

A Lack of Security or of Cultural Capital?
Acculturative Conservatism in the Naming Choices of Early 20th-Century U.S. Jews¹

Jiayin Zhang

Tsinghua University

School of Economics and Management

Phone: +86-10-62772182

Email: zhangjy5@sem.tsinghua.edu.cn

Ezra W. Zuckerman

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Sloan School of Management

Phone: (617) 253-1918

Email: ewzucker@mit.edu

Elena Obukhova

McGill University

Desautels Faculty of Management

Email: elena.obukhova@mcgill.ca

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Abstract

Research demonstrates a marked tendency towards “acculturative conservatism,” whereby immigrants select given names for their children that are “established”—i.e., popular in an earlier generation of the native population. Two explanations for this tendency are: (a) Immigrants lack the cultural capital to discern which mainstream cultural practices are fashionable; and (b) Immigrants are insecure in their membership in the host society, and they use established names to signal such membership. This paper develops a novel analytic strategy for distinguishing these two mechanisms and uses it to examine unique data on given names among World War II Jewish servicemen and compare them to given names in the general U.S. population. We first demonstrate that the parents of these servicemen exhibited a pattern of acculturation that was (a) selective (in avoiding popular native names with strong Christian associations, and embracing certain unpopular native names) and (b) conservative (in their tendency to favor established popular names relative to newly-popular names). We then show that these parents favored those established names whose popularity was rising and avoided those that whose popularity was declining. This suggests that Jewish immigrants had the mainstream cultural capital to discern recent fashion, but deliberately chose established names so as to express their membership in the U.S. society.

INTRODUCTION

Early sociological research on immigrant incorporation into host societies tended to depict a “straight-line” process that began with “acculturation” and ultimately resulted in “assimilation” after several generations (see Gans 1992 for review; cf., Gordon 1964, Park 1928; Warner and Srole 1945). But recent scholarship, much of which was inspired and informed by the post-1965 immigration wave to the U.S., has questioned the idea that assimilation is always the end-point of the incorporation process (e.g., Glazer 1993). In addition, it has ushered in a more nuanced and varied picture of the acculturation process (see e.g., for review, see Gans 1992, 1997; Alba and Nee 1997, 2003; Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Esser 2010). In particular, this recent research suggests three critical revisions to classical formulations of acculturation, which together form the backdrop for our investigation of the social mechanisms responsible for “acculturative conservatism.”¹

First, whereas classical accounts tended to depict acculturation as an encounter between immigrants and a “mainstream” culture in the receiving country, recent research recognizes that the host culture is often highly heterogeneous, such that immigrant communities must effectively choose from different models and their corresponding implications (e.g., that of the white Anglo society or that of the black ghetto; see especially Portes and Zhou 1993). Second, whereas classical formulations of acculturation characterized it as a zero-sum replacement of “old country” cultural patterns with those of the receiving country (see Alba and Nee 1997, 832), more recent research recognizes that immigrants (especially in the second generation) in fact often engage in “selective acculturation,” whereby they become adept in the culture of the host society while retaining their proficiency and commitment to the culture of their immigrant community (see Portes and Zhou 1993; Zhou 1997; Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

Together, these first two revisions to classical formulations of acculturation-- that the dominant culture is heterogeneous and the acculturation is often selective -- raise the question of how immigrants select among the varied cultural forms of the receiving country – the central question our paper seeks to answer. This question is particularly salient when we also consider a third revision to the classic formulations of acculturation—i.e., the replacement of a rather static view of the mainstream culture with a recognition that dominant cultural practices are constantly in “flux” (see Alba and Nee 1997, 833-834). In short, a key challenge for the immigrant who seeks to acculturate is that the distribution of cultural practices in the host culture *is a moving target*. Many aspects of contemporary culture (e.g., music, cuisine, attire, even language [slang]) are subject to fashion trends, and such trends pose (implicit) dilemmas for any member of a culture: Should one choose a form of cultural expression that is novel and thus still unusual, or should one choose a form that is more established and therefore more common?

While we can expect a typical member of a society to be conservative in the face of this dilemma, the tendency toward conservatism should be even more pronounced among immigrants. Consider that in general the advantages of distinguishing oneself as a trend-setter are generally outweighed by the risk that difference will be interpreted as “deviance”—i.e., as a signal that one is either lacking in mainstream cultural capital or is uncommitted to the values and institutions supported by the majority (Author 2014; cf., Simmel 1957; Lieberman 2000). And if native members of a society are generally conservative, it is straightforward to expect that immigrants will be even more conservative since their membership in the host society is less secure than those of the native born (e.g., Park 1928; Eisenstadt 1953) and thus especially concerned that their expressions of difference will be regarded as deviance.

This expectation appears to be reflected in evidence of “acculturative conservatism” among immigrants to the U.S., as pertains to their choices of given names (“first” names in American parlance) for their children. A set of recent studies on immigrants in both the immigration wave of 1880-1920 (Sue and Telles 2007; Lieberman 2000: 209-222; Watkins and London 1994) and the post-1965 wave (Lieberman 2000, 195-200) show that the naming choices of immigrant parents are distinctively conservative, in that they tend to select names that were popular in the previous generation in the native population but have since been eclipsed by more novel ones.

Besides providing evidence of acculturative conservatism, the tendency for immigrants to favor formerly-popular names merits attention because it seems to have been such a major force in American culture that it slowed down the overall pace of change in U.S names. In figure 1, we display the rate, over the years 1880 to 2010, at which the most popular names in one decade were replaced by a different set of most popular names in the following decade. As Lieberman shows, (2000; Lieberman and Lynn 2003), the rate of change in cultural forms has been steadily increasing since around the middle of the eighteenth century in all major Western countries—a trend that reflects the increase of fashion (and the decline of tradition) as an influence on cultural practice. Yet it is striking that figure 1 shows a significant slowdown of replacement in the most popular names around 1920.ⁱⁱ While it is difficult to provide a definitive explanation for such a macro pattern, the slowdown is consistent with effects of acculturative conservatism by immigrants who arrived in the U.S. between 1880 and 1920 and by 1920 accounted for half of all urban residents (Lieberman 1980: 23).ⁱⁱⁱ

<FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE>

But if acculturative conservatism can be such a powerful social force, what mechanism is responsible for it? The insecurity-based explanation, whereby immigrants seek out established

names to signal their *bona fides* as members of the host society, seems compelling. But it is difficult to rule out a very straightforward, alternative explanation—i.e., that immigrants lack knowledge of the host country’s culture (i.e., they lack mainstream “cultural capital”; Bourdieu 1984), and they therefore choose formerly-popular or “established” names simply because they are more likely to be aware of such names than of newly-popular names. Consider that established names will have built up a large stock in the native population, especially among adults. Insofar as immigrant families are residentially and socially removed from native families, they are more likely to encounter native adults (and learn their names) than native children (and their names). While immigrants might prefer fashionable names, they may be more likely to pick established names because they encounter the latter more often and mistake them for fashionable names.

The main objective of this paper is to develop a novel analytic approach for adjudicating between the cultural capital and immigrant insecurity explanations of acculturative conservatism, and to apply it to examine trends in given names among an immigrant population that is unusually well-suited for such a task. The proposed analytic approach focuses on a second dimension (in addition to their relative popularity) by which cultural forms may be distinguished—i.e., whether they have been rising or falling in popularity. We assume that for a given level of popularity, only someone who has significant mainstream cultural capital will know whether a popularity of a cultural practice is on the rise or in decline;^{iv} and we further assume that all things equal, any member of a culture will seek to avoid cultural practices whose popularity is falling (cf., Berger and LeMens 2009). It follows then that we can infer the level of mainstream cultural capital held by immigrants (and anyone else in the society) based on their tendency to avoid names whose popularity has been falling. If immigrants are more likely than the general population to pick established names whose popularity is falling, this would indicate that they lack mainstream

cultural capital. By contrast, if immigrants tend to avoid established names whose popularity is falling, this would suggest that they do not lack mainstream cultural capital and that their preference for established names reflects a lack of security in membership.

To apply this strategy, we compare the names adopted by Jewish immigrants to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th century with those adopted by their mainstream contemporaries. The data on the general population is publicly available on the Social Security Administration on its website.^y The data on the children of Jewish immigrants come from lists of the names of Jewish servicemen who served in the US Armed Forces during World War II. These Jewish servicemen were mostly born between 1917-1920, near the tail end of the great wave of immigration from Eastern Europe that began in 1880. The vast majority of these servicemen would thus have been named by either first or second-generation immigrant parents, most of whom lived in immigrant Jewish neighborhoods in New York and a few other large Northeastern and Midwestern cities.

