

‘Discover Islam’ Video an Attempt to Proselytize Public Schoolchildren, New Jersey Moms Say (See Video)

A couple of months ago, two mothers from Chatham, New Jersey – Libby Hilsenrath and Nancy Gayer – made waves when they protested several of the lessons being taught in their local middle school. The lessons, the [mothers claimed](#), revolved around Islam and attempted to “proselytize” students, particularly through the following cartoon clip:

As Hilsenrath went on to explain, the inclusion of the video was particularly disturbing because it focuses solely on Islam, excluding other religions in the process:

“Hilsenrath also argued that the reason for teaching the ‘tenets’ of religions such as Islam that students don’t know about is flawed. She agreed that students may not be able to answer questions about the tenets of Islam, but pointed out that the same questions about the tenets of Judaism and Christianity would not be known by the students, either, but those religions are not taught.”

In the months following their objections, Hilsenrath and Gayer have been excoriated by others for raising such issues. So much so, that The Thomas More Law Center [recently stepped](#) in to represent them in the controversy.

But why is this such a problem? Should these mothers really be concerned that their children are allegedly being proselytized by Islam in school?

Former Muslim and Hoover Institution scholar Ayaan Hirsi Ali

would likely say yes.

In a [recent paper](#), Hirsi Ali explains that presentations like the aforementioned are an outgrowth of *Dawa*, the Islamist war of ideas. According to Hirsi Ali, Islamists use *Dawa* “to advance the goal of imposing Islamic law (sharia) on society.”

But why does this matter? Isn't sharia a good, morally upright legal system? Would it really make a difference if Islamic law and constitutional practices were to replace the U.S. legal system?

Hirsi Ali answers such a question by explaining the fundamental difference between the two legal systems:

“The most fundamental distinction between the constitution of political Islam and the constitution of liberty is in their differing approaches to the human individual and human life. For [Americans], the individual life is an end in itself. The US Constitution grants individual human beings natural, inalienable, God-given rights. The job of the US government is to protect those inherent rights.

This could not be more different from a constitution that strips away all those rights so that sharia can be spread and implemented. For agents of political Islam, the individual life is merely an instrument.”

Given this difference, do you think parents like Hilsenrath and Gayer have raised a reasonable objection to the instruction on Islam in their children's school?