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## Solidarity Based Not on Sameness: Aspects of the Black-Palestinian Connection

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Solidarity does not mean our struggles are the same. Solidarity means all struggles matter.

—Robin D. G. Kelley at National Organizers’  
Conference of the US Campaign to End the Israeli  
Occupation, September 21, 2014

### INTRODUCTION

Police brutality is not a new phenomenon in the United States. Although the social context—that is, political, judicial, economic, cultural, and so on—in which it has occurred is not always the same, African Americans and other populations of color have long faced police officers who have instinctively regarded them as a public enemy or a threat to society. Even so, there is a contemporary aspect to movements protesting police brutality that finds solidarity across the oceans by addressing the interconnectedness among those movements.

Black-Palestinian solidarity, which has grown since the summer of 2014, is a development that shows that police brutality cannot be limited to a local or national framework anymore. Although relations between the two groups date back more than half a century to the birth of Israel as an independent state, scholarly focus on the historical significance is relatively recent. Among many works focusing on this relationship, the 2015 *Letters to*

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*Palestine*, an anthology edited by Vijay Prashad, gives us a meaningful opportunity to discover how both groups have seen their predicament and struggles in the other.<sup>1</sup> More evidence that Black-Palestinian relations is not a marginal topic is a special issue featured in the December 2015 *American Quarterly*. The issue included nine “essays by authors working in diverse fields who address the relevance of the question of Palestine to the projects of American studies” and emphasized Black-Palestinian solidarity.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of my article is not to summarize how Black-Palestinian solidarity has developed but to critically address the monolithic—in some instances ahistorical—image of the global connection in multiple contexts. As a historian working on contemporary cases of police brutality in New York, I attempt to show how a specific case of brutality has led to greater solidarity both on a national and global level, and how global solidarity characterizes the local incident.

#### PRECEDING THE SUMMER OF 2014

##### CASES OF RACIST VIOLENCE WITHIN THE UNITED STATES

There have been far too many incidents in which black individuals—predominantly young males—have been killed by police or members of vigilante groups to enumerate in full, even if we just talk about cases in New York City since the turn of the twenty-first century. Amadou Diallo, Patrick Dorismond, Sean Bell, and Ramarley Graham are among the many names on the list of police-on-black killings.

We can draw two historical lessons from the cases mentioned above; one is that it is very difficult—or almost impossible—to hold on-duty police officers accountable for their killings of civilians, especially when the victims are nonwhite young males; the other is that police brutality has never been an exceptional issue but rather an everyday problem that nonwhite residents have long had to deal with. For black New Yorkers, Michael Stewart, Amadou Diallo, Patrick Dorismond, Sean Bell, Ramarley Graham, Eric Garner, and others are martyrs of police brutality whose names are etched in their collective memory.

Although neither a police brutality case nor a New York hate crime, the shooting of Trayvon Martin in 2012 is highly representative of racist violence in many ways.<sup>3</sup> The tragic fate of Trayvon Martin, a seventeen-year-old African American in a hoodie, stands for what living as a black youth means in contemporary US society and how the nation’s criminal

justice system operates for the nonwhite population. Trayvon Benjamin Martin was profiled as a criminal because of his black skin when he visited his father's fiancée at her townhouse located inside a gated community in Sanford, Florida. George Zimmerman was a twenty-nine-year-old neighborhood watch volunteer, who testified that he had been concerned about burglaries in his townhouse complex, when he spotted an unfamiliar black face on a rainy evening. He explained later in court that he shot Martin in self-defense after Martin knocked him down to the ground, punching him and slamming his head against the concrete sidewalk. Zimmerman was not charged by the Sanford Police Department, who contended there were no legal grounds to arrest him as they lacked evidence refuting his claim of self-defense. Almost immediately following Trayvon Martin's death, protest marches and rallies across the nation and media coverage of the incident prompted a widespread debate on racial profiling or "stand your ground" laws, which allow someone with a reasonable fear of bodily harm or death to resort to lethal force irrespective of the possibility of retreating from the perceived danger.<sup>4</sup>

Largely thanks to mounting pressures from the public and the consistent efforts of civil rights leaders, George Zimmerman was arrested six weeks after the incident. From the beginning of the trial by jury, however, prosecutors' prospects were gloomy. Although Zimmerman's actions were never appropriate, in that he disregarded a police dispatcher's advice not to follow Martin and there are some who heard Zimmerman's racist words and part of the struggle, no one saw the scene of the shooting with their own eyes. Strictly speaking, defense lawyers did not make a "stand your ground" argument in this case, but because of Florida's laws, not defense lawyers but "prosecutors had to persuade jurors beyond a reasonable doubt that Mr. Zimmerman did not act in self-defense." A shortage of material evidence in the case and some photographs of Zimmerman's injuries might have been enough for jurors to understand the incident according to the Zimmerman's version of events. Late Saturday night, on July 13, 2013, after the six jurors deliberated for sixteen hours and twenty minutes over two days to conclude the nationally famous trial that started on June 24, George Zimmerman was acquitted of second-degree murder and manslaughter, a lesser charge. Although immediately after the not guilty verdict, the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice announced it would take over the case, the move did not change the result. The DOJ terminated its investigation into the violation of Trayvon Martin's civil rights on February 24, 2015. The DOJ's decision was based on the conviction of Attorney General Eric

Holder Jr. that the “standard for a federal hate crime prosecution cannot be met under the circumstances here.”<sup>5</sup>

No doubt protesters shouting “No justice, no peace!” after the not guilty verdict at the state courthouse believed race was an important factor in the decision and that a shortage of material evidence was not essential to be able to characterize the incident as a whole. In a statement released on July 14, 2013, on behalf of Trayvon Martin’s parents, Sybrina Fulton and Tracy Martin, their attorney, Benjamin Crump said, “Trayvon Martin will forever remain in the annals of history next to Medgar Evers and Emmet Till as symbols for the fight for equal justice for all.”<sup>6</sup>

Indeed, African Americans’ fear of police brutality has never been an illusion but rather a matter of solid statistical fact. In April 2013, the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, “an organization of Afrikans in America,” issued the updated version of its report entitled “Operation Ghetto Storm”—originally published in July 2012.<sup>7</sup> As journalist Adam Hudson indicates in an article in *AlterNet* that analyzes the report, “most police officers, security guards, or vigilantes who extrajudicially killed black people, about 47% (146 of 313), claimed they ‘felt threatened,’ ‘feared for their life,’ or ‘were forced to shoot to protect themselves or others.’” He continues:

Police recruitment, training, policies, and overall racism within society conditions police (and many other people) to assume black people are violent to begin with [and] this leads to police overacting in situations involving African-American suspects. It also explains why so many police claimed the black suspect ‘looked suspicious’ or ‘thought they had a gun.’

