

VIOLATING IN/VISIBILITIES

Honor Killings and Interlocking Surveillance(s)

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In 2009 the bodies of four women were discovered in a submerged vehicle in a section of the Rideau Canal in Kingston, Ontario. Three of the women were daughters of Mohammad Shafia, while the other, Rona Amir, was his first wife. In January 2012 Mohammad Shafia, his second wife, Tooba, and his son, Hamed, were convicted for the murders of the three young women — Zainab, Sahar, and Geeti Shafia (ages nineteen, seventeen, and thirteen, respectively) — as well as of Rona Amir (age fifty-two). Evidence indicated that all four women had been murdered prior to their submersion. The Crown (representing the State) argued that the murders were honor killings, a view buttressed by evidence from Mohammad Shafia, who, in wiretapped conversations with Tooba, had exclaimed that his daughters had “betrayed humankind, they betrayed Islam, they betrayed our religion and creed, they betrayed our tradition, they betrayed everything” (Appleby 2001a, A5), including his honor. The Crown’s assertion was countered by the Afghan embassy’s statement that honor killings are not a part of Afghan cultural traditions.¹ Despite this denial, the media continually framed the crime as an honor killing, sometimes surrounding the term with quotation marks as if to separate it out from the continuum of gendered violence that prevails in all countries. Media ac-

Panopticons and Synopticons

Within surveillance studies, Foucault's conceptualization of panopticism remains a central framework of analysis for scholars. While there has been much criticism of the overextension of this "paradigm" (see Haggerty 2006), my use of the concept of panopticism concerns the "circuits of communication" (Foucault 1995, 217) and their cumulative knowledge, which serves as a benchmark for how one "knows" the world and others within it. According to Foucault, panopticism is, "a functional mechanism that must improve the exercise of power by making it lighter, more rapid, more effective, a design of subtle coercion for a society to come" (ibid., 209). This power is evident in contemporary society with its pervasive mechanisms of surveillance ranging from identity cards and passports at borders to the security and traffic cameras populating urban landscapes (see Lyon 2006). It was these kinds of surveillance mechanisms that allowed the authorities to apprehend and arrest the Shafias and to decipher how the victims were murdered. Soon after the family reported that the women were missing, the police installed devices in the Shafia's vehicle, which allowed them to wiretap the private conversations between Mohammad and Tooba Yahya; cell-phone towers were used to locate Hamed Shafia's whereabouts on the night of the murders; and his laptop was examined for incriminating evidence. Similarly, forensic technology established that the women had been drowned, but it was unclear how or where. But it was the panoptic power of the mass media—especially the mainstream and commercial media that captured the murders—that marked the murders as an exceptional case signifying an impending Muslim threat.

The sheer amount of coverage of the Shafia trial through numerous media platforms ensured that it became instantaneously available to all. Individuals loaded videos of the murder scene, courthouse, and commentators on honor killings onto social-media platforms such as YouTube. These sites constitute what Thomas Mathiesen (2011) has called synopticons—allowing the many to see the few. In other words, the synopticon inverts the relation of the gaze inherent to the panopticon, resulting in what Mathiesen calls a "viewer society," wherein the acts of seeing and being seen, surveilling and being surveilled are coupled. Through the mass media, viewers are able to perceive actors across the social spectrum. In this case, the media coverage allowed Canadian audiences to view the Shafia trial, hear and read the witness testimonies, see the per-

petrators, and know the victims. As one columnist opined, "We've come to know such intimate and tender things about these girls and women, their belly button studs, their purple nail polish, the lushly romantic texts their forbidden boyfriends sent. . . . So-called honor killings are a crime against nature, against humanity, against family love and, above all else, against females" (Timson 2011, L3).

The continual focus on the Shafia case—both in print and electronic media—suggests that it operated within a field of visibility that promoted an actuarial gaze. Allen Feldman defines the actuarial gaze as the "visual organization and institutionalization of threat perception and prophylaxis, which cross cuts politics, public health, safety, policing, urban planning and media practice" (2005, 214). He contends that through the scopic regimes of the media, the carceral lattice enmeshing different subject populations is recrafted and visualized in a manner that "screens, repeats, and screens off shock and trauma" (ibid., 212–13). According to Feldman, issues of visibility and invisibility are structured into the actuarial gaze.

