



Still No Evidence for a Jewish Group Evolutionary Strategy

Nathan Cofnas¹

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Abstract

I recently criticized some key tenets of what I called the “anti-Jewish narrative,” particularly as defended by Kevin MacDonald. According to MacDonald, Judaism is a “group evolutionary strategy” that led Jews to impose liberal multiculturalism on the West in order to advance their evolutionary interests at the expense of gentiles. In light of MacDonald’s reply, in this paper, I refine my previous arguments, address some popular misunderstandings, and discuss the root causes and consequences of anti-Semitism. I conclude that, contra the anti-Jewish narrative, Jews are not particularly ethnocentric, Jewish intellectuals do not typically advocate liberal multiculturalism for gentiles but not for Jews, Jews did not orchestrate the rise of liberalism or blank-slatism in the West, and anti-Semitism is not primarily a response to actual Jewish wrongdoing.

Keywords Jews · Anti-Semitism · Liberalism · Blank slate · Ethnocentrism · Multiculturalism · Mass immigration

Introduction

The mainstream leftist narrative about race sees “white supremacy” as an all-controlling social force, which is responsible for producing bad outcomes such as racial disparities. People who reject this narrative sometimes gravitate to an alternative, anti-Jewish narrative, which blames Jews for outcomes disliked by those on the right, such as liberalism and mass immigration. Perhaps the most prominent defender of the anti-Jewish narrative is Kevin MacDonald—a now retired professor of psychology at California State University, Long Beach who has been described as the “Marx of the anti-Semites” (Derbyshire, 2003). According to MacDonald (1998/2002), Judaism is a “group evolutionary strategy,” and Jews imposed liberal multiculturalism on the West in order to advance their own evolutionary interests at the expense of gentiles.

I argued that advocates of both the anti-white-supremacy and anti-Jewish narratives employ similarly biased reasoning (Cofnas, 2021). They “ignore or misrepresent facts that go against the narrative. They trumpet a small number of exceptional, narrative-supporting incidents as if they represented general trends” (ibid., pp. 1329–1330). And they reject more reasonable explanations for the phenomena they seek to explain. I

challenged three key tenets of the anti-Jewish narrative, which have been defended by MacDonald: (a) Jews are highly ethnocentric, (b) liberal Jews hypocritically advocate different policies for Jews/Israel and gentiles/gentile countries, and (c) Jews are responsible for liberalism and mass immigration to the USA. I reiterated my thesis that the best explanation for Jewish overrepresentation in the leadership of liberal political and intellectual movements is the “default hypothesis.” That is, Jews are overrepresented in such leadership positions for the same reasons that they are overrepresented in almost all (non-anti-Semitic) cognitively demanding activities—primarily high mean intelligence (Cofnas, 2018). MacDonald’s (2022) reply exhibits the same biased style of reasoning that characterizes both the anti-white-supremacy and anti-Jewish literature.

In this paper, I further develop my arguments in light of MacDonald’s (2022) critique, address some popular misunderstandings of the default hypothesis, and discuss the root causes and consequences of anti-Semitism.

My most recent exchange with MacDonald was published in the Israeli philosophy journal *Philosophia* (Cofnas, 2021; MacDonald, 2022). *Philosophia* was one of the few respectable journals in the field that had a reputation for publishing defenses of genuinely controversial ideas. However, the day after MacDonald’s paper appeared online, the journal’s associate editor resigned in protest and called for retraction. Philosophy blogger Justin Weinberg ran a post attacking the editor-in-chief Asa Kasher, MacDonald, and me (Weinberg, 2022). Weinberg contacted the journal’s publisher (Springer) in an apparent effort to initiate a retraction. Kasher

✉ Nathan Cofnas
nrc48@cam.ac.uk

¹ Faculty of Philosophy, University of Cambridge, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge CB3 9DA, UK

immediately apologized for publishing both papers, and in July 2022 MacDonald's reply was officially retracted, although the full text is still available online with the note "RETRACTED ARTICLE" printed across every page. Despite his craven apology, Kasher lost his position as editor-in-chief.

I vigorously and publicly opposed censoring MacDonald (Cofnas, 2022). Besides the issue of free speech, silencing one side of a debate does not make the other side appear more credible—if anything, it has the opposite effect. Nietzsche (1888/1990, p. 183) refers to the "world-historical stupidity of all persecutors" who give their opponents "the appearance of honourableness" and bestow on them "the fascination of martyrdom." However, while censorship is unfortunate and may inspire sympathy, it should not necessarily be taken as evidence of the correctness of the censored views.

"Group Evolutionary Strategy" vs. the "Default Hypothesis"

MacDonald (1998/2002) argues that Jewish intellectuals promote liberalism to undermine gentile societies and advance the evolutionary interests of Jews. He says that Jews were a "necessary condition...for the triumph of the intellectual left in late twentieth-century Western Societies" (*ibid.*, p. 18).

I proposed what I called the "default hypothesis" to explain Jewish overrepresentation in the leadership of liberal intellectual movements (Cofnas, 2018). Jews are overrepresented primarily because of high average IQ, and secondarily because of their concentration in influential urban areas that allowed them to capitalize on their ability. Jewish political influence has skewed left in recent history mainly because right-wing movements have been disproportionately anti-Semitic. But Jews have been overrepresented in virtually all *non-overtly-anti-Semitic* intellectual activities. Despite being a fraction of one percent of the world population, Jews have been 44% of world chess champions, 25% of fields medalists, and 24% of winners of Japan's Kyoto Prize. Jews comprise 26% of Nobel laureates in Physics, 26% in Physiology or Medicine, 39% in Economics, 19% in Chemistry, 14% in Literature, and 8% in Peace (JINFO.ORG, 2022).¹ Many of the most prominent figures in art,

¹ Some people have suggested that the high number of Nobel Prizes awarded to Jews reflects Jewish influence over the selection process rather than the merit of the laureates. It is worth noting that Jews are considerably more likely to win Prizes in the sciences, which have relatively objective standards of accomplishment, than in Peace and Literature. This is the opposite of what we would expect if Jewish nepotism were a significant factor. Also difficult for the nepotism theory to explain is the fact that Jews win the Japan-based Kyoto Prize at roughly the same rate that they win the Western-based Nobel Prize and Fields Medal.

business, and politics are Jewish (Lynn & Kanazawa, 2008). With respect to politics, Jews are frequently the leaders of movements with radically opposing aims such as libertarianism and socialism. The default hypothesis says that Jews are overrepresented in liberal intellectual movements for the same reason(s) they are overrepresented in other intellectual activities. I argued that the evidence in fact supports the default rather than the group-evolutionary-strategy hypothesis (Cofnas, 2018).

I explicitly stated that Jewish IQ—which is something like 110–112 on average (Cochran et al., 2005; Lynn & Kanazawa, 2008)—"is not enough to explain Jewish achievement" (Cofnas, 2018, p. 137). I suggested that, besides a geographic advantage, personality traits could also play a role in Jewish success, although the nature of these traits is a matter of speculation. The fact that stereotypes tend to have a basis in reality (Jussim et al., 2015, 2016) and that Jews have been consistently stereotyped as having distinctive personalities—for example, as being "shrewd" (Brigham, 1971)—provides preliminary support for the hypothesis of personality differences.

I recently sought to clarify what should have been obvious, but which has been misunderstood by some critics, that the "default hypothesis" is not intended to be a unified theory of sociology, or to explain all Jewish behavior or all differences between groups. "Like all groups, Jews are influenced by their unique historical circumstances and cultural background. We should not expect Jews to be the same as white gentiles, or the same as urban white gentiles with IQ 110–112" (Cofnas, 2021, p. 1340). The details of the Jewish psychometric profile may also contribute to different patterns of behavior. For example, in contemporary America, verbal intelligence is correlated with liberal political views (Ludeke et al., 2017), and Jewish intelligence is verbally tilted. The mere fact that Jews are different from white gentiles does not necessarily mean that there is a group evolutionary strategy or that Jews were a necessary condition for the triumph of liberalism.

MacDonald (2022, p. 5) writes:

for any level of above-average IQ, there will be many more non-Jewish white Americans than Jews. In the case of *CofC* [*The Culture of Critique*], which examines several influential intellectual and political movements, a random representation based only on IQ would imply that there would be many more non-Jews than Jews in leadership positions of all of the movements discussed. This is far from the case.

It is actually not true that for "any level of above-average IQ" Jews will be significantly outnumbered by non-Jewish white Americans. Given the way normal distribution works, the ratio of Jews to white gentiles increases the higher you make the IQ cutoff point. There is (theoretically) some IQ

level beyond which Jews comprise the majority. But, as noted, I state in my original paper that IQ alone “is not enough to explain Jewish achievement” (Cofnas, 2018, p. 137). Consider, for example, the fact that out of the dozen physicists who were most instrumental in creating nuclear weapons, probably more than half were Jews (Alexander, 2017). That would include arguably the most important, Leo Szilard, who came up with the idea of the nuclear chain reaction and codesigned the first nuclear reactor. J. Robert Oppenheimer and Edward Teller (both Jewish) are known as the “father of the atomic bomb” and the “father of the hydrogen bomb,” respectively. Hans Bethe thought that Stanislaw Ulam (also Jewish) should be considered the father of the hydrogen bomb, and Teller the mother. Bethe reports the following: “Ulam discovered a new way to make fission bombs, and Teller quickly saw how this idea could be applied to make the H-bomb” (quoted in Edson, 1968, p. 125). Jews punch above their IQ weight, and not only in highly *g*-loaded activities like math and physics. Scores on standard intelligence tests only explain something like 6% of the variance in chess skill. Full-scale IQ explains less than 1% of the variance (Burgoyne et al., 2016). Yet Jews make up almost half of world chess champions. What is going on?

There is a whole constellation of psychological traits and mental abilities (which may be genetically or culturally transmitted) that contribute to success in any given domain. Jews (particularly Ashkenazim) were subject to evolutionary selection pressures—presumably the ability to succeed in white-collar professions (Cochran et al., 2005) and/or Talmudic study—that favored higher general intelligence (*g*). The same selection pressures would have favored non-*g* traits and abilities that contribute to success in business or scholarship. Some of these traits and abilities may not be measured by IQ tests. The achievements of East Asians testify to this phenomenon. In America, East Asians outstrip Whites in socioeconomic status far beyond what would be predicted based on their (at most) moderate IQ advantage (Flynn, 2008).

The essence of the default hypothesis is not that *IQ specifically* explains Jewish overrepresentation, but that the same factors explain Jewish overrepresentation in intellectual activities across the board. Jews are not overrepresented in chess, physics, computer science, literature, and the leadership of the libertarian movement for one reason (i.e., cognitive ability), and overrepresented in the leadership of liberal intellectual movements for a completely different reason (i.e., a group evolutionary strategy). Since IQ is not sufficient to explain Jewish overrepresentation in the former activities, the default hypothesis predicts that it will not be sufficient to explain it in the latter, either. To reiterate, this has been my position from the beginning (Cofnas, 2018, pp. 137–138).

MacDonald (2022, pp. 24–25) points out that Jews in the West act differently from overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia, which he apparently sees as evidence that Judaism is a group evolutionary strategy:

Whereas there has been a strong trend for American Jews to have a very large influence on the media, the creation of culture, information in the social sciences and humanities, and the political process..., this has not happened with the Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia despite their dominating position in the economies of the region and their high average IQ....The Overseas Chinese have not formed a cultural elite in Southeast Asian countries and have not concentrated their efforts on media ownership or in the construction of an adversarial culture.

But, again, the default hypothesis does not claim that IQ is the only determinant of behavior, and there are obvious reasons why Jews and overseas Chinese would act differently.

First, there are profound cultural differences between the West and Asia. The West has a strong tradition, which goes back to the Enlightenment, of intense, public debate about questions concerning political philosophy and human nature. (These debates were initiated by European gentiles, though Jews became important participants.) In contrast, people from traditionally rice-farming societies, which includes most Chinese, and from cultures with stronger kin-based institutions tend to be more collectivist and conformist (Henrich, 2020; Talhelm & English, 2020; Talhelm et al., 2014), and do not have such a tradition of debate.

