

Interview 26

This interview was conducted by The Middle East and Middle Eastern American Center (MEMEAC) of The Graduate Center, City University of New York (June 2002 – June 2003)

Gender of respondent: Female

Age: 29

Q. Initially I'd like to start asking you a few questions about yourself. Where were you born?

A. I was born in New York.

Q. Where did you grow up?

A. I grew up in Manhattan.

Q. Where were your parents born?

A. My father was born in Iraq and my mother was born in Cuba.

Q. What would you consider to be your ethnic background?

A. Both Arab and Latino.

Q. What is your religious affiliation?

A. I'm Muslim.

Q. I'm just going to ask you about your parents as well. Were they born in the U.S.?

A. No. My father was born in Iraq and came later in his life. And the same thing ... My mother was born in Cuba and came at least in her twenties.

Q. I'm only asking this question to see if you're second generation or third generation American. Given your information, you are second generation. How old are you now?

A. I'm twenty-nine.

Q. What is your highest level of education?

A. I have completed a Master's degree and I'm currently working on a Ph.D.

Q. What year did you receive your Master's?

A. In [removed].

Q. And in what?

A. [removed].

Q. And where did you obtain your education?

A. At [removed].

Q. What is your main occupation currently?

A. Graduate student.

Q. And what is your marital status.

A. Engaged.

Q. Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about how you experienced September 11th. Where were you on that day around 9am?

A. On that day I was in Spain, in Madrid, visiting a friend of mine who lives there. And we were walking the streets going shopping. We were in a shoe store and we heard ... we actually saw people frozen listening to the radio. And we listened in to the radio and it said that a plane had crashed into the World Trade Center. And so we went looking for a television to see what had happened. And we ended up in a TV store and the whole store was crowded with people and there were TVs everywhere. And we stood there watching as the second plane hit and as the news came in as well.

Q. What was your first reaction?

A. My first reaction? I had many emotions at the same time. At first it was very personal since I was born and raised in New York I felt like--you know--my hometown was being attacked. But I guess my first reaction in feeling that my hometown was attacked was anger at the U.S. government because I felt like ... at first I felt like it was their fault. I felt like, of course this was going to happen at some point. I remember during the Gulf War I had a feeling that something would happen in the U.S. and I felt like finally something did happen; that after the U.S. had gone to so many places and killed so many people that we can't live here expecting that nothing would ever happen to us. I was watching the TV screen totally horrified and crying and upset and feeling it personal. That's my home and they're bombing. But at the same time I felt like this was bound to happen at some point. You can't just go around the world killing people and expect nothing to ever happen here. So I had many simultaneous emotions. But really my first was at the ... at the U.S.

Q. What else did you feel? What were your feelings about what happened immediately afterwards?

A. Afterwards I felt anger at the terrorists 'cause all of a sudden I felt like, Oh my God, all ... what's going to happen to the Arabs and Muslims in ... in the U.S. now. So at first I felt angry towards the U.S. and then afterwards I felt angry towards the terrorists because I felt like they were putting Arabs and Muslims in jeopardy. And also in ... in Madrid I was actually visiting an American friend of mine--a white American friend--who lives in Madrid right now and much of her perspective seemed to echo what a lot of people in the U.S. were saying, such as why is this happening and ... so I also felt very ... guess I just ... I just felt very sad to see this happening. And I was worried that people that I knew might have been at the building, praying that no one I knew died. But I felt really also

angry towards the media for the way it was represented and to ... including my friend who I love, but to a lot of white people who didn't really understand or see my perspective. They just thought why did this happen. The U.S. is good, and so on and so forth.

Q. Was guilt involved because Arabs or Muslims were involved in the attack?

A. When it was happening ... I don't know if I would call it guilt. I ... I was praying. I said: please don't let this be an Arab or a Muslim, please, please, please, 'cause it's the last thing that Arabs and Muslims need to deal with right now, to be associated with such a horrible thing when already Arabs are...

Q. This was before you found out that the terrorists...

A. Yes ... Like, while I was watching it I said please, I hope these aren't Arabs or Muslims. On the news already they were saying Bin Laddin, and I was saying I hope that's not who it is and I hope it's not ... And then I found out that it was.... I felt ... anger at them for putting Arabs and Muslims in jeopardy and associating us with that and all--you know ... I mean, for years Arabs and Muslims have had to deal with bad stereotypes but now it seems like the stereotypes that Americans have of Arabs and Muslims were confirmed.

