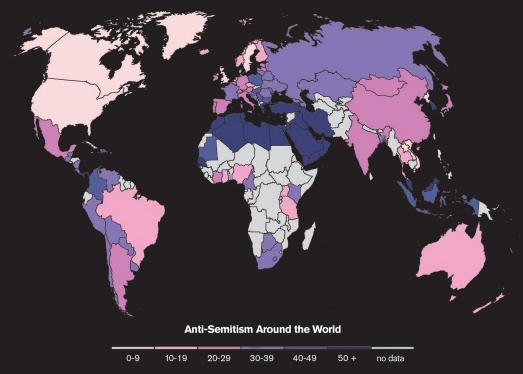
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The Lowe Family Research Workshop

Anti-Semitism in Comparative Perspective:

Recent Trends and Research Frontiers

paper synopses



about the workshop

Recent years have witnessed a dramatic rise in anti-Semitic incidents and the growth of anti-Semitic attitudes around the world. New research estimates more than a quarter of the world—1.09 billion people out of more than 4.1 billion people surveyed—harbors anti-Semitic attitudes. This workshop—organized by David Siroky and Lenka Bustikova of the School of Politics and Global Studies at Arizona State University—brings together leading scholars from around the globe to discuss the frontiers in the study of anti-Semitism and to debate critical factors that influence where and when ethnoreligious groups, and Jews in particular, are likely to be targeted and viewed with prejudice.

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The Jew in the Central European Imagination

Hana Kubatova Charles University Prague, Czech Republic

Slovakia has enough reasons to reflect on its role in World War II and the Holocaust. Wartime Slovakia was not only a pragmatic ally of Nazi Germany but an ideological one as well. Until the outbreak of the 1944 Slovak National Uprising and the subsequent German occupation of the country, Slovakia was governed by a local administration, perceived as also legitimate by the majority population. The regime attempted to bridge Catholic and fascist principles in its rule, and the different wings within the state-party, the Hlinka Slovak People's Party, competed with each other for Hitler's attention and approval. Headed by Jozef Tiso, who enjoyed both secular power as a president but also religious authority as a priest in a country where most identified with the Roman Catholic Church, the government introduced harsh anti-Jewish laws, at times surpassing the severity of Nazi legislation. By presenting the so-called Jewish guestion as an opportunity for the majority society to enhance their social standing, large sections of the population participated in "limiting Jewish influence in the social and economic life of Slovakia," a euphemism for a wide range of discriminatory measures, including the restriction of Jewish employment, confiscation of Jewish farmland and forests, liquidating and seizing Jewish businesses, and selling personal property of Jews, including clothes, shoes and household items at actions that often overlapped with Jews being wedged on cattle cars and deported, most of them to almost imminent death. As established, the widespread local complicity in robbing the Jews, long-awaited by many and done in full daylight, has been linked to anti-Jewish violence, institutional and communal, during the war and in its aftermath. The Slovak government took an active role in the 1942 deportations, in which local gendarmes, assisted by military personnel, including the

paramilitary Hlinka guard, transported approximately 58,000 Jews (out of 89,000 in 1940 numbers) to Auschwitz and the Lublin area. The 1944 deportations, in which additional 13,000 Jews were deported from Slovakia, most of them to Auschwitz and Theresienstadt, were orchestrated by German occupying forces, especially the Einsatzgruppe H of the Security Police and SD, which accompanied the Wehrmacht in occupying the country. Local paramilitary formations, especially the Emergency Divisions of the Hlinka Guard, however, played a crucial role in hunting the Jews in hiding. In many cases, Jews feared the Germans as much as their Slovak henchmen. The Hlinka Guard also participated in the most vicious German-orchestrated atrocities in Slovakia, targeting real or alleged partisans, many of them Jews, in Kremnička (November 1944–March 1945) and Nemecká (January 1945).

