

**BERMAN JEWISH DATABANK**

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# CANADIAN JEWISH POPULATION 2021

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AND CONTEMPORARY  
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# Canadian Jewish Population, 2021

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## **The American Jewish Year Book 2021** **The Annual Record of the North American Jewish Communities Since 1899**

**This Report derives from Chapter 7 of the *American Jewish Year Book, 2021*.**

Since 1899, the *American Jewish Year Book* has documented the current status of North American Jewry: its demography, its institutions, and its accomplishments. It is the premier place for leading academics to publish in-depth review chapters on topics of interest to the North American Jewish communities. Cyrus Adler, Milton Himmelfarb, Henrietta Szold, and other prominent American Jews are among its former editors. In 2008, the *Year Book*, which had been published by the American Jewish Committee, ceased publication, a casualty of the 2008 economic recession.

From 2012 to the present, the *Year Book* has been published by Springer, a major worldwide scientific publisher. The editors of the *Year Book* are Arnold Dashefsky of the University of Connecticut and Ira Sheskin of the University of Miami, both accomplished social scientists of American Jewry. The *Year Book* is published in cooperation with the Association for the Social Scientific Study of Jewry (ASSJ) and the Berman Jewish Data Bank. Current funding comes from the University of Miami, the Fain Foundation, and the University of Connecticut.

The *Year Book* consists of lengthy review chapters on topics of general interest, chapters reviewing important events in the North American Jewish communities, chapters on the US, Canadian, and world Jewish population, lists of Jewish organizations (both local and national), Jewish scholarly resources, major events in the Jewish community, Jewish honorees, and obituaries of notable Jewish individuals. This volume has been a significant and prestigious annual resource for academic researchers, practitioners at Jewish institutions and organizations, the media, and others for basic, up-to-date information about the North American Jewish communities.

Almost all books on the history of North American Jewry cite the *Year Book*. The *Year Book* helps to preserve the current record for future generations.

### **Obtaining *The American Jewish Year Book, 2021***

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## Table of Contents from the *American Jewish Year Book, 2021*

### Part I Review Articles

- 1 Overview of Jewish Americans in 2020**  
*Becka A. Alper and Alan Cooperman (Pew Research Center)*
- 2 Forum on the New Pew Survey, Jewish Americans in 2020**  
*Arnold Dashefsky, Ira M. Sheskin, and Amy Lawton, with Judit Bokser-Liwerant, Sergio DellaPergola, Sylvia Barack Fishman, Harriet Hartman, Samuel Heilman, Debra Kaufman, Ariela Keysar, Laurence Kotler-Berkowitz, Bruce Phillips, Jonathan D. Sarna, Leonard Saxe, Michelle Shain, Emily Sigalow, and Jennifer Thompson*
- 3 America and the Holocaust: Reflections on Three Quarters of a Century and the Development of Holocaust Consciousness in American Society**  
*Michael Berenbaum*
- 4 American Jews and the Domestic Arena (July 2020-July 2021): Not Like All Other Years**  
*Sylvia Barack Fishman*
- 5 American Jews and the International Arena (August 2020-July 2021): The US, Israel, and the Middle East**  
*Mitchell G. Bard*
- 6 United States Jewish Population, 2021**  
*Ira M. Sheskin and Arnold Dashefsky*
- 7 Canadian Jewish Population, 2021: Focus on Occupational and Social Integration**  
*Robert Brym*
- 8 World Jewish Population, 2021**  
*Sergio DellaPergola*

## **Part II Jewish Lists**

### **9 Local Jewish Organizations**

*Ira M. Sheskin, Arnold Dashefsky, and Sarah Markowitz*

### **10 Jewish Museums and Holocaust Museums, Memorials, and Monuments**

*Ira M. Sheskin, Arnold Dashefsky, and Sarah Markowitz*

### **11 Jewish Overnight Camps**

*Ira M. Sheskin, Arnold Dashefsky, and Sarah Markowitz*

### **12 National Jewish Organizations**

*Ira M. Sheskin, Arnold Dashefsky, and Sarah Markowitz*

### **13 Jewish Press**

*Ira M. Sheskin, Arnold Dashefsky, and Sarah Markowitz*

### **14 Academic Resources**

*Arnold Dashefsky, Ira M. Sheskin, Amy Lawton, Sarah Markowitz, and Kimberly Soby*

### **15 Transitions: Major Events, Honorees, and Obituaries**

*Ira M. Sheskin, Arnold Dashefsky, Helen Chernikoff, Amy Lawton, and Sarah Markowitz*

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**For more information about the *American Jewish Year Book*:**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American\\_jewish\\_year\\_book](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_jewish_year_book)

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# Canadian Jewish Population, 2021

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The statistical basis for understanding Canada’s Jewish community—critically important for education and social welfare planning as well as academic research—is imperiled.

