

Professor Kevin MacDonald's Critique of Judaism: Legitimate Scholarship or the Intellectualization of Anti-Semitism?

GEORGE MICHAEL

INTRODUCTION

Since the end of World War II, anti-Semitism has been relegated to the furthestmost fringes of American society. To be sure, the enormity of the Holocaust has limited critical discussion on the topic of Jewish influence on culture, society, and politics. Very few critical studies have been released in the mainstream press, the plethora of scholarship on ethnicity and identity politics notwithstanding. One notable exception is the research of Kevin MacDonald, a professor of psychology at the California State University at Long Beach. In a trilogy of books, MacDonald advances an evolutionary theory to explain both Jewish and anti-Semitic collective behavior. Over the past few years, his research has gained attention through the Internet. Although still a relatively obscure figure, MacDonald seems to have made his most significant impact on the intellectual currents of what is often referred to as the "far right" and as such, can no longer be ignored.

This essay examines the scholarship of Kevin MacDonald and his growing influence. The first section provides a short biographical sketch. The next section examines his trilogy and other publications on the topics of Judaism, anti-Semitism, and ethnic conflict. Reactions to his research are examined in the third section, which is followed by an interview in which he expounds on his theories and answers his critics. Finally, the conclusion discusses recent developments in the American far right and the impact MacDonald's theories may have on this movement.

•GEORGE MICHAEL (B.S., Widener University; M.A., Temple University; Ph.D., George Mason University) is assistant professor, Administration of Justice and Political Science, The University of Virginia College at Wise. He is author of *The Enemy of My Enemy: The Alarming Convergence of Militant Islam and the Extreme Right*. His articles have appeared in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, *Population and Environment*, and *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Special interests include terrorism and political extremism.

BACKGROUND ON KEVIN MACDONALD

Kevin MacDonald was born in 1944 and raised in a traditional Catholic family in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Growing up, he attended Catholic schools and obtained a BA in philosophy from the University of Wisconsin in 1966. While in college, he became involved in the campus anti-war movement. Interestingly, several of his roommates were Jewish, which, as MacDonald later recounted, opened his eyes to Jewish involvement in radical causes. One incident in particular that left an impression on him was when Jewish student radicals recruited him to give a speech in order to present a supposedly non-Jewish veneer to their politics. During this phase in his life, MacDonald entertained dreams of becoming a jazz pianist.¹ Several years later, however, he abandoned both his musical career and radical politics to enter graduate school at the age of 30.

During his graduate studies, MacDonald was drawn to E.O. Wilson's theory of sociobiology, which assumes that human social behavior is genetically determined. Increasingly, MacDonald became interested in evolutionary theory as a graduate student at the University of Connecticut during the 1970s. For his Ph.D. dissertation, he conducted experiments in the behavioral development of wolves, including one in which he assessed the stability of dominance relations in a litter of captive wolf cubs by dropping infant lab mice into the litter and recording which animal was able to eat them.² He concluded that socially dominant cubs retained their rank as they matured into adults. His doctoral research on wolves also involved observational research on play among the wolf cubs and between adult wolves and the cubs. In 1981, he received a Ph.D. in bio-behavioral sciences. At the University of Illinois he continued his interest in parent-child play by conducting post-doctoral research on parent-child physical play in humans, finding that such play was associated with social competence in children.³ Since joining the faculty at California State University—Long Beach in 1985, much of his research has focused on integrating child development and personality research with evolutionary theory and data.⁴ His writing is well known in the field of evolutionary psychology and he has been affiliated with professional organizations in the areas of child development and evolutionary psychology. He served on the

1. Tony Ortega, "Witness for the Prosecution," *Newtimesla.com*, 26 April 2000; downloaded from <http://www.csulb.edu/~kmacd/newtimes.html> (17 March 2005).

2. Kevin B. MacDonald, "Development and stability of personality characteristics in prepubertal wolves," *Journal of Comparative Psychology* 97 (1983): 99–106.

3. Kevin B. MacDonald and R. D. Parke, R. D., "Bridging the gap: Parent-child play interactions and peer interactive competence," *Child Development*, 55 (1984): 1265–77.

4. See for example, Kevin B. MacDonald, *Social and Personality Development: An Evolutionary Synthesis* (New York: Plenum, 1988); and R. D. Burgess and Kevin B. MacDonald, eds., *Evolutionary Perspectives on Human Development*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2004).

Editorial Board of *Child Development*, the leading journal in the area of developmental psychology from 1989–1994, and in 1995 he was elected to a six-year term as Secretary/Archivist and Executive Board member of the Human Behavior and Evolution Society—the leading professional organization associated with evolutionary psychology. He also edited the newsletter of the society from 1995–2000. From 1999–2004 he served as the editor of *Population and Environment*, an academic journal devoted to the issues related to human population and its impact on the environment.⁵ He has authored numerous books in the field of evolutionary psychology.⁶

An article he read in the *L.A. Times* in 1990 about an enclave of Jews that had lived for many years in Wyoming picqued MacDonald's interest in so-called Jewish survival strategies. Wondering how such a relatively small ethnic group could persist as a unique cultural entity despite having been dispersed around the globe for so many centuries, MacDonald concluded that there must be some evolutionary strategy to explain this occurrence.⁷ With that thought in mind, MacDonald set out to develop an evolutionary strategy to explain Judaism.

A PEOPLE THAT SHALL DWELL ALONE

Published in 1994, MacDonald's first book in his trilogy, *A People that Shall Dwell Alone: An Evolutionary Theory of Judaism* posits that Judaism can be viewed as an evolutionary strategy, which features such characteristics as endogamy, ethnic exclusivity, and in-group altruism. According to MacDonald, Judaism is a highly adaptable strategy, which has enabled the religion to endure in numerous environments through history as evidenced by the fact that Judaism, as it is known today, has survived at least since the period of Babylonian captivity. In his estimation, the strategy has been largely successful, despite periodic reversals of fortune as a result of anti-Semitic actions.

Despite dispersion over a large geographical expanse, MacDonald observes that Jews have retained a remarkable degree of genetic relatedness. They have retained extensive kinship ties in the countries in which they inhabited and remained relatively segregated from the gene pool of the surrounding society.⁸ For MacDonald, from an

5. Interview with Kevin MacDonald, 23 April 2005.

6. His published books in evolutionary psychology include: Kevin B. MacDonald, ed., *Sociobiological Perspectives on Human Development* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1988); Kevin B. MacDonald, *Social and Personality Development: An Evolutionary Synthesis* (New York: Plenum, 1988); Kevin B. MacDonald, ed., *Parent-child Play: Descriptions and Implications* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1993); and Burgess and MacDonald, *Evolutionary Perspectives on Human Development*. His articles on the subject are too numerous to list here.

7. Ortega, "Witness for the Prosecution."

8. See E. Kobyliansky and G.A. Livshits, "Morphological Approach to the Problem of the Biological Similarity of Jewish and non-Jewish Populations," *Annals of Human Biology* 12

evolutionary perspective, Jews are remarkable in that they have generally remained intact and resisted assimilative pressures despite having lived for long periods as a minority in other societies.⁹

MacDonald sees an ideology of separateness permeating the Tanakh, namely, the Old Testament. Judaism was a religion well-suited for a nomadic people insofar as the principle focus of the Jewish God was on a spirituality understood as a "representation of the continuation of the kinship group" and not so much religious artifacts.¹⁰ Put simply, God is conceptualized as an "endogamous, unitary ethnic group—the holy seed of Israel." The ideology served to foster solidarity during periods of group failure, as an increase in "religious fundamentalism, mysticism, and messianism" among its members has been a common Jewish response to persecution.¹¹ Endogamy was a primary concern throughout the Tanakh, as sexual relations with members of the surrounding community were highly discouraged.¹²

Notwithstanding claims of universalism and proselytism, MacDonald sees Jews as a relatively impermeable group insofar as Judaism is generally closed to converts. He interprets the historical evidence as indicating that Judaism, while acknowledging the possibility of conversion in theory, has generally been closed to converts in practice. Although Jews may have fostered an image of group permeability, in reality, they have usually discouraged such practices; converts often faced formidable obstacles and were typically granted a second-class status in the Jewish community.¹³

MacDonald finds a high degree of social and political egalitarianism in Judaism, as group altruism is strongly encouraged. The Talmud condones such practices which emphasizes class harmony among Jews and a strong sense of collective economic responsibility.¹⁴ Various social norms and mores that favor group altruism have been enshrined in a religious ideology and enforced by controls within the Jewish community.¹⁵

According to MacDonald, eugenics practices have endowed Jews with superior intelligence, and consequently, have positioned them well in resource competition with their Gentile neighbors. Talmudic regulations encouraged high fecundity, as Jews, especially the most intelligent, were encouraged to have many children.¹⁶ In traditional

(1985): 203-12, cited in Kevin MacDonald, *A People that Shall Dwell Alone: An Evolutionary Theory of Judaism* (Westport, Ct.: Praeger, 1994), 25.

