

An Analysis of Sam Kharoba's A Law Enforcement Guide to Understanding Islamist Terrorism

Counter Terrorism Operations Center's (CTOC) law enforcement training manual full of inaccurate, misleading and likely plagiarized material. Kharoba lacks relevant subject matter expertise.

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Council on American-Islamic Relations
453 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20003
www.cair.com

© Council on American-Islamic Relations

453 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20003
Phone: 202-488-8787
E-Mail: csaylor@cair.com

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Over the past year and half there has been further scrutiny of countering violent extremism (CVE) and counterterrorism training within multiple local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies across the nation. In Florida, Sam Kharoba, an anti-Muslim activist and private counterterrorism instructor hired by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), has become a person of interest to media, as well as local advocacy groups.ⁱ

Florida Muslim organizations, including the regional chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), have conveyed their concerns about possible bias in Kharoba's training to FDLE.ⁱⁱ FLDE has responded, noting that the "issue will be placed on the agenda for presentation at their October 31, 2012 meeting."ⁱⁱⁱ

In preparation for that meeting, CAIR has prepared this detailed analysis and investigation into the content, including its anti-Islam and anti-Muslim assertions, in Kharoba's manual, *A Law Enforcement Guide to Understanding Islamist Terrorism*.

Standard for Analysis

Our assessment of the manual's contents was based on the 2011 DHS Federal interagency guidelines on CVE curriculum standards, *Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Training: Guidance and Best Practices* (hereafter "DHS Guidance").¹ We use this document as our "yardstick" to measure Kharoba's manual for four reasons:

1. It represents the consensus expert opinion of CVE and counterterrorism practitioners across several federal agencies.
2. The State of Florida has received hundreds of millions of dollars in DHS grants, including several million for terrorism training, over the past 11 fiscal years.
3. Given the rising concern of quality control in DHS money spent on CVE training, the Department is now tying grant funding to using training curriculum that safeguards and upholds privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties.
4. This policy guidance overlaps with already-established policies, including grant disbursement, to fusion centers that participate in the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting [SAR] Initiative (NSI).

¹ We also reviewed the FBI's *Guiding Principles: Touchstone Document on Training* (See: <http://1.usa.gov/R0nrTN>.) as part of developing our criteria to assess Kharoba's manual. Nonetheless our report will employ the DHS Guidance for two reasons 1) the overall intent and content of both documents are consistent with each other, 2) the DHS Guidance is directly applicable to local, state and federal agencies, whereas the scope of FBI document is limited to its own agency.

Findings

Kharoba lacks relevant subject matter expertise. Kharoba also has no formal academic degrees in Islamic studies, nor prior experience in law enforcement. At most he has a pre-university level *certificate* in Arabic culture. Arabic culture and Islam are not synonymous; only 20 percent of the world’s Muslims are Arabs. With operatives coming from all over the world, Al-Qaeda is not limited to a single race or ethnicity, either—nearly 40 percent of U.S. Muslim homegrown violent extremists are Caucasians, Latinos, and African-Americans.

Kharoba’s manual rarely cites its sources. Only 9 out of 21 chapters (43%)² had a References section at their end that provided sources. Several chapters, including six that purport to explain the ideological foundations and motivations of Muslim violent extremists, did not have a References section. Training manuals do not need to read like scholarly dissertations; however, it is reasonable to expect they have appropriate citations to ensure their information can be verified as accurate by an independent third party.

The manual uses anti-Muslim pseudo-experts who lack degrees in Islamic studies to explain controversial issues such as jihad and Muslim interfaith relations. Three prominent examples that surfaced in our investigation included:

- Srdja (Serge) Trifkovic
- Robert Spencer
- Bat Ye’or

Beyond their lack of relevant subject matter expertise, Trifkovic, Spencer, and Ye’or are connected in two important ways.

First, in different ways, they all supported the ideology of extreme Serbian nationalism that – according to the CIA – was responsible for 90 percent of the war crimes, including mass killings of Muslims during the 1992-1995 Bosnian civil war. Trifkovic was a leading spokesperson for the Republika Srpska, the failed breakaway republic whose military and political leaders are on trial for war crimes. Robert Spencer has denied that mass killings of Muslims, including the well-documented massacre in Srebrenica, took place. Ye’or gave an anti-Islam lecture in 1995 at a private foundation in the UK that supported the underlying ideology of the Republika Srpska.

Second, to varying degrees, all three have lent their support to other forms of extreme far-right nationalism elsewhere in Europe and the United States. At times this extremism has manifested itself violently, such as the killings by the Norwegian anti-Muslim terrorist, Anders Breivik. According to a content analysis of Breivik’s “2083 Manifesto” by the Muslim Public Affairs Council, a U.S. anti-hate organization³, the specific terms “Jihadwatch.org”, “Robert Spencer”,

² These are Chapters 2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, 15, and 18.

³ The President of MPAC, Salam Al-Marayati was vetted and appointed as a member of DHS’ Faith-Based Advisory Council. See: “Faith-Based Security and Communications Advisory Committee.” *Department of Homeland Security*, May 2012. <http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/hsac/hsac-faith-based-security-and-communications-advisory-committee-final-report-may-2012.pdf>, P. 21. MPAC has also been listed as an “anti-hate organization” resource by Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State

“Trifkovic”, and “Bat Ye’or” were among the 5 most cited anti-Muslim sources (out of 17 search terms).^{iv}

Any scholars Kharoba does rely on are “cherry-picked” to reinforce his own biases. These individuals’ works have 1) recently been called into question due to serious charges of politicization or 2) are simply misleading for novice readers who have no background in the specific subject matter area.

Large sections of the manual were word-for-word identical to unreliable web-based sources. Our investigation found the most common source was Wikipedia. The extensive use of Wikipedia articles is alarming because of the regularly inconsistent and unreliable nature of their content.

15 out of the 19 chapters we analyzed⁴ (79%) have sections of text that are nearly word-for-word identical to a Wikipedia article. In at least one notable case, Chapter 14 (Dar-al-Harb/Dar-al-Islam), nearly the *entire* chapter is identical to a Wikipedia article dated November 18, 2007.^v

Often, the manual contained slight variations from the Wikipedia sources that go beyond grammar. Given Kharoba’s personal biases and the substantive nature of the changes, these edits appear to be done to further portray Islam and Muslims in an inaccurate and negative manner. (Several examples are provided in full detail in our report.)

There are three reasons that strongly suggest large amounts of Kharoba’s material are plagiarized:

1. *The editing history of every single Wikipedia article indicates that over a period of several years multiple authors made multiple edits from multiple locations.* This makes it highly implausible that one person could physically do all this for a sustained period of time.
2. *It is highly unlikely that Kharoba would publicly disseminate the contents in his manual.* For instance, the copy of manual we obtained says on its cover in capital letters “LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE DO NOT DISTRIBUTE”.
3. *It cannot explain the striking similarities between the manual’s content and text found in other non-Wikipedia sources.* There are several passages in Kharoba’s manual nearly identical to text in other Internet sources such as Islam Watch, Robert Spencer’s *Jihad Watch*, and a 2007 op-ed by Ayaan Hirsi Ali. (See the full report for more information.)

We use two cases to illustrate Kharoba’s problematic understanding of Islamic beliefs and how they relate to countering violent extremism. Both are core arguments in Kharoba’s manual.

University, San Bernardino. The Center is run by Brian Levin, former staffer with the Southern Poverty Law Center. See: http://hatemonitor.csusb.edu/resources/anti_hate_org.htm.

⁴ Due to time constraints we did not examine chapters 20 and 21. It is also important to note that our investigation is not exhaustive; our work is a detailed survey that can provide a point of reference for further corroboration and investigation by others.

First he posits Islam itself is the problem: it is inherently violent and aggressive, making it the root cause of radicalization. Therefore Muslims are not to be trusted partners with law enforcement.

In fact, after the 9/11 attacks American Muslims mobilized to fight terrorism and extremism.

