It seems that every year, as I sit down to write this newsletter, antisemitism has gotten worse. This year is certainly no exception. According to the annual report released by the Kantor Center at Tel Aviv University, the number of incidents of major violence committed against Jews spiked by 13% in 2018 compared to the prior year. Jews in Europe, especially in the United Kingdom and France, continue to be on the front lines of antisemitism, but now American Jews have begun to feel its effects as well. Indeed, according to the Kantor Center, the United States had the highest number of cases of antisemitic violence in the world in 2018.

In some ways, this should come as no surprise. Minority groups—especially African-Americans—have long been the victims of racist violence in this country. And the government’s unwillingness to pass even modest gun safety laws means that American racists have more weapons at their disposal than their counterparts in other parts of the world. Nevertheless, many American Jews felt that the kind of violence that Jews experienced in Europe could never happen on American shores.

The massacre at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh proved them wrong. On October 27, 2018, a gunman opened fire at Shabbat services, killing eleven and wounding seven. It was the worst instance of antisemitic violence in American history. In a social media post before the attack, the killer explained that he was targeting the synagogue because of its support for HIAS (the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society), which he blamed for the “caravan” of Latin American immigrants that President Trump and Fox News had described as a national threat in the lead-up to the 2018 election. “HIAS likes to bring invaders in that kill our people, “ the gunman wrote. “I can’t sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I’m going in. ” On April 27, 2019, the Chabad synagogue of Poway, near San Diego, was also attacked by a gunman who blamed Jews for a “genocide of the European race. ” And just as I sat down to write this report, the FBI arrested yet another white nationalist in Ohio who had threatened to strike a Jewish community center.

Some on the right complain that acknowledging the dangers of right-wing nationalism, or criticizing Trump for making racist statements, distracts from the threats Jews face from radical Islamists and the far left, especially the BDS (Boycott Divest Sanctions)
movement. But opposing antisemitism is not a zero-sum game. It is possible to denounce white nationalism without losing sight of the dangers Jews face from other quarters. The fact that Jews are now being murdered for being Jews in the United States cannot be ignored.

Given the tensions surrounding the discussion of antisemitism in today’s political climate, the scholarly research promoted by Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism is all the more necessary. This past year, YPSA hosted over a dozen lectures on topics both historical and contemporary. Events that focused on current antisemitism included a panel on “Populism Then and Now,” moderated by Prof. Carolyn J. Dean, and a lecture by Justice David N. Wecht of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, on “Antisemitism, America, and the Law,” organized by the enthusiastic chair of our new undergraduate board, Miryl Hilibrand. Lectures by Yael Zerubavel, David Shulman, and Tsivia Frank-Wygoda focused on the situation in the contemporary Middle East. Several lecturers explored aspects of the history of the Holocaust and its aftermath, including Omer Bartov, Zoé Grumberg, Shaul Magid, and Amos Goldberg. Caroline Weber discussed antisemitism in fin-de-siècle Paris and Sarah Hammerschlag gave an intriguing presentation on the politics of religion in literature. We co-hosted a panel devoted to Carolyn J. Dean’s new book, *The Moral Witness: Trials and Testimony after Genocide*, and another panel devoted to Daniel Boyarin’s *Judaism: The Genealogy of a Modern Notion*. Our largest event of the year was a two-day conference on “Hannah Arendt and Antisemitism,” which brought together a diverse group of scholars to debate the legacy of one of the most relevant—and controversial—thinkers of the twentieth century.

The Arendt conference was co-organized by our YPSA Postdoctoral Associate, Adam Stern, who also taught a very successful undergraduate seminar last spring on “Theories of Antisemitism.” We are very sorry to see Adam go, but delighted that he will be taking up a tenure-track position at The University of Wisconsin-Madison. We are also thrilled to welcome our new Postdoctoral Associate, Britt Tevis. She holds a Ph.D. in History and a J.D. from The University of Wisconsin-Madison, and is a specialist of antisemitism in the United States. This year, she will teach an undergraduate class on “Antisemitism in American History,” and will complete her book manuscript entitled *May It Displease the Court: Jewish Legal Networks and the Democratization of American Law*.

