

Skin Cream and Anti-Semitism

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Who knew beauty products could be so controversial without blinding bunnies? Ahava cosmetics, the Israeli purveyor of delicious skin creams and conditioners has **been forced to close its flagship London branch** after biweekly demonstrations have cut into its profits. The store at Covent Garden has been hit hard with demonstrators because its cosmetics are produced on a shore of the Dead Sea in an area claimed by Palestinians. Four demonstrators went on trial earlier this year after they **chained themselves to a concrete block** inside the store.

Ok, apart from the major question of how the demonstrators managed to get a concrete block through the front door, the first thing that comes to mind is that these protestors are barking up the wrong tree. This is reminiscent of this week's protests in NYC. The Occupy Wall Street movement has targeted the actual area of Wall St. to demonstrate against the fat cats despite the fact that very little trading happens on stock market exchange floors anymore. It would be more advantageous for them to target online trading but since that isn't a possibility they turn to a solid geographic location. Just because you're demonstrating on Wall St. doesn't mean you're disrupting trading. It means you're getting yourselves on the cover of the New York Post with a pithy headline.

Going back to the **anti-Israel** displays outside a skin cream store. The salespeople here are trying to sell you products to cure your rosacea. Trying to promote your position of a two-state solution by victimizing the college student who needs to meet a sales quota is just like the Wall St. demonstrations: pointless. This is thinly-veiled anti-Semitism at its finest. Targeting a store chain because it is connected with Israel, and only because of its connection with Israel, is anti-Semitism no matter how you try and spin it. As Kenneth L. Marcus' article has shown, **the new political anti-Semitism**

is prolific across the world. He shows that the new anti-Semitism re-racializes and stigmatizes Jews as morally blameworthy and marked for reprisal.

Just as you don't have racism without racists, you can't have anti-Semitism without anti-Semites. The protestors should find another way to vent their frustrations and leave the poor Ahava employees out of their tirades.