

## Review #1

### Assessment of “*The Default Hypothesis Fails to Explain Jewish Influence*” by Kevin MacDonald

#### General Background

MacDonald’s “The Default Hypothesis Fails to Explain Jewish Influence,” responds to an earlier article criticizing MacDonald by Nathan Cofnas, which in turn responds to a large corpus of work by MacDonald completed over many years. “The Default Hypothesis” assumes the reader has at least some knowledge of MacDonald’s earlier pronouncements and claims. For this reason, informed judgement about the article requires a basic familiarity with MacDonald’s long-held ideas about Jews and Jewish influence, which are cited in the footnotes and alluded to throughout the text.

MacDonald has devoted the greater part of his writing career to advancing the thesis that Judaism is a peculiar evolutionary strategy, according to which Jews work collectively to undermine the coherence of other ethnic groups while bolstering their own unity and power. This position has made MacDonald highly influential among white nationalist and neo-Nazi groups in America. He has long been recognized and deplored as one of a handful of academic contributors to the ideology of antisemitism and white nationalism on the contemporary far-right.<sup>1</sup> Due to his racism and antisemitism, MacDonald’s University, California State University, took the unusual step of publicly disassociating itself from him in 2008.<sup>2</sup> Despite his wide influence among white nationalists and neo-Nazis in America, MacDonald is not a well-known figure in the academy. He has published very little peer-reviewed work on “Jewish evolutionary strategy,” although, as mentioned, a very large proportion of his written work deals with this subject. Some of it is self-published.

As a result of the increasing prominence of the alt-right and MacDonald’s significant influence in alt-right spheres, a number of academic articles have recently appeared criticizing him, including several by prominent scholars. MacDonald, it seems, took the opportunity to respond to one of these critiques and publish his work in a venue that would in all likelihood not otherwise have published it.

#### MacDonald’s General Thesis about Jews and Judaism

According to MacDonald’s larger thesis, Jews have developed a biological and cultural “evolutionary strategy” which manifests, on the one hand, as ethnocentrism, solidarity, aggression and other traits said by MacDonald to be best suited for collective success and power. At the same time, this evolutionary strategy is taken to be the true content or meaning of Judaism. MacDonald’s understanding of Judaism as a religion is non-existent, rather he proposes an analysis of it as a repository of evolutionary experience training Jews to dominate

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kevin\\_MacDonald\\_\(evolutionary\\_psychologist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kevin_MacDonald_(evolutionary_psychologist)); [kevin-macdonald-background-november-2013rev.pdf \(adl.org\)](https://www.adl.org/files/documents/2013/11/kevin-macdonald-background-november-2013rev.pdf); <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-theory-behind-that-charlottesville-slogan-1522708318>

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[https://web.csulb.edu/divisions/academic\\_affairs/grad\\_undergrad/senate/resolutions/StatementonDr.KevinMacDonald.html](https://web.csulb.edu/divisions/academic_affairs/grad_undergrad/senate/resolutions/StatementonDr.KevinMacDonald.html)

others. They accomplish this often by subterfuge. For example, they use non-Jews as front-men in their political movements. They spread the intentional falsehood (as MacDonald sees it) that race doesn't matter, in order to weaken other races, while strengthening their own. Most characteristic of the "Jewish evolutionary strategy" is a permanent conspiracy to undermine any more powerful group. MacDonald claims to have discovered and demonstrated that Jews have developed a genetic and cultural habit of accruing wealth and power, using it to buy up media and gain academic influence, and then using this influence to spread false and dangerous ideas to their own benefit and the detriment of others. This, then, is MacDonald's general paradigm. It is no doubt sincerely felt, but it hardly an original or new form of insanity.

What is more specifically at issue in this paper relates to American Jews. MacDonald argues that American Jews have worked successfully beginning in the 1920s to undermine white, Christian America. His argument centers on the Jewish role in passing immigration reform legislation in 1965 and abolishing racial quotas. But more generally, Jews supposedly effected the sabotage of white America by the successful promotion of multiculturalism, progressive politics, and mass non-white immigration. MacDonald maintains that Jews were the "necessary condition" of these policies, whose true purpose was to dispossess white Christian America. Indeed, these policies could not have been adopted without Jewish support. (cf. p. 23) But, at the same time, Jews hypocritically maintained their own ethnic coherence and unity as a group, preserving for themselves, especially in Israel, the very things were destroying for others in America. (cf. pp. 9-11) In this paper, MacDonald circumspectly leaves the inference to the reader. Elsewhere he is not so reserved: Jews were and are the "necessary condition" of the dispossession of white Christian America. Ought they not therefore to be themselves dispossessed in turn? In an interview, MacDonald draws the conclusion that it is rational for other ethnicities to learn to dispossess the Jews, and he muses on where in the world this is most likely to occur first.<sup>3</sup>

