

The Gender-Based Violence Prevention Mailing List

An opt-in mailout that includes resources, event announcements and other news and articles related to gender-based violence prevention, sexual violence prevention and healthy relationships using a critical anti-racist, intersectional, and decolonial framework that call out antisemitism and Islamophobia.

These resources use a power analysis and support critical thinking and action on transforming conditions that enable harm and creating ones that promote healing, care, dignity and liberation.

These resources aim to support 2SLGBTQ+ youth with multiple identities and belonging to BLACK, INDIGENOUS, RACIALIZED and DISABLED communities. They are in support of Indigenous sovereignty, Indigenous self-determination and LAND BACK.

What's in this issue?

1. EVENT: What does Palestine Mean for Black America: A Discussion with Angela Davis on Why We Must Stand with Palestine. (TONIGHT @ 8pm EST)
2. The Teach Palestine Project website is a resource by and for K-12 teachers and teacher educators focused on bringing Palestine into our classrooms and schools." (Recommended by [@HarshaWalia](#))
3. Books About Contemporary Palestine for Children (Resource)
4. As an Arab American Muslim Mother, Here Is the Education I Want for My Children (Article)
5. Boycotting Occupation: Educators and Palestine (Article)
6. On Truth and Neutrality (Article and Teaching Resource)
7. Checking Yourself for Bias in the Classroom (Article and Teaching Resource)
8. Decolonize Palestine: A collection of resources for folks wanting to learn more about Palestine
9. Teaching Palestine: A Multiple Narratives Approach (Online Curriculum Resource) (Recommended by [@HarshaWalia](#))
10. Jewish Voice for Peace: RESOURCES
11. Articles documenting the Palestinian resistance to settler-colonial violence
12. Continuously Updated Master-list of Sources on Palestine (Resources by multiple researchers, scholars, academics, authors)
13. Email campaigns to send letters to elected officials.
14. Petitions.

WHAT DOES PALESTINE MEAN FOR BLACK AMERICA?

A DISCUSSION ON WHY WE
MUST STAND WITH PALESTINE

Wednesday, May 19 @ 8PM
bit.ly/freedom4palestine



Ahmad Abuznaid



Janaya "Future" Kahn



Mohammed el-Kurd



Anwar Hadid



Dr. Angela Davis



Aja Monet



Vic Mensa



Fayrouz Sharqawi



US CAMPAIGN FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

What does Palestine mean for Black America?

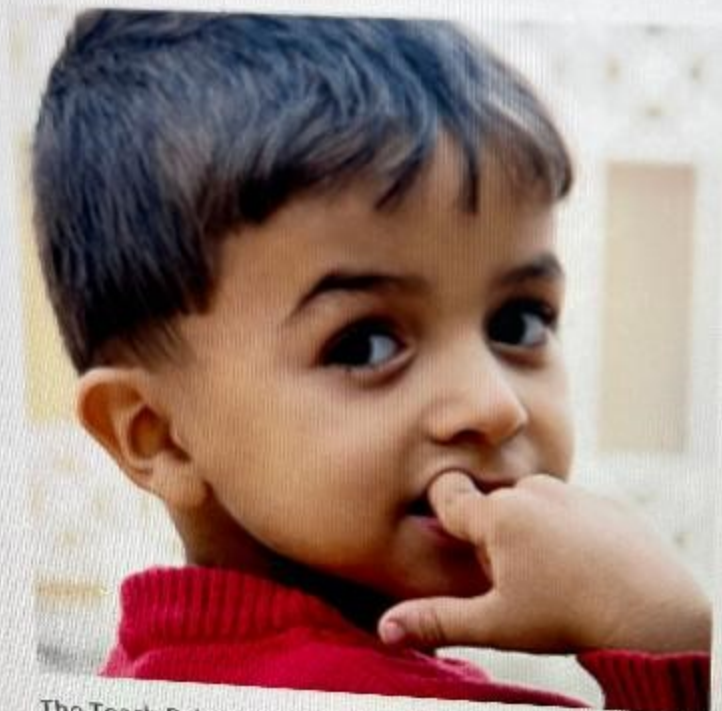
Over the last several weeks, our timelines have been filled with pictures and videos of the violence in Sheikh Jarrah and the Gaza strip. Celebrities who are often silent on issues have been posting #FreePalestine. Why now? What's it got to do with our struggles at home? Join us on Wednesday to lift the veil on what we've been told is a complicated issue and what it's got to do with Black America.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

2. The Teach Palestine Project website is a resource by and for K-12 teachers and teacher educators focused on bringing Palestine into our classrooms and schools." (Recommended by [@HarshaWalia](#))

SOURCE: <https://teachpalestine.org/>

Welcome to the Teach Palestine Project website!



The Teach Palestine Project website is a resource by and for K-12 teachers and teacher educators focused on bringing Palestine into our classrooms and schools.

The recent history and current reality in Palestine are connected to many issues we already teach, including: immigration, Manifest Destiny, borders and walls, the juvenile justice system, water and other environmental issues, and US policy in the Middle East.

Yet almost no one in US schools teaches about Palestine—despite its importance in world politics, the many connections to US history, and the deep involvement of the US in Israel. As Palestinian and US educators, we want to change that.

We know that there are many bars to teaching about Palestine: There is a serious lack of curriculum and age-appropriate information for students of different ages. Many of us feel we aren't knowledgeable enough to take on such a controversial topic.

But teaching Palestine is both possible and rewarding. We hope the units, lessons, resources, and background materials here will inspire you to either begin or expand your curriculum on Palestine. And please contribute your own curriculum, resources, and experiences to this site!

Teach Palestine is a project of the Middle East Children's Alliance, based in Berkeley, California. MECA is a nonprofit organization working for the rights of children in the Middle East by sending humanitarian aid, supporting projects for children, and educating North American and international communities about the effects of US foreign policy on children in the region.

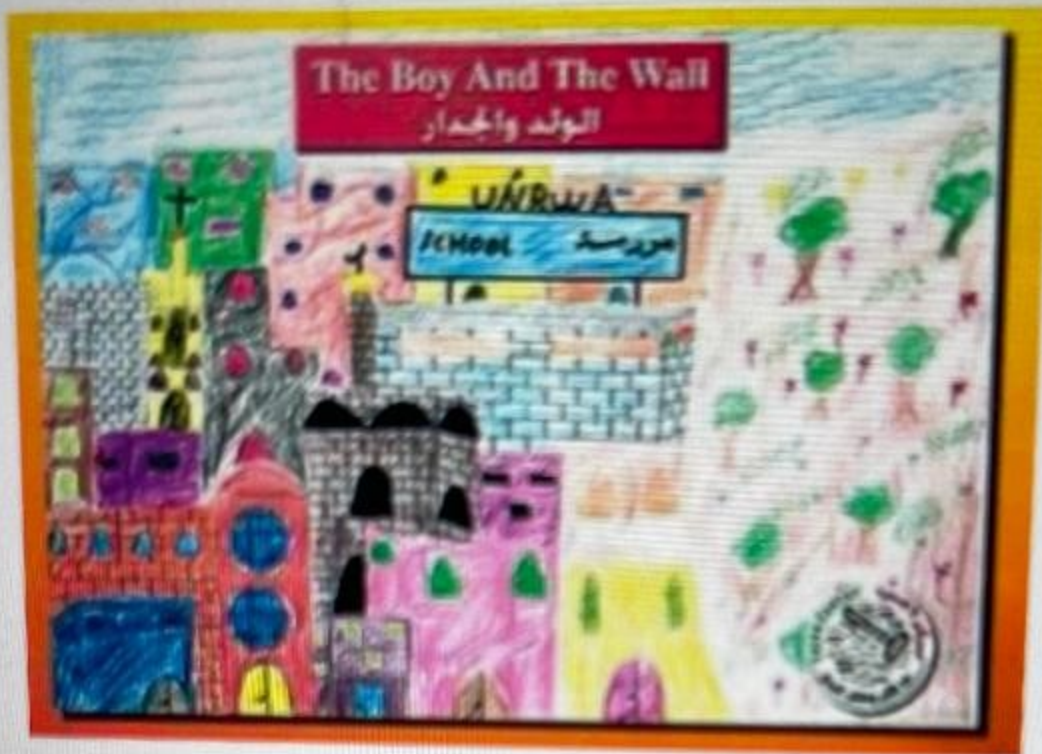
Jody Sokolower, project manager of Teach Palestine, is a long-time political activist, educator, writer, and editor. Most recently, she was managing editor of *Rethinking Schools* magazine; at *Rethinking Schools*, she also coedited the award-winning *Rethinking Sexism, Gender, and Sexuality* (2016) and edited *Teaching the Wars in the Middle East* (2013). Jody has taught middle and high school students, adult English language learners, and teachers. For the past eight years, Zeiad and Jody have co-facilitated workshops on teaching Palestine. She completed a Masters of Arts in Teaching at New College of California.

