

Pride and Pinkwashing

JVP Triangle NC
September 2016

Agenda

1. Why should queers care about Palestinian liberation?
2. Why should Palestinian solidarity activists care about queer liberation?
3. How does Israel use pinkwashing to justify the Occupation?
4. What happened at NC Pride last year?
5. POSTER-MAKING!



Why should
queers care
about
Palestine?

What do we mean by Queer Liberation?

“Queer Liberation involves itself in the struggle for greater freedom for those who fall outside society’s rigid definition of gender or orientation. It often rejects the mainstream gay rights call for equal rights with straight people in marriage, right to join the army etc. as it sees these privileges to be inherently oppressive and seeks for the liberation rather than assimilation into mainstream society of all people.”

<https://baringteeth.noblogs.org/queer-liberation/>



Why should
Palestinian
solidarity
activists
care about
queer
liberation?

Calls from Palestinian Queer organizations

“As Palestinian queers, our struggle is not only against social injustice and our rights as a queer minority in Palestinian society, but rather, our main struggle is one against Israel’s colonization, occupation and apartheid; a system that has oppressed us for the past 63 years. Violations of human rights and international law, suppression of basic rights and civil liberty, and discrimination are deeply rooted in Israel’s policies toward Palestinians, straight and gay alike.”

- Palestinian Queers for BDS

A photograph of a parade float. In the center, a man in a white tank top and a woman in a purple and white outfit are smiling. The float is decorated with a long, colorful garland of balloons in shades of yellow, orange, and purple. The background shows a large crowd of people and buildings under a clear sky. The image is framed by a black border at the top and bottom.

**Celebrate freedom where
millions of Palestinians are
prevented from moving by
checkpoints, roadblocks,
and an apartheid wall.**



Israeli Pinkwashing

How pinkwashing works:

1. Encouraging gay travel to Israel as the “gay capital of the Middle East” under the Brand Israel campaign
2. Promoting the Israeli occupation as progressive bc of gay soldiers, Tel Aviv Pride, etc.
3. Suggesting that Palestinian gov’t is BAD on LGBT rights (connected to Islamophobia)
4. Recruiting Jewish LGBTQ students and organizations to support Israel

Israeli embassy encouraging gay tourism to Israel



**“Fabulous
Israel” travel
agency for
“discerning
gay travelers”**



Treatment of Gay Men by the Palestinian Authority



- Palestinian Authority Police arrest and torture gay men.
- Palestinian families organize vigilante mobs to beat and kill gay men.
- Palestinians accuse gay Palestinians of collaborating with Israel.
- Terrorist groups pressure gay Palestinians into becoming suicide bombers to "purge their moral guilt."

KNOW THE FACTS

standwithus.com

Source: <http://www.itsaolpalestine.com/www/middleeast/1/dep.../news/496701.asp>

Which of the Middle East nations protects the legal rights, safety & freedom of the LGBT communities?

Only Israel.

Israel is by far the most democratic state in the entire Middle East. It supports civil rights for all its citizens regardless of sexual orientation, gender, race, creed & religion.

Dialogue begins when it's based on facts.



Outreach to students

On Wed, Jan 2, 2013 at 2:54 PM, Alex Mishkin wrote:

Hi E.,

Happy New Year. I wanted to introduce myself, I am Alex Mishkin, Campus Engagement Manager for The David Project. If you are not familiar with us, The David Project is a non-profit pro-Israel organization that works with college students to promote the discourse surrounding Israel on campus. Our main focus at The David Project is relationship driven personal advocacy.

I am currently in the process of developing an "LGBT Students for Israel Conference" along with representatives from A Wider Bridge, He'bro and NUJLS and I was hoping to discuss the conference with you. I would like to get your feedback on this initiative, and see if you and your fellow students would potentially like to participate (and help plan) in the national conference that will take place this summer in NYC.

Hi,

Thank you very much for getting in touch with me. However, I am not interested in participating in or helping to organize this conference. As a gay person, I understand what oppression feels like, and I cannot advocate for Israel or participate in "pro-Israel" activities as long as Israel continues to oppress Palestinians. I am very involved in Jewish life on campus (as you probably are aware), and Judaism is a huge part of my identity, but this does not mean that I am pro-Israel. I have read, thought, and talked about Israel-Palestine an enormous amount during my time at college, and have concluded that, as a Jew and a gay person, I cannot advocate for Israel or defend most of its actions. I am disappointed to see that organizations like NUJLS and He'bro, which bill themselves as simply "Jewish" and not explicitly pro-Israel, are co-sponsoring this conference and thereby excluding progressive, Jewishly involved queer Jews like me.

