



Assalamu 'Alaykum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh,

All thanks and praise is due to Allah the Almighty. We ask Him to send His peace, blessings and mercy upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad, his family, companions, and all those who follow his way till the Day of Judgment.

Over 14 centuries after divine revelation was sent to our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), there continues to be attempts to challenge and slander Islam and Muslims. Allah, *subhanahu wa ta'ala*, says in the Qur`an,

"They want to extinguish God's light with their utterances: but God will not allow this, for He has willed to spread His light in all its fullness, however hateful this may be to all who deny the truth." (9:32)

Today in the West, Muslim students continue to face obstacles as they are at the forefront of the Islamic work. Just as the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions struggled and sacrificed to combat falsehood and to spread the message of Islam, it is truly an honor for Muslim students to also have the opportunity to struggle and sacrifice for Islam.

MSA-West serves to unite and empower the Muslim student organizations on the West coast to fulfill their prophetic duty of conveying the true teachings of Islam. The upcoming event titled "Islamofascism Awareness Week" will take place on college and university campuses on October 22nd in an effort to curb critical thinking and academic freedom, spread racism and hate, and slander Islam and Muslims with lies and deception.

By the will of Allah, the Almighty, the consultation of Muslim students and community leaders, MSA-West has produced the following packet to help Muslim Student Associations (MSA) combat this hateful and racist event on their campus.

The packet contains the following:

- About Islamofascism Week
- Who is Behind Islamofascism Week?
- Answering Tough Questions: Speaking points for Muslim students
- Islamophobia Trainings

MSA-West truly hopes this packet will serve the needs of MSA's to intelligently and successfully confront IFAW. We welcome all comments, feedbacks, and suggestions (msawest@gmail.com) in order to better serve the needs of Muslim students.

Before anything, MSA West asks you to make sincere du`a. It is through the example of our beloved Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, that we learn that even the staunchest enemies of Islam have been brought to their knees by the truth and guidance of Allah, *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. We pray that Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* helps us to enjoin good and forbid the evil, and to guide us to success in teaching truth over falsehood.

We ask Allah, glory is to Him, to grant us the strength, courage, and knowledge needed to expose the falsehood as falsehood and to portray the truth as truth. We ask Him, the Almighty, to help us spread His light in all its fullness however hateful it may be to those who deny the truth.

Wa Salaam 'Alaykum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh,

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About Islamofascism Week

1. What is “fascism”?

Fascism is an authoritarian political ideology that considers individual and other societal interests subordinate to the needs of the state. Fascism was termed by Mussolini and is most associated with him and Hitler and their oppressive regimes. The term has popularly become used to refer to any political entity that is totalitarian, oppressive, or a dictatorship.

2. What is “Islamofascism”?

Islamofascism is a term coined by neo-conservatives. According to neo-conservatives, Islamofascists are Muslims (hence the word “Islam”) who seek to rule the world under a totalitarian, oppressive regime (hence the word “fascists”). Such diverse people and groups like Saddam Hussein (a secularist), Al Qaeda, Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah, and the Islamic Republic of Iran are labeled Islamofascists. There is no basis for linking these groups together aside from the fact that they are all Muslim and opposed by the United States and Israel. To call such groups Islamofascists is to be completely devoid of any political, social, and historical context. Even supporters of the Bush administration criticized President Bush’s use of the term as inaccurate.

According to the proponents of Islamofascism Week, such groups pose a threat to the United States. They link these groups by stating such groups want to dominate the world under an oppressive “caliphate”. This accusation has no basis whatsoever. Each of the groups labeled “Islamofascists” has their own goals. Some of the aforementioned groups are groups established by occupied populations who seek the establishment of human rights in their own country, such as in Palestine. Although Iran is labeled as “Islamofascist,” they hold democratic elections and have more women in their Parliament than the United States has in its Congress.

3. Who is behind Islamofascism Week?

The David Horowitz Center is the main organizer of Islamofascism Week. This is a neo-conservative group bent on stifling any criticism of Israeli policies or US Foreign Policy. The group closely scrutinizes Middle Eastern Studies’ Departments and pressures Universities to deny tenure to professors who are critical of Israel. This week is another attempt to suppress academic freedom at Universities and is supported by a number of ultra-conservative organizations.