Second, there are significant differences in the psychometric profiles of Jews and Chinese. Jewish intelligence is more verbal whereas Chinese intelligence is more spatial (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994, pp. 272–275). (On average, Jews have lower spatial-reasoning ability than white gentiles, but much higher verbal ability; Cochran et al., 2005, p. 661.) Since people gain political and cultural influence mainly with words, verbally tilted Jews in the West are bound to have more influence in these domains than spatially tilted Chinese in Southeast Asia. In America, East Asians (including Chinese) are wildly overrepresented at the highest levels in STEM, but they have not come close to attaining the cultural influence of Jews. MacDonald should have no problem accepting this point, since he himself has said essentially the same thing! According to MacDonald (1998/2002, p. 321), Jews will not be outcompeted by Asians for social status

not only because their mean IQ [is high] but, more importantly, because Jewish IQ is skewed toward excelling in verbal skills. The high IQ of East Asians is skewed toward performance IQ, which makes them powerful competitors in engineering and technology....

Jews and East Asians are thus likely to occupy different niches in contemporary societies.

The observed Jewish–Chinese differences are exactly what we should expect based on their different suites of abilities, and they pose no challenge for the default hypothesis.

Jewish Ethnocentrism

A core tenet of the anti-Jewish narrative is that Jews are more ethnocentric and concerned with racial purity than white gentiles. MacDonald (1998/2002, pp. xxiii, xxxvi) writes:

In several places in all three of my books on Judaism I develop the view that Europeans are relatively less ethnocentric than other peoples and relatively more prone to individualism as opposed to the ethnocentric collectivist social structures historically far more characteristic of other human groups, including—relevant to this discussion—Jewish groups....Jewish ethnocentrism is ultimately simple traditional human ethnocentrism, although it is certainly among the more extreme varieties.

He says that his “basic proposal is that Judaism can be interpreted as a set of ideological structures and behaviors that have resulted in [four] features,” the first of which is “the segregation of the Jewish gene pool from surrounding gentile societies” (MacDonald, 1994, p. xcvi). Intermarriage with a gentile is equivalent to “defection” from the group (MacDonald, 1998/2002, p. xxii). He says that

contemporary Western...Jewish groups often go to great lengths to discourage intermarriage....Judaism continues to show extraordinary ideological flexibility in achieving the goal of legitimizing the continuation of Jewish group identity and genetic separatism....An important consequence [of the Jewish-driven cultural changes]—and one likely to have been an underlying motivating factor in the countercultural revolution—may well be to facilitate the continued genetic distinctiveness of the Jewish gene pool in the United States. (ibid., pp. 46, 151, 320)

MacDonald (2022, p. 7) now refers to my “erroneous assumption that the ‘anti-Jewish narrative’ depends on showing that Jews in general are ethnocentric,” and insists that “[r]elatively high rates of intermarriage...serve Jewish interests” (ibid., p. 9). Is this consistent with his previous statements quoted above? I leave that to the reader to decide.

A Pew Research Center survey in 2013 found that 50% of Reform and 69% of unaffiliated Jews report being married

to a gentile (Pew Research Center, 2013, p. 37). It is likely that the rate of intermarriage among Reform Jews is much higher than 50%, since gentiles who marry Reform Jews often undergo nominal “conversions” that are not valid according to traditional Jewish law. Not only are liberal Jews intermarrying themselves out of existence, they are doing so with the enthusiastic support of liberal Jewish leaders. I documented how, contra some false claims by MacDonald, the Reform Jewish establishment actively promotes intermarriage and conversion—especially interracial conversion—and sees the racial diversification of the Jewish community as a major priority (Cofnas, 2019, pp. 146–147; 2021, pp. 1334–1335).

MacDonald (2022, p. 9) says that “In some cases, intermarriage and conversion may have benefits for the Jewish community...such as the marriage of Jared Kushner, an Orthodox Jew, to Ivanka Trump and Kushner’s subsequent influence on the Trump administration’s policies toward Israel.” It is not clear what he is claiming here. Is he saying that Jared Kushner married Ivanka Trump in 2009 in order to influence US policy toward Israel, or otherwise advance Jewish interests? If so, he has not provided a shred of evidence for this. There seem to be much less conspiratorial reasons why Kushner would have wanted to marry Ivanka Trump, which are so obvious that I do not think they need to be spelled out. It is possible, as I previously observed, that “Jews could benefit as a group from some strategic marriage alliances with powerful gentiles, like Esther marrying King Ahasuerus in ancient Persia” (Cofnas, 2021, p. 1333). But the potential benefits of some strategic marriages cannot explain intermarriage rates of well over 50%, and possibly something like 70%, among liberal Jews.

In a flagrant case of goalpost shifting, MacDonald (2022, p. 8) now says that it is not the intermarriage rate per se that is important, but deviation from randomness. Marriages between Jews are indeed far more common than would be expected if people married each other randomly. But, as I noted, there are several possible reasons for this besides exceptionally high Jewish ethnocentrism, including the fact that not all gentiles are eager to marry Jews (Cofnas, 2021, p. 1334). (MacDonald often ignores the role of gentile agency in social phenomena.) But MacDonald (2022, p. 8) acknowledges that “[i]ntermarriage is indeed quite high within the contemporary American Jewish community.” It is not clear how this jibes with the theory that our socio-political system was designed to advance a Jewish group evolutionary strategy, one of the main goals of which is to ensure “the segregation of the Jewish gene pool from surrounding gentile societies” (MacDonald, 1994, p. xcvi). And, again, large-scale intermarriage is the opposite of what he explicitly predicted.

MacDonald (2022, p. 9) argues:

Relatively high rates of intermarriage, low fertility, and various levels of Jewish identification in contemporary Western societies serve Jewish interests because they result in a bridge to the surrounding culture due to family ties with non-Jews, especially prominent non-Jews....This is especially the case since there remains a highly fertile core of Conservative and Orthodox Jews who overwhelmingly reject intermarriage.

Note that “high rates of intermarriage” and “low fertility” were never said to be part of the group evolutionary strategy before I drew attention to these phenomena. Leaving that aside, is MacDonald saying that Jews *consciously* pursue marriages with gentiles in order to create “bridge[s] to the surrounding culture” that “serve Jewish interests”? If so, he has not provided an iota of evidence for this. Is he claiming that the practice of rampant intermarriage is a cultural adaptation—perhaps the result of cultural group selection—that benefits Jews without their being consciously aware of it? If so, he has not provided evidence for this, either. Nor has he provided evidence that mass intermarriage, which is leading the secular Jewish community to disappear, actually benefits Jews at all from a group-evolutionary perspective. He seems to suggest that there is a kamikaze strategy among secular, liberal Jews to intermarry themselves out of existence in order to protect “a highly fertile core of Conservative and Orthodox Jews.” But what is the *evidence* for this? Do liberal Jews show any interest in promoting the reproductive success of Orthodox Jews? Do liberal Jews donate money, or give significant political support, to the Orthodox community? It seems that MacDonald is simply spinning an evidence-free story in order to avoid confronting facts that make no sense according to his theory.

MacDonald (2022) takes great pains to show that Sigmund Freud had a “Jewish identity.” Indeed, Freud did have a Jewish identity, and he said so explicitly. But this fact is not evidence for MacDonald’s (1998/2002, p. 114) radical claim that “Freud conceptualized himself as a leader in a war on gentile culture.” Freud never said anything to support *that*. Repeating a statement from *The Culture of Critique* (ibid., pp. 111–112), MacDonald (2022, p. 6) writes the following: “Regarding his sense of Jewish interests, Freud wrote of his messianic hope to achieve the ‘integration of Jews and anti-Semites on the soil of [psychoanalysis]’ ..., a quote clearly indicating that psychoanalysis was viewed by its founder as a mechanism for ending anti-Semitism.” But this quote just reflects the fact that Freud saw psychoanalysis as a panacea for all social problems, including anti-Semitism. MacDonald only succeeds in showing that, at a time when almost all Europeans had strong ethnic identities, Freud *also* had a strong ethnic identity and, in addition, he opposed anti-Semitism. The fact that Freud identified as a Jew and opposed discrimination against himself is completely unremarkable. It does not support MacDonald’s

theory that the purpose of psychoanalysis was to wage “war on gentile culture” or advance a Jewish group evolutionary strategy.

In both his public and private writings Karl Marx expressed blatantly anti-Semitic views and he looked forward to the eventual dissolution of the Jewish community. As he famously stated, “What is the worldly religion of the Jew? *Huckstering*. What is his worldly God? *Money*....An organization of society which would abolish the preconditions for huckstering, and therefore the possibility of huckstering, would make the Jew impossible” (Marx, 1844/2010, p. 170). He complained that Eastern European Jews were “reproducing like lice” and agreed with Friedrich Engels that Polish Jews were “the dirtiest of all races” (Lindemann, 1997, p. 164). He supported Jewish emancipation, ostensibly with the goal of integrating Jews and gentiles so Jews would cease to exist as a separate people. MacDonald (2022) has found a couple of commentators with the eccentric theory that Marx only *pretended* to be an anti-Semite so, as Shlomo Avineri suggests, he would not be “accused of supporting Jewish rights because of his own Jewish background” (Avineri, 2019, p. 48; quoted in MacDonald, 2022, p. 7). According to MacDonald (2022, p. 7), “This at least suggests a Jewish identity and concern for Jewish interests.” But just because this completely speculative, unorthodox theory about Marx’s secret motivations is convenient for MacDonald does not mean that there is good reason to believe it. Avineri (2019, p. 48) himself notes that “one does not have to particularly like Jews or Judaism in order to support their equal rights as citizens,” and he describes his own idea about Marx’s motivations as “speculat[ion].” There is no actual evidence that Marx’s anti-Semitism—or his stated wish for the Jewish community to cease to exist—was a ruse to conceal a secret concern for Jewish interests. Even Lindemann (1997, pp. 165–166), who offers a somewhat apologetic account of Marx’s anti-Semitism, concludes that

it is difficult to deny that a strain of something akin to mean-spirited racism and anti-Semitism was to be found in Marx, even if inconsistent with his thought and action in other regards....He rarely expressed sympathy for Jews suffering from oppression. Particularly remarkable and revealing is how rarely he referred to his own Jewish ancestry....Marx took little pride in his Jewishness. He must be considered a prime candidate for that problematic category, along with Lasselle and Heine, of the self-hating Jew.

MacDonald (2022) continues to highlight the anthropologist Franz Boas as a key figure in the supposed effort to advance Jewish interests by rejecting Darwinism in the social sciences. Regarding Boas’ Jewish identity, MacDonald (1998/2002, p. 23) writes that he “married within his ethnic group (Frank, 1997, p. 733) and was intensely

concerned with anti-Semitism from an early period in his life. Boas was deeply alienated from and hostile toward gentile culture, particularly the cultural ideal of the Prussian aristocracy (Degler, 1991, p. 200; Stocking, 1968, p. 150).” Based on this, MacDonald (1998/2002, p. 23) “conclude[s] that Boas had a strong Jewish identification and that he was deeply concerned about anti-Semitism.” But he is seriously misrepresenting his sources.

First, as Vivare (2022) points out, Boas did *not* marry within his ethnic group, and MacDonald’s reference for this assertion does not claim that he did. Frank (1997, p. 733) contains two sentences related to Boas’ wife: “[Abraham] Jacobi’s close friend was physician Ernst Krackowizer, a leader of the Austrian revolt of 1848....Boas married Marie Krackowizer, Ernst’s daughter, in 1887, the year he emigrated to America.” For some reason MacDonald erroneously infers from this passage that the Krackowizers were Jewish. In fact, Marie was a Catholic without Jewish ancestry on either side of her family.²

Second, neither Degler (1991) nor Stocking (1968) says anything to support the claim that “Boas was deeply alienated from and hostile toward gentile culture.” Degler (1991, p. 200) simply mentions Boas as one of the “scholars of Jewish descent who had long been held at a distance or excluded entirely from American colleges and universities [who] were now coming to the fore.” Stocking (1968, pp. 149–150) refers to Boas’ “profound identification with classical German culture,” though says that he was alienated from “the Germany of his day.”

MacDonald (2022) again avoids mentioning the fact that Boas strongly identified as a *German*. As Glick (1982, p. 554) expounds:

In all the years preceding the emergence of Nazism, [Boas] consistently maintained pride in his German-American identity, and indeed, until it became impossible, he was more than ready to defend the homeland, even to the potential detriment of his own career.... [He] was determined not to be classified as a Jew.... [In] common with many other Jews, particularly German Jews and others of a strongly assimilationist bent, he did not acknowledge the existence of a specifically Jewish cultural or ethnic identity....[The] very existence [of Jewish identity] was questionable, and indeed enlightened individuals were to be expected to want to dissociate themselves from identification as Jews and should be permitted to do so.