Some examples since 9/11 include, but are not limited to:

- A *fatwa* (religious legal opinion) signed by 18 highly-influential American Muslim scholars and 130 American Muslim organizations “pray[ing] for the defeat of extremism and terrorism”, “pray[ing] for the safety and security of our country the United States of America” and “pray[ing] for the safety and security of all inhabitants of this globe.”^{vi}
- Nine highly-influential American Imams (prayer leaders) issuing a 2010 web-based public service announcement (that went viral among Muslim communities) condemning terrorism in the name of Islam.^{vii}
- Eight of Muslim America’s leading *ulema* (religious scholars), from across the theological spectrum, visiting holocaust concentration camps in Europe and issuing a statement--citing the Qur’an--that condemned anti-Semitism.^{viii}
- Many more statements and *fatwas* from thousands of religious scholars and community leaders representing nearly all 1.4 billion Muslims around the world.^{ix}

American Muslims have proven themselves as reliable partners in one other important way: tips to law enforcement that helped prevent terrorism plots. According to a 2011 study by Duke University, 40% of all Al-Qaeda plots aimed at the United States since 9/11 have been prevented due to tips Muslims provided to law enforcement.^x

Second Kharoba claims that the verses in the Qur’an discussing peace, tolerance and forgiveness were cancelled out by two specific verses that advocated for war. He makes this claim based on a doctrine called *naskh*, or abrogation.

However, among the many flaws with this argument, one of them is that it selectively picks the most extreme opinions in Islamic history which claimed verses 9:5 and 9:29, known as “verses of the sword”, override all 113 verses stressing self-defense, peace, forgiveness, patience and tolerance. These opinions were exceptions, not the norm. As Ahmad Hasan a Muslim scholar at the Islamic Research Institute in Pakistan notes, “It has been the trend of the scholars to reduce the number of the abrogated verses which had reached appalling proportions... This trend shows that the repeal of the individual verses in the Qur’an was generally not favored.”^{xi}

Conclusion

Our assessment indicates that neither Kharoba’s professional/education background, nor the content of his manual come close to meeting to the standards set forth by DHS. We also found his manual’s content to be unsound due to the (likely) plagiarized manner in which he gathered his information, and the fact that many of his sources are missing, unreliable, inaccurate,

politicized, misleading, and/or biased. Our two case studies critically analyzing two of the manual's core arguments only confirms our concerns about Kharoba's dubious research and training content.

In light of the recent public controversies surrounding Mr. Kharoba and the facts contained within this report, we request that you formally and immediately discontinue the services of Mr. Sam Kharoba as a law enforcement instructor. His training tactics are not only inaccurate, but can also potentially increase the law enforcement officers' civil liability in the event of an avoidable confrontation.

INTRODUCTION

In May 2011, *Washington Monthly*, a popular news magazine published an article entitled, “How We Train Our Cops to Fear Islam”, which focused on a cottage industry of private, for-profit individuals providing biased and inaccurate training on counterterrorism and Islam to law enforcement officials. The article focuses largely on Sam Kharoba and his instruction book, *A Law Enforcement Guide to Understanding Islamist Terrorism* (hereafter “Kharoba manual”).

Since then, there has been further scrutiny of countering violent extremism (CVE) and counterterrorism training within multiple local, state, and federal law enforcement, military and intelligence agencies across the nation. In Florida, Sam Kharoba has become a person of interest to media, as well as local advocacy groups.^{xii}

Recently, Florida Muslim organizations, including the regional chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), have engaged in written correspondence with officials in charge of training within the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE). This correspondence reflects Florida Muslims’ concerns about Kharoba’s training curriculum.^{xiii} FDLE has responded, noting that the “issue will be placed on the agenda for presentation at their October 31, 2012 meeting.”^{xiv}

STANDARD FOR ANALYSIS

In preparation for the late October FDLE meeting, CAIR has prepared this detailed analysis and investigation into the content, including its anti-Islam and anti-Muslim assertions, in Kharoba’s manual.

Our assessment of the manual’s contents was based on the 2011 Federal interagency guidelines on CVE curriculum standards, *Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Training: Guidance and Best Practices* (hereafter “DHS Guidance”).⁵ We use this document as our “yardstick” to measure Kharoba’s manual for four reasons.

First, the DHS Guidance represents the consensus expert opinion of CVE and counterterrorism practitioners across several federal agencies. According to the document:

The Department of Homeland Security, in partnership with the National Counterterrorism Center, **hosts an inter-agency working group** to bring together best practices in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) training. The group has prepared this guidance for federal, state, and local government and law enforcement officials organizing CVE, cultural awareness, or counterterrorism training. (emphasis added)

⁵ We also reviewed the FBI’s *Guiding Principles: Touchstone Document on Training* (See: <http://1.usa.gov/R0nrTN>.) as part of developing our criteria to assess Kharoba’s manual. Nonetheless our report will employ the DHS Guidance for two reasons 1) the overall intent and content of both documents are consistent with each other, 2) the DHS Guidance – as outlined below – is directly applicable to local, state and federal agencies, whereas the scope of FBI document is limited to its own agency.

Second, the State of Florida has received hundreds of millions of dollars in DHS grants over the past 11 fiscal years. This includes several million from the State Homeland Security Grant Program and Urban Area Security Initiative,^{xv} which are designed, in part, to pay for CVE and counterterrorism training for state and local law enforcement agencies. Although it is currently unclear whether or not Kharoba's trainings have been directly paid for using DHS funds, given the nationwide reaction across local, state and federal departments about faulty CVE training, it is likely cases like this one, will be of increased interest and scrutiny for DHS grant oversight officials.

Third, given the above-mentioned concern of quality control in DHS grant money spent on CVE training, the Department is now tying its current and future grant funding to using training curriculum that safeguards and upholds privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties (PCRCL) protections. According to U.S. House testimony given by John Cohen, DHS CVE and Counterterrorism Senior Advisor to the Secretary, "In response to reports of operationally inaccurate training, DHS released CVE Training Guidance and Best Practices [the DHS Guidance] to all State and Local partners and grantees as part of DHS' grant guidance policy on October 7, 2011."^{xvi} (This policy is established in DHS Grant Programs Directorate Information Bulletin #373.)^{xvii}

Fourth, this policy guidance overlaps with already-established policies, including grant disbursement, to fusion centers that participate in the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting [SAR] Initiative (NSI). All fusion centers participating in the NSI are required to adhere to PCRCL protections or they will face the possibility of getting federal funding revoked.^{xviii}

Below we focus on the following standards set forth in the DHS Guidance document:⁶

- 1a. "Thoroughly review the prospective trainer's resume to ensure he or she has subject matter expertise and subject-specific training experience. Contact other agencies who have received training to get feedback, check with knowledgeable community leaders, and research media coverage. Don't assume that because a trainer has a particular cultural background, or has law enforcement experience, that he or she is a qualified cultural competency trainer.
- 1b. "Request student feedback when researching a training provider to determine whether the curriculum is relevant and effective for your particular objectives. Look for whether lessons have been operationally useful.
- 1d. "Interview each prospective instructor about his or her experience in the specified topic, which should include both education and work experience. Professional trainers/providers should have long-term grounding in the subject matter they are teaching."⁷

⁶ We focus on these specific criteria given our research limitations, namely an outside organization analyzing Kharoba's manual and open source information. For instance, this does not allow us to use criteria 1f.: "Evaluate the prospective trainer during and after course delivery, and act on the evaluation."

⁷ We also assess Kharoba's the long-term grounding of Kharoba's subject matter expertise based on an additional criterion found in the preface of the DHS guidance: "Training must be accurate".

- 2b. “Training should focus on behavior, not appearance or membership in particular ethnic or religious communities.
- 2c. “Training should support the protection of civil rights and civil liberties as part of national security. Don’t use training that equates religious expression, protests, or other constitutionally protected activity with criminal activity.
- 3a. “A training provider whose organization has an existing productive relationship with local government is likely to be more effective and to focus on educating rather than persuading. Trainers who are well regarded by communities and local government can help further dialogue and broader resources and connections.
- 5b. “Ensure that training provides operational best practices for how to engage with diverse communities to maximize effectiveness.”

1a. THE TRAINER’S RESUME/EXPERIENCE & FEEDBACK FROM AGENCIES, COMMUNITY LEADERS & MEDIA COVERAGE

Trainer’s Resume and Subject Specific Training Experience

According to a short biographical description of himself, Sam Kharoba claims to be an expert on Islam and Muslims, as well as counterterrorism, claiming, “His in-depth studies of Arabic and Islamic history and culture provide him a unique capacity, knowledge and expertise to provide valuable and objective analysis on Middle Eastern affairs and the problems associated with Islamist fundamentalism and terrorism.”^{xxix}

According to biographical information listed on a 2012 training event flyer for law enforcement, Sam Kharoba, “received an Advanced Level Certificate of Education in Arabic Culture from the University of London, and a B.S. degree from LSU [Louisiana State University].”^{xxx} His B.S. degree, not listed in the flyer, is in Electrical and Computer Engineering.^{xxxi} In other words he does not have any formal academic education on Islam, such as an Islamic Studies degree, from an accredited college or university.

