

## Islam and Recruitment in American Prisons

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### Introduction

A quote of peace from the Qur'an 97:5: *There is peace until the dawning of the day!*

-or-

A quote that speaks of evil and destruction to non-believers of Islam from the Qur'an 8:12: *I shall terrorize the infidels. So wound their bodies and incapacitate them because they oppose Allah and His Apostle.*

Which of these quotes *really* represent the true belief of Islam?

The violence instilled in individuals for the purpose of destruction to American citizens is profound. Since the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001, the word terrorism has become synonymous with Islam or Muslims. Today, when you hear of any attack on a public place such as a café, subway, or airplane, you think of people who spew hatred primarily towards non-believers of Islam, adulterers, communist, atheists, homosexuals, Americans and Jews. You visualize individuals who spend their waking day devising ways to hurt and kill people who are opposed to the religion of Islam...you think of a religious war against America, a *Jihad*.<sup>1</sup> You often hear that the September 11, 2001 terrorists were from the Middle East or were of the Islamic faith. This thought perpetuates a stereotypical belief that everyone from the Middle East has an interest in harming Americans. It may be difficult to understand, but there are many American citizens that sympathize with terrorist views. So much so, that recruitment of American citizens from poor neighborhoods, American state correctional facilities, the Internet and other means of recruitment for the purpose of killing the infidels are on the rise. Is Islam a peaceful religion or is it a religion filled with hatred and violence? Which is true? These questions can be answered by learning more about the Middle Eastern culture and the true Islamic belief. In educating law enforcement officers, correctional officers, and court officials you dispel the truth, from non-truths about the religion, culture, its values and traditions. As a means of counterterrorism, or an aversion to a future violent attack on American citizens by a radical religious group, criminal justice professionals who are aware of recruitment techniques that are used by such religious groups can be in a better position to stop such negative recruitment in prisons. Radical Islamic groups are not the only ones seeking to recruit individuals on the premise of "salvation." Many religious groups find vulnerable inmates with receptive minds open to hear what the religion has to offer. Before you learn about Islam, a distinction between traditional Islamic beliefs and radical Islamic factions must be made.

This unit will help teachers teach about a very sensitive topic and explain the difference between traditional Islam and radical Islam. It will introduce the instructor to a culture that includes the Islamic religion, ideologies, dress, gender and other factors. The student will leave understanding more than a sound bite from a news broadcast about the Muslim culture. The student will know and be able to distinguish between, the peaceful Muslims

and the extremist. It is important for students to know that there are peaceful people that do not support extreme views of Islam and are opposed to violence in any way. I have had the opportunity to visit three Middle Eastern countries, Egypt, Jordan and Israel. The people I met in Egypt and Jordan, predominately Islamic countries, were wonderful and accepting. The people of Israel were warm and welcoming. I saw many historical Christian and Muslim artifacts and monuments such as the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, Temple Mount and the Western Wall also called Wailing Wall or Kotel, and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. I found in my travels that people are simply people. Nevertheless, there are those that would seek to impose violence upon nations that do not support their radical views on politics, social norms and religion. This would include moral views such as abortion, gun control or other controversial topics.

In looking at Islam and terrorism, there must be a distinction between the social norms for Muslims, i.e. Islamic religious views and radical Islamic views. But in a deeper way, the focus in this curriculum unit will be on multicultural issues in criminal justice, specifically Islam, terrorism and the American state prison system as it relates to the Middle Eastern culture. It is important to look at “homegrown<sup>2</sup>” terrorists who are not being recruited abroad, but from prisons in America.

In the “old days”, Uncle Sam would recruit American soldiers by playing television commercials that simply stated, “Uncle Sam Wants You!” Radical Islamic groups are now recruiting like Uncle Sam, albeit in a covert manner. Their recruitment fields are not found only in the hills of Afghanistan, but are found in state and federal correctional facilities throughout the prisons in America. A comprehensive overview of correctional institutions in America and how the infiltrations of radical Islamic groups are recruiting in American prisons will be discussed in this curriculum unit. I will take a closer look at the various views of imams, prison converts to Islam, and law enforcement, along with other expert opinions to examine the Islamic faith in the America penal system. In a video documentary produced by PBS entitled, *Is Radical Islam Growing in America's Prisons*, the dichotomy surrounding this issue will be addressed: is the teaching of Islam in American prisons providing meaning and direction to what had previously been lost lives, or is a distorted Islam fostering an extremist ideology here in America? (Rockefeller, 2007)

Counteracting the drive to hurt Americas, this unit will discuss the roles of the Department of Homeland Security and the National Security Administration in counterterrorism measures. It is important to understand the significant roles that the American national security policies and federal agencies play in curtailing acts of violence against Americans.

One perplexing issue related to counterterrorism is racial profiling. A paradigm shift from racially profiling African Americans towards Middle Eastern “looking men” seems to be an unspoken (yet accepted) norm for Americans, especially at airports or other public transportation venues. Thus, the terrorist “profile” is alive and well. Sadly, this belief became more pronounced after September 11, 2001. Many Americans advocate the “open” profiling of Arab people because of terrorism. They believe that Islam

perpetuates hatred towards Americans, much more so than religions like Christianity, Hinduism or Judaism. But if the new faces of terrorism are the everyday Americans that are born and bred in this country, is the need to racially profile a terrorist warranted. The new homegrown “American” terrorist can look like anyone.

