

The Big BUT
System:
The Strategy
that Blocks People
from Seeing Islam
as It Is

Reader Responses

This is amazing. I love it. It contains everything I'd need, I think, when communicating the truth about Islam, which is all I do!!! It really is brilliant. I'm sure no one else has done this.

Jan Ferguson, London, England

Very well done, no buts about it. :-)

*Bill Warner of Political Islam, The Two-Hour Koran, and much more,
Nashville, USA*

Quite an achievement. I think you found your niche. Instead of describing Islam you are giving people content to use when arguing. This is what matters.

Jean-Claude Lamontagne, Rouen, France

Excellent logic, but wow what a battle it all is.

R.B., Cheltenham, England

The Big BUT System: The Strategy that Keeps People from Seeing Islam as It Is

What's the Big BUT System? It's the blocking of negative information about the reality of Islam with a BUT.

There are 2 ways people can take part. When you hear something negative about Islam, you can respond with a BUT. For instance, "BUT there's good and bad in all religions." Or when someone volleys a BUT at you, you can lob back a well-reasoned response. The BUT person is likely to come back with another BUT, and you can answer that one. The volleying may go on indefinitely.

Caught up in this back and forth, both people never get back to the issue: the truthful negative information about Islam that started it all.

Why pay attention to the Big BUT System? It's a powerful strategy to stop people from recognizing the importance of the negative truths about Islam.

How did this guide come to be?

I started by writing

[The Quick and Easy Guide to Understanding Islam:](http://westindanger.com/ed/guide-to-understanding-islam.html)
<http://westindanger.com/ed/guide-to-understanding-islam.html>

However, it soon became apparent that the majority of people responded to

everything negative about Islam with a BUT. In other words, negative information about Islam did not sink in. It was butted away.

This booklet was started as a guide to answering the BUTs, one at a time.

But I soon saw that something else was going on. It was like the thorns around Sleeping Beauty's castle. Those BUTs had a purpose: to keep people asleep to Islam. And like those thorns, there was something "magic" about the BUTs - it was as if a spell had been cast. Who had done that? How? And even more important, how to undo it?

So, now:

- the Big BUT System;
- the most likely reasons why it exists;
- what we can do;
- the BUTs, one at a time - where we repeatedly come to evidence that the Big BUT System isn't natural, but manufactured;
- and finally, the next big questions:
 - whodunit?
 - how is the system kept in place?
 - and how do we end it?



Elsa Schieder, PhD

The Big BUT System

Whenever there's yet another murderous attack by Islamics yelling Allahu Ackbar and pledging allegiance to ISIS, we typically hear that "Islam is a religion of peace. This has nothing to do with Islam." Other responses include:

*"It's all the fault of:
US foreign policy,
feeling unwanted,
poverty,
the people at Charlie Hebdo,
Pamela Geller,
Robert Spencer,
the lack of adequate gun control,
the Republicans,
Israel,
the Jews,
Donald Trump."*

If we mention passages from the Quran, such as

Slay the idolaters wherever you find them. (9:5)

or

Idolaters (including Jews and Christians) are filth – najisun. (9:28)

common responses are:

*"There's good and bad in all religions."
"It's all a matter of interpretation."
"The problem is Islamism, not Islam."
"I know lots of nice Muslims."
"Not all Muslims believe that."
"That's just an opinion."
"Just think of the Crusades."
"I'm too idealistic to believe that."
"That sounds like hate speech."
"Oh those poor poor offended Muslims."
"That's Islamophobia."*

All these responses are part of the See-No-Bad-Islam Big BUT System.

One can deal with the BUTs one at a time, to show just how inaccurate they are. But doing that can be like being stuck on a treadmill. One goes nowhere.

The denials are, in many ways, interchangeable. It doesn't matter which of them is brought out. All are used to block the person from acknowledging the importance of what is being said about Islam. Blockers don't deny the evidence - the gruesome mass murder by jihad terrorists in Paris, Orlando, San Bernardino, and so on. But the reality of those events is deemed irrelevant. After all, there's good and bad in all religions, they know a nice Muslim, it's all a matter of interpretation. No need to go any further.

The core thing.

You're up against a quite rigid belief or narrative that Islam is like all other religions (no matter what the evidence), and Mohammed is a prophet like Jesus and Moses and perhaps even Buddha (again, no matter what the evidence).

Dealing with the charges one by one tends to be useless. It's like shooting off one head at a time of a monster with an unlimited supply of replacement heads.

In fact, we're doing what we're being invited to do: deal with the objections without identifying where the objections come from.

You can get 5 or 6 rebuttals in a row. It's a bit like a strange game of tennis. You get the ball (in this case, a bit of accurate information about Islam) across the net. The ball is ignored. Back comes a BUT. You whack the BUT to pieces, send the original ball back across the net. Once again the ball is ignored. A different BUT comes back to you. You demolish that BUT, send the original ball back. The response: yet another BUT. Time drags on. You may tire. You may run out of time. You may not know how to whack one BUT or another out of court. Or you may whack every BUT to smithereens, and see that it's obviously making no dent on the person's belief that Islam is just fine and that what you're saying sounds like hate speech.

Red herrings are commonplace in detective stories. They function to keep people from paying attention to clues that would lead one in the direction of whodunit. They're almost always deliberately left around, to attract attention away from the clues that would solve the mystery.

The Big BUT System is a bit different. It's only activated when someone calls attention to something negative about Islam. It isn't as if people otherwise tend to bring up that there's good and bad in all religions.

There's another difference as well. There's no mystery. There are negative facts about Islamic ideology, right out in the open. The BUTs are meant to render the evidence irrelevant.

There's a term from the American Wild West: **hornswoggle**, meaning to fool, dupe, snow, trick, deceive, bamboozle, swindle - as in, "I think we've been hornswoggled by that card shark." The Big BUT System is intended to hornswoggle us. Again, there's a difference: when people are swindled by a card shark, most of the time people soon find out and feel outraged. With the Big BUT System, when people say, "But there's good and bad in all religions," they tend to feel righteous, self-satisfied, good about themselves - and superior to whoever brought up the negative information about Islam.

What do you do?

Especially if someone brings up more than one BUT, it may be best to **mention the Big BUT System**.

You may want to let the person know that you could respond to the individual BUT. However, most likely that's useless - because, most likely, you'll just be tossed another BUT and then another - instead of, that the point you're making (say, that the Quran calls for idolaters to be killed wherever they are found) is heard and addressed. You may, in fact, ask them to pay attention to whatever point you're making. Likely, you'll see that the point does not matter, as long as the BUT is in the way.

You may at some point want to pass rebutters a copy of this guide.

Why? Maybe it will do some of the heavy lifting for you. You can suggest that they find the answers to their BUTs. Most, the guide shows how the BUTs are a powerful strategy for not taking in negative information about Islam.

Next: underlying causes for the BUTs.

WHY the Big BUT System

Why don't people welcome very clear evidence about Islam?

One. Monkey see, monkey do. People are trained not to see the evidence. Just about everywhere they turn in the mainstream world, they're told Islam is a religion of peace; anyone who says anything else is a racist; Islamic violence has nothing to do with Islam. It's like, at the time of Galileo, everywhere one turned it was accepted that the sun went around the earth.

Two. People are afraid - afraid of being called names or put down by friends, family, colleagues - and afraid of Islamic violence (what if some Islamic baddie puts out a fatwa on them). It's like people were afraid of considering the evidence showing the earth goes around the sun at the time of Galileo: in this case: what if they're excommunicated, burned at the stake, or end up in hell.

Three. People are brainwrecked, incompetent at thinking - like in the time of Galileo. People were taught what to believe, not how to think. The same holds true now.

Four. There are strong forces in society that get people to be and to stay afraid and brainwrecked - Islamic forces, politically correct forces - forces with a lot of financial and governmental and media and educational backing. It's like when people, in the past, didn't just happen to rigidly believe that the sun went around the earth - there were strong religious forces against their questioning this belief.

