



Love is a Family Value

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Shoval: Education and Tolerance

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

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“I keep forgetting, and mustn't, the basic decency of people”
-Merle Miller

On Being Different: What It Means to be a Homosexual

Q: What is Israel's relationship with
its LGB?



Israel's Demographics

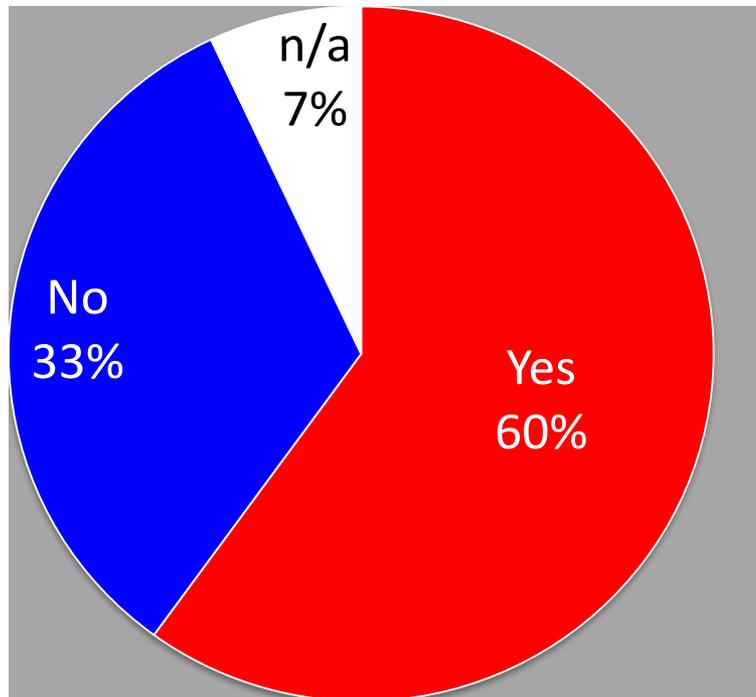


- Area: 8,019-8,522 sq mi
 - New Jersey: 8,722 sq mi
- Israeli Population: 8.67 million
 - New York City: 8.41 million
 - 70.48% Jewish
 - 20.8% Arab
 - 4.4% Other (non-Arab Christians, Baha'i, etc)
- Palestinian Population: 4.7 million
 - 2.9 million Palestinians in West Bank
 - 1.8 million Palestinians in Gaza Strip.

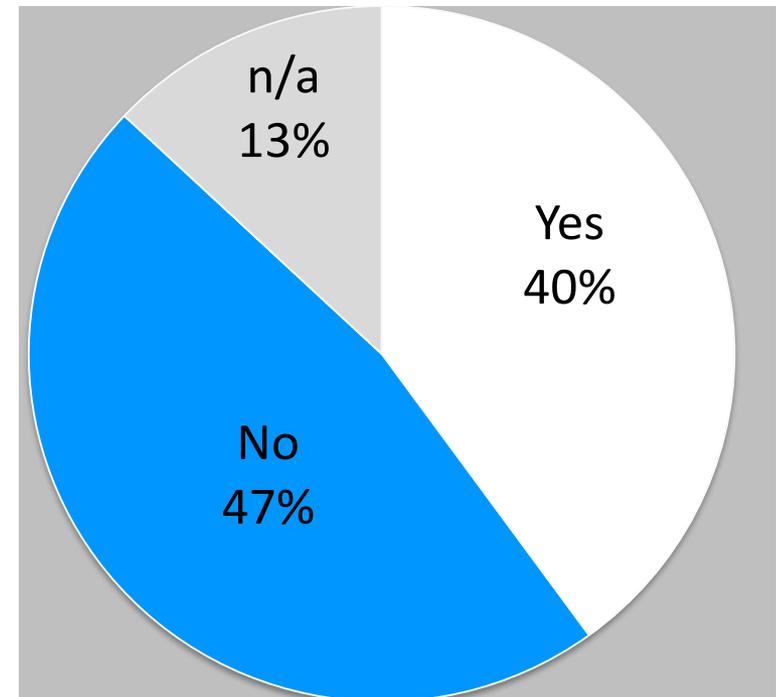
“Should Society Accept Homosexuality?”



