

ACTIVISM AS DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Stephen McCloskey

“What we think, or what we know, or what we believe is, in the end, of little consequence. The only consequence is what we *do*” (John Ruskin, 1902: 194).

Abstract: This article suggests that activism can significantly contribute to development education by sharing knowledge, experience and activist outcomes with learners and assisting their own engagement with development issues. It shares the author’s personal narrative of activism - and that of colleagues - with the question of Palestine to suggest how it has supported awareness raising on this issue at a wider level. It firstly considers the strengths and weaknesses of the personal narrative methodology while situating the author’s activism, introduces the Middle-East question focusing on the West Bank and Gaza Strip thereby contextualising the author’s engagement with Palestine, offers a personal narrative of activism on Palestine, and reflects on how it has aimed to support wider understanding of one of the longest running conflicts in the global South.

Key words: Activism; Development Education; Personal Narrative; Israel; Palestine; Human Rights; West Bank; Gaza Strip.

Activism and experiential learning have always been close to the heart of development education (DE). The emerging DE sector in Ireland and the UK in the 1970s drew heavily upon returning missionaries and development workers from the global South. They applied their knowledge and experiences to increasing awareness of development issues at home and nurtured the network of Development Education Centres which supported grassroots DE delivery across the island of Ireland and England, Scotland and Wales (McCloskey, 2015a). This personal experience of the global South acquired increasing importance

in efforts to challenge a dominant narrative which persists today that equates poverty with developing countries, and defines the relationship between the global North and South ‘principally in charitable terms’ (Oberman and Waldron, 2017: 9). The development worker, missionary and activist may not perceive themselves as similarly engaged with development or social change in the global South. For example, the development worker may be fulfilling a more formal, long-term and specific role within a statutory or non-statutory agency with constraining terms of reference. The activist, on the other hand, may be operating from a more openly critical perspective outside organisational constraints but with less resources and, perhaps, a consequently reduced capacity to operate in-country. Despite their contrasting capacities and remits within the global South, activists and development workers can play an important role in bringing direct experiences into education in the global North.

The past year, since the election of Donald Trump as United States (US) president, has been described as the ‘golden age of political activism’ (Pindell, 2017) with the emergence of a new ‘grassroots resistance’ (Gabbatt, 2017). Solnit (2017) has expressed concern about whether this enhanced activism will endure. She argues that: ‘Newcomers often think that results are either immediate or they’re nonexistent. That if you don’t succeed straight away, you failed’ (ibid). The broad development sector in the UK can recall that in 2005 the activism of more than 200,000 people generated by the Make Poverty History initiative quickly dissipated because it was not underpinned by the more nuanced understanding needed to sustain participation (McCloskey, 2011). This underlines the need for what Freire (1970) described as *praxis*, a combination of reflection and action. Freire argued that reflection without action represents ‘idle chatter’ or ‘verbalism’ and, action without reflection is ‘action for action’s sake’, something inauthentic and inert (1970: 68-69).

This article suggests that activism can significantly contribute to development education by sharing knowledge, experience and activist

outcomes with learners and assisting their own engagement with development issues. It shares the author's personal narrative of activism - and that of colleagues - with the question of Palestine to suggest how it has supported awareness raising on this issue at a wider level. It firstly considers the strengths and weaknesses of the personal narrative methodology while situating the author's activism, introduces the Middle-East question focusing on the West Bank and Gaza Strip thereby contextualising the author's engagement with Palestine, offers a personal narrative of activism on Palestine, and reflects on how it has aimed to support wider understanding of, and action on, one of the longest running conflicts in the global South.

Personal narrative methodology

Etherington (2004: 3) cites Clandinin and Connelly (2000) in describing narrative inquiry as 'an umbrella term that captures personal and human dimensions of experience over time, and takes account of the relationship between individual experience and cultural context'. Narrative inquiry uses tools and methodologies such as stories, autobiography, journals, field notes, letters, conversations, interviews, family stories, photos and life experience. Akinsanya and Bach (2014) regard a narrative as:

"a story that contains a sequence of events that take place over a time period. It mostly follows a chronological order and usually contains a link to the present on the form of a lesson learnt by the narrator. Narrative analysis seeks to find the link by analyzing and evaluating various parts of the narrative".

In considering the advantages of a narrative approach, Clandinin and Huber (2010: 3) argue that:

"narrative inquirers are able to study the complexity of the relational composition of people's lived experiences both inside and outside of an inquiry and, as well, to imagine the future possibilities of these lives".

The narrative methodology therefore offers insight and understanding to a situation that can be highly complex with specific cultural structures and conventions, and comprising a multitude of actors and perspectives. As Etherington suggests, knowledge gained through the narrative approach ‘is situated, transient, partial and provisional; characterized by multiple voices, perspectives, truths and meanings’ (2004: 5). On the other hand, Mitchell and Egudo (2003: 5) argue that ‘Stories are essentially individual constructs of human experience, and have limitations that may affect objectivity in presentation’. The narrative approach is therefore normally based on an individual, subjective account lacking the multiple perspectives and objective rigour required of verified research. However, multiple accounts offered by individuals with similar narratives can reinforce a shared perspective drawn from the same or similar contexts and experiences. Moreover, these narratives can be supported by field notes, interviews, photographs and other forms of evidence gleaned from the local environment, actors and institutions that will lend them greater authority and robustness. This requires, as Etherington suggests:

“that the narrative be sensitive to the rights, beliefs and cultural contexts of the participants, as well as their position within patriarchal or hierarchical power relations, in society as well as in our research relationships” (2007: 602).

Mindfulness of these sensitivities becomes even more important in the highly charged conflict in the Middle-East where ‘facts on the ground’ are hotly disputed and regularly contested in the media.

