



RUTGERS

Center for Security,
Race, and Rights



Friends and Supporters,

No university has been left unaffected by the wave of political activism on college campuses across the United States. Students of different religious, racial, and ethnic backgrounds are testing our nation's commitment to free speech and academic freedom as they vocally support or oppose U.S. foreign policy toward Palestine and Israel.

Watching in real time the skyrocketing death toll of tens of thousands of Palestinians killed by the Israeli military in Gaza, young people responded with organized protests, sit ins, and teach ins at their universities that centered the experiences of Palestinians – a people vilified in American politics since the 1950s. Student defenders of Palestinian human rights faced an unprecedented campaign of censorship, criminalization, and violence by police forces invited onto campus by the same administrators who claim to prioritize student safety. In stark contrast, pro-Israeli student protests occurred without retaliation from university administrators or lawmakers.

College students put into practice their classroom lessons on American civics only to discover what racial minorities have experienced for generations: rights on papers are often hollow when practiced against the interests of powerful people and institutions.

It is this racialized reality that motivates our team at the Center for Security, Race and Rights to tenaciously advance the civil and human rights of Muslim, Arab and South Asian communities in the United States and abroad—even in the face of hateful attacks and smears by extremist lawmakers, activists, and organizations. Our response to un-American censorship campaigns has been more speech by experts, which included a highly attended **Palestine Teach In Series** by Dr. Zachary Foster and a policy presentation by former State Department official Josh Paul on **Origins and Outcomes of U.S. Defense Policy Toward Israel**.

We reject the specious zero-sum frame that positions the safety and civil rights of Palestinian, Arab and Muslim communities as mutually exclusive to those of Jewish communities. Indeed, this theme informed CSRR's groundbreaking report **Presumptively Antisemitic: Islamophobic Tropes in the Palestine Israel Discourse**, which I co-authored with Mitchell Plitnick. The report examines the bad faith political strategy of falsely accusing Muslim, Arab and Palestinian experts of engaging in antisemitism on account of their political critiques of Israeli government policies

and practices. Such racialized campaigns peddle Islamophobic tropes for purposes of censoring perspectives that center the experiences of Palestinians.

The Center for Security, Race and Rights, therefore, elevates voices of communities that have long been silenced and marginalized. As this year's **Humanizing 'the Other' Lecture Series** demonstrates, we strive to include diverse perspectives and engage in healthy, productive collaboration. We started the series off featuring Professor Jonathan Hafetz to speak on **Punishing Atrocities through a Fair Trial: International Criminal Law from Nuremberg to the Age of Global Terrorism**.

Building on the theme of international law and dehumanization, Professor Noura Erakat presented **Justice for Some: Law and the Question of Palestine** and Dr. Tariq Haddad described the **horrific humanitarian crisis killing Palestinians in Gaza** caused by an indefinite Israeli military campaign.

Our examination of the otherization of minority communities also included lectures by nationally acclaimed scholars such as Professor Sheryll Cashin to present **White Space, Black Hood: Opportunity Hoarding and Segregation in the Age of Inequality** and Professor Mahmood Mamdani to present **Neither Settler, Nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities**.

We ended our annual lecture series with the same theme of our first lecture: international law. Kenneth Roth, the former executive director of Human Rights Watch, offered a nuanced analysis of law and politics in his lecture **International Humanitarian Law and the Crisis in Gaza**.

Our newest initiative is the launch of the **Race and Rights Podcast**. Each episode features a scholar, lawyer, or expert whose work provides critical analysis of laws and policies that impact the civil or human rights of Muslim, Arab or South Asian communities. Learn from our esteemed guests by subscribing to the podcast at the platform of your choice **here**.

As we take stock of the numerous challenges facing our society, let us answer the call of our courageous college students for education, discussion, and programming that meaningfully includes the experiences of less powerful, less wealthy, and historically marginalized communities.

With **your financial support**, CSRR will continue to act on the courage of our convictions to ensure civil and human rights on paper apply to everyone in practice.

Sincerely,

Sahar Aziz
Distinguished Professor of Law
Chancellor's Social Justice Scholar

CSRR Launches The Race and Rights Podcast



THE RACE AND RIGHTS PODCAST

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The Race and Rights podcast explores the myriad issues that adversely impact the civil and human rights of America's diverse Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities here as well as abroad.

Host Sahar Aziz engages with academics and experts that provide critical analysis of law, policy, and politics that center the experiences of under-represented communities in the United States and the Global South.

To listen to the Race and Rights Podcast on YouTube, click **here**.

