

Propaganda, Proselytizing, and Public Education

A Critique of the
Arab World Studies Notebook

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

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Introduction

The educational materials any nation chooses for its children tell us a great deal about the vision and values it wishes to inculcate. They tell us what habits of mind and heart a nation hopes to implant in the generations to come.

In recent years, American history and social studies curricular materials have undergone significant revisions to take into consideration the civic implications of a diverse society. They have sought to integrate the historical experiences of women and minorities and to abandon a uniquely white, Christian, Eurocentric view of world events. To prepare students to live in a culturally diverse nation and a global economy, the perspectives derived from the experiences of Latinos, African-Americans, Asians, and Native Americans have been introduced into the curriculum. Within this context, teaching about Muslim and Arab beliefs and history naturally has its place. Moreover, traditional accounts of periods and events in history have been revised to take into account new and different perspectives. For example, American history lessons used to gloss over the African slave trade. Now it is hard to imagine an American history course of study that does not discuss it as a cruel and inhuman phenomenon.

The *Arab World Studies Notebook*, edited by Audrey Shabbas, is marketed as a teacher's manual to assist American public school teachers to teach about the Arab and Islamic worlds and to counter "the rampant negative stereotypes of Arabs and of Muslims."¹ Its purported goal is "encouraging the expression of all the diverse voices within our culture." In fact, it reflects only one voice, and, on many counts, it fails to meet the standards we have come to expect of material used to educate our children in American public schools. These standards involve presenting material in a manner that, at minimum, strives to be fair, balanced, and accurate, and rejects propagandizing. These standards also involve a calibrated approach toward religion, which, while fully respectful of religion and religious values, avoids endorsing or promoting any particular belief system, including, of course, any particular faith or creed.

The *Arab World Studies Notebook*, attempting to redress a perceived deficit in sympathetic views of the Arabs and Muslim religion in the American classroom, veers in the opposite direction—toward historical distortion as well as uncritical praise, whitewashing, and practically proselytizing. The result, as demonstrated in these pages, is a text that appears largely designed to advance the anti-Israel and propagandistic views of the *Notebook's* sponsors, the Middle East Policy Council

(MEPC) and Arab World and Islamic Resources (AWAIR), to an audience of teachers who may not have the resources and knowledge to assess this text critically.

Background

The *Arab World Studies Notebook* first came to the attention of the American Jewish Committee through a high school teacher in Anchorage, Alaska, who was one of eighteen people asked to review it. The initial alert was raised by an ad hoc group within the Anchorage Jewish community, and the Board of Education subsequently recommended against use of the *Notebook* anywhere in the district, pending a review by its Controversial Issues Committee.² Upon receiving a copy of the teacher's manual, the American Jewish Committee began an extensive analysis, aimed at discerning problems within the text and providing an accurate and comprehensive rebuttal for those concerned about the usage of the *Notebook* in their schools.

The *Arab World Studies Notebook* was first published in 1990 under the title *Arab World Notebook*, but was updated and republished in 1998 with its current title. The funding for the publication was provided by the Middle East Policy Council, formerly the Arab American Affairs Council. By its own description, the MEPC is a nonprofit, tax-exempt educational organization with the aim of expanding public discussion and understanding of issues affecting U.S. policy in the Middle East.³ The *Notebook* was published in conjunction with Arab World and Islamic Resources (AWAIR), founded by Audrey Shabbas, who penned many of the articles in the *Notebook*, as well as the editorial commentary throughout. AWAIR is a Berkeley-based nonprofit that has as its mission "to impact what gets taught about the Arab World as a geographic region and about Islam as a world faith, at the pre-collegiate level ... in public schools throughout the United States."⁴

It is important to note that the *Notebook* was last revised in 1998 and, as such, is already outdated. The events of the past six years, including but not limited to September 11 and the campaign of violence launched against Israel in September 2000, should surely be included in a text about the Arab world and American relations with it.

The professed goals of the *Notebook* are manifold: to supplement and/or replace standard-issue world history texts; to improve the "lack of basic knowledge

[that] results in many Americans' continuing fear/hate of 'those people'; to "impact the very resources chosen and used by teachers as well as the training and sensitizing of teachers themselves"; and to assist teachers in turning students into "thoughtful and informed citizens."⁵ While these goals seem well-intentioned and perhaps even laudatory, the text does not fulfill them.

Teachers are subjected to heavy propaganda, both in the *Notebook* and in the teacher workshops sponsored by MEPC and conducted by AWAIR, in which the *Notebook* is the primary source material. The MEPC Web site claims that since 1985, when they began their workshops, they have been conducted in 175 different cities in forty-three states, and been attended by more than 16,000 educators.⁶ (According to the *Notebook's* editor, Shabbas, some 12,000 books have been distributed.) As there is no way to independently verify these statistics, one can only speculate how many educators—and through them, students—have been exposed to the inaccurate views propagated by the MEPC and AWAIR.⁷

The introductory portion of the *Notebook* addresses the appropriateness of religious education in public schools and lists Shabbas's criteria for distinguishing between "teaching about religion in public schools and religious indoctrination." The U.S. government has dealt with this question for decades; in 1995, then Secretary of Education Richard Riley issued a set of guidelines as to what is permissible in this context, including: the history of religion, comparative religion, the Bible (or other scripture)-as-literature, and the role of religion in the history of the United States and other countries; religious influences on art, music, literature, and social studies; and education about religious holidays, including their religious aspects. (While it is acceptable to note secular aspects of holidays, schools may not observe holidays as religious events or promote such observance by students.)⁸ Shabbas's guidelines directly contradict those provided by the Department of Education, and in fact, the *Notebook* flagrantly violates its own less rigorous criteria throughout.

The *Notebook* critiques other educational materials for being Eurocentric, yet it provides students with a completely Muslim-centered perspective. While the *Notebook* professes to be an unbiased attempt at presenting students with multiple perspectives and allowing them to engage in critical thinking, it fails to provide differing perspectives. The *Notebook* references the California State Education Code, which stipulates that "no instructional materials shall be adopted by any governing board for use in the schools which contain any matter reflecting adversely upon persons because of their race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex or occupation."⁹ Surely this standard cannot mean mitigating historical fact to preserve the

reputations of some supposedly maligned groups, while emphasizing the most deplorable actions of Western history.

The *Notebook* is replete with factual errors, inaccuracies, and misrepresentations. In addition to pervasive typographical errors, there is an almost total lack of citation, making reference checking exceptionally difficult, if not impossible.

A Note on Methodology

Common problems run throughout the *Notebook*. As the text is long and errors numerous, an attempt to provide a cohesive analysis necessitates approaching the text using a thematic methodology. This analysis divides the problems with the text into three broad categories: 1) myth/opinion presented as fact; 2) factual/historical inaccuracies and omissions; and 3) overt bias and propagandizing. This analysis will address each category individually, cataloguing specific examples from the text. Citations of the excerpted passages, which are presented in italics, can be found in the footnotes at the end of this report.

I. Myth/Opinion Presented as Fact

Like every religion and culture, Islam and Arab civilization are filled with myths and folklore; such stories add to the richness of any culture. As such, they certainly should be included in teaching about the culture and religion. Care should be taken, however, to reference these stories for what they are—cultural myths. To present them as historical fact is inappropriate, especially in a school setting. For example, a teacher today might present the story of George Washington chopping down the cherry tree as a fable that bespeaks Washington's honesty—but not as a historical fact.

Furthermore, while any study of history is subject to interpretation, opinion should never override that which is historically undisputed nor replace historical fact. Thus, while Northern and Southern historians may give different interpretations of the causes of the American Civil War (even calling it by different names), the facts and the outcomes of that war are acknowledged by both.¹⁰

The *Notebook* is guilty of committing both of the aforementioned errors: It presents myth, folklore, and opinion as historical fact; it uses no qualifiers to differentiate between fact and interpretation; and it fails to clarify that, like the stories behind many other religions, some of the stories within traditional Islam are disputed or unverifiable.

This problem begins in the very first chapter of the text, which outlines the history of the origins of Islam. According to Islamic teaching, the Koran was revealed to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel gradually over a period of approximately twenty-three years, concluding with Muhammad's death in 632 C.E.

Muslims believe that the Arabic Koran is the literal word of God (as Orthodox Jews believe about the Hebrew Torah). Scholars of religion have, in recent years, challenged this belief—especially textual historians who have uncovered manuscripts with variations on the standard Koranic text.¹¹ The *Notebook* states:

*As is well known, the Qur'an was revealed through the prophet Muhammad.... The first revelation came when Muhammad was forty years old, a mature man of impeccable character...*¹²

*The prophet Muhammad, to whom God revealed His truth, grew up in Makkah.... Muhammad was a ready instrument when God, in the year 610, spoke to him through the Archangel Gabriel—himself familiar to many Christians—and entrusted to Muhammad his final revelations.*¹³

These are religious beliefs presented as fact. There is much to be said for belief and faith, and it is within appropriate boundaries for supplemental educational materials to elaborate upon the origins from which Muslims *believe* their sacred text came. However, the *Notebook* fails to present any historical context behind the origins of Islam, and rather presents the accepted belief as absolute truth. If a public school teacher introduced the New Testament's or the Hebrew Bible's depiction of angels or of miracles as literal truth, most likely the teacher would be at least censured, if not removed from the school entirely. The same standards should apply to the teaching of Islamic religious doctrine as truth.