## **Section 1 The Eroding Basis of Statistical Information on Canada’s Jews**

In 2016, for the first time since 1941, the census did not list “Jewish” as an example of an ethnic group in the ethnic question stem.<sup>1</sup> Officials acknowledge that this omission was largely responsible for a precipitous drop of nearly 54% in the count of Canadian Jews by ethnicity, from 309,650 in 2011 to just 143,665 five years later (Smith and McLeish 2019; Statistics Canada 2019a; 2019b).

The 2021 census may partially rectify matters. The “long form” census, distributed to 25% of Canadian households, includes the following ethnicity question:

What were the ethnic or cultural origins of this person’s ancestors?

Ancestors may have Indigenous origins, or origins that refer to different countries, or other origins that may not refer to different countries.

For examples of ethnic or cultural origins, visit [www12.statcan.gc.ca/ancestry](http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/ancestry).<sup>2</sup>

Respondents who click on the link are taken to a list of 264 ethnic labels, including “Jewish.” They may find poring over the list tedious, so it is possible that the count of Canadian Jews will be somewhere between the 2016 estimate and the 2011 estimate.

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<sup>1</sup> The Canadian census allows respondents to choose one or more ethnic origins. Since 1996, ethnic origins listed in the question stem have been determined by the frequency of single responses to the ethnic question in the preceding census. This procedure is prejudicial to Jews. Where Greek immigrants will be inclined to state their ethnic origin as Greek, Jewish immigrants from, say, Russia, may be inclined to state their ethnic origin as Jewish and Russian. This propensity likely continues beyond the immigrant generation. Thus, in 2011, multiple responses indicated 252,960 Greek Canadians and 309,650 Jewish Canadians, yet “Greek” was retained in the 2016 ethnicity question stem while “Jewish” was dropped because single responses indicated 141,755 Greek Canadians and 115,640 Jewish Canadians (Statistics Canada 2019).

<sup>2</sup> Almost all census respondents now complete the questionnaire online, but on First Nations reserves (called Indian reservations in the US) and in the northern territories, which are sparsely populated and underserved by high-speed Internet, face-to-face interviews are common. Therefore, on First Nations reserves and in the northern territories, examples including “Jewish” are listed in the question stem. This procedure is unlikely to add many Jews to the 2021 count because few Jews live in the affected areas. But one never knows. In the 1971 census, 110 members of the “Indian and Eskimo” group claimed to have been born in Eastern Europe and 25 said the language they most often spoke at home was Yiddish, although only 10 said that Yiddish was their mother tongue (*Globe and Mail* 1979).

Meanwhile, the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (2021) estimates Canada's 2021 Jewish population at 393,000, or 1.03 percent of all Canadians.

A nationwide survey of Canadian Jews was conducted for the first time in 2018 (Brym, Neuman and Lenton 2019a). While the survey provided useful knowledge about Canada's Jews, especially because it covered behavioral and attitudinal issues that the census ignores, it also had shortcomings. Notably, due to budgetary constraints, it sampled just 82% of the country's Jewish population: community members residing in metropolitan Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, and Winnipeg.

Remarkably, the 2018 survey was the first of its kind in Canada. Given that the US Jewish population is nearly 15 times larger than that of Canada, it is hardly surprising that seven major national surveys of American Jews have been conducted over the past half-century. It is surprising that, with a Jewish population only about three-quarters the size of Canada's, the UK's Institute for Jewish Policy Research in London is able to mount several national and Western Europe-wide surveys annually. It is downright startling that Australia's Jewish community, less than one-third the size of Canada's, may have a better record of survey research than its Canadian counterpart (for Canadian surveys, see Berman Jewish Databank 2021). Especially because of the mounting difficulties facing census-based research on Canadian Jews, it is imperative that the country's Jewish community now take responsibility for sponsoring nationwide surveys like those conducted in other countries on a regular basis. Meanwhile, it will be necessary to develop innovative ways of treating Canadian census data as it pertains to Jews.

**Figure 1** shows the growth of the Jewish population of Canada from 1901 to 2011.

## Section 2 The Integration of Jews in Canadian Society

This section describes a new method for sampling Jews from Canadian census data and illustrates its utility by examining the economic integration of Jews in Canadian society, a neglected research topic.