4. What are they saying about Islam and women?

The theme of Islamofascism Week is the oppression of women. According to the organizers, Islamofascists are oppressive to women. If Islamofascists are not stopped, women all over the world will become second-class citizens. The practices that Islamofascism Week opposes, includes “honor killings, arranged marriages, and child brides.” All of these practices are against Islam and its teachings. Further, such practices are, unfortunately, practiced by other cultures and societies, some of which are Muslim. However, these practices are not done as taught by the religion of Islam, but because of cultural practices that have been passed down from generation to generation. We are against the oppression of women anywhere in the world, but instead of falsely labeling the root of the problem as religion, the cultural, social, and political contexts need to be addressed.

5. What is the Muslim community's response to Islamofascism Week?

The Muslim Student Association agrees that there are serious challenges in the Muslim world. There are places in the Muslim world where minorities and women are being oppressed. However, these problems cannot be simplified by pointing to religion as the root cause of the problems. The political, social and historical context of these problems and challenges must be addressed. These problems cannot be looked at in a vacuum without addressing colonialism, poverty, illiteracy, nationalism, etc. **To simplify such challenges to religion is not just inaccurate, but it is xenophobic and racist.**

The Muslim Student Association condemns Islamofascism Week as a racist and xenophobic week that at its heart is an attack on our religion, Islam. As Muslim students, we *encourage* academic freedom and debate around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the oppression of women throughout the world, terrorism, and the role of the Muslims in the world. We support those Universities who stand firm in support of their professors and academic freedom against attacks by ultra-conservative groups such as the David Horowitz Center.

We also condemn the hypocrisy of such groups as the David Horowitz Center who pressure Universities to stifle debate about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and yet encourage a one-sided discussion that leaves out any real academic rigor and seeks to blame a religion adhered to by over one billion people as the root of the problems of the world.

We further condemn the fact that the only solution posed by these groups is devastating wars that wreak havoc on the lives of innocent people. **We stand in solidarity against the war in Iraq, and the currently anticipated war on Iran.**

Who is Behind Islamofascism Week?

Islamofascism Awareness Week is the brainchild of David Horowitz, best known as the editor of the extreme right wing websites FrontPageMagazine.com and DiscovertheNetwork.com. So, who is David Horowitz? A former campus radical from the 1960s involved with groups such as the Black Panther Party and other revolutionary organizations, Horowitz became in the late 1970s disillusioned with his radical left-wing orientation and began to drift towards the extreme right.

Since then he has established himself as one of the most strident voices on the American far-right, indulging in extreme racism, warmongering and the promotion of hate and intolerance through a number of institutions and websites. Horowitz' career has been dedicated to one witch hunt after another, targeting African Americans, university professors exercising academic freedom and now Muslims.

Among his books are "The Professors: The 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America" (2006), "Hating Whitey and Other Progressive Causes" (1999), and "The Heterodoxy Handbook: How to Survive the PC Campus" (1994).

In 2001, Horowitz stirred national controversy when he ran nasty advertisements in college newspapers across the country entitled "Ten Reasons Why Reparations for Slavery is a Bad Idea — and Racist Too." The full-page ads ran in several college papers, causing some to issue retractions and apologies, and others to receive protest from outraged students and accusations of racism. Horowitz capitalized on the latter by declaring an "assault on free speech" by left-leaning students.

The David Horowitz Freedom Center is a neo-conservative group bent on stifling any criticism of Israeli policies or US Foreign Policy. The group closely scrutinizes Middle Eastern Studies'

Departments and pressures Universities to deny tenure to professors who are critical of Israel. This week is another attempt to suppress academic freedom at Universities and is supported by a number of ultra-conservative organizations.

The Islamofascism Awareness Week is Horowitz's latest effort to scapegoat and vilify the American Muslim community on campuses across the nation and to spread intolerance and bigotry. This time, his chosen enemy is Muslim Americans.

Horowitz in his own Words:

"Do I think some members of the anti-war movement are in actual formal contact with the radical Islamists and advancing their agendas? Yes I do."

(FrontPageMagazine.com, 8/19/05)

"Free blacks and the free descendants of blacks ...benefited from slavery."

(FrontPageMagazine.com, 1/26/05)

"Guns don't kill black people, other blacks do."

