



# Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism

NEWSLETTER • ACADEMIC YEAR 2023–2024

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## From the Director



*Maurice Samuels*

I am writing this newsletter at the start of 2024, in a landscape transformed by the events of October 7. As a result of the attack by Hamas terrorists and Israel's war of retaliation, antisemitism has become central to American political debates in a way that few could have imagined. And college campuses have been on the front lines of those debates, which are dividing not just university communities, but also families, workplaces, and political parties.

It has been painful to watch students and even some faculty members at American colleges minimize the October 7 attacks, as if expressing concern for the horrible suffering in Gaza requires the discounting of Hamas's atrocities. At the same time, it has been disturbing to see American politicians instrumentalize antisemitism as part of their ongoing campaign to discredit universities. The Congressional hearing on December 5 with the presidents of Harvard, Penn, and MIT revealed genuine inconsistencies in the way that many universities handle cases of harassment. Watching the hearing, though, I couldn't help but think that the same politicians denouncing university presidents for their soft stance on campus antisemitism have been oddly silent about antisemitism on the right.

Not since WWII has the need been greater to comprehend the phenomenon of antisemitism in all its complexity. To make sense of a hatred that spans centuries and crosses continents, one that burrows its way into so many aspects of our culture, we need the insights of historians, political scientists, economists, anthropologists, and sociologists, as well as of specialists of religion, literature, and art. This is the reason why universities, which bring together experts in all these fields, are more essential than ever. Universities may be on the front lines of debates over antisemitism, but they are also the places best suited to understand the problem and to formulate solutions.

Since 2011, the Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism has attempted to shed light on both historical and contemporary forms of antisemitism. Currently one of only two academic programs devoted to the study of antisemitism at an American university (although others are [reportedly](#) being created), YPSA has sponsored conferences and lectures, in addition to hosting postdoctoral associates, offering courses, and providing research funds to Yale faculty and students. I invite you to look through our [archive](#) of past events to get a sense of the range of topics we have covered over the years, which have spanned antiquity to the present, as well as geographical locations from Europe to the Middle East to the United States, and even Australia. Since the pandemic, we have started holding most of our events on Zoom, and [recordings](#) of many of the lectures are available on our website.

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## From the Director (continued)

Although we already had many lectures planned before October 7, we quickly organized a series of events to respond to unfolding events. We held a special lunch seminar with *New York Times* journalist Roger Cohen in November, immediately after his return from covering the massacre in Israel. And on November 1, Kenneth Stern (Bard College) joined us for a discussion over Zoom of “Antisemitism after October 7,” a recording of which is [available](#) on our website.

In addition to a number of lectures on other aspects of anti-semitism (for a full list, see our Calendar of Events), we are planning a special series of events in the spring semester that touch directly on the current crisis, including:

- A lecture by Rabbi Diana Fersko on “Antisemitism in a Post-October 7 World” (January 22, 7pm, SSS Hall)
- A panel on “How to Think about Antisemitism and Islamophobia” featuring Rozina Ali and Mark Oppenheimer (February 20, 4:30 pm, 320 York, Lo1)
- A lecture by Simon Sebag Montefiore on “Questioning the Settler-Colonist Paradigm” (February 12, noon, Zoom)
- A lecture by Eva Illouz on “Is Theory Antisemitic?” The Arffa Lecture in Jewish Studies (April 15, in person, location TBA)
- A panel discussion with Professor Illouz and several members of the Yale faculty on “Jewish Responses to October 7” (April 17, in person, location TBA)

Thanks to the generous support of Guy and Abigail Levy, this year we are also thrilled to host a postdoctoral associate, David Austin Walsh. With a Ph.D. in History from Princeton University, David is a specialist in twentieth-century American intellectual history. In conjunction with the Yale Center for the Study of Race, Indigeneity, and Transnational Migration, we are holding an in-person symposium dedicated to his fascinating new book *Taking America Back: The Conservative Movement and the Far Right* (Yale University Press, 2024) on April 9. David is also teaching a class this semester at Yale on Paranoia and Conspiracy Theories in Twentieth- and Twenty-first-Century America.

David’s class takes a deep dive into the dark and twisted world of paranoia and conspiracy theories in American political culture. Even relatively harmless or innocuous theories and beliefs – The moon landing was faked! The Earth is flat! – can be a springboard into politically toxic and even dangerous worldviews. The class focuses especially on the specter of conspiratorial antisemitism,

which often lurks in the background of the conspiracist worldview and is a vitally urgent topic with the proliferation of anti-Zionist and/or antisemitic conspiracy theories that have proliferated online since October 7.

