Understanding the Burqa: Should it be Banned?

MSU Human Rights Education Internship

Contact Information: fathia.balgahoom@gmail.com

Created by: Fathia Balgahoom

Date: April 27th, 2020

**Lesson Title: Understanding the Burqa: Should it be Banned?**

**Grade/Course: 9th-12th Grade/History Lesson duration: 40-45 minutes**

**Topic of Lesson: The Burqa Ban**

|  |
| --- |
| **Central Focus:**  At the end of this lesson, students will have a clearer understanding of the Burqa Ban, the role anti-Muslim bias played in the passing of the ban, and the consequences of it. Students will also understand the role the European Court of Human Rights plays in the aftermath of the ban and the outcomes that followed suit. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Essential Question(s):**   * What is Islam and the different types of Islamic veils? * What role does Anti-Muslim bias play in the creation of the Burqa ban? * What role did France have in the Burqa Ban trend? * What are some of the arguments for and against the ban? * What are the unintended consequences of the ban? * What is the European Court of Human Rights’ role? How did their decision impact the ban? |

|  |
| --- |
| **State/Disciplinary Standards:**  6.1.4.A.9 Compare and contrast responses of individuals and groups, past and present, to violations of fundamental rights (e.g., fairness, civil rights, human rights).  6.2.12.A.6.d Assess the effectiveness of responses by governments and international organizations to tensions resulting from ethnic, territorial, religious, and/or nationalist differences  6.3.4.A.2 Examine the impact of a local issue by considering the perspectives of different groups, including community members and local officials. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Daily Performance Objectives:**   1. Define the religion of Islam and identify the core values in the religion 2. Identify the different Islamic veils 3. Understand what anti-Muslim bias is and its role in the passing of the Burqa Ban 4. Define the Burqa Ban 5. Recognize the events leading up to the Burqa Ban and both sides of the argument 6. Identify the consequences of the ban and the impact they have 7. Understand the role of the ECHR and the decision’s consequences |

**Lesson Progression:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Duration:** | **The teacher will…** | **The student(s) will…** |
| **19 minutes** | **Begin introducing yourself and the topic. Afterwards start playing the PowerPoint.** | **Listen to the teachers as they go through each slide.** |
| **2-3 minutes** | **In slide 7, ask the students to answer the question on the slide.** | **Take out a piece of paper and write down some arguments for and against the burqa ban.** |
| **~7 minutes** | **Play the video on slide 8 after listening to the audio embedded to the PowerPoint.**  **This video illustrates each side’s point of view of the argument. Since there is a Muslim woman in the debate, this video will help students understand the Muslim woman’s point of view.** | **Watch the video.** |
| **2-3 minutes** | **Have the students get into small groups made up of 3-4 students to discuss the questions on slide 10.** | **Get into small groups and have a discussion about the ban. They will be drawing from the knowledge they gathered from the previous slides.**  **For the second question, they will stay in their groups and see if they can draw any similarities to any news stories or personal experiences where someone else determined the way they chose to dress.** |
| **10 minutes** | **Have the students stay in their groups and work on the activity in slide 11.** | **Read the directions on the slide and complete the activity. After completing the first three steps, they will discuss if their previous misconceptions have changed.** |

|  |
| --- |
| **Prior Knowledge Resources:**  Students may have prior knowledge from:   1. Media/news articles 2. Their own misconceptions-based experience 3. Their own perceptions on the burqa and/or niqab from families and/or friends |

|  |
| --- |
| **Academic Language:**  Islam, Veils, Burqa, and European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) |

|  |
| --- |
| **Materials and Preparation:**   * Computer/Laptop * Speakers/Headphones * Paper and Pen/Pencil |

|  |
| --- |
| **Assessment/Evaluation**  Based on the presentation and the activities throughout the presentation are students able to identify what the burqa ban is, the events that led up to it, it’s consequences and the role of the ECHR? Students should also become more aware of their misconceptions placed on the Muslim community and in turn understand those consequences. Students should also be able to relate to the restrictions placed on these Muslim women. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Homework:**   * Continue to stay up to date with the Burqa Ban * Begin teaching others what you taught today to others * Watch the videos on the handout |

Annotated Bibliography

BHATTI, JABEEN, and Aida Alami. "Burqa Bans Grow Fashionable in Europe."*Gannett News Service*, Jun 27, 2010*. ProQuest*, http://ezproxy.montclair.edu:2048/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.montclair.edu/docview/522114707?accountid=12536.

This article outlines the differing viewpoints of the burqa ban and the debate it has sparked over an individual’s religious freedom versus one’s cultural values. It implies how quickly the “trend” has taken off in Europe, starting in Belgium and what little effect it has over the population. One important piece of evidence, the article points out is that this ban only effects about 30-100 women, which is less than 1% of the overall population. The main reason for all these countries to ban the burqa and niqab is that it is against their values of their countries and see it as a sign of patriarchy for Muslim women. One of the unintended consequences of this ban that this article points out is the isolation of some women who feel as though they cannot express their religion properly.

<https://goatmilk.wordpress.com/2010/06/28/burqa-bans-grow-fashionable-in-europe/>

Duncan, Derek. “What Is Islam?” *Global Ministries*, [www.globalministries.org/mee\_resources\_what\_is\_islam](http://www.globalministries.org/mee_resources_what_is_islam).

This article has a wealth of knowledge regarding Islam and is a great resource that lays out what Islam is and the basic aspects of the religion including the five pillars, the holy book, the belief system and etc. It starts off by mentioning that Islam is one of the three central Abrahamic faiths. It teaches people that are interested in learning more about Islam about the importance of Prophet Muhammad SAW to Muslims. It also points out the belief in prophets and that while Muslims believe Muhammad SAW, as the last prophet, they also believe in Jesus and others as prophets of Islam as well. It also emphasizes the importance Muhammad SAW has on the religion by mentioning the hadiths which are a collection of stories about his life and teachings. It goes into depth about the five pillars and mentions the misconception of Jihad in Islam.

FREEDMAN, JANE. "Women, Islam and Rights in Europe: Beyond a universalist/culturalist Dichotomy."*Review of International Studies*, vol. 33, no. 1, 2007, pp. 29*. ProQuest*, http://ezproxy.montclair.edu:2048/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.montclair.edu/docview/204899277?accountid=12536, doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.montclair.edu:2048/10.1017/S0260210507007280.

In this journal entry, the author specifically using the burqa ban in France as an example. The author delves into the different arguments posed by feminists and politicians whom frequently believe that they are liberating these women by banning the headscarf, niqab and burqa. This entry discusses the shifts towards the headscarf and how this played a role in the burqa ban that took place in 2010. While discussing the feminist point of view, the author points out differing viewpoints for different feminists however they all reach the conclusion of believing that Muslim women are oppressed by a patriarchal society that force them to wear the headscarf. This entry also includes the viewpoints of non-Western Muslim women and their point of view on the headscarf and how it plays a role in their identity. The author uses results of a research study to showcase different reasons as to why one chooses to wear the headscarf or burqa.

Hartcher, Peter. "ASIO Finds Burqa Ban would Fuel Extremists: 'Negative Implications'."*The Canberra Times*, Oct 29, 2014, pp. 8*. ProQuest*, http://ezproxy.montclair.edu:2048/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.montclair.edu/docview/1617546852?accountid=12536.

In this news article, it discusses another country proposing a burqa ban which happens to be Australia. Like many European countries, Australia considered this ban based on a number of reasons such as security. However, the nation’s intelligence organization found no basis on this claim especially after stating this is not the only piece of clothing that can conceal the identity and contraband. It also mentions how damaging this ban can be, because it seems to be aimed towards the Muslim community and cause them to be further isolated from society. Another unintended consequence is having women who don’t normally wear it, begin wearing the burqa as a sign of defiance towards the government.

