

AFGHANISTAN AND AFGHAN AMERICANS:

Helping K-8 School Librarians and Educators Understand the History, Culture, and Literature

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AFGHANISTAN: ITS HISTORY

Even before the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Osama bin Laden, Mullah Mohammed Omar, and the Taliban had become the symbols of a repressive and troubled country. The U.S. war on terrorism has added to the plight of the Afghan people with intensive bombings and a manhunt for Taliban and al-Qaeda leaders.

Afghanistan has been ravaged by war, first by the Soviet Union and now by the United States. Although Afghanistan is predominantly Muslim, the country should not be stereotyped as having only religious fanatics. Millions of Afghans have fled the country during the past twenty years to escape the barbaric and dangerous conditions caused by both military action and religious extremism. The current government is trying to restore the country to more humane living conditions.

Afghanistan has been poor and exploited during most of the twentieth century. The British gained control of the country in 1880. They controlled the government but allowed Afghan *shahs* (kings or supreme rulers) to rule as puppet heads. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Amir Abdur Rahman Khan decided to change that status and fought against internal factions, uniting the country under his rule. From 1901 until 1919 his son Habibullah Khan strengthened the government. The British finally relinquished power when Abdur Rahman's grandson Shah Amanullah attacked the British. Amanullah changed his title to *padshah* (king) in 1921 and set up legislative councils. In 1929 a Tajik rebel, Habibullah Ghazi II, forced Amanullah to abdicate. Amanullah's cousin Mohammed Nadir Shah threw Ghazi out and ruled for three years. Zahir Shah, his son, then became king and remained in office for 40 years, though his uncles dominated his government until 1963.

In 1964 Zahir wrote a new constitution that provided for the equality of men and women and set up a parliament. The new government allowed for diverse political parties and experimented with constitutional monarchy with a *loya jirgah* (national assembly of notables). The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) was founded. Women voted in the 1965 elections for the first time. In the 1960s and 1970s Afghanistan became a popular tourist

site for Americans, dubbed the "Hippie Trail." In July 1973, when the Soviet Union supported a coup by former prime minister Daoud, Zahir Shah fled to Italy.

Daoud became disgruntled with the communists after four years and tried to expel them. He also tried to rid himself of military leaders he felt did not support him. A military fight took place; Nur Mohammed Takaki assumed control and declared the PDPA the only recognized government party. In 1979 Hafizullah Amin, one of Daoud's subordinates, assumed control of the government when Takaki was assassinated. Amin jailed thousands of people and took land from the *khans* (large landholders) to give it to poor, landless farmers. As the communist leaders fought among themselves, the farmers became dissatisfied with their lack of success in producing food. Amin alienated not only the Soviets but also the Americans when the U.S. ambassador was kidnapped and killed.

Amin's government appeared near collapse by 1981. Not wanting to lose control, the Soviets mobilized an invasion force that installed Babrak Karmal, another Afghan communist. The *mujahideen*, Muslim resisters to the Soviet puppet government, became organized and formed alliances such as the Ittehad-I-Islami-Afghan Mujahideen and the Islamic Coalition Council. In 1986 Najibullah took Karmal's place but was not able to maintain peace. He did change the name of the country from the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to the Republic of Afghanistan.

The Soviet-Afghan War resulted in the deaths of 1.5 million people and the displacement of nearly 6 million refugees into Pakistan and Iran. Several Middle Eastern countries and the United States supported the Afghan fighters who opposed the 100,000 communist troops. The United States supplied the fighters with missile launchers and guns. The Saudi heir Osama bin Laden became directly involved in 1988 by setting up a recruiting station in Pakistan, and he began his practice of organizing training camps to attract Muslims from the Middle East to fight for Afghanistan's freedom. Using his considerable wealth, he brought in experts in military strategy, mine removal, engineering, and medicine. The Soviets sustained heavy casualties and were forced to withdraw in February 1989. More than 10,000 Soviet soldiers lost their lives. A deadly legacy left by both the Soviet and the

U.S. military are nearly 10 million land mines and bombs.

