

Freedom and Oppression in the Muslim World, as Shown in the Media and the Eyes of Americans

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Rationale

Objectives

This unit will focus on media portrayals of the Muslim world as constructed within the novel *My Forbidden Face* by Latifa (a pseudonym).¹ Because many students are unaware of the specifics of Islam, it may be difficult for them to comprehend the text. The novel will serve as the primary text of the unit, with the additional media serving in support to various aspects of the novel itself. The importance of encouraging media literacy through this novel is that it might increase student awareness of Muslim culture, help them to better understand politics, and broaden their global knowledge. The unit will consist of media evaluation, short video clips, news articles, editorials, political cartoons, and vast descriptions of culture.

The unit is primarily designed for honors or advanced high school English classes. I will use this unit with my International Baccalaureate sophomores. The unit incorporates activities and assessments that coordinate with the International Baccalaureate Organization. My student audience is ninety-percent African American in an urban setting. Because my school is a Title I low-income school, more than eighty-percent of the student population is on free or reduced lunches; therefore, many do not get to participate in diverse activities outside of Charlotte. Also, approximately half of that student population does not have technology at home, and therefore, does not have a way to access most media components unless at school.

The timing for this unit will be approximately nineteen to twenty-two class periods. For my purposes, the nineteen to twenty-two classes are block scheduled classes, meaning each is approximately ninety minutes in length. Because this unit is in coordination with a novel, the unit will last most of the five to six weeks. The readings for the novel will be completed outside of class.

My school recently incorporated a “BYOT” (Bring Your Own Technology) component in the classroom. Students who do own technology can use this technology in

the classroom when appropriate and directed by the teacher. A computer lab or laptop cart, when accessible, may also be appropriate. Access to audio/video components is crucial for the video segments in the unit.

I want the students to acknowledge, visualize, and analyze stereotypes about Muslims, Islam, and the Middle East within the context of U.S. news reporting and depictions. Through the essential questions and activities, the students will analyze these similarities and differences. The unit will be broken down into four essential questions listed below.

How do we define our freedom as Americans, in relationship to the freedom of Muslims?

Students will seek to define freedom throughout the unit. Is freedom the ability to use our cell phones in school? Is freedom the ability to express ourselves through our fashion, without repression from the government? After evaluating relevant media and reading the text, students will be able to argue about their freedoms and how they change due to perspective.

To further define freedom, students will first begin by examining American freedoms and what they would like to see differently in their lives to make themselves freer. To Americans, freedom is indefinable; instead, it is a mere **ideograph**, or a slogan for what represents America. Ideographs build nationalism and a sense of pride in one's definition of "freedom" as defined by the individual in relation to a surrounding cultural context.² Ideographs link rhetoric and ideology in that our unconscious beliefs affect our social system and inherently influence our discourse. Because ideographs are culturally and politically bound, images can also serve as ideographs.³ Moreover, "photographs and other images can enact ideographs visually and index, or point to, the verbal slogans capturing society's guiding abstractions".⁴

Ideographs are slogans or phrases like "freedom," "liberty," "equality," or "rule of law" that define specific commitments and value judgments in light of situational and historical contexts, yet their meanings are also open to interpretation. For example, America stands on the ideograph of "freedom," and the term comes to mean something through actual rhetorical documents (e.g, the Constitution, Presidential addresses, songs) but people are still able to describe freedom in different ways. Furthermore, these ideographs create a sense of nationalism among people, a common bond that reflects collective identity, and a commitment that guides our values and behaviors.⁵ Ideographs are particularly valuable in helping students to understand how U.S. relations to the Muslim world are mediated.

