Editorial:

Ten Years After 9/11—What Have We Learned?

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The attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11) initiated a new pattern of global conflict a decade after the Cold War ended. It has pitted many states, including those with Muslim-majorities, against groups claiming to act in the name of Islam. For much of the last ten years, the global media have been transfixed by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the terrorist attacks that have been carried out in these and numerous other locations around the world. The governments of many countries have devoted significant resources to the "war on terror" but its end is not within sight. State response to terrorism has mainly been in the forms of militarization and securitization. Some efforts have been made to "win the hearts and minds" of the perceived supporters of terrorism, but scant attention has been paid to its primary bases. A significant amount of research has been conducted on the global conflict. However, little understanding has emerged of how people are motivated to blow up themselves and others, including people of their own faith, or what was really behind the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

The tenth anniversary of 9/11 provides an opportunity to reflect upon and assess what we have learned—and not learned—about communication and conflict. Some commentators have stated that "everything changed" after 9/11. However, it is important to inquire into what changed and what continues to operate within the conceptual frameworks that have existed for decades, even centuries.

Understanding Terrorism

Cohen-Almagor's (2005; 2006) research assumes a moral stance on terrorism and furthers the notion that legal means of protest are equally available to all individuals in "liberal democracies". In proposing this premise in nations such as Israel, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada, Cohen-Almagor fails to take into account the practices of racialization and class division that exist, and the significant role they play in determining *who* is able to effect change (e.g., Crelinsten, 2002; Li, 2007; Lee, 2007; Henry & Tator, 2002; Jackson, 2005; Thobani, 2003). Moreover, Cohen-Almagor does not consider the fact that states

can also be actors in terrorist activities; failing to understand how media coverage works for the benefit of states in furthering more stern and restrictive security policies. Similarly, Weimann (1983) views terrorism through a good versus bad dichotomy without addressing power issues that lead people to resort to extreme measures. Weimann, like Cohen-Almagor, fails to address the relationship between media and political institutions, which will necessarily impact the coverage of terrorist events. This notion is explored, however, in the work of Crelinsten (2002) and even more so by Wittebols (1992).

Crelinsten (2002) offers a somber challenge to the notion put forward by Weimann (1983) in his study of terrorism as a form of communication. He includes state and non-state actors, counter-terrorism measures, and discusses the interconnection between all three in one conceptual model. Crelinsten further distinguishes between political and criminal forms of terrorism. Crelinsten calls for a multidisciplinary approach to the theoretical and analytical study of terrorism that can effectively lead to the prevention and elimination of terrorism. Through a self-analytical model that enables for a conceptualization of terrorism in broader framework of social and political life within and among nations as well as what may be necessary to attain an accountable, transparent and effective system of terrorism prevention and control both within individual states and within the international system of states as a whole, Crelinsten hopes to stimulate further research.

Wittebols' (1992) work offers a critical perspective that also advocates a self-analytical approach to media representations of terrorism. Wittebols identifies and examines two types of terror: "grievance terror" that "challenges power" and "institutional terror" as that which "seeks to maintain the status quo and power" (1992: 267). He explains that while there is an abundance of research that investigates "specific incidents of terror" and how specific groups have been portrayed, there is a lack of research that examines how the media interpret and "label political violence as terrorism, or how the coverage of terror as a general phenomenon manifests itself in the media on a daily basis" (Ibid: 269). Wittebols posits that the media refer to state acts of terror as human rights abuses more often than governments, who at times, refer to the terror of unallied states but tend not to describe state actions as such. Since the public relies on mediated information about acts of terror, this framing of the discourse is likely to influence public opinion about who and what can be considered terroristic. Wittebols claims that due to the dominant media discourse on terror and the scarcity of critical reporting on state terror actions, the public is unlikely to consider states as terrorist actors. He notes the problematic use of "loaded" terms such as "terrorist" and "guerilla" which are systematically employed by the U.S. media in relation to the Middle East. In a point of comparison, his study shows that U.S. media use such terms to refer to grievance terror more often than Canadian media.