Even the Soviet withdrawal did not end fighting between the communist Afghans and the Muslim *mujahideen* commanders. The *mujahideen* factions wrestled for control throughout the early 1990s, with the strongest controlling large sections of the country. Almost 5 million people became refugees during this period.

The *mujahideen* factions could not come to consensus about a government that would support all ethnic groups—Pashtun, Tajik, Uzbek, Hazara, and others. In November 1994, a powerful Islamic fundamentalist group known as the Taliban (meaning “seekers of knowledge”) emerged as the dominant political and religious power when they captured Kandahar. The next year the Taliban captured Herat, and in September 1996 they captured Jalalabad and Kabul. After taking Kabul, they executed former president Najibullah in public, leaving his body hanging for all to see.

Many wealthy Muslims from throughout the Middle East, including Osama bin Laden, backed the Taliban fighters. Due to a run-in with Saudi leaders in the early 1990s over his opposition to U.S. help during the Persian Gulf War, Bin Laden had been expelled from the country and moved to Sudan. While in Sudan, Bin Laden had organized al-Qaeda (“the base”) and masterminded a number of terrorist actions against the United States, including the first bombing of the U.S. World Trade Center, the two Aden hotel bombings in Yemen, attacks on Americans in Somalia, the attempted assassination of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, a truck bomb attack on Americans in Saudi Arabia, U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, the bombing of the U.S.S. Cole in Yemen, and finally the destruction of the twin towers of the World Trade Center and partial destruction of the Pentagon. Bin Laden finally settled in Afghanistan in 1996. In 1998 U.S. forces made Tomahawk missile strikes against him and al-Qaeda camps in southeast Afghanistan.



By 2000 the Taliban had not only captured the capital but also controlled 90 percent of the country. The Northern Alliance, led by Ahmad Shah Massoud, organized several militias to fight against the Taliban, whom they viewed as a strict and oppressive regime marked by corruption.

The Taliban government used illegal means to finance their campaign, such as the

mass production and distribution of opium and hashish. Also the Taliban were known for selling and using women as sex slaves (Physicians for Human Rights, 1998). The Taliban were guilty of many human rights violations, including rape, torture, and murder. Women were not allowed to work outside the home, and girls were not allowed to get an education.

In the summer of 2001 terrorists posing as journalists assassinated General Massoud, head of the Northern Alliance. On September 11 of that year, members of the al-Qaeda network who had been trained in Afghanistan by Bin Laden and the Taliban hijacked four U.S. commercial jetliners and flew three of them into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, causing the loss of more than 3,000 American lives. President George W. Bush responded by declaring war on terrorism in what has become known as Operation Enduring Freedom. U.S. military forces attacked Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, to eradicate terrorist camps and military installations and topple the Taliban regime.

AFGHANISTAN TODAY

Afghanistan has the highest child mortality rates in the world, with a quarter of all children not making it to their fifth birthday. One program to ease their suffering is “America’s Fund for Afghan Children,” established by President Bush on October 11, 2001. He asked schoolchildren across America to send one dollar to help provide important relief to the children of Afghanistan. American children have donated nearly one and a half million dollars to help Afghan children. The first aid shipment in December 2001 included 1,500 tents, 1,658 winter jackets, and 10,000 gift packages (hats, gloves, scarves, school supplies). The supplies were sent to the northern Afghanistan provinces of Faryab and Balkh. Millions of pounds of food have been dropped into Afghanistan to ease the suffering during the war.

Four Afghan delegations met on November 27, 2001, in Bonn, Germany to set up an interim government. The Rome delegation represented former King Mohammed Zaher Shah and included former Afghan ministers, economists, and two women’s rights activists. The Cyprus delegation represented the Iranian refugees and included two advisors. The United Front represented the Northern Alliance and included *mujahideens* from the Tajik, Hazara, and Uzbek militias. Another delegation represented the Pashtun refugees in Pakistan and included refugee leaders from the city of Pashawar. The group chose Hamid Karzai as the new interim head of the cabinet. There was some talk about Zaher Shah coming back if Karzai’s transitional government were to collapse.

