

**THE LOCALIZED
HISTORY PROJECT**

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EDUCATOR GUIDE

**Post-9/11 Surveillance of South
Asian and Muslim Communities in
New York City**

A NOTE FROM THE YOUTH RESEARCHER:

WHY TEACH THIS HISTORY

Hello, my name is East!

I am the researcher of this project and a high school student at Brooklyn Tech. This project highlights two main topics: the surveillance by the FBI, NYPD, and INS (now ICE) of South Asian and Muslim communities in New York City, and the reactions by these communities that demonstrate their resilience and perseverance. I decided that this was a topic that I wanted to research in my sophomore year history class, where we had a 3-day discussion about 9/11 and its legacy. For each day of discussion, we touched upon various aspects of the attacks, but their effect on South Asian communities was absent from the conversation. I made this exhibit so students like me will not feel sidelined in their classrooms, but instead recognized for both the struggles and achievements that their communities have faced. This was an important project for me as well, as I wanted to become more in touch with my Pakistani identity. While my curiosity was rooted in the absence of history, I hope this shifts for future students. Discovering diverse histories can work similarly to incentivise students to engage in their own family stories and heritage.

From extensive visits to university archives to hours of listening closely to oral history interviews, I have learned an incredible amount about this topic that is deeply personal to me. At first, it was difficult; it was counterintuitive for entire communities being surveyed to speak openly about it. I hit many barriers. However, slowly uncovering these documents and stories has increased my understanding of their relevance within our city and our country's history. The strong community efforts of South Asian communities were inspiring, but on the contrary, the lack of solidarity between these communities and the rest of New York was disconcerting. I realized this lack of intercultural solidarity and larger movements was the root of its longevity. Dominant narratives about American solidarity after 9/11 did not give the complete picture, and I wanted to change that.

A NOTE FROM THE YOUTH RESEARCHER:

WHY TEACH THIS HISTORY

Embedding this history into your classrooms will enable students to understand the full scope of their city's history while also challenging dominant narratives about Asian-Americans throughout history. From this exhibit, students can grasp the importance of solidarity and resistance, and can be inspired to become involved in both their own communities and neighboring ones. They will learn what 9/11 was, the government response directly after 9/11, such as the USA PATRIOT Act, and the effects it had in the early 21st century, going into the present day. The intersectionality between systemic racism and local law enforcement programs is highlighted, going into first-hand accounts of surveillance in New York City. These are followed by stories and sources of community-wide movements, showing the resilience of South Asian communities and the importance of political activism. I hope that students can learn about the diverse narratives and perspectives involved in 9/11's history to develop a personal and critical lens on the topic. Lastly, they can develop skills to make connections between this project and the systems in our current society.

Thank you for engaging with my work!

East Kaufhold is a junior at Brooklyn Technical High School, majoring in Law and Society. He is avidly interested in the stories of community organizing and cross-racial political movements. His research specifically focuses on South Asian resilience and community building post-9/11, and he hopes to uplift the voices of those who could not express themselves authentically during an era of mass surveillance and racial profiling. As a youth researcher and a member of the leadership team at the Localized History Project, he hopes to continue to uplift meaningful South Asian stories across New York City. In his free time, he enjoys reading historical fiction novels, rock climbing, and going to the cinema with his friends.

PEDAGOGICAL REVOLUTIONS

HOW TO TEACH THIS HISTORY



Compare and Contrast:

Evaluate the arguments and experiences of both Bobby Khan and Mohammed Razvi. What inclined them to perceive law enforcement differently? Why did they make these different approaches, and to what extent did they work? Encourage students to evaluate which approach they believe is more effective, either finding ways to integrate with the system or resisting it as a whole.



Primary Source Analysis:

Have students read primary sources such as the “Loose Change 9/11” poem from the NYU Muslim student publication, or the SAMAR magazine testimonies. Evaluate how these publications have given South Asian and Muslim students and adults a platform to voice their opinions. Were they helpful/not helpful? What sort of publications do you relate to? If you don’t, would you create one? What would be in it?