### Section 2.1 New 2016 Data Sets

In recent years, chapters of the *American Jewish Year Book* devoted to Canada's Jewish population avoided using 2016 census data because of the shortcomings summarized earlier. Instead, recent chapters have relied on the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), a voluntary poll based on a probability sample of one-third of Canadian households that replaced the previously scheduled 2011 census (**Table 1** and **Figure 2**). Rather than rely on such dated information,<sup>3</sup> this report takes an alternative approach.

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<sup>3</sup> For a historical summary of the Jewish population of Canada and provincial distribution, see Shahar 2020 (236-238.)

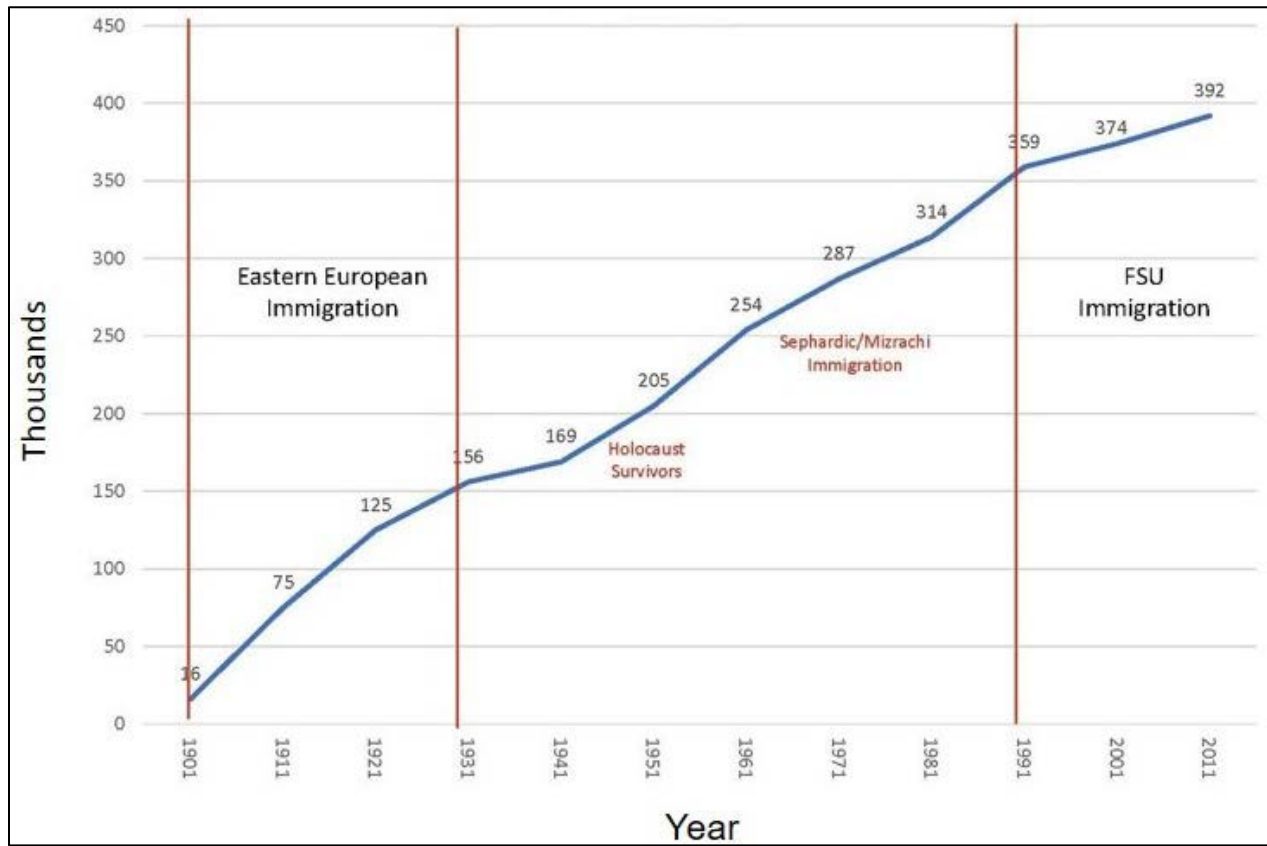


Figure 1 Growth of Canadian Jewish population, 1901-2011 (in thousands)

<b>Table 1 The 20 largest Canadian-Jewish communities, 2011</b>		
Metropolitan area, province	Jewish population	Percent of Canadian Jewish population
Toronto, ON	188,710	48.2
Montréal, QC	90,780	23.2
Vancouver, BC	26,255	6.7
Ottawa-Gatineau, ON	14,010	3.6
Winnipeg, MB	13,690	3.5
Calgary, AB	8,335	2.1
Edmonton, AB	5,550	1.4
Hamilton, ON	5,110	1.3
Victoria, BC	2,740	0.7
London, ON	2,675	0.7
Halifax, NS	2,120	0.5
Kitchener-Waterloo, ON	2,015	0.5
Oshawa, ON	1,670	0.4
Windsor, ON	1,515	0.4
Barrie, ON	1,445	0.4
St. Catharines-Niagara, ON	1,375	0.4
Kingston, ON	1,185	0.3
Guelph, ON	925	0.2
Regina, SK	900	0.2
Kelowna, BC	900	0.2
Other	19,760	5.1
Total	391,665	100
Source: Shahar (2020, 239). Note: This table include Jews by religion and/or ethnicity plus an additional 6,320 individuals due to adjustments by Shahar (2014: 99-100).		

**Figure 2 The distribution of Canada’s Jewish population by city, province, and territory, 2011**



Specifically, the 2016 census “long form,” which included the ethnicity question, was distributed to a random sample of 25% of Canadian households. It is possible to create a new census-based sample of Canadian Jews by linking individuals who participated in both the 2011 NHS and the 2016 census (Smith and Scott 2019). Doing so produces an updated data set that includes (1) individuals who self-identified as Jews by ethnicity in 2016 and (2) individuals who self-identified as Jews by ethnicity in 2011, participated in the 2016 census, yet did not self-identify as Jews by ethnicity in 2016, presumably because of the change in question wording.

Jews form an ethno-religious group, not just an ethnic group, so the resulting sample may be biased insofar as it excludes individuals who identify as Jews by religion alone. This exclusion is a consequence of the fact that a question on respondents’ religion appeared in the 2011 NHS and is included the decennial census taken in the second year of each decade but is not included in the census taken in the seventh year of each decade (in 2016, for example).



As a check on the potential bias of the new 2016 Jews-by-ethnicity sample, a second new 2016 sample of Jews was created. It includes the first sample plus individuals who self-identified as Jews by religion in 2011, participated in the 2016 census, yet did not self-identify as Jews by religion in 2016 because there was no census religion question that year. The following analysis focuses on the first, ethnicity-only new sample. However, results from the two samples are almost identical, bolstering confidence in the validity of the findings presented below.<sup>4</sup>

Let us now turn to an examination of the economic integration of Jews in Canadian society to illustrate the utility of the new samples.

## Section 2.2 Economic Integration

For two millennia, one of the most striking features of Jewry was its occupational structure, which differed sharply from the occupational structure of the surrounding population (Leshchinsky 2020 [1928]). Since the early twentieth century, the occupational structure of Jewry has undergone vast change (Chiswick 2020). Yet little is known about this change as it pertains to Canadian Jewry.

We do know that in 1931 the occupational structure of Canadian Jewry was little different from that of European Jewry but conspicuously unlike that of the Canadian population as a whole. Canadian Jews were more than twice as likely as all Canadians to be employed in merchandising and manufacturing and nearly 24 times less likely to be employed in primary or extractive industries. Jews were also nearly twice as likely to be dentists, more than twice as likely to be physicians or surgeons, and nearly three times more likely to be lawyers or notaries (Rosenberg 1939: 157-8, 191).

Over the next half century, Canada's occupational structure was transformed as industrial and service-sector jobs multiplied and women were drawn into the system of higher education and the paid labor force in growing numbers. Canada's National Occupational Classification identifies about 500 different occupations. **Table 2** lists the 10 most common occupations for Jews and non-Jewish Whites in 1981 and 2016. Non-Jewish Whites form the largest and dominant ethno-racial group in Canada. They comprised 92% of Canada's population in 1981 and 72% in 2016. In Table 2, data are shown only for individuals between the ages of 35 and 54 because the overwhelming majority of people in that age cohort have completed their formal education and have not yet retired, so they form the age cohort with the highest rate of participation in the paid labor force.

Table 2 provides data on a measure of occupational concentration: the percentage of people who work in the top 10 occupations for each group. The smaller the percentage, the lower the level of occupational concentration.

