



IMPROVING PATIENT OUTCOMES IN MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS:
CLINICAL TRIAL DATA AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

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Health of Palestinians and chronic humiliation

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In their abstract for the 2013 *Lancet* Palestinian Health Alliance, Brian Barber and colleagues¹ are not maintaining “the highest scientific standards”² by insinuating that the strong presence of Israeli forces at checkpoints and barriers explains the chronic humiliation suffered by Palestinians in the West Bank.

The two intifadas (uprisings), consisted of 10 years of murderous terror campaigns against Israeli civilians, which resulted in increased vigilance at the borders between areas under full Israeli control and areas under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority. Amnesty International publishes two separate reports annually on political violence in the West Bank and Gaza. One deals with the actions of Israel, the other with the actions of the Palestinian Authority. The latter describes extreme political violence on the part of the Palestinian Authority during the periods that Barber and colleagues discuss. For example, during the second intifada the report describes “a situation where groups of armed Palestinians had almost free rein to carry out unlawful killings and other abuses.”³ In September, 2013, Amnesty International demanded that the Palestinian Authority's police and security forces “cease using unnecessary and excessive force” against peaceful protesters.⁴ Furthermore, gender-based violence against women and girls, in the form of honour killings and domestic violence, continues to be reported in the Amnesty International annual reports on the Palestinian Authority;⁵ however, there are no such accounts in the reports on Israeli actions.

Barber and colleagues do not help the Palestinians by ignoring political violence at the hands of their own governments.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

References

¹ Barber BK, McNeely C, Olsen JA, Spellings C, Belli RF. Effect of chronic exposure to humiliation on wellbeing in the occupied Palestinian territory: an event-history analysis. *Lancet* 2013; **382**: S7. [Summary](#) | [Full Text](#) | [PDF\(58KB\)](#) | [PubMed](#)

² Lancet. Research in the occupied Palestinian territory 4. Executive summary. <http://www.thelancet.com/health-in-the-occupied-palestinian-territory-2013>. (accessed Dec 15, 2013).

³ Amnesty International. Amnesty International Report 2004 – Palestinian Authority.

<http://www.refworld.org/docid/40b5a2000.html>. (accessed Dec 16, 2013).

[4](#) Amnesty International. Palestinian Authority must end use of excessive force in policing protests.

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