Samia Shoman, a California native with Palestinian roots, Samia Shoman has dedicated her career in public education to promoting racial and social justice in the classroom and broader educational organizations she has worked in. She is currently part of a California collaborative leading a Liberated Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Coalition. As a long time high school social science teacher, with a special love for working with English Learners, her current passion is leading an alternative Newcomer Program and the implementation of Ethnic Studies for all ninth graders in her district. Samia currently serves as the Manager of English Learner & Academic Support Programs for the San Mateo Union High School District. In addition to her secondary school work, Samia served as a lecturer in the College of Ethnic Studies Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diaspora Program and the Masters of Public Health Program at San Francisco State University. Samia holds a B.A. in Political Science with a minor in Spanish from UC Davis, an M.A. in Education from San Francisco State University, and an Ed.D with a focus on Organization and Leadership from the University of San Francisco. When she isn't working with students, their families, or teachers and administrators, Samia is running or reading, sharing in being a proud parent of boy/girl twins, Palestine and Jihad with her husband, Feras.

Zeiad Abbas Shamrouh, MECA's executive director, is a Palestinian refugee from Dheisheh Refugee Camp in the West Bank. He is the cofounder of the Ibdaa Cultural Center in Dheisheh. Zeiad is also a filmmaker, journalist, and educator who has worked with Palestinian and international media and has participated in the production of several documentary films. He was the co-producer and production



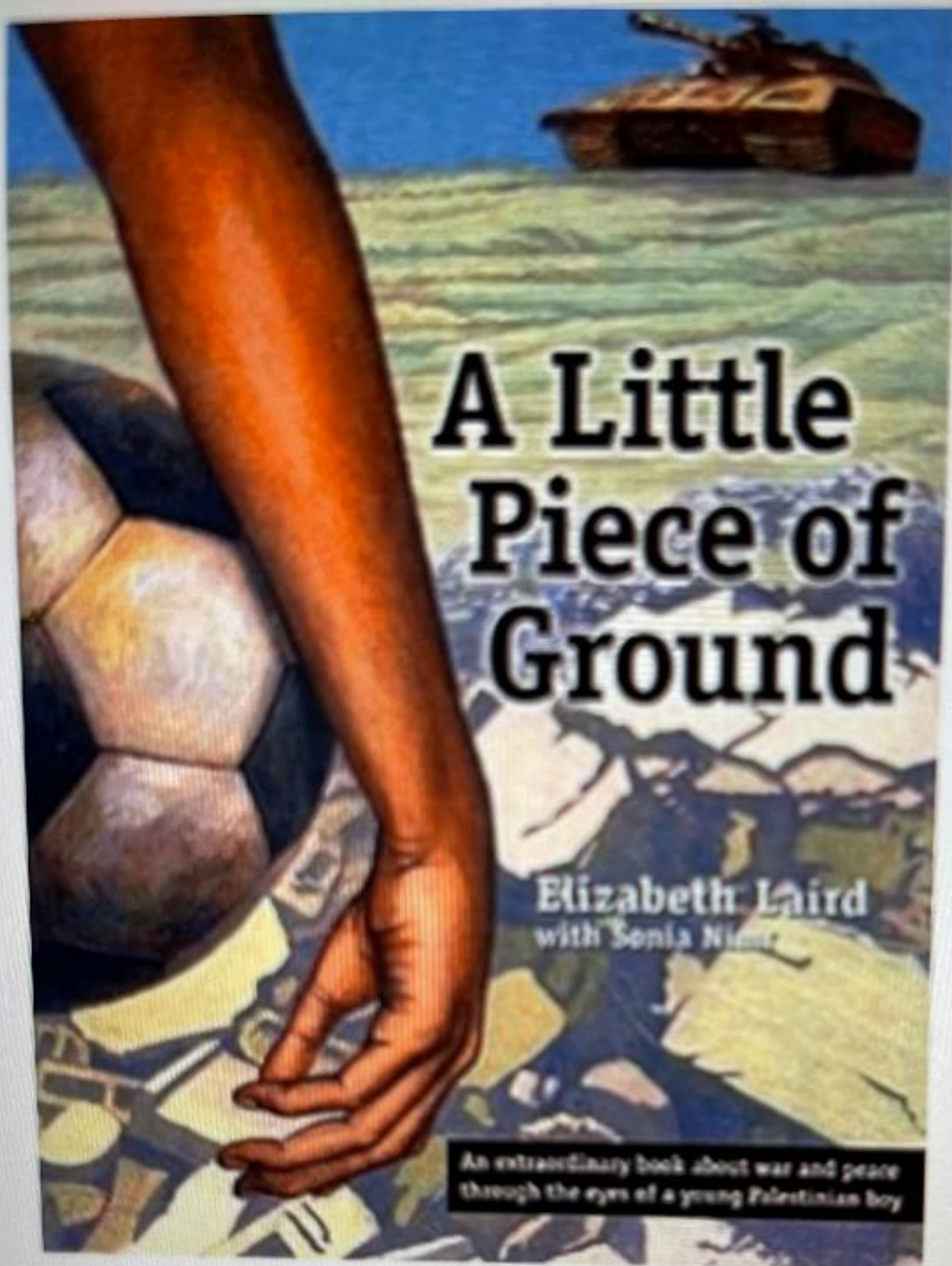
Naomi Shihab Nye is an award-winning poet whose father was a Palestinian refugee as a teenager her life was divided between Jerusalem and San Antonio, Texas. In *Sitti's Secrets*, Mona, who lives in America, goes to visit her grandmother in a Palestinian village in the occupied West Bank. Although Mona does not speak a shared language with her grandmother (*Sitti* in Arabic), they are able to communicate through gestures, music, and actions. It is a beautifully written and illustrated book about a loving relationship between a child and her grandmother.



Amahl Bishara's *The Boy and the Wall*, written in English and Arabic, is about life in Aida, a Palestinian refugee camp near Bethlehem, where the lives of Palestinians were turned upside down when Israel built a huge concrete separation wall (called an apartheid wall by former President Jimmy Carter and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, among others). In a rhythmic speak-and-respond structure modeled on Margaret Wise Brown's *The Runaway Bunny*, a Palestinian child talks with his mother about what he can do to help his community overcome the impact of the wall and all that it brings, including soldiers with guns and tear gas canisters. His mother's responses underscore her love for him and Palestinian traditions and culture, and the resilience of Palestinians under occupation. For example, when the boy says, Or maybe I will become a mountain so that I can be bigger than the wall, and see over it, his mother replies, If you become a mountain and become bigger than the wall . . . I will become a farmer and plant olive trees and tend to you and live from the olives you bear.

