

**WHY
I AM
AN
ANTI-
FASCIST**

.....
*A ZINE BY PŌNEKE
ANTI-FASCIST COALITION*





On this and the following page: Image of a large Toitū te Tiriti gathering facilitated by Pōneke Anti-Fascist Coalition on Waitangi Day 2024 – an event aimed at drawing tauwi (non-Māori) along to demonstrate their support for Māori.



Note about visual accessibility: If you find text in this document difficult to read, all text in the .pdf should be copy/paste-able or screen-readable.

What does anti-fascism mean to you?

This is something Poneke Anti-Fascist Coalition (PAFC) asks ourselves often. No doubt it is something all anti-fascists ask themselves at some point or another. We realise, though, that as every experience of oppression and every instance of fascism or bigotry is unique, so too must be our responses.

To be anti-fascist is to be against the upholding of unjust and oppressive hierarchies: hierarchies of race, capital, power, religion, sex, gender, education, and more. Anti-fascist action is any action that furthers the goal of eliminating fascism and its prerequisites from our community: that means standing up to racists in huge rallies, telling anti-abortion religious extremists to take their bigotry elsewhere, having a hard conversation with your racist uncle, or even showing your mates love when you see them getting radicalised to the right.

PAFC as a group and our individual members engage in a huge diversity of anti-fascist activities. We spread political messages through posters and organise rallies, sure, but we also distribute education materials, our members use their skills to give legal advice to those who can't afford it, or they spend their days in offices researching political extremism. Some of us practise anti-fascism by having a warm open whare to support loved ones in need, and some of us make art to express our ideals. Some of us do anti-fascism when we can find rare time away from childcare and work, and some of us wake up every day to further the cause.

This zine is an opportunity for the members of PAFC to use our individual voices to express what anti-fascism means to us, and to inspire you to think about what anti-fascism might mean for you, too.

Get out there and be an anti-fascist today!

Why I am anti-fascist

I was raised to believe that being weird was fun. I was raised to believe that it was OK to be whoever you wanted to be. I was raised to hate organised religion, cops and attempts to control my body.

I'm an anarchist. I identify with the anti-fascist in the Spanish Civil War. They wanted to build a better and more beautiful world where all were free to achieve their greatest aspirations and be part of a society where everyone's needs were met. They wanted joyous lives - not just for themselves, but for everyone. They also wanted to smash a fascism that stood against freedom, dignity and creativity in every way.

Fascism didn't start with the nazis. It started with an industrial-scale project to enslave humans for profit, and to steal entire continents full of resources based on a religiously divined supremacy upheld by unlimited barbarity. Fascism is anti-hope and anti-future. Fascism is death.

Anti-fascism is life. I'm going to fight for it.



I'm Antifascist because I believe in personal freedom, collectivism and bodily autonomy - to name a few reasons.

I'm Antifascist because I worry about governments and forces that seek to control what we do with our bodies, what bathrooms we use, how we identify and what languages we speak.

I'm Antifascist because the lies told about my fellow trans whānau, my disabled whānau, my Māori whānau, my poor and working class whānau, and my Palestinian whānau must be countered.

I'm Antifascist because I worry about the way disinformation is circulated and weaponised to control us and to turn us against each other.

I'm Antifascist because Fascists are losers.

-Alyx



This year I got Long Covid, faced the full horrors of the pandemic, and began masking everywhere except my home (and sometimes even there). It made me rethink what leftism and anti-fascism mean.

We often frame the Left-Right divide as ~~the~~ ^{the} collective vs. individual, but I suggest the real divide is care vs. abandonment. Or care for people, animals and the environment (Left) vs. care for symbols and objects like "the economy" or "the sanctity of marriage" (Right).

In the Left, we sometimes dismiss individual actions as meaningless because they're insufficient for structural change. But the fact is that we are individuals. Every time we go down to a protest, or form a mutual aid collective, we make that choice as an individual. Moreover, actions like wearing a helmet, a condom, or eating healthily don't become meaningless because they're individual; they help preserve us for our lives and the struggles ahead.

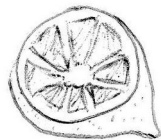
Fascism forces us into meaningless struggles, but also provides meaningless comfort. Right now, it offers us plastic community-building where we resignedly infect each other with a disabling disease and shut out disabled people. But leftism and anti-fascism engages us in meaningful struggle so that we might have meaningful comfort. Revolutions are composed of individuals making sacrifices together, often in small or unseen ways, in pursuit of that comfort. It's worth not-dying for.

I don't come from a particularly political background. It was instead full of people who had lots of words about radical political theory, but who played only until there was consultant roles and finance grad positions to fill.

I'm more interested in practical things, so instead I read revolutionary books when I'm supposed to be booking meetings in an outlook calendars, and I steal mandarin's through the new world self checkout. Practicality has led me to antifascism, which includes stuff like resisting nazis, transphobes and the white supremacist state structure. More importantly, it stems from a love for what those groups seek to destroy.

I want to see these colonial capitalist structures in the bin, and replaced with something better. I believe it is happening^{already}, both quietly and loudly. ♡

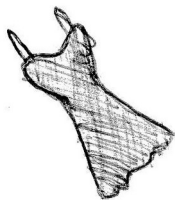
I always thought of myself as anti-fascist,
because of course. Fascism sucks. They were the bad guys in WWII!
But I never did anything about it, just listened to R.A.T.M.



I used to go to these house parties in Nelson
squats around the turn of the century.
Sometimes skinheads would show up,
and we just... tolerated them.

One time they dared me to eat a lemon, & I did.

I tried helping out at anti-war protests
during the invasion of Iraq, but wasn't much help. And we failed.
Moved on & did other stuff. Listened to S.O.A.D. Whatever. Nevermind.
I was a happy little stoned gay white boy.



Then I came out as a transwoman, & couldn't
hide from the hate anymore. It was 2018.
I kept running into this street preacher ranting
about how people like me used the bathroom to
prey on others. Apparently needing to pee made
me a monster. It was 2018.

Then ¹⁵March 2019 happened, and we saw how all the racism
that we knew was going on in our Pākehā community came
crashing down & murdered 51 Muslim kiwis.

We know we have fascists in our community.
You can't just ignore them & they'll go away.
They fucking kill people.

-Trix

A handful of people hoard and control most of the world's resources.

The majority of people are exploited, just so that handful of people can increase their hoards.

This is capitalism.

We can have an egalitarian, cooperative world where everyone has enough - IF we work together and we overthrow the capitalists.

The capitalists know our collective power, so they stoke xenophobia, racism, queerphobia, and so on to disorient and divide us.

And if we begin to overcome these divisive forces, they resort to unleashing outright violence.

Fascism is one of capitalism's last resorts against us.

So countering fascists and the far-right protects our comrades from violence and it gives us space to organise, to connect, to collaborate, and to build toward an egalitarian, sustainable, cooperative future.

-Serah Allison, proud member of the International Socialist Organisation Te Whanganui-a-Tara branch and of Pōneke Anti-Fascist Coalition.

My jam is social & environmental justice & the rights of all people & living beings to enjoy our time on the planet in safety, peace & equity.

So, that's not super compatible with fascism & its baseless notion of hierarchies, which casts some people as "superior" to others & humans as superior to other planetary beings. This gross ideology justifies destruction, extraction & exploitation of marginalised groups & the natural world, to funnel resources, wealth & privileges to a select few.

Anti-fascism is an ongoing necessity as far-right talking points continue to creep into mainstream discourse & grassroots movements, via the agenda-surfing conspiracy theories of cooks & grifters. Decades of neoliberal capitalism has tilled the soil for these talking points to take root; deep structural inequality exposes vulnerable groups to vicious scapegoating & escalates 'zero-sum' narratives that imply a 'necessity' to plunder the Earth, while vilifying reasonable efforts to reduce that plunder through environmental regulations & redistribution.

So, I'm an anti-fascist because fascism & the conditions that support it directly attack social & environmental wellbeing. I think it's important that as many people as possible are able to recognise fascist talking points, canards & tropes, so that when these ideas crop up in our communities or the movements we're part of, we can nip them in the bud rather than leaving them unchallenged to take root & grow.

Ideological infiltration isn't a hypothetical risk; the far-right have always framed or co-opted social & environmental issues to match their distorted worldview, connect with potential followers & replace genuine progress with hateful agendas.

For example, fascists have long weaponised the concept of protecting nature for & against certain groups of people (e.g. the Lebensraum). Far-right populists pretend to care about (white) working-class struggles by blaming immigrants & other targeted groups. Conspiratorial thinking with a hippy flavour ('conspirituality') diverts attention from the systemic vested interests properly the focus of climate campaigns towards fringe topics like chemtrails & clean-eating. As ecological degradation becomes harder to ignore, the far-right can easily flip from denialism to 'eco-fascism', peddling "solutions" that entrench current injustices & power structures & promote more violent oppression of scapegoated groups.

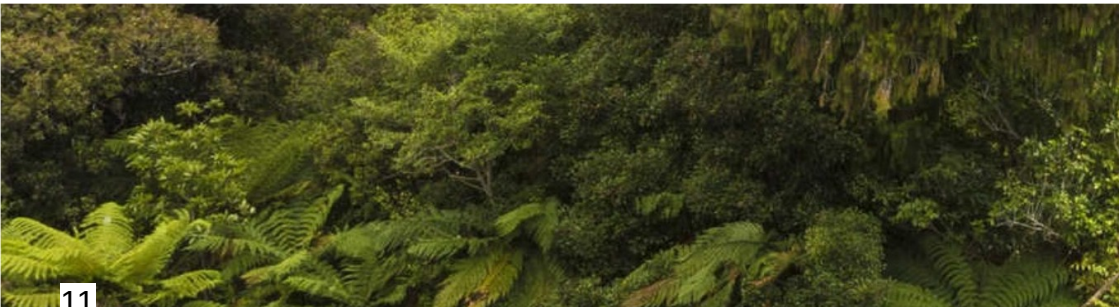
A joyful & inclusive future grounded in social & environmental justice is possible. I'd rather be actively anti-fascist than complacent, when so much is at stake.

I first met Linda Armstrong at a K Road party when I was a teenager. Most punks I had met were into nihilism and cynicism, but Linda espoused a worldview of community-building, staunch feminism, dissolving hierarchies and power structures, mocking societal conventions, compassion and living by your values. She gave me a reading list, which I later devoured at the library.

Linda went on to work at the Māngere Refugee Resettlement Centre, where she touched many more lives. She then moved to my home city and attended the mosque in the neighbourhood I grew up in. It's a city people tend to leave, but Linda never did anything the expected way. The suburb has changed massively since I lived there. Down the road from where the mosque now stands, neo-Nazi skinheads would patrol the streets.

One high school party I helped some Indo-Fijian friends climb the back fence so we could all escape as boneheads smashed the place up. One of the leaders of these gangs managed to convince the city council he was reformed.

They gave him a bunch of money to mentor confused teenagers. He used this opportunity to recruit members for his more overtly political neo-Nazi group, the National Front. Despite the tiny number of supporters, the national media gave him a massive platform to espouse his hatred of Asians.



I don't know the details, but I've been told the last minutes of Linda's life were spent heroically trying to save other people's lives. No one who knew Linda was surprised by this. After she was martyred, anonymous online accelerationist Hitler-fanboys celebrated her death and called her a "blood traitor" and "crypto-Jew".

The difference in world views between Linda and these pathetic losers couldn't be starker. They imagine a world of hate, death camps, slavery, and division. We imagine a world of love, creativity and shared joy.

Sometimes I despair at the direction the world is going. Globally, the situation for refugees and asylum seekers is worse than when Linda was alive. The new government in Aotearoa is treating the disabled community with casual cruelty. The genocide in Gaza is being supported by the majority of leaders in the West. Transgender and gender-non-conforming people are being attacked from multiple directions. The promise of a Te Tiriti-based future is slipping further away. The young neo-Nazis think their movement is on the rise.

But everyday people are coming together and proving the creepy bigots wrong. Most of us want the type of world Linda wanted, and anti-fascists are working to make it happen. We will win.



Well before the start of World War II in 1939, some people who understood what fascism could do began organising against it: union members, communists, socialists and others. When the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) started, people flocked to join the International Brigade against fascist Franco's forces. From the USA thousands joined the Lincoln Brigade in Spain, including many African-Americans.

German and Italian fascists supported Franco, trying out military equipment and methods, practising for world war.

From the mid-1940s, some who'd fought in Spain, and others who denounced fascism earlier in the 1930s earned the title "premature anti-fascists". They became suspects before, during and after World War II - as lefties, communists, undesirables. Some faced discrimination.

Among them was a flawed but extraordinary hero of mine, the singer, actor and left-wing activist Paul Robeson, who despite his world-wide fame, endured additional discrimination in the USA for his political views. Harassed by McCarthy's House Un-American Activities Committee, he was deprived of his passport and denied access to performance venues.



As David A. Walsh writes (www.albavolunteer.org) "premature anti-fascist" now describes "taking an unpopular political stand before it's considered right to do so... —a marker of left-wing political identity." I think we might be premature anti-fascists and therefore on the right (i.e. Left) side of history. Go us!

Marie Russell

Why I am an anti-fascist.

Seems pretty obvious to me that being against fascism should be a default position for most sane people. That opposing a violent, racist, authoritarian ideology for dumbos that aims to subjugate women, BIPOC, and LGBTQ folks would be just what most people do. But fascism has a way of sneaking up on you, of hiding in plain sight, of denying it is what it is even as you're being shoved into an oven. "Oh you just call everyone you don't like a nazi," they say marching in time to chants of "jews will not replace us."

And that's where it seems like we are in this current moment. Fascism has weaselled its way into power in multiple countries around the world. Its rhetoric and methods so normalized within our global consciousness that several right wing parties here in NZ employ them as part of their public presentation. "Bring back law and order!" Was a main slogan of the ACT party - ripped straight from the gaping, slobbering maw of the American fascist MAGA movement. "We need to protect women and girls from biological males," NZ First leader Winston Peters tells us. Borrowing from the transphobic playbook of American stochastic terrorists and fascists Chaya Raichik and Matt Walsh and British fascists Posie Parker and JK Rowling.

And these are the bedfellows chosen by the National party to help run the country for the next 3 years. Far right dinguses who employ the language of fascism to pander to the most racist, homophobic, transphobic, xenophobic members of our country for the chance to wield a bit of power.

Not to mention their penchant for further enriching their wealthy friends while pushing policies that target the most vulnerable members of our society.

So, why am I anti-fascist? Besides the obvious that being against fascism should be a no-brainer, I am angered that it has been allowed to wiggle its way into our politics like a mindflayer parasite that now sits just below the skin, spreading its toxic lies without most people knowing it's there. And like the person who discovers the wriggling worm burrowed in behind the eyes, I want it removed. That seems like a reasonable desire to me.





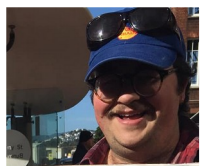
**NAZI
PUNKS
FUCK
OFF**

Won't somebody
please think
of the children

I am an Anti-Fascist because I want a safe, inclusive and just world for my child and the tamariki of the future.



Images taken during recent Pōneke protest actions for Palestine, Kanaki, Toitū te Tiriti, and other causes supported by PAFC.



Are you anti- all the fascist stuff?

**Inside this
zine are diverse
perspectives on the
meaning and practice
of anti-fascism in
Aotearoa**



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