Freedom Thinkers Roundtable:

Muslim and South Asian New Yorkers had to rely on civil rights efforts within their own communities to create change. What if they could connect with other activist groups or figures throughout history? What would they talk about? How do their struggles and efforts relate or differ? Use primary sources to ground these discussions.



Conduct an Oral History Interview:

Much of this exhibit revolves around the experiences of New Yorkers discussed in oral history interviews. This gives intimate, first-hand accounts that offer unique insights into a point in history. Prepare a range of open-ended questions for students, giving them class time to conduct mini oral histories with their classmates. Then, encourage them to use these questions to speak to a family member, neighborhood friend, or another prominent figure in their community! Reflect as a class on their findings.

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**RESOURCES FOR
THE CLASSROOM**

primary sources:



NYPD surveillance map of ethnic neighborhoods, c. 1919.

Map created by the New York Police Department, access provided by the New York State Archives.



Post-9/11 disaster assistance clinic at LaGuardia Airport, c. 2002.

Image held in the New York Taxi Workers Alliance (NYTWA) Records at Tamiment Library & Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University. Photo access provided by the South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA).

“(2) shall specify that the records concerned are sought for an authorized investigation conducted in accordance with subsection (a)(2) to obtain foreign intelligence information not concerning a United States person or to protect against international terrorism or clandestine intelligence activities.

“(c)(1) Upon an application made pursuant to this section, the judge shall enter an ex parte order as requested, or as modified, approving the release of records if the judge finds that the application meets the requirements of this section.

“(2) An order under this subsection shall not disclose that it is issued for purposes of an investigation described in subsection (a).

“(d) No person shall disclose to any other person (other than those persons necessary to produce the tangible things under this section) that the Federal Bureau of Investigation has sought or obtained tangible things under this section.

“(e) A person who, in good faith, produces tangible things under an order pursuant to this section shall not be liable to any other person for such production. Such production shall not be deemed to constitute a waiver of any privilege in any other proceeding or context.

50 USC 1862.

“SEC. 502. CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT.

“(a) On a semiannual basis, the Attorney General shall fully inform the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate concerning all requests for the production of tangible things under section 402.

“(b) On a semiannual basis, the Attorney General shall provide to the Committees on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report setting forth with respect to the preceding 6-month period—

“(1) the total number of applications made for orders approving requests for the production of tangible things under section 402; and

“(2) the total number of such orders either granted, modified, or denied.”.

**Excerpt from Section 215 of the PATRIOT Act,
passed on October 26, 2001.**

Public Law 107-56, enacted into law by the United States Congress on October 26, 2001. Access made available by congress.gov.



ANCESTRIES OF INTEREST



Egypt	Turkey	Lebanon	Morocco
Yemen	Bangladesh	Palestine	Iraq
Iran	Jordan	Afghanistan	Syria
Pakistan	Albania	Algeria	Tunisia
Somalia	Libya	Bahrain	India
Chechnya	Guyana	Indonesia	Uzbekistan
Sudan	Yugoslavia	Saudi Arabia	U. A.E.
American Black Muslim			

COURTESY OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

25 ethnic/ancestral groups listed as "suspect" on the NYPD's Special Registration Initiative.

Document created by the New York Police Department, initially published by the Associated Press, and made available by the NYCLU (New York Civil Liberties Union).



SPECIAL CALL-IN REGISTRATION PROCEDURES FOR CERTAIN NONIMMIGRANTS

(Call-In Group 3, Federal Register Notice – December 18, 2002)

THIS NOTICE IS FOR YOU

- If you are a national or citizen of **Pakistan or Saudi Arabia** and were inspected by the Immigration and Naturalization Service and last admitted to the United States as a nonimmigrant on or before September 30, 2002; and
- If you are a male, born on or before January 13, 1987, and
- If you did not have an application for asylum pending on December 18, 2002, or if you are not otherwise exempt as described in the attached questions and answers; and
- If you will be in the United States at least until February 21, 2003.

