Module 18: Muslim Women and Representation

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Note to Educators

The Teaching Beyond September 11th curriculum project seeks to capture the events of the two decades (2001-2021) following 9/11 as a means for youth to understand the post-9/11 global order. Developed by a team of educators from the University of Pennsylvania in collaboration with international scholars, practitioners, and community activist leaders, each stand-alone module is grounded in at least one of six identified themes and is anchored in an event in a particular year following 9/11. The curriculum does not need to be taught sequentially. Lessons within a module may be taught sequentially or individually unless specified.

The curriculum is ideal for advanced high school and early college students. Educators are encouraged to adapt lessons to meet the needs of their classroom and student academic level. The curriculum framework at the end of this document highlights guiding questions for students to grapple with and enduring understandings that we wish for students to glean from these lessons.
Module 18. Muslim Women and Representation

Primary Theme: Media and Representation
Secondary Theme: Public Opinion, Perception, and Anti-Muslim Sentiment
Year in focus: 2018
Grades: 11 and 12, and freshman college
Entry points (subject area): US History; US Government and Politics; Media Studies

Module Context
2018 was the 17th year of the War on Terror and the year that the first two Muslim women were elected to congress: Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar. They join a short list of Muslims elected to Congress in 2007/8 (since Congress was established in 1789, only 4 Muslims have been elected to Congress: Rashida Tlaib, Ilhan Omar, Keith Elison, and Andre Carson). Aside from being one of the two Muslim women elected to Congress in 2018, Rashida Tlaib is the first Palestinian-American in the House, while Ilhan Omar is the first Somali American, first Muslim refugee, and first hijab-wearing Muslim woman elected to Congress. She is also the first woman of color to represent Minnesota in Congress, following Keith Elison. Tlaib and Omar have gained national prominence as part of a progressive woman of color legislative group known as "the Squad" with Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Ayana Pressley. Tlaib and Omar were elected during the mid-terms of the Trump presidency. The Muslim and African Ban had been in full effect and upheld by the supreme court.

Module Goal
Students will be able to use their independent learning to describe representations of Muslim women in US popular culture/society and in politics, with a particular focus on leaders such as Rashida Tlaib, Ilhan Omar, and Linda Sarsour.

Module Overview
The three lessons in this module provide students with an understanding of the ways in which Muslim women are represented in the media. Over the course of three (stand-alone) 50-minute periods, students will use video, texts, and images to examine the representation of Muslim women in three areas: politics, the entertainment industry, and activism. Throughout these lessons, students will observe the wide variety of Muslim experiences, a variety often diminished by the limited and stereotypical depictions of Muslims, in particular Muslim women.

Lesson 1 – Muslim Women on Capitol Hill
In this lesson, spread over two days, students will learn about the first two Muslim women to be elected to Congress: Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar. Tlaib and Omar have gained national prominence as part of a progressive woman of color legislative group known as "the Squad" with Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

Module 18: Muslim Women and Representation
and Ayana Pressley. Students will discuss the ways in which Reps. Tlaib and Omar are represented by the media. Aside from individual research, students will engage in analysis of political cartoons.

**Lesson 2 – Muslim Women and the Entertainment Industry**
In this lesson, students will consider the representation of Muslim women in mainstream entertainment media. Students will watch popular TV shows with Muslim women characters and critically analyze how they are represented.

**Lesson 3 – Muslim Women Resist**
Students will learn about a Muslim activist named Linda Sarsour. Sarsour was one of the original leaders of the 2017 Women’s March and has been a vocal supporter of Black Lives Matter and Bernie Sanders. This lesson helps disrupt notions of the “oppressed Muslim woman” and further shows that Muslim women can be both progressive and/or activists.

**Curriculum Connections**
Module 7. Understanding Islamophobia
Module 8: Islamophobia and the Oval Office
Module 17: The Muslim and African Ban
Module 19. Muslims in/and Representation
Lesson 1. Muslim Women on Capitol Hill

Overview, Background Resources and Materials Needed

In this lesson, spread over two days, students will learn about the first two Muslim women to be elected to Congress: Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar. Tlaib and Omar have gained national prominence as part of a progressive woman of color legislative group known as "the Squad" with Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Ayana Pressley. Students will discuss the ways in which Reps. Tlaib and Omar are represented by the media.

