



# The Jonathan Netanyahu Symposium on Antisemitism

Friday, October 8<sup>th</sup> 10am-3:00pm | [Register here](#)

*Message from President Stanley*

*Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer Dr. Jabbar Bennett will introduce the Symposium*

## Panel 1: 10:00am-12:00pm “Antisemitism: Past and Present Permutations”



### David Nirenberg - “Does Anti-Judaism’s Past Tell Us Anything About Its Future?”

Anti-Judaism and Anti-Semitism have a long history. How can the study of that history help us to understand the present, and what can it offer the future?

David Nirenberg is Dean of The Divinity School and Deborah R. and Edgar D. Jannotta Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago, where he has also served as Dean of the Social Sciences and Executive Vice Provost. Much of his research focuses on the ways in which Jewish, Christian, and Islamic cultures constitute themselves by relating to or thinking about each other. His prize-winning books include *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages*, and *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition*, and *Neighboring Faiths: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism Medieval and Modern*. His most recent

book, written in collaboration with a mathematician, is *Uncountable: A Philosophical History of Number and Humanity from Antiquity to the Present*. He is currently at work on a World History of Race and Religion in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.



### Eric Ward - “Skin in the Game: How Antisemitism Animates White Nationalism”

Where do we currently stand in relation to the nation’s reckoning with the issues of race, white privilege and inequality, and what stake do we have in this process? Eric K. Ward, Executive Director of Western States Center, will discuss the historical contexts, current challenges and future possibilities that together reflect the connections between antisemitism and white nationalist ideology in the United States.

Eric K. Ward is a nationally-recognized expert on the relationship between authoritarian movements, hate violence, and preserving inclusive democracy. In his 30+ year civil rights career, he has worked with community groups, government and business leaders, human rights advocates, and philanthropy as an organizer, director, program officer, consultant, and board member. The recipient of the Peabody-Facebook Futures Media Award, Eric’s widely quoted writings and speeches are credited with key narrative shifts. He currently serves as Executive Director of Western States Center, Senior Fellow with Southern Poverty Law Center and Race Forward, and Co-Chair for The Proteus Fund.



### David Schraub - “White Jews: An Intersectional Approach”

The application of both “intersectionality” and “whiteness” to American Jews is controversial within many segments of the Jewish community. However, I suggest that an intersectional approach offers the best way of understanding the dynamic relationship between Jewishness and Whiteness, and can help illuminate elements of the Jewish experience that would otherwise remain obscure. Resisting simplistic conclusions that Jews uncomplicatedly either are or are not “White,” my core claim is that Whiteness and Jewishness in combination function in ways that are not necessarily grasped if one atomizes the identities and holds them apart. What Whiteness “does” to Jewishness is act as an accelerant for certain forms of antisemitic marginalization even as it ratifies a racialized hierarchy within the Jewish community. Absent an intersectional vantage, many political projects and controversies surrounding Jewish equality will be systematically misunderstood.

David Schraub is an Assistant Professor of Law at Lewis & Clark Law School, where he teaches courses on constitutional law and anti-discrimination law. He previously taught at DePaul University, the University of California-Berkeley, and the University of Illinois. David has published extensively on the subjects of antisemitism and anti-discrimination more broadly in both academic and popular outlets, such as the *California Law Review*, the *American Political Science Review*, and the *Association of Jewish Studies (AJS) Review*, as well as *The Atlantic*, *The Jewish Daily Forward*, and *Haaretz*. He holds a B.A. from Carleton College, a J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School, and a Ph.D. from the University of California-Berkeley.

Co-sponsors: College of Arts and Letters, College of Social Science, James Madison College, Residential College of Arts and Humanities, Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives, Lester & Jewell Morris Hillel Jewish Student Center, Center for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies, Asian Studies Center.