Call-in procedures for “certain non-immigrants” for the Department of Justice’s Special Registration Program, c. 2002.

Document created by the United States Department of Justice
and made available by the Alliance of South Asians Taking
Action.

introduction

Speaker 1

America's "War on Terror" is nothing but a thinly cloaked discriminatory assault on immigrants. It is a war against civil liberties. It is a war against the people of Palestine and Afghanistan. It is a war against people of color. This war did not begin on September 11. As a continual act of violence against those abroad as well as in the US, it has been in existence for some time. The history of the US has been entrenched in racism and injustice: from the expropriation of Native American land to slavery; from the Japanese internment camps to the present-day persecution of Muslim, South Asian, and Arab immigrants to closed detention hearings. The Department of Justice, the FBI, and INS have been using secrecy and media lies as weapons. Through the following presentation, we bring stories from

Passaic County Jail for over seven months for overstaying his visa. He was arrested at a mosque in Brooklyn that INS officers targeted shortly after September 11. He was held in detention without probable cause for over two weeks. He has no connection to the September 11 hijackings. He told us the story of how he was arrested:

"They were waiting for us outside the mosque when we came out in the morning. They checked our identifications, searched us and then took us downstairs to search our belongings. After that, we went into the mosque. We performed the wazoo ablutions and prayed. Then we were shackled and taken away."

The INS moved this individual to the Special Housing Unit at the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Manhattan without informing his lawyers. At MCC he was held in 23-hour



This fictionalized testimonial is based on the anti-detention solidarity work of members of South Asians Against Police Brutality and Racism, a New York-based organization that has been organizing against racism and state-sponsored violence since 1997, specifically linking South Asian American communities to other communities of color.

detainees as have been told directly to us. In this way, we hope to break the prevailing silence surrounding the persecution of immigrant communities within the history of this country.

testimony i

Speaker 2

Article 1 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment defines torture as:

any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether, physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for the purposes of obtaining information, a confession or punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed.

Speaker 3

A 58 year-old Pakistani man has been held by the INS at

lights-on solitary confinement and shackled hand and foot. The US Attorney's Office and the INS interrogated him without counsel by his side. He has testified that INS officers informed him that he could receive a green card if he fired his lawyers.

testimony ii

Speaker 1

Article 2 of the Convention Against Torture states that:

no exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification of torture.

Speaker 4

"Prisoners have been attacked and beaten by guards and other prisoners. I was hit in the face by another prisoner. Another prisoner was badly beaten by the guards. They

Excerpt from the Summer/Fall 2002 Issue of SAMAR: South Asian Magazine for Action and Reflection.

Image permissions provided by SAADA (South Asian American Digital Archive).

FILM REVIEW: LOOSE CHANGE 911

By: Zain Shah

I was on a city bus, stuck in traffic crossing the Key Bridge heading to work in Georgetown, Washington, D.C. I noticed that the bus driver was a little distraught over something he heard from his dispatcher. I couldn't hear what was said, but by the look on the driver's face I knew it was something big. Just then I received a call from my father who told me a plane hit one of the World Trade Center Towers, I thought maybe a small craft but he said it was a jet liner. I was looking out of the window when I noticed her - she was a jogger listening to headphones, she stopped suddenly, placed her hands on her head phones, listened carefully, looked up in horror and collapsed. I turned my head to see what made her fall, a saw what looked like a tornado of smoke billowing about a mile away. My Father told me a bomb exploded at the Pentagon. I told him that I could see the smoke. He wanted me to come home. I got off the bus and stared at the fighter jets and helicopters flying over the Pentagon. A group of teenagers were looking at the destruction. I told them that a bomb exploded at the Pentagon, they laughed and remarked, "that is so cool". When I got to work, everyone was watching TV and that is when I saw the simultaneous broadcast of the attacks in New York and Washington, D.C. I could not believe my eyes, I hoped it was not a radical group claiming to be Muslims. All the newscasters were already assuming they were Muslims. I started to feel unsafe. My boss told everyone to go home. I was afraid of taking mass transit to go home, but I had been raised to be cautious and not to fear anything but God. I was on the subway when I witnessed it. Everyone - Blacks, Whites, Hispanics - they were all looking at me with piercing hate in their eyes, not even afraid to look away when I caught them glaring. I felt like what an African American must of felt like during the Civil Rights Movement. I started to get very angry, and prepared to say something, but my common sense told me that if I say anything to these sensitive angry people then I will get attacked. They made me feel like I wasn't a part of this world, this America. I felt betrayed. I remember reading somewhere that religious prejudice is more powerful than prejudice against color, nationality, or gender. Since I was a dark-skinned Pakistani Muslim, and the people responsible for the 911 attacks claimed to be Muslims and looked like me, I was the enemy.

