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**USING AND DISPUTING PRIVILEGE**

U.S. YOUTH AND PALESTINIANS WIELDING  
“INTERNATIONAL PRIVILEGE”  
TO END THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT NONVIOLENTLY

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On March 16, 2003, Rachel Corrie, a 23-year-old American college student from Olympia, Washington, was crushed to death by an Israeli military bulldozer while attempting to prevent, with her own body, the Israeli demolition of a Palestinian doctor's home in the Occupied Territories. Photos of blond and petite Corrie, taken during the incident by fellow twenty-something nonviolent activists in the "International Solidarity Movement" (ISM), which Corrie had joined for her work in Palestine, showed her standing high on a pile of dirt in front of the American-made Caterpillar bulldozer. A small figure in a fluorescent jacket holding a bullhorn, she sat down momentarily to stop the bulldozer and then stood high on the dirt pile and looked the bulldozer's driver in the eye. The bulldozer didn't stop. It ran her over, pinning her under the mound of dirt; it then reversed without lifting its blade and ran over her again. ISM volunteers quickly surrounded the crushed and bleeding Corrie, who gasped, according to 21-year-old fellow ISM activist Joe from Iowa, "They broke my back." Shortly after Palestinian ambulance drivers transported Corrie to a local hospital, she died from a crushed chest and skull, joining the hundreds of young Palestinians and scores of young Israelis killed throughout the Israeli military and settler occupation that she and other ISMers had come to challenge.

What is remarkable about Corrie's story is not the untimely death of a young person in the region. Youth have been major victims of violence on both sides, and youth have also been primarily responsible for these youth deaths in many cases: both Israeli soldiers and Palestinian suicide bombers are disproportionately young.<sup>1</sup> What is most obviously remarkable about Corrie's story is that as an American young person, she felt a personal responsibility for Palestinian human rights strong enough to make her voluntarily put herself in harm's way in the first place—and that a transnational nonviolent movement of Palestinians and internationals had drawn her to do this.

Paradoxically, Corrie's traveling to Palestine to place her body in between the Israeli military and Palestinian civilians was both self-martyring and self-consciously privileged. ISM internationals like Corrie go to Palestine in person precisely because the consequences of harm to "privileged" foreign, international, American, European, and disproportionately white bodies participating with Palestinians in demonstrations against the occupation is expected to stay the hands of Israeli soldiers in ways Palestinian bodies have not. International/American/white demonstrators like Corrie are also expected to be more likely than Palestinians to attract the notice of home governments to the violence of occupation itself, and further shine the spotlight of the outside world on those Palestinians resisting the occupation nonviolently. As one of the movement's founders explained, "ISM can help support the nonviolent Palestinian resistance by tapping into the resource that internationals can provide—global attention" (Stohlman & Aladin, 2003, 75). ISM work thus explicitly wields the privilege embodied in "international" citizenship to enable both Palestinian survival and the growth of a Palestinian nonviolent movement, long overshadowed by a violent Palestinian minority and stunted by the Israeli violence of occupation itself. Indeed, ISM exemplifies a striking transnational activist strategy: putting white, American, and international privilege explicitly to work for social change.

Since ISM's inception, nearly three thousand international activists—the majority from Europe and North America, white, and in their twenties and early thirties (so far, the ISM has not accepted members under 18)—have been drawn through ISM's informal, email-based global network to use their privilege in "solidarity" with Palestinians demonstrating on the ground in Palestine, and to then go home to "tell Palestinians' story" of life under occupation to the world community.<sup>2</sup> Understanding the transnational chains of ideas and the people leading ISM's disproportionately young Western activists to use their bodies in Palestine is the driving force behind the research reported in this paper. ISM is a particularly striking example of a transnational political "ideoscape" (Appadurai, 1996) in which critiques of the human rights violations of the Israeli occupation are developing and circulating globally. Further, young

American ISMers in particular—people who, I find, come to analyze the occupation as a human rights problem worth intervening in personally—are striking proof that various youth today might be learning to “think globally, act globally” about a growing number of social problems.

Elsewhere, I explore in depth how these young activists came to intertwine themselves analytically and personally in the occupation (Pollock, in preparation). This paper explores how the dynamics of privilege and unequal power embedded in the movement’s strategy both consciously motivate and plague some of the movement’s younger American participants. In fieldwork conducted with and among a subset of young U.S. activists, I found that activists striving by definition to work in “horizontal” solidarity with Palestinians worried regularly about the dynamics of unequal power embedded in the very project of transporting their “privileged” bodies to Palestine for use as a nonviolent political tool. Indeed, far from being predictably ignorant of “Western,” American, or white privilege, ISM’s international members quite self-consciously utilize and actively reject the privilege of their birth, worrying all the while how this paradox both supports and challenges their ongoing activity. Although ISM likewise self-consciously employs the privileges of mobility, citizenship, and safety even while its members strive continually to be a “Palestinian-led” solidarity movement, it is plagued by the very dynamics of privilege that make the work possible. International ISM activists are well aware that they both defy and utilize a global inequality in measurements of human worth. As one young white activist put it to me bluntly after her return, having “white, Western, Americans there—it made a difference. Israelis would not shoot—because of racism.”

## THE LOCAL FIELD AND ITS DATA

My analysis of ISM and its younger U.S. members is grounded in a localized experience with this transnational activist network: the Boston network supporting ISM delegations, called “Boston to Palestine” (B2P). Focusing on B2P members in their twenties (and under 33), I conducted participant observation fieldwork and semi-structured interviews with this intergenerational group of activists, and two delegates from New York, before, during, and after periods when subsets of delegates traveled to Palestine between 2002 and 2004. Because of the global mobility of the movement’s founders, I was able to hear and, in two cases, interview four of the movement’s typically Palestine-based leaders in Boston and California.

To explore through participation the social analysis, tactics, and strategies demonstrated in ISM work, I attended meetings of B2P before, during, and after the delegates’ stays in Palestine, and I also attended public events in which returning delegates explained their activities to a local audience. I also conducted content analysis on ISM’s media coverage and on the body of online material generated by ISM activists during and subsequent to their time in Palestine. During participant observation and archival analysis (and in both face-to-face and virtual [email/phone] fieldwork), I prioritized the questions of how activists were talking about, analyzing, and acting to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In informal, taped interviews with younger activists—all current or former college students who grew up in U.S. towns and cities, half of whom were in their early twenties, four of whom were in their late twenties/early thirties, and the majority of whom are white—I also prioritized a more developmental investigation of the people and events that had led them to frame their intervention on the Palestinians’ behalf as a moral and political responsibility. I particularly investigated the web-based and face-to-face networks of local and international actors connecting each activist to ISM.

In my fieldwork with B2P, itself an intergenerational group, I was necessarily analyzing young members’ interactions with older activists as well as with one another and myself. Any so-called *youth* activity is actually to some extent intergenerational, with youth rarely living artificially separate from adult influ-

ence; politically active youth never exist in a vacuum, but rather build upon or challenge the analyses and groundwork laid by elders (Michaud, 1997; Munoz, 1989).<sup>3</sup> Further, in locating this fieldwork physically in Boston, I was guided by scholars urging the necessary spatial flexibility of fieldwork (Marcus, 1988), particularly on transnational phenomena (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997). As Sassen (2003, 17-19) argues, studying “the range of activities and organizational arrangements necessary for the implementation and maintenance of a global network” often means studying local people doing the actual work of participating in “global social circuits.”<sup>4</sup>

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## **THE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT: BACKGROUND**

In 2001, the ISM was put in motion by a simple email call from a small coalition of Palestinian activists and foreign activists living in Palestine—many in their twenties—who had realized collectively that the participation of visibly non-Palestinian people in Palestinian nonviolent demonstrations against the occupation seemed to prevent violent Israeli military response to those demonstrations. From its inception, the ISM built its work upon a little-known legacy of nonviolent Palestinian resistance to Israel’s 40-year military occupation and settlement of the West Bank and Gaza strip. Palestinians in the Occupied Territories have long participated in marching and sit-ins to

defy Israeli military and settlement actions, sometimes along with activist Israeli groups; Palestinians have also tried nonviolent strategies of tax resistance and curfew/checkpoint refusal (Kuttab, 2001; Andoni, Qubbaj, Rishmawi & Saffold, 2003). Younger Palestinians have also employed nonviolent resistance tactics, such as flying kites during curfew, breaking curfew to go to school en masse, and organizing discussion forums and protests (Stohlman & Aladin, 2003). Throughout, however, Palestinians have often been shot at or tear-gassed by Israeli soldiers when demonstrating nonviolently alone; citing security concerns, Israel has also exiled many Palestinian nonviolent organizers (Jawad Saleh, 2003).

In spring 2001, several successful nonviolent Palestinian demonstrations involving American exchange students, Israelis, and European NGO workers living in the region convinced Palestinian organizers that having non-Palestinian participants along with Palestinian demonstrators protected them from Israeli military fire. These non-Palestinian participants were literally called internationals to distinguish them from participating Palestinians; at another demonstration at this time “without internationals,” one of ISM’s Palestinian founders later told a Boston audience, 13 Palestinians had been killed. Activists began an email campaign to actively recruit international visitors to join Palestinian nonviolent resistance activities. The goal of the newly labeled “International Solidarity Movement” was to harness visitors’ so-called *international privilege* to support ongoing nonviolent organizing among Palestinians and to foster additional energy for such activism among those Palestinians exhausted and demoralized by the violence of occupation. As one Israeli ISM founder, Neta Golan, put it in a public engagement in Boston, “Our commitment is to keep the venue for nonviolent resistance open with our presence.”

