

The Fear of Islam: An Introduction to Islamophobia in the West. By Todd H. Green. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015. xiv + 362 pages. \$24.00 (paper).
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The publication of Todd Green's excellent text could not be more opportune than in the midst of the 2016 US presidential election cycle as new waves of Islamophobia have come to dominate the discourse. This broad, introductory book aimed at nonspecialists is indeed both timely and necessary. While a variety of texts have analyzed particular manifestations of Islamophobia, such as media or film portrayal, or the powerful Islamophobia industry, no one has brought the historical background of Islamophobia's development in the West, its contemporary transformation, and consequences together in such a useful analysis.

Careful definition of Islamophobia is essential to ensure the efficacy and accuracy of the term. Green relies on the British Runnymede Report of 1997, while carefully replying to important criticism of the report and use of the term. He makes the eight closed views it has defined as characteristic of Islamophobia pertinent through use of contemporary examples. Challenging expressions of Islamophobia need not stifle legitimate criticism of Muslim practice or disagreement with beliefs of Islam. Green offers helpful criteria for making this vital distinction between legitimate critical discourse and expressions of Islamophobia.

Two chapters on the historical foundations of Islamophobia, the construction of the "Other" in the West, and the modern development toward Orientalism, colonialism, and clash of civilization theories offer outstanding studies that do not flinch from the difficult debates. These chapters could be well utilized to supplement discussions in a variety of courses. Missing from coverage of the medieval Christian imagination, though, was any mention of Dante's *Inferno* and the special punishments suffered there by Muhammad and Ali, reinforcing the understanding of Islam as a dangerous, God-punished division within Christian hegemony. It will come as no surprise, though, given Green's current position at Luther College, that the namesake Reformation giant receives a fair and substantive treatment.

Green's masterful survey of the rise of political Islamophobia to legitimize the US war on terror in its various forms is perhaps the best gift of the book. Students too young to remember life before 9/11 will understand the world with new clarity; a critical step toward adulthood is possible when digesting analysis such as this. Highly valuable also is the chapter on the "threat" of Islam in modern Europe in which Green reviews five key events of recent decades that have fueled fear of Islam and reverberated throughout the Continent. Though the longest and a very detailed chapter, it clearly

illuminates the commonalities and differences between the US experience and that of Europe in regard to Muslims and Islam. Undergraduates, often having little knowledge of the European story over the last half century, will benefit from Green's carefully nuanced and forthright analysis of influential controversies, such as the Salman Rushdie affair and the Danish cartoon disputes.

The coverage of Muslims in the media and film is a mixed chapter. Analysis of media coverage, especially of Muslim women, is clear and well documented. More difficult is film analysis through the lens of Islamophobia where inevitably viewers prioritize their own opinions with little deference to analysis. Green's points are important here, but will not be as easily heard. The final chapter on combating Islamophobia summarizes a series of interviews with prominent individuals leading the effort in the United States and Europe. The chapter offers an interesting mix of approaches to basic questions and is a good resource for class discussion on how to respond to Islamophobia. The welcome use of footnotes enhances the impact and usefulness of the text for a variety of audiences; the image gallery, however, seems oddly superfluous.

This well-documented study is a highly recommended addition for libraries both academic and public because of its accessibility and its timely, significant information. A variety of courses will benefit from use of the entire text or selected chapters—from an introduction to Islam or more specialized studies, to surveys of religion in America and Western civilization. The chapters on the rise of political Islamophobia and the professional Islamophobia industry alone are worth the price of the text for anyone, anywhere, in our current political climate.

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Shared Stories, Rival Tellings: Early Encounters of Jews, Christians, and Muslims. By Robert C. Gregg. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. xviii + 721 pages. \$39.95.

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In this book, Robert C. Gregg takes on the impressive task of analyzing five similar narratives (Cain and Abel/Qabil and Habil; Sarah and Hagar; Joseph/Yusuf; Jonah/Yunus; and Mary/Miriam/Maryam) found in the Sacred Scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The book is divided into five sections, each dealing with one of the above-mentioned narratives. Each section begins with a "preview" of the following three chapters (one