Cohen (2001) and Ruby (2002a; 2002b) extend the argument that Crelinsten (2002) and Wittebols (1992) confront the state's entitlement to determine legally the categories of terrorists. Cohen maintains that the ability of a state to label certain persons and organizations as terrorist necessarily entails state exclusion from the concept of terrorism as it is states that create and implement law. Cohen argues that an understanding of the intent behind the labels is therefore vital for the comprehension of who and what is not included in the definition of terrorism. While official government discourse excludes itself from this definition, states rely upon the exclusion of *others* to assert national identity and to create an enemy threat. Similarly, Ruby (2002a; 2002b) challenges the notion that terrorist acts are committed by deranged individuals, proposed by Post (2005) and compares the acts of terrorists and those of states in war as politically motivated (e.g., Coady, 2004).

The behaviour of various Western and other states in the "war on terror" have systematically betrayed certain principles of the liberal society that were developed beginning with the Enlightenment. Suspension of the rule of law (as in Guantanamo Bay), the use of torture, and the practice of rendition characterized the failure of the state in upholding values that have evolved over the last three hundred years. Media coverage has been sporadic and usually overwhelmed by dominant discourses on terror that are presented within a framework in which the good state that does no evil is pitted against the bad terrorist.

The Other, Islam, and the Media

Said (1978) argues that the Orient became Western societies' competing alter ego to help them gain a sense of superiority. Representing racial diversity in Western media begins with the question of *foreignness*, a term that Kristeva (1991) has engaged with intensely. Technically speaking, the foreigner is one who "does not have the same nationality" (Kristeva, 1991: 96). That being said, Kristeva also states that we all have some aspect of foreignness within us, and when we recognize that foreignness within ourselves, we stop detesting outsiders. The foreigner comes in when the consciousness of one's difference arises, and disappears when all acknowledge themselves as foreigners.

According to this mode of thought, to accept foreigners in a culturally, ethnically, and religiously diverse society like Canada for example, one would recognize that everybody is a foreigner and that there is no difference between Self and Other. A pluralist ideal is attained in society when we recognize strangeness within ourselves, and instead of emphasizing the foreigner we instead concentrate our energies on "promoting the togetherness of those foreigners that we all recognize ourselves to be" (Kristeva, 1991: 2). Bhabha's (1994) concept of "Third Space" suggests that as we expand our social definitions to include subject positions like race and gender, we find new self-identities constituted in these "in-between spaces". Khan (2002) describes Third Space as one where contradictory forces struggle to disavow colonial authority. The signs and signifiers of the dominant ideology are appropriated by the other (migrant) culture that attempts to construct its own discourse through this new space. The Third Space disrupts the homogenous culture, and as a result, individuals construct new cultures based on their personal religious and national experiences, transforming them into symbols of the Western societies of which they have become a part (Khan, 1998).

However, dominant perspectives in the West tend to resist the meeting of cultures in the Third Space. With the Iranian hostage crisis of 1979-80 fresh in mind, Said (1981) wrote about the failure of the American media and U.S. experts to understand and explain the Arab and Muslim world. In particular, he argued "Muslims and Arabs are essentially covered, discussed, apprehended either as suppliers of oil or as potential terrorists" (Said, 1981: 26). We have learned that the discourses of groups like al-Qaeda and the Taliban use the symbols and texts of Islam to promote their violent agendas. What we did not learn to do effectively is to be able to use language in manners that do not elide terrorists' presentations of Islam with the majority view of Muslims, which emphasizes fellowship with humanity, compassion and peace. A few days before the tenth anniversary of 9/11 attacks, the Canadian Prime Minister Harper declared that "the major threat is still Islamicism" (CBC, 2011, September 6). Whereas "Islamist" has come to be used as the term for those Muslims who promote an extremist and sometimes militant ideology, its distinction with the religion of "Islam" and its followers who are peaceful is most likely lost on many. It is not surprising, given constant media usage of terms such as "Islamic

terrorist", "Islamic extremist", and "Islamic radical", that polls "show that nearly half the populations in the United States and Canada hold unfavourable views toward Islam" (Aslan, 2011: xiii). This has consequences in behaviours of officials and others who systematically discriminate against Muslims.

