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EON200



How *Ramy* Challenges Arab Stereotypes in American Media

A study of an Arab-American comedy drama

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Abstract

The portrayal of Arabs and Muslims in American film and television has been a lopsided affair since the beginnings of Hollywood movie production. Over the course of film and TV production during the twentieth century, and later, Hollywood and TV production companies has used the Arab as a negative trope to negatively stereotype them, or to elevate the perception of American characters in contrast to the presentation of the baser character of the Arab. The English language has been the language of colonial power all over the world. No less so in the Middle East and North African regions. The stereotypes created in colonial times, has continued throughout the English language Hollywood film and American television production.

When Arab American comedian, Ramy Youssef, created an English language television show in the present USA, the previous century's film and TV representation of Arabs is naturally something he has been exposed to. *Ramy* the TV-series is distributed to an American audience that chiefly speak the English language and have been raised on film and TV in America biased against the Arab. It necessitates Youssef to communicate criticism of the negative stereotypes in the English language. The aim of this study is to find out how Youssef's TV show *Ramy* shows the attitudes of its characters and how it meets the preexisting negative stereotypic representation of Arabs. I used aspects of Jeffersonian transcription, a subdiscipline of Conversation Analysis, a part of Discourse Analysis, to study and analyze the flow and tone of the conversations in *Ramy* the TV-series as Jeffersonian transcription is a tool that can reveal attitudes in conversation. The results show that *Ramy* the TV-series uses a style of conversation, similar to everyday and unrehearsed conversations in the English language, and that intonation, cadence, and emphasis are used to reveal the attitudes of the characters. The results also show that *Ramy* the TV-series individualizes Arabs and problematizes the representation of an ethnic group by a single character.

Keywords

Hollywood, TV, Arabs, Stereotypes, Discourse Analysis

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1 Introduction

Many Arabic language speakers have emigrated to the west from the MENA (Middle East and North African) region and settled in the USA. The Arab American community in the USA is an ethnic group of the US population (US Census). Historically, Arabic/Muslim characters in US film and TV have been predominantly portrayed as other, not part of the US national fabric; and Arab men have been portrayed as terrorists, insurgents, mercantile hagglers, or at best; colourful caricatures with agendas momentarily aligned with US characters' aims and goals, while Arab women have mostly been presented as repressed and silent sub-characters, or as over sexualized harem women and belly dancers (Shaheen, 2001). The female Arab terrorist, or colourful character temporarily aligned with US interests have become more common after the event of 9/11 (Nurullah, 2010). This otherization is something media producers in, or directed toward, the USA will have to overcome if the US media consumers are to see Arabic/Muslim characters as normal and varied a collection of individuals as the sum of white characters in cinema and TV produced in the USA today. The viewing habits of Arab American immigrants show that they choose to watch American TV mostly for entertainment reasons, and Arabic TV for information reasons (Rizkallah, 2011). The way entertainment-based TV programming in the USA represent Arab Americans will have an impact on how the general public perceives the ethnic group of Arab Americans, as well as how Arab Americans perceive how they are presented to the general viewing audience of American TV. I use American and USA interchangeably, because there is a mix of US and Canadian actors, producers, directors etc. in the traditionally ethnically white/Christian production of US film and TV.

I wanted to investigate an example of presenting Arab Americans in the USA. I decided to look at *Ramy*. *Ramy* is a TV-series on Hulu, an American subscription streaming service. *Ramy* is created by, and starring Ramy Youssef, a first-generation Arabic-American stand-up comedian with roots in Egypt. Because the TV-series is created by Youssef and presents as semi-autobiographical, I assumed he would attempt to present himself and his community. Youssef is the first mentioned producer in the credits, and as such has control over what goes into the show and how it is presented.

1.2 Aim and Research Questions

I was most interested in what way *Ramy* uses the English language to present Arab Americans and how *Ramy* tackles the negative stereotypes of Arabs prevalent in American film and TV production since 1921 as presented by Shaheen and others (Chaouch et al., 2011; Nurullah, 2010; Roberts, 2021; Shaheen, 2001) Stereotypes specifically generalize Arab women as being oppressed, or sexual objects; Arab men as being oppressive, unromantic, uneducated, terrorists, or sycophantic toward American goals. The aim of the study was to find out how *Ramy* – the TV series would tackle the negative stereotypes of Arabs in American media while performing its own story. Since the TV series is a scripted performance, the manner in which the prewritten text was performed could either increase, or lessen the impact of the literal words.

Ramy – the TV series is a show mainly performed in the English language, created by an Arab American, acted in by a largely Arabic cast, and taking place mostly in the USA, directed toward an audience exposed to the above-mentioned stereotypes, the show exists in that context and will have to act in relation to it. The importance of an English language Arab American show in America, about Arab- and White Americans, is partly in how the stereotypes against Arabs in America are handled by the show. Will it reinforce them, refute them, or something else? How *Ramy* – the TV series handles the stereotypes will have an impact on the likelihood of Arab Americans producing more TV shows, and whether or not Arabs will become regular non-stereotypical characters in American media in the future.

Therefore, I posed these research questions:

RQ1: How does *Ramy* – the TV-series show attitudes of Arab, Arab American, and non-Arab characters?

RQ2: For what purpose does *Ramy* – the TV-series use the English language?

1.3 Background

The United States is a diverse country with many ethnic groups comprising its population. In the 2020 US Census (US Census Bureau, 2020), the bureau revealed that the Diversity Index (DI) is increasing and has been for some time. DI is the chance that two people in the USA, chosen at random, will belong to different ethnic groups. It is valued between 0 and 1, where 1 is absolute certainty. In 2020 the chance of diversity between two random people was 0,611 (US Census Bureau, 2020). This indicates that a random audience member consuming a television show will be of another ethnic group than the show's producer.

The Arab American Institute ("Decennial Census — Arab American Institute") claims the US Census bureau significantly undercounts Arab Americans in the decennial censuses and are advocating for an inclusion into the census of a Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) ethnic category as this would more accurately reflect Arab descent than the ethnic categories included in the census today. AAI perform information drives to activate Arab Americans to enable the census to reflect their ethnic group more accurately. The AAI claim Arab Americans make up close to 3.7 million ("Decennial Census — Arab American Institute", 2020). Statistics for film and television, showing the diversity among characters, actors, and leads, show Arab Americans as a very small group, if counted at all. The Hollywood Diversity Report 2021 shows MENA leads in television to be 3.1% among cable television shows, but wholly absent from broadcast television (Hunt & Ramón, 2021). Broadcast television in the USA is mainly financed through ad sales, whereas cable television gets a large portion of their influx of money from subscriptions. Broadcast television in the USA is then the form of television that require the least amount of effort from the audience to access. Things seem better when looking at overall cast members' of shows ethnic diversity. In 2019-2020 more than 30% of broadcast television shows had a majority-minority cast, where more than 50% of the cast was non-white. Cable television shows had also increased to 28% of shows. The overall cast member diversity is then in stark contrast to the ethnic diversity of cast lead actors. MENA shares of roles in television shows, broadcast or cable, ranged from 1.3-1.7% in the 2019-2020 television season (Hunt & Ramón, 2021).

1.4 Previous research

1.4.1 Negative stereotypes

Shaheen's (2001) study of the portrayal of Arabs in Hollywood productions of film "Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood vilifies a people" show that film and TV in the USA has a long tradition of otherization of Arabs. The study analysed over 900 films produced in Hollywood starting from the beginning of the 20th century until its end. American film production in the form of Hollywood movies, independent American films as well as movies created by Canadian and Australian producers have consistently portrayed the Arab as other (Shaheen, 2001). Shaheen (2001) breaks down the most prevalent stereotypes into Villains, Sheiks, Maidens, Egyptians, and Palestinians. Arab men have been shown throughout Hollywood's history as identifiable with evil; as bandits, terrorists, or lecherous Sheiks. Arab women, if maidens, are oversexualized as harem ladies or belly dancers, bent on seducing western characters; if they are not maidens, they are silent and oppressed by Arab men. The sexualized image of the Arab woman is not new. In 1917 the movie "Cleopatra" by Fox studios, labelled Arab women as "serpents" and "vampires". An epithet other movie studio used with increasing frequency, derived it to "Vamp", and the word entered the English vocabulary after broad use. Arab women are also sometimes portrayed as terrorists and bombers, but they have been portrayed as such as far back as 1920 in "The Leopard Woman" by Associated Produces Inc. (Shaheen, 2001). From the beginning of the 1900s until the 2000s, the characterization of Arabs has been heavily leaning to the negative. Despite the prevalence of the dangerous Arab terrorist, the Arab is also presented as incompetent, uneducated, and foolish. Egyptians especially has endured a recurring stereotype of Egyptian Arabs seeking to defile western women since Cecil B. DeMille (Shaheen, 2001). Shaheen (2001) looked at over 900 movies produced in Hollywood and found that the vast majority, 936, portrayed Arabs negatively. That the negative stereotypes have a cultural impact that spans multiple generations of both Americans and Arabs, and Arab Americans is clear. The negative associations by Americans toward the MENA ethnic group over generations becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy and creates an automatic negative response to Arabs from Americans, when

they consume all these movies that paint the Arab in such a negative light.

