

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THIS BOOK HAS BEEN hard to research and harder to write. It would have been impossible without the enthusiasm and support of the many Muslim advocates and service providers who agreed to share their experiences and tell their stories, and who asked me probing and incisive questions in response to mine. I cannot name them but I hope they know that I am in awe of their courage and determination.

I have been blessed with a family that supports my work and makes my life beautiful. To my partner, Cemil, who is in competition with me over who writes the best acknowledgment: You have been there every step of the way; you have listened and read, commented and mirrored, admired and confirmed, and you have shared my outrage at the pain human beings inflict on each other every day. You are my rock in a world that scares me a little bit more every day—with you I will survive or go down fighting for what is just and beautiful. To Leyla, whose brilliant mind, sparkling wit, and generous love have fueled me in the darkest of times. And to Mehtap, whose heart is so big and whose courage to stand up for what is right seems endless, I think of you when I lose heart. Thank you, for another “Go, Mama, Go” poster for this book and for the one where every letter of my name is an amazing attribute: Joyful, Unstoppable, Loving, Intelligent, Amazing, Never Give Up, Excellent. My daughters are the reason for this work: I want the world to be a better place for them, a place that nurtures them to be their best selves and a place that is safer than it was for me. Recent political developments have both increased my worry for them and demonstrated what is possible when people unite for justice.

In the past few years I have lost several elders: my Papa, Bernhard Hammer, who instilled a love of books, languages, and learning in me; Onkel Hermi, Hermann Hammer, who shared stories and followed my academic career with pride; and ‘Ammu Jamil Shami, whose presence was always warm and full of heart and whose absence from the world is deeply felt. The loss of Fatima

Mernissi and Saba Mahmood, two giants in feminist Muslim women studies, has reminded me that life is fragile and that every day matters.

I am grateful for the support and friendship of several women who make the world livable: Saadia Yacoob is always there when I need encouragement and reminds me of the beauty of God's love. Kecia Ali has been on my side, luckily, since we first met, and I have admired her work and her courage for even longer. Aysha Hidayatullah allows me to doubt and to question and cares enough to check in on me when things are the worst. Homayra Ziad has been there for my tirades and with unfailing grace reminds me of what matters. Alison Kysia is the critical and supportive friend every scholar wishes for and this book would not have happened without her. Amal Equeiq sends me her poetry on postcards from the world and *za'tar* to remind me of Palestine. Megan Goodwin is often the audience I write for in my head and unfailingly and critically encourages me to dig deeper and try harder in the face of obstacles. Shannon Schorey has convinced me, for now, that theory lives in all kinds of places and that I have it in me. You all are proof that community is what we make it.

I think of sisterhood and lifting each other up in sharing in the struggle in and beyond the academy: Su'ad Abdul Khabeer, Donna Auston, Sylvia Chan-Malik, Rosemary Corbett, Sarah Eltantawi, Zareena Grewal, Shehnaz Haqqani, Sajida Jalalzai, Anne Joh, Sadaf Knight, Debra Majeed, Jerusha Rhodes, Shabana Mir, Fatima Seedat, Sa'diyya Shaikh, Laury Silvers, Riem Spielhaus, Naejeba Syeed, Farah Zeb, and many others.

I acknowledge my indebtedness to the work of Amina Wadud and Ziba Mir-Hosseini in this and my other academic and religious endeavors.

I am grateful for the friendship, occasional snark, and constant intellectual challenges that come from Michael Muhammad Knight—he has changed the way I think about our field and my place in it. Zaid Adhami reminds me that there are good men in the world and that honest debate can be at the core of ethical academic engagement. Carl Ernst, Omid Safi, Kambiz GhaneaBassiri, Edward Curtis, Zaheer Ali, and Mohammad Khalil have provided encouragement along the way and I am grateful for their presence in the field.

I am blessed to have had students who have become colleagues and friends over the years: Ilyse Morgenstein-Fuerst, Kathy Foody, Shailey Patel, Atiya Husain, Katie Merriman, Micah Hughes, Samah Choudhury, Hina Muneer-uddin, Alejandro Escalante, Barbara Sostaita, Becca Hendriksen, Israel Dominguez, and Samee Siddiqui. Micah was the only other person who voluntarily read the whole manuscript and provided helpful feedback even though I am

his advisor. The decolonial solidarity crew is always on my mind in these difficult times: Imani Wadud, Caleb Moreno, Israel Durham, Amal Egeiq, Saadia Yacoob, Zaid Adhami, and Jecca Namakkal.

It is customary to thank academic institutions for their support, and I acknowledge fellowship and leave support from George Mason University (GMU), the Institute for Arts and Humanities at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill, and the UNC Provost's Office, as well as from the Institute for Policy and Understanding in Washington, D.C. It has been extraordinarily difficult to find funding for this project, and my efforts have taught me much about academic priorities, engaged scholarship, and the prevalence of discomfort in talking about domestic violence. The Institutional Review Boards at both GMU and UNC made things difficult but also reminded me of my ethical responsibility toward my interlocutors.

I am thankful to Fred Appel, my editor at Princeton University Press, for working with me for years on this project, for his patience, and for his meaningful and erudite feedback that made the final book better. The two anonymous reviewers of this book helped me see my project more clearly, and I thank them for their thoughtful and detailed and yet overwhelmingly positive comments.

To those who have been victims of domestic violence and to those who are fighting to end domestic abuse: I see you. This book is dedicated to those who continue the struggle and to those who had to rest for a while.



## PEACEFUL FAMILIES

