

Vanishing American Jews and the Death of Meritocracy

Are Jews vanishing in American society? An interesting [article](#) published in *Tablet Magazine* titled “The Vanishing” argues as much. Its author, Jacob Savage, writes, “Suddenly, everywhere you look, the Jews are disappearing.”

Of course, Jewish people haven’t actually gone anywhere. What Savage is referring to is a decline in Jewish representation in key public domains, such as media, universities, and politics. By all appearances, he is correct. And it’s another instance in the death of meritocracy.

Savage provides ample evidence for his claim. With regard to Jewish involvement in academia, he gives the following data points:

- Four percent of [elite American academics](#) who are under 30 are Jewish—in contrast with 21 percent of boomers.
- The prestigious [Harvard Law Review](#) has seen a roughly 50 percent decline in Jewish editors in less than 10 years.
- The 2014 Whitney Biennial featured 16–20 Jewish artists, but in 2022, it featured only [one to two Jews](#).
- The [2012 Guggenheim Fellowship](#) featured 30–40 Jewish names. Ten years later, in [2022](#), there were only 14–16 Jewish names among the fellows.
- From 2010–2019, each [MacArthur Fellowship class](#) featured at least three Jews. Since 2020, no more than one Jew each year has been awarded the grant.
- Only [7 percent](#) of Ivy League students today are Jewish. This is noteworthy because Jewish organizations once campaigned against the unofficial 10 percent cap placed on Jewish Ivy League enrollment that existed until the late '50s.
- The University of Pennsylvania’s student body was 26

percent Jewish in 2015. In 2021, that had declined to 17 percent. In that same time period, NYU's student body declined from 24 percent Jews to 13 percent.

The data are shocking. But it doesn't stop there.

Of Jewish involvement in politics, Savage writes:

"In New York—the seat of American Jewish political power—there are almost no Jews left in power. A decade ago the city had five Jewish congressmen, a Jewish mayor, two Jewish borough presidents, and [14](#) Jewish City Council members. Today just two congressmen and a single borough president remain. Only six Jews now sit on the 51-person City Council. Shelly Silver, the corrupt Orthodox former State Assembly leader, was replaced by Yuh-Line Niou, a pro-BDS 'progressive' whose oligarch father was featured in the Panama Papers. Not even the Lower East Side Tenement Museum is recognizably [Jewish](#) anymore."

That's New York. What of Washington D.C.? Savage argues that while Biden's cabinet does contain many Jews, they're on the decline in the nation's capital as well. "Of the 114 federal judges appointed by Joe Biden," writes Savage, "just 8-9 appear to be [Jewish](#)—in a field that's historically been at least [20% Jewish](#)."

The article also notes that in 2014, [15](#) of Senator Chuck Schumer's 64 staffers were Jewish. However, Schumer came under fire for a lack of diversity in his office. His staff, which has expanded to 89 people, now boasts [fewer than 10 Jews](#).

Savage notices Jewish decline in the media as well:

"Speaking of LA, a decade ago there were 22 Jews on *The Hollywood Reporter's* annual list of the [Top 50 Showrunners](#). In 2022, that's down to [13](#). Other than the half-Jewish (and already famous) Maggie Gyllenhaal, you'd have to go back six years to find a single Jew on *Variety's* annual list

of [10 Directors to Watch](#).

Thanks to the odious new Hollywood house style that requires a detailed ethnic and racial classification at the top of all capsule biographies, we can see just how many self-identified Jews are in the Sundance [writers](#) and directors [labs](#), or the [NBC](#), [Paramount](#), and [Disney writers](#) and [apprenticeship](#) programs—it is zero.”

Upon being presented with such data, the obvious question is why—why have Jews declined in realms in which they previously were disproportionately represented?

There are probably a number of factors at play. But the most obvious is the left’s diversity, equity, and inclusion agenda, which seeks to maximize diversity at all costs. Jews were once considered an oppressed minority group. Now, the left increasingly lumps Jewish people into the maligned “white” category. Jews aren’t diverse enough for the left. As such, when public or private sector entities consider applicants, Jews are often passed over.

But that hasn’t led the Anti-Defamation League—an influential Jewish group that once pushed back against the quotas limiting the number of Jews in Ivy League schools—to rethink its commitment to the diversity agenda. As Savage notes, the ADL has sided with Harvard against the Asian students who are suing the school for racial discrimination admission policies that adversely affect Jews as well. It seems that the liberal coalition has no room for opposition to race-based preferences.

One needn’t be Jewish to recognize the injustice inherent to DEI policies. That [discrimination](#) against certain groups is allowed isn’t just unfair—it can have serious consequences. Doing away with meritocracy is a great way to funnel unqualified individuals into demanding positions. I don’t know about you, but I’d take a qualified pilot, doctor, or

policeman over an unqualified one any day of the week. If meritocracy is completely eliminated, how much of our society will have survived?

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