

The Hate Issue

SPRING 2020

AJS

PERSPECTIVES

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR JEWISH STUDIES



The Hate Issue

SPRING 2020



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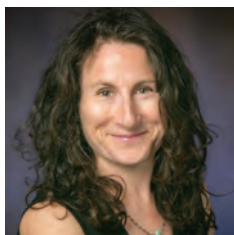
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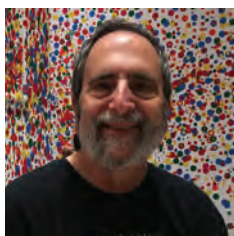
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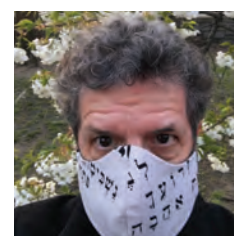
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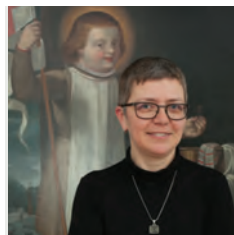
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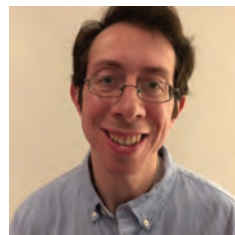
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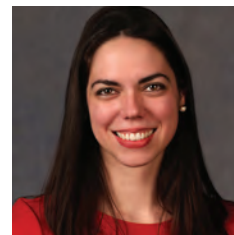
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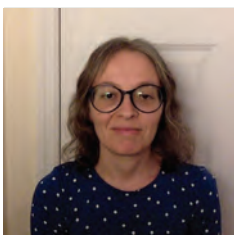
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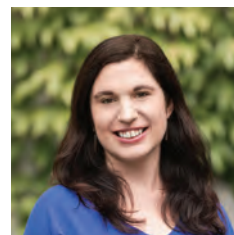
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From the Editors

With the rise of white nationalism across the globe, bloody attacks on houses of worship, and an increase in hateful discourse generally, we felt that the current moment called for an investigation into hate: Who hates whom and why? What are hatred's textual sources? Where do we see it in art, literature, and film? How is it manifested politically and what has it looked like historically? What is the legal relationship between antihate provisions and free-speech allowances? What are hate's impacts and aftershocks? What is the interplay between hate and love, hatred and contempt, and hatred and self-hatred? And what is the relationship between Jewish difference and hate?

In a Jewish Studies publication, antisemitism is the most obvious form of hatred that lends itself to a scholarly investigation, though in this issue we also explore Islamophobia, homophobia, classism, and anti-Black racism. Our issue's authors show us how hate is reflected and constructed in novels, poetry, film, and sacred texts; they reveal the contours of hate from the streets of Kiryat Hayim in Israel to academic conferences to nineteenth-century saloons; and they help us figure out how to manage hate in professional settings and university classrooms. Two photo essays reveal the power of images in conveying and responding to hate.

Hate also straddles the territory between a visceral, unwitting emotion—one in the basket of emotions we all carry with us one way or another as we go about our daily lives—and a distinct ideology—that,

like any political position, can be challenged, suppressed, or ignited through systemic means. If it's an emotion, an empathic or psychoanalytic approach might suggest that it be observed nonjudgmentally; attempts to suppress it forcefully might only serve to intensify it. But if it is a political ideology—that operates intellectually and is reinforced communally, then maybe it should be subject to forceful criticism and zero tolerance. Various pieces in this issue reflect these differing perspectives. Some attempt to negotiate between these poles.

There are glimpses of optimism, too. Sometimes the recognition of mutual hatred can bring alienated parties together, as in the dialogue groups taking place between Jews and Muslims in France. Other times, a community comes together to send succor and healing towards the victims of hate, as happened in the city of Pittsburgh in the aftermath of the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting. And the methodological tool of nonjudgmental ethnography—as in the relationship between a researcher and his hate-speaking subjects, in this case of members of the Westboro Baptist Church—can be a powerful tool for deep understanding. And sometimes, the recognition of ingrained and unrelenting hate mobilizes a community or a people to fight back, as in Argentina in the 1960s. We feature essays in this issue under the heading “Responding to Hate” to explore a variety of responses from empathy and communal solidarity to violent uprisings.



Mira Sucharov & Chaya Halberstam

If hate is inevitable, we ought at least to shine a light on its mechanisms and manifestations. And if it's not, we must seek to understand how to end it.

Chaya Halberstam
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From the Executive Director

Don't Be a Hater

Many years ago, I studied abroad in Mexico and would wander through the local markets in Puebla and Cholula, taking in all the sights and smells that were new to me. While the chamomile and mangos always delighted me, I would invariably catch a whiff of something that for me just smelled, and as I later tasted, awful. The stuff in question was the leafy green herb known as "cilantro," and it was a word I quickly memorized simply so that I could tell everyone to keep this horrible stuff away from me! Yes, I'm one of "those people" who thinks that even the slightest bit of cilantro just ruins a dish. No, I don't think cilantro tastes like soap, as many people have asked me, although I've never tasted soap, which I presume still tastes better than cilantro. One thing I have learned, though, is that my aversion to cilantro is not merely some personal preference, but is actually genetic. In other words, I can't not hate it, but at least I can avoid the herb to the best of my abilities.

Other forms of hate or dislike, though, are not genetic and yet can be less easy to control or avoid. In this age of divisive politics, it seems quite easy to hate someone who doesn't share your beliefs or values. I won't lie; I've harbored some strong feelings of dislike myself in these past few years. Where I've been more concerned, though, is how humans have chosen to voice this hate and dislike recently, namely via the platform of social media. Once considered a technology that would unite people, we've seen how a single tweet can destroy lives or a career and how hateful things

that one would barely deign to say to someone's face are casually posted online without the slightest consideration for the person who may be on the receiving end of such vitriol. While I believe that social media itself is not "evil"—it is an agnostic medium—how we decide to use it comes with much weight and responsibility. Following the 2016 election, I personally pulled back from social media. It not only began to feel more and more like an echo chamber of ideas, and sadly, often despair, but a place where I saw behavior that I found troubling. Rather than bringing people together, social media was becoming a place of caustic remarks, blocked users, and flame wars.

What surprised me, though, is that such behavior and even hate can emerge not just from the "other side" but even from within one's presumably own circle of friends and supporters. The AJS sadly has not been immune from this behavior, as members have sometimes taken to social media to attack each other or the organization itself. In an attempt to address this, when the AJS board created a set of core values a few years ago, one of the tenets was around "Good Faith." It states: "The AJS values collaboration and teamwork which in turn require good faith. Good faith is the general presumption that members will deal with each other honestly, fairly, openly, and constructively, with mutual respect and a shared dedication to the common good."

In fairness, the AJS, like any organization, is not perfect; we are very much a work-in-progress.

Warren Hoffman



We constantly attempt to make things better for our members and in recent years through a variety of mechanisms (our website, email blasts, and our own social media) have worked to be more transparent about how things are done at the AJS and how decisions are made. The AJS is also extremely open to new ideas and feedback. Several years, a group of members wrote me and the board a thoughtful letter about the imbalance in conference registration fees for lower-income members. Complete with numbers and a rationale, this letter made a compelling case that the board took up at their next board meeting, which led to the establishment of tiered conference fees, making us one of the first learned societies to implement such a system. While we can't necessarily deliver on every request or idea that is presented to us, the short is, the organization is not only listening, but is eager to make positive change. Recently, we have put the photos of all of our board members online for the first time so that you can easily identify them and contact them with concerns, ideas, or feedback. You can also write

to the executive committee at their new email address: board@associationforjewishstudies.org. And my door, as they says, is always open as well.

As scholars, we know the value of taking our time. Whether it's writing a book, an article, or a dissertation, there's a reason why we typically need more than 280 characters to express what we're thinking. While we of course hope that members engage with the AJS online to share both their concerns and kudos with us, we also hope that social media will be a place not for "hate" or fuming, but for community building and productive change. We look forward to hearing from you. (Just keep the cilantro away from me.)

Warren Hoffman
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The Hate Issue

JewKkKlansman

Brett Ashley Kaplan

Spike Lee arrived at the 2019 Oscars in an awesome royal purple suit (a tribute to his late friend Prince) with matching cool, chunky glasses, sporting giant knuckle rings with HATE and LOVE in large block letters; the rings had been featured in his 1989 film *Do the Right Thing*. The gesture provoked multiple resonances. For one, the Oscars failed to do the right thing by not nominating his 1989 film for best picture. Moreover, the rings served as a memorial to the actor who so memorably portrayed Radio Raheem, Bill Nunn, who died at sixty-two in 2016 of leukemia, and whose character was murdered by white cops. The rings also struck an evocative chord by reminding us of the rise of hate speech under Trump. In *Do the Right Thing*, Radio Raheem explains to Mookie (Lee) that LOVE and HATE represent an ever-present “static,” always drawing together like our fingers intertwined in a kissing fist. At the Oscars, Lee reversed the left and right hands, placing HATE in the position that Radio Raheem had placed LOVE.

Musing on his choice of hardware, Lee remarked in an interview, “Sometimes I do stuff and you don’t know that there is a thread but now I am seeing it and that is it: the struggle between love and hate.”ⁱⁱ

Lee’s most recent film, *BlackKkKlansman* (2018), continues this reflection on the struggle between love and hate. In addition to being nominated for nineteen Academy Awards, the Oscars finally did the right thing (and shifted a bit from hate to love) in granting it the award for best adapted screenplay. *BlackKkKlansman* relates the biography of a police officer, Ron Stallworth

Zimmerman comes to terms with his Jewishness only when forced to by ... antisemites.

(John David Washington), who, upon seeing an inconspicuous ad in the local newspaper enticing white supremacists to join the KKK, decides to infiltrate the local chapter. In the process, he befriends David Duke via telephone, and ends up thwarting the Klan’s murderous intentions against the Black Power movement. Two of the four screenwriters, Charlie Wachtel and David Rabinowitz, changed the historical white, non-Jewish police officer whom Stallworth describes as his “undercover alter ego Chuck” into the Jewish “Flip” Zimmerman. (The other two screenwriters are Lee and Kevin Willmott.)ⁱⁱⁱ

BlackKkKlansman received accolades for offering a corrective to some of the negative images of Jews viewers had railed against in earlier Lee productions and for disrupting a racialized hierarchy that places white Jews in more powerful positions over Blacks. One reviewer felt that Lee’s Jewish characters “morphed from offensive stereotypes into thoughtful considerations of complicated people.”ⁱⁱⁱⁱ Abraham Riesman claims Lee’s newest film “is one of the most profound and moving meditations on Jewish identity, responsibility, and survival in recent cinema.”^v Marc Dollinger finds that the film breaks from the “classical interracial motif of more powerful Jews helping less powerful Blacks,” by demonstrating how Stallworth led the investigation and Zimmerman followed his lead.^v

Indeed, in *BlackKkKlansman* Zimmerman (Adam Driver) comes to terms with his Jewishness only when forced to by the antisemites who long to relieve him of his trousers



Spike Lee at the 91st Academy Awards, 2019.
Photo by Paul Smith / Alamy Live News.

and subject him to lie detector tests to determine the validity of his whiteness. The screenwriters' choice to make the white cop Jewish changes the infiltration of the Klan by importing a new level of anxiety and tension as Flip must deny his Jewishness and express violent antisemitic sympathies in order to convince a suspicious Klansman that he is not a "kike." "I'm Jewish, yes, but I wasn't raised to be, it wasn't part of my life, I never thought much about being Jewish ... now I am thinking about it all the time" (1:08). Only when forced to take on a virulently non-Jewish persona and to interact with white supremacists does Flip feel the force of his latent ethnic identity.

Lee explains that "Jewish people are No. 2 on the list as far as the Klan goes."^{vi} Rabinowitz, on the other hand, finds that, "since both of us are Jewish it was our way of adding our own Jewish perspectives to the story.

Also, David Duke emerges as the central villain of the story. For him, Jews are sort of enemy number one."^{vii} Lee describes Blacks as enemy number one for white supremacists while Rabinowitz places Jews in the same slot in the chess game of hate analytics. The film, and history from Leo Frank through Nazi propaganda and back to Charlottesville, teaches us, though, that those number one and number two hate slots deeply intertwine and cannot be stacked.^{viii} In his memoir, Stallworth cites what he calls typical white supremacist rhetoric: "Wake up, white man! The Black man wants your woman and job. The Jew wants your money. The Zionist Occupied Government [ZOG] wants to ... make you slaves to all mud people and their Jewish masters."^{ix}

BlackKkKlansman offers a lively space through which to examine racism and antisemitism; throughout the text the latter rests just one hairsbreadth away from the former. But, although the bulk of the film explores the Colorado KKK circa 1979, it lands firmly in our current moment through the inclusion of scenes of Charlottesville, where chants of "Jews will not replace us" mingled with anti-Black racist slogans. Alec Baldwin, who performs the best Trump caricature on Saturday Night Live, magnificently plays a white supremacist speaker, Kennebrew Beauregard, and thus yokes this filmic white supremacist with the current president. Beauregard decries the threat of miscegenation and goes on to complain that the Brown decision was, "forced upon us by the Jewish controlled puppets on the US supreme court" (2:06). "Blood-sucking Jews," Beauregard explains, employ an army of "outside Northern Black beast agitators," to overthrow the white race. "It's an international Jewish conspiracy" (4:00).

The sensitivity to Jewish identity and the recognition of the moving hierarchy of the KKK's hate toward Jews and Blacks (after a while it doesn't matter) evidenced in *BlackKkKlansman* presents a welcome shift from some of Lee's earlier work. When *Mo' Better Blues* came out in 1990, Lee got himself into a boatload of hot water for the widely regarded as antisemitic caricatures of Moe and Josh Flatbush, exploitative, greedy club owners who refuse to treat with respect the Black performers whose inspired musicianship earns them a fat mint. Lee lashed out at critics who decried this perceived antisemitism in



Bill Dunn as Radio Raheem in Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* (Universal, 1989).

an essay published in the *New York Times* with the straight-up title, "I Am Not an Anti-Semite," which decries the unfairness of critiquing him for stereotyping when the vast history of Hollywood has been busy stereotyping Black characters.* A decade later, after all this brouhaha had died down, Lee came out with the troubling (and frankly just not good) film *Bamboozled* (2000). Both Jewish characters in *Bamboozled*, Thomas Dunwitty and Myrna Goldfarb, lay claim to knowledge about Blacks and Blackness in part because of their Jewishness. On one reading, the fusion of racism with antisemitism, and the resonances between them forged in *BlacKkKlansman*, could (and indeed, have) been interpreted as Lee's apology for this earlier antisemitism. It's possible; but I hazard another, more cynical reason: the alt-right has forged this alliance by consistently consolidating racism with antisemitism so that a film about the KKK that did not include antisemitism as a major category would no longer be feasible. The history of the KKK and the history of lynching in the United States weave antisemitism with anti-Black racism. *BlacKkKlansman* demonstrates how these hatreds draw together through the reinvigorated white supremacist discourse we unfortunately suffer now.

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- i I would like to thank Claire Baytas for invaluable help researching this; interview with Spike Lee by Kaleem Aftab in *Sight & Sound* 28:9, September 2018, 22–27.
 - ii Ron Stallworth, *BlacKkKlansman: A Memoir* (New York: Flatiron, 2014).
 - iii Ron Kampeas, "Spike Lee's Jewish Characters Have Gotten Better since *Mo' Better Blues*," *Washington Jewish Week*, May 24, 2018, 22–23.
 - iv Abraham Riesman, "Why Spike Lee's *BlacKkKlansman* Is Required Viewing for Jews," *Vulture*, August 9, 2018, <https://www.vulture.com/2018/08/why-spike-lees-blacKkKlansman-is-required-viewing-for-jews.html>.
 - v "'BlacKkKlansman' Recalls the Possibilities, Then and Now, of a Black-Jewish Alliance," *Washington Jewish Week*, September 20, 2018.
 - vi Naomi Pfefferman, "Spike Lee: The Jewish Character in 'BlacKkKlansman' Added a Lot of 'Complexity' to the Film," *JTA*, February 12, 2019, <https://www.jta.org/2019/02/12/culture/spike-lee-the-jewish-character-in-blacKkKlansman-added-a-lot-of-complexity-to-the-film>.
 - vii Debra Rubin, "Scripting Racism, Anti-Semitism for the Big Screen," *New Jersey Jewish News*, September 5, 2018, <https://njewishnews.timesofisrael.com/scripting-racism-anti-semitism-for-the-big-screen/>.
 - viii I make this argument (and briefly discuss *BlacKkKlansman*) in the article, "'Grotesquery to the Surface': The Leo Frank Case and Philip Roth's *Plot Against America* Revisited in Trump's Alt-Right America," *Studies in American Jewish Literature* (Spring 2020), <https://muse.jhu.edu/issue/42058>.
 - ix Stallworth, *BlacKkKlansman*, 52.
 - x Spike Lee, "I Am Not an Anti-Semite," *The New York Times*, August 22, 1990, <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/film/082290lee-editorial.html>.

When the KKK Exegetes: Circulating Hate with 2 Peter

Dong Hyeon Jeong

At the height of the white supremacist “Unite the Right” rally at Charlottesville, Virginia (August 11-12, 2017), Univision’s Ilia Calderón, a Black Afro-Latina immigrant to the United States, interviewed two KKK white knights.ⁱ Among the many racist expressions spewed, they supported their hateful remarks by arguing that 2 Peter commands them not to break bread with the Other.

Although they did not explicitly mention the exact passage, the two KKK white knights seem to be alluding to 2 Peter 2:13c’s warning against the false prophets (the opponents) who target meal gatherings in order to maximize their influence. Aside from this passage, 2 Peter teems with animalizing hateful rhetoric. For example, 2:12 describes the false prophets or “these people” as “irrational animals, mere creatures of instinct, born to be caught and killed.” Chapter 2, verse 22 equates the false prophets with “dogs returning to their own vomit, and pigs returning to the mud right after being washed.” 2 Peter writes as such because he feels like the false prophets are threatening his community’s identity and faith tradition.

It seems, then, that the KKK members have found discourses in 2 Peter that are affectively useful in expressing their frustrations. Although 2 Peter does not promote white supremacy and antisemitism, the KKK members have tapped into the letter’s protectionist strategy and applied it to their own. Whether they have heard 2 Peter through sermons, Bible study, or (social) media, what is a relatively obscure text in the New Testament has not only survived, but has circulated its affective capacities throughout the centuries, even in a small rural town in North Carolina, USA.

We circulate new emotions, hopefully those that are life-giving, reconciling, and caring, so that all bodies ... could have new ways of being and belonging in this world.

How then did this relatively obscure New Testament text capture the hearts and minds of the KKK? How did 2 Peter (unwillingly) become part of the “clobber text”? It was definitely not rigorous biblical exegesis/interpretation in which the historical contexts are cross-examined, let alone a manifestation of close reading of the literary contours of the texts. As felt in the interview with Calderón, the KKK white knights expressed their knowledge of 2 Peter with such bravado not because they are confident in their exegetical skills. Rather, they know that their bravado has emotional effects on the bodies/objects of their hate. Working with Sara Ahmed’s take on affect theory,ⁱⁱ I would argue that the KKK white knights participated consciously or unconsciously in the affective system that circulates and sticks hate onto bodies with biblical passages such as 2 Peter.

As Ahmed writes in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, hate does not originate in certain bodies; rather, hate originates from its very circulation among bodies. The more it circulates, the more it becomes affective or “stick to bodies.” This circulation, repetition, or overdetermination of hate then produces a rhetoric of differentiation between “us” versus “them.” Such circulation accumulates by their very repetition, which in turn becomes solidified onto bodies. That is why Ahmed perceives emotion as producing “the very surfaces and boundaries that allow the individual and the social to be delineated as if they are objects.”ⁱⁱⁱ



Moreover, Ahmed argues that one hates because one loves: “Hate is generated as a defense against injury.” One hates because one loves oneself, one’s group, one’s ideology, and even one’s faith. 2 Peter begins his letter by demonstrating his love for his faith. 2 Peter 1:1 describes those who share his faith as “precious” or honorable/dignified. Moreover, 3:14 even describes the recipients of his letter as “the beloved.” The KKK white knights hate because they love themselves, the Aryan race, the white supremacist ideology, and their version of Christianity. This “I hate because I love” is also based on the fantasy that one is victimized by the Other. The reemergence of white supremacy’s hate-filled rallies in which they voice their anger for being “oppressed” is a form of their defense against injury, their need to vocalize/circulate hate in order to love and protect their community.

Emotion is so powerful that it not only determines the kind of interpretation one does with a sacred text, it even moves bodies to march again for white supremacy. It also, however, moved a body to death. During the “Unite the Right” rally, a Nazi sympathizer murdered Heather Heyer, a civil rights activist. He also seriously injured nineteen other bodies.

So, what do we do? First, we trace the circulation of hate, figure out how racist and antisemitic statements have stuck onto bodies (as I try to do in this article). Then, we

circulate new emotions, hopefully those that are life-giving, reconciling, and caring, so that all bodies (even the KKK members’ bodies) could have new ways of being and belonging in this world.

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i Occupy Democrats, “A Black Journalist Confronts an Imperial Wizard of the KKK,” Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/OccupyDemocrats/videos/1656436401116074/>.

ii Among many definitions proffered, I find Donovan O. Schaefer’s simple but never simplistic definition helpful: “Affect theory is an approach to history, politics, culture, and all other aspects of embodied life that emphasizes the role of nonlinguistic and non- or para-cognitive forces. As a method, affect theory asks *what bodies do*—what they want, where they go, what they think, how they decide—and especially how bodies are impelled by forces other than language and reason. It is, therefore, also a theory of power. For affect theory, feelings, emotions, affects, moods, and sensations are not cosmetic but rather the substance of subjectivity.” *The Evolution of Affect Theory: The Humanities, the Sciences, and the Study of Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 1.

iii Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2nd ed; New York; London: Routledge, 2015), 45–48.



