

Spring 4-12-2023

Moving Toward Global Feminism: Consciousness of Borders and Implementing Angry Feminism

Cameron Hallman
cameron.hallman@bobcats.gcsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://kb.gcsu.edu/english>



Part of the [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hallman, Cameron, "Moving Toward Global Feminism: Consciousness of Borders and Implementing Angry Feminism" (2023). *English MA Theses*. 15.
<https://kb.gcsu.edu/english/15>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of English at Knowledge Box. It has been accepted for inclusion in English MA Theses by an authorized administrator of Knowledge Box.

Moving Toward Global Feminism:
Consciousness of Borders and Implementing Angry Feminism

Cameron Hallman

M.A. Candidate

Spring 2023



Thesis/Dissertation Signature Request Form

Moving Toward Global Feminism: Consciousness of Borders and Implementing Angry Feminism

Submitted by Cameron Caitlin Hallman in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of M.A. English.

Accepted on behalf of the Faculty of the Department of English and the College of Arts & Sciences by the Thesis Committee:

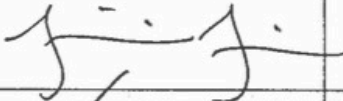
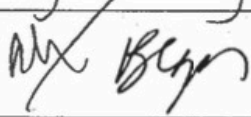
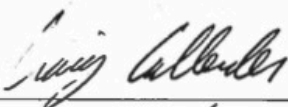
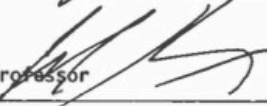
Name, Title	Signature	Date
1. <u>Stephanie Sewick</u> Lecturer		4/12/23
2. <u>Alex Blazer</u> Professor		4/12/23
3. <u>Craig Callender</u> Associate Professor		4/12/23
4. <u>Julian Knox</u> M.A. Coordinator and Associate Professor		4/13/23
5. _____		
6. _____		
7. _____		
8. _____		

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE: MOVING TOWARD A MORE GLOBAL FEMINISM	4
CHAPTER TWO: UNDER THE WESTERN GAZE: AN EXAMPLE OF ONE ARAB-AMERICAN WOMAN’S EXPERIENCE IN THE UNITED STATES	24
CHAPTER THREE: ANGRY FEMINISM IN THE ARAB WORLD: AN INSPIRATION FOR WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES	41
CONCLUSION	55
BIBLIOGRAPHY	59

Chapter One: Moving Toward a More Global Feminism

Introduction

Mona Eltahawy, an Egyptian-American journalist and feminist activist, speaks out against violence toward women, specifically regarding the Arab Muslim world, in her work. Throughout her life, Eltahawy has suffered many instances of sexual violence, and in her manifesto, *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls*, she explains the most shocking violation: sexual assault in a mosque while on Hajj in the holiest site of Islam, Mecca. Eltahawy created #MosqueMeToo with a Tweet in 2018 in order to bring attention to her experience, and “her tweet was shared more than 2,500 times and elicited hundreds more stories. She then suggested that women start using the hashtag #MosqueMeToo to organize the discussion” (Gharib). This Tweet and hashtag build on the existing #MeToo hashtag and movement, and they create a space for women to speak out. In her article, “#MosqueMeToo Gives Muslim Women A Voice About Sexual Misconduct at Mecca,” Gharib present Eltahawy’s response to being asked about #MosqueMeToo:

Eltahawy thinks that #MeToo, the movement to end sexual harassment in the workplace, has helped Muslim women feel comfortable enough to open up about their abuse. “People pay attention to what famous Hollywood actresses do. But #MeToo has to be available to all people — not those who are rich, famous and white.” That’s why she started #MosqueMeToo, she says. “I wanted it to be a space where women can share our stories from hajj and the Muslim space.”

#MeToo became an avenue for the voices of those who do not have a large platform or fame to back them up. Eltahawy created #MosqueMeToo for women who were not white, Western, or famous to speak. She created another avenue to amplify voices. Eltahawy explains that even in the holiest places, sexual assault can occur, and she is not the only woman to experience. In a culture and religion that is male dominated, women fear to speak out because they believe they will not be believed. Eltahawy feared speaking out for many years because she believed that no

one would listen and that people would think she lied about what happened to her. Regarding that fear, Eltahawy says, “who would believe that something so awful had happened to me at such a sacred place? It was better to stay silent, I decided. The men who assaulted me knew that no one would believe me. Though I had obviously done nothing to be ashamed of, I felt it anyway. Something broke in me, and it took years to acknowledge” (19). She remained silent because she feared that no one would believe her; she knew the men knew no one would believe her. That fear became reality when she spoke out. Eltahawy faced backlash when she posted with the hashtag #MosqueMeToo; people did not believe her and commented she was lying, and in the comments, they told her exactly what they thought. After she posted both hashtags, Elthaway says, “[that] under #MosqueMeToo men said, ‘why didn’t you make more of a fuss?’ Under #IBeatMyAssaulter men said, ‘You made too much of a fuss. You were too violent. Don’t you think you overreacted?’” (6). Speaking out about the assault had reactions on both sides of the spectrum; some believed her, and others said she was lying. But the biggest take away from many of those who said they believed her is that they victim-blamed her. There is a sense that she should feel shame because she did not speak out when it happened to her the first time, but the reality is that she did not speak out because she believed and knew that no one would believe her at the time. Eltahawy posted many Tweets about how clothing has nothing to do with assault, and victim blaming is not an excuse for an assault to occur. In response to Eltahawy’s tweet about how clothes have nothing to do with assault, @wotanus, also known as Hugo Simonsen, says, “of course you have read about the exhibition staged by a group of women of the clothes worn by assault victims at the time of the crime. Totally confirmed your statement.” @wotanus is trying to tell Eltahawy that her resources and argument have no base and that women are to blame for assault; he is saying that women “staged” what occurred. These assaults were not

staged, and women face backlash like this because they speak out. There are thousands of responses like this response across Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc., that attempt to place blame on women for their assault.

The negative responses did not deter Eltahawy or silence her. This hashtag became a social media movement and safe space for women who were, and still are, being attacked in holy places to speak out. In response to women speaking out, Eltahawy takes to Twitter and comments, “I am glad to see women are speaking out about being sexually harassed during Hajj. Several years ago, I shared my own experience with sexual assault during the pilgrimage” (@monaeltahawy). There are so many posts from Facebook to Twitter to Instagram and beyond that contain this hashtag. Eltahawy not only forcefully pushed back against patriarchal control, but she also helped create a space for voices to be heard; silence and the fear of being silenced were pushed away the moment this hashtag was posted on Twitter.

Eltahawy also created the hashtag #IBeatMyAssaulter in 2018 to share her story of how she fought back against a man who assaulted her in a night club. With her hashtag, Eltahawy shares that after she was inappropriately groped in the club, she chased down her assaulter and beat him up. In her manifesto *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls*, Eltahawy says, “with #IBeatMyAssaulter, I wanted to fight back, to say, ‘If you grope me, I will beat the fuck out of you.’ It is my right to be free of sexual assault, and it is my right to fight back if I am assaulted. Ultimately. It is my right to defy, disobey, and disrupt” (8). Through her hashtags, Eltahawy expresses the importance of speaking out and fighting back against violence directed toward women’s bodies. Social media became a way for these women to speak out against the bodily violence they experience. Through the use of the internet, their voices carried into other parts of the world. Through the internet, their voices are not confined to their own country where

they are not being heard loud enough; their voices are amplified through the internet, and through this amplification, they are able to reach allies and garner support. The internet is a powerful tool when one needs to get her voice out.

Feminism in the Arab world has higher stakes than in the United States. Women in the United States are living much more comfortably than women in the Arab world. In the United States, women do not have to worry about getting their bones broken or being shot in the streets for speaking out about women's rights. The stakes are not the same. Women in the United States are not faced with life or death situations when they speak out. That is not the case for the Arab world. Women like Eltahawy are beaten and arrested, and sometimes faced with the death sentence, simply for speaking out about being attacked. Women in parts of the Islamic world are faced with death for not wanting to cover their hair.

Mahsa Amini is one of those women who fought back against the Islamic modes of dress and behavior that is in place in Iran. Iran's, "notorious 'morality police,' who enforce the country's rules on hijabs and other conservative Islamic modes of dress and behavior" arrested twenty-two-year-old Amini, and beat her, leaving fatal wounds that lead to her death" (Chappell and Hernandez). As seen in Amini's case, not following rules that the patriarchy sets in place has very high stakes; not wearing a hijab properly, for example, can be a death sentence. However, regardless of these consequences, these women in the world outside of the United States are speaking out and fighting back. After Amini's death, the women of Iran began protesting. According to Chappell and Hernandez, "Iranian women are burning their hijabs and cutting their hair short in protests over the death of Mahsa Amini." Iranian women are facing those stakes head on. They are letting those in power know that they will not stand for this violence against women, and they are willing to lay their lives on the line to prove their point.

Global feminism concerns itself with moving women's rights forward, globally. This form of feminism brings together all types of feminism; it becomes a transnational inspiration for women. For example, women in the Arab world are making major strides in their feminist movement. These women are taking to the internet and calling out systems of oppression through nude images and uniting hashtags, such as #MosqueMeToo, to break down the patriarchy. In Chapter Three: Angry Feminism in the Arab World: An Inspiration for Women in the United States, I will discuss activists, such as Mona Eltahawy and Amina Sboui, to show how this angry form of feminism can and should be inspirational. Feminism in the United States could use some of the anger that exists within the Arab feminist movement. There are activist groups in the United States who are taking to Twitter and dealing with abortion laws, but what these groups are saying need to be amplified. For example, non-governmental and nonprofit organization, the Center of Reproductive Rights, constantly posts about the injustices of abortion laws on Twitter, and they take cases to court. On March 7, 2023, @ReproRights posted, "[that] five women with dangerous pregnancy complications were denied abortions due to Texas' abortion bans. We are suing the state of Texas on their behalf." Women are dying because their state does not allow for abortions to occur; abortions that could be lifesaving are not allowed. While organizations are working to get the message out, their voices are not loud enough; the comment sections on these posts are also lacking. This post has one hundred and thirty-eight thousand views, but there are only eight hundred and forty-seven likes and two hundred and twenty-one Retweets. This is only one example of how people are seeing these messages, and the issue is that they are not getting involved with what is going on. Abortion laws in the United States are restricting women's rights, and it is time for global feminism to inspire women. It will take more than just organizations to make a change. This angrier form of feminism that women in the Arab world is

presenting ways in which women can fight back against the patriarchy. I will argue that what these women are doing could be implemented in the United States to make drastic changes.

In this thesis, I will argue that there must be an acknowledgement of limitations that exist outside of and within feminism. There are many factors that impact feminism across the world. These factors include racism, islamophobia, sexism, and all of these factors make their way into educational systems that teach feminism. I will show how these issues impact women in the Western world, including non-Western women who have moved to the United States. I will also show how non-Western women are making strides in their feminism that women of the Western World, specifically the United States, are not making. I will argue that in order to get to a more global form of feminism, Western feminism must acknowledge the power of non-Western feminism and allow it to inspire Western feminism.

In order to move toward this form of global feminism, I must begin Chapter One: Moving Toward a More Global Feminism with those who laid the groundwork starting with decentering the West. I will introduce and examine Edward Said's *Orientalism*, Assia Djebar's *Women of Algiers in their Apartment*, Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?" and Chandra Mohanty's *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*, in order to show where this feminism has stemmed from and how these pieces are influential on the movement as a whole. After showing where this feminism has stemmed from, I will move toward how this form of feminism is important and impactful for women today in the United States and around the world.