Situating this activist account

The account offered in this article is based on evidence gathered over a period of ten years of visits to the West Bank and Gaza Strip which have helped support a first-hand narrative of life in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). It has sought to engage with civil society movements, non-governmental organisations, and human rights groups working on

behalf of those on the frontline of the conflict such as refugees, children and prisoners. Civil society organisations in Israel and Palestine such as MACHSOM Watch (Israeli activists who monitor checkpoints), Defence for Children International Palestine, Addameer (a prisoner support group) and B'tselem, an Israeli human rights organisation, play a crucial role in monitoring and challenging rights abuses. These organisations are key informants to the situation on the ground in the OPT and sources of valuable insight. This account did not take as its starting point a position of 'neutrality' or 'balance' whereby all informants on one side are counter-balanced by perspectives from the other. The main reason for this is because the situation on the ground in Palestine is itself neither balanced, fair, or in any way, a conventional conflict between competing military forces as hopefully the account that follows makes clear.

In his introduction to Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), Richard Schull wrote that:

"There is no such thing as a *neutral* educational process. Education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, *or* it becomes 'the practice of freedom', the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world" (16).

Freire (1985: 2) directly addressed the issue of neutrality when he wrote: 'Washing one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral'. Applying this maxim of Freirean practice to the issue of the conflict in the Middle-East means to speak truth to power but also to report with accuracy and in the context of human rights legislation governing conflict and occupation. Reporting without recourse to the international laws that pertain to the situation in the Middle-East will diminish any argument advanced by activists. However, activist accounts are often couched in the

context of direct experience and substantiated by evidentiary support that perhaps imbues them with greater authority than secondary sources. So, the purpose of the personal narrative account outlined in this article was not to aspire to neutrality or balance but rather veracity in the context of personal experience and reference to international human rights norms. The account is contextualised in the next section.

The West Bank and Gaza Strip

2017 was a significant year for anniversaries in the OPT. It was the centenary of the Balfour Declaration in which the British Foreign Secretary in 1917, Arthur James Balfour, declared ‘with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people’ (Cronin, 2017: xii). Balfour laid the foundation for the creation of the state of Israel in historical Palestine and foreshadowed a century of war, occupation and human rights abuses that continue today. It was also the 50th anniversary of the six day war in 1967 when Israel seized control of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza Strip, as well as the Syrian Golan Heights and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula (Tahhan, 2017a). This annexation has continued apace since then with the settlement of at least 600,000 colonists in settlements across the West Bank that Amnesty International (2017a) describes as illegal under Article 49 of the Geneva Convention. 2017 was also the tenth anniversary of Israel’s blockade of the Gaza Strip which was ostensibly imposed as a security matter designed to keep Hamas, the Palestinian political group with a militant wing, at arm’s length.

In 2006, Hamas won Palestinian elections described by the Carter Center (2006) as ‘open and highly competitive’. However, the United States (US) and European Union followed Israel’s lead in refusing to accept the outcome of the election. This international pressure subsequently contributed to an internal Palestinian power struggle which resulted in Hamas assuming control of Gaza and the Fatah-dominated Palestinian Authority governing the West Bank. While Israel had withdrawn its settlements from Gaza in 2005, it remained the territory’s

occupying power under international law by controlling its borders, airspace and coastline. According to B'tselem (2017), the blockade is illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention which 'imposes general responsibility on the occupying state for the safety and welfare of civilians living in the occupied territory'. The next section outlines key milestones and events in the West Bank and Gaza over the past decade.

The Gaza Strip

The Gaza Strip is a small coastal enclave of around 360 sq. km with a population of nearly two million people, of whom 70 per cent are refugees from the 1948 *Nakba* (Catastrophe) when 700,000 Palestinians were dispossessed of their homes and land and forced to flee (Pappé, 2006). According to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the UN mission established for Palestinian refugees, 80 per cent of the population is dependent on international humanitarian assistance, 50 per cent dependent on food aid and 41 per cent unemployed which is one of the world's highest rates (UNRWA, 2017). In August 2012, UNRWA published an alarming report titled *Gaza in 2020: A Liveable Place?*, which posed the question whether Gaza's infrastructure was equal to a projected population by 2020 of 2.1 million. The report was published five years after the imposition of Israel's blockade and argued that without 'remedial action' by 2020:

"There will be virtually no reliable access to sources of safe drinking water, standards of healthcare and education will have continued to decline, and the vision of affordable and reliable electricity for all will have become a distant memory for most. The already high number of poor, marginalized and food-insecure people depending on assistance will not have changed, and in all likelihood will have increased" (UNRWA, 2012: 16).

Five years on and the tenth anniversary of the blockade of Gaza has been marked by a glut of new reports that appear to confirm UNRWA's assessment. Perhaps the starkest warning has come from the

International Committee of the Red Cross (2017) in suggesting that ‘a systemic collapse of an already battered infrastructure and economy is impending’. What distinguishes this crisis from the disasters and emergencies that normally push civilian populations to the edge of catastrophe is that it is not the result of a hurricane, flood, tsunami, drought or famine but the calculated policy of the Israeli government.

While Israel has maintained the security pretext as the basis for maintaining the blockade, in its more off-guard moments, it has revealed its true hand in Gaza. US government cables leaked to Wikileaks (Reuters, 2011) show that the Israeli government kept the United States’ embassy in Tel Aviv briefed on the blockade and on ‘multiple occasions’ said their policy aimed ‘to keep the Gazan economy on the brink of collapse without quite pushing it over the edge’. This appears to have been Israel’s blockade policy from the outset as BBC News (2012) reported an Israeli government adviser, Dov Weisglass, as having said in 2006: ‘The idea is to put the Palestinians on a diet, but not to make them die of hunger’. And, in 2012, an Israeli court forced the release of a government ‘red lines’ document which detailed ‘the number of calories Palestinians in Gaza need to consume to avoid malnutrition’ (Gisha, 2012). The Israeli human rights organisation Gisha, which won the legal battle to have the red lines document published, argues that ‘the research contradicts Israel’s assertions that the blockade is needed for security reasons’ (ibid).

