

# Bay Area Women in Black

## June 2015

BAWiB promised to issue a statement regarding the current dispute between Alison Weir and Jewish Voice for Peace. Our steering committee met the last week of June and agreed on these points:

The backgrounds of the members of BAWiB's steering committee include activism within the civil rights, LGBT rights, women's rights, environmental, labor, and anti-war movements, and we all have experience in community organizing. While we all share a deep commitment to a nonviolent end to the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestine, our various experiences compel us to step back somewhat from this controversy and to try to understand some of its implications.

Each of us has experienced oppression as a member of a specific targeted group. We understand and appreciate the hurt and anger that members of such groups feel when they are under attack. Nevertheless, turning this kind of hurt and anger on each other can (and has certainly been known to) cripple liberation movements across history. Empathy with the oppression and disenfranchisement of others is an ideal all of us should be striving towards. Remaining silent when confronted with injustice grates deeply against our mission of expressing publicly our support of human rights. We also believe that acknowledging our own biases, reactions, and emotions towards others is an essential part of working together towards our common objectives.

What is important is not to lose the focus on ending the occupation, ending all US military support for Israel as long as the occupation continues, and supporting Palestinian civil society's call for BDS. We hope to continue our alliances with all individuals and groups who share our focus, and will continue to work against violence, bigotry and divisiveness.