

## The Representation of Jewish English in the Southern United States

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Jewish English in *The Ladies Auxiliary* (Mirvis 1999)

- 1) Good Shabbos / Shabbat Shalom
  - 2) Chanukah, Sukkot, Purim, Pesach
  - 3) shul
  - 4) Lecha dodi
  - 5) Shalom aleichem
  - 6) aishet chayil
  - 7) daven
  - 8) siddur
  - 9) chumash / chumashim
  - 10) mechitza
  - 11) tallises
  - 12) yahrzeit candle
  - 13) mazel tov
  - 14) bar mitzvahs
  - 15) Torah
  - 16) yeshiva
  - 17) frum
  - 18) d'var Torah
  - 19) parah adumah (red heifer)
  - 20) mitzvah
  - 21) mikvah (ritual bath)
  - 22) pareve
  - 23) separate treif pot and knife
  - 24) make kiddush
  - 25) recited hamotzi
  - 26) Kahn's Kosher-Mart
  - 27) Matza, Manischewitz gefilte fish, Miller's cheese, Kedem wine, Empire chicken
  - 28) O/U O/K star-K
  - 29) challas, kugels
  - 30) pickled herring, gefilte fish balls
  - 31) Schnapps table
  - 32) Posh Nosh
  - 33) pish-posh firms in Memphis
  - 34) long brown sheitl
  - 35) beautiful kallah
  - 36) tahor (pure)
  - 37) Nu. We don't have all night.
  - 38) Anna Beth: Chana Bayla
  - 39) Batsheva: daughter of the seven
  - 40) Jewish geography
  - 41) bless his memory
- Southernisms
- 42) y'all
  - 43) thank you, ma'am
  - 44) good ol' fashioned southern hospitality
  - 45) Tziporah leafed through the stray copies of *Southern Living* . . .
  - 46) Posh Nosh: fried chicken, collard greens, hash browns . . . were the closes thing we had to nonkosher southern cooking
  - 47) challahs, a fried chicken, two kugels, and a dish of her famous hush puppies
  - 48) honey mustard chicken, barbecue beef ribs, sliced kishka noodle kugel
  - 49) fried chicken, green bean almondine, and black-eyed peas
  - 50) Visitors commented that they expected . . . Elvis Presley to rise from underneath the bima
  - 51) Shabbat Shalom, y'all.
- Avoidance of Assimilation
- 52) She never shopped at Piggly Wiggly. Even if the store carried products that were certified kosher, she was sure that the very name rendered the entire operation treif.
  - 53) Edith Shapiro: had had a solo in her public school's Christmas pageant, but that was something she didn't go around telling people.

Table 1: Percentage of Jews Living in the U.S., by Region

	1966	2002
East	84 %	50%
Midwest	6%	8%
West	7%	22%
South	3%	20%

(U.S. Census Data: [http://www.baptiststandard.com/2003/2\\_3/pages/shift.html](http://www.baptiststandard.com/2003/2_3/pages/shift.html))

Table 2: Frequency of Jewish English Words in U.S. Newspapers, by Region

	Southeast			Texas			General		
	JE	SE	JE:SE Ratio	JE	SE	JE:SE Ratio	JE	SE	JE:SE Ratio
<i>schlep</i> : tote	9	345	0.03	10	204	0.05	51	264	0.19
<i>schlep</i> : lug	9	80	0.11	10	81	0.12	51	199	0.26
<i>nebbish</i> : nerd	7	114	0.06	23	156	0.15	25	277	0.09
<i>kvetch</i> : whine	1	136	0.01	10	239	0.04	24	306	0.08
<i>glitch</i> : malfunction	286	102	2.80	313	124	2.52	516	220	2.35
<i>maven</i> : whiz	127	184	0.69	114	250	0.46	278	423	0.65
<i>schlock</i> : junk	26	672	0.04	39	783	0.05	67	1314	0.05
<i>chutzpah</i> : gall	32	192	0.17	39	90	0.43	113	183	0.62
<i>schmooze</i> : chitchat	35	67	0.52	45	46	0.98	93	97	0.96
<i>tchotchke</i> : kniek-knaeck	11	17	0.65	13	20	0.65	56	19	2.95
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>1909</b>	<b>0.28</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>0.31</b>	<b>1274</b>	<b>3302</b>	<b>0.39</b>

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