Loyola Marymount University
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High-Profile Antisemitic Rhetoric, Social Media, and Generative AI

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TRIGGER WARNING:
xenophobia, antisemitism

For a brief period towards the end of 2022 and the beginning of 2023, it seemed like every day I would wake up to news that someone, almost always with an extremely large following, had said something antisemitic. I do not remember it being like this before. When you grow up going to Passover seders, Yom Kippur services, and Rosh Hashanah celebrations, you hear countless stories about how much suffering and hatred the Jewish people have lived through in their 3,000-year history, but I never really experienced that hate for myself. Quite frankly, I can only remember one or two comments from my entire childhood that struck me as antisemitic. I knew that the Jews had been persecuted for centuries, but it seemed like all of that was over. It was in the past; it was not something that would ever truly affect me in my lifetime. I was very wrong.

In college, I realized that antisemitism was far from over. I began hearing stories from my family members and friends about how they were teased, insulted, or even physically harmed because of their Jewish identity. When I started to travel more to different parts of the country and the world, I was warned to keep my Jewishness to myself and to never wear my chai necklace in public in some of these places.

> I began seeing more and more attacks on the Jewish community online, both verbally and physically.

Some of them were not far away at all; some seemed like they were right in my backyard. It felt like, all of a sudden, America had a president who not only associated with hateful people and known antisemites but he, himself, perpetrated antisemitic ideas and conspiracies left and right. I am not sure when it stopped surprising me to hear news that a politician or celebrity said something hateful toward Jewish people, but now, it really does not surprise me anymore.

A large portion of this content comes directly from these people to our eyes and ears through social media. Between October of 2022 and March of 2023, I noticed a particular increase in the amount of these posts that I was seeing. This paper serves to analyze these posts from four notable influencers who have come under immense fire for their antisemitism, either directly or indirectly. The influencers are Kanye West, a rapper who now goes by the name of Ye; Kyrie Irving, a star NBA basketball player; Nick Fuentes, a young political commentator; and Donald Trump, the former president of the United States of America. There have been countless instances of antisemitism before this current time period from other people and away from direct social media, but this paper will be focusing on the Twitter, Instagram, and Truth
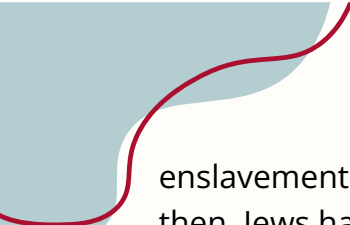
Social posts from West, Irving, Fuentes, and Trump between October 2022 and March 2023. There are multiple reasons for these selections. This period spans the length of Kanye West's antisemitic outbursts, beginning with the posted screenshots of his conversations with Sean "Diddy" Combs and ending with his very interesting apology post after he watched Jonah Hill in *21 Jump Street*. These four people were chosen because they each have very big followings, play a very different role in this country, have posted antisemitic messages in the chosen time period, and are all connected to each other in various ways. I am focusing solely on the social media posts of these individuals (rather than including news media clips, press statements, etc.) because social media is one of the largest contributors to this recent rise in antisemitism, in addition to keeping the scope of this research project narrow.

In this paper, I will first discuss the history of antisemitism in America to give important and relevant context to my study. I will then explain the recent rise in antisemitism and address viewpoints from various experts and contributors regarding what, why, and how this is happening. Next, I will go over each of the selected influencers' connections with antisemitism and how the public has reacted to them. To finish the literature review, I will discuss previous research on antisemitism and hate on social media and in the recent rise. I will identify the different forms of antisemitism and their distinctions from each other and give examples as to when these have been used in times outside of my study. I will then go through my methods for this study, which include identification and coding of the set of posts and testing with generative artificial intelligence. I wanted to use generative AI in this research as it is a relatively new tool that has not been applied widely in this context but may provide some interesting and helpful data. The act of identifying hate speech is hard to do as a human without being biased, but AI is much closer to being truly unbiased, eliminating human subjectivity. I will conclude by presenting my results, discussing them, and noting the limitations of this paper and the need for future research. The purpose of this study is to discover what specific antisemitic tropes these influencers have been using in their rhetoric and to determine the severity and explicitness of their posts. As a young Jewish person living in America, I find it is important to acknowledge my identity and implicit bias in dealing with such a sensitive topic that affects me deeply, but I will attempt to be as unbiased as possible in this study.

Literature Review

To begin the body of this paper, I am going to provide context on American antisemitism, particularly American antisemitism from influential people on social media. The Jewish people have faced persecution in almost every part of the world for thousands of years, whether you place the start date in biblical times with Jewish

enslavement in Egypt, or in the first few hundred years of the Common Era. Since then, Jews have been mistreated, scapegoated, expelled, and slaughtered in hideous ways, primarily in Europe. In fact, the reason that Jews came to America in the first place was to get away from the horrors they were facing in Europe and beyond. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) is a global NGO based in the United States that specializes in civil rights law and fighting antisemitism. They have an extensive database of texts and research that I will be drawing on in multiple sections of this paper. In their guide to American antisemitism, they write, "The history of Jews in America is a history of the ongoing negotiation between hard-won legal freedoms and the lingering social effects of racial and religious prejudice as it persists and reignites in this country" (ADL, n.d.) While the first Jews to immigrate to America did not find full religious tolerance as they might have expected, by 1740, less than a hundred years after they first landed in New Amsterdam in 1654 after fleeing from Brazil, naturalization laws included Jewish residents, which offered them a legal status that would not have been possible in Europe for another half century (ADL, n.d.). In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, European Jews continued to immigrate to the United States in the hopes of escaping antisemitism and finding economic opportunity.

