People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

8 MAI 1945 UNIVERSITY / GUELMA

FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES

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جامعة 8 ماي 1945 / قالمة

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قسم الآداب و اللغة الانجليزية

The Impact of US Media Brainwashing on Promoting Islamophobia and Dogmatism against Muslims after 9/11 Attacks

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Language and Culture

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December 2019

Dedication

To the realization of this work I am sincerely thankful to many dear persons.

I owe a great debt of gratitude and appreciation to my dear family whose love and affection were very helpful.

Great thanks to my amazing best friends and sisters Kawter, Sarah, Marwa, Boutayna, and Razan, for backing me up and being there for me whenever I felt stranded.

Special thanks go to my beloved Chayma to whom I wish all the best in the world.

My deep sense of indebtedness also goes to my beloved aunts Jahida and Fadila for their encouragement, love, and support.

Abstract

After of 9/11 violent attacks the American mass media, under the guidance of the elite in power, waged a war on Islam and Muslims inside the United States and abroad. The mass media ever since did not spare any time to spread lies and misconceptions about Muslims and their faith, as well as incite prejudice and animosity towards them. Hence, this resulted in an unprecedented wave of Islamophobia across the world and mainly in America. The strong effect of media in shaping American minds was flagrant, that the life of American Muslims turned to a perpetual struggle. The epidemic phenomenon of Islamophobia has spread all over the United States leading to a clash between two different nations in terms of standards and values. Furthermore it dwarfed the possibility of their coexisting in peace.

Résumé

Après les attentats du 11 septembre, les médias américains, sous la direction de l'élite au pouvoir, ont mené une guerre contre l'Islam et les musulmans aux États-Unis et à l'étranger. Depuis lors, les médias n'ont pas ménagé leur temps pour propager des mensonges et des idées fausses sur les musulmans et leur foi, ainsi que pour inciter les préjugés et l'animosité à leurs égard. Cela a donc entraîné une vague sans précédent d'islamophobie à travers le monde et principalement aux États-Unis. L'effet puissant des médias sur l'esprit des Américains était flagrant: la vie des musulmans américains s'est transformée en une lutte perpétuelle. Le phénomène épidémique d'islamophobie s'est répandu partout aux États-Unis, ce qui a provoqué un conflit entre deux nations différentes en termes de normes et de valeurs. De plus, il a réduit à néant la possibilité de coexister en paix.

ملخص

بعد أحداث11 سبتمبر، خاضت الساحة الإعلامية الأمريكية-بقيادة نخبة القوى المسيطرة في البلاد- حربا ضروسا ضد الإسلام و المسلمين داخل الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية و خارجها. و منذ ذلك الوقت و الإعلام لا ينفك ينشر أكاذيبا و أفكارا مغلوطة عن المسلمين و معتقداتهم، بهدف التحريض و العصبية و العنصرية ضدهم .و كنتيجة لهذا الهجوم، نتجت موجة اسلاموفوبيا غير مسبوقة في جميع أرجاء العالم و في الولايات المتحدة الامريكية بشكل خاص .ان التأثير البالغ للقاعدة الإعلامية الكبيرة في أمريكا على عقول مواطنيها جد واضح لدرجة أصبحت يوميات المسلمين في البلاد عبارة عن صراع دائم بسبب انتشار ظاهرة الإسلاموفوبيا في جميع انحاء امريكا.. دفعت هذه الظاهرة الفكرية الوبائية بقوة نحو صدام بين امتين مختلفتين من حيث القيم و الأسس مقلصة بذلك فرص التعايش السلمي بينهما.

List of Abbreviations

GTD	Global Terrorism Database
CAP	the Center for American Progress
CAIR	the Council on American-Islamic Relations
CSP	Center for Security policy
AACAP	the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal

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Introduction

Media are originally made up for the purpose of basically informing, enlightening as well as entertaining individuals within a certain society. Its aim is typically raising the level of their awareness and ingraining a set of beliefs, values, and ideologies to bring the whole community into a common ground. Nowadays, mass media has unfortunately taken another detour to serve an elite's interest.

The way American media operate does guarantee an overall control over public opinion and thoughts. The nature of the relationship between the media and the public is identical to the one between puppeteers and puppets, peculiarly in the American setting. Instead of informing the American population about domestic and international events objectively and sincerely, corporate media rather tends more to brainwash most of the citizenry with such abundant manipulated and self-serving data in order to benefit people in power, like politicians and corporations' owners.

The miscellany of US media such as social networks, magazines, and countless TV channels make most individuals unable to question the accuracy and basically the credibility of the flow of information they receive on a daily basis. One major effect of media on the American public is creating the belief of being well informed. In other words, the way media operates, especially through heavy propagandizing campaigns and disseminating disinformation, results in steering public opinions and shaping their thoughts on every level, which produces a brainwashed society.

A major effect of American media propaganda is particularly manifested after 9/11 attacks; the mass media waged a war on Islam and Muslims, fueling a host of negative dogmas and stereotypes against the former with the help of a well systemic network that turned American people's fears and concerns about their national security into a lucrative business. Thus, unfortunately Muslims living in the US came to be considered as a source of violence, terror,

and all kind of abominations which has culminated in a terrible and totally unbearable atmosphere of Islamophobia.

Nowadays, mainstream media's active role within the American society has everything to do with the advancement of terrorism. This is embodied in how the American media implicitly encourages hate crimes and discriminatory acts against Muslims in the US, as well as through justifying and legitimizing anti-Muslim domestic and international policies such as invading Muslim countries in the name of countering terrorism. The so-called War on Terror has brought a huge part of the Islamic world into complete chaos and destruction; moreover, it has dragged the Americans into an unprecedented state of paranoia, bigotry, racism, and dogmatism against Muslims and Islam.

Manufacturing Consent, the Political Economy of the Mass Media, by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky is a book that revolves around an analysis of a "propaganda model" which is primarily about how US media takes action under the control of a certain professional and powerful elite to serve their specific agendas. This system stands for both confirming and conforming to certain ideologies working merely for the interest of media personnel and the elite. Nevertheless, according to the authors, parts of media organizations and policies are still not impeccably enacted or controlled, that at so many occasions they get busted faking events besides other various scandals.

In the same context, Fatiin Haque's and Mahjabeen Khaled Hossain's *Global Media, Islamophobia and its Impact on Conflict Resolution* is essentially about the role and effects of global media played since the last decades. A focal point of their work is media's misrepresentation and diabolization of Islam on the basis of an act done by an extremist group that purports belonging to Islam. Eventually, this led to what is called now Islamophobia. The authors suggest an array of solutions in an attempt to substitute the clichés and racism against Muslims into positive conceptions.

Alice Marwick and Rebecca Lewis in their book, *Media Manipulation and Disinformation Online* discuss how internet uses media and strategic ways to fulfill its manipulative ends via reframing news and spreading disinformation among the public. It also accentuates how far-right groups take advantage of youth opposition to political correctness to disseminate prejudices, Islamophobia, and hatred.

L. Wolfe in his paper *How the Media Brainwash You* stresses that the most part of Americans is deluded by the belief that they are well informed about the surrounding world depending merely on printed and visual media. The variation and abundance of media forms does not necessarily imply the credibility of the received information, though. Going further, the author claims that deliberate decontextualizing and dislocating a certain event from its historical frame and treating it as a separate event, eventually, one would be exposed to disinformation and thus, brainwashing.

Among the literature related to the field is *Media power and Class Power: Overplaying Ideology* by David Miller. The latter's work is based on the work of Stuart Hall for a critique of cultural and media studies. It is claimed that Critical Theorists such as Hall stresses the role of ideology and the 'function' of the media and its effect on the community, capitalist social order, and backing up people in class-power. In other words, how media helps keeping on hegemony, through indoctrinating individuals and stripping them from any power.

This research actually utilizes both the quantitative and qualitative methods which make it possible to achieve an empirical investigation and such a deep analysis of the rise of multifaceted mass media effects on the American society. Therefore, there is a need for investigating responsible entities behind the overall mass brainwashing that US mainstream media practice over the years. In addition to a reference to the symbiotic ties between media corporations and democratic government, and how they turn the mass fear mongering into their benefit at the expense of the whole community.

The major questions this research tried to find anwsers to are the following: What is the relationship between American media brainwashing and Islamophobia? What are the reflections of negative Mass media coverage on Muslims after 9/11? Who benefits from fueling Islamophobia via mass media platforms? What are the repercussions of Islamophobic wave on the lives of both Americans and Muslims in US?

Chapter one: **American Media and Brainwashing Post 9/11 Attacks**

    1.   **How Does US Mass Media Affect Americans?**

Media brainwashing basically rests on crystalizing people's opinions and thoughts regarding certain issues or a whole life pattern. It happens through using systematic propaganda to subtly persuade individuals to have a particular positive or negative thought or attitude towards a person or an entity (Henningsen). Depending on the different tendencies and benefits of various powerful media platforms, people's minds are shaped and directed ("Brainwashing or the Power of Media…").

  After 9/11 American mass media took an extreme detour regarding Islam and its adherents. Through a heavy dogmatizing and Islamophobic propaganda, corporate media managed to radically change most of Americans perceptions and attitudes towards Muslims.

It is commonly known that controlling knowledge or information production and distribution is an overriding pillar for guaranteeing having and maintaining power. Mass Media in its turn is like an enormous store for generating and delivering data on a host of matters and domains. So, obviously controlling mass media is a strong insurance for controlling mass ideas, decisions and conducts through propagating and installing such a conformist pattern of life among the crowds ("Media Control"). In other sense, mass media is the motor that runs the masses.

The American government immensely practices such a tight control on mass media and educational programs, using intensive framed content for the purpose of crystalizing the way of understanding things occurring around, and the overall impact can be referred to as the brainwashing of masses (Chomsky 71). This basically is efficient specifically when utilizing the religious or nationalist side of people, namely, those who are not well-educated as a winning card, along with allowing them to have a very restricted access to other different free media.

American mass media different platforms like, TV channels, newspapers, social media, youtube, online websites, and radio...etc. are vastly creating and promoting a great deal of disinformation, dogmas, stereotypes and Islamophobia within the American community post 9/11 violent events. So ever since that incident, people's views crystalized on the basis that Muslims are the major enemy that all the West, especially America, should fight to bring salvation to the world from Islamic evil.

1.1. Key Examples of US Media Brainwashing Content

There are many examples of American cinema and television whitewashing of American minds through planting Islamophobia seeds and a certain dogma against Muslims after 9/11 events. Some of those known cenimatic works are movies like *The Hurt Locker* (2008), *Zero Dark Thirty* (2012), and American *Sniper* (2014).

The Hurt Locker is a war drama movie, directed by Kathryn Bigelow, which won six Academy Awards. It follows the story of a team specialized in Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) that was sent to Iraq during the war. Throughout the film, a strong fear, suspicion and agitation are sensed. The movie actually portrays the Muslim as being a potential danger (Veldhausz 33). Another focal aspect that can be easily felt through the movie scenes is that of the 'Self' versus the 'Other' mentality (Veldhausz 35). In other words, the relationship depicted here between the Self (Americans) and the Other (Muslims) is very restricted and the only sentiments that the former tends to hold for the latter is basically fear, suspicion and hatred.

Another famous movie which contributed immensely to the dissipation of grudges and stereotypes against Muslims is that of *Zero Dark Thirty*.The movie's narrative is about the capture of the so-called "Ousama Bin Laden" in Pakistan by the American Navy Seal Team in 2011. The movie title is a spy-speak for half past midnight which is the timing at which Ben Ladin is killed. Throughout the film, scenes of torture of captured Muslim men during

investigation is incredibely glorified ("Zero Dark Thirty"). That is, the sight of torturing those 'Criminal' or 'Suspect'Muslim characters is being normalized as well as justified to the viewers.

Additionally, the soldiers are shown as heroes and human rights' defenders; whereas, those Pakistanis are portrayed merely as possible enemies who are savage and unworthy.The movie overlooked the deep effect of the murdering and capturing of Muslim men on their childern and wives (French). That is, after killing and emprisoning these men, their little children and women will have no breadwinner or a supporter. Moreover, the movie apparently turned a blind eye to the fact that the US soldiers brought nothing but destruction to social and economic status of the Pakistani community.

In many scenes of *Zero Dark Thirty*, Muslim women wearing burqas are shown as subordinate elements backing their terrorist husbands, like in the scene where the wives of Ousama Ben Ladin are protecting him and they are later killed by US soldiers (Majed). So, the film actually depicts Muslim women as terrifying and as bad as their men. What this cinematic work tries to say is that when it comes to terrorism and being a threat to the West, and specifically to America, the difference line between Muslim men and women is blurred.

The third example of Hollywood contribution in the creation of Islamophobia is the movie of *American Sniper* (2014).The movie is the autobiography of the number one lethal sniper in American military history, Chris Kyle ("American Sniper"). The latter's main mission was hunting Al-Qaeda leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in Iraq post 9/11 attacks. The movie tries to humanize the protagonist Kyle, even though he has reportedly murdered more than 160 innocent people, by shedding light on him having problem with adapting to the reality of war and resettling into a normal civilian life each time he is back home from a tour in Iraq ("American Sniper Film…").Thus, playing with the human and emotional side of viewers can really work especially when that is linked with patriotism.

In one of the scenes a woman and a little boy are trying to bomb the US marines using grenades, but they got shot at the right time by Chris Kyle. The scenes of the movie focus on making viewers identify with Kyle and his team while despise Muslims (Tunzelmann). They actually urge viwers to see Muslims as savage terrorists and more specifically as the opposite of Kyle and his community. Thus, the idea that Muslims, no matter what gender or age they are, are just a threat to the American stability and national security is clearly reinforced.

Likewise, American Disney's animation and cartoons had a great role in the American media for decades in regards to shaping the views of young people on different topics like the Arab world and Muslims. It actually played a pivotal role in creating many stereotypes and dogmas about Muslims specifically post 9/11 events. One significant example of of those cartoons is *The Simpsons*.

In 2008, one episode of the famous American sitcom cartoon The Simpsons which was aired on the FOX cable Network showed the naughty boy called Bart having a new friendship with a new boy in the town called Bashir Bin Laden. The latter's family is from Jordan. When Bart accompanies Bashir Ben Laden to school, he warns him not to let bullies in the shool know about him being a Muslim. The bullies very soon know about his religion, and then they start bullying him till he is saved by Bart (Pinsky). It is insinuated that even American children are conscious about being around a Muslim. That Bart sees Bashir as someone who is not similar to other kids and he would be bullied only for his belief confirms the idea that Muslims are perceived unequal to other Americans and potentially unwanted.

Later during a typical dinner prepared from the Simpsons for the Bin Laden family, the father Homer had a FOX News nightmare of one Muslim seizing control of their hometown Springfield with the help of a genie from Disney's movie animation Aladdin. In the same nightmare, he sees the Muslim turning their church into a mosque and their pastor into an Imam. Then, when he wakes up from the nightmare, he suspects that the father of Bashir is a

terrorist and that he is about to bomb them. Later, they find out that he is just a demolition expert (Pinsky). All this featuring points out that Muslim people are just not to be trusted and that they are suspicious.

Though it is not directly stated, all the portrayals in the episode reinforce the stereotypes and a certain dogma that Muslims are aiming at taking over the West and namely America to turn it into a Caliphate, compel people to revert to Islam, and most importantly that Muslims are typical terrorists that should be feared and distanced. This racist and Islamophobic content will surely be planted in many of children and adults' minds curtailing the chance to bring all the community sections together to coexist in peace and harmony.

Another important part of the American Media industry is video games. In fact, the latter took a great place in spreading and perpetuating Islamophobia and such negative dogmas towards Islam and Muslims after 9/11 attacks. Among dozens of known video games of this type, two of them are worth tackling: *Muslim Massacre* and *Call of Duty*.

In January 2008, the warfare video game *Muslim Massacre* was put on the internet as a free download. The aim of the game was to "eradicate the Muslim race using an arsenal of the most destructive weapons", and it was played through the viewpoint of an American hero. The game literally glorifies the act of killing each and evey Muslim an American may encounter on his way (Percival).Thus, it makes the act of genociding Muslims, who are already represented in the game as terrorists or the bad guys, as entertaining and simple as ever.

Additionally, the warfare video game called *Call of Duty* was released on October 29, 2003, by Microsoft, and more than 250 million copies were sold. *Call of Duty* was developed by Infinity Ward Company. Much of the game content is quite Islamophobic (Lautenbach). It is not so much different from *Muslim Massacre* game in regards to the sort of message it conveys to the player.

When playing *Call of Duty*, most of what the gamer encounters is warmonging slogans, for instance, "That's Call of Duty, over and over, shoot all the Arabs", also "Muslim blood is the cheapest in the world" and the likes. In addition, Muslim characters in this game are usually represented as slightly dark-skinned either shouting "Allahu Akbar" or carrying a Soviet rifle AK-47, other portrayals include a man with a camel or goat in desert. Also, in one scenario of the game an Arabic writing containing a Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad was put on a frame picture that was hanging in a filthy room above a toilet ("Islamophobia: The Obsession of Digital..."). It is quite patent the degree of hatred and scorn Islamophobic video games developpers in US hold towards the Muslim community.

Thus, in this game too Muslims are represented in a systematically narrow and shaped way that ensures to the person playing the game that those are the villains or the enemy whom you should get rid of. Hence, fighting and loathing people of Islamic belief became a new trend fashion specifically in America so that millions inside and out of the USA are lured to play such unhealthy as well as despicable games considering them as fun and worthy.

According to some studies conducted by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP), playing violent video games mainly for a long time results in serious repercussions on the person especially children and adolescents. The spotlight is shed mostly on young people because during the phase of growing into adults their brains get affected. Thus, their behavior automatically changes into violence simulating what he/she has already watched when playing his "fun" game. In other words, the person's unconscious mind gets used to or rather adapts itself to the recurring aggressive acts he/she makes in that virtual world ("Video Gaming Can ..."). So, although the practice of that violence is sheerly virtual, its reflections are quite real and concrete because it is later imitated on differenet degrees.

The AACAP confirms that most popular violent video games promote stereotypes and racism by perpetuating certain dogma and grudges towards certain people whether was it

based on belief, gender or else ("Video Games and Children…"). Hence, promoting dogmatism and Islamophobia seems to be quite related to the digital world of many popular warfare video games like "Muslim Massacre" and "Call of Duty". No doubt that the influence of the Islamophobic and agressive content on American video gamers is really tremendeous.

So, the premise of the American warfare video games seems to be akin to the American policy that tends to wage war on Islam and Muslims in many direct and indirect ways. In warfare games like *Muslims Massacre* and *Call of Duty*, persons with a Muslim name, Muslim places , Islamic symbols like mosques, the word "Allah" or "Mohammed", Quran or some of its verses are painted as a source of evil, as well as a target to be attacked and desecrated("Video Games and Children…"). No wonder with all these seeds planted in the gamer's mindset, many haters, racists, and murderers would be out there to make the safety and life stability of Muslims in the US shrink more and more over the days.

With all the racist and Islamophobic content of these video games which are played by millions of people in America and even worldwide, even children alongside adults, would grow up to be tolerant to any activity of violence or even killing in the name of protecting their homeland from the supposed enemy: the "Muslims".

Video games of this type, insulting others' beliefs and making people kill others for their beliefs as an entertainment, are not acceptable at any level. This type of hatemongering and derogatory games should be immediately banned and boycotted. Furthermore, conscious people should run campaigns to dissipate awareness especially among young people so that they are not brainwashed to believe that people can be killed for not liking their beliefs. The effect of this pejorative content is so profound as well as totally harmful on the short and long run.

1.2. American Presidential Administration post 9/11:

Among the parties that also played a great role in dogmatizing Muslims and spreading hatred towards them in the American Media after 9/11attacks, is George Bush administration's domestic and international policy, mainly his so called War on Terror. The US mass media such as New York Times, CNN, Fox Nework, Washington Post, Washington Times, and many governmental reports have profoundly promoted his counter-terrorism propaganda tainting the Islamic world as the source of evil that should be feared and fought (Greenwald). Waging wars on Muslim countries with the help of succefull media propaganda will radically change the way Muslims are perceived.

During his presidency, thousands of Muslims in America have been surveilled, detained, and even tortured by the FBI for being suspects of terrorism without any charges, which is utterly against the constitution. This violation of Muslim civil liberties in the name implementing the so called Patriot Act that was largely tolerated by non Muslim Americans because they considered it necessary for protecting their national securtity. Not to forget the deep effect of Bush's waged wars on Afghanistan and Iraq on American Muslims who suffered much higher marginalization, bigotry and hate crimes than before the 2001 attacks ("Surveillance under the USA Patriot Act").

Like George Bush, Obama's administration, whether in rhetoric or practice also continued its war on what is called "Islamic Terrorism" (Brian). Although Obama acted as siding Muslims in US and out, and precisely as anti- Islamophobia yet during his reign US had reinforced othering Muslims and in act he deported millions immigrants many of them are Muslims, and called for a continuous war with terrorists which the Arab/Muslim world is always correlated with throughout American mass media("Registry used to track…").

Another significant personality that largely promoted hate and discrimination against Islam and Muslims through mass media is Donald Trump. The latter's instances of contributing to

Islamophobia are uncountable, but mentioning few of them can really tell how influential that contribution is. On 22 March, 2016, Trump was on Fox Business Network stating that Americans really had problems with Muslims, and the real issue was with Muslim refugees and immigrants, so he suggested that the US impose a strict surveillance on Muslims in the country besides to their mosques ("86 Times Donald Trump Displayed…"). These words are a mere challenge and a deep provocation to the Muslim Community in the USA. It is a call for a justified violence; hate speech, racism, and stereotyping against Muslims.

Then, on 12 June, 2016, following the shooting of *Pulse*, which is a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, by someone who is purportedly a Muslim young man, Donald Trump posted a tweet stating that America needs to be really tough when dealing with Muslims and suggested the Muslim Ban ("86 Times Donald Trump Displayed…"). The next day on 13 June, 2016, Trump made a speech at a press conference at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire, where he again called for banning Muslim migration to the US for a period of time for the sake of the country's safety (Beckwith and Teague). This call for discrimination and hate in media is for sure to make the situation of Muslims in the US worse. They are pointed to as a plague that should be immediately shunned and feared.

Very soon after Trump signed the executive order banning refugees and Muslims from 7 major Muslim countries (Iraq, Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen) for a period of time, a huge chaos and protests in American aiports took place. On 1 September, 2017, Trumps tweeted again that immigrant Muslims like Syrian refugees are taking advantage of the policies of family reunification to create a net of trrorists like 'ISIS' (Giorgis). That is, Trump or rather the American policymakers, kept bluiding a huge wall between the Muslims and non-Muslims in the whole country through ingraining terror and division within. These policies were claimed to be procedures and attitudes that are based on national security intent, but apparently, they are also based on belief issue.

Actually, holding accountable a whole Muslim community living in and out of the USA for the crimes of 0,001% or less of a group of extremists or individuals who are purportedly holding Muslim names and backgrounds, is quite irrational, unjust, and totally unbearable. It is especially unaceptable from a country that played the role of human rights defender in the world and a promoter of freedom and equality.

The effect of US mass media cannot be underestimated; in fact, it rather destroys the people's sense of safety whenever an alleged enemy is announced. This strategy of sowing panic and insecurity among the community is ceaselessly applied to the American community since the Cold War. The brainwashing approaches are not actually new. They basically depend in the first place on propagating the feeling of terror and paranoia in people's minds, which makes them able to accept any unrealistic suggestion as a cause for their insecurity. In the second place comes the turn of using the 'Big Lie' method to support the psychological war waged on the softened public (Schein 2-6; "The History of Mainstream Media's…"). So, dessiminating racist and Islamophobic content regularly on different American media can only be taken as a distraction strategy set by the media corporations in order to justify many of the government's unacceptable attitudes and acts against Muslims.

The American mass media, according to Chomsky, is fundamentally trying to turn the whole population into a certain direction. To keep the public distracted from interfering in the governmental issues by getting them busy with minor stuff like sports, sex scandals, celebrity gossip, ogres that will takeover their homeland, and anything but serious matters which are assumedly the concern of the state to take care of (11). In other terms, washing people's minds with a selected flow of data will definitely affect their thoughts, decisions, and attitudes towards others. No doubt that keeping the American citizenry always occupied with a certain host of matters, like how fearful the Muslims are, will keep them away from seeing the whole picture.

The American mass media works systematically on disseminating particular planned data and messages to the unaware public majority. It is basically hammered home that the media practitioners or newscasters are of absolute credibility and trustworthiness in doing their job of disseminating information. They also try to sell on the idea that they are the only source through which people are able to figure out what is really going on in the world (Pensador). Hence, American people who tend to take for granted whatever is currently showed on screens and other media types should be aware enough to seek real information other than disinformation, from other sources that are far from bias, and should get their minds busy with real and serious matters instead of being played around by mainstream media.

Through major mass media like Television, radio, internet…etc, most Americans are duped into believing that they are being both entertained and informed, while in reality what is occurring is the shaping of their thoughts and pattern of life. They are told what to like, what to hate, whom they should idolize, what and how to do things, and particularly what to fear. So, most people will never take into account any other versions of the truth or information that are different from what they are told by their mass media ("Media Control"). The community in this condition has its mindset totally framed and played by media abusers. The public is being familiarized with a particular sort of ideology which is assumedly superior to any other one in the world, and anything that looks different from it is supposedly inferior. Thus, the people would tremendously trust and follow the government decisions more, as well as, the information given by the mainstream media (Rampell).

Gripping hold of information sources leads effectively to the control, manipulation, and inculcation of people who take those given information for granted and even live upon it. Most people are as similar as automatons who just parrot what they find in the news at night, without bothering to question or even think for themselves (Schein 8-14). So, most American

people have been conditioned, pushed in certain direction, and played pretty much like a host of pawns in a chess game.

In this regard, Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman argue that the US devotes hundreds of billions of dollars for the purpose of indoctrinating and controlling the American populace yearly. They also confirm that the American government will do whatever it takes to fight her major enemy, which is the awareness of her own population (1-35). Since information and data sources are not in the hands of the American populace but owned by another party in power, the latter will run data in a way that would only fit its benefits.

In fact, what different media pratice since 9/11 events is a policy of intimidation and getting the community urged to justify all government violent and racist acts towards Muslims and Islam. In the same time, waging wars against Muslim communities can easily be overlooked as well as tolerated by American non Muslim citizenry in the name of fighting terrorism.

Chapter Two: Islamophobic Mass Media and its Effects on Muslims in America

1. US Media Imbalanced and Biased Coverage about Muslims

The way the media has covered the terrorist attacks committed on American soil has certainly such a direct and strong connection with multiple racist and hate incidents perpetrated against American Muslims, mainly after 9/11 attacks.

According to a research conducted at Georgia State University, terror attacks committed by Muslims receive about 357 percent of media coverage more than those carried out by other groups or individuals. The study was led by Dr. Erin Kearns, an assistant professor at Alabama University and Anthony Lemieux, professor at Georgia State and director of the university's Global Studies Institute. The researchers actually focused more on terror attacks in the U.S. between 2006 and 2015(Chalabi).

The study found that the perpetrator's faith is a significant predictor of news when it comes to covering a terrorist attack. The authors note that in the USA, the general public tend to fear what is called the 'Muslim terrorist' who is portrayed by media most of the time as linked to al-Qaeda as well as motivated by a holy war against America, while overlooking other threats (Betus, et al.).That is, news tend to spot its lights on Muslims as a major menace to the American community and soil, while ignoring the same terrorist acts or worse when committed by a non-Muslim.

The researchers stated that out of 136 terror attacks in the U.S. over the period of 10 years (2006-2015), Muslims carried out on average 12.5 % of those terrorist attacks, yet got more than fifty percent of the news coverage. Terrorist attacks perpetrated by non Muslims received about 15 headlines, whereas those committed by Muslim extremists received 105 headlines (Kearns and Amarasingam).This serious imbalance in news coverage has surely a strong impact on the Muslim minority specifically and on the American community at large as well.

The research reassures that three quarters of the terrorist attacks since 2006 till 2015 are actually carried out by far-right white nationalist American men, while one quarter of attacks are committed by Muslims. What is ironic is that whenever the perpetrator is of Muslim identity it is immediately associated with the label "Terrorist", yet when the perpetrator is white or a non Muslim, his action is referred to a mental disability or that he is a loner whose family is totally against violent actions ("Great Disparities Exist…"). In other words, the American populace is whitewashed and duped by the media into believing that only Muslims or anything that has to do with them has an exceptional aura of evil and an inherent sense of killing the innocent.

According to the FBI Database, after the 9/11 events, radical Jews and other religious groups who belonged to armed movements and other extremist organizations committed acts of terrorism in the name of their religion many times more than extremist Muslims did ("Non-Muslims Carried out…"). But the focus of media coverage was more on the horrifying acts of Muslim men rather than other extremist perpetrators.

According to the Triangle Center on Terrorism and Home Security, only 10% of American fatalities from political violence as well as mass shootings since the attacks of 9/11are caused by American Muslims ("Non-Muslims Carried out…"). This finding raises one key question: why do American mainstream media over-represent the 10% of Muslim extremist acts while tossing away or entirely ignoring the 90% of terrorism committed by other American groups?

Global Terrorism Database (GTD) defines terrorism as the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation (England). Yet, terrorist attacks are described by media outlets depending on the race and basically the faith of the perpetrator. That is to say, only Muslims should be feared the most and highly profiled even when the same act is done by a non-Muslim just like the following case shows.

On October 1, 2017, a gunman called Stephen Paddock opened fire on a crowd of concertgoers at a music festival on the Las Vegas Strip in Nevada. This mass shooting murdered 58 people and wounded about 500. The news described the man as a freak with mysterious motives and probable mental disorder (Sanchez and Hackney). By contrast, when Omar Mateen, an American Muslim who committed mass murder on June 12, 2016, at the Pulse gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, killing 49 people and injuring 53 others, the US media this time commented differently. They called the same act, which was so similar to Paddock's, a local terrorist attack and labeled Omar Mateen as racist, belligerent and even toxic. Additionally, Mateen was claimed to have sworn allegiance to ISIS leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (Kassam).

Actually, this disproportionate news coverage between Muslim and non-Muslim terrorist attacks have shaped public perception against Muslims.The unjust and unequal media coverage following the 9/11 terror attacks is so detrimental especially to Muslims living inside the USA because that will definitely create misconceptions about the prevalence of attacks and fuel bias and discrimination against them (Molla). Thus, media's negative coverage of Muslims drastically stirs up the state of Islamophobia and reinforces the dogmatization of Muslims as terrorist and violent.

This intense dissemination of Islamophobic and dogmatizing media content that tends to direct the American population to consider Muslims as the most feared enemy have real damaging consequences on the daily lives of Muslims in America. The amount of hatred and fear towards Islam and Muslims the biased media systematically conveys to the public heavily fuels more division and make the life of the Muslim minority even harder and far from peaceful.

2. **Hate Crimes Against Muslims Post 9/11 Attacks:**

According to the FBI's data, hate assaults against Muslim minority reported to police rose immediately following the terror events of 9/11. In fact, there were about 481 crimes reported against Muslims in 2001, up from 28 in 2000. Nevertheless, from 2002 till 2014, the number of hate crimes against Muslims receded to about 200 annually ("Eleventh OIC Observatory Report…" 29). This number unfortunately rose again from more than 297 in 2015 up to 500 in 2019 according to the Council on American-Islamic Relations (Lystad)

It also should be noted that other governmental data, like the Bureau of Justice Statistics that relies on roughly 200,000 residential crime surveys actually show such severe undercounting of hate crimes against Muslims. The Bureau's studies, based on respondents' answers to researchers, designate a higher annual average of hate assaults which are estimated at about 250,000 nationally, and over a half of these undercounted offenses are not even reported to the police ("Federal Survey: Half…").

According to Pew Research Center report titled *How the U.S. General Public Views Muslims and Islam*, published in July 2017, the number of respondents who see that Islam is more likely to motivate violence doubled from 25 percent in 2002 to 52 percent in 2014. Interestingly, the center also found out that when American people are personally acquainted with someone who is a Muslim, the fear and bias against him is much less ("Republicans Prefer Blunt…"). This explains how having a meaningful contact of stigmatized Muslims would reduce Islamophobia and dogmas about them.

The surge of hate crimes against this tiny Muslim minority that make up 1% of the whole American population make is it so hard to be a Muslim and live in the USA according to a survey conducted by Pew Research Center in 2017. The result of the survey was that three quarters of American Muslim adults say that there is so much discrimination against their minority in the US ("U.S. Muslims Concerned…"). Muslims in America are living a real

challenge due to their rampant negative image which is tainted carefully by politicians and especially by mainstream media. Since the 9/11 events, Muslims in US suffer on a daily basis with all forms of abominations such as racist acts, verbal abuse, intimidation, property and mosques' vandalism as well as hate speech and murder, whether at school, workplace, on the street, in mosques, or anywhere (Lichtblau).

Some famous cases of hate crimes and discrimination actions that the Muslim community in the US has encountered will shed some light on the negative consequences of their negative and stereotypical portrayal in US media. For example, on February 17, 2009, a former Pennsylvania Senator, Rick Santorum, gave a lecture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln on the subject of Islam. He vehemently argued that Muslims' religious views cannot be altered, thus democracy does not "mesh" with them. He went on proclaiming, "A democracy could not exist because Mohammed already made the perfect law…The Quran is perfect just the way it is, that's why it is only written in Islamic language" (Marr). Lecturing this amount of Islamophobic content among students will surely greatly motivate them to hurt Muslims more believing that there is a sound basis for that.

A terrifying anti-Muslim incident occurred on August 27, 2009, when an attacker in New York was charged with a hate crime after threatening to kill a Muslim mother and her daughter. The attacker actually shouted racial and religious slurs, and even spat on the victims' car. He also threatened to murder the women because of their religious beliefs. The victims were dressed in loose-fitting clothing and headscarves ("Anti-Muslim Incidents since …").

One of the countless school Islamophobic incidents took place on October 13, 2010, when the parents of a Muslim young boy in New York, who was reportedly the victim of regular beatings at his classmates hands, met with the school officials to talk about the possibility of a transfer. The boy's teachers tried to adequately address the violence against him and other

Muslim students but unfortunately failed. Later the sixteen years old student received psychological counseling as his parents reported a significant mood change. And the only official reaction of the school to the incidents was an expression of their sadness about these Islamophobic incidents.

On June 14, 2010, a peaceful march to show support for a proposed mosque in Sheepshead Bay, New York, turned bad when counter-demonstrators started shouting at the marchers. One man shouted "This is a Jewish neighborhood – build a mosque in your own neighborhood," and a woman yelled, "Muslims don't love America. They hate America (McKinney). Besides, on August 23, 2010, an African-American man was mistakenly thought to be a Muslim and was harassed at an anti-mosque rally. The crowd chanted "no mosque here" and made a circle around that man calling him a "coward". One of the protestors shouted, "Muhammad is a p*g" and another man who tried to diffuse the tension reminded the demonstrators, "We're against the Muslims, not each other" ("Eleventh OIC Observatory Report…" 33). Consequently, it is undeniable that the effect of media portrayal of Muslims is deep; it made them look evil in the eyes of those harassers and bigots.

A horrid hate crime also happened on December 27, 2012, when an American woman called Erika Menendez pushed an Indian woman into the path of a subway train and got her killed right away. The perpetrator has assured that she has no previous interaction with the Hindu woman, but she explained her motive for her sneak attack telling the authorities, "I pushed a Muslim off the train tracks because I hate Hindus and Muslims. Ever since 2001 when they put down the Twin Towers I've been beating them up" ("American Woman Sentenced…") So, apparently due to the way 9/11 events are described in media, this woman and many others in the US would believe that by being so harmful to Muslims would show a part of their patriotism and love for their country by holding accountable all those immigrants, especially Muslims.

Other discriminatory hate incidents include the one in Brooklyn, New York, that took place in September 2016, when two Muslim women, out walking their babies in strollers, were attacked by a woman who shouted anti-Muslim obscenities and attempted to rip off their Islamic veils. And in Queens, New York, a Muslim man was beaten on April 2016 by three strangers who shouted "ISIS, ISIS" (Lichtblau). It is unbelievable that it became so risky for both men and women to go on the streets in the US due to the huge possibility of being attacked or discriminated against only because of religious beliefs.

Social networks are also a fertile platform for delivering hate speech against Muslims in the US. An example of a person who is very notorious of his islamophobic comments on social media is a former police officer, Claude Stevens Jr. He retired from a Police Department in Georgia in 2015 and joined some anti-Muslim groups such as "Death to Islam Undercover" and "Rage against the Veil". Stevens' personal Facebook page was full of anti-Islamic memes and comments. For example, he commented on a video about Muslim immigrants in Germany in March 2017 saying, "The Prophet Muhammad eats (sic) dog shit and is a follower of Satan" (Carley and Corey). A retired officer acting as an Islamophobe and harassing Muslims on social media would surely have many followers and people who would look up to him to do the same.

On April 29, 2019, a mosque was terribly ransacked and many Quran books were destroyed in Queens, New York, by a man who was totally enraged and in a hate-fueled state (McKinney). Fifteen days later on May 15, flames tore through a mosque in New Haven, Connecticut, leaving behind huge damage to the property, though no injuries were reported (Zaveri). Then just a week later, precisely on May 21, in Miami Gardens, Florida, a man was arrested by the police after threatening to "kill Muslims one by one" on social media (Lystad).

Actually US mass media is the party that is responsible for promoting Islamophobia to a great degree, and thus is held accountable for its major repercussions too. It has been playing

a significant role in the reproduction and perpetuation of different stigmas and racism against the members of the Muslim community making their life at schools, workplace, on streets and in mosques as uncomfortable and difficult as ever. The Islamophobic manner and tone of many different media like TV news channels tends to shape the minds of a big part of the American population duping them into believing that 'Terrorist Muslims' are at their doorstep and that every one of them is a potential target of 'Islamist Terrorism'.

Do the American media inform the community about policies, or does it actually influence those policies that Americans accept? In fact the American media is more into brainwashing the individuals than into informing them about real facts (Wolfe 1-8). Most Americans are unfortunately far more influenced by the media than they think. In regards to Americans' attitudes towards the Muslim minority in the US or towards Muslims in general, research reveals that recurrent exposure to media negative representations of Muslims raise not merely unfavorable attitudes towards Muslims, but also support for an array of policies that harm Muslims on the international and domestic levels (Saleem).

What grabs most of attention is the strategy of mass media in the US post 9/11, which tended to highlight certain data news and turning a blind eye to others. The way media propagates stereotypes and dogmas about Muslims as violent, potential terrorists, and incompatible with the American policies and democracy is an implicit call for non-Muslim people in the US to ostracize and attack this minority. This systematic propaganda that brainwash millions of Americans to fear and fight Muslims because they might be a lurking threat among the American community at large is quite doubtful and raises many questions like who is behind the curtains of mass media platforms? Who is actually funding, supporting and dictating what people should consider as an enemy and who they should see as a friend? What to love and what to hate? Also, what to perceive as superior and what to see as inferior?

The amount of hate crimes and discriminatory incidents against Muslims that the US witnessed ever since 9/11 events is an enough proof of how profound and hegemonic media propaganda is. Further, it confirms its capability to crystalize people's opinions over the years as well as direct them in a certain way that fits and meets both the local and the international policies of the American government. There is no room for coincidence here for sure, what the government decides obviously and immediately echoes through the media platforms and its reflections are utterly shown in how challenging Muslims' lives in America are.

Chapter three: Islamophobia as a Lucrative Business

    1.   **The Islamophobic Network**

It turned out that Islamophobia is not an accidental dilemma or phenomenon, but rather such a systematic profitable investment to many parties within and outside the American government. Islamophobia business, hand in hand with corporate media, took advantage of any so- called Islamic terrorist attack to affect and manipulate the American public opinion as well as to endorse the American domestic and international policies towards Muslims.

In 2011, a report called "Fear, Inc." was published by the Center for American Progress (CAP). It discussed the deep roots of the Islamophobia Network in the United States post 9/11 attacks. The report actually identified and blew the whistle on all the Zionist organizations, groups, activists, scholars, and pundits which comprise such a tightly connected network and which actually disseminates misinformation, bigotry and hateful propaganda on a regular basis about American Muslims and Islam. It also pointed out the different ways they used such as books, websites, blogs, lectures, reports, and organization of anti-Muslim protests ("Exposing the Islamophobia Network…"). The link between the elements of this network seems to be very systematic and effective, so no wonder the scale of Islamophobia is unfortunately on the rise.

The center for American Progress report also found out that seven charitable foundations supported the anti-Muslim propaganda with at least $42 million between the year 2001 and 2009. The report also confirmed that the efforts exerted by the parties of this network is amplified and empowered by right-wing and conservative media, as well as grassroot organizations and politicians who seek to introduce such an extremely negative perspective on Muslims into the American public via different media platforms (Duss, et al.). In fact, having such a connection between politicians and media outlets as well as numerous other Islamophobic members really explains both the American political attitude towards Muslims,

like surveillance policy that rests on tracking down American Muslims everywhere even on their social media accounts, phones, and laptops. Moreover, the Muslim Ban that deprived many Muslims from traveling to US for almost two months due to security cautions also explains the amount of paranoia and hate crimes against Muslims that are on the rise.

According to a report published by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and California University, Berkeley, more than $200 million was spent for the sake of promoting "fear and hatred" of Islam and Muslims in the USA by numerous organizations between 2008 and 2013(Rifai). On 5 June, 2019, the Dallas Chapter (a branch of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-Dallas Worth Chapter) released a report entitled "Hijacked by Hate: American Philanthropy and the Islamophobia Network" that revealed how mainstream charitable foundations like Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund, the National Christian Foundation, and the Jewish Communal Fund which pumped about $125 million to anti-Muslim groups such as ACT! For America and the American Family Association between the years 2014 and 2016 (Fadel).

The report released by the Council on American-Islamic Relations also found that 1,096 organizations are responsible for financial support of at least 39 groups in the Islamophobia Network between the years 2014 and 2016. In addition, it revealed that the whole revenue capacity of the Anti-Muslim Network during this period has actually reached at least $1.5 billion ("Hijacked by Hate: American…" 108). Reaching this revenue capacity for the mere purpose of promoting hate and bigotry against Muslims through different media indicates that it is not about just making money out of this twisted game, but there might be serious agendas behind it, too.

According to the Center for American Progress (CAP) and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) the fabric of Islamophobia Network involves five categories of

members ("Exposing the Islamophobia Network…"). These memebers work together in harmony exploiting the general atmosphere of fear and concern about the national security.

The first category is money donors which are considered as the lifeblood of this hate network. The Anti-Muslim funders group generally comprises of philanthropic foundations like Russell Berrie Foundation, Newton D. & Rochelle F. Becker Foundation, and charitable trust, in addition to some private conservative foundations like Robert Mercer family foundation, the Adelson Family Foundation and other wealthy families such as the American billionaire Richard Mellon Scaife ("Donors to the Islamophobia network"). It is really intriguing and ironic how Islamophobia is treated as a colossal investment project for a myriad of funders in the US.

In the second place there is the category of scholars and misinformation experts. This group is combined of six Zionist individuals who have their anti-Muslim organizations operating as the core system which is in charge of manufacturing lies and fear-mongering data about Islam and Muslims. These individuals are Frank Gaffney, David Yerushalmi, Daniel Pipes, Robert Spencer, David Harowitz, and Steven Emerson. Each of them used millions of dollars to misrepresent the religion of Islam as the totalitarian enemy of the American constitution and community ("The Islamophobia Misinformation Experts").

The third section of the Islamophobia network consists of grassroots organizations, right-wing groups, and activists. Besides to working day and night for promoting hate of Islam and its followers, this section also uses various communication strategies to recruit new volunteers in their network. Among the most prominent hate organizations in the US are: Act! For America, Middle East Forum, David Horowitz Freedom Center, Investigative Project on terrorism, Center for Security policy (CSP), and Clarion Project. This section is very crucial in terms of communicating anti-Islamic messages through publishing books, pamphlets, reports and online memes ("Islamophobia Network"). Seemingly, this section of

Islamophobia operates in a very tactic and strategic way to achieve their goals through spreading much hate and discrimination against Muslims.

In the fourth place are different media outlets, mainly conservative and right-wing media platforms, like TV channels such as Fox News, CBS News, CNN and One America News Network besides to radio programs hosted by the anti-Muslim political commentators, like Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, and Glenn Beck. Furthermore, there are Islamophobic websites like *Meforum.org*, the online magazines *World Net Daily* and *Front Page Magazine*, and the Anti-Muslim blogospheres, such as *Jihad Watch* and *People for the American Way*. In addition to Newspapers like *The Washington Post, Washington Times, New York Times,* and *New York Post* which are considered as key media platforms for propagating Islamophobic rhetoric, misinformation, negative dogmas, and bigotry against Muslims in the US ("The Right-Wing Media Enablers…"). Islamophobic Mainstream media and conservative and right-wing media, which are all funded by private corporations, surely have huge influence on most people in the US.

The fifth section is called political players who are actually elected officials at the state and national level politicians who have the ability to heavily drench the public with misinformation. In fact they push anti- Muslim myths as "facts" and then craft political fundraising campaigns and getout-the-vote strategies relying on baseless information about both Muslims and Islam ("The Roots of the Islamophobia…").

2. The Vital Members of Islamophobic Network

Frank Gaffney, an active member of the hate organization Center for Security policy, dedicates his weekly radio program *Secure Freedom Radio* to advance and reinforce a clutch of conspiracy theories as well as anti-Muslim messages. For example, he once promulgated that the American government is actually infiltrated by the so called "The Muslim Brotherhood" and that many political figures have connection with this group ("Frank

Gaffney"). Accordingly, he means that there is a secret Muslim society plotting as well as preparing to take over the American government.

Through the many books Gaffney wrote like *Sharia: The Threat to America*, *The Muslim Brotherhood, Securing Freedom*, and *Guilty Knowledge*, Gaffney conveys the same Anti - Islamic message about the colossal threat that both Islam and Muslims pose in America. He continually spreads the same mischaracterization of Islamic teaching like Jihad and the following of Islamic law as being terrorism and Nazism. He also alleges throughout his books that allowing Muslims into the American social, civic, and political life is a great risk for the national security. Gaffney also suggests that Muslims should not get into the country and have to be considered as enemies because, according to him, there are no good Muslims and all Muslims are insidious menace that ought to be stopped (Belew). Gaffney's writings are a furious war waged on Islam and Muslims under the guise of a "Scholar on Islam".

The second key member of Islamophobia Network, Daniel Pipes, has also contributed immensely in the Anti-Muslim propaganda via different media platforms. He is an American historian, prolific author, and commentator of US mainstream newspapers ("Daniel Pipes, the Expert of …"). Besides, he is the founder of *Middle East Forum* think tank as well as the publisher of the *Middle East Quarterly* journal. Throughout his career, he showed only hostility and bigotry against Muslims and Islam in writings like *In the Path of God: Islam and Political Power* (2002) and *Militant Islam Reaches America* (2003) (Rendall, et al. 10).

In the Path of God: Islam and Political Power is a book where Pipes discusses how the American public's awareness of the danger of Islam has come to a rise after the events of 9/11. He discusses how Islamic antagonism against the West is deep rooted in history and that Islam urges its adherents not to accept being westernized by adopting the new life styles of the west. He argues that Muslims have been always looking down on the western life pattern and perceived their Islamic lifestyle as superior, thus, they want to affect the West by their

Sharia instead of being affected by modern era values, like those of the Americans (Bowering). Besides to Pipes' claim that the Muslims' mere goal is to spread evil sharia around the globe, he also bluntly expressed his rage about the matter that Muslims have been refusing the western ideals which many of them are actually contradicted with Islamic Teachings.

Pipes' second book, *Militant Islam Reaches America*, asserts that Militant Islam has waged an official war on America since 9/11 attacks. He also argues that Islam holds such militant ideology that is much similar to both fascism and communism. He confirms that allowing practicing religion namely Islam as well as multiculturalism will eventually put the world and mainly the United States under the control of Sharia which would dictate the actions of both Muslims and non-Muslims. The book also asserts that all Muslims are suspects and all of them should be racially profiled for the sake of protecting the American soil ("A Review of Militant Islam…"). Actually what Daniel calls for in his book such as denying Muslims their right to practicing their religion, besides to his rejection of multiculturalism is contradicted to the American constitution and values.

Steven Emerson, the third significant figure of Anti-Muslim Network, is a writer, journalist, pundit on Islamic extremism, and the founder and the executive director of the thank tank, the Investigative Project on Terrorism. Emerson devotes his career to frame Islamic religion as inherently hostile and a source of terrorism, and he perpetuates this dogma about Islam throughout his speeches and writings. Among his prominent Anti-Muslim writings are his two books *American Jihad: The Terrorists Living among Us,* and *Jihad Incorporated: A Guide to Militant Islam in the US* published in 2002 and 2006 respectively (Rendall, et al.14).

In *American Jihad: The Terrorists living among us, Emerson* contends that after 9/11 attacks, the US federal government managed to arrest few terrorist and detain other hundreds of suspects of terrorist engagement. Some hundreds of terrorism suspects are overseas and

other hundreds are lurking in America and plotting for Jihad in order to take over the country via applying Sharia, he adds. Furthermore, he alleges that Jihad in America started years before the 9/11 events because purportedly many crimes committed by Muslims occurred since 1993 up till present day (Aboul-Enein and Youssef). Emerson's allegations make him so focused on propagating fear and bigotry against Islam and Muslims rather than warning the public of terrorism, which according to him, has everything to do with Islam.

In *Jihad Incorporated: A Guide to Militant Islam in the US*, Emerson states that terrorism is being secretly solicited in the USA by Islamists, ranging from university professors to taxi drivers, along with Islamist American charitable foundations and organizations, mosques, companies, and even Islamic schools. He asserts that these comprise a stealthy network of Jihadists who bide their time to take action. Emerson adds that Muslims even use the internet for their terrorist communication and for plotting against the national security of the US (Rabinowitz). Ironically, every gathering of Muslims in the United States ought to be condemned and suspected as a Jihadist endeavor according to him.

On March 30, 2005, Robert Spencer who is very important figure in the anti-Muslims network anti-Muslim propaganda wrote on his *Jihad Watch* website that there is definitely no slight difference between those American Muslims and Jihadists. He argued that Americans should not believe in the existence of an American Muslim community that has the intent of accepting to integrate with their multicultural society and live an American civic life with a complete loyalty to the United States ("About Robert Spencer…"). Based on his allegations, Muslims are not to be trusted because they are not like other members of the American society but instead they should be feared and utterly ostracized.

On 9 January, 2015, Spencer appeared on Fox News Channel attacking Islam and Muslims and stating that throughout history Muslims never had the intent to integrate and assimilate into non-Muslim communities. He asserted that Muslims have always been seeking

to stick to their so-called superior model of living and governance. Spencer also contended that all what Muslims want is to Islamize other non-Muslim nations and impose by force their Nazi Sharia Law (Mathias). Accordingly, Muslims are only savage monsters who terminate whoever rejects to convert to Islam. In other words, Spencer conveys a clear message that Muslims are the world's enemy and precisely America's antagonist that should be fought.

Robert Spencer, a prolific author and an active member of various Islamophobic organizations like CSP, Middle East Forum, and allegedly a scholar on Islam, reveals throughout his 2017 book that there are many reasons to be an Islamophobe. In *Confessions of an Islamophobe*, he asserts that being an Islamophobe is not a negative thing because it is equal to being concerned about the community's security from the amount of destruction that Islam brings to the lives of humans. Then, he calls for the people in America and worldwide to join him in being Anti-Islamic in order to survive in the world of the 21 [st] Century. He reassures that what he calls for is not hate or bigotry, but it is the right thing to do (Pelletier). Spencer through this book is bluntly encouraging other non-Muslims to be Islamophobic and to fight Islam and its adherents because according to him Muslims are like a contagious plague.

Spencer's second book entitled *The History of Jihad from Mohammed to ISIS* (released in 2018), he claims that Jews, Christians, as well as Hindus and other non-Muslims were historically persecuted and slaughtered by the Muslim Jihadist wars during the whole 14 centuries of Islam. He also describes the Islamic history of Islamic invasions of many countries around the world like Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Turkey, and Spain following Prophet Muhammad's death as bloody. Then, he states that this bloody Jihad is still ongoing today and is embodied in the form of ISIS ("A Review of the History of Jihad..."). Hence, Spencer indicates that Islam is a religion of war, of wrath, and of beheading the innocent that seeks to spread its evil worldwide through bloodshed.

David Horowitz, another important Zionist Anti-Muslim pundit and a member of many grassroots organizations such as David Horowitz Freedom Center, CSP, and Investigative Project on Terrorism, has written many Islamophobic books and articles. For example, in his 2016 book *Unholy Alliance*, he explained the alleged dangers of Islam and Jihadists. He described Islam as a source of terror and dictatorship law which strips people of their basic rights. He strongly argued that Islam is not compatible with the American constitution. Horowitz claimed in his books that the Muslims' goal is only to control the globe with their Sharia law (Feldman).

David Horowitz is also a key participant in many media platforms. He appears on his own websites as well as in other right-wing outlets, like the *Weekly Standard*, *Washington Times*, as well as Fox News Channel (Rendall 8). One of his Anti-Muslim propaganda media tools is his website *Frontpagemag.com* on which he aggressively attacks Muslims and depicts Islam as a devastative faith and a source of the world's troubles and destruction. He also mischaracterizes Muslim migrants as dangerous and such furious predators with an inherent violent lust for women of white skin (Lenz). Apparently, Horowitz is not showing any sign of slowing down on attacking and tainting Islam and Muslims with all kinds of abominations using various available media platforms at hand.

David Yerushalmi is another important Anti-Muslim figure in the Islamophobia Network. He is the founder of *The Society of Americans for National Existence* and operates as a counsel for many right-wing groups like *The Center for Security Policy* and *Stop Islamization of America*. The most prominent of his anti-Muslim writings were "Sharia: The threat to America", a report published in 2010, and a book titled *Offensive and Defensive Lawfare: Fighting Civilization Jihad in America's Courts*, which was released in 2015 ("The Main Purveyors of Islamophobia").

In a report titled *Sharia: The Threat to America* Yurishalmi along with other anti-Muslim figures argue that Islam is the new totalitarian menace and that Islam holds within such political-military teachings opposed to the US so that Islamic laws aim at superseding those of US. Furthermore, the report describes all American Muslim associations as compounds of terrorism and related to the Muslim Brotherhood. Also, they argue that apparently law-abiding American Muslims are actually waging what they dubbed "Stealth Jihad" for the purpose of imposing Sharia law on the United States via peaceful means like using American laws against the common good of US ("Yurishalmi et al. 45-133"). The way Islam is depicted in this report insinuates that whether or not Muslim Americans are acting peacefully or lawfully they should be pinpointed as an enemy.

In *Offensive and Defensive Lawfare: Fighting Civilization Jihad in America's Courts,* Yerushalmi argues that organizations like the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), which purportedly reinforces the Muslim Brotherhood as well as the Palestinian cause, have strategically and tactically managed to gain lawfare which is using the American legal system to overcome enemies of Muslims in US in the recent years. In other words, he states that Muslim organizations got to take advantage of the American constitution in favor of Muslims in USA, and that their focal purpose is to exert more effort to make up and spread positive and even a victimized image of Islam and Muslims ("David Yerushalmi: A Driving…" 2-3). Unexpectedly, Yerushalmi condemns and criminalizes even the resort of Muslims to the American law system for the purpose of defending their rights and reputations.

Yerushalmi also alleges that Muslim organizations in the US work hard to silence their critics so that they can secretly support Jihad movement and Sharia in the country. He purports that the Muslim Brotherhood is using American laws and courts in order to normalize Sharia as well as to suppress and intimidate whoever challenges the Islamic supremacist teachings. Yerushalmi also argues that Islam and Jihadists are targeting the

American legal system through waging a heavy and offensive lawfare on the basic American rights like equality, freedom of speech, and women's rights. Finally, he calls for a defensive lawfare strategy in order to protect the American constitution from the Islamic threat (Elliott).

In fact, turning people's fears and concern about national security into a lucrative multi-billion dollars business is really outrageous and ought to be condemned by the law. Islamophobia network participants such as grassroots organizations, foundations, companies, wealthy families, politicians, and media corporations and platforms are all held accountable for promoting grudges as well as dogmatism against Islam and Muslims throughout the United States. The rising rates of paranoia about Muslims will only lead to terrific numbers of hate crimes and discriminatory acts against American Muslims, thus making their chance to live as normal American citizens will almost be impossible. Furthermore, the whole atmosphere of hate, racism, and fear could never serve the good of the American community because it leads only to divisions and a permanent feeling of insecurity.

Conclusion

The first chapter discusses the role of American media after 9/11 attacks in shaping public opinion and thus affecting the public's attitudes towards Islam and Muslims. This section displays how American media brainwashes most of Americans through raining a flow of such dogmatized, racist and Islamophobic content like cable TV news, Hollywood movies, Disney animations, video games, and social media posts. Different media platforms in the US actually hold Islam and Muslims accountable for 9/11 events whether explicitly or implicitly as well as frame them as a source of terror and violence.

The second chapter tackles the key role of American media in brainwashing folks through fueling an immense amount of hate and negative dogmas against Muslims and Islam. It mainly explains how recurring Islamophobic media content incites hate crimes and discriminatory actions against Muslims in America via displaying many variant reported cases. The huge amount of hate and racist incidents committed against most American Muslims turned their lives into a daily challenge.

The third chapter illustrates the major effect of Islamophobia Network in the US. This network took advantage of American community's hysteria and concern about their homeland security and transformed it into a multi-billion dollar investment. This twisted lucrative business that works hand in hand with multimedia platforms, ever since the 9/11 attacks, has actually contributed heavily to the rising of Islamophobia and racism rates against Islam and Muslims.

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