We cannot continue to minimize antisemitism

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<https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-711812>

Once again, the United States is facing horrific gun violence at the hands of a clearly disturbed, violent individual. The attack in [Highland Park on the Fourth of July](https://www.jpost.com/j-spot/article-711311) was a tragic event, but instead of it sparking a conversation about the fact that a predominantly Jewish neighborhood was once again targeted, instead the media are again actively minimizing the antisemitic aspect of this attack and the attacker.

This is not the first time such a thing has occurred. We saw a similar phenomenon with the Colleyville hostage attack. It’s unacceptable that, in 2022, antisemitism as a motive for terror is still minimized.

Despite the fact that antisemitism and even violent antisemitic attacks are sharply rising in the US, both in communities and on campuses, the media has failed to connect the dots. After the Colleyville hostage crisis, in which a terrorist took Jews hostage inside a synagogue during religious services, the mainstream media repeatedly refused to note the antisemitic nature of the attack and instead spent hours discussing possible motives, ignoring the fact it was the rabbi who helped the Jewish hostages escape, not the FBI.

This same terrorist had also made antisemitic and conspiratorial comments about Jews, expressed solidarity with virulent and violent antisemitic terrorists, and previously tried to enter a synagogue. Yet still, the international media, including AP, BBC, CNN, Fox News and MSNBC, gaslit the Jewish community claiming there wasn’t a clear motive.

Apparently, no lessons were learned, because today, the media are doing the same thing in regard to the Highland Park shooting. Highland Park is 50% Jewish (despite the fact that the US census lists the Jewish community as white – an entirely other issue that contributes to antisemitism today) and it is a thriving Jewish community that is no stranger to Jew-hatred.

Just a few years ago, the local high school had to recall yearbooks due to antisemitic quotes being featured by several of the students and several months ago, the neighborhood was hit with antisemitic flyers.

While the attack was not as clear cut as the Colleyville hostage attack, there is clear evidence of the shooter’s adherence to antisemitic violence, as well as hatred against women and blacks. Yet, he didn’t target women or a black community, he targeted a predominantly Jewish community.

The shooter had also previously tried to visit a local Chabad during Passover and had attempted to visit another synagogue in the area, as well. Volunteers at the synagogue said “he was definitely sizing up the synagogue.” He was active on a Discord chat titled “SS,” and had been seen giving a Heil Hitler salute to local protesters.

And yet, instead of representing the facts on the ground, the media has described the shooter as someone who wanted to harm or kill “African Americans, people affected by homelessness, women and people associated with Judaism.” Is it really that difficult to say Jews?

This reluctance to call a spade a spade is a part of the larger problem of antisemitism in the world, particularly in America: Jews aren’t the victims the world likes.

This is the reason that despite the fact antisemitic hate crimes have topped the FBI’s list of religiously motivated hate crimes in America for my entire life – by more than double any other religious minority – Jews continue to be pushed out of spaces where minorities work to fight oppression.

Efforts to change the subject

This is also the reason that in the aftermath of the Highland Park shooting, instead of discussions on antisemitism in America, we saw a discussion on [whether or not Anne Frank had white privilege trending on Twitter.](https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-711725)

Why are Jews targeted? Because they are a minority which has risen above hate, which has succeeded in many fields beyond its tiny 2% of the US population and most of all, because it’s easy to give in to the age-old hatred of antisemitism. Apparently, it’s too complex for the media to acknowledge that Jews are both a historically oppressed minority who have succeeded beyond expectation, but also that they face tremendous persecution and hate today at the same time.

We are less than 100 years since the Holocaust, yet somehow Jews are no longer interesting victims. Is Jewish blood not important enough to make headlines? Are the threats against Jewish communities worldwide not enough for the media’s clickbait?

It’s time to call out the blatant, antisemitic coverage that’s providing cover to the rising wave of antisemitism in the US and beyond.