A U.S. founder, Palestinian American Huwaida Arraf, told me in an interview that an exhausted older Palestinian activist had told her that nonviolent freedom efforts had to be carried forth by the “young and naïve.” The invitation to “international” participants to engage in nonviolent “direct actions” in “solidarity” with Palestinians against the occupation, Arraf noted, was indeed a fresh move, one both ideologically committed to fostering a new “global” energy for ending the occupation and deeply pragmatic in wield-

ing “international privilege” to support nonviolent Palestinian activity.<sup>6</sup> ISM’s tactics expanded specifically upon previous work spearheaded by Palestinians toward an international witness corps, the “Grassroots International Protection for Palestinians” campaign (GIPP), which had for years brought visitors, primarily from Italy, France, and Spain, to do accompaniment and observation work in Palestine (Andoni, et al., 2003). As one ISM activist put it to me, GIPP volunteers were “more tour-like, less direct action—less likely to do clearing of roadblocks.” ISM’s organizers hoped that a new presence of international activists actually participating in nonviolent Palestinian civil disobedience would both enable a full-fledged Palestinian nonviolent movement and build international pressure to end the occupation through the global circulation of visitors’ eyewitness reports.

To spearhead ISM’s attempts to harness international privilege, Arraf, a woman from Michigan in her late twenties living and working in Ramallah, joined with Golan, a Jewish Israeli activist her age; they were advised by both young and veteran Palestinian organizers (George N. Rishmawi, George S. Rishmawi and Ghassan Andoni) from the Palestinian Center for Rapprochement Between Peoples in Beit-Sahour, an organization with a history of organizing nonviolent resistance and Palestinian-Israeli cross-cultural efforts. Arraf quickly brought into the ranks of ISM leadership her husband Adam Shapiro, a Jewish American in his early thirties whom she had originally met in Jerusalem working for the Maine-based Seeds of Peace youth dialogue program. Under the leadership of the Rapprochement Center, Arraf and her colleagues emailed various activist groups they knew, asking readers to “come join Palestinians in two weeks of nonviolent action” with ISM. This email brought to Palestine about 50 people, mainly from the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as Italy and France. ISM’s first campaign in December 2001 involved sit-downs at Israeli military roadblocks and checkpoints, and marches in which several hundred Palestinians and a small core of ISMers confronted soldiers in a human chain of arm-linked bodies. As hoped, the presence of internationals indeed seemed to keep Israeli soldiers from firing.

Emboldened, ISM’s email calls to action continued. In summer 2002, hundreds of ISM international volunteers—many in their twenties, many on summer vacations from college—descended on Palestine in an action notably called “Freedom Summer” in honor of the U.S. civil rights movement’s legacy of nonviolent inter-group solidarity. Some ISMers came monitored by hometown support networks; many others came alone. Most came from Europe (particularly Italy, France, and the United Kingdom) and the United States, with a lesser number coming from Canada and Japan, and a handful arriving from Latin America and South Africa; a particularly large contingent of younger activists came from Sweden. That summer, many ISMers rode in Palestinian ambulances to protect drivers and passengers with their presence. (One East Coast activist spent nine weeks riding around in ambulances with the internal ambulance light on, purposefully displaying her probably-too-blonde-to-be-Palestinian hair. On one particularly memorable day for her, she called Senator John Kerry’s office on her cell phone while staring into the barrel of an Israeli machine gun, telling him her own tax dollars were threatening her life). In fall 2002-03, several hundred activists traveled to Palestine in an ISM “Olive Harvest Campaign” to protect Palestinian farmers from settler violence while harvesting their olives. By ISM’s third Freedom Summer, 2004, actions included a three-week march of Palestinians, internationals and Israelis along the security fence from Jenin to Jerusalem.

Such campaigns demonstrate the blatant physicality of ISM’s strategy: ISM is a strikingly physical form of transnational activism, even though a large part of ISM work involves ISMers typing email from Palestinian internet cafes and showing slides upon return home. While activists in other movements, networks, or organizations sign web petitions or send letters or money across the borders of nations to solve social problems, ISM activists transport themselves to place their bodies between Israeli soldiers and settlers and Palestinian civilians. ISMers are convinced that it is their own power and responsibility to protect the human rights and enable the nonviolent activism of this geographically distant population. Meanwhile,

activists in their hometowns and states monitor their activities transnationally through cellphones and the Internet and publicize these activities through media work.<sup>7</sup> The ISM network, which links activists on the ground in Palestine to activists at home ready to act the moment a call or e-mail for help arrives, exemplifies current growing trends of self-consciously transnational activism. In such activism, transnational coalitions of people leap national boundaries virtually and physically to participate together in actions designed to solve social problems conceived as a transnational responsibility. And in such activism, the world's young people are playing increasingly central roles.

## TRANSNATIONAL YOUTH ACTIVISM: A FRAMING

In a larger research project entitled “Global Youth, Global Justice” (GYGJ), I am working to discover trends in how young people are currently utilizing transnational partnerships to solve social problems nonviolently; this intellectual quest led me originally to ISM.<sup>8</sup> ISM is by definition a “transnational advocacy network,” as its members link up both inside and outside their nations of origin to solve social problems. Such networks have so far been examined most thoroughly in political science; they are increasingly of interest to disproportionately sociology-based social movement theorists, and to a lesser but growing extent to anthropologists and other social scientists analyzing globalization.<sup>9</sup> Little scholarship has yet investigated, however, how *young people*—from both “privileged” and non-privileged backgrounds—may be disproportionate participants in many current forms of self-consciously transnational activism, which capitalize particularly on the available time, mobility, communication savvy, and excitement about things global that characterize the population of people increasingly labeled *youth* worldwide.”

Youth actors have primarily been framed in anthropological scholarship as the world's most spectacularly global citizens due to the increasingly global circulation and consumption of youth products and (desired) lifestyles.<sup>11</sup> Youth indeed seem particularly excited to think and act globally about fashion or leisure activity, but youth are also increasingly central participants in transnational circulations of analyses, information, and strategies for addressing a broad range of social problems.<sup>12</sup> Rather than track the global circulation of youth products, then, the research reported here tracks a global circulation of analyses of injustice to and by diverse youth—keeping open for investigation the question of which youth are most likely to think and act globally to solve social problems.<sup>13</sup>

Youth activists may also now be key circulators of self-consciously nonviolent problem-solving tactics all too rarely explored by researchers. Youth have already been shown to play key roles in violent transnational political activity; young people from all social backgrounds (though especially the poor) are disproportionately recruited or forced by adults to participate in militias, armies, or guerrilla movements fighting across the borders of nations or proto-nations.<sup>14</sup> Youth of all classes and social groups also seem to get the most attention from police and from researchers when they break windows or hurl homemade explosives in demonstrations. Yet while observers often equate young global justice activists with such “performative violence” (Juris, 2004a), this equation risks analytically overlooking trends of self-consciously anti-violent transnational activism among the world's youth, a version of activism of which ISM is a particularly explicit example.

As the GYGJ investigation is proving, today's transnational activism involving young participants might be classified along four axes in which activists *analyze* a diverse range of problems, *address* those problems through diverse strategies, link themselves spatially in diverse manners, and *organize* themselves through diverse organizational structures that exhibit varying levels of adult influence. First, transna-

tional activists analyze different social problems, framing some problems literally as concerns threatening the entire world (like the environment, AIDS, or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict) and others as local problems created through global flows of funding or political/corporate influence (e.g., a sweatshop or the troubles of specific Palestinian villages under occupation). Some youth activists organize around a generational consciousness as youth (Dunham, 1998; Boren, 2001), while others organize around other social identifications or organize intergenerationally around specific social problems (McAdam, 1988).

Second, young transnational activists often share, transnationally, a variety of ideas for activist activities for addressing these social problems. Spectacular anti-globalization protests are only one form of today's transnational youth activism: some young people write emails or post to blogs to act transnationally, while others raise money and still others share artistic performance (Yudice, 2003). Tactically, ISMers "on the ground" self-consciously model nonviolent tactics from India, South Africa, and the United States (such as marching and sit-ins) and intertwine these tactics with ongoing Palestinian tactics of nonviolent resistance (picking olives, camping on farmlands slated for takeover). Back at home, ISMers raise money, publish reports, and recruit new delegates to Palestine to continue their efforts to end the occupation.

Third, activists link themselves transnationally in different spatial manners. Some transnational activists (like those in ISM) attempt literally to link the entire globe, while others attempt to link just two or more nations. Some activists (like ISM internationals) move their bodies to single sites to participate in activism with peers, while other activists travel to fixed or changing sites for conferences. Still others (like ISM support groups) stay put and facilitate the transnational transfer of knowledge via the internet or telephone.

Finally, the ISM's organizational structure—a porous, loose, intergenerational community of activists who circulate information relatively freely and make consensus-based decisions in Palestine through small affinity groups—is a good example of the kind of transnational activism that is self-consciously informal and anti-hierarchical (see Cohen, 1985). Other activist communities involving young people exist as more formal youth-run organizations, or even as corporate or government-sanctioned spinoffs of adult-run organizations designed for youth participation. As Fox (2000) and others indicate, every such "movement," "coalition," and "network" offers a different version of activism, varying in ideologies, tactics, political cultures, and internal cohesion (Epstein, 1995; Edelman, 2001).

The GYGJ project is demonstrating that while theorists of globalization have often focused on people of all ages experiencing globalization—either experiencing the networks of moving objects, ideas, and people central to globalization, or experiencing the inequalities undergirding it (Baumann, 1998)—young activists in transnational political movements are self-consciously analyzing and redirecting globalization as well (see also Ong, 1999). For example, ISMers self-consciously analyze the occupation as a phenomenon created through transnational processes, and thus best solved through orchestrated transnational action; accordingly, they pursue self-consciously transnational activist tactics, creating networks for transporting ideas, people and activist activity between nations and figuring out how to accom-

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plish the goal of ending the occupation through the use of these transnational networks. ISM activists are thus not only using the analytic, communication, and travel networks made possible by globalization: they also are actively conceptualizing and creating networks for solving social problems within a globalizing world system.<sup>15</sup> By coming to analyze and address the occupation transnationally as a shared social problem, ISMers are capitalizing upon a “think globally, act globally” mentality of globalization, rather than promoting the insular ethnocentrism that are also often globalization’s result (Appadurai, 1996; Barber, 1996; Giddens, 2000).

