Educator's Guide for the documentary film by Theresa Thanjan Whose Children Are These?

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GRADE LEVEL: 6-12th

SUBJECT AREAS: World History, U.S. History, U.S. Government

ESTIMATED DURATION: Each individual lesson plan, 1 hour; as a set, 5-7 days

OVERVIEW

Whose Children Are These? is a short documentary (26:46) that looks into the lives of three Muslim teenagers impacted by the post 9/11 security measure known as Special Registration. The film introduces Navila Ali, an honors student who is fighting to have her father released from detention; Mohammed Sarfaraz Hussain, a popular basketball player who confronts pending deportation; and Hager Youssef, a young woman who faces bias and is spurred into activism as a result. Each young person comes from one of the twenty-five countries profiled by the Special Registration Program (Bangladesh, Pakistan and Egypt).

This guide consists of four lessons. The first lesson includes a pre-viewing warm up and activity examining U.S. policies after September 11, 2001. The second lesson includes the viewing and post-viewing activity. The third lesson asks students to examine racial and ethnic profiling in American society. The fourth lesson plan asks students to compare and contrast the United States policies of Executive Order 9066 during World War II to the Special Registration program in today's "War against Terror." The final lesson provides teachers with learning extension possibilities and research ideas beyond the film.

Please remember that these lesson plans are guidelines only. The content of the film and these activities may require additional preparation and scaffolding, especially for use in the middle grades. We hope that you will make the necessary adjustments to meet the needs of your academic and social environment, keeping in mind your own and your students' familiarity with the issues, the needs of your school and community, your students' grade level and social awareness, and class size and duration.

MATERIALS

- A copy of the film, Whose Children Are These?, by Theresa Thanjin. To purchase a copy of this film please contact the Center for Asian American Media (CAAM) at distribution@asianamericanmedia.org. You can also visit the Web site at http://catalog.asianamericanmedia.org
- 2. Student Handouts (provided).

(continued on next page)

- 3. Web sites: Access needed to internet for student research
 - Special Report, "Special Registration: Discrimination and Xenophobia as Government Policy" http://www.aaldef.org/images/01-04_registration.pdf 2003, Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund.
 - American Civil Liberties Union: http://www.aclu.org
 - Cato Institute: http://www.cato.org
 - Harvard Discrimination and National Security Initiative: http://www.dnsi.org

PROCEDURE

Activity 1 – Personalizing the Story (30-45 min.)

- **1.** Before viewing the film, lead students in a preliminary discussion (warm up activity) about the following topic: September 11, 2001. You can write the following questions on the board or read each one aloud and have the students respond in silence.
 - Where were you on September 11, 2001? What were you doing?
 - Describe your first memory or recollection of the attacks on the Twin Towers (probably associated with watching news coverage).
 - How did these attacks make you feel shocked, afraid, worried, apathetic, angry, etc.?
 - After September 11, 2001, what were some of the concrete ways the government responded? (You can prompt students with examples such as the passage of the Patriot Act, an increase in security at airports or the invasion of Afghanistan.)
 - After September 11, 2001, what were some of the social implications of these policies on the population as a whole and specific groups (for example, Arab Americans)?
- 2. After completing the warm up activity move the conversation towards a discussion on the policies enacted by the United States soon after September 11, 2001. Set up the conversation by explaining that the Executive Branch's rhetoric in justifying these policies was to make "America safer in the 'War against Terror.'" On a sheet of paper for each of the policies ask students to: write the positive and negative aspects, any questions they may have about the policy, and their own conclusion about the policy. After completing this chart have the students answer the following question: *Have these policies made the United States safer from terrorist attacks*? Pass out **Student Handout A: U.S. policies after September 11, 2001**.
- **3.** After students have completed their charts ask them to get in groups and compare. Facilitate a larger class discussion and check for clarity and understanding of these policies.

