Constructing Israeli and Palestinian Identity:
A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of World History Textbooks and Teacher Discourse

Daniel Osborn, Ed. D.
Dean College

Abstract: This research critically evaluates the depiction of Israelis and Palestinians in World History textbooks and World History teachers' instructional discourse. Employing a Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis methodology, this study offers a comparison between written narratives and spoken discourse in order to analyze the portrayals found in classrooms. This research found that Israelis and Palestinians are almost entirely depicted in relation to war and conflict. This establishes parameters for the ways in which either population can be characterized while obscuring substantive recognition of both communities' diversity and cultural identities.

Introduction

Depictions of Israelis and Palestinians are diverse and often divergent. In spite of the pluralistic and dynamic nature of either community's identities, these populations have historically been portrayed in reductive terms. Khalidi (1997) asserts that Palestinian identity has been dismissed as not being a real national identity. Rosenthal (2003) contends that Israelis are more diverse than is often presumed by assumptions about who is a Jew and that all Israelis are Jewish. Adwan, Bar-On, and Naveh (2012) explain that Israeli and Palestinian collective identities have been defined against one another and that the promotion of one group has entailed more critically representing the other. While true when representing any community, the manner in which Israelis and Palestinians are characterized is never value-free. The selection of language in presenting Israelis and Palestinians establishes parameters of understanding. These parameters may legitimize or delegitimize actions by either population depending on the perspective of those constructing the representation. Actions venerated in one depiction may be condemned in another, allowing Israelis and Palestinians to be represented in sympathetic or unflattering ways for the same behavior. To varying extents, the members of both communities are responsible for

promoting their own forms of self-identification. However, both are subject to having associations and labels assigned to them. Within the United States, social studies education is one of many vehicles through which depictions of either population are constructed. Textbooks and teachers' instructional discourse are two mechanisms of transmitting an understanding of Israelis and Palestinians within formal educational settings. However, there is a dearth of research examining the portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians offered by textbooks and through teachers' classroom discourse. Because textbooks and teachers both construct representations of Israelis and Palestinians, there is an existing imperative to ascertain an understanding of the ways these communities are characterized in social studies classrooms.

Background

Although collective identities are often presented as immutable, they are socially constructed forms of categorization. In this respect, identity is contingent upon context and the perspectives adopted by those who ascribe characteristics to a given community. Colombo and Senatore (2005) explain that "community identity can be considered a socially constructed notion intended to lend meaning to experience" (p. 51). The categories that exist in the social world and often purport to be unquestionable realities instead hinge upon historical circumstance and are subject to change (Bourdieu, 1985). As Hall (1997) contends, "It is we who fix the meaning so firmly that, after a while, it comes to seem natural and inevitable" (p. 21). Rather than being innate, these categories are internalized and become the basis for social relations.

National identity is one of the most ubiquitous forms of collective identification. According to Anderson (2006), national identities constitute *imagined communities*. Nations are imagined because they are not biological formations making determinations of belonging fluid rather than fixed. This understanding of nationhood confounds notions of essential traits among communities. If national identity is a prevailing paradigm of establishing social order and membership rather than an unquestionable condition, there can be no ascription of essential characteristics to the nation.

Perceptions of communities are the product of representations disseminated in various social settings. Through discursive modes, people are able to construct meaning and promulgate perceptions of identity (Colombo & Senatore, 2005). Meaning is not always singular, as numerous contending perceptions abound. However, in social settings, certain representations are promoted and become normative modes of perceiving identity and social realities.

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

In particular, schools and the knowledge found in social studies classrooms contribute to youth's socialization and collective identity formation (Apple, 2004). Schools are socially sanctioned sites where knowledge is transmitted. School knowledge is granted a sense of legitimacy while also being considered neutral (Giroux, 2011). As conduits for identity construction, schools are pivotal in this socialization process. Unlike other media transmitting representations and knowledge, youth are compelled to attend school (Seixas, 2009). Because national identity is inculcated rather than natural, it is "mediated by literacy and an extensive, formal educational system" (Gellner, 1981, p. 757). Hutchins (2016) argues, "Nationalism is deeply connected to education. Modern education- and particularly history and social studies education- is inextricably linked to the development of nation-states in liberal democracies" (p. 5). In the United States, this means that social studies education engenders a sense of what it means to be an American (Journell, 2011). VanSledright (2008) asserts that textbooks and teachers do not necessarily offer students an objective portrayal of the past; instead, they expose students to an American creed.

The representations found in schools and social studies classrooms extend beyond promoting a sense of American identity. Social studies education entails representing a myriad of national communities. As students are exposed to notions of American national identity, they are also immersed in the study of communities across the globe. These communities are characterized in the process of being introduced to students via textbooks and teacher discourse. Students are offered representations that legitimize certain perspectives and ways of classifying global communities.

Scholars have recognized that social studies knowledge facilitates both collective identity formation and perceptions of other communities. Multicultural education researchers have long adopted a critical stance towards the knowledge found in schools and the problems associated with representations of subaltern communities. Multicultural education research takes as its point of departure the assertion that representations are not value-neutral but, instead, offer a subjective and particular perspective. Banks (1993b) explains, "The assumption within the Western empirical paradigm is that the knowledge produced within it is neutral and objective and that its principles are universal" (p. 5). The intent behind multicultural education research has been to integrate more inclusive content, reduce prejudice, pursue equity pedagogy, and develop empowering school cultures (Banks, 1995). The cumulative effect of this research and educational framework is to cultivate students' knowledge base, skill set, and dispositions towards living in an increasingly diverse world (Banks, 1993a). This is not in conflict with national

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

identity formation. Instead, it represents a departure from a monocultural nationalism towards a transformative one directed towards social justice and respect for difference (Giroux, 1995).

In spite of the model offered by multicultural education research, it is limited in numerous ways (Lee & Okazawa-Rey, 2006). In the United States, multicultural research tends to concentrate on the depiction of groups from within the demographic makeup of America's citizenry. In a globally interconnected 21st century, this means that there is little research emanating from a multicultural orientation that examines curricular treatment of communities across the world.

Relatedly, much of the scholarship in social studies education is bound to studies of textbooks and curriculum frameworks (cf. Alridge, 2006; Anderson, 2012; Ashley & Jarratt-Ziemski, 1999; Brown & Brown, 2010; Hutchins, 2016; Kaomea, 2000; Loewen, 1995). Such scholarship is premised upon the assertion that textbooks are the primary source of knowledge in the classroom responsible for collective identity formation and offering students representations of communities across the globe. However, such research precludes understandings of the role of social studies teachers in offering their own representations through the discourse they employ during classroom instruction.

The lived classroom experience entails more than reading textbooks. Schooling is multimodal and involves the interplay of various sources of representation. The limitations in multicultural education and textbook analyses necessitate further research dedicated to critically examining the manner in which textbooks and teacher discourse represent communities across the world. In a world increasingly defined by the trends and tensions of globalization, there is an imperative to appreciate the role of schools in portraying other communities across the globe through assorted instructional tools.

While there are numerous populations across the globe who are represented in social studies textbooks and teachers' discourse, there is an acute imperative to understand the portrayal of Israeli and Palestinian populations in American social studies education. For reasons including but not limited to the ubiquity of media coverage of the Middle East and the United States' longstanding relations with these populations, there is a need to better understand the ways in which social studies education is characterizing these two populations for students in American classrooms. With this in mind, this research answered the following question: How are Israelis and Palestinians represented in World History textbooks and World History teachers' classroom discourse?