**CSRR Launches New Report: Presumptively Antisemitic: Islamophobic Tropes
in the Palestine-Israel Discourse**



Rutgers University Law School
Center for Security, Race and Rights

PRESUMPTIVELY ANTISEMITIC: ISLAMOPHOBIC TROPES IN THE PALESTINE-ISRAEL DISCOURSE

November 2023

The struggle for Palestinian rights has never been more important – or more dire.

The conflict has reached a turning point, as the year 2023 became the deadliest for Palestinians on record. In the Gaza Strip, Palestinians face an existential crisis. Leading genocide scholars, experts in international law, and respected human rights organizations have warned that the world is witnessing a genocide, unchecked war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity by the state of Israel.

Simultaneously, the demonization of pro-Palestinian voices in the United States has risen to a fever pitch – particularly when those voices are Muslim and Arab. Zionists and Islamophobes attack critics of Israel's policies and practices by conflating anti-Zionism with antisemitism and seek to censor discussions within the context of the 56-year-long illegal Israeli occupation and the Nakba. Instead, antisemitism is weaponized to silence and discredit advocates of Palestinian human rights.

Presumptively Antisemitic: Islamophobic Tropes in the Palestine-Israel Discourse examines an understudied and little-understood aspect of Palestine-Israel discourse: how Islamophobia works to fuel and sustain spurious allegations of antisemitism used by the Israel Lobby and its Zionist supporters to shame and silence critics of Israeli ethnic cleansing and

apartheid.

While people of all faiths and ethnicities understand and empathize with the historic plight of the Palestinians, nowhere is pro-Israel bias more obvious than when directed against Muslim and Arab defenders of Palestinian human rights. And mainstream media often uncritically repeats such harmful, unsubstantiated claims against Arabs and Muslims.

Three recommendations for U.S. civil society, universities, and elected officials would help all those interested in confronting and countering both Islamophobia and genuine antisemitism – while maintaining necessary support for the human rights of Palestinians:

1. Congress and the President must include the experiences and perspectives of Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim American communities in foreign policy development. U.S. foreign policy on Palestine and Israel currently excludes the lived experiences, analysis, and perspectives of Arabs (especially Palestinians) and Muslims. One-sided, biased input by pro-Israeli nonprofit organizations, elected officials, and analysts predictably dehumanizes Palestinians and exempts Israel from human rights norms.
2. Universities must preserve academic freedom and free speech rights. When it comes to the topic of Palestine, students and faculty face overt hostility when they host events, conduct research, publish articles, or engage in campus activism. University administrators enable, or participate in, harassment of faculty and students. Specious administrative complaints of antisemitism coupled with malicious blacklisting by a nationwide Islamophobic network work to quash criticism of Israel.
3. The U.S. government must hold Israel accountable for violations of Palestinians' human rights. Ongoing violations of international law by Israel – such as settlement expansion, indefinite detention, extrajudicial killings, house demolitions, and collective punishment of the population of Gaza occur unchecked because the United States consistently looks the other way. Even U.S. domestic laws are flouted in order to craft human rights exceptions for the apartheid Israeli regime.

To read *Presumptively Antisemitic: Islamophobic Tropes in the Palestine-Israel Discourse*, click [here](#).

Humanizing 'the Other' Lecture Series

Punishing Atrocities and Fair Trials: From Nuremberg to Global Terrorism with Jonathan Hafetz (9/13/23)

Prosecuting individuals who commit mass crimes is an important duty of states. Since World War II, an increasingly elaborate domestic and international legal framework has emerged for trying and punishing atrocities. But it is important that the rights of the accused are protected in the process. This lecture will examine the challenge of ensuring fair trials, with particular attention on the long shadow cast by the U.S. War on Terrorism, which continues to reverberate across Arab and Muslim communities today.



Watch [here](#).

Psychoanalysis Under Occupation:

Practicing Resistance in Palestine with Lara Sheehi (10/10/23)

Dr. Lara Sheehi presents her book "Psychoanalysis Under Occupation: Practicing Resistance in Palestine," a profound exploration of psychological resilience and defiance, known as *sumud*, amidst the harsh realities of occupation and settler colonialism in Palestine. Dr. Sheehi delves into the deep psychological expressions of self and collective endurance through the lens of psychoanalysis. With clinical case studies, she reveals how Palestinian clinicians and the community navigate an existence enveloped by violence and oppression, yet resist being reduced to mere victims through the power of human rights discourse.