Vincent Valdez. *The City I*, 2015–2016. Oil on canvas. 74 in. x 360 in. Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Purchase through the generosity of Guillermo C. Nicolas and James C. Foster in honor of Jeanne and Michael Klein, with additional support from Jeanne and Michael Klein and Ellen Susman in honor of Jeanne and Michael Klein, 2017. © Vincent Valdez



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On Hate and Jewish Loyalties across the Americas: The Case of Argentina in the Early 1960s

Adriana Brodsky and Raanan Rein

Jews in the United States today are experiencing what Jewish Argentines went through in the 1960s. By all accounts, 1962 was the worst year of the decade, but since 1960, not a week went by without an attack against Jews or Jewish institutions in many Argentine cities. News about broken windows and antisemitic graffiti abounded. Synagogues were targeted, as were young Jews. In the most shocking case, three young right-wing thugs kidnapped Graciela Sirota, a young university student, in broad daylight. The young “ruffians” repeatedly beat her, burned her body with cigarettes, and carved a swastika on her breast. They also reminded her that “Eichmann [was] dead because of [her].”ⁱ The connection between these violent acts and the abduction of Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann by Mossad agents in Buenos Aires in May 1960 seemed obvious to many contemporaries.

Besides the attacks themselves, perhaps what hurt Jewish Argentines more was the doubts cast about their loyalty to the Argentine nation. They were accused, and not only by extreme right-wing organizations, of double or dual loyalty. The support given by Jewish Argentines to Israel’s efforts to bring to justice war criminals such as Eichmann was interpreted by some as support to the infringement of Argentine sovereignty and therefore as disloyalty. The visible hate against Jews during these years offered a moment of reflection on Jewish membership and place in the Argentine nation. The editor of Jewish biweekly magazine *La Luz* wondered if “it [was] worthwhile for Jews to continue living in Argentina,” after “the beautiful ideal brought by the Jewish settlers began to crumble with each Jewish child slashed with swastikas, each Jewish institution shot at.”ⁱⁱ

These antisemitic incidents were not just the work of fringe groups that existed outside the dominant culture of the nation, and therefore the organized Jewish community considered a broad repertoire

of responses: from establishing Jewish integral schools (such as Tarbut), in which Jewish pupils would not be exposed to antisemitic violence and bullying, to traditional lobbying of national and municipal leaders (*shtadlanut*); from denouncing the silence of the Catholic Church in condemning the hate, to shutting down business as a sign of public protest; from working to influence and mobilize public opinion against antisemites, to establishing self-defense groups that would guard community institutions at night.

Although motivated by similar concerns, such self-defense groups in different countries in the hemisphere were not centrally coordinated, and assumed different characteristics according to the national contexts in which they operated. Unlike the Jewish Defense League in the United States, under the leadership of Rabbi Meir Kahane, in Argentina the social base of these groups was more diverse (politically, socially, gender-wise, and ethnically), and the organized community and Israeli envoys were more involved in the training and support of these young Jewish Argentines. As active participants in the self-defense organization, hundreds of young Jews were able to construct their own separate identity, as well as highlight their Jewish masculinity and strengthen their image as soldier-pioneers. Their activities encouraged them to operate outside of accepted social norms and to adopt an approach that challenged existing communal leadership demands. The semiclandestine activities in Argentina were, at times, very aggressive, including burning printing presses of antisemitic pamphlets, beating antisemitic thugs, and planting small bombs in the headquarters of anti-Zionist organizations.

In Argentina these groups also contributed to a heightened Jewish and Zionist consciousness among young people and to a growing solidarity and cohesion within the framework of the organized community. The increase in immigration to Israel during the 1960s and 1970s was at least in part a result of these activities.



Synagogue of the Jewish Congregation of Argentina's Republic (CIRA), called Templo Libertad. Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2006. Photo by Flickr user ActiveSteve, licensed under CC BY-ND 2.0.

At the same time, the young men and women of Argentina's self-defense organizations opted for an aggressive self-defense, which held inherent dangers of mirroring violent antisemitism. Therefore, their struggle, as well as the Jewish Defense League's tactics in the United States, did not contribute to fostering a democratic and tolerant society.

Pursuing political avenues proved to be, in the long run, more successful. One of the right-wing organizations, Tacuara, was eventually declared illegal by the Argentine government thanks to the work of the DAIA (Delegación de Asociaciones Israelitas Argentinas), the central body that still represents the Jewish community to the Argentine government. Recent economic and political upheavals in Argentina have not produced any notable antisemitic discourse or incidents like in the 1960s.

The most recent American Jewish Committee survey of American Jews indicated an increase in antisemitism over the past five years. Far beyond the tragic attacks in Pittsburgh and Poway that have been in the limelight, antisemitic incidents have become part of the social experiences of many Jews.

David Frum, for example, listed attacks in New York City and in Massachusetts, whose descriptions mirrored those in 1960s Jewish Argentine newspapers. And even President Trump has questioned the loyalty of (some) American Jews over their political choices, furthering the notion that (some) do not belong to the nation.

Bari Weiss asked in a recent op-ed, "What if the story of the Jews in America wasn't a straight line, but a pendulum, which had swung one way and was now swinging back into the darkness of the Old World we were sure we'd left behind?"ⁱⁱⁱ The history of Jews in Argentina during the 1960s reminds us that there are several pendulums moving at different times, with each instance of antisemitic violence adding to the collective memory and experience of Jews in the continent. The debate as to how to react to antisemitic violence and hate clearly still lives on in the Americas, but making known past lessons about the futility of revenge and violent counterattacks, and the importance of creating cross-ethnic coalitions and mobilizing public opinion will strengthen Jews in their efforts to defend their belonging in and to their American nations.

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i "Inaudito salvajismo de los discípulos de Eichmann en la Argentina," *La Luz*, June 29, 1962, 15.

ii Nissim Elnecape, "Año tormentoso que se va," *La Luz*, October 5, 1962.

iii Bari Weiss, "To Fight Anti-Semitism, Be a Proud Jew," *The New York Times*, September 6, 2019.

On Loving “Jews” and Hating Jews

David Schraub

Jews consistently rank as among the most well-liked religious groups in the United States. And yet, Jewish fears about the state of antisemitism in America are reaching unprecedented heights. What to make of this? At first blush, it suggests that worries about resurgent antisemitism are overblown. While sporadic incidents of hate are certainly worthy of concern, Jews should not fret much about antisemitism spilling over into the mainstream. How could we be truly threatened by hate, when Jews are so widely loved?

This would be comforting. But it is, perhaps, too Pollyannaish. Who can forget Disraeli’s famous quip that “the Jews are a nervous people. ... Centuries of Christian love have taken a toll”? Love for Jews has not historically been a defense against hatred of Jews. And indeed, there may be more of a relationship between love of Jews and hatred of Jews than first meets the eye.

Consider how Kate Manne describes the mechanics of another persistent hatred, misogyny, in her recent book *Down Girl*. Misogyny, Manne argues, is not simple hatred of women. After all, misogynists frequently love women, or at least some women: doting mothers, attentive wives, and cool girlfriends. Misogyny, rather, is in Manne’s view the “enforcement arm” of patriarchy—the hatred that bubbles up when women fail to stay confined to their supposedly proper role. The misogynist has a particular vision of what a “woman” should be, and when women—actual women—fail to live up to that imagined standard, misogyny is the violent response roping them back into line. This is not in tension with, but rather represents the extension of, the true observation that some women who (whether by choice or coercion) adhere to the strictures of a sexist society may well be genuinely adored.

So too, perhaps, with Jews. In a recent article, Brian Klug defined antisemitism as hatred for the Jew qua “Jew”—that



is, hatred of the imaginary Jew, the Jew of their nightmares and fantasies. Yet—keeping in mind the maxim that a philosemite is an antisemite who loves Jews—Manne’s account suggests that perhaps in some cases Klug has it backwards: antisemitism is *loving* Jews only as “Jews.”

Many people love “Jews”—that is, the concept of “Jews” they’ve constructed for their own purposes. They envision a particular role that “Jews” are assigned to play, and so long as Jews stay in that role we may genuinely be loved. But when Jews—actual Jews—do not deign to stay in the roles assigned to “Jews,” this favor yields to shock, then betrayal, then hatred.

What “role” are the Jews assigned? It varies. Some love Jews as “noble victims,” eager to sacrifice themselves on the altar of selfless universalism. Others value Jews as loyal foot soldiers in service of eschatological religious warfare across the globe. Some love Jews as harbingers of Christ, the instrumental prelude that sets the stage for and is completed by Christianity’s epic. And some adore those Jews who volunteer to intone that soothing chant—“anti-Zionism is not antisemitism”—whenever called upon to do so.

Jews who stay at their assigned post may well be loved, and there are some Jews who—by coercion or by choice—do fill these roles. Nonetheless, these concepts of “Jews”



Charlottesville "Unite the Right" Rally, 2017.
Photo by Anthony Crider, licensed under CC BY 2.0.

For the most part, Jews will fail to live up to the ideal imagined "Jew." And they will be hated for it. Love for "Jews" yields hatred for Jews.

are built by non-Jews, for non-Jews. For the most part, Jews will fail to live up to the ideal imagined "Jew." And they will be hated for it. Love for "Jews" yields hatred for Jews.

Republicans love "Jews." They brag how they will defend Jews from Left antisemitism, from Islamism and BDS, standing as the bulwark preserving the citadel of "Judeo-Christian" civilization.

Republicans also hate Jews. They hate that we still vote Democratic, they hate that we mobilize for progressive causes, they hate that we are ingrates for all the wonderful things Trump has done for (as he put it) "your prime minister." They hate that we remember that the Right has never been a reliable friend of the Jews, that tides of nationalism and authoritarianism inevitably and rapidly swallow us whole. They hate the "globalist" Soros and the "shifty" Schiffs, and they hate that we name that hate for what it is. They love "Jews." They loathe the overwhelming majority of Jews.

Christians love "Jews." They love the Old Testament, Christianity's foundation. They love our faith, an ally against tides of secularism and radical liberal egalitarianism. They love Israel, both as a fortress of Judeo-Christian civilization and as a harbinger of the inevitable return of Christ.

Christians also hate Jews. They hate that we are defenders of public secularism; they hate that our articulation of faith is one that defends women's freedom and the dignity of LGBT families. They hate that Israel for us is not a symbol but a place. They hate that we stubbornly refuse to be completed by them; they hate that we do not accept that they are in fact "better Jews" than the Jews. They hate our "cultural Marxists," our antifa radicals, and our indoctrinating teachers.

The Left loves "Jews." They are inspired by the Warsaw uprising; they mobilize around "Never Again!" They proudly quote Luxemburg, Heschel, and Sanders; they detest those Tiki-marchers in Charlottesville.

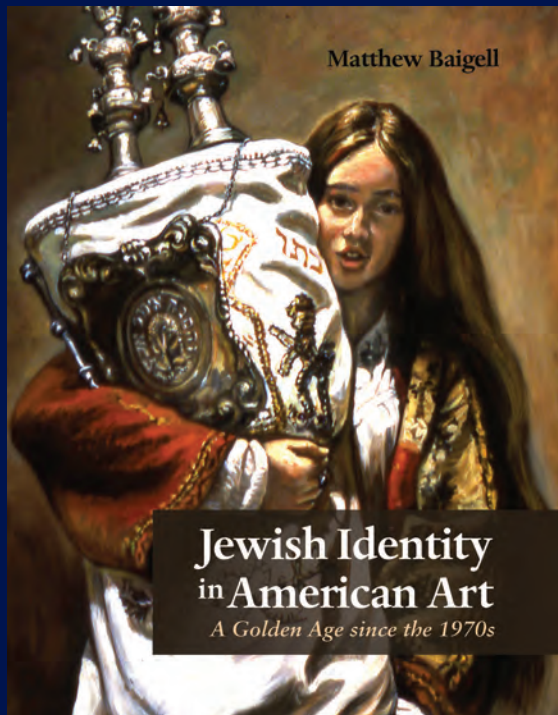
The Left also hates Jews. They hate that we insist that we are a nation deserving of self-determination. They hate that our revulsion at the occupation has not impelled us to abandon Israel outright. They hate that we have not "learned the lessons" of the Holocaust, and they hate that some of the "lessons" we did learn were not especially self-sacrificing and humanist. They hate that we demand they think about antisemitism when they want to promote BDS. They hate us for not accepting on faith that they will protect us if another pogrom comes, and they hate us for reminding them that they did not successfully protect us when the last pogrom came—or the one before that, or before that.

"Jews" may well be loved. But most Jews will always, ultimately, fail to be "Jews." And in an antisemitic society, the failure of Jews to be "Jews" cannot be tolerated. The Jew will be hated, even as (indeed, in many ways because) the hater in the same breath proclaims their adoration of the "Jews."

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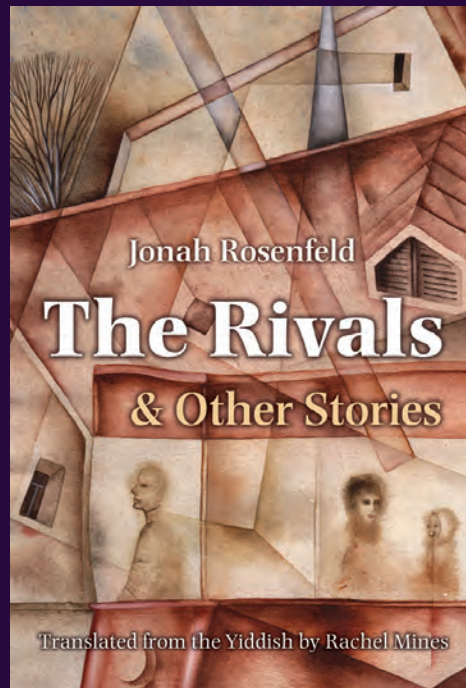
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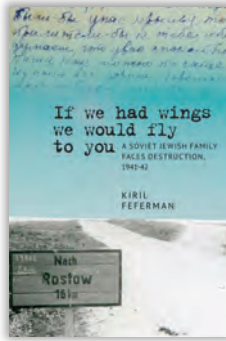
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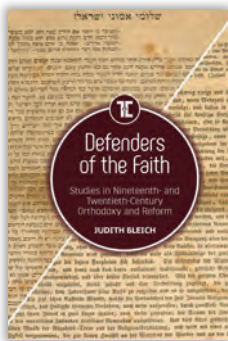
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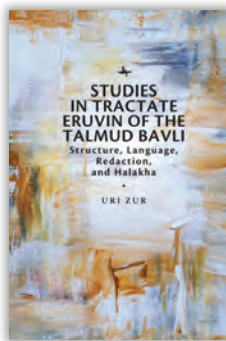
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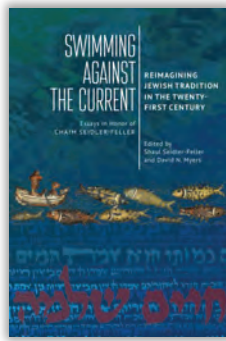


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Soldiers patrolling Tunisian synagogue Rebbi Hai Taieb Lo Mat, rue Julien Lacroix, Feb 2016. Photo by Agnès Poirier Keigwin.

La Haine: Intercommunal Hate in Paris

Samuel Sami Everett

Intercommunal hate (*la haine*) appears to be rife in France. It most particularly affects precariously positioned minority religious identities, both Jewish and Muslim. The dynamics of externalizing internal (or communal) discourses of fear can spill over into wider societal discourses of hate. On the one hand, there exists a French Jewish institutional language of fear based on an imagined violent Muslim demographic take-over (mirroring the situation in Israel-Palestine), which contributes to great replacement (*grand remplacement*) theories. On the other, a sentiment, which tends to be more diffuse among French Muslims, based on distrust of an inherently racist state with Jews perceived to be at its helm, generates a conspiratorial variable geometry of privilege (*deux poids, deux mesure*) theory.

In two recent affairs involving the writers Georges Bensoussan and Houria Bouteldja (both translated into Englishⁱ) the language of discrimination and Othering—

The dynamics of externalizing internal (or communal) discourses of fear can spill over into wider societal discourses of hate.

anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim—were ferociously debated in the French media and academia. Over the last decade I have observed from the inside French Maghribi Jewish commercial, cultural, and linguistic transfer between generations, and overlapping patterns among French Maghribi Muslims. Most recently I have concentrated on Jewish-Muslim dialogue in France. It seems to me that the Bensoussan and Bouteldja cases are connected via the Maghrib: both are descendants of the region, as are the majority of Jews and Muslims in France. Similarly, both affairs turn on language.

Exploring these positions together is important because contemporary fieldwork-led scholarship that highlights Muslim and Jewish sentiments and discourses of

antipathy towards one another has tended to focus more on practices and processes of Othering among either groups of Jewsⁱⁱ or groups of Muslimsⁱⁱⁱ and less across or between them. Nevertheless, I do not wish to create a strict equivalence here; things are different for both groups historically, socioeconomically, and in terms of the mutation of prejudice towards them.

In October 2015, on a French national radio show called *Répliques*, hosted by Alain Finkielkraut, Georges Bensoussan, claiming to quote sociologist Smaïn Laacher, stated that “in Arab families, antisemitism is suckled on the breast of the mother.” In February 2016, a court case for hate speech (*provocation à la haine*) was brought against Bensoussan and his statement by multiple antiracism groups. In court, Laacher’s actual words, that “antisemitism” in Arabic-speaking “domestic space” (in North Africa and France) is “almost naturally deposited on the tongue,” were debated. The most common example of this language is *lihoud* (Jew) formulated as an insult, which I have heard often in Darija- (North African Arabic) speaking contexts in Paris.

It is easy to see how these charges, of which Bensoussan was finally cleared in 2019, feed into broader rhetorics of fear. But Laacher’s point raises the question: What are we to do with such prejudice in language recast in a French context? Is the persistence of this language evidence of an educational failure (as Bensoussan has argued for a long time)? Equally, the violence of Bensoussan’s misappropriation of this linguistic fact as a genetic predisposition was not legally upheld. This reinforces the theory of a variable geometry. Why did Bensoussan get away with his hate speech? Did the court concede for fear of further contributing to an atmosphere of antisemitism? Finally, the adjudication of this matter in a law court rather than by linguists, historians, and psychoanalysts in an academic forum, and its subsequent uptake in the media, underlines the lack of extant space for careful intellectual debate on such delicate matters.

The debates around Houria Bouteldja’s book, edited under the mindful eye of Eric Hazan, focused in particular on a passage in which she passes “by a child wearing a kippah,” going on to describe “that fleeting moment when I stop to look at him.” “The worst part,” she explains, “is the disappearance of my indifference toward you, which is the possible prelude to my internal ruin” (2017: 58). Her way out of a contemporary Jewish-Muslim relational impasse? Jews and Muslims, she says, can leave those ghettoized identities imposed by the French state, together. But the elision of Jew and Zionist and what was read as her fear of

losing all humanity towards the former made her persona non grata among a great many antiracism activists, certain feminist supporters, and a Jewish critical Left, though nobody ever took her to court for hate speech.

Ironically, for all the shunning of her text by activists, Bouteldja’s message, not unlike Bensoussan’s, has been carried outside France, notably to the United States. Though there are exceptions to this, both authors in their respective transnational political camps are put on a pedestal, contributing, discursively, to a polarization of views. Yet rather than creating individual champions, to my mind, the important question raised by the debate that their work provokes is the way history in France is taught and discussed and the way that discrimination and alienation is engendered. The discussion of Maghribi history specifically is central to this. After all, if there is a shared Jewish-Muslim history in France it is that one.^{iv} Promoting recognition of a hitherto heavily stigmatized historical and cultural legacy that is in fact a shared wealth^v might allow individuals of Maghribi descent, both Jewish and Muslim, to reflect critically on the national and transnational structures, both political and linguistic, that create the tropes of superpowered minority and supervictim that circulate through our interconnected world.

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i Georges Bensoussan, *Jews in Arab Countries: The Great Uprooting* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019) and Houria Bouteldja, *Whites, Jews and Us: Towards a Politics of Revolutionary Love* (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2017).

ii For example, Kimberly Arkin on French Jewish college students in *Rhinestones, Religion, and the Republic: Fashioning Jewishness in France* (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2013).

iii For example, Gunther Jikeli on young suburban Muslim men in *European Muslim Antisemitism: Why Young Urban Males Say They Don't Like Jews* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015).

iv Though, I am often told, one must not forget former imperial Muslim might (most recently Ottoman) and those contemporary discourses that anachronistically point towards it as a model of Muslim rule.

v See in particular Gil Anidjar, “Dalāla, Dialogue (Maimonides, Bouteldja and Us),” *Journal of Levantine Studies* 9, no. 1 (Summer 2019): 57–70.

What a Jewish Studies Scholar Learned from Westboro Baptist Church

Hillel Gray

The first time I sat down to interview four protesters from the Westboro Baptist Church, in the Emory University library, I worried: Would they scream and harangue me about the Jews killing Christ? Not at all. The Westboro Baptists were soft-spoken and friendly, though they teased me *as if* I were a nerdy academic.

Fair enough. I came across as academic and stiff. Back then, I avoided discussing my private life. My goal was to understand their lived experiences, such as how they treat each other, and to explore how they'd relate to me personally. The gist of my methodology was in place: to listen warmly and empathically, without ever condoning or criticizing their beliefs or tactics.

Others do not hesitate to criticize WBC. That morning, Atlanta police were out in force—not because of Westboro street preachers, who believe in (physically) nonviolent dissent, but to protect them from the animosity of counterdemonstrators.

How does Westboro draw such intense reactions? For their antigay epithets, and condemnation of Jews, Catholics, and others, they have been labeled a hate group by the Anti-Defamation League.ⁱ WBC does not see itself as hateful—they claim to convey God's hate of sinners and nonbelievers, justified as a duty to rebuke and exhort. From their perspective, they're administering a neighborly kind of tough love (cf. Leviticus 19:17-18).

