

Arab-American and Muslim-American Studies in Secondary Social Studies Curriculum

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Abstract

Arabs and Muslims live within the United States surrounded by misconceptions about their culture and religion, both of which seemed foreign to most Americans. Arabs, like many immigrant groups who came to the United States, were not exempt from racist accusations. They were viewed as a backward, violent, desert-dwelling people. The media and Hollywood did their part to ensure that Arabs and Muslims on the big screen perpetuated these misconceptions through their movies, cartoons, and TV characters. After the attacks on 9/11, many Americans realized, for the first time, how little they understood Arabs and Muslims. This led many to raise questions about curricular needs concerning Arabs, Muslims, and the Middle East, as well as Arab and Muslim Americans living within U.S. borders. This article discusses the mixed methods study, which consisted of 101 surveys of secondary social studies teachers from across the U.S. and contextual analysis of five U.S. history textbooks.

Keywords: Arab-Americas, Muslim-Americans, stereotypes, education, social studies curriculum, multicultural education

Introduction

The need for Arab and Muslim-American studies was never more real than after the attacks on September 11, 2001 when millions of Americans realized for the first time how little they knew of the Middle East, Arabs, and Muslims. As students tried to understand the events, they repeatedly asked questions that many adults struggled to answer. Misunderstandings about Arabs and Muslims created unwarranted attacks, both verbal and physical, against Arab and Muslim Americans living in the United States (Ibish, 2003). Muslim-American loyalty was openly challenged in the media, and a number of mosques, homes, and businesses were destroyed. The catastrophic events of September 11 had a profound impact on millions of Americans' everyday lives, and they also impacted the educational system, as educators sought to include more historical and multicultural lessons on the Middle East and Islam.

Multicultural education in its purest form is a "movement designed to empower all students to become knowledgeable, caring and active citizens in a deeply troubled and ethnically polarized nation and world" (Banks, 1993, p.23). From its inception, multicultural education has challenged teaching practices to emphasize a study of multiple perspectives; in other words, understanding that there are numerous aspects from which to study an event, concept or even a curriculum. From a social studies perspective, this requires a movement away from a one-sided version of history and towards the studying of historical events from numerous viewpoints.

For Arab-Americans and Muslim-Americans, multicultural education requires the inclusion of their contributions throughout history. The social history of Arab and Muslim-Americans is important in helping students dispel the many myths, stereotypes, and biases that exist. The inclusion of Arab and Muslim-American history gives voice to the millions of Arab and Muslim-Americans who have positively contributed to the development and growth of the United States. Unfortunately, this history is often excluded from textbooks and the classroom despite the number of resources on Arab and Muslim-American contributions. However, Arab and Muslim-Americans, like their Arab and Muslim ancestors, have made and continue to make great achievements in a variety of fields, such as, medicine, science, math, sports, politics, business, education, and entertainment. Arab and Muslim-Americans have served within the military and as political servants, activists, poets, artists, Emmy award winning actors and actresses, and sports icons (Kasem, 2005). They have won Nobel Peace prizes. Their contributions to the United States are too numerous to include on a single list, and yet most of their achievements go unrecognized. The dynamic role these two groups have had in science, education, geography, history, and exploration should not be underestimated. Teaching and learning about their contributions will lead to true multicultural education, one that allows students to study and analyze historical events from multiple perspectives. Long held stereotypes that Muslims and Arabs are of a foreign religion and culture, which do not have a place within the American tapestry will be disproved. Arab and Muslim-Americans will be better understood as a people, through a truly a multicultural curriculum.

Statement of the Problem and Significance of Study

The present work is designed with the goal of expanding multicultural and social studies education, specifically about Arab and Muslim-Americans. Multiculturalism was initially intended to reform curriculum and teacher training programs. This research focuses not on the need for multicultural education or teacher training, but on the actual inclusion of multicultural Arab and Muslim-American studies in the secondary social studies curriculum. Little has been written about the teaching of Arab and Muslim-American cultures, despite the growth of the Arab and Muslim-American populations within the United States. A plethora of resources for

teaching Middle Eastern and Muslim traditions exists, but many of these resources are designed for world or global history courses. In U.S. history courses, Arabs and Muslims are frequently referenced in very specific contexts, such as during wars and conflicts (Crusades, 1970s oil embargo, Iran Hostage Crisis, Persian Gulf, 9/11), which emphasize stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims as violent and aggressive. This further demonizes Arab and Muslim-Americans and is counterproductive. Instead, what is needed most is an adjustment to how and when Arab and Muslim-American culture, history, and traditions are included in the curriculum, as well as resources to help educators achieve those goals.

Research Questions

The major objective of this study is to understand Arab and Muslim-American multicultural education in secondary public school social studies courses. Several questions guided this research:

1. To what extent are Arab and Muslim-American history, culture, and positive contributions included in American textbooks and school curricula?
2. How are schools addressing biases against Arabs and Muslims?
3. What difficulties do teachers experience when incorporating Arab and Muslim-Americans history, culture, and positive contributions in social studies lesson plans?
4. Do teachers demonstrate a need for additional resources when teaching about Arab and Muslim-Americans in public schools across the United States?

Mixed Methods Research Strategy

The current study was based on mixed methods strategies. Mixed methods research, according to Creswell (2009) "is an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms (Creswell, 2009, chapter one, fifth paragraph). Through mixed methods research, "the researcher converges or merges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem" (Creswell, 2009, chapter one, thirtieth paragraph). While there are multiple facets to mixed methods research, the current study utilizes a concurrent transformative approach.

First, concurrent transformative strategies utilize two concurrent data collections: qualitative and quantitative. This provides the researcher with the ability to utilize multiple sets of data, emphasizing either qualitative/quantitative data sets or both sets equally, to address the research questions. Concurrent transformative strategies also allow data sets to be "integrated during analysis or possibly during interpretation phase" (Terrell, 2012, p. 272). According to Terrell (2012), concurrent transformative strategies strengthen research by providing data from multiple perspectives, which "offsets weaknesses inherent to one design by using both" and "allows researchers to expand an understanding from one method to another or converge or confirm findings" (p. 272).

