

Tools for engaging in challenging conversations: **Historical** and **Contemporary** Antisemitism



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Map by Margaret Wickens Pearce

Concept by Stephen J. Hornsby

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a National Resource Center on Canada
at the University of Maine

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Take a moment to reflect

What **brought you** here?

INTRODUCTIONS & AGENDA

What to expect

Contracting for intentional community

Diversity of Jewish communities 101

Developing Critical Consciousness and tools for
Historic and Contemporary Antisemitism

Antisemitism in School Settings

Wrap Up and Next Steps

ABOUT US

Facing History and Ourselves uses lessons of history to challenge teachers and their students to stand up to bigotry and hate.

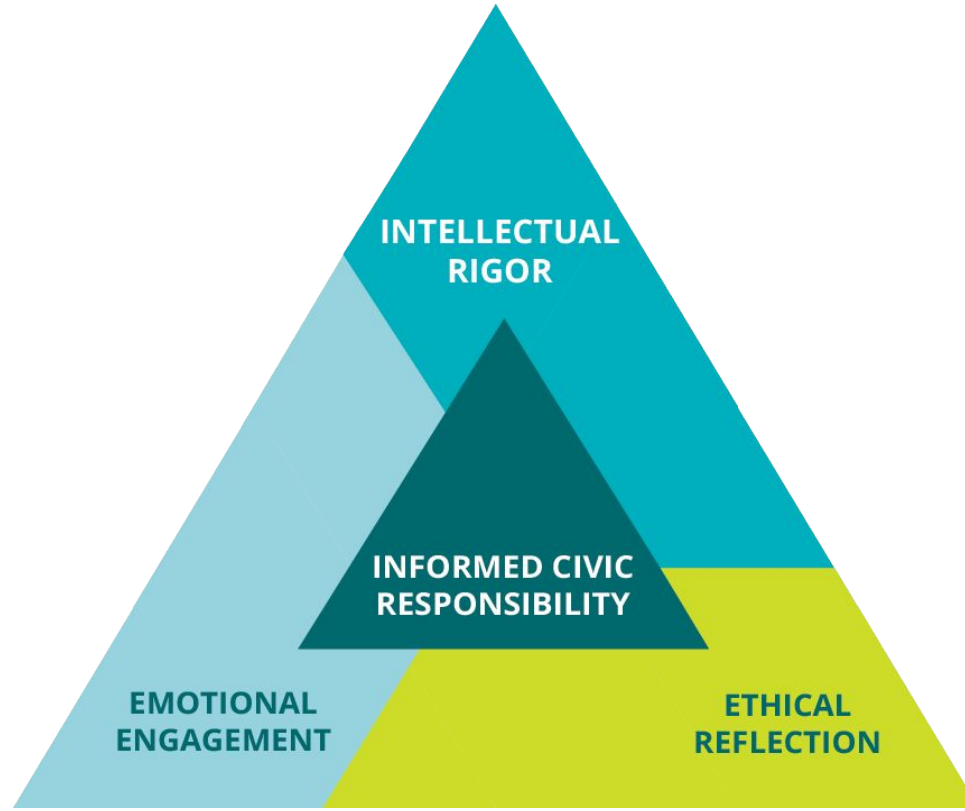
At Facing History and Ourselves, we believe the bigotry and hate that we witness today are the legacy of brutal injustices of the past. Facing our collective history and how it informs our attitudes and behaviors allows us to choose a world of equity and justice. Facing History's resources address racism, antisemitism, and prejudice at pivotal moments in history; we help students connect choices made in the past to those they will confront in their own lives.



OUR APPROACH TO HISTORY AND LITERATURE



Pedagogical Triangle



Contracting and Covenants for Reflective and Respectful Discourse



"We can disagree and still love each other unless your disagreement is rooted in my oppression and denial of my humanity and right to exist."

—James Baldwin

AN INVITATION TO BRAVE SPACE

By Micky ScottBey Jones

Together we will create *brave space*
Because there is no such thing as a 'safe
space' --
We exist in the real world
We all carry scars and we have all caused
wounds...

In this space

We seek to turn down the volume of the
outside world.
We amplify voices that fight to be heard
elsewhere.



AN INVITATION TO BRAVE SPACE

We call each other to more truth and love
We have the right to start somewhere and
continue to grow.

We have the responsibility to examine
what we think we know.

We will not be perfect.

This space will not be perfect.

It will not always be what we wish it to be

But

It will be *our brave space together,*

and

We will work on it side by side.





"I've always felt that it is impossible to engage properly with a place or a person without engaging with all of the stories of that place and that person. The consequence of the single story is this: It robs people of dignity. It makes our recognition of our equal humanity difficult. It emphasizes how we are different rather than how we are similar."

- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie From *The Danger of a Single Story* TED talk

DIVERSITY OF JEWISH PEOPLE

Ashkenazi



Jews from Central and Eastern Europe

Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Germany



Sephardic



Jews of Iberia and the Spanish diaspora

Spain, Morocco, Tunisia, Portugal, Southern France



Mizrahi



Jews of Middle Eastern descent

Modern Iraq (Babylonia), Iran (Persia), Yemen, Syria



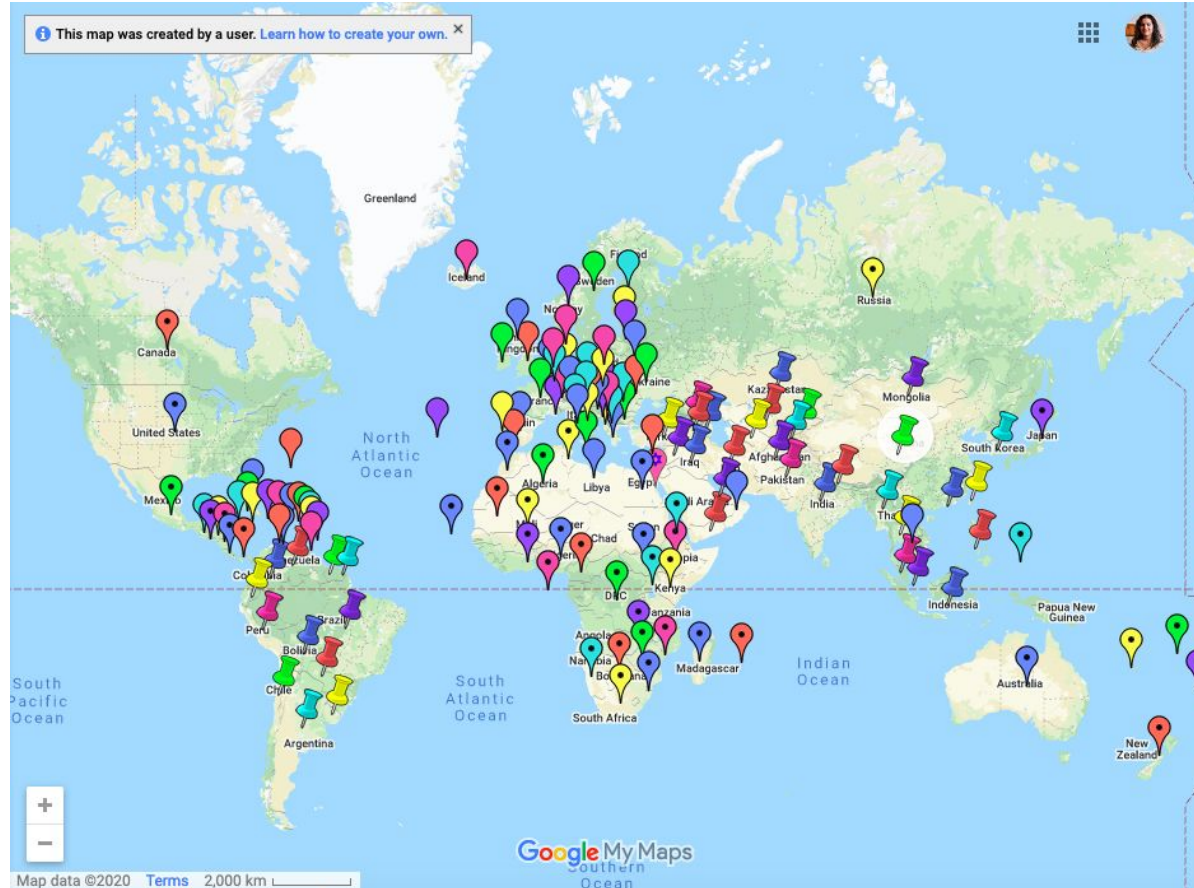
Beta Israel (House of Israel)



