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OPINION

# Truth is not selective: Poland vs Netflix

by Ben Cohen - JNS.org

**Poland's government won an important victory on the battleground of history last week. It succeeded in persuading the entertainment-streaming service Netflix to amend a newly released World War II-based documentary that implied, through one of its maps, that the six extermination centres built by the Nazis on Polish soil were located in an independent, sovereign country, rather than one under German occupation.**

The offending map was included in "The Devil Next Door," the widely praised documentary produced by the Netflix studios about Nazi war criminal John Demjanjuk. The former U.S. citizen was eventually convicted of assisting in the murder of 28,000 Jews at Sobibor—one of the six death factories constructed by Nazi Germany during its occupation of Poland, alongside Auschwitz, Chelmno, Treblinka, Belzec and Majdanek.

The problem with the map as rendered by Netflix was that it showed Poland as a unified country with sovereign borders—an absolute travesty of that country's actual situation during World War II. As a furious chorus of Polish complaints led by Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki correctly pointed out, Poland was eliminated as a sovereign country through its partition at the hands of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. When the Germans invaded Poland, they did not install a puppet government, as was the norm elsewhere, but split the country into districts under direct German rule.

In a letter to Netflix CEO Reed Hastings, Morawiecki argued that viewers would be "deceived into believing that Poland was responsible for establishing and maintaining these camps, and for committing the crimes therein."

He went on: "As my country did not even exist at that time as an independent state, and millions of Poles were murdered at these sites, this element of 'The Devil Next Door' is nothing short of rewriting history."

Within a few days of receiving Morawiecki's letter, Netflix conceded its error and promised to fix it. A revised map would "make it clearer that the extermination and concentration camps in Poland were built and operated by the German Nazi regime who invaded the country and occupied it from 1939-1945," a statement from the company explained.

Poland's leaders responded warmly. Writing on his own Facebook page, Morawiecki remarked that mistakes "are not always made of bad will, so it is worth talking constructively about correcting them." Similarly, on Twitter, the Polish foreign ministry recorded its "appreciation" of Netflix's attention to "difficult and important topics." To anyone who isn't tuned into the finer details of the Polish World War II debate—and that is most people—the spat with Netflix would seem to have been resolved by a welcome combination of sober historical research, mutual respect and an accent upon factual accuracy as the one element of the historical narrative that really matters.

Matters such as these, however, are rarely so simple. In Poland's case, a legitimate complaint such as the one against Netflix also serves as a gateway for the very "rewriting of history" that so alarms Morawiecki, in terms of other critical aspects of the Nazi occupation.

For more than a decade, successive nationalist governments in Poland have made it a priority to assault some of the myths and careless →

→ formulations that have arisen around the Holocaust in Poland. For example, most Poles detest—and rightly so—the lazy description of Auschwitz as a “Polish concentration camp,” when it is more properly understood as a Nazi extermination camp built on occupied Polish soil by the invading Germans.

**When it comes to debating Holocaust collaboration, Poland will not settle for anything less than complete exoneration for its nation—a goal that doesn’t comport with the historical record**

There are other vague, generally accepted notions about World War II that infuriate the Poles as well. On the thorny issue of collaboration with the Germans, two main points are made. Firstly, because Poland was under direct German occupation, historians cannot talk about “collaboration” in Poland as they would do with Croatia, France, Hungary and other European nations where puppet rulers were installed by the Nazis. Secondly, the risks of resisting the Nazis were far greater in Poland, where hiding or otherwise aiding a Jew would result in a sentence of death; the same offence against the Reich in France, by contrast, carried a much lighter sentence.

In Jewish circles, Polish anger over these issues has invariably received a sympathetic hearing. For example, Yad Vashem, Israel’s national Holocaust memorial, frowns upon the use of the phrase “Polish concentration camp,” as do the leading Jewish advocacy organizations—the American Jewish Committee, the World Jewish Congress and the Anti-Defamation League among them—that have built close relationships with Polish institutions since the end of the Cold War.

But accompanying these legitimate complaints is an aggressive tendency to police the research and discussion of the Holocaust so that any probing of Polish collaboration is denounced as historical revisionism.

Through its Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) Law passed in 2017, to speak of Polish collaboration with the Nazis—the “Blue Police” units established by the Germans, the Szmalcownik bandits who preyed on Jews in hiding—is now a criminal offence. Increasingly, Polish historians emphasize that the 3 million Jews from Poland who were murdered by the

Nazis were “Polish citizens,” which conveniently overlooks the widespread discrimination and violence directed at the Jews of pre-war Poland by thousands of their fellow Poles.

In tandem with these developments, Polish relations with Israel have nose-dived. In the furore over the passage of the IPN Act, several leading Holocaust historians accused Poland of callously whitewashing its reputation to suit its present nationalist agenda; the dispute even became a domestic issue, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was taken to task for allegedly prioritizing his desire for close trade and defence links with Poland over the truth of the Holocaust. Ironically, when, last February, Netanyahu did briefly mention the facts of Polish collaboration with the Nazis, the government in Warsaw promptly responded by cancelling a summit of Eastern European nations that was being hosted by Israel.