Understanding the Holocaust as a communal, intimate genocide, to reference historians Omer Bartov and Natalia Aleksiun, and as an ingroup transgression that in hindsight is more often avoided than acknowledged, to point to the works of social psychologists Nyla Branscombe or Michael J. A. Wohl, my recent work looks into strategies that individuals, groups, and states adopt to avoid responsibility for harm committed by members of the in-group in the past. A number of avoidance strategies could be observed across Europe since the aftermath: attempts have been made, for instance, to place the troubled past in a parenthesis or to shift the blame onto others, be this "fascists," "traitors of the nation," or the victims themselves. To protect the "good name" of the nation, most countries of postwar Europe have also exaggerated the scope of their anti-fascist resistance. As the historian Tony Judt aptly noted in this regard, for a country to be considered innocent in postwar Europe, "a nation had to have resisted and to have done so in its overwhelming majority." Recently, there have also been attempts to secure "feel-good" narratives of World War II by presenting Slovaks as righteous resisters, as actual saviors of the Jews. With all this being said, I also show that what further complicates the coming to terms with one's troubled past, in eastern Europe in general as in

Slovakia in particular, is the already mentioned communal or intimate character of the Holocaust on these territories, where choices taken by the gentiles had direct impact on lives of their Jewish neighbors. In short, there has not only been more of what to remember and forget in post-1945 eastern Europe, to come back to Judt once again, as there "were more Jews in the eastern half of Europe and more of them were killed; most of the killing took place in this region and many more locals took an active part in it." There has also been more of what is at stake here when it comes to how the Holocaust is made sense years later, and this is precisely because of how implicated the majority societies were in the Nazi plan for the eradication of the European Jewry. Indeed, as the continuous mnemonic battels over World War II history suggest, interpreting the Holocaust matters across eastern Europe, provoking, in the words of political scholars George Soroka and Félix Krawatzek, "strong emotions and a sense that wider social identities are at stake," seven decades after the events as ever before.

Middleman Minorities and Ethnic Violence:

Anti-Jewish Pogroms in the Russian Empire

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Ethnic minorities that dominate middleman occupations, such as traders and financiers, often become targets of persecution and ethnic violence. An important example is Jews in Medieval Western and Modern Eastern Europe.

Political science literature argues that these "middleman minorities" are persecuted because of the very nature of their occupations: the majority views minorities specializing in credit and trade as "unproductive" and considers that these groups earn their living dishonestly through "parasitism" and "exploitation" of the majority. This sentiment, in the view of political scientists, explains why middleman minorities are particularly vulnerable.

Economic literature, in contrast, considers economic competition between different ethnic groups as one of the primary drivers of ethnic conflict. It has been argued that ethnic minorities who directly compete with the majority are more likely to become the target of ethnic violence compared to minorities occupying economic niches the majority does not specialize in. Many episodes of violence against middleman minorities, however, took place without any increase in competition with the majority. In these episodes, violence broke out even though the economic activities of the targeted groups complemented those of the majority. Which mechanism drives such violence?

To address this question, we examine the conditions under which violence against middleman minorities breaks out. In particular, we focus on the historical events that brought the word pogrom into European languages. We examine the determinants of the outbreaks of anti-Jewish mob violence in the 19th and early 20th century in the Pale of Settlement, a vast area in the Russian Empire where Jews were allowed to live and where they dominated market-intermediary occupations, such as trading and moneylending.

We combine detailed data on the location and timing of anti-Jewish pogroms, measures of shocks to agricultural output and to prices of the main agricultural commodity, data on local ethnic composition by occupation, and proxies for pre-existing antisemitism to explore the causes of pogroms.

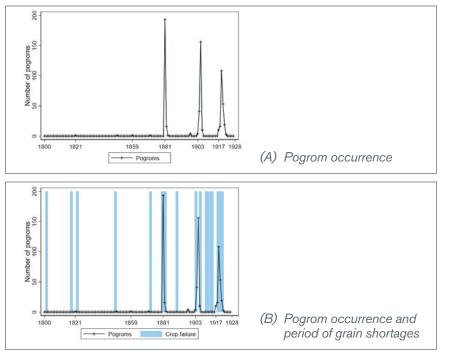
We find that pogroms occurred when severe economic shocks coincided with political turmoil, and mostly in localities where Jews dominated credit and trade in grain. Importantly, economic shocks in times of political stability did not result in pogroms. In addition, Jewish domination over any other sector of the local economy including traders of non-agricultural goods was not associated with an increase in the probability of pogroms.

