



Unlikely allies

Two Brandeis grads from Israel, one a Palestinian and one a Jew, are on a campaign to break down the walls of Mideastern prejudice.

BY RICKI MORELL

I

n the control room of the Brandeis University radio station, two young men stand eye to eye, speaking into the same microphone. As a funky beat fades in the background, they shout in unison, "You are listening to your one and only coexistence radio!"

Forsan Hussein is impeccably dressed in a black turtleneck and jeans, with a small earring in his left ear. Michael Bavly sports tousled hair, jeans, and a T-shirt. They stand so close to each other that their shoulders touch. As they bend over their CDs, choosing music, they seem like typical college disc jockeys, except for their accents and the long, troubled histories that those accents represent. "Al-Salam 'Alaykum," says Hussein, greeting his audience in Arabic. "Ma Hamatzav? Shu al-Akhbar? Wasssup?" Bavly says, moving from Hebrew to Arabic to English. "Welcome to *Just Like You*," they say together.

Hussein and Bavly's voices fade into the beat of their radio program's theme song, "*Bediyuk Kamocha*" ("Just Like You"), sung in Hebrew by Israeli rock singer Shalom Hanoach.

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Ricki Morell is a regular contributor to the Globe's City Weekly section. Her last article for the magazine was on traffic rotaries.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELE McDONALD

Though they come from radically different backgrounds, Forsan Hussein (left) and Michael Bavly now follow the same path.



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On the cover: Movie-making brothers Bobby (left) and Peter Farrelly.

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ut it's true: Every-
s working with
ys Murphy, who
in Jamaica Plain.
n't have any of the
d pretentiousness,
stuff, the power
t happen on other

l chum Michael
was helping run a
dealership in At-
before joining the
s. He co-wrote
l plays a bad cop
a close encounter
icken. Mark Char-
who grew up with
, left his family's
business to work
n. He is the co-
of Irene. Kris
of North Quincy,
uated from Boston
High School, is
it-hand man; he's
iate producer of

Farrellys have also
Boston comedians
weeney, Lenny
ackie Flynn, and
ynn in their mov-

ies. And then there is their
tradition of auctioning off a
small part for a good cause,
like the Cam Neely House
for cancer patients at the
New England Medical
Center.

There is also consider-
able local flavor to the mov-
ies, which the brothers in-
sist be filmed in New Eng-
land. "It's something we
feel very strongly about,"
says Peter. Irene, for in-
stance, was shot in Burling-
ton and Middlebury, Ver-
mont, and in Newport,
Rhode Island. In one scene,
a local cries, "I'm in a
wicked rush!"

Additionally, the Far-
rellys always hold a pre-
miere in Rhode Island.
Dumb and Dumber pre-
miered in Warwick. "It was
all we could get at the
time," says Bobby. By
Kingpin, they had worked
their way up to Newport.
Irene's premiere will be in
Providence on Tuesday.

But the business does
force them to spend some

time in Santa Monica,
where Peter has an apart-
ment. His family came and
stayed with him during the
final months of Irene; Bob-
by's children had to stay
back east to finish school, so
he phoned them every eve-
ning to say goodnight, and
he commuted home on
weekends.

"Once my kids got in
school, I really wanted to go
back home," says Bobby.
"It's a one-industry town
here. Everyone's life re-
volves around the movies."
Adds Peter: "It's a better
life back home. It's way
prettier. This place is a
desert." He pauses. "But
what it's really about is the
people."

Ask them more about
the lure of New England,
and Peter takes out a copy
of his 1998 novel, *The
Comedy Writer*. It's about a
guy in a dead-end job in
Boston who moves to Los
Angeles to try to make it in
the movies and eventually
heads home. Flipping to the

end, Peter Farrelly reads
aloud: "The Red Sox eked
their way into the postsea-
son in the fall of 1990, and
I walked to all the home
playoff games from my stu-
dio apartment in the Back
Bay. I enjoyed it when the
weather turned cold again. I
didn't like hot winters. I
didn't like places where I
had to stop and think about
what month it was. I was
glad to be around my par-
ents, and my brothers and
sisters and friends. I liked
living in a place where sum-
mer meant something. I'd
missed the leaves and cran-
berry bogs. I'd missed
meeting pretty girls who
weren't automatically mod-
els. I'd missed Mike Barni-
cle. Hollywood moguls
come and go, and someday
I'd be lying on my death-
bed, facing the void, and I
was a blessed man because I
knew the truth is there is a
God, and that everything
means something." This
time, there is no punch
line. □

