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The Case Against Academic Boycotts of Israel

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There have been numerous works on the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict, which arose during the middle of the 20th century. This anthology, compiled by Nelson (Univ. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) and Brahm (Northern Michigan Univ.) provides a broad overview of recent efforts to expand the BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) censure movement against Israel to higher educational institutions, first starting at European universities and now extending to ones within the United States. Written mostly by academic scholars, the essays are diverse, informative, and lucidly presented, covering the philosophical problems of academic boycotts, discussions of contentious debates at some academic associations and a few college campuses, the BDS movement, and the Left and American culture among other topics. Verdict While some readers may want to dismiss this work as partisan because of its title, several contributors have broadened the topic in a crucial way: the importance of supporting academic freedom, lest narrow, single-issue politics irreparably damage the university's mission of encouraging the unfettered exchange of knowledge and ideas. The editors also include pro-BDS documents and websites. Highly recommended for researchers of Israeli history. Donald Altschiller, Boston Univ. Lib. (c) Copyright 2014. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc.