KICKING ALL ODDS

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The Middle East conflicts between Palestine and Israel are long-term, ongoing and wide-ranging. *Kicking All Odds* is an observational documentary that explores women football players from Palestine – both Christian and Muslim girls – who play together and forge a team despite all the hardships they face.
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PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION

In our culture, Palestinian women work side by side with the men in the fields and factories. They fight together, demonstrate together. Sometimes she takes the place of the man because he is in jail or is in the mountains, hiding. This game...proved that Palestinian women can do everything – even football.

Rukayya Takrori

The conflicts between Palestine and Israel have been long-term, ongoing and wide-ranging in the Middle East; see Appendix B. Some lasting key areas of contention include mutual recognition, borders, security, water rights, control of Jerusalem, Israeli settlements, Palestinian freedom of movement, and legalities concerning refugees. The ongoing disputes affect all areas of Palestinians’ lives including lengthy travel times, limited access to transportation, restricted access to the sea and areas for recreation, limited water resources, poor living conditions, expansion of Israeli settlements and the Apartheid Wall. The violence resulting from the conflicts has prompted international actions, as well as other increased security and human rights concerns from within and between both sides, and internationally.

Football, known as soccer in the United States, is hugely popular among some people in the Middle East, but the game's development has been held back by a social conservatism that often prevents women from playing sports. Also, competitive sports in the Middle East remain a male dominated sphere, unlike the United States where Title IX provides women a legal claim to participate in sports. Palestinian women's football especially faces problems when it comes to practicing the game. The Israeli occupation restricts women's freedom of practicing, and the national women’s team had to travel outside the country to play a match. However, for some Palestinian women, their
challenge often starts with the effort needed to persuade their families to give them permission to play the sport they love.

*Kicking All Odds* is an observational documentary that explores the players of the first female football team that began in 2003 at Bethlehem University; most of the team’s members were also on the Palestinian national team. Samar Araj Mousa led the team’s formation as its manager and recruited Raed Alhurami to become the coach. The two then spent many hours convincing and persuading the less supportive families to allow their daughters to play and join the team. Both Christian and Muslim girls began playing together and, despite their different family backgrounds, they formed a cohesive unit. The team faced an early problem of only being allowed to practice and play against the local boys team on a hard, concrete Bethlehem University campus handball court. The sole Palestinian grass facility was not easily accessible due to Israeli restrictions on people's movements within Palestine along with the area’s weak infrastructure. Also, when the women's team wanted to play a match with another country, the team had to travel abroad; foreign teams rarely ventured into Palestine. Foreign players are required to pass through many Israeli checkpoints, often waiting in long lines with other Palestinians.

*Kicking All Odds* focuses on two female football players: Honey Thaljieh and Niveen Koleeb. The two Palestinian women share the same passion for the sport they love, but have different dreams and goals in life. The film documents them challenging the system in which they live. Honey was part of the start of the women's football movement and now manages Diyar, the women's championship football club based in Bethlehem. As the first Arab woman to study in a FIFA master program, Honey now travels around the world giving speeches to
empower other women and to free her beloved country from occupation. She has received international recognition for her work in the community, too. Niveen develops into an independent woman who pursues her dream to study at a university and become a professional football player. She also works to give back to the community by mentoring girls under the age of 16 who are learning football. The film shows the two women making achievements under difficult circumstances as they work for the freedom of their country in their own ways.

History of the Palestine-Israel Conflict

Historically, the conflict between Israel and Palestine is lengthy and complex. Stretching from the Balfour Declaration in 1917 to provide Jews with a home in Palestine to the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964 to the 1978 Camp David Accords and on to recent activities and events, a full Palestine-Israel conflict chronology is available in Appendix B. A collection of timeline maps showing the boundary changes through the years can be seen in Appendix C. Also a map outlining the West Bank area and the Apartheid Wall is included as Appendix D.

Purpose

Coming from Taiwan, a country in the midst of its own national and international predicament, I believe even a small group’s voice should be heard and respected. The topic for this film came to my attention when I first heard about an all women football team in Palestine, perhaps because it seemed geographically and socially out of place. The story of their
development is reminiscent of my father who coached disabled athletes; he believed everyone has certain abilities and sports can be used as a tool to build self-esteem and character growth. It is my passion to follow in his footsteps with my profession to build awareness for the underprivileged, minorities, and women’s issues worldwide, using film as a medium. My intention here is to illustrate the conditions of the Palestinians living in the middle of the conflict as well as showing the women that are trying to make a difference against all odds.

Characters in the Film

Honey M. I. Thaljieh – former captain of the National Women Football Team

Honey is 27 years old and grew up in a liberal Christian family in Bethlehem. Her parents encouraged her to play sports and are proud of her being the captain of the national team. Honey decided not to get married at a young age and devoted herself to women's football. Honey's outgoing and friendly personality won the respect of her teammates, and she is a striker and leader that listens and takes good care of her fellow teammates. She believes playing football shows that women can do anything and that sports show that “Palestinians can fight, and fight peacefully” in athletic competition.

Niveen Koleeb – player for the National Women Football Team

Niveen is also 27 years old and is from a Muslim family in Bethlehem. She grew up playing football with her brothers in the mountains. It was when she played with her brothers at an all men’s match that national team manager Samar Araj Mousa saw her talent and recruited her. She became an independent woman and also began teaching football to children in an orphanage.
Supporting Characters

Samar Araj Mousa – Athletic Director at Bethlehem University.

Samar is the Bethlehem University athletics director who organized Palestine’s first football team for women. She has forged a path against the odds since first pursuing her undergraduate work in sports via a physical education degree and graduating at the top of her class from the University of Jordan. In 1984, she began working at Bethlehem University – then got married and had children as she got more invested in teaching and remained loyal to her belief in women’s rights. The women’s football team grew out of her continuing work to prove women’s capability in sports and to show the persistence of Palestinian women in particular. Samar was also a member of the Palestine Olympic Committee in 2007.

Nadin Koleeb – Niveen’s younger sister

Nadin is 24 years old and, unlike Niveen, she does not cover her hair with a veil. She is a free spirit and became the first goalkeeper of the National Women Football Team. She has a very close relationship with her sister, Niveen. Together they support their mother after their father and oldest brother died from heart disease.

Zenib Salah – player for the Diyar club

Zenib is 17 years old and is the youngest player to join Honey’s club. She is the youngest daughter of her Muslim family. Her father wants her to cover her hair like all her sisters, but she refuses. She enjoys following westernized fashion and Hollywood movie stars.

Aya Khateeb – player for the Jericho club

Aya is 19 years old. Her father coached the Jericho team from 2008 to 2011 and her talent has been on display since she is the team’s best striker. Aya is very outgoing and she
always has a bright smile on her face. Honey wants to recruit her to Bethlehem to play for her club.

**Raed Alhurami – coach of the Diyar team**

Raed first saw Honey and a couple of other girls playing without a coach at Bethlehem University; he was impressed by their spirit and skills. He and the manager, Samar, established the first women's football team with only five players, and this team practiced and played their games against local young male teams. He believes that there are no limitations or boundaries in sports and it is good for the body and soul. Considering the religious point of view, Raed said, “Muslim or Christian, no one has said that it’s forbidden for women to play football.”

**Theme**

*Kicking All Odds* explores war-zone identity and displacement within an oppressed and occupied region. It examines the stereotype of women being passive and submissive to the dominant male culture, and it further demonstrates extraordinary accomplishments of women who set their minds on achieving their goals. The documentary shows people can do great things even under extreme circumstances and after going through traumatic events. The women use their life experiences to educate and to help their communities’ younger generation. The film further unites people of different religious and family backgrounds, and it promotes peace through a passionate sport that is universally understood.

**Style and Approach**

*Kicking All Odds* combines traditional direct cinema style with interviews. While the
present time of the story is shot in observational style, the character is often aware of the camera's presence. Interviews break the third wall and the characters address their issues directly to the camera which nurtures an intimacy with the viewers of the documentary; for a list of questions asked of the two main characters, Niveen and Honey, see Appendix E. Stylistically, in order to imply freedom, a wide-angle lens was chosen to shoot the footage outside the West Bank, a higher f-stop was used for greater depth of field to have the background fully in focus, and framing was used to show more space between the characters and their environment. In contrast, the filming in the West Bank uses shallow depth of field to suggest the physical boundary of the daily life under Israeli occupation and the Apartheid Wall. All of this combines to provide visual evidence of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank as people continue to live their lives while struggling through numerous violent conflicts and harsh conditions.

Treatment

A 2010 Olympic logo sign hangs on a huge pole while a huge crowd of people walks into a stadium. A "Welcome to Berlin" sign hangs on the main front gate. Children run around with big German flags pinned to their backs. Nearly everyone has their face painted with German flags and soccer balls. Honey walks into the Discovery Football event and is greeted by a female German reporter. They sit down in the bleachers and begin an interview. Honey tells of how she became the first female football player in Palestine; and now how they have 16 teams throughout the West Bank. She tells the reporter

It is especially hard to convince families to let their daughters join the sport, it is after all a dominant male culture....we used to practice on a hard concrete area, and we shared
it with the local men’s handball team. And because of this, we had a lot of injuries. Like me, I had my knee injuries last year and I stepped back to become the manager for my team, which is the team from Bethlehem. I enjoy managing a team a lot, football is a bridge for peace and it gives hope to young girls for their future, because in our culture, girls marry at a young age. At the same time we are using football to fight for our freedom, and fight for a free country, football can bring peace and instead of building walls, it can bring bridges. (Kicking All Odds, 2014)

The president of the Discovery Football event delivers a speech and welcomes all the teams from different countries to the event. Girls from different countries walk onto the stage to deliver speeches. Girls from Rwanda, India, and Cameroon share their experiences of playing football and how the sport has transformed them and their society. Then team members from Israel go on stage, introduce themselves, and point out how their team consists of girls not only from Israel but also from Jordan and Palestine. Audience members have headphones to listen to an English translation of the speakers. Honey sits in the audience and listens to the two girls representing the Israeli team. The two girls reveal that it was unfortunate that three girls from Palestine could not come with the team for this event, but they didn’t explain why. Taking off her headphones, Honey looks down and frowns. Then, girls from Kenya take the stage.