There is a difference between the current forces and those at the time of Galileo. The Christian leaders of Galileo's time believed that the sun went around the earth. But now many of the people (Islamic leaders, for instance) trumpeting out the message that, for instance, Islam is a religion of peace know very well:

- that Islam means submission, not peace;
- that the peaceful verses in the Quran have been abrogated (rendered null and void);
- and that the Quran says: *Slay the idolaters wherever you find them*, etc.

In other words, the messages being sent to the fearful brainwrecked population, to politically correct people come in part from Islamics who know that the messages are false, intended to deceive - which was not the case when the Church insisted that the sun revolves around the earth at the time of Galileo.

Misleading and false messages also come from non-Islamic mainstream politicians, mainstream media people, mainstream educators. How many of these people, like the religious leaders of Galileo's time, believe what they're saying? How many know they're lying, but think it's for what they consider a good reason, like to protect the feelings of Islamics? After all, clear succinct versions of the Quran are readily available in many languages. Islamic violence abounds, with perpetrators quoting the Quran. What makes mainstream leaders keep spouting patent untruths? Is it greed? Is it infiltration by Islamic forces? Is it fear? What's going on? How much comes from denial of the dangers of Islam? How much comes from the belief, on the part of at least some of the Western elite, that Islam can be swept aside whenever it suits major globalist non-Islamic puppet masters?

Again, this is utterly different from when the Church leaders insisted that the sun revolved around the earth. They believed what they said. Further, unlike now, there was no massive evidence to the contrary. Galileo did have evidence, from his telescope - but no one else initially had such a telescope.

How did the beliefs change, at the time of Galileo? Some Jesuits followed Galileo's example, built a telescope of their own. Their findings corroborated Galileo's findings. In other words, when they found out the truth, slowly the truth began to be accepted.

That can't happen now. A considerable portion of the impetus for the BUT system comes from people who know the truth about Islamic doctrine, but don't want it widely known.

Why not? I think that's obvious. Islamic ideology is not compatible with Western ideology - and some powers-that-be don't want the mass of Western citizens to recognize this, to recognize the danger and deal with it. So the danger is denied by those on the side of Islam and by those eager to benefit from helping Islam.

Why the Big BUT System? **There's a fifth reason. Those BUTs have been constructed.**

When we come to explore the BUTs, one by one, we also come to evidence, over and over, that they're not a natural response.

So what do we do?

WHAT Do We Do?

I keep hearing that people have a **narrative** about Islam, a narrative so strong that they can't see evidence that is outside the narrative.

What comes to mind is an underlying reason why most people find it hard to change: they have deeply entrenched beliefs about themselves and other people - in other words, powerful **narratives** about themselves. So, for example, most of the people who lose weight, can't keep it off. Or women may get involved with one abusive partner after another. Or people keep self-sabotaging. In other words, as long as people believe something like, I'm not good enough, I'm not smart enough, I always get left behind, I can't trust people, I can't trust men, I can't trust women, you can't trust anyone, I never get what I need, the world is a dangerous place - they're likely to stay stuck.

How does one, as the saying goes, throw a spanner in the works, derail or smash the narrative of Islam as a religion of peace, a religion like all others?

Islamic¹ keep doing this. They smash the narrative about Islam being a religion of peace. Bodies all over the place in horrific jihad attacks in Paris, Florida, Nice.

Yet the narrative plays on - like a song one can't get out of one's head. According to the narrative, the jihadist was mentally ill. So the event had nothing to do with Islam, religion of peace.

When we answer the objections one at a time, the narrative likewise continues. We're doing the reasonable thing. We're also usually wasting our time. We're doing what we're being invited to do: deal with the objections without identifying the objections as part of the See-No-Bad-Islam Big BUT System. The system both continues to stay invisible and keeps functioning.

So what do we do? I have 3 suggestions.

¹ What to call someone who believes in Islam? Here the term, Islamic, is used. Why? Muslims are people who call themselves Muslim - but some don't believe in many parts of the Quran. For instance, about 2/3 of Muslims - meaning about one billion Muslims - believe in following Sharia, the laws based on the Quran. But about 1/3 - meaning half a billion Muslims - do not. Some people who call themselves Muslim are atheists. It can be confusing to use the term Muslim.

One. We make the big BUT system as visible as possible. We mention it, and mention that it's a lot like the See-No-Sun-Centered-System at the time of Galileo. Except that the religious leaders at the time of Galileo believed they were right. Now there's massive evidence that the people pushing the Big BUT System are deliberately trying to hoodwink. Islamic religious leaders definitely know the content of the Quran.

Why mention the Big BUT System, and compare it to what happened at the time of Galileo? As noted, just to answer the BUT is to play the game the way "they" (whoever set up the game, and is continuing it) want it played.

Two. Ask questions. Like, WHY are people being lied to? WHY are people being told Islam is a religion of peace when it isn't? And another question: WHO is behind it? Is it Islamic leaders, wanting to trick us into thinking Islam is a religion of peace when they know it isn't? Is it someone else?

In other words, look at the bigger picture, instead of staying with the BUT.

Three. Do answer the BUTs, one after the other.

Four. Go where you're not supposed to go. Show how the BUTs aren't a natural response. And ask who might be responsible for such an unnatural response.

If you don't feel like doing this yourself, pass the person a copy of the guide.

And now, the BUTs, one at a time. Is it true that there's good and bad in all religions? That it's all a matter of interpretation? That what counts is the nice Muslims someone knows? And is it true, when an Islamic blows him or herself up while murdering as many people as possible, that this has nothing to do with Islam?

BUT BUT BUT

BUT ONE:

“There’s Good and Bad in All Religions”

I don’t know how often I’ve heard that there’s good and bad in all religions. That’s usually followed by: There’s lots of nasty stuff in the Old Testament.

So, does one have to concede that all religions are basically the same, good and bad mixed together?

No. The answer is quite different. It has 3 parts.

Part One of the Answer: All Religions are Not Equal

Jains sweep the ground in front of them, so that they won’t step on bugs. The Jain religion is utterly anti-violence. All living creatures are to be respected.

On the other hand, here’s a sampling of Islamic ideology:

Slay the idolaters wherever you find them. (9:5)

Idolaters (including Jews and Christians) are filth – najisun. (9:28)

Fight Jews and Christians until they become Muslims or pay tribute in utter humiliation. (9:29)

Islam must be triumphant over all other religions. (9:33)

Some of the Greek gods raped. This behavior was not condemned.

The Aztecs cut out a living man’s heart on the Winter Solstice so the days would begin to lengthen.

Jesus taught the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do

unto you." There's also the call to love your neighbor as yourself. (No claim is made that most Christians manage to do this - just as no claim is made regarding Muslim adherence to Islamic ideology.)

The sharpest contrast. In Islam, it's "*slay the idolaters wherever you find them.*" The Jains do absolutely as little harm as possible.

The conclusion is obvious. Religions differ from each other in huge ways. All religions are not equal. Each religion must be examined. One must look at them individually and evaluate them individually.

Now for the second part of the answer to the claim that there's good and bad in all religions.

Part Two of the Answer: Islam is Prescriptive; Many Other Religions are Descriptive

Islam is prescriptive, and the prescriptions are permanent.

Many other religions are descriptive. Also, the rules may be changed.

What does all that mean? And why does that matter?

What is set out in the Quran is to continue forever:

Slay the idolaters wherever you find them. (9:5)

No one, ever, is permitted to change this rule. If they do, they are apostates and the penalty for apostasy is death.

On the other hand, the violence in the Old Testament is generally descriptive. In other words, the violence is recorded - for example, Israelites who begin to worship a golden calf are killed. But there is no pronouncement that, forever and ever, any Israelite who worships an idol is to be killed. Unlike in the Quran, there's no permanent prescription.

In other words, even though there are violent passages in both the Old Testament and the Quran - and in many other religions - it matters if the violence is prescriptive (this must continue forever) or descriptive (this happened).

Let's leave religion aside for a moment. Just think of *Star Wars* or *Lord of the Rings* - loads and loads of battle scenes. But the films do not prescribe violence. In fact, they are for loving non-violent living together. The violence that the heroes take part in is meant to stop aggressive murderous violence. In other words, the battle scenes DESCRIBE violence, do not PRESCRIBE violence.