Theoretical Framework

This research into representations of Israelis and Palestinians in World History textbooks and social studies teachers' classroom discourse draws upon postmodernism as a theoretical framework. Postmodernist thinkers assert that knowledge is a form of representing reality; therefore, what is often presumed to be innate and discovered is in fact constructed. Facts may seem neutral, but postmodernist thinkers recognize that knowledge is not merely the accumulation of facts (Brown, 2005). They are selected, arranged, and interpreted, rendering knowledge contingent rather than universal (Hutcheon, 1993). This allows the world to be perceived in an intelligible manner with truth being pluralistic rather than singular. Brown (2005) explains, "If anybody claims to be able to deliver a certainty that cannot be challenged, written History becomes undemocratic and dangerous" (p. 29). Postmodernism is underpinned by the assertion that ambiguity is prevalent in representations. Instead of arriving at certainty through the discovery of absolute truths, postmodernists recognize that reality is too dynamic and multidimensional to be fully articulated in knowledge. Systems of knowledge enable humans to grapple with reality, but postmodernists are compelled to expose them as limited and constructed.

Postmodernists contend that knowledge possesses concealed substrata that are often unrecognized. The undercurrents that permeate knowledge are indicative of a power dynamic. Power determines which forms of knowledge become normative and which are displaced (Foucault, 1993). Knowledge construction is a display of power that determines whose voices are heard or silenced. Postmodernist thinkers harness their understanding of knowledge in order to deconstruct it (Lyotard, 2002). By deconstructing knowledge, postmodernists attempt to illuminate subjectivities and expose the undercurrents within knowledge that otherwise may appear to be neutral.

These tenets of postmodernism have undergirded theory and research in education. Giroux (2011) asserts that the assumption that knowledge is self-evidently neutral is mistaken because it does not consider the implications for selecting and organizing the content of schooling and the subjective decisions inherent in these processes. Apple (2004) contends that the transmission of knowledge in schools contributes to the social construction of reality. Banks (1993b) explains, "[A]s critical and postmodern theorists have pointed out, personal, cultural, and social factors influence the formulation of knowledge even when objective knowledge is the ideal within a discipline" (p. 5). Similar theoretical positions have been applied to social studies education and the relationship between historical narratives and collective identity formation. Seixas (2009)

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

considers the "mythic, nation-building memory" found in schools to contribute to the construction of national identity and the entrenchment of boundaries between communities (p. 720). The postmodernist stance that knowledge is not objective, identities are constructed, and perceptions of social reality are imbued with subjective positions offers a lens to study the content of social studies classrooms.

Postmodernist thought has meaningful implications with respect to research examining the knowledge introduced in the form of textbooks and teacher discourse. Both are positioned as figures of intellectual authority in the classroom. Moreover, knowledge found in school has a high degree of normativity and legitimacy associated with it. Content knowledge grants students access to representations and characterizations of groups that contribute to their consciousness of the social world and its inhabitants, making postmodernism an appropriate theoretical framework for deconstructing representations of Israelis and Palestinians found in World History textbooks and World History teachers' instructional discourse.

Literature Review

Israeli and Palestinian Identities

The scholarship examining Israeli and Palestinian identity construction is robust. Studies in collective memory and identity formation underpin much of this literature. This work seeks to understand ways in which Israeli and Palestinian identities have been formulated, transmitted, and internalized by those belonging to either population. Almog (2000) studied the concept of the *Sabra*, an archetypal ideal emerging from Zionist conceptions of the ways Jews experiencing sovereignty in their own homeland would differ from those living under the conditions of diaspora. Almog explains, "This was taken as a metaphor for the native Israeli, whose rough, masculine manner was said to hide a delicate and sensitive soul" (p. 4). Moreover, this native Israeli would speak Hebrew, talk directly, have an intimate knowledge of the land of Israel, and would be guided by Zionist idealism. Studying the role of trauma in Israeli and Palestinian identity formation, Roberts (2013) also articulated the prominence of the *Sabra* ideal as a construction influencing Israeli identity formation. Roberts writes, "Named after the prickly pear cactus, the Sabra was a fearless fighter and hardworking pioneer; confident, Spartan, easygoing; deeply loyal to the secular socialist values of the collective" (p. 85). While the *Sabra* vision of Israeli identity was not the only one to be proposed by Jews within Zionist circles, it had longstanding hegemonic influence among Israeli-Jews after the establishment of the state of Israel. However, Kimmerling (2001) found that the normative notion of Israeliness that emerged from secular labor Zionism

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

has been eroding, and alternative visions of an affirmative Israeli identity are contending. Kimmerling states, "Within the Israeli state, a system of cultural and social plurality is emerging, but in the absence of a concept or ideology of multiculturalism" (p. 2). Rather than a singular and undisputed Israeli identity, there exists an ongoing conflict among the citizens of the state over the meaning of being Israeli. This has allowed for identity to be reimagined and for countervailing notions of collective identity to surface. For Kimmerling, this entails the end of a hegemonic notion of Israeli identity.

Regarding Palestinian identity, Khalidi (1997) asserts that it is similarly something that has experienced numerous permutations over time and has evolved through changing historical circumstances. Khalidi contends that Palestinian identity has often been dismissed and its legitimacy as a nationality questioned. This has been due to the lack of sovereignty and accompanying state apparatuses that allow for identity to be inculcated. Khalidi explains, "One of the most common tropes in treatments of issues related to Palestine is the idea that Palestinian identity, and with it Palestinian nationalism, are ephemeral and of recent origin" (p. 177). Moreover, Khalidi explains that Palestinian identity is inseparable from Christian, Muslim, Ottoman, Arab, local, family, and tribal forms of identification. This also contributes to criticism, questioning its uniqueness as a national identity (p. 6). This scholarship offers insights into the ways in which Israelis and Palestinians have continually defined and redefined their national identities. It attests to the constructed nature of identity and the fluctuations in how either community has envisioned and been assigned identities from within and without.

In addition to scholarship that examines the evolution of collective identity formation among Israelis and Palestinians, scholars have also focused on illuminating the demographic diversity within either community. This research has focused on the intra-national heterogeneity among Israelis and Palestinians. Gelvin (2007) explains that although national identity is often considered to be homogeneous, such uniformity does not exist among Israelis and Palestinians. Gelvin writes, "Although every nationalism attempts to present itself to the world as a monolithic bloc, beneath its indivisible exterior lurk class, gender, geographic, generational, and ideological cleavages" (p. 144). Rosenthal (2003) also studied Israeli society with these social divisions in mind. Expanding the conception of Israeli-Jewish identity, Rosenthal writes, "They are a disparate mix of radically modern and devoutly traditional" (p. 1). Moreover, Rosenthal's study depicts a mosaic of members of Israeli society inclusive of Jews of Ashkenazi, Mizrahi, and African backgrounds; Haredi, Orthodox, and non-Orthodox forms of Jewish religiosity; and Muslim, Christian, Druze, and Bedouin non-Jewish Israeli citizens. Arguing that Palestinians who have

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

citizenship in Israel are often neglected and obscured from perceptions of Palestinian identity, Peleg and Waxman (2011) and Pappe (2011) examined this community's identity. Peleg and Waxman describe Palestinians within Israel as having experienced discrimination, marginalization, and neglect. Due to decades of residence within Israel under circumstances different than Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon, and elsewhere in diaspora, their identity as part of this larger national community has its own uniqueness. Peleg and Waxman write, "In sum, what has taken place since 1967 is the gradual emergence of a self-identified Palestinian national minority in Israel" (p. 31) that "remains a distinct, separate, largely unassimilated community on the margins of Israeli society" (p. 9). Pappe describes this particular Palestinian community as *forgotten* and defined by Israeli-Jewish society as a potential fifth-column experiencing second-class status. These studies do not necessarily focus on the construction of identity so much as the diversity within Israeli and Palestinian societies. They remind readers that Israelis are not all Jewish, Judaism is not uniform within Israel, Palestinians are of diverse religious backgrounds, and Palestinians live under multiple political structures allowing for manifold Palestinian identities to exist.

Social Studies Research in the United States

Analyses of social studies textbooks are ubiquitous in research examining school knowledge. These studies are premised on the concern regarding the duality of textbooks as both instructional tools and commodities. Apple (1996) argues, "They are *simultaneously* commodities produced for sale, representations of what powerful groups have defined as legitimate knowledge that are at least partially regulated by the state, and they speak to ongoing struggles over cultural legitimacy" (p. 129). Hutchins (2016) considers textbooks to represent official notions of identity due to the legitimacy offered to schools and curricular knowledge. For this reason, social studies textbook analyses are often critical of the manner in which communities are represented in textbooks. Questions regarding the normativity and presumptions of neutrality underpin research that deconstructs textbooks in order to expose the subjectivities inherent in depictions of communities that have historically been marginalized and subject to stereotyping. Many of the studies examining textbooks published in the United States tend to concentrate on segments of American society. This focus has been valuable in investigating the portrayal of Native Americans (Anderson, 2012; Ashley & Jarratt-Ziemski, 1999), African Americans (Alridge, 2006; Brown & Brown, 2010), Mexican Americans (Salvucci, 1991), and Native Hawaiians (Kaomea, 2000), among other subaltern communities. These studies have been valuable in exposing the way social studies textbooks have tended to silence, marginalize, and

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

reduce these communities while obscuring the complexity of their respective historical experiences. However, research evaluating social studies textbook representations are dominated by studies of communities within the United States.

There continues to be a lack of scholarship concentrated on the representation of other national communities and subaltern groups living outside the United States. In the case of Israeli and Palestinian identity, there is a wealth of scholarship exploring the construction of these identities and the manner in which these communities are depicted in Israeli and Palestinian textbooks (Adwan, Bar-On, & Naveh, 2012; Al-Haj, 2005; Brown, 2006; Cohen, 2013; Nasser, 2011; Nasser & Nasser, 2008). However, this has not permeated into the research that critically investigates the knowledge found in social studies textbooks and classrooms in the United States.

Research Methodology

The purpose of this study is to ascertain an understanding of the ways Israelis and Palestinians are represented in World History textbooks and World History teachers' instructional discourse in the context of social studies education in the United States. This research employed Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and applied the methodology to the analysis of both World History textbooks and World History teachers. CDA is predicated upon the assertion that knowledge is not value-neutral. Instead, CDA recognizes the interplay between knowledge and society and the reciprocal influences one has on the other (van Dijk, 2001). According to Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000), "CDA states that discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned. Furthermore, discourse is an opaque power object in modern societies and CDA aims to make it more visible and transparent" (p. 448). Language is used to transmit certain perspectives that are often considered neutral but are actually subjective depictions of reality. Moreover, certain representations become dominant whereas others are displaced. For van Dijk (1993), "Control of knowledge crucially shapes our interpretation of the world" (p. 258). Understanding this power dynamic in discourse is part of the objectives of CDA. Uncovering the implicit and concealed subjectivities of knowledge and discourse is the impetus behind CDA (van Dijk, 1995). With regard to understanding collective identity formation and the ways in which discursive tools represent communities, CDA is an appropriate methodology. Because identities are fluid and subject to reimagining, the processes through which they are conceived and transmitted may be examined. For de Cilia, Reisigl, and Wodak (1999), "national identities are not completely consistent, stable and immutable. They are, to the contrary, to be understood as dynamic, fragile, 'vulnerable' and often incoherent" (p. 154). CDA is, thus, viable in understanding the contingency of discursive representations of Israelis and Palestinians.

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

Research Design

This research entailed applying the methods of CDA to both World History textbooks and the instructional discourse of World History teachers. Whereas similar studies exploring issues of representation only evaluated curricular materials such as textbooks, this study considered the multimodal reality of social studies education inclusive of both print materials and verbal forms of instruction. For this reason, both textbooks and teacher discourse were identified as outlets in social studies classrooms for representing Israeli and Palestinian communities. Five World History textbooks were identified and selected for study. These texts were identified because of their popularity (Marino, 2011). Once textbooks were selected, the table of contents and indexes were read in order to identify relevant passages that introduced content regarding Israeli and Palestinian populations. These passages were then transcribed in their entirety. The textbooks selected for this study are found in Table 1.

Table 1. Textbooks Examined

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company: *World History: Patterns of Interaction-NY Ed.* 2012   Editors: Roger B. Beck, Linda Black, Larry S. Krieger, Phillip C. Naylor, Dahia Ibo Shabaka
Holt, Rinehardt, and Winston: *World History: The Human Journey- FL Ed*. 2005   Editor: Laurel Carrington
Wadsworth Cengage Learning: *World History.* 2013.   Authors: William J. Duiker & Jackson J. Spielvogel
Pearson Education, Inc. publishing as Prentice Hall: *World History*. 2014   Authors: Elisabeth Gaynor Ellis & Anthony Esler
Glencoe/McGraw-Hill: *World History: The Human Experience*. 2001   Authors: Mounir A. Farah & Andrea Berens Karls

The discourse analysis component of this study also involved two World History teachers. Teachers were eligible for participation in this study if they taught a course on the modern world

that included lessons or a unit involving the study of Israel and Palestine. Teachers were observed during their instructional periods with students when introducing topics related to the study of Israeli and Palestinian populations. Both participants were observed for the full length of their units focusing on Israel and Palestine. The observation periods ranged from three to five 85-minute periods per teacher. Teachers' autonomy in planning their units accounts for the range in classroom periods dedicated to this study between these two educators. These observations took place during the 2015-2016 academic year between January and March, 2016. During observations, classroom discourse was recorded via a digital voice recorder. All classroom audio was captured, including that of students. Although all audio was transcribed, only the teachers' discourse was analyzed.

Mr. Gerard. Mr. Gerard teaches World Cultures at Milltown High School, a suburban New England secondary school.[1] He self-identifies as a White male of European descent. He has been teaching for nine years at Milltown High School. Prior to this, he student-taught at a public middle school and a private denominational secondary school in a city near Milltown. Mr. Gerard earned a bachelor's degree in Secondary Social Studies Education from a private university and a master's degree in History from a public university, both in New England. Mr. Gerard never enrolled in coursework as a university student focused on the study of Israel or Palestine. During his nine years as a social studies educator, he has taught Introduction to Psychology for two years, United States History for four years, and World Cultures for nine years. Mr. Gerard was observed on five different occasions during lessons dedicated to studying the history of what he referred to as the Arab-Israeli Conflict. These five observations constituted the full length of Mr. Gerard's unit on the Middle East.

Ms. Herne. Ms. Herne teaches World Cultures at Milltown High School and is a colleague of Mr. Gerard. She self-identifies as a White female. She has been teaching at the school as a fulltime teacher for five years and spent one year as a long-term substitute teacher. Ms. Herne earned a bachelor's degree from a private university in History and Secondary Education and a master's degree in Secondary Education from a public university, both in New England. During her undergraduate and graduate studies, Ms. Herne took courses on Middle Eastern history, studying topics relating to Israel and Palestine. During her time teaching at Milltown High School, she has taught World Cultures for five years and United States History for three years. She was

---

[1] Teachers and schools have been assigned pseudonyms.

observed teaching on three different occasions when her class focused on the study of the Middle East. These three lessons constituted the full length of her unit studying Israel and Palestine.