Honey and the team’s captain – a man from Israel – are surrounded by a mix of the team mates made up of Israelis, Jordanians, and Palestinians. The captain talks to Honey as everyone listens. He talks about how organized football has brought these young women together from their various countries. Honey asks about the three Palestinian girls that did not make the trip. The man explains the three girls from the town of Janine told him a week before the trip that they would not be going, but did not give him a reason why. One team member announces that she heard there was some pressure on the girls not to travel with the team to Germany. Honey responds that the situation is very bad in the West Bank and that the mixed
team gives a false impression that all sides work together harmoniously in their society. “You probably don’t know, but the reality in Palestine is very difficult, it is like a big prison. But it is open from up, we are surrounded by walls, so sometimes it’s difficult for Palestinians to meet Israelis at the same place.” She adds, “I know that people are not interfering with politics or government and we are all human that we believe in justice and we believe in peace, but at the same time it hurts, like when you are in Palestine, it’s your country and you can’t move freely. Like I live in Bethlehem and Jerusalem is 10, 15 kilometers and I can’t go to Jerusalem because of the wall and the checkpoints.” The Israeli captain quickly responds that what Honey said are very strong words and he doesn’t want his group involved in any politics. Honey replies it is important to accurately depict what is going on in the Palestinian territory. The man explains that the group is only focused on building relationships among the girls and they all get along very well no matter where they are from or what they believe. Honey replies “Yes, of course, because football is a language that everybody understands.”

Honey is riding in a train and looks out the window. From the train’s speaker comes an announcement about the next stop in Germany as it slowly pulls into the station. Honey walks by the East Side Gallery, which was created from the remains of the Berlin Wall, carefully viewing the art work. While facing the camera, she talks about how the wall in front of her is not comparable to the wall back home in Palestine. She then knocks on the wall and says her comparison with the Apartheid Wall (the Israeli wall separating Palestinians in the West Bank from Jewish settlements) is not only about the height but also the thickness of the materials. She measures the thickness of the wall with her arms and explains that the wall in Palestine is much wider than this. As she walks by a big Star of David on the wall, “History repeats itself,”
she says before continuing her walk.

A girl wearing a veil steps out of a car as her Israeli-Arab friends try to take her to Jerusalem through the checkpoints. An Israeli soldier at the checkpoint asks for everyone’s identification. The girl says she forgot to bring her wallet. The soldier asks her to exit the car, and asks her and everyone in the car to walk into a small room used to investigate people without identification. The image goes dark as the camera continues to record while being stowed inside the director’s pocket. The audio contains the soldier’s conversation inside the room when he asks for the girl’s name and where she is from. The girl replies her name is Niveen, she is from Natur, Israel. “Natur? No, you are not from Natur, tell me where you are really from!” the soldier replies with anger. He takes out a pair of handcuffs, making clicking sounds of opening and closing one of the cuffs, as he threaten to put her in jail if she does not tell the truth. The audio continues as Niveen finally gives in and introduces herself as a national team’s football player from Bethlehem. She tells the soldier she means no harm and all she wants is to celebrate the New Year with her Arab-Israeli friends from Jerusalem.

Niveen fixes herself in front of the mirror; her eyes are focusing on the pins that she carefully puts between the hijab. She then applies black eye shadows around her green eyes. She walks into the street of Bethlehem, Palestine; there is trash and debris everywhere. She waits at a rusted and decrepit bus stop, gazing into the distance and seeing her home town from above. With the sounds of one of the daily prayers in the background, images are seen of the endless and tall barriers that separate Israel and Palestine, some with graffiti that expresses the Palestinians’ state of mind; the art includes Banksy’s graffiti works of a girl’s feet off the ground as she is held aloft by several balloons she’s holding, a ladder going to the top of the
wall, and a big hole on the wall which shows a sandy beach and palm trees on the other side.

Niveen walks beside the tall wall, passes graffiti that extends as part of the wall that leads off into what looks like an infinite distance. She puts her hands on the wall and tries to peek through a crack in the wall. Two white female tourists walk by and Niveen asks them in English to help her climb to the other side of the wall. The tourists look confused but one of the women reaches her hands out as if she is going to let Niveen put her feet on her palms. Niveen smiles and tells them she is just joking with them. They laugh at her dark sense of humor and walk away. Niveen chuckles and walks on.

Honey arrives at the border between the West Bank and Jordan; her parents embrace her and give her kisses. They have joyful tears in their eyes as if they have not seen her for ages. The family travels in the dark at night from a modern highway with Hebrew road signs to uneven roads that hardly have any light fixtures. Honey and her mom sit in the backseat and they hold their hands tight. The car stops at a checkpoint where Israeli soldiers demand Honey’s father get out of the car and open his trunk. He quickly follows the order and the soldiers order their car to keep going. As the car and its occupants nears Bethlehem, there is more light appearing on the street. Neon angels and stars line a hilly street in Bethlehem. A Christmas song can be heard on the street. The car drives into a very narrow street and arrives at a little corner shop. Honey’s brothers and sister open the door to give Honey hugs and kisses. Together they walk into their home.

An interview with Honey is accompanied by childhood photos and home videos. She talks about her Christian family and how her father opened a small grocery store on the corner of the Church of the Nativity. She introduces each of her family members and explains how the
family manages to live in a small house. She talks about her older sister who got married and now lives in Jerusalem, and how it is very difficult for the family to visit her. She talks about her worries about the future for her family to live under the Israeli occupation. She wants to be able to support her family through her football dream. She describes when she played football with her two brothers on the street and people would tell her she should not play a man’s sports. Honey enters the Nativity church and she sings with the choir as a ceremony at the church begins.

Niveen and her mother walk up a hill overlooking Bethlehem. On the way up the hill, Niveen’s two little nieces run around picking up branches. They talk about the events during Intifada where all the men of their family were taken away. They describe how a tank destroyed half of their house, and how they ran up the hill where they are standing to avoid the shooting. They make a fire, brew tea, and sit down to gaze over the city of Bethlehem.

An interview with Niveen allows her to talk about what happened during the Intifada when Israeli soldiers came to their house and took away her brothers and father. She recalls vividly when her mother tried to go after the soldiers begging them to let go of her family members; she was tied to a tree near her house with her veil. She mentions how her father died after heart surgery, and how her oldest brother died a year later of a heart attack. Black and white photos of the two family members hang on the living room wall. Niveen’s mother prays facing the window of her room while the daily public prayer echoes in the background.

Honey drives her family car around the city of Bethlehem; showing the ongoing development of the Apartheid Wall. She meets a farmer along the way who talks to her about some new wall construction underway down the hill. The man complains that there is nothing
he can do about it, even a powerful country cannot stop Israel from building more walls on their homeland, and only Allah can do something about it. Honey continues driving and she encounters a big construction truck paving the sandy road. Addressing the camera, she says when the director returns in 2013, this area will have walls blocking the view. She stops at the only remaining house in front of a busy highway to Jerusalem. The tall wall has taken away the front yard and blocks the home’s front door. There is a small Palestinian flag hanging on the roof. “All roads lead to Jerusalem, and that is why the Israeli’s are blocking all the roads. It is a tragedy for this house,” she says. Honey walks along the wall as the sun sets behind her silhouette.

As Niveen dusts off her father’s photograph that hangs on the wall, she describes how covering up her hair was her own decision and not something her father asked her to do. She then talks about her first marriage when she was 17. “The man didn’t want me to continue my education, not to even mention playing football….It was a very difficult for me, because I’ve always wanted to go to a university, and I didn’t want to give up on a sport that I love.” Niveen looks up at the black and white photo of her father. “I used to run home and cry to my parents often, I was not happy being married with that man, I was trapped and going nowhere.” Niveen puts on her football shoes and her national team jersey. “I’m glad it is all over now, I divorced him a year after.”

Niveen and Nadin arrive at a small soccer field. Some players are warming up while the others are passing balls back and forth. Honey explains how the grass field is prioritized for the men’s teams and how the women have a higher risk of suffering injuries when playing on a hard surface. The team continues to practice until the sun sets.
Honey visits Samar Araj Mousa, the Bethlehem University athletic director. They walk around the athletic department and recall the days when Honey first saw the recruitment sign about the formation of a women’s soccer team. “I was so excited and I ran straight to your office once I saw the sign,” Honey says. “And you told me the sign had been up for a long time and I was the first one responding to the note.” Honey chuckles. They continue the conversation about how they had to persuade players to join from other sports like volleyball and the team started with only five players. “Against all odds, we did accomplish a lot!” Samar says. Samar gently put her hand on Honey’s back; together they walk out the door.

Niveen and her mother patiently wait in the bus that goes to Jericho. “Jericho, Jericho” is the call heard coming from various bus drivers soliciting travelers to get on their buses. As they depart, Niveen and her mother look out at the bus window at a deserted, hilly landscape. After passing through several checkpoints, they arrive in Jericho. Aya awaits and embraces them before they walk to her house. Niveen sits Aya down and explains her visit; she wants Aya to join her club in Bethlehem. “I understand the travel to Bethlehem to practice is a huge hassle for you, but we need a strong striker like you!” Niveen says. Aya nods and expresses her interest. The conversation goes on to reveal Aya is on to her father’s soccer club in Jericho. The conversation ends on a good note when Aya says she will join Niveen’s team and they go for a walk around the city of Jericho.