9. MacDonald, *A People that Shall Dwell Alone*, 58.

10. *Ibid.*, 46.

11. *Ibid.*, 47-48.

12. *Ibid.*, 41.

13. *Ibid.*, 67.

14. *Ibid.*, 143.

15. *Ibid.*, 154.

16. *Ibid.*, 36.

societies there was a correlation between fertility and wealth for all groups, Jews and non-Jews alike. However, the peculiar Jewish occupational niche, which linked economic success to literacy and business acumen rather than warrior virtues or agriculture, resulted in a confluence of wealth, intelligence, and high fertility in Jewish communities, which had eugenic effects on Jewish intelligence.

The Enlightenment, argues MacDonald, posed the most serious challenge to Judaism as a group evolutionary strategy. If Jews embraced assimilation too strongly, they risked being absorbed in the larger Gentile society and thus eliminating their status as a distinct, cohesive ethno-religious group. As MacDonald explains, the Reform movement in Judaism, which commenced in the nineteenth century, was in the main, an attempt to integrate Jews into the modern Western nation state without compromising Jewish group continuity. However, by the early twentieth century, Reform Judaism had reversed this process and reintroduced elements of Jewish particularism.¹⁷ As MacDonald observes, Jewish efforts to maintain exclusivity have occasioned periodic anti-Semitic reactions, the topic of which he examines in the second book of his trilogy.

SEPARATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Even more controversial, *Separation and Its Discontents: Toward an Evolutionary Theory of Anti-Semitism* asserts that the various anti-Semitic mass movements that have bedeviled the history of the West have been largely reactive in that they were Gentile group strategies to resist displacement in competition with Jews. Ethnic separatism, MacDonald argues, tends to lead to resource competition, and in doing so, exacerbates inter-group tensions. Although often accompanied by exaggerations and even fantasies, MacDonald maintains that anti-Jewish movements have often been grounded in genuine conflicts of interest.¹⁸

MacDonald takes issue with traditional theories of anti-Semitism, which imputes causality to peculiar traits of Western civilization such as Christian theology or the particular social class of Jews in a capitalist society or pathological child-parent relations or sexual repression.¹⁹ After all, as he points out, anti-Semitism has appeared in non-Western societies as well. Further, anti-Semitic stereotypes and conspiracy theories demonstrate a remarkable similarity cross-culturally and diachronically. MacDonald observes similar themes of Jewish economic, cultural, and political domination in a variety of anti-Semitic

17. Ibid., 93-96.

18. Kevin MacDonald, *Separation and Its Discontents: Toward an Evolutionary Theory of Anti-Semitism* (Westport, Ct.: Praeger, 1998), 8.

19. MacDonald, *Separation and Its Discontents*, 28.

narratives.²⁰

Rejecting conventional theories, MacDonald believes psychological research on social identity theory provides an adequate explanation of the dynamics of anti-Semitism.²¹ Essentially, he argues that Jewish ethnocentrism, especially in the context of economic or other forms of competition, has produced a heightened sense of group identity in the various Gentile populations among whom Jews have lived. Consequently, anti-Semitic mass movements develop in large part as a reaction to successful Jewish group evolutionary strategies.

As explained in *A People that Shall Dwell Alone*, numerous traits have enabled Jews to attain positions of preeminence in the West. As the esteemed historian of the Middle East, Bernard Lewis observed, under Islam Jews were never free from discrimination, but rarely subjected to persecution. Their situation was never as bad in Christendom at its worst and never as good as in Christendom at its best.²² MacDonald characterizes the West since the end of Middle Ages as an individualistic society, in which anti-Semitism tends to be "sporadic and decentralized." The reason for a lower intensity of anti-Semitism in the Middle East, MacDonald explains, is that the Middle East is a segmentary society composed of various impermeable subgroups which place a much greater emphasis on the collectivity rather than the individual. In a society composed of various competing, impermeable groups, Jews, as a group, were not able to attain the same levels of preeminence as in the West, because self-conscious Islamic groups for whom ethnicity and religion were requirements for entry, in effect blocked them from advancing. Since Jews could not attain high stature in positions of power in the Middle East as they could in the West in such fields as commerce and politics, MacDonald explains that anti-Semitism rarely reached an extreme level of hostility. By contrast, individualism is culturally enshrined in the West, at least since the end of the Middle Ages, which, until the rise of German National Socialism, represented the high point of Western anti-Semitism. One of MacDonald's central ideas is that Jews have had a marked advantage over their host populations in the West in competition over resources because they pursued a collectivist strategy, which is very effective in competition with the individualism and relative lack of ethnocentrism that has generally characterized the West since the end of the Middle Ages.

However, MacDonald believes that this pattern eventually engenders a severe backlash. In order to resist this putative process of displacement and marginalization, Gentile host societies have at times also developed collectivist affinities and "evolutionary group strategies."

20. Ibid., 27-88.

21. Ibid., 28.

22. Bernard Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites: An Inquiry into Conflict and Prejudice* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1986), 121.

MacDonald links this tendency to current research on social identity processes in psychology. Interestingly, he contends that these strategies tend to mimic Judaism because they encourage endogamy, group altruism, and ethnocentrism. MacDonald cites various examples of such movements that have punctuated Western history including medieval feudalism, the Spanish Inquisition, and German National Socialism.

Anti-Semitism first appeared in a significant incarnation in the West with the establishment of the Christian Church. According to MacDonald, by the third century, Judaism had become a powerful competitor *vis-à-vis* Gentiles. The church sought to counter the dominance of Jews and anti-Semitism was given an official imprimatur. For example, Jews were accused of deicide and eventually were barred from certain influential professions and government service. Moreover, they incurred legal and civil liabilities as well. Evidence suggests that the government was often reluctant to implement such measures but often succumbed to public and ecclesiastical pressures to do so.²³ These anti-Semitic overtones in Christendom carried over to later centuries, as anti-Semitism experienced a revival during the medieval period when the church worked vigorously to exclude Jews from economic and political influence. By the thirteenth century, the church's ideology towards Jews became even more hostile. Anti-Semitic measures were preceded by a period in which Jews had attained a peak in economic and cultural prosperity and were expanding in numbers, thus suggesting that resource competition triggered the reaction. As Christianity became more organic, this renewed anti-Semitism was concomitant with the emergence of a highly collectivist and exclusionary medieval society,

Anti-Semitism figured prominently in the Spanish Inquisition as well, which MacDonald sees as primarily resulting from resource competition with Jews, in particular, the so-called *conversos*, specifically, Jews whose ancestors had converted to Christianity beginning in 1391. The *conversos* rapidly became an elite stratum in Spanish society while remaining a cohesive, endogamous community widely believed by gentiles to be insincere in their Christian beliefs. A major function of the Inquisition was to scrutinize the genetic ancestry of individuals suspected of not being of authentic Spanish blood. These measures were codified in the *limpieza* statutes, a body of law, which protected pure Spanish blood and sought to uncover "crypsis" or efforts by *conversos* to conceal their ethnic background. In that sense, the racism, which developed during this epoch, was reactive in nature. MacDonald sees the Inquisition as basically a response to earlier failed attempts to force genetic and group assimilation. To support his assertion, he notes that the *limpieza* laws did not apply to those who had voluntarily converted prior to the year 1391. Rather, those who

23. MacDonald, *Separation and Its Discontents*, 108.

converted after that date were targeted by the Inquisition on the suspicion that they were crypto-Jews who continued as an endogamous minority of doubtful orthodoxy just below the surface of the seemingly homogeneous Christian society Spain became after expelling the Jews in 1492. Therefore, MacDonald concludes, the Inquisition was racist only in the sense that it was concerned with punishing the putative racialism of the Jews.²⁴ Moreover, the Christian faith remained universalistic, as it failed to recognize racial, ethnic, and national differences.

According to MacDonald, German National Socialism was undoubtedly the most serious challenge that Jews have ever faced. He sees the racial nationalism and cohesive collectivism of the National Socialist movement as a radical departure from the Western tradition of universalism and individualism. Furthermore, he observes a strong element of resource competition that contributed to the development of German anti-Semitism. A common theme in the anti-Semitic literature during and leading up to that period was that Jews were eclipsing Germans in a racial struggle. This theme had its most persuasive expression in Houston Stewart Chamberlain's *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, which would significantly influence the development of Hitler's *Weltanschauung*. In Jews, Hitler saw a formidable adversary that posed an existential threat to Aryans. Despite his belief in Aryan racial superiority, Hitler believed that Jews threatened the German nation through subversion and the promotion of racial admixture.