The Quran, on the other hand, prescribes aggressive violence: *Slay the idolaters wherever you find them.*

The conclusion: while there may well be good and bad in all religions, religions differ enormously, including in the amount of good and bad. One must look at them individually.

**Part Three of the Answer:
Islam is 100% from Allah;
the Bible is Almost 100% from People -
with Enormous Consequences**

You might not think of this as an amazing strength, that both the Old and New Testament are close to 100% written by people, versus that the Quran claims to be 100% from Allah, unchangeable forever.

In the Old Testament, the 10 Commandments are claimed, within the text, to be from God, and in the New Testament the words of Jesus, if they have been accurately recorded, are claimed to be the words of the son of God.

How is that a strength?

In the Old Testament, the Israelites have multiple wives and slaves. At present, with no intervention from any deity, no Jewish person is permitted multiple wives or slaves. How is such a change possible? This has been slowly decided through Jewish rabbis and scholars. For instance, they have deduced that men having multiple wives is not conducive to the best family

life. So it is humans who, through observation, discussion and reasoning, have made the changes.

The Jewish tradition is akin to a widespread Christian belief, as expressed by Thomas Aquinas, in natural law - that is, that the moral laws are laws of nature, and can be ascertained through observation.

This means, of course, that every moral position from the Old Testament, except what is from the 10 Commandments, is open to observation, discussion and reasoning.

This has enormous implications for, for example, the attitude to homosexuality. Within the Jewish religion, the attitude varies enormously, from rejection of this as immoral, to full acceptance of homosexuals, even as rabbis. This does not mean that one strand of Judaism is right, because it is closer to Old Testament thought. It means that rabbis and other Jewish scholars have reached different conclusions (for the moment anyway) which are linked to the different strands of Judaism. This does not violate Jewish tradition, a tradition of scholarship and reflection and discussion based on observation.

In fact, both Jews and Christians who denounce something - for instance, homosexuality - on the basis of a few passages in the Old Testament, passages which some scholars have interpreted differently, need to acknowledge that the acceptance or rejection of something in the Old Testament is not a sufficient Jewish or Christian reason for being for or against something - or having multiple wives and slaves would still be considered morally acceptable.

This is utterly different from Islam. If it is in the Quran, it must be continued forever, because making any change makes the person an apostate and the punishment for apostasy is death.

So it's inaccurate to claim that because there's slavery in the Old Testament, and slavery is also accepted in the New Testament, therefore Judaism, Christianity and Islam have the same morality. In Judaism and Christianity, what is ethical is open to further observation and thought.

Part Four: A Further Question

So far, I've just given nice simple fact-based answers to "There's good and bad in all religions."

But it's worth asking another question. Why does anyone say, "There's good and bad in all religions," when faced with something negative about Islam.

I have never heard anyone continue, as one might expect, with information about a variety of religions - Buddhist, Sikh, Yazidi, Falun Gong, and perhaps also a number of diverse North American aboriginal religions. Instead the only further comment I've heard - over and over - is that there's lots of nasty stuff in the Old Testament.

When one mentions something negative about another religion, especially about Christianity, there's no response of, "There's good and bad in all religions." Instead it's open season to hunt down every bit of badness in Christianity - which is fine - but only if other religions, including Islam, gets equal treatment.

If one says that the Hindu and Buddhist belief in karma and dharma, in contrast to the belief in the scientific method and the work ethic, may be vital factors in the very different trajectories of Indian and European civilizations, including the Industrial Revolution and European conquest of much of the world, one will almost never hear "There's good and bad in all religions." At any rate, I have never heard that response.

If one mentions the Hindu caste system, once again one is not likely to hear that there's good and bad in all religions. Again, at any rate, I have never heard that response.

My experience: "There's good and bad in all religions," rather than coming from the person's exploration of various religions, and recognition that there is good and bad in all religions, is **an intrained knee-jerk response - in other words, a manufactured response** - as if the statement was enough to render irrelevant whatever negative information has been conveyed about Islam.

There's no need to consider that, for all eternity, Islamics are called on to slay infidels wherever they find them. There's no need to consider anything about any religion. After all, one already knows all one needs to know, which

is that there's good and bad in all religions.

In other words, what really matters - yet once again - is blocking negative information about Islam from being seen as relevant. It's as if the information were some unwanted insect and the platitude were a bug-repellent.

It's so utterly obvious. It isn't natural for people to respond with, "There's good and bad in all religions," when someone says something negative about Islam. Once again we see evidence of a powerful puppet master. There are tracks everywhere.

The next tracks: the insistence that it's a matter of interpretation.

BUT TWO:
“It’s a matter of interpretation”
which goes with
“You need to speak Arabic to really understand”

Someone notes that Surah 9 calls on Muslims to kill infidels wherever they find them. A popular response: “It’s a matter of interpretation” and “Some people have just taken things the wrong way.”

The answer: unfortunately this isn’t the case. It isn’t a matter of interpretation. It would make the task of stopping Islamic violence so much easier, if this were true. We’d just have to focus on getting Islamics to acknowledge that they were misinterpreting their core religious texts.

In fact, the evidence is so clear that it isn’t a matter of interpretation that again one needs to ask: what has gotten people to deny blatant evidence? The tobacco industry did it, long denying there was any connection between smoking and lung cancer - but they had a vested interest.

A variant of “It’s a matter of interpretation” is “You need to speak Arabic to really understand.” Again, the answer is a clear no. Most Muslims do not speak Arabic - and yet are not told they don’t understand Islam. Even more, one is not talking about shades of meaning. I did look up various translations of a couple of passages. In one translation, Islamics were called on to slay non-Islamics (labeled infidels, in the Quran), in another to kill non-Islamics, and in a third to slaughter non-Islamics. The general meaning is extremely clear. Most of the inhabitants of hell are women, according to the Quran, because of women’s disobedience. I have not heard the translation disputed.

The claim that “You need to speak Arabic to really understand” is just another way of attempting to discount evidence, especially when dealing with someone uncertain about the content of the Quran.

For comparison, think of mentioning karma and dharma - you won’t get, “It’s a matter of interpretation.” The same goes if you refer to the caste system.

Yet with Islam, where the evidence is more than overwhelming that the Islamics who do violence in the name of Islam are understanding the Quran correctly, you get, utterly absurdly, that it's a matter of interpretation.

How can this be? Once again, the most likely explanation is that this is **an intrained knee-jerk response - in other words, a manufactured response** - not something natural.

There is an obvious next question: **if it isn't a natural response, who manufactured it?** In detective novels the best tactic is to explore who benefits. So **who benefits** when negative information about Islam is dismissed?

A question. Do non-Islamics benefit from denying the connections between Islamic texts and jihad? In some way, yes. Non-Islamics have reason to fear being called racist if they acknowledge things that they're not supposed to acknowledge. They may even, in some cases, lose their jobs.

But it is someone else, some other force which has much more to gain - for instance, those who benefit from continued Islamic immigration into non-Islamic countries.

As for the many people who have been trained to believe that it's a matter of interpretation, and/or who deeply wish that the problem stems from misinterpretation, these people have some unpleasant truths to face.

If someone is genuinely uninformed about Islam, perhaps has been taken in by the false mainstream messages, a good response might be, Here's a link to the *Quick and Easy Guide to Understanding Islam*:
<http://westindanger.com/ed/guide-to-understanding-islam.html>

There are lots of other excellent resources, handy to pass to anyone interested in learning more.

So, if the person ends up hungry for more information about Islam, there is: *The Koran at a Glance*:
<http://koran-at-a-glance.com/>

There's also Bill Warner's quick and clear version of the Koran:
<https://www.amazon.com/Abridged-Koran-Islamic-Trilogy/dp/0978552849>

and his even shorter two-hour Koran:

<https://www.amazon.com/Two-Hour-Koran-Taste-Islam/dp/1936659026>

The Koran also says, 91 times, that Islamics are to follow the example of Mohammed. According to Bill Warner:

To Know Islam, Know Mohammed

The easy way to understand Islam is to know Mohammed's life story. It is an incredible story that changed the history of the world, and it is even more powerful today. Mohammed is pure Islam. Ninety-one verses in the Koran say that every Muslim is to imitate Mohammed in all things.

