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WORLDVIEW EDUCATION: A POSSIBILITY FOR AUTONOMY-FACILITATING EDUCATION IN ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

BY

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DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Much of the current debate surrounding the integration of Muslims into Western countries is fueled by the belief that Islamic values are incompatible with those of the liberal democratic West. One area that could prove especially challenging for integration is education, as the foundational values of Islamic education would also, on this view, clash with the foundational values of liberal education. Could Islamic education ever be conducive to liberal values? If there is indeed a clash of civilizations at work here, then this seems unlikely. However, if the clash is overstated, then are there conditions under which at least some liberal democratic values could be promoted in Islamic schools? In this dissertation, I will partially address this question by focusing on one of the central liberal democratic values: autonomy. Specifically, my aim is to offer a modification to Harry Brighouse's proposal for autonomy-facilitating education in order to suggest a curriculum that could be used to facilitate autonomy in a way that is compatible with some forms of Islamic education. I describe how this curriculum, called Worldview Education, can contribute to an autonomy-facilitating education in Islamic schools by engaging students with a variety of worldviews, as Brighouse proposes, while removing the element of critique that Islamic schools could find troubling.

In memory of my father.

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CHAPTER 1

THE TENSION BETWEEN AUTONOMY AND PLURALISM

Much of the current debate surrounding the integration of Muslims into Western countries is fueled by the belief that Islamic values are incompatible with those of the liberal democratic West. For instance, there is a general impression among non-Muslims in the West that Islam is oppressive, denying personal autonomy (a central liberal democratic value) to its adherents.[1] The practice of some Muslim women of wearing a veil or other head covering when in public is often cited as a visible example of this generalized oppression. The idea that there is an irreconcilable divide between Western and Islamic values was popularized by Samuel Huntington's 1996 book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, which proposes that Western and Islamic civilizations fundamentally clash with each other in such a way that they must always stand opposed.[2] If this is true, then the integration of Muslim immigrants into Western countries would indeed be a difficult task: the fundamentally clashing values of the immigrants (e.g., a commitment to Islam and the worldwide Muslim community) would stand in the way of the embrace of liberal democratic values (e.g., a commitment to the primacy of the individual and the individual's right to direct his or her own life) that is central to their integration into Western societies. One area that could prove especially

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[1] I will give a simple definition of personal autonomy shortly, and I will discuss the concept at length in Chapter 3.

[2] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1996).

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challenging for integration is education, as the foundational values of Islamic education would also, on this view, clash with the foundational values of liberal education. Could Islamic education ever be conducive to liberal values? If there is indeed a clash of civilizations at work here, then this seems unlikely. However, if the clash is overstated, then are there conditions under which at least some liberal democratic values could be facilitated in Islamic schools?

In this dissertation, I will partially address this question by focusing on one of the central liberal democratic values: autonomy. Specifically, my aim is to offer a modification to Harry Brighouse's proposal for autonomy-facilitating education in order to suggest a curriculum that could be used to facilitate autonomy in a way that is compatible with some forms of Islamic education.[3] Before doing so, however, I want to be clear about what it means to provide an education that facilitates autonomy and why traditional ideas of how to do so raises concerns within the context of Islamic education. In order to do so, I will first describe specific forms of Islamic education and Brighouse's proposal for autonomy-facilitating education. I will focus on three forms of Islamic education: one is a proposal by the Muslim scholar Yusuf al-Qaradawi and two are Islamic schools that currently operate in the state of Illinois. These descriptions will lead into a contrast that will reveal some of the real differences between Islamic and liberal worldviews, especially with regard to the value of personal autonomy, or the ability of individuals to direct their own lives. This is a difference that must be taken into account when considering the Islamic education of children in liberal democratic societies. While liberalism defends the value of personal autonomy, it also defends the value of pluralism:

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[3] Harry Brighouse, *School Choice and Social Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

allowing a range of worldviews to flourish. This tension between autonomy and pluralism is inherent to liberalism — it is a clash of liberal values — and it cannot be avoided in questions that arise when considering how to deal with educational pluralism, such as that represented by Islamic education (and religious education generally), in a liberal society.

The remainder of this chapter presents a motivational framework for my dissertation by connecting it to ongoing tensions raised by the increasing presence of Muslims in Western countries. First, I present two sources of tension that highlight the clash of civilizations framework that permeates popular and political discussions of Muslim integration in Western societies: the veil and the mosque. Then, I use Walter Feinberg's book, *For Goodness Sake*, to introduce the specifically educational tensions that arise when considering the place of religious education in liberal democratic societies. Finally, I present a chapter-by-chapter outline of the dissertation, and a brief restatement of its primary goal.

Sources of Tension Between Islam and the West: The Veil and the Mosque

The increasing number of Muslims in North America and Europe, many of whom are immigrants, has led to discussion of how to integrate Muslims into Western liberal societies. In a February 2011 speech in Munich about Islamism and British values, the British Prime Minister David Cameron argued that what he called "state multiculturalism" had failed, leading many Britons to lead segregated lives, split between their cultures and their country. Cameron proposed to resolve this problem with a "muscular liberalism" that enforces a strong sense of British national identity across

cultures.[4] This shows how the concern with integration is thought by some to be rooted in tensions between Islamic values and liberal values. In popular and political domains, these tensions have most notably coalesced around two issues: the veil and the mosque. These issues stand out because they are so visible: some Muslim women see the wearing of the veil or other head coverings when around non-family members as an important element of their religious expression, and immigrant Muslims need to build mosques in their new homes in which to worship.

These issues have surfaced in the public discourse of liberal societies in a number of ways. For instance, France has banned the wearing of headscarves, along with other religious symbols, in its state schools; and Switzerland ignited controversy when it banned the building of minarets, the prayer towers of mosques, in 2009.[5] While these occurrences raise important questions surrounding what it means to protect religious freedom in liberal pluralistic societies — should accommodations be made for religious practices that appear to conflict with liberal values? — I am interested here in examining what the arguments against both head coverings in public places and the construction of mosques reveal about the ways in which Islamic values are perceived as clashing with Western values.

The 2004 banning of religious symbols, including Muslim headscarves, in French public schools is perhaps the best-known controversy involving Muslim head coverings,

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[4] "Bagehot: Muscle v multiculturalism," *Economist*, February 10, 2011, accessed January 21, 2012, http://www.economist.com/node/18112127?story_ID=18112127&fsrc=nlw|wwp|02-10-2011|politics_this_week.

[5] See BBC News, "The Islamic Veil Across Europe," last modified June 15, 2010, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/5414098.stm for a discussion of the banning of veils in Europe. See Nick Cumming-Bruce and Steven Erlanger, "Swiss Ban Building of Minarets on Mosques," *New York Times,* November 30, 2009, accessed January 21, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/30/world/europe/30swiss.html for more on the Swiss ban on minarets.

but there have been other movements to ban the veil and its variants as well. In September 2010, the French parliament passed a law prohibiting the wearing of full-face Islamic veils in public places, which took effect in April 2011.[6] In Spain, the lower house of its parliament narrowly voted down a proposal to ban the burqa (a full-body covering worn by some Muslim women) in public places, a proposal which the parliament's upper house had already approved. However, at the local level, major Spanish cities, such as Barcelona, have proceeded with bans on full-face veils in public places.[7] The lower house of the Belgian parliament has passed a similar measure, though recent shakeups in the Belgian government appear to have stalled its passage through its Senate for the time being.

In a July 2010 essay on the *New York Times* "Opinionator" website, the philosopher Martha Nussbaum presents five arguments that are typically given in support of bans on veils or facial coverings.[8] She aims to show that the bans cannot actually be justified by these arguments, since the arguments are clearly problematic, but rather that they are motivated by something else, and therefore amount to religious discrimination. (She does not explicitly state here what the true motivation might be, but she implies that it is a fear of Islam.) This is troubling, Nussbaum thinks, because religious discrimination is inappropriate in liberal societies, which promote religious tolerance.

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[6] See Steven Erlanger, "France: Senate Passes Bill on Facial Veils," *New York Times*, September 15, 2010, accessed January 21, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/15/world/europe/15briefs-France.html; and Steven Erlanger, "France Enforces Ban on Full-Face Veils in Public," *New York Times*, April 12, 2011, accessed January 21, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/12/world/europe/12france.html.

[7] See BBC News, "Barcelona to Ban Islamic Veils in Some Public Spaces," last modified June 15, 2010, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10316696.

[8] See Martha Nussbaum, "Veiled Threats?" last modified July 11, 2010, http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/07/11/veiled-threats. All the quotes in the discussion of Nussbaum's piece are from here.

The first argument that Nussbaum raises is "that security requires people to show their faces when appearing in public places." The second is "that the kind of transparency and reciprocity proper to relations between citizens is impeded by covering part of the face." She dismisses both of these arguments as unserious, primarily on the grounds that they discriminate against Islam because they are applied inconsistently. In other words, the movements to ban the veil have not also called for a ban on other types of face coverings (winter scarves, helmets, hoods, and so forth). Clearly the veil is being targeted here, which Nussbaum views as a form of religious discrimination.

The third argument is "that the burqa is a symbol of male domination that symbolizes the objectification of women (that they are being seen as mere objects)." She rejects this argument as well, first by pointing out that it is not clear that the burqa really is always a symbol of male domination. Some women might truly wish to wear the burqa: for some, it could be a sign of female empowerment, rather than male domination. Her second point against the argument is that, if the real concern is the objectification of women, then a number of other practices would have to be banned as well (she mentions "sex magazines, nude photos, tight jeans," and "plastic surgery"). Again, Nussbaum claims that the burqa is being targeted here not for its oppressiveness, but because of its association with Islam, and this amounts to religious discrimination.

The fourth argument, related to the third, is "that women wear the burqa only because they are coerced." Her response to this argument is that coercion is already prohibited in the places where these laws have been proposed or enacted by laws against domestic abuse; and that this argument is usually made in ignorance of the actual situation of those wearing the burqa. Again, how do we know that all the women wearing

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the burqa have been coerced into doing so? If coercion is the concern, then laws against abuse need to be better enforced across the board, and we must be sure that those wearing the burqa have indeed been coerced into doing so. Once again, Nussbaum's point is that a practice associated with Islam is being targeted here, and this amounts to religious discrimination.

The final argument that Nussbaum mentions is that the burqa is "unhealthy," because it is "hot and uncomfortable." She rejects this argument easily: is the proposal really to ban all clothing that makes people hot or uncomfortable?

Nussbaum's major point in raising (and rejecting) these arguments is to show that the proposals to ban full-face coverings are in fact meant to discriminate against a practice that is specifically associated with Islam, despite the reasons that are typically given. If those making the proposals were truly concerned with security, or objectification, then there are numerous other practices that would have to be prohibited in public alongside the full-face coverings. Since nobody is seriously proposing to ban these other practices, then the concern must in fact be with the Islamic practice of the full-face covering itself. Nussbaum claims that this is a form of discrimination targeted specifically at Islam.

Why would those proposing these bans want to discriminate against Islam? As I stated earlier, Nussbaum does not answer this question directly in her piece, but the implication is that there must be hidden reasons for wanting to ban full-face coverings in public places; the reasons that are actually given must not be serious, since they are not being applied consistently. I will return to the issue of what these reasons might be after I

have considered another source of tension between Islam and the West that has lately

risen in prominence: the construction of mosques in Western countries.

As mentioned previously, in 2009, through a public referendum, Switzerland

enacted a ban on the construction of minarets, a typical architectural feature in mosques:

tall towers from which the call to prayer is traditionally made.[9] Also, in the summer of

2010, in the U.S., protests arose over plans to build an Islamic cultural center, which

would include a space that could be used as a mosque, two blocks away from ground

zero, the site of the 9/11 attacks that brought down the World Trade Center.[10] The issue

received a considerable amount of media attention, which spread to cover concerns in

other parts of the U.S. about the building of mosques.

What reasons are given to support these movements limiting the construction of

mosques? In Switzerland, a campaign poster in favor of the ban "depicted a Swiss flag

sprouting black, missile-shaped minarets alongside a woman shrouded in a niqab, a head-

to-toe veil that shows only the eyes, starkly illustrated the determination of the right to

play on deep-rooted fears that Muslim immigration would lead to an erosion of Swiss

values."[11] A far-right member of the Swiss Parliament claimed that the minarets

symbolized "the political will to take power," which would then be used to establish

Islamic law in the country.

As for the U.S., the protests surrounding the so-called "ground zero mosque" give

expression to the claim that it is disrespectful to build an Islamic community center so

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[9] See Erlanger, "Swiss Ban Building of Minarets on Mosques." Note, however, that none of the Swiss minarets actually give a call to prayer.

[10] See *New York Times*, "Muslim Community Center in Lower Manhattan (Park51)," last modified August 3, 2011, http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/organizations/p/park51/index.html.

[11] Erlanger, "Swiss Ban Building of Minarets on Mosques."

close to the site of a tragedy perpetrated by Muslims. The project, which is known as Cordoba House, was first presented in public on May 5, 2010, and protests began to emerge the next day. Certain notable conservative figures have spoken out regarding the project. Sarah Palin, for instance, called it an "unnecessary provocation," and (in)famously urged Muslims to "refudiate" it. Newt Gingrich, the former House Speaker who is currently running for President in 2012, has opposed the project as well, calling it "an aggressive act that is offensive."[12] The Anti-Defamation League also opposes the project, even though they have criticized anti-Islamic attitudes in the past. Its national director, Abraham H. Foxman, said the location was "the wrong place," noting that its proximity to the site of the 9/11 attacks makes it an affront to those families who lost loved ones in the attacks.[13] These points might be valid if those who are proposing to build the Islamic community center were affiliated with Al Qaeda, which was behind the 9/11 attacks, or even if they sympathized with the attackers.

However, this is not the case. The man who would lead the center is Feisal Abdul Rauf, an imam who has led a mosque in New York's financial district for over twenty years. He "always emphasizes the center's interfaith agenda."[14] In an opinion piece in the *New York Times* on September 7, 2010, Rauf mentions that he has delivered speeches internationally promoting interfaith relations, and he has also served as a representative on a U.S. State Department tour of the Middle East. He says, "My life's work has been

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[12] See Michael Barbaro, "Debate Heats up About Mosque near Ground Zero," *New York Times*, July 31, 2010, accessed January 21, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/31/nyregion/31mosque.html.

[13] Ibid.

[14] See Stolberg, Sheryl Gay, "Obama Enters Debate with Mosque Remarks," *New York Times*, August 15, 2010, accessed January 21, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/15/us/politics/15mosque.html.

focused on building bridges between religious groups."[15] The name of the center, Cordoba House, is based on the name of his initiative, the Cordoba Initiative, which refers to "the city in Spain where Muslims, Christians and Jews co-existed in the Middle Ages during a period of great cultural enrichment created by Muslims." The initiative, he says, "is intended to cultivate understanding among all religions and cultures." Furthermore, Rauf describes the "broader mission" of the initiative: "to strengthen relations between the Western and Muslim worlds and to help counter radical ideology." Cordoba House would include prayers spaces for many faiths and a multifaith 9/11 memorial. Unless Rauf is being completely disingenuous, and there is no reason to think this, then he is clearly no radical Muslim. He sees Cordoba House as a way to commemorate the *victims* of 9/11, not the attackers.

The outcry against the center has led others to defend it, such as Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York City, and even President Barack Obama, both of whom have claimed that religious freedom allows for religious groups to build centers without government interference. The center has also received support from other Muslims. For instance, on September 20, 2010, a group of Muslim leaders gathered at the proposed site of Cordoba House to pledge their support to the center, focusing on their constitutional right to build a center at the location. More importantly, it has received support from members of other faiths: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders joined together at an "emergency summit" on September 7, 2010, to express their disapproval of the "'anti-Muslim frenzy' and attacks at several mosques" which they said "had the potential not

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[15] See Feisal Abdul Rauf, "Building on Faith," *New York Times*, September 8, 2010, accessed January 21, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/08/opinion/08mosque.html. All the quotes in this paragraph come from this piece.

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only to tear apart the country, but also to undermine the reputation of America as a model of religious freedom and diversity."[16] Despite all of this, a poll performed from September 16-20, 2010, found that, while 80 percent of the New York respondents believed that the Cordoba Initiative had a right to build the community center at its proposed location, 57 percent found the location to be inappropriate, seemingly because they find the location to be insensitive to the families of victims of the 9/11 attacks.[17] Again, though, Imam Rauf (and in fact the vast majority of American Muslims) clearly does not associate or sympathize with the attackers.

It appears that the root cause of the concerns over the presence of the veil and the mosque in the West is a misunderstanding of Islam that leads to a fear that the presence of Muslims in Western countries will lead to the disintegration of Western values. The key misunderstanding is the equation of Islam as a whole with the Islam of the oppressive Muslims who carry out terrorist attacks, such as those on 9/11. This misunderstanding then leads to a fear of anything associated with Islam, or "Islamophobia," with the idea being that Islamic values are necessarily antithetical to the values that are seen as being so central to Western identity, such as individual freedoms. The integration of Muslims into Western society in general is thus seen as problematic. The Swiss propaganda regarding the minarets demonstrates this, as does the French ban on full-face coverings. Recent developments in Germany show this as well. Thilo Sarrazin, a banker, recently published a book, the title of which can be translated as *Germany Does Away With Itself*, "which laments the growing number of Muslim immigrants, contending that they are

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[16] See Laurie Goodstein, "Concern Is Voiced over Religious Intolerance," *New York Times*, September 8, 2010, accessed January 21, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/08/us/08muslim.html.

[17] See Reuters, "NY Voters Support Right to Build Muslim Center – Poll," last modified September 24, 2010, http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSN2420267120100924.

'dumbing down' society."[18] Sarrazin has resigned from his post with the German central bank, but his views have gained some traction in Germany: as of November 2010, his book had sold more than a million copies.

While it might be true that some of those who would identify as Muslims, such as the Taliban, do indeed place a low value on individual freedoms, it is mistaken to attribute this view to Islam as a whole. One step toward dispelling the fear of Muslim immigration to the West is to demonstrate that this equation of Islamic values as a whole with the values of a relatively small group of fundamentalist Muslims is false: even if Islamic values are not the same as Western values, they may not clash as much as this equation allows. At the same time, it is important to note that there are indeed key differences between Islamic and liberal values, as we will see when we compare forms of Islamic education to Harry Brighouse's proposal for autonomy-facilitating education.

