

What Can a Husband Do About a Disobedient Wife?
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A month ago, an Iraqi woman was found on a roadside, beaten to death. A sign was pinned on her: \223Go back to your country, you terrorist.\224 There was immediate hand-wringing from good-hearted people, led by the Islamic American legal propagandists (CAIR), pointing to one more hate crime against American Muslims.

Because there have been very few American Muslims murdered by American thugs, my antennae went up. In short order, the police in El Cajon announced that the murderer, whom they arrested, was the woman\222s husband. What a surprise! The vast majority of Muslim women and girls murdered in this country meet their ends at the hands of their beloved families, not from American rednecks.

The suspect, Kassim Alhamidi, pleaded not guilty, but his daughter confirmed that her mother had suffered years of abuse and had wanted a divorce. The distraught daughter had a grievance herself. One day, shortly before her mother\222s murder, the young woman tried to throw herself out of the family car. She had been found in a car with a boy a year before and had endured the abuse of her father, who was planning to ship her to Iraq and an unwanted marriage to a first cousin.

What was the woman\222s sin in the eyes of her husband? Wanting a divorce, which would have brought \223shame\224 on him. A few years ago, another long-time immigrant American, this time of Pakistani origin, decapitated his wife in the office of the radio station that he owned for asking for a divorce. What is a husband to do with such disobedient women?

A good family friend of the El Cajon suspect, Qasim Alsady, went to the courthouse when Alhamidi was indicted, in a show of support for him. He told a reporter that divorce does happen in Iraq but is not common and is \223shocking.\224 He complained bitterly that \223It is totally different, this place. American women, they control everything. Back home it\222s different. A lot of women they don\222t understand. They try to own the man over here.\224

Yes, it would seem that way to him. It is not an easy thing for people to have to uproot themselves and move to another and very different country with not only a different language, but different customs and laws. Every immigrant family has to face problems with children, who often see their options differently than their elders. Girl children pay the highest price for these options and often lose out in the struggle. But the most pressing problem in these families is with wives, wives who once had no option but to put up with abuse; this has always been their fate in the old country and they expected nothing better.

However, even when husbands attempt to keep their wives from learning English or having exposure to other mores, American culture creeps in. How much better to get a divorce than to cooperate, as some women have, in torturing a disobedient daughter for defying her father\222s marriage plans for her. In Phoenix, recently, an Iraqi mother and father were indicted for the brutal beating and burning of their 20-year old daughter. Even the young woman\222s sister assisted in the brutality. All, alas, are only sentenced to two years of probation.

An author, Nina Burleigh, has written about the clash of cultures when females, Muslims in particular, try to exercise the choices that they see all around them in their new country. We Americans are reluctant to criticize other cultures lest we seem \223biased,\224 but it is time to finally recognize that certain cultural behaviors are poisonous. We do our immigrants no favors when we tip-toe around such issues. Immigrant women must be informed that there are battered women\222s shelters and helping hands available before their menfolk turn lethal.

Disobedience should not be a death sentence, and the American community must do a better job of integrating these immigrants and dismantling a bad cultural pattern.

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