The current study used mixed methods to explore and understand the relationship between numerous variables that affect Arab-American and Muslim-American multicultural studies within the secondary social studies curriculum. These variables included stereotypes and biases towards Arab and Muslim-Americans, the inclusion of Arab and Muslim-American history, culture, authors, and positive contributions in textbooks and school curricula, as well as resources on Arab and Muslim-American studies. The examination of these variables was meant to further determine whether or not there was a lack of Arab and Muslim-American studies within the secondary social studies curriculum and the implications of students' views of Arab and Muslim-Americans.

Surveys

The current study collected data through surveys. Gideon (2012) describes a survey/questionnaire as "an effective tool for obtaining information on a variety of topics such as feelings, attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, values, potential actions, decision-making processes, needs, lifestyles, sense of social belonging, consumption and shopping patterns, or even simple demographic questions" that can utilize both open and closed-response questions (p. 92).

Survey research on multicultural social studies education has focused predominately on the need for multicultural education, creating multicultural curricula, and teacher training programs and participants. However, several studies specific to multicultural social studies have used surveys as a way of collecting data from teachers. Some have utilized both open and closed-response questions based on the Likert Scale, within the same survey.

Tim Fry (2000) conducted a study of pre-service social studies teachers and their perceptions of multicultural education. Fry's (2000) research collected survey data from 101 pre-service social studies teachers from six Kansas universities. The survey comprised of 25 Likert-scale questions and collected data on pre-service teachers' perceptions of multicultural education, perceptions on the "connection between the goals of multicultural education and the social studies," as well as multicultural concepts perceived to be "essential for inclusion in social studies classrooms" (p. 8). The study, however, only utilized Likert-scale questions, which made it difficult to understand why participants answered in a particular manner.

Cathy Brant (2013) conducted a survey of 69 pre-service social studies teachers in a Midwestern university, using closed-response, open-response, and Likert-scale questions. The purpose of the qualitative study was to collect data on pre-service social studies teachers' understanding of multicultural education. Both Fry (2000) and Brant (2013) collected data from pre-service teachers, however, neither asked questions regarding how participants implemented multicultural education within social studies, nor were their surveys specific to Arab and/or Muslim-American studies.

A study of practicing social studies teachers was conducted by Charles Titus (1992), and utilized quantitative strategies to determine how teachers infused multicultural education into the social studies curriculum. Twenty-six social studies teachers were surveyed across three high schools and two junior high schools in a mostly Caucasian community in a Midwestern state. The study, however, was broad, focusing on multicultural education across the secondary social studies curriculum. It concentrated on social studies teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards multicultural education, and not on a specific group, as in the case in the current study. Finally, Titus' (1992) research was conducted through closed-response, Likert-based surveys and did not allow participants to explain or clarify their responses in detail.

Similar to Titus' (1992) study, Sunita Sharma (2005) focused on teacher perceptions of multicultural education. Sharma (2005) conducted a unique mixed methods study through pre and post surveys of 150 teachers in a Florida school district. Fifty teachers were surveyed from each educational level (elementary, middle and high school teachers). Fifteen teachers, five teachers from each level, from the 150 initially surveyed were then randomly selected to participate in interviews. Like Titus' (1992) study, Sharma focused on teacher perceptions of multicultural education. Sharma's (2005) study differs from Titus' (1992), focusing on both elementary and secondary teachers of all subjects and through mixed methods of data collection.

All of the studies are in sharp contrast to the current study that specifically examines the inclusion of Arab, Muslim, and Arab and/or Muslim-American studies with the secondary social

studies curriculum. The current study is also more specifically concerned with multicultural Arab and/or Muslim-American studies. Data for the current study was collected from surveys that utilized qualitative open-response questions and quantitative Likert scale closed-response questions. The use of both open and closed-response questions allowed for a more in-depth analysis of the research. Electronic surveys were also the most efficient way of collecting responses nationally.

Results

The data for this study was compiled from one hundred and one surveys that were collected over the course of three months from November 2012 to January 2013. Questions one, two, and three of the survey collected data on participants' background. The following descriptive statistics provide information on each participant's home state, years of teaching experience, and years of teaching in the current subject.

State participation

The purpose of question one was to determine the location of each participant. The 101 surveys collected spanned the United States, 23 states in total, and the District of Columbia. Of the 101 surveys, ten participants abstained from including their location.

Table 1. Distribution of state participants

State Participation			
US State:	Abbreviation:	Total Participants:	Percentage from Total Participant Responses*:
Alabama	AL	22	24%
Alaska	AK	1	1%
California	CA	8	9%
Colorado	CO	1	1%
Connecticut	CT	1	1%
Delaware	DE	1	1%
Florida	FL	6	7%
Georgia	GA	1	1%
Hawaii	HI	2	2%
Maine	ME	1	1%
Maryland	MD	2	2%
Massachusetts	MA	2	2%
Michigan	MI	6	7%
Minnesota	MN	1	1%
Missouri	MO	2	2%
New Jersey	NJ	1	1%

New Mexico	NM	1	1%
New York	NY	10	11%
North Carolina	NC	4	4%
Ohio	OH	2	2%
Pennsylvania	PA	13	14%
Texas	TX	1	1%
Virginia	VA	1	1%
District of Columbia	DC	1	1%
Total Participant Responses:		91	98%
Skipped Question		10	
Total		101	
* Percentages rounded to nearest whole number			

The states with the largest number of participants included Alabama with 22 responses, nearly a quarter of the overall sample, followed by Pennsylvania with thirteen responses, New York, with ten responses, and California, Michigan, and Florida with eight, six, and six responses respectively. The surveys were originally emailed to secondary social studies teachers who had participated in regional and nationwide study workshops, which included the Korean Fellowship, Fulbright-Hays Study Abroad Program in Turkey, Multicultural Classroom Research in Spain, and the Arab American National Museum professional development workshop. The surveys were further distributed by the participants in these workshops to teachers within their schools, districts, and/or to other colleagues who met the requirements for participation. It may be assumed that some participants chose to distribute the surveys further while others did not. Notably, three states with numerous participants have large Arab and Muslim-American populations: California, Michigan, and New York.