The Place of Islamic Education in Liberal Pluralist Societies

While Islamophobia could be the result of an overreaction to the differences between Islamic and liberal values based on sweeping generalizations about Islam, complete harmony between Islamic and liberal values is unlikely. Liberal democracies, with their concurrent openness to pluralism and valuing of personal autonomy, must have strategies for addressing the differences that do exist. At this point, I narrow my focus to how this impacts decisions regarding educational policy. Specifically, I will examine a central concern in the literature on religious education: the compatibility between the foundations of forms of religious education and the demands of education in liberal

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[18] See Michael Slackman, "Book Sets off Immigration Debate in Germany," *New York Times*, September 3, 2010, accessed January 21, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/03/world/europe/03germany.html.

pluralistic societies. I will introduce this literature by focusing on one recent representative work: Walter Feinberg's *For Goodness Sake: Religious Schools and Education for Democratic Citizenry*.[19] While Feinberg discusses religious education generally, it will be clear how the issues he raises apply to Islamic education specifically.

In *For Goodness Sake*, Feinberg aims "to open up a dialogue about the appropriate aims of religious education and about the teaching of religion in liberal, democratic societies."[20] He states that his "thesis is that the public has a strong interest in the work of religious schools and that this interest extends beyond the academic performance of their students into the shared moral understanding required to sustain and reproduce liberal, pluralistic democracies."[21] Underlying this thesis is Feinberg's concern "with the practices of religious schools and with the extent to which they may develop the critical reflective skills and the attitude of respect for differences that democracy requires."[22] This is a concern because "religion constitutes a new imperative for education [that] must be taken seriously in its own right," but it is not immediately clear "how to do that in the context of competing religious truth claims and without sacrificing the commitment of liberal democracy to critical thinking and autonomy," which is a dilemma Feinberg intends to resolve in his book by discussing "how to engage belief in such a way that the capacity for critical reflection is nurtured."[23]

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[19] Walter Feinberg, *For Goodness Sake: Religious Schools and Education for Democratic Citizenry* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

[20] Ibid., xi.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid., xiv.

[23] Ibid., xv, xix.

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www.manaraa.com

As we will see in Chapter 3, critical reflection is a central component of the development of personal autonomy. Autonomy cannot be exercised without this capacity. However, as Feinberg notes, religious morality "is associated with a set of rules, principles, and virtues that from the inside appear divine but from the outside sometimes appear dogmatic and inflexible."[24] In other words, religious morality is typically associated with the hindrance of autonomy, not its facilitation. At the same time, liberal democracies are generally committed to pluralism, which aims to "allow a 'thousand flowers to bloom.'"[25] A person committed to pluralism would tend to support the flourishing of religious schools, but a person committed to liberalism would not want this flourishing to extend to forms of education that hinder the development of critical reflection and autonomy. What should the person do who is committed to both? There is thus a tension built in to the liberal pluralist democracy on which most Western countries are based, and religious education highlights this tension particularly well.

Feinberg addresses this tension with the following argument: first, "ideally, congregants have *prima facie* reason to ask that citizens respect their religious identity and their right to advance that identity in their children."[26] Second, "citizens [of liberal pluralist societies] have reason to ask that religious education respect the fundamental requirements of liberal pluralism, requirements that include a reasonable degree of individual autonomy, public participation, political stability under just conditions, and intellectual development."[27]

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[24] Ibid., xviii.

[25] Ibid., xx.

[26] Ibid., xxiv.

[27] Ibid.

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My dissertation contributes to this line of thinking by proposing a way that Islamic schools can in fact include a reasonable degree of individual autonomy. I will represent Islamic schools by examining three forms of Islamic education, which between them offer two different ways of understanding what such an education should entail. I will represent an education for autonomy with Harry Brighouse's autonomy-facilitating education. Feinberg's discussion in his book focuses primarily on Catholic schools, with references to Jewish and Lutheran schools, but Islamic education plays a relatively small direct role in his analysis. Few philosophers of education writing in English have examined the foundations of Islamic education and their possible compatibility with liberal educational foundations. One of those who have is Michael Merry, who has analyzed the role of Islamic education in liberal pluralistic democracies in his book, *Culture, Identity, and Islamic Schooling: A Philosophical Approach*.[28] While autonomy does play a role in Merry's analysis, my work differs from his in that it focuses on particular examples of Islamic education (Merry develops an "ideal type" of Islamic education) and uses, as a baseline for comparison, a specific liberal proposal for autonomy-facilitating education. In addition, I will suggest a specific curriculum, which I call Worldview Education, that could serve as a form of autonomy-facilitating education in Islamic schools. I will now explain the chapter-by-chapter approach I will use to undertake this project.

Chapter Outline

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[28] Michael S. Merry, *Culture, Identity, and Islamic Schooling: A Philosophical Approach* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

In Chapter 2, I discuss three forms of Islamic education: the first is the Muslim scholar Yusuf al-Qaradawi's major writing on Islamic education, based on my English translation of his work from the original Arabic.[29] The second is based on a discussion of Universal School in Bridgeview, Illinois, and the third is the College Preparatory School of America in Lombard, Illinois. My aim in Chapter 2 is to present a limited survey of forms of Islamic education that reveal two broad approaches, which, while including material beyond the teaching of Islam, is always tempered with a concern to maintain the integrity of the religion.

In Chapter 3, I use the work of David Johnston and Harry Brighouse on personal autonomy and autonomy-facilitating education, respectively, in order to establish a typical liberal view of the role of the development of autonomy in education. This view will serve as a "template" of what an education for autonomy would look like. In Chapter 4, I will use a discussion of a fundamental difference between Islamic and liberal worldviews — a focus on submission versus a focus on autonomy — in order to reveal the concerns that Brighouse's proposal for an autonomy-facilitating education raises within the context of Islamic education. I then suggest a modification of Brighouse's proposal — Worldview Education — that can serve as the basis for a kind of education for autonomy that would be acceptable to some Islamic schools.

In Chapter 5, I expand on my proposal for Worldview Education by describing in more detail how such a curriculum would work in an Islamic secondary school covering grades 9-12. I present three forms that Worldview Education could take: a four-year curriculum, a one-year curriculum in grade 12, and an integrated approach in which

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[29] To my knowledge, Qaradawi's book on education has yet to be published in an English translation.

aspects of Worldview Education are incorporated into already existing parts of the curriculum. I also raise two major practical concerns that would have to be addressed for Worldview Education to become a reality, especially in the U.S., namely a dearth of qualified teachers and a lack of teaching resources geared toward high school students. However, I suggest ways in which these concerns might be addressed by turning to work that has already been done, both in the U.S. and in Western Europe, on effective practices for teaching about religion. I conclude the chapter by commenting on the need for something like Worldview Education in all schools, Islamic and otherwise, on the grounds of both facilitating autonomy and engaging students with worldviews that they are increasingly likely to come into contact with in an increasingly connected world.

In the end, I hope to show how a comparative study of educational proposals rooted in worldviews with different core values — in this case, three forms of Islamic education and Brighouse's autonomy-facilitating education — can help us to focus on the issues that are relevant to determining the extent to which Islamic education could remain true to Islam while also supporting one of what Feinberg calls the fundamental requirements of liberal pluralism: a reasonable degree of individual autonomy.

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CHAPTER 2

THREE EXAMPLES OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION

Before I can explore the concerns that Harry Brighouse's proposal for autonomy-facilitating education raises for Islamic schools, I first want to offer some examples of what Islamic education looks like, in addition to a description of Brighouse's proposal. In this chapter, I focus on Islamic education. Submission to the will of God is central to the Islamic understanding of what a good human life entails. Accordingly, a central aim of any form of Islamic education is to facilitate students' submission. However, within Islam, there are a variety of interpretations of what exactly it means to submit to God's will. Contemporary thinking on Islamic education reflects this diversity, as we will see in this chapter.

What follows is not a comprehensive review of contemporary Islamic educational thought and practice; such a project would require its own dissertation. Instead, I focus on a limited number of examples that represent the diversity of Islamic understandings of what it means to submit to God — what it means for a person to lead a good life. I first discuss the educational proposal of Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a prominent Muslim religious scholar, who wants to promote a particular vision of Islam that is rooted in tradition and solidly protected against certain challenges of modernity. I then discuss Universal School in Bridgeview, Illinois, and the College Preparatory School of America in Lombard, Illinois. Both of these schools have adopted forms of Islamic education that focus more on providing an education within an Islamic environment that can prepare students for

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college than on inculcating a particular interpretation of Islam. Again, the point is to show that there is disagreement among Islamic educators regarding the implementation of the central aim of Islamic education: submission to the will of God. We must take this disagreement into account when we consider how Islamic schools can provide an Islamic education that also allows for a reasonable degree of individual autonomy. In what follows, I will have more to say about Qaradawi's proposal than about the Illinois school, since Qaradawi's proposal is not available in English, while information about the Illinois schools is more readily accessible.

My discussion of Yusuf al-Qaradawi's conception of Islamic education is focused on one particular work, which was published in 1979 as *al-tarbiyah al-islamiyah wa madrasat Hassan al-Banna* [Islamic Education and the Schools of Hassan al-Banna].[1] In this work, which runs to roughly 100 pages in Arabic, Qaradawi describes how the Muslim Brotherhood, especially during the leadership of its founder Hassan al-Banna, understood Islamic education. The Muslim Brotherhood, which has played a central role in the democratic uprisings in Egypt, is an Islamist movement that originally arose in 1928 as a response to the British occupation of Egypt.[2] Qaradawi himself is a Muslim religious scholar, born in Egypt in 1926, who is generally recognized as a leading authority of Islamic law among Sunni Muslims. He has been described as a "global mufti," in the sense that he has used media such as satellite television and the Internet to

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[1] Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *al-tarbiyah al-islamiyah wa madrasat Hassan al-Banna* [Islamic Education and the Schools of Hassan al-Banna] (Cario: Maktabat Wahbah, 1979). For the remainder of my discussion of Qaradawi's proposal, references to page numbers in the text will refer to this book.

[2] Two helpful discussions of the Muslim Brotherhood, which is also sometimes called the Muslim Brothers, are Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969); and Brynjar Lia, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt* (Reading, UK: Ithaca Press, 1998).

expand the reach of his understanding of Islam to Muslims around the world.[3] Qaradawi was formally associated with the group early in his life, though his current associations with the group are largely unofficial. Nevertheless, Qaradawi is still viewed as a spiritual leader by members of the Muslim Brotherhood, in addition to many Muslims, especially among Egyptians.

Qaradawi devotes *al-tarbiyah al-islamiyah wa madrasat Hassan al-Banna* to an elaboration of the Brotherhood's form of education as a way of propagating and endorsing its views on what a proper Islamic education entails. Before summarizing Qaradawi's discussion, I should note that my interpretation is based on my own English translation of Qaradawi's work, since it has not been formally translated into English. In working through my translation, my aim has been to produce a rough translation, one that captures the main ideas of the book while perhaps not capturing every stylistic flourish. Therefore, when I quote the book, I will be quoting my rough translation.

Qaradawi begins the book with a brief preface in which he describes the postcolonial situation of the *umma*.[4] Even though the majority Muslim states have gained political independence, he believes that the Western influence that permeated these states through colonial occupation has led to the deterioration of the *umma*. The *umma* thus faces a crisis, having lost much of its strength through the weakening of its foundations that came with colonialism. In general, Qaradawi's work has been deeply concerned with how the *umma* should respond to threats, and it is this concern that motivates this book as

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[3] For much more on the life and work of Yusuf al-Qaradawi, see Bettina Gräf and Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen, eds., *Global Mufti: The Phenomenon of Yusuf al-Qaradawi* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

[4] *Umma* is a term that refers to the worldwide community of Muslims. Different groups of Muslims have differing ideas about who should properly be included in the *umma*.

well. The ultimate aim of the book, then, is to describe one way that the Muslim Brotherhood responded to such threats, which focused on the renewal of the *umma* through its youth. If the youth received a proper Islamic education, then they would become agents in the restoration of the *umma*, and in this book Qaradawi describes what this education should entail.

The Brotherhood's model of Islamic education is successful, he thinks, for six reasons:

1. It is based on the firm conviction that the best way to restore the *umma* is through education. A model based on such a firm conviction has extra force.

2. It is clearly laid out, so it would be relatively easy to establish Islamic schools based on this model.

3. It is based on a view that Muslims are stronger when they stand together, meaning that the model aims to instill the importance of the cohesion of the *umma* itself, if Islam is to remain a force in the contemporary world.

4. It is based on a view that the heart of the educator is what is most important if he is to speak the truth about Islam, since true teachings come from the heart. The idea here is that the model is to be implemented by educators who truly believe in Islam in their hearts, which lends soundness to the Islamic character of the education.

5. It has been implemented for two generations, with some of those who were students in the first generation become educators in the second. The model clearly has staying power, and is strengthened by a continuity that comes from having educators who themselves were educated by the model.

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6. It promotes a variety of educational methods, some of which are meant to build strength within the family, some of which are meant to build strength within the community, and some of which are designed to form the Muslim individual. The model therefore promotes a form of education that goes beyond traditional "schooling" in it comprehensiveness.

This last point is of particular importance for Qaradawi, because he believes that education must be adapted to serve various purposes. According to Qaradawi, Islamic education should not be grounded in the traditional route of memorization and recitation, instilling only a rote understanding of Islam; instead it should be an education that is grounded in a variety of methods that promote a passion for Islam. The Muslim who Qaradawi wants to produce is one for whom Islam ignites the will not only to resist outside forces (such as Western ideas), but also to change the world actively according to God's commands, both by spreading God's message throughout the world and establishing an Islamic civilization that unites the *umma*. In Qaradawi's view, God has already provided the *umma* with the tools to establish an Islamic civilization that preserves human dignity, and Islamic education should draw from this toolbox in order to produce a Muslim who is able to further this goal. This, Qaradawi says, was the primary task of the Brotherhood, and they understood that education was the foundation of this mission. In particular, this goal would be achieved through an education characterized by an emphasis on spirituality, comprehensiveness, moderation, brotherhood, excellence, and independence. Much of Qaradawi's book is therefore taken up with how the Brotherhood's program of Islamic education implemented these characteristics.

After establishing the overall aim of the "schools of Hassan al-Banna," which he

endorses as the aim of Islamic education generally, Qaradawi begins to explore in some detail the various aspects of the Brotherhood's philosophy of Islamic education. He begins with what he calls the "spiritual" aspect of the Brotherhood's program of education. He starts here because he believes that it is the most important aspect of this education, and that it is the primary aim of Islamic education generally, since it is the aspect concerned with forming believers. Faith imbued the entire lives of the early Muslims, according to Qaradawi: "The Companions and those among their followers who made up the ancestors of the *umma*…imbued their entire lives with faith, in the mosque, in the home, and in society."[5] (9) This is the message that the Brotherhood tries to get across in its educational program, and faith therefore serves both as Islamic education's driving force and primary aim. Qaradawi focuses especially on the connection of faith to the "living heart." (10) The core of a person is not his physical form, according to Qaradawi, but rather the "divine spark" that animates his entire being. (10) It is this "divine spark," associated with the "living heart," that truly connects a person to God. The living heart is where a person beholds God and it is the heart that is presented to God on the Day of Judgment. He supports this point with numerous Qur'anic references that associate unbelief with the hardening of the heart.[6] When a

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[5] "Companions" is a reference to the companions of Muhammad, those who were part of his inner circle in Medina. Muhammad is the central Prophet of Islam whose life and teachings, based on his propagation of the Muslim holy book, the Qur'an, are authoritative for many Muslims. "Ancestors" is a reference to the first three generations of Muslims, who are seen as particularly exemplary, due to their close connection to the years in which Muhammad established the *umma*. In general, Islam as practiced by the Companions and the ancestors (sometimes called the "pious ancestors") is seen as the Islamic ideal, because it is seen as representing the Islam that God wished to establish on earth through Muhammad's work.

[6] "They broke their covenant and we made their hearts hard." (Qur'an 5:13) "Then your hearts were hardened after that so they were like stones or the most severe hardness." (Qur'an 2:74) "Is the time not arrived for those who believe to make humble their hearts for the memory of God and the truth he brought down and not to be like those who received the Book before so the duration was extended for them and their hearts were hardened?" (Qur'an 57:16) These translations of the Qur'an, along with the others used in

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person acts against God, his heart is hardened; but when a person is connected to God, his heart is enlivened: he has a "living heart."

The turning of the heart toward material desires that results from a love of the world is the greatest danger that the believer faces, according to Qaradawi. As the Qur'an says: "Is not he who is most astray he who follows his passions and not the righteous path of God?"[7] Material desires can include carnal desires like gluttony and lust, but they also include desires for fame, glory, wealth, and public adulation. Qaradawi describes these desires as a "killing epidemic," in line with Ghazali's (d. 1111) description of these desires as "the deadly things," which Ghazali based on a Hadith which states that there are "three deadly things: stinginess...passion...and conceit."[8] (12)

Qaradawi notes that many people believe that the way to control these material desires is through prohibiting oneself from engaging in "deadly" actions such as theft, adultery, and alcohol. But these actions are in fact less dangerous than the true source of these desires: a "psychological disease" of not recognizing one's own ignorance of the divine. (12) This is why the call to Islam, from day one, was focused on removing an ignorance of God and turning toward the divine. According to Qaradawi, prohibiting certain actions is like treating the symptoms of a disease without treating its cause. "Deadly" actions are symptoms of the disease, but the disease itself is caused by an ignorance of God.

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this chapter, are taken from Muhammad A.S. Abdel Haleem, trans., *The Qur'an* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[7] Qur'an 28:50.

[8] Ghazali is perhaps the best-known medieval Islamic scholar, whose works hold great authority for most Muslims.

