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The New Face of Academic Freedom?



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From the Editor

David Remnick, America's premier arbiter of culture, failed. From his lofty perch at the helm of *The New Yorker*, his May 20 cover lowered the bar for commentary by what it didn't depict: college graduates contentedly process across the stage, in handcuffs, yet somehow disconnected from their crime, from whatever it was last Spring that drove them to the barricades. "Class of 2024" went out of its way to normalize the moment as just another rite of passage... go to college, protest, graduate, move on. With his omission, Mr. Remnick leaned into American ignorance, preferring a story about the ineluctable upset of youth to a more complex confrontation with contemporary America.

The context redacted from the heart of this story was, of course, Gaza; not even the checkered corner of a kuffiyah would be allowed.

Fast forward to this Fall semester and, with that benefit of just a little hindsight, plus the mnemonic beat of new protest chants, many Americans now understand what college presidents still prefer to forget: *the students were right*. They were right to believe the Constitution when it said their right to free speech would not be abridged. They were right to question a world that kept company with genocide. They were right to have believed their own eyes over the State Department's perversion of events. They were right to think institutions with latin encomium about *Veritas* and *Pro Scientia Atque Sapientia* would defend academic freedom in earnest.



This issue of *The Link* samples experiences from a handful of universities – public and private, large and small, Jesuit, Quaker, and secular. The faculty contributors document the fundamentally nonviolent character across different encampments and highlight their demands for ceasefire, for arms embargo, and even for adherence to the US laws that Anthony Blinken so brazenly disregards. They decry the serial conflation of political criticism with antisemitism.

The student protestors, wise beyond their years, eviscerated the media's prurient obsessions about " Hamas sympathizers" and "spiraling antisemitism." Instead, they kept each other warm and safe, practiced de-escalation, and decried the aggression funded by their tuition dollars– all while studying for finals. Compared to the ignoble discourse in Congressional subcommittees, where protest speech about "*from the river to the sea*" and "*intifada*" was being grossly misrepresented, students understood that freedom of speech was being thrown under the pro-Israel bus, like so many innocent civilians. Across disciplines and faith traditions, students and faculty continue to say Gaza's name this Fall, bending the arc of history toward justice.

We close this issue with a grateful remembrance of Rabbi Marc Ellis who, even in his final days, centered Palestine and the tragedy of Gaza within the context of Jewish ethical history. Professor Ellis wrote for *The Link* several times over the decades, including shortly before his death. AMEU is grateful to Rabbi Brant Rosen for carrying forward the vital traditions that Marc Ellis inspired. Indeed, his memory is a blessing we cherish.

-Nicholas Griffin

Academic Freedom Under Attack in the US: The Response of MESA's Committee on Academic Freedom

By Laurie Brand

The 2023-2024 academic year was one of the most consequential for widespread student political mobilization and for the vicious threats to academic freedom that accompanied it. From university presidents, external donors, and local police departments to state and national elected officials – including President Biden – the battle being waged by institutions of academic and state power against students and faculty protesting the American-funded and supported genocide in Gaza being committed by Israel has been unprecedented.

To understand what has been perhaps the most perilous period for academic freedom in US history and the Middle East Studies Association's Committee on Academic Freedom's (CAF-NA) response, it is important to bear in mind the pre-war context. Anti-Palestinian and anti-Arab racism and Islamophobia have long flourished in the US; however, in recent years, college campuses have become the epicenter of Palestine solidarity activism, in particular regarding the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement (BDS). The proliferation of chapters of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) are among the most obvious indicators of this transformation. In response, to quash this activism, we have seen increasing efforts to codify a definition of antisemitism that conflates anti-Zionism with antisemitism, often through promoting the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition of antisemitism. Efforts to secure the adoption of this definition in the US have been underway at the federal, congressional, state, and even municipal level, as well as at universities.

A second element that has made this such a fraught moment is that Palestine solidarity work is being constructed by those on the political right as just the most recent cause in the so-called "wokism" they are fighting. One has only to look to the congressional inquisitions that have pilloried and humiliated presidents of top universities to see how a newfound concern with antisemitism on the political right is but the most recent vehicle in a longstanding project to discredit the reputation and the foundations of America's institutions of higher education.

For these right-wing officials, the goal has little to do specifically with Palestine; rather, they seek to silence "radical" academics and their home institutions because they view them as responsible for teaching critical thinking and promoting political positions that they oppose.

A third relevant trend is the corporatization of the university, in particular, the role of large dollar donors. Since the beginning of the war we have seen their impact at Harvard, the University of Pennsylvania, and Columbia, among others, as donors have threatened to suspend gifts until their preferred policies are followed. Some have also demanded the names of student members of Palestine solidarity associations or who have signed letters or petitions that the donors find objectionable in order to blacklist them for future employment. At the same time, similar political pressures have increasingly been brought to bear on public institutions by state legislatures and state representatives. Governor Ron DeSantis and his assault on academic freedom in Florida is only the most recent and radical example. Thus, coercion is being exercised by both the public and the private sectors demanding effective veto power in matters that, for reasons of academic freedom, should be beyond their purview.

Fourth, one cannot explain what has been happening on US campuses since October 7 absent the context of a level of US support for this war and genocide that is as breathtaking as it is unprecedented. Unlike during previous Israeli wars on Gaza, in this case, the Biden administration has offered full-throated, unconditional support. Even periodic reports of US administration frustration or anger with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu have led to no halt in the supply of weaponry or diplomatic support. Such an atmosphere outside the university has a tremendous impact on campuses as well, because it means that pro-Israel and Palestine solidarity activities take place in a political environment in which the power imbalance is extreme.

Relatedly, the marginalization of scholarly expertise on the region has been striking. This was also the case after 9/11 when those who sought to put the attack in perspective were demonized as anti-American. However, with the current war, attempts to put the attack of October 7 into historical perspective – what scholars of the region are trained to do – have often been labelled as constituting support for terrorism and/or as antisemitic. Attempts at explanation have been labelled justification: History began and ended on October 7, and hence many academic events or protests were suppressed on campuses in the name of fighting antisemitism.

CAF-NA was under no illusions after the beginning of the war that what lay ahead would be easy, but we did not expect what developed into a full-scale assault embraced so broadly by college administrators and then adopted so opportunistically by elected officials.