Years of service

Questions two and three of the survey asked the participants to indicate their number of years of service and the number of years teaching the current subject/course. Survey questions two and three allowed teachers to select years of service from 1 to 29 years with an additional option of 30+ years. The responses were then manually categorized into sections to include 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, 21-25, and 26-30+ years of service. The results from question two showed that 15% of the surveyed participants had been teaching for five years or fewer. The largest number of teachers (26%) had been teaching in the range of 6-10 years with nine participants teaching 10 years. The second largest category was the group of teachers with 11-15 years of experience and comprised 22% of the overall surveyed population. In the third largest category (18%) were teachers with 16-20 years of service, followed by teachers with 21-25 years (13%) and 26-30+ years (6%) overall. One teacher abstained from answering the question. Table 2A shows the distribution of data from question two.

The results from question three demonstrated that the teachers with 1-5 years of service in their current subject/course comprised 31% of the overall survey population, making them the largest group. The second largest category, those teaching 6-11 years within their subject/course made up 29% of the population surveyed. Thus, the majority of teachers surveyed had been

teaching their current subject/course for 10 years or fewer, and after the events of 9/11. Percentages decreased as the number of years teaching in current subject/course continued to increase. Those with 11-15 years teaching in current subject/course were 21% of the population surveyed, followed by those with 16-20 years (9%), 21-25 years (7%), and 26-30+ years (4%).

Table 2B shows the distribution of data from question three

Teacher Years of Service			
Years of Service	Response Percent	Response Count	Category Percentages
1	2.0%	2	1-5 Years 15%
2	1.0%	1	
3	2.0%	2	
4	2.0%	2	
5	8.0%	8	
6	3.0%	3	6-10 Years 26%
7	3.0%	3	
8	3.0%	3	
9	8.0%	8	
10	9.0%	9	
11	6.0%	6	11-15 Years 22%
12	4.0%	4	
13	2.0%	2	
14	1.0%	1	
15	9.0%	9	
16	4.0%	4	16-20 Years 18%
17	4.0%	4	
18	3.0%	3	
19	4.0%	4	
20	3.0%	3	
21	3.0%	3	21-25 Years 13%
22	5.0%	5	
23	1.0%	1	
24	3.0%	3	
25	1.0%	1	
26	0.0%	0	26-30+ Years 6%
27	1.0%	1	
28	1.0%	1	
29	0.0%	0	
30+	4.0%	4	
<i>Answered Question</i>		100	
<i>Skipped Question</i>		1	
<i>Total</i>		101	
* Percentages rounded to nearest whole number			

Years Teaching Current Subject/Course			
Years of Service	Response Percent	Response Count	Category Percentages
1	4.0%	4	1-5 Years 31%
2	5.9%	6	
3	6.9%	7	
4	4.0%	4	
5	9.9%	10	
6	8.9%	9	6-10 Years 29%
7	3.0%	3	
8	7.9%	8	
9	2.0%	2	
10	6.9%	7	
11	4.0%	4	11-15 Years 21%
12	3.0%	3	
13	6.9%	7	
14	3.0%	3	
15	4.0%	4	
16	4.0%	4	16-20 Years 9%
17	2.0%	2	
18	1.0%	1	
19	0.0%	0	
20	2.0%	2	
21	2.0%	2	21-25 Years 7%
22	2.0%	2	
23	1.0%	1	
24	2.0%	2	
25	0.0%	0	
26	1.0%	1	26-30+ Years 4%
27	1.0%	1	
28	0.0%	0	
29	0.0%	0	
30+	2.0%	2	
<i>Answered Question</i>		101	
<i>Skipped Question</i>		0	
<i>Total</i>		101	
* Percentages rounded to nearest whole number			

Islamophobia, Biases, and Stereotypes (Questions 5 and 8)

Issues of biases and stereotypes have continued to be prevalent in the media and politics and have influenced how many Americans view Arab and Muslim-Americans (Saliba, 1999; Suleiman, 1999; Naber, 2000; Wingfield, 2006). Stereotypes and biases have also become a major concern in public schools and the curriculum as teachers struggle to address these issues within their classes. Within this study, questions five and eight of the survey were specific to these issues. Question five asked participants if their individual schools took time to discuss biases towards Arabs and/or Muslims with an option for open commenting. Question eight was an open-ended question that asked participants if they had observed biases against Arabs and/or Muslims among students and how they believed their students' views developed. Of the 88 responses to question five, nearly 49% agreed or strongly agreed that, their schools took time to discuss biases towards Arab and/or Muslims, 28.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 22% remained neutral.

Table 3A. Discussing biases against Arabs and/or Muslims

Question 5		
5. Your school takes the time to discuss biases against Arabs and/or Muslims.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	11.4%	10
Agree	37.5%	33
Neutral	22.7%	20
Disagree	20.5%	18
Strongly Disagree	8.0%	7
Comments:		33
	<i>answered question</i>	88
	<i>skipped question</i>	13

The participants' responses on the Likert scale indicated that the majority of schools were addressing biases towards Arabs and/or Muslims, however, their comments suggest otherwise. The open responses to question five were hand coded according to the four themes that emerged from the data. The thirty-three open responses were sorted into the following categories: yes, the whole school took time to discuss biases against Arabs and/ or Muslims and as a part of school policy; yes, teachers individually took time to discuss biases against Arabs and/ or Muslims, and as a part of school policy; yes, teachers individually took time to discuss biases against Arabs and/ or Muslims, but not as a whole school or as a part of school policy; no, the school does not take time to discuss biases against Arabs and/ or Muslims and it is not a part of school policy.

