

Familiarity, Commonality, Attitudes and Perceptions of Latinos Toward US Jews
and Issues of Concern to the Jewish Community in Five US Cities:

A Project of the AJC

Findings and Analysis

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This is the final report of our survey of Latino attitudes toward Jews in the US, conducted in New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami and Kansas City, Missouri. We provide analysis and illustrate our findings across a wide range of response items in all five cities sampled. A broad overview is provided in the Introduction, followed by section specific information.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Latino Americans are the fastest growing bloc in the American population. As of the 2010 Census, 16% or one of six Americans self-identified as Hispanic or Latino, and demographic projections suggest Latinos will become 30% of the overall U.S. population within 40 years. As the Latino population grows and becomes more visible, it is increasingly important to understand the attitudes, view-points, and opinions of this community. However, when it comes to the question of inter-group relations and attitudes between Latinos and Jews, almost no comprehensive and scientific studies exist to shed light on this interesting and important area. Put simply, what do Latinos think about Jews? What do they know about Judaism, about Israel? And most importantly, what prospects and challenges exist for inter-group coalition or bridge-building between Latinos and Jews in America?

Latino Decisions conducted a survey of 2,000 Latino respondents for the American Jewish Committee (AJC) to probe familiarity and attitudes of Latinos toward Jews. Surveys were conducted between August 12 to September 26, 2011 in five major metropolitan areas: New York City, Miami, Los Angeles, Chicago and Kansas City. Locations were selected based on Jewish and Latino population traits and geographic diversity with four major cities with high concentrations of both Latinos and Jews, and a comparison city with a relatively new and growing Latino population, but with a relatively small Jewish population, Kansas City.

Overall, we find Latinos hold many positive views about the Jewish community. At the same time, it is also true that Latino opinions are hampered by limited contact and general unfamiliarity with Jews. More positive reaction toward Jewish people would likely result from more personal contact and experiences with the Jewish community. Many with limited networks to Jewish community withhold opinions (that is to say, they keep responding “don’t know”) thereby refusing to assign a stereotypical or negative evaluation when it would be easy to do so. There are vast opportunities for community and relationship building.

Demographic diversity within the Latino community occasionally produces varied trends in the data. In most instances we find increased education and income among Latinos is correlated with more positive views about Jews. With respect to religious differences, we find Catholics and Christians follow the general trend of generally favorable opinions with no distinctive pattern of on any given set of issues. Significantly, different trends do occur by national origin group and immigrant cohort. Across all topical areas, Cuban-origin Latinos are the most familiar with Jews and related policy areas. On the other hand, Mexican-origin Latinos have the least experience and knowledge about the Jewish community. Like education and income, generational assimilation is positively associated with favorable sentiment and increased contact with the Jewish community. The distinction is sharpest between foreign-born and U.S. born Latinos, regardless of specific immigrant cohort. American-born Latinos are much less likely to answer “don’t know” and hold favorable opinions on nearly all issues considered.

Cities with large Latino and Jewish communities (particularly New York and Miami) express some of the most pro-Jewish and anti-Jewish sentiment. There does seem to be a distinction between personal attributes (honest, committed to social justice and family) that are consistently positive, and perceived power within institutions where Latinos have not traditionally enjoyed much representation or success (e.g. Wall Street, media industry). It is possible that anti-Jewish sentiment we find is actually capturing some other frustration or disappointment with Latino standing in different economic and political structures.

Our findings are organized in three sections: 1) Familiarity, 2) Attitudes (broadly speaking), and 3) Foreign policy. Throughout the report, we note patterns of interest and offer points of consideration given the unique perspective diverse Latino respondents bring to the process.

Familiarity

One of the most striking findings in the survey is that Latinos report *very* low levels of familiarity with Jews. This lack of familiarity and knowledge greatly constrains the degree to which Latinos may view Jews as potential coalition partners. A common finding throughout this research is that among those with regular inter-group contact, more positive sentiments prevail, and that lack of knowledge or familiarity is a common refrain among survey respondents, which should not be interpreted as absolute negative view points towards Jews. Rather, there is a great challenge and opportunity to conduct outreach to Latinos and share more information about the Jewish religion. For example, one finding detailed in this report is that the more familiar Latinos are with the Jewish community, the less likely they are to say “Jews have too much power.”

Measure of familiarity	All Latinos	U.S. Born	Foreign Born
Know very many Jews	20%	28%	16%
Don't know any Jews at all	41%	20%	51%
Interact with Jews everyday	18%	28%	13%
Never interact with Jews	59%	38%	69%
Know a lot about Jewish religion	10%	17%	7%
Know nothing about Jewish religion	41%	18%	53%

Unlike other demographic factors, familiarity with the Jewish community is something that can change and improve as a result of *targeted* organizational efforts. For example, looking to the survey findings, among Latinos with almost no familiarity with Jews, 47% believe Jews are honest business people, whereas 79% of those with high familiarity believe Jews to be honest in business. Throughout our survey we find a similar pattern whereby familiarity and contacts leads to more positive attitudes, however we also note that very sizable segments of Latinos have very limited contact or opinions of Jews, leaving much outreach to be done.

Contact can be both facilitative and obstructive with respect to coalition formation, attitude development and cooperation depending heavily on the context of the content and the degree to which the interests of each group are perceived to coincide or perhaps contrast.

The current relative lack of Jewish-Latino contact and the resulting low levels of familiarity represent a nascent and largely unstructured social relationship. The data reported here indicate vast opportunities to forge relationships between the two groups in all the cities studied.

Interpreting the results through a Latino lens

An important note of distinction in interpreting attitudes towards Jews is that Latinos may interpret group-based characteristics as positive attributes as opposed to negative attributes. For example, numerous surveys of Latinos have found high levels of support for Latino-group identity, strong in-group community ties, and the importance of Latin America-focused issues and news. Thus when Latinos say Jews care a lot about maintaining strong Jewish traditions and practices, Latinos may be assigning positive values to that. Likewise, when Latinos say they think Jews care a lot about Israel, this is likely a natural and expected outcome for those with strong ties to Latin America and their own ethnic heritage. In contrast, prior studies of stereotypes of Jews have often characterized these sort of attitudes as negative because among Anglo-Whites, this was interpreted as meaning Jews were not appropriately assimilating into America. Like Jews, Latinos navigate multiple allegiances and affiliations as a matter of individual and group identity - *for example, national origin group, pan ethnicity, American identity, immigrant identity, regional subcultures, etc.* Thus, Latinos noting strong ethnic/transnational loyalties among Jews should not be assumed to be offering pejorative evaluations.

Unlike other studies to date, here we examine the extent to which Latinos subscribe to both positive and negative stereotypes about the Jewish community. This approach provides a more complete and accurate description of Latino views, instead of focusing solely on the prevalence of negative stereotypes, we understand that Latinos may also hold positive views of Jews. Many academic studies have demonstrated that surveys testing and reporting only favorable or unfavorable views frequently overstate the pessimistic or optimistic nature of public opinion. By

considering both aspects, a more nuanced view emerges of paths to collaboration and avenues where barriers are present.

Favorable opinions about the Jewish community are most common, by far. In fact, the most noticeably trend in the data is that Latinos hold positive views towards Jews. Still, there are minority opinions that deviate from this trend and subscribe to negative stereotypes. These mixed results suggest neither positive nor negative evaluations on singular, important issues necessarily predict views on other topics or overall dispositions.

For example, 48% of Latinos felt Jews had too much influence on Wall Street, compared to 27% who disagreed. In entertainment, 44% of Latinos say Jews run the movie and TV industry and 31% disagree. At the same time, we report that 78% of Latinos think Jews are committed to family life, 61% say Jews have made a positive contribution to cultural life in the U.S, and 53% agree that Jews have a special commitment to social justice and civil rights.

Once again it is important to highlight that contact and familiarity breeds more positive opinions. Among Latinos who report having daily contact with Jews, an overwhelming 84% believe Jews have made a positive contribution to cultural life in America, contrasted with 48% among Latinos who say they almost never have contact with Jews. The same pattern is noted among negative stereotypes. For example, 59% of Latinos who say they are quite familiar with the Jewish religion reject the statement, ‘Jews are more willing to use shady business practices to get what they want’ but only 27% of Latinos who say they know nothing about the Jewish faith reject the same statement.

Opportunities for coalition

Overall, Latinos are not reporting Jews to be automatic allies and coalition partners, however the data are obscured by the large percentage of Latinos who don’t really know any Jews, or don’t know much about the Jewish faith. When we look closer at the viewpoints of Latinos who have at least some familiarity with Jews, there appear to be many opportunities for coalition building.

For example, taken as a whole, 43% of Latinos say they have some or a lot in common with Jews when it comes to community, family, and cultural issues in the U.S. today, while 49% say they have little or nothing in common. However, among Latinos with the highest levels of familiarity with Jews, 67% say they have some or a lot in common, while just 29% think they have little or nothing in common. At the other end of the spectrum, Latinos with no familiarity with Jews at all, just 26% think they have things in common and 59% think they don’t have things in common. When we asked Latinos specifically how much they had in common with Jews in terms of politics, the same patterns emerged – a clear majority of Latinos familiar with Jews though they shared common political issues and objectives.

Likewise, we note a similar pattern on the question of whether or not Jews are trustworthy. Overall, 28% of Latinos say Jews are more trustworthy than other groups; 26% say they are less trustworthy and 36% say they are equally trustworthy to other groups, resulting in a net advantage of just 2 points. Yet among Latinos who actually know and interact with Jews regularly, 37% say Jews are more trustworthy compared to 19% who say less trustworthy, a net advantage of 18 points. In contrast, Latinos who know nothing about Jews are the most skeptical with 18% saying they are more trustworthy and 32% saying less trustworthy, a net deficit of 14 points.

Lessons Learned

The interests of neither Jews nor Latinos are served with broad-brush claims regarding their relationships. The data we gather here present a portrait of that relationship that is, first and foremost, still being drawn. How Latino and Jewish organizations work to engage the other community will determine in large part, we believe, what shape those relationships ultimately take. When attitudes are formed, they are generally more positive than negative, and almost always increasingly positive as we move up levels of socio-economic status, generation, and incorporation into the American polity.

As the Latino community finds a firmer and stronger place in American society, the trends reported here suggest that the future of Jewish-Latino relations has every opportunity to be positive. Whether that does, in fact, come to pass rests in the hands of elites and community leadership in both groups and their careful, respectful, attempts at outreach.

METHODOLOGY AND STUDY DESIGN

Polling

Latino Decisions conducted a survey of 2,000 Latino respondents for the American Jewish Committee (AJC) to probe familiarity and attitudes of Latinos toward Jews. Surveys were conducted between August 12 to September 26, 2011 in five major metropolitan areas: New York City¹, Miami, Los Angeles, Chicago and Kansas City, Missouri.² Locations were selected based on Jewish and Latino population traits and geographic diversity.

We present our primary empirical and substantive findings in this summary report. Appropriate weights are applied to all estimates presented here. Methodology and related details can be located the end of this report in the Appendix A. The text of the survey instrument is attached as Appendix B. Banner books are appended as Appendix C and are also available to AJC personnel at:

http://faculty.washington.edu/mbarreto/ld/ajc_final.html

and

http://faculty.washington.edu/mbarreto/ld/ajc_new.html

The polling data produced a portrait of Latinos attitudes toward Jews and their concerns that is intentionally complex and nuanced. Latino opinion is multifaceted, includes a mix of enthusiastically positive and modestly negative views, and a substantial lack of knowledge.

On the whole we find Latinos hold many positive views about the Jewish community. At the same time, it is also true that Latino opinions are hampered by limited contact and general familiarity with Jews. More positive reaction toward Jews would likely result from more personal contact and experiences with the Jewish community.

Many with limited networks to the Jewish community withhold opinions (that is to say, they keep responding “don’t know”) thereby refusing to assign a stereotypical or negative evaluation when it would be easy to do so. *Importantly, these Latinos represent a large opportunity for community and relationship building.*

¹ New York City interviews were suspended for several days due to hurricane evacuation.

² Kansas City was added late and is entirely concentrated at the latter portion of the interview period.

Demographic diversity within the Latino community occasionally produces varied trends in the data. In most instances we find increased education and income among Latinos is correlated with more positive views about Jews. With respect to religious differences, we find Catholics and Christians follow the general trend of generally favorable opinions with few distinctive patterns of on any given set of issues. Significantly, different trends do occur by national origin group and immigrant cohort. Across all topical areas, Cuban-origin Latinos are the most familiar with Jews and related policy areas. On the other hand, Mexican origin Latinos have the least experience and knowledge about the Jewish community. Like education and income, generational assimilation is positively associated with favorable sentiment and increased contact with the Jewish community. The distinction is sharpest between foreign born and U.S. born Latinos, regardless of specific immigrant cohort. American born Latinos are much less likely to answer “don’t know” and hold favorable opinions on nearly all issues considered.

Cities with large Latino and Jewish communities (particularly New York and Miami) express some of the most favorable *and* unfavorable sentiments. Familiarity, then, is associated with the formation of attitudes in both directions. There does seem to be a distinction between personal attributes (honest, committed to social justice and family) that are consistently positive, and perceived power within institutions where Latinos have not traditionally enjoyed much representation or success (e.g. Wall Street, media industry). It is possible that unfavorable sentiment we find is actually capturing some other frustration or disappointment with Latino standing in different economic and political structures, and should not be over-interpreted.

Throughout the report, we note patterns of interest and offer points of consideration given the unique perspective diverse Latino respondents bring to the process.

Focus Groups

To develop a more in-depth understanding of Latino attitudes toward America’s Jewish community, a total of eight focus groups were held in four of the cities (New York City, Miami, Chicago, and Los Angeles). In each city an English language focus group was followed by a Spanish language focus group. Each session consisted of nine to twelve participants and lasted approximately one hour and fifteen minutes. The discussions were guided by a number of general questions that sought to delve deeper into many of the topics that were addressed in the survey instrument. A copy of the focus group discussion guide can be found as Appendix D.

Between focus groups there was a wide range in the degree of contact the participants had with Jews. The participants also substantially varied as to their socioeconomic status (SES). Variance according to level of contact and SES was intentional in order to see Latino attitudes across a range of differences beyond geographical context. Table 1 provides a summary breakdown of each of the eight groups according to level of contact and SES.

Table 1:			
Socio-Economic Status and Self-Reported Contact by Location and Language, AJC Focus Groups 2011			
	Medium-High SES	Medium-Low SES	Low SES
High Contact		New York City – English Miami - Spanish	
Medium Contact	Chicago - English	Los Angeles - English	New York City - Spanish
Low Contact	Miami – English	Los Angeles – English	Chicago - English

Five general topics were discussed in each focus group (contact, perceptions, religion, Israel, and politics). In the following sections, the responses of the different focus group participants will be reviewed according to the topic. More specifically, the similarities and differences across the groups will be highlighted. While there was variation across the participants and groups regarding views toward Jews a series of common themes emerged. The following report will discuss these in depth, but below we provide a set of five take-home points:

- *The less personal the nature of the contact, the less positive the reactions of Latinos toward Jews;
- *Stereotypes of Jews as “cheap” and “insular” were followed up with a recognition that Latinos are not sufficiently careful with money or unified as a group;
- *There is a sense of difference between Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews, the latter tending to be linked to more of the negative stereotypes;
- *Little in-depth knowledge of the Jewish religion and a neutral regard to Jewish religious customs and beliefs;
- *Very little knowledge about Israel, only a vague sense of conflict in the area.

I. CONTACT AND FAMILIARITY: SUMMARY FINDINGS

Before delving into analysis on Latino opinions and feelings about the Jewish community, we think it is worthwhile to consider dimensions of familiarity. Thus, we begin by highlighting the fact that most Latinos are not well acquainted with Jews. To be sure, these trends vary by region, but the data clearly show Latinos do not have extensive networks or knowledge linking them to the Jewish community.

Latinos in Miami and New York have more contact and information about the Jewish community, compared to all other cities in the sample. Interestingly, Miami-area Latinos report slightly more familiarity with Jews. It may be that Miami's size (far smaller than Los Angeles, New York or Chicago in terms of population and geographic space) and Latino population demographics (more native born, educated and affluent relative to the other locations) accord more opportunity for interaction with the local Jewish population.

The focus group findings were consistent with the quantitative data. They also revealed the role of language-world. Latino contact with Jews varied from "no contact" (CHI-S and LA-S) to close personal and professional contact (NYC-E and CHI-E). The New York City groups had by far the greatest degree of contact, followed by the Miami Spanish language group and the Chicago English language group. The remainder of the groups consisted of participants who tended to have moderate to seldom contact with Jews. A key pattern in terms of contact is that the less personal the nature of the contact, the less positive the reactions of Latinos toward Jews.

Focus groups also revealed, that the lower SES participants tended to have less contact with Jews. However, those among this group that did have contact, that contact tended to be as an employee working under the supervision of a Jewish boss and/or business owner. The individuals that had no contact with Jews referenced television as their base of knowledge. Among higher SES participants, contact took the form of friendship or having a Jewish colleague.

The most Jewish-Latino contact took place within work environments. However a number of participants in the New York City focus groups indicated living in the same neighborhood as Jews. These respondents were lower SES and indicated that the Jews living in their area were Hassidic and/or Orthodox. In Chicago, Miami and LA only one respondent in each, Albany Park, South Beach, and Echo Park, respectively said that they lived in close proximity of Jews.

The type (positive/negative) of work related contact varied widely from a Latina in Chicago referencing her experience working retail and noting that, "Jewish customers are very demanding" to a Miami Latino who works for a wine distributor owned by a Jewish man whom he described as a very, "warm and kind person." In general, other reactions to Jews in the work

Contact and Familiarity

place recognized positive traits such as hard working but also saw less positive traits such as insularity. The type of interaction and general evaluation of Jews also depended on who the Jewish point of reference was-- Hassidic or Orthodox v. non-Orthodox.

The social and political importance of contact and its effects should not be underestimated. Extensive political science research finds individual personal networks (friends, family, co-workers and acquaintances) have a significant impact on attitudes, opinions, and even behavior. Contact can be both facilitative and obstructive with respect to coalition formation, attitude development, and cooperation, depending heavily on the context of the contact and the degree to which the interests of each group are perceived to coincide or conflict.

The relative lack of Jewish-Latino contact, and the resulting unformed attitudes, represents a nascent and largely unstructured social relationship. These data indicate vast opportunities to forge relationships between the two groups in all of the cities tested.

Familiarity Index

Rather than rely on a single indicator of familiarity, which may have idiosyncratic properties and vary in how well it captures the underlying concept, we prefer a multiple-measure approach to capture the degree to which respondents are acquainted with, exposed to, and interact with Jews. To this end, we develop a measure of overall familiarity by constructing a scale variable that captures three different aspects of Latino-Jewish familiarity described in Section 1: 1) frequency of contact, 2) knowledge of Jewish faith and 3) number of Jews personally known.

Each of these variables is coded zero (0) to three (3), with zero representing that the respondent has no contact with Jews, knows nothing of Jewish faith, and has no Jewish acquaintances or friends. A surprising 31% of all respondents had a score of zero on all three measures, and an additive score of zero, and these respondents were coded "None" on the familiarity index. Remaining responses range from one (1) to nine (9) with a nine indicating that the respondent reported 10 or more Jewish friends or acquaintances, very frequent contact, and high levels of knowledge. We collapsed these nine scores into three categories, such that respondents with an index score of one (1) thru three (3) were coded "Low," scores four (4) thru six (6) coded "Medium," and scores seven (7) thru nine (9) coded "High."

Importantly, a sufficient number of respondents fall into the different familiarity categories such that we can confidently measure attitudes about the Jewish community along this variable. This

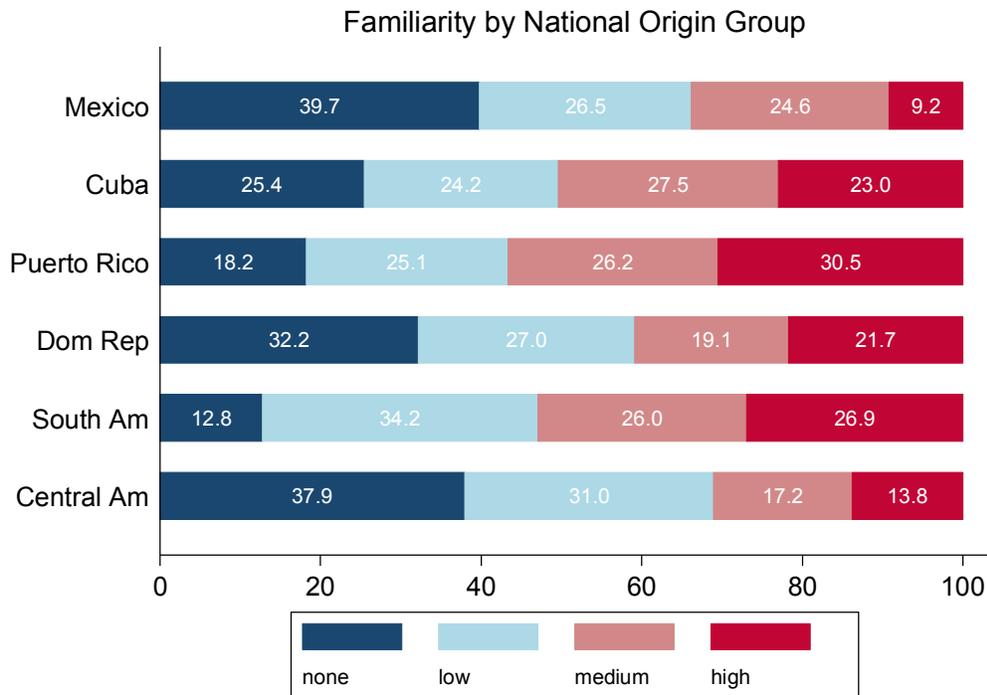
Contact and Familiarity

straightforward additive index for Latino familiarity with Jews exceeds data reliability thresholds, with a Chronbach Alpha coefficient of .82.³

Familiarity Index: Categorized Responses to Three Measures of Contact/Familiarity.			
	Total Additive Index Score	Weighted Total	Weighted Percentage
None	0	572	31%
Low	1-3	555	27%
Medium	4-6	522	24%
High	7-9	378	18%

DETAILED FINDINGS: FAMILIARITY

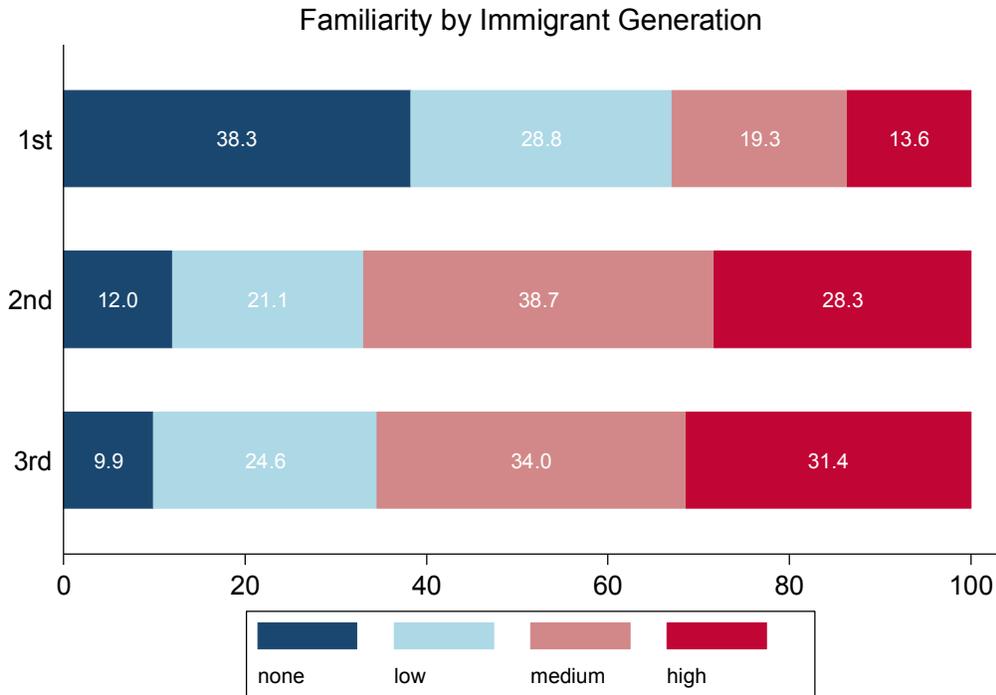
Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and South Americans have much more personal contact and direct experience with the Jewish community. It is striking that 40% of Mexican and South Americans report no contact or knowledge with Jews at all.



³ It is customary to rely on alphas of .7 or greater to indicate that items in a scale co-vary to a degree necessary to accept a claim that they measure the same underlying concept. In this instance, an alpha of .82 comfortably exceeds this threshold.

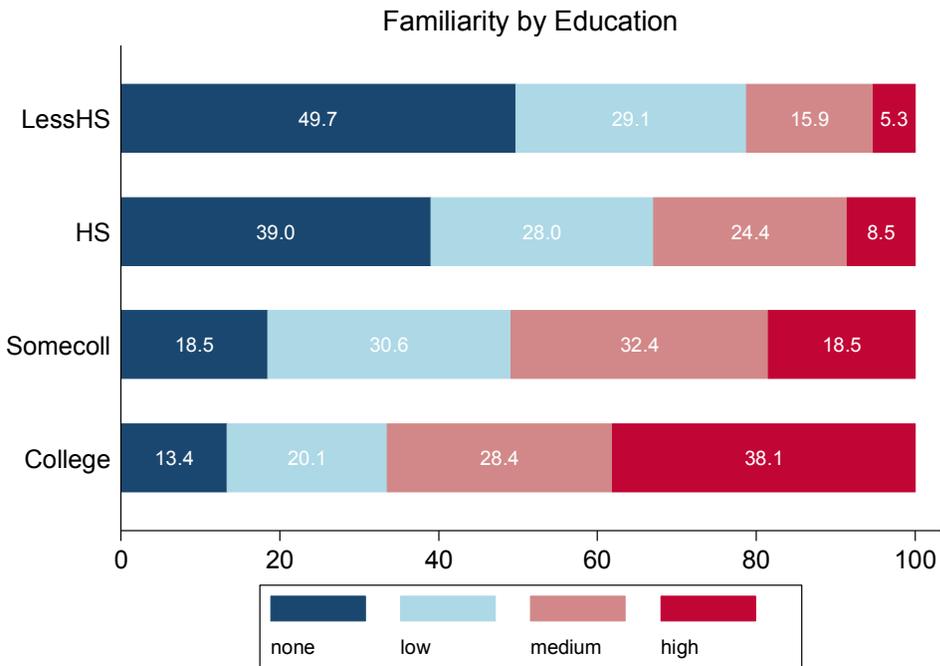
Contact and Familiarity

Familiarity with the Jewish community is higher among Latinos furthest from the immigrant experience. Latino immigrants (1st generation) are much less likely to have personal relationships or contacts with Jews. The highest rates of familiarity doubles at the second generation (28%), and increases a bit more (31%) by the third generation.

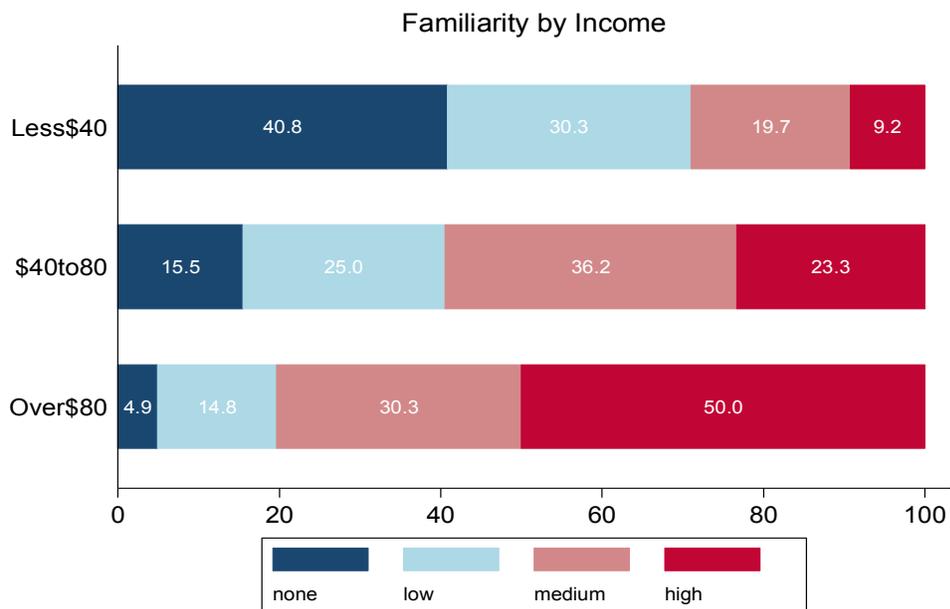


There is a clear relationship between socioeconomic status and familiarity with the Jewish community. As education increases, so does contact and knowledge. Half of those without a high school education have zero overall familiarity with Jews. Conversely, 38% of college graduates have the highest rate of familiarity, and only 13% have none at all.

Contact and Familiarity



Half of affluent Latinos, those with annual incomes over \$80,000, have established relationships with Jews. Among low income Latinos, those with annual incomes under \$40,000, lack familiarity; 41% have no relationships or contact at all.



Extensive political science research finds individual personal networks (friends, family, co-workers and acquaintances) have a significant impact on attitudes, opinions, and even behavior. These data indicate vast opportunities to forge relationships between the two groups in all of the cities tested.

Contact and Familiarity

Latinos in Miami and New York are more connected and informed about Judaism compared to all other cities in the sample. Miami-area Latinos report slightly more familiarity with Jews than any other city. It may be that Miami's size (far smaller than Los Angeles, New York or Chicago in terms of population and geographic space) and Latino population demographics (more Cuban, native born, educated, and affluent relative to the other locations) accord more opportunity for interaction with the local Jewish population.

Our familiarity index has three components—personal contact with Jews, number of Jewish friends and acquaintances, and knowledge of Judaism. We illustrate overall distributions, and distributions by city, of each of these components of the familiarity index.

Frequency of Contact With Jewish People

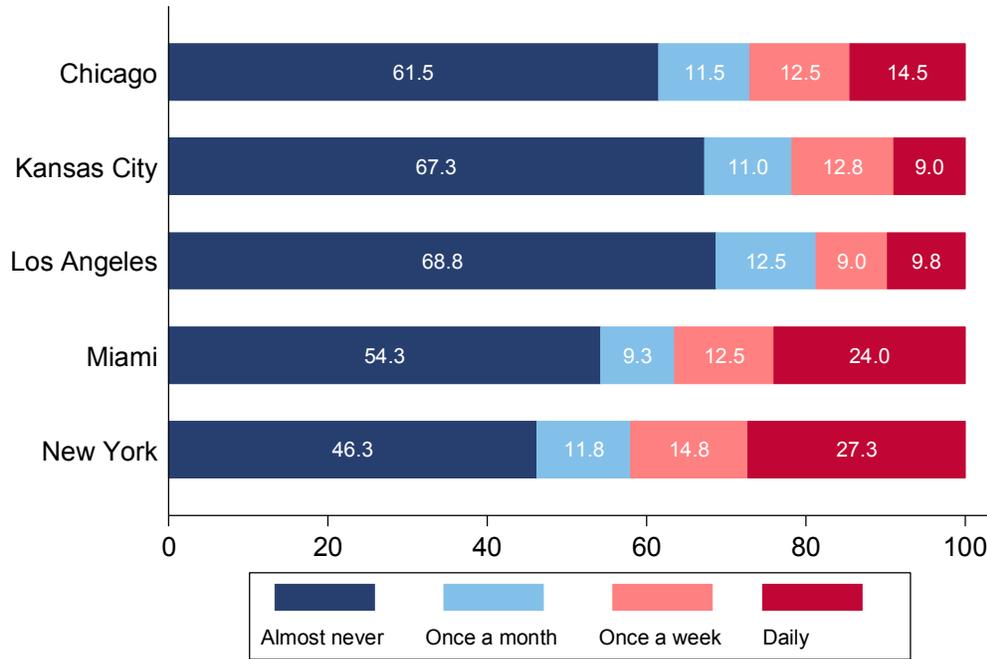


In terms of personal contact, respondents were asked, “How frequently do you have contact with Jews?” Over half, 59%, said almost never. Another 31% said once a week or more they interact with Jews in various settings (e.g. work, school, recreation).

