish schools are very popular with parents as over 60% of Jewish children attending them although that figure includes an estimate of the very orthodox who tend to have larger families which distorts the impression. However the comments of those participants who are currently attending or have been at Jewish schools are not uniformly positive (5.5 page 138 et. seq.) so in spite of their popularity with parents the questions those schools raise include whether they contribute to theological Judaism and/or cultural Jewishness especially if there is dissonance between practise at home and what is taught at school. Also to be considered is whether lack of contact with the non-Jewish world (keeping the children in the Jewish bubble) is detrimental to the pupils and may foster antisemitism among the general population.

7.3.2.6 Israel

Concern with, and affiliation to, Israel has become very real for British Jews given the development of communication and relatively cheap air travel. The focus group maintained that "Every single Jew has some sort of connection to Israel," and the centrality of Israel to Jewish identity may be understood in that all the study participants had visited at least once. Many had close family connections which made their understanding of the divide between the 'abstract idea' of Israel and the 'practical reality' of a country seemingly perpetually on the edge of corruption and scandal all the more difficult. By focussing on the religious dimension of the country Simon was able to enthuse on the atmosphere of the yeshiva, but Terry was much more concerned about the corrosive milieu that his cousin in the Israeli army had to endure enforcing military laws on the West Bank (of the Jordan) with which he did not agree. The political stance of the country seemed to be at odds with the ideals of the country as understood by the participants as the comments by Gerry and Joel show. The negative discourse in the UK media about Israel caused concern that it would spill over into anti-Jewish sentiment, but this was not experienced.

7.3.2.7 Antisemitism

The Jew as the perpetual 'other' against which the rest of society constructs their own identity promulgates myths and insults which some of these young Jews had experienced. The tropes that were invoked included personal avarice and hygiene, and collective hyper-influence over world events, but were at a fairly low level. Jeremy Corbyn became an icon of anti-Jewish feeling being known even outside the UK as well as causing concern in some of the

interviewees' families. The strategies that were used to combat the insults directly required a measure of social skill such as humour (just laughing at the insult), being totally unmoved, and reframing the insult intellectually to display its absurdity (Alan). In the face of threatened or actual physical unpleasantness Rob lacked the social skill to cope with it.

7.3.2.8 Round-up

Referring back to the Jewishness map 3.8.5.2 page 82, the themes - synagogue ritual, theology, culture and heritage, lifestyle, education, Israel, and antisemitism - influence how these Jews relate to the axis between strict adherence to halachic Judaism without any emotional warmth and affinity to Jewishness solely through cultural engagement ignoring even minimal practise. These are extreme positions infrequently encountered and most Jews adopt a fluid position adapting to personal circumstances which they deem appropriate.

7.3.3 Britishness

The binaries relative to the UK concern a long-standing position where although geographically Britain is part of Europe, historically and culturally it has held itself aloof. As an island Britain has had its borders defined by the sea and that relates to a tradition of insularity in the British cultural narrative of being separate from the rest of Europe.

The young men were quite proud of being British but without overt xenophobia. They appreciated the tolerance, courtesy and general liberal atmosphere of British society citing in particular the current attitudes towards LGBTQ issues. London is praised for having a larger range of opportunities than the rest of the country but also criticised for a perception of lacking compassion at a personal level. Similar to their opinion of Israel there is less satisfaction with the political leadership and some of the directions that the country is going. As Britain has become more diverse so has Britishness and these participants accept their nationality albeit within their political inclinations.

The ease and popularity of foreign travel, sport and entertainment, and communications has fostered internationalism and cosmopolitanism that has reduced the reification of nationalism especially within younger (under 40) generations. Certain cultural binaries do persist such as the distinction between nationalism and patriotism within Britain (see 6.2 page 179) but tolerance, liberalism and democracy are mainstream values which transcend nationalism. An additional binary in Britain is that between London and the rest of the UK which was only apparent to participants when they left London.

Having been born in Britain and, with the exception of Rob, lived only in Britain meant that the participants' passive default identity is British but in making sense of how these young men

constructed their identity and what they have said about their Britishness has been analysed.. I shall look at two levels; the supranational level refers to Britain as a whole either on its own or in relation to the rest of the world and the intranational level focusses on the relationship between London and the rest of the country.

7.3.3.1 Nationalism/Patriotism

These young Jews mostly accepted their British identity with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Whilst none of them denigrated Britain as a country, there were some reservations regarding the direction that the leadership was taking the country, notably the Brexit question and Charlie's unexpected critical opinion of the monarchy. There was some unquestioning patriotism and the association with increased nationalist feeling in the context of sporting and cultural competitions noted but any tendency to xenophobic nationalism was minimal. As mentioned in 6.8 page 209, for those at the most observant end of the religious spectrum Britishness was a matter of fact and not much to be concerned about as the predominant factor in identity was being a Jew (see Simon's disc picture Appendix 4 page 246).

7.3.3.2 British Values

When politicians try to define 'British values' they are trying to adopt features which are common to any liberal democracy which is governed by rule of laws made by a democratically chosen and accountable legislature. Internationalisation has contributed to the universality of cultural value systems which inform mainstream moral, legal and political norms including democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, fairness/equality, respect, and tolerance (Maylor, 2016). The absence of any mention by politicians of Christianity as a feature of British identity is not exceptional given Otis' observation that religion had become less relevant and the desire not to offend adherents of other religions reflecting the composition of Britain as an ethnically diverse society.

Within British society there is a general liberal stand towards tolerance on LGBTQ issues and the interviewees spoke about this. There was dissent on only two aspects, the first being the danger to women of faux transgender access to female spaces and the second being objection to the actual sexual activity of homosexuals although same sex attraction was understandable as part of the human condition. The principles of civic nationalism and citizenship do seem to be understood but it was noted that within universities there were issues relating to misogyny, class, and snobbery that ran counter to everyday courtesy.

Reluctance to acknowledge emotion and the phrase, 'Stiff upper lip,' has traditionally been used to describe the attribute of British people in remaining resolute and unemotional when

faced with adversity (see 7.2 page 212). Self-control and projection of confidence are features common to both the rabbinic construction of masculinity and the Roman and Spartan construction of Greco-Roman masculinity. Gerry's reluctance to show emotionality contrasts with Terry's approval of young men's mental health becoming important. David was in the process of changing his view of the advantage of stoicism but concerned that the open emotions on social media were synthetic. In competitive masculinity, showing emotionality would move a man down the masculinity scale and at risk of being dominated whereas for cooperative masculinity having the emotional intelligence to recognise when a friend was having problems (for example, James' mention of his friend 4.8.4 page 118) would be an approved response.

The interviews were conducted in the period of political instability after the Brexit referendum in which the participants were still trying to process the consequences of that result and the realisation that leaving the European Union had become inevitable. Being typical of the demographic in terms of age and locality they had no desire to leave the EU, but they realised that it was happening and that they would have to factor that into their lives. The value of democracy in theory was noted but the reluctance of the interviewees to accept the Brexit vote showed a strain in practice.

7.3.3.3 London

Attempts to recruit participants from outside London by engagement with national youth and student organisations were not successful and the decision was made to persevere with locally available young Jews who were selected to have a range of ages, religiosity, and academic ability to reflect the demographic under study. The absence of non-London participants may be justified because just as London's population dominates that of Britain the relatively large Jewish population of London overwhelms the rest of Anglo-Jewry as once important regional centres have declined. Nevertheless, including participants from provincial communities and from areas without a community would have broadened the geographical range and might have provided novel insights. Opinions on London divided by age of the interviewees. The younger Jews were very metropolitan orientated and spoke very enthusiastically about London and its opportunities. The older ones, who had been to universities outside London, were much more aware of how London and its population differed from the rest of the country.

7.3.3.4 Brexit

The disappointment with the referendum result reflects an international mindset that is prevalent generally in young people but also the international perspective afforded by Jewish connections (see 6.8 page 210). The absence of enthusiasm about the Brexit result is

noteworthy and may relate to the rejection of ultra-nationalism espoused by Tommy Robinson (6.3 page 192).

7.3.3.5 Round-up

Referring back to the theme map of Britishness (3.8.5.3 page 83) whilst extreme nationalism does not feature, these young Jews generally feel British (Otis – “It’s not even a question,” 6.2.4 page 186). They present as fully integrated into British society being patriotic to varying degrees and for the most part do not feel any conflict with how they express their Jewishness. They have bought into the international liberal values of democracy, tolerance, and respect for law that are common to most developed nations and mostly do not regard the rest of the world as alien. London does dominate their Britishness to the extent that interacting with non-Londoners was a new experience for them.

7.4 Formulation of Young British Jewish Masculinities

I shall now combine the binary concepts of masculinity, Jewishness, and Britishness that analysis of the data has produced into the abstract matrix that I have conceptualised. I have argued that masculinity is constructed along an axis between competitive and cooperative modes. Likewise, Jewishness is constructed along an axis between halachic Judaism and cultural Jewishness. The axis of Britishness is between nationalist and internationalist modes with a superadded binary of London against the rest of Britain. An individual young British Jew occupies the intersection of his position of each axis. His position is fluid, being constructed and deconstructed to adapt to changing requirements for each of these aspects of his Jewish British masculinity as circumstances may demand.

These are my answers to my research questions

- **How do young Jews understand and perform Jewishness and masculinity in contemporary Britain?**
- **How do they talk about their experience of being a young Jewish male in Britain and what are their concerns?**

The participants reflect the heterogeneity of the London section of the young Anglo-Jewish population being different from each other in how they experienced British Jewish masculinity but also showing strands of similarity. They accepted that they had an investment in mainstream British society albeit with varying degrees of attachment and they anticipated eventually taking their place in Britain and contributing to the common good. With regard to London, there was a feeling that it was different from the rest of the country, sometimes better but also sometimes worse.

How they experienced Jewishness did show quite a wide disparity between the poles of halachic Judaism and cultural Jewishness. For some, their Jewishness was constructed by repeated adherence to daily rituals and required immersion in an environment of likeminded committed Jews. For others, the ritual was not so important being something they could dip in to and out of as the mood and opportunity had taken them and they found other means such as family commitment, history, literary heritage, and non-ritual communal engagement, to experience being a Jew.

The stereotype of a hard dominant and dominating mode of hegemonic masculinity has been under critical examination which has challenged an axis of 'hard' against 'soft' constructions of masculinity. In Jewish culture the 'brawn' against 'brain' axis was personified by the Esau/Jacob narrative that was taught to me, and every other Jewish boy I knew, from a very early age; that I should model myself like Jacob, "A mild man who stayed in the camp," i.e. studious rather than like Esau, "A skilful hunter, a man of the outdoors," i.e. the lone, self-reliant action-man that was the image promoted by the popular boy's books and comics of the 1950s which carried on into the "Be a man" unemotional macho hero of the Marlboro cigarette advertisements. The harmful consequences of this latter form of masculinity, the risk-taking lifestyle and aversion to help-seeking has been highlighted in 2.2 page 44 (Courtenay, 2000). I am arguing that this sample of young Jewish men demonstrated a development from that formulation and a shift in the axis of masculinity from the hard/soft axis which pits physicality against intellectualism to a competitive/cooperative binary axis. I am arguing that characterising intellectualism and studiousness as soft and physicality as hard ignores the blurring of the boundaries that are presumed to exist between them. This was apparent when I interviewed Hugh, the student at military college. As a military officer he was being trained to build and lead teams which required the soft skills of inter-personal management but also to have the brute force at least equal to, if not better than, his subordinates in surmounting physical obstacles.

