

Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism

NEWSLETTER • ACADEMIC YEAR 2024–2025

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From the Director



Maurice Samuels

When I sat down to write this contribution to the 2025 newsletter, reports broke of the shooting of two young aides to the Israeli embassy in Washington, DC, by a man who shouted “Free Palestine” when he was taken into custody. After registering grief for the families of the two victims, I thought to myself, “I’m surprised something like this hasn’t happened sooner.”

As the war in Gaza drags on, causing enormous suffering and loss of life for the Palestinian population, the tendency to demonize Israelis – and Jews in general – grows stronger. This is partly a symptom of our polarized political culture, in which anyone who disagrees with us becomes our enemy. The problem is no doubt exacerbated by social media algorithms that feed our grievances and block out conflicting points of view. We see a similar kind of demonization taking place between Democrats and Republicans. But I see something unique – and uniquely dangerous – happening in relation to Israel.

The monumental report issued by Harvard’s Presidential Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Israel Bias, which I encourage everyone to read along with the accompanying report on Islamophobia, notes that a change took place within the pro-Palestinian movement in the 2010s. Whereas prior to this moment, pro-Palestine student groups placed emphasis on fostering dialogue with their Zionist peers, more recent activism has condemned such exchanges. Instead, many pro-Palestine groups have insisted on “anti-normalization” of the Israeli enemy – in essence, refusing to treat Israel as a legitimate nation and refusing to treat anyone who supports Israel’s right to exist as worthy of recognition in any form.

The “anti-normalization” approach is especially prevalent on certain American college campuses, where it has led to the exclusion of Jewish students and faculty – anyone suspected of harboring “Zionist” sympathies. Refusing to dialogue is of course contrary to the very premise of universities, which are supposed to be places where ideas can be exchanged and challenged freely. And the demonization of those with whom we disagree can also lead to the kind of violence we saw in Washington, DC. It is a short step from anti-normalization to the kind of dehumanization that justifies the taking of a life.

How can we combat such hatred? Banning all protests and deporting the protesters – without due process – is not, in my opinion, the way to do it. It is the mirror image of the tactics used by the protesters to shut down dialogue and dehumanize their adversaries. We need more dialogue and debate, not less. We also need more education about antisemitism to set the ground rules for discussion about Israel and

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From the Director (continued)

to ensure that disagreements do not veer into demonization. This has been the goal of the Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism since its founding in 2011.

The program has focused, from the beginning, on hosting lectures and conferences relating to antisemitism. We have also sponsored a series of postdoctoral fellows who have taught classes to Yale undergraduates and have given research grants to faculty and students. However, after October 7, 2023, we convinced the Yale administration that we can and should be doing more. As part of the planned expansion of the program, we began fundraising to hire a Managing Director. Whereas I have run the program in addition to my duties as a professor of French and chair of multiple departments, the new Managing Director would be able to focus full-time on the antisemitism program. I am happy to report that thanks to the generous support of donors, we raised the money to fund this position in record time.

I am also extremely happy to report that after a national search, we found the perfect Managing Director. Linda Maizels has a Ph.D. in Jewish History from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where she wrote a dissertation on American campus antisemitism. She is the author of a well-respected book entitled *What is Antisemitism? A Contemporary Introduction*, published by Routledge in 2023. Linda has taught in multiple university settings and worked most recently for the US Department of State. She brings not just enormous experience to the job, but also enormous energy and a deep commitment to fostering the kind of dialogue that is so sorely needed at Yale and beyond. I am excited for us to get to work.

I will let Linda describe some of the exciting new directions we are imagining for the Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism. Please join me in welcoming her to the program and to Yale!

Maurice Samuels

Director, Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism
Betty Jane Anlyan Professor of French

From the Managing Director



Linda Maizels

I sat down to write this piece much later than Maurie wrote his, and there have been, unfortunately, new developments. Less than two weeks after the horrific murders of two Israeli Embassy staffers in Washington, DC, a man was taken into custody in Boulder, Colorado for allegedly throwing Molotov cocktails at a peaceful march calling for the return of Israeli hostages from Gaza; of the 29 victims, one died from her wounds. A subsequent *New York Times* editorial on June 14 warned that “On a per capita basis, Jews face far greater risks of being victims of hate crimes than members of any other demographic groups” and pointed to “demonizing, delegitimizing rhetoric” on both the left and the right as a contributory factor.