On September 11th, we all looked for answers, someone to blame. We had open ears and open minds. We were ready to believe anything and everything that day. I have heard the mass media, it was short, vague and left me unfulfilled. I still had alot of questions. The Documentary, "Loose Change 911" addressed alot of the questions that the Government didn't. Open your mind and heart to all possibilities and let this documentary address some of your questions and may God guide our hearts the truth. Visit www.loosechange911.com to view the free documentary on-line or order a DVD.

**Poem written by Zain Shah, an NYU undergraduate student,
for AFTAB, the Muslim Student Publication, c. 2005.**

Access provided by the Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner
Labor Archives at New York University.

USE THIS SPACE FOR ANY INCIDENT REPORTED:

Somebody sprayed his parked cab on both sides of
brake his side mirror.

130. May we follow-up with you at a later time for more details on the incidents? Yes No
(Interviewer please note name and contact info on separate paper and file in separate envelope)

Enforcement:

Now on to questions about enforcement and policing. From 9/11/01 to 3/11/02:

131. How many times were you randomly been checked by TLC, (NYPD, Port Authority), etc.? Meaning, not because of a moving violation: twice

132. During any of the stops, did the officer/inspector ask you any questions regarding immigration? Yes No

133. During any of the stops, did the officer/inspector search the trunk of your cab? Yes No

134. During any of the stops, did the officer/inspector make any comments to you that you consider abusive? Yes No

135. On average, how much time did the inspections take? 15 minutes

Once at BGA he was stopped by P.A.P. -> was threatened by the cop that he will send him back to his country no matter what his TMS status is.

2nd time he was pulled over in Bklyn, frisked -> his cab was thoroughly searched & then P.O. offered him that he will let him go only if he gives him some info on somebody in the community. He let him go because of his department call.

136. Since 9/11, have you had to attend any court for a hearing on a summons? Yes No

137. Which court: TLC/DMV/EPA/Criminal Court/Civil Court/Small Claims/Other: _____

138. How did the hearing/case affect you (circle all that apply):

- Lost time from shift
- Lost time from sleep
- Lost time preparing for case
- Lawyer's fees
- Paid fine
- Other: license revoked

General Opinion:

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about your opinion on some issues in the taxi industry:

139. Are you considering leaving the taxi business and working elsewhere?

Considering Not Considering Considering but no Options

140. If Yes, what are the reasons why you are considering leaving the taxi industry (circle all that apply):

- Fear of Crime
- Economic reasons - cannot make enough money
- Have to work longer hours
- Want to go back to school
- Thinking of moving back to home country
- Thinking of moving out of NYC or NYS
- Trouble with INS
- Other: _____

Taxi Worker Alliance Survey filled out by a Pakistani Muslim driver, who had been driving for 6 years, c. 2002.

Created by the New York Taxi Workers Alliance, access provided by the Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University.

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Archival materials consulted are courtesy of the Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University and SAADA (South Asian American Digital Archive).