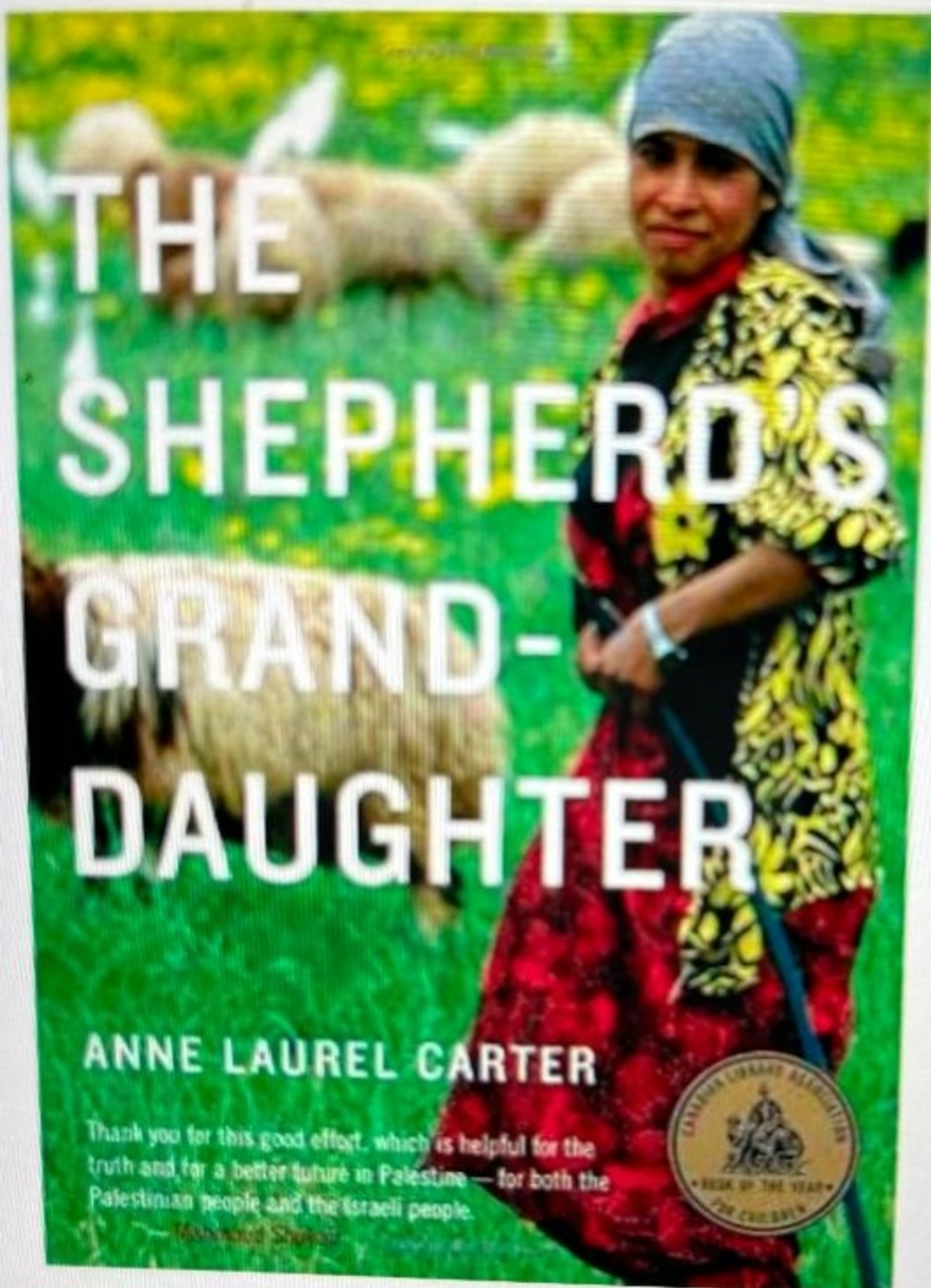
An introduction provides information about the Aida Refugee Camp and life under occupation, including the impact on Palestinians of the apartheid wall (e.g., separating Palestinians from their family members and friends, their land, their work, medical care, religious sites, and open land where children can play). The illustrations are by children from Aida.

Novels



Elizabeth Laird's *A Little Piece of Ground* is particularly good. It is set in Ramallah, just north of Jerusalem in the occupied West Bank. After a bombing in Israel, Ramallah is under a strict Israeli curfew and people are prevented from leaving their homes for days at a time. The main character, Karim, is a 12-year-old boy from a Muslim family who lives in town and is crazy about soccer. His best friend, Joni, is from a Christian family and is also crazy about soccer. While kicking a soccer ball against his apartment building during one of the few breaks in the curfew, Karim meets Hopper, who lives close to a refugee camp across town. Hopper takes Karim to a vacant piece of ground near the refugee camp. It is filled with the rubble of demolished buildings, but they think they can convert it into a soccer field. The three boys do exactly that by hauling rocks and rusty machinery to one side of the plot of land. They discover a car buried under the rubble and convert it into a den. One day, while the three boys are playing soccer with boys from the refugee camp, Israeli tanks roll into their soccer field and the boys take off for safety. However, Karim sprains his ankle and is unable to escape; he ends up hiding inside the abandoned car, where he is trapped for several days. The author, a well-known British writer of books for young adults

who lived in Ramallah while doing research for this book, does a particularly good job of conveying the friendship and shared interests of the boys and the tension that is created for Palestinians by life under the Israeli occupation.



Canadian author Anne Laurel Carter wrote *The Shepherd's Granddaughter* after living in both Israel and Palestine. Amani is a young girl who lives with her extended family in a West Bank village and wants to follow in the footsteps of her grandfather and become a shepherd. She and her family experience terrifying situations when a group of illegal Jewish settlers occupy a hill overlooking the village. Under the protective eyes of Israeli soldiers, the settlers poison Amani's sheep; destroy her family's ancient olive, fig, and lemon trees; appropriate their land and water sources; and threaten villagers with death if they do not leave their land. Amani observes the demolition of her house by an armored Caterpillar bulldozer and the arrests of two close family members: her father, when he returns home to find his

Kenneth Stern
Nomi M. Stolzenberg
Rabbi Burt Visotzky
Steven Windmueller

Understanding Antisemitism at its Nexus with Israel and Zionism ¹

Antisemitism

Antisemitism consists of anti-Jewish attitudes, actions or systemic conditions. It includes negative beliefs and feelings about Jews, hostile behavior directed against Jews, and conditions that discriminate against Jews and impede their ability to participate as equals in political, religious, cultural, economic, or social life.

Uniting all of antisemitism's strands is a persistent demonization that casts Jews not only as "others" (i.e., as intrinsically different or alien) but also as irredeemably threatening and dangerously powerful. There are multiple reasons that people may have for opposing Zionism and/or Israel. Such opposition does not necessarily reflect specific anti-Jewish animus nor purposefully lead to antisemitic behaviors and conditions. For example, someone might oppose the principle of nationalism or ethnonationalist ideology, of which Zionism is an example. Someone's personal or national experience may have been adversely affected by the creation of the State of Israel (e.g., Palestinians for whom Zionism/Israel has created inequality and/or led to exile). Indeed, there are Jewish anti-Zionists who hold ethical and religious convictions that oppose a Jewish state. None of these motivations or attitudes toward Israel and/or Zionism necessarily constitute antisemitic behavior as troublemakers, shysters, capitalists, anarchists, communists, sexual degenerates, etc. The elements that make up antisemitism derive from various historical conditions, and in our current time combine to form pejorative claims that include religion, race, culture and politics. They portray Jews as secretive, manipulative, untrustworthy, controlling, and dangerous — as well as responsible for other people's suffering.