(FrontPageMagazine.com, 8/16/99)

"Now it is virtually impossible for a vocal conservative to be hired for a tenure-track position on a faculty anywhere, or to receive tenure if so hired." (FrontPageMagazine.com, 4/18/03)

"If Rodney King had obeyed the orders clearly given and had laid down in a 'prone position' on the night of his famous encounter with Los Angeles police, 58 people would be alive today, \$16 billion would be circulating in the economy and four dedicated LAPD officers who were working to the book that night would not have been forced to endure two trials (the first had acquitted them) and had their careers destroyed to appease the liberal conscience. But liberals had to make their point." (FrontPageMagazine.com, 9/9/2003)

Hate Speech Publicized by Horowitz on his Websites:

"...an average Moslem who lives up the life recommended by the Quran, behaves like a beast who has forsaken his freedom to exercise his faculty of forming an independent judgement of whom to Love and whom to hate? Like a soulless robot he/she hates all non-Moslems. They have the body of a human being, but their mind no longer has the freedom of forming an independent judgement... Thus while having the body of the Human being, a Moslem who unquestioningly follows the Quran, behaves like a soulless beast who has forsaken his/her capacity of independent thinking." ("Mohammed Atta", 12/11/02)

"Osama bin Laden is a very good Muslim -- a model one, in fact, and one of the most devout in the 1400 years of Islam." (Interview with Paul Sperry, 4/12/05)

"Arabs do nothing on impulse... Muslims have no allegiance to any country. Their only allegiance is to Islam. This is what they have been taught since birth. It is all they know. Muslims have no borders." ("Homegrown Sleeper Cells", 3/7/05)

"The Judeo-Christian basis of our society is superior to Islam as an organizing principle for the moral life of man..." (Serge Trifkovic: "The Moral Problem of Islam Ethics", 12/9/02)

"Islam is cruel, anti-women, anti-religious freedom and anti-personal freedom in general. How could you sympathize with a religion that kills adulterers, homosexuals and people who convert out of Islam? How could you present Islam with such affection? How could you defend a religion that inspired 9/11?"

(Nonie Darwish: "PBS Shame on You", 12/26/02)

"There has been lots of talk in American media about a difference between 'moderate' and fundamentalist Muslims... there is no theological or cultural distinction between the two."

(Michael Anbar: "Where are the Moderate Muslims?" 5/2/03)

"I have written on numerous occasions that there is no distinction in the American Muslim community between peaceful Muslims and jihadists." (Robert Spencer: "2 Men, in New York and Florida, Charged in Qaeda Conspiracy", 5/30/05)

"...Put a complete stop to Muslim immigration, and to find creative ways to deport all Muslim noncitizens. These two measures would be accompanied by the creation of an environment where the practice of Islam is made not easy but difficult." (Hugh Fitzgerald: "Clash of Civilizations? Yes and No", 10/9/05)

(Special thanks to Muslim Public Affairs Council for providing the above facts on 'Who is Behind IFAW?' MSA West added a few additional quotes to the original resource.)

Answering Tough Questions

Below are a few questions that are commonly asked, or are anticipated to be asked during Islamofascism Week. Due to limited space, the answers cannot be thoroughly addressed. We have provided you with some basis for the answers, but we leave it to you to come up with thorough responses to the questions when addressing them. A suggestion we make is to hold trainings on answering tough questions, especially before Islam Awareness Week, for your MSA general body. [Feel free to contact us at msawest@gmail.com if this is an idea your MSA would like to implement.]

1. Why won't the MSA sign the petition?

(ref: <http://terrorismawareness.org/petitions/63/islamo-fascism-petition/>)

We will not sign anything that has Islam and Fascism in the same sentence; the petition has inherent biases; the word *jihad* is being misused; and furthermore, it is not clear who the so-called Islamofascists are.

2. Why are all the terrorist acts committed by Muslims?

Not all terrorist attacks are committed by Muslims. The reason you think that is because when an act of violence is committed by a Muslim, the religion of the individual(s) is mentioned throughout the media. However, if anyone else were to commit an act of violence, their religion is not taken into consideration. (Example: Virginia Tech shootings. The student's religion was not named at all; had he been Muslim, I can guarantee that Islam would have been mentioned). People are purposely trying to make the connection between Islam and terrorism to feed the already existing misconceptions.

