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Dangerous Women/Women in Danger: Gendered Impacts of the September 11th Attacks

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Gendered Impacts of Hate and Repression, 9/11 and Beyond

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VERBAL AND PHYSICAL EXPRESSIONS of public animosity toward Arab and Muslim Americans surged in the United States in the first months after the attacks on September 11, 2001 (9/11), and then quelled to highly varying degrees afterward, depending on place (Levin 2017). This pattern was unlike punitive government actions, which continued nationwide at high levels for years (see Cainkar 2009). My ethnographic and sociological study of the impacts of 9/11 on Muslim Arabs in metropolitan Chicago, involving field research conducted between 2002 and 2005 and in-depth interviews with 102 Arab Muslims (45 percent of whom were women), found that women endured far more hate acts and harassments than men. Indeed, women reported experiencing them at a rate more than double that of Arab Muslim men. The study also found that the overwhelming majority of women experiencing hate acts were either wearing *hijab* (modest clothing, especially a head scarf) or in the company of women wearing *hijab* when victimized, as too were many of the men.

I seek to explain these seeming peculiarities—peculiar if one assumes that the aggressive backlash that followed the 9/11 attacks was directly related to the attacks and to perceptions that Arab and Muslim men posed a terrorist threat. That is, if hatred and fear of terrorism drove vengeance after 9/11, and terrorism is associated with males, why were women the focus of public attacks? Certainly the agencies of the US government focused on men; nearly every person subjected to arrest, detention, deportation, and special registration was male (Cainkar 2009).

Finally, the study uncovered patterns of hate activity that revealed important spatial variations tied to race, neighborhood hegemonies, and perceived types of "threat."[1] It found that women experienced hate acts to widely varying degrees in different parts of the Chicago metropolitan area. In many areas, they experienced little harassment and few attacks, whereas in others these behaviors were commonplace. Some believe that women were victimized more than men because women in *hijab* were more visible as Muslims or were easier targets because they are presumed to be weaker than men. Yet neither presumed weakness nor heightened visibility can explain spatial variations in rates of harassment across places where Arab Muslim women live and work or why few hate acts were reported, for example, in African American and Latinx neighborhoods. These demographic specificities are often neglected in broad examinations of anti-Muslim attacks. Indeed, Muslim women in *hijab* were harassed and assaulted at the highest levels in areas where Muslim men were both plentiful and highly visible, set against a majority-white population. I argue that something much more complicated is occurring here that lies at the intersection of racial domination, white supremacy, and hegemonic femininity (Connell 1995). The seeds of this something are found in the notion of an alleged Muslim authoritarian threat, a somewhat fringe discourse at the time of the attacks that later gained extensive traction as "civilization jihad." The Muslim authoritarian threat is embodied by women in *hijab*, with *hijab* understood as both a symbol of force (the opposite of freedom) and a threat to culturally hegemonic forms of masculinity and femininity. This supposed danger was acted upon most forcibly in places where dominant whites perceived that their hegemony was weakening because of the rapid growth of Arab and Muslim communities (from migration and urban flight) in majority white spaces, thus explaining spatial variations.

Women in *hijab* were disproportionately harassed, chased, and assaulted in specific Chicago suburban areas where Arabs and Muslims constituted expanding, highly visible, and institutionally diverse communities (businesses and places of worship) amid a majority Euro-white population. US Census 2000 data showed large recent increases in the number of Arab Americans in these areas, with growth averaging 226 percent between 1990 and 1999, within a range from 33 percent to 568 percent depending on the suburb. These same areas were on the US Department of Homeland Security's radar, too. Southwest suburban Bridgeview, Burbank, and Oak Lawn were on the list of zip code areas with large Arab populations produced for the department by Census Bureau staff, as were the cities of Chicago and Peoria in Illinois.[2] In these suburbs, where the white population is culturally and politically hegemonic, Arab Americans (both Muslim and Christian but mostly Muslim) are highly visible as *the* dominant minority group.[3] In other neighborhoods where Arab Americans live in significant numbers, the demographics are quite different: they live among other nonwhite groups or in communities that include a diverse range of white and nonwhite groups.

The southwest suburbs of Chicago have a deep history with race. They are highly populated by white families who

fled to them from adjacent, desegregating urban southwest-side neighborhoods during the 1970s and 1980s. Thus, a substantial proportion of the southwestern suburban population voted with their feet to defend an implicit understanding about the American way of life, one flavored by white supremacy rather than by human equality. White residents have fought to maintain these suburbs as homogeneously white communities, a homogeneity they understand to include race, religion, and culture. Although this packaging born of white supremacy renders them similar to many whites in other majority white suburban areas, unfavorable attitudes toward people seen as racially and culturally inferior run especially strong and deep in the southwest suburbs of Chicago.

This same contextualization rules out the explanation that women were attacked more than men mainly because they are perceived as weaker and thus make easier targets than men. If this were the case, women would have been attacked at the same rates across the entire Chicago metropolitan area, but they were not (see Cainkar 2009 for detailed spatial comparisons). Visibility and assumed weakness are plausible explanations for hate encounters that occurred in other areas—for example, in parts of the Chicago metropolitan area where Arab or Muslim residents are relatively few in number or where they live among racially diverse populations. They may explain attacks in other places across the United States and may even explain some of the attacks that occurred in the southwestern suburbs of Chicago. As Jack Levin and Jack McDevitt point out in their book *Hate Crimes Revisited* (2002), there is more than one type of hate-crime perpetrator, and hate crimes are perpetrated for a range of reasons besides neighborhood defense, including thrill seeking, resentment, and the intent to fulfill what is perceived to be a higher-order mission.

This danger that women in *hijab* posed was not about security and had little to do with terrorism. Rather, the threat of women in *hijab* rests in the perception that they openly (even proudly) conform to a set of prescriptions and values that are interpreted as un-American, a meaning imputed to them by Islamophobic messages diffused throughout American culture. Evelyn Alsultany's study of Arabs and Muslims in the media after 9/11 found "an abundance of stories about the oppressed Muslim woman" (2012, 75). In these scenarios, *hijab* is embedded with meaning that runs counter to the type of female freedom demanded by Western hegemonic masculinity, one built upon the taken-for-granted right of men to access women's bodies and experience heterosexual desire (Connell 1995). *Hijab* is interpreted as a symbol of force or, perhaps even more threatening to dominant American culture, as a sign that American Muslim women *choose to reject the promise of American freedom*. Symbolized by the *hijab*, the idea of the oppressed Muslim woman has been invested in for some time by a wide range of interested parties, mostly non-Muslims but also a small proportion of Muslims, and was cashed in domestically to garner popular support for the US invasion of Afghanistan after 9/11, when the connection between *hijab* and oppression was prime-time American culture talk (Abu-Lughod 2002). As perceived adherents to an un-American way of life, American women in *hijab* were easily transformed into threatening enemy aliens who could be commanded by neighborhood defenders to "go home."