Our pilot interview was arranged by Shirley Phelps-Roper, a daughter of Fred Phelps Sr., the controversial church's founding pastor. Shirley and I kept emailing back and forth, out of mutual curiosity.ⁱⁱ

During one rapid-fire exchange, my withholding of ethical judgment was tested. Surprised to discover my emails posted publicly on the church's blog, I

My goal is not to change our research subjects, but to change us. It has been transformational, for me and for my students, to listen in person to religious radicals.

asked if they would remove my name. In the ensuing days, Shirley accidentally forwarded to me an email from the church's internal debate over my request. It contained jarringly anti-Jewish vocabulary, drawn from the New Testament. With my feelings rising, I called a Jewish Studies colleague: she listened and helped me stay on track with my nonjudgmental methodology. I managed to respond in a measured way to Shirley, who apologized for forwarding that unsettling email.

We clicked well in person, too. I visited Topeka, where families of the tiny church live. After three days of interviews with churchgoers, I interviewed Shirley. She opened up about abuse allegations against her intimidating father, and about her having a child out of wedlock. She shared intimate secrets and teared up about the kindness she had received from her parents. I was touched. Without judging her anti-Judaism, anti-LGBT activities, I'd embarked on a close relationship with her.

Since 2017, small teams of undergraduates at Miami University have assisted my fieldwork with WBC. Thanks to their warmth and attentive curiosity to our research subjects, WBC families have introduced us to more of their teens and college-age children.

Students also drew my attention to hostility that I might have ignored. Notably, students pointed to my strained interactions with Steve Drain, a former academic who now handles WBC's public relations. During our last visit, August 2019, Steve had diplomatically pulled me aside about a troubling incident



Courtesy of Westboro Baptist Church

involving a student research assistant and advised me on how to resolve it. He also hosted us for dinner. Yet, at our last get-together, it was Steve who borrowed my kippah and ridiculed it. He puzzles me, and, if nothing else, challenges my capacity for empathic resonance and understanding.

Ironically, my identity as a Jewish Studies scholar and a Jew has eased my relations with Westboro Baptists. Tim Phelps, Shirley's brother, once unapologetically joked about being an "antisemite," which he deems an unfair label for the church's replacement theology. On the other hand, they believe 144,000 Jews will be saved in the end times.ⁱⁱⁱ As they've grown to know me, some Westboro Baptists express the hope that I would be among them.

My relations with Westboro Baptists shifted in 2018, thanks to my parallel inquiry with an ultra-Orthodox Jewish group. As a scholar, I was eager to study a Jewish analogue to the WBC, the Neturei Karta of Monsey, New York.^{iv} Like WBC, they await a miraculous intervention by God. Like WBC, they've been denounced by the ADL.

Even from our first interviews, in May 2018, I felt more relaxed and able to schmooze with Neturei Karta activists than I ever had with Westboro Baptists.^v (In my qualitative methods course, a student is analyzing this differential.) So that August, I was determined to be less stiff in Topeka.

Not only did I loosen up, but serendipitously, as we wrapped up a ninety-minute interview, Tim Phelps challenged me to apply my expertise to "Jewish" eschatology. He even proposed that we coauthor a piece about Israel, Zionism, and the end times. In years past, I might have declined. But, after launching a relationship with Neturei Karta, wouldn't it be fitting for an article to place these oft-hated groups into conversation? Besides their zealous protests, both reject Zionism and await a divine intervention. The next day, Tim and I started collaborating on that piece.

A Jewish adult education class led to the latest phase of this research.^{vi} Participants encouraged me to loosen up further. If a key goal is relationship building, I should mix one-way interviewing to allow the Neturei Karta or Westboro Baptists to listen to me. I experimented with this reversal in August 2019. I invited several Westboro Baptists to ask me whatever they wanted. Shirley asked, for instance, if I have children (which she suspected, having known me for a decade) and how they feel about my encounters with WBC.

Thanks to a critical-empathic, nonjudgmental approach, I've deepened my rapport with "the most hated family in America" at Westboro Baptist Church. What I've learned with WBC has prepared me for connecting with Neturei Karta. Both groups are gradually reciprocating, and building trust, as I explore the limits of conversations with those cast as an "Enemy" within my own circles.



*The author with Rabbi Yisroel Dovid Weiss of Neturei Karta, 2018.
Courtesy of the author.*



Margie Phelps of Westboro Baptist Church speaking with Miami University student researchers Alexa Lawhorn and Sofia Vlahakos, August 2018. Courtesy of the author.

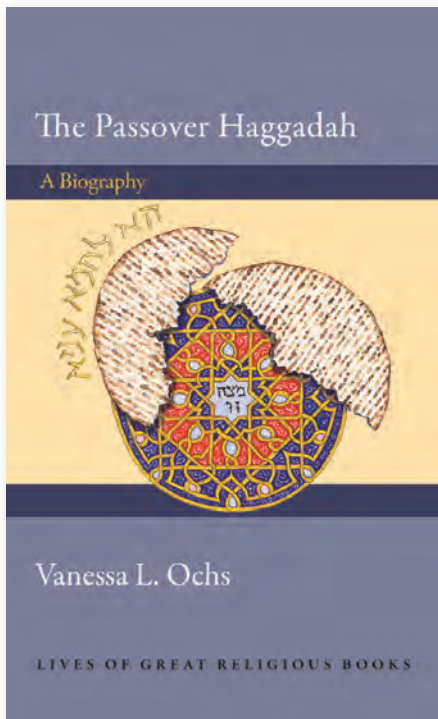


*Steve Drain, WBC Elder, in a picket on Palm Sunday, 2017.
Courtesy of Westboro Baptist Church.*

My goal is not to change our research subjects, but to change us. It has been transformational, for me and for my student researchers, to listen in person to religious radicals. For example, after fieldwork with Westboro Baptists, one LGBT student was inspired (and better equipped) to go into social work. But nonjudgmental empathic listening is not everyone's cup of tea—and it's harder if one's identity is being denied or condemned by those interviewed for research purposes. We've also learned that such transformations do not require a trip to Topeka or Monsey. I've seen people shift to a more empathic perspective after watching just a few video clips of our research encounters. In a deeply partisan political climate, I know friends, relatives, and students who cannot stand each other's views or votes, not just intellectually but in their gut. Where hate may be percolating below the surface, I am learning to introduce WBC or Neturei Karta as a conversational gambit, as a nudge, to encourage us to listen to each other in a less divisive, more empathic manner.

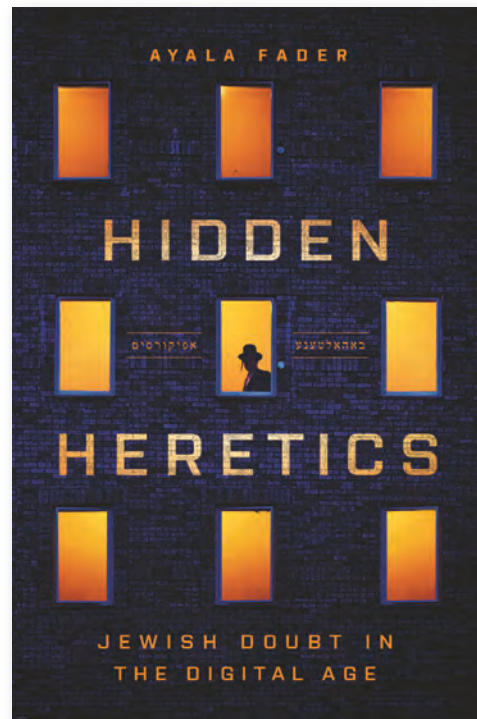
HILLEL GRAY is a scholar of Jewish ethics and assistant teaching professor in the Department of Comparative Religion at Miami University in Ohio, where he leads the Empathy and the Religious "Enemy" project, enemyempathy.com. His research on Westboro Baptist Church is discussed in a forthcoming article in the *Journal of Religious Ethics*.

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- i <https://www.adl.org/resources/profiles/westboro-baptist-church>.
 - ii Seeing my first name, Shirley asked whether Hillel is a boy's or girl's name. It struck me as funny, as WBC was protesting outside Hillels on college campuses around the country.
 - iii Revelation 7:3–8.
 - iv Neturei Karta is hated by many American Jews for favoring Palestinian over Jewish sovereignty and for cordial overtures to Hamas, Iran, and Louis Farrakhan.
 - v Granted, I can be more of a participant-observer with Neturei Karta, where I received an aliyah at their synagogue (with its placard declaring Zionists to be heretics), or, after reading Pirkei Avot, jumped on a trampoline with the rabbi and five of his sons.
 - vi At the National Havurah Committee Summer Institute, I taught: "We Need Something Different: Empathic Listening to the Most Hated Religious Groups in America."



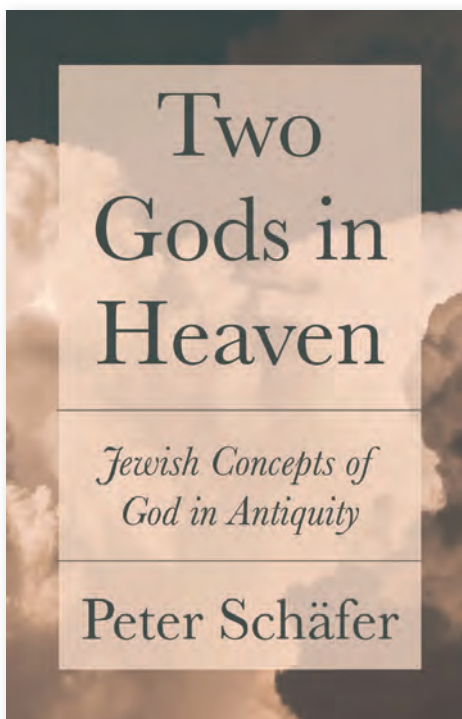
“Ochs has done the remarkable: she has written a book about the Haggadah that is as delightful as the Haggadah itself.”
 —Lauren F. Winner, Duke Divinity School

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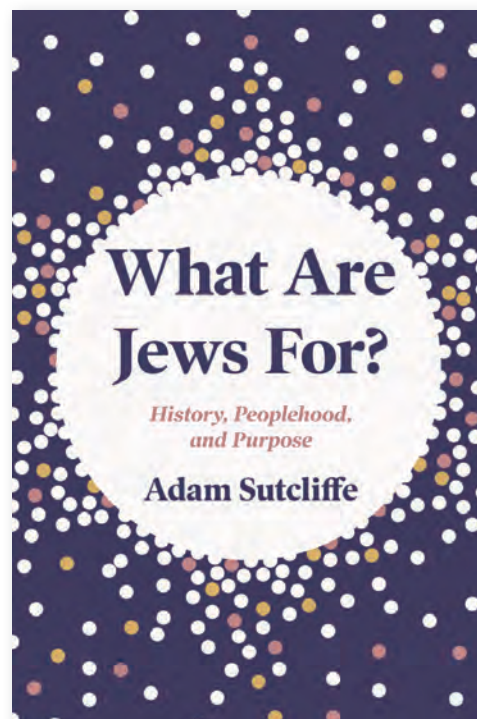
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Screening White Nationalists, Persecuted Victims, and Populist Enablers

Lawrence Baron

From the end of World War II until 1980, the specter of neo-Nazis has haunted the cinematic imagination. Tainted by the Third Reich's crimes, fugitive Nazi war criminals and new generations of white supremacists served as sinister villains for action, espionage, horror, and science fiction films about fringe conspiracies to found a white utopia. The majority of these films were American B movies. With a few exceptions, like *Pressure Point* (1962), they provided escapist entertainment about fanatics whose ideology and transgressions remained intriguingly evil, but practically irrelevant. These motion pictures typically dissociated American political realities from neo-Nazi cabals by setting them in Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Germany, dystopian futures, or alternate pasts.

Although screen neo-Nazis continue to be portrayed as ideologues, mad scientists, or thugs, historical docudramas and psychosocial films constitute an increasing portion of the movies about neo-Nazis produced since 1980. This corpus of movies renders their main characters victims of familial, political, or socioeconomic circumstances rather than as stock villains. Their proliferation reflects the escalation of white supremacist rhetoric into recurring acts of right-wing terrorism in Europe and North America from the 1980s on. Depending on the national origin of these pictures, the specific catalysts for radicalization differ, but the images and themes of Holocaust denial, nativism, Nazi iconography, the skinhead look, and virulent racism embraced by actual and fictional white nationalists resemble each other because they network with each other via Internet propaganda, international contacts, joint training maneuvers, rock music, and social media. More recently, populist political parties have emboldened this radical fringe by espousing more innocuous versions of its doctrines.

As incidents of racist terrorism escalate and populist politicians exploit the discontent that fuels it, filmmakers have tried to explain the attraction of white supremacy without inadvertently condoning it ...

What unites white extremists and populists is outrage over their perceived cultural, economic, and political displacement by foreigners, non-Christians, and people of color. They attribute the erosion of white power to everything from corporate capitalism, demographic decline, and Jewish conspiracies to mass immigration, multilateralism, the outsourcing of industrial jobs to Third World countries, and policies aimed at achieving gender and racial diversity and equality.

To convey the appeal of white nationalism, the dangers it poses, and its potential to expand its influence, directors have resorted to three approaches that are not always mutually exclusive. They immerse viewers in the white power subculture that provides a sense of community and purpose to its members; fashion dual narratives that devote equal attention to the victimized minorities; or expose the connections between racist extremism and populism.

American History X (1998) epitomized the first type of film. It tracked why its protagonist Derek joined a neo-Nazi gang and crossed the line from bigotry to homicide. The African American principal Mr. Sweeney assigns Derek's brother Danny to write about how Derek became radicalized as a warning against following in his brother's footsteps. The audience sees flashbacks of Derek's outrage over his father's murder by Blacks, a rampage he led through a Korean grocery, and the turf battles he fought with Black and Latino gangs. Sweeney managed to persuade Derek to recant his racism after his neo-Nazi



Edward Norton as Derek in *American History X*. Written by David McKenna, directed by Tony Kaye (New Line Cinema, 1998).

inmates turned on him and he developed a friendship with a Black coworker. Having someone from the group he once hated befriend him discredited stereotypes and facilitated his repudiation of racism. When Danny gets gunned down by the brother of a Black teen, Derek had slain, Derek feels guilty for triggering the cycle of retaliation. He grows his hair out, covers his swastika tattoo with his hand, and rips down Nazi posters from Danny's bedroom walls.

Endowing Derek with charisma, eloquence, and a muscular physique emblazoned with Nazi tattoos elicited identification by viewers predisposed to his prejudices. As one skinhead blogger put it, "It is supposed to be an anti-movie. It is supposed to make you wanna quit. But watching it, it had the opposite effect on me. It gave me the urge to fight." Nonetheless, directors strive to neutralize such oppositional readings by highlighting the atonement of their protagonists after establishing relationships with the Other, as is the case in the Canadian movie *Steel Toes* (2007), the German *Combat Girls* (2011), and the American *Skin* (2018).

A second narrative strategy about white supremacists explores the plight of their victims to divert sympathy away from their persecutors. This is an outgrowth of the public awareness of the past and present

iniquities ethnic, racial, and religious minorities have endured. The German miniseries *NSU: German History X* (2016) employs this approach. It recounts the murder spree conducted against Turkish immigrants by the National Socialist Underground, a cadre of former East Germans intent on restoring unified Germany to its Aryan roots. The first episode examines their backgrounds and racist politics, the second the impact of the murder of the first victim on his family, and the third the police investigation into the homicides.

The middle episode concentrates on the NSU's first casualty and how he had been a loving husband and father. In contrast to his Islamic piety, his daughter Semiya acts like a typical German teenager. The police assume the culprits were Turks engaged in honor killings or criminal vendettas. Meanwhile, the shootings of Turks continue. Semiya suspects they are hate crimes. At a public rally in 2006, she pleads for justice for her father. After two of the NSA ring-leaders commit suicide and their female accomplice surrenders in 2011, Angela Merkel apologized to the Turkish community and launched a government inquiry. Addressing a Reichstag session following her speech, Semiya movingly recalls her father's life in Turkey. *NSU: Germany History X* aired while the woman coconspirator was still being tried. Merkel's

decision to offer asylum to refugees from war-torn Syria contemporaneously inflamed hostility towards foreigners. Similarly, Golden-Globe-winner *In the Fade* (2017) dramatizes how the wife of a Kurdish victim of the NSU eventually exacts retribution against the killers.

The final type of movie about white nationalists links their renewed activism to recent electoral gains by populist politicians who spout euphemisms that validate racist grievances. The Belgian-French coproduction *This Is Our Land* (2017) chronicles how a Marine Le Pen–lookalike rebrands her father’s fascistic party to widen its appeal with voters. She eschews overtly racist epithets while blaming the European Union, international banks, and jihadists for France’s malaise. Her party recruits an affable nurse to run for mayor of a rural town polarized by economic and ethnic tensions. The candidate initially fails to recognize the party’s malevolent nature, but ultimately discerns its racist affinities through her boyfriend’s paramilitary activities against Arab immigrants and his past as an enforcer for the party. Likewise, the BBC-HBO miniseries *Years and Years* (2019) envisions the devolution of the United Kingdom into a nativist dictatorship in the wake of Trump’s second term and the implementation of Brexit.

As incidents of racist terrorism escalate and populist politicians exploit the discontent that fuels it, filmmakers have tried to explain the attraction of white supremacy without inadvertently condoning it, to elicit empathy for persecuted groups, and to alert audiences to the slippery slope between voting for ostensibly respectable nationalists and tacitly encouraging its most violent exponents.

LAWRENCE BARON held the Nasatir Chair in Modern Jewish History at San Diego State University from 1988 until 2012. He is the author of *Projecting the Holocaust into the Present: The Changing Focus of Contemporary Holocaust Cinema* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2005) and editor of *The Modern Jewish Experience in World Cinema* (Brandeis University Press, 2011). He served on the Board of Directors of the Association for Jewish Studies from 2003 to 2006.

On Integrating the Hated Object into the Human-Divine Totality: The Zoharic Model of Coexistence

Ayelet Naeh

Hate is a divisive emotion. The object of our hatred is perceived as evil and as a threat to our very existence. We experience this object from a vantage point of alienation: the hated object is assigned negative intentions and perspectives that are essentially different from ours, which can neither be bridged nor resolved. We try, unsuccessfully, to distance ourselves from the hated object, however, its internalized image, disturbing and stubborn, continues to thrive in our psyche and consciousness. Hatred is an intense emotion that enchains the hated object to us and won’t easily let it go. Hatred is of a paradoxical nature: the threatening and disturbing negativity associated with the hated object, which makes us want to distance ourselves from it, actually keeps it alive and kicking in our consciousness. The powerful feelings that the hated object engenders do not allow its trace to fade from our consciousness. For this reason, attempts to distance or erase hated objects from our psyche rarely, if ever, provide a solution.

The Zohar, the great kabbalistic book that appeared on the scene towards the end of the thirteenth century, problematizes attempts to separate ourselves from hated entities, cosmic or human. The Zohar sees human and divine reality as parallel systems that mirror each other. The ten divine sefirot (attributes) are structured in the form of the human body; the human being is created in the image of God, and all of creation is integrated into the human form. For this reason, no component of reality can be regarded as superfluous, everything must be assigned its appropriate place in the totality. Humanity’s problem regarding the integration of

**One cannot dismiss the forces of evil.
A person must know them, understand their
needs, and learn to live alongside them ...**

hated objects is parallel to the problem of how evil is to be integrated into the divine. The issue of integrating conflict, rivalry, and expressions of evil is a major theme in Zoharic literature, as the following two cases illustrate.

The rebellion of Korah (Zohar, volume 1, p. 17a) is seen by the Zohar as paralleling the tension between two divine attributes: Aaron, the high priest, is identified with *Hesed*, the right side, the attribute of loving-kindness; Korah, a Levite, is identified with *Gevurah* or *Din*, the left side, the attribute of strength or judgment. Moses is identified with *Tif'eret*, the center, a harmonizer and balancer. By its very nature, *Din*, judgment, brings conflict and anger, and often pulls in the direction of separating itself from the right side. The advantage of *Tif'eret*, the center, is its ability to hold both right and left, *Hesed* and *Din*, in a unifying structure. Moses's wisdom is expressed in his understanding that Korah's behavior mirrored the behavior model of the divine forces. For the Zohar, Korah is an example of the divisive power of the left, which resists integration with the right—Aaron—and withstands Moses's efforts to include him in the totality of Israel. This brings about his eventual demise: his attachment to anger and *Din* draw him to hell, which was born of *Din*. Korah, the rebellious left side that seeks to separate and sever itself from the totality, cannot exist. The rectified state of society and God can contain the opposites, right and left, in spite of their contradictory natures, in an integrated and unifying divine and human structure, as one.

Job is described in the Bible as someone "who turned away from evil," and for the Zohar, (vol. 2 p. 34a), this is a negative connotation. Job ignored evil—the Other Side in Zoharic terms—not giving it its due. At his feast, Job brought 'olah offerings—the only sacrifice burnt on the altar in its entirety. The parts of the animal left over from other sacrifices are seen by the Zohar as the "portion of the Other Side." Since Job refused to give the Other Side its due, he awakened its wrath and brought calamity upon himself. Just as Job separated evil from good rather than integrating it, God's judgment was meted out in the same manner: first Job was given good, then evil, and then good once again—always separate. This awareness leads a person to realize that the Other Side must be given its due, because evil also has a place in the cosmic scheme

of things, and cannot be disavowed. Job is an example of a person who wants to separate himself from evil and ignore it. By doing so, he reneges on the important task of integrating evil with good—in himself, and in the world. In the example of Job, the desire to negate the existence of the Other Side brings terrible calamities and catastrophes on a person. One cannot dismiss the forces of evil. A person must know them, understand their needs, and find a way to live alongside them in spite of the inherent rivalry between us and them.

The Zoharic model of integration directs us to take an interest in our adversaries, those people whose outlooks are different from ours, whom we might perceive as evil and as a threat to orderly existence as we see it. We must arrive at a deep understanding that our rivals also have a right to exist, needs of their own, and perspectives that for them are valid and true. This outlook is very different from a fantasy of coexistence built on similarity, in which we hope that the Other will accept our fundamental beliefs and we will therefore be able to live together in peace. The Zohar's model of coexistence is more demanding. Otherness is real, and coexistence is forged out of the understanding that integration is critical and essential. The hated object, the personal, social, or political Other, cannot be erased from the map or from our consciousness. We are tasked with recognizing its existence and with finding a way to live alongside it, weaving it into the great tapestry of divine, human, and psychological existence.