What counts more is the judicial reality that police officers—and self-appointed vigilantes—have rarely been forced to be accountable for their killings of black people. All of this ends up justifying and solidifying the “domestic pacification” by the police. In summarizing the report’s implications for the police’s tactics, Hudson emphasizes, “They come to view themselves as soldiers fighting against a foreign enemy rather [than] police protecting a community.” Hudson concludes that an increase in the number of those killed by police is “the inevitable result of institutional racism and militaristic tactics and thinking within America’s domestic security apparatus.”<sup>8</sup>

## INTENSIFIED PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL

Black-Palestinian solidarity is not a new phenomenon. Although a sequence of racial incidents in the United States during the summer of 2014 seems to have triggered a global linkage of protest movements of African Americans and Palestinians, its history traces back to the formation of Israel as a state in 1948. As a pivotal moment, however, the year 1967 marked a sea change for Black-Palestinian relationships. As historian Matthew Frye Jacobson notes, “the discourses of civil rights and of Jewish identity diverged sharply after 1967, when the African-American canon of liberatory narratives set aside the Mosaic legend of Exodus in favor of the contemporary plight of displaced Palestinians.”<sup>9</sup>

With that history in mind, I would like to comment on the interconnection between racial oppression in the United States and settler colonialism in Israel. Among the several figures who have long been vocal on this subject is journalist and activist Kristian Davis Bailey. He had an opportunity to visit the West Bank in 2012 as a journalist for his university newspaper and to cover the arrest and detainment of Fadi Quran, a Palestinian protesting nonviolently there. In spring 2014, Bailey explained why and how he got involved in the issue of Black-Palestinian solidarity:

Fadi’s 2012 arrest occurred two days before Trayvon Martin’s murder, and both of these events pushed me to become active in the Black movement for freedom at home and justice for Palestinians abroad. In educating myself about what Palestinians experience, I began to see the interconnectedness of our struggles. . . . My five-week visit to Palestine last summer occurred less than a month after George Zimmerman’s verdict was released. Outside of Bethlehem, I was shocked to find a memorial to Trayvon Martin painted on the 24-foot separation wall Israel builds on Palestinian land. I was even more shocked at how viscerally I noticed similarities between Stand Your Ground laws at home and Israel’s justification for its treatment of Palestinians.<sup>10</sup>

It can be argued that “the interconnectedness of our struggles” is a by-product of the close US-Israeli connection, especially in terms of law enforcement and military technology. Since 2001, thousands of law enforcement officials from US cities have gone to Israel for several exchange programs with Israeli soldiers on policing and counterterrorism. Some of the programs were hosted by the Jewish Institute for National

Security Affairs, “a neoconservative think tank that claims to have organized Israeli training sessions for some 9,500 law enforcement officials since 2004 through its Law Enforcement Exchange Program.”<sup>11</sup> JINSA sponsored a visit by the Baltimore Police Department’s officers to Israel for learning such skills as “crowd control” and “coordination with the media” in 2002 and to participate in training sessions with Israeli soldiers in 2007.<sup>12</sup>

Another institution that has hosted similar exchange programs is the Anti-Defamation League. In April 2011, the ADL sponsored the National Counter-Terrorism Seminar, which dispatched top officers of the largest US police departments, mainly from the northeast, and leaders of the FBI and Immigration and Customs Enforcement to Israel to participate in binational sessions. “Israel has been the target of terror since the nation was founded,” David Friedman, director of ADL’s National Law Enforcement Initiatives, explained.<sup>13</sup> He added, “NCTS enables Israel’s counterterrorism experts to share their knowledge and lessons learned, to help American law enforcement better protect America, and prevent us from having to learn the same lessons the hard way.”<sup>14</sup> In the institution’s own words, “more than 115 federal, state and local law enforcement executives have participated in the ADL program since it was first launched in 2003.”<sup>15</sup> Similar visiting programs took place around the pivotal year of 2014—in 2013 by ADL and in 2015 by JINSA.<sup>16</sup>

## THE BLACK-PALESTINIAN CONNECTION SINCE 2014

### FROM GARNER TO BROWN, FROM BROWN TO GARNER

The summer of 2014 is remembered as the time when it became clear that it would not be possible to deal with specific cases of police brutality without exploring sociohistorical contexts and their interconnectedness. Before examining Black-Palestinian solidarity across the ocean, I would like to summarize a historical process by which the Eric Garner case, a police brutality incident in Staten Island, New York, has shaped and reshaped its meanings by being connected with another police brutality case in Ferguson, Missouri, which happened to occur less than a month later.

On July 17, 2014, after returning from lunch with Ramsey Orta, a twenty-three-year-old friend, Eric Garner—forty-three years old, 6 feet 2 inches tall, 395 pounds—tried to stop a scuffle taking place in front of him on the stretch of Bay Street along Tompkinsville Park. As two NYPD officers approached, many on the block thought the officers had come to settle the

fight. To the bystanders' surprise, after an exchange of some words between Eric Garner and the officers, the officers moved to arrest Garner for illegally selling untaxed loose cigarettes. Indignant at the police's surprise arrest, Ramsey Orta began videotaping the scene. The sixteen-minute video shows what happened. Officer Daniel Pantaleo, twenty-nine, swung one arm over Garner's shoulder and around his neck and another arm under Garner's arm, taking the larger Garner's body down to the ground. As the two men rammed against the glass window of a nearby beauty shop, four uniformed officers arrived. According to the shop manager, he heard the female sergeant say, "Let up, you got him already." Pantaleo looked at her but did not loosen his hold. Pantaleo moved from holding Garner's neck to pressing his face to the pavement, and the three officers helped handcuff Garner while he repeated eleven times, "I can't breathe." At 3:32 p.m., the officers radioed for an ambulance. About four minutes after emergency medical workers arrived, they lifted Garner's body onto a stretcher, assisted by the officers. While Garner lay on the ground for several minutes, he was not given oxygen by the medical workers. At 3:44 p.m., they raised the seriousness of Garner's condition to the highest level because Garner was in cardiac arrest. Sergeant Dhanan Saminath told Officer Justin Damico to ride in the ambulance with Garner. At 4:34 p.m. Garner was declared dead at Richmond University Medical Center. After his death, the officers stated they believed his pleas were faked to avoid arrest.<sup>17</sup>

Eight days after Garner's funeral on July 23 in Brooklyn, which was attended by hundreds of mourners including his six children, New York City mayor Bill de Blasio hosted a panel discussion with NYPD commissioner William Bratton and Rev. Al Sharpton. Referring to de Blasio's son, whose mother is black, Sharpton said to de Blasio, "If Dante wasn't your son, he'd be a candidate for a chokehold."<sup>18</sup>

On August 1, the day after the discussion, the city's coroner ruled Eric Garner's death a "homicide."<sup>19</sup> The coroner explained that compression of Garner's neck and chest—caused by a chokehold and Garner's positioning pressed on the pavement—caused his death, with his asthma, obesity, and hypertensive cardiovascular disease as contributing factors. Responding to the coroner's report, the mayor issued a statement: "My administration will continue to work with all involved authorities, including the Richmond County District Attorney, to ensure a fair and justified outcome."<sup>20</sup> In contrast to de Blasio's simple words, Patrick Lynch, president of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (PBA), the largest union representing the city's police officers, seems to have tried hard to invalidate the findings

of the report at a press conference on August 5, when he said:

Police Officers don't start their days expecting or wanting something like this to occur in the performance of their duties. . . . We believe, however, that if he had not resisted the lawful order of the police officers placing him under arrest, this tragedy would not have occurred.<sup>21</sup>

During the heated discussions on the medical report, Ramsey Orta, who with his cell phone had shot the video of Eric Garner being killed by the police, was arrested on August 2 on weapons possession charges. On August 3, in another press release, Patrick Lynch commented on the arrest of Orta, saying, "It is criminals like Mr. Orta who carry illegal firearms who stand to benefit the most by demonizing the good work of police officers."<sup>22</sup>

In less than a week, another black man was killed by the police, this time in Missouri. About the shooting of Michael Brown, a case of police brutality that is now well known both nationally and internationally, I will describe only how it happened. On August 9, 2014, Michael Brown, an eighteen-year-old black youth, was shot to death by Darren Wilson, a twenty-eight-year-old white officer of the Ferguson Police Department (FPD). When Wilson encountered Brown and his friend Dorian Johnson on the street in Ferguson, a black-majority suburb of St. Louis, he had already been notified about a robbery of cigarillos at a nearby convenience store; based on the descriptions of the robbers, he claimed to have recognized the two as the suspects. According to the report of the DOJ, after an altercation between Wilson and Brown, who tried to take control of Wilson's gun through the window of his vehicle until Wilson's gun was fired, Brown and Johnson fled, and Wilson ran after them. Suddenly, Brown allegedly stopped and turned back to face Wilson, rushing toward him. During the entire altercation, Wilson fired twelve bullets, the last shot of which was considered to be fatal to Brown. Though the DOJ's report denied that Brown showed any sign of surrendering, many protesters marching in Ferguson and several other places across the country began chanting, "Hands up, don't shoot!" a phrase widely circulated within the black community immediately after the incident.<sup>23</sup>

On August 23, Sharpton's National Action Network held the We Will Not Go Back march on Staten Island in response to the Michael Brown and Eric Garner killings. Shouting the phrase, "I can't breathe!" the marchers—about eight thousand according to one police officer's estimate—peacefully



proceeded from Mt. Sinai Christian Church to Bay Street with the families of both Garner and Brown. As a caller would yell “Hands up!” the marchers would answer “Don’t shoot!” The large turnout on Staten Island symbolized the integration of the two incidents. Sharpton then moved from New York to Ferguson to attend Michael Brown’s funeral, which was held at the Friendly Temple Missionary Baptist Church on August 25. At the funeral, which was attended by many notables such as Rev. Jesse Jackson and Spike Lee, Sharpton eulogized Michael Brown. Lesley McSpadden, Michael Brown’s mother, wept all through the funeral in the front row. On that Monday, many people witnessed the poignant sight of other mothers of black shooting victims—Valerie Bell, mother of Sean Bell; Sybrina Fulton, mother of Trayvon Martin; and Constance Malcolm, mother of Ramarley Graham—consoling Lesley McSpadden.<sup>24</sup>

Not only black New Yorkers but also many other urban dwellers of color often spoke of the “chokehold” as well as the well-known phrase, “I can’t breathe” all across the country. When Police Commissioner William Bratton said before the New York City Council’s Committee on Public Safety on September 8, “Chokeholds are not illegal,” many got furious. In Bratton’s logic, chokeholds have been against police procedure since Anthony Baez, a black New Yorker, was killed in a chokehold by a NYPD officer in 1994. “Banned” or “against police procedure” is not the same as “illegal” in Bratton’s view. In this situation, Dr. Michael Baden, a former New York City medical examiner who conducted an independent autopsy on Michael Brown, disclosed his findings, which basically agreed with the city’s coroner’s report on September 19. Under the apparent adversity, what the NYPD chose as a tactic for defending the officers and the institution was the demonization of Eric Garner. PBA president Patrick Lynch said:

The undeniable fact is that Eric Garner was a criminal who served significant jail time for serious felony crimes and who brought crime, disorder and fear to the community. . . . He continued to violate the law and . . . he ultimately chose to resist arrest. Those bad choices, including the choice to resist arrest, ultimately took his life.<sup>25</sup>

Many, having long called for justice on behalf of Eric Garner and Michael Brown, were infuriated at the judicial decisions of the two grand juries, which were announced within a week of each other. On November 25, a grand jury in Ferguson decided not to indict Darren Wilson for shooting and killing Brown.<sup>26</sup> The news of the decision set off fierce protests all around

the country, including in New York City. On the very next day in Harlem, Garner's family listened to Sharpton's speech about the Ferguson grand jury decision with Brown's family. Harlem was clearly filled with concern about the upcoming grand jury decision in the Eric Garner case, and anger increased with the grand jury decision in the Michael Brown case. Surrounded by many supporters, Gwen Carr, Garner's mother, said, "We don't know what the outcome is, but we're praying."<sup>27</sup> Despite the failure to indict in the Michael Brown case, Garner's lawyers seemed to have believed that the grand jury would indict the officers involved in the New York incident. This is clear from the words of Jonathan Moore, an attorney for Garner's family: "You have a very prompt decision from the medical examiner; you have the videotape. I mean, you hear him say, 'I can't breathe, I can't breathe.'"<sup>28</sup>

On December 3, for Garner's family and many others, vague concern and faint hope turned into despair and anger. At the press conference, Sharpton and Garner's family spoke angrily about the grand jury's decision not to indict Pantaleo and disclosed plans for a national march in Washington, DC. He said, "We are not advocating violence, we are asking that police violence stop. Now you have a man choked to death on videotape and says 11 times 'I can't breathe.'"<sup>29</sup> On the same day, Daniel Pantaleo released a statement through the PBA:

I became a police officer to help people and to protect those who can't protect themselves. . . . It is never my intention to harm anyone and I feel very bad about the death of Mr. Garner. . . . My family and I include him and his family in our prayers and I hope that they will accept my personal condolences for their loss.<sup>30</sup>

That request was immediately rejected by Esaw Garner, who said at Sharpton's office in Harlem, "No, I don't accept his apology."<sup>31</sup> Even President Obama weighed in the discussion by saying, "This is an issue we've been dealing with for too long and it's time for us to make more progress than we've made. I'm absolutely committed as president of the United States to making sure that we have a country in which everyone believes in the core principle that we are equal under the law."<sup>32</sup>

As announced on the day of the grand jury's decision, Sharpton led a march and rally in Washington, DC, on December 13. The Justice for All march was joined by such figures as Eric's wife, Esaw Garner; Eric's mother, Gwen Carr; Michael Brown's father, Michael Brown Sr.; Brown's

mother, Lesley McSpadden; Trayvon Martin’s mother, Sybrina Fulton; and Martin’s father, Tracy Martin, who proceeded to the Capitol. Meanwhile, thousands of people participated in the National Day of Resistance in New York to show their solidarity and outrage over the grand jury decisions in the cases of Michael Brown and Eric Garner. They marched from Washington Square Park to One Police Plaza, the headquarter of the NYPD, and crossed the Brooklyn Bridge, chanting, “No justice, no peace,” “Hands up, don’t shoot!” and “I can’t breathe!” and carrying “Black Lives Matter” signs. For the marchers and those who sympathized with them, Eric Garner and Michael Brown, Staten Island and Ferguson, were inseparable (fig. 1).<sup>33</sup>

Though those who called for justice were unheeded by the grand jury, the DOJ officially agreed to part of what those struggling to achieve justice for Michael Brown had long insisted on. In a report released on March 4, 2015, the DOJ concluded that the FPD had a pattern of civil rights violations. The DOJ did not question the validity of the grand jury’s decision not to indict Darren Wilson, but the department was critical of the everyday law enforcement practices of the FPD. Attorney General Eric Holder Jr. explained, “Our investigation showed that Ferguson police officers routinely



**Figure 1.** The spot where Eric Garner was killed. The message below “NO Justice!” reads “Daniel Pantaleo and his accomplices continue to hide behind the Blue Wall of Violence!” Photo taken by the author on September 6, 2016.

violate the Fourth Amendment in stopping people without reasonable suspicion, arresting them without probable cause, and using unreasonable force against them.”<sup>34</sup> Few were optimistic about the situation, however, because on February 24, about a week prior to the DOJ’s report on the FPD, the DOJ announced that the department would not charge George Zimmerman for the 2012 shooting of Trayvon Martin due to a lack of sufficient evidence.<sup>35</sup>

One of the immediate reforms those critical of police brutality have called for is to halt what many consider a culture of unaccountability. When Staten Island judge William E. Garnett ruled on March 15, 2015, that records of the Eric Garner grand jury investigation would not be disclosed, critics confronted once again a high wall of that culture. They had long insisted that the release of the records of the grand jury might help restore the public’s faith in the criminal justice system. Some argued that the decision was a result of political calculation. Jon Campbell, a journalist who specializes in criminal justice, speculated, “The grand jury that investigated the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, did release records in that case, and many commentators believed they revealed a prosecutor who was not truly interested in an indictment.”<sup>36</sup>

There was another legal action concerning the death of Eric Garner. On July 13, 2015, New York City comptroller Scott Stringer announced that his office had reached a settlement with the estate of Eric Garner, which had sued the city and the NYPD for \$75 million on October 6, 2014.<sup>37</sup> At a press conference, Stringer said, “While we cannot discuss the details of this settlement, and the city has not admitted liability, I believe that we have reached an agreement that acknowledges the tragic nature of Mr. Garner’s death while balancing my office’s fiscal responsibility to the city.”<sup>38</sup> Yet those who had called for justice were not satisfied with the settlement, which promised the estate of Eric Garner \$5.9 million. “So we are still out here doing what we have to do fighting for justice,” Ellisha Flagg, Eric Garner’s sister, told a news reporter.<sup>39</sup>

The one-year anniversary of the Eric Garner incident was a significant moment commemorating the collective struggles for justice among mothers whose sons and husbands were slain by police officers. On July 17, 2015, there was a gathering in Restoration Plaza, Brooklyn, that was organized by Ellisha Flagg and attended by Garner’s mother, Sean Bell’s mother, Trayvon Martin’s mother, Oscar Grant’s mother, Ramarley Graham’s mother, Michael Brown’s mother, and Anthony Baez’s mother, among others. All dressed in white with splashes of bright orange, they agreed at the gathering

on the view that monetary settlements would not keep them quiet.<sup>40</sup>

When one stops thinking of these two incidents of police brutality, the Eric Garner case and the Michael Brown case, as separate, a new cognitive order emerges. In a sense, Eric Garner's death was "discovered" in the aftermath of the Michael Brown incident that happened a few weeks later. To be sure, there were relatively small protests following Garner's death, but the killing was dwarfed by the shooting of Michael Brown, which dominated media coverage across the country. As historian and public intellectual Robin D. G. Kelley argues, for the majority in the mainstream media and their viewers, "it wasn't Brown's death that was deemed newsworthy but the 'riots' that followed."<sup>41</sup> The tense critical situation—"like a war zone"—in Ferguson, witnessed by many who were infuriated at the overtly militarized response to protesters, triggered a broader movement across the nation.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, the We Will Not Go Back march on Staten Island on August 23 was a result of the connections made regarding state violence. In other words, the two incidents came to be integrated on account of the larger movement's call for abolition of racial oppression in the United States. Moreover, the interconnectedness of the two cases was strengthened by the grand jury decisions toward the end of 2014 not to indict the police officers who were responsible for terminating the lives of the two black men.

At first glance, it seems strange that the killing of Eric Garner did not incite a riot immediately after the incident, given that there was a sixteen-minute video of the killing. Among many factors explaining the lack of a large-scale upsurge like the one in Ferguson, I can ironically point to the frequency of police brutality cases in New York as a probable reason. Of course, the ordinariness of illegitimate violence by the police never diminishes its criminality, but many New Yorkers—especially those of color—might have considered it ordinary. For them, the Eric Garner incident was but one of numerous recent cases. Additionally, we should not ignore the city's swift and clear response, compared to the response by top officials in Ferguson. Probably as part of the NYPD's tactics of showing restraint, Mayor de Blasio held a conference with Police Commissioner Bratton and Rev. Sharpton and said, "This is a terrible tragedy that occurred yesterday, a terrible tragedy that no family should have to experience."<sup>43</sup> Summarizing the feelings of the city's residents of color who tried to control their anger, criminal justice reporter Albert Samaha speculated, "The matter is far from resolved. . . . But the protests quieted within days of Garner's

death. . . . There was no more need to shout because De Blasio and Bratton appeared to acknowledge the public outcry.”<sup>44</sup> In retrospect, it seems that people at the time just could not imagine the possibility that the city leaders were not truly heeding their protests.