The social pressures of poverty, isolation and economic inertia caused by the blockade have been compounded and exacerbated by three Israeli military operations in Gaza since 2008 which have collectively claimed the lives of 3,745 Palestinians and wounded 17,441. The most recent operation, ‘Protective Edge’, was a 51-day onslaught in July and August 2014 that killed 2,147 Palestinians, of whom 1,473 were civilians, 501 were children and 257 women. There were 71 Israeli casualties; 66 soldiers and five civilians. The physical hardship created by Gaza’s creaking infrastructure are compounded by the psychological effects of war and poverty, particularly on children. A ten-year-old child in Gaza has

suffered three major Israeli military engagements since 2008 and ten years of an economic siege. In commenting on the multiple effects of war on Gaza's children, Unicef's Pernilla Ironside said in 2014:

"The impact has truly been vast, both at a very physical level, in terms of casualties, injuries, the infrastructure that's been damaged, but also importantly, emotionally and psychologically in terms of the destabilizing impact that not knowing, not truly feeling like there is anywhere safe to go in Gaza" (RT, 2014).

Amnesty International, like many human rights bodies, has described the blockade of Gaza to be illegal under international law and called for it to be lifted without delay. As Amnesty's Magdalena Mughrabi suggests:

"As the occupying power, Israel has obligations to ensure the basic needs of the civilian population are met. At the very least, Israel must not continue to cut off access to essential supplies. The Israeli authorities must immediately lift the illegal blockade and end their collective punishment of Gaza's population" (Amnesty International, 2017b).

The West Bank

According to UNRWA (2016b), the West Bank has a total of 775,000 registered refugees, of whom a quarter live in 19 camps. The issues dominating life in the West Bank are restrictions on movement and the annexation of land caused by the construction of an Israeli Separation Barrier and the expansion of settlements. Between 600,000 and 750,000 Israeli settlers are living in 150 settlements which collectively comprise 42 per cent of the West Bank (Tahhan, 2017b). The settlements are illegal under international law as the Fourth Geneva Convention forbids an occupying power from transferring parts of its civilian population into territory it occupies. Moreover, United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 passed on 22 November 1967 stated that 'Israel must

withdraw from the territories it seized in the (1967) war' as the basis for 'all ensuing diplomatic negotiations' (ibid). South Africa's Archbishop Desmond Tutu has compared the treatment of Palestinians in the West Bank to black South Africans during the Apartheid System stating that:

"I have witnessed the systemic humiliation of Palestinian men, women and children by members of the Israeli security forces. Their humiliation is familiar to all black South Africans who were corralled and harassed and insulted and assaulted by the security forces of the apartheid government" (*Jerusalem Post*, 2014).

The corralling of Palestinians into smaller areas of land has been made possible by the area demarcations of the 1993 Oslo Peace Accords. The West Bank was divided into three areas: Area A comprising 18 per cent of the West Bank and under Palestinian Authority civil control and security authority; Area B (22 per cent of the West Bank) is under Palestinian civil administration while Israel retains exclusive security control; and Area C which represents 60 per cent of the West Bank is under full Israeli civil administration and security control. As Israel has 'full authority over building permissions and zoning laws' in Area C, '99 percent of the area is off limits or heavily restricted for Palestinian construction' (Tahhan, 2017b).

With Palestinians unable to build new houses in Area C, their freedom of movement has become more restricted in Areas A and B through Israel's Separation Barrier, a 700km wall which is twice as long as the Green Line, the armistice line which marked the 1967 boundary between Israel and the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Under the ubiquitous pretext of security, 85 per cent of the wall will be built inside the West Bank when completed, annexing up to 10 per cent of fertile Palestinian farmland and separating 35,000 farmers from their land. Started in 2002, much of the wall comprises a set of two-metre-high, electrified razor-wire fences with a 60-metre-wide exclusion zone on the Palestinian side (Zonszein, 2014). In 2004, the International Court of

Justice issued an Advisory Opinion ‘that Israel's building of a barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory is illegal and said construction must stop immediately and Israel should make reparations for any damage caused’ (OCHA, 2014). Israel has failed to comply with this ruling.

In 2016, there was an escalation of violence in the West Bank triggered by restrictions on freedom to worship at the Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem (Pennetier, 2015). A series of ‘lone wolf’ knife attacks by Palestinians was regularly met by lethal force on the part of the Israeli military and police. According to Human Rights Watch (2017), between 1 January and 31 October 2016, Palestinians killed eleven Israelis and two security officers and injured 131. In the same period, Israeli forces killed 94 Palestinians and injured 3,203. The human rights group Al Haq has alleged that many of the Palestinian deaths involved the avoidable use of lethal force in cases that amounted to ‘unlawful killings’. It argues that ‘Israel regularly uses excessive force against Palestinians, including children, causing death or injury, even when other measures could have been used’ (Al Haq, 2016).

This section has highlighted key human rights concerns in the Gaza Strip and West Bank since 2006 when the author first became actively engaged with Palestine. The next section considers key milestones in the author’s personal engagement with the region.

Personal narrative of engagement

I first travelled to the West Bank in 2006 as part of a delegation of human rights activists, mostly from Ireland, organised individually by Elaine Daly from Newbridge in County Kildare. On reflecting on what she hoped to achieve with these visits, Elaine said that:

“I hope people come away better informed having met with Israeli and Palestinian groups working for peace and justice. I hope that they can speak with more authority on the issue of Palestine, on return to their own country... It is very difficult to

contradict someone who has been to the region and has seen the situation with their own eyes and that certainly adds more weight to their perspective on the situation there” (Boyle and McCloskey, 2011: 10).

The visit was short, spanning eight days, but with a busy itinerary that



Photograph 1. Palestinian man has his fingerprint scanned in a permanent checkpoint in Bethlehem (September, 2016). Photo: Stephen McCloskey. All rights reserved.

included a day in most major towns in the West Bank. From a base in Bethlehem we visited Hebron, Nablus, Ramallah and East Jerusalem and met with a range of human rights actors on the ground including: Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme for Palestine and Israel (EAPPI); B'tselem; Al Haq, the Palestinian human rights organisation; the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD); and Machsom Watch. The visit also included a tour of settlements, a visit to a refugee camp in Bethlehem, and a talk on the Separation Barrier.

I undertook the visit because I had been actively seeking a means of travelling to the region with a structured agenda that supported access to both Israeli

and Palestinian actors on the ground. The visit was very much couched in the context of human rights with a focus on organisations that operated in that sector on behalf of those on the frontline of the conflict such as

children, women, prisoners and refugees. The decision to visit the region was heavily swayed by Palestinian speakers/activists who came to Ireland and encouraged a first-hand, direct experience of Palestine to more fully understand the conflict in context. It is immediately clear why they did so as the physical environment in Bethlehem and elsewhere in the West Bank is heavily oppressive and restrictive. Movement through towns and villages involves negotiating some of the 500 barriers or checkpoints in the West Bank, most of which are permanent. Clearing the permanent checkpoints for Palestinians requires not just documentation but biometrics including finger-print scans. An Israeli soldier can arbitrarily refuse permission to pass which in turn can deny freedom to work, to worship, to seek medical treatment, to study; in short most of the things we take for granted in daily life.

Most startling of all is the omnipresent wall which surrounds most of the main towns and villages in the West Bank and is frequently mocked by graffiti and murals, many of which render humanity, humour and wisdom to a structure that is cold, callous and a blight to life. There is also a constant tension to life in the West Bank, particularly at checkpoints where armed police or soldiers check identification, search cars and board buses. The final day of our visit was free and many of us chose to join a protest in Bethlehem after Friday prayers against the checkpoint restrictions which denied the majority of local people access to Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. As Palestinians moved toward the checkpoint they were rushed by the Israeli Defence Force which fired tear gas, stun grenades and skunk water (a foul smelling liquid designed to repel protesters) at the civilian demonstrators.

The visits organised by Elaine Daly were a catalyst for myself and others to get more involved with the issue of Palestine back home. Elaine herself has recalled that:

“Former participants have returned to Palestine as volunteers for groups such as the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme for

Palestine and Israel (organised by the World Council of Churches) and the Al Haq Human Rights Organisation” (Boyle and McCloskey, 2011: 13).

This activism has been stirred not only by what we saw in the West Bank but by the deteriorating situation in the Gaza Strip following the onset of the Israeli blockade in 2007 and the first of three wars in six years on Gaza in 2008. Many former ‘trippers’ were to be found on demonstrations against the war and siege of Gaza or on the letters pages of national newspapers calling for international action to assist the besieged enclave. Elaine’s visits were not only personally educating for those who travelled with her to the region but enabled activists to share their knowledge with others or become more engaged at a deeper level with the region.

From the West Bank to Gaza

Around this time, I started to give consideration to how my employer, a development non-governmental organisation based in Belfast called the Centre for Global Education, could contribute to awareness raising on Gaza and offer practical support. Our official remit was to deliver development education in the island of Ireland rather than deliver services overseas or work in the global South. Internal discussion led to the idea of trying to support a small-scale, development education project in the Gaza Strip if we could find a suitable partner. Through discussions with partner NGOs in Ireland I was referred to an organisation in Gaza called the Canaan Institute of New Pedagogy which was similar in size and remit to the Centre for Global Education. In 2011, I visited Gaza and met the director and staff of the Canaan Institute while getting an overview of the context in which they work. We initially agreed to work on a summer scheme for 1,000 children aged 8-12 years in the summer of 2012 (CGE, 2012) but then set upon a plan for a capacity-building project using a development education methodology aimed at young people. The project aimed to supplement education provision to 300 children aged between 7 and 10 years and, at the same time, provide psycho-social support to

help the young people address the effects of conflict-related trauma. The need for the project was based upon the chronic shortage of school buildings in Gaza where there are 262,000 students attending 267 schools (UNRWA, 2016) which means that more than 90 per cent of schools have to double-shift; in other words, the same school building is used by two different school populations in the morning and afternoon. The need for psycho-social support was a response to widespread mental health problems in Gaza, particularly among young people, caused by the trauma of conflict and the pressure cooker of family life strained by poverty and unemployment. Trauma is manifested in children through behavioural change such as bed-wetting, aggression, becoming withdrawn, loss of appetite, constant fear and difficulty concentrating in school.

Beginning in 2013, the Centre for Global Education secured funding for four consecutive years from the Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA), the biggest trade union in the north of Ireland, to deliver projects addressing these needs. The project methodology involved working with grassroots, community organisations in areas of Gaza acutely impacted by poverty and conflict. The Canaan Institute delivered facilitation training to staff in each community organisation and provided resources for use in workshops with children. For the duration of the programme, children attended their local community centre three times a week in the morning or afternoon when they weren't at school for development education-based activities. The content of the sessions focused on key learning areas of the curriculum such as literacy and numeracy, as well as providing structured play activities such as arts and crafts, theatre, role-play and dance.

Psycho-social support was provided through activities that enabled young people to give expression to their anxieties and, in addition, workshops were provided to parents to enable them to extend psycho-social care into the household. The project reports reflected the positive learning outcomes for children and the empowering nature of the training provided to facilitators that included lifelong skills in activity

management and delivery (CGE, 2013; 2014). The local schools also valued the projects for supplementing the education of their pupils and parents were pleased to see their children enrolled in structured activities in a safe, community space. The community centres in which the training was delivered benefited from the training to their staff and the provision of additional resources for young people in their care such as stationery, teaching packs, snacks and refreshments.

Between 2011 and 2014, I visited the community centres, met the facilitators and young people, reflected on the programme with Canaan's staff and carried out planning for future projects. These visits also enabled me to become closely familiar with Gaza's social and economic conditions through meetings in schools, hospitals, community centres, refugee camps and with the UNRWA. In July 2012, I visited Al Awda Hospital in northern Gaza which mostly services Jabalia refugee camp (see photograph 2) which has 119,484 registered refugees living in an area of 1.4 sq. km (UNRWA, 2016), an astonishing population density that denies any green spaces, adequate play areas, privacy, clean water and adequate food. Typical cases presented to the hospital were sanitation-related diseases like typhoid fever and diarrhoea caused by pollutants entering the underground aquifer that provides most of Gaza's drinking water. The lack of sewage treatment plants and regular power cuts meant that, according to Save the Children (2012: 17), '60-90 million litres of untreated or partially treated sewage have been dumped into Gaza's sea every day since 2008, with regional implications'. The deterioration of public health is compounded by a lack of access to nutritious food with refugees mostly relying on food aid from UNRWA. As a result, most children in Gaza are clearly stunted and under-weight caused by a polluted water supply and food chain, and a choked off economy unable to import what it needs for a population touching two million.