Not surprisingly, contact varies considerably across locations in the study. As we should expect, contact varies by region, such that Latinos in New York City and Miami have substantially more interaction with Jews compared to their counterparts in Kansas City, Los Angeles and Chicago. In New York and Miami, 45% of Latinos interact with Jews once a week or more. Enduring residential patterns and urban sprawl in Los Angeles and Chicago may limit Latino-Jewish interaction despite their sizable shares in these cities.

Contact and Familiarity

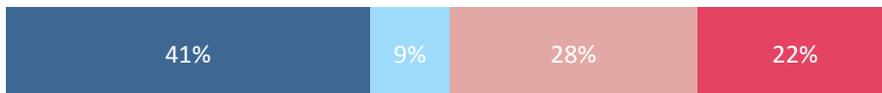
Frequency of Contact with Jews by City



To evaluate personal familiarity, we asked respondents about their Jewish acquaintances. A sizeable proportion of our total sample, 41%, have no Jewish acquaintances at all. Another 25% say they know between one and five Jews, and 20% have more than ten Jewish acquaintances.

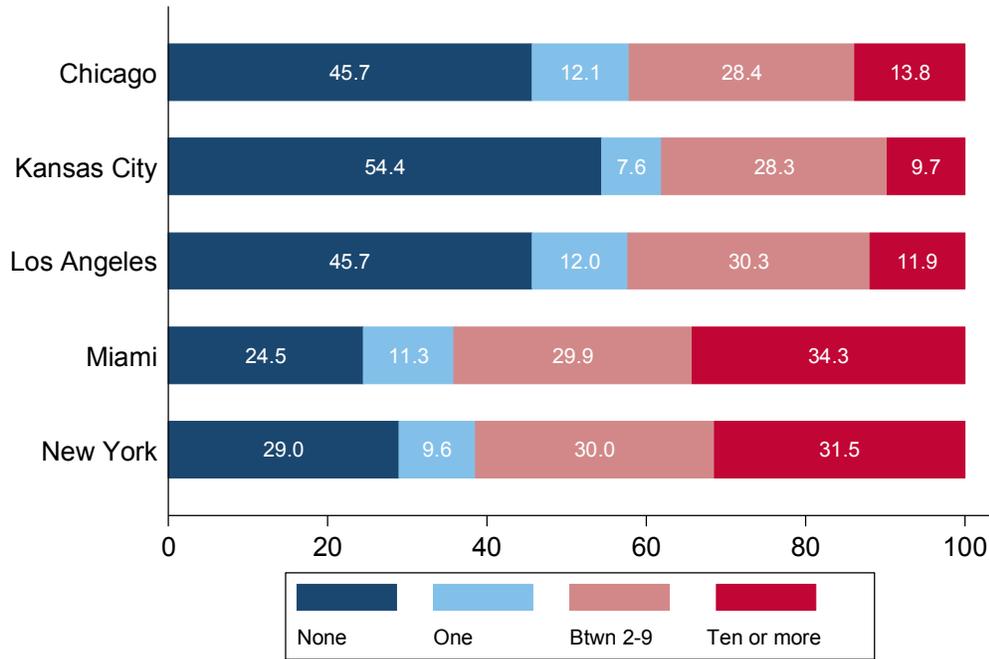
Number Personally Known

■ None ■ One ■ 2 to 9 ■ 10 or more



Contact and Familiarity

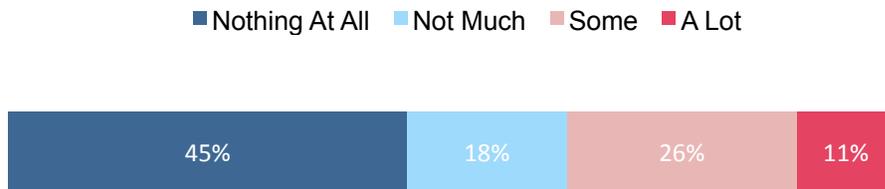
Number Personally Known by City



City-level differences are sharp. One-third of Latinos in New York and Miami (31% and 34% respectively) personally know more than ten Jews; more than twice the rate found in Los Angeles, Chicago, and Kansas City. Only 24% of Latinos in Miami and 29% in New York City say they do not have a single Jewish acquaintance. A sizeable share of Latinos in Los Angeles and Chicago, 46%, say they do not personally know any Jews. That number is a bit larger in Kansas City, where 54% also have no Jewish acquaintances.

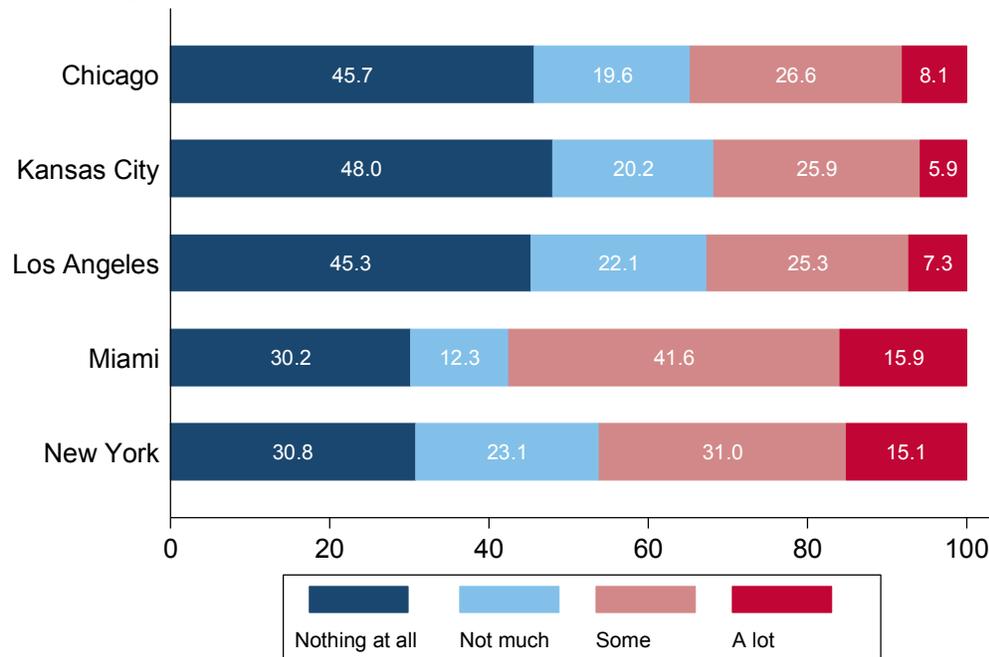
Contact and Familiarity

Knowledge of Jewish Faith



In addition to personal contacts and relationships, we are interested to know about Latino understanding of the Jewish faith. Knowledge of Judaism may influence opinions about Jews and foreign policies. Respondents were asked: “Setting aside *who* you know, how much would you say you know about the Jewish religion?” In all contexts, Latinos concede having limited information. In the overall sample, 63% say they know little to nothing at all about the faith.

Knowledge of Jewish Faith



The least informed are in Kansas City, where 48% are entirely unfamiliar with Jewish religion, and another 20% say they do not know much about it. Los Angeles and Chicago have nearly identical patterns, where two-thirds, over 65%, know little or nothing about the religion and only 7%-8% know “a lot”. More than half of New Yorkers, 54%, indicate they know little to nothing about Judaism. Only 15% say they know a lot about it. Latinos in Miami report the highest rates of information about the Jewish faith, 58% think they know some or a lot (16% a lot, and 42% some) about it.

Focus Group Comments on Familiarity with Jewish Religion and Customs

Knowledge of the Jewish religion was limited to generalities. Even among the participants who had high contact with Jews, their knowledge of the religious aspect was superficial. In general there was a neutral regard to the Jewish religion, meaning that while there was an acknowledgment of stark differences they did not see them as odd or extreme for the most part. The common themes centered around contrasts to Christianity (in particular Catholicism), intensity/fervor of faith, diet, dress, and holidays.

Contrasts to Christian Faith

One of the first remarks to the question of the Jewish faith was that they do not believe in the New Testament. More specifically that they do not believe in Jesus Christ, or see him as their savior. While a disbelief in Jesus was the most common response, none of the groups (who tended to be made up of Catholics) framed Jews or Judaism negatively as a result of this rejection.

Other descriptors of the Jewish faith included, “Jews as the chosen ones” which then led to a mention that this is the reason why they are so successful as a group. Other conversations revolving around Judaism and Christianity included Moses, the Ten Commandments, keeping the Sabbath holy, burying the deceased within one day, and Judaism as the basis of Christianity. Separate seating for men and women was a difference that was highlighted a couple of times throughout the groups. Also, in the Spanish language Miami group it was noted that women are the ones that convert to Judaism and that it is rare to see a Jewish man convert to Christianity.

The one outlier in all of the focus groups regarding conceptions of the Jewish religion was one woman in the English-speaking group in Miami. Twice during the course of the focus group she made reference to animal sacrifices. The first time she mentioned this was at the prompt of what were some Jewish stereotypes and the second during the religion discussion. She said that a friend of hers had married a Jew and that animals were sacrificed when you convert. She went on to say, “that this type of thing doesn't just happen with the Cubans...[in reference to the animal sacrifices that take place in Santeria].” None of the other participants in her group had heard of this and they seemed skeptical of this account. No mention of animal sacrifices surfaced in any of the other groups.

Intensity of Faith

There was a general sense that Jews are deeply religious. At some points, the differentiation between Orthodox and non-Orthodox or cultural Jews would be made to point out that there are differences in religiosity. However, as a whole Jews were seen as devout individuals. This level of devoutness was seen either positively or neutrally. Frequently, this type of devotion was

compared to that of devout Catholics. One participant in the English language Los Angeles group likened the deep religiosity of Jews to, “hardcore Catholics, like my old aunts.” In fact, during the discussions of Latino-Jewish similarities, religion would frequently surface as a commonality. Of course, this was not in terms of substance, but in terms of feeling and intensity.

Diet & Dress

Diet and dress was the second most frequent thing mentioned in response to Jewish religion, second to Jews not believing in Jesus Christ as the son of God. Not being able to eat pork was a very common response. The conversations then frequently turned to how Jews keep two sets of dishes so as not to mix certain foods. An in-depth discussion of the Jewish diet developed in the Spanish language Chicago group. While this was one of the groups with the least contact with Jews, one of the participants had worked for a Jewish caterer. This participant went into detail about how certain foods and utensils were not mixed. Jesus (the participant) had a very positive impression of this remarking that this is a very healthy way of eating because it is, “very clean... because they don't mix utensils, foods.” Another woman in the same focus group remarked that she noticed that some food containers had a special symbol that she thought meant that it met the dietary restrictions of Jews.

Both the high and low Jewish contact groups also indicated familiarity with some clothing items related to the Jewish religious tradition. The yarmulke was the most mentioned item of clothing. The custom of wearing side curls was also noted, however more so by those persons in areas of high Jewish population concentrations (e.g. New York City). A third clothing identifier was related to women having to cover their hair. Throughout the discussions the distinction would be made sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly that the more Orthodox Jews adhered to these more traditional dressing customs.

Holidays

The topic of cultural holidays came up in the religion discussion in a number of groups, but especially in the group New York groups and the Miami Spanish language group, the groups with the most Jewish contact. In New York there was a general sense of frustration and disapproval that there were, “so many” holidays especially with regards to public schools and city ordinances (e.g. alternate side parking getting suspended on Jewish holidays but not for Good Friday in New York City).

One gentleman in the NYC English language group said he did not think school should be cancelled, especially since so many of the city's schools were in failing condition. When another participant pushed him on the point about the need for people to exercise their religious freedom he responded that then those teachers who observe the holiday should take off but that not the whole school system should not be closed. One woman in Miami, who had lived in New York

City said that it seemed that beginning in October it seemed like one only worked a couple of days out of the month until the end of the year because all of the Jewish holidays.

A more general discussion of holidays made mention of Bar Mitzvahs and Hanukkah. The latter was readily associated with the “candle stick” (a reference to a menorah). The need to fast on certain holidays was also brought up, as was the reference back to special dishes as discussed with regards to the Jewish diet.

In summary, the focus groups made it clear that the levels of information about Jewish culture, faith, and tradition has a low mean and wide variance—Latinos appear to have only the scantest familiarity with Jews overall.

2. PERCEPTIONS, AFFECT, AND ANTI-SEMITISM

Examining Latino affect toward Jews is at the heart of this study. We test different aspects of group-perception in order to get a comprehensive view of Latino attitudes. Along with our own original survey instrumentation developed in consultation with the AJC, we also replicate questions from other recent studies that sought to describe Latino opinions about Jews.

For each survey item, we illustrate responses by city, degree of familiarity and note any other significant demographic patterns. Immigrant generation and socioeconomic status are positively associated with higher rates of perceived commonality and favorable stereotypes. National origin differences are most pronounced among Cuban Americans, while religion has no measureable independent impact on most opinions. It is likely that wide variation in Latino connectedness and familiarity with the Jewish community will have a substantial impact on respondent opinions. Unlike many influential demographic variables, (e.g. language, sex, nativity, language ability and country of origin heritage) familiarity with the Jewish community is a factor that *can* change and improve as a result of targeted organizational efforts. Thus, we keep Latino familiarity with Jews in focus throughout the report.

We classify Latino opinions about Jews into five categories:

1. Group Cohesiveness and Identity

Latinos view Jews as a loyal and cohesive group. There are differences of opinion regarding whether Jews constitute a minority group or a segment of the white population. The Latino point of view on items like “sticking together” and “loyalty to Israel” should be taken into consideration. For example, perceptions that “Jews stick together more than other Americans” could be a positive impression. Latinos themselves have high rates of group attachment and identity, and may view Jewish group cohesiveness in a favorable light similar to their own experience. Similarly, Latinos navigate multiple allegiances and affiliations as a matter of individual and group identity (for example national origin group, panethnicity, American identity, immigrant identity, regional subcultures and so forth). Thus, Latinos noting strong ethnic loyalties among Jews should not be presumed to be a pejorative evaluation.

2. Ethics and Influence

We examine the extent to which Latinos subscribe to positive or negative stereotypes about the Jewish community. This approach provides a more complete and accurate description of Latino views. Surveys testing and reporting only favorable or unfavorable views frequently overstate the pessimistic or optimistic nature of public opinion. Considering both aspects allows more nuanced views of paths to collaboration and avenues where barriers are highest.

The first set of questions deal with business ethics and influence in American society. There is a pattern where Latinos view Jews as having significant, if not too much influence in business and industry. These views are pronounced in cities with high Latino *and* Jewish populations, particularly Miami and New York. Latinos most familiar with Jews perceive them to have more economic influence. Importantly, large shares of all Latinos, especially the most familiar and geographically proximate, agree that Jews are honest in business and hold no unfair advantages to success in the marketplace.

3. Unfavorable Attitudes

Few have any objection to inter-marriages between Jews and non-Jews. Similarly, we find little aversion to Jewish political candidates. Unlike most trends, Cubans and well-assimilated Latinos (those with higher incomes, more education and distant from the immigration experience) are more likely to agree that Jews discuss the Holocaust too often. To clarify, the majority of all Latino segments in the population disagree with the sentiment, but the trend among these particular groups is hard to miss.

4. Favorable Attitudes

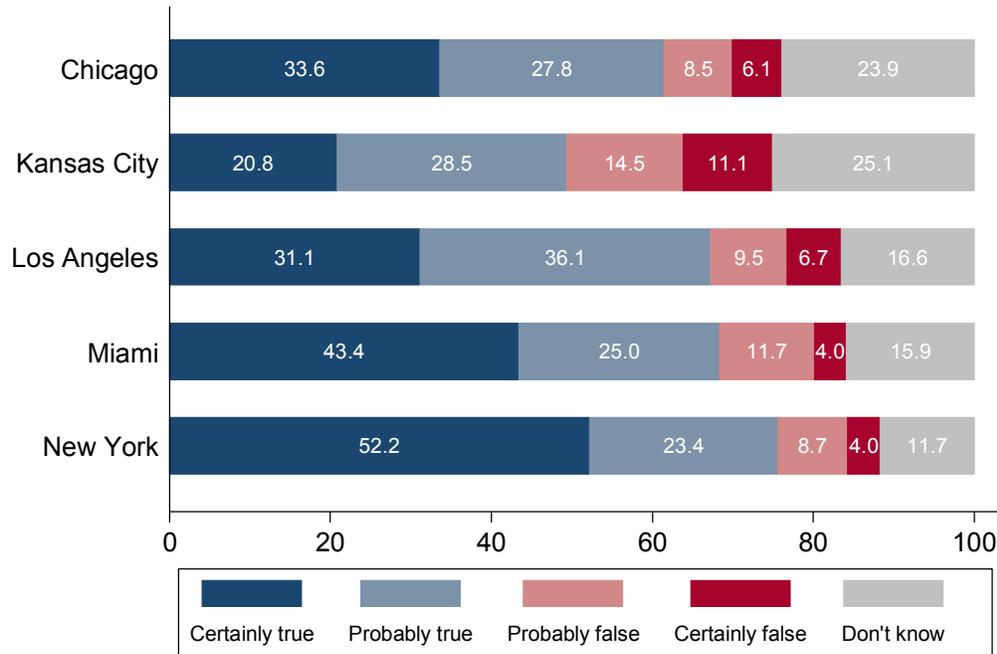
We find consistently positive views of Jewish social and cultural contributions. A large majority think Jews are committed to faith, family and doing good in the world in terms of cultural contributions and social change. Favorable opinions about the Jewish community are most common, by far, among those with greater personal familiarity, and less common among the foreign born and lower socio-economic status respondents.

5. Latino-Jewish Commonality

The generally positive view of the Jewish community does not yet translate into a sense of political commonality between the two groups. Latinos who are U.S. born, of Cuban decent, and higher socioeconomic status however, believe they share cultural similarities with Jews. These segments within the Latino population, along with the more familiar, present potentially rich ground for cross-cultural learning and development.

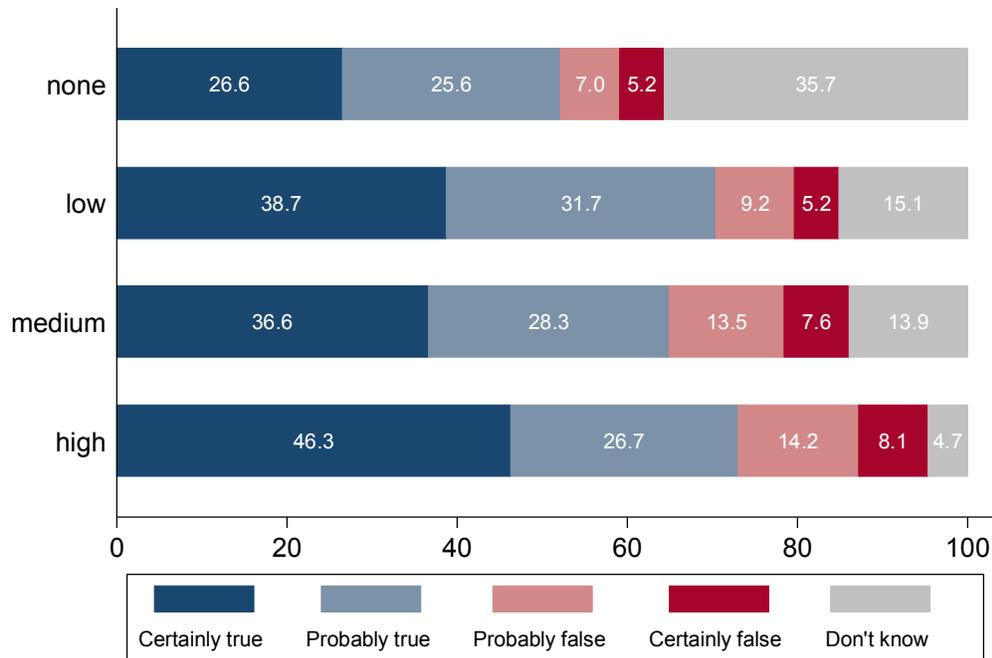
1. FINDINGS WITH RESPECT TO COHESIVENESS AND IDENTITY

Stick Together More than Most Americans



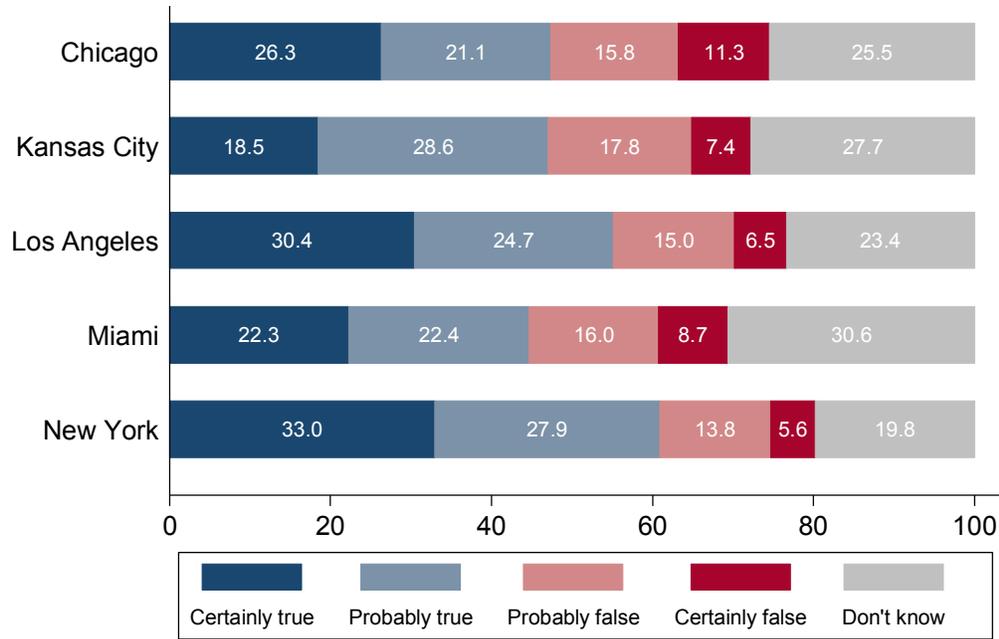
Asked if Jews stick together more than other Americans, 65% of all respondents said this was probably or certainly true, while 16% said the statement is probably or certainly false. Another 18% did not know. New York and Miami residents have stronger perceptions of Jews as a tight community. About 25% of Latinos in Kansas City do not think Jews stick together, and the same share give don't know responses. It could be that Latinos in cities with large Jewish populations like Miami and New York have more occasion to observe Jewish community engagement in cultural events and activities.

Stick Together More than Most Americans by Familiarity



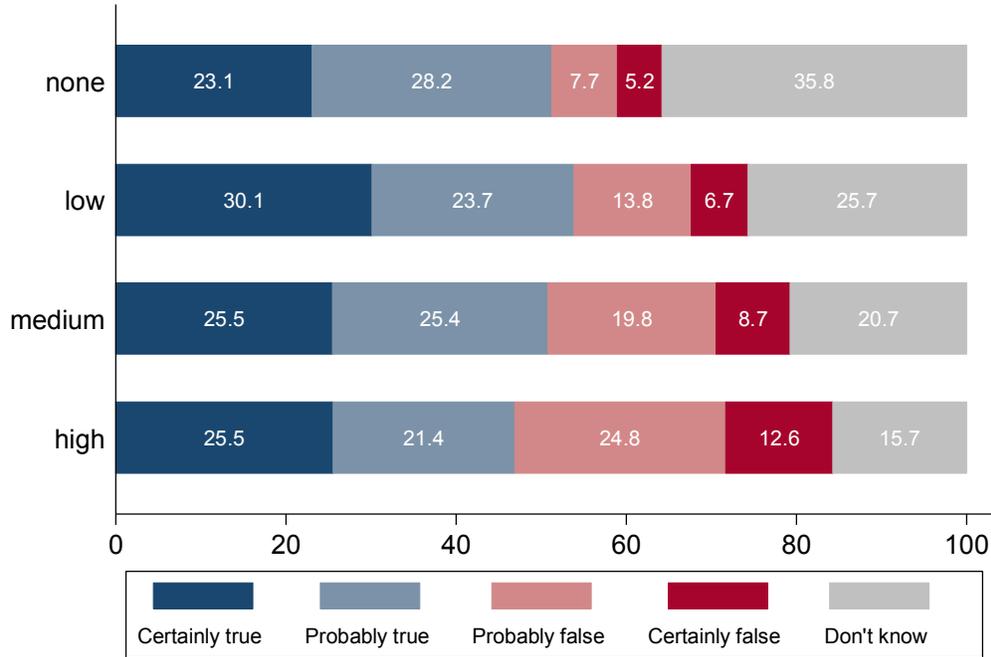
When considering the same question in terms of familiarity, we find less variation, though Latinos who are most acquainted with Jews report the most certainty that Jews stick together. Interestingly, the most familiar also have the largest share that does not view Jews as particularly cohesive (22.3% probably or certainly false). Those who are the least familiar have the highest “don’t know” response rate, at 36%. The fact that they do not offer responses suggests they are unwilling to assign a stereotype (in either direction) in the absence of information.

More Loyal to Israel than the U.S.



Among all surveyed, 52% think it is “certainly” or probably true that Jews feel more loyal to Israel than the United States. Another 23% think it is probably or certainly untrue, and 25% do not know. New Yorkers and Angelinos have the strongest perceptions of Jewish loyalty to Israel, over 50% in both cities. In all cities, over 20% of Latinos disagree with the premise that Jews place loyalty to Israel ahead of the U.S. Miami has an unexpectedly high 31% “don’t know” response rate.

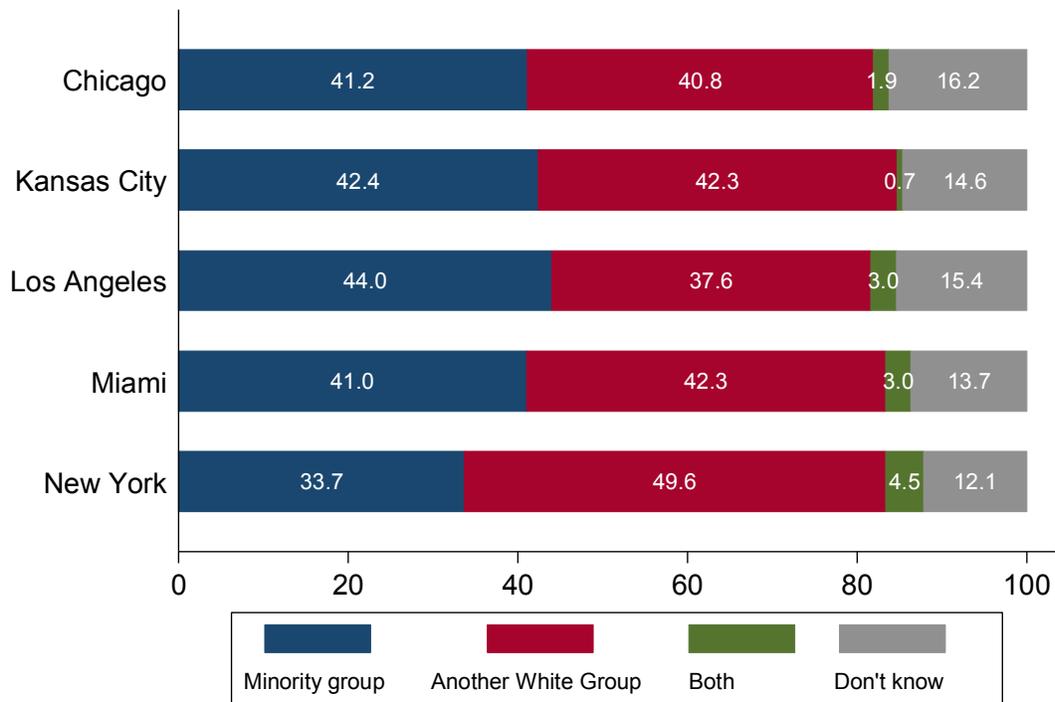
More Loyal to Israel than the U.S. by Familiarity



Considering this same question in terms of familiarity with Jews, some trends come into focus. Latinos that know Jews are more likely to disagree with the statement “Jews are more loyal to Israel than the United States”. Among the highly familiar, 37% of Latinos with high degrees of familiarity with Jews disagree with the statement, while 13% of those entirely unfamiliar have the same response.

The most acquainted with the Jewish community still see strong Israeli loyalties among them: 47% of the most familiar and 51% of the medium familiarity group give probably or certainly true responses.

Minority or Another White Group?



We ask respondents whether they view Jews as a minority group or as another segment of the white population. At the city level there are not too many differences. About 42% of Latinos in four of the five cities think of Jews as a minority group. New York is the exception, where only 34% share that opinion. Similarly, 38% to 42% in Chicago, Kansas City, Los Angeles and Miami think of Jews as another white group. Half of New Yorkers share this view. Few would characterize Jews as “both”, and 12% to 15% do not know which of these categories fits best.

Focus Group Comments on Whether Jews were Minorities:

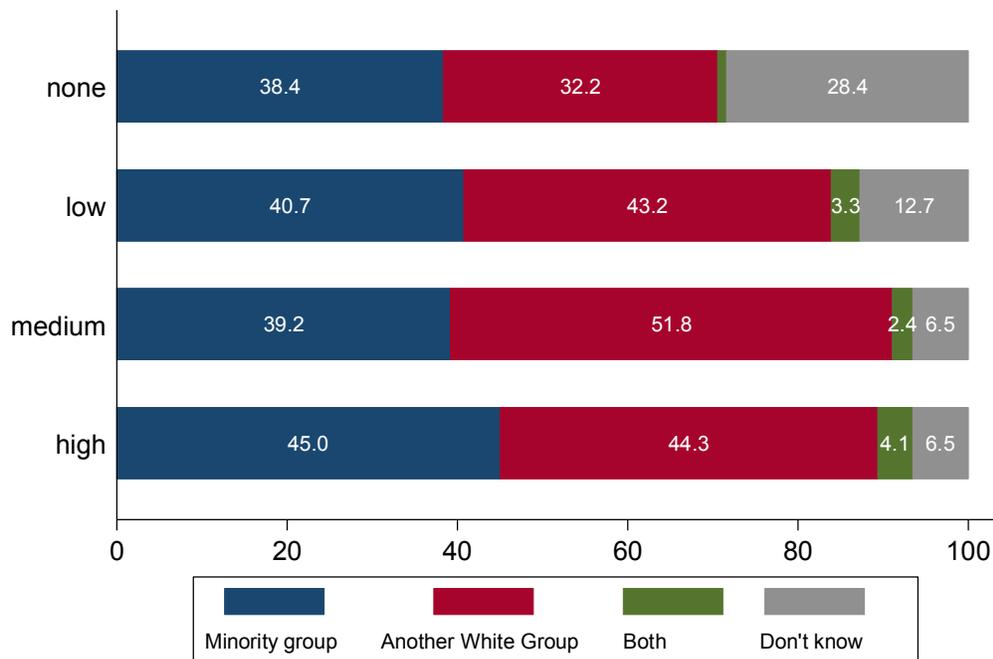
Across the focus groups, Jews were considered to be “more like other whites than minorities.” The rationale centered on both physical characteristics of skin type and educational and financial resources, “They have power. I’ve never seen a homeless Jewish person.” However, when the question of whether Jews have experienced discrimination came up there was a sense that they did. In the Spanish language New York City group there was the belief that they face discrimination, “because of how they dress, that they have closed circles and because people are jealous of their economic power.”

While Jews are categorized as white, there was a common feeling across groups that they are a minority with respect to their religion. Their size, also led many participants to qualify

their categorization as “white” and indicate that numerically they could be seen as minorities. In a number of the focus groups the participants were asked to estimate what percentage of the U.S. population was Jewish. Figures ranged widely and for the most part these numbers were pure guesses that were heavily influenced by what other participants said.