Even after Hitler’s rise to power in 1933, Boas was still willing to declare that “I am of Jewish descent, but in my feelings and my thoughts I am German” (quoted in Vivare,

2022; Weiler, 2008, p. 69). Degler quotes Boas’ explicit statement about his motivations, which refer to his *German* identity. Boas said that “The background of my early thinking... was a German home in which the ideals of the Revolution of 1848 were a living force” (quoted in Degler, 1991, p. 73). MacDonald ignores this. He fails to mention another striking fact discussed by Degler, which is that Boas seemed to look forward to the disappearance via intermarriage of both Blacks and Jews, believing that this would bring an end to anti-black and anti-Jewish racism (ibid., p. 80). It is true that Boas was “concerned about anti-Semitism,” especially when he was being subjected to anti-Semitic discrimination, but this is not evidence of a particularly strong Jewish identity.

That being said, Boas’ concern about anti-Semitism was somewhat limited. On this point, Vivare (2022) identifies another rather shocking misrepresentation in *The Culture of Critique*. MacDonald (1998/2002, p. 23) attributes the following statement to Boas: “If we Jews had to choose to work only with Gentiles certified to be a hundred percent free of anti-Semitism, who could we ever really work with?” In fact, this was said by an unnamed anthropologist long after Boas had died (Chase, 1980, p. 632)! In 1942, the editor of a Jewish newspaper asked Boas to write an article condemning the notorious anti-Semite Father Coughlin and calling for his publication, *Social Justice*, to be banned. Boas replied: “In my opinion the only kind of protest that means anything is to attack the whole attitude of races toward one another. If you want a note in which I accuse at the same time the Jews for their anti-Negro attitude I will write it” (quoted in Lewis, 2001; Vivare, 2022). Not the words you would expect from a supposedly fanatical crusader against anti-Semitism.

Jewish Hypocrisy

MacDonald (2022, pp. 9–10) mockingly writes: “Cofnas (2021) claims that *CofC* maintains that ‘Liberal Jews hypocritically advocate multiculturalism for gentiles/gentile countries but racial purity and separatism for Jews/Israel’, a position that conflicts with the pronouncements of some contemporary Reform leaders.” He does not seem to dispute my so-called “claim” that *The Culture of Critique* maintains what I say it does. More important, he ignores the voluminous evidence I provided that prominent Jewish liberals who advocate liberalism and multiculturalism for gentiles and gentile countries usually advocate more or less the same policies for Jews and Israel (Cofnas, 2018, 2019, 2021). MacDonald (2022, p. 10) says that “Cofnas restricts himself to pronouncements by contemporary American Reform leaders—opinions that may not reflect the views of the wider Reform community, much less represent a consensus among American Jews.” The first part of that sentence is false, and the second part

² I hired a genealogist to confirm this.

is completely unsupported. MacDonald provides no evidence whatsoever to think that there is some large difference of opinion between American Reform leaders and the Jews who pay dues to their synagogues.

MacDonald (2022, p. 11) admits that he “know[s] of no surveys on the attitudes of American Jews toward non-Jewish immigration to Israel or vice-versa.” However, he contrasts the views of American Jews, 80% of whom would like immigration to the USA to stay the same or to increase, with the views of Israeli Jews, almost half of whom say that Arabs should be expelled or transferred from Israel. This, he says, “shows that Jewish attitudes on immigration and multiculturalism vary depending on whether they live in Israel or the United States.” But what this actually shows is that different populations living under completely different conditions have different attitudes on some issues. Jews are not special in this respect. Germans, for example, tend to have different political attitudes depending on whether they lived in Germany in 1942, American in 1942, or Germany in 2022. That does not make Germans a race of “hypocrites.” Hypocrisy is when mutually contradictory views are found *in the same person*. As to American vs. Israeli Jews, the latter group is less than 50% Ashkenazi, is far more traditional and religious, and lives under a constant threat of mortal violence that is completely alien to Americans. In a trivial sense MacDonald is right that “Jewish attitudes on immigration and multiculturalism”—and many other subjects—“vary depending on” where they live. But this does not make Jews “hypocritical” or otherwise different from other people.

MacDonald (2022) does provide one interesting example of what superficially looks like hypocrisy in a liberal Jewish organization. He points to the supposedly “different attitudes of the ADL regarding demographic displacement of the native European-derived population of the U.S. with their attitudes on a one-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict” (ibid., p. 10). On the one hand, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) condemns “replacement theory,” which its CEO Jonathan Greenblatt describes as “a white supremacist tenet that the white race is in danger by a rising tide of non-whites” (quoted in loc. cit.). On the other hand, the ADL opposes a one-state solution in Israel because it would turn Jews into a “vulnerable minority within what was once [their] own territory” (quoted in loc. cit.).

Leaving aside the question of whether the ADL has acted in unprincipled ways in other contexts (regarding which see Cofnas, 2017, 2021, pp. 1331–1332), it is actually not so clear that it *hypocritically* advocates different policies for the USA and Israel. On the one hand, the ADL does not regard “Jewish” as a race. If some influential Jew expressed a desire for Israel to remain majority

“white” (i.e., Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Mizrahi), Greenblatt would be very unhappy. On the other hand, the ADL would surely object to calls to keep America majority *Christian*, although “Christian” is not a race, either. So in some sense the ADL advocates “different” policies with respect to the USA and Israel.

But that still does not necessarily make the ADL *hypocritical*. There could be differences between the USA and Israel that—according to the ADL’s principles—justify different policies. America was founded in large part for the express purpose of protecting freedom of religion. According to the ADL, Israel was founded as a necessary haven for members of a religious minority that has been subject to centuries of sometimes genocidal persecution. “ADL believes that the existence of Israel provides Jews with a safe haven from the bigotry and endangerment they have suffered perennially as a minority culture among non-Jewish majority cultures” (Anti-Defamation League, 2021). From the ADL’s perspective, people who identify as Jews (who can be of any race) need a place to escape persecution, whereas “white” people do not. I am not expressing a view about whether this attitude is justified, but it is not necessarily *hypocritical*.

Besides its stated desire for Israel to remain majority Jewish, the ADL promotes more or less the same liberal policies in Israel as it does in the USA. On its website it brags that “ADL Israel is a leading proponent of social cohesion in Israel” that “educates on issues of hate, discrimination and inequities, promotes Jewish religious pluralism,” and “works to support vulnerable and minority communities” including Ethiopians, LBGTQ+, and African asylum seekers (Anti-Defamation League, 2021). The ADL lobbies the Israeli government to accept what are, relative to Israel’s small population, large numbers of African refugees (e.g., Anti-Defamation Greenblatt & Hetfield, 2018; League, 2018b). It declares that “Israel’s diversity is a source of strength” (Anti-Defamation League, 2018a).

The ADL’s position on immigration in the USA vs. Israel is probably the strongest example of alleged Jewish hypocrisy that MacDonald has ever provided. Yet even in this case it is far from clear whether there is any genuine hypocrisy.

Jews, Liberalism, and Immigration Policy

Regarding liberal activism among Jews, I will address three key claims made by MacDonald (1998/2002, 2022): (a) Jews were a “necessary condition” for the spread of liberalism in the West (see, e.g., MacDonald, 1998/2002, p. 18), (b) Jews were responsible for immigration policies—specifically, the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which ended the national-origins quota system—that

put Whites on track to become a minority in the USA, and (c) the Jews responsible for ending the quota system “intended” to turn Whites into a minority (see, e.g., *ibid.*, p. 296).

Immigration

To begin with immigration, MacDonald (2018a, b) has repeatedly claimed that his views on the role of Jews in shaping US immigration policy are “shared” by mainstream historian Hugh Davis Graham. He quotes Graham (2002, p. 56) saying that “the driving force at the core of [the immigration reform] movement...were Jewish organizations long active in opposing racial and ethnic quotas.” But, as I pointed out, quoting this passage in isolation misrepresents Graham’s position (Cofnas, 2021, pp. 1338–1340). I will not repeat all of the missing context that I previously documented, but, in brief, Graham (2002) says that, by the time Lyndon B. Johnson took office, abolishing the national-origins quotas “seemed an idea whose time had come” for a variety of reasons (*ibid.*, p. 61). “The immigration system constructed in the 1920s...was threatened by growing evidence that it no longer worked” (*ibid.*, p. 53). In the years preceding 1965, an “incoherent patchwork of special government measures” had been employed to circumvent the quotas (*ibid.*, pp. 53–54). Furthermore, the “egalitarian thrust from the civil rights movement” doomed any policies that smacked of racial discrimination (*ibid.*, p. 56). (For more details, see Cofnas, 2021, pp. 1338–1340.) So although Graham says that Jewish organizations played a leading role in opposing the national-origins quotas, he makes it clear that by 1965 the quotas had become untenable for both practical and philosophical reasons.

While MacDonald makes the unqualified statement that his views are “shared” by Graham, Graham unequivocally disagrees with MacDonald’s (1998/2002, p. 296) claim that Jews who opposed the national-origins quotas “intended” to turn Whites into a minority. Graham (2002, p. 10) writes: “Despite repeated pledges, and by all evidence despite sincere beliefs, by immigration reform leaders that the 1965 legislation would not significantly change the number or origin of immigrants, the 1965 law led to a tidal wave of immigration...” In Graham’s view, “*all evidence*” suggests that the immigration reform leaders did *not* anticipate the consequences of abolishing the quotas. He notes that Emanuel Celler—the Jewish congressman who officially proposed the 1965 legislation (also known as the Hart–Celler Act)—was “disturbed by the steep decline of European immigration.” Celler “introduced a bill to allow higher immigration from Ireland, Britain, and the Scandinavian countries, which he said had suffered

from ‘unintentional discrimination’ as a result of his own law” (*ibid.*, pp. 94–95).

MacDonald (2022, pp. 12–13) now says that “the wider context of the [1965] law was critically influenced by other aspects of Jewish activism....Thus any critique of MacDonald’s treatment of immigration...must consider whether Jews had important influence on the wider context discussed by Graham (2002).” But why did MacDonald say that Graham “shares” his views if apparently he meant that Graham *would* share his views if only he appreciated the role that Jews supposedly played in the “wider context of the law”? Sadly, Graham passed away and we cannot ask him what he thinks. But there is no evidence that he shared MacDonald’s views on this topic. And, according to Graham, the “egalitarian thrust from the civil rights movement” was not the only factor that led to the demise of the national-origins quotas.

Contra Graham, MacDonald (2022, pp. 19–20) insists that Celler did anticipate the consequences of the law, writing:

Cong. Emanuel Celler was involved in the publication of the report *Whom We Shall Welcome* [published by the President’s Commission on Immigration and Naturalization (PCIN)] that viewed changing the ethnic balance of the U.S. as a desirable goal....[G]iven the substance of the PCIN report and Celler’s involvement in its publication, it’s difficult to believe that Celler did not advocate changing the ethnic balance of the U.S....Getting rid of the national origins formulas was a necessary condition for changing the ethnic status quo, as Celler was well aware.

To support his claim that the PCIN called for changing the ethnic balance of the USA, MacDonald (2022, p. 19) quotes from *The Culture of Critique*: “The [PCIN] thus viewed changing the racial status quo of the United States as a desirable goal, and to that end made a major point of the desirability of increasing the total number of immigrants (PCIN, 1953, p. 42).” However, there is nothing about the desirability of changing the racial status quo of the USA on page 42 of the PCIN’s report—and MacDonald himself has admitted this! It may be a bit tedious to follow the details of MacDonald’s misrepresentation, but I urge the reader to stick with the next couple paragraphs. Whether Celler knew what his law would do is a question with momentous implications for our understanding of the role of Jews in shaping US immigration policy.

In 2016 I emailed MacDonald to point out that page 42 of the PCIN report does not say what he claims. He replied “I suppose I was referring to p. 32 and similar statements” (personal communication, November 2016; MacDonald gave me permission to quote his emails). I observed that page 32 of the report says that, because of

labor shortages, the USA needs more immigrants, but says nothing about the desirability of changing the racial status quo.