[Watch here.](#)



The New Crusades: Islamophobia and the Global War on Muslims with Khaled Beydoun (11/14/2023)

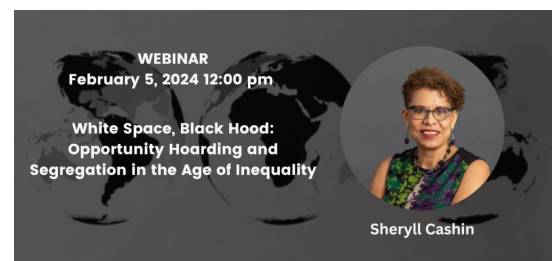
Discover a groundbreaking exploration of Islamophobia on a global scale in 'The New Crusades' by Khaled Beydoun. This lecture offers an unprecedented deep dive into how both democratic and authoritarian regimes worldwide are exploiting Islamophobia to target Muslim populations. Beydoun meticulously analyzes the impact of the American War on Terror, revealing its pivotal role in amplifying and interconnecting anti-Muslim campaigns across continents.

[Watch here.](#)



White Space, Black Hood: Opportunity Hoarding and Segregation in the Age of Inequality with Sheryll Cashin (2/5/2024)

Sheryll Cashin presents the anti-Black historical origins of American residential segregation. She summarizes current anti-Black processes that reify residential caste: boundary maintenance, opportunity hoarding, and stereotype-driven surveillance. Finally, she reflects on how all humans are affected by systems of residential exclusion and how to



build a multiracial politics that promotes inclusion and fair access to opportunity.

[Watch here.](#)

Justice for Some: Law and the Question of Palestine with Noura Erakat (2/21/2024)

Justice for Some offers a new approach to understanding the Palestinian struggle for freedom, told through the power and control of international law. Focusing on key junctures across a century-long arc—from the Balfour Declaration in 1917 to present-day wars in Gaza- this lecture shows how the strategic deployment of law has shaped current conditions. Over the past century, the law has done more to advance Israel's interests than the Palestinians'. But this outcome was never inevitable. Law is politics, and its meaning and application depend on the political intervention of states and people alike. Within the law, change is possible. International law can serve the cause of freedom when it is mobilized in support of a political movement. Presenting the promise and risk of international law, Justice for Some calls for renewed action and attention to the Question of Palestine.

[Watch here.](#)

Neither Settler Nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities with Mahmood Mamdani (3/6/24)

Mahmood Mamdani examines how the colonial state and the nation-state have been mutually constructed through the politicization of a religious or ethnic majority at the expense of an equally manufactured minority. He proffers that political violence demands political solutions: not criminal justice for perpetrators but a rethinking of the political community for all survivors—victims, perpetrators, bystanders, beneficiaries—based on common residence and the commitment to build a common future without the permanent political identities of settler and native.

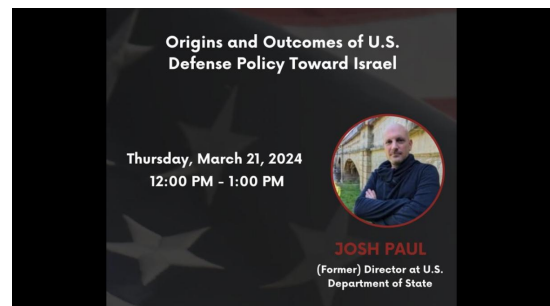
[Watch here.](#)



Origins and Outcomes of U.S. Defense Policy Toward Israel with Josh Paul (3/21/24)

The United States describes its commitment to support Israel as “iron clad” to the extent that our nation is providing diplomatic and military support while Israel conducts what the ICJ has described as a “plausible genocide” in Gaza. Former U.S. State Department official, Josh Paul, will examine how U.S. security and defense policy undermines American interests abroad and its most fundamental values at home.

[Watch here.](#)



The West, Israel and Settler Colonization of Palestine with Joseph Massad (12/4/23)

Professor Joseph Massad discusses the history of Western colonial intervention in Palestine before and after the establishment of Israel. Professor Massad’s lecture contextualized Israel's current war against the Palestinian people and the history of western racism which enables that support.

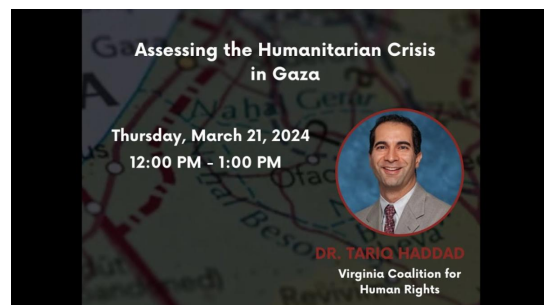
[Watch here.](#)



Assessing the Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza with Dr. Tariq Haddad (3/21/24)

Palestinian American cardiologist Dr. Tariq Haddad, who lost more than 100 family members since October 7 2023, discusses the grave humanitarian impact of Israel’s bombing campaign, mass starvation practices, and total blockade of Gaza.

[Watch here.](#)



CSRR Launches Palestine Teach In Series

Palestine Teach In Series

The Center for Security, Race and Rights hosted a **Palestine Teach In Series** that centered the experiences of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank who have lived under

Israeli occupation since 1967.