In several key characteristics, MacDonald sees German National Socialism as a near mirror image of Judaism. Like early Judaism, National Socialism was concerned about eugenics. There was also a high level of group altruism and self-sacrifice. For example, recurring themes in the Hitler Youth were an extreme racial nationalism, within-group altruism, the organic unity of the state, blind obedience to the *führer*, and hostility and aggression towards out-groups, especially the Jews.²⁵ The notion of the *Volksgemeinschaft* or the national community, which was viewed as an organic entity, exemplified this. An egalitarian ethos suffused National Socialist propaganda. There was much emphasis on fertility, as German women were encouraged to bear many children. The Nuremberg Laws proscribed both sexual and social intercourse between Germans and Jews. As expounded in *Mein Kampf*, Hitler viewed both Judaism and National Socialism as group evolutionary strategies. Moreover, German National Socialism, took a long view of history, and saw the Aryan race as locked in a struggle for racial survival and preeminence.

MacDonald concludes *Separation and Its Discontents* by discussing

24. Ibid., 124-25.

25. Ibid., 133.

Jewish strategies to combat anti-Semitism, including controlling Jewish behavior; constructing self-serving arguments couched in universalistic terms that appeal to non-Jews; and constructing rationalizations and apologia for their behavior. Particularly interesting is a chapter on Jewish self-deception. Consistent with social identity theory, MacDonald argues that Jewish intellectual activity aims at developing ideologies that affirm their own social identity, often in opposition to their Gentile hosts.²⁶ Towards this end, MacDonald contends that Jews have often been in the forefront of critiques of Gentile culture.

THE CULTURE OF CRITIQUE

Faced with their status as a precarious minority, MacDonald argues that Jews have often developed and promoted intellectual movements to further their group interests and combat anti-Semitism. In that vein, the third book, and perhaps most popular in his trilogy, *The Culture of Critique: An Evolutionary Analysis of Jewish Involvement in Twentieth-Century Intellectual and Political Movements*, asserts that there has been considerable Jewish hostility to traditional Western culture, which has manifested in various intellectual movements—including Freudian psychology, the Frankfurt School, and Boasian anthropology—that have sought to undermine the European-derived civilization of America and replace it with a society more congenial to Jews. As MacDonald sees it, since the Enlightenment, Jews have figured prominently in adversarial cultural movements against the religious, moral, aesthetic, and behavioral norms of gentile society. MacDonald categorically rejects an overarching conspiracy à la *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* and concedes that Judaism does not constitute a unified movement. Furthermore, he points out that not all segments of the Jewish community and not all Jewish social scientists and intellectuals have been involved in these various movements. Nevertheless, he argues the basic thrust of Jewish activism has been to manipulate their surrounding environment in a manner that conforms to their interests. A central theme is that the leaders of these movements saw their involvement as furthering Jewish interests, particularly the eradication of anti-Semitism.

First, he explores the field of anthropology. MacDonald charts the victory of Franz Boas and his cultural relativist school of anthropology, which succeeded in removing biological conceptions of race and racial differences from the social sciences. By the 1930s, the Boasian school had eclipsed the Darwinian school of social science by successfully challenging the ability of evolutionary theory to provide an adequate

26. Kevin MacDonald, *The Culture of Critique: An Evolutionary Analysis of Jewish Involvement in Twentieth-Century Intellectual and Political Movements* (Westport, Ct.: Praeger, 1998), 13.

theory of cultural differences.²⁷ American racialist scholars, such as Madison Grant and Lothrop Stoddard, were eventually anathematized, their previous popularity notwithstanding. MacDonald cites evidence indicating that Boas strongly identified himself as a Jew and saw his work as combating anti-Semitism and discrediting theories, which ascribed an elevated status to European civilization. MacDonald argues that Boas relied upon several prominent Gentile "front" scholars to conceal the Jewish character of the school. Supposedly, Margaret Mead, whose book, *Coming of Age in Samoa*, revolutionized American anthropology in the direction of radical environmentalism, was chief among them.²⁸ Jews were also supposed to have also been in the forefront of discrediting more recent attempts to biologize the social sciences. For example, MacDonald argues that this pattern continues, as evidenced by Stephen Gould's *The Mismeasure of Man*, which he characterizes as a highly politicized critique of evolutionary approaches to human behavior and hereditarian views on IQ.²⁹

Next, MacDonald examines the influence of Jews on the political left, focusing mainly on whether leftist Jews continued to identify as Jews and whether they saw radical politics as compatible with Jewish interests. Despite claims of universalism, MacDonald contends that Jews in these movements often retained a strong Jewish identity. What is more, Jewish support for leftist causes waxed and waned depending on whether they furthered Jewish interests.³⁰ Jewish support for Communism is illustrative of this pattern.

MacDonald observes that Jews figured very prominently among the Bolsheviks during the revolution. The fact that the Czarist regime was recognized as anti-Semitic was an important motivating force for Jewish involvement in left wing politics during and prior to that period. He further asserts that the Jewish element constituted a necessary component without which the movement would not have succeeded. He additionally implicates Jews as leading agents in the Great Terror, which ravaged the Soviet Union during the 1930s.³¹ MacDonald notes that opposition to the Czarist government and support for Bolshevism during the early post-revolutionary period spanned the entire Jewish community, including prominent capitalists, such as Jacob Schiff, who provided financial support for anti-czarist revolutionaries. However, once Stalin turned on the Jews, their fortunes changed in the Soviet Union. Removed from leading positions in government, the military, and the media, Jews would consequently go on to form the backbone of

27. MacDonald, *The Culture of Critique*, 25.

28. *Ibid.*, 27.

29. *Ibid.*, 31-36.

30. *Ibid.*, 58.

31. Kevin MacDonald, "Stalin's Willing Executioners: Jews As A Hostile Elite in the USSR," *Occidental Quarterly*, 5 (Spring 2005): 65-100.

the dissident or "refusenik" movement in the Soviet Union.³²

In the long run, however, MacDonald does not see universalistic ideologies such as communism in the presence of continued Jewish group cohesion and identity as a viable mechanism for countering anti-Semitism. The authoritarianism of highly collectivist social and economic structures in the style of socialism and communism enables a highly efficient institutionalization of anti-Semitism if Jewish predominance in that society comes to be viewed negatively.³³ MacDonald argues that Jews fare much better in societies characterized by individualism and fragmentation. Therefore, it is unsurprising that Jewish neo-conservatives have been critical of corporate, statist ideologies as a direct consequence of the recognition that they have resulted in state-sponsored anti-Semitism.³⁴

The psychoanalytic movement, founded by Sigmund Freud, comes under MacDonald's scrutiny as well. Freud, who strongly identified as a Jew, was deeply concerned with anti-Semitism and at times critical of the Gentile society in which he lived. Freud regarded anti-Semitism as a psychopathology stemming ultimately from the putative sexual repression of Gentile society. MacDonald finds that psychoanalysis had a deleterious influence on Gentile society in that it undermined institutions surrounding marriage and sex—influences that can lead to low-investment parenting.³⁵ These consequences, however, have been particularly pernicious to Gentiles because Jews, MacDonald argues, as a highly intelligent, upwardly mobile group, have more internal controls on their behavior and are therefore less prone to the negative effects of stemming from the erosion of traditional Western controls on sexuality.³⁶

The Frankfurt School of Social Research comes under intense criticism from MacDonald, which he accuses of deliberately seeking to "pathologize" Gentile group allegiances. The Frankfurt School originated in Germany, but shortly after Hitler's ascent to power in 1933, the Nazi regime moved against it. Consequently, many of its researchers relocated to the University of California at Berkeley and other elite American universities. After World War II, they sought to explain how the phenomenon of fascism was able to take hold. Most notable in this regard was *The Authoritarian Personality*, written under the direction of T. W. Adorno and published by the American Jewish Committee. Basic to the theory was the psychoanalytic idea that disturbed parent-child relations involving the suppression of human sexuality was the principal factor leading to authoritarianism.³⁷

32. MacDonald, *The Culture of Critique*, 98.

33. *Ibid.*, 100.

34. *Ibid.*, 101.

35. *Ibid.*, 135.

36. *Ibid.*, 149-150.

37. *Ibid.*, 178.