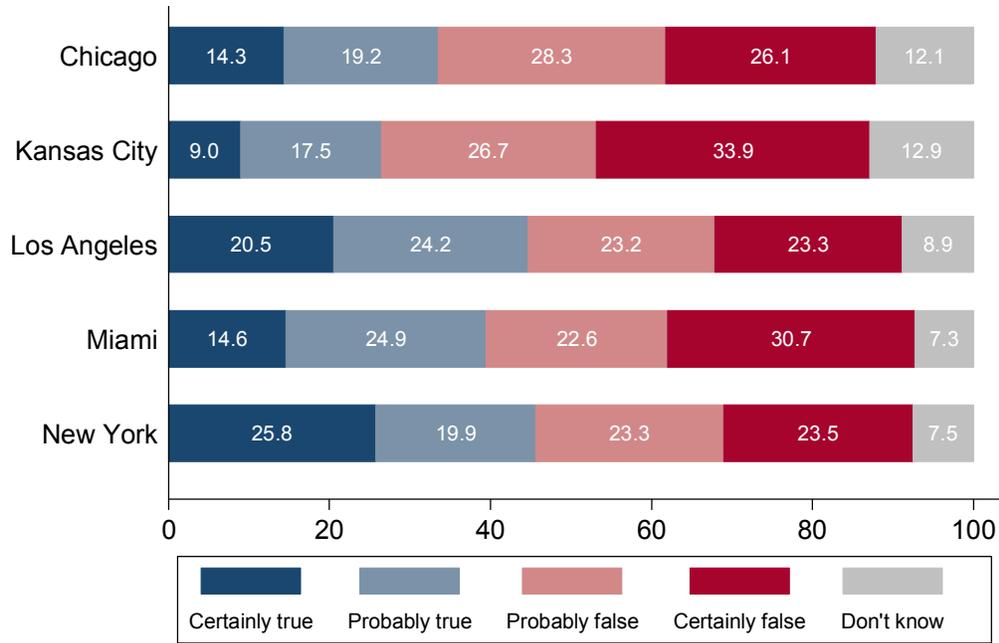
- * New York City (Spanish): 20-60%
- * Miami (English): 5-30%
- * Chicago (English): 3-25%, mean falling around 10%
- * Chicago (Spanish): 8-50% with the mean falling around 20%
- * Los Angeles (Spanish): 10-50%

Minority or Another White Group? By familiarity



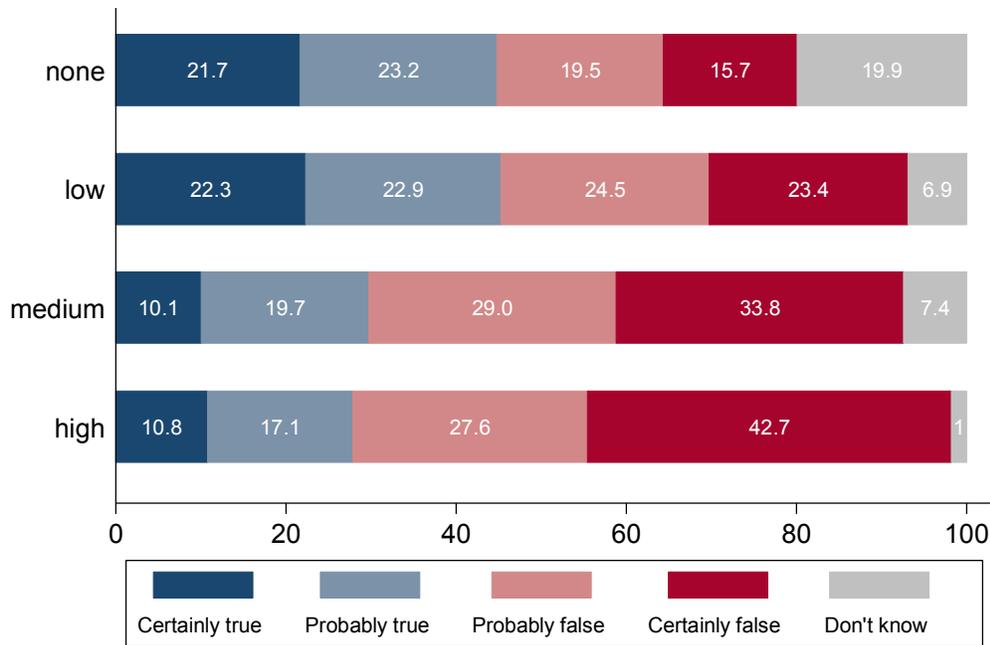
Latinos with more knowledge about the Jewish community are slightly more likely to classify them as a white group *and* a minority group. The most familiar split about even, with 45% responding “minority” and 44% responding “white”. Nearly 40% of the remaining respondents think of Jews as minorities. Academic researchers have pointed to the impact that a minority experience (not necessarily a common one) may have in developing coalition partners.

Identify Jews by Their Looks



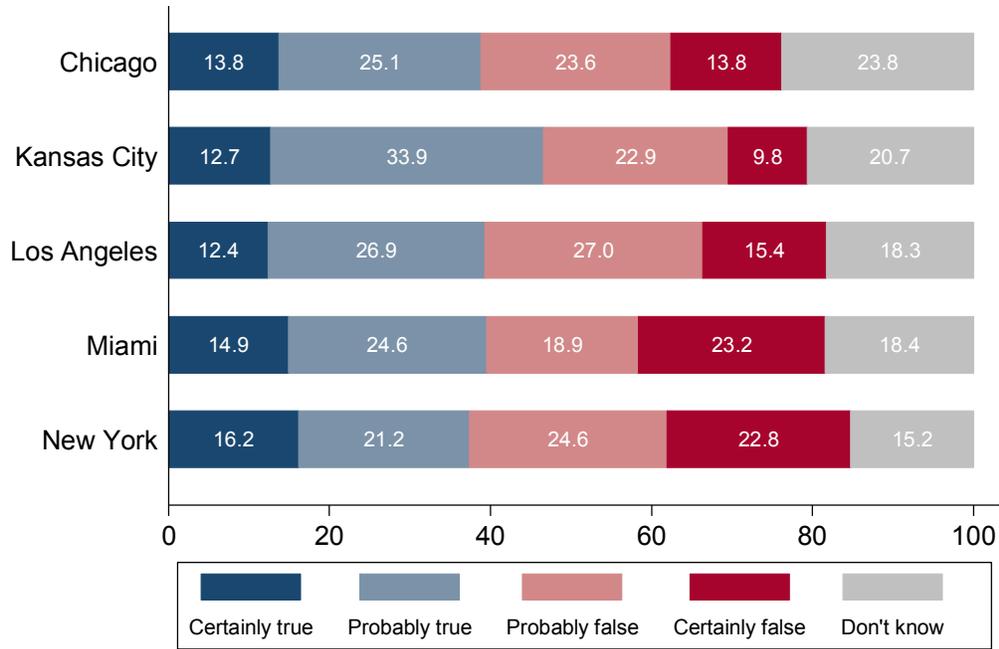
Respondents are asked whether Jews can be identified by looks alone. Most Latinos, in all cities do not think this is the case. The majority of respondents in Kansas City, Chicago and another 46% in New York and Los Angeles think it is probably or certainly not true that one can tell who is Jewish simply by looking. The largest yes responses come from New York, Los Angeles and Miami, where 40% to 46% agree.

Identify Jews by Their Looks by familiarity



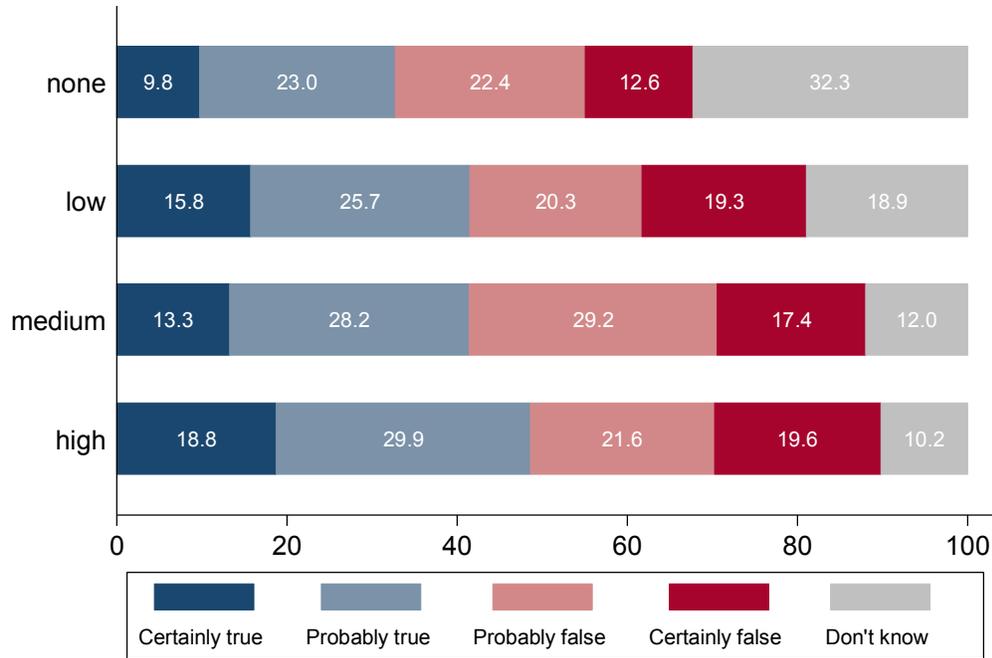
Whether they know Jews or not, most Latinos think looks are not enough to know who is Jewish: 70% of the most familiar and 63% of the moderately familiar disagree with the statement; only 10% say it is certainly true. Though more likely to agree that looks are determinative, over half of the least familiar disagree or say they don't know. It may be that Latino experience with in-group appearance diversity leads them to believe looks can be an unreliable ethnic indicator.

Losing Distinctiveness, Identity and Become Like Other Americans



We evaluate Latino views of Jewish assimilation by asking whether they believe Jews are losing their distinctiveness and becoming like other Americans. Few Latinos think this is true. In all cities less than 17% believe it is true. Miami, Los Angeles and New York residents think it is untrue that Jews are losing their distinctiveness at the highest rates (42%, 42% and 48% respectively). Interestingly, Kansas City, the metro area in our sample with the smallest Jewish population has the highest share of Latinos that think Jews are assimilating.

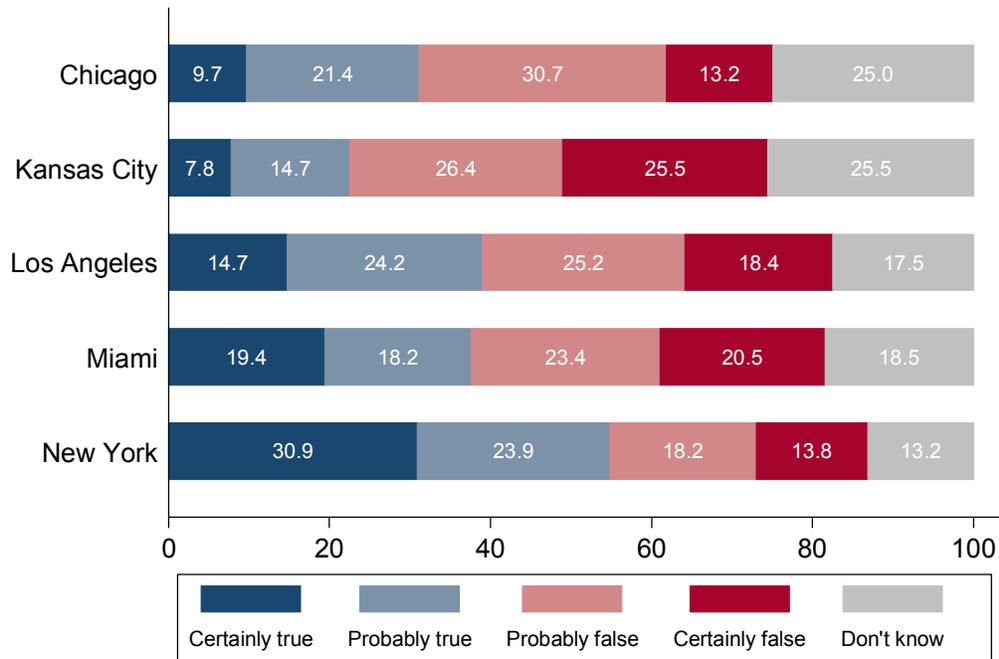
Losing Distinctiveness, Identity and Become Like Other Americans by Familiarity



Latinos most familiar with Jews have slightly stronger views that Jews are losing their distinctiveness and becoming like other Americans. Latino respondents who know Jews best are themselves are among the most culturally assimilated Latinos (English fluency, higher average education, etc). We would caution against interpreting “true” or “false” responses as a negative evaluations. “Becoming American” can be viewed very favorably by both immigrant and native born Latinos (and other subsets of the population). Retaining cultural distinctiveness is also a valued attribute among Latinos. Among our respondents, 63% said they have a strong Latino identity, and 42% also report having a strong American identity.

2. FINDINGS REGARDING ETHICS AND INFLUENCE

Too Much Power in The U.S.

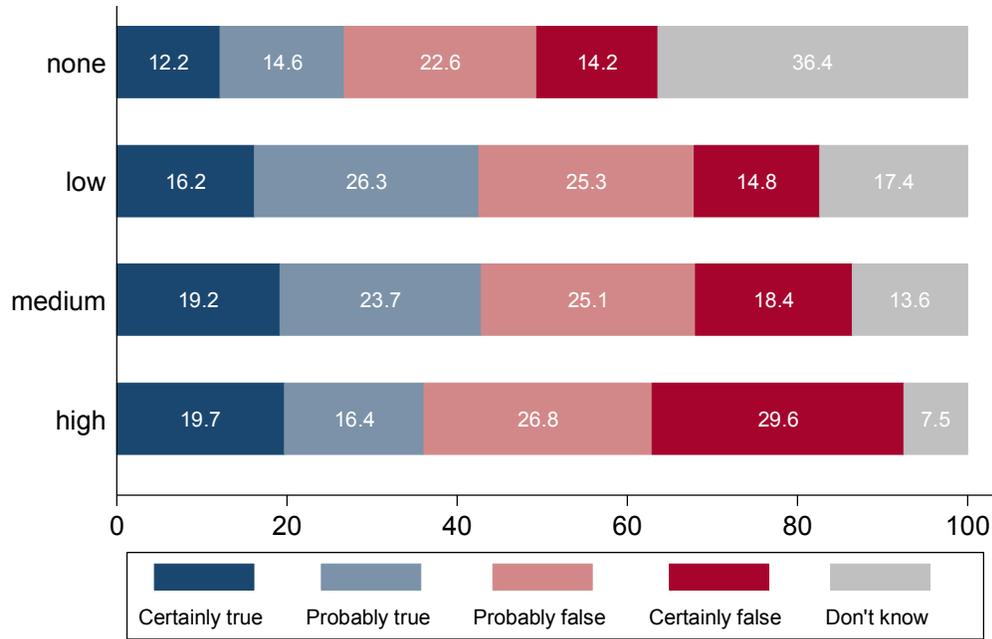


Respondents were asked whether “Jews have too much power in the United States today.” Among all respondents 42% said this was probably or certainly untrue, 38% said it is probably or certainly true, and 20% said they do not know. In New York, 52% of Latinos are of the opinion that Jews have too much power in the nation, with 31% saying it is certainly true. Conversely, 52% of Latinos in Kansas City do not think it is true, with 26% saying it is certainly false.

Focus Group Reflections on Power:

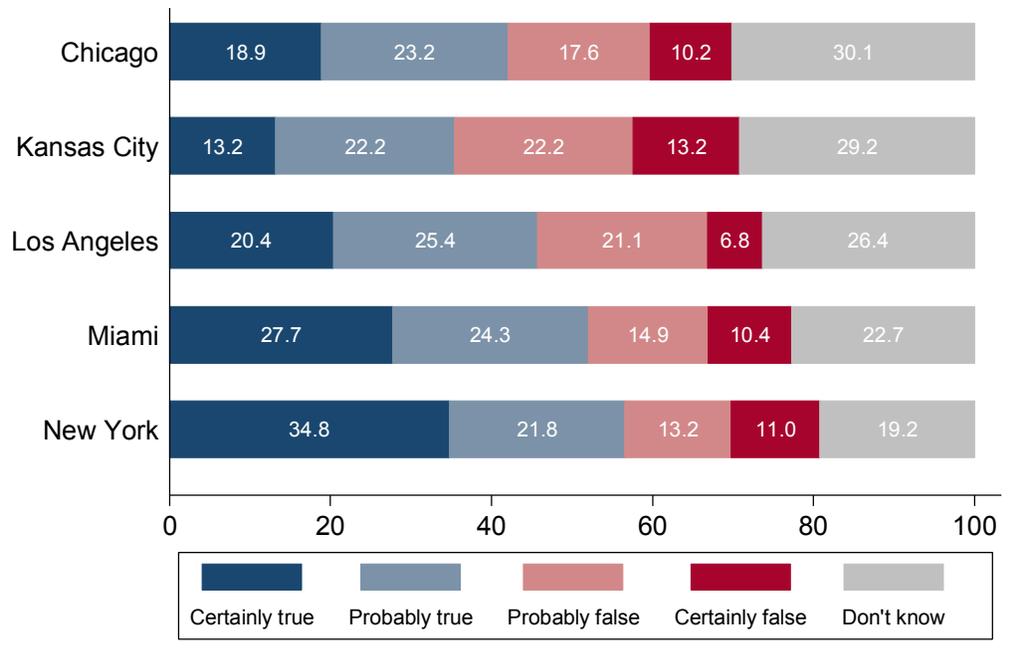
The discussion of contributions then transitioned into a pointed question about whether Jews are powerful or weak and specifically how influential they are compared to whites. There was a general consensus among the participants that Jews hold a lot of power. However, the higher SES groups were able to better elaborate how this influence manifested itself, for example in finance, government, and media. A woman in the Chicago English focus group said that Jews are, “very influential, they run the show.” This sentiment was followed up by the comment that, “if they like you they really like you, if they don’t you’re out.” By contrast, in the Spanish language Chicago group (the lowest in SES) the only Jewish person aside from the mayor that they could name was Barbara Streisand. Though there was a general sense that the community had influence, which was once again contrasted with the Latino community, “for example, its rare that you see something owned by Jose.”

Too Much Power in The U.S. by Familiarity



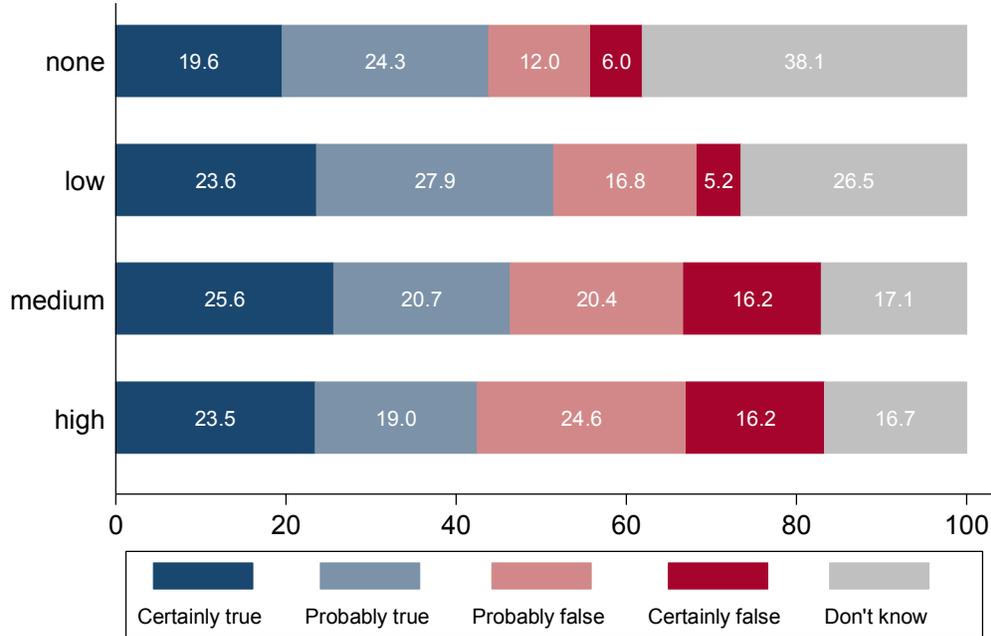
Revisiting this question by degrees of familiarity, the pattern shifts. The more familiar people are with the Jewish community, the less likely they are to say they have too much power. 57% of the high-range group and 43% of the moderate range group say it is false. 30% of those most familiar with Jews say it is certainly false that they have too much power in the U.S. We think it is worth noting that Latinos who do not know Jews do not have higher rates of agreement. The least unfamiliar mostly respond with disagreement (37%) or saying they do not know.

Too Much Power on Wall Street



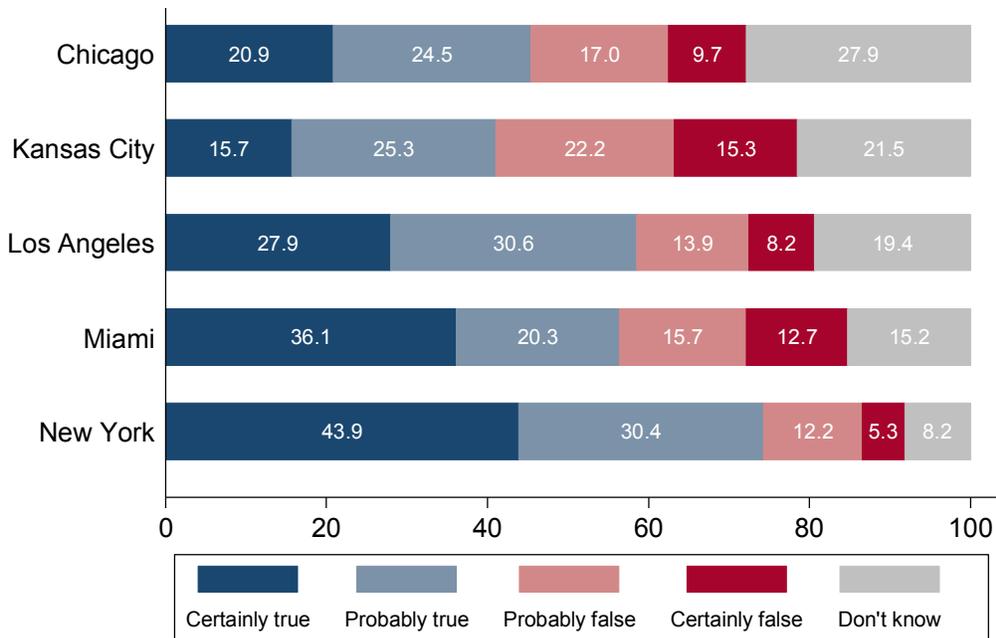
Similarly, we ask whether respondents believe Jews have too much power on Wall Street. Overall, 48% say probably or “certainly” true. Again, New Yorkers have the highest rates of agreement, where 35% say it is certainly true and another 22% say it is probably true. Most Latinos in Miami agree, though at a slightly lower rate, 52% answer certainly or probably true. Kansas City Latinos have the highest rate of disagreement, where 35% say it is probably or certainly false. It is worth noting that a large share of all respondents in all cities say they do not know. 19% in New York City (home of Wall Street), 23% in Miami, 26% in Los Angeles and about 30% in both Kansas City and Chicago. It would be a mistake to classify “don’t know” responses as antagonistic; these respondents did not offer the stereotypical negative response that Latinos who know Jews are less likely to believe that Jews have too much Wall Street influence, with 41% disagreeing but 43% of this group say it is “certainly or probably true.” Those who do not know the Jewish community as well are more likely to say they don’t know instead of making a judgment about the scope of Jewish influence on Wall Street.

Too Much Power on Wall Street by Familiarity



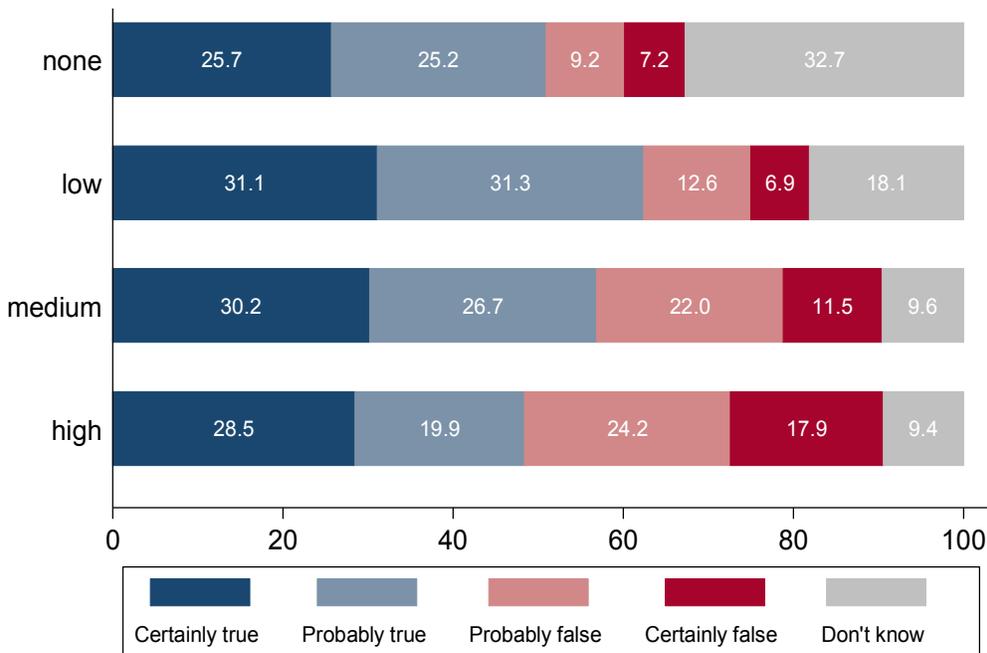
A more general question about the business world asks whether it is true that Jews have too much power in the business world.

Too Much Power in Business World



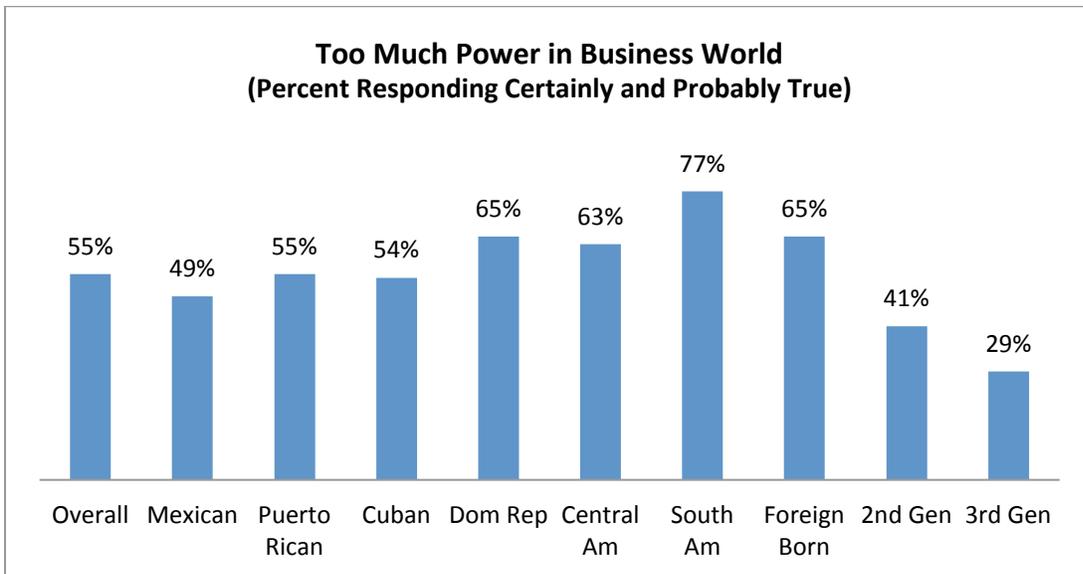
Overall, 56% of respondents say this is probably or certainly true. Latinos in New York and Miami overwhelmingly share this view with 74%, 59% and 56% of respondents in the respective cities in accord. In the remaining two cities, there is large shares that believe Jews have too much influence in the business world: 45% in Chicago and 41%. Again, Kansas City gives more “probably and certainly” false responses compared to all other cities, at 37%.

Too Much Power in Business World by Familiarity

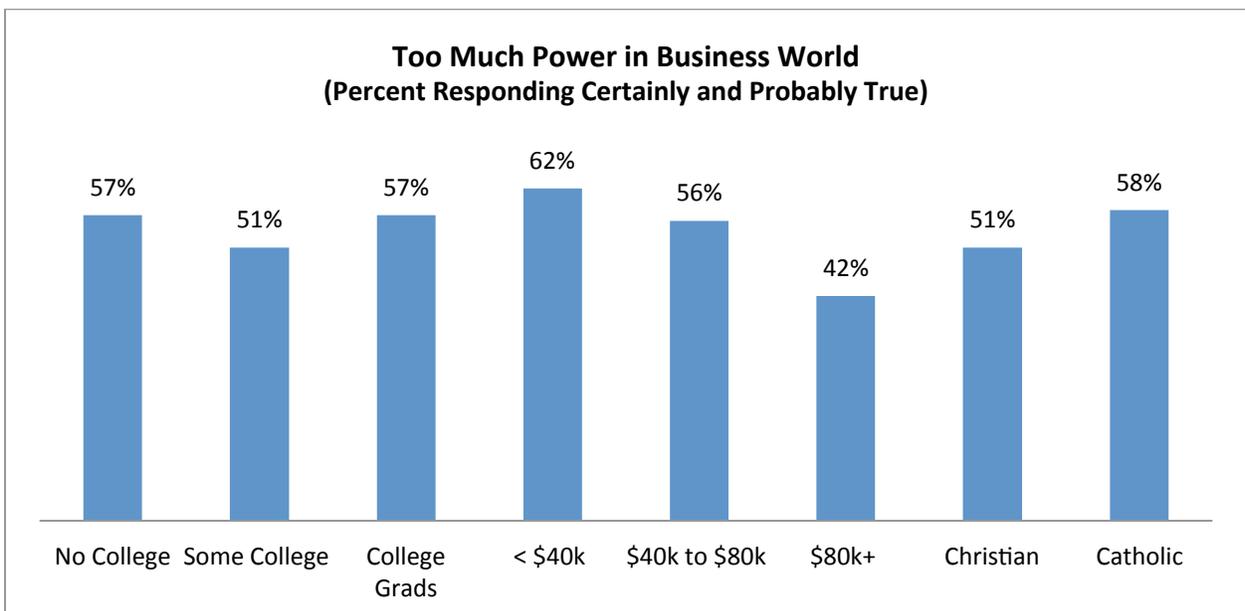


There is some drop-off when we take familiarity into consideration, but it is not drastic. 49% of the most familiar believe Jews have too much influence in the business world, and 42% think such is not the case. Among the moderately familiar 57% among the moderately familiar say it is “certainly” or “probably true”, and 62% among those with low levels of familiarity agree.

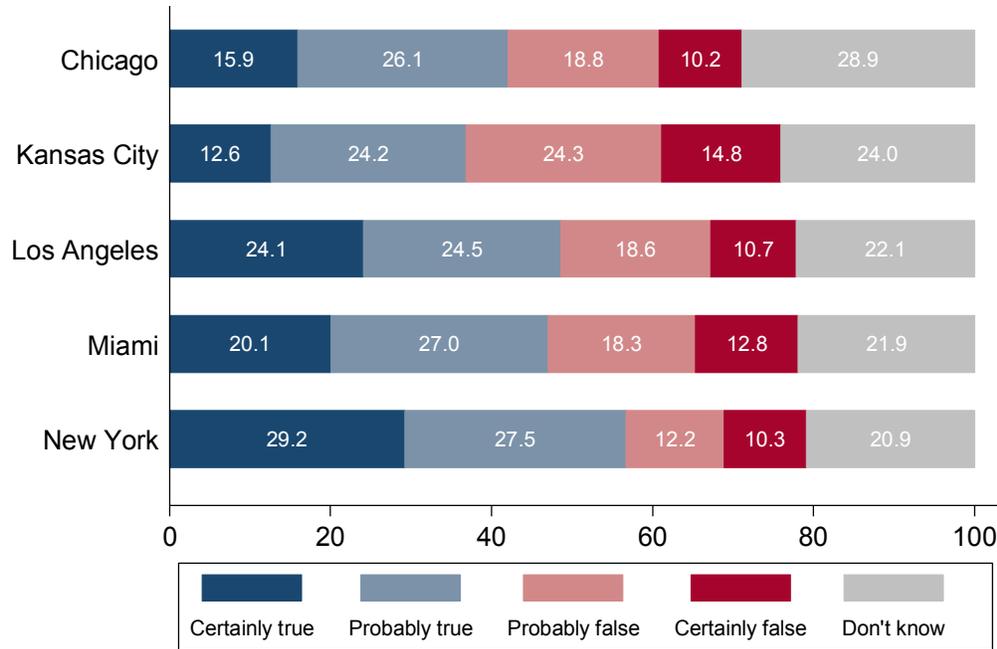
Unlike on many of the other indicators, there is significant demographic variation on the perception of business power. Immigrant experience significantly influences opinions on this issue. Most foreign-born Latinos, 65%, believe Jews have too much power in American business, but only 29% hold that view by the third generation. There are more first generation immigrants among the Dominican, Central and South American origin populations in the US, which is consistent with this pattern.