Of course, in hoping that their citizenship will halt Israeli soldier or settler violence, ISMers also prove that the notion of globalization should not presume the demise of the concept of nations (Ong, 1999). Indeed, transnational political activism is often actually built upon “fundamentally national social and civic organizations” (Fox, 2000, 1): ISMers join, as U.S. citizens or British citizens or Swedes, a community of internationals who, as one activist put it, have “passports as their weapons.” Further, in critiquing the Israeli occupation, ISMers are also calling *de facto* for Palestinian national self-determination. Still, while utilizing the notion of nation to empower both themselves and Palestinians, ISMers frame their activism self-consciously *as* “global”—not just because they are linking transnational actors, but also because they are claiming the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a world responsibility. As Huwaida Arraf put it explicitly, “Internationals can help globalize our struggle—we believe it’s a global one... Internationals are coming to link arms with us and say ‘it’s a global struggle for peace and justice, and everyone who believes in peace and justice can join.’”

That ISM internationals transport themselves physically to place themselves in front of bulldozers and tanks suggests a level of political commitment dwarfing that of young people who write letters or raise money or march to solve social problems at home or abroad. But of course, the young Americans and Europeans who dominate ISM’s ranks are also perhaps disproportionately endowed with the travel funds and mobility to conduct spectacular transnational campaigns that, like the ISM, require temporary physical movement. Young “Westerners” (a term used interchangeably with “internationals” by some ISMers to explain the movement) are also far more likely than their peers worldwide to be connected to the Internet, even while Palestinian-founded movements like ISM and “The Electronic Intifada” (in which Palestinians report on life under occupation from web-linked sites in the Territories) demonstrate that the Internet is by no means a medium used only by the economically privileged (El Fassed, 2003).<sup>16</sup> Finally, young Americans, like Rachel Corrie herself, are perhaps disproportionately more able than youth elsewhere to be seen conducting transnational activism—that is, to play spectacular roles that go publicly recognized in “the West.”<sup>17</sup> While political ideas about transnational responsibility for social problems might flow multidirectionally to and from the West (as stressed in ISM presentations, the original idea for ISM emanated from Palestine), ISM members’ continual struggles to publicize ongoing Palestinian nonviolent activism rather than just their own hints in part that the political power to be seen coordinating transnationally to solve a social problem is often not equally distributed.

## YOUNG AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS IN ISM’S TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVISM: EXAMPLES

On August 5, 2003, Kyle, a 20-year-old from the Boston area on a year off from college, was arrested by Israeli soldiers along with approximately 50 other ISM activists for surrounding a Palestinian home in the Palestinian town of Mas’ha to protect it from Israeli demolition for the Israeli security fence. (Many Palestinians, anti-occupation Israelis, and ISMers call the fence the “apartheid wall,” because its route—as recently argued by international and Israeli judges—is not only separating Palestinians from jobs and



former homes, but also displacing Palestinians from their current homes, water sources, and lands while increasing Israeli settlement holdings.) Minutes after these arrests, Huwaida Arraf sent an e-mail from Palestine to computers across the world estimating that those arrested included “11 US, 1 Canada, 1 Japan, 6 UK, 1 Ireland, 4 Sweden, 1 Denmark, 8 Italian, 2 France, 5 Israel, 3 Palestinians” and requesting that ISM supporters call the police station in the Israeli settlement where the activists were being detained to request their release. Simultaneously, an email announcement was sent out by the Israel-based peace network *Gush Shalom*, quoting ISM representatives on the incident and urging Gush Shalom’s own transnational e-mail lists to call the same police station. Consequently, additional Israeli activists arrived in Mas’ha to defend the same Palestinian house, literally occupying the military’s demolition equipment until they were arrested by their own country’s soldiers.

I myself was at home in Boston monitoring Kyle, who was kept for almost 24 hours in the Israeli settlement prison charged with “obstructing the army.” My own phone rang all day with calls to and from Israel, and to and from the office of Massachusetts senator John Kerry, for whom Kyle himself had interned several years earlier. (Kyle recalled shaking Kerry’s hand at one intern reunion years earlier and suggesting “that he shouldn’t let Israel oppress the Palestinians.”) In the end, Kerry’s aides indeed called the prison to ensure that Kyle was not harmed and would be released. The collection of advocates calling Kerry’s office had included Kyle’s mother, a reluctant but increasingly supportive monitor of her son’s activity who had met no members of B2P personally. Soon after, Kyle’s mother started writing letters to the Boston papers critiquing the Israeli wall (“She’s getting polarized by my being here,” Kyle explained later).<sup>18</sup>

Over the course of my work with B2P, Boston delegates spent nights with the inhabitants of houses slated to be demolished by the Israeli military; they emailed home about travels of short distances with Palestinians that routinely took them into a marathon of military checkpoints and searches. They wrote with alerts about threatened settler violence against their olive-picking activities or planned demonstrations; many were blinded temporarily by tear gas and sprayed with pepper spray by Israeli soldiers their age. During demonstrations, both Kyle and another young delegate from Boston (age 24) were injured by Israeli rubber bullet fire.

In spring 2003, months before Kyle himself headed to Palestine, the killing of Rachel Corrie and the maiming or death of several other young ISMs had both called into question ISM’s assumption of international privilege and tragically highlighted the youth presence in ISM. Before this time, only one ISM activist had been wounded, 23-year-old Caoimhe Butterly from Ireland, who had positioned herself daily for almost a year between Israeli tanks and Palestinian civilians. She was shot in the leg by an Israeli soldier in November 2002 while trying to protect several Palestinian children from Israeli army fire. In spring 2003, youth woundings spiked among ISM members: after Corrie’s death came the maiming of Brian Avery, 24, an ISMer from New Mexico whom Israeli soldiers shot in the face while Avery was walking with his hands raised toward an Israeli tank that was entering the Palestinian city where he was volunteering. Next came the shooting of British ISMer Tom Hurndall, 21, who was shot in the head by an Israeli sniper while attempting to shield Palestinian children huddled on a street corner from Israeli military bullets. Hurndall lay brain dead in England for a year before dying.<sup>19</sup>

After Corrie’s death, Hurndall’s brain-death, and Avery’s maiming, B2P members worried openly in Boston about ISM’s seeming disorganization, about the devolution of ISM’s “movement-building” work into “human shield” work, and about the erosion of the very international privilege undergirding the movement’s direct action tactics. Still, at one meeting in which Boston activists discussed these ideas, Kyle announced his renewed intentions to join the Boston delegation while sitting in front of a commemorative picture of Corrie staring down the bulldozer that crushed her moments later. Another

Boston activist in her early twenties recalled committing to going to Palestine around this same time, just as “it was breaking down—the idea of being immune to the violence as a Westerner.” Email calls recruiting new delegates continued to circulate from ISM headquarters that spring, and a new wave of international volunteers (including approximately eight from Boston) arrived in summer 2003 for Freedom Summer II. Kyle would reconfirm to me a year later in an email musing on his time in Palestine that, “I cannot over emphasize the need for an international presence in Palestine and if for nothing else simply as a presence to bear witness to the daily brutality that Palestinians suffer.”

ISM activism on the ground in Palestine (as opposed to the activism of staying home to monitor and publicize delegates’ activity) is striking for its presence of young activists like Kyle; by 2003-04, returning Boston activists estimated a range of one-third to three-quarters of ISM internationals to be in their twenties.<sup>20</sup> Further, in a number of cases, younger activists proved themselves more likely to run toward the sound of gunfire to document incidents and protect civilians than to run away from it—even while young Boston activists themselves derided other delegates who seemed to seek physical risk blatantly as having “Rachel Corrie envy.” (“You can see why they have a martyr complex—there are pictures everywhere of Rachel Corrie, she’s famous in Palestine,” one explained.) While some observers might assume all young ISMs to be what Kyle called “conflict-chasers,” all the ISM activists I came to know argued before going that danger itself was not particularly attractive. One activist who mused that before being in a physically dangerous situation in Palestine he had felt like he could “take a bullet for the Palestinian people” added that while dangerous activism indeed had “something sexy about it,” he was really “not turned on by the idea of being a human shield.... I have no fantasies of catching a bomb in my mouth.” Kyle said bluntly before going that he felt no urge to interact directly with soldiers or to seek out “danger.” His outlook was simply to “assist with the struggle,” he said, even if spending time with Palestinians drinking tea and talking about goats (a “relationship-building” scenario envisioned by the Boston delegation) was the way to do that. One young Midwestern ISM activist who had witnessed both Corrie’s and Hurndall’s fatal woundings noted in an email report later that Hurndall “was incredibly passionate about protecting people when and where they needed it most.... He wanted to be in the most dangerous areas, not out of some martyr complex to die but simply because he knew that that is where internationals are most needed.”

In our conversations back in Boston, Kyle had tried to explain his motivations for joining ISM work, many of which hinged on his intellectual analysis of and emotional disgust with his own “privilege” as a “white,” “middle-class,” “suburban,” “American,” “international” young person. Kyle described to me a Colombian priest he had heard talking about student activists who were “superficial,” growing their hair long but never living with the poor; this was one reason why he was going to Palestine himself, he said. While he also noted that “ideally I should be able to work for a cause like a sweatshop even if I don’t meet the sweatshop worker,” he added, “if the opportunity is here to meet in person I should take the opportunity.” Kyle, like many activists I came to know, also typically explained his motivations by describing a developmental process in which what he now characterized as un-critical thinking had been replaced by self-conscious critiques of his own “privilege”—and consequent “responsibility.”