In Chapter Two: Under the Western Gaze: An Example of One Arab-American Woman's Experience in the United States, I explain that Laila Lalami employs the ideas of Said and Djebar in her novel *The Other Americans*. Lalami shows how racism and islamophobia are not only an

issue in singular areas, but they are also in the area of feminism. I explain how media before and after 9/11 negatively impacts the views of the Western characters in the novel. Lalami's character Nora faces racism and islamophobia in forms of destruction of her family's property, discrimination in the workplace, oversexualization, and the murder of her father. All of the negative instances in the novel occur as a result of imposed ideologies and the resistance of any other belief. If these negative ideologies had not been created or had been taught to see past, the outcome for Nora and her family may not have been the same. However, that is not the case, and Nora's experiences show what Muslims go through when the Western gaze surrounds them.

In Chapter Three: Angry Feminism in the Arab World: An Inspiration for Women in the United States, I discuss feminist activists Mona Eltahawy and Amina Sboui. Both women are from the Arab world, and they employ what I am calling, "angry feminism," to fight back against the patriarchy. Eltahawy writes manifestos and creates hashtags that fight the violence of the patriarchy and inspire global feminism. Through her movement's #MosqueMeToo and #IBeatMyAssaulter, Eltahawy inspires other women to speak out against the violence they have faced. Before these hashtags, many women remained silent because they believed that no one would listen to what they had to say. Eltahawy opened the door that let these women enter the conversation. Sboui also uses social media to amplify her voice. She posts nude images with shocking language to speak out against the injustices she and other women have faced as a result of being a woman in a patriarchal society. She utilizes angry feminism because no one will listen unless she does something shocking enough to recognize. These women resort to angry feminism to be heard, and their use of social media amplifies their voices across the world. Women in America should stop trying to be saviors and instead take inspiration from these women activists. Abortion laws impact women on a daily basis; however, because American women live with a

false sense of comfort, they are not as aggressive in retaliation as feminists like Eltahawy and Sboui. In the following excerpt from her essay, “Dear White Women Cheering Iranian Women,” Eltahawy explains that women in the United States are living in a false sense of comfort and they need to wake up:

Marsha is Exhibit A of the hypocritical fuckery of white Christian theocratic women. Yes, Marsha, and American women should be able to access abortion care without the fear of being arrested, tracked by bounty hunters or vigilanted, or being killed for it.

Oh and look at Senator Lindsay Graham, another paragon of support for freedom over there who doesn't give a fuck about freedom over here, who dares express concern for “Iranians dying for their freedom over there,” at the same time as he wants a national abortion ban that is the antithesis of freedom and which will result in Americans dying over here..

Marsha and Lindsay point at the theocrats in Iran because it is easier to see theocrats when they don't look like you.

But it's imperative to understand that the theocrats who look like you and those who don't both follow the same rule book: control desire and control our bodies. More simply: Control.

Enforced hijab.

Enforced pregnancy.

This isn't a “whose flavour of patriarchy is worse” letter. This is a “fuck the patriarchy everywhere” grenade that I gift to you. This is not *The Handmaid's Tale*, it's real life.

This is a wake the fuck up because clearly you've been drifting, cruising on the delusions that your whiteness will save you from white supremacist patriarchy.

Patriarchal ideas have become so entrenched in the minds of the women of the United States that they do not see what is happening to them; they do not understand the control they are under. As a result of false comfort and control, women in the United States do not choose to be very aggressive. The women who do decide to speak out of anger are silenced because other women who are under the patriarchy's control speak out against them. I am arguing that it is time to stop victimizing and lessening women of the non-Western world and start listening to feminists like Eltahawy and Sboui. Only when women start listening to each other, can they come together and form a more global feminism.

Said and Orientalism

I must start with Edward Said because he lays the groundwork for decentering the West. He is a part of the non-Western world that is also part of the Western world, and he speaks from a point of view that sees both sides as a Palestinian-American intellectual. Said's 1978 *Orientalism* critiques the Western view of the Arab world, and it breaks down the misconceptions that come with this viewpoint. Said has experience living in both worlds, and his point of view in his original version of *Orientalism*. Said defines orientalism as, "a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience" (1784). People who live in the Western world believe that anyone who is not from the predominantly white West is inferior in some way. Those who are not white and not originally from the United States or Western worlds are automatically deemed as other. In the following excerpt from *Orientalism*, Said explains how people form the idea of the other in their minds:

If we agree that all things in history, like history itself, are made by men, then we will appreciate how possible it is for objects, or places, or times, to be assigned roles and given meanings that acquire objective after the assignments are made. This is especially true of relatively uncommon things, like foreigners, mutant's behavior. Obviously, some distinctive objects are made by the mind, and these objects, while appearing to exist objectively, have only a fictional reality. A group of people living on a few acres of land will set up boundaries between their land and its immediate surroundings on the one hand, and on the other, a land beyond theirs which they call "the land of the barbarians." In other words, this universal practice of designating in one's mind a familiar space which is "ours" and an un beyond "ours," which is "theirs," is a way of making geographical distinctions that can be entirely arbitrary. I use the word arbitrary here because imaginative geography of the "our land/ barbarian land" variety does not require that the barbarians acknowledge the distinction. It is enough for "us" to set up these boundaries in our own minds; "they" become "they" accordingly, and both their territory and their mentality is designated as different from "ours." (167)

Said is saying that people set up boundaries in their minds, and anyone who is outside of their boundary or not in their inner circle becomes the barbarian. The barbarian is how Westerners see those from the world outside of the United States. If someone differs from the Eurocentric

image, he/she/they automatically become the barbarian. Said is showing that it all begins with the mind's barriers regarding the "other." To move to arguments on feminism, one must recognize that this barrier exists within the minds of Westerners. To move past that barrier, one must become conscious of that issue. Said does not focus on gender in *Orientalism*, but the groundwork he sets paves a way for feminism to be incorporated with his ideas. Theorists such as Djebbar and Spivak work with Said's ideas and incorporate gender into the argument.

Djebbar and the Western Gaze

Assia Djebbar's "Women of the Algiers in Their Apartment" focuses on how Western art impacts the Western gaze and its views on gender. Just like any form of media, art has a large impact on how the subject is perceived. Djebbar discusses how Eugene Delacroix, "penetrates into a world that is off-limits: that of the Algerian women," and through his artwork, he implants the idea of the orient. He is penetrating the world of women without consent. He is stripping them of their power as individuals. He is forcing his beliefs and ideas onto these women. There is no consent in this act. There is no joining of two parties in the creation of this painting. Delacroix perfectly exemplifies how the Western gaze forces itself onto the rest of the world.

As Said mentions in *Orientalism*, orientalism is an issue in which Western people impose their ideas and beliefs about a group of people onto that group of people, and Delacroix is doing exactly what Said is criticizing. The Western gaze is prominent in the piece because it is entirely created and depicted through Western thoughts, ideas, and beliefs about the Eastern world. Delacroix is imposing his idea that the women in his painting "Women of the Algiers in Their Apartment" are overly sexual and mysterious. He did not ask these women about themselves, nor did he confide in them to get a sense of who they really are. There is a sense of silent women who are positioned to serve the Western male gaze and satisfy its grotesque wants. Delacroix's

idea plays into the wonders of the orient, which is the oversexualization and fetishization of non-Western women.



Delacroix, Eugène. *The Women of Algiers*. 1834, Louvre, Paris, France, <http://myartblogcollection.blogspot.com/2015/04/20-art-works-showing-picassos.html>.

The women in the painting are posed in open positions. Their legs are spread open, and viewers can see between their legs. Their dresses are not entirely buttoned up, revealing parts of their chests. One woman is poking her backside out a bit as she appears to be walking away. Delacroix puts these women on display for himself and viewers to decide who these women are. This painting depicts women who have no presence; they are just spectators who are, “always waiting. Suddenly less sultanas than prisoners. They have no relationship with us, the spectators. They neither abandon nor refuse themselves to our gaze. Foreign but terribly present in this rarefied atmosphere of confinement” (Djebar). Delacroix strips any power these women could

have, and imposes a false image on them because he is presenting his imagination's perspective. This perspective creates issues because it gives the West a purely imagined Western view of these women. The false image is dangerous because it strips the qualities and power of the individual away. The women are whittled down to objects. The women in the painting are objects for the male gaze to look upon and find sexual gratification in. By penetrating this world of women and creating a false image, Delacroix is performing a form of violence. This act of creation is a form of violence against women. It stems from a Western male desire to impose his fantasy onto women without consent. These women are more than sexual poses and heated gazes, but a viewer would not know that because Delacroix has already decided who the viewers will see.

Delacroix is not the only artist who has forcefully penetrated the world of the women of the Algiers. Pablo Picasso follows in Delacroix's footsteps and turns the women of the Algiers into a hypersexualized version of themselves. Like Delacroix, Picasso projects his own views and beliefs onto this group of women. It must also be noted that Picasso is also working with an image that Delacroix already distorted. So, not only is he working with his distorted view, but there is also another layer, Delacroix's view, that is also imposed onto this work. That is how the Western gaze works; it is like a game of telephone. The Western gaze distorts the true image of these women every time a new artist creates their own take on the work. Picasso was inspired by Delacroix; Delacroix's painting has created a false image; Picasso's painting further falsifies the image of these women because he is working with an image that was already false to begin with.

In this version of the *Women of the Algiers*, Picasso strips the women of the Algiers of their clothing and puts them on display as objects for the male gaze. Their breasts and buttocks



Picasso, Pablo. *Les Femmes d'Alger*. 1955, Private collection of Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber Al Thani, Doha, Qatar, <https://www.pablocassio.org/the-women-of-algiers.jsp#prettyPhoto>.

are put on display. Picasso paints them into overly sexual positions; one woman's legs are splayed open for the viewers to see. There is supposed to be some sort of sexual liberation here, but all Picasso is doing is stripping these women and putting them on display without their permission. In the following excerpt, Assia Djebar explains how Picasso's stripping of the women of the Algiers down to their nude forms is another example of the Western gaze imposing its fantasy onto the women of the Eastern world:

Finally, the heroines—with the exception of the queen, whose breasts, however, are bursting out—are totally nude, as if Picasso was recovering the truth of the vernacular language that, in Arabic, designates the “unveiled” as “denuded” women. Also, as if he were making that denuding not only into a sign of an “emancipation,” but rather of these women's rebirth to their own bodies. (Djebar)

Picasso is giving a voice to these women, but it is not their voice; it is a voice he gave to them. He is speaking for them. He is literally stripping them and taking away their power. Another kind of violence is taking place here. These women did not consent to being stripped to their nude forms. They did not consent to Picasso speaking for them. Their power as individuals does not exist in this painting because Picasso took it from them the moment his brush touched the canvas. With every brush stroke, Picasso forces his Western fantasy onto these women, and creates a “rebirth” of a false image. These women are not reborn by their own free will or choice. They are not constituted in this creation. They are objects on display for the Western male gaze to do whatever it wants with them. There is no liberation here. Picasso is depicting his fantasy of what he thinks liberated women should be. What would it look like if the women of the Algiers were given the paintbrush?

Djebar is adding to Said’s original criticism that the West imposes its ideas and fantasies on the Eastern. By imposing these ideas and fantasies, the West is violating the East because it is taking total control over the other. There is no consent. There is not confiding in those who live in the East. There is only Western thought and beliefs that create the false images depicted in the work of Artists like Delacroix and Picasso. The Western gaze is dangerous, and those who possess it must learn that they should take the blinders off; they should also stop and listen before allowing this uniformed gaze to provide the answers.