Background reading for educators before Lesson 1
As all three lessons in this module require students to search for and engage with media content and news items found online, it is imperative that students have been trained in critical media literacy. Some excellent resources to support educators in this work are:

Books:
   https://wwnorton.com/books/9780393713503
2. Tom Jackson and Cristina Guitian (2020): Fake News Censorship • Hows – Whys • Secret Agendas • Wrongs – Rights • Conspiracy Theories • The Media vs Politicians • Wiki Leaks
   https://www.quartoknows.com/books/9780711250345/Fake-News.html#

Digital Resources:
3. The News Literacy Project: https://www.thenewsliteracyproject.org
4. Learning for Justice’s Digital Literacy Framework:
   https://www.learningforjustice.org/frameworks/digital-literacy
5. Scheibe and Rogow’s (2012) six key concepts in media analysis:
   https://www.projectlooksharp.org/Resources%202/6MLConcepts1.pdf
6. Cartoon Analysis Worksheet from the National Archives and Records Administration:

In addition, educators may find the following resources useful for background knowledge on Palestine:
7. Learning for Justice’s Resources for Learning About Israel and Palestine:
   https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/resources-for-learning-about-israel-and-palestine

Key Terms in Lesson 1
- **Hijab**: A cloth head covering worn by some Muslim women as a symbol of their faith and practice.
- **Head Covering**: Although the term is often assumed to refer solely to a piece of clothing worn by Muslim women, members of many religions wear special head coverings as a way to express faith and show humility. Examples include the veil worn by Catholic nuns, and the yarmulke worn by many Jewish men and boys.
• **Intersectionality:** Intersectionality considers the ways that certain aspects of people’s identities, which are socially constructed, overlap creating various combinations of discrimination or privilege (i.e. the combination of race, gender, immigration etc).

• **Orientalism:** A term developed by scholar Edward Said to refer to the academic study of the Middle East. Said regards Orientalism as a paradigm through which scholars have emphasized the Middle East (historically termed the Orient) as a place that is fundamentally different from the Occident (or the West). The paradigm represents the Middle East through a series of stereotypes that emphasize the region (and its societies) as unchanging, unmodern, and worthy of fear.

• **Exoticization:** A stereotype that represents another cultural group as mysterious, exciting and radically different from one’s own. This is particularly common in the context of power imbalance and results in a distorted, exaggerated or essentialized understanding of the exoticized group. (Source: Amherst College)

• **Stereotyping:** Associating collective characteristics with a particular group and then assigning those characteristics to every member of that group, regardless of individual characteristics. Such preconceived and oversimplified notions may lead to prejudice, bias, and discrimination against members of the stereotyped group.

**Materials Needed for Lesson 1**

1. Slide deck for Lesson 1
2. Index cards (optional; 1 per student)
3. *We the People are Greater than Fear* poster. Available at: [http://cphrw.tt/o/4wUrDk/](http://cphrw.tt/o/4wUrDk/) (also on slide deck)
4. Middle East Eye Article: *Inaugural protest poster stirs debate among Muslim American women* by Molly McCluskey. Available at: [https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/inaugural-protest-poster-stirs-debate-among-muslim-american-women](https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/inaugural-protest-poster-stirs-debate-among-muslim-american-women) (to be shared with students electronically or can be printed; 1 copy per student)
5. **KWHLAQ chart** (1 handout per student)
6. A print out of political cartoon (5 suggested and included in supplementary materials and slide deck; use more cartoons for larger classes)
7. Chart or butcher paper (one for each cartoon above)
8. Markers for students (1 per student)
9. Students will need their computers/tablets for research
Lesson 1. Muslim Women on Capitol Hill

Learning Plan

**Day 1 of 2**
Note: The lesson is spread over two 50m class periods.

**Opening – 10 minutes**

*Warm Up Brainstorm:* In small groups, students will record what they know and how they know it (citing resources or personal experiences) about: 1) Islam and 2) Muslim women.

After 3 minutes, ask students to share out.

*Alternatively:* Have students write their ideas on index cards – one side for Islam and the other for Muslim women, collect and read out a few responses.

This brainstorm should be quick as ideally students are able to recognize that a religion followed by 1.9 billion people (a quarter of the world’s population) is incredibly **heterogenous in both its expression and adherents, and that one’s gender and religion do not intersect in ways that are universal.** If this is not an understanding that students come to independently, be sure to address it.

**Key concepts overview – 10 minutes**

(Lesson 2 Slide deck, slide 2) Begin the inquiry by sharing (passing around or projecting on screen) Shepard Fairey’s “Greater than Fear” image from the We the People Collection.

Ask students to reflect/comment on the image and the symbolism it invokes.

