#### Racism, greed, and economic engagement are tightly related in the context of Guantanamo Bay. The USFG’s ownership of the prison started in 1903, from the Cuban-American Treaty that resulted in the USFG being given full jurisdiction and control over the area. Today, the USFG pays money to keep Guantanamo Bay existing as the naval base. The USFG kept has kept the naval base there to help power further into Latin America, for the sole purpose of expanding western hegemony.

Ree, 2012

(Patrick Ree, “Locating in Obscurity: Cuba and Guantánamo Bay,” April 19, 2012, <http://blog.gitmomemory.org/2012/04/19/locating-in-obscurity-cuba-and-guantanamo-bay/>, Accessed: 3/29/14, RH)

Present day Guantánamo Bay is a space that exists in obscurity, both in terms of geography and public imagination. Locating it on a map might involve a simple rendering of the Caribbean islands or, specifically, the southeastern region of Cuba; but to identify the space as a land once colonized by Spain where native Cubans fought for independence, which is currently on lease to the United States, creates a map with more shadowy borders. Why Guantánamo has attracted so many nations involves understanding the broader historical interactions that have made the site so valuable. Exploring the allure of the Cuban landscape illuminates the obscurity surrounding Guantánamo Bay, but also illustrates the multitude of questions that define its contemporary significance.¶ Harvesting Sugarcane in Cuba¶ This photograph captures a Cuban sugarcane harvester at work. The importance of sugar cultivation was one of the many economic benefits that influenced Spanish colonial expansion in the Cuban landscape.¶ The geography of Guantánamo has always involved a contested race for authority, due to its centrality in the Western hemisphere as a gateway for economic opportunity and political authority. On his second voyage in 1494, Christopher Columbus discovered Guantánamo Bay on the southeastern coast of Cuba — a natural harbor with a wide mouth lying low to the ocean and surrounded by a mountain range. From here Columbus encountered Cuba’s natural fecundity: an island that was capable of producing valuable resources such as silver, tobacco, coffee, and sugar. These natural resources (particularly sugar) would ensure Spain’s political dominance over global trade in the Atlantic World, and effectually define the Cuban landscape as an integral economic resource for future colonial enterprises.¶ Beyond the bay, Columbus familiarized himself with the complex network of trade winds that centralized Guantánamo Bay within the larger Caribbean Basin. Between Guantánamo Bay and the northwest end of Hispaniola lies one of the busiest sea-lanes in the Western hemisphere—the Windward Passage. Its winds blow ships from the Atlantic into the Caribbean Basin where travelers have total access to the Antilles Islands, the Gulf of Mexico, Central and South America, and – by the twentieth century – even the Pacific Ocean by way of the Panama Canal. This oceanic system effectively unites the global hemispheres, making it ideal for boundless human movement, colonial expansion, and commercial enterprise. Thus, the ecologically complex, secure, and ripe landscape of Guantánamo Bay was an attractive resource for Spanish colonial expansion in the Caribbean Basin, inciting a familiar history of imperial exploitation of commerce in the modern Atlantic World.¶ North Atlantic Gyre¶ This map illustrates the complex oceanic system of currents that define the North Atlantic Gyre. Focussing on Cuba, it is easy to see how it’s position in the mid-Atlantic has defined its centrality in global, sea-faring commerce.¶ In the late nineteenth century, the United States sought to use Guantánamo Bay as a strategic location to counter the remnants of Spanish colonial rule in the Western Hemisphere. After the outbreak of the Spanish-American War of 1898, U.S. naval forces deployed in the Bay. At the battle of Guantánamo Bay from June 6-10, 1898, U.S. and Cuban troops defeated Spanish forces. The War threw Spain off the seat of world power, and lifted the U.S. to the forefront of global democracy and power. However, the U.S. narrative within Cuba’s independence was also part of a broader imperial program. While encouraging democracy in Cuba, the Cuban-American Treaty of 1903 (coinciding with the Platt Amendment of 1901) transformed Guantánamo Bay into space that produced Cuban sovereignty, but remained under U.S. military jurisdiction. Thus, despite recognizing Cuban independence, U.S. political authority over Guantánamo Naval Base (GTMO) reaffirmed its continued control of a region that had been historically paramount to colonialist strategies, further undermining Cuba’s ability to self-govern.

