

CDI and Hillel Present:

EDUCATIONAL DIALOGUE ON ANTISEMITISM AT AU



Before we begin, let's discuss our culture for this event.

1. Listen actively -- respect others when they are talking.
2. Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing ("I" instead of "they," "we," and "you").
3. Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions, but refrain from personal attacks -- focus on ideas.
4. Participate to the fullest of your ability -- community growth depends on the inclusion of every individual voice.
5. Instead of invalidating somebody else's story with your own spin on her or his experience, share your own story and experience. Both things can be true at once.
6. The goal is not to agree -- it is to gain a deeper understanding.

What else should we include?

Warm Up:

What is antisemitism? What does it look like? And what questions about anti-Semitism do you have?

Take a minute or two to think about these questions. There are no right or wrong answers! Then, turn to your table and share. Write down some of your collective thoughts here:

Definitions:

Read/skim over the list of terms below. What is unfamiliar to you? Does anything make you uncomfortable? What isn't on this list?

- Anti-Semitism:
 - From DIMENSIONS EDUCATIONAL CONSULTING:
 - “Semitic” originally referred to a family of Afroasiatic languages that includes Akkadian, Arabic, Aramaic, Arabic, Ethiopic, Hebrew and Phoenician. Anti-Semitism came to be applied directly to hatred and mistreatment of Jews. Anti-Semitism is the systematic discrimination against, denigration or oppression of Jews, Judaism, and the cultural, intellectual, and religious heritage of the Jewish people.
 - From the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum:
 - The word antisemitism means prejudice against or hatred of Jews. The Holocaust, the state-sponsored persecution and murder of European Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945, is history’s most extreme example of antisemitism.
 - From the Anti-Defamation League:
 - The belief or behavior hostile toward Jews just because they are Jewish. It may take the form of religious teachings that proclaim the inferiority of Jews, for instance, or political efforts to isolate, oppress, or otherwise injure them. It may also include prejudiced or stereotyped views about Jews.
 - United States Congress:
 - S. 10, IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, December 2, 2016, Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary: AN ACT to provide for the consideration of a definition of anti-Semitism for the enforcement of Federal antidiscrimination laws concerning education programs or activities.
 - A certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities
- Anti-Jewish oppression:
 - From Jews for Racial & Economic Justice
 - The term ‘Anti-Semitism’ was coined in 1879 by Wilhelm Marr specifically trying to give anti-Jewish oppression a ‘scientific’ makeover. Many progressive Jews are starting to use the term “anti-Jewish oppression” instead of anti-Semitism to take control of the framing of our own oppression back from the racists who created it.
- Zionism

- From the Anti-Defamation League:
 - Zionism is the Jewish national movement of rebirth and renewal in the land of Israel — the historical birthplace and biblical homeland of the Jewish people. While there was a continuous Jewish presence in the land of Israel over the millennia, the yearning to return to Zion, the biblical term for both the Land of Israel and Jerusalem, has been the cornerstone of Jewish religious life since the Jewish exile from the land two thousand years ago, and is embedded in Jewish prayer, ritual, literature and culture.
- From the Jewish Virtual Library:
 - The term “Zionism” was coined in 1890 by Nathan Birnbaum. Its general definition means the national movement for the return of the Jewish people to their homeland and the resumption of Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel. Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Zionism has come to include the movement for the development of the State of Israel and the protection of the Jewish nation in Israel through support for the Israel Defense Forces. From inception, Zionism advocated tangible as well as spiritual aims. Jews of all persuasions - left, right, religious and secular - formed the Zionist movement and worked together toward its goals. Disagreements in philosophy has led to rifts in the Zionist movement of the years and a number of separate forms have emerged, notably: Political Zionism; Religious Zionism; Socialist Zionism and Territorial Zionism.
- Ally
 - From DIMENSIONS EDUCATIONAL CONSULTING:
 - Someone who actively supports and stands up for the rights, dignity and empowerment of individuals and identity groups other than their own, especially when that individual or identity group is not present or otherwise afforded the access to represent themselves
 - From the Anti-Defamation League:
 - Ally: Someone who speaks out on behalf of someone else or takes actions that are supportive of someone else. Example: Hearing someone use an anti-Semitic slur and reaching out to that person and telling them you think that was wrong.
 - Advocate: Someone who publicly supports or recommends a particular cause or policy. Example: Writing a letter to your Congressperson to urge her/him to support legislation about anti-Semitism.
 - Activist: Someone who gets involved in activities that are meant to achieve political or social change; this also includes being a member of an organization which is working on change. Example: Participating in a demonstration that is focusing on anti-Semitic hate crimes
- Intersectionality
 - From DIMENSIONS EDUCATIONAL CONSULTING:

- The intersection of multiple forms of historic inclusion and exclusion in one person or group's identity. The belief that oppressive systems within society- such as racism, sexism, classism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, and belief-based bigotry- interrelate to contribute to ongoing and systematic social inequality.
 - From the Anti-Defamation League:
 - A way of looking at the overlap and intersections of people's social group identities (e.g. race, gender, class, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc.) and addresses the related and intersecting systems of bias, discrimination and oppression.
 - Christian Hegemony:
 - From Paul Kivel (refer to back of packet to read more!)
 - The everyday, systematic set of Christian values, individuals and institutions that dominate all aspects of US society. Nothing is unaffected. Christian dominance is a complex and shifting system that benefits all Christians, those raised Christian and those passing as Christian. However, the concentration of power and wealth accumulates to a predominantly Christian power elite. All others experience exploitation and constant vulnerability to violence.
 - Neo Nazi:
 - From Southern Poverty Law Center:
 - Neo-Nazi groups share a hatred for Jews and a love for Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany. While they also hate other minorities, gays and lesbians and even sometimes Christians, they perceive "the Jew" as their cardinal enemy. In 2017, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) found that the number of hate groups rose to 954 from 917 the prior year, up 4 percent. Within the white supremacist movement, neo-Nazi groups saw the greatest growth — soaring by 22 percent from 99 to 121.
 - From the Anti-Defamation League:
 - One of the main segments of the white supremacist movement in the United States and many other countries. They revere Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany and sometimes try to adopt some Nazi principles to their own times and geographic locations, though many neo-Nazis primarily adopt the trappings, symbology and mythology of the Third Reich.
 - White Supremacy/White Supremacists:
 - From the Anti-Defamation League
 - Traditional white supremacists are one of the major segments of the white supremacist movement in the United States, as well as the oldest. The term is used to refer to a variety of groups and individuals whose white supremacy centers around or originated from the struggle to deny equal rights to African-Americans. Ku Klux Klan groups are the most common type of traditional white supremacist, but the movement also includes

other groups, such as the Council of Conservative Citizens, the League of the South, and others.

- From the YWCA:
 - Historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege.
- Privilege:
 - From DIMENSIONS EDUCATIONAL CONSULTING
 - Privilege is a system of "unearned advantages" that systematically empower historically included groups over historically excluded groups in society. Privilege describes an assigned dominance associated with this experience that is based on identity or behavior. Individual privilege can be fluid, non-static and situation specific.
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 - Privilege is a system of "unearned advantages" that systematically empower historically included groups over historically excluded groups in society. Privilege describes an assigned dominance associated with this experience that is based on identity or behavior. Individual privilege can be fluid, non-static and situation specific.
- Oppression:
 - From DIMENSIONS EDUCATIONAL CONSULTING:
 - The mistreatment of a defined group of people, with that mistreatment reinforced and supported by society on personal, interpersonal, systemic/institutional and cultural levels.
 - Four Levels of Oppression and Change
 - Level 1- Personal: A personal level "ism" is prejudice or bias, our feelings and beliefs about others and our attitudes about difference. It is the maintenance of conscious or unconscious attitudes or feelings that another group is inferior or that a group's differences are unacceptable in some way. For example assuming that a CEO will be male or that Asians are technical minded and not people oriented. Other examples include believing that a C-level student is not as valuable or capable as one who gets A's, or believing that students from a predominantly white school are better than students from a mostly black school.
 - Level 2- Interpersonal: Acting on prejudicial beliefs and exhibiting behavior based on conscious or unconscious negative assumptions about other cultural groups is an interpersonal response. Examples are asking: "When will he be available when asking for a manager, or white people being reluctant to hold a school event at the recreation center in a low-income neighborhood of color, white people crossing the street when they see a group of black males, addressing a white person as the authority in a multiracial pair of colleagues.

- **Level 3- Institutional:** Institutional oppression occurs when policies, practices, or procedures intentionally or unintentionally advantage the non-target group and disadvantage members of the target group. Examples include a superintendent's decision to purchase new trucks without air conditioning for maintenance workers, administrative decisions to not support professional development, which may unequally impact diverse targeted groups (women, people of color, new immigrants) who often occupy the lower rungs of the corporate ladder, a complicated college entrance process that intimidates families without a history of going to college.
- ***Level 4- Cultural:** An "ism" has occurred when the standards of appropriate action, thought, and expressions of a particular group are perceived as negative or less than. Examples include school or organizational décor that reflects a Eurocentric or white American view; valuing "people skills" less than technical skills. Cultural classism/elitism refers to the ways decisions are made. For example, an agenda driven meeting with no time for relationship building, questions, personal concerns or feedback. Cultural sexism assumes certain gender roles. For example, a school meeting in which female teachers are expected to provide the refreshments, generate the minutes and clean up afterward, instead of these tasks being equally distributed across men and women.

