

# DOC LANDS

DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL | 5-11 MAY



# BOYCOTT



JUST VISION PRESENTS BOYCOTT IN ASSOCIATION WITH NAKED EDGE FILMS BERTHA DOC SOCIETY CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY AMBER FARIES EDITORIAL PHOTOGRAPHER KELLY WEST MUSIC BY NAINITA DESAI COSTUME DESIGNER FLAVIA DE SOUZA ERIC DANIEL METZGAR GRAPHIC DESIGNER GARRY WALLER  
ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS EMMA ALPERT ANA HEEREN HAGGAI MATAR CO-PRODUCERS TIFFANY FISHER LOVE ASSOCIATE EDITOR MARY KERR EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS SUSAN ADELMAN MATTHEW AND BENNETT LINDENBAUM ELAINE REUBEN  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ABEIGAIL E. DISNEY BARBARA DOBKIN MAXYNE FRANKLIN ELEANOR FRIEDMAN DEBORAH HEGARTY MICHELLE KLUGSBRUN AND KEN GROSSINGER JOAN R. PLATT  
PRODUCED BY SUHAD BABA DANIEL J. CHALFEN JULIA BACHA DIRECTED BY JULIA BACHA

[www.theboycottfilm.com](http://www.theboycottfilm.com)

**CURRICULUM GUIDE**  
GRADES: 9-12

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Dear Educators,

Thank you for attending the California Film Institute's DocLands screening of *Boycott*. Our DocLands Education screenings focus on increasingly relevant issues of global empathy and active citizenship, and we believe this film will be a powerful and engaging text to use in your classroom.

We know that this year is likely one of the most challenging of your professional career, and we hope that this film and study guide can support the incredible work you're already doing. These curricular materials are designed to get students to engage deeply with film by the common-core aligned skills of developing an evidence-based interpretation of a text.

The discussion questions on the following page offer a variety of options for fostering small-group or whole-class dialogue. If your students are already familiar with a process of writing evidence-based interpretive essays, consider using one of the suggested essay prompts for a short writing piece. Additionally, individual handouts for before, during, and after viewing are provided as stand-alone activities to be used individually or in sequence.

Thank you so much for your tireless work!

Sincerely,

The CFI Education Team



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the central issues addressed in this documentary? What has changed between the start and the end?
2. What are some surprising facts you learned from this film? How do these facts shape your understanding of the central issue of the film?
3. Does this documentary feel objective and/or balanced in its presentation of the issues? Why or why not?
4. What did you see in this film that reminds you of other stories from your life or other stories you know?
5. Were there any perspectives relevant to the central issues of the documentary that were not included? How would those voices have changed the film?
6. Consider other films you've seen. What makes this film unique or important? What are some connections between this film and other films?
7. What were some of the reasons people in the film had for supporting Israel? What were some of the reasons people had for supporting the BDS movement?
8. How did lobbyists and the media inform public opinion and government policy around the BDS movement?
9. What other issues could be impacted by actions similar to those seen in the film? How could you initiate such actions in your own community?

## INTERPRETIVE ESSAY PROMPTS

1. What does this film show about how average Americans can influence international affairs?
2. How did the BDS movement become an issue relevant to Americans and their Constitutional rights?
3. How did the separate branches of the Federal Government exert different influences on legislation related to the BDS movement?

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### The Ask an Israeli/Ask a Palestinian Project

<https://www.youtube.com/c/CoreyGilShusterAskProject>

A YouTube series by creator Corey Gil-Shuster of on-the-street interviews asking Palestinians and Israelis to share their perspectives and answer viewer questions on the Israel/Palestine conflict.

### The Israel-Palestine Conflict: A Brief, Simple History

<https://youtu.be/iRYZjOuUnIU>

A 10-minute Vox-produced documentary.

### How the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Began | History

<https://youtu.be/Bno1m1zhIWs>

A 7-minute History Channel documentary.