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The Irreducibility of Demonization and Kabbalistic Ambivalence

Nathaniel Berman

Who said it? Wasn't it Elijah the Prophet?

... Or perhaps it was Joseph the Demon?

—Babylonian Talmud Eruvin 43a

Demonization has become such a powerful feature of public discourse that few of us escape its allure. The current “discourse of demonization” includes *direct demonization* (constructing Others as thoroughly, perhaps irredeemably, alien and evil); *counterdemonization* (delegitimizing Others’ claims by accusing them of demonization); and *self-demonization* (seeking discursive power by brazenly defying conventional norms). Who does not indulge in at least one, if not more, of these? Don’t we all perceive at least some of our political, religious, or cultural adversaries to be situated on the “other side” of a moral chasm? Can we, without bad faith, or betrayal of our moral values, preach the acceptance of the Other who seeks to destroy those values? Might demonization, to borrow Sartre’s phrase, be the “untranscendable horizon of our time”?

The multifaceted discourse of demonization also implicates key questions in recent academic debates. Counterdemonizers, for example, often indict others for improper transgressions of the religion/secularity divide. They charge them with importing religious, even superstitious, images of absolute evil into discussions that should be conducted in the rational spirit of pragmatic compromise. This form of counterdemonization is quite widespread in the academy and beyond it. Yet, for more than a generation, critical thinkers have highlighted the contingent and contestable contours of the very religion/secularity dichotomy that is its fulcrum.

Moreover, attacks on “demonizers” cannot be neatly characterized as advancing secular reason over religious



Abraham Joseph Gikatilla. *Portae Lucis*. (Augsburg: Johann Miller, 1516): title page. Photo by Sander Petrus, licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

irrationality. Rather, one key genealogy of such attacks lies in *intrareligious* polemics—ranging from the Church Fathers’ rejection of gnostic dualism to Maimonides’s rejection of rabbinic demonology. Conversely, placing certain positions beyond the pale has a long history in putatively secular political discourse—from violent fascist exclusions to the genteel strictures of Habermasian protocols.

Long-standing Jewish discourses about the demonic Other, both rabbinic and kabbalistic, provide a nuanced optic on our era. Rabbinic demons were, by turns, friendly and hostile, helpful and destructive: “like human beings” in three ways and “like ministering angels” in three ways (Talmud *Hagigah*). Such demons can neither be domesticated nor shunned—and, at times, can barely be distinguished from their holy counterparts. Ashmedai, King of the Demons, was indispensable for the building of the Temple; he also subsequently usurped Solomon’s throne and slept with his wives. The ease with which those wives mistook Ashmedai for Solomon suggests that he was something of Solomon’s twin—and, indeed, according to one midrash, he was Solomon’s half-brother.

Such twinning comes to the fore in kabbalistic texts—where it takes the more fraught form of divine/demonic

relationships. Such dangers include the ultimate misprision: worshipping a demonic entity instead of the divine entity it resembles. Zoharic and later kabbalistic texts evoke a human condition of urgent uncertainty, an existentialism *avant la lettre*, in which choice is both groundless and yet unavoidable.

Kabbalistic portrayals of the ultimate source of such misprisions heighten their fraught intractability. Some Zoharic texts allude to demonic personae as immature or fallen forms of divine personae:ⁱ the diabolical “Edom” as an immature form of the supreme divine persona, the Holy Ancient One (Liebes),ⁱⁱ the diabolical Esau/Sama’el as the fallen form (and twin) of the divine Jacob/Blessed Holy One (Wolfson).ⁱⁱⁱ Other texts paint deep affinities between the diabolical Lilith and the divine Shekhinah. These two personae at times emerge from each other, at times metamorphize into each other, at times seem almost indistinguishable. Still other texts portray diabolical personae arising from the dissociation of a divine persona: a phenomenon of particular relevance to our time, the “age of anger” (Mishra).^{iv}

Anger is, indeed, a key Zoharic path by which a divine persona becomes, or gives rise to, a diabolical persona. One text portrays the fire of divine anger emitting smoke, which curls around until it takes form as Sama’el and Lilith—who are thus literally the crystallizations of divine wrath. Another text portrays a similar process on the human level. Kabbalistic ambivalence reaches its peak in Zoharic portrayals of the diabolical Dragon as another face of the loving God, the hated Enemy as another face of the cherished Friend. The skill of Zoharic writing lies in its paradoxical evocation of *both* the deep affinity between the Hated and the Beloved, *and* the duty of passionate engagement in the mortal struggle between them.

This insistent portrayal of the divine/demonic relationship as marked by absolute enmity *and* deep affinity makes sense of the fact that Zoharic and other kabbalistic texts forecast opposite ultimate fates for the demonic: reconciliation, even embrace, with the divine *and* utter annihilation by the divine. Similarly divergent counsel may be found in kabbalistic ethical texts as to how one should relate to sinners: embrace and ostracism. It thus also makes sense that in recent decades Kabbalah has inspired forms of Judaism most embracing of ideas, rituals, and even deities of other traditions, as well as intolerant, nationalist, and even racist forms of Judaism.

The ultimate edifying lesson of this brief overview of the kabbalistic demonic may not lie in the stark choice it

The skill of Zoharic writing lies in its paradoxical evocation of *both* the deep affinity between the Hated and the Beloved, *and* the duty of passionate engagement in the mortal struggle between them.

portrays between embrace and annihilation of the Other. Rather, it lies in the writing, especially Zoharic writing, which makes that choice visible: a writing neither so deeply embedded in the divided world that it cannot see beyond it, nor so self-deluded as to pretend to be above that world and its struggles. The former would render it ignorant of the deep affinities between Self and Other, Friend and Enemy; the latter would render it incapable not only of acknowledging its own hostile emotions towards an immoral adversary, but, more importantly, of maintaining the passion of its own commitments. “Self-aware situatedness” might be a slogan for this simultaneously tragic and utopian vision.

We live an age of demonization, yes, and we cannot simply will ourselves beyond it. But kabbalistic myths—perhaps in contemporary revisionist forms—can enable us to nourish still-inchoate hopes of a healing beyond today’s divisions, even while affirming our moral clarity in opposing evil.

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i My designation of these figures as personae follows the practice of scholars such as Elliot Wolfson, *Language, Eros, Being: Kabbalistic Hermeneutics and Poetic Imagination* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004), 183, and Yonatan Bennaroch, “God and His Son: Christian Affinities in the Shaping of the Sava and Yanuka Figures in the Zohar,” *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 107 (2017), 48. The Zoharic literature, curiously, does not employ any general term to refer to them. Later kabbalistic texts pervasively designate them with the term *partsufim*, a rabbinic Aramaic word for “faces” or “facial features.” *Partsuf* is itself a loan word from Greek, deriving from *prosopon*, whose original meaning was “mask” or “face.” *Persona* is the Latin equivalent of *prosopon*.

ii Yehuda Liebes, “Ha-Mythos Ha-Kabbali be-fi Orpheus,” <https://liebes.huji.ac.il/files/orph.pdf>, p. 30.

iii Elliot Wolfson, “Light through Darkness: The Ideal of Human Perfection in the Zohar,” *Harvard Theological Review*, 81 (1988), 81 n. 9.

iv Pankaj Mashri, *Age of Anger: A History of the Present* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017).



AMERICAN ACADEMY FOR JEWISH RESEARCH

CONGRATULATIONS Salo Baron Prize Winner

The American Academy for Jewish Research is pleased to announce the winner of its annual Salo Baron Prize for the best first book in Jewish studies published in 2019. The prize, including a \$5,000 award presented at the annual luncheon at the AJS Conference, will honor:

Joshua Teplitsky, *Prince of the Press: How One Collector Built History's Most Enduring and Remarkable Jewish Library* (Yale University Press)

Joshua Teplitsky's *Prince of the Press* is a novel and intriguing exploration of premodern Jewish life across its political, cultural, and intellectual dimensions through an incisive examination of an extraordinary book collection. One of the greatest tributes to a book's quality is how it measures up to the aims it sets for itself, and this book accomplishes everything it set out to do by utilizing a personal library rather than the usual archives of official institutions to vividly reconstruct early modern Jewish culture. Teplitsky's study demonstrates clearly how books can be "powerful registers of identity." It advances our understanding of book history in all of its manifestations: book and manuscript acquisition practices, the materiality of books, book printing, and the various ways that users "interacted with their book and actively shaped their contents." In addition, Teplitsky gleans a wealth of information from inscriptions, marginalia, flyleaves, title pages, and broadside posters to paint a colorful portrait of not only its main character Rabbi David Oppenheim, Europe's most renowned bibliophile, but of communal government and the intricate political and rabbinic culture swirling around him in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Teplitsky breathes life into a collection of 4,500 printed books and 1,000 manuscripts from whose pages he eloquently teases out the richness of Jewish life in early modern Central Europe. *Prince of the Press* presents an innovative model for future scholarship by demonstrating the critical role of Jewish books and libraries, and indeed books in general, as "important sites of political and cultural authority."

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The Baron Prize honors the memory of the distinguished historian Salo W. Baron, a long-time president of the AAJR, who taught at Columbia University for many decades. It is one of the signal honors that can be bestowed on a young scholar in Jewish Studies and a sign of the excellence, vitality, and creativity of the field.



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Ilan Benattar, New York University

But it is not so in the Kingdom of Ishmael: Exile, Diaspora, and Culture Politics in the Final Ottoman Jewish Generation (1902–1909)

Jan Burzlaff, Harvard University

Outlasting The Nazis in Vilnius, Kraków, and Copenhagen: The Anatomy of Jewish Survival During The Holocaust (1941–1945)

Ariel Paige Cohen, University of Virginia

Displaying Art and Exhibiting Philanthropy: Jews, Gender, and Museums in the United States (1888–1958)

Samantha Madison Cooper, New York University

Cultivating High Society: American Jews Engaging European Opera in New York (1880–1940)

Oskar Czendze, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

From Loss to Invention: Galician Jews Between New York and East Central Europe (1890–1938)

Lindsey Jackson, Concordia University

Brit Without Milah: Jewish Responses to Ritual Circumcision in Canada and the United States

Oren Okhovat, University of Florida

The Portuguese Jewish Atlantic: Constructed Identities and Cross-Cultural Networks in the Seventeenth Century

Lucas F. W. Wilson, Florida Atlantic University

The Structures of Postmemory: Portraits of Survivor-Family Homes in Second-Generation Holocaust Literature and Oral History

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The American Academy for Jewish Research has provided grants to faculty at North American universities to 1) encourage academic collaboration between Jewish studies programs (or faculty) at multiple institutions, either in the same city or in close geographical proximity, or 2) enable collaborative scholarly endeavors that would not otherwise receive funding.

The AAJR is pleased to announce the following winners in this year's competition:

Natalia Aleksion, Touro College, Graduate School of Jewish Studies; Elissa Bemporad, Queens College and CUNY Graduate Center; Dina Danon, Binghamton University, SUNY; Federica Francesconi, University at Albany, SUNY; Elizabeth Imber, Clark University
The New York State Working Group on Jewish Women and Gender in Global Perspective

Eugene M. Avrutin, University of Illinois; Joseph Lenkart, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign; Marina Mogilner, University of Illinois at Chicago; Harriet Murav, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Keely Stauter-Halsted, University of Illinois at Chicago; Karen Underhill, University of Illinois at Chicago
Second Bi-Annual Junior Scholars Workshop in Russian, Polish, and East European Jewish Culture

Flora Cassen, Washington University in St. Louis; Ronnie Perelis, Yeshiva University
Translating the Americas: Early Modern Jewish Writing on the New World

Erez DeGolan, Columbia University; Dov Kahane, Jewish Theological Seminary; Jeremy Steinberg, University of Pennsylvania
The Annual Ancient Judaism Regional Seminar

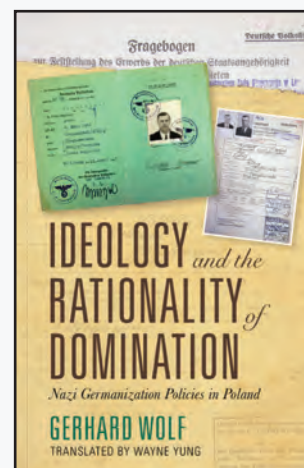
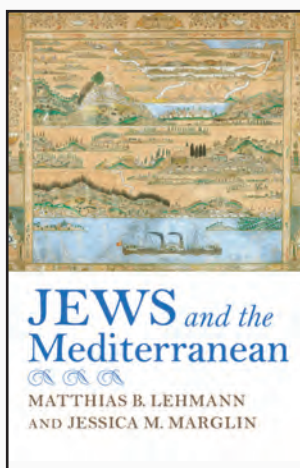
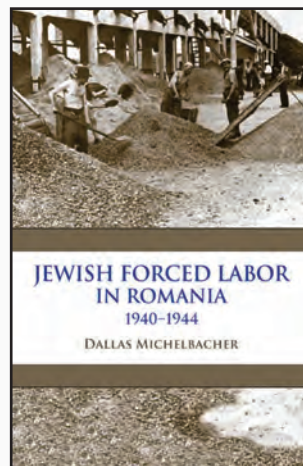
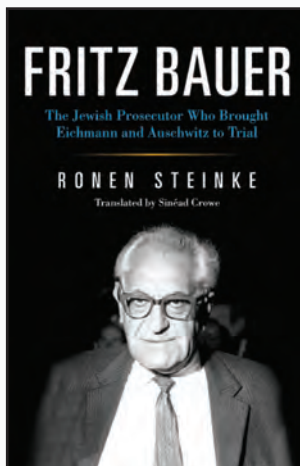
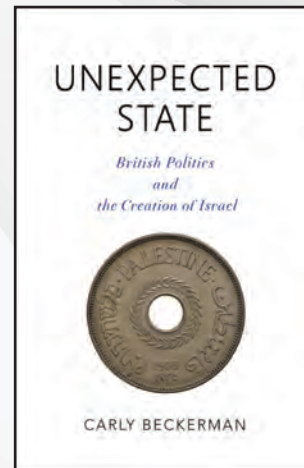
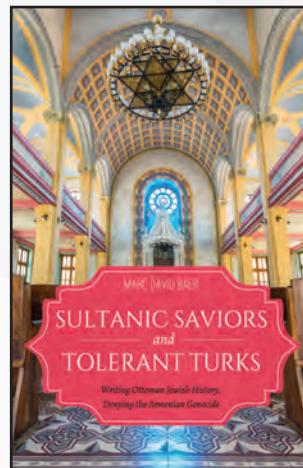
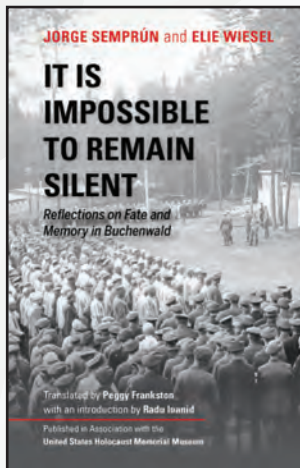
Jessica Marglin, University of Southern California
California Working Group on Jews in the Maghrib and the Middle East (Cal JeMM)

William Miles, Northeastern University; Alan Verskin, University of Rhode Island
Jews in Muslim and Shared Diasporas

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Stronger than Hate: A Photo Essay

Peter Gluck



Courtesy of the Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh.

Pittsburghers from all sectors of the city pushed back publicly and continuously against the shooting at Tree of Life Synagogue in Squirrel Hill on October 27, 2018. Here are a few examples of the "anti-antisemitism" (as I call it) that stand out to me as a native of Squirrel Hill. The scope is important for Jews everywhere.



Courtesy of Tim Hines.

Anyone who knows Pittsburgh knows its sports teams are the soul of the city. An independent graphic artist changed the top of the epic symbol of the Pittsburgh Steelers football team from a yellow diamond shape to a Star of David and inserted "Stronger Than Hate," a quote from the mayor of Pittsburgh, in the space where normally is the name "Steelers." This non-Jewish artist explained he was helping a Jewish friend move in Squirrel Hill when they heard multiple sirens headed toward the Tree of Life synagogue. Discovering what had happened, he headed home to do his artwork. **It went viral.**

The day after the shooting a banner was hung at Heinz Field in Pittsburgh with the image. Before the game, eleven seconds of silence were held in honor of the eleven killed. Art Rooney II, president of the Steelers from an Irish Catholic family, tweeted:

"On behalf of the entire Steelers organization we offer our support and condolences to the families of the attack on peaceful citizens worshipping at the Tree of Life synagogue. Our hearts are heavy, but we must stand against anti-Semitism and hate crimes of any nature and come together to preserve our values and our community."



People posted the "Stronger Than Hate" message in store windows and yards.



The Pittsburgh police displayed the image with a decal on their Zone 4 cars.



Courtesy of Rhi Cook.

Two days after the shooting, three Pittsburghers living and traveling in Prague met and spray painted the Stronger Than Hate logo onto the John Lennon Wall.

"...The relationship between the Tree of Life and the Diocese of Pittsburgh has been close over many years. Anti-Jewish bigotry, and all religious and ethnic bigotry, is a terrible sin...we must put prayer into action by loving our neighbors and working to make 'Never again!' a reality..."

– Bishop Zubik, Diocese of Pittsburgh

"...To the victims, their families, and the entire Jewish community of Pittsburgh, know that we mourn with you and stand united against anti-Semitism and all forms of bigotry and hatred."

– U.S. Representative Conor Lamb



Courtesy of Douglas Pingree.

Another person took a t-shirt with the altered logo and proudly displayed it at the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro to share the message. Similar shirts are found online.



I visited the community I grew up in. It continues to feel like a dream. A gardener raking leaves nearby said to me, "All of Pittsburgh feels like it happened to us."



The Pittsburgh Penguins NHL franchise also altered its symbol for several games with a patch that included a second triangle completing the Jewish star. The Golden Triangle is a symbol for downtown Pittsburgh where three rivers meet. The Penguins Foundation donates the proceeds from the auction of team shirts and patches to the families of those killed and injured, including law enforcement who risked their lives to stop the massacre.



Behind the doors of the front hallway of Tree of Life are gifts from all over the world. One of them reads: "We've Got Your Back."



Photo by Alexandra Wimbley. © Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 2020, all rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

Hundreds of individuals and groups in the city and from around the world sent similar messages of support and anti-hate. Many sent beautiful art messages, some of which are displayed on a chain link fence that still protects the damaged synagogue. **#HeartsTogether.**



Courtesy of the Tree of Life Synagogue.

Lonnie M., 17 "Hero". Newton North High School, Newton, MA **#HeartsTogether**



Courtesy of the Tree of Life Synagogue.

Sara G, 18 "Peace for the Jewish People." Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, Parkland FL **#HeartsTogether.**

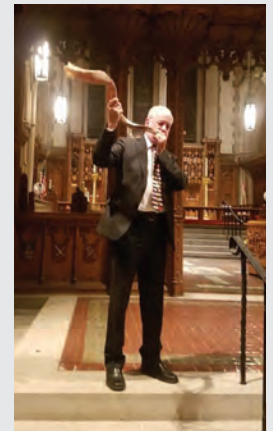


Photo by Ellen Sikov.

Left: "Tree of Life" Steel Drum Art Gift from The Dominican Sisters of Houston, Texas

Right: **Calvary Episcopal Church** opened its doors permitting the Tree of Life congregation to utilize its sanctuary for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services. The church covered the inside crosses, in their words, out of respect and friendship. The rabbi of the Tree of Life sounded the shofar for 5780-2019 in a friend's sanctuary.



*William Penn, half-length portrait, facing right, ca. 1897.
Photograph. Paris: Goupin & Co. Library of Congress,
Prints and Photographs Division.*

**William Penn, Esq.
The Charter of Privileges, 1701**

FIRST. No person believing in One GOD, &c. shall be molested on Account of his Religious Persuasion;

BECAUSE no People can be truly happy, though under the greatest Enjoyment of Civil Liberties, if abridged of the Freedom of their Consciences, as to their Religious Profession and Worship ...

Borrowing an idea from Quakers, I believe the Jewish people have Friends, spiritual partners, **Mithaverei Yisrael**. The Quakers settled Pennsylvania seeking religious freedom, wanting to build a new kind of society. The response of thousands to the Tree of Life tragedy may prove this idea has taken root.

While there is a documented rise in anti-Semitic incidents in the U.S., there is also a growing, significant non-Jewish rejection of this hatred. Shortly before the anniversary of the tragedy, Pittsburgh City Council established October 27, in perpetuity, as a "Remember Repair Together Day" in Pittsburgh.

RABBI PETER K. GLUCK, *PhD, MSW*, is an independent scholar in applied research based in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

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Drunkards Lying on the Floor: Jewish Contempt for Non-Jewish Lower Classes

Gil Ribak

Socialist Yiddish poet Avrom Lesin, who grew up in Minsk in the 1870s and 1880s, recalled that as a child he visited a local tavern whose owner he knew. There he saw “[Gentile] drunkards lay around on the dirty floor, embracing and jostling one another, singing with hoarse voices, snoring,” as the Jewish owner stood at the door and “laughed with such deep contempt that his whole body shook.” Writing about his experience in the *New World*, Yisroel Kopelov, a Russian-born radical, who arrived in America in 1882 and became active in the anarchist movement, remembered his days (late 1880s) as a traveling salesman in New York’s poor neighborhoods. As he walked through the city’s Irish sections, Kopelov was shocked by what he witnessed: “In the Irish neighborhoods the dirtiness was exceptional!” and “roused disgust when looking at them. Just the smell from the house was unbearable!”