Unlikely allies

Continued from Page 14

*A strange person is your
enemy — just like you
Suddenly, also he wants to be
— like you exactly
Suddenly, he gets up and
stands in front of you
Insisting on living ...
This is your enemy
This is your enemy
Just like you
Like you exactly.*

HUSSEIN IS A PALES-
tinian, and Bavly is a
Jew. Both are Israeli citi-
zens. In the Middle East,
they lived 80 miles apart
but grew up as sworn en-
emies, taught to hate, mis-
trust, or simply ignore each
other. Bavly, 27, was an
Israeli army commander
and knew fellow soldiers
killed by Arabs. Hussein,
22, comes from a family of
construction workers who
lost all their land to Jews in
the 1948 war.

Via very different paths,

both young men ended up
at Brandeis University, in
Waltham. They came to-
gether first as acquaintances
who spoke a common lan-
guage, Hebrew. Gradually,
they became friends with
the courage to confront
their stereotypes and wrestle
with Mideast politics. Since
the 1993 Oslo Accords be-
tween the Israelis and the
Palestinians, the peace
process has been slow, fal-
tering over the status of
Jerusalem, territory, and
Palestinian prisoners and
refugees. In their four years
at Brandeis, Hussein and
Bavly have talked and ar-
gued about these conflicts,
delving into subjects so
painful that it was a kind of
therapy for them.

Then they became co-
hosts of the weekly radio
show *Just Like You*, which
aired Thursday evenings
from 7 to 8 on WBSR-FM
during the school year. The
show was a lighthearted mix
that included Arab and Is-
raeli pop music, a cooking

segment, a person of the
week, and a frank discus-
sion of Middle East current
events.

The two also founded a
weekly Arab-Jewish rela-
tions dialogue group on
campus, and they travel
around the country, speak-
ing at synagogues, commu-
nity centers, and schools. In
May, they went to Milton
Academy, a private school
near Boston, for Seminar
Day. "What happened in
1948?" Hussein asked 20
high school students sitting
in a circle outside the
school. "The War of Inde-
pendence," one student re-
plied. "It may be the War
of Independence for Israel-
is," said Bavly. "But for
Palestinians, it is something
else: They call it The Cata-
strophe."

Bavly and Hussein see
themselves as peace mis-
sionaries and believe that
through talk and shared ex-
periences, music, and food,
Israelis and Palestinians can
take some steps toward

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overcoming ancient grievances and forging new bonds. They both know that against an explosive Middle East environment, including rioting last month in the West Bank and Gaza and the chaos surrounding the withdrawal of Israeli troops from south Lebanon, what they do may seem naive. But they are convinced that a grass-roots movement is the only way to build the foundation for a real peace, one that will last through generations.

One of their professors, Steven Burg, who teaches politics, says that Hussein and Bavly's peace-building doesn't take the place of diplomacy but supplements it: "You have to wonder, when push comes to shove, whether they will overcome built-up historical grievances on both sides. But you hope that they are not unique."

THEIR FRIENDSHIP blossomed despite its

roots in the desert of the Middle East. Forsan Hussein's family of construction workers have lived in the same small Muslim village in the Galilee for seven generations - except for a few months when they fled to Lebanon during the 1948 war, which erupted after the partition of Palestine and the creation of the state of Israel. Until then, Hussein's family owned most of the olive trees in the village of Sha'ab, population 5,000. When they returned, Hussein says, everything was government property. Now, the family owns about 20 olive trees, and his father works construction in a neighboring Jewish town. Hussein has one sister and five brothers, the youngest 10 years old.

He was forced to learn Hebrew to survive and to submit to the Jewish authorities. "I grew up thinking Jews were evil," he says. When he was about 10, an older boy scrawled the word

"Palestine" in Arabic, next to the new Palestinian flag at a bus stop. Three days later, the boy was arrested.