Honey stands on the shore of a lake as a boat goes by displaying a flag of Switzerland. Honey talks about how she became the first woman accepted into the FIFA Master program, her experience of studying overseas and meeting people from around the world. Her voice over continues during images of her hanging out with her classmates, walking around
downtown Zurich, and studying.

Niveen and the soccer team arrive in Germany and start a two-week training camp. They practice basics and play friendly matches with German players and a team from Ghana. After practice, Niveen and some of her teammates walk around downtown Munchengladbach, singing and dancing along the street as they express their feelings of freedom in a foreign land. The team visits several landmarks in Germany and they get on a boat that cruises along a small river in the city of Stralsund. Niveen and her sister, Nadin, look at the scenery as they recall the differences they experience in Germany and back home.

Honey and her classmates present their projects to a group of FIFA professors and businessmen. They listen and watch closely as Honey passionately talks about the growth of the FIFA Women’s World Cup. Honey attends FIFA graduation during which she receives a diploma while her mother watches her with joyful tears. “I am so proud of you,” Honey’s mother says as she hugs and kisses her daughter after she walks up to her from the crowd.

In a lakeside interview in Switzerland, Honey talks of receiving an internship offer to work in FIFA’s development department. She explains about how she used to dream of traveling around the world and working for FIFA. “Follow the ball, and it will lead you to your dream!” Honey says with a big smile on her face.

Niveen looks at the checkpoint to Jerusalem from afar. She gets in a car and attempts to go to Jerusalem again. She waves goodbye to the camera and says, “See you on the other side.” The Islamic prayer starts and Niveen stands outside the Aqsa mosque.

At a large open grassy soccer field, young female players watch closely as the older players, including Niveen and Honey, demonstrate basic soccer moves and tricks. Honey and
Niveen have their arms around each other as they watch young girls pass the balls and run around the open space.

End credits.

Intended Audience

Since the film is a documentary that explores the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and women's empowerment issue, it is aimed at an international audience. I would like to achieve bringing the subject matter to the attention of a Western audience that may only be partially aware of this international conflict. By means of a sport that is played throughout the world, *Kicking All Odds* can appeal to sports enthusiasts, teenage Arab girls, and also other women who share the Palestinian female footballers’ passion.

Potential Distribution

In addition to NetFlix and Vimeo distribution for independent filmmakers, there are dozens of film festivals to which the film can be submitted. For a thorough list of potential film festivals see Appendix F.

Other important outlets include:

- Ma’an News Agency (www.maannews.net/eng/Default.aspx) in Palestine which is part of the independent Ma’an Network (www.maannet.org/) created in 2002 in the West Bank providing feature stories, analysis and opinion pieces. One of the websites quotes an audience member’s comment, “Reading or listening to Ma’an is like listening to an old Palestinian woman telling stories.”
• MBC – Middle East Broadcasting (www.allied-media.com/ARABTV/ana_tv_and_middle_east_broadcast.htm) – an independent Arabic satellite TV station which started in London in 1991 before relocating to Dubai Media City delivering news and entertainment programming to Arabic speaking people worldwide.

• Al Jazeera Media Network which provides news coverage and analysis from, and for, the Middle East (www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/) and U.S. (america.aljazeera.com) – they claim nearly 40% of their online viewing comes from America.

• PBS (www.pbs.org/producing), perhaps via member station KERA (www.kera.org/), to try to fulfill one of the American public broadcast corporation’s tenets with “documentaries that open up new worlds.”

• Public Television Service Taiwan (eng.pts.org.tw/contact.php) which seeks to provide its audience with contemporary programs that are “educational, with public service at their core...and [offer a] diverse point of view” in my home country.

• Palestine TV (www.talfazat.com/talfazat/us/en/channel-description/Palestine-TV) broadcasts live from Palestine and is carried on the Talfazat Network.

Research

Books

*Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid* by Jimmy Carter

*The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* by Ilan Pappe

*Year of Locust: A Soldier’s Diary and the Erasure of Palestine’s Ottoman Past* by Ihsan Salih Turjman
A Young Palestinian’s Diary, 1941-1945: The Life of Sami ‘Amr translated by Kimberly Katz

Quakers in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The Dilemmas of NGO Humanitarian Activism by Nancy Gallagher

Landscape of Hope and Despair: Palestinian Refugee Camps by Julie Petee

In Your Eyes a Sandstorm: Ways of Being Palestinian by Arthur Nelsen

Why Did You Leave the Horse Alone? by Mahmoud Darwish

Once Upon a Country: A Palestinian Life by Sari Nusseibgh

Films/Videos


Bethlehem Female Soccer Team (2007) directed by Laura Conti

Checkpoint (2003) directed by Yoav Shmir

The Color of Olives (2006) directed by Carolina Rivas

Hoop Dream (1994) directed by Steve James

Jeremy Hardy vs. the Israeli Army (2003) directed by Leila Sansour

Kicking It (2008) directed by Susan Koch and Jeff Werner

The Road to Bethlehem (2010) directed by Leila Sansour

The Street Stops Here (2010) directed by Kevin Shaw

Until When (2004) directed by Dahna Abourahme

Women in the Stadium (2010) directed by Sawsan Qaoud
Journals


Online Articles


"Gaza women's football team plays against odds" by Iqbal Tamimi in Middle East Online 10 April 2009. Retrieved from www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=31412

Potential Funding

• Sundance Documentary Fund – Deadline: First week of February and July each year, http://www.sundance.org/programs/documentary-fund/

The fund encourages the diverse exchange of ideas that is crucial to fostering an open society and public dialogue about contemporary issues.

The fund enables in-depth analysis of issues through long-form investigative filmmaking and particularly looks to work with filmmakers with a journalistic background or those who are collaborating with journalists.


  The program is intended to help offset travel costs for Texans whose work is invited to prestigious film festivals and events around the world. A particular film can receive only one (1) domestic and one (1) international travel grant for a total of $1,500 from the Travel Grant program: $500 for a North American festival (U.S., Canada, and Mexico) and $1,000 for an international festival.


  Funds for a female director whose project is a non-commercial film, video or multimedia project. *Applicants must be a U.S. citizen, have a Social Security or Federal ID number.

- **Puma Catalyst Awards – Open year-round,** [http://britdoc.org/real_funds/puma-creative-catalyst-award](http://britdoc.org/real_funds/puma-creative-catalyst-award)

  The fund looks for creative documentaries with focusing on women’s rights – female empowerment, anti-violence, women in sports and positive female role models.


  Funds for strategic outreach campaigns for completed or almost completed work. The fund looks to support smart, strategic outreach campaigns for ambitious independent documentary films with a social issue at their core; films which have the ability to achieve real change on a local, regional or global level.
• Catapult Film Fund – Application opens in December 2013, http://catapultfilmfund.org/

Offers early funding to U.S.-based documentary filmmakers who have a compelling story to tell, have secured access to their story and are ready to shoot and edit a trailer/reel for production fundraising purposes. They support powerful stories, moving storytelling across a broad spectrum of issues and perspectives. Grant range: $5,000-$20,000.


Funds projects that may be single programs or series addressing significant figures, events, or ideas and drawing their content from humanities scholarship. It must be intended for national distribution.


LEF invests in documentary film and video projects that demonstrate excellence in technique, originality of vision and voice, and creativity in form.


Reviews crowd funding proposals for selections based in part on the criteria that the project have a positive humanitarian message.

Feasibility

I visited Honey and her Bethlehem team while they were in Germany during the summer of 2011 and also in the West Bank during the winter of 2011. I developed a good relationship with the former captain of the national team as well as recruiting Samar Araj
Mousa, founder of the first women's football team, to become one of my thesis committee members.

My footage from Germany provides comparison with the women's restricted life in Palestine. It contains the women's journey in a free country and their first encounter with a different culture. Three weeks of research and filming in the West Bank during the winter of 2011 provided insight of the players' lives in their country. It also showed the difficulties foreign filmmakers like me experience in gaining access to the West Bank with film equipment. However, I was able to cross the border from Jordan into the West Bank after some lengthy questioning from Israeli border control soldiers. I split my time equally between the two women for filming and research during my stay. Both Honey and Niveen and their families trusted me as I was welcomed and treated as a family member throughout my trip.

The experience provided me great access to my subjects despite the difficulty of entering the country. I believe this will only strengthen the production process and give me perspective in facing stress and difficulties during my additional entry into Palestine for future filming.

Schedule

December 1, 2010 – May 30, 2011

Conducted research about the history and conflicts between Palestine and Israel, contacted Professor Samar Mousa for more information on the first women’s football team in Palestine and she directed me to the first captain of the national team, Honey Thaljieh,
contacted journalists and filmmakers who reside in the West Bank or traveled to the West Bank for advice and feasibility of the project.

*June 26, 2011 – July 9, 2011*

Met Honey Thaljieh and the players from the football club. Conducted interviews and filmed test footage to Honey Thaljieh and all the players on the club in Germany.

*June 26, 2011 – June 28, 2011*

Filmed observational footage of Honey Thaljieh as she attended 2011 Women FIFA in Berlin, Germany.

*June 29, 2011 – July 9, 2011*

Filmed observational footage and interviews with Honey Thaljieh and her teammates in Monchengladbach, Germany.

*August 1, 2011 – November 1, 2011*

Logged and viewed footage and determined that Honey Thaljieh and Niveen Koleeb would be the main characters.

*December 18, 2011 – January 6, 2012*

Filmed observational footage and interviews with Honey Thaljieh and Niveen Koleeb about their lives and families in the West Bank.

