ISRAEL-PALESTINE: THE PEDAGOGICAL CHALLENGE
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ABSTRACT

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict began in a critical sense in 1948 and continues to this day. An understanding of this continuing dispute requires knowledge of its historical, political, religious, demographic, emotional and geopolitical dimensions, and of the way anti-semitism figures in how people engage in discussions of the Middle-East. After sketching out these realities, we consider how disagreement over the framing of the past generates disagreement over visions of the future. Drawing on the work of Jakob Feldt and Ilan Gur-ze'ev, among others, we highlight the challenges posed to educators in regard to how each of the two major narratives, Israeli and Palestinian, compete with the Other’s account of their shared and fractured history. Using an incident involving the British Columbia Ministry of Education as a reference point, we explore the way special interest groups engage with the realm of public education, as well as the challenge of deconstructing conflicting historical interpretations. The paper suggests some pedagogical approaches for moving beyond the contesting of histories and for the development of better-grounded student involvement with this complex issue.