It is this ignorance, then, from which education must protect the Muslim. This is why combating ignorance by promoting a turn toward the divine occupies such a large part in the Brotherhood's curriculum. And Qaradawi believes that this turn toward the divine, as we have seen, occurs in the heart. Because the turn occurs in the heart, what matters is the sincerity that lies behind one's actions, and not so much the actions themselves. As Qaradawi puts it: "[God] does not reward the volume of visible work, but the sincerity that is behind it." (13) And while other people might have difficulty ascertaining the true motives that underlie a person's actions, God easily recognizes hypocrisy, which Qaradawi calls the "hidden shirk."[9] (13) God does not love actions that are "shirk," meaning that their aims are not directed solely toward Him. And actions that are "shirk" come from a heart that is "shirk." As the Qur'an states: "Whoever hopes to meet his Lord must work sincerely and not ever share the worship of his Lord with anyone."[10] The faithful Muslim must therefore be directed solely toward God, according to Qaradawi.

Protection of the heart is just one of the components of the spiritual aspect of Islamic education, on the Brotherhood's model. The second of these components is nourishment of the heart, which is sustained, says Qaradawi, through the worship of God. Encouraging the proper worship of God is one of the foundational components of the Brotherhood's education, just as it is primary for God, who says, "I did not create the jinn and humanity except to worship."[11] Generally, worship refers to all words and actions

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[9] "Shirk," which literally means "association" or "sharing," is considered the gravest sin in Islam: the association of God with other divinities, or the sharing of one's devotion to ideals other than God.

[10] Qur'an 18:110.

[11] Qur'an 51:56.

that please God, but Qaradawi says that he is going to discuss worship in a more general sense of "devotion and closeness to God." (15) In other words, Qaradawi is not interested here in the actual practice of worship; rather, he is interested in detailing what we might call a "worshipful attitude" toward God, which, unsurprisingly, comes from the heart.

So far, then, we have reviewed Qaradawi's discussion of the "spiritual aspect" of the Brotherhood's Islamic education, which occurs in the first chapter of his book. The second chapter of Qaradawi's book is the lengthiest, dealing with the topic of "Integration and Thoroughness" in the Islamic education of the Muslim Brotherhood.[12] Qaradawi foregrounds his discussion of the spiritual aspect of the Brotherhood's Islamic education in the first chapter of his book because he sees this as its "primary special feature": without a base in Islamic faith, education cannot truly be Islamic. (24) However, beginning with this second chapter, Qaradawi aims to show that the Brotherhood's program of Islamic education, while based throughout on Islamic principles, was concerned with more than just inculcating an Islamic faith. While Islamic education must be grounded in Islam, students are not expected to study Islam alone.

By "integration and thoroughness," Qaradawi means specifically to say that the Brotherhood's Islamic education is concerned with every aspect of people, including their relationship with society, and not just with their development of faith. In addition to the previously discussed "spiritual" aspect, then, these other aspects include "the mystical and the moral," "philosophy and the rational," "the physical," and "the social." (23) The spiritual aspect focuses on the heart, the moral aspect focuses on proper behavior, the

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[12] The title of this second chapter might also be translated as "Integration and Comprehensiveness." Either way, the idea is that the Brothers aimed to provide a complete education. While this education is grounded in the "spiritual aspect," faith is not its only topic of study.

rational aspect focuses on proper thinking, the physical aspect focuses on proper health, and the social aspect focuses on how a person should engage with society at all levels from the local to the global. For Qaradawi, this "integration and thoroughness" in Islamic education is appropriate, as it reflect the thoroughness found in Islam.

Having explained generally how the Brotherhood's Islamic education displays "integration and thoroughness" by addressing the individual and society comprehensively, Qaradawi proceeds through the aspects that contribute to its thoroughness: the rational aspect, the moral aspect, the physical aspect, the jihadist aspect,[13] the social aspect, and the political aspect. I will now describe what each of these aspects entails in order to give a sense of the scope of the Muslim Brotherhood's (and hence Qaradawi's) vision of Islamic education.

The "rational aspect" is a crucial aspect of Islamic education, for Qaradawi, because the development of rational thought is a crucial aspect of Islam. He supports this point by noting that the Qur'an contains numerous phrases that reflect a concern for reflection and understanding, such as the following: "Do you not understand?" "Do you not reflect?" "A mandate for the people is that they understand." "The people must reflect." "Foremost are those who contemplate." "Foremost is the mind."[14] (24) Therefore, Qaradawi says, "reflection in Islam is an act of devotion" and "demanding knowledge is an obligation," whereas "slavishly following precedent is a crime." (24)

Qaradawi says that understanding must precede faith because one who responds to the call of Islam should be able to provide accurate explanations of its sources,

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[13] I will say more about what Qaradawi means by "jihadist" later in the chapter.

[14] Qaradawi does not provide specific references for these quotations.

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especially the Qur'an, and correct others' misconceptions regarding its content and interpretation. This understanding therefore not only helps the individual in his own faith, but can be used to teach others about Islam as well. For instance, Qaradawi notes that explanations of the Qur'an, and responses to misconceptions about it, can be spread among the larger Muslim community through media such as writing and radio.[15] The fundamental point, though, is that understanding is the foundation of a "Muslim mentality that understands religion and life correctly." (25) The Muslim with understanding is able to properly comprehend doctrine, proper worship, and God's law. Without understanding, however, none of this is possible. The "rational aspect" in the Brotherhood's educational program is thus of great importance, according to Qaradawi, since one cannot live a truly Islamic life without it.

But Qaradawi gives another reason for the importance of the rational aspect, which extends beyond its connection to the spiritual aspect of Islamic education. The Brother should not only understand the faith, but he should also be able to "understand life around him: How does it pass? How does it transform? How is it influenced? And what are the forces that drive, transform, and influence it?" (26) In other words, the Muslim must understand not only his religion, but also the workings of the world around him. Qaradawi makes clear that he is not just talking about a person's immediate surroundings, or local community. This is where the Brother's focus begins, but it must gradually expand to encompass the entire world: "It is necessary that the Brother begins with knowledge of the small society in which he lives, like the village or the city. Then

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[15] Even in 1979, Qaradawi shows an interest in using mass media to spread proper teachings about Islam. His more recent work connected to al-Jazeera and islamonline.net is simply an extension of this longstanding interest.

he proceeds to knowledge of the wider society [the geography and politics of his homeland], then to the great homeland — the Arab homeland — from the [Persian] Gulf to the [Mediterranean] Sea, and then to the greatest homeland, from Ocean to Ocean, which is the Islamic homeland." (26) The ultimate goal, then, is for Muslims to be able to understand the forces that impact their lives on both a local and a global scale.

This understanding of the forces that impact the Muslim's life must include an understanding of the negative forces, or threats, that work both inside and outside of Islam. Specifically, Qaradawi mentions Zionists, Crusaders, Communists, secularists, idolaters, imitators, the hateful, and utilitarians, all of whom he says "worship the material and are slaves of positions of power."[16] (26) This idea, that there are forces both inside and outside of Islam that threaten it, and must be defended against, is one that will appear time and time again throughout the book. It is clear that preparing Muslims to protect their religion is one of the key themes of the education of the Brotherhood, as Qaradawi describes it.[17]

After explaining the "rational aspect" of the Brotherhood's education, which emphasizes both a proper understanding of the Qur'an and the Sunna and a proper understanding of the variety of forces that impact Muslim lives, Qaradawi turns to its "moral aspect," the importance of which he says stems from its role as "the primary center of social transformation." (30) Qaradawi references a saying of Hassan al-Banna's

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[16] By "imitators," Qaradawi is likely referring to those within the *umma* who attempt to imitate Western values. The upshot of this list, however, is that Qaradawi views any way of life that is not directed solely toward God — that focuses, for instance, on a "love of the world" and a concern for power — as a negative force that threatens Islam.

[17] This concern will be fleshed out when we come to Qaradawi's discussion of the "jihadist" aspect of the schools of Hassan al-Banna. Note that what exactly Qaradawi means by "jihad" will be explained as well.

in support of this point: "The crisis of the world is but a crisis of the selves and the conscience before it is a crisis of economy and politics." (30) For the Brotherhood, morality consisted primarily of having a virtuous character. Qaradawi emphasizes that virtue is not limited to the avoidance of certain things, such as gambling, intoxicants, and idolatry. Rather, virtue also includes various positive behaviors. Qaradawi discusses four positive virtues as having special importance: patience, persistence, hope, and solidarity.

As Qaradawi describes it, the moral aspect of the schools of Hassan al-Banna emphasizes that the Muslim should persevere in devoting his life to Islam, always retaining hope in the ultimate uniting of the world as one *umma* under a Caliph, even in times of persecution or oppression, such as was felt under colonialism. Now we turn to Qaradawi's discussion of the "physical aspect" of the Brotherhood's education. This aspect is arguably the least relevant to our later analysis, but it is notable the extent to which Qaradawi uses Islamic principles to support even physical education.

For Qaradawi, it is important to include physical education in the system of education, because a sound body is necessary to pursue the way of Islam effectively. He supports the importance of a concern for physical education with a Hadith that states: "Verily your body has a right over you." (38) Respecting the body's right over the individual is realized through three goals. First is physical health, which includes good hygiene, undergoing treatment when ill, and avoiding bad habits such as smoking. The second goal is physical strength, which is to be attained through physical activity and exercise. The third goal is to make the body resilient. The body must be able to endure a variety of conditions, such as heat and cold, and a variety of terrains, such as mountains and valleys. The point of all this is that the education of the mind is useless unless the

body that supports it is strong, and able to withstand the kinds of hardships that the Brother is likely to face (and did face, Qaradawi notes, "in the prisons and detention camps").[18] (39)

Qaradawi now turns to what he calls the "jihadist aspect" of the educational program of the Brotherhood. Before describing this aspect, it is important to understand what Qaradawi means by "jihad."[19] The Arabic word can be literally translated into English as "struggle." It can refer to a military struggle, but the word is also used to refer to an inner struggle that requires some kind of self-discipline. Qaradawi emphasizes that the understanding of jihad he has in mind is "deeper and more comprehensive than the military understanding" of the word. (39) In other words, he is not just talking about warfare here; he has in mind a broader understanding of jihad. This understanding of jihad involves "faith, morality, spirit, and solidarity, in addition to [the military understanding of] discipline and training." (39) Hassan al-Banna considered jihad to be one of the 10 Allegiances, and a common slogan of the Brotherhood was "Jihad is our way, and death in the way of God is the height of our faith." (40) Here, a military understanding of jihad is clearly meant.

Qaradawi does acknowledge, however, that there is another aspect of jihad: "the jihad of the self." (46) This struggle is directed against "Satan, who invades the person from inside by way of misconceptions that lead the mind astray, or feelings that seduce

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[18] This is a reference to the arrests of members of the Brotherhood by the Egyptian government, which was discussed earlier in this chapter. Recall that Qaradawi himself spent time in a prison camp for his association with the Brotherhood.

[19] Throughout this discussion of the "jihadist aspect," I will directly quote Qaradawi more often than I have when discussing the other aspects, since jihad is such a controversial topic, and I want to be sure that there is no doubt as to Qaradawi's meaning. I should note, however, that Qaradawi's understanding of jihad here is not necessarily controversial within Islamic thought.

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the desires," and the struggle itself consists of using "weapons of certainty that expel the misconceptions, and weapons of patience that defeat the misconceptions." (47) This understanding of jihad is, Qaradawi writes, "the widest meaning of jihad in Islam, and it is — subsequently — the understanding of the Brotherhood, the education of the Brotherhood, and the behavior of the Brotherhood." (47) The common feature to both the military understanding of jihad and the personal understanding of jihad is the idea of jihad as a struggle against invading forces, whether these forces are external, like foreign invaders, or internal, like temptations and doubt.

After discussing the "jihadist aspect" of the schools of Hassan al-Banna, Qaradawi turns to its "social aspect." This is the aspect of education concerned with the Brother's engagement with the world, and Qaradawi describes it as having three components: one involving the Brother's engagement with God in worship; one involving the Brother's engagement with society through the provision of social services; and one involving the Brother's engagement with "the enemy" through "jihad." (49) Qaradawi goes into some detail about the first component when he discusses the "spiritual aspect" of Islamic education, and we have just reviewed his discussion of the third component through the "jihadist aspect." As for how the Brother is to engage with society, it essentially involves supporting the *umma* in any way possible. Qaradawi mentions a number of services that the Brothers provided, including welfare, education, health care, and funerals. To attain these ends, the Brotherhood established centers throughout Egypt that organized the formation of health clinics and schools, provided charity and literacy classes, and built and repaired mosques and homes.

After establishing the aspect of Islamic education that stresses the need to support

society, Qaradawi discusses the "political aspect." By this, Qaradawi means not only a concern with the government of one's own state, but also a concern with international relations. Prior to the rise of the Brotherhood, Qaradawi claims that religion and politics had become strictly divided in Islam. A man was "either a man of religion or a man of politics" and a group was "either a religious group or a political group." (51) The Muslim Brotherhood, however, wanted to be both a religious group and a political group. As I discussed earlier with regard to Qaradawi's attitude toward secularism, for the Brotherhood, Islam was to encompass every aspect of life, and the notion that Islam could be separated from politics was, in fact, un-Islamic.

Qaradawi discusses three aims of political education. The first aim involves encouraging in people a desire to pursue complete independence for the nations of the *umma*. He contrasts this desire, with its focus on the global *umma*, with a concern for what he calls "narrow patriotism or fanatical nationalism." (53) The second aim is to awaken in people a desire for the restoration of an Islamic government, most preferably under the control of a Caliph. Qaradawi contrasts this with "the humanistic philosophies and positivistic systems" introduced by the colonizers, which he describes collectively as a "disease" as a result of which the "individual lost self-contentment, the family lost its stability and interconnectedness, society lost its cohesion and its balance, and the whole world lost its security and its peace." (57) The "treatment" for this disease is the "medicine" of Islam and, more specifically, "the establishment of the Islamic state." (57) The third aim of political education, which is related to the first two aims, is to instill in people a desire to see the *umma* unified. The ultimate goal of the "political aspect" of the Islamic education of the Muslim Brotherhood, then, was to instill in people an awareness

of and a passion for the obligations not only to drive out any colonizing influences from the Islamic world, but also to strive for the unity of the Islamic world under one leader.

Having proceeded through the various aspects of Islamic education in the eyes of the Brotherhood — rational, moral, physical, jihadist, social, and political — in order to demonstrate its comprehensiveness, Qaradawi devotes a chapter to "the positive and the constructive" elements of this education. Since this chapter repeats much of what we have already discussed, I will move on to the next chapter, which focuses on "moderation and balance," or "middleness," in the schools of Hassan al-Banna.[20] (77) As Qaradawi describes it, the Brotherhood represents a "balance between mind and passion, the material and the spiritual, the ideal and the practical, the individual and society, consultation and obedience, rights and duties, and the old and the new." (77) As has been discussed previously, this position led the Brotherhood to draw from many aspects of Islamic thought: from legal scholars it took a concern for the careful study of texts; from rhetoricians it took a concern for rational argument and challenging misconceptions; and from the Sufi scholars it took a concern for developing an inner connection to God through the heart. The Brotherhood did not accept all of these elements of Islamic thought uncritically, however. Instead, the Brotherhood aimed to sift through the various streams of thought in the heritage of Islam in order to discern that among them which accords with the Qur'an and the Sunna. The goal of this approach was to avoid "fervor and radicalism" in favor of a unified Islam based on moderation of the diverse elements in its heritage. (79)

The final, brief chapter of Qaradawi's book deals with "the Brothers and the

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[20] Recall that a "middle way" approach to Islam is central to Qaradawi's understanding of the faith.

community." (93) The emphasis here is on the kind of relationship that those within the community should have with one another. In short, Qaradawi says that those within the Muslim community should perceive themselves as "children of one family, or members of one body." (93) The implication of this is that all Muslims should be viewed as equal. All differences between Muslims, whether based on national origin, ethnicity, language, race, or class are to be erased, and nothing should remain except a common brotherhood within Islam.

Qaradawi closes his book with a brief conclusion in which he emphasizes that, despite his advocacy of the Brotherhood's educational program, he does not want to give the impression that all the Brothers were perfect. However, on the whole, Qaradawi does claim that the members of the Muslim Brotherhood were "examples of purity," and hence are worthy of emulation. (99) And while the Brotherhood's educational program has been successful for many years, according to Qaradawi, it is important to remain flexible: "it is not reasonable to keep everything that is old in the middle of a world which quickly transforms." (100)

What should we take, then, from Yusuf al-Qaradawi's discussion of the Muslim Brotherhood's view of Islamic education as we move forward? First, for Qaradawi, Islamic education is understood to be comprehensive, in the sense that it encompasses all aspects of life. Second, the foundations of Islamic education are the Qur'an and the Sunna, the two primary sources of Islam, and the key aims of Islamic education are supporting the Muslim community (the *umma*) and defending the place of Islam in the world against forces that are seen as threatening to the Islamic way of life. All aspects of the educational program are therefore justified with reference to their contributions to

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aiding people's understanding of the Qur'an and the Sunna, and leading people toward two heartfelt desires: First, to strengthen and purify the *umma* internally, through social services and purging Islam of forces that stray from the way of the Prophet and his Companions, respectively Second, to protect the *umma* from external forces such as colonialism (whether physical or cultural) and secularism, even to the extent of participating in military struggle, should it be necessary. Islamic education should therefore produce a Muslim who has a sound understanding of the Qur'an and the Sunna, and who uses that understanding as the basis of spreading the call to Islam locally, nationally, internationally, and globally.

