




9-2021

Module 8: Islamophobia and the Oval Office (2008)

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Module 8: Islamophobia and the Oval Office (2008)

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Teaching Beyond September 11th

Note to Educators:

The Teaching Beyond September 11th curriculum project seeks to capture the events of the two decades (2001-2021) following 9/11 as a means for youth to understand the post-9/11 global order. Developed by a team of educators from the University of Pennsylvania in collaboration with inter-/national scholars, practitioners, and community activist leaders, each stand-alone module is grounded in at least one of six identified themes and is anchored in an event in a particular year following 9/11. The curriculum does not need to be taught sequentially. Further, lessons within a module may be taught sequentially or individually unless specified.

The curriculum is geared towards advanced high school and early college students. Educators are encouraged to adapt lessons to meet the needs of their classroom and student academic level. The curriculum framework at the end of this document highlights the guiding questions and enduring understandings that we wish for students to glean from these lessons.

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Module 8: Islamophobia and the Oval Office

Primary Theme: Democracy & Rights

Secondary Theme: US Domestic Policy

Years in focus: **2008, 2017, 2021**

Grades: 11 and 12

Entry points (subject area): US Government, US History, US Politics, Art (Lesson 1)

Module Context

2008 was the year that Barack Obama was elected as the 44th president of the United States and as the country's first Black president. His path to the US presidency (against the late Senator John McCain) was surrounded by false accusations regarding his religion, birthplace, and even his citizenship. Known as the "birther movement", these conspiracy theories were largely pushed by conservatives and Republicans, as well as those with anti-black sentiments. A prominent contributor to these false accusations was Donald J. Trump, who claimed that Obama was ineligible to become president as he was not a natural born US citizen (this is false; Obama was born in Hawaii and his mother was American).

Obama's presidency was preceded by 8 years of the Bush administration during which the US entered two wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Bush was also responsible for the opening of the controversial Guantanamo Bay prison. These wars and Guantanamo Bay were all part of the "War on Terror" that began soon after 9/11 and continued throughout Bush and Obama's administrations and beyond. While the Iraq war formally ended in 2011, US troops reentered Iraq in 2013 (though in much smaller numbers).

In a surprise win in 2016, Donald J. Trump became the 46th president of the United States. He was a one term president who reveled in racist, anti-immigrant, and Islamophobic rhetoric. He lost to president Joe Biden in the 2020 elections, which he claims were rigged.

Module Goal

Students will be able to use their independent learning to analyze how the intersection of racism and Islamophobia has played a role in US presidential politics, with a specific focus on the 2008 and 2016 elections.

Module Overview

This module asks students to analyze the role of the executive branch in perpetuating racism and Islamophobia. To this end, students will analyze two aspects of executive power: presidential campaigns, and Executive Orders. Specifically, students will understand and reflect on the role of Islamophobia in the election of Barack Obama in 2008, and the ways in which both Obama and Donald Trump used Executive Orders to combat or perpetuate Islamophobia during their respective presidencies.

Lesson 1 - The Election of Barack Obama:

Students will evaluate the role of racism and Islamophobia in the 2008 presidential election, focusing on the Birther Movement and the ways in which these false accusations cast a shadow over Obama's bid

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for presidency and continued during his 8 years as president, paving the way for the election of Donald J. Trump in 2016.

Lesson 2 - The Limits and Power of the Executive Order:

In this lesson, students will learn about the possibilities and limitations of Executive Orders in influencing (and being influenced by) policy, practice, and perceptions around Islamophobia, xenophobia, and racism. Specifically, they will evaluate Obama's failure to close Guantanamo Bay, despite his use of the Executive Order and contrast that with Trump's success in passing the Muslim and African ban. Students will understand that Islamophobia played a central role in the outcomes of these two presidential executive orders.

Curriculum Connections

Module 4 – Civil Liberties After 9/11

Module 7 – Understanding Islamophobia

Module 17 – The Muslim and African Ban

Lesson 1. The Election of Barack Obama

Overview, Background Resources and Materials Needed

In this lesson, students will evaluate the role of racism and Islamophobia in the 2008 presidential election, focusing on the Birther Movement and the ways in which these false accusations cast a shadow over Obama's bid for presidency and continued during his 8 years as president, paving the way for the election of Donald J. Trump in 2016.