**Note: Discussing the cultural level of oppression and change will always involve stereotyping. These definitions describe cultural group experiences broadly for the purpose of learning. The experiences of some members of any group are bound to lay outside of these generalized statements and it is important to acknowledge this.*

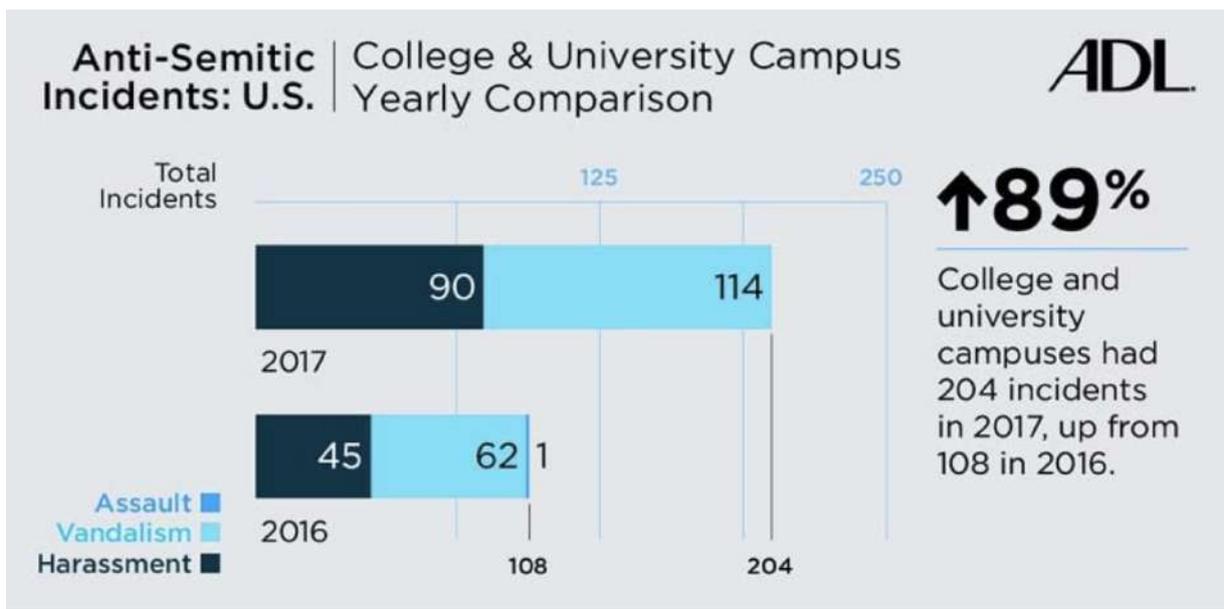
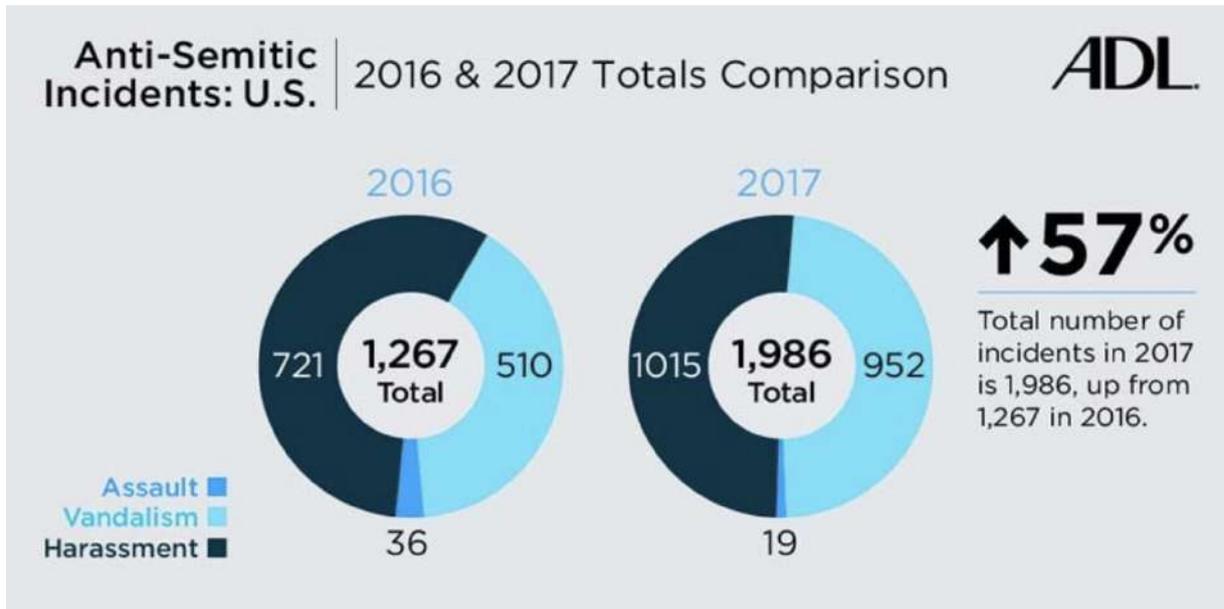
Statistics:

<https://www.adl.org/resources/reports/2017-audit-of-anti-semitic-incidents#major-findings>

2015-2017 Incidents by State



STATE	HARASSMENT			VANDALISM			ASSAULT			TOTAL		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
Alabama	2	1	4	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	3	4
Alaska	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Arizona	3	5	19	1	5	6	0	0	1	4	10	26
Arkansas	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
California	105	128	160	69	77	108	1	6	0	175	211	268
Colorado	15	29	30	2	15	26	1	1	1	18	45	57
Connecticut	21	25	29	5	12	20	0	1	0	26	38	49
Delaware	4	3	12	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	3	13
Florida	61	119	70	27	15	27	3	3	1	91	137	98
Georgia	13	38	40	3	5	17	0	0	1	16	43	58
Hawaii	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Idaho	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	5
Illinois	7	9	25	7	1	22	0	0	0	14	10	47
Indiana	0	2	5	0	4	9	0	0	0	0	6	14
Iowa	1	0	5	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	9
Kansas	0	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	2
Kentucky	1	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	5
Louisiana	3	0	7	0	3	3	0	0	0	3	3	10
Maine	3	1	1	1	3	3	0	0	0	4	4	4
Maryland	6	2	15	3	1	20	0	0	0	9	3	35
Massachusetts	26	61	68	22	63	109	2	1	0	50	125	177
Michigan	4	12	17	2	3	11	0	0	0	6	15	28
Minnesota	7	17	15	5	2	13	0	1	0	12	20	28
Mississippi	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1
Missouri	4	6	11	1	1	6	0	0	0	5	7	17
Montana	1	4	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	4	3
Nebraska	1	12	9	1	1	8	0	0	0	2	13	17
Nevada	3	2	8	0	0	9	0	0	0	3	2	17
New Hampshire	4	5	6	2	3	4	0	0	0	6	8	10
New Jersey	57	73	95	79	81	110	1	3	3	137	157	208
New Mexico	7	10	9	0	1	6	1	0	0	8	11	15
New York	56	35	133	98	146	236	44	19	11	198	200	380
North Carolina	3	3	10	1	1	6	0	0	0	4	4	16
North Dakota	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
Ohio	6	9	13	4	5	13	0	1	0	10	15	26
Oklahoma	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Oregon	1	1	6	1	0	11	0	0	0	2	1	17
Pennsylvania	29	42	45	12	25	51	2	0	0	43	67	96
Rhode Island	1	2	7	0	5	6	0	0	0	1	7	13
South Carolina	0	7	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	9	3
South Dakota	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Tennessee	3	0	7	5	1	2	0	0	0	8	1	9
Texas	18	15	41	10	8	17	1	0	1	29	23	59
Utah	1	3	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	3	4
Vermont	0	4	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	5	3
Virginia	4	6	18	3	0	16	0	0	0	7	6	34
Washington	3	2	11	1	1	9	0	0	0	4	3	20
Washington DC	11	9	19	3	10	13	0	0	0	14	19	32
West Virginia	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Wisconsin	11	16	21	6	6	10	0	0	0	17	22	31
Wyoming	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	3
TOTAL	509	721	1015	377	510	952	56	36	19	942	1267	1986



Looking at these statistics, does anything stand out to you or surprise you?

Mythbusting:

In this next activity, we are going to be looking at some common stereotypes, tropes, myths, and misconceptions about Jews and the Jewish community. For each, read the statement outloud and take a second to reflect. Then, turn to your table and discuss the questions. Follow ups to some of the scenarios are listed at the end of this packet.

Some definitions:

- Myth: a popular belief that is false or unsupported
- Fact: a piece of information about something presented as true and accurate
- Anti-Semitism: Anti-Semitism is prejudice and/or discrimination against people who are Jewish. Anti-Semitism can be based on hatred against Jews because of their religious beliefs and their group membership (ethnicity).