Jews of Ethiopian descent



Jewish Communities Around the World



DIVERSITY OF JEWISH DENOMINATIONS

THE Reform	BIG Conservative	THREE (Modern/Ultra) Orthodox	Reconstructionist	Secular/Cultural Judaism
<p>Jewish ethical law > Jewish law</p> <p>Politically progressive</p> <p>Social-justice oriented</p> <p>Personal choice in matters of ritual observance</p>	<p>Jewish laws obligatory (with some modifications)</p> <p>Midpoint of observance</p>	<p>Adherence to traditional understanding of Jewish law</p> <p>Strict observance</p> <p>Modern- traditional observance with secular modernity</p> <p>Ultra- Haredi, insular communities, traditional garb</p>	<p>Unites Jewish history, tradition, culture, belief with modern scientific knowledge and the way people live today</p> <p>Judaism evolves with its people</p> <p>Varying opinions</p>	<p>No/little religious observance</p> <p>Emphasis on community, and partaking in cultural activities that bring meaning/connectivity</p>

My Jewish Identity

Religious Affiliation:
Grew up conservative,
Culturally Jewish

Community Affiliation:
Youth movement,
Hebrew school

Cultural Background:
Ashkenazi and Mizrahi

Cultural Connections:
Hebrew, food, dance/music

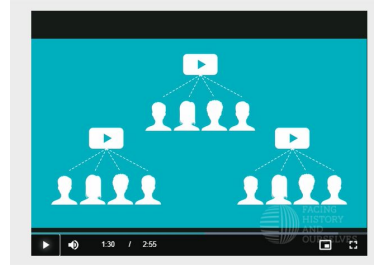
Journal: **Connect**, **Extend**, **Challenge**

- **Connect:** How do the ideas and information **connect** to what you already know about Jewish people?
- **Extend:** How does this information **extend** or broaden your thinking about Jewish people?
- **Challenge:** Does this reading **challenge** or complicate your understanding of Jewish people? What new questions does it raise for you?

Quotes to consider before we study antisemitism



Dr. Kwame
Akroma-Ampim Kusi
Anthony Appiah,
Philosopher and moral
Theorist, NYU



Big Paper Teaching
Strategy (for remote
learning):



Dr. Doris Bergen,
Historian, Chancellor Rose
and Ray Wolfe Chair in
Holocaust Studies, U of T.
Author of
*The Holocaust: A Concise
History*

<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/big-paper-remote-learning>

Framing The Next Session

This session is designed to:

- Explore prominent historical stereotypes and myths at the root of contemporary antisemitism from 70 CE to 1945
- Share knowledge to help you and the students you teach to recognize its manifestation today

This session is not designed to:

- Provide a comprehensive overview of historical and contemporary antisemitism
- Critique Christianity or challenge it on a faith basis; our analysis is of its history not its theology
- Make generalizations concerning your understandings of, or experiences with antisemitism
- Assume a hierarchy of “isms”
- Defend or challenge Israel, Zionism or politics in the Middle East

Preparing for Discussions around Religious and Ethnic Identities

- Steve Becton's "Ouch Points"
- Checking in / Checking Out



https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/publications/Fostering_Civil_Discourse_2020_0.pdf

Defining Antisemitism

The [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's](#) Working Definition:

“Antisemitism is a certain *perception* of Jews, which may be expressed as *hatred* toward Jews. *Rhetorical* and *physical manifestations* of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

*A footnote about “anti-Semitism” vs Antisemitism

Power of Myth Gallery Walk

Power of Myth Gallery Walk (Slide 2 of 32: The Great Revolt: Destruction of the Second Temple. Between 66 and 70 C.... EZ Erez... CC [] X

Q >>

EZ

Erez Zobary X

Between 66 and 70 C.E., Jews of Jerusalem revolted against Roman rule. They were ruthlessly defeated in 70 C.E. Their temple was destroyed, and services for Jews came to an end. After the



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0:06 / 0:21 1x

Navigating VoiceThread

The VoiceThread presentation grid contains the following content:

- Slide 1 (Top Left):** Text card titled "Speech by St. Denis, Bishop of Paris, 1179" with a small image of a man in a blue robe.
- Slide 2 (Top Row, 2nd):** Text card titled "An idea of the difficult journey" with a small image of a person.
- Slide 3 (Top Row, 3rd):** Text card titled "Images in Church" and "70 CE: Middle Ages" with a small image of a church interior.
- Slide 4 (Top Row, 4th):** Image of a large, ornate building, likely a cathedral.
- Slide 5 (Top Row, 5th):** Image of a large, ornate building, likely a cathedral.
- Slide 6 (Top Row, 6th):** Image of a large, ornate building, likely a cathedral.
- Slide 7 (Row 2, 1st):** Text card titled "Images from the Crusades" and "Circa 1000 CE" with a small image of a person.
- Slide 8 (Row 2, 2nd):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 9 (Row 2, 3rd):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 10 (Row 2, 4th):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 11 (Row 2, 5th):** Text card titled "Middle Ages" and "The Plague" with a small image of a person.
- Slide 12 (Row 2, 6th):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 13 (Row 3, 1st):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 14 (Row 3, 2nd):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 15 (Row 3, 3rd):** Text card titled "Middle Ages" and "Money Lending" with a small image of a person.
- Slide 16 (Row 3, 4th):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 17 (Row 3, 5th):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 18 (Row 3, 6th):** Text card titled "Middle Ages" and "Ritualism" with a small image of a person.
- Slide 19 (Row 4, 1st):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 20 (Row 4, 2nd):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 21 (Row 4, 3rd):** Text card titled "18th Century to Early 19th Century" with a small image of a person.
- Slide 22 (Row 4, 4th):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 23 (Row 4, 5th):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 24 (Row 4, 6th):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 25 (Row 5, 1st):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 26 (Row 5, 2nd):** Text card titled "Late 19th/Early 20th Century" with a small image of a person.
- Slide 27 (Row 5, 3rd):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 28 (Row 5, 4th):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 29 (Row 5, 5th):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 30 (Row 5, 6th):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 31 (Bottom Row, 1st):** Text card titled "Witnesses of the Ebers of 1918, originally published 1911. This forged document (making a pact) was created in Russia as propaganda against Jews, purporting to describe a Jewish plan for global domination." with a small image of a person.
- Slide 32 (Bottom Row, 2nd):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 33 (Bottom Row, 3rd):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 34 (Bottom Row, 4th):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 35 (Bottom Row, 5th):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.
- Slide 36 (Bottom Row, 6th):** Image of a person in a blue robe, likely a saint or religious figure.

Navigation controls at the bottom right:

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- Show slide 26
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A Visual History of Antisemitism

Go through this virtual gallery walk using the “analyzing visual images strategy”. please add your comments or observations on several slides:

1. What do you **see** depicted (without interpretation)?
2. What **questions** do you have about what you see?
3. What do you think is happening? What is the artist/publication saying?
4. What is notable about the date or location of this text?
5. What would someone looking at these images/ readings **presume** to know about “Jews”?

Debrief

- What is one thing someone looking at these images/ readings would **presume** to know about “Jews”?
- What is one conflicting **claim** in these images and readings?
- How have **tropes, myths and stereotypes** changed over space and time?

Addressing Myths and Tropes

1. The “Wandering Jew”
2. The Deicide Charge (66 - 400 CE)
3. The Myth of Ritual Murder and the Blood Libels (1144 - 1500)
4. Jews and the Black Plague / Poisoning of the wells (1347 - 1351)
5. Jews as wealthy money lenders (16th - 18th c)
6. The Protocols of the Elders of Zion (1900)

Resources to follow:

Video: [Ancient Roots of anti-Judaism](#)

Video: [Antisemitism from Enlightenment to WWI](#)

Video: [The Power of a lie: the history of the Blood Libel](#)

Video: [Murder in Damascus, Blood Libel in Modern Times](#)

Excerpts: A Convenient Hatred: History of Antisemitism

The Wandering Jew

The Holocaust: Maps by Martin Gilbert p. 151



The Problem with the Deicide Charge (66 - 400 CE)

- Jesus and his early followers are Jewish; the historical Jesus was a reformer within Judaism
- Crucifixion: a Roman practice; Jews lacked the power to enact, but blaming Pontius, a Roman, was not politically viable
- 312: A “Family split” following the fall of Jerusalem and institution of Christianity as the official religion through Constantine
- 354: St Augustine’s Theology: killers of Jesus, but still God’s people
- Vatican II Council (1965) and Pope John Paul II apology