In the open response section of question five, only three participants acknowledged that their schools took time to discuss biases against Arabs/or Muslims. "We do not use a standard curriculum for addressing these issues, but we are sensitive to the biases and engage students in conversations about prejudice as it is relevant." However, an overwhelming 29 responses (88%) indicated that they individually took time to discuss biases against Arabs and/or Muslims, but not as a part of school policy. "Unfortunately, racism, bigotry, and misogyny are endemic in my

student body. I have made it a personal quest of mine to rectify this.” Another teacher recognized that “as a school it is not a priority, but individual teachers do make a point, especially in social studies to integrate this into the curriculum.” Only one teacher admitted that neither they nor their school took time to discuss biases against Arab and/or Muslims. “I have never heard a discuss[ion] related to this issue as a school or even department.”

The results show that any discussion regarding biases or stereotypes was more closely tied to each teacher’s pedagogy and varied “teacher-by-teacher” according to one participant. “This discussion is not school drive[en]. It is initiated if it happens at all, by the teacher,” wrote another educator. These comments represent teachers’ efforts to include multicultural education by emphasizing diversity and challenging stereotypes and biases within their curriculum, even if only on a limited basis. At the same time, multicultural education requires incorporating diversity and challenging stereotypes and biases as a part of the school culture. This provides teachers with support in the classroom and aligns teacher goals with that of the school. Based on the results of the survey, including diversity and challenging stereotypes and biases does not appear to be a part of school policy or culture.

Question eight, similarly, asked if teachers had observed biases against Arabs and/or Muslims, and how they believed those views developed. The 74 responses in question eight were hand coded according to the eight main categories that emerged, one of which was a combination of categories that included five subcategories.

Table 3B. Biases against Arab and/or Muslims among students

Question 8		
8. If you have observed biases against Arab and/or Muslims among your students, how do you think your students’ views developed?		
Coded Categories	Response Percent*	Response Count
9/11 and Terrorism	12%	9
Media (TV shows, movies, newspapers, news programs, internet, and social media)	12%	9
Parents	14%	10
Community/Religious institutions	4%	3
Anti-Americanism	1%	1
Lack of Exposure/Interactions with Arabs and/or Muslims	4%	3
Multiple Factors:		
A. Media and Parents	22%	16
B. Media and Community/Religious Institutions/Lack of Exposure to	1%	1
C. 9/11 and Media	7%	5
D. 9/11 and Lack of Exposure	1%	1
E. Parents and Lack of Exposure	1%	1
None	20%	15
Comments Submitted:		74

*Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number

From the 74 responses, the largest category was that comprising a combination of all categories. Approximately 32% of all participants believed that student biases towards Arabs and/or Muslims developed through some combination of the media, parents, the community, the aftermath of 9/11, or the lack of exposure and interactions with Arabs and/or Muslims. Within this category, 22% believed the media and parents had the largest impact on shaping student views of Arabs and Muslims. "Yes, first of all my students pronounce the word Arab as A-rab, I correct them but they continue to use the term. Bias such as they own all the corner stores, they are crazy, terrorist. They develop these biases through misconceptions of what they see on T.V., video games (Arabs are usually the bad guys) [and] family biases."

The media's role in projecting biases against Arabs and/or Muslims was a significant factor, according to eleven percent of those surveyed. "The news is the news. Arab and/or Muslim followers are seen in various ways on the world stage. Their words and actions (whether positive or negative) speak volumes. Arab/Muslim silence toward radicals in their own groups gives the (perhaps not accurate view) of support for these radicals." Several participants cited students "listening to right wing Republican religious bigots on Fox News" and repeating the "misinformation they've heard from talking heads on Fox News and the like."

Only 12% of the participants referenced 9/11 and terrorism as a factor in the development of biases amongst their students. Overall, however, 26% of the participants made reference to 9/11 or terrorism in their comments. "First and foremost due to 9/11," stated one teacher, "students only have heard of the negatives associate with Arabs and/or Muslims." Another teacher commented, "Views have become more progressive since Sept. 11, though some still express uninformed views and biases." These comments demonstrate that stereotypes and biases towards Arabs, Muslims, and Arab and Muslim-Americans continued more than twelve years after the events of 9/11. Approximately 14% of the comments attributed biases to the influence of parents on students. One participant responded that, "most students' biases derive from parents' misconceptions of Islam," while a second teacher reported that "students tend to emulate what they see and hear from adults."

In total, approximately 79% of those who responded to question eight observed some form of bias towards Arabs and/or Muslims, while 20% argued against the presence of biases. Fifteen teachers maintained that they had not observed student biases towards Arabs and/or Muslims, with one teacher stating that they had "not observed any, although I would say that many of my students are able to recite negative stereotypes, but don't seem to put much stock in them." Other comments by teachers included not having witnessed biases among their students or in their school, not having Arab-American students, or having Arab students, but not witnessing biases towards them. One participant did mention "a tendency of my Muslim-Arab students to downplay their religious and cultural background."

The responses of the teachers to question eight correlate with the research on stereotypes and discrimination against Arabs and/or Muslims and Arab and/or Muslim-Americans. The findings of this study suggest that the media, parents, the community, the events of 9/11, and lack of exposure to or interaction with Arabs and/or Muslims influence students in the United States heavily. Student biases towards Arabs and Muslims have developed through multiple means and are being reinforced by a curriculum that has excluded this minority. To that end, students continue, more than twelve years after 9/11, to view Arabs and Muslims in a negative light.

