

General Comments

Far too often the reviewers fail to make an argument or specific criticisms of my work but seem to think that simply providing an invidious summary of my views is sufficient to rebut them. Most surprising to me is that none of the reviewers mention even one objection to the long section on immigration—by far the most critical and longest section in the article (amounting to 13 pages and 6500 words); nor is there any discussion of the rise of the intimately related topic of the rise of a new, substantially Jewish elite in the post-World War II era in the U.S., particularly since the 1960s. This is important because my paper addresses the three “core issues” raised by Cofnas, but the Jewish role in immigration policy is, as I note, “The only claim that, if true, would seriously endanger an important aspect of what Cofnas labels ‘the anti-Jewish narrative.’” The other issues discussed are interesting and important in a general discussion of Jewish issues, but they pale in comparison to the material on immigration policy. And, as noted in the paper, some of the most discussed issues, such as intermarriage and the issue of Jewish hypocrisy—two of Cofnas’s three core issues (not to mention Karl Marx’s Jewish identity), are completely irrelevant to central work Cofnas describes as being part of “the anti-Jewish narrative,” most notably *The Culture of Critique* (hereafter, *CofC*), which is what Cofnas is supposedly criticizing. Moreover, none of the reviews critique my analysis for why higher average Jewish IQ by itself fails to explain Jewish influence (i.e., Cofnas’s “default hypothesis”).

Review #1

1. Reviewer: “a number of academic articles have recently appeared criticizing [MacDonald], including several by prominent scholars,” I know of no “prominent scholars” who have made specific criticisms of my writing on Judaism—certainly not Daniel Kriegman, mentioned by one reviewer (discussed below), and Cofnas was a graduate student when his 2018 article was published in *Human Nature*. Cofnas’s 2018 critique and the article I am responding to are the only academic critiques I am aware of. This is why I have spent so much time replying to his work (MacDonald, 2018a,b, cited in my paper).

2. Reviewer: “MacDonald’s understanding of Judaism as a religion is non-existent.” My [well-reviewed](#) first book on Judaism, *A People That Shall*

Dwell Alone (hereafter, *APTSDA*), contains a great deal on Judaism as a religion. [Chapter 3](#) in particular discusses the Tanakh, but yes, I conclude that an evolutionary interpretation is quite plausible:

The ideology of the Tanakh is a blueprint for an experiment in living in the sense utilized in Chapter 1. It was obsessed with the history of the Jewish people because one of its essential functions was to rationalize that history and provide a hope for a successful future. The religion of the Tanakh was greatly concerned with reproductive success, endogamy, and cultural separation from surrounding peoples within a diaspora context. It was a religion with powerful sanctions on individuals who worship other gods or stray from group goals, and one in which lowered reproductive success is the result of deviation from life within the confines of the kinship group, while those who continued in the kinship group would be rewarded with great reproductive success and eventual revenge and domination.

From an evolutionary perspective, the purpose of this ideology is to ensure the continuity of the kinship group, even within a diaspora context in which there are enormous pressures for assimilation and gradual loss of contact with other members of the group. The results have been extraordinarily effective: As indicated in Chapter 2, Jews have maintained a significant genetic distance between themselves and their host societies for centuries. Indeed, they are the only group that has successfully maintained genetic and cultural segregation while living in the midst of other peoples over an extremely long period of time. [Historian Paul] Johnson (1987, 3) calls them “the most tenacious people in history.”

3. Reviewer: “They [Jews] 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 is an invidiously phrased and absurdly abbreviated summary of my views, and I never claim “a permanent conspiracy to undermine any more powerful group.” For example, I have an entire chapter in *Cof C* on the movement to oppose Darwinism in the social sciences, and I have numerous examples of recruiting non-Jews for their movements, especially in Chapter 3 of *CofC* and Chapter 6 of *Separation and Its Discontents* (hereafter, *SAID*); recruiting non-Jews to what are essentially Jewish movements is certainly a good strategy given that diaspora Jews are only a small percentage of the population. The vast overrepresentation of Jews as owners and content producers in the U.S. media is well-known and widely acknowledged (documented in the [Preface to the Paperback Edition of CofC.](#), p. Iff). Moreover, the attitudes disseminated by the media typically reflect the attitudes of the mainstream Jewish community on a variety of issues much more than the attitudes of other Americans. For example, as noted in the above link, “television portrays Jewish issues “with respect, relative depth, affection and good intentions, and the Jewish characters who appear in these shows have, without any doubt, been Jewish—often depicted as deeply involved in their Judaism” (Pearl & Pearl 1999, 5). ... These shows, produced by liberal political activist Norman Lear, thus exemplify the general trend for television to portray non-Jews as participating in Jewish ritual, and ‘respecting, enjoying, and learning from it. Their frequent presence and active involvement underscores the message that these things are a normal part of American life’ (Pearl & Pearl, *The Chosen Image: Television's Portrayal of Jewish Themes and Characters* [1999], 16). Jewish rituals are portrayed as ‘pleasant and ennobling, and they bestow strength, harmony, fulfillment, and sense of identity upon those who observe them’” (p. 62). On the other hand,

Michael Medved describes Hollywood’s cumulative attacks in recent years on the traditional American family, patriotism, and traditional sexual mores—the Hollywood version of the culture of critique. But the most obvious focus of attack is on the Christian religion:

In the ongoing war on traditional values, the assault on organized faith represents the front to which the entertainment industry has most clearly committed itself. On no other issue do

the perspectives of the show business elites and those of the public at large differ more dramatically. Time and again, the producers have gone out of their way to affront the religious sensibilities of ordinary Americans. (M. Medved (1992/1993), *Hollywood vs. America: The Explosive Bestseller that Shows How and Why-the Entertainment Industry Has Broken Faith with Its Audience* (HarperCollins), 50).