Early American Antisemitism

Even though they largely found freedom here, "as outsiders bearing a history of condemnation by Christianity and by emergent racial science, Jews still found themselves scapegoated in America" (ADL, n.d.). In Civil War times, both sides of the fight made baseless accusations that Jewish people were aiding the other side. After more than two million Jews from Eastern Europe immigrated to America between 1881 and 1914, including members of my family, "some Americans balked at the Jewish minority and resented their presence in urban life, expressing discomfort about Jewish immigrants' foreign mannerisms, customs and their pronounced drive to succeed in America" (ADL, n.d.). It was also around this time that I found the first accounts of a conspiracy in this country that, as I will discuss later in this paper, is still being widely distributed today. When the economy took a hit in the late 1800s, agrarian populists of the South and Midwest seized on conspiracy theories, claiming that urban Jews were "exploiting markets and the federal government as a whole" and "some such populists condemned Jews as a national threat, as an entire corrupt class of international financiers who owned the banks and ruined small family farms by promoting the gold standard" (ADL, n.d.). While much of this hatred occurred on the fringes of society, Jewish people also faced antisemitism in the mainstream, including "educational quotas [at universities], discrimination in the professional sphere, restriction from residential and recreational communities and continued acts of outright physical violence" (ADL, n.d.).

Jewish people have always faced a unique challenge in navigating their identity. What I have gathered throughout my lifetime is that everyone views it a little differently. Some think of Jewishness as a race or an ethnicity, while to others it is purely a religion. Others view it as closer to a nationality, which can create a lot of tension for Jewish Americans. I will write further on these issues and how they relate to antisemitism at later points in this paper. In *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity*, Eric L. Goldstein (2006) wrote, "The question of whether Jews ought to fashion themselves as a race or merely a religious denomination became one of the most hotly debated issues of early-20th-century Jewish communal discourse." Many Jewish people felt that they deserved racial protections, not only religious ones which they had been granted previously. While many Jews could and did assimilate into whiteness, it only happened sometimes, and always in a racist system (ADL, n.d.).

The Original Influencers

One hundred years before Donald Trump took office, primarily by way of using social media to spread his controversial ideas and mobilize his supporters, the popularity of mass media was growing rapidly with the invention of the radio and the public's fixation on press. This heavily influenced the social climate in the United States. Using mass media, "some of the most influential people in the country used their national platforms to stoke hatred and fear of Jews in the interwar years" (ADL, n.d.). One of these people was Henry Ford, one of the most well-known and praised businessmen of all time. Zach Beauchamp (2022), senior correspondent for Vox, writes that "he was also a hardcore antisemite, blaming Jews for everything from World War I to an alleged decline in the quality of candy bars." He purchased his hometown newspaper, the Dearborn Independent, and used it to publish and promote antisemitic conspiracy theories in 91 consecutive issues (ADL, n.d.). Because he required his Ford Motors dealers to distribute the paper, it became the second-largest newspaper in the country and his hatred reached a massive number of people. Ford drew from "*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, an infamous Russian forgery that purported to be records of the Jewish conspiracy's worldwide activities" and "he reprinted much of this content in his four-volume *The International Jew*, which saw hundreds of thousands of copies distributed" (Beauchamp, 2022; ADL, n.d.). Historian Norman Cohn (2018) stated, "*The International Jew* probably did more than any other work to make The Protocols [of the Elders of Zion] world famous" (as cited in Beauchamp, 2022). Adolf Hitler, when asked about the portrait of Ford hanging over his desk by a Detroit News reporter in 1931, answered that he regarded Henry Ford as his inspiration (Beauchamp, 2022).

Ford was arguably the most well-known antisemite in America during his time, but he was not the only one. Beauchamp (2022) notes that "Ford's propaganda set the stage for a wave of American antisemitism in the runup to World War II, including the rise of infamous antisemitic demagogue Father Charles Coughlin." Coughlin was a Catholic figure who had a weekly radio show with 15 million listeners. On his show, he "propagated antisemitic beliefs, justified Natzi violence against Jews overseas, and provoked his American followers to paint swastikas on Jewish businesses and gang up on Jews in the streets" (ADL, n.d.). In the 1930s, physical violence towards Jews increased as a result. American antisemitism was reaching an all-time high. In one poll from 1939, it was shown that "fewer than 40 percent of Americans believed Jews should be treated 'as any other Americans'" (ADL, n.d.). Charles Lindbergh, American aviator and activist, claimed in 1941 that the real endangerment to the American people was the Jewish control of "our motion pictures, our press, our radio and our Government" (ADL, n.d.). There is that conspiracy again. Towards the end of the war, the country had become very used to the normalized and mainstream antisemitism.