Besides the availability of such data, the Jewish population is a particularly good research site because Jewish parents also gave their children separate Hebrew-character names to express ethnic and religious identity. Therefore when they used English names, they were relatively free from the “cake of custom” (Park 1928, 881)—except in their avoidance of names with strong Christian associations. This limits the extent to which names in our case function as “ethnic maintenance” (Gerhards and Hans 2009; Sue and Telles 2007), making Jewish American naming patterns in this period an excellent site for a study of selective acculturation, and allowing us to examine the manner by which such acculturation was expressed.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. In the next section, we review how cultural capital and insecurity in membership are intertwined in the immigrant experience. We then present our analytical approach and then how it applies in the study population of early 20th century Jewish

Americans. We then discuss our data and present results. Our analysis produces four notable findings. First, we find that Jewish acculturation to American naming patterns was *selective*, in the clear avoidance of names with strong Christian associations. Second, instead of these Christian names, Jewish parents did not select names with strong Jewish associations but rather names that had been relatively unpopular among Americans. Third, we find significant evidence of acculturative conservatism, in that Jewish parents favored established names. And finally, we find that these parents preferred established names that remained popular rather than those whose popularity was falling, indicating that their acculturative conservatism did not stem from a lack of mainstream cultural capital. This result suggests that the barriers to immigrant acculturation are not reducible to a lack of cultural knowledge but involve more subtle challenges of social acceptance. It also extends a key lesson from the recent sociology of culture—that cultural practices reflect the strategic application of knowledge – to the case of immigrant acculturation.

IMMIGRANT-INSECURITY VS. CULTURAL CAPITAL

What might account for immigrants' apparent tendency towards acculturative conservatism? As discussed in the introduction, two possible explanations for acculturative conservatism are: (a) that immigrants feel insecure in their host society; and (b) that they lack the mainstream cultural capital to succeed at being fashionable. In this section, we discuss these two mechanisms and explain why it is difficult to separate the two empirically.

The first mechanism relies on the existence of distinctive *desires* on the part of immigrants to demonstrate belonging and to claim membership in the host nation. In general, any member of a society can be expected to be relatively conservative in deviating from the dominant fashion because deviation from societal patterns suggests that one is either culturally incompetent or uncommitted to the host culture (see Author 2014). And the desire to demonstrate both cultural

competence and commitment to the host culture should be even stronger in the case of immigrants since their membership in the host society is not yet established (Eisenstadt 1953: 170). Furthermore, the cultural practices of immigrants often appear alien to the host culture, thus creating dilemmas whereby immigrants must effectively choose to either align with their ethnic group or with the host society. This implies that insofar as a given cultural practice does not pose such a dilemma, immigrants would be particularly inclined to perform it in a way that signals their embrace of membership in the host society. All things equal then, immigrants can be expected to emphasize their host-culture identity by adopting currently established names, as these names are most *prevalent* in the native population, even if these names are not currently the most popular.^{vi}

Despite the plausibility of the “immigrant-insecurity” mechanism, acculturative conservatism could be driven by a related but distinct mechanism—i.e., immigrants’ *dated beliefs* about what is most popular in the native population. **To be sure, all parents operate in the dark when picking their children’s names. In particular, it is common for parents to think they have selected a novel (if not too unusual) name, only to discover that many of their contemporaries picked the same name (Lieberson 2000: 154-6). But while such “errors” reflect the difficulty of underestimating contemporary demand for a name, they also reflect a common ability to recognize, and thus to avoid, names that are no longer in fashion. By contrast, there is reason to suspect that immigrants will not have the same ability to recognize a fashion that has passed and thus should be avoided. Thus even if immigrants *desire* to select a newly-popular name, it is possible that they will tend to choose established names because they are more likely to encounter established names and mistakenly believe they are fashionable.**

The two explanations are distinct but they are difficult to distinguish because they both rely on the fact that formerly popular or “established” names have a greater stock at any a given time than newly-popular names. According to the cultural capital explanation, this fact leads immigrants to be significantly more familiar with established names than with newly-popular names and thereby to mistakenly believe that established names are fashionable. By contrast, the immigrant-insecurity explanation assumes that common knowledge about what is established and what is newly-popular shapes how immigrants’ desire to signal membership in the host society is expressed. Because established names are more common, these names are safe signals of membership in the host society; adopting such an established name will not raise questions about one’s cultural competence or political commitments. As a result, evidence of acculturative conservatism need not indicate greater insecurity among immigrants; it could simply indicate that they are less knowledgeable about the latest fashions.

PROPOSED ANALYTIC STRATEGY: DISTINGUISHING FALLING FROM RISING NAMES

The ideal way to disentangle the immigrant-insecurity mechanism from that of lack of mainstream cultural capital would involve direct measurement of the sense of security and of cultural knowledge among immigrant (as compared to native) parents as the time of the naming of their children. In the absence of such a direct method, we propose an indirect method. In particular, we examine not only whether immigrants adopt established or novel names, but also whether immigrants choose a name that has been “rising” or “falling” in popularity.

Our key assumption is that parents prefer names that have been rising in popularity and avoid those that are falling in popularity since the former will generally be regarded as more fashionable than the latter (Lieberson 2000; cf., Berger and Le Mens 2009). More generally, we assume that parents care not only about whether a name is currently popular, but also about the

trend in a name's popularity. Children are likely to use the name for their entire lives. Parents cannot tell at the time of naming how many other parents are making similar or different choices at the same time; and so they rely on recent trends to forecast the future.

Consider a concrete example from the data we analyze below. Table 1 includes four names-- Robert, Fred, Donald, and Raleigh-- and their popularity ranking^{vii} in the general population from 1880 and 1920. These names were selected as illustrating four possible trajectories that we label as: (a) established, rising; (b) established, falling; (c) novel, rising; and (d) novel, falling. We label Robert and Fred as “established” because they were in the top 30 in 1880 (ranked #10 and #15, respectively) whereas Donald and Raleigh -- “novel” because they were below the top 30 (ranked #246 and #499 respectively).^{viii} And since Robert rose to #3 and Donald rose to #16, while Fred fell to #33 and Raleigh to #633, we label the former pair “rising” names while the latter pair are labeled as “falling.”

<TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE>

Our proposed method is based on the recognition that while both the cultural capital and immigrant-insecurity explanations imply that immigrants will show preference for established over novel names, the theories differ in their implications regarding this second dimension—preferences for names rising and falling in popularity. In particular, if acculturative conservatism reflects a lack of mainstream cultural capital then immigrants will be sensitive only to whether or not a name is established (and thus has a significant stock in the population relative to novel names) but will be unaware of whether a name is rising or falling. Thus, immigrants can be expected to use both Robert, an established name that was rising in fashion, and Fred, an established name that was declining in popularity. By contrast, if immigrants had sufficient mainstream cultural capital to distinguish rising from falling names, they would signal their membership in host society with

established but rising names such as Robert but would avoid Fred due to its declining popularity. More generally, if we find that immigrants exhibit a significant tendency to adopt established names but to avoid those established names that have been falling in popularity, this will imply that immigrant parents' conservative name choices were not due to a lack of mainstream cultural capital but to feelings of insecurity that inclined them to signal membership in the host society.

STUDY POPULATION

We use our analytic strategy to analyze names given to boys by American Jews in the years around 1918. **At that time, the Jewish community consisted of approximately 3.4 million people, of whom roughly half lived in New York and about 85% of whom were first and second generation Americans from Eastern Europe;**^{ix} almost all of the remainder were descendants of German Jews who had arrived in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. In addition to data availability, as discussed below, this population has several important advantages as a site for our study.

First, whereas the naming choices of many immigrant parents are heavily influenced by established patterns in their country of origin, such influence was generally *unimportant* in determining the English-language names selected by Eastern European Jewish immigrant parents (except for an avoidance of cultural practices with salient Christian associations, as discussed below). The key reason is that virtually all Jewish immigrants (like all traditional Jews today) gave their children *two sets* of given names in two different languages and corresponding alphabets: a religious name in Hebrew characters (which could be either Hebrew or Yiddish) and a secular name in English (Blatt 1998, 2004).^x The secular name appears in official documents, beginning with the birth certificate, and would have been used for most forms of social interaction, especially outside the Jewish community and often in

the community as well (especially if the family was not traditionally observant). But all such children also had Hebrew names, which were used for religious purposes (e.g., in the synagogue, in Jewish weddings and divorces, on gravestones), but seldom for everyday interaction.^{xi} This naming system (which is roughly paralleled by contemporary practice among Chinese immigrants who also frequently have one name in Chinese as well as an English name) is advantageous for our research objective as it implies that ethnic and religious commitments could be expressed through Hebrew names, thereby giving Jewish parents considerable freedom to choose English names at least insofar as they do not have strong Christian associations.

Also, the influence of their country of origin was generally unimportant because Eastern European Jews (in contrast to German Jews who arrived between 1820 and 1880) were largely unincorporated in “mainstream culture” in their countries of origin. One reason for this was the relatively undeveloped state of the national cultures in Eastern Europe. A second reason was their relative separateness from the non-Jewish society in their sending countries. They came from a world in which Jews had lived as a community apart from the local non-Jewish communities (both peasantry and aristocracy, who themselves had quite distinct language patterns and cultures). While they were a significant part of the local economy, especially through World War I, Eastern European Jews remained apart in virtually all other respects, their avenues for joining host nations marked by contention and discrimination (see Glazer, *ibid.*; Goldscheider and Zuckerman 1984). Accordingly, analyzing data from one city in Poland, Lieberman finds very little overlap in the given names among Polish, Russians and its Jewish inhabitants (Lieberman 2000: 209-211).

Note that this stands in marked contrast to an earlier wave of German Jews immigrants, who had already experienced “emancipation”—i.e., the extension of individual citizenship rights to Jews, a process initiated by the French and American Revolutions—in Germany, even if the fitfulness of the emancipation process was a significant impetus for their emigration to the United States.^{xii} And this emancipation experience, as well as the space that existed in German culture for middle-class members of German nationality but various religious affiliations (see Glazer 1957, 62-68), led many Jews to embrace German language and culture, and to identify themselves as Germans in many significant respects—even after arrival in the United States (Cohen 1984). Accordingly, Lieberon (2000:211) presents suggestive evidence that the names chosen by immigrant German Jews reflected some degree of acculturation into larger German culture.

Finally, Eastern European Jewish immigrants represent a good test case because they exhibited a strong desire to acculturate—or what was generally called “Americanize” at the time)—and their particularly intense embrace of American culture seems to have reflected significant *insecurity* as Americans as well as a capacity to accumulate significant mainstream *cultural capital*. One reason for their desire to acculturate and succeed in American society was that there was no turning back. Jewish immigrants were considerably more likely than other contemporary immigrant groups to have emigrated on a permanent basis (given the comparably worse political and economic conditions for Jews in Eastern Europe), coupled with their recognition that a failure to acculturate formed a barrier to social mobility (Goldscheider and Zuckerman 1984, ch. 10; Lears 1972[1952], Spiro 1955). And in addition to the desire to acculturate, there were several important factors that helped Jews in the acculturation process. One such factor was their tendency to concentrate in the

emerging urban centers (especially New York), which placed a relatively high demand on linguistic and symbolic-management skills, and which featured relatively effective public school systems.

Another important factor, both in increasing the (insecurity and thus the) motivation to acculturate as well as in providing assistance in doing so, was the role played by the Eastern European Jews' established predecessors, the German Jewish community. By the time, Eastern European Jews arrived in America their German counter-parts were well-established. As Howe (1989 [1976]) writes: "With an ease the Russian and Polish Jews could not—indeed, seldom cared to—emulate, the German Jews had thoroughly Americanized themselves, many of them finding a road to the Republican party and bourgeois affluence (229). From their position of "glib condescension" they expended significant efforts to help Americanize the recent Eastern European arrivals:

In addition to the rudiments of citizenship, the established Jews sought to inculcate values and codes of behavior as part of the Americanization process. The Anglo-Jewish press, for example, purveyed a virtual list of 'dos and don't's' for the benefit of the newcomers. Most of their strictures amounted to a counsel of low visibility: e.g., obey the law, avoid organized Jewish political activity; shun all forms of radical 'isms'; guard against self-ghettoization. Implicit in those admonitions were two reminders: (1) Whatever any individual Jew does reflects upon the entire community; (2) we, the Germans, have worked hard to create the image of a law-abiding, loyal, America-oriented group—don't undo it. The content of the Americanization program of the settlement houses was determined by the Germans with an ever-watchful eye on the non-Jews (Cohen 1984, 311).

While the Eastern European Jewish immigrants resisted significant aspects of the Americanization program advocated by the Germans (especially their condescension towards Yiddish language and culture, and the extent of the religious reforms they advocated), the Eastern Europeans were highly receptive to the Americanization process more generally. Indeed, there is considerable evidence that Eastern European Jewish immigrants generally went through the process of acculturation at a faster rate than other ethnic groups (Glazer 1950; Russell 1955; Rosenthal 1960; Kessner 1977; Gans 1997).^{xiii}

DATA

Our data come from military service Honor Roll records compiled by the Bureau of War Records of the National Jewish Welfare Board in a book entitled “*American Jews in World War II: The Story of 550,000 Fighters for Freedom*” (Kaufman 1947). From 1942 to 1946, this organization assembled the most complete records of Jewish servicemen/women who participated in the armed forces directly or worked in army service activities. These records were made under strict standard of authentication: all records were sent to local communities for confirmation.

We limit our analyses to 19,948 male servicemen from four states that are chosen to effect broad geographic representation: New York (16,038 servicemen), Illinois (2,391), California (1,307) and Virginia (212 servicemen). We do not perform an analysis for women because female names are relatively rare in these records. In total, the 19,948 servicemen had 783 different given names. To test our assumption that these servicemen were born around 1920 and thus can be compared with national data from that year, we randomly extracted a sample (n=213) of the servicemen. Using the Church of Latter Day Saints Genealogy online database we succeeded in locating 135 of these servicemen and determining their exact birth years.^{xiv} The median birth year was 1918; the mean was 1917, with a standard deviation of 5.87.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

We present our analysis in four steps. We begin by examining whether Jewish immigrants were acculturating by calculating the degree of overlap in names popular among the Jewish servicemen and those in the general population. Our findings of a partial overlap because Jews avoided names with strong Christian associations suggest that Jewish immigrants were acculturating, but that this acculturation was selective. Next, we examine whether this (selective) acculturation was conservative (i.e., exhibiting significant preference for established popular names rather than newly-popular names). Then, we proceed to show that the names that served as the effective substitutes for Christianity-associated names, were not names with Jewish associations or established popular names, but relatively rare “American” names. We label this curious pattern “subcultural acculturation.” Finally, having established that immigrant Jews indeed exhibited (selective) acculturative conservatism, we employ our proposed analytical strategy for disentangling the immigrant-insecurity explanation from the cultural capital explanation for acculturative conservatism.

Evidence of selective acculturation

In table 2, we present a comparison of the top 30 most popular names in the general population born in 1920 with that of the Jewish sample born around 1917, as well as information about the history and origin of each name. The first result is that there is evidence of significant acculturation. Each of the thirty most popular mainstream names was adopted by at least some parents of the Jewish servicemen. Further, a substantial minority of the most popular names among Jewish boys (thirteen out of the top thirty, and six out of the top twenty) overlapped with the most popular names in the general population. Consistent with previous research (e.g., Lieberman 2000: 195-200), this suggests that immigrants’ choices of the host country’s names gravitated towards the

fashion in the general population, and it supports our assumption that Jewish immigrants were relatively free to choose English names.

<TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE>

At the same time, this acculturation was selective. In particular, Jewish immigrants in this period departed from the mainstream in one important way: names that are strongly associated with Christianity in general and with the New Testament in particular were noticeably less popular among Jews than they were in the general population. For example, while *John*, *James*, and *Paul* were ranked first, fourth, and fourteenth in the general population, these names—which are most strongly associated with their eponymous Gospels—are considerably less popular among Jews (ranked 79th, 86th, and 40th respectively). Similarly, *Frank* and *Thomas*, two names that are associated with prominent saints, were very popular in the general population (ranked 9th and 11th respectively) but relatively unpopular among Jewish servicemen (ranked 68th and 191th). Jews did seem to pick some names associated with saints, but these tended to be less prominent saints for whom the connection to Christianity was likely to be unknown or to be superseded by later secular figures with the same name.

In sum, while Jewish immigrant tastes were distinctive, many of the names that were popular in the mainstream were also popular among Jewish immigrants. That it is, there is evidence of significant acculturation, even if it is selective. And thus, to the extent that immigrant Jews engaged in acculturation, the question is whether such acculturation was conservative (favoring established popular names) or fashionable (favoring newly-popular names).