Qaradawi's proposal is representative of what could be classified as a conservative, though not necessarily fundamentalist, view of Islamic education. He seems to envision it being introduced into predominantly Muslim countries. I now turn to views of Islamic education that have been implemented in the West. I use examples of contemporary Islamic educational thought and practice that are drawn from the literature on Islamic education available in English. One such example is found in a chapter by Barnaby B. Riedel in the book *Just Schools*, edited by Martha Minow, Richard A. Shweder, and Hazel Rose Markus.[21] Riedel's chapter focuses on an Islamic school in Chicago called Universal School. He chooses to study Universal School because it has adopted a character education curriculum known as Character Counts! This interests Riedel because Character Counts! has been adopted by a number of schools in the U.S.,

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[21] Barnaby B. Riedel. "Universal Particularism: Making an Ethical Islamic School in Chicago," in *Just Schools*, eds. Martha Minow, Richard A. Shweder, and Hazel Rose Markus (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2008).

both public and private. It is not an Islamic curriculum, yet it is being used as a curricular cornerstone in an Islamic school.[22]

Universal School educates Muslims from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. As such, the school understands Islam "principally in terms of a system of universal values and ethics rather than, for instance, a common cultural heritage or a set of beliefs based on a revealed book." (133) The Character Counts! curriculum allows Universal School to rise above the "cultural and theological differences within the school" by focusing on a generalized view of virtue and good character. (134)

Universal School was explicitly founded as an alternative to public education in the community of Bridgeview, which has become a focal point for Muslim immigration since the 1970s. These immigrants came from many areas in the Muslim world, such as Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Sudan, India, and Pakistan. The story goes that the Universal School was founded after "the son of a Syrian doctor returned home from public school deeply disturbed, later explaining to his father that he had seen pictures of naked women covering the inside of another boy's locker." (138) This similarly disturbed the doctor, who gathered together support from Muslims in the area and around the country to start an Islamic school in Bridgeview. The school opened on September 4, 1990, and it was accredited by the Illinois State Board of Education in 1992. It counts among "one of the largest pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade Islamic schools in the country, with over 600 students and 50 staff." (138)

The school does not claim to teach a particular form of Islam; rather, it aims to produce an Islamic environment. (141) This goal is achieved in various ways. There is a

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[22] The website for Universal School is http://www.universalschool.org. References to Riedel's discussion of Universal School will be given as page numbers throughout this section.

dress code: all students must have "regular haircuts" and "wear socks and closed-toe shoes." Girls cannot wear makeup and boys cannot wear earrings. Older girls wear a hijab and calf-length navy-blue top; younger girls wear plaid skirts; and boys wear dress pants and collared shirts. (139) Students check into classes every morning in order to ensure attendance and maintenance of the dress code. They then head to the gym for prayer and announcements. At these times, the gym essentially becomes a mosque: shoes are removed, and students take positions on rugs that are oriented in such a way that students can face toward Mecca. The students arrange themselves on the rugs in a particular way, with men and women separated, arranged from oldest to youngest. An older male student then takes the role of imam, calling the group to prayer. A similar event happens for the afternoon prayer.

The school is decorated with posters that have both Islamic and American themes, commemorating key events in both Islamic and American history. This contributes to the Islamic environment of the school. In addition to the dress codes and daily prayers, an Islamic environment is maintained through sex-segregated classes after fifth grade, a ban on flirting and dating among students, and halal food in the cafeteria. (141) The Islamic environment shows up in the curriculum through "classes relevant to the Islamic faith and the preservation of Muslim identity," such as prayer instruction, Islamic studies, Islamic history, Arabic, and Qur'anic instruction. (141) Classes are taught in English, but Arabic is used to describe certain concepts and in expressions. There is a standard secular curriculum in place at the school, including Advanced Placement courses. While engagement with non-Islamic views would occur in courses on English, History, Geography, and Sociology, there are no classes explicitly devoted to other cultures or

religions. Behavior is enforced "with reference to the Qur'an and the life of the Prophet, models of how to be good Muslims." (144)

It is important to note that the school has a familial environment, largely because all of the students are drawn from the close-knit Muslim community in Bridgeview. That being said, this community is not homogeneous: "While the student body is predominantly Palestinian (approximately 50 percent) and Syrian (nearly 20 percent), faculty and students come from families of Egyptian, Moroccan, Sudanese, African American, Indian, and Pakistani descent." (145) Riedel notes that this poses a challenge for Universal School: "the difficulty of uniting a diversity of Muslims under the umbrella of a common Islam and a shared vision of Islamic education." (145) Riedel argues that the Character Counts! curriculum is one way that Universal School addresses this difficulty, by providing a universalist ideal of good character that can transcend the cultural and theological differences present in the community. The key question here is how to provide an Islamic education when faculty, students, and the community have different ideas about what Islam teaches.

Universal School claims to "teach Islam 'just at the general level.'" (146) This means that there is not a robust Islamic curriculum at the school. Instead, Universal School focuses on preserving an Islamic environment. As Riedel points out, "The focus on creating an 'environment' rather than a 'curriculum' meets the challenge of diversity by leaving the question of Islamic education unstandardized and open-ended." (149) This environment, implemented in ways that I have previously mentioned, allows Islam to pervade the school as "a system of value and ethics": "Islamic education at Universal

School is about teaching students how to be good people, good Muslims, where the concept of 'good' is believed to be universal, transcendent, and self-evident." (149)

And yet, Riedel describes the value system promoted by Universal School as an "ethics of community," where "the world is seen not as a collection of individuals but as a collection of groups." (150) The focus of this ethics is preserving the integrity of the community, including the family. Riedel contrasts this ethics of community with an "ethics of autonomy," where "the moral world is made up of individual human beings, and the purpose of moral regulation is to protect the discretionary choice of individuals." (151) Rather than preserving the community, an ethics of autonomy aims to preserve the freedom of the individual.

While the ethics of community is reinforced at Universal School with reference to the Qur'an and the life of the Prophet Muhammad, the values that the school promotes are not seen as particular to Islam. Instead, these values are seen as "being equivalent to 'American' and 'Western' values." (151) In fact, these values are viewed as universal. The ethics of community aligns neatly with the ethics held by the character education movement, including the Character Counts! curriculum, which began in 1992 and which Riedel describes as "possibly the most widely used character-education framework in the United States." (153) It centers on "six pillars of character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship." (153)

Universal School uses Character Counts! as "a framework for Islamic moral pedagogy," since the values coincide. The key difference between how the curriculum is implemented in a public school and how it is implemented in Universal School is that the Qur'an and the Hadith are used to reinforce the pillars of character. The citizenship pillar

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is taught through community service opportunities and participation in the "Get Out the Vote" program. In a survey of Islamic school students, a vast majority supported the importance of voting, personal freedom, religious freedom, and the value of a secular government. Riedel notes that "the education at Universal School fits well with more conservative conceptions of American character that emphasize the centrality of religion in forging communal bonds, strengthening social responsibility, and promoting democratic values." (156) This is seen, both by Universal School and the character education movement, as a contrast to "radical individualism, excessive freedom, and a lack of moral supervision," which characterize public schools. (157)

Yusuf al-Qaradawi's educational proposal is an example of a conservative form of Islamic education, one that advances a particular interpretation of Islam. Universal School can be thought of as a more moderate version of Islamic education, with its more general focus on providing an Islamic environment without getting caught up in particular understandings of Islam. I now turn to a third Islamic school that could be characterized as moderate: College Preparatory School of America (CPSA) in Lombard, Illinois, a northwest suburb of Chicago.[23]

The "vision" of CPSA could be shared by any college preparatory school: "To be a nationally recognized college preparatory school with outstanding faculty, state of the art facilities, and advanced curriculum to prepare our graduates for admission to top-ranked colleges and be successful in their future endeavors."[24] Here is the remainder of CPSA's vision: "We strive to foster a vibrant environment which ensures practice of

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[23] The website of CPSA is http://www.cpsaonline.com.

[24] College Preparatory School of America, "About CPSA," accessed January 21, 2012, http://www.cpsaonline.com/about-cpsa.

Islamic principles at all levels, and promotes cultural diversity, intellectual curiosity, creativity, entrepreneurship, leadership qualities, and service to humanity at large. We aim to produce professionally successful, and well-rounded individuals, who are enriched with knowledge, inspired to excellence, and committed to the betterment of family, community, and humanity."[25] Again, aside from the reference to Islamic principles, this could be any college prep school.

The mission statement of CPSA is a little more explicit about the commitment to Islam: "[CPSA] is an academic institution dedicated to providing excellent education in an Islamic environment with Quran and Sunnah as its guiding principle."[26] The school was founded in 1991 "with a vision to provide a quality education in an Islamic environment."[27] It began as a high school with a population of 100 students, but has since expanded to include Pre-K through 12th grade and now educates over 400 students. CPSA emphasizes its rigorous curriculum -- college is clearly the goal for its students. The Elementary program at CPSA "stresses critical and abstract thinking processes" and this continues through to High School, which "emphasizes critical reading, research and writing, history and tradition, mathematical and technology skills, as well as scientific understanding."[28] The school offers Honors and AP courses and 99% of its graduates have been admitted to higher education.

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[25] Ibid.

[26] College Preparatory School of America, "Mission Statement," accessed January 21, 2012, http://www.cpsaonline.com/mission-statement.

[27] College Preparatory School of America, "History of CPSA," accessed January 21, 2012, http://www.cpsaonline.com/history-of-cpsa.

[28] Ibid.

Islam does play an important role in the curriculum at CPSA: Students "learn Quranic Arabic, Sirah [the prophetic biographical tradition], and the principles of Islamic jurisprudence."[29] CPSA has also worked with Islamic centers to offer opportunities for Quranic memorization. Those who have memorized the Quran are known within Islam as *huffaz*, a special distinction that typically carries great respect within the religion.

The Islamic environment at CPSA extends beyond the curriculum. All the women pictured on the school's website wear the veil, from the female principal to the staff, faculty, and students. Students are separated by sex in physical education classes. The school realizes a focus on "inner personal development" through "the pursuit of understanding and implementation of the teachings of the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)."[30] The intended outcome of this development is "virtues such as respect for others, kindness, love, service, and sacrifice, so that [students] may become excellent Muslims and members of society."[31] When this personal development is combined with academic development, CPSA's goal is "to foster an environment conducive to well-rounded individuals who will be well-equipped to succeed in the world around them as well as in the hereafter."[32]

There are, of course, numerous other Islamic schools and educational proposals that I could describe here. However, my review of Qaradawi's proposal, Universal School, and CPSA should be enough to make my point that a range of educational

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[29] Ibid.

[30] College Preparatory School of America, "Academics Overview," accessed January 21, 2012, http://www.cpsaonline.com/academics. "PBUH" is an abbreviation of "Peace be upon him," which is traditionally appended to references to Muhammad and other central Muslim figures as a sign of respect.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

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practices fall under the heading of Islamic education. This range is differentiated in part by how a particular school or proposal understands what it means to be a Muslim. Qaradawi wants students to embrace a particular interpretation of Islam that includes among its precepts the necessity to defend and expand the faith. Universal School and CPSA tend to avoid potentially divisive teachings of a particular understanding of Islam in favor of a more comprehensive approach that focuses especially on character. For Qaradawi, the entire educational program points toward producing devoted Muslims. For Universal School and CPSA, the aim is to provide a high-quality academic education within an Islamic environment that reinforces what they see as Muslim values. Universal School and CPSA do provide Islamic studies classes but the majority of the curricula offered by these schools are similar to what one might find at a secular school.

These distinctions between kinds of Islamic education matter, for the purposes of this dissertation, because in Chapter 4 I will propose a modification of Harry Brighouse's autonomy-facilitating education that could be acceptable to Islamic schools. However, as I will discuss, the traction that my proposal could gain in Islamic schools will depend on how particular schools understand the aims of Islamic education. As we will see, Qaradawi's proposal is not conducive to the premises and aims of the kind of education for autonomy I will propose. However, more moderate Islamic schools, such as Universal School and CPSA, are more likely to be able to find my proposal to be acceptable.

CHAPTER 3

HARRY BRIGHOUSE'S AUTONOMY-FACILITATING EDUCATION

In the previous chapter, I described three forms of Islamic education, one of which (Yusuf al-Qaradawi's) can be classified as conservative and the other two of which (Universal School and the College Preparatory School of America) can be classified as moderate. In this chapter, I turn to the proposal for autonomy-facilitating education that Harry Brighouse develops in his book *School Choice and Social Justice*.[1] Just as I am using Qaradawi, Universal School, and the College Preparatory School of American as representatives for Islamic education, I use Brighouse's discussion as a representative for liberal education. I should emphasize again, as I did at the beginning of the chapter on Islamic education, that the goal of my dissertation is to use these descriptions of Islamic and liberal educational proposals in order to open up a discussion of ways that some Islamic schools can allow for a reasonable degree of individual autonomy. The goal of this chapter is to discuss both what autonomy is and one prominent proposal concerning the role that the development of autonomy should play in the schools of liberal democratic societies.

This chapter has four sections. First, I offer a brief overview of the notion of personal autonomy through David Johnston's discussion in his book *The Idea of a Liberal Theory*.[2] Second, I describe how Harry Brighouse builds on this general

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[1] Harry Brighouse, *School Choice and Social Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[2] David Johnston, *The Idea of a Liberal Theory: A Critique and Reconstruction* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).

understanding of personal autonomy in his own discussion of autonomy in *School Choice and Social Justice*. Third, I discuss Brighouse's argument for the value of personal autonomy. Fourth, I describe how Brighouse proposes that the value of the facilitation of autonomy should shape the design of educational institutions: how he proposes that a theory of an autonomy-facilitating education might be put into practice. As we will see in the next chapter, Brighouse's proposal as it is presents some difficulties for Islamic education, but there might be ways to modify his proposal so that Islamic schools would find it to be more acceptable.

What Is Personal Autonomy?

While the concept of autonomy has a complex history, I am interested here in describing how the variety of autonomy known as personal autonomy is generally understood in liberal thought, since this is the centerpiece of Brighouse's proposal for autonomy-facilitating education.[3] In his book *The Idea of a Liberal Theory*, David Johnston offers a succinct account of the meaning of personal autonomy, and I will draw from his discussion here. According to Johnston, personal autonomy "is achieved when a person autonomously chooses his own projects and values."[4] In other words, the individual who exhibits personal autonomy is one who not only has projects and values, but who also has actively chosen those projects and values. So a person who has been brainwashed into accepting his projects and values would not be personally autonomous, because he would not have chosen those projects and values for himself.

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[3] For an excellent review of the development of the concept of autonomy in Western philosophy, see Jerome B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[4] Ibid., 75.

Johnston points out that advocates of personal autonomy do not usually mean that the autonomous individual chooses his projects and values entirely on her own: "As a matter of necessity, individuals base most of their values and ambitions on the values and ambitions that they see others adopt."[5] However, what advocates of personal autonomy do mean is that the individual is autonomous to the extent that he "subjects those values and projects to critical appraisal and fashions them into a relatively consistent and coherent whole."[6] The process of critical reflection is therefore a crucial condition for the choosing that is involved in attaining personal autonomy: one cannot be personally autonomous unless she has at some point reflected upon other ways of life than the one she is currently living. As a final point, I should note that individuals can be autonomous to varying degrees. For instance, a person might be autonomous in some aspects of his life, but not in others, depending on which aspects of his life he has subjected to critical reflection.

Autonomy According to Brighouse

I now focus on the way that Harry Brighouse understands personal autonomy, drawing from the general concept of personal autonomy described by Johnston. Brighouse is a contemporary political philosopher of education who is one of the leading proponents of autonomy as an important educational aim, most notably in his work *School Choice and Social Justice*. My discussion of Brighouse's understanding of

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[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

autonomy will set up a discussion of the value that Brighouse places on autonomy, which leads him to argue in favor of the facilitation of autonomy as an aim of education.

In *School Choice and Social Justice*, Brighouse discusses autonomy in the context of an argument in favor of school choice. He sees autonomy and, specifically, the child's "interest in becoming an autonomous adult," as one of the key factors that supports the provision of school choice in educational policy.[7] Brighouse's assertion that the child has an interest in becoming an autonomous adult is connected to the work of Joel Feinberg, who makes the argument that children have what he calls "the right to an open future."[8] In other words, while the autonomy of children might necessarily be restricted because of their dependence on adults, they have an interest in one day becoming independent, or becoming autonomous. This interest must be protected, and instituting autonomy as an aim of education helps to do so.

Brighouse also argues that "the principle that all children should have a real opportunity to become autonomous" should be "primarily relevant to the design of educational institutions."[9] Brighouse uses this point to make an argument for school choice, but here I want to examine why he believes that the development of autonomy is so important that it should be considered as a primary educational aim. Let us first understand exactly what Brighouse means by autonomy, since, as he recognizes, it is "used in many different ways by different theorists."[10]

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[7] Brighouse, *School Choice and Social Justice*, 65.

[8] See Joel Feinberg, "A Child's Right to an Open Future," in *Freedom and Fulfillment: Philosophical Essays* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

[9] Brighouse, *School Choice and Social Justice*, 64.

[10] Ibid., 65.

Brighouse explains his idea of autonomy by describing "four familiar non-autonomous processes."[11] By examining situations that he sees as clearly not autonomous, he hopes that we will better understand what autonomy is. First, he notes that a process is not autonomous if "coercive practices have illegitimately restricted the options available to the agent."[12] The point here is that, even if a person has a choice among a range of options in a particular situation, that person does not exercise autonomy through that choice if the options have been limited through coercion. Consider, for instance, a student who is told by his teacher that he can either pay the teacher fifty dollars or receive a failing grade on his assignment. The student has a choice here, but it cannot be considered an autonomous choice, because the teacher has illegitimately limited the student's options. The mere fact of choice does not ensure autonomy; the way that the range of choices is constituted is also important.

The second non-autonomous process Brighouse discusses occurs when "someone deliberately manipulates an agent by providing false information about the options available or costs and benefits attached to the options."[13] For example, suppose a school offers a student a choice between four courses without telling the student that one of the courses regularly receives complaints from students because of a neglectful teacher. In this situation, although the student has a choice and a range of options, the student is not exercising autonomy, since key information is being withheld from the student that would be likely to alter his decision. So far, then, we have seen that choice is important, a

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[11] Ibid., 66.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

range of options is important, and an accurate portrayal of those options is important, if autonomy is to be exercised.

The third non-autonomous situation occurs when "people adapt their preferences or beliefs subconsciously to apparently unchangeable circumstances."[14] An example of this is a student who comes from a long line of farmers, and has come to believe that he, too, must become a farmer, regardless of what he might prefer to do, even though nobody in his family has told him that this is the case. This student is not autonomous, because his life has led him to believe (erroneously) that he must become a farmer — he has no choice in the matter. Thus, in addition to being able to make a choice over an accurately presented range of options, the autonomous person must also believe that he is the kind of person who can pursue multiple possibilities. This condition of autonomy does not relate so much to the range of options as it does to the background conditions of the person.

