

Ten months ago,
a small group of funders
and I set out to answer
some questions:

What does countering
antisemitism through
a democracy and
cross-community
solidarity lens look like?

Why does it matter?

Which organizations
are holding this frame
in their work?

What are the gaps that
exist in the landscape?

This effort was rooted in the recognition that antisemitism directly fuels broader anti-democratic extremism and hate, and that attacks on our democratic norms, values, and rights make Jews (and so many others) less safe.

In the ten months since we launched this project, our world has dramatically changed as a result of the deadliest attack on the Jewish people since the Holocaust and the wave of antisemitism it unleashed in the United States and around the globe.

Some will argue that the aftermath of October 7th is proof of failure for this framework, that the isolation and abandonment many Jewish Americans understandably feel right now means that we should put up walls and give up on building bridges between communities in pursuit of Jewish safety and a more inclusive democracy.

But in reality, the aftermath of October 7th is proof of need: that the often-siloed and narrow way we've approached the fight against antisemitism has been insufficient, and that deeper investment in a different approach—one that illustrates the interconnection of Jewish safety with the safety of other communities and the future of our liberal, inclusive democracy—is needed.

In other words, the world has changed in a way that makes this project and this framework much more urgent—even as we simultaneously recognize that it may now be even harder to advance this framework.

As we grapple with the pain of this moment, we must still reject the false binaries that too often dominate these conversations—because there is no other option but to find a path forward, to continue building bridges and coalitions in pursuit of the shared future we know is inherent to Jewish safety and our democracy. What follows is an attempt to shine a light on this path forward without shying away from the very real challenges.

In the coming pages, you'll find an analysis of the current landscape in the fight against antisemitism, with an eye towards efforts that highlight the connections between antisemitism and our democracy. This includes trends, themes, and gaps (and recommendations on how to fill them), as well as a look at some of the organizations and initiatives that utilize this framework and the results of some initial antisemitism message research. This report captures a particular moment in time in the landscape; inclusion here should not be considered an endorsement of an organization.

The goal is to provide readers with grounding to understand this moment in the fight against antisemitism; a snapshot of organizations and efforts to learn from; and analysis and details to inform how to discuss, evaluate, invest in, and further build this framework.

We know that there is no silver bullet. Ultimately, our hope is that this report supports and expands the number of funders, practitioners, and stakeholders engaged in this work, and that the field looks much different a year from now so that we can advance a more inclusive, diverse, and well-funded landscape of organizations, leaders, and initiatives to counter antisemitism, anti-democratic hate, and extremism at such a pivotal moment.

Amy Spitanick

Antisemitism x Democracy

A Report by Amy Spitalnick

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Executive Summary & Overview

Executive Summary

Antisemitism is not simply a form of religious, racial, or ethnic prejudice. It also uniquely functions as a conspiracy theory rooted in lies about Jewish power and influence that are used to sow distrust in our institutions and our democracy. Because of this, it poses a threat far beyond the Jewish community.

Recent research underscores this deep connection between antisemitism and broader threats to democracy and all communities. Belief in conspiracy theories—such as the antisemitic Great Replacement or QAnon—are among the biggest drivers of political violence and anti-democratic extremism. Similarly, belief in conspiracy theories is among the best predictors of antisemitism.

We've seen this in the recent cycle of white supremacist violence targeting Jews and other marginalized communities, as well as in post-October 7th conspiracy theories related to “Jewish” or “Zionist” power and influence.

This tells us that the fight for democracy and for the safety of all communities requires countering antisemitism because it animates and fuels broader extremism and hate. Relatedly, Jewish safety is often most assured in inclusive, liberal democracies where all communities are safe and free.

Yet the conversation on antisemitism is too often myopic and siloed. This makes it harder for some Jews to see broader democracy and civil rights work as fundamental to Jewish safety, prevents people who aren't Jewish from understanding their own self-interest in combating antisemitism, and keeps communities apart at a moment when solidarity is critical to our mutual safety and thriving.

The good news is that messaging connecting Jewish safety with our democracy, democratic norms and values, and the safety of others isn't just accurate—it resonates strongly with the communities who must be engaged in this fight. Research conducted in the fall of 2023 found that such messages tested very well across race, generation, and party. Recent follow-up research, focused on 18- to 34-year-olds, found that the most resonant messaging highlighted antisemitism's threats to our democracy and freedom and how antisemitic hate spreads to target other groups.

Yet the field of leaders and organizations engaged in this framework is emergent, uneven, and significantly under-resourced, too often drowned out by louder voices and zero-sum narratives. This report recommends deliberate resourcing and work to expand public affairs, communications, and training capacity (including expanding and diversifying the bench of messengers); improve advocacy and bridge-building; and support the philanthropic community to better engage with this framework.

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“We must advance inclusive multiracial democracy in service of Jewish safety, and we must combat antisemitism in service of inclusive multiracial democracy.”

The Jewish American community and its allies are facing a moment of crisis on antisemitism. As we grapple with unprecedented threats to the Jewish people, American democracy, and our shared future here in the United States and around the globe, the rise in antisemitism is both a reflection and a key driver of the broader extremism that has become normalized in our politics and our society.

How we respond to this moment of uncertainty will determine the safety and stability of the diverse Jewish American community—and so many other communities—for generations to come.

Yet the public conversation on antisemitism in the United States is too often myopic, lacking context on how this ancient form of hate connects today to other forms of bigotry and anti-democratic extremism. Rather, antisemitism is commonly addressed in a silo, and as an exclusively particularistic form of bigotry, or not fully understood as a dire contemporary issue.

At such a pivotal moment, it is crucial that we are clear about twin urgencies: we must advance inclusive multiracial democracy in service of Jewish safety, and we must combat antisemitism in service of inclusive multiracial democracy. One cannot exist without the other.

The October 7th attack on Israel and the antisemitism that’s followed around the globe underscore the need to further this framework. In so many ways, this crisis has exposed how conventional frameworks of race and power impact perceptions of the Jewish community and efforts to combat antisemitism. It is critical to engage non-Jewish leaders and communities in understanding antisemitism and how its impact extends well beyond the Jewish community. At the same time, moments of crisis often embolden zero-sum frameworks and narratives suggesting that fighting one form of hate comes at the expense of another.

It is critical that we understand combating antisemitism as essential for the safety of Jews, for Americans’ collective safety, and for the health of our democracy.

Why The Antisemitism x Democracy Framework Matters

This framework, to which we will refer simply as Antisemitism x Democracy, sees the interconnection of antisemitism and inclusive, multiracial democracy as a two-way street. We believe:

- The fight for democracy and for the safety of all communities requires countering antisemitism because it animates and fuels broader extremism and hate.

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- Jewish safety is often most assured in inclusive, liberal democracies where all communities are safe and free.

We recognize that this is not a perfect frame and that it cannot possibly encapsulate the many other ways organizations and leaders are approaching the fight against antisemitism or for inclusive, multiracial democracy.

One of the oldest forms of hate, antisemitism functions as a form of religious, racial, and/or ethnic prejudice against Jews. But unlike other religious, racial, and/or ethnic prejudices, antisemitism also operates as an overarching conspiracy theory rooted in lies about Jewish power and influence.

And precisely because it functions as a conspiracy theory, antisemitism poses a threat far beyond the Jewish community. It is systemic, both fueling and fueled by other forms of hate and extremism, including against other communities and democratic institutions that are painted as pawns of Jewish control. Unsurprisingly, antisemitism—much like conspiracy theories in general—tends to increase at moments of social or political anxiety as people look for a source to blame for society’s ills.

Casting the Jews as all powerful serves to fuel hatred and otherization of Jews. It also explains that which extremists oppose, such as the progress of other communities extremists believe to be incapable of advancement on their own. And it seeks to breed distrust in our democratic institutions and norms.

Ambassador Deborah Lipstadt, the U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, calls antisemitism the “canary in the coal mine of democracy,” because it is so often a harbinger of broader hate and anti-democratic extremism. Race Forward Executive Vice President Eric Ward often explains that antisemitism is a tool used to “bring distrust” to democracy and “deconstruct democratic practices.” And as Yair Rosenberg wrote, “the more people buy into antisemitism and its understanding of the world, the more they lose faith in democracy.”

There are few clearer and more painful illustrations of this reality than the cycle of right-wing extremist violence in recent years. When neo-Nazis descended upon Charlottesville, VA in 2017, they chanted “Jews will not replace us,” previewing the “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory that would go on to fuel a series of mass shootings and other violence while becoming increasingly normalized in our politics and society. Once relegated to the dark corners of the internet, this antisemitic, xenophobic, and racist conspiracy theory suggests that there is a deliberate Jewish effort to supplant the white population with immigrants, Black people, and others. It has directly inspired deadly attacks targeting Jewish (Pittsburgh and Poway), Hispanic (El Paso), Black (Buffalo), Muslim

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(Christchurch), and other communities.

Watered down—but still deeply dangerous—versions of this conspiracy theory have become increasingly mainstreamed in political rhetoric, courtesy of pundits, elected officials, and candidates. They use it to advance anti-democratic, dehumanizing policies and political goals while further emboldening violent extremists. We heard echoes of this conspiracy theory on January 6, 2021, when many insurrectionists flaunted antisemitic, racist, and white supremacist paraphernalia, and in other efforts to deny the 2020 election results, including false claims of undocumented immigrants stealing the election. Antisemitism also increasingly intersects with hate targeting the LGBTQ+ community, which we can see in recent efforts by neo-Nazis to recruit based on anti-trans and anti-drag panic, and with misogynistic, anti-abortion efforts.

While the role of antisemitism in fueling this right-wing anti-democratic extremism is clear, we must also understand how some of the same tropes and conspiracy theories related to Jewish control and power can and do manifest on the left. Whether baselessly attributing certain injustices to “Zionists” or Jews, or perpetuating stereotypes about Jewish financial and political influence that “oppresses” the working class, we’ve seen an increase in far-left voices engaging in such antisemitism. (Later in this report, you’ll find a more detailed analysis of antisemitism-related dynamics on both the left and the right.)

Sadly, it is no surprise that as antisemitic ideas continue to be mainstreamed we’re experiencing a concurrent increase in belief in these conspiracy theories and in actual hate and violence targeting both Jews and an array of other communities.

Belief in conspiracy theories is among the biggest driving motivations for political violence and anti-democratic extremism: A 2023 University of Chicago study found a significant increase in support for political violence in recent years. Those supporting violence were much more likely to believe in antisemitic conspiracy theories, including the Great Replacement (60%) and QAnon (49%). Similarly, recent poll data from the ADL and One8 underscored that belief in conspiracy theories is among the best predictors of antisemitism. And a new survey released by the ADL and the University of Chicago in October 2023 found that highly antisemitic Americans are significantly more likely to support political violence and other forms of anti-democratic extremism.

So what does this tell us? None of this extremism exists in isolation. Rather, antisemitism and other forms of hate and extremism animate and fuel each other in a constant feedback loop—with deadly consequences for all marginalized communities and for our democracy.

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We would be unwise to separate the fight against antisemitism from the fights against xenophobia, white supremacy, racism, Islamophobia, anti-LGBTQ+ bigotry, misogyny, and other forms of hate and violence—or from broader efforts to advance inclusive, multiracial democracy. The safety and fates of all communities are deeply intertwined.

And yet antisemitism is generally not understood or described in this way. As a result, the public conversation about antisemitism has been largely disconnected from conversations on democracy, racism, and other forms of bigotry and extremism, treating antisemitism as a particularistic challenge despite its universal impact. This dissociation has multiple implications:

- It makes it harder for some Jewish stakeholders to see broader democracy and civil rights work as fundamental to Jewish safety.
- It can prevent non-Jewish communities from understanding their own self-interest in combating antisemitism.
- It keeps communities apart at a moment when solidarity is critical to our mutual safety and thriving.

Underscoring the deep connection between antisemitism, other forms of bigotry, and our democracy is all the more urgent as a wide array of extremists exploit the Israel-Hamas war to drive antisemitism and hate—especially as we approach the 2024 election cycle, when bigotry, conspiracy theories, and extremism will surely be given bigger and more frequent platforms.

To effectively combat antisemitism, we must understand how it is used as a tool to fuel broader hate, violence, and anti-democratic extremism, and build solutions that recognize this deep interconnection, bringing together communities that are under threat in pursuit of an inclusive, multiracial democracy where all Americans are safe.

The Impact of October 7th

October 7th has united the Jewish community in pain and grief over the deadliest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust. As we grapple with the resulting increase in hate and extremism, we observe a lack of coordination or deliberate efforts to engage key partners in the fight against antisemitism.

While many non-Jewish leaders and organizations have joined in allyship with the Jewish community, many Jews have felt abandoned and isolated by those who have remained conspicuously absent. This crisis further exposed the lack of understanding of antisemitism in various spaces, including how antisemitism—

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intentionally or not—manifests in conversations related to Israel, and how conventional frameworks of race and power impact perceptions of the Jewish community (which is in fact multiracial) and the seriousness of antisemitism. Fundamentally, there is a lack of recognition in many spaces that Jewish safety is deeply linked to the safety of all communities and our democracy.

At the same time, some within the Jewish community are creating a false binary, arguing that we should not focus on threats against others, such as the Muslim American, Arab American, and Palestinian American communities, when Jews themselves are experiencing so much pain. Some have exploited legitimate concerns about antisemitism to advance an extremist agenda, such as attacking Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs, pitting Jewish and Black communities against one another, and more. This is all the more dangerous at a time when allyship is essential to opening doors of communication and relationship, dispensing with zero-sum frameworks, and charting a better, more pluralistic path forward.

A key goal of this report is to ensure that the landscape looks different a year from now, with a more coordinated and cohesive approach to telling the story of our shared future. This shared future is possible if we can successfully frame the fight against antisemitism as inherent to the safety of everyone.