Our main findings are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, which highlight the variation in pogroms over time and across localities. In Panel A of Figure 1, we present the number of pogroms over time, which illustrates that the vast majority of pogroms came in three waves. In Panel B, we overlay this time series with economic shocks, i.e., the times of severe crop failures in

Middleman Minorities and Ethnic Violence: Anti-Jewish Pogroms in the Russian Empire

major grain-producing areas, which led to substantial increases in grain prices. In Panel C, we superimpose the timing of pogroms on episodes of political turmoil, i.e., the periods of extreme political uncertainty about the future, such as following the assassination of Alexander II, the Tsar-Liberator, when peasants thought serfdom would be reinstalled by the new tsar, or during wars that led to occupation of Russia's territory, or the Russian revolutions. In Panel D, we show what happens when the economic shocks coincided with political turmoil. The figure shows that pogrom waves occurred every time economic shocks coincided with political turmoil are distinct: economic shocks that coincided with political turmoil were no more severe on average than those that did not coincide with political turmoil. Several episodes of extremely bad harvests, including the largest famine in the Russian Empire of 1891, took place during periods of political stability and did not cause ethnic violence.





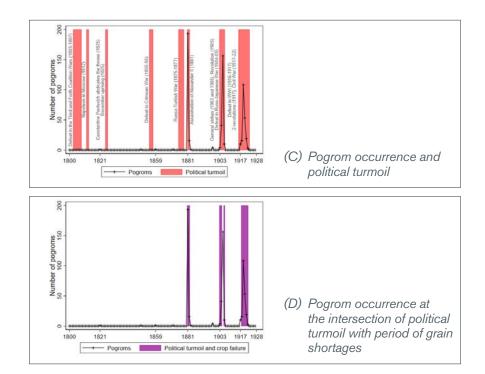


Figure 2 presents the second key driver of pogroms—the Jewish domination over middleman occupations servicing agriculture: moneylending and grain trading. Panel A shows that the frequency of pogroms in localities that suffered from local crop failures in times of political turmoil strongly depended on the share of Jews among local moneylenders: in times of political turmoil, local crop failures were more likely to trigger pogroms in places where most of the moneylenders were Jewish. Panel B shows that the share of Jews among local grain traders is a strong predictor of pogroms when political turmoil coincided with periods of high grain prices.

Middleman Minorities and Ethnic Violence: Anti-Jewish Pogroms in the Russian Empire

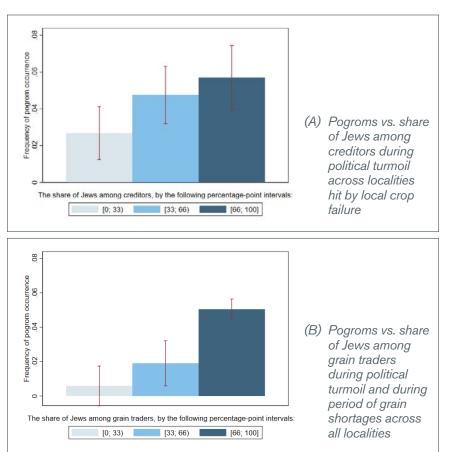


Figure 2: Pogrom occurrence and the shares of Jews among creditors and grain traders

What could explain these results?

We consider several potential explanations for these findings and conclude that neither the ethnic violence caused by scapegoating nor ethnic inequality can explain the evidence.

We argue that Jewish middlemen were the providers of insurance to the majority during economic crises: they forgave outstanding debts and extended new credit. However, political turmoil introduced uncertainty about the continuation of the long-term relationship between Jewish creditors and grain traders, on the one hand, and the majority group, on the other hand, making the implicit insurance contracts nonviable, because they were based on the continuation value in repeated interaction. As a result, the concomitance of economic shocks and political turmoil resulted in three major waves of pogroms, during which Jewish middlemen were the primary target: peasants organized pogroms when neither the repayment nor renegotiation of loans from Jewish creditors was possible, and buyers of grain turned against Jews when grain prices were high and there was no credible way to commit to payment in instalments for the grain that Jewish traders brought to the market.

