

E W I C

Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures

MUSLIM WOMEN AND THE MEDIA TRAINING INSTITUTE

PROJECT ABTRACTS

Sumaira Alwani:

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This project is about understanding the challenges of honor issues including rape challenges in Pakistan. It speaks about the complex set of belief and law systems that exist in Pakistan including the urban legal systems and tribal court systems that furthermore expands to the understanding of the ‘Panchayath and Jirga’ systems in Pakistani villages. Altogether, this project creates an understanding of the misrepresentation of Islam in terms of honor crimes and rape that has made Islam and Muslim women to be considered as militant/strict and oppressed.

Bian Elkhatib:

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My project will look at the ways Muslim women are getting involved in politics, particularly in the aftermath of 2016. I’m planning to interview women who have a variety of experiences, from a first-generation immigrant casting her first ballot in 2018, to a seasoned policy analyst considering a run for office. Muslim women who are politically engaged on a public level -- whether through activism or through running for office -- often face backlash not only from Islamophobes but also sometimes from their own community. The goal of the project is to showcase the experiences Muslim women have in regards to civic engagement.

Bobbie Foster:

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Through the use of long-form interviews, the piece explores the challenges of using dating apps for the modern woman with religious affiliations. Women discuss their use of both commercial and religion-specific dating apps or online dating websites, as well as their selection of materials for their profiles including writing about their religion, ethnic background, or selecting photographs. Women also discuss the pressures, if there are any, to get married. The piece

considers the different ethnic, religions, and sexual orientations of a variety of women including Muslims, Christians, Hindus, and Jews.

Nour Halabi:

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Reflecting on the themes of the Muslim Women Training Workshop, I have conducted several public scholarship projects connecting the research on media representations of Muslims in the media with timely events taking place in the news coverage of the Trump administration. This includes a podcast produced by the Center for Media Religion and Culture where I convened several panelists from political science and religious studies to discuss the representation of Muslim Americans in American media, and specifically in Trump's speech at CPAC describing Muslim Refugees and Muslim people as venomous snakes. Another project I continue to work on is an opinion piece about the criminalization of immigration as a whole, connecting the issue of the Muslim Ban with broader issues of the media representation of immigration as a whole in the United States.

Heena Khan:

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The project aims to cover Muslim women in India from different walks of life, trying to dig into the most basic answers that are left to unexplained by generalizations, broad and vague. How do we define Muslim women at workplace? Who is she, what are her dilemmas with her faith, her dress, and the male gaze. Would she rather hide herself, or should she ace it with a devil-may-care attitude? What are her ambitions, little or more? What makes her a Muslim, what makes her a woman and what makes her a human being. The project aims to chronicle her voice from within and without.

Hunter Martin:

American University

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Hunter B. Martin is developing a series of multimedia blog posts featuring Muslim women. She first conducted research over the countries of Iraq and Iran to provide readers with an overview of the background of the ancient history, effects of colonization, and modern political structure. She will then interview women who self-identify as having Iranian or Iraqi heritage, including a wide range of ethnic and cultural groups that may cross modern borders, and write blog posts to share pieces of their stories with readers. The overall goal of the project is to provide readers with diverse international perspectives from marginalized groups.

Myles Mason:

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This project seeks to bring attention to the extrajudicial murder of Muslim women. With the uptake of #BlackLivesMatter and #SayHerName, there has been renewed attention to police brutality; however, Muslim individuals have been largely left out of these conversations. Not only does this perpetuate the idea that Muslim individuals aren't the victims of hate crimes, but it also creates this idea that the killing of Muslim individuals as something that happens in war zones. Further, the erasure of these crimes prevents Muslim individuals from being seen as victims and only as perpetrators of terror.

Eryn Mathewson:

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In 2018, more female athletes in hijab are competing in elite level sports than ever before. Basketball, fencing, and taekwondo are just a few of the sports that are not only attracting these athletes, and turning them into serious competitors. Sportswomen like Olympic medalist, Ibtihaj Muhammad, and basketball star, Bilqis Abdul-Qadir are examples. In light of their talent and popularity, I plan to highlight the next generation female Muslim athletes. In addition to their stats, I want to know their motivations, goals, how their faith impacts their training and competition experience, and the most supportive high school athletic associations.

Atia Musazay:

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A Different Life is a short biopic on a young woman who was brought to the U.S. by her brother and nephews who are all under the age of 18. She's learning to navigate new territory as a Muslim, Afghan woman with Down's Syndrome. This is the first time she's been enrolled in school and her host mother is battling for the right to adopt her. However, Samira is recovering from abuse and is constantly trying to communicate a new set of emotions and challenges.

Mira Nabulsi:

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The feature audio documentary will be a narrative audio piece that would feature interviews with up to four Yemeni women. The feature will delve into the complexities of life under war through the eyes of a group of Yemeni women.

My objective from this project is to bring more attention to Yemen and dig deeper into the conflict through women's stories beyond the preconceived notions around women's victimhood in war. The listener will hear the women talk about their activism, civic and political engagement and also what roles they took on in their communities and families since the beginning of the war.

Amy Nelson:

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Arbaeen Walk is a virtual reality (VR) experience in which two Muslim American women walk from Najaf to Karbala, Iraq to participate in the world's largest pilgrimage. The production incorporates 360 video, narration, motion graphics, and spatial audio to deliver an immersive experience over the course of three days. Of the 27 million pilgrims in attendance, 60 percent are women. The vast majority are Iraqi Shiites. Over 4 million come from other countries and include Christians, Sunnis, Sabians, and Zoroastrians. Arbaeen commemorates the martyrdom of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson, Husayn. What does this event mean for Muslims in the world today?

Charlotte Prud'Homme:

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Charlotte Prud'Homme is exploring the extent to which Muslim women's voices are used in shaping and crafting international development initiatives, and if it is possible for women of colors voices to be heard and respected in development work. Her work is examining if and how Muslim women voices are heard as recipients of aid, and if this is empowering the female population or furthering the danger of a single story that all Muslim women need some form of assistance. She will investigate what aid projects directed towards Muslim women look like using the case study, <https://www.usaid.gov/jordan/fact-sheets/usaid-hydroponic-green-farming-initiative-hgfi>, and produce a final article examining media exposure of Muslim women in international development

Charlotte will examine media content to gain insight into using Muslim women in international development media- and find out if it furthers false narratives and worsen stereotypes about Middle

Eastern, African and Asian women or does it help empower women, craft meaningful work and make impact change? She will also seek to answer, Is there a certain de-sensitization to Muslim women, and perhaps even broader, women of color, in media that shapes the way people view, listen to and read these stories?

Pooja Singh:

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I'm working on an oral history-based story that will revolve around the theme, "What it is like to be a queer Muslim woman in Trump's land." I focus on queer Muslim women, across age groups, in New York. I believe the prevalent homophobic and anti-Islam rhetoric in President Donald Trump's makes this story crucial for one and all, including human rights activists, LGBTQ activists, social advocates, and the general public.