## **Rationale**

My school, Howard High School of Technology in the New Castle County Vocational Technical School District, is located in Wilmington, Delaware. I teach civil law and criminal law in the Legal Administrative Assistant Program. Because these students will be pursuing a career in the legal field, they must be knowledgeable of the criminal justice approach to curtailing terrorism. This curriculum unit will be taught to 10<sup>th</sup> graders. These students are introduced to law enforcement practices, the courts and the correctional system. I have previously taught about terrorism and the criminal justice system. I found that the students knew very little about Islam as a religion or the Arabic culture. Like most people, their exposure to this culture was limited and based on what they saw on television or what they read on the Internet or in newspapers. They did not personally know anyone from the Middle East. They were unfamiliar with the practices of Islam or the defining attributes of the Muslim culture such as art, food, geography, and politics or otherwise. The students were only able to discuss September 11<sup>th</sup> and its aftermath. Many people do not possess a real knowledge of the Muslim culture that does not extend beyond what is shown on the television or ideas derived from stereotypical means. This practice is not uncommon for most cultures. Socialization occurs through family, friends, teachers, churches, synagogues, mosques, parishes etc. Exposure to cultures outside of one’s own immediate surroundings may be limited. Because of these limitations, the mass media has a strong influence on our perceptions and ideologies about ethnicities and cultures. If you only hear the negative about something or someone, without a balance of positive views to curtail such opinions, you are left to accept what the media presents as truth without understanding that what is being portrayed on television, radio or the Internet (and nowadays, social media) are mere stereotypical ways of thinking.

Legal students must learn the law and apply the law to fact patterns. However, they must be able to administer the law with due process for everyone, regardless of ethnicity. Teachers teaching this unit must be fair and objective in their teaching approach. The ability to be unbiased when teaching about Islam to your students will be beneficial. The student can develop their own opinions about the topic. They will learn the importance of having an effective cultural contact with the Middle Eastern culture as it relates to the criminal justice system.

In teaching about terrorism, I find that students are really interested in knowing about the people who live in the Middle East. They don’t understand why Americans are hated. They know that many of the September 11<sup>th</sup> hijackers believed in Islam. The students are encouraged to keep an open mind about stereotyping an entire culture because of the actions of a few. However, with influential teachings from other social entities such as

home, parents, church as such, it is hard to change the minds of the students when they feel they are being attacked for no valid reasons.

This is why I feel it is important for the student to learn about the Muslim culture. When teaching about terrorism by radical extremist religious groups, again, it is important to make a distinction between traditional Islam and radical extremist groups such as Al Qaeda, The Taliban, Hamas and other such radical extremist terrorist groups.

In devising this curriculum unit, I have used resources from the University of Delaware, Yale National Teaching Institute-Delaware Teaching Institute seminar *Islamic Thought and Culture*, with Professor Alan D. Fox, books, articles, law enforcement experts, professors of criminal justice and terrorism, Hearing of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, September 19, 2006, and Internet resources.

This curriculum unit will help teach students about the difference between traditional Islam and radical Islam as it relates to terrorism and the American prison system. Teachers will be equipped to teach about the history of Islam, Muslim cultural values, along with helping students to think about ways to eliminate the blanket negative stereotype of the Middle Eastern culture in America. (It should be noted that Islam is practiced all over the world not just in the Middle Eastern countries. There are approximately 1.5 billion followers of Islam in the world [Rockefeller, PBS]). The students will be able to better understand traditional Islam and critically think objectively rather than accepting surface explanations they hear in the media about terrorism and the Islamic religion. The students will have a sound understanding of how radical extremist groups perpetrate violence in the name of religion. It is my hope that after teaching this unit, the students will not only be knowledgeable for educational purposes when learning about criminal justice and issues related to the recruitment of radical terrorist in the American prison system, but for their own personal knowledge about a culture, they perhaps, knew very little about prior to being taught.

The student's responsibility will be to take the information and research the topic further. This will give the students the opportunity to develop their own opinions and ideologies about the Islamic religion as it relates to everyday Muslims and radical Muslims when studying about recruitment of American citizens as terrorist.

## **Objective and Strategies**

### Teacher and Student Objectives

The teacher's objective is to teach a curriculum unit on Islam and the connection to radical Islam in the American prison system. This curriculum unit will focus on the roles of criminal justice, including law enforcement and correctional facilities. This curriculum unit will give a historic review of the Islamic religion and define key terms associated with terrorism, along with analyzing the explanations and differences between traditional Islam and radical Islamic terrorist attacks upon Americans. It will also look at the Muslim culture, its people and the religion in a deeper understanding of what the

Qur'an states about infidels (Islamic non believers), violence, martyrdom and more. It will further look at how radical Islamic groups recruit from American prisons for terrorist reformers against American society. Students will have an opportunity to explore Islam through several forums such as the Internet, video, documentaries and speeches. By writing this curriculum unit, it is my goal to enhance students and teachers knowledge about the Muslim culture and the religion of Islam as it relates to terrorism and the criminal justice system. I expect the students to be able to apply their enhanced knowledge in the legal field. The students' objective will be to understand the Islamic culture, religion, and terminology related to this topic. Not just learn the terminology; but they should be able to analyze various points of views in order to develop their own opinion or to critically think about the pros and cons of the topic. Most importantly, by having the students understand the difference between traditional Islam and radical Islam, as it relates to terrorism, it will help them to distinguish between the two and not combine all Muslims in the same negative light.