About the same time, Hussein was invited, through an outreach program at his school, to visit a nearby Israeli *moshav*, a communal village founded by liberal Jews from Philadelphia and Chicago. He didn't tell his parents, because he was afraid they would tell him not to go. It was the first time he had been close to Jews. As he trudged through the olive trees toward the settlement, he thought: "Maybe these Jews are going to kill me. Maybe they're waiting for me with guns." Instead, they greeted him with chocolate chip cookies.

Soon after, he brought three Jewish friends from the settlement to his house for breakfast. He had taught them how to say "Good morning" in Arabic, and when they greeted his

mother, her worried face melted into a smile. Years later, one of these friends from the *moshav* noticed a small ad in *Ha'aretz*, Israel's largest newspaper: The Abraham Fund, a philanthropic organization based in New York, had a new four-year full scholarship to Brandeis University. Named after New York philanthropist Alan B. Slifka and his mother, it was to be awarded to a Palestinian and a Jew who had demonstrated a commitment to coexistence. The friend urged Hussein, who had never heard of Brandeis, to apply.

On a hot summer day in 1996, Hussein, following in the footsteps of his father and brothers, was working construction. Shirtless, in shorts and work boots, he was mixing cement to build a wall when his boss told him he had an urgent telephone call from his mother. "I thought somebody had died," he says. Instead, she

told him that he had been chosen for the Brandeis scholarship.

He rushed up to his boss and quit. Then he hopped into his brother's car and sped home. His mother greeted him with an ululation, a kind of high-pitched wail that Arab women make with their tongues to signal happiness, sadness, or a momentous occasion. It was the beginning of her son's escape from the past.

MICHAEL BAVLY HAS few memories of speaking to Palestinians when he was growing up in Hertzliya, an affluent suburb of Tel Aviv. The only Arabs he saw were the construction workers who came into his neighborhood when a house was being remodeled. He had been taught to view Palestinians as the enemy, so he remembers being happy when Palestinian Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat's plane

crashed in North Africa in the early 1990s.

Bavly grew up in a liberal and secular environment, the fifth and youngest child of two members of the Israeli establishment. His father is a retired accountant. After high school, Bavly joined the army, as all young Israelis (except Palestinians) are required to do. He stayed four years, serving mostly in the Golan Heights and rising to the rank of lieutenant. As a company commander, he oversaw 60 soldiers and five officers.

Once, he recalls, a fellow soldier was kidnapped and shot dead by the Palestinian radical group Hamas. The soldier had been hitchhiking, on his way home to visit his family. Another soldier that he knew died in Lebanon when a missile fired by Hezbollah, the Shiite Muslim guerrilla group, hit his army post. Sometimes, he says, "I'd go down to a field

near my army post and look at the Syrians on the other side of the border. I'd think of a Guns 'N Roses song called 'Civil War,' and imagined blasting the lyrics from huge loudspeakers: 'What we've got here is a failure to communicate.'"

On a hot summer day in 1992, he stood at a Palestinian checkpoint in the Gaza Strip, dressed in his green uniform and beret, a rifle slung across his chest. He checked identification cards, looking for terrorists among the hundreds of Palestinian laborers returning home to the territories after a day's work in Israel. The Palestinians were close enough to grab his rifle, he says, or to pull out a knife and stab him. The sun beat down, and the crowd grew bigger and louder. "Back off!" he screamed at the Palestinians. He was 19 years old, but the middle-aged men obeyed him and silently backed away.

He suddenly felt para-

lyzed and unsettled by his power.

After his military service, he needed a change, so he applied to American colleges, and Brandeis accepted him. "The odds that Forsan and I would meet here... the coincidence of things," he says. "I'm not one to think about the divine, but I don't know."

BAVLY AND HUSSEIN met during their freshman year. First semester, they gravitated toward each other because they were the only two in their basic composition class who spoke Hebrew. They sat next to each other, and Hussein would ask Bavly for help with his English. Bavly was polite but distant.

Then, during second semester, an Arab friend suggested that they all form a small Arab-Jewish dialogue group on campus. They invited three other people, and called the group the Children of Labaneh,

named after a kind of Middle Eastern cheese. Hesitantly, then more boldly, they broached subjects that they had discussed with the called enemies: Zi suicide bombers, the surrounding the creation of Israel.