Spivak: Subalterns Can Speak

Gayatri Spivak’s “Can the Subaltern Speak?” criticizes the West like Said, but she adds in a gendered aspect to the argument that connects to Djebar’s argument about how the Western gaze distorts the image of gender. “Can the Subaltern Speak” speaks to the fact that the humanitarian efforts of the Western world should not try to give the subaltern a voice. The

subaltern must learn to speak for herself. For it is the words of the subaltern alone that can speak out about her issues. It is not the place for Western culture to step in and take over. Spivak says, “the subaltern cannot speak. There is no virtue in global laundry lists with ‘woman’ as a pious item. Representation had not withered away. The female intellectual as intellectual has a circumscribed task which she must not disown with a flourish” (104). Spivak is not saying that the voices of these women are nonexistent; she is saying that in a political sphere, these voices are not being heard. The reason their voices are not being heard is because they are not scholars; in most cases, they do not have the access to become scholars. In turn, no one listens to what they have to say, and instead, scholars tend to speak for them.

This idea that subalterns do not possess the ability to speak for themselves is a huge issue when it comes to global feminism. Not everyone can be a scholar, and many scholars have tried to speak for those who they deem unscholarly. The white savior complex comes into play when Spivak writes that, “white men are saving brown women from brown men” (92). The idea that women of color cannot speak for or protect themselves is another Western concept that is false. These women do not need to be saved; they need to be heard. Women of the Arab world are speaking out about the injustices within their world. They are speaking out about assault on their bodies through social media. They are writing books. They are posting videos online. These subalterns are done remaining silent.

The reason Arab feminism is not supported as broadly is because women of the Western world have preconceived notions about these women of the Arab world. The white savior complex is a result of false images and beliefs about Eastern people. Orientalism is never going to fully disappear, but the power it has over global feminism needs to begin to dissipate. And that dissipation should start with the taking of inspiration from Arab feminism.

Westerners have a savior complex, meaning that they feel as though the aspects of other countries, such as feminism for example, in other countries need helping hands to guide them in the Western way. While it is important to aid those who need help, it is not the time or the place to push Western ideology onto other cultures around the world. Western ideologies place members of the non-Western world into categories of the villain and the victim.

Said states that Orientalism is a Western perception that “reveals more about the West and its fantasies than it does about the actual people, culture, and history of the East” (1781). Because Orientalism is a Western concept, it imposes Western views on anyone who is considered the “other.” The issue with the “other” not only exists with the oversexualized view of women, but also Arab people as a whole. Racism and Islamophobia are rampant throughout the world. Film and media negatively portray this group of people. Media has always portrayed Arab men and women as the villains and sexual deviants. According to Salita, “media, including negative statements made by presidents and prominent government officials, and ... ‘[the] generic Arab shares ... [the stereotyped] thick lips, evil eyes, unkempt hair, scruffy beard, weak chin, crooked nose, vile look’” (160). Media depicts these men and women as monsters, which is a false image. The Western gaze tends to see people of Arab descent as villains, especially after 9/11. This group of people face stereotyping, racism, and Islamophobia, and this issue results from the false image that the Western gaze imposes upon them. The false image does not end with stereotyping, racism, and Islamophobia. Those issues are the roots to another large issue that has arisen over the last twenty-two years. That issue is the white savior complex.

Mohanty’s Global Feminism

Said, Djébar, and Spivak have introduced issues that Chandra Mohanty will refer to as borders, and these borders affect scholarship, creating barriers that prevent feminism from

reaching its full potential. Chandra Mohanty's *Feminism Without Borders* provides a critique of Eurocentric and Western feminist scholarship, and in this work, she explains borders that exist that negatively impact feminism. Mohanty argues that there are borders put in place, such as the assumptions regarding class, sexuality, and race, that negatively impact feminist scholarship. With borders comes ideology, and when ideology is in practice, it becomes difficult to escape the mindsets it creates. A large issue that Mohanty focuses on is the fact that scholarship is overrun with these borders. The only way to get past these borders is to become conscious of them and transcend them.

Western scholarship cannot see past these borders. Academia itself is stuck within the borders, and in turn, it becomes a border, too. Students are learning scholarship based on narrow views, and this teaching of Eurocentric feminism continues to feed into the current problem at hand. With borders put in place, feminism outside of the Eurocentric and Western worlds is seen as uncivilized and in need of white saviors. Mohanty says, "I think feminist pedagogy should not simply expose students to a particularized academic scholarship but that it should also envision the possibility of activism and struggle outside the academy. Political education through feminist pedagogy should teach active citizenship in such struggles for justice" (243). Mohanty is saying that the students are taught within borders, and these borders must be acknowledged and understood in order to transcend them.

Once aware of these borders, one can think about how a border, such as race, impacts his/her/their view on feminism in other parts of the world. Racism, sexism, classism, etc. all negatively impact feminism across the world because they place limitations on one's scope. For example, feminism in the Middle Eastern world is seen as incapable of making advancements by itself, and women in the United States feel the need to save the women of the Middle Eastern

world. These women do not need saving, and as I will argue later, they are making strides that could be, and should be, inspirational for women of the United States. Mohanty's goal is to help scholars see past these borders and create a more global form of feminism.

Mohanty is saying that there needs to be a form of feminism that transcends these problematic borders. She is pushing towards a more global form of feminism. She offers her view of a feminism without borders in the following excerpt:

Feminism without borders is not the same as "border-less" feminism. It acknowledges the fault lines, conflicts, differences, fears, and containment that borders represent. It acknowledges that there is no one sense of a border, that the lines between and through nations, races, classes, sexualities, religions, and disabilities, are real-and that a feminism without borders must envision change and social justice work across these lines of demarcation and division. I want to speak of feminism without silences and exclusions in order to draw attention to the tension between the simultaneous plurality and narrowness of borders and the emancipatory potential of crossing through, with, and over these borders in our everyday lives. (Mohanty 2)

This feminism without borders acknowledges that there are borders put in place. These borders will not simply go away overnight, but Mohanty is saying that the borders should be acknowledged in order to transcend them. One must be constantly aware that borders such as class, race, sexuality, etc. exist in order to push past them.

Mohanty pushes for a feminism without borders. These borders that exist do not disappear in this feminism Mohanty promotes, but the feminist scholar becomes aware of them. This awareness is what allows the scholar to transcend the borders that exist around him/her/them. In order to have a more inclusive, global feminism, this awareness must be present. In order to truly understand and aid the different forms of feminism in the worlds outside of the Eurocentric world, the Western feminist scholar must use her awareness.

Conclusion

In Chapter One: Moving Toward a More Global Feminism, I have introduced the critics and activists who have laid the groundwork for a movement toward more global feminism. Said, Djebbar, Spivak, and Mohanty are all concerned with decentering the West. Said decenters the West through his lens that focuses on his experience living in the East and West. Said does not focus on gender, but he lays the groundwork for transcending barriers of race and class. Djebbar also implements the ideas of Said. She argues that the Western gaze not only imposes racist ideology on the East, but she also argues that it implements sexism, too. Artists, such as Delacroix and Picasso, veil paintings with their Western gaze, and this veiling creates a false image that feeds into the borders that prevent the true images from emerging. On similar lines, Spivak argues that the Western gaze and Western literature paint false images and steal the voices of women outside of the Eurocentric and Western worlds. Borders have emerged as a result of the Western gaze and its false assumptions and fantasies. To bring all of this together, Mohanty argues that in order to transcend these borders, one must become aware that these borders exist. Academia is within those borders, and it is up to feminist scholars to recognize those borders, transcend them, and help create a more global form of feminism.

The Western Gaze is problematic for a multitude of reasons, such as fueling racism and creating false images of people who are not from the Eurocentric and Western worlds. The false images are the results of fantasies and ideologies that westerners impose on those who are not from the Western world, and these fantasies take away the individuality and power of those on the receiving end of the gaze. This Western gaze creates villains and victims of those who are not part of the Western World. Before 9/11, Muslims and those from the Eastern world were depicted as the villains in film and media, creating fear amongst viewers. These forms of film and media also incited anger and racism that became amplified after 9/11.

In Chapter Two: Under the Western Gaze: An Example of One Arab-American Woman's Experience in the United States, I will apply the ideas of Said and Djubar to argue that the racism, islamophobia, sexism, etc. they point out in their works appears in Laila Lalami's *The Other Americans*. This novel shows how the Western gaze and ideologies impact those from non-Western worlds. Lalami's main character Nora faces racism and islamophobia from a young age; she is shunned and mistreated because she looks different, eats different food, and has a different sounding name. Orientalism and the wonders of the Orient play a large role in the section of the novel that focus on Fiero's oversexualization of Nora. She is over sexualized because she is a non-Westerner, and artwork, such as pieces by Picasso and Delacroix, films, and media have influenced the way Westerners perceive the non-West. The appearance of these issues shows how they bleed into feminism. Feminism is not just feminism itself; borders such as racism and islamophobia play a role in negatively impacting feminism. I will argue that this work of literature sheds light on the borders that exist and encourages readers to become aware that those borders exist.

Finally, in Chapter Three: Angry Feminism in the Arab World: An Inspiration for Women in the United States, I will argue that feminists in the Arab world are using an angrier form of feminism to combat the patriarchy. I will use examples from Eltahawy's *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls*, the #MosqueMeToo and #IBeatMyAssualter, and Amina Sboui's "Fuck Your Morals" to show how this angry form of feminism works and how it can be beneficial for women in the United States. This form of feminism should be inspirational for women in the United States because as of right now, women are not fighting back hard enough, and the angry feminism that exists in the Arab world can be implemented into feminism in the United States.

Chapter Two: Under the Western Gaze: An Example of One Arab-American Woman's Experience in the United States

Introduction

In this chapter, I will show how the groundwork the theorists from Chapter One: *Moving Toward a More Global Feminism* laid appears in the life of an Arab woman living in the United States. I will analyze Laila Lalami's *The Other Americans* and show how the theorists' points are linked to the work. I have chosen to examine this novel because it exemplifies how the Western gaze and Western ideologies negatively impact those who are not from the United States. The novel shows how the groundwork laid in Chapter One: *Moving Toward a More Global Feminism* applies to life in the United States for Arab Immigrants. Said's arguments regarding racism and islamophobia, Djébar's argument's regarding the Western gaze and feminism, Spivak's arguments about the subaltern and gender, and Mohanty's argument about borders preventing people from transcending ideologies are all prevalent in this novel. Throughout this thesis, I will argue that these Western ideologies regarding views of those of Arab descent are related to the borders that Mohanty states are preventing Western feminists from understanding the reality of situations; for feminism to become more global, borders such as racism, islamophobia, sexism, etc., must be transcended. Lalami's *The Other Americans* presents the borders that exist and leads to an eye-opening that will help move toward a more global form of feminism.

Laila Lalami's *The Other Americans* presents readers with Nora, an Arab-American woman who experiences life under a certain type of the Western gaze that deals with racist attitudes, islamophobia, oversexualization of the female body, etc. Before the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States, Nora and her family faced racism; they were treated poorly based

on their appearances, traditions, and culture, and media often portrayed them as villains in films. The members of the Guerraoui family were considered to be the Other, and the fact that they were thought to be the mysterious Other made them dangerous to the Western eye of many of the white characters in the novel. The fear directed toward Nora and her family worsened when 9/11. The 9/11 terrorist attacks made a devastating impact on the United States, and media began to portray the Arab-American in a negative light; there were attempts to reshape this newly formed opinion of the Arab-American. Being of Arab descent, Nora and her family, along with other Arab-Americans, are grouped together and considered one entity – the terrorist – because the Western gaze that Lalami presents the reader focuses on the appearance of those who terrorized the United States, and it places blame on the group as a whole. This fact takes away an individual's experience; it prevents Nora from living a peaceful and successful life. To prove the negative impact on Nora as a result of the Western gaze and belief system, I will be in conversation with Basu and Lalami.

