

What underlies growing skepticism about the Holocaust in Canada and the United States?

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Association for Canadian Studies
For release
March 22-23, 2024

Methodology

According to a December (2-5), 2023 survey of Americans by YouGov for the Economist, a fifth (20%) of Americans ages 18-29 believe the Holocaust was a myth and 23% agreed the Holocaust was exaggerated. Less than one in ten Americans over the age of 30 agreed with these statements which are described as a worrisome trend that appears to be gaining traction (https://d3nkl3psvxxpe9.cloudfront.net/documents/econTabReport_tT4jyzG.pdf).

While there has been some question about the veracity of the survey, (<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/03/05/online-opt-in-polls-can-produce-misleading-results-especially-for-young-people-and-hispanic-adults/>.) its findings are similar to the results of a recent Leger poll conducted for the Association for Canadian Studies over the period February 23-26, 2024 with a sample of 1590 Canadians and 1005 Americans . It reveals that one in six Canadians between the ages of 18 and 24 agree that the Holocaust is exaggerated and a similar share of Americans concurred. Equally worrisome is that a majority of those who think that the Holocaust is exaggerated think that they have a good knowledge about historic genocides. And we also found an important link between favorable opinions of Hamas (held by some one in ten respondents in Canada and one in six in the US and higher in each country amongst the youngest cohorts).

A margin of error cannot be associated with a non-probability sample in a panel survey for comparison purposes. A probability sample of 1590 respondents would have a margin of error of $\pm 2.5\%$, 19 times out of 20

One in six persons in Canada and the United States respectively believe that the Holocaust is exaggerated

I think the Holocaust is exaggerated- Canada	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes	5%	8%	3%	16%	8%	5%	4%	3%	2%
No	82%	82%	81%	69%	78%	78%	81%	85%	91%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	13%	10%	16%	15%	15%	17%	15%	12%	7%

I think the Holocaust is exaggerated –United States	Total	Male	Female	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65 +
Yes	8%	10%	6%	15%	12%	10%	4%	1%
No	76%	75%	77%	64%	71%	68%	85%	86%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	16%	15%	17%	21%	17%	22%	11%	13%

A slight majority of Canadians and Americans say that they have a good knowledge about genocide (s) in history

Canada I have a good knowledge about genocide(s) in history -	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes	51%	57%	45%	47%	48%	49%	49%	55%	54%
No	36%	33%	38%	38%	38%	36%	35%	32%	35%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	13%	10%	17%	14%	14%	16%	15%	12%	11%

United States I have a good knowledge about genocide(s) in history -	Total	Male	Female	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65 +
Yes	53%	59%	47%	50%	51%	50%	58%	51%
No	31%	28%	34%	35%	31%	28%	31%	30%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	16%	13%	19%	14%	18%	22%	12%	18%

Amongst those Canadians who believe the Holocaust is exaggerated some two-thirds believe they have a good historic knowledge of genocides

I have a good knowledge about genocide(s) in history - Among the following, please indicate whether each statement applies to you or not. Canada	I think the Holocaust is exaggerated - Among the following, please indicate whether each statement applies to you or not.	
	Yes	No
Yes	65.9%	54.5%
No	31.8%	35.1%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	2.4%	10.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Some half of Canadians who think the Holocaust is exaggerated hold negative opinions of Jews

Canada.... Jews - Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative view of the following?	I think the Holocaust is exaggerated - Among the following, please indicate whether each statement applies to you or not.	
	Yes	No
TOTAL positive	47.1%	74%
Very positive	10.6%	24.3%
Somewhat positive	36.5%	49.7%
TOTAL Negative	47%	14.6%
Somewhat negative	23.5%	10.4%
Very negative	23.5%	4.2%
I prefer not to answer	5.9%	11.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

More than one in four Canadians who think the Holocaust is exaggerated hold negative opinions of Jews

