



# HonestReporting 2013 Q2 REPORT

Defending Israel From Media Bias

Welcome to HonestReporting's Q2 report. The past three months have witnessed continuing growth in our core content areas as well as the launch of new initiatives to bring us closer to our readers. We love getting your feedback and ideas – tell us how we're doing at [action@honestreporting.com](mailto:action@honestreporting.com)

## Content Highlights from 2013 Q2



HonestReporting's action alert generated a deluge of complaints against Dagbladet's anti-Semitic cartoon.

Norway's third largest newspaper, [\*Dagbladet\*](#), took the issue of circumcision well beyond the boundaries of civil debate and straight into the realm of blatant anti-Semitism with the cartoon above.

HonestReporting responded with an [action alert](#) causing a deluge of complaints.

"This is a despicable attack on Jews and a fundamental tradition of Jewish life," said HonestReporting CEO Joe Hyams, who was attending the [Global Forum for Combating Antisemitism](#) when the cartoon was published.

The emails clearly caught *Dagbladet's* attention as an editorial in the newspaper lamented this form of protest, bizarrely comparing it to the violence and threats unleashed in the aftermath of the 2005 Mohammed cartoon riots.

When the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement claimed Professor Stephen Hawking as a major success, many pro-Israel advocates jumped on the chance to hit back when conflicting information emerged contradicting the BDS claims. **HonestReporting was the only organization that carefully fact-checked with the journalist responsible before publishing a response.** By doing so, HonestReporting once again demonstrated its credibility both to its own subscribers and also to the media.

HonestReporting's [opinion piece](#) on the issue, which also appeared in *The Times of Israel*, generated over 500 comments – our greatest ever on any topic.

THAT THIS CARTOON HAS BEEN PUBLISHED AS DELEGATES MEET FROM AROUND THE WORLD IN JERUSALEM TO COORDINATE THE FIGHT AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM GRAPHICALLY ILLUSTRATES THE NEED TO COMBAT THIS PERNICIOUS JEW HATRED.

JOE HYAMS

In the second part of our analysis of the treatment of Israel on the opinion pages of major media, we took a look at [The Washington Post](#), one of the most influential newspapers in the world.

In comparison with *The New York Times*, we found a much more balanced approach to Israel, including a number of editorials, columns, and op-eds that expressed sympathy for Israel's position or criticized Mahmoud Abbas's Palestinian Authority.



HonestReporting addressed an outrageous "art" exhibit, which referred to Israel as a "colonial power" and Palestinian terrorists as "fighters" and "victims of the Israeli military," that [opened in a museum in Paris](#). Suicide bombers were referred to as "militants" who heroically set out to "assassinate Israelis."

HR CEO Joe Hyams said: "Terrorists should not be deified and held up as 'martyrs' in a publicly funded exhibition. There is nothing artistic in the glorification and justification of terror, particularly when government money is involved. How is it that taxpayer's money is being thrown away on promoting organizations that have been designated as terrorist groups by the EU itself? This exhibition should be brought to a close immediately."

The museum's pathetic response means that this story is still ongoing.

## Watchdog of the Week

Our readers are a valuable resource and we want to recognize their efforts to defend Israel against media bias. Our new Watchdog of the Week feature is our way of encouraging our readers to send us tip offs to alert us to incidents of media bias that we may not have spotted as well as letting us know of any individual achievements such as getting their letters published in a newspaper. Readers can use our new Red Alert web page:



[honestreporting.com/redalert/](http://honestreporting.com/redalert/)



Simon Plosker at King David School

## Highlights from April-June 2013

**UK Speaking Tour:** Simon Plosker visited the UK as the guest of the Manchester Jewish community as part of their Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations.

On the night of Yom Ha'atzmaut, Simon was the guest speaker at the joint *seudah* (festive meal) organized by the Stenecourt Synagogue and King David High School. Some 300 members of the community and students listened to Simon give a presentation on Israel's performance vis a vis the international media during Operation Pillar of Defense and highlighted examples of the type of media bias seen during the military campaign.

**THE SESSION WAS REALLY, REALLY GOOD... POSSIBLY THE BEST EVER.**

LOUIS RAWLINGS,  
CHEADLE HULME  
JEWISH SOCIETY  
HEAD

The following day, Simon was the guest of the Jewish Society at Cheadle Hulme School, a prestigious private day school. 30 students, both Jewish and non-Jewish listened to a presentation on photo bias in the media, which was extremely well received.

Simon then traveled to Liverpool, where he was hosted by a supporter of HonestReporting who managed to fit over 50 people into his living room for a full presentation on media bias and the work of HonestReporting.

The following evening saw a return trip to Manchester to address the inaugural meeting of Whitefield Hebrew Congregation's Friends of Israel group, which attracted some 150 people. This successful event was covered by the local [Jewish Telegraph](#).