I will argue that under this gaze, Nora experiences different kinds of racism before and after 9/11 based on her appearance and traditions. Before 9/11, as an Arab-American child, such as Nora herself, was subject to racism and othering in the classroom and on the playground. After 9/11, a new kind of racism emerged that labeled them as terrorists. Nora is treated as if she were a terrorist, even though she had nothing to do with what happened in 2001.

As a grown woman, Nora still faces othering, racism, and Islamophobia, but now she is also in the view of the “eye of sex” (Djebar). I will further argue that Nora has caught this eye because of the Western gaze that has painted Middle Eastern women as the hypersexual other. Painters such as Delacroix and Picasso are in part responsible for this false, sexualized image. I will be in conversation to show how these painters are responsible for creating false images.

Finally, I will argue that this sexual gaze impacts Nora's relationships with men. I will compare and contrast Beck's relationship with Nora with Jeremy's relationship with Nora. In this comparison, I will be examining how exoticism and sexualization impact each of the relationships. I will also examine how these relationships impact Nora to present and Arab American woman's experience in relationships with non-Arab men in the United States.

This chapter will examine Nora's experiences as an Arab American woman pre- and post- 9/11 to give a perspective on what it is like to be an Arab-American woman in the United States and show how this experience can help move toward a more global feminism. This novel follows the order of the groundwork for global feminism laid out in Chapter One: Moving Toward a More Global Feminism. In order to begin moving toward a more global feminism, I must show how the arguments of theorists in Chapter One: Moving Toward a More Global Feminism unfold in the lives of those who are not Westerners. Nora's perspective and experiences are her own, and while these experiences cannot represent the experiences of all Arab-American women in America, they can give insight as to what it may be like for some of these women. I will discuss Nora's experiences with out-casting, stereotyping, hate crimes, and islamophobia, and racism before and after 9/11, as well as her experiences in relationships, to show how her image is distorted, othered, and sexualized. These experiences end with the unveiling of borders that exist within the Western feminist's view. In order to move toward transcending those borders and move toward global feminism, I must show how those borders appear.

Before 9/11: Nora's Experience with Out-Casting in Elementary School in the United States

Lalami presents a single experience of an Arab-American girl through Nora; Nora's childhood experience in America is anything but pleasant. Like Said mentions, Nora experiences being what the minds of Westerners deem to be the "other" or the "barbarian" because she is not a Westerner. Throughout her childhood, Nora is treated as an outsider because of her appearance, name, culture, etc. Being of Arab descent makes her odd and mysterious to the white characters in the novel. Because she looks different and because she has different cultural practices, the children in the novel choose to "other" her and bully her. Nora becomes an outcast.

This out-casting can be clearly seen when Nora goes to school during her childhood. Nora's classmates exclude her from activities because she eats different food and looks different. For example, Nora says, "I ate the zaalouk my mother had put in my lunchbox, while the other girls at my table whispered among themselves" (Lalami 17). Children have to learn this behavior from somewhere. The children "other" her because this behavior is a learned response from the parents and even films. Children follow the examples that their parents set for them. If the parents make fun of someone because they are eating an un-American food, the children will do the same. If the parents bully someone because that person is of a different race, the children will do the same. Furthermore, the cartoons, especially older cartoons and tv shows that children would have been watching in the 1990s when Nora was growing up, tend to have racist tones to them. Characters who are the good guys are white, and the bad guys have the same skin tone as Nora. The parents' actions and the cartoons lead the children to behave in the same manner because they are taught that it is normal to mistreat and outcast those who are not Caucasian. Television shows also negatively impact how the Western gaze sees the an Arab-American like Nora. In the following excerpt, Salaita mentions how television negatively portrays Arab

Americans, taking away their individuality, and he also presents survey evidence from pre-9/11 television and politics:

Those assumptions, based on the notion that terrorism is a morally repugnant and inexplicable act exclusive to the East, survive only in the framework of a corresponding assumption, that Arabs are inferior in culture and intellect to Americans (read: Whites). 9/11, as I mentioned above, did not produce these assumptions, although it did provide them with pragmatic legitimacy to advocates of imperative patriotism already predisposed to anti-Arab racism. The stereotypes underlying the assumptions have long existed and have been expressed through popular American culture in, among other media, television and film, as the journal *Cineaste* (1989) and media critic Jack Shaheen (2001) have recorded. In a detailed study of “the Arab image” in the United States, Ronald Stockton surveyed hundreds of representations of Arabs in numerous media, including negative statements made by presidents and prominent government officials, and concluded that “[t]he generic Arab shares with [the stereotyped] Jews thick lips, evil eyes, unkempt hair, scruffy beard, weak chin, crooked nose, vile look. (160)

During the time before 9/11, there were still false representations of Arab-Americans in media and film. These representations created a terrifying image, and Arab-Americans like Nora and her family suffered because they were not white.

Also, because she looks like the characters who are presented as evil and different in the parent’s eyes and the cartoons, the students continue to exclude Nora from their groups. The students at Nora’s elementary school also exclude her from the group. Nora mentions that, “at story time, we all gathered around Mrs. Nielson to hear her read from ‘Rapunzel,’ but nobody wanted to sit next to me” (Lalami 18). Nora’s dark eyes, hair, and skin are not a common trait in America, and the children have not seen someone who has these traits, except in the brief moments where the Arab-American is presented as the villain. Nora suffers because the Western gaze has already determined who she is and who she is going to be. She does not stand a chance because her voice and opportunities are shut down before she can even speak. She is silenced because no one will listen to what she has to say; she is a subaltern.

Nora’s Knowledge of Her Otherness and Out-Casting

In addition, Nora knows that she is an outcast, and she knows that there is nothing she can say or do that will change the children's minds; Nora is aware of the borders that exist within the minds of the children she goes to school with. Nora knows that the children are mistreating her because she is different from the American average. She is not white. She has an uncommon name. She eats different food. These issues result from the borders of racism and islamophobia that have been taught and ingrained into the minds of these children. Nora can never escape from this othering; it surrounds her and impacts her entire being because it surrounds the children and controls their ways of thinking. Nora says that, "The sense of being different never completely went away. The fault lines usually appeared when I was asked what church I went to, or when my mother spoke to me in the school parking lot, or when the history teacher asked a random question about the Middle East and all eyes turned to me" (Lalami 20). Because Nora eats food the girls are unfamiliar with, they perceive her as the estranged "other." The "other" is strange because the white American cannot wrap her head around Middle Eastern culture. Going back to Said, there is a pre-conceived notion that anything that is not inherently Western is "barbaric." Nora's culture is different, and therefore, it is dangerous, and the children, and the parents who teach them, will not take the time to learn to listen and understand. Borders blind the children from understanding that there is nothing wrong with being different. 9/11 impacts these borders further and turns those from the Middle East into a believed threat to American society.

The poor treatment that Nora faces before 9/11 shows how easily the influence of film and parents impact children's perspectives. Because children are taught to act this way, they carry on the racist tones into adulthood, and the issues are never solved. Lalami is showing readers that adult's views and beliefs negatively impact children and the cycle continues. Lalami is presenting one female, Arab-American child's experience growing up in the United States

before 9/11. Other Arab-American children have completely different experiences; some may have been beaten or murdered; some may have had their lunch dumped on them; some may have been molested. Those are shocking possibilities, but they are all possibilities that likely did happen. Nora still had a negative experience, but her experience is very different from what other children could have faced.

After 9/11: Nora's Experience with Stereotyping, Hate Crimes, and Islamophobia

After 9/11, Nora began experiencing more and more racism because the media portrayed her as one of the members of the Taliban that flew into the Twin Towers. The Western gaze predetermined her role as an American citizen; she, along with other Arab American characters in the novel are placed in a group' they are not treated as individuals. According to Altwaiji, "representations of Arab Muslims become more prevalent in post-9/11 politics, and terrorism becomes the most available term for labeling this group of people" (314). They are treated as one entity – the terrorists. Nora says that "in September of my sophomore year, two planes were flown into the World Trade Center and strangely that distinction seemed to matter less, not more. We were both called the same names. Ragheads Talibans. Sometimes, raghead talibans" (Lalami 91-92). Nora experiences the life of an individual who has a predetermined image and personality as a result of media and propaganda. The racial slurs and islamophobia are directed toward Nora, and she suffers for it.

Furthermore, hate crimes extend to actual physical violence in the novel. In his article, Basu says, "9/11 brings these covert prejudices to the foreground, and the characters in the novel become targets of more explicit xenophobia and racial hostility" (42-3). Nora and her family become targets of this hostility. The family owns a doughnut shop, and 9/11 characters who are not Arab-Americans arson the building. Nora says, "I knew something terrible would happen.

You remember his business was arsoned after September 11th” (Lalami 25). Nora and her family want to succeed in America; that is the whole reason that they moved to the United States in the first place. They are chasing the American dream, and 9/11 takes any possibility of achieving that dream away from them. In the following excerpt from “A World Changed: What Post-9/11 Stories Tell Us about the Position of America, Purpose of Business, and Meaning of Work,” Michaelson and Tosti-Kharas explain how the Guerraoui family wants to achieve an American Dream that involves ownership and success in America:

Like the history of the United States, the novel is in significant part a story of property ownership and how a claim to land can both lend legitimacy to a family’s status and give rise to disputes with other landowners. It raises the still-present question of whether the American Dream is available to anyone who enters the country, or only to those whose opportunities fit within the existing power structure. (885)

They are successful for a while, but that success is destroyed in a matter of seconds after someone lights the match.

The Western gaze is blurry, and it prevents the white Americans in the novel from seeing Nora and her family as normal humans who are seeking the same goal. According to Altwaiji, “‘terrorist’ propagation, with which the imperial stereotyping power has labeled all Arab Muslims, if not all Arabs including the Christian Arabs,” showing how Nora and her family are victims as a result of these false assumptions (314). Nora is subject to the violent language and harassment, exclusion, etc. Vandals burned down her father’s store because they are Arab-Americans, and they are placed into a stereotype for that very reason; in the eyes of the Western Gaze, they are terrorists.

The media did attempt to help improve the image of the Arab-American, but the negative views were much more powerful. In her article, Alsultany says, “At the same time that sympathetic portrayals of Arab and Muslim Americans proliferated on US commercial television

in the weeks, months, and years after 9/11, hate crimes, workplace discrimination, bias incidents, and airline discrimination targeting Arab and Muslim Americans increased exponentially” (161). As a result, Nora and her family still experienced hate crimes. Nora’s father’s shop was burned down because he was believed to be connected to the Terrorist who happened to be Muslim, but in actuality he, “[is] an atheist ... [he does not] pretend to be someone [he is] not” (Lalami 57). Because they are placed into a standardized mold, the Guerraoui family are considered to belong to the Taliban group that was responsible for 9/11. In the following lines about media’s portrayal of Arab and Muslim Americans, Alsultany mentions:

[That] a TV drama that portrays an Arab American as the unjust victim of post-9/11 discrimination often appears in a story line that concludes that it is unfortunate but inevitable that Arabs and Muslims will have to deal with discrimination because of the exceptional national security crisis. So, on the one hand, we have unusually sympathetic portrayals of Arabs and Muslims on network television. And on the other, the image often appears in a narrative that justifies discrimination against them. (164)

This statement is another example of how media fails to let the Arab and Muslim American speak, as well as how it continues to place Nora and her family into the same old –same old mold. Nora and her family do not direct or write the screenplay for these shows. They are silenced here, as well, because they do not get a say in how the media is portraying them. According to Markina, “those who undergo normalization in images that prescribe how they should behave, feel, and look in accordance with a model (this applies to women in particular); and those who are openly alienated, subjected to stereotyping through negative images, or who are depicted as being aggressive, dangerous or outright enemies (such as images of migrants in the print media)” (172). These shows pre-determine how Nora and her family should perform within society, as well as how they should be treated. The issue of stereotyping takes away the Guerraoui family’s voice and ability to succeed in the United States. It places them into a taped-up box that they cannot break free from.