Highlight for students that this particular image was widely used at the 2017 Women’s March and was the source of some debate and controversy amongst Muslim American women:

- Some felt Fairey’s image did not accurately represent the diversity of Muslim American women, particularly those who do not wear the hijab.
- Others felt the hijab was necessary to distinguish the woman as a Muslim woman.
- Some felt the image suggested Muslim American women need to prove their patriotism to gain acceptance in American society, such as through conspicuous displays of the American flag, or by agreeing with U.S. policies that may be problematic.
- Others felt the inclusion of the star-spangled hijab showed that Muslim woman can embrace and express both their American and Islamic identities without conflict.

**Application – 25 minutes**

Pass out a copy of the KWHLAQ chart handout to each student. Invited them to fill out the first three columns to launch independent or partner research about the election of the United States’ first two Muslim women representatives, Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar (Lesson 2 Slide deck, slides 3-4). The guiding question for this activity, as found on the chart is:
How were/are Representative Rashida Tlaib’s and Ilhan Omar’s Muslim identity addressed in the media?

The KWHLAQ chart includes the following prompts:

- **K** - What do you **know**?
- **W** - What do you **want** to know?
- **H** - **How** will you find out?
- **L** - What have you **learned**?
- **A** - What **action** will you take?
- **Q** - What further **questions** do you have?

Once students have a minimum of 2-3 questions in the “W” column and a plan to answer each question, check students’ questions for depth/relevance before instructing them to begin researching independently or with partners. For example, if students have questions that seem stereotypical or misinformed, you should decide if you might need to intervene immediately or if there is more that students might need to think about/research.

As students begin their research on Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar, encourage students to engage in both traditional media (newspapers, other mainstream publications) as well as in social media. Time permitting, take a few minutes to talk about credibility of sources and media bias.

As students seek answers to their questions, they should complete the remaining columns in their chart.

**Debrief – 5 minutes**

Assign homework to prepare for Day 2 of the lesson. Instruct students to read Middle East Eye article about the controversy around the “Greater Than Fear” image for homework. Prompt them to think about both the support and critique of the poster. They may also continue their research.

**Day 2 of 2**

**Pre-Class Preparation:**

Before the lesson, print each political cartoon in color and adhere each image to the center of a large piece of chart or butcher paper. Based on the size of the paper and the number of students (the larger the paper and class, the more space you should provide), draw a ‘frame’ around the cartoon that allows ample space for students to write inside and outside of the frame. (see example of Dual Frame on slide deck with instructions for activity)

**Opening – 10 minutes**

Ask students for their thoughts on the article assigned for homework using the following prompt:

**What are the primary responses described in support of the “Greater Than Fear” image and against it?**

Students are likely to bring up issues of exoticization and stereotyping. Be sure to explain that the exoticization and stereotyping of Muslims is part of a longstanding European worldview known as...
Orientalism. The term, as developed by Edward Said, describes the paradigm that represents the Middle East through a series of stereotypes that emphasize the region (and its societies) as unchanging, unmodern, and worthy of fear. That this paradigm continues today is a point worth clarifying for students. (see key words definition in lesson overview).

Transition to discuss students’ independent or partner research from the previous lesson. What did students observe in terms of how Reps. Tlaib and Omar are represented? Did the source of information impact the representations? How so?

Application – 30 minutes
Educator note: The Cartoon Analysis handout in the resources list is a useful document to refer to set up this activity.

Share an array of political cartoons from 2018 and 2019 about Reps. Tlaib and Omar (see supplementary materials for examples).

(Lesson 1 Slide deck, slide 5). Explain to student they will be engaging in a two level or dual frame analysis of the political cartoons.

- Frame 1 is a rectangle surrounding or “framing” the image where students will record short descriptions of what they see with a particular focus on symbols and elements that are exaggerated or stereotypical.
- Frame 2 is a larger rectangle around the perimeter of Frame 1 in which students record the message(s) the image is meant to express/evoke and any particular points of view that are centered in it.

Gallery Walk Activity: Split students into small groups (one per cartoon) and instruct them to follow the instructions on Slide 5. They should move around the classroom and make comments on each of the cartoons using the guided questions on the slide. (Educators may refer to the Cartoon Analysis Handout to guide students in this activity).

After students have responded individually, give them 5-10 minutes to view the comments that others have recorded.

Debrief – 10 minutes
Based on the nature of the comments, facilitate a short discussion to close this activity using the following prompt or assigning it as an exit ticket.