Data Analysis

Data from textbooks and teachers' discourse was analyzed using van Leeuwen's (2008) framework on representing social actors. As a tool for conducting CDA, van Leeuwen's framework establishes structure for analyzing representations of individuals and communities. He describes the various ways in which a CDA can deconstruct representations to garner an understanding of how portraits of populations are constructed. Within this structure, van Leeuwen describes the ways populations are categorized through *classification* and *relational identification*. According to van Leeuwen, classifications are the major categories used in identifying and differentiating between communities. He explains, "In the West, these now include age, gender, class, wealth, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and so on. But classification categories are historically and culturally variable" (p. 20). Relational identifications are ways of categorizing populations in relation to one another rather than as isolated persons or communities. Relatedly, van Leeuwen's framework describes the ways in which groups are *aggregated* in order to present a purported consensus within a community. Moreover, he explains the ways in which discourse may depict populations through *collectivization*, whereby entire populations appear as monolithic entities. This framework served as an appropriate analytical tool in understanding the manner in which Israelis and Palestinians are depicted in two salient modes of knowledge found in social studies classrooms.

Findings

The depictions of Israelis and Palestinians in World History textbooks and social studies teachers' discourse were similar in many ways. While not identical in the representations offered in print form and during instructional periods with students, textbooks and teachers tended towards similar classifications of Israelis and Palestinians. Through these similarities, salient patterns in the portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians emerged.

Classifications of Israelis

Both textbooks and teachers often introduced the study of nationalism in the Middle East and the establishment of the state of Israel around Zionism, thereby presenting Israeli-Jews as Zionists. Although Zionism took many forms, the presentation of Jews as Zionists tended towards a uniform definition. *World History: Patterns of Interaction* considered Zionists "people who

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

favored a Jewish national homeland in Palestine," (p. 1017) emphasizing the status of Jews as a dispersed population lacking sovereignty in diaspora. This characterization of Zionists as Jews seeking a national homeland in Palestine was also emphasized in *World History: The Human Journey.* Consistently, Zionists were described as responding to anti-Semitism through political action and migration. In their classroom discourse, both Ms. Herne and Mr. Gerard presented Zionists in similar terms, emphasizing a community seeking a homeland. While *World History: The Human Experience* and Ellis and Esler's *World History* focused on European Jews as victims of pogroms and persecution, Duiker and Spielvogel's *World History* presented Jews as a diasporic community living in Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. While Jews-as-Zionists tended to be uniformly presented as a consensus community all seeking the same clearly articulated political aspiration, this text recognized Jews as a dispersed population experiencing geographic diversity.

The study of Israelis and Palestinians often emphasized conflict. This engendered classifications that were compatible with this type of narrative. Rather than describing the demographic makeup of Israel, both textbooks and teachers identified Israelis in relation to war and violence, often as the recipients of Arab and Palestinian aggression. In this way, ethnic, religious, linguistic, and other forms of diversity were often excluded in both textbook descriptions and teachers' discourse in favor of representations that privileged associations with conflict.

All of the textbooks and teachers ascribed to Israelis the status of defenders against external belligerency. This classification was conveyed across historical incidents with little variability. For instance, *World History: The Human Experience* and Ellis and Esler's *World History* described the establishment of the Haganah in the early 20ᵗʰ century as a defensive measure by a Jewish population suffering from Arab attacks. This role of Israelis defending themselves against Arab aggression continued as textbooks and teachers described the events of Israel's establishment. *World History: Patterns of Interaction* explained, "The new nation of Israel got a hostile greeting from its neighbors" (p. 1018), while Mr. Gerard stated, "the Arab countries had pledged to destroy Israel." Ms. Herne emphasized Israel as attacked on all sides except the Mediterranean Sea.

Classifying Israelis as a population subject to attack and assuming the status of defenders was pronounced when focusing on the wars of 1967 and 1973. Across textbook narrations and teachers' discourse, Israel was presented in both of these conflicts as fending off belligerency. Israelis were consistently depicted as responding to external aggression when launching a preemptive attack on Egypt, Syria, and Jordan in 1967. Duiker and Spielvogel's *World History*

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

referred to Israel as "concerned that it might be isolated" (p. 875), while *World History: The Human Experience* stated, "Fearing possible attack, Israel responded with force" (p. 730). Ms. Herne similarly characterized Israelis as fearful of Arab aggression, launching its attacks only when "Israel can feel the threat." The decision to maintain possession of territories occupied during 1967 also framed Israelis as acting primarily as defenders concerned with safeguarding the nation. Duiker and Spielvogel's *World History* explained, "Meanwhile, many Israelis argued that the new lands improved the security of the beleaguered state and should be retained" (p. 875). This decision to associate Israelis with defense continued when textbooks and teachers introduced the 1973 war. *World History: The Human Experience, World History: Patterns of Interaction, World History: The Human Journey*, and Mr. Gerard's classroom discourse each emphasized Israel's vulnerability in this conflict as war began on Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement. Mr. Gerard explained, "Yom Kippur is the holiest day of the Jewish calendar. That would be like attacking the United States on Christmas." These portrayals cast Israel in the role of a country experiencing an existential threat and acting out of self-preservation.

When depicting relations with Palestinians rather than sovereign Arab nations, the textbooks and teachers tended towards presenting Israelis as defending themselves from hostility and terrorism. Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon was situated in this framework of Israelis assuming the role of defenders against aggression. *World History: Patterns of Interaction* and *World History: The Human Experience* represented Israelis as launching this war in order to curtail attacks from the Palestine Liberation Organization. Both Ms. Herne and Mr. Gerard's statements in their classrooms echoed this stance that the invasion of Lebanon conformed to the pattern of Israel taking action to repel violence directed against Israelis. This continued into descriptions of Israeli-Palestinian relations during the two Intifadas. Ellis and Esler's *World History* depicts Israelis as "sealing off and raiding Palestinian towns and targeting terrorist leaders" (p. 1055) during the First Intifada. In the Second Intifada, Prime Minister Netanyahu is depicted in *World History: The Human Experience* as instituting restrictions of Palestinian mobility as a defense measure. *World History: Patterns of Interaction* and *World History: The Human Journey* describe the bulldozing of Palestinian homes and targeted assassinations as tactics responding to terrorism. Similarly, Ellis and Esler's *World History* relates Israelis as taking a defensive stance when blockading the Gaza Strip in response to Hamas's rise to power. Mr. Gerard's discourse with students was consistent with this tendency to assign Israelis the role of defenders responding to Palestinians only to counteract violence directed towards Israel. He explained, "Now, 2002, you have the beginning of the West Bank security barrier. Israel begins building a wall between Israeli territory and Palestinian territory in order to protect its citizens from these Intifadas and from terrorist

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

actions." These numerous examples attest to the propensity for both textbooks and teachers to classify Israelis as defenders against aggression consistently across historical episodes. While the circumstances of each historical episode described in textbooks and teachers' discourse had their own contextual variations, the assignment of this role to Israelis was presented as uncontroversial, self-evident, and without the possibility of alternatives.

While the 1967 War and its consequences tended to be emphasized in all of the World History textbooks and teachers' discourses studied, there was much less focus on Israeli settlers who would inhabit the various territories occupied by Israel after this war. When they were introduced, settlers were often presented as occupants of newly acquired land. Ellis and Esler's *World History, World History: The Human Journey,* and Mr. Gerard were most explicit in identifying settlers as a segment of Israeli society. These portrayals did not ascribe any explicit characteristics to Jewish settlers. While the motives of these have been diverse and varied over the decades since 1967, the textbooks and Mr. Gerard presented them in a non-descript manner, not taking note of ideological, religious, or pragmatic considerations underscoring their relocation to occupied territories.

Israelis often appeared in textbooks and teachers' discourse as acting out of self-defense. However, books did include passages that illuminated acts of violence that did not fit into this particular characterization. In these instances, Israelis were characterized as acting violently in a manner that was more antagonistic and detrimental to political affairs.