### **Teaching Strategy**

The teaching strategies I will use are news articles, books, videos, and cooperative learning, pair share, and KWL. Learning Focus Strategies (LFS) teaching will be included in this unit. LFS is a framework for teaching. The Appendix will include a Student Learning Map identifying the Key Learning, Unit Essential Question, Concepts, Lesson Essential Question and Vocabulary. I intend to use a combination of lecture, PowerPoint slides, readings and critical thinking exercises. The discussions will stimulate critical thinking and allow the students to connect the lecture to current issues related to radical Islam and terrorism. I will also utilize the required class textbook on criminal justice, James Fagin, *Criminal Justice 2011*. You can include guest lecturers from law enforcement, courts and/or corrections agencies to visit the class to discuss terrorism, homegrown terrorism and/or counterterrorism measures.

### **Islam, the Religion**

Before teaching about the differences between traditional Islam, radical Islam and homegrown terrorist, I feel it is important to have a brief lesson on Islam to better understand how this religion began? It is also important to understand the Five Pillars of Faith as it relates to Islam. The Qur'an gives instructions on the Islamic faith. I will also give a brief introduction to the Qur'an (Note: the spelling varies, i.e. Koran).

Islam is derived from biblical legends. According to those legends, Abraham and Sar'ai were a married couple in the Bible. God came to Abraham in a vision and he entered into a covenant with him. He was told that a child would come forth out of his bowels. For many years, Sar'ai's womb was barren. They both began to get very old, so Sar'ai told Abraham that since the Lord has retrained her from bearing a child that he should go to her maid, Hagar in order to fulfill God's promise. So Hagar conceived a child from Abraham. Hagar fled and an angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness and told her to go back to Sar'ai and that she would bear a son and his name would be Ishmael.

Abraham's firstborn son was named Ishmael. After Hagar had Ishmael, Abraham and his wife Sarah eventually had a son by the name of Isaac. In the Bible, Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael left and went to the desert. While there, Abraham deserted Hagar and Ishmael. Hagar and Ishmael were alone; she sought water for her child because he was thirsty. She ran back and forth 7 times to get water and then God caused water to spring up out of the ground. God heard the cry of the child. Abraham eventually returned back to Hagar and Ishmael. At the site of the water coming up from the ground is where Abraham and Ishmael built a mosque (called a "Kaaba" for the pilgrimage that is in Mecca) Genesis 21:18. Arabs believe Ishmael is the legitimate son of Abraham and not Isaac.

In 570 AD, according to some legends, a child was born. He was the Prophet of Islam, and his name was Muhammad. His father died before he was born and he lived with his grandfather. He was sent on a journey at the age of 5 or 6 to the desert. It is said that at that time two angels opened his heart and removed a black spot (the evidence that "sin" had been removed from him). At the age of 20, he joined "Alamean" which is a merchant caravan and sold goods. He met a widow, Kadejah, who had six children and was 15 years his senior. She was a business and property owner. Muhammad and Kadejah loved each other and got married. Kadejah was not the only wife to Muhammad; he had other wives. (This practice was common during that time.) Muhammad and Kadejah worked well together. He was a very good businessman and they became successful. Muhammad did not like idolaters or spirit-Gods.

The legend depicts Muhammad say an illiterate man, but not in the sense of a lack of intelligence. In other words, he was a blank slate, such as Mary was as a virgin...pure or clean. He was a man, but not divine. He was perfect (righteous). He was exotic like Job or Moses. He grew up in Mecca. In 610, Muhammad travelled in the caves of Mecca which is in Saudi Arabia for about 3 nights to seek solitude. While there, an angel from heaven appeared to him. It is thought that this was the angel mentioned in the Bible by the name of Gabriel. The angel enveloped Muhammad and started to squeeze him very tight. The angel told Muhammad to recite the words he was being told, but Muhammad refused. The angel continued to squeeze Muhammad even tighter until he agreed to recite. What eventually comes from the lips of Muhammad are Arabic recitations, or what we would call verses. These verses came to Muhammad a little at a time. This went on for 23 years. Many of the verses were poetic rhymes that reflected God's ideas. They were melodic when recited. Initially, he did not share this encounter with anyone else, but decided to share his encounter with his wife Kadejah and their two sons. Kadejah told him to go back to the cave and continue to listen to the voice of the angel. For the next 23 years, Muhammad had visions and Gabriel gave him what we now know as the written words of the Qur'an. This account can be found in the Qur'an at 96:1-3.