Ismael and Measor (2003) argue that racism and Orientalist points of view were utilized in the Canadian media to explain 9/11. Analyzing the *Globe and Mail* and the *National Post* between the periods of September 11th, 2001 and June 2nd, 2002, the events of 9/11 are "depicted through reductive and racist notions of 'truth', 'fact', and 'reality'" (2003: 102). They contend that Canadian and American intelligentsia, including Michael Ignatieff, Bernard Lewis, and Samuel P. Huntington, among others, have filtered the Middle East through biased lenses. Media outlets, such as the *National Post,* then adopted these viewpoints and passed them off as factual news. Samuel P. Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations* (1996) thesis, which was popularized in the 1990s and widely debated (Adib-Moghaddam, 2002; Abrahamian, 2003; Cloud, 2004; Cornell, 2002; Haller, 2003; Mellon, 2001; Norris & Inglehart, 2002; Wedeen, 2003), was invoked by mainstream American media in the aftermath of 9/11. Indeed, the notion of the "clash of civilizations" became the frame within which the 9/11 attacks and the justification for the "war on terror" were reported. The foreignness of the Muslim Other and the utter difference from Western civilization was emphasized as the case was made for the military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The association of Islam with terrorism has come to be accepted as part of the discourse on security and terrorism, so much so that the terms "Muslim" and "terrorist" have become almost synonymous. These views have developed and normalized over time so that they are no longer questioned (Karim, 2003). Li (2007: 50) believes that the fear created through the 9/11 attacks produced an environment where the expression of intolerant feelings became more socially acceptable. He claims that during periods of panic such as this, "the use of 'race' and the attribution of undesirable connotations to 'race' become normal and natural, as long as they are constructed in the context of preventing public danger and upholding public good" (Li, 2007: 51). Rather than a return to an "old" form of racism, this climate of fear permitted previously concealed racist thoughts and practices to rise again to the surface. The manner in which racism appears discursively as either "direct and explicit" or subtle and under the surface depends upon the construction and normalization of racialized discourse as "a convincing rationalization" (Li, 2007: 51). Surveys and polls concerning public attitudes toward Arabs and Muslims (Aslan, 2011; Karim, 1997; Li, 2007) show that prejudice against the East has gained increasing acceptability in Western societies.

The themes of violence and militancy are commonly associated with Muslims (e.g., Byng, 2010; Eid, 2007; 2009; Haque, 2010; Henry, 2010; Jiwani, 2004; Karim, 2003; 2002; Mack, 1999). Media reporting of 9/11, terrorism, the Islamic faith, and other topics related to Muslims reveal a dramatic increase in the use of stereotypes and discriminatory rhetoric (Akter, 2010; Dakroury, 2008; Eid, 2008; Eid & Khan, 2011; Saleh, 2009; Steuter & Wills, 2009). Such coverage frequently relates the teachings of Islam to terrorism, destruction, and conflict. Through false assertions, distortions, and the presentation of fringe elements, dominant media discourses tend to portray incidents, such as honour-related, protest-related and terrorist violence, as being representative of Muslim tendencies. The adherents of Islam are also often portrayed as villainous assassins, kidnappers, hostages, and/or terrorists in film, television drama, and computer games. As well, Islamic law and tradition are often portrayed as drivers of violence.

The tendency to label Muslims as terrorists has grown steadily over the last three decades. In the years following 9/11 there has been a stream of media content that depicts explicit links between terrorism and Islam (Caidi & MacDonald, 2008). For example, Canadian media coverage of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq has reinforced the broader political framing of Muslims as terrorists, mobilizing other negative metaphors and representations that fabricate an "enemy versus the West" dichotomy (Steuter & Wills, 2009). Islamic law, Qur'an, Muslim prayer and religious education are presented as fundamental parts of terrorist training. Whereas some extremists with Muslims backgrounds have used certain places of worship for their purposes, the tendency in some media discourses has been to allege that most mosques are centers for terrorist planning and fundraising (e.g., Awan et al., 2007; Cañas, 2008; McConnell, 2003).

9/11 Lessons (Not) Learned

Nelles (2008) argues that the American Cold War public diplomacy strategy was adapted after 9/11 in relation to national security interests, fears, and desires. He examines the differences, similarities, and debates in Canadian media, policy documents and academia, in response to American political, economic, and military pressures or demands for a North American security approach. Nelles claims that contemporary public diplomacy has been a dubious, pseudo-educational, fear-mongering vehicle nurtured by academics, politicians, and military leaders as part of an American foreign policy, military security, and propaganda strategy. He further suggests that following 9/11, Canada's own public diplomacy policies have been used to serve American interests.