When it comes to debating the issue of Holocaust collaboration, Poland will not settle for anything less than complete exoneration for its nation—a goal that doesn’t comport with the historical record. Just as it is true that there were no Polish units in the SS—unlike the Lithuanian, Ukrainian and other national units—it is also true that several thousand of the 3 million Polish Jews murdered by the Nazis were delivered to their executioners by non-Jewish Poles. Truth is not selective.

***Ben Cohen is a New York City-based journalist and author who writes a weekly column on Jewish and international affairs for JNS.***





# SHANA TOVA

## JNF Blue Box Campaign

This year, the JNF Rosh Hashanah Blue Box Campaign is continuing to support the Gaza border community of Kfar Aza.

Although the threats are ever present, the families of Kfar Aza recognise the special kind of shared life which is cultivated there. That is why many young families continue to choose Kfar Aza as a place to make their home.

This Rosh Hashanah, help support the **growth** of Kfar Aza.

Funds raised will further contribute to the development of new playgrounds and neighbourhood greening to improve the overall quality of life for the residents of this courageous and vibrant community.

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# Shopping on the Internet? Beware of your smartphone

by J-Wire Newsdesk

**With the shopping season about to start, consumers may make better shopping decisions using their desktop/laptop computer rather than smartphones or other mobile devices, according to new research from the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.**

"The issue is not actually screen size," says Prof. Lior Fink, head of the Mobile Behavior Lab and a member of the Department of Industrial Engineering and Management at BGU. "It is actually the fact that sites adjusted for mobile viewing reduce the information offered on the results page and require more digging around in the site for information. Sites adjusted for PC viewing give more information right up front."

This is the first study that differentiates between screen size and information reduction, which are often mixed up. The findings will be presented next month at the International Conference on Information Systems, the top academic conference in the field.

In 2018, phones accounted for 47% of traffic to online stores and 36 per cent of sales according to Adobe Analytics. Last Black Friday was the first during which there was more than \$2 billion in online U.S. sales via phones.

"Most e-commerce providers use 'responsive web design' to adapt the presentation of information to the device used," Fink explains. "While mobile-friendly presentation improves visibility, it reduces the amount of information and causes consumers to make decisions that are less consistent with their preferences."

From a pure decision-making perspective, the study shows it is better to simply present the same information irrespective of the device used. Consumers will find the information more difficult to view on mobile devices, but their decisions will be more accurate.

Prof. Fink and his master's student Daniele Papismedov conducted two experiments in the Mobile Behaviour Lab focused on choosing a fictitious hotel room among 11 room options. Participants viewed the information either on a desktop or on a mobile device. They viewed eight informational features about each room option on the PC display and only three on a mobile display. While all the information was available in both displays, it was more readily available on the PC display. The assignments to a specific device and to a specific display were independent of each other.

The experiments showed that when the same information was presented on both screens right upfront, equally accurate decisions were made. As a result, the research showed that participants made decisions that were less accurate and less aligned with their preferences as a consequence of the mobile display but not as a consequence of the mobile device.

Whether it is selecting a hotel room, a new outfit or a new TV, the researchers believe that shoppers will have a more accurate shopping experience in line with their preferences using a PC rather than a mobile-friendly format.

**The research was supported by a grant from the Israel Science Foundation. — J-WIRE**



# Church of England report says centuries of Christian antisemitism led to Holocaust

by JNS.org

**Christian theology played a part in the stereotyping and persecution of Jewish people that ultimately led to the Holocaust, according to a new report released by the Church of England.**

Titled “God’s Unfailing Word: Theological and Practical Perspectives on Christian-Jewish Relations,” the 121-page report said attitudes towards Judaism over centuries had provided a “fertile seed-bed for murderous antisemitism,” and that Anglicans and other Christians must repent for the “sins of the past,” as well as actively challenge anti-Semitic attitudes or stereotypes.

“The attribution of collective guilt to the Jewish people for the death of Christ and the consequent interpretation of their suffering as collective punishment sent by God is one very clear example of that,” the report said. “Within living memory, such ideas contributed to fostering the passive acquiescence if not positive support of many Christians in actions that led to the Holocaust.

“Christians have been guilty of promoting and fostering negative stereotypes of Jewish people that have contributed to grave suffering and injustice. They, therefore, have a duty to be alert to the continuation of such stereotyping and to resist it.”

The report also called on Christians to be “sensitive to Jewish fears” and encouraged followers of the Church to rediscover the relationship of “unique significance” between the two faiths. The bond should be viewed as a “gift of God to the Church” to be received with care, respect and gratitude, it said.

To read and see the full report from the Church of England click [here](#).

***The report’s section on Israel defends the Jewish people’s right to self-determination and classifies some of the approaches and language used by pro-Palestinian advocates as “indeed reminiscent of what could be called traditional antisemitism.” – JNS.org***

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PRESS RELEASE

**DISCOVER  
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## Sinai College, a leading School in Queensland focused on delivering quality International Primary Curriculum to students, is proud to announce the launch of its newly redesigned website at [sinaicollege.qld.edu.au](http://sinaicollege.qld.edu.au)

The new site features a streamlined, modern design, improved functionality, and easy access to essential information to help prospective students and parents make well-informed decisions about their school choices.

