

Muslim Voices

The notion that religion can be practiced freely in America is something taught in American schools, yet the reality of the lived experience is an interesting discussion and the book, *Muslim Voices in School* speaks in the voice of many Muslims about a vast array of personal experiences.

Such a discussion gives rise to the need for knowledge and understanding of Quran, Islam and Muslims in order to enhance the lived experiences reported by some Muslims about their school life.

A Winner!

“Muslim Voices in School” was chosen for the **2010 Phillip C. Chinn** award at the National Association of Multicultural Education annual Conference.



UPDATE! Second Edition is now in the works. Available soon.

Available on:

- [Amazon.ca](#)
- [Amazon.com](#)
- [Publisher Sense](#)

The need for research about the Muslim student and schools in the west has been paramount.

This book is part of a series published by Sense Publishers.

The series: Transgressions: Cultural Studies and Education is edited by Shirley Steinberg of McGill University in Canada and the late Joe Kincheloe also of McGill University in Canada.

This book contains chapters by Muslim researchers who were invited to share their research and is a collection of readable, accessible, compelling, varied, voiced, passionate, real, textured, multi-faceted, hybrid, fearless, fearful, cautious, bold, modest, and inspired accounts of living Islam in relation to mainstream schooling in the West. The book helps to make the diverse experiences of Muslim students (from elementary through university, student through professor) both contextual and complex. The politics and education about Islam, Muslims, Arabs, Turks, Iranians and all that is associated with the West's popular imagination of the monolithic "Middle-East" has long been framed within problematics. The goal of this book is to push back against the reductive mainstream narratives told about Muslim and Middle Eastern heritage students for generations if not centuries, in mainstream schools. The chapters are each authored by Muslim-aculturated scholars. This book will be of interest to teachers, administrators, students and scholars. As well, the content is suited to fields of study including ethnic studies, critical multicultural education, anti-oppression approaches to education, curriculum studies, social issues in education, social contexts of education, and qualitative research in education.

| [Dr. Seema Imam began](#) the research for the chapter "[Separation of What and State](#)" in 1998 without realizing it. For Dr. Imam, there was nothing harder to listen to than the labeling of a faith community as terrorist community. As the research began to look at the public curriculum or mass media, many realizations came to light. The Muslims consume the mass media public curriculum like everyone else, and it takes its toll. This research revealed the essence of the lived experiences. What is it like living in the midst of the negative public curriculum? The data was collected through in-depth interviewing. Post 9-11 focus groups of parents were convened to discuss their children's experiences with public schooling. All that was just the beginning. Since then there have been many presentations, more research and efforts to create resource materials to help public schools work with all students through a better understanding of differences.

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REVIEWS

SEPTEMBER 2010:

MVS is the WINNER! of the [National Association for Multicultural Education's](#) 2010 [Philip C. Chinn book award](#)!

AUGUST 2010:

[Teaching Tolerance](#) is one of the most respected and well-known equity communities for educators. They have recently posted [a link to MVS in their Professional Development resources](#) section.

From the review:

“Provides a much-needed collection about Muslim student experiences in Western schools. Each chapter ends with meaningful discussion questions and extension activities for teachers. This is a true handbook for educators.”

JULY 2010:

Really excited and honoured that MVS has been nominated for the [National Association for Multicultural Education's](#) 2010 [Philip C. Chinn book award](#).

MAY 2010:

From the review:

“The narratives in Muslim Voices in Schools have authenticity and readability because most [sic: all] of the authors are Muslim-acculturated scholars... As pedagogical tools, the discussion questions and extension activities accompanying each chapter are priceless.”

Scholars Share Narratives of Muslim Identity and Pluralism

Book review by Adebowale Adekile

Muslim Voices in School, edited by Center alumnus Ozlem Sensoy and Christopher Darius Stonebanks, provides comprehensive, diverse, and readable insights into Muslim experiences in the West from multiple perspectives. The book's chapters are divided into three sections that focus on different levels of the educational landscape, making it easy for different audiences to access the book. The chapters in the first part address the voices and experiences of Muslim students in the K-12 school years. In her chapter, "Where the Heck is the 'Muslim World' Anyways?" Sensoy provides a content analysis of popular world history and social studies textbooks. She reveals how Muslims are depicted in terms of who they are, where they are, and what they do. The chapter includes a riveting discussion of how the incongruence between the depictions and actuality of Muslims contributes to the preservation of the East/West divide and how it oversimplifies complex histories and tensions.

The second part of the book, "Voices and Experiences of Muslim Students in the University Years," contains revealing chapters about Muslim students' trials and tribulations as they navigate their complex identities. In a chapter titled "The Evolution of an

Identity Crisis," Dalia Al Houseini, a Palestinian Muslim Arab Canadian, recalls her experiences of trying to fit in as a recent immigrant. She uses vignettes to explain how the societal curriculum, outside of the formal school curriculum, plays a pivotal role in identity formation. In "On Being Black and Muslim," Samaa Abdurraqib gives a powerful narrative of how others interpret her multiple identities in the university environment and society at large. She argues that Black Muslims are in a unique position to bring the Black and Muslim communities together, both within and outside college campuses. The third part of the book is titled "Voices and Experiences of Muslim Teachers, Scholars, and Administrators." Christopher Darius Stonebanks uses his experiences as a scholar and educator in Canada's public schools to critique the disproportionately small number of Muslims working in Canada's school systems.

The narratives in *Muslim Voices in Schools* have authenticity and readability because most of the authors are Muslim-acculturated scholars. The chapters present multiple perspectives on key issues of identity and pluralism at different levels of the education strata. As pedagogical tools, the discussion questions and exten-

sion activities accompanying each chapter are priceless. *Muslim Voices in Schools* is an excellent resource for understanding and deconstructing the evolving meaning of being a Muslim in the West in a post-9/11 world, a phenomenon alluded to by many of the contributors to this book.



Muslim Voices in School: Narratives of Identity and Pluralism, edited by Ozlem Sensoy and Christopher Darius Stonebanks, is published by Sense Publishers.

APRIL 21, 2010:

From the review:

“the book highlights the role educators play in the lives of their students and sheds light on the importance of understanding how youth identity is shaped and influenced by what takes place outside of formal schooling... The book is organized chronologically from elementary through university experiences of Muslim students”

arab news.com
The Middle East's leading English language news site

Book sheds light on the challenges Muslim youth face in Western schools

By LISA KAKI, LISAKAKI@ARABNEWS.COM

Published: Apr 21, 2010 18:21 Updated: Apr 21, 2010 18:21

Despite the vast and easy access to information, most people in the West still don't know the truth about Islam. That is because the Information Technology Revolution has done little to remove the lies and misconceptions attached to the Muslim faith.

Since education is directly connected to politics, Western schools have the wrong perception of Islam. A hidden curriculum with regard to the Middle East, Islam and Muslims has been used in Western schools since a long time. This indisputable fact was the starting point for a fascinating research that led to the publication of *The Miseducation of the West: The Hidden Curriculum of Western-Muslim Relations* in 2004.

Muslim Voices in School: Narratives of Identity and Pluralism is a follow up that was published in 2009. Written by Ozlem Sensoy and Christopher Stonebanks, it brings together a number of studies conducted by university professors, teachers, students and scholars who have dealt with Muslim youth experiences in regards to Western schooling. Furthermore, the book highlights the role educators play in the lives of their students and sheds light on the importance of understanding how youth identity is shaped and influenced by what takes place outside of formal schooling.

[Click to read full review.](#)