I invite you to join us for as many of our events as you can, either in person or on Zoom. In the meantime, please make sure to sign up for our [mailing list](#) and check our [Calendar of Events](#) for updates, as dates could change and more events could be announced. If you would be interested in supporting YPSA’s activities and growth, please visit our [website](#) and consider making an impactful contribution to the conversation today.

Maurice Samuels

*Director, Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism*



*Jennifer Mittelstadt, November 15, 2023*

# Lectures 2023 – 2024

Webinar on February 7, 2023

**Richard Hurowitz**, Writer and Founder of the Octavian Report

“In the Garden of the Righteous: The Heroes Who Risked Their Lives to Save Jews During the Holocaust”

 [Watch Recording](#)



Webinar on March 8, 2023

**Chad Alan Goldberg**, University of Wisconsin-Madison

“From Multiculturalism to Antisemitism? Revisiting the Jewish Question in America”

 [Watch Recording](#)

Webinar on April 13, 2023

**Michael Steinlauf**, Professor of History Emeritus, Gratz College

“Tangled Up in Poland”

 [Watch Recording](#)

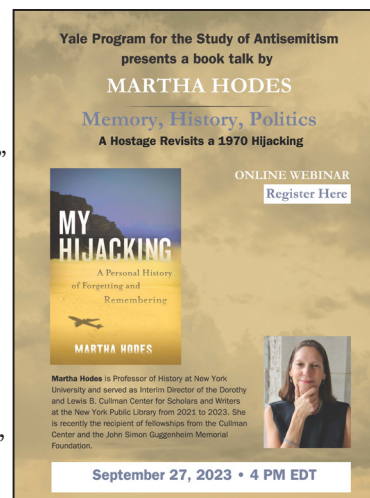


Webinar on September 27, 2023

**Martha Hodes**, Professor of History, New York University

“Memory, History, Politics: A Hostage Revisits a 1970 Hijacking”

 [Watch Recording](#)

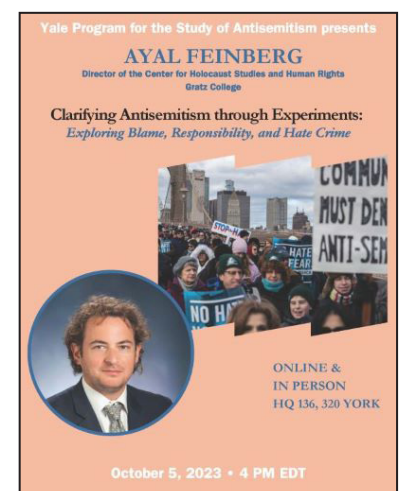


Hybrid Event on October 5, 2023

**Ayal Feinberg**, Director of the Center for Holocaust Studies and Human Rights at Gratz College

“Clarifying Antisemitism through Experiments: Exploring Blame, Responsibility, and Hate Crime”

 [Watch Recording](#)



Webinar on October 25, 2023

**Bryan Cheyette**, Professor Emeritus of Modern Literature and Culture at the University of Reading, and a Research Fellow at the University of Southampton

“Edwardian Popular Culture and Everyday Antisemitism”

 [Watch Recording](#)



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Webinar on November 1, 2023

**Kenneth Stern**, Director of the Bard Center for the Study of Hate  
“Antisemitism after October 7”

 [Watch Recording](#)

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Webinar on November 9, 2023

**Michelle Kahn**, Assistant Professor at the University of  
Richmond

“Antisemitism Across Borders: German and American Neo-Nazis,  
1970s-1990s”

 [Watch Recording](#)

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In-Person Event on November 14, 2023

Lunch Seminar on the Crisis in Israel with **Roger Cohen**,  
the *New York Times*

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Hybrid Event on November 15, 2023

**Jennifer Mittelstadt**, Professor of History at Rutgers  
University

“Fighting World Government: Revisiting the Grassroots  
Campaigns Against the UN and Liberal Internationalism in  
Postwar America”

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In-Person Event on January 22, 2024

**Rabbi Diana Fersko**

“Antisemitism in a Post-October 7th World”

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Webinar on January 24, 2024

**Magda Teter**, Professor of History at Fordham University

“Antisemitism and Racism: A Shared History”