Recommended Background reading for educators before Lesson 1

It would be beneficial for educators to review the following article. This article may also be used as a supplementary reading list for students in higher level courses:

1. NPR article that provides background to the New York cartoon that students will be critiquing. **"I'm Just Trying To Make Myself Laugh': 'New Yorker' Artist Shares His Cover Stories"**.
<https://www.npr.org/2017/10/20/558777025/im-just-trying-to-make-myself-laugh-new-yorker-artist-shares-his-cover-stories>

Key Terms in Lesson 1

- **Racialization:** a process in which racial identities and behaviors are assigned to a group.
- **Racism:** the belief that different races possess distinct characteristics, abilities, or qualities, especially so as to distinguish them as inferior or superior to one another. As a system, racism includes prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism by an individual, community, or institution against a person or people on the basis of their membership of a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized.
- **Satire:** A way to make fun or ridicule through an exaggerated form of expression, either literary or graphic. Often used in the context of contemporary politics, satire can also be a form of discrimination or a microaggression against a group of people.
- **Structural racism:** laws, rules, or official policies in a society that result in and support a continued unfair advantage to some people and unfair or harmful treatment of others based on race.

Materials Needed for Lesson 1

1. Module 8, Lesson 1 Handout: **Cover Analysis graphic organizers** (one per student)
2. Blitt's 2008 *New Yorker* cover, "Fistbump: The Politics of Fear" Available at: <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2008/07/21> (to be projected on screen or printed and passed around class)
3. Post its or paper + tape (enough for all students)
4. Drawing materials (paper, markers, colored pencils, crayons or just pencils) (enough for all students)

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5. Reading packet for students to be assigned before class:
 - a. **The Birth of the Obama “Birther” Conspiracy by Anthony Zurcher**
<https://www.bbc.com/news/election-us-2016-37391652>
 - b. **Obama Says Race is Not an Issue in the US Election by David Wiessler**
<https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSN27407972>

Lesson 1. The Election of Barack Obama

Learning Plan

Pre-class Homework (for Students)

Assign the following article to students to read before class:

1. **The Birth of the Obama “Birther” Conspiracy by Anthony Zurcher**
(<https://www.bbc.com/news/election-us-2016-37391652>)
2. **Obama Says Race is Not an Issue in the US Election by David Wiessler**
(<https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSN27407972>)

Pre-class Preparation (for Educators)

Post the following two questions on either side of the room in preparation for an in-class activity and provide post-its or slips of paper and tape for each student:

- How did race influence the election?
- How did Islamophobia (anti-Muslim racism) influence the election?

Opening – 10 minutes

Open the lesson by explaining you will be discussing the 2008 presidential election. Explain to students that you will be specifically discussing Barack Obama’s election and the ways in which racism played a role in how he was perceived as a candidate.

Ask students for their understanding of the birther controversy. Why was this an issue for Obama’s campaign? Remind them that Obama was the first Black Democratic nominee for President and that he has a Muslim middle name but that he is not Muslim (his grandfather had converted to Islam but his father converted back to Christianity).

Connect to pre-assigned readings: Direct students to the two questions posted on different sides of the room and provide students with post-its (or pieces of paper and tape). Instruct students to write their response on post-its in response to each question:

1. How did race influence the election?

Possible student responses include:

- the discourse about Jeremiah Wright (Obama’s former pastor) forced Obama to talk about race
- there were questions from the Democratic Party about whether Obama would lose votes because of his race;
- some believe that Trump was elected as a backlash against having a Black president.

2. How did Islamophobia (anti-Muslim racism) influence the election?

Possible student responses include:

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- the birther controversy started because of accusations that Obama’s middle name “Hussein” meant he was Muslim, which was equated with not being American;
- beliefs that Obama was a “secret Muslim” and the son of a Kenyan national and hence was not a natural born citizen (be sure to clarify that he was born in Hawaii and his mother was American)
- the last president was George W. Bush, who started wars in the Middle East that many Americans voted against;
- the climate of fear about Islamophobia that flourished after 9/11 made some candidates feel like they had to be tough on terrorists, which resulted in Islamophobic policy stances which they took during debates, speeches, and other campaign events.

Instruct students to look at both lists. Which of the items are examples of both racism and Islamophobia? How, if at all, do the lists overlap?