Q. Have your feelings changed since the events?

A. My feelings really haven't changed much since the event. I just ... since the events, I ... I guess I feel ... I mean, I'm not really surprised at how the media has dealt with this but I feel more-- I'll use the word anger again--anger at the media for...

Q. More anger?

A. Yeah, at the media for representing what happened as the greatest human tragedy ever. It's like I've met a lot of people who really believe that it's the worst thing that's ever happened. And while I feel deep sadness and I do feel like it's a horrible think people die all over the world. Horrible things happen all over the world and I feel like this is just a small taste that we got of how other people live. Even this past weekend I had a cousin who was here from the Cuban side of the family. She was twenty-one years old and she was talking about September 11th and she was saying how she thought it was the worst humans tragedy ever. And I said to her, "Ever ... I mean, this is nothing. Three thousand people dying is nothing compared to what's happened in all parts of the world. This is really. We don't know what tragedy is here."

Q. What would you say your most vivid memory of September 11th is? Is there anything that stands out in your mind that you'll never forget?

A. I definite have a ... an image of standing in the TV store and hearing about the second plane and the third and the fourth and just wondering how many more there were, and feeling really scared. And I guess I'll also never forget being with my friend, who is one of my closest friends, and that feeling of having such different perspectives, experiencing September 11th completely different from how she experienced it. Even when I said to her, "Oh my God! What's going to happen to Arabs and Muslims?" she said, "Why are you worried about that? You know? People aren't like that any more. They're ... Arabs and Muslims are going to be fine." And she had so much hope and faith for people in this country and she didn't think anything... .

Q. What was her ethnic background?

A. She's white from Connecticut. So I the images that stay in my mind is really just being in that TV store watching it happen, feeling really scared and wondering where my family was, wondering where people were, and the divide that I felt with one of my closest friends. And being far away from home with her and experiencing the event so drastically different. And I think because of our backgrounds, our ethnic backgrounds, we experienced it differently.

Q. Did you discuss this with her?

A. We did.

Q. And what was her reaction?

A. She was actually very open to hearing what I had to say. And interestingly, a day or two later she was speaking to her mother on the phone, and her mother is a fourth grade teacher in Connecticut, and her mother was saying, "I don't know what to say to my students. My students want to know why this happened and I don't know why this happened." And all of a sudden I hear my friend saying to her Mom, "Mom, do you even know what the U.S. does? Have you ever looked at U.S. policy in Israel." And she was saying all these things to her Mom! I said wow! No. But she listens to me. That's why we get along despite our differences.

Q. When Americans asked you about your ethnic background and origin before September 11th what did you tell them?

A. I used to tell them that I'm Arab, Latino, Muslim.

Q. And what about immediately afterwards?

A. Afterwards I avoided going out for a while. When I returned to the States I don't ... felt really scared to go out. I felt like I don't know ... I guess especially since I am mixed.

Most people say I look Arab but sometimes I have no idea--you know-- ... I wasn't sure how identifiable I am and I just felt really scared going out and...

Q. What were you scared of?

A. I had heard of all the hate crimes that were going on and although there seemed to be less in--you know--in my area--I was ... I was living in Oakland at the time there were a few instances in Oakland, at convenience stores, and so on, of basically hate crimes, mainly verbal. But I was really scared to go out and I could feel hated or experience hatred from other people. And I had an ... an Egyptian friend who was living near me and we would go out together whenever we went out. But I avoided going outside and I really ... You know, before September 11th I really felt strongly that I was both Arab and Latino and after September 11th I felt like an Arab Muslim, like my connection to my Latino identity ... I just felt ... all of a sudden I just felt so Arab and so Muslim and so identifiably Arab and Muslim and I ... I mean, even now I feel, although I do identify with being Cuban and with my Cuban family, I ... I have to admit I experienced less of a connection there.

Q. Why do you think that is?

A. I think probably 'cause when I'm in public and I am identifiably Arab, it's not like people are, like, Oh both. They identify me as Arab and Muslim. And also because my Latino side of the family, they couldn't really relate to what I was experiencing. They also have really bad stereotypes of Arabs. They don't like Arabs. They don't trust Arabs. They think Muslim ... Islam is a bad religion. So I guess amidst all of that I couldn't exactly turn to my Latino family to talk to them about how I was feeling and I was able to identify more with what Arabs and Muslims or dealing with my Arab side of the family.