Our analysis suggests broader lessons. First, political shocks interact with income shocks to trigger ethnic conflict. Second, occupational segregation across ethnic groups might not reduce conflict, even though it does reduce interethnic competition; this happens when minorities specialize in middleman occupations, but the uncertain environment makes longer-term relationships difficult to sustain.

Antisemitism, Conspiratorial Politics,

and the U.S. Election of 2020

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Of the many images from the January 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol, some of the most shocking were the widely disseminated displays of antisemitic symbols. One bearded man wore a hoodie emblazoned with the words "Camp Auschwitz." Another sported a T-shirt with the inscription "6MWE" above the symbols of Italian fascism, an acronym well known to the far right for "6 Million Wasn't Enough." Still others wore sweatshirts or raised American flags with the symbol "Q" superimposed, a reference to QAnon, the conspiracy theory group whose anonymous leader communicates online with followers in clues and riddles supposedly exposing a struggle between Donald Trump and a cabal of child-trafficking, Democratic Party-affiliated elites.

What remains unclear is the actual impact of antisemitism on political behavior and its relationship to the new conspiracism in U.S. politics. Kane, Craig, and Wald (2004: 281) in their study of Florida maintain that "although there still are enough voters with anti-Semitic views to affect the outcome of a close election, their numbers do not appear to be as great as some observers have feared." More recently, however, others

have worried that the willingness of politicians such as Donald Trump to ignore or even encourage white nationalists who want to "make America great again" may have increased the salience of antisemitism in political life (Grossman, 2017).

These concerns raise the question of the sources of contemporary antisemitism and its relationship to other forms of prejudice. To what extent does antisemitism correlate with anti-Black racial resentment and xenophobia? Has it been reactivated in American political life by the entry of new conspiracy groups and does it influence voting behavior? Did antisemitism influence the vote for Trump? Our article addresses these questions with two nationally representative surveys undertaken in January (N=1097) and August 2020 (N=1612). The analysis shows that antisemitism is a multidimensional construct that correlates poorly with racial resentment but is much more clearly related to traditional forms of xenophobia. Although we find some evidence of antisemitism among groups traditionally on the "left," a much more powerful relationship is to be found on the conspiracist right. We find an especially strong association between antisemitism and QAnon followers and a modest but meaningful correlation between antisemitism/QAnon support and the decision to vote for Donald Trump.

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Contemporary Left Antisemitism

David Hirsh

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This paper centers on some of the key ideas in my 2018 book, and of an article, now published, in defense of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism:

- Contemporary Left Antisemitism (London: Routledge, 2018)
- 'It was the new phenomenon of Israel-focused antisemitism that required the new definition. (*fathom,* online)

The book begins by describing the Livingstone Formulation, named in 2006 after the then Mayor of London Ken Livingstone, is the standard articulation of the opposite assumption. The Livingstone Formulation says that that when people raise the issue of antisemitism, they are probably doing so in bad faith in a dishonest effort to silence legitimate criticism of Israel. It warns us to be suspicious of Jewish claims to have experienced antisemitism. It warns us to begin with the skeptical assumption that such claims are often sneaky tricks to gain the upper hand for Israel in debates with supporters of the Palestinians.

This is the substantial position of the 'call to reject' the IHRA definition of antisemitism with which my article engages.

The Livingstone Formulation does not allege that Jews often misjudge what has happened to them, it alleges that they lie about what has happened to them. It is not an allegation of error, or over-zealousness, perhaps explicable by reference to the antisemitism of the past. It is an allegation of conspiracy. The 'call to reject' does not say that Jews and Jewish institutions campaign for IHRA out of a genuine if misplaced fear of antisemitism, it says that they do so with an ulterior motive of re-describing criticism of Israel as antisemitism in order to make it appear illegitimate. This is not an allegation made against this or that Jewish person, but against the overwhelming majority of Jews and their institutions.