In this crisis atmosphere, MESA launched an initiative to compile an archive of materials based on news reports and accounts sent by our members regarding developments on individual campuses hoping to use these materials to help shape the association's response. In the process it has compiled a rich set of resources for such groups as students, faculty, researchers, and journalists, which includes: MESA Board and joint Board-CAF statements on campuses and the conflict; select CAF letters; statements from university and college presidents; statements from other scholarly as well as civil and human rights organizations; and links related to the definitions of antisemitism and their deployment to silence criticism of Israel.

In the meantime, CAF-NA began to research, write, and send letters. The first case adopted concerned Ryna Workman, President of the NYU Student Bar Association, who had issued a statement on October 10, 2023, expressing "unwavering and absolute solidarity with Palestinians in their resistance against oppression toward liberation and self-determination" and declaring that "Israel bears full responsibility for this tremendous loss of life." As a result, the law firm that had offered Workman a position withdrew that offer, and the NYU Law School dean informed Workman that he was initiating an "inquiry" into the episode. This was the first in what became a series of actual and threats of job offer withdrawals to students who signed statements, tweeted commentary, or engaged in demonstrations that university donors and prospective employers objected to because of their Palestine solidarity content.

Another early case in what has been a dreadful record at Columbia University since October was that of Professor Joseph Massad. While harassment of professors has subsequently become increasingly common, Massad's receipt of death threats, left under the door of his university office and on his home phone after the publication of an article in the immediate aftermath of the October 7 attack, stands out as particularly egregious, as was the university's continuing refusal to come to his defense or even to condemn these threats.

As the weeks passed, university presidents across the country issued statements, a few of which expressed concerns for death and trauma on both sides in the war, but most of which focused exclusively on the losses inflicted on

Israel, as part of the broader climate that ignored expressions of anti-Palestinian racism and tried to delegitimize or equate any expressions of concern for the killing in Gaza with antisemitism. Universities in succession announced new committees, task forces, or initiatives to address what was increasingly proclaimed as the rising tide of antisemitism on university campuses. In the current climate, threats against Jews as Jews – swastikas and yellow star graffiti and the like – have certainly been on the rise, but the tremendous jump in the number of such episodes regularly cited in the media and by commentators is also attributable to counting anti-war demonstrations and other manifestations of criticism of Israel or pro-Palestine solidarity as antisemitic incidents.

In the context of pressures to conflate anti-Zionism with antisemitism, growing concerns about anti-Israel rhetoric and protests at colleges led the Biden administration on October 30 to announce new efforts aimed at fighting antisemitism and related violence on campuses. That "related violence" includes Islamophobia, but as in most statements issued in the US on this conflict, the primary thrust has continued to be countering antisemitism, through initiatives to defend Jewish students and faculty as if they constituted a pro-Israel monolith, ignoring their prominent role in anti-war protests. Islamophobia is sometimes mentioned to give the appearance of balance, but in practice the reality has been one of ignoring or marginalizing the threats to and the concerns of those in the Palestine solidarity community – regardless of religious or ethnic background.

As a result, CAF-NA continued to take up cases across the country while the vast majority of university administrations stood by, largely silent, as certainly hundreds, probably thousands, of individual cases of harassment and intimidation against Palestine solidarity students and faculty of varying degrees of gravity have occurred whether on campus or on various social media platforms. Anti-war demonstrators have reported physical assaults; one of the most outrageous examples was at Columbia University, where protestors were sprayed with a chemical agent with lasting health effects. SJP and JVP chapters have had their activities suspended or frozen at multiple universities, among them George Washington, Columbia, and Brandeis, often using ad hoc disciplinary rules. We have also seen many programs – speakers, films, panels, art displays – refused permission, cancelled, or moved online with the justification of vague "security concerns." Extremely harsh penalties, including suspensions and expulsion from university housing, have been imposed on students for what in other circumstances would have been considered minor violations: tearing down posters and writing graffiti.

With the prevailing approach that of university administration silence in the face of episodes of anti-Palestinian racism or Islamophobia, many Palestine solidarity faculty, students, and staff have been unwilling or afraid to report such violations to the campus offices charged with investigating Title VI complaints. This lack of reporting, however, has allowed already unsympathetic administrators to proceed as if pro-Israel students, faculty, and outside supporters have faced widespread harassment while the anti-war protesters have faced none.

Given this dreadful atmosphere, CAF-NA has had to focus its efforts on only some of the most egregious examples of academic freedom violations. Below are brief summaries of several additional cases about which the committee has written; they are illustrative, certainly not exhaustive, of the challenges and threats our college and university communities have been facing:

Indiana University suspended political science Professor Abdel Kader Sinno for two semesters for, it claimed, errors in filling out a form for a campus event for a student group for which he served as faculty advisor. In so doing the university violated its own handbook procedures – a phenomenon we have seen in a number of cases, as universities make up new rules when it serves their interests in clamping down on programming or protests. IU subsequently banned Professor David McDonald from campus following his arrest for trying to protect his students who were peacefully demonstrating.

Albany Law School Professor Nina Farnia was asked by her dean to remove Palestine/Israel related readings from one of her courses. She was also harassed by emails sent by faculty “colleagues” accusing her of glorifying antisemitism because of a tweet that she had subsequently erased. She received no support from the university as the workplace became a hostile environment.

Texas Tech Professor Jairo Fúnez-Flores was suspended for unspecified tweets that the university claimed were antisemitic, likely as a result of the university conflating criticism of Israel with antisemitism. This case seems to be part of a growing trend of universities censoring speech or programs rather than risk an investigation by the US Department of Education for purported Title VI violations. We have also seen a number of cases where universities initially threatened disciplinary actions and ultimately backed down, but the effect on students and faculty is chilling.

The University of Texas, Austin relieved two graduate students in the School of Social Work of their fall 2023 TA

assignments after they criticized the university’s silence in the face of the mental health impact of the Gaza war on students, staff, and faculty, while the University of Arizona’s College of Education placed two instructors on administrative leave following student complaints about discussions they led on Israel’s war in Gaza. In this case, the recordings that students used against them had been selectively edited.

And in a move with international implications, Texas A&M University announced its intent to close its Education City campus in Doha, Qatar (TAMUQ) in 2028, although TAMUQ’s contract had been renewed in 2021 to run until 2033. The decision seems to have been influenced by a broad disinformation campaign, one that Texas A&M’s President Mark Welsh described as “irresponsible” and “insanity.”