Q. So this is a personal choice on your part in terms of... .

A. It doesn't feel like a choice. It felt like ... I mean, it was certainly a choice not to speak to them about what was going on 'cause I know how they think. It was a very odd phenomenon that all of a sudden I just ... I felt so Arab and so Muslim when my whole life I was, like both equally ... and I 'm not just ... just acting that way, I guess, just I had a stronger identification with Arabs and Muslims and what Arabs and Muslims have been going through ever since then.

Q. How do you feel about that though?

A. How do I feel about that? Well, I mean, it feels good to have strong ... a specific strong connection to Arabs and Muslim now, but at the same time--you know--such a horrible situation to encourage this feeling. And this is happening because of discrimination and alienation from U.S. society and ... But at the same time, I guess, in a positive light I do feel more accepted by Arabs and Muslims since September 11th. Whereas in the past it was Oh, but she's not all Arab and she's not fully Arab. And ever since then I feel like that that's not really an issue or a question when I meet Arabs and that they are more accepting of...

Q. They're more accepting of you now than they were before?

A. Yes. More unity. Like, in crisis people were able to get together and be more accepting.

Q. Have your feelings toward the United States changed since 9-11?

A. I don't think so. I feel that--you know--for a long time I haven't been pleased with U.S. I always thought the U.S. was ... abused its power in other countries. And, one of my feelings on September 11th was that I was surprised it didn't happen sooner considering

U.S. actions in other countries for so many years. But no, my feelings haven't really changed much since September 11th. I guess my feelings have been confirmed more than anything.

Q. Can you briefly describe ... I mean, you already mentioned a little about U.S. foreign policy basically. Can you describe how your feelings have been cemented?

A. I guess since I'm aware of, for example, U.S. support of Israel or a long history of ... I feel like in all parts of the world, or, for example, the sanctions in Iraq and them bombing of the Iraqi people, that for years I've known that the U.S., for example, perpetuates violence other people, kills other people. And this, in a sense, I saw it as karma: that what the U.S. does in other countries finally came home on our ground. And so I didn't really see it as a lot of other people saw it as why is this happening, and this isolated incident, and we're innocent people in the U.S. Some evil people came along and bombed innocent people. I see the U.S. government as very guilty in practicing horrible things in other countries. So when this happened I felt like it confirmed ... Other people die. Other people feel the effects of the U.S. this is a retaliation.

Q. What is your reaction to the U.S. reaction in terms of...

A. My reaction to the U.S. reaction? You mean, the U.S. also positioning themselves as innocent and...

Q. Yeah. To that and to how it reacted to the attacks?

A. Oh. I did not at all agree with how the U.S. responded. Unfortunately, George Bush's response became the source of many jokes ... saying we're going to hunt out ... hunt him out of his hole, and whatever else he said. But I did not at all agree. I feel like they also misled the American public in believing that ... even though they tried to, on certain

occasions, say this is not Islam, I feel like overall the way it was handled conformed that Islam is some kind of crazy religion and confirmed a huge separation between who Arabs are and who Americans are. And also Afghani people after being there and after Bin Laddin. But I did not at all agree.

Q. Do you feel a sense of belonging to the United States?

A. This is a tough question because I do and I don't. I can't say yes entirely and I can't say no entirely. I feel like I was born and raised here. I never felt ... growing up I never felt American. I felt like a New Yorker as opposed to an American 'cause I always associated America with being a white American from the middle of America. But it is my home. I was born and raised here. When I go to the Middle East, although I feel a sense of identification, it doesn't feel like home to me. So I feel like I cannot deny that the U.S. is my home. But it's very difficult to claim it in the same way that white Americans claim it. I feel like for years America has been associated with white ... with being white American, and so it's been hard for other Americans to also claim being American in the same way, especially when Arabs and Islam are demonized. So I ... I have to say that the United States is my home but I don't feel the same sense of belonging that other Americans are entitled to feeling.

Q. What do you think needs to change for you to feel like you belong here, like this is your home, or to claim it as other Americans claim it?

A. I feel like there would definitely have to be more of an understanding of Islam and more inclusion of Arabs. What I found particularly interesting since September 11th is that before September 11th Americans ... the world America in my mind was associated with white Americans, and all people of color were struggling to be included as

Americans, whether they were African-American or Latin they were ... they weren't really American. They were hyphenated Americans. They weren't as American as white Americans. And then after September 11th, all of a sudden American in my eyes, it was re-signified. All of a sudden African-Americans were Americans, Latinos were Americans, Asian-Americans were American. Everybody was American except Arabs. and it seems like for the first time there was progress in that people of color were included in being an American but that it was defined against Arabs and Muslims. So it would be nice if somehow Americans really was ... like, the idea of being American really was inclusive of the diversity that actually live in this country.

Q. You mentioned that all the other minority groups all of a sudden became American. Do you think Arabs were left out because of their choice or because they were excluded from that?

A. I feel that they were excluded from that. I feel that since Arabs were the enemy, since Bin Laddin is Arab and Muslim and he was the enemy at the time that it gave the opportunity for other people of color who are usually criminalized-- African-Americans are usually seen as drug dealers, criminals and Latinos are seen as illegal aliens, --all of a sudden all of the bad stereotypes that they had associated with them didn't matter. They were American too. They were part of the struggle, and it was Arabs who were excluded in order to define the rest of the people as Americans. So I don't think it was a choice on the part of Arabs. I feel that Arabs were deliberately were excluded and that it really did give an opportunity for other people of color to become included for the first time.

Q. Do you think that there's been a change in the way people from the Middle East in the U.S. are treated since 9-11?

A. I feel like people from the Middle East in the U.S. have long been dealing with racism but that since September 11th it's just become more obvious, more on the surface, perhaps more instances. But I feel like it's gone from being something covert, not really addressed, not being talked about, to being something more overt and something that we can address and talk about. In the past racism has been associated with the other groups, African-Americans and Asians and Latinos, and, I mean, especially since Arab-Americans aren't or Arabs aren't a recognized minority in the U.S. oftentimes when we talk about racism we don't talk about Arabs in that way. And I see that since September 11th we can address the racism that Arabs face.

Q. Do you think that we have?

A. I think we have begun, but I think we have a long way to go.

Q. Have you personally experienced any backlash after 9-11 such as harassment, racial profiling or discrimination?

A. I feel that personally, I have not. I mean, at the airports sure I get stopped and searched but. Sometimes I feel it's because I'm Arab, but I don't get stopped ... I travel a lot and it's really fifty/fifty when I get stopped. And so it's hard to tell if it's just general security or if it's specific. I can't ... I can't really say that it's specific. So personally I ... I can't say that I've had any particular harassment or backlash.

Q. Have any member of your family experienced backlash?

A. I do have [name removed], one of which is a [removed], and he was in Turkey during September 11th. And so when he came back into the country as a [removed]--he lives in [removed], which I think is where the training school was for the terrorists so he had a hard time coming back in. But he was just stopped at the airport, questioned for over six

hours, and then they let him go. And my parents have also ... I guess they've experienced more ... they've had a few instances where like standing on line for something, bumping into someone by accident and people saying to them go back to your country. So they've had a few instances whereas in the past they've been necessarily ... but they have been themselves in public and later sense of animosity.

Q. Can I ask you where they live that they experienced this?

A. They live in Miami now.

Q. Do you think that Middle Eastern organizations have been effective in handling the backlash against Arabs after 9-11?

A. No.

Q. Why?

A. I feel like the ... the main organization that I know about is the ADC and the last I heard about them was that they released a statement that they support the war on terror and I feel that, because I don't support the war on terror, I was a little bit dismayed that they would release such a statement. And I do know that a lot of Arabs after September 11th really felt the need to express solidarity and they didn't want to be excluded and left out and seen as the enemy, and they really had to work hard to claim we're on your side, we're with Americans. And it seems that maybe the ADC is doing that, but I wasn't happy with it ... with the statement supporting the war on terror. So ... and since that's the only Middle East organization that I feel is somewhat visible ... I mean, I really don't know which other ones are out there trying to or ... are as visible as they are, I ... I don't think that doing that is very active.

Q. Do you think that some organizations may have managed to organize or mobilize the community politically?

A. You know what? Yeah. I do think so. I do feel that September 11th did, again, I mean, crisis did promote solidarity. So I think that among mosques and different community organizations they did get people together and promote solidarity within the community in terms of relations with greater governmental institutions or making public statements, like the ADC, I don't think that that happened. But maybe more on a local level but not on a national level.

Q. Have you joined any ethnic or religious organizations since 9-11?

A. I did join the Arab Women's Solidarity Association. You finally found me. I joined them right after September 11th.

Q. Wow! How did you find out about them?

A. I went to a conference – a women of color conference –and I met some Arab American women there and they told me about the list and told me how to subscribe.

