

*Coercive Concern: Nationalism, Liberalism and the Schooling of Muslim Youth*, by Reva Jaffe-Walter. Stanford University Press, 2016. 216pp., Hb. \$ 85.00. ISBN-13: 9780804796217

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In *Coercive Concern* Jaffe-Walter presents an analysis of schooling of Muslim youth in Denmark from the perspective of anthropology of policy. The objective is to trace policies on immigration and education in the discourses, teachers and school milieus encountered by Muslim youth and further to examine how young Muslims internalize and respond to these policies. This approach provides a very comprehensive presentation of how young Muslim lives are lived in the shadows of national and liberal ideals of education and assimilation. The book has a broad audience and gives a voice to an otherwise silenced minority that should be interesting to policy makers, educators, and the public. As a bonus for this audience, Jaffe-Walter also presents explicit recommendations for changes in educational practices that would improve the inclusion and education of Muslim youth. For scholars of Islam and Muslim minorities in the West—most of which are very familiar with the discrimination and suspicion towards Muslims—the book offers yet another example of how nationalist exclusion is (blindly) practiced and experienced.

The analyses and conclusions presented in *Coercive Concern* are based primarily on fieldwork in a Danish school but also draw on policy studies and fieldworks in schools in other national contexts. On this basis, Jaffe-Walter presents developments in Danish policies on education, immigration and integration over the past thirty years. She identifies two themes underlying the current policies: Care and concern. These themes are connected to wider European/Western trends such as nationalism and coercive liberalism, which again are displayed as products of anxieties spurred by globalisation. Jaffe-Walter goes on to demonstrate how concern and care dominate public discourse and guide teachers' interaction with Muslim youth in school, for example through one teacher's encouragement of Muslim teenage girls to have boyfriends in order to help them integrate in Danish society. In Jaffe-Walter's in depth discussions with especially three young Muslim women, it is convincingly illustrated, that the nationalist exclusive and concerned approached of misunderstood care have grave consequences for Muslim youth. The young people themselves are initially not conscious of these consequences, but they evolve in spaces of

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shared reflection created by Jaffe-Walter. Using different tools to initiate reflection, Jaffe-Walter is able to present Muslim youth's experiences of exclusion and lack of academic expectations in school, and how this leads to low self-esteem, "divided selves", and expectations of no good future in Denmark.

Jaffe-Walter argues that using Denmark as a "best case" example of good schooling allows her to conclude or at least suggest that if Muslim youth are not being educated and integrated here, they are not doing good in other countries either. The Danish case might be best or good when it comes to provision of schooling for all children and self-perceived tolerance, but Danes generally oppose (high levels of) immigration and are highly suspicious toward religion compared to other European countries. As home of the Muhammad cartoons, Denmark does not seem to be the best place to educate or integrate Muslims. Further, it is not entirely clear how the case school relates to similar Danish schools. Are the teachers of Jaffe-Walter's case school typical in their interpretations of policies and in their approach to the Muslim youth? How do policies "travel" into the heads and practices of teachers and how do different teachers enact policies differently? Despite these ambiguities and some detail mistakes (e.g. the wrong designation of politician Pia Kjærsgaard as a man instead of as a woman), *Coercive Concern* offers a very well-written description of a dark side of schooling, connecting policy to practice and practice to Muslim youth through very clear and well-illustrated points.