A *certificate* in Arabic Culture is different in terms of both subject matter and level of academic achievement than a *degree* in Islamic Studies for several reasons.

- **Most Muslims are not Arabs.** Arab culture and Islam are not synonymous; no more than 20% of the world’s Muslims are Arabs.^{xxii} The same goes for Al-Qaeda and its affiliates. Its operatives are largely Black Africans, South Asians, Afghans, and Southeast Asians. Nearly 40% of U.S. homegrown Muslim violent extremists are Caucasians, Latinos, and African-Americans.^{xxiii}
- **Not all Arabs are Muslims; many are Christians and Jews.** Nearly 8 million Egyptians^{xxiv} and nearly 40% of Lebanon’s population is Christian.^{xxv} In Israel, a Jewish-majority country, currently half of the population are Arab-origin *mizrahi* Jews.^{xxvi}

- **Most Arabs in the United States are Christian, not Muslim.** According to the Arab-American Institute, Christians constitute two-thirds of the American-Arab population.^{xxvii}

Given these facts, using “Arabic Culture” as a substitute for subject matter expertise with *Islam* and Islamic Studies creates a fundamentally flawed equivalency between the two areas of study.

Furthermore, a British “Advanced Level Certificate”, shorthand for Advanced Level General Certificate of Education (also referred to as “A-Level GCE”) is not the same as a university *degree*. Commenting on Kharoba’s academic qualifications, Dr. Richard Bartholomew, a research associate in the Department of the Study of Religions at the University of London, notes, “‘A-Levels’, as everyone in Britain knows, are **pre-university** level courses.”^{xxviii} (emphasis added)

Kharoba’s lack of academic qualifications and formal training on the subject matter are probably part of the root of problems with the content of his curriculum. As we shall describe shortly, our research found highly questionable sourcing and poor research that are further indicative of a lack of academic training and insufficient grasp of the actual facts.

Community Feedback & Media Coverage

His grasp of the subject matter is thrown into further doubt when examining feedback from other agencies, knowledgeable community leaders, and media coverage. As noted in the Introduction section of this report, media coverage and direct correspondence from Florida Muslim community leaders and organizations has been highly critical and negative of Kharoba’s material and instruction.^{xxix}

1b. REQUEST STUDENT FEEDBACK TO SEE IF THE INFORMATION IS RELEVANT, EFFECTIVE & USEFUL

Although there is evidence indicating that Kharoba received positive feedback from local Florida law enforcement officers, the validity of those responses are questionable given that most of the people being trained appear to lack basic knowledge regarding Islam.^{xxx}

When Kharoba was scheduled to teach a similar course at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), after being a guest instructor for a year, his course was suspended from being integrated into the general curriculum. According to an investigative report by the *Washington Monthly*, the same month his work was to be added to the general academy materials, FLETC had received a complaint from Muhammad Rana, an Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent.^{xxxi} The complaint was initiated because Rana was concerned by FLETC training that essentially argued the religion of Islam, not fringe violent extremists, were the threat – arguments that are made in Kharoba’s manual.⁸ As the *Washington Monthly* noted, “Perhaps embarrassed by the Rana incident, FLETC suspended the official incorporation of Kharoba’s

⁸ We wish to be very clear about this statement: we are not saying that Kharoba had given the FLETC instruction in question. What we are pointing out, however, is that anyone who has conducting training that advocates Islam as the threat – rather than teaching that the problem is violent extremist Muslims – has been discontinued from FLETC.

course into the standard curriculum.” Eventually Kharoba’s services were discontinued from FLETC.^{xxxii}

1d. INSTRUCTOR’S EDUCATION, WORK EXPERIENCE & GROUNDING IN THE SUBJECT MATTER

Education & Work Experience

As detailed in Section 1a, Sam Kharoba does not have direct education and academic credentials in the subject matter area of Islamic Studies which impacts ones understanding of Islam as a religion and the diverse spiritual beliefs of Muslims. Kharoba also has no prior professional experience as a law enforcement officer or analyst. The lack of both formal Islamic studies credentials and law enforcement experience is problematic for someone who positions himself as an expert and law enforcement trainer on *Islamist* terrorism.

The reliability of his education is thrown into further doubt due to his lack of academic, peer-reviewed publication experience. As noted in Section 1c of the DHS guidance, “Most professional trainers will be open to outside observation and peer review.” This is important because Dr. Magnus Ranstorp, a research scholar with decades of academic *and* practitioner experience in counterterrorism,^{xxxiii} has observed that terrorism remains an emerging field of study and practice that is challenged by problems of scientific rigor. This makes it relatively easy for pseudo-experts to instantly gain unwarranted fame and recognition, unlike in other areas of study.^{xxxiv}

In other words, counterterrorism does not have the decades of applied scientific research and thorough review that other aspects of law enforcement, such as firearms training and other uses of force,^{xxxv} have. This makes any peer-review publication experience exceptionally vital in a new field like terrorism, especially for anyone conducting training that carries ethical, professional, legal, and human ramifications, including the personal safety and civil liability of law enforcement officers.

Beyond his lack of academic training and peer-review publication experience, one other way to measure Kharoba’s “long-term grounding in the subject matter’ is to review the content of his training manual, *A Law Enforcement Guide to Islamist Terrorism*. Overall our review of the manual’s content revealed several problems, including:

- Overall lack of credible cited sources
- Use of anti-Muslim pseudo-experts who lack formal training in Islamic studies
- Politicized and potentially misleading research
- Plagiarized use of Wikipedia and other unreliable sources

We then conclude the remainder of section 1d by providing two case studies of Kharoba’s inaccurate and distorted research.

Overall Lack of Credible Cited Sources

Our findings suggest, in addition to his personal anti-Muslim biases, Kharoba's lack of academic credentials strongly contributed to the use of questionable sources that in turn fed into his flawed assumptions, misleading analysis, and inaccuracies.

An initial review of the manual found that Kharoba rarely cited his sources. Only 9 out of 21 chapters (43%)⁹ had a References section at their end that provided sources. (It is important to note that the References sections do not tell the reader which parts of the Chapter come from which sources; that is left for the reader to determine.) Chapters lacking a References section include incendiary-writing and/or misleading analysis on topics such as:

- *The Qur'an in Chronological Order* (Chapter 6). Makes three claims 1) With precision and certainty, we know the exact chronological order of the Qur'an's revelation, 2) The Qur'an is a book filled with violence, 3) Earlier verses stressing peace, non-violence, mercy, and reconciliation with non-Muslims have been permanently overridden by later verses that advocate war.
- *Lying and Deception in Islam* (Chapter 12). Argues that Muslims are taught by the religion to lie to people of other faiths.
- *Dar-al-Islam/Dar-al-Harb* (Chapter 14). Claims that the default teachings in Islam are predisposed toward war and aggression.
- *Islamic Scholars Influencing Jihadists* (Chapter 17). Asserts that there are four main religious figures who are the ideological sources of Al-Qaeda's violent extremism.
- *Women in Islam and Shariah Law* (Chapter 19). Argues that sharia is inherently oppressive toward women.

It not reasonable to expect that training manuals read like scholarly dissertations; it is reasonable, however, that they have appropriate citations to ensure that information can be verified as accurate by an independent third party. As we shall detail below, Kharoba's manual uses highly unreliable, politicized and misleading sources.

Use of Anti-Muslim Pseudo-experts

Several of the sources cited in the "References" of Chapter 13 ("Jihad")^{xxxvi} and Chapter 15 ("Jiziya and Dhimmis")^{xxxvii} were problematic. In both cases they included authors who show a strong anti-Muslim bias in their writings. We will mainly focus on three authors:

- Srdja (Serge) Trifkovic
- Robert Spencer
- Bat Ye'or

⁹ These are Chapters 2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, 15, and 18.

Serge Trifkovic, although lacking a degree in Islamic studies, is an anti-Muslim activist who frequently writes negatively about Islam. *Trifkovic is a former spokesperson for the Republika Srpska (RS),^{xxxviii} the failed breakaway republic whose leaders and military—according to the CIA^{xxxix}—were responsible for “90% of the war crimes” committed during the 1992-1995 Bosnian civil war, including the mass killing and ethnic cleansing of tens of thousands of Bosnian Muslims.^{xl}* As part of his opposition to U.S. policy toward Kosovo, in 2006 Trifkovic claimed that American officials were “feeding local Muslims with the morsels of Balkan Christendom” to “keep the global beast at bay.”^{xli}

In addition, he has denied that mass killings against Bosnian Muslims occurred, including the massacre of 8,000 civilians at Srebrenica.^{xlii} Trifkovic has also publicly defended Radovan Karadzic,^{xliii} former President of the RS, and Ratko Mladic,^{xliv} a RS general during the Bosnian civil war. Both Karadzic and Mladic are on trial for war crimes and acts of genocide.