Kishi, Katayoun. “Assaults against Muslims in U.S. Surpass 2001 Level.” *Pew Research Center*, Pew Research Center, 15 Nov. 2017, [www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/11/15/assaults-against-muslims-in-u-s-surpass-2001-level/](http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/11/15/assaults-against-muslims-in-u-s-surpass-2001-level/).

The burqa ban is arguably an act of anti-Muslim bias. In order to understand this point, I found it valuable to point out the recent trend of anti-Muslim bias rising steadily. In this study done by the Pew Research Center, there is a chart illustrating assaults towards Muslims and the impact 9/11 had on the Muslim community. The study also mentions that assault isn’t the only form of aggressions towards Muslims with the biggest being intimidation. The study also mentions statistics to help back up their claims and compare these crimes towards Muslims against other groups.

Lægaard, Sune. "Burqa Ban, Freedom of Religion and 'Living Together'."*Human Rights Review*, vol. 16, no. 3, 2015, pp. 203-219*. ProQuest*, http://ezproxy.montclair.edu:2048/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.montclair.edu/docview/1702197232?accountid=12536, doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.montclair.edu:2048/10.1007/s12142-015-0362-6.

In this journal entry, the author breaks down what the European Court of Human Right’s (ECHR) decision based on the case presented to them. The case brought to the court was from an anonymous French citizen who believed that this ban is a violation of European Convention of Human Rights articles three, eight, nine, ten, eleven, and fourteen. The author breakdowns the decision handed by ECHR and their justifications on the upholding the ban in France. Coming from the Human Rights Review, the author will be basing the entry from a human rights perspective and breaking down the government’s decision and reasoning behind the ban. By breaking down the meaning and showing that this ban has no basis, it adds a legal layer to this argument.

Lundt, Jennifer. “Muslim Veil and Hijab Types: Complete Guide: Meaning, Styles & More.” *IstiZada*, 14 June 2019, <http://istizada.com/muslim-veil-and-hijab-types-a-complete-guide/>.

This source helps breakdown the different types of hijabs and Muslim veils. For my presentation, I believe it is important to point out the different types of dress for Muslim women and the distinction between them since my lesson plan is about a specific type of dress Muslim women can wear. By addressing the different types of veils, it can help breakdown the conceptions about Muslim women. It will also help those unfamiliar with the veil and different types of it to see that there is more than one kind. This article also addresses why some women chose to wear said veil and why. Those are important questions to address especially since not many are aware of the veil and the reasonings behind it.

Piatti-Crocker, Adriana, and Laman Tasch. "Veil Bans in Western Europe: Interpreting Policy Diffusion."*Journal of International Women's Studies*, vol. 16, no. 2, 2015, pp. 15-29*. ProQuest*, <http://ezproxy.montclair.edu:2048/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.montclair.edu/docview/1655287044?accountid=12536>.

In this source, it details the definition of the burqa and the niqab. Before even discussing the ban and the different reasons for the ban, I have to define what the burqa and the niqab are which is located in this source. Also, this source goes over four different main countries in Europe that imposed a burqa ban including France, Belgium, Italy and The Netherlands and gives a brief overview for the countries various reasons of imposing a burqa ban. In the conclusion the author mentions that if all European countries continue to follow this path, it could become an infringement on one’s human rights such as the right to display one’s religion.

“Should Britain Ban the Burka?” This Morning , 7 Dec. 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XRwHXt8BmyQ>.

In this video, I found it important to see a debate happening around the burqa ban. There were two points of views from this interview that were really beneficial. The first was the point of view from a Muslim woman, her thoughts on the ban and what is means from a Muslim woman’s perspective. The other from a point of view supporting the idea of a ban. This debate allows people to hear both points of view and see what it really means to a Muslim woman when laws like these are passed.