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***Creating and Planning Transnational Place:
International Activists, Graffiti and the Israeli Separation
Barrier***

Robert R. Saunders

Throughout the first Palestinian intifada, graffiti served as a form of communication and resistance against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Today, graffiti continue to be used in communicating resistance against the ongoing occupation. However, unlike the First Intifada, there is noticeable international influence and participation in the graffiti on the concrete sections of the Israeli Separation Barrier. British street artist Banksy, former Pink Floyd bassist Roger Waters, the Netherlands-based 'Send-a-Message' project as well as countless individual international activists have placed graffiti on the wall to express solidarity with Palestinians. This article, based on fieldwork in the West Bank conducted between July and September 2009, explores 1) how the graffiti on the Israeli Separation Barrier functions as a form of resistance by transnational activists, 2) how the community of activists and artists placing graffiti on the barrier transform it into a newly re/deterritorialized transnational place, and 3) the ways in which planning professionals might engage with such 'soft spaces' created in a more disruptive world. The contestation of space and place through this transnational production of graffiti on the barrier draws into question issues of deterritorialization and reterritorialization as they relate to the Israeli Separation Barrier as well as to other spaces and places that fail to conform to the traditional and normalized spaces bound by governmentability.

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