Students will identify that the main differences between “our” civilizations and “theirs” is based on cultural identity. In this way, gender, nation, and race are thought to be the basis of one’s culture.⁶ Through the framework of a “clash of civilizations”, our culture has developed a troubling “us” versus “them” idea through which “we” come to believe that others must adopt our way of life.⁷ This way of life includes ideographs of freedom, equality and happiness. Images are central to defining the clash of civilization and are therefore bound by culture; this creates the idea of the “white man’s burden”, in which the white man must fix the oppressions of others to “save” them from themselves.⁸ Investigating this objective, students will better understand the ways of life, cultures, and norms of other cultures.

For example, Cloud cites a photo essay image from *Time Magazine* entitled “From Shadow to Light”. Both the title and the images presented construct a sense of nationalism around an “us” versus the “them” framework. The photo essay is set to melancholic music and shows images such as a man viewing posters seeking 9/11 victims, an Arab man holding a pistol to his face, President Bush speaking with his advisers, Muslim protestors, and finally, a man in front of the Stock Exchange wearing a red, white, and blue tie, looking dejected. Both the images and the music combine to enhance the clash of civilizations.⁹

Similarly, in George W. Bush’s 2004 State of the Union address, words like “terror” and “free” describe both the state of Afghanistan itself, and our job ensuring their freedom. He states, “The men and women of Afghanistan are building a nation that is free, and proud, and fighting terror—and America is honored to be their friend.”¹⁰ In this speech, Bush’s implication is that their complacency is now allowing us to become Afghanistan’s “friend”, and the before the “Others” we could not have been friends. As these ideographs develop, they create “a compelling series of paradigmatic binary oppositions between the American ‘self’ and the Afghan ‘other’. Americans might stand for a powerful economy, capitalism, democracy; the enemy is seen as barbaric, evil.”¹¹ These examples of ideographs are present in much of the media coverage we have seen from the War on Terror, and that is what this curriculum unit aims to address; they even act as a precursor for war. Throughout the unit, students will tackle these ideographs and dissect their components.

As Dana Cloud summarizes, according to media coverage the “United States and its people face a supposedly incontrovertible conflict with Others, particularly Islamic Others, whose civilizations are inferior and hostile to Western capitalism”.¹² Through this unit students will identify how they understand “freedom” as constitutive of “us” and lack of freedom as constitutive of “them,” and thus how developing countries and non-democratic governments are identified by the media, and portrayed by our government in the form of ideographs.

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How do we define oppression, and what does it look like?

Continuing our discussion of oppression, students will evaluate the definition of oppression after reading pieces of literature on refugees. Students must understand the life of a refugee before reading *My Forbidden Face*, as the characters in the story become refugees to leave the oppression they faced in Afghanistan by the extremist group The Taliban. Students will paint a clear picture on what a refugee looks like, what they experience, and how they move on with their lives. Once students develop the ideograph of what we define to be freedom, they will develop the ideograph of oppression. With these general terms, different students will define these words different ways, and this question will seek to show them how the civilizations also have different ways of defining these idiosyncrasies.

How do the media affect our view of culture, and specifically of the Islamic religion?

Students will look at multiple types of media and evaluate the use of “us versus them” as a slogan used in our culture. Based on their definitions of freedom, how do we view the not-free? The students will therefore develop their views on the “them”, or the oppressed. This will include the bias viewpoint, which the media is often portrayed as showing in their newscasts and breaking news stories. In this unit, students will look closely at media bias, not necessarily individual biases, but the sources that create these individual biases. For example, this refers to the pervasiveness of mediated perspectives, as constructed for the general public. Moreover, we see media bias daily in newspapers, television programming, and online. With our inherent desire for quick information that we can get “now”, we don’t always see the “whole story”, and therefore just a fragment of it. Students will also evaluate common stereotypes and misconceptions of the Islamic religion. A major discussion will take place throughout the unit on why Muslims are not terrorists. Many students associate Muslims as terrorists, and do not consider the specific aspects of the language.

This portion of the unit will evaluate specific sections of the Koran, the experiences of Muslims in America, especially post-9/11, and the culture of the Muslim world. Students will examine the timeline of events that lead to the Taliban’s takeover in Afghanistan, and their influence across the world. Because part of this lesson will take place over September 11th, the influence of the terrorist attacks on America will be syndicated in this portion. Using these images, students will see examples of how, as Robert Ivie argues, mediated “justifications for war involve representations of the ‘enemy’ as savage and barbaric,” as “coercive, irrational, and aggressive” opponents_ to a “freedom-loving, rational and the pacific victim.”¹³ Students will be able to argue how this plays out in our media.

This portion of the unit will also focus on how Muslims are “othered” through themes of oppression. We often describe Muslims as “ignorant, abject victims of an enemy regime” and this justifies U.S. intervention (military, diplomatic) on the “humanitarian grounds of saving people from themselves”, creating the feeling of the “white man’s burden”, or the idea of imperialism that has affected our rich versus poor cultures for so many generations.¹⁴ Our ideographic constructions of freedom and our privileged position to define it *contra* the Muslim “other,” becomes apparent in these constructs.

To be more specific, as Cloud explains, after the War on Terror, the media started dispersing images that created a predominantly “us” vs. “them” idea. The visual portrayal argued “that images of Afghan women and men establish a binary opposition between a white, Western, modern subject, and an abject foreign object of surveillance and military action”, whereas the viewer would be the “paternalistic savior of women and posit images of modern civilization against depictions of Afghanistan as backward and pre-modern.”¹⁵ This occurs in a sample image from *Time* magazine, in which the cover title states “Kabul Unveiled”, displaying a Muslim woman covered in a burqa in a school room, showing a sense of “desperation to learn despite the constraints of an oppressive culture”, thus indicating a lack of freedom for women and restraints on education based on the Taliban’s presence in Afghanistan.¹⁶ These images appear so often in U.S. media that they naturalize oppression as a fact of Muslim identity. Students will identify these ideological biases, and hopefully recognize and learn to resist such stereotypes, becoming more aware of media bias.

Can one person change the world?

After reading Latifa’s novel, students will evaluate how one person can change culture and people’s opinions on Muslim culture, freedom, and oppression. Upon synthesizing the effect Latifa and others have had in peacefully spreading their stories, students will evaluate how our lack of knowledge can lead to global ignorance, and a lack of understanding of how people remain oppressed around the world. Ideally student perceptions will change concerning how people live around the world. After hearing first-hand accounts of the transgressions that others face, students will have multiple textual and media examples to support their claims.

Strategies

Strategy 1: Introductory Media Perception Response

Activity: “To Be a Refugee” – YouTube clip

In this one day lesson, students will construct their primary stereotypes of a refugee and create their own definitions based on their current knowledge of who refugees are and their stories. Students will watch the media clip from a documentary. The video is entitled “To Be a Refugee”. This video contains some graphic footage of refugees, how they suffer, what it looks like to suffer, and the reality of their situations. Students will hear personal accounts of the refugee life. After watching the video, students will reevaluate their definitions of a refugee.

To further complicate their definitions of a refugee, the teacher will ask students about refugees in America. Do they exist? If so, how, where, why? Are “our” refugees different from “theirs”? Once students complete their brainstorming, they will analyze images and titles from New Orleans post-Hurricane Katrina. They will compare and contrast these types of refugees. Even in our own country, the “us” versus “them” perceptions exist. While they both may be considered refugees, distinct cultural differences exist that *do* make these groups of people inherently different. Again, the mass media tends to radicalize these groups of people, but on what grounds? This activity relates to EQ 1: How do we define freedom?.

Strategy 2: Analyzing Personal Perceptions

Activity: Comparing “To Be a Refugee” and “The Song of Peng-Ya”

Students will take two days to complete comprehension and vocabulary on the two essay and poem; the two day plan also includes the final compare and contrast assignment after completing the essay and the poem. Students will compare the essay “To Be a Refugee” and the poem “Song of Peng-ya” to compare experiences of refugees in several different countries. Did we ever hear the media perceive the experiences of refugees this way? Are we even familiar with these times in history? Students will compare and contrast the experiences of these refugees in Vietnam and China. This relates to EQ 2: What is oppression, and what does it look like?.