Myth #1: Jews are cheap, greedy, and materialistic; Jews are good with money.

Have you heard this before? In what context?

What does this make you think of?

Where do you think this comes from?

Myth #2: Jews control the banks, media, Hollywood, and even the U.S. government; Jews have a secret plot to take over the world.

Have you heard this before? In what context?

What does this make you think of?

Where do you think this comes from?

Myth #3: Jews think they are better than everyone else.

Have you heard this before? In what context?

What does this make you think of?

Where do you think this comes from?

Myth #4: Jews are loyal to Israel to the detriment of the United States or their own country. Jews all have divided loyalties.

Have you heard this before? In what context?

What does this make you think of?

Where do you think this comes from?

What other myths have you heard?

Scenarios:

At your tables, take turns reading each scenario, then answer the following questions for each:

What is the problem/dilemma?

What myth is this situation based on?

What facts can you give to disprove the myth?

What else can you do or say in response to this situation, if this happened at AU?

Scenario #1: Being Good with Money

When your friend Tammy was elected to the school council last year, one of her campaign promises was that spring dance was going to be the best ever. When January came, Tammy asked you to be part of the spring dance committee and you agreed. At the first meeting Tammy starts assigning committee roles. When she gets to your friend Sheryl and puts her in charge of raising money for the dance you are surprised because Sheryl is an amazing artist and you believe she would be put in charge of decorations. You speak up and recommend Sheryl be in charge of decorations. Tammy says in front of everyone, "No, I need Sheryl to be in charge of money because she's Jewish and everyone knows Jews are good with money."

Scenario #2: Controlling Everything

You are over at your friend Greg's house finishing up a group project for your current events class on U.S. foreign policy during the last four years. You are just about to leave when Greg's mom comes in and asks what you are working on. You and Greg spend a few minutes talking about the timeline you've created and the poster full of charts. When you are finished she nods in approval and says, "I wonder what our foreign policy would be like if the Jews weren't controlling everything."

Scenario #3 Excused from School

You are sitting in your math class when the bell rings and the teacher starts taking roll call. When she gets to Josh Weinberg's name she doesn't bother to call it out, and continues on with the roll call. John leans over to you and asks, "Where's Josh?" You have no idea and are about to answer when Heather leans over and says, "Oh, don't you know? Josh is Jewish and today's supposed to be a Jewish holiday. On top of that, Josh says that there was a Jewish New Year's celebration last week, which was why he didn't come to school then. He gets out of class assignments and tests so often! It's so unfair! You know Jews think they are better than everyone else."

What other scenarios can you think of?

Jews and Intersectionality

In this section, take turns reading each source and then answering the questions at the end. Feel free to pause at any time and reread parts that are confusing or dense. Remember, we are reading for understanding, so posing questions that arise to your group mates, even if they don't know the answers, can help point you in the right direction!

Source 1:

What is Christian Hegemony? *Adapted from Living in the Shadow of the Cross* by Paul Kivel

I define *Christian hegemony* as the everyday, systematic set of Christian values, individuals and institutions that dominate all aspects of US society. Nothing is unaffected. Christian dominance is a complex and shifting system that benefits all Christians, those raised Christian and those passing as Christian. However, the concentration of power and wealth accumulates to a predominantly Christian power elite. All others experience exploitation and constant vulnerability to violence.

This dominance operates on several levels. First is the subtle internalization of Christian beliefs by individuals. The behavior and voting patterns of millions of people in the United States are influenced by concepts such as original sin, manifest destiny, the existence of “the one truth” contained within Christianity and the notion that humans were given dominion over the earth. The social, political and economic (as opposed to spiritual) power that individual clergy exert on people’s lives is another level of impact...

All these levels of Christian dominance have significant impacts. The personal shows up in the way many Christians internalize feelings of superiority, entitlement and judgment – as well as guilt – while those who are not Christian may primarily internalize low self-worth.

Interpersonal effects include specific acts of aggression directed at those who are not Christian or Christian of the wrong sort – e.g. people who are LGBTQ.

The institutional effects show up in the ways that health care, educational and criminal legal systems favor Christians and Christian values and treat others as outside society’s circle of caring. For example, most institutional policies privilege Christian holidays and cultural norms, treating other religions’ practices as unusual and therefore easily dismissed. The levels of this institutionalized system of dominance are interconnected, so the cumulative impact creates a structure that is all-encompassing. Christian dominance has become so invisible that its manifestations even appear to be secular.

Questions:

What is your understanding of Christian hegemony?

Are there experiences or moments that feel connected to or explained by this term?