In 613, approximately 3 years after the angelic encounter, Muhammad shared these verses with the people of Mecca. However, his message was not readily accepted by everyone. His verses were ridiculed. The verses dealt with many issues such as social, spiritual, family, women, prayer and more. The recitations were meant to be read aloud. Muhammad's message was monotheistic, meaning there is only one God.

In 632, Muhammad died of a fever at the age of 62. He is buried in a mosque in Medina. His teachings spread from Medina to all parts of the world. Today, there are approximately 1.2 billion followers of Islam (Rockefeller, PBS Doc. 2007). Indonesia is the largest Muslim population with approximately 180 million followers. The United States have over 1,000 mosques and it is growing. Islam is comprised of two different sects (with smaller sects comprising approximately 5%). These sects place emphasis on various attributes of Islam. Although they both follow the path of the Prophet Muhammad, the Sunni at 85% follow after the 7<sup>th</sup> Century when a religious divide took place. Their focus is on the power of God and the human fate, whereas, the Shi'a is comprised of 10%. During the 7<sup>th</sup> Century divide, they chose to follow Muhammad's son-in-law. Their focus is on religion in public places and politics.

Today, the Qur'an has 7,000 verses and 114 chapters. The translation of the word *Islam* means "submission" and the root word for Islam means "peace." This submission is to be a straight path to God. The translation of the word *shalom* means "peace". Submission to the will of God is the primary focus of the Muslim follower.

### **Five Pillars of Islam**

In the Islamic religion, everything you do is for Allah or God. For this reason, worship to God is essential. The Five Pillars of Islam are: 1) Belief in the oneness of God and the prophethood of Muhammad -"Imam" or faith; 2) Pray 5 times per day and face east towards Mecca "Salah". The prayers are offered at dawn, mid-day, late-afternoon, sunset and at nightfall every day. Muslims bow down and pray on a prayer rug, along with kneeling on the ground bowing forward. The purpose of the rug is to keep ones feet from being unclean before Allah. Prayers are spoken in Arabic to God; 3) Give alms or "Zakah". Charity is required of all Muslims. They are to give to the poor. The money cannot be used for the upkeep of the mosque, but should go directly to those in need; 4) Fasting or "Swan". "O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint." Qur'an 2:183. The purpose of the fast is to build a closer relationship with God. It is a time for inner reflections of life. Individuals who are sick, elderly, pregnant or menstruating are exempt from the fast, or they may participate in the fast over a five-day period. The fast is from dawn until sundown for one month. *Eid al Fitr* is the celebration marking the close of Ramadan; 5) Pilgrimage to Mecca of "Hajj" - the journey to Mecca is required of all Muslims at least once during their lifetime if they are healthy and financially able. When you arrive at the Hajj, everyone wear a white shroud (this means you are dead to God and that there are no differences in the person...there is no class or status). The purpose of the Hajj is to be cleansed. You walk around the "Kaaba" which is an all black cloth that is made by hand. Verses of the Qur'an are embroidered on the Kaaba. Muslims march around the Kaaba seven times back and forth. Then they go approximately seven miles outside of the city of Mecca to pray and confess their sins to God. They do not take anything with them out to the desert. Food and water is prohibited. The pilgrims return back to the Kaaba and have one last prayer service before they head back to their homes. They leave cleansed and sin free. This is the same place where the Prophet Muhammad came many years ago.

## **Traditional Islam**

Making a distinction between traditional Islam and radical Islam is important. It is my decision to refer to law abiding, peaceful and civil Muslims as traditional. The account of the beginning of the Islamic religion does not appear to be founded on the premises of hatred and violence. Certainly, there have been religious wars throughout the world where believers of one religion fought to keep their religion. The Qu'ran speaks of peace. Many peaceful Muslims live among all societies throughout the world without knowing any type of violence or invoking harm to anyone. The reading that is included in this unit from an imam (See Classroom Activity No. 2 "below") will show how an imam loves Allah and shares the love of Islam to all. He is respected in his community. There are many Muslims that are law abiding citizens in America who love their country. They do not want violence or hatred. They love their country like any other American. Many Muslims also died on 9/11 in the World Trade Center as did people from many countries. They continue to die in the streets throughout all parts of the world, because of people who choose to hate for whatever reason.

## **Radical Islamic Extremist**

Radical Islamic groups are at war with the west. This is what they call a "jihad". A jihad can be interpreted in different ways. The Qur'an talks about a jihad "struggle" within one's own mind and heart to better them. There is also the aggressive form of jihad that has become a common sound in the ears of America since September 11, 2001, and that is the jihad where a holy war was pronounced on non-believers of Islam. This jihad was vocally thrust throughout the world by radical Islamic extremist groups and viciously directed towards Americans and Jews.