Methodology

This project was informed by over six dozen formal and informal interviews and conversations with leaders and organizations dedicated to advancing the Jewish community, civil and human rights, democracy, anti-extremism, and interfaith relations. While we wish we could have spoken to everyone working on these issues, time constraints required us to draw some details from publicly available information and other materials.

We intentionally take a broad view of democracy. For the purposes of this report, “democracy” should not be considered a political or partisan term, even if some individuals or groups attempt to paint it that way. Rather, we define it as the fundamental belief that everyone deserves to live in a society where they can feel safe and thrive, and where that right is reinforced by basic norms, values, and the rule of law. In this report, democracy includes both the institutions of democracy, such as free and fair elections and an independent judiciary and media as well as the values of an inclusive, multiracial, multifaith democracy, such as civil and human rights for all, safety, pluralism, equality, and more.

In addition to understanding the landscape of organizations engaged around

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the Antisemitism x Democracy framework, this project also seeks to understand the messages that may be most effective at engaging Americans in the fight against antisemitism. The initial results of this message research, undertaken in partnership with More In Common in October 2023, can be found on page 29.

A number of partners provided invaluable advice, guidance, and support throughout this project. These include the funders of this report: Shayna Triebwasser and Rachel Levin of the Righteous Persons Foundation, Alyssa Arens and Karyn Cohen of the One8 Foundation, and Coby Schoffman and Rachel Nilson Ralston of the Newton and Rochelle Becker Charitable Trust; additional funding was provided by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. The Aspen Institute served as the institutional home for this project; in particular, Simran Jeet Singh and Rev. Audrey Price provided invaluable support.

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Trends & Themes

Trends & Themes

Antisemitism, Other Forms of Hate, and Violent Extremism Are All on the Rise

While hate crime data are notoriously inconsistent, a number of reports and statistics can help us understand how antisemitism, other forms of bigotry, and violent extremism are on the rise.

The ADL's [2022 Audit of Antisemitic Incidents](#) tracked 3,697 incidents throughout the United States, a 36% increase over 2021 and the highest number on record since the ADL began tracking antisemitic incidents in 1979. These figures include a 102% year-over-year increase in white supremacist propaganda activity. The data also reflect the fact that visibly Orthodox Jews were targeted in over half of the antisemitic assault incidents last year.

A different ADL report on [Antisemitic Attitudes in America](#) found that 20% of Americans believe six or more antisemitic tropes, marking a significant increase from the 11% found in 2019.

The [2022 Hate Crime Statistics](#) released by the FBI reflect a 7% year-over-year increase from 2021, and a nearly 50% increase since 2014. The vast majority of the over 11,000 reported single-bias incidents (59.1%) were driven by the offenders' bias toward race/ethnicity/ancestry: over half targeted the Black or African American community, followed by anti-Asian, anti-Hispanic, and anti-Latino incidents. 17.2% of single-bias incidents were related to sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity. Of the 17.3% of single-bias incidents related to religion, over half targeted the Jewish community, followed by the Muslim and Sikh communities. There were also nearly 350 multiple-bias hate crime incidents.

This rising hate parallels an increase in the number of Americans who consider political violence acceptable. Since 2017, [support for political violence has doubled among Republicans while also growing among Democrats](#).

According to a recent University of Chicago study, those supporting anti-democratic violence were particularly likely to believe in two key conspiracy theories, both deeply rooted in antisemitism: the Great Replacement Theory (believed by 60% of those who support violence) and QAnon (believed by 49% of those who support violence).

This trend is indeed translating to an increase in violent extremism, largely stemming from the right. According to data released earlier this year by the ADL, every extremist-related murder in 2022 was committed by right-wing extremists; the vast majority of those were white supremacists. Not only NGOs and academic institutions are tracking this threat: in late 2020, former President Donald Trump's Department of Homeland Security found that white supremacists were "the most persistent and lethal threat" in the United States.

Of course, antisemitism and broader extremism exist across the political spectrum, including on the left, as well as in forms entirely removed from political frameworks. The aftermath of October 7th has highlighted how antisemitism can be normalized in progressive spaces, such as on college campuses. While the current crisis on college campuses is rapidly evolving, the ADL, Hillel International, and a variety of other organizations have tracked dramatic increases in antisemitic incidents following October 7th, ranging from graffiti and other vandalism to direct assaults and other forms of violence. Recent data and surveys underscore that some of the greatest challenges in combating antisemitism exist among the youngest Americans, including Gen Z (born between 1997 and 2012).

Together, these statistics and trends paint a picture of antisemitism that contributes to Jews feeling unsafe and isolated; that is rising alongside other forms of bigotry and hate and fueling a broader cycle of violent extremism targeting a broad array of communities; and that threatens the very fabric of our democracy.

Efforts to Combat Antisemitism Are Proliferating

Over the last decade, a proliferation of organizations and initiatives have focused on combating antisemitism. These include both expanded efforts from legacy Jewish organizations as well as newer funder-driven campaigns and initiatives.

Some of these efforts seek to build bridges between Jews and other communities. However, among many Jewish legacy organizations and these newer funder-driven efforts, there has not been an explicit focus on the connection between antisemitism and multiracial democracy. Some groups have even pivoted away from focusing on democracy.

Many efforts to combat antisemitism have prioritized responsive measures, including physical security, rather than broader preventative, proactive work aimed at building democratic resiliency to hate and extremism. This focus on security is critical as we grapple with real threats to synagogues and other Jewish institutions. However, increasing security alone cannot effectively reduce antisemitism; doing so requires deliberate efforts to ensure we are not literally walling off the Jewish community from potential allies and partners nor creating safety issues for Jews of Color and others often targeted by racial profiling.

“What does progress look like? When more non-Jewish allies include Jews in their story of us.”

On the Left, Little Shared Understanding and Increasing Acceptance of Antisemitism

On the non-Jewish left, there is little shared understanding of antisemitism and how it connects to broader anti-democratic extremism and hate. In some cases, this includes a total lack of recognition of antisemitism as a real domestic issue that requires progressives’ voices and advocacy.

In many progressive spaces, Jews are not seen as a marginalized community. This raises challenging and complicated questions around Jews and whiteness, including around the privilege that white Jews who are not visibly Jewish do carry in many circumstances. At the same time, the real threat and impact of antisemitism on the Jewish people—as well as an understanding of the diversity of the Jewish community and the ways in which Jews of Color, LGBTQ+ Jews, and others can face compounding forms of bigotry—are too often missing from these conversations.

As [Eric Ward notes](#), the left “insisting Jews identify as white and therefore ‘privileged’ no longer allowed a space for a conversation about antisemitism... It’s outrageous that the Jewish community on the left never gets to lift up its experience with antisemitism, which is a form of racism in the United States. It is told who it is by others with very little agency to define itself within left and progressive spaces.”

Many interviewees, especially progressive Jewish organizers, described these broader dynamics as very difficult and painful. One interviewee put it succinctly: “What does progress look like? When more non-Jewish allies include Jews in their story of us.”

Too often, we’ve seen this give way to acceptance of antisemitism in some progressive spaces, particularly as it relates to Israel and instances where anti-Israel rhetoric crosses into explicit antisemitism.

The response to Hamas’ October 7th terror attack in certain progressive spaces has put a fine point on this dynamic, allowing criticism of Israel to morph into explicitly antisemitic rhetoric and actions, including the celebration of October 7th as an act of “resistance”; the denial of the atrocities committed against Israelis, including rape and sexual assault; or the targeting of Jews, Jewish institutions and places of worship, or Jewish-owned properties as “retribution” for the actions of the Israeli government. In some cases, progressive groups have sought to bar “Zionists” from membership or participation. With survey after survey affirming that the vast majority of American Jews have a connection to Israel, such litmus tests are inherently a form of antisemitic discrimination.

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“This furthers—and is a core tactic of—white supremacy: keeping communities apart from one another rather than allowing them to come together in solidarity against rising bigotry and extremism.”

Ultimately, all of these dynamics not only serve to reinforce and normalize antisemitism; they also have the effect of separating Jews from the very coalitions necessary to advance inclusive democracy at this critical moment.

A related dynamic that arose in project interviews was the struggle by progressive Jews and progressives more broadly to call out and discuss antisemitism that comes from non-white, non-Jewish actors or social movements, including antisemitism that doesn't look like white supremacy or white nationalism. This requires new resources and language that reflect the nuances of the issues at play, including how antisemitism can and does exist in progressive spaces or among communities of color—even if the threats manifest differently than white supremacist and white nationalist antisemitism. It also requires recognition that some dynamics may not fit neatly into our understanding of the world, including antisemitism among Black Hebrew Israelites (such as those who killed three people at a kosher grocery store in Jersey City in 2019) or how antisemitism from non-white actors can be fueled by white supremacist or white nationalist ideas (such as the Asian American man who shot two Jews outside a synagogue in Los Angeles in early 2023 after [sharing antisemitic, white supremacist propaganda](#)).

On the Right: Normalized Antisemitism and Particularism That Pits Communities Against One Another

Among some parts of the political right, there is a concerted effort not only to separate the fight against antisemitism from the fight against other forms of hate, but to also pit communities against one another by suggesting that the advancement of rights and safety for other marginalized groups necessarily fuels antisemitism.

This has manifested itself recently in narratives suggesting that a focus on systemic injustice related to race, class, gender, or sexuality somehow fuels antisemitism. The strategy here furthers—and is a core tactic of—white supremacy: keeping communities apart from one another rather than allowing them to come together in solidarity against rising bigotry and extremism.

This tactic also goes hand-in-hand with other right-wing efforts to weaponize antisemitism, which have been on the rise in recent years, including intentional efforts to muddy all criticism of Israel as antisemitism in an attempt to suppress debate over Israeli policy.

We have also seen an increase in right-wing efforts to label Democratic or

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“As institutions and educators consider and address these challenges, they have an opportunity to more directly incorporate a democracy framework in Holocaust education programs and more deliberately build this culture of resilience.”

progressive Jews as “disloyal” or “bad.” The most prominent examples of this include former President Trump’s frequent claim that Jews’ “lack of loyalty” to “friends” like him is responsible for a decrease in support for Israel; or comments by the wife of former Pennsylvanian gubernatorial candidate Doug Mastriano that he “love[s] Israel more than most Jews.” Such statements are, in and of themselves, a core antisemitic tactic, playing into dual loyalty tropes—all while seeking to drive wedges between communities by suggesting that liberal or progressive communities are inherently antisemitic or anti-Israel.

This is occurring alongside the broader mainstreaming of antisemitic conspiracy theories and tropes (such as “replacement” and “invasion” rhetoric) among right-wing politicians, pundits, and others, as described earlier in this report—all intended to further divide communities, sow distrust in our institutions and democracy, and normalize bigotry and extremism.

Holocaust Education Is at an Inflection Point

We are at an inflection point on Holocaust education, as most survivors have died and institutions are utilizing new technologies and approaches to tell their stories. At the same time, the role and impact of Holocaust education is being understood in new ways, particularly as it relates to combating contemporary antisemitism and other forms of bigotry.

Some believe that even more robust Holocaust education is needed as time passes. Others point to the ways in which Holocaust education that is often taught without broader context on who Jews are as people, how the Holocaust fits into a longer arc of antisemitism, or how antisemitism intersects with other forms of hate and extremism can inadvertently perpetuate a narrative about Jews as victims and overly define the Jewish community by that tragedy. At the same time, Holocaust education rarely involves teaching who Jews are as a diverse people and the beliefs they hold, including the values and traditions at the core of Jewish history, such as democracy and freedom.

A number of interviewees noted that contemporary antisemitism pales in comparison to and can be minimized because “it isn’t the Holocaust.” The millennia-long history of antisemitism, including its origins and how it manifests today, is often missing from Holocaust education. Whether intentional or not, many schools and institutions teach the Holocaust in isolation, which ignores the broader context within which it happened and complicates efforts to grapple with contemporary manifestations of antisemitism or connect it to other forms of hate and extremism.

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“To effectively build bridges to advance Jewish safety and inclusive democracy, we must approach this work through a trauma-informed lens.”

Relatedly, some may struggle to reconcile the success many Jews, and especially white Jews, have achieved in America—and other parts of the world—with the reality of contemporary antisemitism in the years since the Holocaust.

Finally, as book and curriculum bans increase, some states continue to mandate the teaching of the Holocaust while simultaneously banning discussion of America’s history of white supremacy and related topics. Treating the Holocaust as “acceptable” to teach while banning discussions of white supremacy, racism, LGBTQ+ rights, and more, reinforces tropes about Jewish power, and sets up “oppression olympics.”

Of course, in a growing number of situations, these book and curriculum bans have also led to the banning of Holocaust-related books and lessons. A recent [Hechinger Report investigation](#) explored the ways in which “divisive concepts” laws and Holocaust curricula often collide in the classroom. And book and curriculum bans of any sort harm all communities, including Jews, not just those targeted.

As one German Jewish rabbi stated in discussing the various challenges around Holocaust education and memory, “Building a culture of resilience is different than a culture of remembrance.”

As institutions and educators consider and address these challenges, they have an opportunity to more directly incorporate a democracy framework in Holocaust education programs and more deliberately build this culture of resilience. This is even more crucial at a moment when some Holocaust institutions, such as Yad Vashem, are grappling with threats to their independence from right-wing governments.

Trauma Is a Barrier

It is important to grapple with the role of trauma—including inherited and intergenerational trauma and long-standing narratives of victimhood and powerlessness—in the Jewish community’s approach to antisemitism.

This imperative raises a number of questions: What does it mean to effectively combat antisemitism at a time when many Jews have power in our democracy? How does our drive to combat antisemitism impact our shared understanding of what antisemitism looks like at this moment? And how do trauma-centered narratives impact the Jewish community’s ability to be in coalition with others?

Trauma and fear are sometimes used to build a sense of community and to

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raise funds. In their worst manifestations, they are used to scare Jews into thinking, “we are not safe anywhere or with anyone.” This fear-based thinking is counterproductive to building the coalitions and alliances Jews have benefited from over history and need now. To effectively build bridges to advance Jewish safety and inclusive democracy, we must approach this work through a trauma-informed lens.