Said (1978) defined Orientalism as a thought system based on the differences between, and the superiority of the Occident over the Orient. Orientalism also defines the middle east, or Orient, more from *a priori* knowledge than the actual investigation of local culture, defining the Orient in relation to the Occident, rather than looking at it on its own merit (Said, 1978). Nurullah (2010) used Said's Orientalism framework (Said, 1978) to examine how the television series "24" portrayed Arabs. After the event of 9/11 the focus of Arab portrayal in USA produced media increasingly focused on the Arab as a terrorist, threatening the USA, and its interests. Media has a great impact on whether or not a religion is portrayed positively, or negatively. The repetition of negative stereotypes about Muslims in news and media elevates the perceived truth of the stereotype in the minds of the media consumers. Nurullah (2010) found that American media portrayed Muslims and their religion negatively and associated with violence. There was a clear tendency to equate Muslims with Arabs and Arabs with terrorists and terrorists with Muslims, despite only ca 12% of the world's Muslims being Arabs. Vastly more Muslims live in south- and south-eastern Asia, than in the middle east (Nurullah, 2010). Chaouch (Chaouch et al., 2010) found that even though movies post 9/11 showed the emergence of a "good" Arab character, the collaborator. The "good" Arab was still not on equal terms with Americans. Some weakness of character, or culture, prevented the Arab from being a partner to the White American and reinforced the Orientalism tropes described by Said (1978). Roberts' (2021) research into the stereotypical imagery of MENA countries by Hollywood during the George W. Bush era (2001-2008) show that Hollywood's use of language varieties reinforces stereotypical, negative, imagery of MENA countries. Terrorists were marked by a foreign voice and the combined effect was to distance the audience from male MENA imagery (Roberts, 2021).

1.4.2 Language and attitudes

Bednarek (2010) did an extensive case study of the TV series *Gilmore Girls* focusing on language and attitudes. Using **Concordance Analysis**, they found that *vegetarian* and *vegan* were used almost exclusively in negative contexts. A vegetarian character's use of language was immature, and the

character breaks normative rules in her use of language, reinforcing the chance that she will be considered as other by the audience. Other characters in the drama comedy propagated a meat-positive ideology, and by extension, a vegetarian/vegan-negative ideology (Bednarek, 2010). They did so by using language and jokes to invalidate the vegetarian ideology. This could be seen in evaluative remarks by meat-positive characters extolling the realness of fatty meat and bacon being the reason to get up out of bed, while disparaging vegan food as being “soy everything” and invalidating vegetarian ideology by suggesting vegetarians would gladly become meat-positive if they were tricked into eating pork. Given that an audience will connect with different characters to a degree almost as if they are personal acquaintances, the characters’ use of language and jokes that disparages a certain ideology may have a strong impact on the real-life attitudes of those audience members (Bednarek, 2010).

1.4.3 Politics and attitudes

Rezk and Zamoum (2021) studied the subliminal messaging in American War movies about Arabs. The impact of the representation of Arabs in American media has an effect on the American consumers of the media, but also a significant effect on Arab youth who consume American media at an increasing rate (Rezk & Zamoum, 2021). The study used **Critical Discourse Analysis** to examine the political dimension present in the discourse of the movie “Rules of Engagement”. Rezk and Zamoum (2021) found that the movie portrayed many stereotypes about Arabs and political points of view in line with US justification of their military presence in the Middle East. “Rules of Engagement” was made by a former Assistant Secretary of Defense and Secretary of the Navy of the USA, Jim Webb. The fact that a politician, and former military personnel, wrote the script of the movie entrenches the ideological connection between Hollywood and the US government. The movie suggested that Arab lives were less valuable than American soldiers’ lives and that it is justifiable to kill Arabs, even women and children, since even children turn out to be terrorists (Rezk & Zamoum, 2021).

Sayfo (2020) studied the representation of Arabs in the American TV series, “Tyant”, from a

production perspective. The producer Howard Gordon stated that his goal with the TV series was to provide a nuanced portrayal of Arabs and to tell the story from their point of view, but critique of the TV series stated that it was very stereotypical, negative, and racist in its portrayal of Arabs (Sayfo, 2020). The interviews that Sayfo (2020) conducted with the production team, directors, writers, actors, art directors and show runners showed very few Arabs among the personnel and very few with any interest in Arab culture, outside of their job description for the creation of the TV series. Even though Islamic cultural consultants were employed to advise on authenticity, their suggestions were not treated with a higher priority than placating the American audience who would consume the TV series. The American TV audience was assumed to not have any contemporary interest in the Middle East other than what American media reported, or what Hollywood had presented to them in movies. Even though there apparently were no coordination between a political agenda of the US government and the production team on the TV series and the production team had a genuine intent to present Arabs authentically, their wish to take the path to production with the least effort and least cost led to a perpetuation of the usual negative stereotypes of Arabs already present in American film and TV (Sayfo, 2020).

2 Theory

2.1 Discourse Analysis

Discourse is the perception, and framing, of the world by the speaker. Discourse analysis (DA) concerns itself with the study of how language shapes reality. DA shows how power is used through the use of language and focuses on the implied meaning of the text rather than any overt information. (Denscombe, 2010).

2.2 Conversation Analysis

Conversation Analysis (CA) is a major approach to analysing the structure of conversation and discourse. CA is derived from ethnomethodology and concerns itself with analysing both verbal and non-verbal interactions between people in sociolinguistic interactions. Conversation Analysis (CA) is a rigorous and detailed research methodology. It is focused on the structural aspects of conversation and what guides them. Aspects such as turn taking, opening conversation, closing it, taking and yielding the floor in the conversation. CA reveals how a conversation takes place, how speakers cooperate, spar, or do not cooperate. These structural revelations can also reveal the attitude of the speakers, the why of the structure. At first CA was concerned with conversations between individuals, recorded to preserve a record to enable CA, or preexisting recordings of conversations between individuals, such as interviews for other initial purposes (Sacks & Jefferson, 1995). In more recent years the study of scripted conversation has gained interest among researchers, who claim that there is a significant interest in analyzing such dialogue because scripted conversation so often seeks to mimic natural conversation and may be indistinguishable for the observer from that of a spontaneous conversation, even though the scripted, or literary, conversation is a fantasy (Bowles, 2011). Scripted conversation, like any authored material, may align itself with natural conversation, or contrast and abstract itself from how an expected natural conversation might develop. This alignment, or deviation, will communicate different things to the

audience of the conversation. The literary conversation written by an author for a piece of fantasy, such as a play, may contain instructions for the actors on how maxims of cooperation, or word choices, and emphasis should be adhered to, or deviated from. Or the text may contain no such instruction. Whether or not instructions are present in the text, the text becomes a conversation spoken by the actors, which includes hesitations, breath, speech variations depending on the actor which is observed by the audience as a spontaneous conversation (Bowles, 2011). Whether or not the audience perceives the conversation to be spontaneous and natural, may be dependent on prior awareness that it is an act.

2.3 Jeffersonian Transcription

Jeffersonian transcription (JT), so called in remembrance of its inventor Gail Jefferson, 1938-2008. The notation indicates how speech flows in a conversation, when a voice quavers, gets louder, hesitates, when non-verbal additions are brought to the conversation, and other ways in which the attitude of a speaker might color a conversation (Litosseliti, 2010). JT is mainly used in **Conversation analysis (CA)** to reveal the structure of the conversation by mapping the additional cues in the conversation that are non-verbal. If a transcript of a conversation has only the words, it may not reveal how the turn taking came about. With a notation of a pause of several seconds in the dialogue, the aspect of time is revealed. Attitudes can be revealed through the use of JT as well. Irony, for instance, is very difficult to convey in text, but with the addition of JT, it may become obvious. The ability of JT to indicate irony in a transcription of a conversation means that JT is an excellent method for revealing the attitudes of participants in a conversation. I used **Jeffersonian transcription** in my **Discourse analysis (DA)** because of the strong indication of a speaker's attitude in their speech that JT reveal when mapping emphases, volume, hesitation, and other non-verbal speech acts. **Jeffersonian transcription** uses several symbols to describe different ways things are said and what the **Turn-constructive Unit (TCU)** sounds like and what non-verbal cues may emphasize meaning. TCU is the fundamental segment of speech in a conversation, what

a speaker communicates during their turn in a conversation. The attitudes of the speakers would easily be identified when listening to the conversation, and JT is used to imbue the transcribed text with markers of attitude such as volume, tempo, laughter, et cetera that would otherwise be lost to analysis when the recorded conversation has been transcribed.

