

**Holocaust Denial on Campus:
The Case of Pacifica Forum (1994-2010)**

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Pacifica Forum began as a Eugene, Oregon pacifist group in 1994 but quickly devolved into a hotbed for Holocaust denial and other antisemitic conspiracy theories until its dissolution in the early 2010s. The Forum met on the University of Oregon campus during the final six years of its existence, sparking community debate on the limits of free speech on college campuses, especially after Pacifica Forum hosted Holocaust deniers Mark Weber and David Irving in 2007 and 2008. In 2010, the University of Oregon relocated Pacifica Forum to an off-campus but university-owned building in downtown Eugene. While this relocation eventually led to the Forum's dissolution, it came several years after significant protest from Eugene residents, particularly the Jewish community. This thesis uses twenty-four boxes of previously unanalyzed archival material to argue that the tardiness of the university's response was due to two interdependent phenomena. First, the relocation was a response to student and faculty protest, which came significantly later than the first Jewish protests of Pacifica Forum. Second, as Pacifica Forum became more identifiably right-wing in its latter years, Eugene residents considered the group less of a misguided amalgamation of neighbors and more of an extra-societal clan that did not share the community's ethos and was, thus, worthy of censorship.

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Introduction

This is a story about authority. Who has the authority to make a historical claim, especially about the deadliest and most well-documented genocide in history? Who defines free speech? Who gets to decide what qualifies as antisemitism? And once those questions have been answered, who has the authority to enforce those answers?

Holocaust denial, which the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum defines as “any attempt to negate the established facts of the Nazi genocide of European Jews,” fundamentally raises these questions. However, these questions were magnified in the crucible of the Eugene, Oregon community from 1994 to 2010.¹ Due to a rare policy that allowed University of Oregon professors emeriti to reserve university space for free, Holocaust denial entered campus via a local group called Pacifica Forum. Holocaust denial in Eugene was no longer relegated to the world of obscure websites and tinfoil hat-wearers. It collided with students, faculty, administration, and the societal expectation that the university must protect all points of view, no matter how divisive.

Retired University of Oregon professor Orval Etter created Pacifica Forum in 1994 to be one of many left-leaning pacifist discussion groups in the Eugene area. However, Pacifica Forum lost most of its local sponsors in 2004 — including its original meeting venue, the Methodist Wesley Center — as it gained a reputation for promoting Holocaust denial and other antisemitic conspiracy theories. Because Etter was a professor emeritus, the Forum began to meet at the

¹ “Holocaust Denial and Distortion,” United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed May 23, 2024, <https://www.ushmm.org/antisemitism/holocaust-denial-and-distortion>.

University of Oregon in 2004, sparking community debate on the limits of free speech on college campuses. Additionally, the group experienced some internal conflict as longtime members Jimmy Marr and Valdas Anelauskas gained increasing control of the group from aging Etter, steering what was once a left-wing membership into increasingly radical right-wing rhetoric. Protests by faculty, students, and Jewish community members intensified after Pacifica Forum invited renowned Holocaust deniers Mark Weber and David Irving in 2007 and 2008 to speak on campus. Wary of infringing on Pacifica Forum's first amendment rights but pressured by faculty and student complaints, the University of Oregon administration relocated Pacifica Forum to the off-campus (but university-owned) Baker Center in 2010. This relocation attempted to address both Pacifica Forum's claims to free speech and community outrage against their rhetoric, and it came several years after Pacifica Forum first began spreading conspiracy theories on campus.

This thesis argues that the tardiness of the university's decision is due to two interdependent phenomena. First, the relocation was a response to student and faculty concerns, not off-campus Jewish concerns. Second, as Pacifica Forum became more identifiably right-wing under Marr and Anelauskas's leadership, Eugene residents considered the group less of a misguided amalgamation of neighbors and more of an extra-societal clan that did not share the community's ethos and was, thus, worthy of censorship. The University of Oregon's inability to recognize Pacifica Forum's antisemitism during the group's more progressive years is indicative of a larger social unawareness of how antisemitism functions in left-wing spaces.

The local Jewish community (along with members of Pacifica Forum's former pacifist ally organizations) criticized Pacifica Forum in its early days when its members were still enmeshed in progressive Eugene's social fabric and were spreading antisemitic conspiracy theories under the more popular left-wing guises of anti-militarism and anti-Zionism. However,

the University of Oregon did not respond to their concerns. It was only years later, when faculty and students witnessed more overt forms of antisemitism such as the Nazi salutes and the desecration of Jewish ritual objects performed by Marr, Anelauskas, and their followers that the University of Oregon removed the group from its main campus. I argue that Pacifica Forum is one of countless cases in which the Jewish community sounded an alarm that was only heeded once considerable additional damage was done. This phenomenon is directly related to a general, nationwide lack of understanding of how antisemitism functions in progressive spaces; had the university recognized that antisemitic tropes can undergird the progressive discourse with which the Eugene community was so familiar, Eugene Jews may have been spared years of injury.

This argument relies on original analysis of the Orval Etter Papers, which are housed in the University of Oregon Special Collections and University Archives. Upon his death in 2013, Etter donated twenty-four archival boxes of material pertaining to his life to the University of Oregon, including hundreds of Pacifica Forum meeting agendas, advertisements, and other documents relating to the group. The archival collection also features hundreds of printed internal emails sent amongst Pacifica Forum members, providing an intimate view of the various motivations, tensions, and ideologies present in the group.

My study is the first to cite the Orval Etter Papers and the first academic analysis of Pacifica Forum. My focus on a previously underutilized archival collection invites its future use as scholars continue to fill the dearth of historical research on Holocaust denial on college campuses, especially in the Pacific Northwest. The Orval Etter Papers are additionally significant source material because the internal communication and other documentation of comparable hate groups are not so readily available. While histories such as Kathleen Belew's *Bring the War Home* and Leonard Zeskind's *Blood and Politics* make excellent use of ex-member testimony,

FBI files, and trial transcripts to tell the story of similarly radical groups, my study uses rare internal documentation to understand Pacifica Forum from the inside out.²

Other source material includes articles from local newspapers and magazines, University of Oregon Faculty Senate records, and statements given by the Southern Poverty Law Center and Anti-Defamation League during the height of Pacifica Forum's controversy. I looked at contemporary press regarding Pacifica Forum not only to corroborate names and dates from the archive but also to observe how various publications criticized the group differently. The tonal and rhetorical differences featured in coverage of Pacifica Forum by the left-leaning magazine *Eugene Weekly*, right-leaning online newsletter *The Oregon Commentator*, and relatively centrist newspaper *The Eugene Register-Guard* work together to account for various political persuasions in the Eugene community.

Using this source material, I argue over three chapters that Pacifica Forum's ability to promote antisemitic tropes for over fifteen years relied on three factors: the subtlety of left-wing antisemitism, protection gained from academic free speech, and the university administration's hesitation to respond to Jewish complaints. My first chapter tracks Orval Etter's and Pacifica Forum's pacifist histories to examine how progressive antisemitism exists subtly and insidiously. Chapter Two traces two catalysts; first, it analyzes how Pacifica Forum's presence at the University of Oregon allowed it to utilize the university's commitment to free speech to spread its fringe ideas. Second, it shows that Pacifica Forum's alienation from Eugene's progressive community increased according to rising right-wing sentiment within the group. Chapter Three

² Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018) and Leonard Zeskind, *Blood and Politics: The History of the White Nationalist Movement from the Margins to the Mainstream* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2009).

catalogues the university administration's response to student and faculty mobilization against Pacifica Forum and illustrates that the progressive university community was only willing to publicly counter Pacifica Forum once the Forum reached a recognizable threshold of right-wing animus.

The general lack of awareness in American society of how left-wing antisemitism functions — both in Pacifica Forum's era and today — reflects a lack of historical scholarship on the subject. While several scholars have done excellent work on right-wing antisemitism, especially as it relates to other forms of racism, left-wing antisemitism is largely misunderstood by both historians and average Americans. This study seeks to fill that gap and to promote future research on antisemitism on the left. Associating antisemitism with the right wing alone opens the Jewish community to significant potential harm because, as in the case of Pacifica Forum, the effects of left-wing antisemitism are largely underplayed and ignored.

Additionally, these chapters aim to combine the previously separate historiographies of Holocaust denial and academic free speech, specifically regarding on-campus antisemitism. Some scholarship in other disciplines analyzes Holocaust denial specifically on college campuses, but historical work largely keeps the issues of Holocaust denial and campus speech separate, failing to explore the ways in which Holocaust deniers take advantage of the university's social obligation to protect unpopular ideas.³ Accounts such as Eunice G. Pollack's *Antisemitism on the Campus: Past and Present* treat Holocaust denial as a footnote within the broader history of antisemitism on college campuses, whereas the field would benefit from a

³ For interdisciplinary analyses of Holocaust denial on college campuses, see: Robert O'Neil, "Academic Freedom to Deny the Truth: Beyond the Holocaust," *Minnesota Law Review* 101, no. 5 (2017): 2065-2088, Christopher Lovett and Sam Dicks, "'History is Far Too Important to be Left to History Professors': Combating Holocaust Denial on a Small College Campus," *Perspectives* 38, no. 8 (2000): 35-38, and Katherine Bischoing, "Responses to Holocaust Denial: A Case Study at the University of Michigan," *Contemporary Jewry* 18, no. 1 (1997): 44-59.

magnified focus on Holocaust denial specifically as a distortion of the very intellectualism universities seek to promote.⁴ Furthermore, my combination of Holocaust denial history and the history of academic free speech fundamentally bolsters my argument that Presidents Frohnmayer and Lariviere's concern as stewards over the University of Oregon's free exchange of ideas took precedence over Jewish complaints about Pacifica Forum's Holocaust denial.

Regardless of its lack of focus on universities specifically, previous scholarship on American Holocaust denial forms important context for my study. The first historical scholarship on Holocaust denial directly resulted from the formation of the United States's foremost Holocaust denial group, the Institute for Historical Review, in 1974 and the publication of the world's first major Holocaust denial book, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, in 1975.⁵ While individuals in the late 1940s through 1960s publicly doubted the scale of Jewish death during World War II, it was not until those individuals began to organize that historians responded. The first major historical analyses of Holocaust denial, Yehuda Bauer's *The Holocaust in Historical Perspective* (1978), Israel Gutman's *Denying the Holocaust* (1985), and Deborah Lipstadt's *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (1993) all warned a general readership that Holocaust denial organizations use freedom of speech to claim intellectual legitimacy and must be met with rigorous skepticism.⁶

My argument takes this previous analysis one step further; while Bauer, Gutman, and Lipstadt warned against Holocaust deniers' utilization of general rights to free speech, I warn against Holocaust deniers' utilization of *academic* free speech. The fundamental difference

⁴ Eunice G. Pollack, ed., *Antisemitism on the Campus: Past and Present* (Brighton: Academic Studies Press, 2011).

⁵ Arthur Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century* (Brighton: Historical Review Press, 1975).

⁶ Yehuda Bauer, *The Holocaust in Historical Perspective* (London: Sheldon Press, 1978), Israel Gutman, *Denying the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem Press, 1985), and Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York: Free Press, 1993).

between the two relies on the Western assumption that universities, as opposed to other public venues, bear the civic responsibility of hosting open debate. While Pacifica Forum quickly lost its off-campus sponsors, its move to the University of Oregon forced its critics to argue against the Forum's socially ingrained right to exchange ideas at a public university.

It is important to note that this dynamic occurred, at least in part, during a wider national debate on academic free speech following September 11, 2001. Only eighteen days after the attacks on the World Trade Center, Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor predicted that "[l]awyers and academics will help define how to maintain a fair and a just society with a strong rule of law at a time when many are more concerned with safety and a measure of vengeance."⁷ Just as Justice O'Connor anticipated, the post-9/11 American environment affected the ways in which legal experts and academics perceived campus free speech.

University administrations during this era generally sought to maintain their campuses' ideological status quo. University of Texas President Larry Faulkner, for example, famously called Professor Robert Jensen a "fountain of undiluted foolishness" after the latter stirred up countercultural criticism of the post-9/11 United States military.⁸ University of Oregon Presidents David Frohnmayer and Richard Lariviere, like Faulkner, sought to protect their university from scandal and thus avoided addressing issues regarding Pacifica Forum that were potentially inflammatory.

⁷ Linda Greenhouse, "A Nation Challenged: The Supreme Court; In New York Visit, O'Connor Foresees Limits on Freedom," *The New York Times*, Sept. 29, 2001, <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/29/us/nation-challenged-supreme-court-new-york-visit-o-connor-foresees-limits-freedom.html> in Marin Scordato and Paula A. Monopoli, "Free Speech Rationales after September 11th: The First Amendment in Post-World Trade Center America," *Stanford Law & Policy Review* 13, no. 1 (2002): 188.

⁸ Scordato and Monopoli, "Free Speech Rationales after September 11th," 184.

University faculty, on the other hand, generally saw the 9/11 attacks and subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as cause to encourage free speech, including criticism of U.S. foreign policy. Professors increasingly felt compelled to prepare their students civically as members of a democracy rather than simply training them as skilled workers.⁹ This contextualizes University of Oregon professors' various responses to Pacifica Forum; those who advocated for the Forum's removal may have seen the group as a threat to the civic values they sought to instill whereas those who defended the Forum's right to meet on campus may have done so in a post-9/11 zeal for free speech.

This post-9/11 zeal for free speech was also reflected in twenty-first century legal analyses of the three most notable instances in which Holocaust denial entered the courtroom. *Mel Mermelstein v. Institute for Historical Review* (1985), *Regina v. Ernst Zundel* (1992), and *David Irving v. Penguin Books and Deborah Lipstadt* (2000) each involved the potential sanction of a Holocaust denier for fraud or misinformation. Legal scholars Lawrence Douglas and Stanley Fish argued in 2001, however, that the court system cannot produce a ruling on historical truth.¹⁰ According to Douglas and Stanley, historians, not judges, bear the burden of disproving Holocaust denial.

This perspective reinforces the idea that universities can produce a type of normative truth through intellectual debate; however, it fails to account for the fact that Holocaust deniers often take advantage of the very policy of open intellectualism that Douglas and Stanley assumed

⁹ Henry Giroux and Susan Searls Giroux, "The Post-9/11 University and the Project of Democracy," *Take Back Higher Education* (New York: Macmillan, 2004) and R. Kenton Bird and Elizabeth Barker Brandt, "Academic Freedom And 9/11: How The War On Terrorism Threatens Free Speech On Campus," *Communication Law and Policy* 7, no. 4 (2002): 432-459.

¹⁰ Lawrence Douglas, *The Memory of Judgment: Making Law and History in the Trials of the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001) and Stanley Fish, "Holocaust Denial and Academic Freedom," *Valparaiso University Law Review* 35, no. 3 (2001): 499-524.

would defeat Holocaust deniers more effectively than the courts. Thus, the need for historical analysis of Holocaust denial in conjunction with historical analysis of academic free speech remains clear. Western society expects universities to tolerate diverse ideologies, but Holocaust deniers often exploit that expectation.

