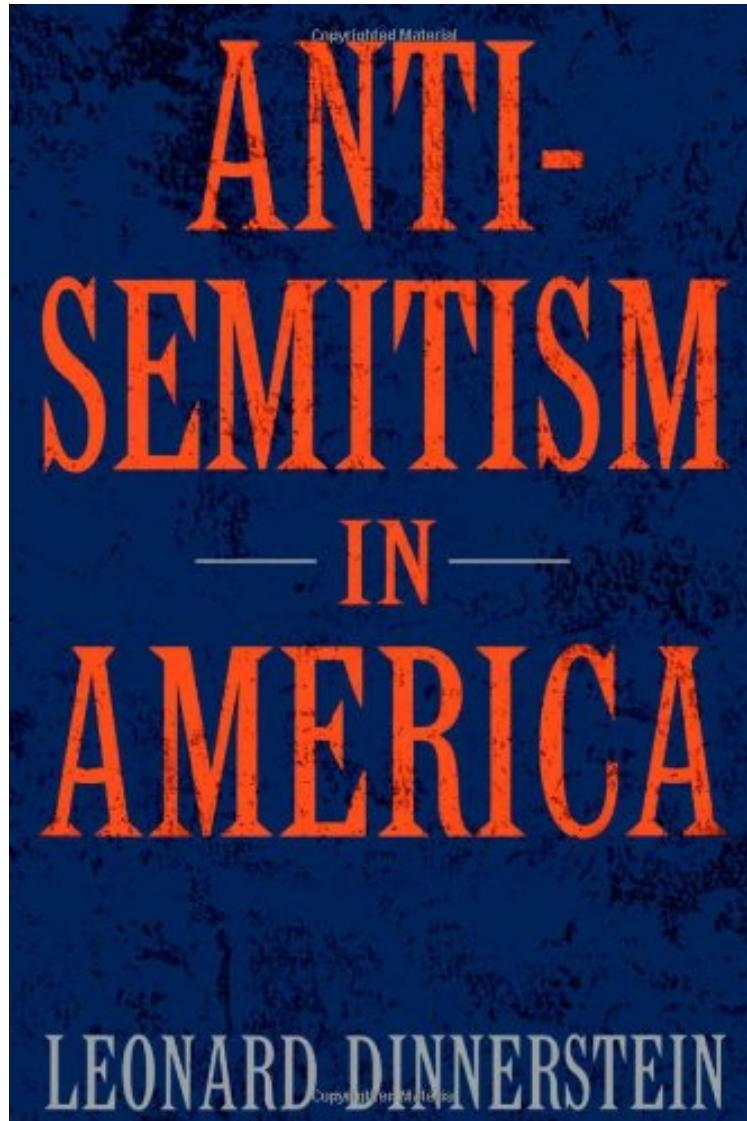


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Antisemitism in America

Leonard Dinnerstein

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9 of 17 people found the following review helpful. An outstanding bookBy A CustomerI almost cried many times whie readiing this book. I am just thankful that i grew up in the 1970's-1980's when anti-semetism was at an alltime low. I can only imaging what jews hd to go thri in the first half of this Century. His chapter on black anti-semetism hit it on the head big time. He shows how black anti-semetirsm started an how they are the only group in america today who is still openly anti-semetic. This book is the most definitive book on anti-semetism that i have ever read0 of 3

people found the following review helpful. Good GriefBy Hollis HookeA cursory glance at the rest of Mr. Dinnerstein's bibliography will fairly quickly shed light on what's been smeared across the 400+ tedious pages contained in this lil opus. Save your time and money. Just write, "These goyim are terrible; why do they persecute us so?" in a text file, copy paste it a few thousand times, print it out, staple it together, and you've got your free copy of this book. 9 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Good ReadingBy uslawfl@aol.com Even though this book deals with an unpleasant subject, it is so well written that it is a pleasure to read it. The information contained in the book is valuable and appears to have been thoroughly researched.