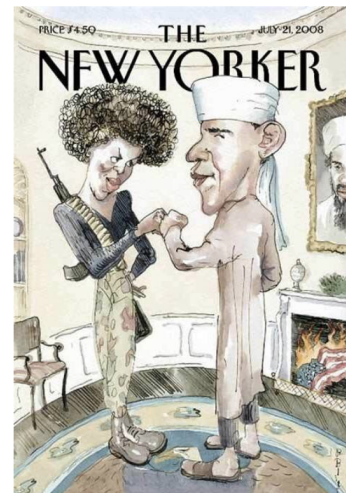
Key Concepts Overview – 15 minutes

Show students the New Yorker [cover](#) by projecting it in front of the classroom or, if technology is not available, providing it as a handout.

Explain to students that this cover was printed during the 2008 presidential campaign. According to David Remnick, the editor of the New Yorker, **it was supposed to critique the racism and Islamophobia levelled against the Obama family during the campaign.** In other words, it was supposed to critique exactly the issues that the class just compiled into a list.

Explain to the class that, despite the fact that the cover was supposed to be satire, the Obama campaign denounced it for reinforcing exactly the incidents it was trying to critique.

Hand out the **cover analysis graphic organizer** (see lesson materials).



As a class (or in small groups), use the graphic organizer to identify pictorial elements of the cover. Together, fill out the column:

- identifying how each pictorial element is linked to the election
- identifying how each pictorial element is linked to 9/11
- asking them to identify connections to racism and Islamophobia, and to the readings

Ask students if there were any incidents of Islamophobia or racism from the campaign that the cover left out. Refer to the list the class made in the lesson opener as well as class readings. What would they have included?

Ask students if they would have left out any of the elements on the cover. If so, why?

Anticipated student responses:

- They would have left off the image of Michelle Obama because she isn’t the candidate running for office.

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- They would have focused the image on the individuals making disparaging remarks about the Obamas instead of the Obama family, thereby focusing on the people perpetuating structural oppression.
- They would have left off the image of Obama dressed in traditional Muslim clothing because it was more offensive than satirical.

Application – 20 minutes

NOTE: If the earlier two activities take up more time than allocated and if the discussion is going well, you may assign the following activity as homework. Be sure to make time to discuss the drawings in a subsequent class.

Instruct students that they have 10 mins to **draw an alternative cover for the New Yorker explaining the roles of race and Islamophobia in the election**. Let students know this can be a rough sketch. (students can finesse their sketches as homework).

Gallery Walk. When the sketches are done, hang them up around the classroom. Give students five minutes to walk around and look at the sketches.

In the final five minutes, have a group discussion about the sketches. Ask students:

- What were some of their favorite covers they saw? Why?
- What were they proud of in their own covers?

Debrief – 5 minutes

Wrap up the discussion by asking students their understandings or takeaways **on how racism and Islamophobia intersect**, especially as it pertains to the US office of the president.

As a final activity, ask students to write a short, 2-3 sentence written reflection on the following statement: **How can art be used to reveal issues of racism and Islamophobia today?**

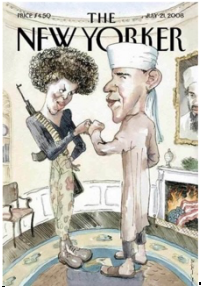
Possible student responses include:

- using magazine covers, murals, or political cartoons as an alternative to text can make it more inclusive
- can use symbolism to represent greater truths
- can transcend language because it uses images instead of alphabets
- can be widely disseminated on the internet, in public spaces, etc.

Lesson 1. The Election of Barack Obama

Student Handouts and Supplementary Teaching Materials

- 1. Module 8, Lesson 1 handout: Cover Analysis Graphic Organizer**



Cover Analysis Graphic Organizer

Name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

Pictorial Element	Link to Election	Link to 9/11	Elements of Racism	Elements of Islamophobia	Source (s)	Your Analysis
<p><i>Example:</i> First Lady Michelle Obama dressed like a militant.</p>	<p><i>Fear of a Black family in the White House.</i></p>	<p><i>Use of imagery like weapon and bullets equated with terrorism.</i></p>	<p><i>Idea that all Black people are militants and unfit to run the country.</i></p>	<p><i>Use of imagery associated with terrorists which is equated with Islam.</i></p>	<p><i>Speech on Jeremiah Wright.</i></p>	<p><i>This was meant to critique the way Michelle Obama was portrayed in the media but it reinforced stereotypes.</i></p>

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Pictorial Element	Link to Election	Link to 9/11	Elements of Racism	Elements of Islamophobia	Source (s)	Your Analysis

To access Blitt's 2008 *New Yorker* cover, "Fistbump: The Politics of Fear": <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2008/07/21>

Lesson 2. The Power and Limits of the Executive Order

Overview, Background Resources and Materials Needed

In this lesson, students will learn about the possibilities and limitations of Executive Orders in influencing (and being influenced by) policy, practice, and perceptions around Islamophobia, xenophobia, and racism. Specifically, they will evaluate Obama's failure to close Guantanamo Bay, despite his use of the Executive Order and contrast that with Trump's success in passing the Muslim and African ban. Students will understand that Islamophobia played a central role in the outcomes of these two presidential executive orders.