Teach-In on Gaza [Watch here.](#)

Palestine 101 [Watch here.](#)

West Bank and Jerusalem [Watch here.](#)

Israeli Settlements in the Palestinian Occupied Territories [Watch here.](#)

Teach In on Political Zionism. [Watch here.](#)



PALESTINE TEACH IN
RUTGERS
Center for Security, Race, and Rights

 Dr. Zachary Foster CSRR Senior Fellow	MON 11/16 Teach-In on Gaza 12:00 PM EST.
	TUES 11/21 Palestine 101 12:00 PM EST.
	TUES 12/5 West Bank and Jerusalem 12:00 PM EST.
	FRI 12/8 Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories 12:00 PM EST.
	WED 4/10 Teach In on Political Zionism 12:00 PM EST.

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CSRR in the News

60+ Journalism Profs Demand Investigation into Controversial NYT Article Alleging Oct. 7 Mass Rape. *Democracy Now.* (interviewing Deepa Kumar) (2024).

A group of more than 60 journalism professors has written to The New York Times calling on the paper to commission an independent review of its report that members of Hamas committed widespread sexual violence on October 7. Numerous media outlets, as well as some of the paper's own staff, have raised questions about the December 28 article headlined "Screams Without Words," reported in part by a freelance Israeli journalist who had liked multiple posts on social media advocating for violence against Palestinians. Read more [here](#).



Confronting Prejudice. *Thirteen.* (interviewing Sahar Aziz) (2024).

Sahar Aziz, Distinguished Professor of Law at Rutgers Law School joins Steve Aduato on PBS as part of a special series, "Confronting Racism & Prejudice," to respond to the historic rise in Islamophobia across the nation, the vandalism of the Center for Islamic Life at Rutgers University, and the college campus protests. Read more [here](#).



The failures of the UN in the Israel-Palestine conflict. Susan M. Akram. *Open Global Rights*

(2024).

Structural power imbalances in the UN system have prevented it from halting Israel's ongoing war crimes against Gazans. Individual states and civil society must step in to prevent further aggressions and ensure accountability.

Read more [here](#).



Gaza is the greatest test liberalism has faced since 1945. And it is failing. Faisal Kutty. *Middle East Eye* (2024).

Last month, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell called Gaza “a graveyard for tens of thousands of people and also a graveyard for many of the most important principles of humanitarian law”. The reality may be even worse. I fear it may become the graveyard of liberalism itself. Three decades ago, liberalism was the lead chariot in the procession of the liberal democratic project. New democracies were emerging in Europe; the Soviet Union had crumbled, and Russia was in transition; the Berlin Wall had fallen; and South Africa's apartheid regime was collapsing. Even China exhibited signs of change. Read more [here](#).



Majority of US voters want Gaza cease-fire. Do Jewish, evangelical faithful agree? Saher Selod. *USA Today* (2024).

On Jan. 25, Somerville's City Council overwhelmingly voted in favor of a resolution calling on President Joe Biden to work toward an immediate cease-fire in Gaza by the Israeli government. Somerville was the first city in Massachusetts to pass the cease-fire resolution, with Cambridge and Medford following suit. Read more [here](#).



Unpacking Islamophobia: Five Questions on Islamophobia in Gaza Report. Sahar Aziz and Mitchell Plitnick. *Bridge Initiative Team* (2024).

In Episode 12 of “Unpacking Islamophobia,” our guests for the March 2024 episode are

Professor Sahar Aziz and Mitchell Plitnick who are co-authors of a **November 2023 Rutgers University report** from the Center for Security, Race and Rights called “Presumptively Antisemitic: Islamophobic Tropes in the Palestine-Israel Discourse,” which examines how anti-Palestinian racism and Islamophobia have been used to silence criticism of the Israeli government. Read more **here**.



Beyond 'Genocide Joe': This election year, Muslim-American voters are at a crossroads. Nazia Kazi. *Middle East Eye* (2024).

This November, Muslim Americans are poised to make a coordinated impact on the presidential election. With the campaign to #AbandonBiden over President Joe Biden's ham-fisted support for the Israeli assault on Gaza, Muslim and Arab-American voters are at an electoral crossroads. Short of severing all funding to Israel and pushing for a full war crimes tribunal for Israeli officials, Biden can do nothing to restore this voting base, especially in the key state of Michigan. Read more **here**.



The Center for Security, Race and Rights (CSRR) engages in research, education, and advocacy on law and policy that adversely impact the civil and human rights of America's diverse Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities. We do so through an interfaith, cross-racial, and interdisciplinary approach.

To learn more about CSRR's work, visit our website at <https://csrr.rutgers.edu>

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