*July 16, 2012 – July 22, 2012*

Filmed observational footage and interviews with Honey Thaljieh during her studies with the FIFA Master program in Neuchâtel and Zurich, Switzerland.

*September 1, 2012 – October 1, 2012*

More viewing and logging of footage.
May 15, 2013 – October 1, 2013

Editing.

August 7, 2013 – August 19, 2013

Filmed observational footage and interviews with Niveen Koleeb about her life and with her family in the West Bank.

October 10, 2013

First rough cut completed.

November 1, 2013

Second rough cut completed.

November 12, 2013

Final cut completed.

November 30, 2013

Final sound mix and music track mix completed.

December 6, 2013

Picture lock.
In the preproduction phase, I planned on telling a story about a Palestinian women’s football team as they traveled, focusing more on the team and its struggle to play as a whole instead of focusing on any particular players. But as I traveled and met Honey Thaljieh in Germany, I was attracted to her personal story, her determination, and her very loveable characteristics. I scratched my initial idea and started heading toward a new direction where I observed certain players from Honey’s team and hoped to find another player to be another central focus that could be intertwined with Honey’s story. By conducting interviews and following some players with the camera, I got a good sense of their personalities and their openness to both the camera and me as the filmmaker.

Upon reviewing the interviews and the observational footage, Niveen stood out among the other players. I thought she would make the good counterpoint to Honey’s story because of her likeable sense of humor and her willingness to share her life story with me. Unlike Honey’s family which had initial doubt about her playing a male dominated sport, Niveen’s family was a big supporter of her decision from the very beginning. Niveen and her supportive family break the stereotype most western viewers have when they see Muslim women wearing hijabs. She is an independent woman who chose to cover her hair and found her calling in the sport she loves since she was little. She did not stop when she achieved her childhood dream of becoming important in the world of football and she is determined to continue her education to advance herself beyond the world of sports. Like Professor Samar Mousa, she gives back to the community in her own way, passing on her knowledge to other girls playing the sport she loves.
Preproduction

The preproduction phase of *Kicking All Odds* took place in the U.S and Germany over several months from December 2010 to July 2011 while I conducted research about the history and conflicts between Palestine and Israel and the first Palestinian women’s football team, contacted Professor Mousa and traveled to Germany to meet Honey Thaljieh and the players from the football club Honey manages.

Integration of Production and Theory

Journey Films

“*Journey films*” is the notion of a journey based on encounters – most frequently between filmmaker and subjects, but also between different subjects and also (more obliquely) between the spectator and the film. The encounter (and more particularly the chance encounter) was central to the cinéma vérité and direct cinema traditions, and continues to be a significant factor of many observational documentaries.

S. Bruzzi

*Kicking All Odds* is a journey film that chronicles the life of two football players from Palestine. It tells the story of the challenges faced by female athletics in the male dominated world of sports and it further illustrate the struggles the women faced growing up and continue to face in an occupied country. Bruzzi (2006) notes that a journey film is structured around “encounters and meetings that are often accidental or unplanned.... These characters recall direct cinema’s interest in the moment when people meet and change....” (pp. 81-82). Using observational footage and sit down interviews, the film documents the players’ journeys over the course of three years.
Kicking All Odds resembles the journeys of Seven Up and Hoop Dreams in the sense of what Bruzzi (2006) describes as “open journeys in that their starting point is the selection of individuals whose lives the filmmakers are intent on following without knowing in detail where these individual stories will take them.” (p. 86) For a journey, there is a beginning, a middle, and an end; so for the filmmaker, the journey film has an ending despite what is going on in the subject’s or character’s journey which continues beyond the scope of the film. The film’s subjects may continue to suffer in their lives, or their suffering may come to an end, but it is not among the images captured for use in the documentary. In Kicking All Odds, the characters ease their suffering of living in an occupied country by playing football – whether that suffering ever stops is unknown because the film’s journey ends. Bruzzi (2006) indicates that

[Q]uintessentially, Seven Up and Hoop Dreams abide by the notion of documentary filmmaking as following action and argument rather than prompting or creating them. As with many early Direct Cinema documentaries, the pleasure of the journeys they undertake derives from overseeing people change over time, getting to know them, observing their growing familiarity with the filmmakers, predicting the future and frequently having those predictions overturned. (pp. 86-87)

Kicking All Odds leads viewers into parts of the world that are often ignored by western media and breaks the stereotype of Palestinian women. The film opens viewers’ mind and introduces them to Honey, a determined athlete who speaks of her efforts to push a message of peace for her country and people, and Niveen who is a free spirit Muslim woman. Both seek to deliver a message of peace and love.

“The term ‘journey’, applied to documentary, is either a very concrete term or a deeply nebulous one.” (Bruzzi, 2006, p. 82) Kicking All Odds portrays the journey of two female football players, but the film also touches on the misery of a nation under occupation. Half way into the film the director found herself being confined in a room for questioning by an Israeli soldier --
“Is it a film about football or is it a film about border checkpoints?” The filmmaker uses that encounter to encourage viewers to watch the film beyond its surface images. *Kicking All Odds* gives what Bruzzi (2006) calls “coherence to an otherwise fragmentary series of events and images.” (p. 83)

Meaningful Images

“Critics often claim that documentary film images present viewers with images of ‘the world’ the look of things in the world as an index of meaning.” (Nichols, 2010, p. 27) When the documentary places images into a structure of exposition, explanation or arguments, the images become evidence of certain facts of the world. This is achieved by the use of voice-overs, printed titles, and/or quasi-verbal montage constructions, any and all of which offer an interpretation or make an argument about the world witnessed by the images. “Every cut or edit is a step forward in an argument.” (Nichols, 2010, p. 29) In *Kicking All Odds*, the filmmaker presents Palestine as an oppressed country through voice-over, on screen encounters with the subjects, and ongoing barrier images in the foreground. The elements bring the spectator into the world of confinement just as Palestinians face in their daily lives. “Editing of course is a selective process and inevitably implies at least some shaping of the material. Use of the world re-create allows for a variety of responses in editing, and a cinéma vérité film does bear the selective influence of its creator.” (Mamber, 1974, p. 3) Although *Kicking All Odds* follows the noninterference shooting style of cinéma vérité, the reality is filtered through editing. The film intercuts from the two female athletes as their life events and opinions often reflect and support each other. Honey is often the lead voice in the film while Niveen supports Honey’s
points visually. It is the filmmaker’s attempt to break the barriers between the subject and the audience to present an “unmanipulated reality.” (Mamber, 1974, p. 4)

Empowering Women through Sports

Western media has long depicted Palestine as being in a constant state of warring conflicts which means western audiences often associate Palestinian men as suicide fighters, women and children as helpless victims. People who travel to the country would not be bombarded by the images presented over and over by the western media, instead they would find a country filled with heartwarming people who embrace education and live off the land while making an effort to face the challenges of life under Israeli occupation. Moreover, women’s development in the world of football is spreading throughout the West Bank despite it being considered a male-dominated sport in a Muslim society.

Younes, Ciccomascolo, and Shim (2013) point out some key obstacles female athletes face in the development of football in Palestine:

1. Lack of financial support and facilities.

The girls played on the concrete court which hurts their muscles and also their knees, especially the knee. They continue playing so much that the ligament of the knee hurts and they need a future surgical operation. (S. Mousa, personal communication, August 2013)

[The changing room] didn’t have anything in it. We used to go in, five or seven girls to change, and we would find lizards and cockroaches. The court itself doesn’t have locker rooms for us to change in. (N. Koleeb, personal communication, August 2013)

2. Lack of a wide base of specialized female physical education teachers.

I held on to the idea of teaching women football in Palestine and giving them the opportunity to have equality with men in playing sports... Once I became athletics director at Bethlehem...the coach was my colleague, Raed Alhurami, who suffered a lot
with us since he was teaching a difficult sport that was new to the girls. But the girls wanted to learn. They wanted to challenge everything and play football. (S. Mousa, personal communication, August 2013)

3. Resistance from conservative social traditions and religious fundamentalism and gender bias, which varies from one city to another for recruitment.

But the community looked strangely at the girls playing football; the young boys who played against them also looked down on us. ‘Why are the girls playing football?’ Like they are not buying it, like these girls are weak. (S. Mousa, personal communication, August 2013)

My friends, Muslims with headscarves, my classmates, they always say, “I wish that I could play like you!” I always tell them, go and just play [...] [and they say] “we can’t” [...] - you know [that’s just] the culture they live in (Amira). (Kremers, Luft, Schaller, & Gieß-Stüber, 2010)

4. Parents also have great influence on their daughters’ involvement in sports. Cortis and Muir (as cited in Younes et al., 2013) believe some parents are noticeably culturally sensitive to sports and prefer their daughters to spend their free time at home.