When analyzing scripted conversation, one no longer observes spontaneous conversation. Since the conversations are scripted, there are two acts taking place: The interaction between speakers, and the observation of the interaction by the audience. **Jeffersonian transcription** illustrates the flow and melody of the conversation, revealing aspects such as nervousness, anger, irony, or other aspects of conversation difficult to glean from a written script and that **speech acts** do not show clearly. The script writer and producer will have had these two aspects in mind when shaping the dialogue. How do two people talk to each other, and how that is perceived by the audience. The actors performing the conversations will enhance the scripted text and its meaning and impact by applying intonation, cadence, volume, and other aspects difficult to transcribe without **Jeffersonian transcription**. They will perform the conversations in accordance with the intended impact upon the audience (Perelman, 2022).

3 Method and Material

3.1 Discourse Analysis for analysis of *Ramy* – the TV series

I wanted to see how the actors in *Ramy* – the TV-series convey the conversations as natural, or unnatural, to the audience, and what may be communicated to the audience in addition to semantics and rhetoric by this portrayal. For this, I used **Jeffersonian transcription** for the selected conversations to clarify how the conversation flows and what attitude and meaning that flow conveys as JT can clarify attitudes of speakers and how their conversation shapes reality and the perception of it by mapping non-verbal speech acts along with the text.

I detail the Jeffersonian transcription I have used and tailored for analysis of *Ramy* – the TV series in table 1. To make both the transcription and the conversations more readable, I have elected to color the **Jeffersonian transcription** symbols I have used grey to aid readability of the two levels of code.

Table 1

<p>A [yeah]</p> <p>B [okay]</p> <p>A I keep telling [you every time</p> <p>B [La la la, I'm not listening to you anymore!</p>	<p>Overlapping talk is shown with square brackets.</p> <p>Since it may be difficult to show when overlap ends, the researcher may use opening square brackets and no closing square brackets to indicate when overlap started.</p>
<p>A Have you seen Laura's ring=</p> <p>B =Oh, it's a doozy!</p> <p>A I don't think you should go to Perth=</p>	<p>= End of one TCU and beginning of next begin with no gap/pause in between (sometimes a slight overlap if there is speaker change).</p>

<p>B Why ever not?</p> <p>A =because Hank wants you to work the store.</p>	<p>It can also be used when TCU continues on new line in transcript. In the second example speaker A speaks without pause even though B interjects at “Perth” and obviously overlaps while A continues. Using = for speaker A and not adding square brackets makes it visually cleaner and the overlap is also marked by the = signs.</p>
<p>.pt</p>	<p>A lip smack</p>
<p>(.)</p>	<p>A brief interval, just noticeable</p>
<p>(1.2)</p> <p>A I don’t know why (1.4) anyone would do that.</p> <p>A That’s a nice blouse.</p> <p>(2)</p> <p>B Don’t pretend you care now.</p>	<p>An interval of 1.2 seconds between instances of verbal and non-verbal communication. The numbers note the absolute time in seconds and decimal fractions of seconds. A pause belonging to a speaker is written on the same line as other words of the speaker. An interval between speakers is written between the lines of the speakers.</p>
<p><u>Word</u></p> <p>Word<u>ing</u></p>	<p>Underline of a word indicates emphasis. Placement indicates which syllables are emphasized.</p>
<p>Wo:rd</p> <p>Wor:::d</p>	<p>Colon marks prolonged sound. Vowel or consonant.</p> <p>Colon follows prolonged sound.</p> <p>One colon normal, but more colons when markedly prolonged. Three colons only in extreme cases.</p>
<p>↑Word</p> <p>↓Word</p>	<p>↑ marks shift in pitch up compared to surrounding speech.</p>

	↓ marks shift in pitch down compared to surrounding speech.
↓↓Word↑↑Word	More arrows indicate extremer shift in pitch
. , — ¿ ?	Markers of final pitch direction at TCU boundary: Final falling intonation (.) Slight rising intonation (,) Level or flat intonation (—) Medium falling to rising intonation (¿) (a dip and a rise) Sharp, rising intonation (?)
WORD	Upper case marks louder word or syllables than other speech by the same speaker.
°word°	Word or syllables inside degree symbols are noticeably quieter than surrounding speech.
<word	Pre-positioned left caret indicates hurried start of word, or sentence.
Word- A And you. Ha- a wonderful Christmas, Sir.	Dash indicates a cut-off. Typically, this would be a glottal stop.
>word<	Right/left carets indicates speech between them is speeding up, or at a faster rate than surrounding speech.
<word>	Left/right carets indicates speech between them is slowing down, or at a slower rate than surrounding speech.

.hh Wo(.hh)rd	Inbreath, normal duration. .h is shorter, .hhh is longer than expected duration of inbreath. In parenthesis if the breath is part of the pronunciation of the word.
hh Wo(hh)rd	Outbreath, normal duration. h is shorter, hhh is longer than expected duration of outbreath. In parenthesis if the breath becomes part of the pronunciation of the word.
whhord	Indicates breathiness while speaking.
W(h)ord	Indicates laughter, giggling, or similar while speaking.
£word£	Indicates suppressed laughter while speaking words between pound signs.
#word#	Words or syllables between hash signs are in a creaky voice, or with vocal fry.
~word~	Words, or syllables between tilde signs are delivered in a shaky voice, as in crying, or scared.
(word) ()	Uncertain word, if empty () it is intelligible to the point of no plausible candidate being available.
((scoffs)) ((while offering bowl of sugar))	Double parentheses contain descriptions difficult to indicate with symbols, or comments from the analyst.
→	Indicates line of interest to the analyst.

Selected conversations are mapped by season, episode, and conversation containing an English dialogue. I

use my own symbology in certain areas:

- ((Arabic)) – This means a section of Arabic is spoken.
- (Habibi) – This means the words said sound like “Habibi”.
- ((Dena’s brows are furrowed, jaw set.)) – My scene descriptions and commentary.

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I gave the conversations a letter and number code for selected conversations in order of appearance in each episode by number, starting with 01. If there are several conversations from an episode, one can see in what chronological order the subject matters of the conversations were presented within the episode.

Examples of identifying codes for conversations:

S01E04D01 Series one, Episode four, first selected dialogue. As it appears in the appendix

S01E06D03 - *excerpts* Series one, episode six, third selected dialogue, with only excerpts of the dialogue. As it appears in the results.

I grouped the conversations into one of four umbrella themes according to what main theme my analysis showed each conversation had. There may be elements of more than one theme within a conversation, but a main theme was apparent for each conversation.

Themes:

Orientalism

Gender Roles

Oppression of Women

Terrorism

3.2 Material

The data for this study is the TV-show *Ramy*. I used **Jeffersonian transcription** (JT) to analyse the conversations. I selected dialogues in the English language from episodes 1, 4, 5, 6, and 9 of the first season of *Ramy* – the TV series that contain information about Arabs, Arab culture, and/or Arab/American relations. The limit of selection was the first season of episodes and that the conversations were in the English language. The criteria for selection for analysis was if the conversations dealt with the subject matter of the negative stereotypes of Arab men and/or Arab women mentioned earlier. This sample selection was informed by the thought that the first season would likely introduce, if not answer, questions about the prevalent Arab stereotypes presented by American media. The first episodes and first season would likely have many audience members of the ethnic White majority of the USA. The TV-series would have to deal with preconceived notions about Arabs and Muslims that the audience would have been exposed to for many years prior to his TV series. Youssef would likely be aware of this and tailor his production to maximize interest and commonality to connect with a diverse audience (Perelman, 2022).

To see how *Ramy* - The TV Show uses English, I used JT of conversations to aid my **Discourse Analysis** (DA) to illuminate the portrayed conversations and how they present the participants and concepts in relation to the stereotypes predominant for Arabs in American media.

4 Results

I grouped the conversations according to the main theme of the conversation. Although conversations may have multiple themes, I have chosen to categorize them based on the main theme in each conversation as my analysis using **Jeffersonian transcription** has shown it to be. To reduce the size of the paper and simultaneously show that my **Discourse Analysis** is looking at the larger reality of the TV series, I included excerpts from the conversations in the results. Complete conversations are in the appendix.

The concepts and stereotypes *Ramy* – the TV series have to deal with, I have themed as **Orientalism**, **Gender Roles**, **Oppression of Women**, and **Terrorism**. Conversations about blanket judgement of people as a group rather than as individuals as well as *a priori* assumptions and judgements of culture, people, events, or behavior I grouped under **Orientalism**. The stereotypes of Arab men as uncultured, unromantic, incompetent, naïve, or controlling on a personal level I grouped together with Arab women as obedient and demure, or oversexualized under **Gender Roles**. Conversations where women's freedom of movement, agency, or autonomy have been central I have grouped under **Oppression of Women**. Conversations where the stereotype of Arabs as terrorists have been the main focus I themed **Terrorism**.

4.1 Conversations dealing with Orientalism

S01E01D01 - *excerpts*

Ramy and his friends are attending a marriage ceremony, sitting along one wall of the room, away from the table where the Imam and couple sit with their closest family.

...

- 6 → **Ahmed** There's only two hot Muslim girls left in town, and they'll be ↓ gone by the end of the year.
- 7 **Mo** Are you talking about Fatima and Hadiya, bro?

8 **Ahmed** ↑Yeah

9 →**Mo** °They °are not° hot

...

20 →**Mo** °You need to find a girl asap, okay? <a>sap. >You're getting< old, bro (.) and your hairline (.) is
21 not looking ↑good

...

37 →**Ahmed** [White girls suck, bro. You can't keep dating 'em. One, they're always walking around
38 barefoot=

39 **Mo** =That's crazy

40 **Ahmed** ↑They have no morals=

...

45 →**Ahmed** =The- they're just jumping in stuff that's none of their business, man.

46 →**Ahmed** They skinny-dip. You don't want a wife that skinny-dips.

47 **Mo** Bro

48 **Ahmed** You want a ↓wife that swims at <normal> times=

49 **Mo** =yes=

50 →**Ahmed** =with ↓proper attire. Not this nakedness. You need to find someone (.) who knows where you
51 came from and what you bel↑ieve in. And someone who's (.) <hot>

...

57 →**Mo's wife** °These guys are idiots°

58 **Mo** Hey

59 **Mo's wife** But everything they said is ↑true

60 **Ahmed** White girls ↓suck (0.3) You don' want to ↑do ↓that (.) You don't wanna go down that ↓road

The dialogue is following a pattern similar to any TV-series where male characters advice a friend that he needs to find a female partner. Interestingly, no one refers to physiognomy of attractive females, only that they should be “hot”. In American sitcoms it would be normal for a male character to emphasize what physical attributes said “hot” female should have, by miming the shape of her attributes, or using slang for said attributes. Here, neither Mo, nor Ahmed does this. The conversation is as male-centric as is usual for similar scenes in other American TV-series, but they avoid direct physical objectification while still objectifying women. The avoidance of words for breasts, lips, butts, substituting them for “hot” shows that the men conform to a standard prevalent in American media of men objectifying women, while at the same time flying in the face of American physiological objectification of women by refusing to use parts of the female anatomy to define how attractive a woman is. Instead, the use of “hot” and “beautiful” keeps the definition vague and personal. Mo and Ahmed agree that an attractive woman must be “hot”, but they immediately disagree what “hot” is, signaling to the audience a vagueness that denies concrete objectification via size of breasts, butt, or curvature of body. In contrast, they point out Ramy’s physical shortcomings. Throughout the conversation the emphases and cadence signal the sincerity and emotional investment of the characters, portraying their points of view as real and tangible. Ahmed and Mo berate Ramy and repudiate white women through the same type of process normally used in Orientalism. They judge white women *a priori* for otherness compared to Arab women, they attribute individual expression as truth for the whole group. Here they are concrete; white women are naked and walk around barefoot. White women also are “jumping in” putting their noses in other people’s business and skinny dip at scandalous times of the day. They present “white” as a bearer of otherness. *Ramy* – the TV-series confronts the audience with a reverse Orientalism of sorts that is plainly untrue, silly, and bigoted. *Ramy* stands Orientalism on its head.

Mo's wife defines Mo and Ahmed as idiots, signaling that *Ramy* – the TV-series is not actually propagating the reverse Orientalism Mo and Ahmed just spouted. She also is “jumping in” into the conversation, adding that everything they said is true. This leaves the audience in a kind of limbo. Does that mean that *Ramy* – the TV-series believes in Orientalism, or not? It is a further challenge to the audience. No clear answer is given now, the audience must observe and analyze what is presented, the opposite of *a priori* judgement.

S01E06D03 - *excerpts*

Dena and Kyle are making out on Kyles bed after dinner at Kyle's place. This time it is a real make out session. Dena starts to take of her clothes...

...

3 →**Kyle** Oh, no, °no°. Keep yours on for a minute (.) Yeah, ↓no, we'll take it slow.

4 **Dena** Oh, hh °okay° Okay.

...

22 →**Kyle** Oh my Gohhd (.) that's ↓so hot (.) ((starts unbuttoning his trousers)) >Okay okay< (.) Will you
23 say my name in Arabic? Will you sahhy my name?

24 **Dena** Oh. (0.3) It's (.) it's (.) just, ↓“Kyle” there isn't really, like (.) there isn't, like, an equivalent to it.

25 →**Kyle** Oh, yeah. No, that (0.3) Yeah, that makes sense. (.) Okay (0.3) ((removing trousers)) will you just
26 say something else?

...

36 →**Dena** Uh (0.3) ((Arabic))

...

38 →**Kyle** ba (.) bah (.) bek

...

- 43 →**Kyle** Oh, God, you're so sex↑y (.) This olive skin.
- ...
- 46 **Kyle** Yeah. (1.5) You ↓sure you want to have sex with me?
- 47 **Dena** Yeah. Mmh↑mm.
- 48 →**Kyle** Yeah? (.) Even though I'm a ↓white infid↓el?
- 49 **Dena** Uh (.) ↓m↑m?
- 50 →**Kyle** I can just stick it in your ass (.) so you can still be a ↓virgin. hh Is that what you [want?
- ...
- 57 →**Kyle** Oh, no (.) I was just- I was doing, like (.) a little ↓role-play.
- 58 **Dena** .hh
- 59 **Kyle** Like-
- 60 →**Dena** ↓Oh.
- ...
- 64 →**Dena** Uh (0.3) yeah. (.) Can we just (.) have ↓normal ↑sex?
- 65 **Kyle** (1) Yeah, no (.) totally.
- 66 **Dena** Mmh↑mm?
- 67 →**Kyle** >Yeah, yeah, yeah<. Yeah, for sure.
- ...
- 75 →**Kyle** I accept you (.) You don't have to wear a fu(hh)cking ((kissing)) head scarf or-
- 76 →**Dena** ↑What? (.) ↑Dude!
- ...

- 81 →**Dena** Um, (.) can we just role-play that I'm, (.) like, a white girl, and-
- 82 →**Kyle** Uh, (.) I mean ((2.5)) <w:hy>?
- 83 →**Dena** Okay, so (1.5) are you ↑just (0.3) hooking up with ↓me because I'm Egyptian?
- 84 (1)
- 85 →**Kyle** I mean- (1.3) I think it's <hot> that you're <Egyptian> (.) Like, is that (.) No, I think it's like (0.3)
- 86 I think it's a <cool> (0.3) part of you. I think it's inter↓esting. It's just, like, ↓so (0.3) unknown, and I just
- 87 want to (0.3) ↓know it. ((starts kissing Dena's neck))
- ...
- 96 →**Kyle** Do you know how weird it is to be nothing? hh Okay. (.) Like, my art, (.) right? I've got, like, this
- 97 voice. (0.8) And fuck (.) like, ↑nobody gives a shit (.) 'cause I'm not (0.3) Indian (.) or (.) <trans>.

Ramy – the TV-series present Kyle as an embodiment of Orientalism. He projects motivations and cultural preconceptions on Dena and assumes he has the right to control her sexuality to conform to his idea of her as an exotic. In contrast to Dena's diffuse fears of being sexually controlled, Kyle's exertion of control is specific and directed. He tells her not to undress, then to undress when he decides it is appropriate. He colors his request for consent with suggestions of sexual violation. He only extolls Dena's ethnicity, cultural expression, exotic language, and the color of her skin. When challenged, he complains of his nothingness and how disfavored he is as a white man. Completely ignoring the head start he has had to even arrive at the station where he is, or indeed any white male. His opinions and desires are made *a priori* to meeting Dena, and are projected without looking at, or trying to find out, who the person is before him. The speech pattern of Kyle is hurried, when he is being dishonest, slow and measured when he communicates what he really believes. Dena uses volume and pitch to signal uncertainty and acquiescence, or certainty and challenge.

S01E09D03 - *excerpts*

Ramy is at a party that Shadi invited him to. He has come back inside after talking to a woman outside.

...

3 →**Ramy** Yo, ↓man, I (.) I ↓just met ↓someone, I (.) I think she's your friend? (.) This, like really (0.3)

4 cute girl (.) she (.) she said they were going to another party that was more chill. May maybe we ↑could

5 ↓go with ↑them?

6 **Shadi** DUDE, ↓that's fuckin' ↓awesome. You ↓found a chick alr↑eady?

7 **Shadi** I knew my ↓cousin was a ↓play↑er!

8 **Shadi** You're ↓like fuckin' ↑Hitch, ↓man. ((offers a plate with lines of cocaine)) ↓Here. Try this.

9 →**Ramy** ↓Wha? ((looking at plate))

10 →**Shadi** HITCH. Will Smith in that ↑film? ↓He's really good with ↑chicks?

...

15 →**Ramy** ↓Are you serious, ↑bro?

...

21 →**Shadi** ↓Bro (1) can I talk to you outside for a minute?

22 ((Shadi and Ramy are at the back of the building, facing the Nile River))

23 →**Shadi** What the fuck, bro? Like, wha- what are you ↓on about? I thought you were cool, ↓man, from

24 New York-

25 →**Shadi** I ↓thought you were my nigga, ↓man.