The disengagement of men from spheres previously held to be of exclusively feminine concern over attitudes and activity has also become more diffuse as noted in 7.3.1.4/5 above but this also can be viewed in the competitive/cooperative binary as shown in the exchange I had with Otis on the subject of fashion and clothes shopping (see 4.7 page 110). He and his friends have an interest in fashion and clothes shopping (feminine) but there are also competitive elements. There is the struggle (masculine) to obtain a rare, desired object – the shoes for £350 – the risk taken (masculine) and finally the triumph (masculine) when making 300%

profit. The synthesis of masculine/feminine and competition/cooperation show how blurred the lines may be.

The Hebrew Bible through the Adam/Eve narrative gives to young men a masculine sex role tradition and public status and role generally denied to women. The rabbinical influence has built on the Jacob/Esau narrative prioritising intellectualism and reinforces the power enjoyed by men over women and those men marginalised by class, education and sexuality. Young, straight, middle-class, educated Jews are thus able to enjoy the benefits of patriarchy without concern or having to engage with physical aggression and risk taking that characterise much of the more toxic masculinities. This sample of young Jewish men reflect the range of religiosity and educational ability of Anglo-Jewry and embody a modern expansive gender identity. Whilst enjoying sport and exercise (Gerry, Terry, and James) overt physicality and aggression is absent. Inclusive masculinity is present in for example, the acceptance of gay and bisexual young men in friendship circles (Hugh and Mark) and the cooperation that is required for assembling a group for Jewish prayer (Simon). The friendships demonstrate caring masculinity at both an individual level (James) and group level (Simon and Charlie). Expansion of interests away from a narrow range of stereotypically 'masculine' activities to include traditionally more 'feminine' pursuits such as art galleries (Alan), shopping (Otis), cooking (Joel) and clothes (Rob) may be regarded as a form of rebellious positioning against stereotypical masculine attitudes. Overt misogyny and homophobia were absent but reluctance to countenance women in public Jewish roles did feature at the more halachic pole of Jewishness (Simon and Andy) whereas those in the middle of the halacha/culture spectrum were willing to engage with women's desire for their spiritual needs to be met and with the LGBTQ community.

For the most part these young British Jews are committed to continue to be Jewish in a traditional manner but not necessarily at the observant end of the spectrum. Some observe the dietary laws under quite difficult circumstances and those who attend synagogue services generally have positive feelings about the experience. Family loyalty and warmth supplement cultural Jewishness even if observance is not particularly strong. The particular issue of the role that women can play in Judaism is not so much a generational divide as a cultural divide. Those young men considering this from the standpoint of secular society view the subaltern position of women as indefensible but from within sections of the orthodox community the opposition to women's involvement is centred not on halacha but on tradition and it is tradition which has been credited with the survival of Judaism through the centuries. The

position taken by the participants on this issue reflects their acceptance or rejection of this part of the tradition and this subject is a contentious issue for other religions as well.¹⁶¹

The liberality and concern for social justice with which the young men spoke about women's role in Judaism is also apparent in their acceptance of individual choice in matters of gender equality in society and sexual orientation in particular. The social justice issue was also reflected in their attitude towards Israel. They recognised the importance of Israel for their Jewish identity but this recognition was not going to prevent them from critical engagement. Liberalism did not prevent having strong views on some subjects amongst which were the very orthodox community, Extinction Rebellion and the Brexit vote.

Despite the Brexit vote the participants were very much integrated into British life as would be expected from their background. The support for remaining in the European Union spoke of an international rather than a nationalist outlook. Some were more nationalistic (by emphasising Britain's superiority over other countries) than others but I did not perceive outright xenophobia and unless challenged externally (sporting and cultural competition) patriotism was not overt. London was their point of reference and there were mixed opinions regarding the relationship between the capital and the rest of the country.

They were all eager to get on and make a success of their lives and recognised that they would have to work hard to succeed in academic competition for university places and subsequent careers but they also valued friendships so I did not get the impression that they were committed to success at any price. I do not think that they would recognise themselves in the gauche hapless Jewish men depicted in popular culture (page 32-34).

The participants spoke frequently of the love and respect that they had for their parents (see 4.6 James and Gerry page 103) but some also spoke frankly about some of the differences they had with their parents and the shortcomings they perceived (see David and Simon Page 103-104). In matters of national authority there was, not so much rebellion as a wish to have a different perspective (see Joel on the oil tanker capture page 184, and Charlie on monarchy page 185).

Essentialist models view identity as unchanging, coherent, homogenous and non-contradictory. I am arguing that this model is inappropriate for these young British Jews and they inhabit a fluid self, set in a three-dimensional matrix of binaries of masculinity, Jewishness and Britishness. Their identity is always in flux with identity stitched together contingently

¹⁶¹ This is not just a concern for Judaism as there is yet to be a female Cardinal in the Catholic Church although "*Theologically and theoretically it is possible*" Jesuit Fr. Federico Lombardi 4th November 2013

through a patchwork of often contradictory discourses and fragments (Kahn-Harris & Gidley, 2010 Page 51). The fragments I have presented in the data chapters show how in the course of the interviews the participants have explored concepts that they knew were part of their identity but generally had previously not thought about or worried about. In the course of the interview there were inconsistencies and contradictions as they were developing their opinions and it is very likely that an interview six to 12 months after the first would produce different opinions. What does come through in the interviews is the attempt to rationalise, and in some cases justify, why they should be Jewish as a young man in a secular country. They see that apart from a minority of the general population who have strong religious views (which ever religion they may espouse) the majority does not seem to be bothered about religion. As Alan commented “I don't think they care if you're Jewish or non-Jewish - I really don't.” When the participants were asked what being Jewish means to them the answer was couched in terms of what they and their family do. It was as if they had found out that fate/destiny had given them this quality, being a Jew, and they were trying to make sense of it by doing things they had been taught that a Jew does. Concepts about God in a Jewish context were only volunteered by Andy and I had the impression that he was just repeating a mantra that he had been taught rather than his own spontaneous opinion.

Much of the data can be viewed as supporting the proposal that being a young Jewish man in Britain means being part of the generation that is questioning the opinions and attitudes of society in general and their parents in particular. These young men's 'British masculinity' depended firstly, on how their family performed Britishness (e.g. did they have royal wedding parties – nationalist – or were they more international in outlook), and secondly what was the attitude of other males in their family regarding their gender construction (did they tend to a competitive or a more cooperative mode of masculinity). For these young men using the binaries of masculinity and Britishness that I have mentioned there is the additional factor of being a Jew superimposed on their developing identity. How Jewishness was performed in their environment is likely to influence their position in the binary between halacha and cultural affinity as I have argued. As mentioned above, for all three aspects of identity the individual is likely to interrogate the positions available as they develop their own version of Jewish British masculinity.

7.5 Contribution to the Literature

Research on the contemporary Anglo-Jewish community has centred on concerns regarding Jewish identity, the shifting demography and religious composition of the community, and trends in education. The work of Keith Kahn-Harris and Ben Gidley showed that the response

to rising rates of exogamy in the USA noted in 1990 caused a shift in the attitude of the communal leadership towards emphasising the danger to the community (Gidley & Kahn-Harris, 2012; Kahn-Harris & Gidley, 2010). They noted the introduction of the programme *Jewish Continuity* by Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks in 1993 which was absorbed into the UJIA (United Jewish Israel Appeal) in 1997 with the focus of preventing out-marriage and promoting Jewish identity. The demography of the community was changing with the high birth rate of the very orthodox section and aging of the rest of the community (D. Staetsky & Boyd, 2015). At the same time Jewish schools became more popular (Boyd, 2019; L. D. Staetsky & Boyd, 2016) and have become the subject of long term research (H. Miller & Pomson, 2014; H. Miller, Pomson, Wolf, & Scott, 2017). I argue that hitherto the literature on Anglo-Jewry has not taken the impact of gender seriously as a dimension of Anglo-Jewish experience neglecting male Jewish life. What has not featured in research in the community is how young male Jews are constructing their masculinity in conjunction with their understanding and performance of Judaism as they are growing up in contemporary British society and this is the space where this study is located.

Recent research in masculinity studies features alternatives to hegemonic masculinity (see 2.3 above) and underlines the importance of specificity in research on masculinities in different contexts. Brendan Gough for example has “advocated research into local enactments of masculinities within specific communities” (Gough, 2018 Page 1). In line with this, the intersection of additional elements of identity, in this case Jewishness and how that impacted on young British Jews construction of masculinity, was the concern of my research. What the data reveals is how the participants are negotiating between stimuli from the different strands of their identity. For example, the importance of tradition and perpetuating that tradition was a frequent theme in Jewishness. However they also had the modern British outlook of liberalism and equality especially in relation to issues of sexuality and gender role which ran counter to generally accepted Jewish tradition. In order to reconcile this difference tradition and liberalism had to be less well defined and a more nuanced perspective adopted than previously accepted. British Jews have ties of kinship with fellow Jews in other countries and there is a history of an international outlook by Jews and this has balanced their undoubted attachment to Britain. London, being their domicile, holds a central place in their sense of national identity and this was challenged when they ventured outside London and found that the rest of the population had a different perspective on Britishness to them. Antisemitism is a major concern for the Jewish community and instances are given prominence in the Jewish press but for this group there was comparatively little experience of it. Even at universities

which had a reputation for being uncomfortable places for Jews there was no overt anti-Jewish feeling. There was disparity between the expectation and the actuality of antisemitism and anti-Israel activity. Physical activity, in particular sport and exercise, has long been a motif for masculinity and with team sports there is the opportunity to be competitive (opponents) and cooperative (team-mates) in the same space. For a substantial proportion of these young men physical activity was more for personal enjoyment and fitness than aggression and competition. It is within the blurring of boundaries of identity that these nuances are to be found relating to young male Jews in Britain and I believe my study demonstrates this.

7.6 Methodological Discussion

I believe that my research is within the 'Post-modern' epistemological tradition (see 3.3 page 69) and is appropriate for studying a demographic which, although a very small section of the population, is nevertheless heterogenous in its composition. I have mentioned my difficulty in recruiting participants (see 3.5 page 72) which I have attributed to institutional hesitation consequent upon the discourses around gender and electronic databases at the time. Also my research was from a London university which might have been seen as patronising by potential participants from outside London. Despite these difficulties I succeeded in assembling a group of diverse young Jewish men and once I had made personal contact with potential participants and explained the purpose of my research I found that they were willing to be interviewed. The experience of being listened to without interrogation or interruption by an older person who was curious to know and accept their view of the world was something that they seemed to enjoy and the success of the interviews can be found in the richness of the data that I obtained. The interview process was best when conducted face-to-face in an interview room and only slightly less so when at the subject's home. Remote interview by Skype was acceptable, least satisfactory was when the interview was in a coffee bar. Having a second interview was extremely useful even if it was only a phone call follow-up.