Background reading for educators before Lesson 2:

It would be helpful for educators to review these sources, consisting of the primary sources cited in the articles assigned to students. Further, for educators teaching college students, these resources can be used as additional reading texts for the students to help make discussions more complex.

1. **Text of the executive order in 2009:** <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/eo/eo-13492.htm>
2. **Text of the original executive order in 2017:** <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/02/01/2017-02281/protecting-the-nation-from-foreign-terrorist-entry-into-the-united-states>
3. **Biden ends Muslim Ban – official statement:** <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/proclamation-ending-discriminatory-bans-on-entry-to-the-united-states/>

Key Terms in Lesson 2:

- **Executive Order:** a special action that an American president can take if they want to take legislative action without needing the support of Congress. Because they bypass checks and balances, there are limitations on what executive orders can be used for: specifically, they can only apply to federal issues.
- **Muslim and African Ban:** Popularly known as the Muslim Ban, executive Order 13769 was signed by President Donald Trump in January of 2017. Formally named "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States," the law prevented the entry of individuals from seven predominately Muslim countries and was eventually expanded to include several more countries, including additional African countries. Protests and lawsuits condemned the law, but the Supreme Court upheld the Executive Order in June 2018. President Biden ended the Executive Order in January 2021.

Materials Needed for Lesson 2

1. Plan to Close Guantanamo Venn Diagram Handout (one per student)

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2. Art supplies - poster board or construction paper, markers (one set per group)
3. Reading packet (one per student; printed out or shared online)
 - a. **President Obama Presents the Plan to Close Guantanamo, by the Obama White House**
<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2016/02/23/president-obamas-plan-close-Guant%C3%A1namo-about-closing-chapter-history>
 - b. **Trump Website Takes Down Muslim Ban Statement After Reporter Grills Spicer in Briefing** <https://www.cnn.com/2017/05/08/trump-website-takes-down-muslim-ban-statement-after-reporter-grills-spicer-in-briefing.html>
 - c. **Trump Inherits Guantanamo's Remaining Detainees, by Arun Rath**
<https://www.npr.org/2017/01/19/510448989/trump-inherits-guantanamos-remaining-detainees>

Lesson 2. The Power and Limits of the Executive Order

Learning Plan

Pre-class Homework (for Students)

Assign the following article to students to read before class. It may be helpful to provide context as well:

1. **President Obama Presents the Plan to Close Guantanamo, by the Obama White House.** A very brief overview of Obama’s statements about closing Guantanamo and his plan to do so. This can be used in the lesson opening to analyze the messaging used around closing Guantanamo Bay. <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2016/02/23/president-obamas-plan-close-Guant%C3%A1namo-about-closing-chapter-history>
2. **Trump Website Takes Down Muslim Ban Statement After Reporter Grills Spicer in Briefing.** A reprinting of an Islamophobic campaign statement that was on the Trump campaign web site in 2015, coupled with a very brief analysis of the Trump administration renaming the Muslim Ban a “travel ban” in order to combat accusations of Islamophobia. <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/05/08/trump-website-takes-down-muslim-ban-statement-after-reporter-grills-spicer-in-briefing.html>
3. **Trump Inherits Guantanamo’s Remaining Detainees, by Arun Rath.** An overview of why Obama was unable to close Guantanamo. <https://www.npr.org/2017/01/19/510448989/trump-inherits-guantanamos-remaining-detainees>

Opening – 5 minutes

Ask students if they know what an executive order is.

Depending on their answers, explain to students that an executive order is a special action that an American president can take if they want to take legislative action without needing the support of Congress. Because they bypass checks and balances, there are limitations on what executive orders can be used for: specifically, they can only apply to federal issues. Since 9/11, they have most commonly been used to address immigration issues. For example, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) was an executive order, as was the Muslim Ban and African Ban.

Explain that since executive orders are unilateral decisions that don’t require persuading Congress or voters of their merit, presidents often do messaging after signing the order to try to get the public on their side.