In addition to the social role of universities, historian David Nirenberg argued that another “Western tradition” is antisemitism itself.¹¹ According to Nirenberg, the Western collective subconscious relies heavily on Christian theology which, in turn, has defined itself in opposition to Jews since antiquity. Antisemitic tropes are thus embedded into Western intellectual history and are often repropagated subconsciously. This allows antisemitism to transcend the Western political spectrum and to survive, in the words of historian Robert Wistrich, as the world’s “longest hatred.”¹²

This phenomenon allowed Pacifica Forum to espouse ideologies — sometimes simultaneously — that one separately associates with the extreme left and extreme right. The group’s earliest years were its most overtly left-leaning (featuring more anti-war and anti-colonial attitudes) and its latter years were its most right-leaning (featuring white nationalist attitudes); however, the group spent most of its time combining leftist pacifism with traditionally conservative-based conspiracy theories through a continuous mistrust of the Jews. Holocaust denial especially was a throughline through Pacifica Forum’s fluid political ethos.

Pacifica Forum espoused both anti-Zionist Holocaust denial and neo-Nazi Holocaust denial according to members’ oscillating political views. Anti-Zionist Holocaust denial claims that organized global Jewry faked or exaggerated the Holocaust to garner international sympathy

¹¹ David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York: Norton, 2014).

¹² Robert Wistrich, *Antisemitism: The Longest Hatred* (New York: Schocken, 1991).

for the founding of the State of Israel whereas neo-Nazi Holocaust deniers attempt to exonerate Hitler, Himmler, Goebbels, and other architects of the Holocaust by arguing that Nazi leadership never intended to harm Jews.¹³ While Anti-Zionist Holocaust denial is generally associated with the radical political left and neo-Nazi Holocaust denial is generally associated with the radical political right, “antisemitism disrupt[s] binary understandings of race, power, and partisanship.”¹⁴ Reflecting current trends in Jewish studies and history research, my study rejects the idea that antisemitism is inherently bound to certain political persuasions. Instead, I argue like Nirenberg that antisemitism can exist in a multitude of political environments because it is interwoven into the Western collective subconscious.¹⁵

In addition to these insights, scholars in Jewish history have identified a relevant etymological issue regarding the definitions of Zionism and anti-Zionism. The complexity of the Israel-Palestine conflict, as well as the flood of commentary on it, have rendered these terms definitionally inconsistent. For the purposes of my study, I define a Zionist as one who believes that the State of Israel should exist in some form as a Jewish state, regardless of that person’s particular opinions on a two-state solution, West Bank annexation, or other facets of Israel’s border expansion or retraction. An anti-Zionist advocates against the State of Israel’s existence in any form, whether from a left-wing or right-wing perspective.

Jimmy Marr and Valdas Anelauskas are prime examples of right-wing anti-Zionists, and it is important to note that the neo-Nazism that the two exhibited during Pacifica Forum’s later

¹⁴ Mara Lee Grayson, “Beyond Racial, Religious, and Political Binaries: Toward Antisemitism Literacy,” *Journal of Literacy Research* 56, no. 4 (2024): 361-378.

¹⁵ Also see: Alan Johnson, ed., *Mapping the New Left Antisemitism* (London: Routledge, 2023) and Sina Arnold and Blair Taylor, “Antisemitism and the Left: Confronting an Invisible Racism,” *Journal of Social Justice* 9, no. 1 (2019): 1-33.

years echoed collective memories of Eugene’s white supremacist past. Seventy years before Pacifica Forum, Oregon had the highest per capita concentration of Ku Klux Klan members in the United States until members of the hippie movement and post-1968 “New Left” migrated to cities like Eugene.¹⁶ Although Marr and Anelauskas did not identify directly with the Klan, their actions reminded Eugene of an uncomfortable racist past.

Oregonian Jews in the early 2000s, on the other hand, supported liberal state and federal legislation even more so than the average Oregonian.¹⁷ The congregants of Eugene’s Temple Beth Israel and members of Pacifica Forum shared membership in some of the same left-leaning social circles during the Forum’s more progressive years. Even so, this did not preclude Eugene’s Jews from recognizing antisemitic attitudes in their neighbors and warning the community accordingly. The University of Oregon administration, however, did not respond to these complaints until Pacifica Forum promoted more recognizable forms of antisemitism that hearkened back to Eugene’s white supremacist past.

In this case, the University of Oregon exhibited “epistemic antisemitism,” a term that legal scholar David Schraub coined in 2022 to describe the unwillingness to “credit Jewish testimony (even — or especially — on matters where Jews might be thought to possess first-hand knowledge).”¹⁸ While local Jews identified the antisemitic tropes and conspiracy theories undergirding Pacifica Forum’s early pacifist activism, the university ignored these concerns and allowed the Forum campus meeting space. This phenomenon is largely due to the university’s lack of awareness of how antisemitism can exist on the left. University of Oregon Presidents

¹⁶ Kendall Porter, “Confronting the Racism of the Past,” *Eugene Weekly*, February 23, 2023, <https://eugeneweekly.com/2023/02/23/confronting-the-racism-of-the-past/>.

¹⁷ Ellen Eisenberg, *The Jewish Oregon Story* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2019), 15-37.

¹⁸ David Schraub, “The Epistemic Dimension of Antisemitism,” *Journal of Jewish Identities* 15, no. 2 (2022): 153-179.

Frohnmayr and Lariviere administrations ignored Jewish concerns because Pacifica Forum appeared to be progressive and did not begin to display the more obvious signs of right-wing antisemitism until the late 2010s. Although Eugene Jews had vocalized concern since Pacifica Forum's left-wing years, the university only recognized right-wing antisemitism as cause to remove the group from campus in 2010. This delay implicitly dismissed Jewish claims — and, thus, epistemic expertise — on antisemitism.

Chapter 1

In the Beginning: Pacifica Forum's Genesis to its Exodus from Wesley Center (1994-2004)

Orval Etter was less celebratory than most as “Victory Over Japan Day” celebrations reached famously boisterous heights throughout Oregon in 1945. He did not throw confetti over newly returned veterans or excitedly photograph them brandishing stolen Japanese flags. While not necessarily anti-veteran, Etter was certainly anti-war. Just five years before, Etter had become one of the 43,000 American men who would register as conscientious objectors during World War II.

The image shows a draft card for Orval Henry Etter, dated October 16, 1940. The card is a 'REGISTRATION CARD' and 'REGISTRATION REPORT' from the Selective Training and Service Administration. It includes fields for name (Orval Henry Etter), address (444 Columbia St, Eugene, Lane, Oregon), date of birth (July 26, 1912), and date of registration (October 16, 1940). The card is marked as a conscientious objector. The card is divided into several sections: 1. NAME, 2. ADDRESS, 3. DATE OF BIRTH, 4. DATE OF REGISTRATION, 5. OCCUPATION, 6. EDUCATION, 7. RELIGION, 8. REASON FOR OBJECTOR STATUS, 9. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRANT, 10. SIGNATURE OF REGISTERING OFFICER, 11. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRANT'S NEAREST RELATIVE, 12. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRANT'S NEAREST RELATIVE, 13. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRANT'S NEAREST RELATIVE, 14. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRANT'S NEAREST RELATIVE. The card is marked as a conscientious objector.

Figure 1 Orval Etter draft card marked “Conscientious objector,” 1940, FamilySearch.com

Etter, like many other conscientious objectors, promoted anti-Zionism as part of his anti-war ethos. However, Etter adopted a reputation for antisemitism that other conscientious objectors did not.¹⁹ I repeat David Schraub’s insinuations that delineating whether

anti-Zionism is always antisemitic would not make an interesting project; instead, the field of Jewish history and mature discussions of the Israel-Palestine conflict benefit from analysis of when anti-Zionism becomes antisemitic.²⁰ In Etter’s case, normative anti-Zionism became antisemitic when exhibited in conjunction with conspiracy theories, classical antisemitic tropes, and two fallacious interpretations of Holocaust history: first, that the Holocaust indeed happened

¹⁹ James Tracy, *Direct Action: Radical Pacifism from the Union Eight to the Chicago Seven* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996) in Scott Bennett, “American Pacifism, ‘The Greatest Generation,’ and World War II,” *The United States and the Second World War*, G. Kurt Piehler and Sidney Pash, eds. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 282.

²⁰ David Schraub, Dov Waxman, and Adam Hosein, “Arguing about antisemitism: why we disagree about antisemitism, and what we can do about it,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 45, no. 9 (2022): 1803-1824.

but that Zionists either caused or grossly exaggerated it (Holocaust distortion), and second, that the Holocaust as a whole is a myth engineered by Zionists eager to garner sympathy for the State of Israel (Holocaust denial). Etter's interest in conspiracy theories and anti-Jewish tropes produced a version of anti-Zionism that relied fundamentally on antisemitic elements while incorporating normative anti-Zionism's progressive principles.

This chapter tracks how this version of anti-Zionism could exist within a larger progressive space as well as how it attracted some pacifists but repelled others. It serves as important context for later chapters as it shows that, without the social protections of academic free speech, Pacifica Forum felt significant sanction from its former off-campus allies. Third, it serves as starting point by which one can track antisemitism as a throughline within Pacifica Forum's changing political atmosphere; while Pacifica Forum eventually abandoned some of the leftist accoutrement it displayed during this chapter's timeframe, it never abandoned Holocaust denial.

Genesis of Pacifica Forum: 1994-2003

After decades of membership in the international anti-war organization Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), Etter requested permission to form an official Eugene FOR chapter in the early 1990s.²¹ FOR denied his request, and Etter subsequently founded Eugene's Pacifica Forum in 1994, not as a FOR chapter as he had intended, but as an autonomous group that enjoyed FOR sponsorship. The two groups' mission statements were essentially the same. As FOR claimed to

²¹ "Criteria for Endorsement or Sponsorship by Eugene Fellowship of Reconciliation," undated, OE Papers Box 1, folder 6.

“explore the power of love and truth for resolving human conflict,” Pacifica Forum committed “to intervene in social and political situations in order to minimize war, militarism, and violence.”²² Etter envisioned Pacifica Forum to fit into a larger cluster of pacifist groups in Eugene.

Pacifica Forum also enjoyed sponsorship from the Quaker Eugene Friends Meeting. A 1998 list of the Friends Meeting’s officers and committees shows that several members of the

group were also members of Pacifica Forum.²³ When Etter’s wife died in 2005, the Eugene Friends Meeting House hosted her funeral.²⁴ Additionally, the Eugene chapter of the Methodist Wesley Foundation allowed the fledgling Pacifica Forum to meet in a portion of its church called the Wesley Center.

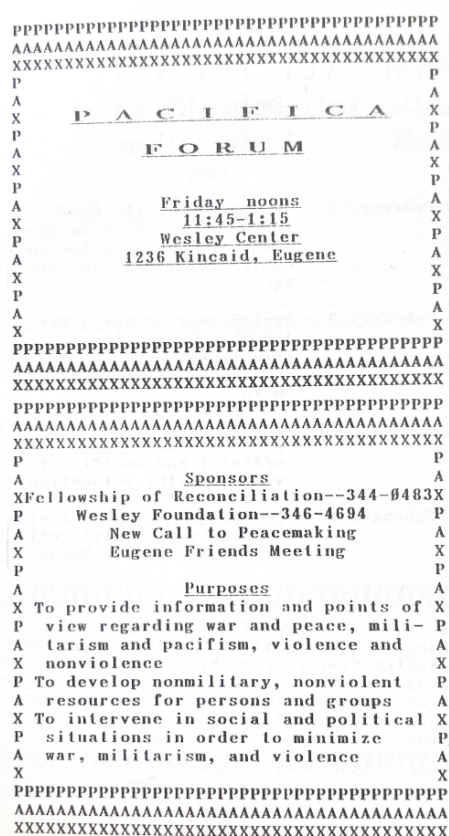


Figure 2 Early PF Flyer, 1997, OE Papers

These allyships indicate that, at this point, Pacifica Forum members were totally enmeshed in Eugene society. Before the Forum began meeting and members manifested anti-Jewish bias, there was nothing to suggest that Pacifica Forum was dissimilar from any of the many other pacifist groups in the area. Thus, when the leaders of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Eugene

Friends Meeting, and Wesley Foundation agreed to sponsor Pacifica Forum in the late 1990s,

²² “Pacifica Flyer,” undated, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

²³ “Eugene Friends Meeting Officers and Committees,” OE Papers Box 4, folder 14.

²⁴ “United States, GenealogyBank Obituaries, Births, and Marriages 1980-2014,” *FamilySearch*, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QK55-B5PW>.

they could not have predicted the community agitation and social angst that would drive them to publicly dissolve those ties in the early 2000s.

However, as Jewish advocate Mark Weitzman reminded us, antisemitic individuals and groups “embrace[d] popular ‘hot-button’ themes” in the late 1990s and early 2000s, “such as anti-globalization or anger over the war in Iraq... to use them as their points of entry... in the hope that they will help move them away from the margins of Western society.”²⁵ This phenomenon was clear within Pacifica Forum; although group members undeniably had pacifist convictions, they also generally had a poor opinion of Jews, poor media literacy in the age of the Internet’s infancy, and a willingness to take conspiracy theory as historical fact. Additionally, they sought to spread these beliefs through their connections with other pacifist groups.

Pacifica Forum’s interest in conspiracy theories runs as long as the archival record, beginning in 1994. Printouts from conspiracy sites like WhatReallyHappened.com and Conspiracy Planet pile by the dozens in archived Forum materials. Forum members theorized via email about CIA involvement in the September 11, 2001 attacks as early as two weeks after them.²⁶ Draft lists of possible Forum discussion topics ranged from “Zionist-Israeli Control of U.S. Foreign Policy” to “Can Any Democrat be Trusted?” to “Hoaxes: Racial and Ethnic.”²⁷ The interest in conspiracy theories that soon led Pacifica Forum to Holocaust denial began early in the group’s history.

²⁵ Mark Weitzman, “Globalization, Conspiracy Theory, and the Shoah,” *Holocaust Denial: The Politics of Perfidy*, ed. Robert Solomon Wistrich (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012): 210.

²⁶ “Elaine Winters email to various members” and “Patrick Lufkin email to David Bradwell,” 2002, OE Papers, Box 3, Folder 2.

²⁷ “Pacifica Forum draft schedule,” 2003, OE Papers Box 4, folder 2.