Thanks to the continuing support of the Salo W. and Jeannette M. Baron Foundation, YPSA was able to award seven research grants—three to Yale undergraduates, three to Yale graduate students, and one to a Yale faculty member. Topics explored by our winners include the effect of Brexit on antisemitism in the UK; antisemitism and the struggle for civil rights in the U.S.; the motivations for genocide; attitudes of Christians toward Jews in present-day Bethlehem; Jewish memory in the Western Mediterranean; the WWII journals of a German doctor; and the aftermath of the Tree of Life massacre. We are very grateful to Charles Knapp and the Baron Foundation for making this important research possible.

As one of only two university programs in the United States dedicated to the study of antisemitism, YPSA has an important role to play in calling attention to the problem of antisemitism and in developing strategies to combat it. Our presence at the Whitney Humanities Center, at the heart of the campus, helps
make sure that the problem of antisemitism remains part of ongoing discussions at Yale around race and ethnicity. With your support, we could do even more. We are currently raising funds to continue our postdoctoral associate program; to produce more videos on topics relating to antisemitism, such as the one by Cary Nelson on “The Ten Worst Things about BDS,” currently available on the YPSA homepage; and to expand the Iranian Archives Project, which seeks to record the testimonies of Jews who have left Iran, to include Jews from other Muslim countries. If you are interested in becoming a YPSA sponsor, please do not hesitate to contact me at maurice.samuels@yale.edu.

Let me urge you to visit our website (http://ypsa.yale.edu) for a full list of our activities. Let me also express my deepest gratitude to everyone who helped make our work this year possible, especially the YPSA Advisory Board; Gary Tomlinson and the staff of the Whitney Humanities Center; the Provost’s office; and our wonderful YPSA administrator, Inessa Laskova.

Maurice Samuels

Director, Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism

—Ira Forman, Former U.S. State Department Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism

Kathryn Sophia Belle
Wednesday, September 26  
**The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series**  
**Caroline Weber,** Professor of French and Comparative Literature, Barnard College  
In Conversation with **Maurice Samuels**

Monday, October 8  
**Omer Bartov,** Distinguished Professor of European History, Brown University  
“Anatomy of a Genocide: Lessons of Studying Mass Murder on the Local Level”  
Co-sponsored by the Yale University Library, the Fortunoff Holocaust Video Archive, and the Judaic Studies Program

Tuesday, October 9  
**Yael Zerubavel,** Professor of Jewish Studies & History, The State University of New Jersey  
“Desert in the Promised Land”  
Graduate Student Colloquium  
Co-sponsored by the Council on Middle East Studies, MacMillan Center

Thursday, November 1 — Friday, November 2  
**YPSA Annual Conference: Arendt and Antisemitism**  
Made possible by a generous grant from The Edward J. and Dorothy Clarke Kempf Memorial Fund

Monday, November 5  
**The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series**  
**David Shulman,** Professor Emeritus, Hebrew University  
“Notes on Freedom from the South Hebron Hills”

Wednesday, November 28  
**The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series**  
**Zoë Grumberg,** Fox Fellow, Yale University  

Tuesday, December 4  
**The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series**  
**Amos Goldberg,** Senior Lecturer, Hebrew University  
“Nazism Has Conquered Our Entire World”

Wednesday, January 23  
**The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series**  
**Tsivia Frank-Wygoda,** 2018-2019 Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of French, Yale University  
“Berber Jews: Creating Territories of Belonging in Contemporary Jewish Algerian Literature”  
Co-sponsored by the Department of Religious Studies, Judaic Studies Program
Thursday, February 21
The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series

Sarah Hammerschlag, Associate Professor of Religion and Literature, Divinity School, University of Chicago
“Fetish and Fiction: Religion, Literature and the Political”
Co-sponsored by the Department of Religious Studies, Judaic Studies Program

Thursday, February 27
The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series

Shaul Magid, Professor of Jewish Studies and Religious Studies, Indiana University
“Dare We Speak of a Divine Purpose to the Holocaust? Rabbis Kalonymous Kalman Shapira of Piaseczno and Zvi Yehuda Kook”

Tuesday, April 2
Justice David N. Wecht of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, Yale College 1984, Yale Law School 1987
“Antisemitism, America, and the Law”

Monday, April 8
The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series

Daniel Boyarin’s
“Judaism: The Genealogy of a Modern Notion”

Panel Discussion
Daniel Boyarin, University of California
Naomi Seidman, University of Toronto
Eliyahu Stern, Yale University
Noreen Khawaja, Yale University
Paul North, Yale University
Co-sponsored by the Judaic Studies Program

Monday, April 22
BOOK PANEL:
Carolyn J. Dean, Yale University
Adam Stern, Yale University
Cathy Caruth, Cornell University
Thomas Keenan, Bard College
Hannah Pollin-Galay, Tel Aviv University
Michael Roth, Wesleyan University
“The Moral Witness: Trials and Testimony after Genocide”
Moderated by Samuel Moyn, Yale
Through the generous support of the Salo W. and Jeannette M. Baron Foundation, YPSA was able to award seven research grants this year.