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<sup>4</sup> The biggest difference in the two samples concerns annual median income in 2015. In sample 2, Jewish men earned \$500 more than in sample 1, while Jewish women earned \$600 less. This difference probably reflects a higher level of gender stratification among the Orthodox, who are likely more numerous in sample 2.

<b>Table 2 Ten most frequent occupations of Jewish and non-Jewish White Canadians age 35-54 by gender, 1981 and 2016, in percent</b>			
Jewish		Non-Jewish White	
Men 1981			
General managers	8.2	Truck drivers	4.1
Sales managers	6.0	Sales managers	2.6
Salespersons	5.7	Salespersons	2.5
Lawyers	5.2	Farmers	2.2
Accountants	5.0	Carpenters	1.9
Sales supervisors	4.2	General managers	1.8
Commercial travelers	4.2	Auto mechanics	1.8
Physicians	3.8	Secondary school teachers	1.8
University professors	3.3	Janitors	1.7
Real estate sales	2.1	Foremen	1.7
Total	47.7		22.1
Women 1981			
Bookkeepers	11.5	Secretaries	7.3
Salespersons	9.4	Bookkeepers	7.2
Secretaries	9.0	Salespersons	6.8
Elementary school teachers	4.1	Elementary school teachers	3.9
Office clerks	3.2	Nurses	3.7
Secondary school teachers	2.5	Cashiers	3.2
Real estate sales	2.1	Janitors	2.8
Sales supervisors	1.9	Food servers	2.5
Typists	1.9	Office clerks	2.4
Sales managers	1.8	Sewing	2.3
Total	47.4		42.1
Men 2016			
Lawyers	3.5	Truck drivers	3.6
Information systems analysts	3.3	Trade managers	3.0
Computer programmers	2.8	Carpenters	1.8
Trade managers	2.4	Sales persons	1.8
Truck drivers	2.4	Construction laborers	1.7
Sales persons	2.2	Auto mechanics	1.7
University professors	2.0	Janitors	1.6
Software engineers	2.0	Material handlers	1.4
Financial senior managers	1.9	Info systems analysts	1.4
Specialist physicians	1.5	Agriculture managers	1.3

<b>Table 2 Ten most frequent occupations of Jewish and non-Jewish White Canadians age 35-54 by gender, 1981 and 2016, in percent</b>			
Jewish		Non-Jewish White	
Total	24.0		19.3
Women 2016			
Elementary school teachers	4.1	Elementary school teachers	4.0
Lawyers	2.8	Administrative officers	3.3
Registered nurses	2.7	Administrative assistants	3.3
Administrative officers	2.7	Registered nurses	3.3
Sales persons	2.5	Sales persons	2.6
Early childhood educators	2.1	Office support workers	2.4
University professors	1.9	Trade managers	2.3
Administrative assistants	1.8	Early childhood educators	2.3
Trade managers	1.8	Nurse aids	2.1
Software engineers	1.8	Light duty cleaners	1.8
Total	24.2		27.4
Sources: Statistics Canada (1981, 2011, 2016).			

In 1981, 48% of employed Jewish men and 22% of employed non-Jewish White men between the ages of 35 and 54 worked in the top ten occupations for each group.<sup>5</sup> This 26 percentage point difference points to a much higher degree of occupational concentration among Jewish men than among non-Jewish White men. Nonetheless, three of the top ten occupations were common to both groups; the comparable figure for 1931 was almost certainly zero.

For Jewish women, the degree of occupational concentration in 1981 was nearly as high as it was for Jewish men (47%). However, at 42%, the degree of occupational concentration for non-Jewish White women was almost twice as high as it was for non-Jewish White men. This finding speaks to the predominance of gender over ethnicity as the main source of occupational concentration among Canadian women in 1981: the typical socialization experience of women and the relatively restricted range of educational and occupational opportunities available to them ensured a high level of occupational concentration regardless of ethnic identification. This factor is also likely responsible for the fact that the difference between Jews and non-Jewish Whites was much smaller for women than for men (5% versus 26%, respectively) and the fact that five of the top ten occupations were common to both groups of women, compared to three of ten for men.

Between 1981 and 2016, strong convergence is evident between Jewish men and non-Jewish White men. In 2016, 24% of employed Jewish men worked in the top ten occupations for Jewish men—a 24 percentage point decline since 1981. Comparing Jewish men and non-Jewish White men, we find a 26 percentage point difference in 1981,

<sup>5</sup> In the text, percentages are rounded to the nearest integer.

declining to five percentage points in 2016. Furthermore, four of the top ten occupations were common to both groups in 2016, up from three in 1981.

