



# Back Stories: U.S. News Production and Palestinian Politics

*Amahl Bishara*

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Few topics in the news are more hotly contested than the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—and news coverage itself is always a subject of debate. But rarely do these debates incorporate an on-the-ground perspective of what and who newsmaking entails. Studying how journalists work in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Ramallah, and Nablus, and on the tense roads that connect these cities, Amahl Bishara demonstrates how the production of U.S. news about Palestinians depends on multifaceted collaborations, typically invisible to Western readers. She focuses on the work that Palestinian journalists do behind the scenes and below the bylines—as fixers, photojournalists, camerapeople, reporters, and producers—to provide the news that Americans read, see, and hear every day.

Ultimately, this book demonstrates how Palestinians play integral roles in producing U.S. news and how U.S. journalism in turn shapes Palestinian politics. U.S. objectivity is in Palestinian journalists' hands, and Palestinian self-determination cannot be fully understood without attention to the journalist standing off to the side, quietly taking notes. *Back Stories* examines news stories big and small—Yassir Arafat's funeral, female suicide bombers, protests against the separation barrier, an all-but-unnoticed killing of a mentally disabled man—to investigate urgent questions about objectivity, violence, the state, and the production of knowledge in today's news. This book reaches beyond the headlines into the lives of Palestinians during the second intifada to give readers a new vantage point on both Palestinians and journalism.

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