#### NUANCED ASPECTS OF THE BLACK-PALESTINIAN CONNECTION

In the course of resistance against the merciless violence of the FPD after the Michael Brown incident, protesters in Ferguson began holding up signs declaring solidarity with Palestinians living under the system of settler colonialism imposed by the state of Israel. In turn, Palestinians sent instructions to them by way of social networking services such as Facebook and Twitter on how to deal with the inhalation of tear gas. As early as at 1:02 p.m. on August 14, Rajai Abukhalil, a Palestinian man, tweeted, “Don’t Keep much distance from the Police, if you’re close to them they can’t tear Gas. To #Ferguson from #Palestine.”<sup>45</sup> He was joined by Mariam Barghouti who posted at 12:07 p.m. on August 14, “Always make sure to run against the wind /to keep calm when you’re teargassed, the pain will pass, don’t rub your eyes! #Ferguson Solidarity.”<sup>46</sup> After pointing out that tear gas canisters used in both Ferguson and Gaza were products of the same Pennsylvania-based company, Combined Tactical Systems, Barghouti added, “The very tactics used by the Israeli military in the suppression of Palestinian resistance are being applied by the militarized American police.”<sup>47</sup>

Since the cruel slaying of Michael Brown on August 9, spectacular displays of solidarity between Ferguson and Palestine have continued, even beyond the suburbs of St. Louis. In a sense, both organizers in Ferguson and Palestinian supporters discovered themselves in the other.<sup>48</sup> In Robin D. G. Kelley’s words, “activists wasted no time in drawing the obvious connections between Israeli state violence in the name of security and US state violence, from drone strikes abroad to domestic police killings.”<sup>49</sup>

As early as August 12, an organization that called itself the Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network sent a message of strong empathy, declaring it “salutes the people of Ferguson, joins their call for justice for Michael Brown and for an end to police oppression, mass incarceration and militarization, and stands in solidarity with Black movements struggling for justice and liberation.”<sup>50</sup> Moreover, on August 19, Black-Palestinian Solidarity, a multiracial forum whose slogan is “When I see them, I see us,” issued a statement that was “signed by more than 1,100 Black activists, artists, scholars, students and organizations that calls for ‘solidarity with the

Palestinian struggle' as well as a boycott of private prison company G4S and other corporations profiting from Israeli occupation."<sup>51</sup>

As one of the individual Palestinians who stood with black protesters in Ferguson across six thousand miles, photojournalist Hamde Abu Rahma vividly envisioned a symbolic image of solidarity on his Facebook page. Rahma titled his photo essay "'I can't breathe' #PalestineToFerguson." The phrase "I can't breathe" has multiple connotations depending on the context in which it is uttered. For Palestinians living under the system of settler colonialism, it would remind them of the difficulty in breathing in tear gas, which has been regularly used by Israeli forces to suppress protests by desperate Palestinians.<sup>52</sup>

Anti-Semitism has been the most common charge leveled against individuals and organizations that take a pro-Palestine stance. For instance, when the NFL's Detroit Tigers running back Reggie Bush posted on his Instagram page comments that included, "No matter who you are, what color skin you have, where you live, we are all in this together! This isn't a Ferguson problem it's a global problem. We need change NOW!" with a photo of Hamde Abu Rahma holding a banner that read, "The Palestinian people know what mean to be shot while unarmed because of your ethnicity #Ferguson #Justice," the Anti-Defamation League strongly criticized his view. In a press release, ADL national director Abraham H. Foxman asserted, "The conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is not based on race, it is a political dispute based on claims to land, and by conflating the death of Michael Brown with the conflict in the Middle East, Reggie Bush demonstrates a severe lack of understanding of both issues. He should stick to football."<sup>53</sup>

There has always been a diversity of political views among the Jewish population in the United States. Although probably not representative of the majority, one Jewish intellectual, Shaul Magid, joined the struggle against racial oppression and police brutality as a way to cherish the "American Jewish tradition of fighting for justice and against inequality." Magid does not hesitate to criticize what he considers the Jewish majority's inaction and encourages them to face historical realities. He writes, "Others, too many, would like to speak out but are caught in the 'chokehold' of the American Jewish Establishment driven by AIPAC [the American Israel Public Affairs Committee]." He continues, "There are many Eric Garners who are living under the thumb of a forty-seven-year occupation."<sup>54</sup> Magid's view is akin to that of Hedy Epstein, an American Jewish survivor of the Holocaust and leader of the Palestinian solidarity movement. She sees her activism for

Palestinians and her battle against segregation and racism at home are inseparable.<sup>55</sup>

Black activists and intellectuals, too, have had to deal with the issue of anti-Semitism. When asked in an interview about the issue, Cornel West touched on this point: “Well first, in terms of the various kinds of Zionist critiques, we make it clear that this has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with anti-Jewish hatred or anti-Jewish prejudice. This has to do with a moral and spiritual and political critique of occupation.”<sup>56</sup> For West, a call for justice based on moral appeals cuts across religious differences.

The relationship between black activists and Palestinians has never been without conflict or tension. Individuals in both groups know that their strong solidarity must be based on a mutual understanding of the other being not the same as themselves, as well as on rejecting seeing each group as monolithic. This highly delicate point has been expressed in various statements and position papers issued after summer 2014. For instance, Palestinian American legal scholar and organizer Noura Erakat explained in a press release by Black-Palestinian Solidarity, a cyberspace forum that is not constrained by geographical limitations: “Organically, an analysis [has] emerged highlighting similarities, but not sameness, of Black and Palestinian life, and more aptly, of their survival. This critical moment [has been] built on a rich historical legacy of intellectual production on, as well as movement building between Black and Palestinian communities.”<sup>57</sup> Rana Baker, a Palestinian scholar studying in the United States, explicitly touched on this point when she wrote on the *Electronic Intifada*, “It is also worth noting that the Palestinian struggle for freedom is not a copy of the struggle of our black brothers and sisters both in the past and present. Neither is the black struggle a homogeneous one. Finally, the struggle of our black brethren is not a simple tool to ‘popularize’ ours.”<sup>58</sup>

Surely, there are many activists and intellectuals who have hesitated to use such terms as “sameness,” “similarities,” and “comparisons,” but they are never critical of Black-Palestinian solidarity itself or making a point of insisting on differences. When historian Mark LeVine wrote that “the roots of the police violence seen in Ferguson go well beyond the Israel-Palestinian conflict,” his emphasis was on an analysis of structural causes inside the United States. As one example of similar messages posted on social media, journalist Alex Kane tweeted very early, “Not a big fan of comparing #Gaza to #Ferguson. It’s much more accurate to compare #Ferguson, to, well, every city throughout US history/ 9:19 AM – 14 Aug 2014.”<sup>59</sup>



In order to overcome a theoretical binary between “sameness” and “difference,” the concept of “congruence” is helpful. Employing Raymond Williams’s notion of “congruence,” literary scholar David Palumbo-Liu has persuasively explained:

Certainly the two situations are different, and demand different strategies and tactics in response. And yet one should not discount the moral and indeed inspirational value of gestures that reach across those differences to claim solidarity. . . . Raymond Williams’ notion of “congruent” grievances can lead to a powerful movement of solidarity between anti-racists in both the US and Israel-Palestine, each working their own specific fields while tapping into a global movement toward justice, as evidenced in this 2014 statement from Palestine to Ferguson.<sup>60</sup>

Just as Palumbo-Liu contends, Black-Palestinian solidarity as a global issue concerning social justice should be considered not as a matter of strategic possibility but as a moral integrity. To use Kristian Bailey’s words:

In our separation, both of our relative struggles as Blacks and Palestinians remain ignored by the larger society. The time is ripe to rebuild those connections. Strong Black solidarity with the Palestinian struggle seems necessary and urgent. We must work together to address the effects of money, policing and militarism here and in Israel/Palestine.<sup>61</sup>