Jewish Americans should also understand that the contemporary antisemitism conversation is new to many non-Jewish Americans. As previously discussed, many non-Jewish Americans’ understanding of antisemitism is often exclusively shaped by Holocaust education, if at all. As Eric Wards frequently says, we need to “build muscle around this conversation,” recognizing that good people make mistakes. The goal should be staying at the table together with potential allies and partners—putting mistakes and differences aside where possible in pursuit of solutions to our common challenges.

The White House Strategy Shows Another Way Forward

In many ways, the Biden administration’s [National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#) provides a helpful framework for the work ahead and confers important legitimacy on the connections among antisemitism, our democracy, and the urgency of building cross-community solidarity. At its core, this strategy recognizes that combating antisemitism requires protecting and advancing our democracy and the fundamental rights and safety of all communities; it specifically names “cross-community solidarity and collective action to counter hate” as one of its four pillars.

The strategy itself was the result of extensive advocacy by many and deep listening by the administration—a process that, in and of itself, illustrates how an effective advocacy ecosystem can work. It was also informed by key administration officials who have long understood how antisemitism and democracy intersect, including Ambassador Deborah Lipstadt and former Domestic Policy Advisor Susan Rice.

The Landscape: 7 Key Takeaways

The Landscape: 7 Key Takeaways

1 **The field is emergent, uneven, and significantly under-resourced.**

While this may shift over time as validators—including the Biden administration—lift up the ways in which antisemitism poses a threat to democracy, relatively few organizations currently align all their work and programs with this analysis. For those that do there are often significant and common challenges of being under-resourced and understaffed. In multiple cases, programming to counter antisemitism is held by a single staff member with deep expertise but limited time and capacity. In addition to more hands, leaders cited the need for funders who understand the long-term nature of this work and other support structures to offset the emotional toll of being on the frontlines—and often intermediaries—on this issue.

2 **There is real hunger in the field for more resources and better coordination.**

Practitioners need more and better resources to connect antisemitism to the broader anti-democratic moment. We heard this from newer Jewish progressive organizations and leaders, as well as institutional organizations and leaders like local Jewish Community Relations Councils. Non-Jewish leaders and organizations (who fundamentally understand the importance of combating antisemitism to their broader work) shared that they've avoided the conversation because they are worried about blowback if they say the wrong thing and/or because they have not found the right partner in the Jewish communal landscape. Jewish and non-Jewish leaders and practitioners alike noted the significant need for content on how antisemitism relates to the erosion of democracy and the safety of others. This lacuna presents a major opportunity.

3 **Leaders feel drowned out by the loudest voices and zero-sum narratives.**

There is a small number of Jewish antisemitism experts with national platforms, and many do not center this framework; the number of non-Jewish leaders with platforms on antisemitism is even smaller. This is in part because this frame and analysis is relatively new and it takes time for voices to break through, and in part because platforming new and diverse voices and approaches requires resources. As a result, the national conversation is dominated by a limited set of perspectives and often reinforces zero-sum narratives about antisemitism and how to address it.

The Landscape: 7 Key Takeaways

4

Cohort-based programs are promising but difficult to scale.

Western States Center, Shalom Hartman Institute, Faith in Action, Widen the Circle, JCRCs, and a number of other organizations utilize cohorts, bringing together leaders across lines of difference to concurrently learn and build relationships. Relationship building with non-Jewish allies who understand antisemitism, commit to countering antisemitic hate, and see their own safety and future as intertwined is both time intensive and deeply personal. Like many efforts and interventions designed by conflict resolution experts and used to combat polarization, this work is interpersonally transformative but hard to replicate quickly and at scale.

5

A significant amount of education and solidarity-building is happening behind-the-scenes.

At a time of deep polarization, when people are often called out and canceled, there are few public spaces where leaders can come together across lines of difference to learn and grapple together without personal and/or professional risk. So much of this work is, necessarily, happening behind the scenes.

This is especially true post October 7th, when dominant narratives are drawing sharp lines around communities and movements. A number of leaders are having hard but productive conversations with non-Jewish partners about how to avoid inadvertent antisemitism. To give just two examples, T'ruah worked with a labor union that was organizing against a Jewish business owner to ensure the campaign did not inadvertently touch on antisemitic tropes; and JCPA has been working with civil rights organizations on statements addressing the post-October 7th rise in antisemitism. The quiet nature of this work makes impact possible—but also makes it hard to capture, evaluate, and share it with broader audiences who, understandably, have a hard time understanding (and resourcing) what they cannot see.

6

Organizations—and their funders—have varying definitions for allyship and success.

Even before October 7th, Jewish leaders held a spectrum of opinions on what allyship in the fight to counter antisemitism should look like (not to mention differences of opinion around what does and does not constitute antisemitism). In a post-October 7th world, there needs to be some level-setting on what

The Landscape: 7 Key Takeaways

constitutes allyship—including broader understanding both within and outside the Jewish community that allies can simultaneously stand up against antisemitism while opposing Israeli policies and actions. Many of the practitioners we spoke with also emphasized the problems with transactional approaches, and the importance of meeting would-be allies where they are and increasing relational accountability from there.

7

This is long-term work, not a quick fix.

There is no silver bullet. Rather, the fight against antisemitism requires a holistic and sustained approach that involves long-term relationship building between communities and stakeholders, deliberate efforts to change the public conversation, and more.

The Landscape: Gaps & Recommendations

The Landscape: Gaps & Recommendations

While relatively limited, there are a number of organizations already engaged in combating antisemitism through the lens of its connections to our democracy and the safety of other communities (we identified 19). There are many more organizations primed to become engaged if provided the right partners and resources. At the same time, we identified a number of meaningful gaps in the landscape, many of which could be filled by engaging and better resourcing existing organizations and initiatives on these needs:

1

Public Affairs and Communications Resources and Coordination

- Generally, there is a hunger for more and better resources to connect the conversations on Jewish safety, the safety of other communities, and the health and vibrancy of our democracy. This need was expressed by progressive leaders and activists inside and outside the Jewish community as well as by Jewish communal leaders and organizations, such as Jewish Community Relations Councils.
- One key way to create these resources and connections is to develop a streamlined public affairs operation that can function across a spectrum of potential partners and is focused on coordinating and advancing messaging; producing sample materials and content; offering media and advocacy trainings and other resources; developing policy agendas for the national, state, and local levels; and more.

The goals for this operation should include advancing an Antisemitism x Democracy framework broadly while preparing for crisis moments that require rapid response. By bringing together a spectrum of partners committed to this framework, sharing resources, and coordinating responses, we can tell a much stronger and more coherent story about how Jewish safety connects to our democracy and shared future.

- This work also requires dedicated coalition space(s) to better connect Jewish and non-Jewish organizations and leaders engaged around antisemitism's deep interconnection with other forms of hate and to build related advocacy and public affairs campaigns. The White House antisemitism strategy provides valuable credibility to this framework and a unique opportunity to advance this work through these sorts of coalitions, but it requires swift mobilization.
- There is a significant need to expand the bench of messengers who are prepared to discuss antisemitism in key moments and to articulate connections among rising antisemitism, other forms of hate, and anti-democratic movements.

The Landscape: Gaps & Recommendations

The majority of prominent voices on antisemitism, including those most frequently tapped by the media in response to antisemitism-related news, are generally white, male, and Jewish. Too often, Jews of Color, women, younger individuals, and non-Jewish experts and allies are not among the first calls made by news outlets and others driving the public conversation at these key moments.

This isn't meant to discount the existing voices but, rather, to recognize that, in order to engage broader audiences in the fight against antisemitism, we need a broader array of voices and messengers. Ongoing message testing, media training, and public relations support—with the explicit goal of preparing and elevating diverse voices who can advance this framework via the media, programs and events, social media, and more—can help diversify the ecosystem.

The field would benefit from a broad array of partners amplifying this framework beyond the organizations listed here, including influencers and stakeholders with whom to share messaging in crucial moments.

2

Trainings and Workshops

- While some organizations offer trainings, workshops, and other resources for corporations and nonprofits seeking to engage their employees and lay leaders on antisemitism, these efforts have been undertaken in a somewhat arbitrary, piecemeal fashion, with different organizations taking different lenses and (at least apparently) no systematic approach. A more structured and deliberate approach to antisemitism trainings for workplaces would be more impactful.
- Similarly, there is a real opportunity to systematically engage progressive advocacy organizations, political infrastructure, and other parts of the progressive landscape in order to advance a shared understanding of antisemitism. This could bring together the various efforts that have already been engaged in this work to develop a deliberate strategy for trainings and workshops to reach the most important audiences.
- More broadly, there needs to be a deliberate effort to develop a shared understanding of the line between criticism of Israel and antisemitism, an absence that has become especially apparent since October 7th.

3

Advocacy & Bridge Building

- As book and curriculum bans and related challenges increase, developing a streamlined approach for tracking and understanding the impact on Holocaust and antisemitism education would be valuable, as would mobilizing to oppose the bans more broadly because of the obvious ways they threaten Jewish safety and values and the safety of so many other communities.
- There has been a proliferation of efforts to build bridges between communities, including a number of efforts focused on Black-Jewish relationships. These efforts typically occur on such a small scale that it's hard to develop big-picture takeaways. It would be useful to convene organizations and leaders who have led such programs in recent years with the goal of deeper evaluation, sharing learnings and best practices, and identifying opportunities to scale.
- College campuses present a significant challenge, with legitimate criticism of Israel too often morphing into explicit antisemitism, especially post-October 7th. Holding deliberate conversations to engage Jewish and non-Jewish student organizations, administrators and faculty members, and other stakeholders around the Antisemitism x Democracy framework could create opportunities to move campus conversations on antisemitism—with the goal of much more explicitly connecting antisemitism to the safety of other communities and our democracy.

4

Funder Engagement & Evaluation

- Funders themselves need better resources to understand, engage with, and support this framework. This report is meant to serve as a conversation starter and should be used to engage funder networks both within and outside of the Jewish community.
- While there are many promising interventions identified in this report, there is clearly a need for regular fieldwide and organization-specific evaluations to support funders and other stakeholders in tracking impact in the short- and long-term.
- Perhaps the biggest gap of all relates to the disproportionate resources that go to a relatively narrow set of organizations and initiatives focused on combating antisemitism versus the larger array of organizations and initiatives (as detailed here) that do critical related work.

As stated at the beginning of this report, a healthy, smart, and iterative ecosystem requires a wide array of organizations and leaders doing this work. No single organization can lead this work alone.

Messaging The Antisemitism x Democracy Framework

Messaging The Antisemitism x Democracy Framework

As detailed earlier in this report, there are significant gaps and opportunities on the communications and public affairs front when it comes to advancing the Antisemitism x Democracy framework. In addition to laying out trends and providing a landscape of organizations and initiatives working in this framework, we were also interested in learning how to best share this analysis with broader audiences in order to inform potential communications and public affairs efforts.

That led us to partner with More in Common, a nonprofit that utilizes research to understand and address the underlying drivers of fracture and polarization to build more united, resilient, and inclusive societies. More in Common doesn't only look at audiences through conventional demographic breakdowns, but also employs a "[Hidden Tribes](#)" framework, utilizing an extensive research process that places Americans into one of seven "tribes" based on how they express their core beliefs.

In general, More in Common found that messages that connect the fight against antisemitism with democracy and democratic norms and values—including and especially freedom and justice—tested very well, with high levels of agreement across race, generation, and party. Within these findings are crucial audience-specific insights: for example, highlighting the ways in which antisemitism fuels other forms of bigotry resonated particularly strongly among Gen Z respondents.

It's important to note that given the time and budget constraints of this project, our immediate goal was not to conduct comprehensive message testing. Rather, we sought to get a sense of how particular messaging frames resonate with various audiences, and to spark interest from the field in further research. This survey is already being utilized to support additional research by the Jewish Council for Public Affairs and its partners. A first round focused on 18 to 34 year-olds and confirmed that the most effective message to engage diverse communities in the fight against antisemitism underscores how it fuels other forms of hate and threatens our democracy.

What follows is a summary of research findings written by the [More in Common](#) team.

Approach to Messaging

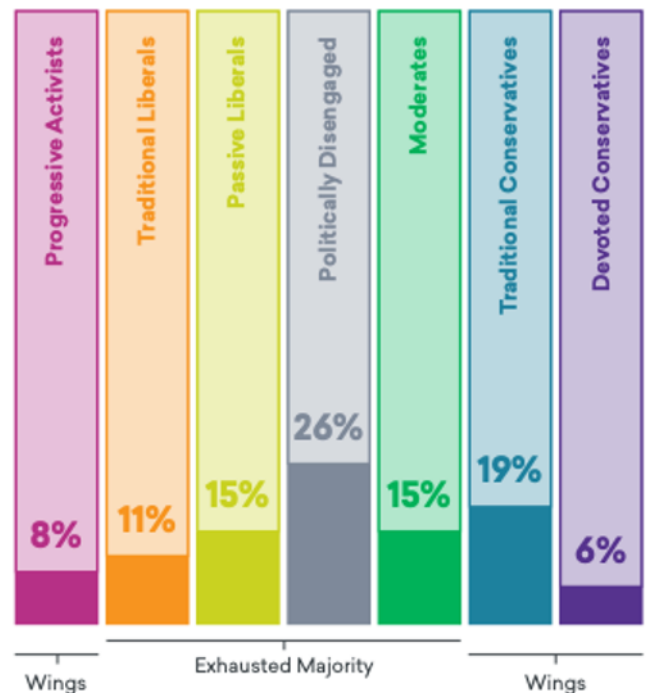
More in Common’s work is rooted in our understanding of Americans’ core beliefs, the complex web of identities, values, and attitudes that shape how people interpret the world. In prior work we have mapped these core beliefs and used them to create a Hidden Tribes segmentation (Figure 1) that clusters Americans based upon commonalities and distinctions in their core beliefs. With this understanding, we can intentionally craft messaging and narratives that have greater potential to achieve broad reach and resonance by balancing core beliefs that are often in tension (e.g., care and authority). Core beliefs messaging also has greater explanatory value about the causal relationship in communications. Each message we tested contained an appeal to a specific core belief or set of core beliefs; we are thus better positioned to show not just which messages worked best, but why. This approach gives us greater confidence in how to expand and further develop messaging that that will achieve the desired impact.