The new comprehensive website brings Sinai College onto the web or mobile setting for everyone to view and access information. Our school has progressed over the last 29 years and has adapted to the enquiring minds of the children we teach, to the dynamic history of the college and this encompasses our values and ethics.

“We are thrilled to debut our new school website to our staff, students, parents and prospective parents” said Tom Percasky, Principal “This website redesign truly ties together everything we do in the classroom and showcases what we have to offer.”

Sinai Colleges new website will be updated on a regular basis with news and events. Visitors are encouraged to explore the website at [sinaicollege.qld.edu.au](http://sinaicollege.qld.edu.au) and leave feedback on Google.

### **About Sinai College**

Sinai College is proud of its size. We currently have an enrolment of approximately 40 students. The small school focus enables students to enjoy close personal contact with the teachers and fellow students. We have the advantage of a family atmosphere with small class sizes in all classes. This enables staff to give to each child the attention required in the implementation of our curriculum.

- Small Class Sizes: Personalised, tailored and cosy!
- Inquiry-Based Curriculum: We use the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) as a basis to teach the Australian curriculum
- A Jewish Education: grounding in Jewish cultural history and traditions and the Hebrew Language
- Individualised learning: A tailored program from Prep through to Year 6
- Tolerance: A zero-bullying and zero-prejudice campus
- Languages: Hebrew language is taught as a language other than English from Year 1
- Community: Our students become contributing members of our Jewish and local communities
- Care: Before, After-school care and vacation care are available at Greenheart Montessori (co-located on the campus)
- Location: Just 15 km from Brisbane's CBD

Sinai College provides Prep to Year 6 students with a superior education that is broad, individualised, and accepting within a nurturing environment following a Jewish ethos.

Call us on 07 3349 9088 or email us at [admin@sinaicollege.qld.edu.au](mailto:admin@sinaicollege.qld.edu.au)

# 'Very disturbing': People dressed in Nazi uniforms confront shoppers at supermarket

November 24, 2019 | By Michael Koziol | THE AGE

**Shoppers at a Victorian supermarket were stunned when four people dressed in Nazi uniforms entered the store - an incident that highlights the increasing use of Nazi symbols in Australia, according to Jewish community leaders.**

Ambassador Chris Cannan told the audience witnessing the unveiling at the historic Semakh Station in the grounds of the Kinneret College.

Mr MacKenzie said he believed the group was heading to a party and the people involved did not necessarily identify as right-wing extremists or white supremacists.

"Once in the supermarket, I said to them that they were being highly disrespectful and had no idea what their uniforms meant," he said. "The blokes told me that it was 'only a joke' and to f--- off. I persisted, saying that there could be people here who went through World War II and the Holocaust. They laughed it off and told me to f--- off again."

Mr MacKenzie said other shoppers, many of whom were elderly, were visibly intimidated by the display.

The incident can be revealed ahead of a report due to be released on Monday detailing anti-Semitic incidents in Australia over the past 12 months, compiled by the Executive Council of Australian Jewry.

Jewish groups have warned the use of Nazi symbolism was on the rise, and last year's report chronicled a substantial increase in anti-Semitic harassment, vandalism and threats by phone, email and posters.

Last month, eight swastikas were painted on the Nylex building in Melbourne's south-east, alongside other white supremacist graffiti. During the federal election Treasurer Josh Frydenberg's campaign posters were defiled with Nazi symbols.

Jennifer Huppert, president of the Jewish Community Council of Victoria, said there was a "lack of understanding" about the impact of Nazi memorabilia, costumes and symbols, and a growing "disconnect" with the Holocaust.

The incident at the supermarket in Woodend would have

been "very disturbing and distressing" for anyone with a connection to the Holocaust as "it brings back memories, it brings back trauma", Ms Huppert said.

"It's not a matter just for the Jewish community, Australians fought in that war for freedom against Nazis.

"Perhaps a visit to the Auschwitz extermination camp or the crematorium at Theresienstadt would jolt them back into reality."

Peter Wertheim, co-chief executive of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry

"These people probably don't even know their own grandparents fought in a war against the people in those uniforms."

The Woodend incident came about the same time as a group of four men were reportedly ejected from Oktoberfest celebrations in the Yarra Valley for dressing up as Nazi soldiers.

Peter Wertheim, co-chief executive of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, said it was "truly bizarre that some people are so ignorant of history".

"Perhaps a visit to the Auschwitz extermination camp or the crematorium at Theresienstadt would jolt them back into reality," he said.

On Thursday night, Prime Minister Scott Morrison accepted the Jerusalem Prize from the Zionist Federation of Australia, the Zionist Council of NSW and the World Zionist Organisation - an honour previously bestowed upon Bob Hawke, John Howard and Julia Gillard.

In his speech, Mr Morrison said "absolutely shameful" acts of anti-Semitism had "no place" in Australia, but they were still occurring and could not be ignored.