The *Authoritarian Personality*, MacDonald points out, recognized that anti-Semitism was often associated with Gentile movements for national cohesion.³⁸ A key theme was that Gentile participation in cohesive groups with high levels of conformity was symptomatic of pathology. However, MacDonald points out that this touchstone was not applied to Jews for whom group cohesion and affinity were ignored.³⁹ Gentile collectivist tendencies are thought to ultimately lead to anti-Semitic mass movements, such as German National Socialism. According to MacDonald, expression of Gentile group solidarity is often deligitimized as "right wing extremism," as evidenced by, for example, Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab's study on the topic, *The Politics of Unreason: Right Wing Extremism in America, 1790-1970*. A self-conscious Gentile pursuit of group interests receives treatment as irrational and indicative of psychopathology.⁴⁰ In its stead, MacDonald avers, the Frankfurt School sought to promote a radical individualism to Gentiles.⁴¹

MacDonald cites previous research suggesting that historically, the incidence of anti-Semitism is less likely to manifest in individualist, heterogeneous societies as opposed to cohesive, homogeneous societies.⁴² Consequently, MacDonald argues that Jewish interest groups have sought to make American society more heterogeneous by promoting a liberal "open borders" immigration policy. He marshals evidence to demonstrate that the major Jewish organizations (e.g., the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Congress, and the American Jewish Committee) have promoted an immigration policy that would allow for a more diverse pool of immigrants, and lead eventually to a more racially and ethnically diverse population. Further, MacDonald claims that Jews have advocated similar pro-immigration efforts in Western Europe, Canada, and Australia. The objective was the same in America: to make the countries more ethnically and racially heterogeneous, thus diminishing the likelihood of the emergence of cohesive anti-Semitic mass movements.⁴³ Although MacDonald conceded that other entities, such as ethnic and business groups, have also sought to shape immigration policy, he maintains the most important influence in the period leading up to the sea change in policy inaugurated by the 1965 immigration law was Jewish. Even though the majority of the population may oppose massive immigration, they are poorly organized and without access to

38. *Ibid.*, 161.

39. *Ibid.*, 162.

40. *Ibid.*, 195.

41. *Ibid.*, 165.

42. *Ibid.*, 166, and Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, *Jews and the New American Scene* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995).

43. MacDonald, *The Culture of Critique*, 294-97.

the major media.⁴⁴

Multiculturalism, MacDonald asserts, militates against anti-Semitism insofar as it makes it more difficult for the development of unified, cohesive groups of Gentiles to unite in their opposition to Judaism. It is no coincidence that the most significant anti-Semitic movements have emerged in societies characterized by religious and ethnic homogeneity. Therefore, ethnically and religiously pluralistic societies are more likely to satisfy Jewish interests.⁴⁵ A key theme of *The Culture of Critique* is that Jews have worked in concert with other minority interests to foster a multicultural society and in doing so, create a more congenial environment in which it far less likely that a homogeneous Gentile group will be arrayed against the Jews as an out-group.⁴⁶ However, MacDonald believes that a multicultural society is unsustainable. He makes the highly controversial assertion that the European-derived peoples have a unique genetic disposition that allows only them to sustain certain Western institutions and practices such as individualism, universalism, pluralism, respect for minority rights, and republican forms of government. Once the European-derived population diminishes below a certain critical mass, it would become "every group for itself." As explained in the conclusion of *Culture of Critique*, MacDonald depicts a somber future for the West, which leads to oblivion for the European-derived population or a period of quasi-medievalism in which the European-derived population develops a collectivist orientation in order to preserve itself as a unique cultural and ethnic entity.⁴⁷ Recently, MacDonald expanded on some his theories in a new monograph.

UNDERSTANDING JEWISH INFLUENCE: A STUDY IN ETHNIC ACTIVISM

Released in 2004, the monograph *Understanding Jewish Influence: A Study in Ethnic Activism*, elaborates on some of the themes of MacDonald's trilogy. In it, MacDonald argues that Jews are highly ethnocentric and able to cooperate in extremely cohesive, organized groups. He identifies four background traits that account for the high success of Jewish activism: ethnocentrism, intelligence, psychological intensity, and aggressiveness. According to MacDonald, these traits have enabled Jews to have had powerful transformative effects on the societies in which they reside.⁴⁸

MacDonald traces the genesis of Jewish "hypoethnocentrism" to

44. Kevin MacDonald, "The Numbers Game: Ethnic Conflict in the Contemporary World," *Population and Environment* 21 (2005): 413-25.

45. MacDonald, *Separation and Its Discontents*, 276.

46. *Ibid.*, 74.

47. MacDonald, *The Culture of Critique*, 310-22.

48. Kevin MacDonald, *Understanding Jewish Influence: A Study in Ethnic Activism* (Augusta, Ga.: Washington Summit Publishers, 2004), 9.

their Middle Eastern origins. Jews and other Middle Eastern cultures evolved under conditions that favored the formation of large groups dominated by males. Essentially, these groups were extended families that practiced endogamy and consanguineous marriage (namely marriage between uncles and nieces). MacDonald observes that these characteristics were just the opposite of those cultural tendencies found in Western Europe, which favored individualism and where group identity is relatively attenuated.⁴⁹ MacDonald cites previous research, indicating that Jews evince the highest bias towards their group among other racial and ethnic groups.⁵⁰ This heightened ethnocentrism is tied to a very long sense of historical persecution, which engenders a strong sense of group grievance, and, according to MacDonald, often expresses itself as an extreme enmity towards European and Christian civilization.

High intelligence, MacDonald maintains, has given Jews a marked advantage in their affairs with Gentiles. He cites previous research that suggest that Jews, as a group, exhibit a significantly higher average IQ than the population at large. It would then seem to follow that Jews would be more successful and influential. For example, MacDonald cites data indicating that although Jews make up approximately only 3 percent of the American population, they account for 45 percent of the people on the *Forbes* richest 400 Americans. Furthermore, 20 percent of the professors at leading universities are Jewish, and 40 percent of the partners of the leading New York and Washington, D.C. law firms are Jewish as well.⁵¹

According to MacDonald, Jews are also psychologically intense and exhibit an intense commitment to Jewish causes.⁵² This strong emotionality serves as a force multiplier for Jewish activism, most notably, in the areas of support for Israel, immigration policy, and civil rights.

MacDonald argues that Jewish aggressiveness has often expressed itself in overt hostility to American culture and the Christian religion. Moreover, he characterizes the Jewish Diaspora experience as qualitatively different from the experience of other Diasporic populations. Whereas, for example, the Chinese in Southeast Asia have usually pursued a more assimilative coexistence with their hosts, MacDonald contends that Jews have often taken an adversarial position *vis-à-vis* their neighbors.⁵³ MacDonald sees Zionism as an illustration of Jewish ethnocentric activism.

According to MacDonald, Zionism is the most important example of Jewish extremism in the contemporary world. Furthermore, he

49. MacDonald, *Understanding Jewish Influence*, 10-11.

50. MacDonald, *Separation and Its Discontents*, 17.

51. MacDonald, *Understanding Jewish Influence*, 24.

52. *Ibid.*, 27-28.

53. *Ibid.*, 31.

asserts the most extreme elements within the Jewish community ultimately give direction to the community as a whole. Although Zionism originally emerged as a radical movement among very committed segments of the Jewish population, it eventually spread and became mainstream within the Jewish community. Demonstrative of the influence of Zionism on the larger Jewish community, MacDonald observes that the early Zionists actually unsettled the Jewish community insofar as the latter feared that the chauvinism of the former could lead to charges of dual loyalty.⁵⁴ However, by 1945, a poll in the United States found that 80.5 percent favored the creation of Israel and only 10.5 percent opposed it.⁵⁵ In recent years, the neo-conservative movement has been in the forefront of the effort to support Zionism.

MacDonald advances the thesis that the neo-conservative movement can be conceptualized as a Jewish intellectual and political movement. He sees it as a fundamentally different variant of American conservatism, if it could even be classified accurately as conservatism at all. Moreover, by displacing traditional forms of conservatism, MacDonald believes that neo-conservatism "has actually solidified the hold of the left on political and cultural discourse in America."⁵⁶ As he sees it, the best predictor of neo-conservative attitudes, at least in the realm of foreign policy, is what the Israeli political right thinks is in the best interests of Israel.⁵⁷ He characterizes the neo-conservative movement as an interlocking complex of professional and family networks centered on Jewish publicists and organizers that draw upon and recruit non-Jews "in harnessing the wealth and power of the United States" in support of Israel.⁵⁸ One consequence of the solid support for Zionism in the Jewish community is that the United States has over the years become increasingly involved in the Middle East, often supporting the hard-line policies of the Likud Party. Furthermore, he accuses Jewish neo-conservative activists as the principal force in fomenting the most recent war in Iraq.⁵⁹

The neo-conservative movement emerged from a group of originally leftist intellectuals including Max Shachtman, an early admirer of Leon Trotsky, who would go on to become a Cold Warrior and a social democrat in the late 1940s.⁶⁰ MacDonald points out that the chief "guru" of the neo-conservative movement, Leo Strauss,

54. *Ibid.*, 48.

55. *Ibid.*, 51.

56. Quoted in *ibid.*, 66.

57. MacDonald, *Understanding Jewish Influence*, 67.

58. *Ibid.*, 67.

59. Kevin MacDonald, "The Conservatism of Fools: A Response to John Derbyshire," available online at: <http://www.csulb.edu/~kmacd/books-derbyshire.html>, downloaded 17 March 2005.

60. MacDonald, *Understanding Jewish Influence*, 75-76.

believed that individualist, Western societies were best suited to meet Jewish needs. The main contribution of Strauss's philosophy, according to MacDonald, was to establish a blueprint for Jewish survival in the Diaspora. Strauss attained a veritable cult status and advocated an aristocratic rule of kings, who would pay lip service to traditional religious and political beliefs of the masses, while at the same time, not believing them.⁶¹ He believed in the use of deception and manipulation to attain goals.⁶² Other notable figures in the neo-conservative movement include Nathan Glazer, Sidney Hook, Stephen Bryen, Charles Krauthammer, Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Elliot Abrams, Douglas Feith, Abram Shulsky, Michael Ledeen, Bernard Lewis, Daniel Pipes, and some non-Jewish figures as well, including Dick Cheney, and Donald Rumsfeld.⁶³ MacDonald asserts that the visibility of non-Jews who, for a variety of personal and political reasons, identify with Jewish causes disguises the Jewish character of the neo-conservative movement.⁶⁴

MacDonald accuses the neo-conservatives of applying a double standard in that they extol multiculturalism in the West, while insisting upon ethnic exclusivity in Israel. He implicates the neo-conservatives in what he characterizes as the most destructive force associated with the political left in the twentieth century—that is, massive non-European immigration into the Western world—citing, for example, the comments of Ben Wattenberg, who referred to the “non-Europeanization of America,” as “heartening news of an almost transcendental quality.”⁶⁵ In recent years, MacDonald has turned his attention to the unique characteristics of the West and how they have influenced the relationship between the West and Judaism.

WHAT MAKES WESTERN CULTURE UNIQUE?

As MacDonald explains, the European-derived peoples have traveled an evolutionary trajectory resulting in a unique genetic make up that has greatly influenced Western civilization. Among the most notable differences between the West and other cultures are marital practices, social isolation, and individualism. Whereas the West has a long tradition of monogamy, other cultures have a long tradition of polygyny. MacDonald theorizes that the practice of monogamy was ecologically imposed in the West, as the harsh conditions of the Ice Age made it nearly impossible for males to control additional females because the investment of each male had to be directed to the children

61. *Ibid.*, 91.

62. *Ibid.*, 92.

63. *Ibid.*, 93-110.

64. *Ibid.*, 69.

65. *Ibid.*, 84.

of one woman.⁶⁶ If these conditions persist for an evolutionarily significant time, then the population eventually would develop tendencies towards monogamy even after the conditions that gave rise to it have ceased.⁶⁷

Because of their evolutionary development, MacDonald postulates, Europeans have been less subject to between-group natural selection processes than Jews and other Middle Eastern ethnic groups have experienced.⁶⁸ Drawing upon the research of Fritz Lenz, MacDonald posits that the harsh environment of the Ice Age engendered a tendency towards social isolation among the various Nordic peoples.⁶⁹ Consequently, Northern Europeans have not developed to the same degree the collectivist mechanisms for group competition. They tend to be less elaborated and require a much higher level of group conflict to trigger their expression.⁷⁰

Individualism, MacDonald posits, is a unique trait to the West. What is more, MacDonald argues, the tradition of American individualism militates against the formation of an effective mass movement arrayed against Jews insofar as people from individualist cultures tend to have a more favorable view of strangers and are less likely to hold negative views on out-groups.⁷¹ Consequently, MacDonald believes that individualist societies are ideal environments for collectivist, group-oriented strategies, such as Judaism.⁷²

As MacDonald sees it, both Jewish organizations and individual Jews have worked on a number of fronts to wage a *Kulturkampf* against the European-derived population of the West:

Jewish organizations in America have been a principal force—in my view the main force—for erecting a state dedicated to suppressing ethnic identification among Europeans, for encouraging massive multi-ethnic immigration into the U.S., and for erecting a legal system and cultural ideology that is obsessively sensitive to the complaints and interests of ethnic minorities: the culture of the Holocaust.⁷³

Through such provocative statements, MacDonald has occasioned considerable controversy. His critics fear that this scholarship could further nefarious ends in that his theories would tend to give credence to themes long echoed by the anti-Semitic segment of the far right.

66. Kevin MacDonald, "What Makes Western Culture Unique?," *The Occidental Quarterly* 2 (Summer 2002): 10.

67. *Ibid.*, 14-17.

68. *Ibid.*, 22.

69. Fritz Lenz, "The Inheritance of Intellectual Gifts," in E. Baur, E. Fischer, and F. Lenz, *Human Heredity*, trans. E. Paul & C. Paul (New York Macmillan, 1931), 657, in MacDonald, "What Makes Western Culture Unique?," 22.

70. MacDonald, "What Makes Western Culture Unique?," 22.

71. "Correspondence," *The Occidental Quarterly* 2 (Spring 2002): 10.

72. MacDonald, "What Makes Western Culture Unique?," 31.

73. MacDonald, *Understanding Jewish Influence*, 33.

REACTIONS TO MACDONALD'S RESEARCH

Not surprisingly, MacDonald's highly controversial trilogy on the study of Judaism and anti-Semitism has occasioned strong reactions from different quarters. His trilogy has been well received by those in the racist right, as it amounts to a theoretically sophisticated justification for anti-Semitism. In the fractious world of the American far right, virtually no figure escapes hostility from at least some quarters in the movement. Even prominent activists such as David Duke, Tom Metzger, William Pierce, Willis Carto, and Jared Taylor have had their detractors within the far right. By contrast, Kevin MacDonald has attained a near reverential status and is generally considered beyond reproach, although some may disagree with certain aspects of his theories.

The National Alliance, the organization led by the late Dr. William L. Pierce, praised MacDonald's trilogy in American Dissident Voices broadcasts and in its journal, *National Vanguard*.⁷⁴ Pierce integrated MacDonald's evolutionary theories into his own critique of Judaism as he echoed similar themes in his American Dissident Voices radio broadcasts.⁷⁵

The historical revisionist journal, *The Barnes Review*, gave a favorable review to MacDonald's trilogy as well. However, the reviewer, Alexander Jacob, opined that MacDonald had not adequately emphasized Jewish exclusivity as the main factor impelling antagonism towards Gentiles.⁷⁶

Most of the published reviews to MacDonald's scholarship have appeared in so-called paleo-conservative journals. Paul Gottfried wrote a favorable review of *The Culture of Critique* in the journal *Chronicles*. However, he believed MacDonald ascribed too much influence to Jews rather than liberal Protestants in shaping the liberal post-war orientation of American society. Moreover, he believed MacDonald greatly exaggerated the impact of Jewish interests on United States' immigration policy. MacDonald countered with the assertion that the Jewish intellectual and political movements discussed in his book were a necessary condition for the transformation of America. Further, he argued that the collective influence of various "Jewish" intellectual movements such as the Frankfurt School, Boasian anthropology, psychoanalysis, neo-conservatism, and the New York

74. See "Two Lessons in Racial Survival," *National Vanguard* 117 (March-April 1997); available online at: <http://www.natvan.com/national-vanguard/117/2lessons.html>; Kevin Strom, "Transplants Cause Death," American Dissident Voices Broadcast, 1 March 2003; and William Pierce, "Books and Freedom," American Dissident Voices Broadcast, 4 December 1999.

75. For more on the worldview of Pierce, see George Michael, "The Revolutionary Model of Dr. William L. Pierce," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15 (Autumn 2003): 62-80.

