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Gaza

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Abstract

This is a film review of *Gaza* (2019) directed by Garry Keane and Andrew McConnell.

Keywords

Palestine, Israel, Occupation

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Gaza (2019), dir. Garry Keane and Andrew McConnell

This is a remarkable movie about ordinary people living on the Gaza Strip. What we discover is the misery and hopelessness of living in Gaza. We also discover the resourcefulness and courage of the Palestinians who live on this tiny sliver of land. (Nearly two million people live in an area that is 25 miles long and only 7 miles wide.)

Among those interviewed are Ahmed, a 14 year old boy; a taxi driver, Mahmoud, who used to be a photographer, but is now a life guard; a tailor who can work only when the electricity is available; a woman who put on the first fashion show in Gaza; a son who has just been released from an Israeli prison; a rapper; and a theater director. For each of these people life is harsh. There are few jobs available, so poverty is rampant. Many of the buildings have been destroyed in bombing raids. The crossings into Israel and Egypt are closed so getting goods from Israel or Egypt

is more difficult than before. Israeli gun boats keep anyone from entering or leaving Gaza by sea, which affects Palestinian fishing in the Mediterranean Sea.

Despite all of these obstacles the people interviewed in the film use music, theater, family gatherings, the beach and other resources for living better under the harsh conditions imposed upon them. The kids play soccer, a young woman learns to play the cello, people go to the beach. All in an effort to deal with their situation. And many are successful. Most of these people want freedom and opportunity.

The movie does identify the blockade imposed by Israel, along with bombings and shootings, as reasons why life is so difficult in Gaza. But, interestingly, the people in the movie have nothing to say about Hamas. One of the characters says that the world has abandoned Gaza because it is ruled by Hamas, but the role of Hamas and its rocket attacks on Israel and its commitment to a Palestinian state throughout the region are never mentioned.

As a documentary film portraying the lives of Palestinians in Gaza, this is a remarkable movie. As a film that deals with the politics of Gaza, it fails to offer an objective perspective.