Discussion of Positive Contributions by Arabs and Muslims (Question 6)

The portrayal of Arabs and Muslims within the curriculum reflects the prevalent stereotypes of these groups. The results of questions five and eight indicate that stereotypes and biases about Arabs and Muslims are well established among students by the secondary level. However, are students being exposed to positive Arab and Muslim contributions and achievements? The argument is that without positive images in the media, as well as positive reinforcement of Arab and Muslim history and experience through multicultural education, stereotypes and biases against these groups will continue. By providing students with information about the positive contributions of Arabs and Muslims, they will gain a more balanced portrayal of Arabs and Muslims in the curriculum, and be able to challenge the negative stereotypes and biases prevalent in the media. The purpose of question six is to determine if positive Arab and/or Muslim contributions are included in the current curriculum.

There were 87 responses to the close-ended portion of question six. Of the responses, the majority, nearly 52% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that students discussed positive contributions by Arabs and/or Muslims in class. Almost 22% of the participants were neutral and comprised the second largest category. Only 26% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4. Discussion of positive contributions by Arabs and/or Muslims

Question 6		
6. Students at your school discuss positive contributions Arabs and/or Muslims have made in class.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	10.3%	9
Agree	41.4%	36
Neutral	21.8%	19
Disagree	18.4%	16
Strongly Disagree	8.0%	7
Comments:		87
	<i>answered question</i>	87
	<i>skipped question</i>	14

There were 21 responses to the open-ended question. All of the responses were hand coded according to the four themes that materialized from the data. The overwhelming majority (81%) agreed with the statement that students at their schools discussed positive contributions by Arabs and/or Muslims in class. Only one participant reported discussing positive contributions when the opportunity presented itself in response to current events, such as stereotypes and the media. One teacher did not discuss positive contributions by Arabs and/or Muslims and two responses were unclear and did not specifically answer the question. Of the educators who said yes, most cited including positive contributions in ancient, global, and world history courses as a part of historical achievements and contributions, but not specific to Arab-Americans. "Within the World History classroom, we discuss Al-Kwarizmi, Ibn Sina, Ibn Battuta, Abu al-Qasim, Salah al-Din and al-Kindi," and another participant responded, "In world history this is certainly true – although less emphasis is placed on Arabs/Muslims than on Christians/Europeans." One

teacher reported, “Most of these discussions are centered around Arab inventions, contributions to math, etc and less on Arab-American contributions.” Not all teachers who participated in the survey agreed that the inclusion of Arab and/or Muslims was necessary. “America as a country and culture should and must be the emphasis in American public schools. Citizens and taxpayers need informed citizens of America and need not be acculturated to Arab and/or Muslim cultures.”

The responses from question six suggest that while there is some inclusion of positive contributions by Arabs and/or Muslims, the majority of it is included in ancient, global, and world history. Teachers who include Arab and/or Muslim contributions concentrate on historic achievements. There seems to be little incorporation of contemporary Arab and/or Muslim history in other social studies courses.

Lessons on Arab and Muslim-Americans (Question 4 and 9)

Questions four and nine of the survey focus specifically on the inclusion of Arab-American history, culture, and authors in textbooks and teacher lessons. Question four of the survey asked teachers to consider whether or not books and textbooks in their schools included Arab-American history, culture, and authors. Their responses were categorized according to a Likert scale of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. An open comment section allowed participants to expand on their selections on their Likert scale. Question nine remained open ended for comments only.

Overall, the 88 teachers who responded to question four disagreed (46.6%) or strongly disagreed (12.5%) with the statement that books and textbooks included Arab-American history, culture, and authors. Slightly more than nineteen percent agreed that books and textbooks included Arab-American history, culture, and authors, with almost seven percent strongly agreeing. Nearly 15% of the participants remained neutral.

Table 5. Inclusion of Arab-American history in textbooks

Question 4		
4. Books and textbooks in your school include Arab-American history, culture and authors.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	6.8%	6
Agree	19.3%	17
Neutral	14.8%	13
Disagree	46.6%	41
Strongly Disagree	12.5%	11
Comments:		25
	<i>answered question</i>	88
	<i>skipped question</i>	13

* Percentages rounded to nearest whole number

Of the 101 people surveyed, 25 commented on question four. The comments were then hand coded according to themes that emerged from the data. The themes were compiled into

five main categories; yes, Arab-American history is present in books and textbooks; yes, Arab-American history is present in books and textbooks, but only in global, world, or ancient texts; yes, Arab history is present in books and textbooks, but not specifically on Arab-Americans; no Arab-American history is not present in books and textbooks; and maybe. Of the 25 responses, eight responded that Arab-Americans were included in books and texts, while four responded that Arab-American history was included in world history texts only. One teacher stated that the inclusion of Arab history was “almost exclusively from the Golden Age of the Abbasid Caliphate. Arab history is discussed in World War I, II and in reference to the 70’s oil crisis. The latter chapters are from a distinct Americentric view.” An additional four responded that Arabs and Muslims were included in books and texts, but not Arab and Muslim-Americans specifically, whereas three did not agree that Arab-Americans were included in texts and six were unsure. “My World Culture textbook discusses Arab history, but not Arab-American history. I don’t currently teach American History, but when I did, I don’t recall any information regarding Arab-Americans.” Another teacher responded, “some AP World History books, like Bentley, include info[rmation] on Arabs, but not Arab-Americans.”

Their responses demonstrate the confusion that exists over the inclusion of Arab-American studies in books and textbooks used in public schools. Some teachers admitted that Arab and Muslim studies were included, but their responses suggest that this inclusion is limited to ancient, world, and global history studies. While one teacher recognized that more contemporary Arab studies were included in American history texts, such as the 1970s oil crisis, it is still not an inclusion of Arab-American history. The responses from question four also coincide with the results of question six and suggest that there is a lack of contemporary Arab-American inclusion.