This is the basic thesis that MacDonald advances in numerous articles and especially in his trilogy of books about Jewish evolutionary strategy.<sup>4</sup> It is a position not easily distinguished from the arguments and tropes of the 19<sup>th</sup> century antisemitic work, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, or those made in the 1930s and 1940s by Nazi propagandists.<sup>5</sup> These are serious words in the world today. These are words capable of inspiring real acts of terrorism. They concern a community whose schools and places of worship are locked down under police protection all across America, for the first time in the history of America.

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[https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA159328265&sid=googleScholar&v=2.1&it=r&linkaccess=abs&issn=0021969X&p=AONE&sw=w&userGroupName=mlin\\_oweb&isGeoAuthType=true](https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA159328265&sid=googleScholar&v=2.1&it=r&linkaccess=abs&issn=0021969X&p=AONE&sw=w&userGroupName=mlin_oweb&isGeoAuthType=true)

<sup>4</sup> MacDonald, K.B., *A People That Shall Dwell Alone: Judaism As a Group Evolutionary Strategy, With Diaspora Peoples* (Praeger 1994); *Separation and Its Discontents Toward an Evolutionary Theory of Anti-Semitism* (Praeger 1998); *The Culture of Critique: An Evolutionary Analysis of Jewish Involvement in Twentieth-Century Intellectual and Political Movements* (Praeger 1998)

<sup>5</sup> See Jeffrey C. Blutinger, "A New Protocols: Kevin MacDonald's Reconceptualization of Antisemitic Conspiracy Theory" *Antisemitism Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring 2021), pp. 4-43

This consideration cannot by any possible standard of reasonableness be left aside when passing judgement on this paper.

### Scholarly Quality of the “The Default Hypothesis Fails to Explain Jewish Influence”

MacDonald’s work falls well short of academic or logical rigor. I cannot present here each absurdity, nor would it be of value to do so. I provide a few examples of the shoddy thinking, twisted everywhere by a conspiratorial cast of mind.

As mentioned, MacDonald often refers to Judaism as an “evolutionary strategy.”<sup>6</sup> But in this paper he ascribes the strategy to non-religious Jews. (cf. p. 3-4) The notion of an “evolutionary strategy” is thus applied in multiple contradictory senses: on the one hand, it means an unconscious, genetic-psychological disposition shared by all Jews even or especially when they have “self-deceptive Jewish identities” (p. 34); on the other hand, it means the fully conscious and conspiratorial political program of the organized Jewish community in America. The “strategy” is like a malevolent spirit: it animates people who are ignorant of it, and it manifests in the machinations of hidden political power. The “strategy” instructed Jews to convince Americans that race doesn’t matter, by means of the Boasian School of Anthropology and in other ways (pp. 3-4, 12-16). They knew this was untrue. They bought up and gained control over the media and then used the media to spread the lie about race, which MacDonald will correct. (pp. 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 15, 16, 20, 21, 23, 24) Jews did this so that white American would be weakened in its ethnic and cultural identity, while the Jews, maintaining their own ethnic identity tenaciously, would thereby increase their collective group power.

There is no precedent in the field of evolutionary biology for any similar usage of the term “evolutionary strategy” in this sense, though it might perhaps occur in early 20<sup>th</sup> century racist ideologies. Generally, the term is applied to the mating habits of animals. MacDonald does suggest it may involve Jews marrying non-Jews to strengthen the power of Jews, or not having children in order the better to blend in with the childless dominant white culture (p. 9) Of course, it makes little sense to call being childless “an evolutionary strategy,” any more than it makes sense to call a conscious political program advanced by any group an “evolutionary strategy.” The term ceases to have any real precise meaning, although it serves well enough to imply secret machinations and hidden power.

In a similar way, MacDonald clumsily tries to find a unity of aim among Jews whose conscious political programs differ completely or contradict. He assumes, when it serves his argument, that some or all of these political aims might be unconscious, or involve self-deception. He takes the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory and the Boasian School of Anthropology as instruments furthering Jewish aims, (pp. 3-4) although neither group was exclusively Jewish, nor understood itself to represent the Jewish community, nor had anything to do with Judaism. He quotes Sigmund Freud speaking of his feeling of Jewishness, as though this could establish that Freud was in some way an instrument of the “Jewish evolutionary strategy.” MacDonald brings together all Jews everywhere into one conspiracy, even Jews who make no claim to be

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. MacDonald, K. (1994/2002). A people that shall dwell alone: Judaism as a group evolutionary strategy. Praeger, 1994; reprinted with a new preface by iUniverse, 2002.

part of the Jewish community. But he dismisses Jews who do in fact claim to speak for the Jewish community, when what they say does not coincide with MacDonald's idea of the "Jewish strategy." (cf. pp. 9-10)

This is conspiracy theory. We don't like that on the internet or on tv; surely it's no more acceptable in an academic journal.