Geography

Afghanistan is roughly equivalent in size to Texas, with a population of approximately 25 million. The landlocked country is bordered by Iran to the west, Turkmenistan to the northwest, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to the north, China to

the northwest, and Pakistan to the east. There are 31 provinces. Kabul, the capital, is in the center of the country and has the largest population—over one million. Major cities in the north are Mazar-I-Sharif, Kunduz, and Chitral. Herat, famous for its Persian carpets, and Shindand are in the west. Kandahar, Dehraud, and Tarinkot lie to the south. Kandahar, where U.S. troops have been stationed, boasts one of the few international airports in the country. Jalalabad, Asadabad, Asmar, and Khost are major cities in the east, near Pakistan. Many refugees live in Peshawar and Islamabad in Pakistan.

The only river of any consequence is the Helmand, running from the southwest border of Iran to near Kabul. The land is rugged and hard to transverse. Hindu Kush, a branch of the Himalayas, lies to the northeast, and grassy steppes are located in the north, with a desolate desert in the southwest and forests in the southeast. The climate ranges from extreme cold in the winter to hot, dry summers.

The People and Daily Life

The largest ethnic group is the Pashtun, which makes up more than 40 percent of the population. Other ethnic groups are Tajiks (25 percent), Uzbeks (9 percent), Baluchi, Brahui, Krgyz, Hazara, Nuristani, Quzilbash, and Turkmen. The most common languages are Farsi (a form of Iranian Persian), followed by Dari, an Afghan Persian dialect used in business by the elite, and Pushtu, spoken in both India and Pakistan. The written language is Arabic.

There is little industry in Afghanistan. The people make their living primarily from agriculture. Afghans live in villages of a few hundred to a few thousand people. There are even an estimated two million nomads called *kochis*, who drift around the country in small bands herding sheep, goats, and camels. Some *mujahideen* warlords live in forts called *qalas* and have tenants who grow cotton, fruit, nuts, wheat, and rice. Afghanistan is reported to be the world's leading exporter of hashish and competes with Myanmar as the leading supplier of opium. The Silk Road has been redubbed the "Opium Road."

The head of each village is known as the *khan*. Every village has a *jirgah* (council) that decides local matters. Family honor or *gharyrat* is important, since a man's word is his bond. Most adhere to a moral code called *Pushtunwalli*. This code makes it necessary to avenge the death of a friend or relative or to fight to the death protecting anyone who seeks refuge. Any guest is to be treated with honor and given food and shelter. Villagers must also offer forgiveness for any offense other than murder or adultery (punishable by death). During battle they must spare a foe if he begs mercy.

Families receive a dowry when daughters marry to replace her economic role. The groom's family also throws a party for three days. On the final day, in the presence of a *mullah* and witnesses, a marriage contract (*nikah-namah*) is signed, followed by recitation from the Koran and almond candy thrown at the groom.

Many Afghans live in compounds that have underground

entrances. Except in the larger cities most residents do not have electricity and need to use fresh or dried ingredients since refrigeration is not common. Several homes have a guest room but usually a main room goes through a daily transformation from living room to dining room to bedroom. Families tend to cluster together in adjoining compounds.

Because they are Muslims, Afghans have strict dietary codes. Muslims don't drink alcohol or eat pork. In fact, wild pigs are found in tamarisk groves in large numbers. Women are encouraged to dress modestly and are expected to wear head covers. Most women wear *burqas* (head-to-toe shrouds). Men pray five times daily. Until recently women were not allowed to work or attend school. Afghans value cleanliness, and most have special bowls, called *aftawa-lagan*, for washing their hands. Polygamy is permitted, with a man having up to four wives.

Afghan boys attend private schools, called *madrassas*, led by *mullahs*. *Mullahs* are Islamic holy men who can read and write and are well versed in the Koran. They tutor those boys in their village who have the potential to take their place. Young boys are taught Islamic concepts of morality and defending the religion. There are very few girls in the public schools except in the larger urban areas. During the Taliban regime girls were not permitted to attend school at all. Heavy bombings have taken their toll on public schools. Even though girls may now attend, these schools number a few hundred and are overcrowded. Afghanistan has one of the highest illiteracy rates in the world.

Common foods are *naan* (flat bread), soup, fruit, rice, and tea. Other popular dishes are *kebabs* (skewers with meat and vegetables), *quabuli dumpukht* (baked rice with raisins and carrots), *burauni* (eggplant with tomato sauce), *firni* (cornstarch pudding), *jelabi* (sweet bread with syrup and molasses), *ash* (noodle soup), *mantu* (dumpling), *faluda* (rice with syrup and milk), *gur* (molasses lumps), *bolani* (spicy vegetable pie), and *pilau* (rice pilaf with vegetables).

Afghans have a rich tradition of storytelling. They like to recite poetry, and many can quote hundreds of poems. Afghans tell urban legends about the Jinn, who are spirits that can possess humans or cats. The Koran mentions them as being made of smokeless fire. Other popular characters are Bachey Kul (a Bald Boy who is cunning), Mullah Nashrudin (a Muslim cleric who is a buffoon), Leilah and Majnun (a pair of doomed lovers), and Rashtum (a mighty hero who fights monsters).

Afghan children play a variety of hide-and-seek games. Soccer is a popular sport. They also play a variation of cricket in which a player hits a ball with a stick and runs between two bases as many times as possible before being tagged out. Cockfighting is also popular, as is kite fighting; here, participants try to get their opponents' kite string to break. Afghan men like to dance the *attan*, a war dance in which they spin guns or swords faster and faster as the music tempo quickens. A very popular sport among boys is to raise pigeons and then send them off against competitors to lure competitors' pigeons to their roosts. They also play *bazul-bazi*, a form of

marbles that uses sheep knucklebones. Boys and men also like to wrestle and can grab their opponent only above the waist. The match is over when the opponent's shoulders are pinned to the ground.

There are only a few national holidays. The most important holiday in this Muslim nation is Ramadan, when people fast from dawn to dusk, then gather in the evening to share a meal with family and friends.

Immigration

Until the 1970s Afghan immigrants to the United States were primarily students. In 1990 there were approximately 50,000 living here. Zulfacar (1998) sets the number of Afghans granted refugee or asylum status from 1980 to 1994 at 32,887. Nearly one-half of all Afghans live in either California or New York. There are small numbers in Georgia, Washington, Maine, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Nebraska, Utah, Colorado, Virginia, and Maryland. There is a large group living in Contra Costa County in California. In Arlington, Virginia, there is a predominantly Afghan-American private school, the Ariana School. San Diego even has a youth organization, Awaz-E-Jawan. Resettlement is usually based on kinship, since relatives are expected to take care of new arrivals financially. Many Afghans in the United States are Pashtun and come from near Kabul.

THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

The literature included below presents the geography, history, and culture of Afghanistan and the diverse experiences of Afghans. Readers of the following books will learn of the folklore and history of the Afghan people, their daily lives in Afghanistan and in exile in Pakistan and the United States, their extended families, and their struggles for independence, freedom, and social justice.

Folklore

Shah, Amina. *Tales of Afghanistan*. London: Octagon Press, 1982. 115 pp. ISBN 0-900860-94-4. Gr. 5–8.

This no-frills book is written at a fifth-grade level. The vocabulary is for students who are more advanced or gifted. Included are 20 tales, including “The Princess and the Bulbul,” “The Amir Who Became a Weaver,” “The Well-Digger and the Deev,” “The Leopard and the Jinn,” “Prince Mahsud and the King Rat,” “The Magic Shawl,” and “The Enchanted Trumpet.” There are no illustrations.

Stone, Sheila. *Mitthu the Parrot*. London: Jennie Ingham Associates, 1989. unpaginated. Illus. by the author. Series: Tall Tales. ISBN 1-85474-001-6. Gr. K–2.

Mitthu the parrot outwits his owner, a rich merchant, into believing that he is dead. When the owner takes the

parrot out to bury him, the parrot escapes to freedom. The text is written in both English and Arabic. The illustrations are pastel watercolors that use purples, greens, and oranges for striking effect.