It is important to mark this event as a shift from the colonial mapping of Guantánamo Bay to the neocolonialist GTMO’s mapping and present day detention camp. This functional change in the region would absorb the consequences of 20th and 21st century foreign affairs, ranging from the 1959 Cuban Revolution, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the detention of Haitian refugees during the 1990s, and recent War on Terror detainees. All things considered, the naval base has incited ongoing consternation over an unrecognized diplomatic basis for continued U.S. presence in Guantánamo Bay since the Cuban-American treaty of 1903. With this exceptional status, the base serves U.S. foreign affairs, but not Cuba’s. Thus, with the establishment of U.S. political authority in GTMO, the acknowledgement of Cuba as an independent sovereign state has always remained in question.

Today, the base remains an entangled balancing act of political and national control. But with the recent international focus on 21st century detentions, new obscurities arise from questions over human rights violations and democracy. Does Guantánamo Bay’s exceptional legal status justify the use of the naval base as a detention camp? How many times has the base been “closed,” and what does closure ultimately mean for those who viewed the naval base as important versus those who have been “freed?” These are among the many questions that expose the need for a closer interpretation of the allure of the Cuban landscape, and what makes U.S. control over Guantánamo Bay still vital today. With the changing contexts of Guantánamo’s centrality in world focus, it is important to view the Cuban landscape as a continued narrative of imperial expansion that is evolving with new meanings of global political economy.

#### US officials at Guantanamo Bay are operating under the guise of protecting America in order to justify government funded tortures, killings and sexual harassment.

Danios, 2012

(Danios, “On the Outlandish Claim That ‘There is No Islamophobia,’”

<http://www.loonwatch.com/2012/01/on-the-outlandish-claim-that-there-is-no-islamophobia/>, January 23, 2012, Accessed: 3/20/14, RH)

It is Muslims, not people of any other religious faith, that were (and continue to be) detained by the hundreds–without trial or charge–and holed away in the hell-hole known as Guantanamo Bay detention camp. This, even though it was known by the government that “the vast majority of detainees at Guantanamo were innocent.” Most Americans fail to realize the gravity of this injustice, and continue to believe–like mindless sheep–that the Gitmo prisoners are “the worst of the worst” and are evil Magneto-style villains. People of the future will be horrified that any sane person would think that this is necessary:¶ 1¶ 2¶ Who but the sickest and most deranged person could think this is OK?¶ Can you imagine the outcry had it been a Jewish person who had been imprisoned like so by our government? Even the idea is considered ludicrous.¶ Gitmo is just the tip of the iceberg. Thousands of Muslims have been imprisoned in Bagram (“the Other Guantanamo”) and there are probably tens of thousands Muslims that have been detained by the United States, without trial or charge, around the world. They are subjected to typical American forms of torture: solitary confinement (considered by human rights experts to be one of the worst forms of torture) and sexual harassment (including sodomy, rape, and having their testicles electrocuted). Mentally deranged guards routinely used dogs to torture the inmates.¶ 3¶ Yes, it is Muslims who are the victims of these horrific crimes.¶ These abuses are carried out because the institution that is supposed to protect American citizens (including American Muslims)–the U.S. Armed Forces–has instead been, in the words of the hawkish Jeffrey Goldberg, ”waging a three-decade war for domination of the Middle East.” Quite predictably, the U.S. Armed Forces as an institution is rife with Islamophobia.¶ It is Muslim civilians who are being incinerated by our bombs, missiles, and drones. Over the course of the last two decades, the United States has directly or indirectly caused the deaths of over a million Muslims. America is dropping bombs on multiple Muslim countries (the list just keeps getting longer and longer); Americans feel comfortable dropping bombs on countries they can’t even locate on a map. These are Islamophobic wars that kill way more people than hate crimes do.¶ It is Muslims, not Jews or people of any other religion, who are the victims of civil liberty assaults and Endless War. Glenn Greenwald writes:¶ [W]ho are the prime victims of America’s posture of Endless War? Overwhelmingly, the victims are racial, ethnic and religious minorities: specifically, Muslims (both American Muslims and foreign nationals). And that is a major factor in why these abuses flourish: because those who dominate American political debates perceive, more or less accurately, that they are not directly endangered (at least for now) by this assault on core freedoms and Endless War…¶ To see how central a role this sort of selfish provincialism plays in shaping political priorities, just compare (a) the general indifference to Endless War and the massive civil liberties assaults… (ones largely confined to Muslims) to (b) the intense outrage and media orgy generated when a much milder form of invasiveness — TSA searches — affected Americans of all backgrounds. The success of Endless War and civil liberties attacks depends on ensuring that the prime victims, at least in the first instance, are marginalized and easily demonizable minorities.¶ It is Muslims who are the victims of such governmental abuses:¶ Assassination of U.S. citizens; Indefinite detention; Arbitrary justice; Warrantless searches; Secret evidence; War crimes; Secret court; Immunity from judicial review; Continual monitoring of citizens; and Extraordinary renditions.¶ It is absolutely crass to argue that there is more anti-Semitism in America than Islamophobia. There would be nothing less acceptable in our country than anti-Jewish Congressional hearings. One could simply not imagine imprisoning hundreds of Jews–without trial or charge–in Guantanamo Bay. If the United States caused the death of over a million Jews, people would be calling this the next Holocaust. Such things are simply unthinkable, except when Muslims are the intended victims.