**Students**

**Genna Abele, undergraduate student in global affairs**

The United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union in a referendum in June 2016. The Brexit vote has brought a wave of xenophobia, anti-immigration sentiment, racism, and antisemitism to mainstream British society. Antisemitic incidents in the UK hit a record high in 2018, with more than 100 recorded every month, according to the Community Security Trust (CST), a charity that fights antisemitism. This rise in antisemitism is paired with uncertainty on the part of many British Jews about how they should respond to the UK’s impending departure from the EU. In this project, I first aim to analyze whether and how Brexit has caused or accelerated the rise of antisemitism in the UK. To answer these questions, I plan to analyze the press, including TV, radio, and news articles both immediately before and since the Brexit vote. I also plan to interview policymakers, MPs, and experts at the CST, as well as members of the British Jewish communities living in London and Manchester. Second, I will examine British memory of the Holocaust through an analysis of British Holocaust memorials and museums to determine whether and how the Brexit vote has impacted the discussion around, and memory of, the Holocaust in the UK.

**Anna Duensing, graduate student in history**

My dissertation, “Strange Victory: Cold War Civil Rights and the Long Shadow of Fascism, 1941-1971,” tells the overlapping, transnational stories of soldiers, artists, journalists, activists, and intellectuals who continued to find in “fascism” a powerful framework for critiquing white supremacy, state violence, racialized social death, and the limits of liberalism in the postwar United States. Recognizing the relational nature of the struggle between antifascist and fascist movements, my project also examines the influence of the interwar global Right on the rise of modern American conservatism and massive resistance to the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. The Salo W. and Jeannette M. Baron Student Research Grant will allow me to carry out two major research trips crucial to this latter endeavor, visiting collections that will help me to tease out the entanglements of racism, antisemitism, xenophobia, and anticommunist Americanism that motivated some of the most virulent opponents of the black freedom struggle around midcentury. While these archives will inform my dissertation as a whole, I will be focusing on materials concerning the former U.S. army officer and far-right leader Edwin A. Walker, who plays a central role in two chapters of the project.

**William Kwok, graduate student in political science**

My dissertation, “The Banality of Organization: Mass Killings as a Coordination Problem in the Shadow of War”, addresses the following puzzles: “Why do local subordinates obey leaders’ orders for mass killings, and when and where do they do so?” and “what accounts for the onset of and participation in mass killings?” My project addresses these puzzles through a comparative study of the political organization of mass killings. With Baron support, I will collect documents from the Khmer Rouge state located in archives across Cambodia. My project addresses important scholarly deficits in our understanding of antisemitism (and other forms of enmity) and its impact on mass killings, and has substantial policy implications for mitigating or preventing genocides.

**Alicen Roberts, MDiv. candidate**

I am very grateful to receive the Salo W. and Jeannette M. Baron Student Research grant. This grant will support a twofold project: (1) I plan to research aspects of religious tolerance and Christian production of antisemitism in Jerusalem and Bethlehem through direct interviews and field-based observations while studying abroad at Hebrew University this spring and summer. I am particularly interested in how local Christians, working within certain organizations, understand and participate in (even unintentionally) what is often called “the new” antisemitism, or rather, anti-Israel/anti-Zionist remarks and actions. Through historical and field research, I seek to better understand and write about the complexities and often conflicting narratives of Christian Palestinianism and Christian Zionism. (2) Part one will tie into research on broader regional concerns, such as Israeli security, in light of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East and disparate views of Zionism among Middle Eastern countries.
Lucy Sternbach, undergraduate student in American studies

Spending three months between Granada, Spain and Rabat, Morocco, I will be living with Jewish women who are rebuilding memories of their heritage and the historical memory of Judaism in the Western Mediterranean. This summer, I will be studying Spanish conceptions of “feminism” and gender relations; this research will seek to understand the subtle and active roles that Jewish women have in Andalusian history — what does it mean to be an Andalusian Jewish woman, and how has that changed over time? I will conduct this as a photojournalism project. Through environmental portraiture (photos of individuals I speak with and landscapes they interact with daily) and a long-form article for both a Yale and local Spanish newspaper, I will depict the oral histories of the women and Jewish peoples I speak to in Andalucía. The generosity of the Baron Fellowship, which will help me explore the intersectionality of race and gender in global contexts, will also help me expand my scholarly and creative work highlighting antisemitism, and the modes of resistance that Jewish populations are crafting in response.