Based on the research conducted on Day 1 coupled with the political cartoons viewed on Day 2, how were/are Representative Rashida Tlaib’s and Ilhan Omar’s Muslim identity addressed in the media?

Expected student responses:
- The representatives are deeply committed to their communities, but in the political cartoons, their religious identity is always the focus and is represented as un-American (Educator note: a comment like this is an excellent time to remind students of Said’s notion of Orientalism as well as the how Christianity is normalized in US society).
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- Their religion is depicted as something that overwhelmingly drives their personal interests and decisions that are un-American rather than one aspect of who they are. The political cartoons consistently show them as angry, aggressive women.

If assigned as an exit ticket, take 10 minutes in the next class to discuss what students wrote.
Lesson 1. Muslim Women on Capitol Hill

Student Handouts and Supplementary Teaching Materials

1. Lesson 1 slides deck preview (please download separate linked file)
2. Lesson 1 handout 1: KWHLAQ Chart (1 handout per student)
3. Political Cartoons for analysis [5 cartoons] (1 cartoon per student group; 5 have been provided. Larger classes may need more cartoons to keep the group sizes manageable)
4. Additional cartoons that may be used (not printed as permission to reprint was not received; educators may use in their classroom under fair use)
   - The Four Horsewomen of the Apocalypse: https://grrrgraphics.com/the-four-horsewomen-of-the-apocalypse/
   - Ray-cist: https://www.washingtontimes.com/cartoons/hunter/here-it-racist/
Muslim Women on Capitol Hill

Module 18, Lesson 1

Political Cartoon Analysis

Infer Frame (around the cartoon)

1. Recollection: Describe the picture with people, objects, or scenes that are suggested or represented.
2. What is the cause of the cartoon?
3. What is the cause of the cartoon?
4. What is the cause of the cartoon?
5. What is the cause of the cartoon?

Observer Frame (inside the cartoon)

1. Recollection: Describe the picture with people, objects, or scenes that are suggested or represented.
2. What is the cause of the cartoon?
3. What is the cause of the cartoon?
4. What is the cause of the cartoon?
5. What is the cause of the cartoon?

Dual Frame Political Cartoon Analysis

Reps. Tlaib and Omar have gone national prominence as part of a congressional women of color legislative group known as "The Squad" with Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Ayanna Pressley.

Only two other Muslim women have served in Congress before them:

Keith Ellison (2007, Minnesota)
Andi Canseco (2005, Indiana)

Osirii two other Muslim women have gained national prominence as part of a progressive women of color legislative group known as "The Squad" with Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Ayanna Pressley.
Lesson 1: KWHLAQ Chart

You are about to research the election of Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar to the U.S. House of Representatives. Use this KWHLAQ chart to create a plan for your research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before researching:</th>
<th>After Researching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>K</strong> - What do you <strong>know</strong> about Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar, and their election?</td>
<td><strong>L</strong> - What have you <strong>learned</strong> about Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar, and their election?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W</strong> - What do you <strong>want</strong> to know about Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar, and their election?</td>
<td><strong>A</strong> - What <strong>action</strong> will you take?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H</strong> - How will you find this out?</td>
<td><strong>Q</strong> - What further <strong>questions</strong> do you have?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Module 18: Muslim Women and Representation
**[EDUCATOR RESOURCE] Cartoon Analysis Worksheet**  
Educators may wish to refer to this analysis worksheet as they guide their students to complete the dual frame analysis of the cartoons.  
Original form designed and developed by the Education Staff, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL 1</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visuals</strong></td>
<td><strong>Words (not all cartoons include words)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List the objects or people you see in the cartoon.</td>
<td>Identify the cartoon caption and/or title.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Locate three words or phrases used by the cartoonist to identify objects or people within the cartoon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Record any important dates or numbers that appear in the cartoon.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visuals</strong></td>
<td><strong>Words</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of the objects on your list are symbols?</td>
<td>Which words or phrases in the cartoon appear to be the most significant? Why do you think so?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think each symbol means?</td>
<td>List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed in the cartoon.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.

2. Explain how the words in the cartoon clarify the symbols.

3. Explain the message of the cartoon.

4. What special interest groups would agree/disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?
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Lesson 1. Muslim Women on Capitol Hill
Political Cartoons for Analysis

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Lesson 1. Muslim Women on Capitol Hill
Political Cartoons for Analysis
Lesson 2. Muslim Women and the Entertainment Industry

Overview, Background Resources and Materials Needed

In this lesson, students will consider the representation of Muslim women in mainstream entertainment media.