While few in quantity, there were salient examples of Jews in Palestine prior to 1948 depicted as employing violent means to further their political aspirations. *World History: The Human Experience* employed language such as "Jewish underground forces" (p. 727), while *World History: The Human Journey* described "extremist Zionist groups" (p. 893). Both textbooks relied on such terminology when referencing violent action directed towards British and Arab targets. Ms. Herne also broached the subject of Jewish violence during the Interwar years, referring to Jews as aggressors in their relations with the British.

Israelis were also depicted as violent in response to the peace process with the Palestinians launched in the 1990s. However, unlike characterizations of Israelis as a collective resorting to violence as a defensive stance, members of Israeli society who were violent were identified as individuals and outliers rather than part of a broader segment of society. *World History: The Human Journey* stated, "Many Israelis who had settled on the West Bank feared violence at the hands of the self-governing Palestinian Authority. In 1994, a radical Israeli settler killed 29

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

Palestinians in the West Bank city of Hebron" (p. 900). Baruch Goldstein was not referenced by name, nor were his religious or ideological affiliations identified. In this respect, his status as a "radical Israeli settler" is not grounded but rather vaguely defined. Moreover, his classification as a radical is prefaced with a statement about the fear of violence at the hands of Palestinians. Even while introduced as an example of Israeli radicalism beyond the more widely acknowledged defensive use of violence, the textbook still invokes Israeli fear of aggression. The last salient example found in textbooks of Israelis identified as violent is regarding the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. None of the textbooks identified his assassin, Yigal Amir, by name. However, he was called "an Israeli radical" (p. 900) in *World History: The Human Journey,* "an Israeli student" (p. 733) in *World History: The Human Experience*, "an Israeli opponent of the accords" (p. 877) in Duiker and Spielvogel's *World History*, and "a right-wing Jewish extremist who opposed concessions to the Palestinians" (p. 1021) in *World History: Patterns of Interaction.* These characterizations, to varying extents, each conceal and divulge various aspects of Amir's identity through these classifications. While his violence is universally recognized across textbooks, each used different descriptors ranging from vague to increasingly more nuanced.

Textbooks and teachers often referred to Israelis in terms of a cohesive collective unit. There was limited emphasis on the fault lines and diversity within Israeli society. For instance, Ellis and Esler's *World History* explained that "Israelis oppose this right" (p. 1056) in reference to the Palestinian right of return. This statement epitomizes the tendency to refer to Israelis as a consensus community without internal variation or division. However, Duiker and Spielvogel's *World History* offered one of the most expansive characterizations of Israeli diversity: "Some were immigrants from Europe, while others came from other states in the Middle East. Some were secular and even socialist in their views, while others were politically and religiously conservative" (p. 875). Beyond this description, references to social cleavages within Israeli society were restricted to political divergences regarding the peace process. *World History: The Human Journey* and *World History: The Human Experience* were most explicit in identifying the political variations within Israeli society. Both textbooks emphasized Israelis as divided over the peace process and the future of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, illuminating the political contentiousness between Israelis who supported and opposed negotiations with Palestinians and land transfers. Mr. Gerard also characterized Israelis as politically discordant, particularly with regard to conflicting stances on the separation barrier in the West Bank; he explained to students, "It's extremists on all sides of this issue that keeps this conflict going." This emphasis on political divisions and extremism as the underpinning to conflict offers a subtle recognition that Israeli society possesses factions and that not all Israelis are invested in the perpetuation of

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

conflict. However, these factions were more often implied than explicitly discussed, and the vagueness of terms like "extremists" does not adequately qualify the identities of those categorized in this manner.

Israelis were infrequently described in ways that alluded to their possession of any essential or contextually relevant traits. However, Ms. Herne ascribed emotions to Israelis at two points during her instructional discourse. She portrayed Israelis involved in attacks on the British during the Interwar Years as "angry." When discussing the death of civilians at Deir Yassin in 1948, Ms. Herne explained that Israelis were "sad" to have participated in this incident. These two examples are outliers in the way Israelis were described. Rarely was the emotional state of Israelis referenced.

Classifications of Palestinians

Textbooks and teachers varied in the specificity with which they articulated a sense of Palestinian identity. Similar to the ways the demographic diversity of Israelis was eclipsed by classifications that related to conflict, there were infrequent passages and discursive moments dedicated to describing the demographic makeup of Palestinians. Ms. Herne simply referred to Palestinians as "the people who were living there prior to Israel's creation." This is a problematic definition because of its vagueness and the absence of any reference to identity components other than residency on the land. Mr. Gerard offered more specificity, albeit in a manner that excluded some Palestinians. He considered Palestinians to be "Arab Muslims living in what is traditionally called the Holy Land." Ellis and Esler's *World History* mirrors this definition when referring to Palestinians as "the Muslim population" (p. 864) of Palestine. These instances circumscribe the religious identity of Palestinians as Muslims while excluding Christian members of this national community. Duiker and Spielvogel's *World History* alone referred to Palestinians as Christians and Muslims. *World History: The Human Experience* was the only source that identified Palestinians as a segment of Israel's citizenry after 1948. Relatedly, this textbook also described Palestinians as a diasporic community dispersed throughout the globe. There are no other substantive attempts to offer a framework for who has membership to this national community.

Textbooks and teachers commonly referred to Palestinians as a population that has been displaced. This displacement became one of the seminal ways of classifying Palestinians. It also underpinned many of the other common ways in which Palestinians were portrayed. There is an interplay between displacement and associations with hostility and terrorism that typified ways of describing Palestinians. All of the textbooks acknowledged that Palestinians were displaced

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

during the events of 1948. However, the language often avoided references to Israelis or the manner in which Palestinians were displaced. For instance, *World History: The Human Experience* refers to Palestinians as "homeless" (p. 727), while *World History: The Human Journey, World History: Patterns of Interaction,* Ellis and Esler's *World History,* and Duiker and Spielvogel's *World History* all describe Palestinians as *refugees.* Textbooks tended to avoid referencing Israelis in the processes of Palestinian displacement. Ms. Herne and Mr. Gerard also adhered to this pattern of recognizing the displaced status of many Palestinians. Ms. Herne referred to Palestinians as those who "have been pushed out" or "refugees who have been displaced from their homes" while Mr. Gerard described them as a people who fled and are now refugees. These portrayals highlighted the status of Palestinians without commensurate attention on Israelis and the relationship between either community in Palestinian displacement. Palestinian status as displaced tended to be represented as a byproduct of war, a classification that did not necessitate characterizing the role of Israelis in this process.

Few textbooks explicitly presented Palestinians as a community that has been under occupation since 1967. Duiker and Spielvogel's *World History* indirectly explained that as a result of the war, Israel "added one million Palestinians inside its borders" (p. 875). This description presents Palestinians merely as a population absorbed into Israeli territory. *World History: The Human Experience* was more pointed when stating that "Palestinians found themselves under Israeli military occupation" (p. 731). This representation engenders a more nuanced characterization of the situation and status of Palestinians as a people subject to military rule. *World History: Patterns of Interaction* describes Palestinians in occupied territory as "People who lived in the other areas [West Bank and Gaza Strip] [who] were not offered Israeli citizenship and simply came under Jewish control" (p. 1019). While somewhat muted language is used, this depiction portrays Palestinians as a population with an ambiguously defined civic status subject to external determinations regarding their governance.