As much as it exposes and classifies, [the actuarial gaze] also creates zones of visual editing, structural invisibility, and *cordon sanitaire*, resulting in the decreasing capacity of surveilled, stigmatized and vulnerable groups, classified as risk-bearers, to make visible their social suffering, shrinking life-chances and human rights claims in the global public sphere. To the very degree that the traumatic realism of the state and media monopolizes truth-claiming about hazard, threat and violence over and against the everyday life experience of populations and spaces objectified as affected and infected by risk, human rights violations are rendered invisible or marginal. (Ibid., 213)

While Feldman describes the actuarial gaze in reference to the repeated and continuous circulation of images from the collapsing Twin Towers on September 11 to the widespread propagation of the tortured victims at Abu Ghraib, his analysis is also applicable to the gendering of surveillance. Using "shock and awe" tactics, the actuarial gaze makes visible violations of the moral order, acts of criminality, and other transgressions, but it erases from the public eye everyday violations of human rights, human suffering, and structured inequalities. In the Shafia case, the young women and Rona Amir (Mohammad Shafia's first wife) had, on numerous occasions, sought help. The young women had called on the authorities at school, and one of them had even sought refuge in a shel-

counts repeatedly mentioned the immigrant origins of the family, their Afghan cultural background, and their migration to several countries before settling in Canada. In contrast to the usual attention devoted to cases of femicide or filicide resulting from intimate partner violence, the media attention to this case signaled it as exemplary of the importation of the backward and barbaric practices of Muslim immigrants.

In this essay I argue that the media works as a surveillance system, identifying which bodies are worthy of attention and, in that process, highlighting cases that mark particular bodies and specific groups as unworthy of belonging to the nation, or as worthy victims who need to be saved from their own communities. In this sense, while surveillance studies as a field has often focused on the construction of risk as embodied by particular groups of men—as, for example, in the case of terrorists and illegal migrants—a feminist analysis suggests that a similar surveilling practice operates when it comes to women within these targeted and stigmatized groups. In the Shafia case, I contend, the extensive media coverage legitimized the surveillance of Muslim women under the pretext of protecting them from the presumed barbaric practices ascribed to Islam and the ultrapatriarchal proclivities of Muslim men, and in placing them under surveillance in these ways, resulted in the intensified policing of Muslim communities. The mediated emphasis on “honor killing” as a particularly exotic variant of femicide contributed to the hypervisibility of the Shafia case against the unstated and muted backdrop of the everyday gendered violence that women experience, or of the prevalent femicide of specific groups of women, including aboriginal women (Jiwani and Young 2006; Jiwani 2009). Rendering the Shafia murders as honor killings became a cipher for all the ideological baggage that is invoked in relation to Islam and Muslims, and it served as an ideological tool to further profile Muslim men as potential abusers and Muslim women as at heightened risk.

Mediating Femicide: Hypervisibility and Surveillance

Surveillance depends on regimes of visibility and invisibility (see Smith, this volume), making visible the potential threats that exist and using cues to profile potential threats. The mass media constitute a primary vehicle for making visible that which is regarded as a potential threat or for using the threat as an exemplar to discipline, regulate, and control those who are perceived as threatening the social, cultural, and political order.

On average, approximately 58 women are killed by their partners per year in Canada (Statistics Canada 2011). This equals approximately one femicide a week. Yet, while some of these murders are covered in local newspapers, they rarely achieve the intensity and extent of coverage devoted to the Shafia murders. In a recent study Dana M. Olwan (2013) reported that her search of the Canadian newsstand database that covers all Canadian media resulted in over 1,300 articles that dealt with the Shafia case. My search of femicide cases, over a six-and-a-half-year period (2005–2012), using the same database and focusing on one of the major Canadian national dailies, the *Globe and Mail*, turned up only 54 stories on femicides. My search terms included “murder and (women or woman) and (domestic violence).” In contrast, a search using the term “Shafia” over the same period of time netted 66 stories, of which 60 were specifically concerned with the trial coverage. Femicides tend to be invisibilized or accorded limited coverage, unless, of course, they involve long, sensational trials that focus on crimes regarded as alien to normative standards. Honor killing, as a category, fits that criterion, as do other aspects of the ten-week-long Shafia trial, which involved 58 witnesses and 162 exhibits.² My analysis is based on a close textual examination of the trial coverage as it was reported in the *Globe and Mail*, and is supplemented with insights gained from an examination of other media reports.