Trifkovic has also participated in activities supported and attended by European fascist groups such as the British National Party, and American extreme-right racists.^{xlv}

Robert Spencer is a well-known anti-Muslim activist and pseudo-expert on Islam. He has no degree in Islamic studies; he has a M.A. in religious studies from UNC-Chapel Hill where he focused on early Christianity. Among the Spencer’s hateful statements are, “traditional Islam is not moderate or peaceful”^{xlvi} and “that the Qur’an doesn’t teach violence any more than the ‘Bible or Torah’ is flatly false.”^{xlvii} Like Trifkovic, Spencer has also denied that the occurrence of Serbian genocide against Bosnian Muslims.^{xlviii}

Academics formally trained in Islamic studies, such as Dr. Carl Kenan and Dr. William Kenan at UNC-Chapel Hill, have flatly stated that Spencer’s views have “no basis in scholarship.”^{xlix} Spencer has been named part of the Top 10 “Anti-Islam inner circle”^l by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). The SPLC has listed Spencer’s blog Jihad Watch^{li} and his organization “Stop the Islamization of America”^{lii} as hate groups.

Like Trifkovic, Robert Spencer has participated in activities supported and attended by European fascist groups.^{liii} According to interviews with Charles Johnson, a former Robert Spencer supporter,^{liv} Johnson began to separate himself from individuals such as Spencer due to their associations with nationalist and racist extremists.^{lv}

Bat Ye’or is the pen name of Gisele Orebi Littman, a self-styled historian and pseudo-expert on the history of Muslim interfaith relations in the Middle East. She is most popularly known for her historical work on non-Muslim religious minorities in Muslim-majority Middle Eastern societies, referred to as *dhimmi* in Arabic. She is also one of the leading proponents of the “Eurabia” theory, the idea that European Muslim immigration and birthrates will change the culture and ultimately laws in European nations.^{lvi}

Although her work attempts to present a scholarly veneer, a closer examination of her work and activities reveals a strong anti-Muslim bias. Like Trifkovic and Spencer, she has used her pseudo-intellectual position to support extremist forms of far-right European nationalism,^{lvii} including giving a 1995 talk at a private foundation in the UK that “supports the ideology that led to formulation of Bosnian Serb Republic (Republika Srpska) and its rule under Karadzic.”^{lviii} According to the University of Chicago Islamic studies professor Michael Sells, Ye’or’s lecture:^{lix}

reinforced Karadzic's long-affirmed ideology concerning the struggle of Christian Serbia against the genocidal and inexorable Islamic program of conquest through jihad from the outside and cultural and moral enslavement from within.

However seasoned Islam experts are not fooled. Regarding her research on *dhimmis*, a book review in the peer-reviewed journal *Middle East Policy* by Robert Benton Betts, a Middle East historian and specialist in religious minorities in the Middle East, noted:^{ix}

The general tone of the book is strident and anti-Muslim. This is coupled with selective scholarship designed to pick out the worst examples of anti-Christian behavior by Muslim governments, usually in time of war and threats to their own destruction (as in the case of the deplorable Armenian genocide of 1915).¹⁰ Add to this the attempt to demonize the so-called Islamic threat to Western civilization and the end-product is generally unedifying and frequently irritating.

Another review in the *Middle East Journal* noted, "Many will consider Bat Ye'or's views alarmist and her scholarship tainted by an ideological agenda which ultimately shapes not only what historical data she presents but under what thematic categories she presents it."^{xi}

Regarding "Eurabia", experts on European Islam have dismissed her views as alarmist. Numerous studies actually indicate the opposite trend is occurring: Muslim immigration and birthrates are rapidly dropping,^{lxii} and Muslims indicate high levels of loyalty to their host nation.^{lxiii} For example, Dr. John Esposito and Sheila Lalwani, Islamic studies researchers at Georgetown University, cited recent findings a Pew Religion and Public Life poll, noting, "Pew's findings demonstrate that fear of a European Muslim takeover is largely the product of hysteria – France is not destined to become an 'Islamic Republic' by 2048."^{lxiv} Ye'or's views have similarly been dismissed by many other experts in Europe.^{lxv}

That she is strongly criticized by individuals with subject matter-relevant qualifications for her flawed research is not surprising given her lack of credentials. According to an article in Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*, "Bat Ye'or's opinions have made her a controversial figure, as the fact that she is not an academic and has never taught at any university."^{lxvi} A *Washington Times* article provides further details: "She [Ye'or] studied at the University of London's School of Archaeology and at the University of Geneva, but never graduated."^{lxvii}

¹⁰ It is important to note that even in this case the Turkish military leaders who planned and authorized the acts of genocide, known as "Young Turks", were actually atheists. According to personal memoirs of Henry Morgenthau, former Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire (1913-1916), "Undoubtedly religious fanaticism was an impelling motive with the Turkish and Kurdish rabble who slew Armenians... **but the men who really conceived the crime had no such motive. Practically all of them were atheists, with no more respect for Mohammedanism than for Christianity, and with them the one motive was cold-blooded, calculating state policy.**" See: "Henry Morgenthau, U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire (1913-1916)." *Armenian National Institute*, (2012). http://www.armenian-genocide.org/statement_morgenthau.html.

Trifkovic, Spencer, and Ye’or are connected in two important ways. First, as noted earlier, they have in various ways lent support to the ideology of extreme Serbian nationalism that fueled the mass killings against Bosnians and Croats.

Second, they have lent their support, in various ways to other forms of extreme nationalism elsewhere in Europe and the United States. At times this extremism has manifested itself violently, such as the killings by the Norwegian anti-Muslim terrorist, Anders Breivik.

According to an analysis of Breivik’s “2083 Manifesto” by the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), a U.S. faith-based policy and anti-hate organization¹¹, the specific terms “Jihadwatch.org”, “Robert Spencer”, “Trifkovic”, and “Bat Ye’or” were among the 5 most cited anti-Muslim sources (out of 17 search terms):^{lxviii}

- “**www.jihadwatch.org**”. Ranked 1st, cited 112 times.
- “**Robert Spencer**”. Ranked 2nd, cited 54 times.
- “**Bat Ye’or**”. Ranked 3rd, cited 45 times.
- “**Serge Trifkovic**”. Ranked 5th, cited 22 times.

MPAC’s analysis went on to conclude, “It is interesting to note the heavy influence of anti-Muslim websites in the web citations of the so-called ‘2083 Manifesto’... **Out of 1735 total Internet-based citations in the manifesto, these specific [website search] terms cumulatively represent 10.8% of all such Internet-citations in the document.**”^{lxix} (emphasis in original)

Beyond Trifkovic, Spencer and Ye’or one other author deserves brief mention:

Mark A. Gabriel, allegedly a Muslim convert to Christianity. He also claims to be a former PhD recipient from Al-Azhar University, a prestigious Islamic university in Egypt. All of Gabriel’s books, including *Islam and Terrorism* (used by Kharoba)^{lxx} do not appear to have gone through any academic peer-review. While not written in an academic format, a book review posted on the independent online publication, *The American Muslim*, gave a very negative assessment of the book by doing a point-by-point analysis and refutation of the first 59 pages of its contents, ultimately finding it to be riddled with factual errors and misquotations of the Qur’an.^{lxxi}

The objectivity of Gabriel’s work is cast into further doubt given the author’s strong anti-Muslim biases that appear to guide his research. According to Gabriel, the only solution to solving terrorism committed in the name of Islam is by converting all Muslims to Christianity: “Political and military actions have a role to play, but they will not take this evil away. There is

¹¹ The President of MPAC, Salam Al-Marayati was vetted and appointed as a member of DHS’ Faith-Based Advisory Council. See: “Faith-Based Security and Communications Advisory Committee.” *Department of Homeland Security*, May 2012. <http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/hsac/hsac-faith-based-security-and-communications-advisory-committee-final-report-may-2012.pdf>, P. 21. MPAC has also been listed as an “anti-hate organization” resource by Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino. See: http://hatemonitor.csusb.edu/resources/anti_hate_org.htm.

only One to rescue us: He is the source of peace and the prince of peace, the Lord Jesus Christ.^{lxixii}

Politicized and Misleading Sources

In addition to relying on pseudo-experts in his manual, Kharoba has “cherry-picked” the works of individuals to reinforce his own biases written in the manual. These individuals may have a stronger subject matter background, however these works have 1) recently been called into question due to serious charges of politicization or 2) are simply misleading for novice readers who have no background in the specific subject matter area.