The most common classification of Palestinians was that of a population hostile to Jews whose hostility manifested itself in terrorist activities. Textbooks and teachers traced Palestinian hostility and terrorism to the early days of Zionist activity and continuing through contemporary events. *World History: The Human Experience* and Ellis and Esler's *World History* described Palestinians as opposing Jewish immigration and attacking Jewish settlements in the early 20th century. Mr. Gerard reiterated this message of Palestinian hostility during this period. Duiker and Spielvogel's *World History* described "PLO and Arab provocations" (p. 875) in the 1960s; *World History: The Human Experience* detailed the PLO's use of airplane hijackings and bombings as

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

hostile tactics; and *World History: The Human Journey* described the PLO as responsible for "guerilla attacks" (p. 899). These descriptions often cast Palestinians in a role oppositional to Israel.

While many descriptions framed Palestinians as hostile, many more explicitly cast them as terrorists. A wide variety of actions on the part of Palestinians were categorized as terrorist activities. *World History: The Human Experience* and Ellis and Esler's *World History* both presented Palestinian "border raids" in the 1950s as terrorist activities. Mr. Gerard determined that all Palestinian acts of violence directed towards Israel constituted terrorism. However, unlike the textbooks, he associated terrorism with Islam. He explained, "So, thus far, in the 25 years that we've discussed since Israel was created, we've seen the creation of modern Islamic terrorism as we know it." When discussing the events in Munich during the 1972 Olympic games, Mr. Gerard stated, "Obviously, you're seeing right now the rise of militant Islamic terrorism similar to what we know today." These statements conflate the actions of the secular nationalist PLO with the actions of other organizations, effectively entangling disparate actions perpetrated by dissimilar organizations into a purportedly cohesive movement of Islamic terrorism.

Textbooks also focused on Palestinian terrorism as a bulwark in the peace process from the 1990s onward. These depictions concentrated more explicitly on the actions of Hamas and suicide bombings. Duiker and Spielvogel's *World History* described "terrorist attacks by Palestinian militants" (p. 877), and *World History: The Human Experience* and *World History: The Human Journey* both concentrated on suicide bombings in descriptions of Palestinian hostility towards Israel and against the peace process.

The consistent association of Palestinians with terrorism was not selectively applied depending on the actions or time period in question. This encompassed wide-ranging actions in the same category. From Palestinians crossing the border into Israel in the 1950s to suicide bombings in the 1990s and 2000s, a multitude of violent acts were fitted into this way of representing Palestinians.

Ms. Herne was alone in explicitly presenting Palestinians as seeking liberation rather than merely acting out of hostility. When describing the PLO, she explained, "They are going to launch attacks on Israel in order to gain that land back, in order to gain homes back for the people that were displaced" and "They still think that they should be given this land and maybe they should be." These statements expose the contingent nature of classifications. Whereas the majority of textbooks considered Palestinian actions as terrorism, Ms. Herne posited an alternative

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

understanding of this population. In this respect, while still examining acts of violence, terminology such as *hostility* and *terrorism* were deemphasized in favor of *reclamation of lost territory* and *liberation*.

Descriptions of the Palestinian Intifadas offered a more complex characterization of Palestinians and their actions directed towards Israelis. Whereas Palestinians were often described as terrorists in all other instances recounted in the textbooks and teacher discourse, the descriptions during the Intifadas were more multifaceted. In the context of the First Intifada, Palestinians were described as protesters and strikers employing various forms of civil disobedience. *World History: The Human Experience* and *World History: Patterns of Interaction* employed language that focused on this type of depiction. *World History: The Human Journey* emphasized Palestinians' roles as demonstrators while also presenting them as "violent" in their use of rocks and other improvised weapons in confrontations with Israeli soldiers. Ms. Herne emphasized the involvement of "civilians, kids, women, everyone," expanding the scope of Palestinian involvement in the First Intifada. While the narratives of the First Intifada differed substantially, there was a consistent message that Palestinians were activists and demonstrators whose activities, while violent, were not part of the reoccurring trope of Palestinians as terrorists.

Similar to the way Israelis were presented as having ideological cleavages, textbooks and teachers also introduced Palestinians as experiencing a diversity of ideological positions on the issue of peace and negotiations. *World History: The Human Experience* described Palestinian opponents of the peace process as fearful that sovereignty would be incomplete and that an independent Palestine would still be subject to Israeli control. However, the text also described Hamas as opposed to peace for reasons beyond this skepticism. Mr. Gerard described the peace process as stymied by "hardliners" and "extremists." These descriptions do not present the ideological perspectives of many segments of Palestinian society. Instead, they tend to concentrate their attention on outliers seeking to disrupt peace negotiations.

Descriptions of Palestinians often ascribed emotional states to the population. These tended to be contingent traits that hinged on political situations. Palestinians were frequently described as motivated by intense emotions. *World History: The Human Experience* described the rejection of the 1947 United Nations partition plan of Palestine by "embittered Arab leaders" (p. 727). Ellis and Esler's *World History* ascribed bitterness to Palestinians as they responded to the building of Israeli settlements. Across textbooks and classrooms, representations of Palestinians as angry, infuriated, and full of rage reoccurred. According to *World History: The Human Journey*, Palestinians were "infuriated" (p. 893) by the establishment of Israel; *World History: The Human*

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

Experience stated that after 1967, "Palestinians lived in a smoldering rage" (p. 732); and Ms. Herne described Palestinians' desire to return to their homes as a source of "anger." Each of these emotional associations is used in response to unfolding events. In this respect, they are not considered to be essential or immutable aspects of Palestinian identity. However, Ms. Herne called shame "the most painful emotion in the Arab culture," so that Palestinians resorted to violence in order to assuage the anguish of shame. Unlike Israelis, whose emotional states were rarely mentioned, Palestinians were frequently assigned emotions that purportedly underpinned their actions and were presented in conjunction with hostility and terrorism.

Israelis and Palestinians as Peacemakers

Textbooks and teachers tended to describe Israelis and Palestinians as communities who could be identified according to their relations to one another. Typically, this resulted in inverse forms of classifications. However, regarding the peace process beginning in the 1990s, both textbooks and teachers introduced Israelis and Palestinian leaders as committed to peace. Descriptions of Israeli and Palestinian leaders tended to focus on Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat, both of whom were consistently presented as conciliatory and willing to compromise. *World History: The Human Journey* presented Rabin as "a former army chief who had led Israeli forces in the Six-Day War" (p. 900), underscoring his transformation from a military leader to a peace advocate. Whereas most other representations of Israelis and Palestinians presented the populations as intractably divided, passages on the peace process in the early 1990s focused on a willingness to negotiate and avoid further impasses.

Discussion

Reflecting on the contending narratives emanating from Israeli and Palestinian communities, Rabbi Michael Lerner (2012) wrote, "From all my experiences, I have realized that there are many perspectives on the same facts and that many of them make sense" (p. 23). Lerner is expressing an understanding that knowledge is not singular and objective. Such an understanding obscures the recognition that facts are not inert. Instead, they are selected, interpreted, and ascribed meaning. The subjectivities inherent in this process underpin all attempts at creating knowledge. This is something that multicultural education researchers have recognized and which has galvanized critical investigations into the portrayal of subaltern communities in school knowledge (Banks, 1993b). As Apple (1996) notes, the power to determine which interpretations and representations become sanctioned by schools and are normalized entails a struggle over legitimacy. The tendency to present representations of Israelis and Palestinians as

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

uncontroversial and without alternative modes of depiction typifies the manner in which World History textbooks and teachers presented either community.

The textbooks and teachers involved in this study cast Israelis and Palestinians in certain roles. However, there was a dearth of explicit disclosure of the decisions made in these characterizations. Presenting Israelis as consistently defenders of their sovereignty and safety and Palestinians as terrorists acting on rage should not be self-evident. Rather, casting either population in these roles entails making determinations about behavior. These determinations remained unspoken and unacknowledged. In this respect, the textbooks and teachers favored certain depictions while silencing other possibilities that would have promoted alternative interpretations and evaluations of either community. Consistently, Israelis appeared to be a community defined by its national aspirations and defensiveness when presented with belligerency from Arab states and Palestinians. Alternatively, Palestinians appeared to be more aggressive and using violence in an unacceptable manner.