Canada Hamas - Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative view of the following?	: I think the Holocaust is exaggerated - Among the following, please indicate whether each statement applies to you or not.		
	Yes	No	Total
Total Positive	27.1%	9.5%	10.7%
Very positive	10.6%	1.4%	2.3%
Somewhat positive	16.5%	8.1%	8.4%
Somewhat negative	28.2%	19.8%	19.2%
Very negative	35.3%	53.6%	48.6%
I prefer not to answer	9.4%	17.2%	21.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Those Canadians with a very positive view of Hamas are more likely to believe that the Holocaust is exaggerated (one in ten Canadians say they have a positive view of Hamas)

I think the Holocaust is exaggerated- Canada	Hamas - Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative view of the following?			
	Very positive	Somewhat positive	Somewhat negative	Very negative
Yes	24.3%	10.5%	7.9%	3.9%
No	48.6%	78.9%	84.3%	90.3%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	27.0%	10.5%	7.9%	5.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive view of HAMAS	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
NET POSITIVE	11%	22%	19%	9%	8%	9%	5%
Very positive	2%	5%	4%	3%	1%	2%	1%
Somewhat positive	8%	17%	15%	6%	7%	7%	4%

Americans questioning the Holocaust



Amongst those who believe the Holocaust is exaggerated some 80% believe they have a good historic knowledge of genocides

I have a good knowledge about genocide(s) in history United States	I think the Holocaust is exaggerated - Among the following, please indicate whether each statement applies to you or not.	
	Yes	No
Yes	78.5%	56.0%
No	16.5%	33.4%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	5.1%	10.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Amongst those Americans that feel the Holocaust is exaggerated nearly forty percent harbor negative sentiment towards Jews

Jews	I think the Holocaust is exaggerated - Among the following, please indicate whether each statement applies to you or not.		Total
	Yes	No	
TOTAL positive	44.3%	77.3%	68.1%
Very positive	19.0%	35.1%	30.3%
Somewhat positive	25.3%	42.2%	37.8%
TOTAL negative	39.3%	10.1%	14.1%
Somewhat negative	24.1%	7.6%	9.7%
Very negative	15.2%	2.5%	4.4%
I prefer not to answer	16.5%	12.6%	17.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Those Americans who think the Holocaust Is exaggerated are more likely to feel positive about Hamas than feel negative towards them

Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative view of Hamas	I think the Holocaust is exaggerated - Among the following, please indicate whether each statement applies to you or not.		Total
	Yes	No	
Total Positive	44.7%	12%	14.5%
Very positive	19.2%	3.7%	5.1%
Somewhat positive	29.5%	8.3%	9.4%
Somewhat negative	16.7%	13.9%	15.1%
Very negative	21.8%	58.0%	49.8%
I prefer not to answer	12.8%	16.1%	20.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Those Canadians and Americans with a positive view of Hamas are more likely to believe that the Holocaust is exaggerated
(One in six Americans say that they have a positive view of Hamas)**

I think the Holocaust is exaggerated- United States	Hamas - Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative view of the following?			
	Very positive	Somewhat positive	Somewhat negative	Very negative
Yes	29.4%	24.5%	8.6%	3.4%
No	54.9%	67.0%	70.2%	88.6%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	15.7%	8.5%	21.2%	8.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive view of HAMAS	Total	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65 +
NET POSITIVE	15%	28%	21%	16%	11%	1%
Very positive	5%	11%	8%	5%	3%	0%
Somewhat positive	9%	17%	13%	11%	7%	1%

Amongst those Americans between the ages of 18 and 29 that believe the Holocaust is exaggerated an important majority hold a positive view of Hamas

Hamas -Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative view of the following? 18-29	I think the Holocaust is exaggerated - Among the following, please indicate whether each statement applies to you or not.		Total
	Yes	No	
Very positive	26.7%	9.6%	11.2%
Somewhat positive	43.3%	11.2%	16.8%
Somewhat negative	23.3%	12.0%	13.8%
Very negative	6.7%	43.2%	34.7%
I prefer not to answer		24.0%	23.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%