26 →**Ramy** All right, ↓dude, you really GOTTA stop saying ↓that.

- 27 **Shadi** Saying what?
- 28 →**Ramy** The N-word. You can't ↓say that ↑shit, you can't just shout it.
- 29 →**Ramy** You real↓ize how offensive that is to ↓black ↑people?
- 30 →**Shadi** Dude, Egypt's IN ↓Africa! We're ↓African! You're black, I'm black (.) we can say that ↓shit.
- ...
- 33 →**Shadi** ↑You judged me earlier for not ↓prayin', and now- and ↓now you tell me what I ↓can say and
- 34 what I ↑can't say?
- 35 →**Ramy** I'm just worried about you, dude. You're doin' coke. ↓That's dangerous.
- ...
- 40 →**Shadi** >Man, Todi< (.) his ↓sister went to jail for holding up a ↑sign, and she fuckin' DIED.
- 41 **Shadi** And I see you being all ↓spiritual and shit and trying to make (.) meaning of all of ↑this? (1)
- 42 →**Shadi** Look, I don't know where ↓God is (.) but I sure as fuck know he's not here right now_

...

Ramy – the TV-series criticize the sometimes myopic and uncomplicated perception that Americans and American media has of events that occur far from America. It is another form of *a priori* judgement *Ramy* carries with him as American. He thinks that he knows what he is talking about and can set the tone of a conversation in spite of not knowing anything about the realities that the ones who lived through the event have faced. That *Shadi* comes from another experience and world view than what *Ramy* carries with him is clear when *Shadi* explains that God is not in Egypt, a Muslim country. He contrasts a down pitched God with a profane emphasis to strengthen his message.

Ramy – the TV-series does not shy away from the use of the N-word, nor of a critique of the cultural appropriation that *Shadi* and his compatriots make themselves guilty of. Just like Orientalism assumes cultural aspects *a priori*, *Shadi* equates being black and using the N-word with having African origin. He

completely misses the cultural and historical complexity of having a diaspora because of enslavement and a continuing apartheid existence on many levels within one's own country. Shadi assumes, based on the same type of reverse Orientalism that Mo and Ahmed illustrated in their conversation about women's hotness. Ramy and Shadi mostly use emphases and pitch to point out what concepts are important, helping the audience to pay attention to the contrast between what the two characters are talking about, as they are invested in their viewpoints while sometimes speaking past each other.

4.2 Conversations dealing with gender roles

S01E01D02 - *excerpts*

Ramy and Nour are on a date in a restaurant. At the same table, between them, is a man who acts as chaperone for the date. The chaperone smokes a water pipe and blows smoke in Ramy's direction

1 **Ramy** hh

2 **Ramy** So (0.4) have you lived in Jersey_¿ your whole life? ((directed at chaperone))

3 →**Chaperone** No, no_ (.) You're here for her_ not me (.) I'm just the chaperone (.) Pretend I'm not even
4 here.

5 **Ramy** °Okay° (1) Nour (.) uh (.) you're from Jersey_¿

6 →**Chaperone** ↑Bo:rn and ↓raised

...

11 →**Chaperone** [Too much small talk (.) MoRe personal.

12 (2.5)

13 →**Nour** So ↓how did you pick this restaurant? You think because I'm E↑gyp↓tian, I like to eat Egyptian

14 ↑food?

15 (1)

16 **Ramy** You ↓know (0.3) I just figured you ↓probably had a lot of ↑homemade Egyptian food (.) but I
17 really wanted you to taste it (.) when it's made by (0.3) the Russian guys in the kitchen here.

...

20 →**Joey** =Yo! fuckin' ↑Ramy! Look at this ↓guy!

21 **Johnny** This motherfucker!

...

24 →**Joey** You too good to ↓call my ↑sis↓ter? Get ↓out of here!

...

28 →**Joey** You guys try the fa↓lafels yet? They're ↓bomb as shit (.) Come ↓on.

...

33 →**Johnny** Ah (.) no (.) ↑What you're <act>ually doin is coming with us to Dan↑te's.

...

37 **Ramy** Sure (.) yeah (.) Maybe we'll just (.) ↓like (.) meet you there later.

38 →**Chaperone** You want to meet these peop↓le at Dante's_?

39 **Ramy** N-n- no, no, no. I (.) I was just (0.3)

40 **Chaperone** ((lifting forefinger to Joey and Johnny)) Listen to me (0.8) You ↓don't want to go to Dante's
41 on a ↓Friday. ((Pointing fingers to own thigh for emphasis))

42 →**Chaperone** ((holding hands palm up, signaling import of statement)) What you want to do is go to PJ's.

43 **Chaperone** Very hard to get into (.) Tell the guy at the door (.) you know Masoud (.) ((Points to self))

44 He'll get you in.

...

53 →**Joey** [Wait, wait. What's happening?

54 →**Chaperone** No, no (.) I insist (.) I'll ↓be your chaPero:ne.

...

60 →**Chaperone** Relax a little bit (.) ↓man. You're carrying a lot of tension. ((while rubbing Ramy's

61 trapezii))

62 **Chaperone** °You seem like a good guy° (.) but she's not gonna see the ↓real you: if you're so wound up_

63 **Ramy** °Okay°

64 ((Chaperone leaves, following Joey and Johnny))

...

Initially, the impression of the scene seems to confirm the idea of Muslim women being oppressed and demure. The male chaperone is sitting in the middle, directing communication, and speaking gruffly.

Ramy and Nour have the hesitant cadence suggesting the start of a first date, similar to any American first date on TV. The contrast between the brash White Americans and the careful Arab Americans is illustrated well through the difference in tone and cadence, standing the stereotype of the unromantic, unrefined Arab on its head, comparing it to the White Americans behaving poorly. *A priori* judgement of the chaperone, who speaks with the rough accent that traditionally denotes an aggressive, oppressive, Arab male is negated when he leaves and gives advice for Ramy to be a better date to Nour.

This scene does a role reversal of the stereotypes of uncultured, foolish, unromantic, and unrefined Arabs in American film. Also, the presence of a chaperone does not seem to indicate oppression. Rather there is a strong suggestion that the chaperone is not there to oppress Nour, instead he is there to try to guide the daters not to fail at dating, and to make sure Nour's interests are endorsed.

Ramy and Nour are walking outside, having left the restaurant recently. It is still their first date.

1 →**Ramy** Look, I ↓know it was terrible (.) but (.) the day the Muslim ban ha↑ppened (.) I had ↑a really
2 ↑good day¿

...

6 →**Ramy** =you know? It was just (.) like (.) one of those days (.) Remember (.) the weather was gre:at (.) I
7 killed it at this ↓meeting (.) I found a Metro ↑card (.) that had hundred and ↓twenty ↓dollars on it.

8 **Nour** Okay¿ ↑wow.

9 →**Ramy** That doesn't ↑happen

10 **Nour** Yeah, that ↑sounds like a really £good day£

11 →**Ramy** It was weird¿ 'cause I'm watching the ↑news (.) and this guy on TV is like (.) “This is a terrible
12 day for ↓all Muslims.” I'm like (0.3) “Well (.) no:t (.) <all> Muslims.”

13 **Nour** You know what? You're right (.) Because I have this (.) um (.) uncle that lives in Libya, and he was
14 supposed to come live with ↓us, and then the Mus↑lim ↓ban happened (.) and he's still in Li↑bya.

...

22 **Nour** =My dad gave us the sex talk in that roo:m

...

26 →**Nour** =Arab dad talk (.) you ↑know? He got us all in the room (.) and then he said (.) “Girls, no boys
27 (.) Boys, no boys” and then he just walked out the ↑room.

28 **Ramy** ↓<Wow> (0.4) That's (.) like (.) really efficient.

...

As Ramy and Nour’s date continues, they talk of the Muslim travel ban, an anti-terrorist measure, but this is not what Ramy and Nour discuss. The gleeful and giddy discussion centers around how the day of the

ban was really good for Ramy, and that ultimately it was a positive for Nour. Her agreement turns into a description of how the access to her room was threatened by the planned arrival of an uncle, and that her room was special to her, partly due to having received the “sex talk” there. The “sex talk” was “Girls, no boys. Boys, no boys” Nour mimics her father in a comically rough voice. The statement itself is not only oppressive of women, it is homophobic in nature. Ramy expresses admiration for the succinctness with which Nour’s dad managed to conclude the sex talk. The ease and admiration in their voices and that they are sans chaperone reveal that the “sex talk” was merely performative. Rather, the shortness of the talk was what was laudable. The parent is supposed to have said it, and the children are supposed to have heard it.

4.3 Conversations dealing with the oppression of women

S01E01D04 - *excerpts*

Nour and Ramy are walking into an alley where Nour’s car is parked.

...

12 **Nour** ↑What, I don't get a good-night kiss?

13 (1)

14 →**Ramy** I just (0.5) I wasn't ↓sure if you did #that#

15 **Nour** If I ↓kissed?