The Hidden Tribes segmentation is based on a wide range of questions about individuals’ underlying beliefs, group attachments, and levels of political activity and engagement.

The seven segments are:

- Progressive Activists: younger, highly engaged, secular, cosmopolitan, angry.
- Traditional Liberals: older, retired, open to compromise, rational, cautious.
- Passive Liberals: unhappy, insecure, distrustful, disillusioned.
- Politically Disengaged: young, low income, distrustful, detached, patriotic, conspiratorial.
- Moderates: engaged, civic-minded, middle-of-the-road, pessimistic, Protestant.
- Traditional Conservatives: religious, middle class, patriotic, moralistic.
- Devoted Conservatives: white, retired, highly engaged, uncompromising, patriotic.

The Hidden Tribes of America



Source: More in Common (2019)

Figure 1:

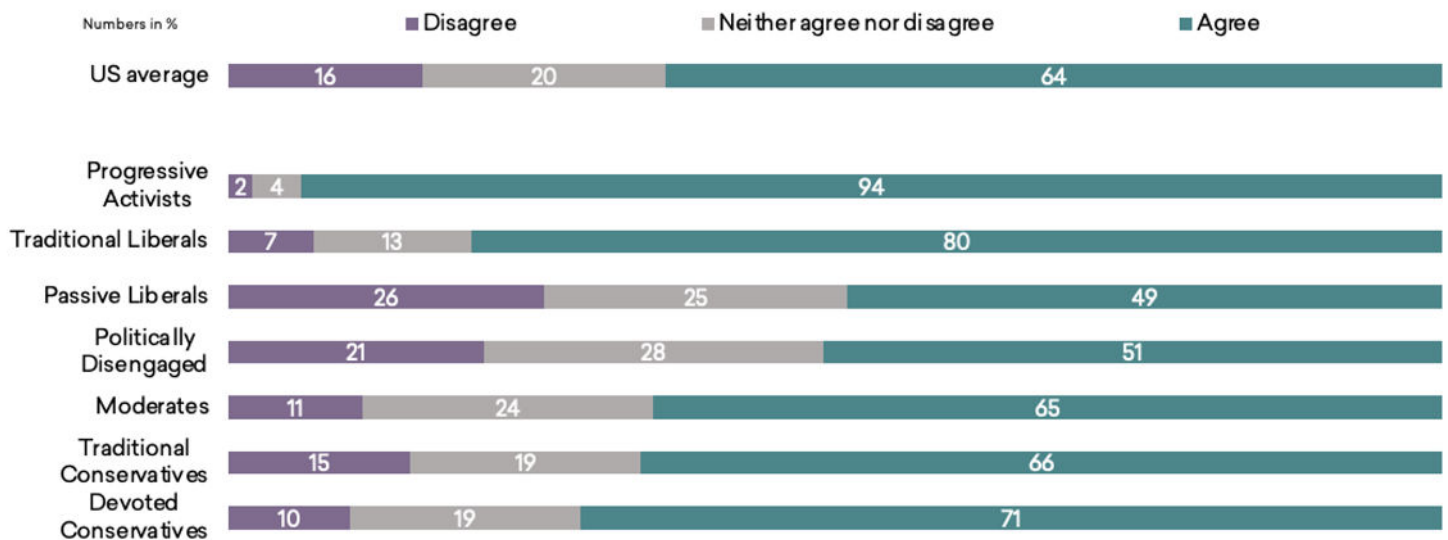
Step 1

Message Research Methodology

Our first step in message development was to collect data on how Americans’ core beliefs interacted with their views on antisemitism and on democracy. We partnered with international survey vendor YouGov to conduct online survey interviews with N=1,392 American adults (including an oversample of N=107 Jewish Americans) from September 15-20, 2023. Working closely with the Antisemitism x Democracy report team, we applied our Hidden Tribes segmentation questions to this survey and then asked respondents about their attitudes towards and experiences with antisemitism and democracy. An example is shown below.

Low-trust Hidden Tribes groups feel less responsibility to stand up to antisemitism.

I have a responsibility to stand up to antisemitism or hatred of Jewish people



Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Source: More in Common

Note: Numbers in data visualizations are rounded to the nearest whole number. Figures may total to larger or smaller than one-hundred percent due to rounding, and column totals may not match with individual data points in graphics due to rounding.

Using this data, we identified the core beliefs that had the strongest potential relationship to how Americans viewed antisemitism and democracy. They are shown here:

Core Beliefs



Step 2

Informed by these insights, we developed nine messages, each of which incorporated a specific frame: religious freedom, freedom and justice, America as a place of refuge, advancing social justice, care and belonging, our responsibility to strengthen democracy, antisemitism as a means of manipulation, antisemitism as a machinery of division and fear, and law and order. Highlighted colors refer back to the core beliefs intentionally appealed to with the text.

The 9 Messages:

Machinery Metaphor

Antisemitism is part of the machinery of division and fear that cynical politicians and others use to boost their own power. They rely on antisemitism to **manufacture fear and exploit divisions between Americans instead of delivering a better future for us all**. We should work together to end antisemitism and all forms of bigotry because we all deserve freedom and safety, no matter our background.

Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy

It is **every American's responsibility to protect and strengthen our democracy**. One way we do this is **by standing up against antisemitism**. Antisemitism **weakens our democracy by turning Americans against each other** and **creates an environment of hatred, fear, and distrust**. **Americans of all backgrounds** should make our democracy better by standing united against antisemitism and all forms of bigotry.

Advancing Social Justice Broadly

Ending antisemitism is an essential part of making America **a more just, equal, and inclusive society**. History has shown **us that antisemitism fuels the targeting of people from many different backgrounds and identities, such as LGBTQ+ communities, immigrants, and people of color**. **By combating antisemitism, we not only protect Jewish communities, but make America a safer and more welcoming place for all of us, no matter our religion, gender, or skin color.**

Justice

Most of us believe that we all deserve freedom, no matter our religion, race, or background. Antisemitism, like all forms of bigotry and discrimination, dehumanizes individuals and communities based on their identity. We stand in solidarity with Jewish people and commit to working together to dismantle harmful narratives that **normalize hate and violence**. Nobody is free unless everybody is free.

Religious Freedom

Freedom of religion is an essential American value. An attack on any one faith is an attack on the freedom of all Americans to practice faith as they believe. This means all Americans of all faiths have a duty to stand up against antisemitism. Each of us must do our part to ensure America remains a nation where people are free to practice their faith without fear.

American Exceptionalism

America has always been a place of refuge for those fleeing religious and ethnic persecution. Our Founding Fathers established this nation on the principles of freedom and liberty, and standing up against tyranny and persecution. By undermining freedom of religion and threatening Americans' safety, antisemitism strikes at the very essence of who we are as a nation. To honor and preserve our most sacred ideals, we have a patriotic duty to stand united against antisemitism.

Law and Order

Antisemitism undermines law and order in America. If we tolerate threats or attacks against any of our citizens based on their faith, it will lead to even more chaos and lawlessness. We can stand up against antisemitism without infringing on our rights to free speech and expression. By holding those who spread bigotry against Jews accountable, we help preserve the rules and laws that have made our nation great throughout history.

Don't Be Manipulated

Antisemitism, like all prejudice, is a tool used to manipulate Americans. Those seeking to turn Americans against each other use antisemitism not only to hurt the Jewish community but also to pull us apart as a society. We all have an obligation to reject efforts that use anti-Jewish bigotry to manipulate and divide us.

Care

All Americans have a role to play in standing up to antisemitism. Although our country is a work in progress, the promise of America has always been that people of all backgrounds can find belonging, community, and opportunity. Right now that promise is under threat from antisemitism. Whatever our background, we should stand united against antisemitism.

Step 3

We fielded a second survey with N=1,015 U.S. adults from October 19 through 26, 2023. Respondents for this survey included a significant number (N=781) who had also taken the initial September 2023 survey, as well as new respondents (N=234). The respondents were matched to a sampling frame on gender, age, race, and education. The margin of error (adjusted for weighting) is +/- 3.1 for the U.S. average and higher for subgroups.

Before reviewing potential messages, survey respondents were provided the definition of antisemitism utilized in the White House's National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism:

Antisemitism is a stereotypical and negative perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred of Jews. It is prejudice, bias, hostility, discrimination, or violence against Jews for being Jews or Jewish institutions or property for being Jewish or perceived as Jewish. Antisemitism can manifest as a form of racial, religious, national origin, and/or ethnic discrimination, bias, or hatred; or, a combination thereof. However, antisemitism is not simply a form of prejudice or hate. It is also a pernicious conspiracy theory that often features myths about Jewish power and control.

Topline Results

- 1 All nine messages received relatively high levels of agreement, ranging from 78% to 84% average agreement scores. The messages also received agreement from majorities of Americans across race, generation, and party.
- 2 Unsurprisingly, after being exposed to all of the messages, respondents were more likely to think that antisemitism is a problem (+11%), that it is a threat to all Americans' freedom (+8%) and democracy (+6%), and that they have a responsibility to stand up to antisemitism (+5%).¹
- 3 The strongest performing message in terms of overall agreement score (84%) centered on the importance of freedom of religion; this was also the message that the highest percentage of respondents (20%) said they agreed with most and the one respondents were most likely to say would be persuasive to other Americans with similar political views (as the respondent).
- 4 Although the majority across all generations were more likely to agree with all nine messages, variation across age was notable, with Gen Z being the least likely to express agreement (ranging from 67% to 73%).

¹ Change is calculated by comparing responses to this exact question on an initial survey of N = 1,392 US adults (including an oversample of n=107 Jewish Americans) from September 15-20, 2023

Salient Findings from the Message Test

Messages evoking freedom—including freedom of religion—had among the highest agreement scores overall and across a number of subgroups.

Freedom messages tested especially well among most Hidden Tribes groups.

Themes	Statement	US Average	Progressive Activists	Traditional Liberals	Passive Liberals	Politically Disengaged	Moderates	Traditional Conservatives	Devoted Conservatives
Freedom, freedom of religion, loyalty, call to action	Freedom of religion is an essential American value. An attack on any one faith is an attack on the freedom of all Americans to practice faith as they believe. This means all Americans of all faiths have a duty to stand up against antisemitism. Each of us must do our part to ensure America remains a nation where people are free to practice their faith without fear.	84	89	91	84	75	87	85	86
Freedom, freedom of religion, American history, call to action	America has always been a place of refuge for those fleeing religious and ethnic persecution. Our Founding Fathers established this nation on the principles of freedom and liberty, and standing up against tyranny and persecution. By undermining freedom of religion and threatening Americans' safety, antisemitism strikes at the very essence of who we are as a nation. To honor and preserve our most sacred ideals, we have a patriotic duty to stand united against antisemitism.	82	91	90	81	71	82	83	89
Freedom, equality, safety	Most of us believe that we all deserve freedom, no matter our religion, race, or background. Antisemitism, like all forms of bigotry and discrimination, dehumanizes individuals and communities based on their identity. We stand in solidarity with Jewish people and commit to working together to dismantle harmful narratives that normalize hate and violence. Nobody is free unless everybody is free.	82	93	88	80	73	83	84	77

Survey question: How much do you agree with the following statement, with 0 meaning completely disagree and 100 meaning completely agree?
Source: More in Common

Looking at the results by age group, we see that, overall, Gen Z expresses the lowest agreement scores—though all are still in the positive zone—across messages. This is consistent with findings from other recent public opinion research. We also see this pattern in the results for the Politically Disengaged segment, which consistently exhibited lower-than-average agreement with messages countering antisemitism compared to other Hidden Tribes groups; this group tends to be younger, more diverse, and lower income.

Although there is less variation across racial categories, we found that the “justice” message resonated most strongly among Black Americans and Asian Americans. In general, the messaging resonated a bit less strongly with Black and Hispanic Americans compared to the general population. In particular, Black Americans agreed least with messages that evoked prejudice and division, as well as diversity and inclusion, underscoring findings from other research that inadvertently engaging in competitive victimhood is unhelpful to building allyship.

Themes	Statement	US Average	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Income <\$40K	Income \$40K-\$120K	Income \$120K+
Freedom, equality, safety	Most of us believe that we all deserve freedom, no matter our religion, race, or background. Antisemitism, like all forms of bigotry and discrimination, dehumanizes individuals and communities based on their identity. We stand in solidarity with Jewish people and commit to working together to dismantle harmful narratives that normalize hate and violence. Nobody is free unless everybody is free.	82	85	76	76	78	78	84	87

Survey question: How much do you agree with the following statement, with 0 meaning completely disagree and 100 meaning completely agree?
Source: More in Common

Although still above 70 percent in terms of agreement, Black Americans have lower average agreement scores relative to the overall population with messages evoking prejudice and division as well as diversity and inclusion.