Medved fails to find even one film made since the mid-1970s where Christianity is portrayed positively apart from a few films where it is portrayed as an historical relic — a museum piece.

Finally, Jews are vastly overrepresented among American billionaires and, more importantly, in lists the most generous donors to political causes (e.g., 60 percent of top donors in the 2020 U.S. election cycle: Ron Kampeas, [“Meet the Top 15 Jewish Political Donors,”](#) *Jewish Telegraph Agency* [September 24, 2020]).

4. The reviewer’s language is needlessly inflammatory and he/she typically simply notes what I have written without providing any counter-argument: “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.” Language: I never write that Jews have “undermined white Christian America” or “sabotaged” it. I have argued that Jews have successfully pursued a program of making America less homogeneously White because of fear of a homogeneous White Christian culture—the thesis of the section in the paper under review on the immigration laws of 1924 and 1965 with its extensive documentation—none of it contested by the reviewer. Language matters. Where is the argument against specific things I have written? The section on “Jewish hypocrisy” is simply noted without explaining why the ADL wasn’t hypocritical in its views on immigration to the U.S. versus Israel. (Incidentally, the ADL has apparently scrubbed the webpage where they rationalize concern for Israeli demography since Tucker Carlson featured it

in his response to the ADL's claims that belief in white replacement was a racist and anti-Semitic "conspiracy theory.")

5. Reviewer: "Elsewhere [MacDonald] 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." The link provided in the footnote goes to a website that is password protected, so I have no idea what he is referring to. But even the most naïve would have to agree that groups compete for power. Jews and the organized Jewish community are quite powerful, and it would not be at all surprising—and quite rational—if movements arise that challenge that power if they see their interests compromised by the current power structure.

6. Reviewer: "It is a position not easily distinguished from the arguments and tropes of the 19th century antisemitic work, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, or those made in the 1930s and 1940s by Nazi propagandists." This is outrageous. The theoretical and empirical basis of my work is entirely different from such material. If a fortune teller and a psychologist make similar analysis of a person's personality, does that mean that the psychologist is necessarily wrong? Can I argue that grass couldn't possibly be green by noting that Hitler believed it?

7. Reviewer: "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. This consideration cannot by any possible standard of reasonableness be left aside when passing judgement on this paper." This is a plea for censorship of writing that is an honest, empirically based attempt to get to the truth on certain issues. Accounts of historical events are often extremely contested because they are seen—perhaps correctly—as contrary to the interests of one group or another. This by itself is no reason to censor views that are seen as not in the interests of one side or another.

Right now, the American media is saturated with invidious accounts of the history of white America and the West. Should they be censored?

8. Reviewer: “MacDonald often refers to Judaism as an ‘evolutionary strategy.’ 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.” This a complete misunderstanding. There is no contradiction, and my comment on “self-deceptive Jewish identities” refers to particular examples from Chapter 3 of *CofC*; the reviewer never disputes these examples. My analysis of Judaism as a more or less unitary group evolutionary strategy is the topic of my first book on Judaism, *APTSDA*, which deals with Judaism prior to the Enlightenment—how traditional Jewish communities organized themselves, policed their members, cooperated economically, and were characterized by high levels of ingroup charity and certain socialization and eugenic practices; these characteristics show remarkable commonality in widely dispersed Jewish communities prior to the Enlightenment. But I note there (in Ch. 1) that Jews are “flexible strategizers” who are thus able—like all humans—to respond to contingencies in their environments via what psychologists label “domain general processing” or “explicit processing” (MacDonald, K. [2008]. “[Effortful Control, Explicit Processing and the Regulation of Human Evolved Predispositions](#),” *Psychological Review* 115, no. 4 (2008): 1012–1031; explicit processing is closely related to general intelligence). That is, conscious strategizing in pursuit of perceived goals has always been critical and, especially since the Enlightenment (when many Jews rejected the Jewish religion but retained a variety of other Jewish identities). Different Jewish groups and individual Jews may have different or even opposing strategies (e.g., Zionists often clashed with anti-Zionists, especially prior to the establishment of Israel). Moreover, as I emphasize in *SAID* (Ch. 6), there have been a variety of consciously adopted strategies to deal with social contexts—strategizing in a democratic society with diverse power centers and a critical role for public opinion (resulting in vastly increased importance

of media) is entirely different from dealing with a dictatorial regime or a medieval monarchy.