76. Alexander Jacob, "Is the Jewish 'Survival Strategy' A Threat to Western Society?," *The Barnes Review* 6 (March/April 2000): 23.

intellectuals effectively cut the moral rug under those who would advocate a restrictionist immigration policy on the basis of European racial interests.⁷⁷ Writing in the journal, *American Renaissance*, Stanley Hornbeck (a pseudonym) lauded *The Culture of Critique*, but found the assertion holding Jews singularly responsible for the major cultural transformation of the past century overwrought. Rather, he believed white Gentiles deserved much of the blame insofar as they abandoned their sense of cultural and racial identity and, in a Spenglerian sense, lost their will to survive as a unique racial entity.⁷⁸ In an Internet review, Stephen Sniegowski spoke favorably to *A People That Shall Dwell Alone*, but maintained that MacDonald's insistence on explaining so many aspects of Judaism based on a conscious evolutionary strategy to be over-determinative.⁷⁹

The Occidental Quarterly, the journal of the Charles Martel Society with which MacDonald is affiliated, also reviewed *The Culture of Critique*. Although the journal's reviewer, Hugh Perry, agreed with MacDonald that the organized Jewish community has taken an adversarial position *vis-à-vis* Gentile society, he imputed the decline of the West not so much to Jews, but rather a malaise indigenous to Western civilization.⁸⁰ MacDonald's recent writing on the nature of Western culture and its relationship to Judaism (see above) may be seen as a response to these criticisms.

MacDonald did little to disabuse the charge that he associated with the far right when in 2000, he testified on behalf of the revisionist historian, David Irving, in his libel suit against Deborah Lipstadt in London. Irving is probably the most sophisticated of the so-called revisionist historians, whose books, although controversial, have gained some critical acclaim. At issue in the trial was the charge that Lipstadt had libeled Irving as a "Holocaust denier" in her 1993 book, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*. In some lectures, Irving has impugned the existence of gas chambers at Auschwitz during the period of the Holocaust. During his testimony, MacDonald asserted that Irving had suffered a campaign of censure by Jewish organizations, such as the Anti-Defamation League, as a result of his controversial historiography. Most notable in this regard was the pressure applied by Jewish organizations and activists to St. Martin's Press, which rescinded publication of Irving's book, *Goebbels: Mastermind of the Third Reich*, in the spring of 1996.⁸¹ According to

77. For the exchange between Cottfried and MacDonald see Paul Gottfried, "A Race Apart," *Chronicles* (June 2000): 27-29.

78. Stanley Hornbeck, "Cherchez le Juif," *American Renaissance* (March 1999): 6-11.

79. Stephen Sniegowski, "A self-chosen people?," *The Last Ditch* 19 (19 December 1997); available online at: http://www.thornwalker.com/ditch/snieg_macdon.htm.

80. Hugh Perry, "The Jewish Question Once Again," *The Occidental Quarterly* 1 (Winter 2001): 83-90.

81. After numerous protests, St. Martin's chairman Thomas J. McCormack canceled

MacDonald, a double standard exists insofar as ethnocentric Jews are able to have their work published by prestigious mainstream publishers and often obtain positions at elite academic institutions.⁸² For her part, Lipstadt characterized MacDonald's research as "high-class anti-Semitism."⁸³

To his critics, MacDonald provides a pseudo-intellectual cant to the prejudices of anti-Semites. Some of the various "watchdog" organizations that monitor right-wing extremism have criticized MacDonald's scholarship. For example, the Southern Poverty Law Center has occasionally mentioned MacDonald in critical articles about him and other so-called paleo-conservatives.⁸⁴ Marc Caplan, a research analyst for the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), wrote a report on MacDonald, but it has yet to be released. Interestingly, the ADL has yet to launch a full-scale assault on MacDonald, presumably, preferring instead to pursue a policy of "quarantine" or "dynamic silence." Generally speaking, according to this measure, anti-Semites are to be ignored until they attain a certain level of notoriety at which time the Jewish defense organizations will publicly respond.⁸⁵ However, in February 2006, Marilyn Mayo, the associate director of the ADL's Fact Finding division, included a critical discussion on MacDonald in her testimony before the First International Conference on Academic Anti-Semitism held in Amsterdam.⁸⁶

MacDonald's trilogy was not widely reviewed in the mainstream

Irving's book. He claimed that St. Martins was unaware of the controversial content of Irving's book, which is hard to believe due to his international notoriety. Irving attributed the cancellation to pressure from organized Jewish groups. See Paul Gray, "Revisiting a Revisionist," *Time* (15 April 1996), 103.

82. See "Testimony of Kevin MacDonald in the Matter of David Irving Versus Deborah Lipstadt, available online at: <http://www.csulb.edu/~knacd/irving-mediaFlyer.html>, downloaded 17 March 2005. For more on MacDonald's testimony, see D. D. Guttenplan, *The Holocaust on Trial* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001), 129-31.

83. For more on Lipstadt's account of MacDonald's testimony at the Irving trial, see Deborah E. Lipstadt, *History on Trial: My Day in Court with David Irving* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 151-59.

84. See for example, Heidi Beirich and Mark Potok, "Keeping America White," *Intelligence Report* (Winter 2003); available online at: <http://www.splcenter.org/intel/intelreport/article.jsp?aid=152>; and Bill Berkowitz, "Reframing the Enemy," *Intelligence Report* (Summer 2003); available online at: <http://www.splcenter.org/intel/intelreport/article.jsp?aid=53>.

85. Dr. Solomon Andhil Fineberg of the American Jewish Committee is given credit for the creation of this tactic. It was first devised in the late 1940s to meet the challenge of Gerald L. K. Smith, one of the most notable anti-Semitic far rightists of the last century. Fineberg expounded on the "quarantine treatment" in S. Andhil Fineberg, "The Quarantine Treatment," in Edwin S. Newman, ed., *The Hate Reader* (New York: Oceana Publications, 1964), 111-16.

86. Testimony of Marilyn Mayo, associate director of Fact Finding, Anti-Defamation League submitted before the First International Conference on Academic Anti-Semitism, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 23 February 2006, available online at: http://www.adl.org/osce/Mayo_academic_as_article.pdf.

press. John Derbyshire, a regular contributor for *The National Review*, wrote a critical review of *The Culture of Critique* in the journal, *The American Conservative*, in which he referred to MacDonald as the "Marx of the anti-Semites." Essentially, Derbyshire found MacDonald's thesis overwrought. He furthermore expressed sympathy for the efforts of Jews to pursue policies that protect their group interests.⁸⁷ MacDonald responded in an internet essay titled "The Conservatism of Fools," in which he accused Derbyshire of living in a "childlike world in which Jewish interests are legitimate and where attempts to pursue their interests, though they may occasionally be irritating, are not really a cause for concern much less malice." Furthermore, he criticized Derbyshire for not taking seriously the prospect that real conflicts of interests could underpin Jewish-gentile interactions.⁸⁸

Arguably, MacDonald's most strident critic has been Judith Shulevitz, who wrote several critical articles for *Slate*—an Internet magazine. Shulevitz urged researchers in the field of evolutionary psychology to condemn MacDonald and excoriated him for seemingly presenting a rational explanation for—*inter alia*—the Nazi Holocaust. At times her criticism of MacDonald verged on ad hominem attacks, characterizing his university as a "third rate school."⁸⁹

More recently, in May 2006, Jacob Laksin wrote a critical article that appeared in the conservative Internet magazine *FrontpageMagazine.com*, in which he described MacDonald's research as "polemical" rather than scholarly, and motivated by an anti-Jewish animus. According to Laksin, in order to lend his research an "air of respectability," MacDonald believed that "an excess of footnotes will compensate for a conspicuous deficit of facts."⁹⁰ MacDonald retorted by stating that "[w]e are approaching a situation where being labeled an anti-Semite is a badge of honor."⁹¹

For the most part, academe has not given much formal attention to MacDonald's trilogy. Most of the academic criticism has been confined to Internet discussion forums. In an online article entitled

87. John Derbyshire, "The Marx of the Anti-Semites," *The American Conservative*, 10 March 2002; available online at: http://www.amconmag.com/03_10_03/review.html.

88. MacDonald, "The Conservatism of Fools."

89. Judith Shulevitz, "Evolutionary Psychology's Anti-Semite," *Slate* (24 January 2000); available online at: <http://slate.msn.com/id/1004446/>.

90. Jacob Laksin, "Cal State's Professor of Anti-Semitism," *FrontpageMagazine.com* (4 May 2006); available online at: <http://www.frontpagemag.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=22313>.

91. MacDonald's comments appeared in a reply that was posted on his website at <http://www.kevinmacdonald.net/laksin.htm>. Shortly after he made these comments, Kevin Alfred Strom of the extreme right National Vanguard lauded MacDonald's comments as an "era-defining statement" and praised him for his scholarship. Kevin Alfred Strom, "The Badge of Honor," *American Dissident Voices* (7 May 2006); available online at: <http://www.nationalvanguard.org/story.php?pid=8884>.

