



From Kalamazoo to CUNY too

The Brandeis Brief

March 2013

Last month, the Louis D. Brandeis Center's campaign against campus anti-Semitism brought us from Chicago to Los Angeles to Oakland to Davis to Kalamazoo. This month, our focus has been on Brooklyn College, CUNY, where a heated campus controversy has led to some significant charges. This issue will describe the trouble at Brooklyn College, as well as other recent developments. Moreover, the March Brandeis BookNote has a feature review of political scientist Clemens Heni's new work and addresses a perennial question for anti-Semitism scholarship and activism, to wit: Should anti-Semitism be treated as a unique evil or as an example of a broader social problem, such as racism or xenophobia. This has been a surprisingly explosive issue lately for anti-Semitism studies. This issue explores the history of this divisive issue and explains what is at stake.

Articles

[The Trouble at Brooklyn College](#)

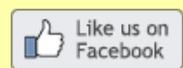
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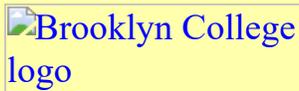
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This month, the Brandeis Center has devoted substantial time to problems at CUNY's Brooklyn College. The trouble began when Brooklyn College announced that it would host an anti-Israel BDS panel. New York taxpayers were understandably upset when BC's political science department turned out to be a key sponsor of the event. While the event was widely condemned, the college refused to back down, insisting that academic freedom required the free exchange of a wide range of opinions. Brooklyn lost considerable credibility, however, when it was reported that Jewish pro-Israel students were excluded from the event. Most notoriously, campus police escorted four Jewish students out of the event. College spokesmen initially claimed that the students were disruptive but appear to have backed down from that claim after reporters disproved their allegation and posted supporting audiotapes. The Brandeis Center's Kenneth L. Marcus joined the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Brooklyn this month for discussions with BC's president, provost, and other senior leadership. In formal correspondence, the Brandeis Center is asking BC to promptly address what appear to be significant irregularities by BC in connection with the event. LDB is in continuing conversations with BC students and faculty about their concerns.

by individuals, groups and foundations that share our concern about Jewish college students. Contributions are tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. To [support](#) our efforts to combat campus anti-Semitism, please contact us at info@brandeiscenter.com.

Can We Help You?



Kenneth Marcus

The Louis D. Brandeis Center stands ready if we can help you to combat anti-Semitism in higher education. [Please contact us](#) if you are a student or professor who needs our help. We are also available to provide technical assistance to university administrators who are interested in achieving legal compliance and best practices for eliminating campus anti-Semitism.

Kudos to Rep. Chris Smith

Rep. Chris Smith

LDB has publicly [commended](#) Chairman Christopher Smith and his congressional subcommittee for bringing public attention to the surging problem of European anti-Semitism. In particular, the Brandeis Center commended Rep. Smith and the U.S. House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations for conducting a potentially landmark hearing on February 27th, 2013, to investigate patterns of European anti-Semitism and explore the historic connection between the failure to combat anti-Semitism and the well-being of other religions and civil democracy.

The Brandeis Book Note

Is Anti-Semitism Unique?

Kenneth L. Marcus

Review of Clemens Heni, "Antisemitism: A Specific Phenomenon" (Berlin: Edition Critic, 2013)

 Clemens Heni
Antisemitism

Among anti-Semitism scholars, nothing clears a room faster than the question of whether Jew-hatred is unique. One school of thought says that it is uniquely evil, qualitatively distinct in both severity and character. Let us call all them the Exceptionalists, because they argue that anti-Semitism is a singular phenomenon. The second school says that Jews should get over themselves: anti-Semitism is bad, but it is not entirely different from other aversions, such as racism, sexism, homophobia or heterosexism. Let us call them the Genericists, since they consider Jew-hatred to be nothing more than a particular instance of a broader phenomenon, such as xenophobia or group-based animus. For all their mutual commitment to the same ostensible goal of combating anti-Semitism, Genericists and Exceptionalists are embroiled in civil war. [Continue Here](#)

