



Overview

Antisemitism is a set of dehumanizing and hostile beliefs and behaviors that target Jews, both as individuals and as a group, because of their Jewish identity. It takes on many forms, including overt acts of violence, discrimination, harassment and vandalism, as well as more subtle codes, tropes and assumptions. A central feature of antisemitism is its conspiratorial nature, where historical antisemitic conspiracies and myths offer a blueprint for future generations to draw on when blaming Jews for various world events. Seemingly disparate groups and individuals across the ideological spectrum use antisemitism to manufacture fear and divide society.

Antisemitism operates as an energizing force behind white supremacy, and both directly and indirectly affects millions of Jews and non-Jews in the United States and around the world. Movements, organizations and individuals committed to a just and equitable society are often portrayed as tools manipulated by Jews to undermine or remake society. Most often this involves attempts to racialize and vilify Jews as the manipulative puppet masters behind various economic, political and social schemes. Antisemitism does not occur in isolation. Any effort to dismantle white supremacy must work to combat antisemitism alongside and connected to other forms of hate and bias. The SPLC is committed to tracking and combating antisemitism as part of our efforts to build an inclusive, multiracial society.

Just as it is antisemitic to hold Jews collectively responsible for the actions of the Israeli government or its leaders, it is also wrong to assume any critique of Israel is an attack on the Jewish community. The Jewish community is incredibly diverse and cannot be treated as a monolith. Jews come from a range of different racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds, and while some practice Judaism, others consider themselves atheists. Jews differ from each other on a number of social and political issues, including Israel.

This document is intended as a resource and starting point for a discussion about what antisemitism is, how extremists in the United States use it, and how some tropes have become normalized in society. It is not intended to serve as a comprehensive definition of antisemitism. There are many definitions of antisemitism, and some, like the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), are controversial and should not be used to trigger anti-discrimination or hate crime laws. Additionally, it does not claim to provide all the answers to questions surrounding antisemitism, and because of this, the document will be routinely updated based on emerging trends and themes in American society.



Tropes and misconceptions

Contemporary antisemitic tropes and stereotypes have existed for millennia but are adapted to relate to present-day issues. Throughout history, those in power have historically scapegoated Jewish people to manufacture fear, divide societies and deflect blame. Below are a few common antisemitic tropes:

- **Power and control:** Claims that Jews are manipulative with secret and undue influence over various institutions, governments and social movements (e.g., George Soros, globalism, communism).
- **Greed:** Assumptions that Jews are greedy, self-serving elites associated with money or worldwide financial systems.
- **Holocaust denial, distortion and relativism:** Questioning, denying or manipulating the established historical record of the Holocaust to suggest that the genocide of Jewish people is exaggerated or fabricated, and using disingenuous Holocaust analogies to diminish or lessen the severity of the Holocaust.
- **Blood libel:** The enduring myth that Jews murder non-Jews for religious rituals, especially preying on Christian children.
- **Deicide:** The false accusation that Jews murdered Jesus and are enemies of Christianity.
- **Dual loyalty:** The charge that Jewish people have divided loyalties, prioritizing Israel or global Jewish interests over their home country.
- **Conflation with nation-state:** The assertion that Jewish people, on the whole, are responsible for actions taken by the Israeli government or when Israel is conflated solely with Jewish people.

Examples of prominent antisemitic narratives

The mutability of antisemitism means it underpins a wide array of conspiracy theories and acts as a common baseline in several prejudicial ideologies, animating hate against many non-Jewish communities along with Jewish ones. Antisemitism frequently manifests as a belief that Jewish people control marginalized and minoritized communities, as well as social movements that seek equity and justice for those groups. Antisemitic conspiracies thus paint Jewish people as a threat to the established order. Some examples include:



The anti-immigrant ‘great replacement’ conspiracy theory

Adherents of the “great replacement” theory believe there is a calculated effort to replace white European populations with non-white foreign populations, resulting in reduced white political power and ultimately white genocide. This conspiracy theory is inherently white supremacist, stoking xenophobic fears about immigration and characterizing non-white populations as inferior. Proponents of this conspiracy theory often present Black people as pawns in a Jewish plot to harm white people and destroy America. Many proponents of the “great replacement” believe powerful Jewish individuals or a Jewish “deep state” are responsible for this plot. For example:

Attacks and accusations of conspiracies related to the “great replacement” have frequently targeted Jewish and non-Jewish refugee organizations because of their work on resettling Muslim refugees from the Middle East and North Africa.

Nebraska Sen. Steve Erdman invoked the antisemitic “great replacement” theory to justify his support for a six-week abortion ban. He claimed Nebraska’s population hadn’t grown except for “foreigners and refugees,” blaming abortion for killing “200,000 people” who could have filled job vacancies. Erdman’s remarks echo white supremacist ideas, linking population control and abortion to a supposed conspiracy by elites, often targeting Jews, to replace the white population.