#### Bias and Discrimination, Fact and Controversy, Documentation, Integrity of Argument

It is the stated and implicit theses of the article as a whole, obviously, that are most unacceptable. But the article also contains numerous specific statements that easily qualify in the most narrow and precise sense as biased and discriminatory. The article contains many false inferences from dubious facts, and its documentation is selective and tendentious. One need not fear that this article succeeds on the more prosaic grounds of academic rigor. We are happily not obliged to denounce any solid and important work of research, in order to be rid of a conspiracy theory.

MacDonald asks: "Should white advocates ignore the historical and contemporary Jewish role in their dispossession?" (p. 27) Jews are thus accused of perpetrating a dispossession. The implication is that one may dispossess them in turn, in self-defense. This is the position that MacDonald has elsewhere called "rational antisemitism." It is an extremely subtle call to ultimate violence. Its singular aim is to arouse a great bias against Jews, so as to make people hate and fear them, and discriminate against them, so as to dispossess them. The Wall Street Journal has reported that this charge of dispossession, originating with MacDonald, found its way into the chants of the white nationalists marching in Charlottesville.<sup>7</sup>

As mentioned, MacDonald sees leftwing political and social movement that had many Jews in them as instruments of the "Jewish strategy." He remarks that non-Jews in such movements "were relegated to subordinate roles that really amounted to window dressing." (p.3) This biased claim receives no documentary or factual support in this article. Elsewhere, MacDonald does provide obscure anecdotes. In the nature of things, it is controversial to claim that Jews employ non-Jews as a front in political movements, in order to conceal the Jewish character of the movements. And it is hard to admit that it could be a claim based on documented factual evidence. What factual evidence could possibly establish this claim? Are we expected to consider the matter patiently with an open mind? There is a point at which common sense revolts, even if the affront to common sense is not the central issue here. Rather, what is decisive is that MacDonald's claims about Jews constitute hate speech, and are not fundamentally compatible with social peace or public order.

#### Conclusion

It was a grave error of judgement on the part of the editor of the journal to publish this article. No principle of academic freedom obliges an academic journal to publish an incitement to racial hatred.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-theory-behind-that-charlottesville-slogan-1522708318>

## Review #2

“Marx ‘had to bend over backward and distance himself as much as possible from Jews and Judaism so as not to be accused of supporting Jewish rights because of his own Jewish background.’ This at least suggests a Jewish identity and concern for Jewish interests.” P.7

How was his awareness of the fact that he would be identified as a Jew and thus his ideas would be attacked an indication that he was concerned about promoting *Jewish interests*? Marx was worried about his own interests and the promotion of his communist ideology.

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“... Jews under discussion were ethnocentric as indicated by ethnic networking.” P.8

Does that mean that blacks are ethnocentric because of their ethnic networking? Or Catholics? Or fundamentalist Christians? This is gibberish because he is making statements about Jews as a group and arguing that they are *different* from gentiles but he presents no comparison data regarding *relative* ethnocentrism.

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The absurdity of making comparative claims without comparisons is overwhelming. For example, in claiming that Jews are more ethnocentric than gentiles he writes:

“94% of American Jews are proud to be Jewish (Pew Research, [2013](#))—another marker of ethnocentrism”

What percentage of Irish are proud to be Irish? Or Italians. Or fundamentalist Christians? Or White Nationalists?

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This is just incoherent:

“In some cases, intermarriage and conversion may have benefits for the Jewish community—e.g., the advantages of marrying into prominent non-Jewish families while retaining strong ties to 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 (e.g., the normalization of relations between Israel and Bahrain) and in other areas (Crowley & Halbfinger, [2020](#)). Another example is the marriage of Sascha Baron-Cohen, a strongly identified Orthodox and pro-Israel Jew, who married an ethnically European woman, Isla Fisher.”

