

# PEER BIAS LEADERS NEWSLETTER

## JANUARY 2020

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### **A statement from the HMHS Peer Bias Leaders regarding the events of January 6, 2021:**

*On January 6th, the world watched domestic terrorists storm one of our nation's most sacred buildings. As Haddonfield students finished their school day, we witnessed one of the darkest moments in American history. We were stunned by this violent assault on our country's democratic institutions, many students and community members alike were struck by the respect afforded to the Capitol assailants by law enforcement. The lack of police presence for what appears to be a premeditated attack on the nation's Capitol, juxtaposed to the constant displays of force that were so often a response to peaceful Black Lives Matter protests this summer shows injustices demonstrated throughout history are still prevalent in our nation. Like many of our community members, this coup attempt made us feel hopeless and dejected, but these feelings will not lead to change.*

*Emboldened by these tragedies, the HMHS Peer Bias Leaders feel that now, more than ever, the commitment to pursue justice, equity, and opportunity for all is necessary for our country in hopes of a brighter future for all.*

This month's newsletter, while our nation continues to grapple with these recent events, we decided to focus on discussing, explaining, and examining symbols of hate targeted towards the Jewish community, some of which were displayed and utilized by rioters earlier this month. As a town, it is our responsibility to understand the danger of hate; Antisemitism has no place in our community.

-The Peer Bias Leaders

### ***Discussion Topics:***

- [American Jewish History](#)
  - **1654-1655:** After 23 Jews sailed to New Amsterdam (later New York) in 1654, they won the right to settle in 1655. The Jewish community “contributed to the welfare of New York and the other cities in which they lived: creating jobs, supporting the prevailing government and when the time came, frequently joining with the forces of revolution” (Touro Synagogue National Historic Site).
  - **1698:** Aaron Louzada becomes the first Jew to settle in New Jersey.
  - **1760s:** Philadelphia has an organized Jewish community.
  - **1830s:** Many German Jews begin immigrating to the US.
  - **1840:** American Jews protest the persecution of Jews in Damascus, Syria
  - **1849:** Jews in North America and Europe protest Italy's Papal States who seized Edgar Mortara and raised him as Catholic.

- **1861-1865:** 8,000-10,000 Jews fight in the American Civil War. At least 50 become officers. Most of American Jews “lived in the North and supported the Union” ([Sarna 9](#)).
- **1888:** Writers publish several antisemitic works in NYC.
- **1906:** Approximately 150,000 Jews, mostly from Eastern Europe, immigrate to the US.
- **1911:** The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire kills about 146 people, who were mostly Jewish women aging from 16 to 23 years old. This tragic event galvanized the Jewish community into taking action and remains a symbol for the American labor movement.
- **1917:** The US enters World War 1. Approximately 225,000 American Jews served in the war.
- **1920-1927:** Henry Ford engages in anti-Jewish activity among a large anti-Jewish sentiment in the US.
- **1930s:** Many German Jews seek refuge in the US.
- **1939:** With an audience numbering in the millions, Father Charles E. Coughlin denounces Jews on the radio.
- **1943:** American Jews become aware of the Holocaust.
- **1964:** Congress passes the Civil Rights Act.
- **1972:** Sally Priesand becomes the first female rabbi in American history.
- **1993:** The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum opens in Washington.
- **2000:** Joe Lieberman becomes the first Jewish candidate on a major political party ticket.
- **2013:** [Pew Research Center](#) finds that 35% of American Jews identify with the Reform Movement, 18% with Conservative Judaism, 10% with Orthodox Judaism, 6% with smaller groups, and 30% with no denomination.
- [Harmful Stereotypes](#)
  - The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) releases a survey every year to examine the prevalence of Jewish stereotypes in our society. Although their results for 2021 have not been released yet, the ADL notes that anti-Semitic attitudes have been statistically consistent for many years.
  - At least 11% of American adults believed 6 or more common and harmful tropes associated with Jewish people. This survey from 2020 covers many of the most damaging Jewish stereotypes, and how they have affected the U.S.’s staggering anti-Semitic crime rate.

**Books:**

- [How to Fight Anti-Semitism: Weiss, Bari](#) - An urgent wake-up call to all Americans exposing the alarming rise of anti-Semitism in this country—and explains what we can do to defeat it.
- Titles available at Inkwood:
  - [Antisemitism: A Very Short Introduction](#) - Steven Beller reveals how Antisemitism grew as a political and ideological movement in the 19th century, how it reached its dark apogee in the worst genocide in modern history - the Holocaust - and how Antisemitism still persists around the world today.
  - [The Survivors, A Story of War, Inheritance, and Healing](#) - A memoir of family, the Holocaust, trauma, and identity, in which Adam Frankel, a former Obama speechwriter, must come to terms with the legacy of his family's painful past and discover who he is in the wake of a life-changing revelation about his own origins.

**Podcast of the Month:**

- [Anti-Semitism now, anti-Semitism then: The Ezra Klein Show talks with Deborah Lipstadt](#) - This podcast is a discussion between Ezra Klein and Deborah Lipstadt about the anti-Semitism still present in today, and how this compares to the anti-Semitism during WWII.

***Resources:***

- [The Jewish Journey: America](#)→ A trailer to a larger documentary about Jewish immigration to America through the centuries.
- [Hate on Display™ Hate Symbols Database](#)→ From the Anti Defamation League: a list of common and uncommon hate symbols.
- [A Scholar of American Anti-Semitism Explains the Hate Symbols Present During the US Capitol Riot](#)→ Many hate symbols were present at the January 6th riot on the US Capitol, particularly antisemitic ones. This article shows and breaks down the meanings behind these symbols, and explains more about why their presence at the riot is so terrifying.
- [Jane Parven: I Love Being Jewish](#)→ With this TedTalk, Jane Parven describes her story as a Jewish teenager in the United States, explaining the history of Antisemitism and the horror of its growing presence in America today. She says that “if hate can spread like wildfire, then so can peace,” expressing her hope that better days are ahead, and her willingness to work towards change.
- [Spelling of antisemitism vs. anti-Semitism | Anti-Defamation League](#)

***Quote of the Month:***

“No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”

- Nelson Mandela (1994)

