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THE BLOG

Museum of Intolerance

As a museum that espouses the values of tolerance, should you, the Museum of Tolerance, be promoting such an Islamophobic film?

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What is the first community, religion that comes to mind when you read female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM), forced marriages, and "honor killing"? African, Arab, Indians, or Muslims?

I bet it is "Muslim". I am especially interested to hear your comments if you thought "Muslim".



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["Making Waves"](#) is a documentary highlighting the positive changes taking place right now by the many anonymous folks working in their communities, villages in combating many of these social ills. One heartwarming story in this documentary is the successful collaboration of women activists in Ghana and the male imams of their villages who were challenged to prove the religious justification for FGM in the Quran. The imams took on the challenge and returned a few weeks later to acknowledge they couldn't. And so starts a re-education effort across their villages with the blessings of the imams themselves against FGM.

This is of course, a real positive story. Who cares, right? We all prefer negative stories, so here's a big bone for you.

Last month another documentary was released raising the same hideous issues, with all the subjects in this film represented by



atrocities muslim women suffer in the name of islam i.e. child/forced marriages, "honor killing" and FGM.

This documentary which I will rename "Dishonest Diaries" was produced by some very deep pockets whose names I'd rather not promote and was screened at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles as well as at a side event of the United Nations' Council on the Status of Women in March.

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This production, unlike "Making Waves," only rehashed the violence against Muslim women in the name of Islam without the other half of the story, that is, the many positive changes that have taken effect on the ground with Muslim women and men, including imams, working together in eradicating FGM and many social ills. It left out the many Muslim women's organizations all over the world who are the first in-line to fight back against child marriages and child rights. That half of the story was conveniently omitted.

Why? Is it because the producers did not have the funding to do a Google search? Do they not have the resources to make a call to the United Nations Development Fund and find out the other truths?

No. They are not interested in the full truth. Only in half of it, the half that depicts Muslims and Islam as evil.

I had the opportunity to attend the screening at the U.N. side event. During the question and answer session, I turned to the audience to



defined as between two adults of sound mind? The audience's response was a gasp. Wouldn't that have been an educational bit of information that would have helped in understanding the root of the problem -- the miseducation of Muslims about Islam. Shouldn't a documentary provide the full truth?

As a museum that espouses the values of tolerance, should you, the Museum of Tolerance, be promoting such an Islamophobic film? Wouldn't that be equivalent to me, the Muslim, supporting a film funded by anti-Semites purportedly supporting Jewish rights? Let me play fair and offend my own ilk: the equivalent of Saudi Arabia producing a film about human rights!

It is offensive on so many levels. Yes, let me offend you as you have to the hundreds of [Muslim women organizations](#) who have worked for decades against the practice of FGM, forced/child marriages and violence against women in general, and have themselves faced hardships, abuse and even death.

Surely you, the Museum of Tolerance are not naïve to realize that the funder of this documentary is one of the most anti-Muslim American institutions there is with funding up to \$18 million dollars solely for the purpose of demonizing ALL Muslims in America? Were you blind sided because you share the same donor base, who share the same intolerance of Muslims?

Surely you as a Jewish institution and the historical experiences from which you draw from are aware how effective sophisticated media propaganda are to inciting hate, spreading false truths, resulting in murder? Surely you recognize you are playing the same game, don't you?



convincing some of the muslim women into participating in your anti-Islam propaganda. Unlike other production companies whose corporate names are always proudly visible on promotional materials, your corporate name is no-where to be found. Had it not been for a small mistake by one of your administrators in soliciting Muslims for Progressive Values organization's support, I too would have made the mistake of supporting an ill-intended propaganda piece.

Day in and day out, many of us work toward building bridges with Jewish communities through dialogue, partnerships in community services, and even an [interfaith service](#). But a work that should reap an abundance of peace and understanding is crushed by the might of those who sow hate and mistrust and by those like the Museum of Tolerance, who nurture it.

To the Museum of Tolerance, I ask you, why do you compromise your moral standing by allowing yourself to participate and propagate such an intolerant perception of Islam?

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