#### The role of the ballot is to vote for the team that best challenges structural violence within state sanctioned institutions.

#### The 9/11 attacks have been used craft a foreign policy of Islamic hate and torture with the threat of terror used to justify them. This positionality creates a binary which justifies these forms of structural violence. This event also lead to the hostility against Muslims which has transformed into racism.

Koenigsknecht, 2012

(Theresa Koenigsknecht, Public History MA Candidate at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, “Perspectives on Post 9/11 Prejudices: Islamophobia,” October 04, 2012, <http://blog.gitmomemory.org/2012/10/04/perspectives-on-post-911-prejudices-islamophobia/>, Accessed: 3/19/14, RH)

A detainee holds prayer beads. The majority of prisoners held at Guantánamo following 9/11 have been Muslims.¶ Have the September 11th terrorist attacks changed how you view or treat others? For many, unfortunately, the answer is probably “yes.” The events of 9/11, the United States government’s response to them, and an increasing public misunderstanding of Islam have created a culture of collective suspicion and prejudice towards Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslim). This “unfounded fear of and hostility towards Islam” is popularly known as “Islamophobia.” Whether this attitude occurs intentionally or subconsciously, this mindset has resulted in intensifying stereotypes, hate crimes, discrimination and often condones the violation of civil rights of Muslim-Americans.¶ The Muslim community’s response to the 9/11 attacks, both initially and today, remains remarkably patriotic and supports cooperation with government authorities. Yet immediately following 9/11, Muslim-Americans, as well as those perceived to be Muslims, often endured increased suspicion from other Americans and even experienced physical violence, supposedly in retaliation for the attacks. Over a decade later, Muslims are still subjected to hate crimes, workplace discrimination, unreasonable arrest and detention, passenger profiling, verbal (especially through hate mail and internet outlets) and physical harassment and abuse. Although racism and anti-Semitism are considered socially unacceptable, ethnic profiling against Muslim-Americans is often encouraged and accepted by government authorities and popular media.¶ Fortunately, some people are actively working to counter the rise of Islamophobia and many communities have come together showing solidarity and interfaith cooperation with their Muslim neighbors. Anyone can take steps to defeat Islamophobia by encouraging empathy for others and participating in activities that promote discussion between people of different faiths and ethnicities. More information on countering Islamophobia can be found on The Muslim Public Affairs Council website which provides helpful resources, links and workshops. It is efforts such as these that can help create an atmosphere of trust and dialogue, as opposed to fear and misunderstanding.¶ So what does Islamophobia have to do with Guantánamo? Muslims constitute almost all of those detained there since 9/11. For that reason, although Guantánamo may not figure largely in the minds of some Americans, Islamophobia strongly influences Western culture and plays a large part in what Americans do understand about Guantánamo and its detainees. To many American’s the prevalent misconception that Islam is equivalent with terrorism unfortunately justifies the violation of Muslim’s civil liberties in the United States as well as violations of detainees’ human rights at Guantánamo. Yet, the American Civil Liberties Union’s “A Call to Courage” report states that,¶ “by allowing and in some cases actively encouraging the fear of terrorism to divide Americans by religion, race, and belief, our political leaders are fracturing this nation’s greatest strength: its ability to integrate diverse strands into a unified whole on the basis of shared, pluralistic, democratic values.”¶ Remembering each person’s right to civil liberties and advocating for greater awareness and knowledge can persuade people to reconsider how they view or treat those around them and in time provide an antidote for Islamophobia.