Is antisemitism on the rise in America? Did the "hymietown" comment by Jesse Jackson and the Crown Heights riot signal a resurgence of antisemitism among blacks? The surprising answer to both questions, according to Leonard Dinnerstein, is no--Jews have never been more at home in America. But what we are seeing today, he writes, are the well-publicized results of a long tradition of prejudice, suspicion, and hatred against Jews--the direct product of the Christian teachings underlying so much of America's national heritage. In *Antisemitism in America*, Leonard Dinnerstein provides a landmark work--the first comprehensive history of prejudice against Jews in the United States, from colonial times to the present. His richly documented book traces American antisemitism from its roots in the dawn of the Christian era and arrival of the first European settlers, to its peak during World War II and its present day permutations--with separate chapters on antisemitism in the South and among African-Americans, showing that prejudice among both whites and blacks flowed from the same stream of Southern evangelical Christianity. He shows, for example, that non-Christians were excluded from voting (in Rhode Island until 1842, North Carolina until 1868, and in New Hampshire until 1877), and demonstrates how the Civil War brought a new wave of antisemitism as both sides assumed that Jews supported with the enemy. We see how the decades that followed marked the emergence of a full-fledged antisemitic society, as Christian Americans excluded Jews from their social circles, and how antisemitic fervor climbed higher after the turn of the century, accelerated by eugenicists, fear of Bolshevism, the publications of Henry Ford, and the Depression. Dinnerstein goes on to explain that just before our entry into World War II, antisemitism reached a climax, as Father Coughlin attacked Jews over the airwaves (with the support of much of the Catholic clergy) and Charles Lindbergh delivered an openly antisemitic speech to an isolationist meeting. After the war, Dinnerstein tells us, with fresh economic opportunities and increased activities by civil rights advocates, antisemitism went into sharp decline--though it frequently appeared in shockingly high places, including statements by Nixon and his Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. "It must also be emphasized," Dinnerstein writes, "that in no Christian country has antisemitism been weaker than it has been in the United States," with its traditions of tolerance, diversity, and a secular national government. This book, however, reveals in disturbing detail the resilience, and vehemence, of this ugly prejudice. Penetrating, authoritative, and frequently alarming, this is the definitive account of a plague that refuses to go away.

From Publishers Weekly In an enlightening history of anti-Semitism in the U.S., Dinnerstein argues that deeply ingrained hostility toward Jews embedded in Christian teachings is the mainspring of this prejudice. During the Civil War, he notes, Jews became scapegoats for the ills of society; non-Jews in both the North and South accused Jews of profiteering and of supporting the enemy. This scapegoating continued, Dinnerstein shows, through the Great Depression and into WW II, when Charles Lindbergh, addressing an isolationist rally in Iowa in 1941, blamed Jews for pushing the U.S. toward war with Germany. Professor of history at the University of Arizona, Dinnerstein offers an illuminating analysis of black anti-Semitism since WW II, tracing its roots in many instances to Protestant theology. Noting that antagonism toward Jews has always been weaker in the U.S. than in Europe, he predicts that countervailing traditions of tolerance, legal equality and pluralism will continue to weaken anti-Semitism in America. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Dinnerstein (history, Univ. of Arizona, Tucson) presents a landmark history of anti-Semitism in America in a fine, readable manner. He arranges his book both chronologically and episodically. A major chapter, for instance, deals with the key subject of African American attitudes toward Jews from the 1800s to present. Pivotal historical periods such as the Great Depression years and life on the home front during World War II are also fully explored. The result is much more comprehensive than Frederic C. Jaher's *A Scapegoat in the New Wilderness* (LJ 3/1/94), which is primarily a study of Colonial times to the mid-1800s. Dinnerstein makes good use of anti-Semitic tracts, ditties, and songs, and while some may feel that Dinnerstein presents too sunny a view of the present, both general and informed lay readers will find it enjoyable. Recommended for most libraries. Paul Kaplan, Lake Villa Dist. Lib., Ill. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Kirkus s Dinnerstein (History/Univ. of Arizona), who has written extensively on areas of American Jewish history (*Uneasy at Home*, not reviewed), offers the first comprehensive scholarly survey of American anti-Semitism, tracing its development from the colonial period to the present. Dinnerstein shows how at the heart of most anti-Semitism lies the old European Christian belief that the Jews killed Christ and rejected his teachings. On the other hand, Dinnerstein asserts that from the earliest days of the colonies, the physical openness of the land and the desire to establish new traditions worked to mitigate some of the viciousness of anti-Semitism. Indeed, American anti-Semitism, even at its

most virulent, has never approached the violence of its European counterpart. What has obtained, says the author, has been a mixture of "tolerance, ambivalence and rejection." However, as the book points out, when Christian Americans faced an economic, political, or social crisis, it was usually the Jews who became scapegoats. Major outbursts of anti-Semitic feeling occurred during the Civil War, the depressions of 1873 and 1893, WW I, the Red Scare of 1919, the Great Depression, and WW II, with blame for these upheavals falling on alleged conspiracies of Jewish bankers and media moguls or on filthy foreigners. After WW II, a sudden downswing in anti-Semitism occurred, one that has for the most part continued up to the present, with overtly anti-Jewish behavior and expression at an all-time low in the past decade. Still, Dinnerstein readily admits, anti-Semitism may have faded to a negligible factor in American political life, but it cannot be eradicated completely, and as his chapter on African-American anti-Semitism notes, it remains a forceful and occasionally fashionable sentiment in some communities. Dinnerstein's book is indeed comprehensive, but it is also rather dry. A useful work, but not for casual reading. -- Copyright 1994, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.