As the spring semester passed its midpoint, the encampment movement, which began at Columbia, ultimately expanded to some 200 campuses nationwide. To address not only the proliferation of cases but also the growing inclination of universities to use force – riot police, highway patrol officers, state troopers, and with calls on the political right for university presidents to use their state national guards – CAF joined with the MESA Board to issue two statements of outrage regarding the dreadful securitization of campus, the violence against peaceful protesters, and the attendant escalation of violations of academic freedom against students and faculty. Since issuing these two statements we have continued to see unnecessary and excessive force deployed against those protesting the ongoing genocide, as well as arrests and harsh disciplinary measures imposed on both students and faculty.

In sum, the Gaza war has broadened, deepened, and intensified the attacks on academic freedom and free speech on university campuses for faculty, students, and staff. MESA and CAF continue our committed engagement in defense of our colleagues, as well as of higher education institutions more generally. As of this writing, the genocide in Gaza continues and we are in an election year: All indicators suggest that the current harassment, intimidation, and repression are likely to be with us for some time to come. ☹

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Faculty and Staff Mobilization since October 7: The Case of Georgetown

By Sam Halabi

Since October 7, 2023, scholars and researchers of the conflict between the modern state of Israel, on the one hand, and the indigenous people of Palestine, on the other, have faced the most significant onslaught on the basic task of doing their jobs since such onslaughts commenced for the most part around 1967. And that is saying something. From 1967, there has been a well-funded and orchestrated campaign to harass, intimidate, defame, and discredit scholars for doing nothing more than deploying the basic methods of research and inquiry relevant to that conflict in a number of disciplines: anthropology, archaeology, economics, history, law, political science, refugee studies, and sociology, to name only some of the most prominent.

What stirs disbelief from my perspective, as a Palestinian-American lawyer and political scientist subjected to this onslaught, is that the actual research results from those methods are not seriously in dispute. The modern state of Israel was established through a massive and intentional exercise in violent ethnic cleansing of the indigenous Palestinian population – murder, rape, massacre, psychological warfare, and various crimes against civilian non-combatants. It largely succeeded: About 750,000 were driven from their cities, homes, farms, olive groves, orchards, ports, communities, villages, and institutions. Their descendants now form one of the stateless populations that has characterized international politics of the twentieth century and now much of the twenty-first.

The Palestinian resistance preceding the military buildup and execution of this ethnic cleansing – which is ongoing and relentless – long before it became associated with violence against civilians, began with all the forms of civil disobedience that global political leaders say should facilitate change: diplomacy, marches, labor strikes, petitions, pamphleteering, and protest. Violence against civilians is now and always should be illegal and punished, but it is worth stating on the record that long before the current age of American film, media, and news producers associating Palestinians with hijackings, kidnappings, and murder, Palestinians had heralded and innovated nonviolent forms of resistance and continue to exercise them. It just rarely gets covered.

We knew we had to mobilize, and we did. Some of what made us effective (and I think we have been effective even if we have not achieved all our objectives yet) can be accomplished at any college or university; some is unique to Georgetown, its people, and its location. The reality is that Georgetown University, for a number of reasons not all or even most of which have to do with its Jesuit traditions and mission (although I have to give credit where credit is due) is home to three centers populated with dedicated leaders, researchers, and teachers: the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, the Alwaleed Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, and the Center for Social Justice, which formed a core of response that prioritized protection for student learning and protest; faculty academic freedom and governance; and outreach to faculty with whom we could coordinate locally, regionally, and nationally. This is not to say that faculty had to be affiliated with one or more of these centers (indeed, formally, I am not and many of our group are not) but they served as a reservoir of core university constituencies that could convene, organize, and act. More importantly, they served as safe spaces for the scores and perhaps hundreds of students who felt silenced and intimidated. From there, we were able to gain campus-wide reach, including the law and medical campuses.

We quickly formed Faculty and Staff for Justice in Palestine, drew up our chartering principles, and began to develop strategies aimed in three directions: 1) protection of students and their speech; 2) dissemination of research about, and solidarity with, Gazan universities and faculty; and 3) advocacy at the internal university bureaucracies that may be implicated in supporting or benefiting from mass human suffering.

With respect to the protection of students and their speech, we coordinated with them and supported them as they made use of campus facilities and rooms to hold events, invite speakers, and, right out of the gate, protest outside of the president's office. When facilities personnel attempted to designate such events as special "security" occasions and tried to impose fees, we successfully opposed such content-based constraints. We served as speakers at events and wrote for student publications on the history and context of the dispute. As students mobilized toward changing Georgetown policies, including its suppliers and investments implicated in atrocities against Gazan civilians, we helped them map existing channels for such protest; identify strategies that could be adopted; and attended meetings with university leaders in support. It is worth noting that these student movements originated across a number of affinity groups.

On the medical campus, where I am based, I worked with faculty in medicine and nursing to meet with students who had, like so many others, been doxed because of their political activity protesting the destruction of medical facilities, the killing of health workers, and the prevention of the entry of medicines, food, and water. We met individually with medical campus leaders, discovering during those conversations that many of them had little or no awareness of the conditions of occupation experienced in Gaza long before October 2023, and provided them reports from Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International definitively describing conditions of apartheid.

In the course of expressing solidarity with Gazan faculty and using our capabilities as researchers, we immediately began writing, both individually and collectively, in student newspapers and publications; granting interviews to both student publications and the mainstream media; and shining a light on the rich educational institutions and traditions of Gaza being indiscriminately targeted. We held vigils in fall and spring in which dozens of faculty read out the biographies of accomplished researchers, physicians, poets, and professors who had been killed by Israel and who had taught at Gazan universities, all of which have now been destroyed.

From our very first letters and interviews, we emphasized the critical role of evidence-based understanding of the conflict from our disciplines if justice and peace were to be obtained. From a legal perspective, this meant emphasizing the non-reciprocal obligations of any belligerent parties to protect civilians and ensure that only proportional measures were used. It also meant including the ongoing and mass violations of international human rights law Israel had committed from its establishment in 1948 and the accelerating pace of those violations in recent years. We emphasized the distinction between antisemitism (as a semite myself, it is particularly maddening that a term that applies to both Jews and Arabs has been wielded so thoughtlessly and maliciously by one group against the other) and the legitimate criticism of Israel based on law, human rights, ethics, philosophy, and migration studies.

We used our speakers' series through our departments to invite Palestinian and supporting academics and public personalities to address both lay and campus audiences. And we reached out and coordinated with regional and national faculty. Working with faculty and students from the DMV (DC, Maryland, Virginia) universities, the faculty monitored the encampment at George Washington University, spoke at recurrent rallies held there, provided

food and water to students, and, when necessary, formed a barrier between security personnel and students.