#### Mohammed Mattan is one of many innocent people trapped in Guantanamo bay.

(Lauren Carasik, Clinical Professor of Law and the Director of the International Human Rights Clinic, Legal Services Clinic at Western New England University School of Law, “The Tragic tale of Guantanamo Detainee #684,” June 20, 2013, <http://www.islamophobiatoday.com/2013/06/20/the-tragic-tale-of-guantanamo-detainee-684/>, Accessed: 3/19/14, RH)

Yet Mohammed Abdullah Taha Mattan has been caught up in a vortex of politics beyond his control. June 19 marks the somber 11th anniversary of Mattan’s detention in the inhumane confines of Guantanamo Bay. (Full disclosure: with three other attorneys, I am co-counsel for Mattan.)¶ ¶ Despite his towering height, Mattan has always exuded a preternatural tranquility. Inexplicably, his gentle and dignified spirit has somehow survived the years of brutal physical and emotional torture, isolation, humiliation and despair. The extreme misfortune of having been in the wrong place, at the wrong time, in the pursuit of a peaceful and erudite life has cost Mattan more than 11 years of his life.¶ ¶ He has missed the milestones we all take for granted, from the marriage of his siblings to the birth of nephews and nieces. Lost to Mattan are the joys and tribulations of everyday life, from the sublime to the mundane.¶ ¶ Each day for the last 11 years, Mattan has awakened in a tiny, stark cell, alone, wishing desperately that somewhere in the unfortunate circumstances that led to his wrongful detention, some fortuitous chain of events had intervened and spared him and his family this harrowing tale.¶ ¶ From Palestine to Pakistan¶ ¶ Mattan was born in the village of Burqa, a small enclave in the West Bank, on January 12, 1979, the second of 15 children. By nature a dutiful and intellectually curious child, Mattan passed his time reading, studying and assisting his parents with raising his 13 younger sisters and brothers.¶ ¶ Concerned about the prospects facing their children, Mattan’s parents stressed that education was the key to escaping the grinding poverty and turmoil that made educational advancement and economic security unattainable dreams. As a devout Muslim, Mattan embraced the peaceful principles of the religion and renounced violence.¶ ¶ Inspired by his faith, Mattan joined Tablighi Jamaat, an Islamic missionary movement whose members are committed to community service by spreading their faith in a peaceful and apolitical way. Focused on spirituality, Tablighis neither support nor participate in armed struggle against Israel or any other government or group.¶ ¶ Through his dedication to his family, his spirituality and his studies, Mattan evaded the trouble that plagued many of the discontent young men who faced a bleak future in the West Bank. Despite his aspirations to continue his education after he graduated from high school in 1997, the region’s political strife made it impossible. With few other opportunities available to him, Mattan took work in construction, hoping to provide some meagre economic support to his struggling family.¶ ¶ When the second intifada erupted in 2000, Mattan was a 21-year-old young ~~man~~ with a dismal future in the West Bank. He made the hard decision to leave his beloved family to escape the violence and poverty that had engulfed his homeland. Encouraged by his fellow Tablighis, Mattan planned to study, pray and fulfill the mission required by his faith.¶ ¶ On September 28, 2001, Mattan started the fateful journey that he never could have imagined would descend into the nightmare in which he currently resides. Travelling to Pakistan, Mattan began missionary work at the Tablighi centre in Raiwind where he remained for four months, passing his time studying and praying. During this time, Mattan met several men who told him that despite the conflict in the region, they knew of places that enjoyed relative calm.¶ ¶ Mattan travelled west towards Afghanistan, hoping to settle into a life away from the violence that seemed to have followed him from the West Bank. Though delayed in his desire to immerse himself in the intellectual pursuits that captured his heart, he continued to pray and fulfill his spiritual mission removed from the violence he abhorred.¶ ¶ In Quetta, Pakistan, Mattan visited a mosque, where he met a ~~man~~ who advised him against travelling to Afghanistan because of escalating violence in the region, and warned him that his profile would lead authorities to suspect him of involvement in the fighting there. Concerned by this news, Mattan decided to return to Raiwind.¶ ¶ En route, with his financial resources depleted, Mattan encountered a ~~man~~ who told him of other aspiring Arab students residing in a guesthouse in nearby Faisalabad who might be able to advise him about how he could pursue his studies. Mattan headed to the guesthouse feeling a renewed sense of hope about his educational prospects, when the winds of fate struck him a terrible blow.¶ ¶ Shortly after his arrival, on March 28, 2002, Pakistani security services conducted a security sweep of the guesthouse. Though he was not the target of the raid, Mattan’s mere presence in the guesthouse rendered him a suspect and he was detained. The Pakistani authorities transferred Mattan to the custody of the US, who held him at Bagram Airbase in Afghanistan, and then transported him to Guantanamo, where he has been wrongfully detained ever since.¶ ¶ The US government has no evidence that Mattan has ever participated in subversive activity, nor that he was ever affiliated with any member of al-Qaeda, the Taliban, or any other terrorist organisation. The US possesses no evidence because there is none: Mattan has never condoned violence and maintains no connection with known or suspected terrorists.¶ ¶ The travesty of Guantanamo is that some of the men were rounded up not because of reasonable suspicions, but instead because areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan were blanketed with leaflets offering a bounty for “suspected terrorists”, sparking a frenzy of lucrative but wrongful accusations.