I was unable to conduct a focus group and the discussion group I did have was not completely satisfactory (see 3.9 page 85). It was however the only way I was able to get a group together and it did produce some data that I would not have been able to obtain in individual interviews. I had tried to engage Jewish organisations in this project by meeting the national organisers of two of the largest youth groups and I had also been to see some communal leaders all without success in recruiting more participants. In spite of the difficulties in obtaining my sample outlined above these interviews yielded a lot of rich data which indicates that young men are capable of engaging with serious concepts of self and with me.

I transcribed the interviews myself which had the advantage in that I was intimately familiar with the data but had the disadvantage of being extremely time-consuming. As I did this study part-time I was advised not to try and use a computer programme for the analysis but if a similar project would be undertaken by a full-time team with more participants to be interviewed then professional transcription and computer aided analysis would be preferable. My study had quite a wide age range because I was interested in a broad cross-section of youth for this empirical study. A larger study of a narrower age band would be more appropriate if a quantitative analytical project were desired but this would require more intensive recruitment procedures than I was able to undertake. It is possible that if the approach been made at a higher level than me it would have garnered greater co-operation. If this research were to be repeated I would advocate a multi-centre approach indicative of a major project and including research representatives from the university of at least one, preferably two, moderately sized provincial communities in addition to Birkbeck College to counter any subliminal anti-London bias. If a multi-centre study were to be proposed then the interview structure would need to be formalised to ensure consistency and the interview recordings to be heard by all the researchers. I would recommend that two interviews be scheduled in the planning of the research. The visual aid was particularly helpful when looking at the intersections of the aspect of identity and I think that should continue to be used and it would help a similar study on other ethnic minority groups.

7.7 Reflexivity

I have described my motivation for doing this research and my impression of how in my adolescence I constructed my British Jewish masculine identity in the Preamble to this thesis (page 11) and my professional experience as a doctor in 3.9 (page 85). I have always been interested in learning new skills and in my professional life my practice was always in the forefront of innovations in the practice of medicine and administration of general practice. Since retirement I have channelled that interest into academic research into Judaism via the MA degree which has both broadened and deepened my personal religious commitment. Doing this project has furthered this process and has enabled me to look afresh at these three aspects of my own identity as a male British Jew through the eyes of an upcoming generation. Even where I have disagreed with some of the views of my participants I have wanted to understand where they were coming from and what had been their motivation for their opinion.

My position within Anglo-Jewry would generally be considered to be one of mainstream orthodoxy (I wear a head covering) by most Jews but I have friends in all sections of the

community and I have been a regular attender and presenter at Limmud as well as other mixed Jewish forums. The participants would see me as someone of their grandparent's generation and may assume that my attitude and opinions would reflect that age-divide. I have described (in 3.9) how I tried to dispel any prescriptive assumptions they may have had about the interview. I am placed in the Jewish community but not in any position of communal authority and by stressing the research aspect of this work I am not affiliated to any religious denomination and can observe and interact with the interviewee taking an interested and non-judgemental detached view. I described how I opened the interview in 3.7.1 above and was conscious that the young men may have been wary of speaking to someone much older than them and I have mentioned how some were reticent and others launched into a prepared speech (see 3.9). I thought that I had managed to gain their confidence after a short time and they were prepared to speak to me as a 'concerned and interested adult.' As an older Jewish man who was listening to and accepting their opinions I was able to be an audience for them to expound views that they may have been reticent about in raising with their parents. By just being myself and not trying to appear as a contemporary, which they would have seen through very quickly, I think they respected my integrity and they felt comfortable about bringing up some subjects that aroused strong feelings. For instance Mark became angry and contemptuous on three occasions; speaking about religion generally (about as much sense as pastafarianism), Extinction Rebellion (just stupid, stopping people going to work), and the rainbow poppy (disrespecting the blood of the soldiers). Gerry became quite agitated speaking about the Haredi world (a cult), Jewish schools (bigoted parents), and Israeli politics (far right-wing governments). I had the impression that Andy was being uncooperative and trying to hide his opinions but he did become animated in his dismissal of Reform Judaism and women rabbis.

My personal transition from a medical career first in hospital practice and then in suburban general practice to doctorate student in psychosocial studies, a branch of social sciences in the humanities section of Birkbeck College might seem a complete change of direction.

Admittedly the immediate concern of alleviating the distress of the patient before me in my consulting room or at the bedside in the middle of the night calls for a completely different set of skills to those required in a research seminar, lecture hall or library but there are points of contact. As a senior GP Trainer teaching a trainee or medical students I taught that the diagnosis of a patient's condition was not complete unless that diagnosis had been made in medical, psychological, and social aspects; that is, a holistic approach. An acute injury or illness in a labourer doing casual work requiring time off work inevitably puts financial stress

on the family and if the condition becomes chronic (long-term) then the psychological consequences for the worker may be depression, anxiety, and even family breakup. The same considerations apply whoever in the family presents; a child I diagnosed with an incurable neurological disease or a young woman with breast cancer, all had profound consequences in psychosocial terms. My practice did its own night and weekend emergency work and we estimated that between the partners we saw at least one member of 90% of the families on our list every year. Given this background my transition to research in the interaction between an individual and his social setting has been fairly smooth. I have to mention one particular area where a major difference was noted and that is in writing anything. In medicine the SOAP (Subjective, Objective, Action, Plan) system of Problem Orientated Notes requires concise records and I had to learn a completely different style of writing for this thesis. However my supervisors have commented that sometimes I still write like a doctor.

Chapter 8 Conclusion and Implications for Further Study

The research questions for this thesis: -

- **How do young Jews understand and perform Jewishness and masculinity in contemporary Britain?**
- **How do they talk about their experience of being a young Jewish male in Britain and what are their concerns?**

The questions concern masculinity and also identity in both personal and group terms, and thus feed into the general research fields of masculinity and identity and I shall remark on these separately.

As I have been arguing that gender is socially constructed young men have to consider what society expects of them and whether they agree with the expectations or whether they find themselves at odds with the objectives that their society has provided. In the event of disparity between the expectations of their milieu, their family and peers, and their personal inclination the conflict is at risk of provoking severe psychological stress. Mental health problems in young men are a major cause of morbidity and the suicide rate in this demographic indicates that men, unable to cope and control with the expectations upon them, seek release in the only ways they can control. A Norwegian study of suicides of young men who had no prior history of mental illness suggested unbearable shame and loneliness due to inability to cope with expectation from family and friends lead to the act as compensatory masculinity (M. L. Rasmussen, Haavind, & Dieserud, 2018). I have argued for a change in the axis of thinking about masculinity from hard against soft to competitive against cooperative modes allows a different perspective of masculinities to be constructed. Cooperation enhances emotional intelligence and by promoting a supportive social framework men would be able to deal with challenges which might question their manliness and have overwhelmed them. Cooperation has been shown to give superior results than individuals in a 'survival game'¹⁶² that I curated for new groups of General Practice Trainees which demonstrate that they could achieve better results working together than separately. I do not deny the importance of setting goals in driving up standards and in my medical practice these were referred to as "SMART" goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time bound) and for the individual in a learning situation the competition is with themselves. Competition

¹⁶² Survival Game – The group are survivors of a plane crash in a remote area and have a random list of objects retrieved. They have to rank the importance of the objects, first as individuals and then as a group. The lists are compared to that produced by an expert panel. The group list has always been superior to any individual list.

has an important place in life, for social, academic, and professional advancement but it can and should be without the negative connotation of dominance and hegemony which have been traditional hallmarks of masculinity. By the change of masculinity axis and promoting cooperation as masculinity mode I hope this can feed into the generality of masculinity studies and thence to the wider public perception of what it means to be a man. I am opening up a space for men to be allowed to be vulnerable and seek help for their problems without their manhood being belittled or ridiculed.

Studying identity from a social constructionist perspective requires acknowledgement of the various social forces that operate on the individual. My argument has been that for masculinity, Jewishness and Britishness are such forces and because all are variable identity has been continually constructed and deconstructed as social circumstances require. I have shown that masculinity can be analysed along an axis of competitive to cooperative modes, Jewishness along an axis of performative Judaism to cultural affinity to Jewishness, and Britishness along an axis of nationalism to internationalism upon which is superimposed cosmopolitan London against the rest of the country. Being born Jewish is a passive process but performing Jewishness covers an extremely wide range of activity encompassing the halachic and cultural modes that I have described. I argue that the Jewish emphasis on communal cooperation generally supports the cooperative mode of masculinity and Britishness has influenced the way that Judaism has been performed. My argument is that young male Jews inhabit a three-dimensional matrix of variable masculinity, Jewishness and Britishness which changes in both the short term and longer term as they proceed through adolescence. Although fluidity about the axes may lessen in adulthood there is still the potential for variability should an occasion demand.

The findings of my study have important implications for social policy within the Anglo-Jewish community. These young Jews did not feel particularly engaged with the religious and lay leadership of all denominations of the community. They were also generally uncomfortable with the position of women being subordinate and discriminated against by traditional Judaism. These issues present a challenge to the policy makers and communal leadership and if they are ignored and not addressed then estrangement from Judaism by this generation is a distinct possibility.

I believe that this model can be applied wherever gender, theology and location operate. In the context of diaspora studies, it might throw light on how young men in other UK religious minorities that have strong cultural traditions such as Islam, Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist,

negotiate their masculinity in the context of their Britishness and also feed into UK masculinity studies.

For international Jewish studies, there are sizeable Jewish communities in Canada, Argentina, Australia, and Continental Europe where Jewishness, national identity and masculinity have not been studied. I cite these countries because they are each developing a distinct national identity to differentiate from their neighbours. Canadians emphasise that they are not American, South American Jewry has a long history with Argentinian being the largest community, and Australia has a policy of separating from the constitutional embrace of the UK. In continental Europe despite the European Union, France has always been particular about its own national identity and language protected by the Académie Française. The Jewish community in Germany has grown with an influx of Jews from Russia and there are signs of resurgence of communities in Eastern Europe. I believe a study like mine would be useful both to the communities studied and the generality of masculine studies.

My final comment is that this has been an empirical rather than a theoretical project. The binary nature of the aspects of identity could have leant them to a theoretical study of the nature of the opposing poles of masculinity, Jewishness, and Britishness in an abstract conceptualising manner. This has not been my mode of working as I preferred to interact with people rather than concepts.

Word count 99663

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Appendix 1 – Illustrations

Mark Gertler 1916 *Merry-Go-Round*David Bomberg 1912 *Vision of Ezekiel*

David Bomberg 1915 *The Billet*



David Bomberg 1920 *Ghetto Theatre*



Pre-Zionist Leipnik Passover Haggadah Altona 1740



Passover Haggadah – 1955 Four Attitudes to the Zionist Dream



Appendix 2 Invitation letter and Questionnaire

Anthony Nicholls
 c/o Professor Stephen Frosh
 Department of Psychosocial Studies
 Room 502A, 30 Russell Square
 Birkbeck College, University of London
 LONDON WC1B 5DT

INVITATION AND INFORMATION LETTER Jewish Males 14 – 24 years

I am doing research on how people like you feel and think about what being a young Jewish man means in Britain today. Do you think that there are some advantages to being Jewish or is it difficult and if so how? What do you think about the way that Jews are written or spoken about in books, the newspapers, TV and radio and on the internet? Do you have any role models from Jewish history or culture or are they irrelevant to you? What contact do you have with non-Jews and what do you think their opinion of Jews is?