**"We can't pretend it isn't happening here - it is," he said. "It's like the country just wants to eject it out of its system, yet it persists. That's why we must remain so vigilant about these things - we can't be casual about these things. We can't overlook it or just pretend." - The Age.**



## Reaching out to support members of the Jewish community in Queensland.



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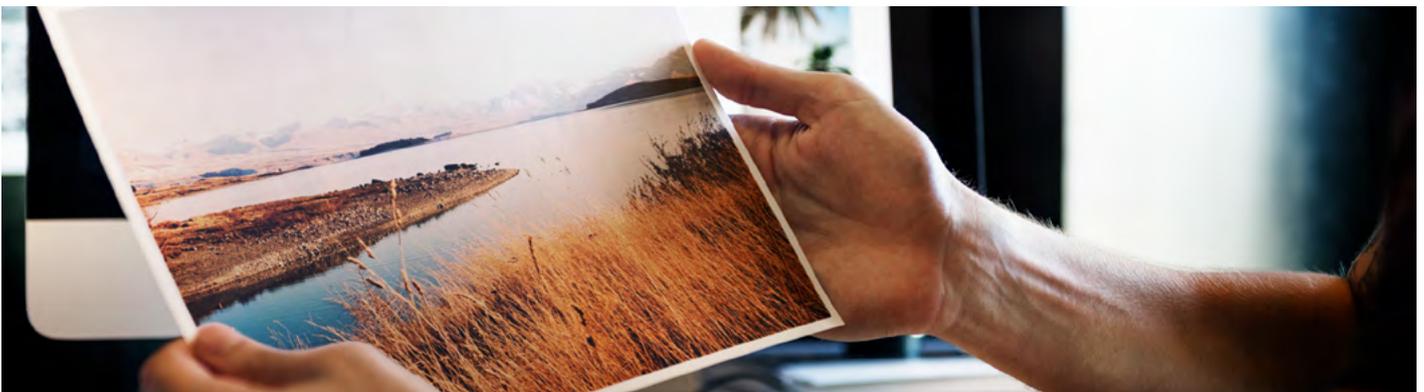
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# Socially Yours

NEWS FROM THE COMMUNITY,

- ✍ The Jewish National Fund of QLD (JNF) wishes to express its sincere condolences to the family of **MIRIAM OCHERT** who passed away recently in Melbourne. So well respected, loved and remembered for her contribution to the Brisbane Jewish Community, Miriam had moved to Melbourne some years ago with husband **MORRIS** to be closer to family. JNF wishes her children **NONI** and **DAVID** and their families Long Life and may Miram's memory be a blessing and a comfort.
- ✍ JNF QLD wishes to congratulate **FRANK GOLDSTEIN** who was inducted into the Gold Coast business awards Hall of Fame in late November. Everyone connected with Goldsteins Bakery is extremely proud of this achievement as Frank's passion for Goldsteins and the Gold Coast has been immense throughout his life as is also reflected by his involvement with many local Gold Coast communal organisations. This award is a recognition for hard work and dedication and is well deserved.
- ✍ Well known and respected former Brisbanites **LILI** and **ALFRED GANS**, who are now living in Melbourne, wish to let everyone know that they have recently moved and that their new address is The Benson-Toorak 585 Toorak Road Toorak. Their new phone number is (03) 9068 8651, their mobile numbers remain the same. Their email addresses have also changed so please contact them for the latest details.
- ✍ JNF QLD as publishers of SHALOM Magazine wishes to congratulate **KEL BOGAN** for his creativity and professionalism in his role as Graphics and Digital Development Editor of SHALOM. Kel started with SHALOM a year ago in December 2018 and the development, growth and sophisticated look of SHALOM over the past year is evident for all to see. Well done and looking forward to another creative year in 2020.
- ✍ Congratulations and Mazel Tov to **LEE** and **TONY MCNAMEE** on the occasion of the engagement of their son **DAVID** to **ADRIANA TATE**.



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## The grave of Australia's first detective was consecrated in Sydney 151 years after burial

by Henry Benjamin | J-Wire

**I**srael Chapman, known to all those who knew him as Izzy, was Australia's first detective and after a painstaking search, his unmarked grave was located in Sydney's Rookwood Cemetery where his brand-new headstone was consecrated in October.

The search for Izzy's Chapman's last resting place was initiated by the Acting Assistant Commissioner of the NSW Police Stuart Smith.

It has been a long-standing passion of AAC Smith to memorialise outstanding members of the NSW Police Force since its inception.

Today, three descendants of Israel Chapman attended the consecration of his headstone by NSW Police chaplain Rabbi Mendel Kastel.

The official party was accompanied by a lone piper, representing the Jewish community was the Vice-President of The New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies David Ossip and CEO Vic Alhadeff.

Born in Chelsea, London in 1790, Israel Chapman was transported to the penal colony of NSW in 1818 after being convicted of highway robbery.

AAC Stuart Smith said: "A model convict, Chapman was made the principal overseer in the newly-built Hyde Park convict barracks in Sydney joining the Sydney police 18 months later."

In 1821 he was granted a conditional pardon and entered the Sydney police as a constable.

Constable Chapman's duties took him throughout the colony where he captured many bushrangers and was wounded several times.

On 28 November 1820 in St Philip's Church, Sydney, he married convict Catharine Martin.