Existing studies document the low coverage accorded to accounts of domestic and sexual violence (Benedict 1992; Meyers, 1997), except in instances which involve murder or high-profile personalities. But even in these cases, much depends on the status and race of the victim (Dowler, Fleming, and Muzzatti 2006). As Carol A. Stabile (2006) demonstrates in her historical analysis of raced and gendered crimes, black victims seldom get the kind and extent of coverage that their white counterparts do. This finding is corroborated by Travis L. Dixon and Daniel Linz (2000) in their analysis of race and crime in television news. In the Canadian context, Scott Wortley (2002) notes the under-coverage of black female victims of violence, while Warren Goulding (2001) and Kristen Gilchrist (2010) demonstrate the lack of media attention given to aboriginal victims of gendered violence as compared to white victims of gendered violence. The panoptic power of mainstream media is critical in terms of not only defining what constitutes a crime, but, importantly, identifying victims deserving of societal attention and intervention. With the intensity of attention accorded to the Shafia case, clearly both the victims and perpetrators, though not white, were propelled into the limelight.

ter for a time so as to escape the abuse. Similarly, Rona Amir had continuously asked for help from a woman she knew in the United States, but nothing came of it (Appleby 2011b, A10). These instances of violence were rendered invisible in terms of media attention at the time they occurred. They didn't surface until the court trial, at which point they became fodder feeding into the stereotypical construction of the Muslim patriarch as an angry, oppressive tyrant.

Thresholds of In/Visibility: The Somatechnics of Difference

In the post-9/11 context the Muslim body became signified as the bearer of risk, carrying within it the threat of destruction—either through stealth weapons technologies, through the infiltration of Shariah laws, or through the presumed fecundity of Muslim women whose offspring threaten to invade the Western nation-state (Grewal 2003; Werbner 2007). Indeed, the furor and moral panic over the issue of Muslim women wearing the hijab and niqab in Europe, the United States, Canada, and Australia signify the condensed anxieties and fears about the possible invasion of Islam in the West, its incursion into and infiltration of the body politic, as well as its potential to engulf Western culture(s) (Razack 2008; J. W. Scott 2007; Zine 2009). Jasmin Zine (2009) effectively demonstrates how the tropes of “disciplining culture,” “death by culture,” and “death of culture” play into the coverage that Muslims, and especially Muslim women, receive in the dominant Western press. Each of these tropes relies on the disciplinary and surveilling power of the state, which identifies the specific cultures that are to be disciplined (through technologies of racial profiling for instance). The “death by culture” trope focuses on Muslim women's apparent vulnerability to the perceived violence of their cultures. Honor killings become a signifier of that particularity of violence seen as endemic to Islam. This again, through media coverage, provides a rationale for disciplining particular cultural groups. Finally, the trope of “death by culture” summons forth fears of invasion, of a nation being engulfed by recalcitrant minorities with deviant cultural and religious practices. All of this rests on the corporeality of the body—that which signals its difference.

In the Shafia trial coverage, these tropes were evident in the manner in which the press reports described both the victims and the perpetrators of the murders. For instance, the young women victims were consistently described as normal teenagers caught in a culture conflict with their ultrapatriarchal father and their Afghan Muslim upbringing. Their

aspirations to conform to dominant norms through the wearing of Western clothes and through heterosexual relations outside the familial context were consistently highlighted (Jiwani 2014). Thus, they were portrayed as victims of “death by culture”—implying that it was the cultural tradition of honor, as invested in them, that caused their death. The repeated circulation of these young women's photographs and “selfies” (self-photographs) in various poses, mostly in Western dress, made them seem more “like us” and hence elicited considerable sympathy from the audience.

At the same time, the reporting, through the panopticism of the media, served as a disciplining tool; it communicated to Afghan Canadian communities, as well as to other Muslims, that their communities were under surveillance and that femicides were not permitted in Canada. However, rather than this being a general condemnation of all kinds of femicides within any and all communities, it was the specificity of honor killings as associated with Muslim culture and Afghan traditions that were castigated as “un-Canadian” and therefore uncivilized. As the Ontario Superior Court judge Robert Maranger stated in his judgment, which was widely reported in the press: “It is difficult to conceive of a more despicable, more heinous crime. . . . [T]he apparent reason behind these cold-blooded, shameful murders was that the four completely innocent victims offended your completely twisted concept of honor . . . that has absolutely no place in any civilized society” (Bascaramurty and Freeze 2012, A1). The lead prosecutor, Gerard Laarhuis, in his statement to the media declared, “This verdict sends a very clear message about our Canadian values and the core principles in a free and democratic society that all Canadians enjoy and even visitors to Canada enjoy” (Appleby 2012, A6). The civilizational discourse is apparent in these quotes, as is the binary of Canada as progressive, egalitarian, and free of gender-based violence, in contrast to Afghanistan or other Muslim majority countries, which are cast as “uncivilized” and gender oppressive. But here again, femicide was not regarded as the root issue; the media instead constructed the Shafia murders as another sign of the importation of Islam with its presumed barbaric practices, a sign that represented a threat to an imagined community of white Canadian bodies.

We continually see commercial media and state attempts to distinguish between different kinds of violence against women through the representation of the Shafia murders as “honor killings.” As the feminist theorist Sherene Razack aptly notes,

A crime of honor is a crime originating in culture/race, whereas a crime of passion originates in gender (abstracted from all other considerations). A crime of honor thus involves body, emerging as it does as a cultural tradition, and a crime of gender is mind, a distinctly individualized practice born of deviancy and criminality. The honor/passion distinction not only obscures the cultural and community approval so many crimes against women have in majority culture, but it reifies Muslims as stuck in premodernity while Westerners have progressed as fully rational subjects with the capacity to choose moral actions, even if the choice is a bad one. (2008, 128)

Razack's insightful analysis demonstrates how cultural differences are freighted with the burden of gendered violence, absenting the responsibility for such violence and failing to note the prevalence of patriarchy in all societies. What makes the elision possible is the strategic use of cultural signifiers to demarcate and stigmatize particular groups or communities.

Signifiers attached to the bodies of those who are considered different are often used to mark cultural deviance. Joseph Pugliese refers to such culturally coded signifiers as somatechnics, which he defines as "the indissociable way in which the body of a subject is always already technologised and mediated by cultural inscriptions. In the West, this somatechnologisation of unassimilable culturalist difference can be seen to be operative across the broad spectrum of cultural artefacts inscribed by the sign 'Islam,' including the black beard, the hijab, the headscarf and the niqab" (2009, 13). The notion of somatechnics as techne related to the body returns our analytical focus back to the corporeal body "in which the body, the social-economic-political conditions of embodied subjectivity, and the relationship between the body and the body politic are taken as important sites of political struggles" (Salter 2006, 178). Here, corporeality is the site where relations of power are played out. Bodies that are absented from political considerations—from the field of power, as it were—are bodies whose corporeal presence is denuded of significance. These are the bodies that don't count in Judith Butler's (2004) terms, precarious bodies, bodies that are ungrievable. Precarious lives are often relegated to the zone of structured invisibility within the actuarial gaze. They only enter the realm of the panopticon or the synopticon when their visibility becomes corporeally coupled with threat; surveillance then becomes the technology by which such bodies are made visible, with that visibility