*Joe Hyams meets  
Professor Dan Ariely  
at the 2013 President's  
Conference in Jerusalem.*



**Boston and Brazil:** Joe Hyams was welcomed back to the warm reception of the Sao Paulo community in Brazil, home to a growing number of supporters and activists for our global brand. Highlights of the trip included a presentation at the CIP Community Center to local organizational leaders. From the Al-Dura affair to more recent examples of media manipulation, Joe explored the categories of bias we all need to be on the lookout for, and how at a local level we can each play a role in responding effectively.

**K-Space** represents a growing network of meeting locations for young Jewish professionals. HonestReporting has had the opportunity to present to the Miami branch in the past and looks forward to future visits at the two new branches due to open later this year. At K-Space Joe engaged with the diverse and enthusiastic audience, focusing on visual and multimedia opportunities, as well as threats, in the fast paced digital news marketplace.

Joe moved on to Boston where he presented to over 100 people as guest lecturer at Young Israel of Brookline. In the wake of the Marathon Bombings, Joe focused his lecture on mass media's role and responsibility in the wake of terror attacks. He shared his personal experiences following the 2005 London bombings, and described how he has seen Israeli society address and work through the psychological challenges after events that impact whole communities.

**"ON BEHALF OF ALL K SPACE BRAZIL, WE WERE EXTREMELY HONORED BY JOE'S VISIT. WE HAD AN ENRICHING AND INSPIRING EXPERIENCE AND WE HOPE TO SEE YOU AGAIN!"**



**Israel Daily  
News Stream**

### Total views

Dec  
2013

(projected)

**1,840,000**

Dec  
2012

**952,463**

The Israel Daily News Stream contains everything you need to know about how the media is covering Israel, all in one place for easy reference, delivered directly to your inbox – or mobile device – every morning.

### BRAND NEW PODCAST

The Israel Audio News Stream had a well-received launch at the end of June. The 3-minute podcast featured Pesach Benson discussing a selection of developments from the IDNS. Your mobile device now broadcasts everything you need to know about Israel and the Mideast.





**HonestReporting in Print:** Today, well over 100 million Europeans embrace a satanic view of the State of Israel. They believe that Israel is exterminating the Palestinians, despite their major population growth in recent decades. This current widespread demonic view of Israel is a new



mutation of the diabolical beliefs about Jews which many held in the Middle Ages, and those promoted more recently by the Nazis and their allies.

The media plays a prominent role in promoting this view of Israel and Dr. Manfred Gerstenfeld's [new book](#) *Demonizing Israel and the Jews* includes a chapter-length interview with

HonestReporting's Simon Plosker.



*Golda Och Academy students at HonestReporting's office.*

## Mobile Upgrade

With a significant and rapidly growing number of readers accessing HonestReporting content through their mobile devices, we have been making continuous improvements to how our website looks and performs on these smartphones, tablets and other devices.

Our latest upgrade is our best yet, giving our readers an attractive and user-friendly browsing experience.



**Student Visit to HR HQ:** A group of 35 students from New Jersey's Golda Och Academy learned the basics of anti-Israel media bias and how to counter it during [a visit to HonestReporting's International Headquarters](#).

The visit was part of a two-day section on Israel advocacy led by Awesome Seminars.

HonestReporting CEO Joe Hyams delivered the presentation, demonstrating how influential the media is in shaping public opinion.

"Before this lecture, I didn't understand how powerful the media are," said Carmella, one of the students taking part in the 2013 Neshama program in Israel.

Micha'el Brownstein, a staffer with the Neshama program, said he believed the Israel advocacy section was important for the students. "They are going to go to college and be confronted with difficult situations," he said. "We think it's important that they have the tools to deal with it."

Joe Hyams said the presentation was part of HR's mission to give every student the opportunity to understand the power of media to influence the world, especially in regard to Israel.

"It's truly a pleasure to continue welcoming visiting groups of bright, committed people who return home with their heads held even higher – as they celebrate the modern day miracle that is the State of Israel," he said.

**HONESTREPORTING DOES A GOOD JOB FIGHTING MEDIA BIAS. I WILL DEFINITELY PAY MORE ATTENTION IN READING NEWSPAPERS AND TWEETS. I LEARNED WHAT I CAN DO AS AN INDIVIDUAL AND I WILL TELL MY FRIENDS.**

CARMELLA,  
GOLDA OCH  
ACADEMY

**Truth Be Told Event:** Simon Plosker was a guest on a panel discussion organized by Truth Be Told and held in the presence of 265 people in Herzliya. The evening commenced with five Ethiopian-Israeli students from the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya, who reported on their successful mission to Cape Town in March during Israel Apartheid Week.



