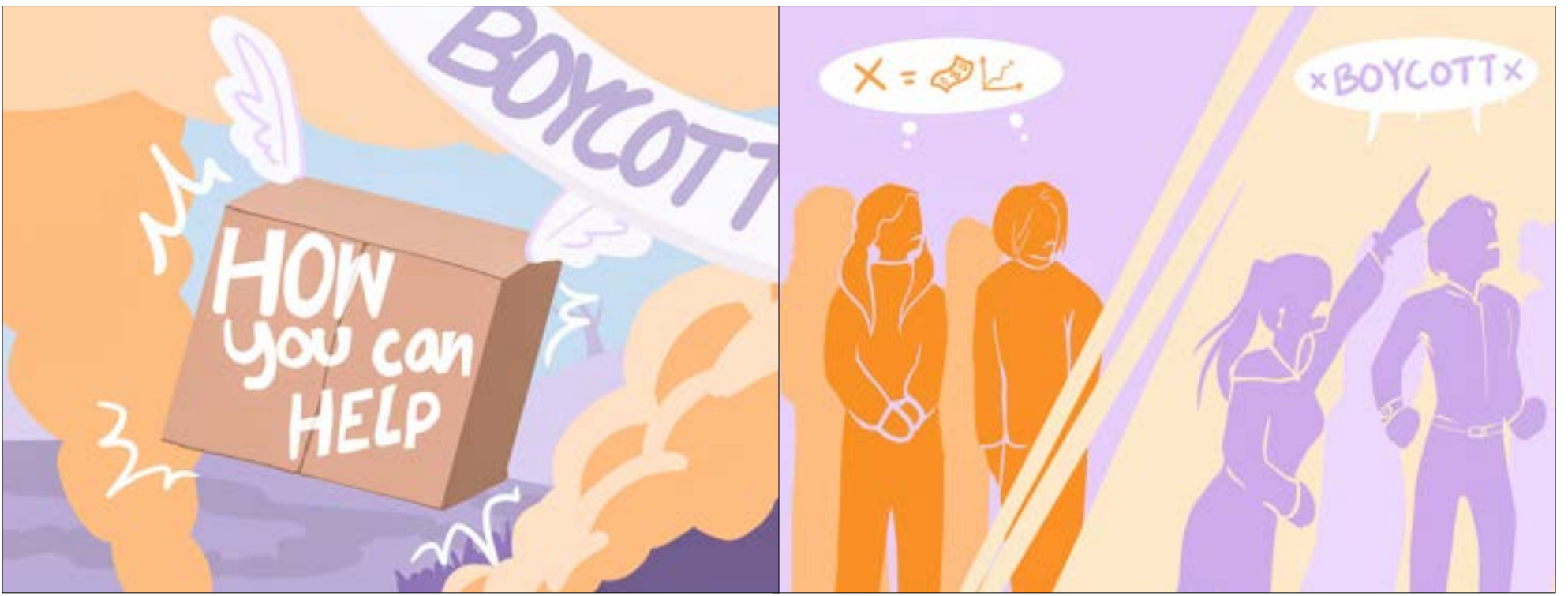


HAVE A STORY IDEA?
Contact the Opinion editor,
Sascha Harvey
opinion@thesunflower.com



Illustrations by Wren Johnson / The Sunflower

What can you actually do for Palestine? Here's an idea



Sascha Harvey
opinion@thesunflower.com
OPINION

6,730 miles away, war is raging in the Gaza Strip. Here in Wichita, it's business as normal for most of us — at least, those of us that have no connections to Israel or Palestine. But there are easy steps everyone can take to make a difference overseas.

In a world of social media and disinformation, posts exploiting the suffering of Syrian citizens and video game clips as footage of the current war are easy to find. The identification and spread of facts are crucial to keeping the public out of the dark in relation to what is actually happening.

For young Americans with no direct relation to the war in Palestine, it's easy to be disengaged and leave our activism to Instagram stories. Still, I believe there's more we can do here in the states to support Palestine.

Many in the Palestinian liberation movement are supporting a boycott of Israeli products as well as companies that have been in support of the Israeli government and Zionism.

"The Israeli regime's economy is not self-sufficient and is heavily dependent on trade and imports, especially energy, as well as exports, which makes it vulnerable to foreign boycotts," Ivan Kesic wrote in an article for PressTV.

The Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement is led by the Palestinian sect of the BDS National Committee (BNC). BDS pushes audiences to pursue a targeted boycott — which is proven to be more impactful, as shown by the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, the Civil Rights movement in America and the anti-British-colonialism movement in India — that focuses on fewer companies to maximize impact.

Although not included in the BDS targeted boycott,

I urge consumers to boycott Starbucks as well for the corporation's response to the Starbucks Workers Union's message in support of Palestinian liberation. Starbucks has also been historically anti-union and hasn't reached a labor agreement with any branches that have unionized, so maybe frappuccino fans should look for a new coffee shop anyway.

On Wichita State's campus, Starbucks is far from the only choice for coffee. The Groundhouse in Shocker Hall and Cargill Cafe in Woolsey Hall (temporarily closed) both offer coffee sourced from the local Reverie Roasters. In Delano, Leslie Coffee Co. is a great alternative — make sure you stop by before they shut down at the end of this year.

For the organic targets, there are many options for avoiding purchasing from the targets. Instead of McDonald's or Burger King, try Braum's, Dairy Queen or the locally owned Sport Burger.

Instead of Pizza Hut or Papa John's, visit Papa Murphy's. To support some smaller chains and businesses, try one of the Ziggy's locations or Picasso's Pizzeria.

Even if "boycott" feels like a strong word, it can be as simple as avoiding purchasing from these companies for the time being.

I think a lot of people feel like they've "done their part" by reposting activism on social media, but I urge you to think again and put your money where your mouth is.

Although verbal support is obviously very important and crucial to highlighting the terrors of the war (especially in a country with a staunchly Zionist leader), money makes movement. Boycotts are, historically, a great way to make your voice heard, especially with an organization leading supporters in a targeted boycott.

If you're in support of the Palestinian movement, consider how you can make these easy and more mindful choices in alignment with your values.

WHO'S BEING BOYCOTTED?

BY SASCHA HARVEY
opinion@thesunflower.com

The following companies are popular companies included in the boycott for Palestine organized by the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement. The companies' relation to Israel ranges from direct support of the Israeli government to occupying territory in Israel.

1. CONSUMER BOYCOTT TARGETS

The BDS movement calls for a boycott of these brands due to the company's history of complicity in Israeli apartheid.

- PUMA
- SodaStream
- RE/MAX
- Products of Israel

2. DIVESTMENT TARGETS

The BDS movement wants to pressure governments and institutions to divest from these companies due to their business in Israel's illegal settlement, according to the UN database.

- HD Hyundai, Volvo and CAT
- Chevron

3. PRESSURE (NON-BOYCOTT) TARGETS

The BDS movement calls for pressure campaigns against these brands due to their complicity in Israeli apartheid. For strategic reasons, BDS has not called for a boycott but instead for supporters and institutions to pressure them to end their complicity in Israel's apartheid and support of the Israeli government.

- Google
- Amazon
- Disney
- Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia

4. ORGANIC BOYCOTT TARGETS

The BDS movement did not initiate boycotts of these brands but is in support of the boycotts due to their support of Israel in the genocide of Palestinians.

- McDonald's and Burger King
- Domino's, Pizza Hut and Papa John's
- Wix

A full list of all companies being boycotted is available at bdsmovement.net.

Don't shame people for not boycotting for Palestine



Jacinda Hall
podcast@thesunflower.com
OPINION

Let me start by prefacing that this piece is not meant to say "boycotting is bad." I am in full support of boycotting brands, but some things that should be known when it comes to the act of boycotting.

I also would like to preface that I am both pro-Jewish and pro-Palestine, and this column is not meant to be antisemitic or Zionist.

The act of boycotting has been around for hundreds of years. In fact, it was popularized in the late 1800s by Charles Stewart Parnell during the Irish land agitation of 1880 to protest high rents and land evictions.

Boycotting was also big during the Civil Rights movement after Rosa Parks was arrested for not giving up her seat for a white man on a bus. Many people boycotted the bus system in Montgomery, Alabama.

Now, since the rise in awareness of the Israel-Palestine conflict, many people are boycotting businesses, including McDonald's and Starbucks.

McDonald's has been under fire for giving free meals to the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), and Starbucks is being boycotted for suing its unions over posts in support of the liberation of Palestine.

While both companies' actions are bad, we shouldn't shame people for not boycotting these companies. There are many reasons why people aren't able to boycott these companies.

For some people, including students on campus, if they don't want to go to Starbucks, they're not left with many options other than Fairmount Coffee Company or Credo Coffee Shop, which may not fit very many people's personal values either since they are both affiliated with religious organizations and/or located

inside a church.