I think it is important that what you feel and have to say about being a young Jewish youth in today's Britain is heard and I am writing to ask for your help. My research is from Birkbeck College, University of London and is under the guidance of Professor Stephen Frosh and Dr Benjamin Gidley who have written a lot about how young people feel about growing up in Britain today. Attached is a questionnaire that I would like you to fill in and return to me by email anthonymicholls@btinternet.com with 'Questionnaire' as the subject. Your answers will be completely confidential, you do not have to tell your parents what you have said but you are of course free to talk about your answers to them.

THERE ARE NO 'WRONG' ANSWERS AND IT IS YOUR VOICE THAT I WOULD LIKE TO HEAR!

I plan to invite a selection of you to a personal interview and also to get small groups of you to discuss matters that seem to be important. Your consent will be asked for before the interview and group and you may stop the interview and leave at any time. After the interview and/or the group your consent will be asked for again. The interviews and groups will be confidential and only used in the research with your permission. If anything is used in a book, article or published on the internet, the people who told me their opinions will not be named so you can be sure that you can speak freely.

I do hope that you will help this research and fill in the questionnaire even if you would rather not be interviewed.

Yours sincerely

Anthony Nicholls MB, BS, MA

Questionnaire

Name

Date of Birth

Home address

Email/mobile phone

Secular Education

Please describe your school/college

Jewish Affiliation

Please describe the synagogue (if any) you attend

Jewish Education (If any)

How do you spend your free time?

Is there anything that you specifically like about being Jewish?

Have you personally experienced any disadvantage in being Jewish?

Please give three examples of what being a Jewish man means to you.

Would you be interested in being interviewed either in person or by Skype?

Would you be interested in participating in a focus group to discuss being a Jewish man?

Please return to anthonymicholls@btinternet.com with Questionnaire as the subject

Appendix 3 Individual Interviews

Interview Setting

I gave the interviewee the choice of venue which may be at their school/college, place of work or synagogue or a social space, such as a coffee shop. I make sure that there are other people in earshot in the building; I would not be alone in a building with the interviewee.

Concluding the interview

When the interview has come to a natural end, I shall thank them again and ask them to sign the post-interview consent form.

Writing up the transcript

I shall make notes noting both pre- and post-tape talk along with my reactions and observations about the interview. I shall consider whether the interview affects the trajectory of the research project.

I shall listen to the recording several times before making a transcript and listen again reading the transcript and then highlight the items that will form the coding for analysis.

Appendix 4 Identity colour disks

Otis

Do want to be part of British society but still able to preserve traditions.

So that's one of the key things that many non-Jews see about Jews, that they are British but also have their traditions.

I think there is more of a divide between the more religious and the less religious

I don't see being a man is so different to being a woman. I think genders are becoming so like a non-thing

There's always going to be the biological differences but right now I don't think being a male to me is so important. It's just like being human...it's not even a question.

, I'm British, it's not even a question. If this country suddenly becomes extremely anti-Semitic then I would like..question my Britishness



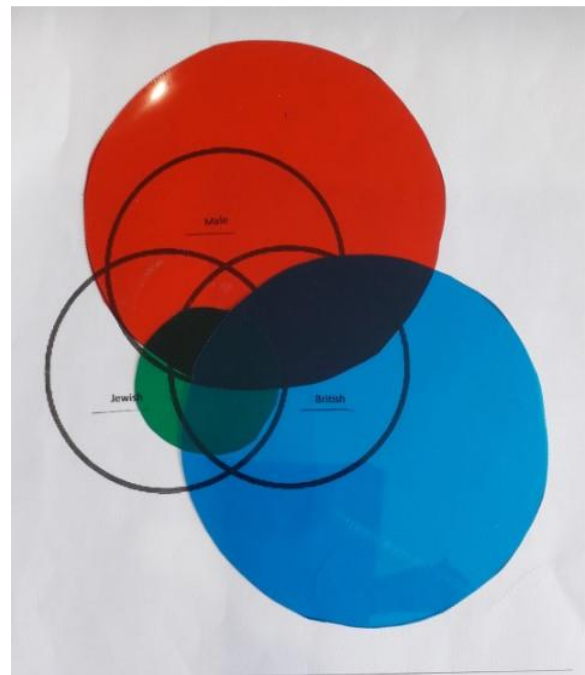
Hugh

The college is definitely a masculine space. When we get our rifles out everybody says the lines from 'Full Metal Jacket' so when we do the high-risk stuff you get all the men going over the top.

I like being patriotic. Its always good fun watching an England game of some sort. Being at military college you have to be patriotic.

The educational programme with Saturday lectures leaves little scope for conventional Jewish life. Little engagement with the forces' chaplain and none with his home rabbi. I've spoken to him a couple of times over the years, but I wouldn't say I have a relationship with him.

Israel: Most of them are for Israel (in the conflict)



Simon

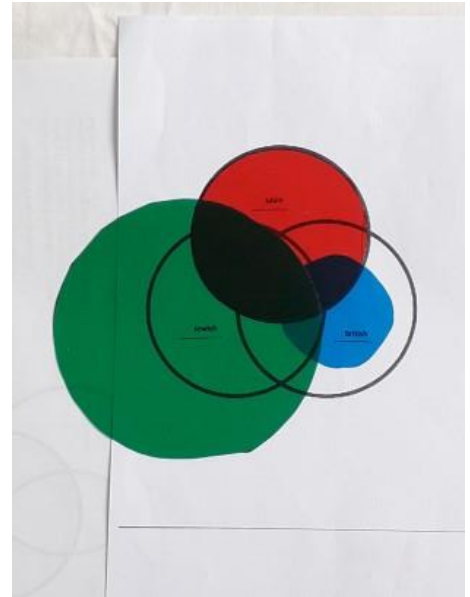
Minimal contact with non-Jewish world. Orthodox Jewish schools and 2 years yeshiva pre-university

I am particular to pray with a minyan 3 times a day and heavy emphasis on study numerous hours both morning and evening

We should very much do the washing up, clean the house, go out to earn a living, be a family man, being engaged in studying Torah, keeping to halacha

The Torah forbids, not being a homosexual, but the act of homosexuality. It does not fit in with the halachic system

I am grateful to Britain but primarily we are Jewish people who happen to live here. It is merely a check point on a journey to something higher



Gerry

Being Jewish isn't something I chose. You're born into it. Being Jewish is about putting the middle finger up to Hitler who tried to destroy my family for who they are Synagogue doesn't appeal to me, but I'll still go to the Seder Meal

I pay close attention to what is going on in Israel Beautiful country, only democracy in Middle East but keep voting in far-right governments

I do feel patriotic. I feel proud to be British, I love this country British values: Tolerance, Courtesy, Respect for law, Freedom

I adhere to the norms society has created for me. You won't see me cry or get emotional in public. I go to the gym several times a week and lift weights. I'm surrounded by loads of men lifting weights because we think that's what men should do

Intellectualism and self-improvement. I want to be a morally better person, fitter and stronger It's physical and mental and emotional



Appendix 5 Participants

Pseudonym	Age at interview	Occupation	Family Affiliation	Religious observance	Jewish schooling ?	Attending community
Otis	16	School	Sephardi/US	Moderate	Yes	US
Alan	19	Student	Ashkenazi/US	Moderate	No	No
David	23	Trainee law	Ashkenazi/US	High	No	US
Simon	23	Student	Ashkenazi/US	Very high	Yes	Independent modern orthodox
James	17	College (special needs)	Reform/US	Low	No	No
Terry	22	Student	Ashkenazi/US	Mild	No	No
Hugh	17	Military college	Ashkenazi/US	Mild	Yes	US
Andy	14	School	Ashkenazi/Adath Yisrael	Very high	Yes	Orthodox Union
Gerry	23	Retail Manager	Ashkenazi/Reform	Low	No	No
Joel	15	School	Ashkenazi/US	Moderate	Yes	US
Mark	15	School	Ashkenazi/Liberal	Very low	Yes	No
Nigel	15	School	Ashkenazi/US	Moderate	No	US
Charlie	15	School	Ashkenazi/Masorti	Moderate	Yes	Masorti
Arthur	15	School	Ashkenazi/Masorti	Moderate	Yes	Masorti
Oscar	15	School	Ashkenazi/Reform	Low	Yes	Reform
Rob	21	Baker/Auditor	Ashkenazi/Hasid	Lapsed high	Yes	No

