



Since I began this journey of discovery in 2003, I can happily report some progress in producing photographs that are slowly finding an audience.

On my most recent trip from March thru May 2006, I was able to pursue my three main themes: water, youth, and Non-violent resistance to the occupation. And I discovered several more themes which I plan to investigate more fully: people in devotion at the holy sites, on the street in their ordinary roles, and the famed wildflowers of Palestine.

The slide shows and print exhibits I offer and on line exhibits are on my website, teeksaphoto.org.

What have I done with these photos and writings?

I made a West Coast tour in January and February 2007, giving presentations to approximately 500 people in 16 different venues, including two Anchorage high schools and 3 Friends meetings. I ranged from British Columbia near the Yukon, thru Alaska, Washington state, to California. I shared the proceeds with various Israel-Palestine organizations. In the Boston area I produced exhibits and presentations at churches, universities, Friends meetings, and other community venues. I'm now planning another tour of the South for this summer.

Thanks to many incisive questions from audiences, I've learned better what to examine on my next trip to the Middle East next fall. Occasionally someone objected to my views, usually respectfully.

One example of a question leading to further insight came from the last show about Gaza, in Seattle, thru the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. The audience included several Jews who had been many times to the



region in support of Palestinian rights, a young man from Gaza, and a woman who'd worked in Gaza with the AFSC and then the UN as a nurse to Palestinian refugees in 1949-50. The question was, that word "terrorist," what does it suggest? Maybe try dropping the word entirely and be more specific—attacker of civilians, self or suicide bomber, fighter, militant, etc. "Terrorist" tends to demonize the Palestinians and remove the Israelis from the category of terrorist. I've learned to nuance the word "martyr," why not "terrorist"?

To continue this project I plan a 4th journey to Israel-Palestine next fall, probably October thru December 2007. As before I'll volunteer my photography and teaching to organizations including the UN, the Israeli-Palestinian Center for Research and Information, Palestinian Water Authority, Gaza Community Mental Health Program, Ramallah Friends School, Ramallah Friends Meeting and its new International Ramallah Friends Center, and the American Friends Service Committee.

Side work has included giving workshops about Palestine/Israel at New England Yearly Meeting (scheduled for the 3rd year this summer), helping establish the Working Group about Israel-Palestine at the Friends Meeting at Cambridge, and making presentations at the US Social Forum this summer in Atlanta. I'm also part of the Cambridge to Bethlehem People to People Initiative, helping organize a delegation to Bethlehem this summer.

Without support from many people in the States and Palestine and Israel who donate money, prayers, guidance, organizational expertise, and feedback, I'd not be able to do this work.



It saddens me to hear of the difficulties Skip is going through [finding an audience]. This is discouraging for us who are struggling in the situation. I never would have suspected that his pictures were not balanced. The first act of nonviolent resistance is to tell the truth. His pictures shared that. Let's pray our dear friend does not give up!
—Jean Zaru, Quaker and activist, Ramallah, Palestine

Front cover: Man from Gaza showing US-made artillery shell which landed in the Gaza Strip, May 2006; swimming pool in Ma'ale Adummim, an Israeli settlement, 2003; raw sewage lagoon, Rafah, Gaza Strip, May 2006



Old City, Jerusalem, March 2006

From an interview published in Servant Song by Agape:

Some of your biggest struggles on this issue have been with Quakers. Why?

Skip: Self-silencing. There is a blanket smothering debate about Palestine Quakers and in the US generally. Something happens when an American says there is a real crisis in Palestine and much of the problem rests with the Israelis. Jimmy Carter uses the term "Apartheid." Then Jews cry, "Don't use that word." Why the snuffing out of debate? The primary cause is the Israeli lobby. This is not a conspiracy but a tightly knit collection of some of the more influential American Jews and others who support Israel uncritically and strongly. The Anti-Defamation League is continually writing on how to spot anti-Semitism. Demonization of Israel, they say, is anti-Semitic, so is divestment of Israel. These Jewish voices are consistently saying, "Why single out Israel?" The reason for focusing on Israel, is because the US and Israel are tied at the umbilical cord. We see it in the financial and military support of Israel. Holocaust guilt is a strong pro-Israel factor, as well, and that may be legitimate. The US performed ignobly refusing Jews asylum in the States while our military reconnaissance photos showed clearly what was going on in the camps.

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Reporting: breaking the silence

a photographic project by **Skip Schiel,**
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*For the wound of the daughter of my people is my heart wounded,
I mourn, and dismay has taken hold of me.
Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?
Why then has the health of the daughter of my people not been
restored?
O that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that
I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of
my people!!*

Jeremiah 8:22-9:1