Jonathan Schanzer of Doublethink stated in his article "At War with Whom? A Short History of Radical Islam" that radical Islam is a minority outgrowth of the faith that exudes a bitter hatred for Western ideas including capitalism, individualism, and consumerism. It rejects the West and much that it has to offer (with the exception of weapons, medicines, and other useful technologies) seeks instead to implement a strict interpretation of the Qu'ran (Islam's holy book) and Shari'a (Islamic law)." However, the jihad is not exclusive to the west, but also to European countries, Asian countries, and basically all over the world when it comes to non believers of Islam. Since the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attack on New York, Washington, D.C. and Shanksville, PA, there have been many terrorist attacks by radical Islamic groups in places such as India, Turkey, Spain, England, Russia, Israel, Africa Morocco, Thailand and numerous middle eastern countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq and more. Many traditional Muslims seek peace. They do not believe in the violence perpetrated by radical Islam. However, they are victims of such violence just like Americans and other races. Oftentimes, Muslims or people from the Middle East become victims of suicide bombers, ruthless killer, snipers and military aggression more than any other people in the world.



How is the Qur'an used for radical extremist groups? There are 42 verses in the Qur'an that say to fight the unbeliever. There are 344 verses that speak of compassion and being merciful.

Islam is a peaceful religion. Some would say this statement seems to be debatable. The reason being, many of the writings in the Qur'an does not reflect peace. In connecting Islam to radical Islam, the law of this religion changes from day to day based upon the argument of the day or issue. It becomes the civil law in society not made by the government. It is not based on case precedent. Because of this, you have individuals and groups, such as radical religious sects to take the Qur'an to support their most evil and deceptive ideologies. It is used in propaganda to the masses. Whether you are a law abiding citizen with traditional Islamic views or hear propaganda where someone is trying to hurt you, your family or country, even a person that is civil may change their value system to combat the perceived enemy. This would include converting to a radical form of Islam.

### **Islam and the Nation of Islam**

In 1619, Africans from the west coast of Africa came to America bound in chains as slaves and without freedom. Not only did they arrive on American soil without being free human beings, but their native language and native religion were lost because they were not allowed to freely practice either one. According to the history of the Nation of Islam, a new religion grew out of a need to separate the slave from the slave master. Hence, the Nation of Islam was established. This sect of Islam is exclusive to America and its followers are primarily African-Americans. In the video *Inside Islam*, the history of the Nation of Islam is explained. (See Materials I Have Reviewed "below")

The Nation of Islam was founded by a white man named Wallace Fard Muhammad.<sup>3</sup> In checking several Internet websites, it appears that in 1932 Mr. Fard Muhammad vanished without a trace. I find it interesting that on the website for the Nation of Islam [www.noi.org](http://www.noi.org), Mr. Fard Muhammad's name is not specifically mentioned in the biography. He is simply referred to as "The Master." It is ironic to learn that this religion was founded by a white man, when this religion teaches that the "white man is the devil." Before Mr. Fard Muhammad's disappearance in 1932, he met a person by the name of Elijah Poole. Poole accepted the doctrine of Fard Muhammad and he ordained Poole as a divine representative for the Nation of Islam. Poole changed his name to Elijah Muhammad, which eventually evolved into the "Honorable" Elijah Muhammad.

Malcolm Little (aka Malcolm X) was a follower of the Nation of Islam. He committed offenses and eventually was incarcerated in prison. He was recruited by an Imam for the Nation of Islam in the 1950's. Malcolm became a convert. He changed his name from the slave name of 'Little' to 'X' to represent that he would not take on the name of his slave master. He became a minister for the Nation of Islam. He preached the separation of the Black man back to Africa, the origin of their religion...Islam. He had the opportunity to go to the Hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca. Once he was there, he found out that what he had been taught in America was a lie. He saw all races of people at the Hajj.

He came back to America a changed man. He started to preach the religious values of traditional Islam. It was not long after that he was killed. His killer was from the Nation of Islam. Many felt there were undertones that the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and Minister Louis Farrakhan (the spiritual leader that replaced Elijah Muhammad) were involved in the slaying.

The point of discussing Malcolm X is two-fold. First, he was recruited while in prison. He was an outcast from society. Although his ultimate goal was not to kill Americans, he was a revolutionist against American society because of the civil rights movement. This is the same way radical extremist are recruited in American prisons today. Next, Malcolm went to Mecca with other Muslims and found that it was a peaceful religion with traditional values. Malcolm's story is perfect in showing how a religion can be used to sway a person's mind in a positive or negative direction for political or social gain. It is a perfect distinction to show how inmates are recruited from American prisons every day, but not all religions are for the purpose of transforming the inmate into a soldier against the citizens of America. Most religions are there to help the inmate repent for their wrongdoing and to help them to be rehabilitated so that they will not commit any future offenses against society.

In the book "The Autobiography of Malcolm X", you will find the entire life story of Malcolm X in more detail. There is also a motion picture on the autobiography of Malcolm X with Denzel Washington as the star actor.

### **Religious Recruitment**

There are various ways that radical Islamic extremist groups recruit foot soldiers. There are a tremendous number of websites online seeking to recruit individuals to participate in the extreme views of Islamic groups. Propaganda is spewed to appeal to individuals who have rebellious ideologies toward governments, not just in the United States, but worldwide. The enticing propaganda embraces the ideas of a breakdown in societies where poverty is rampant and social issues prevail. They seek to encourage individuals who wish to obtain a greater life in the hereafter. Spiritual attitudes and beliefs are a magnet for recruitment. One profound means of recruitment is directed towards those incarcerated in American prisons. American prisons are not solely recruitment grounds for radical Islamic terrorist, but are also for many different types of religious recruitment have been found in prisons in many parts of the world like India, Indonesia, Afghanistan, and other countries. In American prisons, these individuals are not just targets of the radical Islamic religion, but are often visited by many religious groups in society, such as Christians, Catholics, and Buddhists to name a few.