Income sharply distinguishes Latino opinions on this matter. There is a twenty-point gap between low and high income respondents, where low income Latinos are the most likely (62%) to believe Jews have too much power in the business world. A majority of Catholics are also more likely to agree with this view as well, seven percentage points above Evangelical Christians.

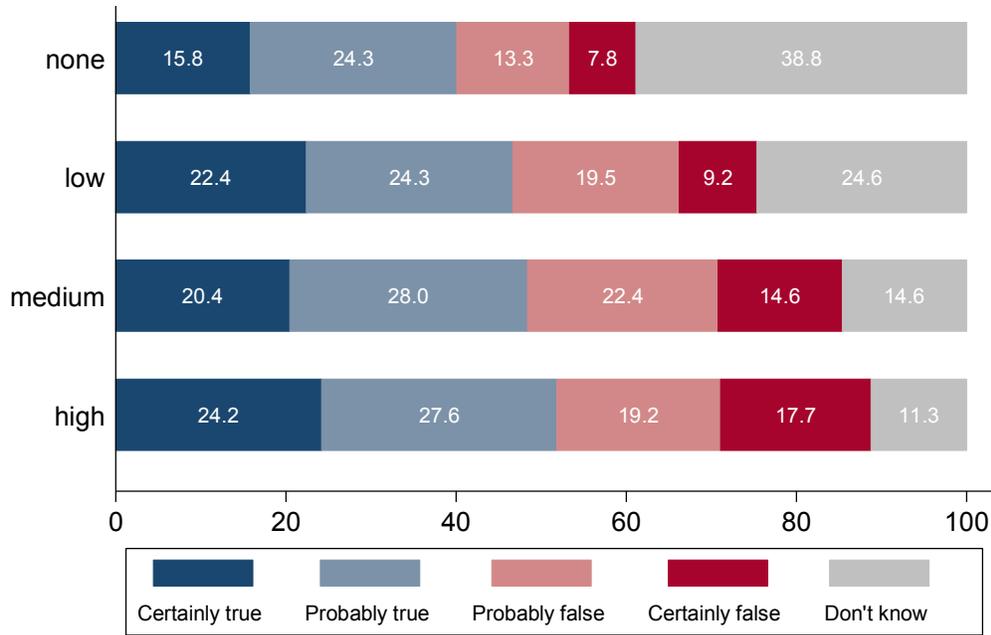


Like to be at Head of Things



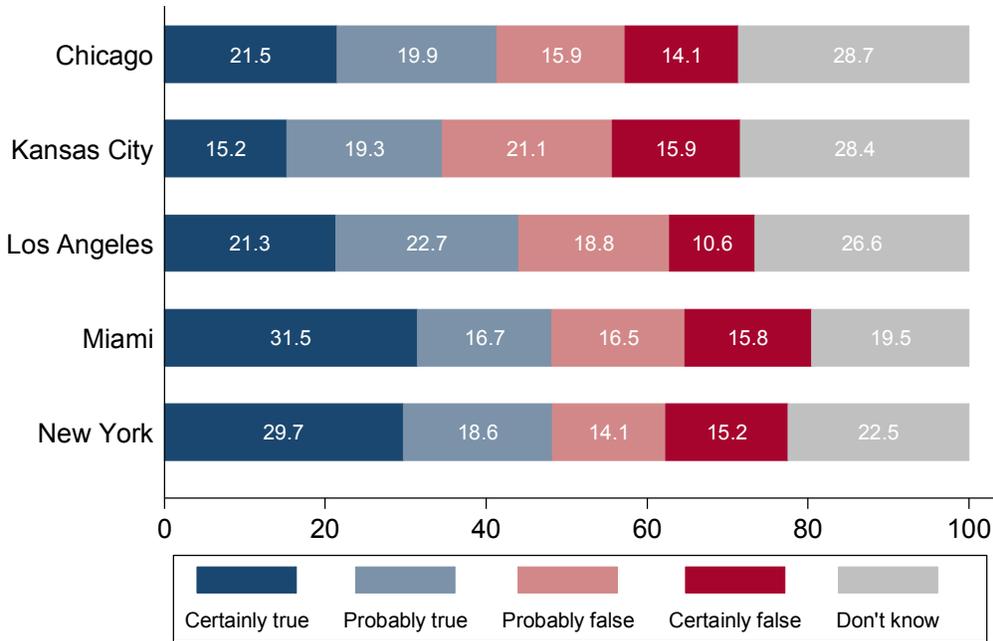
We asked respondents whether they believe is true or untrue that “Jews always like to be at the head of things.” Again, the cities with the largest Jewish and Latino populations give a high share of certainly and probably true responses. Over 20% of all respondents in all cities do not know; in Chicago that figure is a high rate of 29%. Kansas City respondents disagree at the highest rate, 39% followed by Miami at 31%.

Like to be at Head of Things by Familiarity



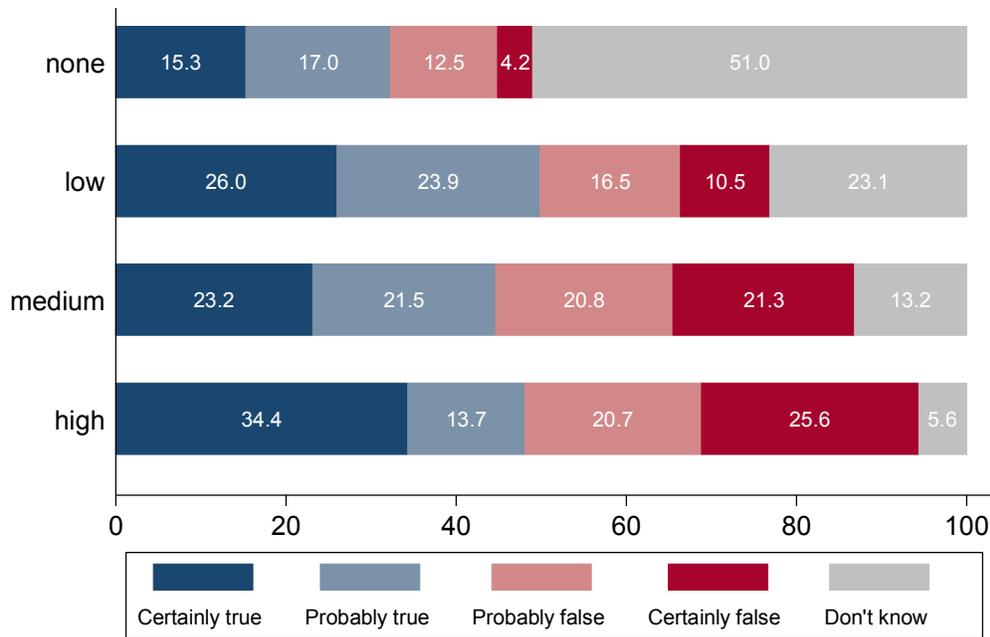
Latinos who know the Jewish community have the highest rates of both true and false responses. 52% of the most familiar agree, with 25% saying certainly true. Among the most and moderately familiar 37% disagree. Again, we find Latinos unfamiliar with Jews do not offer antagonistic responses, instead sticking with “don’t know”, at 39%

Jewish Media Control



Next we consider Latino perceptions of Jewish influence on American media. Respondents are asked whether “the movie and television industries are pretty much run by Jews.” Among all respondents 44% believe this is true, 31% say false, and 25% don't know. 49% in Miami and 48% in New York agree, with 32% in Miami saying certainly true. Only 11% in Los Angeles and 15% in New York (industry centers) disagree. 20% or more in all cities don't know.

Jewish Media Control by Familiarity



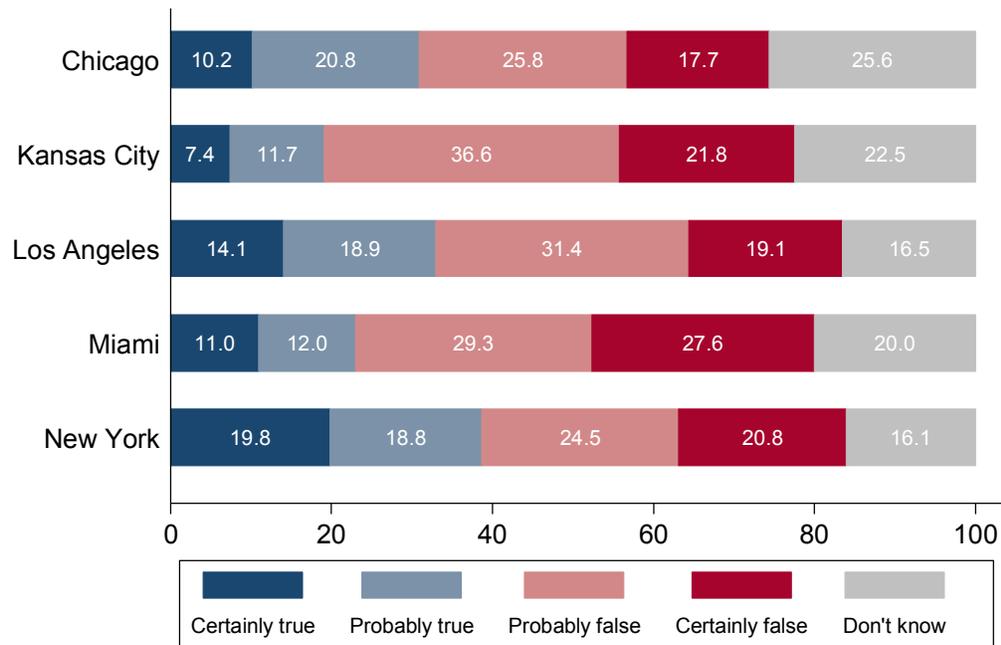
Latinos who know Jews have much higher rates of disagreement with the statement that Jews run the television and movie industry: 46% of this group disagree, with 25% saying it is certainly false. Still, 48% of this group answered true, and 34% said “certainly true.” Half of our respondents lacking networks with the Jewish community do not know.

Focus Group Comments on Media Influence

Jewish influence in Hollywood was frequently brought up and would tie into a discussion of how their influence in the media reinforces their influence in other areas. The “Rick Sanchez” incident came up in the Miami English language group as an illustration of Jews, “having a lot of influence in the media, in anything TV.” In the English language Los Angeles group, one Latino commented that, “being Jewish is beneficial because it helps in getting a job in business or as a writer in Hollywood.”

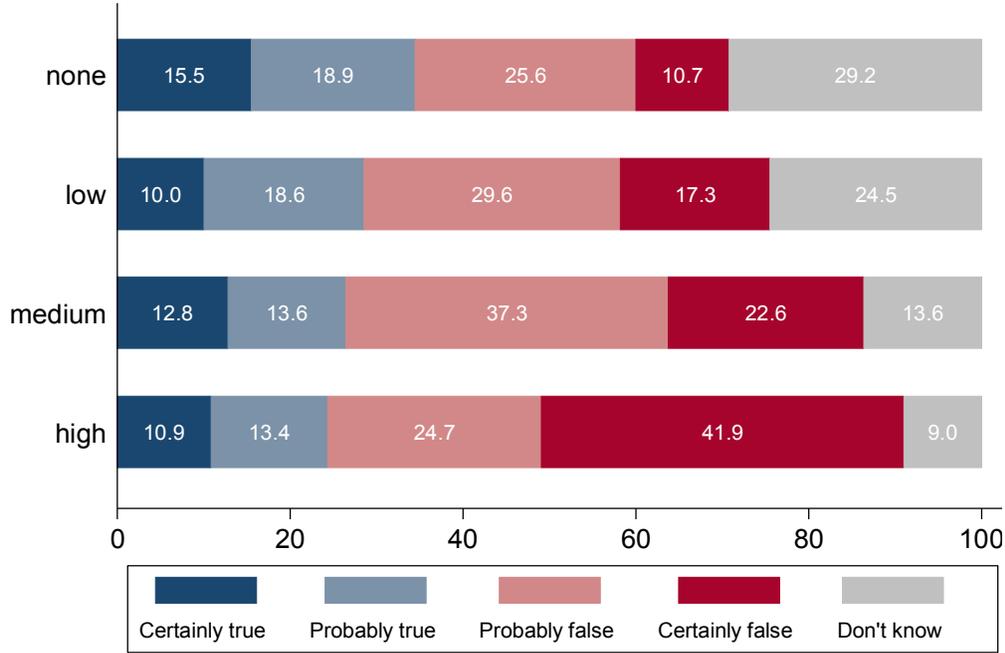
In the English Los Angeles group Jews were regarded as the “one-percenters,” with influence in Hollywood, news, media, and business. However this was followed up by another participant that said that their influence was limited to certain areas, “a Jewish president won’t get voted into easily.”

Too Shrewd For Others To Compete



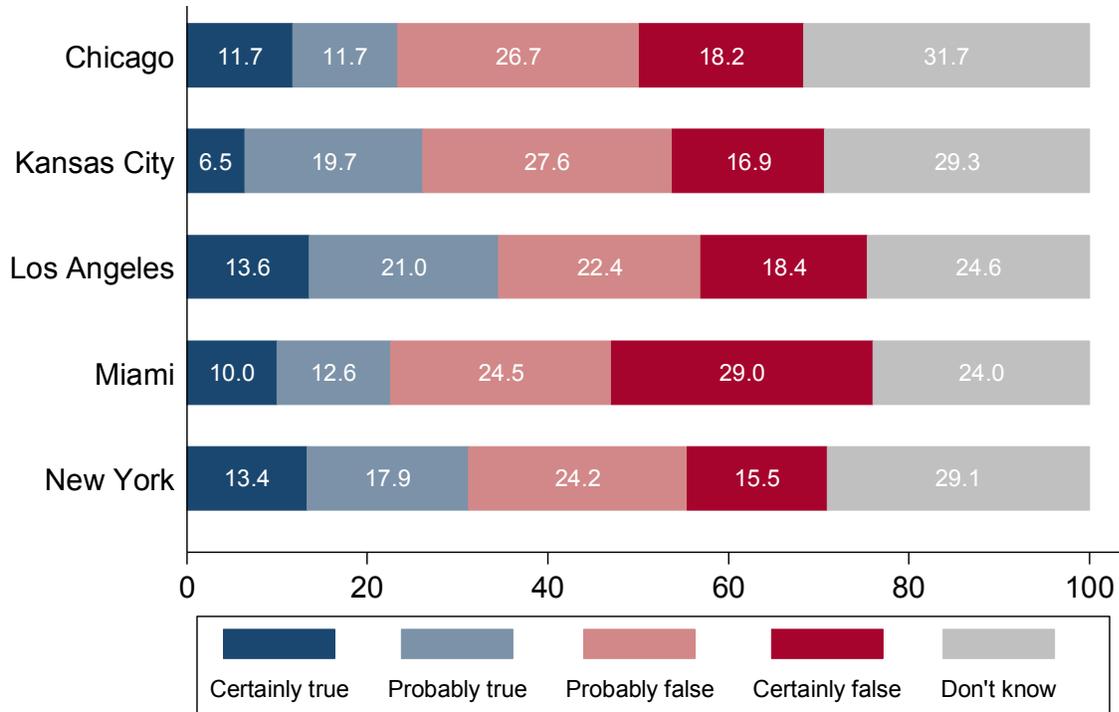
There is a pattern whereby Latinos view Jews as having significant, if not too much influence in business and industry. We probe further asking whether Latinos think these gains have been achieved fairly. Asked whether Jewish business people are so shrewd that others do not have a fair chance in competition, 51% said this statement is probably or certainly false, 31% said it is true, and 20% said they do not know. By city, 57% of Miami respondents, 50% in Los Angeles and 59% in Kansas City think the notion of Jewish shrewdness posing unfair advantages is false. And 28% in Miami say it is certainly false. In New York, 46% also disagree but 39% responded true/probably true.

Too Shrewd For Others To Compete by Familiarity



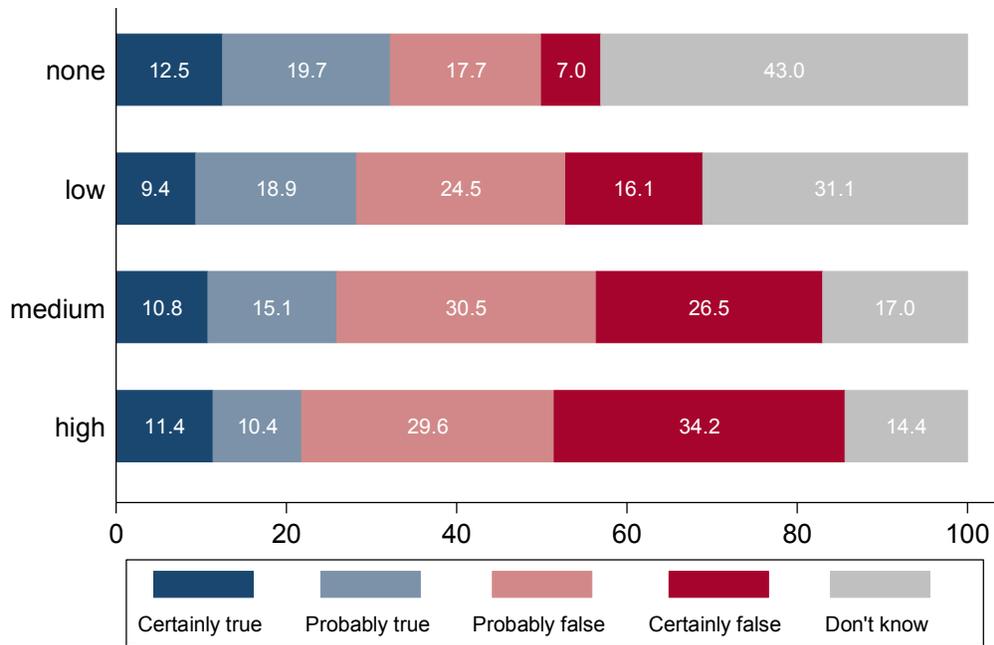
Personal experience seems to temper views on this issue: 67% of Latinos familiar with the Jewish community respond in disagreement, with 42% saying certainly false. Moderate category respondents also reject this notion at a rate of 60%. The least familiar have the most pessimistic view where 35% agree; still, 37% disagree among this group, and another 29% don't know.

Shady Business Practices to Get Ahead



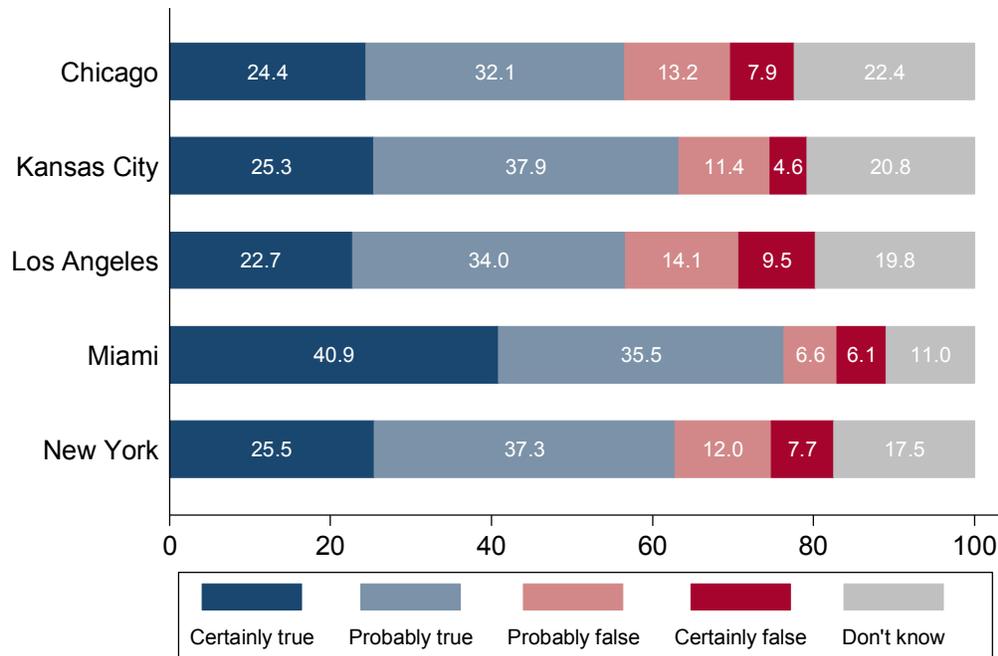
When asked if “Jews are more willing than others to use shady business practices to get ahead”, respondents show higher levels of disagreement and lack of information. In total, 44% disagree, 28% agree and 28% don’t know. Uncertainty remains high, with 25% to 32% of respondents in all cities give don’t know responses. Disagreement is high across cities: 54% in Miami disagree, with 29% saying certainly false. In the four remaining cities, 40% to 45% disagree. Los Angeles has the highest rate of agreement, at 35%.

Shady Business Practices to Get Ahead by familiarity



As one might expect, the more people know Jews, the more they disagree with the premise that they use “shady business practices.” The graphic clearly illustrates this point: 64% of high-familiar group and 58% of the moderate-familiar group oppose the idea, while 40% of the low familiar group also disagree. The low-familiar groups have don’t know rates of 31% and 43%, suggesting that more contact produces more positive evaluations.

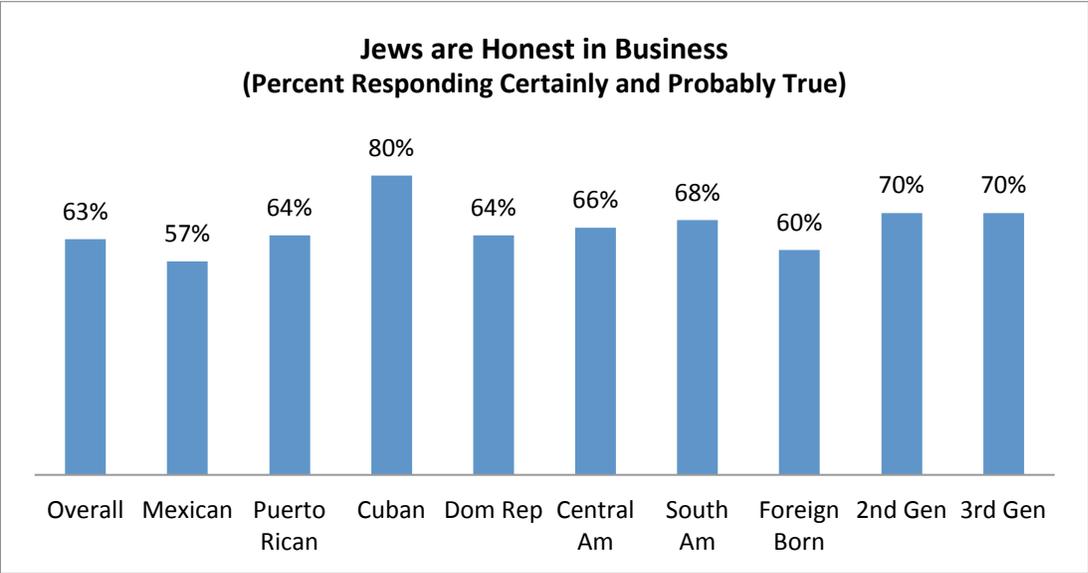
Honest Business People



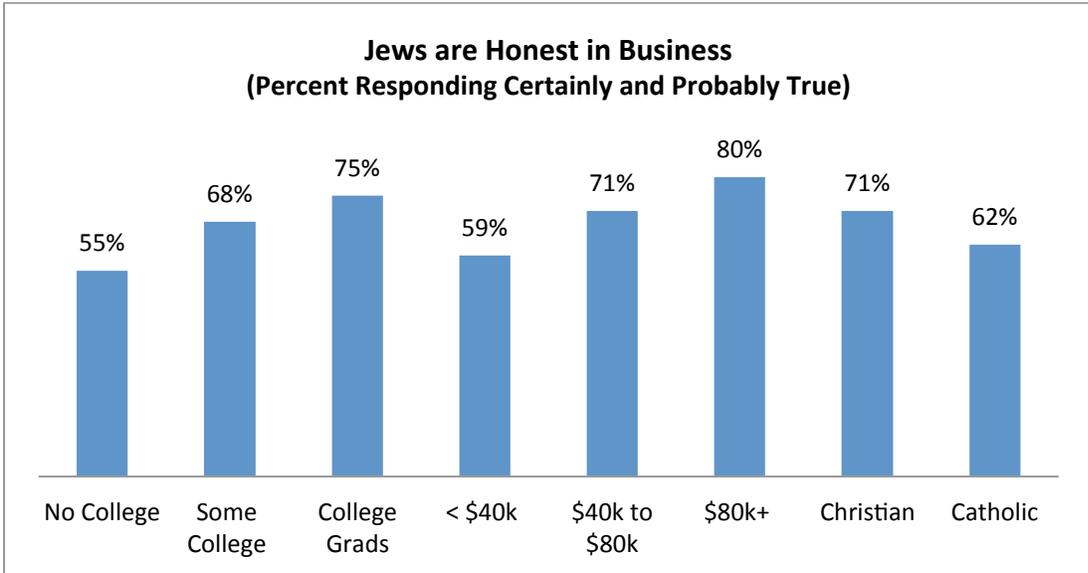
It is important to gauge responses to survey items framed in both positive and negative terms. Accordingly, we asked respondents whether they believe Jews are just as honest as other business people: 64% of all Latinos agree Jews are honest, 18% disagree and 18% don't know.

Miami-area Latinos have the most positive evaluation, where 41% say it is certainly true that Jews in business are equally honest, and a total of 77% agree. New Yorkers and Chicago residents share this view at a rate of 63%, followed by 57% of Angelinos and 56% in Kansas City. Just 10% of L.A. respondents offer the most negative response possible (certainly false). About 20% don't know outside of Miami and New York.

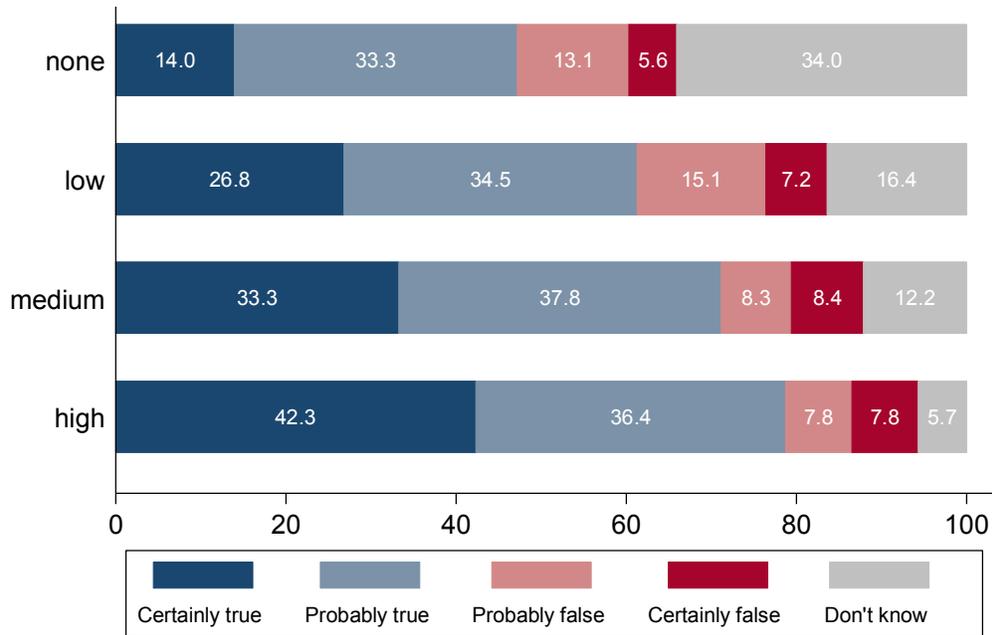
Here, again, some important demographic trends become evident. Generational assimilation and national origin distinguish responses to this question. Second and third generation Latinos agree at a rate of 70%, compared to 60% of foreign born respondents. Eight out of ten Cuban origin respondents agree Jews are honest businesspeople. The majority of Mexicans agree (57%) but this is a smaller majority relative to all other Latino groups.



There is a linear relationship between socioeconomic traits and opinions about Jewish honesty in business. Again, the majority of all groups have positive views, but there is much more agreement among the most educated and affluent. There is a twenty point gap between the least and most educated and affluent.



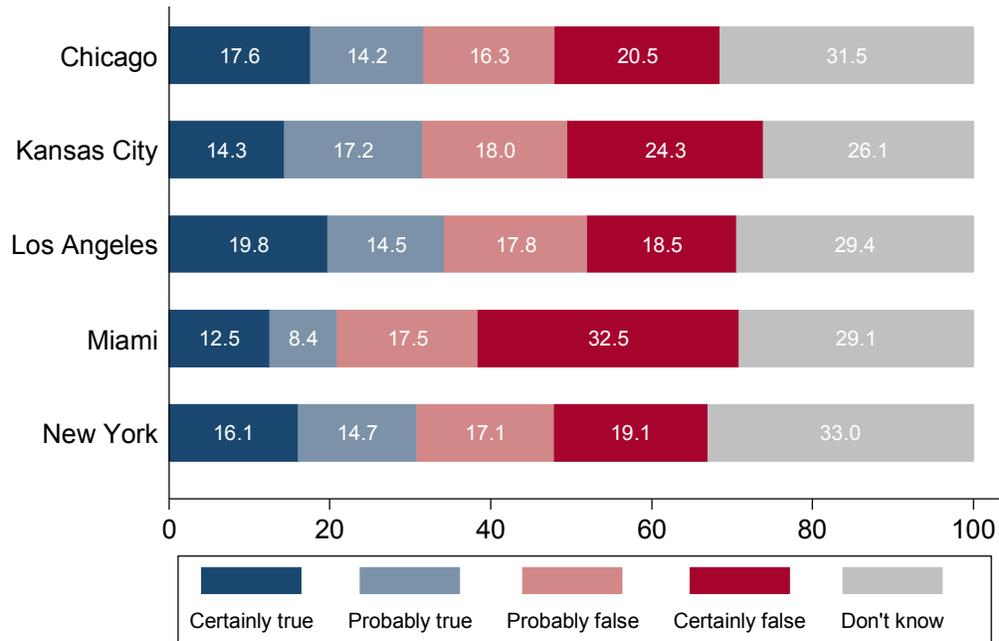
Honest Business People by familiarity



Again, we are not surprised to find that familiarity with the Jewish community leads to more positive responses. Over 70% of the response groups most familiar with Jews agree they are equally honest in the business world. The same is true for 62% of those who have relatively low levels of knowledge and contact with Jews. One third of those without any contacts to the Jewish community respond don't know.