Q. What do you do on the list? Do you just receive and...

A. Yeah. Basically whoever's on the list they just send out articles if they think it's of interest, and have debates on articles. But more than anything it just feels nice to somehow be connected to a network of Arab women around the world even if I'm not directly speaking with them and just ... I don't know. Somehow it's comforting to be part of that.

Q. In your opinion, what do you think the nature of the relationship between your ethnic or religious group and others in the United States is at this time? I mean, you mentioned earlier how other minorities have become more American and the Arabs

have been left out. But do you think relations are more tolerant or harmonious than before 9-11 or are they more strained or oppositional?

A. I do think that they're more strained for Arabs. I feel like in the past--again I guess I'm repeating myself--but I believe and feel that in the past other minorities were rally in the spotlight of hate. For a long time African-Americans were really hated. For a long time Latinos had their turn. And all of a sudden it feels like it's Arabs turn; that there always has to be someone who is hated. It would be nice if all minorities would band together and form links with each other as opposed to ... I don't know. It seems to me that other minorities like African-Americans and Latinos, are relived that they're not the ones in the spotlight of hatred right now and instead of standing up to defend Arabs they're just kind of taking a back seat and saying: Phew! See? We're good people. They're the bad ones. So I feel that ethnic relations for Arabs are strained. Of course, it's true. Arabs never really as a group stood up or other minorities so, I mean, I don't necessarily expect the same ... I don't expect different right now.

Q. What do you think members of the Arab-American community can do to improve relations between the groups, --between ethnic or religious groups?

A. I think that ... that Arab-Americans could form links with other people of color.

Q. How?

A. Instead of sticking to one's own community and actually break out and establish greater solidarity with other minorities and see more of the similarities that I do feel that at all times someone is singled out. And so if we could acknowledge that similarity with other groups and form solidarity with them I think it would help.

Q. How do you think we can do that?

A. Well, I think on an ... on an individual level I think it's just really forming bonds with people outside of your own ethnic group. And then, in terms of organizations, organizations I think it's more ... easier for organizations. If you're in an Arab-American organization there are many organizations out there, African-American organizations, Latino organizations, --and on an organizational level it's much...

Q. Yeah. That was my next question. What do you think Arab- American organizations can do?

A. I think that they could really form links and do project with other ... whether it's other ethnic groups, other religious groups, and to just make that bond more ... and more visible as opposed to just ... I mean, I think it's very important to do work within your own community. But at times like these, I think it's important to make connections with other racial, ethnic and religious groups to work together against hatred, which again, Arabs aren't the only ones who've dealt with it. Every other minority group has so it would be important to make those kinds of connections.

Q. Given your understanding of the status of Middle Eastern immigrant groups in the United States after 9-11, would you encourage people from these countries to emigrate to the U.S.?

A. I don't think that ... I certainly would not encourage them to emigrate now. Perhaps in two years things will be better. But I don't even know if they would get in if they tried ... People who are here are being deported, and it seems that even if they ... if they tried, I don't know if they would get in right now. So I would definitely not encourage it.

Q. Why you would not encourage it?

A. I would not encourage it, not now; maybe in a few years, but not now.

Q. Why wouldn't you encourage them now?

A. Because I think that Arabs right now are in the spotlight of hatred. I think it would be very difficult for them to come, especially if you don't know the language, and to make a successful life for themselves ... have to find a job and an apartment and living. I think it would be more difficult now than it has been. And also 'cause I don't think they would be accepted to begin with, to get into the country. I just think it would be more difficult than ever right now to make a life here.

Q. We've talked about some of the negative consequences of 9-11. Do you think there were any positive consequences?

A. Like I said earlier, I think that in this moment of crisis that there has been greater solidarity amongst Arabs and Muslims. And again, in my own personal experience, I definitely feel ore solidarity and more acceptance, and I don't feel like people are picking on my not being one hundred percent Arab and speaking Spanish and not speaking Arabic. And I don't feel like people are scrutinizing me for that. And people seem to be more unified than before.

Q. Were you scrutinized for that before by Arabs?

A. Yeah. I do feel that way, that because I don't speak Arabic and I do speak Spanish, and because one parent is Arab and not both that it came down to... . Even within my Iraqi family ... in the family they, in the past, haven't seen me as fully part of them. And even after September 11th, within my family it just seems closer and more accepting of me as well. I can talk about experiences. You know, speaking of which, I do have an aunt who was visited by the FBI after September 11th.

Q. For what? Where did she live?

A. They just wanted to ask her some questions and...

Q. For what? They just picked her randomly?

A. I guess so because they got a phone call because they wanted to meet her immediately.

It wasn't like, we'll see you next week. It was: We want to come over tomorrow. They wanted to come to her house. She said, well, my ... my children are here. Let me just take my children to the neighbor. They said: No, no. We want the children there too so we can ask them questions. ... Her children are eight and ten.

Q. Where did she live?

A. In New Jersey.

Q. And what happened?

A. She said that she took down all of her paintings that looked Arab from the wall and hid them in the basement. And she said she'd like to present herself as American as possible. And they wanted to know when she came here, what her husband does for a living ... I guess ultimately they wanted to know if she has any association with terrorism.

Q. Was she in any organizations--any Arab organizations--or... .

A. Nothing. She is one of the many Arabs who would--you know-- refuse to be tape recorded or spoken to and wants to maintain her pro-American stance. So they came and they asked her many, many questions and left.

Q. Did she hear from them again?

A. She didn't hear from them again, just the one visit.

Q. Well, that's strange. Well, not strange now ... Do you think that there's been more visibility or an improved understanding of Middle Easterners or Muslims in the United States since 9-11?

A. I think that there has been a worse understanding since then. But the opportunity is there now to ... to change that. It just seems that really Islam is demonized. I don't know why that is that in this country they ... the Judeo-Christian tradition and they don't include Islam in that when Judaism and Christianity and Islam all came from the same one God. There just seems to be this distinction that's made that places Islam as being something completely different and horrible. I mean, I heard ... I heard on the news once that one of the best selling books since September 11th is the Koran. And I wasn't sure whether to be ... I thought if someone picked up the book on their own and reads it without any ... I don't know. It could go either way. So I think some people are more interested than they were before, more curious. And because of that I think there's a greater opportunity to teach and to change the bad associations.

Q. Do you think we've grabbed that opportunity to do that?

A. I think in some areas. For example, at UC Berkeley in the Ethnic Studies Department they've never offered anything Arab or Muslim, ever. And last semester for the first time they taught a course on Muslims in America. A graduate student taught it since they don't have faculty. And I was reading, I think yesterday or the day before yesterday in the *New York Times* about this huge controversy at the University of North Carolina, that they assigned a book on Islam to some students and the parents are objecting why they have to read about Islam. They should be reading about Christianity.

Q. This is a school or university?

A. University in North Carolina. So it seems that at least at certain universities the opportunity has n taken to actually educate people on Islam, since it's obvious that a lot of people do not know what it is, and I think that's the first good step. I mean, what else are people supposed to be doing at universities. They're supposed to be educating people. So it's nice to see the few examples where at certain universities people have taken the opportunity to educate people on something they don't know much about.

Q. Why do you think he attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon happened?

A. I really ... I really see it as karma. I see it as you did it to everyone else and it's going to come home to you someday too. That's really ... and regardless of ... of course, I disagree with Bin Laddin. I'm Muslim but I'm not his kind of Muslim. I don't agree with killing people, even if you're being killed. I don't ... I disagree with them, with the attacks. But regardless I just really have ... this is more of, like, an instinctual sense as opposed to an intellectual response, but I really feel karma. And that's how I felt the moment I watched the attacks happening, like, this is the U.S. karma. Going around the world killing all these people, it's going to come back and happen here.

Q. Did you think the Arabs or the Muslims in the Middle East hate America?

A. Do I think that they hate America? I think some do, not all. I think some do. There's a lot of Arabs in the Middle East think that U.S. is arrogant and the U.S. thinks they're the best. And a lot of the Arabs actually see what's happened to Palestinians, see what's happened to Iraqis, and they know that the U.S. has a lot to do with that. I think it ranges from seeing actual devastation to ... You know? For example, a lot of Muslims disagree

with the American life style here. So, yeah. I think that ... I mean, not all Arabs in the Middle East, but I think there's definitely a sense of animosity in the Middle East towards America.

Q. What do you think that the U.S. can do to resolve the problem of terrorism directed against it?

A. I think the U.S. can do several things. First is solving the Israel/Palestine issue and creating a Palestinian state. Ending the embargo of Iraq would be another thing. I think educating the public about Islam would also be important to the American public and just generally stopping its meddling in other countries and its assumption that they know what's best and that violence is the solution to solving the world's problems.

Q. Are there any other issues or points that you'd like to comment on which we haven't mentioned in this interview?

A. I don't think so. I think we covered everything on my mind at this point.

Q. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

A. You're welcome.