Post-9/11 repercussions for Arab and Muslim Americans were quite gendered because men and women were seen to represent different types of threat. Whereas men took the brunt of government security measures after 9/11, such as incarceration, registration, interrogation, and removal, women, especially women in *hijab*, took the brunt of public rage. Contemporaneous social understandings and metanarratives circulating within American culture about Arabs and Muslims articulated the dual threat they were said to pose. Men were positioned as the security threat, a threat that was managed largely by government agencies and policies.[4] Women in *hijab* represented the cultural threat, which was managed by individual and small-group "neighborhood defenders" who considered themselves guardians of "the American way of life." Their acts of aggression against Arab Muslim women constituted "cultural sniping" because their actions were intermittent, purposeful, and specifically targeted at bearers of the specific cultural symbol that they perceived to pose a threat to the neighborhood.

Hate-crime experts Levin and McDevitt point out that the selection of victims in neighborhood-defense hate crimes is never random; rather, such crimes are specifically targeted at the "types of individuals" who represent the threat (2002, 78). Precision targeting is critically important to neighborhood defenders, whose actions are predicated on getting a specific message across. The actual citizenship status of a woman in *hijab*, as representative of that which is anti-American and foreign, had little bearing on her experiences; the opposite applied to men, for whom citizenship status was key to different experiences of government repression. Although it may be that the intersection of gendered perceptions of weakness and the notion of cultural threat produced more attacks on women than on men, the notion of cultural threat nonetheless remains central. These hate acts that were gendered and neighborhood specific after 9/11 would assume a broader nationwide pattern with the later rise of the organized Islamophobia movement and its call to fight the Muslim invasion and "civilization jihad."

Gendered De-Americanization

What happened to Arabs, Muslims, "Middle Easterners," and South Asians in the United States in the wake of September 11, 2001, was a de-Americanization process that we have witnessed before. Bill Ong Hing argues that like Japanese Americans after the attacks on Pearl Harbor, Arab and Muslim Americans were effectively de-Americanized after 9/11—positioned as foreigners and then denuded of their civil rights (2002, 444). He points out that

de-Americanization operates simultaneously on two levels that work in tandem: (1) the actions of private individuals and (2) official government-sanctioned actions. According to Hing, "The message is one of exclusion: 'You Muslims, Middle Easterners, and South Asians are not true Americans'"; whether citizens or noncitizens, the victim community is "forever regarded as immigrant America, as opposed to simply part of America and its diversity" (444). De-Americanization revolves not only around notions of perpetual foreignness but also around an implicit lack of national loyalty (Akram and Johnson 2002). When perceived as non-Americans, such communities can easily be placed outside the boundaries of constitutional rights (see, e.g., Leiken 2004, 11). Arab and Muslim Americans were well aware after 9/11 that their citizenship had become different from that of other Americans, as demonstrated in the following news report: "'I have to be cautious as a citizen of this country—that's not something an average American has to do,' said an Arab-American Muslim waiting in line at the Al Rasheed meat market on 63rd Street. 'After Timothy McVeigh, nobody said everyone with blue eyes and blonde hair is a danger to society.' The man declined to give his name or hometown for fear of retaliation from law enforcement" (Winograd 2001).

Arab and Muslim Americans were de-Americanized by agents operating on two levels *and* in specifically gendered ways in that the source of their "perpetual foreignness" was interpreted differently depending on whether they were male or female. I reproduce some of the cultural matter that informed the neighborhood defenders' focus on women, providing rationales for their targeted selection. This cultural matter includes the substantive content of anti-Arab and anti-Muslim cultural discourses—which are both Islamophobic and nativist because they portray Arabs and Muslims as "enemies of a distinctively American way of life" (Higham 1955, 24)—as well as government jingoisms that revolved around notions of freedom and hatred of freedom, specifically expressed in the need to rescue Afghani women wearing *hijab*. I also make note of Joane Nagel's (2003) theory that during times of crisis, when nationalism is mobilized, men and women face heightened expectations to conform to hegemonic definitions of masculinity and femininity. If Arab/Muslim men are pinned with being inherently violent and violence is accepted as a masculine trait, then Arab/Muslim men are in fact conforming to gendered standards, suggesting that neighborhood defenders should turn their attention to Arab/Muslim women wearing *hijab*, who in their bodily modesty pose a danger to hegemonic American standards of femininity. Arab/Muslim women in *hijab* should thus be de-*hijab*ed and commanded to "go home."

If Arab/Muslim men are seen as "perpetual foreigners" and the enemy, however, extending Nagel's theory to this situation would seem to require that their masculinity not be engaged or rewarded at all and that a different type of action be called for: they need to be emasculated and feminized. This type of project is difficult (although not impossible) to pursue by private parties in the neighborhood and is best undertaken in places where the conditions are more promising. Here, government actors with powers of confinement had far greater leeway after 9/11. Male-degradation ceremonies were acted out in their most vulgar form when Muslim men were in the captivity of American jailers, whether through the repeated body searches at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, New York (Office of the Inspector General 2003) or through the forced and photographed nudity required of Iraqi men at the US military's Abu Ghraib prison. The ideas behind these actions perpetrated against Arab and Muslim men, clearly emasculation rituals, emerged from notions similar to those that drove attacks on women in *hijab*: they were ideas grounded in a "culture war" in which modesty is interpreted as the polar opposite of sexual freedom. The binary of force and choice was another pole around which post-9/11 backlash revolved: Muslim women were perceived as forced to cover their hair, just as Arab/Muslim men were perceived as forced into sexual sublimation. The paradoxical element of this culture war was in the use of force to promote freedom, whether by *hijab* pulling in US suburbs or by compulsory nudity as at Abu Ghraib prison.

The perceived cultural threat of *hijab* as un-American and anti-American was based on interpretations that wearing *hijab* symbolizes being unfree because it results from an act of force. This interpretation of *hijab*, that it is grounded in force, is understandable only from the perspective of hegemonic masculinity and its desire for the embodiment of "emphasized femininity" (Connell 1995). By violating the Western feminine ideal, women in *hijab* are practicing a form of "pariah femininity" that needs to be cast out (Schippers 2007). Using this framework of Muslim women as cultural threats to American freedom (discussed later), we can see why Arab Muslim women were physically victimized and verbally harassed by the public in the southwest suburbs of Chicago to a much greater degree than Arab Muslim men and than Arab Muslims in other Chicago metropolitan areas as well as why a woman in *hijab* was present in the overwhelming majority of hate incidents. If the perceived threat to the neighborhood was terrorists, then men would have been the logical objects of attack, especially in places where Arab and Muslim men were easily distinguished from the majority-white population. If female weakness lay behind the plurality of attacks on women, then women would have been attacked equally in all locations. It is time to move on from these oft-repeated arguments of females' visibility and weakness to explain the higher rate of attacks on women.