#### We will now present the poem by Jumah al-Dossari, a person who knows this pain all too well.

(This poem is taken from the article “poems from Guantanamo Bay.” The author of the article is John Lundberg. The author of the poem is Jumah al-Dossari. He was a \_\_\_\_. This article was posted on 3/16/2008. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-lundberg/poems-from-guantanamo-bay\_b\_91575.html Accessed: 3/23/14, RH)

Take my blood.

Take my death shroud and

The remnants of my body.

Take photographs of my corpse at the grave, lonely.

Send them to the world,

To the judges and

To the people of conscience,

Send them to the principled men and the fair-minded.

And let them bear the guilty burden before the world,

Of this innocent soul.

Let them bear the burden before their children and before history,

Of this wasted, sinless soul,

Of this soul which has suffered at the hands of the "protectors of peace."

#### The USA Pentagon and government have CENSORED what people learn and hear about Guantanamo Bay. Multiple stories and poems have been UNRELEASED by the government. The only way these people can express themselves is through poetry – they used it to maintain sanity and preserve humanity. Their stories are always already commodified through the view of the Western, dominant point of view.

Falkoff, 2007

(Mark Falkoff, assistant Professor at the Northern Illinois University College of Law, attorney for 17 Guantanamo prisoners, this article was published by the University of Iowa Press, “Poems from Guantanamo,” Fall 2007, <http://www.amnestyusa.org/news/news-item/poems-from-guantanamo>, Accessed: 3/23/14, RH)

Many men at Guantánamo turned to writing poetry as a way to maintain their sanity, to memorialize their suffering and to preserve their humanity through acts of creation. The obstacles the prisoners have faced in composing their poems are profound. In the first year of their detention, they were not allowed regular use of pen and paper. Undeterred, some drafted short poems on Styrofoam cups retrieved from lunch and dinner trays. Lacking writing instruments, they inscribed their words with pebbles or traced out letters with small dabs of toothpaste, then passed the "cup poems" from cell to cell. The cups were inevitably collected with the day’s trash, the verses consigned to the bottom of a rubbish bin.

After about a year, the military granted the prisoners access to regular writing materials, and for the first time poems could be preserved. The first I saw was sent to me by Abdulsalam Ali Abdulrahman Al-Hela, a Yemeni ~~businessman~~ from Sana’a, who had written his verses in Arabic after extended periods in an isolation cell. The poem is a cry against the injustice of arbitrary detention and at the same time a hymn to the comforts of religious faith. Soon after reading it, I learned of a poem by Latif called "The Shout of Death." (Both of these poems remain classified.) After querying other lawyers, I realized that Guantánamo was filled with amateur poets.