MacDonald later referred me to pages 107 and 108 (personal communication, August 2017). Page 107 says that “what succeeded in maintaining a ‘racial status quo’ was not the arbitrary and unsuccessful national origins formula, but the reduction in the total amount of immigration.” But here it is not saying anything about the desirability of changing the racial status quo—and certainly not of making Whites into a minority. It is observing that the quota system was not “successful” in achieving the goal for which it was established because “the distribution of actual immigration (quota and nonquota) varies considerably from that of the quotas themselves” (PCIN, 1953, p. 106). Page 107 also says that the “rigidity [of the system] prevented the accomplishment of certain desired national objectives and required the Congress to bypass the national origins system on many occasions through special immigration legislation,” examples of which are listed on page 108. Pages 108–109 reiterate the conclusion that “The national origins system failed in its avowed purpose. Immigrants do not come to the United States in the proportions set up by the national origins formula....” Again, it is not saying anything about the desirability of changing the racial balance of the USA. It is only saying that the quota system often had to be bypassed to achieve what legislators saw as desirable goals. The claim that—despite all evidence to the contrary—Celler secretly knew that the 1965 law would turn Whites into a minority based on the fact that he was “involved in the publication of the [PCIN] report” is completely baseless.

Liberalism and Blank-Slatism

MacDonald ignores centuries of radicalism among gentiles and shines the spotlight on a small number of Jews who, while in some cases highly influential, were not the primary drivers of the historical trend toward liberalism (Cofnas, 2018, 2021). The philosophical tenets of liberalism were originally formulated by gentile thinkers during the Enlightenment. The first experiment in radical, liberal social engineering was the gentile-led French Revolution (Murray, 2020, p. 296), which began in 1789—almost a century before Jews started gaining significant cultural influence.

Blank-slatism, which in a more or less extreme form is the root of modern radicalism, goes back at least to John Locke, who in 1690 declared that the human mind begins as “white paper, void of all characters” (Locke, 1690/1979, § 2.2.2). Claude-Adrien Helvétius, who in 1758 proposed a radically egalitarian political philosophy based on Lockean psychology, was arguably more influential than Jean-Jacques Rousseau in the decades preceding the Revolution in France (Heydt, 2014, p. 31). William Godwin—the “founder

of philosophical anarchism” (Philp, 2021) and husband of Mary Wollstonecraft, one of the founders of modern feminism—wrote in 1793: “Children are a sort of raw material put into our hands, a ductile and yielding substance, which if we do not ultimately mould in conformity to our wishes, it is because we throw away the power committed to us” (Godwin, 1793/1796, p. 55; partially quoted in Pinker, 2002, p. 11). Pinker (2002, p. 18) notes that John Stuart Mill “was perhaps the first to apply [Locke’s] blank-slate psychology to political concerns we recognize today.” Mill condemned hereditarianism—including with regard to sex differences—in one of his characteristically run-on sentences:

I have long felt that the prevailing tendency to regard all the marked distinctions of human character as innate, and in the main indelible, and to ignore the irresistible proofs that by far the greater part of those differences, whether between individuals, races, or sexes, are such as not only might but naturally would be produced by differences in circumstances, is one of the chief hindrances to the rational treatment of great social questions, and one of the greatest stumbling blocks to human improvement. (Mill, 1873, p. 274; quoted in Pinker, 2002, p. 18)

These gentiles—along with many others—are the scholars who first formulated the doctrine of blank-slatism and conjoined it with liberal–leftist political ideals. Yet they are completely missing from MacDonald’s version of history.

Murray (2020, p. 297) observes that “[b]ehaviorism, founded by John B. Watson, took the blank slate to its ultimate expression.” Watson summed up his theory in a famous passage in 1924:

Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and my own specified world to bring them up in and I’ll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select—doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and, yes, even beggarman and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, and *race of his ancestors*. (Watson, 1924/1930, p. 104—emphasis added)

After Watson, the torchbearer of behaviorism was another gentile, B. F. Skinner. In terms of academic and cultural influence, behaviorism rivaled Freudianism. A study ranking the one hundred most eminent psychologists of the twentieth century based on a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures placed Freud third while Skinner came in *first* (Haggblom et al., 2002, Table 4). In *The Culture of Critique* behaviorism is mentioned only a single time—in a parenthetical as an example of a “universalist” ideology to which a Jewish political scientist named Charles Liebman had subscribed (MacDonald, 1998/2002, p. 10). MacDonald does not even attempt to blame Jews for behaviorism. Instead, he just ignores the whole movement.

MacDonald (1998/2002, chapter 2; 2022, pp. 14–16) blames Boas for establishing the liberal orthodoxy that all races are psychologically identical. It is true that Boas played a leading role in promoting this view, although he did not claim that races are literally the same.³ However, the idea that race differences are skin deep started gaining traction among liberal scholars before Boas came onto the scene in the 1880s. Before Boas was born, Disraeli (1852, p. 496) referred to “that pernicious doctrine of modern times, the natural equality of man,” and “the natural equality of man now in vogue, and taking the form of cosmopolitan fraternity.” In the mid-nineteenth century, Christian abolitionists and civil rights leaders were invoking the authority of gentile scientists who affirmed the equality (or near equality) of all races. In a speech delivered in 1869, US Senator Charles Sumner, who had been a leading abolitionist, quoted Alexander von Humboldt:

Whilst we maintain the unity of the human species, we at the same time repel the depressing assumption of superior and inferior races of men. There are nations more susceptible of cultivation, more highly civilized, more ennobled by mental cultivation, than others—but none in themselves nobler than others. (Humboldt, 1849, p. 368; quoted in Sumner, 1869/1900, p. 157)

(Note that Humboldt seems to be attributing mental differences that may exist among races mainly to environmental factors like “mental cultivation.”) Sumner (1869/1900, p. 157) commented: “Such is the testimony of Science by one of its greatest masters....Through [Humboldt] Science is enlisted for the Equal Rights of All.” Alfred Russel Wallace, who coauthored the first paper on the theory of natural selection with Darwin in 1858, was another influential advocate of the equality hypothesis. Based on his experience traveling in South America and Southeast Asia, he believed intelligence to be equal among all groups. In 1869 he concluded that the theory of natural selection cannot explain the high level of intelligence among human beings, and he became an advocate of intelligent design (Degler, 1991, pp. 59–61). His rosy view of the evolutionary process, which deemphasized the role of competition, was embraced by progressive activists of the day such as the (gentile) Russian anarchist and

revolutionary Peter Kropotkin (ibid., pp. 60–61). Wallace himself became a socialist (ibid., p. 60).

Boas attributed his views about race and culture to the prominent gentile scholar Theodor Waitz (ibid., pp. 72–73). In 1859 Waitz published *On the Unity of the Human Species and the Natural Condition of Man*—the first volume of what would be a six-volume work. He argued that all people are “equally destined for liberty,” and differences between them are not innate but “something acquired in the course of their development, which, under favorable circumstances, might have been equally acquired by peoples who appear at present less capable of civilization” (quoted in ibid., p. 72). Degler comments:

In Boas’ treatment of race over the years, no other authority achieved the prominence accorded Theodor Waitz....As late as 1934 he was still reminding his readers that his own view of culture had been “expressed by Waitz as early as 1858 and is the basis of all serious studies of culture.” (loc. cit.)

The name “Waitz” does not appear a single time in *The Culture of Critique*.

Degler attributes the “shift from biology to culture” (especially with respect to group differences) primarily to the fact that many social scientists did not wish to accept the possibility that biological reality might place constraints on their vision of a just society (ibid., p. viii). There was (and still is) a strong psychological motivation for utopian-minded scientists to interpret evidence in a way that magnified the importance of culture. In addition, anthropologists who specialized in the study of cultural forces had a professional incentive to deemphasize biology in order to establish the independence of their field. Acknowledging the importance of biology meant ceding authority to biologists. According to Degler, the evidence suggests that Boas himself was motivated by an “ideological commitment” rather than professional defensiveness (ibid., p. 82), but both motives probably played important roles in the ultimate victory of anti-biologism in anthropology and other social sciences. MacDonald (2022, p. 5) correctly notes that many early twentieth-century anthropologists were Jewish, which is an interesting piece of information, the implications of which warrant investigation. It is entirely plausible that the Jewish identity of social scientists was sometimes an important source of motivation for their hostility toward biology. In fact, I am certain that this was the case. Racism—including anti-Semitism—is often rooted in the perception that there are biological differences between groups. Jews had a personal incentive to undermine discrimination against themselves by denying the explanatory power of biology. But this does not mean that Jews—let alone strongly identified Jews striving to promote Jewish group evolutionary interests—were the deciding factor in the rejection of biological thinking in the social sciences.

³ Boas (1911, pp. 271–272) wrote in his most important book, *The Mind of Primitive Man*, that “it would be erroneous to assume that there are no differences in the mental make-up of the negro race and of other races, and that their activities should run in the same line. On the contrary, if there is any meaning in correlation of anatomical structure and physiological function, we must expect that differences exist.” The revised version of the book, published at the end of his career, contains a very similar statement (Boas, 1938, p. 270). Nevertheless, he held that whatever differences may exist are minor and have little sociological significance.

Table 1 Regression coefficients of willingness to fight for one's country on % Jewish and GDP per capita (USD, 000s)

Variable	All countries		Excluding Israel and the West Bank	
	β	p	β	p
Constant	61.12 (54.13, 68.10)	<0.0001	61.44 (54.20, 68.68)	<0.0001
% Jewish	0.32 (-0.15, 0.78)	0.1752	1.52 (-16.51, 19.55)	0.8661
GDP per capita	-0.55 (-0.77, -0.33)	<0.0001	-0.57 (-0.83, -0.31)	<0.0001
R^2	0.35		0.34	
N	52		50	

A recent list of the 25 most-cited books in the history of social science (Green, 2016, Table 1) provides another piece of evidence that MacDonald is downplaying the influence of radical gentile scholars. Michel Foucault, who with his theories about power and sexuality probably did more than anyone else to shape woke orthodoxy, has two books on the list: *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1975/1977), ranked seventh, and the three-volume *The History of Sexuality* (Foucault, 1976/1978, 1984a/1990, 1984b/1986), ranked eleventh. Paulo Freire's (1968/1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is ranked third. Rawls' (1971) *A Theory of Justice* is ranked eighth. None of the 25 books was authored by Freud, Boas, a Frankfurt School theorist, or anyone else mentioned in *The Culture of Critique* besides Marx, whose *Das Kapital* (Marx, 1867) is ranked seventeenth. (*Das Kapital* was the most cited book before 1950; Green, 2016, Table 2.) The citation count of books is a far-from-perfect measure of the academic—let alone cultural—influence of their authors. Freud and even Boas were far more influential than, for example, Lev Vygotsky, whose book on developmental psychology (Vygotsky, 1978) is ranked sixth. (Freud also has far more total citations in psychology journals than Vygotsky; Haggblom et al., 2002, Table 1. As noted, Freud was ranked

Table 2 Regression coefficients of agreeing that "Immigrants are a Burden on Our Country" on % Jewish and GDP per capita (USD, 000s)

Variable	All countries		Excluding Israel	
	β	p	β	p
Constant	64.44 (51.62, 77.26)	<0.0001	64.78 (51.30, 78.26)	<0.0001
% Jewish	0.28 (-0.06, 0.61)	0.1044	2.70 (-12.76, 18.16)	0.7137
GDP per capita	-0.59 (-0.92, -0.26)	0.0016	-0.63 (-1.00, -0.22)	0.0049
R^2	0.52		0.50	
N	18		17	

the third-most eminent psychologist of the twentieth century. Vygotsky was ranked eighty-third; *ibid.*, Table 4.) That being said, there is a fairly high correlation between the number of citations to a book and its influence (though probably not its merit). The citation data suggest that MacDonald is spinning a false version of history that leaves out key figures in the development of modern leftism and liberalism.

MacDonald laments the decline of Anglo-Protestant nationalism in America, which, incidentally, excluded Whites with names like "MacDonald," and which he attributes to Jewish machinations. But the impulse for universalism and miscegenation arose from within the heart of WASPdom. Quintessential American WASP intellectual Ralph Waldo Emerson held non-Caucasians—which for him included the Irish—in low regard (Kaufmann, 2019, p. 53). Nevertheless, he declared in 1846 that the USA is the "asylum of all nations," and he looked forward to a time in America when "the energy of Irish, Germans, Swedes, Poles and Cossacks, and all the European tribes, of the Africans and Polynesians, will construct a new race...as vigorous as the new Europe which came out of the smelting pot of the Dark Ages" (quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 52–53). Around the same time, many Protestant theologians in America saw immigration as a mark of divine favor, and lobbied vigorously against restrictions—particularly on Chinese immigration. Some even saw the ingathering of the world's people in their country as a sign of the Second Coming (*ibid.*, pp. 56–57). As Kaufmann (2004, 2019) describes, many Anglo-Protestants in mid-nineteenth century America expected non-Anglo-Protestant immigrants to become culturally and even racially assimilated into the dominant group, which they regarded as in some sense superior. WASP chauvinism was real, but it existed alongside strongly inclusivist tendencies long before Jews entered the picture.