On a somewhat more hopeful note, a ceasefire between Israel and Iran, finalized on June 24 to end twelve days of hostilities, is still holding, and hopes are growing for a 60-day truce and hostage release deal between Israel and Hamas. Still, while these measures may calm the situation in the Middle East, even temporarily, the question is whether this will translate to a more tranquil and civil climate for American college and university campuses in the 2025–26 academic year.

Taking all of this into account, YPSA will continue, as it has done in years past, to bring quality academic programs about antisemitism to the Yale community and beyond. YPSA’s mandate is to grapple with both contemporary and historical aspects of antisemitism, and the 2025–26 program of events will be similarly diverse, including offerings on antisemitism in European football, the development of Raphael Lemkin’s legal concept of genocide, poetry during the Holocaust, Iranian Jews and antisemitism, content moderation against hate speech on the Internet, the roots of present-day campus antisemitism, and the resurgence of contemporary American antisemitism (to name just a few). We will continue our partnerships with other entities around Yale, such as the Program in Jewish Studies, the Brodie Center for Jewish and Israeli Law, and the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies. We also plan to diversify our offerings by looking beyond our usual webinars to different media, such as films, podcasts, and graphic novels.

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From the Managing Director (continued)

We will continue to advise and support the Yale administration by offering our expertise in meeting the challenges of countering antisemitism, both on and off campus. We are proud to be partnering with our Yale colleagues, who have navigated the difficulties of the last two years with empathy and forthrightness, and we look forward to partnering with them should difficult situations arise in the next academic year.

We are excited to announce that YPSA will be forming its first undergraduate student board. Students will help us with a variety of needs, including planning programs and beta testing educational materials. In return, we will respond to their interests, such as discussion and reading groups, research opportunities, and leadership training for students who are interested in facilitating meaningful dialogue on contentious topics related to antisemitism, Jews, Israel, and Zionism.

We are in the preliminary stages of identifying opportunities for collaborations with other centers and programs that are similarly devoted to the academic study of antisemitism. While Yale and Indiana University were, at one time, the only two universities with a dedicated programmatic focus on antisemitism, the aftermath of Hamas attacks on Israel on October 7, 2023, has led to a proliferation of similar academic units. YPSA hopes to parlay this burgeoning interest in the academic study of antisemitism into a series of cooperative ventures with other institutions. Our primary goal for this year is to produce educational materials – videos, digital tools, and possibly graduate student seminars – for a wide range of participants.

YPSA is thrilled to support two postdoctoral fellows, Claire Aubin and Arash Azizi, in the coming academic year. Aubin is a historian of Nazism, Holocaust perpetration, and 20th-century American culture. Her doctoral dissertation is the basis for a forthcoming monograph with Cambridge University Press, titled *The Homeland: Nazi Perpetrators as Immigrants to America*. Azizi is a historian of the modern Middle East and global history of the twentieth century with a focus on social and political movements. He is the author of *The Shadow Commander: Soleimani, the U.S. and Iran's Global Ambitions* and *What Iranians Want: Women, Life, Freedom*. His upcoming book, *Counterweights: Iran, Israel and the Battle for the Middle East*, will be published by Public Affairs. Both Aubin and Azizi will be teaching courses at Yale during the spring semester.

The program will continue to fund the research projects of Yale faculty and students through the Salo W. and Jeannette M. Baron Research Grants. Check the YPSA website to see past recipients of these grants and watch the YPSA listserv for a spring semester program honoring the research of 2025 student recipients.

Finally, YPSA staff members are working on revamping our website to make it more attractive and user-friendly. The current site will remain in service until we make that transition, so please feel free to browse, and be sure to check out the videos of our past events on our website or on YouTube. For those of you who missed our spring conference, “Antisemitism and the Crisis of Liberalism,” you can watch recordings of all five panels at either location.

I have only been at Yale for about four months, but I am already feeling at home. I am grateful to be working with my new YPSA colleagues, Maurice Samuels and Inessa Laskova, as well as Diane Brown from the Whitney Humanities Center. I feel privileged to have met some outstanding Yale undergraduate students whom I hope will form the nucleus of our new board. Perhaps most important of all, I met Handsome Dan the Bulldog, and I am trying to figure out how to smuggle him into my office as often as possible.

I hope that I will also have the opportunity to meet some of you. Until then, enjoy the summer heat, and I look forward to seeing you at YPSA programming in the fall!

