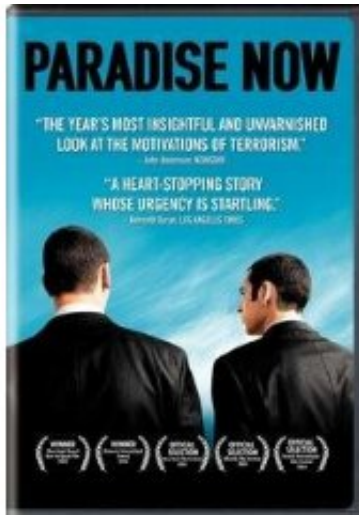


## Paradise Now | Revisited

by Rev. Joe Dirt - Monday, October 30, 2023

<https://curmudgeon-alley.com/paradise-now-revisited/>



I originally posted an article on [Paradise Now](#), the 2005 Golden Globe Winner – Best Foreign Film, in 2009. With the conflict between the Israelis and Hamas, it might be time to revisit the movie. It allows you to consider the world from a point of view that is not often taken into account in the West, the Palestinian.

Disclaimer: One should not be necessary, tis not the world we live in, though. I have written a few sharply clever – IMHO – satirical pieces that a small number of folks took way too seriously. This led to a smattering of vile comments as they did not appreciate my finely honed sense of ironic humor. While I approve most comments, a few went across the line.

This article deals with a movie that tells the story of two young men from the West Bank recruited to become suicide bombers. I am in no way condoning terrorism or violence of any sort. There is never a valid reason for it, although many groups and individuals will jump through intellectual hoops to do so. The movie explores why someone would be so radicalized as to commit such an action. It is something that we need to think about, what pushes people over this horrendous edge that they become terrorists.

I don't quite remember why this movie popped up on my radar, perhaps from receiving the Golden Globe award. At the time I was living and working in the Jackson, MS area. One of my co-workers was a Egyptian man who managed the mainframe databases of the company I worked for. He was a very intelligent man and secular. His wife, however, was a very devote Muslim, and the children were being raised in the religion. Our relationship was such that we had many interesting discussions involving cultural difference, religion, Southernisms, any number of subjects. His English was better than 99% of native speakers, but I still laugh when I think about him teaching himself to say "y'all"... with the proper southern drawl.

Living in Mississippi, if I wanted to see the movie I would need to purchase it. I did. I mentioned this to

him, and we made a night of it. One night I ate dinner at his home with his family. We watched the movie with his wife and his parents. They sent the kids off to their rooms due to the subject matter. I wish we had had more discussion after the movie, but I think no one quite knew what to say. And no one wanted to offend. I see that now as a bit of a missed opportunity.

I remember my Egyptian friend being very distressed at one point. In the public elementary school his children attended, the teachers had the habit of starting the day off with a Christian prayer. Remember it was Mississippi. He knew about separation of church and state, the prohibition of prayer in schools, but he did not want to create problems for his children. I would like to report that it had a rational outcome. It did not. He and his wife chose not to make waves, but advised their children on how to not participate without them making waves. It should not have been necessary. But once again I stray.

While the movie deals with a violent subject, the movie itself is not violent. Violence is only alluded to or results in a fade away. The vast majority of movies I have seen, I seldom think about, but *Paradise Now* made an impression. When the news is full of awfulness coming from the Middle East, I occasionally think about this movie. You cannot pen people up in ghettos for decades and not expect consequences.

Hamas and other such terrorist groups are a whole other story. That is more about fanaticism, misplaced religious fervor and anti-Semitism as a base tenet of the more radical Islamic sects. In a sane world such groups would not exist. Hamas has no more respect for the Palestinians in Gaza than they have for the Jews in Israel.

IMDB gives a good synopsis of the movie: [Paradise Now | IMDB](#)

The discussion on Wikipedia was also good: [Paradise Now | Wikipedia](#)

If you want to get a vague hint on what it feels like to live in these Palestinian ghettos then this movie will help. Remember, though, even before the current conflict, the conditions in Gaza are many degrees worse than the West Bank where this movie takes place.

The movie is still available at many places. Amazon has it for rent on Amazon Prime or for purchase. Several other sites also have it such as Apple TV, Vudu, etc. I did not come across an app with it for free, but it would be \$2 or \$3 well spent. It is in Arabic with English subtitles.

Just some food for thought in these troubled times.

[Subscribe to Curmudgeon Alley](#)