Evidence of acculturative conservatism

Some light on this question is shed by table 3. This table is comparable to table 2, but in this case the top 30 names in the Jewish sample are presented together with the top 30 in the general

population in 1880 rather than in 1920. Again, we see that there is substantial overlap between the two rankings. In particular, twelve of the top 30 names that were popular among Jewish parents around 1917 were popular in 1880. And note that while this degree of overlap is slightly lower than that which was found in table 2 for the 1920 general population (13 out of 30 rather than 12), the degree of overlap in the top 20 is actually *higher* for 1880 (8) than for 1920 (6). This degree of preference for what was popular in 1880 seems high when we consider that if we were to randomly draw samples from the American given names in 1920, the popularity distribution in a given sample should overlap significantly *more* with the 1920 popularity distribution than with the 1880 popularity distribution. Given that, the fact that the Jewish sample displayed almost as much (if the top 30 is used) or more (if top 20) overlap suggests considerable conservatism.

<TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE>

To test the statistical significance of this finding, we conducted a Monte Carlo experiment based on this logic. Specifically, we drew 1,000 random samples from the 1920 general population of the same size as the Jewish sample.^{xv} For each of these random samples, we calculated four different measures of “overlap ratio,” each of which compares: (a) the overlap between the most popular names in the sample with the most popular names in the general population in 1920; with (b) the overlap between the most popular names in the sample with the most popular names in the general population in 1880. These four measures of overlap ratio are distinguished based on whether: they are calculated on the top 20 or the top 30; and whether the denominator is the overlap in 1880 (“type 1”) or the sum of the overlap in 1880 and the overlap in 1920 (“type 2”).^{xvi}

The results of this test indicate that acculturative conservatism by the Jewish parents was statistically significant. In particular, since 12 of the top 30 names in the Jewish sample were in the national top 30 in 1920 and 13 were in the national top 30 in 1880, this generates a type-1

overlap ratio of 1.08 (13/12). Since a type 1 overlap ratio as high 1.08 appeared in only 126 of the 1,000 random samples, this implies statistical significance at near conventional levels (p-value of .126). Moreover, conventional levels of statistical significance were achieved by the three other measures. In particular, only 10 of the 1,000 random samples (p-value of .01) had a type 2 overlap ratio as high as 0.52 (i.e., the equivalent of what is observed in the Jewish sample: 13/[13+12]), and the results are even stronger if we use the top-20 to calculate overlap ratios. While eight of the top 20 names in the Jewish sample were in the national top 30 in 1920 and 10 were in the national top 20 in 1880, neither a type 1 overlap ratio as high as 1.33 (i.e., the equivalent of the Jewish sample: 8/6) nor a type 2 overlap ratio as high as 0.57 (i.e., the equivalent of the Jewish sample: 8/[8+6]) appeared even once in 1,000 random samples (p-value<.001).

Before analyzing the causes of this acculturative conservatism, it is worth considering whether this preference for established names was actually an artifact of Jewish immigrants' tendency to avoid names strongly associated with Christianity. If such names became more popular in the general population between 1880 and 1920, it is possible that this fact alone accounts for Jewish-immigrants avoidance of newly-popular names. This does not appear to be the case, however. In particular, between 1880 and 1920, among the top 20 most popular names, *Harry*, *Fred*, *Samuel*, *David* and *Louis* declined in popularity and were replaced with *Richard*, *Harold*, *Paul*, *Raymond* and *Donald*. Of these, only *Harold* rose to the top 20 among Jews. While Jews likely avoided *Paul* because of the name's strong association with Christianity, the other three names were as legitimate for use by Jewish parents as the other names with relatively weak Christian associations. Meanwhile, whereas the popularity among Jews of *David* and *Samuel* might be explained by their Jewish associations, this does not explain the continued popularity among Jews of *Harry* and *Louis*. In sum, it appears that while (as shown in the previous section),

Jewish acculturation was selective in that it avoided names with strong Christian associations, it was also distinctively conservative: conditional on choosing popular names, Jewish parents preferred established popular names over newly-popular ones.

Was Acculturative Conservatism Responsible for Distinctively Jewish American Names?

Before analyzing why Jewish immigrants were acculturatively conservative, we must first consider another pattern that emerges from tables 2 and 3, and whether it too is a manifestation of acculturative conservatism. In particular, it is noteworthy that Jewish parents seem to effectively have “replaced” strongly Christian-associated names with a few names-- such as *Stanley, Sidney, Irving, Morris* and *Jerome*-- that stand out as favored by the Jewish immigrants but not by the general population, neither in 1880 nor in 1920. The popularity of these names might not seem puzzling because many Americans tend to regard them as classically Jewish (see Lieberson 2000: 216). But in fact, these names do not have any associations in Jewish religion nor did they have any roots in (Eastern European) Jewish culture. Their emergence as Jewish names is a distinctly American phenomenon. That is, these names became known in the United States as distinctively Jewish names as a *result* of their popularity among American Jews. But to call these names Jewish is to beg the question of how they became Jewish.

<TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE>

One possible explanation is that while these names were not popular in 1880 (the earliest birth-year available from the Social Security Administration), they were popular in the prior generation and their popularity thus reflects a form of acculturative conservatism. To check this, we obtained name data from Union veterans of the Civil War, who would have been born around 1840. These results are presented in table 4. We see that quite clearly,

the names that had distinctive appeal for immigrant Jews were *not popular* in 1840. While it is possible that some of these names rose and fell in popularity between 1840 and 1880, this seems relatively unlikely, especially given the relatively slow rate of fashion cycles in 19th century naming fashion (Lieberson 2000; Lieberson and Lynn 2003). This implies that the selective acculturation of American Jews was marked by two aspects: (a) avoidance of Christian-associated names; and (b) a dynamic we label “subcultural acculturation.” The latter occurs when an immigrant community adopts relatively *unpopular* cultural forms in the host society, which gain popularity in that community due to fashion dynamics that are internal to that community. In particular, it appears that some Jewish parents were responding specifically to the popularity of names among their peers, and this led to distinctive popularity levels for certain names among Jews. In the conclusion section, we consider the implications of this result.

Disentangling the two explanations of acculturative conservatism

Having established the existence of subcultural acculturation alongside acculturative conservatism, we now employ our analytic strategy for clarifying what drove such acculturative conservatism. To recall, there are two possibilities. First, immigrants might lack mainstream cultural capital in that they desired to keep up with the latest fashion but they did not have sufficient knowledge to do so. Second, immigrants might be aware of the latest fashion but their sense of insecurity as members of the host society leads them to select established names that more clearly convey national identity. As discussed, our strategy for disentangling the two explanations is to test whether or not Jewish immigrants avoided names that were falling in popularity; such avoidance would suggest that they possessed the mainstream cultural capital necessary to be fashionable but they opt for safe choices.

To clarify our analytic approach, we present in tables 5 and 6 the data that are based on the analysis of the top 30 most popular names in 1880 and 1920. From table 5, we see that in the general population, 19 of the 30 names that were established as most popular in 1880 remained in the top 30 in 1920, and that the 11 that had dropped out of the top-30 by had (necessarily) been replaced by 11 newly-popular names. This carries a key implication: If the Jewish population were picking randomly from established names because they could not distinguish between those that were no longer fashionable than those that remained fashionable, the likelihood of picking a name that had dropped out of the top 30 would be $11/30$ or 58%. In fact, however, we see from table 6 that of the 12 established names by 1880 that were popular among Jewish Servicemen, *only one of these (Samuel) was a name that dropped out of the top 30 by 1920*. Thus, while Jewish parents were considerably more conservative than the general population (as shown in the previous section and as shown in the last column of table 6 by their low ratio of adopting newly-popular relative to established names [$2/16=0.125$ versus $11/30=0.366$ in the general population]), they display a marked tendency to avoid those established names that were falling in popularity.

<TABLES 5, 6 ABOUT HERE>

To verify this result in a systematic way, we extended the analysis for the top 30 names to the top X names. X is a continuous variable with the range from 31 to 1000 (as 1000 is the maximum rank that we have in our general population data). Also to assess statistical significance, we again ran a Monte Carlo experiment. In particular, we drew 1,000 random samples from the 1920 general population of the same size as the Jewish sample. For each of these random samples, we noted the popularity of the names in the sample and we calculated the ratio of established names that fell out to the established names that remained popular, for all top X names. A lower value of this ratio indicates a stronger tendency to

avoid falling names. Then we tested whether the this ratio for the Jewish sample can be considered statistically different from the general population by comparing this ratio to the sampling distribution for the random samples from that population.

The results are presented in Figure 2. The solid black red curve shows the means of the ratios across one thousand random samples from the general population, for all top X names, and the dashed curves show the 95% confident intervals around the means. The solid grey curve shows the ratios of the Jewish sample. We see that the grey curve is considerably *below* the 95% confidence interval for all X. This suggests that our key result is very robust.

In brief, the evidence suggests that Jewish immigrant parents made discriminating choices based on their knowledge of contemporary fashion. To be sure, they exhibited a marked tendency to pick established names. But they do not appear to have selected those names due to their ignorance of recent fashion. Indeed, they seem to have exhibited a *stronger* tendency to avoid names that were falling in popularity than was exhibited by the population in general. This suggests that they had significant mainstream cultural capital, and that their acculturative conservative reflected a *choice* to signal membership in the host society rather than mistaken beliefs about what was fashionable.

SUMMARY

Our results make an important contribution to our understanding of the immigrant incorporation process by exploring the role that the lack of security and lack of cultural capital play in hindering an immigrants' successful acculturation. Recent research has raised the call for more nuanced theories of immigrant incorporation, in particular highlighting the need to replace static conceptions of the host culture and the dilemmas implied by a cultural in flux (Alba and Nee 1997). The phenomenon of acculturative conservatism exemplifies such dilemmas. When

confronted with a culture subject to fashion, immigrants are distinctively conservative in their choice of children's first names, in that they tend to select names that were popular in the previous generation but have since been eclipsed by newer names (Sue and Telles 2007; Watkins and London 1994; Lieberman 2000). The question is why. Acculturative conservatism could reflect immigrants' lack cultural knowledge of the host society's culture, especially as these are subject to shifting fashion. Alternatively, immigrants might prefer established names because they are more effective ways of shoring up their insecure membership in the host society.

In this paper, we documented evidence of acculturation among American Jews at the beginning of the twentieth century that was both *selective* (as it was marked by avoidance of names with strong Christian associations) and *conservative* (as it was marked by a preference for names that were established in popularity relative to newly-popular names). And we also showed that acculturative conservatism is consistent with a *high level of cultural capital* among these Jewish immigrants, as indicated by their avoidance of established names that were falling in popularity. While we cannot directly measure these immigrants' feelings of insecurity, this pattern of result casts significant doubt on the likelihood that the lack of cultural capital is responsible for "acculturative conservatism." And this thereby lends credence to the immigrant-insecurity explanation.

IMPLICATIONS

In concluding, we would like to highlight the implications of our study for (a) future research on immigrant naming patterns; (b) immigrant incorporation more generally; and (c) research at the intersection of the society of culture and immigrant incorporation.

First, although it was not the focus of our study, we think future research would benefit from looking more carefully at the puzzle of "subcultural acculturation." We use this

term to refer to the curious pattern by which names for which Jewish immigrants had no cultural or religious affinity gained significant popularity specifically among immigrant Jews. This study appears to be the first to show such popularity *cannot* be explained by acculturative conservatism (as we demonstrated, these names were not popular in 1840). Instead, the pattern seems more consistent with the operation of a fashion dynamic endogenous to the Jewish community (see Kaufman 2004; Lieberman 2000; Author 2014 for review). But the specific mechanisms by which this endogenous dynamic operated it is hard to discern from our data. Did Jewish parents erroneously think that these names were popular in the native population (cf., Wirth 1928, 241-3)? Or did they know that these names were popular only among Jews but selected them because they thought it was an effective way of signaling that they were members in the American Jewish community? And note finally that insofar as the wave of Jewish emigrants from Eastern Europe also produced significant communities in the British Empire, Argentina, and elsewhere, future studies might examine which aspect of this phenomenon was shaped by factors that were particular to the American environment.

Our study also carries important implications for our understanding of immigrant incorporation. While immigrants might derive social and economic benefits from (selective) acculturation, it is not always a smooth process. Public policy, particularly in residential and education programs often makes the assumption that increased social integration-- i.e. more opportunity for immigrants to interact with the native population-- will increase acculturation (Alba and Nee 2003; Van Tubergen 2006). Increased interaction is assumed to both increase immigrants' mainstream cultural capital and increases their sense of belonging in the host society. But if it is easier to administer cultural education programs

than it is to increase the social acceptance of immigrants, the importance of the latter could be overlooked. It is possible that some of immigrants' behavior patterns, which such programs assume result from immigrants' lack of cultural knowledge, actually reflect deliberate choices due to a sense of insecurity; and such insecurity may in turn reflect constraints on acculturation that exist even when there is significant contact between the host society and the immigrant group. Future research should focus on the process by which the latter, more subtle limitation, may be overcome.

Finally, this study provides an opportunity to apply and extend ideas from recent cultural sociology. Note in this regard that research and policy pertaining to immigrant acculturation well predates the emergence of cultural sociology as a prominent subfield in the 1980s and the literatures have still not yet been fully incorporated. Note in particular, the lessons from our study are quite consistent with Swidler's (1986, 2001) "tool-kit" model and in particular her argument that people "know more culture than they use" (Vaisey 2007: 1678) and that their use of cultural knowledge is strategic and adapted to the particular context. Our key result is quite consistent with this argument and it extends it as well. In particular, our evidence suggests that immigrants may often know more about the host society than is reflected by their observable actions. This may seem surprising given that we might expect immigrants to do what they can to demonstrate that they have the cultural capital to fit in. But just as native members of a culture can be expected to enact a narrow range of their cultural knowledge and skills when they feel insecure that such a display will be accepted (see Swidler 2001, ch. 8), it stands to reason that this should *a fortiori* true for immigrants. And more generally, this study of immigrant acculturative conservatism attunes us to the agency that underlies conformity.

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Table 1. Examples of different types of names and their likely adopters

	Rank in the general population					Classification	Likely adopters
	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920		
Donald	246	131	79	44	16	Novel, rising	Natives with mainstream cultural capital
Robert	10	8	6	4	3	Established, rising	Immigrants with mainstream cultural capital
Raleigh	499	431	543	617	633	Novel, falling	Natives lacking mainstream cultural capital
Fred	15	15	17	22	33	Established, falling	Immigrants lacking mainstream cultural capital

Table 2. The 30 most popular names in the general population born in 1920 and those among the Jewish Servicemen

	Top 30 names in the general population born in 1920	Rank in the Jewish sample	Origin and History of Name ^a	Top 30 names in the sample of Jewish servicemen (mean birth year: 1917)	Rank in general population	Origin and History of Name
1	John	79	English, NT	Irving	116	Scottish surname
2	William	14	Germanic	David	25	HB
3	Robert	6	Germanic	Bernard	46	Germanic, Saint
4	James	86	English; NT	Joseph	7	HB
5	Charles	26	Germanic, Saints	Harold	12	English
6	George	22	Greek; Pro. Saint	Robert	3	Germanic
7	Joseph	4	HB	Harry	21	Dim. of both Henry and Harold
8	Edward	24	English, Saint	Sidney	107	English surname
9	Frank	68	(Francis), Pro. Saint	Jack	20	Dim. of John (Christians) or of Jacob (Jews)
10	Richard	49	Germanic; British	Samuel	44	A prophet in the HB
11	Thomas	191	Greek, NT, Pro.Saints	Abraham	202	HB
12	Harold	5	English	Herbert	41	Germanic
13	Walter	56	Germanic	Milton	74	English surname
14	Paul	40	Greek, NT	William	2	Germanic
15	Raymond	71	Germanic	Louis	28	French, Kings & Saints
16	Donald	77	Gaelic	Morris	109	Modification of Maurice; Maurus, Saints
17	Henry	33	Germanic, English, Kings & Saints	Arthur	18	Celtic or Roman
18	Arthur	17	Celtic or Roman	Stanley	40	English
19	Albert	30	Germanic	Jerome	126	Greek, Saint
20	Jack	9	Dim. of John (Christians) or of Jacob (Jews)	Leonard	38	Germanic
21	Harry	7	Dim. of both Henry and Harold	Max	112	Roman, Dim. of Maximilian
22	Ralph	60	Norman	George	6	Greek; Pro. Saint
23	Kenneth	100	Scottish	Martin	78	Roman
24	Howard	47	English	Edward	8	English, Kings & Saints
25	David	2	HB	Norman	47	Germanic
26	Clarence	169	Latin	Charles	5	Germanic, Saints
27	Carl	70	Germanic	Nathan	172	HB
28	Louis	15	French, Kings & Saints	Murray	239	Scottish
29	Willie	395	Dim. of William	Seymour	203	Norman
30	Eugene	66	English	Albert	19	Germanic

Notes:

- a. Primary source: Behind the names: the etymology and history of first names (<http://www.behindthename.com/name>).
- b. In **bold** are names that appear among top 30 in both the general population and in the Jewish sample. In *italic* are names that appear among top 20 in both the general population and in the Jewish sample.
- c. NT: New Testament;
OT: Old Testament;
HB: Hebrew Bible;
Pro. Saints: Prominent Saints;
K&S: Names of Kings and Saints.