For women, occupational convergence between 1981 and 2016 was just as strong. In both cases, the percentage of employed Jews in the top ten occupations dropped 23 percentage points over the 35-year period under consideration. Notably, the difference between Jewish women and non-Jewish White women fell to just 3% in 2016. And in a reversal, Jewish women were now less concentrated in the top ten occupations than non-Jewish White women were. Six of ten top occupations were common to the two groups.

As one might expect given the occupational convergence of Jews with non-Jewish Whites, median income also converged (**Table 3**). In 1980, median income for Jewish men age 35-54 was 30% higher than median income for the corresponding age cohort of non-Jewish White men. By 2015, the difference had dropped to just 9%. Similarly for Jewish women, their 1980 advantage over non-Jewish White women in median income fell more than two-thirds, from 29% to 9%.

<b>Table 3 Median annual market income of Jewish and non-Jewish White Canadians age 35-54, 1980-2015,* in 2005 Canadian dollars</b>			
	Jewish	Non-Jewish White	Percent difference
Men			
1980	85,600	59,800	30.1
1990	78,800	58,100	26.3
2000	74,400	55,700	25.1
2015	69,500	63,100	9.2
Women			
1980	34,500	24,500	29.0
1990	42,000	31,300	25.5
2000	44,700	35,000	21.7
2015	47,800	43,300	9.4
Sources: Statistics Canada (1981, 1991, 2001, 2011, 2016).			
*In Canadian censuses, respondents are asked to report their annual income for the complete year before the census.			

The trends just described falsify Balaam’s biblical pronouncement that Jews are destined to be “a people that shall dwell alone” (*Bamidbar* [Numbers] 23:9). Occupational convergence testifies to economic integration. Canadian Jews work disproportionately as lawyers, physicians, registered nurses, university professors, teachers, in jobs related to information technology and so on. But such specialization is no longer that unusual, as other groups have increased their employment in these occupations (Chad and Brym 2020). Moreover, occupational specialization is much more attenuated than in the past, as Jews have increased their participation in other occupations that were once foreign to them (Hou and Brym forthcoming 2023). Who in 1981 would have thought that we would reach a point just 35 years later where the fourth most common job held by Canadian Jewish men would be truck driving?

## Section 3 The Social integration of Jews in Canadian Society

This section examines the strength of social ties among Jews and between Jews and other ethnic groups. Economic integration and social integration may be orthogonal. That is, social integration does not necessarily accompany economic integration. It is possible for an ethnic group to have an occupational structure similar to that of the larger society yet remain relatively cohesive and segregated in terms of membership in voluntary organizations, friendship patterns, and sentiments about out-group members.

In 2002, Statistics Canada conducted the Ethnic Diversity Survey in English, French, and seven other languages. The survey sampled more than 42,000 individuals (excluding Indigenous Canadians) over age 14 in private households. Several questionnaire items can be used to determine how socially integrated Canadian Jews are relative to other Canadian ethnic groups. The following analysis excludes individuals who self-identified as Canadian, British (English, etc.), and French (Québécois, etc.) as well as those who were categorized as “other” (“other Caribbean,” etc.).<sup>6</sup> These exclusions leave 29 ethnic groups for comparison (Statistics Canada 2002b).

*Internal bonding* refers to the strength of social ties within an ethnic group (Berger et al. 2005). After determining the respondent’s main “ethnic or cultural identity” (without providing examples), interviewers asked, “Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not important at all and 5 is very important, how important is your [Jewish, etc.] identity to you?” They also asked, “As far as you know, how many of your friends have [Jewish, etc.] ancestry— all of them, most of them, about half of them, a few of them, or none of them?” Responses to these two questions were standardized and added together to create an index of internal bonding, with a high score indicating strong internal bonding and a low score indicating weak internal bonding.

*External bridging* refers to the strength of external ties to other ethnic groups. After determining that the respondent had been a member of at least one voluntary organization in the year preceding the survey, the interviewer asked, “What *kinds* of groups or organizations were they?” Thirteen response options, twelve of which were *not* ethnic/immigrant organizations, were listed. In the following analysis, respondents who listed three or more organizational memberships were categorized as externally linked. Interviewers later asked, “How often do you feel uncomfortable or out of place in Canada now because of your ethnicity, culture, race, skin color, language, accent, or religion? Is it all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, rarely, or never?” Respondents who replied “never” or “rarely” were categorized as comfortable in Canada. Responses to these two questions were standardized and added together to create an index of external bridging, with a high score indicating strong external bridging and a low score indicating weak external bridging.