Appendix 6 Spreadsheets

Masculinity

Name	Gender & Religion	Trans-gender	Sexual orientation	Gender & Public Space	Women & Religion	Women & Relationship	Women & Non-relationship
Simon University 23	Actions study prayer	Does not recognise	Unable to relate to gay people		Seeks legal backing but resorts to tradition	Conforms to traditional model	Condescension & denial of women's autonomy
David Trainee Barrister 23	Practices as a male	Does not fit with his construction of gender	<i>I am fairly metosexual but I don't think that's any less male</i>	<i>I would strongly identify as male but then I don't think committing oneself to be male commits you to any sort of behaviour, or social behaviour. David is over 6 feet tall. His size projects physicality. He has no need of masculine mannerisms to bolster his maleness.</i>	Prioritises competence Rejects fundamentalism	Wrote, 'Finding a Jewish wife' as what being a Jewish man means	<i>A wide mix of Jewish friends Different backgrounds, some parochial and superficial and some interesting. Just interested in their Jewish bubble. Their thoughts don't extend from Golders Green Edgware.</i>
Joel School 15		Individual choice	Same sex attraction is universal. Concern about LGBTQ rights	Concern about equality in market place, gender pay gap	Rejects exclusivity of gender roles. Would prefer mixed seating in shul		Lots of friends who are girls but no relationships
James College 17		Individual choice				Recognises his immaturity	
Terry Graduate 21		Judaism should be flexible		Rationalises going to the gym	Satisfied with gender role in shul. Shul not important	Hedonistic both sexes. Paradoxical appeal. Later conformity	
Gerry Sales 23			Acceptance will lead to compassionate society	Men don't cry or be emotional. Lifts weights in gym		Early relationship failure	
Alan University 20	Rejects the gendered expectations of ultra-orthodoxy		Judaism is primitive	Refuses resort to violence. Recognises danger of macho		Could continue if exogamy. Early relationship failure	Thinks that Jewish girls are anxious about non-Jewish relationships
Hugh College 17			Had a stereotype which was challenged			Negotiated without sexual charge. Aware of 'No touching'	
Otis School 16	<i>When you step into the shul, women can't lead the service so where are your moral values?</i>			<i>I don't think being a male to me is so important. Rejects gender norms</i>	Gender is irrelevant & relegation of women is immoral		Easy working with girls
Andy School 15					Fundamentalist misogyny. Probably taught		
Mark School 15	<i>When the boys do Torah reading the girls either stay outside to talk or they have nothing to do</i>	<i>I fully support people who do, however, there's the problem of some men doing it to get into women's changing rooms</i>	<i>I think to say that one person is not allowed to stay in their sexuality is ridiculous</i>				
Nigel School 15	<i>it's a US synagogue there's much more for men to do than women and some of the stuff shuns women. I don't think that's particularly right in the 21st century world</i>	<i>There's the problem of some men doing it to get into women's changing rooms</i>	<i>There's a whole sentence in the (Torah). It says in the Torah that to lie with a man is not allowed. However, it's outdated at this point to be honest.</i>	<i>I know there's a big thing whether you're Jewish or not to be macho and every young man has that whether you're Jewish or not</i>	<i>I find that in my synagogue often women are complaining. That the mechitzahs [separation] are too high, or unseeable through. And that when the Torah's passed round they never get to kiss it, see it even and lots of people don't enjoy that</i>		
Charlie School 15	The synagogue is not doctrinaire regarding women's participation it allows individuals to choose which option they attend whilst still being under the general the community.	<i>and it's not society's job to decide what gender they are. They can change their gender; they can have surgery</i>	<i>People who are homosexual find it really hard to 'come out' to their friends. I think even though it's accepted, it's not the norm</i>	<i>Being a male is biological. I guess that being a male shapes everything I do because as I live my life</i>		<i>At my age everyone's just having fun. No one is really in it for a serious relationship. I see the point of marriage, I see like the commitment behind it, but I'm not sure.</i>	
Arthur School 15	<i>Orthodox shuls might be, have more demand for males, on males to be more masculine. Supposes that Orthodox Judaism is gendered</i>	<i>I think it's perfectly fine for them to change gender. He does acknowledge that sometimes the trans issue can be weaponised by someone who wants to trivialise the issue</i>	<i>Liberal views on homosexuality; I believe that people could do whatever they feel; One person I know came out as bisexual. But everyone kind of accepted it very quickly</i>		<i>When I go to service at shul you see women praying, you see women being rabbis and doing just as much as the men would do.</i>		
Oscar School 15			His school tolerated variable sexual orientation; <i>Well one of my friends is gay yea. I think another might be bisexual</i>	<i>The danger of being on the streets, a young man; That it is young men who were being targeted and requiring uniformed police protection this implies that their masculinity has diminished</i>			<i>I'm friends with some girls, they're nice</i>
Rob Baker/Au pair 21	<i>Jewish masculinity is being very skinny, very pale. Sat in a corner of a very big yeshiva and studying all summer. Not going out, maybe once to the mikveh [ritual bath] on I don't know, Fridays</i>		<i>Rob has known from very early on that he was gay; I'm gay but I, kind of knew that all my life growing up; I think of people saying to me, "When did you know you were gay?" that is what I think of four years old or less.</i>	<i>Non-Jewish masculinity is being like, very muscular, being alpha male, wearing, being a hipster, wearing trendy clothes, being tall, being broad. He contrasts this 'yeshiva masculinity' with the Zionist ideal; The Zionist opinions of it would probably be being beautiful and big muscles, physically fit, being good at shooting. A man should take the initiative; I feel, taking charge of a situation and trying to make everything okay. I feel it means someone bearing the brunt of certain situations</i>		<i>An idealised asexual image of marriage. I feel marriage or relationship is a real union between two people who have a similar understanding and can support each other in different areas and willing to foresee each other's shortcomings enough to readily commit to spending the rest of their lives together.</i>	

Jewishness

Name	Jewish Identity	Religiosity	Religious belief	Festivals	Food/Kashrut	Israel	Anti-Semitism	Intellectualisation	Outlook
Simon University 23	Not had to think about	Must pray with a minyan 3 times a day	Frequent mention of Torah and Halacha. Encouraged by the Torah and ultimately by the One above			Tremendous energy, sense of community, everybody is Jewish	Not experienced Sorry to disappoint you	Masculinity bound up with study	Minimal contact with non-Jews
David Trainee 23	I guess from my parents actually. Constructs through practice	Born with certain obligations and you just have to accept that as part of reality	Without some concept of God there is no morality			Not mentioned	A little banter at school. Apathy at University. People credit Jews with more than perhaps they are	Critique of modern philosophers. The lack of an obvious focus of higher direction, i.e. God is causing society to fragment.	We live in a society which doesn't have common values and a common understanding of reality and I think that's problematic
Joel School 15	Family history - Stories from my great-uncle. Prayer & T'sit-T'sit at school	Regular Shabbat attendance and youth service				Good that there is a homeland, Disagree with settlements & concern over political corruption	Felt objectified by verbal comments, Jewish school blazer badge equivalent to Yellow Star	Keen to learn about other religions. Acquiring skills for when he lives alone	Associates with LGBTQ activism. Notes lack of ethnic diversity in some jobs. Sensitive to mal-treatment of women at work.
James College 17	The religion is amazing Preparing for my Bar Mitzvah I realised I'm part of the religion	If I go the the synagogue I don't understand anything	My family may not you know, pay humorous attention to Judaism but we are all a Jewish family and I would try to stick with that and meet a Jewish girl.		Some of the things I love about Judaism is the foods you wouldn't get normally	I love the things you can do there. Makes you proud to be Jewish	If someone says to me, "You're a stinky Jew." - Factor judicious "Jews like Money" - That's one thing that's been said to me	Recognised his limitations but respected his teachers and appreciated their efforts rejoiced in his successes.	Best friend isn't Jewish. Will talk to anyone. Jeremy Corbyn, people have been saying to me, "If he was elected," unlikely I think. But if elected it would be a lot harder for Jews. Apparently, they're against us
Terry Graduate 21	More aware away from London. Ethnicity, "thick curly black hair"	I still see myself as an orthodox Jew in an orthodox tradition	I am religious to a certain extent. I have the surname [redacted]. If I open a sidra, I believe in God. You are engaging with Jewish culture, Jewish traditions, celebrating the festivals. That's very important to me.			Identifies with cousins in Israel. Defends on internet and media	Aware of being perceived differently. Spent a year in Paris and observed anti-Semitism there	Preferred challenge of reading major history to lighter fiction	You have to adapt to British culture. I'm proud that my university experience was not Judeised.
Gerry Sales 23	A racial matter, not something I chose to be, you're born into it	Synagogue doesn't appeal to me. Still go to Sedar and read Ma Nishkana	Clear personal philosophy: I want to be a morally better person as well. And I want to be fitter, and stronger as well. It's physical and mental, and emotional, so that's all self-improvement.			Beautiful country, can't understand voting in far-right governments	Can't understand why UK Jews demand IHRA definition	The history of our religion has been intellectualism and open mindedness and curiosity and thirst for knowledge	Local party politics. Very concerned about abuse in Charedi community
Alan University 20	I do philosophy and identity, I keep kosher. Recognise myself through the eyes of others	Re-vamp Friday night Jso. "We'll say the prayers, light candles, wash, matze"				I've been to Israel a couple of times; I don't really see allegiance to the country	Kitchen jokes - traying up the bacon for breakfast. Plans re-working The Jew of Malta to show absurdity	Identity has grown because of research and the intellectual side of it	Appreciates that London more unfriendly than provinces
Hugh College 17	Strengthened since away from home. Appreciates kosher food	Saturday lessons. Little contact with Rabbi			When I sit at dinner and they ask, "Why are you having vegetarian?" And I say, "It's because I'm Jewish." And I start explaining about kosher, and can't eat the meat	Finds that his peers support Israel	Jokey 'Hi, Jew' in corridor.	The course is very physical but engineering is prominent	His being at military college challenges non-Jewish perception
Otis School 16	Jewish school, family festivals, food	Older generation more religious than younger and become "judgey"	A lot of people are less religious but more, like to stick to the traditions, more conservative in their views. But don't see God as a big part of their life	It brings family together, cos you have lots of holidays and if you have family across the world you visit them. We'll be in Israel for Pesach, Manchester for Rosh Hashanah and I have cousins in Munich who come over all the time and they would not come over if it wasn't for the Jewish holidays.	I'll keep Kosher as that's part of being Jewish. It also creates identity. No-one keeps Kosher in America- the place where it's easiest to keep. In England, it's different. Keeping kosher is quite a normal thing. And it's not only the super-religious that keep Kosher, a lot of people keep Kosher. In America only the very religious keep Kosher.	Israel creates negative views about Jews	Aware of continental anti-Semitism	Jews prominent in politics and law	Being in a Jewish school excludes you from the outside world
Andy School 15	Very concentrated Jewish environment	Attends Youth minyan regularly	If you're Jewish there is meaning. Work towards something. With non-Jews, they work for the sake of money. For the sake of, to be supported, to be in a good matter. However, Jewish it all ends up to be to God. Working towards God.		He recognised that there is a cost to Judaism in that kosher food is more expensive: let's say for food, for instance. There's a lot of cheaper places. You can get more for being non-Jewish	"What do you mean, 'What do I think?' It's just Israel, like."	Had a problem with bus driver. Aware of an attack		"Reform will die out in 2 generations. Non-Jews don't mean anything."
Mark School 15	Identity from mother only.	Only has Friday night with maternal grandparents. No interest. Can't remember his Bar Mitzvah	I don't really believe in much religion. Because there's no proof for any of it and it's just blind faith			Had a trip after Bar Mitzvah, present from grandparents	Non-Jewish friends joke about all religion. Jews in England, even though they might not have experienced it, they'll still be quite defensive about things just because they expect people to be anti-Semitic.	Requires 100% certainty. Uses "technically" a lot	Self-reliant. Is on margins of Judaism
Nigel School 15	Revolves around community in public space and family in domestic space	I enjoy the tradition. Shul is a really nice place to go.	I think, people say, "Do you believe in God?" I do because I'm Jewish and Judaism is more than the community. I do see a belief in something there but what it is, I don't know. I do believe in God and I believe that there's something there but what it is, I don't know		Getting together every Friday night/Saturday lunch with my family	I enjoy the idea of a place where everyone around you is Jewish. You feel safe. I have no physical connection to Israel	Not experienced personally. Believes some politicians are anti-Semitic	Academic environment. Everybody very studious. The competition pushes me on.	Growing up in the Jewish bubble doesn't prepare you for everyday life. You should go out into the world
Charlie School 15	I think that community is a massive part of Judaism	I do believe in God and I believe that there's something there but what it is, I don't know. Progression.1) Morality/Ethics.2)Source material.3) For GCSE	I think, people say, "Do you believe in God?" I do because I'm Jewish and Judaism is more than the community. I do see a belief in something there but what it is, I don't know			I feel privileged to have that; any Jew can come and live here	There's stories about anti-Semitism in the Labour Party	In my family, everyone's been to university	Recently the Chief Rabbi spoke about Jews not voting for Labour which really didn't like. I don't think it's his job to speak for all Jews. I think young people should be allowed to express themselves, their political views, more than they are at the moment
Arthur School 15	I feel like the tragedies that happened in the past have built a really nice, kind, caring community	I feel like I partially believe in God. I wouldn't say when I'm praying in shul, I feel like I'm praying to God	I feel like I partially believe in God. I'd say in some ways rather than others. I wouldn't say when I'm praying in shul, I feel like I'm praying to God			It's quite an amazing country actually. It's really, really incredible in the way that it functions and how it welcomes lots of different people.	Just kind of shouting. "Jews, blah blah, money grabbers." A little bit scary because to know that people have these views about Jews and things like that		He led a small team to raise money for an international charity, WDHAA (Wings of Hope Award), and the team won a prize for being in the top 10 teams in the UK.
Oscar School 15	Jewish identity is expressed in terms of peoplehood associated with Israel and constructed in personal action at home	we keep kosher, "Not the things in the Torah that says, 'God did specifically' I don't believe in everything like that. Not sure really about God. I don't really believe in the Torah	Believes that Judaism should survive but has difficulty believing the Torah. Not really sure about God	We celebrate Chanukah, yea and yea, lots of other, the other and the main festivals	We keep kosher. We don't eat any unkosher food but we don't have to have specifically. So, we can have, erm, like beef but not specifically kosher beef. But we don't have pork and shellfish and stuff.	A great place, important for Judaism, for Jewish people. Well, just a place where Jewish people can go to, dangerous sometimes, but I really enjoyed going there	Aware of anti-Semitic tropes; just the Rothschilds, like controlling the world and there's some ideas about Jews controlling the media	Interest in classics; The Roman culture. The emperors, lots of interesting things about them. Lots of them, well, a few of them were crazy. For 'W' level he is considering; Maths, English Literature and Classics	He is expected to conform to his societal norms; Erm, well, probably to get a good job and probably expected to have a family, I guess; and for his career; I don't know exactly what career, that maybe a lawyer. Something to do with English, not sure. Rob has both academic and social aspirations; I would like to get a BA, a Masters and PhD. Ultimately put some kind of life together; being bi-polar and it's something I'm learning to navigate better. The future is uncertain but all I can do is by eating well, sleeping well, being occupied.
Rob Baker/Ju pair 21	Speech peppered with Yiddish idioms	Gradual estrangement from Chasidism	I believe in God. I really do. I think He wants us to be happy. He wants us to feel and enjoy this life. He created the world to be enjoyed and to set an example and I don't think Jews are better than non-Jews. I think we all have a part to play and I know we all have individual worth		I try to keep kosher and there are certain things I won't eat	Supports Israel in the abstract but did not find it helpful regarding his sexuality. Associates his mental problems with his experience	Did not have the social skill or confidence to refute an obviously stereotypical trope and preferred to withdraw rather than confront the situation.	Jewish values are, working hard, being academic, taking education seriously, which is not something some Chasidim believe in	