Is sex slavery Islamic? Look to Mohammed. He had sex slaves, so when Islamic state has sex slaves, it is Islamic. What are women's rights in Islam? Look to Mohammed. He said that women could be beaten, had to always obey their husbands and be part of a harem. He also said that slaves were to be treated well.

<https://www.politicalislam.com/know-islam-know-mohammed/>

People can read the full 800-page *Sira*, the life of Mohammed.

For those who prefer something shorter, Bill Warner has condensed the *Sira*:

<https://www.amazon.com/Life-Mohammed-Taste-Islam/dp/1936659069>

There is also Harry Richardson's excellent *The Life of Mohammed*.

For reviews, plus links to read and buy:

<http://thestoryofmohammed.blogspot.com.au>

Then there's F.W. Burleigh's brilliant *It's All About Muhammad: A Biography of the World's Most Notorious Prophet*.

For the current situation re Islam, for info on the book, and to read part of it:

<http://itsallaboutmuhammad.com/>

To purchase: <https://www.amazon.com/Its-All-About-Muhammad-Biography/dp/0996046909>

If you'd like to see the potential impact of such a book - in this case J.K. Sheindlin's *The People vs Mohammed* (<https://www.amazon.com/People-Muhammad-Psychological-Analysis/dp/0994362986?ie>), here's a Muslim (just becoming a former Muslim, it seems) having a total meltdown on an Arab TV station after reading the book:

<https://youtu.be/v5foN-2ucZc>

But it's likely that only a few people will be eager for resources like these. As with "There's good and bad in all religions," the important thing about "It's a matter of interpretation" is that it's a block against thinking,

learning, exploring. The person making the statement can almost never point to instances of misinterpretation. The statement almost never comes from knowing the Quran, but from not knowing it - or at any rate from not wanting to know it.

In my experience, this also holds true for people who identify as Muslim, as well as for non-Islamics. At least in the West, many people who consider themselves Muslim don't know the Quran, or don't know it well, maybe just know a quote or two. Yet they insist, often adamantly, that their religion is terribly misunderstood - it's a religion of peace.

What do they do when faced, for instance, with the content of Surah 9:

Slay the idolaters wherever you find them. (9:5)

Idolaters (including Jews and Christians) are filth – najisun. (9:28)

Fight Jews and Christians until they become Muslims or pay tribute in utter humiliation. (9:29)

Islam must be triumphant over all other religions. (9:33)

They may talk of their wonderful mother and grandmother, devout Muslims who have recited the Quran in Arabic all their lives without understanding a word. They may insist one needs to know Arabic to know what the words really say. If one answers that the people in ISIS claim to be devout Muslims, and quote the Quran, these Muslims are likely (in my experience, anyway) to continue to insist their religion is being misunderstood, has been hijacked.

Denial, as others have noted, is not just a river in Egypt.

There's a variant of "It's a matter of interpretation": "That's just your opinion." I'll come to that. However, there are 3 huge BUTs to look at first:

"The problem isn't Islam, it's Islamism."

"I know a nice Muslim."

"The real problem isn't Islam, it's Absolutely Anything Else."

BUT THREE: “The problem is Islamism, not Islam”

There's yet another popular response to the violence done in the name of Islam. The problem, many people claim, is Islamism, not Islam.

What, supposedly, is Islamism? Jihad and terrorism - these are an awful perversion of Islam. And what, supposedly, is Islam? Islam is a religion of peace.

Unfortunately for the claim that the problem is Islamism, the Quran calls for violence to non-Islamics: *Slay the idolaters wherever you find them*. And on and on and on.

The conclusion is obvious: the problem is Islam, not some weird Islamism.

In fact, many Islamic leaders insist that there is no such thing as Islamism. There is only Islam.

I had a realization a while ago. If anything, the words, Islam and Islamism, have been reversed. The danger comes from Islam:
<http://elsasblog.com/islam-definition.html>

If anyone has any doubts that the problem is Islam, they can be sent to the readings already recommended, like [The Quick and Easy Guide to Understanding Islam](#), [The Koran at a Glance](#), Bill Warner's [abridged Koran](#) and [Two-Hour Koran](#), and biographies of Mohammed, like Richardson's [The Life of Mohammed](#) and Burleigh's [It's All About Muhammad: A Biography of the World's Most Notorious Prophet](#).

Denial of the nature of Islam may help people avoid uncomfortable truths for the moment. But denial - about an illness, about an addiction, about Islam - just gives the problem time to worsen.

Note, once again: there's no "It's not X, it's Xism" when it comes to Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism. There's none of this when it comes to Communism, Nazism, Liberalism, Republicanism. So, once again, this response seems intrained, rather than natural.

And that, once again leads to the question: who's the most likely puppet master who has gotten so many people to respond differently to Islam than to any other religious or non-religious ideology? Who benefits, once again, from negative information about Islam widely dismissed as not being about Islam?

"And the truth shall set you free." The truth - not falsehoods.

A final point. "The problem is Islamism not Islam," like "There's good and bad in all religions," and "It's a matter of interpretation," is used as a block. The person making the statement can almost never point to instances of how Islamists (bad) misinterpret while Islamics (good) understand something correctly. Islam is to be defended, usually with no exploration.

There's a popular variant of "The problem isn't Islam, it's Islamism."
"Terrorism has nothing to do with Islam." I'll get to that.

But first, yet another huge block against learning about Islam: "I know a nice Muslim."

BUT FOUR:
“But I know a nice Muslim,”
“I know lots of nice Muslims,”
and
“Not all Muslims believe that”
mixed with
Ahmadi and Ismaili Islamics
often not identifying themselves as such

It seems that almost everyone knows at least one nice Muslim. Even if someone doesn't know any Muslims, people are likely to go, "But all Muslims aren't like that." This tends to mean something like: okay, so there are nasty words like dhimmi and kafir and caliphate, and okay, there are scary incidents where people yell Allahu Akbar and murder as many people as they can, and yes, this is getting to be an ever more common occurrence, but it's important not to connect that with Islam because there are nice Muslims and it would be wrong to generalize.

I encountered yet another of these people a couple of days ago - a very nice caring neighbor. Presented with some unpleasant information about Islamic ideology, he immediately responded, "But not all Muslims believe in that stuff."

Of course not. No one was saying they did.

We may respond that we're talking about Islamic ideology.

Muslims, on the other hand, are people, individuals - just like Christians and atheists and Hindus.

In my experience, this argument - though 100% accurate - often falls on deaf ears. Most listeners staunchly keep pushing away information about Islamic ideology, supposedly because of the nice Muslims. Somehow, for these people, the existence of nice Muslims is taken to mean that Islamic ideology is irrelevant. Somehow the existence of nice Muslims erases the importance of Islamic ideology.

Further, many of these people turn to Muslims - rather than the Quran - to check something they have heard about Islam. Suddenly Muslims are seen as experts on Islam - while at the same time, if something unpleasant about

Islamic ideology is mentioned, it's discounted with "BUT most Muslims don't believe any of that nonsense."

The **whole issue is muddied even more because of members of two small sects**, who consider themselves Muslim, but are persecuted in Islamic countries: the Ahmadis and the Ismailis. They account for a total of approximately .5 (half a per cent - or 1 in 200) of self-identified Islamics. There are approximately 5 **million** Ahmadis, about 1 **million** Ismailis - in contrast to about 1.5 **billion** other Islamics.

Most non-Islamics in the West don't know of these sects, and more important, don't know how their ideologies differ from the orthodox Islamic ideology of 99.5% of Islamics.

Both of these sects do not accept the Quran as the last word of Allah.

The Ahmadis believe in ongoing revelation. For instance, the current Aga Khan (their spiritual leader) accepts his daughter's marriage to a Christian, without demanding the man's conversion - not acceptable according to the Quran.

