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Title: **“Modern Anti-Semitism: Empirical tests of the anti-Semitism anti-Israel Model”**

Panel: Psychology

Recently, prejudice, bigotry, and intolerance have been a topic of great concern. Anti-Semitism in particular is notably visible in the US, and Europe stemming from both the alternative right and the liberal left (Oppenheimer, February 17, 2017). Globally, the specter of ongoing violence in the Middle East accompanied by repeated failed peace talks have ignited anti-Israel demonstrations and the BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) Movement (Alderdice, 2007). However, until the last decade the resurgence of anti-Semitism accompanying the Middle East turmoil may not have been so readily apparent. In Europe Jewish Day schools, supermarkets and pedestrians have been violently attacked; in the U.S. Jewish cemeteries and synagogues have been defaced, and in Israel innocent Jewish civilians have been brutally beaten and bludgeoned to death. Anti-Semitism is indeed increasing. What may account for the uptick in anti-Semitism? And what if any is the connection to Middle East turbulence?

Recent research demonstrates that the psychological underpinnings of both may be one in the same (Aita, 1997; Bar-Tal, 2005; Patterson, 2011; Pyszczynski, Abdollahi, Greenberg, Solomon, Cohen, & Weise, 2006). A new theoretical model of anti-Semitism is presented and tested in five experiments. The model proposes that mortality salience increases anti-Semitism and that anti-Semitism often manifests as hostility towards Israel. Study 1 showed that mortality salience led to greater levels of anti-Semitism and lowered support for Israel. This effect occurred only in a bogus pipeline condition, indicating that social desirability masks hostility towards Jews and Israel. Study 2 showed that mortality salience caused Israel, but no other country, to perceptually loom large. Study 3 showed that mortality salience increased punitiveness towards Israel’s human rights violations more than it increased hostility towards the identical human rights violations committed by India or Russia. Study 4 showed that mortality salience increased people’s agreement with support for political cartoons demonizing Israel but not China. Study 5 showed that mortality salience increased support of BDS for Israel’s human rights violations committed against Palestinians more than it increased support of BDS for Russia’s identical human

rights violations committed against the Ukraine. Collectively, results suggest that Jews constitute a unique cultural threat to many people's worldviews, that anti-Semitism causes hostility to Israel, and that hostility to Israel may feed back to increase anti-Semitism.