Themes	Statement	US Average	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Income <\$40K	Income \$40K-\$120K	Income \$120K+
Loyalty, division, call to action	Antisemitism, like all prejudice, is a tool used to manipulate Americans. Those seeking to turn Americans against each other use antisemitism not only to hurt the Jewish community but also to pull us apart as a society. We all have an obligation to reject efforts that use anti-Jewish bigotry to manipulate and divide us.	79	82	72	74	76	76	81	83
Loyalty, equality, system of hate, call to action	Antisemitism is part of the machinery of division and fear that cynical politicians and others use to boost their own power. They rely on antisemitism to manufacture fear and exploit divisions between Americans, instead of delivering a better future for us all. We should work together to end antisemitism and all forms of bigotry because we all deserve freedom and safety, no matter our background.	79	80	77	75	73	77	80	79
Equality, fairness, dignity and respect, care, diversity, safety, call to action	Ending antisemitism is an essential part of making America a more just, equal, and inclusive society. History has shown us that antisemitism fuels the targeting of people from many different backgrounds and identities, such as LGBTQ+ communities, immigrants, and people of color. By combating antisemitism, we not only protect Jewish communities, but make America a safer and more welcoming place for all of us, no matter our religion, sexual orientation, or skin color.	78	80	72	74	75	74	80	78

Survey question: How much do you agree with the following statement, with 0 meaning completely disagree and 100 meaning completely agree?
Source: More in Common

Finally, looking at ideological categories, we found that both the “religious freedom” message and a message about our “responsibility to strengthen democracy” resonated with both Democrats and Republicans. The “justice” message also resonated with Progressive Activists, the most liberal of the Hidden Tribes segments, whereas the “law and order” message resonated with the more conservative segments.

To summarize, here we show the top three messages broken out by Hidden Tribes segments and by demographic and political categories.

Top messages for various groups.

Message	Progressive Activists	Traditional Liberals	Passive Liberals	Politically Disengaged	Moderates	Traditional Conservatives	Devoted Conservatives
#1 Message for group	Justice	Freedom of religion	Freedom of religion	Freedom of religion	Freedom of religion	Freedom of religion	Law and Order
#2 Message for group	Advancing Social Justice Broadly	Advancing Social Justice Broadly	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Justice	Care and Belonging	American Exceptionalism	American Exceptionalism
#3 Message for group	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Law and Order	Law and Order	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Freedom of religion

Message	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Democrat	Republican	Independent
#1 Message for group	Freedom of religion	Freedom of religion	Law and Order	Freedom of religion	Freedom of religion	Freedom of religion	Freedom of religion
#2 Message for group	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Justice	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy
#3 Message for group	Justice	American Exceptionalism	Freedom of religion	Care and Belonging	Justice	Justice	Justice

Message	Silent Generation	Baby Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen Z	Income <\$40K	Income \$40K-\$120K	Income \$120K+
#1 Message for group	Law and Order	Freedom of religion	Freedom of religion	Freedom of religion	Advancing Social Justice Broadly	Freedom of religion	Freedom of religion	Freedom of religion
#2 Message for group	Freedom of religion	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Justice	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Freedom of religion	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Justice
#3 Message for group	American Exceptionalism	Justice	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	American Exceptionalism	Justice	Justice	Justice	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy

Note: Messages are ranked according to each subgroups' top three messages from the 0-100 point messaging agreement scores.

Source: More in Common

We also asked respondents which message they agreed with most and which message they thought would be most persuasive to other Americans with similar political views (as the respondent). Americans were most likely to say the “religious freedom” message resonated the most with them, followed by the “justice” message.

Message respondents agree with the most.

Message	Selected %
[Religious Freedom] Freedom of religion is an essential American value. An attack on any one faith is an attack on the freedom of all Americans to practice faith as they believe. This means all Americans of all faiths have a duty to stand up against antisemitism. Each of us must do our part to ensure America remains a nation where people are free to practice their faith without fear.	20
[Justice] Most of us believe that we all deserve freedom, no matter our religion, race, or background. Antisemitism, like all forms of bigotry and discrimination, dehumanizes individuals and communities based on their identity. We stand in solidarity with Jewish people and commit to working together to dismantle harmful narratives that normalize hate and violence. Nobody is free unless everybody is free.	14
[American Exceptionalism] America has always been a place of refuge for those fleeing religious and ethnic persecution. Our Founding Fathers established this nation on the principles of freedom and liberty, and standing up against tyranny and persecution. By undermining freedom of religion and threatening Americans' safety, antisemitism strikes at the very essence of who we are as a nation. To honor and preserve our most sacred ideals, we have a patriotic duty to stand united against antisemitism.	12
[Advancing Social Justice Broadly] Ending antisemitism is an essential part of making America a more just, equal, and inclusive society. History has shown us that antisemitism fuels the targeting of people from many different backgrounds and identities, such as LGBTQ+ communities, immigrants, and people of color. By combating antisemitism, we not only protect Jewish communities, but make America a safer and more welcoming place for all of us, no matter our religion, sexual orientation, or skin color.	11
[Care and Belonging] All Americans have a role to play in standing up to antisemitism. Although our country is a work in progress, the promise of America has always been that people of all backgrounds can find belonging, community, and opportunity. Right now that promise is under threat from antisemitism. Whatever our background, we should stand united against antisemitism.	10
[Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy] It is every American's responsibility to protect and strengthen our democracy. One way we do this is by standing up against antisemitism. Antisemitism weakens our democracy by turning Americans against each other and creating an environment of hatred, fear, and distrust. Americans of all backgrounds should make our democracy better by standing united against antisemitism and all forms of bigotry.	10
[Manipulation and Division] Antisemitism, like all prejudice, is a tool used to manipulate Americans. Those seeking to turn Americans against each other use antisemitism not only to hurt the Jewish community but also to pull us apart as a society. We all have an obligation to reject efforts that use anti-Jewish bigotry to manipulate and divide us.	8
[Machinery Metaphor] Antisemitism is part of the machinery of division and fear that cynical politicians and others use to boost their own power. They rely on antisemitism to manufacture fear and exploit divisions between Americans, instead of delivering a better future for us all. We should work together to end antisemitism and all forms of bigotry because we all deserve freedom and safety, no matter our background.	7
[Law and Order] Antisemitism undermines law and order in America. If we tolerate threats or attacks against any of our citizens based on their faith, it will lead to even more chaos and lawlessness. We can stand up against antisemitism without infringing on our rights to free speech and expression. By holding those who spread bigotry against Jews accountable, we help preserve the rules and laws that have made our nation great throughout history.	7

Survey question: In your opinion, which of the previous messages did you agree with the most?
Source: More in Common

Americans prefer the message on religious freedom the most.

Themes	Statement	US Average	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent Generation	Baby Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen Z
Freedom, freedom of religion, loyalty, call to action	Religious freedom	20	15	28	19	36	18	21	22	18
Freedom, equality, safety	Justice	14	16	11	15	17	16	13	14	10
Freedom, freedom of religion, American history, call to action	American Exceptionalism	12	12	15	11	5	14	13	12	9
Equality, fairness, dignity, care, diversity, safety, call to action	Advancing Social Justice Broadly	11	15	5	11	5	12	10	8	19
Care, equality, safety	Care and Belonging	10	9	13	13	3	10	12	10	11
Democracy, loyalty, safety, care, equality, call to action	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	10	11	10	10	17	12	7	12	7
Loyalty, division, call to action	Manipulation and Division	8	8	4	9	11	3	7	10	13
Loyalty, equality, system of hate, call to action	Machinery Metaphor	7	8	6	6	2	7	10	5	8
Authority, law and order, loyalty, freedom, call to action	Law and Order	7	6	9	7	4	9	7	7	5

Survey question: In your opinion, which of the previous messages did you agree with the most?
Source: More in Common

Most Progressive Activists chose the social justice message as their top message, while most Devoted Conservatives selected the religious freedom message.

Themes	Statement	US Average	Progressive Activists	Traditional Liberals	Passive Liberals	Politically Disengaged	Moderates	Traditional Conservatives	Devoted Conservatives
Freedom, freedom of religion, loyalty, call to action	Religious freedom	20	7	14	21	22	22	23	42
Freedom, equality, safety	Justice	14	18	10	15	16	22	10	9
Freedom, freedom of religion, American history, call to action	American Exceptionalism	12	11	16	7	13	12	14	6
Equality, fairness, dignity, care, diversity, safety, call to action	Advancing Social Justice Broadly	11	26	17	17	7	9	6	0
Care, equality, safety	Care and Belonging	10	9	10	10	10	9	11	12
Democracy, loyalty, safety, care, equality, call to action	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	10	11	16	6	9	9	10	17
Loyalty, division, call to action	Manipulation and Division	8	8	6	7	10	5	8	8
Loyalty, equality, system of hate, call to action	Machinery Metaphor	7	7	9	7	8	9	7	3
Authority, law and order, loyalty, freedom, call to action	Law and Order	7	3	3	10	6	4	11	2

Survey question: In your opinion, which of the previous messages did you agree with the most?

Source: More in Common

Most Progressive Activists felt the social justice message would be most convincing to others that share their beliefs, while most Devoted Conservatives felt the religious freedom message was most convincing to those similar to them.

Themes	Statement	US Average	Progressive Activists	Traditional Liberals	Passive Liberals	Politically Disengaged	Moderates	Traditional Conservatives	Devoted Conservatives
Religious Freedom	Religious Freedom	20	13	16	20	18	21	24	41
Justice	Justice	16	22	17	18	17	22	12	5
American Exceptionalism	American Exceptionalism	12	7	11	10	15	12	15	10
Advancing Social Justice Broadly	Advancing Social Justice Broadly	10	28	14	14	6	10	5	2
Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	10	5	12	9	9	7	13	9
Law and Order	Law and Order	9	6	11	6	11	8	9	10
Machinery Metaphor	Machinery Metaphor	8	7	7	8	9	7	7	6
Care and Belonging	Care and Belonging	8	6	7	7	8	4	9	10
Manipulation and Division	Manipulation and Division	7	6	5	9	7	9	7	7

Survey question: In your opinion, which of the previous messages would be most convincing to other Americans with similar political beliefs as yours?

Source: More in Common

Americans also thought these same messages would be the ones that resonated most with others who had similar political views.

Americans think the religious freedom and justice-oriented messages would be most convincing to others with similar political beliefs.

Themes	Statement	US Average	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent Generation	Baby Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen Z
Religious Freedom	Religious Freedom	20	18	25	17	31	15	22	23	20
Justice	Justice	16	18	13	17	17	20	17	14	13
American Exceptionalism	American Exceptionalism	12	11	15	14	10	16	11	13	10
Advancing Social Justice Broadly	Advancing Social Justice Broadly	10	15	2	12	15	6	13	10	15
Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	10	9	12	13	6	12	10	9	9
Law and Order	Law and Order	9	7	11	8	7	13	8	7	7
Machinery Metaphor	Machinery Metaphor	8	7	10	4	9	7	8	8	8
Care and Belonging	Care and Belonging	8	9	7	8	3	5	9	9	9
Manipulation and Division	Manipulation and Division	7	6	5	8	2	7	4	9	10

Survey question: In your opinion, which of the previous messages would be most convincing to other Americans with similar political beliefs as yours?

Source: More in Common

Members of minority groups were less likely to see the “law and order” message as persuasive to other Americans with similar political views.

Themes	Statement	US Average	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Income <\$40K	Income \$40K-\$120K	Income \$120K+
Religious Freedom	Religious Freedom	20	20	20	21	19	21	16	27
Justice	Justice	16	16	20	15	13	18	16	17
American Exceptionalism	American Exceptionalism	12	13	10	15	14	11	14	11
Advancing Social Justice Broadly	Advancing Social Justice Broadly	10	11	10	6	13	9	13	10
Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	Responsibility to Strengthen Democracy	10	10	14	9	8	9	10	9
Law and Order	Law and Order	9	10	3	3	13	11	8	9
Machinery Metaphor	Machinery Metaphor	8	7	9	8	2	8	8	7
Care and Belonging	Care and Belonging	8	7	10	8	12	6	8	8
Manipulation and Division	Manipulation and Division	7	6	5	15	4	8	7	3

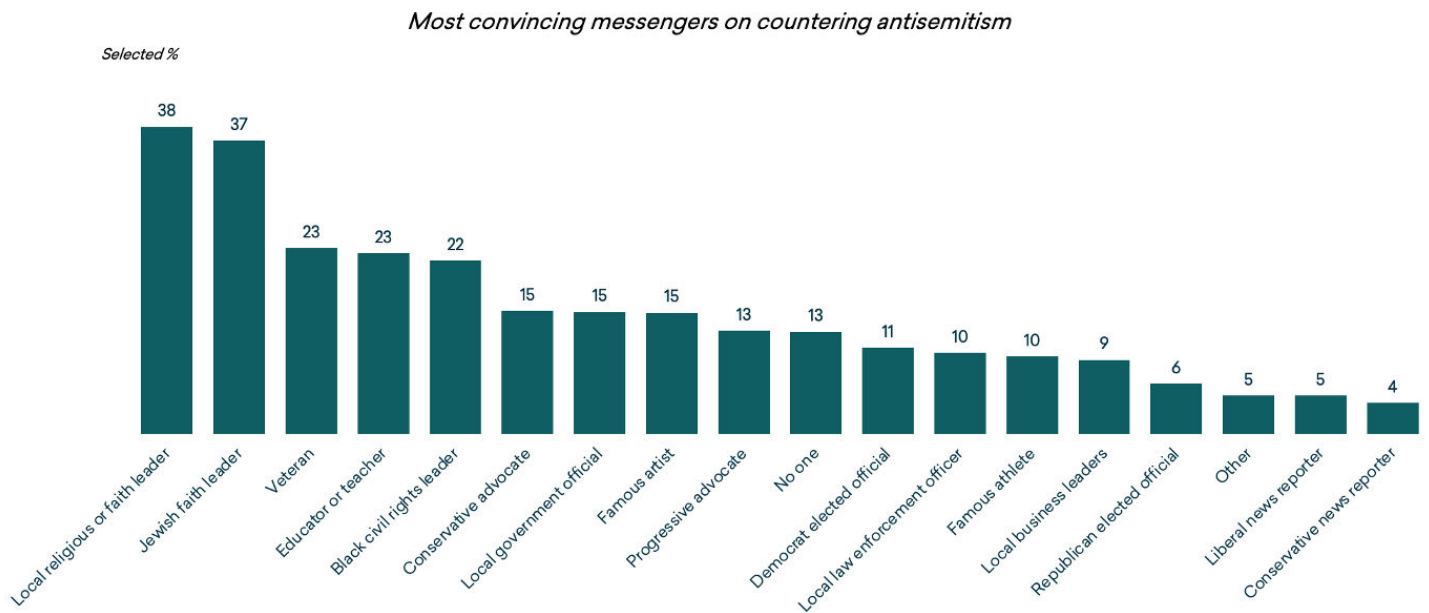
Survey question: In your opinion, which of the previous messages would be most convincing to other Americans with similar political beliefs as yours?