The book goes on to give a history of the rise of the Corbyn movement in the UK Labour Party. The recent Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) report on antisemitism in the Labour Party under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership felt the need to re-state the Macpherson principle specifically in relation to antisemitism. The report says that to assume that allegations of antisemitism are made in bad faith for ulterior motives may itself be antisemitic. When this was done by officers of the Labour Party, says the report, it constituted 'unlawful harassment' under the Equality Act (2010). The EHRC Principle is that the practice of dismissing complaints of antisemitism as 'smears' and 'fake' may itself be antisemitic.

The wording is important here because it still requires judgment of the specifics of the case. Of course, it is possible for an accusation to be made that is in fact fake, or a smear, just as it is possible for a woman to invent a story of rape. But to dismiss such accusations without proper investigation, without empathetic consideration and without taking them seriously may well be antisemitic—or sexist.

Chapters 4 and 6 are the pre-history to Labour antisemitism, which is the rise of antizionism and the boycott movement in the academic trade unions and its spread to the wider left and Trade Union movement.

Chapter 5 is a genealogy of the IHRA working definition of antisemitism and an introduction to the politics of the struggles over defining antisemitism. This is part of the context of the contemporary discussion about the definition.

Chapter 8 contains some thoughts about Jewish antizionism and its importance. This relates specifically to the framing of the 'call to reject',

Contemporary Left Antisemitism

which constructs a kind of inversion of identity politics. Generally, with identity politics, people say that their 'lived experience' as members of a targeted group gives them some special insight, partially hidden from those outside, to the nature of the racism that they suffer.

But the 'call to reject' inverts identity politics. Its claim is that membership of the targeted group gives them not a privileged view, based on experience, of the racism that Jews suffer, but rather... special inside knowledge of the self-serving and dishonest claims made by the majority of Jews! They write as though their standpoint requires them to bear witness against the majority of Jews and Jewish institutions and to warn non-Jews about Jewish cunning, dishonesty and selfishness.

Chapter 9 has some important thinking about sociology and method, in particular that we begin by studying the phenomenon of antisemitism, looking at it, and understanding what it is before going on to theorize it. We do not start by looking at things that are not antisemitism, for example 'criticism of Israel', and then define antisemitism negatively.

The epilog of the book was an opportunity to start to think about populism following the 2017 General Election in Britain in which the Labour Party gained ground. It is the beginning of an analysis of the Corbyn movement in relation to Brexit and Trump.

In my article about the IHRA definition, I argue that it is important to understand that the EHRC emphasized the accusation of bad faith in its report because its investigation found that the accusation of bad faith was a significant antisemitic phenomenon in the real world.

This method reflects my own understanding of what is at the heart of social science as an empirical and materialist discipline. The best social science begins by looking at the world, and only from that basis is it able to develop theories to help make sense of the world. To be sure, the process goes both ways: empirical observation informs concepts and concepts then help us to understand the world that we're looking at.

The IHRA definition is similar in this respect. It highlights the possibility of antisemitism which is related to hostility to Israel not because somebody thought it was a good idea in the abstract, but because that is a significant part of the antisemitism to which actual Jewish people are subjected in the material world, as it exists. The IHRA definition was written following the experience of antisemitism at the World Conference against Racism at Durban in 2001, where there was a largely successful campaign to designate 'Zionism' as the key racism on the planet after the defeat of apartheid.

This kind of political antisemitism, which targeted Jews as Zionists and Zionism as racism, was gaining ground on campuses too in the first years of the century. It was also related to what three of the key drafters of the definition describe as a 'resurgence in antisemitic incidents in Europe including violent attacks on Jewish targets. Most occurred in Western Europe, and many were identified as coming from parts of local Arab and Muslim communities.' Of course, the definition also kept an eye on the persistence of right-wing fascistic antisemitism, especially in Eastern Europe at that time. Today's populism, with its potentially antisemitic targeting of a metropolitan, educated, liberal, cosmopolitan elite, cast in opposition to a 'white working class', was not yet foreseen.