In December 2023, then-Republican presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy promoted the antisemitic “great replacement” theory, claiming it is not a conspiracy but the Democratic Party’s agenda. This theory suggests that elites are replacing white Americans with non-white immigrants. He retweeted a video from neo-Nazi Nick Fuentes, a notorious antisemite, celebrating Ramaswamy’s endorsement of the theory. By doing so, Ramaswamy contributed to the normalization of a trope rooted in the idea that Jewish people manipulate demographic changes for political power.

Adherents of this violent conspiracy theory have also committed tragic acts of violence targeting Jews at the Tree of Life synagogue in 2018, predominantly Latinx shoppers at an El Paso Walmart in 2019 and the Black community in Buffalo, New York, in 2022.

The demonization of LGBTQ+ people

In recent years, antisemitic extremists have manipulated age-old tropes about Jewish sexual deviance to align with mainstream efforts to attack the LGBTQ+ community. Believers of the QAnon conspiracy have spouted these falsehoods, alleging that a cabal of elites operate a child trafficking ring to harvest their blood to secure a chemical that helps them stay young. Hate groups in communities across the country distribute flyers blaming Jews for promoting the “gay agenda,” exemplifying this conspiracy. Similarly, neo-Nazis have regularly demonstrated against the LGBTQ+



community in recent years with signs wrongly asserting, for example, that “Judaism allows child rape” and “Jews run the pedo agenda.”

Holocaust revisionism and distortion serves to invalidate violence against LGBTQ+ people in Nazi Germany, erasing the existence of LGBTQ+ Jews and LGBTQ+ people. For example:

Anti-LGBTQ+ extremist Scott Lively's *Pink Swastika* alleged that the Nazi party was full of gay men and that they were responsible for the Holocaust.

In recent years, a network of groups promoting anti-LGBTQ+ pseudoscience used the historically loaded term “sterilization” and made explicit comparisons between gender-affirming health care and eugenics to associate trans health care with the very worst atrocities done in the name of eugenics – from the genocidal euthanasia campaigns in Nazi Germany, to the mass sterilization of disabled people and people of color in the United States.

Lebensunwertes Leben, or “life unworthy of life,” was a set of eugenicist-based policies and rhetoric justifying the euthanasia (state-sanctioned murder) of disabled, sick, elderly and LGBTQ+ people preceding the Holocaust. The sinister concept was disguised as matter of racial hygiene or *Rassenhygiene*. This formed a key point of the Nazi regime’s racial purity and Aryan superiority, relegating disabilities, mental illness and homosexuality as signs of racial imperfections and weakness in need of purging, paving the path to racial cleansing. This use of eugenics was foundational to development of the Final Solution. Attempting to erase the historical homophobia and transphobia within the Nazi regime from the Holocaust erases necessary context to understanding its inception and actualization.

Male supremacy

Antisemitism and male supremacy are mutually reinforcing, working together to animate each other and escalate resentment stemming from a perceived loss of white male status and power. One survey found young people who reported negative attitudes toward feminism were significantly more likely to endorse antisemitic conspiracy theories and engage in Holocaust denial and distortion. Misogyny often acts as a powerful pathway into antisemitism, blending personal experiences with a politicized threat framework. Once individuals internalize this idea of victimization, they easily apply this same framing to other perceived enemies, particularly Jewish people.

Male supremacists view women as genetically inferior, stupid and lazy, yet also suggest we live in a gynocentric society dominated by feminists who favor women to the detriment of men. To resolve this logical inconsistency, many adherents present feminism as an invention of the Jewish elite to emasculate men and corrupt society. For example:



Male supremacist influencer Andrew Tate's references to the film *The Matrix* to describe the perception that there is a hidden feminist conspiracy that runs society. Tate positions himself as one of the elite few who can see the world for what it is and can guide his supporters to "escape the matrix." He has described the matrix as "a cabal of people who have mass influence over the world" and claims "[Israel] controls the matrix. They control the narratives." He downplays accusations of sexual violence by accusing this conspiracy of fabricating allegations against him and other hard-right actors to undermine their critics.

In August 2024, Tate was arrested by Romanian authorities who were investigating accusations that he had trafficked and had sexual intercourse with a minor. Almost immediately, many of his supporters suggested this was an act of retaliation by the matrix. In a tweet viewed nearly 2 million times, Nick Fuentes, a fellow male supremacist and white nationalist, claimed the arrest was retaliation for Tate speaking out about "the Jewish mafia" behind the matrix.