How did Cohen’s marriage provide benefits for the Jewish community? And since when is he a “strongly identified Orthodox Jew”? [According to Cohen](#), “I wouldn’t say I am a religious Jew ... I am proud of my Jewish identity and there are certain things I do and customs I keep ... It’s what you might call Church of England Jewish”

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On the one hand there is the risk to Israeli Jews of a one state solution in which they would very soon be outnumbered by Palestinians, the vast majority of whom believe in the right of return and/or that Jews have no right to live in Israel. MacDonald equates this with the demographic changes in the US with the inevitable loss of majority status of white Americans now that immigration isn’t largely restricted to white Europeans. White Americans will then have to

share a country committed to equal rights for all its citizens. Hardly analogous to the situation for Jews in Israel.

He argues that the untenable situation that would occur in Israel in a one-state solution with Palestinian return justifies American opposition to nonwhite immigration because it is “reasonable to suppose that the white population would also be increasingly vulnerable if they become a minority.”

While being a minority does make a group more vulnerable, who is he kidding? Whites of European descent in America may no longer be a *majority* at some point in the not-too-distant future, but they will remain a *plurality* for many, many years. Justifying American white anxiety about discrimination as a *minority* by comparing the situation to Israel’s Jews makes no sense whatsoever.

Invoking this absurd comparison by Tucker Carlson is a bit bizarre.

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He compares the numbers of Reform Jews (35% in the US and 3% in Israel) suggesting that Israeli Jews are mostly conservative or orthodox when in fact 66% of Israelis Jews say they are not very religious or are secular. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli\\_Jews#Religion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli_Jews#Religion)

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“... Jewish communal structure brings Jews together in nonrandom ways—itself an ultimate result of Jewish ethnocentrism (e.g., programs like Birthright Israel and J-Date)”

Again, what nonsense. Do Christian summer camps, universities, and [Christian dating sites](#) indicate Christian ethnocentrism? If not, why not? Where is there a shred of evidence that that Jews are one iota more ethnocentric than other groups, all of which tend to be ethnocentric?

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### **Nazi, racist pseudo-science is used as MacDonald’s sources**

“Intermarriage is indeed quite high within the contemporary American Jewish community, but it is certainly far from random given that the small population size of Jews (1.9%) compared to the population as a whole makes meeting co-ethnics relatively unlikely (Dutton, 2020),”

Makes no sense. Jews are a much larger percentage of the population *where Jews live*, e.g., in New York City where nearly two million Jews live. And even there they are not evenly spread out. I happened to grow up on a dead end street that was all Jewish because Jews weren’t shown houses in other parts of my home town back around 1950.

And an interesting reference: Dutton. This is what I found on Wikipedia:

Dutton “has written controversial [racialist](#) articles for fringe far-right journals such as [Mankind Quarterly](#) [described on the Wikipedia as “a white supremacist journal” and publisher of two of KM’s referenced papers] and [OpenPsych](#) [Many articles on

OpenPsych promote [scientific racism](#), and the site has been described as a "[pseudoscience](#) factory-farm"] Some of the books Dutton has authored [such as this one, *Making Sense of Race* that MacDonald references here] have been published by [Washington Summit Publishers](#) operated by [neo-Nazi Richard B. Spencer](#)."

KM also references Lynn's *The chosen people: A study in Jewish intelligence and achievement*, which was also published by Washington Summit.

Nine of his "scholarly" references were to *The Occidental Quarterly* or *The Occidental Observer* (including five of KM's own publications). [BTW, KM founded *The Observer* and is the Editor of *The Quarterly*]

***The Occidental Observer*** is an American [far-right online publication](#) that covers politics and society from a [white nationalist](#) and [antisemitic](#) perspective. Its [mission statement](#) is to "present original content touching on the themes of white identity, white interests, and the culture of [the West](#)."

***The Occidental Quarterly*** is an American white nationalist[\[3\]](#) [magazine](#) published by the [Charles Martel Society](#).[\[4\]](#) Its stated purpose is to defend "the cultural, ethnic, and racial interests of Western European peoples" and examine "contemporary political, social, and demographic trends that impact the posterity of Western Civilization". was on the board of *The Quarterly*]

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One of the main criticisms of this MacDonald can be found in this following paper, [Darwinian Antisemitism](#), where it is repeatedly documented how MacDonald describes features of Jews and Jewish groups that are often accurate. These features fit his theory that Jews, for example, tend to be endogamous and promote Jewish interests. So far, so good (for his theory). But then he makes the absurd claim that Jews are MORE endogamous and more focused on their own group's interest than gentile groups under similar ecological conditions (e.g., being a minority religious group). It is *absurd* to make a comparative claim *without any such comparisons*. This is just not science. And when it is claimed that the undemonstrated difference is the result of a genetic, biological difference, we are dealing with racism.

In fact, when he describes gentiles in circumstances similar to Jewish circumstances, he actually claims they DO act in a similar fashion. But he concludes that they do so in reaction to Jews! When Jews do it, it's because of their nature. When gentiles do it, it's because they are reacting to Jewish nature. This is pure racist drivel.

