“If we could somehow turn every Jew blue for 24 hours, I think that people would be able to see what is going on.” Dylann Roof, Notebook

In this seminar we will discuss the history, ideas, tendencies, and cultural contexts of anti-semitism. Remaining aware of how the anti-Judaism of the Christian tradition has contributed to anti-semitism we will observe how this prior anti-Jewish tradition, though itself at times violent, was transformed in the last two hundred years into a distinct conspiracy theory about the insidious and malignant role played by Jews in society. We will read original literature as well as some academic works. There are a number of angles from which to study this material and our questions will also depend on the questions students bring to the class, especially their questions about the current moment (For example, where does anti-semitism fit in the current awkward political climate in which the president refuses to condemn Nazis and then brags about his daughter being a Jew? How do we understand the apparent recent increase in anti-semitism in the US? How does anti-semitism and accusations of anti-semitism function in the recent politics around Israel/Palestine? What is the relationship between European Christian anti-semitism and the anti-semitism attested within some Muslim communities?). This is not a course about Judaism but about the fantasies that Jews have been able to inspire, fantasies which have nonetheless had direct and even lethal repercussions on real Jewish lives.

Readings will include:
Jean Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew* (1946)
Selections from Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*
The Protocols of the Elders of Zion
Essays of Hannah Arendt

Recent academic works:
Jerry Z. Muller, *Capitalism and the Jews* (2011)

Recent popular press:
Jonathan Weisman, *((Semitism)): Being Jewish in America in the Age of Trump* (2018)

**Please note:** This course is a small seminar and students will be expected to arrive each week prepared to discuss the readings. There will be short written assignments, such as posting to a discussion space on Classes, and a longer paper (approximately 12-15 pages) due at the end of the term on some related topic of interest to each student.