Also that semester, Hussein and Bavly sat to each other in the reaches of a huge hall as an economic unfolded below. On their attention drifted to the lecture, and they discussing how to make more egalitarian inclusive.

"What about the flag?" Bavly asked. "No problem, right?" (contrary, Hussein said Israeli flag was a symbol of Jewish imperialism. Two long blue lines sent the Nile and the Euphrates rivers, he said the Star of David between represented the intention to control

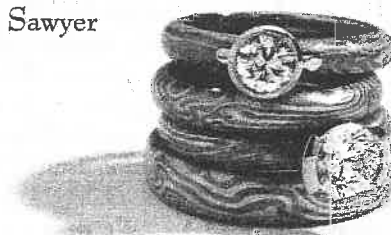
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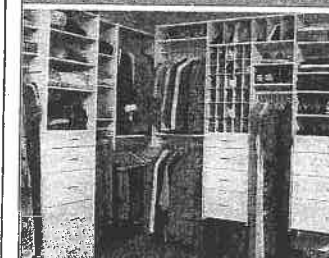


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the desert of the East. Forsan Husseini of construction have lived in the all Muslim village Galilee for seven years - except for a few months when they fled to Jordan during the 1948 war, which erupted after the partition of Palestine and the creation of the State of Israel. Until then, the family owned olive trees in the village of Sha'ab, population 100. When they returned to Husseini says, even today, the government has not given them back their 20 olive trees. Now, the family has 10 olive trees, but the father works in a neighboring town. Husseini has five brothers, the oldest is 10 years old. He was forced to learn to survive and to work in the Jewish sector. "I grew up thinking it was evil," he says. He was about 10, and he scrawled the word

"Palestine" in Arabic, next to the new Palestinian flag at a bus stop. Three days later, the boy was arrested. About the same time, Hussein was invited, through an outreach program at his school, to visit a nearby Israeli *moshav*, a communal village founded by liberal Jews from Philadelphia and Chicago. He didn't tell his parents, because he was afraid they would tell him not to go. It was the first time he had been close to Jews. As he trudged through the olive trees toward the settlement, he thought: "Maybe these Jews are going to kill me. Maybe they're waiting for me with guns." Instead, they greeted him with chocolate chip cookies. Soon after, he brought three Jewish friends from the settlement to his house for breakfast. He had taught them how to say "Good morning" in Arabic, and when they greeted his

mother, her worried face melted into a smile. Years later, one of these friends from the *moshav* noticed a small ad in *Ha'aretz*, Israel's largest newspaper: The Abraham Fund, a philanthropic organization based in New York, had a new four-year full scholarship to Brandeis University. Named after New York philanthropist Alan B. Slifka and his mother, it was to be awarded to a Palestinian and a Jew who had demonstrated a commitment to coexistence. The friend urged Hussein, who had never heard of Brandeis, to apply. On a hot summer day in 1996, Hussein, following in the footsteps of his father and brothers, was working construction. Shirtless, in shorts and work boots, he was mixing cement to build a wall when his boss told him he had an urgent telephone call from his mother. "I thought somebody had died," he says. Instead, she

told him that he had been chosen for the Brandeis scholarship. He rushed up to his boss and quit. Then he hopped into his brother's car and sped home. His mother greeted him with an ululation, a kind of high-pitched wail that Arab women make with their tongues to signal happiness, sadness, or a momentous occasion. It was the beginning of her son's escape from the past. **MICHAEL BAVLY HAS** few memories of speaking to Palestinians when he was growing up in Hertzliya, an affluent suburb of Tel Aviv. The only Arabs he saw were the construction workers who came into his neighborhood when a house was being remodeled. He had been taught to view Palestinians as the enemy, so he remembers being happy when Palestinian Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat's plane

crashed in North Africa in the early 1990s. Bavly grew up in a liberal and secular environment, the fifth and youngest child of two members of the Israeli establishment. His father is a retired accountant. After high school, Bavly joined the army, as all young Israelis (except Palestinians) are required to do. He stayed four years, serving mostly in the Golan Heights and rising to the rank of lieutenant. As a company commander, he oversaw 60 soldiers and five officers. Once, he recalls, a fellow soldier was kidnapped and shot dead by the Palestinian radical group Hamas. The soldier had been hitchhiking, on his way home to visit his family. Another soldier that he knew died in Lebanon when a missile fired by Hezbollah, the Shiite Muslim guerrilla group, hit his army post. Sometimes, he says, "I'd go down to a field