Britishness

Name	Identity	Patriotism	Gratitude	London	Europe	Nationalist	Loyalty
Simon University 23	<i>We are Jewish who happen to live here</i>	<i>Not much kinship with England</i>	<i>Very grateful for hospitality</i>				Minimal
David Trainee Barrister 23	<i>Liking for order and civility. I like a good queue</i>						
Joel School 15		<i>I like it a lot</i>			<i>I don't agree with Brexit but there we go</i>		Could have done better
James College 17	<i>Strict over health.Crime & Punishment</i>	<i>I'm very proud to be British</i>					
Terry Graduate 21	<i>British university culture. Parties and night clubs</i>			<i>When you leave London you see the real Britain</i>		<i>Anti Ascot and grouse shooting</i>	
Gerry Sales 23	<i>Respect for rule of law.Tolerance and curtesy</i>	<i>Proud to be British</i>				<i>Anti-nationalist</i>	
Alan University 20		<i>Only in sports or cultural competition</i>		<i>London differs from UK</i>			<i>No conflict</i>
Hugh College 17		<i>You have to fit in</i>					<i>England over Israel</i>
Otis School 16	<i>I'm British.It's not even a question</i>	<i>Falkland Isles.Britain had the guts to go to war</i>			<i>Brexit (referendum) was a mistake, it was just to get votes away from UKIP. We'll be fine in the long term but not in the short term</i>		<i>We don't like forcing our country</i>
Andy School 15	<i>I'll go with wherever I'm born</i>				<i>Definitely I think there will be a period in Britain when the pound will be very low and there'll be a whole, there will be a 'bust' period. So, everything will be like 2008 again I think, but then eventually, a few years after that it will become better and stronger after they've dealt with it.</i>		
Mark School 15	<i>I'm British and grew up in Britain</i>	<i>Patriotism is lacking in Britain</i>				<i>Angry over LGBT 'poppy'</i>	<i>I support my country</i>
Nigel School 15	<i>Britain is the country I have grown up and lived in</i>	<i>I would say I'm reasonably patriotic. I feel strong connection with Britain</i>			<i>I honestly think that we shouldn't have left the EU. I didn't agree with the reasons. Now that we've left, I didn't agree with the idea of a second referendum because that's anti-democratic</i>	<i>I've never actually been taught British values and what they are</i>	<i>Do I have more of a duty to join the British Army or the Israeli Army if I were to join one?</i>
Charlie School 15	<i>You know, it's my home. I don't want to leave England. He supports a second-tier football club</i>	<i>My mum and family are big fans of the monarchy we've had royal wedding parties.I don't feel any sense of love for them.</i>		<i>I love London</i>	<i>I don't like Brexit</i>	<i>I don't feel any sense of love for the leaders of the country</i>	
Arthur School 15	<i>Britain; I think it's great. I think, I quite like England a lot</i>			<i>How amazing the city is. I think it's a great place to be brought up.</i>		<i>Experience of Britain outside London is limited and rather naive; The rest of the country, we've gone to the countryside a few times. It's very nice, lots of greenery</i>	<i>I feel representing your country, and the people in your country in a good light</i>
Oscar School 15	<i>I like being British; the idea of accepting all races and religions and democracy</i>	<i>Accepts his hybrid identity with primary attachment to Britain but warm concern for Israel being integral for his Jewishness; I guess I would rather be British than from another country</i>		<i>Does see a contrast between London and the rest of the UK; London's capital city, it's the main, the largest, most expensive place. Probably more modern than the rest of the country. London has a different cultural milieu from the rest of the country.</i>	<i>No strong views on Brexit</i>	<i>You're a British Jew or a Jewish Brit. I've talked about that at my shul with some of the youth programmes, Jewish and British identity</i>	
Rob Baker/Au pair 21	<i>Does not have settled identity; . I really like living in England. If I've been away, I feel so calm when I come back to Heathrow</i>						

Education

Name	First school	Secondary school	Post school	Secular Learning	Jewish Learning	Hobbies & Interests
Simon University 23	Jewish Zionist	Jewish. Very positive. Influence of peer group most important	Yeshiva. Finance and Tax	Completing 3 year degree course	Repeat visits to Yeshiva, Many hours daily in UK	Regards religious study as a hobby
David Trainee Barrister 23		Non-Jewish, private. <i>A lot of money for not much</i>	Philosophy Theology	Bar Exams	Informal Chavrutah	
Joel School 15	Jewish Regimented. Tsit-tsit & daily prayers	Jewish. Felt overwhelmed at first. Less regimented	N/A		<i>RE Islam & Judaism. Everything relates back to Judaism</i>	Tennis & Squash, Cooking, Reading detective novels
James College 17	Special. Many behaviour problems	Special set, normal school. Teachers so kind	N/A	N/A	Managed Bar Mitzvah by rote learning	All sports, computer games
Terry Graduate 21		Non-Jewish, private	University Law & French			Watching films, reading, gym for own fitness
Gerry Sales 23		Non-Jewish, private. Very positive experience	Politics and Philosophy. Loved it. No interest in Jsoc		Idealised abstract view	Politics. Addicted to gym
Alan University 20		Non-Jewish, private	Philosophy		Wants to re-vamp Jsoc Friday night	Visiting art galleries. Theatre Production
Hugh College 17		Jewish up to Y11 then Military College	N/A	P.E. Drill, Rifle training. No language at Jewish school	Nil	Was scout leader. Bouldering Programming Video Games
Otis School 16		Jewish school. <i>Not sure if a good thing</i>	N/A			Youth movement. Politics. Shopping
Andy School 15	Jewish. Not much secular. Heavy kodesh	Jewish, more secular but still heavy kodesh	N/A	Okay with maths, doesn't like English, <i>I just don't like writing a lot</i>		Computer games & football
Mark School 15		Jewish. Doors off toilets due to vaping	N/A	Prefers science & maths. Dislike of 'soft' subjects	Not interested	Air Cadets, Cycling Extreme sports, Shooting
Nigel School 15	Jewish Zionist. Small, limited outside opportunities	Selective, independent, boys'school	N/A	Science, Maths, Languages. Doesn't like English texts - boring		Music - saxophone piano, plays by ear. Sports badminton, squash, water polo, football
Charlie School 15	Reform Judaism	Co-ed Comprehensive, Jewish Modern Orthodox	N/A	High academic expectations	<i>Progression;1) Morality/Ethics,2)Source material;3) For GCSE</i>	<i>I went to the climate strikes, one of the climate strikes and I think my generation worries more.</i>
Arthur School 15	Reform Judaism	Co-ed Comprehensive, Jewish Modern Orthodox. <i>A lot of people; you feel you are part of a massive thing and it's not like very like personal .</i>	N/A	<i>The opportunities it gives are like similar to a private school and the grades it gets are very high. But it's not a private school</i>	<i>it's one of the favourite things about the JS session is discussing with them and understanding why they believe a lot of what they believe and I think, every now and then you get a teacher who's so like, stuck in their ways. But a lot of them you can reason with them and have very, very good discussions with them</i>	A national management contest WOHA which involved running a number of projects involving his school, his synagogue, the parents' workplaces and a charity walk covering every London Premier football stadium. The project required the team to work for quite a long time under stress developing skills in marketing, communication and logistics which tested their friendship
Oscar School 15	Reform Judaism	Cross communal Jewish. <i>One of the best schools that I looked at; a nice place when I visited, nice people</i>	N/A	<i>I like History, Latin and English Literature, Chemistry as well.</i>	Not enthusiastic	Has a circle of non-Jewish friends that he has made due to his membership of a rugby club, a football team and a non-Jewish scout troop. He became involved with each of these through friends and he left the scouts when his friends left and this suggests a pattern of his friendships leading his activities.
Rob Baker/Au pair 21	Bobover Chedar	Yeshivot in England, New York, Toronto, Israel		<i>Limmud chol there would be counting 1 to 100 or very simple division. I'm not very good at Maths, small Geography, small US History. I would go to the library in Toronto.</i>	Has spent a lot of time in yeshivot but he did not mention anything of the content of his time there.	<i>I love photography</i>

Appendix 7 Postscript – Covid-19

Studying the population response in the early stage of pandemic restrictions

Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic affected not only individuals, but it caused trauma to societal infrastructures, whether political, economic or religious, both large and small. Faced with the breakdown of familiar loci of identity construction people struggled to adapt to the changed landscape of their lives. This small study, part of a larger study of Anglo-Jewish masculinity, examined a sample of young Jews to see how they were attempting to comprehend their changed situation.

I did the original series of interviews between December 2018 and January 2020. I had approached the interviewees directly in order to produce a range of ages and religiosity that would reflect the general London area Anglo-Jewish community. I carried out sixteen in-depth interviews and have written up the analyses.

