
Roundtable: “Religio-Racial Identity” as Challenge and Critique

Unmasking Islamophobia: Anti-Muslim Hostility and/as White Supremacy

Megan Goodwin*

This article considers the twenty-first century enforcement of Georgia’s Anti-Masking Act as a site of confluence for American white supremacy and American anti-Muslim hostility. Extending Judith Weisenfeld’s theory of religio-raciality, I argue that contemporary American white supremacy might best be understood as a religio-racial force, evidenced in part through anastrophic law enforcement. As seen in the application of Georgia’s Anti-Masking Act, laws initially instituted to deter religio-racial terror in the public square now also work to publicly discipline non-white, non-Christian bodies as well as any who would overtly challenge the supremacy of American whiteness. This case study demonstrates the importance of understanding anti-Muslim hostility as informed but not exhausted by racism.

“BACK UP! BACK UP!”

Camouflaged white men in riot gear carrying assault rifles—Georgia law enforcement officers—are pushing black-clad protesters back against a curb. “She’s on the ground! She’s on the ground!” one protester insists, pointing at a woman invisible under a dogpile of policemen. Protesters, many wearing black handkerchiefs around their necks or over their faces (presumably as minimal protection against potential teargassing, doxxing,

*Megan Goodwin, Department of Philosophy and Religion, Northeastern University, Renaissance Park 404, Boston, MA 02120, USA. Email: me.goodwin@northeastern.edu.

or both), yell, “Put the guns down, put the guns down! Hands up, don’t shoot!”¹

A helmeted law enforcement officer points a rifle at the chest of the camera operator. “Get back, get BACK!” Georgia cops are pointing guns at unarmed American citizens—unarmed American citizens who have assembled to protest a gathering of the National Socialist Movement—neo-Nazis—in April 2018 ([Southern Poverty Law Center n.d.a](#)). A SWAT team member insists that “state law requires you to remove your masks right now” ([Flynn 2018](#)). Someone barks: “REMOVE YOUR MASKS OR YOU WILL BE ARRESTED” over and over ([Flynn 2018](#)).

More than seven hundred law enforcement officials arrived in Newnan, GA, in anticipation of a white supremacist rally billed as the largest since the 2017 Charlottesville, VA “Unite the Right” riot that left at least one counterprotester dead ([Katz 2018](#)).² This massive militarization of law enforcement in Newnan—a town of roughly 37,000 people—speaks to an anxiety about the potential for a violent clash between neo-Nazis and counterprotesters similar to Charlottesville.³ In the end, “mere dozens” of neo-Nazis arrived in the small Georgia town to celebrate Adolf Hitler’s birthday ([Polti 2018](#)). The hundreds of law enforcement officers who had descended on Newnan on April 21 arrested no Nazis but did roughly tackle a number of counterprotesters, throwing them to the ground and pointing guns at both counterprotesters and members of the press ([@letsgomathias, April 21, 2018a](#); [Shular 2018](#)). Reporting from the scene, the Huffington Post’s Christopher Mathias called these arrests “the most over-aggressive policing [he’s] ever seen” ([@letsgomathias, April 21, 2018b](#)).

The counterprotesters’ crime: violating Georgia’s 1951 Anti-Masking Act, instituted to prevent members of the Ku Klux Klan from anonymously perpetrating acts of religio-racial terror in the public square.

These arrests are not without precedent. In 2016, Georgia law enforcement officers charged masked anti-white supremacy protesters with

¹“Hands up, don’t shoot!” became an anti-white supremacy rallying cry following the death of Michael Brown, a Black teenager who was shot by Ferguson, MO, police officer Darren Wilson in 2014. “Doxxing” refers to the mass distribution of private information with the intent to encourage harassment and threats of violence ([Bowles 2017](#)).

²James Alex Fields Jr. drove his car through protesters opposing white supremacy, killing Heather D. Heyer, age thirty-two. The Justice Department charged Fields with hate crimes and first-degree murder. Fields originally pled not guilty to all charges in June 2018, changed his plea to guilty of twenty-nine hate crimes as part of a plea deal to avoid the death penalty, and was sentenced to two life sentences plus 419 years and \$480,000 in fines ([Heim et al. 2018](#); [Duggan 2017](#); [Hagle 2018](#); [Ingber 2019](#)).

³An hour before Nazis were scheduled to descend on the town, Lieutenant Governor Casey Cagle tweeted that he was “praying for Newnan. Our thoughts are with Sheriff Yeager, city officials, and all law enforcement officers who are working to protect residents and we hope the protests remains nonviolent” ([@CaseyCagle, April 21, 2018](#)).

violating the statute at a “white power rally” at Stone Mountain (Schneider 2016). But attempts to enforce the anti-masking statute extend beyond discouraging anonymous protests of white supremacy. Just days after the 2016 presidential election, a Georgia state legislator introduced a bill to expand the state’s 1951 anti-masking law to prevent Muslim women from covering their heads or faces “upon any public way or property” (Georgia General Assembly 2017).

Though a number of European countries have passed laws explicitly forbidding niqabs and hijabs in public in the name of keeping the peace, this would have been the first law in North America to explicitly identify Muslim pious fashion as a public safety concern (Samuel 2018; Steuter-Martin 2018).⁴ Bill sponsor Rep. Jason Spencer claimed that the bill did not reflect anti-Muslim bias and that he had “no intention of targeting a specific group” (Bever 2016). But Spencer also said he proposed the bill as “a response to constituents that do have concerns of the rise of Islamic terrorism” and that his “objective was to address radical elements that could pose a threat to public safety” (Diamant 2016). Rep. Spencer interprets Muslim women’s pious clothing as indicative of Islamic terrorism, a threat to good order, and attempted to deploy Georgia’s anti-masking law to control Muslim women’s bodies on the same grounds used by Georgia law enforcement to justify pointing guns at unarmed citizens protesting white supremacy.

This article considers the twenty-first century enforcement of Georgia’s Anti-Masking Act as a site of confluence for white supremacy and anti-Muslim hostility in the contemporary United States.⁵ Extending Judith Weisenfeld’s concept of religio-raciality, I argue that anti-Muslim hostility in the contemporary United States might best be understood as a religio-racial force, evidenced in part through anastrophic—from the Greek, to turn upside down, back, or about—law enforcement. Although white supremacy absolutely informs twenty-first century anti-Muslim attitudes and actions, racism does not and cannot fully account for the operations of what is commonly known as Islamophobia.

The proposed changes to Georgia’s anti-masking statute specifically target Muslim women who cover their heads for religious and cultural reasons as a threat to public safety, demonstrating how anti-Muslim hostility functions as a religio-racial force. Thus applied, a law instituted to

⁴Countries with anti-covering legislation include Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, France, and most recently Denmark. On pious fashion, see Bucar 2017.

⁵Anti-Muslim hostility includes overt and subtle forms of violence, ranging from passing comments and vandalism to physical and verbal assaults to structural disadvantages, including employment discrimination, anti-Muslim political campaigning and protests, and state- and federal-level legislation and policies that affect Muslim communities.

deter religio-racial terror in the public square would have instead chilled a common but by no means universal practice (that is, head covering) among a vulnerable religio-racial population, American Muslim women—publicly disciplining non-Christian bodies presumed not white as well as any who would overtly challenge the supremacy of American whiteness (e.g., the anti-fascist protesters I refer to above).⁶

At the same time, the anastrophic operations of Georgia's anti-masking law help us parse the imbricated biases at work in perceptions of and responses to American Muslim women's head covering practices. In part, the proposed legislation is significant because it "make[s] visible the contours of whiteness" (Weisenfeld 2017, 282; see also Matthew J. Cressler's contribution to this roundtable)—whiteness that, as I explore in this article, operates not merely as racial but also as religious category in the contemporary United States. The coding of certain bodies, certain practices as fundamentally dangerous to the American body politic also creates space for American law makers and enforcers to reconcile a professed American commitment to religious freedom with de-facto anti-Muslim legislation. Law makers and enforcers exculpate themselves for targeting religio-racial minorities—that is, American Muslims—by identifying them as threats to local, state, and national security.

In pursuing this argument, I first explain how we, the authors of this roundtable, have understood the theoretical imperative of Judith Weisenfeld's work in *New World A-Coming: Black Religion and Racial Identity during the Great Migration* (2017), and how I apply the theoretical apparatus Weisenfeld provides to this case study. I then briefly survey Islam as American religious history, with attention to the late twentieth- and twenty-first century racialization of American Muslim women and concerns about what they have had (or not) on their heads. I detail the proposed changes to Georgia's Anti-Masking Act with an eye toward how this legislation targets American Muslim "women of cover" as a threat to good order and public safety.⁷ I conclude that we must understand

⁶To be clear: anastrophic law enforcement should not be understood as solely pertaining to anti-Muslim hostility, explicit religio-racial bias, or overt white supremacy. Consider the Trump administration's appointment of charter-school and private school-voucher advocate Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education or of Scott Pruitt as administrator of the federal Environmental Protection Agency after Pruitt had dissolved Oklahoma's Environmental Protection Unit as the state's attorney general. This is not, of course, to imply that failure to protect the environment or public education does not disproportionately impact communities of color, but only to observe that white supremacy does not exhaust the harms effected by anastrophic exercises of legal authority. Neither do all such maneuvers specifically or exclusively pertain to concerns of religio-raciality.

⁷In an October 11, 2001 address to the State Department, George W. Bush referred to American Muslim women as "women of cover." Bush applauded American Christian and Jewish women for showing Muslims "true friendship and support" by going shopping with them (Safire 2001).

anti-Muslim hostility as a religio-racial force, as reducing what is commonly known as Islamophobia singularly to racial or religious bias fails to fully account for the phenomenon.