Jews did play a part in formulating open-borders, universalist, liberal orthodoxy, but not in the way MacDonald claims. According to Kaufmann (2019, p. 65):

The Liberal Progressives were the first recognizably modern left-liberal open borders movement. They combined aspects of individualist-anarchism, ecumenism and Progressivism into a new synthesis. Two intellectual traditions nourished Liberal Progressivism: Anglo-American anarchism and secularized Reform Judaism. The former was represented in the persona of William James, the second by Felix Adler.

James' philosophy of "pluralism" enjoins people to combine elements from diverse ethical systems. The German-born Adler, who was a leading figure in American Reform Judaism, came up with the idea that Jews should aspire to "die" as a race after they achieve their mission to spread monotheism. He explained:

The perpetuity of the Jewish race depends upon the perpetuity of the Jewish religion....So long as there shall be a reason of existence for Judaism, so long the individual Jews will keep apart and will do well to do so....[W]hen this process [of evangelization] is accomplished...the individual members of the Jewish race [will] look about them and perceive that there is as great and perhaps greater liberty in religion beyond the pale of their race and will lose their peculiar idiosyncrasies, and their distinctiveness will fade. And eventually, the Jewish race will die. (quoted in *ibid.*, p. 66)

(Adler's wish is now coming true, at least as far as American Reform Jews are concerned.) Adler's suggestion that Jews should universalize themselves out of existence inspired some Anglo-Protestants, such as John Dewey, to adopt a similar stance toward their own group. Contra MacDonald, Jews did not convince Anglo-Protestants to abandon their own drive for group continuity while pursuing separatism for themselves. Rather, some Reform Jews renounced their own aspirations to continue as a distinct people, and some gentiles—already primed with universalist tendencies—took inspiration from their example.

What about the prevailing view that only nonwhites should be allowed to celebrate their identity? In this case the key figure, according to Kaufmann, was a gentile named Randolph Bourne. Bourne first became known for publishing an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1916 titled “Trans-National America” (*ibid.*, p. 71). (At the time the magazine, which later changed its name to the *Atlantic*, was owned and edited by a gentile named Ellery Sedgwick.) Bourne was influenced by Horace Kallen—a Jewish philosopher who advocated multiculturalism. Kallen argued that America is a “federation for international colonies” (quoted in *loc. cit.*) in which all ethnic groups ought to be preserved as distinct entities. For Kallen, that included Anglo-Protestants. Kaufmann notes that “[t]here are many problems with Kallen's model, but there can be no doubt that he treated all groups consistently” (*ibid.*, pp. 71–72). Bourne's innovation was to “[infuse] Kallen's structure with WASP self-loathing. As a rebel against his own group, Bourne combined the Liberal Progressives' desire to transcend ‘New Englandism’ and Protestantism with Kallen's call for minority groups to maintain their ethnic boundaries” (*ibid.*, p. 72). Kaufmann terms the result “*asymmetrical multiculturalism*, whereby minorities identify with their groups while Anglo-Protestants morph into cosmopolites” (*loc. cit.*). Bourne exhorted his fellow WASPs:

Breathe a larger air...[for] in his [young Anglo-Saxon's] new enthusiasms for continental literature, for unplumbed Russian depths, for French clarity of thought, for Teuton philosophies of power, he feels himself a citizen of a larger world. He may be absurdly superficial, his outward-reach-

ing wonder may ignore all the stiller and homelier virtues of his Anglo-Saxon home, but he has at least found the clue to that international mind which will be essential to all men and women of good-will if they are ever to save this Western world of ours from suicide. (quoted in *loc. cit.*)

Later in the twentieth century, Anglo-Protestant identity became subsumed under *white* identity, and these ideas were applied to Whites. Kaufmann concludes that “Bourne, not Kallen, is the founding father of today's multiculturalist left because he combines rebellion against his own culture and Liberal Progressive cosmopolitanism with an endorsement—for minorities only—of Kallen's ethnic conservatism” (*loc. cit.*). Neither Bourne nor William James is mentioned in *The Culture of Critique*.

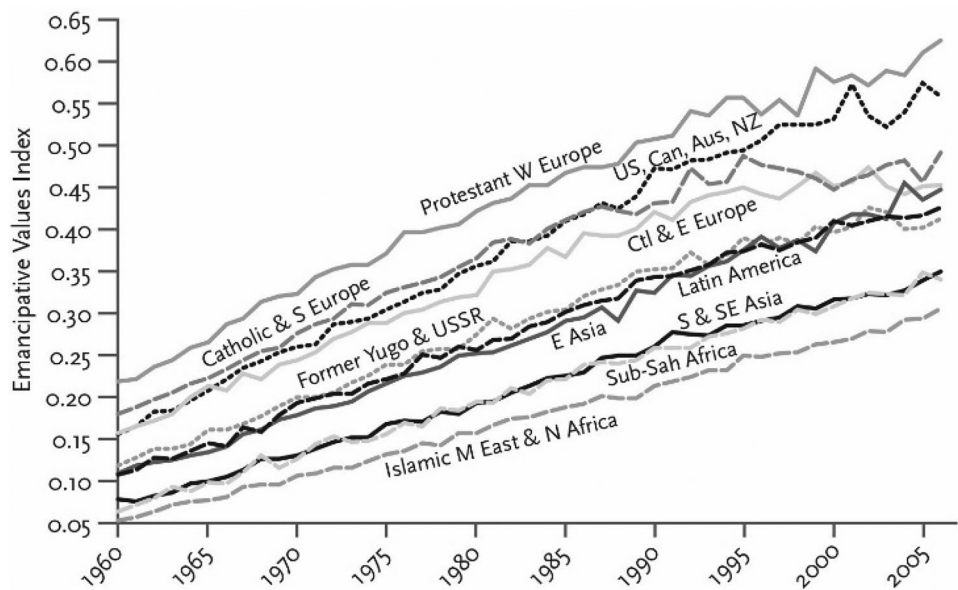
To be clear, this is not to suggest that Jews have not played an important role in recent political history and in the ascent of liberalism. Jews have been and continue to be extremely influential in virtually every area of intellectual life. Many of the most prominent advocates of liberalism—especially in America—were and are Jewish. That does not mean that Jews were *responsible* for the general leftward trend.

A good natural experiment to test whether Jews were a “necessary condition” for the rise of liberalism and radicalism is to see whether societies in which Jews have more influence are more radicalized than other societies. I pointed out that some of the most far-left-liberal countries in the world “are those where Jews are relatively small in number and influence” (Cofnas, 2021, p. 1337). For example, Sweden may be the most extreme radical country in the world.

David Schwarz (pro-multiculturalism op-ed writer in the 1960s; see Tawat, 2019) and Barbara Lerner Spectre notwithstanding, Jews are less than 0.2% of the population of Sweden, and have very little influence—certainly far less influence than in places like the U.S. and the U.K. Yet the Swedes took egalitarianism (Barry, 2018), feminism/gender theory (Söderlund & Madison, 2015), multiculturalism (Tawat, 2019), and open borders (Traub, 2016) to extremes beyond any other country. (Cofnas, 2021, p. 1337)

When it comes to free speech, the constitution of Sweden specifically does not protect expressions of “contempt for a population group or other such group with allusion to race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religious faith or sexual orientation” (Swedish Const. art. IV, § 11). In practice, this means that fact-based discussion of controversial issues may be restricted. For example, in 2021 a Swedish politician was criminally prosecuted under a hate-crime law for mentioning national differences in IQ in the context of a debate about immigration. In a decision that was upheld by a higher

Fig. 1 The cross-cultural spread of liberal values, 1960–2006. Note. From Pinker (2018, Fig. 15–7). Copyright by Steven Pinker. Reprinted with permission



court in 2022, he was given a suspended sentence and a fine (Aghamn, 2022; Dagerlind, 2022).

In response, MacDonald (2022, pp. 25–26) says that Jews *are* responsible for the political situation in Sweden. He offers five pieces of evidence to support this claim: (a) “the Bonnier family...has long had a commanding presence in Swedish media,” (b) between 1964 and 1968, Jewish pro-immigration activist David Schwartz wrote or co-wrote 37 out of 118 articles debating immigration and minority policy in prominent Swedish newspapers and magazines, and another 9 articles were written by other Jews, (c) “minorities have an advantage in ethnic competition in being more mobilized than majorities,” (d) “minority influence is particularly effective in individualist cultures, and Scandinavian societies are the most individualist cultures on Earth,” and (e) Sweden is “influenced by the wider trends in the West,” so “it is not at all surprising that trends that began in the U.S. would be” adopted by Swedish thought leaders.

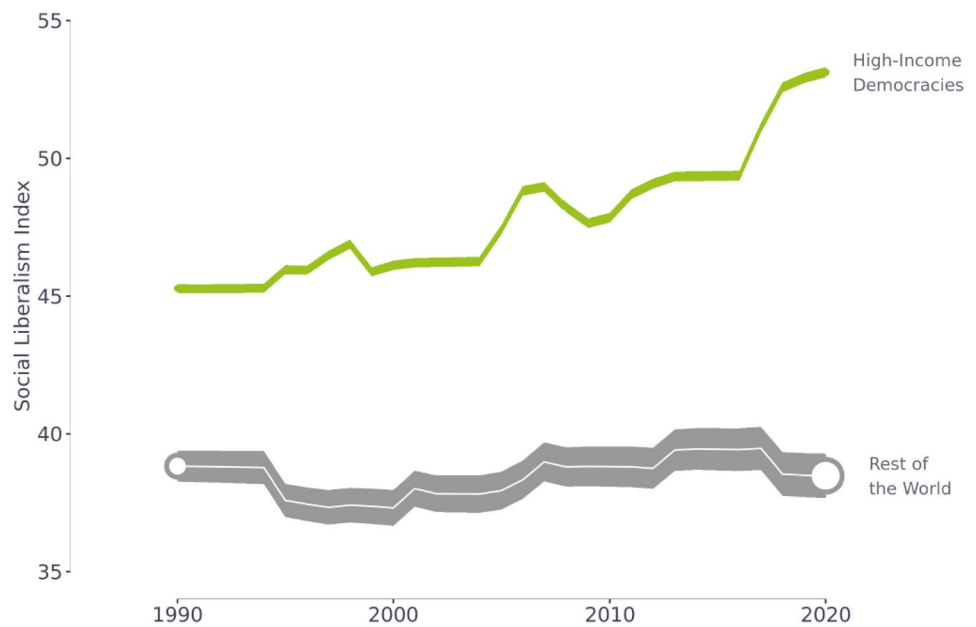
It is difficult to overstate how inadequate this is as a piece of social-scientific analysis. As I noted, Swedes took egalitarianism, feminism/gender theory, multiculturalism, and open borders to extremes *beyond any other country*. How are 46 pro-multiculturalism newspaper articles published in the 1960s relevant to explaining this? The Bonniers, although originally Jewish, began intermarrying with gentiles a long time ago and now identify as Lutherans. Åke Bonnier, who is currently one of the largest stakeholders in the Bonnier Group, is a bishop in the Church of Sweden. Even if the Bonniers had remained Jewish (which they did not), the idea that a single family can hijack the culture of millions of people via its ownership of a media company needs to be supported by evidence. MacDonald provides

no evidence for this, simply asserting that “the Bonnier family...has long had a commanding presence in Swedish media” while misleadingly implying that they are Jewish.

Regarding (c), MacDonald appears to be making the claim that, in group conflict, it is an advantage to be the minority. While it is true that minorities can sometimes prevail over larger populations by exhibiting higher degrees of unity (Turchin, 2007), this is the exception, not the rule. Cultures are usually *not* controlled by minorities because being in the minority puts you at a *disadvantage* in gaining cultural influence. But suppose for the sake of argument that minorities are uniquely influential in supposedly individualist countries like Sweden. Then why have the 810,000 Muslims who comprise 8.1% of the population not converted Swedes to Islam’s right-wing views on feminism and gender theory? In the end, MacDonald resorts to blaming Swedish radicalism on Jews on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, saying that “it is not at all surprising” that Swedes would follow “trends that began in the U.S.” His approach has a lot in common with that of leftists who blame all the problems of nonwhites on faraway and/or long-dead white people. For MacDonald, even if there are few or no Jews in a radicalized gentile society, it is always possible to point the finger at a Jew who wrote some magazine articles more than half a century ago, or at Jews on a distant continent.