Activity 2 – *Meet the Youth* (1-1/2 hours including the viewing of the film)

- 1. Write the following essential question on the board: What is the most appropriate way to balance the protection of national security and our individual rights? Explain to the students to keep this question in mind as they watch the film, participate in the following activities and engage in discussion with their peers.
- **2.** Before watching the film, *Whose Children Are These*?, prep the students by sharing an overview of the film and that it takes a closer look at a security measure known as Special Registration.

- **3.** Pass out **Student Handout B: Meet the Youth**. Students will be asked to take notes on the three main characters by completing the matrix on these four categories:
 - Background information.
 - How has post 9/11 policy affected their lives?
 - What kind of action was taken to help them address their issues (either by themselves or others)?
 - What, if any, further action needs to be taken?
- **4.** At the completion of the film ask students to get in groups and share their charts with each other. Check for understanding and make sure that all students have an understanding of the situations of each of the three characters.
- **5.** Pass out **Student Handout C: Post-viewing Questions**. Ask students to answer some specific content and theme questions about the film. This can be done in the groups or if pressed for time, the assignment can be done for homework.
- **6.** Facilitate class discussion and answer any other questions students may have about the characters, content or themes from the film.
- 7. For a summary of the Special Registration program, ask students to read the Executive Summary (pp.4-9) of the Special Report, *Special Registration: Discrimination and Xenophobia as Government Policy*. It can be downloaded at http://www.aaldef.org/images/01-04_registration.pdf

Activity 3 – *Racial and Ethnic Profiling* (2-4 class sessions, excluding independent research by the students)

- **1.** Ask students to create 2 columns on a sheet of paper, titled "race" and "ethnicity." Under each "category," ask students to write down what race they consider themselves to be and what ethnicity they are. Under their answers for each column have students write down the reasons why they are considered that race or ethnicity (e.g., skin color, country of heritage, language, cultural practices, etc.). Next ask students to write down what other people perceive their race or ethnicity to be and explain why people come to those conclusions (e.g., skin color, language, clothing, etc.).
- **2.** Have students share their sheets with each other. Ask students to see if they share any characteristics with other races or ethnicities, were there any surprises, and do they have any further questions. Clarify with the class the differences and definitions between "race" and "ethnicity." You can include other factors and dynamics such as nationality, religion, and culture.
- **3.** Ask students to define racial and ethnic profiling. Hold a brainstorming session and challenge students to really think about their definition based on the differences (they just learned) between race and ethnicity.
- **4.** Ask the students the following question during the facilitated conversation:
 - What happens when someone is being racially or ethnically profiled?
 - Who uses this practice and in what types of situations?
 - In what type of instances, if any, is racial or ethnic profiling okay?
 - What are some of the dangers of racial and ethnic profiling, both to the victim and the perpetrator?

- **5.** The next step involves the students consulting with some experts. Have students read the positions and opinions of the American Civil Liberties Union, the Cato Institute, the Harvard Discrimination and National Security Initiative, and other resources you may find:
 - http://www.aclu.org/racialjustice/racialprofiling/index.html
 - "Ethnic Profiling: A Rational and Moral Framework" by Robert A. Levy: http://www.cato.org/current/terrorism/pubs/levy-011002.html
 - http://www.dnsi.org
- **6.** Next, have students research prominent cases of racial and ethnic profiling in U.S.
 - History. (Feel free to add to this list.):Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti
 - The Palmer Raids
 - Internment of Japanese Americans during World War II
 - Wen Ho Lee
 - Amadou Diallo
- **7.** Break the class up into research teams, 2 teams per case. Students will need to conduct extensive research on both the historical facts and the issue of racial and ethnic profiling. One team must argue in defense of racial and ethnic profiling as applied to the case, while the other team must argue against it.
- **8.** Conduct the dialogue between the teams in class. After all of the research has been presented, do a recap: as individual response essays have students reflect on the key concerns they have learned about the practice of racial and ethnic profiling, how their understanding or awareness of the issue has changed through this activity and research, and why it is such an important issue in American society.