The Ismailis believe Mohammed was not the final prophet - utter apostasy, according to the Quran. All the same, Ismailis believe there was a recent true final prophet. His message, from the time of British rule in India, is much more like the message of Jesus.

It's easy to see why members of these sects are not accepted as Muslims by the Sunni Muslims (approximately 90% of Muslims) or Shia Muslims (approximately 9% of Muslims) - why they are persecuted as apostates in Islamic countries: their teachings are, in fact, against the teachings of the Quran.

For me, it's as if there were Jew-loving Nazis, who strongly identify as Nazi, want other Nazis (who do not accept them as Nazi) to accept them as Nazi, and tell everyone they are Nazis - confusing non-Nazis about Nazi ideology, as their beliefs are so different from mainstream Nazi ideology as expounded in *Mein Kampf*.

Why aren't Ahmadis and Ismailis, in the West, open about their differences in ideology from the other 99.5% of Islamics, instead of just generally identifying themselves as Muslim? The Ahmadis are known to want to be seen as the "real Muslims." The Ismailis likewise consider themselves the true current Muslims, believing in the true final prophet. If members of

these sects spoke of their persecution in Islamic countries, this might well lead to unwanted questions about why they are not considered Islamic by 99.5% of Islamics.

Two self-defined Muslim scholars recently gave presentations on Islam in a friend's city. My friend did a little research. Both were Ahmadi - and neither mentioned this.

Is this taqiyya, the devout Islamic practice of the deliberate deception of outsiders for the benefit of Islam?

If it is taqiyya, a good portion likely is from Sunni and Shia Islamics, who very rarely speak out in the West, denouncing the Ahmadis and Ismailis as apostates, non-Islamics. This silence benefits traditional Islam, as it helps cloak Islamic ideology, as given in the Quran.

Whether religiously motivated or not, there is almost certainly the involvement of deliberate deception. Think how different the situation is with Islam than with the various Christian and Jewish sects. In Christianity, Catholicism, the various denominations of Protestantism, and the Eastern/Coptic churches make clear their own beliefs, and also how some of these beliefs are the same as and others are different from the beliefs of other branches of Christianity. Similarly the different branches of Judaism make clear their own beliefs, and how, for instance, Orthodox Judaism is similar to, and different from, Reform Judaism.

Imagine if Jehovah's Witnesses came to the door, claiming to represent Christianity. This doesn't happen, of course. They are very clear about how they are different from the other branches of Christianity.

Whatever the cause of the lack of clarity, it is very confusing to non-Islamics, when Ahmadis and Ismailis call themselves Muslims, and don't make it clear that they don't believe a considerable portion of the ideology of 99.5% of Islamics.

I think of Rome, Iowa, presenting itself as Rome, Italy - not making clear that it is not quite the same place.

In this case, we're not just dealing with a BUT ("BUT I know a nice Muslim"), but with confusion coming from the lack of knowledge of most non-Islamics about the different Islamic sects, a confusion encouraged by the general

silence of Ahmadi, Ismailis, and also Sunnis and Shiites.

Further, the first Islamic immigrants to the West tended to be Ismaili and Ahmadi, due to their persecution in their home countries. These self-labeled Muslims did not explain how their ideology differed extensively from the ideology of 99.5% of Islamics. So it's natural that non-Islamics in the West believed that these people were representative of Islamics in general.

However, non-Islamics also have responsibility for the muddle. When the jarring discrepancy between the messages trumpeted from all sides that Islam is a religion of peace, and the facts about Islamic jihad violence became clear, non-Islamics did not, in general, seek out information. Most stayed with prevalent BUTs: for instance, "BUT I know a nice Muslim" and "BUT the violence is not from the true Islam, it's from hijackers of Islam."

For the past year or so, I've been responding to "But I know nice Muslims" with "Yes, of course there are nice Muslims. Just like there were nice Nazis. But Nazi ideology is still a problem."

Most often people are stunned. What! Was I asking them to make a disconnection between Nazis and Nazism? - like the disconnection they were insisting on making between Muslims and Islam ideology, in order to somehow justify that what mattered were the nice Muslims, and therefore the ideology was irrelevant?

Yes, I was asking them to do that. I was also trying to get them to recognize that there might be a connection between Muslims and Islam.

How is it, I've come to wonder, that Nazis and Nazism are so strongly connected - and Muslims and Islam so disconnected?

It's not just Nazis and Nazism that are connected in people's minds. If one talks about the KKK, no one goes: "All KKK people aren't alike. You mustn't generalize." And if one talks about Communism, one doesn't hear: "There are all kinds of Communists. Lots of them don't believe anything that Karl Marx said."

In fact, people are at liberty to see negative features of any ideology except for Islam, without any barrage of "Oh, but all X's are not like that."

What's going on, that things are different when it comes to Islam?

Once again, the logical conclusion is that people in the West have been trained (indoctrinated, brainwashed, brainwrecked) to claim that not all Muslims are terrorists. We have been trained (indoctrinated, brainwashed, brainwrecked) to separate Muslims and Islam, not to recognize that, for instance, while 1/3 of Muslims don't want to live under Sharia (Islamic law), fully 2/3 of Muslims - one billion Muslims - do want to live under Sharia. Of course not all Muslims want any particular aspect of Islamic ideology. But many Muslims want many aspects of the ideology.

Even more, whether or not Muslims want the ideology enforced, the ideology is there. It's vital to acknowledge that, and to recognize that the ideology is dangerous to non-Islamics.

Yes, there are nice Nazis, Communists, and KKK members.

But Communist ideology has, for instance, led to incredibly repressive governing systems, as it lacks checks and balances. It doesn't matter how nice individual Communists are. The same for Nazism and KKK ideology.

There's another noticeable difference in the way Nazis are connected to Nazi ideology, whereas Muslims are disconnected from Islamic ideology. If someone called themselves Nazi and claimed that Nazism had nothing to do with anti-Semitism, they would almost certainly be challenged. Yet Muslims are not generally asked, when some say they are for religious tolerance, how they put that together with the call, in the Quran, to kill infidels wherever they find us.

What's going on? The utterly abnormal response to Islam is yet another indication of the response having been constructed, just as Pavlov's dogs were trained to salivate at the sound of a bell.

And that of course brings up the ever-present question: whodunit? Which leads us to: who benefits?

Another question: do Muslims have a responsibility to be aware of the ideology they are linking themselves with?

A bigger question: do non-Islamics have the responsibility to know the content of Islamic ideology, especially with the increasing influx of Islamics into the West?

Yet, instead of paying attention to Islamic ideology, non-Islamics widely dismiss that Islamic ideology leads to behavior by at least some Islamics, behavior clearly called for by the ideology.

But the core question that keeps coming up: who's behind the cries of "But not all Muslims are like that?" In other words, who is the puppet master?

**BUT FIVE:
"It's not Islam.
It's all the fault of:
US foreign policy,
feeling unwanted,
poverty,
the people at Charlie Hebdo,
Pamela Geller,
Robert Spencer,
the lack of adequate gun control,
the Republicans,
Israel,
the Jews,
Donald Trump
trucks (which can be used to kill people)."**

For many non-Islamics, it's never the fault of the Islamic attacker, or the Islamic ideology the attacker is shouting at the time of the attack.

It's the fault of the Republicans, the people at Charlie Hebdo, Pamela Geller and Robert Spencer, colonialism, capitalism, inadequate gun control, inadequate knife control, Israel, the Jews, Donald Trump, trucks (which can be used to run down people).

Not holding someone responsible - very common among the politically correct. Looting: it's poverty - with no recognition of the many millions of people living in extreme poverty and not looting. Being a drug dealer - it's poverty, with no recognition of the many millions of people who have responded differently to living in poverty. Jihad terrorism: it's feeling excluded - though, for instance, the Boston bomber was popular and well liked, and though, more importantly, millions upon millions have had to deal with being outsiders, and have not turned to terrorism, and in fact are working against it.

