

Legacy of Peacebuilding: TEAM TEACHING A TWO SIDED STORY

Project Narrative

This pedagogic documentary is being produced through a Palestinian Israeli teaching team and is conceived to attract four main audiences and has three main goals. As in the real life meetings and workshops across the divide,, the spoken common language of the two Professors is English, though at times one or the other will explain the meaning of certain words or phrases in Arabic or Hebrew. The documentary will have subtitles with both languages so as to have as far a reach as possible and it can be subtitled for any other linguistic audience in the future as well. In regards to the audiences: 1] the first is high school and university students in Israel and Palestine. 2] The second is the youth in general in both formal and informal settings in the wider Middle East. 3] The third audience is the larger Arab and Jewish diasporas, whose leaders tend to be often more extreme than the residents of the two nations. 4] The fourth particular audience is Facebook itself to whom the film will act as a trigger for a proposal and professionally interactive filmed and featuring a visual display of what can be done on their platform in the name of peace education and shedding of traditional stereotypes held about those who might be considered hostile by interacting with one another. To the best of our knowledge, from Sam Keen's "Faces of the Enemy" film/book/exercises, relating to the USSR/USA in the Cold War, no such venture has been developed.

Furthermore, Facebook provides a medium which enables the obstacles separating these student groups from a joint learning experience to be circumvented through the use of widely used and globally available social media technology. At this time without any deliberate attempt to reach a wider audience, a Google result of the names Kaufman-Hassassian [hereafter Edy and Manuel] produces a search result of 1,620 items. Upgrading their cooperation techniques with the film and sharing it to wider audiences will most probably have a multiplying effect on any search engine.

As above mentioned, ,the documentary has three concentric main goals: 1] The overarching purpose is the advancement of a shared vision of peace and justice among the youth throughout the Middle East, emphasizing the power of nonviolent means. 2] The second goal of the film is to provide illustrations of the classroom and direct them to explore through the webpage of [CIDCM \(University of Maryland\)](#), [M.A. Program of Peace and Conflict Management \[Haifa University\]](#) and [M.A. Peace Studies Program at Bethlehem Bible College](#) website is to encourage passive viewers and listeners to experiment together with their local peers and inner circle of friends by means of attractive exercises of nonviolent communication, active listening , and prejudice reduction. 3] With these two elements - the three peace/conflict transformation websites and the film, the third goal is to secure a larger source of funding or direct partnership with the United States Institute of Peace Academy and/or The Facebook Foundation in order for the team to invite viewers to participate in online (in real time or through visual vodcasts and audio podcasts) in the June/July 2019 Interactive course of Profs. Hassassian and Kaufman. The marketing of the course will be primarily to students in Palestine, Israel, and then surrounding Middle Eastern countries for no cost. A potential additional target group to be explored is the participation online and subsequent training of faculty across the divide throughout the Middle East, encouraging the teaching of conflict resolution and peace education that these two teacher developed in order for it to replicated in future team taught courses with one professor for each side of a particular conflict being studied. At least conflict reduction and de-escalation can be achieved generically through an understanding of the "Other" through the power of reverse role playing [putting yourself in the shoes of the Other],, personalized relations, mutual trust and empathy, a shared vision and consensus building .

The nominees are the principal focus of the documentary and the two professors who teach the course that will be presented to Facebook. Profs. Kaufman and Hassassian have developed and kept up to date year by year their curriculum revolving around team teaching peace education in the midst of a protracted conflict. Both of the

nominees have distinguished records of commitment to repeatedly going the extra mile in overcoming the various aspects of society that divide one side from another, be it: religious, ethnic, cultural, or any other sphere which has the potential to generate conflict within a society or between two distinct societies in conflict. A comprehensive understanding of their role in their respective societies can be followed through their curricula attached herewith as well as in the text of the nomination and letters of reference. In order to underline that both colleagues have preserved in their friendship and collaborative work for more than a quarter of a century, let us point out one example of their open mindedness. Manuel was the first Palestinian academic in history to accept a post as a Visiting Research Fellow to an Israeli University (at The Truman Institute of Peace from the The Hebrew University directed by Edy); and on the other hand he later served as the chair of the Palestinian Council of Higher Education. Edy has dedicated most of his academic life to advance Arab/Jewish concrete cooperation, and has co-authored, co-facilitated or team taught with eight Palestinian/Arab colleagues (among them a majority of Muslim as well as Christian, Druze and Baha'i); and on the other hand, he was the President of The National Union of Israeli Students (NUIS) and volunteered for many years to be the honorary secretary of Israeli Council for Jews in Arab countries. In better days for the Middle East, both have actively participated in several regional NGOs such as The Middle East Citizens Assembly (MECA) and Middle East Virtual Community of Academics and Intellectuals (MEVIC).