In 1827 he was transferred from the basic police to become appointed "The George Street Runner".

Chapman had been appointed to the newly-created post of police runner at an annual salary of £100. Like the Bow Street Runners, he was primarily a detective. He was popularly known as the 'George Street Runner', because he was attached to the George Street police office in Sydney.

In the same year, the NSW Governor Sir Ralph Darling granted Israel Chapman a full pardon.

A fearless character who gained notoriety as a master of disguise and was ruthless in finding and capturing Bushrangers with his bare hands.

In February 1829, within a month of his wife's death, he returned to London. In June 1832 his request for a passage to New South Wales as a free emigrant was warmly supported by Darling, the former governor. →



→ Chapman returned to Sydney and in March 1833 was appointed one of the six wardsmen in the police force at a salary of £73. He died destitute at the Liverpool Asylum on 4 July 1868 and was buried in an unmarked grave in the Jewish section of the cemetery at Haslem's Creek now part of the Rookwood Cemetery.

Stuart Smith added: "For the last twelve months the archival team at the Rookwood historic cemetery, the NSW State Library, NSW State Archives and State Crime Command under a set of terms of reference by the NSW Police Force Detectives Board, identified the last resting-place of Israel Furthermore we have recovered and replicated key documents of the policing career of Chapman including the absolute pardon and a copy of The Australian functioning novel celebrating the deeds of Detective Chapman.

These documents will now be permanently on show at State Crime Command at the Detectives' Training Course in Hurstville standing as a guide to the trainees of the tenacity, skill and the expectation required to achieve the designation of detective"

He thanked the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies who provided assistance and funded today's celebration.

He added: "The Police Association of NSW is meeting the costs associated with the preparation of the placement of the headstone.'

He thanked the State Library and the NSW Police State Records for granting access to records which have been sealed for 192 years.

Commissioner Mick Fuller told the guests that

Chapman was "a small fellow who made a large impact on public safety" adding "you would have liked to have a beer with him to be at the bar listening to his stories." He thanked The New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies for funding the headstone.

David Ossip, the vice-president of The New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies said: "Israel Chapman represents a long history of the Jewish contribution to this country." He said that the Jews of NSW in Chapman's time faced no discrimination and there no position of authority that was denied to them adding "they passed in Colonial society indistinguishable from the general population."

He pointed out that Israel Chapman was the first detective but also the first policeman John Harris was also Jewish.

Ossip commended the "tremendous support the Jewish community receives from the NSW Police on an ongoing basis. It is greatly appreciated."

The three descendants of Izzy Chapman are grateful to the NSW Police who found their ancestor.

Izzy had a brother who had worked in Berrima and Barry Robinson who lists genealogy as one of his interests had let it known that he was looking for a Chapman. Stuart Smith's team had contacted Berrima police in the search for Izzy Chapman's data.

Now Barry wife Dianne and her relatives Betty Bailey and Rosalie Pollett heard firsthand today the story of a lost long ancestor.

And for memory of Israel "Izzy" Chapman, a headstone marks his grave and his life. — **J-WIRE**



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# AUSTRALIAN JEWISH MILITARY DATABASE

The ACT Jewish Community is installing a touch-screen that will display biographical material and photographs of the 341 men named on the new Australian Jewish War Memorial (Located within their grounds in Canberra), who were killed in action or died on service since 1900 until present.

This will of course significantly improve the experience of visitors to the memorial.

A list of the names [can viewed here](#).

If you are able to provide any biographical material or photographs for this important project or you know someone who could do so, could you please contact

**Peter Allen**

(Previously National Co-ordinator of the Centenary of Anzac Jewish Program),  
who is preparing the narratives for the ACTJC on

**[ccallen@bigpond.net.au](mailto:ccallen@bigpond.net.au) or 0418 161 366**

**Also see AJHS website: [Australian Jewish Military Database](#)**

# DAVID ABRAMSON ELEVATED TO THE PRESTIGIOUS PEARCEY HALL OF FAME AND NAMED PEARCEY MEDALLIST FOR 2019

**The Pearcey Foundation is a non-profit organisation founded in 1998 in memory of a great Australian ICT pioneer Dr Trevor Pearcey. The Foundation operates broadly across the Australian Information Communication Technologies (ICT) sector, from celebrating achievements through national and state awards, to being involved in debate and public policy on critical national issues such as productivity, the digital economy and national infrastructure.**

The **Pearcey Hall of Fame** recognises individuals who have made very significant lifetime contributions into one or more of Australia's ICT research, industry, or professional development. It is a yearly award which includes the Pearcey Medallist and up to two other individuals. In 2019 Pearcey Medallist, David Abramson was elevated into the prestigious Pearcey Hall of Fame.

The **Pearcey Medal**, which recognises a distinguished lifetime achievement and contribution to the development and growth of the ICT industry in Australia, was presented to Professor David Abramson. The presentation of the Medal was by Nigel Warren, Executive Director Growth CSIRO at the annual Pearcey National Awards held on 14th November 2019, in Melbourne.