All the same, we keep hearing, it's the fault of the Republicans, the people at

Charlie Hebdo, the people who provoke, the people who are at the wrong place at the wrong time . . .

Murderous Islamic terrorists attempted to strike a Draw Mohammed event organized by Pamela Geller and Robert Spencer, but were killed before they could kill. The media and political figures and massive amounts of ordinary citizens went: "It was awful of Pamela Geller and Robert Spencer to provoke the attack!" In other words, like considering battered women awful if they for instance, don't do the toast to the batterer's liking, they considered Pamela and Robert awful - rather than courageous for daring to act despite the threat of violence from an ideology that incites to violence (though incitement to violence is supposed to be illegal).

The charge (it's the fault of x, y, z) is meant to prevent any looking at of what is being said. Yes, they were yelling Allahu Ackbar while beheading. But this is because of US foreign policy in the 1970's, 80s, 90s and on. I have nothing good to say about most US interventions - like getting the Ayatollah Khomeini back to Iran in the 70s - like the crazy destabilization of Islamic countries in the name of the so-called Arab Spring only a few very short years ago.

But still, what about those yells of Allahu Ackbar while chopping off the head of a soldier in a quiet London street? What about those prayer breaks - for prayers to Allah - taken while murdering people at the Westgate Mall in Kenya? What about the 13-year-old girl murdered in her bed in Israel by a 17-year-old Islamic terrorist who was immediately hailed as a hero and martyr in his Islamic home area, so close to the girl he murdered?

What about all the teachings of hate in the Quran, and in many of the Islamic countries, and in many mosques also in non-Islamic countries?

This response, by the way, is the same as that used to take responsibility away from anyone currently designated "victim" - as in, most notably, the whole Black Lives Matter movement. So this response, in contrast to the others, is in line with the response to other violence done by groups designated as oppressed.

The question is the same as the one asked regarding the other BUTs: who is behind this?

An equally crucial question: how do we stop this violence?

If we stop all the things that, supposedly, are the true cause of Islamic violence, will that do it? Will changing US foreign policy stop the violence when the religion calls for jihad until there is a worldwide Islamic caliphate?

Already 1400 years ago, long before the US came into existence, in the last decade of Mohammed's life, Islamics were attacking, murdering and subjugating those around them.

It's not likely that removing every other supposed and actual cause for Islamic jihad, other than Islam, will stop Islamic jihad. In fact, it's illogical to think this is even a possibility.

Islamic conquest. Huge Hindu areas. Huge parts of Africa. Turkey. The Middle East.

And then genocides, like the Armenian genocide. At least 1,500,000 people dead.

How do we stop this violence?

I think it makes sense to take a good look at Islam.

Of course there will be the usual screams.

BUT SIX:
“It has nothing to do With Islam”
which goes with
“Islam is a religion of peace”
(variants of “The problem is Islamism, not Islam”)

We’ve all heard - from top politicians, from the media, from the people we work with, from family, from strangers we chat with, from neighbors - that Islamic terrorism has nothing to do with Islam - Islam is a religion of peace. As a friend noted, it boils down to: Islam has nothing to do with Islam.

What can you do, faced with such a denier? As already suggested (more than once), should the person actually be misinformed, they can be given readings like [The Quick and Easy Guide to Understanding Islam](#), [The Koran at a Glance](#), Bill Warner’s [abridged Koran](#) and [Two-Hour Koran](#), and biographies of Mohammed, like Richardson’s [The Life of Mohammed](#) and Burleigh’s [It's All About Muhammad: A Biography of the World's Most Notorious Prophet](#).

You can also point out that Islam means submission - not peace. Submit or else!!

Most likely, though, when someone says that “Islamic violence has nothing to do with Islam”, the reason isn’t lack of knowledge. The evidence is overwhelming that there is a powerful link between, for instance, Islam and terrorist attacks committed by self-proclaimed Islamics doing it for Allah.

Some people may conclude that the link between Islam and Islamic violence is so strong that it’s ridiculous to even go into the topic yet once more. It’s a waste of time and of breath.

Maybe so. Maybe not.

Or maybe, to adequately deal with the barriers within people against acknowledging that Islamic violence has a lot to do with Islam, we need to look at what is fueling their refusal to see what is in plain sight.

BUT SEVEN:
“That’s a matter of opinion”
which goes with
“All opinions are equal” and
“We’re going to have to agree to disagree”
(variants of “It’s a matter of interpretation”)

Many people dismiss facts as opinions. They consider it, for instance, a matter of opinion if the Quran calls on Islamics to wage war on non-Islamics.

How to deal with that? We can try to point out the difference between facts and opinions. When there is evidence for something - like that it is snowing, it is sunny, the Quran calls for infidels to be slain - these are facts, not opinions.

From “It’s a matter of opinion,” many people go: “I think we’re just going to have to agree to disagree.” That means they will not, for the moment anyway, look at some evidence.

A suggestion: let them stay with their disagreement. It’s important that we pick our battles, instead of wasting our breath.

“That’s a matter of opinion” in some ways is different from the other BUTs. It’s among responses that are currently extremely popular when someone is asked to acknowledge an unsavory truth about some non-Western culture or religion: Who are we to judge? All opinions are equal. It’s a matter of opinion. Everything is relative. You’re being judgmental.

Because this response is widespread does this mean that, unlike the other BUTs, it’s a natural response?

EUREKA about “All opinions are equal”

I was wondering about, if “all opinions are equal” is widespread, does that mean it’s natural, when I had a eureka moment.

No, this BUT isn't different from the others. Instead, something utterly unnatural is permeating Western society. Throughout the West, millions upon millions of people hold that all opinions are equal, all cultures are equal, all religions are equal.

I noticed this rapidly growing belief, in my college classes, in about 2005. My first online articles (2006) were about this. For example: *Stupid Opinion #1 - All Opinions Are Equal*:

OVERVIEW:

<http://www.elsas-word-story-image-idea-music-emporium.com/not-thinking.html>

FULL ARTICLE:

<http://www.elsas-word-story-image-idea-music-emporium.com/stupid-opinion.html>

I was most stunned by how rigidly, tenaciously students stuck with these beliefs - refusing to look at evidence that their beliefs did not fit with reality, or with logic. Reality and logic were irrelevant. What was going on? I didn't know. I was in shock - like someone who has come upon a snake poison previously unknown, for which I could not find an antidote.

I did not, at the time, have any clue that the belief was something unnatural. The main cause I could think of was Western guilt - especially guilt at having pushed its religion and culture as superior to other religions and cultures, disregarding the shortcomings of Western culture (like the takeover of continents from indigenous inhabitants).

Is Western guilt enough to account for the belief that all opinions, cultures and religions are equal? The Western sense of guilt is almost definitely a factor. But I no longer believe it’s enough to account for what I witnessed.

The eureka moment: "That's a matter of opinion" and "All opinions are equal" are part of the Big BUT System. They block people from looking at opinions, cultures, religions.

It's natural to look and judge. I'm remembering a powerful moment from Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, when a boy hears twins crying in the forest. In his tribe twins are regarded as evil and left to die in the forest. But something breaks in him when he hears the cries. In other words something in him knows this is wrong, judges it as wrong, despite the beliefs of his culture. No, all beliefs are not equal. I think we all instinctively know that, no matter how much we may disagree about which ideology is valid.

What's the logical conclusion, regarding the politically correct belief that one must not judge another culture (except Western culture)? A detective would suspect it had been inculcated, induced like a hypnotic trance. He or she would also suspect that whodunit would be the same people who manufactured the other BUTs. This would all need to be verified.

What came first? Belief that all opinions are equal, or the Big BUT System regarding Islam?

In my case, I noticed the belief that all opinions are equal a decade before identifying the Big BUT System. I went on to do a lot of thinking, speaking and writing this, including *Think or Sink: We Think of the West Sinks*:
<http://elsasemporium.com/good-thinking.html>

I also looked at the Western education system, showing how it's become an indoctrination system:
<http://westindanger.com/education-not-indoctrination.html>

It's only now, in what was supposed to be just a set of quick rebuttals to the BUTs people make when faced with negative facts about Islamic ideology, that I've had two eureka's. First, that the BUTs are unnatural. And now, second, this much bigger eureka that the Big BUT System is connected to the illogical and counter-factual belief that all cultures are equal.

