



A Concise History of American Antisemitism

By Robert Michael

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A Concise History of American Antisemitism shows how Christianity's negative views of Jews pervaded American history from colonial times to the present. The book describes the European background to American anti-Semitism, then divides American history into time periods, and examines the anti-Semitic ideas, personalities, and literature in each period. It also demonstrates that anti-Semitism led to certain behaviors in some United States officials that resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Jews during the Holocaust. Clear and forceful, A Concise History of American Antisemitism is an important work for undergraduate course use and for the general public interested in the roots of the current rash of anti-Semitism.

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Editorial Review

Review

This is an excellent, very important, revisionist study of the long history of American antisemitism. . . In the contemporary whiteness school of historical scholarship, antisemitism almost disappears from view. To these scholars, there is only one bigotry in American history, white racism against blacks or people of color. By contrast, Robert Michael convincingly shows that antisemitism-not just white racism-was at the core of the American historical experience. A measure of the success of the manuscript is that by the time the reader arrives at the Holocaust, he/she is not at all surprised by America's failure to do anything to aid the European Jews during the rise of Nazism and the Holocaust. (Eunice Pollack)

Remarkably broad in its scope, the book explores the anti-Jewish sentiments expressed in the writings and pronouncements of political, civic, philanthropic and business leaders, contemporary literature and poetry, law, and (some) forms of popular culture. . . . In compiling such a comprehensive list, Michael does students of American Jewish history a great service. He also offers an important challenge to historical works that see antisemitism rooted more in social conditions or economic and social competition than in Christian Theology. (Cheryl Greenberg *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal Of Jewish Studies*)

Dr. Michael is remarkable for his scholarly breath and depth. He has the particular qualification to be a historian of antisemitism and the Holocaust. Dr. Michael's book reminds us how deeply rooted is Christian antisemitism in our Western tradition and, mutatis mutandis, in the United States; equally, he brings home to the reader how necessary, Sisyphean though it may be, is the effort to preserve democracy, religious tolerance, social pluralism, and human solidarity, and the eternal vigilance to root out and guard against antisemitism." (Frederick Schweitzer)

About the Author

Robert Michael is professor emeritus of history at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth and Visiting Professor at Ringling School of Art and Design and Florida Gulf Coast University. His other books include: Dictionary of Anti-Semitism, An English Lexicon of the Language of the Third Reich, and The Holocaust: A Chronology and Documentary. He is working on a poetry collection and a novel.

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