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The Enemy Within

Claim: Illinois senator Barack Obama is a "radical, ideological Muslim."

Status: *False.*

Example: *[Collected via e-mail, 2006]*

THE ENEMY WITHIN!

This is the "dude" that some people want to be the next President of the United States

Scary isn't it???????

Speaking bluntly, in a real presidential election, no one in their right mind would vote for Obama. That would be like voting for the guy who just moved in down the street from you, that you wave to from time to time but don't know a thing about. That's Obama. He's been a US Senator for about 100 days, give or take a week. Obama takes great care to conceal the fact that he is a radical Muslim while admitting that he was once a Muslim, mitigating that damning information by saying that, for two years, he also attended a Catholic school.

Obama's father, Barack Hussein Obama, Sr. was a radical Muslim who migrated from Kenya to Jakarta, Indonesia. He met Obama's mother, Ann Dunham, a white atheist from Wichita, Kansas at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Obama, Sr. and Dunham divorced when Barack, Jr. was two. Obama's spinmeisters are now attempting to make it appear that Obama's introduction to Islam came from his father and that influence was temporary at best. In reality, the senior Obama returned to Kenya immediately following the divorce and never again had any direct influence over his son's education. Dunham married another Muslim, Lolo Soetoro who educated his stepson as a good Muslim by enrolling him in one of Jakarta's Wahabbi schools. Wahabbism is the radical teaching that created the Muslim terrorists who are now waging Jihad on the industrialized world. Since it is politically expedient to be a Christian when you are seeking political office in the United States, Obama joined the United Church of Christ to help purge any notion that he is still a Muslim, which, ideologically, he remains today.

Variations: A later version of this piece included the following sentence:

ALSO, keep in mind that when he was sworn into office — he DID NOT use the Holy Bible, but instead the Koran (Their equivalency to our Bible, but very different beliefs)

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This statement is a mistaken reference to Minnesota congressman [Keith Ellison](#), not Barack Obama.

Origins: Barack Obama, 45, served as an Illinois state senator for several years, and in 2004 he won a seat representing that state in the U.S. Senate. His keynote address before the Democratic National Convention in June 2004 brought him national prominence, and he is currently one of the leading contenders for the nomination to represent the Democratic Party in the 2008 presidential election.

Barack Obama has an unusual and interesting background, which the above-quoted piece draws on to paint him as a dangerous, camouflaged radical Muslim. Much of the information presented therein about his background is distorted and exaggerated, however, and no evidence supports a claim that Obama is currently "ideologically Muslim" or has ever been a "radical" Muslim:

Claim: Barack Obama has been a U.S. senator for only 100 days.

Barack Obama was sworn in as a U.S. senator representing the state of Illinois on 4 January 2005, so as of late December 2006 (when the e-mail about his Muslim background appeared) he had been in that office for two years.

Claim: Obama takes great care to conceal the fact that he is a radical Muslim while admitting that he was once a Muslim, mitigating that damning information by saying that, for two years, he also attended a Catholic school.

Barack Obama has not "admitted" to being a Muslim, nor has any evidence been produced demonstrating that he is, or ever was, a "radical Muslim." (As with everything else in the e-mail quoted at the head of the page, this is asserted as "fact" despite a complete lack of supporting evidence.) "Senator Obama has never been a Muslim," Obama communications director Robert Gibbs said. "As a six-year-old in Catholic school, he studied the catechism." Barack Obama has been associated with the United Church of Christ since the mid-1980s, describes himself as a Christian, and says that he is "rooted in the Christian tradition."

When he was a child in Indonesia, Obama spent a couple of years at a Catholic school and another couple of years at a school that was predominantly Muslim (because Indonesia itself is predominantly Muslim). In his 2006 book, *The Audacity of Hope*, Obama elaborated on his early schooling, explaining that he attended both Catholic and Muslim schools in Indonesia – not out of any particular religious affiliation, but because his mother wanted him to obtain the best education possible under the circumstances:

During the five years that we would live with my stepfather in Indonesia, I was sent first to a neighborhood Catholic school and then to a predominantly Muslim school; in both cases, my mother was less concerned with me learning the catechism or puzzling out the meaning of the muezzin's call to evening prayer than she was with whether I was properly learning my multiplication tables.