Strategy 3: Written Response

Activity: “Yes, I Follow Islam, but I am Not a Terrorist” article and Koran PowerPoint

This activity will take place in approximately one class period. Students will complete two different activities prior to completing the written response. Students will view images and passages from the Koran and interpret their meaning. They can also generalize how religious extremists may take the scripture out of context. This relates to

EQ 3: How do the media affect our view of culture, and specifically of the Islamic religion?

To follow up with the Islamic beliefs presented in the Koran PowerPoint, the students will read the article “Yes, I Follow Islam, but I am Not a Terrorist”, published in *Newsweek* after the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks. It recounts the experience of an Egyptian-American Muslim woman, studying journalism in New York City, and the malevolent treatment she experienced following 9/11. After reading and discussing the article as a class, students will independently write a three paragraph written response to Muslim-Americans, explaining a perceived and renewed understanding of the Muslim religion, and the treatment they receive in our country. Because the mass media affects such a large portion of our society, more than seventy-five million people, the images and articles we see affect our impressions of the “them”. This reflects our inherit “us” versus “them” society, trying to get those who are a part of Islamic societies to believe our “adopt our way of life” strategy, creating a fundamental clash in beliefs.¹⁷ Following September 11th, our leaders cited our desire for the Islamic world to consider democracy, and adopt our ways of living, such as equal treatment towards women.

Strategy 4: Visual Media Evaluation

Activity: “Aftermath of 9/11” visual media

Taking approximately two days to evaluate several types of 9/11 media, students will evaluate the media, interpreting the meaning of the images provided, the audience, cultural discrepancies including presence of radicalism and bias, and the purpose of the images. These images consist of a book cover, a cartoon from *The New Yorker*, a comedic look at Jeff Dunham’s “Achmed Terrorist” series, and a look at the aftermath of 9/11 website. Additional comedic resources include the video trailer for the movie *Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World* from 2005, and clips from *The Axis of Evil Comedy Tour*, featuring four Middle Eastern comedians who headline this comedic experience. This also relates to EQ 4: How do the media affect our view of culture, and specifically of the Islamic religion?

Students will first look at the book cover, evaluating the colors used, the shapes portrayed, and the symbolism of the figures presented. Students will take a similar approach in analyzing the political cartoon; however, they will evaluate the political significance of the cartoon, as well as its use of satire. Because satire and apathy are such frequent characteristics of political cartoons, it is important to understand how and why political cartoons are used. The teacher will show a short clip of comedian Jeff Dunham’s “Achmed the Terrorist” pieces. Finally, students will look at the post-9/11 website made to publicize the creation of the post-9/11 memorial (<http://www.911memorial.org/>). Again, symbolism will be utilized to explain the photographer’s selection in picture

angles, why the monument was created the way it was, and how it answers to the political unrest occurring after 9/11.

Students will evaluate the significance of the different takes, and write a paragraph arguing which is the most effective strategy to educate us, and which they believe to be the least significant piece of media using as many details and symbols from the media texts as possible, including their knowledge of ideographs. Using comedy in this section shows a specific dichotomy that is often considered non-permissible, insensitive, and not politically correct; however, if students understand *why* comedy is so powerful, they can more accurately develop an understanding of its biases. Kenneth Burke depicts this transient principle as simply the contrast to tragedy, which maintains that sin and guilt are a part of how humans are conditioned. It combines human feelings such as guilt, purification, and redemption, cycling in and out of each feeling.¹⁸ While comedy is often depicted as crude and often not politically correct, its purpose and meaning in society's constructs allows us to feel certain ways. For example, in viewing the clip "Everyone's a Little Racist", honesty trumps guilt, breaking the cultural confines of race to show the truth about how people often feel, but cannot say.