Key concepts overview – 20 minutes

Facilitate a group discussion in which students analyze the messaging from their readings associated with each executive order. Some questions to ask:

1. **What are some words and phrases that each president used to defend their executive order?**
 - o Some examples to point out around Obama closing **Guantanamo Bay**: argument that closing Guantanamo Bay contributes to national security by restoring dollars to the

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military, repairing “partnerships with allies,” and eliminating a source of propaganda from terrorists.

- Some examples to point out around the **Muslim Ban**: shift in rhetoric from “Muslim Ban” to “travel ban,” decision to remove Islamophobic content from campaign website, use of blatant Islamophobia such as accusing Muslims of “hatred beyond comprehension.”
2. **Why did the president pick this particular angle?**
 - An example to point out for Obama: using tough, military language to counteract the idea that he was Muslim (and the Islamophobia surrounding this) by showing he was tough on terrorism.
 - An example to point out for Trump: using racist / Islamophobic language to apply to his base and to continue to sow the hatred that mobilized those who elected him.
 3. **What type of individual is each president appealing to with each message? Why?**
 - Obama: appealing to centrist voters who might question his commitment to America’s safety; trying to sway voters who may have doubts about his commitment to the US given his Muslim name.
 - Trump: appealing to racist, Islamophobic Americans, and continuing to build a climate of fear that makes Americans feel threatened by outsiders.
 4. **How does each message deploy Islamophobia?**
 - Obama: By trying to assuage American fears about his Muslim name, Obama is giving credence to their Islamophobic ideas that anyone with a Muslim name is a terrorist.
 - Trump: This is an explicitly Islamophobic message that contributes to a climate of fear.
 5. **Do you think the messaging is effective? Why or why not?**
 - This is up to students to decide for themselves, but they should use examples from the text and from the readings to back up their arguments. They may, for example, argue that Obama’s messaging was ineffective because he was ultimately unable to close Guantanamo, or that Trump’s was ineffective because he was not reelected and his ban was also overturned by Biden without much public outcry.

Explain to students that despite the fact that Obama passed his executive order on the third day of his presidency, 13 years later, Guantanamo remains open.

While the Muslim Ban and African Ban was eventually ended by an executive order by President Biden, it was upheld by the highest court in the land, the Supreme Court, during the Trump presidency.

Application – 15 minutes

Pass out Venn Diagram handout. As a class, fill out the Venn diagram articulating the similarities and differences between the Muslim Ban and the order to close Guantanamo.

Consider the following:

- **Partisanship.** (The role of the opposing party in upholding or striking this down.)
- **Logistical obstacles.** (For example, not being able to transfer political prisoners back to their homes.)
- **Organized resistance.** (Demonstrations at airports for the Muslim Ban.)

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Debrief – 10 minutes

Ultimately, the Travel Ban was successful while Guantanamo remains open. Ask the students: What made the Muslim and African Ban successful? What made the closing of Guantanamo a challenge?

Anticipated student answers re: Muslim and African Ban:

- the perpetuation of a climate of fear that began with 9/11
- continued Islamophobia and racism, specifically anti-Blackness
- conservative judges appointed to courts who then upheld Trump's ideology
- inability to maintain sustained public pressure to remove ban because of the plethora of issues in the news cycle claiming public attention
- shift in rhetoric to "travel ban," making the issue seem less about race / faith.

Anticipated student answers re: what made closing Guantanamo a challenge:

- lack of public support due to a climate of fear, grounded in racism and Islamophobia
- claims of difficulty in repatriating prisoners because their home countries were unstable
- difficulty in repatriating prisoners because countries did not want to take back people accused of terrorism
- public unaware that many of the prisoners were falsely accused, and actually not participating in terrorism
- partisanship in congress that resulted in Republicans blocking steps towards closure along party lines.

Extension Activities or Homework

In small groups of 3-4, instruct students to create a list of reasons why Guantanamo Bay should be closed. This list should include messaging that will appeal to the general public and to the opposition party. How can they get the public and opposition on their side? Why does it matter to have them on their side? Students should prepare a presentation for the general public and opposition to make their case (3-5 slides)

No tech alternative 1: Students should write an op-ed making the case to close Guantanamo

Groups present their key arguments

Option 1: Each group has 2-3 mins to presents their arguments via presentation slides

Option 2: Students share the main arguments of their op-eds.