intimately tied to ways that these bodies are made vulnerable to state violence. Razack captures this connection elegantly when she writes, "The eviction of groups of people from political community begins with their difference, coded as an incomplete modernity that poses a threat to the nation" (2008, 84). That "incomplete modernity" comes through the surveillance of particular racialized and gendered communities. For example, this phenomenon occurs in the disproportionate media surveillance of Afghan communities in Canada—followed by allegations in press reports of Afghans as tribalistic, primitive, and atavistic. In the aftermath of the tragic events of September 11, the popular columnist Margaret Wente, for instance, described Afghans in the following way: "Those who are responsible are most likely men from remote desert lands. Men from ancient tribal cultures built on blood and revenge. Men whose unshakable beliefs and implacable hatreds go back many centuries farther than the United States and its young ideas of democracy, pluralism, and freedom" (2001, A1). Here, orientalism becomes the lens motivating the placement of these bodies under surveillance as well as the theory rendering them intelligible through the mass media. Edward Said (1978) identifies four dogmas of orientalism, of which the fourth one is particularly relevant in this context: "that the Orient is at bottom something either to be feared (the Yellow Peril, the Mongol hordes, the brown dominions) or to be controlled (by pacification, research and development, outright occupation whenever possible)" (1978, 300–301). Orientalism has legitimized, and continues to legitimize, violent surveillance technologies and practices aimed particularly at Muslims and others from the Middle East (Jiwani 2011; Magnet 2012; Razack 2008). In the trial reporting examined, the Muslim affiliation of the perpetrators was clearly identified through references to prayers, Afghanistan, and polygamy, whereas the victims were consistently portrayed as rebelling against this imposed identity and social requirements.

The trial press accounts also clearly identify the somatechnics of the perpetrators in ways that discursively demarcated them as different from the norm. Tooba Yahya Mohammad, for instance, was described in one account as "slight and pale, wearing a modest black tunic top over matching pants, cuffed at the wrist and ankle, her small chin quivered now and then, but she held it together—she is an Afghan, after all, tough and proud—until, as part of a court procedure, the prosecutor read aloud the names of her four surviving children" (Blatchford 2009, A2). As evident in

this quote, the somatechnology that Pugliese describes in terms of identifiable cultural artifacts, such as a hijab, were conspicuously absent. Instead, the somatechne used to demarcate difference is stereotypical attributes of Afghan culture—Afghans as “tough and proud,” reminding the reader of a famous orientalist poem by Kipling, “The Young British Soldier.”³ Nonetheless, there were photographs displayed in court that showed the young Shafia women wearing hijabs, demonstrating that somatechnes worked to position these young victims as simultaneously at risk of patriarchal Islam while remaining emblematic signifiers of the oppressiveness of Islam.

Pugliese further posits that the somatechnics of difference, where difference is signified as being unassimilable and as culturally foreign, result in a “prostheticized citizen subject” (2009, 21). The nonwhite body can never enjoy full or authentic citizenship; rather, it remains an other—conditionally tolerated, but never part of the body politic. Prosthetic citizenship can be taken away or withheld. It is never permanent. Whiteness as a racialized technology of power determines who can be granted citizenship and, with it, the security of belonging to the nation-state and of having rights that are recognized as rights and upheld within that body politic. The criteria by which specific bodies are seen as legitimate citizens as opposed to others who are denied such recognition rests on the race line (to use a term from Dubois about the ways in which U.S. culture is organized around a color line—that is, that white supremacy structures the U.S. polity according to race [1965/1999]).

Mohammad Shafia, his second wife, Tooba Yahya, and his son, Hamed, remain prosthetic citizens. One way in which the media ensured this status was through the constant reference to their immigrant status and origins. Indeed, a key point held against Mohammad Shafia was that he had immigrated into the country on the basis of his capital and investment in property. He had “bought his residency in Canada under the federal investor-immigrant program” (Appleby 2012, A6). As prostheticized citizens, then, their murders are located outside the realm of the normative—this, despite the reality that in the year preceding this quadruple murder, forty-five women were killed in Canada as a result of domestic violence (Statistics Canada 2011). Seen as others, the murderers’ “fit” within Canada as a sovereign state is questioned. They mark the border between “us” and “them.” Shades of Afghanistan, with its “primitive, tribal culture,” are invoked in this coverage, clearly demarcating the boundaries

between nations, cultures, and religions. It is, as Pugliese (2009) would suggest, a case of *compulsory visibility*.

The Aftermath

Rachel L. Finn’s (2011) study of surveillant staring (being stared at) experienced by South Asian women in the United States emphasizes the corporeal aspects of being subjected to the daily “citizen-to-citizen surveillance” that has resulted from the heightened focus on security issues post-9/11. Drawing from Sara Ahmed, Finn argues that the signifiers of cultural differences and their embodiment in “strangers”—discursively defined as inassimilable others—serve to demarcate racialized boundaries and homogenize differences within those regarded as strangers. She notes, “Surveillance is an *active social process* that reinforces the differential structural positioning of its targets” (2011, 424). In a sense, this kind of surveillance demonstrates the synoptic influence of the mass media. Convinced about what terrorists “look like” based on images and messages from the media, citizens then take it on themselves, with permission and encouragement from state authorities, to spy on others. Yet it is Finn’s argument about how the bodies of others become defined as racialized boundaries that is of interest here, for if bodies signify borders, then the threat of difference as an invasive force becomes that much more potent. Conversely, if bodies are seen as borders to be invaded, rather than as a threat, then these bodies signify borders that can be overcome, transcended with the might of state power.