Table 3. The 30 most popular names in the general population born in 1880 and those among the Jewish Servicemen

	Top 30 names in the general population born in 1880	Rank in the Jewish sample	Origin and History of Name ^a	Top 30 names in the sample of Jewish servicemen (mean birth year: 1917)	Rank in 1880 general population	Origin and History of Name
1	John	79	English, NT	Irving	203	Scottish surname
2	William	14	Germanic	David	18	HB
3	James	86	English; NT	Bernard	97	Germanic, Saint
4	Charles	26	Germanic, Saints	Joseph	7	HB
5	George	22	Greek; Pro. Saint	Harold	116	English
6	Frank	68	(Francis), Pro. Saint	Robert	10	Germanic
7	Joseph	4	HB	Harry	12	Dim. of both Henry and Harold
8	Thomas	191	Greek, NT, Pro. Saint	Sidney	96	English surname
9	Henry	33	Germanic, English, Kings & Saints	Jack	77	Dim. of John (Christians) or of Jacob (Jews)
10	Robert	6	Germanic	Samuel	17	A prophet in the HB
11	Edward	24	English, Saint	Abraham	163	HB
12	Harry	7	Dim. of both Henry and Harold	Herbert	38	Germanic
13	Walter	56	Germanic	Milton	91	English surname
14	Arthur	17	Celtic or Roman	William	2	Germanic
15	Fred	55	Germanic, dim.of Frederick	Louis	19	French, Kings & Saints
16	Albert	30	Germanic	Morris	172	Modification of Maurice; Maurus, Saints
17	Samuel	10	A prophet in the HB	Arthur	14	Celtic or Roman
18	David	2	HB	Stanley	191	English
19	Louis	15	French, Kings & Saints	Jerome	229	Greek, Saint
20	Joe	112	Dim.of Joseph	Leonard	78	Germanic
21	Charlie	395	Dim.of Charles	Max	230	Roman, Dim. of Maximilian
22	Clarence	169	Latin	George	5	Greek; Pro. Saint
23	Richard	49	Germanic; British	Martin	45	Roman
24	Andrew	253	Greek, NT	Edward	11	English, Kings & Saints
25	Daniel	43	HB	Norman	133	Germanic
26	Ernest	88	Germanic	Charles	4	Germanic, Saints
27	Will	>783	Dim.of William	Nathan	115	HB
28	Jesse	136	Hebrew, OT, English after the Protestant Reform.	Murray	438	Scottish
29	Oscar	85	Gaelic	Seymour	502	Norman
30	Lewis	102	Medieval English form of Louis	Albert	16	Germanic, Saints

Notes:

- a. Primary source: Behind the names: the etymology and history of first names (<http://www.behindthename.com/name>).
- b. In **bold** are names that appear among top 30 in both the general population and in the Jewish sample. In *italics* are names that appear among top 20 in both the general population and in the Jewish sample.
- c. NT: New Testament;
OT: Old Testament;
HB: Hebrew Bible;
Pro. Saints: Prominent Saints;
K&S: Names of Kings and Saints.

Table 4. The popularity of the names favored by Jewish servicemen in 1840, 1880 and 1920

	Top 30 in Jewish sample	Percentage among Union Civil War veterans (approximately born around 1840) ¹	Percentage among general population in 1880	Percentage among general population in 1920
1	Irving	0.02%	0.05%	0.13%
2	David	2.45%	0.73%	0.68%
3	Bernard	0.17%	0.12%	0.38%
4	Joseph	4.42%	2.22%	2.32%
5	Harold	0.00%	0.10%	1.24%
6	Robert	2.24%	2.04%	4.42%
7	Harry	0.12%	1.82%	0.85%
8	Sidney	0.09%	0.12%	0.15%
9	Jack	0.22% ²	0.17%	0.87%
10	Samuel	3.08%	0.86%	0.42%
11	Abraham	0.41%	0.07%	0.06%
12	Herbert	0.05%	0.36%	0.48%
13	Milton	0.27% ³	0.13%	0.24%
14	William	13.85%	8.05%	4.56%
15	Louis	0.57%	0.70%	0.63%
16	Morris	0.14%	0.07%	0.15%
17	Arthur	0.21%	1.35%	0.93%
18	Stanley	0.01%	0.05%	0.48%
19	Jerome	0.12%	0.04%	0.12%
20	Leonard	0.19%	0.17%	0.50%
21	Max	0.05% ⁴	0.04%	0.14%
22	George	8.02%	4.33%	2.44%
23	Martin	0.87%	0.30%	0.22%
24	Edward	2.22%	2.00%	1.83%
25	Norman	0.08%	0.09%	0.37%
26	Charles	6.23%	4.52%	2.57%
27	Nathan ⁵	0.90%	0.10%	0.07%
28	Murray	0.01%	0.01%	0.05%
29	Seymour	0.03%	0.01%	0.06%
30	Albert	1.09%	1.26%	0.91%

Note:

1. The sample for calculating the percentage around 1840 is the names of the soldiers who participated in the union's army in the American Civil War (1861-1865). The sample size is 2,672,341. The (first) names' frequencies is obtained by searching these names via *the*

Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System (CWSS), a database which contain the information of the men who served in the armies during the Civil War.

2. This number also includes the percentage of the first name “Jackson”. *Jack* and *Jackson* cannot be distinguished by using the searching engine provided by CWSS. So the actual percentage of “Jack” should be much lower than 0.22%.
3. This number also includes the percentage of the first name “Hamilton”.
4. This number also includes the percentage of the first name “Maximilian”.
5. This number also includes the percentage of the first name “Nathaniel” and “Johnathan”.
6. In **bold** are names that appear among top 30 in both the general population and in the Jewish sample. In *italics* are names that appear among top 20 in both the general population and in the Jewish sample.

Table 5. The top 30 names in the general population in 1920 and their popularity histories

General Population's Top 30 in 1920	Rank in the general population in 1880	Established names that remained popular ^a	Newly-popular names ^b
1. John	1	Y	
2. William	2	Y	
3. Robert	10	Y	
4. James	3	Y	
5. Charles	4	Y	
6. George	5	Y	
7. Joseph	7	Y	
8. Edward	11	Y	
9. Frank	6	Y	
10. Richard	23	Y	
11. Thomas	8	Y	
12. Harold	116		Y
13. Walter	13	Y	
14. Paul	60		Y
15. Raymond	87		Y
16. Donald	246		Y
17. Henry	9	Y	
18. Arthur	14	Y	
19. Albert	16	Y	
20. Jack	77		Y
21. Harry	12	Y	
22. Ralph	54		Y
23. Kenneth	297		Y
24. Howard	44		Y
25. David	18	Y	
26. Clarence	22	Y	
27. Carl	42		Y
28. Louis	19	Y	
29. Willie	34		Y
30. Eugene	53		Y
Total		19	11

Notes:

- a. Top 30 in general population in 1880 and also top 30 in 1920.
- b. Not Top 30 in general population in 1880 but top 30 in 1920.