Photograph 2. Jabalia Refugee Camp, Gaza (July, 2012). Photo: Stephen McCloskey. All rights reserved.

In addition to reports, the visits to Gaza created possibilities for other forms of awareness raising work including talks and regular articles for NIPSA's *Global Solidarity* (2017) magazine for members and pieces for open access web sites (McCloskey, 2015b; 2017a).

In 2013, General Abdel Fatah el-Sisi, seized power in a military coup that overthrew Egypt's fledgling democracy. Sisi was elected president in a disputed ballot in May 2014 and immediately adopted a more aggressive stance toward Gaza. He closed smuggling tunnels between Gaza and Egypt that were an economic lifeline for the enclave and heavily restricted travel through the passenger terminal at Rafah into Egypt. Because of the Israeli blockade, Rafah became the only exit point for the majority of Gazans but was partially opened for just 21 days in all

of 2015 (Ma'an News Agency, 2017). In 2014, I travelled to Gaza for what was intended to be a two week visit but was extended to five weeks because the Rafah Crossing was closed and I was unable to depart. This is the reality for thousands of Palestinians every day desperate to cross into Egypt, often in life or death situations, such as patients urgently needing medical treatment beyond the compass of Gaza's health service. I was unable to visit Gaza after 2014 because the Egyptian government stopped issuing travel visas thus contributing to the growing isolation of the territory.

Deportation from Israel

In 2016, I visited the West Bank with Elaine's group ten years on from her first trip and seven years since my last. The itinerary was similar to previous trips but included a visit to the Theatre of Freedom (2017) in Jenin which 'engages communities in critical inquiry, experiential learning and creative transformation through participatory theatre'. The group also met with an Israeli settler, went through a checkpoint at dawn in Bethlehem, met a Palestinian family evicted from their home in East Jerusalem, and met with Omar Barghouti, co-founder of the Boycott Divestment Sanctions (BDS) movement (BDS, 2017). As in previous visits, the final day was free and the majority of 'trippers' joined a protest in the village of Bil'in near Ramallah, which has been using non-violent means since 2005 to oppose the construction of the Separation Barrier on their land. The protest has become a focus of international solidarity and regularly attracts overseas activists who join villagers in the Friday demonstration (International Solidarity Movement, 2017). The Bil'in protest is regularly attacked by the Israeli Defence Force using a combination of stun grenades, skunk water, plastic bullets and live ammunition with villagers and international protestors often seriously injured as was captured in the Oscar-nominated documentary film *Five Broken Cameras* (2011).

The expansion of settlements in the West Bank was startling and they were now morphing into small cities. The Separation Barrier

(photograph 3), too, remains a suffocating presence, stifling life around it and making a contiguous Palestinian state impossible.



Photograph 3. The Separation Barrier, West Bank (September, 2016). Photo: Stephen McCloskey. All rights reserved.

On 9 September 2017, I again travelled with a mostly Irish delegation to the West Bank with 31 people on the same flight and others travelling separately. We were flying to Tel Aviv from Dublin via Istanbul with a view to transferring to Bethlehem. On arrival in Tel Aviv, four of us were separated from the group and interviewed in turn by immigration officials. In my interview I was asked about the protest in Bil'in in 2016 I had participated in and was shown footage of the protest on a mobile phone. I was asked to give my opinion on the political situation in the Middle-East, and ultimately told that I was being denied entry to Israel. The reason stated for my exclusion on a 'Denial of Entry' form was

‘Prevention of illegal immigration considerations’, which airport ground staff in Dublin found baffling as I was travelling on a valid Irish passport. Three other Irish citizens, including Elaine Daly, were also deported. We were returned on the first available flight back to Ireland.

Many of the activists that had visited the West Bank with Elaine wrote to the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs to call for action in response to our deportations. The Irish Ambassador to Tel Aviv has asked the Israeli Foreign Ministry for an explanation. At the time of writing, none has been offered. A question was asked about the deportations in the Dáil (Irish parliament) on 21 September 2017 by Clare Daly TD (member of the Irish parliament) and, replying on behalf of the government, Helen McEntee, Minister of State for European Affairs, said that:

“Without a more specific explanation, it is difficult not to conclude that the exclusion of these persons is part of the ongoing effort to suppress scrutiny and criticism of Israeli policies in the West Bank” (Oireachtas Debates, 2017).

Another TD, Maureen O’Sullivan, who participated in the Dáil debate, was part of the delegation to the West Bank and allowed access to Israel / Palestine. She said:

“Other members of the group, some of them young students, who were interrogated by the immigration authorities in Tel Aviv airport were traumatised by the way the immigration authorities spoke to them” (ibid).

Yet another member of the delegation was Mike Murphy, a former broadcaster with RTE, the Irish state television and radio service, who wrote an opinion piece on his visit in *The Irish Times* (2017) titled ‘Degradation of Palestinians shocking to witness’. Murphy clearly found

the visit deeply troubling and he recounts in the article some of what he witnessed. 'I saw Palestinian youths being subjected to strip searches, being shouted at, pushed and ritually humiliated' (ibid). And on another occasion, his Palestinian guide is forbidden to 'walk on the street down which we were headed to the bus'. Three Israeli soldiers, he says, 'frogmarched him away' (ibid). When teenagers started throwing stones at an army barracks, 'An armoured truck came speeding suddenly out of the gates and hurtled down the hill to the boys, firing round after round of tear gas' (ibid). These incidents speak to the power of the eyewitness account and a narrative written in experience. It is the power of these narratives, one suspects, that the Israeli deportations are trying to suppress as suggested by Minister McEntee.