Finally (although like all of the above, it is a continuing effort), the faculty used the special role given to them at the university to press special scrutiny of the university's commercial and academic relationships. These certainly include Georgetown's role as a major investor. Georgetown maintains that it is committed to "use reasonable efforts to avoid investments in companies that have demonstrated records of widespread violations of human dignity" and has formed an "advisory" committee that includes faculty to help it do so. But when actually asked for information relevant to this determination in the Gaza context, the university leadership has so far refused to provide it. At follow-up meetings granted to students, it appears that the university's leaders are unaware of what, if any, "efforts" are made, so that any determination of "reasonableness" is out of sight. For now. Similarly, Israeli universities with which Georgetown maintains formalized relationships have adopted punitive and discriminatory measures, and we have highlighted the university's obligation to have those relationships only with institutions that have adopted, and actually observe, non-discrimination policies. Many Georgetown students would not even be allowed entry into Israel and would likely face adverse circumstances should they attend classes or campus events.

On the one hand, I feel extraordinarily blessed to be part of a faculty community that has mobilized so quickly and done so much to express and realize solidarity in the face of such a challenge to the research and teaching environment, to say nothing of the human dignity that we all are fighting to protect (for our students, for our campus community, for justice and dignity for all involved). On the other hand, there is a long way to go. But I am fairly certain of this: University faculty, especially those with security of position, are one of the few constituencies in the United States that can speak the truth about what is going on. Censorship, punishment, and discrimination face so many people in media, government, and certainly private employment who speak the truth about what is going on. Because we are able to do so, I believe we must, and I hope that message resonates with my faculty colleagues across the country and the world. ☸

Sam Halabi is the Director of the Center for Transformational Health Law and a Professor at Georgetown University's School of Health.

Performative Neutrality vs. Student Protest at the University of Connecticut

By Gary M. English

On the morning of April 30, 2024, after five days of peaceful public protests, police at the University of Connecticut, supported by scores of police officers from at least four different jurisdictions including a unit of state police, descended on the “UConn Divest Encampment” and arrested 25 students and one alum. Charges included criminal trespass and disorderly conduct. If the state proceeds this would mark the first time in UConn history that students would be criminalized and prosecuted for engaging in peaceful protest.

A stone’s throw from the site of the arrest, an exhibit at the Dodd Center for Human Rights offered unmistakable irony, commemorating the 1974 arrest of over 200 Black UConn students who had occupied a campus building during protests to demand greater visibility and representation of the Black experience within the university. Unlike the 1974 incident, when charges were “nolled” due to advocacy by the NAACP and faculty and student uproar, the students arrested this past April were, as of late July, being arraigned in Tolland Superior Court. No national constituency, organizations, new media, alumni groups, or other voices are available to support Palestinian or Muslim American students who protest the Gaza war unlike the Black students in 1974 who were also maligned as agitators. It remains to be seen whether students will fight the charges and assert their free speech protections or accept “accelerated rehabilitation” whereby arrest records may be expunged when court demands are met. One student was told to pay the Dodd Center for Human Rights a \$100 “donation,” creating the appearance of a form of state-sponsored extortion and insinuating that protest for Palestinian rights is somehow illegitimate.

The arrests at UConn played out on the Storrs campus as a public drama, with the props, scenic elements, and general *mise-en-scène* reflecting two radically different sets of values. The students conducted themselves with dignity, holding their heads high in defiance of the staged criminalization by police, who in turn were acting in response to the UConn administration. The students did not resist but did refuse to comply.

The encampment was decorated with signs protesting the unprecedented slaughter in Gaza and highlighting the

links between the university, Israel, and Connecticut’s substantial defense industries. Understanding that research universities are invariably tied to defense industries, leaders of the student movement made clear their intentions, which centered on the demand to meet with the administration about increased transparency over the UConn Foundation investments, divestment where investments could reasonably be connected to war profiteering in Gaza, and the discontinuation of cooperation by UConn in economic partnerships with Israeli institutions.

I observed the protests over four of the days preceding the arrests and witnessed the encampment as a peaceful and vibrant gathering, with activities that included music, poetry readings, lectures, puppetry, and education. On the Saturday evening before the arrests, a Passover Seder and Shabbat ritual were performed by a dozen or so Jewish students participating in the encampment and other Jewish community members, followed by a communal dinner. All of this juxtaposed peacefully with the Islamic call to prayer. The space was marked by a spirit of generosity, peaceful protest, and assembly, and was fueled by the moral outrage of students and no small number of faculty.

At the time of the arrests, over 36,000 Palestinians in Gaza had been slaughtered, including over 14,000 children.

Building the encampment produced a sense of belonging and humanizing space for Palestinian-American, Muslim, and non-Palestinian and non-Muslim student allies that they rarely experience at UConn. The energy produced a “sense of belonging and purpose,” and one student told me, “Every time I take a break, I find myself needing to come back.” Students spent their time participating in “call and response” style protest and speeches, and they read, worked on their computers, prepared for exams, and took turns working at the encampment’s library café for a few hours at a time. During the day and into the early evening, the encampment often held up to 300 students and faculty while at night a smaller contingent held vigil and attempted to sleep. The overall positive energy created a bond within the encampment and gave the students, many for the first time, a sense of empowerment in a just and peaceful cause.

The actions taken by police, by contrast, included violence directed against students during and immediately after the encampment was set up and various attempts at intimidation through false claims that the encampment was blocking access to university buildings. The university also sent emails claiming that the tents, set up by students to protect themselves from an unseasonable cold snap

accompanied by rainstorms, were violations of university policy; this refrain was repeated by university officials during and in the aftermath of the arrests and belied any reasonable position, especially given the weather. The issue of the tents was particularly confusing to students (and faculty) as the administration's policy appeared to be generated in the moment and as a direct response to the encampment; prior communications had indicated that the encampment would be allowed to continue as long as it remained peaceful.

A meeting was scheduled between members of the administration and student leaders in hopes that an accommodation could be reached and issues of divestment and the needs of Palestinian and Muslim students could be addressed. During informal conversations at the encampment, one administrator floated the idea of offering funding for programming. However, the meeting became moot when the administration's representatives made it clear the meeting was merely a "wellness check-in" and no negotiations would take place. The students walked out.

The morning of the arrest turned ugly when UConn Police established an impenetrable perimeter and state police then arrived with a large number of zip ties and vans standing by to transfer anyone arrested. A few faculty members functioned as liaisons between the students in the encampment and police. An officer with the state police asked if there was a need for "interpreters," as if the students were not English-speaking Americans, but foreigners. The police asked if the students would come out of the encampment to be arrested. Two faculty checked in and the response came back saying they would not leave.