Figure 3 IHR Flyers in PF archival materials, undated, OE Papers

Thus, although Pacifica Forum

members insisted that “Zionism was clearly related to PF’s concern with war and militarism,” they also related Zionism to their mistrust in the government and of Jews.²⁸ In 2003, Pacifica Forum member George Beres e-mailed an article to Etter that claimed “Zionists had a long history of shameless cooperation with the Nazis.” Beres explained that he shared the article “because the target is Zionists.”²⁹

Additionally, Forum member Nadia Sindi

shared a conspiracy theory about a secret alliance between the Zionist paramilitary group Lehi and Nazi leadership. Sindi commented, “I don’t know if this is true or not but knowing how they work I wouldn’t put it behind them.”³⁰ It is unclear whether “they” refers to Zionists or Jews, and it is possible that Sindi kept this intentionally ambiguous. Regardless, Beres’s and Sindi’s annotations indicate that their “research” on World War II was less grounded in historical fact than in a desire to confirm their pre-constructed opinions on Zionists.

Pacifica Forum’s first known exposure to the Institute for Historical Review (IHR) — America’s foremost Holocaust denial institution — was through an IHR promotional letter that decried “Holocaust propaganda” as “Israel’s number one weapon.”³¹ Because Pacifica Forum

²⁸ “Forum Members’ Email to Barbara Daté,” undated, Coll 338, Box 1, Folder 6, Orval Etter Papers, University of Oregon Special Collections and University Archives, Eugene, OR.

²⁹ “George Beres email to Orval Etter,” 2003, OE Papers Box 3, folder 2.

³⁰ “Nadia Sindi 2002 email to various Forum members,” 2002, OE Papers Box 4, folder 13.

³¹ “IHR promotional letter,” 2000, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

had already exhibited a willingness to believe conspiracy theories and had a pre-existing aversion to Israel, the combination of conspiracy theories with anti-Zionism made sense within Pacifica Forum's environment. Following this initial exposure, printouts of IHR and other Holocaust denial publications appeared more frequently in the Forum's discussion materials, indicating increasing interest in Holocaust distortion and denial. As discussed previously, Jewish advocate Mark Weitzman's analysis could have been written to describe Pacifica Forum specifically: "They have not surrendered their [pacifist] beliefs. Instead, they have taken [those] topics and undergirded them with the tropes of antisemitism that have always been at the core of their belief structure."³² It was through this phenomenon that Pacifica Forum began to emerge as unique within Eugene's larger pacifist community.

"Zionism and its Links" and Departure from Wesley Center: 2003-2004

The separation between Pacifica Forum and other progressive groups grew deeper after Pacifica Forum hosted a series of discussions titled "Zionism and its Links." Other pacifists' reactions to the series's contents, which included Holocaust denial and other conspiracy theories, indicate that Pacifica Forum's expression of anti-Zionism diverted considerably from what the early 2000s Eugene progressive community deemed normative anti-Israel activism. This conflict marked a turning point in Pacifica Forum's gradual marginalization from the Eugene activist community.

On July 10, 2003, the *Eugene Register-Guard* reported, "The Pacifica Forum will meet at 11:45 a.m. Friday at the Wesley Center, 1236 Kincaid St. The program, one of a series on

³² Weitzman, "Globalization, Conspiracy Theory, and the Shoah," 210.

Zionism and its links, will be a review of ‘Jenin,’ a Palestinian-produced video of life in the Jenin refugee camp in Palestine. The meeting is sponsored by the Fellowship of Reconciliation and Eugene Friends Meeting.”³³ *Jenin, Jenin* was a controversial film from its conception; during the April 2002 Israeli military raid on the Jenin refugee camp, Arab-Israeli actor Muhammad Bakri snuck into the camp to record illicit interviews with its residents.³⁴ The resulting film has been lauded as a revolutionary documentary and denigrated as a misinformation campaign, including within Pacifica Forum.

Pacifica Forum appears to have circulated a handout of “opposing perspectives” prior to the film’s screening that claimed “investigations by Time Magazine and the Washington Post concluded there was no massacre in Jenin.”³⁵ This is a striking divergence from the Forum’s inveterate refusal to circulate any perspectives favorable to Israel, which indicates that the group was not yet totally disconnected from surrounding attitudes. Despite this, one member of both Pacifica Forum and the Eugene Friends Meeting emailed several members of both groups to describe the film as “a smear and a hate campaign.” She warned members that its screening “threatens the Jews of Eugene.”³⁶ This instance is the first record of contention between the two groups and instigated the first rumors of their separation.

It is unclear whether the complainant was familiar with Pacifica Forum’s growing interest in anti-Jewish interpretations of history or whether she hastily concluded that an anti-Zionist film

³³ *Eugene Register Guard*, “Pacifica Forum meeting to review video of Jenin,” July 10, 2003, https://books.google.com/books?id=JVZWAAAIAIAJ&pg=PA11&dq=Pacifica+Forum+Eugene+Palestine&article_id=4887,1916449&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi25bn4xaqJAxXIFjQIHeu_Cm04ChDoAXoECA4QAg#v=onepage&q=Pacifica%20Forum%20Eugene%20Palestine&f=false.

³⁴ Mira Fox, “A controversial documentary upended the narrative on Jenin 20 years ago. Has anything changed since?” *Jewish Daily Forward*, February 21, 2023, <https://forward.com/culture/533833/jenin-documentary-controversial-israel-palestine/>.

³⁵ “What Really Happened in Jenin?” 2003, OE Papers Box 3, folder 2.

³⁶ “With Friends Like These,” 2007, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

was inherently antisemitic; regardless, it is clear that Pacifica Forum had already exhibited a mistrust in Israel and Jews. Rabbi Maurice Harris of Eugene’s Temple Beth Israel later reflected, “I had thought perhaps the reaction of the Jewish community to the [film] was overdone, but in the context of these other programs... those Palestine videos did not occur in a vacuum, they occurred in an existing anti-Jewish context.”³⁷ Thus, the evidence of Pacifica Forum’s unique manifestation of anti-Zionism became increasingly clear to some community members throughout “Zionism and its Links.”

Possibly due to growing friction with the Eugene Friends Meeting caused by the film, Pacifica Forum requested that another ally, FOR, renew its sponsorship of the group in August 2003. Michael Williams began attending Forum meetings in the same month, reporting back to FOR as a “witness” on whether the Forum lived up to its growing reputation for antisemitism. Williams “immediately” encountered evidence of antisemitism during “Zionism and its Links” and continued to attend for eighteen months to gather further evidence for FOR.³⁸

Williams encountered Holocaust denial in the group almost immediately. Pacifica Forum devoted September 2003’s first two “Zionism and its Links” sessions to the Leuchter Report, which claimed that pseudoscientific tests on the walls of Auschwitz disprove the existence of gas chambers in the camp. Zionists, Pacifica Forum members argued, had lied about concentration camps’ crematoria to bolster support for the State of Israel. Two months later, another “Zionism and its Links” session focused on Holocaust denier Ingrid Weckert’s book *Flashpoint: Kristallnacht 1938*, which claimed that Jews were at once “instigators, victims, and

³⁷ “Rabbi Harris response,” 2003, OE Papers Box 1, folder 6

³⁸ “Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?” 2006, OE Papers, Box 4, folder 3.

beneficiaries” of the pogrom.³⁹ Etter insisted that the book proved Jewish responsibility for Kristallnacht and that Zionists had purposefully concealed these facts.⁴⁰

Pacifica Forum’s discussions of the Leuchter Report and *Flashpoint: Kristallnacht 1938* are notable for two reasons. First, they show the Forum’s engagement with Holocaust denial from an explicitly anti-Zionist perspective. Second, the group engaged in Holocaust denial despite splintering relationships with the Eugene Friends Meeting and FOR, indicating that Pacifica Forum was not only aware that its anti-Jewish attitudes alienated it from its allies but that it persisted in promoting antisemitic theories nevertheless.

In addition to these Holocaust denial discussions, 43 percent of programming from August to December 2003 criticized Jewish individuals and organizations, suggesting a rising preoccupation with anti-Jewish ideology rather than good faith pacifist issues.⁴¹ In fact, Pacifica Forum did not plan any sessions to discuss the Iraq War despite it beginning just months prior.⁴² “Zionism and its Links” illustrated that Pacifica Forum had transitioned from one of many normative Eugene pacifist organizations to a unique environment that relied on Holocaust denial to bolster its anti-Zionist perspective.

Michael Williams helped other Eugene pacifists realize that Pacifica Forum had diverted from their common cause. In late 2003 or early 2004, Williams and his wife offered a public apology to the Jews of Eugene on behalf of FOR, expressing shame that FOR had unknowingly sponsored anti-Jewish discussions. The Williams’ disavowal of Pacifica Forum led others with

³⁹ Ingrid Weckert, *Flashpoint: Kristallnacht 1938: Instigators, Victims and Beneficiaries* (Torrance: Institute for Historical Review, 1991).

⁴⁰ “Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?” 2006, OE Papers, Box 4, folder 3.

⁴¹ “Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?” 2006, OE Papers, Box 4, folder 3.

⁴² “Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?” 2006, OE Papers, Box 4, folder 3.

dual membership in FOR and Pacifica Forum to lodge complaints and leave the group, and Pacifica Forum lost 75 percent of its membership by the end of 2004.⁴³ Former member testimony led the Eugene Friends Meeting to also cut ties with Pacifica Forum. The Wesley Foundation followed soon after, insisting that the Forum no longer meet on its premises.

This prompted Etter, an adjunct professor emeritus who had given some lectures in public policy decades prior, to take advantage of an unwritten policy which allowed University of Oregon professors emeriti to hold meetings on campus for free. Thus, Pacifica Forum transitioned in 2004 from a non-academic venue to an academic one. This chapter will serve as a foil for the following ones as it showed that, once Pacifica Forum publicly espoused Holocaust denial, its off-campus community allies condemned it swiftly. In subsequent years, the University of Oregon did not share this swift response.

⁴³ “Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?” 2006, OE Papers, Box 4, folder 3.

Chapter 2

“Fixed, deaf, one sided, and impossible”: Pacifica Forum on Campus (2004-2007)

Shortly after the Wesley Foundation disavowed Pacifica Forum in late 2003, Orval Etter wrote a memo titled “DEPARTURE”:

With thanks for years of free accommodations, a certain weekly luncheon club in this city is departing from a certain religious center that ‘does not have any interest in collaborating with’ the club ‘to address... controversial topics... such as Zionism.’ As the club departs, it looks back over the center’s front entrance at a banner that proclaims, ‘open hearts, open minds, open doors.’⁴⁴

Accusing opponents of closed-mindedness had been — and would remain — a longtime strategy of Pacifica Forum’s. The “paranoid complaints of Hillel,” FOR representative Michael Williams, and other concerned community members had resulted in such extreme “muzzling” that Orval Etter celebrated the Forum’s forced relocation to the University of Oregon as a chance to “ring out the old [and] ring in the new.”⁴⁵ Remaining Forum members considered themselves pioneers forging on in the name of free speech despite growing opposition.

This chapter examines the tension between Pacifica Forum’s continued promotion of antisemitic conspiracy theories and the right to free speech by which they defended it. Pacifica Forum insisted that the University of Oregon owed them more toleration than Wesley Center as an academic institution rather than a religious one. Instead of curtailing its offensive speech, the group continued it in the confidence that the University of Oregon was societally obligated as a learning institution to protect unpopular ideas.

⁴⁴ “DEPARTURE,” 2003, OE Papers Box 3, folder 5.

⁴⁵ “Email between Beres, Sindi, and Etter,” 2003, OE Papers Box 3, folder 6 and “Ring out the Old, Ring in the New,” 2003, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

Additionally, this chapter catalogues three key shifts that occurred within Pacifica Forum between 2004 and 2007. First, Orval Etter began identifying with the label “antisemite” and encouraged his followers to see antisemitism as a commitment to free speech. Second, Etter’s advanced age allowed Jimmy Marr and Valdas Anelauskas to rise in prominence within the Forum and promote white nationalist attitudes. Lastly, Marr vandalized a Jewish religious object during a Forum meeting, marking a shift from hateful speech to hateful action.

Antisemitism Becomes a Badge of Honor

Although the Wesley Foundation and the Eugene Friends Meeting were swift to sever ties with Pacifica Forum after the “Zionism and its Links” series, the Eugene Fellowship of Reconciliation delayed as FOR national authorities equivocated through 2003 and 2004 on whether to give Eugene’s local chapter permission to end its allyship with Pacifica Forum. This prompted additional pressure from longtime Pacifica Forum critic Michael Williams and his followers, some of whom withdrew their local FOR membership in protest. Beth and Steven Deutsch, for example, wished to retain national FOR membership but requested their names be “taken from the FOR [Eugene] Chapter listing” as they did “not wish to be associated with the Pacifica Forum nor with a local group that has made the misjudgment... of continuing to sponsor it.”⁴⁶ FOR’s Eugene chapter eventually formalized its split with Pacifica Forum in 2005, marking the decisive end of Pacifica Forum’s allyship with the general Eugene progressive community.

The groups’ divorce sparked rumors on both sides of impending lawsuits. While each organization threatened the other with a defamation suit at least once, sources reveal more anxiety

⁴⁶ “Deutsch letter to FOR chapter,” 2003, OE Papers Box 3, folder 3.

than legal maneuvering. Williams and his wife, Sarita, assured FOR that there had been “no actionable basis for a lawsuit” in their advocacy against Pacifica Forum, but they nevertheless temporarily stopped criticizing the Forum as “the perceived threat of a potentially expensive lawsuit effectively silenced” them.⁴⁷

In turn, devoted Pacifica Forum member Mariah Leung expressed her worry to Etter that FOR members “seem so vicious and relentless. They might not stop at anything, they seem that desperate. I am even worried for your safety.”

Unlike FOR, Pacifica Forum’s tradition of conspiratorial thinking emerged in these discussions. Leung worried that the “Federal Gov’t [sic] infiltrates groups like this and tries to break them up, and that there are many spies in the peace movement, and that we are all on a list and being looked at...” She further suspected that FOR members were undercover federal agents.⁴⁸

While these legal discussions occurred and eventually subsided, remaining Pacifica Forum members adjusted to meeting at the University of Oregon. The Forum’s split from

other pacifist groups briefly sparked discussion over meeting under a new, untarnished name.

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1. **Orval Etter - CSPA (PPP&T) & BGRS** Associate Professor Emeritus of Public Affairs and Administration
 Name: Orval Etter Department: Department Title: Associate Professor Emeritus of Public Affairs and Administration
 Address: 3080 Potter - Eugene - 97405-344-0483 - Phone: orvaletter@uoregon.net E-mail:
 Signature: Orval Etter

2. **GEORGE BERES** UNIVERSITY RELATIONS MGR, SPEAKERS BUREAU
 Name: GEORGE BERES Department: Department Title: UNIVERSITY RELATIONS MGR, SPEAKERS BUREAU
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Figure 4 Campus Civil Liberties Circle space request with University of Oregon, 2004, OE Papers

⁴⁷ “Michael Williams and Sarita Leif to FOR members,” 2004, OE Papers Box 3, folder 3.

⁴⁸ “Mariah Leung email to Orval Etter,” 2003, OE Papers Box 3, folder 3.