When presenting schoolchildren with the believed origins of the Koran, rather than stating as fact, "The Koran was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad over a period of twenty-three years" (as the *Notebook* does), the text should say, "Muslims believe that..." or "Islam teaches that..." By prefacing this type of statement with a qualifier, it is easy to avoid confusing a religious belief with a proven historical fact. For instance, one would not in a public school setting teach that "God chose Abraham to be the father of the Jewish people" or "Jesus performed miracles, feeding thousands with fish and loaves." But one might say that "Jews believe that God chose Abraham" or "the New Testament records that Jesus performed miracles."

The following excerpts fail the test of objectivity, and present myth and belief as fact:

*Wars began in 624 and continued until 630, when the Prophet at the head of an army of 10,000 finally entered Makkah again, now as its conqueror. In this final triumphant campaign there was but one casualty.*¹⁴

No citation is given for this information. There were indeed several wars beginning in 624 and culminating with Muhammad's victory in Mecca in 630. However, the claim that there was but a single casualty throughout the course of a six-year war defies credulity, and would seem to fall in the category of Muslim folklore, yet it is presented as historical fact.

*And [Muhammad's wife] took him to a cousin of hers, a Christian monk, who affirmed that this was no delusion, but bore all the marks of genuine revelation.*¹⁵

Again, there is no qualifier, such as "according to the Koran," for this statement. Shabbas does not disclose the textual source, nor is there any outside source cited to lend credibility to this story.

*Religion is always considered a right or correct way.*¹⁶

By whom? This is a subjective and inflammatory statement for a public school setting, where children of differing religions and children of no religion study together.

*In the case of Islam, there are no religious functions that cannot be performed by every adult member of the community.*¹⁷

This may be true in theory, but not in practice. In her book *The Trouble with Islam*, Irshad Manji describes being taught in her *madrassa* (religious school) that women are not allowed to lead prayer because, "Allah says so."¹⁸ A nuanced view of the role of women in Islam is provided by Khalid Duran, a scholar of the history, sociology, and politics of the Islamic world:

As persons before God, man and woman are equal. Woman is seen neither as merely derivative from man nor as morally inferior.... However, the social order envisioned in the Qur'an is unmistakably patriarchal. Women are called upon to respect the placement of man in the position of leadership.... Muslim women's struggle for equal rights is dramatic and often tragic, with many setbacks, and is still beset by great obstacles.¹⁹

On other topics as well, the *Notebook* portrays in laudatory terms aspects of Islamic culture that have a darker side.

*The Qur'an condemns wars of extermination or territorial (sic) conquest. But it is a religious duty, according to the Qur'an, for the entire Muslim community—women as well as men—to struggle in the world, in self-defense for their lives, property and freedom. This is the "Lesser Jihad."*²⁰

Much ink has been spilled over the double meaning of the word jihad—literally, “struggle” or “campaign”—which connotes both “the internal struggle of the individual to achieve an ethical existence”²¹ and “the battle against infidels.” As Duran points out, “Both ideas have existed side by side for more than a thousand years and reflect a profound, continuing tension within Islam.”²² Shabbas, however, insists that jihad “does not mean ‘holy war.’”²³ In portraying only Islam’s “gentle treatment of civilian populations,”²⁴ Shabbas distorts the historical record. It is well documented that at its peak the Muslim world extended throughout the Middle East, North Africa, Spain, and to the Indus River in Asia.²⁵ The “building of an Islamic empire” is described in William L. Cleveland’s *A History of the Modern Middle East*:

The speed and extent of the Arab conquests were remarkable. In 637 the Arab forces defeated the imperial Sasanian army at the battle of Qadisiyya, an encounter that was quickly followed by the capture of Ctesiphon and the beginning of the difficult ... campaign across the Iranian plateau toward the Indian subcontinent. Success against Byzantium was equally swift.²⁶

The spread of Islam was clearly accomplished by warfare in its early stages, but the *Notebook* refuses to acknowledge this fact of history.

The *Notebook's* Treatment of Western Religions

Often the *Notebook* draws parallels between Islam and Christianity. While this approach could facilitate comprehension for children unfamiliar with Islam, the comparisons are frequently misguided and inappropriate, in that they involve statements of faith. For example:

*“The Qur'an synthesizes and perfects earlier revelations.”*²⁷ The Qur'an incorporates Judaic and Christian teachings into Islam, thus “synthesizing” earlier religious teachings. But to say that the Qur'an “perfects” Judaism and Christianity is inappropriate in a public school setting, because this is not teaching about religion, but rather preferring one over another.

The Qur'an is undeniably unique ... in the entire context of classical sacred tradition throughout the world, in having been revealed in the full light of his-

tory, through the offices of a Prophet who was well known.

As the last link in a chain of revelation going back to time immemorial, even to the very origin of humankind, the Qur'an has the special function of recollecting the essential message of all revealed Books and distinguishing this from the opinions and reactions later interpolated into ancient texts whose original dispensation had taken place in remote and even unknown times.²⁸

Here, Islam's chief argument regarding its superiority to Judaism and Christianity is laid out in no uncertain terms. The revelations contained in the Qur'an are understood to be a continuation of the divinely influenced prophecy that began with Moses, was carried forward by Jesus, and then expounded in its truest form by Mohammad. According to Islam, all prior divine teachings are distorted, as noted by Cleary, through a process of interpolation.

Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the pure word of God, immune to opinion and redaction as well as to interpolation; that belief is a statement of faith, not fact. For the *Notebook* to imply that this somehow makes it superior to other "ancient texts," namely the Old and New Testaments, is a presentation of religious belief as historical fact and a denigration of the beliefs of other religions.

"[The Koran] is undeniably a book of great importance even to the non-Muslim, perhaps more today than ever, if that is possible."²⁹ The study of religion and religious texts is important for a variety of reasons, not least of which is to widen the capacity for mutual understanding. But the implicit message behind this statement is troubling because it fails to elaborate why the Qur'an is important to non-Muslims. Given the *Notebook's* critique of the weakening moral fabric of the West and its profession that the Qur'an is the perfection of the Old and New Testaments, the *Notebook* seems to imply that the Qur'an is a remedy for the degeneration of Western morality. This is an inappropriate implication.

"The Qur'an tells the story of the Virgin Birth of Jesus. (It would be safe to say, since all Muslims regard the Qur'an as the literal word of God, that there are more Muslims who believe in the Virgin birth of Jesus than there are Christians who believe in the Virgin birth.)"³⁰ This statement implies that all Muslims believe all teachings of Islam. Even if this were true, the *Notebook's* statement would be fairly meaningless, since believing in the virgin birth in a Muslim context means something different than believing in the virgin birth in a Christian framework of faith.

"One aspect of Islam that is unexpected and yet appealing to the post-Christian secular mind is the harmonious interplay of faith and reason."³¹ The *Notebook* fails to explain the manifestation of this appeal. Is Islam appealing to the "post-Christian secular mind"—whatever that is—in order to affect conversion or as a subject wor-

thy of academic study? And the *Notebook* implies but does not demonstrate that other religions lack that harmonious interplay.

*The Qur'an is nothing but the old books refined of human alloy, and contains transcendent truths embodied in all sacred scriptures with complete additions, necessary for the development of all human faculties. It repeats truths given [by]... all other prophets, and adds what was not in them.*³²

This statement necessarily implies that there were transcendent truths missing from the Old and New Testament. Such a statement of faith is inappropriate in a public school setting.

*Lesson Plan—Islam is God-Centered: ... And to understand how Islam requires of Muslims that they put God at the center of their lives, everyday, all the time, is perhaps best experienced.... Have your students practice these phrases which they would hear many times a day....*³³

This lesson crosses the line between what is and is not appropriate in religious education in public schools. The activity asks students to “find the ‘allah’ in the transliteration” of four different Arabic phrases. Then the students are asked to “practice these phrases which they would hear many times a day throughout the Arab World, throughout the larger Muslim world, and even here in America, among the Muslim communities that now number six million members.” These phrases include the Arabic words for “in the name of God,” “it was from God,” “the praise belongs to God,” and “if God wills.” To ask students to recite these Arabic phrases is no less problematic than asking public school students to say “Praise Jesus” several times a day. Furthermore, teachers are encouraged to buy rubber stamps that produce the image of the name of Allah in Arabic (from Shabbas’s company) to give out to students—a highly questionable suggestion on religious and commercial ethics grounds alike.

Even more troublesome is the “Note to Teachers” at the end of the lesson plan, which says, “The phrase ‘alhamdu-lillah’ [meaning ‘the praise belongs to God’] is a very appropriate one to attach to student’s good work.... You are certain to receive heartwarming approval from the parents of Muslim youngsters in your class.”³⁴ But what about the parents of non-Muslim children in the class? If public school teachers began stamping children’s work with the phrase “Jesus loves you,” there would be an outcry. Commensurate standards need to be applied here.

The tradition exists that whoever learns and transmits forty hadith [sayings of the Prophet Mohammad] will enter Paradise. Certainly we all need all the help we can get! So do us a favor and read the list below—then do yourself a favor, and pass it on to someone else. Of one thing we can all be sure: the more

*these words circulate, the more they will be in people's minds. And the more they are put into action, the less distant Paradise will seem.... 1. Worship God the Merciful, feed others, spread peace, and you will enter Paradise in peace.*³⁵

This exercise specifically suggests the student perform a religious act, in reciting the fundamental belief statements of Islam. Imagine a public school teacher advising his/her students that any person who says twenty “Hail Mary’s” will get into heaven—and expecting the student to say them! This passage is a clear instance of proselytizing.