Post-War Feelings

After World War II, the American public became more aware of the reality of the Holocaust and Nazism and the fact that the thousands of Jewish soldiers fought for the United States, which led to the steady decline of antisemitism and anti-Jewish sentiments (ADL, n.d.). With the civil rights movement, "Jews gradually were loosened from the grip of discrimination that had blocked their entry into universities, success in the job market and access to the housing market," and by the 1970s, it was definite that "antisemitism … was shifting to the margins of American society" (ADL, n.d.). Even though it mostly went away in the mainstream of this country, antisemitism never went away completely. There are multiple examples in the years between the war and 2015 that show that. The ADL (n.d.) writes, "widespread anxiety about globalization, mass migration and economic inequality — especially after the 2008 financial crisis — have created the conditions in which antisemitism has always festered." Whenever those things are present, people will fall back into conspiracy and hatred and use Jews as an easy, albeit very wrong, answer to the reasons behind their difficult and complex problems. It is almost a universal truth throughout history that when something goes wrong, Jewish people will be blamed. Some people who genuinely feel hatred for the Jewish community and some people who do not know any better will use terms like "globalist": a derogatory code-word for Jews that evokes an "antisemitic myth, falsely accusing mysterious agents of multiculturalism and international cooperation of weakening America from within" (ADL, n.d.). It is important to understand that although it seemed like antisemitism went away for 70 years, these sentiments still persevered but not in the American mainstream. Today, we see the mainstream return to these sentiments.

The High Tide

R. Amy Elman (2022), a professor of political science and Jewish studies, says that we have to change the way we look at antisemitism in this country, writing that we must reject "'American exceptionalism' in which antisemitism happens elsewhere — in other states, political parties, professions, campuses, and communities." Elman continues, "Antisemitism so understood occurs only to the unfortunate, in places we don't frequent, and at the outer edges of the political spectrum [... however] I suggest American antisemitism is so pervasive — so utterly mainstream — that it hides in plain sight" (Elman, 2022). Understanding antisemitism's existence in America is crucial to working through and attempting to fix it. The recent rise of antisemitism that we have seen in these examples can be traced directly to the timeline of the presidency of Donald Trump. The most pronounced examples of this have been from those on the far right of the political spectrum. These people "have been emboldened by President Trump's adoption of specific elements of their rhetoric and his dismissal of their hate, such as his use of terms like "globalist" or "migrant caravans" or even his campaign slogan, "America First" (ADL, n.d.).

In 2018, hate crimes reached their highest point in 27 years, and Jews were shown to be the most frequent target of religion-based incidents. Jamie Moshin (2018) writes:

> While one can point to the rise of antisemitic acts since the inception of Trump's presidency — an increase of 86 percent — one cannot prove that Trump's rhetorics have caused this rise [and] I believe that President Trump is tapping into, and bringing forth, a deep wellspring of systemic antisemitism that many (incorrectly) assumed to be either extinct or nothing more than the expression of a radical individualism.

Marin Cogan (2022), a senior correspondent at Vox, summarizes the prevalent attacks on Judaism in America in the last six years that have made antisemitism much harder to ignore:

> To consider it one way, there was nothing particularly new or notable about antisemitism in the United States in 2022. After all, to be Jewish in the United States during the last five years has meant being confronted with evidence of the hatred lurking in our neighbors' hearts. We saw it in 2017, when polo-shirted Nazis chanted "Jews will not replace us" as they unleashed terror on the streets of Charlottesville, Virginia; in 2018, when 11 Jews were massacred at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; in 2019, when a shooter killed one and injured three others at the Chabad of Poway in California; and in smaller attack

perpetrated in between, on streets and subways, at restaurants and rallies, outside shuls and sukkot.

Antisemitic Incidents | U.S.
Ten Year Review | 2012–2021
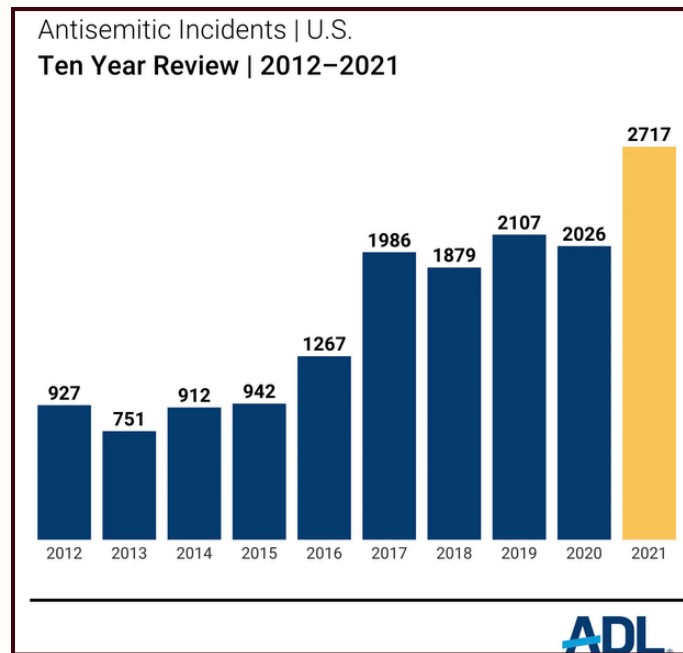
The ADL published a report of antisemitic incidents in the past ten years that showed record numbers. It is nearly impossible to say now that antisemitism has not risen again in the United States. Pamela Nadell (2022), historian and director of the Jewish studies program at American University, says, "Historians have called the period between World War I and World War II the 'high tide' of American antisemitism. I think we may have to rename that: I think we are at the moment living in the high tide of American antisemitism [emphasis added]" (as cited in Beauchamp, 2022). While Donald Trump is not as explicitly antisemitic as someone such as Henry Ford was in his day, it's important to remember that Ford was never the President of the United States. Ford was never as popular or as influential as Trump is today. The American people didn't elect Henry Ford, but they elected Donald Trump.