## YOUNG AMERICANS ANALYZING AND WIELDING PRIVILEGE

Kyle suggested that while it was probably reductive to attribute his current politics to single experiences, he typically told others that a specific experience had “table-flipped” him in his analysis of his own global privileges and, consequently, his life purpose. A high school church service trip to Ecuador had “opened [his] eyes from white suburbia,” “humbled” him through meeting people who were “not caught up in the capitalist mindset,” and convinced him that poverty was simply “not okay” and that people “in the first

world need to help to bring people out of poverty.” Another high school trip to a Native American reservation had convinced him further that he felt more than the “spring-break level of dedication” to anti-poverty work; further activism with a Global Action group at his college on corporations, labor, and the military had solidified his “lifetime commitment” to social justice, which he contrasted to his college’s “community service culture” of “Band-Aid” spring break trips to Appalachia or Latin America that simply gave students a “warm fuzzy feeling afterwards.” Grimacing even while making such comments about his political development, however, Kyle worried (particularly when discussing his travels) that he still “sounded like a colonialist with a first world perspective.” He stressed that he wanted always to be “humble, to learn.”

Kyle, like a number of other activists, was fairly self-deprecating about his past (and possibly current) lack of analytic “perspective.” Several activists framed their past political selves critically as “zombies” (particularly regarding Israel-Palestine) and worried that their present analytic positions, too, sounded “colonialist,” uninformed, “ideological,” or pompous. Activists were, however, particularly disturbed by the tendency of other Americans to refuse to “unfold the whole map”: each activist described with relief a necessary globalization of their political analysis in which they had learned to think transnationally about various world problems and about the U.S. role in the transnational dynamics creating such problems (including Israel-Palestine). All the activists described having worked hard to globalize their analyses through active pursuit of knowledge from people met and settings experienced along their life paths; none indicated that this re-reading of the world would have occurred naturally. Several described home-town friends who had prioritized “talking about video games” in high school, in college were still “apolitical,” were clueless about their own “privilege,” and post-college still had to be convinced to “do something” about problems they didn’t see as involving the United States. One activist who had been to Gaza with her parents when she was 18 noted that she had caught an early glimpse of a world her peers still remained ignorant of: “I hadn’t seen poverty, that level of violence—I saw soldiers firing on kids. I was used to American high school, shopping at the mall.... Gaza is really shocking.”

For all activists, the process of realizing privilege continued in Palestine. The analysis most quoted on Internet exchanges from emails Corrie had written home shortly before her death was a simple comparison of her own basic “hometown” privileges to Palestinian children’s: “Nobody in my family has been shot, driving in their car, by a rocket launcher from a tower at the end of a major street in my hometown. I have a home. I am allowed to go see the ocean.”

Indicating indirectly that they are not the population of Americans who do get shot at (or see others shot) in their hometowns—and speaking only indirectly of their privilege in relation to other Americans—U.S. ISMers typically suggest they embody the international privilege of relative safety in comparison to Palestinians. As Huwaida Arraf put it to me, “when a Palestinian looks at an international, an American, an Australian—he knows he left the comfort of home to face the violence they face every day. That means a lot.” Further, ISMers crossing the ocean to work and live with Palestinians broadcast the international mobility they as a class can achieve and afford. While many B2Pers did substantial fundraising to be able to buy plane tickets, others could afford to pay for them outright. Kyle used personal savings from summer employment to get to Palestine, noting that if he was in need while there, his parents would wire additional money into his account despite their consternation over his activism.

**“ Each activist described with relief a necessary globalization of their political analysis in which they had learned to think transnationally about various world problems and about the U.S. role in the transnational dynamics creating such problems”**

Zygmunt Bauman (1998) has written that under globalization, mobile people as a group can be broken down into two subgroups, unequally empowered: one group, *tourists*, move globally by choice, while the second, *vagabonds*, move only under duress. ISM activists obviously fall into the former group. ISM-related travel to and within Israel/Palestine, in fact, is often some of the first limited mobility activists have experienced. Israeli officials routinely (though spottily) deny ISMers initial or return entry into Israel, or into the territories themselves.<sup>21</sup> In order to be released from jail after the house-protection action, Kyle had to sign a declaration that banned him permanently from returning to the territories. He returned only by slipping past checkpoint control, to the dismay of his parents and some anxious B2Pers at home in Boston.<sup>22</sup> After Corrie's death, for another example, Israeli military officials started asking internationals from all organizations who entered the territories to sign waivers releasing the military from responsibility for any harm the activists might suffer.

Despite these setbacks to their typical privilege of mobility and safety, and despite the fact that ISMers are more privileged than many of their U.S. peers, U.S. ISMers speak of a general international privilege that undergirds their travels and becomes even more apparent during ISM work itself. As Corrie wrote home from Rafah via email, living trapped in the daily violence of occupation seemed for Palestinians “not a nightmare, but a continuous reality from which international privilege cannot protect them, and from which they have no economic means to escape.” Israeli founder Neta Golan (who had moved permanently to Palestine) suggested similarly in a public address in Boston that participating in a demonstration with Palestinians early on had convinced her that Israelis, too, enjoyed the local privilege of being able to leave and the international privilege of being less likely than Palestinians to be shot. “When Arab civilians are killed no one seems to care,” she said, adding,

me and another Jew were the only reason [Palestinian] kids weren't killed. Two days later when we weren't there one was shot in the back. Because we have this privilege, for me I feel it's a responsibility to use it.

While the U.S. activists I came to know cited strong identifications with various identity groups (“Palestinian-Americans,” “Jews,” “Christians,” “socialists”) as underlying their commitments to personal presence in Palestine<sup>23</sup>, the key shared group identification driving all the activists was a nation-based sense of privilege and responsibility as Americans. All described having learned to analyze the occupation as a human rights problem created through transnational flows of money and power implicating the United States; literally getting in the way of Israeli military equipment paid for by their “tax dollars” seemed for each activist to be the most direct way to make good on his/her American culpability. All framed their activism as an individualized and collective stand against human rights abuses that their government funded but refused to condemn. As one 24-year-old friend of Corrie's put it in a local paper after her death, “Rachel shouldered the responsibility that her government would not bear.” One Boston returnee explained bluntly that she “felt morally responsible as a human being and as an American—because my tax dollars are supporting this illegal occupation.” As another Boston delegate discussing his identification as an “American” put it to me similarly before he left for Palestine:

I paid taxes last year—those taxes paid maybe for that killing, or a smoke brigade, or part of a new settlement. That is my fault. If I knew there were rapists on my street and I gave them \$50 every day and they were buying knives, people would say I wasn't a good person. I could pay my taxes and then cover my ears, eyes, and mouth really hard and say my taxes went to pay for a stoplight, but they didn't.

While focusing on their nation-based American responsibility for the occupation, all the activists said they had also learned, over time, to analytically link various locations' struggles as analogous struggles of the "dominated" against the "colonial" ("All colonial oppression is the same," several argued), of "civilians" everywhere against "people with guns" ("It's all related," one activist summed up), or of "violence" against "nonviolence" or "peace." All made explicit analytic connections between various world locations in our conversations, indicating that neither social analyses nor information were actually nation-bound. One young delegate said he had learned to critique the Israeli occupation from Scottish friends during arguments in pubs over "empire" and "class," while interning with the Socialist party during a college year abroad in Scotland (ironically, while in Palestine he met an ISMer he had worked with in the Scottish parliament). Kyle first heard of ISM via email while working on Bangladeshi sweatshop workers' rights in a summer job in a labor organization in New York.

Indeed, the transitively "global" inequality analyses of the movement's young members (see also Castells, 1997) was noted by several ISMers, who described younger ISMers as typically coming from the "social justice crowd" or the "global justice crowd" (one younger New York activist said specifically that ISMers there had "recruited out of the global justice movement"). Two of ISM's founders noted to me that the anti-globalization movement, concerned with various injustices worldwide, had now "put Palestine high on their list of social ills," so that many young ISMers came with much energy for overcoming "global" disparities of power and privilege but with little historic knowledge of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict itself. This reality, they said, was unfortunate, but it rarely mattered to the actual work. As Kyle put it further, "one doesn't need to be sound in history to see that collective punishment doesn't seem justified"; another activist argued that it was obvious that the group of people living under military rule without stable access to land or adequate water was "getting screwed." Still, a longtime Israel-Palestine activist whose daughter joined the movement pessimistically described ISM in its early years as having attracted "a lot of anti-globalization kids who don't know the first thing about Palestine," given the movement's tactics of "putting out a call and seeing who shows up."<sup>24</sup> Yet many young activists I talked to had already acquired extensive knowledge about Israeli-Palestinian history; each also had thought extensively about why he/she was working on Israel-Palestine rather than on other locations' issues.

While some analysts have argued that global justice movements link local struggles with an anticapitalist analysis and vocabulary,<sup>25</sup> the "global" analytic discourse used by ISM activists is rooted more explicitly in a language of human rights and "justice." "In the [nonviolent] war for social justice worldwide," one activist summed up, "this is the battle." Some activists argued explicitly that Palestine work was the next important installment in worldwide nonviolent organizing against human rights violations. All were particularly excited about supporting ongoing nonviolent resistance activity in Palestine, which, they argued, "no one" in the "rest of the world" ever seemed to notice. Most cited the Palestinians' call for international nonviolent assistance as particularly compelling. Kyle noted often that Palestinians had initiated this attempt to "exploit international privilege" through nonviolent participation—in Ecuador, he suggested, there were "no banana plantations calling for internationals."