I feel like a detective story sleuth, say, Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot, recognizing not just that all the ongoing mysterious murders are linked, but that these murders are linked with many other unsolved mysteries.

Back to: which came first, "All opinions are equal" or the Big BUT System about Islam? "All opinions are equal" is essential for Islam to make inroads into the West. Without it, Islamic ideology would have been visible decades ago and rapidly evaluated as incompatible with Western ideologies that are for freedom of enquiry and speech. The dangerous nature of Islamic ideology would have been seen immediately.

So my guess is that "All opinions are equal" was encouraged throughout the West - by infiltrators, for instance - before there was much Islamic presence. I remember, by 1980, cries from Islamics and the emerging politically correct, that one must not use Western criteria to judge Islamic practices like female genital mutilation. No one had the right to judge another culture.

I remember disagreeing vehemently. One always had the right to judge a culture. Someone from a culture without slavery could judge that slavery was wrong, based on what humans could be shown to need to flourish. Likewise, you did not have to be from a Nazi society to judge Nazism as wrong, based on its denigration without valid justification of Jews, blacks, and on. You did not have to be from a society with female genital mutilation to judge that destroying women's capacity for sexual pleasure, an innate capacity, was wrong.

I had no idea how the opposite opinion, that all opinions were equal and it was wrong to judge another culture, was coming to permeate Western society - until I was faced with a class where all my students held that opinion.

Right now, with this eureka moment, I feel like someone from a fairy tale, who has just unmasked a wicked witch (or wolf) disguised as, say, Little Red Riding Hood's sweet grandmother. "All opinions are equal" - it's supposed to stop the evil West from being that evil thing, judgmental. But pull off the mask and you see that it's a poisonous belief, like the poisonous prick from the needle that put Sleeping Beauty to sleep for a hundred years.

Whodunnit? Was it the politically correct? If so, how did it happen? Was it Islamic infiltrators who utterly did not believe all opinions cultures and religions are equal, but saw this belief as something extremely useful?

According to a friend,

There is a spiritual battle going on. I believe there is a God and also there is evil. Call it the Devil. The Devil tries to destroy everything God created and uses deceit. Just like Allah. Any tactic to stop people from understanding the truth. So God equals truth; Satan equals deceit. It is simply illogical that

otherwise intelligent people are blind to the truths about Islam. I think Satan blinds them, via the ways that you articulate. I could go on but that's it in a nutshell.

I also have the sense of "forces".

Important stuff to explore.

But for now, a few final BUTs.

BUT EIGHT:
“All religions are nonsense”
(a variant of “There’s good and bad in all religions”)

Like “There’s good and bad in all religions,” the assertion that “All religions are nonsense” or “All religions are fairy tales” is meant to make it irrelevant to look at any religion.

How to deal with this? Point out the function of the assertion.

You may also suggest that the person watch videos of Sam Harris, an atheist who recognizes that the content of the different religions differs, and pays attention to Islamic ideology.

**BUT NINE:
 “Islam is only 1400 years old -
 think of Christianity 600 years ago”**

Confronted with Islamic jihad terrorism, many people respond with “BUT Islam is only 1400 years old. Just think of Christianity 600 years ago.” They speak as if it were a well-known truth that religions run on a timeline.

So I checked on various religions.

The Jain religion is about 5000 years ago. What was it like when it was 1400 years old? Very much as it is now. Utterly non-violent.

What about Buddhism, which is about 2600 years old, in other words 1200 years older than Islam? What was it like approximately 1200 years ago? Very much as it is now.

So much for the theory that religions run on a timeline, as opposed to that their ideology is crucial, as well as other non-timeline elements, such as social factors.

An observation: the oldest of the religions I’ve mentioned, Jainism, is the most non-violent. The youngest of them, Islam, is the most violent. A question (not relevant to the Big BUT System): has something been happening over the course of the past 5000 years, that encourages the emergence of more violent religions - and perhaps more violence in general?

Back to the timeline theory. Is the timeline theory mentioned in relation to unpleasant practices from other religions? Like the practice of the Aztecs to cut out a healthy young man’s heart on the winter solstice? No. Like the Hindu practice of suttee, prevalent at the time of the British conquest of India? No.

By the way, how old was Hinduism at that time of the British conquest? The first period of what developed into present-day Hinduism, the Vedic period, dates back to about 1900 BC. So, on the timeline, what is supposed to be happening when a religion approaches 4000 years of existence? I have never

heard a single speculation about this, or even a single postulation about a religious timeline, except to deny the importance of current Islamic violence.

Another by the way, when the Crusades are mentioned, Christianity is usually condemned. People don't go: "But think, at the time of the Crusades, Christianity was younger than Islam is today, and we all know about current Islamic terrorism, only to be expected when a religion is only 1400 years old. So what do you expect from Christianity at an even earlier age?" Instead, just like "BUT Islam is only 1400 years old," "BUT think of the Crusades" is brought up only to deflect attention from Islamic jihad terrorism, and to demonstrate that Christianity has been at least as bad, if not worse.

Why would anyone spout, "BUT Islam is only 1400 years old", which presupposes that religions run on a timeline, while never examining the supposition?

The only time this BUT is trotted out is in relation to Islam.

So, again, the BUT appears constructed, rather than natural.

And who might benefit from the existence of this BUT? Anyone who might want the importance of Islamic violence discounted.

BUT TEN: "Think of the Crusades"

Almost every time there is a mention of Islamic invasions of one country or another, Islamic conquests - northern Africa, Turkey, the Middle East, India, Spain, also eastern Europe to the gates of Vienna - one hears: "Just think of the Crusades. Christianity was no different."

Which religious group might have been upset by the Crusades? Islam.

Why were the Crusades fought? To fight back against Islamic invasion.

This is not mentioned when people intone "BUT think of the Crusades."

Nor do people - including me - tend to have any idea of the number of battles by Islamics intended to spread Islam, in contrast to the number of Crusader battles. I was stunned when I found out the very low number of Crusader battles, in contrast to the huge number of Islamic battles.

Nor do most people know that the Crusader battles were meant to take back Christian territory, while the Islamic battles were to spread Islam. I myself had no idea. (I also had no idea about another consequence of the Crusades, vastly increased European anti-Semitism.)

For a comparison of the Crusader battles versus Islamic battles, an excellent introduction is Bill Warner's **Why We Are Afraid: A 1400 Year Secret:** http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_Qpy0mXg8Y

And why would anyone spout, "Think of the Crusades", when faced with information about Islamic violence, while not knowing anything about the scope or origin of the Crusades, or about the scope and extent of Islamic conquests?

Does it seem a natural response, or does it seem highly likely that it was intrained in people?

As for who might benefit from this BUT, it is almost certainly some force that

does not want people to face Islamic violence - the causes, the reality, the extent.

BUT ELEVEN:
“Oh those poor poor offended Muslims”
which goes with
“It’s not right to hurt their feelings”
and also with the self-policing
“I must be careful not to hurt Muslims’ feelings”

Another way the truth is made irrelevant is through “BUT just think of those poor poor offended Muslims with all their poor poor hurt feelings.” Somehow truth does not matter. It’s as if one could not mention someone who is utterly drunk because family members who are not utterly drunk (in this case, Muslims not in favor of violent jihad) could have their feelings hurt if one mentioned the extremely drunk family member.

This isn’t the case when someone brings up one of the many sex scandals involving Catholic priests. I’ve never heard anyone say: But think of all those nice Catholics who aren’t involved in sex scandals. They will have their feelings hurt. Even worse, they could be offended if one mentioned the sex scandal.

According to a university professor (personal communication):

Although I think that Islam is a plagiary, copied from Jewish, Christian and pagan sources, I cannot hurt my Muslim students by saying it. Academic freedom does not mean freedom to bash your students' belief. They are there to study, not to be denigrated.