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"The odds ratio for Jewish marriage of single-ancestry Jews in the U.S. is 2085 and for mixed-parentage Jews is 50, where an odds ratio of 1 would indicate no ingroup preference; for comparison, the odds ratio for White Hispanics is 596 and Black Americans is 3525."

I'm not sure I understand these numbers. They are taken from Philips 2013 who explains "the odds ratio for Group X is more than ten times higher than for Group Y because members of Group B have fewer potential exogamous partners." But nowhere else in the article can the term "Group B" be found. It is simply unclear what this refers to.

Last I checked, White Hispanics and Black Americans weren't religions or even clearly defined identity groups; so what do those comparison numbers mean? The intermarriage rate was well under 6% for Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland during the period KM's claims were made. And they had at least as much contact with the other group as Jews do with gentiles. So, does that make them more or less endogamous than Jews?

### Cherry picking the data

Furthermore, KM states, "In fact, American Jews who are not of mixed parentage "are surprisingly endogamous compared with other groups in America" (Philips, 2013: 103)."

This is clearly selective cherry picking the data: One thing that is clear about KM is that he is thorough in his study of the literature. Why then does he reference a study that was produced in January 2013 (Philips) and ignore the data from an October 2013 [study from the Pew Research Center](#) (a source he frequently uses when its findings are convenient to his theory) that found nearly 60% intermarriage rate for American Jews? Especially since he is writing in 2021 and it is almost inconceivable that by then he doesn't know about the Pew study. This appears to be intentionally dishonest.

### Note to the editor:

A correction. If there will be some accusations or defenses based in a debate about KM's article, it is important to get things exactly right.

In my notes, I criticized KM for using Philips 2013 study that found "American Jews who are not of mixed parentage "are surprisingly endogamous compared with other groups in America." and not using the slightly later 2013 Pew study that found that 60% of the time Jews marry non-Jews. He does reference that Pew study elsewhere, so it is still interesting that he doesn't mention the 60% figure that poses a pretty serious challenge to his racist thesis that Jews are **biologically** highly predisposed to endogamy.

But the Philips paper made the point of emphasizing the use of odds ratios *instead* of percentages. And, as I noted in my notes, I didn't fully understand his argument. I'm in the process of having a mathematician explain Philips' use of odds ratios and why that may be valid (or invalid), though I still don't know if, regardless of the mathematics, it has any validity since it compares endogamous Jewish marriages, mixed marriages, and gentile marriages as if somehow that shows a preference by Jews for endogamy that EXCEEDS such preferences by gentiles.

That conclusion is based on the assumption that Jews are exposed to EXTREMELY large numbers of gentiles (Jews being 2% of the American population) and avoiding them. In fact, where most Jews in America live, the Jewish population is much larger than 2%. AND during the period that KM claims he is writing about (up to 1970 or so), where is the evidence that it was **Jews** who were avoiding intermarriage? Antisemitism (which still exists) in America was finally significantly waning at *the end* of that period.



### Review #3

Well, I am not sure why this piece would be considered for publication in the first place. For the most part, it is apologetic (self-apologetic) and really just defends what the author thinks with the overall point of self-justifying his position and writing. It contributes nothing new. It might be appropriate at a conference as a "reply," but in a journal? In any case, although there are "citations" to materials and sources, they tend to support overviews and simplifications as if they sprung from concrete data. Common sense (unquestioned, unprobing) explanations are taken to be rigorous analytical proofs, and their yield is often generalizations and vague "inferences." He presupposes categories that need to be questioned in the first place (e.g., "over representation") and then trite observations are alchemically transmuted into systematic thought. He appeals to sources so that they say what he wants them to say.

It's just not worth publishing.

Are there biased or opinionated statements? Well, yes, but not anything that would qualify as hate speech, and probably not anything that would be overtly or strategically aggressive or belligerent.

Whether or not there are controversial statements without clarification and factual information... that is a tough one. There are controversial statements, and they are coupled with gestures toward justification; he points to sources, but these tend to be isolated examples and superficial observations.

The same holds whether he is documenting the presentation of material in the article. Often, he cites himself (or earlier research?) as documentation. Again, I sense the main point of his article is apologetic, not clarification.

I think, to be fair, he is presenting his research and methodology in a transparent manner. It's just that the article is strongly questionable in the number of presuppositions, what gets questioned, what gets asserted, and what passes as "data" and "conclusions." Yes, he is very clear in argumentative form and drawing conclusions. It is not sloppy in that regard. Ok, fine. But why waste the "paper" or space?