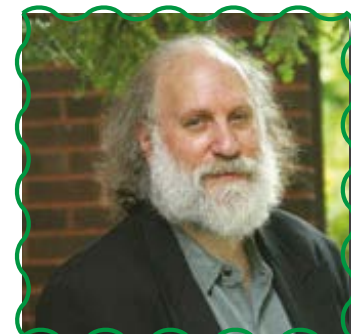
## Panel 2: 1:00pm-3:00pm “Antisemitism and the Campus Climate”



### Saba Soomekh - “From the Classroom to the Quad: The Rise of Antisemitism and a Hostile Campus Climate”

Dr. Soomekh will discuss the many challenges Jewish and pro-Israel students deal with regarding the rise of antisemitism on campus and in the classroom. She will discuss how we can support Jewish students and their allies in order to build a secure and positive campus environment and empower campus leaders to strengthen their Jewish community’s position within the larger university. Finally, Dr. Soomekh will specifically address the antisemitism Iranian and other Mizrahi Jews experience in America and their Ashkenormative experience on campus.

Dr. Saba Soomekh is the Associate Director at the American Jewish Committee-Los Angeles and a lecturer at The Academy for Jewish Religion-CA, where she teaches Religious Studies and Middle Eastern History courses. Dr. Soomekh teaches and writes extensively on World Religions, Women and Religion, intersectionality and its impact on the Jewish community, and the geo-politics of the Middle East. She is a participant in the 2021 Fellows Program at King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID), and was a Scholar-in-Residence at Oxford University with the Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy. Professor Soomekh is the editor of the book *Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews in America* and the author of the book *From the Shahs to Los Angeles: Three Generations of Iranian Jewish Women between Religion and Culture*.



### Cary Nelson - “The Academic Mandate for Antisemitism”

Anti-Zionist beliefs have become institutionalized in a number of humanities and social science departments. As a consequence, the guard rails that blocked or discouraged their faculty from drifting from anti-Zionism to antisemitism have disintegrated. Teaching about contemporary antisemitism should therefore confront current faculty practices.

Cary Nelson is Jubilee Professor of Liberal Arts & Sciences Emeritus at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Nelson was President of the American Association of University Professors between 2006 and 2012. His 35 authored books include 5 about antisemitism and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict including *The Case Against Academic Boycotts of Israel* (Co-edited with Gabriel Noah Brahm, 2015) and *Israel Denial: Anti-Zionism, Anti-Semitism, & The Faculty Campaign Against the Jewish State* (2019).



### Ethan Katz - “From Jewish Studies Educator to Anti-Bias Training Filmmaker: How the Changing Realities of Campus Politics Led Me to the Fight Against Antisemitism”

In this talk, Prof. Ethan Katz will present the acclaimed training film *Antisemitism in Our Midst: Past and Present*, which he co-wrote with colleagues at UC-Berkeley. He will explain how over the past couple of years, his scholarship, background, and political circumstances have led him to focus substantial attention on antisemitism education at Berkeley and far beyond. Drawing on that experience, Dr. Katz will address what he sees as the key challenges and most promising approaches in that work today and how those shaped the training film.

Ethan Katz is Associate Professor of History and Jewish Studies at the University of California-Berkeley, where he is also the Chair of the Chancellor’s Committee on Jewish Life and Campus Climate. Since the spring of 2019, he has been the co-founder and co-director of the Antisemitism Education Initiative at Berkeley (along with Rabbi Naftalin-Kelman). This effort brings together administrators, faculty, and leaders of the campus Jewish community to create a sustained program to combat antisemitism, and has been treated as a resource and model by colleagues on a number of other campuses. Dr. Katz is also currently the co-chair of a Task Force of the Association for Jewish Studies on Antisemitism and Academic Freedom.

As a scholar, Dr. Katz’s work has focused on the Jewish experience in modern Europe and the Middle East, especially in France and the Francophone world. Much of his scholarship examines Jewish belonging and exclusion, Jewish-Muslim relations, the Holocaust, Islamophobia, and colonialism and its legacies. His book *The Burdens of Brotherhood: Jews and Muslims from North Africa to France* (Harvard, 2015) received five prizes, including a National Jewish Book Award and two awards for the best book of the year in French history.