



HILLEL'S JOSEPH MEYERHOFF  
CENTER FOR JEWISH LEARNING

## **TWO SWORN ENEMIES AND A MICROPHONE- FACILITATOR'S GUIDE**

<http://www.guiltandpleasure.com/hiphop>

Feuding hip-hop artists are nothing new, but are the stakes higher when the lyrics revolve around Arab-Israeli conflict? This article, by Dorian Lynskey, takes a look at the growing Israeli hip-hop scene and provides further fuel for the question, is Israel a “Light unto the nations” or “A state like any other state?” Arab citizens comprise 20% of Israeli society. Renowned author, David Grossman, refers to Israeli Arabs as “the quietest minority.” The hip-hop scene may change that silence, giving voice to those who previously lacked a platform. Meanwhile, Jewish rappers with a right-wing stance have developed a huge following among young Israelis in military service- a service Arab citizens cannot perform.

The article is likely to illicit many diverse and interesting reactions from salon participants and it is a great idea to invite people to your salon who you know will have interesting things to say about this article. Your job as the facilitator is not to push the conversation in any specific direction, but to help the conversation flow naturally and help draw everyone into the discussion. Keep in mind that different people come to the table with different knowledge and lack of knowledge (i.e. Israel, the music industry, politics) and that it is important to create a space where terms and references are defined and questions are encouraged. Sometimes great conversation happens on its own, and sometimes it is necessary to pose questions to the group which can spark discussion or advance the conversation after a lull.

### **Here are some sample discussion prompt questions to ask at your salon:**

1. What is this article about?
2. Did your opinion of the Kobi Shimoni and Tamer Nafar change or evolve throughout the course of reading the article? How?
3. What facts and opinions did you find surprising in this article? What resonated with you? What made you feel uncomfortable?
4. Were you shocked by any of the song lyrics cited in the article? How does the content of Israeli hip-hop appear in contrast with the American music which inspired it? Does the music “keep it real”? Does it seem powerful, authentic, sensationalist, reasonable, unreasonable, or something else?
5. Is hip-hop more “violently relevant” in Israeli society than in America? What do you think of a culture where musicians and artists have a stake and an influential role in politics?
6. “Hip-hop is the megaphone through which young Israelis are broadcasting their discontent.” What does it mean when music plays this large a role in a society?
7. What do you think of filmmaker Anat Halachmi’s claim that Subliminal and DAM’s dueling dynamic is essentially the same as the dynamic of Israeli and Palestinian leadership?

8. Does the author give proper consideration to all sides of the issues raised in the article? Does the author seem to have a bias? What was missing from this article?

**Additional opportunities to share with students:**

1. Bring *Channels of Rage* to campus. Website on the award-winning documentary about the Shimoni/Nafar feud.  
[http://www.ruthfilms.com/html/fs\\_channels\\_of\\_rage.html](http://www.ruthfilms.com/html/fs_channels_of_rage.html)
2. Find Tamer Nafar/DAM's music and tour calendar on MySpace.  
<http://profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendid=25392149>
3. Tel Aviv City Team (TACT), Shimoni's record label which represents Subminal and other popular Israeli artists. <http://www.tact-records.com/en/>
4. Several Subliminal and DAM music videos and recordings can be found by searching YouTube.