In the beginning, I heard about a football team in Bethlehem and I wanted to join it, but I was worried my parents would be against it. (N. Koleeb, personal communication, August 2013)

In the beginning, my parents were a bit resistant, of course, because it was very strange to have women playing football in a Palestinian community. So it was very difficult for them to accept that their daughter plays football. Especially the comments that they got from the neighbors, family and friends: “Why is your daughter playing football? Why is she wearing shorts? Why is she in the street?” So my parents were reluctant, especially my father, because of our male, masculine-dominated society. (H. Thaljieh, personal communication, January 2012)

5. Occupation resulted in the restrictions of the movement between cities.

Sometimes we get ready for a game, two months of practicing, with careful scheduling, preparing ourselves to be at one level, and then something happens, political curfew or explosion in one place, they stop – we stop all the activities for one month or five weeks or two months and we will have to start once more from the beginning. (S. Mousa, personal communication, August 2013)
We are from Bethlehem, when we went to Ramallah to train, it would take us two to three hours because there’s a lot of traffic at the checkpoints; or sometimes the Israeli soldiers would stop us at the checkpoints and we would be late for training. And when we returned from training the trip would take a long time. We would be late getting home. Not all parents would tolerate this. (N. Koleeb, personal communication, August 2013)

We don’t have fields – grass fields – except one in Jericho. It’s half an hour from Bethlehem by car, but because of the checkpoints we need three hours and we can’t practice there every day because we don’t go via typical routes. We have checkpoints everywhere so we have to take detours, and they are difficult roads, in order to reach Jericho. (Ghada) (Kremers et al., 2010)

Despite the challenges women face when playing this sport they love, Younes et al. (2013) found female athletes are more motivated intrinsically than extrinsically and cite Levesque, Williams, Elliott, Pickering, Bodenhamer, and Finley (2007) to point out the women participate in an activity “simply for the pleasure, interest and satisfaction derived from doing” the activity. (p. 50) Kremers et al. (2010) note “[T]his development of character is of special importance in a patriarchal society, as the Muslim player Fidaa affirmed:

[…] it’s a good change for my personality because I think when a girl plays soccer, it gives her [an idea] of free[dom], and this is good for the girl - to live free, to become strong in her society and maybe she will face everything and she can give the people outside of Palestine a good picture about the woman in Palestine. (p. 20)

First developed in the French language, then tested for reliability and validation in English, the Sport Motivation Scale (SMP) is valuable in examining three types of athletic motivation: Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation, and Amotivation. (Peletier, Fortier, Vallerand, Tuson, Brière, & Blais, 1995) Based on the SMP, female athletes in Palestine who are intrinsically motivated show more self-determination and perform better in their chosen sport. Furthermore, they have more courage to challenge the key obstacles whether from the conflicts of occupation or the conservative society.
Dedicated women such as Samar A. Mousa, Director of the Athletics Department at the University of Bethlehem, have successfully campaigned for the inclusion of women’s football in the physical education curricula of state schools. Up to then, women’s football was played only occasionally, and only at private schools, which are more liberal due to the influence of their Western benefactors. (Kremers et al., 2010)

The game has not only changed people’s perspective on Palestinian women, it has further shown how friendships among the players can be built across different religious and family backgrounds; it leverages the confidence level of the women and opens doors for their future.

We have birthed a generation that’s aware and have faith in football as a step to success to the future and they’ve accepted football. There’s now an understanding that ‘No, I don’t want to go out, get married and have children, I also want to build a future. I want to achieve my dream. And I want to meet people and change their assumptions about the Palestinian people and Palestinian women. And talk about how we are a people who love life and we love to live it in freedom because we are people who deserve to live.’ Football has given hope to me and to all the girls on the team, to the Palestinian people that we can overcome all the obstacles and believe that the walls are not our limit – our only limit is the sky. (H. Thaljieh, personal communication, January 2012)

Both Honey and Niveen demonstrate self-determination and excel in their careers in the documentary. Honey became the first Arab woman to be accepted in the FIFA master program is now fulfilling her dream working in FIFA in Switzerland, traveling around the world representing Palestinians and delivering her message of peace. Niveen has received a coaching certificate and is the manager of the Palestinian Women National football team; she is now a coach for girls under the age of 16 in her community of Bethlehem where she contributes her experience and encourages girls to pursue their dreams.
PRODUCTION

Overview

The production of *Kicking All Odds* included filming in Switzerland, Germany, Jordan, Palestine, and Israel. I began filming in late June 2011 and ended in August 2013.

Crew

*Hanny Lee – Director / Producer/Cinematographer*

Born and raised in Taipei, Taiwan, Hanny Lee found her passion for cinematography and documentary film when she came to the United States to pursue higher education. The documentary films she directed and produced explore social issues including immigration, the disabled, and Alzheimer’s disease. Her films received awards and have been screened at festivals including Broadcast Education Association, Texas Black Film Festival, Dallas International Film Festival, Thin Line Film Fest, Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival, and Mammoth Film Festival. When not working on her own films, Lee often works as a camerawoman for other documentary films around the United States and other parts of the world.

*Sara Masetti – Sound Recordist/ Camera Assistant*

Sara Masetti is an Italian documentary filmmaker based in Texas where she worked as a narrative and documentary director and producer before pursuing her MFA degree in documentary film at UNT. Her films have screened at several venues including the United Nations Association Film Festival, NewFilmmakers New York, the San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts, and the Texas Theater. Masetti’s work delves into themes of Latino, Muslim, Italian, and
LGBT identity; and the celebration of the human family.

*Abbey Hoekzema – Sound Recordist/ Camera Assistant*

Abbey Hoekzema is documentary filmmaker based in Denton, Texas. Having spent several summers on the road seeing America, Hoekzema became fascinated with learning about new people and places which ultimately led her to documentary film production. She has worked on a number of short films and is in her final year of work on an MFA in documentary film production at UNT. Her work focuses on altruism, conservation, education, and travel. Hoekzema is currently the Program Manager for the All in Film Workshop sponsored by the Lone Star Film Society which is based in Fort Worth to help foster community filmmaking.

*Tareq Faroun – Editor*

Tareq Faroun was born in Amman, Jordan, and moved with his family to Texas at the age of 11. His father is an electrical engineer who owned and operated a computer services and IT solutions company. While growing up, Faroun worked at his father’s business where he learned skills with computer hardware and software, assembled hundreds of computers, and learned about networks and servers. He always had a passion for film; movie trailers, soundtracks, and the cinematic rhythm of motion pictures captivated him. During his preadolescent years, his father took him to the movies every weekend to watch Kung Fu and horror films (against his mother’s wishes). Gradually he went from building computers and going to the movies with his father on weekends to teaching himself non-linear video editing software during his late teens. After high school, Faroun spent several years participating in production and postproduction internships in the DFW area while continuing his education. He worked as a videographer/editor during the mini DV tape days recording live bands at local
clubs and music festivals. Faroun recently worked as promotions manager and video producer for the first Arab Film Festival in Texas. He is completing his senior year in UNT's Department of Radio, Television and Film to earn his bachelor degree.

**Matt Bukaty – Composer**

Matt Bukaty is an American music composer for film, television, and multimedia. His emotionally-charged music has accompanied a number of documentary and narrative films that have screened at festivals worldwide. Bukaty received a bachelor degree in music composition from UNT in 2009, studying under composers David Bithell and Cindy McTee. He went on to earn a master's degree in film and multimedia scoring from New York University, where he studied under film composer Mark Suozzo and renowned film orchestrator Sonny Kompanek. Bukaty is also part of **THE HUNGER GAMES MUSIC PROJECT** which is a collaboration with friend and fellow composer Edward Underhill. They have completed two of three planned albums inspired by the novels of Suzanne Collins; the music of which exhibits hybrid scoring techniques, fusing synthetic and sampled instruments with live performers. The project has received international attention and is swiftly developing a worldwide fan base.

**Equipment**

The camera gear included a DSLR Canon 5D Mark II and a Canon 60D with a Zeiss 50mm prime lens, a Canon 24-70mm 2.8 zoom lens, and a Canon 70-200 2.8 zoom lens. A Manfrotto monopod and minimal Zacuto shoulder rigs were used. Location sound was recorded through the double-system method utilizing a RØDE directional mic attached to the camera and Sennheiser wireless lavalier microphones plugged into a Zoom H4N digital recorder.
Due to budget constraints, I operated the camera and monitored the audio alone on most filming trips aside from the shoots in Germany in 2011 and the West Bank in 2013. Thanks to the inclusion of videography capability on DSLR cameras, I was able to travel into the West Bank in disguise and with less hassle crossing the Israeli border and checkpoints. The Israeli soldiers and border control searched my luggage, but did not discover the DSLR cameras were for documentary videography.

Budget

Specific budget details can be found in Appendix A.

Reconceptualization Before Postproduction

I always thought Honey Thaljieh would be the central focus of the film due to her involvement with the first women’s football team and its development along with the achievement of her dream to work in FIFA. While she is prominent in the film, in reality she has special talents and, therefore, not fully representative of everyone; whereas Niveen Koleeb represents more of the current situation in Palestine. Honey Thaljieh sees herself as the ambassador of Palestine and carries the responsibility of speaking out about her people’s ongoing struggles. I admire Honey’s strong personality and how she is not afraid of speaking from her heart for the people in Palestine; I want the viewers to experience what I witnessed when I spent the time with her. She is a female fighter battling the conflicts in her peaceful way by telling of her life experience and through her passion about football.
There is an on-going storytelling trait I discovered during my travels and meetings with all these extraordinary women. Whether it is a Palestinian mother passing down stories of the struggles and conflicts or a mentor like Professor Samar Mousa who passes down a passion for sports and empowers women with equality. Both Honey and Niveen are continuing that trait, inspiring the people they meet and the people who hear their story. I want viewers to see that Honey is able to travel around the world because her passion for the game allows her to excel in her career. Also, she does not forget her roots, but instead she is an activist about bringing peace and justice to her country. Niveen calmly faces her struggle in her occupied country with a sense of humor and her personality naturally comes out through the film. She breaks the stereotype of being a Muslim woman who covers her hair and draws viewers’ attention to her opinions.
POSTPRODUCTION

Overview

Most of my previous films delved into the worlds of minorities and people with disabilities. I was able to apply the past experiences and structure this film into embracing the women going through conflicts and occupation. I worked closely with my editor Tareq Faroun to assemble footage. We edited sequences according to certain events and dates, and then assembled them into the desired order in one timeline. With advice from my thesis chair, Tania Khlaf, I separated my various sequences of thematic material and divided them into groups – introduction of the characters, female football, religion, struggles: Apartheid Wall, occupation and settlement, ID system and travel, refugee camp and economy, family support of the game of football, women’s benefits from sports, future, and goal. Once these themes were identified, we noticed the first cut of the film was overpowering with the theme of struggles and lacking the football theme. So I went back and restructured the film to its current version.