Uniformity and Consensus Communities

World History textbooks and teachers often offered a false sense of uniformity and consensus among Israelis and Palestinians. Although there were instances when intragroup diversity was acknowledged, these were infrequent. Diversity tended to be discussed in relation to political discord regarding the peace process. Beyond these ideological differences, there were many instances in which the plurality from within each community was eclipsed by characterizations that minimized any meaningful recognition of Israeli and Palestinian diversity.

Israeli and Palestinian demographic diversity was rarely introduced. Neither community is homogenous, but their heterogeneity was not fully illuminated by textbooks or teachers. The diversity within both communities is the product of ethnic, linguistic, and religious differences, among others. Rosenthal (2003) recalls that Israeli Jews are of many ethnicities and practice Judaism in ways that range from orthodox to atheistic. Moreover, not all Israelis are Jewish, as the state is also home to Muslims, Christians, and Palestinian populations. Khalidi (1997) describes the fault lines among Palestinians that fall along religion, but also speaks of divisions among class and location. Moreover, the location of Palestinians within Israel, under Israeli occupation, and in exile also complicates any representation that presumes uniformity of historical experience. Regarding Palestinians with Israeli citizenship, Rabinovich (2008) contends, "Most Arabs living in Israel see themselves as Palestinians and support the ideas of Palestinian self-determination and statehood, but they are not interested in becoming part of that state" (p.

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

185). Relatedly, Bishara (1998/2008) argues, "Palestinians [in Israel] began to realize that they were torn between demanding equality in Israeli civil society and demanding an independent national identity" (p. 468). While the variations among Palestinians are numerous, Rabinovich and Bishara illuminate the complexities of identity for this one subset. Among Palestinians within Israel, there is a tension for equality, support for statehood, preservation of national identity, and a desire to integrate into Israeli society. Neither the textbooks nor Ms. Herne or Mr. Gerard explicitly recounted these complexities of identity within any segment of Israeli or Palestinian populations. The demographics of Israelis and Palestinians were not fully revealed. Therefore, Israelis appeared as Jews and Palestinians, often, as Arab Muslims. While not inaccurate, these representations are incomplete. This is problematic because a false sense of homogeneity reduces complex identities to the most simplistic terms.

Both textbooks and teachers offered a streamlined identity of Zionists as Jews acting to establish a national homeland in Palestine. This reduces Zionists to a community that collectively yearned for sovereignty. Gelvin (2007) identifies various factions among Zionists between Labor, Revisionist, and Religious camps. Pianko (2010) expands the definition of Zionists to include those whose ideological motives did not entail statehood. He refers to this camp as pursuing a *counterstate* paradigm. Moreover, textbooks and teachers failed to consider Zionists as a population concerned with anything beyond acquiring statehood. This precluded any discussion of the manifold visions of Jewish identity renewal offered by Zionists. From Ahad Ha'am's spiritually renewed Jews, Martin Buber's *Hebrew Humanists*, and Max Nordau's J*ewry of Muscle,* Zionists were concerned not only with sovereignty but with the condition of Jews and the markers of Jewish identity that could be cultivated through Zionism. Without these representations, textbooks and teachers imposed narrow parameters on Zionists that veiled the diversity within this subset of Jews.

Conflict Characterizations

The classifications reserved for Israelis and Palestinians often framed these populations in relation to one another through conflict. Because much of their relations since the late 19th century have involved various forms of conflict, this is understandable. However, as Pappe (2004) notes, "Most of the histories of Palestine and Israel are histories of conflict. But life in Palestine and Israel is not determined by conflict alone" (p. 11). Because Israelis often appeared as defenders responding to attacks and Palestinians as hostile terrorists, the scope of understanding these populations was restricted. By assigning these roles to Israelis and Palestinians, textbooks and teachers reinforced associations with violence and war and did so in a way that restricted

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

alternative understandings of the roles played by either community in this conflict. As Adwan, Bar-On, and Naveh (2012) reveal, actions that are condoned and legitimized from one perspective are often condemned and chastised by another. In their presentation of dual Israeli and Palestinian versions of their respective histories, Israelis were often depicted as aggressors by Palestinians and vice versa. However, this was not the case with the textbooks and teachers involved in this study.

Massad (2006) problematizes the use of the term *terrorist* when explaining, "Terrorism is a name that is never assumed but always tendered. The taxonomy that transforms it from a practice to an identity is always particular" (p. 1). It is not self-evident that Palestinians are terrorists. Instead, such a classification scheme entails the adoption of one perspective at the expense of other contending ways of identification. The decision to integrate certain terminology into the way groups are identified is a matter of perception. Moreover, the blanket association of Palestinians with terrorism did not appear in textbooks and teacher discourse as reserved for individual actors. It was more generally associated with all oppositional acts, aside from those of the First Intifada.

A consequence of casting Israelis as responding to aggression and Palestinians as a source of aggression is the tacit, if any, recognition of other aspects of Israeli and Palestinian identity outside of their connection to conflict with one another. Moreover, the terms reserved for either population within this paradigm tended to be highly critical of Palestinians while presenting Israelis in more forgiving terms. Even when Palestinians were identified as displaced and occupied, there were not commensurate classifications made for Israelis. Neither textbooks nor teachers identified Israelis as explicitly responsible for displacement, and Israel's status as an occupying force tended to be framed within a broader framework of seeing Israelis as defenders of sovereignty and safety. This entailed privileging an understanding of Israeli-Palestinian relations that absolves Israelis of instigating violence or being aggressors while imbuing Palestinian behavior with a negative connotation. Offering an alternative would not entail ignoring or condoning violence. Ms. Herne offered one of the few examples of an alternative when she framed Palestinians as seeking liberation rather than engaging in terrorism. Characterizations are based on subjective decisions. Assigning roles to a population is not a neutral decision. Instead, it is predicated upon a certain perspective. Textbooks and teachers frequently privileged an interpretive lens that was more sympathetic to Israelis.

The frequent description of Palestinians as a group whose emotional range was defined by bitterness and rage reinforced associations with hostility and violence. Israelis were almost never

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

described according to their emotional states. However, when they were, it was in Ms. Herne's discourse when she described Israeli soldiers as "sad" for violence directed towards Palestinians. This fits into a broader framework that Segev (2002) describes as "shoot and cry" (p. xi). According to Segev, this is a means of describing Israelis that avoids criticism because Israelis appear remorseful rather than malicious. This is in contradistinction to portrayals of Palestinians as acting out of more intense emotions. Such characterizations of Palestinians as full of anger preclude alternative representations that acknowledge other features of their communal existence extending beyond violence and conflict.

Conclusion

The descriptions found in World History textbooks and World History teachers' instructional discourse constitute two of the primary sources of knowledge in social studies classrooms. They are sources of knowledge replete with subjective assessments that are often not revealed. This means that the characterizations of populations described in historical narratives merit deconstruction in order to unpack these subjectivities. This study examined five World History textbooks and the discourse of two social studies teachers in order to ascertain an understanding of the way they represented Israelis and Palestinians to students. These two populations were consistently defined by their relationship to one another in the context of conflict. Moreover, the roles assigned were antithetical to one another with Israelis often appearing as a population defending itself from Palestinian terrorism and hostility. Such portrayals confine any understanding of these populations to their involvement in an ongoing conflict. This renders these textbooks and teachers' discourses devoid of substantive content that would expose students to other social or cultural aspects of Israeli and Palestinian identity.

