

CULTURAL STUDIES Colloquium

*Always free and open to the public. An interdisciplinary forum
for the presentation of new research on the important issues of our time.*

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
FALL 2019

PHD PROGRAM IN CULTURAL STUDIES

The doctoral program in Cultural Studies at George Mason University celebrates its 25th year with a yearlong colloquium on Middle Eastern issues during the fall semester and the Amazon takeover during the spring semester. The doctoral program was the first of its kind in the United States. It has since awarded more than 87 doctoral degrees to scholars who work in varied academic and applied fields and who have published their findings widely with scholarly and popular presses.

Core faculty members and affiliates from more than a dozen other departments at Mason work collaboratively to ensure that the research fostered in the program is genuinely interdisciplinary, even as students are rigorously trained in common theoretical traditions of cultural critique. Methods are drawn from a wide gamut, including Marxist models of culture and political economy; film, media, and new media studies; a Foucauldian approach to institutions of modernity; and critical studies of race, gender, and sexuality. The aim of the program is to encourage students to produce socially useful knowledge, whether of the past or present, that affords fresh insights into the current social-political conjuncture.



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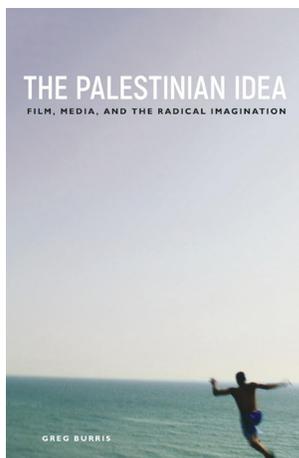
Palestine in Black and White

Greg Burris

Assistant Professor of Media Studies, American University of Beirut

November 7, 2019, 4:30–7 p.m.

Johnson Center, Meeting Room D



Today, United States-Israeli friendship, partnership, and cooperation are commonly celebrated across the U.S. political spectrum. In our troubled times, this issue remains one of the last with truly bipartisan support. But what about the other side of the coin? If United States-Israeli cooperation is seen as natural, what about solidarity between the oppressed populations in each country? What about the idea of Black-Palestinian solidarity? In this talk, drawn from his book, *The Palestinian Idea*, Greg Burris examines the history of Black-Palestinian relations through the lens of media and culture. Focusing on a number of recent instances in which links between these two communities have been fashioned through an array of media forms including YouTube videos, Twitter feeds, Facebook posts, spoken word poetry, hip-hop music, and television news spectacles, Burris argues that Black-Palestinian media activism presents an opportunity to critically examine and challenge our notions of race, identity, and solidarity itself.

Greg Burris is a film and cultural theorist whose work focuses on race, media, and emancipatory politics. His writings have appeared in such publications as *CineAction*, *Cinema Journal*, *The Electronic Intifada*, *Film Quarterly*, *The Guardian*, *Jadaliyya*, *Middle Eastern Studies*, *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*; and the anthologies *Futures of Black Radicalism* and *Global Raciality: Empire, PostColoniality, and Decoloniality*. *The Palestinian Idea: Film, Media, and the Radical Imagination* is his first book.

The Cultural Studies Colloquium is presented by George Mason University's Cultural Studies Program and brings scholars of diverse methodological, theoretical, and topical expertise to share new and cutting-edge interdisciplinary research. The Cultural Studies Program would like to acknowledge the Department of Communication, the Department of English, the Global Affairs Program, the Department of History and Art History, the Middle East and Islamic Studies Program, the Department of Philosophy, the Office of the Provost, the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and the Writing and Rhetoric Program for the funding and support that helped make this speaker series possible. For questions or more information, please contact colloquium coordinator Paul Smith at psmith5@gmu.edu or the Cultural Studies Office at cultural@gmu.edu.

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Naila and the Uprising

Documentary screening and discussion

with Julia Bacha

Johnson Center Cinema

November 12, 2019 at 4:30

When a nation-wide uprising breaks out in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, a young woman in Gaza must make a choice between love, family, and freedom. Undaunted, she embraces all three, joining a clandestine network of women in a movement that forces the world to recognize the Palestinian right to self-determination for the first time. *Naila and the uprising* chronicles the remarkable journey of Naila Ayesh and a fierce community of women at the frontlines, whose stories weave through the most vibrant, nonviolent mobilization in Palestinian history, the First Intifada in the late 1980s.



Using animation, intimate interviews, and exclusive archival footage, this film makes visible the courageous women activists who have remained on the margins of history. While most images of the First Intifada paint an incomplete picture of stone-throwing young men front and center, this film tells the story that history overlooked -- of an unbending, nonviolent women's movement at the head of Palestine's struggle for freedom.

While the First Intifada provides the backdrop for *Naila and the Uprising*, its lessons transcend that particular time and place. Through the experience of countless women engaged at all levels of society, we learn what is possible when women take the lead in struggles for rights and justice -- from a movement's inception to peace talks -- and what we lose when they are stripped of their roles.

