

TO: Members of the AHA Council

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We urge you to rescind your veto of the [Resolution to Oppose Scholasticide in Gaza](#) and put the resolution to a vote of all AHA members. The Council's action is undemocratic, reveals a lack of trust in the judgment of its members, and violates the Association's and Council's own historical precedents. Heeding repeated Palestinian scholars' [calls for solidarity](#) and [support](#), 82% of the over 500 members who attended the January 5, 2025 Business Meeting supported the resolution. Council's action demonstrates the force of the "Palestine Exception" that suppresses solidarity, undermines free speech, and denies the essential humanity of the Palestinian people and their rights, including the right to education.

The term [scholasticide](#) refers to [systematic destruction](#), in whole or in part, of the educational life of a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group. Since October 7, 2023, Israel destroyed all universities in Occupied Gaza, killing 161 professors and more than 903 students, and injuring 1,297 professors and 1,805 students. Israel decimated all of Gaza's archives and libraries, and most of its historical sites. In the Occupied West Bank, and in the same period, Israeli forces killed 36 university students and injured more than 141. This scholasticide is fueled by US taxpayer money as well as military and diplomatic support, and it is justified by spurious historical arguments.

Executive Director James Grossman stated that the resolution contravened the AHA's "constitution and bylaws because it lies outside the scope of the association's mission and purpose." Yet it is consistent with the AHA's [Guiding Principles on Taking a Public Stance](#), which emphasize the association's "*responsibility to take public stands*" including "*when public or private authorities, in the United States or elsewhere, censor or seek to prevent the writing, publication, exhibition, teaching, or other practices of history or seek to punish historians.*" Scholasticide in Palestine far exceeds the levels of repression outlined in these principles.

Moreover Council has regularly criticized foreign governments, such as those of Poland, China, and Afghanistan. On February 28, 2022, and, without a membership vote, it condemned "in the strongest possible terms" Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Russian President Putin's "abuse of history." At the 2007 Business Meeting, members ratified a [Resolution on United States Government Practices Inimical to the Historical Profession](#) urging members "to do whatever they can to bring the Iraq war to a speedy conclusion." Council submitted this obviously political resolution for a membership vote, where it [passed by an overwhelming margin](#).

In a context of rising authoritarianism, many major U.S. institutions are engaging in [anticipatory obedience](#), much of which is geared to suppressing Palestine solidarity and criticism of the U.S. and Israel. Anticipatory obedience is an affront to our professional standards and our ethical responsibilities as scholars, educators, and people. It is also a dead-end strategy, imposed from the top, that only emboldens those who are waging an assault on truth. As the American Association of University Professors recently put it, "Now is not the time to be complacent. Now is the time to act." **Send the *Scholasticide Resolution* to the full membership of the AHA!**