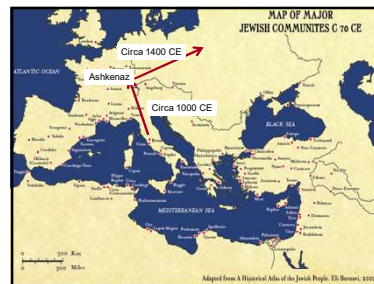




Examples of false balance in reporting on science

- Man-made versus natural climate change
- Mutations versus vaccination (thiomersal) causing autism
- Evolution versus intelligent design
- Rhineland versus Khazarian origins for Ashkenazi Jews



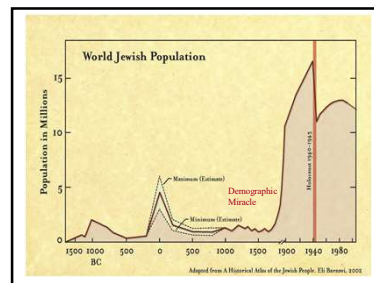
False balance, sometimes called "false equivalency," refers disparagingly of the practice of journalists who, in their zeal to be fair, present each side of a debate as equally credible even when the factual evidence is stacked heavily on one side.

Liz Spayd
New York Times Public Editor
September 10, 2016

What is the Rhineland Hypothesis?

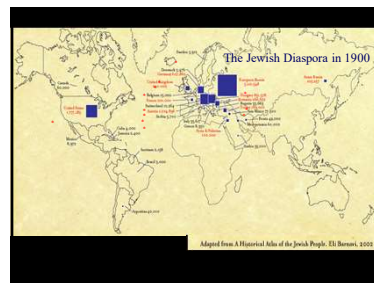
The Ashkenazi Jews (from the Hebrew word for 'German') moved north of the Alps, probably from Italy, during the first millennium of the Common Era. During the ninth century, the ancestors of Ashkenazi Jews settled in the cities of the Rhineland, where they adopted German as their language. Over time, this developed into a Judeo-German dialect that was relexified with Hebrew and Slavic words and became known as "Yiddish." In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Ashkenazi Jews were expelled from the countries of Western Europe and were granted charters to settle in Poland and Lithuania. As a result, the center of Ashkenazi Jewry shifted to the East, where it remained for the following five centuries.

Ostler, *Legacy: A Genetic History of the Jewish People* 2012



However, there is no equivalence between the two sides when one is supported by evidence, and the other side with little or no evidence, of which most is of low quality. In other words, in false equivalence, someone will state that the opposing arguments have a passing similarity in support, when, on close examination, there is large difference between the quality of evidence.

<https://www.skepticalraptor.com/skepticalraptorblog.php/logical-fallacies/false-equivalence-logical-fallacies/>



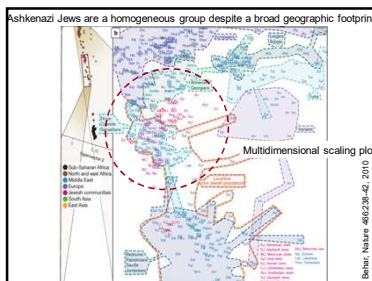
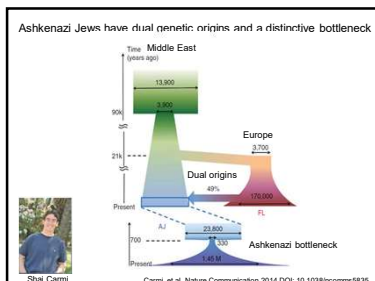
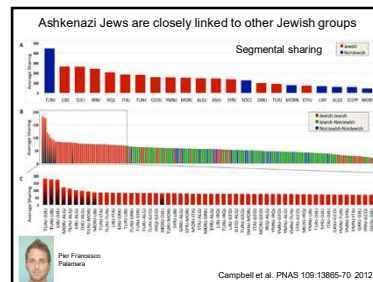
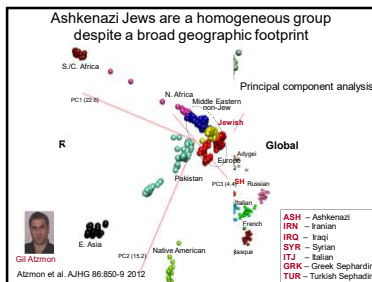
Major points in support of a Rhineland hypothesis for Ashkenazi Jews