Claim: Obama's father, Barack Hussein Obama, Sr. was a radical Muslim who migrated from Kenya to Jakarta, Indonesia. He met Obama's mother, Ann Dunham, a white atheist from Wichita, Kansas at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Obama, Sr. and Dunham divorced when Barack, Jr. was two.

Barack Obama's father (also named Barack Obama) was born on the shores of Lake Victoria in Alego, Kenya. Although the elder Obama was raised as a Muslim, no evidence supports the claim that he was ever a "radical Muslim," and Senator Obama's family histories note that his father was an atheist or agnostic (i.e., no longer a practicing Muslim) by the time he married the younger Obama's mother.

Claim: Obama's spinmeisters are now attempting to make it appear that Obama's introduction to Islam came from his father and that influence was temporary at best. In reality, the senior Obama returned to Kenya immediately following the divorce and never again had any direct influence over his son's education.

The notion that "Obama's spinmeisters are now attempting to make it appear that Obama's introduction to Islam came from his father" and deliberately obscuring the "reality" that his father had little "influence over his son's education" is just silly in light of the fact that Barack Obama himself has repeatedly acknowledged that his parents split up when he was two years old and that he scarcely knew his father:

My father was almost entirely absent from my childhood, having been divorced from my mother when I was two years old.

At the time of his death, my father remained a myth to me, both more and less than a man. He had left Hawaii back in 1963, when I was only two years old, so that as a child I knew him only through the stories that my mother and grandparents told.

(Barack's only other childhood contact with his father occurred when he was eleven years old, and his father came to visit Hawaii for a month at Christmastime.)

Claim: Dunham married another Muslim, Lolo Soetoro who educated his stepson as a good Muslim by enrolling him in one of Jakarta's Wahabbi schools. Wahabbism is the radical teaching that created the Muslim terrorists who are now waging Jihad on the industrialized world.

The claim that Obama attended a radical [Wahabbist](#) school in Indonesia in the 1960s is exceedingly far-fetched, given that:

The large Indonesian community resident in Mecca was a medium through which knowledge about Wahhabism reached Indonesia, but the community itself appears to have remained virtually immune to Wahhabi influences. In reality there was little direct influence of Wahhabism on Indonesian reformist thought until the 1970s.

Insight magazine claimed in a January 2007 article that Barack Obama spent at least four years attending what is variously described as a "madrassa," a "radical Muslim religious school," or a "Muslim seminary" in Indonesia, but CNN has more recently reported that its own investigation found those claims to be false:

[R]eporting by CNN in Jakarta, Indonesia and Washington, D.C., shows the allegations that Obama attended a madrassa to be false. CNN dispatched Senior International Correspondent John Vause to Jakarta to investigate.

He visited the Basuki school, which Obama attended from 1969 to 1971.

"This is a public school. We don't focus on religion," Hardi Priyono, deputy headmaster of the Basuki school, told Vause. "In our daily lives, we try to respect religion, but we don't give preferential treatment."

Vause reported he saw boys and girls dressed in neat school uniforms playing outside the school, while teachers were dressed in Western-style clothes.

"I came here to Barack Obama's elementary school in Jakarta looking for what some are calling an Islamic madrassa ... like the ones that teach hate and violence in Pakistan and Afghanistan," Vause said on the 'Situation Room.' "I've been to those madrassas in Pakistan ... this school is nothing like that."

Vause also interviewed one of Obama's Basuki classmates, Bandug Winadijanto, who claims that not a lot has changed at the school since the two men were pupils. *Insight* reported that Obama's political opponents believed the school promoted Wahhabism, a fundamentalist form of Islam, "and are seeking to prove it."

"It's not (an) Islamic school. It's general," Winadijanto said. "There is a lot of Christians, Buddhists, also Confucian. ... So that's a mixed school."

The *Associated Press* reported similarly:

A spokesman for Indonesia's Ministry of Religious Affairs said claims that Obama studied at an Islamic school are groundless.

