

Review of *The Past Didn't Go Anywhere: Making Resistance to Antisemitism Part of All of Our Movements*, in *Make/Shift Magazine* (Issue 2, Fall 07) by E. Nepon

The Allentown, PA skinhead youth movement blossomed in my teenage years, targeting Jewish, Black, and Puerto Rican kids with common venom. The rage and resistance I built as a Jewish girl standing up to local skinheads had everything to do with me finding a home in the Left with anarchists, queers and anti-racists. So I was shocked and heartbroken, if naïve, when a 2001 North Philly panel discussion on the World Conference Against Racism took a turn into worse antisemitism than I'd ever heard from the skinheads. There were too many terrifying comments to recount, but the one that still rings in my ears is this: "Black people in this country are in the same position that Germans were before WW2, kept down by the Jews, and soon we are going to rise up and resist." The audience applauded. The moderator kept saying "You speak the truth." A Korean woman challenged the statement, and she too got applause, but otherwise a multiracial room full of antiracists, anarchists, and communists remained silent. I asked myself: am I fighting for a revolution that wants me dead? Afterwards, people told me, "I didn't know enough to argue."

That's why April Rosenblum's 32-page pamphlet "*The Past Didn't Go Anywhere: Making Resistance to Anti-Semitism Part of All Our Movements*" is a gift to the Left – a clear and accessible analysis written with the insights of a life-long radical after years of research and interviews. In the tradition of feminists and antiracists challenging the movement to live up to our hopes and demands for the future, this pamphlet is a vital tool in the struggle to make the Left a side worth fighting on.

The pamphlet covers wide terrain. Rosenblum explains how antisemitism is like and unlike other oppressions, alerts us to current trends on the global scene, and breaks down common antisemitic myths like the one about how Jews cause wars and/or cause the loss of wars. I'm moved by the way that this pamphlet offers us a glimpse into the true spectrum of Jewish communities – broadening Left knowledge about Jewish diversity through sections like "What exactly are Jews, anyway?" and "With all the time they save by not running the world, what *do* Jews think about?" Though many others have identified and discussed antisemitism on the Right and Left, Rosenblum's work stands out for its consistent, grounded stance that the Left – including Palestine-solidarity work – will be strengthened by facing antisemitism within our own movements. Rosenblum dispels the myth that we need to choose between fighting antisemitism and fighting for the rights of Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims. Rosenblum writes,

I do not want activists to put aside the vital issues we already work on to switch to this one. No battle today for peoples' basic human rights can afford to lose our energy and commitment. What's called for is for us to integrate radical analysis of anti-Jewish oppression into the work we already do. May the ideas here strengthen us for all the tasks ahead.

Check it out! Free download at <http://www.pinteleyd.com/past/#main>