II. Factual/Historical Inaccuracy and Omissions

Of the three overarching problems with the *Notebook*, its inaccurate presentation of historical fact, not to mention conspicuous omissions, is by far the most egregious. Its inaccuracies, omissions, and distortions are abundant in every chapter, to such a degree that the *Notebook* cannot be viewed as a legitimate and reliable history/social studies resource.

One such gross factual inaccuracy, a chapter entitled “Early Muslim Exploration Worldwide: Evidence of Muslims in the New World before Columbus” was, in fact, removed from the *Notebook* after complaints were lodged against it. Incredibly, that chapter boasted: “Columbus was well aware of the Manding presence... [and] that [Muslims] had reached Canada and were trading and intermarrying with the eastern woodland Iroquois and Algonquin nations. Much later, early English explorers were to meet Iroquois and Algonquin chiefs with names like Abdul-Rahim and Abdallah Ibn Malik.” This revision of history outraged the Algonquin Indians. Peter DiGangi, the director of Canada’s Algonquin Nation Secretariat in Quebec, told a *Washington Times* reporter that these claims were “preposterous” and “outlandish,” and that “nothing in the tribe’s written or oral history support them.”³⁶

Sandra Stotsky of the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, an educational reform think tank, in an incisive study of American history textbooks, said of this chapter: “The idea that English explorers met native Indian chiefs with Muslim names in the middle of the Northeast woodlands sounds almost like something a Hollywood film writer dreamed up for a spoof.”³⁷ She goes on to say that the most astonishing fact is not the inclusion of this element of historical fakery itself, but rather that “it seems not to have been recognized as fake history by all the satisfied teachers that MEPC claims have participated in its workshops over the years.”³⁸

Despite the removal of the offensive chapter, elements of its distortion of history are retained in a chapter entitled “Muslims Worldwide.” This chapter states

as fact: *“And there is new research being done to uncover the story of earlier Muslims from west Africa who navigated the Mississippi and others who settled amongst the eastern [sic] Native American tribes—several hundred years before the arrival of European settlers.”*³⁹ There is no reference cited to indicate where Shabbas acquired this information, nor did she state who conducted this research or where it is being done or why there is any reason to believe it will prove anything.

(Currently, a revised version of “Evidence of Muslims in the New World”—without the Indian chiefs with Arabic names, but with the idea of pre-Columbian Muslim voyagers reaching America—is posted at the Middle East Policy Council Web site at http://www.mepc.org/public_asp/workshops/musexpl.asp.)

Writing about the conquest of Spain and the broader Muslim empire by the Muslim forces over many centuries, the *Notebook* gives an extremely sanguine picture of what was in many cases clearly the spread of Islam by the sword:

From the eighth to the thirteenth century A.D., an Arab empire greater than Rome’s extended across North Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia, from Spain to the borders of China. Unified and inspired by the religion of Islam, its people met in a new society, a multi-ethnic “Muslim World” whose members were Arab, Afghan, Aramaean, Berber, Egyptian, Indian, Persian, Spanish, and Turk—Moslem, Christian, Jew, Hindu, and Zoroastrian. Diverse cultures flourished within the Empire and made great achievements in many fields.

...what happened was not the imposition of a foreign culture by invasion.

*...Unlike the Mongol invaders of the thirteenth century who destroyed much of the Middle East, the Arabs were constructive influences in their domain. They created a new social order, a tolerant Muslim society, to which they brought Islam, the Arabic language, and Islamic law.*⁴⁰

This is an extraordinarily rosy picture, far from complete, omitting entirely the solidly documented darker side of the Islamic conquests. True, there were periods of cooperation, when dhimmis (“protected minorities,” primarily Jews and Christians who refused to convert to Islam) were permitted to participate in the larger society, most famously during the “Golden Age” in Spain, lasting approximately from 950 to 1150. But even during that period there were many difficulties for the protected minorities, including special clothing for Jews, a ban on synagogue construction, a massacre of Jews in Granada, taking some 4,000 lives, and deportations of Christian communities.⁴¹

The accuracy of the written material does not improve when the period discussed is contemporary. *“There are six million Muslims in America, making them the*

*second largest religious group in the United States, after Christians.*⁴² Shabbas does not offer any citation of sources to support this claim, but it may come from the similar estimates circulated by Muslim organizations such as the Islamic Society of North America, the Council on American-Islamic Relations, and the Muslim Student Association. None of these organizations gave a scientifically sound basis for their figures.⁴³

Two recent attempts to determine an accurate figure for the number of Muslims living in the United States reached far lower estimates: one study commissioned by the American Jewish Committee and conducted by Dr. Tom Smith of the University of Chicago, the director of the General Social Survey of the National Opinion Research Center; and the other, the American Religious Identification Survey of 2001, conducted by the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Dr. Smith's study examined the methodology of a number of prior surveys of the American Muslim population, estimated the Muslim portion of the General Social Survey, and concluded that "the average number being cited by the media at present (6.7 million) is 2.4 to 3.6 times greater than the best available estimates (1.9-2.8 million)."⁴⁴ The American Religious Identification Survey (ARIS) 2001, based on random digit-dialing of 50,000 households, found a self-reported total population of Muslims in the United States to be about 1.8 million.⁴⁵ Interestingly, these two studies arrived at roughly the same number.

There are obvious reasons why religious populations would seek to inflate their numbers, not the least of which is to boost their own political clout. As such, Islamic political groups responded with hostility to both of these reports. The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) accused Smith's report of working "to block Muslim political participation."⁴⁶ In a similar angry response, the American Muslim Council attempted to discredit Smith's work by claiming that their own estimate of "more than seven million" was derived from the 2000 Census figures,⁴⁷ failing to acknowledge that the U.S. Census Bureau is constitutionally prohibited from asking questions regarding religious affiliation. Thus, the figure six million, repeated several times throughout the *Notebook* as the accurate count of the Muslim population in America, is not only unreferenced, but wrong.

*Here in North America, Islam is perhaps the fastest growing religion—with six million U.S. citizens who are Muslim.... It is significant to note that they are the second largest religious group, after Christians.*⁴⁸

It is no coincidence that if Muslims are the second most numerous group in the United States, then Jews are relegated to a less numerous, and therefore less

politically powerful, position. However, to the contrary, while there are estimated to be approximately two million Muslims in America, estimates of the Jewish population of the United States range from 5.3 million to six million, or roughly 2 percent of the total population.⁴⁹ The statement that Muslims are the second largest religious group after Christians is false.

Whitewashing

The introductory chapter on Islam is, like the chapters that follow, extremely problematic in its tendency to blur distinctions between Islam in theory and Islam in fact. As the book's first chapter, it sets the tone for the rest of the text.⁵⁰ For example, under the title "Islamic Revivalism," it states:

*The Western term "fundamentalism" does not accurately describe the modern movements in Islamic countries to renew Islamic values in Muslim personal and public life. Muslims prefer "revivalism" as a more accurate description of this renewal, whose manifestations include an increase in religious observance (mosque attendance, Ramadan fast, wearing a traditional Islamic modest dress); a revitalization of mystical orders; the growth of numerous religious publications and media programming; support for the implementation of Islamic law; and the growth and establishment of Islamic organizations and movements.*⁵¹

This description of Islamic renewal as primarily a spiritual and inward trend ignores the political manifestations that have occurred in many nations under Islamist rule. Never mentioned are the excesses that this "revivalism" has brought under Islamist regimes such as Iran and Saudi Arabia. The harsh consequences of the imposition of Islamic law, *shari'a*, in Iran have been movingly described by Azar Nafisi in *Reading Lolita in Tehran* (New York: Random House, 2003), which tells of the mandatory veil-wearing, the lowering of the age of female marriage to nine, the daily humiliations and curtailment of movement for all women, the beheadings, and the arbitrary arrests. Even the most religiously committed among Nafisi's students were appalled by the consequences of externally implemented and enforced Islamic law.

Saudi Arabia, long ruled by Islamic law, was found by Amnesty International to follow equally reprehensible practices: At least fifty-three people were executed, all by public beheading; Iraqi refugees were tortured and subjected to other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment; refugees were detained without trial and without access to legal counsel or family members; the

Saudi Arabian army used excessive lethal force in the refugee camps, as well as possible extrajudicial executions.⁵²

World history texts today include less flattering episodes in Western history, such as the Christian Crusades and the European explorers' treatment of Native Americans in North America. If Iran and Saudi Arabia—not to mention Afghanistan under the Taliban, the Sudan, and other Islamic regimes—have troubling human rights records, according to Amnesty International and other sources, a balanced presentation requires that this information be presented in conjunction with the more positive aspects of Muslim culture.