Have a brief (7m) group discussion about the messaging the class created. **Which messaging was the most effective? Why?**

Prompt the students: Using what we have learned, make a prediction about how and when Guantanamo will ultimately be closed. What evidence do you have for your prediction?

Remind students that Guantanamo remains open, although as of 2021 several prisoners have been released.

Lesson 2. The Power and Limits of the Executive Order

Student Handouts and Supplementary Teaching Materials

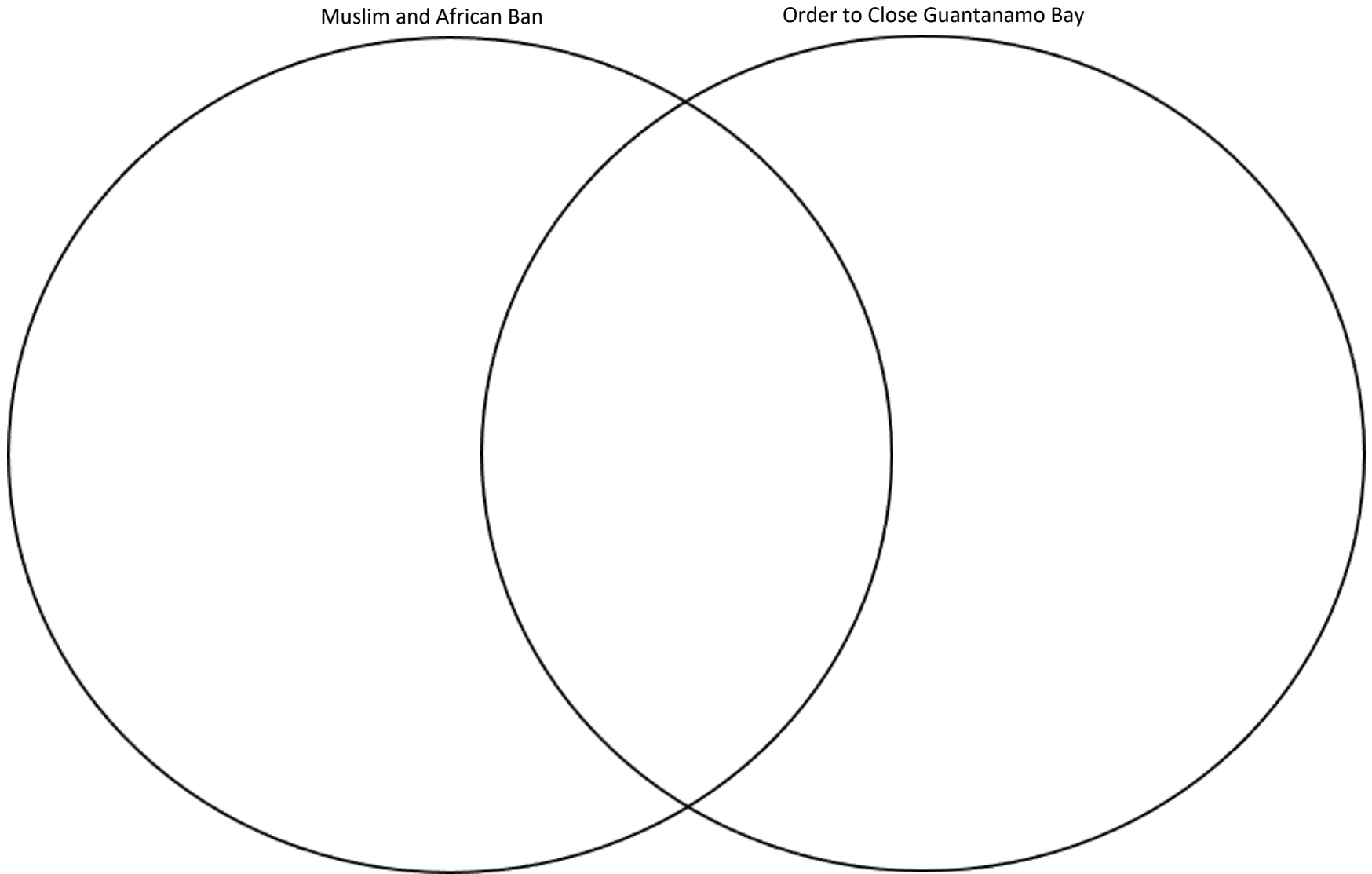
1. Module 8, Lesson 1, Handout 1: **Venn Diagram Handout** (1 per student group)
2. Module 8, Lesson 1, Handout 2: **Plan to close Guantanamo Graphic Organizer and accompanying articles** (1 per student group)

Venn diagram comparing and contrasting executive orders

Name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____



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Plan to Close Guantanamo Bay

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Challenge	Solution	Messaging
Examples: Countries where prisoners are from are now in a Civil War and it is not safe to send them back.	Work with war torn countries to help them create repatriation plans for prisoners by helping them find homes in neighboring countries. Help broker peace whenever possible.	Helping to end civil wars will help global stability, which will in turn help American stability.