Furthermore, on the topic of religion, there are characters in the novel that are close to Nora who practice a different religion than the assumed sole religion of the Middle East, further proving that American assumptions about religion in the Middle East are false. Nora's friend, Sonya, is Hindu, but Nora mentions that "we were both thought to be Muslim and Sonya often had to say, 'No, no, I'm Hindu,'" showing that the Americans idea that everyone who looks like he or she comes from the Middle East is Muslim is false (Lalami 91). Lalami is presenting the fact that the American imagination has created one view of the religion in the Middle Eastern world, and that view is solely based on false assumptions. These false assumptions will later lead to unfair treatment because Muslims are associated with terrorism. After 9/11, the fact that Sonya is not Muslim does not matter, and anyone who looks as though he or she is from the Middle East is assumed to be a terrorist.

Lalami's View and Voice

Even though many years have passed since 9/11, racism toward Arab-Americans still exists, and Lalami presents readers with Nora's experience to show a single Arab-American woman's experience and expose the borders that exist within the American mind. Lalami speaks on her novel, and she says, "the novel is still set in 2014. And if it reads differently it is only because, as I said, we are seeing a particular upswing of nativist rhetoric and nativist behavior. But the underlying issues were always there. It's not as if there was not anti-immigrant, anti-Arab, anti-Muslim, or even anti-veteran sentiment before 2016" (Frelier 15). Lalami incorporates all of these issues in the novel, and readers are shown how Nora experiences all of this negativity. Readers get the singular experience of an Arab-American woman so they can see what one experience is like; they can hear her voice. They will have to listen to what she is saying as she narrates the piece.

Nora's Experience with Work in the United States

Nora's Experience in America as an Adult Arab-Woman is often negative; She is still treated as if she were one of the terrorists in 9/11, or she could be one. When she is at Silverwood, Nora says, "a security guard stopped me as I tried to go into the venue on my first morning, asking me to show my ID and tell him what business I had in the building" (Lalami 272). Because Nora looks a certain way, she is stopped and forced to show her ID. In the following excerpt from his article, Gamal talks about how modern Orientalism and 9/11 have negatively impacted the Arab-American's life:

The close affinity between the 9/11 discourses and modern Orientalism is taken into consideration as far as the dominant stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims are concerned. John Esposito has noted, "For many in the West it is axiomatic that Arabs are nomads or oil shaykhs, denizens of the desert and harems, an emotional, combative, and irrational people. Islam is equated with holy war and hatred, fanaticism and violence, intolerance and the oppression of women." (98)

Because Nora looks a certain way, she is once again stereotyped. She should simply be able to walk through a building without security stopping her. She is not a danger, but she is perceived to be one because of her appearance.

As a result of her Middle Eastern appearance, finding a job is difficult for Nora because she is an Arab-American, and when she does find a job, the people who work with her discriminate against her. Nora is treated like a criminal based on her appearance, and when she is at Silverwood, she says "a security guard stopped me as I tried to go into the venue on my first morning, asking me to show my ID and tell him what business I had in the building" (Lalami 272). Silverwood is Nora's first venue where she will play music. Nora is a talented musician, but the American characters do not see her as a musician – they see her as a terrorist. The security guard sees Nora as a threat simply based on a stereotype. That is the issue. A stereotype determines her position in the American world; she has no say in the matter of her character.

Nora cannot be grouped in with the actual terrorists; she is a normal American woman trying to live her life without being stopped at every security check.

Along with her desire to play music, Nora also desires to teach students, but, again, she is a victim of stereotypical discrimination. A further example of this discrimination occurs when Nora “pursues her passion for music composition, a single woman barely getting by in the San Francisco Bay area on meager commissions, adjunct teaching positions, and the perpetual hope of securing grant funding” (Michaelson and Tosti-Kharas 886). It is difficult to find a job in academia, but it is even more difficult for Nora because Americans have placed her in a stereotypical position. It is harder to get a job, grants, and even a glimpse of hope because those in charge shoot her down before she has a chance.

The Sexualized Image

The Western gaze is guilty of sexualizing the image of the Middle Eastern Woman. The gaze can be seen clearly in Delacroix’s and Picasso’s paintings of *The Women of Algiers*. These paintings depict Middle Eastern women as overly sexual beings. In Delacroix’s painting, the women are sprawled out, and their eyes denote something mysterious. In Picasso’s painting, the women are naked; their breasts are perky and pointed, and they are also sprawled out in overly sexual positions. These paintings show how the Western gaze chooses to sexualize and fetishize the “oriental” woman.

Western art leads to the creation of the idea that “the other” woman’s body is an exotic sex object. To characters like Fierro, the body of a woman of foreign descent is mysterious and exotic; her body is a new experience that the white European male desires to experience. This idea arose from Western art and media. Western paintings of women from the Middle East impose the white European male’s gaze on the woman; he speaks for her, not with her. In Assia

Djebar's work, she talks about the image of "the other" and how Westerners skew that image. In her novel *Women of Algiers in their Apartment*, Djebar states, "there is an almost feverish hand at work, an intoxicated gaze: a fugitive moment of evanescent revelation standing on that borderline in motion where dream and reality converge." She is referring to Delacroix's painting of three Algerian women and a servant girl in their apartment. These women are from Algeria and not of Moroccan descent like Nora is, but Delacroix began his journey in Morocco. In Morocco, Delacroix begins to gather ideas and images of what he thinks is the oriental woman, and, "as he passes from Morocco to Algeria, Delacroix crosses, at the same time, a subtle frontier that is going to invert every sign and will be at the root of what posterity shall retain as this singular 'journey to the Orient'" (Djebar). Delacroix traveled to Morocco before he went to Algeria, and Morocco is where his ideas bloomed; it is where he created his own version of the "the other" women instead of the true version of those women. And, at some point in his life, Fierro has seen the false image of women from the Middle East, and these images stick with him, creating another false version of these women.

Nora is subject to the sexualized fantasies associated with this image. It is common for film and literature to skew the image of people from the Middle East, specifically women, and Nora is subject to the fantasy that certain white Western men in the novel project onto her. One of Nora's first boyfriends is Beckett Burke, and it is clear that he only wants to date her to sleep with her because she is exotic. Burke comes from wealth, and he travels quite often, spreading the Westerner's help to third world countries. He also always has a foreign woman on his arm. Basu mentions that, "Nora recognizes that Beckett's attraction for her was fueled by her status representing exotic novelty through her Moroccan heritage. Clearly, Beckett fetishizes this exoticism but craves newer women who represent different ethnic cultures and fresh exotic

appeal” (45). Beckett Burke becomes intrigued with Nora because of her exotic appearance; he does not care about who she is as a person. The only thing that matters to him is experiencing the Orient. In the following excerpt, Nora explains what happens after Burke has had his way with her:

When, a couple of weeks later, he took me to his apartment and relieved me of my virginity, I did not mind, or yet know I should mind, that the sex was rushed and unenjoyable. I was flattered that he was interested in me and proud to stand beside him at parties, absorbing his effortless cool as if by osmosis. With his hand on my back, he introduced me as “the lovely Nora Guerraoui” and the sound of my name on his lips, even with the exaggeratedly rolled r’s, thrilled me... When Beckett started to cancel dates or set them up last minute, I blamed his busy schedule. When he forgot to call me, I blamed myself for being too dull. Only when I saw him walking down Arboretum Avenue with Margarita Semprevivo, his arm around her tiny waist, did I finally understand that he had moved on to “the lovely Rita.” (Lalami 120)

This excerpt reveals that Beckett Burke wants to have sexual relations with Nora because of her exotic appearance due to her Moroccan ethnicity. Nora now knows that he does not care about her. He relieves her of her virginity; it is not an enjoyable experience for her like it should be. The sex is rushed because he wants to experience her as quickly as possible to please himself; he does not care if she felt pleasure. This experience is an example of the Western male seeking out the Oriental female’s body as a result of fetishization. Once Beckett Burke is done with Nora, he treats her as if she does not exist; he replaces her with another exotic female that he will treat the same way as he did her.

Nora’s body is fetishized once again when she meets Fierro. Fierro is only concerned with the exotic appearance of Nora’s body; he thinks because she is exotic, exploring her body will lead to a much different experience than the body of any other woman he has slept with. After he hears that Nora is Moroccan, Fierro asks Jeremy if he “fuck[ed] her” (Lalami 205). To Fierro, Nora is an object to be sexualized, and that fact is a result of the skewed image of the Middle Eastern woman. Literature and films about women from the Middle East impose a false,

sexualized image of them, and when talking about a piece of literature regarding a Middle Eastern woman, Said says that “she never spoke of herself, she never represented emotions, presence, or history” (1787). A white, Western man wrote this work of literature, and he imposed his fantasies upon this woman, creating an overly sexualized image of the Middle Eastern woman. As a result of film and literature that create this skewed image, Fierro has formed a fantasy about Nora, and he can only see her as a sexual object. She has no voice because no one will listen. She is cipher because who she is as a person does not matter; her voice does not matter; her body does not matter. The only thing that matters is what the white man can experience with her. Additionally, later in the novel, Fierro continues to reveal his sexual fantasies about Nora when he tells Jeremy, “I didn’t know you like hajji pussy so much” (Lalami 255). Fierro thinks that the only reason Jeremy could want to be with Nora is for sex because Middle Eastern women are falsely portrayed as sexual beings in Western portrayals of “the other” women. Paintings, literature, social media, etc. distort the image of the Middle Eastern woman and silence their voices. In this moment, it is clear to see that Fierro possesses a skewed image of Nora, and this skewed image is a result of the fantasies that Orientalism creates. Throughout the entire novel, Nora is treated as a lesser being because the fantasies that result from Orientalism are so ingrained in the American mind.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Lalami’s novel *The Other Americans* presents how Nora and her family experience racism, islamophobia, and xenophobia, as well as how the Western gaze skews their image. The family moved to the United States to create a better life for themselves, but they end up experiencing horror and trauma instead. Nora faces othering and out-casting in school. She and her family suffer hate crimes. They suffer loss instead of the gain that they had hoped to

achieve. The Western gaze silences them and prevents them from speaking out. Nora cannot speak out if no one is there to listen, and very few characters who are white care to hear what she has to say. Nora is an American. She has a voice. And her story deserves to be heard. I have argued that Nora has been discriminated against and that her image has been skewed. That image should be a little bit clearer now.

This chapter shows how the ideas of Said, Djebbar, Spivak, and Mohanty from Chapter One: Moving Toward Global Feminism play out through the life of Nora. Nora experiences “othering” on a daily basis because of her ethnic background. She is subject racism and islamophobia, as well as the fetishization of the Western gaze. She is a silenced subaltern because no one is listening to what she has to say. Finally, the borders that Mohanty brings up are prominent throughout the novel, and the novel helps these borders, such as racism, islamophobia, and sexism come to light. Lalami incorporates the theorists’ ideas and shows readers that borders exist. This novel becomes a medium through which a transcendence of borders can occur.

Now that there is an understanding of the borders that exist in the United States, I will move to the Middle East to show how feminism in the Middle East combats borders that exist there, and I will also argue that the feminism in the Middle East is making strides; feminism in other parts of the world are not falling behind feminism in America. In Chapter Three: Angry Feminism in the Arab World: An Inspiration for Women in the United States, I will reintroduce Mona Eltahawy and Amina Sboui to my argument. Eltahawy and Sboui are feminist activists who fight against bodily violence toward women, and their anger towards the patriarchal system that dictates the rights to their bodies backs their activism. These two feminist activists utilize the internet to amplify their voices, and people are listening. I will argue that this form of feminism

is the type of feminism that the women in the United States need to implement into their form of feminism. To get to a more global feminism, borders must be transcended and voices of those speaking out must be heard.