United States



Israel



Pew Research Center (2013). “The Global Divide on Homosexuality”

Israel's LGB Rights

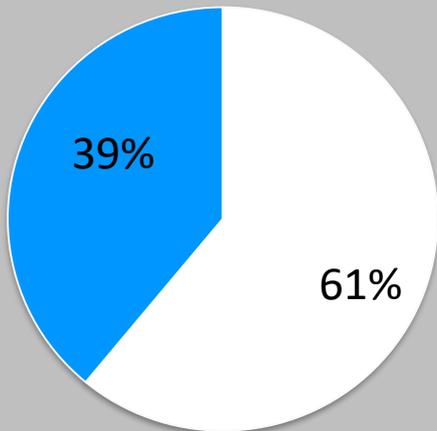


Israel	USA
1950's – Government policy quietly categorizes homosexuality as a harmless “psychiatric illness”	1950's – The lavender scare associated homosexuality with communism and cost tens of thousands of jobs
1988 – All consensual adult intimacy legalized in legislature	2002 – All consensual adult intimacy legalized in Supreme Court
1993 – LGB Israeli soldiers may openly serve	1993 – Don't Ask, Don't Tell
1992 – Employment discrimination prohibited on the grounds of sexual orientation	1998 – Federal discrimination enacted by executive order (congressional law detained in 2015)
1994 – Common Law Marriage	2014 – Marriage Equality
2012 – Tel Aviv voted “best gay travel destination” in GayCities.com vote	2012 – NYC came in second place

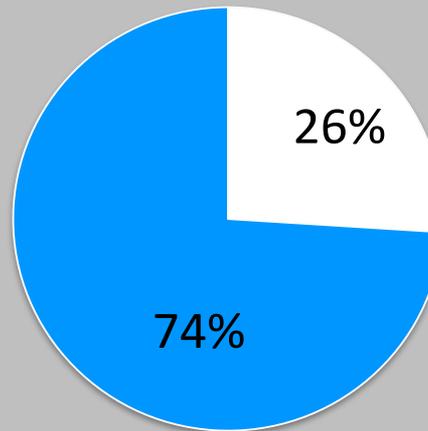
“Should Society Accept Homosexuality?”



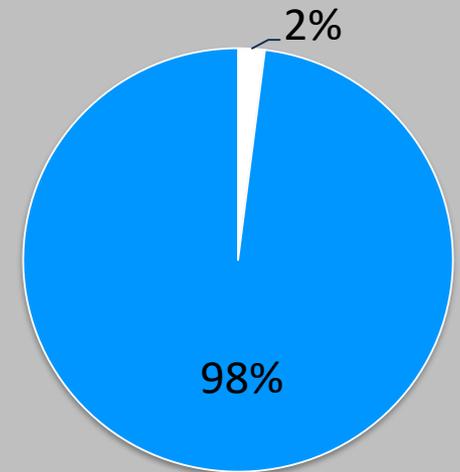
Secular Jewish



Traditional, Orthodox, Ultra-Orthodox



Israeli Muslim



Yes



No/No Answer

Shilo & Savaya (2012)



- In a group of 461 self-identified Israeli LGB youths, religiosity correlated with:
 - More internalized homophobia
 - Less self-disclosure
 - Less acceptance and support from family and friends.

Saewyc (2011)



- Rejected sexual minority youth reported significantly higher rates of:
 - Depression
 - Illicit drug youth
 - Unsafe sex practices
 - Voluntary/forced homelessness
 - Suicide attempts.

Wright & Stern (2016)

Participants = 109 self-identified LGB adults
(females = 54.1%)