9. Reviewer: “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.” I never said they knew it was untrue, and in order to rebut my claims on the influence of Boasian anthropology one would have to have specific criticisms of Chapter 2 of *CofC*.

10. “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.” Again, this is a tendentious way of phrasing my claims. As I noted in the paper, “Boasian ideology had become dominant in the Congressional debates of 1965 on immigration (Ch. 7); as noted below, this racial ideology became dominant in the media during this period (Joyce, 2019)—at a time when all the television networks and Hollywood studios were owned by Jews, and marking a huge shift from the 1920s when restrictionist arguments based on race appeared in prominent magazines and were published by mainstream book publishers.” (On the other hand, during the 1920s Jews had only a relatively minor presence in the media compared to later decades.) In order to rebut this, the reviewer needs to show that Jews did not have a prominent place in the media during the 1960s and that the views of the media did not reflect the influence of Boas on the unimportance of race and were not prominent in Congressional debates on the 1965 law. Again, the reviewer fails to make an argument against specific things I wrote but seems to think that simply providing an invidious summary of my views is sufficient to rebut them.

11. Reviewer: “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 20th century racist ideologies. Generally, the term is applied to the mating habits of animals.” When I wrote *APTSDA*—subtitled *Judaism as a Group Evolutionary Strategy*, group

selection and the idea of strategizing groups was a decidedly minority view among evolutionary psychologists—at the time, the dominant paradigm was individual-level selection. However, the intellectual tide has shifted, due in large part to the influence of David S. Wilson (with whom I was allied at the time my book was published [1994]; Wilson later wrote a book with a similar evolutionary perspective to the one I developed in *APTSDA, Darwin’s Cathedral: Evolution, Religion, and the Nature of Society* (University of Chicago Press, 2003); Wilson cited my book in his book, and my book got [good reviews](#) by evolutionists). As a result, the Cultural Evolution Society has been established devoted to understanding how culture has an independent role in human evolution, including understanding how different human groups may supplant each other because of a more adaptive culture—including the characteristics I emphasize in describing traditional Jewish groups (e.g., how Jewish communities organized themselves, policed their members, and cooperated economically, as well as their ingroup charity and socialization and eugenic practices). For example, in [my review](#) of *The WEIRDest People in the World* (Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 2020), by Joseph Henrich (a Harvard evolutionary psychologist), I note:

Without mentioning cultural group selection, Henrich describes social norms as “arising directly from cultural learning and social interaction, that is via cultural evolution” (p. 69). Within the group, reputation is important; people with a bad reputation may be penalized, exiled, or even murdered — essentially acknowledging that human groups become, like a military unit, vehicles of selection because they are able to police group membership by expelling cheaters who accept the benefits of group membership without paying the costs. Groups with better norms, especially the ability to inculcate high levels of intragroup dependence and cooperation, are able to prosper by growing faster, and this has genetic consequences. “Wherever we look, from the Arctic to Australia, hunter-gatherer populations compete, and those with the best combinations of institutions and technologies expand and gradually replace or assimilate those with less effective cultural packages”; e.g., the Inuit replaced the “fragmented and isolated communities that had lived there for

millennia” (p. 80). The relevance to the expansion of the West after 1500 is obvious.

My 1994 book is entirely in this tradition. Whether one calls it a “group evolutionary strategy” or different groups having different cultural norms makes no difference. My *APTSDA* has lengthy discussions of the adaptiveness of traditional Jewish culture—how Judaism became a vehicle of cultural group selection

12. “MacDonald does suggest [the Jewish group evolutionary strategy] 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).” This is a complete misrepresentation. I never say that these marriages are intended to “strengthen the power of Jews with the childless dominant white culture.” I simply point to examples of Jews who have retained a strong Jewish identity while marrying prominent non-Jews and have done things that aided the Jewish community (e.g., Jared Kushner, an Orthodox Jew, and Ivanka Trump); I don’t discuss Kushner’s motivations, only the end result: that some such marriages benefit the Jewish community—a point that the reviewer doesn’t dispute. And I have no idea where the reviewer gets the notion that “not having children in order the better to blend in with the childless dominant white culture” is part of a Jewish intermarriage strategy. I never wrote anything like that. Fertility in all groups has gone down over the last century—excluding some well-known, typically highly religious counter-examples, such as Hasidic and Orthodox Jews.

13. Reviewer: “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.” I have never claimed to “find a unity of aim among Jews whose conscious political programs differ completely or contradict.” There are often real disputes and no underlying

unity of aim. For example, prior to the establishment of Israel, the aims of anti-Zionist Jews were contrary to the aims of the Zionists aiming at establishing a Jewish homeland, the former mainly motivated by fear among diaspora Jews of being charged with disloyalty. The point is that different groups of Jews may have contradictory beliefs on the best course of action. As I am always careful to note, Judaism is not monolithic.