The subsequent chapters are equally flagrant in their omission and misrepresentation of historical fact. Following are some examples:

*While some leaders of Islamic movements have spoken out against democracy and a parliamentary system of government, their negative reaction has often been part of the general rejection of European colonial influence and a defense of Islam against further penetration of and dependence on the West rather than a wholesale rejection of democracy.*⁵³

Here, the *Notebook* makes an effort to counter a Eurocentric understanding of democracy and to explain rejection of the West on the part of the Arab world as mere resentment. This argument implies that when one group of people accepts responsibility for having subjugated another in the past, the group in power relinquishes forever the right to criticize the subjugated group. While it is true that rejection of democracy in the Middle East is in some part due to resentment of past European colonialism, this is by no means the only factor. Many Muslims believe that Western law and practice are akin to atheism—a belief that emanates from the Islamic teaching that only God can make law, or *shari'a*. Many emerging Muslim leaders in the Arab world profess that Western liberal ideals are in direct contradiction to their own ideology of political Islam. “Stridently anti-Western and anti-modern, political Islam portrays itself as the strongest ideological counter to democracy and capitalism.”⁵⁴

Leaders of some Muslim countries have been known for their anti-Western rhetoric and propaganda, not to mention anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist statements, such as former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad's assertion that “Jews rule the world by proxy,” made in 2003 before the fifty-seven-nation Organization of the Islamic Conference. To dismiss such rhetoric as resentment of colonialism ignores the larger picture and is an inadequate explanation of the depth of hostility toward Jews and the West.

This misunderstanding between Islam and the West feeds the Muslim incapacity to respond coolly and meaningfully. Muslims being killed in the West Bank or in Kashmir, their mosques being threatened with demolition in Jerusalem or in Ayadhya, India, are seen throughout the Muslim world on television and cause instant dismay and anger.⁵⁵

A totally one-sided view of the conditions leading to Muslim and Arab violence is offered. Televised images of “Muslims being killed in the West Bank or Kashmir” are mentioned, while televised images of Israeli civilians blown up on buses or in coffee houses are ignored. Further, while the *Notebook* is quick to point out the concerns that Muslims harbor about their holy sites, it fails to recognize legitimate Jewish and Christian concerns regarding their holy sites under Muslim control. During the nineteen years of Jordanian control of East Jerusalem, from 1948-67, the holiest of Jewish sites, the Western Wall, was off-limits to Jews entirely. Yet Jews did not resort to violence to restore their access to their holy sites during this period.

These Qur’anic teachings explain the Arab conquerers’s (sic) relatively gentle treatment of civilian populations.... They were allowed the free practice of their faiths, and the retention of their churches, on condition that they wear a distinctive honey colored dress, and pay a poll tax according to their income.⁵⁶

According to Islamic law, non-Muslims belong to a class of citizens, the dhimmi (“protected”), who constitute their own community. In exchange for their allegiance to the state and payment of a poll tax [in lieu of military service in defense of the state], they are free to practice their faith and are governed by the religious leaders and laws in matters of worship, private life, education and family laws.⁵⁷

The *Notebook* paints an inaccurate picture of the dhimmi, the conquered civilian populations of Christians and Jews, also referred to as the “people of the Book.” While the *Notebook’s* description of the dhimmi status as “protected” is true in a technical sense, it glosses over the real disabilities and limitations associated with the inferior position of the dhimmi. While Christians and Jews were better off than other groups living under Islamic rule, who had a choice only between death and conversion, their “protection” and ability to practice their faith did not mean they were treated well by their Muslim rulers. Christians and Jews lived in conditions of total subordination, forced to acknowledge the superiority of the Muslim “believers.” Their subordination was consistently reinforced through a yearly poll tax imposed upon them. They were forbidden to bear arms or hold pub-

lic office; to mock or criticize the Koran, Islam, or Muhammad; and to have any physical contact with a Muslim woman. Additionally, they were forbidden to ride horses or camels, to build synagogues or churches taller than the local mosque, to construct houses taller than those of Muslims, or to drink wine in public. They were also proscribed from praying or mourning in a loud voice (because doing so might offend their Muslim superiors), required to show public deference toward Muslims, and forbidden from giving evidence in court against a Muslim.⁵⁸ For the *Notebook* to profess that Muslims treated other faiths solely in a “gentle” way and that their adherents were “free to practice their faith” paints a distorted picture of the status of minorities in the Muslim world.

The *Notebook* Denies Jewish Ties to Jerusalem

The *Notebook*'s depiction of Jerusalem bears little resemblance to the city that exists today and that most visitors encounter.

*When people talk of Jerusalem and consider the historic rights over the city and the claims to it, they are not talking about the European-type colonial suburb-turned-city which foreign Jews built next to the historic religious city-shrine, even though they called it Jerusalem too. They are talking about the walled city, fully built up, containing a small Jewish quarter, it is true, but almost exclusively a home to Christian and Muslim Palestinian Arabs.*⁵⁹

*Yet the “Old City,” the Jerusalem that most people envisage when they think of the ancient city, is Arab. Surrounding it are ubiquitous high-rises built for Israeli settlers to strengthen Israeli control over the holy city.*⁶⁰

To purport that Jerusalem is “almost exclusively” an Arab city and to characterize Jews as “foreign” to Jerusalem is, quite simply, inaccurate. Both archaeology and the Bible attest otherwise. King David made Jerusalem the capital of Israel over 3,000 years ago.⁶¹ The Old City of Jerusalem contains the Western Wall, the last remaining remnant of the Second Temple erected atop the remains of the First Temple, and the holiest site in Judaism. Jews have been living in Jerusalem for nearly three millennia, except for periods of their explicit exclusion, after the second Jewish revolt against Rome in 135 C.E. until 438 C.E. Over the centuries Jewish pilgrims visited, and small numbers lived there. By 1868, according to the “Jerusalem Almanack,” half the population of Jerusalem was Jewish, and by 1890 they were the clear majority.⁶² Jerusalem never served as a capital under Muslim rule, nor was it a Muslim cultural center. In fact, it was a backwater for most of Arab history. Jerusalem's religious significance to Islam is chiefly centered on the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque.⁶³ Thus to claim that the Old City is

uniquely Arab, and that Jews inhabit Jerusalem only to “strengthen Israeli control”—as the *Notebook* states—is to deny history and current reality. The *Notebook* applies a colonialist argument wherein white Europeans subjugated a dark-skinned indigenous people and colonized their land, but the argument could be made that Jews were the indigenous inhabitants of Jerusalem. Clearly, both Jews and Arabs have historic ties to the city.

*“What has escaped the casual reader, however, is that Islam’s religious ties with the Holy City are equally long and much deeper.”*⁶⁴ Judaism is significantly older than Islam; Jewish historic ties to Jerusalem go back some 3,000 years, while Islam dates from the seventh century C.E.; the Dome of the Rock was completed in 691 C.E. while the Western Wall dates to the reign of Herod in the first century before the Common Era.

Curiously, the sections focusing on Jerusalem are ones that focus on the importance of examining an issue from multiple perspectives. The chapter on Jerusalem includes a lesson plan entitled “Critical Thinking—‘Points of View,’” which opens with a quotation from John Stuart Mill: *“The only way in which a human being can make some approach to knowing the whole of a subject, is by hearing what can be said about it by persons of every variety of opinion, and studying all modes in which it can be looked at by every character of mind.”*⁶⁴ The lesson plan emphasizes the importance of considering a variety of opinions *“in an attempt to determine the truth,”* which involves *“seeking opinions from the ‘mainstream’ as well as those less well-known, and even those opinions held as ‘unpopular.’”*⁶⁶ While the *Notebook* suggests soliciting various *“‘points of view’ on the question of Jerusalem”* from a variety of organizations—including the American Jewish Committee and AIPAC—nowhere in the text itself are varied voices heard. Although there are emotion-laden stories of young Palestinians wanting to come to Jerusalem to worship and being turned back at checkpoints, there is no mention of Jewish families who had lived in the Old City for generations but were forced to flee during the 1948 War of Independence. There is no acknowledgment that Jews whose ancestors were buried on the Mount of Olives found the tombstones had been used as paving stones for roads and as construction material in Jordanian Army camps, including use as latrines, during the period of Jordanian occupation, 1948-67.⁶⁷ In short, there is none of the “variety of opinion” that the text pays lip service to.

*In 1967 prior to the Six-Day War, forty-five thousand Arab Christians and twenty-five thousand Arab Muslims lived in the [Jerusalem]. Since the 1967 war, Israeli settlement on confiscated Arab land in Jerusalem has proceeded quickly in order to establish a claim to the city.*⁶⁸

The population figures here are not only unreferenced, but unsubstantiated. The inherently biased terminology, “confiscated Arab land in Jerusalem,” is the loaded language the text urges the student to eschew. And more to the point, it is simply historically inaccurate. The notion that Israel “proceeded quickly in order to establish a claim to the city” denies Jewish historical ties to Jerusalem and the pre-1947 presence of Jews in the Old City.

*“Yet the world seems unable to stop the irrevocable changes now occurring in the historic character of Jerusalem.”*⁶⁹ This statement implies that the historic character of Jerusalem is solely Arab and Muslim, and that the Jewish presence there desecrates it. The *Notebook’s* opposition to changes in the city assumes that Jerusalem, uniquely among the cities of the world, is immune to significant development throughout history, thus denying it the vitality of growth and change. The expansion of Jerusalem outside the historic Old City has been going on since the end of the nineteenth century.

*Other colonial suburbs were built by foreigners in Arab countries, but today no one suggests that Algiers, Tunis, Casablanca, etc., may be rightfully claimed by the Europeans who settled there during their colonial period of recent history. Only in the case of Jerusalem does colonialist thinking still predominate.*⁷⁰

That the *Notebook* presents Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem as “foreigners” who built and colonized an Arab country is problematic for many reasons: It openly denies Jewish ties to Jerusalem; it implies that there existed an Arab country called Palestine prior to 1948; and it consciously references colonialism, because of its negative connotations, but also because of its pervasive use among those who propagate anti-Zionist⁷¹ sentiment.