3. FINDINGS REGARDING UNFAVORABLE ATTITUDES

Responsible for Jesus Death



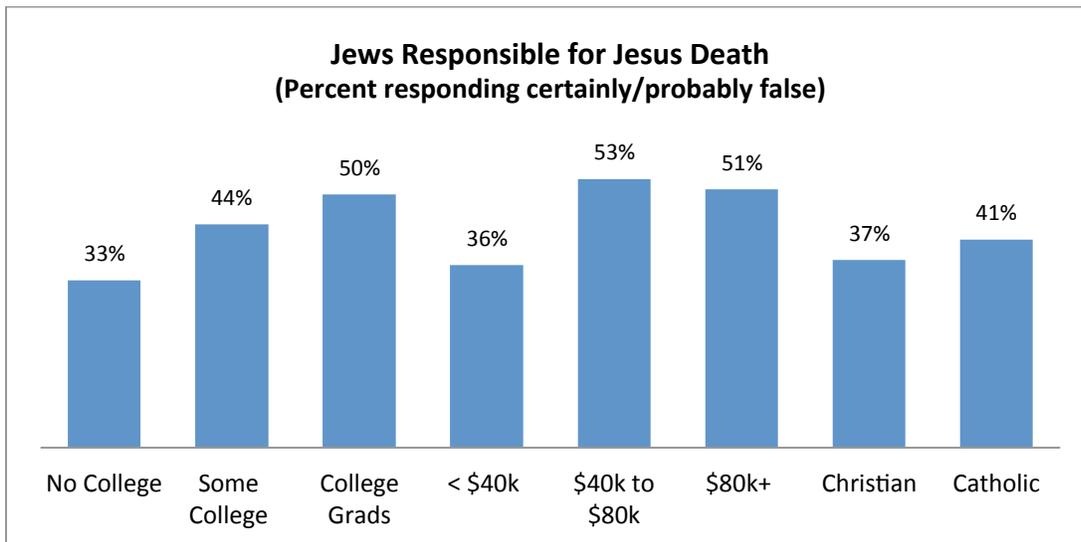
The next four items are pointed measures of the personal politics of anti-Semitic attitudes, as opposed to economic factors already discussed. Here we consider religious, political and personal opinions that may reveal antagonism towards the Jewish community.

First, we look at responses to the statement “Jews are responsible for Jesus death.” Among all respondents 30% say this is true, 41% say it is false, 29% don’t know. To place these responses in context, 83% are self-identified Christians, 77% are Roman Catholic and 29% consider themselves born-again or evangelical Christians. We did test this question across religious categories and found no deviation from this general pattern, 30% of Catholics agreed, 44% disagreed. Non-Catholic Christians were about evenly split where 38% agreed and 37% disagreed. Conventional wisdom would predict high rates of ‘agree’ among this very Christian-identified group. But, we find rather nuanced results.

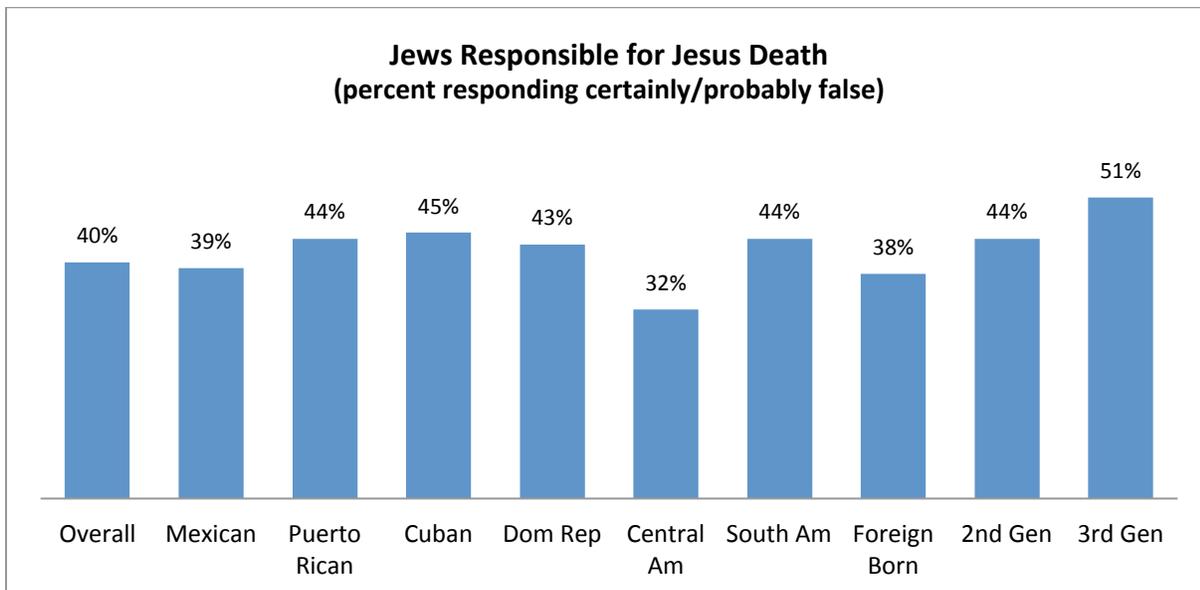
The sizable “don’t know” category should be a focus of some concern. That response implies that the respondent is at least open to considering such a claim and potentially persuadable—or else they would have disagreed. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that a significant majority of those answering the question disagreed with the claim.

Perceptions, Affect and Anti-Semitism: Unfavorable Attitudes Toward Jews

Some demographic affects appear on this question. Education and income differences among Latinos yield very different responses. Half of college educated and more affluent Latinos disagree that Jews are accountable for Jesus death. Only one third of the least educated and lowest income group respondents disagree with this premise.

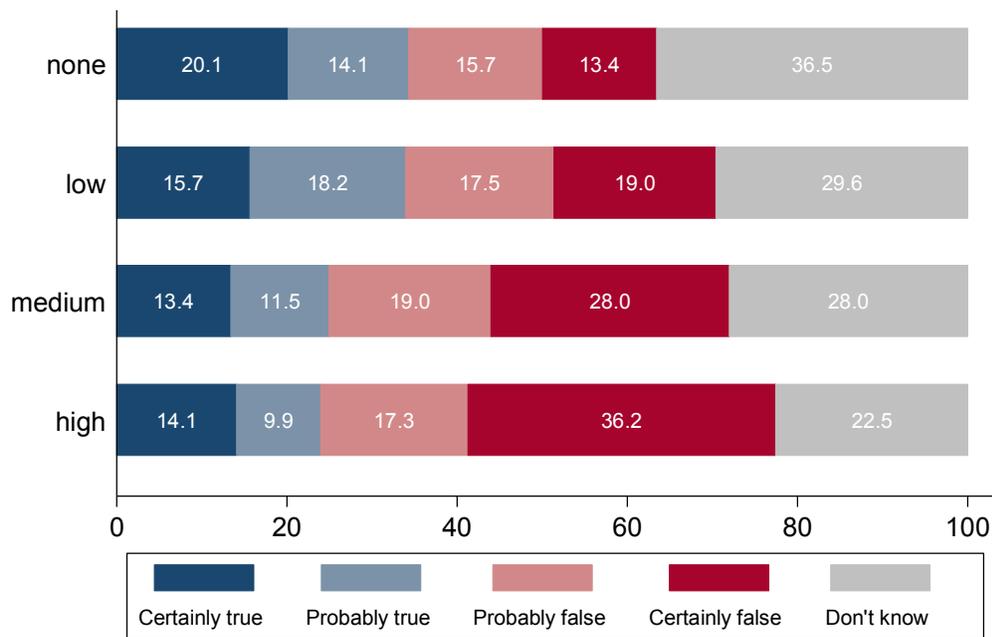


Similarly, third generation Latinos disagree at much higher rates (51%) compared to foreign born respondents (38%). Mexicans and Central Americans are less prone to disagree with the statement compared to Cubans, Dominicans and South Americans.



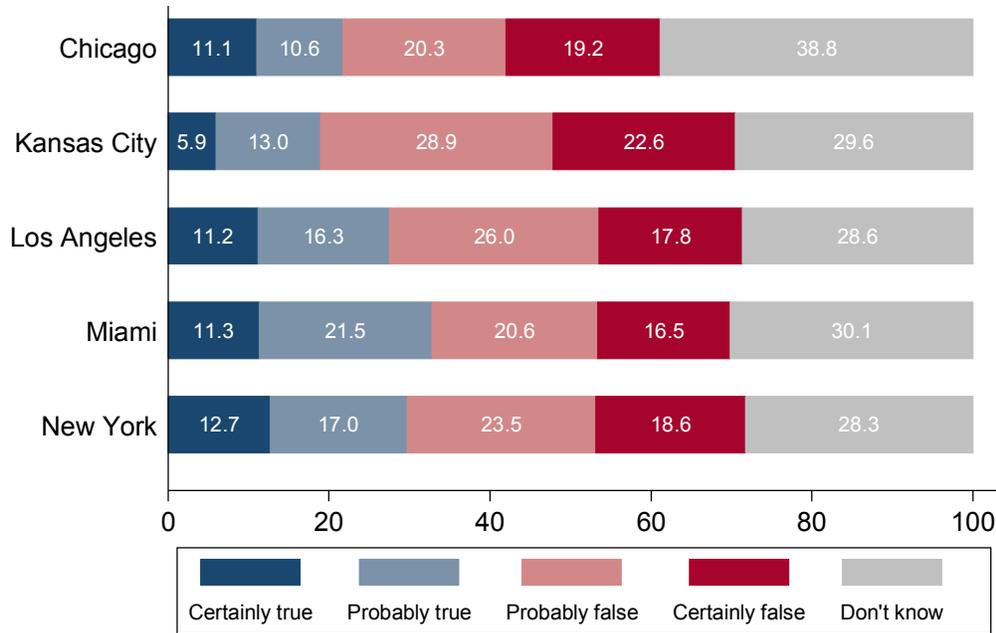
City-level differences mirror the overall patterns. About 30% in all cities, with the exception of Miami, think Jews are responsible for Jesus death. Angelinos hold this view at the highest rate, at 36% and of those, 20% responded with certainly true. Miami is about ten-points less likely than any other city to hold this opinion. Similarly, nearly half of South Florida’s Latinos disagree, and one-third of them say it is false. The differences here are in terms of intensity, for the most party, the cities have about one third of their responses in each of the three categories.

Responsible for Jesus Death by familiarity



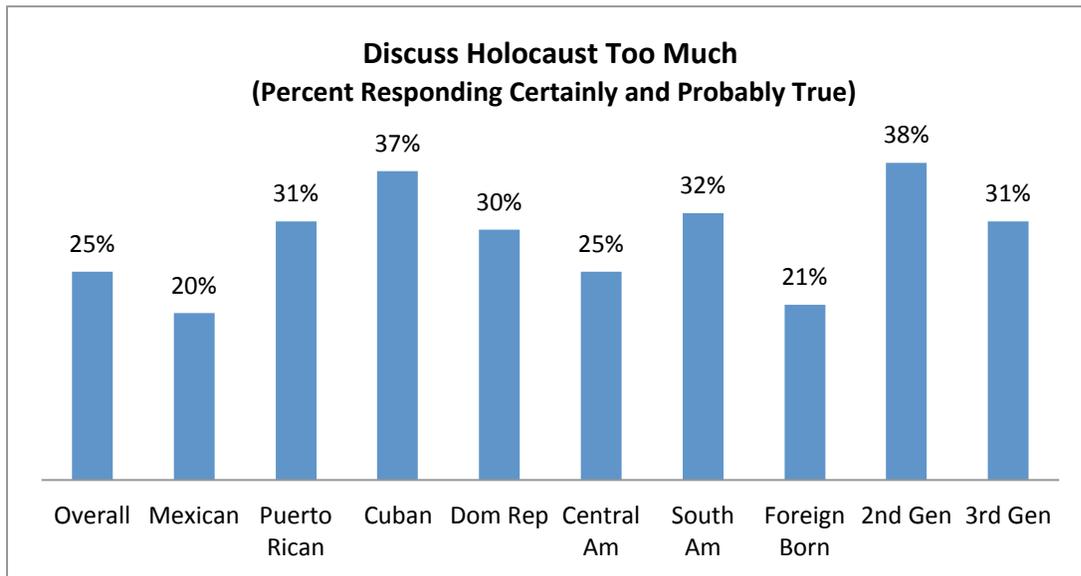
The difference between Latinos with ties to the Jewish community and those without is evident in this case. As familiarity increases, so does the share saying they believe it is certainly false to assert Jews are responsible for Jesus death: 53% of the most familiar oppose the statement, compared to only 29% of those without any relationship to Jews. That least familiar group also has the highest rate of true responses, at 35%, and 20% saying it is certainly true.

Talk Too Much About Holocaust

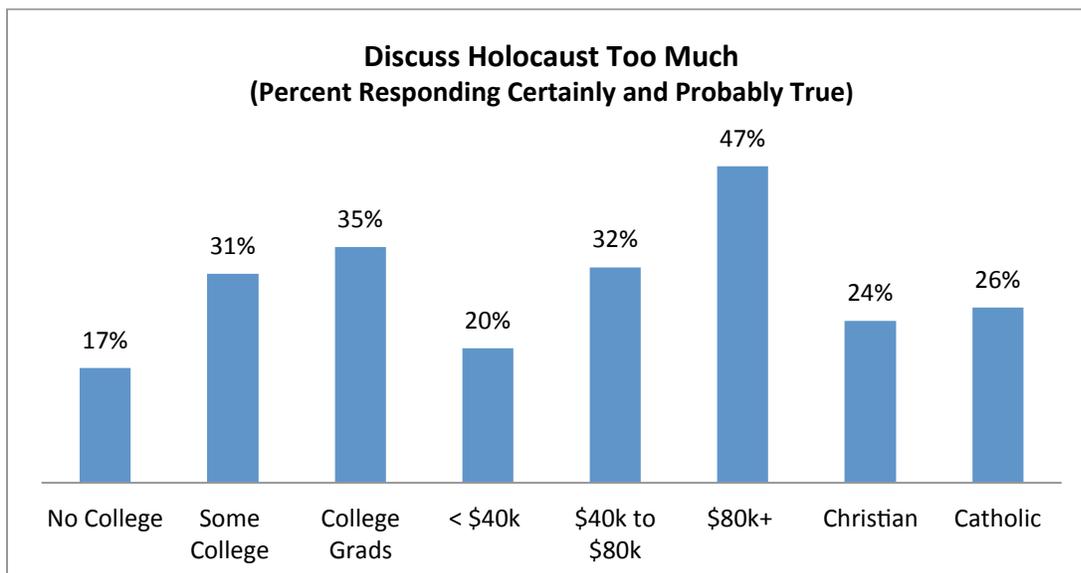


When asked whether “Jews still talk too much about what happened to them in the Holocaust”, 25% of all respondents agree, 43% disagree and 31% say they do not know. Like the overall pattern, the city-level distributions show more opposition to the statement than support for it in all cases. Latinos in Miami and New York are more likely to agree with this sentiment, with 30% to 33% responding this is true. Kansas City and Los Angeles respondents disagree at the highest rate, 52% and 44% respectively. It is striking that nearly 30% of Latinos in all cities say they do not know, and in Chicago that number is a very high 39%.

Several important demographic effects appear on this measure. Response trends to this question are *unlike any others in the study*. Cubans have the most antagonist opinions, where 37% agree Jews talk about the Holocaust too much. Assimilated Latinos have higher rates of agreement too. Only 20% of immigrant Latinos agree, but that number jumps to 38% in the second generation, dropping down a bit to 31% in the third generation.

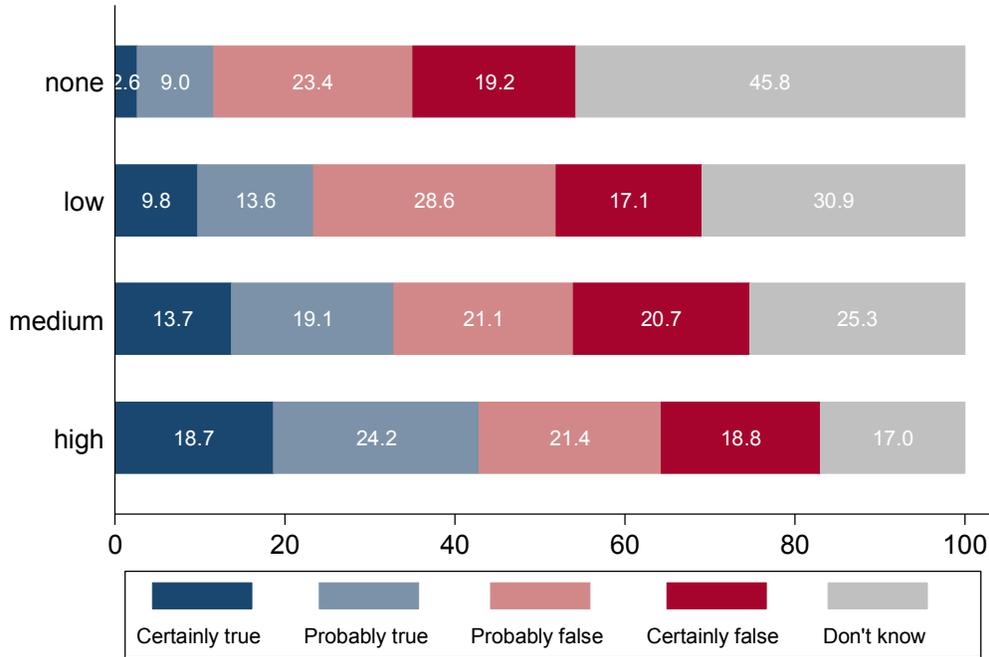


Higher socioeconomic indicators correlate with more unfavorable view toward Jews as well. One third of college educated Latinos agree compared to only 17% of those with no college experience. A startling 47% of the most affluent respondents say it is certainly or probably true that Jews discuss the Holocaust too much, but only 20% of low income respondents share this view.



On this measure, almost uniquely, there is a curious pattern of adverse socialization with respect to Jews and their history. On most other measures, socioeconomic mobility and generation are positively associated with more favorable views of Jews. Here, the pattern is the reverse.

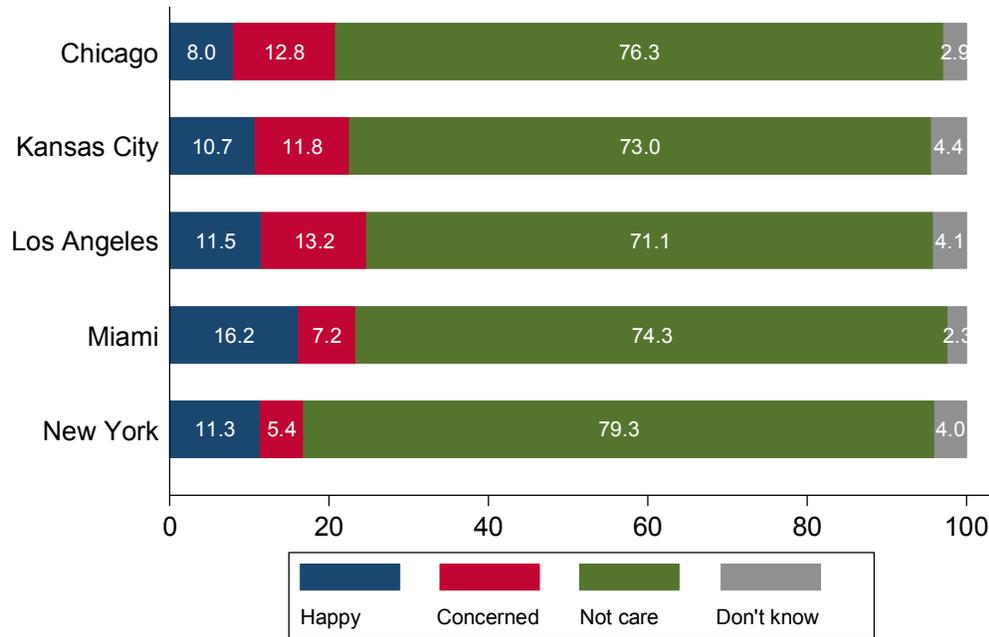
Talk Too Much About Holocaust by familiarity



Familiarity generates notable trends. Those with more contact and information about the Jewish community have the highest rates of agreement, at 43%. Disagree with the statement that Jews discuss the Holocaust too much range between 40% and 46%, producing little distinction across the groups in this regard. The large share of don't know responses surfaces among the low-information categories as expected at 31% and 45%.

Family/Friend Marry Jewish Spouse

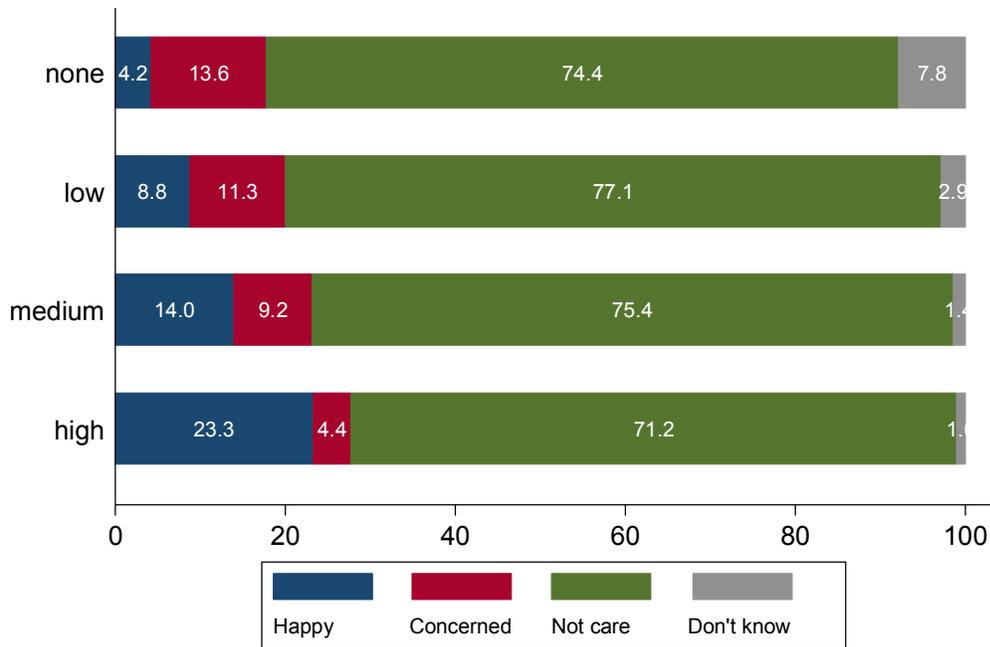
Asking about family inter-marriage is a direct way to ascertain prejudicial feelings toward other groups. There is little evidence that Latinos have unfavorable attitudes along this dimension. The vast majority of all Latinos surveyed, 75% would “not care” if a family of friend were to marry a Jewish spouse. 11% said they would be happy and 10% would be “concerned”.



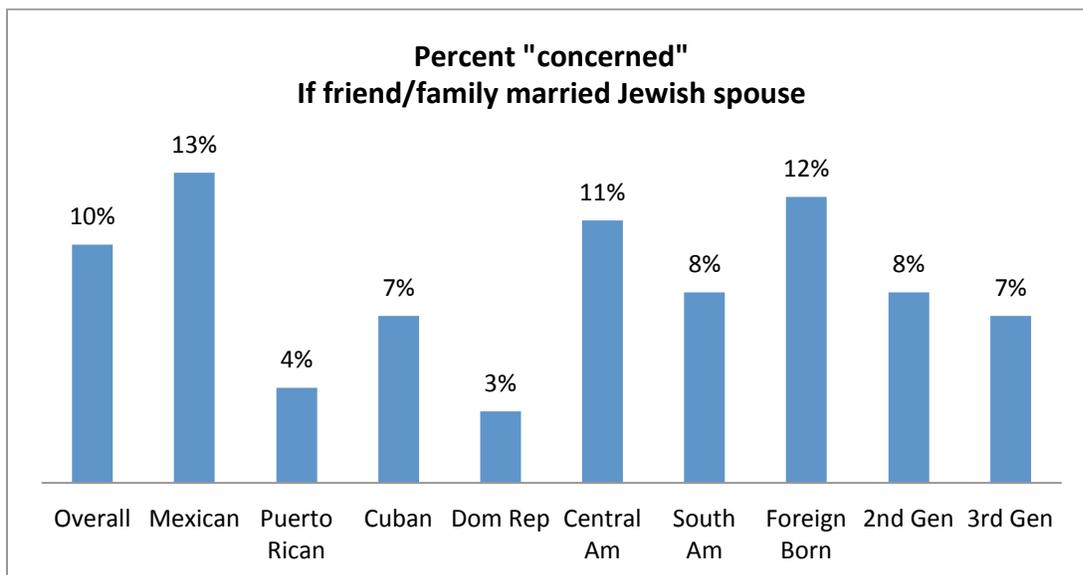
At the city level we find 16% of Miami Latinos would be happy, while in Los Angeles and Chicago, 13% indicate they would be “concerned”. This question does not seem to evoke favorable or unfavorable sentiment from Latinos regarding Jews.

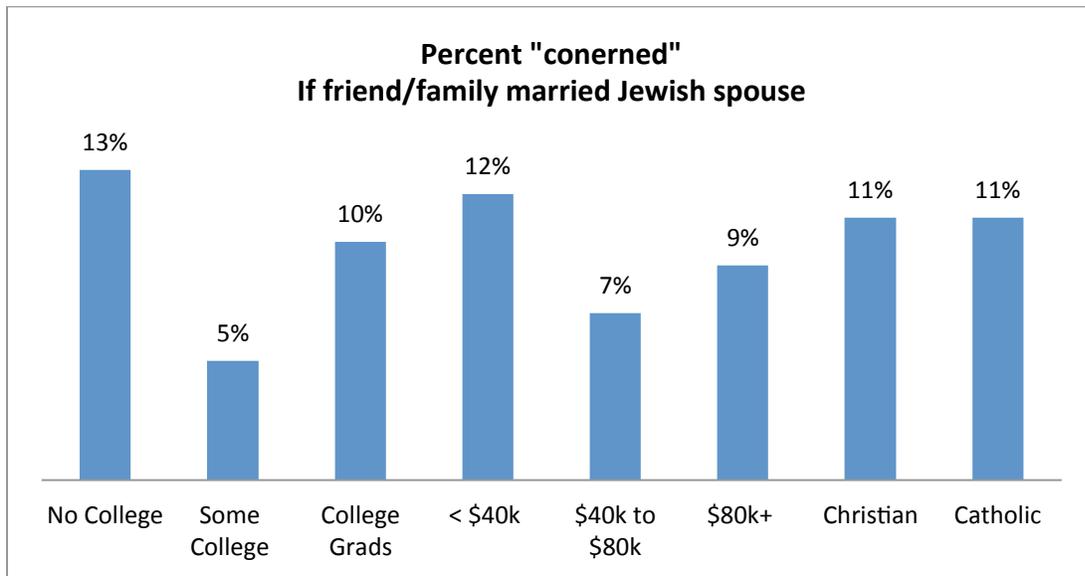
When we consider familiarity, the responses produce an observable pattern. The more familiar Latinos are with Jews, the more positive their responses. 23% of the highly familiar group would be happy, and the percent “concerned” is largest (though only 13%) among those who are entirely unfamiliar with Jews.

Family/Friend Marry Jewish Spouse by familiarity



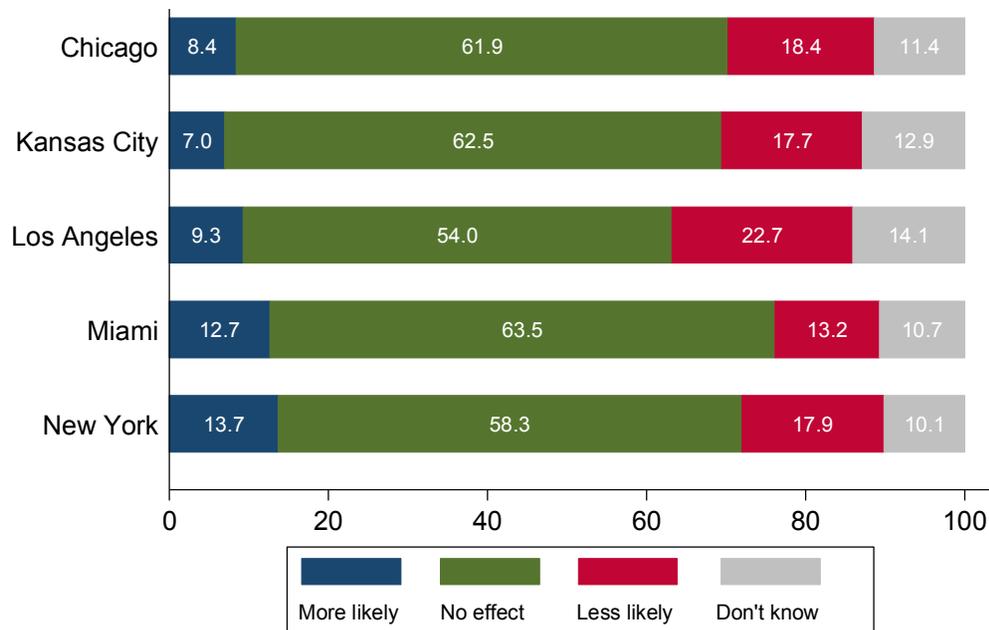
Despite the low rate of unfavorable attitudes, there is considerable demographic variation among respondents regarding the likelihood of reporting these views. Dominican, Puerto Rican and 3rd generation Latinos are the least likely to express concern, while Mexican, Central American and the foreign-born are the most likely.





Patterns on income and education are not-monotonic and somewhat harder to interpret. Higher income and education diminishes the little concern that does exist, and there are no differences between Catholic and Christian views on the issue.

Support for Jewish Presidential Candidate



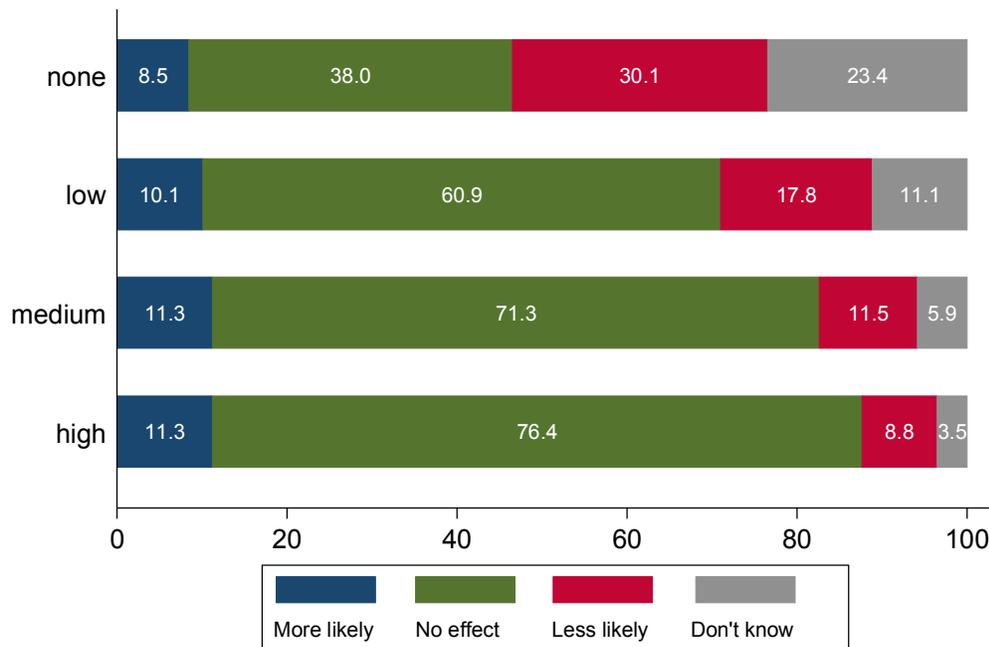
Perceptions, Affect and Anti-Semitism: Unfavorable Attitudes Toward Jews

Asked whether a Jewish presidential candidate's faith would influence vote choices, 59% of all surveyed indicated no effect and 11% said the candidate's faith would make them more supportive. However, 19% said they would be less likely to support on these grounds.

A clear majority in all cities report no impact. Notice New Yorkers and Miami Latinos have the highest rate (though only 13 to 14%) saying Jewish faith would bolster their support. In Los Angeles 23% would be less likely to support a Jewish candidate, and in Chicago, Kansas and New York, 18% agree.

We may be observing latent evaluations of Jewish elected officials in these responses. Long-time and current residents of South Florida and New York have several contemporary and past experiences with Jewish representation (e.g. Mayor Bloomberg, Senator Schumer and Representative Wasserman-Schultz). The slightly higher rates of support are more compelling in context of this reality where respondents may have specific Jewish politicians in mind.