Activity 4 – History Repeats Itself? – A Case Study (2 class sessions)

1. Pass out Student Handout D: Special Registration Interrogation Questions.

- **2.** Explain to students that they will be participating in a brief role-playing activity as a fictitious character from the film. They are to assume the role of a young teenage Arab American who has been notified of Special Registration and has agreed to come to the Federal Building. You are then forced into an isolated room with an interviewer and the following questions, all of which are real, are asked of you (**Handout D**). (Please keep in mind that this activity should be done with cultural sensitivity and respect as they assume the role of an ethnic person that may be different from their own ethnicity. Prepare your students accordingly.)
- **3.** When they are finished with the role-play, have them answer the follow up questions at the end of **Handout D**. Facilitate the larger classroom discussion and draw some conclusions based on the students' analyses and responses.
- **4.** Now briefly revisit some of the research conducted by the student groups on the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II (from the previous Activity 3). Fill in any blanks and make sure students have enough background information so that the students can make the connections between these two different historical events.
- **5.** To begin to contextualize the history and draw similarities to what is happening in the

present, ask students to read and analyze **Student Handout E: Loyalty Questionnaire during Internment**. Like the previous set of Interrogation Questions these Loyalty Questions are also real questions.

- **6.** After students have read through the questions ask students to answer the following questions:
 - Which of the following questions is unanswerable, meaning, how does one prove one's loyalty by providing positive or negative evidence?
 - What is the point of the ethnic and religious questions? What does this have to do with one's loyalty?
 - What questions were similar to those asked of Arab and Muslim Americans during Special Registration?
 - After having analyzed and answered the two different sets of questions, what do these questions tell us about how the United States responds during war time in regards to how we treat our citizens, (specific) ethnic groups, and our views on civil liberties?
- **7.** Now ask students to make other connections between Japanese internment and the racial profiling of Arab and Muslim Americans through Special Registration. Some ideas:
 - Attacks on American soil
 - Economic discrimination (e.g., seizure of lands and property, tracking of bank transactions, boycott of businesses, etc.)
 - Loss of civil liberties
 - Media representation and/or propaganda
 - U.S. involved in war abroad
 - Surveillance
 - National security
- 8. As a final culminating research essay, ask students to answer the essential question: What is the most appropriate way to balance protection of national security and our individual rights? Students should base their answer, research, and evidence on the content and themes explored from the activities.

Activity 5 – Learning Extensions (duration up to the teacher)

There are other directions that you can take your students in utilizing this film. Here are some other content and theme recommendations:

- Hate crimes: Hate crimes against Arab and Muslim Americans continue in this country. Ask students to look at hate crime laws, is there enough being done to protect victims of hate crimes, and how are Arab and Muslim communities responding.
- Media Analyses: How are Arabs and Muslims depicted in mass media? What impact does this have on society's general perception of these communities?
- Defining Terrorism: The threat of terrorism is part of the rhetoric to justify the Patriot Act and other controversial policies. How is this term being used by our government and mass media? How is the term being used abroad?
- Civil Rights violations: How has the Patriot Act and Special Registration impacted other Muslims of another ethnic descent, for example Asians, Eastern Europeans, and Africans?

RESOURCES

Links

- Bay Area Mosaic, American Made, Activity 3: www.kqed.org/mosaic
- Wikipedia, *Guantanamo Bay:* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guantanamo_Bay_detainment_camp
- Wikipedia, Special Registration: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_Registration
- Wikipedia, 2001-present war in Afghanistan: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2001_war_in_Afghanistan
- Wikipedia, 2003 Invasion of Iraq: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_on_Iraq%2C_2003
- Wikipedia, USA Patriot Act: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USA_PATRIOT_Act.

Books

- Said, Edward W., Orientalism, 1st Vintage Books Ed edition, October 1979.
- Weglyn, Michi, Years of Infamy: the Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps, University of Washington Press, Updated edition, May 1996.