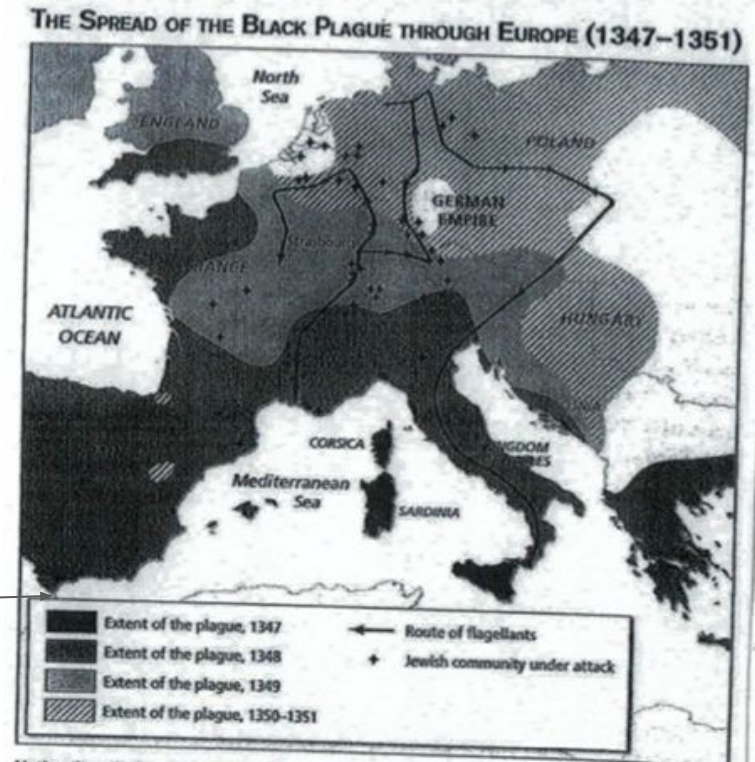
The Problem with Ritual Murder and the Blood Libels (1144 - 1500)

- Jews were forbidden to taste blood because they believed it contained the spirit of living beings
- Jewish dietary laws (Kosher) and the preparation of meat meant avoiding the possibility of eating blood
- If Jews came in contact with blood that would have to purify themselves before carrying out religious obligations

Jews and the Black Plague / Poisoning of the wells (1347 - 1351)

- **In October 1347:** several trading ships from Genoa, Italy pulled into the harbour at Messina in Sicily.
- Aboard the ships were black rats, infected with the bacterium that caused the Black Plague, *Yersinia Pestis*, which could be transmitted zoonotically by Rat fleas.
- The disease continued to spread through trade routes; additionally, a small group known as “flagellants” appeared to fight the plague, moving from town to town.

Notice the relationship between the route of the flagellants and the places where Jews were killed because people falsely believed that they were responsible for the plague



Jews as wealthy money lenders (11th C -)

“By the end of the eleventh century, **Jews were being squeezed out of international trade and into occupations forbidden** to Jews, Christians and Muslims- banking, money lending, and currency exchange...Few other occupations were now open to them.. The process of turning Jews into money lenders was gradual... But nearly everywhere, it **pushed Jews to the margins of society and led to the stereotype of the Jew as greedy and money-hungry.**”

Excerpted from Goldstein, Phyllis. A Convenient Hatred: The History of Antisemitism. (Facing History and Ourselves, Brookline, MA, 2012), 73.

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion (1900)

- In August 1921, The Times of London showed how the authors had copied long passages from several fictional works
- Jewish disloyalty was unfounded as they fought in every Army during World War 1
- In most places, Jews represent 1-3% of the population so could not control the economy
- During times of war Jews were often an easy scapegoat

Recognizing Antisemitism **Today**

In order to better understand how modern antisemitism exists, it is important to hear directly from Jewish people about their lived experiences.

All individuals who filled out this form have a relationship with us and were asked through facebook/instagram to share their experiences to help Facing History and the teachers we support. No particular school board was mentioned in our request. While we have permission to use these quotes in this context, we ask that the survey responses not be shared.

Individuals were asked to share their experiences of antisemitism for the purpose of learning, however we acknowledge that these experiences do not reflect the care support that Jewish students receive.

Learn to Listen, Listen to Learn

1. **Read** (7 min) **and respond in journal** (3 min)

In your journal, respond to the following prompt

How are you responding to what you are reading? How does your identity influence the way you are responding?

2. **Share in Groups (15)**

- **Step 1:** Each person takes turns (1- 2 minutes) sharing their response to the prompt above without interruption, questions, or reactions to the others' comments
- **Step 2:** Once every group member has shared, have a group conversation (10 minutes)
- **How might you use something you've learned today to prevent or address antisemitism in your classroom?**

Wrap up Debrief: in the chat, where do you find yourself now?

OUR PEDAGOGICAL TRIANGLE

