



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on October 28, 2014

“No God but Allah”? Father Protests “Pro-Muslim” Curriculum at Son’s School

“Allah is the greatest. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah. I bear witness that Muhammad is his Prophet.” So reads a handout in Anthony Giannino’s son’s middle school in a passage relating the Muslim call to prayer. It’s part of a world-civilizations curriculum in the Revere, Massachusetts, school district that the father characterizes as pro-Muslim. And he’s quite upset about it — so upset that he has pulled his son out of the class in question. Writes [WHDH.com](#):



“No religion should be taught at school. In their paper it says Allah is their only God. That’s insulting to me as a Christian who believes in just Jesus only,” said Anthony Giannino.

... “We don’t believe in Allah. I don’t believe in my son learning about this here,” he said. “If my son was from another country and came here, he would have been catered to. But where he’s not being catered to, they give him an F.”

In response, Revere schools superintendent Dr. Paul Dakin says that the story is the result of social-media hype and misrepresentation. He defended the curriculum in a letter to parents, [writing](#), “Islam, like all of the other major world religions, is studied in relation to the specific culture, time period, or historical events that students are focusing on in a social studies or history class. ... [N]o religion is taught with the purpose of converting students to that religion.”

Dr. Dakin reiterated the above when I spoke to him on the phone yesterday, saying that you cannot study a given time period without touching on its formative faith. He indicated that Mr. Giannino is an outlier and that parents in his district generally don’t object to the curriculum and have been satisfied with his explanation. For his part, Giannino is gathering up a petition to get the materials — which other media have identified as part of a textbook but Dr. Dakin says is a handout from EdHelper.com — removed, and he says other parents support his cause.

Dr. Dakin also pointed out that the Muslim call to prayer in this piece’s opening sentence is simply presented as something Muslims recite and believe and not as a doctrinal guide for the students. And this is true. However, it is preceded on the handout by other statements that made the *Daily Caller*, [echoing](#) the concerns of many, say that the district is teaching Islam “in the most embarrassingly shallow and cheerleading way imaginable,” in an “admiring, rah-rah” fashion. For instance, the handout states as fact that Muhammad “was kind” and “had a strong sense of right and wrong.” It also informs in section five that by “the time Muhammad died, he had united many people in the Arabian Peninsula.”

Nowhere is it mentioned that this was accomplished through warfare; Muhammad launched 100 military expeditions, 27 of which he participated in himself.

In section eight the handout tells the students, “Often a special area in the mosque is reserved for women.” But critics might point out that this is much like saying 1955 Alabama had “special” water



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fountains for blacks. For example, in a piece titled “Mosques Relegate Women’s Prayers to the Basement,” writer Hajer Naili quotes a female convert to Islam as [stating](#), “I went to mosques and what I found was sort of an unwelcome environment for women.... The spaces are separated, there are different rooms and sometimes it [the women’s area] was even in the basement.” Naili also quotes Chicago interfaith educator Hind Makki, who complained, “Every time I visit a mosque, I assume that I must enter through a side or back door, if I’m allowed in at all. I assume that my prayer space is not the one that men use and that I must look for signs directing me to a basement or a mezzanine floor. This has been the case in nearly every mosque I’ve visited in the U.S., Canada and Western Europe.”

Then there’s the handout’s section nine, which states “Muslims raise their children to have high standards. Muslims are taught to not kill, lie, cheat, steal, or betray their country.” However, critics point out that there are many verses in the Koran prescribing violence against non-Muslims. These observers also might cite Thomas Jefferson’s letter to John Jay, in which he wrote of what he was told upon asking Tripolitan ambassador Sidi Haji Abdrahaman why his Barbary pirates were raiding (stealing from) American vessels. Jefferson related, “The Ambassador answered us that it was founded on the Laws of their Prophet, that it was written in their Koran, that all nations who should not have acknowledged their authority were sinners, that it was their right and duty to make war upon them wherever they could be found, and to make slaves of all they could take as Prisoners, and that every mussulman who should be slain in battle was sure to go to Paradise.”

As for lying, a chorus of voices points out that Islam actually prescribes two acceptable forms of the practice, *taqiyya* and *kitman*. As journalist Daniel Pipes [explained](#) in 2005, “[T]aqiyya (pronounced take-ya): precautionary dissimulation or deception and keeping one’s convictions secret.” He continued, *kitman* is a synonymous term meaning “mental reservation and dissimulation or concealment of malevolent intentions.... Taqiyya and kitman or ‘holy hypocrisy’ has been diffused throughout Arabic culture for [almost] fourteen hundred years.”

While speaking to Superintendent Dakin, I got the impression that he was very sincere in his conviction that the Revere curriculum is unbiased. The issue is a matter of his being sincerely wrong, of a lack of information (and too much misinformation), unconscious biases, relativistic instincts, and politically correct motivations.

For instance, while defending his curriculum, Dakin mentioned that Christianity had violence in its past as well and, repeating a common misconception, reflexively cited the Crusades. But as *The New American* reported [here](#), the Crusades were actually a defensive response to “more than four centuries of conquests in which Muslims had already captured two-thirds of the old Christian world,” as Saint Louis University History Department chairman Thomas Madden [put it](#).

For comparison purposes Dakin also sent me a handout on Christianity used in his schools. While it certainly appeared a good-natured presentation of the faith not designed in any way to demean, it also contained the line, “According to locals, this man [Jesus] was either a great teacher or an outright rebel.” In contrast, the handout on Islam related no non-believer perspective whatsoever — it presented only the views of pious Muslims.

Yet this is nothing unusual in today’s schools; in fact, there are far worse offenders. As *The New American* [reported](#) in February citing information from the group Textbook Advocates (TA):

[P]ro-Islamic bias in modern textbooks is the norm, not the exception. For instance, there are the claims in *Ways of the World* (Bedford Freeman & Worth) that “Islamic Civilizations have a long



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history of encouraging religious tolerance and guaranteeing the rights of religious minorities” and that “the Quran affirms religious pluralism, cultural diversity and human rights.”

... Yet textbooks’ treatment of Christianity is somewhat different. For instance, *Discovering our Past — A History of the World* (McGraw-Hill) writes about Jesus’ crucifixion: “They may have charged Jesus with Treason, or disloyalty to the government.... He was questioned by the Roman Governor and sentenced to death.” This is immediately followed by “Romans regularly crucified criminals and political rebels.”

...TA also reports that, in general, Christianity and Judaism are ignored in textbooks in favor of Islam. As a representative example, TA reports that *My World History & Geography, Early Civilization thru Renaissance* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) has one unit and five chapters on Islam and none on Christianity or Judaism; in addition, the book contains more than three times as many references to Muslims as to Christians and Jews *combined* and almost twice as many to Mohammed as to Jesus.

In an e-mail Dr. Dakin sent me, he wrote of his “appreciation of our diversity” and stated “We celebrate the differences we have”; he also said, when I informed him of the Crusades’ actual nature, that everyone has a “perspective.” This is true, but misses what should be the central question: Does the perspective have a basis in Truth or in a lie? And with moderns’ relativism-induced inability to recognize such a distinction, are we giving more credence to the perspective of the Devil than the principles of the divine?



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