Source 2:

Excerpts from *Understanding Anti-Jewish Oppression: An Offering to our Movement Allies (or: A Mazel Tov Cocktail Against the Right!)* by Aurora Levins Morales, Leo Ferguson, Dove Kent and member leaders of Jews for Racial & Economic Justice

A note about terminology: The term ‘Anti-Semitism’ was coined in 1879 by Wilhelm Marr specifically trying to give anti-Jewish oppression a ‘scientific’ makeover. Many progressive Jews are starting to use the term “anti-Jewish oppression” instead of anti-Semitism to take control of the framing of our own oppression back from the racists who created it. This is the terminology used throughout this paper.

As Jews in the social movement left, we believe that everyone needs clarity about anti-Jewish oppression – both because, as Jews, we need our allies to have our backs and because as a movement we need to be able to see through the ways that both real anti-Jewish oppression and false accusations of anti-Jewish oppression are used to divide and derail us. We offer this intersectional analysis as a resource to strengthen our united movements as we face the escalation of attacks...

WHERE DOES OUR COLLECTIVE CONFUSION COME FROM?

In recent decades, the Right has expanded the meaning of anti-Jewish oppression to include any critique of Israel or Israeli government policy. While this is intended to suppress and delegitimize calls for justice in Palestine, it also spills over into other areas of social justice work. Entire organizations and movements, many of them engaged in important anti-racist and economic justice work, have been tarred as anti-Semitic.

Meanwhile, the left constricts the meaning of anti-Jewish oppression to include only overt, violent acts against Jews, dismissing its role in institutions and in the lived experiences of Jews. In reaction to the manipulations of the Right, many on the left haven’t wanted to address the issue at all. Failing to understand how oppressions collude, the left has often dismissed anti-Jewish oppression as unimportant or even denied that it really exists.

It should be a concern to us all that this insidious and complex oppression is so marginally addressed by the social movement left, particularly because throughout history, anti-Jewish oppression has been used, especially in Europe and the United States, to distract and divide powerful movements for justice and equity...One of the most devastating impacts of oppression is the way it makes us vulnerable to believing the lie that our interests and our communities are at odds...We have, and have always had, a compelling mutual interest in each other’s liberation as we face the entire complex of white supremacy, imperialism, and capitalism that are the foundations of this country and threaten the world.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT THE JEWISH COMMUNITY?

Part of anti-Jewish oppression is the white-washed, classist narrative that gets told about our community, and that makes Jewish People of Color, Mizrahi Jews, Sephardi Jews, and poor and working class Jews invisible and vulnerable to greater targeting, so the first step is a better understanding of who Jews are.

For starters, Jews are a racially and ethnically diverse community. Altogether, somewhere between 6% and 20% of Jews in the United States are People of Color...Many people incorrectly believe there are no poor Jews. But 20% of U.S. Jews report household incomes of less than \$30,000 per year and about six in ten Jews in this low-income category are either under age 30 or over 65...Thus, despite widespread Jewish poverty, the experiences of poor and working class Jewish communities are erased by the lens of anti-Jewish oppression.

WHAT IS ANTI-SEMITISM OR ANTI-JEWISH OPPRESSION?

Anti-Jewish oppression, usually called anti-Semitism, is the form of oppression that targets Jews, and is based on white supremacy and Christian hegemony. Like all oppressions, such as racism and sexism, it contains elements of dehumanization and degradation – myths and stereotypes about Jews – and also a narrative. The narrative changes and adapts to different times and places, but one particular story it tells is that Jews can and should be blamed for all of the problems facing a society. Central to anti-Jewish oppression is the scapegoating of Jews by their neighbors...

The function of anti-Jewish oppression is to provide a scapegoat. To offer a ready-made diversion when people are looking to place blame for their exploitation or for changes in their conditions. For this to work, Jews have to be allowed privilege and visibility, bribed to collaborate with the status quo, and at the same time kept insecure. *Anti-Jewish oppression isn't always intended to crush Jews now. It's meant to keep us available for crushing later.*

Anti-Jewish oppression works best when Jews are able to enjoy a measure of financial or political success so that they can be plausible scapegoats...the basic political use of anti-Jewish oppression has remained consistent: to shield the ruling class by diverting people's anger away from systemic injustice and towards Jews...

A key characteristic of anti-Jewish oppression which originated with European Christianity and has survived in many forms – it must be cyclical in order to work. This is another feature of the oppression that is deeply confusing and sets it apart from the way that many other oppressions operate.