Charlotte Van Voorhis, undergraduate student in American studies

My great grandfather kept journals all through the 1930s and 40s, detailing his time as a German army doctor in World War II, the conditions of camp, operations he performed and his contact with his family. I am fascinated by these journals, housed in Frankfurt, Germany, and would like to read them in order to learn more about antisemitic practices and philosophy in the Nazi army during World War II and how the city of Frankfurt remembers its Holocaust victims. As an American Studies major, I have taken numerous classes on the transatlantic slave trade, the civil rights movement, and their legacies in America today. While studying abroad in Cape Town, South Africa, I also studied how Apartheid has shaped social inequalities and how institutions like University of Cape Town can help build a more inclusive community. I hope to interview my relatives and take advantage of Frankfurt’s city archives and historical resources to get a better understanding of this project.
Save the Dates!

Thursday, September 12, 2019  •  12 noon, Luce Hall, Room 203
Aomar Boum, University of California
“Revisiting Vichy Forced Labor Camps in the Sahara, 1940-1945”
Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism and Council on Middle East Studies

Thursday, September 19, 2019  •  2:00 PM, Luce Hall, Room 203
Deborah Starr, Cornell University
“Jews in Early Egyptian Cinema: Between Nationalism and Nationality”
Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism and Council on Middle East Studies

Thursday, September 19, 2019  •  2:00 pm, Luce Hall, Room 203
Aomar Boum, University of California
“Revisiting Vichy Forced Labor Camps in the Sahara, 1940-1945”
Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism and Council on Middle East Studies

Wednesday, October 2, 2019  •  4:00 PM, WHC, Room 208
Judith Lyon-Caen, EHESS, Paris
“The Plaque: Vichy Blurred Traces in the Land of D-Day”
The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series
Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism and Whitney Humanities Center

Wednesday, October 30, 2019  •  12 noon, WHC, Room 208
Yana Grinshpun, Paris III-Sorbonne Nouvelle University
“The Rhetoric of Antisemitism. How to Build a Political Landscape with Words: Example of French Media”
The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series
Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism and Whitney Humanities Center

Wednesday, October 30, 2019  •  4:00 PM, WHC, Room 208
Céline Masson, University of Picardy Jules Vernes
Béatrice Madiot, University of Picardy Jules Vernes
Jean Szlamowicz, University of Burgundy
“Adolescence and Antisemitism, Budding Political Ideas: A Study in French Junior High Schools Around Paris”
The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series
Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism and Whitney Humanities Center

Tuesday, November 5, 2019  •  4:00 PM, WHC, Room 208
Michele Battini, University of Pisa
“Socialism of Fools: An Interpretation of Anti-Jewish Anti-Capitalism in Modern Europe”
The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series
Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism and Whitney Humanities Center

Wednesday, November 20, 2019  •  5:00 PM, WHC, Room 208
Ian Thomson, writer
“Primo Levi’s Homecoming, 1945-46: The Need to Bear Witness”
The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series
Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism, Italian Department, Slifka Center, Fortunoff Video Archive and Whitney Humanities Center

Thursday, November 21, 2019  •  5:00 PM, WHC, Room 208
Susie Linfield, New York University
“TBD”
The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series
Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism

Wednesday, December 5, 2019  •  4:00 PM, WHC, Room 208
Mikhel Dekel, Rikkind Center for the Humanities and Arts, CCNY
“TBD”
The Benjamin (Yale 1962) and Barbara Zucker Lecture Series
Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism and Whitney Humanities Center

Friday, February 14 – Saturday, February 15, 2020  •  WHC, Auditorium
The Authoritarian Personality Conference
Made possible by a generous grant from The Edward J. and Dorothy Clarke Kempf Memorial Fund