Introduction - Covid-19

There had been international epidemics in the last twenty years; SARS in 2002, Avian flu (H5N1) in 2005, MERS in 2015 and Zika in 2015. Although the general public might have been vaguely aware of these epidemics through the foreign news none of them impacted significantly in Britain and public discourse in Britain has been preoccupied with the aftermath of the European Union referendum for the previous three and a half years. The Covid-19 virus was reported in December 2019 in Wuhan China, at the same time that Britain was occupied firstly with a General Election and then with the Christmas/New Year break so the general public did not pay much attention to this new disease. Epidemics have caused major changes in the past, notably the Black death of the mid-14th century which hastened the end of serfdom (Trevelyan, 1956 Page 238) and whilst it is difficult to say if the Covid-19 epidemic is on the same scale, this virus has impacted on the way present-day society is functioning. For this reason, I thought that it would be interesting to see how the virus had affected the particular minority group I was studying, male Jews between the ages 14 to 24 living in Britain.

The first cases of viral infection in the UK were identified on 31st January 2020 and the first deaths in the UK occurred on 10th March. The week of the 8th of March included the festival of Purim (9th and 10th) and synagogue attendance and celebrations happened as usual. On the 16th of March, following advice from the Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Scientific Advisor the government decided to stop all educational, social, and cultural activity in the country and

advised the population to isolate themselves in their homes¹⁶³ and only venture out for medical needs, essential food shopping, limited exercise and travel only for essential work. Within classical Jewish sources there is reference to public health measures in the event of infectious disease. Isolation of someone with an infection is mentioned in the bible¹⁶⁴ and advocated in the Talmud¹⁶⁵ in the event of plague and the term ‘quarantine’ [lit. forty-days] is derived from the Venetian law requiring ships arriving to wait 40 days before disembarkation. The term used currently for social isolation is ‘lockdown’ which was originally used to describe the process of locking rioting prisoners in their cells as a method of control.

Social interaction is an important modulator of both mental and physical health with social relationships perceived as being supportive and associated with improved health, whereas perceived social isolation and stressful social interactions can be detrimental to health. These restrictions were a profound change in life pattern for the population with disruption of the usual daily routine and likely to cause stress. With the closure of schools, colleges, places of worship and entertainment, Jewish communal life largely ceased although sections of the ultra-Orthodox community ignored this instruction (see later). Ingrained habits which structured people’s lives, of study, prayer and socialising were disrupted. As this was such a profound change, I wanted to contact some of the interviewees to see how they were and whether they had any thoughts on a Jewish aspect or response to the epidemic. I sent out an email and tried to phone the interviewees and six were prepared to speak to me and one sent an email. I conducted the interviews between 24th March to 30th March (the first week of the lockdown) remotely, the first two by telephone and the next four by Zoom and they were all recorded. I transcribed the recordings and examined them for references to; self (study/work), family, friendships, Jewish community, religiosity, Britain (government/people) and future prospects. I coded these onto a spreadsheet for ease of analysis. The Anglo-Jewish community is not homogenous and just as the original group had members from across the age and religious spectrum the sub-group whose themes I am presenting, similarly has a range from the 15-year-old to the 24-year-old and included orthodox, Liberal, Reform and non-affiliated Jews. Two were still at school, three were students, one was an accountant, one a retail manager, and one was unemployed.

¹⁶³ Angela Davis used the term “Sheltering in place” in a *New York Times* interview.

¹⁶⁴ Leviticus **13**. Isolation of someone with צרעת [leprosy]

¹⁶⁵ Baba Kamma 60b:2-9 *The sages taught; If there is plague in the city, gather your feet*; i.e. limit the time you spend out of the house, *as it is stated, “And none of you shall go out of his house to the morning”* Isaiah **26.20**

Participants

Pseudonym	Jewish affiliation	Age & Occupation	Date interviewed
Otis	Moderate Sephardi	17 Jewish school	23-03-2020
Simon	Orthodox Ashkenazi	23 Tax Accountancy	26-03-2020
Arthur	Moderate Liberal	15 Jewish school	29-03-2020
Gerry	Low Reform	23 Retail Manager	30-03-2020
Rob	Lapsed Haredi	23 Unemployed	30-03-2020
Terry	Moderate Ashkenazi	21 Post-grad Law	01-04-2020
Alan email response	Moderate Ashkenazi	19 Student	02-04-2020

Responses

"It's all a bit weird" Self/Study/Work

The social restrictions had not come in uniformly and the week of the 8th to 15th March there was uncertainty with some events cancelled and some 'panic buying' which reflected growing anxiety amongst the public. When the order to close the schools and colleges came, the students were confused:

Arthur *It's all a bit weird because you've known that year-11 is the year you do GCSE, but I don't need to panic about doing exams or working sleepless nights for revision. It's a bit, I really don't know, something quite confusing.*

Otis identified with his age group peers:

Otis *A bit confused because there's no clear instructions for what's going on. Exams we've worked for having been cancelled, nobody knows how to deal with it. I think the whole country has worked really hard for these 'A' levels.*

Some studies are able to be adapted for remote learning:

Terry *I'm still studying to get through these exams (solicitors Legal Practice Course) at the campus in [place] but they've just moved everything on-line.*

Exercise is known to be beneficial for the psychological wellbeing and academic progress of children and young adults (M. Rasmussen & Laumann, 2013; Tomporowski, Davis, Miller, & Naglieri, 2008) and this seems to have been understood at the school of one of the interviewees:

Arthur *The PE [Physical Education] department has given us different videos if you want to do exercise. They've set up a Strava, it tracks how far you run, and a leader board and whoever has done most by the end of the week is the winner of that week.*

For adults who have been accustomed to regular exercise the disappointment of closure of gyms is offset by acknowledgement of its necessity:

Gerry *But I haven't done any weights exercise for two weeks. That's been one of the toughest parts actually.*

He recognises that as:

Gerry *People are dying, self-isolating and getting really lonely. In the great scheme of things that's such a minor sacrifice so I'm not too down about it.*

The themes that are apparent are confusion as the short-term goals disappeared and ensuing boredom resulting from the absence of purpose or anxiety in the face of danger. Being occupied by study or an important job does provide a sense of fulfilment which counters boredom:

Gerry *My team are very busy fitting out the 'sneeze-screens' at the check-outs (supermarkets) and the markings to keep people two metres apart.*

Arthur *My local tennis club's been closed. The park's been closed. You can't even go and play, just family. That's a big shame. I'm bored at home.*

Boredom is a common experience that critically alerts us that we are unable or unwilling to successfully engage attention in meaningful activities (Westgate, 2020). It has been "universally conceptualised as the aversive experience of wanting, but being unable, to satisfying activity" (Eastwood, Frischen, Fenske, & Smilek, 2012).

Friendship

A person's range of general friendships helps to shape his or her social personae especially in the formative period of youth (Grayling, 2013 Page 170). The biblical injunction, "*Love your neighbour as yourself*"¹⁶⁶ is complemented by the Mishnah, "*Acquire a friend*"¹⁶⁷. Both Aristotelian friendship and Biblical fellowship are conceptualised in terms of love; and both are operationalised in terms of action on behalf of another. Both, in effect, are social virtues. For just as Aristotle regards a diffuse form of friendship as what knits society together, Leviticus prescribes and seeks to inculcate friendship as the bond of peoplehood (Goodman, 1999 Page 126). In time of extreme stress, such as the relationships in war-time, the bonds between men have been described variously as friendship and comradeship. Cristina Pividori found two characterisations of the difference between them in the literature relating to the Great War. The word "friendship" refers to "individualized relations of amity or love between men" and "comradeship" to describe "a corporate or group commitment, a relation particular to war. The other was a heightened awareness of the self in friendship and in the suppression of

¹⁶⁶ Leviticus 19.18

¹⁶⁷ Ethics of the Fathers 1.6

self-awareness in comradeship” (Pividori, 2016). In the context of my study of Anglo-Jewry comradeship, where love and reliance on the group is essential, would only occur transiently when there are only 10 men available gathered for a prayer service to allow a mourner to say kaddish.

Maintaining friendships is very important for this demographic and the social restrictions of the shutdown have prevented the face-to-face interactions that form the cement of society. Although contact was being made:

Gerry *We’re calling each other the whole time on Skype and other Apps and stuff.*

Attempts have been made to replicate the experiences of pre-lockdown:

Terry *Every Saturday me and my friends do a pub quiz. We get a glass of wine to drink in our bedrooms. It’s not the same as seeing them in person.*

The Jewish tradition of small group learning has been enlisted by someone that Simon interpreted as a socially acceptable means of initiating a new relationship:

Simon *Someone sent a message to one of the groups saying, “Would anyone like a chavrutah, a study partnership?” I just think that’s really symptomatic of how people feel at the moment in that they feel they need people. They need conversation and in this particular case it would be learning with someone, interacting with them.*

Meeting someone with a view to life partnership is important for this demographic and if the restrictions were prolonged then there is anxiety that opportunity for making such a relationship would be limited:

Terry *Everything’s just up in the air. Yes, it’s very difficult. I don’t think you can have any new socialising going on. It can’t really be done. It’s not like normal social pathway where you go to a party, go out to just a bar, speak to friends, meet new people. That’s just not going to happen with this lockdown.*

Internet dating sites have become popular (Friedman, 2009) and in very orthodox communities there is a tradition of introductions with a view to marriage so the prospect of an initial introduction via video call would be novel but nevertheless in accord with hitherto custom.

Religious life

For an orthodox Jew the closure of synagogues has stopped men gathering for communal prayer. Orthodox synagogues would not allow remote coordination of prayer on Sabbaths and festivals by video teleconferencing platforms. In his first interview for my research project, Simon’s sense of being a man was expressed by his following the religious law which obligated daily communal prayer with a minyan:

Simon *Minyonim are not happening. It simply means a question of davening [praying] alone. Obviously, the sacredness of life supersedes the idea of davening with a minyan. It's definitely the right thing to do.*

When balancing the demands of prayer against the imperative not to endanger life Simon accepts that his religious habit has had to be modified. On weekdays when there is no prohibition on electronic equipment and some synagogues are using remote coordination so that members pray at their regular times:

Simon *There is [place] which has a Shacharit morning (virtual) minyan.*

By contrast the Liberal synagogue took a different approach and did allow live-streaming prayer on the Sabbath:

Arthur *One person led the Friday night service so people could just listen in if they wanted to. On Saturday there was a Zoom Shabbat service, quite a lot of the people came on that.*

This approach may be considered as a creative response to the problem of synagogue closure. It may be postulated that the leader of the community was concerned that the congregation would get out of the habit of attending the synagogue and wanted to put something in place to preserve the religious routine. The Liberal and Reform sections of the community have less stringent rules on the use of electrical and electronic equipment, but they had not previously sanctioned teleconferencing their services.

For both wings of the Jewish religious spectrum there is concern that the structure of spiritual life should continue and regular prayer is an important part of that structure (Donin, 1972 Page 159 et. sec.). Confronted by the social disruption imposed by the government, the religious authorities adopted pragmatic responses which required relinquishing long held traditions of behaviour. The orthodox Jew was being asked by the government to abandon congregation for prayer where such gathering would endanger life. The authority of the government is allowed to take precedence over religious law by virtue of the principle of *Dina Malchut*¹⁶⁸ [Law of the King] where the secular authority has issued an edict through an equitable legal procedure. Not only prayer, but also social occasions such as weddings were also forbidden, something which a certain section of Jewry, the Haredi, having historic deep mistrust of secular authority, were reluctant to do:

Rob *There are secret shuls, secret minyonim, secret chasenah [weddings] going on in Stamford Hill and America.*

¹⁶⁸ Maimonides Law of Kings 4.2

They only complied when one of their leaders instructed:

Rob *The Bobover Rov came up with a letter saying everything is closed. And he lost 15 men, old Chasidim, who have died because of this.*

The clear and present danger from congregating forced this section to curtail this aspect of their activity. An orthodox Jew therefore adapted his prayer obligation to praying on his own on Sabbaths and Festivals when he could not use teleconferencing and the communal leader would use teleconferencing on weekdays to produce a virtual congregation at the regular communal service times so that the habit of prayer would not be lost.