Many scholars have argued that American Jewish liberal/progressive leanings are a direct result of the alleged universal values of Judaism, and/or Jewish historical experience. According to those interpretations, Jews often identified “down,” that is, with the downtrodden and other marginalized groups. Jewish historical experience, however, reflects a different streak altogether. Throughout most of their history, Jews had usually shown little interest in—and quite often utter contempt toward—the surrounding lower-class and lower-stratum non-Jews. In eastern Europe, the *muzhik/poyer* (peasant) usually embodied those low-class Gentiles. In Yiddish folklore, in numerous memoirs and autobiographies, and in the Jewish press, certain archetypal images of the peasantry were entrenched: the local peasantry (whether Belarusian, Polish, Romanian, Ukrainian, etc.) was usually portrayed as strong, coarse, drunk, illiterate, volatile, and sexually promiscuous. That imagery yielded songs like “oy, oy, oy/ *shiker iz a goy / shiker iz er / trinken muz er /*

Countless accounts and folktales by eastern European Jews illustrated peasants as dim-witted people, whose ignorance could only compete with their ruthlessness.

vayl er iz a goy” (drunk is a Gentile / drunk is he / drink must he / because he is a Gentile); sayings like “a Gentile remains a Gentile”; “when the Gentiles have a feast they beat up Jews”; “when the Jew is hungry he sings. When the Gentile is hungry he beats up his wife”; and “the Jew is small and Vasil (a common Ukrainian name) is big.” There were also contemptuous names for Gentiles, especially peasants, such as *zhlob* (a boor or yokel), *dovar akher* (literally “other thing,” figuratively meaning something impure like a pig or an abominable person), *shkots, orl* (a more contemptuous term than *goy*, referring to the uncircumcised), *poperilo, kaporenik* (figuratively someone who is worthless), or just “Ivan.” That approach could be found even among ideologues on the Left, who espoused working-class solidarity. Such attitudes continued to manifest themselves in America, where Jewish immigrants often cast structurally low-class groups, such as the Irish and African Americans, as the New World’s reincarnation of the Slavic peasants, with many of their perceived negative characteristics.

Contempt and fear of the non-Jewish lower classes had to do with the Jewish socioeconomic position as middlemen, who were also members of an ethnoreligious minority, and reliant on central authority for their ultimate safety. Therefore, the prevailing historical pattern was that Jews tended to identify “up” rather than “down.” More often than not, Jews aligned themselves with the central authorities who protected them from mob attacks, and many communities relied on Gentile rulers for their livelihood as well. Anxiety about non-Jewish masses was interwoven with disdain for their behavior.



Russian peasant women, 1909. Photo by Sergeĭ Prokudin-Gorskii. Prokudin-Gorskii photograph collection, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

Back in the 1960s, American Jewish essayist Milton Himmelfarb found similarities between the relations of contemporary American Jews to African Americans, and the relations of eastern European Jews to the peasantry. Himmelfarb asserted, "The Jews did not hate the muzhiks," since Jews "are poor haters"; if anything, "Jews pitied the muzhik," while feeling "superior" to the peasants.ⁱⁱ Himmelfarb's characterization has much truth to it, since in many Yiddish sources, peasants seemed less threatening than the clergy or gentry, and there are many examples of sympathy for the peasants' plight because of their poverty and exploitation by the upper classes. Even hasidic sources, which usually emphasized what they saw as intrinsic differences between Jews and non-Jews, saw some redeeming qualities in the peasantry.

Still, Himmelfarb's formulation downplays Jewish caution about revealing one's mindset in public. The non-Jewish majority's hateful attitudes brought about systems of legal restrictions and various kinds of attacks that seriously impinged upon the lives of Jews; Jews' political situation and historical experience as a minority therefore tempered the expression of their attitudes (that were hardly more elevated) toward the majority. Yet if overt

Jewish hatred toward peasants was articulated less frequently, the Jewish approach toward them exhibited much scorn. Countless accounts and folktales by eastern European Jews illustrated peasants as dim-witted people, whose ignorance could only compete with their ruthlessness.

By the turn of the twentieth century, however, a vocal yearning for normalcy, to be *ke-khol ha-goyim* (like all other peoples) in economic and cultural life would become widespread, especially among Jewish nationalists and radicals. These Jewish modernizers looked at other nations and their peasant masses as "healthy," down-to-earth, no-nonsense people, who rolled up their sleeves, toiled the land, knew how to defend themselves, and whose directness and simplicity were not corrupted in comparison with the alleged Jewish cowardice, casuistry, and nervousness. Moreover, the conduct of those nations became, to a large degree, a gauge of Jewish shortcomings. What is highly important in this context, nevertheless, is that the ideal of normalization did not change the traits attributed to low-class Gentiles, but rather their evaluation. For example, Zionist writer Yosef Ḥayim Brenner contrasted in 1914 "the millions of strong and patient" Russian peasants and their "formidable instincts" with the indecisive, hesitant Jews. That characterization did not prevent him from describing the Russian masses' "slavish spirit" and "stupefying cruelty."ⁱⁱⁱ As before, the peasant was seen as simple, strong, and coarse, but by the early 1900s, such features became gradually more desirable by modernizing Jews.

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i Avrom Lesin, *Geklibene verk: zikhroynes un bilder* (New York: Cyclo, 1954), 24; Y. Kopelov, *Amol in amerike* (Warsaw: Brzoza, 1928), 157, 164.

ii Milton Himmelfarb, "Negroes, Jews, and Muzhiks," *Commentary* (October 1966): 83–84.

iii Yosef Ḥayim Brenner, "Ha'arakhat 'azmenu be-sheloshet ha-krakhim," Ben Yehuda Project, <https://benyehuda.org/read/537>.

Jerusalem of Black: Ethiopian Israeli Girls Rage Against Hate

Marva Shalev Marom

Yerus: No matter what we do, this is what we get. "These Ethiopians, these barbarians, they infiltrate Israel." Take police racism, for instance, they treat us like invaders, criminals, even though this is our home. And the strangest thing is, who knows the feeling of exclusion better than the Jewish people? We weren't accepted in Europe because we were Jewish, and now you don't accept us because we're Black?! You were discriminated and now you discriminate us. You're not accepting yourself! We are PART of you, can't you SEE?

Yerus was born on a plane that flew from Addis Ababa to Ben Gurion Airport. For her family, her birth symbolized an epic reunion after centuries apart, between Beta Yisrael—the Jewish Ethiopian Diaspora—and the entire Jewish world. Her father named her Yerus there and then: "Like a drop returning to the ocean," he said, quoting the traditional Ethiopian proverb, "we will return to Jerusalem."

A dozen years later, on the grass outside her caravan, Yerus is faced with an ocean of hatred, the tears on her cheeks are oceans of pain. She opens her mouth, her classmates ask, "How come you know Hebrew so well?" Her A+ in math upsets her teacher, "How come she got it right and you Israelis didn't?!" Every afternoon, kids from the B'nai Akivah Jewish Orthodox youth group come around the block and yell at her that she's not Jewish.

In late June 2019, an off-duty policeman entered her neighborhood and spotted a group of teenagers. Yerus had a feeling about how this was going to end. First, he'd pick up a conversation. Then, he'd pick up a gun. The death of eighteen-year-old Solomon Takka that night



Alamnesh (pseudonym), participant-researcher, recording her first single in Tel Aviv, Israel. Photo by Rafi Shargai

from that bullet sent the entire Ethiopian Israeli community to the streets, and in the following weeks Yerus joined many thousands in protest. Their signs said: "Police Murders Beta Yisrael," "Black = Second-Class Citizen," "My Blood Is Good Only for Warfare."

These signs conjure heated demonstrations that occurred before Yerus's lifetime: back in 1985, when Beta Yisrael finally set foot in Jerusalem, the core symbol of their Jewish faith. These Jews walked by foot in thousands, from the hilltops of Gondar, Ethiopia, through the Sudanese desert, and into the State of Israel, to make their faith come true. Only at the border, the price of the ticket became clear: To become Israeli citizens, they must convert to the halakhic Jewish model and leave their unique Jewish tradition—one that is closer to Second Temple Judaism—at the door. Still sore from the exodus, thousands marched to the state parliament in Jerusalem. "We are Jews Like You!" their signs said, "Like you!" "Why should we convert?! Color won't come off in the mikveh!" "Calm down," rabbinic officials came out to lighten the spirits, "this is not racism here; we're doing you a favor, building you a bridge over 2,000 years of Jewish development."

Beta Yisrael, the Jewish tradition of Ethiopia, is murdered in Israel. In Kiryat Hayim in 2019, the police shot the gun; in Jerusalem in 1982, the rabbinate did. These two scenarios delineate the tragic slope of Ethiopian Judaism in Israel. While Yerus's father dreamt of Jerusalem of Gold, Yerus grew up with the reality of Blackness: police brutality, fear of "infiltrators," institutional discrimination, religious delegitimization.

For Yerus, this makes no sense. How could there be a divide between her and other Jews?! "We are part of you, can't you SEE?!" she asks me, as if our Jewish belonging should be no less evident than the varying shades of our skin. In Ethiopia, Yerus wasn't Black, but Jewish. Her kin were named Falasha, "wanderers," a degrading term assigned to Jews as a religious

minority who were forbidden by law to inherit land. In Israel, everybody calls them "Ethiopians," always distinct from other Israelis. While Yerus is accustomed to being somebody's Other, she can't understand how those who know in flesh the feeling of exclusion, exclude her, who's one of them.

Yerus's exclusion from Israeli society is not foreign to me. I've been teaching and learning with Ethiopian Israeli teenagers since I was eighteen. In recent years, Yerus and I, parents and neighbors, set to explore what makes a Black Jew in Israel into a seemingly contradictory identity. We learn that the civic and religious identities of Ethiopian Israelis are in conflict: as Jews, they are part of the religious majority, as Blacks, they are forever foreign. Throughout the 2019 demonstrations, the struggle of



Alamnesh, Serkalem, Workitu, and Yerus (pseudonyms) participant-researchers, collecting data in Gondar, Ethiopia. Photo by Rafi Shargai

Ethiopian Jews against Israeli nationhood became clear beyond doubt. “Go back to Africa,” angry drivers yelled at the protestors, “We’ll win the war without your blood.” These expressions of hatred tell a greater story about the Jewishness we both share as Israelis: something had to happen for Yerus to become Black in the land of the Jews.

What is Jewishness—religion, race, civilization? is an ever-open question. Yerus’s hurt and confusion attests to a change of its function in Israel: it is used to discriminate between Jews of Difference—in tradition, values, and pigments. But like Schrödinger’s cat, the essence of Jewishness is responsive to how we perceive it, and what we’re using it for. The State of Israel uses Jewishness as a weapon in a war: not only against the Palestinian people, but against Jewish diversity.

In the context of Israeli statecraft, Jewishness is recruited for creating social cohesion, but this recruitment is detrimental to the bounty and diversity that characterize Jewishness most of all. In diasporic settings, striving for cohesion was a way of creating Jewish continuity across space. In a Jewish state, however, this same attempt brings about discrimination and hatred: Ethiopian Israelis

who look different and observed a different Jewish tradition for centuries remain outsiders to Israeli society.

But in and of itself, Jewishness offers diversity a stable apparatus, and a long rope: Why else would we have Talmud pages full of contradicting views, or joke about two Jews having three opinions, or founding two synagogues in a deserted island so there’ll be one they don’t attend?

A core idea in Kabbalah is the “Union of Opposites,” which delinks the idea of unity from that of uniformity. In Israel, the only unity possible is that which cherishes the divergent pathways that brought us all there. The hatred Yerus feels every day results from a refusal to unite across difference. Let Yerus and her community remind us that Jewishness is a diversity, before all.

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Jews and Hate Speech

Jason Schulman

In the early 1940s, Ohio Congressman Martin Sweeney, a right-wing isolationist and devoted supporter of antisemitic priest and radio personality Charles Coughlin, brought a series of lawsuits against news outlets around the country. Sweeney claimed the media had injured his reputation by printing that he, like Father Coughlin, opposed the appointment of Judge Emerich Freed to the federal bench because Freed was Jewish.

The newspapers managed to have all of Sweeney's suits dismissed but one: that of the *Schenectady Union-Star* in New York. The court of appeals sided with the congressman, pointing to the state's large Jewish population as a key contextual factor in determining that the story about Sweeney did in fact expose him to public hatred. The *Union-Star* appealed to the Supreme Court, where Morris Ernst, the urbane, often bow-tied counsel of the American Civil Liberties Union, argued that Sweeney's use of libel lawsuits was a potentially destructive tool in the "hands of bigots and merchants of hate." When used by men like Sweeney, libel laws would—counter to their supposed purpose—immunize bigots from being publicly called out for their hatred. What Jews needed was the freedom to counter such hateful words in the marketplace of ideas. Ernst's argument was supported by a brief by the major national American Jewish organizations of the time (the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, B'nai B'rith, and Jewish Labor Committee), who collectively argued that despite the rising threat of antisemitism, the best way to combat evil was through education and open debate rather than the legislative suppression of "anti-Semitic preachments."

Throughout the twentieth century, in cases like *Sweeney* (or more famously *New York Times v. Sullivan* in 1964) in which individuals felt their "good name" had been tarnished, Jews were frequently on

the front lines of major free-speech cases, arguing that a democratic society like the United States needed a debate on public issues that was "uninhibited, robust, and wide-open."

But what about cases where the preachments of hate were directed against an entire group?

Jews were less unified in their responses to "group libel" (what we today call "hate speech") that maligned racial, ethnic, or religious minorities.

Some Jews felt that permissible speech was too wide open when it came to attacks on minority groups. For example, also during the 1940s, a thirty-something law professor named David Riesman, who would go on to make a name for himself for his studies in Sociology, was grappling with the *Sweeney* case and how to reconcile "democracy and defamation." With antidemocratic and antisemitic forces growing, especially but not only in Europe, Riesman worried that free speech was not truly free for all, since some groups "encounter[ed] obstacles rooted in inequalities of private wealth and power." Riesman strongly advocated for group libel laws, which would allow marginalized groups to seek "legal redress" against claims made by bigots, fascists, and antisemites.

Riesman's arguments resonated with Justice Felix Frankfurter. In 1952, in *Beauharnais v. Illinois*, the Supreme Court ruled that a leaflet castigating African Americans was not protected speech. White supremacist Joseph Beauharnais had distributed a petition calling on the mayor of Chicago to "halt the further encroachment, harassment and invasion of white people, their property, neighborhoods and persons, by the Negro." He was convicted and fined for violating an Illinois law that barred defamatory pronouncements directed at a "class of citizens" based on race, color, creed, or religion. In upholding the Illinois law, the court reasoned that, like other categories of speech



Ben Shahn. Father Coughlin, 1939. Watercolor and ink. 15 1/2 in. x 12 in. Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio: Museum Purchase, Derby Fund, from the Philip J. and Suzanne Schiller Collection of American Social Commentary Art, 1930–1970. © 2020 Estate of Ben Shahn Licensed by VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY

that fell outside the First Amendment—like obscenity, profanity, and insulting or “fighting words”—the value of Beauharnais’s contribution to civic discourse was so slight that it was outweighed by the interest in maintaining social order. And just as a state could (prior to *New York Times v. Sullivan* in 1964) punish a libelous “utterance directed at an individual,” it could punish the “same utterance directed at a defined group.” Frankfurter, who wrote the court’s opinion and cited Riesman in his footnotes, argued that “willful purveyors of falsehood” against racial and religious minority groups cause strife inconsistent with a “metropolitan, polyglot community.” There was no place for them in America.

And yet, American Jews as a whole did not take up Riesman and Frankfurter’s support for group libel laws. As a small, visible minority in the United States, it might have made sense for Jews to back laws like the one in Illinois, to be able to use such laws against antisemitic screeds lobbed against them. But whatever earlier interest American Jews had in group libel—during the 1940s as the specter of Nazism grew, or earlier in the 1910s when the major American Jewish organizations came into their own and advocated for group libel statutes and the philosopher Horace Kallen pushed for pluralism attuned to group-based recognition—by the second half of the century, Jews had come to overwhelmingly support individual rights, especially the right to speak and reply, over any type of group-based rights.

Famously, by the late 1970s, when the National Socialist Party of America marched in front of the village hall in Skokie, a heavily Jewish suburb of Chicago, it was Ernst’s ideological descendant, ACLU director Aryeh Neier, who advocated for the speech of those he hated (and hated him). Less famously, a few years earlier, Jewish organizations had disagreed—and split with major Black civil rights organizations like the NAACP—over how to deal with J. B. Stoner, a radical segregationist who claimed African Americans were not human beings: mobilize public opposition or wield the law against him?

Unlike other democracies, especially in Europe, the American aversion to hate speech laws may seem surprising. Despite America’s “metropolitan, polyglot”

The issue of hate speech exemplifies a pattern of American Jewish liberalism.

makeup, its minorities are expected to be able to handle degrading speech directed toward them by punching up. And perhaps somewhat surprisingly, American Jews—who might have reaped some benefits from a legal remedy like group libel when they were vilified as, say, gangsters, porn peddlers, or subversives—have not supported legislative prohibitions on hate speech directed at groups.

The issue of hate speech exemplifies a pattern of American Jewish liberalism. Unlike other minority groups that saw a path to equality through group-based arguments (often highlighting their race, color, creed, or religion), American Jews have largely downplayed such arguments in favor of individual freedoms. Jews wagered that the benefits of a liberal society that prizes the individual over the group—and allowed Jews to succeed individually without calling too much attention to their particularism as a group—outweighed any discomforts that might arise from allowing antisemitic opprobrium. Because of their racial/ethnic and economic place in American society, Jews had more choice than other minority groups about when—and when not—to advocate as a group. And since their success was always at least somewhat precarious, Jews feared that group-based protections like hate speech might unintentionally backfire and even incur further antisemitism (as the famed civil rights lawyer Louis Marshall feared in the 1920s, for instance, when he hesitated to take on the antisemitic auto magnate Henry Ford).

American Jews’ approach to issues of hate speech and freedom of expression rests, hopefully sturdily, on a belief that truth and toleration will win out in the long run over perversion and the bondage of irrationality.

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Hate in Soviet Jewish War and Holocaust Writing

Marat Grinberg

The word “hate” is key in Russian writing of the World War II era. The most influential expression of hate toward the German enemy came from the pen of Ilya Ehrenburg (1891–1967), a celebrated writer and a towering Soviet Jewish figure. During the war and afterwards, until his death, Ehrenburg did all in his power to preserve the memory of murdered Jews and bring bits and pieces of Jewish culture and history to the starved Soviet Jewish reader. Sanctioned by the regime, Ehrenburg’s universally read pithy articles proclaimed hate as the only possible response to the Nazis. His sober claim was that hate did not come naturally to Russian soldiers and therefore they needed to be reeducated in the new faith. If the Nazis were to be defeated and the world saved with its Jewish remnant, hate had to prevail.

Yet Ehrenburg professed a deep ambivalence about embracing hate. He wrote in a newspaper article in 1943, “We hate the Germans because we have no choice but to kill them, because out of all the words the humans live by, only one has remained for us—‘Kill!’”¹ Other prominent writers and poets also asserted the obligation to hate, but only Ehrenburg sought to formulate a moral justification for it.

Ehrenburg’s call for hate inspired a number of powerful and complex responses from two Russian Jewish poets, at that time yet unpublished and serving in the Red Army. Unlike Ehrenburg, who had to abide by the regime’s directives, they were much freer in what they were able to say. In this context, hate becomes a key theme of Soviet Jewish war writing, linked to the Jewish textual corpus of the Holocaust at large. Our first poet is Boris Slutsky (1919–1986), who would go on to become Ehrenburg’s confidant, a major original voice of postwar Soviet poetry and, as I have long argued, its richest Jewish voice. The second is Yan Satunovsky (1913–1982), a remarkable representative of the postwar Soviet literary

Satunovsky: “I did not really hate them / until I saw them.”

underground, who was also supremely preoccupied with Jewishness.

In 1940–41, on the eve of being called up to the front, Slutsky wrote a cycle of poems, *Verses about Jews and Tatars*, published posthumously decades later in 1993. Consisting of ruminations on Nazi antisemitism and what awaits the Jews, the cycle is steeped in Jewish sources, from biblical to kabbalistic. Its last installment, “Unfinished Thoughts,” depicts a scene in a crowded train car, filled with soldiers and officers headed for the front. They hearken to Ehrenburg’s demand for hate for the enemy: “What do we require for our souls? / We require hate for our souls, / a hundred-year-old stagnant hate.”

Suddenly a soldier, a Tatar by origin, begins to sing about the calamity of his people, who ruled over Russia long ago but were eventually brutally defeated by it. Others join him in the lament and “with paradoxical sadness / the Russian folk are singing about the folk that once reigned over old Russia.” In a startling and daring move, Slutsky transforms the Tatar woe into an expression of his Jewishness, its memories and traumas. One persecuted minority sentiment gives birth to another. He identifies with the Tatars, calling himself a Tatar avenger, and foresees now not the Nazi destruction, but the return of antisemitism to Russia—“the pogroms’ howl”—as would indeed happen during the war and the last years of postwar Stalin’s rule. Slutsky concludes by referring to Russia as both his mother and stepmother; as a Russian poet, soldier, and a Jew, he is forever fractured. He sure still hates the Nazis, but knows also that he’s hated by his countrymen for being a Jew, making the despised Tatars—not the imperial Russians—his true brethren.



Ilya Ehrenburg, 1945. Bulgarian Archives State Agency via Wikimedia Commons. BASA-80K-2-270-2



Yan Satunovsky, c. 1939. Immortal Regiment Moscow.



Boris Slutsky, Hungary, c. 1945.