Trump, West, Irving, and Fuentes
In November of 2022, Donald Trump, Kanye West, and Nick Fuentes all sat down for dinner together at Mar-a-Lago. This was problematic for many reasons — too many of these individuals' histories with antisemitism, in addition to Kyrie Irving's, as the fourth selected member of this study. I've already discussed how Trump opened the door for the resurgence of many themes of hate including antisemitism, but what specific actions has he taken? Again, Trump has never outwardly expressed a hatred, or even a dislike, of the Jewish people, but he has perpetrated antisemitic tropes and conspiracies more times than one can count. Aaron Blake, senior political reporter for the Washington Post, tracked many of these instances, and I have added them here. For one, Trump consistently speaks about American Jews as if their country is

Israel and not the United States (Blake, 2022). During the White House Hanukkah Party in 2018, a Republican Jewish Coalition event in 2019, and a call after Rosh Hashanah in 2020, he repeatedly referred to Israel as "your country"; Benjamin Netanyahu as "your prime minister"; and David Friedman, Trump's ambassador to Israel, as "your ambassador." Trump has also mentioned many times that he believes American Jews are largely disloyal to Israel and that they are insufficiently appreciative of how he has handled the United States-Israel relationship. He has stated that when a Jewish person votes for a Democrat, "it shows either a total lack of knowledge or great disloyalty" (Blake, 2022). I will cover why this idea of dual-loyalty perpetuates antisemitism when I cover the multiple forms of antisemitism in a later section. We already know that "The most popular antisemitic trope in politics is that Jews control things behind the scenes — often by virtue of their money and cunning [and] Trump has also leaned into this" (Blake, 2022). In 2015, he told Republican Jews that he didn't want their money, although they "stupidly" wanted to give him money. Further down the road in his campaign, he "tweeted an image of Hillary Clinton surrounded by money with the words 'Most Corrupt Candidate Ever!' inside a six-pointed star, the shape of the Star of David [and he] ran an ad featuring several prominent Jews — George Soros, Janet L. Yellen, and Lloyd Blankfein — while warning of '"global special interests"' (Blake, 2022). Trump also stated in a 2021 interview, "It used to be that Israel had absolute power over Congress, and today I think it's the exact opposite" (as cited in Blake, 2022). He has also suggested multiple times that any ethnic allegiance should extend to him because his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, is Jewish, and therefore so are his grandchildren. Despite this excuse for his previous antisemitic comments, he has since posted on social media threats to the Jewish community.

From what I remember, Kanye West used to be a pretty normal, unproblematic individual. He made a lot of very successful music, some of which I listened to regularly, and was many people's favorite artist. At some point, he became very problematic. His pop culture controversies eventually turned into political ones, especially with his outright support of Donald Trump. Cogan (2022) writes,

"It's hard to overstate the importance of Kanye West's transformation from one of hip-hop's most salient rappers into one of the country's most prominent Jew haters."

Beginning in October of 2022, West "went on a spree of public appearances and interviews in which he spouted antisemitic comments and conspiracy theories,

criticized Black Lives Matter, ended business relationships, and was blocked on social media platforms, leading to widespread criticism and disavowal by industry peers" (Dellatto & Porterfield, 2023). At his Yeezy fashion show, he wore a shirt that read "White Lives Matter," which is a phrase associated with a Neo-Nazi group of the same name (Dellatto & Porterfield, 2023). He then began to post very troubling screenshots around the internet about his relationship with the brand Adidas and LVMH CEO Bernard Arnault. He was interviewed on Fox News and spewed baseless claims about abortion and obesity. Then, on October 7th, he mentioned Jews publicly for the first time by posting a screenshot of his texts with Sean "Diddy" Combs. He continued to post wildly antisemitic statements on social media that were primarily hinged on two antisemitic conspiracy theories, that Jewish people control the media and that Jewish people stole the identity of Black people. Then, footage was posted and leaked online of various clips of West discussing these conspiracy theories among others and even praising Adolf Hitler, saying he "likes Nazis" and can see "good things about Hitler" (Dellatto & Porterfield, 2023). What finally got him kicked off of Twitter for good was when he posted an image of a swastika combined with a Star of David.

Kyrie Irving didn't contribute nearly as much to the recent rise of antisemitism as West did, but he did in his own way. His controversy — and praise from West — resulted from posting a link on Twitter on October 27, 2022 to a documentary that was filled with highly antisemitic tropes and stereotypes (Ganguli & Deb, 2022). For a week afterward, he didn't apologize or condemn antisemitism. Due to this lack of apathy, he was promptly suspended indefinitely from his NBA team, the Brooklyn Nets. Nike also suspended their relationship with him. He then spoke at a press conference and backed up what he had posted, stating, "History is not supposed to be hidden from anybody … I'm not going to stand down on anything I believe in. I'm only going to get stronger because I'm not alone. I have a whole army around me." (Irving, 2022 as cited in Ganguli & Deb, 2022). On November 3, Irving apologized in an Instagram post and he was eventually traded to another NBA team, the Dallas Mavericks.