STANDARDS

Correlating California State Content Standards for History-Social Studies

Grade 9 – Recommended Elective Course

- World Religions
- Humanities
- Area Studies: Cultures
- Anthropology
- Ethnic Studies
- Law-Related Education

Grade 10 – World History, Culture, and Geography: The Modern World

- 10.2 Examine the significant ideas of the Enlightenment thinkers, in particular Thomas Hobbes (*Leviathan*), John Locke (*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (*The Social Contract*).
- 10.4 Analyze patterns of global change in the era of New Imperialism in at least two of the following regions or countries: Africa, Southeast Asia, China, India, Latin America, and the Philippines.
- 10.6 Describe the effects of World War I and resulting peace treaties on population movement, the international economy, and shifts in the geographic and political borders of Europe and the Middle East.
- 10.8 Analyze Nazi Germany during World War II, paying particular attention to the Ministry of Information and Propaganda and *Kristallnacht*.
- 10.9 Understand how the forces of nationalism developed in the Middle East, how the Holocaust affected world opinion regarding the need for a Jewish state, and the significance and effects of the location and establishment of Israel on world affairs.
- 10.10 Analyze instances of nation-building in the contemporary world in the following region or countries: (Middle East) Israel and Syria.

Grade 11— United States History and Geography: Continuity and Change in the Twentieth Century

- 11.1 Examine the effects of the Civil War and Reconstruction and of the industrial revolution, including demographic shifts and the emergence in the late nineteenth century of the United States as a world power.
- 11.2 Analyze the relationship among the rise of industrialization, large-scale rural-tourban migration, and massive immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe.
- 11.3 Analyze the role religion played in the founding of America, its lasting morals, social, and political impacts, and issues regarding religious liberty.
- 11.4 Trace the declining role of Great Britain and the expanding role of the United States in world affairs after World War II.
- 11.5 Analyze the international and domestic events, interests, and philosophies that prompted attacks on civil liberties, including the "Red Scare," Palmer Raids, the Sacco-Vanzetti case, the Ku Klux Klan, and immigration quotas and the responses of organizations such as the ACLU, NAACP and the ADL to those attacks.
- 11.7 Discuss the constitutional issues and impacts of events on the U.S. home front, including the internment of Japanese Americans (e.g., *Fred Korematsu v. United States of America*) and the restrictions on German and Italian resident aliens.
- 11.8 Describe the significance of Mexican immigration and its relationship to the agricultural economy, especially in California.
- 11.8 Describe the increased powers of the presidency in response to the Great Depression, World War II, and the Cold War.
- 11.9 Describe U.S. Middle East policy and its strategic, political, and economic interests, including those related to the Gulf War.
- 11.10 Examine the Civil Rights Movement, paying particular attention to the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in 1963, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968, the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the 24th Amendment in 1964.
- 11.10 Analyze the success of the black civil rights movement and its effects on other movements – including women, Hispanics, American Indians, Asians, Pacific Islanders, and individuals with disabilities – in their campaigns for legislative and judicial recognition of their civil equality.
- 11.11 Discuss the reasons for the nation's changing immigration policy, with emphasis on how the Immigration Act of 1965 and successor acts have transformed American society.
- 11.11 Explain how the federal, state, and local governments have responded to demographic and social changes such as population shifts to the suburbs, racial concentrations in the cities, and international migration.

Grade 12-Principles of American Democracy (U.S. Government)

- 12.2 Discuss the meaning and importance of each of the rights guaranteed under the Bill of Rights and how each is secured.
- 12.3 Evaluate, take and defend positions on fundamental values and principles of civil society.
- 12.5 Using case studies, explain the controversies that have resulted over changing interpretations of civil rights.
- 12.8 Evaluate, take and defend positions on the influence of the media on American political life; Discuss the meaning and importance of a free and responsible press;

Describe the roles of broadcast, print and electronic media as means of communication in American politics; Explain how public officials use the media to communicate with the citizenry and to shape public opinion.