### Israel-Gaza violence: The Conflict Explained

<https://www.bbc.com/news/newsbeat-44124396>

A BBC article explaining the origins of the Israel-Palestine conflict.

## STANDARDS

### Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.8

Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

### History-Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools

12.3.2. Explain how civil society makes it possible for people, individually or in association with others, to bring their influence to bear on government in ways other than voting and elections.

12.7.6. Compare the processes of lawmaking at each of the three levels of government, including the role of lobbying and the media.

## ABOUT CFI

The nonprofit California Film Institute celebrates and promotes film as art and education through year-round programming at the independent Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, presentation of the acclaimed Mill Valley Film Festival and DocLands Documentary Film Festival, as well as cultivation of the next generation of filmmakers and audiences through CFI Education programs.

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## ABOUT THE FILM

When a news publisher in Arkansas, an attorney in Arizona, and a speech therapist in Texas are told they must choose between their jobs and their political beliefs, they launch legal battles that expose an attack on freedom of speech across 33 states in America.

*Boycott* traces the impact of state legislation designed to penalize individuals and companies that choose to boycott Israel due to its human rights record. A legal thriller with “accidental plaintiffs” at the center of the story, *Boycott* is a bracing look at the far-reaching implications of anti-boycott legislation and an inspiring tale of everyday Americans standing up to protect our rights in an age of shifting politics and threats to freedom of speech.

## ABOUT THE DIRECTOR: JULIA BACHA



Julia Bacha is a Peabody award-winning filmmaker and the Creative Director at Just Vision. She started her filmmaking career in Cairo, where she wrote and edited *Control Room* (Sundance, 2004), for which she was nominated to the Writer's Guild of America Award. Subsequently, she directed *Encounter Point* (Tribeca, 2006), *Budrus* (Berlinale, 2009), *My Neighbourhood* (Tribeca, 2012), and *Naila and the Uprising* (IDFA 2017). Julia's films have been broadcast on PBS, HBO, CBC in Canada, among others. In addition to over thirty film festival awards, Julia is the recipient of the 2011 Ridenhour Film Prize, the 2012 Doc Society Creative Impact Award, a 2015 Guggenheim Fellowship, the 2017 Columbia University

Medal of Excellence, and the 2019 Chicken & Egg Award. Originally from Brazil, Julia is a Documentary Branch Member of AMPAS and has given two TED talks: "Pay Attention to Nonviolence" and "How Women Wage Conflict Without Violence."

## KEY VOCABULARY

**boycott:** abstaining from financial or commercial support of a group, company or other entity as a protest

**divestment:** selling off assets or parts of a company or organization

**sanction:** an imposed penalty, fine, or punishment for disobeying a rule

**legislation:** government-enacted laws, such as those enacted by congress

## THE ISRAEL/PALESTINE CONFLICT

The Israel/Palestine conflict is an ongoing military and human rights conflict in the Middle East with a long history over competing Arab and Jewish claims to the same land. When the Israeli state was created in 1948, it included the geographic area of Palestine, which led to war and the resettlement of much of the Palestinian Arab population. Another war started in 1967, sparking the ongoing modern conflict which sees Israeli forces continuing to occupy the West Bank and other territories claimed by Palestinians.

The United States has generally maintained an official foreign policy of allyship with Israel and in 2016 signed an agreement to provide Israel with \$3.3 billion in military financing. American policy has also often advocated for a "two-state solution," a framework supported by the Biden Administration that would establish and recognize an independent State of Palestine alongside the State of Israel in contested areas.

Supporters of Palestine condemn human rights abuses committed against Palestinians living under Israeli military occupation. At the same time, supporters of Israel decry violence committed by Hamas, a US-designated terrorist organization, that fights for the liberation of Palestine. The conflict remains unresolved.

### Questions to Consider:

1. Why would a conflict between Israelis and Palestinians be of significance to the United States?
2. What factors should influence American involvement and policy towards Israel and Palestine?

# BEFORE VIEWING: ANTICIPATION GUIDE

## Directions:

The film you are about to watch explores various grassroots protests and legislative actions taken in response to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Respond to this anticipation guide to consider some of the issues that will be relevant to this film.