Source: More in Common

Messengers

In the survey, we also asked Americans about the types of messengers they would find credible and convincing for messaging on countering antisemitism. Most Americans believe that the most convincing messengers on countering antisemitism are local religious or faith leaders and Jewish leaders, followed by veterans, educators or teachers, and Black civil rights leaders. Republicans and older Americans showed slightly more support for local religious leaders as messengers while Black Americans were particularly likely to find a Black civil rights leader to be a convincing messenger. Gen Z and Black Americans were also more likely to want to hear from Democratic elected officials on antisemitism.

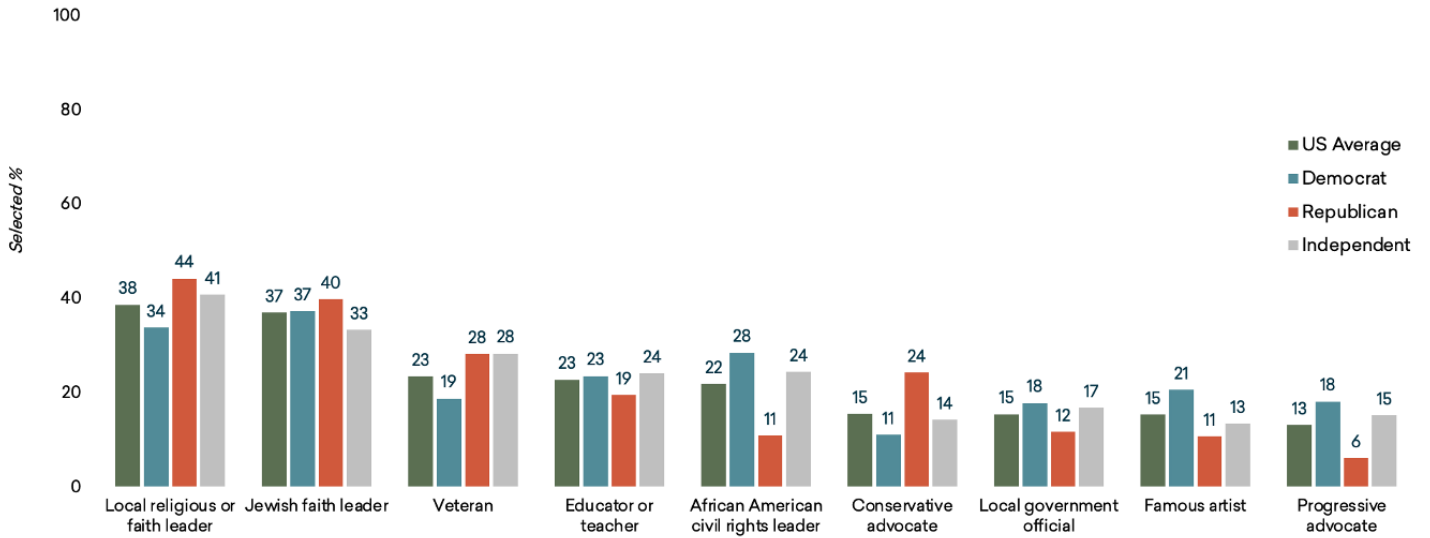
Americans think the most convincing messengers are local and Jewish faith leaders, followed by veterans, educators, and Black civil rights leaders.



Survey question: In your opinion, who would be the most convincing in expressing the message you agreed with the most to the public about fighting back against antisemitism, or hatred of Jewish people? Select your top 3.
Source: More in Common

Republicans show slightly more support for local religious leaders as messengers.

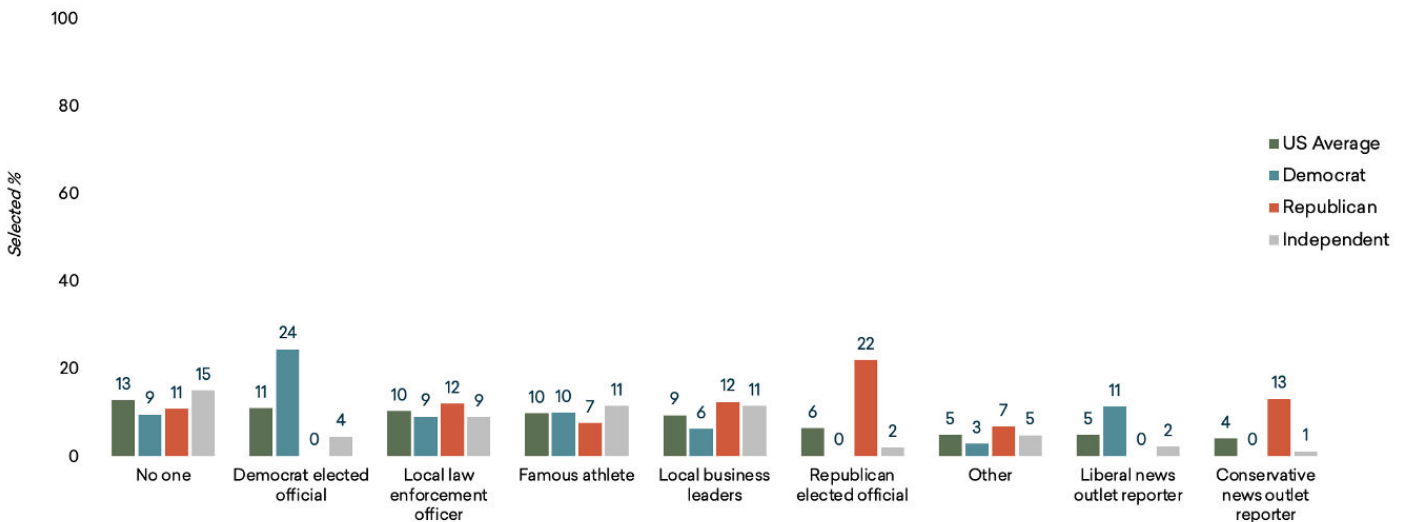
Most convincing messengers by party



Survey question: In your opinion, who would be the most convincing in expressing the message you agreed with the most to the public about fighting back against antisemitism, or hatred of Jewish people? Select your top 3.
Source: More in Common

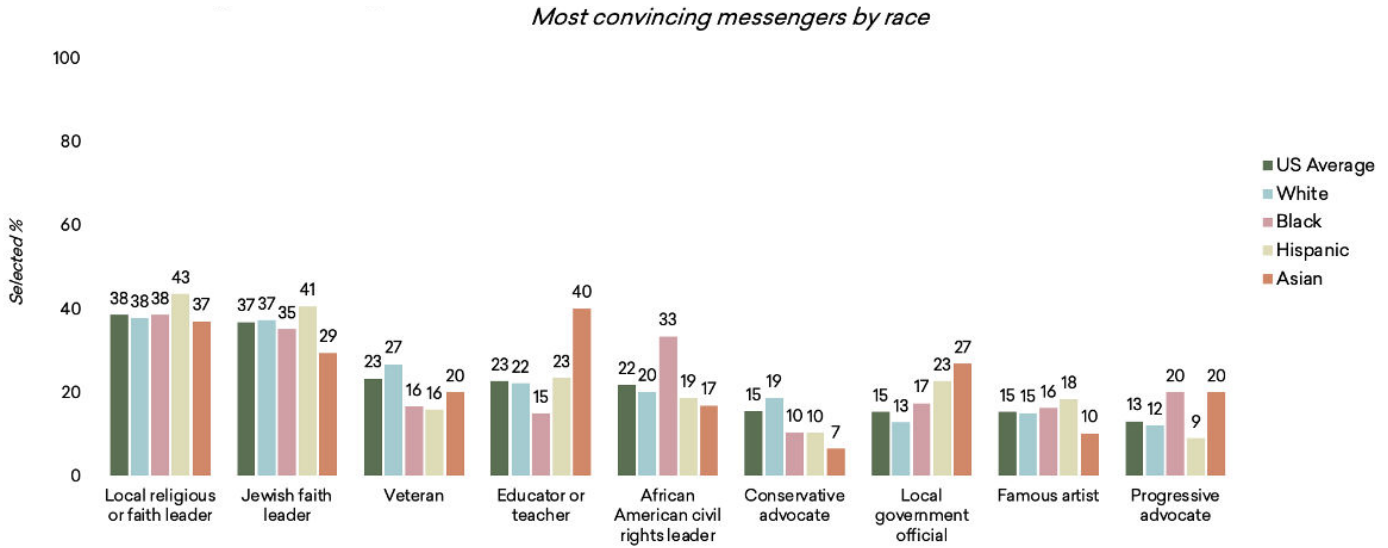
Democrats want to hear from Democratic elected officials. Republicans want to hear from elected Republicans.

Most convincing messengers by party



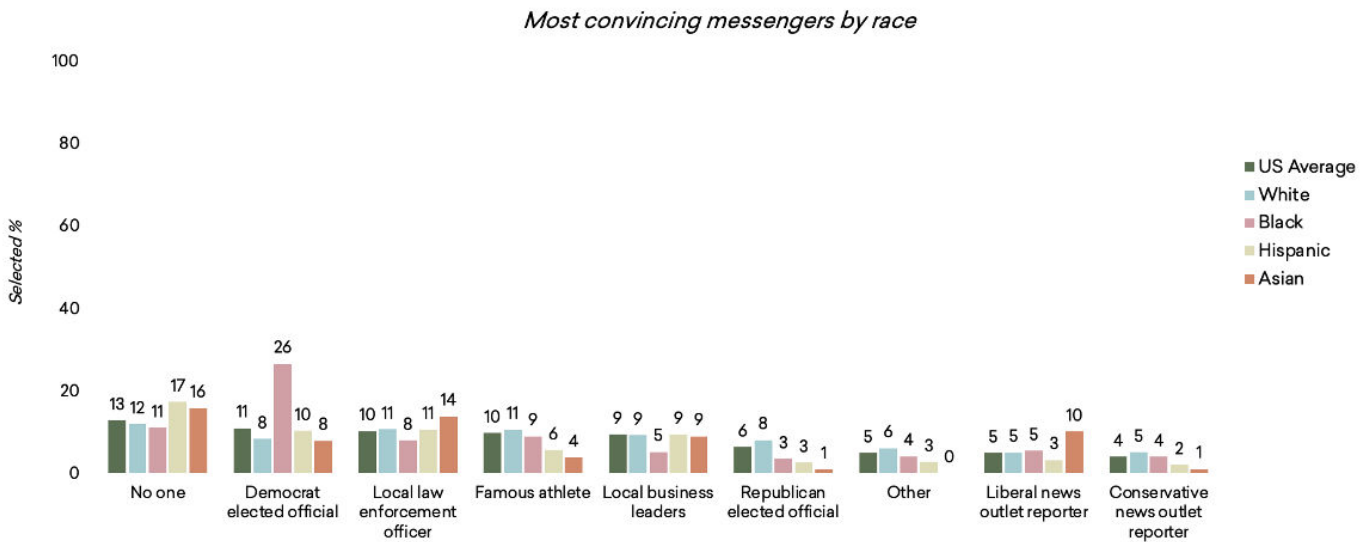
Survey question: In your opinion, who would be the most convincing in expressing the message you agreed with the most to the public about fighting back against antisemitism, or hatred of Jewish people? Select your top 3.
Source: More in Common

Black Americans are especially likely to find a Black civil rights leader as a convincing messenger.



Survey question: In your opinion, who would be the most convincing in expressing the message you agreed with the most to the public about fighting back against antisemitism, or hatred of Jewish people? Select your top 3.
Source: More in Common

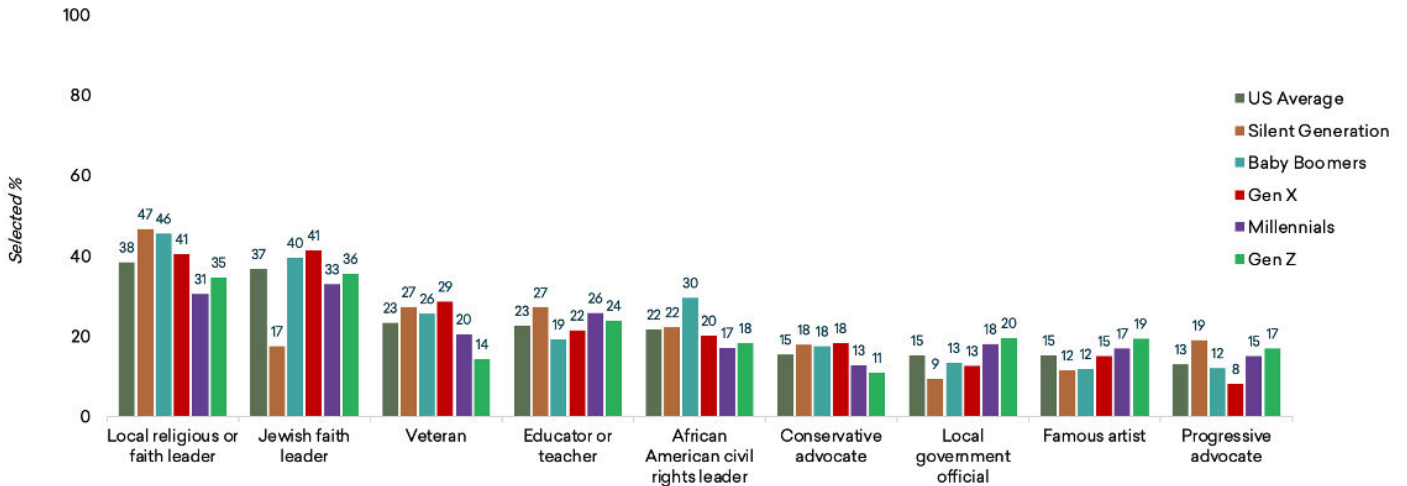
Black Americans want to hear from elected Democrats.