Understanding and addressing antisemitism is important in its own right, and it is a critical part of the broader struggle against all forms of oppression.

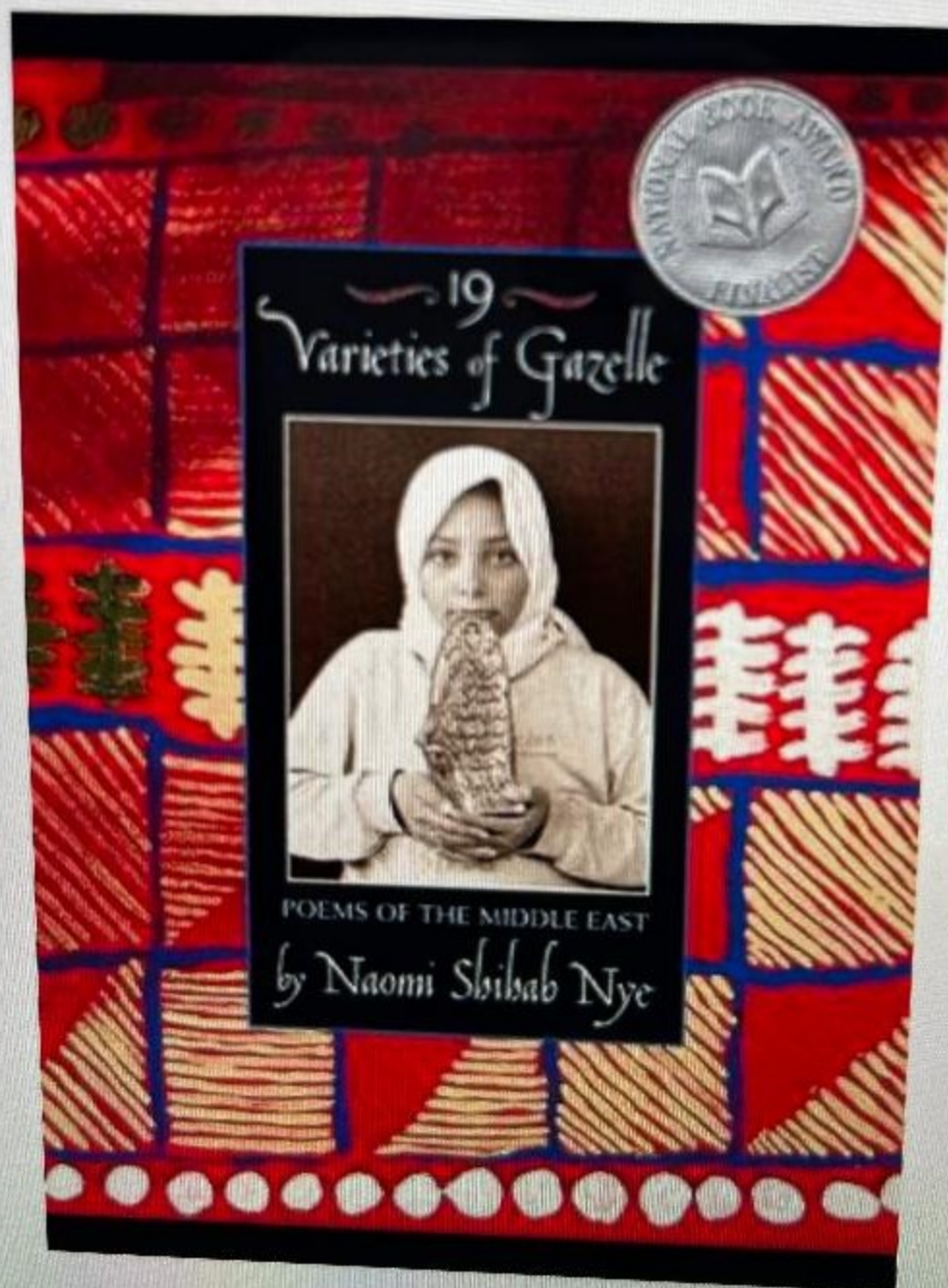
Antisemitic behaviors and conditions may emerge from indifference, stereotyping, or the rejection of Jewish perspectives and interests because they are held by Jews. It is even possible to engage in antisemitic behavior, or to promote antisemitic conditions, without holding expressly prejudicial attitudes toward Jews. In some cases, antisemitic behaviors and conditions may coexist with positive attitudes toward certain Jews or Jewish institutions.

Antisemitism can present in different forms; people change it and adapt it to their own social, political, cultural, religious, and historical circumstances. It can be used to target Jews of all races, denominations, gender identities, levels of observance, and political ideologies.

Antisemitism fulfills a social function: It provides an explanation for social disorders. People use it to demonize and fuel the oppression of any minority and all minorities ², while fomenting division between Jews and other minorities.

The second section of the book focuses on Barakat's memories of life as a refugee and then under occupation from the age of 3 to 7. Presumably she drew on family members recollections to augment her own early childhood memories because the descriptions are very detailed. She describes how frightening the war is and what it was like to flee from her home and be separated from her family for a while. She describes her family's life in a refugee camp in Jordan and their return to their home on a hill near Ramallah in the West Bank. Because it is in the center of an Israeli training ground, they are not allowed to leave the house during the day. Afraid for her children's safety, Barakat's mother takes her children to live in an orphanage, where she finds work.

Poetry



the flag of childhood

poems from the middle east



"This collection of poems is
a miracle of life."
—Karen Hesse

selected by naomi shihab nye

Nye edited *Flag of Childhood: Poems from the Middle East*. The poems in this volume, written by poets from 14 countries, including Palestinians and Jewish Israelis, explore and honor daily life in the Middle East, and life for Middle Eastern immigrants and their children in North America. The collection offers readers a beautifully worked window into what Nye refers to in the introduction as a complicated center of dramatic cultural and religious history.

The revered Palestinian writer and prolific poet Mahmoud Darwish wrote primarily for adults. However, his compelling poetry captures life for Palestinians, from their forced dislocation when the state of Israel was formed, through exile and occupation, and many of his poems can be shared with intermediate

grade readers. One example is Identity Card; the penultimate stanza captures the losses that Palestinians have experienced:

Write down!

I am an Arab

You have stolen the orchards of my ancestors

And the land which I cultivated

Along with my children

And you left nothing for us

Except for these rocks.

So will the State take them

As it has been said?!

Some Final Thoughts

U.S. media coverage of the Middle East is frequently Israel-centric and does not explore the enormous financial support that the United States provides each year to Israel and its occupation of Palestine. When this is coupled with a sometimes virulent anti-Muslim and anti-Arab feeling in many parts of the country, it is incumbent on educators to take a role in unpeeling these biases and encouraging students to think critically about human rights in Palestine/Israel. There is no question that reading books about contemporary Palestine and the Israeli occupation may raise conflicting points of view, but that is part of supporting students to become critical readers, thinkers, and, hopefully, activists in support of justice and peace.