To question nine, a total of 75 participants responded. The question was “Do you currently teach lessons on Arab-American or Muslim-American studies? Please explain.” The answers demonstrated that 24 respondents, who comprised 32% of the overall population, claimed to teach about Arab and/or Muslim-American studies in their classes. The majority, 51 participants, said that they did not. Responses varied from, “Not currently, not Arab-American or Muslim-American,” to more detailed responses for example, “No. I teach lessons on America’s relationship with the Muslim world, but very little of that focuses on Arab-Americans or Muslim-Americans.” Of those that said yes, answers were mixed. Teachers who did include Arab and/or Muslim-American studies in their classes did so as a part of lessons on discrimination and stereotypes, current events, contributions, culture and traditions, Islam in America, and community and diversity. Several responses included, “I teach a unit on Islam, which included some discussion about Arab-American and Muslim-American. But it mostly focuses on the historical aspect of the region,” “In our discussion of Islamic civilization we talk about stereotypes and current events as well as watch a 30 Days video on Muslims in America,” and “I teach American History so at times, the topic comes up, for example when teaching about 9-11, the Patriot Act, current events that relate to this topic, etc.”

Some of the responses led to concerns about the interpretation of state and national benchmarks and standards. Several comments cited that Arab and/or Muslim-American studies were not included as a part of the curriculum or that teachers lacked the time to include extra topics that were not required by the standards. One teacher commented, “...it's not a part of our curriculum.” Another teacher commented, “...even though I teach American history, this group does not seem to be large enough to warrant extra attention. We don’t cover Swedish Americans, either.” These comments bring to light some of the deeper challenges when it comes

to including Arab and/or Muslim-Americans in the curriculum. Upon closer examination of the curriculum, however, it can be inferred that Arab and/or Muslim-Americans, and Swedish Americans for that matter, are included. The state of Michigan social studies High School Content Expectations, for example, does mention the study of ethnic groups, although not specifically Arab and/or Muslim-Americans. Standards and benchmarks are written openly to allow for their inclusion and they align with the National Geography Standards (Appendix B). It is, therefore, a part of the curriculum to teach diversity and culture. Additionally, culture and teaching about culture comprise one of the ten themes of social studies, as determined by the National Council for the Social Studies (2013). In other words, the inclusion of groups, like Arab-Americans and Muslim-Americans, are a required part of the curriculum.

The information from the survey suggests that teachers struggle to realize not only that Arab and/or Muslim-Americans are already a part of the curriculum, but also the various ways in which they can be incorporated. This is not only evident from the responses in question nine, but also in question ten.

Resources on Arab and Muslim-American Studies (Questions 10 and 7)

One major research question in this study was to determine whether or not teachers faced any challenges when including Arab and Muslim-American studies into the current curriculum and whether or not there was a need for additional resources on teaching Arab and Muslim-American studies. Question ten asked participants to comment on difficulties experienced in incorporating multicultural education on Arab-Americans or Muslim-Americans in lesson plans (e.g., resources, lessons, activities, and/or basic information). Responses were gathered from 68 participants. The largest responses (28%) cited resources (literature, books, and texts) as the most difficult factor in incorporating Arab and/or Muslim-American studies. According to the experiences of one teacher, “Topics, such as history, beliefs, and culture seem readily available. However, resources related directly to Muslim-Americans experiences and challenges in the US would be valuable. It is also challenging to find good young adult literature about Arab-Americans/Muslim-Americans.” The second largest factors cited by participants were time and interpretation of the curriculum and/or standards, each with 15% and 13% respectively. Other factors cited were teachers’ lack of knowledge (6%), student/parent resistance, and a combination of a lack of knowledge and resources (4.5% each), time and resources, and time and curriculum (3% each), followed by resistance and time (1%). Six percent of participants had not tried to incorporate Arab and/or Muslim-American studies into their lessons and 16% claimed to have no difficulty incorporating them at all.

The second largest factors, time and the interpretation of the curriculum/standards, are again of major concern. Teachers comments included “lack of time to teach it – it is not a part of my curriculum and while I would like to insert it, I have too much to cover,” “it’s not in our state standards,” and “there’s no time to teach all the standards, let alone things outside of the standards.” According to one teacher, there is “not enough time, or flexibility given to the teacher to do so...we are in lock step with our teaching requirements.” These comments represent not only the frustrations that teachers face in trying to uphold state standards and benchmarks, but also their difficulties in understanding individual state and national benchmarks. While resources were also listed as a challenge to including Arab and/or Muslim-American studies, the interpretation of state and national benchmarks proves to be just as challenging.

The results from the data in question ten suggest that even with specific resources on Arab and Muslim-Americans it is unlikely that teachers would incorporate such resources with the existing state and national standards. The result is a paradigm where teachers are incorrectly

interpreting the curriculum and standards. Resources alone will not solve this issue. Instead, teachers will need resources that can be blended within their existing lessons that are already aligned with their state and national standards.

The responses in question ten correlated to those in question seven, which allowed teachers to comment specifically about what resources on Arab-American histories and cultures they would prefer to have. The comments were then categorized by hand according to the major commonalities that appeared in the data. Table 6 shows the distribution of responses to question seven where seven main categories emerged. Here, the responses were mixed. Of the 65 responses, the largest response (29%) came from 19 teachers interested in texts (informational, historical, current events, as well as contributions by Arab-Americans). One respondent commented, “I teach Civics, helpful information would include current Arab-Am[erican] politicians and activists, voting patterns, voting power, [and] interest groups.” Another teacher included in their response a request for “sidebars in U.S. history books.”