near my army post and look at the Syrians on the other side of the border. I'd think of a Guns 'N Roses song called 'Civil War,' and imagined blasting the lyrics from huge loudspeakers: 'What we've got here is a failure to communicate.'" On a hot summer day in 1992, he stood at a Palestinian checkpoint in the Gaza Strip, dressed in his green uniform and beret, a rifle slung across his chest. He checked identification cards, looking for terrorists among the hundreds of Palestinian laborers returning home to the territories after a day's work in Israel. The Palestinians were close enough to grab his rifle, he says, or to pull out a knife and stab him. The sun beat down, and the crowd grew bigger and louder. "Back off!" he screamed at the Palestinians. He was 19 years old, but the middle-aged men obeyed him and silently backed away. He suddenly felt para-

lyzed and unsettled by his power. After his military service, he needed a change, so he applied to American colleges, and Brandeis accepted him. "The odds that Forsan and I would meet here... the coincidence of things," he says. "I'm not one to think about the divine, but I don't know." **B**AVLY AND HUSSEIN met during their freshman year. First semester, they gravitated toward each other because they were the only two in their basic composition class who spoke Hebrew. They sat next to each other, and Hussein would ask Bavly for help with his English. Bavly was polite but distant. Then, during second semester, an Arab friend suggested that they all form a small Arab-Jewish dialogue group on campus. They invited three other people, and called the group the Children of Labaneh,

named after a kind of Middle Eastern cheese. At first hesitantly, then more candidly, they broached subjects that they had never discussed with their so-called enemies: Zionism, suicide bombers, the events surrounding the creation of Israel. Also that semester, Hussein and Bavly sat next to each other in the upper reaches of a huge lecture hall as an economics class unfolded below. One day, their attention drifted from the lecture, and they began discussing how to make Israel more egalitarian and inclusive. "What about the Israeli flag?" Bavly asked. "That's no problem, right?" On the contrary, Hussein said. The Israeli flag was a symbol of Jewish imperialism: The two long blue lines represented the Nile and Euphrates rivers, he said, and the Star of David in between represented the Israeli intention to control all the

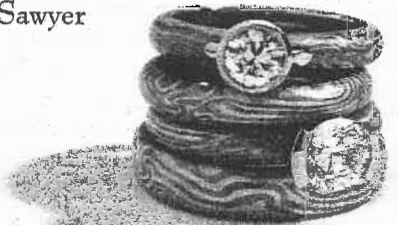
land between those two rivers. Bavly was shocked. He told Hussein that the flag had biblical origins, based on the *Talit*, the Jewish prayer shawl. Hussein didn't believe it, so after class, they looked it up at the library. Bavly was right. "I grew up seeing Israelis beating up Palestinians," says Hussein. "In my village, if something was wrong, the answer would always be 'the Jews.' This was my narrative. But in this case, I learned that it was not based in fact. It was a big lesson for me." Bavly and Hussein became friends because they missed their home, and when they looked at each other, they saw not "the other" but their common Holy Land: sun, desert, olives, hummus, and mothers who feed them until they can't eat any more. "We have in common three things," they like to tell people. "Cooking, soccer,

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and girls."

They played side by side on the same intramural soccer team and twice won the championship. Bavly taught Hussein to play tennis. They cooked together, because neither could stand bland American

college-cafeteria food. And when they went home to Israel for vacation, they visited each other's families. In 1995, Bavly's parents, tired of suburban life and looking for an alternative, moved to Mitzpe Harshim, a small rural community on a

mountaintop in the Galilee, about 15 miles from Hussein's village.

Hussein and Bavly both decided to create their own college major, "peace-building." They took Burg's course, Managing Ethnic Conflict. In it, they hashed out

their own Middle East peace agreement, which they called "The Bostonian Understandings." A 35-page document, it addresses the stumbling blocks to Middle East peace, including the status of Jerusalem and the borders of a Palestinian state. In it, each side apologizes for causing the other to suffer.