"Scholarship as an Exercise in Rhetorical Strategy: A Case Study of Kevin MacDonald's Research Techniques," David Lieberman focused on MacDonald's selective use of Jaff Schatz's book, *The Generation*, for a chapter the former had written in *The Culture of Critique*, which examined Jewish participation in the Communist Party around World War II. Lieberman characterized MacDonald's research techniques as opportunistic. Moreover, he pointed out that MacDonald had garnered a following among white supremacists and other right-wing extremists.⁹²

Some researchers in the field of evolutionary psychology have spoken out against MacDonald. Most notable in this regard are University of California, Santa Barbara professor John Tooby and his wife, Leda Cosmides, who both named the field in 1992. Back in 2000, Tooby was busy preparing a refutation of MacDonald; however, as of 2006 it has yet to be released.⁹³ Agreeing with Tooby and Cosmides, the prominent Harvard linguist and psychologist, Steven Pinker added that MacDonald's theories "collectively add up to a consistently invidious portrayal of Jews, couched in value-laden, disparaging language."⁹⁴ Ken Jacobs, an anthropologist at the University of Montreal, described MacDonald's research as "far out" and "factually wrong." He even prepared a 300-page manuscript detailing errors in the trilogy; however, the manuscript has never been released.⁹⁵

Although he continues to hold his position as professor of psychology at the California State University, Long Beach, MacDonald reports that his academic horizons have been restricted as a result of his controversial research. For example, he now finds that the more prestigious academic journals in psychology are loath to publish his articles. As a result, he must now resort to less prestigious journals when submitting his articles.⁹⁶ The administration at his university has taken no action against him, but once issued a public statement that his personal and academic opinions "do not necessarily represent the opinions or beliefs of the university or the faculty."⁹⁷ MacDonald's decision to testify on behalf of David Irving sparked an imbroglio on the campus at Long Beach in 2000. After a flurry of critical Internet

92. David Lieberman, "Scholarship as an Exercise in Rhetorical Strategy: A Case Study of Kevin MacDonald's Research Techniques," H-Antisemitism Occasional Papers, posted 29 January 2001; available online at: http://www.h-net.org/~antis/papers/dl/macdonald_schatz_01.html.

93. Tony Ortega, "In the Hot Seat," *newtimesla.com*; available online at: <http://www.csulb.edu/~kmacd/newtimes-Ortega2.html>, downloaded 25 April 2005.

94. Lipstadt, *History on Trial*, 154.

95. Ortega, "Witness for the Prosecution."

96. Interview with Kevin MacDonald, 23 April 2005.

97. Alison Schneider, "Professor Who Defended Holocaust Denier Now Faces Scrutiny of His Own Views," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (31 May 2000); available online at: <http://www.csulb.edu/~kmacd/irving-che.html>.

articles on MacDonald, some of his colleagues at the university, including his former friend and tennis partner, Martin Fiebert, demanded that his views on Judaism be subjected to a public campus forum. For his part, MacDonald declined, commenting that the idea seemed "more like an inquisition than an attempt to find out the truth about anything."⁹⁸ Instead, he chose to moderate an Internet discussion based on his scholarship.⁹⁹ The controversy actually gained considerable attention, as evidenced by an article covering the event in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.¹⁰⁰

Not all responses to MacDonald from academe have been critical. For example, in a review that appeared in the *Human Ethology Bulletin*, Frank Salter of the Max Plank Institute in Germany, asserted that much of the criticism leveled at MacDonald stemmed from "ignorance of his scholarship and a confounding of political and scientific issues." Salter went on to characterize MacDonald as a scholar of "considerable analytical power and scope."¹⁰¹ In a favorable review of *A People that Shall Dwell Alone*, John Hartung, a professor at the State University of New York at Brooklyn, described MacDonald's research as extensive and competent. Furthermore, he argued that the theme of group competition—a central component of MacDonald's thesis—suffused Jewish primary texts such as the Torah and the notion of reactive anti-Semitism to be theoretically sound.¹⁰² Hartung also defended MacDonald's decision to testify on behalf of David Irving.¹⁰³ Finally, David Sloan Wilson, a professor at Binghamton University, found MacDonald's theories of adaptive group strategies convincing and applicable to other groups besides Jews.¹⁰⁴

Inasmuch as MacDonald has generated a significant amount of controversy, the opportunity for him to answer his critics and expound

98. Schneider, "Professor Who Defended Holocaust Denier Now Faces Scrutiny of His Own Views."

99. These articles included Ortega, "In the Hot Seat"; Judith Shulevitz, "How to Deal With Fringe Academics," *Slate* (3 February 2000); available online at: <http://slate.msn.com/id/74139>; and Judith Shulevitz, "Evolutionary Psychology's Anti-Semite," *Slate* (January 24, 2000); available online at: <http://slate.msn.com/id/1004446/>.

100. Schneider, "Professor Who Defended Holocaust Denier Now Faces Scrutiny of His Own Views."

101. Frank Salter, "Essay/Review of *Culture of Critique: An Evolutionary Analysis of Jewish Involvement in Twentieth-Century Intellectual and Political Movements*," *Human Ethology Bulletin* 15 (September 2000), 16-22.

102. John Hartung, "Book Review of *A People that Shall Dwell Alone: Judaism as a Group Evolutionary Strategy*," *Ethnology and Sociobiology*, July 1995, downloaded from <http://www.lrainc.com/swtaboo/tabooos/aptsda01.html>.

103. "Comment by John Hartung," *Culturebox: the Fray*; available online at: <http://www.csulb.edu/~knacd/slate-Hartung.html>, downloaded 17 March 2005.

104. David Sloan Wilson, "Selfish Groups and Adaptive Fictions: Two Themes Addressed by Kevin MacDonald Worth Defending," in *Culturebox: the Fray*; available online at: <http://www.csulb.edu/~knacd/slate-wilson.html>, downloaded 17 March 2005.

on his theories is in order.

INTERVIEW WITH KEVIN MACDONALD

Despite the controversy generated by his trilogy, MacDonald has rarely had an opportunity to confront his critics. Hopefully, this interview, which was conducted as an email exchange, will bring new insight into the man and his research.

George Michael: Your meticulous scholarship notwithstanding, some of your critics fear that your research provides a sort of intellectual legitimacy to anti-Semitism. How would you respond to this criticism?

Kevin MacDonald: My logic is as follows: I see conflicts of interest between ethnic groups as part of the natural world. The only difference between conflicts between Jews and non-Jews compared to garden variety ethnic conflict stems from the fact that for over a century, Jews have formed an elite in various European and European-derived societies, an elite with a peculiar profile: deeply ethnocentric and adept at ethnic networking; wealthy and intelligent, aggressive in pursuit of their interests, prone to media ownership and the production of culture, and hostile to the traditional peoples and cultures of the societies in which they form an elite. As an elite, Jews have wielded power that is vastly disproportionate to their numbers, so that anti-Jewish attitudes and behavior are to be expected when Jewish power conflicts with the interests of others. The various themes of modern anti-Semitism all boil down to the Jewish role as a hostile elite whose attitudes and behavior are in conflict with the interests of others: economic domination in many parts of Eastern and Central Europe prior to World War II; cultural subversion via the Jewish role in the media and intellectual life (e.g., removing Christian symbols from public places); facilitating the displacement of native populations via mass migration into Western societies; dual loyalty because of Jewish sympathies with foreign Jews, especially Israel since 1948; and the history of Jews as a hostile elite in the USSR during the period when it became the most murderous regime in European history. Since I believe that these propositions are intellectually defensible, and since these propositions, if believed by non-Jews, would cause them to attempt to lessen Jewish power and thereby further their own interests, it is indeed the case that my work could be said to provide intellectual legitimacy to anti-Jewish attitudes and behavior. But this isn't really any different from claiming that Zionist theories provide intellectual legitimacy to the dispossession of the Palestinians, or that psychoanalysis or the Frankfurt School provide intellectual legitimacy to anti-Western attitudes. At the end of the day, what counts is whether indeed my writings are intellectually defensible.

GM: The tone of your most recent writings over the past few years suggest that you have moved away from being a dispassionate observer to an overt critic of Jewish collective behavior. Moreover, one might find your affiliation with the Charles Martel Society and *The Occidental Quarterly* as evidence that you are now part of the "far right." How would you respond to such an inference?

KM: As implied in my responses to the first question, I see Jews and non-Jews as having conflicts of interest. In that sense I am a critic of Jews: The Jewish

community is not monolithic, but segments of the Jewish community may well have interests and behavior that conflict with my interests. For example, I firmly believe that Jewish neo-conservatives whose primary allegiance is to Israel have had a decisive influence on recent American foreign policy even though most of the American Jewish community would not describe themselves as neocons and do not vote for the Republican Party. I see my affiliation with the Charles Martel Society and *The Occidental Quarterly* as a way of becoming intellectually engaged in an attempt to alter the intellectual and political climate in this country so that this sort of thing does not happen in the future. Being able to discuss the Jewish motivation of the main movers of our current foreign policy is, in my opinion, an important aspect of being able to change this policy to conform to what I think are in the interests of the great majority of Americans, including myself. What I am doing is no different from the legions of Jewish academics who, as an aspect of their professional and personal identity, have pursued their ethnic interests by writing for Jewish publications, promoting Zionist causes, or attempting to change the intellectual and political climate of the U.S. in a way that furthers their perceived ethnic interests. In fact, as I note, their presence at elite universities and their access to prestigious publication venues—far more prestigious than *The Occidental Quarterly*—was an important basis of their influence.

GM: A basic premise of *The Culture of Critique* is that there are real conflicts between the group interests of Jews and Gentiles. Do you believe that they are reconcilable?

KM: I think that given the characteristics of Jews as highly intelligent ethnic networkers who are prone to acquiring wealth, it was inevitable that they would emerge as an elite in Western societies. Indeed, this has been a recurrent pattern in Western history. What is not inevitable is that the Jewish elite maintains its hostile and aggressive stance toward the traditional peoples and culture of European societies (including here also societies derived from Europe, such as the United States). In my view, it is this Jewish hostility—what Disraeli described as the “malignant vengeance” of Jews deriving from their sense of historical persecution in European societies—that is at the heart of the problem—the motivating force for so much of the activity described in *The Culture of Critique*. In my view, of course, Jewish hostility has much more to do with psychological processes stemming from Jewish ethnocentrism—their Manichean worldview of a heroic in-group battling corrupt and evil out-groups—than a dispassionate assessment of their own history or their role in the contemporary world. The theme of Jews as a hostile elite has become increasingly prominent in my writing on this topic.

GM: Do you see any evidence to suggest the development of collectivist anti-Semitic movements on the horizon both in the West and elsewhere?

KM: Anti-Jewish attitudes in the Arab and Muslim world are intense because of the Israeli/Palestinian situation, but these forces are relatively powerless to change the behavior of Israel, and they pose little threat to Jews generally. I don't think that will change in the foreseeable future even if Arab governments become more democratic as the result of the current neo-conservative-inspired onslaught by the U.S. military in the Middle East. I certainly do not see any anti-Jewish movements on the horizon in the West, but I do think that white people in the U.S., especially married whites with

families, are coalescing politically in the Republican Party, if the results from the [2004] national elections are any indication. Presently the Republican Party is a hodge-podge of people with very different economic interests and ideologies, but this may change in the future as whites become increasingly marginalized and victimized by affirmative action and other manifestations of multiculturalism. It is a fairly small step for a party with an implicit sense of white identity and interests to become an explicit movement of white advocacy. Such a movement may well eventually develop overtones of anti-Jewish attitudes, especially if the American Jewish community continues in its current and past patterns of political behavior and attitudes.

In recent years, MacDonald appears to have become more strident in his critique of Judaism. Not surprisingly, this has endeared him to the more intellectual segment of the far right on which he has had a significant influence.

CONCLUSION

Since the early 1980s, the American extreme right has evolved from a movement characterized by ultra patriotism, to one increasingly characterized by nihilism. The various social trends that have significantly changed the racial makeup of the United States explains, in large part, this change. For those in the extreme right, the United States is not the same country they once knew. However, this sentiment did not arise overnight. For many years, conservative patriotism tinged with nativism characterized the extreme right. During the Cold War, some in the movement saw Communism as a diversion, somewhat of a distraction from the "real" enemy. However, with the removal of communism as a major force in geopolitics, the extreme right could focus more attention on the Jews and their putative vehicle, the U.S. government, as the prime source of evil.¹⁰⁵ What accelerated in the 1980s was the identification of Jews as the primary enemy—the puppet master of all of the enemies, in the extreme right's worldview as evidenced by the popularity of the ZOG (Zionist Occupation Government) discourse. Although the notion of ZOG has featured prominently in the worldview of the extreme right for over two decades, there have been several variants of this theme. For example, according to the Christian Identity, a religion popular in the racist right, the conflict between Gentiles and Jews is grounded in theology and extends back to the Book of Genesis in the Bible.¹⁰⁶

105. Mattias Gardell, "Black and White Unite in Fight?," in Jeffrey Kaplan and Heléne Lööv, *The Cultic Milieu: Oppositional Subcultures in an Age of Globalization* (New York: Alta Mira Press, 2002), 168.

106. For more on the Christian Identity, see Michael Barkun, *Religion and The Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Jeffrey Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far Right to the Children of Noah* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1997); and Howard L. Bushart, John R. Craig, and Myran Barnes, *Soldiers of God: White*

The neo-Nazi segment, which includes organizations such as the National Alliance, casts its criticism of Jews in terms of culture and race. Some far right conspiracy theorists conflate Jews with powerful, shadowy entities such as international banks, the CFR, and the Bildeberger Group.

Highly significant about MacDonald's research is its potential to forge a standardized anti-Semitic critique in the far right. His trilogy is often discussed on numerous far right chat rooms, such as Stormfront. Conceivably, this could accelerate the process of convergence of the extreme right in the United States and other nations of the western world.¹⁰⁷

Over the past few years the American far right has experienced several setbacks as the revolutionary segment consisting of groups such as the Aryan Nations, National Alliance, and the World Church of the Creator have all lost important leaders either to death or imprisonment. However, the non-revolutionary segment appears to have gained greater prominence in the overall far right constellation. Several trends have contributed to this development. First, representatives of the revolutionary racist right have often acted brazenly and injudiciously despite the formidable opposition that has been arrayed against them including the government and various non-governmental organizations that monitor them.¹⁰⁸ This has given authorities opportunities to effectively neutralize the more audacious among them including Matt Hale and Alex Curtis. Furthermore, several prominent organizations of the revolutionary right have been decimated through civil suits including Tom and John Metzger's WAR, the Aryan Nations, and the United Klans of America. In contrast, the non-revolutionary segment has remained largely intact, and may actually be expanding. Therefore, in an evolutionary sense, the non-revolutionary segment appears to occupy an increasing portion of the racist right in that its more radical counterpart has been winnowed through arrests, prosecutions, and civil suits. Second, although the non-revolutionary right may reject the strident rhetoric of their more radical racists, the former observes the latter and learns from its mistakes. Finally, the non-revolutionary right in recent years has attracted individuals from professional and educational backgrounds uncharacteristic of the past. Organizations such as American Renaissance, the Council of Conservative Citizens, and the Charles Martel Society attract members, writers, and supporters from among academics, lawyers, and successful businessmen.

Inasmuch as the non-revolutionary racist right has been able to

Supremacists and Their Holy War for America (New York: Kensington Books, 1998).

107. Jeffrey Kaplan and Leonard Weinberg, *The Emergence of a Euro-American Radical Right* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1998).

108. George Michael, *Confronting Right-Wing Extremism and Terrorism in the USA* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003).

attract individuals of higher social status in recent years, there is reason to believe it may be having some impact on the marketplace of ideas, if only at this time, on the traditional paleo-conservative movement. Kevin MacDonald, who appears to have overtly moved towards the direction of the far right, demonstrates this trend. At an award ceremony in October 2004, he discussed the applicability of the "Jewish Model" as an approach to ensure the "survival" of the West. He presented this lecture during a ceremony at which he was awarded the Jack London Literary prize for his trilogy.¹⁰⁹ The event was sponsored by the Charles Martel Society, a highly selective paleo-conservative organization that seeks to advance a platform of "white racial survival" and the preservation of Western Culture.¹¹⁰ The popularity of MacDonald could portend a major change in the orientation of the American far right, which, for over the past two decades, was characterized by radicalism and a relatively uneducated membership with little pretense to increased intellectual sophistication. This approach, however, was largely ineffectual as both the government and various non-governmental organizations effectively delegitimized and marginalized the movement. However, a new breed of far right intellectuals with tempered rhetoric and impressive academic credentials could conceivably broaden the influence of the movement as it reaches out to a more respectable mainstream audience.

109. See "Can the Jewish Model Help the West Survive?," available online at: <http://theoccidentalquarterly.com/jllp1/jllp-km.html>; and "Statement of Principles," *The Occidental Quarterly*.

110. William Regnery II, an heir to the Regnery publishing fortune, founded the Charles Martel Society in 2001. The Society publishes an academic style journal, *The Occidental Quarterly*, which carries articles by authors highly acclaimed by prominent paleo-conservatives, including Sam Francis, Wayne Lutton, and Kevin MacDonald. See "White Supremacists: Reclusive publishing heir to start all-white dating service," *Intelligence Report*, issue 114, Summer 2004; available online at: <http://www.splcenter.org/intel/intelreport/article.jsp?aid=479>.

Copyright of Journal of Church & State is the property of JM Dawson Inst of Church State Studies and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.