Background reading for educators before Lesson 2:
As all three lessons in this module require students to search for and engage with media content and news items found online, it is imperative that students have been trained in critical media literacy. Some excellent resources to support educators in this work are:

Books:
   https://wwnorton.com/books/9780393713503
2. Tom Jackson and Cristina Guitian (2020): Fake News Censorship • Hows – Whys • Secret Agendas • Wrongs – Rights • Conspiracy Theories • The Media vs Politicians • Wiki Leaks
   https://www.quartoknows.com/books/9780711250345/Fake-News.html#

Digital Resources:
3. The News Literacy Project: https://www.thenewsliteracyproject.org
4. Learning for Justice’s Digital Literacy Framework:
   https://www.learningforjustice.org/frameworks/digital-literacy
5. Scheibe and Rogow’s (2012) six key concepts in media analysis:
   https://www.projectlooksharp.org/Resources%202/6MLConcepts1.pdf

In addition, educators may find the following resources useful for background knowledge on Palestine:
6. Learning for Justice’s Resources for Learning About Israel and Palestine:
   https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/resources-for-learning-about-israel-and-palestine
7. Teach Palestine: https://teachpalestine.org/

Key Terms in Lesson 2:
- **Head covering**: Although the term is often assumed to refer solely to a piece of clothing worn by Muslim women, members of many religions wear special head coverings as a way to express faith and show humility. Examples include the veil worn by Catholic nuns, and the yarmulke worn by many Jewish men and boys.
- **Hijab**: A cloth head covering worn by some Muslim women as a symbol of their faith and practice.
- **Intersectionality**: Intersectionality considers the ways that certain aspects of people’s identities, which are socially constructed, overlap creating various combinations of discrimination or privilege (i.e. the combination of race, gender, immigration etc).
**The Bechdel test:** Named after American cartoonist Alison Bechdel, this test assesses three criteria in film in order to determine the active presence of women: 1) there are at least 2 women present, 2) they talk to each other, and 3) their conversation is about something other than a man.

**Materials Needed for Lesson 2**
1. **Slide deck for Lesson 2** (both days)

   - **Day 1:**
     2. Students will need access to Netflix or Hulu.
        - If Netflix is not available, use this clip available on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08w8hK2LYpQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08w8hK2LYpQ)
     4. *The Bold Type*, Season 1, Episode 1, available on Hulu Premium
        - If Hulu is not available, use this clip available on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnMExyeumVg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnMExyeumVg)
     5. *9-1-1 Lonestar*, Season 1, Episode 3 (Texas Proud), available on Fox, Hulu, and Amazon Prime
        - If Fox/Hulu are not available, use this clip available on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XHStoeswcw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XHStoeswcw)

   - **Day 2:**
     6. The Bechdel Test for Women in Movies (to be projected in class)
        [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLF6sAAmb4s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLF6sAAmb4s)
     7. Readings for students (randomly assign one article per student electronically or in print)
        - The Best Muslim Characters on TV Didn’t Happen by Accident
        - Do Muslim women on tv “pass the Bechdel test”?
          [https://www.media-diversity.org/do-muslim-women-on-tv-pass-the-bechdel-test](https://www.media-diversity.org/do-muslim-women-on-tv-pass-the-bechdel-test)
        - 6 Television Shows That Have a Hijabi Character – And No, It’s Not Enough
          [https://mvslim.com/5-television-shows-hijabi-character-no-not-enough/](https://mvslim.com/5-television-shows-hijabi-character-no-not-enough/)
Lesson 2. Muslim Women and the Entertainment Industry

Learning Plan

Note to educators:
This lesson can be split over two days. Alternatively, Day 1 can be assigned as homework the day before Day 2’s lesson as it is largely independent work and requires students to watch some TV shows.

Day 1 of 2 (or Pre-lesson homework):

Opening / Homework Explanation – 5 mins
Explain to students that they will be exploring representation of Muslim women in mainstream entertainment media. Before assigning the homework, ensure that students understand the difference between a head covering and a hijab, as the two are often conflated and/or misunderstood, and be reminded that head coverings are common practices in a number of religions.

Timestamped Annotations: Students will choose 1-2 pre-selected episodes from one of the shows listed below that includes a Muslim woman character. As they watch, they will take notes on the Time Stamped Annotations graphic organizer that includes the following sections:
- Name of Show/Episode
- Name & Brief Bio of Muslim Woman Character(s)
- Time/Scene Descriptions (only note scenes that include the Muslim woman character; these observations should focus on how the character is dressed, any dialogue or personality traits of interest, and how the character interacts with others)
- Overall Reflections (after watching)

Viewing Options. If access to these full-length videos is not available, students can watch the three short clips for their timestamp annotations.