First, is Bernard Lewis. Lewis is considered to be someone who has an academically credentialed background in modern Turkish politics and the study of Medieval Islam. While his background and work can be considered far more scholarly and far less polemical than those of the individuals mentioned thus far in our review, in recent years Lewis has come under greater criticism for increasingly politicized research.

A review of Lewis’ works by Christopher Anzalone, a specialist in Al-Qaeda and its affiliates, and a Doctoral candidate in Islamic Studies at McGill University, one of the oldest and more prestigious Islamic Studies programs in North America, noted:^{lxixiii}

Lewis' aforementioned severe error in judgment has been the kind of politicized scholarship that has made up the bulk of his work during the last several decades, from the infamous (among his critics) *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response* to his post-September 11, 2001 mini-work, *The Crisis of Islam...*, which was basically an enlarged and updated version of an earlier essay, "The Revolt of Islam."

[...]

No one really questions Lewis' scholarly abilities; he has proven his mettle and academic abilities time and time again. What many do question is his tendency to mesh his politics with his scholarship.

It should be noted that *The Crisis of Islam*, which Anzalone cites, is one of the sources in the References section for Chapter 13 (Jihad) of Kharoba’s manual.

Lewis has also faced controversy over his changed position on the Armenian Genocide. He no longer believes genocide occurred, switching his opinion due to personal preferences on Middle East politics.^{lxixiv} He has also been criticized by other Middle East academics for passing himself off as an expert on *contemporary* Arab Middle East politics, despite being trained as a *medieval* researcher and failing to visit an Arab-majority country in several decades.^{lxixv}

Second is *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition* by Yohanan Friedmann. Our concern with the book is not its scholarship; the research is generally

sound (with a few exceptions).^{lxxvi} However the trouble with the book,¹² especially as a resource for law enforcement training, is not what it contains, but what it leaves out. Experts have noted that if the reader does not have strong subject matter expertise in the topic, reading Friedmann’s book can be very misleading.

According to Daniel Martin Varisco, an Islamic studies professor at Hofstra University, “Friedmann’s analysis is almost exclusively about intolerance”.^{lxxvii} Varisco goes on to note that Friedmann’s narrow focus “suggests the author has not made a relevant parallel effort to explore tolerance in the Islamic textual tradition.”^{lxxviii} Varisco’s review concludes, “Scholars familiar with the subject can benefit from this informative study, but **I would not recommend it for a general reader or a beginning student.**”^{lxxix} (emphasis added)

Another book review, by Elizabeth Sartain, an Emeritus Professor of Arab and Islamic Civilization at the American University in Cairo,^{lxxx} notes, “Friedmann’s evident desire to stress the point that medieval views were frequently intolerant often gives his interpretations a negative slant.”^{lxxxix} Sartain concludes:^{lxxxii}

...his introduction suggests that he is writing mainly for the benefit of such non-specialist readers. However, despite its title, this work is not an easy and straightforward survey of the traditional interrelationships between Muslims and non-Muslims. **There is much in it that may mislead, confuse and baffle a non-specialist, and, in my opinion, a general introduction to medieval Muslim views on interfaith tolerance and coercion should be more comprehensive and balanced.** (emphasis added)

Plagiarized Use of Wikipedia and Other Unreliable Sources

Beyond the use of unreliable and misleading sources, our review and investigation of the content in Kharoba’s manual, which is copyrighted and may have “intellectual property rights covering subject matter in th[e] document”,^{lxxxiii} came upon an alarming finding: large sections – in at least one case, an entire chapter – were word-for-word identical to unreliable sources found on the Internet.

Our review is not the first to point this out. In 2011 *Washington Monthly* noted, “large sections of Kharoba’s guide turned out to be word for word the same as open-source materials found online”.^{lxxxiv} The article asserted information was taken from unreliable materials ranging from “publicly available Facebook pages to anonymously authored PDFs.”^{lxxxv}

Our review investigated the matter further and found Wikipedia was the most frequently identified source. The extensive use of Wikipedia articles is alarming because of the regularly inconsistent and unreliable nature of their content.

According to *Inside Higher Ed*, a trade publication specializing in college education, professors have consistently stated it is inappropriate to directly cite or use information in Wikipedia articles for college term papers (much less law enforcement training) because they lack rigorous

¹² We leave aside the question of how relevant and operationally useful the complex and varied *medieval* history of interfaith relations in the Middle East is for law enforcement officers in *modern*-day America.

quality control and frequently contain inaccurate information. *Inside Higher Ed*, quoting Sandra Ordonez, a spokesperson for Wikipedia, noted:^{lxxxvi}

Wikipedia is the ideal place to start your research and get a global picture of a topic; however, it is not an authoritative source. In fact, we recommend that students check the facts they find in Wikipedia against other sources. Additionally, it is generally good research practice to cite an original source when writing a paper, or completing an exam. It's usually not advisable, particularly at the university level, to cite an encyclopedia.

15 out of the 19 chapters we analyzed¹³ (79%) have sections of text that are nearly word-for-word identical to a Wikipedia article. In at least one notable case, Chapter 14 (Dar-al-Harb/Dar-al-Islam), nearly the *entire* chapter is identical to a Wikipedia article dated November 18, 2007.^{lxxxvii}

Often, the manual contained slight variations from the Wikipedia sources that go beyond grammar. Given Kharoba's personal biases and the substantive nature of the changes, these edits appear to be done to further portray Islam and Muslims in an inaccurate and negative manner. Some examples include:

- **P. 3.** In Kharoba's manual it states "Islam is socialistic". The original source¹⁴ actually states, "Islam is societistic." The difference in terms is significant: the former is a political worldview that emphasizes government control of a nation's economy; the latter is a philosophy that emphasizes the overall well-being of a group of people.
- **P. 43.** Kharoba's manual contains passages on Qur'anic commentary (*tafsir*) that are nearly identical to a sub-section within a Wikipedia on the same topic.^{lxxxviii} However there is additional content, not in the Wikipedia article, which makes a grossly inaccurate¹⁵ claim that a convert Muslim who cannot read and recite the Qur'an in Arabic will be considered "a 'second-class Muslim'" by those who can.

¹³ Due to time constraints we did not examine chapters 20 and 21. It is also important to note that our investigation is not exhaustive; our work is a detailed survey that can provide a point of reference for further corroboration and investigation by others.

¹⁴ "Islam." *Jewish Virtual Library*, 2012. <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Bible/Islam.html>. While evidence strongly suggests Kharoba borrowed this passage and surrounding text from the Jewish Virtual Library (JVL), it is also important to note that the JVL copied, with permission, all of its information from a webpage by former Washington State University (WSU) professor Richard Hooker. According to Hooker's resume, found on his LinkedIn profile, he has no formal training in Islamic studies; he taught web-based education development at WSU and is currently an Executive for a private marketing firm. For more information, see: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/richardhooker>.

¹⁵ This runs contrary to the teachings laid out in a famous address by the Prophet Muhammad, popularly referred to as the "Farewell Sermon", in which Muhammad states, "All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab..." Furthermore, Muhammad Asad, a famous commentator of the Qur'an and a convert to Islam, has stressed the importance of understanding Arabic to better access the teachings of the Qur'an. However nowhere has he claimed that a Muslim unable to read or recite in Arabic is a "second-class Muslim". On the Prophet's Last Sermon, see: <http://www.islamicity.com/articles/Articles.asp?ref=ic0107-322>. On Muhammad Asad and understanding the Qur'an, see: <http://bit.ly/ORxYQw>.

- **P. 73.** Kharoba’s manual has text on the various public roles Muslim religious scholars (*ulema*) have played in recent years that is very similar to text in a Wikipedia article on the same topic.^{lxxxix} However there are two additional sentences that claim religious preaching (*da’wa*) “could be the prelude to *Jihad* where Muslims believe they must fulfill the *da’wa* process in order to provide people with the peaceful process to convert to Islam prior to waging *Jihad* as in the tradition of Muhammad.”