Chapter Three: Angry Feminism in the Arab World: An Inspiration for Women in the United States

Introduction

In the following excerpt from her 2022 essay, “Dear White Women Cheering Iranian Women,” Mona Eltahawy presents the fact that women in the United States and women in Iran are both dealing with a controlling patriarchy. In the following excerpt from this essay, Eltahawy brings about the issues of abortion rights in the United States:

“Women in Iran should be able to wear what they want without the fear of being killed for it,” extolled that paragon of I support women over there but not over here, U.S. Senator Marsha Blackburn.

Marsha is Exhibit A of the hypocritical fuckery of white Christian theocratic women. Yes, Marsha, and American women should be able to access abortion care without the fear of being arrested, tracked by bounty hunters or vigilanted, or being killed for it.

Eltahawy is pointing out a large issue in the United States, and that issue is the restriction and lack of care for women’s rights. Senator Marsha Blackburn, an American woman, does not support the women of her country’s rights to their own bodies, but she will support other women’s rights, as long as it has nothing to do with abortion. Women should have the right to their own bodies, and Eltahawy, a feminist activist who has written many articles, essays, and books on the topic of female, bodily violence, is saying that women in the United States have as much right to their bodies as women in Iran or anywhere in the world.

Throughout history, women in the United States have remained blind to the constraints they are living under. They are complacent. They are veiled. They are delusional. Eltahawy is saying that women need to wake up to what is happening in their country in the following excerpt:

But it's imperative to understand that theocrats who look like you and those who don't both follow the same rule book: control desire and control our bodies. More simply:

Control.

Enforced hijab.

Enforced pregnancy.

This isn't a "whose flavour of patriarchy is worse" letter. This is a "fuck the patriarchy everywhere" grenade that I gift to you. This is not *The Handmaid's Tale*, it's real life.

This is a wake the fuck up because clearly you've been drifting, cruising on the delusions that your whiteness will save you from white supremacist patriarchy.

Nothing will.

The same thing that is happening in the Middle East is happening in the United States. Control over women's bodies is not limited to one place in the world. For too long have women in the United States remained under the delusion that they have so many rights and freedoms when it comes to their bodies. The overturn of *Roe v. Wade* is only the beginning, and if women in the United States do not "wake the fuck up," they will continue to lose their power and freely continue to give the patriarchy control.

Although, many North African women have remained complacent regarding certain forms of agency for some time, activists have emerged since the Arab Spring uprisings in 2010. Mona Eltahawy and Amina Sboui are only two of the many female activists who are fighting the patriarchy. Eltahawy is an Egyptian journalist who has written many books and articles about her experiences with the abusive patriarchy and the male gaze. In this chapter, I will examine her manifesto *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls* to present how women like Eltahawy are combatting the patriarchy through something I am describing as "angry feminism" in this chapter. Angry feminism acts against the patriarchy; it talks back and acts. Retaliation is key when it comes to understanding what angry feminism is. Angry feminism is written word, self-defense against assaulters, hashtags on the internet, journal articles, photographs, and more. All of these aspects that make up angry feminism are united through a disdain for control over and

violence towards women's bodies. I will specifically focus on how bodily violence inspires angry feminism. I will also examine Anne Marie E. Butler's *Bad Girls of the Arab World* and Amina Sboui's photograph, "Fuck Your Morals" to further exemplify this angry feminism that challenges the male gaze and the patriarchy.

I am focusing on these women from the Arab world because they are not typically looked to for inspiration for Western Feminism, and that issue needs to change because these women are breaking ground through their activism. These Arab women live in what most would consider to be a highly conservative world, and they are standing up to the constraints their societies and cultures place upon them. They are also standing in as inspiration for what needs to be occurring in the United States. The United States is certainly not free from patriarchal control. It is a conservative country that has placed a veil in front of everyone's eyes. The overturn of *Roe v. Wade* is one of the most recent examples of bodily violence toward women's bodies. Yes, women have spoken out against the violence, but there has not been a photograph like Sboui's to arise from this anger that is boiling beneath the surface. Women in the United States should take inspiration from these female activists in the Middle East.

Next, I will examine how Islam, a religion in the Arab world, can be a patriarchal device that increases the stronghold over women. Religion silences women because it teaches them that men are the dominant figures in society. It is used to cover up vile acts committed against women. I will argue that global feminism is becoming more prominent through the use of the internet and the use of hashtags, such as #MosqueMeToo and #IBeatMyAssaulter. In the following Facebook Post, Shameelah Khan explains what happened to her at a religious place:

a man tried to pull a weird gropy sexual harassment move on me at the kabah during Tawaaf but I clapped him down. YOU'RE not going to pull that male trash in front of the Kabah- you deserve to be moerd.

that's it really. women must just moer them because i realised it happened so quickly and then he couldnt see me in the crowd.

but jokes aside... that clap was just such a reflex because I think my entire self could not comprehend the thought of sexual harrassment at the Kabah. and then I realised that so many women experienced it and that it doesnt matter where you are in the world... you can never assume you are safe around men.

not even on Umrah or Hajj

#mosquemetoo

#moerthem

p.s. I remember making duaa that he must get moerd again hoping that all duaas were accepted at the kabah.

Khan uses Eltahawy's hashtag to share her experience of being assaulted in a holy place. She uses angry feminism to defend herself. Eltahawy goes global with hashtags and she is speaking to larger groups of women; she is inspiring these women to speak out against their assaulters. For too long, women have remained silent, and with the power the internet provides, these women can break that silence. Breaking the silence online does not stop men, and even women who are still under the effects of the patriarchy from retaliating. There is a voice of the patriarchy that still resounds in this area, but it is challenged because the voices of the previously silenced are shouting out and overpowering it.

Online, Sboui uses images of her body to make shocking statements that challenge the patriarchy's power. Butler also examines Sboui's images, and she expresses how powerful these images are and the impact that they have on society. "Fuck Your Morals" directly calls out the male gaze. Sboui is topless with these words written across her torso. She is giving the middle finger to the camera and smirking at it, as if challenging the viewer. She challenges it to gaze upon the female form and dares it to try and sexualize it. There is still pushback against her images, but this pushback cannot silence Sboui. Her words and statement have already crossed the screens of thousands of people across the world. And these people are starting to close in on the patriarchy.

Eltahawy, Butler, and Sboui are all fighting against the patriarchy. I will amplify what they have to say so that their voices can be heard even more widely. I will examine the power of angry feminism and its effect on the patriarchy to show how it challenges the patriarchy. Finally, I will examine this global feminism through the use of hashtags and online images to show how this angry feminism spreads and comes together to attack the patriarchy.

Eltahawy and Angry Feminism

In her 2019 manifesto, *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls*, Mona Eltahawy confronts the male gaze and the patriarchy in the Middle East and North Africa to inspire women and encourage them to speak out against the patriarchy that has silenced them for so long. She argues that it is time for a new type of active feminism: angry feminism. To create this new form of feminism, girls must be taught to subvert the patriarchy from the very beginning. There can be no more teaching young girls, “that men and boys have a right to [their] attention, [their] affection, [their] time, and more” (Eltahawy 16). Eltahawy is saying that young girls in the Middle East and North Africa, and all over the world, are taught that men have a right to have control over women. Girls are taught that the male gaze has a right to their bodies, and this teaching creates a problem for feminism. The disruption of the patriarchy must begin with teaching young girls to be angry and vocal instead of passive and silent. For too long has the patriarchy ruled over women; it silences women and prevents them from standing up to it.

In order to resolve this issue of silence, Eltahawy encourages angry feminism. This angry feminism is about not standing by in silence. Years of silencing must be averted because this silencing allows the patriarchy to continue to maintain control over women. In the following excerpt from *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls*, Eltahawy explains a new form of feminism that must emerge in order to put an end to the patriarchy’s rule:

If we are to save girls, wherever they live in the world, if we are to nurture the pilot light of anger that guides them to their true north, feminism must be as universal and commonplace as patriarchy. But it must be a feminism that terrifies the patriarchy, a feminism fueled by rage as foundational to its strength. Anger is the bridge that carries feminism from ideas to being, from the thought “How the fuck is this happening!” to “This must fucking stop.” (21)

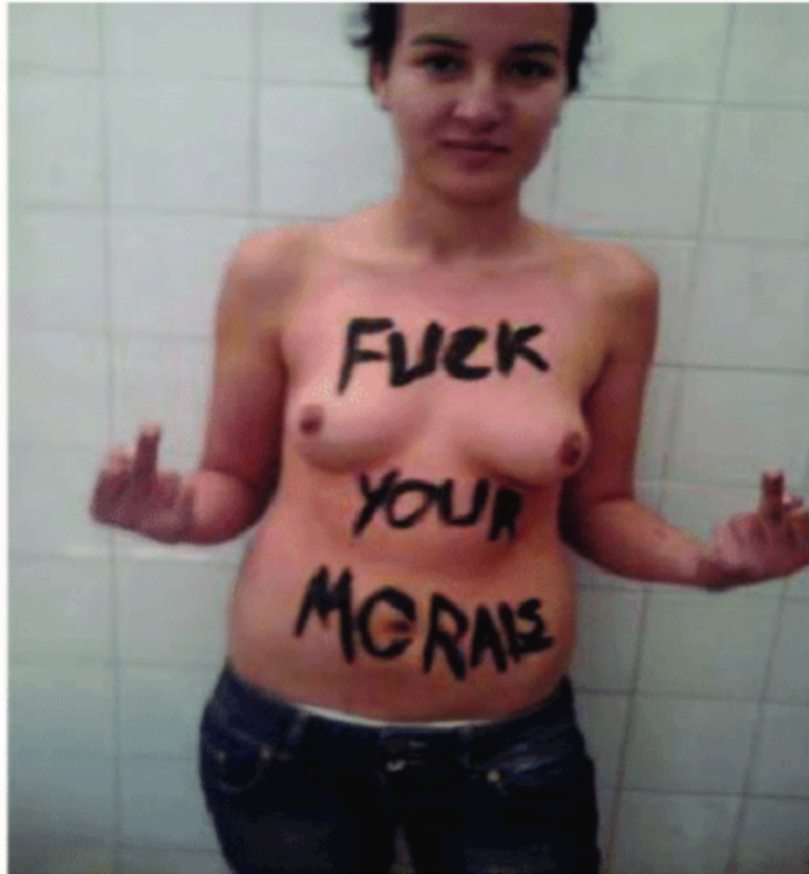
Anger is what will turn ideas into action. Women can sit around and think of how this is happening, but it is not until they turn to anger, to action, that the issues with patriarchal control will cease. Women have to stand up for themselves, and activists like Eltahawy are saying that living in fear or accepting the status quo can no longer be tolerated. They have to decide that they are not going to let comments or rules the patriarchy sets in place discourage them from fighting for their rights.

Eltahawy is violent toward the male gaze. She does not allow it to have power over her. For example, when a man touches Eltahawy inappropriately at a club, she followed him and, “[she] sat on top of him and [she] punched and punched and punched his face” (Eltahawy 4). Men take advantage of women’s bodies and get away with their actions. Eltahawy had already been assaulted multiple times throughout her life, and in this moment, she is tired of men getting away with these actions. So, she turned to meet violence with violence. Is that not just? Eltahawy believes so, and she defends herself. Violence and anger are the only ways to pierce the blind the male gaze. Men will not look at or touch something they are afraid of, and angry feminism is what is needed to make these men become afraid. Something that faces the patriarchy head on is what activists like Eltahawy and Sboui are applying because staying silent and remaining meek clearly do not stop hands.