3. Doesn't the Quran say "kill them where they find them?"

This is referring to Qur'an Chapter 2, verses 190-193: *"Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for Allah loveth not transgressors. And slay them wherever ye catch them, and turn them out from where they have Turned you out; for tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter; but fight them not at the Sacred Mosque, unless they (first) fight you there; but if they fight you, slay them. Such is the reward of those who suppress faith. But if they cease, Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. And fight them on until there is no more Tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Allah; but if they cease, Let there be no hostility except to those who practise oppression."*

This verse is an example of how some people spread their propaganda by taking verses from the Qur'an out of context. You cannot take one part of a verse, without leaving out everything that was said before it and after it. The above verses clearly lay the limits for fighting in war, and the emphasis is on self defense in the face of oppression. If the opposing side ceases, if they stop fighting you, then you are ordered to stop fighting them.

4. Islam and Women's rights

Islam protects human rights...whether women's or men's...among these: right to keep her own name after marriage...right to keep her own money and not be obliged to spend it on anyone other than herself, right to business and commerce, right to inherit...to name a few...

a. Why are woman treated so horribly in Muslim countries?

This question assumes that there's something inherently about Islam that leads to the mistreatment of women, but nothing about the political and historical issues that are exacting the oppression against Muslim women, men, and children. There are many countries around the world labeled as "Muslim." To the dismay of many Muslims however, the actions taking place in these so-called "Muslim" countries are by all means, not at all Islamic! When Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) brought the message of Islam to the peoples of Arabia more

than 1400 years ago, it revolutionized the society and removed almost every social and political ill present at the time. One of the more drastic changes that occurred was that which took place in respect to the treatment of women. Prior to Islam, women in Arabia and elsewhere were treated as slaves, as property, and as second-class citizens with no rights of their own. Women could not own property, work on their own behalf, and take part in the political aspects of their communities. Men believed that women could not be given these responsibilities because for one, women would not be able to handle it and two, they believed that the outside realm of life should be left to the hands of men. Women should not dabble in what does not concern them. Islam came and changed all this. It showed men how to respect, love and care for women in a way that shook the Arabian society to its core. When these ideas and practices were introduced to other societies, including the one we live in now, it had the same effect on those who understood the true teachings of Islam.

b. Why have Muslims not condoned such oppression of women?

Muslims are actively condoning oppression of women, but many of these voices are not heard in mainstream news...research the latest efforts to change family laws in Morocco and Egypt that worked against women...look at the Iranian lawyer who won a nobel prize, etc. Just because Muslims are not heard, does not mean we are not condoning what is wrong.

c. What is hijab? Why are Muslim women forced to wear hijab?

Hijab literally in Arabic means "barrier" or "covering"...and it serves as a barrier against disrespect, violation of women's rights and privileges, as a protection, etc. Regimes might force women to wear it (Saudi Arabia, Iran) or remove it (Turkey, France), but Islam itself is a religion that believes in human choice.

d. Why do Muslims do "honor killings?"

This is a blanket statement..."honor killings" happen across religious societies for cultural reasons, rather than religious reasons. While Islam may be used as a cover for "honor killings", nowhere does the book of Islam (The Qur'an), or in the tradition of the Prophet (PBUH) are "honor killings" advocated or allowed.

e. Why is female genital circumcision practiced in Islam?

This act is by no means encouraged or even preferred for Muslim women in the teachings of Islam. Permitting such a ritual constitutes an act of tolerance by Islamic law for pre-Islamic practices, and may be overruled by the Islamic prohibition against harmful acts. Consider, for example, that Islamic law protects a woman's right to sexual enjoyment, as demonstrated by the fact that a woman has the right to divorce on the grounds that her husband does not provide sexual satisfaction. It follows that Islamic law prohibits clitorodectomy (partial or complete removal of the clitoris) or infibulation (excision of part or all of the external genitalia and stitching/narrowing of the vaginal opening), or any genital mutilation which impairs the woman's ability to enjoy sexual relations. *If the Islamic law does not mandate female genital mutilation and tolerates only the most mild form of circumcision (and that only if it produces no adverse effects in the child), then how does it come about that so many people from certain countries with large Muslim populations insist that savage acts which exceed these limits are not only permitted, but required by Islamic law?* The answer becomes obvious when one realizes that Christians from many of these countries also insist that the tradition is mandated by their religion as well. **People often confuse traditions rooted in local culture with religious requirements.** There are active efforts in Egypt and Sudan to eradicate these practices.

f. Why does Islam promote forced marriages?