Moreover, movements don't have to be exclusively Jewish in order to be reasonably classed as a Jewish movement. As I note in my paper, "The movements analyzed in [*CofC*] were originated and dominated by strongly identified Jews with a strong sense of Jewish interests (see also MacDonald, 2004, on neoconservatism), and there was a great deal of ethnic networking and mutual citation patterns, with non-Jews often relegated to subordinate roles that really amounted to window dressing. These movements have been influential, and the Jews at the center of these movements were critical to their influence." Because Jews are a small minority in the U.S., Jews have often actively recruited non-Jews to their causes—particularly influential non-Jews, not only as "window dressing" but also because some of these movements appealed to some non-Jews. For example, neoconservatism naturally appealed to many non-Jewish intellectuals and politicians (e.g., Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, John Bolton, as noted in [MacDonald \[2004\]](#)) because of its emphasis on a strong military and an aggressive foreign policy. The reviewer needs much more than a restatement of my thesis in order to rebut the data I have amassed; the reason I have replied to Cofnas is because he has attempted to do exactly that, and he did so in an academic publication. Of course, I reject his claims.

14. Reviewer: "[MacDonald] 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.'" The reviewer would have to present a detailed rebuttal of Chapter 4 of *CofC* where I show the Jewish origins and composition of the psychoanalytic movement, their Jewish motivations, and their mutual support and citation patterns.

15. Reviewer: "MacDonald brings together all Jews everywhere into one conspiracy, even Jews who make no claim to be part of the Jewish community." Nonsense. As I note in the paper: "The Jewish community is

clearly not monolithic, although at particular historical periods there has been substantial consensus on particular issues. Individual influential Jews or a separate influential Jewish intellectual movement may be critical of a specific Jewish intellectual movement.”

16. Reviewer: “But [MacDonald] 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 presumably refers to my comments on Reform rabbis who advocate liberal immigration policies for Israel, where I note: “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.” Again, the Jewish community in the U.S. (or anywhere) is often not monolithic and in such cases, one has to attempt to discern the relative power of various Jewish groups. In that section I attempt to show that the opinions of these Reform rabbis carry no weight in Israel hence have no effect on the real world. The reviewer never rebuts the actual data I refer to.

17. Reviewer: “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. ... 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.” I have backed up the claims in my article and my other rather voluminous writing on the topic. Since the reviewer has completely failed to refute any of these claims and not ever bothered to deal with the evidence I provide, the “conspiracy theory” accusation is groundless. And it’s most definitely not a call for violence. What I would like is for the organized diaspora Jewish community to stop promoting multiculturalism and multi-ethnic, replacement-level immigration and acknowledge the legitimate interests of non-Jewish white Americans in retaining power in America as the ADL has argued for in the case of Jews in Israel (pp. 9–10 of my article).

18. Reviewer: “MacDonald sees leftwing political and social movement [*sic*] 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.” Notice the reviewer dishonestly leaves out my qualifier, ‘often’, to make it sound as though I think relegating non-Jews to window-dressing is always the case. This is the complete clause: “with non-Jews often relegated to subordinate roles that really amounted to window dressing.” As noted above, it is also the case that these movements have often appealed to non-Jews for entirely reasonable, self-interested reasons.

And again, the reviewer mounts a blanket criticism without bothering to deal specifically with the examples I mention in my paper or my other writing—or explaining why they are “obscure.” It is impossible to respond to such criticisms. Certainly, as in the case of neoconservatism mentioned above, not all non-Jews who joined Jewish-dominated movements of the left were simply window dressing. However, I have a variety of examples in Chapters 3 and 4 of *CofC* on this phenomenon, including my personal experience at the University of Wisconsin in the 1960s, as noted in my paper. For example: Phyllis Grosskurth’s comment on Ernest Jones, and I cite Klehr, (1978: 40) and Rothman & Lichter (1982: 99) as well as Lyons (1982: 81) on this issue. For example, Lyons quotes a gentile Communist who said that many working-class gentiles felt that they were recruited in order to “diversify the Party’s ethnic composition.” All this is ignored and labeled obscure. This is intellectually dishonest in the extreme.

Regarding the general issue of Jews in leftwing political and social movements were “instruments of the ‘Jewish strategy,’” I have numerous very specific examples from highly reputable sources not only in the paper under review, but also in Chapter 3 of *CofC* on Jewish leftists with strong Jewish identities who saw their political attitudes as closely connected to their Jewish identity (including Bolsheviks and American Jews) and I show that Jewish support for the left waxed and waned depending on leftist support for specific Jewish issues (e.g., the relationship between the USSR and Israel); I also have a long discussion in Chapter 3 of *CofC* of various theories of Jewish radicalism citing several Jewish authors, and I conclude that social identity processes are critical; for example, I note: “If indeed radical politics resulted in a strong sense of identification with a Jewish ingroup, then Jewish involvement in these movements would be associated with very negative and exaggerated conceptions of the wider gentile

society, and particularly the most powerful elements of that society, as an outgroup. In conformity with this expectation, Liebman (1979, 26) uses the term “contraculture” to describe the American Jewish left because ‘conflict with or antagonism toward society is a central feature of this subculture and . . . many of its values and cultural patterns are contradictions of those existing in the surrounding society.’” Some of this is covered in Section 6 of the paper under review (“Jews and the Left”). Since *CofC* was published, the Jewish identity of Jewish radicals has also been covered in Alain Brossat and Sylvie Klingberg’s [*Revolutionary Yiddishland: A History of Jewish Radicalism*](#) (2016).

