

decade before she met David Brown. As Hirshey puts it, “Belding opened the path to serious skills, a genuine career and the sort of professional satisfactions Helen would later wish on *Cosmo* readers” (110). While Brown gave Helen much needed direction, it was Belding who assisted her in finding her life’s purpose. It was the kind of guidance HGB would later offer to women who worked under her at *Cosmo*.

Later in her career, Brown became notorious for two episodes in which her advice created understandable controversy. Hirshey takes her to task for her willful ignorance about AIDS that led to her decision to publish an irresponsible and erroneous article claiming that heterosexual women had nothing to fear in terms of AIDS. A few years later HGB published a tone-deaf editorial on sexual harassment that clearly signaled that she was no longer in touch with the zeitgeist. Negotiations regarding her retirement from the editorship of *Cosmo* followed a few years after, and this would have been a perfectly respectable place to wrap up her story. Hirshey instead insists on tastelessly dwelling on HGB’s physical and cognitive decline, plastic surgeries, and rumors of infidelity in the final chapters of her book. Here, Hirshey crosses a line into mean-spiritedness, and her subject and readers deserve better.

Scanlon’s *Bad Girl’s Go Everywhere* remains the definitive treatment of Brown’s popular culture influence, but for scholars and readers looking for more details (and gossip), these two new entries might be worth a look. *Enter Helen* is a fun and accessible read for those interested in Brown’s life and influence. *Not Pretty Enough* overwhelms readers with details but fails to offer much meaningful assessment of a compelling and influential figure.

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On Global Muslim Creativity: A Review of *Islam and Popular Culture*. Karin Van Nieuwkerk, Mark Levine and Martin Stokes, eds. U of Texas P, 2016. 394 pp. \$23.42 paperback.

The rise of radical organizations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS has provided mainstream media circles, terrorism studies analysts, and

political opportunists in the west with the impetus to tarnish Islam and Muslims. Cultural producers across the United States and Europe have capitalized on an already existing orientalist heritage that projects an estimated range of 1.3–1.6 billion Muslims as monolithic and incompatible with a rigidly framed sense of western spatial morality. Hollywood filmmakers alone have contributed hundreds of films since the silent cinema era that propagate this framework. A contributing factor that sustains this narrative is the understudied role of Muslim cultural producers in mediating the complexity of Muslim communities and the multiplicity of their experiences across the globe. *Islam and Popular Culture* creates a space for scholars to intervene and capture a wide range of Muslim creativity and self-representation.

This work is broad in scope to account for the existing diversity in the Muslim consciousness whether in Muslim-majority countries or in countries where Muslims live as a minority. It offers eighteen case studies that invite the readers in a journey across the Middle East and parts of Africa, Asia, and Europe. Contributors to this collection engage with various popular culture media that range from street performances to television serials and ritualistic acts. The book also features chapters that deal with poetry, dance, and visual art. Perhaps the most attention in this work is geared toward music and how it reflects the multitude of Muslim engagement with art. Aside from historicizing the intricate debates among religious authorities around music, for instance, there is a scholarly interest in examining it as a lived experience whether in the form of reciting Qur'anic texts among North African Sufi diaspora in France, singing religious pop in Turkey, using *anashid* (religious chants) to advance an Islamist sociopolitical agenda in Morocco, embracing a state-endorsed form of popular music in Iran, circulating singing as a mark of a Muslim collective identity in Indonesia, or reproducing a Pakistani traditional music in England.

The significance of *Islam and Popular Culture* lies in its disruptions of certain western-based presumptions about Islam and Muslims. It offers a rebuttal to both perceptions of Islam as adamantly aggressive against artistic creativity and of popular culture as a secularizing force in constant challenge to religious establishments. By paying close attention to the personal and the local, the authors emphasize the importance of context in defining what constitutes a Muslim beyond the popularized boundaries of Sunni, Shi'a, and Sufi traditions. Taking into consideration such critical variables as place, time,

heritage, practice, and sociopolitical condition necessitates the study of the existing multiple narratives within each Muslim community. Through its multiple methods of ethnography and textual analysis, the work introduces English-speaking scholars, students, and readers to a timely account of Muslim communities invested in varying priorities and concerns, often dismissed in western media and underexplored in academia. These include, but are not limited to, issues of identity, faith, authority, gender, and ethnicity.

The case studies in *Islam and Popular Culture* are not meant to be comprehensive in their coverage of Muslim experiences with cultural production. They resulted from an Amsterdam-based international conference, "Islam and Popular Culture," held in 2013, which concluded a Dutch-funded, research project, "Islam and Performing Arts," directed by Karin van Nieuwkerk. The predominance of certain Middle Eastern Muslim scenes—Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Turkey, and Iran—in these studies, however, suggests the need for future research to shed lights on other underexamined scenes. How do Muslims in countries like Yemen, Sudan, Libya, Mauritania, and other Arab countries use cultural production as a means to voice their celebration and critique of their societies? What is the role of popular culture in mediating majority–minority conflicts in the Horn of Africa and West Africa? What are the narratives emerging from the Asian. Ie-Asian-Pacific countries that serve as home to the highest Muslim populations in the globe? How do the transnational fractures help Muslims navigate meanings of belonging beyond Western Europe to include other multilayered histories in the Americas? Similarly, although the collection does not address other cultural media such as film, novels, plays, comic strips, fashion, as well as genres within its examined visual arts and music, it urges more research in this regard.

Islam and Popular Culture presents both critical and timely insights into a growing field of inquiry. It is rich in theory and content and is written in accessible language. It could certainly serve as an important resource for educators, media practitioners, cultural producers, and general readers interested in challenging their pre-established knowledge of Islam, Muslims, and popular culture.

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