A chemist by profession, Satunovsky was a platoon commander at the front. In a poetic fragment penned at the end of the war, he admits, "I did not really hate them / until I saw them." Evocative of Ehrenburg's moral dilemmas, Satunovsky strives to unpuzzle the nature of hate and its consequences. He draws a distinction between collective sloganeering, however befitting and noble it may be, and the crushing power of personal encounter; the parallel "hate/saw" is intensified by the shared root of these words in Russian: *nena**videl**/u**videl***. Satunovsky goes on to recall the mocking of German POWs by the Red Army; he humanizes them and makes them worthy of at least pity, but this feeling is momentary. Another soldier, a non-Jew, gives them water to drink, not the speaker. His Jewishness stops him from helping the Germans. As a Red Army officer, he is not the down-trodden, but a vengeful and proud Jew. He recalls Jewish suffering, reliving afresh the German taunting of the Jew, which he himself hasn't witnessed, but knows intuitively and historically only too well. His hatred of the Germans persists, both individually and collectively:

**Not I, not I, but your lice-infested Krauts -
"Jude, hey, Jude, want to drink?" -
long drank the yellow liquid, licking their lips,
"Jude, hey, Jude, cross yourself."**

There's a documentary aspect to Satunovsky's poem, conveyed through his insertion of the direct Nazi speech

(lines 2 and 4) in between describing the scene he's witnessing. Here the Germans become like the Jews, whom they earlier humiliated and killed. While this creates some sort of ironic justice in history, it also perhaps relativizes the Holocaust, making the then-Jewish and the now-German situations alike.

It is significant, however, that the fragment ends with the German order to the Jew to cross himself, an act symbolic of the entirety of Christian antisemitism. Satunovsky, unhindered by fears of censorship, makes the Jewish underpinnings of Ehrenburg's justification of hate explicit, and, like Ehrenburg, takes a long historical view of antisemitism.

Slutsky recalled after the war, "Like Adam and Columbus, Ehrenburg was the first to enter the realm of hate." He did so as a Jewish witness of his time. The Russian Jewish poets followed suit, filling in the dark but impassioned details of this realm.

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i Il'ia Erenburg, *Voina 1941-1945.*, ed. B. Frezinskii (Moscow: Astrel, 2004), p. 349.

Simon of Trent: A Story of an Image

Magda Teter



Simon of Trent in Hartmann Schedel, *Weltchronik*, or *Nuremberg Chronicle* (Nuremberg, 1493), 254v.



Simon of Trent in the pirated edition of Hartmann Schedel, *Liber Chronicarum Cum Figuris et Imaginis Ab Initio Mundi Usque Nunc Temporis* (Augsburg, 1497), 285v.

The image of Simon of Trent from Hartmann Schedel's splendid *Weltchronik*, or *Nuremberg Chronicle* in Nuremberg in 1493 (254verso), has become one of the most iconic images of ritual murder, embraced as such by both antisemites and scholars. Although neo-Nazis operate in a separate epistemological community, reading and reinforcing their own "authoritative sources" through translations of Nazi publications, including the notorious newspaper *Der Stürmer*, troublingly, our own work as scholars might be coopted for hateful uses as well. By treating this image as the iconic image of ritual murder, we as scholars may be, unwittingly, affirming its importance in distressing agreement with the (neo-) Nazis. As Sara Lipton has noted, "Texts outlive people who write them, memory of their initial purpose fades, and words take on a new meaning and power"; the same applies to images.¹

Schedel's 1493 chronicle was indeed unprecedented, with hundreds of woodcuts of kings, popes, and cityscapes. It included several vivid images of Jews—some of the earliest iconographic representations of Jews in print—with the now iconic image of Simon of Trent as one of the most intricate. The book was magnificent, and very expensive. It thus was not reissued beyond the original 1493 printings in Latin and German.

In 1497 a pirated edition—smaller and cheaper—was published in Augsburg, crudely replicating the Nuremberg original (it was then republished in German in 1500 with the same illustrations). The Augsburg edition also had a woodcut of Simon of Trent, a smaller and much cruder mirror version of the one included in Schedel's *Liber chronicarum*. But the original 1493 image was never reused in any other publication, nor was widely copied. Indeed, other images were used, reused, and copied in Christian chronicles, but they are now forgotten.

While the now-iconic image from 1493 was not reprinted, or copied, other images of Simon of Trent were used and reused in different countries.

In 1698 this image was copied in Leiden, and appears as a mirror image in Johann Ludwig Gottfried, *Omstandigh Vervolgh Op Joh. Lodew. Gottfrieds Historische Kronyck* (Leiden, 1698), 1408.

And then in 1704, the 1698 image was reused in Nicolas Gueudeville, *Le Grand Theatre Historique*.

Yet, these representations of Simon of Trent are now forgotten, displaced by the 1493 woodcut from the Nuremberg Chronicle, which received a new lease on life when it was published in May 1934 in *Der Stürmer*, in the notorious issue devoted to "ritual murder."



Left: Simon of Trent in Johann Ludwиг Gottfried, *Historische Chronica* (Frankfurt, 1674), 689. Middle: Johann Ludwиг Gottfried, *Omstandigh Vervolgh Op Joh. Lodew. Gottfrieds Historische Kronyck* (Leiden, 1698), 1408. Right: Simon of Trent in Nicolas Gueudeville, *Le Grand Theatre Historique* (Leiden, 1704), vol. 4, 206. © <http://diglib.hab.de/drucke/lgb-2f-11-2b-2s/start.htm?image=00107>

This Nazi rediscovery of Simon in 1934 was not incidental. In 1933, the Nuremberg Chronicle, forgotten like the woodcut of Simon, was published in a gorgeous facsimile in Leipzig, no doubt drawing new attention to this woodcut. (In my study of the dissemination of the blood libel stories I found that the Nuremberg Chronicle was cited only once among hundreds of books—in the 1670 *Abregé du process fait aux juifs de Mets* by Abraham-Nicolas Amelot de La Houssaie.)

In 1943 and in 1944, the woodcut of Simon—along with several others from the 1934 issue of *Der Stürmer*—was included in the Nazi book by Hellmut Schramm, *Der jüdische Ritualmord*.ⁱⁱ

The influence of the 1934 issue of *Der Stürmer* was also palpable in Italian fascist publications. The March 5, 1942, issue of *La difesa della razza*, an Italian fascist biweekly magazine promoting racist ideas through “a scientific” approach, also devoted part of its issue to ritual murder and blood accusations, publishing select images from *Der Stürmer*, among them the 1493 woodcut of Simon.

And in 1943 the image appeared in a Polish-language Nazi publication on ritual murder, as well as in other languages, as part of the Nazi propaganda during the murderous phase of the “final solution.” Frederyk To Gaste, *Prawda o żydowskich mordach rytualnych* (Warsaw: Glob, 1943).



May 1, 1934, issue of *Der Stürmer*, front page.



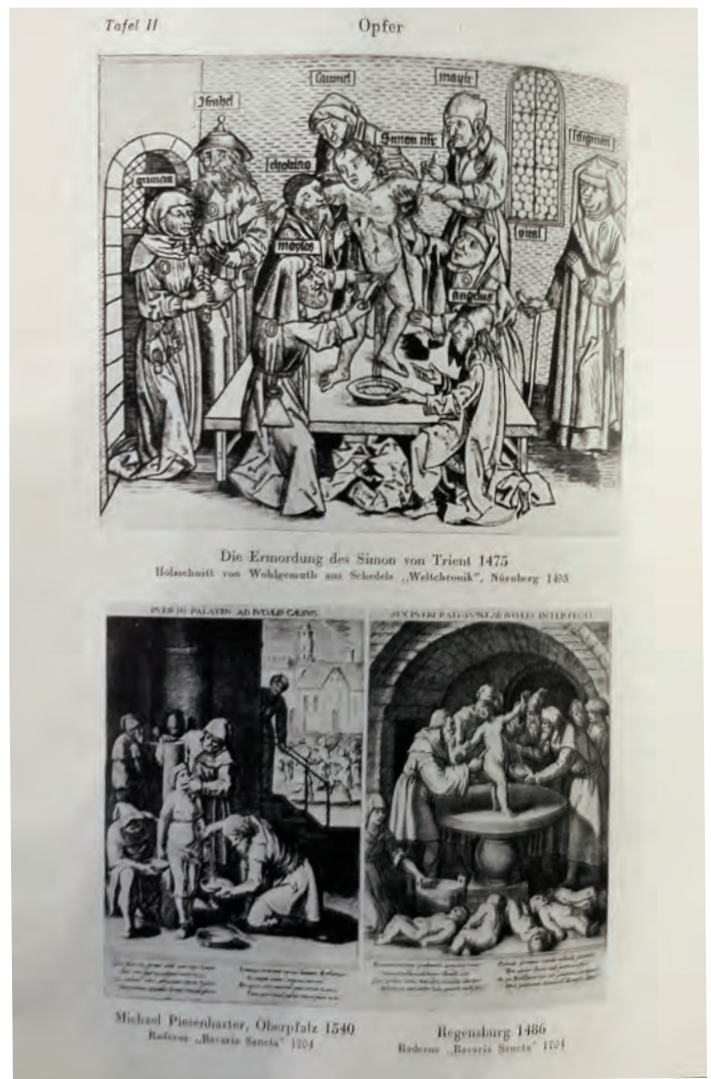
May 1, 1934, issue of Der Stürmer, page with Simon of Trent.

Since then the image became widely used not only by antisemites, including the neo-Nazis of our own time, but also by scholars studying antisemitism, blood libels, and ritual murder accusations. And there is little reason—aside from its intricate nature or the study of Schedel's chronicle—to use this particular image. It was not the most influential or most reproduced. The broadsides and chapbooks published during and in the immediate aftermath of the Trent trial were far more significant in developing, as Laura dal Prà has argued, the iconographic vocabulary of ritual murder.ⁱⁱⁱ Disturbingly, it seems that the reason we scholars have used it is because the Nazis popularized it as one of the most emblematic representations of ritual murder. And now, just as emblematic it was for them, so it is for us.

The troubled history of the now-(in)famous woodcut from Schedel's Nuremberg Chronicle raises broader questions about our own sources. We modern scholars have sometimes used primary sources without examining how and why these texts and images entered circulation, or what conversations they were a part of. Jacqueline Jung, a medieval art historian, has begun to examine the role that Nazi aesthetics and ideology have played

in the visual documentation of Gothic sculpture, now ubiquitously used by scholars of Medieval Studies. Lisa Leff has gestured toward this question in another context—studying Zosa Szajkowski—noting that the documents Szajkowski obtained by removing them from their original archival context shaped the historiography of French Jewry.^{iv}

These are not trivial questions. By using sources that had been coopted by (neo-)Nazis we might be unwittingly amplifying their voices, and in today's world this can have deadly consequences. The impact that Simon of Trent's story and the iconic image have had cannot be more explicit than in the vitriolically antisemitic and racist manifesto written by the shooter of the Poway synagogue near San Diego, "you are not forgotten Simon of Trent, the horror that you and countless children have endured at the hands of the Jews will never be forgiven."



Hellmut Schramm Der jüdische Ritualmord (Berlin, 1944).



Martirio del fanciullo Simonino da Trento (da una xilografia di Vohlgemuth).

Una delle suggestive ed ormai uniche xilografie della Classense di Ravenna mi dà occasione di rievocare un fatto criminoso, che ebbe nei suoi tempi la più clamorosa eco come il più efferato delitto ebraico ed originò una sua propria letteratura. È la storia secondo alcuni, la leggenda secondo altri, del beato Simonino da Trento.

La rozza xilografia, unica superstite del suo genere, si ricollega a quella messe infinita d'immagini, che sul martire trentino furono popolarissime ed ovunque diffuse. Come ebbe a notare Corrado Ricci, la rappresentazione grafica è quanto mai efficace. Il fanciullo, nudo, è fissato, a mo' di crocifisso, su una tavola verticale ed ha attorno quattro brutti ceffi di giudei che lo torturano: due, ritti, gli pungono il volto; altri due, in ginocchio, gli scorticano le gambe; e il sangue, che cola abbondantemente dalle piaghe aperte, ha ricominciato una scodella. Fu alto della stampa, disegnata da uno dei soliti anonimi del Quattrocento, vediamo gli strumenti della tortura: un coltellaccio ed una tanaglia. Ma al Ricci fece effetto, soprattutto, l'espressione sadica degli ebrei, perfettamente resi nel tipo razziale, soddisfatti per l'opera meritoria voluta dal loro rito. Da questo lato la vecchia xilografia è tutto un racconto. All'interpretazione del Ricci si

prestava, d'altronde, il disegno arcaico lineare, che mette in rilievo il fanatismo con cui è compiuto il misfatto. E se la prese, l'illustre studioso, con il preziosissimo foglietto, che in fin dei conti non rappresenta che un'idea divenuta simbolo, sembrandogli essa documento di odio di razza e di antica cretola.

Ma di questo parere non era, ad esempio, la «Civiltà Cattolica», ospitando lunghe corrispondenze, che mi aiutano a rievocare la triste e clamorosa vicenda: la quale ebbe l'onore, come ho detto, di una vasta letteratura, iniziata dal rarissimo poemetto (1475) del poeta bresciano Giovanni Ruffinoni (Calphurnii poetae Brix. mors et apothosis Simonis infantis novi martiris: ad Johannem Laderlacchiun pontificem tridentinum et dominum praestantissimum) e dal poema «Simonidos» (1475) di Ubertino Puscolo.

È noto come la reazione della razza giudaica contro le altre genti, specie cristiane, sia non solo religiosa e politica (invenzione di domini e di preconcetti falsi e perniciosi, maledizione, inganno, usura, mutilazione di libri, ecc.), ma anche criminosa: con la consumazione di veri e propri delitti contro la proprietà e le persone, delitti considerati dagli ebrei doveri di religione e manifestazioni di devozione e di fede.

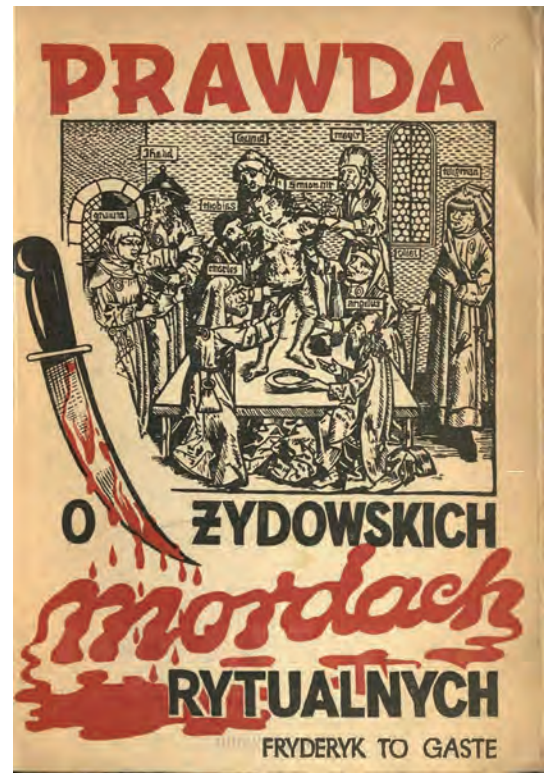
LE "PASQUE" IL MARCHIO DI SAN SIMONE

Il processo di Trento - La confessione dei giudei imputati



Simon of Trent in March 5, 1942, issue of *La difesa della razza*.

Inset: *Frederyk To Gaste, Prawda o zydowskich mordach rytualnych (Warsaw: Glob, 1943).*



osserva la sua legge con rigore e è naturalmente portato all'odio per esso, fomentato dal Talmud e dai suoi, che predicano essere fratello del solo soltanto il giudeo e tutti gli altri miseri. Il Talmud non obbliga, ma mente, ad uccidere i cristiani, ma per così dire la licenza; e la feccia laica, cioè i più fanaticamente re i più colti, ha dimostrato — come provano tanti fatti e processi — pochi scrupoli. Quando, poi, sarà il Messia, l'ebreo comanderà il cristiano e guai a chi non si farà e non si circonderà!

Sui riti ebraici del sangue, ci sono una lunga catena, ha già su queste pagine (II, n. 22, pag. 2) Carlo Alberto Masini; ed è stato pubblicato un elenco documentato di uccisioni di cristiani, redatto da d'Adria. L'ebreo convertito Algran il suo romanzo e Nella tribù di Ma il martirio di Simonino va particolarmente.

Parechi e famosi sono gli assassini cristiani, di cui la storia

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- i Sara Lipton, "A Terribly Durable Myth," *New York Review of Books*, June 27, 2019.
- ii Magda Teter, *Blood Libel: On the Trail of an Antisemitic Myth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020).
- iii aura dal Prà, "L'immagine di Simonino nell'arte Trentina dal XV al XVIII secolo" in *Il Principe Vescovo Johannes Hinderbach (1465-1486)*, ed. Iginio Rogger and Marco Bellabarba (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane, 1992). Also, David S. Areford, *The Viewer and the Printed Image in Late Medieval Europe* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2010).
- iv Lisa Moses Leff, *The Archive Thief: The Man Who Salvaged French Jewish History in the Wake of the Holocaust* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

Pariah or Parvenu: Confronting Jewish Self-Hatred in Modern Times

Lauren Gottlieb Lockshin

Madonna reclaimed “bitch.” The gay pride movement reclaimed “queer.” And if you go back a little farther, you will find that the Jews reclaimed “pariah”—or at least briefly thought about it.

France at the turn of the twentieth century was an easy place for Jews to become pariahs. The Dreyfus Affair had raised popular antisemitism from a slow simmer to a fast boil, and Jews reacted in large measure by turning inward, declining to defend the wrongly accused Jewish army captain, and in some cases even joining the masses in rallying against him. Bernard Lazare (1865–1903), a French Jewish public intellectual at the time, would later recall how readily French Jews had internalized the hate directed at them and bought into the dominant antisemitic culture that celebrated Dreyfus’s exile to a remote penal colony: “Even if some three dozen of them were to be found to defend one of their martyred brothers, thousands would have been found to mount watch around Devil’s Island, along with the most devoted champions of the fatherland.”¹

Jewish self-hatred has long persisted as the shadowy underbelly of antisemitism, and the Dreyfus Affair was neither the first nor the last time that Jews would readily denigrate one another and themselves for the benefit of social acceptance. But it was a crucial event for Bernard Lazare, who would go on to become one of the first thinkers to analyze Jewish self-hatred in modern times. Lazare had wrestled with his own self-hatred for years before the Dreyfus Affair changed his mind. Early in his career, Lazare participated in the elite antisemitic literary and political circles of fin-de-siècle Paris and wrote numerous antisemitic essays about other Jews whom he deemed too wealthy, too foreign, and too religious. Seeing the dangerous effects of this antisemitic rhetoric take shape in the persecution of Alfred

Dreyfus, however, Lazare repented of his earlier views and likewise sought to change the minds of other Jews who had adopted antisemitic opinions, too.

The modern experience of Jewish self-hatred emerged alongside Emancipation, the process by which Jews gained citizenship in countries where they had historically been denied equal status. This was no coincidence, Bernard Lazare argued. Eager to nurture the reluctant tolerance of their Christian peers into a more fraternal respect, these newly emancipated Jews were ready to adopt their neighbors’ antisemitic viewpoints and amplify their own stature by denigrating that of other Jews around them. Lazare pointed to the rich Sephardic Jews of Bordeaux, who, immediately after gaining citizenship, actually protested against extending emancipation to their poorer Ashkenazic brethren in Alsace. “This attitude of the Bordeaux Jews gradually spread among the Jews of the West in proportion as they recovered their dignity as men,” he wrote.

Thus, while he may have been granted citizenship and freed from the physical ghetto, the Western Jew had learned to inhabit a psychological or “moral” ghetto, according to Lazare. This moral ghetto was even worse than the physical one because the Jew himself actively participated in its making. “That was the mistake and the sin of the Western Jew; he was not able to worthily enjoy his freedom; he did not look upon it as something which was due to him, which had been stolen from him and which he was recapturing, but as a thing granted to him, of which he must make himself worthy.” In this way, the Western Jew became a “pariah,” in Lazare’s language, still suffering the persecutions and soft bigotry of a popular antisemitism accepted and turned against himself. He retained the status of Other in the eyes of all who saw him—including his own.



When Bernard Lazare urged his fellow Jews to become “conscious pariahs” amid the raging antisemitism of the Dreyfus Affair in late nineteenth-century France, he was not asking them to accept the hatred society directed towards them. Quite the opposite: he was asking them to reclaim the pejorative term and use it to energize a renewed Jewish identity.

Portrait of Bernard Lazare, Jassy (Romania), 1902.
Photo by M. Margulies. Courtesy of the Library of the Alliance Israélite Universelle (Paris), Fonds Bernard Lazare.

Inevitably, the Jewish pariah seeks a way to ameliorate his condition. He desperately strives to separate from his besmirched lineage and assimilate into the masses. In so doing, he becomes what Lazare calls “*un parvenu*.” The parvenu, meaning something akin to “social climber,” begins to “de-Judaize” himself, Lazare writes, until “he has lost his own virtues and acquired only the vices of those who surround him.” In Lazare’s opinion, French Jews were the ultimate parvenus. “They were not satisfied with becoming more jingoist than the French people of France; as in all countries where the Jews have been emancipated, they have voluntarily shattered the solidarity which existed among them.”

Lazare’s “pariah” and “parvenu” have become the typologies referenced by numerous thinkers over the past 120 years. Hannah Arendt adopted the term “pariah” to describe an array of Jewish historical figures ranging from Heinrich Heine to Franz Kafka. She also lamented that the majority of Jews were parvenus, “continually trying to disguise an imaginary stigma” with eagerly embraced Diaspora nationalities. Jean-Paul Sartre described the differences between the “authentic” and “inauthentic” Jew in the same way: “It is not the man, but the Jew, whom Jews seek to know in themselves through introspection; and they seek to know him in order to deny him,” he wrote. Isaiah Berlin crafted a parable about the Jews as the archetypal parvenus, likening them to a band of travelers who stumble upon a native tribe and so desperately seek acceptance therein, they become willing “to live or die for it, and if need be, with it, no less bravely and perhaps with greater passion, than the natives themselves.” This despite the fact that their willing sacrifice makes the natives hate them even more.