There are three reasons that strongly suggest large amounts of Kharoba’s material are plagiarized:

1. *The editing history of every single Wikipedia article indicates that over a period of several years multiple authors made multiple edits from multiple locations.* This makes it highly implausible that one person could physically do all this for a sustained period of time. There is no evidence indicating Kharoba had multiple people working/volunteering that could produce and disseminate such a large amount of information over a long time.
2. *It is highly unlikely that Kharoba would publicly disseminate the contents in his manual.* From a business standpoint this is highly implausible because Kharoba runs a for-profit law enforcement training company. Giving out his sources of information would potentially expose his “trade secrets”. Additionally, there are other indications that strongly suggest a he is averse to having his manual examined by a wider audience. For instance, the copy of manual we obtained says on its cover in capital letters “LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE DO NOT DISTRIBUTE”.
3. *It cannot explain the striking similarities between the manual’s content and text found in other non-Wikipedia sources.* There are several passages in Kharoba’s manual nearly identical to text in other internet sources such as Islam Watch, Robert Spencer’s *Jihad Watch*, and a 2007 op-ed by Ayaan Hirsi Ali. (See the table below for more information.) The only plausible explanation is that Kharoba ghost wrote these articles and somehow received permission to use text from the articles without attribution. However the manual does not indicate such permission was given, and there is no information to suggest any relationship between Sam Kharoba and Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Jihad Watch, or Islam Watch.

Passage from Kharoba’s Manual	Passage from Outside Source
<p>(P. 84.) Taqiyya is a religiously sanctioned Islamic doctrine where some argue that it originated in Shi’a Islam but is practiced today by non-Shia as well. The Qur’anic verses referenced earlier quote Prophet Muhammad supporting dissimulation for the benefit of Muslims. Taqiyya is the deliberate dissimulation about religious matters which may be undertaken to protect Islam and the Muslim believers. A related term, of broader application, is “kitman,” which is defined as</p>	<p>“Taqiyya” is the religiously-sanctioned doctrine, with its origins in Shi’a Islam but now practiced by non-Shi’a as well, of deliberate dissimulation about religious matters that may be undertaken to protect Islam, and the Believers. A related term, of broader application, is “kitman,” which is defined as “mental reservation.” An example of “Taqiyya” would be the insistence of a Muslim apologist that “of course” there is freedom of conscience in Islam, and then quoting that Qur’anic verse -- “There shall be</p>

<p>“mental reservation”. An example of <i>taqiyya</i> would be the insistence of Muslim apologists that “Islam supports freedom of religion” by quoting that <i>Qur’anic</i> verse – “There shall be no compulsion in religion”. But this is a false notion since they know that the concept of abrogation – <i>naskh</i> – has abrogated this verse by later, far more intolerant and dogmatic verses. Throughout history and consistently with Islamic theology there is, and always has been, “compulsion in religion” for Muslims. The compulsion for Muslims comes from the treatment of apostasy as an act punishable by death. And although dhimmis – non Muslims living under the <i>Caliphate</i> – were allowed to practice their religion at the time, they did so under harsh conditions and restrictions that many converted to Islam to avoid the indiscriminate treatment.</p>	<p>no compulsion in religion.” But the impression given will be false, for there has been no mention of the Muslim doctrine of abrogation, or <i>naskh</i>, whereby such an early verse as that about “no compulsion in religion” has been cancelled out by later, far more intolerant and malevolent verses. In any case, history shows that within Islam there is, and always has been, “compulsion in religion” for Muslims, and for non-Muslims. The “compulsion” for Muslims comes from the treatment of apostasy as an act punishable by death. And though “dhimmis” are allowed to practice their religion, they do so under conditions of such burdens and restrictions that many, not as an act of conscience but rather as a response to inexorable Muslim pressure, have converted (or “reverted”) to Islam.</p> <p>Source: http://www.jihadwatch.org/2005/01/fitzgerald-islam-for-infidels-part-one.html</p>
<p>(P. 85.) Thus, although the Hudaibiyya treaty stipulated a 10-year truce, Muhammad broke the agreement and attacked Mecca within two years when his army became stronger than the Meccans and Muhammad’s quest to spread Islam by the sword began when he captures Mecca in 630 AD.</p> <p>From the treaty of Hudaibiyya and the subsequent capture of Mecca and Ka’ba two years later, the evident message of the master tactician Prophet of Islam is that: “When you are weaker against your enemy, do not jump into a suicidal war. Instead, sign a truce of nonaggression for a while during which you could build up the force and ammunition and when you are strong enough to overrun the enemy, ignore the truce and attack”. (emphasis in original)</p>	<p>Although a ten-year truce was signed, Muhammad broke the agreement and attacked Mecca within two years as his force became strong enough to overrun the coveted city.</p> <p>From the treaty of Hudaibiyya and the subsequent capture of Mecca and the Ka’ba two years later, the evident message of the master tactician Prophet of Islam is such:</p> <p><i>When you are weaker against your enemy, do not jump into a suicidal war. Instead, sign a truce of nonaggression for a while during which you could build up the force and ammunition and when you are strong enough to overrun the enemy, dump the truce and launch the attack.</i> (emphasis in original)</p> <p>Source: http://www.islam-watch.org/MA_Khan/HamasHudaybiya.htm.</p>
<p>(P. 139.) A woman in Islam is not viewed as competent and must always have a guardian. The responsibility of guardianship may pass from father to brother to uncle before a girl is married, at which point she</p>	<p>A woman in Islam is not competent and must always have a guardian. The responsibility of guardianship may pass from father to brother to uncle before a girl is married off, at which point she must answer to her husband.</p>

<p>must answer to her husband. Marriage is typically arranged, with no choice given to the girl, and there is often an exchange of money in the process. Thus, under the religious rule of Islam, it is still common today that a woman’s rights are essentially sold to a man she may not know, and most likely does not love.</p>	<p>Marriage is typically arranged, with no choice given to the girl, and there is often an exchange of money in the process. Thus, under the religious rule of Islam, it is still common today that a woman’s rights are essentially sold to a man she may not know, and most likely does not love.</p> <p>Source: http://bit.ly/RXQkhR. (Op-ed, Washington Post)</p>
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For a complete listing of our findings, see “Appendix A: List of Plagiarized and Heavily Borrowed Sources.”

Pseudo-Scholarship Case Study #1: “Usama Bin Laden Did Not Hijack, Nor Twist Islam”

Beyond issues of highly problematic sources and overall lack of reliability, the content of Kharoba’s manual is built on a foundation of flawed assumptions, inaccuracies and oversimplifications that paints a highly distorted picture of Islam and Muslims.

Kharoba’s manual contains too many problems to go into exhaustive detail. Below we will focus on the manual’s main argument, which can be characterized in the following quote: “Usama bin Laden did not hijack, nor twist Islam and that every one of his speeches is theologically correct”.^{xc}

In other words, Kharoba is arguing that Islam itself is the problem: it is inherently violent and aggressive, making it the root cause of radicalization. Therefore Muslims are not to be trusted partners with law enforcement.

Sadly these charges are nothing new. Such accusations are nearly identical to anti-Muslim religious polemics from over a century ago. In fact, as far back as 1885, an Indian Muslim scholar named Cheragh ‘Ali wrote a book responding to these kind of accusations entitled, *A Critical Exposition of the Popular ‘Jihad’: Showing that all the wars of Mohammed were Defensive; and that Aggressive War, or Compulsory Conversion is not Allowed in the Koran*.^{xci}

Needless to say, Islam is not the problem; in fact, it is part of the solution. Contrary to Kharoba’s claim, Osama Bin Laden is no more representative of Islam than the Ku Klux Klan and Timothy McVeigh are of Christianity. After the 9/11 attacks American Muslim communities and organizations mobilized to fight terrorism and extremism as thousands of influential Muslim religious scholars and leaders denounced the attacks, and the hateful ideology behind them, as completely un-Islamic.