Study Data on Hate Acts

Women reported experiencing hate acts at a rate more than double that of men. Sixty-five percent of women (thirty out of forty-six) interviewed in the post-9/11 study reported personally experiencing physical or verbal hate acts,

compared to 30 percent of men (seventeen out of fifty-six). A majority of these experiences occurred in the southwest suburbs. Arab Muslim women were also more likely than Arab Muslim men, by a wide margin (83 percent compared to 45 percent), to say they felt unsafe in certain places. When men and women were asked to describe threatening places, the most frequent answers were: where many Arabs live, Arab shopping districts, mosques, and southwest suburban shopping malls—in other words, the southwest suburban locations where Arab Americans concentrate demographically and conduct their daily lives. The proportion of women who said they felt unsafe in these specific types of places was much higher than the proportion of men, who were more likely to feel unsafe in rural areas and small towns.

A woman wearing *hijab* was present in more than 90 percent of hate incidents reported by Arab Muslim women, signaling its important symbolic role in the eyes of neighborhood defenders. Sixty percent of women who reported experiencing hate acts were wearing *hijab* when the incidents occurred, and an additional 30 percent were in the company of women wearing *hijab*.[5] In addition, more than half of the men who reported experiencing hate acts were in the company of women wearing *hijab* when the incidents occurred. Furthermore, when asked which subgroup of Arab Muslims was most affected (in any way) by post-9/11 events, 55 percent of the study's respondents identified women wearing *hijab*. They were more likely than other women and than men to be spit at, be the target of road rage, have items thrown at their cars, be followed by strangers, be subjected to hateful language, and report home vandalism and sieges.

Hateful experiences reported by women in *hijab* occurred initially all across the Chicago metropolitan area, but after the three- to four-month period of heightened post-9/11 hate-crime backlash ended (see Cainkar 2009, chap. 6), all but two events reported in the post-9/11 study occurred in the southwest suburbs. The following incident occurred within weeks of the 9/11 attacks near a university campus just west of downtown Chicago. An Arab Muslim woman who experienced the threat of vehicular assault reported a sense of fear attached to wearing *hijab* that she had not experienced prior to the attacks.

Literally, I could not leave my apartment because I was scared to leave and lived in fear. For the first time in my life, I was fearful for my life. When I did go out, I would have things thrown at my car, remarks made. People who used to be friendly with me were not so friendly. Some of them may not have said anything directly to me but were standoffish now. And I understand because I think I'm a reminder of what happened that day. Before, I would walk around, and nobody ever said anything to me, but immediately thereafter, especially the couple of days after 9/11, I would be screamed at, yelled at, "go back to your country." It was just a very scary time in my life. I actually had a bottle thrown at my car. . . . One time, I was crossing the street here at Paulina, and a man who was driving came to a stop sign and was slowing down. Then I started crossing because I thought he was coming to a full stop. He pressed on the accelerator, and I retracted from crossing the street. He yelled out of his car, "You terrorist." . . . To be honest, I have friends who have considered and have actually taken off their *hijab* just because they were fearful of their lives. I didn't come to that point where I would consider ripping it off, but I can see why some women did.

Although many interviewees spoke of incidents in which a woman's *hijab* was pulled off, no one in this study personally experienced such an attack. Nonetheless, the Council on American–Islamic Relations in Chicago took reports of such incidents. In an incident that occurred at a McDonald's in southwest suburban Orland Park (the site of a new mosque) in 2006, an eighteen-year-old man pulled a woman's head scarf off from behind.[6] In another incident that year, the word *camels* was spray-painted on an Arab American family's lawn in far southwest suburban Tinley Park.[7] Although this incident was directed at an entire family, it reveals the persistence of dehumanizing views of Arab and Muslim Americans in the southwest suburbs. The locations of both of these incidents also indicate that hate encounters and neighborhood defenders are moving to areas where the Arab/Muslim presence is newly increasing.

Cultural Sniping: Muslim Women in *Hijab* as Symbols of the Rejection of American Values

"One of my friends was wearing a scarf, but not anymore. Her neighbor put small flags at all of the houses [on the block], and my friend asked her, 'Why you didn't put flags in front of our house?' She said, 'Because you are Muslim.' My friend said, 'No, I was born here; my husband was in the army,' and she went out and bought a big flag. A lot of women who wore the scarf stopped. They were afraid someone would attack them." This quote from an Arab Muslim woman living in the southwest suburbs shows a white American woman's understanding of the relationship between being American and wearing *hijab*—where one negates the other. When a flag, the symbol of American nationalism, is denied to the American-born woman wearing *hijab*, she removes her *hijab* and purchases a flag, both actions supporting a specific hegemonic construction of "American woman."

Many Muslim women, however, refused to stop wearing *hijab* even when it was suggested to them that doing so would protect them from attack. "My husband told me to take it, the *hijab*, off. I said, 'No. I am wearing it for my religion. If I'm not bothering anyone, no one should bother me.'"

Just as many Arab/Muslim American families bought flags to place on their lawns, making the statement that they,

too, were Americans, many women in *hijab* bought flags for their cars, which, beyond making a statement, was perceived to enhance their safety while they went about their normal routines. "Quite a few families put flags out at that time. Some Arabs, especially women that wore *hijab*, put flags in their car." Vehicular safety was important to secure because many women reported being cursed or followed while driving. "Our neighbor was chased by four or five people who were riding in a car. She ran away very quickly to the Police Station. That really happened. She was very terrified. They had tracked her many times in the past. This is why she didn't go home; she didn't want them to know where she was living. They fled when they saw her heading towards the police station." "Raghead," a derogatory term for Arab men referring to the head shawl traditionally worn by some men in various Arab countries, was now being shouted at women in *hijab*: "One guy, when I was taking groceries out of my car, yelled, 'Go back to where you came from, you raghead!' I was in cul-de-sac by my house. He yelled out of his car. It was scary, but he went away." Public safety (or lack thereof) and wearing *hijab* were so highly interconnected that Arab Muslim women who did not wear *hijab* believed that their lack of *hijab* was the source of their safety. In response to the question, "Do you feel safe shopping?," one woman answered, "Because I don't wear *hijab*, yes."

It is also possible that some bigots thought out their actions extensively and decided that because the government was acting aggressively enough toward Arab and Muslim men, their own work had to focus strategically on women. The only way to prove or disprove this line of thinking is by studying the perpetrators, which I have not done. As I have noted, some aggressors may have assumed that women in general are weaker than men or that women wouldn't strike back, as one male interviewee believed:

> Some of the attacks were against women, some because they wear their veil. Being a woman is being vulnerable, you know, because people look at you as the weaker one than the male. . . . Sometimes maybe women can communicate with others a lot better than men or in a better way because if somebody talked to an Arab man, they might get defensive, they might be very offended, they might be ready to fight or something. But a woman might do it by talking. It's already happened. Pulling their scarves off and hitting a woman, or spitting on her. Where if it was a guy, they wouldn't have done that. And it's a guy doing it usually. So, yeah, I think women are more vulnerable than men.

Yet this line of thinking does not explain why a disproportionate number of attacks on women occurred in the southwest suburbs. In a place where Arab and Muslim men were easily distinguished from and by the majority-white population, it is clear that women were *chosen* as targets for very specific reasons tied mostly to defense of a neighborhood hegemonic order rooted in white supremacy and hegemonic masculinity. Although I recognize that perceptions of gendered vulnerability may intersect with these reasons for choosing hijab-wearing Muslim women as targets, cultural threat remains a central motive.

Flags, *Hijab*s, and National-Boundary Setting

The American flag played a prominent role in performances of outcasting Arabs and Muslims: mobs around the Bridgeview mosque waved flags, and interviewees reported flags draped from the cars of southwest suburbanites shouting insults at them. These flags were not the flags of patriotic Americans expressing national solidarity after the 9/11 attacks, and there were many of those. These particular flags were the props of southwest suburban bigots symbolically erecting national boundaries. Flags, in turn, played a symbolic role for Arab and Muslim Americans seeking to assert their membership in the nation. Women in *hijab* placed flags on their cars, and Arab Americans began displaying flags on their lawns. A flag was hung on the Bridgeview mosque while it was under police protection, and the first prop on the Orland Park mosque construction site was an American flag. "Some people painted in our driveway 'Go Home.' People threw firecrackers in our driveway. They must be from the neighborhood. Who else would know who we were? All the Arabs in the neighborhood started putting flags out."

Arab Americans on the southwest side and in the southwest suburbs of Chicago have a wide array of Arabic businesses to patronize, yet they also shop at local supermarkets and southwest suburban shopping malls. The latter were the places where Arab Muslim women said they felt least safe. They repeatedly mentioned malls and supermarkets as sites of harassment, verbal abuse, and physical assault. Women in *hijab* reported being spit at, sneezed on, and told to "go home," "go back to your country," or "go back to where you came from" most often in these types of places. One woman told me, "A group of white people approaching me in a mall would scare me." Southwest suburban shopping malls and supermarkets were key sites for hostile encounters because they were among the few places outside of the block, the school, and the superstore where suburban whites and Arab/Muslim Americans met and shared space for extended periods of time. "My mother's friend was walking into the supermarket. Someone tugged at her scarf, shouted at her, and spit at her. This was on Ninety-Fifth Street in Bridgeview or Palos Hills."

The experiences of Arab Muslims in southwest suburban malls and supermarkets indicate that these locations became spaces of heightened contest after 9/11, places where Arab/Muslim women's right to walk freely was challenged. They were key spaces of boundary setting and outcasting performed by some members of the southwest suburban white community. That community's actions went beyond efforts to deny American cultural citizenship to

Arabs and Muslims by challenging their very right to live in the United States. Because a large proportion of Arab and Muslim Americans living in the southwest suburbs were born in the United States, however, they first had to be constructed as foreign, de-Americanized, before they could be told to go home.

Displaying the American flag symbolized loyalty to the United States, so many women who wore *hijab* felt that doing so was essential to proving that they too were American. "This girl I was with felt so uncomfortable entering the Home Store in Lemont that the minute we walked in, she said, 'Do you have any flags here?' I think people who cover [wear *hijab*] have obviously been affected. They're more aware of people watching them." White southwest suburbanites were acting out a local form of nativism that would eventually characterize the nation.

Anti-Muslim Discourses: Muslims Hate Freedom and Seek to Destroy American Culture and Democracy

Several decades ago, the scholar John Higham defined nativism as "zeal to destroy enemies of a distinctively American way of life" (1955, 24). Higham observed that nativist practices surge when fear binds the nation together; at such times, discourses championing "national homogeneity" establish the boundaries of inclusion (us) and exclusion (them). "Mere difference is not enough to provoke nativist zeal," noted Higham, because hostile views toward the cultures and institutions of strangers and newcomers are a "perennial human experience" (3). It is during times of national crisis and war that a "profoundly intense American feeling" emerges along with a "persistent conception about what is un-American" (3). Acts of harassment and violence based in nativist ideas of "who we are not" are directed at perceived cultural threats to the American way of life and are articulated as national defense. In the southwest suburbs of Chicago after 9/11, neighborhood defenders latched on to nativist arguments and reconstructed their Arab and Muslim American neighbors as foreigners who posed a threat to the fabric of American culture—the white, middle-class, Christian culture that institutionalized the defenders' privilege. Arab Muslim women wearing *hijab* were positioned as the countersymbols to this culture, the people "we are not." According to the interpretation of *hijab* as representative of coercion and female submission, both values considered "un-American," women in *hijab* symbolized the foreigners who needed to be outcasted; they were commanded to "go home."

Writing in the 1950s, Higham believed that anti-Catholic nativism, which called for "stiff naturalization laws and exclusion of Catholics and foreigners from public office, completely overshadowed every other nativist tradition" (1955, 6).[8] Catholics were seen as foreign agents who posed a threat to American core values of individual freedom and political liberty. Catholics, nativists said, were unable to practice democracy. Nativists argued that the large migration of Catholics to the United States was a papal plot to subvert American institutions and install in their place an authoritarian Catholic Church. Calling for a repeal of naturalization laws, they argued, "They hate our Republic, and are trying to overthrow it."[9] The similarity of these calls to nativist assertions about Muslims at the turn of the twenty-first century is striking.

Islamophobic discourses of the time also spoke of Muslim plots to take over American institutions and establish authoritarian rule—a leadership style represented as inherent to both Arabs and Muslims—and included calls for halting their immigration. The Center for Immigration Studies published a report in 2002 that argued that

> in its long history of immigration, the United States has never encountered so violent-prone and radicalized a community as the Muslims who have arrived since 1965. Because the immigrant Muslim community is so new, it is still very much in formation. Which way will the first generation of immigrant children turn? Will their dual identities as Americans and Muslims be complementary or contradictory? Will they accept or reject the Islamist program of changing the United States? Will they control the urge toward violence? More broadly, will they insist on adapting the United States to Islam, or will they agree to adapt Islam to the United States? Much depends on the answer. (Duran and Pipes 2002)

Assertions that Arabs and Muslims are threats to democracy were usually accompanied by essentialized claims that render history and current political realities as culturally inevitable outcomes. That is, if Arabs and Muslims don't have democratic governments, that state of affairs has everything to do with cultural proclivities and religious beliefs and nothing to do with global imperialism. Such is the case with Bernard Lewis's assessment of the Muslim "problem with democracy." Lewis asserted that Muslims march behind authority because of their religious beliefs: "It is not easy to create and maintain free institutions in a region of age-old authoritarian traditions, in a political culture where religion and ethics have been more concerned with duties than with rights, in which obedience to legitimate authority is a religious obligation as well as a political necessity, and disobedience a sin as well as a crime" (1994).