"Realizing you are doing the right thing does not mean it is not painful to do," wrote Bavly in a personal statement at the end of the paper. "I could not stand Forsan's insistence on the issue of Jerusalem. I felt so frustrated when I realized I actually had to give up parts of Jerusalem. But most of all, the pain I feel has to do with a personal realization that I am also at fault here."

Hussein described his friendship with Bavly as it developed "in cramped dorm rooms, speaking with Michael over the phone in hunched voices as my suitemates slept." Still, he said, "Writing the Bostonian agreement was not an easy task for me, because, on the one hand, Michael is my friend; on the other hand, my friend is the one to blame for the suffering of my people."

They came up with the idea for the radio show two years ago while driving to Vermont, with the music blasting in Bavly's 1986 Chevy Celebrity. Before the show, they would usually meet for two hours in an out-of-the-way lounge with windows that offer a sweeping view of the campus. One day in April, they discuss *Ya'om Al-Ard*, or Land Day - March 30, 1976 - when six Palestinians died in protests after Israel tried to annex land in the Galilee.

"We need a national day, like Memorial Day, to remember them, in which Jews and Palestinians are together," says Bavly during the pre-show planning session. "And



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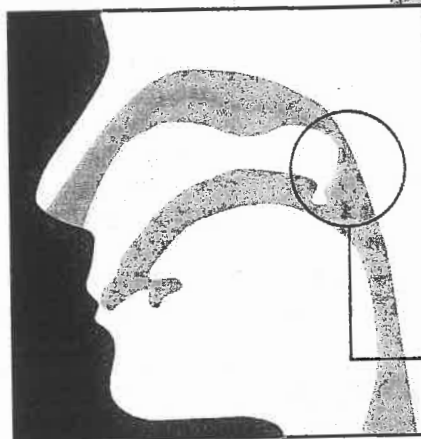
by Liz Betta

I had HAD it with my bad breath... and had tried virtually every product on the market that claimed it could help me. Breath sprays, mints, gum, mouthwash, toothpaste—you name it, I tried it. What really did it was when my 4-year old daughter smelled cigarette smoke from my nose, and asked if that's where I smoked my cigarette. And that was right after I had thoroughly brushed my teeth! How embarrassing. Then I heard about SinoFresh®, invented by a chemist who, while concocting a home cure for his infected sinuses, discovered the remedy also freshened his breath.

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Fetid (offensive) breath originates from numerous sources within the human anatomy such as the teeth, gums, throat, tongue and even the stomach. With each breath we take, the foods we eat and habits such as smoking, chewing tobacco, affect the nose and sinuses often resulting in bad breath. Various types of oral hygiene products are available to combat most types of fetid breath; however, until the discovery of SinoFresh, no therapy was available for problem breath originated from the nose



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let's talk about other ways that we can strengthen our collective identity, such as making Muslim and Christian holidays part of the calendar."

"I would like to see changes in the flag, too, and the national anthem, too, to be more inclusive of Palestinians," says Hussein.

This kind of talk is, of course, controversial. Some Israelis don't understand how Bavy could consider a Palestinian his best friend. Some Arabs cringe when Hussein identifies himself as a Palestinian-Israeli instead of a Palestinian. Once, on Newbury Street in downtown Boston, he met an Arab woman from a neighboring college. They stood on the sidewalk, flirting, until he mentioned that he was Israeli. He didn't have time to ask her for a date. She simply walked away.

ON A WEDNESDAY night in April, about 15 students gather in a Brandeis lounge, the leather couches pulled into a circle for the weekly Arab-Jewish dialogue group. As they wait for the meeting to begin, they socialize, speaking Arabic, English, and Hebrew, the languages blending into one low hum.

In the beginning, some Jewish students on campus declined to join the dialogue group, saying they didn't feel comfortable talking to Arabs. But now, Arabs and Jews from several college campuses, including Wellesley and Harvard, eagerly participate.

"We have a few new faces checking us out tonight," Bavy says, as the students take their seats. They are from Jordan, Lebanon, Israel, and the United States, and tonight they will be talking about stereotypes. Bavy and Hussein divide them into three small groups: Arabs, Jewish Israelis, and Americans. Their assignment: to come up with stereotypes about

each ethnic group, including their own.