Resources

Books

- Abdel-Fattah, Randa. *Where the Streets Had a Name*. New York City: Scholastic Press, 2010.
- Barakat, Ibtisam. *Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood*. New York City: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007.
- Bishara, Amahl. *The Boy and the Wall*. Illustrations by youth from the Lajee Centre. Ramallah, Palestine: Lajee Centre. Available in North America from Nidal Al-Azraq at nd_alazraq@yahoo.com, 2005.
- Carter, Anne Laurel. *The Shepherds Granddaughter*. Toronto, Canada: Ground-wood Books/House of Anansi Press, 2008.
- Laird, Elizabeth. *A Little Piece of Ground*. Chicago, Ill.: Haymarket Books, 2006.
- Middle East Children's Alliance. *A Child's View from Gaza: Palestinian Children's Art and the Fight Against Censorship*. Berkeley, Calif.: Pacific View Press, 2012.
- Nye, Naomi Shihab, ed. *The Flag of Childhood: Poems from the Middle East*. New York City: Aladdin Paperbacks, 2002.
- Nye, Naomi Shihab. *19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems of the Middle East*. New York City: Greenwillow Books, 2002.
- Nye, Naomi Shihab. *Sitt's Secrets*. Illustrations by Nancy Carpenter. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994.
- OGrady, Ellen. *Outside the Ark: An Artist's Journey in Occupied Palestine*. Durham, N.C.: 55 Books. Available from P.O. Box 542, 305E Chapel Hill Street, Durham, N.C. 27702, 2005.

Internet Resources





Protesters participate in the international campaign to boycott, divestment from, and sanction Israel in support of Palestinian human rights. Montreal, August 2014.

Photo: Scott Weinstein

"They are targeting our children. They know our children are the future of Palestine," a mother and community activist told Rethinking Schools editor Jody Sokolower. In this Palestinian woman's East Jerusalem neighborhood, dozens of children have been arrested from their beds at 4 in the morning, cuffed and blindfolded, and taken for lengthy interrogations. One 5-year-old was arrested and detained because he rushed to his mother's defense in their own house. After the children return home, they are often on house arrest for months. Many of these children show the effects of trauma: bedwetting, nightmares, depression. As a result of their incarceration and house arrest, they lose valuable time at school, and many drop out as a result.

This is just one example of the impact of Israel's occupation of Palestine, but it's one that moved us deeply. When the United States was about to invade Afghanistan and again in the lead-up to the war against Iraq, Rethinking Schools argued that these were situations of such magnitude that educators had a moral and an *educational* responsibility to speak out. We think that Palestine is just such a situation. We've had long discussions about what that means for us as educators. One important piece of that responsibility, we believe, is joining the movement to boycott, divest from, and sanction Israel (BDS) for its denial of human rights to Palestinians.

What Is BDS?

The BDS movement was launched in 2005, with a call from 170 Palestinian civil organizations, including teacher and other unions, medical associations, and religious and humanitarian organizations. Appalled at the separation wall Israel was building through occupied Palestine and frustrated by the inability of the United Nations to hold Israel accountable for violating dozens of resolutions upholding Palestinian

human rights, they called for an international movement to boycott, divest from, and sanction Israel. They were influenced by South African leaders like Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela, who described the similarity of Palestinian life under Israeli occupation to their lives under South African apartheid, and by the positive impact of the international movement to expose and isolate that regime.

The Palestinian BDS movement demands that Israel:

1. End its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantle the separation wall.
2. Recognize the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality.
3. Respect, protect, and promote the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN Resolution 194.

In the beginning, the idea that individuals, organizations, and governments around the world would understand the role of Israel toward Palestinians as a colonial occupation seemed far-fetched. But just as the movement to isolate South Africa grew slowly from a small base, the BDS movement has gradually expanded and become part of an international sea change in understanding the role of Israel and the situation of the Palestinians. Israel's cyclical violent assaults on the besieged people of Gaza have horrified people around the world. So have images of the separation wall snaking through Palestinian lands, separating villagers from their olive fields and children from their schools. And, as the number of illegal Israeli settlers in occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank has climbed to more than 500,000, the country's expansionist aims have become clearer.

Meanwhile, organizing by Jews who support Palestinian human rights, individually and through organizations like Jewish Voice for Peace and the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network, rebuts claims that criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic. (Zionism, which began in the late 19th century as a movement for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, today means the support of Israel as a Jewish state—and often its expansion to East Jerusalem, Gaza, and the West Bank as well.)

In the past few years, the movement to pressure Israel through boycotts, divestment, and sanctions has grown in the United States, particularly in church organizations and on college campuses. The Presbyterian Church U.S.A. voted to divest from Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola because of their role in the occupation; the United Church of Christ and the Mennonites also voted for divestment. UAW 2865, representing thousands of teaching assistants and other workers for the entire University of California system, and the system's statewide Student Association voted to support BDS; divestment motions have passed at DePaul, Earlham, Loyola, Northwestern, Oglethorpe, Stanford, Wesleyan, and the University of New Mexico.

Last August, more than 1,000 African American scholars, activists, students, artists, and organizations signed a Black Solidarity Statement with Palestine in support of BDS and an end to U.S. diplomatic and economic aid to Israel until it complies with international law. Signers included scholar/activists Angela Davis and Cornel West, imprisoned journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, rapper Talib Kweli, Black Lives Matter co-founder Patrisse Cullors, and the Dream Defenders.

Education Under Occupation

Within Rethinking Schools, a growing sense of responsibility for Palestine has been reinforced by editors' personal experiences over many years. Bob Peterson, Linda Christensen, and Bill Bigelow were part of a delegation to Palestine/Israel back in 1989. They returned with stories about the impact of the occupation on children and young people—Israel had closed all K-12 schools and universities in retaliation for the first Palestinian *Intifada* (uprising). In Gaza, they spent time with children who were

terrorized by a dusk-to-dawn, shoot-to-kill curfew and regular Israeli armed attacks on Palestinian schools. A few years ago, Jesse Hagopian participated in an African heritage trip to Palestine sponsored by Interfaith Peace-Builders. Veterans of the Civil Rights Movement on that trip spoke about experiencing post-traumatic stress from the similarities to what they had lived through in the Jim Crow South. According to Jesse, "To hear from the older activists that life for Palestinians under Israeli control was more oppressive than Jim Crow—that was life-changing."

Jody Sokolower spent two weeks in East Jerusalem last year, interviewing Palestinian children, their parents, and community activists. "I wanted to focus on the impact on children and education," she says, "so I looked at the Silwan neighborhood, where residents experience daily house demolitions, evictions, more and more Israeli settlers (many from Brooklyn), constant arrests, and lack of basic services. Children suffer the worst. I didn't meet a boy over the age of 8 who hadn't been arrested at least once. And I met a teenage girl who didn't speak for a year after her family's home was demolished before her eyes."

There is a severe shortage of classrooms for Palestinian children in East Jerusalem; schools in Gaza suffer from the effects of Israel's 2014 attacks and the continuing siege. And then there's what Palestinian children are allowed to learn. Teachers in East Jerusalem and within Israel's 1948 borders are forbidden to mention Palestinian history or culture. Just as children in colonized Jamaica and Nigeria were taught only British history, Palestinian children are taught only Israeli history (see ["Education Under Occupation: East Jerusalem"](#)).

Palestine Solidarity for K-12 Teachers?

A few months ago, RS editor Adam Sanchez asked Palestinian American scholar/activist Ali Abunimah, author of *The Battle for Justice in Palestine*: "K-12 teachers have so much else to worry about. Why should we support the BDS movement?"

After describing the impact of the occupation on Palestinian children and their education, Abunimah explained: "I don't want to say what people should and shouldn't do, but the United States is directly implicated in what's happening in Palestine. It's directly complicit in the occupation. It arms and funds occupation, it arms and funds Israeli apartheid and settler colonialism. The impact on Palestinian society has been catastrophic. And there's no doubt that U.S. support for Israel has been driving much of the conflict and extremism we see in the region."