The administration's refrain held that the students had defied repeated warnings and calls to disperse; this narrative is one that many in the university community will likely continue to reject. The University Senate convened a special meeting on May 20, 2024, and passed a motion that urged the president to extend amnesty to all students who were arrested and drop all criminal charges, as well as form an ad hoc committee to investigate and report back to the University Senate on the decision to authorize the police to arrest the students at the encampment. A letter also circulated amongst faculty and staff that received over 300 signatures echoing similar sentiments in support of the arrested students. As of this writing UConn has not taken steps to protect students from further criminal prosecution and has refused to offer a blanket amnesty, with respect to the code of conduct, to students arrested.

In stark contrast, sister universities such as Northwestern, Brown, and Wesleyan responded to parallel student unrest by engaging with student leaders and achieving constructive solutions. In the case of Northwestern and Wesleyan, results included pledges by officials to establish committees to evaluate university funding investments and develop programs to enhance awareness of Palestinian-related issues on campus. This sort of approach was easily within reach at UConn with little or nothing to be lost in the bargain. It remains a mystery why – with evidence of a crisis spreading across campuses nationwide – the University of Connecticut did not more energetically seek out opportunities to meet with student leaders and resolve the impasse. Many on campus now believe that when the fall semester begins the administration will be forced to respond to the University Senate and create a committee to look at Foundation investments, and that UConn's President, Radenka Maric, will face continued questions regarding the decision to forcibly remove the encampment and criminalize students rather than act on their behalf and meet with them.

Perhaps the most difficult question facing UConn concerns its unmistakable preference in support of Israel and the silencing of those who might advocate on behalf of legitimate Palestinian grievances. As Jonathan Becker from Bard College recently pointed out, "In the case of the current pro-Palestinian campus demonstrations, politicians and now even education leaders are invoking the need for neutrality as a justification to quell dissent and, in some case, to call for aggressive police interventions." This insistence on fabricated neutralities, and opportunistic university policymaking, is clearly intended to disadvantage the student, who we should, instead, be listening to and talking with. UConn has devoted significant resources to develop itself as a center of human rights discourse and research. Without a deeper grasp of student experiences at UConn and the historical moment in which we now find ourselves, we risk being seen as hostile not only to the Palestinian and Muslim student experience, but to academic freedom and individual freedom of speech.

Student protest movements since the 1960s have, however flawed, almost never been wrong. Criticism of protests against the US war in Vietnam was marked by the same rhetoric we hear today, including charges of "outside agitators," and the use of police force was often violent and marked by a pro-government stance. Arbitrary decisions were made regarding who to repress or, at times, leave alone. Protest movements often faced manufactured policies designed to create a net of requirements that cannot be reasonably met, and institutions often failed

to recognize or appreciate the large-scale sense of moral outrage held by protestors that history determined to be justified. I am reminded of the bombing of Cambodia in 1968 that led to the Cambodian genocide, mass campus protests, the closure of universities, the criminalization of students, and eventually to the National Guard killing protestors at Kent State. Institutional and police attempts at intimidation directed against students and faculty also led to the Healy vs. James Supreme Court decision that legitimized and reaffirmed campus political speech. In the 1980s, students protested relentlessly the apartheid regime in South Africa even as Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher regarded the African National Congress as a terrorist organization.

Do those who want to repress this particular student movement really want to defend the actions of Israel in Gaza? Not unlike the Reagan and Thatcher governments, university administrators – at UConn and elsewhere – will soon find themselves on the wrong side of history. ☞

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Free Speech and Hate Speech in a Quaker Context

By Maud Burnett McInerney

I am not a lawyer or a legal scholar, or a specialist in the history of Palestine and Israel. I am neither Jewish nor Muslim. I am a Professor of Comparative Literature at a small liberal arts College in Pennsylvania that used to pride itself on its Quaker values, among which a commitment to peace is central. Back in November, I was one of a dozen or so faculty members who put my name on a letter imploring our administration to call for ceasefire in a conflict that had produced what seemed (then) an unthinkable number of civilian casualties; the number of dead in Gaza was approaching 20,000. The signatories of the letter were rapidly denounced as antisemites, because in the minds of some, to support the human rights of Palestinians is somehow intrinsically

antisemitic. Ever since, I have been deeply entangled in questions around free speech on my campus. What is free speech? Who has the right to speak freely? When does speech cross the line? What is the line? How is academic freedom related to free speech? What do we, as educators and mentors, owe the people that we teach? I'm not an expert on free speech but I am a highly trained reader and interpreter of texts. And here is what I see when I look at the rhetoric deployed by protestors and counter-protesters in my small corner of the world.

I begin with an anecdote. In February 2024 a group of perhaps 150 people assembled on the Cricket Field at Haverford College, planning to march to Suburban Square, a shopping area in Lower Merion. Lower Merion is a prosperous, mainly white suburb of Philadelphia. Student organizers chose Suburban Square partly because there is a Starbucks there, and Starbucks has been accused of providing financial support for Israel. Students from Haverford, Bryn Mawr and Villanova were present, but they were by no means the only participants in the march; student organizers had reached out to local community organizations from both Montgomery County and Delaware County, and as a result it was a very mixed group: there were union members, Muslim families from the neighbourhood with small children, a silver-haired white couple who I imagined might have met in college, protesting the Vietnam war, a local indigenous woman who is a long-time activist for the rights of the oppressed. People wore keffiyehs, Black Lives Matter hats, Not in Our Name shirts. A small girl kept escaping her stroller and running around shrieking with laughter until someone caught her and returned her to her mother. The whole gathering felt friendly, communal, hopeful, even while it remained serious. People passed out small Palestinian flags. There were plenty of banners bearing slogans like "Stand with Palestine, End the Occupation Now," "Free Palestine," "Defund Genocide," "End Apartheid," "Mourn the Dead but Defend the Living Like Hell," and "Jews Say Ceasefire Now."

I would like to think for a moment about the words on those banners, and about those banners as physical objects. They were handmade, out of bedsheets or parts of cardboard boxes. The fanciest ones were in red, black, and green Sharpie on poster board. The letters were wobbly. Some had errors or corrections. Students had stayed up late making them. No one had the money for a run to a copy shop, and they didn't want to use the printers in the library for fear of reprisals by the College. While many banners referred to the Jewish identities of those who carried them, not a single banner used the word Israel or contained anything that could be considered

antisemitic language, let alone an antisemitic slur. Unless, of course, you consider “Free Palestine” to be by definition an antisemitic slogan, which some especially hardline supporters of the state of Israel do.