In the Shafia case, both during the trial and after the verdict had been announced, the Canadian government granted \$2.8 million to antiviolence organizations to help them sensitize service providers to signs of potential honor killings (Olwan 2013). In Montreal the Shield of Athena, an organization that provides multilingual services to victims of domestic violence was granted a hefty \$350,000 to aid victims of honor crimes (Radio Canada 2012). Cultural sensitization becomes one way in which the state, through nonprofit organizations, carries out its surveillance of particular bodies. In contrast, as Olwan (2013) contends, organizations such as the aboriginal women’s organization Sisters of Spirit, along with many other aboriginal groups, were deprived of much-needed funding. These then represent the bodies that can be invaded or overcome and bodies that are precarious—that is, bodies that simply don’t count.

The notion of different bodies as constitutive of a boundary separating “us” from “them”—the watchers from the watched—offers a way to reconceptualize security and surveillance. In the first sense, it brings home the notion of the marked body as a threat where the threat is no longer abstract but corporealized, where surveillance becomes, as Finn remarks, “democratized,” making it a duty for all good citizens to maintain heightened vigilance to signs of deviant differences. Recasting the body as border makes apparent the spatial relations of power; thus, the visibility of the marked body operates against the invisibility of the unmarked body, which is the body in dominance (e.g., whiteness against blackness). Here, as Rachel Hall also argues in her contribution to this volume, the white body is normalized and acts as the standard against which the racialized body is compared, and against which its differences are accentuated and signified within particular frames of meaning. John Gabriel (1998) refers to this as the power of exnomination, where the nominated body is the profiled body, or as Hall suggests (this volume), the profiled body is opaque, impenetrable, and therefore always suspect. The nominated body thus represents the borders of the social order, and interactions with such a body come to represent transgressions which may be seen as impure and dangerous. Hence, the Muslim bodies that committed the “honor killing” come to be framed in the same manner—as polluting agents who threaten to destabilize the social order by engaging in a heinous crime. That crime, through nomination, is defined as “honor killing” and thereby abstracted from the more widespread and prevalent pattern of femicides.

Women, as Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis (1992) have underscored, are boundary markers in most ethnic groups. As women are reproducers of the nation, their role in upholding the moral order is a necessary foundation for the continuity of patriarchal power. However, where such patriarchal power has been defined as illegitimate and unacceptable (as in the case of Muslim men who are perceived as ultrapatriarchal), the potential exercise of such power is immediately put under surveillance. Witness, for instance, the state-mandated publications and workshops geared toward immigrant Muslim families in Europe. The stated aim of these is to inculcate in Muslim immigrants and refugees the proper norms regarding gender relations and sexual rights. The assumption that citizens at large customarily practice such egalitarian relations and equitable rights is simply taken for granted and rarely interrogated (Olwan 2013; Razack 2004). Shoshana Amielle Magnet (2011) discusses how the

border becomes outsourced, inscribed on bodies that are different and that reside elsewhere. Surveillance thus occurs outside the nation in order to preempt any threat from entering the nation. She argues that this strategy of outsourcing relies on racialized, gendered, and heteronormative logics. This is one form of “outsourcing the border,” as Magnet (2012) would describe it. The state-imposed criteria as to who can enter the borders of the nation state are installed in source countries to deter those who cannot or will not “fit” into the country of destination. The outsourcing of surveillance then works in conjunction with the in-sourcing of surveillance—through the provision of services and the sensitization of service providers who work with victims of honor killing. This, I would suggest, is surveillance with a small “s,” in contrast to Surveillance, which deploys state technologies to actively and overtly spy, contain, and discipline others (e.g., passport control).

Conclusion

Compared to the long-standing invisibility of gendered violence committed on the bodies of sex workers, transsexuals, and indigenous women, the violence of the Shafia murders hit the screen, shocking and awing audiences into a heightened awareness of the phenomena of honor killings. This particularly exotic variant of femicide assumed media currency for several identifiable reasons: it involved an Afghan family (with all the connotations of tribal and atavistic Afghan culture); those involved were Muslims (the current of Islamophobia being an inherent part of the orientalist lens of the mass media); and it violated middle-class norms of morality (as is the case with all crime stories). Shaima Ishaq (2010) has pointed out that, prior to 2001, there were two cases of familial homicides that resembled the Shafia case, but neither one was described as an honor killing. The salience of honor killings as a particular form of femicide is clearly a post-9/11 phenomenon in the West. Through the panoptic capacity of the mainstream media and the synopticons of social media, honor killings have become the cipher signaling Muslims and their cultures as a threat, thereby legitimizing the surveillance and profiling of Muslim women, men, and their communities.

Gender plays a crucial role in this context. The body of the Muslim woman is imbued with significations that define her as a threat but also as a *victim par excellence*. When women are cast as victims who need to be saved from “death by culture,” their bodies and the associated vulnera-

bility they face rationalize state-mediated interventions and the surveillance of Muslim men. Compulsory visibility thus informs us, as a viewer society, that the threat “they” represent needs to be kept at bay. “We,” as the citizen audience, are in turn tasked with surveillance of these others. In the meantime, the state outsources its surveillance to the countries where Muslim immigrants come from in order to manage and mold them to fit—albeit conditionally, as prostheticized citizens—into the Canadian body politic. Once, in the country, they are subjected to a democratized surveillance (surveillance with a small “s,” the surveillance of everyday life).

In the final analysis, it can be argued that race (with all its signifiers of difference) is the threshold calibrating visibility and invisibility, and by corollary, absence or presence in the actuarial gaze. However, power is implicit in structuring the relations whereby different groups of women and men become the objects of the actuarial gaze or are located outside of its glare.

Notes

1. “Hamed Shafia Begins Appeal of Murder Conviction,” *Globe and Mail*, 1 February 2012, A3. There is a debate among Muslim scholars about whether, in fact, honor killings are sanctioned by Islam. There is no mention of honor killings in the Qur’an, and the words that reference violence against women are ambiguous and open to interpretation (compare Ammar 2007; King 2009; R. M. Scott 2009).

2. The *Globe and Mail*, it should be noted, publishes sixteen newspapers across the country and is owned by the Thomson family (also owners of Thomson-Reuters) in partnership with Bell Media, a major media conglomerate. Hence, its stories are reproduced and often act as a catalyst for additional coverage on other media platforms.

3. Kipling’s poem was printed in the *Globe and Mail* in the immediate aftermath of September 11. The published extract privileges the following lines:

When you’re wounded and left
On Afghanistan’s plains,
And the women come out
To cut up what remains,
Just roll to your rifle
And Blow out your brains
An’ go to your Gawd
Like a soldier. (Barbar 2001, F4)

5

GENDER, RACE, AND AUTHENTICITY

Celebrity Women Tweeting for the Gaze

RACHEL E. DUBROFSKY AND MEGAN M. WOOD

While women’s bodies have long been objectified in popular media, social media raise new questions key to feminism about women’s agency and responsibility, since social-media platforms ostensibly empower women to operate the technologies that objectify and surveil them. Visual-media technologies—including surveillance technologies embedded in social media—are always already part of an objectifying process that has particular implications for gendered bodies. We look at popular tabloid coverage of women celebrities that feature their use of Twitter, specifically stories about celebrities posting pictures of themselves. What are the implications when women are presented as having agency (taking charge of how they are displayed), and therefore expressly complicit in the creation of the images that display their bodies? How might a critical feminist perspective, with a focus on surveillance, make sense of the gendered and racialized dimensions of visual social-media practices of self-representation?

Celebrities are a particularly salient focus since the celebrity body, as Imogen Tyler posits, “has become a central means through which contemporary social values are distributed and, through consumption, identification, and mimicry, become hardwired into everyday practices of subjectivity” (2011, 24). Discussions of female celebrity bodies are noth-