For each statement, decide whether you Agree or Disagree, then write a one or two sentence explanation for your opinion.

STATEMENT	AGREE/DISAGREE?	EXPLANATION
Boycotting, or refusing to purchase, a particular product or organization is an effective form of protest.		
The government should be able to restrict companies from boycotting other groups because of a disagreement in political beliefs.		
Newspapers have a responsibility to remain neutral on all issues and should therefore not accept advertising money from organizations with political agendas.		
It is acceptable for elected politicians to let their religious beliefs guide their policy-making decisions.		

# DURING VIEWING: BOYCOTT NOTECATCHER




**Directions:**

As you watch the film, use this notecatcher to keep track of these key individuals connected to the BDS movement.

Individual	Profession	What is their stance on BDS?	How did they get involved with the BDS movement? Were they affected in some way?	What actions did they take? What was the result of their actions?
 <p>Alan Leveritt</p>				
 <p>Bahya Amawi</p>				



# DURING VIEWING: BOYCOTT NOTECATCHER

Individual	Profession	What is their stance on BDS?	How did they get involved with the BDS movement? Were they affected in some way?	What actions did they take? What was the result of their actions?
 <b>Bart Hester</b>				
 <b>Mikkel Jordahl</b>				
 <b>Itamar Benzaquen</b>				

# AFTER VIEWING: RESPONSE QUESTIONS

## Directions:

Respond to each question, referring to specific scenes, events, and dialogue from the film as evidence for your interpretation.

1. Explain how the BDS movement became such an important issue for the different individuals interviewed in the film.

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2. What did this film reveal about how international relations and government policy can impact average Americans? What did it reveal about how Americans can have an impact?

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3. What was this film's overall argument? How did it present its argument?

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4. What connections did the film make between the BDS movement and African-American civil rights activism of the past and present?

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# AFTER VIEWING: FOUR C'S

## Directions:

Respond to each prompt in complete sentences, citing specific scenes, events, and dialogue from the film as evidence for your response.

### CONNECTIONS

What connections do you draw between the film and your own life or your other learning?

### CHALLENGE

What ideas, positions, or assumptions do you want to challenge or debate in the film?

### CONCEPTS

What key concepts or ideas do you think are important and worth holding on to from the film?

### CHANGES

What changes in attitudes, thinking, or action are suggested by the film, either for you or others?

Adapted from Harvard Project Zero's Think Routine Toolbox:

<http://www.pz.harvard.edu/resources/the-4-cs>

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY: ORAL HISTORY WITH A BOYCOTTER

### Directions:

The power of boycotts is that they enable ordinary people to participate in a mass political action. The BDS Movement is just one of many historic boycotts that have been used by protestors. Chances are, somebody you know has participated in a boycott, whether a large-scale, organized movement or an individual boycott based on a personal experience, value, or belief. For this activity, conduct an oral history with a family member, friend, or other member of your community who has participated in a boycott for political reasons.

### What is oral history?

Oral history is a practice of preserving historical accounts through direct interviews with people involved. Oral histories are an excellent form of primary source material to document history from actual participants. Oral histories are often preserved special collections in libraries and universities, and some radio programs, such as StoryCorps ([www.storycorps.org](http://www.storycorps.org)) broadcast oral histories to the general public. In some ways, oral histories are similar to podcasts, but are generally focused on specific historic events.

### Directions:

1. Find somebody you know who has participated in a boycott in some way.
2. Create a list of questions you want to ask them about the boycott: What they were protesting, why they opted to use a boycott, how long they participated in the boycott, etc.
3. Schedule a time to interview them.
4. Using a smartphone or other audio recording device, record your conversation. Use the scripted questions you prepared, but don't be afraid to deviate and ask additional probing questions.
5. If you are able to, use an audio program, like Audacity (<https://www.audacityteam.org/>), to edit your interview.
6. Share your oral history with your classmates and family!