These ideas blatantly contradict another oft-asserted trope: the inherent chaos and turbulence of the Arab and Muslim world, a place (reduced to a single unit) "teeming" with people who are ultimately unpredictable and live in the throes of their emotions and discontents. Although it is sociologically illogical to find rampant chaos and disorganization (disobedience) in a place where obedience is sacred and authoritarianism is said to rule, such contradictions are possible in an imagined world of the Other, where there is no growth, no change, no diversity, no human adaptation, and no material for sociological study except for why things never change. As Mahmoud Mamdani

(2002) puts it, the Muslim world is characterized as a (singular) place living outside of history. Similar ideas were the hallmark of anti-Catholic nativism in the nineteenth century, when Catholics were portrayed as irrational, emotional, and uncontrollable at the same time as they were said to be controlled by the love of authoritarianism and the pope.

Although President George W. Bush called for public tolerance and restraint after 9/11 and delivered a positive speech about Islam at the Islamic Center in Washington, DC, on September 17, 2001, he made other statements that supported the notion that Muslims hate freedom and democracy. For example, in his speech to Congress and the American people on September 20, President Bush said: "Americans are asking, why do they hate us? They hate what we see right here in this chamber—a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms—our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other" (Bush 2001a).[10]

The solution to the Muslim threat, argued Mark Krikorian in a *National Review* article entitled "Muslim Invasion?" (2002), lay in reducing their immigration to the United States and "slowing the growth of the Muslim population." Kirkorian was arguing the decades-old fabricated trope about Muslim terrorism: "Muslim immigration helps facilitate domestic terrorism, with immigrant communities serving, as Mao might have said, as the sea within which the terrorists swim as fish." Krikorian also tied the Muslim threat to potential erosion of American support for Israel. Echoing the terror-threat trope, neoconservative Daniel Pipes argued a few months prior to his nomination by President George W. Bush to the board of the United States Institute of Peace that Muslims in the United States as well as Muslim visitors and immigrants required special scrutiny: "There is no escaping the unfortunate fact that Muslim government employees in law enforcement, the military, and the diplomatic corps need to be watched for connections to terrorism, as do Muslim chaplains in prisons and the armed forces. Muslim visitors and immigrants must undergo additional background checks. Mosques require a scrutiny beyond that applied to churches and temples" (2003).

Right-wing talk-radio hosts also took up the nativist charge that Muslims intended to take over American political institutions: they would do so by manipulating attitudes favoring tolerance so as to ultimately destroy American culture and eradicate its core component, freedom of choice.

"Allah Is Not the God of This Nation"

April 2004. Talk-radio host Michael DelGiorno on 1170 KFAQ, Tulsa, Oklahoma:

> Allah is not the God of this nation, but that is exactly the agenda of Islam: to change our government from within through politics and through tolerance and inclusion—alter our culture.
> But make no mistake about it, their goal is not to be one of many gods and one of many religions, it's to be the God and the religion of the entire Earth.
> Christians you better start speaking up and standing up for what's right, it's already too late in Michigan. . . .
> How much longer before it's too late right here at home? (reported in Muslim Civil Rights Center 2004, ellipses indicating pause in speech)

Thwarting the planned Muslim takeover of the United States might require drastic action, according to Boston radio host Jay Severins of WTKK-FM, who suggested: "I've got an idea, let's kill all Muslims" (reported in Muslim Civil Rights Center 2004).

Hatred of freedom is the core around which anti-Muslim nativist arguments pivot. Framed in this way, Arabs and Muslims could be interpreted not only as terror threats but also as profoundly threatening to the American way of life. *Hijab*, interpreted as an act of coercion, was in the post-9/11 period the blatant symbol of that hatred.

Meanings of *Hijab*

In dominant Western discourses repeated often in the years before and after the 9/11 attacks, *hijab* has been represented as an act of oppression enforced on Muslim women by Muslim men. It stands as symbolic of women's submission to patriarchal men, a trait associated with backward societies and cultures, places far less "civilized" than the United States. Indeed, photos of women in *hijab* have been central to the image construction of Arab and Muslim societies as places where the way of life is in opposition to American ideals of freedom and individual liberty. The alleged relationship between the *hijab* and oppression and the *hijab*'s oppositional bearing to civilized society, American culture, and personal freedom formed a core theme of the US invasion of Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks. As Lila Abu-Lughod (2002) points out, saving Muslim women from Muslim men was a cultural theme invoked to garner support for American military actions in Afghanistan. There was no apparent strategic necessity for such a theme because there was little domestic opposition to the invasion (although the theme indicates the government's mixing of military strategies and cultural chauvinism), but this message reinforced ideas about American cultural superiority while participating in dichotomies frequently articulated by the government in its War on Terror: the civilized and the barbaric, the free and the unfree, us and them. In the government's construction, women in *hijab* were symbols of (Muslim) force and barbarism, countersymbols to American civilization and freedom. Put forth as symbols

of something Americans should disdain and conquer, American women in *hijab* were the "them" that neighborhood defenders sought to cast out.

If one believes that where there are women in *hijab*, there is force and authoritarianism, that women wearing *hijab* are open displays of coerced submission to men, then it follows that Muslim women should rejoice in being saved from such coercion, whether through military liberation or through migration to the West. By their very wearing of the *hijab*, then, American Muslim women somehow do not deserve to live in the United States because whether they are forced or choose to do so, they are actively rejecting the promises of American freedom. Women in *hijab* are thus potent symbols of the victory of tyranny over the ideal of individual liberty, and even women who freely choose to wear *hijab* are acting in a manner unacceptable to American culture. There is no space for choice when it comes to *hijab* if it is interpreted as a symbol of force. As Nadine Naber has noted, Muslim women's possibilities are reduced to "unveiling or allying with foreignness, backwardness, or violence" (2012, 138). Rejecting freedom, American women in *hijab* cease to be unique persons with individual dignity; they are instead symbols of the calculated use of American freedom to take over American culture and drag the country into political backwardness and despotism.

The illogic of these social constructions that debase Muslim women's free will and choice works like this: Muslim women who *choose* to wear *hijab* are *using* American freedom to openly flaunt their *rejection* of American freedom. Such constructions that cast American women in *hijab* as un-American, even anti-American, in their motivations explain why after 9/11 neighborhood defenders driven by a "zeal to destroy enemies of a distinctively American way of life" (Higham 1955, 24) demanded that Muslim women in *hijab* "go home" and systematically harassed, assaulted, spit on, and followed them.