But the Jewish pariah need not always be doomed—he does not have to become a parvenu. Lazare argued that he could instead become conscious of his pariah status and own it as his true identity, thereby also regaining his power as an individual and as a member of the Jewish community. Lazare thus chose to reclaim the pejorative term and urged his fellow Jew to join

The Western Jew retained the status of Other in the eyes of all who saw him—including his own.

him in becoming a “conscious pariah,” actively resisting the antisemitism foisted upon him and the self-hatred succumbed to by others. Only a conscious pariah, Lazare argued, might successfully defend his integrity, and help to build a new national identity without shame. “He is a pariah; emancipated or not,” Lazare wrote, “So it is as a pariah that he must defend himself, through duty to his own being, for every human creature must know how to resist oppression and preserve his right to total development, his freedom to be and to be *himself*.” To this end Lazare encouraged Zionism, the pursuit of a homeland for conscious pariahs, who would be revolutionaries not only in the society of others, but also in their own. Though Jews in the twenty-first century may not wish to identify as pariahs and may cringe when reading news items that reference Israel as a “pariah state,” Lazare’s message still rings true. And the term “pariah” may still be proudly redeemed.

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i Bernard Lazare, “Nationalism and Jewish Emancipation” (1899) in *Job’s Dungheap* by Bernard Lazare, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Lorin Binsse (New York: Schocken, 1948). All other quotations cited here can be found in the same landmark essay written by Lazare at the end of the Dreyfus Affair and revised two years later.

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“How Pure Is Your Hate?”: Reflections on Passing, Privilege, and a Queer Jewish Positionality

Sarah Emanuel

“How pure is your hate?” This is the question my colleague asks their students on the first day of class, echoing the late Alexander Cockburn. My colleague asks this question with a desire for unwavering passion—including unwavering hate—on issues concerning capitalism, climate change, and racial injustice. They hope students will share in their disdain for inequality—whether against humans or against lands—and therefore find value in the qualification of their opening question. “How pure is your hate [for injustice]?” really, is the question they aim to ask.

And yet.

As both an academic and a queer Jewish American, the word that stands out for me in the question is not so much “hate,” but rather “pure.” What, in other words, does “purity” mean? What does “pure hate” mean? How might conceptions of purity contribute to conceptions of hate?

My focus here will be on conceptions of purity in relation to Jewishness and queerness, beginning with the former and then putting it in conversation with the latter.

“Jew,” historically, isn’t the most likable term. As Religious Studies professor Cynthia Baker explains, “For most of two long millennia, the word Jew has been predominantly defined and delimited as a term for *not-self*.”ⁱ To be a Jew, put simply, is to be culturally, ethnically, theologically, and even racially Other to the Self that is Western Christianity.

The race of the Jew is particularly unstable. As a social construct, all conceptions of race are unstable (we could divide humans by thousands of characteristics, including height, hearing capacities, allergies,

etc.), but Jews have become quintessential examples of race as construct. According to the “race science” of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, for instance, Jews are biologically *not* white; physiognomic features such as the big nose, big lips, and big hair proved their non-whiteness even outside of skin pigmentation. Such rendering today, however, does not hold. Jews of eastern European descent, regardless of antisemitic renderings of nose, mouth, and hair, are considered white. They, moreover, at least according to political activist Houria Bouteldja, opt into such whiteness. The Jew is recognizable, she asserts, “not because he [sic] calls himself one, but because of his willingness to meld into whiteness.”ⁱⁱ

Holding this here, let me transition to queerness—or, more precisely, a story about my own queerness, which will then take me back to Jewishness.

The day before I turned thirty-two, I was walking in the East Village of New York City holding hands with my girlfriend. We were two curly-haired, Ashkenazic Jews celebrating my birthday in our favorite city (and in a neighborhood I like to call, perhaps just after Disney World, the “Gayest Place On Earth”).

And then it happened. As we walked hand-in-hand, a man followed us. After a few blocks, he started to get closer, and eventually ran up behind us and kicked me. As I fell to the ground, he walked away slowly—calmly—as if he needed the validity (in his mind) of what he had done to last. What is more: he did this while staring back at me with what I can only describe as pure hate. His derision was unwavering.

I did not experience hatred back. Instead, noticing that he was not white, hatred toward myself gave me a second kick. I began to think:



Cartoon printed in the May 18, 1873 edition of *Kikeriki*. ANNO, Austrian National Library.

... he did this while staring back at me with what I can only describe as pure hate. His derision was unwavering.

This is where the conversation concerning queer-ness, Jewishness, and purity intersect. Jews, on the one hand, are of a not-place. Their identity shifts based on who is doing the talking. Even while benefitting from the privileges of white presentation, they are not “purely” white, they are molding. White supremacists and antisemites have noted that the Jews’ lack of “purity” here is what makes them so dangerous; some Jews can pass as white, but they really aren’t.

That does not mean, however, that “white-appearing” Jews necessarily claim a particular not-white status. In the words of Cheryl Greenberg, “Emotionally, historically, in the ways that are most relevant in the shaping of identity, Jews have never considered themselves white. Nor do they consider themselves Black, or a subset of any other racial group.”ⁱⁱⁱ In a sense, we might even say that the antisemites are right. Jews do not belong anywhere. They are the epitome of the Not-Self—the epitome of the Not Pure.

Maybe the man assumed we were just good friends; self-identifying women, after all, are often thought to show affection in friendship more quickly than self-identifying men due to various social norms and privileges.

Maybe, moreover, he was angry at our privilege—the fact that we were two white women walking down the street, never having to face systemic discrimination.

Or maybe he could tell we were Jews. We have the physiognomic curly hair. I have the physiognomic long nose. And there we were, benefitting from the Jew’s new whiteness, indeed melding into such whiteness, as we walked toward a hotel bar.

Let me be clear when I say that I have no idea what the man’s intentions were when he kicked me. In all likelihood, it was homophobia. Interestingly, though, his homophobic actions did not ignite externalized hate or even internalized queer-hate, but rather another sort of self-hate: internalized anti-Jewishness.

Why? I have a few theories. One in particular is that queerness celebrates the impure; it celebrates disruption, destabilization, and the space between the binary. I feel protected by fellow queers and queer allies in that celebration. But the impurities of Jewishness? No. I do not feel protected. And what is more? My internalized anti-Jewishness tells me that the lack of protection is deserved. Jews are part of

the problem. To quote Bouteldja once more, the Jew is recognizable, “because of his willingness to meld into whiteness.” My impurity, which is my malleability, is a problem on all sides.

But maybe we can turn this around. Maybe my Jewishness and my queerness are indeed two sides of the same coin. Queerness, after all, celebrates the unstable. It celebrates the power of disruption and malleability. Maybe, then, to be Jewish is to also be queer, at least in some form or another. If Jewish identity has taught me anything, it is that identity is messy and understandings of the world are multiple. Two Jews, three opinions? No problem.

So, how pure is my hate? I don’t know. But what I do know is this: I’d rather dismantle systemic injustices—including those targeted within—queerly than purely.

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i Emphasis original. Cynthia M. Baker, *Jew* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2017), 4.

ii Houria Bouteldja, *Whites, Jews, and Us: Toward a Politics of Revolutionary Love*, trans. Rachel Valinsky (South Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e), 2017), 54.

iii Cheryl Greenberg, “I’m Not White—I’m Jewish’: The Racial Politics of American Jews,” in *Race, Color, Identity: Rethinking Discourses about “Jews” in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Efraim Sicher (New York: Berghahn, 2013), 46.

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The Profession

Protest vs. Hate: Debating Disruption at an Antisemitism Conference

David A. Davidson

In October, I attended the annual conference of Bard College's Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities. Entitled "Racism and Antisemitism," the two-day program interrogated fundamental questions about both belief systems. In a turn of events that would strain believability in a year other than 2019 (or 5780), a series of performative outbursts turned the gathering into a referendum not only on anti-Jewish racism but also on the premises of discussion itself.

The drama unfolded in three acts. Act One encompassed the opening day's last panel, entitled "Who Needs Antisemitism?" About twenty student protesters affiliated with Bard's chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) took center stage, chanting slogans and carrying placards during the start of Harvard emerita Ruth Wisse's formal remarks. Most were allowed to remain and to continue standing in front of the podium, provided they quieted down. At the end of the talk the protesters resumed their chant, which seemed to draw a moral equivalency between Israeli occupation of Palestine and an alleged hate crime at Bard's sister campus. At this point campus security ushered the protesters out en masse.

The curtain rose on Act Two the following morning, during a panel on the intersection between racism and Zionism. Batya Ungar-Sargon, opinion editor of *The Forward*—who had been seated onstage during the previous night's protest, in preparation for a moderated discussion with Wisse that followed—excoriated the conference's audience for our ostensible failure to respond decisively to the placard carriers, and stated

If intellectual disposition matters, it follows that it can also be cultivated through the rituals of discourse.

her intention to lodge her own protest by leaving straight away. It was the second time we had heard "Shame on you!" from the stage in less than a day: first Wisse to the protesters, and now Ungar-Sargon to us. As she made her way to the exit, conference organizer Roger Berkowitz interposed a brief defense of his decision to "ignore" the protesters the previous day by allowing them to remain, while also praising Ungar-Sargon for her bravery and urging her to stay. She briefly tarried to speak with a few well-wishers, who also attempted to sway her, but to no avail. Looking around, I took a mental snapshot of the scene. Audience members were looking around quizzically, half expecting the next act to come storming through the door any moment.

As it turned out, Act Three took the form of a sustained epilogue following the conference. Ungar-Sargon set the scene with an opinion piece that bore the provocative title "I Was Protested at Bard College for Being a Jew," which soon began making the Twitter rounds, appearing (for example) on the Anti-Defamation League's feed.ⁱ Rejoinders by Berkowitz, conference co-organizer Samantha Hill, and others who had spoken there soon followed in *The Forward*; to varying degrees, these responses disputed the veracity of Ungar-Sargon's claims.ⁱⁱ An additional response from Shany Mor, an associate fellow at the Arendt Center who also participated in the moderated discussion that followed Wisse's talk, supported Ungar-Sargon's general view.ⁱⁱⁱ



Students protest while Ruth Wisse speaks and Batya Ungar-Sargon and Shany Mor are seated onstage at Bard College's Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities conference "Racism and Antisemitism," October 10, 2019. Courtesy of Cathy Young.

High drama indeed, at least for an academic conference. Looking back on the program, the unsung hero of the show had a more subtle approach: sincere discussion. Contrary to popular belief, academics can sometimes respond with maturity to unexpected public displays. In a shocking plot twist, most of us did. For all twenty who carried placards, and notwithstanding Ungar-Sargon's decision to make a bold statement, many more attendees used the channels of discourse to reflect on what had transpired. Breakout sessions were converted into opportunities to engage in searching, impassioned, and meaningful dialogue. The discussion coalesced around three interrelated questions. First, how does one discern the distinction between protest that furthers conversation and protest that disrupts it? Second, to what extent is anti-Zionism tantamount to antisemitism? Third, what does it mean to debate both these questions simultaneously as they each unfold in real time?

From our collective discussion of these questions, one significant takeaway was that intellectual disposition matters. Most attendees with whom I spoke agreed that nonviolent protest is a form of expression that can powerfully shape a conversation. Yet there was also a general consensus that the adoption of such tactics without circumspection does little to advance one's cause. Wisse and Ungar-Sargon were correct to note the irony of protesting a talk about antisemitism with placards reading "ZIONISM = RACISM" and "I Stand with Ilhan Omar." As Wisse repeatedly noted, her talk had nothing to do with Israel. Ungar-Sargon may miss the point—there is no clear evidence that she or her copanelists were protested specifically for their Jewish identity—yet she and Mor are justified in wondering what this

anti-Zionist outpouring was all about. It was likely a response, at least in part, to a series of inflammatory statements Wisse had made about Palestinians in the past. Fair enough; Wisse even offered a few essentialist nuggets about "the Arabs" in her formal remarks. Yet as Mor repeatedly noted, there were plenty of inflammatory things uttered—both in the past and in real time—by other speakers at the conference, with no ensuing protest. All this makes me wonder what might have happened had these students taken a different approach. They might have listened actively to Wisse's remarks, and then raised their hands as a bloc during the question-and-answer session, asking pointed questions to convey their premises and generate apposite responses. In this way they might have shaped the conversation more to their own liking, instead of leaving the audience speculating about their motives.

None of this is to say that the conference organizers should have kicked the protesters out summarily. As per school policy, sustained verbal disruption was the one-way ticket out the door for individual protesters, and ultimately for the full group. The students seemed to understand as much, opting for a showy entrance and exit but largely silent in between, thereby ensuring their right to remain. As Berkowitz has noted, it is fair to ask whether he should have requested that the protesters move to the side of the auditorium so as not to obstruct the panelists' ability to see their audience, and vice versa. It is also fair to ask what he should have done in that hypothetical scenario had they refused his request. One point that emerged from our discussion was that a rewrite of campus policy may be in order to address this grey area.

Ironically enough, the SJP students may indeed have proven Wisse at least somewhat wrong, albeit not via persuasion. With tongue partially in cheek, Wisse is fond of labeling antisemitism “a brilliant strategy” for its obstinate redirection of attention from the complex to the facile. Antisemitic or not, this particular protest appears to have had the reverse effect, as we attendees left the conference with a more nuanced understanding of the parameters of both antisemitism and free expression after debating and discussing those very topics. The Arendt Center continues to offer opportunities to virtually engage with the issues raised by the presence—and tactics—of the protesters. For my part, I resolved to further redirect the episode toward nuance by assembling a symposium at my institution on the subject of discourse and its norms. The event occurred in February, and opened up a productive institutional dialogue.^{iv} There is no better way to build a thriving academic community than to start by thinking carefully about how we communicate ideas to one other, and how we listen. If intellectual disposition matters, it follows that it can also be cultivated.

Thus the show goes on.

DAVID A. DAVIDSON is a member of the History Department at The Dalton School. He holds a BA from Yale University, and an MA and Ph.D. from Northwestern University. He teaches seminars on the history of ideas in early America, as well as a class on the history of American conservatism. He recently organized a schoolwide symposium on the historical and contemporary dimensions of free-speech discourse. He is eager to craft additional programming and writing about ideological diversity and political pluralism, and welcomes collaboration across disciplines. He can be reached at [dadavidson@gmail.com](mailto:davidson@gmail.com).

i Batya Ungar-Sargon, “I Was Protested at Bard College for Being a Jew,” *The Forward*, October 12, 2019, <https://forward.com/opinion/433082/i-was-protested-at-bard-college-for-being-a-jew/>.

ii See letters to *The Forward's* editor by Kenneth Stern, dated October 13, 2019, and by Berkowitz, Hill, and Shahanna McKinney-Baldon, dated the following day. All can be accessed online via links at the end of Ungar-Sargon's piece, at <https://forward.com/opinion/433082/i-was-protested-at-bard-college-for-being-a-jew/>.

iii Shany Mor, “Letter: Why Is Everyone Lying about Bard? Every Other Account Proves Ungar-Sargon Right,” *The Forward*, October 20, 2019. <https://forward.com/opinion/433408/letter-every-letter-about-bard-proves-ungar-sargon-right-i-should-know-i/>.

iv Berkowitz and Hill were among the symposium's featured panelists.

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Application Deadline: October 12, 2020

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Jews have been closely associated with law since antiquity, developing a rich and complex legal tradition and participating variously in the legal cultures of the societies in which they have lived. Several leading universities are now home to centers for Jewish law, ancient to contemporary in focus, and the topic is drawing scholarly interest from well beyond the field of legal studies, including research in history, literature, philosophy, political theory, and gender studies, among others. The Katz Center is pleased to contribute to this growing and expansive topic over the course of two consecutive fellowship years devoted to exploring the connections between Jewish studies and legal thought, culture, and practice.

During the first year of this cycle, the 2021–22 academic year, the Center seeks to support scholars working on law as a dynamic feature of Jewish culture in *premodern* contexts, spanning from antiquity to the eighteenth century.

The Katz Center invites applications that propose the study or framing of Jewish law or legal thinking within relevant historical contexts; that explore the relationship between law and other aspects of society or culture; that attend to questions of form, genre, and rhetoric; that investigate the institutions, practices, and actors that enact law; or that address related topics such as governance and/or crime. The vision for the year is of a fellowship community that advances an interdisciplinary and multi-dimensional approach to law and that bridges between Jewish law and other legal cultures.

The Katz Center will issue a separate call for applications in the summer of 2021 for the year 2022–23, focused on Jews and the law in *modern* contexts. While the hope is to promote interaction between the two years, the two fellowship cohorts will be distinct: there will be a separate selection process for each year, and fellows selected for the first year will not be eligible to reapply for the second.

Applications from scholars worldwide are encouraged. All applicants must hold a doctoral degree or expect to receive it by the start date of the fellowship. Fellows will be expected to take residence in Philadelphia, and to contribute to the Center's intellectual community through active participation in seminars, conferences, and other collaborative activities.

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Pedagogy

Southern Hospitality: Jewish Studies Finds a Home?

Judith Lang Hilgartner

A familiar sight on the first day of school at Davidson College in Davidson, North Carolina: at sixty seconds to the hour, eighteen expectant faces are glancing up at me, waiting to start class. For me, the responsibility of teaching is never more poignant than during that one minute before the semester starts. No matter how much you prepare, something difficult, new, or puzzling will invariably pop up. Even the most airtight syllabus must be adjusted or rearranged, and each student brings a cornucopia of unique elements to the table—endless variables that color the collective experience for better or worse. Teaching Jewish Studies at small liberal arts colleges in the South brings these expectations into even sharper relief. While some good practices may be universal, there is a need to be even more creative when teaching on campus with little prior investment in Jewish topics.

Davidson College, emblematic of the small, southern liberal arts college, presents a challenge when it comes to Jewish Studies because of relative scarcity of Jewish-related coursework in the past. Thanks to the dialogue that the recent Jewish Studies initiative has brought to Davidson, some students have been willing to admit that they had thought “all Jews wear black hats” and “the Jews were just from the Bible.” Perhaps even more surprisingly, one student confided that he “didn’t know that Jews still existed.” In environments like Davidson, where Jewish Studies hasn’t really been on the radar, confusion and misunderstanding are widespread, but regardless of the school or student demographic, the questions for Jewish Studies educators are similar: How do we teach Jewish Studies to an audience who doesn’t always recognize its importance? What is the role of educators in combating apathy, hatred, and perhaps more than anything else, enrollment quotas? How do you create a permanent home for Jewish Studies where historically there was none?

These questions present great challenges with no easy answers, but only in the past few months, there has been some movement in terms of student support. In a tweet response to a *Davidsonian* article, a History professor, Ilana McQuinn, @IIIMcQ, noted that in fall 2019, 24 students were enrolled in Jewish Studies courses, whereas for spring 2020, 112 students were enrolled.

The relative success in enrollment of these classes is in part due to three different pedagogical strategies that the Jewish Studies faculty at Davidson have recently employed to optimize student experience, raise awareness, and garner support. Although these qualities could apply to any school or any discipline (and by no means represent an exhaustive list) they seem even more relevant for a grassroots effort in the South.

Flexibility

In contrast to teaching in a campus environment that has a lot of existing Jewish affinity, at small liberal arts colleges in the South, educators must be willing to be flexible with their plans. It's risky to assume any prior knowledge. We learned at Davidson that depending on the student's high school, they may not have covered the Holocaust, because it's not included on the AP exam. Students don't come to college expecting to take Jewish Studies if it has rarely been included in the course catalogue. Specialists in the field must be able to think on their feet and take the risk of being the first person to discuss controversial, knotty topics with their students. For example: What does it mean to be Jewish? Is being a Jew a religion, a culture, a race, or something else? Are light-skinned Jews white? What's the root of the conflict in the Middle East? These questions are difficult for any educator, but if you are teaching in an environment where you are one of the first to tackle these topics, these questions can carry a sense of added responsibility.

Intersectionality

Jewish Studies is often most accessible when introduced through intersectionality. For example, a Davidson professor in Anthropology, Tamara Neuman, shared that her discussion on Jewish Diaspora has been enriched by a broader conversation about contemporary migration issues. In my course, "Jewish Latinx Literature," I teach texts that are written by authors who write in Spanish and also identify as Jewish. While there are some Jewish-specific themes, larger concerns like the Latinx experience in the United States and colorism in the Caribbean are applicable to the broader Latinx experience. Contextualizing Jewish Studies within themes of the civil rights movement, discussing texts by Jews of color, and exploring little-known narratives of resistance during the Holocaust are some avenues to

... one student confided that he "didn't know that Jews still existed."

demonstrate that Jewish Studies is inherently interdisciplinary and multifaceted, appealing to a wide range of disciplines and interests.

Being Inviting

A college campus, by definition, is a melting pot of people and ideas; some students are open-minded advocates of diversity, others are perpetrators of discriminatory bias, and many more are bystanders unaware of the issues of equity at stake. Teaching Jewish Studies effectively in a new environment requires a welcoming tone that invites conversation, questions, and dialogue. A safe space must be created for these interactions in order to establish equitable access. Davidson sophomore Catherine Cartier '23 said that before the initiative, it wasn't really possible for her to learn about Jewish topics. Dalia Krutkovich '21 also concurred that Jewish students at Davidson hadn't felt equally represented or supported, particularly in light of challenging current events like the Or L'Simcha/Tree of Life shooting in 2018.

In order for Jewish Studies to make a lasting, meaningful impact, educators must also encourage interaction outside of the academy. The fact that the Jewish community in the South is relatively small speaks all the more to the need for institutional interest and support. Community partnerships with outside organizations can help small colleges offer additional cultural experiences and connections with the community in a diverse space. President of the Levine Museum of the New South, Peggy Brookhouse, said it best: "One needs to create space for people to discover and dialogue. The promises of the South are not yet realized."

JUDITH LANG HILGARTNER *is visiting assistant professor of Spanish and Jewish Studies at Davidson College.*

Wandering in the Field of Social Justice Teacher Education: Where Does Antisemitism Fit?

Joni S. Kolman, Jenna Kamrass Morvay, and Laura Vernikoff

The three of us are Jewish teacher educators committed to equity-oriented teaching. Our shared concerns about how antisemitism is marginalized within the field of social justice teacher education, and our personal experiences with antisemitism in schooling, prompted us to come together to research how teacher educators with a stated commitment to teaching about diversity and equity for K-12 schools address hate, white supremacy, and antisemitism with teacher candidates.