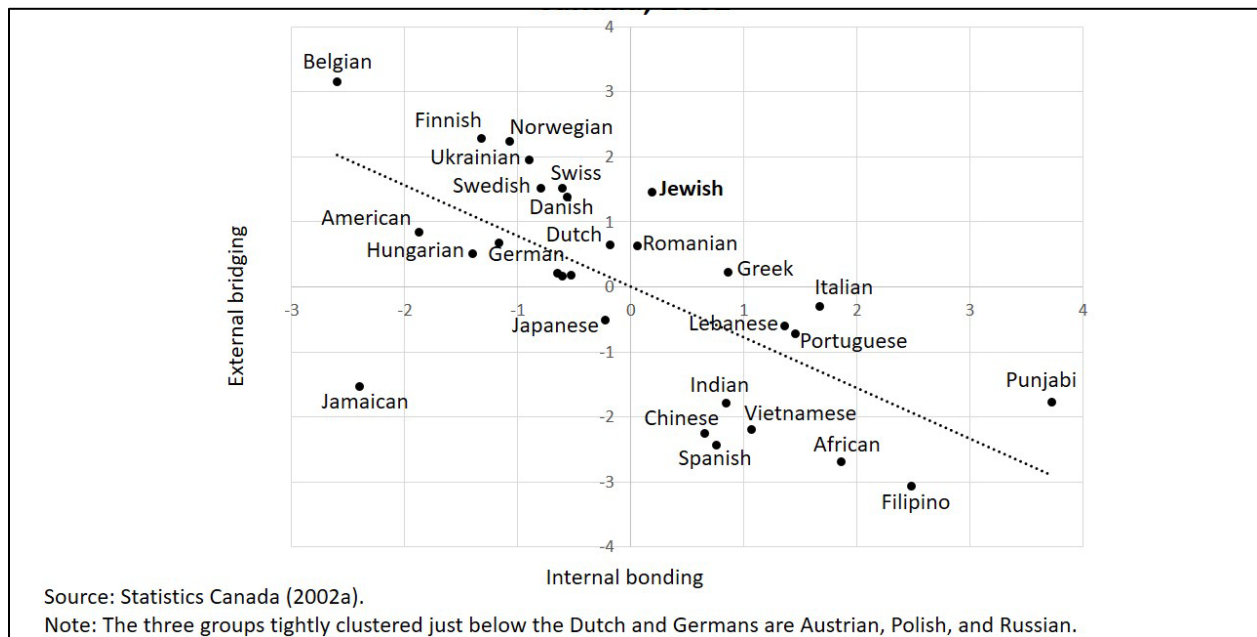
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<sup>6</sup> The exclusions are justified on the grounds that individuals who indicated they are of Canadian, British, or French origin are largely descendants of early European settlers, while “other” groups are agglomerations of individuals from various countries. In other words, the analysis is restricted to groups with a relatively short history in the country and a clearly defined ancestry.



**Figure 3** plots the two indices against each other for all 29 ethnic groups. Two points stand out. First, Jews' level of internal bonding is above the mean. The group with the next highest degree of internal bonding is the Chinese. Much of the Jewish/Chinese difference in internal bonding is likely a function of the percentage of immigrants in each group (33% among Jews vs. 86% among Chinese; Figure 3); within any ethnic group, immigrants tend to rely on each other more than non-immigrants do for many economic, political, social and cultural goods.

The second noteworthy feature of Figure 3 is related to the pattern summarized by the dotted trend line. The line tells us that the lower the level of an ethnic groups' internal bonding, the higher its level of external bridging. The correlation between these two variables is strong ( $r = -0.692$ ). However, some groups are relatively far from the trend line, indicating that they fit the overall pattern less well than other groups do. Jews are farther above the trend line than any other ethnic group. This means they have a considerably higher level of external bridging than one would expect given their above-average level of internal bonding. Earlier it was demonstrated that Canadian Jews are increasingly well integrated in their country's occupational structure. Now it may be added that the occupational integration of Canadian Jewry is compatible with relatively high external bridging to non-Jewish ethnic groups *and* relatively high internal bonding. In general, then, Canadian Jews are well integrated economically and socially, yet are able to maintain relatively strong ties with other Canadian Jews. The degree to which group cohesiveness will persist is, of course, an open question.