After some initial embarrassment, the stereotypes come tumbling out: "primitive, sexist, stab people in the back." One Arab woman talks about how she might be perceived: "They think I'm anti-Semitic, undereducated, and rude." The Israelis talk about perceptions of themselves as "egomaniacs and victims." "Bad drivers" seems to apply to everyone but the Americans.

"A stereotype is not necessarily a lie," says Yoav Borowitz, Hussein's Israeli counterpart on the Slika scholarship and also his roommate. "It's very important to realize that, and not try to dismiss stereotypes but to try and talk about it. ... It's like therapy. You have to go through a painful situation to let the poison out."

They take a break to eat spinach-and-cheese *borekas*, a Middle Eastern pastry, but not before Bavy jokes: "So everybody thinks about everybody that they're brutal murderers and narrow-minded." Laughter fills the room.

When they return, they discuss the positive stereotypes about the others: "great food, charming, hardworking, respect for tradition, organized, democratic, clever."

As they get up to leave, a Jordanian student shows Bavy a picture of her home in Amman. It is a big square house, built from a pinkish stone common in the Middle East. Bavy studies the picture and says, "It looks just like my house."

IN EARLY SPRING, BAVLY and Hussein are cooking dinner together in the apartment Bavy shares with Catherine Freedman, a Brandeis senior and his girlfriend for 3½ years. A poster that says "To Live in Peace," in English, Arabic, and Hebrew hangs over the

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microwave.

"They're practically inseparable," says Freedman. "Their friendship has a lot of facets. They can talk to each other. Even in college, so many friendships are superficial. I think they have a unique bond. The only one I can compare it to is a friend I've had since I was 4. I think they're willing to open up entirely to each other."

While she sits at the dining table studying Russian, Hussein and Bavly bustle around the kitchen, discussing strategy for cooking their meal of hummus, salmon, new potatoes, salad, and caramelized pearl onions. The first rule: lots of olive oil and lots of garlic. "Do you have any za'tar?" Hussein asks Bavly, using the Arabic word for thyme.

They listen to tapes of their radio show, critiquing themselves while they cook.

At 8:30, Freedman leaves to see a campus movie, skipping dinner, and Hussein bends down to open the oven and check the potatoes. "If we could just make them a little crustier, Bavly," he says.

"Crusty, shmusty," replies Bavly, adding in Arabic, "Yallah." ("Let's go.")

They sit down at the table and begin to eat and talk. The conversation heats up as it turns to the conflict and a touchy subject: justice.

"Why don't you like the term 'justice'?" demands Hussein, rolling his eyes and crossing his arms. "Does it make you feel bad? Does it make you feel guilty?"

"I believe the term is so loaded," shoots back Bavly. "For a lot of Israeli Jews, the term 'justice' implies a set of demands that aren't necessarily the set of demands that Palestinians have in mind when they call for justice."

At this, they seem to reach an impasse. But, unlike the Israeli and Palestinian peace negotiators, these two don't leave the table. They've learned how to disagree and move on. So, the conversation turns to lighter topics, such as a girl who seems to have a crush on Bavly. Bavly laughs and asks Hussein if he wants the last piece of salmon. Hussein sighs, "I've had enough."

Though these dinners are sure to be less frequent now that the two have graduated, it is just the beginning of what Bavly and Hussein call their "people's peace." They say they've been so transformed by their college peacemaking that they have vowed to make it their life's work.

Both men hope to spend a few more years in the Boston area. Bavly will attend Suffolk University Law School. Hussein is looking for a job in the Boston area, and then he plans to apply to graduate school in diplomacy and business. They say they will continue their radio show if they're still in the area.

Hussein dreams of becoming the first Arab prime minister of Israel. Bavly wants to start, with Hussein, a coexistence conference center in the Galilee. They plan to run seminars and dialogue groups, do a similar type of radio show, and run a restaurant, because they believe the easiest way to forge a friendship is over food.

They're moving away from the safety of the college cocoon to a more complex and dangerous world. What is considered an enlightening exercise in America can be deadly in the Middle East. Many of Hussein's friends back home disagree with his willingness to reach out to Jews. His mother worries that if he draws too much attention to his peace activities, he will get hurt, or killed. Bavly is still haunted by the right-wing Jew who assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin after Rabin made peace with Yasser Arafat.

"What we do is not a game," insists Bavly. "It's not a college experiment. We want to show that peace is possible."