Finally, the biggest antisemite of our chosen four individuals is Nick Fuentes. Fuentes is a 24-year-old political commentator who hosts a webcast called America First, which has a very large following online. Fuentes is a known Holocaust denier and proponent of antisemitic conspiracies. Beauchamp (2022) writes, "Fuentes's smirking, 'just kidding' demeanor on his America First webcast barely hides his eliminationist antisemitism — and sometimes the mask falls off entirely." In one of his broadcasts in November 2022, he said, "The Jews had better start being nice to people like us, because what comes out of this is going to be a lot uglier and a lot worse for them

than anything that's being said on this show" (Fuentes, 2022, as cited in Beauchamp, 2022). Fuentes, alarmingly, has been gaining traction in the Republican party recently. He hosted an America First Political Action conference in February of 2022 and got prominent GOP representatives Marjorie Taylor Greene and Paul Gosar to attend. His biggest win to date was his dinner with the "highest-profile proponent of antisemitic conspiracy theories in the country," Kanye West, and the nation's former leader, Donald Trump, who reportedly came away impressed (Beauchamp, 2022).

Public Opinion and Fear

Personally, I was abhorred and disturbed when I found out about most of the things I outlined above; I can say the same for most of the Jewish Community. This violence and hatred has eroded the sense of safety and security that American Jews had been feeling for decades (Cogan, 2022). Gil Preus (2022), the CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, said that the events of the months leading up to the end of 2022 had been extremely challenging for Jewish people:

> The fear that people have, when they see swastikas or other things put up in their neighborhoods or see it online, has arisen in a way that it shouldn't. Each time that we see one of these antisemitic acts, it feels like the culture around antisemitism has been changing. It's affecting every part of Jewish communal engagement. (as cited in Cogan, 2022)

One of the main differences between antisemitism today versus that of before is well-put by op-ed columnist for the New York Times, Michelle Goldberg (2022):

> For most of my adult life, antisemites … have lacked status in America. The most virulent antisemites tended to hate Jews from below, blaming them for their own failures and disappointments. Now, however, anti-Jewish bigotry, or at least tacit approval of anti-Jewish bigotry, is coming from people with serious power: the leader of a major political party, a famous pop star, and the world's richest man.

Social media provides some context to understand the general sentiment of the public. For the most part, the public has denounced Trump, West, Irving, and Fuentes for their antisemitic comments and actions, but some are defending them. In analyzing reactions to their controversial statements, Jikeli and Soemer (n.d.) found that "more than 80 % of the top 20 retweets of these five weeks were related to antisemitism, past or present, mostly denouncing antisemitism. However, the sixth most popular tweet (retweeted 10,785 times) suggested that Ye might have been right that "Jews control everything." After Elon Musk took over Twitter, the first peak

of conversations about Jews occurred on October 30, 2022. Most of these tweets "denounced antisemitism, but 18 % of conversations about Jews were antisemitic, an unusually high percentage [and] on that day, 23 % of the top 20 retweets (7,611 retweets altogether) defended Ye's explicit or Kyrie Irving's implicit statements about Jews" (Jikeli & Soemer, n.d.). The fact that these highly influential people are spewing antisemitic comments and conspiracy theories makes people believe it is okay to share them as well, which creates a very dangerous atmosphere for Jews on and offline. They are called social media influencers for a reason.

Methods

For my research in this study, I'll first be compiling the social media content of Donald Trump, Kanye West, Kyrie Irving, and Nick Fuentes between October 2022 and March 2023 that relate in any way to Jewish people. This task is more difficult than a traditional social media content gathering because almost all of these posts have since been deleted or the accounts that posted them have been deleted, restricted, suspended, and/or removed. I'll be searching through various news publications, web archives such as the WayBack Machine, and even image search engines to find screenshots and recordings of these past tweets and posts. Originally I was going to record the amount of interaction, such as likes and comments, that these posts received, but since many of them were deleted or had interactions disabled by the platforms, this won't be possible. For determining if a post relates to Jewish people, I will be pulling any content that includes the words "Jews," "Jewish," "antisemitic," "semitic, [sic]" "Israel," or "Hebrew(s)." In addition to these words, I will also be using common codes for Jews such as "globalist." Any posts that use a visual related to Judaism, such as a Star of David or a swastika, will also be pulled. Finally, I will select posts from any of these four individuals that reference each other's previous actions. These posts will be compiled in a spreadsheet, with written content copied over, visual content described through text, and the date and platform noted.

Once all of the content is compiled, I will code each post for the antisemitic tropes that they rely on. Jikeli et al. (2022) provide a method for classifying antisemitic content which I will be relying on in this study. The goal of their research was to provide a method for annotating antisemitic tweets that was less biased and more concrete, especially because antisemitism can have a broad and confusing definition. They chose to use the definition set forth by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), which they refer to as the working definition. The working definition "has been endorsed and recommended by more than 30 governments and international bodies and is frequently used to monitor and record antisemitic incidents," which makes it the best definition to use for my study as well (Jikeli et al., 2022). The working definition that the IHRA (n.d.) writes provides 11

examples of contemporary antisemitism, which I labeled 1-11. Trump, West, Irving, and Fuentes seem to rely on only a few of them, outlined here:

1: Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.