We also witness the tremendous power of nonviolent organizing: women's committees, drawing on all the hallmarks of civil resistance, were able to mobilize hundreds of thousands through massive street rallies, mobile health clinics, underground schools and concerted boycott campaigns, sustaining the uprising while generating indigenous self-sufficiency. In *Naila and the Uprising* we see how women-led civil resistance can stir the masses, put pressure on power-holders, and affect real structural change.

The screening will be followed by a Q&A with filmmaker Julia Bacha and Amal Amireh, Associate Professor of English and Middle East Studies at George Mason University.

The Event is sponsored by Film and Video Studies, Film and Media Studies, Middle East and Islamic Studies, Ali Vural Ak Center, Global Affairs and Global Programs, Cultural Studies, DKA at GMU, University Life, and Women and Gender Studies. For more information please contact Cynthia Fuchs cfuchs@gmu.edu.

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Stone Men: The Palestinians *Who* Built Israel

Andrew Ross

Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis, New York University

November 21, 2019, 4:30 - 7PM

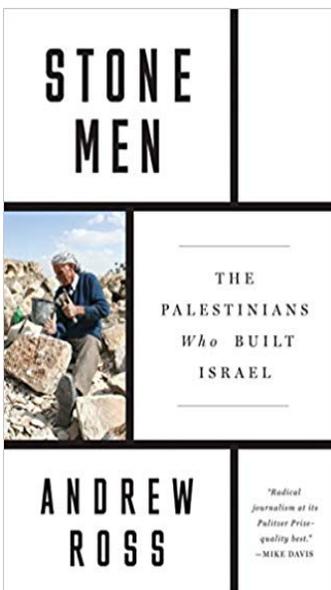
Johnson Center, Meeting Room D

The story of Palestine's stonemasons and the building of Israel.
"They demolish our houses while we build theirs."

This is how a Palestinian stonemason, in line at a checkpoint outside a Jerusalem suburb, described his life to Andrew Ross. Palestinian "stone men," using some of the best-quality limestone deposits in the world and drawing on generations of artisanal knowledge, have built almost every state in the Middle East except one of their own. Today the business of quarrying, cutting, fabricating, and dressing is the Occupied Territories' largest private employer and generator of revenue, and supplies the construction industry in Israel, along with other countries in the region and overseas.

Ross's engrossing, surprising, and gracefully written story of this fascinating ancient trade shows how the stones of historic Palestine, and Palestinian labor, have been used to build the state of Israel—in the process, constructing "facts on the ground"—even while the industry is central to Palestinians' own efforts to erect bulwarks against the Occupation. For more than a century, the hands that built Israel's houses, schools, offices, bridges, and even its separation barriers have been Palestinian. Looking at the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in a new light, this book, largely based on field interviews in the region, asks how this record of labor and achievement can and should be recognized.

Andrew Ross is Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis at New York University, and a social activist. A contributor to *The Nation*, *the Village Voice*, *New York Times*, and *Artforum*, he is the author of many books, including, most recently, *Bird on Fire: Lessons from the World's Least Sustainable City* and *Nice Work if You Can Get It: Life and Labor in Precarious Times*.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

FALL 2019 Cultural Studies Colloquium All events begin at 4:30 p.m.

DATE/LOCATION	SPEAKER	TITLE/DESCRIPTION
October 3, 2019 Johnson Center, Assembly Room D	Matt Karush, Professor of History; and Alex Monea, Assistant Professor of English and Cultural Studies, George Mason University	A workshop on the dos and don'ts of writing and publishing one's work in academic journals.
October 24, 2019 Johnson Center, Assembly Room D	Paul Smith, Professor of Cultural Studies; Alison Landsberg, Professor of History and Cultural Studies; and Jessica Scarlata, Associate Professor of English, George Mason University	A workshop on how to prepare to enter the job market while finalizing the requirements of the degree.
October 31, 2019 Johnson Center, Assembly Room D	Student Organizing Committee Presentations Panel	Members of the Student Organizing Committee will present research on their chosen topics and participate in a Q&A.
November 7, 2019 Johnson Center, Assembly Room D	Greg Burris, Assistant Professor of Media Studies, American University of Beirut	<i>Palestine in Black and White</i>
November 21, 2019 Johnson Center, Assembly Room D	Andrew Ross, Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis, New York University	<i>Stone Men: The Palestinians Who Built Israel</i>
November 28, 2019	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
December 5, 2019 Johnson Center, Assembly Room G	Dissertation Proposals	Cultural Studies doctoral students will each give a 15-minute presentation to outline and discuss their proposed research on the dissertations they are about to embark upon.
*December 12, 2019 Johnson Center, Assembly Room G *f needed	Dissertation Proposals	Cultural Studies doctoral students will each give a 15-minute presentation to outline and discuss their proposed research on the dissertations they are about to embark upon.