Brighouse's fourth non-autonomous process is one "whereby people *consciously and deliberately* accommodate their preferences to unjust background conditions."[15] We might think here of a student who has never attended a secondary school where college was presented as a real option for its graduates and he therefore decides to embrace the life of an unskilled laborer. This student makes a choice, but his choice is based on a limiting context (i.e., the subpar schools) over which he had no control. In addition to the background conditions of the person's life, the background conditions of the person's current situation must not be restrictive if autonomy is to be exercised.

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., emphasis in original.

Based on Brighouse's description of these four non-autonomous processes, what are the characteristics of an autonomous process? In summary, for a person to have the possibility of exercising autonomy, according to Brighouse, she must, first, have a range of options that, if it is restricted, is restricted only in legitimate ways. Second, she must have valid information about her available options and the costs and benefits associated with those options. Third, she must be able to determine whether or not she has altered her preferences or beliefs either subconsciously or consciously based on her past and present circumstances. Importantly, Brighouse notes that all people are subject to non-autonomous processes — they are never wholly inescapable, and therefore a person will never be autonomous in every aspect of her life. However, Brighouse does believe that we can learn how "to avoid or overcome many instances of non-autonomy," and that developing "the capacities involved in critical reflection" is how this can be done.[16] In other words, Brighouse maintains that we will be better enable to live autonomously — we will be able to maximize autonomy in our lives — if we can bring critical reflection to bear on the way we live.

Brighouse then raises a potential critique of his description of autonomy. He points out that "many of our commitments *must* be formed non-autonomously," as they are formed in the background, "by internalizing impressions, by trusting the testimony of others, or by trusting our hunches."[17] Brighouse concedes that many commitments are indeed formed non-autonomously, as a result of our background conditions, but this does not mean that these commitments are beyond the reach of critical reflection and

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid., 67.

autonomous processes. As Brighouse puts it, "Commitments generated by non-autonomous processes become autonomous when the agent reflects upon them with an appropriate degree of critical attention."[18] So a process is autonomous either when it is produced autonomously or when it is reflected upon autonomously. This means that our lives are autonomous to the extent that we subject the processes that make up our lives to critical reflection, even if we choose to retain the aspects of our lives that were arrived at non-autonomously. Brighouse qualifies this point by noting that autonomy is really only concerned with matters of moral value. Things like "musical tastes" or "tastes in clothing and decor" — in other words, our preferences — are "morally trivial," and do not influence the extent to which a person is autonomous.[19]

To sum up, then, Brighouse understands autonomy to be a state that a person attains to the extent that his or her commitments (to be distinguished from preferences or tastes) have been subject to critical reflection in order to clear away the influences of coercion, misinformation, and mistaken beliefs that one's circumstances are unchangeable. This is the notion that Brighouse has in mind when he says that enabling children to become autonomous adults is one of the key factors that should influence the development of educational institutions.

<div align="center">Autonomy's Value According to Brighouse</div>

Having explicated Brighouse's understanding of autonomy, I now turn to his discussion of the value of autonomy. In order to argue that "the state [should] impose an

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[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

autonomy-facilitating education on all children," Brighouse obviously has to argue that autonomy, as he understands it, is of value — that it at least increases the possibility of living a good life.[20] One way he can make this argument, he says, is to refer to the Socratic ideal that the unexamined life is not worth living.[21] If this is the case, then in order for children's adult lives to be worth living, they must learn how to examine those lives, and this means learning the skills involved in critical reflection in order that they might live autonomously. As he puts it, the argument goes like this: "Critical reflection on one's own goals and values, on this view, is an essential part of living well. Since everyone should have an opportunity to live well, everyone should be taught to be autonomous."[22] Brighouse believes that this argument can be shown to fail. For instance, it would be odd to say that, between two people who have exactly the same values, the person who had come to those values autonomously had a life of worth, whereas the life of the person who had absorbed those values non-autonomously was worthless. "It may be plausible," Brighouse writes, "to say that autonomy adds worth to a life lived according to good values, but quite implausible to say that it is a precondition of that life having worth."[23] This means that autonomy can contribute to making a life better — the autonomous life is better than the non-autonomous life — but one's life can have value (i.e., it is possible to live a good life) without it.

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid., 68.

After dismissing the Socratic argument, Brighouse turns to Amy Gutmann's argument for educating for autonomy.[24] According to Brighouse, her argument is rooted in the view that "the state has an interest in teaching children how to be good democratic citizens," and this, she believes, means that the state "has to expose them to a range of political views, and to equip them with the skills needed to reflect on them rationally."[25] It would be difficult, however, to teach autonomy just in regard to political commitments, as Gutmann's brand of democratic education requires, so democratic education leads to teaching autonomy in such a way that it can be applied across one's life. Brighouse finds fault with Gutmann's argument, though, because it "deploys a conception of justice that places too much weight on the value of democratic participation."[26] Gutmann believes that democratic participation is a political duty (this is why the state can require that its citizens adopt the skills necessary to engage in it), but Brighouse think that this view goes too far — justice does not require democratic participation — and thus prevents her argument for teaching autonomy (as a key component of democratic education) from having wide appeal.

So Brighouse rejects the arguments that the state should provide an autonomy-facilitating education because autonomy is intrinsically valuable or because autonomy is instrumentally valuable for providing civic education in a democracy. His own argument for teaching autonomy, the one he believes to be the strongest, is "instrumental," but in a different way than Gutmann's. Brighouse's argument is that autonomy should be

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[24] Gutmann makes this argument most notably in *Democratic Education*, rev. ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999).

[25] Brighouse, *School Choice and Social Justice*, 68.

[26] Ibid.

facilitated in education because people can use it as an instrument to make their lives better, and justice requires that the state attempt to enable its members to lead good lives, whether or not autonomy is intrinsically or politically (or democratically) valuable.[27] In other words, the foundation of Brighouse's instrumental argument is that autonomy is an instrument for justice, which "requires that each individual have significant opportunities to live a life which is good for them."[28] A state aiming to be just would therefore want to provide its members with such opportunities to the best of its ability.[29]

Brighouse's next point is that, for a person to have a significant opportunity to live a life that is good for her, she must have "some sense of what constitutes living well."[30] Therefore, the state wanting to provide its members with opportunities to live well must provide each of those members with some sense of what it would mean for him or her to live well. This view does allow for multiple conceptions of a well-lived life: the value of autonomy is that it allows an individual to determine what living well means *for him*, though this might differ from another individual's determination of what living well means *for her*.

Next, Brighouse claims that "the basic methods of rational evaluation are reliable aids to uncovering how to live well."[31] These methods are "especially important," says Brighouse, in the contemporary world, where we might become "easily lost in the moral

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[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid., 68–69.

[29] Note that providing the opportunity to live a good life is different than actually providing that good life itself. In other words, as long as a person has the opportunity to live a good life for him, the state has met its obligation under justice, even if that person fails to capitalize on that opportunity.

[30] Brighouse, *School Choice and Social Justice*, 69.

[31] Ibid.

and economic complexity of modernity" without them.[32] Brighouse recognizes that this modern complexity does not *demand* that people adopt the methods of rational evaluation in order to live well — some people might stumble upon (or be led to) a well-lived life without subjecting their commitments to rational evaluation at all. However, Brighouse argues that "children will be *better* able to live well if they are able rationally to compare different ways of life."[33] In other words, children might be able to live well without autonomy, but they will have a better chance of living well if they are autonomous.

Brighouse then expands upon what he means by "living well," which is crucial for our purposes, because here we get a sense of the notion of the good life that supports (and is tied up with) autonomy, which contrasts with the view that Yusuf al-Qaradawi advances. For Brighouse, there are two components to living well: "the way of life must be good; and the person living it must endorse it 'from the inside.'"[34] In order for a life to be lived well, then, the content of the life must be deemed good in some objective sense, and the person living that good life must identify with it.[35] Brighouse would not say that the excellent murderer was living his life well, even if the murderer identified wholly with his life of crime, because murder is (we would generally agree) not good. Additionally, Brighouse would not say that the perfect saint was living her life well, even if everyone agreed that her life was filled with good things, if she did not identify with her life — if she really preferred to be a murderer rather than a saint, for instance.

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[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid., emphasis added.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Brighouse does not discuss how exactly to determine whether a form of life is good, which is something that would have to be fleshed out in order to implement his notion of autonomy in educational institutions.

Autonomy and the rational deliberation it involves enable a person to live well, according to Brighouse, because it facilitates these two components of a good life. In other words, autonomy allows us to consider whether a particular form of life is good in itself, and it allows us to consider a variety of forms of the good life in order to find one with which we identify. Again, this is why Brighouse calls his argument an instrumental one: the state should provide autonomy-facilitating education because it has the practical consequence of improving people's chances of living well, and enabling people to pursue opportunities to live well is a crucial element of a just society; so the state that aims for justice has an interest in facilitating the development of autonomy in its members, including its children. But does it demand that a liberal democratic state do so through its schools? Brighouse says that this question can be answered by examining "the character of [a society's] non-educational institutions and facts about developmental psychology."[36]

The character of a society's non-educational institutions matter because it is possible that a society will provide autonomy facilitation in some other way, outside of its schools. Perhaps autonomy is simply unavoidable in a certain society — perhaps it is just the way that things are done. In the Europe of the Middle Ages, "everyone" was Christian. Perhaps, in some society, there is an institution that ensures that "everyone" is autonomous. However, Brighouse believes "this is false in most liberal democracies" because no such institution exists.[37]

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[36] Brighouse, *School Choice and Social Justice*, 70.

[37] Ibid.

As for developmental psychology, Brighouse's assumption is that "to hold one's moral commitments autonomously requires the use of skills and knowledge which, for most people, must be explicitly taught."[38] The point is that there would be no need for the state to facilitate autonomy in its schools if everyone learned the skills involved in rational deliberation as part of normal human development. Assuming, though, that (1) a society aiming for justice does not have a non-educational institution that facilitates autonomy and (2) people do not normally become autonomous without being taught the skills needed to do so, then the just society must provide an autonomy-facilitating education for its children in its schools.

Brighouse notes that he is using an "abstract" conception of autonomy because it rests on the notion of rational reflection, which is itself abstract.[39] It does not "suffice to weigh different alternatives of how to live," meaning that a simple reference to rational reflection does not fully tell us *how* the weighing of alternatives should take place, but "no other known device is so reliable in this area of human understanding."[40] Rational reflection leading toward autonomy is, in essence, the best tool we have for determining how we should live our lives, even if it is a somewhat abstract ideal.

Recall that Brighouse's argument "starts with the obligation which adults have towards prospective adults, to provide them with certain kinds of opportunity to live well."[41] This obligation is present because of "the fundamental interest each person has in

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[38] Ibid., 71.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

living well."[42] Once this obligation is established, then autonomy-facilitating education can be invoked as the best instrument for ensuring that the liberal democratic state is able to fulfill this obligation. So autonomy has value to the extent that it fulfills this obligation; and the basis of this obligation is justice. It is justice that obligates the state to provide its members with the opportunity to live well, and it is this obligation that requires an autonomy-facilitating education. So autonomy is valuable because of its connection to justice.

He raises one objection to this claim, however, via Francis Schrag's argument that autonomy-facilitating education is not required, since it is possible to live a good life non-autonomously.[43] Schrag offers as an example a woman who converted to Orthodox Judaism as an adult and is able to articulate why this life is well lived. Although she chose to live this life autonomously, Brighouse notes that "it would be implausible to think that the goodness of her way of life depends on its being chosen autonomously."[44] With Schrag, Brighouse agrees that this case shows that a "way of life can be lived well even when it is not chosen autonomously."[45] If this is indeed the case — if Schrag is right — then it would seem that, in Brighouse's words, "we do not need to teach children the skills needed to make comparative evaluations between their parents' and other ways of life in order to give them a real opportunity to live well."[46]

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[42] Ibid.

[43] See Francis Schrag, "Diversity, Schooling, and the Liberal State," *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 17, no. 1 (1998).

[44] Brighouse, *School Choice and Social Justice*, 72.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid., 72–3.

While conceding Schrag's point that a life that is not chosen autonomously can in fact be a well-lived life, Brighouse does not think it therefore follows that we do not need to provide children with an autonomy-facilitating education. This is because, in a situation of pluralism, there is a "recognition that people have different personalities, characters, or internal constitutions, that suit them differently well to different ways of life; and these differences do not correlate perfectly with the demands of their parents' or their communities' religious commitments."[47] The point Brighouse is making here is that, while it is possible that a child will live a good life by accepting (for example) the religious commitments of their parents or communities, not all children will be able to live a good life in this way, because some children will be constituted in such a way that they will not be able to live well by accepting their parents' or communities' commitments. (And recall that Schrag's example involves an adult.) Brighouse offers as an example a homosexual person, who would likely not be able to live well by accepting his parents' commitments if those commitments included a religious position that viewed homosexuality as a sin. In summary, "if what we might call constitution pluralism [i.e., the recognition that people have different internal constitutions] is true, and religious parents are permitted to exempt their children from autonomy-facilitation, then some children will have few or no opportunities for living well."[48] This, Brighouse says, is unjust.

Brighouse then raises another objection to his argument: most individuals will have a chance to exit the web of commitments held by their parents and communities at

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[47] Ibid., 73.

[48] Ibid.

some point.[49] However, even if this is the case, these individuals still suffer from injustice because they will not have received preparation for functioning autonomously outside of those commitments. Even if they can leave a web of commitments, they will not know how to function autonomously outside of that web, which means that exiting really is not an option at all. "Justice, it appears, requires that they be educationally prepared for mainstream society: since they cannot be identified before the fact, this suggests that justice requires that all children receive some sort of autonomy-facilitating education."[50]

The Curricular Implications of Brighouse's Autonomy-Facilitating Education

Having made a case that justice requires that the state provide children with an autonomy-facilitating education because it has the instrumental effect of enhancing students' opportunities to live well, Brighouse then draws out the implications of this argument for the school curriculum. He mentions four. First, children would learn "the traditional academic content-based curriculum," because

> an autonomous life cannot be led without the information about the world in which it is led, and the critical thinking skills involved in autonomy can neither be developed nor exercised without the ease of access to a considerable amount of information which is provided only by having learned and internalized it.[51]

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[49] Susan Moller Okin discusses the issue of exit rights, which we will return to in the next chapter, in "'Mistresses of Their Own Destiny': Group Rights, Gender, and Realistic Rights of Exit," in *Citizenship and Education in Liberal-Democratic Societies*, eds. Kevin McDonough and Walter Feinberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[50] Brighouse, *School Choice and Social Justice*, 74.

[51] Ibid.

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Brighouse's point here is just that a focus on the facilitation of autonomy would not negate the need for the traditional content-based curriculum.

Second, children would learn "how to identify various sorts of fallacious arguments, and how to distinguish among them, as well as between them and non-fallacious arguments."[52] These skills would be needed for individuals to be able to evaluate arguments for and against particular ways of living.

Third, children would learn "about a range of religious, non-religious, and anti-religious ethical views in some detail; about the kinds of reasoning deployed within those views; and the attitudes of proponents toward non-believers, heretics, and the secular world."[53] This curricular component is necessary because these views constitute the range of options from which students would determine how they could live well.

Fourth, children would learn

about the diverse ways, including non-reason-based ways, in which secular and religious thinkers have dealt with moral conflict and religious disagreements, and with tensions in their own views; and how individuals have described, and to the extent possible how they have experienced, conversion experiences, losses of faith, and reasoned abandonment of ethical positions.[54]

This would help students to deal with moral conflicts that arise in their lives, and it would also help them to understand how one's conception of what it means to live well can change over the course of one's life. Brighouse emphasizes the presentation of alternative ethical viewpoints, since autonomy requires the availability of a range of

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[52] Ibid., 75.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

options for reflection; but he also notes that the way in which these views are presented is crucial, so that the presentation "reflects the reality of the lives lived according to these commitments."[55] This could be best achieved, according to Brighouse, "by allowing proponents of views to address children in the controlled environment of the classroom."[56] Brighouse finds support for this position in John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*, where Mill argues that a person "must be able to hear [arguments] from persons who actually believe them" in order "to do justice to the arguments."[57]

Thus far, we have discussed Brighouse's instrumental argument for autonomy-facilitating education and the curricular changes that he believes would be required if his argument holds. In order to understand why Brighouse argues for an autonomy-facilitating education, as opposed to an autonomy-promoting education, we should examine how he contrasts his view with autonomy-promoting education of the type endorsed by Amy Gutmann.[58]

The key difference between Gutmann's autonomy-promoting education and his own autonomy-facilitating education, according to Brighouse, is that Gutmann actively promotes autonomy as a value of the good democratic citizen, while Brighouse simply wants autonomy to be an option available to citizens, leaving the choice of whether or not to exercise it up to them. As he puts it, autonomy-facilitating education "aims to enable

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[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

[57] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (New York: Norton, 1975), 36, quoted in Brighouse, *School Choice and Social Justice*, 75.

[58] Specifically, Brighouse references Amy Gutmann's *Democratic Education* and her "Civic Education and Social Diversity," *Ethics* 105 (1995).

them to live autonomously should they wish to."[59] It is true that Brighouse argues in favor of facilitating autonomy in education because he does claim that "the skills needed rationally to reflect on alternative choices about how to live is a crucial component of providing them with substantive freedom and real opportunities" and that "people's lives go better when they deploy the skills associated with autonomy," but he does not think that this instrumental argument supports the actual promotion of autonomy in a state system of education. Such a system should enable autonomy, according to Brighouse's argument, but the argument does not obligate the state to ensure that people actually exercise this capability in their lives. However, the arguments for autonomy-promoting education, such as Gutmann's, *do* obligate the state to ensure that people *actually exercise* autonomy, both because democratic citizenship requires it and because the autonomous life is seen as intrinsically better than the non-autonomous life. In other words, in essence, Gutmann argues that autonomy is a *necessary* value in a democratic society, and a democratic education that prepares citizens to participate in such a society must promote autonomy — education is undemocratic if it does not. Brighouse says that he is open to the possibility that education should actively promote autonomy, but his instrumental argument only goes so far as to support the facilitation of autonomy, since the goal of living a good life can be achieved without it.