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In-Person Event on January 29, 2024

**Jeremy Eichler and Sebastian Ruth**

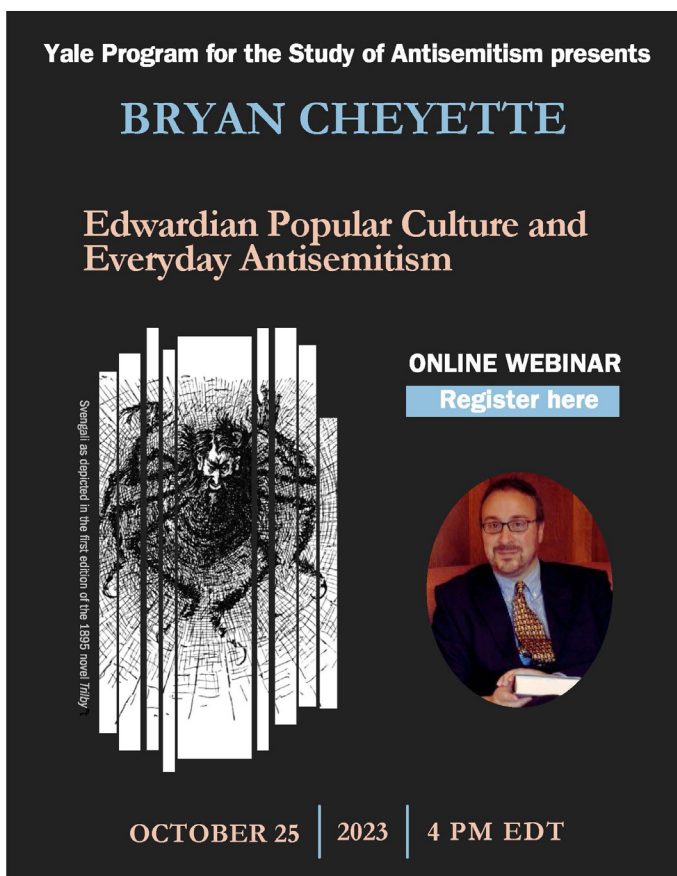
“Listening to Lost Time,” a book talk with music performance

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Webinar on February 12, 2024

**Simon Sebag Montefiore and Eliyahu Stern**

“Questioning the Settler-Colonialist Paradigm”



Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism presents

**BRYAN CHEYETTE**

**Edwardian Popular Culture and  
Everyday Antisemitism**

ONLINE WEBINAR  
[Register here](#)

OCTOBER 25 | 2023 | 4 PM EDT

Svenigall as depicted in the first edition of the 1895 novel *Friday*

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In-Person Event on February 20, 2024

**Rozina Ali and Mark Oppenheimer**

“How to Think about Antisemitism & Islamophobia”

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Webinar on February 26, 2024

**Maurice Samuels and Alice Kaplan**

“Alfred Dreyfus: The Man at the Center of the Affair”

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In-Person Conference on March 26, 2024

“Rethinking Bystanders” — a panel organized around Michael Rothberg’s work *The Implicated Subject: Beyond Victims and Perpetrators* (2019) with Carolyn J. Dean as a moderator

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Webinar on March 27, 2024

**Renée Poznanski**, Professor Emerita in the Department of Politics and Government at Ben Gurion University

“The French Resistance and the Persecution of the Jews during WWII”

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In-Person Panel on April 9, 2024

“Rethinking the Fringe” — a roundtable discussion of David Austin Walsh’s *Taking America Back: The Conservative Movement and the Far Right*

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In-Person Event on April 15, 2024

**Eva Illouz**, Professor of Sociology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

“Is Theory Antisemitic?”

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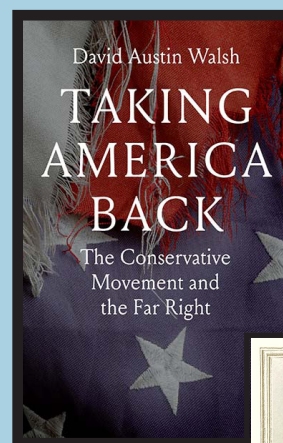
In-Person Event on April 17, 2024

“Jewish Responses to October 7” — a panel discussion with Professor Eva Illouz and several members of the Yale faculty

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## \* Announcing the Publication of Two New Books



Preorder “Taking America Back” scan or click QR code.



Preorder “Alfred Dreyfus” scan or click QR code.