Arab and Muslim Women: Producers of Terrorists

Themes revolving around the *hijab* and its relationship to core American values were primary, but they were not the only ones in American popular culture before and after 9/11 that singled out Arab/Muslim women as different, even barbaric. As is common to misogynist arguments, purveyors of hatred charged Arab/Muslim motherhood itself with a culture crime. Antiwomen arguments usually play into larger stereotypic themes about a group by focusing on women's particular role in producing and reproducing certain cultural outcomes. The case of Arab/Muslim women is no exception to this pattern. Quite compatibly with larger stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims, misogynist narratives claim that Arab/Muslim women actively nurture the alleged violent personalities of Arab/Muslim men by refusing to hug them as children. A statement posted by a "center for self-healing," for example, charges that Arabs and Muslims are cold and harsh with their children and implies that mothers are fully on board with the cultural plan, predisposing their children to adulthoods of brutality and barbarism. Once again we cannot tell whether women choose or are forced to engage in this behavior, but yet again it does not really matter. This quote, which also conflates Arabs and Muslims to enable capturing both, was not found on the website of a hate group; it was prominently positioned on the website of the very mainstream Annapurna Center for Self Healing in Washington State.[11] Restating claims made by Howard Bloom in an *Omni* magazine article entitled "The Importance of Hugging" (1989), the quote refers to Arabs (or is it Muslims?) as a "walking time bomb." "Could the denial of warmth lie behind Arab brutality? Could these keepers of Islamic flame be suffering from a lack of hugging? . . . In much of Arab society the cold and even brutal approach to children has still not stopped. Public warmth between men and women is considered a sin. And the Arab adult, stripped of intimacy and thrust into a life of cold isolation, has become a walking time bomb. An entire people may have turned barbaric for the simple lack of a hug" (Annapurna Center 2005). In this particular manifestation of the argument, the role of the kind and loving mother is eviscerated by replacing her with references to totally unrelated norms concerning public displays of affection between unrelated adult males and females. Bloom lays out this argument more fully in his book *The Lucifer Principle* (1997), where he explains why Islamic societies are "high on the list" of "barbarians." Although his argument is clearly an example of Orientalist, Islamophobic, and racist literature that like others of its genre uses spurious data to support its argument, it was nonetheless published in *Omni* magazine as "scientific" and is representative of a certain track in American culture.

The website of the Global Ideas Bank, which claims to be the "greatest ideas site on the internet today," posted a similar argument based on Bloom's work (enacting Edward Said's [1978] notion that repetition rather than objective data is the hallmark of Orientalist claims), stating as fact that Muslims treat their children coldly: "The cultures that treated their children coldly produced brutal adults, according to a survey of 49 cultures conducted by James Prescott, founder of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development's Developmental Biology Program in the States. . . . Prescott's observations apply to Islamic and other cultures, which treat their children harshly. They despise open displays of affection. The result, he claims: violent adults."[12]

After 9/11, the diffusion of these ideas in American culture provided further reason why nativists should focus their attacks on Arab and Muslim American women, the reproducers of culture, especially in areas where their large number was seen to pose a significant cultural threat to the neighborhood's moral order.

In the competition over definitions of who and what is American that emerged after the 9/11 attacks, attacks on women in *hijab* were acts of cultural sniping taken to affirm hegemonic masculinity and femininity. Muslim women

who covered their hair and bodies physically and symbolically refused hegemonic men their claimed right to heterosexual desire; they denied the men gazing rights and free access to women's bodies. Harassments, rudeness, assaults, vehicular pursuits, and threats of greater violence, framed in utterances of outcasting ("go home"), were belligerent acts of aggression that asserted that American femininity precluded *hijab*. American feminist support for liberating Afghani women from the burqa reinforced this narrow definition of femininity. Ideas about covering versus exposure and force versus choice became binary poles around which the cultural front of the War on Terror was waged. In public space, women's clothing and bodies were on the front line; under confinement, men's bodies were targeted.

Women in *Hijab* Alter Their Behaviors after 9/11

Some women stopped wearing *hijab* temporarily after 9/11, many of them pressed by their husbands to do so, at least until the situation settled down. Some religious figures, whose authority was accepted by some women and contested by others, issued statements after 9/11 that women who felt in harm's way were allowed to refrain from wearing *hijab*. "Many have stopped wearing *hijab*. Many men asked their wives to take it off. Some did, some didn't. Fatwas were issued saying it was OK. If you are in extreme physical harm, take it off or wear a cap or stay home. One fatwa was from a sheikh from Mauritania; another was from someone who is a doctor by day and a sheikh by night. He really has no authority to do so." Some women who wore *hijab* stayed inside their homes for weeks: "After 9/11, my sister-in-law didn't go out of their house for two weeks, and that's because she wears the veil. She's a widow, and she's the one who cooks and cleans and does everything in the house, and her kids are always working. . . . She's stuck in the house because of what happened. Many other women carried on with life in *hijab* but, aware that they were the potential targets of attack, shifted their patterns of movement in public space."

Other women, however, continued to wear *hijab* and leave the house, but at the same time their husbands assumed many of the women's usual public tasks. "I have another friend who insisted that his wife take off her *hijab*, and she refused. She kept going out, but he was worried about her. He would do lots of the errands that she used to do because he was worried." Others said they exercised more caution about where they went. "Forest preserves and parks were definitely out. Places where soccer moms go were places I would not go." Some women who wore *hijab* reportedly endured extensive stress and anxiety during this period. "One of my friends, immediately after September 11, she was afraid and she couldn't go out, and she ended up staying home and having psychological anxiety and being treated for that because she almost had a breakdown. She was so afraid for her children and worried about her husband and about what would happen to us in this country." The perceived danger was a heart-wrenching challenge to one's commitment to religious beliefs. "After the events, we have begun to feel less secure than before. And because I wear a veil, I have been living in a conflict: I have been confused about what to do. Should I take off the veil? Keep it on? What to do? If I keep it on, I might endanger myself, and if I take it off, I would endanger my faith. I have been living in fear and anxiety."

Women's Bodies and Clothing: Historic Site of Ideological Battles

A scholar in Chicago's Arab American community who was interviewed in the study suggested that Muslim women's greater vulnerability to public harassment continues a global historical pattern in which women's bodies and dress are the battlegrounds where larger conflicts are fought. Because of the post-9/11 attacks on women in *hijab*, this Arab Muslim woman softened her prior antipathy for it, now seeing the *hijab* as a woman's choice that must be defended. Although she considered the "*hijab* phenomenon" an "exaggerated response to modernity," she saw women's agency in the choice to wear it. Like others, she maintained that attacks on women in *hijab* increased many women's commitment to wearing it. In response to the question "Have women been affected in any special way?," she answered,

> Oh yeah. More vulnerability. They are more subject to harassment. The whole ideological battle is being fought over women's bodies and women's clothing.
> The September 11 events made me re-evaluate my animosity to Islamic phenomena, like *hijab*, because, traditionally, I'm hostile to this. Now, I'm not that hostile. I want to protect them. I feel like protecting them. I defend them. Actually, I do. I say to people, "It's their choice." I never used to think it was the women's choice. Now, I say well maybe it is their choice, and they should be able to wear whatever they want to wear. I probably was much more harsh on them before. So they suffered from my rejection of Islamization, wearing the *hijab* here in the US, I mean. The *hijab* in Egypt isn't a threat to anybody; it's accepted. Here, it's not accepted, and it makes women more vulnerable, which I think now they are beginning to realize.
> I think Americans are beginning to adjust to it, and as they do, the animus will be taken out of it. I think there's a sense of defiance now about wearing the *hijab*.