Instrumentalization

The "utilitarian" or "instrumentalization" antisemitic trope refers to viewing Jewish people not as individuals but as tools for political or economic purposes. This idea has deep roots in Western civilization, from medieval Crusaders using Jewish people as money lenders to modern right-wing tactics offering disingenuous support for Israel as a means to an end. Today, right-wing media personalities, pundits and politicians have also found utility in Jewish people when condemning campus protests against the Israel-Hamas war. This tactic, using Jewish people to stifle and attack higher education and diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility programs, has become a key component of recent right-wing strategies, including the series of House Education and Workforce committee hearings led by its chair, Virginia Foxx (R-Virginia).

This trope becomes even more concerning when it enters mainstream political discourse. Politicians and religious leaders, knowingly or unknowingly, may deploy this trope to score political points or virtue signal to the Jewish community. Some prominent examples include:

Former President Trump: Trump has repeatedly used antisemitic rhetoric, implying Jewish loyalty due to his support for Israel. He claimed Jews who don't support him "need their heads examined" and warned that Israel's future depends on his re-election. He also suggested that if he loses the election, "Jewish people would have a lot to do with that loss."

Preacher Robert Jeffress: Jeffress has a history of antisemitic remarks, claiming Jews are destined for hell unless they convert to Christianity. His support for Israel is rooted in his evangelical belief that Israel plays a key role in fulfilling Christian end-



times prophecy, viewing Jews as tools for this divine plan rather than respecting their faith. His inclusion at Trump's 2019 Hanukkah event underscored the conditional and exploitative nature of his support for Israel and Jewish people.

Congresswoman Elise Stefanik (R-New York): Stefanik presents herself as a defender of Israel and a champion against campus antisemitism. But she has also promoted antisemitic tropes, particularly the "great replacement" theory and conspiracies about George Soros. She has regularly used Soros, a Jewish Holocaust survivor, as a scapegoat for right-wing grievances, tapping into antisemitic narratives of Jewish control and manipulation.

Sean Feucht: The Christian nationalist leader, who has met with various right-wing politicians, holds that any criticism of Israel is inherently antisemitic. His conditional support for Jewish people is based on the belief that Israel's founding was biblically ordained and necessary for the return of Jesus Christ, viewing Israel as a means to a religious end.

This pattern reflects the way certain political and religious figures leverage Jewish people and Israel to advance broader political or religious agendas, often reducing Jewish identity to a mere tool in their ideological frameworks.

For further questions, explanations, or educational resources, please contact SPLC Intelligence Project Senior Research Analyst Alon Milwicky at alon.milwicky@splcenter.org

The SPLC actively monitors hate and antigovernment extremist activity across the United States. The SPLC tracks groups, online activity, threats and incidents to give an accurate picture of the situation to policymakers and communities working to prevent and respond to acts of hate and violence.



Sources

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4. splcenter.org/news/2019/08/05/hate-alive-america-el-paso-shooting
5. splcenter.org/news/2022/05/16/splc-responds-mass-killing-buffalo-gunman-steeped-white-supremacist-ideology
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10. learningforjustice.org/magazine/addressing-antisemitic-hate-with-students
11. learningforjustice.org/discussing-war-and-conflict-resources-for-educators-parents-and-caregivers
12. splcenter.org/news/2023/04/18/national-urban-league-partners-splc-state-black-america-report
13. splcenter.org/hatewatch/2024/05/03/holocaust-education-mixed-bag-us-schools

Select SPLC Resources

1. whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/06/02/the-u-s-national-strategy-to-counter-antisemitism-key-actions-by-pillar-2/
2. truah.org/issue/fighting-antisemitism/
3. keshetonline.org/resources-and-events/
4. rac.org/about-religious-action-center-reform-judaism
5. <https://diasporaalliance.co/>
6. jewishdems.org/action/



7. <https://www.splcactionfund.org/sites/default/files/antisemitism-awareness-act-senate-letter.pdf>
8. <https://www.splcactionfund.org/sites/default/files/antisemitism-awareness-act-letter.pdf>

Resources from Learning for Justice

9. [*Let's Talk*](#)
10. [*Speak Up at School*](#)
11. [*Responding to Hate and Bias at School*](#)
12. [*learningforjustice.org/magazine/acclaimed-documentary-one-survivor-remembers-urges-all-to-never-forget*](https://learningforjustice.org/magazine/acclaimed-documentary-one-survivor-remembers-urges-all-to-never-forget)
13. [*learningforjustice.org/magazine/understanding-and-countering-antisemitism-and-islamophobia-in-schools*](https://learningforjustice.org/magazine/understanding-and-countering-antisemitism-and-islamophobia-in-schools)

Resources from the federal government

1. [The U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#)
2. U.S. Department of Education
[*Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics*](#)
3. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights
[*FACT SHEET: Protecting Students from Discrimination Based on Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics*](#)
4. Department of Education, Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships
[*Resources for Preventing and Addressing Antisemitism in Schools*](#)
[*Supporting Campus Safety Following the October 7, 2023 Hamas Attacks in Israel*](#)