Table 6. The Top 30 names among the Jewish Servicemen and their Popularity Trends

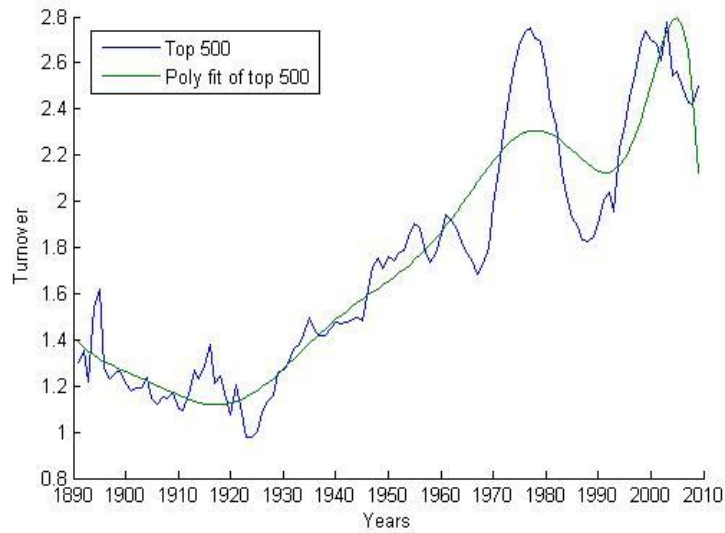
	Top 30 names among Jewish servicemen	Rank in the general population in 1880	Rank in the general population in 1920	Names idiosyncratically favored by Jews ^a	Established names that remained popular ^b	Established names that fell out ^c	Newly-popular names ^d
1	Irving	203	116	Y			
2	David	18	25		Y		
3	Bernard	97	46	Y			
4	Joseph	7	7		Y		
5	Harold	116	12				Y
6	Robert	10	3		Y		
7	Harry	12	21		Y		
8	Sidney	96	107	Y			
9	Jack	77	20				Y
10	Samuel	17	44			Y	
11	Abraham	163	202	Y			
12	Herbert	38	41	Y			
13	Milton	91	74	Y			
14	William	2	2		Y		
15	Louis	19	28		Y		
16	Morris	172	109	Y			
17	Arthur	14	18		Y		
18	Stanley	191	40	Y			
19	Jerome	229	126	Y			
20	Leonard	78	38	Y			
21	Max	230	112	Y			
22	George	5	6		Y		
23	Martin	45	78	Y			
24	Edward	11	8		Y		
25	Norman	133	47	Y			
26	Charles	4	5		Y		
27	Nathan	115	172	Y			
28	Murray	438	239	Y			
29	Seymour	502	203	Y			
30	Albert	16	19		Y		
	Total			16	11	1	2

Notes:

- a. Neither top 30 in general population in 1880 nor top 30 in 1920.
- b. Top 30 in general population in 1880 and also top 30 in 1920.
- c. Top 30 in general population in 1880 but not top 30 in 1920.
- d. Not Top 30 in general population in 1880 but top 30 in 1920.

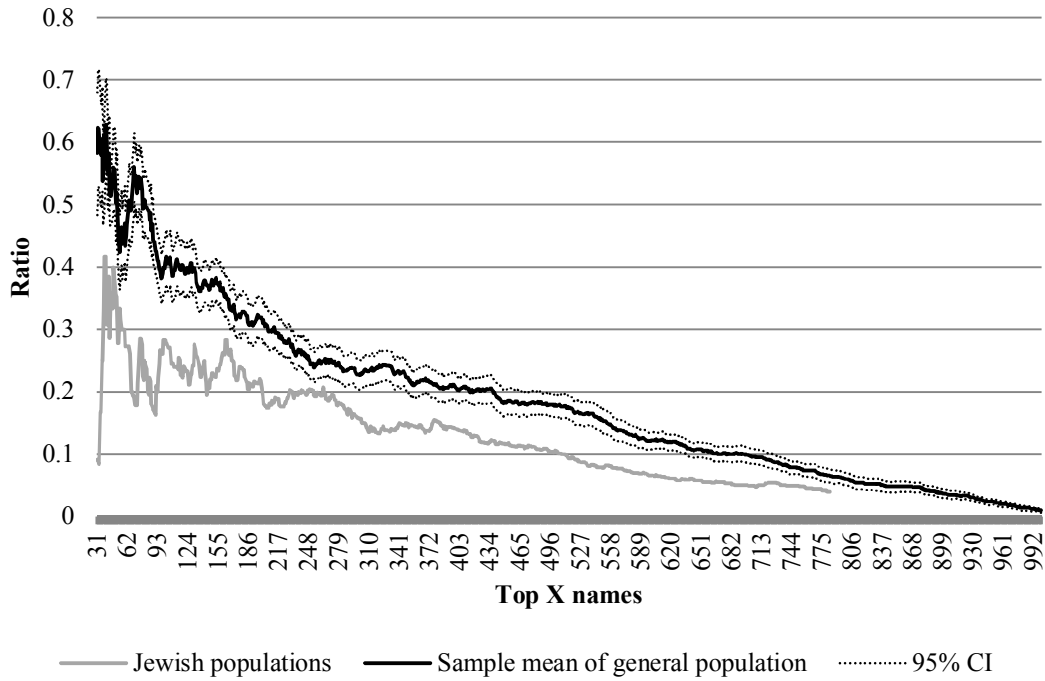
FIGURES

Figure 1. Adjusted name turnover of the top 500 American male names



Note: Adjusted turnover indicates the extent to which a group of names changes over a specific time period (Lieberson, 2000). The value reported for each year represents the value of turn-over for the immediately preceding 10-year period. Please check Zhang, etc. (2013) for additional information about our measure of adjusted turnover.

Figure 2. Ratio of established names that fell out to established names that remained popular, by different categories of top names



APPENDIX: ACCULTURATIVE CONSERVATISM AS A POWERFUL SOCIAL FORCE

In this appendix, we present a simple computation model that we used to clarify how actors' choices of established names can slow down the name turnover in popular names.

Basic Model

In the model a population of N actors adopt practices from a pool of M practices ($M \geq N$). In the initial state of the system ($t=0$), we randomly assign each actor a value as her taste for popularity. The distribution of all persons' tastes for popularity is normal. In different experiments, we change the mean of the tastes for popularity between 1% and 20%, which indicates the average preference to (un)popular practices. For instance, if the mean equals 20%, on average actors prefer a practice that 20% of other actors adopt.

We also randomly assign P ($P \leq M$) practices to the N actors, and calculate the P practices' initial popularities—the popularity of a practice is the percentage of actors who adopt this practice. At $t=1$, an actor calculates the differences between its taste for popularity and the popularities of all practices (including the one that the actor adopts). Then the actor changes its practice to a novel one whose popularity is closest to the actor's taste for popularity (if the actor's current practice is not the closest one). After all actors update their practices, we calculate the adjusted turnover of Top N names^{xvii}. We can let all actors update for T time periods (as time flows) and get T adjusted turnover along time.

Comparative condition

In this condition, H percent of actors choose practices from a narrowed set: the practices that have reached a certain level of popularity (L) for several consecutive periods-- C , and $C < T$. Figure B-1 shows the results when actors only choose practices from the ones which have reached

a certain level of popularity (e.g. $\geq 5\%$) for a rather long term (e.g. 3 periods). We run the model with 100 actors and 100 practices, and calculate the adjusted turnover of top 50 names. The configuration of the parameters is as follows: $L=5\%$, $C=3$, $T=50$ and $H=0, 20\%, 50\%$ or 100% . As a complementary result to figure 2, Figure B-2 shows the turnover as a function of time when different proportions of actors prefer established practices ($H=0, 20\%, 50\%$ and 100%). The rates of change stabilize after a few time periods. The result shows that when the proportion (H) is higher, the stable rate of change is lower.

The values of the rate of change shown in figure B-1 are the average of those of the T ($T=50$) periods (to avoid noise, the first three periods are excluded when we calculate the mean). We change the average of actors' tastes for popularity and repeat our calculations. Our key result is robust. Also our results show that the rate of change decreases with the increase of average taste for popularity, which is consistent with the results of Obukhova, Zuckerman and Zhang (2011). Our results are also robust when we change the values of the number of top names (X), popularity threshold (L), number of consecutive periods (C). For more comprehensive robustness check of the model, please refer Obukhova, Zuckerman and Zhang (2011).