Sboui and Angry Feminism

Amina Sboui is a Tunisian Feminist activist who utilizes angry feminism to combat the conservative nature of the patriarchy in her part of the world. Through photographs that include

nudity and vulgar language, Sboui acts and shares her angry feminism with the rest of the world. The image known as “Fuck Your Morals” challenges the expected covering of a Tunisian, Muslim woman’s body.



Sboui, Amina. “Fuck Your Morals.” *Facebook*, 2014, https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Amina-on-Facebook-Amina-on-Femen-Tunisia-Facebook-https-wwwfacebookcom_fig1_280770444.

In this photograph, “Fuck Your Morals,” Sboui is topless with the words “Fuck” and “Your” framing her breasts, and “Morals” is spread across her stomach. She is not being a passive sex object. Yes, she is nude, but the intent of this image is not to entice the male gaze. It confronts the gaze and forces it to look at the nudity surrounded by the words that challenge it. The male gaze is unsettled because it loses its power in this moment. Anne Marie E. Butler presents Sboui’s angry feminism and action in her chapter from the collection of essays, *Bad Girls of the*

Arab World. This chapter stands beside Eltahawy's argument that angry feminism is needed. Chapter 8's "Fuck Your Morals" presents how Amina Sboui takes her anger out against the constraints of the patriarchy of Tunisia through her photographs on social media platforms. One of her most widely recognized works is named "Fuck Your Morals." Sboui was inspired by the Ukrainian topless protest group called Femen, and Femen "uses bare-breastedness to protest the supposed requirement of covering for Muslim women" (Butler 134). This group is attempting to reclaim Muslim women's agency through the use of these shocking photographs. Sboui garnered inspiration from this group, and uses her body in protest. Due to corruption, Sboui decided to leave this group; its morals and agenda do not align with her own. Though she stopped aligning herself with the group, some powerful images emerged that spoke out against the injustice Sboui and other Tunisian women faced. Through the use of her topless images, Sboui, "makes her body speak twice: once in terms of her assured and self-conscious portraiture and once in terms of her textual message" (Butler 133). Sboui is utilizing this new angry, action-based feminism Elthaway promotes to speak and dismantle the patriarchy. Eltahawy says, "anger is important in girls because waiting for the patriarchy to self-correct, to do the right thing, to do the moral thing, has got us not very far. Anger is the first step to putting patriarchy on notice that we are done waiting" (29). To get the patriarchy to listen, women must face it with anger, whether that be with their words, images, or actions. Sboui may not be using her literal voice before an audience, but she is using her body and written words as a statement to speak out against the status quo.

Sboui is saying that men should look at her body and feel her anger that is within the words written across it. She is saying, "fuck you" to all the men who would normally sexualize her body while at the same time force her to cover it. The morals Tunisian women are supposed

to uphold involve the covering of their bodies. Butler mentions that Sboui chose to use “Fuck Your Morals” because, “when she was a young girl, morals were presented as cultural requirements that were gender specific. For example, she was taught not to be alone with a boy, to remain a virgin until marriage, and to not swear” (137). Comparatively with Elthaway, Sboui was taught certain morals as a young girl, and these morals that were taught increased patriarchal control. Sboui is not allowing the patriarchy to have control any longer. With this image, Sboui is rejecting what her patriarchal community would expect to be immoral. She is uncovered and swearing in this image. Being nude in this moment is not immoral; it is saying that men do not have power over her body. Her words and her body belong to her.

Furthermore, her choice to use English expands the horizon for her words to speak out against and challenge the male gaze. If she had not written these words in English, other people across the world would not have been able to read it, and her activism would only reach Arabic-speaking people. Her choice to speak out challenges more than one patriarchy. Patriarchy is all over the world, and because she wrote her words in English, this form of angry feminism, made its way to other patriarchies. Furthermore, she is also smirking and giving the middle finger with both hands to state that she does not agree with the morals Muslim culture forces upon her. With these images, Sboui is not only inciting conversation but also controversy. She is reclaiming her body, and according to Butler, “if the body is constituted through marking by others, as in power relations that have control over the body by inscribing various positions onto it, then literal self-marking would be a form of reclaiming bodily control and therefore power” (135). She is making a statement with her nudity. She is challenging the confines of the patriarchy that are controlling her. She is taking back her power through angry, aggressive language.

#MosqueMeToo: Ending Silence

Bodily violence is an issue even within religion in the Muslim world. No one would or could believe that something so vile could happen at a Mosque, but it can happen. Arab women have started speaking out against violence that can occur and does occur in the Mosques. In the following excerpt, Eltahawy explains how her violation at Islam's holiest site was unthinkable, and that even being fully covered like the religion requires had not protected her:

That such a violation was happening to me as we performed the fifth pillar of our religion at Islam's holiest site was unthinkable to me. Who would believe that something so awful had happened to me at such a sacred place? It was better to stay silent, I decided. The men who assaulted me knew that no one would believe me. Though I had obviously done nothing to be ashamed of, I felt it anyway ... being covered from head to toe during the hajj had not protected me ... The Global Early Adolescent Study has shown that girls across the world are taught that their bodies are both an asset and a target. They must cover up and stay away from boys if they want to keep themselves safe from sexual assault, and if they are assaulted, it is their fault. (19)

Eltahawy had been taught that if she covered up and stayed away from boys, she would be safe from sexual assault. No one would think that men would attack a woman in a religious place either. And yet, Eltahawy explains that it happens. The next issue is that no one would believe her if she said she had been attacked in a holy place, and these men knew that no one would believe that a man would do something so horrible in a sacred place. Religion has the power to silence women because it places power in male hands. For years, Eltahawy remained silent about her assault, but eventually, she decided to speak out through the use of the internet and hashtags.

Fear of persecution keeps women silent. Women like Eltahawy are afraid to speak out against assaults that have happened in religious places because they are afraid that no one will believe that a man would commit such an atrocity in a holy place. Sabica Khan is a Pakistani woman who experienced assaults during *hajj*. In the following Facebook post, Khan explains what happened to her multiple times in a holy space:

I was afraid to share this because it might hurt your religious sentiments.

While performing my tawaaf around the Kaaba after isha prayer, something really weird happened. It was my 3rd tawaf, and I felt a hand on my waist. I thought it was just an innocent mistake. I completely ignored. Then... I felt it again. It made me feel very uncomfortable. I kept moving. During my 6th tawaf I suddenly felt something aggressively poking my butt, I froze, unsure of whether it was intentional. I ignored and just kept moving slowly because the crowd was huge. I even tried to turn around but woefully couldn't. When I reached the Yemeni corner, someone tried to grab and pinch my butt. I decided to stop there. Grabbed his hand and threw it off me *couldn't move or turn around* I was literally petrified. Couldn't even escape, so I stood, and turned around as much as I could, to see what's happening, I turned around but... couldn't see who it was.

I felt so violated. I felt unable to speak out. Stayed quiet because I knew no one would trust me, or nobody would take it seriously, except my mum. So I told her everything when I returned to the hotel room. She was incredibly confused and devastated. After this incident, she never allowed me to go there again alone.

It's sad to say that you are not even safe at holy places. I've been harrassed, not once, not twice, but thrice. My entire experience in the holy city is overshadowed by this horrible incident.

I believe it's totally okay and important to be open about harassment.

Don't know how many of you had similar experience there but this incident has unfortunately left me feeling upset.

Not only did an assault happen to her once in a holy space, but it happened multiple times. She was so afraid to speak out in that moment. Her body violated, and her assaulters free of punishment. But that freedom is ending. Fear to speak out is ebbing away, and women are using the internet to get their voices out. There is power in numbers, and the internet allows women, not just Middle Eastern women, to share their experiences and come together against their assaulters. In a twitter post, using the hashtag #MosqueMeToo, @kevegerhardt says, "I wish I was as fearless of persecution as I am now back when I was assaulted* (2nd time). I still wouldn't have been believed, my family would still be broken, and would still have a secret to hide, but I would have stood up for myself. I would have said that it wasn't okay." Persecution is still happening, but the fear is ebbing away because so many people have utilized this hashtag. These victims do not feel as though they are alone anymore. Social media is a gateway for

women all across the world to come together and speak of the violence that happens to them in holy places and anywhere.

Social Media and Voice

Eltahawy and Sboui utilize the internet to speak out against the injustices of the patriarchy, and many women follow in their footsteps. As previously mentioned, Sboui uses images of her body to make a statement. Eltahawy use hashtags to unite women and increase the power of feminism. Two hashtags that Eltahawy creates are #MosqueMeToo and #IBeatMyAssaulter. Eltahawy attaches these hashtags to any of her online writings about her assault. She explains what happened to her in holy places and public places. These hashtags gave inspiration to women who had been silenced by religion and the patriarchy, and they became a “global chorus of women who saw each other and recognized what it means to be done with the fuckery of patriarchy” (Eltahawy 6). These women are able to unite and break the silence that had been placed upon them for so long. “Me Too” is a powerful statement that shows these women that they are not alone. There is power in numbers, and there is power in anger. It is no longer being an individual trying to fight against the patriarchy. It is a global community that is tired of the patriarchy’s power and aims to overthrow it. Many women mention that they were too scared to speak out against the atrocities committed in holy space. In the following Twitter post, @Pengelanalmpian says, “I witnessed myself during my hajj journey back in 2004, when male jamaah very often take advantage on female without they were not able to protest due to the crowd. A better system should be applied soon there #MosqueMeToo.” Women are silenced in the crowd and they cannot fight back against assaulters. @Pengelanalmpian is saying that it is time for Mosques to have better systems to protect women. The status quo in Mosques is not

protecting women, and to change the status quo, women are finally speaking out and utilizing angry feminism, and speaking out has created power and movement for feminism.

Although there is power in numbers, women are still facing pushback and racism. In a Twitter post, Yasmine Mohammed also mentions the pushback against these testimonies from women who have been attacked in holy spaces. Mohammed says, “It’s why #MosqueMeToo was started, but ya...women were attacked for sharing their stories and ‘embarrassing’ Muslim men. Well how about you not be an embarrassment then? The way women are expected to endure trauma quietly to protect the honor of vile men is honestly pure evil.” Mohammed is saying that it is time for men to start listening and taking responsibility for their actions. Victims should not be attacked again for telling what happened to them. That is not to say that she is saying that all men are responsible. While victims are being attacked, racism is also taking advantage of the situation. In a Twitter post, Eltahway says, “I started #MosqueMeToo fully aware that Islamophobes and racists are all too willing to demonize Muslim men by weaponizing my testimony of sexual assault. And that the ‘community’ of fellow Muslims would rather I shut up about being sexually assaulted.” Eltahawy is acknowledging that racists will utilize this movement to demonize the male Muslim community by taking advantage of these accounts, but these accounts must be heard because some men do commit these violent acts against women.

Conclusion

Women in North Africa and the Middle East are using angry feminism to speak out against the patriarchy. For many years, these women have remained silent for fear of persecution from members of their society. These women felt as though they would not be heard, but because of writers and activists like Eltahawy and Sboui, these women began to fear less and less. Eltahawy speaks out through self-defense, writings, and hashtags. Sboui takes back her bodily

autonomy by posting topless photos with vulgar language because that is what it takes to be heard. All of the women and non-binary people who have used the hashtags Eltahawy created have spoken out through anger. Women in this part of the Middle East are galvanizing what I have referred to as angry feminism. It is a form of feminism that does not cower under the male gaze. It confronts it head on. Women of the United States would do well to pay attention to the activism of women in the Middle East. In her essay, *Essay: Dear White Women Cheering Iranian Women*, Eltahawy tells women of the United States that they need to wake up from the delusions they have been living in for so long. In *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls*, Eltahawy says, “it is no use pretending the girls in Western societies are free from patriarchal social norms that girls in non-Western societies are taught” (23). Women in Western societies are not free from oppression and patriarchal norms, and that fact can be seen in the recent overturn of *Roe v. Wade* and the new abortion laws that have arisen as a result. It is time to become angry. It is time to speak out against the injustices that are upon the women of the United States. It is time for angry feminism to attack the patriarchy in the United States.