Without solidarity, such problems as racial oppression and settler colonialism will remain untouched because, as one speaker from the Toward Justice: The Black/Palestine Solidarity Tour said at a meeting at Stanford University in April 2016, “This society is all about taking a lot of large problems and making us think they are individual.”<sup>62</sup>

#### A CONCLUDING NOTE

The numerous grand jury decisions not to indict those who caused the deaths of Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, and many others bring to mind the saying “Dead men tell no tales.” In the absence of the ones killed, who would have been the most powerful witnesses, the incidents have had to be reconstructed based mainly on the accounts of those who

caused the deaths themselves. What's more, the current US criminal justice system allows racist stereotypes to run rampant across the country, which works to justify killing people of color with impunity. Meditating on the fact of Michael Brown's lifeless body that was left on the street for four and a half hours, Robin D. G. Kelley has noted, "It was, after all, an act of collective punishment—the public display of the tortured corpse was intended to terrorize the entire community, to punish everyone into submission, to remind others of their fate if they step out of line. We used to call this 'lynching.'"<sup>63</sup>

To counter "an act of collective punishment" or modern-day "lynching," we must fight not as a sum of individuals but by finding solidarity based on a moral integrity. On this very point, the issue of Black-Palestinian solidarity brings to mind Martin Luther King Jr.'s words in his April 16, 1963, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail": "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."<sup>64</sup>

Solidarity matters.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This anthology comprises twenty-eight essays that include Mumia Abu-Jamal's "What Is Palestine to the U.S.?" and Robin D. G. Kelley's "Yes, I Said, 'National Liberation.'" Vijay Prashad, ed., *Letters to Palestine: Writers Respond to War and Occupation* (New York: Verso, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> The forum was an attempt following the resolution on the academic and cultural boycott of Israel by the American Studies Association. As Mari Yoshihara, the journal's editor, explained, the ASA resolution in 2013 "generated intense debates on Israel-Palestine relations, the United States' role in the conflict, and how American studies as an academic field and the ASA as a professional organization might engage the issue." Mari Yoshihara, "Editor's Note," *American Quarterly* 67, no. 4 (December 2015): v.

<sup>3</sup> As is well known, an international activist movement called "Black Lives Matter" began using the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter on social media after the acquittal of George Zimmerman. Furthermore, an activist organization, the Dream Defenders, was formed in 2012 in the wake of the killing of Trayvon Martin to work against police brutality and state-sanctioned violence. For more comprehensive information on the shooting of Trayvon Martin and various issues concerning the incident, see Michael A. Knox, *Intermediate Range: The Forensic Evidence in the Killing of Trayvon Martin* (Jacksonville, FL.: Crime Science Books, 2012); Eric Gerald Pearman, *The Lions and the Lamb: The Trayvon Martin Tragedy* (Gautier, MS.: Pink Kiss, 2013); Lisa Bloom, *Suspicion Nation: The Inside Story of the Trayvon Martin Injustice and Why We Continue to Repeat It* (Berkeley, CA.: Counterpoint, 2014); and George Yancy and Janine Jones, eds., *Pursuing Trayvon Martin: Historical Contexts and Contemporary Manifestations of Racial Dynamics* (New York: Lexington Books, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> Lizette Alvarez, "Justice Department Investigation Is Sought in Florida Teenager's Shooting Death," *New York Times*, March 16, 2012; Lizette Alvarez and Cara Buckley,

“Zimmerman Is Acquitted in Killing of Trayvon Martin,” *New York Times*, July 14, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Alvarez and Buckley, “Zimmerman Is Acquitted in Killing of Trayvon Martin”; “The Zimmerman Trial, Day by Day,” *New York Times*, July 11, 2013; Lizette Alvarez, “U.S. Won’t File Charges in Trayvon Martin Killing,” *New York Times*, February 24, 2015; “DOJ Not Charging George,” *New York Amsterdam News*, February 24, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Alvarez and Buckley, “Zimmerman Is Acquitted.” Probably the most well-known comment touching on Trayvon Martin’s race would be what President Barack Obama said on March 23, 2012: “If I had a son, he’d look like Trayvon.”

<sup>7</sup> Malcolm X Grass Roots Movement, “Operation Ghetto Storm: 2012 Annual Report on the Extrajudicial Killings of 313 Black People by Police, Security Guards and Vigilantes,” April 2013, <https://mxgm.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Operation-Ghetto-Storm.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Adam Hudson, “1 Black Man Is Killed Every 28 Hours by Police or Vigilantes: America Is Perpetually at War with Its Own People,” *AlterNet*, May 28, 2013, [www.alternet.org/news-amp-politics/1-black-man-killed-every-28-hours-police-or-vigilantes-america-perpetually-war-its](http://www.alternet.org/news-amp-politics/1-black-man-killed-every-28-hours-police-or-vigilantes-america-perpetually-war-its).

<sup>9</sup> Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Roots Too: White Ethnic Revival in Post-Civil Rights America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 379.

<sup>10</sup> Kristian Davis Bailey, “Why Black People Must Stand with Palestine,” *Ebony*, May 21, 2014, [www.ebony.com/news-views/why-black-people-must-stand-with-palestine](http://www.ebony.com/news-views/why-black-people-must-stand-with-palestine).

<sup>11</sup> Rania Khalek, “Israel-Trained Police Invade Baltimore in Crackdown on Black Lives Matter,” *Electronic Intifada*, May 7, 2015, [electronicintifada.net/blogs/rania-khalek/israeli-trained-police-invade-baltimore-crackdown-black-lives-matter](http://electronicintifada.net/blogs/rania-khalek/israeli-trained-police-invade-baltimore-crackdown-black-lives-matter).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*; Rania Khalek, “US Cops Trained to Use Lethal Israel Tactics,” *Electronic Intifada*, December 4, 2015, [electronicintifada.net/blogs/rania-khalek/us-cops-trained-use-lethal-israeli-tactics](http://electronicintifada.net/blogs/rania-khalek/us-cops-trained-use-lethal-israeli-tactics); “JINSA Launches Law Enforcement Exchange,” September 5, 2002, [www.jinsa.org/events-programs/law-enforcement-exchange-program-leep/jinsa-launches-law-enforcement-exchange](http://www.jinsa.org/events-programs/law-enforcement-exchange-program-leep/jinsa-launches-law-enforcement-exchange); John Murphy, “Lessons in Counterterrorism,” *Baltimore Sun*, June 28, 2007. Incidentally, the Baltimore Police Department became a target of harsh criticism from civil rights activists when a Baltimore police encounter with Freddie Gray, a twenty-five-year-old African American man, resulted in his death in 2015.

