

including illiteracy, infant mortality, and gross domestic product per capita—are unrelated to whether people become involved in terrorism.” Besides, if poverty breeds terrorism against the West, why isn’t it being carried out by people from places much poorer than many countries in the Muslim world—large swaths of sub-Saharan Africa, for example?

We shouldn’t need Krueger’s book to be persuaded of his conclusions. Arab writers have been making similar arguments for years. Saudi commentator Muhammad Mahfouz, for example, has argued that religious teachings inciting violence, rather than poverty, are the main cause of terrorism among Saudi youth. “These youths,” he writes, “were brought up in a special cultural atmosphere which finds its roots in a stereotyped understanding of religion. This understanding serves as a basic incubator to this group.”

Maybe a distinguished economist, surveying reams of social-scientific studies, will finally succeed in convincing Western opinion leaders, many of whom don’t consult Arab sources, of this truth. Perhaps they’ll read Krueger’s book and understand that if terrorism has identifiable root causes, they’re the ones most frequently cited by Islamists themselves—the desire to achieve what terrorists see as holy ends, and the conviction that, in the service of these ends, terrorism works.

I fear, though, that despite Krueger’s definitive and persuasive book, conventional wisdom and wishful thinking will keep alive the idea that poverty causes terrorism. Intellectual hygiene is an honorable enterprise but, alas, often unsuccessful—especially in a world in which familiar, easy, and hopeful explanations that leave us thinking the problem has a ready solution are preferred to explanations that leave us feeling vexed, powerless, and perpetually afraid.

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## Gotham’s Melting Pot

By Mimi Schwartz

NEW YORK CITY, FOR many, means the borough of Manhattan, with its skyscrapers, Fifth Avenue shops, Central Park, and Wall Street. But just to the east is a lesser-known gem:

### THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF QUEENS.

By Claudia Gryvatz Copquin. Yale Univ. Press. 265 pp. \$35

Queens. The largest of the city’s five boroughs (110 square miles) and the second most populous (after Brooklyn), Queens is unique. It is, as historian Kenneth T. Jackson points out in his introduction to *The Neighborhoods of Queens*, “the most heterogeneous place in the world.” Of its two million residents, 44 percent are foreign born—a population that tops Miami’s. One Queens neighborhood, Elmhurst, has immigrants from 110 countries. Another, Astoria, “has the largest Greek population outside the Mediterranean.” Richmond Hill is home to the largest population of Sikhs outside India. And on it goes.

*The Neighborhoods of Queens*—written by Claudia Gryvatz Copquin, a free-lance journalist raised on the turf—is a practical, easy-to-use guide to every one of the 99 neighborhoods and smaller yet distinct sub-neighborhoods of this fascinating, multi-cultural borough. Each chapter offers a brief narrative overview of the area it covers and is generously illustrated with photographs and a detailed map. Before Yale launched its “Neighborhoods of New York City” series (in collaboration with the Citizens Committee for New York City), to which this book is the latest addition, no one had attempted to map all the city’s neighborhoods.

My family arrived in the borough as refugees from Nazi Germany in 1937, three years before I was born. I grew up in Forest Hills, and when I opened to the chapter on that neighborhood, there was a photo of the West Side Tennis Club, where we used to watch the U.S. Open before it moved to Flushing Mead-



Geography was destiny for Long Island City, the most industrialized neighborhood in Queens, directly across the East River from Manhattan.

ows in 1978. Other pictures captured the mix of apartment houses and neat single-family houses—five or six to a block—that I used to pass every day as a child. Across the dozen or so lanes of Queens Boulevard is the more exclusive Forest Hills Gardens, the nation's first planned community, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and Grosvenor Atterbury in the early 1900s to look like a quaint English village. Jews and Catholics were not welcome there in my day, but when I walked in this neighborhood a few years ago, signs on telephone poles and lawns indicated the presence of a thriving Asian community.

Aside from its rich diversity, what makes Queens special is a tradition of tolerance that began more than a century before the Declaration of Independence. When the Dutch controlled the area in the 1600s, citizens revolted against Governor Peter Stuyvesant's efforts to limit how they worshiped, producing the Flushing Remonstrance of 1657. This petition, Jackson writes, "remains the most eloquent defense of religious freedom in all of American history."

One man, John Bowne, went to jail rather than submit to a law that forbade Quakers from worshipping in his house. He appealed, and the Dutch government overruled Stuyvesant. It all happened in Flushing, Queens, in what is now the heart of a thriving Chinatown. Bowne's house, the oldest structure in the borough, has been converted to a museum on the street named after him.

Queens still attracts people looking for opportunity and peace. Despite its latest influx of diverse newcomers—from China, Guyana, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Jamaica, South Korea, India, Haiti, and Ecuador—this borough of New York has fewer homicides than many American cities with smaller populations, including Atlanta and Baltimore. We should all go to Queens to see how it's done.

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