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Challenge	Solution	Messaging

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Lesson 2: The Power and Limits of the Executive Order – Plan to Close Guantanamo Bay Graphic Organizer + accompanying articles (4 pages)

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Obama White House Archives

President Obama Presents the Plan to Close Guantanamo: "This Is About Closing a Chapter in History"

FEBRUARY 23, 2016 AT 12:11 PM ET BY MELANIE GARUNAY

URL: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2016/02/23/president-obamas-plan-close-Guantánamo-about-closing-chapter-history>

Today, President Obama [announced](#) the plan to close the prison facility at Guantanamo Bay once and for all -- saying that keeping the prison open undermines our national security and stains our broader record on upholding the highest standards of rule of law. He made the case for why it's time to change the course on Guantanamo:

"For many years, it has been clear that the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay does not advance our national security—it undermines it. It's counterproductive to our fight against terrorists, who use it as propaganda in their efforts to recruit. It drains military resources, with nearly \$450 million spent last year alone to keep it running and more than \$200 million in additional costs needed to keep it open going forward. Guantanamo harms our partnerships with allies and other countries whose cooperation we need against terrorism." [President Obama, February 23, 2016](#)

In one of President Obama's first acts as President, he took action to begin closing the prison facility. Since he took office, we've transferred 147 of its detainees, each under new, significant restrictions to keep them from returning to the battlefield.

Of the nearly 800 detainees once held at Guantanamo Bay, now just 91 remain.

Today, the Defense Department submitted a [plan](#) to Congress on closing the prison facility and dealing with the remaining group of detainees.

Here's what the President laid out in the plan to close Guantanamo:

- 1. "We'll continue to securely and responsibly transfer to other countries the 35 detainees already approved for transfer.** This process involves extensive and careful coordination across our federal government to ensure that our national security interests are met when an individual is transferred to another country. We insist, for example, that foreign countries institute strong security measures."
- 2. "We'll accelerate the periodic reviews of remaining detainees to determine whether their continued detention is necessary.** Our review board, including representatives from across government, will look at all relevant information, including current intelligence. If certain detainees no longer pose a continuing significant threat, they may be eligible for transfer to another country."
- 3. "We'll continue to use all legal tools to deal with the remaining detainees still held under law of war detention.** Currently, 10 detainees are in some stage of the military commissions process—a process we reformed in my first year in office with bipartisan support from Congress. Still, these commissions are very costly and have resulted in years without a resolution. We're therefore outlining additional changes to improve these commissions, which would require Congressional action."

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Lesson 2: The Power and Limits of the Executive Order – Plan to Close Guantanamo Bay Graphic Organizer + accompanying articles (4 pages)

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4. "We're going to work with Congress to find a secure location in the United States to hold remaining detainees. These are detainees who are subject to military commissions, as well as those who cannot yet be transferred to other countries or who we've determined must continue to be detained because they pose a continuing significant threat. We are not identifying a specific facility today."

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CNBC

Trump website takes down Muslim ban statement after reporter grills Spicer in briefing

Christine Wang

May 8, 2017

URL: <https://www.cnn.com/2017/05/08/trump-website-takes-down-muslim-ban-statement-after-reporter-grills-spicer-in-briefing.html>

Access full article above. Cached version of Donald Trump's statement (available in article above) is below as part of public record.

The full original statement is below:

DONALD J. TRUMP STATEMENT ON PREVENTING MUSLIM IMMIGRATION

(New York, NY) December 7th, 2015, -- Donald J. Trump is calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure out what is going on. According to Pew Research, among others, there is great hatred towards Americans by large segments of the Muslim population. Most recently, a poll from the Center for Security Policy released data showing "25% of those polled agreed that violence against Americans here in the United States is justified as a part of the global jihad" and 51% of those polled, "agreed that Muslims in America should have the choice of being governed according to Shariah." Shariah authorizes such atrocities as murder against non-believers who won't convert, beheadings and more unthinkable acts that pose great harm to Americans, especially women.