Final Words

Brighouse's central argument that the education provided by a liberal state should facilitate the development of autonomy is, as he puts it, an instrumental one. This

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[59] Brighouse, *School Choice and Social Justice*, 80.

instrumental argument rests on the assertion that people will, all things being equal, have better lives if they exercise autonomy, and that justice obligates the state to enable people to lead good lives to the extent that it is possible. My aim in raising Brighouse's argument is to offer a template for an autonomy-facilitating education that we can start from when considering how Islamic schools might facilitate a reasonable degree of individual autonomy. For Brighouse, the instrumental effect of an education that facilitates autonomy is that it can actually make people's lives better by enabling them to exercise autonomy. Brighouse does believe that people can have good lives without the exercise of autonomy, but since we cannot predict who these people will be, everyone should be able to exercise autonomy in the (likely, thinks Brighouse) chance that they will have better lives if they exercise this capability.

In the next chapter, I will use my descriptions of Islamic education from the previous chapter, combined with my description of Brighouse's autonomy-facilitating education here, in order to draw out the tensions between liberalism and Islam with regard to the role of the development of autonomy in education. After demonstrating that the key point of tension is the inclusion of critical reflection across a range of options in Brighouse's proposal, I will suggest a modification to this proposal that leads to an educational curriculum – Worldview Education – that might satisfy Brighouse's desire to facilitate autonomy while also satisfying the concern of Islamic educators not to undermine the integrity of their faith. We will see that Qaradawi's educational proposal is likely to leave little room for my proposal to achieve its aims, but that more moderate Islamic schools such as Universal School and the College Preparatory School of America, would be more likely to find the Worldview Education acceptable. In the final

chapter of the dissertation, I will build on my sketch of Worldview Education in order to

offer more detail about what such a curriculum could look like in Islamic schools.

CHAPTER 4

THE POSSIBILITY OF AN AUTONOMY-FACILITATING ISLAMIC EDUCATION

A primary aim of education, as a rule, is to enable people to live better lives. It would make little sense to educate for something that the educator did not believe would do the educated some good.[1] In liberal thought, autonomy is usually understood to be a central component of a good life, on the grounds that being able to determine the course of one's own life is better than having one's way of life decided upon by others.[2] Therefore, the development of autonomy is usually understood to be a central aim of liberal education. I have presented an example of this kind of view through the work of Harry Brighouse in *School Choice and Social Justice*, where he argues in favor of an autonomy-facilitating education on the grounds that it will help children to be better able to live well. As I discussed in the previous chapter, Brighouse contrasts his view with the autonomy-promoting education favored by Amy Gutmann (among others).[3] An autonomy-promoting education actually teaches students that they should exercise autonomy, while an autonomy-facilitating education only aims to give students the capacity to exercise autonomy. One of Brighouse's complaints against an education that promotes autonomy is that it in fact undermines autonomy by *directing* students to

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[1] See Richard S. Peters, "What Is an Educational Process?" in *The Concept of Education*, ed. Richard S. Peters (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967).

[2] As I discussed in the previous chapter, David Johnston offers an overview of this aspect of liberal theory in *The Idea of a Liberal Theory: A Critique and Reconstruction* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996). A more detailed discussion of the origins and development of the concept of autonomy can be found in Jerome B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[3] Amy Gutmann, *Democratic Education*, rev. ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999).

become autonomous — "I order you to be autonomous."[4] In other words, an autonomy-promoting education does not allow students to make an autonomous decision about whether or not to exercise autonomy. Brighouse also believes that an autonomy-promoting education could have the effect of forcing students away from their parents' ways of life, which goes against an element of parenting that makes it so meaningful for many individuals.[5] Brighouse maintains that his autonomy-facilitating education avoids these problems by giving students the capacity to become autonomous, while leaving the initial choices of whether or not to encourage autonomy up to the parents and whether or not to exercise autonomy up to the students. For instance, Amish parents would not be directly undermined in their attempts to guide their children into an Amish way of life. At the same time, their children would not be forced to maintain this way of life, since they would have the capacity to exercise their autonomy and break away, if they opted to do so. An autonomy-facilitating education would not encourage the children to break away, though it would enable them to do so.

However, Brighouse's proposal for an autonomy-facilitating education poses a potential problem for models of Islamic education, such as those I described in Chapter 2. In Islam, submission to the will of God is usually understood to be a central component of a good life. Therefore, submission is usually understood to be a central aim of Islamic education. This view can take different forms, based on one's understanding of Islam, as I have shown in the course of my discussion of Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Universal School, and the College Preparatory School of America (CPSA). The distinction between autonomy

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[4] Walter Feinberg suggested this phrasing via email in a comment on an earlier draft of this dissertation (November 20, 2011).

[5] See Harry Brighouse and Adam Swift, "Parents' Rights and the Value of the Family," *Ethics* 117 (2006).

and submission to the will of God as sources of the good life represents perhaps the central tension between liberal and Islamic worldviews. Liberalism, through autonomy, calls for individuals to look within themselves for sources of the good life, whereas Islam, through submission, calls for individuals to find such sources through understandings of Islamic tradition based primarily, though not exclusively, on the Qur'an and the Sunna. In this chapter, I explore the issues that this contradiction raises with regard to the question of how Islamic schools can provide an education that facilitates autonomy while not undermining religious belief. The central question of the chapter, therefore, is whether it is possible to modify Brighouse's proposal for an autonomy-facilitating education for use in Islamic schools in such a way that both Brighouse and at least some Islamic schools would find it acceptable.

When we discuss the aims of education in a liberal pluralist society, we must recognize that this discussion has to apply to people who disagree on the components of a good life, and thus disagree on what education should do in order to enable individuals to live well. We must also recognize that there are at least three actors who have an interest in how the aims of education are determined: the state, parents, and children. These actors are internally diverse. The liberal state has no official position on what constitutes the good life, though it presumably wants its members to live well. Parents are likely to have a position on this issue, and they are also likely to want their children to think likewise. Children are unlikely to have a perspective on what it means to lead a good life until they learn it from others.

From the perspective of many adult Muslims, the path to the good life is known: it is the straight path of Islam. As we have seen from our examples of Islamic educational

thought and practice, Muslims might disagree on exactly what this path entails, but certain features, encapsulated by Islam's Pillars and Articles of Faith, are generally held in common. Muslim parents will want their children to follow this path, and they will want their children's education to guide them into, and along, this path. Brighouse's autonomy-facilitating education could be problematic for these parents, because it might lead their children away from the straight path by forcing them to engage in critical reflection across a variety of worldviews, including their own.

Of course, those who do not believe that the straight path of Islam constitutes the good life might find these parents' viewpoint just as problematic as those parents find the facilitation of autonomy. Broadly, there are two kinds of objections here: One view is that these parents are preventing their children from playing a role in determining their own ways of life. Those advocating the facilitation of autonomy would hold this view. Another view is that these parents are guiding their children down a road that does not in fact lead to a good life. Those advocating submission to other authorities, such as some other religious believers, would hold this view. Either way, the children are being misled.

This dilemma focuses on what it means to enable a child to live well. Another dilemma focuses on what it means for parents to live well. A component of a good life for many, if not all, parents is that their children adopt a view of the good life that aligns with their own. Parents who believe that a good life must be determined autonomously will want their children to believe likewise, just as parents who believe that the good life is achieved through submission will want their children to believe this as well.

If we want to promote living well in general, we have to take the situations of both parents and children into account. Promoting a good life for parents leads us to

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allow parents to determine how their children are educated with regard to the good life. However, promoting a good life for children leads us to determine how children are educated with regard to the good life based on the view of a good life that we happen to hold, which may or may not coincide with the views of parents.

For a concrete example of how this tension can affect children, imagine a gay student – or even a student who might one day recognize that he is gay – in a particular Islamic school that teaches that homosexuality is against the will of God. If this student is taught that Islam offers the only path to a good life, then he is caught between, on the one hand, living a way of life that is true to himself but that will, if what he has been taught is true, lead to damnation and, on the other hand, living a way of life that is supposed to lead to salvation but comes with self-denial and, very likely, self-hatred. Or imagine a high-achieving female student – or even a female student who demonstrates the potential to excel in her studies – who attends a particular Islamic school that teaches that the proper place of women is as caretakers of the home; women's ambitions are to be limited solely to the domestic sphere. This student is caught in a similar dilemma to the gay student: she can realize who she is and violate her faith or she can lead a putatively good Islamic life full of thwarted ambitions. Situations such as these highlight the pressing problem that is raised by considerations of how we formulate the aims of education with regard to the good life. An autonomy-facilitating education would undoubtedly allow these children to lead better lives, but from some Islamic points of view, these improved worldly lives would hardly be worth the damnation that is sure to come – any life ending in damnation cannot ultimately be a good life.

A possible compromise is to educate children in such a way that their development of autonomy is facilitated, along the lines suggested by Brighouse, but within an Islamic environment, such as that provided by Universal School and the CPSA, that includes such elements as dress codes, prayers, halal food, and a special focus on Islamic history and thought. In this way, both autonomy and Islam would be facilitated. Children would learn what it means to be a good Muslim, but they would also acquire the capability to critique various views of the good life and choose among them for themselves. But there is a problem here: Brighouse's autonomy-facilitating education requires critical engagement with a variety of worldviews, including one's own. This kind of engagement is exactly the thing that some Muslim parents would want to avoid because, for them, one's worldview is not an open question that should be subjected to critical engagement.

The problem for some Muslims with Brighouse's proposal for an autonomy-facilitating education is that it tends to have an equalizing effect on worldviews: many of the views will be presented as valid options. A sort of marketplace of worldviews is presented to students. Students browse the available selections, reflect on the possibilities, and then make their choices based on their preferences. This approach to worldviews only makes sense, however, if one accepts that the individual's preference should play a central role in determining the overall shape of one's life. Admittedly, in an autonomy-facilitating education, the preference is meant to be a reasoned preference: it should involve more reflection than, say, choosing a meal. Further, Brighouse recognizes that one's community will necessarily shape one's choices: no one is completely autonomous, beyond the reach of all external influence. But one's way of life should still

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ultimately come down to the individual's free choice. What "feels" right to the individual is going to matter.

But a great number of people believe that individual preference is irrelevant when it comes to fundamental aspects of a good life. If one believes that there is a God who says that the good life requires certain beliefs and practices, and a commitment to preserving the integrity of a particular community, then how can individuals really question this? In this context, individual preference could be an obstacle to a good life, not part of the path. While it is true that some individuals might choose to accept submission as a result of an autonomy-facilitating education, it is just as true that some individuals will not. Within strains of Islam, as within strains of Christianity, there is the view that people are weak; they are easily tempted away from the straight path — this point comes up repeatedly in Islamic thought[6] — we do not want to encourage this tendency through children's education!

What we are dealing with here is a stark contrast between the liberal and Islamic worldviews with regard to what it means to live well. (And I should note that this does not just apply to Islam — it applies to any worldview that accepts a notion of the good life rooted in submission to an infallible authority.) In the liberal worldview, a way of life that is not at least partly the result of autonomous processes would be suspect: a good life must necessarily involve a way of life that is the result of critical reflection across a range of options. In the Islamic worldview, whatever the differences in interpretation between sects and legal schools, a path to a good life that is not based in some way on the Qur'an

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[6] See, for instance, *Qur'an* 12:53: "I do not pretend to be blameless, for man's very soul incites him to evil unless my Lord shows mercy: He is most forgiving, most merciful." This translation is from Muhammad A.S. Abdel Haleem, trans., *The Qur'an* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

and the Sunna would be suspect: the good life must necessarily involve submission to God's path. The good life is either the result of autonomous processes or it is threatened by these processes.

Is the contrast really this stark? For some, it certainly is. Advocates of autonomy-promoting education, such as Gutmann, are unlikely to accept any education that does not explicitly promote autonomy. Some Muslims would be unlikely to accept any education that does not adhere uncritically to the Qur'an and the Sunna. But there are other views within these traditions that do not see this contrast so dichotomously. For instance, Brighouse is willing to accept that autonomy is not necessary for a good life; this is part of why he argues for the facilitation of autonomy rather than its outright promotion. Autonomy might make it more likely that a given child will live well; but one can live well without it. And there are Muslims who accept interpretations of Islam that allow for other paths to a good life.[7] There are also Muslims who might accept a role for autonomy in Islam, whether or not they view Islam as the only path to the good life: what good is submission if it is not freely given?[8]

Imagine a child about to enter formal schooling in kindergarten. She is 5 years old. How can we best enable her to live well through her schooling? We might try to answer this question abstractly, in regard to a generic "child" who "we" want to live well. But this would only work if there was a universally agreed upon notion of the good life. Since there is not, the answer to the question is going to depend on who is in charge of the child's education. If the child's parents were followers of Yusuf al-Qaradawi, they

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[7] See Mohammad Hassan Khalil, *Islam and the Fate of Others: The Salvation Question* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[8] See Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, *Islam and the Secular State: Negotiating the Future of Shari'a* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008).

might believe that they were enabling her to live well by sending her to a school using Qaradawi's educational proposal. If the child's parents were recent Muslim immigrants to Bridgeview, Illinois, or Lombard, Illinois, they might believe that they were enabling her to live well by sending her to Universal School or the CPSA, respectively. If the child's parents endorsed Brighouse's work in *School Choice and Social Justice*, they might enable her to live well by sending her to a school that facilitated autonomy according to Brighouse's proposal. Who gets to decide for any given child?

A quick answer is that a child's parents or guardians get to decide how she is educated. But this assumes that the child does not have educational interests of her own. Joel Feinberg has discussed the right of a child to an "open future," which essentially says that children have the right not to be locked into the way of life of their parents.[9] This kind of argument can be countered by the position that parents should have the right to determine how their children are educated, since this is a key element of a good life for many parents.[10] In addition, it is unclear who should have the right to direct a child's educational path, if not the parents. Is this something we would want to hand over entirely to the state? To a particular community?[11] All of these actors have an interest in how children are educated, but the difficulty arises when we try to balance these interests against one another, especially in situations where the interests conflict. For instance, the autonomy promoters might argue that, because we do not know in advance how any given child is going to turn out, we should not push him or her into a particular view of

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[9] Joel Feinberg, "The Child's Right to an Open Future" in *Freedom and Fulfillment: Philosophical Essays* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

[10] Brighouse and Swift, "Parents' Rights and the Value of the Family."

[11] This is Plato's proposal in the *Republic*, where children would be taken from their parents by the state in order to be educated on the basis of how they could best fit society's needs.

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what the good life entails. But those advocating submission would respond that, yes, we do not know how any given child is going to turn out in advance, but this really does not matter, because submission is a central component of the good life for everyone, whether they realize it or not. Once again, we are back to fundamentally different worldviews.

The dilemma is especially salient when we consider children, because they are vulnerable. Also, they do not come into the world with a view of the good life. They have not embraced liberalism, Islam, or any other worldview. What they are taught about living well becomes particularly important, because they will not yet hold their own views on this matter. Importantly, though, children will not learn about the good life just at school. Their parents or guardians will clearly have a significant influence on how they come to think of a good human life. In addition, children's conceptions of the good life are likely to be shaped by their peers and the media they consume. Of course, this could mean that there is all the more reason to facilitate autonomy in schools, since there is no guarantee that children will become autonomous at home, and since children need some way to sift through the variety of influences they will encounter in society. But an autonomy-facilitating education could undo much of what parents teach their children about a good life, and therefore much of what makes being a parent a key component of living well for many people. Perhaps it should be the child's decision: the child should decide what kind of schooling they experience. But, first, it is unclear that children are in the position to make this sort of decision, especially when they are younger; and, second, this view is itself the result of a belief in the importance of autonomy for the good life. If children are making these decisions, then autonomy has already won.

And yet, as the earlier scenarios about the gay and high-achieving students emphasize, children's interests should play some role in determining how we teach about the good life, even if those children are not in the position to protect their interests themselves. Brighouse's autonomy-facilitating education is designed to do just this, but as I have discussed, it poses potential difficulties for religious schools in that it presents one's way of life as a matter of individual choice. The question is thus whether it is possible to "tweak" Brighouse's proposal in such a way as to have it play a role in religious education – specifically, Islamic education. In what remains of this chapter, I will develop a proposal for a compromise between the autonomy facilitators and the submission promoters and then discuss whether it could work in forms of Islamic education such as the ones I described in Chapter 2. The proposal will not be acceptable to those who advocate an autonomy-promoting education or those who do not want their children even to be exposed to other worldviews, but I do think it would appeal to the vast majority of individuals, who dwell somewhere in the middle.

In short, I propose a curriculum that can facilitate both autonomy and submission in Islamic schools, as long as those schools provided for critical thinking in other parts of the curriculum. My curriculum would not push a child toward either autonomy or submission — it would not promote either. Rather, it would show a child how people have approached the question of the good life in a wide variety of ways, both religious and secular. The form of education I propose would appeal to the autonomy facilitators, since it would indeed facilitate autonomy, as long as critical thinking was learned elsewhere in the curriculum; but I think it would also appeal to many Muslims, in that it could take place within an Islamic environment without explicitly undermining the faith.

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Shelley Burtt advances a proposal with similar intent.[12] She focuses on "comprehensive educations," which has the goal of "fitting the child with the worldview, personal commitments, and moral understandings that his parents and the faith community that he inhabits believe to be necessary to live a good life."[13] Most forms of Islamic education fit this description. She notes that this is typically contrasted — as I have done — with the liberal educational goal of autonomy, which she defines broadly as thinking and knowing for ourselves. Her central argument is that "the achievement of autonomy *correctly understood* is not threatened by the major sorts of religious and cultural education on offer today."[14] This does not mean, she writes, that all comprehensive educations will make their students autonomous; but it does mean that comprehensive educations and educations for autonomy are not mutually exclusive. I have emphasized the phrase "correctly understood" because her argument hinges on an atypical understanding of what is required to make someone an autonomous individual.

Focusing on the definition of autonomy as "to think and know for oneself," Burtt proposes that "we place independent thought and action rather than free choice at the center of our understanding of autonomy."[15] On this view, an individual would be considered autonomous not on the basis of whether or not her way of life was the result of critical engagement leading to selection from among a range of options, but on the

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[12] Shelley Burtt, "Comprehensive Educations and the Liberal Understanding of Autonomy" in *Citizenship and Education in Liberal-Democratic Societies: Teaching for Cosmopolitan Values and Collective Identities*, eds. Kevin McDonough and Walter Feinberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[13] Ibid., 179.