Composer Matt Bukaty and I have spent five years working together; his music often provides a strong emotional charge to the audience. We went over a couple sequences about the need of potential musical scoring and discussed the type of instrumentation I wanted him to use. He then composed music based on the different themes.

Equipment

Editing was done in Adobe® Premiere® Pro CS6. Color grading was done with Adobe® SpeedGrade CS6 and all audio mixing was completed in Avid® Pro Tools 10.
Following the rise of the civil rights movements, in the 1960s and 1970s there was a growth spurt of documentaries that chronicle women as central subjects in depicting their desire to express their concerns about gender relations. Lane (2002) notes that a movement sparked by female filmmakers embraced identity politics as a way to raise awareness about various cultural issues in an attempt to represent minorities in the male-dominated direct cinema. Now women filmmakers stray from the mainstream cinema that addresses gender and sexual differences; instead, they disseminate diversity within genders that speaks for themselves.

With the addition of video capability to DSLR cameras, filmmakers had a new tool for a low budget production to produce high quality films, and it liberated female camera operators due to DSLR’s lightweight bodies. As a cinematographer for various documentary projects and reality TV shows, I embraced this technology prior to the production of *Kicking All Odds*. I conducted some research on the U.S Department of State travel website and consulted filmmakers who had previously traveled to Israel which helped me learn about the difficulty of traveling into Palestinian territory with a video camera. It was then an easy decision to utilize a DSLR camera as my primary camera for shooting this film. I was able to disguise myself as a traveler to the Holy Land with a regular “photo camera.”

“Personal narratives have embodied the feminist adage that ‘the personal is political’, acknowledging that what happens in the lives of ordinary women rightfully belongs in the consideration of larger feminist and political concerns.” (Hart, Weathermon, and Armitage, 2006, p. 3) By photographing their lives and stories with my camera, both Honey and Niveen
became a reflection of what I tried to present as the struggles faced not only by regular women in Palestine but also the additional difficulties of being athletes. It was not intentional, but an all female production crew developed around me as I proceeded to the production stage of *Kicking All Odds*.

Several factors contributed how the all female crew developed: my trust towards the crew members with whom I worked closely on other projects, my limited budget for lodging, and – most importantly – there would be less of a barrier between the crew and the female subjects in the film which would allow us to gain their trust and friendship. Having a male crew member traveling with me overseas might have been detrimental in gaining close access to the subjects. My crew member and I were often in intimate places and situations that would only occur when a filmmaker has gained the full trust of the subject. During the Germany portion of production, a player from the team got injured. After she returned from the hospital, her team mates showed up at her hotel room, some of them wearing pajamas. They welcomed us into the hotel room where we filmed their interaction. Some of the girls were jumping up and down on a bed and having a pillow fight while the injured player explains to me, the camera, what caused her injury. The footage did not make it to the final film, but the experience helped me realize the advantage of being a female filmmaker for this project in gaining access to the female athletes’ homes and allowing them to relate to me as a woman.

While being a woman gave me an advantage as a filmmaker in gaining trust with my subjects, I was still an outsider looking into their community. I talked with the players during the Germany trip about my intention to make a women’s empowerment film, but it was my encounters with Honey and Niveen on my first trip to Palestine that really cemented the trust
and friendship with my main subjects. The experience of riding on the Palestinian bus crossing the Jordan border was a moment shared by Honey and me. I crossed the King Hussein Bridge border (the only border crossing for Palestinians) on the bus meant for Palestinians, not for foreign tourists. We both knew we had to pretend we did not know each other during the ride and while going through customs. When the Israeli soldiers spotted me during the first checkpoint into the West Bank, they were baffled with my presence and were not happy about seeing a non-Palestinian aboard the bus. It turned out the Israelis keep tourists or people who hold an Israeli ID separate from Palestinians and have them travel on a different bus. The situation was very tense because they suspected that someone on the bus knew me and was helping transport me to the Palestinian territory. As the soldiers held up the bus and yelled for someone on board to confess, I witnessed firsthand the soldiers’ hostility towards Palestinians.

I was left alone outside the bus at a particular checkpoint while Israeli soldiers let the bus riders get back on the bus, including Honey. As the soldiers holding semi-automatic weapons questioned me about my motive for riding the “wrong” bus, I exchanged quick eye contact with Honey through the bus window. I could not hear or understand what was being said on the bus when one soldier got on board and started yelling and trying to find out who was assisting me. I did not know what Honey would say. I did not know whether she would reveal the truth or not. I just hoped we had enough trust with each other at that moment to not reveal why I was there. Time goes by awfully slowly when you have multiple semi-automatic weapons surrounding you. When one of the soldiers whispered to me, “Don’t be afraid,” I realized that my petite female physical appearance and how most people perceive women as non-threatening helped me to persevere and get back onto the same bus to continue my journey. I
have never regretted the decision to be there with the people who endure hours to cross a border just a couple miles to go home.

The trust established between Honey and me during that trip together allowed our friendship to grow since I was with her for the majority of my time on my first visit to the West Bank. Honey shared her room with me during my stay at her house and we would sometimes talk until late in the night before going to sleep. We shared our experiences of growing up in different cultures and different political situations. Sometimes our discussions would involve our views on religion, marriage, and our hopes for the future. It allowed me to evaluate myself as a filmmaker and embrace the idea of telling the stories that Honey and Niveen wanted to share and discover the important elements affecting their lives instead of simply filming what I believed was important to the project.

“The problem with ethics arises exactly from this fact: if the camera is not objective, if it operates ‘selectively’ and thereby influences what we see and how we interpret what we see, what obligations, if any, do documentary filmmakers have to the subjects of their films, the audience of their films, or themselves?” (Katz & Milstein, 1988) The filmmaker maintains editorial control while giving subjects some illusion of empowerment rather than actual power so that “new voices are heard, [but] traditional forms of authorship have not been significantly altered.” (Ruby, 1991) Although I agree the editorial power remains with the filmmaker, I disagree that the empowerment and authorship of my subjects are illusionary and significantly altered in *Kicking All Odds*. Due to the process and the observational style of the project, both Honey and Niveen are aware of the camera’s presence and both are heavily involved in providing guidance of what they believe should be filmed during my journey in the West Bank.
When I arrived for my second trip to the West Bank, I sat down with Honey and Niveen on the first day to explain the footage and editorial vision I had at the time. I also talked about some additional footage I needed during this trip and consulted with both of them on what aspect they would like to add to the film that I might have missed. By involving my subjects in the filmmaking process, it is not simply a film presented by an outsider looking into the lives of these women, but an empowerment of the subjects to help tell their own stories.

Audience Building Plan

Documentary films are capable of social change; they can inspire and educate people to take actions on issues they may or may not have known about prior to watching the films. *Kicking All Odds* is aimed at being the medium to create awareness of the struggle in Palestine and change society’s point of view towards Palestinian women.

Barrett and Leddy (2008) highlight Fledgling Fund which is a private foundation providing grants for documentary films to support outreach and audience engagement. The organization believes documentary film can work as a change agent and they have recognized some “Dimensions of Impact” that they use as an agenda for the projects they fund. It includes Compelling Story, Awareness, Engagement, Stronger Movement and Social Change.

Barrett and Leddy (2008) define measurements for the Dimensions of Impact. First, compelling story is measured by “Festival Acceptance, Awards, [and] Film Reviews.” *Kicking All Odds* aims to submit to film festivals internationally; see Appendix F. Aside from receiving reviews from the accepting festivals online platforms, *Kicking All Odds* will be submitted for
Second, awareness is measured by “Audience Size, Diversity of Audience, Press Coverage.” *Kicking All Odds* has the ability to attract a wide, diverse audience due to the themes of sports, women’s empowerment, religion, Middle East conflicts and social justice. It is important to research the local organizations based around the festivals accepting the film and invite the organizations to view and to help promote the film. For example, if *Kicking All Odds* is accepted by Thin Line Fest based in Denton, Texas, the potential contact list of the organizations to be considered for attending the film screening includes: Contemporary Arab and Muslim Cultural Studies Institute (CAMCSI) at the University of North Texas (UNT), women’s soccer teams from UNT and Texas Woman University (TWU), Friends of the Family – who provide compassionate support services to mostly women impacted by relationship violence and sexual assault, Trinity Presbyterian Church whose minister has expressed support towards Palestinians and held events and screenings of related topics, Islamic Society of Denton, and a women’s empowering group on Meetup.com that is based near Denton. By drawing on a diverse set of organizations, *Kicking All Odds* can generate press coverage due to cooperation with the committed organizations to thus increase the audience size at each festival stop.

The measurement of the audience engagement can be evaluated by participants in post-screening dialogues along with comments and interactions posted on social network and website visits. Aside from creating a solid e-mail list, developing a main website for the film, and assuring the appearance on major social network sites – such as Facebook, Twitter and
Instagram – *Kicking All Odds* also aims to create buzz around the related themes mentioned above to allow for further discussions about the film. Several social websites have proven to be great engagement tools for publicity on the Internet. Buzzfeed is a website that helps generate content that can go viral by letting users pass along, or share, the content via the most used social network platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, etc., and then keeps track of what is getting the most “likes” and “shares” on those other sites. Instead of simply posting the film’s trailer, the idea would be to create content that is related to the themes arising from within *Kicking All Odds*. For example, stating the achievements from the women of the Palestinian National team and posting photos of the graffiti painted on the Apartheid wall would make for some short and precise information distribution of material on Buzzfeed which could attract readers to the film’s main website. Upworthy is a website that focuses on shareable video content that often inspires and aims for social change. *Kicking All Odds* is creating short videos from unseen footage from the film and categorizing the clips into themes that could be standalone videos to be considered for the site. An example would be a video of the Apartheid wall, checkpoints, and settlement while utilizing facts about the history of the wall’s development and the illegal settlement that is continuing throughout the West Bank.