In March 2017, the Israeli Knesset (parliament) 'approved a new law banning anyone found to support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement from entering the country' (Dearden, 2017). Although, BDS was not raised with me in my interview, it is this new legislation that appears to have empowered immigration officials to exclude activists from Israel / Palestine. BDS is a non-violent, vibrant and truly global movement for freedom, justice and equality in Palestine inspired by the South African anti-apartheid movement. BDS calls for a boycott of Israeli goods, divestment from the Israeli economy and the application of sanctions against Israel to ensure its compliance with international law and human rights. It is supported by trade unions, churches, academics and grassroots movements across the world. Indeed, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions was the first European federation of trade unions to support the BDS Movement in 2007 (McMahon, 2011). The introduction by Israel of a ban on BDS activists and supporters suggests that Israel is concerned at the rising international tide of non-violent activism that is gathering around the Palestinian cause. Indeed, Israel's alarm at the global traction of BDS has seen it establish a Ministry for Strategic Affairs with 'comprehensive responsibility for leading the campaign against the phenomenon of de-legitimization and boycotts

against Israel' (Lis, 2017). All of which suggests that activism works as evidenced by the disinvestment by multinationals Orange and Veolia from Israel (Abunimah, 2016).

Conclusion

In 2014, CIVICUS, a global alliance of civil society groups, wrote an open letter to 'fellow activists across the globe', in which it offered a damning verdict on the civil society movement and its failure to address the 'glaring inequality that sits at the heart of the new world order'. The letter said of civil society groups:

"We are the poor cousins of the global jet set. We exist to challenge the status quo, but we trade in incremental change. Our actions are clearly not sufficient to address the mounting anger and demand for systemic political and economic transformation that we see in cities and communities around the world every day.

A new and increasingly connected generation of women and men activists across the globe question how much of our energy is trapped in the internal bureaucracy and the comfort of our brands and organisations. They move quickly, often without the kinds of structures that slow us down. In doing so, they challenge how much time we – you and I – spend in elite conferences and tracking policy cycles that have little or no outcomes for the poor.

They criticise how much we look up to those in power rather than see the world through the eyes of our own people. Many of them, sometimes rightfully, feel we have become just another layer of the system and development industry that perpetuates injustice.

We cannot ignore these questions any longer" (CIVICUS, 2014).

We clearly need today the kind of agility and radicalism advocated in the CIVICUS letter. The rise of populist nationalism reflected in the UK's decision to leave the European Union and the election of Donald Trump as US president in 2016 should worry educators of all stripes (McCloskey, 2017). If activism was once an optional appendage to everyday life, then the global crises of climate change, migration, terrorism and neoliberalism demand that it becomes something more central to our lives. Development education can help to nurture more sustainable forms of public engagement with global issues, and activism can offer a pathway toward development education by drawing upon the narrative accounts and experiential learning available from activists.

The need for renewed activism in the case of Palestine has been underlined by President Trump's announced plan (*Aljazeera*, 2018) in December 2017 to move the United States Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, thereby reversing a longstanding US commitment to have the status of the contested Holy City agreed as part of a negotiated Middle-East settlement. By recognising Jerusalem as the capital of Israel (Landler, 2017), Trump has seemingly dashed Palestinian aspirations for recognition of East Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state. More evidence of Trump's political chauvinism in the Middle-East came in January 2018 with his administration's announcement that it was to withhold \$65m (£45.8) of a \$125m aid package to UNRWA (Stone, 2018). Should UNRWA's frontline services be removed, it will not only create unbearable levels of distress to Palestinians, but create social upheaval and fertile ground for the spread of extremism in a region already combatting the hateful ideology of Islamic State. As UNRWA's Chris Gunness asked: 'Is it in American and Israeli security interests to have the collapse of a functioning service provider in Jerusalem?' (Holmes, 2018). These twin announcements by President Trump in the space of two months have dealt a deadly blow to meaningful short-term prospects of a political settlement in the Middle-East and placed a greater premium on

the activism of global civil society to take up the cause of BDS toward a sustainable peace in the region.

This article has considered the strengths and weaknesses of the personal narrative account and then offered an overview of the author's engagement with the question of Palestine over a ten-year period. The engagement was contextualised and the activist outcomes indicated different forms of educational and awareness raising practice that can result from deep-lying engagement over an extended period. Trewby (2014) proposed five 'lines of engagement' which capture most forms of active citizenship: low cost v high cost; low risk v high risk; conventional v unconventional; non-political v political; and individual v collective. They effectively represent 'soft' v 'critical' forms of engagement with the latter representing more nuanced and sustained forms of activism. This more critical and political activism - a counterpoint to the shallow 'clicktivism' often advocated by NGOs - has to become more deeply embedded in the mainstream of statutory and non-governmental educational practice if citizens are to be equal to the global challenges that confront us all.

References

Abunimah, Ali (2016) 'Campaigners hail "inspiring" BDS victory as Orange quits Israel', *The Electronic Intifada*, 11 January, available: <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/campaigners-hail-inspiring-bds-victory-orange-quits-israel> (accessed 19 December 2017).

Akinsanya, Adedamola and Bach, Christian (2014) 'Narrative analysis: The Personal Experience Narrative approach', ASEE 2014 Zone I Conference, 3-5 April 2014, Bridgeport, CT:

University of Bridgeport, available: <http://www.asee.org/documents/zones/zone1/2014/Student/PDFs/21.pdf> (accessed 22 November 2017).

Al Haq (2016) 'The Killing of Mahmoud Badran: The IOF's Excessive Use of Force and Shoot to Kill Policy', available: <http://alhaq.org/advocacy/topics/right-to->

[life-and-body-integrity/1055-the-killing-of-mahmoud-badran-the-iofs-excessive-use-of-force-and-shoot-to-kill-policy](#) (accessed 29 November 2017).

Aljazeera (2018) 'Donald Trump: Jerusalem is off negotiating table', 12 February, available: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/02/trump-jerusalem-negotiation-table-180212052249924.html> (accessed 19 February 2018).

Amnesty International (2017a) 'Israel's Occupation: 50 Years of Dispossession', available: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2017/06/israel-occupation-50-years-of-dispossession/> (accessed 24 July 2017).

Amnesty International (2017b) 'Gaza: Looming humanitarian catastrophe highlights need to lift Israel's 10-year illegal blockade', 14 June, available: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/06/gaza-looming-humanitarian-catastrophe-highlights-need-to-lift-israels-10-year-illegal-blockade/> (accessed 29 November 2017).

BBC News (2012) 'Israel forced to release study on Gaza blockade', 17 October, available: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-19975211> (accessed 22 May 2017).

B'tselem (2017) 'The Gaza Strip - Israel's obligations under international law', 1 January, available: http://www.btselem.org/gaza_strip/israels_obligations (accessed 22 November 2017).

Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) (2017) available: <https://bdsmovement.net/> (accessed 24 July 2017).

CGE (Centre for Global Education) (2012) 'Report on Summer School in Gaza', Belfast: Centre for Global Education, available: <https://www.centreforglobaleducation.com/sites/default/files/CGE%20Summer%20School%20in%20Gaza%20Report.pdf> (accessed 29 November 2017).

CGE (Centre for Global Education) (2013) 'Supporting Education Provision in the Gaza Strip', Centre for Global Education, available: <https://www.centreforglobaleducation.com/sites/default/files/Supporting%20>

[Education%20Provision%20in%20the%20Gaza%20Strip.pdf](#) (accessed 29 November 2017).

CGE (Centre for Global Education) (2014) 'Psycho-social Support to Children in the Gaza Strip', Centre for Global Education, available: <https://www.centreforglobaleducation.com/sites/default/files/GAZA%20Psych%20Social%20Report%202014.pdf> (accessed 29 November 2017).

CIVICUS (2014) 'An Open Letter to our Fellow Activists across the Globe: Building from below and beyond borders', 18 July, available: <http://blogs.civicus.org/civicus/2014/08/06/an-open-letter-toour-fellow-activists-across-the-globe-building-from-below-and-beyond-borders/comment-page1/#comment-579191> (accessed 12 May 2015).

Clandinin, D J and Huber, J (2010) 'Narrative inquiry' in B McGaw, E Baker, and P Peterson (eds.) *International Encyclopaedia of Education* (3rd ed.), New York, NY: Elsevier.

Cronin, D (2017) *Balfour's Shadow: A Century of British Support for Zionism and Israel*, London: Pluto Press.

Dearden, L (2017) 'Israel parliament approves travel ban for foreign supporters of BDS movement', 7 March, *The Independent*, available: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/israel-travel-ban-boycott-supporters-bds-movement-banned-knesset-vote-settlements-visas-residency-a7616701.html> (accessed 18 December 2017).

Etherington, K (2004), 'Narrative Approaches to Case Studies', Bristol: University of Bristol, available: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/media/keeleuniversity/facnatsci/schpsych/document/s/counselling/conference/5thannual/NarrativeApproachestoCaseStudies.pdf> (accessed 21 November 2017).

Etherington, Kim (2007) 'Ethical research in reflexive relationships', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13(5), 599-616.

Five Broken Cameras (2011), Directed by Guy Davidi and Emad Burnat. Visit: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2125423/> (accessed 29 November 2017).

Freire, P (1970) *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, London: Penguin Books.

Freire, P (1985) *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power and Liberation*, Westport: Bergin and Garvey.

Gabbatt, A (2017) 'Activism in the age of Trump: meet the leaders of the grassroots resistance', *The Guardian*, 19 January, available: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jan/19/anti-trump-activists-protest-grassroots-leaders> (accessed 21 November 2017).

Gisha (2012) "'Red Lines' presentation: New details about the old policy, while the current policy remains shrouded in secrecy', available: <http://gisha.org/updates/1825> (accessed 24 Jul 2017).

Holmes, O (2018) "'It's a death sentence": Palestinians in Jerusalem brace for Trump aid cuts', *Guardian*, 27 January, available: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/26/jerusalem-trump-aid-cuts-shuafat-israel-palestine> (accessed 4 February 2018).

Human Rights Watch (2017) 'World Report: Israel/Palestine Events of 2016', available: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/israel/palestine> (accessed 29 November 2017).

International Committee of the Red Cross (2017) 'Electricity shortages affect all aspects of life in Gaza', available: <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/Gaza-power-fuel-crisis> (accessed 22 May 2017).

International Solidarity Movement (2017) '12th anniversary of the popular resistance in Bil'in', available: <https://palsolidarity.org/2017/02/12th-anniversary-of-the-popular-resistance-in-bilin/> (accessed 29 November 2017).

Jerusalem Post (2014) 'Desmond Tutu: Israel Guilty of Apartheid in Treatment of Palestinians', 10 March, available: <http://www.jpost.com/Diplomacy-and->

[Politics/Desmond-Tutu-Israel-guilty-of-apartheid-in-treatment-of-Palestinians-344874](#) (accessed 29 November 2017).

Landler, M (2017) 'Trump Recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's Capital and Orders U.S. Embassy to Move', *New York Times*, 6 December, available: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/06/world/middleeast/trump-jerusalem-israel-capital.html> (accessed 19 February 2018).

Lis, J (2017) 'Israel's anti-BDS Ministry Pushes to Keep Its Activities Secret', *Haaretz*, 16 May, available: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-1.789617> (accessed 19 December 2017).

Ma'an News Agency (2017) 'Egypt opens Rafah crossing with Gaza for 4-day opening', 16 December, available: <https://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?id=779643> (accessed 18 December 2017).

McCloskey, S (2011) 'Rising to the challenge: Development education, NGOs and the urgent need for social change', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 12, Spring, pp. 32-46, available: <https://www.developmenteducationreview.com/issue/issue-12/rising-challenge-development-education-ngos-and-urgent-need-social-change> (accessed 22 November 2017).

McCloskey, S (2015a) 'Development Education as an Agent of Social Change', in G McCann and S McCloskey (eds) *From the Local to the Global: Key Issues in Development Studies*, 3rd edition, pp.302-321, London: Pluto Press.

McCloskey, S (2015b) 'Gaza: walking "eyes wide open" into another war', *openDemocracy*, available: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/north-africa-west-asia/stephen-mccloskey/gaza-walking-eyes-wide-open-into-another-war> (accessed 29 November 2017).

McCloskey, S (2017a) 'Gaza: Ten Years of Economic Blockade', *openDemocracy*, available: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/north-africa-west-asia/stephen-mccloskey/gaza-ten-years-of-economic-blockade> (accessed 29 November 2017).

McCloskey, S (2017b) 'In the age of Brexit and Trump, we need "development education" more than ever', *openDemocracy*, 27 February, available: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/wfd/stephen-mccloskey/in-age-of-brexit-and-trump-we-need-development-education-more-than-ever> (accessed 18 December 2017).