Any definition does not come first out of thought but out of an understanding of, and an effort to describe, a thing which exists.

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AfD and Anti-Semitism in Germany

in the Time of Pandemic

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This contribution uses the lens of (mis)representation to analyze contemporary antiemitism in Germany, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Anti-Semitism excludes Jews from its ethnonationalist definition of 'the people', but also uses tropes to accuse the current political elites of misrepresenting 'the true people'. This contribution proceeds in three steps. First, I briefly analyze the contemporary anti-Semitism in Germany, the rise of the Alternative for Germany (German: *Alternative für Deutschland*, AfD), and the AfD anti-Semitism. Then I analyze how AfD constructs claims of (mis)representation—the 'people' and the elite. Particular attention is paid to the instrumentalization of 'Jews' by the AfD. The paper's final part outlines the pandemic and the rise of anti-Semitism in the 2020 anti-governmental 'Anti-Corona' protests.

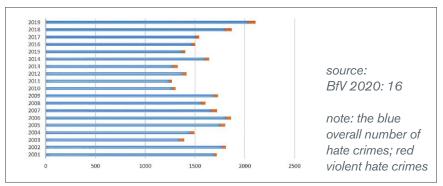
The paper highlights an important point—the anti-governmental protests during the COVID-19 pandemic brought anti-Semitism to the public square. The anti-corona protests made clear that beyond hate crime (online and offline), anti-Semitism is deeply rooted in German society, including in parts of the country's police and the military. Furthermore, it is instrumental to the populist radical right AfD.

Contemporary Anti-Semitism in Germany

Anti-Semitism is an amalgam of prejudice, resentment, and stereotypes (Wodak 2018). As an ideology, antisemitic prejudices, resentments, and stereotypes are flexible, "accommodating to new sociopolitical developments" (Wetzel 2014). Anti-Semitism excludes Jews from the 'people', defined in ethnonationalist terms. (Salzborn, 2018:76). The 'people' defined as Volksgemeinschaft (ethnonational community) is simultaneously opposed to the nation's multiethnic and civic notion and the idea of a society based on shared values and norms. As such,

the concept of Volksgemeinschaft is antithetic to democracy and incompatible with the constitutional order (2017 ruling of the German Constitutional Court).





Approximately 20% of German citizens harbor anti-Semitism in its primary or secondary forms (BfV 2020:8). The multifaceted nature of anti-Semitism makes its appeal broader while making it difficult to define and capture (Figure 1).

The AfD—The First Successful Radical Right Party since 1945

Since entering the German Parliament, AfD radicalized and is now a radical right-wing populist party (Berning 2017). The party evolved from "a party for antisemites into an antisemitic party" (Salzborn, 2018: 75). The AfD whitewashes history by simultaneously claiming victimhood for itself while rejecting the victimhood of the Shoa victims. When everybody is blameless, it is possible to blame the victims for 'trying to profit from their victimhood' (Wodak, 2018)

AfD in the German Parliament: Two Discourses in AfD's Claims of (mis) representation

Two discourses are key for understanding the AfD: nationalism and populism. The nationalism discourse portrays the AfD as the only party representing German values people. Populism discourse highlights the AfD as a party speaking for the 'small people' misrepresented by the established parties. These also include the Jews in Germany, whom AfD presents as the main victims of the government refugee policy. The AfD simultaneously excludes the Jews from its ethnonationalist definition of the people while also instrumentalizing the Jewish population as a fig leave against accusations of anti-Semitism and the responsibility of the radical right for the rise in antisemitic hate crimes.

Anti-Semitism during 2020 Anti-Corona protests

While most Germans support pandemic mitigation measures, a (vocal) minority of 20% of citizens rejects them. In 2020, this vocal minority organized large- and small-scale demonstrations. While the participants of these protests were heterogeneous, the organizers are often members or sympathizers of the radical right. Strong antisemitic elements, including striking visual cues, were present. Some protesters adopted David Star with embossed 'unvaccinated' as a symbol of the protests, and some also wore black and white clothing worn during World War II in concentration camps (Figure 2). While visually identifiable anti-Semites were a small minority of the protesters, they were tolerated and even embraced by their fellow protestors.