When times have been good, anti-Jewish oppression has seemed like nothing more than a set of insignificant stereotypes and attitudes about Jews...Because the oppression has come in waves, because Jews have often been allowed to flourish between those waves, and because these waves have often broken over our communities when least expected, many current day Jews live with a kind of simmering fear. It can seem like we have nothing to worry

about, because many of us are financially secure, and living with white privilege in a country that protects us from anti-Jewish violence. But the reality is that Jews have lived in many countries where it seemed that we were safe, where a portion of our people had wealth and privilege, and still, when the next wave came, we faced massacres and expulsions. This is how our oppression has worked for centuries. Jews have been held in reserve for blame, and when it came, it was often deadly. So, while the material stability and safety that many Jews in the U.S. have is real and significant, it is also precarious. And if historical patterns go unchallenged, it is possible that it will once again disappear.

This feeling of insecurity drives many Jews to align with those in power in an attempt to maintain safety, when in reality this allegiance is part of the project to maintain white supremacy that will ultimately throw Jewish people under the bus when needed...And at the same time, without accurate information about the origins and uses of anti-Jewish oppression, other oppressed groups become easily manipulated to channel their anger at Jews instead of targeting the true decision-makers and systems directing their oppression.

Questions:

What is your reaction to reading this perspective about anti-Jewish oppression existing across the party divide?

Is it possible to disentangle talking about anti-Jewish oppression and talking about Israel?

Source 3:

From the Jewish Virtual Library: Anti-Semitism & Anti-Zionism

There is a dangerous confluence between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism though the two concepts are not always identical. Anti-Zionism is often used as a euphemism to conceal hatred of Jews. Today, writer Howard Jacobson observed, Israel has become the pretext [for anti-Semitism]...All the unsayable things, all the things they know they can't say about Jews in a post-Holocaust liberal society, they can say again now. Israel has desecralized the subject. It's a space in which everything is allowed again.

Criticizing Israel does not necessarily make someone anti-Semitic; the determining factor is the intent and language of the speaker:

- Is the speaker someone with a history of anti-Jewish attitudes? If so, the criticism is probably anti-Semitic.
- Critics who habitually single out Israel for condemnation while ignoring far worse actions by other countries (especially other Middle Eastern countries) are anti-Semitic.
- Likening Israel to Nazi Germany, or to traditional anti-Jewish stereotypical behavior is another sure sign of Jew-baiting.
- Attacks on the merits of Israel's existence rather than individual government policies are anti-Semitic.

Here are several additional ways to distinguish between people who are expressing legitimate criticism and anti-Semites who seek to delegitimize Israel:

Legitimate critics expose Israel's flaws in the hope of improving society.

Delegitimizers highlight Israel's imperfections for the purpose of embarrassing, isolating and demeaning the nation.

Legitimate critics seek to change Israel through its democratic processes.

Delegitimizers attempt to use non democratic means to impose changes on Israel, many of which are opposed by the citizens of Israel.

Legitimate critics want to see Israel adopt policies that will help it grow and prosper and coexist with an equally prosperous Palestinian state.

Delegitimizers want to see Israel weakened or destroyed.

Legitimate critics believe the free flow of ideas, culture and trade between peoples is the best way to promote peace and understanding.

Delegitimizers advocate blacklists, censorship and demonization of Israelis.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. put it this way when he was approached by a student who attacked Zionism, "When people criticize Zionists, King said, they mean Jews. You're talking anti-Semitism."

Questions:

In your words, what is the difference between antisemitism and anti-Zionism?

Do you see a conflation of antisemitism and anti-Zionism at AU?

Source 4:

In a video uploaded to his official Facebook page on Friday morning, Trayon White, a DC Council Member posted a video clip on his social media about Jews controlling the weather. White referenced the Rothschilds, a European Jewish banking family who have been linked to anti-Semitic conspiracy theories for years. He said:

"Man, it just started snowing out of nowhere this morning, man. Y'all better pay attention to this climate control, man, this climate manipulation," he says in the video, which was shot through windshield of a car driving through downtown Washington. "And DC keep talking about, 'We a resilient city.' And that's a model based off the Rothschilds controlling the climate to create natural disasters they can pay for to own the cities, man. Be careful."

What is your reaction to reading this?

What if this was your representative?

His post was deleted shortly after, after public backlash. He responded with the following:



What is your reaction to this apology?

Is it enough?

Who is responsible for educating him?

Jews United for Justice's Response:

We write to give some context on our ongoing relationship with Councilmember Trayon White and our response to his recent anti-Semitic remarks, referencing a known conspiracy theory. Councilmember White's words were wrong - even though they weren't made with malice. That is why we have been working with Councilmember White, mostly behind the scenes, to support what our Jewish tradition calls teshuvah: a process of repentance, apology, learning, and change. We have also connected him with other Jewish leaders, served as a resource to other elected officials grappling with this issue, and put our perspective in the media, as we all respond to Councilmember White's words.

(from Jacob:) I know that people are hurting and angry that an elected official made ignorant and anti-Semitic statements. We've heard from many JUFJ community members over the

past few days. Some are proud of the way we've responded. Some are angry that we haven't made more unequivocal statements. All are pained by what happened. For those of you who would have preferred for us to take a different approach, I hope this note helps to explain our thinking. We are sorry that we weren't able to communicate more with you in this whirlwind.

Sunday evening I was at our DC Labor Seder when I got a call from Councilmember Trayon White. Councilmember White is someone I've known for a few years since his first campaign for Council in 2015. That evening he called me to apologize and to ask for guidance on how he could learn more and begin to make amends to all of JUFJ and the Jewish community for the harm he had done. During the course of our conversation, it became clear to me that Councilmember White has never actually been educated about these kinds of perverse anti-Semitic conspiracy theories. Even though it seems so obvious to most of us Jews, I am learning that many non-Jews don't know the history of these sorts of conspiracy theories or how they have been used to persecute Jews. Once he understood, he was deeply disturbed. That conversation informed his first statement of apology.

I was surprised, confused, and hurt to hear what Councilmember White had done. But I was glad that he was reaching out in relationship and asking for help to do teshuvah, make amends, and change to never make the same mistakes again. I wanted, and want, to respond in the spirit of our organization's fundamental belief in building relationships in which we can together take responsibility for making change.

Over the past few days I've spoken frequently with Councilmember White. In addition to speaking directly, we've connected him with Jewish community leaders like Rabbi Aaron Alexander of Adas Israel, Rabbi Batya Glazer of the Jewish Community Relations Council, and Yolanda Savage-Narva, the Executive Director of Operation Understanding DC. Based on those conversations and others, Councilmember White wrote a two page open letter yesterday.

Clearly, these are just first steps. This process has not been a shallow apology from Councilmember White and a simple acceptance from us, but instead an ever-deepening engagement with the hurt that was done and the learning and change that must happen as part of moving forward in relationship. We're working closely with the Jewish Community Relations Council to support a larger conversation about anti-Jewish stereotypes and ideas that will bring in the whole DC Council and Jewish community leaders together next week. We have also been in conversation with many of our allies on the Council - with our Jewish partners Councilmembers Elissa Silverman and Brianne Nadeau, whose responses are well worth reading, and one of our non-Jewish partners, Councilmember Robert White, whose reflection on his own lack of knowledge about anti-Semitism is moving. And there is clearly further work to do to rebuild trust. Councilmember Trayon White was caught up in fake news and deliberate misinformation. How will he avoid that in the future?

But even with more to do, I also want to recognize that it's rare today for a person in the public eye to make a real apology and to take responsibility for learning and doing better. We hope that our community can engage with this unfolding story with that spirit, and judge Trayon not only by his recent words, but also by his actions over the past few days and moving forward.

We believe that we can best address anti-Semitism and misinformation in this moment by engaging and educating rather than denouncing. And we believe that this young Black leader, who works hard for his community and for our whole city, is someone who deserves the chance to learn from his missteps. We especially encourage our community to read this open letter from our colleagues Stephanie Sneed (a Black non-Jewish woman) and Monica Kamen (a white Jewish woman), co-directors of the Fair Budget Coalition, about the toxic intertwining of racism and anti-Semitism, and about our shared struggles for a just District of Columbia.

This challenging situation unfolded on the day of JUFJ's seders in Baltimore and DC, where nearly 400 people came together to celebrate, learn, and take action on migrant justice and voting rights. It's fitting that this news broke while our community was gathered to make change. Thank you for helping build this community that learns and acts together, and that is able to build accountable relationships with elected leaders like Councilmember White.

I and other staff will be working on this issue moving forward and we are available if you would like to be in touch. Together we are stronger.

Jacob Feinspan
together with Rabbi Elizabeth Richman and Rebecca Ennen

Questions:

How can Jews discuss antisemitism with people of color, and how can people of color talk about racism with Jews? What are some of the challenges that arise?

Allyship

To recap: what is antisemitism to YOU, now that you have read through these sources? How has your understanding changed? Flip back to where you discussed it before.

If you were to see antisemitism at AU, would you know what to look for? Would you feel comfortable responding?

How do you think Jewish students could use allies when they face antisemitism?

What are ways that you might start to build deeper connections with Jews on campus, with/within the Jewish community, knowing what you know now?

What are ways that Jews and non-Jews can open up space for one another in our moving against hegemony and oppression on campus and beyond?