The events of 9/11 shaped a social climate in Canada that encouraged fear of Muslims through violent stereotypes that proliferated in the media, often linking terrorism and Islam (Bramadat & Seljak, 2005). Negative representations of Muslims post-9/11 have been commonly justified by a desire to protect and communicate patriotism in the U.S., with similar attitudes influencing media discourse in Canada. In this, some media practitioners fail to uphold even the pretence of objectivity, raising serious questions about mainstream media's adherence to professional and ethical standards of journalism. Government claims were taken at face value about the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq (Ackerman, 2003). The willingness to believe the worst about the Muslim other most likely enhanced the climate in which there was a lax attitude to fact checking (Steuter & Wills, 2009).

The reaction to the 9/11 attacks had a negative influence on public perceptions of immigration (Esses, Dovidio & Hodson, 2002). The attacks increased feelings of vulnerability and fear while strengthening the sense of national identity and belonging in relation to in-groups versus out-groups. Media focus on the attacks as a threat to Canadian and American values and freedom has had a negative influence on public perception and has narrowed the view of collective belonging. Those perceived to be foreigners, especially those who are thought to be Arab or Muslim, have experienced increased fear and anxiety. Research indicates the influence of government policy and legislation on the practice of racial profiling (e.g., Adelman, 2002; CAIR-CAN, 2004; Kruger, Mulder & Korenic, 2004; Pratt & Thompson, 2008; Razack, 2008).

Although Hanniman (2008) maintains that the RCMP has been attempting to use community policing principles to create trust within "the Muslim-Canadian community", the literature suggests that the rise in anti-Muslim racism or "Islamophobia" has not abated since 9/11, leading to a furthering of the isolation and marginalization of Canada's Muslim citizens

and residents that predates the terrorist attacks in the U.S. (Karim, 1997; 2003). Pratt and Thompson (2008) investigated the Canadian Border Services Agency's (CBSA) claim that racial profiling does not occur and revealed how this racialized practice did indeed take place at land border crossings in Canada. They noted that the vague definition of racial profiling might be the source of the problem; it has led to the increased acceptance of nationality-based criminal profiles and a furthering of the practice of racialization while simultaneously continuing to deny the existence of racial profiling. Through a series of 60 interviews with frontline border officers, superintendents and senior officials between June 2002 and November 2004, the authors identified a "masculinist and chivalrous logic" in the gendered discourse of the CBSA. A thoroughgoing ambiguity surrounds the very meaning of racial profiling at the border. Pratt and Thompson (2008) noted one Canadian study and three studies outside of Canada that have thoroughly investigated the operations of border agencies.

Racialized risk knowledges are transferred/transmitted through individualized biased experience, official "expert" knowledge (e.g., CSIS and immigration intelligence via specialized training sessions), "look out" advisories, special alerts, office postings, newsletter items and word of mouth. Still, the reverse process happens as well where the CBSA provides information about certain individuals or border-related risks to intelligence services. Provisions for the use of information derived from informants are also written into policy. Post-9/11, the CBSA received many special reports and look out advisories for terrorists with photographs, names and descriptions; official briefings with "risk" nationality data; and "cultural sensitivity" training that racializes others as exotic, strange and/or dangerous to "know what you are against". The interviews conducted reveal that the CBSA profiles individuals based on physical appearance (a more widely considered notion of race) and nationality. Those working in the CBSA are influenced by mediated information in relation to terrorism, especially when related to 9/11, as are those in CSIS who provide terrorist information to CBSA and vice versa. As such, a critical area for future research would be to consider the impact of this information and that of the media as a whole on CBSA and CSIS behaviours and attitudes in relation to racialized practices such as racial profiling. (Eid, 2009).