Forum screenings also can be an engagement tool. While it is important to attend post-screening Q&A sessions at film festivals, *Kicking All Odds* will also target a list of universities that have departments in Arab, Muslim, Palestinian-Israeli conflict and/or Middle Eastern Studies. I have identified these schools meeting the criteria:

- University of North Carolina
- Columbia International University
• Columbia University
• Yale University
• McGill University
• University of Michigan
• University of Nebraska
• University of Chicago
• University of Kentucky
• John Carroll University
• University of Detroit Mercy
• Indiana University
• Duke University
• New York University
• Michigan State University
• Villanova University
• Harvard University
• Stanford University
• American University
• University of Texas at Austin
• Georgetown University
• University of Montana
• University of Oregon
• University of Houston
The ultimate goal of *Kicking All Odds* is to create social change, it includes policy change on an international level, behavior change towards women’s rights and equality, empowering women through sports and easing the struggle of Palestinians living in their own land and altering the dialogue of how people see the Palestinian nation and its people. A stronger movement is necessary for the goal; *Kicking All Odds* wants activists and organizations to utilize the film as a dialogue between the policymakers and people in higher positions. By expanding its audience size at each screening and forum, and generating buzz within the online virtual world, *Kicking All Odds* expands its longevity and becomes a tool capable of social change.
EVALUATION OF COMPLETED WORK

Preproduction

The idea of making a film about women football players from Palestine came to me when I read Kershner’s (2009) *New York Times* article about the women’s team’s first international match in Jordan. What really caught my attention was a mention about the team members getting very emotional when the game ended. The players from Gaza and the players from the West Bank embraced each other with tears because they knew they might not see each other again. I knew about the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts, but I was not fully aware of the Palestinians’ struggle at the time so I conducted more research to fulfill my curiosity. As I read more articles and news about the conflicts, I was amazed with the story and I started to wonder why someone had not done a documentary on women’s football in Palestine. And I realized: I am that person.

I found an article written by Professor Samar Arai Mousa and obtained her contact information. Eventually Mousa directed me to Honey Thaljieh, who then provided me with information about the women’s football movement in Palestine.

The hardest part of preproduction is to immerse myself in a whole new culture and historical facts – since I was born and raised in Taiwan and have spent the last ten years learning and absorbing things about the U.S., were I currently reside. The more I learned about the Palestinian-Israeli history and conflicts, the more similarity I saw in my homeland of Taiwan-China. Although people living in Taiwan have far more freedom than Palestinians, both countries continue to fight for international recognition, as well as independence.
Many of my friends and family worried about me traveling to the Middle East since it is an area under occupation and/or ongoing conflicts. However, I was not as concerned about my safety, instead I worried more about actually crossing the border, passing Israeli checkpoints, and getting into the West Bank with film equipment since my sole purpose was to make a documentary. For each trip into the West Bank, I had to make a detailed “vacation” plan and book hotel rooms at various tourist stops in Israel. My extensive vacation plan documents worked both times and it turned out to be the right process because Israeli border control officers tend to be suspicious of everyone going into their country and they demand proof of travel plans.

Production

The production of *Kicking All Odds* took 54 days. It was by far the most grueling and complex filming I have ever done – and mostly by myself. My training got me used to working on a team during my undergraduate studies in fiction filmmaking. Though one thing I was very used to during the production was being alone in a foreign country.

Being both the director and cinematographer had advantages and disadvantages while creating this film. Aside from allowing me to save money in my overall budget, my work as the cinematographer gave me more intimacy with my subjects; the women would address me – that is, the camera – giving them direct eye contact with the audience. However, I felt the need to take a moment here and there to process my thoughts and step back to observe the surroundings as a director from time to time. It was quite difficult to monitor the audio while operating the camera and I discovered some audio problems after my first trip to the West Bank.
Bank. That caused me to be sure I had a sound recordist with me on my second trip to the West
Bank.

Honey Thaljieh and Niveen Koleeb both hosted my stay in West Bank. They were very
hospitable and treated me as a member of their families. I was able to immerse myself into
Palestinian culture, family values, and experience the life of living in Palestine.

Postproduction

Aside from editing a film that contains conversations spoken neither in my native
language of Mandarin Chinese nor my adopted language of English, one of the most difficult
processes I encountered was editing out certain sequences and footage – being able to “let go”
of something I had earlier found really important. I had become attached to a storyline and
associated images with events I experienced as a person while also being the shooter-director.
However, with the advice and help from my thesis chair, Tania Khalaf, I was able to get beyond
my emotions about the themes I foresaw from my initial proposal. We wrote each sequence
down on notecards, and lay them down on a big conference table then categorized different
sequences into major themes. This method helped me identify repetitive topics and allowed for
the film to be restructured into a more balanced storyline between the sport that empowers
women and the struggle of being Palestinians.
APPENDIX A

BUDGET
Budget for Hanny Lee  
Production Title: Kicking All Odds  
Length: 50 minutes  
Format: HD Video  
Preproduction: 4 Weeks  
Production: 50 Days  
Post-Production: 12 Weeks

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APPENDIX B

HISTORICAL CHRONOLOGY OF PALESTINE-ISRAEL CONFLICT
1917: Great Britain, during World War I, issues the Balfour Declaration, promising a Jewish national home in Palestine, with respect for the rights of non-Jewish Palestinians.

1922: After the Ottoman Empire is defeated in World War I, the League of Nations confirms British mandates over Iraq and Palestine, and a French mandate over Syria and Lebanon. Transjordan is separated from the Palestine Mandate and becomes an autonomous kingdom.

1936: Palestinian Arabs demand a halt to Jewish immigration and a ban on land sales to Jews. British troops attempt to assert control, but violence continues. The Peel Commission recommends partition of Palestine between Arabs and Jews.

1939: Britain announces severe restrictions on Jewish immigration and land purchases in Palestine. Violence erupts from Jewish militant.

1947: Britain lets the United Nations decide what to do about Palestine, which is partitioned into Jewish, Arab, and international areas (Jerusalem and Bethlehem). Fifty-five percent of the territory is allocated to the Jewish state. Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan are now independent states.

1948: The British mandate over Palestine terminates. Israelis declare their independence as a nation, Arab armies attack, and Israel prevails. U.N. General Assembly Resolution 194 establishes a conciliation commission and asserts that refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace should be allowed to do so, that compensation should be paid to others, and that free access to the holy places should be assured.

1949: Armistice agreements with the Arabs allow Israel to gain more land (77 percent of Palestine). Egypt occupies the Gaza Strip. Transjordan, renamed Jordan, controls what is left of the west bank of the Jordan River, including Old Jerusalem, and in 1950 annexes this territory.

1956: Egypt nationalizes the Suez Canal, and Israel joins Britain and France in occupying the canal area. Under international pressure all foreign forces withdraw from Egyptian territories by the next year. U.N. forces are assigned to patrol strategic areas of the Sinai.

1964: The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is established, committed to wage a battle to liberate the homeland of the Palestinian people.

1967: Egypt blockades the Straits of Tiran, and Arab forces make menacing moves. Israel launches preemptive attacks on Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and then Jordan, and within six days occupies the Golan Heights, Gaza, the Sinai, and the West Bank, including Jerusalem.

Six months later, U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 is passed, confirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of land by force and calling for Israel's withdrawal from occupied territories, the right of all states in the region to live in peace within secure and recognized borders, and a just solution to the refugee problem.
1973: Egypt and Syria attack Israeli forces in the Sinai and Golan Heights. This conflict becomes known as the Yom Kippur War. After sixteen days of war, U.N. Resolution 338 is passed, confirming Resolution 242 and calling for international peace talks. Various disengagement agreements follow.

1974: The Arab summit at Rabat in Morocco unanimously proclaims the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Israel agrees to withdraw from Syrian territory, except for control of the Golan Heights.

1975: Civil war erupts in Lebanon. With approval from the international community the following year, Syria sends troops to establish order.

1977: Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat visits Jerusalem and outlines Arab demands to the Israeli Knesset. Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin makes a return visit to Ismailia, with no progress toward peace.

1978: The Camp David Accords are approved by Israel and Egypt, confirming Israel’s compliance with U.N. Resolution 242, withdrawal of political and military forces from the West Bank and Gaza, and full autonomy for Palestinians. The Accords outline a peace agreement between Israel and Egypt and other Arab neighbors. The Accords are rejected by the Arabs at the Baghdad summit, and Egypt is isolated.

1979: A peace treaty is signed between Israel and Egypt, guaranteeing withdrawal of Israel from the Sinai, normal diplomatic relations, and Israel’s access to the Suez Canal.

1981: Israel escalates establishment of settlements on Palestinian territory. Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat is assassinated.

1982: In response to terrorist attacks across Lebanon’s border, Israeli troops move into Lebanon, seeking to destroy PLO forces there. The militant Lebanese organization known as Hezbollah is established. Subsequent actions by the Israelis in Lebanon draw international criticism.

1985: Israel partially removes its forces from Lebanon.

1987: A Palestinian Intifada (uprising) erupts, and Israel responds to the violence with harsh reprisals. The militant Palestinian organization known as Hamas is established.