[14] Ibid., 180, emphasis mine.

[15] Ibid., 184.

basis of whether or not the individual could act or think independently. This is a more minimalist view of autonomy when compared to that endorsed by Brighouse.

Burtt does acknowledge that forms of comprehensive education involving, for instance, "an unquestioning obedience to the dictates of a religious leader" would not allow for autonomy, on her view.[16] But her point is that there are forms of comprehensive education that do not encourage such orthodoxy.[17] She argues that a comprehensive education can provide for autonomy by educating for three things: "moral courage…, familiarity with the idea of 'character pluralism,' and a belief that good lives must feel right 'from the inside.'"[18] By moral courage, she means "the ability to resist pressures to conform, to act on one's understanding of the good in the face of familial and peer disapproval."[19] "Character pluralism" is the view "that individuals come with different needs, characters, gifts, and abilities," which "implies that the good life for one person may not be a rewarding life for another."[20] The belief that good lives must feel right "from the inside" "encourages the individual to insist that the fundamental principles to which he conforms be experienced as right for him, the sort of person he is and has, through his experience, circumstances, and education, come to be."[21] Burtt argues that these three components are enough to facilitate autonomy and are part of most forms of comprehensive education. The primary aspect of other forms of autonomy-facilitating

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[16] Ibid., 185.

[17] Another way to put this is that forms of comprehensive education that involved indoctrination would not allow for autonomy. I will raise the issue of indoctrination again in reference to Qaradawi's proposal for Islamic education in order to make just this point.

[18] Burtt, "Comprehensive Educations," 190.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., 191.

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education that she is trying to avoid is the "consumerist" notion that one's way of life is merely a matter of personal preference.

I agree with Burtt's three key elements of an autonomy-facilitating education. I also agree with the concern that a form of autonomy-facilitating education like that proposed by Brighouse could lead to an emphasis on free choice being what matters most when it comes to autonomy. However, I do not think that familiarity with the idea of character pluralism is enough – students must in fact be presented with the range of views that character pluralism leads people to adopt. In other words, an autonomy-facilitating education requires that students be exposed to alternative ways of life, not just to the idea that different forms of life are good for different kinds of people. It is true that familiarity with character pluralism might be enough to lead some students to seek out alternatives, but I am unsure that students would be able to engage meaningfully with other ways of life on their own, especially if their homes, communities, and schools were steeped in one particular tradition. To return to the example of the gay student in a school that teaches that homosexuality is a sin, the idea of character pluralism might help him to realize that there are some who do not believe that homosexuality is sinful, but it would not help him to gain exposure these other views in such a way that he might, at some point, be able to consider them seriously.

What I propose is a curriculum that falls between the proposals of Burtt and Brighouse. Like Burtt, I eschew the idea that directed critical engagement with a range of views is necessary for the facilitation of autonomy. However, like Brighouse, I believe that some engagement with a range of views is necessary for an autonomy-facilitating education. I call my proposed curriculum Worldview Education. What I present here is

not a detailed curriculum proposal — I will go into more detail in the next chapter. I intend this discussion to be an initial sketch of a worldview education, which describes its general aims and methods. By a worldview, I simply mean a comprehensive way of understanding the human condition, which typically includes views about the origin and nature of the universe, the origin and nature of humanity, and the form of a good human life. Broadly speaking, there are both religious and secular worldviews. Both claim, or sometimes claim, universal application but differ primarily in where they locate the sources of the worldviews. Religious worldviews tend to be grounded in sources of authority beyond humanity, while secular worldviews tend to be grounded in ideas produced solely by human thought.[22]

The overarching premise of Worldview Education (WE) is the unquestionable fact that people hold a variety of worldviews, which include differing views about what it means to live well. A second premise of WE is that people have believed that they have actually led good lives within many, if not all, of the plurality of worldviews. We might disagree about whether some of these people have, as a matter of fact, led good lives, but the premise is simply that people have felt that they have experienced good lives through many different ways of understanding the world.[23] (This is in line with Burtt's idea of character pluralism.) A third premise is that it is useful to understand the variety of worldviews that people hold when one lives in a pluralistic society, even if one's own

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[22] Buddhism, particularly in its Theravada form, might pose a problem for this scheme, as represented by the common discussion of whether Buddhism counts as a religion or a philosophy. The Buddha taught that his views were based simply on an understanding of the human condition that did not require reference to revelation. The source of his worldview was not beyond humanity. I will set this discussion aside, simply noting that Theravada Buddhism — and perhaps other worldviews, such as philosophical Daoism and Confucianism — might be classified as secular under this scheme.

[23] In other words, there are Muslims, Christians, and Hindus who would say that they are living good lives, just as there are atheists who would say the same.

view is not in question. This is so for the straightforward reason that it is difficult to understand others unless one has a sense of the underlying worldviews that are driving their lives.[24]

Based on these premises, the curriculum for WE would consist of a survey of a variety of worldviews, focusing on their differing accounts of what it means to live well, in a way similar to the autonomy-facilitating curriculum that Brighouse proposes. (Burtt's version of an autonomy-facilitating education would not require this.) Worldviews that locate the good life in submission to authority would be presented alongside worldviews that view the good life necessarily as a matter of autonomous choice. In each case, the worldview would be presented from the point of view of the individuals or groups who hold the view — the view would not be presented as universally valid. In addition to teaching about various people's worldviews and corresponding conceptions of a good life, the curriculum would include explanations of why those people hold those views. In other words, the ways that people support their worldviews would be presented alongside the worldviews themselves.

A crucial difference between WE and Brighouse's autonomy-facilitating education, however, is that the worldviews and conceptions of the good life would not be explicitly critiqued. If students raised questions about these understandings, then these questions could be addressed, but at no point would students be forced to critique the views, since this might mean critiquing their own views, or the views of their families. This is the facet of WE that could make it, as opposed to autonomy-facilitating education,

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[24] This premise in fact suggests that WE can be justified without reference to autonomy. I believe that this is one of the strengths of WE: it will enable the facilitation of autonomy, but its inclusion in school curricula can be promoted for other reasons.

acceptable in some Islamic schools. At the same time, WE could be acceptable to Brighouse, because students would indeed be capable of exercising autonomy after learning about others' worldviews. It would not be a large step for students to move from the recognition that people hold a variety of views about the good life to the questioning of their own views, though this would not be touched upon in the classroom. In other words — and this is a major point — a form of education can facilitate autonomy without having to explicitly critique various ways of life. Simply learning about a variety of worldviews can be enough to facilitate autonomy.

This might initially seem incorrect: how could WE facilitate autonomy even though it avoids critique, since Brighouse notes that critical reflection across a variety of worldviews is necessary for autonomy? To answer this question, my proposal does rely on two key assumptions about the schools and communities in which WE takes place. First, the school and community cannot be so oppressive that critical thinking is entirely snuffed out. In other words, there must be some avenue through which students could learn critical thinking skills. Critical thinking is, as Brighouse says, ultimately necessary in order to exercise autonomy. WE would provide the "raw material" for the facilitation of autonomy, but the critical thinking skills would have to come from other sources. The most likely source would be other parts of the school curriculum. Any school purporting to provide an education that prepares students for higher education would teach critical thinking skills in the traditional academic subjects, as Universal School and the CPSA do. In fact, it is likely that critical thinking would play a role in the religious aspects of the curriculum as well: interpretation of the Qur'an and Sunna, along with an understanding of the debates that occur between Islamic schools of law, both require the ability to think

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critically across different Islamic worldviews. Critical thinking is entirely in line with Islamic tradition and these skills could transfer outside of the tradition.

The second key assumption is that the school and community cannot be so oppressive that students have no hope of ever leaving — as Susan Moller Okin put it, the students must have "exit rights."[25] In other words, students would need to have open to them the possibility of exercising autonomy at some point in their lives. Learning about different worldviews and developing the ability to think critically — the two things necessary for a form of education to facilitate autonomy — would ultimately be meaningless if there was no possibility of changing one's way of life. For instance, if our high-achieving female student lived in a community where any girls expressing aspirations to pursue careers outside of the domestic sphere were put to death, she would have no real hope of leaving, even if she realized that there were other ways of life available to her were she to resituate herself.

Both of these assumptions would hold true in any reasonable form of religious education. Of course, one can imagine religious schools that solely provide rote learning and are situated in communities where exit is practically impossible, and WE would have no traction in these places. However, many religious schools are not like this, as demonstrated by Universal School and the CPSA. Universal School and the CPSA both emphasize that they provide an education for students that includes critical thinking skills and they both hope to send students to college, with this mission even being enshrined in the name of the latter school. (I will discuss how Qaradawi's proposal is problematic in light of these two assumptions momentarily, however.)

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[25] Susan Moller Okin, "'Mistresses of Their Own Destiny': Group Rights, Gender, and Realistic Rights of Exit" in *Citizenship and Education in Liberal-Democratic Societies*, eds. McDonough and Feinberg.

Further, the fact that WE need not explicitly critique ways of life would not prevent students from being exposed to critiques from various forms of media: books, magazines, television, and movies, to say nothing of the Internet. Armed with exposure to different worldviews and critical thinking skills, students would be able to pursue critical engagement on their own time as they grew into adults. The important point, however, is that this engagement would not happen within the WE curriculum. This curriculum would simply be presenting views: Muslims believe in worldviews that say that the good life is A, B, or C; Christians believe that it is D, E, or F; positive psychologists argue that it is G, H, or I; philosophers claim that it is J, K, or L; and so forth. Similarities and differences between the views would be presented; it would be a comparative curriculum. This comparative approach would likely involve a kind of implicit critique — it would be clear that Muslims, Christians, and secular philosophers disagreed on certain matters, for instance — but the views would not be endorsed, and the views would not be challenged. They would simply be offered up in a survey of what people have believed and do believe about the world and what it means to live well within it.

As I have noted, WE would not be acceptable to people who only wanted children to be exposed to their own worldviews, whether those views were secular or religious. But I do think — in line with my third premise behind WE — that it would be acceptable to people who believe that there is value in learning about others' views, even if they believe that their own view is correct. However, for this to hold, WE would have to strive to be unbiased. It would have to present worldviews just from the perspectives of the people holding them, not from the perspective of the teacher or the school.[26] It would also

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[26] There is an extensive literature on the possibility of neutrality in teaching, which I do not want to delve into here, as I fear it would derail my discussion. See, for instance, Paul J. Crittenden, "Neutrality in

have to be pluralistic, presenting a wide variety of worldviews. This means that WE could not be confined to a single course, or a single year — it would have to extend throughout a child's schooling.[27]

Also, WE would require a method of dealing with offensive views. This is one of the great challenges of developing a WE curriculum, because what counts as offensive can vary from one context to another. Certain views, such as those associated with Nazism, are considered offensive by a vast majority of people, and these could be left out. However, atheist views might be offensive only to some religious individuals; and conservative religious views might be offensive only to those of a liberal persuasion. A line has to be drawn in order to separate the offensive from the inoffensive in the context of WE, if it is to be a curriculum that could be used in a wide variety of Islamic (and other religious) schools. This cannot be left to the discretion of the individual school, because this could compromise the pluralism of WE.

The key to addressing potentially offensive viewpoints is, I think, to err on the side of inclusivity. This would mean that offensive views would be included in WE, though the perception of which views were offensive would vary from one community to the next. For instance, WE would present worldviews from certain branches of evangelical Christianity, which involve the rejection of homosexuality as a sin. It would also present the worldviews of certain atheists, which involve the rejection of evangelical

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Education," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 12 (1980). Admittedly, it would be difficult for a teacher to remain completely neutral in the teaching of WE, but by presenting the worldviews through the perspectives of people holding those views, hopefully teacher bias would be limited.

[27] This would, of course, mean a significant reorganization of school curriculum. This work would be a necessary part of producing a more detailed curriculum proposal for WE, as I will attempt in the next chapter.

religion and its understanding of sin. On the one hand, communities characterized by a nearly universal acceptance of evangelical Christianity would find the former inoffensive, while likely finding the latter to be offensive. On the other hand, communities with, say, a strong presence of LGBT advocacy organizations would find the former offensive, while likely finding the latter inoffensive. I believe that allowing WE to present offensive views can be justified in the following ways: First, none of the views would be endorsed. Second, the mission of WE is to help students understand how a wide variety of people have conceived and do conceive of the world and what it means to live well within it. Third, since WE is necessarily comparative, the offensive view would be presented alongside a large number of other views, including some that critique and reject it. Fourth, the views presented by WE could be freely challenged outside of the curriculum. The power of any curriculum should not be overestimated.

A key advantage of using WE in Islamic schools is that it would teach students why some people value autonomy while also demonstrating why some people value commitment to submission to the will of God. WE takes seriously both autonomy and religious commitment as sources of a life well lived. But it would not endorse either of these views. At the same time, while WE would not explicitly lead students through a critical engagement with these views, every view it presents would be challenged implicitly by the other views presented alongside it, even though WE itself would not endorse these challenges.

Would WE be acceptable as a component of the curriculum in the context of the educational proposals we discussed in Chapters 2 and 3? Would Brighouse find this to be an acceptable form of autonomy-facilitating education, and would Qaradawi, Universal

School, and the CPSA find it acceptable within an Islamic education? Brighouse would likely want WE to be more critical of the views it presents, but, as I have discussed, critical thinking skills could come from other parts of a school's curriculum. As long as this was the case, WE would contribute to the facilitation of autonomy, and as such I see no reason why Brighouse would be opposed to it as a way of facilitating autonomy in Islamic schools. Universal School and the CPSA would likely find WE to be acceptable, given that it would not explicitly critique Islam and that the Islamic environment and religious education curriculum of these schools would prevent WE from interfering with the Islamic character of their forms of Islamic education. However, it is unlikely that WE would work within an educational proposal like Qaradawi's, which steers too closely toward the fundamentalist end of the spectrum of Islamic education.[28] Qaradawi does want students to learn about other worldviews, though it is clear that his aim is to demonstrate how non-Islamic ways of life are, simply put, wrong. Even some Islamic worldviews would be presented as incorrect within Qaradawi's proposal, given that he is intent on pushing a particular understanding of Islam.

The consideration of Qaradawi raises the point that WE would be thwarted in schools where indoctrination plays a central role.[29] This connects to the point I made previously about the oppressiveness of a school and community potentially undermining WE. A key feature of WE, recall, is that worldviews would be presented in as unbiased a

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[28] I should note that WE might also be unacceptable to those who advocate autonomy-promoting education. For instance, Amy Gutmann would likely be critical of WE on the grounds that it does not go far enough in terms of critical engagement with different ways of life.

[29] Perhaps the best introduction to the concept of indoctrination in education is Ivan A. Snook, *Indoctrination and Education* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972). Snook writes, "A person indoctrinates *P* (a proposition or set of propositions) if he teaches that with the intention that the pupil or pupils believe *P* regardless of the evidence." (47)

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way as possible. While it is likely that students in a school based on Qaradawi's proposal would develop some form of critical thinking through critiquing non-Islamic and some Islamic understanding, this thinking would be presented in the context of an education ultimately designed to inculcate in students the unquestionable acceptance of a particular understanding of Islam. Qaradawi's students would be exposed to other worldviews, but it is difficult to see how they could take these worldviews seriously, since they would be vilified to such an extent that students would realistically have little chance of adopting a view outside of the narrow range of views that are acceptable to Qaradawi. The bottom line is that WE would only work in contexts that allow for the possibility of choosing (or not choosing) to exercise autonomy.

Humanity is very unlikely to reach universal agreement on how to attain the good life. Pluralism is not a problem to be solved; it is a fact that must be dealt with if diverse individuals want to live together. It must particularly be dealt with in a society's educational landscape. Some Muslims would be leery of Brighouse's autonomy-facilitating education because it would involve critique of their own views; some liberals are leery of Islamic schools because students might not be able to consider other worldviews that could allow them to lead better lives. I believe that WE offers a compromise between these views. By removing the element of critique from Brighouse's proposal, as long as critical thinking is taught in other parts of a school's curriculum, WE would ensure that students were capable of becoming autonomous – as Brighouse desires – while also ensuring that the Islamic character of a school would not be weakened – as Islamic educators desire. In the next chapter, I will describe in more detail how WE could be implemented in moderate Islamic schools, such as Universal School and the CPSA.

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CHAPTER 5

FLESHING OUT WORLDVIEW EDUCATION

In Chapter 4, I argued that a curriculum that I call Worldview Education (WE) could serve as a way to provide for an autonomy-facilitating education in Islamic schools such as Universal School and the College Preparatory School of America, which I described in Chapter Two. WE is a modification of Harry Brighouse's autonomy-facilitating education, which I described in Chapter 3. Brighouse proposes that a curriculum that guides students through a process of critical reflection across a range of ways of life can enable students to exercise autonomy without actively encouraging them to do so: it facilitates autonomy, rather than promoting it. However, I argued that Brighouse's proposal would be problematic for many Islamic schools in that it would require critique of Islamic ways of life, which could undermine Islamic education's primary aim of guiding students into, and along, the straight path of Islam. My proposal for WE addresses this concern by retaining Brighouse's suggestion of presenting students with a variety of ways of life while removing the critical element that Islamic schools would find troubling. Although critical thinking is necessary for the exercise of autonomy, I argued that the skills relevant to critical reflection would be obtained throughout the curriculum in any Islamic school that hopes to prepare students for higher education. Even the aspects of the curriculum that deal with Islamic thought could provide for critical thinking, since debate about the proper interpretation of the Qur'an and the Sunna – the key sources of Islam – are prominent in the Islamic tradition,

especially in the field of Islamic law. While it is true that some Islamic schools might not present this debate in such a way as to promote critical thinking – they might, for instance, teach a particular understanding of Islam as correct and fail to engage the intra-Islamic debates – these schools would teach the skills needed for critical thinking in the traditional curriculum: English, social studies, math, science, and so forth.