Support for Jewish Presidential Candidate by familiarity



Increased familiarity is associated with higher rates of both more likely and no effect responses. The least familiar are the most put off by Jewish faith in politics: only 38% say there would be no effect and 30% indicate they would be less likely to support a Jewish presidential candidate. These results could reflect a hesitation to support people generally unfamiliar to them, and not about Jewish religion or faith per se. It is an interesting outcome that may merit further study.

Focus Group Insights on Negative Affect and Stereotypes

Without moving as mechanically through the stereotype items, the focus groups explored this topic conversationally, allowing views to come from the informants and seeing how the conversation elicited different dimensions of negative and positive characteristics attributed to Jews.

The topic of stereotypes elicited a number of characterizations in the focus groups, however three common themes prevailed across the groups:

- * Cheap / smart with finances
- * Insular / united/ family focused
- * Gender differences / “machista”

Every group mentioned the characterization of being cheap in response to the stereotype question. For most of the groups, this was the first response given. In the Los Angeles Spanish language group one participant said that he had heard that Jewish business owners (he was referring to shop keepers) will not eat until they have made their first profit of the day.

While the initial nature of the descriptor (e.g. cheap, tight, miserly) had a negative connotation more often than not, the conversation turned to a recognition of the positive side of this characteristic—Jews are smart with their finances. More specifically, a common theme that developed across groups was the formulation of a contrast between Jews being smart with their money in contrast to Latinos being careless with their finances and spendthrifts, “Unlike us Latinos—if we have money we just spend it” (LA-Spanish).

The second most common stereotype made reference to a characteristic of being insular. This description often was tied to a discussion of how Jews tend to marry within their own religion. One comment that was made in the Spanish language Chicago focus group and that the participants kept coming back to was that, “one is not invited to convert to Judaism, as opposed to other religions that come to you house.” This discussion then led to the characterization of, “Jews as economically united, as selfish because they do not want to mix with others and not be social with others.” Jesus, the Chicago participant with the most contact with Jewish

people, as a result of working part-time as a truck driver for a Jewish caterer, noted that, “money only moves among them.” He discussed how his boss would only purchase and sell goods from other Jews.

In the New York City, English language group informant Maribel recounted an experience that pointed to the insularity of the Hassidic community. However before she did, she first described her positive experience with her co-worker Seth that, “goes out with co-workers on Fridays and hangs out and has a beer” in order to draw the distinction between different Jewish groups. A couple of years back, Maribel would have to go to the Maimonides hospital in Brooklyn when her daughter was young for her therapy appointments.

“When we were done we would wait for the city bus, outside in the cold winter nights. My daughter would see a bus come, but not pick us up, but only pick up the Hassidic Jews. My little girl would ask me why they couldn’t pick us up from out of the cold and I found it difficult to explain to her since I didn’t understand... I saw it as a form of segregation.”

The bus discussion then sparked a story about two children that were in an accident -- one Jewish, one black. The first ambulance came and took the Jewish child leaving the black child. Everyone noted that they had heard of this story before. What was interesting is that the participant who told this story was one of the most educated of the group, a teacher who by and large had thoughtful comments throughout the session.

Toward the end of this New York City group the respondent with the most positive experience David, referred back to the Hassidic busses and said, “good for them,” they are organized and have put together this service. He was highlighting this to contrast with the lack of organization of Latinos. “The Hassidic community looks out for each other.”

As with the discussion of the “cheap”/ “smart with money” stereotype, the discussion of Jews as insular had a positive face to it too, a recognition of how family centered and united the Jewish community is. One young woman in the Spanish language Miami group said, “I have never met a poor Jew” she then went on to say that it is probably because they help each other. She then gave the anecdote of a Jewish guy she knew that had a repair shop that burned down but then his friends and synagogue stepped in to help him reopen.

The positive side of “insular” would unfold as the conversations turned to the benefits of unity at the community and family level. A young Latino from Williamsburg Brooklyn recounted how once when he was a child he and a group of friends went to some Hassidic homes in their neighborhood on Halloween to throw eggs as a prank and that within minutes of their prank one

Perceptions, Affect and Anti-Semitism: Unfavorable Attitudes Toward Jews

of the Jewish residents blew a whistle and a very large group came out to surround the children and run them off. The participant said that that was the last time he “messed with them” and noted how it is a community that sticks together and takes care of themselves. He saw this as a very positive characteristic and his comment stood out, because otherwise he had negative experiences and perceptions related to Jews.

The final stereotype theme that emerged dealt with Jewish gender roles. In particular, those of Orthodox Jews, however the participants did not always explicitly make the distinction. Two of the most commonly noted observations included men and women sitting separately and men not being able to touch a Jewish woman nor look her in the eye.

A participant in the English language New York City group recounted an instance when he was introduced to a Hassidic couple and he extended his hand to both of them and then realized that you can not shake the hand of a Hassidic Jewish woman, “I understand this is their custom, but I believe it ends up turning people off.”

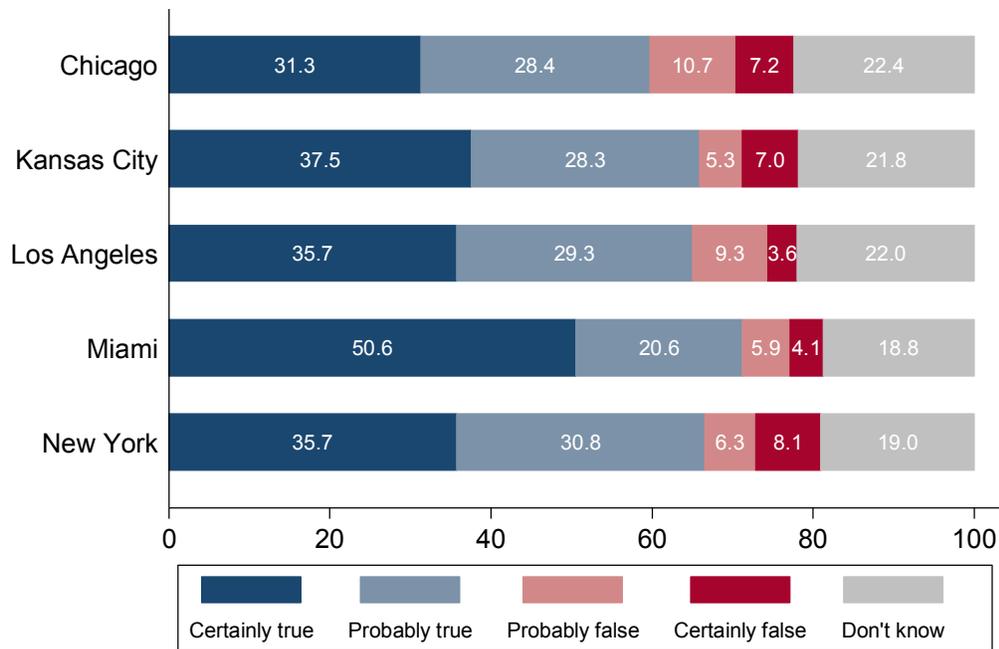
A participant in the Spanish language New York City group lives next door to a synagogue said that he thought Jews were, “Machistas” because he never saw women at the synagogue, only the men and kids and when he did see women they wore long skirts. To follow up on this idea, another participant brought up the Barbara Streisand movie where she dressed like a man to go to school.

4. FINDINGS REGARDING FAVORABLE VIEWS

Among our concerns with the use of the long-standing anti-Semitism scale was its significant lack of balance. The use of scale items all of which tend in the same direction can present a distorted view of public opinion as a consequence of acquiescence bias, or the tendency of respondents to try to find a way to “agree” with the interviewer. A scale that is all positive will produce artificially favorable overall responses, while a scale that is all negative will produce the reverse.

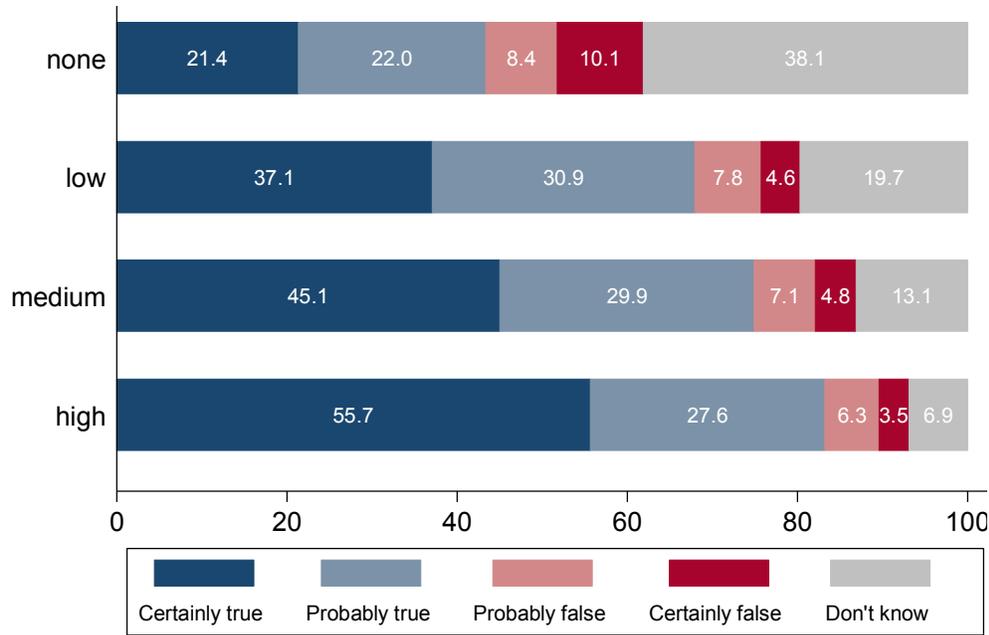
To address this problem we interspersed several positive attributes that respondents might have attributed to Jews. The results are quite instructive.

Strong Faith in God



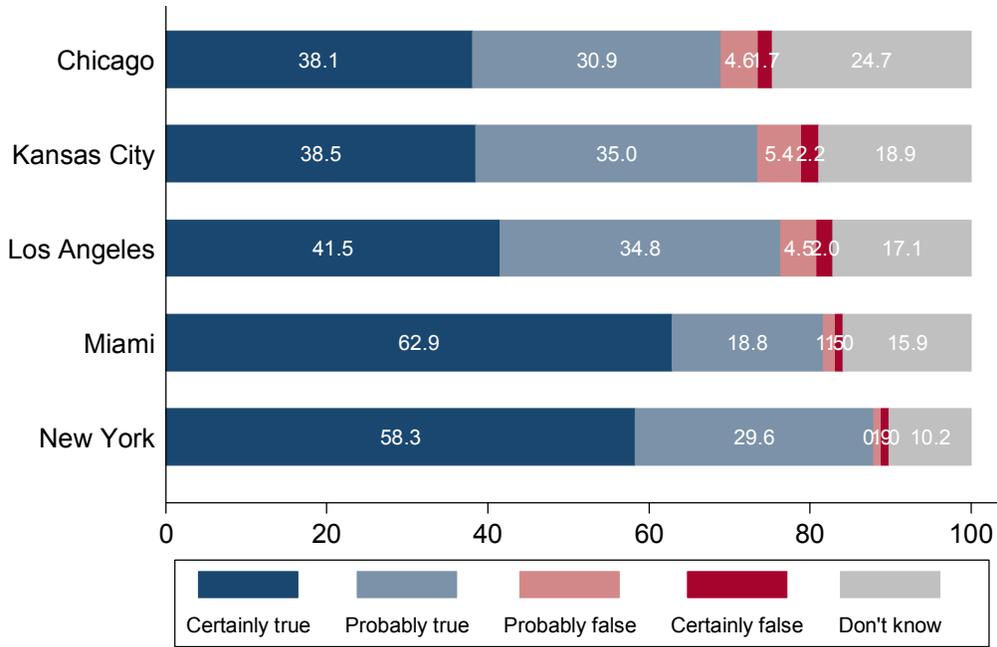
Most Latinos, regardless of city, perceive the Jewish community as one with a strong faith in God. Two-thirds of all respondents hold this opinion, only 14% disagreed and 21% said they did not know. Miami area respondents have the strongest views on this point, where 51% of South Florida’s respondents said it is certainly true that Jews have a strong faith in God, and another 21% said it is probably true. The remaining four cities have similarly high evaluations of Jewish faith with 59% and more in accord on this point.

Strong Faith in God by familiarity



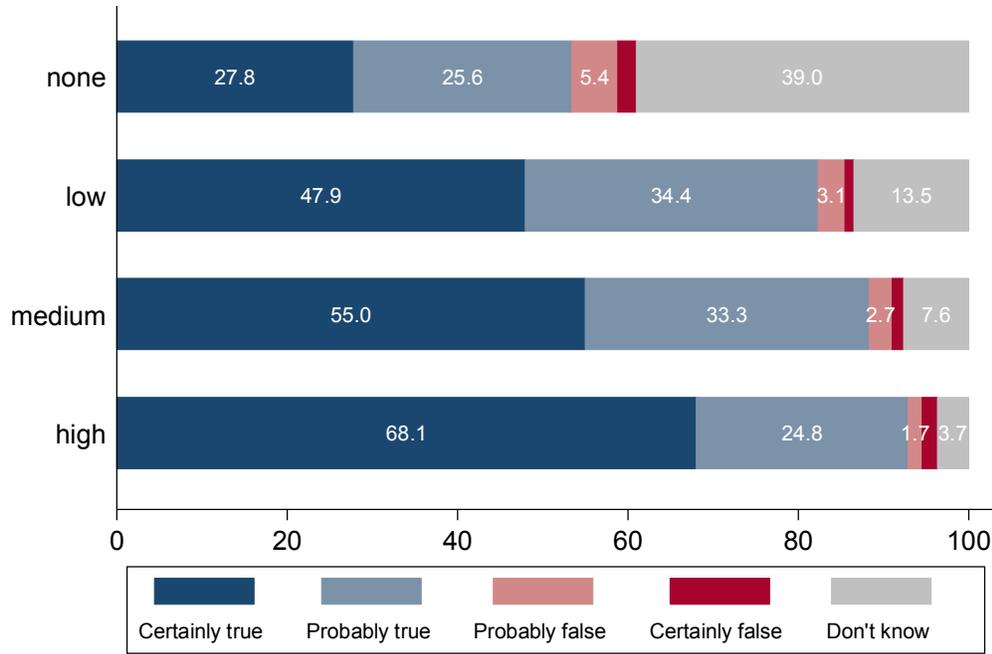
The opinion that Jews are very strong in their faith is clearly associated with familiarity with the faith and/or people. 84% of Latinos who are highly familiar with the Jewish community rate them as having strong faith, including 56% who said it is “certainly true”. 44% of those with no all connection to Jews assign them high marks on this question. Since Latinos in this survey report high rates of religious affiliation, it is likely that views about faith and religiosity have special importance to this group.

Committed to Family Life



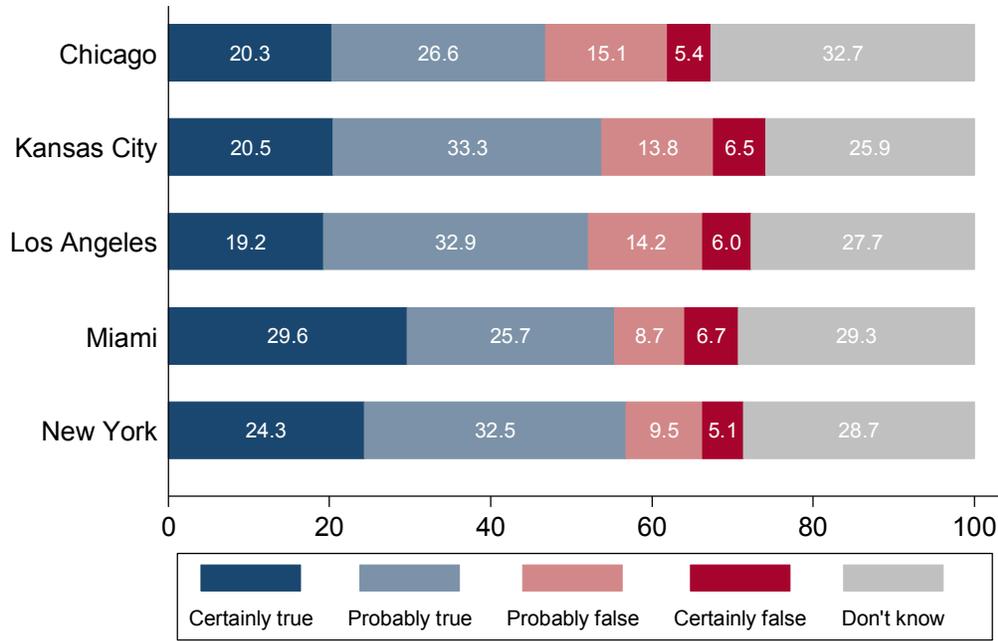
Again, we find nearly unanimous positive evaluations of Jews in the context of personal values. 78% agree that Jews are committed to family life, only 5% in the entire survey disagreed. 14% said they did not know. New Yorkers and Miami residents are the most sure of this, with over half responding certainly true.

Committed to Family Life by familiarity



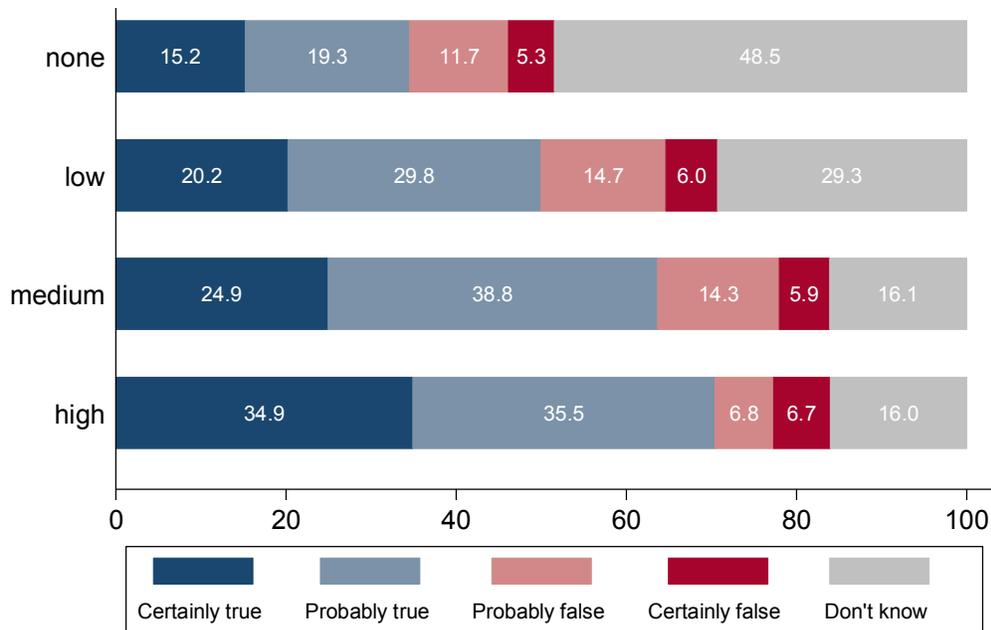
Positive views about Jewish families are strongest among those know them best. The rate answering certainly true increases as Latinos report having higher rates of familiarity with the Jewish community. 54% of those with no ties to the Jewish community think they are committed to family life, and 39% in this category are unsure.

Special Commitment to Social Justice and Civil Rights

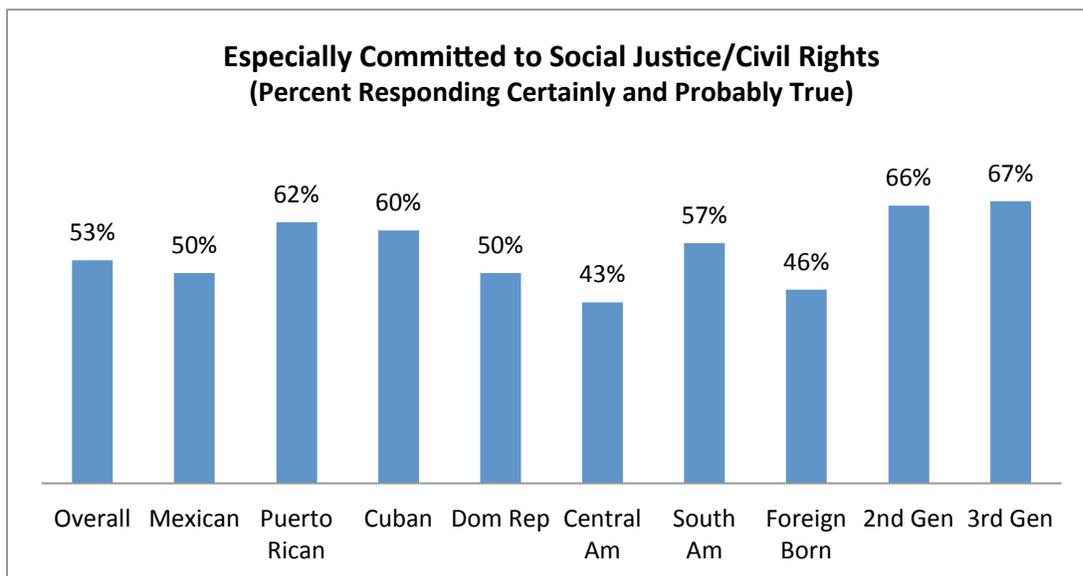


Here respondents are asked whether the Jewish community has a special commitment to social justice and civil rights. The results are interesting, 29% of all Latinos do not know, but among those who do give a response, 53% agree that Jews are especially pro-civil rights. In all cities, with the exception of Chicago (still high at 47%), the majority of Latinos share this view. Given the history of Latino and Jewish social justice activity in American cities, it is possible that our respondents have collaborated in their hometowns with members of the Jewish community on these kinds of issues. If not their own personal experience, it is possible that their friends, family or church/volunteer acquaintances have done so.

Special Commitment to Social Justice and Civil Rights by familiarity



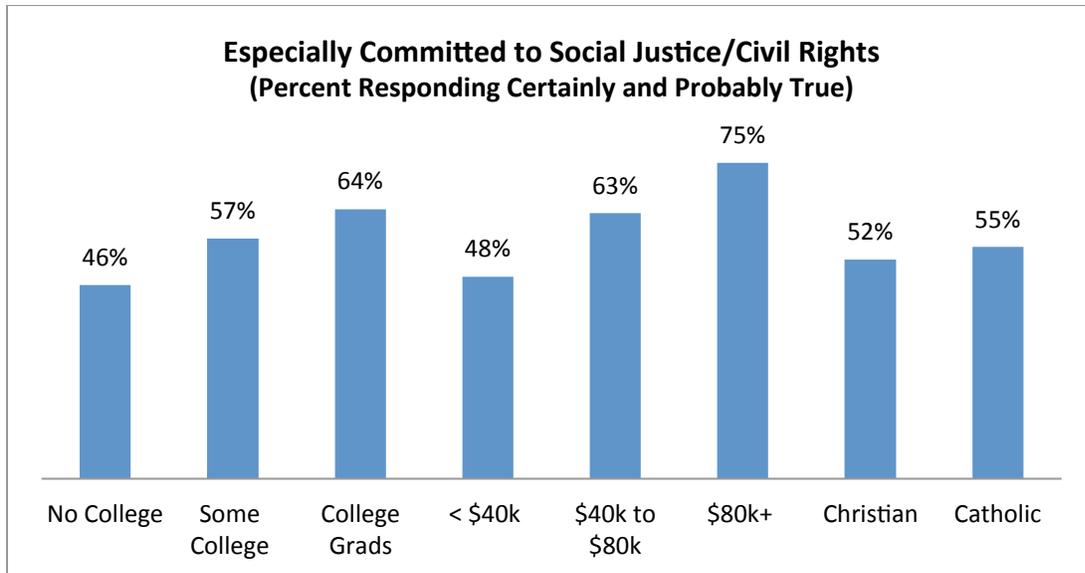
Those engaged with the Jewish community are most firm in their view that the group is especially committed to social justice and civil rights causes. Nearly half, 49% of those with the least familiarity give don't know responses. There is very clear evidence here showing stronger relationships with Jews lead Latinos to see them as champions of civil rights. The results from this particular question points to potential community building between these two groups where they may find common cause.



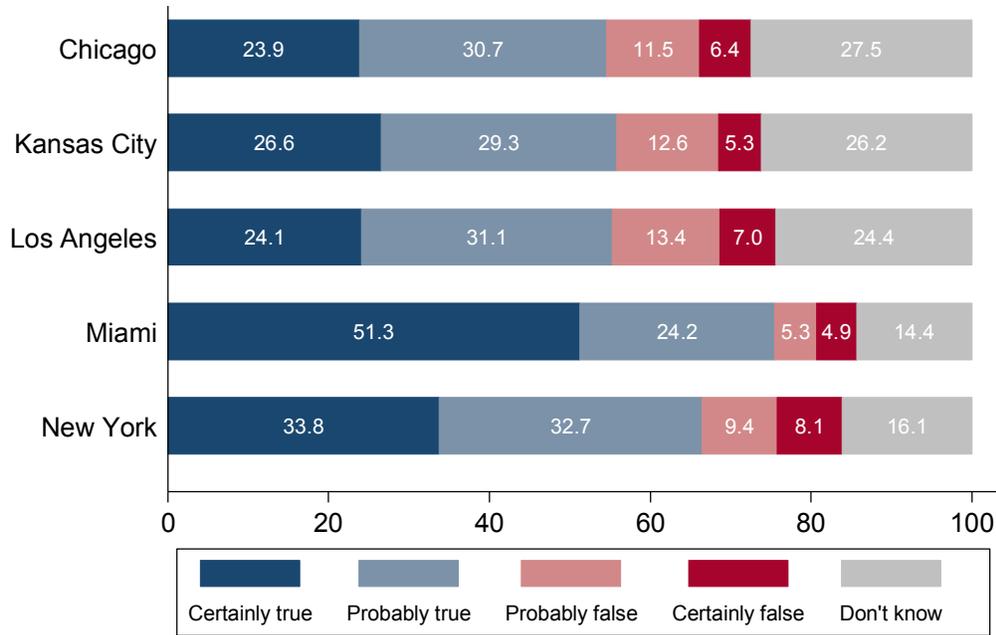
Perceptions, Affect and Anti-Semitism: Favorable Attitudes Toward Jews

On this favorable view of Jews, several demographic variations of importance occur. Two-thirds of second and third generation Latinos hold this view, which is a twenty point difference compared to foreign born Latinos. Puerto Ricans and Cubans are the most likely origin groups to hold this view.

Again we find a positive linear relationship between income, education and favorable attitudes toward Jews, but little difference by religion. Increases in education and income are clearly associated with thinking of Jews as especially committed to civil rights in the United States. Twenty percentage points or more differentiate opinions at the lowest and highest ranges of income and education.

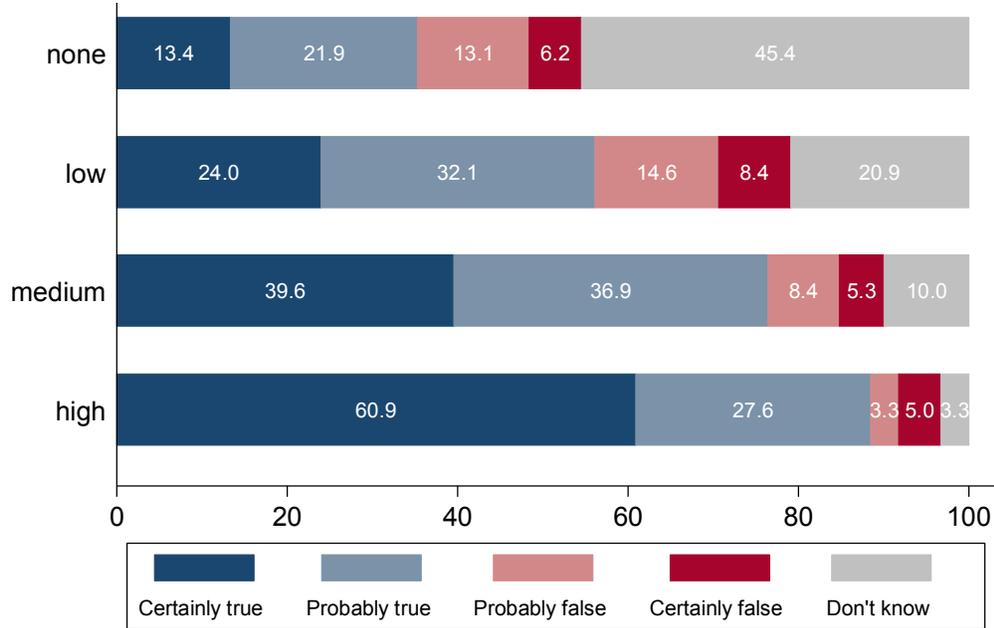


Positive Cultural Impact on the U.S.



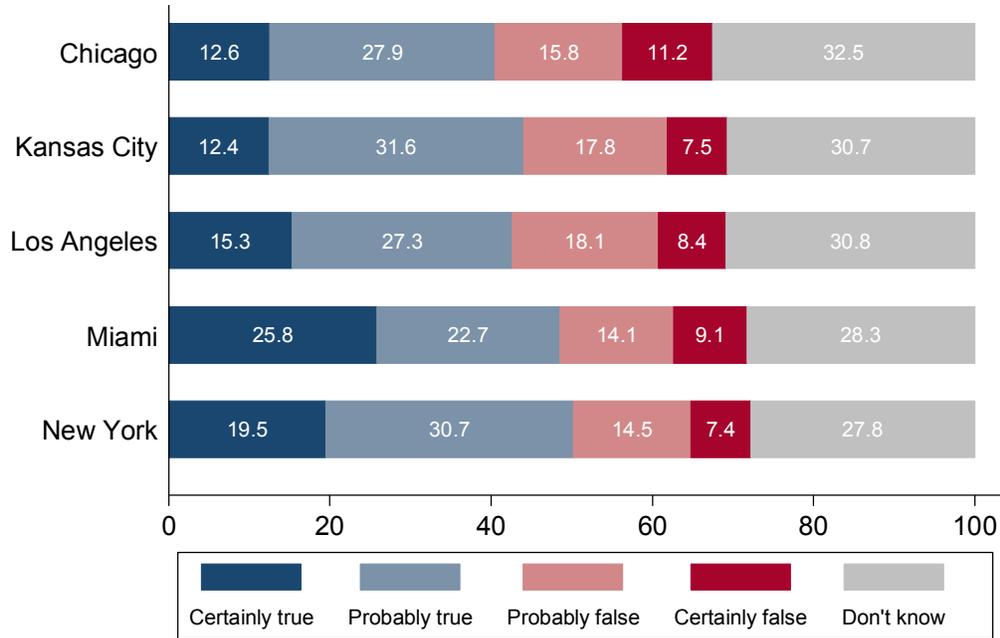
A large majority of all respondents, 61% believe that Jews make positive cultural contributions to the United States. Only 17% disagreed and 22% don't know. This is another striking example of the favorable opinions Latinos have about Jews that are ripe for coalition building and further study. New York (67%) and Miami (75%) Latinos have the highest evaluations, on this measure but all cities agree at rates over 50%.

Positive Cultural Impact on the U.S. by familiarity



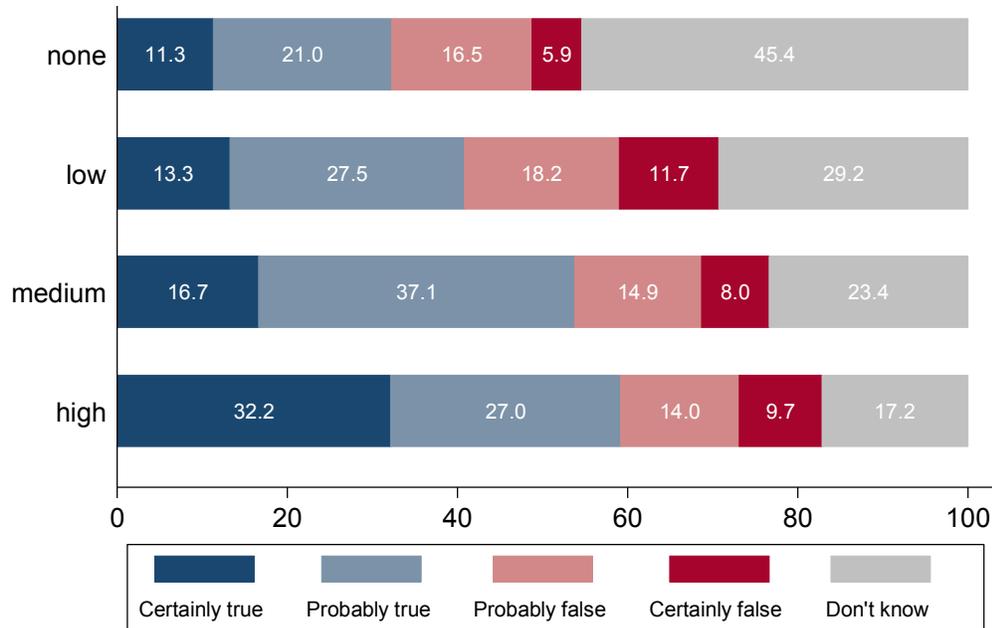
Latinos who know Jews have no question as to their positive impact on American culture; 61% offer the strongest response possible and an amazing 89% agree with the statement. The least familiar really are unfamiliar, 45% don't know at all.