*“The Israeli fetish of Jerusalem.”*⁷² Jerusalem is neither a Jewish obsession nor a fetish. It is the capital of the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people, and the focal point of Jewish prayer. (Jews pray facing Jerusalem.) To call the centrality of Jerusalem to Jews a fetish is denigrating, belittling of another faith, and wholly inappropriate.

*In 1948, between 50 and 70 percent of Palestine’s Christians were driven from their ancestral homes with the creation of the Jewish state. Since the 1967 illegal Israeli occupation of their lands, an additional 20,000 Christians have felt a necessity to leave their homeland. Formerly the population of Jerusalem, in Christian tradition, the “mother of all churches,” was half Christian.... “Israelis have targeted the Palestinian Christian community for extinction.”*⁷³

This information is misleading and inaccurate. On the contrary, as Amnon Rubinstein, a left-leaning former Israeli minister of justice, states:

Following the Israeli War of Independence ... the Christian population in the country plummeted, reaching a meager 34,000 in 1960. However, since then, their numbers have steadily increased, totaling 111,000 by 2000. They are the only Christian community in the Middle East to have grown numerically—though not proportionally—in the post-World War II period.⁷⁴

The above-quoted section of the *Notebook* makes the claim that Palestinian Christians suffer at the hands of Israelis. On the contrary, during the years 1967–95, when Israel had administrative control of Bethlehem, the city boasted a 60 percent Christian majority, while today, “eight years after PA assumed control of the city, Bethlehem is only 20 percent Christian.... Christian families there endure lawlessness, blackmail, theft and devastation at the hands of Moslem authorities. The same is true in Ramallah, once a predominantly Christian town.”⁷⁵

The *Notebook's* depiction of Israeli treatment of Palestinian Christians reflects classical anti-Semitic notions of Jews conspiring to kill non-Jews. Students who use the *Notebook* learn that these decreased Palestinian Christian population figures reflect, in substance, a Jewish conspiracy to make Christians “extinct,” and find no reference to their ill treatment under the Palestinian Authority as a likely cause of their departure.

The *Notebook* Distorts the History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict

The *Notebook's* presentation of the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict consistently distorts facts and uses polemical, one-sided language. It by no means provides the kind of “even-handed” approach to conflict situations that one would expect of American social studies curricular materials.

*At the end of World War I, the British were installed as a mandatory power over Palestine and began to facilitate both increasing Jewish immigration into the country and Jewish acquisition of Palestinian land.*⁷⁶

At the conclusion of World War I, much of the Ottoman Empire was divided between Britain and France, with the British Empire taking control of what was known as Mandatory Palestine. This territory was significantly larger than modern-day Israel and included Jordan, the West Bank, and Gaza. While Britain sporadically indicated a willingness to accommodate the Jewish desire to return to their ancestral homeland—including, but not limited, to the Balfour Declaration of 1917—Britain also issued a series of White Papers beginning in 1922 that severely limited Jewish immigration and, at times, terminated it alto-

gether. The White Papers explicitly addressed Arab concerns regarding the Jewish presence and increased Jewish immigration.⁷⁷

The 1922 White Paper drastically reduced the area of the Mandate, excluding the entire area east of the Jordan River. This territory was given to Emir Abdullah and renamed Transjordan. In 1930, Britain again issued a White Paper, which stated that “if immigration of Jews results in preventing the Arab population from obtaining the work necessary for its maintenance, ... it is the duty of the Mandatory Power ... to reduce, or, if necessary, to suspend, such immigration....”⁷⁸ In 1939 another White Paper rejected the Peel Commission’s partition plan, replacing it with “the establishment within ten years of an independent Palestine State ... in which Arabs and Jews share in government in such a way as to ensure that the essential interests of each community are safeguarded.”⁷⁹ Jewish immigration to Palestine was limited to 75,000 for the first five years, subject to “economic absorptive capacity” and contingent on Arab consent. Stringent restrictions were imposed on land acquisition by Jews.⁸⁰ Given the limitations placed on Jewish immigration, the 1939 White Paper was effectively responsible for removing Palestine as a possible refuge for thousands, perhaps millions, of Jews seeking to escape from Adolf Hitler’s Holocaust.

To disregard the White Papers in the context of the Mandatory period deprives students of important facts necessary to understand the history of the area and Britain’s complex political motivations and actions.

The colonization of Palestine led to increasing friction between the Zionists and the Arabs, with both accusing the British of aiding the other side. Violent campaigns by the Zionists to rid Palestine of the British and by the Arabs to eliminate all European control led Britain to withdraw from Palestine in 1948, leaving the dispute to the Arabs and Jewish settlers.⁸¹

There are several historical inaccuracies here. The use of the word “colonization” is a misrepresentation that tries to paint Arabs as subjugated people of color and Jews as white Europeans bent on colonialism. If Native Americans wanted to return to their former homelands within the United States, their right to the land might be contested, but no one would refer to their presence as colonialism. Furthermore, Jews and Europeans are referred to collectively as colonial powers from which the Arabs were trying to free themselves—a specious and inaccurate argument. Moreover, when Britain withdrew from the Middle East in 1948, the conflict was not left to the Arabs and Jews to settle for themselves, but was turned over to the UN. The United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) was sent to investigate and came up with Resolution 181, often referred to as the

1947 Partition Plan, which recommended dividing Mandatory Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states.⁸² The plan, while accepted by the Jews, was rejected by the Arabs; the Jews declared their own state, which the Arab states promptly attacked.⁸³

*The U.S. and the Creation of Israel... Truman's decision to push the UN decision to partition Palestine, ended in the creation of Israel. The questions of Jewish lobbying and its impact on Truman's decision with regard to American recognition—and indeed, the whole question of defining American interests and concerns—is well worth exploring.*⁸⁴

To say this question is “well worth exploring,” without suggesting other factors, such as the Holocaust, that might have contributed to the creation of the State of Israel, is tantamount to saying that the only reason Israel came into existence was due to illicit lobbying by Jews. While Shabbas may have had this opinion, it is certainly not universally shared. For many, it is a myth that U.S. pressure alone created the State of Israel. Truman's support was due in large part to the obligation he felt to the international community because of the Balfour Declaration, which the U.S. Congress had voted to endorse in 1922, in keeping with President Woodrow Wilson's principle of “self-determination” of nations.⁸⁵

*1948: The First Arab-Israeli War: As a result of Israel's declaration of independence and its subsequent continued attempts to force the Palestinian Arab inhabitants out of their land, the neighboring Arab states vowed to come to the rescue of the Palestinian civilian population. The Arab armed forces were outnumbered three to one and were poorly coordinated. Against sixty-five thousand well-trained Jewish troops stood a combined Arab force of about twenty thousand... Moreover, the main Jewish terrorist groups (the Irgun and Stern) mustered no fewer than eighty thousand men, all armed with modern weapons... For a time, the Jordanian army stood as the only force in the fight, outnumbered fourteen to one ... armed Jewish groups had driven much of the Palestinian population from their homes, thus capturing most of the Palestinians' land through acts of sheer terror and intimidation. The Jewish campaign of terror [was] employed against a people unaccustomed to war and deliberately kept untrained and unarmed by their British colonialist rulers.*⁸⁶

This description of the War of Independence is a total distortion of fact. The claim that Arab forces were outnumbered three to one would imply that Israel was able to muster almost one million troops, out of a country whose Jewish population was only 872,700.⁸⁷ In fact, in the first days of fighting, Arab troops numbering in the hundreds of thousands faced a Zionist army of only 30,000-35,000.

After Israel's declaration of statehood in 1948, all of Israel's Arab neighbors—including Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Transjordan, Iraq, and a token cohort from Saudi Arabia—invaded the new state after encouraging Palestinians living within its borders to flee. There is no question that the aim of the attack was to eliminate Israel's existence, as was often explicitly stated. The Iraqi prime minister stated that “all the Arabs would need would be ‘a few brooms’ to drive the Jews into the sea.”⁸⁸ On the very day that Israel declared its independence, Azzam Pasha, secretary general of the Arab League, declared a jihad, stating: “This will be a war of extermination and a momentous massacre which will be spoken of like the Mongolian massacres and the Crusades.”⁸⁹ Similarly, in a letter to the UN the prime minister of Transjordan said, “Our position is clear, and has been proclaimed on every occasion. It is never to allow the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine.”⁹⁰

Moreover, the claim that the Arab armies were vastly outnumbered and ill-equipped in comparison with Israeli forces is inaccurate. On the contrary, the invading Arab forces were “fully equipped with the standard weapons of a regular army of the time—artillery, tanks, armored cars and personnel carriers, in addition to machine guns, mortars and the usual small arms in great quantities, and full supplies of ammunition, oil, and gasoline. Further, Egypt, Iraq, and Syria had air forces.... In contrast, the Jews had no matching artillery, no tanks, and no war-planes in the first days of the war.”⁹¹ Jews fresh out of concentration camps and recently arrived in the state comprised a large portion of Israel's forces. Malnourished, ill-equipped Jews faced standing Arab armies, both armed and trained.