McMahon, E (2011) 'Irish Congress of Trade Unions Maintains Commitment to BDS and Moves Policy Forward', BDS, available: <https://bdsmovement.net/news/irish-congress-trade-unions-maintains-commitment-bds-and-moves-policy-forward> (accessed 18 December 2017).

Mitchell, M and Egudo, M (2003) 'A Review of Narrative Methodology', Edinburgh, Southern Australia: DSTO Systems Sciences Laboratory, available: <http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/css506/506%20readings/review%20of%20narrative%20methodology%20australian%20gov.pdf> (accessed 22 November 2017).

Murphy, M (2017) 'Degradation of Palestinians shocking to witness', 23 September, *The Irish Times*, available: <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/mike-murphy-degradation-of-palestinians-shocking-to-witness-1.3230666?mode=sample&auth-failed=1&pw-origin=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.irishtimes.com%2Fopinion%2Fmike-murphy-degradation-of-palestinians-shocking-to-witness-1.3230666> (accessed 18 December 2017).

NIPSA (2017) *Global Solidarity*, Belfast: NIPSA, available: <https://www.nipsa.org.uk/NIPSA-in-Action/Global-Solidarity/Newsletters> (accessed 29 November 2017).

Oberman, R and Waldron, F (2017) "'They Should be Grateful to God': Challenging Children's Pre-Conceptions of the Global South through Human Rights Education', *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, Vol. 25, Autumn, pp. 9-33, available: <https://www.developmenteducationreview.com/issue/issue-25/%E2%80%98they-should-be-grateful-god%E2%80%99-challenging-children%E2%80%99s-pre-conceptions-global-south> (accessed 22 November 2017).

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs occupied Palestinian territory (OCHA) (2014), '10 Years since the international court of justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion', 9 July, available: https://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_10_years_barrier_report_english.pdf (accessed 2 October 2016).

Oireachtas Debates (2017) 'Humanitarian Access', 21 September, available: <http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/debateswebpack.nsf/takes/dail2017092100023?opendocument> (accessed 18 December 2018).

Pappé, Ilan (2006) *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, Oxford: One World.

Pennetier, M (2015) 'UNESCO condemns Israel for limits on al-Aqsa mosque access', 21 October, *Reuters*, available: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-palestinians-unesco/unesco-condemns-israel-for-limits-on-al-aqsa-mosque-access-idUSKCN0SF1RI20151021> (accessed 29 November 2017).

Pindell, J (2017) 'Welcome to America's golden age of political activism', *Boston Globe*, 24 January, available: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/news/politics/2017/01/24/groundgame/oB0e1onE4q6AaztzShw0PM/story.html> (accessed 21 November 2017).

Reuters (2011) 'Israel said would keep Gaza near collapse: WikiLeaks', available: <http://ca.reuters.com/article/topNews/idCATRE7041GH20110105> (accessed 22 May 2017).

Ruskin, John (1902) *The Crown of Wild Olive: Four Lectures on Industry and War*, Toronto: The Copp Clarke Company, p. 194, available: https://ia902304.us.archive.org/8/items/cihm_72729/cihm_72729.pdf (accessed 10 December 2017).

RT (2014) '469 Gaza children killed, over 370,000 need "psychosocial aid" – UNICEF', 22 August, available: <https://www.rt.com/news/182028-gaza-children-death-toll/> (accessed 29 November 2017).

Save the Children (2012) 'Gaza's Children: Falling Behind: The Effect of the Blockade on Child Health in Gaza', London: Save the Children, available:

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Gaza%20Health%20Report%20FINAL-LR.pdf> (accessed 29 November 2017).

Solnit, R (2017) 'Protest and persist: why giving up hope is not an option', *The Guardian*, available: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/mar/13/protest-persist-hope-trump-activism-anti-nuclear-movement> (accessed 21 November 2017).

Stone, J (2018) 'EU pledges €42.5m extra aid to Palestinians after Donald Trump cuts US contribution', *The Independent*, 31 January, available: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/palestine-aid-donald-trump-eu-frederica-mogherini-israel-a8187606.html> (accessed 19 February 2018).

Tahhan, Z (2017a) '1967 war: How Israel occupied the whole of Palestine', 6 June, *Aljazeera*, available: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/06/50-years-israeli-occupation-longest-modern-history-170604111317533.html> (accessed 24 July 2017).

Tahhan, Z (2017b) 'Israel's settlements: 50 years of land theft explained', 21 November, *Aljazeera*, available: <https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2017/50-years-illegal-settlements/index.html> (accessed 29 November 2017).

Trewby, J (2014) 'Journeys to engagement with the UK Global Justice Movement: Life stories of activist-educators', London: Institute of Education, University of London, available: <http://www.columbans.co.uk/download/144/> (accessed 13 May 2015).

Theatre of Freedom (2017) available: <http://www.thefreedomtheatre.org/who-we-are/> (accessed 18 December 2017).

The Carter Center (2006) 'Preliminary Statement of the NDI/Carter Center International Observer Delegation to the Palestinian Legislative Council Elections', available: <https://www.cartercenter.org/news/documents/doc2283.html> (accessed 22 November 2017).

UNRWA (2016a) 'Gaza Strip', available: <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/gaza-strip> (accessed 29 November 2017).

UNRWA (2016b) 'The West Bank', available: <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/gaza-strip> (accessed 29 November 2017).

UNRWA (2012) *Gaza in 2020: A Liveable Place?*, August, available: <https://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/file/publications/gaza/Gaza%20in%202020.pdf> (accessed 29 November 2017).

Zonszein, Mairax (2014) 'Walled off: 12 years of Israel's separation barrier', 12 March, *Aljazeera*, available: <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/3/12/visual-activism-activestillsphotographsthebarrierwall.html> (accessed 29 November 2017).

Stephen McCloskey is Director of the Centre for Global Education, a development non-governmental organisation based in Belfast. He is editor of *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*, an online, open access, peer reviewed journal. He is co-editor of *From the Local to the Global: Key Issues in Development Studies* (2015) (London: Pluto Press). He manages education projects for young people in the Gaza Strip and writes regularly on a range of development issues for books, journals and online publications.