Fiction

Ellis, Deborah. *The Breadwinner*. Toronto: Groundwood Books, 2001. 170 pp. ISBN 0-88899-419-2. Gr. 5–8.

Eleven-year-old Parvana disguises herself as a boy in the oppressive Taliban-controlled Afghanistan after her father is arrested for having a foreign education. In the streets of Kabul she endures harrowing adventures in her efforts to help her family survive.

Ellis, Deborah. *Parvana's Journey*. Toronto: Groundwood Books, 2002. 176 pp. ISBN 0-88899-514-8. Gr. 5–8.

In this sequel to *The Breadwinner*, Parvana, now 12, is reunited with her father but separated from her mother and sisters. Following her father's death she joins a band of orphans who struggle to stay alive in the midst of war.

McKay, Lawrence Jr. *Caravan*. New York: Lee & Low, 1995. Illus. by Darryl Ligasan. unpaginated. ISBN 1-880000-23-7. Gr. 2–4.

Jura accompanies his father on an exciting trip through Afghanistan. He battles the icy mountains of the Hindu Kush, fords frozen rivers, and travels over the steppes while learning about his culture and people. The illustrations are packed with depictions of his adventures. The artist employs golden tones to give the reader a feel of the warmth of the father and son bonding during their journeys. The story is based on Kirghiz caravaneers traveling between Russia and Afghanistan, which explains the mixture of Mongol and Caucasian features of the characters in the illustrations.

Biography

Landau, Elaine. *Osama Bin Laden: A War Against the World*. Brookfield, Conn.: Twenty-First Century Books, 2002. 144 pp. ISBN 0-7613-1709-0. Gr. 5–8.

This biography focuses on bin Laden's September 11 attack on the United States. It discusses many important subjects, such as Taliban, al-Qaeda, embassy bombings, and so on. Black-and-white photographs show stark and grim examples of alleged terrorist attacks as well as pictures of key figures associated with them. Landau is noted for her books for young readers on terrorism. There is a list of further readings and an index in the back.

History

Behnke, Alison. *Afghanistan in Pictures*. Minneapolis:

Lerner, 2003. 64 pp. Series: Visual Geography. Second ed. ISBN 0-8225-1849-X. Gr. 4–8.

This brief geography covers the land, history and government, people, and economy of Afghanistan. There are several black-and-white photographs as well as a few color ones that are quite unique and complement the text.

Ali, Sharifah Enayat. *Afghanistan*. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Marshall Cavendish, 1995. 128 pp. Series: Cultures of the World. ISBN 0-7614-0177-6. Gr. 3–5.

This is a very well written country study, which includes the geography, history, government, economy, peoples, lifestyle, religion, language, arts, leisure, festivals, and food of Afghanistan. There are quick notes, a glossary, and a bibliography in the back of the book. Color photographs show examples of people and scenery throughout the country.

Ansary, Mir Tamim. *Afghanistan: Fighting for Freedom*. New York: Dillon Press, 1991. 127 pp. Series: Discovering Our Heritage. ISBN 0-87518-482-0. Gr. 3–5.

This brief historical work by a noted Afghan-American scholar covers “A War-Torn Land,” “Afghan Way of Life,” “A Society of Storytellers,” “Festive Days,” “The Struggle for Education,” “Games and Sports,” and “Afghans in America.” In the front is “Fast Facts about Afghanistan.” In the back are a glossary, a selected bibliography, and an index. A few well-chosen color photographs depict geography and people. Teachers and librarians will appreciate Ansary’s recently published memoir, *West of Kabul, East of New York* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2002).

Chomsky, Noam. *9-11*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2001. 96 pp. ISBN 1-58322-489-0. Gr. 8–12.

A controversial exploration of what caused the attacks on America. Chomsky offers a candid look at the events throughout the world that contributed to the attacks, including the recent history of Afghanistan and U.S. assistance to the *mujahideen* there during the Soviet invasion and occupation.