Strategy 5: Facebook Timeline Creation

Activity: Create a Facebook timeline

Because our students use social media almost every day, they will create a Facebook timeline for the country of Afghanistan. Teachers will display a PowerPoint presentation that explains the following: Afghanistan's political history over the past 100 years, its climate, its geography, its culture, and where it is now. Students will receive a print out of this presentation to assist them. Showing the PowerPoint and allowing students to create time to create a Facebook timeline will take approximately two class days to complete. This will also be introduced in accordance with the first chapter of the *My Forbidden Face* novel. This activity revisits our interpretation of EQ 2: What is oppression, and what does it look like?

Utilizing the PowerPoint notes taken during the presentation, students will create a Facebook timeline for Afghanistan. Their profile and album images can include self-created pictures of the geography and climate; additionally, students can display how Afghanistan and the Taliban have evolved over the past 100 years. Their "Friends" can include significant political figures, events can include important events in history, and their "About Me" section can summarize the description of the country and its political and social attributes.

Strategy 6: Photojournalism

Activity: Create titles to each of the photos from Afghanistan, serving as a photojournalist.

In this activity that will span over the course of completing chapters one and two in *My Forbidden Face*, students will create titles for five pictures per day. The PowerPoint slideshow consists of various images from the Taliban, the culture in Afghanistan, and the aftermath of the fighting. In the lesson setup for the week, students will complete Quiz 1 and Quiz 2 on the weekly readings on two separate days – for example, Tuesday and Thursday. Additionally, this activity revisits the EQ 2: What is oppression, and what does it look like?

Each day of the week, students will analyze five of the photographer's photos. They are responsible for creating a caption that relates to what they see in each image. It will, of course, be personal interpretation, and they will use the characteristics and symbols displayed in the image to create the title. This method of visual rhetoric gives students the opportunity to closely examine verbal and visual means of stereotypes by captions, positions, and items in an image. Using the predefined ideographs of freedom, oppression, and clash of civilizations, students will apply this knowledge to their image captions just as photo-journalists would. The democratic public culture created in creating titles will again deliver the cultural discrepancies in the fundamentals of the various cultures.¹⁹ Students will be able to share these observations with the class to illustrate how interpretations shape the meanings of images.

Strategy 7: Gender Roles – Group Activity

Activity: Taliban Decrees – How do they measure up?

In the second full week of reading the novel, students will receive a copy of the Taliban decrees as they interpreted the Koran, and as broadcasted by Sharia Radio. This lesson will take one class period. The students will rank them in accordance with how their lives would be different. “1” will be ranked the most important to them; this decree must be the one that would influence their lives the most. Students will rank them “1” through “5”. Students will then evaluate how the Taliban decrees would affect their families and community and rank them “1” through “5”. What types of things do we take for granted? What would happen to our society with these regulations/laws? This will help us respond to EQ 3: How does the media affect our view of culture, and specifically of the Islamic religion?.

Strategy 8: Research Circles

Activity: Research the Various Contexts of My Forbidden Face

In this activity, students will spend two to three class periods during the third week of reading *My Forbidden Face* to evaluate the various contexts of the novel. Students will perform an extended writing, research, and critical thinking exercise while evaluating the following contexts of *My Forbidden Face*: literacy and how it is used, historical context, political context, and social context (other literary/autobiographical connections with other texts covered in class). This activity will be used in conjunction with EQ 3: How do the media affect our view of culture, and specifically of the Islamic religion?

Students will use technology, including laptops, iPads, cell phones, encyclopedias, and texts used in class. Students will research their given topic and create a written product as well as a visual representation of what they learned. Students can be in predetermined groups. Students will create the expectations for the activity to ensure it is rigor and higher level thinking.