Survey question: In your opinion, who would be the most convincing in expressing the message you agreed with the most to the public about fighting back against antisemitism, or hatred of Jewish people? Select your top 3.
Source: More in Common

Older Americans find local religious leaders more convincing as messengers.

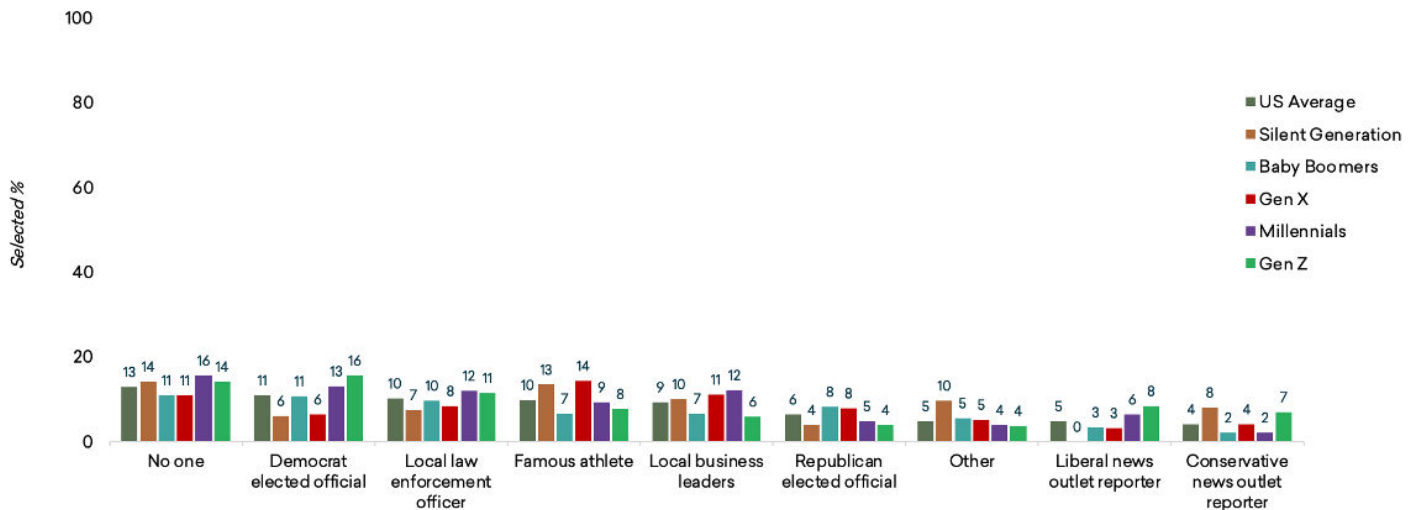
Most convincing messengers by generation



Survey question: In your opinion, who would be the most convincing in expressing the message you agreed with the most to the public about fighting back against antisemitism, or hatred of Jewish people? Select your top 3.
Source: More in Common

Gen Z wants to hear from Democratic elected officials.

Most convincing messengers by generation



Survey question: In your opinion, who would be the most convincing in expressing the message you agreed with the most to the public about fighting back against antisemitism, or hatred of Jewish people? Select your top 3.
Source: More in Common

As with most tests on messenger credibility, the results likely reflect Americans' perceptions of existing voices on countering antisemitism. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the majority of prominent voices on antisemitism including those most frequently tapped by the media in response to antisemitism-related news—tend to be white, male, and Jewish. Without discounting the existing voices, which the data suggests have robust credibility across multiple audiences, it is important to note that engaging new and larger audiences in the fight against antisemitism will likely require expanding the diversity of voices and messengers heard and seen speaking out against antisemitism.

Calls to Action

Across the board, Americans were more likely to see antisemitism as a problem in the US after reading the messages. They were also more likely to see antisemitism as a threat to Americans' freedoms and to democracy, and to feel a sense of responsibility to stand up against antisemitism.

It is important to note that some subgroups showed a decrease in the above-mentioned variables. For example, the Politically Disengaged, while showing an increase in attitudinal variables such as the extent to which they perceive antisemitism to be a problem in the US, had a drop in the percentage of individuals who feel a sense of personal responsibility to stand up against antisemitism. At this point we cannot identify any particular driver of these decreases, but More in Common is engaged in extended research to surface potential influencers.

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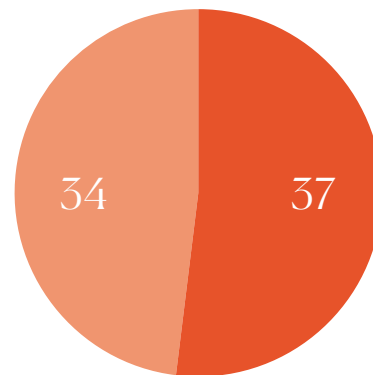
The Current Landscape

As previously noted, the goal of this project is not to account for every existing organization or effort focused on antisemitism or democracy. Rather, the goal is to illustrate the significant efforts already underway, dismantle silos between those efforts, and provide recommendations on how best to fill gaps using existing infrastructure.

While studying the expanding field of projects and organizations working in the United States to combat antisemitism, we looked most closely at 72 groups.

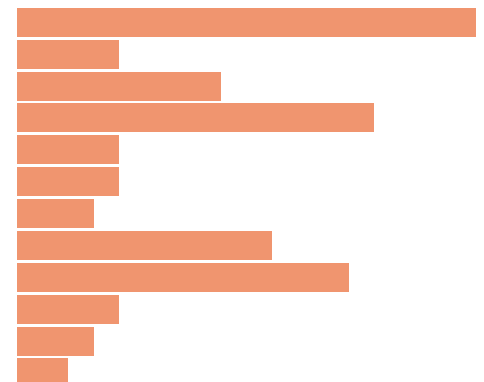
Organizations/projects that do not identify as Jewish: 34

Organizations/projects that identify as Jewish: 37



Groups whose work focuses on:

Social Justice: 18
Arts & Culture: 4
Pro-Democracy & Civil Rights: 8
Jewish Community Development: 14
Research & Think Tanks: 4
Interfaith Organizations: 4
Interfaith Organizations: 4
Philanthropic Networks: 3
Israel: 10
Anti-Polarization, Political Violence, & Extremism: 13
Education: 4
Public Engagement Campaigns: 2



(A number of groups have multiple focus areas)

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Of the 72 groups, 19 (roughly 25%) currently consistently align their programmatic work with the Antisemitism x Democracy framework. Notably, these 19 organizations have a variety of focuses, including Holocaust education, community organizing, research, advocacy, public affairs/community relations, and Jewish arts and culture.

Another 38 organizations, or just more than half of the fuller landscape we looked at, either align their programmatic work with the Antisemitism x Democracy framework some of the time and/or could, with additional resources and support, do even more to address the ways in which antisemitism is connected to other forms of hate and poses a threat to democracy. Like the first, this group of 38 organizations represents an array of focus areas, including Jewish community development; education; Holocaust education; research; Jewish arts and culture; public engagement campaigns; pro-democracy and civil rights; anti-polarization, political violence and extremism; philanthropic leadership; and Israel.

Finally, we identified another 15 organizations that can best be described as focusing on adjacent or broadly related work, such as polarization, anti-extremism, and civil rights writ large. We heard from a number (but not all) of these groups that more resources—such as educational information, partnerships, and financial support—would increase their capacities to incorporate antisemitism into existing streams of work.

A healthy, smart, iterative ecosystem requires a wide array of organizations and leaders doing this work in a variety of ways—some directly and some indirectly. No single organization can do this work alone.

Snapshots of six organizations, selected to represent a range of approaches, follows. These should not be considered endorsements of any particular organization or program.

As a reminder, this project began, and interviews were largely completed, before October 7th; with the situation rapidly evolving, this report intentionally did not adopt a specific litmus test for organizational responses. However, there have been serious questions and concerns about how some responded or, perhaps more importantly, did not respond to the deadliest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust. We encourage potential funders and partners to have individual conversations with organizations to understand their statements and engagement on this crisis.

Collaborative for Jewish Organizing

Social Justice

The Collaborative is a network of nine Jewish Groups organizing in 16 states and the District of Columbia, including: Carolina Jews for Justice (North Carolina), Detroit Jews for Justice (Michigan), Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action (Massachusetts), Jewish Community Action (Minnesota), Jewish Council on Urban Affairs (Illinois), Jews for Racial and Economic Justice (New York), Jews United for Justice (Maryland and Washington, DC), Bend the Arc (nationwide), and the Religious Action Center (nationwide). The Collaborative supports the Jewish organizing field by generating funds for members and brings them together to build relationships, learn, share best practices, and collaborate on priority initiatives.

Past & Current Related Programs:

- Communications and narrative work aimed at empowering members of the Collaborative and partners to engage on antisemitism. In addition to providing message guidance (utilizing the [Uprise/Bend the Arc guide](#)), the Collaborative also provides technical support for communications work across its member organizations—including tools and strategies to respond to bad-faith actors seeking to undermine social movements.
- Trainings and messaging for non-Jewish partners and elected officials on antisemitism, with the goal of serving as a trusted local messenger. For example, Carolina Jews for Justice engaged a local Muslim American elected official and their staff, who now more explicitly name antisemitism when discussing threats to Jews and our democracy. Jewish Community

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Action in Minnesota brought on a designated anti-hate organizer who offers 90-minute Antisemitism 101 trainings, including for local churches, in non-Jewish spaces, and even for TikTok creators, with the goal of helping participants be better prepared to show up in solidarity with the Jewish community.

- Engagement opportunities and trainings for Jewish community members, such as Carolina Jews for Justice’s Antisemitism Listening Project, which provides space for local Jewish community members to process their own experiences with antisemitism. The goal is to build trust so that these community members can then be brought into the Collaborative’s analysis of how to combat antisemitism through a justice framework.
- Policy and campaign work, such as supporting hate crime reporting laws that address harm in a non-punitive and non-carceral way.

What They Have Learned:

- Developing trusted relationships with non-Jewish partners on shared goals and work is crucial to addressing antisemitism and staying in relationship in challenging moments. In particular, many partners lack basic information about Jews and Jewish people, or experience mixed messages about how critique of Israel impacts American Jews.
- Addressing antisemitism through the lens of BIPOC Jews’ experiences is one important way to ground the work, underscoring why it’s counterproductive to attempt to fight antisemitism without a focus on solidarity.
- Progressive organizing provides Jews, including otherwise unaffiliated Jews, with a way to show up as Jews—providing a trusted source for social justice work rooted in Jewish values.

What They Say They Need to Scale:

- Resources to increase the reach of the antisemitism work—both to scale engagement with Jewish communities to understand antisemitism, and to engage non-Jewish partners.
- Additional message testing that measures the effect of messages on persuasion and motivation.

Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA)

*Social Justice; Pro-Democracy & Civil Rights;
Jewish Community Development*

JCPA is the national convener of Jewish coalitions working to build a just and inclusive democracy, rooted in an abiding belief that Jewish safety is tied to inclusive, multiracial democracy and strong relationships across communities. At the core of this work is the engagement and mobilization of the 125 Jewish Community Relations Councils (JCRCs) around the country. Notably, JCPA recently restructured to become a more nimble and responsive organization that can meet the demands of the moment.

Current Related Programs:

- Issue-based advocacy coalitions focused on protecting and advancing democracy and combating hate and discrimination. These coalitions—expected to launch in early 2024—will mobilize JCRCs, national Jewish organizations, and non-Jewish allies to educate and advocate on core priorities with an emphasis on opportunities that can be replicated at the local level. Current focus areas include voting and civil rights; combating book bans and curriculum challenges; fighting extremism and disinformation; protecting free and fair elections; and countering anti-LGBTQ, anti-immigrant, anti-Black, and other forms of hate, with a particular focus on how they intersect with antisemitism and Jewish safety.
- Strategic community relations and engagement, providing dedicated support to JCRC field professionals and lay leaders (including professional development, toolkits, and convenings on shared challenges and opportunities, efforts to diversify the field, and how to scale local successes). Examples of promising local JCRC initiatives include Cincinnati's Leaders in Light Institute and St. Louis' Student to Student program.

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- Trend analysis and public affairs, allowing JCPA to identify emerging issues on which it can develop support and guidance on a national level.
- Rapid response communications and organizing in moments of crisis, such as the Israel-Hamas war. Since October 7th, JCPA has provided talking points and other materials to allow the JCRCs to engage their local partners; JCPA has also worked to organize the Jewish community to stand with others under threat, most notably organizing over 160 Jewish organizations in a statement rejecting Islamophobia and anti-Arab hate.

What They Have Learned:

- Independent community relations councils are key. Part of the impetus for JCPA's restructuring was the recognition that some Jewish communal organizations are uncomfortable with or unable to engage in the advocacy necessary to build coalitions and advance inclusive democracy, such as on racial justice, civil rights, and LGBTQ equality. By providing JCRCs (many of which are housed within Federations but can act under their own banner) with the resources to do this work, mainstream local Jewish communal organizations can still engage on these critical issues.
- Showing up for our neighbors matters. Many JCRCs reported that the post-October 7th statement on Islamophobia (mentioned above) allowed them to open lines of communication with their Muslim and Arab American neighbors to advance shared safety in the wake of October 7th, even at such a tenuous and challenging moment.
- Cohort-based programs and trips have had promising results, such as Cincinnati's Leaders In Light Institute, which brings together diverse cohorts of civic leaders to engage on issues of democracy. As one JCRC director said, "we've been able to solve [local] problems that we wouldn't have been able to solve otherwise" thanks to these programs.

What They Say They Need to Scale:

- Additional staff capacity and funding. While three key funders provided some financial runway as part of JCPA's restructuring, significant additional resources are necessary to fully staff and program the coalition and community relations work for the long run.