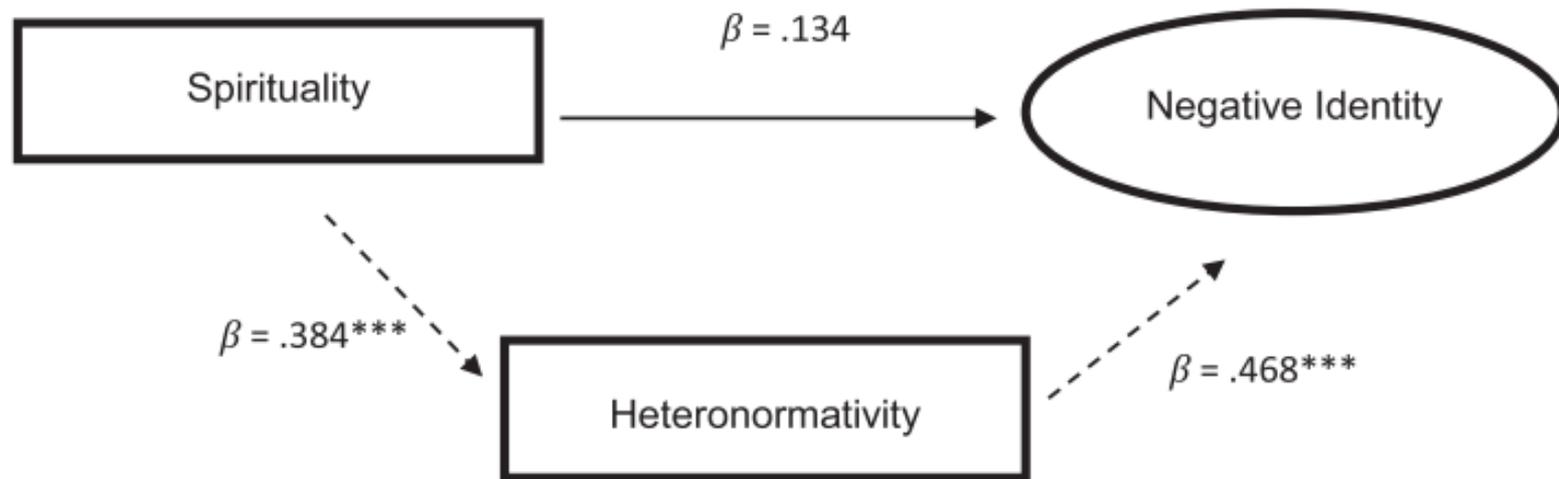


Figure 2. Summary of direct and indirect effects of spirituality and heteronormativity on negative identity. β = β regression coefficient. $^{***} p < .001$.

2005



The New York Times

WORLD

Clerics Fighting a Gay Festival for Jerusalem

By LAURIE GOODSTEIN and GREG MYRE MARCH 31, 2005

Left to right: Cleric Abdel Salem Menasra, Archbishop Aristarchos, Patriarch Michel Sabbah, Archbishop Aristarchos, Sephardic chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar, Ashkenazic chief Rabbi Yehuda Metzger
(not pictured: Sheik Abdel Aziz Bukhari)

Israel's Relationship with LGB



- Mostly good
- Depends on community
- Disparity between law and cultural impact
- More conservative communities have more problematic relationships.

Q: What is Orthodox Judaism, and how does it look at LGB issues?

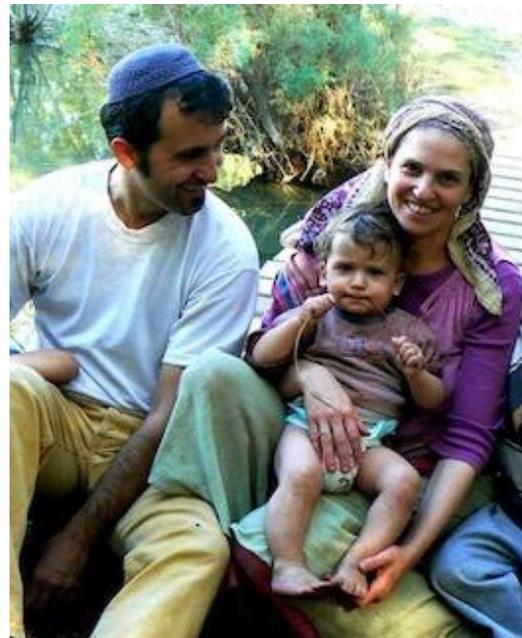
Israeli Judaism



Secular
49% of Israeli Jews
40% of Israeli Adults



Traditional/Orthodox
42% of Israeli Jews
33% of Israeli Adults



Ultra-Orthodox
9% of Israeli Jews
8% of Israeli Adults



Orthodox Observance



- Orthodoxy is predominantly defined by laws (e.g., Sabbath & kosher)
- Law as source of ethics
 - *“An intelligent person must find comfort, warmth, and a sense of fulfillment in the law. A sense of pleasure must be derived from fulfilling a norm.” – R. Joseph B. Soloveitchik*
- Dedication to scholarship
 - *“May I be graced with children and grandchildren who are wise, scholars, and servants of God” (Prayer for children)*
- Skepticism towards non-Torah scholarship

Orthodox Culture: Collectivism



- Like many conservative cultures, Orthodoxy is interpersonal
 - Public life event rituals (e.g., *brit milah*, wedding, baby naming, *shiva*)
 - Traditional family structure
 - “*Children are happiness*”
- It is also collectivistic
 - Community members are judged partly in terms of their ability to maintain the standards of the community
 - “*Annul your will before His [God’s] will, so that others will annul their will before yours. Hillel said: be sure to never separate yourself from your community*” (Avoth 2:4).