Strategy 9: Characterization of a Muslim, Refugee Woman: Personal Account (RAFT)

Activity: Read "Farewell to Manzanar" with My Forbidden Face

In this activity, which will span over two class periods, students will finish *My Forbidden Face* and read the memoir "Farewell to Manzanar". They will then analyze multimedia photos that relate to the memoir using YouTube. Students will use what they have learned from the novel, as well as their new knowledge from the memoir and photos to create a characterization of a Muslim, refugee woman. Most students do not understand the extent to which our country oppressed its own people after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. It is important for students to see how charisma can essentially hypnotize or brainwash a group of people into certain beliefs. We will now move into EQ 4: Can one person change the world?

Students will complete a "RAFT" (Role, Action, Form, Topic) activity to explain how these particular women have changed the face of politics and oppression. The "Role" will be for the students to write to one of the women as a refugee activist. The "Action" will be to write a persuasive piece; the "Form" will be the form of a letter, and the "Topic" will be to explain and encourage them to spread their message to more teenagers. Students will explain WHY that is. They will answer questions such as how the media portray both refugees and Muslims, and why it is important for teens to be a part of the selected audience. Because the youth are our future, they must be motivated to change the world.

Strategy 10: Socratic Seminar

Activity: How do the characters we read about change?

We are just teenagers; what can we do to change the world? Students will take a half of one class period to prepare for the Socratic seminar. They will take a class period to perform the Socratic seminar. Most teens do not think that they matter. This activity will seek to help us answer EQ 4: Can one person change the world?

Students will answer the following questions: 1) Discuss how and why each character has changed throughout the course of the novel. Are these changes negative or positive? Explain; 2) How has the town changed once the family returns? How do these changes affect each character differently?; 3) Discuss varying themes / lessons in the novel (ex- family, discrimination, fear, injustice, indifference, identity, and injustice). Offer evidence from the text to support your answer.

Strategy 11: Final Product

Activity: Magazine Production

In the final two to three class periods of the unit, students will write a magazine article to be composed into a class magazine. As a class, we will name the magazine, and ensure that it is broad enough to incorporate a range of discussions on freedom and oppression. Students will select a topic (none will be repeated) and write a magazine article using evidence from all of the media and literary texts we have used throughout the unit. Students will also use images they create or find online to supplement their article. Students can use comedy, photojournalism, facts, and information from the novel, and any notes they have taken to create the product. The final product will evaluate our four Essential Questions regarding freedom, oppression, media perceptions, and one person's ability to change the world. Students will be assessed using a rubric.

¹Latifa, and Chékéba Hachemi, *My Forbidden Face: Growing Up Under the Taliban : A Young Woman's Story* (New York: Hyperion, 2001) : i-x.

² Dana L. Cloud, "'To Veil the Threat of Terror': Afghan Women and the Clash of Civilizations in the Imagery of the U.S. War on Terrorism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 90 (2004) : 285.

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³ Ibid., 287

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Janis L. Edwards and Carol K. Winkler. "Representative Form and the Visual Ideograph: The Iwo Jima Image in Editorial Cartoons," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 83, no. 3 (1997): 289-310.

⁶ Dana L. Cloud, "To Veil the Threat of Terror," 289

⁷ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, 1993, 212.

⁸ Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden," *McClure's Magazine* 12 (February, 19, 1899) : 321.

⁹ Dana L. Cloud, "To Veil the Threat of Terror," 291

¹¹ Text of President Bush's State of the Union Address as released by the White House, Associated Press, January 21, 2004, <http://www.lexisnexis.com>

| ¹² Dana L. Cloud, "To Veil the Threat of Terror," 292

¹² Ibid., 291

| ¹³ Robert L. Ivie, "Images of Savagery in American Justifications for War," *Communication Monographs* 47 (1980) : 284

¹⁴ Dana Cloud, "To Veil the Threat of Terror," 286

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 288

¹⁷ Ibid.

| ¹⁸ James E. Combs, and Dan D. Nimmo. *The Comedy of Democracy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996) : 12.

| ¹⁹ Robert Hariman, and John L. Lucaites. "Visual Rhetoric, Photojournalism, and Democratic Public Culture," *Rhetoric Review* 20 (2001) : 38.