*In 1956, Britain, France, and Israel attacked the newly independent government in Egypt.... It was only under U.S. pressure that France and Britain—and later Israel—withdraw from Egyptian territory.*⁹²

This brief description of the 1956 Suez Canal crisis is misleading and omits important historical details that led up to the war. Despite armistice agreements signed after the War of Independence in 1948, Egypt maintained a state of belligerency with Israel, and in 1949 closed the Suez Canal to Israeli shipping. While the UN supported Israel's complaint against Egypt for illegally closing the canal, Egypt refused to open it. On August 31, 1955, President Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt made his intentions clear: “Egypt has decided to dispatch her heroes, the disciples of Pharaoh and the sons of Islam and they will cleanse the land of Palestine.”⁹³ The “heroes” to whom Nasser referred were the *fedayeen*, terrorists trained and equipped by the Egyptian government to commit acts of sabotage and murder within Israel itself. Students should learn of the belligerent actions by the Egyptian

government, including its blockade of both the Suez Canal and the Strait of Tiran leading to the Gulf of Aqaba, in order to understand Israel's actions in 1956.

1967: The June War ... Israeli shipping from there had to pass through Egypt's Straits of Tiran. The port handled a tiny percentage of Israeli shipping, but the closing of the straits during a time of tension between Egypt and Israel was portrayed in Western media as "a noose around Israel's neck." By the end of this "preemptive attack" six days later, Israel had doubled its territory and lost fewer than seven hundred dead. The Arab dead numbered from ten to fifteen thousand.⁹⁴

The *Notebook's* claim that the Strait of Tiran was unimportant to Israeli shipping is inaccurate: By closing the strait, Egypt cut off all Israeli shipping bound for Eilat, Israel's chief oil port and its gateway to Africa and Asia, which accommodated 30 percent of Israel's mineral exports.⁹⁵ The *Notebook* does not view Israel's preemptive strike as legitimate (as indicated by the quotation marks around "preemptive attack"). Missing is the fact that Israel had been suffering from ongoing attacks over several years prior to the war. On May 15, 1967, Egyptian and Syrian troops began amassing in large numbers on Israel's border. Nasser continued his war-mongering rhetoric and closed the Strait of Tiran to Israeli shipping. Thus there was clear evidence that war was imminent. This background should be presented in a study of the Six-Day War; otherwise, it would be analogous to teaching about the causes of the American Revolution and mentioning only the Stamp Act.⁹⁶

Furthermore, the *Notebook's* claim about casualties is misleading. While Israel did lose considerably fewer lives than did the Arab armies, Israel, a small country, suffered losses of dead and wounded in six days proportional to its entire population on par with the number of Americans lost in eight years of fighting in Vietnam.⁹⁷ Furthermore, the *Notebook* suggests that Israel's loss of life was insignificant because it gained so much territory—a claim that dishonors the dead and their sacrifice to preserve their country.

1973: The October War: Between 1967 and 1973, with parts of their territories under Israeli occupation, Egypt and Syria (and Jordan) sought diplomatic redress. Israel rejected all peace offers. In October of 1973 Egypt and Syria attacked Israeli forces in occupation of their lands.⁹⁸

In 1971, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat "raised the possibility of signing an agreement with Israel, provided that all the occupied territories were returned by the Israelis."⁹⁹ Syria, however, never proposed such a peace treaty, and, in fact,

remains in a state of hostility with Israel, despite negotiations throughout 1994–96.¹⁰⁰ While relations between Jordan and Israel were less hostile than those with Egypt and Syria, Jordan only concluded a peace treaty with Israel in October 1994, after the Oslo peace process had been launched.

Israel did not agree to the proposed deal with Egypt, and over the next several years Sadat continuously threatened war. In 1973 on Yom Kippur—the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, when many Jews were at prayer—Egyptian and Syrian forces attacked Israel. The *Notebook's* description of this war fails to acknowledge that Israel was invaded on the holiest day of the Jewish year, when much of the populace was in synagogue, and frames the conflict as one in which Arab forces attempted to liberate their lands from the aggressive and war-mongering Israeli occupier. Like many other conflicts briefly described by the *Notebook*, the description here is so severely truncated as to be inaccurate.

*Camp David: Egypt, Israel and the United States sign Camp David Accords promising [sic] limited autonomy to Palestinians in occupied territories. Israel continued to refuse to deal with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the PLO rejected autonomy.*¹⁰¹

The *Notebook* fails to explain Israel's reasons for refusing to engage the PLO in a meaningful way. It does not reference the PLO Covenant expressly calling for Israel's destruction.¹⁰² Nor does the *Notebook* discuss the actions of the PLO in the years leading up to Camp David, including terrorist attacks and overt aggression.¹⁰³ In omitting these crucial contextual facts, the *Notebook* distorts history.

*1982: Invasion of Lebanon: ... This Palestinian armed presence in south Lebanon, although presenting no serious military threat to Israel, was perceived by the Israelis as a source of harassment to the settlements in the northern part of Israel. In order to remove this threat and to destroy the infrastructure of the PLO, Israel invaded Lebanon on June 5, 1982.*¹⁰⁴

The *Notebook's* use of the word “settlements in the northern part of Israel” likens these towns that are wholly within Israel proper to disputed settlements in the West Bank and Gaza—as if the status of Tel Aviv, for example, were in dispute. In 1978, PLO terrorists infiltrated Israel from the Lebanese border, killing an American tourist and hijacking a civilian bus. After thirty-four people were killed, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) entered Lebanon and overran the terrorist bases. The IDF withdrew after two months, allowing the UN to enter to control terrorist activity.¹⁰⁵ Unfortunately, the UN was helpless to prevent the PLO from perpetrating further terrorist acts against Israel, and over the next several years the situation escalated. Despite a U.S.-brokered ceasefire in 1981, PLO attacks against Israel

continued. Ultimately, Israel charged that the PLO had carried out 270 terrorist attacks against Israel, in which 29 died and more than 300 were injured, from the Lebanese and Jordanian borders.¹⁰⁶

Denying that these infiltrations posed a “serious military threat” implies that Israel did not have an obligation or a right to defend its citizens from attacks across its border. If America suffered 250 or more terrorist attacks from the Mexican or Canadian border, in which hundreds of Americans were killed or wounded, such action would unequivocally be considered a substantial threat to the U.S. and would be dealt with accordingly. To imply that PLO attacks against Israel did not pose a serious threat and that Israel was misguided in viewing them as anything more than “harassment” is ludicrous.

III. Overt Bias and Propagandizing

Overt bias and unabashed propagandizing are in evidence throughout the *Notebook*. Under this rubric are materials intended to propagate one point of view or doctrine, to the exclusion of all others. While the *Notebook* pays lip service to presenting “different points of view,” it provides only an Arab perspective, as noted above, on Jerusalem, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the conflict between Western and traditional Muslim values. Highly subjective, emotion-laden poetry and short stories reinforce the “facts” presented in the text.

The *Notebook* highlights several poems by Mahmoud Darwish, one of the most widely recognized Palestinian poets, known for invoking the language of struggle and occupation. His poem, “Identity Card,” is excerpted from the *Notebook*:

*I am an Arab
You have stolen the orchards
of my ancestors
and the land
which I cultivated
Along with my children
And you left us with those rocks
so will the State take them
as it has been said?*

The usurper's flesh will be my food

*Beware—beware—of my hunger
and my anger!*¹⁰⁷

To bring a poem of victimization and thirst for revenge without presenting countervailing voices is emotionally loaded, propagandistic, and not in the tradition of American curricular materials. How exactly is a teacher expected to explain objectively or a student to comprehend the words, “The usurper’s flesh will be my food”?

Darwish’s short story “Memoirs of Everyday Sorrows,” a tale of a Palestinian man who is inordinately burdened by the Israeli government because of “security measures,” is also highlighted in the *Notebook*. Every time the *Notebook* discusses Israeli “security measures,” it uses quotation marks in order to delegitimize any real security concerns that Israel might have. While many Palestinians are indeed at times significantly burdened by measures Israel institutes in the name of security, that does not obviate Israel’s legitimate safety concerns, which this purportedly factual text does not even mention.

The section on Jerusalem is brimming with anecdotal information—stories by journalists, eyewitness accounts, and direct quotations from Palestinians. There are, however, no quotations or stories from Israelis, nor is the Israeli perspective even alluded to. The following are some examples.¹⁰⁸

For most of the month, Palestinians from Bethlehem, just five miles away, with their compatriots in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, were prevented by an Israeli military “security closure” from entering Jerusalem. Permits for family, medical and employment reasons were canceled, and Ramadan prayer was not [sic] exception.

They pleaded with the soldiers, argued and yelled, protested and cried. Many elderly passed through on Fridays, but young and middle-ages [sic] men were routinely turned back for “security reasons.” Hundreds found another way, drawn by the desire to pray....

Though initially daunted by the hundreds of Israeli soldiers at the gates of the Old City, he swore, “I will pray the evening prayer in Al-Aqsa if I have to die doing it.”

The limitations on Palestinian travel are never contextualized by Israeli security concerns. Where is the story of an Israeli soldier at a checkpoint trying to decide whether a Palestinian ambulance carries a legitimate sick person or a “dummy” with bombs? Although it may be a “stretch” to expect that the *Notebook* would present such countervailing stories, it is a gross omission to ignore the

facts—presumably familiar to students from news reports—about Palestinians detonating themselves at checkpoints and smuggling bombs in ambulances. Suicide bombers who have slipped past security checks have killed many Israelis in pizzerias, discos, synagogues, and supermarkets. Yet the instructor reading this text would be given no clue as to the other side of the story.