The proper permits having been obtained, we had a polite police escort on the march to Suburban Square and there we were met, as expected, by counter-protesters. They were all white, mostly male, many of them wearing what looked like military fatigues, and they carried some of the most extraordinary flags I have ever seen, huge ones combining the Stars and Stripes and the Star of David. In sharp contrast to our homemade banners, they looked fancy, mass-produced.

There were chants on both sides. On ours, “Free Palestine,” “While you are shopping bombs are dropping,” and, yes, “From the river to the sea.” On theirs, the most common was “F*&% Hamas.” Several members of our group made speeches. A colleague of mine spoke eloquently about the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement. An African American student spoke about her personal freedom, the fact that she could walk to Wawa and buy a sandwich in safety, while wearing her hijab, contrasting this with the radical lack of security in Gaza. A Palestinian student spoke movingly about the situation in her home, the West Bank, the current threats, the long history of violence. In response to these speeches, not one of which used a slur or any foul language, new chants arose. Two of them were particularly memorable: “People like you don’t belong on the Main Line” and “Go back to Gaza.” “People like you don’t belong [insert white middle class neighborhood here]” is a classic racist dog-whistle, and it is important to remember that the pro-Palestine demonstrators were probably at least 50% Black and Brown, and the three speakers I’ve just mentioned were all people of color. “Go back to Gaza” was, chillingly, directed specifically at the Palestinian student, who wears a hijab and has an accent (and who is not from Gaza). By February the death toll in Gaza had passed 25,000 people and the assault on Rafah was already anticipated. “Go back to Gaza” was a clear threat.

Bi-Co Students for Justice in Palestine (Bi-Co is shorthand for Haverford and Bryn Mawr) posted images from the protest on Instagram the following day, along with a reference to the “hateful language” that had been used by counter-protesters. A member of the Haverford faculty who had attended the demonstration responded to the post, praising the protesters and especially “the restraint that everyone showed while being screamed at by racist genocidaires.” Within days they were summoned to the president’s office and asked to explain what they meant

by using the word “genocidaire” – a loan-word from French, meaning a person who participates in or supports genocide.

This is what it’s really all about. What do the words we mean use? How are they understood? How can meaning be manipulated? Who controls speech? And what does rhetoric reveal about the individual who deploys it, or about the group?

To be clear, my colleague has not (yet) been formally censured or disciplined, but that they were interrogated for their use of the word “genocidaire” is revealing. I believe it points toward the influence of the Executive Order on Combating Anti-Semitism signed by Donald Trump in the final days of his administration, an amendment to Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The order directs those departments and agencies that receive federal funding to “consider” the working definition of antisemitism developed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). It would thus affect colleges and universities that receive federal funding, which is nearly all of them. The amendment raised concerns about free speech from the day it was signed, with some of those concerns coming from left-leaning Jewish organizations. It has already been cited in a number of lawsuits charging colleges and institutions with antisemitism. Most of these presuppose that any support of Palestinian rights is, ipso facto, antisemitic.

Particularly relevant here is the amendment’s recommendation that agencies consider the IHRA’s “Contemporary Examples of Anti-Semitism,” which include “drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.” Apparently the use of the word “genocidaire” was understood as drawing such a comparison. This is illogical on the face of it because it seems to assume that the term genocide can only point to the Nazis. The Holocaust was an appalling example of genocide committed against the Jewish people and other groups such as the Roma and gay men, but, tragically, genocide was not a Nazi invention nor did it cease with the end of the Third Reich. Consider the Armenian genocide, which killed over a million between 1915 and 1923, the Cambodian genocide of the 1970s, the ethnic cleansing of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1990s, or the ongoing genocide in Darfur.

According to the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, “genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group... a) killing members of the group; b) causing

serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; d) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.” It is on the basis of this definition that South Africa brought a case alleging that Israel was committing genocide before the International Court of Justice in December 2023.

Israel continues to deny that what is occurring in Gaza is either ethnic cleansing or genocide. Curiously, however, the rhetoric of some pro-Israel counter-protesters seems to rely on the understanding that what is occurring is, in fact, genocidal in nature. Several colleagues of mine have received threats in their college email that develop the “go back to Gaza” theme:

There is no place in civil society for Hitler-acolytes like you. You may think you are protected by a radical incompetent college president & tenure but you will soon find out there is no place here for you. However, there will be plenty of openings in your homeland of Gaza & suggest you resign here & reapply there.

You should not be allowed in any classroom in the U.S. - especially with the worthless courses you teach. However there will be plenty of openings in Gaza for you. But I should caution you that they don't like LGBTQs and usefully kill them since they view it as a crime.

Both of these communications are clearly threatening, as was the “go back to Gaza” chant addressed to our student. The first is unwittingly ironic in that its addressee is actually Jewish, although non-practicing. The second is chilling since it betrays that the writer has ascertained the recipient’s identity and uses it as an element of the threat against them: “usefully kill them” clearly approves of violence against LGBTQIA+ people. Additionally, the reference to “your homeland of Gaza” (neither addressee is Palestinian) assumes that Gaza is the homeland of Palestinians, even though most Zionist Israeli rhetoric depends upon denying the indigeneity of the Palestinian people. What is most revealing about such threats, however, is that they depend for their menacing quality on the recognition that Gaza is, in effect, a huge prison whose inhabitants can be summarily humiliated, starved, and killed. As of the time of writing, the official death count in Gaza is approaching 40,000; The Lancet argues that the real death count is closer to 186,000. The very rhetoric of the threat makes it clear that the author of these words (who is only one among many who have addressed students and faculty with hateful speech) actually is a genocidaire, a person who supports genocide.

Pro-Palestinian students on our campus have been, in my opinion, exemplary in their commitment to the Quaker values that once defined our institution. They come from many religious traditions, Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Hindu, Quaker; some belong to no religious tradition, but simply believe in human rights. They have protested peacefully in support of ceasefire for months and have been the target of constant hateful and threatening rhetoric, of which I have given only a couple of examples. I don’t believe they will stop protesting any time soon. Nor will my colleagues and I stop supporting them in their commitment to free speech in support of human rights and human dignity, and especially Palestinian rights in the face of an ongoing genocide. We hold by the message enshrined in Haverford’s governing documents:

The College endeavors to develop in its students the realization that as members of a free society they have not only the right but also the obligation to inform themselves about various problems and issues, and the freedom to formulate and express their positions on these issues. ☸

Maud Burnett McInerney is the Laurie Ann Levin Professor of Comparative Literature, Professor of English, and Chair of Comparative Literature at Haverford College.

Gaza War Prompts Attacks on Academic Freedom

By Stephen Zunes

During the wave of campus protests opposing the US-backed war on Gaza and calling for divestment from Israel, students weren’t the only demonstrators to face arrest; supportive faculty members were also caught up in the crackdown.

At Columbia University, where president Minouche Shafik was pressed to resign by members of Congress for being too lenient toward the protesters, the university’s School of Public Health blocked a South African faculty member from teaching about the health impacts of settler colonialism. Shafik has also placed professors who have used terms like “settler colonialism” or “apartheid” in the context of Israel under investigation for alleged anti-Jewish discrimination, and has removed professors from teaching assignments in response to complaints by right-wing students.

When Shafik testified before Congress in mid-April 2024, she announced that Middle Eastern Studies professor

Joseph Massad had been removed as chair of the university's Academic Review Committee following claims by Republicans that he had said Hamas's murder of Jews was "awesome, astonishing, astounding, and incredible" – even though he never said anything of the sort. She also failed to correct false claims by Republican committee members regarding Columbia Law Professor Katherine Franke, stating that she and Massad were under investigation for discriminatory remarks.

As Irene Mulvey, national president of the American Association of University Professors, told *The New York Times*,

We are witnessing a new era of McCarthyism where a House committee is using college presidents and professors for political theater. President Shafik's public naming of professors under investigation to placate a hostile committee sets a dangerous precedent for academic freedom and has echoes of the cowardice often displayed during the McCarthy era.

And Columbia isn't the only university where faculty feel as though their academic freedoms are being steadily revoked.

Indiana University faculty have overwhelmingly endorsed a vote of no confidence in their president, provost, and vice provost for suspending a tenured political science professor for a full year from teaching or advising – without the normal review process – after he hosted a talk by an Israeli-American peace activist that the university tried to ban.

Jodi Dean, a tenured professor at Hobart & William Smith College and a noted political theorist, has been suspended from teaching duties as a result of writing a blog post supportive of the Hamas attack. Although there had been no complaints from students about their interactions with Dean, the college's president claimed that she had led students to feel "threatened in or outside of the classroom." While her essay was widely condemned, even by pro-Palestinian faculty, there has been no such disciplinary action against professors who have defended the far greater violence against civilians by US-backed Israeli forces.

Professor Sang Hea Kil, an associate professor of justice studies at San Jose State University, who was serving as a liaison between pro-Palestinian campus protestors and university administration, has been suspended and is under investigation for disciplinary action following false charges that she was actively encouraging students to violate university policies.

At Texas Tech University, Jairo Fúnez-Flores, an assistant professor of curriculum studies and teacher education, had criticized US policy toward Israel-Palestine on social media and was suspended after unsubstantiated claims of antisemitism appeared on a right-wing website. Similarly, at New York University, a popular adjunct who is critical of Israel was suspended due to complaints that were not revealed to him or the public. At the University of Arizona College of Education, an assistant professor and community liaison were placed on leave for leading a discussion about civilian casualties in Gaza. An adjunct professor in American cultural studies at Washington University was "relieved of all job duties" and "prohibited from being on any part of the University campus" after taking part in a pro-Palestinian demonstration in which he and other peaceful protesters were arrested.

At Smith College, an adjunct lecturer in dance, Olive Demar, was fired because her syllabus – which had been prepared the previous summer – included a reading on the relationship between concert dance and settler colonial violence and displacement.

College administrators are not immune either. At Sonoma State University, President Mike Lee was placed on administrative leave on grounds of insubordination and later forced to resign for agreeing to a deal with pro-Palestinian protesters. The University of Minnesota's College of Liberal Arts canceled its search for a new associate dean of diversity, equity, and inclusion and decided to leave the position vacant rather than allow Professor Sima Shakhsari, who had been personally invited to apply for the position by colleagues, to assume the position following false charges by outside groups that they supported Hamas.

Graduate student instructors and teaching assistants have been particularly vulnerable and, in several instances, have been removed for simply noting the humanitarian consequences of Israel's war on Gaza.

Administrations have been interfering with curriculum as well. At Albany Law School, a professor was ordered to unpublish a law review article by a prominent US legal scholar and a legal briefing issued by a respected US civil rights organization related to Israel-Palestine.

Unfortunately, the Biden Administration, rather than fighting this crackdown on academic freedom, has been supporting it. The Department of Education has opened a Title VI investigation into the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill because a Black professor in the Department of Communication said in a class that "Israel

and the United States do not give a shit about international law or war crimes.” Such criticism of US policy, according to the Biden Administration, may constitute discrimination against Jews.

Biden also launched an investigation against a George Washington University psychology professor for alleged antisemitism for critical comments about Israel just days after an independent investigation found no evidence to support the charges.

Faculty, however, are fighting back, particularly in defense of their students. At Columbia, Barnard, the University of Texas, and elsewhere, there have been walkouts and work stoppages. Faculty senates have condemned administrations for their violations of academic freedom, issued no confidence resolutions against their administrations, and have provided support – such as food deliveries – for students in their encampments.

Scores of faculty members have also been arrested, risking their careers and even physical safety.

At Indiana University, four professors were detained trying to protect students engaged in peaceful protests in a recognized free speech zone on campus, and have since been banned from campus for one year. At Washington University, historian Steve Tamari was brutally beaten by police while supporting peaceful demonstrators and was hospitalized with multiple broken ribs and a broken hand. Even faculty observers who were not participating in the protests themselves have become targets, such as at Emory University, where economics professor Caroline Frohlin was body slammed during her arrest and Noelle McAfee, philosophy department chair, was also arrested. At Dartmouth, Annelise Orleck, the 65-year-old head of the Jewish Studies program, was twice pushed to the ground while being arrested and initially banned from campus for six months, although that was later rescinded.

The crackdown is having an impact. A survey of Middle East Studies faculty revealed that “82 percent of all US-based respondents, including almost all assistant professors (98 percent), said that they self-censor when they speak professionally about the Israeli-Palestinian issue.”

While US faculty have long been outspoken on controversial issues, these attacks on academic freedom are the worst in nearly 60 years. While they are in part related to pressure from right-wing Zionist groups and donors, these actions can best be understood in light of the broader attack by the right against higher education as a whole.