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- Combs, James E., and Dan D. Nimmo. *The Comedy of Democracy*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996.
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- Hariman, Robert, and John L. Lucaites. "Visual Rhetoric, Photojournalism, and Democratic Public Culture." *Rhetoric Review* 20 (2001): 36-38.
- Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, 1993.
- Ivie, Robert L. "Images of Savagery in American Justifications for War." *Communication Monographs* 47 (1980): 284
- Kipling, Rudyard. "The White Man's Burden." *McClure's Magazine* 12 (February 1899): 321.
- Latifa, and ChékébaHachemi. *My Forbidden Face: Growing up under the Taliban : A Young Woman's Story*. New York: Hyperion, 2001.
- Stanmeyer, John, VII. Kabul Unveiled: Photo Essay. Accessed October 25, 2012. <http://www.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,2051647,00.html>.
- Text of President Bush’s State of the Union Address as released by the White House, Associated Press, January 21, 2004, <http://www.lexisnexus.com>.

Bibliography for Teachers

Cloud, Dana L. "'To Veil the Threat of Terror': Afghan Women and the (clash of Civilizations) in the Imagery of the U.S. War on Terrorism." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 90, no. 3 (2004): 285-306.. This article gives a very vivid picture of how the mass media portrays anti-Muslim stereotypes. It describes the virtual "veil" that we as Americans place over actually understanding the Muslim culture and its people. Many times, unknowing students see terrorists and Muslims as one person. This article gives insight as to how the media does this and why, based on significant research.

Combs, James E., and Dan D. Nimmo. *The Comedy of Democracy*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996. This is an optional reading source for a teacher trying to better understand how comedy works, and why we use it. It gives insight into how people use comedy to poke fun at current statuses in government, and looks at the historical, beginning of comedy, impression of how comedy was used generations ago, while maintaining its practicality in today's culture.

Latifa, and ChékébaHachemi. *My Forbidden Face: Growing up under the Taliban : A Young Woman's Story*. New York: Hyperion, 2001. The novel is a fantastic novel that the students generally really enjoy. Because the protagonist is about their age, the students tend to reevaluate their education and freedoms as described through Latifa's experience under the Taliban. Giving an Afghan impression, it also allows the students to take world literature to a different level. Additionally, the protagonist and her sister form their own school as an outlet for children in the community. It is interesting for the students to see the lengths the Afghans had to go to just to get an education.

Rashid, Ahmed. *Taliban*. London: Yale University Press, 2000. While this is not a required reading, I found it incredibly helpful in developing my understanding of the Taliban. Understanding the history of Afghanistan and its culture is crucial to students seeing the media biases and ideographs of freedom and oppression, as the teacher must include information from this era for them to better understand the prior knowledge associated with the novel.

Stanmeyer, John, VII. *Kabul Unveiled: Photo Essay*. Accessed October 25, 2012. <http://www.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,2051647,00.html>. Like the students, identifying the representations of the captions and images presented in the photo essay give the teacher early insight into the extent to which media portrayal influences our biases.

Student Reading List

"9/11 Memorial." Accessed October 31, 2012. <http://www.911memorial.org/>. This website provides insight as to how and why the 9/11 Memorial was constructed the way it was. It also has clips of 9/11 that students can see what the day of looked like through the eyes of the New Yorkers.

Holt McDougal Literature: Grade 9. [s.l.]: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012. The textbook contains the poem "Song of Peng-ya", the essay "To Be a Refugee", and the short story "Farewell to Manzanar", all mandatory for student reading in this unit.