Linda Maizels

Managing Director, Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism

The **Salo W. and Jeannette M. Baron Research Grants** support current Yale University undergraduate or graduate students, as well as Yale faculty, who wish to pursue focused research on some aspect of antisemitism.

Lauren Crawford *Ph.D. student, History*

Lauren Crawford's dissertation, "Antisemitism, Islamophobia, and the 'War on Terror' in Germany," examines how increasing Western involvement and intervention in Muslim-majority countries, from the early 1980s on, has shaped the contours of Holocaust memory culture. In so doing, the dissertation reconceptualizes how Holocaust memory culture became the basis for the reunified German state's liberal humanist ethical commitments, encapsulated in the language of "never again" and denoting the right to be protected from (genocidal) violence.

Dylan Gunn '25, *History*

This project seeks to explore the nature of antisemitism in Ireland. Ireland's Jewish population, while small and primarily concentrated in Dublin, has a long history within the country and the Irish diaspora. As the Republic of Ireland seeks to place itself as a global advocate for peace, it has been a steadfast critic of Israel's conduct in its war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip. This research will complement the current focus on international affairs with a greater attention towards the lived experiences of Irish Jews in Ireland itself. Given the geographical concentration of this community, this research will include interviews and engagement with community leaders and spaces to more fully understand their experiences with antisemitism and other aspects of modern Irish culture, and there will also be a photojournalist component to the project.

Maya Rabinowitz, *Ph.D. student, Psychology*

This project investigates current perceptions of solidarity and betrayal between Black and Jewish Americans. Historically, Black and Jewish Americans have collaborated in advocating for collective social and racial justice, connected by shared experiences of discrimination and marginalization. However, recent tensions surrounding the conflict in Israel and Gaza have strained this relationship, and instances of both antisemitism and anti-Black racism are on the rise. This project investigates how Jewish Americans and Black Americans perceive the actions, attitudes and status of the other group, and the impact of these intergroup perceptions on intentions for future solidarity. In the ongoing effort to combat collective discrimination, it is essential to investigate the barriers and facilitators of intergroup cooperation, to more effectively advocate for shared social justice.

Eran Rubinstein, *Ph.D. student, Political Science*

This research examines the involvement of Jewish Germans in the Imperial German Army during WWI and how this might have affected local antisemitism trends in the Weimar Republic between 1919-1933. Following Germany's defeat in World War I, nationalists propagated the stab-in-the-back myth (*Dolchstoßlegende*), which asserted that the country's loss stemmed from the perceived disloyalty of internal groups, particularly the Jewish population. This claim is contradicted by historical evidence: approximately 12,000 Jewish soldiers lost their lives in combat out of an estimated 100,000 who served. This research investigates how varying degrees of participation, sacrifice, and commemoration among Jewish soldiers from different towns in Germany influenced local antisemitic sentiments during the Weimar era and public acceptance of the stab-in-the-back myth.

Ellen VanDyke Bell '25 *M.A.R., Divinity School*

This project addresses antisemitism on university campuses through the lens of Jews of Color (JoCs). Drawing from the experiences of JoCs in higher education—as well as the author's perspective as an African American Jewish woman completing her academic work in ethics and religious studies—this project explores how racialized perceptions of Jewish identity shape campus experiences and responses to antisemitism. This work will show how institutional definitions and approaches to antisemitism often overlook the racial and ethnic diversity within Jewish communities and will focus on how antisemitism uniquely affects JoCs, including how their experiences are rendered invisible or misunderstood in academic spaces. These patterns will be documented to elevate strategies that promote solidarity, education, and more inclusive responses. Ultimately, this project seeks to broaden how antisemitism is understood and addressed in university settings, and to encourage campus conversations that reflect the full complexity of contemporary Jewish identity.

Alice Kaplan is Sterling Professor of French and a specialist of 20th-century France. Her teaching and research have focused on the Second World War, the Liberation, and the Algerian War, and on the writers Céline, Proust, and Camus. Kaplan is a recipient of the French *Légion d'Honneur*. She was awarded the Los Angeles Times Book Prize in History for her book *The Collaborator: The Trial and Execution of Robert Brasillach* and the Henry Adams Prize for *The Interpreter*. Kaplan's current project is a history of the preparation of the Nuremberg war crimes trials by her father, American prosecutor Sidney J. Kaplan (1909-1962).