1988: Jordan cedes its rights in the West Bank and East Jerusalem to the PLO. PLO head Yasser Arafat acknowledges Israel’s right to exist and renounces violence. The U.S. and the PLO initiate dialogue.
1991: The Persian Gulf War ejects Iraqi forces that have invaded Kuwait. Many Palestinian exiles move to Jordan. A Middle East peace conference, focusing on Arab-Israeli relations, is convened in Madrid.

1993: Israel and the PLO conclude a peace agreement in Oslo with mutual recognition and a five-year plan to resolve all remaining differences. Militant Palestinians and right-wing Israelis begin attempts to undermine the agreement.

1994: The Palestinian National Authority is established. Israel and Jordan sign a comprehensive peace agreement.

1995: Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated by an Israeli right-wing religious fanatic. This setback to the peace process is exacerbated by violent attacks from Palestinian groups opposed to the Oslo Agreement.

1996: Palestinians elect Yasser Arafat as president and elect the members of a legislative council. Israelis return the Likud Party to power, which stalls the Oslo process.

1998: The Wye River Memorandum is issued after talks between the Israelis and the Palestinians, under U.S. auspices. An airport is opened in Gaza, with flights to Arab nations.

2000: Israeli forces are withdrawn from Lebanon except for a disputed area, Shebaa Farms. Peace negotiations at Camp David break down. Ariel Sharon visits the Temple Mount and a second intifada is launched, more violent than the first.


2001: Ariel Sharon is elected prime minister of Israel, committed to rejection of the Oslo peace agreement and an emphasis on national security. The Gaza airport runway is bulldozed.


2003: The Quartet Group (the United States, United Nations, European Union, and Russia) agree on a “road map for peace.” Palestinians pledge full support, but Israel rejects key points. Violence continues, and the security barrier in the West Bank draws international criticism for undermining the peace process. An unofficial peace agreement negotiated by Israelis and Palestinians is released with extensive international support as the Geneva Initiative.

2005: Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) is elected president of the Palestinian National Authority. Israel unilaterally evacuates its settlements from the Gaza Strip and four from the West Bank.

January 2006: Ariel Sharon suffers a massive stroke. Palestinians elect a new government, with Hamas winning a small plurality of votes but a majority of parliamentary seats. Israel and the United States isolate Palestine, cutting off funds.

March–August 2006: Ehud Olmert becomes Israel’s prime minister, promising that the dividing wall will, in effect, be the new Israeli–West Bank border. Hamas and Hezbollah militants capture Israeli soldiers, and Israeli forces attack Gaza and Lebanon. Hezbollah missiles strike northern Israel. The United Nations approves Resolution 1701, establishing a fragile cease-fire.

December 27, 2008-January 18, 2009: Gaza War.

October 2012: Israeli air strike kills Ahmed Jabari, chief of the Hamas military wing in Gaza.

November 2012: Cease-fire agreement takes effect and calls for “complete and total cessation of all hostile activity” initiated in Gaza.

(Carter, 2006; CNN.com, 2012)
APPENDIX C

LOSS OF LAND (MAP)
The Palestinian-Israeli conflict has dragged on for more than 115 years, where both claim historic and religious ties to the land. The geopolitical disputed area stretches over a 100,000 square-mile landscape, sitting between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River with an unresolved conclusion and far-reaching implications. Over the period of the conflict, Israel’s share of land has gradually expanded.

(Source: Loss of Land, 2012.)
APPENDIX D

PALESTINIANS SURROUNDED 2006 (MAP)
(Carter, 2006.)
1) How did you start playing football and what does football mean to you?

2) Tell me about your father and your relationship with him.

3) Did he ever ask you to cover up your hair or was that completely your decision?

4) What was your first experience going overseas? How are other countries different from your own?

5) Tell me about your experience during Intifata and the story of how your mother held the family together.

6) Tell me about your mother and your relationship with her.

7) If you can contribute something to your country, what area would you work on the most?

8) How do you feel when you play football? Explain why you mentioned you just want to play instead of managing a team.

9) What are the challenges for women to play football in Palestine?

10) You mentioned to me the day we went to the concert that people in Palestine need more activities to do in life under the restriction of movement. Can you elaborate?

11) Tell me about living conditions in Palestine such as water issues, trash and the infrastructure.

12) Do people need permits to go to Israel? How often do people in Palestine get to have such permits?

13) Talk about the places you and your family used to go in Israel when traveling was easy and free.

14) Was your family happy the day we went to Jaffa? How about your mother? Were you happy to see her to relax and see the wide open sea?

15) What do you think is the future of Palestine?

16) What’s your point of view on religion?

17) You have a lot of Christian friends, but unlike some of the western world, Christian and Muslim live and work peacefully together here. Do you think it’s just a fear of the unknown?

18) Do you think sports, in this case, football should be separated from religion and politics?

19) Talk some about why you think it's important to better yourself in terms of education.
20) Your mother was very strong during Intifada when all the men were in jail, tell me more about her and how she influenced you.

21) You are a firm believer of educating yourself to become a better person and contribute back to the community. What would you say to the young girls to encourage them?

22) What is your hope and dream for the future?
APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: HONEY
1) People may have a misconception that Palestine is all Muslim and forget that Bethlehem is the birthplace of Jesus, so how do you feel about that since you’re a Christian in the mist of the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts.

2) What can you say about playing sports together side by side with Muslim players, and, more importantly on being friends with them?

3) Do you often pray for the freedom of your country and ending the suffering of your people?

4) What happened to you and your family during the 40 days of siege of Nativity Church in 2002?

5) How did you start playing football and what does football mean to you?

6) Tell me about your relationship with your parents, were they supportive of the idea of you playing soccer at the very beginning? And how did their attitude change?

7) How often were football practice sessions scheduled? And does the team still practice on the hard concrete? If yes, why?

8) What’s your goal for the future women soccer players in Palestine?

9) When did you undertake the FIFA master program? And what is the program teaching you?

10) Where have you been with the FIFA master? What is the overall experience?

11) Tell me about the FIFA internship in the development department. What process did you go through to get the job? And are you looking forward to work with FIFA?

12) What was your dream growing up? Have you had a dream come true experience with the FIFA program and now getting the internship? Have you dreamt about this day?

13) After experiencing the difference of being here [in Switzerland], is there a dilemma of deciding whether to go home after the internship or stay here in Europe?

14) You mentioned about how someone once told you to follow the ball and the ball will take you everywhere. And the ball indeed has taken you to your dream. What is your advice to the next female generation of Palestine?

15) What’s next? Time to look for another dream to achieve?
APPENDIX G

POTENTIAL FILM FESTIVAL DISTRIBUTION FOR KICKING ALL ODDS
1) Ann Arbor Film Festival
2) Abu Dhabi Film Festival
3) AFI Dallas, International Film Festival
4) Atlanta Film Festival
5) Athens International Film + Video Festival
6) Arab Film Festival
7) Arab Film Festival Australia
8) Ashland Independent Film Festival
9) Austin film Festival
10) Beijing International Film Festival
11) Beirut International Film Festival
12) Berlin International Film Festival
13) Big Muddy Film Festival
14) Big Sky Documentary Film Fest
15) Busan International Film Festival
16) Byron Bay International Film Fest
17) Cairo International Film Festival
18) Cannes Film Festival
19) Cape Winelands Film Festival
20) Chicago International Film Festival
21) Chicago Palestine Film Festival
22) Cinequest Film Festival
23) Cleveland International Film Festival
24) Discovery Zone Luxembourg City Film Festival
25) Doxa: Documentary Film and Video Festival
26) Dubai International Film Festival
27) Durban International Film Festival
28) Edinburgh International Film Festival
29) Festival dei Popoli
30) FIFA
31) Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival
32) Florida Film Festival
33) FreedomFilmFest
34) Full Frame Documentary Film Fest
35) Glasgow Film Festival
36) Gold Lion Film Festival
37) Haifa International Film Festival
38) Hong Kong International Film Festival
39) Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary
40) Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival
41) International Film Festival of India
42) International Film Festival of Kerala
43) International Film Festival Mannheim-Heidelberg
44) International Film Festival of Marrakech
45) International Film Festival Rotterdam
46) Jakarta International Film Festival
47) Jerusalem Film Festival
48) Karlovy Vary International Film Festival
49) Kolkata Film Festival
50) Leeds International Film Festival
51) London International Documentary Festival
52) London Palestine Film Festival
53) Los Angeles Film Festival
54) Ma’an TV (West Bank)
55) Melbourne International Film Festival
56) Middle Eastern Film Festival NYC
57) Moscow International Film Festival
58) Mumbai International Film Festival
59) Myrtle Beach International Film Fest
60) Nashville Film Festival
61) New Horizons International Film Festival
62) New Mexico International Film Fest
63) Newport International Film Festival
64) Next Frame Film Festival
65) Norwegian International Film Festival
66) Norwich Film Festival
67) Reykjavík International Film Festival
68) Palm Beach International Film Festival
69) USA Film Festival
70) Santa Barbara International Film Fest
71) San Francisco International Film Festival
72) San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival
73) San Sebastián International Film Festival
74) Sedona International Film Festival
75) Seattle International Film Festival
76) Sofia International Film Festival
77) Sofia Middle East & North Africa Region Film Festival
78) Solothurn Film Festival
79) Sonoma International Film Festival
80) Stockholm International Film Festival
81) Sundance Film Festival
82) Tenerife International Film Festival
83) Thessaloniki Documentary Festival
84) Toronto Independent Film Festival
85) Tokyo International Film Festival
86) Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival
87) Universities in Palestinian territories
88) Vienna International Film Festival
89) Venice Film Festival
90) Women's International Film & Arts Film Festival
91) Women Make Waves Film Festival Taiwan
92) Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival
REFERENCES


