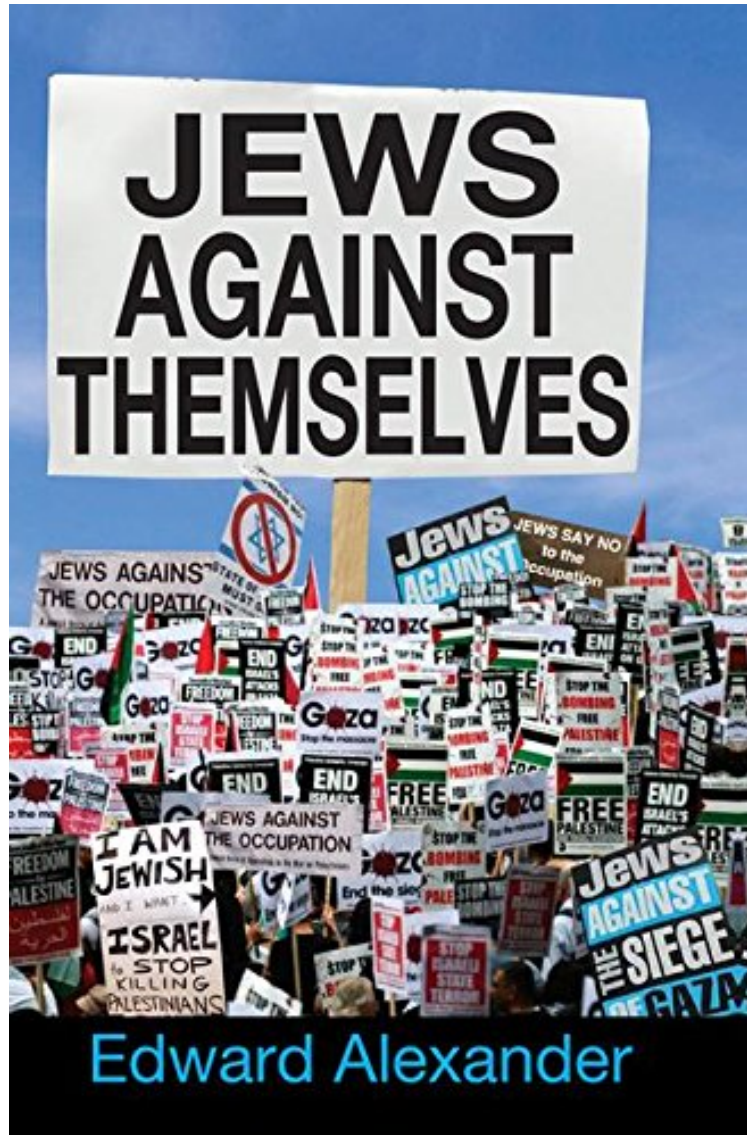


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Jews Against Themselves

From Edward Alexander

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From Edward Alexander : Jews Against Themselves before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jews Against Themselves:

14 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Jew hatred by Jews By Lawrence W. White There is a large crowd of politically active cognoscenti who make it their business to criticize Israel at every turn. These are the folks who blame Israel for fighting back against their attackers, whether Hamas rockets or Palestinians wielding knives. Of great interest and concern is the fact that many of the Jew haters who participate in these activities are themselves Jewish.

This is not surprising, since there is a long history of this sort of behavior, often referred to (inaccurately) as self-hating Jews. In describing this phenomenon, Edward Alexander has combined extensive and important scholarship with an engaging style. His book is destined to be the definitive word on this subject, as he takes on the more mainstream anti-Israel groups such as J Street, as well as the boycott, delegitimize, and sanctions (BDS) crowd of Jewish Voice for Peace (a misnomer, since most of its "voices" do not identify as Jewish, and certainly do nothing to promote peace). One of the most interesting targets is so-called "Rabbi" Michael Lerner, a self-styled modern prophet whose chief goal is his own aggrandizement. Professor Alexander exposes Lerner's earlier days when he was a left-wing violent agitator, as well as a bully who threatened law suits against any opponents. He follows his career to the present, when under the guise of a "sadness on both sides sanctimony," he heaps scorn on Israel. This book deserves to be widely read by anyone interested in the Middle East conflict, and in particular anyone wishing to understand the critical domestic lobbying against Jews and their concerns, frequently used by Jews themselves. These nefarious folks use the media to join in the dishonesty of the various anti-Israel actors. Further, the frequent refrain, "As a Jew, I particularly deplore the actions of Israel." is understood for what it is, moral preening by some Jews, who are neither factually correct nor engaged in moral speech and actions. Hopefully this book will be widely read by both Jews and non-Jews.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This should be obligatory reading for all decent people and ...

By Margalit Fliegelmann This should be obligatory reading for all decent people and those who have a sense of justice. You do not need to be a Jew to have to read this book. Very clear and well researched, it takes on all those that I, for one, have simply dismissed as cranks so far. They are too many by now to be dismissed and much as some of their arguments are unpalatable to the point of being nauseating, this book respectfully and without name calling addresses all points for what they are, rather than who writes them. I am going to buy a few copies (I myself read the Kindle version) to hand out to people I care about. I can only thank the author for having gone to such length and employed such elegant scholarly rigor to research and write this indispensable book.

19 of 22 people found the following review helpful. Edward Alexander's Jews Against Themselves

By Abigail L. Rosenthal Edward Alexander has put together the indispensable map of contemporary Jewish self-betrayal. This is the source book, the "who's who" or rogues gallery of fashionable "anti-Zionism." Their roguish strategy is to summon the sole Jewish state to a purity of conduct incompatible with real life in any possible world. Edward Alexander's intellectual precision and moral fearlessness makes it possible for the reader to look directly at a subject as disturbing and disorienting as any in the landscape. The book has another virtue. Essay after essay is a model of English prose. Walking unsullied through a landscape of marsh, quicksand, bad faith, opportunism and evasion, Alexander the writer manages never to sound a false note.

This volume features powerful essays by Edward Alexander on the phenomenon of anti-Zionism on the part of the Jewish intelligentsia. It also analyzes the explosive growth of traditional anti-Semitism, especially in Europe, among intellectuals and Muslims. Alexander notes that anti-Zionism has established a presence even in Israel, where it frequently takes the form of intellectuals sympathizing with their country's enemies and perversely apologizing for their own existence. Alexander begins with an examination of the origins of Jewish self-hatred in nineteenth-century Europe. He then explores the mindset of disaffected Jews in reacting, or failing to react, to the two events that shape modern Jewry: the Holocaust and the founding of the State of Israel. The book concludes with a focus on contemporary anti-Zionism, including three essays about the role played by Jews in the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement to expel Israel from the family of nations. A final essay addresses the need for American Jews to decide whether they are going to judge Judaism by the standards of The New York Times or The New York Times by the standards of Judaism.

"Rarely has a book so thoroughly and eloquently identified, analyzed, and rebuked a form of thinking that endangers the very democracy from which that thinking arose. . . . Many texts try to explain why some Jews turn on their own people . . . Never have I read one with such moral clarity, subtlety of thought . . . If future generations don't look back and read this New York Times 'moral standard' as one of the defining manifestations of cognitive and moral disorientation of the early twenty-first century, it will only be because jihadis prevailed in convincing a foolish and even suicidal West into sacrificing its most valuable ally. And if that happens, it will be in no small measure thanks to the Jews portrayed in Alexander's book." Richard Landes, *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs*

"Alexander proffers numerous case studies, old and new, of the moral and intellectual bankruptcy behind the peculiar phenomenon of Jewish Israel-hatred. The book . . . is a collection of concise and informative essays on a variety of subjects (Zionism and Liberalism; the lessons of the Holocaust; the intellectual roots of the Oslo Accords) written over several decades." Tibor Krausz, *The Jerusalem Report*

[S]hort and well-written . . . How is it possible, this book asks, for Jewish intellectuals not only to live under the shadow of a second genocide but to furnish arguments that prepare for it? Jews who take a strong and public position against Israel are putting themselves in the same position as those apostates in the Middle Ages. They, too, seemingly talk with inside knowledge. . . . Granted their history, Jews have every reason to think through the demands of identity. Superficially, it is plausible that the men and women who so provoke Alexander are

acting out of self-hatred. . . . Alexander is not asking for a tribal closing of the ranks, merely for common humanity; in the testing years ahead, a lot of it will be needed. David Pryce-Jones, National "I am overjoyed by the gathering of these essays and at the same time wildly depressed, because to read them again, not one by one as before, but in the hideous Niagara force of their phalanxes is frightening. As a virtuoso polemical work, as a literary tour de force, *Jews Against Themselves* is a masterpiece." Cynthia Ozick, short story writer, novelist, and essayist "[Edward Alexander] profiles in this powerful little book a rogues gallery of Jews who have decided, as he puts it, that Israel is the devil's own experiment station and either barely sustains a right to exist or has forfeited it altogether. . . why is a recurrent phenomenon spanning centuries have Jews turned so virulently against Jews? . . . [W]hatever the wellsprings of the malaise, Alexander's book depicts it masterfully and exposes these scoundrels in their true infamy." P. David Hornick, PJ Media "In *Jews against Themselves*, Alexander takes up the curious and disturbing phenomenon of his volume's title. A professor emeritus at the University of Washington, Alexander is a distinguished student of American and English literature and an essayist whose erudition is ornamented by a coruscating wit. . . . We live in an era when survivors of the greatest catastrophe ever to befall the Jewish people are still living among us, yet a small but influential cadre of Jews, mimicking the disreputable conduct of a smaller number of their forebears, are fortifying the intentions of today's most virulent anti-Semites, including the genocidal among them. Hatred of Jews, a lengthy history suggests, has an infectious character. By the evidence compiled here, the virus has found a ready host even in some of those whom it would first destroy." Gabriel Schoenfeld, *Mosaic In Deuteronomy*, the people of Israel are told that their enemies will come from one direction but will flee in seven. Nowadays, something like the opposite seems to be true, with Israel's enemies coming at her from many directions. One of these is from within. These internal enemies are the subject of *Jews Against Themselves*. . . . Like Jewish apostates of medieval times, these modern Jewish apostates, carry out with greater zeal than non-Jews the persecution of their brethren. . . . Alexander is a superb writer and wields a very sharp pen. David Isaac, *The Washington Free Beacon* Many of the mordant Jewish critics of Israel, as the author indicates, are wedded to Enlightenment and liberal values and believe that Israel has betrayed the ideals of those legacies. Alexander put it beautifully: For members of the anti-Israel coalition, he says, there is a straight line from the revelation at Sinai to the left wing of the Democratic Party. In his survey of the leading Jewish anti-Israel mob, Alexander uses a skillful scalpel in eviscerating Bernard Avishai, Michael Lerner and Peter Beinart all of whom, as Mark Anthony said, are honourable men. . . . Those who derive their political ethos from the Enlightenment and liberalism and translate it into a violent critique of Israel are mistranslating the legacy of those two movements, and demonstrating a paralyzing rigidity in their understanding of reason. Arnold Ages, *Chicago Jewish Star* [Edward Alexander] exposes and eviscerates Jewish self-hatred, the liberal betrayal of Zionism, the moral failure of American Jewish intellectuals, and as only an academic could the rampant anti-Semitism that infests American universities and how it came to lodge there. Alexander's intellectual weapons are formidable. A literary scholar, he weaves Matthew Arnold, George Eliot and Franz Kafka into his narrative. A knowledgeable student of history, he integrates Benjamin Disraeli, Karl Marx and George Orwell into his analysis. He is as familiar with the Israeli apologetics of Amos Oz and David Grossman as he is with the tortured American Jewish gyrations of Hannah Arendt, Michael Lerner, and anguished Jews at *The New York Times*. His distinctive voice is audible and powerful. Jerold S. Auerbach, *The Algemeiner* "Alexander, a professor emeritus at the University of Washington, is a combat veteran of the intra-Jewish quarrels of the past several decades, and he is one of the most skilled. In this, perhaps the most important of his many books, Professor Alexander takes on the painfully relevant topic of what he calls 'the new forms taken by Jewish apostasy.' . . . *Jews Against Themselves* sheds much-needed light on the subject and deserves to be on everyone's must reading list." Benyamin Korn, *The Algemeiner* "An excoriating assault on Jewish apostates Jews who, in the words of Maimonides, separate themselves from the community or hold aloof from the congregation of Israel and is indifferent when they are in distress. Peter J. Leithart, *First Things* "Alexander's no-nonsense tone is a tonic." Shmuel Ben-Gad, *Association of Jewish Libraries* "Edward Alexander is one of those rare academics whose prose is a delight to read. These richly informative and trenchantly critical essays, dating from 1986 to 2014, range widely over the landscape of contemporary Jewish denunciation of Israel. Most of his subjects see themselves as defenders of Enlightenment values against what they presume to be Jewish sectionalism and obscurantism. Alexander brilliantly dissects the ideological confusions and broken-backed arguments that litter this stance. To a non-Jew like myself, however, with few illusions left concerning the complicity of the present-day liberal-left with kinds of antisemitism that used to be the sole province of the extreme Right, there is also a good deal of pathos about these refugees from Judaism as they leap, with unerring agility, from the frying-pan into the fire." Bernard Harrison, *University of Utah* and *University of Sussex* Edward Alexander is a must-read for anyone wishing to understand the culture wars raging among Jews in recent years. A knowledgeable guide to these fractious debates, and also an energetically engaged participant in many of them, Alexander writes as both critical analyst and intellectual combatant. His passionate, provocative essays, composed in a polemical style all his own, unsettle as well as inform. Alvin H. Rosenfeld, *Indiana University* About the Author Edward Alexander is professor emeritus of English at the University of Washington, Seattle. He is the author of *The Jewish Idea and Its Enemies*, *The Holocaust and the War of Ideas*, *Irving Howe: Socialist, Critic, Jew*,

and Lionel Trilling and Irving Howe.