Like the Mahmoud Darwish excerpts and the Jerusalem quotations, other chapters of the *Notebook* engage in overt propagandizing—not only against Israel but against the United States and the Western world. Examples of such biased statements include:

*That colonialism lives can also be seen in lopsided U.S. support for anything Israel does, and in the West's non-response to Serbian crimes against the Bosnian Muslims. Were the tables turned and it were the Muslims conducting ethnic cleansing against Christians, does anyone seriously believe it would have been allowed to continue?*¹⁰⁸

The *Notebook's* indictment of the West's alleged silence in Bosnia is factually inaccurate. In April 1994, NATO forces began selected, limited bombing of Serb positions around the capital of Sarajevo in an attempt to force the Serbs to begin negotiating. NATO initiated Operation Deliberate Force (over 60 percent of whose forces were American) and launched air strikes against the Serbs beginning on August 30 of that year through the beginning of September, when the Bosnian Serbs agreed to end the fighting and participate as a part of the Bosnian nation.¹¹⁰ Thus, contrary to the *Notebook's* claim, the West did intervene, albeit belatedly, when Muslims were the victims.

*President Reagan sent F-111s to drop dozens of 2,000 pound bombs, aimed at eliminating Qaddafi, whom the American President holds responsible for acts of terrorism. The Libyan leader's baby daughter is killed.*¹¹¹

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan ordered the bombing of Tripoli after two American servicemen were killed in the bombing of a Berlin nightclub, allegedly ordered by Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi.¹¹² Qaddafi's daughter and thirty-six other people were killed in the attack. While the *Notebook* presents some of the facts, it presents only some, and does so in a biased, one-sided context. Libya and Qaddafi had long been viewed by the United States as supporters and perpetrators of international terrorism going back to 1981 (and arguably even earlier). The *Notebook* omits important details and prevents students from getting a comprehensive understanding of history.

The *Notebook's* Treatment of Western Culture

The *Notebook* regularly imposes simplistic, black-and-white explanations for complex issues involving the United States and Western civilization. The following excerpts reflect harsh denunciations of Western values contrasted to idealized views of Muslim culture:

What gives the West its dynamic energy is individualism, the desire to dominate, the sheer drive to acquire material items through a philosophy of consumerism at all costs, to hoard. Such frenetic energy keeps society moving. Patience, pace and equilibrium, by contrast, are emphasized in Islam. Haste is the devil's work, the prophet warned.... Silence, withdrawal and meditation—advocated by all the great religions—are simply not encouraged by the media.... The nonstop television images are of couples performing sex, and men inflicting terrible pain. The video-cassettes that accompany pop songs produce every [sic] more bizarre images, from Madonna masturbating to Michael Jackson's transfiguration into a panther. These intrusions corrode the innermost structure of balance and authority in that crucible of all civilization, the family, adding to the crumbling authority structures of the West that have been under attack now for the last two generations.¹¹³

While certainly there are elements of Western culture that are in direct contradiction to Muslim values, this does not justify such a sweeping denigration. Although it is acceptable to teach that Islam rejects these aspects of Western culture, it is unacceptable for the *Notebook* to preach its own moral and religious values as the yardstick for evaluation of the West. The disavowal of Western values within a text that professes to be the neutral vanguard of mutual understanding and differing perspectives is objectionable and serves to vitiate the *Notebook* as a useful resource.

On the other hand, the *Notebook* presents Western media as having a dominant influence on Muslim values and character:

Yet the non-Muslim media, by their hammer-headed onslaught, have succeeded in portraying a negative image and may even succeed in changing Muslim character. Muslims, because of their gut response to the attack—both vehement and vitriolic—are failing to maintain the essential features of Islam.¹¹⁴

Again, this is an undisguised attempt to blame the negative circumstances in the Middle East on the West and Western influence. Increasing violence and the deterioration of social values in the Middle East are explained away as the influence of “non-Muslim media.” This is clearly an incomplete and misguided expla-

nation that serves to misinform American students as to the history and influences behind the hostility of many Muslims toward the West.

Summary

The *Arab World Studies Notebook* purports to be a vehicle for elementary, middle, and high school teachers to learn about Arab and Muslim cultures from a benign perspective, to overcome stereotypes and promote understanding at the precollegiate level. Instead, it presents a heavy-handed, propagandistic view of the role of Islam in world history and current politics and of the Arab-Israeli dispute. With regard to the latter topic, it consistently distorts facts, applies the inappropriate and invidious paradigm of “colonialism,” and brings emotion-laden poetry and short stories of victimization as the predominant voice of Palestinian culture. As one text among many in a college course, this book might be an appropriate, if slanted, choice. However, as the single source for teachers’ understanding of Islam to be conveyed to a precollegiate audience, it is an unacceptable polemic.

Most disturbingly, for a public school setting, the *Notebook* frequently steps over the line from teaching about religion to teaching religion itself, as when it suggests that students repeat Arabic phrases that are confessions of belief and proposes that Muslim faith statements be transmitted to others. It implies that Christian and Jewish students could best “perfect” their own faiths by accepting the Qur’an. These lessons are less teaching about the Muslim religion than they are proselytizing for it.

As William Bennetta, president of the Textbook League, a resource for middle school and high school educators, notes in his review of the *Notebook*, the true purposes include “inducing teachers to embrace Islamic religious beliefs; inducing teachers to embrace political views that are favored by the MEPC and AWAIR; and impelling teachers to disseminate those religious beliefs and political views in schools.”¹¹⁵ Bennetta concludes that “the *Notebook* is a vehicle for disseminating disinformation, including a multitude of false, distorted or utterly absurd claims that are presented as historical facts.”¹¹⁶

Again, it cannot be overemphasized that this book is being utilized for instruction in public school classrooms as an authoritative historical and cultural resource. Clearly it is not appropriate for that purpose.

For all these reasons—its promulgation of religious beliefs, its distortion of history and current social-political circumstances, its propagandizing against the

West and for the Arab perspective in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and its need for an update in the post-9/11 reality—the *Arab World Studies Notebook* should be rejected from use by teachers in all public schools.

Notes

1. Audrey Shabbas, "Introduction," *Arab World Studies Notebook* (Berkeley, CA: Arab World and Islamic Resources, 1998), p. v.
2. In February 2005 the Anchorage School Board, meeting in special session, disapproved the use of the *Notebook* in all Anchorage area schools.
3. Middle East Policy Council, www.mepc.org.
4. Shabbas, "Introduction," *Notebook*, p. v.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. v-vi.
6. Middle East Policy Council, www.mepc.org.
7. As of this writing, it is known that controversy over the use of the *Notebook* has sprung up in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and the Bryan Union School District in California, and after a campaign led by a radio talk-show host Michael DelGiorno, the Tulsa district disallowed the use of the *Notebook*.
8. Richard Riley, *Guidelines*, U.S. Department of Education, <http://www.ed.gov/Speeches/08-1995/religion.html>.
9. Shabbas, *Notebook*, p. viii.
10. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_War for a history of the different naming conventions around the Civil War.
11. Toby Lester, "What Is the Koran?" *Atlantic Monthly*, Jan. 1999.
12. Thomas Cleary, "The Qur'an: An Introduction," *Notebook*, p. 29.
13. William Tracy, "To Pray in Jerusalem," *Notebook*, p. 89.
14. Rabia Terri Harris, "Islam 101: The Holy Prophet," *Notebook*, p. 6.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
16. Shabbas, "An Introduction to Islam," *Notebook*, p. 2.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Irshad Manji, *The Trouble with Islam* (Ontario, Canada: Random House Canada, 2003), p. 14.
19. Khalid Duran, with Abdelwahab Hechiche, *Children of Abraham: An Introduction to Islam for Jews* (New York: American Jewish Committee, KTAV, 2001), pp. 251-52.
20. Shabbas, *Notebook*, p. 3.
21. Duran, *Children of Abraham*, p. 71.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 72.
23. Shabbas, *Notebook*, p. 3.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
25. See map of the Caliphate at its greatest extent, R.M. Savory, ed., *Introduction to Islamic Civilisation* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 17.
26. William L. Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East, sec. ed.* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2000), p. 13.
27. Cleary, "The Qur'an: An Introduction," *Notebook*, p. 28.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
29. Cleary, Thomas, "The Qur'an: An Introduction," *Notebook*, p. 27.