**Figure 3 Internal bonding and external bridging of 29 ethnic groups, Canada 2002**

## **Section 4 Do Canadian Jews Lag American Jews?**

Surveys show that, on average and across multiple indicators, American Jews are considerably more culturally assimilated than Canadian Jews are. For example, while the Jewish intermarriage rate has increased in both countries over time, the American-Jewish intermarriage rate is close to double the rate for Canadian Jews (Brym and Lenton 2020). This observation and others like it reinforce the widespread view that Canadian Jewry differs from its American counterpart only insofar as it is a laggard; many observers believe that, if not by 2031 then by 2041, the Canadian-Jewish intermarriage rate will be as high as today's American-Jewish rate. Similarly with other indicators of group cohesiveness.

It is possible that these observers are prescient. It is certain that they ignore the social-structural and cultural factors that may prevent Jews in the two countries from following the same path at the same speed. Cross-national differences in the Jewish immigration rate, Jewish denominational composition, the strength of national identity, and state support for ethno-religious particularism are the main factors underlying the different level and pace of cultural assimilation in Canada and the US (Brym et al. 2020).

### **Section 4.1 Immigration**

In proportionate terms, Jewish immigration has been considerably more robust in Canada than in the US since World War II. Consequently, immigrants comprise about one-third of Canadian Jews but only around one-seventh of American Jews (Hou and Brym forthcoming 2023). Canadian Jews therefore tend to have stronger ties to old country traditions than American Jews do.

### **Section 4.2 Denominational Composition**

In percentage terms, Orthodox and especially Conservative Jews are more numerous in Canada than in the US. Meanwhile, in percentage terms, Reform Jews are more numerous in the US than in Canada, as are Jews who have no denominational identification (Table 4). Thus, categories marked by a relatively low level of cultural assimilation (Orthodox and Conservative) loom much larger in Canada than in the US, while the reverse is true for categories marked by a relatively high rate of cultural assimilation (Reform and none/just Jewish).

<b>Table 4 Major Jewish religious denominations, Canada 2018 and USA 2020, in percent</b>		
Denomination	Canada	US
Orthodox	20	10
Conservative	33	18
Reform	20	39
None/just Jewish	28	34
Total	101	101

Sources: Brym et al. (2019b); Pew Research Center (2021, 57).  
 Note: Totals do not equal 100 due to rounding. Minor denominations and respondents who refused to answer or answered “don’t know” are not included in this table.

### **Section 4.3 National Identity**

National identity is weaker in Canada than in the US, so patriotism is less inviting, making it easier for ethnic particularism to persist. The relative weakness of Canadian national identity is partly a consequence of the fact that it has had less time to crystallize, because European settlement began a century later in Canada than in the US. In addition, Canadian national identity emerged gradually with the peaceful evolution of independence from Great Britain, in contrast to American national identity, which was forged in an anti-colonial war that, like all group conflict, sharpened and hardened group identity.

### **Section 4.4 Ethnic Policy**

Out of political necessity, fostering the growth of ethnic and religious institutions has been Canadian public policy since the British conquest of New France in 1760. English conquerors recognized they could dominate the relatively substantial number of French settlers only by permitting the Catholic Church to maintain religious, educational, and cultural control of the French population. The eventual establishment of separate school systems throughout the country—Catholic for the French, Protestant for the English—did not easily accommodate Jewish immigrants. In larger Jewish communities it fostered the growth of a private Jewish school system and other Jewish community institutions that promoted the retention of Jewish religious and ethnic identity.

When Canada was proclaimed a bilingual country in the 1960s, numerous minority ethnic groups objected that they, too, deserved official recognition and funding. In 1971, Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau proclaimed in the House of Commons that “no particular culture is more ‘official’ than another” (quoted in Ferguson et al. 2009: 85). The

era of multiculturalism was at hand. For the past 50 years, strong state support for ethno-religious institutions has helped all Canadians, Jews among them, to ward off religious and ethnic assimilation. Support for religious and ethnic diversity has become a key component—many would say the central component—of Canadian identity. In contrast, nativism, including opposition to religious and ethnic diversity, has been stronger in the US since the Civil War and has strengthened in the wake of the Trump presidency. Nativism exists in Canada too but is much weaker than in the US. A month before the 2020 presidential election, a polling firm asked a national sample of 1,500 Canadian adults, “If you could vote in the US presidential election, would you vote for Joe Biden or Donald Trump?” Just 16% of decided “voters” supported Trump (Fournier 2020).

In short, there is reason to believe that the social-structural and cultural forces just identified will continue to influence the two quite different Jewish communities on either side of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel.

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