• 12.10 Formulate questions about and defend their analyses of tensions within our constitutional democracy and the importance of maintaining a balance between the following concepts: majority rule and individual rights; liberty and equality; state and national authority in a federal system; civil disobedience and the rule of law; freedom of the press and the right to a fair trial; the relationship of religion and government.

LESSON CREDITS

Ken C. Garcia-Gonzales

Ken C. Garcia-Gonzales has been a teacher for ten years and last taught at Berkeley High School as a History and Ethnic Studies teacher. He has been recognized in the national publication, *Who's Who Among American Teachers*, and also taught abroad in Japan. He has a B.A. in American Studies with an emphasis in Ethnic Studies and an M.A. in Teaching with an emphasis in Literacy. He is currently the Project Supervisor for School Services at KQED, Public Television in San Francisco and manages K-12 education outreach for the station including curricula instruction, professional development workshops and technology trainings.

FILMMAKER CREDITS

Theresa Thanjan, producer and director

Born and raised in New York City, Theresa is an award winning filmmaker, lecturer and activist. She graduated from the Columbia University School of Social Work in 1997 and received her film training from New York University and Film/Video Arts. Theresa Thanjan is a 2006 Fellow in Video from the New York Foundation for the Arts. She has also been awarded grants from the Center for Asian American Media (formerly NAATA) and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council.

Shashwati Talukdar, editor

Shashwati Talukdar has an M.F.A. in Film and Video Arts from Temple University, Philadelphia. She began working in the film and television industry as an assistant editor for a TV show by Michael Moore. Since 1999, she has worked on projects for HBO, BBC, Lifetime and Cablevision. One of Shashwati's projects, a narrative short entitled "Love, Mom," starring *Tony Award* winner Tonya Pinkins, won the Best Director award at the Black Maria Festival. In addition, Shashwati has produced for the Sundance Channel and has made independent projects that have been supported by the Jerome Foundation, NYSCA and the Center for Asian American Media. She has also has taught at New York University, Arcadia and Temple University.

STUDENT HANDOUT A: U.S. POLICIES AFTER SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

The Patriot Act

Also known as the *Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001* or the U.S.A. Patriot Act, this was formed in response to the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001. It dramatically expanded the authority of American law enforcement for the purpose of fighting terrorism in the United States and abroad. Some sections of the Act are controversial in regards to infringements of civil liberties, such as the usage of electronic trace devices and accessing personal records (Web visits or foreign bank transactions).

The War in Afghanistan (2001)

Also known as *Operation Enduring Freedom*, the War in Afghanistan began in October 2001 marking the beginning of America's "War against Terror." The stated purpose of the war was to target al-Qaeda members, namely Osama bin Laden, and oust the Taliban government which had provided haven and support for al-Qaeda. The war ended with the removal and replacement of the Taliban government and the presence of the U.S. military in Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden was not captured and is still at large.

Guantanamo Bay detainment camp (2002)

Also known as Gitmo, this military prison and interrogation center has been in operation since 2002. The prison holds people suspected by the U.S. government of being al-Qaeda or Taliban terrorists or sympathizers. Detainees are classified as "war combatants" and many have been detained without trial. There have been allegations of prison abuse and torture. The U.S. administration claimed that the detainees were not entitled to the protections of the Geneva Conventions but the Supreme Court ruled against this in June 2006. There are still approximately 430 detainees still being kept at the prison.

War in Iraq (2003)

Also known as *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, the U.S. war in Iraq began in March 2003. The stated purpose was to "disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, to end Saddam Hussein's support of terrorism, and to free the Iraqi people." On May 1, 2003, President Bush declared all major combat operations over in Iraq. Since then, Saddam Hussein's government has been toppled and he was later captured by the U.S. military. Although a new democratic government has been in place, the U.S. military has had ongoing conflicts with insurgents and the U.S. death toll continues to increase.

What, if any, further action needs to be taken?			
What kind of action was taken to help address their issues (by themselves or others)?			
How has post 9/11 policy affected their lives?			
Background Information			
Characters	Navila Ali	Mohammed Sarfaraz Hussein	Hager Youssef

STUDENT HANDOUT B: MEET THE YOUTH

STUDENT HANDOUT C: POST-VIEWING QUESTIONS

- **1.** In what ways are these students American? In what ways, if any, are they not American? Provide examples for each character and explain your reasoning.
- **2.** Describe the interrogation that Mohammed Sarfaraz Hussein witnessed while he was awaiting his own interview session at the Federal Building.
- **3.** Answer Hager's question regarding the immediate response the day of the attacks by the government and authorities in determining who the terror suspects responsible for September 11 were. How did they know so soon the terror suspects were of Arab descent or Muslim?
- **4.** Although Navila's father complied with the law and was determined not to be a terrorist threat, he was still kept in detainment for several months and eventually deported. He was proven to not be a terror suspect but instead, had violated immigration law. Is his punishment appropriate with the stated objectives of Special Registration?
- 5. "There are ties between the federal laws and policies and attitudes of the people. When people see the government go to great extent to detain people (Muslims) for months, deport them, people get the sense that Muslims are bad because the government thinks so too."
 —Hager

Do you agree with Hager's statement? What is the danger in generalizing or stereotyping a group? How is this problem magnified, especially as it relates in times of war?

6. Over 83,000 men registered for Special Registration, most of whom were of Arab descent. Not a single person was charged with terrorism. What do these results tell you about this program, its purpose or objectives, and how it was implemented?

STUDENT HANDOUT D: SPECIAL REGISTRATION INTERROGATION QUESTIONS

- 1. What is your religious faith?
- 2. Where do you worship?
- 3. How often do you pray?
- 4. Do you know Osama bin Laden?
- 5. Do you own a pilot's license?
- 6. Do you have special computer skills?
- 7. Where were you on 9/11?
- 8. What is your political opinion of the United States?

Follow Up Questions

1. Based on the type of questions listed above, what is the objective of Special Registration?

2. Which of the following questions would be the most difficult to answer and why?

3. Assuming your character in the role playing activity, how would you answer question 8 knowing that you have been targeted because of your ethnic and/or religious group and that you can possibly be deported based on your answers?

SOURCE: Thanjan, Theresa, Whose Children Are These?

STUDENT HANDOUT E: LOYALTY QUESTIONNAIRE DURING INTERNMENT

The purpose of this interview is to provide the United States with the assurance that in permitting your leave from this center, it is doing the best thing for the United States as a whole and for you as an individual.

Before questioning you any further, we would like to ask you if you have any objection to signing a pledge of allegiance to the United States.

- 1. Have you attended any Japanese schools?
- 2. Do you belong to any Japanese organizations? What was your role?
- 3. Have you at any time been a resident or visitor to Japan? If so, specify the dates.
- 4. Do you have any relatives in Japan? Who are they?
- 5. If permitted to leave, will you voluntarily remain out of the states of Arizona, Nevada, Utah, California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Colorado?
- 6. Will you assist in the resettlement program by staying away from large groups of Japanese people?
- 7. Will you avoid the use of the Japanese language except when necessary?
- 8. Will you try to develop American habits which will cause you to be accepted readily into American society?
- 9. Can you furnish any proof that you have always been loyal to the United States?
- 10. What do you think of the United States in general?
- 11. What effect has the report of any Japanese victory in the Pacific and Far East had upon your thinking?
- 12. What would you do if you discovered a shortwave set, both sending and receiving, in your neighbor's apartment?
- 13. Do you think that you are "losing face" by cooperating with the United States concerning your initial evacuation?
- 14. Do you celebrate any Japanese holidays?
- 15. Do you believe in the Samurai tradition?
- 16. Do you practice aspects of Japanese culture in your home?

- 17. What would you consider a disloyal act to the United States?
- 18. Is Japan at this time a democratic country?
- 19. (Draft-age persons only) Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?
- 20. (Draft-age persons only) Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and foreswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power or organization?

SOURCE: Weglyn, Michi, Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps, University of Washington Press, Updated edition, May 1996.