Review #2

1. Re Marx: The reviewer seems quite naïve about how anti-Semitism often operates. People often attribute Jewish motivations to Jews simply because they are Jewish. That’s why in my work, I take pains to document Jewish motivations by looking at biographies, memoirs, etc. The people I discuss in *CofC*, which deals with twentieth-century movements up to around 1970, were strongly identified Jews who saw their activities as furthering Jewish interests—e.g., ending anti-Semitism. But the point is that Marx’s Jewish identity is not relevant because he died in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, it’s an interesting topic, and I cite an Israeli historian on this:

Schlomo Avineri’s (2019: 48) view is consistent with the latter comments and casts further doubt on Cofnas’s claim that Marx was an anti-Semite. Avineri argues that the most likely explanation for Marx’s anti-Jewish remarks is that he strongly backed Jewish emancipation and was opposed to Bruno Bauer’s demand that Jews be forced to convert to Christianity before being granted legal equality. 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. However, the entire issue of Marx’s attitude toward Judaism is unimportant for evaluating the role of Jews in leftist political movements in the twentieth century up to ~1970, the topic

of CofC (Ch. 3) which Cofnas is attempting to criticize, since Marx died in 1883.

So I have based my discussion on an entirely reputable source, and the entire topic is irrelevant to critiquing *CofC*.

2. Reviewer quotes me: “... Jews under discussion were ethnocentric as indicated by ethnic networking” and comments “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.” Notice that I do not make a point that Jews are *more ethnocentric* than any particular group either in the paper under review or in *CofC*—apart from the 2002 [Preface to the First Paperback Edition of *The Culture of Critique*](#) (pp. xviii–xxxi) contrasting Western European and Jewish cultural forms on a variety of traits. The material in the 2002 preface is a preliminary version of the ideas in my book *Individualism and the Western Liberal Tradition* (2019) and is in no way essential to the argument in *CofC* as published in 1998, where the only relevant claim I make is that Jews are ethnocentric—a claim that I document exhaustively. However, for completeness, my view is that Jews are in general more ethnocentric than Western European groups (I make no other comparisons), particularly northwestern European groups—the thesis of my *Individualism and the Western Liberal Tradition* (2019). My emphasis on the uniqueness of Western individualism is entirely congruent with Joseph Henrich’s *The WEIRDest People in the World* (2020), mentioned above. When Henrich uses the superlative ‘WEIRDest’ (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, Democratic) in the title, he is emphasizing the uniqueness of the Western peoples; individualism is the polar opposite of collectivism and its associated ethnocentrism endemic to Jewish groups.

3. Similarly, the reviewer comments: “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?” Again, I am not making the claim either in the paper under review or in *CofC* that Jews are *more ethnocentric* than any particular group—and only in later writing do I emphasize that Western Europeans are relatively less ethnocentric, and I document these differences extensively (the material from the 2002 preface is on pp. xviii–xxxi [here](#)). I am only claiming that Jews are documentably ethnocentric. And with reference to my comments above on Western individualism, the percentage of White Americans who are White nationalists (and presumably on the high end of ethnocentrism) is vanishingly small.

4. “How did [Sascha Baron] 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.’” I should think that it’s obvious that it’s possible to have a strong Jewish identity without being a religious Jew. In Baron Cohen’s case, the article notes also that “Religion is observed in the Baron Cohen family but does not dominate. ... he tries to keep kosher and attends synagogue about twice a year. Where possible he goes home on Fridays to observe the Sabbath with his family.” So he is religious, but not intensely so. The fact that he is an ADL spokesperson certainly indicates his ethnic activism, and I suppose that indicates some benefit to the Jewish community, but I would have to agree with the reviewer that the marriage itself doesn’t benefit the Jewish community. I should have included Baron Cohen as an example simply of the fact that intermarriage is not necessarily an indication of lack of ethnocentrism—the point of the next paragraph in my article which begins: “These examples illustrate the idea that intermarriage may not result from lack of ethnocentrism and that intermarriage is compatible with strong Jewish identification and activism.” But the important point is that, as I note at the beginning of that section (Section 3), the main issue here is Cofnas’s claim that Jews are not particularly ethnocentric as indicated by contemporary rates of intermarriage. I wrote “he [Cofnas] repeats his erroneous assumption that the ‘anti-Jewish narrative’ depends on showing that Jews in general are ethnocentric, his argument in opposition being contemporary rates of intermarriage in Western societies. But

contemporary rates of intermarriage are completely irrelevant to whether Jewish activists who have been described as participating in influential intellectual and political movements in earlier decades—the subject of *CofC* [which deals basically with movements from 1900–1970]—had strong Jewish identifications and saw their work as advancing Jewish group interests such as combatting anti-Semitism.” The point is that *CofC* dealt with particular Jews at particular times and places, not the entire Jewish community or Reform Jews in the contemporary West, and the marriage status of these people was not discussed. So the reviewer’s point is not at all relevant to the main issues in dispute. And as I note at the end of that section, “assessing Jewish involvement in influential intellectual and political movements doesn’t depend on whether there are advantages or disadvantages to intermarriage. The topic [of the benefits of intermarriage to the Jewish community] is never discussed in key works asserted to be part of the “anti-Jewish narrative” (e.g., *CofC*). ... And in any case, there is no indication that the activist Jewish community, whatever their ethnic status and whether they are intermarried, is becoming less influential in the United States. What is important is to assess the Jewish identity and pursuit of perceived Jewish interests of the main figures, and to examine the influence of the movement.”