Positive Moral Force in the World



Respondents were asked whether they think Jews play a vital role in making sure the US is a positive moral force in the world. Despite the somewhat complex nature of the question, 45% of all respondents said it is certainly true, 25% disagreed and 30% said they do not know. Half of Latinos in Miami and New York agree with this very favorable characterization of the Jewish community. And 26% in Miami say it is certainly true. One-third of Chicago-area Latinos say they do not know.

Positive Moral Force in the World by familiarity



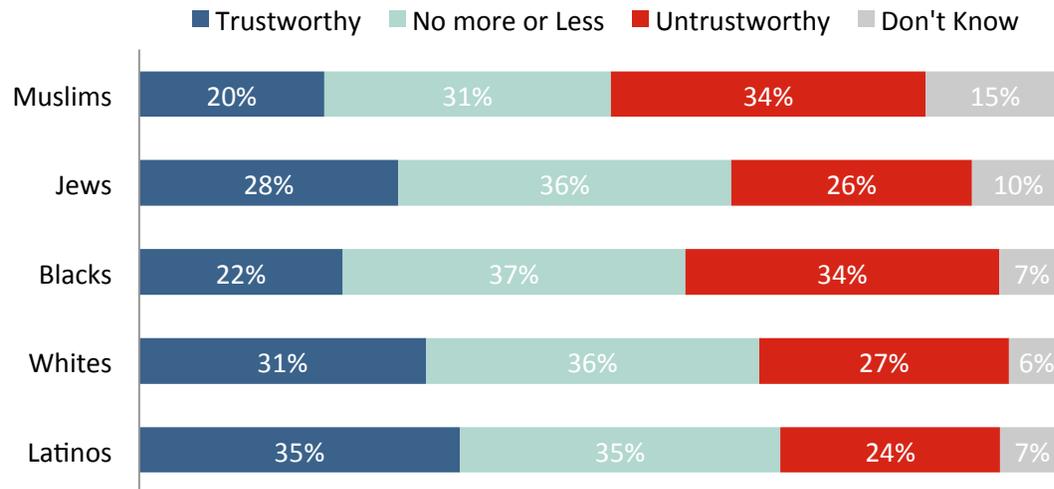
Familiarity with the Jewish community has a strong positive impact on Latino views about Jews. Here we see the majority of Latinos with moderate to strong relationships with Jews see them as a positive force for the nation and the world. Still, a third to 45% of those least familiar with the Jewish community share this view about their positive national and global impact. The data continue to reveal underlying sentiments even among those least connected to non-Latinos, that can extend Jewish-Latino relations.

Contributions/Influence as Reported in Focus Groups

In delving into more positive representations of Jews, participants were asked to think of important contributions Jews had made in American history and society. The responses were limited as a result of the relative lack of familiarity with the Jewish community among the respondents and because of the general difficulty of cold recall requests. However, the most consistent mentions included Albert Einstein and the media industry (e.g. Steven Spielberg). Among the Spanish language focus groups, this question was less likely to elicit responses. Other individuals who were noted included Alan Greenspan, Senator Lieberman, and Chicago Mayor Rahm Emmanuel among the Chicago groups. In Los Angeles, the Dodgers baseball player Sean Green was mentioned and the anecdote that he did not play once during Yom Kippur was shared.

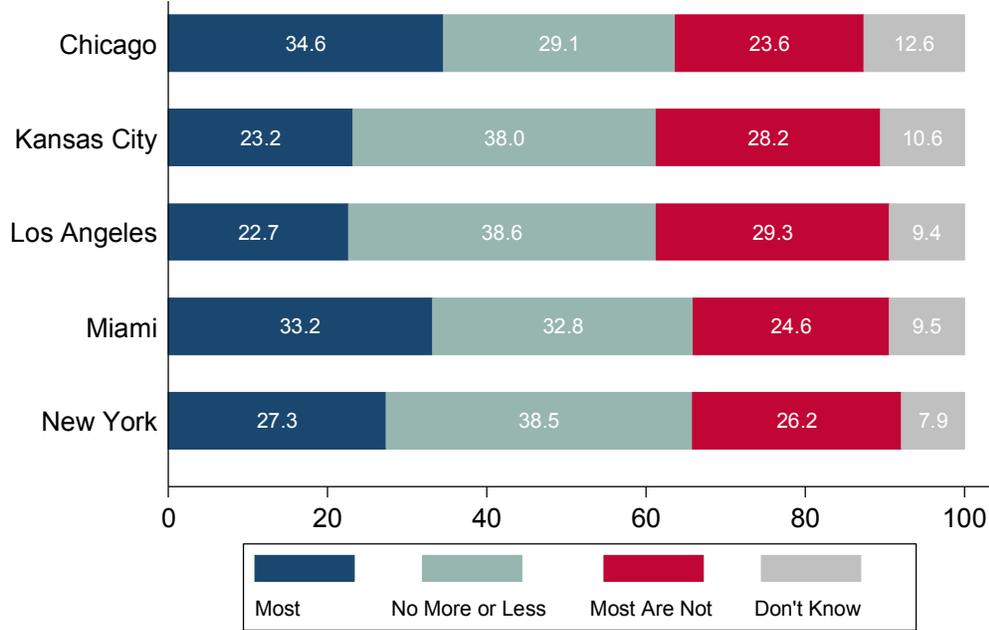
5. FINDINGS ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF LATINO-JEWISH COMMONALITY

Racial/Ethnic Group Trust



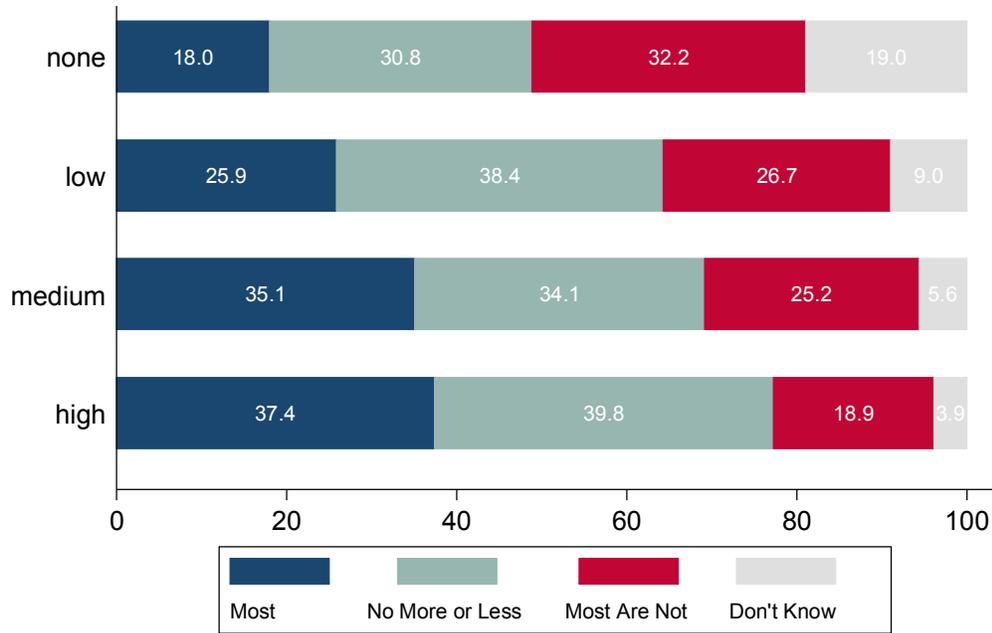
Similarly, we ascertain Latino evaluations of trust across racial and ethnic groups. Here we see Latinos are not particularly trusting by our measure. Only 35% view their fellow Latinos as trustworthy, and 24% say co-ethnics are not trustworthy at all. Around 31% trust whites and 28% trust Jews. And, for the most part, we can easily see that all groups are essentially divided into thirds. Looking at these patterns it is fair to say that Latinos are very trusting of *any* group

Jewish Trustworthy



We observe no significant differences across cities, though Chicago Latinos are more trusting of the Jewish community relative to the other cities. This is unexpected as Chicago rarely lead on positive attribution on other measures we've considered here.

Trustworthy by familiarity

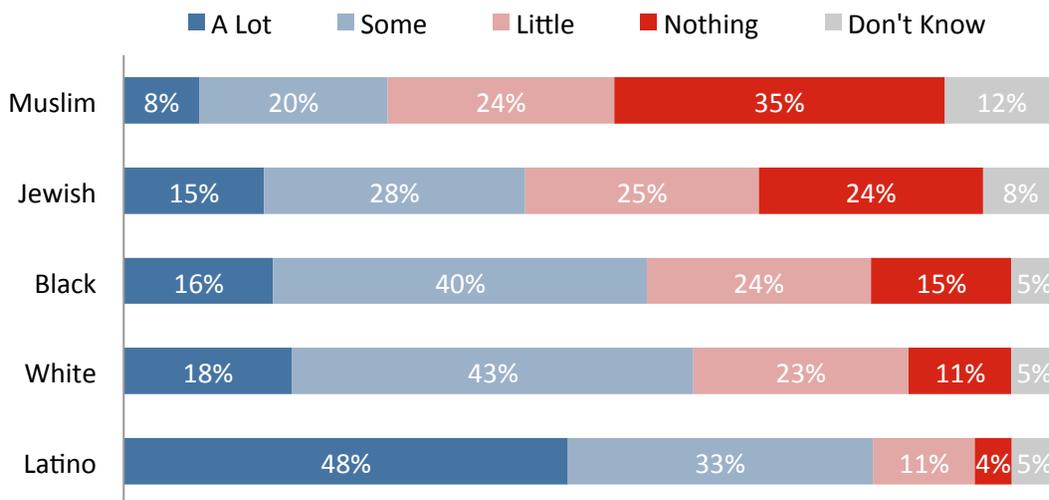


Trust by familiarity is closer to the pattern we expect. Of course more familiarity leads to more trust, and the differences in trust between the lowest and highest levels of familiarity is quite sizable.

A: SOCIO-CULTURAL AND POLITICAL COMMONALITY

We explore two dimensions of commonality—socio-cultural and political. To merely ask respondents how much they have in common with another group, without specifying the dimension of commonality, makes interpretation of responses impossible. Rather, we specifically prompted respondents to think, first about “commitment to community and family, strength of faith and culture,” and later, about “government services and employment, political power and representation.”

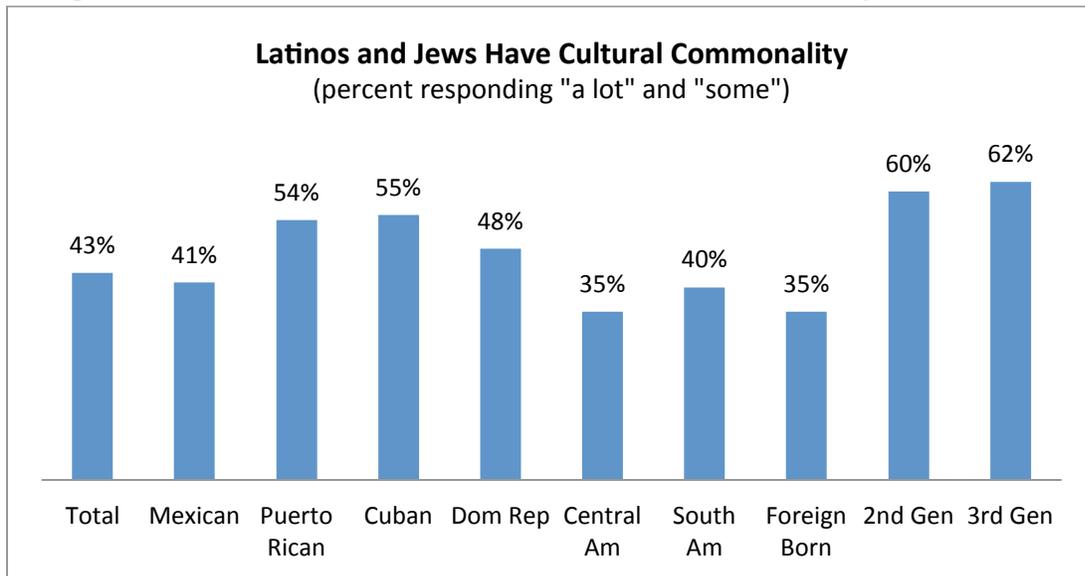
**SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMONALITY:
How Much Do Latinos Have In Common With...**



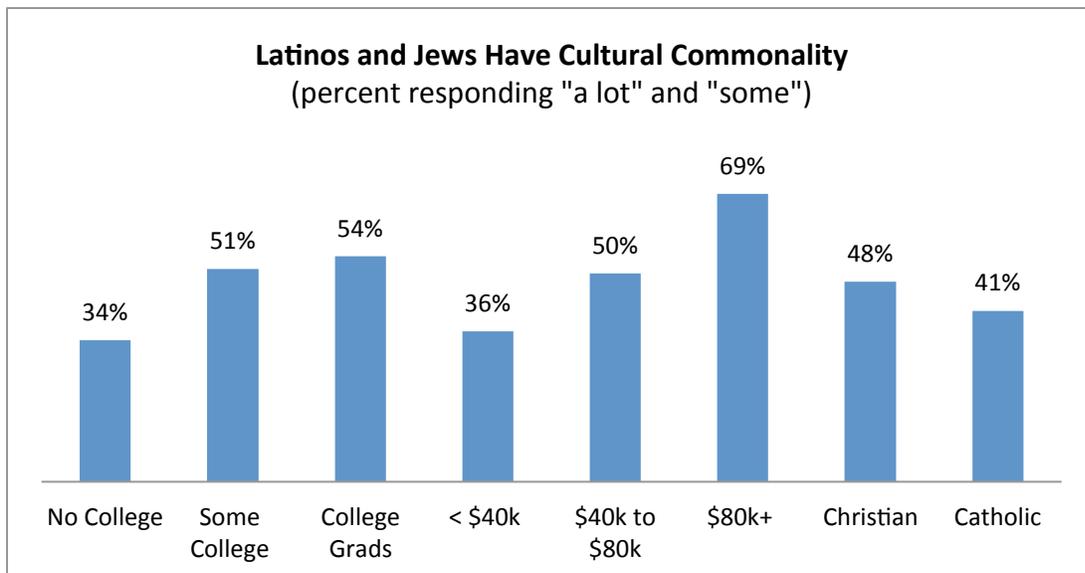
We asked Latinos how much they have in common with Jews in terms of community and culture. But, before evaluating those answers, it is instructive to consider how Latinos rate other racial and ethnic groups along this same metric. Responses are shown in the above illustration. Not surprisingly, Latinos feel they have the most in common with co-ethnics. Outside of their own group, Latinos rate their cultural commonality with whites highest (63%), followed by African Americans, (56%), then Jews (43%) and lastly, Muslims (28%). Given the relatively high rate of unfamiliarity Latinos have with Jews, and distinctively different religious identities, it is not particularly surprising that commonality was lower relative to other groups.

The overall figures mask assimilation and national origin differences though. Only 35% of foreign-born immigrants think Latinos and Jews share culture, but 60% or more second and third generation respondents do see similarities. More than 50% of Cuban and Puerto Ricans agree.

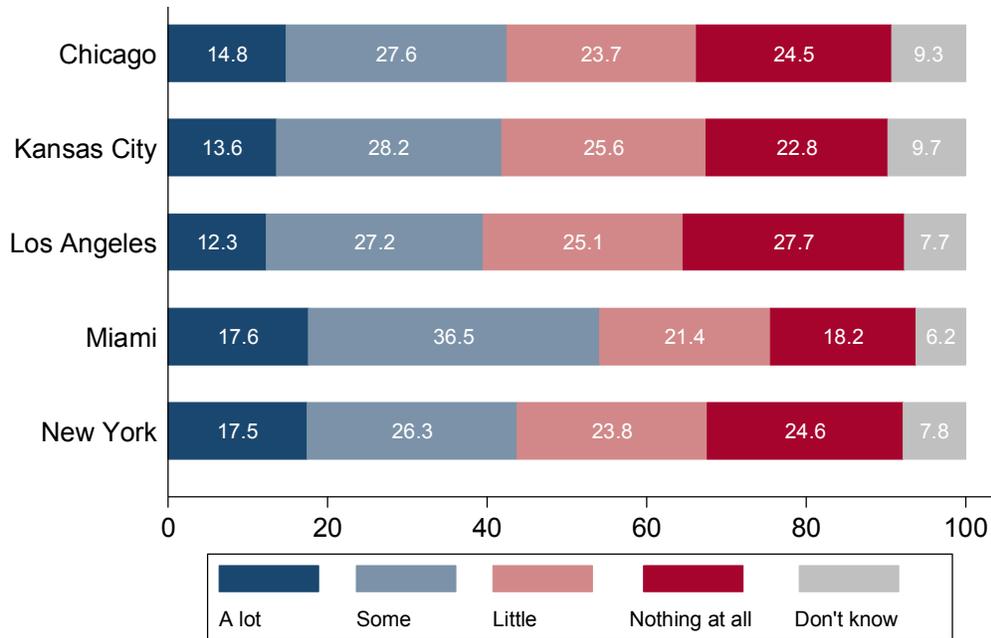
Perceptions, Affect and Anti-Semitism: Latino-Jewish Commonality



Education and income unmistakably shape opinions on this issue. There is a striking thirty-three-point difference between low and high-income groups. Only 35% of low income and 34% of non-college educated Latinos think they share cultural commonality with Jews. High-income earners and college graduates see things quite differently, at 69% and 54% respectively. There are small differences by religion where Christians see more similarities compared to Catholics.

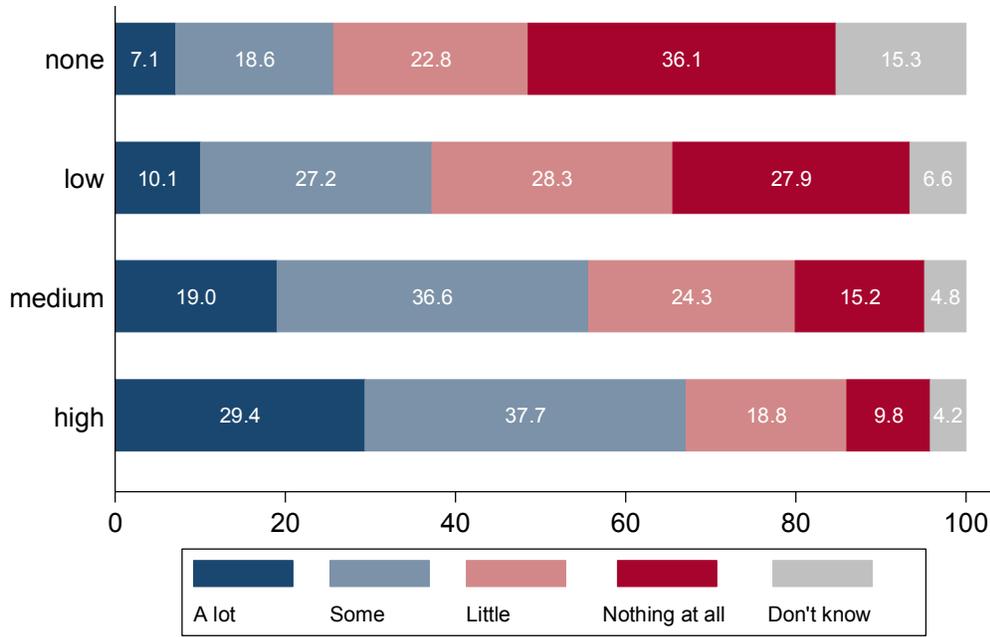


Latino-Jewish Common Experiences



Here we illustrate Latino views of social commonality with Jews. City-level differences contrast from the overall figures. The majority of Latinos in Miami, 54%, think they share commonalities with Jews. Yet the majority in Chicago, Kansas City and Los Angeles say they have little to nothing in common with the Jewish community. Surprisingly, nearly half of New Yorkers also think they have little to nothing in common with the Jewish community. These evaluations of commonality should not be construed as negative opinions about Jews. It is entirely possible for people to see themselves as culturally distinct without being antagonistic to each other. As we have illustrated, Latinos report positive sentiment toward Jews on several variables of interest.

Latino-Jewish Common Experiences by familiarity



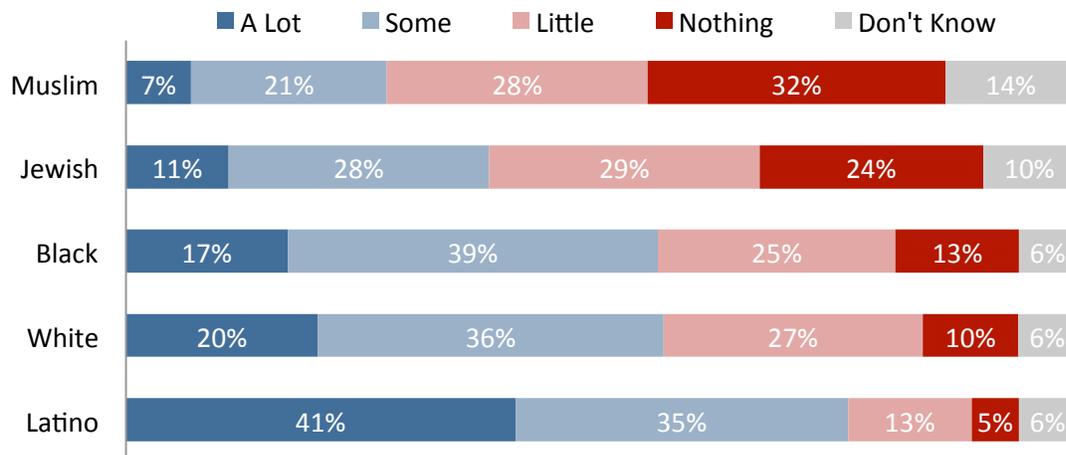
These data are more consistent with the overall findings in this report. People who are closer to the Jewish community (in knowledge, spatial proximity or personal relationships) see similarities between the two groups. Two-thirds of the most familiar and 56% of the next level group think of themselves as sharing common life experiences with Jews.

B: POLITICAL COMMONALITY

We earlier distinguish political and socio-cultural dimensions of commonality. We found that perceptions were that social commonality with Jews, though more or less evenly divided, was lower than for whites and African Americans.

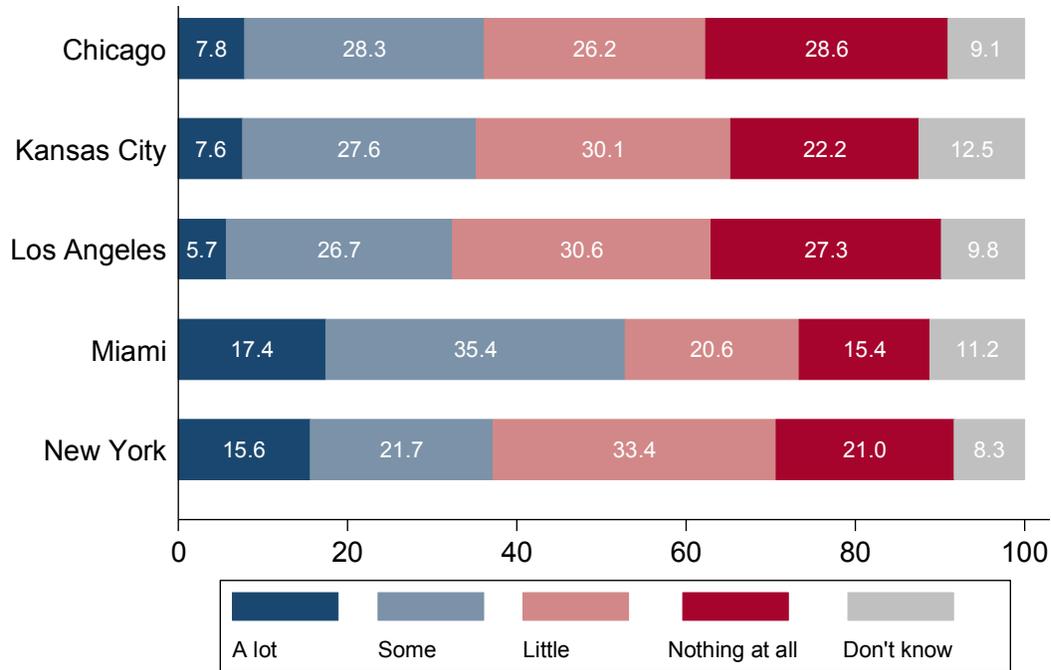
Here we ask Latinos whether their political situation is similar to different groups. The question reads, “thinking about things like government services and employment, political power and representation, how much do (Hispanics/Latinos) have in common with other groups in the United States today?”

How Much do Latinos Share Common Politics With...



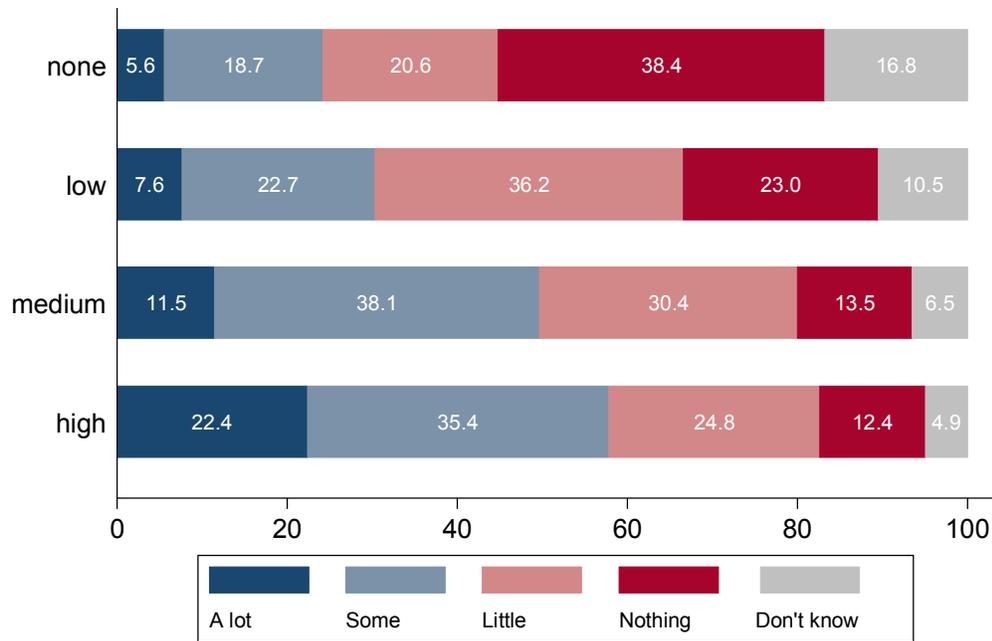
Again, Latinos think co-ethnics are similarly situated in terms of politics, at a rate of 76%. The majority, 56% say they share political commonalities with whites and blacks. Most Latinos, 53% say they have little to nothing in common in terms of their political situation, with the Jewish community. Only 39% of Latinos do believe they have some or a lot of political similarities with Jews.

Latino-Jewish Political Commonality



Breaking out by city, we find that the majority of Latinos in Chicago, Kansas City, Los Angeles and New York say they have little to nothing in common with Jews, when it comes to politics. Miami is the exception and clear outlier, where a majority, 54% see shared political experiences between Latinos and the Jewish community.

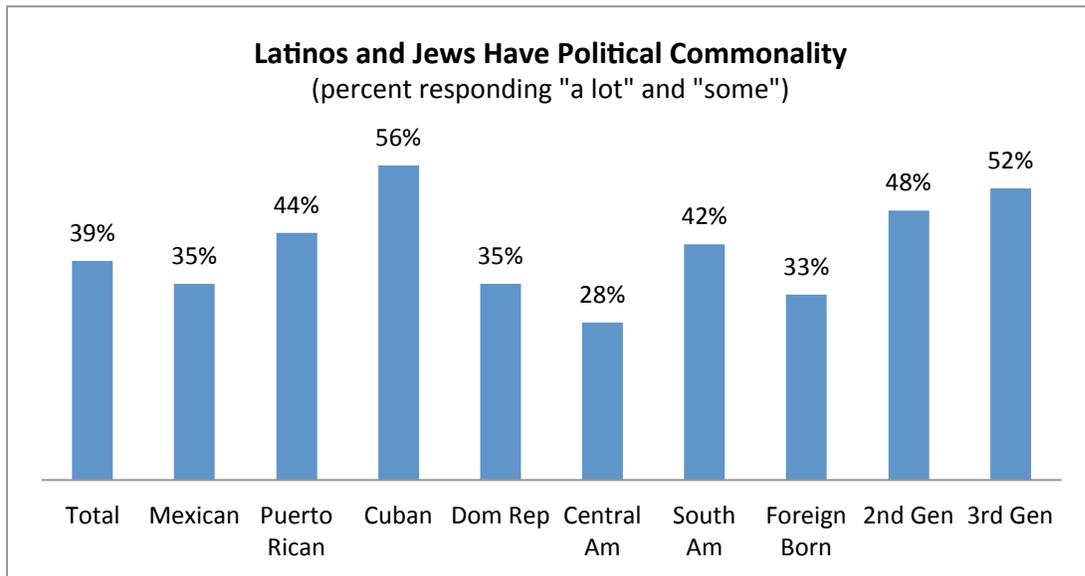
Latino-Jewish Political Commonality by familiarity



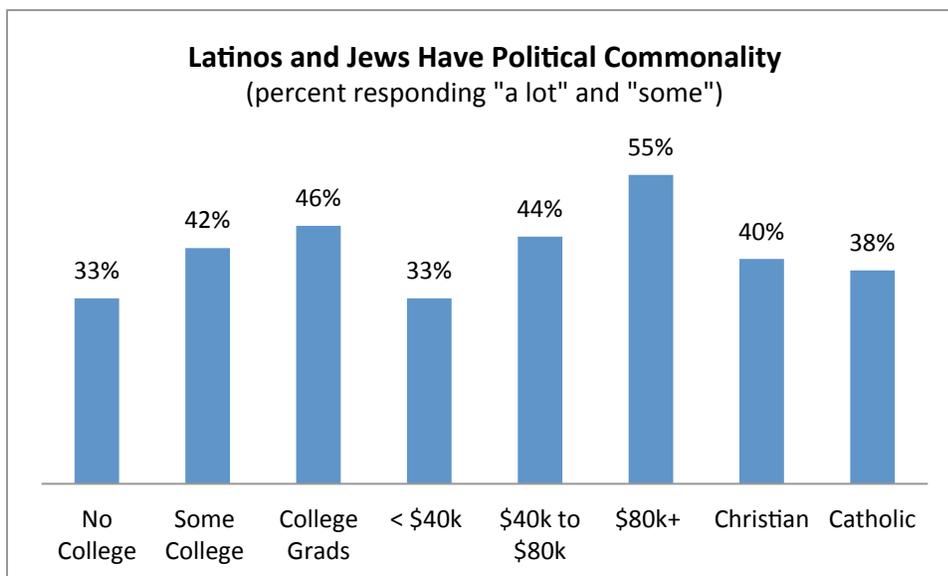
The more acquainted Latinos are with Jews, the more likely they are to think they share political commonalities with them. Over half of the most familiar groups and nearly half of the moderate group see political similarities between Jews and Latinos. Interestingly, the “don’t know” responses are somewhat low on this item in light of their range on other survey questions. Again it is important to recall that dissimilarities are not necessarily indicative of conflict or negative sentiment. It could be that the lack of contact and familiarity makes it difficult for Latinos to see such connections in the political context.