Other on-campus coffee shops, such as Cargill in Woolsey Hall and the Groundhouse, have limited hours throughout the week and on the weekends.

These limited options for your everyday cup of coffee can leave some people stuck in the middle on where to go when they spend most of their time on campus.

Also, boycotting can also have some classist undertones. Wichita, as a city, has 44 square miles of food deserts. Wichita State University is located in and around several of these food deserts, which means, for some people, the two McDonald's restaurants within a mile of each other on Hillside are the only option they have.

Not to mention, McDonald's is a franchise, and all McDonald's here in Wichita are owned by Lane Enterprises, who happen to be a family of local business owners. By boycotting McDonald's, you could be hurting the local economy.

The specific branch of McDonald's that gave free meals to the IDF was a branch that was based in Israel and not the U.S. or McDonald's as a company.

McDonald's franchises in other middle-eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Turkey put out statements saying that they were disassociating themselves from McDonald's in Israel.

Because McDonald's is a franchise, all owners have different opinions on the Israel-Palestine conflict. Some of the other owners across the world, like the ones mentioned above, could very well disagree with the decision the branch in Israel made — we just don't know.

All I am saying here is, before you boycott, please do your research on these companies because while most are corporately owned, some are not. If you see someone drinking coffee from Starbucks or eating food from McDonald's, don't judge or shame them.

'The Sims 4' continues to disappoint despite constant updates



Makenzie Miller
makenzieleightart@gmail.com
OPINION

"The Sims," a popular and well-known video game franchise, combines its life simulator qualities with (a lot of) chaos. With four installments in the franchise's repertoire, it's disappointing that the newest installment, "The Sims 4," is one of the most lackluster.

"The Sims 4" came out on Sept. 2, 2014, with the base game originally costing \$40. As of now, the game is free (even though players who paid the original cost received no compensation, but that is a different conversation). With "The Sims 4," players all around were ecstatic for the new content, better graphics and a more immersive gaming experience, but were immediately let down.

graphics than its previous games, but the customization, from clothing and decor to creating the Sims themselves, paled in comparison to the previous game, "The Sims 3." Many, including myself, argued that the base game clothes were dull and the color choices were often ugly, including hair customization.

Even now, I find a lot of the clothing in the game to come off as really repetitive or just plain boring, especially when it comes to colored hair. On top of this, I find that a lot of the clothing is not flattering on Sims, and if you try to put masculine clothes on a feminine body or the opposite, it looks ill-fitting. This is far from the biggest problem with the game, though.

As well as clothing options, the Sims' whims, which are things the characters like to do, as well as their "moodlets" (moods) are

personality traits you have given them. While in past games, these aspects were interesting and unique, now it can be easy to simply forget the traits you have given Sims because of how little they matter.

Personally, I was super excited about the open world aspect that was assumed to be in "The Sims 4," due to the fact it was introduced in "The Sims 3." But the open world concept was actually taken away with the new installment. This was confusing in many ways, considering the fact that the open world concept was well-received by players, including me.

I feel like "The Sims 4" has the same issue with non-playable characters (NPCs) that "Animal Crossing: New Horizons" has, being that these NPCs have zero personality. In past "Sims" games, the NPC characters all felt alive and had lots of interesting lore and

lacked this, and many of the NPCs feel the exact same as one another.

The gameplay was also disappointing for lots of players. I found that lots of mechanics simply did not work. If there was any sort of fire in your home (which was rare), oftentimes calling for a fireman did nothing, and your Sim would just burn if they were unable to put the fire out themselves.

Many of the concepts in the game felt half-baked and unfinished, which can be extremely frustrating when trying to play the game using the base mechanics. A game from a company like EA should be capable of creating games that have finished experiences that should be able to run smoothly, especially with the popularity of their "Sims" franchise. This even includes Sims' basic autonomy. Sims can often not take care of

be constantly instructed. This can get tedious and annoying, and as someone who is prone to micromanaging the games I play, it can make the game kind of stressful.

When toddlers were added — no, they were not originally in the base game; they weren't added until 2017 — their highchairs did not work. Even now, they can be buggy and hard to deal with. These poor mechanics and late addition are made more disappointing when considering that both "The Sims 2" and "The Sims 3" started with toddlers in the base games.

Once again, though, these issues were not the main problem that set off most fans, as that award goes to the lackluster quality of the base game and the millions of expansion packs.