Liberalism has been on the rise across cultures for many years. Steven Pinker presents a graph (Fig. 1), which is an updated version of one made by Christian Welzel based on data from the World Values Survey (WVS) (Welzel, 2013, Fig. 4.4), showing the spread of “emancipative” (i.e., liberal) values from 1960 to 2006 in ten major cultural regions. It suggests that in the last several decades liberalism has been rising steadily in all major societies.

Fig. 2 The spread of liberal values in rich democracies and the rest of the world, 1990–2022. *Note.* From Foa et al. (2022a, Fig. 24). The Social Liberalism Index measures commitment to “individualism, freedom of choice, support for democracy, and personal autonomy.” The thickness of the lines represents total population size. Copyright by Roberto Stefan Foa, Xavier Romero-Vidal, and Andrew J. Klassen. Reprinted with permission



However, this is based on data that were extrapolated by a questionable age-period-cohort analysis. Perhaps most problematically, as Foa et al. (2022b, p. 4) note, Welzel makes “an adjustment such that, for each passing year, a country receives an *automatic increase over and above the estimated level*....No empirical data could ever *not* show a long-term rising trend in Emancipative Values after being reprocessed via such a method.” The analysis has some difficult-to-believe implications, for example, that Iranians became more progressive with respect to women’s rights and democracy in the decade following the Islamic Revolution, and Rwandans did the same during the infamous civil war and genocide in the 1990s (ibid., pp. 4–6). Roberto Stefan Foa and colleagues provide a graph (Fig. 2) based only on raw data from the WVS, which shows “social liberalism” rising sharply—and from a higher starting point—in the rich democracies but flatlining everywhere else since 1990 (Foa et al., 2022a, Fig. 24; 2022c, Figure A.1). (The WVS began conducting surveys in 1981 but did not start covering most of the world until the 1990s, so the imputed data in Pinker and Welzel’s graphs before that time cannot be compared with actual survey data.) As indicated by the relative thickness of the lines in Fig. 2, the non-rich-democracies (in which there has been no change in commitment to liberal values) include most of the world population.

Even if the recent explosion in liberalism occurred only in the rich democracies, it seems difficult for MacDonald to explain. Did every rich democratic country have, like Sweden, a Jewish op-ed writer who set them on this trajectory circa 1960?

Another key claim made by MacDonald is that Jewish activists weaken nationalism in the majority populations.

This does not hold up under empirical scrutiny. A 2014 survey reports the percentage of people in 64 countries who say they are willing to fight for their homeland—a measure of nationalistic fervor (Gallup International, 2015). At the bottom are Japan (11%) and the Netherlands (15%), while Morocco and Fiji (both 94%) are at the top. Are Jews associated with less willingness to fight? The Jewish Virtual Library reports the Jewish and total populations for 52 of the 64 countries included in the survey (Jewish Virtual Library, 2022). Among these 52 countries there is a statistically insignificant correlation between the percentage of the population that is Jewish and willingness to fight, $r=0.118$, $p=0.406$. Excluding Israel and the West Bank, this correlation becomes negative, with the relationship bordering on statistical significance, $r=-0.249$, $p=0.081$. However, this is due to the confounding variable of wealth. People in rich countries are less nationalistic than people in poor ones, and Jews are more concentrated in the wealthy West. Controlling for GDP per capita for the years 2010 to 2014 (or, for one country where this statistic was not reported, for the years 2005 to 2009) (World Bank, 2015), multiple regressions show that the relationship between % Jewish and willingness to fight is statistically insignificant regardless of whether Israel and the West Bank are included in the analysis (Table 1).

Nationalists tend to see immigrants as a threat to racial and/or cultural survival. Do Jews shift public opinion in a pro-immigrant direction? A 2018 survey reports the percentage of people who agree that immigrants “are a burden on our country” or “make our country stronger” in 18 top-migrant-destination countries (Pew Research Center, 2019). Among these nations, the percentage of the population that is Jewish (Jewish Virtual Library, 2022) does not have a statistically significant correlation

Table 3 Regression coefficients of agreeing that “Immigrants Make Our Country Stronger” on % Jewish and GDP per capita (USD, 000s)

Variable	All countries		Excluding Israel	
	β	p	β	p
Constant	16.59 (−2.76, 35.93)	0.0875	16.53 (−3.88, 36.95)	0.1044
% Jewish	−0.32 (−0.84, 0.19)	0.1967	−0.70 (−24.11, 22.71)	0.9498
GDP per capita	0.80 (0.30, 1.30)	0.0037	0.81 (0.20, 1.42)	0.0132
R^2	0.46		0.44	
N	18		17	

with either the percentage that sees immigrants as a burden, $r=0.237$, $p=0.344$, or the percentage that says immigrants make their country stronger, $r=-0.189$, $p=0.455$. Excluding Israel, % Jewish has a statistically insignificant correlation with agreeing that immigrants are a burden, $r=-0.311$, $p=0.225$, and that immigrants make the country stronger, $r=0.339$, $p=0.183$. Higher income countries tend to have both more Jews and more pro-immigrant attitudes. Controlling for GDP per capita for the year 2018 (World Bank, 2019), multiple regressions also show no relationship between % Jewish and attitudes toward immigrants regardless of whether Israel is included in the analysis (Tables 2 and 3).

What *is* responsible for the trend toward liberalism and waning nationalism—at least among rich democracies—is an interesting and important question, which I will not attempt to answer here. But the “It’s the Jews” hypothesis is, in light of the facts discussed above, a nonstarter.

Anti-Semitism As a Cause and Consequence

Jewish (Comparative) Underrepresentation Among the Leadership of Far-Right Movements

I pointed out that there is only one major white nationalist organization in the USA that is not explicitly anti-Semitic, namely, American Renaissance, founded in 1990 (Cofnas, 2021, p. 1341). In the early days, many of its most prominent supporters were Jews. But Jewish support declined as anti-Semitism crept in among the rank and file. A 2008 article published in *The Occidental Observer*—a journal edited by MacDonald—reported that “The ‘Jewish question’ surfaced in one guise or another in almost all of the speeches that were given at this year’s American Renaissance Conference. It is a source of increasing tension.” The article concluded that “You do not pull the eleventh chair up to a table set for ten,” referring to a Jew

trying to participate in a white nationalist movement from which he ought to be excluded (Pyke, 2008).

MacDonald (2022) does not dispute my claim that American Renaissance is the only major white nationalist organization that is not explicitly anti-Semitic. Nor does he deny that, despite the official policy, many Jews have been driven out by anti-Semitism. Although he asserts that “there is a history of Jews attempting to influence white advocacy movements in a manner compatible with Jewish interests at the expense of developing a reasonable sense of white ethnic interests,” he has not claimed—let alone provided evidence—that this happened at American Renaissance. So, I will assume that he accepts my contention that the one white nationalist movement that is not officially anti-Semitic lost much of its Jewish support because of widespread anti-Semitism among its members. It seems that the default hypothesis has no trouble explaining why Jews are underrepresented among prominent white nationalists. As I previously put it, “We... do not need to posit a group evolutionary strategy to explain why Jews tend to be less well represented in political movements that are anti-Jewish, which call for Jews to be second-class citizens, expelled, or killed” (Cofnas, 2021, p. 1332).

(To be clear, I am commenting on this from a neutral scientific perspective. I am not suggesting that Jews ought to support white nationalism. The scientific question is whether the default hypothesis provides a reasonable explanation for why Jews are less overrepresented in the leadership of far-right nationalist movements compared to liberal–leftist movements.)

Historically, Jews have been heavily involved in the leadership of nationalist movements *when they were welcomed*. Perhaps most notably, Jews were among the primary architects of Italian fascism. The political, financial, and strategic support of one particular Jew was probably a necessary condition for the political success of Benito Mussolini.

According to Michaelis (1978, p. 11), Mussolini’s Jewish associates in the period around 1914 to 1915—which included Giuseppe Pontremoli, Ermanno Jarach, Elio Jona, and Cesare Sarfatti—helped to bring about the “conversion of the future Duce to intervention and nationalism.” However, like many historians, Michaelis neglects the by-far most important Jewish fascist, Margherita Sarfatti (wife of the aforementioned Cesare).

Sarfatti’s influence defies summary. She played key roles at every stage in the formulation of fascist philosophy and Mussolini’s rise to power (Cannistraro & Sullivan, 1993). She is sometimes described simply as Mussolini’s “mistress,” which she was (while she was married to Cesare). But for many years she was his intellectual mentor, benefactor, and closest advisor. In her roles as biographer, ghostwriter,

journalist, newspaper editor—including editor of *Gerachia*, the “semi-official” newspaper of the fascist regime (ibid., p. 286)—and leading cultural figure in Italy, she was arguably the most important propagandist for the strong-arm nationalist movement. It was she who urged Mussolini for months to undertake the March on Rome that led him to be appointed Prime Minister in 1922 (ibid., p. 256). She also provided the fascists with their first martyr. The Sarfatti’s young son, Roberto, a fervent Italian nationalist, enlisted to fight in World War I (initially using a fake identity because he was underage) and was killed. Mussolini “used Roberto’s heroic death to justify Fascist violence. Soon the Fascists would gain other ‘martyrs’ in their battles with the Socialists. But Mussolini had appropriated Roberto—admittedly with his parents’ blessing—as the first” (ibid., p. 238). Besides being an Italian nationalist, Sarfatti was a white nationalist in something like the modern sense, expressing concern about “White Civilization” (ibid., p. 523) and the birthrate of Whites relative to those of Africans and Asians (ibid., p. 457).

Why have you probably never heard of Margherita Sarfatti? At the time, her influence was no secret. In 1938 the *New York Mirror* described her as a “titian-haired Jewess who was the guiding star of Premier Mussolini’s rise to power” (ibid., p. 520). Nevertheless, she got written out of history, I suspect because it was in no one’s interest to recognize her. After the fascists turned anti-Semitic, they did their best to bury her story. According to Cannistraro and Sullivan:

Not only did Mussolini try to deny Sarfatti’s part in the creation of Fascism, but after he had made his alliance with Hitler, he could not tolerate public knowledge that a woman and a Jew had done so much as she had to build the Fascist regime. (ibid., p. 7)

Jews themselves had no interest in giving credit for fascism—which ended in disaster for everyone, especially Jews—to one of their own. And although Sarfatti was surely one of the most influential women of the twentieth century, feminists are unlikely to take much pride in her. For these reasons the influence of individuals like Sarfatti is not part of the standard history curriculum, let alone the cartoon version of history that we absorb from popular media and Twitter.

Besides the Sarfatti family, Jews—who were just one tenth of one percent of the Italian population (Lindemann, 1997, p. 475)—played prominent roles in the fascist regime at many levels. Italian Jews leaned conservative and nationalist, and the Jewish establishment generally supported Mussolini. Although there were undercurrents of anti-Semitism in the fascist movement from the beginning (Michaelis, 1978, pp. 7–8) and a few high-profile Jew-baiters in the fascist government—most notably Roberto Farinacci—Jewish-gentile

relations initially *improved* under fascism. Eventually even antifascists stopped accusing Mussolini of anti-Semitism (ibid., pp. 6, 28). Adolf Dresler—the first Nazi to write a biography of Mussolini—deemed fascism a “Jewish movement, utterly dissimilar to anti-Jewish Hitlerism” (ibid., p. 37). Citing some bizarre rumors, Dresler speculated that Mussolini might be Jewish himself—an immigrant from Poland with the real name of “Mausler.” Far-right Nazis frequently smeared Mussolini as a “Jewish hireling” (*Judenknecht*) based on his real (and sometimes imagined) Jewish associations and supporters (ibid., p. 39).

Mussolini repeatedly—and apparently sincerely—denounced Nazi-style race science (Cannistraro & Sullivan, 1993, p. 517; Michaelis, 1978, pp. 28–29, 35, 130). In 1932 he published a manifesto on fascist philosophy in which he defined nationhood in explicitly nonracial terms: “Not a race, nor geographically defined region, but a people, historically perpetuating itself...” (Michaelis, 1978, p. 29). The same year he told the Austrian fascist Prince Starhemberg that “There are many [Jews] in the Fascist Party, and they are good Fascists and good Italians” (ibid., p. 56). He reiterated this sentiment many times in both public and private. His true feelings may have been a bit more ambivalent, as indicated by another statement he made to Starhemberg: “I have no love for the Jews, but they have great influence everywhere. It is better to leave them alone. His anti-Semitism has already brought Hitler more enemies than is necessary” (ibid., p. 30). But he did not harbor serious hostility to Jews, and he accepted many as valued friends, allies, and lovers. As the second comment to Starhemberg suggests, his stance on Jews was partly motivated by his belief in the power of international Jewry, with which he did not want to come into conflict (ibid., pp. 29–30).

Yet, in 1936, Mussolini turned against the Jews. First, for complicated reasons connected with the Italian invasion of Ethiopia and the Spanish Civil War, he became committed to an alliance with Hitler (Michaelis, 1978, pp. 99–100). To cement his friendship with the Nazis, he affirmed their racial ideology (Cannistraro & Sullivan, 1993, p. 497; Michaelis, 1978, pp. 119–120, 154). Second, given what Hitler had been able to get away with, he came to believe that he had overestimated Jewish power. He decided that strengthening his bonds with the Nazis promised a higher payoff than maintaining good relations with the Jews (Michaelis, 1978, p. 118).

As a prelude to his anti-Semitic campaign, in September 1936 Mussolini unleashed Farinacci to publish the following indictment of Italian Jews, which is amazingly empty of content:

We must admit that in Italy the Jews who are a very small minority and who have schemed in a thousand different ways to grab...high posts in finance, industry,

and education did not offer any resistance to our revolutionary march. We must admit that they have always paid their taxes, obeyed the laws and done their duty in war as well. Unfortunately, however, they manifest a passive attitude which is apt to arouse suspicion. Why have they never said one word which would convince all Italians that they perform their duty as citizens out of love rather than out of fear or expediency? Why do they do nothing concrete to split their responsibility from all the other Jews in the world, the ones whose only goal is the triumph of the Jewish International? Why have they not yet risen against their co-religionists who are perpetrators of massacres, destroyers of churches, sowers of discord, audacious and evil killers of Christians?...There is a growing feeling that all Europe will soon be the scene of a war of religion. Are they not aware of this? We are certain that many will proclaim: we are Jewish Fascists. That is not enough. They must prove with facts to be first Fascists and then Jews. (ibid., pp. 108–109)

That was the best that the Jew-baiter-in-chief of the fascist regime could do. Yes, Jews appear to be good citizens and fascists, but they are overrepresented in prominent positions and maybe they do not have enough love in their hearts, or they do not protest enough against Jews in other countries. In other words, they had not actually done anything wrong. In 1937 Mussolini began to make it explicit that the problem was “Jewish blood” and that Jews should be opposed regardless of their actions or beliefs (ibid., p. 114). In 1938 he instituted anti-Semitic laws modeled after those in Nazi Germany. When his sister Edvige “begged [him] to relent, and reminded him of his former love for Margherita[,] Mussolini agreed that any notion of Italian racial purity was nonsense and that there was no Jewish peril. It was all a matter of politics to please his new German partners” (Cannistraro & Sullivan, 1993, p. 517). He told his son-in-law Ciano that (in Michaelis’ words) the “anti-Jewish measures would serve to widen the gulf between Italy and the democracies and to toughen the soft-hearted Italians” (Michaelis, 1978, pp. 151–152). There is no question that Mussolini’s anti-Semitism was pure treachery on his part, and not a response to anything real or even imagined that the Jews had done.

So Jews played an outsize role in one of history’s two successful fascist movements, and might have done the same thing in the other if they had not been deliberately driven away. According to Hitler, the only thing that kept Jews out of his movement was anti-Semitism. He told Hermann Rauschnig:

Jews have been ready to help me in my political struggle. At the outset of our movement some Jews actually gave financial assistance. If I had but held out my little

finger I would have had the whole lot crowding around me. (quoted in Lindemann, 1997, p. 493)

Various experiences throughout the twentieth century—including their betrayal by Mussolini—have presumably taught Jews a lesson about how they can expect to be treated after nationalists take power even when they play by the nationalists’ rules. Even Margherita Sarfatti was forced to flee Italy in 1938, while her sister and brother-in-law were killed in the Italian holocaust (Cannistraro & Sullivan, 1993, p. 539).

Despite the fact that many pre-Nazi eugenicists in Germany were Nordic supremacists and anti-Semites, Jews were prominently represented among leading supporters and spokesmen for eugenics (Anomaly, 2022, p. 156). The half-Jewish Wilhelm Weinberg (of Hardy–Weinberg equilibrium fame) was chair of the Stuttgart Racial Hygiene Society. The famous Jewish geneticist Richard Goldschmidt was an important advocate of eugenics (Weindling, 2010, p. 319). Alfred Ploetz, a gentile who founded the Racial Hygiene Society, considered Jews to be a “civilized race,” and he predicted that anti-Semitism would wane with the advance of democracy and science (ibid., pp. 318–319). According to Weindling, “[i]n its early years, it appeared immaterial whether a member of the Racial Hygiene Society was Jewish” (ibid., p. 319). However, Ploetz “began noting who among recruits to the nascent racial hygiene movement was Jewish, and he sought allies to curb putative Jewish influence” (loc. cit.), indicating that Jewish influence was (at least perceived to be) significant. After the Nazis took power, the anti-Semitic wing of the eugenics movement, which emphasized the superiority of the Nordic race and advocated segregation vis-à-vis Jews, won out, thus providing another lesson in how things can go wrong for Jews who support European nationalism, especially of the race-based variety.

MacDonald (2022, p. 26) writes: “My view is that Jews should be allowed to join [white nationalist] movements if they acknowledge the role and the power of the Jewish community in transforming America contrary to white interests and direct their efforts at converting the Jewish community to pro-white advocacy.” The question of whether MacDonald is an anti-Semite is irrelevant to the truth of his scientific theories about Judaism. But it *is* relevant to testing the default hypothesis with respect to Jewish underrepresentation in contemporary American white nationalist movements in which he is arguably the most influential thought leader (Cofnas, 2018, pp. 136–137). Can MacDonald be considered an “anti-Semite”?

Commenting on his own intellectual development, MacDonald (1998/2002, p. lxvii) says that “the main point is that I came to see Jewish groups as competitors with the European majority of the U.S.” Thus he draws a distinction between Jews and white gentiles, seeing Jews as competitors.

He reports that he has “come to the point of seeing [his] subjects [i.e., Jews] in a less than flattering light” (ibid., p. lxviii).

Regarding his current views, let us consider some statements he made in an interview in November 2021. One of the interviewers said: “To me there are no good Jews, nor can they be good....I think ultimately deep down they are badly motivated, and that they can never be trusted. And from my point of view there are no good ones.” MacDonald replied: “That’s probably a good rule of thumb” (MacDonald, 2021, 37:17–38:01). When an interviewer said that “the only relation that we could have with [Jews] is that they serve us instead of us serving them,” MacDonald replied: “Right. We have to be in the leadership position” (ibid., 39:20–39:28). When asked what he thinks of Hitler, the Third Reich, and National Socialism, he had almost nothing bad to say, and did not mention the Nazi’s treatment of Jews at all:

I think there were a lot of positive aspects to the Third Reich....[I]t was a very cohesive society....And yeah, the entire world ganged up on them. I do think Hitler made some disastrous mistakes, I don’t think he should have been so aggressive, and should have tried to... continue to build the Third Reich up to be a shining example for all of Europe and all of humanity. (ibid., 27:37–28:15)

When asked about the Holocaust he said:

I’ve sort of stayed clear of that. But lately I have posted articles by Thomas Dalton, who I regard as a serious scholar about the Holocaust. And he has severe doubts about it....When I publish something on my website—*The Occidental Observer* or *The Occidental Quarterly*—I don’t necessarily agree with everything. But at the same time I don’t violently disagree with it either....So I’ve gotten more and more open to it [i.e., Holocaust denial]. (ibid., 29:27–30:53)

The article by Dalton (2021) says that “the latest gaff gives us a chance to shine a light on the on-going fraud that is the Holocaust.” He is referring to false claims about atrocities committed at the Jasenovac concentration camp in what is now Croatia. But these claims about Jasenovac have been promoted for political reasons mainly by *non-Jewish Serbs*, and are rejected by mainstream Holocaust scholars (Goldman, 2021). Dalton (2021) himself notes that “Serbia, of course, has an incentive to promote high numbers of victims, and especially high numbers of Serbs, because it enhances their victimhood status and promotes their nationalist agenda.”

Here is a passage from a recent, representative article published in *The Occidental Observer*:

He’s Jugly, as you might say: that is, he’s ugly in a characteristically Jewish way. I agree with a fascinating

article at [the neo-Nazi magazine] *National Vanguard* arguing that “Jews themselves are an unattractive and, on average, ugly people” and that “Jews, as a group, oppose beauty.”...And why are Jews and leftists “on average, ugly people”?...And ugly Jewish brains have consistently created ugly ideologies that war on the “indissoluble Trinity of Truth, Beauty and Goodness.” (Langdon, 2021)

So MacDonald thinks that “there are no good Jews, nor can they be good” is a “good rule of thumb.” He says that Jews should be forbidden from occupying leadership positions in white nationalist movements, agreeing that the only proper role for Jews is to “serve” white gentiles. He has mainly positive things to say about Hitler and Nazism. He promotes Holocaust denial, and justifies his skepticism about the Holocaust by attacking claims that are promulgated mainly by gentiles and rejected by mainstream Holocaust scholars. As editor of *The Occidental Observer* and *The Occidental Quarterly* he regularly publishes nasty, scientifically baseless screeds against Jews. In addition, he is closely associated with open anti-Semites such as Richard Spencer, who dreams of a Jew-free white ethnostate (Cofnas, 2021, p. 1342), and former Ku Klux Klan Grand Wizard David Duke, on whose radio show MacDonald has regularly appeared and whom he endorsed for political office (MacDonald, 2016a, b). And, if I am right, he has spent the last three decades developing and promoting a pseudoscientific theory based on misrepresented sources and cherry-picked facts that portrays Jews as uniquely pernicious. MacDonald (2019) says that he does not “like to call [his] work ‘anti-Semitic,’” preferring the label “Judeo-critical.” Whether you call him “Judeo-critical” or “anti-Semitic,” I do not think you need to postulate a group evolutionary strategy to explain why so few Jews have volunteered to accept dhimmitude in his political movement.

Anti-Semitism and the Appeal of the Anti-Jewish Narrative

Commenting on opposition to hereditarian explanations of race differences, Sesardić (2010, p. 436) observes that some people will think it is praiseworthy to “focus...just on the arguments and avoid...political imputations.” But, he says,

this approach will sometimes make important aspects of a scientific controversy completely unintelligible. Trying to understand the dynamics of contemporary discussions about heritability, race and IQ without mentioning politics is very much like attempting to understand the debate about Intelligent Design by focusing only on biological complexity, fine details of the bacterial flagellum and intricacies of probability reasoning, but completely ignoring the religious context.

The same is true with respect to the controversy over whether Jews undermine gentile civilization to advance their own evolutionary interests. This is a scientific proposition, the correctness of which should be determined using scientific methods. It is also true that important aspects of the debate make no sense if we ignore the sociopolitical context—specifically, the fact that there is a millennia-old tradition of Jew hatred in the West.

Jews are the most enduringly disliked group in the world. Anti-Semitism first reached genocidal intensity in ancient times (Nirenberg, 2013, chapter 1). Since their expulsion from Israel by the Romans in the second century—and even before that—Jews have frequently come into conflict with the gentiles among whom they lived. Some of the same complaints have been repeatedly made: Jews are arrogant exploiters, they exercise secret power to advance their interests, and so on (Lindemann, 1997, pp. xv–xvi). Could it be that the accusations are true? If “anti-Semitism” were a response to actual Jewish wrongdoing, it would be misleading for the default hypothesis to invoke it as an independent force that explains Jewish political behavior.