Islam does not force arranged marriages. Cultural practices do. Understand that just because a culture practices something, it does not mean it has any basis in Islam, and just because Islam tells people to do or not do something, it does not mean it is always practiced. The pine tree in

Christmas is not part of Christian doctrine, it is part of a Scandinavian pre-Christian practice that is maintained; not all Christians are forced to buy a pine tree to celebrate Christmas, but it has been integrated and practiced as a given of Christian faith, when in reality it is not. This is a rough parallel...

5. Islam in America

a. Are Muslims in America linked to terrorist organizations?

Muslims in America work to be positive role models and exemplary citizens in their societies. Islam teaches us to be catalysts for positive social change. Therefore, Muslims in America do not condone violence and are not linked to outside terrorist organizations nor do they support them.

Muslims in America have consistently condemned the killings of innocent civilians all over the world. Muslim organizations, like the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), Muslim American Society Freedom Foundation (MAS-FF), Muslim Public Affairs Council and others, have organized advertisement campaigns, petition drives, public service announcements, "Open Mosque Day," interfaith dialogues, and other programs to condemn terrorism and spread the true peaceful teachings of Islam.

CAIR has even compiled a 68 page document showing all the condemnations of terrorism after 9/11. http://www.cair.com/Portals/0/pdf/September_11_statements.pdf

Therefore, claims that Muslims in America are linked to terrorist organizations are groundless and false. Muslims are proactive and positive members in their communities.

b. How do you respond to accusations that MSA is linked to terrorist organizations?

MSA's have been on college and university campuses in the United States since 1963. The MSA is meant to fulfill 3 main objectives:

1. Serve the Muslim students on campus.
2. Teach and spread the correct understanding of Islam and Muslims on campus.
3. Work on social and political issues.

Therefore, the MSA's are here to serve the campus by promoting understanding and tolerance, and getting involved politically and socially. MSA's are not linked to and do not support terrorist organizations. Rather, MSA's are the first to condemn the killings of innocent civilians regardless of who the perpetrators are. MSA's have been a positive force on college and university campuses for over 4 decades and will continue to be this positive force. The extreme right is now trying to discredit the wonderful work MSA's do on their campus by trying to falsely link them to terrorist organizations.

Islamophobia Trainings

Is· lam

- *noun*

1. the religious faith of Muslims, based on the words and religious system founded by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and taught by the Qur'an, the basic principle of which is absolute submission to One God, Allah.
2. the whole body of Muslim believers, their civilization, and the countries in which theirs is the dominant religion.

pho· bi· a

- *noun*

1. A persistent, abnormal, and irrational fear of a specific thing or situation that compels one to avoid it, despite the awareness and reassurance that it is not dangerous.
2. A strong fear, dislike, or aversion.

What happens when you put these two together?

Is· lam· o· pho· bi· a

- *noun*

1. the fear and/or hatred of Islam, Muslims or Islamic culture. Islamophobia can be characterised by the belief that all or most Muslims are religious fanatics, have violent tendencies towards non-Muslims, and reject as directly opposed to Islam such concepts as equality, tolerance, and democracy. It is viewed as a new form of racism whereby Muslims, an ethno-religious group, not a race, are nevertheless constructed as a race. A set of negative assumptions are made of the entire group to the detriment of members of that group. During the 1990's many sociologists and cultural analysts observed a shift in forms of prejudice from ones based on skin color to ones based on notions of cultural superiority and otherness.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamophobia>

Islamophobia is not a recent occurrence. It has been a recurring sentiment, most commonly seen on college and university campuses. MSA-West is offering your MSA Islamophobia trainings. These trainings will provide your MSA and Muslim general body with an understanding of why Islamophobia is spreading, facts on countering the false information that is rapidly spreading Islamophobia, and other such issues. MSA West is working with Muslim civil rights activists and organizations to better serve your MSA.

If you are interested in scheduling an Islamophobia training on your campus, please email us at msawest@gmail.com with:

- Your Name
- Phone number
- School
- 3 dates, in order of preference, that your MSA is interested in hosting the training.