Clifford, Mary Louise. *The Land and People of Afghanistan*. New York: Lippincott. 1989. 225 pp. Series: Portraits of the Nation. ISBN 0-397-32338-7. Gr. 4–8.

A very detailed treatment covering the Afghans’ struggle for autonomy, the rugged land, the people, Islam, honor and faith, living patterns, social patterns, cultural patterns, the economy, world power politics, and reconstruction following the Soviet occupation. There is a bibliography and an index in the back. Black-and-white photographs illustrate the text.

Foster, Leila Merrell. *Afghanistan*. New York: Children’s Press, 1996. 127 pp. Series: Enchantment of the World. ISBN 0-516-20017-8. Gr. 3–6.

This straightforward treatment covers geography, history (four periods: Ancient, Muslim Dynasties, Great Game, and A Republic), culture, customs, education, health care, agriculture, industry, the economy, religion, art, and everyday life. Color photographs contribute to visualizing people and places. There are mini-facts and an index in the back.

Frank, Mitch. *Understanding September 11th: Answering Questions About the Attacks on America*. New York: Viking, 2002. 136 pp. ISBN 0-670-03582-3. Gr. 7–10.

In a question-and-answer format, Frank offers much information on the September 11 attacks and what contributed to them. He covers Islam, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, the Taliban, Afghanistan’s recent history, perceptions of the United States there and in the Middle East, and Osama bin Laden’s terrorist training camps. Black-and-white photos, tables, maps, a glossary, a bibliography, and an index complement the text.

Howarth, Michael. *Afghanistan*. New York: Chelsea House. 96 pp. ISBN 0-7910-0100-8. Gr. 3–5.

A very basic history that covers the Afghan wars, beginning of the republic, noted historical figures (Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, Tamerlane, Babur), the people of Afghanistan, village life, crafts, and major cities. There are a few black-and-white and color photographs.

Logan, Harriet. *Unveiled: Voices of Women in Afghanistan*. New York: HarperCollins, 2002. 108 pp. Illus. with photos by the author. ISBN 0-06-051087-0. Gr. 7–12.

Logan, an internationally recognized photographer, presents the faces and testimonies of a variety of women and girls in Afghanistan, who tell of their lives during and after the Taliban’s rule. A principal theme is the women’s struggle to obtain an education and basic human rights enjoyed by men. Readers read of the hopes kindled by the Taliban’s fall as well as the suffering of women who endured American bombing attacks.

Videos

Afghan Exodus. (1980). [n.p.]: Andre Singer. 53 minutes, color.

Afghanistan: Exporting the Taliban Revolution. (2000). Princeton, N.J.: Films for the Humanities and Sciences. 24 minutes, color.

AMIR: An Afghan Refugee Musician's Life in Peshawar, Pakistan. (1989).

Behind the Veil: Afghan Women under Fundamentalism. (2001). Princeton, N.J.: Films for the Humanities and Sciences. 26 minutes, color.

Escape from Afghanistan. (2002). Los Angeles: New Concorde Home Entertainment. 88 minutes, color; available in DVD.

Frontline—Gunning for Saddam. (2001). Alexandria, Va.: PBS Video. 60 minutes, color.

Frontline—In Search of Bin Laden. (2001). Alexandria, Va.: PBS Video. 60 minutes, color.

Frontline—Inside the Terror Network. (2001). Alexandria, Va.: PBS Video. 60 minutes, color.

Frontline—Looking for Answers. (2001). Alexandria, Va.: PBS Video. 60 minutes, color.

Frontline—Trail of a Terrorist. (2001). Alexandria, Va.: PBS Video. 60 minutes, color.

Heart of the Warrior. (1990). [n.p.]: Michael Franck. 54 minutes, color.

The Holy Warriors. (1998). New York: Filmmaker's Library. 52 minutes, color.

Jung (War): In the Land of the Mujaheddin. (1999). [n.p.]: Karousel Pictures. 114 minutes, color.

Kabul, Kabul. (2000). New York: Third World Newsreel. 46 minutes, color.