Abunimah published an article last March about American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten's speeches and public statements in opposition to BDS. "So," he concluded, "I think teachers have to get involved because they already are. For teachers whose unions are part of the AFT, their name is being used to support unjust policies. They have to decide whether they're going to take that in silence or speak up for justice."

But what would solidarity with Palestine look like for K-12 teachers and schools? For us, education activism starts with content in the classroom. Samia Shoman's article on teaching the history of 1948 (["Independence or Catastrophe? Teaching Palestine Through Multiple Perspectives,"](#) summer 2014), Katharine Samway's [article on books about Palestinian lives appropriate for K-8 readers](#) (winter 2012-13), and Ken Gadbow's article on connecting U.S. and Palestinian students via videoconferencing (["Portland to Palestine,"](#) winter 09-10) are examples of places to start. But we need more teaching, more curriculum, more articles that delve into the history and politics of Israel-Palestine. And we need to build networks of teachers to defend those who may be attacked for teaching Palestinian perspectives.

But we also want to encourage K-12 teachers and education activists to participate directly in the BDS movement. As teachers and teacher educators, we have pension funds, many of which are invested in corporations that contribute to and/or profit from the repression of Palestinian people. Progressive unions around the world, including the British National Union of Teachers, the Connecticut branch of the AFL-CIO, and the Quebec Confederation of National Trade Unions, have endorsed BDS and made it part of an overall commitment to responsible investment. This seems like an important time for teacher unions in the United States to take a similar stance.

Divisive or Strengthening?

Some people say that now, when public education is under such sharp attack, raising solidarity with Palestine will divide and weaken our movement. Martin Luther King Jr. faced similar criticisms when he spoke out against the war in Vietnam. He responded famously, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Like King, we believe that when we take principled stands and connect issues, we build a stronger movement.

An example of how international solidarity can strengthen movements emerged from Black Lives Matter during the demonstrations in Ferguson, Missouri, over the police killing of Michael Brown in August 2014. When news reports revealed that the tear gas canisters used by police to disband protests in Ferguson were the same as those used by Israeli soldiers in Palestine—and Palestinians tweeted advice to demonstrators in Missouri—it was an impetus to build bridges, exchange visits, and make commitments. As the Black Solidarity Statement with Palestine says:

Out of the terror directed against us—from numerous attacks on Black life to Israel's brutal war on Gaza and chokehold on the West Bank—strengthened resilience and joint struggle have emerged between our movements. . . . We urge people of conscience to recognize the struggle for Palestinian liberation as a key matter of our time.

6. On Truth and Neutrality (Article)

SOURCE: [Learning For Justice](#)

On Truth and Neutrality

A TT Advisory Board member encourages fellow educators to commit to tackling the tough topics.

[BARBIE GARAYÚA TUDRYN](#)

Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."

The truth about the values upon which our democracy is said to stand—freedom, justice and equality—belongs in your classroom. It belongs to every one of your students. Everyone has the right to the real story of social justice, of this democracy, of the ways history continues to leave its mark at the individual and collective level.

Garayúa-Tudryn is a school counselor at a dual-language elementary school in North Carolina. She is also a member of the Teaching Tolerance Advisory Board.

7. Checking Yourself for Bias in the Classroom (Article and Teaching Resource)

SOURCE: [Learning for Justice](#)

Checking Yourself for Bias in the Classroom:

Unconscious bias can shape the responses of even the most well-intentioned educators. But you can check yourself—one teacher shares how.

By Ellen Fracassini

Bullying & Bias

If you had asked me in my first few years of teaching what a classroom should look like, I probably would have described something that included students sitting silently and working on assignments. Sure, I also would have mentioned something about discussion and group work, but a lot of what I envisioned in my mind was compliance. Why? Because that's what my own educational experience looked like.

I wouldn't have realized at the time that this was also a glaring example of the unconscious bias I carried with me into the classroom. I was in a classroom where I was the only person who was not of the culture my students shared. I took this as an opportunity to listen, learn, ask questions and accept responsibility when I got it wrong. In my eagerness and earnestness to learn and soak up as much as I could, students and their families trusted me with their stories. It has shaped my purpose as an educator and evolved my practice over the last decade.

This work is ongoing and ever-evolving.

While "doing the work" on yourself is intense and reflective, it is also a process. It will take time to unpack and time still to revisit, revise and reevaluate your practice. As you begin or continue this journey, it can be helpful to have a way to check yourself in class. We all know that impact matters more than intention—this is of utmost importance with young people who are shaping their views of

themselves and their place and space in the world—so having a reliable strategy to check your response to a student's behavior can be helpful in determining the most appropriate response in that moment.

I have relied on what I call Me/They/We. Using Me/They/We helps me to quickly determine whether my initial evaluation of a situation is a reflection of my own expectations rooted in bias, a judgment of the student's behavior or a response that is appropriate to the situation at hand.

In this sense, I'm able to more accurately understand my own intention in redirecting a student. I ask:

- **Me** – Am I the only person bothered or distracted by this behavior?
- **They** – Is the student's behavior distracting them from the task at hand?
- **We** – Is this student's behavior distracting to a larger group/the class as a whole?

Here's a more specific example: A student is constantly drumming his fingers on his desk and bobbing his head to his beats. This gets my attention and seems like a distraction. Consider:

- **Me** – Am I the only one bothered by his drumming and moving?
- **They** – Is his behavior distracting him from working? Is it a habit he does without realizing? Does this actually help him focus?
- **We** – Does the class notice? Are the people around him distracted?

If I'm the only one bothered/distracted, the student in question is working and others around him are unbothered, I move on.

This technique helps you weigh your purpose in calling attention to something otherwise innocuous against the potential effect of your calling a student out. While your intention may be to redirect the student to an ideal classroom behavior that appears more focused—or rather, meets your vision of what focus looks like—the impact varies. You may be passing a judgment that erodes trust or creating a larger distraction to students who were otherwise working diligently. Or, at the very least, you may be interrupting the learning process for your student.

This is one example, of course. There are times in class when I've run through this in my mind and determined that the behavior is, in fact, disruptive to the student in question or to others and that I needed to redirect. There are many ways to validate and redirect with low intervention.

Does this seem like a lot to consider before telling a student to stop drumming or stop drawing or lettering all over their notebook? Maybe.

But we already do this every day.

As educators, we make judgments and evaluations constantly throughout the day. It's worth being more deliberate and slowing down the process to further peel back any layers of unconscious bias we have and, most importantly, to always keep the care and connection with our students at the forefront of our decision-making.

If we aren't diving into *this* work as deeply as we dive into curriculum, then what exactly is the purpose?

Myths database

Tired of all the propaganda and disinformation on Palestine?

Explore our myths database, where you will find a continuously updated list of some of the most prominent myths and talking-points related to the Palestinian question, as well as their debunking.



Myths database

VISIT WEBSITE: <https://decolonizepalestine.com/>



Rainbow washing

From appeals to environmentalism to claims of women empowerment, learn about the myriad ways in which Israel seeks to improve its dismal world image.



Palestine reading list

Expand your knowledge on all things Palestine with the Decolonize Palestine reading list.



Palestine FAQ

Need a quick answer?

Our Palestine FAQ contains answers to the most commonly asked questions regarding the Palestinian question.

VISIT WEBSITE: <https://decolonizepalestine.com/>

9. Teaching Palestine/Israel: A Multiple Narratives Approach (Online Curriculum Resource)
SOURCE: [TeachPalestine.org](https://teachpalestine.org)

Recommended by [Harsha Walia](#) @HarshaWalia

A Multiple Narratives Approach

By Samia Shoman

NOTE: See ["Independence or Catastrophe? Teaching Palestine Through Multiple Perspectives"](#) for Dr. Shoman's description of how this curriculum looks in the classroom.

Introduction

A few years ago, one of my former students shared an essay she wrote for her college applications with me. Here is part of what she wrote:

I was assigned a Palestinian history teacher when I entered high school, and I quickly came to realize that there was more to being Jewish than I knew. Through our Palestine-Israel unit, I was exposed to perspectives that made clear that Jews share responsibility for the conflict in the Middle East. This epiphany not only challenged my perception of Jews as perfect, it also made me curious to learn more. Instead of assuming my tolerance of other religions, I became motivated to understand the diversity around me. I decided to make high school the grounds for my investigations. I sought out people with different backgrounds and cultures from my own. My closest friend is Iraqi. By asking questions, thinking twice, and listening attentively to other people's opinions, I have been able to shed some of my ignorance. The experience has been liberating.

As a social studies teacher in the San Francisco Bay Area, it has been a challenge to teach the Palestinian-Israeli conflict—not because I am Palestinian, but because this is not a conflict or war of equal powers, yet as educators we are asked to ensure a “balanced” curriculum that is equal to both sides. No matter what I have done to ensure that all sides are represented, there are some people who can never get past the fact that I am a Palestinian. I have been accused of using biased materials. The accusations did not come from my students or their families, but from an outside organization. Because of these accusations, my curriculum has been vetted by numerous outside sources at the request of our district and county office of education. Although I was confident in the curriculum and am a veteran teacher, this scrutiny caused me a great deal of stress, anxiety, and frustration. There were times when I sat in a bathroom stall at work and cried, times when I understood that what was happening was a microcosm of the greater conflict, and times when I was so inspired by the thoughtfulness of my students as they wrestled with the history and reality of the conflict that I forgot about everything that was happening to me.

Why a Multiple Narratives Approach?

I teach Palestinian-Israeli history from a multiple narratives approach. Because this approach relies on students' critical analysis of original sources representing many points of view, I have been successful in building my students' content knowledge about the area and their ability to think critically at the same time that I have successfully defended my curriculum from concerted Zionist attacks.

I recommend this approach to other teachers who are in situations where they are vulnerable to similar politically motivated scrutiny. It challenges students to learn historical content, synthesize content, and develop critical analysis skills. In addition, it invites students to come to their own conclusions given the content they have learned, which helps avoid controversy and criticism. It allows educators opportunities to teach students both historical content and important historical thinking skills.

The rationale behind multiple narratives is the attempt to balance the idea of history as a discipline based on facts with the idea of history as a collection of human experiences and memories based on a person's own perspective. Students are presented with historical facts and also exposed to various Palestinian and Israeli perspectives and narratives about those events. The idea is to keep students open to outcomes. Although there are definitely historical facts I expect students to learn, I don't dictate conclusions. The multiple narratives approach creates opportunities for students to synthesize the facts with different perspectives and narratives, and come to a truth or multiple truths about the conflict.

Although this often challenges students with close ties to the region or strong opinions, my experience is that they grow as much or more than other students. For example, here's an excerpt from a thank you letter one of my 10th graders wrote several years ago:

You have inspired me in so many ways and broadened my perspective immensely, especially when learning about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Going to a Jewish school for nine years, I didn't even know Palestinians refer to Israel's independence as the catastrophe and I was shocked to hear this. I really am glad, though, that I learned a lot more about the conflict from multiple perspectives. This unit taught me about the other side I had never learned about and showed me how no one is innocent and both sides need to make sacrifices to move forward. I will not stand by as either side abuses people's basic rights. One of the most important things I will take away from your class is that in the end we are all human and despite our differences we all deserve our natural rights and be treated with dignity.

Teaching about this conflict can be done. And more importantly, a justice-based approach can be used. As challenging as this can be, the reward is seeing students flourish as they think, question, and engage. They will come in to talk between classes and during your off periods because they are so perplexed by the situation, and you will feel validated that you have instilled a sense of urgency and humanity in them. The potential for high levels of student engagement, processing, and ability to draw their own conclusions about one of the most critical and controversial situations in the world should inspire and motivate educators to teach about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Introduction to the Unit Outline

Before beginning the Palestine/Israel unit, I dedicate 1-2 days to reviewing the geography and political landscape of the MENA region. The first day consists of completing and reviewing a survey on the Middle East. Then the students generate questions on the Middle East and people from the region. Throughout the unit, I address the questions (usually 2-3 a day).

Kenneth Stern
Nomi M. Stolzenberg
Rabbi Burt Visotzky
Steven Windmueller

Understanding Antisemitism at its Nexus with Israel and Zionism ¹

Antisemitism

Antisemitism consists of anti-Jewish attitudes, actions or systemic conditions. It includes negative beliefs and feelings about Jews, hostile behavior directed against Jews, and conditions that discriminate against Jews and impede their ability to participate as equals in political, religious, cultural, economic, or social life.

Uniting all of antisemitism's strands is a persistent demonization that casts Jews not only as "others" (i.e., as intrinsically different or alien) but also as irredeemably threatening and dangerously powerful. There are multiple reasons that people may have for opposing Zionism and/or Israel. Such opposition does not necessarily reflect specific anti-Jewish animus nor purposefully lead to antisemitic behaviors and conditions. For example, someone might oppose the principle of nationalism or ethnonationalist ideology, of which Zionism is an example. Someone's personal or national experience may have been adversely affected by the creation of the State of Israel (e.g., Palestinians for whom Zionism/Israel has created inequality and/or led to exile). Indeed, there are Jewish anti-Zionists who hold ethical and religious convictions that oppose a Jewish state. None of these motivations or attitudes toward Israel and/or Zionism necessarily constitute antisemitic behavior as troublemakers, shysters, capitalists, anarchists, communists, sexual degenerates, etc. The elements that make up antisemitism derive from various historical conditions, and in our current time combine to form pejorative claims that include religion, race, culture and politics. They portray Jews as secretive, manipulative, untrustworthy, controlling, and dangerous — as well as responsible for other people's suffering.

Understanding and addressing antisemitism is important in its own right, and it is a critical part of the broader struggle against all forms of oppression.

Antisemitic behaviors and conditions may emerge from indifference, stereotyping, or the rejection of Jewish perspectives and interests because they are held by Jews. It is even possible to engage in antisemitic behavior, or to promote antisemitic conditions, without holding expressly prejudicial attitudes toward Jews. In some cases, antisemitic behaviors and conditions may coexist with positive attitudes toward certain Jews or Jewish institutions.

Antisemitism can present in different forms; people change it and adapt it to their own social, political, cultural, religious, and historical circumstances. It can be used to target Jews of all races, denominations, gender identities, levels of observance, and political ideologies.

Antisemitism fulfills a social function: It provides an explanation for social disorders. People use it to demonize and fuel the oppression of any minority and all minorities ², while fomenting division between Jews and other minorities.

As the embodiment/realization of collective Jewish organization and action, Israel is a magnet for and a target of antisemitic behavior. Thus, it is important for Jews and their allies to understand what is and what is not antisemitic in relation to Israel.

Antisemitism, Israel, and Zionism

Israel and Zionism:

Historically, and especially since its establishment as a state in 1948, Israel has served as one expression of Jewish national identity. Zionism is a political ideology that says the Jewish people constitute a modern national collective. During the 20th century, Jews in many European and Middle Eastern countries were assaulted, oppressed, and economically deprived, culminating in the murder of 6,000,000 Jews in the Holocaust. This led most Jews worldwide to embrace Israel and Zionism.