IT'S THE THURSDAY evening of one of their final shows, and Hussein and Bavly are in full swing. "So, Forsan, how you doin'?"

"I'm hungry and tired, and I've had a long day."

"I'm doin' great, because we finally are in summertime."

This week, the news out of Israel is that President Ezer Weizmann will not be indicted on corruption charges in an ongoing scandal that implicated former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "Everyone is getting interrogated," says Bavly. "Apparently, if you're not interrogated, you're not cool."

"I heard Weizmann was not interrogated," says Hussein. "So apparently, he's not cool anymore."

The voices fade into a Lebanese song called "Rah Habibi," or "My Love Went Away." Then, Bavly chooses a CD that he calls "Euro-trash," the kind of music played in Tel Aviv discotheques. "I was talking to a Lebanese friend of mine recently," says Bavly, "and she said they also play that music in Beirut."

"Sooo," Hussein responds. "Are you trying to tell me that I'm like you and you're just like me?"

They launch into a discussion of names Arabs and Israelis have in common, such as Abdullah and Ovdya, which both mean "slave of God." Then comes another song: an Israeli Jew singing in Arabic.

Before they sign off, they send one last message. Bavly looks straight into Hussein's dark brown eyes: "Do good." Hussein looks right back into Bavly's eyes, which are just a shade lighter. "Do peace," he says. □

The Globe Puzzle Food for thought

ACROSS

1 Cambridge course
6 Bridge columnist
12 Ice bucket accessory
17 Bender
18 Chevy model
19 Family subdivisions
20 Half a Julia Child quote
23 Scepter adornment
24 Small one
25 Horned Frogs' sch.
26 Gardener's buy
28 Boil slowly
30 Frankfurt's river
31 XXX look-alikes
32 Little louse
33 Very demanding
35 Coin call
36 Tobacconist's offering
38 USN bigwig
41 Roulette bet
42 Shrewd
43 Prolonged attacks
44 The Rosenbergs' crime
46 Chameleonic Allen role
47 Solzhenitsyn setting
48 Aragonite beads
49 Bug maker, for short
50 Affectionate strokes

53 "Jack Sprat could ..."
54 They have two legs
55 Lat. Bible version
56 His sentence was suspended
57 "Today I ... man"
58 Clara Peller's demand
62 Battle Born State (abbr.)
63 Five, to Francois
65 Mrs. Geraint
66 European cavalryman
67 Beavers' den
69 Permanent
71 "It Seems to Me" columnist
72 56 Across's first name
73 Caesura
74 Dogpatch surname
75 MVP of three Super Bowls
76 Fumigates
78 Less
79 Had the desired effect
80 Sitcom star's monogram
81 Gave as an example
82 Prozac company


83 Like 007's martinis
85 Asti article
86 "— fair ..."
87 Consequently
88 Foolish
91 Closet invaders
94 Earth (prefix)
95 Came down in buckets
97 Carnival venue
98 20 Across's other half
102 Conical shelters
103 All-out attempt?
104 Hubert's successor
105 Expository remark
106 Fix the manuscript
107 Cafeteria stack

19 German mathematician
21 Prop for Fritz Kreisler
22 Sans ardor
27 Norms (abbr.)
29 Painter Homer
31 — Major (Sirius's constellation)
34 Writer Anita
35 Doesn't mince words
36 Ill temper
37 Restraint
38 Tranquil
39 "California —"
40 Essential part
42 Irish ancestors
43 Billow
45 Son of Prince Valia
46 Gerrymandered
47 Greek physician
49 Brazilian airline
50 Heel style
51 Chic
52 Alarm clock setting
54 Tubular pasta
55 Soft palate
59 1950s skating star Carol
60 Decisive time
61 Stood on either side
64 Seismology subject
68 Mel of Cooperstown
70 Wished otherwise
71 Plays ninepins
72 Recess

DOWN

1 Software letters
2 Left at sea?
3 The answer man
4 Cock and bull?
5 Line of fashion
6 Cool Runnings athlete
7 One with holdings?
8 Islamic leader
9 Norma Rae director
10 Trice preceder
11 Half a ha'penny
12 Sawbuck
13 Individuals
14 Actress Campbell
15 Sam-I-Am's entree
16 Canned pilchard

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