<sup>13</sup> Anti-Defamation League, “American Law Enforcement Executives Study Counter-Terrorism in Israel,” press release, April 21, 2011, [www.adl.org/press-center/press-releases/israel-middle-east/american-law-enforcement-1.html](http://www.adl.org/press-center/press-releases/israel-middle-east/american-law-enforcement-1.html).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*; Kristian Davis Bailey, “The Ferguson/Palestine Connection,” *Ebony*, August 19, 2014, [www.ebony.com/news-views/the-fergusonpalestine-connection](http://www.ebony.com/news-views/the-fergusonpalestine-connection).

<sup>16</sup> Concerning the benefits of the exchange program for the ADL, David Friedman told the *Jerusalem Post* that it helped produce influential supporters for Israel’s colonial project; officers participating in the programs “come back and they are Zionists.” Anti-Defamation League, “ADL Mission Brings U.S. Law Enforcement Executives to Meet Their Counterparts in Israel,” press release, January 29, 2013, [www.adl.org/press-center/press-releases/israel-middle-east/adl-mission-brings-us-law-enforcement.html](http://www.adl.org/press-center/press-releases/israel-middle-east/adl-mission-brings-us-law-enforcement.html); Rania Khalek, “US Cops Trained to Use Lethal Israeli Tactics,” *Electronic Intifada*, December 4, 2015, [electronicintifada.net/blogs/rania-khalek/us-cops-trained-use-lethal-israeli-tactics](http://electronicintifada.net/blogs/rania-khalek/us-cops-trained-use-lethal-israeli-tactics).

<sup>17</sup> J. David Goodman and Vivian Yee, “Death of a Man in Custody Adds Fuel to a Dispute over a Policing Strategy,” *New York Times*, July 20, 2014; Al Baker, J. David Goodman and Benjamin Mueller, “Beyond the Chokehold: The Path to Eric Garner’s Death,” *New York Times*, June 13, 2015.

<sup>18</sup> “Timeline: Eric Garner Death,” *NBC New York*, December 5, 2014.

<sup>19</sup> Jeremy Pasker, “Eric Garner’s Death Ruled a Homicide,” *New York Amsterdam News*,

August 4, 2014.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Anna Merlan, “Police Union President: Ramsey Orta, Arrested Witness to Eric Garner’s Death, Is ‘Demonizing the Good Work of Police Officers,’” *Village Voice*, August 4, 2014.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.; Cyril Josh Barker, “State of the City: Videos, the NYPD and the Answer,” *New York Amsterdam News*, August 7, 2014.

<sup>23</sup> Julie Bosman and Emma G. Fitzsimmons, “Grief and Protests Follow Shooting of a Teenager,” *New York Times*, August 10, 2014; United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, *Department of Justice Report Regarding the Criminal Investigation into the Shooting Death of Michael Brown by Ferguson, Missouri Police Officer Darren Wilson* (Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, 2015).

<sup>24</sup> Tessa Stuart, “How to Join the ‘We Will Not Go Back’ March for Eric Garner,” *Village Voice*, August 22, 2014; Cyril Josh Barker, “Thousands Mourn Michael Brown in Ferguson,” *New York Amsterdam News*, August 28, 2014; Herb Boyd, “Thousands March on Staten Island for Eric Garner,” *New York Amsterdam News*, August 24, 2014; “Michael Brown Laid to Rest in Ferguson,” *New York Amsterdam News*, August 25, 2014.

<sup>25</sup> Herb Boyd, “‘Chokeholds Not Illegal,’ Bratton Says,” *New York Amsterdam News*, September 11, 2014; Khorri Atkinson, “Expert Pathologist: Eric Garner Died in Police Chokehold,” *New York Amsterdam News*, September 25, 2014.

<sup>26</sup> Rania Khalek explained that the not guilty verdict from the grand jury owed much to the St. Louis County prosecutor Robert McCulloch, who failed “to prosecute a single police officer for excessive force throughout his decades-long career. . . . Just as the community expected, the grand jury decided not to indict Darren Wilson, mainly because of McCulloch’s manipulative tactics. He acted more like Wilson’s defense attorney than a prosecutor.” Rania Khalek, “‘Liberation for All’: Why Palestine is a Key Issue on the Streets of Ferguson,” *Electric Intifada*, December 17, 2014, [electronicintifada.net/content/liberation-all-why-palestine-key-issue-streets-ferguson/14124](http://electronicintifada.net/content/liberation-all-why-palestine-key-issue-streets-ferguson/14124).

<sup>27</sup> “Timeline: Eric Garner Death.”

<sup>28</sup> Jon Campbell, “No One Knows Why the Eric Garner Grand Jury Is Taking So Long,” *Village Voice*, November 21, 2014.

<sup>29</sup> “No Indictment in Eric Garner Police Killing,” *New York Amsterdam News*, December 3, 2014.

<sup>30</sup> Tessa Stuart, “No Indictment from the Grand Jury Convened in Eric Garner Chokehold Case,” *Village Voice*, December 3, 2014; “Officer Daniel Pantaleo: ‘It Is Never My Intention to Harm Anyone,’” *New York Amsterdam News*, December 3, 2014.

<sup>31</sup> Kerry Burke, Tina Moore, Thomas Tracy, Rocco Parascandola, and Corly Siemaszko, “‘The Time for Remorse Was When My Husband Was Yelling to Breathe’: Eric Garner’s Widow Lashes Out at NYPD Cop Who Put Her Husband in Fatal Chokehold,” *Daily News*, December 4, 2014.

<sup>32</sup> “Leaders React to Lack of Indictment in Eric Garner Killing,” *New York Amsterdam News*, December 3, 2014.

<sup>33</sup> Cyril Josh Barker, “Weekend Marches in DC and New York Make Mark,” *New York Amsterdam News*, December 18, 2014.

<sup>34</sup> “No Federal Charges for Michael Brown’s Killer,” *New York Amsterdam News*, March 4, 2015.

<sup>35</sup> “DOJ Not Charging George,” *New York Amsterdam News*, February 24, 2015.

<sup>36</sup> Jon Campbell, “Judge Rules Eric Garner Transcripts Will Not Be Made Public,” *Village Voice*, March 19, 2015.

<sup>37</sup> Khorri Atkinson, “Eric Garner’s Family Plans to Slap City with \$75 Million Lawsuit,” *New York Amsterdam News*, October 9, 2014; Khorri Atkinson, “Protest Marks Year since

Death of Eric Garner,” *New York Amsterdam News*, July 16, 2015.

<sup>38</sup> Nayaba Arinde, “‘Money Isn’t Justice.’ Says Sharpton as City Settles in Eric Garner Case,” *New York Amsterdam News*, July 16, 2015.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Nayaba Arinde, “Mothers Mourn: Families of Men Killed by Police Come Together,” *New York Amsterdam News*, July 23, 2015.

<sup>41</sup> Robin D. G. Kelley, “Thug Nation: On State Violence and Disposability,” in *Policing the Planet: Why the Policing Crisis Led to Black Lives Matter*, ed. Jordan T. Camp and Christina Heatherton (Verso: New York, 2016), 27.