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- Deeper coordination on communications, research, and other resources so that they can be adapted and distributed to the community relations field. There is critical work on antisemitism, anti-democratic extremism, and other forms of bigotry already underway at both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations. A deliberate effort to coordinate those resources could work in both directions: JCPA could adapt these materials into useful resources for the JCRCs, and partners could leverage JCPA's insights from the community relations field to inform future research.

Disclaimer: Amy Spitalnick recently started as the new CEO of JCPA.

Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC)

Social Justice; Jewish Community Development

The RAC is the advocacy arm of the Reform Movement, educating and mobilizing the Reform Jewish community around issues of social justice. The RAC particularly focuses its strategy on the local and state levels where synagogues and state-level chapters take action.

Past & Current Related Programs:

- Nonpartisan voter engagement work undertaken in partnership with the Center for Common Ground, Black Voters Matter, and other organizations to reach people targeted by barriers to voting. The RAC estimates it has reached over 1.5 million voters since 2018, including in swing states like Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Georgia.
- A partnership with the ADL, including the Kulanu program for 70+ Reform congregations around the country. This annual program seeks to empower congregations to address antisemitism and hate in their communities through education and advocacy. This effort particularly lends itself to hyper-local work, such as a congregation in Duluth that's working with local Native tribes to support a genocide education bill.
- Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) programs, both internally and for the broader Reform movement by providing its programming to the general public free of charge. This includes a recent series of trainings

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on whiteness and systems of oppression for people who identify as white. The RAC also provides fee-for-service REDI offerings to other Jewish institutions.

- Work with teens. The RAC brings approximately 2,000 teens to Washington, DC each year via the L'Taken Social Justice Seminar, to learn about Judaism and justice. The RAC also offers a Teen Justice Fellowship, a project-based learning opportunity focused on social justice and community organizing.

What They Have Learned:

- Hyper-local work allows Jewish community members to connect their lived experience on antisemitism to broader struggles for justice. Providing a vehicle for people to do social justice work in deep partnership with their local allies has helped Jews understand the intersection of Jewish safety with that of their neighbors.
- Organizing in diverse coalitions—even and especially on issues where white Jews are less significantly impacted—helps combat antisemitism. Antisemitism decreases when people are in relationships with Jews and when we live in a more equitable and just society. By winning policy changes that allow more people to flourish, especially through multiracial coalitions, Jews are inherently safer too.
- Some congregants are comfortable engaging institutions (such as school boards or law enforcement) on antisemitism but not as comfortable engaging other non-Jewish stakeholders in the community. There are incredibly varied levels of understanding of antisemitism and its intersections with other forms of hate, and the RAC is seeking to better engage congregations around how extremists use antisemitism as a tool to divide our communities in order to prevent us from doing the broader work of social justice.
- This work is just as challenging in blue states as it is in red states. For example, the RAC has been engaged in conversations around long-standing racial segregation in New Jersey schools, the result of white flight; deep local relationship work is necessary to fully grapple with and address segregation.
- Doing Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion work internally first is critical to building the foundation to do the work externally with congregations and affiliates.

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What They Say They Need to Scale:

- Resources to hire, train, and retain organizers so that the RAC can further ramp up its organizing work.
- State-level partners to build out a legislative agenda, particularly as it relates to genocide education. The RAC is hoping to build its work in this space, but this will require identifying and engaging coalitions in a variety of states where they do not yet have a significant presence.

T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights

Social Justice, Israel

T'ruah works to organize and train rabbis, cantors, rabbinical and cantorial students, and the communities they lead around issues of human rights in the United States, Canada, and Israel/Palestine. CEO Rabbi Jill Jacobs has been a leading voice on the intersections of antisemitism and anti-democratic extremism and the urgency of fighting all forms of hate and bigotry in order to advance multiracial democracy.

Past & Current Related Programs:

- Antisemitism trainings and resources for Jewish organizations and leaders, including clergy and groups such as HIAS and the Jewish Social Justice Roundtable.
- Trainings for non-Jewish organizations and leaders, like Amnesty USA, GLAAD and Moms Demand Action, Hill staffers, and chaplain students. This has also included some unique trainings, such as working with the Laundry Workers Circle of New York to ensure that one of their workers' rights campaigns targeting a Haredi-owned business did not inadvertently engage in antisemitic tropes. T'ruah has also engaged behind the scenes with progressive coalitions.
- Bystander Intervention to Stop Antisemitism, in partnership with Right to Be (formerly Hollaback), to empower ordinary people to intervene when they witness antisemitic harassment and violence, with a focus on Orthodox Jews who are most likely to be targeted by such harassment or other visible Jews.

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- Defining the line between criticism of Israel and antisemitism so that it is easier to call out and combat direct antisemitism, which T'ruah frequently does. This includes publishing a guide to antisemitism that both introduces the history of antisemitism and parses the difference between criticism of Israel and antisemitism; and organizing Jewish clergy in opposition to codification of definitions of antisemitism into policy or law, including the IHRA definition, as well as opposing legislation that seeks to prohibit the boycott of Israel and/or settlements.

What They Have Learned:

- One-on-one conversations and engagement are most effective on multiple levels. First, these conversations are crucial to helping non-Jews understand why certain tropes—e.g. about Jews and money—inadvertently perpetuate antisemitism. Second, given the ways in which antisemitism can both manifest and be weaponized in conversations on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it's easier to unpack the layers and have those hard conversations in individual settings.
- Both nuance and clarity on Israel matter. T'ruah is one of the few progressive organizations that works on both Israel-related and domestic issues, not shying away from Israel's complexity or the fight for human rights for both Israelis and Palestinians. Yet they recognize that non-Jews don't necessarily understand that this version of progressive Zionism exists or how antisemitism shapes many Jews' commitment to Israel's existence. There is much more work to do here.
- It's important for non-Jewish partners to see Jews fighting racism, xenophobia, and other forms of bigotry and extremism.

What They Say They Need to Scale:

- Additional staff capacity and funding. This would support dedicated staff for T'ruah's antisemitism work, design and distribution plans for its antisemitism guide and other training materials, and communications efforts.

Western States Center

Pro-Democracy & Civil Rights

Western States Center produces programs, resources, and tools to help organizers and other progressive leaders advance inclusive democracy. Their former Executive Director, Eric Ward, and their current Program Director, Megan Black, have been among the strongest national voices explaining the intersections of antisemitism, white nationalism, and anti-Black racism.

Past & Current Related Programs:

- Common Good Fellowship: a 12- to 18-month cohort-based fellowship for progressive leaders working across disciplines, who hold political or community power and are well positioned to bring what they learn from WSC about antisemitism and its centrality to combating authoritarianism back to their own organizations and networks. Over 150 leaders have participated in various forms of the fellowship to date.

International trips to Poland and Israel/Palestine to help multiracial, multifaith groups of progressive leaders contextualize these issues while building relationships and solidarity. (These trips are currently paused.)

- A Masterclass program for artists and cultural workers that culminates in participants creating and sharing art projects exploring the relationships among antisemitism, anti-Black racism, white nationalism, Islamophobia, and other threats to democracy.
- Campus-based leadership cohorts for undergraduate students. The goal is to equip students with a clearer analysis of antisemitism, white supremacy, and democracy in order to foster more nuanced and thoughtful dialogue

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on Israel-Palestine. Participants learn basic organizing skills, deep listening skills, power analysis, and more.

- International trips to Poland and Israel/Palestine to help multiracial, multifaith groups of progressive leaders contextualize these issues while building relationships and solidarity.
- Resources and handbooks to empower communities to understand antisemitism and related forms of hate. For example, in December 2023, WSC partnered with Princeton’s Bridging Divides Initiative to release [“Speaking Out Against Bigoted, Dehumanizing Rhetoric: What We Can Do,”](#) documenting the surge in antisemitic and Islamophobic hate incidents and providing resources to take action.

What They Have Learned:

- The participants WSC engages—whether through the Common Good Fellowship or the Masterclass for artists—often stay connected to the organization, can be powerful messengers and bridge-builders, and may even go on to create their own projects rooted in the Antisemitism x Democracy framework. Evan Milligan of Alabama Forward, Leo Morales of the ACLU of Idaho, Robert Jones of the Public Religion Research Institute, and writer Wahajat Ali are all Common Good fellows who have used their public platforms to call out antisemitism’s connection to broader extremism. Meanwhile, playwright Rachel Atkins and musician Ana Egge, who participated in the Masterclass, continue to explore related themes in their creative work.
- The dynamics on college campuses are particularly intense and require cross-institution support. WSC’s two-semester pilot at Oberlin College did not have enough support from school personnel and “limped” across the finish line as a result. While a full evaluation remains underway, a two-semester pilot at NYU was seemingly more successful, thanks in part to greater institutional buy-in and a revamped program design that made it a co-curricular opportunity that included a stipend. While there were plenty of challenging conversations, a number of students walked away understanding the connections between the diversity of Jewish engagement with Zionism and their own experiences of Black liberation and nationalism.
- Trips to Poland and Israel/Palestine deepen learning and engagement for participants who have completed other WSC programs. WSC now launches

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each program with the budget and intent to offer international travel. These trips are currently paused as WSC undertakes a strategic planning process.

What They Say They Need to Scale:

- Additional staff capacity and funding. Megan Black is currently the main staff member holding this stream of work, although WSC is working to raise additional funds and build additional capacity.
- Strategic communications support. If there were a deliberate effort and resources available to elevate the voices of Common Good Fellows and other WSC-trained leaders in key moments, their powerful messages could be significantly amplified.
- More coordination with Jewish coalitions who can engage with and amplify WSC's work, including its resources aimed at protecting local democratic institutions, supporting local organizers and activists, and building cross-community collaboration. This can be done through deliberate engagement with Jewish Community Relations Councils (via JCPA), as well as through spaces like the "Against Hate in the Immigration Debate" table of nonprofit groups.

Shalom Hartman Institute

Jewish Community Development, Education

The Shalom Hartman Institute is a center of Jewish thought and education that serves North America and Israel, with the goal of strengthening Jewish peoplehood, identity, and pluralism. It runs a broad array of programs, including some focused on intergroup and intragroup education as well as how faith communities can strengthen participatory democratic culture.

Past & Current Related Programs:

- **Black/Jewish Leadership Initiative:** a cohort-based program piloted in 2023 that brought together community-based Black and Jewish leaders with the goal of strengthening allyship through mutual understanding of each other's experiences, including racism and antisemitism. Participants included journalists, university administrators, social service leaders, and more; four of the 24 participants were Black Jews. The program was designed by a team of Black Studies professors (who taught about Black narratives and identity) and the Hartman faculty (who taught about Jewish narratives and identity). In addition to New York-based seminars, the program also included trips to Israel and the American South.
- **Muslim Leadership Initiative,** providing Muslim leaders with the opportunity to engage in academic-level study of the Jewish people, Judaism, Israel, and Zionism. The program has had nine cohorts to date and includes an annual retreat with North American Jewish leaders aimed at furthering mutual understanding and identifying opportunities for communities to work together.

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What They Have Learned:

- Directly incorporating Israel presents challenges to bridge-building. On the Black/Jewish cohort's trip to Israel, Jewish participants—who spanned the political spectrum—were somewhat defensive about Israel and how it was taught. Without a Yad Vashem stop, some felt an important narrative was missing. At the same time, the trip allowed the group to directly explore how an American racial analysis does or does not apply to the Israel/Palestine context. At the end, participants and faculty were divided over whether incorporating Israel was crucial or a distraction; in particular, academics and campus leaders felt like addressing Israel was key, while those doing more local work did not. Related: the Muslim Leadership Initiative's decision to directly address Israel has led to pressure on participants to pull out or similar challenges.
- Raising the interconnectedness of hate without inadvertently invoking competitive victimhood is not easy. Hartman sought to avoid a comparative approach to Black and Jewish experiences and trauma, but it was hard to avoid it altogether. At the end of the program, participants who are white and Jewish felt they had a better understanding of the societal and structural injustices faced by the Black community; however, Black participants may not have gotten as clear a picture of the Jewish experience in America because of the attention given to Israel/Palestine.
- Choosing people who were connected geographically or otherwise was important and valuable to deepening connections. Unsurprisingly, this is the best way to ensure that the relationships developed via these programs can continue for the long term.

What They Say They Need to Scale:

- Before scaling, the Black/Jewish Leadership Initiative requires much deeper analysis. Hartman is currently evaluating what to change: program structure, types of participants, how much Israel is part of the experience, and so on. It is also worth noting that Hartman was originally unable to find a Black organizational partner for the program, ultimately moving forward with three Black Studies faculty instead.

Conclusion

This is a defining moment for the Jewish people, our democracy, and the safety of all marginalized communities across the country.

Extremists continue to exploit the violence in Israel and Gaza to fuel division, distrust, and hate, building on an already-dire crisis that long predated October 7th. Meanwhile, Jews—as well as other communities—are feeling isolated and afraid, emotions that can lead to seeing the world in zero-sum terms and pulling back from our neighbors.

Instead, as challenging and sometimes painful as it may be, we must reject these efforts to tear our communities apart. It is more urgent than ever that we move towards one another, rather than away—connecting the dots between our communities' safety and futures, and recognizing the only path forward is one deeply rooted in cross-community relationships and solidarity. This is all the more critical as we enter the 2024 election season, when hate, conspiracy theories, and disinformation will only become more prevalent, and antisemitism further utilized to sow further distrust in each other and our democracy.

It is certainly a dark time, but there are reasons for hope. As this landscaping illustrates, there are significant opportunities to expand the field of organizations and messengers engaged in explaining the intersections of antisemitism and democracy through better resourcing, collaboration, and engagement. Meanwhile, message research and other data underscore the path forward in mobilizing key audiences at this critical moment.

By building a healthier, smarter, and more iterative ecosystem, we can ensure a more coordinated and cohesive approach to telling the story of our shared future—rightfully positioning the fight against antisemitism as inherent to the safety of everyone and the future of our democracy.

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