

**#JewGoal and the Online Normalization of Antisemitism: A  
Lacanian Perspective [abstract only]**

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## **#JewGoal and the Online Normalization of Antisemitism: A Lacanian Perspective**

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This paper will examine the migration of the antisemitic hashtag, #JewGoal, from the FIFA video game series to online discussions of real-world football. By analysing 1,364 public tweets of the ‘Jew goal’ hashtag on the social media platform ‘X’ (formerly Twitter), it details how this seemingly innocuous hashtag, originating in the FIFA video game community, has become a vehicle for antisemitic rhetoric, drawing upon historical stereotypes and cultural symbols. Focusing on the hashtag’s deployment across diverse contexts—including commentary on individual players, team performances, and football rivalries—while also highlighting the normalization of antisemitic language within online communities, the paper draws from Lacanian theory in order to investigate the enjoyment and motivations underpinning the perpetuation of online antisemitism. Utilizing Lacan’s concepts of *jouissance* and *llanguage*, it is argued that the hashtag’s prevalence stems from an inherent enjoyment in its application across various antisemitic tropes, regardless of contextual relevance. This enjoyment, linked to the formation of in-group identity and online othering within gaming and football fan cultures, underscores the hashtag’s function as a marker of belonging, fostering a sense of community through shared knowledge of the term’s offensive origins. Challenging traditional approaches to understanding and addressing online hate speech, and moving beyond content-based analyses to emphasize the affective and unconscious dimensions of online communication, the paper reveals how the enjoyment underpinning the hashtag’s adoption can advocate for a deeper consideration of the libidinal investments driving the perpetuation of antisemitism in digital spaces. In the context of rising political polarization and the growing influence of far-Right ideologies, the paper situates the hashtag within a broader psychosocial landscape marked by crisis, highlighting its role in exacerbating social divisions and perpetuating digital violence.

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