Figure A-1. Rate of change in top 50 names when (a proportion of) actors choose established practices

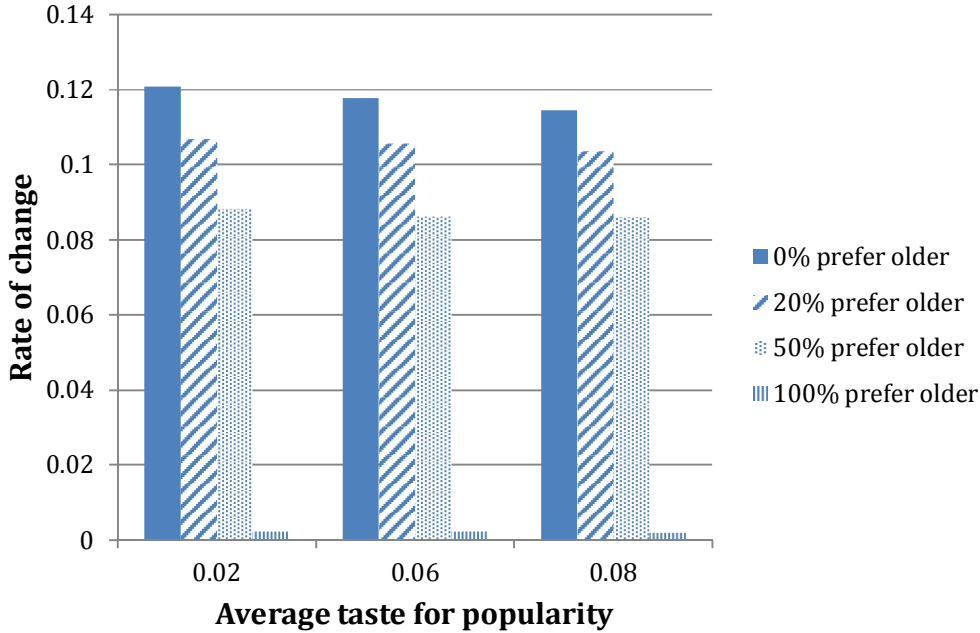
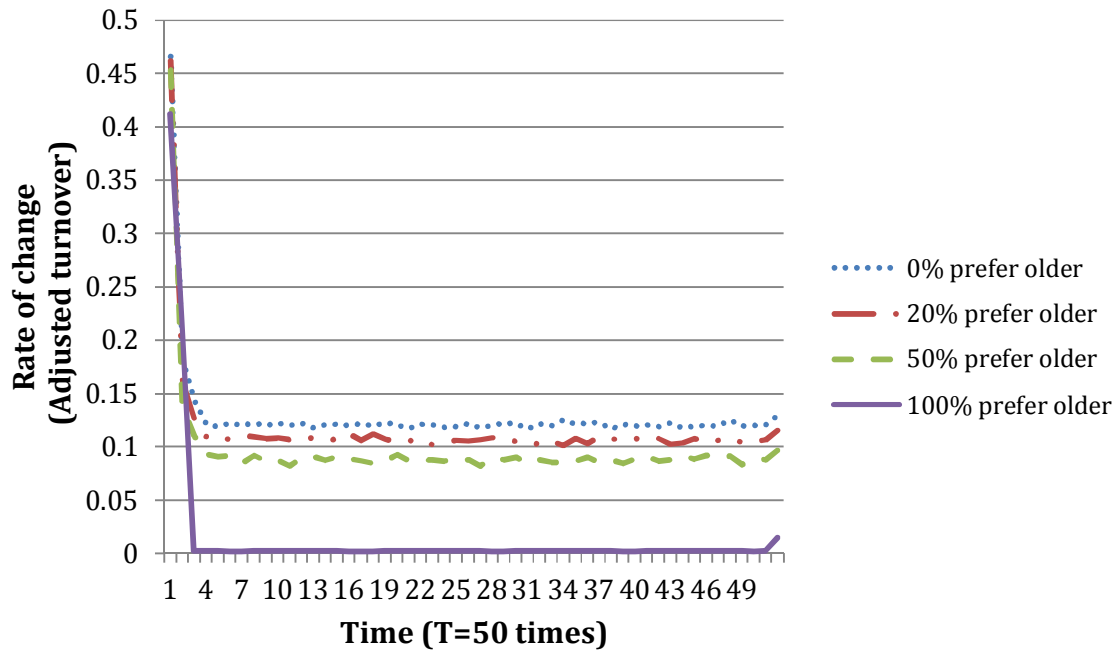


Figure A-2 How adjusted turnover changes along time



Endnotes

ⁱ Two other revisions in classical formulations are outside the scope of this paper: (a) the recognition that immigrants are selective in what aspects of their “old country” culture they bring to the receiving country, often emphasizing those elements that are more acceptable and productive in the latter (see Zhou 1997); and (b) the recognition that acculturation is a two-way street, with the immigrant culture (e.g., in cuisine) often having significant effects on the host culture (see e.g., Alba and Nee 1997: 834).

ⁱⁱ Zhang, Zuckerman and Obukhova (2013) shows how the rate of replacement is calculated.

ⁱⁱⁱ To verify the internal validity of this argument, a computational model is presented in Appendix A.

^{iv} This assumption does not hold under current conditions since the popularity of names is now publicized and it does not require cultural capital to know trends in a name’s popularity.

^v For each year after 1879, U.S. social security administration (<http://www.ssa.gov/oact/babynames/>) publishes all the names that appear in its records at least five times for either gender. It also provides data on the number of births for each of these names, and the number of U.S. births per year for each gender.

^{vi} Note that this might not be true for cultural practices that are very transient since formerly popular practices will no longer be most prevalent. But for cultural practices like names that are hard to change, the most prevalent and visible at any one time are those that have the greatest cumulative popularity up to the present rather than those that are newly-popular.

^{vii} Rank measures a name’s popularity relative to popularity of other names, so that names with highest popularity have highest rank.

^{viii} Note that a novel name in one time period might be a name that once was very popular but fell out of favor.

^{ix} “Eastern Europe” here means the western provinces of the Russian Empire (the “Pale” of Settlement, including parts of present-day Poland, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, and the Baltic states), as well as the province of Galicia, in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (including parts of present-day Poland, Ukraine, and Slovakia). For population estimates, see:

[http://www.hillel.org/docs/default-source/historical/american-jewish-year-book-\(1920-1921\).pdf?sfvrsn=2](http://www.hillel.org/docs/default-source/historical/american-jewish-year-book-(1920-1921).pdf?sfvrsn=2) and <http://www.jewishdatabank.org/studies/downloadFile.cfm?FileID=3025>.

^x For the vast majority of immigrant Jews who were “Ashkenazi” and originated in Eastern Europe, this practice was a modification of practices they had followed in Europe whereby they often had a religious Hebrew name and a secular Yiddish name (Blatt 2004). Since Yiddish is written in the Hebrew alphabet, the Yiddish name was often coupled with the Hebrew name as part of a combined Hebrew-Yiddish name (e.g., Dov Behr [“bear” in Hebrew followed by “bear” in Yiddish] or Tzvi Hirsch [“deer” in Hebrew followed by “deer” in Yiddish]).

^{xi} In recent years, and in line with the general American shift towards multiculturalism (and with the increase in their security as members of American society), it has become much more accepted/fashionable among American Jews to give their children secular names that are transliterations of Hebrew names and which have no English equivalent (e.g., Mayim [“water”] or Aviva [“spring”] for girls, Lev [“heart”] or Noam [“pleasant”] for boys), and to use this name on official documents and for everyday interaction. Use of Yiddish in names (and use of Yiddish generally) has generally fallen out of fashion except in the Hasidic community.

^{xii} For a classic overview of Jewish emancipation, see Baron (1928 [1964]). See also Goldscheider and Zuckerman (1984).

^{xiii} We should clarify that the acculturation of the first and second generations of Jewish immigrants was slightly different from that of later generations. The first and second generations of Jewish immigrants tended to pursue acculturation (and also assimilation in economic, social and political spheres). Many even tried to hide their Jewish identity (Rosenthal, 1960; Wirth, 1956[1928]; Cohen, 1983). However, greater openness and embrace of Jewish identity re-emerged among the third and later generations due to various economic, social and political factors, including, the reduction in prejudice and acceptance of multiculturalism in mainstream American society, and Jews' attainment of improved economic, social and political status (e.g., Etzioni, 1959; Goldscheider and Zuckerman 1984; Rosenthal, 1960).

^{xiv} See http://www.ancestorhunt.com/mormon_church_records.htm

^{xv} We obtained the 1000 random samples as follows. First, we estimated a popularity distribution for 14,100 names given to the 1,100,915 boys born in 1920 according to the Social Security Administration data. Then, we drew 1000 random samples, each of which is the same size as our Jewish subsample of 19948 boys, and randomly chose names for the simulated boys based on the popularity of these names in the estimated popularity distribution. We then assessed the tendency for the simulated subsample to pick established versus newly-popular names and compared that with the Jewish subsample.

^{xvi} The disadvantage of a simple ratio of overlap in 1880 over overlap in 1920 is that since the denominator is relatively close to zero, it is "harder" for the ratio to reach a high number if the overlap in 1920 is low.

^{xvii} There are two ways that actors can update their practices: simultaneously or sequentially. Simultaneous update means all actors update their practices at the same time. Sequential update means actors update one by one (or group by group), and the ones act later use the latest

information of practices' popularity. The two different ways don't have a significant influence on our results (see also Obukhova, Zuckerman and Zhang, 2011).