5. Re Jewish intermarriage, I wrote, “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.” The reviewer notes: “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.” Good point. But it should be noted that the reviewer leaves out the end of the sentence that he quotes. This is the entire sentence: “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), *apart from Jewish communal structure that brings Jews together in nonrandom ways—*

itself an ultimate result of Jewish ethnocentrism (e.g., programs like Birthright Israel and J-Date which are committed to promoting endogamous Jewish marriage).” The point is that the Jewish community also takes an active role in preventing intermarriage. Besides the mentioned programs, I could have mentioned attending synagogue or being involved in Jewish communal affairs would bring Jews together in non-random ways. The reviewer mentions his/her experience in 1950, but the fact is that in recent decades—i.e., the decades when Jewish intermarriage dramatically increased—Jews have been free to live anywhere and they are often in environments where they are a small minority, as I note in the following paragraph, emphasizing the individualism of Western culture: “While Jewish intermarriage was negligible throughout the great majority of Jewish history, Jews navigating post-Enlightenment individualist Western societies naturally come into contact with many non-Jews (e.g., at universities and in the workplace); they may be pulled in many directions, so that ethnocentrism need not be as important as other tendencies known to be important for choosing marriage partners.” The reviewer doesn’t rebut this. And it’s simply historically inaccurate to put all the responsibility for lack of intermarriage on non-Jews. As I discuss extensively in Ch. 4 of *APTSDA*, traditional Jewish communities developed practices that strongly discouraged marrying non-Jews, and these attitudes—although much lessened for some sects—continue into the present, particularly among Conservative and Orthodox sects. These passages, both from Ch. 4 of *APTSDA*, illustrate these points and provide some of the basis for the argument that there is a genetic component to the Jewish group evolutionary strategy described in Ch. 8 of *APTSDA* —in addition to the cultural component discussed in Section 7 below:

It was noted in Chapter 1 that in order to qualify as an evolutionary strategy, genetic segregation must be actively maintained by the strategizing group. There are sound theoretical reasons to suppose that a group strategy in a diaspora context could be maintained only by an ideology that emphasizes separation from the rest of society. If individuals are completely free to maximize self-interest, then membership within a kinship group is expected to be only one among several considerations affecting self-interest (MacDonald 1991), and, indeed, it has been suggested that individually adaptive behavior in

contravention to the group strategy has been the source of at least some of the genetic admixture between Jewish and gentile populations over historical time (see Chapter 2). Mating on the basis of similarity in social class and assortative mating on a variety of valued phenotypic traits (e.g., intelligence) are expected to gradually break down rigid ethnic barriers in societies where there is free choice of a marriage partner (MacDonald 1991).

A genetically closed group strategy therefore depends on the development of social controls reinforcing group identity and preventing high levels of genetic admixture from surrounding groups. In addition, however, research on social identity theory (Hogg & Abrams 1987) indicates that the erection of very powerful cultural barriers between Jews and gentiles produces an intense identification with the ingroup and psychological distance from outgroups. As indicated in Chapter 3, this very powerful identification with the ingroup was necessary to maintain group cohesion in the face of disasters.

Among the factors facilitating separation of Jews and gentiles over historical time have been religious practice and beliefs, language and mannerisms, physical appearance and clothing, customs (especially the dietary laws), occupations, and living in physically separated areas, which were administered by Jews according to Jewish civil and criminal law. All of these practices can be found at very early stages of the diaspora, and in the ancient world, a *Mitzvoth* of 613 commandments evolved, including prohibitions that very directly limited social contacts between Jews and gentiles, such as the ban on drinking wine touched by gentiles and the undesirability of bantering with gentiles on the day of a pagan festival. Perhaps the most basic signs of separation, appearing in the Pentateuch, are circumcision and the practice of the Sabbath. The following material surveys these ideologies and behaviors with a concentration on the ancient world, the Sephardic Jews in Spain, and the Ashkenazi Jews in Eastern Europe. The chapter concludes by discussing Jewish cultural separatism since the Enlightenment.

From an evolutionary perspective, the uniqueness of the Jews lies in their being the only people to successfully remain intact and resist normal assimilative processes after living for very long periods as a minority in other societies. This unique resistance to assimilation dates from the period of the Babylonian exile and perhaps even the Egyptian

sojourn described in Genesis. Bickerman (1988, 38; see also Cohen 1987) points out that in the ancient world there were voluntary diasporas of Greek, Aramaic, and Phoenician peoples, which eventually became assimilated into the surrounding societies. Moreover, it was a common practice of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians to displace the peoples whom they had conquered, just as the Jews were displaced during the Babylonian exile. For considerable periods, it was common for these displaced peoples to live in separate communities and to continue to identify with the ethnic group and the religion that were left behind: "It could hardly be otherwise: the tribal organization of oriental peoples blocked the road to assimilation" (Bickerman 1988, 38). However, in the long run, these displaced peoples became assimilated, while the Jews did not.