Kubuliwala. [n.d.]. India: Yas Raj Films. 136 minutes, black and white; available in DVD.

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Osama Bin Laden: In the Name of Allah. (2002). New York: A&E. 50 minutes, color.

The Pathens. (1980). University Park, Pa.: Penn State Public Broadcasting. 45 minutes, color.

Shroud of Silence. (1996). Arlington, Va.: Feminist Majority Organization. 15 minutes, color.

Soldiers of God. (1998). Burbank, Calif.: Warner Home

Video; dist. by CNN Productions. 93 minutes, black and white & color.

State of the Talib. (2001). Morris Plains, N.J.: Journeyman Pictures. 50 minutes, color.

Stopping the Money: An Economic Approach to Counterterrorism. (2002). Princeton, N.J.: Films for the Humanities and Sciences. 22 minutes, color.

The Taliban and Global Terrorism. (2001). Seattle, Wash.: UWTV. 50 minutes, color.

The Taliban Legacy. (2001). New York: Filmmaker's Library. 35 minutes, color.

The Taliban Prayer for Hate. (2001). Arlington, Va.: Feminist Majority Organization. 12 minutes, color.

Web Sites of Interest

Afghanistan for Kids

(www.public.asu.edu/~apnilsen/afghanistan4kids/)

Two Arizona State English professors, Don and Alleen Nilson, who lived with their children in Afghanistan share information about Afghani culture. Included are a couple of coloring stories, "The Sheep" and "The Afghan Hound."

Afghanistan Maps

(www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/afghanistan.html)

Extensive collection of maps including war maps, country maps, city maps, historical maps, and thematic maps.

Afghan News Network

(www.myafghan.com/)

An extensive news site devoted to happenings in Afghanistan. This is a straightforward site with an archives of news articles.

Afghanistan Online

(www.afghan-web.com/)

A privately owned independent site dedicated to Afghanistan news. The site has extensive links to such areas as news, culture, economy, geography, languages, politics, history, Afghan women, biographies, sports, games, and weather.

Amnesty International Afghanistan

(<http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/countries/afghanistan>)

This human rights site includes many interesting reports and news about alleged abuse by both U.S. forces and the current government in Afghanistan.

Andy Holt's Virtual Library Afghanistan Information Center

(www.utm.edu/vlibrary/afghan.shtml)

Andy Holt at the University of Tennessee—Martin Campus

has put together sections on Afghan culture and the nearly 50 languages spoken there, plus a wealth of links to large general and multi-section web sites about the country.

Assistance Afghanistan (www.pcpafg.org/)

A United Nations site devoted to aid for the Afghan people. The site includes news, organizations, maps, and information links.

Development Gateway, Postwar Reconstruction and Development in Afghanistan (www.developmentgateway.org/node/134111/?page_id=133865&ov1)

A humanitarian site devoted to helping underprivileged people. This section is devoted to Afghanistan, with links to such groups as the World Bank and the United Nations. Many of the links are to articles and reports with specialized focus.

Information and Stories about Islam and Muslims (www.acpl.lib.in.us/Childrens_Services/islam.html)

A bibliography with books and films, with links to Islamic sites.

Islamic State of Afghanistan

(www.politicalresources.net/afghanistan.htm)

Political resources include documents about elections in Afghanistan and political parties and groups.

Muslim Directory Online (www.ummah.com/)

News, articles, and information about Muslims in Afghanistan and throughout the world.

Newstrove Afghanistan

(<http://afghanistan.newstrove.com/>)

This is an extensive collection of news stories from news-wires about dozens of Afghanistan topics; hence the motto, "All the current news about Afghanistan."

Physicians for Human Rights Banning Landmines in Afghanistan (www.banminesusa.org/)

This proactive group advocates against the use of landmines and describes their effects on the people of Afghanistan and other countries. Links cite articles that deal with the tragic results of landmine use, with many examples from Afghanistan.

The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (<http://rawa.fancymarketing.net/index.html>)

This site is concerned with Afghan women struggling for peace, freedom, and democracy in their country. Included are some interesting cultural links, including music and poetry.

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