Just as there was on the socio-cultural dimension, there is some modest demographic effects on political commonality. Perceptions of political commonality are positively correlated with generation, with foreign-born Latinos perceiving the least in common and third generation and above perceiving the most.

Cuban Americans appear quite distinct on this dimension as well. At 56%, the share of Cubans who perceive political commonality is 21 points higher than the same measure among Dominicans and Mexicans, and 28 points greater than Central Americans.



Religious identity does not yield any significant difference in these perceptions, a finding which is distinct from the social commonality, where evangelicals were significantly more likely to perceive cultural attributes in common. Looking at socio-economic status, however, we find both income and educational attainment significantly and positively associated with perceptions of shared political interests, with college educated respondents 13 points more likely to perceive such commonality than those with only High School, and higher income respondents 22 points more likely to perceive these connections than low income respondents.



Focus Group Thoughts on Political Unity or Commonality between Jews and Latinos

The level of political knowledge was low across the groups. Even among the higher SES focus groups, there was low interest in politics. This baseline level of information was evidenced in that few participants could say with certainty whether Jewish voters tended to be Republicans or Democrats. The most common answer—in error—was that Jewish voters are Republican as a result of their more privileged economic status. Some said that they are Democrats, but with the exception of the Miami Spanish speaking group, the focus group participants did not have a clear sense of Jewish partisanship and by extension a more in depth knowledge of Jewish political issues. As in many other instances, the absence of information presents more opportunity than obstacle.

After the partisanship query was made the topic turned to Jewish-Latino political interests. In the New York City English group the question of political commonality between both groups led to a recognition that Latinos and Jews share a sense of family and morality, but aside from that there was not significant political overlap. This discussion segued into the influence of Jews in politics, “they have a stronghold in the city.” One example that was mentioned was how the roads that surround Jewish schools are closed with barricades while school is in session. The Williamsburg resident also attributed the gentrification of his neighborhood to Jews that had the political influence to buy public property and displace low-income folks.

A common theme across the groups regarding politics was that Jews have more power and influence, while Latinos do not and are struggling. As a result, participants did not see a basis for unity between both groups. The general perception was that Jews have a strong political agenda as a result of being very unified. In contrast, Latinos do not have a unified agenda; Latinos themselves are not a unified group. Latinos and Jews were seen to have different political priorities with the former centering on immigration and the latter on finances. More specifically, if a coalition were to result, Jews and Latinos would not be on the same level but rather Latinos would be providing the votes and not necessarily an equal partner in political power.

The focus groups ended with a discussion of immigration. The participants were asked if Jews would support the Latino position for immigration reform. The answers to this question were not grounded in a strong opinion in either a positive or negative direction. The more general and immediate sense was, “why would they care about this issue,” since they do not have a personal vested interest in the issue as stated by one participant in the Miami Spanish language focus group.

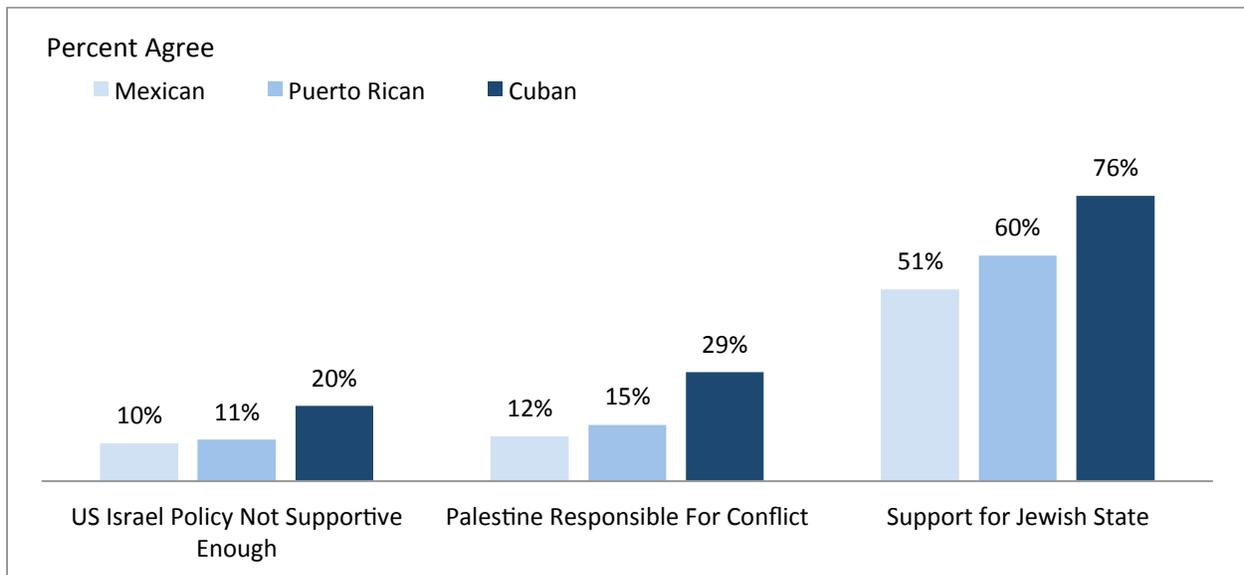
As the discussion regarding immigration was further teased out, there was a mix of opinions of where Jews would stand on the immigration. However, the common denominator centered around whether it would be in their interest to have more open immigration. One rationale against Jews supporting immigration reform was that Jewish employers make a lot of money from paying low wages and with a reform they would have to pay more. At the same time, in the same focus group (Miami English) the observation was made that, “when you come here as an immigrant, Jews are the first to give you a job.”

As part of the larger immigration discussion the moderator brought up the historical immigrant legacy of Jews in the United States. While the participants had not thought of Jews in this context they did recognize the common factor with Latinos in this country. However, the immigrant experience of Jews was considered as too far in the past to have a tangible effect on the views of Jews today on the issue of contemporary immigration issues.

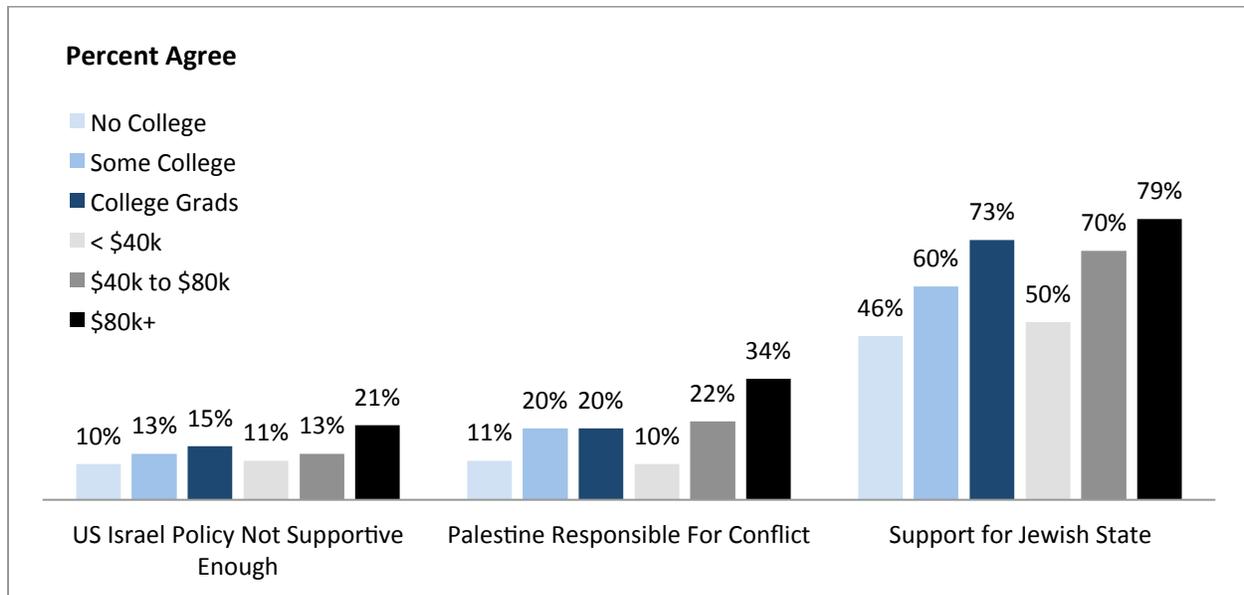
III. ISRAEL AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Latino familiarity with Israel and related foreign affairs is quite limited. The “don’t know” response rate is highest within this rubric of questions relative to any others in the entire survey. Among those who do answer, responses are somewhat tempered, with near even distributions across answer choices. Latinos were seemingly most familiar with the general idea of the Jewish state. The question regarding Jewish right to self-determination vis-à-vis the Jewish state generated the lowest don’t know rate, of 39%. On the other hand, and 62% of Latinos answered don’t know when asked who is to blame for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Cuban Americans give responses most consistently favorable to Israel along all of these measures. Socioeconomic class also predicts higher support and fewer “don’t know’s”, but not as sharply as national origin. With these facts in mind, we would caution against drawing inferences about favorable or unfavorable sentiments toward Israel as a function of these survey questions.

Favorable Views Toward Israel by National Origin



Favorable Views Toward Israel by Income and Education



Views Toward Israel Reflected in Focus Groups

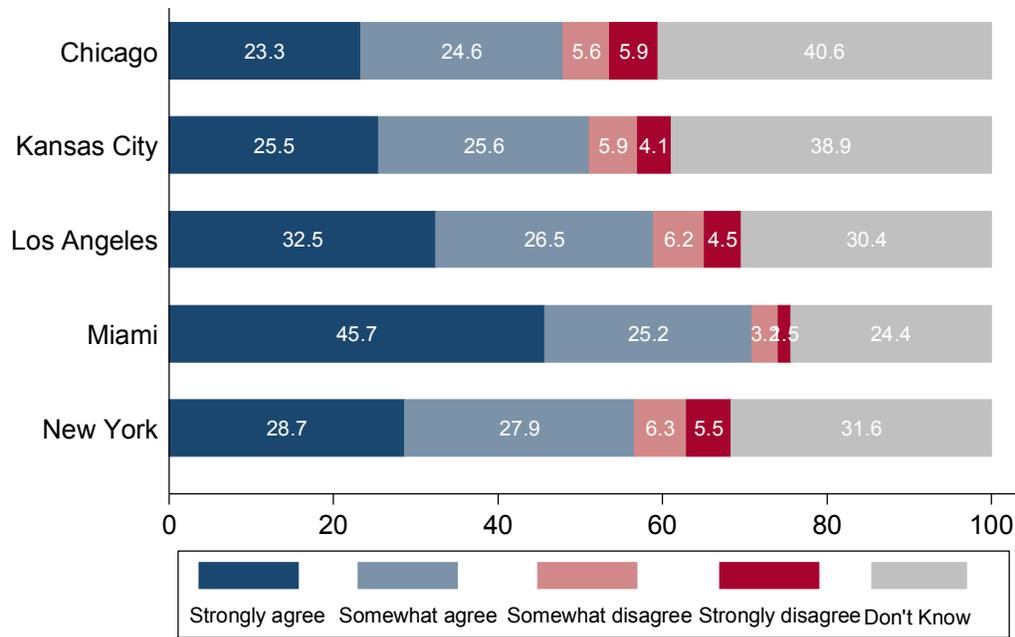
The level of knowledge in reference to Israel was extremely low across the focus groups as well. As a result, with few exceptions there were not developed opinions about what side was at fault for the conflict or what the role of the United States was. While the majority of the respondents recognized that there is a war and/or ongoing conflict in the region, the source of that conflict was unknown (with the exception of two individuals that we will refer to momentarily). The general sense was that there existed in Israel a “century's old” conflict that was a “chicken and egg” problem in not being able to determine why there is fighting or who is at fault. The fact that the fighting has been longstanding was one firmly held belief across the groups.

Two men, one in the English language Miami group and one in the English language Chicago group had clear feelings of blame toward Israel for the political conflict. The Chicago man felt especially strong about the issue. Both men saw Israel as taking land from others. They also both pointed out that they respectively had Jewish friends that agreed with their position as Israel being an unjust aggressor.

In addition to the topic of conflict, Israel prompted a discussion of the Holy Land. This mention prompted a very positive image of Israel, albeit recognizing the ever-present conflict. “Israel is one of the greatest marvels of the world...but war has brought it down...bombs everywhere.”

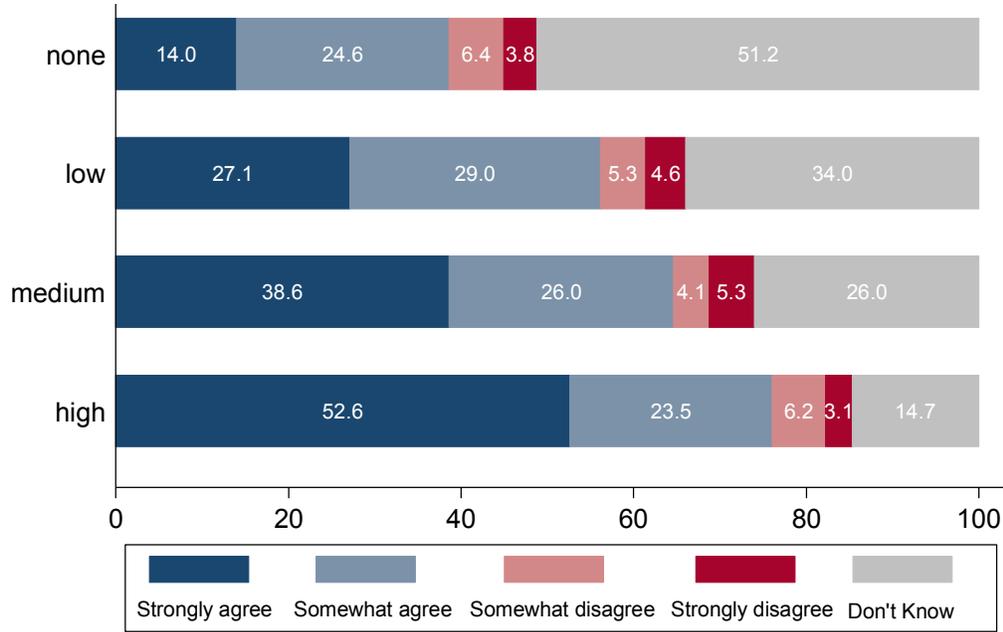
Some of the participants had had family members who had visited and had enjoyed the trip. “Israel is a tourist destination and for religious people it is a dream to go there.” One young man in the Los Angeles Spanish speaking groups said that it was his grandmother's dream to visit the Holy Land.

Right to Jewish State



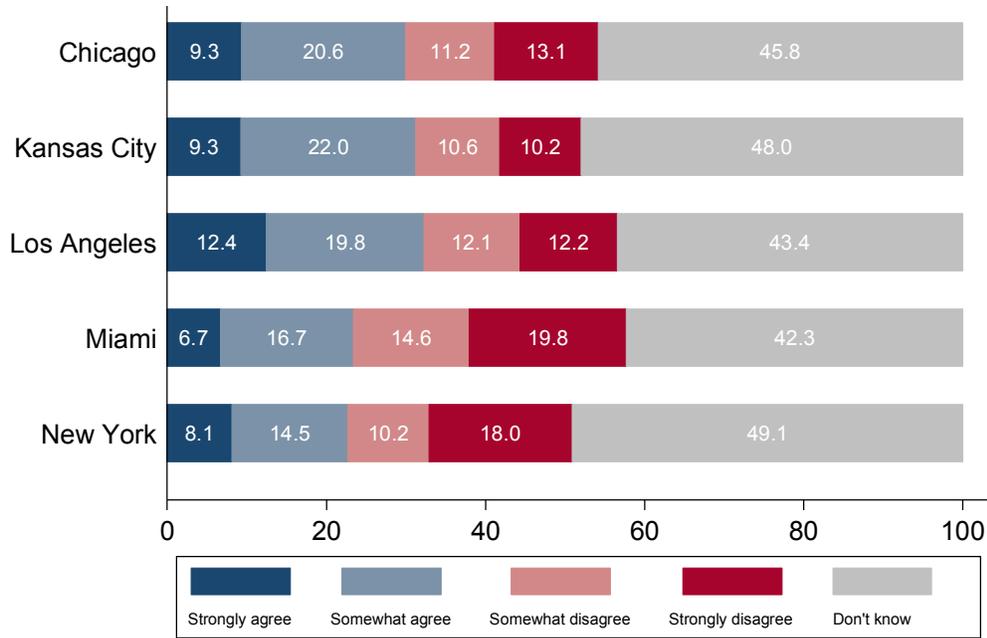
In terms of foreign policy, respondents were most comfortable with this one topic. They were asked whether they agreed that Jews should have the right to self-determination, and subsequently the right of the Jewish State to exist, flourish and defend itself against threats. Latinos in Miami offered strong support for this statement, with 46% responding “strongly agree”, and over half in agreement. Majorities of Latinos in New York and Los Angeles also support this statement. The large share of don’t knows is clear with 25% to 41% in a given city. The percentage of Latinos that disagree with the right to self-determination is one of the lowest disagree rates we find in this study.

Right to Jewish State by familiarity



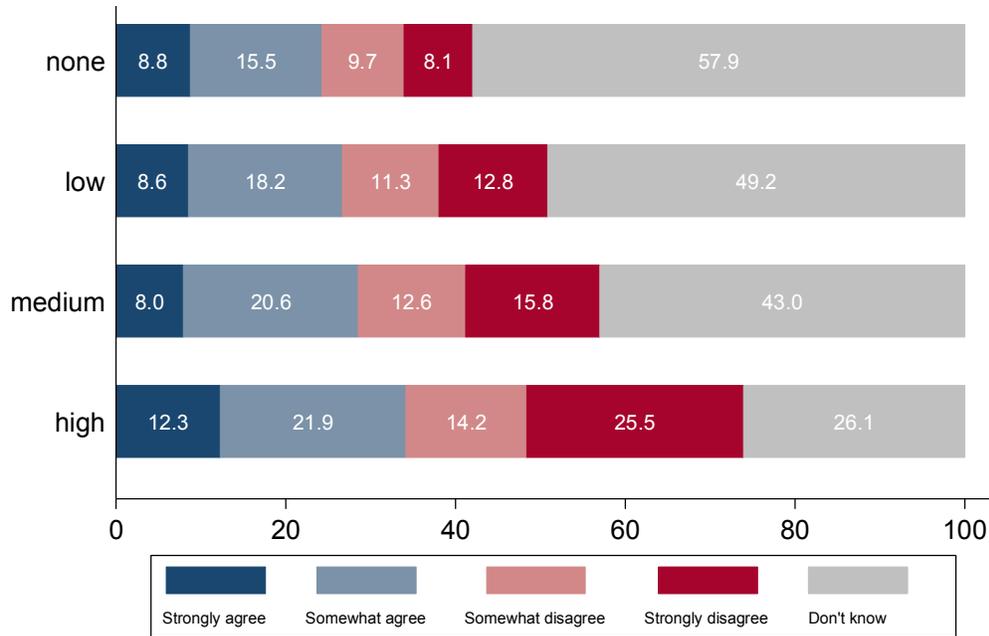
Familiarity produces almost entirely different pattern. The share of don't knows is much smaller in these categories. In fact three of the four groups show the majority supporting the Jewish population right to Israel. Only those without any relationship to Jews rate low on this measure, where the majority (51%) respond don't know. It is interesting that Latinos report having little in common with Jews in terms of politics or general experiences, yet we find evidence where Latinos do share political sentiments with many in the Jewish community.

Israel-Palestine Relationship Parallel to U.S.-Latinos



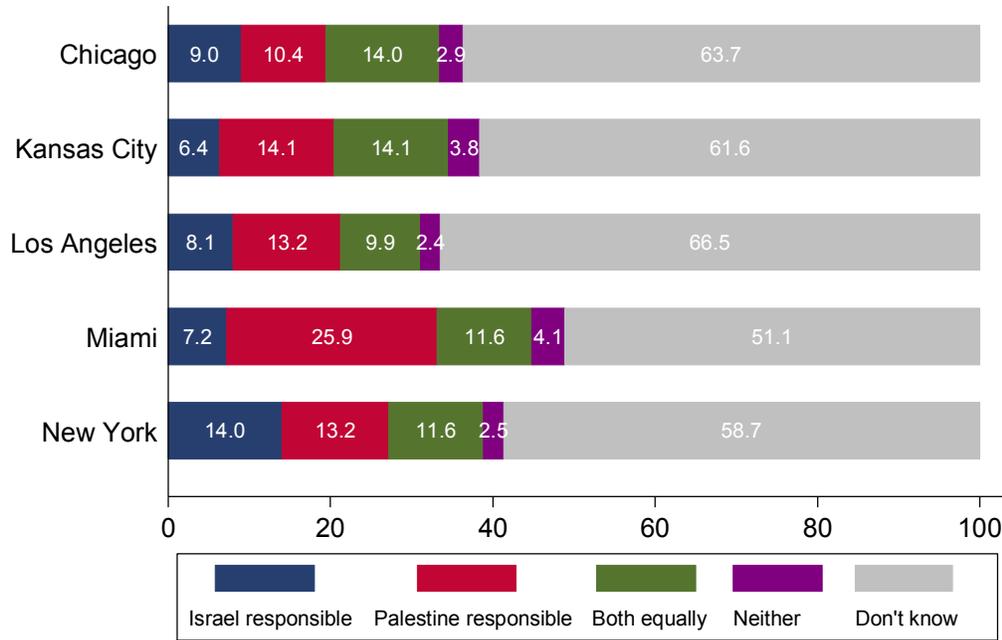
Asked whether they think the Israeli treatment of Palestinians is similar to the US’ treatment of Latino immigrants today, many respondents hesitated to answer. Above you can see that 45% of respondents said they did not know. The patterns in Chicago, Los Angeles and Kansas City are very similar with one-third in agreement, and about 10% strongly agreeing. It is striking that Los Angeles has the highest overall agree and strongly agree rate, given the centrality of immigration politics to that city. Disagreement registers highest in Miami, at an overall rate of 35%, and 20% of them strongly disagreeing with that characterization.

Israel-Palestine Relationship Parallel to U.S.-Latinos



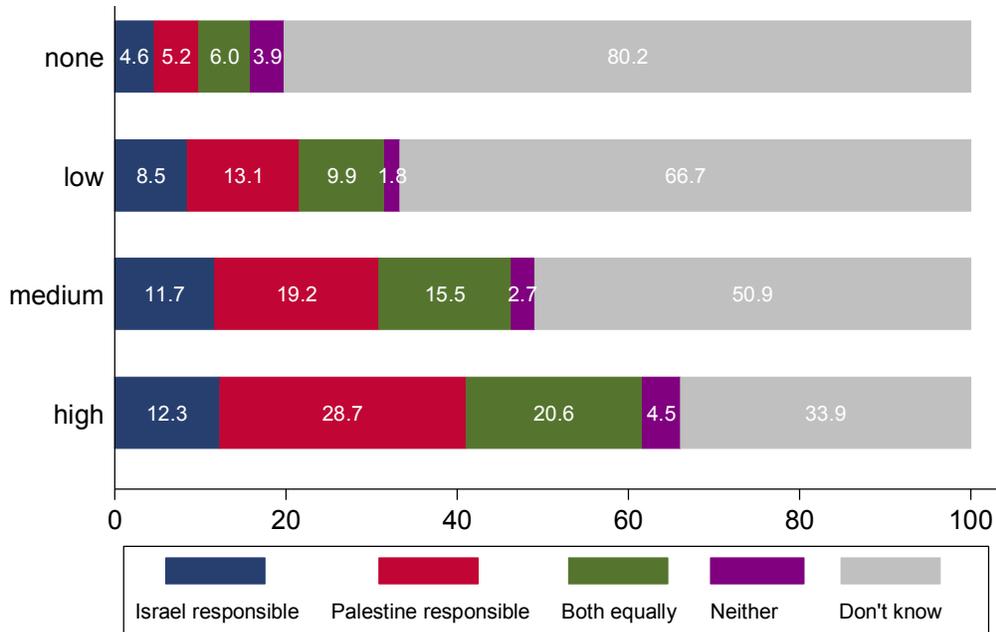
Those most acquainted with the Jewish community disagree at the highest rates among all Latinos. Here we see a clear pattern where a stronger relationship with Jews is associated with decreasing support for the idea that the Latino immigrant experience today is analogous to Palestinians in Israel. 40% of the most familiar disagree, with 26% voicing strong disagreement. Do not know responses are close to half of all respondents or more in three of the four categories.

Responsibility for Israel-Palestinian Conflict



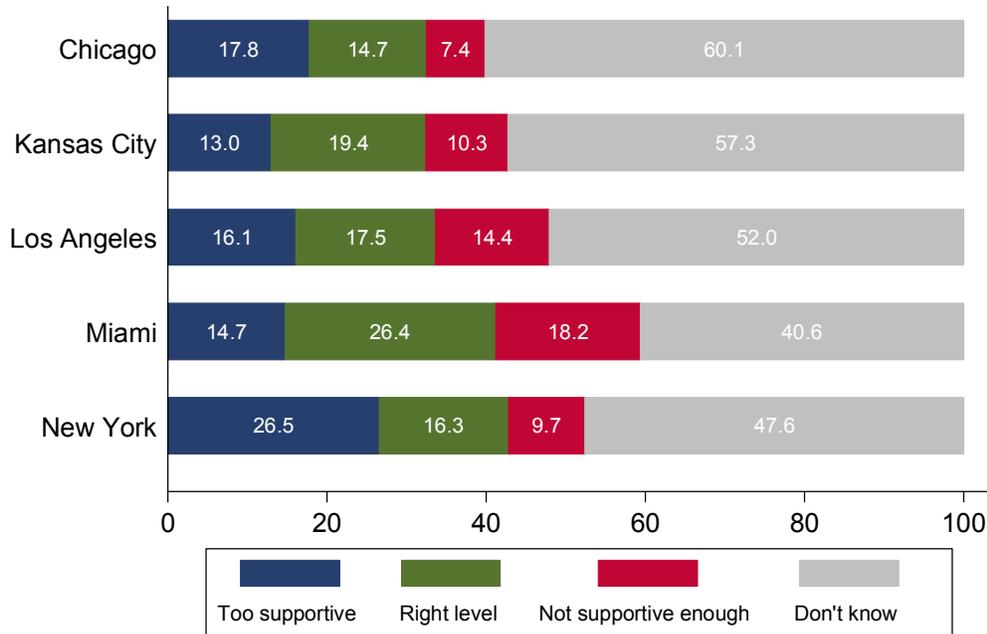
These two graphics tell us that Latinos are not familiar with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Asked which party is responsible for the conflict, 60% of respondents said they do not know. 15% said it is the Palestinian’s fault, 12% assign blame to both parties, 9% said Israel and 3% said neither. Miami area respondents have the strongest and most clear position on the issue, where 26% think Palestine is responsible for the conflict. 13% in New York agree, but another 14% believe Israel is to blame. The long grey bars demonstrate a general low familiarity with the topic, which is rather common among the national population, as following foreign affairs can require a larger time investment relative to domestic politics.

Responsibility for Israel-Palestinian Conflict by familiarity



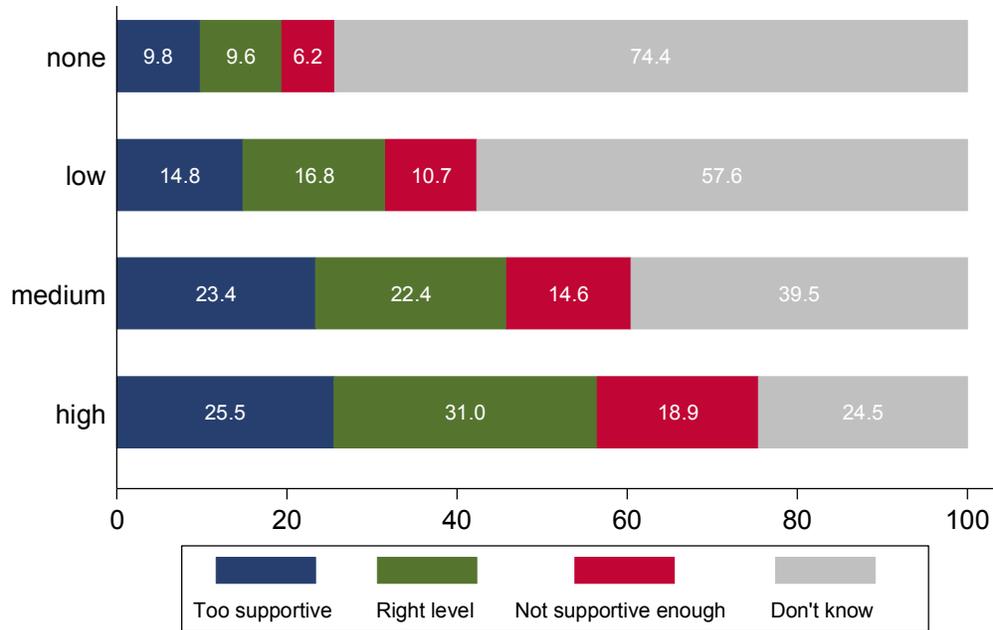
People more familiar with the Jewish community are more likely to have an opinion on this question altogether. Stronger relationships with Jews are predictive of the opinion that Palestine is accountable for the long-standing conflict. That rate reaches 29% among respondents most knowledgeable about Jewish affairs. Again we can clearly see the paucity of information about this topic where most do not know.

US Foreign Policy Toward Israel



Asked whether American foreign policy toward Israel is too supportive, at the right level or not supportive enough, 52% of those surveyed passed on the question. Nationally 17% believe it is too supportive, 19% think it is at the right level and 12% think it is not supportive enough. 27% of New Yorkers think American policy toward Israel is too supportive. To the contrary, in Miami we find 26% think it is at the right level and 18% think it is not supportive enough.

US Foreign Policy toward Israel by familiarity



Again we find that people who know the Jewish community have a point of view on the issue. Interestingly, 26% of that group think the policy is too supportive, compared to 19% in that same group that think American policy could do more.

SUMMARY

Our investigation into the perceptions of Jews by Latinos in the United States focused principally on the effect of contact. While variation on other dimensions had observable effects, none were so systematically and profoundly important as contact. Moreover, the general gist of the findings here suggest that Latino attitudes toward Jews are weakly held, ill-informed, and often absent altogether. The relative paucity of information and contact creates an information vacuum that is in need of filling in order to shape the future social and political relations between the groups. Among those who hold views, our sense is that there are *not* broad, deep anti-Semitic views in the population. This is not to say that no respondent offered negative assessments of Jews with whom they were familiar. Indeed, the focus group narratives suggest that Latinos are not immune to stereotyping behavior. Nevertheless, the data we present here does not suggest the presence of a barrier of negative affect between the groups.

Among the most positive findings in the interest of political and social cohesion is the positive relationship between information and perceptions of commonality. More informed respondents are significantly more likely to perceive commonalities between Latinos and Jews, suggesting that efforts to increase contact and visibility of Jews and Jewish organizations among Latino residents of the U.S. is very likely to have significant, positive return on investment.

On all of the “positive” stereotypes of Jews, including commitment to social justice, family orientation, faithfulness and the like, there is widespread embrace of these views by Latinos. This too suggests a strong basis for outreach in order to shape evolving views of Jews among the Latino population.

By contrast, the lack of information is associated with potentially destructive beliefs. For example, when asked if most Jews were trustworthy, untrustworthy, or neither more nor less trustworthy than other people, the relationship between familiarity and trust is very strong. Those with little familiarity with Jews have comparatively negative evaluations of their trustworthiness, an evaluation reversed among those with greater information.

Information vacuums, then, are double edged. In the absence of information, fewer people hold strong views of Jews, but those views are far more likely to be negative than among those with greater familiarity. The systematic information shortfalls we find in the Latino population may represent a significant opportunity for messaging and outreach. But if left unaddressed, this lack of information is very likely to result in negative—rather than positive— affective orientations to Jews. All of which is to say that an outreach and messaging campaign to Latinos is not only desirable, it may in fact be *necessary*.