**First chapter**

* The protagonist affirms to love America in the third sentence of the book. This is done on purpose, so that he both reassures his interlocutor and forewarns the reader that at least at first he was a *“lover of America”*.
* The protagonist guesses his interlocutor’s nationality not for his appearance: the skin’s color, his dress, his hair and his expansive chest, which are *“typical of a certain type of American”*. Using this statement the protagonist suggests the reader he has a “stereotype” of a general American man, perhaps some evidences each one of us use to connect somebody with his nationality. Not only for his interlocutor’s look but also for his behavior, once the entered in the café, Changez seems to be suspicious about him as he states again *“that is not typical of Americans”*. It follows that, for Changez, the interlocutor is atypical, he does not behave like other Americans.
* At the beginning the protagonist was sure to leave his homeland in search of the American dream, he was hopeful about America. Therefore attending the Princeton University allowed him to be selected for an interview to Underwood Samson: this is a sign of respect and promise of wealth made by America who acted in favor of his students as they, the protagonist first, did not care about the imperialist strategies, I mean how America maintained its power. Princeton University attracted the world’s most brainy minds to the US, offering them scholarship, student visas, good education and then encouraging them to use their ingenuity for America and American companies. *“We were happy to do so. I certainly was, at least at first.”* – this sentence gives advance notice that something was going to change.
* Later on the protagonist indirectly expresses his opinion: in many ways, Western imperialism and American capitalism are responsible for the decline in Changez’s family’s fortune. Indeed the local elite, that once dominated Pakistan, slowly lose their power and influence, first to the British colonists, then to businessmen, many of whom worked for American companies. Nevertheless, as an undergrad he was not so concerned with these realities, but the reader will discover he was going to be.
* Young and idealistic, at the beginning, Changez believes that working for Underwood Samson – and living in the United States – will help him and his family because it will change him into a confident, perceptive man, just as the interviewer Jim was became.

Anyway he was still different from his peers.

**Second chapter**

* [Changez](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-reluctant-fundamentalist/characters/changez) points out a group of young women wearing Western clothing contrasting them with the women sitting near them, who wear traditional Pakistani clothing. The contrast between the students and the older women suggests that Pakistan, like Changez, is caught between local and Western culture.
* Although Changez recognizes that he’s different from his wealthy classmates, his employment at Underwood Samson is already exposing him to richer people and lifestyles. His travel group treats him differently because they recognize that he’s exotic, but for now, this “soft racism” doesn’t greatly offend Changez because it seems to actually give him certain benefits.
* Erica’s clothing and interest in tae kwon do suggest that she enjoys the non-Western world: she is a “consumer” of the non-Western world without even realizing it. Changez’s behavior around Erica represents his feelings toward America itself — he’s attracted to her, and becomes conscious of beeing an outsider in her presence.
* When Changez wonders how such impertinent people can be so powerful, he’s implying that manners — the way we treat other people — have a major effect on politics and foreign policy — how one country treats another, or how the West treats the rest of the world. The fact that Changez is surprised by his peers’ behavior, even after four years at Princeton, suggests that he still holds fast to the lessons of his upbringing, but also that his employment at Underwood Samson, which makes his vacation possible, introduces him to a new side of American life.
* Until the end of the second chapter, even after weeks of feeling like an outsider around his Princeton classmates, Changez is still optimistic about living in the United States, because there may be impolite people, but there are also good, respectful people like Erica, and especially powerful businesses like Underwood Samson.