The dissonance of seeing "privileged", nonviolent "internationals" undergoing the violence experienced routinely by Palestinians is often the first thing observers describe about ISM activity, which itself serves the movement's purpose of broadcasting the occupation's violence to outside observers. An Israeli journalist describing two ISMers in their early twenties with whom she spent 24 hours in March 2003 titled her article "I was a Human Shield":

They are young, politically motivated university graduates—very extreme and determined pacifists. Their purpose is to prevent the army from harming civilians. Every night, with the beginning of the curfew, they are spreading in Palestinian homes on the first row, which are exposed to shooting from the military positions. They wear phosphorescent clothing and megaphones. In the midst of firing, or in the face of IDF bulldozers, they emerge to call out in English the text of international conventions and block the soldiers when they come in, shoot, bomb or demolish homes (Moskona-Lerman, 2003).

Describing one of the ISMs, Joe Smith, as “a 21-year old guy from Kansas City,” the journalist noted his willingness to endanger himself physically for Palestinians’ well-being. In doing so, she paraphrased Smith’s analysis of his own privilege and status:

In a political science course.... he read Marx and realized his status as a white male, with privileges at the top of the pyramid. He went to Slovakia, joined anti-globalisation groups and decided that what he most wants to do with his life is to devote it to the weak, to those who don’t have the privileges he has. Especially he wants to challenge the dictatorship of the strong which is enforced by his own government, which is how he got to the Rafah group.

While ISM’s internationals, like Smith, describe themselves as advantaged along various axes (one delegate reporting back to a somewhat diverse audience in Cambridge argued notably generally that “we all have a lot of privilege that we can put to use here and internationally”), international privilege and American privilege for U.S. ISMs also often are equated squarely with white privilege. On the ground in Palestine, it is literally one’s physical appearance that is needed during ISM activities to mark one as non-Palestinian when confronting soldiers and settlers; while many Palestinians are light-skinned, displaying the facial features as well as the clothing of whites or Westerners to soldiers and settlers is central to ISM work.<sup>26</sup> In a report designed to reach local African-Americans with an analysis of the black-Palestinian connection, one Boston delegate of color implied that the physical appearance of “internationality” meant being light-skinned: the speaker pointed wryly to his face in saying that he and his brother experienced extra threats of military violence while in Palestine with ISM because they did not obviously look like “Westerners.” Both delegates also indicated to me privately that ISM work was for them white-loaded even if its participants are not all white; both worried ironically that their own ISM work reproduced “colonial” relations in which Americans, as “shiny white people,” set out patronizingly to “protect mud people” worldwide.

While people of color participate in U.S. ISM delegations or in some cases organize to share in ISM work through parallel organizations (one white activist from New York mentioned a “people of color contingent”), U.S. ISM participants and ISM participants in general are indeed overwhelmingly white. Almost all of the B2P activists I came to know in my research identified themselves at some point in our conversations as “white,” except the brothers mentioned above and several middle-aged Arab-Americans, whose work I did not investigate specifically. Specific outreach to Boston activists of color for a delegation in summer 2004 attempted to counter this pattern. One New York activist described the New York ISM population, too, as “definitely way, way white.” Whether white activists dominate ISM because of the overt utility of their physical appearance, because of some disproportionate commitment to the cause, because they have fewer problems “at home” to occupy them, or because of relative wealth and/or mobility remains unclear. As Maira (2004) points out, immigrants of color in the U.S. often lack the freedom to protest the activities of their new government directly; Hsiao (2000), noting that antiglobalization protests in the United States too have been “overwhelmingly white,” has suggested that analyzing problems “abroad” can

seem “abstract” or extra to people who at home “are getting our asses kicked daily” (Hsiao, 2000, 1-2). But while using international privilege proactively to assist Palestinians is ISM’s explicitly stated strategy, using white privilege proactively to achieve the same goal is also a strategy articulated privately by many white U.S. ISM delegates. Indeed, the two kinds of privilege are intertwined in many activists’ analyses. For example, Joe Smith (one of the last to be with Corrie before she died) described in a summative email to the ISM community how a sense of white privilege had for him combined with a sense of personal privilege that was “American,” “middle class,” and “Western”:

I chose to come to Palestine and work with ISM because I felt it was one of the best ways for me to use my privilege as a white middle class American male to directly serve impoverished people of color who are under-privileged due to the Israeli and other Western governments, especially mine. I have dedicated my life to serving such people, as I believe my over-privilege is a direct result of their under-privilege. I have benefited from their suffering, and this must stop.

This theme of sequentially (and/or simultaneously) analyzing white privilege, American privilege, and international privilege (and here, middle class privilege) was echoed by a number of white Boston activists. Some described gradually realizing the simultaneity of white, American, and international privilege in college courses on “race class gender”; others described realizing their simultaneity while in Palestine (one New York

activist, for example, spoke of realizing “the power of a passport and blond hair.”) While analyzing the responsibility of using various privileges like these to assist those without them, however, ISMers repeatedly debated in meetings, conferences, and online the complex politics of using “international,” “outsider,” and primarily white bodies to assist Palestinians. Indeed, the movement’s young members were strikingly articulate about the dilemmas of thus wielding privilege, engaging in face-to-face conversations and sharing emails to discuss their own anxieties and concerns even while continually reiterating the need for acts of political “solidarity” between those with “privilege” and those without it. While each activist shared with me a desire to put their various privileges of money, mobility, race and citizenship to work to protect the human rights of Palestinians (one activist suggested that “international solidarity” was generally about “coming from a position of privilege, and from a group that is oppressing, and stepping out and saying ‘I’m standing with you on this.’”), all also expressed complex regrets over those very privileges and confusion over how those “privileged” could avoid reproducing “colonial” relations with those they were attempting to “help.” “Charity is vertical,” one activist put it, “but solidarity is horizontal.” Knowing they were rejecting privilege to travel to Palestine to participate in activism relying paradoxically on that very privilege, younger ISMers worried repeatedly about how to actually use their privilege in “solidarity.”

**“Charity is vertical,” one activist put it, “but solidarity is horizontal.”**

## **YOUNG AMERICANS ANALYZING AND DISPUTING PRIVILEGE**

ISMers note that one core irony of international physical presence in Palestine is that attention to international activism in some cases seems to unintentionally overshadow the nonviolent Palestinian activism ISM was created to support and spotlight. While Palestinians organize and die under the occupation daily, for one thing, ISMers know it is quick visitors and privileged international martyrs, like Corrie, who attract international media attention. Arraf admitted in an email to a critic that, “We often feel guilty about the frequency in which we report on internationals arrested or injured, but we hope it helps highlight that the Israeli occupation is attacking civilians.” In emails informing readers about ISM delegates

wounded or attacked, ISMers typically take pains to stress that Palestinians experience such violence routinely. ISM's official press release clarifying and mourning the circumstances of Corrie's death, for example, stressed in conclusion that Palestinians die regularly in identical events, concluding, "Rachel joins 1,900 Palestinians who have been killed by Israeli soldiers and settlers since September 2000." Other ISM reports circulating on the internet reminded readers that a young pregnant Palestinian woman had been crushed recently in her home by an Israeli-owned, American-made Caterpillar bulldozer as well.

Still, the highlighting of harm or threats to international and, so far, white activists in the ISM movement is, however paradoxically, a purposeful strategy of the ISM project. One goal of the internationals' strategy of sending home digital photos and email reports expressing their experiences, fears, and temporary suffering during ISM work is that white/Western/American observers will begin to critique the occupation by sympathizing with people who look like them. Exporting images of internationals blocking tanks next to Palestinians is also designed to re-humanize Palestinians as people worth risking "international" lives for. As one B2Per put it, seeing an international demonstrating with Palestinians might cause Israelis, too, to see Palestinians as more human. Indeed, this paper's own introduction mirrors the strategy of capturing "Western" readers' attention with the story of the death of an innocent of their own—and in this paper's investigation of transnational assistance to Palestine, I myself (also white) risk refocusing sympathetic attention on exterior "saviors" rather than on nonviolent Palestinians themselves.<sup>27</sup>

That ISMers are deeply committed to publicizing existent Palestinian nonviolent activity to a public expected to see only Palestinians' violent fringe is clear whenever ISMers, in public presentations or writings, themselves stress the original leadership of Palestinians in the ISM movement. Yet while the idea of supporting and fostering a full-fledged Palestinian-led nonviolent social movement is what attracts many to join in ISM work, during the period of my research, the ISM's habit of stressing the Palestinian leadership of all its actions' at times seemed to members to be more wishful thinking than a description of the current reality. ISM activists worried about international efforts eclipsing Palestinian efforts remained in a continual process of self-evaluation and reinvention designed to realize the movement's original goal: supporting and fostering nonviolent Palestinian activism to actually end the occupation.<sup>28</sup>

During the period studied, specific ISM actions, such as taking down particular roadblocks, transporting particular cargoes of medicines, or protecting specific olive groves, were often suggested by Palestinians; of course, the ISM movement itself was a Palestinian suggestion. But the large scale Palestinian-led community demonstrations expected by many ISM internationals were suggested less frequently than many delegates had hoped. While as often as possible under curfew and threat of violence, ISM's actions have involved Palestinian adults and youth—and while summer 2004 saw hundreds of Palestinians at a time marching along with internationals in Palestinian-organized local demonstrations against the wall—the Palestinian presence in nonviolent public actions has undeniably waxed and waned due to occupation itself. For example, when Sharon's "Operation Defensive Shield" rolled tanks into communities throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip in April 2001, activists reported that many Palestinian nonviolent community organizers went into hiding, while others were stifled with nearly 24-hour curfews. The original plan for the movement's first Freedom Summer action in 2002, to ride with Palestinians on bus trips down settler-only Israeli roads, became impossible because of the curfew, lockdown, and closure activities of the occupation itself. The immediate needs of Palestinians, as one Boston returnee reported, also turned out to be somewhat different: since the military incursion put Palestinians under immediate threat of home demolitions and other forms of collective punishment, internationals arriving who hoped to be directed by Palestinians to big demonstrations often spent their days simply helping Palestinians get through their everyday lives without injury.