I cannot undertake a detailed analysis of the long and complicated history of tensions between Jews and gentiles. But I will propose that anti-Semitism has a fairly straightforward explanation. It is not that Jews really are a race of criminals. Rather, *anti-Semitism is largely explained by the same factors that explain other ethnic hatreds* (cf. Lindemann, 1997, pp. xv–xviii). The qualifying word “largely” is important, since there are some *sui generis* elements to anti-Semitism. What makes Jew hatred unique is, in turn, largely a consequence of the special (often in a bad way) status of Jews in the world’s two most popular religions. This explanation of anti-Semitism does not imply that Jews have never done anything wrong, either individually or collectively, or that such wrongdoing does not explain some instances of anti-Jewish sentiment. The default assumption—which I think is probably correct—should be that Jews are not significantly better or worse than other people. Group conflicts are sometimes triggered by wrongdoing on one or both sides, and there is no reason to think that Jews are always in the right. In this respect Jews are no different from anyone else.

To begin with what makes anti-Semitism different from other kinds of prejudice, most people in the world follow a religion based on Judaism, namely, Christianity or Islam. In both of these offshoot religions Jews have an ambivalent status that can easily inspire hostility.

Many contemporary Christians emphasize the philo-Semitic side of the religion. There is a strong tradition of philo-Semitism among Old Testament-oriented American Christians, starting with the Puritans who identified with the ancient Israelites (Lindemann, 1997, p. 258). However, parts of the New Testament can be read as supporting a more sinister attitude toward Jews. Some passages seem to hold

Jews collectively responsible for killing Jesus, and to portray them as the enemies of God and of humanity in general (Nirenberg, 2013, chapter 2). Nirenberg notes that Paul could have adopted the strategy of some other early followers of Jesus and simply rejected the Hebrew scripture as false. Had he done so, ancient Christians might have come to regard Judaism as just another spiritually irrelevant identity (*ibid.*, pp. 56–57). But instead Paul built a new approach to “scriptural interpretation... built on a foundation of questions about the believer’s relationship to ‘Judaism’” (*ibid.*, p. 57). Thus, Christian identity was originally constructed in large part based on an adversarial relationship to Jews and Judaism.

Unlike Jesus and his early disciples, the Church Fathers who formulated what became Christian orthodoxy did not work in a Jewish milieu. Christianity came to be dominated by people of non-Jewish descent, and Jews themselves became scattered and powerless.

Yet the logic of Jewish enmity and the killing carnality of the Jews only grew stronger, driven now not so much by conflict with real Jews, but because it proved ever more generally useful for thinking about God, the world, and the nature of the texts and powers that mediate between them. (*ibid.*, p. 85).

Jews were seen as representing flesh, the letter, and the law in verses such as “the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life” (2 Corinthians 3:6 NKJV). Christians often attacked their (Christian) theological opponents as “Jews” (Nirenberg, 2013, chapter 3). In the fourth century, when Jews were not in a position to persecute anyone, Eusebius lobbed the following petard to discredit a group of rivals called the Montanists: “Is there anyone among the Montanists who has been persecuted by the Jews or killed by the lawless?” (*ibid.*, p. 93). Anti-Jewish rhetoric reached a crescendo in the year 386 when John of Antioch—also known as Saint John Chrysostom—delivered a series of eight sermons against the Jews. The saint’s message was as follows: “Although such beasts are not fit for work, they are fit for killing. ... This is why Christ said: ‘But as for my enemies, who did not want me to be king over them, bring them here and slay them’” (quoted in *ibid.*, p. 113).⁴ Augustine—who as far as historians know only encountered a single Jew in his entire

⁴ Some historians argue that Saint John Chrysostom’s sermons need to be understood in the tradition of the stylized *psogos* (“tirade”) in which a rhetor makes over-the-top-attacks on his opponents that should not be taken literally. Therefore, John may not have hated Jews as much as it might seem to the “uninstructed modern eye” (Lindemann, 1997, p. 35). Lindemann emphasizes the claim that “John did not urge his followers to commit violent acts against the Jews” (*loc. cit.*), but he does not mention the statement quoted in the text above, which, taken at face value, does seem to call for violence. Whether John was seriously encouraging violence is debatable. In any case, Lindemann notes that “John added his voice to the rising chorus of Christian theologians who developed an elaborate theology of hate for Jews and Judaism” (*ibid.*, p. 36).

life—invoked the less genocidal but still ominous Psalm 59: “Slay them not, but scatter them in your might, lest your people forget your law” (ibid., p. 131).

Like Jesus, Mohammed claimed to be the true heir to the Jewish prophetic tradition, so Jews were destined to have a special status in his religion. Islam borrowed elements of Christianity’s anti-Judaism to serve similar theological purposes (ibid., p. 149). Since Mohammed rejected the authenticity of parts of Jewish scripture, Jews had to be regarded as frauds who falsified religion for nefarious purposes. Sensitive about the relationship between Judaism and Islam, early Muslims would, like Christians, sometimes accuse each other of being “Jewish” or influenced by Jews. Jewish opposition to Islamic ideas and practices is a perennial theme in Islam, especially in the extra-Quranic literature (ibid., chapter 4). Mohammed himself engaged in violence against Jews, and, according to one tradition, his last words called for war against Jews as well as Christians: “May God fight the Jews and the Christians!...Two religions will not remain in the land of the Arabs” (ibid., p. 163). According to a widely accepted Islamic tradition, Jesus will return at the end of days to kill all the Jews (ibid., p. 164).

The religious motive for anti-Semitism was to some extent an accident of history. If Europe and the Middle East had remained pagan, or if Christianity and Islam had rejected Judaism wholesale, Jews would not have been perceived as having any profound and potentially negative cosmic significance. But by claiming (more or less) continuity with the Jewish tradition, Christianity and Islam had to construct identities based in part on opposition to Jews and Judaism. For many centuries this was—and to some extent it still is—a powerful source of prejudice against Jews.

Although Christian anti-Semitism left an indelible mark on our culture, religion has been on the wane for centuries in the West and no longer appears to be the primary source of hostility toward Jews. In fact, *philo-Semitic* interpretations of Christianity have become highly influential. But there are at least three nonreligious forces that have been extremely important in promoting hatred of Jews, as well as other minorities in similar situations.

First, as Chua (2003, chapter 5) notes, “market-dominant minorities” are always subjected to the same calumny: they are cheaters, exploiters, conspirators, and so on. (Minorities in turn often resent more successful *majorities*, though they usually cannot act on these feelings.) Hostility to prosperous groups (and individuals) is often motivated by a false theory of economics that assumes that the wealth of one must come at the expense of another. Overseas Chinese who dominate the economies of Southeast Asia have been subject to intense prejudice, discrimination, and large-scale violence (ibid., chapter 1). As recently as 1998 there were deadly pogroms targeting ethnic Chinese in Indonesia, which were precipitated by an economic recession. In 1972 Idi Amin expelled

Asians—primarily Indians—from Uganda. As the BBC reported, “resentment against [Asians] has been building up within Uganda’s black majority. Amin has called the Asians ‘bloodsuckers’ and accused them of milking the economy of its wealth” (BBC, 1972). Was Amin’s accusation justified? Without the Indian “bloodsuckers” Uganda’s economy quickly tanked. Similarly, after President Robert Mugabe promised to “strike fear in the heart of the white man—our real enemy” and then confiscated the land of Whites who controlled most of the country’s farming industry, average Zimbabweans became far poorer than before (Chua, 2003, chapter 5). Needless to say, Jews have often been conspicuously economically successful (Lindemann, 1997; Muller, 2010). Prominent gentile thinkers, perhaps most famously Mark Twain (1899/1992), have highlighted the economic motive for anti-Semitism.

Sowell (2005, chapter 2) argues that minorities tend to be most despised when they occupy the widely misunderstood economic niche of “middleman.” According to him, “truly wealthy people have seldom provoked the kind of rage and bitterness directed at middleman minorities” (ibid., p. 69). These minorities are not hated for their wealth but for the way they acquire it. Making a profit by moving money or goods around without physically producing anything strikes many people as parasitic, in contrast to making tangible things with your hands (ibid., p. 70). It is plausible that anti-Semitism is partly explained by the particular economic roles that Jews have often played. However, this does not seem to be the whole story. Sowell makes some offhand comments noting that “middleman minorities” often branch out into non-middleman roles, yet may continue to be resented:

Where middleman minorities have gone into manufacturing, clothing has been a favorite specialty.... Clothing and textiles are just two of many occupations, professions, and industries that middleman minorities have gone into, after they have achieved success in traditional retailing and money-lending enterprises....[L]ater generations have tended to move not only into manufacturing, transport, publishing, and other industries, but also into professions requiring advanced education. (ibid., pp. 84, 86)

He claims that a failure to appreciate the middleman’s economic function remains “at the core of animosities that have endured even after most members of middleman minorities have moved onto professional careers in medicine, law, and other fields” (ibid., p. 70). But if “middleman minorities” are disliked even when they stop being middlemen, this seems to support Chua’s (2003) thesis that minorities’ conspicuous economic success per se often triggers hostility. I mentioned the example of Whites in Zimbabwe who were strongly resented for their success in farming.

Second, ethnic hatred is often cultivated for political advantage. Given their double minority status—being different ethnically and religiously—combined with their high socioeconomic position, it is unsurprising that Jews have been a favorite scapegoat for political leaders looking to deflect blame and rally support. Karl Lueger, the influential anti-Semitic mayor of Vienna from 1897 to 1910 and role model for Hitler, made a remarkable statement to another Austrian politician that “anti-Semitism is a good means of agitation, in order to get ahead in politics, but once one gets up there, one doesn’t need it any more, for it is a sport for the common people” (quoted in Lindemann, 1997, p. 346). Although Hitler’s anti-Semitism was undoubtedly sincere, it also served a political function. When asked by Rauschnig whether he intended to “destroy the Jew,” he replied, “No. We should then have to invent him. It is essential to have a tangible enemy, not merely an abstract one” (quoted in *ibid.*, p. 493). In *Mein Kampf* he writes:

The soul of the people can only be won if along with carrying on a positive struggle for our own aims, we destroy the opponent of these aims. The people at all times see the proof of their own right in ruthless attack on a foe. (Hitler, 1925/1999, p. 338)

Houston Stewart Chamberlain, who was an important anti-Semitic theorist and major influence on Hitler, nevertheless recognized the attraction of irrational Jew hatred and lamented the “revolting tendency to make the Jew the scapegoat of all the vices of the time” (quoted in Lindemann, 1997, p. 353).

Third, because there is a principle of psychology that “bad is stronger than good” (Baumeister et al., 2001), we are often miffed by our enemies more than we appreciate our allies. If, for the reasons mentioned above, you are already primed to regard Jews with suspicion, and Jews are over-represented in the leadership of practically every (non-anti-Semitic) political movement, Jews on the side you oppose may be more psychologically salient. Thus, communists attack Jews for being capitalists and vice versa. *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*—arguably the most influential anti-Semitic text of modern times—refers to the “successes of Darwinism, Marxism, and Nietzscheism...[that were] engineered by” Jews, and also portrays Jews as rapacious promoters of capitalism who control the gold supply (Nilus, 1905). Hitler (1925/1999, p. 57) asked rhetorically: “Was there any form of filth or profligacy, particularly in cultural life, without at least one Jew involved in it?” The answer to Hitler’s question may well be “no.” But, on reflection, it should be obvious that the presence of “at least one” member of a group in every activity one dislikes is not a reasonable basis for drawing conclusions about the character or social consequences of the group as a whole. (Not that Hitler did not have other complaints against the Jews, but this is still a revealing statement.)

In the same vein, ignoring the role that we and our own group have played in bringing about a situation we do not like comes naturally to us. For example, suppose you are unhappy about mass immigration. Here is a list of the nine official “resettlement agencies” in the USA that receive funding from the Department of State: (a) Church World Service, (b) Episcopal Migration Ministries, (c) Ethiopian Community Development Council, (d) Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, (e) International Rescue Committee, (f) Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, (g) US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, (h) United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, (i) World Relief Corporation (UNHCR, 2021). The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), which is a Jewish organization, gets an inordinate amount of attention from the far right. The Tree of Life Synagogue shooter famously complained about HIAS “bring[ing] invaders [i.e., immigrants]” (Jordan, 2018). But the eight non-Jewish resettlement agencies are ignored. (Also ignored is the fact that HIAS has a branch in Israel working to grant refugee status to non-Jewish Africans.)

This is the context in which MacDonald has promulgated his theory that Jews undermine gentile civilization to advance their own evolutionary interests. To reiterate, his theory should be assessed based on its scientific merits, not on the motives of the man who devised it or of the people who came to accept it. But the eager reception with which MacDonald’s ideas have been received in some quarters is an interesting sociological phenomenon, which can itself be subject to scientific analysis.

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