"SDN Menteng 1 is a public primary school that is open to people of all faiths," said the spokesman, Sutopo, who goes by only one name. "Moreover, he studied earlier at Fransiskus Assisi, which is clearly a Catholic school."

Obama later transferred to SDN Menteng 1 the elite, secular elementary school at the center of the controversy. The school is public but is very competitive and has exceptionally high standards. It is located in one of the most affluent parts of Jakarta and attracts mostly middle- to upper-class students, among them several of former dictator Suharto's grandchildren.

Indonesia is home to several of the most radical Islamic schools in Southeast Asia, some with alleged terrorist links. But Akmad Solichin [the vice principal at SDN Menteng 1], who proudly pointed to a photo of a young Barry Obama, as he was known, said his school is not one of them.

Moreover, a [statement](#) released by the Obama campaign affirmed that:

In the past week, many of you have read a now thoroughly-debunked story by Insight Magazine, owned by the Washington Times, which cites unnamed sources close to a political campaign that claim Senator Obama was enrolled for "at least four years" in an Indonesian "Madrassa". The article says the "sources" believe the Madrassa was "espousing Wahhabism," a form of radical Islam.

All of the claims about Senator Obama's faith and education raised in the Insight Magazine story and repeated on Fox News are false. Senator Obama was raised in a secular household in Indonesia by his stepfather and mother. Obama's stepfather worked for a U.S. oil company, and sent his stepson to two years of Catholic school, as well as two years of public school.

To be clear, Senator Obama has never been a Muslim, was not raised a Muslim, and is a committed Christian who attends the United Church of Christ in Chicago. Furthermore, the Indonesian school Obama attended in Jakarta is a public school that is not and never has been a Madrassa.

Claim: *Since it is politically expedient to be a Christian when you are seeking political office in the United States, Obama joined the United Church of Christ to help purge any notion that he is still a Muslim, which, ideologically, he remains today.*

As noted above, Barack Obama describes himself as "a Christian," says that he is "rooted in the Christian tradition," and his association with the United Church of Christ began well before his political career. (Obama was first elected to the Illinois state senate in 1996, but he has been involved with the United Church of Christ since the mid-1980s.) The beginnings of Obama's relationship with the church were described in an April 2004 *Chicago Sun-Times* article:

Obama is unapologetic in saying he has a "personal relationship with Jesus Christ." As a sign of that relationship, he says, he walked down the aisle of Chicago's Trinity United Church of Christ in response to the Rev. Jeremiah Wright's altar call one Sunday morning about 16 years ago.

The politician could have ended his spiritual tale right there, at the point some people might assume his life changed, when he got "saved," transformed, washed in the blood. But Obama wants to clarify what truly happened.

"It wasn't an epiphany," he says of that public profession of faith. "It was much more of a gradual process for me. I know there are some people who fall out. Which is wonderful. God bless them ... I think it was just a moment to certify or publicly affirm a growing faith in me."

These days, he says, he attends the 11 a.m. Sunday service at Trinity in the Brainerd neighborhood every week — or at least as many weeks as he is able. His pastor, Wright, has become a close confidant.

So how did he become a churchgoer?

It began in 1985, when he came to Chicago as a \$13,000-a-year community organizer, working with a number of African-American churches in the Roseland, West Pullman and Altgeld Gardens neighborhoods that were trying to deal with the devastation caused by shuttered steel plants.

"I started working with both the ministers and the lay people in these churches on issues like creating job-training programs, or after-school programs for youth, or making sure that city services were fairly allocated to underserved communities," he says. "And it was in those places where I think what had been more of an intellectual view of religion deepened.

"I became much more familiar with the ongoing tradition of the historic black church and its importance in the community. And the power of that culture to give people strength in very difficult circumstances, and the power of that church to give people courage against great odds. And it moved me deeply."

No evidence supports the claim that Barack Obama is, despite his professed Christianity, "an ideological Muslim," and those who have made this claim have offered nothing to support it — no letters or documents in which Barack Obama has ever stated such, no reports of conversations in which he ever admitted such, no revelations from friends or associates that he ever demonstrated such.

Additional information:



**Debunked Insight Magazine and Fox News Smear Campaign
(U.S. Senator Barack Obama)**

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