Many delegates from Boston questioned whether such human shield work was the kind of Palestinian-led activism celebrated in ISM literature, and decided by summer 2003 to take up residence in two Palestinian villages for extended community activism rather than to continue the more typical ISM tactic at the time of flitting from action to action as needed.<sup>29</sup> As one veteran ISM activist visiting Boston argued at a meeting, “we’re not supposed to be the A-team—we’re not cannon fodder. We’re not just running out to stop tanks. This is supposed to be a joint effort with Palestinians.” Another seasoned Boston activist agreed, “I don’t want to just do protection. Many people go over there with no knowledge of the original purpose—to foster and protect Palestinian activism.... We’re not chaining ourselves to trees. Palestinians aren’t trees, they’re people—and *they* have activity.”

A recurring discussion topic among delegates was just how much spectacular nonviolent activity ISMers could and should suggest to an exhausted Palestinian population, often focused exclusively on the informal nonviolent resistance of survival itself. As Kyle put it in his last call to me from Israel, many Palestinians seemed to him to be too overwhelmed by the occupation that summer (2003) to plan large rallies or demonstrations. Another delegate also suggested that the Palestinians he had met often expressed to him that they did not want internationals to endanger themselves on their account. Consequently, Kyle had felt often that he was showing up to follow an ISM coordinator’s lead in a march or rally, rather than truly participating in activism planning with Palestinians themselves. He cited as an example his visit to one “village getting screwed by the wall,” during which a Canadian ISM coordinator sent him a text message suggesting he ask Palestinian farmers if they had an interest in doing an anti-wall action. Rather than suggesting such actions, Kyle argued to me, “The ISM should be working to really understand the community” and help only to make received suggestions come to fruition. Even when Palestinian locals were the ones coordinating ISM volunteers, he argued further, ISMers were often insufficiently involved in community affairs and taken to “meet with mayors, top officials, but not exactly meeting community people.”

During the period I studied the movement, email exchanges demonstrated that ISM activists throughout the world and in the coordinator headquarters in Palestine were similarly evaluating the movement continually to determine whether the movement’s intention of supporting, highlighting, and fostering widespread Palestinian resistance activity was coming to fruition. Flow charts produced in hours of face-to-face meetings and email exchanges in Boston and eventually sent to ISM Palestine coordinators forcefully showed arrows of influence pointing from Palestinian communities to ISM internationals, rather than vice-versa. A drafted report of suggestions for ISM’s headquarters written by B2Pers in winter 2003 argued that if the goal was “to support non-violent Palestinian resistance,” ISMers had to assess the current “active” or “passive” state of nonviolent organizing in each Palestinian community and follow the lead of those communities in determining an appropriate level of nonviolent resistance actions. “We cannot teach the Palestinian communities as internationals,” the report stressed. “To this end, we should consider the fullest definition of solidarity—which, while epitomized by collaborative direct action, should also allow for other kinds of relationship-building work within communities.” Kyle suggested to me similarly that while the word “solidarity” got “thrown around a lot,” it had to mean something more collaborative than the “colonialist mindset” of “internationals going in to say ‘We’ll help you out.’”

The time period I studied was, quite possibly, the movement’s own awkward adolescence: after years of internal struggles to achieve truly Palestinian-led large-scale direct actions, photos and reports documenting Freedom Summer III 2004 activities demonstrated a large daily number of the activities ISM was designed to support—huge gatherings of Palestinians marching and demonstrating in community-designed nonviolent actions, in coordination with internationals and Israelis along to participate in solidarity. Further, upon return from Palestine, all the activists described having been taught basic nonviolent

resistance tactics, analyses, and commitments by Palestinians themselves.<sup>30</sup> Especially in periods of increased military violence, the form of ongoing Palestinian nonviolent organizing and resistance was surprising and informative to some internationals. Kyle said that he had realized over time (as had a number of B2P delegates) that the big sit-ins, marches, and giant rallies he had anticipated seemed intermittently much less important to everyday Palestinians than the everyday resistance of actively surviving under the occupation. Founder Adam Shapiro, similarly, described to me originally having misread a Palestinian focus on everyday survival as “weakness” and lack of interest in “direct action.” The summer 2003 dip in large-scale “action” had caused Kyle great disappointment, as he had hoped before coming that “there would be many things that internationals could plug into and use their privilege to do;” that “we’d show up and join in.” Kyle had wished, for example, that instead of just walking around tanks in the streets, Palestinian people would have a “huge march around them.” Yet he himself had acknowledged that “It’s easier to go protest in the streets here without being shot...I don’t want to assume that ‘direct action’ only equals the showy things.” At a report-back, another returned B2Per showing a photograph of a Palestinian aged man and child outdoors to his audience said, “That’s direct action—just leaving your house under curfew is direct action.”

Still, Kyle noted after his return that since ISM work was driven by internationals who came for a short time and in that time like him wanted to “do actions” such as demonstrations, sit-ins and marches, an energy to participate in physical, more spectacular protests had often been injected by ISM volunteers. This involvement itself, for Kyle and others, led to an uncomfortable sense of leading the Palestinian community rather than being led by it. In Freedom Summer 2003, B2P delegates sleeping at a peace camp assembled by Palestinians to protest the new apartheid wall wondered whether the ISMers throwing paint on the wall and marching were too often imposing their version of demonstration on a population currently too exhausted by the occupation to participate in that particular manner. Such action-seeking also, in some cases, made Boston delegates feel endangered. For example, one demonstration against the wall, led by several internationals whom B2Pers described as “insane,” proceeded without taking the time to plan how ISMers would react if Palestinian children started throwing rocks. When some did throw rocks and Israeli soldiers fired on the crowd, chaos ensued, leaving Boston delegates wounded by Israeli rubber bullets and fuming.

Delegates also admitted—many shamefully—that their own lack of Arabic skills, typical among ISM volunteers, meant that ISMers in the first several years of the movement all too often failed to even communicate adequately with local Palestinians about their activist intentions. (In some cases early in ISM’s history, activists experienced bewilderment and at times resentment from village Palestinians uninformed about the purposes of their presence.) ISM has always conducted trainings for all internationals upon arrival, but returned delegates had mixed reviews on these brief trainings’ ability to prepare people for cross-cultural interactions. B2P set up its own Arabic lessons for delegates, taught by an older Arab-American activist who was staying home. Still, Kyle reported that Palestinians “kept apologizing for not knowing enough English, while I felt like I should be apologizing for not knowing Arabic.”

Further conflicts over how ISM outsiders could or should validly judge those Palestinians choosing violent resistance also caused great dispute within ISM. The movement’s own stance is resolutely nonviolent: founder Arraf told me that the “criteria” for joining ISM simply include “a belief in freedom for Palestinian people based on U.N. resolutions and international law,” and a commitment to working toward that freedom only through nonviolent direct action. Yet public comments from some individual members, including Arraf, asserting Palestinians’ right to militaristic self-defense under U.N. law cause deep arguments among volunteers and stay in critics’ arsenals permanently. Perspectives even on the milder violence of rock throwing caused internal controversy over the legitimacy of “international” interventions.

During Freedom Summer 2003, arguments raged among activists on the ground and after return over how ISMers should most appropriately react if Palestinian youths started throwing stones during nonviolent demonstrations. Some argued that only Palestinian parents should be halting rock-throwing youths. (In well-organized, “Palestinian-led” demonstrations, one activist noted, Palestinian parents restrained their children). Others suggested that ISMers should simply walk away from rock throwers in silent non-support, while still others suggested that ISMers should stand in nonviolent solidarity next to stone throwers to prevent them from being shot. A few even argued that ISMers should assert youths’ right to resist tanks in this manner. While some activists argued heatedly that “ISM isn’t there to provide protection for someone throwing a rock,” others, like Kyle upon his return, also argued that stone-throwing was just a youthful expression of “frustration” and that it wasn’t truly “doing damage.” (“It would be great if young Palestinians decided to sit in front of the tank instead of throwing stones,” Kyle said. “But since people get run over and shot, there’s less emphasis on being right in front of a tank.”) All reacted with relief to news that Palestinian nonprofits were attempting to do local outreach with Palestinian youths on nonviolent tactics for confronting the military.

In sum, the question of how to make efforts toward a full-fledged nonviolent social movement of civil disobedience against the occupation fully led by (or at times, even simply coordinated with) Palestinian communities was the central analytic and tactical question debated within ISM. After three months spent in Palestine, Kyle asked me in one summative phone conversation from Palestine if I had read Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, saying he had picked it up in the ISM office from the local Palestinian coordinator, who had checked out the book from the local library. He said he had realized upon reading it that “much of what ISM is doing is wrong in light of that book.” He had “read some good quotes” from it to a group of internationals there and argued as much. Freire stressed living with the community, Kyle had explained, understanding their dialect and their needs before one could try to “help.” Instead, he argued to me, “We’re going in and rushing the whole process—we get there, hear what’s happening and plant seeds about doing an action.” But of course, he suggested, ISMers were often the population suggesting “actions” because so many Palestinian people seemed to be simply “trying to make it by, to make a living, feed their family.” Palestinian activism, he was realizing, was like U.S. activism in the fluxuating energy people had for “big” events, so it was unclear when suggestions were warranted.

Kyle, worrying to me further about whether internationals should stand in front of, behind, or next to Palestinians during demonstrations, mused about what it really meant for activism to be Palestinian-led. Noting to me with a frown one evening after his return that the Palestinian members of the Mas’ha house he had defended had not participated in the action that had caused him (and several Palestinians) to be arrested, said that other ISMers had explained to him that Palestinians had not been asked to participate en masse, since a Palestinian demonstrating in such an action risked arbitrarily long military sentences and even death. (As one activist put it on another occasion, “Palestinians sometimes just watch us when soldiers are there, but they come dig [up roadblocks] with us when soldiers are not.”) Still, Kyle argued that activism for Palestinians was not sufficiently activism with Palestinians. At times like the Mas’ha protest, Kyle said, he had even felt a bit like a “rent-an-activist,” showing up to do pre-planned ISM events while Palestinians fearing arrest stood behind and watched. Recalling again that fellow internationals had argued that the Palestinian house owners could likely “be in detention for years” if arrested, Kyle won-

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dered in frustration, “But shouldn’t they be there? Are we helping in a larger movement if they call us up and we get arrested?”

The basic, privilege-loaded question of who was “in front” at actions, and who should be “in front,” was often discussed among delegates debriefing on their time in Palestine. While Kyle noted that one core point of international protection was to be in front protecting Palestinians from military violence, the very idea of solidarity suggested to Kyle instead that ISMers should be standing next to Palestinians in protest, not in front of them. When I asked Kyle why a demonstration with internationals at its forefront rather than Palestinians would be inherently problematic, he looked at me in shock, and explained his own understanding of solidarity as being about side-by-side activity:

Wouldn’t it seem weird if whites from New England were marching for African-Americans in the South rather than together? This movement isn’t for international rights, for us to get to land, it’s for Palestinians to get to their land. It would seem colonialist or imperialist for us to do this for them. It’s important for ISM to be empowering rather than disempowering. If people become dependent on internationals to come put themselves in the way of bulldozers, but they aren’t building up their community....

Paradoxically, however, throughout our post facto conversations about his time in Palestine, Kyle also expressed frustration at not having put himself more “out there,” in comparison to Palestinians who engaged every day in the basic nonviolent resistance of survival. He had often stood behind and watched anxiously, he said frowning, while Palestinians walked about their communities under the threat of military gunfire. Leaning out in front of an Israeli tank once had made him feel “successful,” he said, musing also that he had felt “successful” when simply walking with Palestinians trying to get home. But he would be “never satisfied” about his activist activity, he admitted, always wondering even where to best be active (whether he “could be doing more here,” in the “belly of the beast,” or “maybe there...”). Kyle in particular apologized often for his self-proclaimed unformed political views, for what he feared was his “colonial” interest in “helping” Palestinians, and for his possibly inflated sense of purpose. “Remember I’m a guy with a good heart who’s got good intentions....” Kyle finished in one interview. “If I’m messing up I’d appreciate finding out how.”

## COMING HOME: THE PRIVILEGE OF REPORTING, THE MARGINALIZATION OF REPORTS IGNORED

Finally, ISMers self-consciously debate the meta-dynamics of privilege underlying even the representation of the movement and its activities to the “outside world.” Palestinians (particularly from the Rapprochement Center) often write reports summarizing ISM’s daily activities to the internal network, but ISM work relies predominantly upon internationals describing Palestinians for others, creating complex politics of representation. Corrie emailed home from Palestine, for example, that “Many [Palestinian] people want their voices to be heard, and I think we need to use some of our privilege as internationals to get those voices heard directly in the United States, rather than through the filter of well-meaning internationals such as myself.” Internationals’ descriptions of Palestinians are themselves controversial at times. In winter 2003, a critical email sent to ISM headquarters entitled “Orientalism lives on in the ISM” expressed one British professor’s anger about an ISMer’s email report home describing Palestinians as people who still “love to laugh”:

At best, [ISMers'] reports can be useful and informative. But more often than not, reports are conceited, self-centred, and reveal an arrogance that non-Palestinians who go to Palestine with little knowledge of the long history of ethnic cleansing, dispossession, and colonial occupation have often displayed when they go "to show you Palestinians a better, non-violent way."

In an email response noting that she herself was often surprised and inspired by Palestinians' ability to express joy under trying circumstances, ISM founder Huwaida Arraf acknowledged that privilege was indeed a thorn in the movement's side—as well as its foundation. "We do run into many problems and conflicts vis-à-vis the role of the 'privileged,' i.e., non-Palestinians," she wrote. "We cover this in our training, but the issue comes up because one of the things that ISM does is try to exploit the racism inherent in the occupation and even in the international community." She then reasserted ISM's basic project of striving to follow Palestinians' lead:

The ISM was founded by Palestinians. I am a Palestinian. We reject completely the notion that westerners or other internationals come to Palestine to "show us a better, non-violent way." We don't deny that many can get this idea—both those volunteers that come to join us with good intentions, and other critics of Palestinian strategies that may point to the ISM as a positive initiative.... The ISM exists to support and strengthen the Palestinian nonviolent resistance movement. The Palestinian people have a long history of using methods of nonviolent resistance that the west hails and studies in the Indian liberation movement, the Civil Rights Movement, the anti-Apartheid movement and others, yet have ignored in the Palestinian freedom struggle. ISM exists to help give voice and otherwise provide a resource for this aspect of the resistance and international ISM volunteers follow the lead of the local community.

It is ironic, given these constant struggles over wielding and resisting privilege in Palestine, that when ISMers return home their privileged position is often replaced by stark marginalization. Most basically, the injuries and harm that have befallen ISM activists have not garnered the international outrage that ISM strategy expected. National ISM efforts to introduce an official "Rachel Corrie Resolution" in the U.S. Congress have met with continuing intransigence; a year after Corrie's death, House Concurrent Resolution 111, calling for an independent investigation into the incident, had received only 16 necessary sponsors.<sup>31</sup> ISM activists are also often alternately vilified and ignored by observers in the United States. When Kyle, detained in the August 5 house defense, explained to a *Boston Globe* reporter that he had been imprisoned for standing in nonviolent solidarity with Palestinians against unwarranted home demolitions, the reporter asked if he was going to just give "political statements" or rather "answer the question and cut the bullshit." The same reporter resolutely refused to cover other Boston activists' participation in ISM events. As one Los Angeles-based ISM activist remarked simply in a conference call about his local *L.A. Times*, "They hate us." ISM has been misrepresented often in the press as "terrorist"-supporting; one Boston activist spent months getting an *L.A. Times* reporter to retract a story insinuating that ISMers supported and even funded Palestinian "terrorism." Rachel Corrie has been posthumously branded a "terrorist" by countless websites and journalists. One B2Per learned that his neighbor was spreading gossip that he was "going over to help the suicide bombers." And after Kyle's college newspaper ran a story on his ISM work, one of his own professors wrote the paper an angry letter to the editor asking, "When you defend murderers, terrorists and their apologists, what do you, in the end, become?"<sup>32</sup>

Of course, that Corrie's citizenship did not stop the Israeli bulldozer from crushing her in the first place—and later, that the U.S. government showed a striking disinterest in investigating her death—

broadcast that it was the presumption of international privilege that actually undergirded ISM work. As one ISMer stated over email to the movement list serve after her death, “Our ‘privilege’ was never something that we possessed, it was always contingent on the actions of others.” Indeed, as even demonstrating Israelis are now being wounded by the Israeli military, it seems unclear whether anyone truly enjoys privilege in the territories—except for, more typically, Israeli soldiers and the Israeli settlers they protect.<sup>33</sup> But the most striking evidence of ISM’s success at striving for transnational solidarity is that internationals continue to flock to Palestine—despite common knowledge of their “privilege’s” erosion.

## CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of international young people using their privilege to challenge the occupation through nonviolent activism in Palestine is a striking demonstration of these activists’ analysis of transnational responsibility and personal power. Globalization research focused on youth tends to view them as particularly disempowered by transnational “flows”; scholars have suggested that with the international circulation of images of consumables comes a clash of “possible worlds” (Appadurai, 1991) for young people, who drown in a sea of desires for impossible lives or flail as sudden “nobodies” in a global system that erodes local systems of meaning (Leichty, 1995; Fong, 2004). In the case of youth political networks, however, globalization can mean the global connection of young people committed to an ideology of social equality, and this kind of globalization may be leading youth instead to the sense of actually being somebody able to change the course of world events.

Whatever one thinks of young American ISMers’ actions or intentions, in a world in which violence has often seemed the most common strategy for conducting international relations—and in which members of more powerful nations often seek unabashedly to dominate those less powerful—it is striking that young activists are attempting to collaborate horizontally and nonviolently across national borders with global peers to solve problems of social inequality. The violent treatment of nonviolent youth in this crisis—Corrie, Avery, and Hurdall from ISM, countless murdered young Palestinians, young Israeli civilian victims of suicide bombings, and even high school Israeli “refusniks” imprisoned for refusing to serve in the occupation<sup>34</sup>—makes this youthful commitment to nonviolence all the more poignant. What these young activists themselves want and would have wanted, it seems, is that violent harm befalling nonviolent activists of all national origins will galvanize public outrage against violence in a new way.

### Note

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## ENDNOTES

- 1 A “Who Will Save the Children” report by several research groups including Jews for Justice in Palestine and Israel named and pictured 232 Palestinian children and 54 Israeli children killed just in the fall of 2000 to spring of 2002, by Israeli soldiers enforcing the occupation violently and Palestinian suicide bombers demonstrating violently against it, respectively.

- 2 Given ISM's bureaucratic informality, I have been unable to count the exact numbers of volunteers visiting Palestine through ISM, and I offer here an aggregated total based on various ISMers' estimates. As one seasoned ISM activist put it, "We haven't kept real good records."
- 3 While *youth culture* is best defined as the practices that people defined as *youth* accomplish together (Bucholtz, 2002, Amit-Talai & Wulff 1995), youth culture exists always in conversation with existing/adult cultural practices, often explicitly. See Hall & Jefferson (1976); Pollock (2004, 2004b).
- 4 Sassen argues succinctly that "the fact that the network is global does not mean that everything has to happen at the global level." Juris (2004b), citing Robertson (1995), writes that "global justice" movements—which increasingly use the internet as "technological infrastructure"—are "increasingly glocal-operating at both local and global levels, while seamlessly integrating both on-line and off-line political activity" (10).
- 5 Such activist Israeli groups participating have included Israelis Against Home Demolitions, Gush Shalom, Ta'ayush, and Rabbis for Human Rights.
- 6 Fox (2000) notes similarly that "binational approaches to workers' rights campaigns" in Mexico and the United States have been "not simply driven by ideology, but by [their] greater practical impact" (6).
- 7 Wellman (2001) would call ISM a "computer-supported social network," in which "computer-mediated communication networks link people, institutions, and knowledge" (228). Such web-based networks, Wellman suggests, help facilitate social communities built upon common interest rather than spatial proximity.
- 8 In this first taxonomic phase of the larger GYGJ project, I am working to identify trends in transnational youth activism in collaboration with activist-researchers at the Global Youth Action Network, a transnational network of youth activists themselves attempting self-consciously to organize a "global youth movement." The GYAN is not connected to ISM, but many of ISM's younger members are involved in movements that do link to GYAN's members.
- 9 In political science, see Keck & Sikkink (1998); Fox (2000). In sociology, see Edelman (2001); in anthropology and more generally, see Cunningham (1999), Appadurai (2000), Sassen (2003).
- 10 As any cross-cultural scholar of human development would note (see Whiting & Whiting, 1988; Herdt & Leavitt, 1998), the concept of *youth* is itself fluid, with new definitions of the concept or population (and its chronological years) dependent both on a local community's current social, economic, and political arrangements and on global "flows" of ideas about youth (Leichty, 1995; Levine, 1999; Yan, 1999). In the past, some communities have not marked such a liminal stage at all (Burbank, 1988), while other communities' socialization practices have long marked a youth stage between childhood and adulthood (Condon, 1987), often through elaborate public activity centered on puberty, marriage, or age-grade (Whiting, 1941). I use a minimum chronological target of age 10 and a maximum target of age 33 as an informal global range of what are often said to be youth's outer boundaries (South African activists, for example, for years defined youth activists as anyone under 34). I thus define *youth* etically in this project as people who are approximately under 30 and typically without children of their own—definitions used throughout the world to define the stage between childhood and adulthood—and also emically to include activists of any age who label themselves as youth.
- 11 See Leichty, 1995; Dolby, 2001; Fong, 2004; Maira & Soep, 2004. Indeed, the worldwide emergence of a new developmental category called *youth* or *teen* has been framed as predominantly dependent on marketing (see also Cole, 2001).
- 12 Juris, 2004a, b; Aron, 2003; Klein, 2002; Wittekamper, No Date.

- 13 The phenomenon of transnational youth activism itself falls between the cracks in current scholarship (SSRC, 2003). While current anthropological scholarship on global youth culture largely overlooks purposeful youth activism, it primarily theorizes global youth as a population tied together by webs of transnational consumption and desire rather than political ideology or practice. In interdisciplinary scholarship on youth development, most research on the moral-political development of adolescents addresses no unit larger than the nation, focusing on youth (particularly North Americans) who develop politically within the confines of nation-states or local communities (Colby, et al., 2003; Flanagan & Sherrod, 1998; Yates & Youniss, 1999). Similarly, scholars investigating youth activism (see Yu & Lacoe, 2003) have said little about youth conducting transnational activism, while emerging work on adult transnational activism says little specifically about youth (Appadurai, 2000; Sassen, 2003; Cleaver, 1998).
- 14 Krijn & Richards, 1998; Michaud, 1997; Shepler, 2004.
- 15 Castells (2000) notes, "While networks are old forms of social organization, they are now empowered by new information/communication technologies" (5; see also Escobar, 1994). Juris (2004b) argues that while scholars have pinpointed a "cultural logic of networking" central to new internet-aided social movements, "scholars have yet to explore the specific mechanisms through which this decentered networking logic is actually produced, reproduced and transformed by concrete activist practice within particular social, cultural and political contexts"(2).
- 16 See also Cleaver (1998), on the Zapatistas' use of Internet technology.
- 17 The concept of "spectacular" youth culture (Hebdige, 1979) has typically been used in scholarship to denote youth practices designed to confront the status quo aesthetically. I use the term here to describe political acts (in this case, nonviolent ones) designed similarly to confront the status quo by drawing public attention.
- 18 Corrie's and Hurndall's parents became similarly active in public activity against the Occupation after the deaths of their children.
- 19 When Hurndall's parents later visited the site where their son was shot, they were targeted briefly by the same sort of sniper fire, but they escaped without injury.
- 20 ISM activists noted that the direct action tactics and physical location of on the ground ISM work seems to attract both ISM volunteers without family responsibilities and an older population (50+) who have finished or never taken on such responsibilities. As one activist stated, "It's almost like there are two sets of people who have the freedom in their lives to go participate." Several ISM supporters in their forties and fifties who considered becoming delegates but did not, cited family obligations. Counter-examples do exist, however, such as Israeli co-founder Neta Golan, active in ISM actions up through her ninth month of pregnancy and afterwards.
- 21 Since some ISMers are refused entry at the Israeli airport, some activists cut their hair or shave before traveling. (One seasoned traveler to Israel complained to me early in ISM's history of a "clueless" French activist denied entry into the airport while wearing a "Free Palestine" t-shirt.)
- 22 Successfully ensconced on a roof in Jenin as Israeli tanks rolled into town, Kyle told me via phone that I could assure others that he wasn't running "around the West Bank like a moron." "Hopefully my mom isn't crying right now," he said.
- 23 Many U.S. ISM activists have been Jews, arguing, as individuals or as members simultaneously of activist groups such as "Jews against the Occupation," against Israeli actions committed "in their names." While some of these activists have been well received by Jewish communities in the United States, some have experienced friction with home Jewish communities. ISM leader Adam Shapiro's parents, New York Jews, were harassed repeatedly by anonymous critics after Shapiro became well known for ISM's first well-publicized action—holing up in Arafat's compound as the Israeli military surrounded it, to prevent, in Shapiro's words, a "bloodbath." Shapiro's parents were eventually forced to leave their synagogue and move out of New York.



- 24 Such lack of knowledge is, of course, not confined to younger activists: one older woman in Boston expressing interest in going to Palestine surprised me in one meeting by asking what language Israelis would be speaking.
- 25 See Hsiao, 2000; Cleaver, 1998; Schneider, 2003.
- 26 Over the course of ISM's development, internationals also began wearing florescent orange jackets with reflective stripes to mark themselves clearly from afar internationals; that such jackets were worn by all three young ISMers killed or maimed in 2003 signaled to ISMers that soldiers had targeted the three despite their being clearly marked as internationals.
- 27 I thank Thea Abu El-Haj for pointing out to me this paper's own replication of this strategy for capturing attention and sympathy.
- 28 As Juris (2004b) notes more generally, citing Beck (1994), new social movements are highly "reflexive" and self-evaluative. The anti-globalization movement(s) Juris studied demonstrated "the ubiquity of movement-related debates and discussions within physical and on-line forums, including the incessant production and circulation of documents, reflections, editorials, and calls to action" (17).
- 29 ISM writ large over time adopted this village-based strategy as well.
- 30 What Corrie herself described literally as her "tutelage" by Palestinians in nonviolent resistance would persist until her death. As she wrote in an email back to her parents just a month before she was killed, "I am just beginning to learn, from what I expect to be a very intense tutelage, about the ability of people to organize against all odds, and to resist against all odds."
- 31 Worldwide knowledge of Corrie's death, as opposed to the typically unremarked-upon deaths of Palestinian youths her age (international condemnation of the May 2004 killing of Palestinian child protestors in Rafah is a notable exception), demonstrates the very imbalance of power central to ISM activism. But the U.S. government has shown a striking lack of response to a widespread call to investigate the circumstances of Corrie's death (see Corrie's mother's editorial in the *Boston Globe*, "Seeking Answers from Israel," March 18, 2004). While one activist explained to an audience at a public "report back" that "ISM internationals have a credibility in the international community that Palestinians don't have," ISM reports of Corrie's death have themselves been dismissed as biased by many mainstream readers. After Corrie's death, for example, a press release from ISM's media office stated that she had been "deliberately run over by an Israeli military bulldozer," but many U.S. newspapers reported that Corrie had fallen down out of sight of the oncoming driver.
- 32 Similarly, since several ISM activists wound up in Arafat's compound in April 2002, emails circulating against ISM have critiqued ISMers as "Arafat-buddies," even though ISM leaders repeatedly argue that the movement will not align itself with Palestinian political factions.
- 33 A 21-year-old Israeli demonstrator shot by soldiers while shaking and cutting into the security fence in a demonstration in December 2003 was, according to one AP article circulated by B2P members, the first "Jewish-Israeli" protestor targeted by his own military forces in demonstrations against the wall. Released from his own mandatory service in the military's combat artillery unit shortly before joining the demonstration, the young man argued to reporters that "We didn't want to threaten soldiers and we didn't threaten soldiers. All we hurt was the fence" According to one reporter, "He said he joined Friday's demonstration because he was outraged by the way the barrier inhibits Palestinians' lives." (Plushnick-Masti, 2003).
- 34 See [http:// www.shministim.org/english/index.htm](http://www.shministim.org/english/index.htm).

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