16 →**Ramy** I mean, I'm sure you kiss (.). I just didn't ↓know if, you know, because we're, like, a-

17 →**Nour** ((starts kissing Ramy))

...

25 **Nour** Okay, good (1) Do you have a condom? ((sniff))

- 26 **Ramy** Uh, yeah, but, um (.) ((heh))
- 27 (1)
- 28 →**Nour** ↑What, you don't wanna have sex?
- 29 **Ramy** Yeah, but I- I (.) I didn't know if- if you could, you know, just 'cause (.) we're not ↓married.
- 30 →**Nour** Oh, I- I didn't even know you were that strict (.) I ↑mean, yeah, we can get married. Um (.) my
- 31 >cousin does (.) like, nik↓ahs over the phone if you want to do (.) like (.) a temporary marriage (.)There's
- 32 this imam she uses<
- 33 →**Ramy** No, no, no (.) I'm not (.) I don't think we should try and, like (.) ↓trick God or whatever. I just
- 34 think maybe we should .hh (.) you know (.) slow down?
- 35 →**Nour** >Oh, okay (.) Yeah, we can take it slow<
- ...
- 45 →**Nour** #Choke# me while I f(hh)inger myself
- 46 **Ramy** What?
- 47 **Nour** I want you to choke me .hh
- 48 **Ramy** Um (0.4)
- 49 →**Nour** Use both (hh)ands .hh
- 50 **Ramy** Um (.) okay. (0.3) Are you ↑sure?
- ...
- 55 →**Nour** Like (.) actually harder. It's not a masshhage.
- ...
- 68 →**Ramy** I'm not into choking. I don't (.) I don't want to chohhke you.

69 **Nour** Oh, God. (hh) God, you're so full of shit. ((heavy breathing))

...

76 →**Ramy** Look, this is, like (.) just throwing me for a loop a little bit. I didn't think that a girl like you was

77 gonna want to, like=

78 →**Nour** =A girl like ↑me? ((panting)) (2) Look, we had this, like, really nice night, and you felt weirded

79 out by (.) the idea (.) of kissing ↓me .hh (.) I get it if you don't want to have sex, but .hh I'm, like, in this

80 little Muslim box in your head (0.3) and I'm (0.3) the wife or the mother of your kids (0.3) right? (.) .hh

81 I'm not supposed to cum.

82 **Ramy** hh .hh Okay, I'll #choke# you

83 **Nour** just get ↑out of my ↑car.

...

This scene both affirms and denies that Muslim women are sexually oppressed. Nour has decided Ramy is attractive enough for her to want to have sex with him. She takes the lead. She signals that both are aware of a patriarchal system of rules within Islam that forbids sex outside of marriage. She also comes up with the solution to be able to follow the rules, while simultaneously gratifying their sexual freedom. This is not the suggestions of a woman who is constricted by the system of rules. When Ramy protests, she agrees that they can take it slow, but the speed with which she speaks suggests that “slow” is far from sexless. She has a fetish for being choked. When the word choke, or variations thereof is spoken by either of them, it is with heavy breathing, vocal fry, gasping, panting, or shortness of breath. The constricting of breath and throat as they say the word enhances the literal meaning of the word, as well as reminding the audience of choking being a form of oppression. But this oppressional technique is what gives Nour sexual arousal, sexual freedom. Like Nour suggesting getting a Nikah to be able to have sex, the choking fetish suggests that Nour controls her freedom within constrictions to maximize her quality of life. She is in control and does what she wants. Finally, Ramy states he is not into restricting her, while almost

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choking on the word, signaling to Nour that he believes in the stereotypical idea of the wife as chattel, demure and unfree. She ends the date and kicks Ramy out.

S01E06D02 - *excerpts*

Dena and Kyle are making out in Dena's bed.

...

- 12 **Kyle** Yeah ((digs for condom)) (3) How do you ↓want me?
- 13 (1.2)
- 14 **Dena** What do you ↑mean?
- 15 **Kyle** Like, .hh what position?
- 16 (0.5)
- 17 →**Dena** Um (0.3) >whatever<
- 18 ((Kyle opens condom packet))
- 19 **Dena** I'm cool with, like >any of ↓them<.
- 20 (1)
- 21 **Kyle** hh .hh hh .hh What Have y- (0.3) have you done this before¿
- 22 (2)
- 23 **Dena** What (.) do you meanhh¿
- 24 →**Kyle** Like, (.) have you done <anything>?
- 25 (1)

- 26 **Dena** Uhhm (1)
- 27 **Maysa** ((from outside Dena's bedroom)) DENA, [have you seen this video on YouTube?]
- 28 →**Dena** [[[gasps]] What the fuck?] ((covering herself and Kyle with duvet))
- 29 **Dena** ↑Mo:m!
- 30 →**Maysa** [(ya leila soda) ((*What a terrible night!*))
- ...
- 36 →**Farouk** What's going ↓on, Dena; ((Farouk and Maysa are standing passively at the foot of the bed))
- 37 **Dena** I ↓thought you guys were at uncle Nas↑eem's!
- 38 →**Farouk** ((to Kyle)) Who are ↑you?
- 39 **Kyle** Kinda what it looks like.
- ...
- 43 →**Dena** Get OUT! ↑Ple:ase!
- ...
- 47 →**Uncle Naseem** [Now ↑she's having ↓sex! (.) ((to Kyle)) ↓You white animal!
- 48 **Dena** [Get #out#!
- 49 ((Naseem is coming with violence towards the bed, Farouk and Maysa try to hold him))
- 50 **Naseem** [How dare you? I kill you!
- 51 →**Dena** [One second, ↑PLEASE
- ...
- 61 →**Ramy** Uh (.) I'm gonna go ↓hang out with this ↓girl.
- 62 →**Uncle Naseem** E::y; All ↓right! (.) Oh, yeah!

- 63 ((chattering))
- 64 **Farouk** Proud of you.
- 65 →**Maysa** Enj↑OY it!
- 66 →**Uncle Naseem** Wear a ↓condom, ah?
- 67 **Maysa** (Habibi)
- 68 →**Uncle Naseem** () Send a ↑picture to ↓Uncle Naseem! ((distorted voice and laughing))-
- 69 ((a big music note, and then uncle Naseem and Maysa stares silently at Dena))

...

In this section, the conversation starts out realistically and in an expected fashion as Kyle and Dena are making out and the conversation turns to how Dena wants to have sex. Her faster speech pattern for “whatever” and “any of them” says she wants to move on, and not dwell on the fact that she does not know any details of how one has sex. Kyle realizes that Dena has no experience, when he lingers on “anything”.

Kyle and Dena are interrupted by Maysa walking in without knocking. Dena is surprised, gasps and expresses a general expletive. Maysa has walked in on her and Kyle, saying “what a terrible night” in Arabic, which the TV-show translates for us. She repeats the phrase much louder, drawing Farouk’s attention and presence. All the while Dena interjects with expletives, or references to God; softly, with vocal fry, or uncertainly. Farouk is not aggressive, and when he questions the situation, Kyle answers with the opposite of what would be expected with a very matter of fact tone. It is indeed what it seems like, he and Dena were about to have sex. The fears that Dena apparently has harbored for what will happen if Naseem shows up are revealed and are about to be realized. Uncle Naseem speaks over Dena’s pleading to Maysa for help and puts the finger on what is the big problem presently; Dena is having sex. Naseem is loud, threatening, and accusatory. Dena tells them to get but her “out” cracks and signals weakness. *Ramy* – the TV-show seems to be showing the audience that the male relative’s violent control

of the female's sexuality is within the male's purview and that the female is controlled. It is reinforced when Ramy steps into the conversation. Maysa, Farouk, and Naseem turn positively to the entrance of Ramy, and seem to forget about Dena. Uncle Naseem turns supportive and jovial when it becomes apparent that Ramy will have sex with some unknown girl. Naseem's drawn out "E::y" is a very strong positive attitude towards Ramy.

Ramy – the TV-series shows the audience that Arab women are oppressed sexually and that their oppression is in the hands of male relatives and that Arab men have an expanded freedom to explore premarital sex. Or does the show do that?

The tone of the reality in the scene changes and lights flash, sounds are distorted and horror movie-like. People appear and berate Dena for having sex and not caring about Arab refugees in an increasingly dream-like manner. Suddenly, Dena wakes up and the audience is made completely aware that this has been a dream sequence. Dena's nightmare. *Ramy* – the TV-series show that Dena imagines social stigma if her family would find out she has sex. Her voice quality mirrors the initial indignance that her private sphere is invaded, and then her decreasing ability to protest against loss of independence. The rest of the family speaks with a negative and aggressive tone to her, but supportive and upbeat towards Ramy. *Ramy* – the TV-series clearly depicts that an Arab woman's fear of social stigma and loss of autonomy is real.

4.4 Conversations dealing with terrorism

S01E04D01 - *excerpts*

A twelve-year-old Ramy and a few of his friends from school are walking to school. They have been obsessively occupied with masturbation and have been bragging about their proficiency, without anyone of them actually knowing whether or not any of the others have masturbated, or ejaculated. Ramy has neither, and has unsuccessfully tried to research methodology and masturbatory iconography, while he has been intimating to his friends that he has indeed masturbated for a while now. Complicating Ramy's

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view of how he thinks others view him, is the recent attack on the World Trade Center in New York on the eleventh of September.

...

3 →**James** Are you a ↓terrorist?

4 (3)

5 **Ramy** ↑↑What?

...

16 →**James** You've been ↓lying to us.

17 **Ramy** ↑When?

18 **James** Whenever we talk about jerking ↓off and stuff, you always (.) say something weird;

19 →**James** The other day, you ↓said you ↓jerked off six times in a ↓row (.) That's crazy.

20 **James** So I asked my brother about ↑it (.)

21 **James** He said you can end up in the hospital from doing ↓that

22 →**Alex** He said you could've °died°

23 →**Ramy** ↑↑No (.) You ↑can (0.3) ↑You can ↑↑do it.

...

27 →**Alex** Have you ever <even> done ↑it?

28 (1)

29 **Ramy** ↑Yeah.

30 →**Moses** Just be HONEST with ↓us.

31 **Ramy** Of course I #↑↑have#!

...

36 →**Ramy** I'm not ↓ly↑ing, #guys#

...

41 →**James** Jerk off on this ↓leaf. ((holds out leaf to Ramy)) ↓Show us ↑you're not a ↓terrorist.

...

In this scene, the accusation of being a terrorist or connected to terrorism because of MENA background occurs for the first time. The conversation takes a turn immediately when James asks Ramy if he is a terrorist. Ramy's voice is pitching up and down more than the others, showing his agitated state. Terrorism is not the actual issue. The strong conviction that he has been lying about masturbating is. Ramy has been lying and his extreme pitch changes when he tries to overcome the truth by almost yelling only serve to cement his friends' conviction that he has been lying. Moses' loud HONEST tells the audience and Ramy that he could admit it all, and they would probably forgive him. Ramy doubles down instead, and with pitch changes and vocal fry that belie that he is not lying, seals the only way out he had. James then gives him the logical ultimatum: perform masturbation with ejaculation, or they will deem him a terrorist. The silly seriousness of the ultimatum, the gravitas James musters in his voice defuses any interpretation that the friends believe that Ramy is a terrorist. They think he is a liar.

This scene focuses on the unreasonable accusation of terrorist on an individual who has nothing to do with terrorism, and equates it to childlike, ignorant group think. The scene is very much a direct critique of blanket statements about Arabs and Muslims. It also well illustrates that an ill-doer, or liar, is not automatically guilty of other things.

S01E05D01 - *excerpts*

Ramy is in line for food at the mosque. A man wearing a kufi hat (a male garment signifying the wearer is Muslim) is behind him in the line.

...

3 →**Man** (Salaam alaykum) brothe:r. Peace and ↓blessings be upon you.

...

11 →**Mo** Yeah, (waleikum assalaam), bro (.) I see you, okay; ((Do not fuck with me. I know what's going
12 on, buddy.))

13 ((Mo turns to Ramy, pulling him away from the man))

14 →**Mo** Come on, ↓man, let's go. Don't be a fuckin' idiot. He's under↓cover, bro.

15 **Ramy** What?

16 →**Mo** ↑Dude's Dom↑ini↓can (.) Straight-up Dominican (.) FBI's not even trying anymore (.) They're
17 fuckin' la:zy

...

20 →**Mo** >Yeah, ↑he is. Hundred percent (.) ↑Who says “Salam alaykum” and “Peace be up↓on ↓you”?

21 (0.4)

22 **Ramy** Muslims (.) Muslims [say that.

→**Mo** [No, nobody says it twice. He said it twice. ↓Translated it for you. ↑Who translates that shit?_ (.)

By the way (.) you really ↓fucked <up> that thing with Far↑ida (0.2) Okay? Ahmed's over there
res↓cheduling other ↑dudes.

...

It is perfectly normal to wish someone well with the standard Arabic greeting, but the man greeting Ramy, takes the trouble to translate the phrase. His emphasis on “brother” is odd, elongating the e. His accent is like Ramy’s; that of someone who has been born, or grown up in the USA. The oddness of the man is enhanced by Mo, who after quickly returning the standard greeting tells the man he sees him in a

challenging tone, meaning Mo knows what the man is up to. Mo switches to Spanish, telling the man *Do not fuck with me. I know what's going on, buddy*. The TV-show translates the Spanish into English, making sure all of the audience will understand what Mo said. The man does not react to the profanity, but simply stares at Mo without any mimicry. Mo explains to Ramy and to the audience that the man in the kufi (a Muslim headdress for men) is an undercover agent for the FBI. Ramy's tone oozes skepticism and Mo brings up the translation of the standard greeting as the dead giveaway of an agent provocateur. Mo's intonation and emphasis work to show that Mo's opinion is a certainty, that only one kind of person would translate the greeting, an agent. Here *Ramy* – the TV-series critiques the American establishment (FBI et al.) for looking for terrorists where there are none, and painting them as lazy and incompetent.

5 Discussion

Ramy – The TV-series presents, develops and discusses several concepts in the course of the show. As many TV-series dealing with a main character developing over time, with different supporting actors who may become temporary main characters for an episode or two, *Ramy* – The TV-series deals frequently with universal concepts such as personal growth, friendship, community, and coming of age. *Ramy* – The TV-series also deal with more narrow concepts, specific to Arabs and their place in America, or Arabs as viewed by Americans and American media. *Ramy* – The TV-series frequently brings up male and female roles within the ethnic group of Arab Americans, as well as otherness and the wish to belong within the society surrounding oneself.

5.1 Orientalism

How *Ramy* – The TV-series treats the subject of otherness is to use the method and language of Orientalism and stereotypical notions of Arabs and to break apart the stereotype into the complex facets of culture and individuality that lie closer to a believable truth than the 100-plus year negative Arab stereotypes fed to audiences of American movies and television as presented by Shaheen (2001). The TV-series stand a stereotype on its head, turning the tables on preconceived notions of previous American media production. Like Said (1978) describes western writers defining the Orient in relation to the Occident with an assumption of inferiority and degeneration in the Orient that helps define the superiority of the Occident. Ahmed, supported by Mo, assumes and describes degenerate and inferior behaviour by white women, while clearly having no personal experience of it (S01E01D01).

The cadence and intonation, the intensity and rapid-fire timing of Mo and Ahmed reveal their earnestness. That Mo's wife then "jumps in", supporting Mo and Ahmed's arguments with seriousness, reveal the flaw in Orientalism when regarding others. In a sense, *Ramy* – The TV-series is giving the audience who might be indoctrinated by Orientalism a taste of receiving the same unfounded judgement

as Arabs have been subjected to for over a hundred years of Hollywood film making.

During Ramy's date with Nour (S01E01D02), the TV-series use a stereotypical backdrop, by having the daters eat at an Arab themed restaurant, with a chaperone. Nour quickly reveals how the setting is inappropriate for a date with an Arab woman (line 13) and Ramy responds by scraping off the veneer of ethnicity; the restaurant is run by Russians. Shaheen (2001) talks of ethnical signifiers defined by Hollywood to signal "authentic" Arab environs; and here Nour and Ramy play up the fake reality of the "authentic" when Nour mocks indignation and Ramy light-heartedly reveal to the viewers that Arab representation in America likely is fake. Their tone reveal that the trope is known, naïve, and wrong.

When Ramy comes to Cairo (S01E90D03), Ramy's cousin, Shadi, speaks American English with enthusiasm and using American cultural references with an air of complete familiarity. His tone and sure attitude, speaking the English language suggests not an Arab in Egypt, instead he might as well live on the same block in New Jersey as Ramy. The Egyptians are Americanized, consume American media and refer to American movie stars, and -concepts. Arab male characters in American movies between 2001 and 2008 had Arabic, or heavy accent as a sociolinguistic marker as "enemy", "terrorist", or "other" (Roberts, 2021). The ease and flow with which Shadi speak the English language with Ramy is significant for the audience to identify with a non-American Arab. Had he spoken the same words with heavy accents, and disjointed cadence, his words would be associated with the voice of the enemy. Shadi has the same vices as Americans might have (cocaine) and the same desire to speak his mind as Americans do. Shadi's use of the N-word shows that an Arab is also capable of cultural appropriation and *a priori* interpretation of a culture not their own.