As a sovereign state and a member of the United Nations, Israel has the rights and responsibilities of other sovereign states. It is subject to praise and condemnation, support and opposition, according to the expectations and provisions of its international and domestic relationships and obligations. Zionism asserts that the Jewish people should be able to exercise self-determination in their ancestral homeland. Beyond this core affirmation, the word Zionism often means different things to different people, and should therefore be used with precision. There are numerous varieties of Zionism and many attempts to appropriate the term in service of a particular political perspective.

Zionism makes no judgment regarding the justice or wisdom of particular Israeli governmental policies (e.g., Israel's precise borders or the character of its democracy).

If a person identifies as a "Zionist," such association does not entail *carte blanche* approval of all or even any policies or politics of a specific Israeli government. Similarly, "anti-Zionist" is not an appropriate label for a speaker merely because he or she opposes specific Israeli policies.

Criticism of Israel and Zionism:

Criticism of Zionism and Israel, opposition to Israel's policies, or nonviolent political action directed at the State of Israel and/or its policies should not, as such, be deemed antisemitic.

Using accusations of antisemitism as a tool to suppress criticism of Israel is dangerous on many levels. It distracts attention from *bona fide* antisemitism, infringes on the principle of freedom of expression, and militates against constructive dialogue and debate among people with differing opinions.

Even contentious, strident, or harsh criticism of Israel for its policies and actions, including those that led to the creation of Israel, is not *per se* antisemitic. This includes critiques of specific forms of Zionism that are incompatible with the equal dignity or self-determination of others (e.g., forms of Zionism which are opposed in concept to the existence of a Palestinian state or to any other credible mechanism for upholding Palestinian democratic rights).

Generally speaking, judging Israel using the same standards applied to other countries is not antisemitism. Paying disproportionate attention to Israel and/or treating it differently than other countries is not *prima facie* evidence of antisemitism. There are numerous reasons for treating Israel differently or devoting special attention to Israel, among them that Israel receives more military aid than

any other country or that someone has a special religious connection with Israel. Singling out Israel because it is a Jewish state, using standards different than those applied to other countries, is antisemitism.

Opposition to Zionism and/or Israel:

There are multiple reasons that people may have for opposing Zionism and/or Israel. Such opposition does not necessarily reflect specific anti-Jewish animus nor purposefully lead to antisemitic behaviors and conditions. For example, someone might oppose the principle of nationalism or ethnonationalist ideology, of which Zionism is an example.² Someone's personal or national experience may have been adversely affected by the creation of the State of Israel (e.g., Palestinians for whom Zionism/Israel has created inequality and/or led to exile). Indeed, there are Jewish anti-Zionists who hold ethical and religious convictions that oppose a Jewish state. None of these motivations or attitudes toward Israel and/or Zionism necessarily constitute antisemitic behavior.

When is criticism or opposition to Zionism and/or Israel antisemitic?

All claims of antisemitism, like all claims of discrimination and oppression in general, should be given serious attention. Arguments that claims of antisemitism are *always* or *primarily* tools to suppress criticism of Israel or opposition to its policies often justify the dismissal of Jewish concerns, allowing even serious cases of antisemitism to go unchallenged. In particular, antisemitic speech or conduct is not insulated simply because it styles itself as "criticism of Israel."

Whether or not speech or conduct about Zionism and Israel is antisemitic should be based on the standards for speech or conduct that apply to antisemitic behavior in general. Thus, it is antisemitic to promote myths, stereotypes or attitudes about Zionism and/or Israel that derive from and/or reinforce antisemitic accusations and tropes. These include:

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- Characterizing Israel as being part of a sinister world conspiracy of Jewish control of the media, economy, government or other financial, cultural or societal institutions;⁴
 - Indiscriminately blaming suffering and injustices around the world on a Jewish conspiracy or as the maligning hand of Israel or Zionism.⁵
 - Holding individuals or institutions, because they are Jewish, *a priori* culpable of real or imagined wrongdoing committed by Israel.⁶
 - Considering Jews to be *a priori* incapable of setting aside their affinity/loyalty to the Jewish people and/or Israel.⁷
 - Denigrating or denying the Jewish identity of certain Jews because they are perceived as holding the "wrong" position (whether too critical or too favorable) on Israel.⁸
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Other cases in which criticism of Zionism and Israel or opposition to Israel's policies might be deemed antisemitic include:

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- Including symbols and images that present Jews worldwide as collectively guilty for the actions of the State of Israel.
 - Attacking a Jew because of her/his relationship to Israel. Conveying intense hostility toward Jews who are connected to Israel in a way that intentionally or irresponsibly (acting with disregard to potential violent consequences) provokes antisemitic violence.

- Treating Israel in a negative manner based on a claim that Jews in particular should be denied the right to define themselves as a people and to exercise self-determination.
 - Advocating a political solution that denies Jews the right to define themselves as a people, thereby denying them because they are Jews the right to self-determination, and/or denying Jews the right to physical safety and full human, civil, and religious rights.
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Overall, the criterion for judging whether instances are antisemitic is the same criterion for judging antisemitic behavior in any of its forms. It is antisemitic if it includes harmful hostile, degrading, or discriminatory behaviors directed toward Jews — in word and/or in action, that harm Jews — and significantly impede their ability to participate as equals in political, religious, cultural, economic, or social life.

¹ This paper was drafted by the Nexus Task Force, which was a project of the Knight Program on Media and Religion at the Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism at USC, examining the issues at the nexus of antisemitism and Israel in American politics.

² For the purposes of this paper we are using the term "antisemitic" and "antisemitism" to refer to all forms of anti-Jewish behavior. We also use "antisemitism" (without a hyphen) to emphasize that there is no ideology of "Semitism" that antisemites oppose — antisemitism is not, for example, hostility towards speakers of Semitic language groups. For the purposes of this paper we are using the term "antisemitic" and "antisemitism" to refer to all forms of anti-Jewish behavior. We also use "antisemitism" (without a hyphen) to emphasize that there is no ideology of "Semitism" that antisemites oppose — antisemitism is not, for example, hostility towards speakers of Semitic language groups.

³ See "[Skin in the Game](#)" by Eric Ward for an articulation of the ways in which antisemitism animates white nationalism.

⁴ From the Iranian run Press TV broadcasting in North America and Europe: "Netanyahu still has his hands on the strings that control puppets around the world, the press, entertainment industry, key world leaders."

⁵ An Algerian news site blamed the "Zionist Entity" (Israel) for the Coronavirus and a collaboration between a "Zionist Institute" and a French Jewish billionaire. <https://almasdar-dz.com/?p=103657>

⁶ A study by the UK based Institute for Jewish Policy Research showed "almost eighty percent of respondents, indicated that "they have felt blamed by non-Jews, at least occasionally, for the actions of the Israeli government, purely on the basis of their Jewishness."

⁷ In August 2019, President Trump, while praising the loyalty of Israeli Jews to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused American Jewish Democrats of disloyalty. The New York Times wrote of the incident: "It was the second day in a row that Mr. Trump addressed Jews and loyalty, a theme evoking an anti-Semitic trope that Jews have a "dual loyalty" and are often more loyal to Israel than to their own countries." "If you want to vote Democrat, you are being very disloyal to Jewish people and very disloyal to Israel," Mr. Trump said Wednesday at the White House."

⁸ David Friedman, prior to becoming U.S. Ambassador to Israel called, J St supporters "worse than Kapos." <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/Articles/Article.aspx/18828>

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