Latifa, and ChékébaHachemi. *My Forbidden Face: Growing up under the Taliban : A Young Woman's Story*. New York: Hyperion, 2001. The novel is a student must read throughout this unit. It highlights the memoir of a fourteen year old girl growing up under the Taliban. It depicts her experience having to follow the sharia, the laws of the Taliban, and the experiences of her family as they struggled to maintain safety. In addition, it gives an Afghani expression of life under the Taliban

Stanmeyer, John, VII. *Kabul Unveiled: Photo Essay*. Accessed October 25, 2012. <http://www.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,2051647,00.html>. The images in the photo essay compliment both the Curriculum Unit and the images the teacher wants the students to see. The teacher will demonstrate how the mass media portrays the "us" versus "them" theme in the cultural differences. Many of the photos presented in this photo essay show these stereotypes quite clearly.

"Yes, I Follow Islam, But I'm Not A Terrorist." *The Daily Beast*. October 14, 2001. Accessed October 23, 2012. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2001/10/14/yes-i-follow-islam-but-i-m-not-a-terrorist.html>. This fabulous article was written by a graduate student who was experiencing harsh criticism while living in New York based on her Islamic beliefs. It outlines some of the actions done to her, as well as her response to how people treated her. It is an eye-opening approach to how Muslims are treated in America, not just how we perceive them abroad.

List of Materials for Classroom Use

Active Voice1. "To Be A Refugee (UNHCR)." YouTube. March 16, 2010. Accessed November 1, 2012. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpwqK3B2ac8>. This clip shows the struggles of refugees from several locations around the world to open the discussion of freedom and oppression.

Holt McDougal Literature: Grade 9. [s.l.]: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012. The textbook contains the poem "Song of Peng-ya", the essay "To Be a Refugee", and the short story "Farewell to Manzanar", all mandatory for student reading in this unit. This is in line with Strategy 2 in the Curriculum Unit.

"Yes, I Follow Islam, But I'm Not A Terrorist." The Daily Beast. October 14, 2001. Accessed October 23, 2012. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2001/10/14/yes-i-follow-islam-but-i-m-not-a-terrorist.html>. This fabulous article was written by a graduate student who was experiencing harsh criticism while living in New York based on her Islamic beliefs. It outlines some of the actions done to her, as well as her response to how people treated her. It is an eye-opening approach to how Muslims are treated in America, not just how we perceive them abroad.

Koran presentation. I created a presentation using certain verses of the Koran as well as the history of Islam.

"9/11 Memorial." Accessed October 31, 2012. <http://www.911memorial.org/>. While this website contains information for students to read and visualize, it also contains powerful video clips from the fateful 9/11 terrorist attack. Teacher can elect to use as many or as few of these clips based on time and availability to technology.

Brottman, Makita. "The Chronicle Review." What's So Funny About 9/11? Accessed October 29, 2012. <http://chronicle.com/article/article-content/130708/>. This article contains *The New Yorker* cover students will analyze in Strategy 4.

Krow, Batellio. "Jeff Dunham - Achmed the Dead Terrorist." YouTube. September 29, 2007. Accessed October 29, 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1uwOL4rB-go>. This video clip shows Jeff Dunham's explicit comedy making fun of terrorists. This clip does contain explicit language, so students should be warned accordingly; however, one can shorten the clip to use a shorter version without explicit language.

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Latifa, and ChékébaHachemi. *My Forbidden Face: Growing up under the Taliban : A Young Woman's Story*. New York: Hyperion, 2001. In Strategy 4, students will also the cover of the novel to analyze visual media.

Afghanistan timeline. Teacher will use knowledge of Afghanistan to create a presentation that shows the political history, geography, and culture of the Afghan people in order to create the Facebook timeline in Strategy 5.

Stanmeyer, John, VII. Kabul Unveiled: Photo Essay. Accessed October 25, 2012. <http://www.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,2051647,00.html>. For Strategy 6, the students will use the images presented in the Photo Essay to create titles as an acting photojournalist.

Holt McDougal Literature: Grade 9. [s.l.]: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012. “Farewell to Manzanar”, as used in Strategy 9 will require use of the textbook.