1. *Elite*, Season 1, Episode 1, available on Netflix.
   - If Netflix is not available, use this clip available on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08w8hK2LYpQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08w8hK2LYpQ)

2. *The Bold Type*, Season 1, Episode 1, available on Hulu Premium.
   Note that the main protagonist in this show is a Muslim woman and a lesbian. Homophobia and misogyny can be present in many communities, including Muslim communities. Please consider your class before sharing this clip and be prepared to have a conversation about the multiplicity of identities that individuals can have, including those that may seem in conflict. It is also important to recognize that there are LGBTQ+ Muslims. This would be a good opportunity to introduce students to the term intersectionality.
Day 2 of 2:

Opening – 5 minutes
If Lesson 1 from this module has also been taught, ask students how were/are Representative Rashida Tlaib’s and Ilhan Omar’s Muslim identity addressed in the media? Then segue to the question below.

If Lesson 1 was not taught, jumpstart the class by asking them to reflect on any observations they made during their homework where they viewed the films.

After a few responses, ask students if they are familiar with the Bechdel test.

[Lesson 2 slide deck, slide 2] Explain that this test assesses three criteria in film in order to determine the active presence of women:
1. There are at least 2 women present
2. They talk to each other
3. Their conversation is about something other than a man

Show video with 2-minute summary of the Bechtel Test.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLF6sAAMB4s (Link also included at the bottom of the slide 2)

[Lesson 2 slide deck, slide 3-4] In March 2018, an episode of the show Grey’s Anatomy (Season 14, Episode 14 - “You Really Got a Hold On Me”) showed Dr. Dahlia Qadri dramatically removing her hijab in order to use it as a tourniquet. The scene sparked controversy; as writer Anmol Irfan described in this Media Diversity Institute article, Muslim women in TV and film are often shown in hijab and the removal of their hijab (whether through an emergency or deliberate act) has become a common trope to mark character development. How might such representations be stereotypical and problematic? Why does this matter?

Application – 20 minutes
Independent Practice - Jigsaw Reading: Students should revisit their Timestamped Annotations from the homework (or previous lesson) and will be assigned to read one of the articles below:
- The Best Muslim Characters on TV Did’n’t Happen by Accident
- Do Muslim women on tv “pass the Bechdel test”?
  https://www.media-diversity.org/do-muslim-women-on-tv-pass-the-bechdel-test
- 6 Television Shows That Have a Hijabi Character – And No, It’s Not Enough

Module 18: Muslim Women and Representation
Lesson 3. Muslim Women Resist
Students will be grouped with peers who read a different article. Each student will summarize the article they read and what it described about the representation of Muslim women in entertainment media. Then students should highlight examples from the shows they watched for homework (or in the previous lesson) that illustrate the points made in the articles discussed.

Debrief – 10 minutes
[Lesson 2 slide deck, slide 5] Author Viet Thanh Nguyen has described how some groups experience narrative scarcity, in which their stories are limited and yet are somehow expected to represent diverse swaths of people and experiences. What is the typical narrative of Muslim women in TV/film and why is it important to disrupt it? **What might it look like for Muslim women to have narrative plenitude (many stories/representations)?**

**Exit Ticket:** How are Muslim women represented in entertainment media and how might these representations impact how they are understood in society? (If students have gone through Lesson 1, they can make connections to the research they connected and the political cartoons analysis).
Lesson 2. Muslim Women and the Entertainment Industry

Student Handouts and Supplementary Teaching Materials

1. Lesson 2 slide deck preview (please download separate linked file)
2. Time stamp annotation graphic organizer (one per student)
Excerpt from step 6 of article by Razan Mneimneh:

Muslim character in Grey's Anatomy took off her hijab...and people lost it.

The author, Shondra Rhimos, took off her hijab and wrapped it around a patient's leg to stop the bleeding in an attempt to save his life. This single move surprised and inspired viewers, exciting learners and critics alike.

Author Viet Thanh Nguyen has described how some groups experience narrative scarcity in which their stories are limited and yet are somehow expected to represent diverse swathes of people and experiences.

What is the typical narrative of Muslim women in TV/film and why is it important to disrupt it? What might it look like for Muslim women to have narrative plausibility (many stories/representations)?