*Panelists Gerald Steinberg, David Olesker, Simon Plosker, debate moderator Leah Zinder.*

Moderated by Israel Broadcasting Authority English News anchor Leah Zinder, the other panelists were Trevor Asserson, a Jerusalem-based international lawyer who successfully challenged the BBC on issues of media bias, David Olesker (founder and director of the Jerusalem Center for Communication and Advocacy Training) and Gerald Steinberg (president of NGO Monitor and professor of Political Studies at Bar-Ilan University). The event was covered in [The Jerusalem Post](#).

#### **Global Forum for Combating Anti-Semitism:**

Joe Hyams and Simon Plosker participated in the 4th International Conference of the Global Forum for Combating Anti-Semitism (GFCA). The Global Forum is an active and worldwide alliance of statesmen, parliamentarians, diplomats, journalists, legal experts, NGO's and scholars led by the State of Israel.

Its goal is to fight the growing expressions of anti-Semitism and other forms of racism as they manifest themselves around the world. It does so by learning best practices from experts and practitioners in the field, thus enabling it to fight current trends and prepare for future developments.



*Joe Hyams presents his segment at the Global Forum for Combating Anti-Semitism.*

Both Joe and Simon made presentations in the Working Group on Anti-Semitism in the Internet and in the Media, cooperating with other media watchdog groups, including CAMERA, CiF Watch and BBC Watch.

## **HR Mission: May 2013**

Mission participants got to tour Israel's borders with Syria and Lebanon with a special army patrol charged with keeping Israel's borders safe despite the violence engulfing Israel's neighbors.

During their briefing on the security situation in Syria, Commander 'N' from Unit 334 told the mission participants that their advocacy work on behalf of Israel was also vital to Israel's security. "We are proud to keep our borders safe, knowing that you guys are there defending our name," she said.

The group also toured Israel's border with Gaza and met with Sderot's mayor, David Buskila, who explained the town's unique challenge thanks to its proximity to the Gaza Strip.

Protecting Israel's citizens, he said, often looks bad on television and has a negative effect on Israel's image abroad. "You can be strong, or you can be popular," he told the group, referring to Israel's dilemma. "If I'm weak I don't get another chance. So I prefer to be strong.

"So the poor kid in Gaza remains the media hero. Our defensive measures won't compete with that. But in time they'll see we weren't the bad guys," he said.



*Mission participants and soldiers next to a Multiple Launch Rocket System at an IDF base near the Syrian border*

Turning to newsmakers working to change Israeli society, mission participants heard from recently elected MK, Dov Lipman from the Yesh Atid party, who shared his vision of a unified Israel where every citizen plays a role in Israel's future.

"We live in a magical world and we have to believe that unity in Israel is possible," he said, in response to a question about whether it's possible to overcome the divisions in Israeli society.

HonestReporting CEO Joe Hyams gave several talks about the importance of effective media monitoring. "Think not about what you want to say but what you want to see happen," he told the group, echoing a maxim he learned at Saatchi and Saatchi.

Other speakers included Avital Leibovich of the IDF's Spokesperson's Unit, Itamar Marcus of Palestinian Media Watch, and Palestinian journalist Khaled Abu Toameh. The itinerary also included a visit to Hebron.

Mission participant Sylvia Simko, who came with her husband Paul, said the mission was inspiring.

"We went from Metullah to Hebron, and we hope people felt some support knowing we stand behind them," she said.

"The pen is still more powerful than the sword," she added, and we all have to resolve in our minds to be fighters and combat the bad press Israel receives unfairly."



## Videos

In the second quarter, we continued adding original content to our YouTube video channel. Twelve videos were published and the channel had over 72,000 views in the three month period.

Classic HR videos such as [“Jerusalem: The Media Myth of Two Cities”](#) and [“Searching for Israel’s Capital”](#) continued to be seen by thousands. At the same time, new weekly videos attracted a wide audience. The video [“Liar Liar”](#) asked why the media would still take anything proven liar Saeb Erekat says seriously. [“The New York Times and the Terrorist’s Mom”](#) questioned the NYT using a picture of a terrorist’s mother to illustrate a story rather than a picture of the victim’s family.

The videos create an animated debate among viewers, many of whom are not HonestReporting subscribers. 3,000 viewers now subscribe to the HonestReporting channel and receive the videos automatically.

When we found out that Hollywood studio Paramount Pictures had taken the word “Israel” out of the subtitles for the Turkish version of the movie *World War Z*, [we made a video](#) asking why Paramount thought that Islamic audiences could deal with a horror film about flesh-eating zombies but not the word “Israel.” All they were doing was giving credibility to those who consider “Israel” a dirty word.