Conclusion

Global feminism is important to strive for. Academia tends to be overrun with the borders Mohanty mentions, and those borders must be transcended in order to move past them. Students need to be aware that these borders exist, and they need to understand that they should not impose their beliefs, their borders, onto other women. In her essay, “Dear White Women Cheering Iranian Women,” Eltahawy explains that white women do not need to save women of the Eastern world. Both Eltahawy and Sboui are fighting against and speaking out against the patriarchy with their angry feminism. Women in America should see women like Eltahawy and Sboui as inspiration because their angry feminism is taking strides toward something that women in America have not yet achieved. Patriarchal brainwashing is a border that impacts women, and women need to become aware of it; they need to be taught how to become aware of it. Abortion laws are currently a large issue in the United States. Women in America turn a blind eye to these laws that have such an effect on their bodies. It is time to look for inspiration and ways to fight back. Looking at Eltahawy and Sboui are great places to start because they fight against violence toward women’s bodies and share their voices through social media. Western women need to be angry, and they need to start pushing harder against patriarchal control.

This thesis strives to show that it is time to become aware of the borders that exist, and it is time to listen to what the non-white, non-Western women have to say. Instead of saving these women by speaking over them and imposing Western concepts and beliefs upon them, it is time to help them by listening and amplifying their voices. The white savior complex that Spivak alludes to is problematic because it sees the “other,” non-western individual as a helpless, in-human subject. Eltahawy and Sboui have proved that they are not helpless and that they do not

need saving. They want people to listen and spread the words they are speaking in order to shut down patriarchal control over women and their bodies.

It is also important to look at one's own form of feminism and the states she is living in in order to recognize that there are borders and forces, such as patriarchal control, working against her. For feminism to be global, feminists must work together to transcend borders and come together as equals with women across the world. Mohanty points out that academia is overrun with borders, and unless something is done to transcend those borders, a more global feminism is not going to occur and the status quo will remain the same. Women will still reside in silence and face violence against their bodies.

Honor killings are an extreme violence against women in the Middle East, and without some transcendence of borders, people would not be helping stop these honor killings. Honor killings are ways to punish women for not complying with cultural rules, such as forced marriages, not getting divorced from said marriages, adultery, and not remaining chaste before marriage. Over the last decade, there has been a large increase in these killings. According to Parsa, "a significant reason for this increase in honor killings is because women and girls are becoming more aware of their rights; for example, they are not accepting forced marriage and want to have the freedom to choose their future spouses, their education and jobs, and to be present in public life shoulder to shoulder with men." In 2020, a thirteen-year-old girl, Romina Ashrafi, was murdered by her father while she slept. Her father killed her to maintain what he believes is his honor. After her death, social media informed the world about her murder. This influence created pressure from the public on the legal system. Ms. Masumeh Ebtekar, who at the time was President Hassan Rouhani's assistant for women's issues made a public statement against the horror killings of children and present a bill against these killings. The bill was not

passed, but campaigns arose all across Europe and the United States. As mentioned, social media plays a large role in the spreading of important information and statements; it is a way that women can be heard. Through the power of social media, silenced voices speak. Romina was murdered and no longer able to speak, but her story was told on social media. Global feminism is the coming together of women and feminists across the world. Together, feminists create campaigns that are shocking, bold, and heard. Campaigning has its risks of imprisonment and/or death, but women in Iran are fighting, and those who are campaigning with them are fighting, too. This is an example of a more global feminism. Instead of simply speaking for these women, feminists across the world are fighting with these women knowing the cost of what they are fighting for.

Western feminism can help feminism across the world, but there a fine line between helping and saving. Non-Western women do not need saving; they need allies. These allies lie within global feminism. When feminists come together and transcend borders, they become allies who help fight against the injustices toward women. The goal of global feminism is to come together and help each other. The campaigning that occurs across the world in order to help the movement against honor killings exemplifies how global feminism is at work. In order to continue this movement toward global feminism forward, academia must teach feminist scholars to acknowledge borders and how to transcend those borders. The overall message is to remember that non-Western women's feminism is just as powerful and capable of fighting for women. Women in Iran are still going to fight for their rights with or without the help from Western feminists. Western feminism should take inspiration from non-Western women because there are issues, such as abortion laws, which can lead to life or death situations and imprisonment. These laws in the United States are imposing violence against women's bodies,

and if they do not wake up as Eltahawy suggests or transcend borders like Mohanty suggests, then they will never be able to be a part of a more global feminism.

Bibliography

- Alsultany, Evelyn. "Arabs and Muslims in the Media after 9/11: Representational Strategies for a 'Postrace' Era." *American Quarterly*, vol. 65, no. 1, 2013, pp. 161–169. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/41809552.
- Altwaiji, Mubarak. "Neo-Orientalism and the Neo-Imperialism Thesis: Post-9/11 US and Arab World Relationship." *Arab Studies Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 4, 2014, pp. 313–323. JSTOR, www-jstor-org.gcsu.idm.oclc.org/stable/10.13169/arabstudquar.36.4.0313?Search=yes&resultItemClick=true&searchText=neo&searchText=Orientalism&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dneo%2BOrientalism%26amp%3Bacc%3Don%26amp%3Bwc%3Don%26amp%3Bfc%3Doff%26amp%3Bgroup%3Dnone&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_SYC-4802%2Ftest2&refreqid=search%3Aad4f729e56967063a87b34d55ce746ad#metadata_info_tab_contents.
- Basu, Lopamudra. "Memory, Trauma, and the "Implicated Subject" of the War On Terror In Laila Lalami's *The Other Americans*." *Studies in the Novel*, vol. 53 no. 1, 2021, p. 36-53. *Project MUSE*, doi:10.1353/sdn.2021.0003.
- Butler, Anne Marie E. "Fuck Your Morals." *Bad Girls of the Arab World*. University of Texas Press, 2017, pp. 132-145.
- Chappell, Bill and Hernandez, Joe. "Why Iranian Women are Burning Their Hijabs After the Death of Mahsa Amini." *NPR*, 21 Sept 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2022/09/21/1124237272/mahsa-amini-iran-women-protest-hijab-morality-police>.

- Djebar, Assia. *Women of the Algiers, 1979*. Prague Writers Festival, 8 February 2020.
www.pwf.cz/archivy/texts/readings/assia-djebar-women-of-algiers-in-their-apartment_2970.html.
- Delacroix, Eugène. *The Women of Algiers*. 1834, Louvre, Paris, France,
<http://myartblogcollection.blogspot.com/2015/04/20-art-works-showing-picassos.html>.
- Eltahawy, Mona. *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls*. Beacon Press, 2019.
- Frelier, Jocelyn. "Cultivating Empathy and Humility: A Conversation with Laila Lalami." *World Literature Today*, vol. 93, no. 4, Oct. 2019, pp. 14–17. EBSCOhost,
 doi:10.7588/worllitetoda.93.4.0014.
- Gamal, Ahmed. "'Encounters with Strangeness' in the Post- 9/11 Novel." *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2012, pp. 95–116. JSTOR,
www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/intelitestud.14.1.0095.
- Gharib, Malaka. "#MosqueMeToo Gives Muslim Women A Voice About Sexual Misconduct at Mecca." *NPR*, NPR, <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2018/02/26/588855132/-mosquemetoo-gives-muslim-women-a-voice-about-sexual-misconduct-at-mecca>.
- @kevegerhardt (Kevynn). "I wish I was as fearless of persecution as I am now back when I was assaulted* (2nd time). I still wouldn't have been believed, my family would still be broken, and would still have a secret to hide, but I would have stood up for myself. I would have said that it wasn't okay." *Twitter*, 22 January 2020,
<https://twitter.com/kevgerhardt/status/1220032113136656384>.
- Khan, Sabica. "I was afraid to share this because it might hurt your religious sentiments." *Facebook*, 2 February 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/bicayyy>.

Khan, Shameelah. “a man tried to pull a weird groping sexual harassment move on me at the kabah during Tawaaf but I clapped him down.” *Facebook*, 12 March 2018,

<https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/mosquemetoo>.

Lalami, Laila. *The Other Americans*. Pantheon Books, 2019.

Markina, V. M. “The Representation of Others in the Media: The (Re) Production of Stereotypes and Counter-Strategies for the Depiction of Otherness.” *Russian Social Science Review*, vol. 62, no. 1/3, Jan. 2021, pp. 163–174. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,shib&db=edb&AN=150982742&site=eds-live&scope=site.

Michaelson, Christopher, and Tosti-Kharas, Jennifer. “A World Changed: What Post-9/11 Stories Tell Us about the Position of America, Purpose of Business, and Meaning of Work.” *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 45, no. 4, Oct. 2020, pp. 877–895. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.5465/amr.2019.0151.

Mohanty, Chandra. *Feminism Without Borders*. Duke University Press, 2003.

@monaeltahawy. “I am glad to see women are speaking out about being sexually harassed during Hajj. Several years ago, I shared my own experience with sexual assault during the pilgrimage.” *Twitter*, 5 Feb. 2018,

<https://twitter.com/monaeltahawy/status/960644697067749376?lang=en>.

Parsa, Fariba. “Iranian Women Campaign to Stop the Rise in ‘Honor Killings.’” *Middle East Institute*, Middle East Institute, 6 Aug. 2021, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/iranian-women-campaign-stop-rise-honor-killings>.

@PengelanaImpian (gita_H). “I witnessed myself during my hajj journey back in 2004, when male jamaah very often take advantage on female without they were not able to protest

due to the crowd. A better system should be applied soon there #MosqueMeToo.”

Twitter, 28 February 2018, twitter.com/Pengelanaimpian/status/968733400323575808.

Picasso, Pablo. *Les Femmes d'Alger*. 1955, Private collection of Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber Al Thani, Doha, Qatar, <https://www.pablocicasso.org/the-women-of-algiers.jsp#prettyPhoto>.

@ReproRights. “[five women with dangerous pregnancy complications were denied abortions due to Texas’ abortion bans. We are suing the state of Texas on their behalf.” *Twitter*, 7 Mar. 2023, <https://twitter.com/ReproRights/status/1633245406091153408>.

Said, Edward W. “Orientalism.” *The Georgia Review*, vol. 31, no. 1, 1977, pp. 162–206. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41397448>.

Said, Edward W. “Orientalism.” *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism: Third Edition*, edited by Vincent B. Leitch, W.W. Norton, 2018, pp. 1780-1805.

Salaita, Steven George. "Ethnic Identity and Imperative Patriotism: Arab Americans Before and After 9/11." *College Literature*, vol. 32 no. 2, 2005, p. 146-168. *Project MUSE*, doi:10.1353/lit.2005.0033.

Sbouï, Amina. “Fuck Your Morals.” *Facebook*, 2014, https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Amina-on-Facebook-Amina-on-Femen-Tunisia-Facebook-https-wwwfacebookcom_fig1_280770444.

Spivak, Gayatri. “Can the Subaltern Speak?.” Pdf.

@wotanus. “Of course you have read about the exhibition staged by a group of women of the clothes worn by assault victims at the time of the crime. Totally confirmed your statement.” *Twitter*, 6 Feb. 2018, <https://twitter.com/wotanus/status/960797904465268736>.

@YasMohammedxx (Yasmine Mohammed). “It’s why #MosqueMeToo was started, but ya... women were attacked for sharing their stories and ‘embarrassing’ Muslim men. Well

how about you not be an embarrassment then? The way women are expected to endure trauma quietly to protect the honor of vile men is honestly pure evil.” *Twitter*, 28 April, <https://twitter.com/YasMohammedxx>.