Regular religious study is mandated in the Oral Law¹⁶⁹ and usually takes one of two forms. A group of students lead by a teacher, who may be a rabbi or a knowledgeable lay person; this format is termed a 'shiur' [lesson, plural - shiurim]. An alternative format is where two or three students meet to study, and this is termed 'chavruta' [friend] study. The Jewish educational world has been using the internet for many years where shiurim were recorded and broadcast on platforms such as YouTube. These were not interactive, and this did not replicate the 'questions-and-answers' which characterised a live shiur. Interactive platforms do allow this to-and-fro and can provide a more realistic experience. When the yeshiva that Simon attended in Israel closed there was an infrastructure in place to enable him to continue his study habit:

Simon *My yeshiva's pretty much closed and they've been putting out shiurim every day. They're interactive, they're live.*

Within his micro-community he found many other opportunities for study:

Simon *I've 'been' to many more shiurim than I normally do. They've been broadcasting on WhatsApp and Zoom.*

The order to stay at home came three weeks before the festival of Passover and had been preceded by the general population 'panic buying' so that the supermarkets had difficulty maintaining supply. This wasn't a solely UK phenomenon; internationally, as the virus spread most countries had a similar experience. For Jews who have any connection to the community these weeks are usually the busiest time of the year with preparations for the festival and the lockdown caused severe disruption to these preparations and concomitant anxiety:

¹⁶⁹ Mishnah Ethics of the Fathers 1.15 *Fix a period for your study of the Torah.*

Terry *The supermarkets are practically empty and to try to shop for stuff for Passover is going to be quite tough. We might be relaxing a few of the things we usually do. We might have to eat bread¹⁷⁰, I don't know.*

Rob *The Pesach shop in [place] which is, they turn a small warehouse into a large grocery store for Pesach. It's completely empty.*

The first evening of Passover is marked by a family ritual of the Seder [lit. order] night where extended families celebrate the festival together. The lockdown prevented the family gathering:

Otis *The family Pesach is not going to happen this year. Pesach will be quite different.*

Reaction to the curtailed ranged from disappointment:

Alan *Just having a Passover with immediate family will not be very exciting.*

To a more positive note:

Gerry *We're doing a Zoom Seder this year which will be interesting.*

As in the case of the different views on the use of technology on Sabbaths and festivals, some Reform Jews did use teleconferencing as a means of family connectivity on the Seder night.

Community

Paul Spicker considered community as a set of interconnected, overlapping networks institutions and social groups. He identified three patterns of community; community of identity with a shared culture activity and mutual action, a community of interest such as business or leisure and a community of geographical place however it is defined (Spicker, 2019 Page 79). This classification allows an individual to belong to a number of different communities depending on the pattern that is being considered. It therefore follows that communities need not be homogenous as the variation of Jewish practice indicates a number of sub-communities within the broad term Anglo-Jewry. Communal life, the cooperation within a community of Jews, is according to Jonathan Sacks, essential for Jewish spiritual life (Sacks, 2015) and this applies to the social activity as much as the religious activity of the community. Maimonides declared that a person who separated himself from the community and goes on his own individual path does not have a share in the world to come¹⁷¹. Communities are using teleconference platforms for non-religious purposes to promote communal cohesion:

¹⁷⁰ Bread is forbidden for the duration of Passover.

¹⁷¹ Laws of Repentance 3.11

Arthur *Last night they did a shul quiz (on Zoom), which was quite nice. Lots of people joining in on that. They're making lots of different ways. People still feel they're part of something in the community.*

Britain

There were quite differing views regarding how the government were handling the crisis. The disparity of views is unlikely to have been due to the phase of the epidemic and more likely to reflect the general public debate on the administration's handling of the crisis that was taking place. There were supportive opinions:

Terry *I think how the government is supporting different people is quite a big thing, and is quite good thing, quite reassuring. With the rate of infections and the amount of deaths, government is doing what it can in the face of the coronavirus. Obviously, people are still worried but there has been a government response. There's been a lockdown and people are being protected from the virus.*

He was concerned about the economic impact:

Terry *Eventually we'll start seeing the economic impact of the crisis, businesses starting to close down. The government's promises about packages might have been a bit too optimistic.*

Other views were critical:

Rob *I think Boris Johnson has completely failed the people in this country. We should have been in quarantine ages ago and I think England should have closed its borders.*

The policy of regular news conferences by senior members of the government and scientific advisors sought to reassure the public who, when convinced by the reports of the progress of the disease, generally followed the advice. The responses of the interviewees reflect the public concern regarding the government's handling of the situation. The consensus was that the majority of the population were complying with government advice:

Gerry *I've seen a lot of people are listening and actually taking in what has been advised for them to do. I'm a bit more positive about it actually, the way people have reacted. Everybody I know is obeying social distancing norms. Pleasantly surprised at how the majority of British people have responded to this crisis. But that's an optimistic view.*

Not everyone was as sanguine:

Rob *I am quite concerned about older people going out and doing things. It's a terrible risk but I've been seeing the majority of people staying at home; This is*

a terrible nightmare we're going through and I'm not sleeping very well at night about it. A major cause for concern.

Terry *I think at the beginning of the lockdown period a lot of people were very anxious. I think there will be long-term anxiety going forward once the economic damage caused by the crisis starts manifesting itself. But now, people sort of got used to the first week of just staying indoors.*

Future

It is still very early to make any prediction of how society will develop over the next year, but some trends are emerging:

Arthur *I think the way that people are doing things now can actually work by people working from home more often. Less travelling in to work every day.*

Terry *In terms of the Jewish community, once they get things up and running when synagogues open and start seeing each other maybe people will take it. Be grateful to see everyone again. But I think things should be getting back to normal, maybe end of May. Maybe people will appreciate the sense of community, but I think that will have quite a short-term impact. Let's say a year from now we shall sort of get back to normal.*

Simon *I think it may be that it will increase people's appreciation of the community.*

Conclusion

Modern society is a complex organism which relies on multiple strands working interconnectedly to provide the infrastructure necessary for people to construct their reality and identity. Making the analogy between society and the individual the pandemic may be seen to have caused society to be sick as well as individuals. The stress caused by a pandemic tends to expose structural weaknesses in society and the panic buying mentioned highlighted the fragility of the supply chain to shops leading to the empty shelves in supermarkets. The quality of leadership at all levels, from national to local is stress tested by pandemics and the general public want guidance and reassurance. In a rapidly evolving situation official advice may change which causes confusion as occurred in the decision to close the schools and cancel examinations. There is a long history of religious figures becoming active in maintaining societal function¹⁷² and the communal leaders were important players in keeping their communities functioning. Apart from the physical effects of the disease psychological

¹⁷² See Randall L Hall for an example of work in the Yellow Fever outbreak in Memphis (Hall, 1997)

symptoms, anxiety and depression, are common caused by economic disruption and social isolation as the lockdown progresses.

The speed and totality of the cessation of normal life has sent a shockwave and the Jewish community has suffered in concert with the rest of the country:

Alan *This is such a universal situation that impacts everybody in the same way regardless of religion or cultural background.*

The responses to the inquiry as to whether there was a specifically Jewish aspect to the situation emphasised the effect on cultural and religious life. The overall theme that has emerged is one of 'Rupture and Adaptation.' Recognising that if left unchecked the fabric of the Jewish community would likely degenerate caused a response both at leadership level and personal level to maintain a semblance of normality so that when conditions improve regular activity will resume. To this end extensive use of modern communication technology has been harnessed with remarkable speed and Zoom has become a commonly used word both as a noun and a verb. At the time of doing these interviews estimates of when this pandemic will abate had not been made and it is possible that some changes in Jewish society will be permanent.

Covid-19

Pseudonym	Date interviewed	Self	Work	Study	Family	Friends	Community	Religiosity	Government	Populace	Future
Otis - Sefardi Year 13 Jewish School	23/03/2020	<i>Tutors making sure we're okay</i>		<i>Exams we've worked hard for cancelled. All confused</i>	<i>Family Pesach not going to happen this year</i>			<i>School sending out Jewish videos. Lunch and learn</i>			<i>Assured of university place</i>
Simon - Very orthodox. Tax Accountancy	26/03/2020	<i>I've been ill with the virus last week</i>	<i>The job is good, lucky with the people</i>	<i>I've been to many more shiurim WhatsApp and Zoom</i>		<i>Everything's on hold</i>		<i>Minyonim not happening. I'm davening on my own</i>			<i>It will increase appreciation of community</i>
Arthur - Liberal Year 11 Jewish school	29/03/2020	<i>I'm bored. Tennis club closed</i>		<i>Talking to my friends, missing school</i>	<i>Both my parents now working from home</i>	<i>I try video- calling but it's not the same</i>	<i>Last night they did a shul quiz. Still feel part of the community</i>			<i>A lot of people are taking in what as advised</i>	<i>I think less people travelling to work and working at home</i>
Gerry - Reform Retail Manager	30/03/2020	<i>One of the toughest parts is not going to the gym</i>	<i>My team are busy fitting sneeze screens</i>		<i>My father passed away. I've moved back with mum</i>	<i>I'm calling my mates on Skype and other Apps</i>	<i>Lord Sacks written about importance of community. Don't know if that's a Jewish response</i>	<i>Extended family. We'll do a Zoom seder. I'll be with mum</i>		<i>Pleasantly surprised how the majority have responded</i>	
Rob - Lapsed Charedi	30/03/2020	<i>Quite anxious about the current situation</i>			<i>My parents went to a Chasenah and appently 20 have been taken sick</i>	<i>I have friends in Italy and Spain and they said the qaarentine came too late</i>	<i>There are secret shuls, secret chasenahs going on in Stamford Hill</i>	<i>I've never heard so many peopletalking about prayer and some kind of answer</i>	<i>I think Boris Johnson has failed the country. England should have closed it's borders</i>	<i>I've been seeing the majority of people staying home</i>	<i>This is a terrible nightmare and I'm not sleeping. A major cause for concern</i>
Terry - Centre- right. Law graduate LPC	01/04/2020		<i>Starts August</i>	<i>LPC now online</i>	<i>Every one's well. My grandparents live quite close, see them from 2 m</i>	<i>Every Saturday we do a pub quiz. Going out and meeting new people is not going to happen</i>		<i>We might have to eat bread. We might be relaxing a few things</i>	<i>Government is doing what it can. People are protected from the virus</i>	<i>People have got used to staying indoors</i>	<i>I don't think this will last for too much longer</i>
Alan - Centre- right . 2nd-year Student email response	02/04/2020				<i>Just having a seder with immediate family, not very exciting</i>			<i>I doubt I'll be engaging much</i>			<i>World is in crisis. Everybody impacted regardless of religion</i>