

## 18 WAYS TO ADDRESS ANTISEMITISM IN YOUR LITERARY LIFE Strategies Acquired/Refined Over (a Long!) Time

By Erika Dreifus

Prepared for the Jewish Book Council Writers' Conference

12 November 2023

1. Know yourself.
2. Pay attention/stay informed.<sup>i</sup>
3. Take a breath.
4. Protect yourself (“safety first”).
5. Find your people.<sup>ii</sup>
6. Remember: Reporting *is* responding.<sup>iii</sup>
7. Choose your battles.
8. Remember: Retweeting/amplifying others’ messages that you consider worthy is *also* responding.
9. “Counsel, don’t cancel.”<sup>iv</sup>
10. Be polite.<sup>v</sup>
11. Remember: “The mute button is your friend.”
12. Unsubscribe.
13. Resign.
14. Sign (and consider amplifying) open letters/statements.<sup>vi</sup>
15. Write a letter to the editor.<sup>vii</sup>
16. Write/publish an op-ed.<sup>viii</sup>
17. Embrace your Judaism, Jewishness, and Jewish pride/joy, especially in literary contexts.<sup>ix</sup>
18. Incorporate Judaism, Jewishness, and Jewish pride into your writing.<sup>x</sup>

*“You are not obligated to complete the task, but neither are you free to desist from it.”  
(Pirke Avot, 2:16)*

---

<sup>i</sup> Resources include: [“After October 7: Readings, Recordings, and More”](#) and [“Writers, Beware”](#).

<sup>ii</sup> I was connected with the following groups prior to October 7; they’ve offered much support since then: [Association of Jewish Libraries](#) (requires membership fee); [Jewish Kidlit Mavens](#); [Literary Modiin](#); [PJ Library](#) ([link](#) for newsletter sign-up).

<sup>iii</sup> Resources include: [ADL](#), [CAMERA](#), [Honest Reporting](#) (“Send Us Your Tips”).

<sup>iv</sup> Adapted from a formulation I’ve encountered many times from the ADL’s Jonathan Greenblatt, advocating “counsel culture” instead of “cancel culture.”

<sup>v</sup> Example: [a comment](#) on a 2022 Facebook post from Mary Karr.

<sup>vi</sup> Examples included in [“After October 7: Readings, Recordings, and More”](#).

<sup>vii</sup> Examples included in [“From My Archive: Writings About Israel”](#).

<sup>viii</sup> Examples included in [“From My Archive: Writings About Israel”](#).

<sup>ix</sup> Example: [this Bookshop list](#) (based on a Twitter/X thread; note that I will receive small commissions from purchases).

<sup>x</sup> Examples included in [“From My Archive: Writings About Israel”](#).