In American prisons, Imams indoctrinate inmates in Islam by sending the inmates messages and by teaching them about the Qur'an. These prisoners are already outcast from society. They are vulnerable to the speeches given to them that may be in opposition to the American government.

In her book, *Terror in the Name of God*, Jessica Stern discusses recruitment by radical Islamic leaders. This underground network spans all over the world. People like Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh aka Umar Sheikh who is a British born militant of Pakistani descent received a death sentence for the death of journalist Daniel Pearl. He found himself a recruit of such prison networks, even though he went to elite private schools. He was unhappy and frequently got into fights. He shared a cell with a person that showed him the way to a radical form of Islam. Another example of such recruitment is inmate Kevin James who formed a radical prison group called Jam'iyyat Ul-islam Is-Saheed (JIS). JIS supported the killing of Jews and the implementation of an Islamic government in the United States. James recruited other inmates upon his release and set plots to harm citizens in Los Angeles. Other homegrown terrorist in June of 2011 came from Seattle, Washington by the names of Abu Khalid Abdul-Latif (aka Joseph Anthony Davis) age 33 and Walli Mujahidh (Frederick Domingue, Jr.) age 32 of Los Angeles. Both were arrested for plotting to shoot people that were enlisting in the armed forces at the Military Entrance Processing Station in Seattle. These plots were derailed, but how many other plots are being planned without anyone's knowledge? Will they be stopped in time?

### **Classroom Activities**

This curriculum unit has four activities to help the student understand the concepts about traditional Islam, radical Islam and Recruitment in American prisons.

#### **Activity No. 1**

##### **Frontline Muslims Lesson**

##### **Topic: Making Sense of Jihad vs. Hirabah**

The Islam Project Website link: [http://www.islamproject.org/education/D05\\_Hirabah.htm](http://www.islamproject.org/education/D05_Hirabah.htm)

On this website you can create a lesson on *jihad* (struggle) vs. *hirabah* (terrorism). It is an opportunity to compare and contrast these two concepts. Students will be able to learn about the real meaning of jihad from an intrinsic and extrinsic perception. This is important because the students will see how Muslims have a jihad that is non-violent. The lesson discusses the distinction between jihad as a principle of social justice, and as a military institution entrusted to authorities in society. Students learn about the categories of illegitimate violence in society, namely rebellion and terrorism, brigandage and other forms of mayhem against the public. The students will learn about jihad that make an effort to overcome difficulty or to struggle. The struggle can be within one's own being, instead of against others in a violent manner. You can create a PowerPoint from the website, along with transparencies on jihad. This is a good lesson for students to better understand the traditional Islamic jihad, rather than the jihad commonly discussed as a holy war. A graphic organizer is included for students to gather information about the two types of jihad. (See Appendix B "below") After this lesson, you can have the students complete the compare/contrast graphic organizer and have them explain how jihad differs from traditional Islam and radical militant Islam. If their views have changed, they could explain how learning about this religion has helped them to better understand the between jihad and *hirabah*.

#### **Activity No. 2**

### **From Muhammad, Legacy of a Prophet**

“A Muslim Cleric on the American Frontier” by Imam Sayed Hassan Al Qazwini

Access website: <http://www.pbs.org/muhammad/essays/qazwini.html>, found at PBS.org. This is an essay (somewhat of a testimonial). Imam Sayed Hassan Al Qazwini, was born in Karbala, Iraq in 1964. He is from a family of Muslim clerics. He came to the United States in 1992. Since 1997, he has served as the resident imam at Dearborn Michigan's Islamic Center of America. He walks you through his conversion to Islam. This Imam would be considered a traditional follower of Islam. (The Imam is the person that would approach the inmate for recruitment in prison, but this imam **is not** a radical Islamic recruiter. This reading is simply to give the student an idea of how and what an imam thinks and feels about Islam.) On this website, you can watch a small video clip, along with exploring other topics. You can find out when this film is showing in your area or you can purchase the video). As the imam speaks, the students would select the highlights of the speech that they feel the imam would share with an individual that may be interested in converting to Islam. Have students identify the parts of the essay where the imam is happy or sad. Have the students explain why they think the tone of the letter is happy or sad. Have students write a letter back to the Imam telling him what they thought of his essay. The letters do not have to actually be mailed, but can be orally shared with the class.