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

References

Adwan, S.; Bar-On, D., & Naveh, E. (2012). *Side by side: Parallel histories of Israel-Palestine.* New York, NY: Peace Research Institute in the Middle East.

Al-Haj, M. (2005). National ethos, multicultural education, and the new history textbooks in Israel. *Curriculum Inquiry 35*(1). 47-71.

Almog, O. (2000). *The sabra: The creation of the new Jew.* Berkley, CA: University of California Press.

Alridge, D.P. (2006). The limits of master narratives in history textbooks: An analysis of representations of Martin Luther King, Jr. *Teachers College Record 108*(4). 662-686.

Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined communities*. New York, NY: Verso.

Anderson, C.B. (2012). Misplaced multiculturalism. Representations of American Indians in U.S. history academic content standards. *Curriculum Inquiry, 42*(4). 497-509.

Apple, M.W. (1996). Power, meaning and identity: Critical sociology of education in the United States. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 17*(2). 125-144.

Apple, M.W. (2004). *Ideology and curriculum* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Ashley, J.S., & Jarratt-Ziemski, K. (1999). Superficiality and bias: The (mis)treatment of Native Americans in U.S. government textbooks. *American Indian Quarterly, 23*(3/4), 49-62.

Banks, J. (1993a). Multicultural education: Development, dimensions, and challenges. *Phi Delta Kappan, 75*(1), 22-28.

Banks, J. (1993b). The canon debate, knowledge construction, and multicultural education. *Educational Researcher, 22*(5), 4-14.

Banks, J.A. (1995). Multicultural education and curriculum transformation. *The Journal of Negro Education 64*(4). 390-400.

Bishara, A. (1998/2008). Arab citizens of Palestine: Little to celebrate. In I. Rabinovich and J. Reinharz (Eds.), *Israel in the Middle East: Documents and readings on society, politics, and foreign relations, pre-1948 to the present* (pp. 467-468). Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press.

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

Blommaert, J., & Bulcaen, C. (2000). Critical discourse analysis. *Annual Review of Anthropology 29*, 447-466.

Bourdieu, P. (1985). The social space and the genesis of groups. *Theory and Society, 14(6).* 723-744.

Brown, C.G. (2005). *Postmodernism for historians.* New York, NY: Pearson Longman.

Brown, C.G. (2005). *Postmodernism for historians.* New York, NY: Pearson Longman.

Brown, N.J. (2006). Contesting national identity in Palestinian education. In R.I. Rotberg (Ed.), *Israeli and Palestinian narratives of conflict: History's double helix* (pp. 225-243). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Brown, A.L. & Brown, K.D. (2010). Strange fruit indeed: Interrogating contemporary textbook representations of racial violence toward African Americans. *Teachers College Record 112*(1). 31-67.

Cohen, E.H. (2013). *Identity and pedagogy. Shoah education in Israeli state schools*. Brighton, MA: Academic Studies Press.

Colombo, M. & Senatore, A. (2005). The discursive construction of community identity. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 15*, 48-62.

de Cillia, R., Reisigl, M. & Wodak, R. (1999). The discursive construction of national identities. *Discourse Society 10*(2). 149-173.

Foucault, M. (1993). Excerpts from: The history of sexuality: Volume I: An introduction. In J. Natoli & L. Hutcheon (Eds.), *A postmodern reader* (pp. 333-341), Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Gellner, E. (1981). Nationalism*. Theory and Society, 10*(6), 753-776.

Gelvin, J.L. (2007). *The Israel-Palestinian conflict* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Giroux, H.A. (1995). National identity and the politics of multiculturalism. *College Literature, 22*(2), 42-57.

Giroux, H.A. (2011). *On critical pedagogy*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Hall, S. (1997). The work of representation. In S. Hall (Ed.), *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices* (pp. 15-69). London, UK: Sage Publications Ltd.

Hutcheon, L. (1993). Beginning to theorize postmodernism. In J. Natoli & L. Hutcheon (Eds.), *A postmodern reader* (pp. 243-272), Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Hutchins, R.D. (2016). *Nationalism and history: Curricula and textbooks in the United States and France*. New York: NY: Routledge.

Journell, W. (2011). Social studies, citizen education, and the search for an American identity: An argument against a unifying narrative. *Journal of Thought, 46*(3-4), 5-24.

Kaomea, J. (2000). A curriculum of Aloha? Colonialism and tourism in Hawaii's elementary textbooks. *Curriculum Inquiry, 30*(3), 319-344.

Khalidi, R. (1997). *Palestinian identity: The construction of a modern national consciousness.* New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Kimmerling, B (2001). *The invention and decline of Israeliness: State, society, and the military*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Lee, E., Menkart, D. & Okazawa-Rey, M. (2006). *Beyond heroes and holidays: A practical guide for K-12 anti-racist, multicultural education and staff development.* Washington, D.C.: Teaching for Change.

Lerner, M. (2012). *Embracing Israel/Palestine: A strategy to heal and transform the Middle East.* Berkeley, CA: Tikkun Books.

Loewen, J.W. (1995). *Lies my teacher told me*. New York, NY: A Touchstone Book.

Lyotard, J.F. (2002*). The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Marino, M.P. (2011). High school world history textbooks: An analysis of content focus and chronological approaches. *The History Teacher, 44*(3), 421-446.

Massad, J.A. (2006). *The persistence of the Palestinian question: Essays on Zionism and the Palestinians*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Nasser, R. (2011). *Recovered histories and contested identities: Jordan, Israel, and Palestine.* Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books.

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

Nasser, R., & Nasser, I. (2008). Textbooks as a vehicle for segregation and domination: State efforts to shape Palestinian Israelis' identities as citizens. *Journal of Curriculum Studies 40*(5). 627-650.

Pappe, I. (2004). *A history of modern Palestine: One land, two peoples.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Pappe, I. (2011). *The forgotten Palestinians: A history of the Palestinians in Israel.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Pianko, N. (2010). *Zionism and the roads not taken: Rawidowicz, Kaplan, Kohn*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Peleg, I. & Waxman, D. (2011). *Israel's Palestinians: The conflict within.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Rabinovich, I. (2008). From "Israeli Arabs" to "Israel's Palestinian Citizens." In I. Rabinovich and J. Reinharz (Eds.), *Israel in the Middle East: Documents and readings on society, politics, and foreign relations, pre-1948 to the present* (pp. 183-187). Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press.

Roberts, J. (2013). *Contested land, contested memory: Israel's Jews and Arabs and the ghosts of catastrophe.* Toronto, ON: Dundurn.

Rosenthal, D. (2003). *The Israelis: Ordinary people in an extraordinary land.* New York, NY: Free Press.

Salvucci, L.K. (1991). Mexico, Mexicans and Mexican Americans in secondary-school United States history textbooks. *The History Teacher, 24*(2), 203-222.

Segev, T. (2002). Forward. In R. Carey and J. Shainin (Eds.), *The other Israel: Voices of refusal and dissent* (pp. vii-xiii). New York, NY: The New Press.

Seixas, P. (2009). National history and beyond. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 41*(6), 719-722.

van Dijk, T.A. (1993). Principles of critical discourse analysis. *Discourse & Society, 4*(2), 249-283.

van Dijk, T.A. (1995). Aims of critical discourse analysis. *Japanese Discourse*, 1, 17-27.

van Leeuwen, T. (2008). *Discourse and practice: New tools for critical analysis.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com

VanSledright, B. (2008). Nation-state, historical knowledge, and school history education. *Review of Research in Education, 32*, 109-146.

About the Author: Daniel Osborn, Ed.D. is a graduate of Boston University School of Education. He is an instructor at Dean College and a program associate at *Facing History and Ourselves*.

Corresponding author: Dan.osborn411@gmail.com