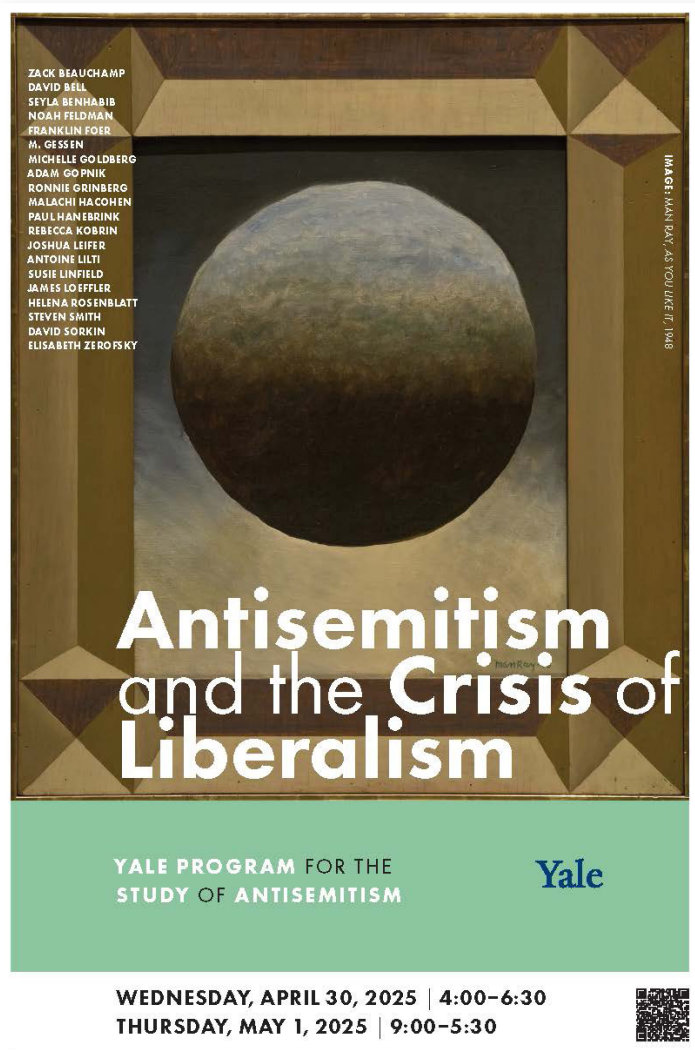
Mark Oppenheimer is a research associate at Yale and is professor of practice at the Danforth Center on Religion and Politics at Washington University in St. Louis. He is the author of five books, including, most recently, *Squirrel Hill: The Tree of Life Synagogue Shooting and the Soul of a Neighborhood*. His current research is for his forthcoming book, *The Dirty Bicker: Princeton, the Jews, and the Antisemitism Scandal of 1958*, which details the outrage that ensued when 35 students, about half of whom were Jewish, received no bids to join Princeton's elite eating clubs.

YPSA

Antisemitism and the Crisis of Liberalism Conference, 2025



Roundtable (Adam Gopnik)



Left: Roundtable (Chair Samuel Moyn, M.Gessen, Zack Beauchamp, Michelle Goldberg)

SEPTEMBER 24, 2024

PANEL DISCUSSION: “Facing Anti-Arab Racism, Antisemitism, and Islamophobia on Our Campus: Faculty Discuss their Experiences”

Moderator: **Maytal Saltiel**, University Chaplain

Panelists

- **Teresa Chahine**, Sheila and Ron Marcelo Senior Lecturer in Social Entrepreneurship at Yale School of Management and Director of the Social Innovation Initiative at Yale Jackson School of Global Affairs
- **Shiri Goren**, Director of the Hebrew Program in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations
- **Hani Mowafi**, Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine at Yale School of Medicine
- **Maurice Samuels**, Betty Jane Anlyan Professor of French and Director of the Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism

OCTOBER 10, 2024

PANEL DISCUSSION: “‘The Worst Year Ever’: A Conversation about Jews and Israel After October 7th”

Moderator: **Maurice Samuels**, Betty Jane Anlyan Professor of French and Director of the Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism

Panelists

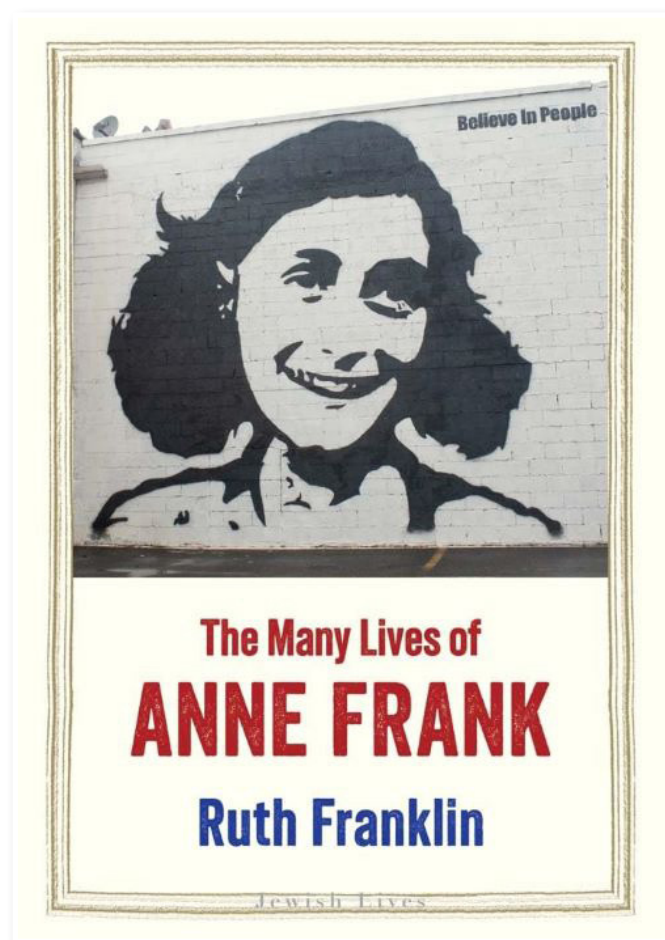
- **Lee Yaron**, *Haaretz* investigative reporter and author of *10/7: A Hundred Human Stories*
- **Joshua Cohen**, Pulitzer Prize Winning Author of *The Netanyahus* and Visiting Professor of Jewish Studies and English
- **Eliyahu Stern**, Professor of Modern Jewish History

OCTOBER 30, 2024

WEBINAR: “Coping with Defeat: Islam, Catholicism and the Modern State”

Jonathan Laurence, Professor of Political Science at Boston College and Director of the Clough Center for the Study of Constitutional Democracy

 [Watch Recording](#)



NOVEMBER 13, 2024

WEBINAR: “The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: The True Story”

Hillel Cohen, Associate Professor in the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies and head of the Cherrick Center for the Study of Zionism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

 [Watch Recording](#)

NOVEMBER 19, 2024

LECTURE: “Primo Levi and Slave Labor at Auschwitz-III”

Robert Gordon, Professor of Italian at the University of Cambridge.

Events 2024 – 2025

JANUARY 22, 2025

WEBINAR: “The Ideology of Settler Colonialism and the Israel-Palestine Conflict”

Adam Kirsch, poet, critic, and editor at *The Wall Street Journal*

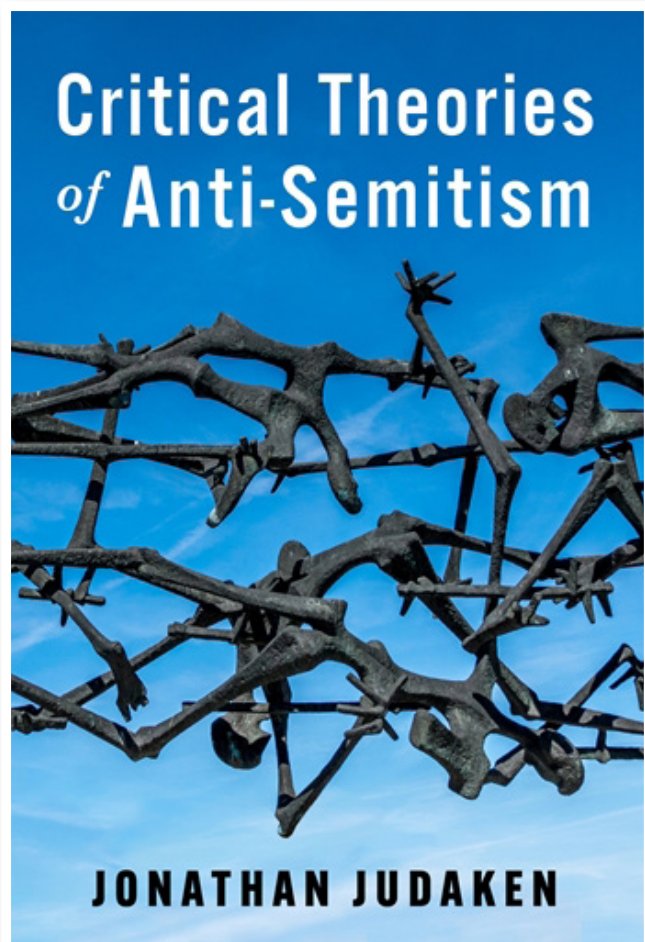
 [Watch Recording](#)