### **Activity No. 3**

A video of Osama bin Laden in an interview. He is interviewed by a British journalist who is investigating Al-Qaida. He seeks to find the rationale behind this radical group. At the end of the investigation he finds Osama Bin Laden and interviews him. Osama Bin Laden called for a Jihad by Al-Qaida, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan Islamic fundamentalism against America and Israel. This is a Roberts & Wykeham film on YouTube entitled, “Osama bin Laden Interview”; you can access the video at:

[http://www.ask.com/videos/watch-video/bin-laden-interview/NLIEinjxAqERIV\\_oa7Vgbg?o=15527&l=dis&ver=11&domain=ask.com](http://www.ask.com/videos/watch-video/bin-laden-interview/NLIEinjxAqERIV_oa7Vgbg?o=15527&l=dis&ver=11&domain=ask.com)

As a means of discussion, students will post their opinions of the video on Blackboard. A blog could be set up for the students on the Internet if you do not have access to Blackboard. Several questions such as the following can be used to facilitate a class discussion on Blackboard: 1) Should Americans come out of Saudi Arabia? 2) What is Bin Laden’s message? 3) How do you feel about Bin Laden’s admonition to kill Americans and Zionist (Jews)? 4) How would you address the comment Bin Laden makes when he says, “it is better to kill American soldiers than to use your energy on other matters?” The video briefly discusses Islam and the religious connection to the Taliban and Al Qaida, both radical Islamic terrorist groups. Each of the questions above will generate a discussion about the radical form of Islam.

### **Activity No. 4**

**The Autobiography of Malcolm X**, a book written by Malcolm X and Alex Haley (Publisher: Penguin Modern Classic). There is also a film available for older teens. I do not suggest the film for younger children. This film is rated PG (Parents are strongly

cautioned) because of vulgar language and some violence. The film is directed by Spike Lee and stars actor Denzel Washington and actress Angela Bassett.

The emphasis on reading the book or watching the film is with the focus on the differences between the Nation of Islam (as radical), prison recruitment and the pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca (how Malcolm X's transformation to becoming a peaceful person was not a reality to him until his pilgrimage to Mecca). You and the students will have a better look at why Malcolm was lured to the Nation of Islam. You will also be able to translate yesterday's recruitment (from a black militant standpoint) to today's recruitment climate of hating Jews and Americans by Islamic radical extremist groups. How is recruitment similar from the 1960s to the current year? Have students make the connection from civil right as a movement, the Vietnam War, black vs. white, in pulling together the solidarity of a people to hate America as a bridge to today's hatred of America for religious beliefs. Students should be able to see how the basis for hatred can be anything, but the same tactics are used to divide and hurt. Recruitment is the same no matter how you look at it. Recruitment of prisoners to hate America by enslaved prisoners, outcast citizens, many followers from broken homes and poverty, the things America has purportedly done abroad and around the world (mainly supporting Jews and having a foothold in Mecca and Medina [the Middle East as a whole]). Students can research the topic of the Nation of Islam and the Islamic beliefs from the Middle East. They will write a research paper on how religious groups present their religion to prison inmates. What is the overall presentation or "catch-phrases?" This can include religions of Christianity, Catholicism, Judaism, Islam, Nation of Islam, Hedonism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Shinto, Taoism, Sikhism, Hare Krishna, Native American Spirituality or Atheism. Identify what the institutional policies are for allowing the various religious groups into the prison? What are prisoner's rights as it relates to religion?

### **Materials I have Reviewed**

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Bjelopera, Jerome P., *American Jihadist Terrorist: Combating a Complex Threat*, Congressional Research Service, November 15, 2011 [Specialist in Organized Crime & Terrorism]

Dawood, N. K., *The Qur'an: With Parallel Arabic Text*, Penguin Classics 1956

Eggers, Dave, *Zeitoun*, Vantage Books, 2009

Gabriel, Mark A., *Islam and Terrorism: What the Quran really teaches about Christianity, violence and the goals of the Islamic Jihad*, Charisma House, 2002

Huntington, Samuel P., *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Over*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, Simon & Schuster, 1998

Hussain, Irshaad Ramadan - An opportunity to know your inner self, 8/11/2011 - Religious - Article Ref: IC0909-3949, IslamiCity-

<http://www.islamicity.com/articles/Articles.asp?ref=IC0909-3949> – retrieved 11/15/11

Lewis, Bernard, *The Middle East*, Scribner, 1997

Reich, Walter, *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*, Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1998

Ryrie Study Bible, King James Version, Moody Press

Schanzer, Jonathan, **At War With Whom? A Short History of Radical Islam**, by *Doublethink*, Spring 2002, <http://www.meforum.org/168/at-war-with-whom#>, retrieved 11/15/11

*Sunni Islam*, Pathoes, Website: <http://www.patheos.com/Library/Sunni-Islam.html>

Stern, Jessica, *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill*, Harper Perennial, 2004

Rockefeller, Sharon P., President & CEO, *Is radical Islam growing in America's prisons?* WETA Washington, D.C., America at a Crossroads PBS Documentary, 2007

### **Bibliography for teachers:**

Fagin, James A., *Criminal Justice 2011*, Allyn & Bacon, 2011

Fagin, James A., *Criminal Justice*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Allyn and Bacon, 2007

Martin, Gus, *Understanding Terrorism, Challenges, Perspectives, and Issues*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Sage Publications, Inc. 2006

### **Internet Research:**

*Debunking Stereotypes about Muslims and Islam*, Teaching Tolerance, <http://www.tolerance.org>

*Federal Bureau of Prisons, an Agency of the U. S. Department of Justice* <http://www.bop.gov>