Regarding the post-Enlightenment period, the most assimilative form of Judaism was the Reform movement.

As early as the beginning of the 20th century, there was a trend among American Reform Jews to reverse the entire process [of assimilation] and re-introduce elements of Jewish particularism (Meyer 1988, 295), including the celebration of traditional religious feasts and a greater appreciation of Orthodox Judaism as essential to the continued existence of Reform Judaism, rather than simply an outdated relic of the past. By mid-century, educational efforts had been extended, and the goal "was no longer simply to make Jewish young people into better human beings, but to make them also into dedicated members of the Jewish people" (Meyer 1988, 299). Reform Judaism became increasingly less differentiated from Conservative Judaism, where ethnic identification and religious rituals continued to retain a prominent role.

...

Reform Judaism was therefore not intended to end Jewish cultural separatism (see also Woocher 1986, 5). Nor was it intended to end Jewish genetic segregation. According to Katz (1985, 85; see also Levenson 1989), the clearest sign of continuing separatism in post-emancipation Germany was endogamy: Jews continued to marry almost exclusively among themselves. The small percentage of Jews who married exogamously (and their children) were lost to the Jewish

community. Moreover, “[a]s far as actual and active kinship was concerned, Jews remained almost exclusively bound to their own kind—a fact that more conspicuously than any other set them apart from the population at large” (Katz 1985, 86). Sorkin (1987, 111) notes that there was very little defection from Judaism in the 19th century in Germany despite the disappearance of powerful community controls. The annual rate of apostasy among Jews is estimated at no more than 6 or 7 per 10,000, and intermarriage is described as “not a significant factor.”

6. Re citing Edward Dutton, my practice is that citations should be to information that I consider reasonable and reliable, not what the political affiliations of the authors are. I cite many authors who have political beliefs that I do not subscribe to. And note that I include a clause in the sentence where I cite Dutton that essentially qualifies Dutton’s assertion by including “*apart from Jewish communal structure that brings Jews together in nonrandom ways,*” which Dutton ignores.

7. Relying on a paper by Daniel Kriegman, the reviewer writes, “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.” This presumably relates to the following passage from Kriegman: “All of a sudden, when it comes to analyzing gentile behavior, MacDonald switches away from a genetic to an ecological analysis of human culture in which one must primarily understand the context in which a cultural phenomenon occurs. He presents no evidence to support the notion that the Jewish strategy represents their biological being, while the gentile response is purely ecologically controlled (i.e., is a defensive reaction and, ‘in a fundamental shift,’ operates, to some degree, against their truer nature, which is to be

more individualistic and tolerant of otherness and more open to assimilation and exogamy). For MacDonald, Jews act, gentiles react. Because of this, MacDonald is able to ignore the data of gentile collectivism and ethnocentrism and conclude: Whereas prototypical Western societies have shown strong tendencies toward assimilation and individualism, Judaism is at its essence exclusivist and collectivist... . The foregoing provides evidence that the Near Eastern peoples, and especially the Jews, tend in general toward racial exclusivity and collectivism compared to most Western societies.” (p. 245).”

Whatever the truth here, it has nothing to do with the paper under review. As is typical of Kriegman, a psychotherapist by training who has no credibility as an evolutionary psychologist (while I have published [dozens of articles](#), many in prominent journals, as well as [authored and edited academic books](#) in the field; I was also an officer of the Human Behavior and Evolution Society, the premier society for evolutionists studying human behavior, for four years in the 1990s), he omits critical information. My claim, prefigured in the [preface](#) noted above and elaborated extensively in my *Individualism and the Western Liberal Tradition* (2019) is that the individualism of Western peoples *is* biologically based—rooted in the evolutionary history of the three main groups that populated Europe—Northern hunter-gathers, Middle Eastern farmers, and the Indo-Europeans. But psychological processes and social context are also important, and in particular, social identity processes. Kriegman fails to note my extensive discussion of social identity theory in a number of publications, most notably for my books on Judaism, Chapter 1 of *SAID* (but also to some extent in *CofC*) where I document how Jewish behavior and contextual influences on Jewish behavior are an excellent fit with the findings of this research tradition and I argue that these tendencies are an evolved human *universal* adaptation for group living (this argument is also presented in my publication, “[An Integrative Evolutionary Perspective on Ethnicity](#),” *Politics and the Life Sciences* 20 [2001]: 67–79).

The point is that Western peoples are indeed relatively individualistic and therefore relatively non-ethnocentric—only *relatively non-ethnocentric*, not completely devoid of ethnocentrism—compared to other world cultures (this relies not only my *Individualism and the Western Liberal Tradition* but also Henrich’s *The WEIRD People in the World*; both these works emphasize the uniqueness of the West); however, *all humans* tend

to become more group-oriented if they feel threatened. This certainly applies to Jews—reviewed in Ch. 1 of *SAID* where I note: “the fact that social identity processes and tendencies toward collectivism increase during times of resource competition and threat to the group (see Hogg & Abrams 1987; Triandis 1990, 1991) is highly compatible with supposing that these processes involve facultative mechanisms triggered by between-group conflict. As emphasized by evolutionists such as Alexander (1979) and Johnson (1995), external threat tends to reduce internal divisions and maximize perceptions of common interest among group members.” True of both Jews and non-Jews. A human universal.