Mr. Trump stated, "Without looking at the various polling data, it is obvious to anybody the hatred is beyond comprehension. Where this hatred comes from and why we will have to determine. Until we are able to determine and understand this problem and the dangerous threat it poses, our country cannot be the victims of horrendous attacks by people that believe only in Jihad, and have no sense of reason or respect for human life. If I win the election for President, we are going to Make America Great Again." - Donald J. Trump

Module 8: Islamophobia and the Oval Office

Lesson 2: The Power and Limits of the Executive Order – Plan to Close Guantanamo Bay Graphic Organizer + accompanying articles (4 pages)

Appendix to Module 8: Islamophobia and the Oval Office

Curriculum Framework

Goal

Students will be able to use their independent learning to evaluate the ways in which the United States executive branch both affects and is affected by American Islamophobia.

Essential questions

1. How has Islamophobia manifested in recent US elections?
2. In what ways did racism and Islamophobia influence the 2008 presidential election?
3. What role did Islamophobia play in Obama's and Trump's abilities to pass and enforce executive orders related to the legacy of the War on Terror?

Understandings

Students will understand that...

1. Islamophobic and racist messaging were heightened in the post-9/11 world and affected the 2008 elections.
2. In 2008 and 2016, islamophobia affected the ability of the presidential administration to enforce two very different executive orders (the order to end Guantanamo and the Muslim Ban & African Ban).
3. Political cartoons are tools for critiquing unjust systems and policies.

Knowledge

Students will know...

1. How Islamophobia and racism affected the 2008 Presidential race.
2. The purposes and uses of Executive Orders.
3. The history of Guantanamo Bay, including attempts to close it.

Skills

Students will be able to...

1. **Interrogate** different ways in which Islamophobia influences the working of the executive branch.
2. **Analyze** how public perception influences political decisions.
3. **Assess** the impact of Islamophobia on the 2008 presidential election.
4. **Assess** the impact of Islamophobia on Obama's ability to close Guantanamo Bay and Trump's ability to impose a Muslim and African ban.
5. **Create** political art representing their views on Islamophobia and racism.
6. **Predict** how Islamophobia may influence future campaigns and / or executive branch decisions and actions.

Summary of Performance Tasks (Assessment)

1. **Graphic organizer analyzing *New Yorker* cover:** Students will view a *New Yorker* cover that was printed during the 2008 presidential campaign. Then, in small groups students will use the graphic organizer to identify pictorial elements of the cover. Together, they will identify how each pictorial element is linked to the election; how each pictorial element is linked to 9/11; and connections to racism and Islamophobia.
2. **Alternative Cover Drawing:** Students will draw an alternative cover for the *New Yorker* cover that was analyzed in Performance Task 1. This alternate cover should explain the roles of race and Islamophobia in the election.
3. **Group Discussion about Executive Orders:** A group discussion in which students analyze the messaging from pre-readings about executive orders related to the closure of Guantanamo Bay and the Muslim and African Ban.
4. **Venn diagram comparing and contrasting executive orders:** As a class, students will fill out the Venn diagram articulating the similarities and differences between the Muslim Ban and the order to close Guantanamo.
5. **Op-ed (or presentation) outlining a plan to close Guantanamo:** In small groups of 3-4, students will create a list of reasons why Guantanamo Bay should be closed. This list should include messaging that will appeal to the general public and to the opposition party. Students will then either write an op-ed making the case to close Guantanamo or prepare a presentation for the general public and opposition to make their case.
6. **Debriefs and whole-class discussions:** In each lesson, students will apply key concepts in groups or individually, then return to the whole class space to articulate their findings and takeaways.

Common Core Standards

History/Social Studies 11th and 12th Grade

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6

Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8

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Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

About the Contributors

Mathangi Subramanian is an award winning Indian American author and educator. Her novel *A People's History of Heaven* was a finalist for the Lambda Literary Award and was longlisted for the PEN/Faulkner. Her middle grades book *Dear Mrs. Naidu* won the South Asia Book Award. Her essays and op-eds have appeared in *Harper's Bazaar*, *Ms.*, *The Washington Post*, and *The San Francisco Chronicle*, among others. A Fulbright-Nehru Senior Scholar, she holds a doctorate in communications and education from Columbia University Teachers College.

This module was developed with assistance from Kareena Pamani, Andrianna Smela, and Ameena Ghaffar-Kucher from the Teaching Beyond September 11th team.