How might such representations (like the one in Grey's Anatomy above) be stereotypical and problematic? Why does this matter?
# Time Stamp Annotation Graphic Organizer

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Name of Show &amp; Episode Tittle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Name &amp; Brief Bio of Muslim Woman Character(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Time/Scene Descriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Only note scenes that include the Muslim woman character; these observations should focus on:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• how the character is dressed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• any dialogue or personality traits of interest,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• and how the character interacts with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Overall Reflections (after watching)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 3. Muslim Women Resist

Overview, Background Resources and Materials Needed

In this lesson, students will learn about a Muslim activist named Linda Sarsour. Sarsour was one of the leaders of the 2017 Women’s March and has been a vocal supporter of Black Lives Matter and Bernie Sanders. This lesson helps disrupt notions of the “oppressed Muslim woman” and further shows that Muslim women can be both progressive and/or activists.

Background reading for educators before Lesson 3

As all three lessons in this module require students to search for and engage with media content and news items found online, it is imperative that students have been trained in critical media literacy. Some excellent resources to support educators in this work are:

**Books:**
1. Renee Hobbs (2020): *Mind Over Media: Propaganda Education for a Digital Age*
   [https://wwnorton.com/books/9780393713503](https://wwnorton.com/books/9780393713503)

**Digital Resources:**
3. The News Literacy Project: [https://www.thenewsliteracyproject.org](https://www.thenewsliteracyproject.org)
5. Scheibe and Rogow’s (2012) six key concepts in media analysis: [https://www.projectlooksharp.org/Resources%202/6MLConcepts1.pdf](https://www.projectlooksharp.org/Resources%202/6MLConcepts1.pdf)

In addition, educators may find the following resources useful for background knowledge on Palestine:

7. Teach Palestine: [https://teachpalestine.org/](https://teachpalestine.org/)

**Key Terms in Lesson 3**

**Hijab:** A cloth head covering worn by some Muslim women as a symbol of their faith and practice.

**Intersectionality:** Intersectionality considers the ways that certain aspects of people’s identities, which are socially constructed, overlap creating various combinations of discrimination or privilege (i.e. the combination of race, gender, immigration etc).

**Islamophobia:** A phobia or exaggerated bias, hatred, or fear of Islam as religion and those who practice Islam, Muslims. Islamophobia extends to other communities and individuals who are perceived to be Muslim as well. Also known as anti-Muslim racism.
Materials Needed for Lesson 3

1. Chart paper (7 pieces, to be posted around the room) and markers for all students
2. Students will need their computers/tablets for research
3. Quartz video: **Linda Sarsour is a Muslim American on a mission**
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhmUbeXeqso
Lesson 3. Muslim Women Resist

Learning Plan

Pre-Class Preparation:
Before the lesson, hang up 7 chart papers around the room each labeled with one of the following:

- Sarsour’s Palestinian identity
- Arab American Association of New York
- Recognition of Muslim holidays in New York City schools (Ex: Vox video)
- Muslims for Ferguson/Black Lives Matter
- Sarsour v. Trump class action suit
- 2017 Women’s March
- 2019 Women’s March controversy

Opening – 10 minutes
[Lesson 3 slide deck, slide 2-3] Explain to students that today they will learn about a Muslim activist named Linda Sarsour. Sarsour was one of the leaders of the 2017 Women’s March and has been a vocal supporter of Black Lives Matter and Bernie Sanders. Muslim women are not necessarily viewed as progressive or activists, and Sarsour disrupts such notions. Show students this short biographical video from Quartz: Linda Sarsour is a Muslim American on a mission (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhmUbeXeqso), then assign students to do partner research about one of the following aspects of Sarsour’s activism.

Application – 30 minutes
Partner Research & Gallery Walk: Students will work in pairs to research Sarsour’s activism and critiques of her work. Divide the following topics across the student pairs; multiple pairs researching the same topic is encouraged:

- Sarsour’s Palestinian identity
- Arab American Association of New York
- Recognition of Muslim holidays in New York City schools (Ex: Vox video)
- Muslims for Ferguson/Black Lives Matter
- Sarsour v. Trump class action suit
- 2017 Women’s March
- 2019 Women’s March controversy

Students should be mindful of using critical media literacy skills to determine the perspectives and political agendas held by the sources they find. Give students 15-20 minutes for this research.

In the last 10-15 minutes, instruct students to summarize their findings on chart paper posted around the room labeled by topic; as students complete their summaries, they should conduct a gallery walk to view the findings of the other groups.
Debrief – 10 minutes

1. How does Sarsour disrupt notions of what it means to be a Muslim woman? Why is she such a controversial figure?
2. (If students completed Lesson 1): What connections did you make to the ways in which she is depicted in the media and the ways that Reps. Tlaib and Omar are represented/criticized?
Lesson 3. Muslim Women Resist

Student Handouts and Supplementary Teaching Materials

No supplementary materials for this lesson.
Appendix to Module 2018: Muslim Women and Representation

Curriculum Framework

Goal
Students will be able to use their independent learning to describe representations of Muslim women in US popular culture/society and in politics, with a particular focus on leaders such as Rashida Tlaib, Ilhan Omar, and Linda Sarsour.

Essential questions
1. How are Muslim political figures positioned by the media?
2. How are Muslim women represented in the media?
3. Why does representation matter?

Understandings
Students will understand that...
1. There are 1.9 billion Muslims in the world and there is no singular Muslim experience or way to be Muslim/practice Islam, just as there is no singular religious experience or identity of any kind. However, due to the ways that Islam has been represented, particularly in European and American culture, Muslim identity and practices often essentialized in popular culture and media.
2. There are limited and stereotypical representations of Muslims in entertainment broadly speaking and far fewer representations of Muslim women in particular. These portrayals impact how Muslim women are viewed by U.S. society and how Muslim leaders are positioned by the media in ways that emphasize both their religion and their gender.

Knowledge
Students will know...
1. There have only been four Muslim members of Congress since it was established in 1789.
2. How Muslim women have traditionally been portrayed by the media, and the ways in which some celebrated depictions have, in fact, been stereotypical and problematic.
3. The definition of the Bechdel Test and how it relates to the representation of Muslim women in the entertainment industry.
4. How public figures such as Linda Sarsour disrupt notions of the “oppressed Muslim woman” and show that Muslim women can be both progressive and/or activists.
5. The difference between various kinds of head coverings worn by woman across a variety of religious groups.
6. The meaning of the term intersectionality
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Skills
Students will be able to...

1. **Interrogate** media depictions of Muslims that are often seen as positive, when in fact they are problematic.

2. **Use critical media literacy skills** to determine perspectives and political agendas held by the sources.

3. **Analyze** media representation of Muslim women through a variety of methods, including the Bechdel Test.

Summary of Performance Tasks (Assessment)

1. **KWHLAQ Chart (Lesson 1):** Students will use the chart to launch independent or partner research about the election of the United States’ first two Muslim women representatives, Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar.

2. **Cartoon Analysis Activity (Lesson 1):** Students will view an array of political cartoons from 2018 and 2019 about Reps. Tlaib and Omar and analyze those cartoons.

3. **Timestamped Annotation Activity (Lesson 2):** Either as a part of the lesson or for homework, Students will watch excerpts from television shows that includes a Muslim woman character. As they watch, they will take notes on details of the clip and their personal reflections.

4. **Jigsaw Reading Activity (Lesson 2):** Students will be grouped with peers who read a different article. Each student will summarize the article they read and what it described about the representation of Muslim women in entertainment media. Then students will highlight examples from the shows they watched for homework (or in the previous lesson) that illustrate the points made in the articles discussed.

5. **Exit ticket (Lesson 2):** Students will respond to the following question: How are Muslim women represented in entertainment media and how might these representations impact how they are understood in society?

6. **Linda Sarsour Partner Research & Gallery Walk (Lesson 3):** Students will work in pairs to research Sarsour’s activism and critiques in relation to selected topics. They will then summarize their findings on chart paper posted around the room labeled by topic; as students complete their summaries, they will conduct a gallery walk to view the findings of the other groups.

7. **Debriefs and whole-class discussions:** In each lesson, students will apply key concepts in groups or individually, then return to the whole class space to articulate their findings and takeaways.

*Common Core Standards*

History/Social Studies 11th and 12th Grade

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

Craft and Structure:
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CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.5
Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7
Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

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**About the Contributors**

Noreen Naseem Rodriguez, PhD, is a Pakistani/Filipina American and an Assistant Professor of Teacher Learning, Research, and Practice in the School of Education at the University of Colorado Boulder. Her research engages critical race frameworks to explore the pedagogical practices of teachers of color and the teaching of so-called difficult histories through children’s literature and primary sources. She is co-author of the forthcoming book *Social Studies for a Better World: An Anti-Oppressive Approach for Elementary Educators* with Katy Swalwell. Before becoming a teacher educator, Noreen was a bilingual elementary teacher in Austin, Texas for nine years.

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