Within the data were nine requests (14%) for multi-media resources such as videos, movies, DVDs, interactive activities, and websites. An additional seven teachers commented on the need for primary and secondary resources on Arab-American cultures, differences within Arab cultures, and Arab-American perspectives and biographies. “For U.S. history teachers, primary documents that discuss Arab-American contributions similar to those contributions made by [N]ative Americans, African Americans and Asian Americans.” One teacher commented, “1) not all Arabs are alike, I would like to have different narratives from Arabs from all different countries so strong comparisons can be made. 2) info[rmation] on immigration and reasons for the exodus, 3) difficulties with immigration.” Another teacher commented specifically on Islam, stating, “We need more understanding of the overwhelming numbers of moderate Muslims. Muslims who embrace the teachings of peace in the Koran and more information concerning what efforts the Muslim religious community is doing to reach out to and reform the Islamist.” Finally, one teacher responded, “Primary source materials that are accessible for students. Secondary materials that discuss the achievements of Arab civilization in the centuries between the Golden Age and the rise of Arab nationalism. When we discuss the region (which is rare) we are focused on European imperialism, or the Turks.”

Table 6. Resources on Arab-American histories and culture

Question 7		
7. What resources on Arab-American histories and cultures would you like to have?		
Categories Generated from Responses	Response Percent	Response Count
Texts (Informational, historical, current events, contributions)	29%	19
Multimedia (videos, movies, DVDs, activities, websites)	14%	9
Primary and Secondary Resources	11%	7
Curricular Packets/Lessons	6%	4
Combination of Categories	17%	11
Anything	14%	9
Nothing	9%	6

<i>answered question</i>	65
<i>skipped question</i>	36

* Percentages rounded to nearest whole number

The second largest category (17%) of the surveyed population included 11 teachers who requested some combination of the above categories including guest speakers, field trips and graduate courses and workshops. Nine teachers were open to any materials, with one commenting, "Anything! Our textbooks are not very focused on diverse perspectives of history, so teachers have to put together supplemental sources." Seven teachers requested primary and secondary resources and only four teachers requested curriculum packets or lessons. Six teachers commented that no additional resources were needed. One teacher in this category commented, "The internet is enough," while another made specific reference to the curriculum. "The issue is not resources; it is making sure that attention is paid to the issue in curriculum."

The responses to question seven suggest that teachers are not as interested in lessons or curricular guides as in supplemental resources and materials that cover vast topics from history, cultures, biographies, multimedia materials, guest speakers, and interactive activities. A possible justification is that supplemental resources and materials provide teachers with the flexibility to include certain items that fit the needs of their students, lessons, and units. Teachers have the option to include as much or as little as they choose in order to achieve their objectives, whereas lesson plans can be more rigid and difficult to implement without multiple alterations.

After closely examining the state curriculum, it is recognized that Arab and Islamic history were included frequently, and they will play an increasing role in the curriculum in years to come. Islamic history and religion have already been incorporated in the Michigan state curriculum as early as middle school and well into high school (Michigan Social Studies Grade Level Content Expectations, 2012; Michigan Social Studies High School Content Expectations, 2012). Students study basic Islamic beliefs, holidays, and customs. The high school curriculum also includes Middle Eastern and Arab Studies in regards to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Camp David Accords, the Persian Gulf War, Iraq War, the Iranian hostage crisis, 9/11 and Afghanistan.

This would lead many to believe that Arabs and Islam play an influential role in the curriculum, and indeed, they do. It is clear that, in most cases, when students study Arabs, the Middle East, or Muslims, it is usually within a violent context. For example, students will most often study Arabs or Muslims while studying the Crusades, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Iranian Hostage Crisis, 1970s oil embargo, Iran-Iraq War, Operation Desert Storm and 9/11. Students are rarely taught about positive contributions made by the Arab and Muslim community around the world and within the U.S.

The media's portrayal of Arabs and Muslims only intensifies this, which makes it easy to understand why so many students and even adults have difficulty separating violence from Arabs and Muslims. The use of certain curriculum materials, such as the *Kite Runner*, in English classes, again, only reiterates the stereotypes that students already have about Muslims. This perpetrates the image that Arabs and Muslims are angry and violent aggressors who oftentimes direct their anger at the United States and Americans at large. At the same time, teachers can help address these stereotypes, maybe even reverse their effects, thereby altering the resources they utilize within the curriculum in a way that allows for the positive inclusion of multicultural Arab and Muslim-American studies.

Conclusion

The current study addressed biases and stereotypes, positive Arab and Muslim contributions, lessons on Arab and Muslim-Americans, and secondary social studies resources, each of which was concerned with critical multicultural education as a form of social justice education. The first of the four research questions was to determine if teachers observed stereotypes or biases about Arabs, Muslims, and Arab and Muslim-Americans amongst their students and if schools took time to address these biases and stereotypes. It was clear from the data in the study that stereotypes and biases towards Arabs and Muslims continue more than ten years after 9/11. It is also clear that teachers believe these stereotypes develop outside the walls of the classroom and school. Unfortunately, none of the teachers surveyed drew a connection between stereotypes, biases, and the lack of positive Arab, Muslim, and Arab and Muslim-American inclusion in the curriculum.

The inclusion of Arabs, Muslims, and Arab and Muslim-Americans in the curriculum was also a major research question. While it is important to recognize that teachers are including ancient Arab and Muslim contributions, it is equally important to note that contemporary Arab, Muslim, and Arab and Muslim-American achievements continue to go unnoticed in schools.

The third research focus of the study was to determine if Arab and Muslim-American history, culture, and authors were included in textbooks and school curricula. The results from question four of the study indicate that more than half of the teachers (58.9%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that textbooks include Arab-American history, culture and authors. Some teachers agreed that Arab and Muslim-Americans were included in textbooks, however, only in reference to Middle Eastern conflicts, terrorism, or conflicts between the United States and the Middle East, for example the 1970s oil embargo. Similarly, the results from question nine show that most teachers (51%) do not specifically include Arab and Muslim-American studies in their classes and those who do, focus primarily on Middle Eastern conflicts or terrorism.