Thus, the group registered its earliest on-campus meetings under the title Campus Civil Liberties Circle.⁴⁹ However, Pacifica Forum quickly returned to its original name.

Of the thirty-six on-campus Pacifica Forum sessions in 2004, fourteen discussed Jews, and all references to Jews and Jewish organizations were unfavorable.⁵⁰ The first session of 2004 focused on Rabbi Michael Lerner's *Healing Israel-Palestine*. Rabbi Lerner, members argued, was incapable of providing a "balanced" solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict because he was Jewish.⁵¹ Members did not display the same wariness of bias during their discussion of Palestinian sources.

Additionally, Pacifica Forum's April 30, 2004 session was particularly inflammatory as George Beres presented his theories on disproportionate Zionist control of the U.S. government. Two weeks later, Beres presented a list of conservatives that he felt threatened American democracy, almost half of whom had "Jewish-sounding names."⁵² Other sessions criticized Jewish criminal defense lawyer Alan Dershowitz, Jewish peace organization Tikkun Community, and many other Jews and Jewish organizations, creating a "hostile preoccupation" that Williams later argued "meets any reasonable definition of 'anti-Semitism.'"⁵³ Pacifica Forum exhibited "the total demonization of the 'Jewish other'" that historian Robert Wistrich argued is one of the core components of antisemitic anti-Zionism.⁵⁴

However, after years of being labeled antisemites by Williams and his followers, Pacifica Forum began to self-identify with the term. In May 2004 Etter first "presented the idea that anti-

⁴⁹ "Campus Civil Liberties Circle request to University of Oregon," 2004, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

⁵⁰ "Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?" 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

⁵¹ "Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?" 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

⁵² "Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?" 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

⁵³ "Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?" 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

⁵⁴ Wistrich, "Anti-Zionism and Anti-Semitism," 29.

Semitism now means disagreeing with Jews” and, therefore, to be called an antisemite was not pejorative.⁵⁵ The Jews, in Etter’s view, deemed their critics antisemitic to conceal their own culpability for society’s ills; thus, embracing the label of antisemite would rob Jews of their manipulative power. He repeated this view in subsequent sessions, encouraging his followers that antisemites were, in reality, defenders of free speech. Forum members began to argue that, if the University of Oregon truly lived up to its role of protecting free speech on campus, it would protect and even promote antisemitism.

“Zionism and Russia” and the Jews as Racial Others

As Pacifica Forum moved from the Erb Memorial Union to the University of Oregon’s Chiles Business Center in 2005, the group continued to experience some internal conflict. Long-time Pacifica attendee Brian Bogart expressed concern to his fellow members for the group’s disproportionate focus on Israel. “At this point,” he wrote in February 2005, “Israel’s government is far less threatening to the world than our own.” He also encouraged members to stop fighting with Michael Williams, reminding them that “the enemy is at the top, not around us, not among us.”⁵⁶

Bogart’s qualms are notable on two points. First, his belief that Pacifica Forum still had the potential to make peace with Michael Williams shows that the group was not yet completely on the margins of society. Unlike the Volksfront, the KKK, and other antisemitic groups in the Pacific Northwest, Forum members remained integrated enough into the Eugene community that

⁵⁵ “Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?” 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

⁵⁶ “Brian Bogart to PF members,” 2005, OE Papers Box 3, folder 3.

they had to coexist, if only at the most basic level, with their critics. Second, Bogart's complaints come somewhat surprisingly given his participation in previous antisemitic activity, including explicit Holocaust denial. Internal conflict in Pacifica Forum reminds the outside observer that group members were not static figures confined to archival boxes, but complex characters with various motivations and a capacity for change and inconsistency.

Meanwhile, Eugene community members continued to criticize Pacifica Forum's "hostile preoccupation" with the Jews. Local businessowner Susan Phillips repeated Bogart's concerns.

Topic	2003	2004	2006	03-06 total	2005	total
Jews, Jewish organizations	6	14	16	36	1	37
NonViolence and war resistance	2	4	4	10	7	17
war	2	3	1	5	6	11
war memorials	0	6	0	6	2	8
Israel	1	1	5	7	0	7
critics of anti-Semitism	(2)	(1)	(2)	(5)	0	(5)
Palestine	1	1	2	4	1	5
impeachment	0	0	2	2	3	5
Iraq War	0	1	0	1	0	1
Israel-Palestine	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Documented	14	35	42	91	21	102

Figure 5 Table by Michael Williams showing disproportionately low focus on Jews in 2005 Pacifica programming, 2006, OE Papers

"Please Orval," she wrote in a 2005 email, "lay off the Jews and begin to question the political system and corporate greed."⁵⁷ Pacifica Forum did "lay off the Jews" for a time. Perhaps due to contestations from Bogart,

Phillips, and others, only two of 2005's twenty-one Pacifica programs centered on Jews or Israel. Attendance quadrupled. Some returned to the Forum in hopes that its controversial days were over. However, antisemitic programming returned to Pacifica Forum in 2006 as the group transitioned to yet another on-campus venue.

Pacifica Forum began meeting in room 125 of McKenzie Hall in 2006.⁵⁸ The building had become home to the university's history department just seven years earlier, and the Forum took advantage of this, framing their conspiracy theories as revisionist historicism. Pacifica Forum had a history of mimicking academic language and practice prior to its presence in

⁵⁷ "Susan Phillips email to Orval Etter," 2005, OE Papers Box 3, folder 3.

⁵⁸ "McKenzie Hall space request," 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

McKenzie Hall; it presented Holocaust deniers as “historians,” referred to the Holocaust denial *Journal for Historical Review* as an academic journal, and performed academic-style reviews of books published by nonacademic presses.⁵⁹ As Pacifica Forum convened in the same building as bona fide historians in 2006, over half of their discussions criticized Jews and Jewish organizations.⁶⁰ Members continued to claim that Jews invented the Holocaust to protect themselves from scrutiny, utilizing their academic venue to legitimize their claims.⁶¹

It was additionally under the guise of academic historicism that Lithuanian expatriate Valdas Anelauskas led seven weeks of Pacifica Forum programming titled “Zionism and Russia.”⁶² Anelauskas had renounced his Soviet citizenship in 1988 after decades of anti-Soviet activism in Lithuania. After seeking asylum in the United States, Anelauskas worked for various anti-communist politicians and organizations until he became disillusioned with American conservatives “who sought to achieve, not human rights, but global power, by the Soviet demise.”⁶³ These experiences convinced Anelauskas that a Zionist cabal controlled the United States government, a revelation he chronicled in his 2002 book *Discovering America As It Is*.⁶⁴ Anelauskas then moved to Eugene and sought community within Pacifica Forum.

Despite his belief that Zionists sought “global power” through dismantling the USSR, Anelauskas also argued that communism had spread in Russia through a “Judeo-Bolshevik” conspiracy, a theory that Hitler repeated often. Thus, “Zionism and Russia” paradoxically argued

⁵⁹ “Institute for Historical Review pamphlet,” 2005, OE Papers Box 3, folder 2, “List of books discussed in Pacifica Forum, undated, OE Papers Box 3, folder 2, “Summary of Laird Wilcox’s *The Watchdogs*,” undated, OE Papers Box 3, folder 2, “List of Holocaust deniers labeled “Historians,” undated, OE Papers Box 4, folder 13.

⁶⁰ “Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?” 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

⁶¹ “66 Questions on or about the Holocaust,” 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 13, and “Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?” 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

⁶² “Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?” 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

⁶³ “Anelauskas bio,” 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 14.

⁶⁴ Valdas Anelauskas, *Discovering America As It Is* (Atlanta: Clarity Press, 2002).

that Zionists sought global control in America through dismantling the same communist system they had established in Russia. Anelauskas also repeatedly denied the Holocaust during his seven weeks addressing the Forum.⁶⁵

Anelauskas's rise to prominence in Pacifica Forum instigated another conflict within the



Figure 6 Kaunas, Lithuania-based newspaper describing Anelauskas's controversies in Oregon. The title roughly translates to: "American Jews angered by former Kaunian's lectures," 2006, OE Papers

group. While all group members in 2007 promoted — or were at least complacent with — antisemitic stereotypes and conspiracy theories, Anelauskas, Jimmy Marr, and a few others often added white nationalist attitudes to such discussions. While most Forum members denigrated Jews through conspiratorial anti-Zionism, Anelauskas, Marr, and their followers also denigrated Jews as racial others, sometimes to the chagrin of other members.

In June 2007, George Beres urged Marr to “quit using your time and mine on a fabricated issue of racism against Whites.”

Beres often vilified Jews as “global Zionists”

yet was offended by Marr's vilification of Jews as nonwhites, another example of Forum

members' dynamism and potential for inconsistency. Marr responded, “Whatever we Aryans

⁶⁵ “Lithuanian article on Anelauskas,” 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3 and “Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?”

have done to deserve this [criticism], I beg your forgiveness and ask that you consider respecting us as a racially distinct people. Just because we believe in our racial reality does not mean we wish to deprive or demean the races of others. There is only one group I know that is intent on doing that. They're doing it in Palestine.”⁶⁶

Marr's analysis is an interesting blend of ideologies that one associates with both the radical left and the radical right. Generally, far-left anti-Zionism thrusts whiteness upon Israeli Jews, constructing the State of Israel as an arm of global white supremacy. Marr integrates this argument with its seeming antithesis, neo-Nazi race theory, to suggest that Jews exert colonial supremacy *despite* their racial inferiority.⁶⁷ This ideological blend reminds us that antisemitism exists beyond the political binary and further illustrates the tension between Oregon's history of white supremacist movements and the relatively left-leaning environment of Eugene in the early 2000s.

Marr forwarded this conversation to other group members who commented that Beres was “blind up his ass about race” and “just another guilt-tripped liberal.”⁶⁸ This indicates that, excepting Beres and a few others, most Pacifica Forum members at this time either shared Marr's white supremacist attitudes or were complacent towards them. While the political ethos of the group had shifted significantly since its pacifist origins, the throughline of antisemitism remained the same.

⁶⁶ “Pacifica Forum email chain on white supremacy,” 2007, OE Papers Box 3, folder 3.

⁶⁷ For an excellent analysis on the relationship between whiteness and Jewishness, see: David Schraub, “White Jews: An Intersectional Approach,” *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 43, no. 2 (2019): 379-407.

⁶⁸ “Pacifica Forum email chain on white supremacy,” 2007, OE Papers Box 3, folder 3.

Speech Becomes Act: Menorah Vandalism in McKenzie Hall

Despite this influx of white supremacist rhetoric, Pacifica Forum sought to add interviews of various members of the Eugene Jewish community to their programming. After Oregon Hillel Executive Director Hal Applebaum declined the Forum's invitation, Etter turned to Rabbi Maurice Harris of Eugene's Temple Beth Israel.⁶⁹ The *Eugene Register-Guard* had recently published Harris's op-ed, "Mideast violence is misery for all," which criticized both Hamas and the Israel Defense Forces for human rights abuses.⁷⁰ While Harris's argument aligned in theory with Pacifica Forum's professed pacifist principles, the rabbi and other Eugene Jews noticed that Pacifica Forum enjoyed "putting the Jews on trial" and using Jewish guests to reinforce pre-existing anti-Jewish sentiment.⁷¹

Harris had attended a Pacifica Forum meeting the previous week that had confirmed his suspicions. During a discussion of the antisemitic text *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, Anelauskas and other Forum members discussed whether "the Jews are actively conspiring to dominate the world as part of an evil plan." Thus, "it's not just that I'm not interested in defending my people from such a horrible and bigoted charge," Harris wrote to Etter in July 2006, "it's that I feel that to participate in a 'discussion' in which the larger framework is essentially one of putting the Jews on trial is to disrespect myself and to reward a kind of abusive, confused, and misguided behavior that is humiliating to me and, frankly, debasing to the Pacifica Forum."⁷² Harris's response shows that the Jewish community first sought to protect

⁶⁹ "Irwin Noparstak email to Edwin Rugh," 2006, OE Papers Box 3, folder 6.

⁷⁰ Maurice Harris, "Mideast violence is misery for all," *Eugene Register Guard*, July 16, 2006, https://books.google.com/books?id=UV1WAAAIBAJ&pg=PA30&dq=maurice+harris+eugene+oregon&article_id=6410,3552967&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwinoOCi8_qKAXXHJzQIHV3oDIwQ6AF6BAGFEAI#v=onepage&q&f=false.

⁷¹ Maurice Harris to Orval Etter," 2006, OE Papers Box 3, folder 6.

⁷² "Maurice Harris to Orval Etter," 2006, OE Papers Box 3, folder 6.

itself by severing social ties with Pacifica Forum. By this point, Pacifica Forum had enough of a reputation for antisemitism within Eugene that local Jews avoided engaging in their discussions.

Etter drafted a response to Harris but asked Forum member Jack Dresser to proofread it before sending. Dresser warned Etter to write “Israeli” instead of “Jewish” when criticizing Israeli citizens and to “go beyond personal opinions and personal moral judgements and cite [Israel’s] continuous violations of international law.”⁷³ Etter ignored Dresser’s counsel, writing to Rabbi Harris, “If I seem to you to be anti-Jewish, let me at the risk of unnecessary repetition, insist that my negative assessment of one or more Jews is based on their conduct, not their Jewishness, and I do not intend to let the assessment be silenced by their Jewishness.”⁷⁴ This is just one example of several instances in which Etter claimed that his negative comments toward Jews were unrelated to their Jewishness, a claim that fell flat given Etter’s history of “hostile preoccupation” with Jews and Judaism.⁷⁵

After Applebaum’s and Harris’s refusals, Forum member Edwin Rugh emailed a prominent figure in the Eugene Jewish community, Dr. Irwin Noparstak, to ask whether he thought the Lane County Jewish Community Relations Council chairman, Craig Weinerman, might speak at the Forum. Likely aware of the futility of his request, Rugh complained, “‘We have to hear all sides,’ but sometimes the other side doesn’t want to talk to us.”⁷⁶ Noparstak, who was not a Forum member but was familiar with Etter and his followers through mutual engagement in the University of Oregon Chamber Music Series, responded, “Hasn’t it occurred to you that there is a good reason why people don’t want to attempt communications with

⁷³ “Dresser to Etter,” 2006, OE Papers Box 3, folder 3.

⁷⁴ “Etter to Harris,” 2006, OE Papers Box 3, folder 6.

⁷⁵ “Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?” 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

⁷⁶ “Edwin Rugh to Irwin Noparstak,” 2006, OE Papers Box 3, folder 6.

Pacifica Forum at this point?” He continued, “The idea that Pacifica Forum or a PF speaker takes a position and then we [Jews] have to come debate it or refute it is repugnant. When it comes to Jewish issues, Pacifica Forum seems fixed, deaf, one sided, and impossible.”⁷⁷ The irony that Pacifica Forum remained “fixed, deaf, one sided, and impossible” while simultaneously defending their beliefs though the concept of free and open debate was not lost on the Eugene Jewish community, and they soon sought allyship with Pacifica Forum’s former pacifist allies.

Although Pacifica Forum had faced criticism from Hillel, Temple Beth Israel, and FOR separately, leaders of these groups sought to combine their strength. Noparstak, Weinerman, Harris, Applebaum, and Williams joined with twenty-three other Eugene residents to form the Anti-Hate Task Force (AHTF) in fall 2006. The AHTF was officially sponsored by the Community Alliance of Lane County, a pacifist organization that was founded in Eugene in 1966 to oppose the Vietnam War. However, many other community groups participated in the AHTF’s creation, including the City of Eugene Human Rights Commission.⁷⁸

The AHTF reserved an advertisement in the *Eugene Register-Guard* denouncing Pacifica Forum and solicited Eugene community members to sign it before printing. The ad ran on December 11, 2006, reading:

We, the undersigned citizens of Lane County, protect and honor each other’s ways of being in the world. We stand together against the promotion of hate toward any community. We support any community that has been attacked or denigrated. We consider Pacifica Forum’s concerted focus on demonizing Jews dangerous to our community. We recognize that when any one minority is targeted, we are all vulnerable.

⁷⁷ “Irwin Noparstak to Edwin Rugh,” 2006, OE Papers Box 3, folder 6.

⁷⁸ “CALC letter to Eugene residents,” 2006, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

The ad received 197 signatures from local businessowners and various clergymen.⁷⁹ However, the Forum's critics remained mostly Jews and members of former pacifist ally organizations. The majority of the Eugene community, especially faculty and students at the University of Oregon, remained relatively neutral toward the Forum.

Pacifica Forum members gathered four days later to discuss the ad, assembling around a Hanukkah menorah dripping with fake blood and decorated with a banner reading "ISRAE HELL." The meeting occurred in McKenzie Hall and, not coincidentally, on the first day of Hanukkah.⁸⁰ Despite their reticence to visit the Forum, some members of the AHTF had decided to attend the meeting to defend their *Register-Guard* statement and thus also witnessed this scene. One of these attendees, local pastor Dan Bryant, later remarked, "I didn't recognize the bloody menorah when I first saw it. Simply didn't know what it was. It would never have occurred to me that someone would actually defile the religious symbol of another group and flaunt it so defiantly in a public setting."⁸¹ While the AHTF was aware enough of Pacifica Forum's history of antisemitism to publish an advertisement denouncing it, Bryant's surprise indicates that the AHTF saw the menorah vandalism as an escalation.

Some initially suspected that Anelauskas had vandalized the menorah as an extension of his "Zionism and Russia" series, but Jimmy Marr claimed the vandalism was his own "extraordinary rendition" of the Jewish symbol. "Hasn't the menorah traditionally been a symbol of genocide?" he wrote other Forum members two months later. Apparently relishing the offense

⁷⁹ Eugene Register-Guard, "We Stand Together Against Bigotry," December 11, 2006, https://books.google.com/books?id=rF5WAAAAIIBAJ&pg=PA5&dq=maurice+harris+eugene+oregon&article_id=3798,2817555&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewj8yKqi8_qKAXWpHzQIHehElh44ChDoAXoECAgQAg#v=onepage&q=maurice%20harris%20eugene%20oregon&f=false.

⁸⁰ "Are Pacifica Forum Programs Anti-Semitic?"

⁸¹ Dan Bryant to Mariah Leung," 2007, OE Papers Box 3, folder 6.

community members took from the scene, Marr was “delighted to have menaced this Goliath with only a candlestick.”⁸² Thus, the vandalism was not only another turning point by which Pacifica Forum further alienated itself from normative progressive society; Marr’s comments reveal his disinterest in remaining in that society in the first place. This shows a fundamental shift from the Forum’s origins. While Etter formed Pacifica Forum to blend in with other local pacifist groups, Marr and Anelauskas’s right-wing influence did away entirely with the desire to fit in.



Figure 7 Leung and Dresser protest in Eugene a few months after leaving Pacifica Forum, 2008, Al-Nakba Awareness Project website

“infiltration” of “white separatist” ideas and their social effects.⁸³ Along with another disillusioned longtime Forum member, Jack Dresser, Leung formed a splinter group called the Al-Nakba Awareness Project, which advocated for Palestinian statehood in a way that was more socially acceptable to the average Eugene resident.

Some Pacifica Forum members, however, still had some motivation to fit in. Mariah Leung, for example, had enjoyed Pacifica Forum for years as an outlet to spread her Holocaust denial beliefs but began to distance herself as Marr’s influence estranged the group from society. Leung frequently denigrated Jews as global puppeteers and fabricators of the Holocaust “myth,” but ultimately chose to leave the group due to the

⁸² “Marr to Forum members,” 2007, OE Papers Box 3, folder 5.

⁸³ C. J. Ciaramella, “Anarchy and outrage at the Pacifica Forum,” *Oregon Commentator*, November 30, 2007, https://oregoncommentator.com/pdf/vol25_issue05.pdf.

The menorah vandalism also showed that Pacifica Forum had crossed the threshold from words to action. While Orval Etter mocked the AHTF's "superstition" that the Forum's activities would escalate to "spilled Jewish blood" if left unchecked, the Eugene Jewish community feared that Pacifica Forum's escalation from hate speech to the vandalism of a religious object portended another escalation to physical violence.⁸⁴ Dan Bryant expressed this fear to George Beres, writing, "I know that PF has had a better history and has done some good things. I am sorry to say George, those days are gone."⁸⁵ What had begun as a community pacifist organization had become a genuine source of fear for neighboring Jews and their allies.

Eugene "Ponder[s] [the] Limits of Tolerance"

The rhetoric that Pacifica Forum spread while meeting in McKenzie Hall, the Chiles Business Center, and the Erb Memorial Union were at the top of University of Oregon President David Frohnmayer's mind as he prepared his keynote remarks for Eugene's annual interfaith breakfast. Various interfaith leaders had hosted the breakfast since 2001, including Pacifica Forum critic Dan Bryant, who used his position to urge other organizers to address the limits of free speech. The *Eugene Register-Guard* reflected this tension as it reported that 2007's breakfast would "ponder [the] limits of tolerance."⁸⁶

⁸⁴ "Problems of Definition," 2007, OE Papers Box 4, folder 3.

⁸⁵ "Bryant to Beres," 2007, OE Papers Box 3, folder 5.

⁸⁶ Jeff Wright, "Interfaith breakfast to ponder limits of tolerance," *Eugene Register-Guard*, August 20, 2007, https://books.google.com/books?id=tWBWAAAIAIAJ&pg=PA10&dq=university+of+oregon+interfaith+tolerance+breakfast+september+11,+2007&article_id=2403,4540595&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiGwr6-hZmLAXV2HjQIHVMRGgYQ6AF6BAGEEAM#v=onepage&q=university%20of%20oregon%20interfaith%20tolerance%20breakfast%20september%2011%2C%202007&f=false.

Two weeks before the event, Etter invited Frohnmayer to a series of Forum discussions “on the topic of the breakfast.”⁸⁷ Etter used these discussions to argue that the Eugene community had hitherto focused too much on *perceived* victims of intolerance — specifically

Pacifica Forum topic looks at tolerance, intolerance

Pacifica Forum will offer “Toleration/Intolerance: Workshop II” at 4 p.m. Friday at 121 McKenzie Hall on the University of Oregon campus. The discussion is in preparation for the Sept. 11 interfaith breakfast on the topic. Admission is free. For information, call 344-0483.

Figure 8 The Eugene Register-Guard advertises Pacifica Forum meetings in anticipation of the interfaith breakfast, 2007, Eugene Register-Guard archives

mentioning Jews — and had focused too little on *actual* victims of intolerance like the Forum. That many Eugene residents, especially Jews, “desire[d] no further communication with” Forum members was proof, Etter insisted, that the community was “intolerant” of the Forum’s views.⁸⁸ There is no evidence that Frohnmayer responded to Etter’s invitation, nor did he attend these meetings. This further underscores that, by this point, many in Eugene considered Pacifica Forum too fringe to engage

with.

Two weeks later, over 200 community members gathered in the Morse Event Center in Eugene on September 11, 2007 to eat breakfast and listen to Frohnmayer’s address, “The Limits and Depths of Toleration in a Free and Diverse Society.” Frohnmayer took a liberal stance on tolerance, instructing those offended by others’ beliefs to “get over it.”⁸⁹ This advice, however,

⁸⁷ “Etter to Frohnmayer,” 2007, OE Papers Box 3, folder 3.

⁸⁸ “Etter to Frohnmayer,” 2007, OE Papers Box 3, folder 3.

⁸⁹ Jeff Wright, “Third interfaith breakfast explores limits of tolerance,” *Eugene Register-Guard*, September 12, 2007,

https://books.google.com/books?id=JWFWAAAAIIBAJ&pg=PA19&dq=university+of+oregon+interfaith+tolerance+breakfast+september+11,+2007&article_id=1899,2927942&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiGwr6-hZmLAXV2HjQIHVMRGgYQ6AF6BAGGEAM#v=onepage&q=university%20of%20oregon%20interfaith%20tolerance%20breakfast%20september%2011%2C%202007&f=false

was directed toward a general audience and did not necessarily account for the nuances of an academic setting.

One such nuance was the university's branded reputation, and the University of Oregon's deputy general counsel did not reflect Frohnmayer's generous views on tolerance. Two months after the interfaith breakfast, Deputy General Counsel Randolph Geller sent the Forum "a demand that you eliminate any identification of the University of Oregon as an affiliate or friend of the Pacific[a] Forum... and that you cease all unauthorized use of the name 'University of Oregon' and the University's marks and logos."⁹⁰ The Forum continued to meet on campus, but the deputy general counsel's demand marked the beginning of several attempts by the university to distance itself from the group.

Additionally, Frohnmayer's remarks at the interfaith breakfast form an interesting reference point by which to examine the university's response to the controversies that will be described in the subsequent chapter. While Frohnmayer gave his speech, Etter planned famous Holocaust denier Mark Weber's visit to the University of Oregon, an occasion that would instigate fervent faculty, student, and community protest. Frohnmayer's "get over it" doctrine would lose its popularity in a matter of months.

⁹⁰ "Geller to Pacifica Forum," 2007, OE Papers Box 3, folder 3.

Chapter 3
“Nazis Get Off Our Campus:”
Holocaust Denial, Protest, and Resolution at the University of Oregon (2007-2010)

Pacifica Forum’s invitation to renowned Holocaust deniers Mark Weber and David Irving to speak on the University of Oregon campus as “specialists” and “historians” attracted the attention of the national anti-hate organizations Southern Poverty Law Center and Anti-Defamation League. Galvanized by national scrutiny and the creation of an anti-Pacifica Forum Facebook group, community protesters mobilized their most organized, populous front against the Forum, reflecting the power of burgeoning social media platforms and national hate watch groups. Neither the Associated Students of the University of Oregon (ASUO) nor the University of Oregon Faculty Senate had the numbers to pass a resolution urging the new Richard Lariviere administration to remove Pacifica Forum from campus entirely; however, national attention and widespread condemnation of Pacifica Forum’s ideologies culminated in the group’s relocation to an off-campus but university-owned downtown building. The ASUO, faculty senate, and Lariviere administration’s hesitation to call for the Forum’s complete removal from university property indicates that Pacifica Forum’s self-branding as champions of free speech was, at least in part, effective.

Additionally, Frohnmayer’s “get over it” doctrine and Lariviere’s continuation of it implicitly favored Pacifica Forum’s self-framing as free speech advocates over the complaints the Jewish community had lodged against the group since, at the latest, 2006. This, as discussed previously, was a form of epistemic antisemitism as the various University of Oregon administrations elevated Pacifica Forum’s ability to meet on campus over Eugene Jews’ accounts of their own experiences with Forum members, such as Rabbi Maurice Harris, Hal Applebaum, and Irwin Noparstak’s

warnings that Pacifica Forum enjoyed “putting the Jews on trial.”⁹¹ While the rise of student and faculty complaint against Pacifica Forum provided the necessary pressure for the university administration to take action, it was largely based on concern for student safety and the university environment, not on the wellbeing of Jews in the wider Eugene community.

“Frank Debate or Complicity with Racism”: Mark Weber on Campus

In June 2007, Etter, Marr, and Anelauskas invited Holocaust denier Mark Weber to speak on the University of Oregon’s campus. “We have been kicked out of one location after another because we do not shy away from objectivity when it comes to the Zionist Entity,” they wrote, “but we have a dedicated core who will spare nothing when it comes to fighting the thought police.”⁹² The invitation is illuminating on three points. First, it illustrates Marr and Anelauskas’s rise in power within Pacifica Forum, especially as Etter reached 92 years old in 2007 and was increasingly unable – and unwilling – to block Marr and Anelauskas’s initiatives. Second, the Forum continued to frame its antisemitism as martyrdom for free speech. Third, Etter, Marr, and Anelauskas introduced Pacifica Forum in this invitation as “a University of Oregon discussion group,” indicating that the group still expected some level of protection and legitimacy from the university.

Once Weber accepted this invitation, the ways in which Pacifica Forum advertised his visit show how Pacifica Forum employed antisemitic stereotypes under the guise of free speech. Flyers depicted American flags made of Stars of David and missiles instead of the classic stars and stripes,

⁹¹ Maurice Harris to Orval Etter,” 2006, OE Papers Box 3, folder 6.

⁹² “Etter, Marr, and Anelauskas to Weber,” 2007, OE Papers Box 3, folder 3.

an image historically used to symbolize Jewish control of the American government. The advertisements sought to juxtapose “Jewish-Zionist interests” with American ideals, positioning “Zionist power” as the nemesis of “free speech.” One flyer featured a snake coiled into a Star of David, another classical antisemitic image used centuries before the Forum. These symbols warned that “organized Jewry” — inseparable from “Zionist power” — was responsible for American political ills.⁹³ Additionally, Weber argued that Jews worldwide fabricated the Holocaust to gain sympathy for the Zionist project, a message that Pacifica Forum explicitly invited him to spread at the University of Oregon.

Redesign Old Glory???
To symbolize Uncle Sam's subservience to Israel???

Pacifica Forum has long been concerned about US-Israeli relationships. To help Eugene become better informed about them, PF is inviting to town a southern California specialist, MARK WEBER, because PF believes his view deserves to be heard here and because no other group in town appears be willing to offer him a platform.

Hear him at 7:00pm FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2, in 129 McKENZIE HALL, Uofo, near 11th & Kincaid. Free. The public invited. Further information at 344-0483.

**Pacifica Forum presents
FREE SPEECH vs ZIONIST POWER**

The Israel Lobby: How Powerful Is It?

Free lecture by America's most prominent revisionist historian
MARK WEBER
Director of the Institute for Historical Review

Friday, November 2, 7:00 p.m.
University of Oregon, McKenzie Hall, Room 129
Near 11th Ave. and Kincaid St.

The Israel Lobby: How Powerful Is It?
Mark Weber to Address Meeting in Eugene, Nov. 2

The Bush administration and Israel, together with the Jewish-Zionist lobby and a compliant Congress, are pressing for a new war in the Middle East – this one against Iran. In spite of their stunning record of lies, destruction and death, the neocons and Israel-firsters are preparing to launch yet another war – either by the US alone, or by Israel with US backing – that will serve only Jewish-Zionist interests.

A decisive factor in this campaign is the powerful Israel lobby, which also played a crucial role in pushing for the US invasion of Iraq. Awareness of the lobby's power and impact is now growing everywhere.

At a 'Pacifica Forum' meeting in Eugene (Oregon), Mark Weber will put all this in perspective in a talk entitled "The Israel Lobby: How Powerful Is It?"

Friday evening, November 2, 2007, at 7:00 p.m., at McKenzie Hall, Room 129, near East Eleventh Avenue and Kincaid Street, at the University of Oregon, in Eugene.

The meeting is open to the public, and admission is free.

This event is being organized by the Pacifica Forum, which is dedicated to providing information and perspective on the issues of war and peace, militarism and pacifism, violence and non-violence. Founded by Orval Litter, emeritus associate professor of public affairs and administration at the University of Oregon, the Pacifica Forum firmly supports freedom of speech.

Mark Weber – historian, author and director of the IHR – has written and lectured extensively on the pro-Israel lobby and Jewish-Zionist power. The US alliance with Israel, he says, is dangerously harmful to American interests, and to the interests of world peace. Unwavering US support for the Zionist state and its policies is due above all to the intimidating power of organized Jewry.

IHR INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL REVIEW
P.O. Box 2739 • Newport Beach, California 92659
Tel. 949 - 631-1490 • Fax. 949 - 631-0981 • ihr@ihr.org • www.ihr.org

Figure 9 Various advertisements for Weber's visit to UO, 2007, OE Papers and Oregon Commentator

Furthermore, while Weber is known internationally as the face of American Holocaust denial and as the editor-in-chief of the pseudoacademic Holocaust denial publication *Journal of*

⁹³ “Various ads for Weber’s visit to UO,” 2007, OE Papers Box 4, folder 14, and C.J. Ciaramella, “Pacifica Forum to host holocaust denier,” *Oregon Commentator*, November 30, 2007, <https://oregoncommentator.com/2007/10/15/pacifica-forum-to-host-holocaust-denier/>.

Historical Review, multiple Pacifica flyers referred to him only as a “specialist” and “historian.”⁹⁴ Weber received a master’s degree in history from Indiana University in 1977, but the academic community has since exiled him as an antisemite and falsifier of historical facts; that Pacifica Forum hosted a fraudulent historian in University of Oregon’s history building generated an irony that disturbed faculty and students alike.

One such faculty member, Dr. David Luebke, encouraged Eugene residents to see past Pacifica Forum’s “pretext” of free speech in a guest opinion published in the *Eugene Register-Guard*. “Perhaps you have a hunch that things more sinister than a commitment to ‘frank and open debate’ motivate the invited speaker and his local supporters,” the history professor wrote. “What should you do about it?”⁹⁵ Two other faculty members answered Luebke’s question by assisting him in planning an educational symposium on the Holocaust and a protest on the evening of Weber’s visit.⁹⁶

Several dozen community members joined Dr. Luebke, Dr. David Frank of the University of Oregon Honors College, and other professors in this protest. However, faculty opinion was not homogenous. While Luebke and Frank wished Pacifica Forum gone from campus altogether, history professor and Jewish community member Matthew Dennis told the

⁹⁴ “Flyers for Weber talk,” 2007, OE Papers Box 4, folder 14.

⁹⁵ David Luebke, “Frank debate or complicity with racism?” *Eugene Register-Guard*, October 17, 2007, https://books.google.com/books?id=sGFWAAAIBAJ&pg=PA5&dq=mark+weber+university+of+oregon&article_id=6600,3525236&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj8vsD11a-LAxWPEjQIHdpsNosQ6AF6BAGGEAM#v=onepage&q=luebke&f=false.

⁹⁶ Jeff Wright, “Foes target Pacifica Forum,” *Eugene Register-Guard*, October 31, 2007, https://books.google.com/books?id=vmFWAAAIBAJ&pg=PA18&dq=mark+weber+university+of+oregon&article_id=6404,6852908&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj8vsD11a-LAxWPEjQIHdpsNosQ6AF6BAGIEAM#v=onepage&q&f=false.

Register-Guard that, while he found Pacifica Forum’s message “dishonest” and “hateful,” the university must protect the group’s first amendment rights.⁹⁷

Weber’s speech in McKenzie Hall at the University of Oregon was just as incendiary as Luebke and Frank feared. Just minutes into his address, Weber observed, “Although Jews make up only about two or three percent of the US population, they wield immense power and influence — vastly more than any other ethnic or religious group.” This statement set the tone for a speech riddled with antisemitic stereotypes and references to “organized Jewry,” the “Jewish lobby,” and the “Jewish connection.”⁹⁸ Although Weber did not spend much time engaging in Holocaust denial — pausing only once to call the Holocaust a “stupefying distortion of history” — his address explicitly held Jews responsible for several American ills. As long as “the Jewish-Zionist grip on American political, social, and cultural life” remained, Weber argued, “there will be no end to the systematic Jewish-Zionist distortion of history and current affairs [and] the Jewish-Zionist corruption and domination of the US political system.”⁹⁹ As attendees filed out of the history building, some wondered whether the “free and open debate” they had defended was, in reality, the very “complicity with racism” that Dr. Luebke’s *Register-Guard* piece had warned them about two weeks prior.

Weber’s visit prompted University of Oregon President David Frohnmayer to explicitly disavow Pacifica Forum publicly for the first time. Seven months after discussing the limits of

⁹⁷ Alton Baker, et al., “A textbook example: a free exchange of ideas informs the community,” *Eugene Register-Guard*, November 2, 2007, https://books.google.com/books?id=6CdRAAAAIBAJ&pg=PA7&dq=mark+weber+university+of+oregon&article_id=5959,235051&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj8vsD11a-LAxWPEjQIHdpsNosQ6AF6BAgHEAM#v=onepage&q=mark%20weber%20university%20of%20oregon&f=false

⁹⁸ Mark Weber, “The Israel Lobby: How Powerful Is It?” *Institute for Historical Review*, November 3, 2007, https://ihr.org/other/0711_webereugene.

⁹⁹ Mark Weber, “The Israel Lobby: How Powerful Is It?” *Institute for Historical Review*, November 3, 2007, https://ihr.org/other/0711_webereugene.

tolerance at Eugene’s annual interfaith breakfast, five months after Weber’s visit, and at least two years after Jewish community members like Maurice Harris first sounded the alarm, Frohnmayer sent a message to the University of Oregon community seeking to distance the university from Pacifica Forum, describing the organization as “an outside group that holds its meetings from time to time on campus.” Frohnmayer repeated some concepts from his interfaith breakfast address, writing that free speech extends to even the most “repulsive” and “hateful” views. However, groups “that use university facilities from time to time do not speak for the University of Oregon,” he wrote. “Nor does the appearance of any invited speaker or the use of our facilities imply the institution’s endorsement, support, or even its moral indifference to the content of a message.”¹⁰⁰ Fully aware of Weber’s antisemitic statements in McKenzie Hall the previous November, Frohnmayer sought to explicitly disconnect this rhetoric from the university. Frohnmayer, nevertheless, never questioned the Forum’s right to meet on campus.

Pacifica Forum offered its rebuttal in Frohnmayer’s own language; Frohnmayer’s interfaith breakfast address had advised any attendees offended by differing viewpoints to “get over it,” thus Etter’s response to Frohnmayer’s disavowal of the Forum was titled “Doctor Heal Thyself: ‘Get Over It.’” Etter argued that Pacifica Forum members “have never sought personal injury or property damage through forum activity.” Therefore, “the public may properly ‘get over’ expressions of politically incorrect ideas at the forum.”¹⁰¹ Holding to his conviction that critics of Pacifica Forum were enemies of free speech, Etter began arrangements to host the

¹⁰⁰ “Full text of Frohnmayer’s letter,” *The Oregon Commentator*, April 21, 2008, <https://oregoncommentator.com/2008/04/21/full-text-of-frohnmayers-letter/>.

¹⁰¹ “Pacifica Forum responds to Frohnmayer,” *The Oregon Commentator*, April 28, 2008, <https://oregoncommentator.com/2008/04/28/pacifica-forum-responds-to-frohnmayer/>.

U.K.'s most prominent Holocaust Denier, David Irving, at the University of Oregon in just three months' time.

“Legendary British historian and martyr for free speech”:

David Irving on Campus

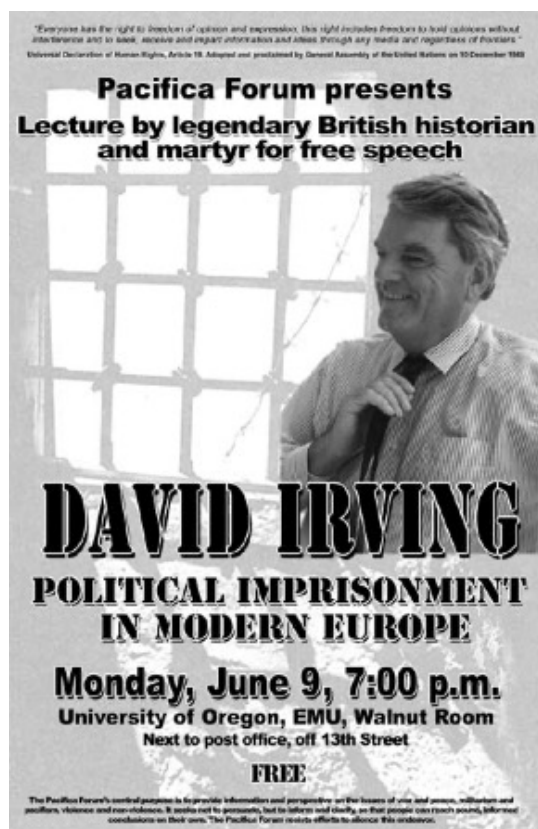


Figure 10 Advertisement for Irving's visit to UO, 2008, *The Oregonian*

Irving's visit to Pacifica Forum in June 2008 was not his first appearance in Oregon. He gave speeches in Portland in 1992 and 1994, the latter of which caused one local newspaper to reflect that the "[Neo-Nazi] reality doesn't always live up to the stereotype, judging from the middle-aged and conservatively dressed turnout" who attended Irving's October 10, 1994 speech.¹⁰² While the average Pacifica Forum member was older than middle-aged and did not dress noticeably conservatively (Jimmy Marr sometimes showed up in a Scottish kilt), Irving's visit to Eugene caused even more scandal than his previous Oregon appearances.

David Irving does not hold any history degree, but Pacifica Forum marketed him as a "legendary British historian" based on his authorship of several books that deny the Holocaust. In addition to his books, Irving gave several public addresses throughout the 1980s and 1990s

¹⁰² "Willamette Week article on Irving's 1994 speech in Portland," OE Papers Box 4, folder 13.

arguing that Hitler was the “biggest friend the Jews had in the Third Reich” and that “the gas chambers that are shown to the tourists in Auschwitz are fakes.”¹⁰³ Pacifica Forum also lauded Irving as a “martyr for free speech” due to his 2001 and 2005 convictions in British and Austrian courts of Holocaust denial. The latter led Irving to spend 13 months in an Austrian prison, an experience that he promised to recount in his Pacifica Forum lecture, “Political Imprisonment in Modern Europe.”¹⁰⁴

However, Irving’s speech at the University of Oregon focused less on his prison time and more on praising Hitler and arguing that, if a Holocaust had indeed occurred, the Jews had provoked it. “The Jews in the United States are now beginning to occupy the same positions or predominance in the lucrative, wealthy professions and so on that they occupied prior to Nazi Germany, which caused their tragedy,” Irving stated, arguing that another “tragedy” would befall American Jews if they did not leave positions of power.¹⁰⁵

While Michael Williams and other members of the Anti-Hate Task Force organized a small vigil in protest of Irving’s presence on campus, students and other community members generally quietly avoided Pacifica Forum instead of mobilizing large protest efforts.¹⁰⁶ However, after Irving’s speech brought national attention to the University of Oregon, this dynamic

¹⁰³ Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York: Free Press, 1993), 162 and Richard Evans, *Telling Lies About Hitler: The Holocaust, History and the David Irving Trial* (New York: Verso, 2002), 134.

¹⁰⁴ “Controversial Holocaust speaker at UO tonight,” *The Oregonian*, June 9, 2008, https://www.oregonlive.com/breakingnews/2008/06/controversial_holocaust_speake.html and “Oregon University Hosts Talk by Notorious Holocaust Denier, Amid Protest,” *Fox News*, June 9, 2008, <https://www.foxnews.com/story/oregon-university-hosts-talk-by-notorious-holocaust-denier-amid-protest>.

¹⁰⁵ “College Campuses See Rising Anti-Semitic Sentiment,” *Southern Poverty Law Center Intelligence Report*, August 29, 2008, <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/reports/college-campuses-see-rising-anti-semitic-sentiment/>.

¹⁰⁶ “Oregon University Hosts Talk by Notorious Holocaust Denier, Amid Protest,” *Fox News*, June 9, 2008, <https://www.foxnews.com/story/oregon-university-hosts-talk-by-notorious-holocaust-denier-amid-protest>.

changed. In the latter half of 2008 and throughout 2009 and 2010, students, faculty, and other Eugene residents organized the most cohesive opposition Pacifica Forum would experience.

Pacifica Forum Gains National Exposure

Irving's presentation at the University of Oregon transformed the Pacifica Forum controversy from a local to a national issue. The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) was the first national anti-hate group to mention Pacifica Forum, giving it considerable coverage in its August 2008 article, "College Campuses See Rising Anti-Semitic Sentiment." SPLC warned its readers that Pacifica Forum represented an extreme example of a trend in nationwide on-campus antisemitism: hiding behind free speech. Hillel executive director Hal Applebaum told SPLC, "[Pacifica Forum has] truly escalated. They hide behind issues of free speech and claim it's important to hear what these people say. They lend legitimacy to speakers who have been discredited and widely condemned by almost everybody who's taken a look at their stuff." Meanwhile, Etter responded to SPLC's request for comment that "if you rub a substantial number of Jews the wrong way, you're anti-Semitic. In that sense, I have to admit that the forum and I, in particular, are anti-Semitic."¹⁰⁷ Just two weeks later, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) reported that "Pacifica Forum Gives a Platform to Anti-Semites and Holocaust Deniers," repeating many of SPLC's concerns.¹⁰⁸

After its initial article, SPLC became increasingly concerned that Pacifica Forum appeared "to have forsaken its left-wing origins and made a giant leap to the extreme right," a

¹⁰⁷ "College Campuses See Rising Anti-Semitic Sentiment," *Southern Poverty Law Center Intelligence Report*, August 29, 2008, <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/reports/college-campuses-see-rising-anti-semitic-sentiment/>.

¹⁰⁸ "Pacifica Forum Gives a Platform to Anti-Semites and Holocaust Deniers," Anti-Defamation League, September 15, 2008.

fear that led SPLC to add the Forum to its annual list of American hate groups in March 2009.¹⁰⁹ SPLC divides its hate group list into eight categories: Ku Klux Klan, Neo-Nazi, White Nationalist, Racist Skinhead, Christian Identity, Neo-Confederate, Black Separatist, and General Hate. Pacifica Forum was the only Oregon group listed in the white nationalist category in 2009. While some argued that Pacifica Forum would fit more neatly into the Neo-Nazi category, SPLC's Director of Research and Special Projects explained that Marr's and Anelauskas's explicit endorsement of white supremacy ultimately pushed the Forum into the white nationalist group.¹¹⁰ This categorization reflects the ideological *mélange* that was present in Pacifica Forum as its hatred toward Jews did not fall into easily separable groupings.

Pacifica Forum's connection to its left-wing origins was further severed when Rose City Antifa, Portland's chapter of the far-left national organization Antifa, published a "Statement on Anti-Semites and their Collaborators" in the left-wing publication *Turning the Tide: Journal of Inter-communal Solidarity*. Although members of both groups had attended some of the same events in the past, Rose City Antifa sought to disavow Pacifica Forum and Anelauskas in particular, writing, "Rose City Antifa strongly opposes attempts to make excuses for anti-Semitism, or to pretend that it is any less poisonous than any other form of racism." It further warned other left-wing Oregon organizations to avoid the Forum.¹¹¹ It is interesting that Rose City Antifa's statement connected antisemitism to race. While early Pacifica Forum members framed antisemitic theories through a political lens (i.e., progressive anti-Zionism), Marr and Anelauskas's right-wing influence introduced racial antisemitism to the group. Rose City

¹⁰⁹ Baker, Mark, "Pacifica Forum lands on list of hate groups," Eugene Register-Guard, March 13, 2009.

¹¹⁰ "Pacifica Forum Gives a Platform to Anti-Semites and Holocaust Deniers," Anti-Defamation League, September 15, 2008.

¹¹¹ "Rose City Antifa: Statement on Anti-Semites and their Collaborators." *Turning the Tide* 22, no. 3 (Summer, 2009): 3. <https://uoregon.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/rose-city-antifa-statement-on-anti-semite-their/docview/230652766/se-2>.

Antifa's statement implied that racial antisemitism was its only form, whereas the case of Pacifica Forum illustrates that racial antisemitism is simply the more overt of many forms of hatred toward Jews.

Additionally, the growing controversy surrounding Pacifica Forum prompted Jewish author Joseph A. Lieberman to attend a Forum meeting and report his findings to the local newspaper *Eugene Weekly*. Lieberman had published a book the previous year covering the 1998 Thurston High School shooting, which occurred less than twelve miles from the University of Oregon. Rendered particularly sensitive to extremism by his research on the shooting, Lieberman sought to uproot other extremists in Eugene.

Lieberman's visit happened to coincide with Pacifica Forum's most antisemitic program since the menorah vandalism in winter 2006. According to Lieberman's *Eugene Weekly* account, Jimmy Marr began the meeting by reading a section of the Torah that described Jews as God's chosen people. "What does that make us?" Marr asked. "Slaves to the Jews!" At least six attendees then joined Marr in a Nazi salute, repeatedly shouting "Sieg Heil!"¹¹² The title of this meeting was "National Socialist Movement: An insider's view of America's radical right," and Lieberman had assumed that the "insider" would be a reformed neo-Nazi guest speaker; he quickly realized that the "insider" was Marr himself, along with the six who joined him in the Nazi salute. Marr spent the remainder of the meeting blaming Jews for a variety of societal ills, exhibiting a "mild exterior" that thinly veiled, in Lieberman's estimation, an anger toward the Jews that "seemed poised to explode." Witnessing this anger prompted Lieberman to ask his *Eugene Weekly* readers, "At what point, then, does 'free speech,' an American right, cross over

¹¹² Joseph A. Lieberman, "Free Speech vs. Hate Speech," *Eugene Weekly*, December 17, 2009, <https://archive.org/details/20091217EW/page/12/mode/2up>.

into ‘hate speech’ designed to incite violence?’”¹¹³ This was the fundamental tension felt by the Eugene community, especially in the final three years of Pacifica Forum’s presence on campus.

Lieberman additionally observed that this event drew no protests and that it was, as usual, held on the University of Oregon campus.¹¹⁴ The fact that Marr could lead such an event in a normal university classroom without student or faculty protest explains why he emboldened enough to lead Nazi salutes. He still expected academic free speech protection from the university and, aside from the years-long complaints of Michael Williams and the Jewish community, Marr saw little opposition.

Protests, Administrative Equivocation, and Tentative Resolutions

Students and faculty finally mobilized against Pacifica Forum at the beginning of winter term 2010. Links to the SPLC and ADL articles regarding Pacifica Forum, as well as footage from some of the Forum’s more overt displays of neo-Nazism, had spread through the Internet. Once Pacifica Forum’s hatred was blatant, recognizable, and sharable through social media, its events gathered increasing protest throughout 2010. This was, however, four years after the Jewish community united with former pacifist allies of Pacifica Forum to openly criticize the group in the local newspaper. The student and faculty protests of 2010 were less concerned with Pacifica Forum’s offense to Jewish students or the larger Eugene Jewish community and more concerned with campus safety.

¹¹³ Joseph A. Lieberman, “Free Speech vs. Hate Speech,” *Eugene Weekly*, December 17, 2009, <https://archive.org/details/20091217EW/page/12/mode/2up>.

¹¹⁴ Joseph A. Lieberman, “Free Speech vs. Hate Speech,” *Eugene Weekly*, December 17, 2009, <https://archive.org/details/20091217EW/page/12/mode/2up>.

Pacifica Forum rented out the Walnut Room of the Erb Memorial Union, the university's student center, on January 8, 2010 for a ninety-minute presentation titled "Everything You Wanted to Know About Pacifica Forum But Were Afraid to Ask," and over thirty undergraduates took this opportunity to attend the event with signs reading "Free Speech is not Hate Speech" and "Pacifica Forum Nazi Dupes."¹¹⁵ One student asked Orval Etter, "Have you not crossed the line?" When met with silence, Forum member Billy Rojas explained to the student that ninety-four-year-old Etter was "not in the right condition to reply," a reminder of Etter's increasing incapacity to lead the Forum and quell Marr's and Anelauskas's rising power.¹¹⁶

Another student, Katie Hulse, confronted Anelauskas about his previous comments on feminist Andrea Dworkin, whom Anelauskas had called "too ugly to rape." Anelauskas responded to Hulse, "Don't worry, you are not ugly."¹¹⁷ After Hulse ran out of the Walnut Room in tears, ASUO President Emma Kallaway approached Pacifica Forum. "I have just witnessed you insult a highly educated woman who is a valued member of our campus and believe that you being here in our student union is a safety issue," she said. "We don't want you here in this building. Get out of our safe student union."¹¹⁸ Kallaway certainly exhibited bravery and leadership, but it is important to note that her concern, like other students, was campus safety, not the Jewish community.

¹¹⁵ "Pacifica Forum draws campus protest," *Eugene Register-Guard*, January 8, 2010, <https://www.registerguard.com/story/news/2010/01/09/pacifica-forum-draws-campus-protest/11721727007/> and "Pacifica protest," *The Daily Emerald*, January 10, 2010, <https://dailyemerald.com/75761/news/pacifica-protest/>.

¹¹⁶ "Pacifica protest," *The Daily Emerald*.

¹¹⁷ "Pacifica protest," *The Daily Emerald*.

¹¹⁸ "Pacifica protest," *The Daily Emerald*.

Similarly, sophomore Devon Schlotterbeck told investigators from SPLC that “awareness ha[d] risen exponentially” since undergraduates started the “U of O students and community members against the Pacifica Forum” Facebook group, which attracted 1,200 members within its first week.¹¹⁹ “People’s reactions are mostly of shock and of disgust and also a lot fear that this group is on our campus,” Schlotterbeck said, emphasizing like Kallaway students’ concern for campus safety.¹²⁰ The rapid growth of the “U of O students and community members against the Pacifica Forum” Facebook group also highlights the influence of the Internet and student leaders, like Kallaway, to mobilize against Pacifica Forum.



Figure 11 Students protest Pacifica Forum, 2010, Flickr

¹¹⁹ “Movement to Boot Pacifica Forum off Oregon Campus Gains Steam,” *Southern Poverty Law Center HateWatch*, January 14, 2010, <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2010/01/14/movement-boot-pacifica-forum-oregoncampus-gains-steam>.

¹²⁰ “Movement to Boot Pacifica Forum off Oregon Campus Gains Steam,” *Southern Poverty Law Center HateWatch*.

At a time when social media sites were just becoming widely-used on college campuses, the anti-Pacifica Forum Facebook group was integral to student organizing. While only thirty students attended the original Walnut Room protest, a protest outside of Agate Hall the following week featured over one hundred students, many of whom had mobilized through the new Facebook group. Undergraduates held signs reading “Nazis Get Off Our Campus” and “Smash Fascism.” In response, Jimmy Marr and at least one other unidentified Pacifica Forum member performed Nazi salutes toward protesting students. Clearly, Marr and the other member were disinterested in remaining within the bounds of Eugene acceptable society. Pacifica Forum had transformed from a community organization that concealed its antisemitic animus with pacifist framing to a group totally external to Eugene societal norms. Orval Etter had encouraged his followers in 2004 to identify as antisemites and fighters for free speech; by 2010, Marr encouraged Pacifica Forum members to openly identify as neo-Nazis.



Figure 12 Jimmy Marr and unidentified Pacifica Forum member raise Nazi salutes at student protesters, 2010, Flickr

Not all University of Oregon students, however, opposed Pacifica Forum's presence on campus. One undergraduate wrote to the conservative journal *The Oregon Commentator*:

My friends and I went [to the Walnut Room protest], but what we found was not the free exchange of ideas but a circus, a shouting match that ultimately ended in nothing of intellectual value... What I saw today was a horrible re-enactment of what the Nazis themselves did; silence unpopular opinion, appeal to the basest part of human nature, and ultimately a crime against free speech. I hate the Nazis, both those of Germany and the ones I saw today at the Pacifica forum, both protester and speaker.¹²¹

Another student wrote:

At one point a protestor screamed 'FUCK FREE SPEECH!' and was met with a loud round of applause. I left the Forum meeting in tears. I am deeply ashamed of my fellow UO students for their inability to support free speech. I came to the University not only to get an education but also to expose myself to different people whose viewpoints do not mirror my own. What went on at the Pacifica Forum was mockery of the 1st Amendment and intolerance in its purest form. I do not support Nazis, Hitler or Communism but I do support debate and the opposing viewpoints that make healthy debate possible.¹²²

The *Oregon Commentator* contributors, however, were in the minority, and pressure from mounting student protest against Pacifica Forum led the university administration to move the Forum out of the Erb Memorial Union but not off campus entirely. While the administration assured students it heard their voice, Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Robin Holmes reminded undergraduates, "We want to make sure that we can protect the institution."¹²³ Additionally, the Division of Student Affairs, the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity, and Finance and Administration reminded faculty and staff that "use of space on campus to hold an event does not mean that the University endorses it."¹²⁴ The university hoped Pacifica Forum

¹²¹ "In Defense of Free Speech," *Oregon Commentator*, January 16, 2010, <https://oregoncommentator.com/2010/01/16/in-defense-of-free-speech/>.

¹²² "In Defense of Free Speech," *Oregon Commentator*.

¹²³ "Pacifica Forum Out of EMU," *Oregon Commentator*, January 21, 2010, <https://oregoncommentator.com/2010/01/21/pacifica-forum-out-of-emu-2/>.

¹²⁴ "Letter from the UO Administration," *Oregon Commentator*, January 21, 2010, <https://oregoncommentator.com/2010/01/21/6456/>.

would cause less commotion in Agate Hall, a less centrally-located building than the Erb Memorial Union, and simultaneously sought to avoid the turmoil that removing the group from campus completely would agitate. President Lariviere, like his predecessor President Frohnmayer, sought the path of least turbulence and disturbance.

This equivocal response came in the context of the general tension in the early 2000s between domestic political unrest and nationwide university administrations' desire for orderly campuses worthy of tuition-paying parents' approval.¹²⁵ Post-9/11 student protests caused hundreds of university presidents the same consternation Frohnmayer and Lariviere faced. Most responded in kind, too, finding solutions that attempted to sate student outrage while protecting the university's image.

Additionally, the University of Oregon was concerned about donor retention as the upkeep for the campus space Pacifica Forum met in was paid for through endowments and tuition. Continuing his years-long activism against Pacifica Forum, Michael Williams told SPLC, "The university is subsidizing the most prolific outlet for white nationalist, white supremacist, neo-Nazi public presentations between Seattle and Sacramento. It's not a question of censoring them or shutting them down; it's a question of venue. Should they really be meeting in an academic setting for free?"¹²⁶ The potential financial implications of Pacifica Forum's presence on campus, in addition to student and faculty mobilization, caused the Lariviere administration to

¹²⁵ See R. Kenton Bird and Elizabeth Barker Brandt, "Academic Freedom And 9/11: How The War On Terrorism Threatens Free Speech On Campus," *Communication Law and Policy* 7, no. 4, 431–459, Dennis Chong, "Free Speech and Multiculturalism In and Out of the Academy," *Political Psychology* 27, no. 1, 29-54, and Donald Downs, *Restoring Free Speech and Liberty on Campus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

¹²⁶ "Movement to Boot Pacifica Forum off Oregon Campus Gains Steam," *Southern Poverty Law Center HateWatch*.

wonder whether they might be forced to take more drastic action than simply moving the Forum to a less popular on-campus building.

Additional pressure mounted on the university administration after an unknown vandal spraypainted a swastika inside the university's LGBTQ Alliance office.¹²⁷ Although there is no evidence Pacifica Forum directly incited the vandalism, some Associated Students of the University of Oregon (ASUO) representatives wondered whether the Forum's presence emboldened others with similar views. Despite this, the ASUO Senate voted down a resolution asking Pacifica Forum to vacate campus entirely on January 27. They passed a revised resolution on February 10, which did not ask the Forum to leave campus outright but pledged "support to the students who have rallied against the group."¹²⁸ While the ASUO did not officially call for Pacifica Forum's complete removal from campus, its widespread discussion of Pacifica Forum generated the type of negative publicity that the university administration did not want, further pushing it to take more decisive action to avoid further reputational damage.

The University of Oregon Faculty Senate, too, discussed the best path for the university. On March 8, 2010, Dr. Margie Paris of the School of Law and Dr. Bob Bussel of the Labor and Education Research Center proposed a resolution that would "not suggest that the University ban the Pacifica Forum from campus [nor] deny it the freedom to express its views," but instead manifest "the Senate's condemnation of the some of the Forum's messages."¹²⁹ The resolution

¹²⁷ "Police investigate swastika vandalism at University of Oregon in Eugene," *The Oregonian*, February 1, 2010, https://www.oregonlive.com/education/2010/02/police_investigate_swastika_sp.html.

¹²⁸ "ASUO opposes Forum," *The Daily Emerald*, February 3, 2010, <https://dailyemerald.com/74215/news/asuo-opposes-forum/> and "The Other Side of the Pacifica Forum Coin," *Oregon Commentator*, February 11, 2010, <https://oregoncommentator.com/2010/02/11/the-other-side-of-the-coin/>.

¹²⁹ "Email March 8, 2010 from Margie Paris (Law) and Bob Bussel (Labor and Education Research Center) re resolution (US09/10-14) concerning Pacifica Forum," University of Oregon Faculty Senate Resolution Log, March 10, 2010, <https://pages.uoregon.edu/uosenate/dirsens090/ParisBussel-08Mar10.html>.

passed, and the faculty senate assured the public that it “denounces in the strongest possible terms the hateful speech that is frequently expressed at the Pacifica Forum and deplores the pseudo-debates that Pacifica Forum portrays as serious intellectual inquiry, and the University Senate will publicize this stand widely throughout the University community.”¹³⁰ Like the ASUO, the faculty senate did not publicly urge the Lariviere administration to remove Pacifica Forum from campus. However, its discussion of the issue added to a cacophony of debate, controversy, and scandal that administration feared would affect donors and prospective students.

The faculty senate’s statement was one public connection between Pacifica Forum and the University of Oregon too many for the university administration, and it moved Pacifica Forum from an on-campus building to an off-campus but university-owned venue that same week. Although the Lariviere administration cited space as the reason for the relocation, many Eugene community members suspected that the combined impact of both the ASUO’s and faculty senate’s statements against the Forum finally pushed the administration to remove the group from campus.¹³¹ Pacifica Forum would then meet in the University of Oregon Baker Continuing Education Center in downtown Eugene, less than two miles from its last on-campus location, Agate Hall. The Lariviere administration hoped that public speculation, debate, and criticism would no longer threaten the university’s noncontroversial reputation.

The faculty senate then introduced two policy changes that sought to protect the university’s reputation. While assigning Pacifica Forum’s meeting place was ultimately under

¹³⁰ “US09/10-14 - regarding the Pacifica Forum,” University of Oregon Faculty Senate Resolution Log, March 10, 2010, <https://pages.uoregon.edu/uosenate/dirsens090/US090-14.html>.

¹³¹ “UO moves meetings of Pacifica Forum, seen as a hate group, off campus,” *The Oregonian*, March 11, 2010, https://www.oregonlive.com/news/2010/03/uo_moves_meetings_of_pacifica.html.

the Office of the President’s purview, the faculty senate exercised its right to amend the University of Oregon’s facilities use policy to repeal the rule that had allowed Pacifica Forum to meet on campus in the first place. When Pacifica Forum first met on campus in 2004, it did so under the policy that any University of Oregon professor emeritus could reserve campus space for free. As of May 26, 2010, the amended policy charged community groups a fee to meet on campus and implemented an administrative review process. These changes were direct results of the Pacifica Forum controversy that aimed to discourage similar groups from creating similar dissention.¹³²

The faculty senate also introduced a “Motion to improve transparency of UO Policies” to further protect university space from hate groups, but the motion was quickly withdrawn. With Pacifica Forum off campus — albeit still on university-owned property — the group seemed less of a threat. Student protest dwindled as the Forum became out of sight and out of mind. As one writer at the conservative *Oregon Commentator* opined to the student body, “The Forum is a small, isolated group that isn’t growing a following and isn’t going to change its ways. Protesting the Forum is starting to seem like a lost cause, for a while at least, and there are thousands of other causes begging for awareness. Try directing your efforts to larger-scale projects that will reach a larger audience and engage more of the University community.”¹³³ Eventually, student attention moved to other causes.

Students’ concern regarding Pacifica Forum passed so ficklely because it was always centered on themselves, not on the Jewish community. Once the Forum was no longer present where students lived, ate, and studied, students did not seem aware that Pacifica Forum remained in the

¹³² “US09/10-19 - Motion to adopt Facilities Use Policy,” University of Oregon Faculty Senate Resolution Log, May 26, 2010, <https://pages.uoregon.edu/uosenate/dirsen090/US090-19.html>.

¹³³ “Pacifica,” *Oregon Commentator*, May 21, 2010, <https://oregoncommentator.com/2010/05/21/pacifica/>.

Eugene area and still threatened Jewish community safety. The 2010 student protests of Pacifica Forum very much focused on pushing the Forum out of the university environment; where they might push the Forum out *to* and who the Forum might harm after leaving campus was not a concern.

The university administration, similarly, acted out of a type of self-interest, placing concern for the university's reputation over concern for Jewish safety. Notably, the article in which David Schraub coined the term "epistemic antisemitism" observed that "epistemic antisemitism deftly discredits Jewish testimony and forces Jews to take a backseat in conversations that very much touch on fundamental aspects of Jewish life, experience, and identity." The Pacifica Forum controversy hinged on something only Jews can "know" and experience (antisemitism), yet the Eugene Jewish community was neither considered nor consulted by the Frohnmayer and Lariviere administrations. The Jewish community, as Schraub described, was forced "to take a backseat" to administrative concerns about the university's reputation.

Conclusion

The same week that the university relocated Pacifica Forum to the off-campus but university-owned Baker Center, one public online forum member questioned Pacifica Forum's vitality, commenting, "Isn't Orval Etter like, really really old?"¹³⁴ Etter turned ninety-five in 2010 and did not infuse the same energy into Pacifica Forum from his residence in a local retirement home as he had in the past. Remaining Forum members thrived on creating controversy on campus, and enthusiasm within the group dwindled as the Baker Center offered them less of a spotlight. Pacifica Forum was also increasingly splintered by the fanaticism of Marr and Anelauskas, who often preferred to pursue individual "activism" against the Jews anyway. Attendance dwindled, eventually into nothing. Pacifica Forum drifted into irrelevance.

Orval Etter died in 2013 at age ninety-seven. The *Eugene Register-Guard* published his obituary, which mentioned Pacifica Forum as an extension of Etter's lifelong commitment to pacifism. "Although in the end there was criticism regarding some controversial topics and speakers," it read, "Orval personally remained committed to the principle of free speech and to providing a peaceful forum for discussion of important issues."¹³⁵ Even in death, Etter's pacifism was used as a justification for Holocaust denial and antisemitic conspiracy theories. Freedom of speech does not include freedom from its consequences, however, and the organization that Etter had formed to carry his pacifist legacy disbanded amid almost complete community sanction.

Many individuals from the group remained in the Eugene area. Mariah Leung and Jack Dresser's Al Nakba Awareness Project organization continues to hold anti-Israel protests, some

¹³⁴ "Pacifica," *Oregon Commentator*, May 21, 2010, <https://oregoncommentator.com/2010/05/21/pacifica/>.

¹³⁵ *Eugene Register-Guard*, "Orval Etter Obituary," April 8, 2013, <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/registerguard/name/orval-etter-obituary?id=18294684>.

of which have been advertized by the national organizations Samidoun (which federal authorities identified as a “sham charity” that funnels money to the U.S.-designated terrorist organization Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) and Electronic Intifada (which frequently publishes support for U.S.-designated terrorist organizations Hamas and Hezbollah).¹³⁶ Jimmy Marr enjoys some local notoriety for driving a truck around the area with an attached billboard that features antisemitic slogans such as “Jew Lies Matter” (written next to a swastika) and “Holocaust is Hokum.”¹³⁷

While Marr remains on the margins of Eugene society, Dresser and Leung are not. Many celebrate the Eugene community’s commitment to pacifism — of which Dresser, Leung, and many other anti-Zionists are a part — but the case of Pacifica Forum serves as an important reminder that antisemitism can thrive, sometimes undetected, in such an environment. Pacifist use of classical antisemitic tropes is certainly less overt — and less popular in Eugene — than neo-Nazism; however, for the antisemite and the community that fails to recognize him, the politics of the left and the right lead to the same destination. Left-leaning circles who fail to recognize Jewish discomfort with antisemitic tropes may find they have more in common with their white nationalist foes than they would prefer to imagine.

Antisemitism as a throughline that united both ends of the political spectrum was a key element of this study. Chapters One and Three bookended Pacifica Forum’s ideological arc;

¹³⁶ *Samidoun*, “March 6, Eugene, OR: Emergency protest for Palestinian Political Prisoners,” February 28, 2013, <https://samidoun.net/2013/02/march-6-eugene-or-emergency-protest-for-palestinian-political-prisoners/>, *U.S. Department of the Treasury*, “United States and Canada Target Key International Fundraiser for Foreign Terrorist Organization PFLP,” October 15, 2024, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2646>, and Maarten Jan Hijmans and Fadi Hirzalla, “Who condemns the victimizer?” *Electronic Intifada*, July 25, 2006, <https://electronicintifada.net/content/who-condemns-victimizer/6202>.

¹³⁷ *Anti-Defamation League*, “Oregon Neo-Nazi Takes Anti-Semitic Message to the Highways,” September 7, 2016, <https://www.adl.org/resources/article/oregon-neo-nazi-takes-anti-semitic-message-highways>.

Chapter One evidenced Pacifica Forum’s political antisemitism as they denied the Holocaust from an anti-Zionist perspective whereas Chapter Three showed the Forum’s transformation to more overt racial antisemitism. Pacifica Forum promoted Holocaust denial through both of these extremes as well as throughout the complicated ideological “in-between” it spent most of its time in. My study joined a multitude of contemporary Jewish studies scholarship to suggest that one must understand antisemitism as transcendent of political and social binaries as it draws on implicit, widespread biases in “Western tradition.”¹³⁸

Chapters Two and Three illustrated the necessity of adding historical analyses of academic free speech to existing Holocaust denial historiography. Previous historical work has kept the issues of Holocaust denial and campus speech separate, but this thesis required an analysis of the ways in which Holocaust deniers take advantage of the university’s social obligation to protect unpopular ideas, prompting a synthesis of these two previously separate historiographies. Understanding the historical context of campus free speech in the United States was also necessary to illustrate how the societal expectation on universities to protect fringe ideas was a key motivator behind the University of Oregon’s epistemic antisemitism.

The university implicitly dismissed Jewish claims — and, thus, epistemic expertise — on antisemitism when it allowed Pacifica Forum to use campus space for four years after Jews first publicly complained about the Forum. When the university did relocate the Forum, it did so out of concern for its reputation, not for the local Jewish community. I began this study by describing it as a story about authority; while student protesters also engaged in some epistemic antisemitism as their protests focused on campus safety, not community safety, the university’s

¹³⁸ Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition*

potential for criticism is inherently tied to its authority. Student protesters had some authority to motivate the university administration to remove the Forum from campus, but, ultimately, the administration alone is responsible for this removal's delay. Thus, my charge of epistemic antisemitism focuses on the administration.

The scholars I read while working on this study proposed various solutions to antisemitism's prevalence across the political spectrum; each one urged humility. In conclusion, I would like to add my voice to theirs. Epistemic antisemitism may only be eradicated once our society's average individual doubts himself as much as he doubts his ideological "other." This of course requires non-Jews to doubt that they are as knowledgeable about the Jewish experience as the Jews themselves, but it also has wider implications. Mara Lee Grayson keenly observed that the political left, in general, is swifter to recognize antisemitism on the right than within itself, and vice versa; a focus on policing one's own prejudices over others' would likely ease other social issues in addition to rising antisemitism.¹³⁹ I concur with David Schraub's assessment that the social health of our society hinges on "a fundamental humility, a lack of confidence that our immediate, pre-deliberative intuitions about a claim of oppression (whether antisemitism, misogyny, or something else) are so obviously conclusive that we need not look into the matter further."¹⁴⁰ I invite individuals and organizations in Eugene, Oregon, and nationwide to adopt this "fundamental humility" lest our communities suffer the same strife Pacifica Forum, and other peddlers of hatred, will cause.

Additionally, and interrelatedly, I would like to propose one more solution. Most scholars of Holocaust denial advocate for increased Holocaust education and, while this is certainly

¹³⁹ Grayson, "Beyond Racial, Political, and Religious Binaries," 368.

¹⁴⁰ Schraub, "The Epistemic Dimension of Antisemitism," 157.

essential, I suggest that it is less effective in communities that do not purposefully and open-mindedly engage with their Jewish neighbors. In short, Pacifica Forum did not deny the Holocaust because they were unfamiliar with its facts; they did so due to a fundamental mistrust of Jews. Additionally, the university did not prioritize its reputation over condemning Pacifica Forum's Holocaust denial because it was uneducated on Holocaust history. It did so because it did not incorporate its Jewish neighbors into its discussions. Dara Horn's 2021 book *People Love Dead Jews* argued geniously — and prophetically — that communities which know the facts of the Holocaust more intimately than their own Jewish neighbors will never completely understand or trust the Jewish experience.¹⁴¹ It was trust in the Jewish experience, or, as Schraub would say, a faithfulness to their epistemic authority, that was the missing variable throughout the Pacifica Forum controversy. Four years after the publication of *People Love Dead Jews*, the current political and social climate in the United States necessitates a familiarity and respect for one's Jewish neighbors now more than ever. It is my sincere hope that Eugene, Oregon, and our nation will engage with our Jewish neighbors, not two-dimensionally according to their potential for victimhood, but as a multifaceted community which deserves our consideration, friendship, and respect.

¹⁴¹ Dara Horn, *People Love Dead Jews* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2021).

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DEDICATION

In December 2024 I presented a version of this thesis at the Association for Jewish Studies annual conference in a panel titled “Memory and Denial.” The research of my fellow panelist, Rocco Giansante of Yad Vashem, relied on the motif of “the gaze of the victim” throughout Holocaust photography and videography. In many photographs and videos, Holocaust victims seem to look *through* the camera — not at it — to communicate with the viewer. “The gaze of the victim,” to some, is a communication over space and time which urges the viewer to *see* the victim, to recognize his suffering.

I often feel “the gaze of the victim” in my research. It urges me to protect Holocaust memory from those, like Pacifica Forum and so many others, who would pervert it for their own purposes. Even from photographs and video, victims demand that we see their suffering and protect it. This thesis is dedicated to them.



Examples of “the gaze of the victim” in Holocaust photography. Left and bottom right via Eisenhower Presidential Library. Top right via City of Munich archives.