The other members of our Jewish queer group, are similarly devoted to fighting oppression in all its forms, so I can also tell you that we would not co-sponsor such a conference. In fact, don't know of any queer Jews on campus who would be interested in this, so I'm afraid I can't offer you any other people to contact. I would be happy to talk to you more about my thoughts about Israel and this conference, though, if you are interested.

Best,

E.

Exposing & Resisting Pinkwashing

“You cannot have queer liberation while apartheid, patriarchy, capitalism and other oppressions exist. It’s important to target the connections of these oppressive forces...

This is another iteration of a familiar and toxic colonial fantasy — that the colonizer can provide something important and necessary that the colonized cannot possibly provide for themselves.

Pinkwashing strips away our voices, history and agency, telling the world that Israel knows what is best for us. By targeting pinkwashing we are reclaiming our agency, history, voices and bodies, telling the world what we want and how to support us.”

<https://electronicintifada.net/content/eight-questions-palestinian-queers-are-tired-hearing/12951>



INDY week

durham
chapel hill
10|28|15

**IS SHE
TOO
BLACK
FOR
NC
PRIDE?**

By Brian Howe
p. 22

**NC Pride
2015**

**NO PRIDE FOR SOME OF US
WITHOUT LIBERATION FOR ALL OF US.**

WE CAN'T BREATHE





**JVP
Triangle
Queer
Shabbat
led by
Rinah
Rachel**

We march
in Pride &
hand out
flyers
during
Black Lives
Matter
disruption



“Why We Disrupt Pride” Statement

We disrupt your Pride so that you are reminded that our Pride also matters and that we are proud of our roots. We are proud to have ancestors and kindred in folks like Miss Major, Storme DeLarverie, Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P Johnson - who actively demonstrated what resistance meant by putting their bodies and their lives on the line our collective survival. They also fought the police and saw that the policing of queer and trans bodies, genders, and loving happens at the same violent hands and by the triggers of the same deadly guns that take the very lives and cuff the fragile hands and cage the wounded, healing bodies of Black and Brown people every single day. Our Pride was birthed by our Transgender and Queer ancestors and kindred in a storm of fire and fishnets where Black and Brown people chased the police off of our turf. Your pride has a police escort. Our pride took the streets by a storm to protect gender nonconforming people who were shoved into paddywagons. Your pride has a parade permit and asks participants to follow the instructions of law enforcement and pay outrageous fees while our only permit is each other and our hearts are our instructions and those who pay know that they are in a position to do so as an act of loving solidarity.

NC Pride in Durham is sponsored by Wells Fargo, which in 2012 loaned \$785 million dollars to Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), a large corporation that contracts with prisons and ICE. You would have to work more than 108 thousand hours at 7.25 dollars an hour to make 785 million dollars. Greensboro Pride is sponsored by Bank of America, which has multi-million dollar contracts with the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Your Pride is sponsored by the banks and corporations that cage, murder, and enslave Black and Brown Queer and Trans folk.

We interrupt your regularly scheduled state-sanctioned celebration to remind you that we are not ready to celebrate the countless murders of our Transgender Black Women. We are not ready to give into silence and privilege and respectability politics that only continue to increase the pockets of some while deplete the pockets of many.

Our kindred are locked back in the Durham County Jail - denied urgent medical care, reading material, clean drinking water or even a fundamental right to sunlight. We are being tased in Harris Teeter, dragged out of our homes and hunted down, then violently persecuted and shot at on the very streets for having no homes to go to. We interrupt your Pride because Zora taught us that if we are silent about our pain, you will kill us and say we enjoyed it. Today, we are here, standing strong, as a reminder that we will no longer stand silent and will hold those in power and those that perpetuate and profit off of Black and Brown murders, incarceration, bodies, and love.

Nonprofit industrial complex, you can no longer get your grant dollars off our deaths and bucks off our backs. Your hands are bloody. Our people, queer trans black and brown people, are not an afterthought, your tokens, or your objects on your websites. Our tribe stands in our legacy of resistance and we are demanding: show up for us or we shut you down. Fight alongside us, or we shut you down. Divest from prisons and big banks, or we shut you down.

Resources

Reading

Israel-Palestine and the Queer International by Sarah Schulman

Terrorists Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times
by Jasbir Puar

“Israel and Pinkwashing” by Sarah Schulman, *New York Times*, 11/22/2011

Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics and the Limits of Law by Dean Spade

“Eight questions Palestinian queers are tired of hearing,”
by Ghaiḥ Hilal, *Electronic Intifada*, 11/27/13

Organizations

[al-Qaws for Sexual and Gender Diversity in Palestinian Society](#)

Palestinian Queers for BDS
(PQ-BDS)

[Pinkwatching Israel](#)

Queers Against Israeli Apartheid

[Sylvia Rivera Law Project](#)