FEBRUARY 5, 2025

WEBINAR: “The Many Lives of Anne Frank”

Ruth Franklin, literary critic

 [Watch Recording](#)



FEBRUARY 19, 2025

WEBINAR: “Critical Theories of Anti-Semitism”

Jonathan Judaken, Gloria M. Goldstein Professor of Jewish History & Thought at Washington University in St. Louis

 [Watch Recording](#)

MARCH 3, 2025

LECTURE: “The Fate of Bulgaria’s Jews during WWII”

Joseph Benatov, Director, Modern Hebrew Language Program; Lecturer in Foreign Languages, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations; Associate Director, Jewish Studies Program at the University of Pennsylvania

APRIL 30- MAY 1, 2025

CONFERENCE: “Antisemitism and the Crisis of Liberalism”

Panel 1: From the Enlightenment to 1848 and Beyond

Chair: **Isaac Nakhimovsky (Yale University)**

David Bell (Princeton University)

Jews in the French Enlightenment Imagination

Antoine Lilti (Collège de France)

Was Voltaire an anti-Semite? The Enlightenment on Trial

Helena Rosenblatt (CUNY)

Freedom of Religion and the First Liberals: Madame de Staël and

Benjamin Constant on Judaism

David Sorkin (Yale University)

The Invention of Emancipation Politics

Paul Hanebrink (Rutgers University)

Jews, Liberalism, and the Long Shadow of “Judeo-Bolshevism”:

The Case of Hungary

 [Watch Recording](#)

Panel 2: Theorists of Liberalism and the “Jewish Question”

Chair: **Seyla Benhabib (Yale University)**

Steven Smith (Yale University)

Spinoza’s Jewish Question: His or Ours?

Ronnie Grinberg (University of Oklahoma)

The New York Intellectuals, Gender, and Liberalism in the Age of McCarthy

Rebecca Kobrin (Columbia University)

Columbia University, Antisemitism and the Making of Lionel

Trilling’s The Liberal Imagination

Malachi Hacoheh (Duke University)

Jewish History and the End of the Liberal Era

 [Watch Recording](#)

Panel 3: Is Illiberalism Bad for the Jews?

Chair: Yair Listokin (Yale University)

Franklin Foer (The Atlantic)

Was American Jewish Liberalism a God That Failed?

James Loeffler (Johns Hopkins University)

Fearless Speech: On the Possibility of Jewish Liberalism

Elisabeth Zerofsky (New York Times)

Is the New European Far Right Philosemitic?



[Watch Recording](#)

Panel 4: American Liberals and Zionism

Chair: Eliyahu Stern (Yale University)

Noah Feldman (Harvard University)

Between Idealism and Idealization: American Liberal Zionism from Brandeis to the Present Crisis

Joshua Leifer (Yale University)

The Making and Unmaking of American Liberal Zionism

Susie Linfield (New York University)

Zionism and Antizionism: The End of Liberalism?



[Watch Recording](#)

Panel 5: Roundtable

Chair: Samuel Moyn (Yale University)

Zack Beauchamp (Vox)

M. Gessen (New York Times)

Michelle Goldberg (New York Times)

Adam Gopnik (The New Yorker)



[Watch Recording](#)

JUNE 5, 2025

CONFERENCE: “Empirical Studies of Antisemitism”

Cosponsored with the Brodie Center for Jewish and Israeli Law



Is Illiberalism Bad for the Jews? (Chair Yair Listokin, Franklin Foer, Elisabeth Zerofsky, James Loeffler)



From the Enlightenment to 1848 and Beyond (Helena Rosenblatt, Antoine Lilti, Paul Hanebrink)



Is the New European Far Right Philosemitic? (Elisabeth Zerofsky)