Bin Laden’s marginal standing among Muslims has only declined further for several years due to his indiscriminate attacks against civilians and because his ideologically-driven distortions of Islam have been denounced as bankrupt by overwhelming majority of mainstream Muslim religious scholars. **Some examples of Muslims in America and around the world fighting violence and the ideology of extremism since 9/11 include, but are not limited to:**

- A *fatwa* (religious legal opinion) signed by 18 highly-influential American Muslim scholars and 130 American Muslim organizations “pray[ing] for the defeat of extremism and terrorism”, “pray[ing] for the safety and security of our country the United States of America” and “pray[ing] for the safety and security of all inhabitants of this globe.”^{xcii}
- Nine highly-influential American Imams (prayer leaders) issuing a 2010 web-based public service announcement (that went viral among Muslim communities) condemning terrorism in the name of Islam.^{xciii}
- Eight of Muslim America’s leading ulema (religious scholars), from across the theological spectrum, visiting holocaust concentration camps in Europe and issuing a statement--citing the Qur’an--that condemned anti-Semitism.^{xciv}
- Many more statements and *fatwas* from religious scholars and community leaders representing nearly all 1.4 billion Muslims around the world.^{xcv}

Three excellent resources that provide incomplete, but long lists of Muslim condemnations of terrorism and extremism are.^{xcvi}

- *The American Muslim*, an independent magazine operating since 1989.
- The website of Dr. Charles Kurzman, Islamic Studies professor at UNC-Chapel Hill.
- The “Study of Islam” Section at the *American Academy of Religion*, a U.S.-based professional group of academic subject matter experts in religious studies

American Muslims have proven themselves as reliable partners in one other important way: tips to law enforcement that helped prevent terrorism plots. According to a 2011 study by Duke University, 40% of all Al-Qaeda plots aimed at the United States since 9/11 have been prevented due to tips Muslims provided to law enforcement.^{xcvii} The same study also found that Muslim community tips were responsible for more terrorism arrests than the use of informants.^{xcviii}

Finally, empirical studies have not supported the idea that greater Islamic religiosity pushes people toward radicalization and extremism. In fact studies of both terrorist recruits and terrorist recruiters have shown the opposite—**ignorance of Islam is a strong factor in facilitating radicalization of Muslims.**

According to a study of 500 Al-Qaeda operatives by Marc Sageman, a former CIA case officer and expert on international terrorism, only one quarter grew up with a religious upbringing; two-thirds “grew up secular, in secular environments.”^{xcix} These individuals only became religious after they started becoming attracted to Al-Qaeda’s political ideology. Sageman later concludes, “A simple traditional religious education... might have inoculated the [terrorist] wannabes against the violent ideas.”^c

Looking at the recruiter side of radicalization, the Minaret of Freedom Institute—a U.S. faith-based think-tank promoting individual liberty, limited government and free markets in Muslim

societies^{ci} concluded a two-year long study of Osama Bin Laden's 49 public statements, covering the span of 15 years (1996-2011).^{cii}

The study found that Bin Laden overwhelmingly cited political and policy issues to justify violence when speaking to various audiences, including Muslims, he was trying to recruit. However, he cited religious beliefs more often to fellow extremists and terrorists already committed to his cause. The study concluded that, given "bin Laden's overwhelming preference for invoking policy justifications, it appears religious justifications are not a means of obtaining new recruits, but instead meant to maintain the loyalty and morale of his followers."^{ciii}

Although Kharoba – who has neither a degree in Islamic studies, nor a background in law enforcement – has claimed that "Usama Bin Laden did not hijack nor twist Islam and that every one of his speeches is theologically correct according to Islamic theology", the overwhelming majority of mainstream Muslim scholars have categorically rejected that notion. They have roundly condemned and refuted Bin Laden's violent pseudo-religious ideology and Muslim community members notify law enforcement of any potential plots they are aware of.

Pseudo-Scholarship Case Study #2: A Distorted Discussion of Naskh

In order to prove that Islam is an inherently violent religion, Kharoba employs a selective cut-and-paste methodology to the Qur'an and life of the Prophet to Muhammad to charges that they are filled with violence and aggression.

Again, rather than engaging in a point-by-point refutation of Bin Laden and Kharoba's distortions of the Qur'an and life of the Prophet Muhammad, we will leave it to the experts – Muslim scholars such as Dr. Muhammad Tahir ul-Qadri who wrote a 600-page *fatwa* citing the Qur'an, life of the Prophet Muhammad and classical scholarship refuting terrorism and its extremist ideology^{civ} – to discuss this matter in further detail.

We will focus only one other specific, but very important element to Kharoba's (and Muslim violent extremists')^{cv} claim that Islam justifies indiscriminate bloodshed, aggression and hatred toward non-Muslim and Muslim adversaries.¹⁶ He claims that verses of peace, which reportedly came early in the Qur'an's revelation while the Prophet Muhammad was in the city of Mecca and persecuted, were overtaken later by verses discussing violence when the Prophet fled to Madina and became the elected leader of the city.

As Kharoba's manual notes:^{cvi}

Initially the Qur'anic revelations were peaceful and tolerant but later became radical and militant. Muhammad initially attempted to spread Islam peacefully using Da'wa – the peaceful call to convert to Islam. Later in life, when the Da'wa

¹⁶ We note Muslim opposition to terrorist ideology not only in order to clarify the public record, but also to note that, **according to West Point's Combating Terrorism Center, the overwhelming majority – 85% – of Al-Qaeda's victims are other Muslims.** See: Scott Helfstein, Nassir Abdullah, Muhammad al-Obaidi, "Deadly Vanguard: A Study of al-Qa'ida's Violence Against Muslims." *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, December 2009. http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/deadly-vanguards_complete_1.pdf

did not succeed, Muhammad resorted to *Jihad* – violence and warfare to forcibly convert people to Islam.

This assertion is based on a highly selective reading of a historical doctrine called *naskh* (discussed in Chapter 6 of Kharoba’s manual), in which certain Qur’anic verses, those addressing warfare, supersede others that advocate for peace.

However in order to make such an argument, Kharoba makes two assumptions. First, he assumes to know with certainty the exact chronological revelation of the Qur’an over a 23-year period. As his manual states:^{cxvii}

Understanding the chronological order of Qur’anic verses is fundamental to understanding the violent nature of Islamic theology which is the root cause of Jihadist and terrorist activities exhibited by Muslims today.

However Muslim and non-Muslim scholars who have studied the Qur’an for centuries have hotly debated this issue and arrived at no consensus to this very day. Various researchers have developed their own timelines and criticized others’.^{cxviii} Yet Kharoba’s chapter makes no mention of this debate, instead it is described as though it is a settled matter. The strength of his argument is further weakened when considering where he gets his information. Kharoba’s chronology of the Qur’an is identical to that of an extremely dubious source – the *Skeptic’s Annotated Quran*^{cxix} (written by atheist polemicists who espouse a staunchly anti-religious worldview).^{cx} If people with stronger subject matter expertise and greater methodological rigor have not arrived at a firm conclusion, it is unlikely Kharoba, with his lax methods and suspect sources, has either.

Second, he assumes that there is a relatively unified understanding of how *naskh* is applied to verses of war and peace. However, like the order of revelation, the concept of *naskh* has been a hotly debated issue, especially among Muslim scholars.^{cx} There has never been agreement on *how many* verses are abrogated and *which* verses are abrogated. In fact some classical scholars and growing number of modern scholars reject the idea of *naskh* altogether!^{cxii}

Kharoba appears to cherry pick only the most extreme *naskh* opinions that claimed verses 9:5 and 9:29, known as “verses of the sword”, literally override all 113 verses on self-defense, peace, forgiveness, patience and tolerance. However this opinion is the exception, not the norm. As Ahmad Hasan, a Muslim scholar at the Islamic Research Institute in Pakistan notes, “It has been the trend of the scholars to reduce the number of the abrogated verses which had reached appalling proportions... This trend shows that the repeal of the individual verses in the Qur’an was generally not favored.”^{cxiii}

In his article, “Jihad is Not Perpetual Warfare”,^{cxiv} American Muslim scholar Zaid Shakir documents the diversity of opinions on *naskh* and cites several classical scholars who argued that the “Verses of the Sword” were in fact superseded by other verses in the Qur’an that advocated peace. Similarly, Islamic studies professor Sherman Jackson provides a critical analysis of extremists’ use of *naskh* in his article “Jihad in the Modern World”.^{cxv}

2b & 2c. TRAINING SHOULD FOCUS ON BEHAVIOR, NOT RELIGION. DON'T USE TRAINING THAT EQUATES RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION, & OTHER CONSTITUTIONALLY PROTECTED ACTIVITY WITH CRIMINAL ACTIVITY.

As we have noted earlier, Kharoba's manual fails on both of these criteria, making no distinction between the overwhelming majority of peaceful, law-abiding Muslims and the tiny, but dangerous minority of violent extremists that merit law enforcement attention. (For more information see, Section 1d, starting from subsection *Lack of Cited Sources*, until the end of *Case Study #2*.)

Kharoba's conflation between lawful religious practice and behavior reasonably indicative of criminal activity¹⁷ is clearly reinforced in the following passage:^{cxvi}

As the remainder of this publication will present, Islam as a system of theology is a radical and violent set of beliefs that mandate the spread of Islam worldwide. Islamic law, known as *Shariah* Law does not promote equality between Muslims and non-Muslims. *Shariah* Law also mandates gender discrimination where men are far more superior to women. These are the foundations of Islamic theology. Thus, the words Peaceful Islam are an oxymoron.