*Islam and Terrorism*, <http://www.answering-islam.org/Terrorism/index.html>, 1999-2011

*Inside Islam, a sweeping story of one of the world's great faiths*, Documentary, The History Channel, DVD © 2002 [includes Islamic history and Interactive Menus]

*U. S. Department of Homeland Security*, <http://www.dhs.gov>

Chomsky, Noam, It's not radical Islam that worries the US-it's independence, February 4, 2011, <http://www.chomsky.info/articles/20110204.htm>

Mier, Peter, *Obsession, Radical Islam's War Against the West*, © 2006 [1 hour video on radical Islam] Website: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g68xcNxx134>

### **Resources related to the above objective:**

The resources stated above include a comprehensive overview of a real problem that deal with terrorism. Various aspects as discussed about the topic are addressed.

These resources will enlighten both the educator and the students alike.



## APPENDIX C

**Radical Islam:** Its beliefs and operations, 9/11 and Its Impact. This is a PowerPoint Presentation on Radical Islam that is ready to use. Website Link - [rutlandhs.k12.vt.us/eisenman/Files/General/Radical%20Islam.ppt](http://rutlandhs.k12.vt.us/eisenman/Files/General/Radical%20Islam.ppt)

## APPENDIX D

### Glossary of Terms

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>Eid al Fitr</b>     | The celebration marking the close of Ramadan   |
| <b>Jihad</b>           | The Qur'an talks about a jihad "struggle" within one's own mind and heart to better themselves. There is also the aggressive form of jihad that has become common and that is the jihad where a holy war was pronounced on non-believers of Islam. |
| <b>Hajj</b>            | The journey to Mecca is required of all Muslims at least once during their lifetime if they are healthy and financially able. The purpose of the Hajj is to be cleansed.   |
| <b>Hirabah</b>         | A concept in Islamic law that protects public safety. According to the law hirabah, publicly directed violence is against the law.   |
| <b>Islam</b>           | The literal translation means "peace", a belief that there is one God (Allah).   |
| <b>Koran or Qur'an</b> | Compilation of verses revealed to Muhammad by the angel Gabriel that is now a sacred book used by Muslims as the revelation of God (Allah).  |
| <b>Kaaba</b>           | A black cloth made by hand. Verses from the Qur'an are written on it. Muslims march around the Kaaba seven times back and forth. The purpose is for cleansing of sin.  |
| <b>Radical Islam</b>   | A minority outgrowth of the Islam religion that exudes a bitter hatred for Western ideas.  |
| <b>Salah</b>           | Second Pillar of Islam, means to pray.   |
| <b>Shalom</b>          | Shalom means "peace".  |
| <b>Shi'a</b>           | The second largest denomination of Islam.  |
| <b>Sunni</b>           | The largest denomination of Islam.   |
| <b>Zakah</b>           | Third Pillar of Islam; Arabic term which means charity as an act of worship to share with the poor; a way to redistribute wealth from the better off to those who are less fortunate.  |

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> A jihad can be interpreted in different ways. The Qur'an talks about a jihad "struggle" within one's own mind and heart to better them. There is also the aggressive form of jihad that has become a common sound in the ears of America since September 11, 2001 and that is the jihad where a holy war was pronounced on non-believers of Islam. This jihad was vocally thrust throughout the world by radical Islamic extremist groups and viciously directed towards Americans and Jews.



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<sup>2</sup> Homegrown terrorist are individuals who perpetrate violence or plots against the United States or abroad. They are American citizens, legal permanent residents. (Bjelopera, 2011)

<sup>3</sup> aka Wallace Fard, Wallace Dodd, Wallace Dodd Ford and other names.

## Student Learning Map Unit Topic:

Key Learning: Corrections in the American criminal justice process and how prisoners are recruited to radical militant religious groups.

Unit Essential Question: How are American prisoners recruited to radical militant religious groups?

|                                      |                                  |   |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| <u>Concept:</u><br>Traditional Islam | <u>Concept:</u><br>Radical Islam | <u>Concept:</u><br>Recruitment Techniques |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <u>Lesson Essential Questions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is traditional Islam?</li> <li>• How did the religion of Islam begin?</li> <li>• How is does traditional Islam differ from the Nation of Islam?</li> <li>• What are the Five Pillars of Islam?</li> </ul> | <u>Lesson Essential Questions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is radical Islam?</li> <li>• What is a jihad in the context of radical Islam?</li> </ul> | <u>Lesson Essential Questions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What techniques are used to recruit prisoners to a radical form of Islam?</li> <li>• What is a homegrown terrorist?</li> </ul> |
|--|---|--|

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <u>Vocabulary:</u><br>Islam, Muhammad, Shia'a, Sunni, Qur'an, Salah, Zakah, Swan, Ramadan, Hajj, Kaaba, Nation of Islam | <u>Vocabulary:</u><br>Jihad, intrinsic, extrinsic, Hirabah, Radical Islam, Osama bin Laden, Al Qaida, Taliban | <u>Vocabulary:</u><br>Corrections<br>Imam<br>Homegrown Terrorist<br>Foot Soldiers |
|---|---|---|

Additional Information/Resources: