

The Anarchist Lunch

Director: Rachel Epstein

Tag line: A group of leftists have been gathering for a weekly lunch for over 35 years. With love and humour, the film explores their friendship, lifelong activism, community, and the process of aging.

Bio: Rachel Epstein grew up in a secular Jewish household imbued with politics, social justice and the music of Pete Seeger, Tom Lehrer and the Wobblies. Her work and activist life have included 10 years working with migrant domestic workers, 25 years as a 2SLGBTQ+ parenting activist and 5 years as Executive Director of a community-based secular Jewish organization. She currently works as a facilitator, mediator, fertility counselor and coach, wedding officiant and filmmaker.

Summary: The Anarchist Lunch is a Vancouver-based 45-minute documentary about my 99-year-old dad's lunch group that has been meeting weekly for over 35 years. Lunch members range in age from early 50s to 90s (most are in their 70s and 80s), and have been actively involved, over many years, in anti-war and nuclear movements; assisting American war resisters; working to get wrongly convicted prisoners released; as union and climate activists and as Jews in support of Palestinian struggles.

The film's themes are male friendship, lifelong activism and aging. It was shot over 5 years during which time lunch members got sick and died, covid happened, and world events unfolded. My dad got to watch the final film just days before he died in July, 2023.