However, there are peaceful Muslims and radical Muslims. Many of the peaceful Muslims are the secular (sometimes referred to as cultural) Muslims who do not follow strict Islamic theology. These Muslims do not pray five times a day, do not fast the month of Ramadan and are not followers of *Shariah* Law. Thus, the words peaceful Muslims and radical Muslims are appropriate since many non-practicing Muslims are by default peaceful and there is a minority of religious Muslims who follow peaceful practices. On the other hand, once a Muslim is a strict follower of Islamic theology and is an adherent to *Shariah* Law, there is [a] very likely chance that such an individual will hold *Jihadist* beliefs that predict Islamic superiority and the need to destroy non-Muslim civilizations. If such an individual is going to act on these, believes, [sic] then we have what we call a terrorist.

3a. TRAINERS WHO ARE WELL REGARDED BY COMMUNITIES & LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN HELP FURTHER DIALOGUE AND BROADER RESOURCES & CONNECTIONS

We have no evidence of how Kharoba is perceived by "local government" outside of specific local law enforcement agencies. As we have already documented, Florida Muslim communities

¹⁷ "Reasonably indicative of criminal activity is the legal standard set forth in Functional Standard 1.5 of the Information Sharing Environment, which regulates how suspicious activity reports are to be filed by local, state and federal agencies and departments sharing terrorism/homeland security information within the Information Sharing Environment, across the entire nation. See: "Information Sharing Environment (ISE) Functional Standard (FS) Suspicious Activity Report (SAR) Version 1.5." *Office of the Program Manager for the Information Sharing Environment*, May 21, 2009. <http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/privacy/privacy-pia-dhswide-sar-ise-appendix.pdf>.

have a very poor opinion of Kharoba's trainings, finding them to be grossly inaccurate and biased. (For more information on Muslim communities' opinions, see Section 1a.)

5b. ENSURE TRAINING PROVIDES OPERATIONAL BEST PRACTICES FOR HOW TO ENGAGE WITH COMMUNITIES TO MAXIMIZE EFFECTIVENESS

Our review of Kharoba's manual found no operational best practices on engagement. In fact, our evidence indicates that his inaccurate and negative description of Islam supports a position of mistrust, disengagement, and confrontation between law enforcement and Muslim communities. (For more information see, Section 1d. starting from subsection *Lack of Cited Sources*, until the end of *Case Study #2*.)

CONCLUSION

In this report, we analyzed the content of Sam Kharoba's manual, *A Law Enforcement's Guide to Understanding Islamist Terrorism* based on standards established by the Department Homeland Security and other federal law enforcement agencies. Our assessment indicates that neither Kharoba's professional/education background, nor the content of his manual come close to meeting to the standards set forth by DHS.

In fact, alarmingly, we found his manual's content to be unsound due to the (likely) plagiarized manner in which he gathered his information, and the fact that many of his sources are missing, unreliable, inaccurate, politicized, misleading, and/or biased. Our two case studies critically analyzing two of the manual's core arguments only confirms our concerns about Kharoba's dubious research and training content.

In light of the recent public controversies surrounding Mr. Kharoba and the facts contained within this report, we request that you formally and immediately discontinue the services of Mr. Sam Kharoba as a law enforcement instructor. His training tactics are not only inaccurate, but can also potentially increase the law enforcement officers' civil liability in the event of an avoidable confrontation.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF PLAGIARIZED & HEAVILY BORROWED SOURCES

Chapter 1:

- From “The sacred text of the Muslims...” to the end of “Islam is socialistic” (Actually says “societistic” in the original document) Link: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Bible/Islam.html>
- Basic History sub-section taken from: <http://static.nicic.gov/Library/017613.pdf>
- Islamic Theology sub-section: <http://static.nicic.gov/Library/017613.pdf>
 - Leaves out important things, such as the original text stating that women are equal to men.
- Requirements on becoming a Muslim sub-section taken from: <http://static.nicic.gov/Library/017613.pdf>
- Daily Observances sub-section: <http://static.nicic.gov/Library/017613.pdf>
- Holy Days sub-section: <http://static.nicic.gov/Library/017613.pdf>
- Dietary Regimens sub-section: <http://static.nicic.gov/Library/017613.pdf>

Chapter 2:

- The Rightly Guided Caliphs sub-section very similar to: http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Caliphate&oldid=270296671#Rashidun.2C_632-661

Chapter 4:

- Five pillars: <http://static.nicic.gov/Library/017613.pdf>
- Ashura: http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Day_of_Ashura&oldid=209240367
- Information on “Other Islamic sects” are nearly identical to content from Wikipedia entry “Divisions of Islam” dated May 20, 2008: http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Islamic_schools_and_branches&oldid=213785574
 - Kharoba manual adds in additional text about Tablighi Jama’at being used by extremists and terrorists to facilitate travel and spreading extremist ideology.

Chapter 5:

- P. 41-42 appears to be heavily borrowed from: <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Quran&oldid=20692828>
- Last two paragraphs, P. 42 heavily borrowed from [http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Naskh_\(tafsir\)&oldid=72504862#Modes](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Naskh_(tafsir)&oldid=72504862#Modes)
- Mushaf paragraph taken from: <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Mus%27haf&oldid=213699050>.
- Section on Tafsir take from: http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Quran&oldid=508634909_-_Tafsir
 - Adds an odd and grossly inaccurate statement not in the original Wiki text about converts being second-class for not being able to read and recite in Arabic.
- Arrangement of the Qur’an sub-section identical to information contained in the Skeptics Annotated Quran: <http://skepticsannotatedbible.com/quran/chrono.htm>

Chapter 7:

- “The Origin of Naskh” is strikingly similar to text found in: [http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Naskh_\(tafsir\)&oldid=500195950#Theory](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Naskh_(tafsir)&oldid=500195950#Theory)

Chapter 8:

- “Origin of hadith” (P. 62) sub-section nearly identical to passages in: http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Hadith&oldid=56516388#How_hadith_were_collected_and_evaluated

Chapter 9:

- Text and structure of Chapter on Ulema largely identical to passages in: <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ulama&oldid=301176162>;
 - Section on preaching (p.73) appears to have added additional inaccurate and inflammatory text about religious preaching being the prelude to jihad

Chapter 10:

- Large sections of this chapter are very similar in structure and text to: <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Fiqh&oldid=237772473>.

Chapter 11:

- Large sections of text are identical to: <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Takfir&oldid=302236285>.
 - Interestingly, Kharoba’s manual fails to include the statement in the Wiki article that Abu Bakr’s statement did not qualify as takfir.

Chapter 12:

- Taqiyya and Kitman definitions taken from Hugh Fitzgerald Jihad Watch: <http://www.jihadwatch.org/2005/01/fitzgerald-islam-for-infidels-part-one.html>;
- Discussion on the Treaty of Hudaibiyya largely identical to text in: http://www.islam-watch.org/MA_Khan/HamasHudaybiya.htm

Chapter 13:

- Large portions of this chapter’s text are identical or nearly identical to: <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Jihad&oldid=168861322>

Chapter 14:

- Entire Chapter Text nearly identical to: http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Divisions_of_the_world_in_Islam&oldid=172252036

Chapter 15:

- Jizya sub-section largely identical to text found in: <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Jizya&oldid=100844360>
- Dhimmi sub-section contains large amounts of wording identical to text found in: <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Dhimmi&oldid=235786449>

Chapter 17:

- Ibn Taymiyyah sub-section largely identical to text found in: http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ibn_Taymiyyah&oldid=290765983
- Ibn Wahhab sub-section largely identical to text found in: http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Muhammad_ibn_Abd-al-Wahhab&oldid=101426535
- Sayyid Qutb sub-section largely identical to text found in: http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Sayyid_Qutb&oldid=126728446

Chapter 18:

- Large sections of text nearly identical to what’s found in: <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Sharia&oldid=125505558> and <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Sharia&oldid=213751277>

Chapter 19:

- Large sections of text throughout the chapter are nearly word-for-word identical to: http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Women_in_Islam&oldid=222088933.
- Text on Saudi law and “blood money” for people of different religions, taken from: <http://www.jihadwatch.org/2010/11/sharia-a-muslims-life-is-worth-twice-that-of-a-jew-or-christian-and-fifteen-times-more-than-that-of.html>;
- On P. 139, the paragraph discussing women’s mental competence, is nearly identical to a passage in an op-ed from: http://onfaith.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/guestvoices/2007/08/my_view_of_islam.html

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- ^x Charles Kurzman, "Muslim American Terrorism Since 9/11: An Accounting." *Duke University Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security*, (2011). http://tchhs.sanford.duke.edu/about/documents/Kurzman_Muslim-American_Terrorism_Since_911_An_Accounting.pdf. P. 5.
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