Therefore, one condition for the success of WE as a form of autonomy-facilitating education in Islamic schools is that critical thinking be taught in at least some aspects of the curriculum. The second major condition is that the school and community not be so oppressive that any realistic possibility of pursuing a different way of life is unavailable to students, even as they grow into adults. This level of oppression is hard to imagine in any Islamic school that guides students toward college, especially in America, where there are no Islamic colleges or universities that could serve to keep students in the fold. My argument, then, is that as long as these two conditions hold, WE can make an Islamic education an autonomy-facilitating education. It does so by exposing students to other worldviews through the eyes of those who accept them. This not only informs students that a range of worldviews exist – a point that would be hard to avoid, even without explicit instruction, for any student with access to the Internet – but also it teaches students about these views in such a way that the only biases would be those that are internal to the worldviews being presented.

While I believe that a kind of WE could be formulated for use in K-8 Islamic schools, I am going to focus here on developing a curriculum proposal for WE in the traditional high school years: grades 9-12. I will present three alternative proposals concerning the form that WE could take. The first, and the most preferable in my view,

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extends across all four years. I will have the most to say about this suggestion. The second form of WE would take place only in grade 12 as a one-year curriculum. The third is a form of WE that would be integrated into already existing portions of the curriculum. I will assume that an academic year consists of 36 weeks of instruction divided into two 18-week semesters or four 9-week periods. While I am imagining that these proposals would be implemented in Islamic schools, I should note that these proposals do not rely on an Islamic school setting. In fact, these proposals could be used in any high school that wanted to promote exposure to a variety of worldviews, whether on the grounds of coming to understand other people or on the grounds of contributing to the facilitation of autonomy.

Four-Year Worldview Education

Four years of WE would extend across eight 18-week semesters or sixteen 9-week periods. I believe that this form of WE is most preferable because it allows for the most in-depth coverage of the widest variety of worldviews. However, I recognize that this would essentially involve adding a new subject to the high school curriculum, which is something that many schools would find difficult to do in their already full schedules. There are also other concerns connected to introducing WE as a standalone subject in high schools, which I will address at the conclusion of this section.

The four years of WE would cover the following topics, chosen based on worldviews that significant numbers of people hold:

- Judaism
- Christianity

- Islam

- Hinduism

- Buddhism and Jainism

- East Asian Traditions: Confucianism and Daoism

- Indigenous religious traditions and new religious movements, including Shinto, Mormonism, and Sikhism

- Secularism (i.e., worldviews that do not rely on sources beyond humanity)

It might seem strange that I have included Islam in this list, given that it is likely that Islam would receive sufficient coverage in the religious education curriculum of Islamic schools. However, this portion of the WE curriculum could focus on specific branches of Islam that the religious education curriculum does not cover. For instance, in a predominantly Sunni community, it is possible that Shi'a Islam would not receive much attention within religious education; it could be covered in WE instead.[1] In addition, Islam would have to be a part of WE in non-Islamic schools as well.

I have proposed eight units, one per semester or two nine-week periods. The order of the units could be altered, though Judaism, Christianity, and Islam should form a sequence, as should Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, as these traditions build off of one another. Christianity arises out of Judaism, and Islam makes reference to both. Buddhism and Jainism both arise as responses to Hinduism. I would also suggest that secular worldviews remain at the end of the curriculum, in part because they can be understood as a response to religious worldviews and in part because they require a study

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[1] This basic point could apply to other religious schools as well. For instance, Catholic schools would obviously include sufficient coverage of Catholicism, but might not include much discussion of other forms of Christianity, such as Protestantism or Orthodoxy. These branches of Christianity could be covered in WE.

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of philosophy that would be best undertaken by students at the end of their high school years.

I have chosen these eight units because they cover the world. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, while all initially appearing in West Asia, have a significant presence across the globe – Judaism through immigration and Christianity and Islam primarily through missionary efforts. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism appeared in South Asia, but have also spread: Buddhism underwent significant development in East Asia, while each of these traditions has achieved a global presence as adherents have immigrated to a variety of countries. Confucianism and Daoism represent key sources of Chinese thought. The indigenous tradition unit would cover worldviews that have largely remained localized in the Americas (Native American traditions), Africa (African tribal traditions), and Japan (Shinto), while also including worldviews that emerged as indigenous traditions but have spread through missionary work and immigration (Mormonism and Sikhism). Secular worldviews of course have a global presence, though they are most prevalent in Western countries, especially those of Europe, and modern China, where communism (and its official position of atheism) is dominant. These eight units therefore allow WE to cover many parts of the world while including the worldviews that continue to dominate human activity. Most of the world's over six billion people accept a form of one of these worldviews.

Each unit would cover roughly eighteen weeks, and would be set up as an introduction to the worldview under consideration, similar to the one-semester introductions that are common in many colleges and universities: Intro to Judaism, Intro to Christianity, Intro to Buddhism, and so forth. This is an advantage for this proposal,

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since there are already resources available for teaching one-semester courses on most of these topics, though they would have to be adapted for use by high school students. Typically, these introductory courses are set up chronologically: they begin with the emergence of the tradition, progress through key phases in its development, and conclude with a look at the role the tradition plays in the contemporary world. I am generalizing here, of course – there are other ways to run introductory courses on worldviews – but I believe that the chronological approach would work best, as it tends to present the clearest picture of the foundational components of a worldview (which can be discussed as part of a tradition's emergence) and how those components have been understood in different ways as a tradition has developed branches and varying schools of thought.

Given eighteen weeks, then, the general pattern of a worldview unit would be as follows:

- Emergence of the tradition, including foundational beliefs and practices.
- Development of the tradition, including the emergence of diverse branches or schools of thought.
- Contemporary expressions of the tradition, focusing on topical case studies.

Each of these topics would receive roughly equal coverage: six weeks each in an eighteen-week semester. As an example of how this pattern would play out with a particular tradition, I will go into more detail about the Christianity unit.

The first six weeks of the Christianity unit would focus on the emergence of the tradition by studying the writings that make up the New Testament. The first week would present the historical and social context of the emergence of Christianity by discussing the state of Judaism in Palestine when Jesus lived. Weeks two and three would look at the

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four canonical gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – emphasizing how each presents a different picture of the figure of Jesus and how his message should be understood. The fourth and fifth weeks would draw attention to the letters of Paul in order to discuss how Christianity initially took root in a number of communities established by the apostles. The sixth week would look at the other books of the New Testament, the so-called catholic letters and the Book of Revelation, in order to describe further issues faced by the early Christian communities and the role of apocalypticism in Christian thought. Throughout these six weeks, the New Testament itself would be the primary source material, supplemented by other readings that place the New Testament in context.

The second six weeks would present the development of the Christian tradition through Augustine, Aquinas, and the emergence of distinct branches of Christianity through Orthodoxy and Protestantism. Week seven would look at Augustine, and week eight would turn to Aquinas. These weeks would also serve as an introduction to Catholic Christianity. Week nine would examine Orthodoxy, and weeks ten through twelve would explore Protestantism.

The remaining six weeks of the unit on Christianity would be taken up with topical case studies that would examine the role of Christianity in the contemporary world. Each week would focus on a different topic. Topics for these weeks could include the role of women in Christianity; the place of Christianity in American politics; Christianity's position on other religions; the rise of evangelical Christianity; the variety of Christianity in America; and global Christianity, or the different forms that Christianity has taken as it has spread throughout the world.

While much of the Christianity unit would work with the study of texts, there would also ideally be time set aside for visits from local Christian ministers representing a variety of forms of Christianity and field trips to local churches that would emphasize not only the ways that services occur but also the reasons that different Christian churches are laid out in different ways. The hope is that the visits from ministers and the field trips would help students to understand how contemporary Christians actually practice their religion. Christianity is not just a set of texts, beliefs, and practices, but a worldview that people actually believe, which drives their lives.

The units that cover multiple traditions, including the unit on secularism, would have to follow a slightly different format. For multiple traditions, each would receive a compressed version of the emergence/development/contemporary expressions pattern. For instance, with indigenous religious traditions and new religious movements, three weeks would be spent on traditions indigenous to the Americas, three weeks on traditions indigenous to Africa, two weeks on traditions indigenous to Australia, two weeks on Shinto, two weeks on Mormonism, two weeks on Sikhism, and four weeks on new religious movements.

Covering secular worldviews in a semester would require some selectivity. The focus of this unit would be on worldviews that have emerged primarily from the field of philosophy. Ryan Haczynski, a Florida public school teacher, has had some success teaching philosophy to high school students. He uses a textbook by Douglas J. Soccio entitled *Archetypes of Wisdom*.[2] The book offers an overview of major philosophical

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[2] The latest edition of this book is Douglas J. Soccio, *Archetypes of Wisdom: An Introduction to Philosophy*, 7th ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 2009). Haczynski has indicated to me via email that he uses the 5th edition, from 2003.

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ideas. It complements this overview with brief selections from key works. Haczynski uses brief lectures that summarizing the main ideas presented in the text as a launching point for class discussions about the concepts. While it would be ideal to engage students directly with the primary philosophical sources themselves, these texts might prove inaccessible to some (or many) high school students. The use of the textbook and lectures has allowed Haczynski to lead students to an understanding of the concepts while avoiding the difficulties that philosophical writing sometimes presents. There are, of course, other models for teaching philosophy to pre-college students, and the development of this portion of the WE curriculum could draw from this work.

Ultimately, elaborating on each of the units in the four-year WE curriculum would require an extensive amount of work. Further, I noted previously that there are concerns that would have to be addressed for a four-year program of WE to function effectively in high schools. Perhaps the most important of these concerns relates to who would teach WE. In high schools that currently offer electives in world religions, instructors who are certified in social studies or English typically teach these courses. However, if WE is to become its own subject in the high school curriculum, there will be a need for teachers who are certified specifically in this area. In countries where religious education (RE) is an established subject, like the UK, this is already done. Teachers can become certified in RE just as teachers can become certified in math or science. In countries like this, there would already be a pool of instructors qualified to teach WE, given its heavy emphasis on religion. Yet in the US, no such certification exists.

The best way to address this would be to introduce a WE certification into teacher certification programs. Students in religious studies would be ideal candidates for this

certification, and a certification track could be developed by introducing courses into teacher education curricula dealing with pedagogical practices for teaching about religion. Another possibility would be to draw WE teachers from those certified in social studies or English who have academic backgrounds in religious studies. Either way, this concern would have to be dealt with if WE were to become widespread as a high school subject, since teachers would have to be sufficiently well versed in the religious traditions in order to teach semester-long units about them.

Another concern relates to resources that could be used to teach WE. As I noted previously, there are college-level resources for teaching introductory courses on the religious traditions, but these resources might have to be adapted for use in high schools. Additionally, while there are sample syllabi and assignments available through sources such as the journal *Teaching Theology & Religion* and the American Academy of Religion, this material is based on a college schedule, where course meet two or three days a week, and they would not translate directly to a high school where a WE class met every day. The point is that lesson plans for WE would have to be developed in order to facilitate its introduction into the high school curriculum. This is important not only so that each individual teacher does not have to invent the curriculum from scratch, but also so that best practices could be developed for WE. Much work has gone into producing effective methods for teaching in the traditional subjects, while less work has gone into producing such methods for the units included in WE.

I think that a key element of any movement to include WE in the high school curriculum would be to involve those who teach about religion and philosophy at the college level. Introductory religion and philosophy courses are staples at most community

colleges, colleges, and universities, and the instructors and professors who teach these courses have given thought to how such courses should be taught. Ideally, teacher training in WE would be achieved by having prospective WE teachers work with these college-level instructors, primarily in two ways. First, WE teachers would be religious studies majors with at least some coursework in philosophy. Through their coursework, they would be able to see what it looks like to teach about religion and philosophy. Second, WE teachers would take courses as part of their certification in which they could reflect upon the approaches to teaching religion and philosophy that they had experienced in their coursework. These "Worldview Education Pedagogy" courses would be taught, at first, by experienced college-level instructors, though eventually they would be taught by experienced WE teachers.

There is in fact a model for this kind of teacher preparation at Harvard University. For almost 40 years, the Harvard Divinity School ran a Program in Religious Studies and Education, which offered a Master's degree through the Divinity School with a special focus on teaching about religion. In 2011, this program was succeeded by a Certificate in Religious Studies and Education, which is essentially a graduate minor consisting of 5 courses, two of which are required and deal specifically with religion and education and three of which must be electives that deal with religious traditions. In addition, the Harvard Divinity School initiated the Religious Literacy Project, which aims to bring together resources to aid in teaching about religion in K-12 schools. Diane L. Moore heads the Religious Literacy Project and has been a driving force behind the Religious Studies and Education programs at Harvard; she also chairs the American Academy of Religion's Task Force on Religion in the Schools, which has produced a 36-page

document entitled "Guidelines for Teaching About Religion in K-12 Public Schools in the United States" after a 3-year effort that involved regular feedback from outside of the task force gathered at the AAR's Annual Meetings.[3]

The point of bringing this up is to show that there is a nascent pool of resources for teaching about religion in high schools that could be brought to bear to support the inclusion of WE as a subject in the high school curriculum. In fact, in addition to Moore's work through the Harvard Divinity School and the AAR, the Department of Religious Studies at California State University, Chico, has operated an online Religion and Public Education Resource Center since 1995.[4] And this is say nothing of the resources available by looking to the UK and Western Europe, where scholars have published numerous books and establish journals such as *The British Journal of Religious Education* as part of developing the subject of Religious Education that many of those countries have in place. Establishing WE in Islamic schools, or in American schools generally, would not have to involve reinventing the wheel.

One-Year Worldview Education

While I believe that a four-year form of WE would be most effective in informing students about the widest variety of worldviews, a one-year form of WE in grade 12 is a

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[3] For more on Diane Moore, see her Harvard Divinity School faculty page at http://www.hds.harvard.edu/people/faculty/diane-l-moore. For more on the Certificate program, see its Harvard University Extension School catalog description at http://www.extension.harvard.edu/degrees-certificates/professional-certificates/religious-studies-education-certificate. For more on the Religious Literacy Project, see the Harvard Divinity School's page about it at http://www.hds.harvard.edu/faculty-research/programs-and-centers/religious-literacy-project. The "Guidelines" document is available from the website of the American Academy of Religion at http://aarweb.org/Publications/Online_Publications/Curriculum_Guidelines/AARK-12CurriculumGuidelines.pdf.

[4] See the homepage of the Religion and Public Education Resource Center at http://www.csuchico.edu/rperc/index.shtml.

more realistic option for many schools because it would be easier to fit it into the existing curriculum. This form of WE would also be easier to implement in that it would not require as much specialized training on the part of the teacher. In addition, there are more resources available for teachers to use for a one-year WE, since materials that are used for introductory world religions courses in colleges and universities could be adapted readily for use in grade 12.

Given one year for WE, I would suggest covering the same eight units as in the four-year WE, though in a much compressed schedule. Rather than giving one semester over to each unit, each unit would be covered in two weeks (ten days). The general pattern of each unit would also remain the same as what I described for the four-year WE, though I would suggest three days for the emergence of the tradition, three days for the development of the tradition, and four days for contemporary expression of the tradition focused on topical case studies. There would be less room in this schedule for visits from religious leaders and/or field trips, but hopefully at least one of each could still be worked into the unit. I would suggest using an introductory college-level world religions textbook as the primary source for the course, especially since the course would be given in grade 12.

<center>Integrated Worldview Education</center>

The appeal of the integrated model of WE is that it does not require extra space in the high school curriculum. However, it would likely require modifications to the English and social studies portions. For instance, literature courses could include the study of world scriptures, like the Bible, the Qur'an, the *Bhagavad Gita*, and the *Analects*. History

courses could increasingly explore the role that worldviews have played in world history, sometimes leading groups of people into conflict and sometimes motivating people to pursue social justice. However, these kinds of modifications, just like my other proposal for WE, would require that educators be trained in order to teach them effectively. It would be difficult to teach the *Bhagavad Gita*, for instance, without some understanding of the role it played in the development of Hinduism; and it would be difficult to explain the work of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X toward civil rights without some understanding of the interpretations of Christianity and Islam that drove them.

Final Words

In order for Worldview Education to become a viable way of allowing for autonomy-facilitating education in Islamic schools, much more work would have to be done that I have done here. In this chapter, I have only engaged in the initial steps of curriculum design. As I have noted, though, there are ample resources available for determining how WE could work.

It should also be clear that much of my description of WE would not be exclusive to Islamic schools. In fact, I suggest that WE could serve as a way of providing an autonomy-facilitating education in any school where controversy might be raised by engaging in explicit critique of religious traditions. For instance, while critique would be technically allowed in American public schools, it is hard to imagine this being widely accepted – it would likely be seen as an attack on religion by many people, even if critique of secular worldviews was also included. The great strength of WE, in my view, is that it can facilitate autonomy without having to engage in such critique. At the same

time, students would still be capable of critically reflecting about worldviews if they combined the information garnered through WE with the critical thinking skills hopefully developed in other parts of the curriculum. It is true that students would have to take this step on their own, but they would have the resources to be able to do so, especially with the wide range of information they could explore on the Internet. Through WE, they would learn how to take the diversity of worldviews seriously – how to understand that a plurality of worldviews are central to how people live differently in the world – and this would enable them to think about worldviews seriously across the course of their lives. This would not mean that students would necessarily abandon the worldviews of their parents, schools, or communities, but it would give them the chance of doing so if they found certain aspects of these worldviews troubling.

In addition to the fact that WE can contribute to an autonomy-facilitating education in a way that some religious schools could accept, there are other benefits to WE. The most important is that it would serve as a form of multicultural education by engaging students with the worldviews that underlie different cultures. This, I think, is a justification for the inclusion of WE in schools just as crucial as the justification related to autonomy. Also, for both of these reasons, WE would be beneficial to students at all schools – not just those in Islamic schools. For instance, I suspect that American public schools do not sufficiently facilitate autonomy in the way that Brighouse would want, in part because they do not sufficiently expose students in a serious way to different ways of life, especially those that are most prominent outside of America. Other ways of life might come up in history or literature courses, but this is usually in the context of describing world events or discussing a specific work, not in the context of illuminating

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the basic beliefs that motivate people as they live their lives. A curriculum like WE could do much to enable students to become global citizens by providing them with information that would help them to understand people outside of their communities while also giving them a key resource to help them to think reflectively about how they will live in the world. However, this is a line of argument for a different time. In the end, I believe that WE provides a way to uphold personal autonomy – a core tenet of liberalism – while not undermining the importance of commitment to a worldview in many people's lives.

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