Representative Elise Stefanik, Republican of New York, for example, has refused to condemn Donald Trump’s antisemitic comments and associations and has touted the Great Replacement Theory and other antisemitic tropes; she is now leading the charge against anti-war and pro-Palestinian faculty for alleged antisemitism. The attacks that led to the forced resignation of Harvard University president Claudine Gay were orchestrated not by Zionist groups, but by figures like conservative activist Christopher Rufo, who was also behind the assault on critical race theory.

And it is no accident that a disproportionate number of faculty targeted have been female, queer, and people of color.

It is also part of the right’s anti-intellectual agenda: Just as the overwhelming majority of Latin American scholars and other university faculty back in the 1980s opposed Reagan’s support for the Salvadoran junta and Nicaraguan Contras, most Middle Eastern scholars and other faculty have opposed Biden’s support for Israel’s war on Gaza, as they did his previous support for the US invasion of Iraq. The reason for this is simply that intellectuals tend to be more knowledgeable about their subject matter and less motivated by ideology than policymakers. This is why, for example, climate scientists are more concerned about climate change than officials in Washington. By claiming that it is the scholars who are biased rather than the US government, supporters of US backing of Israel’s war and occupation, like supporters of weaker environmental legislation, can sow doubt among the public as to who to trust. And, by using antisemitism as a wedge, they can sometimes get moderates and liberals to naively believe them.

So, while the right may be taking advantage of concerns of antisemitism, this disturbing trend should not be seen in isolation. What’s happening on campuses may only be the beginning. ☸

Stephen Zunes is Professor of Politics and International Studies at the University of San Francisco. This piece is based largely on the article, “The New Assault on Academic Freedom,” which appeared on the website of The Progressive magazine on May 15, 2024.

In Appreciation: Rabbi Marc Ellis

Dr. Marc Ellis, the courageous scholar, thinker, and Jewish liberation theologian, died on June 8 at the age of 71. Although I had just spoken to him just a week earlier – and though Marc was in the final stages of cancer and had recently begun hospice – his death still came as a great shock to many of us. It is difficult to imagine the world without Marc Ellis – particularly in a moment in which his ideas are more relevant than ever.

Marc was a maverick thinker and a prolific writer. His landmark book, “Toward a Theology of Jewish Liberation,” is still as fresh and audacious today as it was when it was first published in 1987. Using Christian Liberation Theology as a framework – and taking his cue from Jewish post-Holocaust theologians such as Richard Rubenstein, Irving Greenberg and Emil Fackenheim – he courageously parsed the theological impact of the Jewish political-military empowerment embodied by the state of Israel. While the mainstream theological trends viewed Jewish statehood as redemptive, Marc challenged that Israel’s oppression of the Palestinians represented a profound theological and moral crisis. Such ideas were truly audacious in the 1980s. They remain no less so today.

Marc began his academic career as a distinguished scholar and professor at Maryknoll School of Theology, where he directed its Institute for Justice and Peace. In addition to his writing and scholarship, he was instrumental in promoting the landmark work of Palestinian Liberation theologian Rev. Naim Ateek. In 1998 he was appointed professor of American and Jewish studies at Baylor University, where he founded its Center for Jewish Studies. Marc was eventually forced out of Baylor in 2012 by then-President Kenneth Starr. Though the university never gave a formal reason for his firing, it was clear to many of us that he was being punished for his controversial views.

Marc was a very important friend, teacher and mentor to me. As I wrote in an essay for a Festschrift held in his honor in 2018, Marc reached out to me during a difficult time in my life – after I left my former congregation under painful duress. It meant the world to me that a scholar who had such an influence on my own religious and political journey would make such a gesture. Marc, who was never able to find full-time employment after leaving Baylor, was experiencing first-hand the reality of professional exile himself. Long before the current moment – in which increasing numbers of young Jewish community professionals are losing their jobs for calling for ceasefire and protesting Israel’s genocide of Palestinians – Marc

himself had experienced what he referred to as banishment to the “New Diaspora.”

Even so, Marc never stopped writing. His final book, “First Light: Encountering Edward Said and the Late-Style Jewish Prophetic in the New Diaspora” was published just last year. More to the point, Marc never stopping growing. In more recent years, he wrote extensively about the “prophetic,” which he believed was the “Jewish indigenous.” He wrote about the “end of ethical Jewish history.” His style of writing also evolved markedly; he increasingly wrote in poetic sentence fragments. He also painted prolifically – many of his artistic works are featured alongside his prose in “First Light.”

In his final years, Marc wrote extensively on his Facebook page. When he was stricken with Parkinson’s Disease, and later with cancer, he wrote openly about his own health struggles, weaving them into his meditations on Palestine/Israel, politics and the prophetic. He posted his final Facebook message on April 20:

Waking. Shabbat. The sky is gray. Foggy.

First light is hidden.

After consultation with my doctors, I have decided to enter hospice.

The other avenues are too fraught. They won’t offer much except pain.

The doctor’s prediction is that I have six months to live - more or less.

Full life I’ve lived. No complaints.

End of life exploration ahead.

I am surrounded by love and care. And the beauty of our world.

We send our blessings of condolence and comfort to his sons Aaron and Isaiah and his wife Coy as well as the many friends, colleagues and students whom he touched, challenged and transformed during the course of his life. Though Marc is no longer physically with us, his life’s work is more vital, critical and resonant than ever. Those of us who are mourning his untimely death are finding solace and strength in his uncompromisingly prophetic example, which continues to challenge us, beckon to us and ultimately, I believe, point the way for us all. ☸



Brant Rosen (left) is rabbi of Tzedek Chicago.



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Our office at 475 Riverside Drive has been home for nearly a half-century and, though it no longer serves as a warehouse for the book sales that were once a core part of our mission, we maintain a toehold in "the God Box" for our library and for the wonderful neighbors we meet in this homebase for New York's non-profit sector. The office address is unchanged and for those who prefer pen and ink, we welcome your correspondence and suggestions (and donations!) there.



As Fall settles in, AMEU is especially grateful for readers who have sought us out and remembered us in their estates and trusts. Please email us at donate@ameu.org for more detailed information about how to go about this. (Though in an effort to keep costs down, we did cancel our land line, we can still be reached at our Google phone, at 559-481-4742.)

We were grateful to receive comments at our ombudsman email—feedback@ameu.org—and hope our future issues will address some of the thoughtful tips we receive there.

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