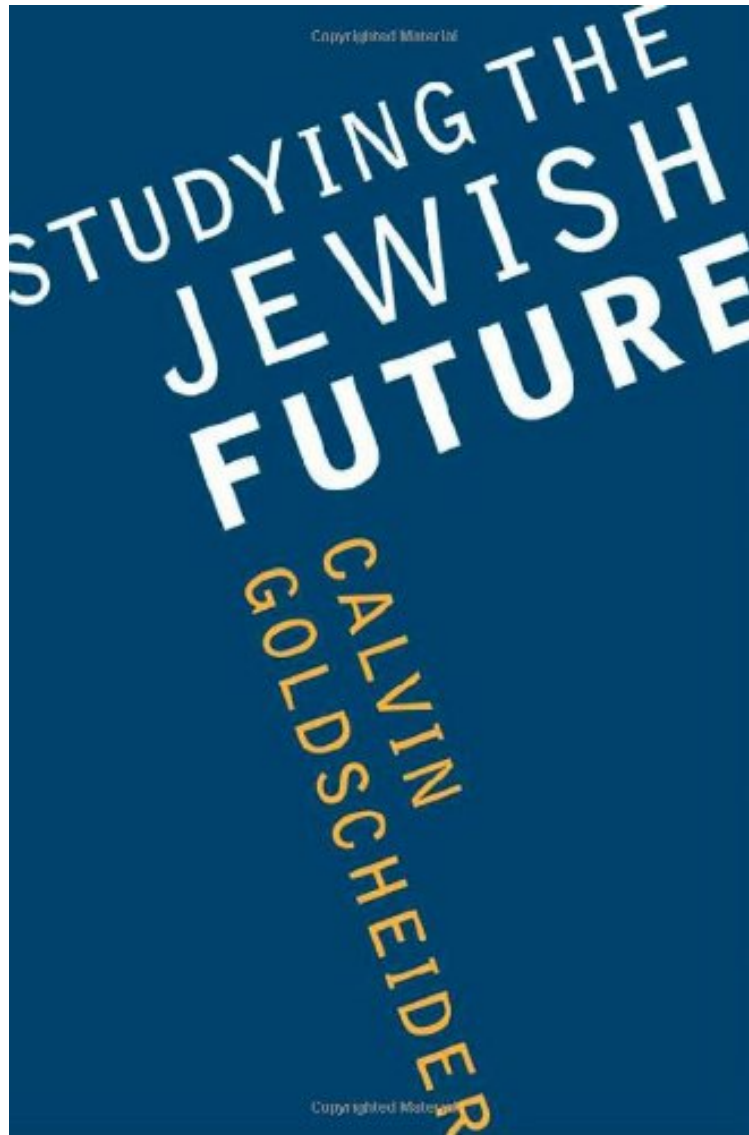


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Studying the Jewish Future (Samuel and Althea Stroum Lectures in Jewish Studies)

Calvin Goldscheider

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Calvin Goldscheider : Studying the Jewish Future (Samuel and Althea Stroum Lectures in Jewish Studies) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Studying the Jewish Future (Samuel and Althea Stroum Lectures in Jewish Studies):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Great Read By Zachary Segal In his book, Calvin Goldscheider does an excellent job of exploring the central issues associated with studying the Jewish future. Goldscheider

acknowledges standard concerns (such as intermarriage and the fading Jewish majority in Israel) and uses extremely compelling, yet easy to follow, arguments to reevaluate their actual importance. Goldscheider's methods are both diverse and interesting: he expertly combines general discussions with individual biographies. This book may have been written by a demographer, but it can be read by anyone.

Studying the Jewish Future explores the power of Jewish culture and assesses the perceived threats to the coherence and size of Jewish communities in the United States, Europe, and Israel. In an unconventional and provocative argument, Calvin Goldscheider departs from the limiting vision of the demographic projections that have shaped predictions about the health and future of Jewish communities and asserts that "the quality of Jewish life has become the key to the future of Jewish communities." Through the lens of individual biographies, Goldscheider shows how context shapes Jewish senses of the future and how conceptions of the future are shaped and altered by life experiences. Goldscheider's distinctive comparative approach includes a critical review of population issues, a consideration of biographies as a basis for understanding Jewish values, and an analysis of biblical texts for studying contemporary values. He combines demographic and sociological analyses in historical and comparative perspectives to dispel the notion that quantitative issues are at the heart of the challenge of Jewish continuity in the future. Numbers are clearly the building blocks of community. But the interpretations of these demographic issues are often confusing and biased by ideological preconceptions. As a basis for studying the core themes of the Jewish future, hard facts are less hard and less "factual" than interpreters have made them out to be. Population projections are limited by the vision of those who prepare them. Goldscheider concludes that the futures of Jewish communities--in America, Europe, and Israel--are much more secure than has been presented in most scholarly and popular publications, and discussions about the Jewish future should shift to other patterns of distinctiveness. This book will appeal to the general Jewish reader as well as to social scientists and modern Jewish historians. It is appropriate for Jewish studies courses, particularly, but not exclusively, those focusing on Jews in the United States, the American Jewish community, and modern Jewish society, and in courses on ethnicity, multiculturalism, cultural diversity, and ethnic relations.

"An effective antidote to the melancholy views of those who gloomily forecast the demise of the Jewish community." *Jewish Journal*, Dade County, FL
About the Author Calvin Goldscheider is Ungerleider Professor of Judaic Studies, professor of sociology, and a faculty fellow at the Population Studies and Training Center at Brown University. He is the author of many books focusing on family and demographic issues within the Jewish community, including *Israel's Changing Society: Population, Ethnicity, and Development*; *The Arab-Israeli Conflict*; and *Jewish Continuity and Change*.