<sup>42</sup> Jon Campbell and Nick Lucchesi, “A \$5.9 Million Settlement Caps a Turbulent Year for Eric Garner’s Family,” *Village Voice*, July 13, 2015.

<sup>43</sup> Albert Samaha, “Why the Outrage after Michael Brown’s Death Was Different from the Outrage after Eric Garner’s Death,” *Village Voice*, August 19, 2014.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Charlotte Alfred, “Protesters Say Ferguson Feels Like Gaza, Palestinians Tweet Back Advice,” *Huffington Post*, August 14, 2014.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Alexis Goldstein, “Palestinians and Ferguson Protesters Link Arms via Social Media,” *Yes! Magazine*, August 15, 2014, [www.yesmagazine.org/peace-justice/palestinians-and-ferguson-protesters-link-arms-via-social-media](http://www.yesmagazine.org/peace-justice/palestinians-and-ferguson-protesters-link-arms-via-social-media); Alex Kane, “Weapons Fired in Ferguson Come from Companies Supplying Israel, Bahrain and Egypt,” *Mondoweiss*, August 19, 2014, [mondoweiss.net/2014/08/ferguson-companies-supplying/](http://mondoweiss.net/2014/08/ferguson-companies-supplying/).

<sup>48</sup> Khalek, “‘Liberation for All’”; Kristian Davis Bailey, “Building Unity, Wrecking Walls: Palestinians Come to Ferguson,” *Ebony*, November 14, 2014, [www.ebony.com/news-views/building-unity-wrecking-walls-palestinians-come-to-ferguson-032](http://www.ebony.com/news-views/building-unity-wrecking-walls-palestinians-come-to-ferguson-032).

<sup>49</sup> Kelley, “Thug Nation,” 27.

<sup>50</sup> Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, “Solidarity with Ferguson: Justice for Michael Brown, End Police Oppression,” statement, August 12, 2014, [samidoun.net/2014/08/solidarity-with-ferguson-justice-for-michael-brown-end-police-oppression/](http://samidoun.net/2014/08/solidarity-with-ferguson-justice-for-michael-brown-end-police-oppression/).

<sup>51</sup> Black-Palestine Solidarity, press release, n.d., [www.blackpalestiniansolidarity.com/release.html](http://www.blackpalestiniansolidarity.com/release.html). G4S is a gigantic multinational security services company headquartered in England.

<sup>52</sup> Jameson Parker, “Palestinians Show Solidarity with Americans over Eric Garner Injustice,” *Addicting Info: The Knowledge You Crave*, December 5, 2014, [addictinginfo.org/2014/12/05/palestinians-show-solidarity-with-americans-over-eric-garner-injustice-images/](http://addictinginfo.org/2014/12/05/palestinians-show-solidarity-with-americans-over-eric-garner-injustice-images/).

<sup>53</sup> Anti-Defamation League, “ADL: Reggie Bush’s Ferguson-Palestine Comparison Demonstrates ‘Severe Lack of Understanding’ of Both Issues,” press release, November 26, 2014, [www.adl.org/press-center/press-releases/discrimination-racism-bigotry/adl-reggie-bush-ferguson-palestine-comparison.html](http://www.adl.org/press-center/press-releases/discrimination-racism-bigotry/adl-reggie-bush-ferguson-palestine-comparison.html).

<sup>54</sup> Shaul Magid, “Is It Right to Compare Ferguson to Gaza? Reflections from a Jewish Protester,” *Tikkun*, December 11, 2014, [www.tikkun.org/nextgen/is-it-right-to-compare-ferguson-to-gaza-reflections-from-a-jewish-protester](http://www.tikkun.org/nextgen/is-it-right-to-compare-ferguson-to-gaza-reflections-from-a-jewish-protester). AIPAC is a lobbying group, founded in 1963, that advocates pro-Israel policies to the US federal government.

<sup>55</sup> Khalek, “‘Liberation for All.’”

<sup>56</sup> David Palumbo-Liu, “‘It’s Ugly, It’s Vicious, It’s Brutal’: Cornel West on Israel in Palestine—and Why Gaza Is ‘the Hood on Steroids,’” *Salon*, February 26, 2015, [salon.com/2015/02/25/its\\_ugly\\_its\\_vicious\\_its\\_brutal\\_cornel\\_west\\_on\\_israel\\_in\\_palestine\\_—\\_and\\_why\\_gaza\\_is\\_the\\_hood\\_on\\_steroids/](http://salon.com/2015/02/25/its_ugly_its_vicious_its_brutal_cornel_west_on_israel_in_palestine_—_and_why_gaza_is_the_hood_on_steroids/).

<sup>57</sup> Black-Palestine Solidarity, press release, n.d.

<sup>58</sup> Rana Baker, "Palestinians Express 'Solidarity with the People of Ferguson' in Mike Brown Statement," *Electronic Intifada*, August 15, 2014, [electronicintifada.net/blogs/rana-baker/palestinians-express-solidarity-people-ferguson-mikebrown-statement](http://electronicintifada.net/blogs/rana-baker/palestinians-express-solidarity-people-ferguson-mikebrown-statement).

<sup>59</sup> Mark LeVine, "Ferguson Is Not Gaza . . . Yet," *Al Jazeera America*, August 14, 2014, [america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2014/8/ferguson-police-violenceisraeliandusmilitarizedpolices.html](http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2014/8/ferguson-police-violenceisraeliandusmilitarizedpolices.html); Alfred, "Protesters Say Ferguson Feels Like Gaza."

<sup>60</sup> David Palumbo-Liu, "Ferguson and Gaza: The Definitive Study of How They Are and Are Not Similar," *Salon*, August 23, 2014, [www.salon.com/2014/08/22/ferguson\\_and\\_gaza\\_the\\_definitive\\_study\\_of\\_how\\_they\\_are\\_and\\_are\\_not\\_similar/](http://www.salon.com/2014/08/22/ferguson_and_gaza_the_definitive_study_of_how_they_are_and_are_not_similar/). The 2014 statement from Palestine to Ferguson was signed by "Palestinian groups and individuals inside and outside of historic Palestine . . . in solidarity with their brethren in Ferguson, Missouri." See Baker, "Palestinians Express 'Solidarity with the People of Ferguson' in Mike Brown Statement."

<sup>61</sup> Bailey, "Why Black People Must Stand with Palestine."

<sup>62</sup> Eric Ruder, "Standing for Solidarity from Gaza to Ferguson," *Socialistworker.org.*, April 28, 2016, [socialistworker.org/2016/04/28/standing-for-solidarity-from-gaza-to-ferguson](http://socialistworker.org/2016/04/28/standing-for-solidarity-from-gaza-to-ferguson).

<sup>63</sup> Robin D. G. Kelley, "Why We Won't Wait," *Counterpunch*, November 25, 2014, [www.counterpunch.org/2014/11/25/why-we-wont-wait/](http://www.counterpunch.org/2014/11/25/why-we-wont-wait/).

<sup>64</sup> Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," April 16, 1963, Historical Text Archive, <http://historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?action=read&artid=40>.