Latif

Military officials at Guantánamo destroyed or confiscated many of the prisoners' poems before the authors could share them with their lawyers. In addition, the Pentagon refuses to allow most of the existing poems to be made public, asserting that poetry "presents a special risk" to national security due to its "content and format." The risk appears to be that the prisoners will try to smuggle coded messages out of the prison camp.

Still, the earliest of the poems we submitted for classification review were deemed unclassified, and it was only after the Pentagon learned that we were putting together a book of the poems that the hand of censorship came down. Hundreds of poems therefore remain suppressed by the military and will likely never be seen by the public. In addition, most of the poems that have been cleared are in English translation only, because the Pentagon believes that their original Arabic or Pashto versions represent an enhanced security risk. Because only linguists with secret-level security clearances are allowed to read our clients' communications (which are kept by court order in a secure facility in the Washington, D.C., area), it was impossible to invite experts to translate the poems for us. The translations included in the collection, therefore, cannot do justice to the subtlety and cadence of the originals.

Despite these and many other hurdles, 22 poems have now been published, and the voices of the prisoners in Guantánamo may now be heard. As the courts move sluggishly toward granting the prisoners fair and open hearings, and as politicians bicker about whether to extend the protections of the Geneva Conventions to the detainees, the prisoners' own words may now become part of the dialogue. Perhaps their poems will prick the conscience of a nation. ai

Marc Falkoff is an assistant professor at the Northern Illinois University College of Law and attorney for 17 Guantánamo prisoners. Poems reprinted by permission from Poems from Guantánamo, published by University of Iowa press.

#### Our knowledge production is key to solve systemic Islamophobia and a pre-requisite to political action that fights Islamophobia

Zine, 2004

(Jasmin Zine, associate professor of Sociology at Wilfred Laurier University, lecturer at Ontario Institute for Education Studies at the University of Toronto, B.A. at the University of Toronto, Ph.D. from Ontoario Institute for Studies in Education, she is a researcher studying Muslims in the Canadian diaspora, “Anti-Islamophobia Education as Transformative Pedadogy: Reflections from the Educational Front Lines,” American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, Accessed: 3/28/14, RH)