Figure 2. Anti-Corona protesters in Cologne (May 2020 Cologne)



Preliminary Conclusions

This contribution used the lens of (mis)representation to analyze contemporary anti-Semitism in Germany, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. This paper highlights an important point—the anti-governmental protests during the COVID-19 pandemic brought anti-Semitism from the shadows to the public square. Before the pandemic, the growing number and violence of (antisemitic) hate crimes and the spread of antisemitic propaganda online led to systematic attention by state institutions. What followed was the securitization of the discourse on anti-Semitism. The anticorona protests made clear that beyond hate crime (online and offline), anti-Semitism is deeply rooted in German society, including in parts of the country's police and the military. Furthermore, it is instrumental to the populist radical right AfD.

The pandemic protests made the anti-Semitism usually hidden in specialized online for avisible to the German public. The old antisemitic tropes were updated-the Jews were accused of spreading the coronavirus and financially profiting from it, and attempting to impose the 'new world order' via the vaccine. Once again, a Jew' became a resonant symbol of evil, disease, and death. Secondary anti-Semitism spread and normalized on social media, slowly spilled over into primary anti-Semitism. It stepped out of the shadows into the light-from online anonymity into the streets and squares. It presents itself as legitimate 'critical thinking' in a pluralist society. The spread of anti-Semitism on social media increased the tolerance (or decreased the inhibition threshold) for downplaying Holocaust and using radical right 'victimhood' narratives.

Exploring the roots and changes in antisemitic attitudes and the links between conventional and unconventional participation is paramount to designing better school curricula and policies to combat anti-Semitism.

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Variation in U.S. Anti-Semitic Events

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The crux of my research contributes to and builds bridges between several scholarly fields, including the study of ethnic politics, human rights, conflict processes, and minority identity formation by examining how political dynamics affect ethnoreligious and racial minority group security. My article, "Explaining Ethnoreligious Minority Targeting: Variation in U.S. Anti-Semitic Events," published in Perspectives on Politics in 2020, introduces both broad concepts and specific factors that explain hate crime variation, with a particular focus on bias-incidents targeting contemporary American Jewry. My book project, "Insecurity in Paradise: Anti-Semitism in Modern America," builds on this publication. It utilizes an interdisciplinary and mixed-methods approach to fill a critical vacuum in our knowledge of modern Jew-hatred by answering: why reported anti-Semitic hate crimes vary in the U.S. and how these events alter attitudes towards Jews, Israel, and perceptions of security. Specifically, the research presented in this project utilizes large-N statistical analyses and an original survey experiment to examine the factors and circumstances that explain anti-Semitic events and hate crime variation. In doing so, I explain why American Jews are more likely to be targeted in particular places, during certain times, following discrete events, and by specific groups through a novel theory applicable to all ethnoreligious and racial minorities: opportunity, distinguishability, stimuli, and organization.

We are currently living in a time where the rise of domestic hate and discrimination concerns scholars, security officials, and average Americans alike. With systematic research in this arena more in demand than ever, my work underscores that not all prejudice and bigotry manifest uniformly. It also highlights how the presence of and competition between hate groups can measurably impact their primary target population's security. Specifically, for American Jewry, my research finds that living in one of the most philo-Semitic countries in the world does not fully protect Jews from being the target of violent anti-Semitism motivated by the actions of Israel (real, exaggerated, and fictitious). It also underscores the unique threat posed to the U.S. Jewish community that accompanies the rise of white nationalism.

related works

Feinberg, A. 2020. "Explaining Ethnoreligious Minority Targeting: Variation in U.S. Anti-Semitic Events" *Perspectives on Politics*, 18 (3), 770-787.

Feinberg, A. in progress. Insecurity in Paradise: Anti-Semitism in Modern America

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