

Saying No to Hate: Overcoming Antisemitism in America

Norman H. Finkelstein

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Norman H. Finkelstein reviews the past and present fight against American antisemitism in *Saying No to Hate*.

Finkelstein notes that the first Jews settled in North America in the mid-1600s. Since then, he writes, the United States has been safer for Jewish people than any other country, thanks to constitutional guarantees of freedoms of religion, speech, and assembly. But the situation is still imperfect, as shown through the stories of American Jews who fought to make their mark and to better the situation for all—including Cesar Kaskel, who took extraordinary measures to protest the expulsion of Kentuckian Jews from their homes during the Civil War, and Aaron Sapiro, who took on the antisemitic newspaper owned by powerful automaker Henry Ford and won. Through these tales and others, the book traces the evolving, ever-present issue of antisemitism, showing how it requires continued education and vigilance among Jews and gentiles alike.

The book achieves accessibility via simple explanations of complex concepts, as of how the origins of modern antisemitism stretch back to the dawn of Christianity. It also lays out the definitions of key terms, as where it distinguishes anti-Judaism from antisemitism. Its appendices include practical advice for protecting oneself against mass shooter events and combating antisemitism in everyday life. On occasion, it strays into whataboutism, though. Still, the book accomplishes two important goals: it reveals the many forms that antisemitism can take, and it showcases the diversity of thought, action, and achievement in the Jewish population of the United States.

Saying No to Hate is a sobering, empowering primer on how antisemitism and the fight against it changed the face of America.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (May / June 2024)

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