Above all, an area on which there is very little research is the civilizational and cultural engagement between Western and Muslim societies. Academics, policymakers and journalists have a sorely inadequate understanding of how the two interact with each other despite the significant presence of Muslims in the West and Westerners in majority-Muslim countries. There is a widespread tendency to view the Other with suspicion, although this is not a universal attitude. The rifts between Self and Other on both sides have been widened during the last decade of the "war on terror". George W. Bush remarked after 9/11 that it marked the beginning of a long war. Sadly, he was right; but he probably underestimated how long the war would last. As hatred between the antagonists has continued to grow, one wonders if the war will rage for another ten, twenty, or hundred years. It will not be ended by military or security measures alone—substantial effort has to be made in understanding the Other in order to understand the motivations and actions and to move towards a genuine and lasting peace. We have not started doing that seriously as yet.

In this Issue

The Fall 2011 issue of the *Global Media Journal -- Canadian Edition* (GMJ -- CE) focuses on the role of communication and media in conflicts and conflict resolution since 9/11. The refereed

papers section of this issue opens with a paper titled "Trapped in the Carceral Net: Race, Gender, and the 'War on Terror'", in which Yasmin Jiwani argues that a series of security measures were aimed at keeping out potential terrorists and neutralizing potential terrorist activities. However, many were also aimed at citizens within the nation, legitimizing their exclusion and denial of rights. Jiwani explains that race, class, and gender intersect and interlock to construct particular representations of victimhood as demonstrated by contemporary media representations of Muslim women.

On the latter topic, Faiza Hirji investigates the framing of Muslim women in popular television entertainment. In her paper "Through the Looking Glass: Muslim Women on Television—An Analysis of *24*, *Lost*, and *Little Mosque on the Prairie*", Hirji argues that in the ten years after 9/11 media discourses regarding Muslims have changed superficially while essentializing stereotypes have been reinforced for the general public.

Elizabeth Poole, in her paper titled "Change and Continuity in the Representation of British Muslims Before and After 9/11: The UK Context", examines the British press representation of British Muslims over a 15 year period. The paper shows how this represents a continuation of processes that became more visible following 9/11 whilst also documenting the changes.

Examining a 9/11 photograph that triggered some revealing debate in the United States about what 9/11 images "should" show, Dan Fleming describes a contemporary "Machiavellian moment" in which civic humanist ideals turn out to deny a reality that the image briefly hinted at. "The Talk of the Town: 9/11, the Lost Image, and the Machiavellian Moment" argues for the necessity of hearing a different conversation that is discernibly "out there" in order to have a better understanding of the materialization of affect in images and speech acts.

Charles A. Hays' paper, "The 9/11 Decade: Social Imaginary and Healing Virtual Community Fracture", looks at two online community groups using Usenet, showing that while community members acted out their shock and horror, they also acted out the process of repairing the radical fracture to their virtual communal identity. Hays argues that the process of community repair is very much driven by the culture inherent in the sodality represented by the participants to each newsgroup.

Finally, "Making Friends in Dark Shadows", by Andrew Chomik, explains how 9/11 demonstrates the failure of the U.S. intelligence community in communication and cooperation. Chomik argues that agencies with the community failed to "connect the dots" by not collaborating in intelligence gathering efforts, which resulted in severe gaps in data sharing that eventually contributed to the terrorist attack. As a result, the U.S. intelligence community has made organizational and operational changes to intelligence gathering and sharing. However, the paper identifies the challenges and recommends improvements.

In addition to the above six refereed papers, this issue of GMJ -- CE has a review section that includes a review article, a DVD review, and two book reviews.

In his review article, "Les défis traductifs de l'islam post-11/9", Salah Basalamah reviews the books: *Islam et modernité: Identités entre mairie et mosquée* (2010), *L'islam sera spirituel ou ne sera plus* (2009), *L'islam sans soumission: Pour un existentialisme musulman* (2008), *L'islamisme à l'heure d'Al-Qaïda: Réislamisation, modernisation, radicalisations* (2005), and *Les musulmans d'Occident et l'avenir de l'islam* (2003). As well, a DVD review by Ella Ruth Anaya shows how the series of short films *September 11: 11 Directors, 11 Stories, 1 Film* (2002) portrays people engaged in their regular routines, intercepted by the news of 9/11, portraying their global experiences and interpretations of this singular day and the impact of this horrific

event. Finally, Vinita Srivastava reviews *Dreaming in Canadian: South Asian Youth, Bollywood and Belonging* (2010) and Karim H. Karim reviews *No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam* (2011).

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