THE CHALLENGE AND CRITIQUE OF RELIGIO-RACIAL IDENTITY: HISTORY AS THEORY

In her groundbreaking work of twentieth-century American religious history, *New World A-Coming*, Weisenfeld observes that “all religious groups in the United States could be characterized as religio-racial ones, given the deeply powerful, if sometimes veiled, ways the American system of racial hierarchy has structured religious beliefs, practices, and institutions for all people in its frame” (2017, 14). As the introduction to this roundtable insists, to read this passage as a cursory suggestion that scholars of American religions should consider engaging race in their analyses is to misread it.

The authors of this roundtable have taken as a foundational premise that Weisenfeld’s concept of religio-raciality should be understood not merely as an historical descriptor but as a theoretical imperative for the study of American religion. In her response, Weisenfeld reiterates that her intention in *New World A-Coming* was “to attend carefully to religio-racial claims in the specific context of the early twentieth-century United States and among Black migrants from the South and immigrants from the Caribbean.” How might we collectively extend Weisenfeld’s theorization of American religion beyond the specificities of her archive while retaining the nuance of her work—and encourage other scholars of American religions to do likewise?

Although Weisenfeld herself might not characterize her project as a theoretical imperative, we contend that the nuance of her work and the richness of her archive should be read precisely *as* challenge: not merely to include race in the study of American religion, but to radically reorient the study of American religion *as* a study of race, and vice versa. This is not to propose that considerations of race should exhaust the study of American religion but rather to note that—to adapt Eve Sedgwick—the study of American religions is not only incomplete but *damaged* if it does not center race as a (perhaps *the*?) formative structure.

I have argued elsewhere against the artificial distinction between work in religious studies that “does theory” and historical, anthropological, and creative works that address how lived religion manifests in the world (Goodwin Forthcoming). Weisenfeld herself recently addressed this bogus dichotomy, insisting that “historians of religion . . . uncover buried histories, reorient our understandings of familiar histories, elucidate

contours of power and structure, and highlight religious histories of the marginalized.” The work of these historians is, Weisenfeld emphasizes, much more than “just ‘descriptive’” (@JLWeisenfeld, October 23, 2018). This bears repeating: the work of historians of religion, ethnographers of religion—indeed, any piece of writing about religion—offers a theory of what religion is, how it works in the world, what shapes it takes, and why it matters.

Theorization of religion is not the unique provenance of those explicitly trained in critical theory, nor is it solely expressed in abstract or universalized terms. Theorization of religion is rather the bedrock of the discipline of religious studies, and the most robust theorizations of religion draw from the kind of concrete evidence Weisenfeld draws on in the archive of *New World A-Coming*. At its root, then, the theoretical imperative issued by *New World A-Coming* for the study of American religions might be best expressed in the challenge issued by Sara Ahmed to “use our particulars to challenge the universal” (Ahmed 2017, 9–10; see also McTighe’s article in this roundtable).

One of the commitments Jamil Drake, Laura McTighe, Matthew Cressler, and I made when proposing this roundtable was to resist facile applications of the observation that “all religious groups in the United States could be characterized as religio-racial ones”—not to allow Weisenfeld’s razor-sharp analysis of the ways religion and race co-constitute one another throughout American history to devolve into an academic truism akin to conference handwavings at Foucault and power. As outlined in the introduction, this roundtable proposes that religio-raciality renders visible the elasticity at work in the religious making of race, particularly when the state mediates this religio-racial self-making; that considerations of the American construction of race and religion must account for Black agency, even when whiteness is the primary analytical target; and that any theory of religion must account for the historical moment and human bodies on which it is predicated.

Throughout *New World A-Coming*, Weisenfeld demonstrates that religious belonging endows the category of race—too often understood and enforced as immutable and innate—certain measures of elasticity. As she shows in her introduction, the worldview that the Moorish Science Temple of America offered Alec Brown Bey allowed him to understand himself as Moorish American rather than Negro (Weisenfeld 2017, 2). More than this, Brown Bey understood his attachment to the Moorish Science Temple as authorization to reject the terms on which the state—manifest here in the form of a draft registration card—proposed to categorize him.

Brown Bey did not disavow Blackness as a racial category; he located himself otherwise in relation to race, demanding that the state credit his

religio-racial identity. Religious belonging made this racially otherwise-location possible, signaling elasticity, what Joseph Winters has called the “messiness and instability of race” (Winters 2016, 238). At the same time, Brown Bey’s religio-racial self-making does not stand on its own. Rather, as Weisenfeld notes, the draft registrar indicated that “he believed Brown Bey ‘to be a Negro’” (Winters 2016, 3). This altercation, which Weisenfeld observes must have been a “fraught exchange,” signals a dialogism at work in the making of religio-racial identity (Winters 2016, 3). Brown Bey understood himself to be a Moorish American, and that identification survives with his draft registration document. So too, though, do the registrar’s objections to Brown Bey’s religio-racial self-making. This suggests that religio-raciality is not made in isolation: religio-racial identity is not merely elastic but *dialogic* (cf. Bakhtin), negotiated between the self and the state, among other authorizing parties (see Drake’s article in this roundtable; see also Winters 2016, 238).

Acknowledging the dialogic construction of religio-raciality is crucial, both because it reiterates the agency of Black Americans in the making of American race and religion and because it renders visible the implicit and explicit violence attendant to religio-racial self-making. American religions scholars too often discuss race as something thrust upon Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color. By contrast, Weisenfeld details the participation of and the pains taken by her historical interlocutors to craft religio-racial identities that reflected the particularities of their commitments, attachments, and worldviews. At the same time, Weisenfeld observes that the Federal Bureau of Investigation subjected both the Moorish Science Temple and the Nation of Islam—sites of vibrant and radical Black religio-racial innovation—to intense scrutiny from the groups’ inceptions (see also Johnson 2015, 395, 399). Efforts to resignify Blackness via religious belonging never operated outside state surveillance or discipline.

Finally, Weisenfeld’s theory of religio-raciality mandates historical specificity and accountabilities to the people being theorized. Her rich descriptions of the Black individuals and communities engaged in the making of religio-racial identity hold her theory accountable to her historical interlocutors, demonstrating the ways specific times and places in American history—here, in the wake of the Great Migration, in urban settings, in a time of great national redefinition and negotiation of identity—lay plain the shifts in social construction of categories like race and religion.

In considering how Weisenfeld’s theory of religio-raciality applies to my own work, I find myself returning to that draft card on the table between Brown Bey and the draft registrar: Brown Bey inscribing by hand

his Moorish American-ness, the draft registrar allowing that identification to stand while marking his “belief” in Brown Bey’s Negro-ness on that same card. At this moment in history, Brown Bey’s draft card is a kind of palimpsest of self-making: an artifact of “fraught,” multivocal negotiations of one man’s religious, racial belonging. Weisenfeld’s encapsulation of this moment of Black religio-racial agency both asserted in defiance of and countermanded by an agent of United States military is dialogic—that draft card, that exchange, the material artifact of embodied meaning-making in the conversation and tension between multiple, unequal actors. In this moment, on that card, Moorish Americanness and Negro-ness are both asserted, if not reconciled, and Brown Bey’s religio-racial identity emerges—in ways familiar to contemporary Muslim Americans, whose religio-racial identity is formed in what critical race scholar Sylvia Chan Malik calls a “continual *againstness*” in relationship and tension with white christian cultural and social norms (Chan Malik 2018, 4–5; original emphasis).⁸

American Muslim women’s head coverings share a kindred ambivalence with Brown Bey’s draft card. For women who cover, this “single item of clothing” can signal connection with community or culture, bodily cultivation of piety, modesty, fashion sense, defiance of American imperialism, a combination of these things, or something else entirely (Abu-Lughod 2002, 786). But for many non-Muslim Americans, covering is “the ultimate sign of Muslim women’s oppression” (Bucar 2017, 1). Americans’ fraught understanding of Muslim women’s head coverings is the first point at which I draw on Weisenfeld’s theoretical imperative: seeking the dialogic meaning-making attendant to this piece of cloth; grounding analysis in the quotidian materiality of personal and institutional religio-racial negotiations.

To Weisenfeld’s approach, I add sustained attention to how gender complicates American Muslim women’s religio-racial self-making. Weisenfeld touches on gendered experiences in the Nation of Islam, Moorish Science Temple, and Father Divine’s Peace Mission Movement, but gender is not a primary mode of analysis in *New World A-Coming*. American Muslim women’s head coverings are a site at which religion, race/racialization, gender, and sexuality converge; my analysis of this case study reflects this imbrication.

⁸Winters, in conversation with Bakhtin, describes a similar tension in marginalized groups’ reading of popular culture. Winters notes the operation of centripetal forces—those that attempt to maintain conformity—and centrifugal forces, “the divergent desires, ideas, and forms of expression that prevent the status quo from being totally seamless and unchallenged” (Winters 2016, 144). Here, Brown Bey would represent the centrifugal force, the draft registrar the centripetal.

With Weisenfeld, I also want to emphasize the significant role of minority religions in the shaping of something called “American religion,” acknowledging this as both historical fact and theoretical intervention. This lens helps us understand that we cannot reduce anti-Muslim hostility to either religious or racial bias alone—and that operations of white supremacy (in law enforcement and elsewhere) need to be understood as working as imbricated religio-racial force. We must analyze anti-Muslim hostility as both religious and racial or risk misunderstanding this mode of religious intolerance. In proposing white supremacy be read *as* a religio-racial force, I suggest that analyses of anti-Muslim hostility should concern scholars of American religions every bit as much as they do Islamic studies scholars. A field of “American religion” that does not recognize or account for the germinal role of Islam in its shaping is incomplete and, worse, replicates the white christian assumptions and power structures many of us in that field propose to trouble with our work.

As I note in my forthcoming book, *Abusing Religion*, “small-c christian” here refers to a circulation of religious attachments, moralities, and explanatory frameworks through ostensibly secular means (Goodwin 2020). This conceit is a nod to Winnifred Sullivan’s theorization of “small p-protestantism,” which notes the authorization of unmarked and authoritative religious assumptions in the American public sphere (Sullivan 2005, 7). Sullivan observes that legal protections of religious freedom have required an essentialized definition of religion per se that elides American national identity with liberal protestant commitments to individuality, tolerance, voluntarism, and progress. Sullivan’s protestantism proposes that Americans have absorbed and assimilated Protestant Christian commitments into “a kind of nationalism,” which, while “religiously invisible,” “may have enforcement power through legislation” (Sullivan 2005, 148, 154). Non-protestant behaviors and identities, Sullivan insists, “have been carefully and systematically excluded, both rhetorically and legally, from modern public space” (Sullivan 2005, 8).

Small-c christianity also draws on Tracy Fessenden’s concept of “public Protestantism,” the normalization of Protestant ethics as nominally secular and explicitly American values, as well as Lynne Gerber’s observation that this normalization strengthens the impact of these protestant sensibilities by making them seem universal and inherently rational (Fessenden 2007, 221–22; Gerber 2011, 226–27). But, as I explore in *Abusing Religion*, the concepts of stealth Protestantism, public Protestantism, and small-p protestantism fail to account for the significant role Roman Catholicism has played in shaping and regulating American values since the 1970s. Small-c christian, then, should be understood to combine small-p protestantism

and related concepts with Roman Catholicism's increasingly pronounced role in American politics and culture.⁹

Viewing the proposed changes to Georgia's Anti-Masking Act through the lens of Weisenfeld's theoretical imperative makes visible the influence of small-c christianity in American law enforcement, highlighting the complicity of christianity in American white supremacy. This is not to say that all American Christians promote overt white supremacist attitudes or actions, but only to note that analysis of this case study requires attention to the *religio-racial* operations of white supremacy in the contemporary United States (see McTighe's article in this roundtable).

Theorizing white supremacy as a religio-racial force requires us to recognize the space between making American Blackness—a construction that is, as Weisenfeld has compellingly demonstrated, as rooted in creativity, resistance, innovation, and joy as it is in the survival of enslavement, systemic oppression, and attempted genocide—and making American whiteness—a construction that has at every stage of our nation's history remade itself through the violent oppression of difference, justified through explicit or implicit Christian worldviews.

Naming and identifying the violent religious construction of American whiteness, the violent racial construction of American Christianity, and the religio-racial construction of American identity as a preferential option for whiteness does not center whiteness so much as it holds whiteness accountable for its own homicidal origins (Cressler 2017). Law enforcement officers' defense of overt white supremacy at gunpoint; a lawmaker's explicit identification of visibly Muslim American women as a threat to public safety: these dual deployments of Georgia's Anti-Masking Act lay plain the violent enfranchisement of whiteness presumed christian.

Although American anti-Muslim hostility capitalizes on white supremacy, we cannot parse anti-Muslim hostility solely in terms of racial discrimination. *New World A-Coming* offers religio-raciality as space in which history, racial identity, and the relationship of religion to racial collectivity enmesh and inform one another (Weisenfeld 2017, 13). It is essential to consider the religious assumptions of American white supremacy—understanding American whiteness as the sinister counterpart (an anastrophe?) to Weisenfeld's *religio-racial identity*, a relationship of whiteness to christianity embedded in our nation's history and source code.¹⁰

⁹I also explore the catholicization of public morality in Goodwin 2018.

¹⁰To borrow a phrase from NPR Code Switch's Gene Demby: "white supremacy" isn't just dudes in swastikas. It's the idea that white ppl should wield a society's political/cultural power. That's not some nutjob; it's been the U.S.'s operating premise for almost its entire existence. It's in the country's source code" (@GeeDee215, August 26, 2017).

Georgia's Anti-Masking Act conspires to limit "legitimate religion" to white Christianity (necessarily excluding Islam and Muslims) and "legitimate Americanness" to whites who do not fracture good order by asserting the value of non-white lives. Modifying and building on arguments for understanding anti-Muslim hostility—often called Islamophobia—as racism, I propose that racism informs but does not exhaust the operations of contemporary American anti-Muslim hostility.¹¹

MUSLIM WOMEN'S HISTORY IS AMERICAN RELIGIOUS HISTORY¹²

Historically coded both as not-white and not-(really)-religion, Islam has in many ways played the foil to "American religion." Islam, of course, is not a race. But as a religion, Islam has been racialized throughout the American experiment. "Muslim" has never been merely a designation of American religious identity; it is rather, as Suad Abdul Khabeer notes, "a racialized designation, which mediates access to and restrictions on the privileges of being an American, itself also a racialized category" (Khabeer 2016, 24). Racialization here refers to the assigning of supposedly essential qualities to a group of disparate people based on an assumption of shared behaviors and physical attributes (Joshi 2006, 211–12).

In the United States, racialization always occurs in opposition to whiteness as the assumed norm and preferred category. As Anne Anlin Cheng has it, "Racialization in America may be said to operate through the institutional process of producing a dominant, standard, white national ideal, which is sustained by the exclusion-yet-retention of racialized others" (Cheng 2001, 10). American Muslims are further racialized via orientalism: the imagination, exaggeration, and elision of "the East" and its peoples (here: Muslims) as exotic, timeless, and—as I have explored elsewhere—hypersexualized (Goodwin 2016, 760–61).¹³ Islam is not a race, but American Islam is always already racialized as not-white, which is to say not (fully) American.

The racialization of American Muslims owes much to the history of American Islam, which is indelibly intertwined with the history of American white supremacy. Islam came to the North American continent with the trans-Atlantic slave trade: the first American Muslims

¹¹For a broader overview of this conversation, see the Islamophobia Is Racism syllabus: <https://islamophobiaistracism.wordpress.com>.

¹²Nod to the germinal Braude (1997).

¹³On Orientalism, see both Said 1979 and King 1999. With regard to the hypersexualization operant in orientalism, see Boone 2015, 31.

were enslaved persons, forcibly taken from their homes in West Africa—a region in which Islam had thrived for centuries—and brought to North America. Tens of thousands of African Muslims carried their Islamic practices and beliefs with them across the Atlantic and continued to pray daily, recite the Quran, and preserve Muslim naming practices (Austin 1997, 5; Gomez 2005, 143).

The American Muslim population remained relatively small throughout the nineteenth century. Muslims were mostly invoked in Orientalist terms, often as anti-Americans, opposed to freedom and civility. Early critics of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints compared Mormons to Muslims, suggesting that polygamy—religiously permissible in both Islam and early LDS doctrine—was a “relic of barbarism” (Marr 2006, 203). For much of mainstream white America, Islam represented a perverse and threatening foreign-ness, even while comparatively few Muslims lived in the United States.

The 1924 Immigration Act severely curtailed Muslim immigration to the United States, as most of the world’s Muslims lived (and live) in Asia.¹⁴ But the restriction of Asian immigration did not eliminate Islam from the American religious landscape. Black Muslims were the face of American Islam for much of the twentieth century; until the mid-1970s, the majority of American Muslims were *African* American Muslims (Chan Malik 2018, 13). Chan Malik observes that before the 1960s, nearly all press or popular culture depictions of American Muslim women were of Black women, who “forcefully shaped” American Islam (Chan Malik 2018, 3).

Islam emerged as a “Black protest religion” in the United States, a significant element in struggles for Black empowerment throughout the twentieth century (Chan Malik 2018, 4).¹⁵ The connections between Black American religious innovation and struggles for Black liberation were of some concern to state and federal government officials (Johnson 2015, 399). The FBI, as early as the 1930s, engaged American Muslims as “a racial population whose interests and aspirations contravened the imperatives of the United States as a racial state” (Johnson 2015, 395). The Moorish Science Temple and later the Nation of Islam became spaces of intense Black religious innovation. As Weisenfeld notes, both the Moorish Science Temple and the Nation allowed members to resignify their own

¹⁴According to 2012 survey data, “The Asia-Pacific region also is home to most of the world’s Muslims (62%). About 20% of Muslims live in the Middle East and North Africa, and nearly 16% reside in sub-Saharan Africa” (Pew Research Center 2012). Additionally, the Pew Research Center projects that the American Muslim population will double by 2050 (Pew Research Center 2016).

¹⁵On the role of Islam(s) in American Black liberation movements, see also Curtis 2002 and Johnson 2015.

Blackness by claiming ties to Islam, to locate themselves in histories other than those of oppression and enslavement (Weisenfeld 2017, 6, 14).

Given American Islam's close ties with Black liberation struggles, it might seem strange that Americans coded Islam as distinctly Arab a mere thirty years later. Although African Americans constituted a statistically significant portion of American Muslims throughout much of the twentieth century, US military conflicts in Muslim-majority areas and immigration reforms contributed to the late twentieth-century racial coding of American Islam as brown, not Black (or white, for that matter). United States military conflicts contributed to the conflation of the Middle East and Southwest Asia, *not* Africa, as "the Islamic World."¹⁶

Mid-twentieth-century immigration policy reform influenced this shift. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 reforms lifted restrictions on Asian immigration and led to a boom in the United States' Asian Muslim population (1965 Immigration and Nationality Act). An influx of Muslim immigrants from Asia contributed both to increased conflation of Islam with Arab identity and a surge in nativist sentiment.¹⁷ For the first time, American Muslims were predominantly South Asian immigrants. Many Middle Eastern and Central Asian Muslims also immigrated, including tens of thousands of Iranians who came to the United States to study, many of whom remained in the US following the tumult of the 1979 Iranian revolution.

In November 1979, the Islamic Republic of Iran imprisoned employees of the former US embassy. For four hundred and forty-four days, Iranian militants held more than sixty American embassy workers hostage in Tehran. The Iran hostage crisis, as it came to be known, was one of the most widely televised events in US history, sustaining nightly audience interest for more than a year (McAlister 2005, 198). The hostage crisis "forcefully jettisoned Islam into the Orient" in most non-Muslim Americans' imaginations, marginalizing Black women's significant role in shaping Islam throughout American history (Chan Malik 2018, 156).

A preoccupation with what Muslim women put on their heads accompanied this orientalizing of American Islam; previous to the late 1970s, "the scarf was not a central issue or concern" for most American Muslim women (Chan Malik 2018, 154). Although some American Muslim women covered their heads during the early and mid-twentieth century, "there was little discussion of the veil and Islam's treatment of women in U.S. popular culture or in mainstream media" well into the 1970s

¹⁶On the political operations of the concept of the "Islamic world," see Aydin 2017.

¹⁷Although the Arabic language serves an important religious function in the lives of many Muslims, only about 20 percent of the world's Muslims are ethnically Arab (Berkeley Center 2020).

(Chan Malik 2018, 155).¹⁸ Headscarves did not really emerge as a symbol of Islam's presumptive oppression of women until after the Iranian hostage crisis—at which point, a “distinctly U.S.-based discourse of the veil” began to use Muslim women's head coverings as a symbol of Muslims' supposed religious misogyny (Chan Malik 2018, 156).

It was the events of September 11, 2001, however, that cemented Americans' conceptualization of Muslims as phenotypically Arab and as a violent terrorist threat both to the United States *and* to women (especially but not exclusively Muslim women). These attitudes are succinctly captured in First Lady Laura Bush's November 2001 national radio address:

Fighting brutality against women and children is not the expression of a specific culture; it is the *acceptance of our common humanity*—a commitment shared by people of good will on every continent. Because of our recent military gains in much of Afghanistan, women are no longer imprisoned in their homes . . . *The fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women.* (Bush 2001, emphasis added)

Such rhetoric characterizes Muslim majority states and Muslim culture(s) as especially and uniquely oppressive of women and girls, and western nations—especially and uniquely the United States—as the appropriate liberators of these oppressed women (Stabile and Kumar 2005, 766). Calls to liberate women oppressed by Muslim men have normalized and bolstered American military incursions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan, as well as the “moral surveillance and regulation” of Muslims in America and elsewhere (Abu-Lughod 2013, 107).

THE VEIL ON THEIR HEADS AND OFF OUR ROADS

The history of American Muslims—and particularly the history of American Muslim women—must be understood as one of profound ambivalence. “Islam has functioned as a space of safety for women, as well as a source of violence directed toward women,” observes Chan Malik (2018, 33). Non-Muslim Americans' conception of Muslim women as being in need of saving (cf. Abu-Lughod) has been paradoxically accompanied by increased violence toward American Muslim women, at whom anti-Muslim protestors often direct anger and violence (Hammer 2013, 29–36). White supremacist rejection of Islam as fundamentally not-white, not-religion, and not-American has intensified in the past eighteen years.

¹⁸Women of Ahmadiyya Movement used blankets or bedsheets, and uniforms for women members of the Nation of Islam included white headcoverings, though women in the Nation also informally covered in ways reflecting contemporary fashion trends (Chan Malik 2018, 154).

And hate crimes against Muslim women, especially toward women of cover, markedly increased after September 2001 (Chan Malik 2018, 156).

Anti-Muslim bigots seem to have been particularly emboldened to speech and action since the 2015–2016 election cycle. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, more Muslims were assaulted in 2015–2016 than directly following the events of September 11, 2001 (Federal Bureau of Investigation 2017). This report shows anti-Muslim hate crimes on the rise for two years in a row and a “near-tripling” in the number of anti-Muslim hate groups recorded by the Southern Poverty Law Center in 2016 (2017). Anti-Muslim intimidation in the US also increased from 2015 to 2016 (Kishi 2017).¹⁹

American Muslim women of cover are at risk in the current political climate: “Muslim women in headscarves were, and continue to be, singled out as objects of scorn and derision, people who have not been recognized as U.S. citizens” (Chan Malik 2018, 181). A Human Rights Commission report on religious harassment found that Black Muslim women in the Bronx were the most likely targets of religiously intolerant physical assault in New York City (Nasa 2018). American Muslims are at risk of bodily harm merely for being—or appearing to be, as Sikh Americans can attest—Muslim in public.

At the same time, American lawmakers have intensified their portrayals of Muslims as a threat to the United States. Donald Trump, who once told CNN’s Anderson Cooper that “Islam hates us,” has tried to restrict immigration from Muslim-majority countries three times. The grounds for these executive orders were nominally “protecting the nation from foreign terrorist entry,” despite no Muslim immigrants from the banned countries having perpetrated terrorist attacks on US soil.²⁰ Executive Orders 13769 and 13780 both highlight so-called “honor killings” among the justifications for these proposed restrictions. A plain text reading reveals that the current administration considers Islam too intolerant a religion for Americans to tolerate and views Muslims as inherently racist, sexist, and violent—especially toward women.

The Supreme Court recently upheld the president’s third attempt to restrict immigration from Muslim-majority countries in *Trump v. Hawaii* (2018). Justice Sonia Sotomayor’s dissent cites a 2015 statement in which the president “call[ed] for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims

¹⁹The Huffington Post attempted to track anti-Muslim incidents in 2015; according to reporter Christopher Mathias, “In less than two months, the list became so long the webpage often wouldn’t load” (Mathias 2017).

²⁰As sociologist Charles Kurzman observes, “For a decade or more, Americans have been warned about widespread plots of Muslim extremism, and these warnings have proven hollow” (Kurzman 2019a, 6).

entering the United States” as well as numerous occasions on which the president announced his plans for a so-called “Muslim ban.” Sotomayor’s dissent condemns the administration’s anti-Muslim rhetoric, saying such statements allege that Islamic law “authorizes . . . unthinkable acts that pose great harm to Americans, especially women.” At the highest levels of American law-making and enforcement, Muslim women are seen both as pitiable for their oppression and a signal of Islam’s inherent danger.

In the contemporary United States, for a Muslim woman to visibly signal religious belonging through head covering is “to feel profoundly unsafe because of one’s Muslim-ness while seeking solace or refuge in her Islamic beliefs and practices” (Chan Malik 2018, 14).²¹ Given the implicit and explicit violence they face, for many American Muslim women the act of covering one’s head becomes an act of what Chan Malik calls *insurgency*: an embodied expression of piety despite real personal safety concerns; a counternarrative to community members and governing bodies that read a headscarf as a threat. In the current political climate, Islam—as symbolized in part by American Muslim women covering—operates as a “racialized and pathologized trope of terror” for many non-Muslim Americans (Chan Malik 2018, 14). Indeed, “Muslim bodies . . . are marked by abject monstrosity” in the American imagination (Chan Malik 2018, 21).

We see precisely this sort of monstrosification of Muslims, and specifically Muslim women who cover, at work in Rep. Jason Spencer (R-Woodbine)’s attempts to expand Georgia’s Anti-Masking Act to criminalize Muslims’ sartorial piety. According to Spencer, “This bill is simply a response to constituents that do have concerns of the rise of Islamic terrorism, and we in the State of Georgia *do not want our laws used against us*” (Diamant 2016, emphasis added). House Bill 3 would have amended Georgia’s criminal code to include gender-specific language that could be interpreted as preventing Muslim women from covering their heads or faces “upon any public way or property” (Georgia Code 2010). The law as written pertains only to men and was originally intended to ban Klan robes and hoods in public spaces.

Georgia passed its anti-masking legislation in 1951 and affirmed it in 1990, after Shade Miller Jr argued that the statute violated his free speech by criminalizing the wearing of his traditional Ku Klux Klan regalia (including face mask) in public (*State of Georgia v. Miller* 1990). *State of Georgia v. Miller* (1990) notes that the Anti-Masking Act was passed with

²¹Kurzman notes that in 2016, “Americans were less likely to be killed by Muslim extremists (one in six million) than for being Muslim (one in one million)” (Kurzman 2019b). What is more, the primary terrorist threat currently facing the United States is not Muslim extremism, but angry white men with guns and histories of domestic abuse (Kurzman and Schanzer 2015; Traister 2016; Kristof 2017).

a “Statement of Public Policy,” which highlights masking by “anonymous vigilante organizations” as a threat to civil society. *State v. Miller* observes that the original legislation “was preceded by a period of increased harassment, intimidation and violence against racial and religious minorities carried out by mask-wearing Klansmen and other ‘hate’ organizations.”

The decision identifies the targets of anti-masking legislation exclusively as “vigilantes” and emphasizes that the act is specifically intended to “safeguard the people of Georgia from terrorization by masked vigilantes.” *State v. Miller* further emphasizes that all other instances of masking should be understood as lawful: “The law restricts only unprotected expression – *the communication of a threat*” (emphasis added). As it stands, Georgia’s Anti-Masking Act proscribes public masking only insofar as “the mask-wearer knows or reasonably should know that the conduct provokes a *reasonable apprehension of intimidation, threats, or violence*” (emphasis added). That is, public masking is illegal in Georgia if and only if the masked person knows—or should—that their attire will be read as a threat.

With House Bill 3, Rep. Spencer proposed amending Section 38 of Article 2 of Chapter 11 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia to read:

A person is guilty of a misdemeanor when *he or she* wears a mask, hood, or device by which any portion of the face is so hidden, concealed, or covered as to conceal the identity of the wearer and is upon any public way or public property or upon the private property of another without the written permission of the owner or occupier of the property to do so. *For purposes of this subsection, the phrase ‘upon any public way or property’ includes but is not limited to operating a motor vehicle upon any public street, road, or highway.*

Spencer proposed two primary changes: “he or she,” explicitly including women in the provisions of the Anti-Masking Act, and specifying that face-covering should be illicit while walking or driving. It is noteworthy that Spencer included a specifically feminine pronoun, rather than argue for a universalizing interpretation of “he,” in targeting the Muslim women of Georgia with this proposed amendment. It is also significant that the provision targets Muslim women who cover operating motor vehicles as an offense against public order when so many critics of Islam use Saudi Arabia’s restrictions on women driving as an example of how oppressive Islam is. The proposed amendment also specifies that these anti-masking or anti-covering laws do *not* apply to people wearing “traditional holiday costume[s] on the occasion of the holiday,” sports or safety equipment, gas masks, or costumes for theatrical productions or Mardi Gras celebrations. Under the proposed revisions, a man driving down the street dressed as Santa Claus does not fracture good order, but a woman covering her head to cultivate religious piety does.

These changes were necessary, Spencer argued, both to render Muslim women “identifiable to law enforcement” and to “address radical elements that could pose a threat to public safety” (Diamant 2016). In keeping with *State of Georgia v. Miller*, Spencer’s proposed changes imply that Muslim women’s sartorial piety inspires “reasonable apprehension of intimidation, threats, or violence.” Plainly, this proposal by an elected official of the state of Georgia says that “persons of common intelligence” are right and reasonable to interpret a Muslim woman’s choice to cover her head as a threat.

House Bill 3 provoked what Spencer termed a “visceral reaction” within the Georgia electorate and beyond (Spencer 2016). American Civil Liberties Union attorney Heather Weaver condemned the bill as “a naked and despicable attempt to exploit the current wave of anti-Muslim sentiment by targeting Muslim women” (Clary 2016). Aisha Yaqoob of Georgia’s Muslim Voter Project called the bill “frustrating;” “I don’t see the need for a law that specifically targets Muslim women,” Yaqoob said (Diamant 2016). Council on American-Islamic Relations representative Edward Ahmed Mitchell called HB3 “a bad solution to a non-existent problem,” noting that most Muslim women in Georgia do not cover but that “those who do have a Constitutional right to do so” (Diamant 2016).

Spencer withdrew House Bill 3 two days after submitting the proposal. He maintains that “both [political] sides have misunderstood the intent of the bill” but also insists that “people will try to hide behind the religion [i.e., Islam] in order to carry out an act. That is how jihad is waged.” He announced his intention to submit similar legislation in the 2018 session, insisting that “protecting the public against credible public safety risks remains a function of the state’s police powers and HB3 underscores this important public policy” (Bever 2016). Here again, note Spencer’s conviction that an American woman’s decision to cover her head in public for religious reasons presents a credible threat to public safety and the fracture of good civic order.

Spencer will not be proposing new legislation before the Georgia House of Representatives any time soon, having lost his most recent primary and embarrassed himself on national television (Jackson 2018; Kilgore 2018). But his proposed legislation has an afterlife of its own: HB3 lives on in fake news headlines shared more than fifteen thousand times on Facebook; and, as I noted at the beginning of this article, Georgia law enforcement has invoked the anti-masking statute as recently as five months previous to this writing (Hagen 2017; Palma and Mikkelson 2017).

Throughout American history, anti-masking legislation has had complicated ties to white supremacy, from New York passing the earliest US anti-masking law in 1845 to prevent farmers from dressing up as “Indians”

and protesting evictions, to North Dakota's 2017 attempt to criminalize masked Native protests against the building of the Dakota Access Pipeline (Ahmed and Pauly 2017; Daniszewski 2017; Feldman 2017; Burgum Signs Bills Aimed at North Dakota Pipeline Protesters 2017). Curiously, none of the public outcry against Spencer's HB3 criticized the proposed bill as racially discriminatory, despite the large percentage of American Muslims who are racial minorities and the large percentage of Georgia Muslims who are Black—including Council on American-Islamic Relations representative Edward Ahmed Mitchell, who condemned the proposed bill. Georgia has a large and robust Black Muslim population; it is fair to interpret this proposed legislation as an attempt to control Muslim women's bodies specifically *as* bodies of color, and especially—though not exclusively—Black women's bodies.

ANTI-MUSLIM HOSTILITY AND ANASTROPHIC LAW ENFORCEMENT

The word "irony" is insufficient to describe the violent hypocrisy of twisting anti-Klan laws to target both vulnerable religious minorities (as with Spencer's HB3) and public opposition to white supremacy (as in April 2018 in Newnan, Georgia). Although it might be tempting to dismiss Rep. Jason Spencer as a cartoonish caricature of old-timey Southern racism, attempts to twist Georgia's Anti-Masking Act to police Muslim women's bodies are not unique to Spencer: in 2016, a Georgia State University professor demanded that first-year student Nabila Khan remove her niqab in class, and handed her a copy of the anti-mask statute when she refused (Phillips 2016).²²

Nor are law enforcement attempts to weaponize anti-Klan legislation against populations that legislation was intended to protect unique to the American South: in 2015 and 2016, California prosecutors charged two Black women—Jasmine Richards and Maile Hampton—with "felony lynching" for attempts to prevent law enforcement officers from taking Black Lives Matter activists into police custody. In both Hampton and Richards' cases, prosecutors turned a law intended to protect Black Americans from religiously informed white supremacist violence against Black women for protesting and resisting police brutality.

What we see in such moments is not merely reaction to increased public demands for Black lives to matter, nor even partisan warping of American jurisprudence. Rather, such exercises of law enforcement are

²²Khan withheld the name of the professor in question in her interview with the student newspaper, *The Signal*, which originally broke the story.

anastrophic: deliberate reversals of legal provisions meant to protect vulnerable minorities from religio-racial violence and terror deployed against those vulnerable religious or racial/ized minorities.²³ As I have shown, lawmakers originally instituted the Anti-Masking Act to prevent Klan members from menacing public spaces in Georgia. Rep. Spencer's proposed application of this law—like the application of anti-lynching laws against Black Lives Matter activists—is anastrophic. Rhetorically, anastrophe reverses the normal order of words in a sentence, especially for emphasis. In this political context, I use anastrophe to signal reversals of laws against their original intent to emphasize or assert a mode of social order—here, to reassert white supremacy in the American state, using the mechanism of law and the force of its enforcers. Anastrophic law enforcement is intended to unsettle, to dis-place, its policed subjects, and as such might be considered a form of hate speech (Butler 1997, 41).

Anastrophic law enforcement is my own term, but the operation has been observed by Derrick Bell in "Racial Realism" (1992) and by Winters in *Hope Draped in Black* (2016), as well as by Lee Edelman in *No Future* (2004) and Jasbir Puar in *Terrorist Assemblages* (2007). In "Racial Realism," a germinal essay for critical race theory, Bell notes that civil rights activism "may have prevented us from recognizing that these legal rights could do little more than bring about the cessation of one form of discriminatory conduct that soon appeared in a more subtle though no less discriminatory form" (Bell 1992, 375). Bell's argument does not dismiss the intent of civil rights activism, but rather expresses a deep concern for the malleability of white supremacy. Akin to Winters, Bell notes that "the very absence of visible signs of discrimination creates an atmosphere of racial neutrality that encourages whites to believe that racism is a thing of the past" (Bell 1992, 374). Following Bell, we might interpret Spencer's anastrophic application of Georgia's Anti-Masking Act as one that makes "a choice to ignore historical patterns, to ignore contemporary statistics," and quantifiable evidence of racial oppression to assert "artificial and inappropriate parity" between American whites and racial/ized minorities—allowing Spencer, on behalf of his white constituents, to characterize American Muslim women who cover as a credible threat to civic peace and domestic security.

Anti-Muslim hostility has opened new space not only for religious intolerance toward Muslims but also new modes of expressing anti-Blackness (Winters 2016, 240). Given Georgia's robust Black Muslim

²³When I speak of religio-racial terror, I am referring specifically to overt white supremacy authorized by mainstream Protestant hegemony in the twentieth-century US, as detailed by American religious historian Kelly J. Baker in *The Gospel According to the Klan* (2001).

population, it is fair to read Spencer's proposed legislation as a further attempt to police Black women's bodies in public—a "new and subtler way," Winters might say, for "injustices [to] target black bodies" (Winters 2016, 3). Here again, we see the importance of historical specificity in theorizing religio-raciality: in this post-post-racial moment, America has absolved itself of its white supremacist history while justifying new modes of white supremacist law enforcement. "The assumption that the nation has moved beyond the cruelty and bigotry of the past," Winters asserts, "overlooks the ways in which these forces get redirected toward other racialized groups" (Winters 2016, 3). This moment in history insists that white supremacy as a religio-racial force express itself not in terms of religion or race. "In a postracial society," Winters asserts, "the line between acceptable and unacceptable expressions of race involves . . . the pervasive desire to tame and monitor the movement of suspicious bodies" (Winters 2016, 242). Thus, anastrophic law enforcement codes the policing of Muslim women's bodies not as racism or as religious intolerance, but as keeping the peace in Georgia.

Although the application of critical race theory to anti-Muslim hostility as a religio-racial force in the United States is a natural fit, queer theory offers further insights into the functioning of anastrophic law enforcement—especially as it pertains to the violent and unequal application of laws on marginalized communities. Though the project of Edelman's queerness was to "rupture" "such notions [as] 'civil order,'" his thinking in *No Future* also informs my theorization of anastrophic law enforcement (Edelman 2004, 16–17). In noting that conservative discourse often at once reverses and lays bare queer political projects that liberals would disavow, Edelman notes the elasticity and anastrophic potentiality of political force and intent.²⁴ Spencer's proposed application of the Anti-Masking Act demonstrates precisely this sort of slippage between intent and enforcement.

Puar's analysis adds further depth to considerations of anastrophic law enforcement, noting the role of heterosexual desire/entitlement to Muslim women's bodies—thwarted by covering. Puar allows us to parse law enforcement agencies' scrutiny of Muslim women who cover and their interpretation of a scarf as intent to do harm (Puar 2007, 13–14). American Muslim women of cover may be read by non-Muslim Americans as both sexually oppressed and sexually withholding—which, as Muslims

²⁴My analysis does not endorse Edelman's larger political project, which is abstention from and the eventual destruction of the American political system. This project, the so-called antisocial thesis, has already been critiqued for privileging masculinity (cf. Halberstam) and whiteness (cf. Muñoz) (see Caserio, Edelman, Halberstam, Muñoz, and Dean 2006).

in the United States are under “greater duress to produce themselves as exceptional American subjects,” might be interpreted as “evidence of nonassimilative behavior” (Puar 2017, xxvi, 162). In this way, American law makers and enforcers justify the exclusion of Muslims visible as such—and in the case of Georgia’s anti-masking proposal, Muslim women who cover—as Americans without violating a professed national commitment to religious freedom. Such “disidentification” of Muslim women and their covered bodies as legitimately American is, Puar insists, a “sexualization as well as a racialization of religion” (2007, 38). Puar’s theoretical apparatus, in partnership with Weisenfeld’s, renders visible the complex role of the state in the project of race-making. Obviously, the state is not the sole actor or agent in this project. At the same time, legal thresholds—like the proposed changes to and anastrophic applications of Georgia’s Anti-Masking Act—trace and publicize the ways American institutions mark Muslims as legitimate targets of state scrutiny and violence. The reduction of American Muslim women of cover to public safety concerns is just one among many ways that the United States marks Muslim women as, “at the end of the day, unsavable” (Puar 2007, 5).

ISLAMOPHOBIA IS NOT (JUST) RACISM²⁵

In the current political moment, we cannot dismiss Rep. Spencer’s attempt to use Georgia’s Anti-Masking Act—enacted to protect religious and racial minorities from anonymous vigilante violence—against Georgia’s religious and racial minorities as an aberration. House Bill 3 is a clear, damning example of anti-Muslim hostility as explicit white supremacy, but it is by no means unique. Anti-sharia bills are a more familiar and far more common example of legal attempts to characterize Islam as both fundamentally foreign and fundamentally dangerous to American domestic sovereignty. Forty-three states have introduced two hundred and one anti-sharia bills since 2010; fourteen states proposed anti-sharia legislation (Shanmugasundaram 2018).

Consider, too, recent federal definitions of violent extremism as tied directly to Islam (in proposing to shift the purview of the Countering Violent Extremism program to exclusively target “Islamic Extremism”) and Black identity (in the FBI’s assessment of Black Identity Extremism as a threat to national security) (Ainsley et al. 2017; German 2018). As to this last, Islamophobia scholar Khaled Beydoun notes that

²⁵A nod to Melani McAlister (2018).

the F.B.I. designation [of Black identity extremism as a threat to national security] *compounds the vulnerability of black Muslims*, who make up the largest segment—at least 25 percent—of the Muslim population in the United States. Muslim communities are already the targets of counterradicalization policing. Neighborhoods, campuses and institutions where black Muslims organize around racial justice and against police brutality could now be doubly scrutinized with double the threats to civil liberties, particularly as the Trump administration seeks to intensify counter-radicalization measures. (Beydoun and Hansford 2017; emphasis added)

And, of course, there are repeated attempts to harass and intimidate the only two Muslim women currently serving in the United States Senate, Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar. Omar, as a Somali American Muslim woman who covers, has borne the brunt of conservative religio-racial bias.

These examples of state-sponsored anti-Muslim hostility are but one facet of the multiple attempts to restrict American identity to whiteness-presumed-christian under the current presidential administration, which has rendered America's preferential option for whiteness plain in the eyes of the world. The dual function of Georgia's anti-masking law—to quell protests against violent white supremacy and to discourage Muslim women from expressing their religious commitments in public—should be read as twin attempts to reestablish the sovereignty of state-sponsored white supremacy.

Legislative anti-Muslim hostility functions in tandem with other attempts to bolster state-sponsored white supremacy, as seen in the dual uses of Georgia's Anti-Masking Act detailed in this article. At the same time, we cannot collapse the consideration of anti-Muslim hostility into analyses of racism. Anti-Black and anti-Brown racism does inform but does not exhaust anti-Muslim religio-racial bias: hostility toward American Muslims *is* racism, but that is not *all* anti-Muslim hostility is.

In a recent post to *Contending Modernities*, American Studies scholar Melani McAlister provocatively insists that “Islamophobia is Not Racism” and begins by noting that “this statement seems . . . to be both obviously right and obviously wrong” (McAlister 2018). She observes that “anti-Muslim-ism” in the United States combines Orientalism, anti-Arab racism, and intense hostility toward Islam as a religion, especially after 2001. McAlister further notes that the current president seems intent on further racializing Islam, as evidenced in all three instantiations of the Muslim ban. Although she insists that racism is a crucial component of anti-Muslim hostility within the United States and its foreign policy, McAlister's research on African evangelical communities troubles the collapse of global anti-Muslim hostility into racism. Religious animus toward

Muslims and Islam, she proposes, has force and weight even in situations where Muslims are not (or are not imagined to be) distinct from a racial majority.²⁶

To reduce contemporary anti-Muslim hostility to racism disregards hostility toward Islam explicitly *as* religion, as a form of practice and belief *de jure* protected under the first amendment and *de facto* policed and adjudicated as fundamentally un-American.²⁷ Note, for example, Rep. Spencer's discrediting of Islam as a religion: "People will try to hide behind the religion [i.e., Islam] in order to carry out an act. That is how jihad is waged." The implication here is that Muslims *claim* religious commitments in order to conceal violent intentions. If American Muslims are not sincere in their commitments to Islam, but rather *use* Islam to mask hostility toward other Americans and toward the idea of America itself, Spencer's attempt to use the anti-masking statute to criminalize Muslim women of cover would seem to follow.

American Islam and American Muslims threaten the supremacy of American whiteness, which must be understood as a *religious* as well as a *racial* formation. American whiteness is far more than the force behind generations of systemic, violent, larcenous racial oppression (though that would be enough). American whiteness derives its authority in meaningful ways from a moral conviction in its own supremacy—one that operates with religious conviction even absent of explicit religious commitments. American whiteness is a religio-racial formation, American white supremacy a religio-racial force.

Georgia's anti-masking law is a singular but by no means isolated example of why the study of American religions must ground itself in robust engagement with race. Following Weisenfeld's theoretical and methodological challenge, there can be no consideration of American religion that does not center race; neither can there be an understanding of America that does not understand whiteness as—at least in part—a religious construct.

We cannot fully understand Americans' suspicion of and violence toward American Muslims if we are not also thinking about race, if we fail to consider American Islam as racialized. In a nation that strongly identifies with white Christianity, American Islam's connection to Black and Brown-ness, to slavery and immigration, and to a monotheism not centered on Jesus has led to suspicions that Muslims cannot *truly* be

²⁶It should be said, however, that McAlister's argument risks unintentionally bolstering white supremacist dismissals of Islamophobia-as-racism critiques, particularly when Americans have shown themselves all too willing to leap at opportunities to absolve themselves of racism.

²⁷I am indebted to Juliane Hammer (2012) for the observation that collapsing anti-Muslim hostility into racism obscures hostility toward Islam *as* religion.

Americans. At the same time, it is insufficient to collapse anti-Muslim hostility into racism.

We can read Weisenfeld's theorization of religio-racial identity as a space in which lived religion meets the forces of the state (see Drake's article in this roundtable). The exercises of Georgia's Anti-Masking Act constitute such a space in their legal enfranchisement and protection of white supremacy (at gunpoint), in their identification of American Islam and American Muslims as a threat to public safety. The significance of this case study lies in part in reconceptualizing American religious studies as potential home for analyses of anti-Muslim hostility.

The perception of American Islam and American Muslims as a threat to American whiteness should fundamentally inform the study of American religions. Analyses of anti-Muslim hostility cannot and should not be the sole responsibility of Islamic Studies scholars, though certainly Islamicists have borne the brunt of this challenge and their work should inform American religions scholars addressing the phenomenon. But corrective content on the practices of Islam does not meaningfully disrupt anti-Muslim hostility, which has sharply intensified in the past several years ([Southern Poverty Law Center n.d.b](#); [Kishi 2017](#)).²⁸ For this reason, the work of historicizing and potentially disrupting American anti-Muslim hostility must not fall solely to experts in Islam. Considerations of anti-Muslim religio-racial bias—and religious intolerance more broadly—should be understood as a crucial component of the study of American religions (see [Baker 2011](#) and [Corrigan and Neal 2011](#)).

There is no singular way to do this, but one approach would be, following Weisenfeld's example, to reimagine the study of American religions as necessarily centered on considerations of race, one that provides historical context and intellectual challenge to a national amnesia that, in the words of American religions scholar Jason Bivins, "yearn[s] for the not-reality of black bodies, women's bodies, Muslim bodies, or the dead who bear the marks of our complicity" ([Bivins 2018](#)). "For all the fearsomeness of alt-righters in the streets, for all the pieties about 'our way of life' and the whiteness of its religion," Bivins insists, "ours is a time of things refusing to conceal themselves" ([Bivins 2018](#)). To refuse to let white supremacy go unnamed in the practice and theorization of American religions, to render visible the Christian assumptions that undergird American white supremacy: this would be a significant scholarly unmasking.

²⁸I am indebted to Todd Green for his observation that accurate data about the practice of Islam does not meaningfully disrupt anti-Muslim hostility.

REFERENCES

- 585 US __ (2018). *Trump v. Hawaii*. Available at <https://www.oyez.org/cases/2017/17-965>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- 1965 *Immigration and Nationality Act, a.k.a. the Hart-Celler Act (An Act to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act, and for other purposes)*, H.R. 2580, 89th Congress (October 3, 1965).
- Abu-Lughod, Lila. 2002. "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?" *American Anthropologist* 104 (3): 783–790.
- _____. 2013. *Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Ahmed, Maha, and Madison Pauly. 2017. "Wearing Masks at Protests Didn't Start with the Far Left." *Mother Jones*, September 29, 2017. Available at <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2017/09/masks-protests-antifa-black-bloc-explainer/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Ahmed, Sara. *Living a Feminist Life*. 2017. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Ainsley, Julia Edwards, Dustin Volz, and Kristina Cooke. 2017. "Trump to Focus Counter-Extremism Program Solely on Islam." *Reuters*, February 1, 2017. Available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-extremists-program-exclusiv-idUSKBN15G5VO>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Austin, Allan. 1997. *African Muslims in Antebellum America: Transatlantic Stories and Spiritual Struggles*. New York: Routledge.
- Aydin, Cemil. 2017. *The Idea of the Muslim World: A Global Intellectual History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs. 2020. "Demographics of Islam." Georgetown University. Available at <https://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/essays/demographics-of-islam>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- "Burgum Signs Bills Aimed at North Dakota Pipeline Protesters." 2017. Associated Press, February 24, 2017. Available at <https://www.apnews.com/3f8ec0c042014a82b0bd7d8673a3c499>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Baker, Kelly J. 2011. *The Gospel According to the Klan: The KKK's Appeal to Protestant America, 1915–1930*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press.
- Bell, Derrick. 1992. "Racial Realism." *Connecticut Law Review* 24 (2) (Winter):363–379.
- Bever, Lindsey. "After Outcry, Georgia Lawmaker Abandons Bill That Would Have Banned Muslims from Wearing Veils." *Washington Post*, November 18, 2016. Available at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/>

- [wp/2016/11/18/after-outcry-georgia-lawmaker-abandons-bill-that-would-have-banned-muslims-from-wearing-veils/](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/18/after-outcry-georgia-lawmaker-abandons-bill-that-would-have-banned-muslims-from-wearing-veils/). Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Beydoun, Khaled A., and Justin Hansford. 2017. "The F.B.I.'s Dangerous Crackdown on 'Black Identity Extremists.'" *New York Times*, November 15, 2017. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/15/opinion/black-identity-extremism-fbi-trump.html>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Bivins, Jason. 2018. "Open Carry Racism: The Right Wing Fever Dream that Predates Trump." *Religion Dispatches*, April 10, 2018. Available at <http://religiondispatches.org/open-carry-racism-the-right-wing-fantasy-that-predates-trump/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Boone, Joseph Allen. 2015. *The Homoerotics of Orientalism*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Bowles, Nellie. 2017. "How 'Doxxing' Became a Mainstream Tool in the Culture Wars." *New York Times*, August 30, 2017. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/30/technology/doxxing-protests.html>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Braude, Ann. 1997. "Women's History Is American Religious History." In *Retelling U.S. Religious History*, edited by Thomas A. Tweed, 87–107. Oakland: University of California Press.
- Bucar, Elizabeth. 2017. *Pious Fashion: How Muslim Women Dress*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bush, Laura. 2001. "Text: Laura Bush on Taliban Oppression of Women." *Washington Post*, November 17, 2001. Available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/nation/specials/attacked/transcripts/laurabushtext_111701.html. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Butler, Judith. 1997. *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*. New York: Psychology Press.
- Cagle, Casey (@CaseyCagle). 2018. Twitter post, April 21, 2018. <https://twitter.com/CaseyCagle/status/987754457474756613>.
- Caserio, Robert L., Lee Edelman, Judith Halberstam, José Esteban Muñoz, and Tim Dean. 2006. "The Antisocial Thesis in Queer Theory." *PMLA* 121 (3) (May): 819–828.
- Chan Malik, Sylvia. 2018. *Being Muslim: A Cultural History of Women of Color in American Islam*. New York: New York University Press.
- Cheng, Anne Anlin. 2001. *The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation, and Hidden Grief*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Clary, Timothy. 2016. "After Muslim Backlash, Georgia Lawmaker Drops Change to No-Mask Law." *CBS News*, November 18, 2016. Available at <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/georgia-lawmaker-drops-change-to-no-mask-law/>.

[cbsnews.com/news/muslim-backlash-georgia-lawmaker-change-no-mask-law/](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/muslim-backlash-georgia-lawmaker-change-no-mask-law/). Accessed February 18, 2020.

Cressler, Matthew. 2017. "Black Power, Religio-racial Identity, and the Unveiling of White Catholicism." Paper presented at the "Religio-racial Identity' as Challenge and Critique" session of the North American Religions and Afro-American Religious History units, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. Boston, MA.

Corrigan, John and Lynn Neal. 2011. *Religious Intolerance in America: A Documentary History*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Curtis IV, Edward E. 2002. *Black Islam in America: Identity, Liberation, and Difference in African-American Islamic Thought*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Daniszewski, John. 2017. "The Associated Press Limits Its Use of the Term 'Alt-Right' — Here's Why." *Business Insider*, August 16, 2017. Available at <https://www.businessinsider.com/why-the-associated-press-is-no-longer-using-the-term-alt-right-2017-8>. Accessed February 18, 2020.

Demby, Gene. (@GeeDee215). 2017. Twitter post, August 26, 2017. <https://twitter.com/GeeDee215/status/901467678707240962>.

Diamant, Aaron. 2016. "Lawmaker Withdraws Bill Banning Women from Wearing Burqas in Public." *WSB-TV*, November 17, 2016. Available at <https://www.wsbtv.com/news/local/new-bill-would-ban-women-from-wearing-burqas-for-drivers-license-photos/467901403>. Accessed February 18, 2020.

Duggan, Paul. 2017. "Charge Upgraded to First-Degree Murder for Driver Accused of Ramming Charlottesville Crowd." *Washington Post*, December 13, 2017. Available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/driver-accused-of-plowing-into-charlottesville-crowd-killing-heather-heyer-due-in-court/2017/12/13/6cbb4ce8-e029-11e7-89e8-edec16379010_story.html. Accessed February 18, 2020.

Edelman, Lee. 2004. *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Feldman, Noah. 2017. "The Constitution Has Masked Protesters Covered." *Bloomberg Opinion*, March 2, 2017. <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2017-03-02/the-constitution-has-masked-protesters-covered>. Accessed February 18, 2020.

Fessenden, Tracy. 2007. *Culture and Redemption: Religion, the Secular, and American Literature*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Flynn, Meagan. 2018. "Georgia Police Invoke Law Made for KKK to Arrest Anti-Racism Protesters." *Washington Post*, April 23, 2018. Available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2018/04/23/georgia-police-invoke-anti-mask-law-made-for-kkk-to-arrest-racism-protesters/?utm_term=.45592e9d28dd. Accessed February 18, 2020.

Georgia, Code. 2010. 16-11-38. "Wearing mask, hood, or device which conceals identity of wearer." Available at <https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/2010/title-16/chapter-11/article-2/16-11-38/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.

Gerber, Lynne. 2011. *Seeking the Straight and Narrow: Weight Loss and Sexual Reorientation in Evangelical America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

German, Michael. 2018. "Testimony Before the Congressional Black Caucus on the FBI's 'Black Identity Extremism' Report." *Brennan Center for Justice*, March 20, 2018. Available at <https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/testimony-congressional-black-caucus-fbis-report-black-identity-extremism>. Accessed February 18, 2020.

Gomez, Michael. 2005. *Black Crescent: The Experience and Legacy of African Muslims in the Americas*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Goodwin, Megan. 2016. "'They Do That to Foreign Women': Domestic Terrorism and Contraceptive Nationalism in *Not Without My Daughter*." *The Muslim World* 106.4: 759–780.

_____. 2018. "They Couldn't Get My Soul: Recovered Memories, Ritual Abuse, and the Specter(s) of Religious Difference." *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* (2018): 280–98.

_____. *Abusing Religion: Literary Persecution, Sex Scandals, and American Minority Religions*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

_____. Forthcoming. "This Field Which Is Not One/The Body Is Smart." In *Critique in Context: Surveying Key Categories in the Study of Religion*, edited by Rebekka King. Sheffield, U.K.: Equinox Publishing.

Georgia General Assembly. 2017. H. B. 3, Sess. of 2017–18. Available at <http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/display/20172018/HB/3>. Accessed March 21, 2020.

Hagle, Adam. 2018. "10 Arrested at Neo-Nazi Rally in Newnan, Georgia." *CBS News*, April 21, 2018. Available at <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/neo-nazi-rally-newnan-georgia-adolf-hitler-birthday-live-updates-2018-04-21/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.

Hagen, Lisa. 2017. "Georgia Still in Fake News Headlines over Dead 'Burqa Ban,'" *WABE*, March 22, 2017. Available at <https://www.wabe.org/georgia-still-fake-news-headlines-over-dead-burqa-ban/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.

Hammer, Juliane. 2012. "(Muslim) Women's Bodies, Islamophobia, and American Politics." *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* 42 (1): 29–36.

_____. 2013. "Center Stage: Gendered Islamophobia and Muslim Women." In *Islamophobia in America: The Anatomy of Intolerance*, edited by Carl Ernst, 107–144. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

- Heim, Joe, Devlin Barrett, and Hannah Natanson. 2018. "Man Accused of Driving into Crowd at Charlottesville 'Unite the Right' Rally Charged with Federal Hate Crimes." *Washington Post*, June 27, 2018. Available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/man-accused-of-driving-into-crowd-at-unite-the-right-rally-charged-with-federal-hate-crimes/2018/06/27/09cdce3a-7a20-11e8-80be-6d32e182a3bc_story.html. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Ingber, Sasha. 2019. "Neo-Nazi James Fields Gets 2nd Life Sentence For Charlottesville Attack." *National Public Radio*, July 15, 2019. Available at <https://www.npr.org/2019/07/15/741756615/virginia-court-sentences-neo-nazi-james-fields-jr-to-life-in-prison>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Jackson, Gordon. 2018. "Spencer Loses Primary Election after Four Terms." *The Brunswick News*, May 24, 2018. Available at https://thebrunswicknews.com/news/local_news/spencer-loses-primary-election-after-four-terms/article_1420fdb3-c353-53cb-8f8c-9d4eff04a8dd.html. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Johnson, Sylvester. 2015. *African American Religions, 1500–2000: Colonialism, Democracy, and Freedom*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Joshi, Khyati Y. 2006. "The Racialization of Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism in the United States." *Equity & Excellence in Education* 39 (3): 211–226.
- Katz, Andrew. 2018. "Unrest in Virginia: Clashes over a Show of White Nationalism in Charlottesville Turn Deadly." *Time*, November 13, 2018. Available at <http://time.com/charlottesville-white-nationalist-rally-clashes/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Khabeer, Su'ad Abdul. 2016. *Muslim Cool: Race, Religion, and Hip Hop in the United States*. New York: New York University Press.
- Kilgore, Ed. 2018. "Jason Spencer Finally Gets Too Weird for Even the Georgia GOP." *New York Magazine*, July 23, 2018. Available at <http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2018/07/georgia-lawmaker-spencer-literally-shows-his-ass-on-showtime.html>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- King, Richard. 1999. *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India, and "the Mystic East"*. London: Routledge.
- Kishi, Katayoun. 2017. "Assaults against Muslims in U.S. Surpass 2001 Level." *Pew Research Center*, November 15, 2017. Available at <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/11/15/assaults-against-muslims-in-u-s-surpass-2001-level/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Kristof, Nicholas. 2017. "Husbands Are Deadlier than Terrorists." *New York Times*, February 11, 2017. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/11/opinion/sunday/husbands-are-deadlier-than-terrorists.html>. Accessed February 18, 2020.

- Kurzman, Charles. 2019a. "Muslim-American Involvement with Violent Extremism, 2001–2018." Durham, NC: Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security, January 22, 2019. Available at https://sites.duke.edu/tcths/files/2019/01/2018_Kurzman_Muslim-American_Involvement_with_Violent_Extremism.pdf. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- _____. 2019b. "Annual Report." *Muslim American Terrorism*. Available at <https://kurzman.unc.edu/muslim-american-terrorism/annual-report/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Kurzman, Charles and David Schanzer. 2015. "The Growing Right-Wing Terror Threat." *New York Times*, June 16, 2015. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/16/opinion/the-other-terror-threat.html>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- McAlister, Melani. 2005. *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East since 1945*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- _____. 2018. "Islamophobia Is Not Racism." *Contending Modernities*, October 2, 2018. Available at <http://contendingmodernities.nd.edu/theorizing-modernities/islamophobia-racism/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Marr, Timothy. 2006. *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Mathias, Christopher (@letsgomathias). 2018a. Twitter post, April 21, 2018. <https://twitter.com/letsgomathias/status/987757305088311297>.
- _____. 2018b. Twitter post, April 21, 2018. <https://twitter.com/letsgomathias/status/987757214202056704>.
- Mathias, Christopher. 2017. "6 Rules Of Islamophobia In America." *Huffington Post*, January 23, 2017. Available at https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/islamophobia-america_n_587cf491e4b0e58057ff98e0. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Nasa, Rahima. 2018. "In New York, Intolerance Has Become Routine." *ProPublica*, July 16, 2018. Available at <https://www.propublica.org/article/in-new-york-intolerance-has-become-routine>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Palma, Bethania, and David Mikkelson. 2017. "Fact Check: Georgia Becomes First State to Ban Muslim Culture?" *Snopes.com*, updated March 20, 2017. Available at <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/georgia-bans-muslim-culture/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Pew Research Center. 2016. "A New Estimate Of The U.S. Muslim Population." *Fact Tank*, January 6, 2016. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/01/06/a-new-estimate-of-the-u-s-muslim-population/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.

- Pew Research Center. 2012. "The Global Religious Landscape." *Religion & Public Life*, December 18, 2012. Available at <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-exec/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Phillips, Ariella. 2016. "Georgia State Student Refused to Remove Muslim Veil in Class." *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, updated September 21, 2016. Available at <https://www.ajc.com/news/local/georgia-state-student-refused-remove-muslim-veil-class/uWdoIoRt3xOvpruFPku5oN/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Polti, Daniel. 2018. "Neo-Nazi Counterprotesters Met by Aggressive Militarized Police Force in Georgia." *Slate*, April 2018. Available at <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2018/04/neo-nazi-counterprotesters-met-by-aggressive-military-police-force-in-newnan-georgia.html>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Puar, Jasbir. 2007. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- _____. 2017. *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Safire, William. 2001. "The Way We Live Now." *New York Times Magazine*, October 28, 2001. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/10/28/magazine/the-way-we-live-now-10-28-01-on-language-coordinates.html>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Said, Edward W. 1979. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Samuel, Sigal. 2018. "Banning Muslim Veils Tends to Backfire—Why Do Countries Keep Doing It?" *The Atlantic*, August 3, 2018. Available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/08/denmark-burqa-veil-ban/566630/>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Schneider, Craig. 2016. "Wear a Mask? In Georgia, You Could Be Arrested." *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, April 25, 2016. Available at <https://www.myajc.com/news/wear-mask-georgia-you-could-arrested/tz4NZUFAGMROd42UTyfCpM/amp.html>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Shanmugasundaram, Swathi. 2018. "Anti-Sharia Bills in the United States." *Southern Poverty Law Center*, February 5, 2018. Available at <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2018/02/05/anti-sharia-law-bills-united-states>. Accessed February 18, 2020.
- Shular, Daniel (@xshularx). 2018. Twitter post, April 21, 2018. <https://twitter.com/xshularx/status/987762130773475328>.
- Spencer, Jason. 2016. "Rep. Jason Spencer to Withdraw House Bill 3," November 17, 2016. Available at <http://www.house-press.com/?p=6060>. Accessed February 18, 2020.

Southern Poverty Law Center. 2017. "Hate groups increase for second consecutive year as Trump electrifies radical right." February 15, 2017. Available at <https://www.splcenter.org/news/2017/02/15/hate-groups-increase-second-consecutive-year-trump-electrifies-radical-right>. Accessed February 18, 2020.

_____. n.d.a. "National Socialist Movement." Available at <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/national-socialist-movement>. Accessed November 13, 2018.

_____. n.d.b. "Anti-Muslim." Available at <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/anti-muslim>. Accessed September 3, 2018.

Stabile, Carol A. and Deepa Kumar. 2005. "Unveiling Imperialism: Media, Gender and the War on Afghanistan." *Media, Culture, and Society* 27(5) (September 1, 2005): 765–782.

State of Georgia v. Miller 398 S.E.2d 547 (Georgia 1990). Available at <https://law.justia.com/cases/georgia/supreme-court/1990/s90a1172-1.html>.

Steuter-Martin, Marilla. 2018. "Bill 62: Quebec Releases Criteria for Requesting, Granting Religious Accommodation." *CBC*, May 9, 2018. Available at <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-bill-62-guidelines-accommodations-1.4655620>. Accessed February 18, 2020.

Sullivan, Winnifred Fallers. 2005. *The Impossibility of Religious Freedom*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Traister, Rebecca. 2016. "What Mass Killers Really Have in Common." *The Cut*, July 15, 2016. Available at <https://www.thecut.com/2016/07/mass-killers-terrorism-domestic-violence.html>. Accessed February 18, 2020.

Weisenfeld, Judith. (@JLWeisenfeld). 2018. Twitter post, October 23, 2018. Available at <https://twitter.com/JLWeisenfeld/status/1054705551450533888>

Weisenfeld, Judith. 2017. *New World A-Coming: Black Religion and Racial Identity during the Great Migration*. New York: New York University Press.

Winters, Joseph R. 2016. *Hope Draped in Black: Race, Melancholy, and the Agony of Progress*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.