

Owens: What is the current state of the Jewish communities in Britain and America, and how are the two different?

Ierman: A good place to start is size, because there's obviously a vast discrepancy. There are about 300,000 self-identifying Jews in Britain. Most British Jews live in London. Jews used to live in all kinds of outlying places, such as in South Wales, in the mining villages, out in the countryside as well. About 60 percent of the Jewish population is affiliated with some kind of Jewish organization, whether it's a synagogue or a cultural association. The main synagogue group is mainstream Orthodox, called the United Synagogue. About 60–70 percent of Jews that are affiliated with synagogues are affiliated with that particular branch. Reform Jews make up about 15 or 20 percent of British Jews, and the ultra-Orthodox—who have become a much more significant factor in British Jewry in recent years—make up about 10 percent of the Jewish population.