It is important to point out that the nominator Prof. Sahar Mohamed Khamis has not only initiated the submission but has volunteered both her theoretical knowhow and professional experience in the field. As a professor of Communication at UMD in the service of this project she will join both Edy and Manuel bringing her experience with testing the potential of online learning and expertise in long-distance communications maximizing the use of IT. Such an approach is vital in a region where individuals as such can participate in projects, overcoming many tangible and intangible obstacles.

Thus far the overall project has progressed on a number of levels which will now be listed and explained. 1] First, Jonny Simpson a young, professional documentary filmmaker -former student, teaching and research assistant to both professors - has agreed to direct, write, and edit the film for the purpose of preserving the professor's collective and joint legacies. 2] Secondly, the University of Maryland has agreed to a very modest financial assistance in kind for the film's production [\$3,000). 3] Thirdly, now the Program Coordinator for Peace Education Innovation at the [University of Maryland's Center for International Development and Conflict Management](#) together with the IT team of the College of Arts and Humanities has been working on widening and modernizing the scope of the course and met together with the mentioned three professors with the professional Middle East staff of the *U.S. Institute of Peace*, including Vice President Jeff Helsing who has encouraged our team to go ahead as well as explore how to best add the online version of the course to the [Institute's Registration Course](#) list. 4] Fourth, a partnership with the interactive online education system [Soliya](#) has been established by Prof. Khamis for this upcoming Summer 2018 in which students in the Middle East, particularly Israel and Palestine, can audit the course for free. 5] With this project approved by the Goldberg Prize Selection Committee, the team at CIDCM is working on a comprehensive proposal of developing the course directly on Facebook utilizing the most recent technologies and available equipment to foster relationships between Jewish, Arab and Muslim residents of the Middle East through social media. The team working on the project is keen on taking advantage of the global prevalence of [Facebook Live](#) to expand the course in the most interactive online learning experience to date. 6] Last but not least, over a quarter of a century of team teaching, the professors as a team have collected a large number of media op-eds, online and newspaper articles about them, academic publications, radio programs and interviews, a one hour long cable TV interview in 1997, and five YouTube segments about their course.

The team teaching relationship between these two professors was born and developed in Israel/Palestine and has faced not a few challenges over the years from the very time they became acquainted, during the Second Intifada, and at present, with extremely antagonistic societal tensions and governmental trends. It is testament to the commitment towards peace education displayed by these two individuals that the course has endured for so many years despite setback after setback in the overall peace process. They have been equipping "Future Influentials" on both sides of the conflict, as well as, American and international students with the skills to work successfully towards the purpose of peace in the future. The number of former students who have gone on to work in government or as activists or NGO employees is abundant. Further, the online version of the course being offered to students in the Middle East for no cost has the potential to overcome the barriers which exist in society that prohibit or extremely limits students from such different countries and cultures to engage in a collective learning experience together with professors who are equipped with the delicate skills needed to facilitate a positive learning environment for the students. Additionally, the project has now involved a professional documentarian with both the skills and dedication to make a film that will accomplish the project's first phase goals and a commitment to further pursue the project and to the content's enduring efficacy and the importance of the historical legacy and real life progress achieved by the subjects of the film and the practitioners of the course being offered online and being exhibit -if so the individual participant wishes- directly in the documentary.

A sustained experiment in Israeli/Palestinian peace education requires a new face and wider outreach. Edy is returning to live the rest of his life teaching in Israel/Palestine and only two months a year in the USA [one month with Manuel in Summer and one month with a Sufi Muslim in the Winter term]. Manuel is ending his diplomatic mission and headed back to the Middle East and plans to spend a smaller part of the year also in the USA, so both professors planning to continue team teaching at UMD and living together in the Greater Washington DC area. Added to their personal face-to-face mission with students, most of their time is planned to universalize the idea of team-teaching our own conflicts (please read the 2018 article that summarizes best their learning experience in the attached materials) and focus on attitudinal change of their own Palestinian and Israeli youth.

Their long-term experiment in team teaching the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and the search for common ground has given us the confidence that the Goldberg Prize will have a multiplying effect. The prize will enable to prepare the modest but unique film. The different media with free access will add to the UMD presencial and online current course the ability to connect to the young in the Middle East across borders and controls through a flexible use of the social media. A rather small investment will make sure that years of writing, teaching and living together each Summer will allow the Palestinian and Israeli professor to fulfill a long-time dream- a meaningful contribution to the Middle Eastern youth that "yes, we can" reach peace, perhaps through a long bottom-up process, when empowered to move on towards a future of coexistence. Both main stream in their own societies, it will prove that tired of tensions and suffering as said in one of the op-eds by Prof. Hassassian: "we are doomed to LIVE together", to which Prof. Kaufman added in the classroom: "and with the Iranian nuclear threat to Israel-allegedly in solidarity with the Palestinian people- peace among us will prevent the fear of being doomed to DIE together". The professors are in good shape, physically and mentally. But as time is passing, getting selected can be a meaningful contribution not necessarily for the services rendered for the advancement of peace, but rather a big step towards a universalization of peace education in the most war stricken region.