Orthodox Culture: Gender

- The traditional family as a community activity
- Interaction but separation of sexes
- Defined dress, behavior, roles for each sex, often codified into ritual
- **Of course, all this is prescriptive not descriptive**



Orthodoxy in a Nutshell



Law oriented

- *“If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.” – Leviticus, 20:13*

Skepticism towards conventional sources of legitimacy

- *“There is no proof that conversion therapy doesn’t work that isn’t politically informed.”*

Community oriented

- Limited access by single-sex couples

Collectivistic morality

- *“What about your family?”*



Q: How Do You Change A Culture?

~ or ~

How Do You Build Bridges With
People Who Don't Agree with You?

Changing a Culture Through Identity



- Shared-identity politics
 - From fighting for the right to be different towards fighting for the right to be the same
 - “Because that’s how I was raised”
 - Speaking with identifiable language
 - Making space for contradictions in identity
 - *“The excess for which some people judge gays is the product not of homosexuality but of homophobia...The pretenders to religious certainty do not know the geography of my soul.” (Jay Michaelson God vs Gay?)*
 - From abstract groups to concrete individuals.



אנחנו
להט"בים
מבית דתי

הפנים שלנו

בת קול | חברותא | אנ"ש



0:57 / 2:22

משפחות דתיות גאות- תגובה לבית היהודי



נעמה ארנון

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Changing a Culture Through Scholarship



- Limiting scope of halakha [law]
 - Biblical verse only about male anal sex
- *Halakhic* [legal] ideals to conventional community values
 - Speaking less about sex and more about love
 - Speaking less about rights and more about values
 - *Hillel said: be sure to never separate yourself from your community” (Avoth 2:4).*

Changing a Culture Through Scholarship



Once, Rabbi Simon son of Elazar from Migdal Gedur was riding from his rabbi's house on a donkey, trotting upon the edge of the river. He was very happy, and filled with pride for he learned much Torah. A man happened upon him who was incredibly ugly.

"Hello, Rabbi!" said the man, but there was no reply.

Instead, Rabbi Simon said, "my, how ugly his is! Tell me, are all the people of your city as ugly as you are?"

The man replied, "I do not know. Go to the Artist who made me and tell him 'how ugly is this vessel you have made.'" (Ta'anith, 20a).

Changing a Culture Through Bridge-Building: Shoval



“The facts which will cure this prejudice belong the ordinary talk of ordinary people...What is needed is not more science but just more humane and charitable recognition of our right to differ from one another.”

-Iris Murdoch, *The Moral Decision of Homosexuality* (1964)

- Setting
 - Two facilitators
 - 45 min: personal stories
 - 45 min: discussion
- Location
 - School
 - Community centers
 - Clinics
- Scope
 - 50 per year
 - 6 conferences
 - 1,200 participants .



Changing a Culture Through Bridge-Building

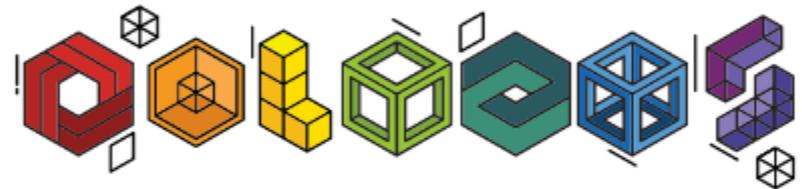


- From *educating* people to *dialoguing* with them
 - Presuming good intentions
 - Presuming thoughtful discourse
 - Stands by right to respectfully disagree.

Costs of Bridge-Building



- Main cost: compromise
 - Risk of apologetics
 - Accepting differences of opinion and phrasing
- Secondary cost: patience
 - Successive approximation.



פסח שני - עושים מקום!

שבוע הסובלנות הדתית 7-13/5 י"א- י"ז באייר

[Second Passover – making space!]

2016





שבל - חינוך לסובלנות בציבור הדתי החרדי

about 2 months ago

..ת ואישית, ולפנייה לראיית הטוב בכל אדם. רבניות ורבנים מהציבור הדתי לאומי ביקשו לומר זאת בקול רם:



הרב ד"ר בני לאו
רב קהילת רמב"ן בירושלים

אתה בודק את עצמך, שואל את עצמך - ראייה? ראייה את

שואל את עצמך? ראייה את האנושים שהם לא אהבה? 3:10



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