The fourth major research question focused on resources. Analysis from the data in question seven suggest that teachers are not interested in lesson plans and packets, but instead in supplemental material that can be adapted to meet the needs of their classes and individual students. Question seven did not determine if teachers struggled to collect or incorporate instructional materials about Arab and Muslim-Americans in their lesson plans. Question ten was designed to determine what difficulties teachers experienced incorporating multicultural education on Arab and Muslim-Americans in their lesson plans. It was in the open-responses of question ten that the data began to correlate with that in question seven. In this section, 29% of participants cited resources as the most difficult factor when it came to including Arab and/or Muslim-American studies. When combined with the information in question seven, it suggested that the lack of available resources correlates to the lack of Arab and Muslim-American studies in secondary social studies education.

Social studies teachers must find new ways, not new benchmarks, standards or curricula, to incorporate Arab and Muslim-American studies in a manner that challenges the stereotypes and misconceptions that currently exist. It is not simply the addition of the Arab and Muslim-American narrative to the curriculum; rather it is analyzing the same historical contexts from their position. In other words, teachers will need to look at the curriculum from a critical multicultural standpoint. It is the hope of the researcher to develop and provide such materials to teachers in the future.

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Appendix A. Survey

**Arab and Muslim-American Survey
 University of Michigan – Dearborn**

This survey is part of a doctoral study on multicultural education in high school social studies class. Please be sure that as a participant in this survey you are a secondary public school social studies teacher.

1. In what state do you currently teach?
2. How many years have you been a teacher?
3. How many years have you spent teaching the current subject/course?

Please indicate on the Likert scales the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below.

4. Books and textbooks in your school include Arab-American history, culture and authors.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree
 Comments:

5. Your school takes the time to discuss biases against Arabs and/or Muslims.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree
 Comments:

6. Students at your school discuss positive contributions Arabs and/or Muslims have made in class.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree
 Comments:

7. What resources on Arab-American histories and cultures would you like to have?
8. If you have observed biases against Arab and/or Muslims among your students, how do you think your students' views developed?
9. Do you currently teach lessons on Arab-American or Muslim-American studies? Please explain.
10. What difficulties have you experienced to incorporating multicultural education on Arab-Americans or Muslim-Americans in your lesson plans (e.g., resources, lessons, activities, basic information on Arab-Americans/Muslim-Americans)?
11. Is there any other information that you would like to include?

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix A. Michigan Social Studies High School Content Expectations

The Foundations in U.S. History and Geography Strand: F2 Geographic, Economic, Social, and Demographic Trends in America to 1877, which is meant to serve as a review of material covered in the eighth grade, includes:

- regional economic differences and similarities, including goods produced and the nature of the labor force (National Geography Standard 11, p. 206)
- changes in the size, location, and composition of the population (National Geography Standard 9, p. 201)
- patterns of immigration and migration (National Geography Standard 9, p. 201)
- development of cities (National Geography Standard 12, p. 208) (Michigan Social Studies High School Content Expectations, 2012)

Written as such, the strands allow for the inclusion and study of Arab and/or Muslim-American immigration, their contribution as a part of the labor force and the development of ethnic neighborhoods and cities. These same concepts are echoed in other strands:

- 6.1.1 Factors in the American Industrial Revolution
 - increase in labor through immigration and migration (National Geography Standard 9, p. 201)
- 6.1.2 Labor's Response to Industrial Growth – Evaluate the different responses of labor to industrial change including
- 6.1.3 Urbanization – Analyze the changing urban and rural landscape by examining
 - the location and expansion of major urban centers (National Geography Standard 12, p. 208)
 - the growth of cities linked by industry and trade (National Geography Standard 11, p. 206)
 - the development of cities divided by race, ethnicity, and class (National Geography Standard 10, p. 203)
 - resulting tensions among and within groups (National Geography Standard 13, p. 210)
 - different perspectives about immigrant experiences in the urban setting (National Geography Standards 9 and 12, pp. 201 and 208)
- 6.1.4 Population Changes – Use census data from 1790-1940 to describe changes in the composition, distribution, and density of the American population and analyze their causes, including immigration, the Great Migration, and urbanization. (National Geography Standard 9 and 12, pp. 201 and 208)
- 6.1.5 A Case Study of American Industrialism – Using the automobile industry as a case study, analyze the causes and consequences of this major industrial transformation by explaining
 - domestic and international migrations (National Geography Standard 9, p. 201)
 - the development of an industrial work force
 - the impact on Michigan
 - the impact on American society (Michigan Social Studies High School Content Expectations, 2012)

The inclusion of Arab and/or Muslim-Americans can also be incorporated in other strands:

- 8.1.2 Foreign Policy during the Cold War – Evaluate the origins, setbacks, and successes of the American policy of “containing” the Soviet Union, including
 - the armed struggle with Communism, including the Korean conflict (National Geography Standard 13, p. 210)
 - indirect (or proxy) confrontations within specific world regions (e.g., Chile, Angola, Iran, Guatemala) (National Geography Standards 5 and 13; pp. 192 and 210)
- 8.3.4 Civil Rights Expanded – Evaluate the major accomplishments and setbacks in civil rights and liberties for American minorities over the 20th century including American Indians, Latinos/Latinas, new immigrants, people with disabilities, and gays and lesbians. (National Geography Standard 10, p. 203)
- 9.2.1 U.S. in the Post-Cold War World – Explain the role of the United States as a super-power in the post-Cold War world, including advantages, disadvantages, and new challenges (e.g., military missions in Lebanon, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Gulf War). (National Geography Standard 13, p. 210)
- 9.2.2 9/11 and Responses to Terrorism – Analyze how the attacks on 9/11 and the response to terrorism have altered American domestic and international policies (including e.g., the Office of Homeland Security, Patriot Act, wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, role of the United States in the United Nations, NATO). (National Geography Standard 13, p. 210) (Michigan Social Studies High School Content Expectations, 2012)