***On the night of the medal presentation, David a well known member of the Brisbane Jewish Community, had his professional achievements detailed by the Pearcey Foundation as below and we congratulate him on this most well deserved award and recognition.***

"Professor David Abramson, as current Director of Research Computing at the University of Queensland, is considered, by his peers, a pioneer and global leader in the design, implementation and application of high-performance systems and software for parallel and distributed systems.

David Abramson is a highly productive researcher whose peer-reviewed publications include over 230 articles and 4 patent applications. He was an ARC Professorial Fellow from 2007 to 2011. He was awarded a Doctor of Science degree in 2011 as a result of a thesis comprising 60 papers in 14 chapters.

His research concerns the software development lifecycle for high-performance distributed applications. Software construction, debugging, testing and deployment for these applications is challenging in that they must work efficiently within the size, distribution, and heterogeneity variations of the remote resources on which they will execute.

His software products have been used widely in both academia and industry. One system, called Nimrod, was a leader in the use of globally distributed computer systems. It underpinned a commercial product (called EnFuzion) which has been used by power utility and energy companies in 9 countries, by major TV broadcasters in the US and Canada and by 3D animation studios around the world including China. Another system for debugging parallel programs has been licensed to Cray, one of the world's most significant supercomputer manufacturers.

He has undertaken collaborative research with many industry partners including IBM, Microsoft, Hewlett Packard, Sun Microsystems, Leica Microsystems and Huawei.

David Abramson is a Science Graduate (Hons) from Monash University (1978), Melbourne and completed his PhD in Computer Science also at Monash University under the highly respected Prof Chris Wallace. Prof Abramson is a Fellow of the ACM, a Fellow of the IEEE, a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE) and a Fellow of the Australian Computer Society." – **The Pearcey Foundation**



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## Will anti-Semitism accusations sink Corbyn and the Labour Party?

**“People want to excuse it by saying these are small numbers, but what happened to the principle that one racist is one too many?” — By Rachel Elbaum**

**LONDON — Social inequality, resolving Brexit, investment in the struggling National Health Service — these are some of the issues Britain’s opposition Labour Party had hoped would top the agenda during the election campaign.**

Instead, the party is mired in a continuing anti-Semitism crisis amid accusations that it has mismanaged bigotry among its own members ahead of the Dec. 12 vote. Many, including activists, lawmakers and the mainstream Jewish community, say the blame for the scandal lies with the party’s leader, Jeremy Corbyn, an unabashed socialist and self-described anti-racist.

Anxiety is running so high in the Jewish community that the United Kingdom’s chief rabbi made an unprecedented intervention last week, calling the party’s response to anti-Semitism allegations “utterly inadequate” in a letter to The Times newspaper.

Some of the most stinging criticism has emerged from the heart of the movement.

“There seems to be no willingness to engage with the fact that many Jewish people have left the party, that they feel it’s not a safe space,” said Mike Katz, the national chair of the 99-year-old Jewish Labour Movement. In April, the group deemed Corbyn unfit to be prime minister.

In May, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the country’s equality watchdog, launched a formal investigation into allegations of anti-Semitism in the party and to determine whether unlawful acts have been committed.

The Jewish Labour Movement, or JLM, says it knows of 130 outstanding anti-Semitism complaints against Labour. During a debate Nov. 19 with Prime Minister Boris Johnson of the ruling Conservative Party, Corbyn said Labour had “investigated every single case” of anti-Semitism. The JLM has provided a list of action points to root out anti-Semitism, including regular updates on the number of complaints and anti-Semitism training for the disputes panel, but says they have not been addressed.

“People want to excuse it by saying these are small numbers, but what happened to the principle that one racist is one too many?” Katz said.

Labour did not respond to NBC News’ requests for comment via email and telephone over the course of several weeks — including on the claim of outstanding anti-Semitism complaints. On Tuesday, Corbyn responded to questions about apologizing to the Jewish community in a BBC interview, saying that his government would “protect every community against the abuse they receive.”

In a video released August 2018, Corbyn apologised “for the hurt that has been caused to many Jewish people,” and said the party has been too slow to process disciplinary cases.

Britain’s Jewish community — just 0.5 percent of the population — has been largely split politically in the elections prior to 2017. →



→ The anti-Semitism crisis, however, has left many Jews fearful that the election outcome could directly affect their community's well-being and comfort in the U.K.

In October, one poll for the Jewish Chronicle newspaper found that only 7 percent of Jewish respondents would consider voting for Labour.

Ephraim Mirvis, the U.K.'s chief rabbi, gave voice to many of these fears in his open letter in The Times newspaper Nov. 25.

"When December 12 arrives, I ask every person to vote with their conscience. Be in no doubt, the very soul of our nation is at stake," the spiritual leader of Britain's Orthodox Jews wrote, saying that he spoke out with "the heaviest of hearts."

Mirvis' letter followed nearly four years of complaints by Jewish members of the party who say there is a culture of anti-Semitism among the Labour Party membership.

Corbyn, who long inhabited far-left fringes of the Labour Party, became its leader in a surprise victory in 2015 after the party's defeat in a national election, and is popular with the party's rank and file. But he is profoundly unpopular with many of his parliamentary colleagues, who tried unsuccessfully to oust him in 2016. He has faced accusations of not just failing to deal with anti-Semitism within the party's ranks but also of potentially harbouring anti-Semitic views himself.

A poll for the Jewish Chronicle newspaper in March found that around 87 percent of respondents regarded the Labour leader as anti-Semitic.

He once questioned on Facebook a decision by local officials to remove a mural depicting hook-nosed bankers playing monopoly on the backs of the poor – widely reviled as a bigoted work that deployed well-known anti-Semitic tropes and symbols.

Corbyn, who has long championed Palestinian rights and opposed the 2003 invasion of Iraq, was pilloried in August 2018 after video from 2013 emerged of him accusing British Zionists of not "understanding English irony."

His associations with organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah, whose representatives he invited to an event in Parliament in 2009 and called "friends," have disturbed the mainstream Jewish community. Corbyn later said he regretted his choice of words. Both groups are classified by the U.K. and the United States as terrorist groups and have repeatedly called for the destruction of Israel.

Labour isn't the only party in Britain facing allegations of racism at the moment. After criticism from the Muslim community about Islamophobia within its ranks, the British finance minister, a member of the Conservative Party, said last Tuesday that the party would investigate the claims.

But the anti-Semitism crisis has engulfed Labour in way that claims of Islamophobia have not hurt the Conservatives. Corbyn has repeatedly said he abhors anti-Semitism and his supporters accuse foes of using the accusations to undermine his leadership. →

→ There are Jewish people who feel that although there is an issue in the party, it is not reason enough to vote for another party.

"The problem of anti-Semitism in Labour is not an existential threat, which is how it has been characterized in other media," said Rivkah Brown, 27, a Labour supporter who lives in Corbyn's district. "The Labour Party problem is internal and manageable."

But that is not sufficient for Rebecca Simon, 38, a former Labour activist. For the first time, she is planning to vote for another party.

"I look at this election with despair and trepidation," she said.

She is now backing her local Liberal Democrat candidate, Luciana Berger, a former Labour lawmaker and ex-parliamentary chair of the Jewish Labour Movement who left the party in February, saying it was institutionally anti-Semitic. She had faced severe online harassment, as well as efforts from her local Labour Party to run her out for her lack of support for Corbyn.

"I feel anxious," Simon added. "The best thing that 'good' looks like to me is that Jeremy Corbyn doesn't get to form the next government. On a national level, it doesn't feel like there is a positive position to get behind."

Adam Langleben was also a longtime party activist and served as a Labour representative on a London council from 2014 to 2018. He said that after Corbyn assumed the leadership of the party, he received constant harassment both online and in his local party, where fellow members repeatedly asked him to pledge his loyalty to Corbyn. He also said he received at least one death threat as well as hate mail saying that he was trying to take down "JC" just like the Jews did before.

"It's become so routine that you become used to it and immune to it," said Langleben, 32, who resigned from the party in February because of its failure to tackle anti-Semitism among the membership. Langleben said he had submitted the evidence to the Equality and Human Rights Commission and was unable to share the letters and threats with NBC News.

Langleben said that for the first time, he will not vote for the Labour candidate in his area and will instead support the anti-Brexit Liberal Democrats in the election.

"For these people it doesn't matter if you're a Zionist Jew that supports Palestinian independence," he said. "It matters that you're a Jew." - **NBC NEWS**



# 2019 Term 4 Queensland C2C in the Classroom

**The Term 4 visits in 2019 were over two consecutive weeks, from 28/10 – 8/11, beginning with Glasshouse Mountains Christian College, a co-ed school in the Sunshine Coast hinterland.**

Our first visit there was last May for Grade 10 and this time we presented the program to grade 9 students. Because of distance, again the small team overnights in the local Eco Lodge. There were two sessions with 95 students and our two Survivors were Suzi Smeed and Peter Baruch. The classes were held in their library and resource centre. As with our first visit, the students engaged so well with the program and were very well prepared. We will be returning in 2020.

Faith Lutheran College is about 45 minutes south east of Brisbane. We had one session in this first visit to the school with 36 year 10 and 11 students, who learnt for the first time about the Sugihara story, with Peter Baruch as our Survivor. The presentation and Survivor story were held in their large school theatre.

Our first visit to St Pius X primary school in the Brisbane suburb of Salisbury was excellently received. There were 24 very eager and well prepared grade 6 students. We held the 3 parts of the session in their classroom. They were so keen and interacted well with Ngaire in her presentation.

They were all very moved to hear the Sugihara story. Peter's blanket was a magnet and they had lots of insightful comments. Although it was a rather large group for Jay's facilitation, the students were

very interactive and were quite delightful. Before we left they presented us each with a laminated Thank You plaque and some boxes of chocolates.

A small team, Ngaire Douglas as presenter and Peter Baruch as Survivor storyteller and Peta Briner as facilitator, accompanied Kayla to the Brisbane U3A, where 35 adults experienced the program.

The next school was a first time visit to Ambrose Treacy Catholic Boys' school at Indooroopilly, where we had one session for year 10 students. They were very keen and interactive.

For the final week the team travelled for the first time to Stanthorpe, for 3 days of presentations at two schools. This significant country town lies 218 km south west of Brisbane in the Southern Downs Granite Belt. Stanthorpe which is in Queensland's premier wine and apple growing region, has been going through a crippling drought for a number of years and recently survived a horror season of bushfires.

Despite the stress and hardship, the team were so warmly received. Day 1 included 3 sessions at St Joseph's College, with 94 students from years 7 – 11 and 6 teachers. The second and third days were at Stanthorpe High School, where 143 students and 6 teachers experienced the program.

The team were all very moved by the kindness and welcome of these country folk, who have been going through much hardship over recent times. Two students wrote beautiful 'Thank You' notes to the team. – **Courage2Care**



## Ask the Rabbi : HAS G-D MOVED?

**Q. Rabbi Nathan Cardozo has said that G-d has moved and is no longer in the synagogue. Do you agree?**

**A.** Rabbi Cardozo makes three main points:

1. *True seekers are not generally found in synagogues but in cafes, non-traditional minyanim, study halls, etc.;*
2. *Synagogues are largely devoid of the spiritual, meaningful and experiential;*
3. *Observant Jews are in denial, focussing on contrived legal questions and ignoring the "big picture" issues.*

He is partly right – and partly wrong. Where he is right is that some synagogues run their affairs in a routine, perfunctory way without emotional, spiritual or intellectual excitement. Genuine seeking and encounter is the last thing that happens there.

The old joke has come true: "I'll let you into the synagogue, but don't let me catch you praying". There is no danger of people actually praying in some Shules.

Congregants gallop through the pages of the Siddur, stop for a conversation (usually on irrelevancies such as what she's wearing and what's doing in the stock market), and God either isn't there or maybe all He gets is a passing nod.

Other places, maybe those which Rabbi Cardozo enumerates, maybe the beach, the hills, even a quiet garden, are more conducive to spiritual experience. Sometimes the seeker finds Him simply through being alone.

Sermons feature "big picture" issues – but without passion or urgency, and so wrapped up in banalities and rhetoric that they mean nothing to anybody, not even the preacher. Shiurim address little points of little significance – almost like the medievals who debated how many angels could sit on the point of a pin.

If this is all true, let's feel sorry for God. We tell the secularists that one can't have Judaism without God, but we ourselves are fostering a Judaism where God hardly figures.

Outside the synagogue one can certainly find God, but the soaring moments are occasional and

ephemeral. They can't be relied upon. They can also be anarchic. Their spiritual quality is not necessarily God. Nor does the spiritual encounter necessarily make a difference to a person's life, or the world.

The synagogue should not be written off. Its agenda item is God – and man's relationship to Him. Forget about who gets "sh'lishi" or "shishi". Think big. But small synagogues need to become large: large synagogues need to become small.

Small synagogues need to become more than comfort zones for catching a Kaddish, but quiet places of humming and meditation. Large synagogues need to create a sense of fellowship with less formality and more moments of quiet in the midst of the pomp and ceremony.

Both need to arouse and re-charge the soul, and send people back into the world as better people with a task.

A verse from Psalm 16 is emblazoned in many synagogues, "Shiviti HaShem l'negdi tamid" – "I set the Lord always before me". That verse prefaces the Code of Jewish Law and says, "If the Divine Presence is with you always, you are sure to make it a better world on behalf of God".

Rabbi Apple served for 32 years as the chief minister of the Great Synagogue, Sydney, Australia's oldest and most prestigious congregation. He was Australia's highest profile rabbi and held many public roles. He is now retired and lives in Jerusalem. Rabbi Apple blogs at [www.oztorah.com](http://www.oztorah.com)





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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### BRISBANE – REGULAR EVENTS

<b>Community Diary Bookings</b>	<b>Kathy Gould</b> 07 3411 3664 0402 497 413 kathygould45@msn.com
<b>WIZO Aviva</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday each Month (n)</b> 07 3715 6562 wizoqld@gmail.com
<b>NCJWA Meeting</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Monday 7:30pm</b>

### GOLD COAST – REGULAR EVENTS

<b>NCJWA Gold Coast</b> www.ncjwa.org.au	<b>Monthly Meetings</b> 7:30pm – 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday of each month 0412 377 488 goldcoast@ncjwa.org.au
<b>Temple Shalom Services</b>	<b>Office</b> 07 5570 1716 <b>Erev Shabbat</b> 6:30pm <b>Shabbat Morning</b> 10am <b>Oneg Shabbat</b> 2nd Friday each month following services <b>Seiudat Shabbat</b> Last Shabbat each month following Torah Service <b>Groovy Movers Exercise</b> Mon & Wed 10am-12 Noon Friday 8-10 am
<b>Gold Coast Hebrew Congregation Services</b>	<b>All enquiries call 07 5570 1851</b>  Friday Night Live Uplifting Service every Friday Night starting 5:30pm Shabbat Kiddish Following the service every Shabbat at 9am Kabbala and Jewish Mysticism Journey of the Soul, Monday evening at 7:30pm Talmud Classes Thursday evening at 7:30pm Talmud Torah Chader Sunday 9:30 – 11:30am

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