Ashkenazi Jews have dual genetic origins and a distinctive bottleneck

Ashkenazi Jews are a homogeneous group despite a broad geographic footprint

Ashkenazi Jews are closely linked to other Jewish groups

Ashkenazi Jews spoke a Judeo-German dialect, even when living in Eastern Europe



Who were the Khazars?

The Chozars (or Khazars) were a people of Central Asian Turkic origin who ruled a Jewish state between the Caucasus Mountains and the Volga River. They spoke a language in a family of languages that includes Turkish, Kazakh, Uzbek, Uigur, and Kirghiz, not the Slavic languages. Their kingdom established in most of southern Russia long before the rise of the Russian monarchy, acted as a barrier against the northern advance of the Arabs, then at the height of their expansion. This kingdom flourished for two or three centuries, subjugating other tribes in its region and forcing some of its Slavic neighbors to pay tolls for the use of the commercial routes that it controlled.

Ostrer, *Legacy: A Genetic History of the Jewish People* 2012

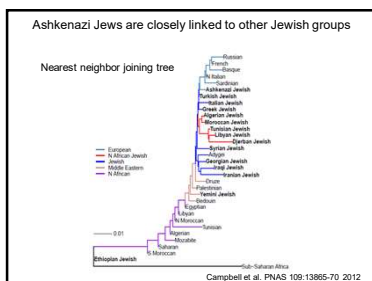
Abstract: Children in the Genome Era: Major Jewish Diaspora Populations Comprise Distinct Genetic Clusters with Shared Middle Eastern Ancestry

LETTERS

The genome-wide structure of the Jewish people

North African Jewish and non-Jewish populations form distinctive, orthogonal clusters

The population genetics of the Jewish people



The Khazars' Embrace of Judaism

In the middle of the eighth century, the Khazar king and aristocracy embraced Judaism. Ordinary Khazars retained their traditional beliefs and eventually were converted to Islam or Christianity. Around 965 C.E., the Russians overcame the Khazars, destroying their capital and other cities.

Ostrer, *Legacy: A Genetic History of the Jewish People* 2012

The rebuke of Elhaik's study apparently has irked the beleaguered and brash researcher. He's launched a new offensive—the double entendre is intentional—as chronicled in the *Jewish Forward*. Elhaik is now calling the world's top geneticists "liars" and "frauds." When I weighed in on the magazine's discussion board, Elhaik responded with academic restraint, claiming my reporting was no better than the geneticists he trashed, saying it shared "common ground with the Nazism (sic) ideology."

Jon Entine, Forbes, May 16, 2013

"It was a great pleasure reading your group's recent paper, 'Abraham's Children in the Genome Era,' that illuminate[s] the history of our people," Elhaik wrote to Ostrer. "Is it possible to see the data used for the study?"

Ostrer replied that the data are not publicly available. "It is possible to collaborate with the team by writing a brief proposal that outlines what you plan to do," he wrote. "Criteria for reviewing include novelty and strength of the proposal, non-overlap with current or planned activities, and non-defamatory nature toward the Jewish people." That last requirement, Elhaik argues, reveals the bias of Ostrer and his collaborators. Allowing scientists access to data only if their research will not defame Jews is "peculiar," said Catherine DeAngelis, who edited the *Journal of the American Medical Association* for a decade. "What he does is set himself up for criticism: Wait a minute. What's this guy trying to hide?"

Rita Ruben, Jewish Daily Forward May 7, 2013