30. Shabbas, "Islam, Pre-test: Three Holy Books," *Notebook*, p. 14.
31. Cleary, "The Qur'an," *Notebook*, p. 27.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
33. Shabbas, *Notebook*, p. 17.
34. Shabbas, "Islam, Lesson Plan—Islam is God-Centered," *Notebook*, p. 18.
35. Rabia Terri Harris, "The Qur'an, Scandalously Radical Sentiments of the Prophet Muhammad," *Notebook*, p. 35.
36. George Archibald, "Textbook on Arabs Removes Blunder," *Washington Times* (April 16, 2004).
37. Sandra Stotsky, "The Stealth Curriculum: Manipulating America's History Teachers," Thomas B. Fordham Foundation (April 13, 2004).
38. *Ibid.*
39. Shabbas, "Muslims Worldwide," *Notebook*, p. 67.
40. Ruth Afifi, Aseel Nasir Dyck, and Audrey Shabbas, "Arab Contributions to Civilization," *Notebook*, pg. 273.
41. These realities are examined at length in Richard Fletcher, *Moorish Spain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
42. Shabbas, "An Introduction to Islam," *Notebook*, p. 4.
43. Tom W. Smith, *Estimating the Muslim Population in the United States* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 2002), p. 2.
44. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.
45. Daniel Pipes, "How Many U.S. Muslims?" *New York Post*, August 29, 2001, <http://www.ajc.org/InTheMedia/RelatedArticlesPrint.asp?did=373>. See also http://www.gc.cuny.edu/studies/aris_index.htm.
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Ibid.*
48. Shabbas, "Muslims Worldwide," *Notebook*, p. 67.
49. "Table 8, Countries with the Largest Jewish Populations 1/1/2003," in David Singer and Lawrence Grossman, eds., *American Jewish Yearbook 2003* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 2003), p. 608. "What is the Approximate Jewish Population in the United States?" *Infoplease*, <http://www.infoplease.com/askeds/8-17-00askeds.html>. "Jewish Population of the United States," *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/US-Israel/usjewpop.html>.
50. William Bennetta, president of the Textbook League, points out in his preliminary critique of the *Notebook* that, "legitimate historical appraisals of the origins of Islam and the Koran are excluded." William J. Bennetta, "Arab World Studies Notebook Lobs Muslim Propaganda at Teachers" (Oct. 8, 2003), <http://www.textbookleague.org/spwich.htm>.
51. Shabbas, "An Introduction to Islam," *Notebook*, pp. 3-4.
52. "Saudi Arabia," *Amnesty International Report 1995*, http://www.amnestyusa.org/countries/saudi_arabia/document.do?id=47041C40346CD40680256A0F005BB523.
53. John Esposito, "Islamic Resurgence, Political Pluralism, and Human Rights," *Notebook*, p. 69.
54. David Rhode, "Radical Islam Gains a Seductive New Voice," *New York Times*, Oct. 26, 2003, http://www.seasite.niu.edu/flin/103_handouts/radical-islam_nyt26oct03.htm.
55. Akbar S. Ahmed, "Muslims Worldwide, Terror and Tolerance," *Notebook*, p. 72.
56. Shabbas, "An Introduction to Islam," *Notebook*, p. 3.
57. Esposito, "Islamic Resurgence," *Notebook*, p. 70.

58. See Duran, *Children of Abraham*, pp. 106-113, for a discussion of “The Ideology of ‘Dhimmitude.’”
59. Ruth Affi and Shabbas, “Jerusalem,” *Notebook*, p. 84.
60. Ibid.
61. For a timeline of Jerusalem, see the Web site of the History Channel at <http://www.historychannel.com/exhibits/jerusalem/jerutime.html>.
62. Martin Gilbert, *Jerusalem History Atlas* (New York: Macmillan, 1977), pp. 13, 17, 47, 57.
63. Mitchell Bard, *The Complete Idiot’s Guide to the Middle East Conflict* (Indianapolis, IN: Alpha Books, 1999), pp. 5-6.
64. William Tracy, “Jerusalem, To Pray in Jerusalem,” *Notebook*, p. 89.
65. Shabbas, “Jerusalem, Critical Thinking—Points of View,” *Notebook*, p. 95.
66. Ibid.
67. See http://www.palestinefacts.org/pf_1948to1967_holysites.php.
68. Affi and Shabbas, “Jerusalem,” *Notebook*, p. 83.
69. Ibid.
70. Ibid.
71. Zionism is the belief that Israel has the right to exist as a national homeland for the Jewish people. The term Zionism says nothing about the policies or practices of that state—it only speaks to its legitimacy. Anti-Zionism, then, is the belief that Israel has no right to exist and that it is an illegitimate entity.
72. Michael Dumper, “Jerusalem, the Future of Jerusalem,” *Notebook*, p. 87. Dumper is quoting Ian Lustick, “Reinventing Jerusalem,” *Foreign Policy* (Winter 1993-94), who used the term “fetish.”
73. Ibid.
74. Amnon Rubinstein, *Israeli Arabs and Jews: Dispelling the Myths, Narrowing the Gaps* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 2004), p. 2.
75. Eugene Korn, “Saturday Comes Before Sunday,” *The Interfaith Agenda for Today: Jewish-Christian Values, Terrorism and the Middle East* (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 2002).
76. Shabbas, “The Question of Palestine, Palestine in the Twentieth Century,” *Notebook*, p. 373.
77. Conor Cruise O’Brien, *The Siege: The Story of Israel and Zionism* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986) pp. 189, 237-241.
78. John Norton Moore, ed., *The Arab-Israeli Conflict, Vol. III: Documents* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), “Passfield White Paper,” p. 139.
79. Ibid., “MacDonald White Paper,” p. 215.
80. “White Papers,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/History/white.html>.
81. Amjad Atallah, “Colonial Legacy, Colonialism in the Arab World,” *Notebook*, p. 318.
82. Moore, *Arab-Israeli Conflict*, “General Assembly Resolution 181,” pp. 314-38.
83. O’Brien, *The Siege*, p. 286.
84. Kenneth Perkins and Shabbas, “The U.S. and the Arab World, The United States and the Middle East: Points of Intersection,” *Notebook*, p. 338.
85. See “Teaching With Documents Lesson Plan: The U.S. Recognition of the State of Israel,” http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/us_recognition_of_israel/us_recognition_of_israel.html.
86. Shabbas, “The Question of Palestine,” *Notebook*, p. 373.
87. In the first days of fighting, the Arab forces numbered more than 200,000, while the Jew-

ish state was able to muster only 30,000-35,000. See “1948 Arab-Israeli War,” *World IQ*. http://www.wordiq.com/definition/1948_Arab-Israeli_War. The first census, conducted in 1948, found a population of 872,700 Jews and 156,000 non-Jews. “Timeline of Events, 1948-1998,” Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Oct. 2, 2002, at <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/History/Modern%20History/Israel%20at%2050/Timeline%20of%20Events-%20Half%20a%20Century%20of%20Independence#1948>.

88. “Israel’s Independence, Arab Countries React,” Palestine Facts at http://www.palestine-facts.org/pfindependence_arab_countries.php.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid.

91. “Arab Armies Invade,” Jewish Virtual Library, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/Invade.html>.

92. Amjad Atallah, “Colonial Legacy: Colonialism in the Arab World,” *Notebook*, p. 318.

93. “The Suez War of 1956,” Jewish Virtual Library, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/Suez_War.html.

94. Shabbas, “Palestine in the Twentieth Century,” *Notebook*, p. 374.

95. Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Israel from the Rise of Zionism to our Time*, sec. ed. (New York: Knopf, 1996), p. 626.

96. For the lead-up to the Six-Day War, see *ibid.*, pp. 625-35. For in-depth analysis, see Michael Oren, *Six Days of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

97. Mitchell Bard, “The 1967 Six-Day War,” Jewish Virtual Library, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/67_War.html.

98. Shabbas, “Palestine in the Twentieth Century,” *Notebook*, p. 374.

99. Mitchell Bard, “The Yom Kippur War,” Jewish Virtual Library, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/73_War.html.

100. “Israel-Syria Negotiations,” Jewish Virtual Library, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Peace/israelsyr.html>.

101. Perkins and Shabbas, “The United States and the Middle East,” *Notebook*, p. 338.

102. Article 15 of the Palestinian National Charter or PLO Covenant, of July 1968, states:

The liberation of Palestine, from an Arab viewpoint, is a national duty and it attempts to repel the Zionist and imperialist aggression against the Arab homeland, and aims at the elimination of Zionism in Palestine. Absolute responsibility for this falls upon the Arab nation—peoples and governments—with the Arab people of Palestine in the vanguard. Accordingly, the Arab nation must mobilize all its military, human, moral, and spiritual capabilities to participate actively with the Palestinian people in the liberation of Palestine....

The full text of the charter can be found in Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin, eds., *The Israel-Arab Reader, Sixth Edition* (New York, London: Penguin Books, 2001), p. 118. As part of the Oslo agreements in 1993, the Palestinians pledged to amend their charter and remove the objectionable statements that referred to the destruction of Israel—but whether this was ever done remains unclear.

103. Including the hijack of a plane to Entebbe in July 1976. See O’Brien, *The Siege*, p. 556.

104. Shabbas, “Palestine in the Twentieth Century,” *Notebook*, pp. 374-75.

105. Sachar, *A History of Israel*, “Israel in Lebanon,” p. 899.

106. See http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/Lebanon_War.html.

107. Mahmoud Darwish, “The Question of Palestine, Identity Card,” *Notebook*, p. 376.

108. Lance Laird, "Ramadan in Jerusalem," *Notebook*, pp. 93-94.
109. Shabbas, "Colonial Legacy, Colonialism in the Arab World," *Notebook*, p. 315.
110. "Bosnian Civil War (1992-1995)," *History Guy: The War List* (April 25, 2004), http://www.historyguy.com/War_list.html#warlist_bosnia.
111. Perkins and Shabbas, "The United States and the Middle East," *Notebook*, p. 339.
112. Julie Stahl, "Reagan Launched the War on Terror, Former Diplomat Says," CNSNews.com, Jerusalem Bureau (June 7, 2004) <http://www.cnsnews.com/ForeignBureaus/archive/200406/FOR20040607e.html>.
113. Ahmed, "Muslims Worldwide: Terror and Tolerance," *Notebook*, p. 71.
114. Ibid., p. 73.
115. William J. Bennetta, "*Arab World Studies Notebook* lobs Muslim propoganda at teachers," (Oct. 8, 2003) <http://www.textbookleague.org/spwich.htm>.
116. Ibid.



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