

Antisemitism Notebook

with Arno Rosenfeld 

A campus partnership could challenge Chabad's big tent policy; Robert Kraft's antisemitism ad draws public ire; and a conversation with the Berkeley professor 'sitting in' his own office

UP FIRST



The Education Department doesn't offer hair and makeup before the photographer pops in to the press conference, but here I am questioning Secretary Miguel Cardona about antisemitism and Islamophobia on campus in February. (Photo: U.S. Dept. of Education)

Welcome to [Antisemitism Notebook](#) — a new, [weekly newsletter](#) where I'll be helping you make sense of what has felt like a bewildering surge of hostility toward Jews since Oct. 7. Alarming incidents have swept college campuses and city streets, throwing our community into a crisis. Coverage of antisemitism has leapt off the [Forward's pages](#) and landed on the cover of national magazines, including a [recent declaration](#) that “The Golden Age of American Jews Is Ending.”

But this furor didn't begin in October, and it won't end after this war is over — the struggle to understand what it means to keep Jews safe, and in a position to thrive, in the United States is long and complex.

I've spent years [reporting](#) on the grim — and often confounding — reality of contemporary antisemitism. I'll bring to this newsletter what I've learned, both before and since Oct. 7, to help you navigate this thicket of facts and feelings. My guiding light is a question that Susan Datz Edelman asked me last spring, when I interviewed her for an article about neo-Nazis [projecting swastikas](#) on local landmarks in her hometown of Jacksonville, Florida.

Susan said the hardest part was not knowing how serious the threat was.

“You can't react proportionally,” she told me. “What is it that's out there?”

That's a question I've tried to answer in all my reporting, joining with my colleagues to [visit college campuses](#) across the country last fall to see what it was really like to be Jewish on campus in the early days of the war, and carefully examining the [huge volumes of data on antisemitism](#) that have been released in recent months.

I've also [spoken to](#) Arab and Muslim students whose activism has been painted as a [menacing threat](#). I've [asked experts](#) what to make of those flashy television ads calling out “Jewish hate”, and documented the surge of federal investigations and lawsuits [related to antisemitism](#) and Islamophobia in higher education.

I'll bring that same inquisitive spirit to this newsletter. But I also want to hear from you. What's keeping you up at night? What don't you understand? What's giving you hope?

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