For example, the 1967 Arab-Israeli war was context in which many American Jews felt threatened on behalf of Israel, and it increased their sense of Jewish identity. The following is from Ch. 8 of *SAID*:

Jews may not consciously know how strongly they in fact identify with Judaism. For example, Silberman notes that around the time of the 1967 Arab/Israeli war, many Jews could identify with the statement of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel that “*I had not known how Jewish I was*” (in C. E. Silberman [1985], *A Certain People: American Jews and Their Lives Today*. New York: Summit Books, 184; emphasis in original). Silberman comments that “This was the response, not of some newcomer to Judaism or casual devotee but of the man whom many, myself included, consider the greatest Jewish spiritual leader of our time.” Many others made the same surprising discovery about themselves: Arthur Hertzberg (*Being Jewish in America* [Schocken Books, 1979], 210) wrote that “the immediate reaction of American Jewry to the crisis was far more intense and widespread than anyone could have foreseen. Many Jews would never have believed that grave danger to Israel could dominate their thoughts and emotions to the exclusion of everything else.”

Research indicates that an increase in group identification under conditions of perceived threat is a human universal. So it’s simply not true that I claim that “the Jewish strategy represents their biological being, while the gentile response is purely ecologically controlled.” Jews also become more collectivist and ethnocentric under conditions of perceived threat, and the same goes for the people of the West. Context is critical for everyone. Western individualists are indeed relatively less ethnocentric than Jews on average (remember: Western culture is unique among the

peoples of the world [Henrich, 2020; MacDonald, 2019]) but their relatively low levels of ethnocentrism can be intensified by perceptions of threat. In fact, my entire analysis need not invoke biologically based tendencies to explain Jewish social structures and behavior. The main thrust of my first book on Judaism, *APTSDA*, is to describe traditional Jewish culture and could stand on its own as a purely cultural phenomenon. In Ch. 1 I discuss various cultural practices that would qualify a group as a vehicle of selection, and only in the last chapter (Ch. 8) do I offer an argument that Jewish ethnocentrism may be biologically based. But Chapter 8 could have been omitted without any loss. And even in that passage, I begin by being rather tentative, using the word ‘*suggest*’ rather than any claim of certitude. After reviewing data on the ancient Israelites, the passage reads: “I suggest that the ancient Israelites were genetically predisposed to be high on a cluster of traits centered around group allegiance, separatism, ethnocentrism, and collectivism. Moreover, with the adoption of a group strategy in which allegiance to the group must be a constant concern, there would also be cultural selection for individuals who were high on these traits. Highly collectivist individuals (referred to by [Harry C.] Triandis as ‘allocentrics’ [“Cross-cultural studies of individualism and collectivism,” *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation 1989: Cross Cultural Perspectives*, University of Nebraska Press, 1990] would be more likely to maintain group membership and submerge their individual interests in favor of group goals. They would thus represent the epitome of the group ethic and would presumably be more likely to be successful within the group. On the other hand, individuals who were low on collectivism (referred to by Triandis as “idiocentrics”) would be expected to be less committed to group goals, less able to submerge individual interests in favor of group goals, and therefore more likely to defect from the group.”

8. Re Phillips’ paper on intermarriage, the reviewer: “[I don’t know if the odds ratio analysis] 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.” This is partly false. As I note in the paper, Phillips’ data (which takes into account relative population size) shows White Hispanics with a higher ingroup marriage rate than mixed-parentage Jews,

and Blacks having a higher intermarriage rate than single-parent Jews: “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.” So these data indicate that ingroup preference exists both for mixed-parentage and single-ancestry Jews, with the latter much more pronounced. The reviewer then reiterates his point, discussed in Section 5 above, “where is the evidence that it was **Jews** who were avoiding intermarriage?” Again, as I noted above, “it’s simply historically inaccurate to put all the responsibility for lack of intermarriage on non-Jews.” However, I also acknowledge that some responsibility may lie with the attitudes of non-Jews preferring people of their own religion or ethnicity, as well as anti-Jewish attitudes. The fact is that anti-Semitism has sharply declined since World War II, and there are no restrictions on where Jews live, so that Jews are often in environments where they are a small minority, as in the vast majority of universities and workplaces in the West. As a result, it’s reasonable to suppose that at some of the Jewish marriage data can be explained by Jews actively seeking out other Jews.

And finally, again, data on contemporary rates of Jewish intermarriage are completely irrelevant to any issue related to the “anti-Jewish narrative,” and in particular to Cofnas’s main target, *CofC* which deals with Jewish influence and activism from ~1900–1970.

Review #3

Reviewer #3 makes several charges but does not provide any specific examples of my malfeasance, so there is nothing I can reply to.