Our video encouraged viewers to go to Paramount’s Facebook page and leave a comment under their postings about the movie. What followed were hundreds of comments all over the Paramount page. A few examples:



*Intern Sarah Harari from Maryland was responsible for a revamp of our YouTube Channel.*

## Interns at HR

HR’s office has allowed us to host student interns and volunteers. Our latest interns have found their way to us through the Young Judaea student internship program. We are able to give an experience and greater understanding of our work for young Jewish students to take back with them to university campuses. In addition HR benefits from the raw potential and enthusiasm that these students demonstrate during their stay with us.



## The Untold Truth: 150 Million Europeans Hate Israel

A new book posits that well over 150 million Europeans believe that Israel is exterminating the Palestinians.



### Slideshow: Photo Bias In the Media

Images depicting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict distort our understanding.



### USA Today Runs BDS Press Release as a Story

USA Today parrots the BDS movement's charges against Israel.



### Apartheid: More Than Just a Word

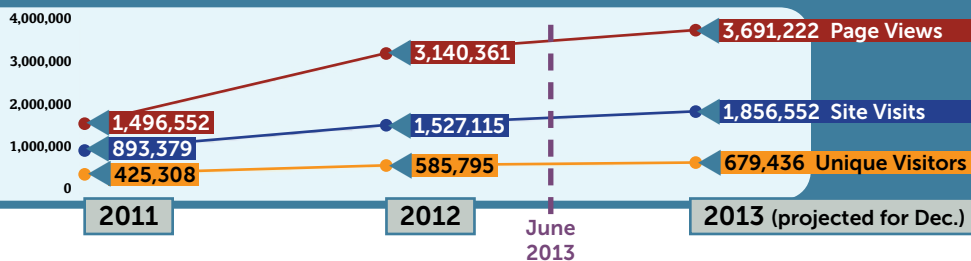
The word apartheid has been hijacked by Israel's detractors.

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## HR Site Usage: Yearly Comparison



## Avg. Visit Duration

2011	00:01:36
2012	00:02:52
2013	00:03:19

## Social Media Highlights 2013 Q2

### Outbrain

HonestReporting continues to look for ways to leverage Internet tools to spread its message beyond the choir of

supporters. In 2013, we implemented Outbrain, a content discovery system that has increased the number of pages people view on our site. Outbrain recommendations appear at the

bottom of all our posts, specially selected to match the content of the post.

The selection engine has been particularly successful. Our blog post titled, "The Hypocrisy of a Black Miss Israel?" has been viewed 45,000 times in the past three months alone thanks to the Outbrain system. It has also helped HonestReporting raise the number of pages viewed by 33% over last year's record-breaking year.

### You may also like:



The Hypocrisy of a Black Miss Israel?



Shattered Lens - Photo Bias Exposed in the Wire Services



UK Media: The Israel Line or The Bottom Line?



Exposed: Award Winning Gaza Image was Photoshopped

Recommended by

Outbrain recommendations at the bottom of our posts.



## Corrections in the Media

I reviewed the article and we have altered the line in question. Best wishes,  
Sean O'Grady  
Deputy Managing Editor  
*The Independent*

Thank you very much for bringing this to our attention. The misleading photo has been replaced. Sincerely,  
Benjamin Wheelock  
Art Director  
Salon.com

## Slideshows

Slideshows have emerged as some of the most popular and useful pieces of content HonestReporting puts out each year. During the second quarter, we published two new slideshows, one about the [misuse of photos to create bias against Israel](#) and another composed of [important quotes from the media battlefield](#). In addition, our slideshows from previous years, particularly one about the threat of Iran, continued to draw substantial numbers of viewers in 2013.



# MediaCentral

MediaCentral, a project of HonestReporting, has been busy assisting foreign journalists in Israel, helping to get the story right. To find out about MediaCentral's latest activities both in the field and in its Jerusalem media center, email Aryeh Green: [aryeh@m-central.org](mailto:aryeh@m-central.org)

## Facebook

Facebook remains HR's largest referrer site. It also serves as an important bridge to the world of mobile technology. More than a quarter of the traffic sent to HR from Facebook arrives via a mobile device.

Facebook also remains the strongest platform for distributing sharable images (like the one below).



## Pinterest

As more people on the Internet continue to spread their interests beyond Facebook and Twitter, HonestReporting has expanded its social media presence as well. In 2013 HonestReporting began operating on Pinterest, one of the largest referrers of traffic on the Internet.

Pinterest, which functions as a "virtual" pin board, allows HonestReporting to keep a public archive of materials that may be useful to our readers. It also allows us to reach new audiences through the site's social engagement.



**HonestReporting**

Defending Israel from media bias. Every day.

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Beautiful Israel Photography



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Israel and Iran



Israel Today



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