2: Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.

3: Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non Jews.

4: Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).

6: Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.*

9: Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis. (IHRA, 2022)

The IHRA also states that antisemitism includes but is not limited to these examples, so it is important to remember that a piece of content can be antisemitic without falling exactly into one of these 11 examples. I anticipate there will be posts that the general public and I view as antisemitic but don't fit with the working definition. For those instances, I will label them 12, referring to something obviously antisemitic but doesn't fit in with labels 1-11. For Label 6, the definition is focused on accusations of loyalty to Israel, so I will be applying it to any accusations of loyalty or disloyalty to Israel.
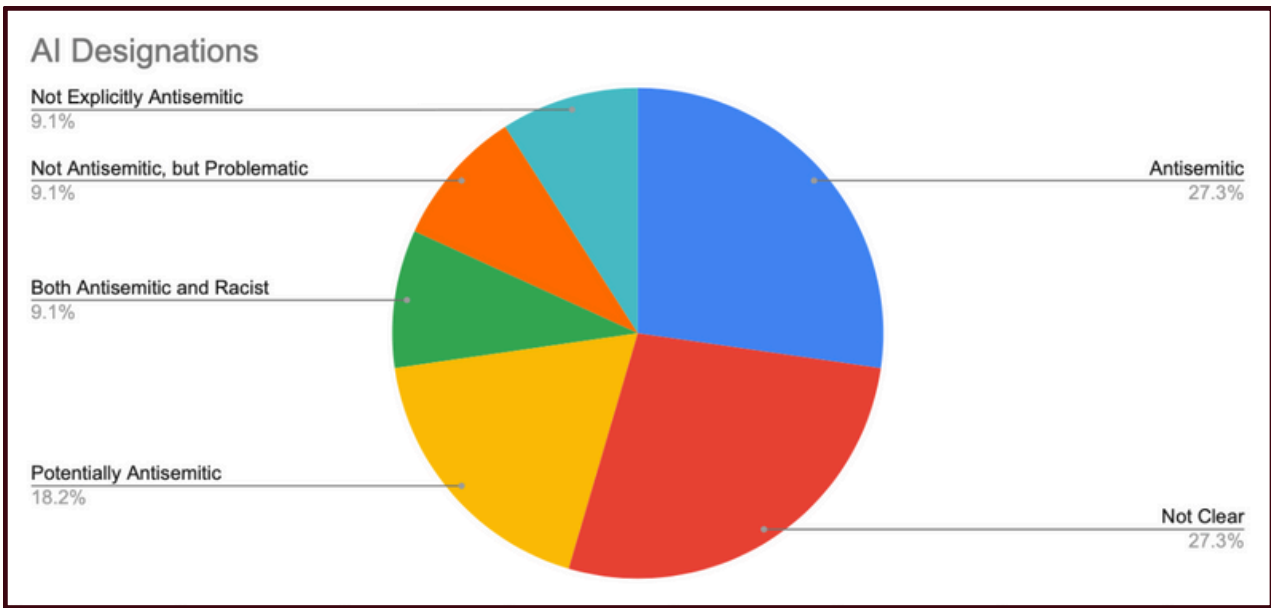
As another form of annotation and coding, I will be inputting the gathered social media content into ChatGPT, a generative artificial intelligence, and asking it to explain whether each post is antisemitic or not. I'll first prompt the AI by saying, "I am going to provide a description of a social media post, and I would like you to decide if this post is antisemitic or not and explain why. Do you understand?" followed by a description of the post after it responds. I believe that this method might be less biased than human annotation, and could provide alternative definitions and xamples to the IHRA working definition. At the very least, it will serve as an additional set of annotations to compare our original set to.

Results

After searching the internet for social media posts from Donald Trump, Kanye West, Kyrie Irving, and Nick Fuentes that related to Judaism between October 2022 and March 2023, I found 12 posts to analyze. Of these 12 posts, seven were posted in October, one in November, two in January, and one in March. Eight of the posts were made on Twitter, three were made on Instagram, and one (the only post from Donald Trump) was made on Truth Social. The biggest contributor to the data set was Kanye West with seven posts, followed by Kyrie Irving and Nick Fuentes with two posts, and Trump with one post. Of the 12 posts, only two remain on the platforms today, due to removal by the user or the platform, account deletion or removal, or suspension by the platform.
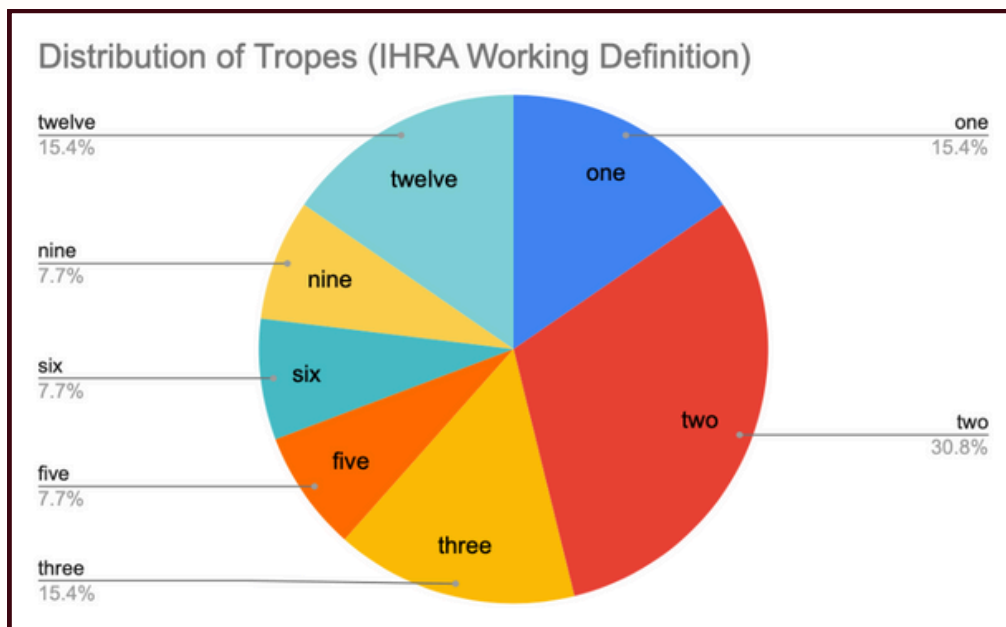
Upon coding the content for antisemitic tropes laid out by the IHRA working definition, I found that the most common trope used was Trope 2: "Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions" (IHRA, 2022). Three of the posts received multiple labels and two of them received none, signifying that of the 12 posts relating to Judaism, 10 of them — or 83% — were antisemitic. The distribution of tropes is shown in the figure above.

AI Designations

- Not Explicitly Antisemitic — 9.1%
- Not Antisemitic, but Problematic — 9.1%
- Both Antisemitic and Racist — 9.1%
- Potentially Antisemitic — 18.2%
- Antisemitic — 27.3%
- Not Clear — 27.3%

When input into ChatGPT, each post generated a result that included a designation on how antisemitic it was and explanations for why it felt that way. The most common designations were "antisemitic" and "not clear," with each being applied to three of the 12 posts. Other designations included: "not explicitly antisemitic," "not antisemitic, but problematic," "both antisemitic and racist," and "potentially antisemitic." The full transcript of my conversation with ChatGPT is in the **appendix** of this paper. The spreadsheet I used to track this data is below.

Name	Username	Platform	Date	Content	Reference	IHRA	Codes	AI Designation
Kanye West	kanyewest	Instagram	10/07/2022	Photo: Screenshot of text to Sean Diddy Combs which reads "This ain't a game / Ima use you as an example to show the Jewish people that told you to call me that no one can threaten or influence me / I told you this was war / Now gone get you some business [sic]" Caption: "Jesus is Jew"	https://twitte	2	3	Potentially Antisemitic
Kanye West	kanyewest	Twitter	10/09/2022	"I'm a bit sleepy tonight but when I wake up I'm going death con 3 On JEWISH PEOPLE The funny thing is I actually can't be Anti Semitic because black people are actually Jew also You guys have toyed with me and tried to black ball anyone whoever opposes your agenda"	https://web.a	1		Antisemitic
Kanye West	kanyewest	Twitter	10/30/2022	Photo: black and white headshot of Kyrie Irving, Caption: "There's some real ones still here"	https://twitte	12		Not Clear
Kanye West	kanyewest	Instagram	10/31/2022	Screenshot of text with Def Jam Recordings co-founder Russel Simmons which reads, "I'm staying in America / I gotta get the Jewish business people to make the contracts fair / Or die trying."	https://www.	2		Potentially Antisemitic
Kanye West	kanyewest	Twitter	11/04/2022	"I'm starting to think anti Semitic means nigger"	https://www.	12		Both Antisemitic and Racist
Kanye West	kanyewest	Twitter	12/01/2022	"YE24 LOVE EVERYONE #LOVESPEECH" Photo: Screenshot of a Swastika combined with a Star of David	https://finan	5	9	Antisemitic
Kanye West	kanyewest	Instagram	03/25/2023	Photo: 21 Jump Street Poster, Caption: "Watching Jonah Hill in 21 Jump Street made me like Jewish people again / No one should take anger against one or two individuals and transform that into hatred towards millions of innocent people / No Christian can be labelled antisemite knowing Jesus is a Jew / Thank you Jonah Hill I love you"	https://www.			Not Antisemitic, but Problematic
Donald Trump	realDonaldTrump	Truth Social	10/16/2022	"No President has done more for Israel than I have. Somewhat surprisingly, however, our wonderful Evangelicals are far more appreciative of this than the people of the Jewish faith, especially those living in the U.S. Those living in Israel, though, are a different story — Highest approval rating in the World, could easily be P.M.! U.S. Jews have to get their act together and appreciate what they have in Israel - Before it's too late!"	https://www.	6		Potentially Antisemitic
Kyrie Irving	KyrieIrving	Twitter	10/27/2022	Link to a documentary called "Hebrews to Negroes: Wake Up Black America," which has been deemed as wildly antisemitic and is filled with antisemitic tropes	https://forwa	2	3	Not Explicitly Antisemitic
Kyrie Irving	KyrieIrving	Twitter	10/29/2022	"I am an OMNIST and I meant no disrespect to anyone's religious beliefs. The "Anti-Semitic" label that is being pushed on me is not justified and does not reflect the reality or truth I live in everyday. I embrace and want to learn from all walks of life and religions. / Héla "	https://twitte			Not Clear
Nick Fuentes	NickJFuentes	Twitter	01/25/2023	Gif: Ye24 presidential bid which then fades into a sign that reads "DEFCON 3"	https://twitte	1		Not Clear
Nick Fuentes	NickJFuentes	Twitter	01/25/2023	""Globalist American Empire" "Zionist Occupied Government" "	https://www.	2		Antisemitic

Discussion

When designing this study, I had originally assumed that there would have been more content, but while doing research I realized that although each individual post was very powerful and caused lots of harm, there were actually not that many. Their ability to make headlines and generate reactions made it seem like there were way more of them than there were. Also, lots of the antisemitic comments that were said

during the recent rise came from places such as the news or other independent sources, which were not the focus of this study. Social media arguably plays the biggest role in recent antisemitism; however, it operates in a system that has many moving parts. It is important to remember that every bit of content created makes it to social media, where it is put into algorithms and echo chambers for people to interact with as they please.

> As expected, the most antisemitism that I studied centered around tropes and conspiracies of Jewish control, whether that be of the media, the government, or something bigger.

This tracks with what I have felt as a Jewish person living through these times, and is proved by this research. West, Irving, and Fuentes all perpetrated ideas that Jews control things that they do not control, as evidenced by the fact that more than 36% of their tweets about Judaism in the time period relied on that trope. Donald Trump, however, did not ever promote this idea and instead played on the more classic and less mainstream trope of dual loyalty in his lone tweet. Remember, though, that most of Trump's antisemitism has come from outside of social media. I also discovered through this study that many social media posts don't come off as antisemitic without further context. Some of the content seemed not antisemitic at all, but when placed in the context of the world at the time it was posted, we can see how clearly antisemitic it is.

The fact that a majority of the posts in this study came from a rather small time period provides some hope that this rise in antisemitism could just be a spike and it will not persist, but the numbers of attacks and antisemitic sentiment that we have discussed previously would suggest otherwise. Even if it does die down after this spike, antisemitism is not going to go away fully. This becomes even more true when we do not acknowledge the hatred and we just let it go away naturally. Censorship and restrictions on hate online are definitely important, but there is a fine line to walk between censorship and sweeping hate under the rug. If we do not expose it and learn from it, then nothing will ever change for the better. It is not clear to me if the fact that it was so difficult to find most of this content online is a good or a bad thing. Only time will tell if we are now on the downslope of this high tide in antisemitism or not.

I found the most interesting part of my research to be my conversation with the generative artificial intelligence, ChatGPT. I was surprised at how well it was able to

interpret my descriptions of these posts without any context, and I was impressed with its ability to explain exactly why they were antisemitic. I believe it did a better job than I could've personally done in laying out the exact reasons behind why it gave the designation to each post. It felt very unbiased, and it rarely asserted anything without a disclaimer, generally calling for the reader to use additional context before reaching a final answer. I would highly recommend that others read parts of my conversation in the **appendix** of this paper, as they not only demonstrate the incredible functionality of AI, but also explain the ways that these social media posts are extremely problematic in terms that are easy to understand. One of the biggest problems that social media platforms have is not being able to identify hate speech because their algorithms lack the human-like intelligence that is required to spot more covert instances (Baider, 2022). In addition, hate speech is challenging to measure because of human subjectivity. However, this study shows proof that artificial intelligence, when used alongside human annotations, may be a suitable solution for identifying and explaining hate speech online. AI can also be a tool for researchers to conduct additional studies in the future, as it does well in eliminating human subjectivity, despite not being perfect.

Conclusion

This study was very helpful in collecting the instances of antisemitism in recent months on social media from high-profile influencers, but there were some limitations. For one, the sample size was rather small, so it is hard to know if this data could be extrapolated properly to other individuals or time periods. Because so much of the content studied was deleted, it was impossible to gather more data on it like interactions with the public.

> Antisemitism is also a very broad topic with many definitions, and none of them are perfect.

The IHRA working definition served as a good base for this study, but it doesn't include everything and feels slightly out-of-date now. It is also confusing when dealing with anti-Jewish sentiment versus anti-Israeli sentiment as some organizations, including the ADL, would classify both of these as antisemitic, while many others would not. In addition, working with AI always poses certain limitations. It doesn't operate with an up-to-date database and lacks recent and relevant context for this and similar studies and is also known to generate false data at times. It is possible, though, that AI may be a viable solution, or perhaps even the best solution, to the problem social media platforms and other institutions are having regarding

identifying and explaining hate speech online. Future research on this topic should continue to expand the scope of this project, studying more content from influencers and the public. If possible, the interactions and impact should also be measured and studied. It would be beneficial to study antisemitic content outside of social media as well. Finally, researchers should ask the question of what the proper way to deal with antisemitic and other hateful social media posts is. The general consensus today seems to be that they should be deleted with the account that posted them suspended, but it is not clear that this is the best way to combat hate. Further research must be done to find out the best way to proceed, in the hopes of minimizing antisemitism as much as possible and making sure that this is the last high tide this country ever has to go through.

References

Appendix