As an anti-racism scholar and educator, fellow colleagues and I realized from as early as September 12 that there was an urgency to frame a crit- ical pedagogical response to address and challenge the rampant Islamophobia affecting the realities of Muslims from all walks of life and social conditions. Among the most vulnerable were children and youth, who received little support from schools in dealing with the backlash that many were experiencing on a routine basis. Most schools were reluctant to engage in any response beyond the politically neutral arena of “crisis management.” Among the school districts that I was in contact with, there was a clear resistance to addressing or even naming issues of racism and Islamophobia. In fact, the discursive language to name and define the experiences that Muslims were encountering on a day-to-day basis did not even exist within the educational discourse. While schools were reluctant to name specific incidents as racism – part of an all-too-common denial – the notion of “Islamophobia” did not have any currency at all. In fact, it was not a part of the language or conceptual constructs commonly used by educators, even by those committed to multicultural and anti- racist pedagogy.¶ ￼I realized the urgency to map a new epistemological and pedagogical terrain by creating an educational framework for addressing Islamophobia. Within the existing equity-based educational frameworks, one could find the conceptual and pedagogical tools to address issues of racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, and anti-Semitism. However, the discursive foundations for dealing with Islamophobia and the accompanying educa- tional resources simply did not exist.¶ Developing a new framework to fill this gap involved coining a new term: “Anti-Islamophobia Education.” Being able to name and define the experience of Muslims as the result of Islamophobia was critical to shaping the kind of interventions that would take place from a critical educational standpoint. Before outlining a methodology for conducting anti-Islam- ophobia education, it was necessary to develop some discursive founda- tions, arrive at a definition of Islamophobia, and create an understanding of what it was that we sought to challenge and resist.¶ From a socio-psychological standpoint, the notion of Islamophobia is often loosely translated as an “attitude of fear, mistrust, or hatred of Islam and its adherents.” However, this definition presents a narrow conceptual framework and does not take into account the social, structural, and ideo- logical dimensions through which forms of oppression are operationalized and enacted. Applying a more holistic analysis, far from being based on mere “ignorance,” Islamophobic attitudes are, in fact, part of a rational sys- tem of power and domination that manifests as individual, ideological, and systemic forms of discrimination and oppression. The idea that discrimina- tion, be it based on race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, or religion, simply stems from “ignorance” allows those engaged in oppressive acts and poli- cies to claim a space of innocence. By labeling Islamophobia as an essen- tially “irrational” fear, this conception denies the logic and rationality of social dominance and oppression, which operates on multiple social, ideo- logical, and systemic levels.¶ Therefore, to capture the complex dimensions through which Islamo- phobia operates, it is necessary to extend the definition from its limited con- ception as a “fear and hatred of Islam and Muslims” and acknowledge that these attitudes are intrinsically linked to individual, ideological, and sys- temic forms of oppression that support the logic and rationale of specific power relations. For example, individual acts of oppression include such practices as name-calling or personal assault, while systemic forms of oppression refer to the structural conditions of inequality regulated through such institutional practices as racial profiling or denying jobs or housing¶ ￼¶ opportunities. These exclusionary practices are shored up by specific ideo- logical underpinnings, among them the purveyed notions designed to pathologize Muslims as “terrorists” and impending threats to public safety. Understanding the dimensions of how systems of oppression such as Islamophobia operate socially, ideologically, and systemically became a key component of developing educational tools that would help build the critical skills needed to analyze and challenge these dynamics.¶ From a discursive standpoint, I locate anti-Islamophobia education within a integrative anti-racism framework5 that views systems of oppres- sion based on race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and religion as part of a multiple and interlocking nexus that reinforce and sustain one another. Based on this understanding, I have mapped some key epistemological foundations for anti-Islamophobia education.6 This includes the need to “reclaim the stage” through which Islam is represented from the specter of terrorists and suicide bombers to a platform of peace and social justice. “Reclaiming the stage” requires adopting a pedagogical approach that shifts the popular media discourse away from the negative, essentialized referents and tropes of abject “Otherness” ascribed to Muslims. This move involves presenting a critical counter-narrative in order to reframe the Manichean worldview and “clash of civilizations” narratives typically being purveyed in order to present a more nuanced, reasoned, and critical perspective of the global sociopolitical realities that Muslim individuals and societies are confronting, engaging, and challenging.

Another foundational aspect of anti-Islamophobia education involves interrogating the systemic mechanisms through which Islamophobia is reinforced, by analytically unraveling the dynamics of power in society that sustain social inequality. Racial profiling, which targets groups on the basis of their race, ethnicity, faith, or other aspects of social difference, and sim- ilar issues are major systemic barriers that criminalize and pathologize entire communities.¶ In schools, the practice of “color-coded streaming,” whereby a dispro- portionate number of racially and ethnically marginalized youth are chan- neled into lower non-academic level streams, is another example of institu- tionalized racism. Negative perceptions held by teachers and guidance counselors toward racialized students have often led to assumptions of fail- ure or limited chances for success, based on such false stereotypes as the notion that “Islam doesn’t value education for girls” or “Black students won’t succeed.” These negative attitudes are relayed to students through the “hidden curriculum” of schooling and lead to lower expectations being¶ ￼￼¶ placed upon youth from specific communities.7 Developing critical peda- gogical tools to analyze and develop challenges to these systems of domi- nation is part of building a transformative and liberatory pedagogy, one geared toward achieving greater social justice in both schools and society.¶ Another key goal of anti-Islamophobia education involves the need to demystify stereotypes. Since 9/11, renewed Orientalist constructions of dif- ference have permeated the representation of Muslims in media and popu- lar culture. Images of fanatical terrorists and burqa-clad women are seen as the primary markers of the Muslim world. Deconstructing and demystify- ing these stereotypes is vital to helping students develop a critical literacy of the politics of media and image-making. Critically examining the destructive impact of how these images create the social and ideological divide between “us” and “them” is important to exposing how power oper- ates through the politics of representation.