Through interviews and collection of teaching documents from teacher educators across the United States, we have learned about beliefs and practices both discouraging and fascinating. Our findings offer empirical evidence of how antisemitism occupies a marginal place alongside the other “-isms” addressed within teacher education and also provide some insights into what factors shape teacher educators’ decisions to teach about antisemitism (or not) as part of their work related to diversity and equity.

Through this study, we learned that teacher educators engage preservice teachers in exploring how racism, classism, homophobia, and Islamophobia shape education. For example, a participant described a lesson in which preservice teachers were asked to analyze memes from the Internet around the Black Lives Matter Movement to begin discussions of systemic racism. Many of the participants illustrated examples using current events, including the mosque shooting in New Zealand, as a catalyst for dialogue around hate and modelled holding such discussions in K-12 classrooms. Strikingly, our participants report that they rarely, if ever, discuss antisemitism or antisemitic acts with their preservice teachers. If they do, they describe it briefly as part of larger discussions about religious discrimination and hate, particularly Islamophobia.

When probed about this stark contrast, many of the participants were halting in their replies, questioning themselves aloud about why they may not address antisemitism within their work as teacher educators. Notably, participants who identify as Jewish, or who mention having a Jewish partner, had similarly hesitant reactions, even as they acknowledged that they or their families might be directly affected by antisemitism.

Rationales for this omission vary but generally fit into two themes: not believing antisemitism is as serious a problem as other forms of discrimination, and a lack of resources for teaching about antisemitism. When arguing that antisemitism is not as problematic as other forms of discrimination, such as racism and Islamophobia, several participants state that most Jews are white or white-presenting and, therefore, benefit from white privilege in ways that make these discussions of antisemitism irrelevant or unimportant. This perspective was even shared by one of the Jewish-identifying participants who expressed shame around being white-presenting and, thus, getting some of the privileges that come with appearing white. This participant did not want to take airtime away from other problems that they see as bigger or more pervasive. Another non-Jewish participant even drew on antisemitic tropes, stating that Jewish people already use their privilege to draw unmerited attention to antisemitism, and arguing that Jews have “benefited from whiteness in a way that gets anti-Jewish discrimination more visibility.”

Several participants also describe a lack of resources related to teaching about antisemitism in the United States (as opposed to resources related to teaching about the Holocaust). For example, one participant talks at length about the availability of materials related to



Brichta Anna. "Portrait of a Young Lady," c. 1943–1944. Mixed media collage. 13.8 in. x 12.2 in. Artwork from children's drawing classes in the Terezín concentration camp organized by the painter and teacher Friedl Dicker-Brandeis. Photo by Werner Forman Archive / State Jewish Museum, Prague / Heritage Images via Alamy Stock Photo.

teaching about Black Lives Matter and other social movements but reports a struggle to find resources appropriate for helping teacher candidates understand antisemitism as a form of hate and white supremacy. Participants also describe how the hidden curriculum of their own doctoral programs, which were seemingly designed to illustrate educating teachers about diversity and equity, reinforced the idea that antisemitism is not necessary or important to address in teacher preparation. Their professors did not address antisemitism when teaching other “-isms” within courses on diversity and equity. One Jewish participant even reported that their attempt as a teaching assistant to incorporate a reading related to antisemitism into a multicultural education course was thwarted when the class ran short on time.

This research has created space for discussion around an issue that the three of us have felt deeply about for years, but have never felt able to articulate. We have all felt despair when our colleagues dismiss antisemitism as irrelevant to teaching for equity, or when antisemitic events such as the Tree of Life and Chabad of Poway shootings do not merit recognition as forms of white supremacy. It is our hope that, by drawing attention to the marginalization of antisemitism in teacher preparation focused on diversity and equity, we will encourage teacher educators to explicitly address antisemitism as a long-standing, systemic form of white supremacy rather than dismiss antisemitism as unimportant in the United States today. Further, although resources on teaching

about American antisemitism in teacher preparation programs and K-12 schools are limited, organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League and Teaching Tolerance do offer some resources for teacher educators and teacher candidates who do not know how to start teaching about antisemitism. At the moment, though, bell hooks gives voice to our feelings of dismay and erasure when she writes, “[There is a] difference between education as the practice of freedom and education that merely strives to reinforce domination.”¹ The teacher educators we spoke to defined themselves as educators for equity, but we contend that if they continue to fail to include antisemitism in their discussions of hate and white supremacy with teacher candidates, then they are in fact reinforcing the white supremacy they believe they are repudiating.

JONI S. KOLMAN is assistant professor in the School of Education at California State University San Marcos. Her research focuses on equity-oriented teaching and learning, particularly for and in low-resource, high-accountability K-12 schools. She recently published the coauthored article “Cascading, Colliding, and

Mediating: How Teacher Preparation and K-12 Education Contexts Influence Mentor Teachers' Work in the Journal of Teacher Education.

JENNA KAMRASS MORVAY is a doctoral candidate in Curriculum and Teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University. Her research focuses on teacher activism. Her most recent collaborative publication is “Affective (An)Archive as Method” in *Reconceptualizing Education Research Methodology*.

LAURA VERNIKOFF is assistant professor in the Graduate School of Education at Touro College. Her work focuses on inclusive education, urban education, and teacher preparation. Her collaborative publication “Reimagining Social Justice-Oriented Teacher Preparation in Current Sociopolitical Contexts” is forthcoming in the *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*.

¹ bell hooks. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 1994): 4.

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The modern notion of Second Temple Judaism was originally shaped by Christian scholars who imagined it as the “intertestamental” period between the Old and the New Testaments, or as the “age of Jesus.” On the other hand, Jewish scholars were uncomfortable with the periodization, only gradually accepting the notion that a significant transition also occurred between “Biblical” and “Rabbinic” Judaism, or “from the Bible to the Mishnah.” Second Temple Judaism, however, is much more than just a combination of “proto-Rabbinic” and “proto-Christian” traditions. It was the seedbed for multiple, distinctive worldviews, as recorded by Josephus and attested by the Dead Sea Scrolls, the so-called OT Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the New Testament, and the rich literature of Hellenistic Judaism.

The Frankel Institute aims to develop fruitful conversation about ancient Jewish diversity. We invite fellows to question the separation of the “canonical” from the “non-canonical,” and the “Christian” from the “Jewish.” We particularly welcome proposals that integrate the “traditional” tools of philology, intellectual and social history, and archaeology with “newer” methods of analysis (gender studies, post-colonial studies, etc.). By bringing together a group of international scholars who approach the material from different perspectives in an interdisciplinary and inclusive fashion, the Frankel Institute seeks to contribute to our understanding of the vibrant diversity of Second Temple Judaism and redefine its place within Jewish Studies.

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Starting at Home: Using Local and Current Events to Combat Antisemitism

Jamie Levine Daniel, Rachel Fyall, and Jodi Benenson

Introduction

Antisemitism—prejudice towards or hatred of Jews—is prevalent. Antisemitism can manifest overtly (e.g., swastikas in public spaces), or can occur as a result of other events occurring in a community.

For example, Brooklyn recently faced a measles outbreak. Public officials highlighted low vaccination rates among the hasidic community. As a result, members of the community faced profiling and fear-mongering, reflecting antisemitic tropes of disease spreading.ⁱ

Context

Antisemitism has obvious costs to its victims, but also affects how public services are delivered and utilized. Jewish organizations have to spend more time and money on security measures, which directly impacts their mission-oriented work. Jews who may be trying to access government services may feel shut out or not welcome, and therefore cut off. In public administration classrooms, many of us integrate local and/or current events into our classes in order to show how the material we study has real-life applications. These types of discussions present opportunities to think about direct actions and reactions to blatant expressions of antisemitism. They also show how antisemitism can manifest in seemingly unrelated contexts, and can have unintended consequences on implementation and effectiveness.

Framing the Discussion

Regardless of the specific topic used as an entry point for talking about antisemitism in the classroom, every classroom conversation about antisemitism should begin with basic information about Jews. Jewish literacy—an understanding of Judaism, Jewish history, and the Jewish

community—is a precondition for combating antisemitism. Students in Jewish Studies classes may already have this familiarity, but may need practice using these concepts in general conversations to general audiences.

This discussion should also describe the basic tropes of antisemitism. These tropes traffic in dehumanization (Jews as rats or demons) and stereotypes (Jews as money-grubbing controllers of banks, government, and media). Antisemitism can also manifest in a moral inversion where Jews are perpetrators of hate and violence, not victims.

Depending on the geographic location and course subject, a public administration classroom likely includes Jews, non-Jews with Jewish family or friends, non-Jews with little exposure to Jews, and students who harbor antisemitic views. According to the Anti-Defamation League's 2015 Global 100 survey, 10 percent of American adults have agreed with antisemitic statements. Balancing these demographics, Jewish literacy levels, and attitudes in our classrooms is challenging. Bringing the Self into these discussions can help amplify our message. Engaging in these discussions helps us meet a pedagogical charge set forth by Love, Gaynor, and Blessett of facilitating difficult conversations in our classrooms.ⁱⁱ

As Jews ourselves, we (the authors of this essay) have a unique opportunity to mix our personal experiences with more generalizable content.ⁱⁱⁱ Non-Jews can also bring in the Self by talking about their own vulnerabilities (e.g., these conversations can be hard/outside of comfort zones), admitting mistakes they may have made in the past and/or how they have gone about familiarizing themselves with language that signals allyship.



Borough Park, Brooklyn, NY, 2018. Photo by Carol M. Highsmith. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

In-class Assignments: Dissecting a Current Event using Policy Matrices

The steps informing policy matrices can contextualize an event.^{iv} These steps are:

- 1 Define the problem
- 2 Assemble evidence
- 3 Construct alternatives
- 4 Select criteria
- 5 Project outcomes
- 6 Consider tradeoffs

For something that has already happened (e.g., fines levied for vaccine noncompliance), students can focus on the tradeoffs of such a policy, or reframe the problem to walk through all of the steps. For an incident that may lead to further policy actions, they can start with the problem definition itself. We use the examples of the measles outbreak to demonstrate the following these steps.

Definition: Public Health Emergency in New York City - declared by Mayor Bill de Blasio on April 9, 2019

Evidence: 285 cases confirmed in Brooklyn and Queens by April 2019

	Alternative 1: Fines for nonvaccination	Alternative 2: Quarantines
Criteria 1: Efficiency	High - can be administered electronically	Low - raises administrative costs, necessitates human resources (cops, etc.) to be on the ground
Criteria 2: Technical feasibility	High	Low
Criteria 3: Equity	Low - appears high because it is applicable to all nonvaccinated people, but low because in reality it targets specific populations	Low
Projected Outcomes	increased vaccination rates	not necessarily higher vaccination rates, potentially perpetuates the health emergency
Trade-offs	<i>likely to perpetuate stereotypes*</i>	negative impact on economic standing, <i>likely to perpetuate stereotypes*</i>

**only identifiable through a lens of cultural literacy*

Balancing these demographics, Jewish literacy levels, and attitudes in our classrooms is challenging. Bringing the Self into these discussions can help amplify our message.

Without understanding the demographic makeup of Brooklyn, and specifically, Williamsburg, the policy alternative of fines appears logical. However, armed with some cultural literacy about Jewish geography and antisemitism, problems become clearer. Declaring an emergency in Williamsburg, without contextualizing the policy solution with cultural sensitivity, may incite connections to antisemitic tropes of Jews as disease carriers. One possible approach may be to frame communication in a way that does not highlight the Orthodox demographic (giving street names as boundaries rather than calling out Williamsburg). Jewish literacy can help public policy makers and administrators recommend and implement solutions that achieve desired health outcomes while also mitigating unintended consequences.

Closing Thoughts

Antisemitism deserves focus as its own issue. We dive into this in more detail in our own field's journal for pedagogy.^v Antisemitism also fits within a theme of Othering, which occurs when, as John A. Powell explains, people winnow the definition of who counts as a full member of society. Islamophobia, sexism, racism, and homophobia are additional examples. In our context, Othering potentially cuts people off from the public services they need. The examples we present here are specific to antisemitism, but offer a lens through which we can help our students engage with many of these challenging topics.

Additional Resources

For Jewish population stats: American Jewish Population Project.^{vi}

For curricula fostering Jewish literacy: Facing History and Ourselves.^{vii}

On social construction: A. Schneider, and H. Ingram "Social Construction of Target Populations: Implications for Politics and Policy," *American Political Science Review* 87, no. 2 (1993): 334-47.

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RACHEL FYALL is assistant professor at the Evans School of Public Policy & Governance at the University of Washington. Her research focuses on the intersection of the nonprofit and public sectors, with particular interest in nonprofit advocacy and policy implementation.

JODI BENENSON is assistant professor in the School of Public Administration at the University of Nebraska Omaha. Her primary research interests include civic engagement, nonprofit organizations, social policy, and social equity.

Jamie Levine Daniel, Rachel Fyall, and Jodi Benenson's recently co-authored article, "Talking about Antisemitism in MPA Classrooms and Beyond," appears in the Journal of Public Affairs Education.

i <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/may/17/new-york-brooklyn-measles-outbreak-orthodox-jewish-antisemitism>.

ii Jeannine M. Love, Tia S. Gaynor, and Brandi Blessett, "Facilitating Difficult Dialogues in the Classroom: A Pedagogical Imperative," *Administrative Theory and Praxis* 38, no. 4 (2016): 227-33. <https://tandfonline.com/doi/10.1080/10841806.2016.1237839>.

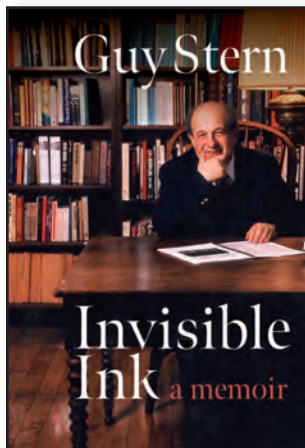
iii bell hooks. *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

iv V. Cooley and A. Pennock, "Teaching Policy Analysis through Animated Films: A Mickey Mouse Assignment?," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 48, no. 4 (2015): 601-6.

v Jamie Levine Daniel, Rachel Fyall, and Jodi Benenson, "Talking about Antisemitism in MPA Classrooms and Beyond," *Journal of Public Affairs Education* (2019): 1-23.

vi <https://ajpp.brandeis.edu/publications.php#section3>.

vii <https://www.facinghistory.org/>.



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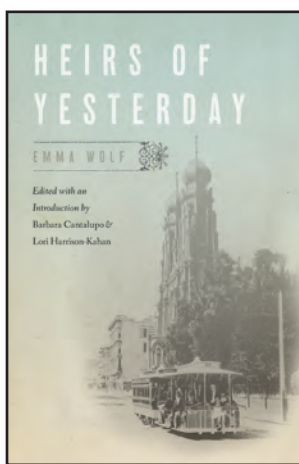
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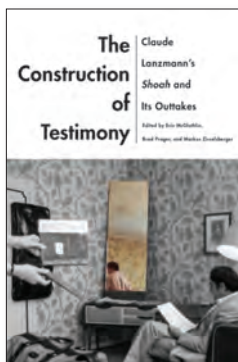
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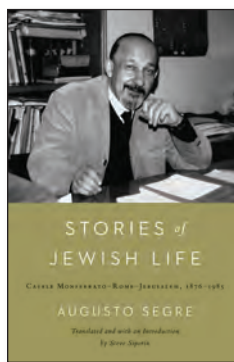
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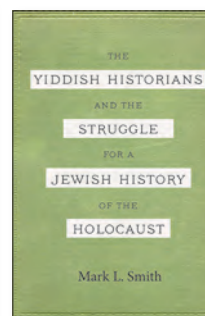
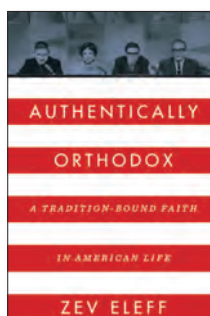
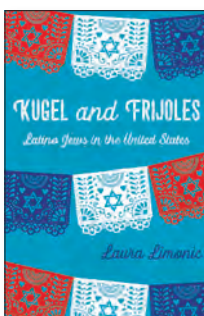
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Antisemites Are a Problem; Antisemitism Not So Much!

Bernard Dov Cooperman

When I tell my students that I don't believe in antisemitism as a timeless force in history, they get angry. When I tell them that antisemitism can no more be ascribed historical agency than can other abstract categories like democracy or patriarchy, they don't know what to make of something that sounds hostile to Jews, to America, and to women. When I explain that when we label something antisemitic in our course we will be describing a series of time-bound ideas, tropes, and memes that arose in the nineteenth century and are periodically weaponized for contingent reasons, they simply get confused.

It has never been easy to find a single coherent framework that could define and encompass all the varied aspects of social discrimination, religious opposition, legal and political restriction, and cruel persecution directed at Jews in different eras and places. Often, historians have tried to distinguish between anti-Judaism and antisemitism: the former was religious polemic and to be expected; the latter was unacceptable hate. That was the approach in 1901, when the editors of the *Jewish Encyclopedia* restricted their treatment largely to the modern political and racist antisemitism then beginning to make itself felt, while intentionally omitting medieval hostilities, since these were based "principally on religious grounds" (vol. 1, 643). Scores of writers have since cataloged and explored the theological and doctrinal abstractions of religious polemic, sometimes providing quite startling insights into Christian tolerance or the foundational role of anti-Judaism in the Western tradition as a whole. Other scholars have elucidated religious polemic on the Jewish side, for the most part emphasizing the rational and exegetical arguments through which Jews defended their tradition. (In recent years, Jewish religious polemic has been pictured as



less anodyne. We now know of Jews' mockery of their neighbors' sacred traditions, of halakhists' efforts to protect rigid social separation, and even of outright Jewish hostility towards the host society. No matter how controversial some of these latter treatments have been, they at least grant a measure of historical agency to the Jews themselves, making Jews more than a blank canvas painted on by the brush of Christian hatred.)

But religious polemic does not, by itself, explain antisemitism. Where does social causality lie? What factors lead from religious abstractions to mass riots, brutal slayings, expulsions and ghettoization, pogroms and the Holocaust? Scholars dealing with the medieval have suggested a range of explanations for the transition: the rise of psychological pathologies, political centralization, or the blending of accumulating doctrine with folk animosities, and on and on. In the end many find it easiest simply to ignore the cumbersome distinction between religious doctrine and brutal persecutions, blending everything into a single narrative of hate. By 1972 the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* article on "Antisemitism" is far longer and better illustrated than the treatment of 1901 mentioned above. Now "antisemitism" is given an independent reified existence no matter the specific place or time or religious context. The term is no longer spelled with a hyphen since it no longer requires a myth of origin in nineteenth-century pseudoscientific "Semitism." In popular and scholarly treatments alike,



Protesters clash over Labour Party antisemitism issues in Parliament Square, London, 2018. Photo by Alex Cavendish / Alamy Live News.

antisemitism has become “the longest hatred,” which merely changes its face to suit the times. Modern political realities require, too, that even Islamicate lands be brought into the discussion of this single “lethal obsession” that stretches “from antiquity to global jihad.”

Of course, omnipresent and essentialized hatred of Jews is actually useful for Jewish historians: the community of potential victims is large, and we can therefore legitimately treat more than the narrow “elite” of true believers and rabbinic scholars (*gelehrten-geschichte*). But such an historiographical approach abandons the century-long effort to shape a narrative that is more than *leidensgeschichte*—a history of suffering. It was the search for Jewish historical agency that led Salo Baron famously to portray the ghetto as the location of an autonomous community, paradoxically finding Jewish agency in places and times when Jews were ostensibly least able to control their own destiny. Anti-Judaism may be useful to understand Christians but, like Said’s *Orientalism*, it tells us far more about the observer than the observed, far more about the Christian/Muslim than about Jews—unless we mean Jews as a “field of discourse” for others.

While I have taught courses on antisemitism in the past, these days I prefer to design comparative courses that treat demagoguery, xenophobia, segregation, and prejudice in broader terms. With the students I look for the contexts in which such categories are activated, the

... omnipresent and essentialized hatred of Jews is actually useful for Jewish historians ...

logic they present, and the ways in which they are applied. If we still deal with anti-Jewish riots in Alexandria and Barcelona and Kishinev, we also deal with medieval bread riots and modern industrial riots, with politicized rhetorics about the Boston massacre and racialized rhetorics about the Tulsa massacre. Comparison does not trivialize the individual victim or forgive the specific perpetrator; rather it warns us that the particularist thinking that sees “us” as threatened by an essentialized Other is not an innocent celebration of difference but a dangerous form of politicized speech that has often been weaponized with drastic results—by Jews as against them. Victims of plague may accuse Jews of well-poisoning just as Japanese may accuse Korean workers of setting fires after an earthquake. Soccer fans may riot and hunt down innocent victims in Jerusalem just as they do in Europe. The historian may not paper over, much less celebrate, any specific rhetoric of identity when it leads to hate. Our task is to study past hatred to learn and teach the lessons of civil morality for the future.

I am not abandoning the study of the Jewish past. Quite to the contrary, I intend to shape courses that acknowledge the Jewish use of power and thus to explore the morality of Jewish choices. Victims cannot be moral because they have no agency. Only those with power have the opportunity and obligation to make moral choices. How Jews have acquired and used power both as individuals and as a collectivity is a proper focus of teaching Jewish history. After all, antisemitism may not exist as an independent metahistorical force, but antisemites abound. How Jews have chosen to respond is central to how they have defined and shaped their societies and how they have sought to frame their own group interest.

BERNARD DOV COOPERMAN holds the Louis L. Kaplan Chair of Jewish History at the University of Maryland. His treatment of “Cultural Pluralism from the Ghetto: What Might It Have Meant?” will appear soon in *Pierre Savy and Alessandro Guetta, ed., Non Contrarii, ma Diversi. The Question of Jewish Minority in Early Modern Italy* (Rome: Viella, 2020).

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