Hijab is about respecting physical modesty, a value that is not alien to other religions. In the long histories of

Judaism, Catholicism, and Orthodox Christianity, the practice of women covering their hair as an act of faith was abandoned only relatively recently, and some women of these faiths still do it. In the 1960s, the Vatican and Western feminists shared the view that veiling was not a practice consistent with modernity. Catholic nuns began taking off their veils. Veiling and rigorous modesty came to be understood in dominant American culture as retrograde; wearing one's faith was replaced with Protestant ideas that spirituality was a private matter. Nonetheless, some measure of respect or tolerance has been accorded to Jewish women, Amish women, and Catholic nuns who cover their hair because of their religious beliefs. When Muslim women engage in this practice of faith and modesty, however, a different interpretation of this behavior places them in situations of potential danger.

An Arab American woman (who says she has chosen for now not to wear *hijab*) thought that pointing out religious continuities in wearing *hijab* would help others see *hijab*'s meaning: "I was insulted even before September 11. They used to call us 'camel jockeys' or the '*hijab*' and make fun of us. After 9/11, it got worse, and it's still going on. It's mostly women with the *hijab* who are being attacked verbally. I want to sit with the people and explain about the *hijab* and I would say, for example, look at the Virgin Mary. We respect the Virgin Mary. What is she wearing? Is she naked? She's wearing something respectable." But for many Americans after 9/11, *hijab* was invested with a host of imputed meanings that symbolized their worst fears: authoritarianism, loss of freedom, and Muslim takeover. They did not invent these fears; they learned them.

Attacks on Women in *Hijab* Decrease in the Southwest Suburbs

Toward the end of the period of data collection for the post-9/11 study, Arab Muslims reported that attacks on women in *hijab* seemed to be decreasing in the southwest suburbs of Chicago. "Actually, I have a sister-in-law who became religious, and she put a scarf on her head. At quite a few places, I was with my brother, his wife, and my wife in the malls, and we'd hear these really nasty remarks, but we'd just keep walking. I have to admit, it's less frequent, thank God. I think people are realizing that it's not polite . . . it's not appropriate." The banning of *hijab* in French state schools emerged as a new point of comparison in interviews and conversations: whereas in France sentiments against the *hijab* had become institutionalized by the state, Muslim women in the United States remained legally free to wear *hijab*. Indeed, US government agencies (e.g., the Department of Justice, Department of Education, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) had issued numerous statements, advisories, and brochures supporting the right of Muslim women to wear *hijab* free from discrimination (and how it should be managed during security inspections), a right the government supported in court cases revolving around wearing *hijab* in public schools, often with the assistance of organizations typically associated with evangelical Christians.[13] "I don't think it's still going on as much. It's very interesting. America, compared to Europe, is more conservative in some areas but progressive in others. Contrasting with what's happening in France, in regard to the head scarf, America is more progressive in that sense than France."

Although most study participants felt that voices in the American media bore substantial responsibility for inciting attacks on women in *hijab*, some credited the media with eventually offering information that promoted new interpretations of reality. "I think the women with the *hijab*, with the cover, were affected in the beginning. I think it's much less now because the media helped the people to look at it a little bit different." In addition to an increasing number of authentic teach-ins, courses, and books on Islam offered in the years after 9/11, some Arab Muslim women reported personal experiences in which non-Muslims expressed an interest in learning more about Islam and *hijab*. This quest for knowledge was one of the paradoxical outcomes of 9/11 (see Cainkar 2009). "I really think people are more interested in Islam—what it is, what faith stands for, *hijab* and why women chose to wear it. They want know about me." These positive changes did not last long, though. At the same time as the number of hate attacks on Muslim women in the southwest suburbs as well as anti-Muslim attacks across the United States were declining, anti-Muslim activities among an increasingly coordinated network of Islamophobes were rising.

"Muslim Invasion" and "Civilization Jihad" Take Anti-Muslim Hatred in New Directions

Islamophobia did not begin on September 11, nor did it begin with Muslim migration to the West. Its history in the West is long and deep, stretching back to the Crusades and the Reconquista of Spain, the latter occurring in the same period as Columbus set out on his expedition for new trade routes to India, framing what Ella Shohat calls "the two 1492's" (2013, 50). More recently, anti-Muslim sentiments marked US government responses to the Nation of Islam, the Iranian Revolution, and the 9/11 attacks. Yet it is difficult to find a moment in recent US history when they were stronger and more widespread than in the second decade of the twenty-first century. This elevated status must be credited largely to a highly organized and methodical cast of personalities, funders, scholars, activists, organizations, and media outlets that the Center for American Progress refers to as the "Islamophobia industry" and that are intent on bringing fear of Muslims into every American home (Ali et al. 2011; Duss et al. 2015). The industry includes not only some of the same characters active in post-9/11 Islamophobic work discussed earlier—Kirkorian, Emerson, Pipes—but also a new cadre of activists, organizations, and elected officials. According to the center's research, seven charitable foundations spent $42.6 million between 2001 and 2009 to support Islamophobic activities. These activities wed the

notion of Muslim cultural threat to mass immigration and demographic change, promoting the idea that a Muslim invasion of the United States bent on "civilization jihad"—the formal name given to the alleged Muslim takeover of American culture and politics—was taking place. In recent years, these actors have moved from the fringe to the center with a clear message that Islam and *all* Muslims are much more than a terror threat—they are a threat to the very fiber of US American culture.

A study by Christopher Bail found that, thanks to extensive media exposure, "civil society organizations that deployed the Muslims as enemies frame drifted from the fringe of the discursive field to the very center of the mainstream" (2012, 869). These groups received wide corporate news coverage of their charge in 2007–8 that presidential candidate Barack Obama was a closet Muslim, of their campaign in 2010 to oppose Manhattan's "Ground Zero" mosque, of Terry Jones's threat in 2010 to burn a copy of the Qur'an, and of their multiyear and multistate anti-Sharia campaigns. Increased activism and media coverage produced heightened levels of public engagement, including through extralegal violence against Muslims and anti-Muslim platforms of candidates for political office. Distinct rises in officially reported anti-Muslim hate crimes were evident in 2010 and 2012, corresponding to election cycles. Anti-Muslim hate crimes rose again in 2015, increasing 67 percent from 2014, reflecting the highest level of anti-Muslim hate-crime activity since 2001; they have continued to climb ever since (B. Levin 2017). According to Pew Center research, the proportion of persons who believed that Islam was more likely than other religions to encourage violence doubled from 25 percent in 2002 to 50 percent in 2014 (B. Levin 2017). The number of anti-Muslim hate groups in the United States nearly quadrupled between 2015 (34) and 2017 (114) (Southern Poverty Law Center 2017). What was heavily neighborhood defense in the immediate post-9/11 period went nationwide.

The purported threat of Muslim invasion and civilization jihad calls for state policies of control, such as surveillance, registration, and immigration bars. These are the very policies that anti-Muslim presidential candidate Donald Trump promised in 2015 and 2016, calling for a "total and complete shutdown" of Muslims entering the country, for a Muslim American registry, and referring to Syrian refugees as "Trojan horses." There is no doubt that the increase in anti-Muslim hate groups and hate crimes during these years is directly related to his statements. Once Trump became president, he issued a series of executive orders, known collectively as the "Muslim ban," that barred refugees from Syria and all immigration from six Muslim-majority countries (see Cainkar 2020). After numerous court challenges and revisions, the ban went into effect temporarily in December 2017 and was upheld by the US Supreme Court in June 2018. Immigration from banned countries as well as from other Muslim-majority countries dropped dramatically (Cainkar 2020). The Islamophobia movement and its adoption by much of the Trump administration institutionalized anti-Muslim animosity in the United States and rendered American Muslim public safety as tenuous as it was in the years immediately after 9/11, perhaps even more so.

Although women in *hijab* are still among the primary victims of Islamophobic hate acts (Cainkar and Najeeb 2019), mosques have also been set on fire, and quite a few men presumed to be Muslim have been murdered by (mainly white) public actors (Cainkar 2019). As Higham noted, nativism tends to grip a nation in times of fear. Trump and Islamophobic activists have created and stoked such fear, promoting an exclusionary white-supremacist nativism that endangers all Muslims, among many other BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) groups, everywhere. Because the alleged brown-male terror threat was also framed as a culture threat (as women in *hijab* had been framed), the work of disciplining brown men moved beyond being largely the work of state apparatuses to also being the work of the public, therein increasing Muslim males' vulnerability to public attack. This significant change in the framing of Muslim men evened out the gendered plane that characterized post-9/11 extralegal violence; now both Muslim women and Muslim men are positioned as culture threats. Representative Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, one of two Muslim women (along with Rashida Tlaib of Michigan) elected to the US Congress in 2018 and the first congressperson to wear *hijab*, has been a particular focus of white-supremacist and Islamophobic wrath. In the fall of 2019, North Dakota state senator Oley Larsen, a Republican, used Facebook to call Omar an "elected terrorist," an allegation that was accompanied by a photo that went viral, claiming to show her at an al-Qaeda training camp even though the photo was taken before she was born. For his part, President Trump has repeatedly denigrated Omar, Tlaib, as well as Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts—all women of color—referring to them as "the squad." In an act of outcasting, in July 2019 he told them to "go back and help fix the totally broken and crime infested places from which they came," even though three of the four were born in the United States. When he shortly thereafter made a range of false claims about Omar at a North Carolina rally, the excited crowd chanted, "Send her back, send her back."

Conclusion

No matter where they were born or their citizenship status, Arab Muslims living in Chicago's southwest suburbs reported being treated as foreigners in their own neighborhoods. Flags were thrust at them or denied to them, in both cases expressing the notion that one cannot be American and Arab or Muslim at the same time. They were "de-Americanized," but in specifically gendered ways. Arab women in *hijab* were seen as the ultimate symbols of this foreignness because *hijab* was understood to represent un-American values of force and authoritarianism, the opposite

of American personal freedom. Arguments by women that they choose to wear *hijab* carried little currency with persons who held these anti-Muslim views because by the very action of choosing *hijab*, Muslim women were seen as blatantly rejecting the promises of American freedom and its hegemonic notions of femininity; women in *hijab* posed a danger requiring gender policing. In the southwest suburbs where these interpretations born of white supremacy flourished among the majority-white community, women wearing *hijab* lived in danger. They were more likely than other women and than men to be spit at, experience road rage, have items thrown at their cars, be followed by strangers, be subjected to hateful language, and be the target of home vandalism and sieges. These extralegal activities were synergistic with federal government antiterror policies that abrogated the civil and legal rights of Arab and Muslim men. Public support for mass arrests, detention without charges, special registration, mass expulsion, wiretapping, and spying without pretext practiced against Arab and Muslim American communities was easier to obtain when these groups were understood as threatening and "not really American." Although Muslim women witnessed some improvements in their safety in the southwest suburbs a few years after the 9/11 attacks, those advances did not last long. Extralegal anti-Muslim violence has instead escalated in recent years because of the efforts of a nationally coordinated Islamophobic movement that casts all Muslims as cultural threats to the nation and the endorsement of these views by members of the Trump administration as well as by Trump himself. Hate violence is no longer directed primarily at women in *hijab*, but the repeated threats faced by Congresswoman Ilhan Omar indicate that women in *hijab* remain both women in danger and dangerous women because they openly challenge hegemonic femininity and white supremacy.

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1. I use the words *hate acts* and *hate encounters* instead of *hate crimes* to more broadly cover hostile actions that may not be considered a crime, such as spitting, sneezing in someone's face, and hand gestures. Few such actions were reported to the police. In contrast, the "hate-crime data" referred to in this chapter are officially reported acts that constitute a crime and were determined by police to be a hate crime. Quite a few crimes considered by Muslims to be hate crimes were not accorded this status by police.

2. See chapter 1 in Cainkar 2009 for more information about this controversial list assembled by US Census Bureau staff in 2003. See also Electronic Privacy Information Center 2004. Peoria is home to a historic and largely second- and third-generation Lebanese population.

3. The description of their local civic and political status is based on my field research.

4. This finding could mean that the government's aggressive and widely publicized efforts focused on Arab/Muslim men reduced the public's propensity to attack men and shifted their focus to women.

5. Women wearing *hijab* made up 46 percent of the female interlocuters.

6. The perpetrator was initially charged with a hate crime, but the state's attorney lowered the charge to battery. The man pled guilty to battery and was sentenced to perform community service with the Council on American–Islamic Relations in Chicago.

7. The defendant in this case was acquitted because the family was unsure whether they could positively identify him; he was wearing a ski mask at the time of the incident.

8. This conclusion about anti-Catholic nativism is possible largely because Higham viewed exclusionary actions against persons seen as nonwhite as a different form of nativism, which he called "racial nativism." One form of nativism (racial) was about "who we are," and the other form of nativism (antiforeign) was about "who we are not."

9. Anti-Catholic Press, "THE KNOW-NOTHING: AND AMERICAN CRUSADER 29 July 1854," Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

10. President Bush's speech at the Islamic Center of Washington, DC, on September 17 focused on Islam as a religion of peace and solace. See Bush 2001b.

11. The Defense Science Board describes the simplifying function of the conflation that subsumes complex and different matters into one rubric: "The Global War on Terrorism replaced the Cold War as a national security meta narrative. Governments, media, and publics use the terrorism frame for cognitive, evaluative, and communication purposes. For political leaders, it is a way to link disparate events; identify priorities, friends, enemies, victims, and blame; and shape simple coherent messages. For journalists and news consumers the terrorism frame conflates and appears to make sense of diverse national security stories—Al Qaeda, Jihadists, Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel, Iran, Chechnya, Indonesia, Kashmir, the Philippines, Kenya, Spain" (2004, 17).

12. These statements were on the Global Ideas Bank website (http://www.globalideasbank.org/site/bank/idea.php?ideaId=35) when I originally accessed the site on July 25, 2007, but are no longer on the site.

13. See, for example, *Hearn vs. the Muskogee Public School District*, District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma, C.A.