

The “Worlding” of the Muslim Superheroine: An Analysis of *Ms. Marvel’s* Kamala Khan

SAFIYYA HOSEIN

Muslim women have been a source of speculation for Western audiences from time immemorial. At first eroticized in harem paintings, they later became the quintessential image of subservience: a weakling to be pitied and rescued from savage Brown men. Current depictions of Muslim women have ranged from the oppressed archetype in mainstream media with films such as *The Stoning of Soraya M* (2008) to comedic veiled characters in shows like *Little Mosque on the Prairie* (2012). One segment of media that has recently offered promising attempts for destabilizing their image has been comics and graphic novels which have published graphic memoirs that speak to the complexity of Muslim identity as well as superhero comics that offer a range of Muslim characters from a variety of cultures with different levels of religiosity.

This paper explores the emergence of the Muslim superheroine in comic books by analyzing the most developed Muslimah (Muslim female) superhero: the rebooted Ms. Marvel superhero, Kamala Khan, from the Marvel Comics *Ms. Marvel* series. The analysis illustrates how the reconfiguration of the Muslim female archetype through the “worlding” of the Muslim superhero continues to perpetuate an imperialist agenda for the Third World. This paper uses Gayatri Spivak’s “worlding” which examines the “othered” natives and the global South as defined through Eurocentric terms by imperialists and colonizers. By interrogating Kamala’s representation, I argue that her portrayal as a “moderate” Muslim superheroine with Western progressive values can have the effect of reinforcing

Safiyya Hosein is a Ph.D. candidate in the joint program in Communication and Culture at Ryerson University and York University in Toronto. She is an intersectional feminist scholar who specializes in Muslim superhero representation and Muslim audiences. Her dissertation project is an audience study of young adult participatory Muslim consumers of Muslim comic book superheroes and she is a recipient of the *RBC Immigrant, Diversity and Inclusion Project* research grant. She was chosen by *Vice Media’s* Motherboard for their “Humans of the Year” series for both her dissertation project and comic book writing in 2017. She can be reached at shosein30@gmail.com.

The Popular Culture Studies Journal, Vol. 7, No. 2
Copyright © 2019

imperialist desires for Muslim women. The paper begins by discussing several scholars’ assessment of modernity, or the Western assumption of what constitutes modern life, to examine stereotypes of Muslim women as “backward.” It then provides a literature review considering Ms. Marvel’s “othered” status. Finally, it engages with Spivak’s concept of worlding to analyze the ways in which Ms. Marvel can function for imperial purposes.

Ms. Marvel: Kamala Khan

For several decades, Ms. Marvel was the blonde, blue-eyed Carol Danvers who most audiences now know as Captain Marvel from 2019’s superhero blockbusters, *Captain Marvel* and *Avengers: Endgame*. In 2014, Marvel Comics took a bold step forward by recasting the character as a Pakistani-American, Muslim teenager named Kamala Khan. This recasting was unprecedented since it was the first time Marvel embarked on an entire series starring a Muslim superhero as the main protagonist. Set in New Jersey, Kamala’s powers consist of polymorphing, which allows her to change in size from miniscule to gigantic as well as stretching her limbs to superhuman levels. She can also shapeshift, having done so to look like her predecessor when she first discovers her superpower (Issue #1). Finally, she can slowly self-heal. During this time, she must revert to her regular self and cannot transform again to Ms. Marvel until fully healed.

An interesting way to interpret her superpowers is to note them as symbolic of the changes a teenager goes through during puberty. For instance, the extremes in size that she experiences seem to symbolize the fluctuation in emotional changes which can range from grandiose levels of self-importance to diminishing levels of self-worth. The stretchiness of her limbs reflects the awkwardness in body changes. When Kamala is injured and self-heals, she ends up sleeping in and overeating, which can be the same traits one experiences when depressed— itself a form of injury itself. Much of the series shows her leading the life of an ordinary high schooler who writes fan fiction while navigating her friendships and school life. It also spotlights her relationship with her close-knit family which consists of her mother, father and brother. The series also showcases aspects of her ancestral Pakistani culture which includes attending the mosque as well as wedding ceremonies like *mehendis*. Ms. Marvel, then, appears to straddle the line between Westernized teenager and traditional Muslimah.

Muslim Women and the Question of Modernity

When examining Kamala's construction, an examination of academic studies and interventions on Muslim women's subjectivity becomes a worthwhile place to start. Scholarly research has revealed a reconfigured individual in third world nationalist agendas, and Islamism. Most importantly, it has revealed a bias in conceptualizing modernity to fit European forms of progress. In *Crafting an Educated Housewife in Iran*, Afsaneh Najmabadi contemplates the place of women in modernity by referencing the educational regimes in Iran at the turn-of-the-twentieth century stating that "they were central to the production of the woman of modernity through particular regulatory and emancipatory impulses" (Najmabadi 91). While her essay examines the functions of Iranian motherhood and wifehood, her views can be applied to a remade Muslim female in popular culture in a post-9/11 setting. Considering that most portrayals of Muslim women depicted them as helpless and abused in pre-9/11 films like *Not Without My Daughter* (1991), a crime-fighting superhero makes a significant departure from such a stereotype. Najmabadi's observation of the discourses surrounding the scientization of motherhood in modernity contemplated whether the "process contained and frustrated the possible feminist potentials of women's awakening, or even that the scientization was a disciplinary and regulatory process that crafted a modern womanhood in contradistinction to a traditional one" (91).

One cannot help but see such a parallel in the characterization of Kamala Khan and thus the construction of the Muslimah superhero. When the reader is introduced to Kamala in the opening scenes of *Ms. Marvel: Issue #1*, she is juxtaposed against her hijab-wearing best friend, Nakia, who functions as the traditional female that stands in contrast next to the modern, denim-clad Kamala. Nakia wards off disparaging comments about her hijab from a blonde classmate who asks her "Nobody pressured you to start wearing it, right? Your father or somebody? Nobody's going to like honor kill you? I'm just concerned." (Wilson 2) The purpose of this dialogue is to reinforce Nakia's stringent traditional values. Thus, Nakia functions as the binary opposite that Kamala is pitted against in an effort to prove her modernity to the reader. Kamala is later placed in situations that spotlight the traditional aspects of her culture where she is either forced to choose between them or "American" values or to find a common ground.

Lila Abu-Lughod spoke about the cultural preoccupation with modernity in the introduction to her book, *Remaking Women*, stating that "Paul Rabinow has noted that it is impossible to define modernity; rather, what one must do is to track the

diverse ways the insistent claims to being modern are made. Certainly ‘being modern’ has been the dominant self-image of Europeans for almost two centuries” (7). The argument can extend to the American self-image as well, hinting to a Western hegemonic bias in the definition of modernity. Markers definitely can be attributed to the “insistent claims to being modern” in the *Ms. Marvel* series—some of it being directly linked to Kamala’s contestation with orthodox Islam. In Volume II (Issue #8), she stumbles upon a giant dog in one of her crime-fighting missions and brings it home, only to learn from her orthodox brother, who was described in Issue #1 as a “penniless mullah,” that owning a dog is not “pak” (pure) (Wilson). Such an observation is favored by many observant Muslims because of religious rules around “salat” (ritual prayer). Kamala contests this with her parents and a compromise is struck where she can keep her pet outdoors but not in the house—thus she negotiates a modern space as a dog-loving American living with Islamic mores. The comic also features other more modern markers as part of the plot—Kamala is not veiled outside the mosque; she eschews shalwaar kameezes in favour of jeans; she sneaks out to a party in Issue #1 and drinks orange-juice flavoured vodka; and she freely mixes with the opposite sex, even choosing her Italian-American male best friend as her crime-fighting aide (Wilson).

Throughout the series, Kamala occupies a third space: the uncharted territory of moderation where she is not only juxtaposed against the traditional Nakia but other all-American female characters as well. She is even compared to her predecessor, the original *Ms. Marvel*, who is the blonde and blue-eyed Carol Danvers. Blonde hair in particular seems to be the penultimate signifier for “all-American” and thus “non-immigrant” particularly after Kamala is transformed as a blonde when she first dons the *Ms. Marvel* costume. She is scantily clad and with white skin - a persona she feels uncomfortable in. While the hair and skin tone are obvious reasons why a woman of colour may feel uncomfortable personifying, it is curious to wonder why Kamala’s creators chose to make the American-born character appear self-conscious about baring her arms and legs in a superhero costume.

The representation of the modern Muslim woman in this alternative discourse forces the character to choose between being traditional like her headscarf-wearing best friend and her scantily-clad, blonde counterparts only to have her negotiate a third space as a “moderate” Muslim: an archetype of Muslim that was invented by the West according to Elora Shehabuddin in her essay *Gender and the Figure of the Moderate Muslim: Feminism in the Twenty-First Century* (Shehabuddin 103).

Therefore, she cannot be an absolute American where the implication is to be blonde and assumedly Christian nor can she be an absolute Muslim by orthodox standards. Kamala only reverts to looking like herself with brown skin and dark hair after she opts for a burkini as her choice of costume—a conservative choice of dress by American and even some Muslim standards—depicting her as the most wholesome-looking American superhero. Such a decision still forces the Muslimah superhero into the “Other” category where she is not exactly like her White, all-American predecessor but safely presents an alternative to the headscarf-wearing Muslim female who we are widely used to seeing in the media as being forced to veil and therefore oppressed.

The Construction of *Ms. Marvel*: Normalcy vs. Intersectionality

This “Otherness” is best explored by examining the construction of Kamala’s classmates as well as her predecessor, Carol Danvers. The depiction of blonde whiteness in opposition to Kamala’s Muslim immigrant identity was noted by Shenila S. Khoja-Moolji and Alyssa D. Niccoloni in their article *Comics as Public Pedagogy: Reading Muslim Masculinities through Muslim Femininities*. After remarking on the opening scene of Issue #1 where Kamala’s blonde classmate interrogates Nakia’s choice to wear the hijab and after a reference to Starbucks and bacon is made, the authors remark on Kamala’s encoding to audiences by stating:

All these signs—from a BLT and blonde hair to the hijab—elaborate for the readers Kamala’s cultural specificity in relation to the white, blonde, blue-eyed, Starbucks- and alcohol-consuming, bacon-eating American, who is cast as the norm. Said differently, Islam and cultural practices (such as not eating pork, donning the hijab, and observing Muslim rituals) become the primary tropes in and through which Kamala becomes legible. (Khoja-Moolji and Niccolini 27)

The authors further comment on Kamala’s lamentation to the “golden-haired” Carol Danvers when she is anointed as the new “Ms. Marvel” by bemoaning her lack of normalcy in a clear reference to the hidden markers of Christianity being presented as the undisputed “normal” in the series (Khoja-Moolji and Niccolini 28). They surmise that Christianity is characterized by whiteness which appears as “secular” and “acultural” (Khoja-Moolji and Niccolini 28). While they credit more

of these hidden markers to statements made by Captain America about Kamala disobeying her religion, they more importantly point out the semiotics of the panel by noting its connection to Christian iconography stating, “Captain Marvel appears in celestial beauty to her, and the composition of Kamala’s body, along with her face with its closed eyes, are reminiscent of Jesus on the cross or of a Christian saint.” (Khoja-Moolji and Niccolini 29) The panel’s similarity to Christian iconography is also discussed by Sarah Gibbons in her article *‘I Don’t Exactly Have Quiet, Pretty Powers’: Flexibility and Alterity in Ms. Marvel* where she draws a direct connection to the stances and positions of Captain Marvel, Iron Man, and Captain America to Jesus, Elijah and Moses in Raphael’s iconic painting, *The Transfiguration* (Gibbons 455). It is interesting to note that both articles have connected the Muslim superhero to art and iconography that flourished in the colonial era. While Khoja-Moolji and Niccolini see the subversive implications of the connection between whiteness and normalcy in the text, it is important to note that Gibbons saw the text as a wholly intersectional contribution to popular culture which she discussed throughout her essay. She also connected the same panel to Muslim artistic contributions, stating:

The comic juxtaposes the Christian iconography, however, with text from Sufi poet Amir Khusro’s famous thirteenth-century poem ‘Sakal Bun Phool Rahi Sarson’ (‘The yellow mustard is blooming in every field’) as it recalls the Judeo-Christian underpinnings of the superhero genre while gesturing toward new possibilities for the introduction of a Muslim hero. (Gibbons 455)

What is interesting to note about Gibbons’s piece is her reference to the text’s examination of Sufi poetry. There is more than one reference to Sufi poetry—the second time being when Kamala quotes Rumi right before she takes on her first villain. The spotlighting of Sufi poetry is most likely a way Wilson closer connected her to South Asian expressions of Muslim identity which is a culture where Sufi poetry flourished.

Khoja-Moolji and Niccolini are not the only ones who have commented on Kamala’s legibility to audiences. In *Unveiling Marvels: Ms. Marvel and the Reception of the New Muslim Superheroine*, Miriam Kent conducted a media reception study of media response to Kamala Khan’s debut by noting the editorials that commended the text as assimilative as opposed to intersectional. It is important

to note that Kent saw the *Ms. Marvel* series in the same light as Gibbons which was as an intersectional contribution. In response to the critics' reception of the piece, Kent stated "examination of the critical reception of the book reveals a need for the character to be relatable to everyone (whoever "everyone" may be)" (Kent 525). She also discusses the media reviewers' pattern for commending the text as "assimilationist" instead of celebrating it as an intersectional piece.

However, despite the misgivings, *Ms. Marvel* still stands out as a beacon of cultural sensitivity in comparison to the dominant depictions of Muslims in popular culture when one examines the research. Scholarly analyses on Muslim representation in popular culture indicates a perpetuation of orientalist narratives in American media—particularly in film. In *Examining the Critical Role American Popular Film Continues to Play in Maintaining the Muslim Terrorist Image, Post 9/11*, Rubina Ramji conducted a brief genealogy of Muslim portrayal in American films from the early 1900s to the present concluding that "terrorism, specifically Muslim terrorism against America, pays big money at the box office, and so these themes and images continue to win out in the theatre" (17). In her essay, Ramji referred to the leading scholar in Muslim and Arab representation in popular culture, Jack Shaheen, by summarizing his constructions of Muslim women in American films "as silent, shapeless bundles under black garbs or as eroticized, enchantingly veiled belly dancers" (8).

The sentiment of the sexualized Muslim female was echoed by Kerem Bayraktaroglu in his article, *The Representation of Turkish women in James Bond Films* which emphasized orientalist images of Turkish women in Bond films. As it is with Arab representations in popular culture, Turkish representations are inevitably connected to Islam. When discussing the James Bond film, *Skyfall*, Bayraktaroglu stated that Bond "emancipates and sexually liberates his Turkish lover from the demands that her faith and culture place upon her." (9) He later discussed the construction of the sexualized image of the belly dancer which has been another image associated with Muslim women. Bayraktaroglu also discussed depictions of Muslim masculinities in American films in his article, *The Muslim Male Character Typology in American Cinema Post-9/11*. He referred to Shaheen's analyses which surmise that Muslims have been "locked in the Arab cycle of identification" which was a sentiment echoed by Ramji in her article as well (Bayraktaroglu 345). When discussing his "Muslim the Despot" construction, Bayraktaroglu refers to an epitomized character in this section by referring to his "tyrannical" treatment of the women in his family (355). Such a depiction

perpetuates the stereotype of Muslim men as oppressors of women which in turn reinforces the stereotype of Muslim women as oppressed.

From this standpoint, *Ms. Marvel* is a much-welcome text for its humanizing portrayal of Muslims despite its few shortcomings. For instance, the character is not sexualized at all through her costume or everyday clothes where she is often found in comfy jeans and t-shirt ensembles, thus indicating her tomboyish predisposition. There are no orientalist markers such as bellydancing as noted in the James Bond films. And where relationships with non-Muslim men are concerned, there is no sexual liberation either. Most curiously, one of her best friends is an Italian American, Bruno Carrelli, who later on develops feelings for her. He becomes somewhat of a sidekick to Kamala aiding her in her battles at random moments. Most importantly, the friendship between both characters is one of love with Bruno being one of the few who knows of Kamala’s true identity as Ms. Marvel. He is there when she first learns of her ability to self-heal after she is shot at his store trying to botch an attempted robbery. He later on helps her escape from an abandoned island not far from New York City.

The “Worlding” of the Muslim Superheroine

Considering all these factors, Kamala’s unique space as a multifaceted American-Muslim superheroine starts to become clear. In *Scattered Hegemonies*, Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan encourage feminist readers to be attuned to the “ways in which various patriarchies collaborate and borrow from each other in order to reinforce specific practices that are oppressive to women” (24). It must be stated that the author of the *Ms. Marvel* series is an orthodox American-Muslim convert, G.Willow Wilson and the editor of the series is the Pakistani-American, Sana Amanat. In an interview with the *New Yorker*, Wilson acknowledged that they both recognized “the many lines along which the character could be criticized: traditional Muslims might want her to be more modest, and secular Muslims might want her to be less so. Some would be wary no matter what” (Tolentino). Additionally, it is worth noting that her intentions as well as Amanat was anything but malicious when creating the character and the series.

However, Marvel Comics own and distribute the series and, as the financial backers, they would have considerable control in the construction of the character. Marvel has often been undeniably patriarchal in its nature. Its CEO, Ike Perlmutter, was widely condemned for donating \$1 million dollars to Donald Trump’s

#trumpforvets charity foundation (Bowman). The donation drew ire in public opinion partly because of the then Republican presidential candidate's xenophobic attacks on Muslims. The company is also widely regarded as the creators of hyper-masculine, White male characters such as Captain America and Wolverine that have been depicted as soldiers or characters who work closely with the U.S. army to expand US interests in some of their storylines. Why then the exception with creating a character such as a Muslimah heroine which is far from the norm from what they are used to producing?

In *Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism*, when considering relationship between literature and imperialism, Spivak states:

In the study of the literatures of the European colonizing cultures of the great age of imperialism, we would produce a narrative, in literary history, of the "worlding" of what is now called "the Third World." To consider the Third World as distant cultures, exploited but with rich intact literary heritages waiting to be recovered, interpreted and curricularized in English translation fosters the emergence of "the third world" as a signifier that allows us to forget that "worlding," even as it expands the empire of the literary discipline. (Spivak 243)

According to Spivak, "worlding" is a narrative that depicts third world cultures that is developed through the lens of an imperialist agenda may provide the answer. In the post 9/11 media, a "clash of civilizations" argument between the West and Islam has featured prominently in political debates and popular culture. TV shows such as *24* and *Homeland* as well as countless movies such as *The Hurt Locker*, *Transformers*, *American Sniper* and *Fair Game* have sensationalized the argument to a fever pitch, repeatedly reinforcing definitions of "good Muslims" vs "bad Muslims." The one common trait that constitutes a good Muslim in contrast to a bad Muslim is a simple loyalty test: are they on the side of Americans or against them? There is virtually no attention paid to the complexity of hegemonies present in their individual cultures nor the complications of Western geo-politics in their region. Shehabuddin noted this in her analysis of the moderate Muslim persona when she defined the moderate Muslim as a Western invention whose construction is dependent on support for U.S. foreign policy in the Islamic world in a post 9/11 context (131). It was only a matter of time before the "woman question" factored

into this heightened attention of the Islamic world in popular culture. And this is where *Ms. Marvel* comes in.

Spivak’s essay develops the notion of “imperialism as a social mission” and at one point she refers to the German philosopher’s Immanuel Kant’s “categorical imperative” philosophy, otherwise known as a motivation for actions (247). In this case, the motivation for creating Ms. Marvel is yet another strategy in fulfilling an imperial social mission. Spivak states that “such a travesty in the case of the categorical imperative can justify the imperialist project by producing the following formula: *make* the heathen into a human so that he can be treated as an end in himself” (248). If we consider the Muslim “Other” as the heathen transformed into a powerful superhero, then a humanizing process occurs within the framework of an imperialist agenda. American superheroes have always been symbolized as a protector and fighter for American freedoms and Kamala Khan has not been any different. Throughout the series, she refers to herself as a regular “Jersey Girl” fighting to keep her city safe from crime much in the same way Batman protects Gotham city, thus fulfilling the objective of an all-American superhero.

Spivak also speaks at length of a “domesticated Other” whose primary purpose in Western literature is to consolidate an ‘imperialist Self’. She states that “no perspective critical of imperialism can turn the Other in a self, because the project of imperialism has always already refracted what might have been the absolutely Other into a domesticated Other that consolidates the Imperialist Self” (253). A reconfigured Muslim female is being developed here as an unveiled, crime-fighting Muslim woman who is not in need of being rescued from savage Brown men. Thus, Khan does not represent the “domesticated Other” but instead portrays the “imperialist Self” to the Western audience to which the series panders. Readers can feign a sense of cross-cultural inclusiveness and forget the racist “clash of civilizations” binary playing out in the media and Western politics for a brief time because they now have an assimilated, revamped Muslim woman acting in the capacity of an American hero—despite the fact that she is Othered by her costume and is consistently seen renegotiating a “moderate” space between her traditional South Asian sub-culture in America in favor of her highly coveted “modern” values. Kamala gets to question her imam on the authenticity of today’s Islam in a youth lecture by reminding him that the partition that separates the ladies’ side of the mosque from the men’s side never existed during the time of the Prophet Muhammad, thus illustrating her egalitarian, feminist values (Wilson). What a

considerable contrast this is from the long-suffering *Not Without My Daughter* construction or the hypersexualized harem paintings.

It appears, then, that Kamala does have to keep proving her modernity, a burden not shared with other female superheroes like Wonder Woman or Batgirl. What story, then, is she telling in the capacity of an “absolute Other”? After all, it is undisputed that Muslim women are commonly stereotyped as “oppressed” with media sensationalism around veils, female genital mutilation, and honor killings reaching to a fever pitch during the War on Terror. As is always the case with marginalized women, they are simply not seen in the same light as white women. Thus, answering this question requires decoding the purpose of the character. Kamala does not represent any real feminist advancement as a Muslim female living in America. Instead, the character becomes another feel-good, benevolent imperialist message for Western audiences to consume and enjoy, convincing themselves that they are inclusive and therefore special in comparison to the rest of the world.

Spivak states that “attempts to construct the “Third World Woman” as a signifier remind us that the hegemonic definition of literature is itself caught within the history of imperialism” (254). Thus, the New Jersey-based Kamala Khan is an American who also signifies as a “Third World Woman” because of her Muslim identity. The comparisons to her all-American classmates and predecessor at the very least illustrates her as something other than American. The purpose of the series as a breakthrough addition to popular culture because of its methods of exploring Muslim assimilation in America is simply another testament to a long history of incorporating the imperialist project in modern literature, an area where imperialism as a social mission can flourish in creative ways. While this was not the intent of the creators, the text can function in this way to readers. The inclusion of a Muslimah superheroine into the world of superheroes simply creates a new brand of a Muslim woman: the touchingly “moderate” kind that straddles a life between tradition and the ever-elusive definitions of modernity. But it also pigeon-holes the modern archetype of a Muslim woman as monolithic. Kamala is status-quo in many ways as a heterosexual, middle-class female and she can be defined as conservative by some standards considering her reluctance to show skin, her attendance to mosque and her willingness to negotiate cultural and religious mores with her parents and imam.

Conclusion

Kamala’s representation to Western audiences can best be explained through the concept of the reconfigured individual that was previously analyzed in research on Muslim women’s subjectivity. As stated earlier, Muslim women were reconfigured in third world nationalist agendas at the turn of the century. Coupled with analyses on the Eurocentric definitions of modernity, one can begin to see how the character invites comparisons to her hijabi best friend, Nakia, as well as her predecessor, Carol Danvers. Keeping in mind Khoja-Moolji’s and Niccolini’s theoretical interventions on Christianity masked as secularism as being the hidden “normal” in the *Ms. Marvel* series as well as Spivak’s theoretical interventions on “worlding,” the possible ramifications of Kamala’s construction becomes clearer.

Thus, this introduction of a modern Muslim woman in Western popular culture is simply a reconfigured version of previous ones. This version of the Muslim woman incorporates religion in her life by choice but is also assimilated enough by American standards. Most importantly, however, is her place in popular culture in a post-9/11 world, where her story is incorporated into an imperialist social mission that argues for inclusion despite the open tensions between the West and the Islamic world. Such a story contributes a form of “worlding” about the Islamic world and Muslim women that allows the First World to continue to ignore the imperialist overtones of Western geo-politics in Muslim countries while praising ourselves for being an “all-inclusive” society.

Works Cited

Abu-Lughod, Lila. “Introduction.” *Remaking Women*, edited by Lila Abu-Lughod, Princeton UP, 1998, pp. 3-32.

Bayraktaroğlu, Kerem. “The Muslim Male Character Typology in American Cinema Post-9/11.” *Digest of Middle East Studies*, vol. 23, no. 2, 2014, pp. 345-59.

Bayraktaroğlu, Kerem. “The Representation of Turkish Women in James Bond Films.” *Journal of Religion and Film*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2019, pp. 1-32.

- Bowman, John. "Marvel CEO's \$1M Donation to #Trump4Vets Prompts Reaction." *CBC News*, 29 Jan. 2016, www.cbc.ca/news/trending/marvel-ceo-perlmutter-donates-trump-veterans-1.3425308.
- Duncan, Jackie. "Beyond the Veil: Graphic Representation of Islamic Women." *The Compass*, vol. 1, no. 2 Apr. 2015, pp. 1-9.
- Gibbons, Sarah. "'I Don't Exactly Have Quiet, Pretty Powers': Flexibility and Alterity in Ms. Marvel." *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, vol. 8, no. 5, 2017, pp. 450-63.
- Grewal, Inderpal, and Caren Kaplan. "Introduction: Transnational Feminist Practices and Postmodernity." *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices*, vol. 1, U of Minnesota Press, 1994, pp. 1-36.
- Kent, Miriam. "Unveiling Marvels: Ms. Marvel and the Reception of the New Muslim Superheroine." *Feminist Media Studies*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2015, pp. 522-7.
- Khoja-Moolji, Shenila S., and Alyssa D. Niccolini. "Comics as Public Pedagogy: Reading Muslim Masculinities through Muslim Femininities in Ms. Marvel." *Girlhood Studies*, vol. 8, no. 3, 2015, pp. 23-39.
- Najmabadi, Afsaneh. "Crafting an Educated Housewife in Iran." *Remaking Women*, edited by Lila Abu Lughod, Princeton UP, 1998, pp. 91-125.
- Ramji, R. (2016). Examining the Critical Role American Popular Film Continues to Play in Maintaining the Muslim Terrorist Image, Post 9/11. *Journal of Film and Religion*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 1-19.
- Shaheen, Jack. "Arab Images in American Comic Books." *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 28, no. 1, 1994, pp. 123-33.
- Shaheen, Jack G. *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People*. Olive Branch Press, 2001.

Shehabuddin, Elora. “Gender and the Figure of the ‘Moderate Muslim’: Feminism in the 21st Century.” *The Question of Gender: Engagements with Joan W. Scott’s Critical Feminism*, edited by Judith Butler and Elizabeth Weed, Indiana UP, 2011, pp. 102-42.

Spivak, Gayatri C. “Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism.” *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 12, no. 1, 1985, pp. 243-61.

Tolentino, Jia. “The Writer Behind a Muslim Marvel Superhero on Her Faith in Comics.” *The New Yorker*, 29 Apr. 2017, www.newyorker.com/culture/persons-of-interest/g-willow-wilsons-american-heroes.

Whitlock, Gillian. *Soft Weapons Autobiography in Transit*. U of Chicago Press, 2010.

Wilson, G. Willow. “Issue #1.” *Ms. Marvel: No Normal*. Vol. 1, Marvel Comics, 2014.

---. “Issue #8.” *Ms. Marvel: Generation Why*. Marvel Worldwide Inc., 2015.