Clearly this person considers that it is bad to “bash” and to “denigrate.” But what would “denigration” consist of? The answer seems to be: conveying evidence about Islam that Islamic students are not likely to appreciate.

What is going on is easy to see. First and foremost, Islamic students must not have their feelings hurt. That is priority one. The truth is not relevant, facts are not relevant, nothing else is relevant if Islamic students might get their feelings hurt.

I regard truth as the higher priority. Of course how one says things matters. Ridicule, humiliation, denigration, contempt - these have no place toward students.

Imagine if the situation were just slightly different - if one were dealing with Nazism instead of Islam, and had Nazi students in the class. Would the teacher be unwilling to hurt their feelings by telling the truth about things?

In fact, a huge suffering in many Germans and Austrians (my background is Austrian) is that many of them felt/feel intense guilt and/or shame over the Holocaust - something which occurred, something that needs to be accepted.

That doesn't mean that one doesn't tell the truth.

I'm on the side of more truth, rather than holding back - including exploring what it may do to people to be brought up Islamic and then coming to face the truth about the ideology (death to apostates, etc), as well as about other aspects of Islam, like the evident plagiarism and also the non-factual nature of some of the claims in the core Islamic religious texts (like that the sun sets in a pool of muddy water) though supposedly the text comes from their god who supposedly knows everything.

Note that, once again, one does not hear that one must not bash or denigrate Nazism or Communism, Christianity or Buddhism or Hinduism, or New Age spirituality, or atheism. And when, as is happening ever more frequently, Judaism, Jews, and Israel are denigrated, one does not hear: oh you must not hurt the feelings of Jews and/or Israelis. Instead, there is massive denigration.

All this is yet more evidence that one is dealing with a constructed response, rather than that "oh those poor offended Muslims" is the response of people who are naturally sensitive to members of any religion or non-religious ideology.

Something else is happening. Here the BUT ("But one must not hurt the feelings of Islamics") leads to massive **self-censorship**. One must not say this. One must not say that. Why not? Because one might hurt the feelings of Islamics. In other words, the person is constantly self-censoring, self-policing.

The self-censorship may be most apparent here, because it is openly expressed: the person is happy to state that he does not express what he knows because he does not want to "bash."

However, all the BUTs are linked with self-censorship. If, say, someone defines any negative truth about Islam as hate speech, and is against such speech, that person will almost certainly police themselves, prevent themselves from saying anything that could be seen as hate speech.

BUT TWELVE: "You're a realist. I'm an idealist."

I keep coming upon more BUTs. Recently someone claimed that the difference between her view on Islam and mine stemmed from my being a realist, and her being an idealist.

She didn't deny the truth of anything I said. But somehow, being an idealist, she could not stomach my conclusions re the dangers of Islam and Islamic immigration.

I mentioned Chamberlain. In many ways, he - more than Hitler - caused World War II. He appeased Hitler over and over. In 1938, German army officers were ready to apprehend Hitler, have a coup, when Hitler came back from yet another meeting with Chamberlain. Chamberlain could not give in yet again, was the thought of the army officers. They were wrong. Chamberlain appeased Hitler yet once more. Hitler returned to Germany, triumphant. The army officers could not apprehend him. Hitler continued to be in charge. Soon, World War II. Millions of dead soldiers on both sides. The citizens of Leningrad starved en masse by Hitler's siege. The Holocaust.

Idealism - another term is reality-denial.

The outlook I favor is Churchill's: that England would continue to battle, no matter how difficult the situation.

The list of BUTs goes on.

A very prevalent and powerful one: "That sounds like hate speech."

**BUT THIRTEEN:
“That sounds like hate speech!!”
which goes with
“That’s Islamophobia”**

A friend stopped talking to me for two years because of my speaking about Islam. He didn’t deny the truth of what I was saying. But these truths should not be spoken, according to him. People could come to have a negative attitude to Muslims.

My friend and I are speaking again. But he still is very uncomfortable with any talk that includes truth about Islamic ideology. He shudders. The fear of breaking the politically correct taboo and doing what may be considered “hate speech” looms large.

Somehow truth has become irrelevant.

Another way the truth is made irrelevant is through “BUT just think of those poor poor offended Muslims with all their poor poor hurt feelings.” Somehow, once again, truth does not matter. It’s as if one could not mention someone who is utterly drunk because family members who are not utterly drunk (in this case, Muslims not in favor of violent jihad) could have their feelings hurt if one mentioned the extremely drunk family member.

This isn’t the case when someone brings up one of the many sex scandals involving Catholic priests. I’ve never heard anyone say: But think of all those nice Catholics who aren’t involved in sex scandals. They will have their feelings hurt. Even worse, they could be offended if one mentioned the sex scandal.

Perhaps the most common BUT, saved for last, is “That’s Islamophobia.” Once again, truth is made irrelevant. It isn’t seen as unimportant when one looks at the atrocities committed by Communists. No cries of, that’s Commiephobia. It isn’t seen as unimportant when one looks at the atrocities committed by the Inquisition. It isn’t seen as unimportant when one looks at the Salem witch burnings. No cries of, those poor Christians who don’t believe in burning witches. Just think of their poor hurt feelings.

Again I ask: are "That sounds like hate speech" and "Oh those poor poor offended Muslims" and "That's Islamophobia" natural responses to an unpleasant reality?

All the evidence points to the contrary. One can talk about Nazism, the Aztec religion (in which a healthy young man's heart was cut out of his chest), the old Greek religion (in which some gods raped), Communism (millions dead in the Gulag Archipelago). One can talk about cigarette smoking being linked to lung cancer. No one recoils that any of this is hate speech.

It does not take a major league detective to note that something unsavory is going on. Truth has been found left to rot and die, over and over.

What's next?

More Crucial Questions

More and more schools are teaching texts like *I Love Islam*. What to do?

I sat down and wrote the [*Quick and Easy Guide to Understanding Islam*](http://westindanger.com/ed/guide-to-understanding-islam.html):
<http://westindanger.com/ed/guide-to-understanding-islam.html>

The next task, I thought, would be to get that guide out into the world and into schools. That does need to be done.

But as I noted at the start, I was immediately hit by how people denied, not the negative truths about Islam, but the *importance* of these truths. BUT. BUT. BUT. There's the common insistence that murderous violence done by self-proclaimed jihadis in the name of Islam has nothing to do with Islam. All the massive evidence is BUTted away.

The more I explored the BUTs, the more something else struck me: they were unnatural.

An image that initially came to mind: the hedge of thorns around Sleeping Beauty, condemning her to 100 years of sleep until the right prince finally came along.

However, the BUTs are not magic, stemming from a quick curse from an irate fairy godmother. Abracadabra.

Another image may be more fitting: the Great Wall of China, built to keep any potential invader out of China, initially taking lots of energy to put into place, but thereafter strong and easily protected. The Big BUT System, now in place, is virtually self-maintaining, constantly reinforced by the people whose lives it is endangering.

So, what next?

There *is* the need to get the message out.

Some very obvious questions also come to mind.

Whodunnit? How have people had instilled in them so much unnatural recoil from the truth about Islam?

And then: how is something as unnatural as the Big BUT System kept in place?

Plus, is there a way, not just of countering one BUT or another, but also of exposing the system to the light of day and rendering it ineffective?

The same questions come up when one looks at the so-called education system in the West, where children have instilled in them the beliefs that all opinions, cultures and religions are equal, and that it's wrong to judge.

Every little kid judges: cops and robbers, good guys and bad guys, heroes and villains. It's natural - and sane - to make judgments.

But in the education system as well, the natural response is BUTted away. BUT it's wrong to judge another culture. BUT who are we to judge? Proof that it's both illogical and counter-factual to hold that all opinions are equal, is likewise BUTted away.

The education system in the West has clearly become an indoctrination system.

Again, whodunit, how is the system maintained, and how do we disable it?

These questions go beyond the scope of this guide to the Big BUT System.

The exploration will continue. Soon: another guide.

In the meantime, all the best to all of us doing what we can to counter the anti-freedom movements around us.

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Notes