5.2 Gender Roles

The stereotypes of Arab women being either oppressed or oversexualized objects, and the stereotypes of Arab men being uncouth, unfeeling, and unnuanced are the stereotypes that *Ramy* – The TV-series explore most frequently. The date between Nour and Ramy (S01E01D02) is interrupted by two rude

American acquaintances of Ramy's. They impose themselves with profanity and disregard for what ought to be a private event. Like the reverse Orientalism of Mo and Ahmed (S01E01D01), the stereotypical rough and uncultured caricature is made of Westerners, instead of the usual Arab. The chaperone leaves the date with advice for Ramy to open up to Nour, revealing an attunement to romance and the emotional needs of his ward as well as those of Ramy. The rough accent of the chaperone becomes associated with a caring and helpful Arab. Nour shows herself as a woman with agency and desires. She is problem solving and direct. She tries to work around Ramy's reticence in order to achieve sexual gratification, but Ramy's demure behaviour restricts her pleasure (S01E01D04). The expectation of gender roles for the two Arab Americans is reversed. She is sure of her sexual desires, but accommodating to his sexual shyness. He is sexually repressed, not Nour. Instead of the Arab man fulfilling his sexual appetites in spite of the woman's protestations, or the woman having sex with the man at any cost, she feels restricted by his shyness and *a priori* idea of her role as an Arab woman. This is a complete reversal of the usual representation of Egyptian Arab men lecherously forcing themselves on women, or Arab maidens being oversexualized belly dancers, needing to seduce the male. Nour shows integrity and agency when Ramy's behaviour goes counterproductive to her having pleasure on equal terms, and she ends the date. The controlling behaviour of parents, and especially Arab male relatives are discussed in (S01E01D03) and (S01E06D02). The seemingly oppressive behaviour of Nour's father as she describes him giving her and her siblings the "sex talk" with forbidding overtones of sexism and homophobia is mitigated by their jovial description of an authoritarian father and suggests that the father may have been socially required to have performed the ritual talk in that manner, rather than actually wanting to control the children's dating life.

5.3 Oppression of Women

When *Ramy* – the TV-series deals with the oppression of women, sex and sexual freedom is close at hand. This is likely a conscious choice, since the stereotypes of Arab women being silent, covered from head to

toe, subservient, or oversexualized objects for male use and gratification are two sides of the oppressive stereotype.

When Nour desires to have sex with Ramy, she reveals she likes to be choked. She is in control and directs how Ramy should give her sexual gratification through a technique of oppression, that of strangulation. Ramy is reticent and unwilling. His unwillingness to physically oppress Nour on her terms is oppressing her mental, sexual, freedom. Throughout the conversation they breath heavily and choke on the word choke, again and again. The non-verbal choking focusses the conversation on the oppressive technique, contrasted with the oppressiveness of not acquiescing to Nour's desire, when she has respected Ramy's choice not to have penetrative sex. It brings the question of what is oppressive to the forefront. Nour is finally turned off by what Ramy is signaling; the idea that the woman is devoid of sexual desire and agency.

Ramy – the TV-series tells the audience, that yes, there are constrictions and oppressions of women within Islam and Arab culture. However, women are able to be free and still be both Arab and Muslim, and they will leave the men who deny them their individuality and freedom, in the cold.

Dena's nightmare sequence starts out with Dena exploring her sexual initiation with an American man, Kyle. As they are interrupted by more and more of Dena's family and relatives, who become increasingly upset, everything devolves into otherworldly nightmare fantasy. The private and intimate moment between Kyle and Dena turns into a shouting match between Uncle Naseem and Dena. The embarrassment and urgency in Dena's voice convey the catastrophe of what is happening more so than the shouting of Uncle Naseem. Dena is threatened by loss of face and perhaps more. The absurdity of Ramy casually walking in and the elder generation warmly congratulating him on his future sexcapades is devastating to Dena. When voices become inhuman, the audience realizes that this is Dena's dream.

In this light it is clear that *Ramy* – the TV-series is not saying that Arab women are necessarily oppressed by their male relatives, but that this is a fear that Dena, or any Arab woman might have. This does not mean that the fear is unfounded. The exaggerated presentation of the admonishments of Dena within the dream sequence suggests that while the fear might be founded in reality, it may also not be

quite so bad. *Ramy* – the TV-series does not shy away from the existence of a fear of oppression, but does not gloss over it by attempting to deny it. Stereotypes may have a kernel of truth. The oppressive nature of Arab men and Islam toward women as presented by Hollywood is exaggerated. There are however rituals, traditions and sociocultural expectations within the Arab and Muslim community that Arab women have to be aware of and navigate.

5.4 Terrorism

Given the prevalence of the Arab as terrorist in American media it is surprising how little time is given to tackling the issue of Arabs being seen as terrorists. In the fourth episode Ramy is a boy coming of age and he and his school friends are obsessed with masturbation resulting in ejaculation, and how it is a sign of becoming a man. During this time, the real-world terrorist attack of 9/11 happens, and it changes Ramy's self-image and some of his classmates' view of him, but it is not the focus of the negative, doubting view he and the others develop of him. His lying about having masturbated, is the issue (S01E04D01).

In episode five there is a very brief dialogue that exposes the existence of American government agent provocateurs moving among the Arab American populace. It is not presented as a threat, it is presented through Mo's emphases and cadence as tiresome, myopic, and most of all: wrong (S01E05D01). It is a clear antithetical statement to the imagery of Hollywood that show Arab men as terrorists. *Ramy* – the TV-series does not speak this intensely and loudly. The TV-series shows Arabs being individuals, talking about and doing everything, while not being terrorists.

6 Conclusion

Ramy – the TV-series uses mainly The English language. It is presented as norm for Americans, Arab and non-Arab alike, as well as a desirable norm for non-American Arabs. As the norm, it becomes the tool with which *Ramy* – the TV series turn expectations on their head, or affirm normalcy, such as when Mo and Ahmed objectify women without using the expected physical objectification while doing so. When Arab Americans in an Arab setting not only speak English exclusively, but their use of the language is more nuanced and subtle than the White Americans who intrude, the TV-series elevate the perception of Arabs as the in-group members with the audience, and the White Americans as outsiders. If *Ramy* and Nour's date had been performed in Arabic, with subtitles, as would be quite possible and logical given that *Ramy*, Nour, and the Chaperone all speak Arabic, the intrusion of *Ramy*'s acquaintances wouldn't have cemented the Arab Americans as the civilized ones being disturbed by barbaric outsiders. By using the English language throughout, the audience can find many recognizable points of identification with *Ramy* and Nour during the date, while the intruders speak with a more accented English, and their uncouth word choices make them seem barbaric and alien in comparison.

When using the English language *Ramy* – the TV series not only uses it to reveal old tropes like Orientalism, and use the same semantics directed at the West and White Americans to strip Orientalism of its relevance, but the TV-series also use non-verbal cues to enhance the local as well as the global meaning of words and conversations, such as when Nour and *Ramy* gasp while discussing choking and sexual freedom of women, or when Kyle, or Dena, speak hurriedly, seeking to avoid a deeper glance at their statements, rushing past the truth.

The attitudes of the characters are presented by the actors' performances and are consistently used to connect the story of the TV-series with that of the audience, to make the script seem reality, and therefore true. *Ramy* – the TV-series presents the characters as believable, everyday individuals. Their reality is connected to that of the audience. Because of this, when the characters present ideas or criticism that

challenge the old stereotypical view of the Arab in Hollywood, the ideas and critique is not merely argumentative and intellectual. The attitudes of the characters make the audience feel and think about these ideas, instead of just being told about them. This makes the message of the TV-series more convincing and successful. The flow of Kyle's words when he is trying to have sex with Dena divulge his truthfulness, or lack thereof, and is used to present him, the American White male, as coarse, unromantic, and incompetent. The TV-series creates dialogue that mimics and flows like spontaneous conversation between people in real life. When the TV-series criticises stereotypes, it is the flow of the conversation that makes the criticism clear and successful. The timbre, cadence, and emphases of the actors turn the information within the script to a perceived and experienced reality for the viewing audience. Ramy's generation of Arabs all speak the English language in a manner consistent with other Americans of the same generation. This lets the audience identify with the characters and accept their ideologies of life. The TV-series turns away from natural conversation somewhat as there are very few examples of overlapping speech, but this would be in aid of clearer perception for the audience, which likely is a majority of non-Arab Americans. When the TV-series does present a more natural and chaotic soundscape in dialogue, it enhances grotesqueness, showing the unreasonableness of the content of the conversation. The enhancements of intonation, vocal fry, or choking while speaking certain words give them and their concepts deeper and wider meaning than the overt sense of the performed scene, elevating the English words spoken from having only meaning within the universe of the dialogue, to speaking against the Orientalism of the American media landscape's past.

Ramy – the TV-series barely mentions Arabs not being terrorists and I think this is perhaps the most effective strategy the TV-series could take. By not verbally refuting the stereotype of “other”, “enemy”, or “terrorist” again and again, *Ramy* – the TV-series does not activate the audience's defensiveness by shining a light on their preconceived notions. Instead Ramy and other Arabs speak like White Americans do, inject feelings and import into their conversations, similarly to the audience's feelings and thoughts in their lives. The choice of the English language, and the attitude of the speakers, revealed through flow of the dialogue, is there to put a looking glass to the message of *Ramy* – the TV-series: Arabs are

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individuals, everyone a unique person, impossible to easily define as representatives of a group.

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8 Appendix

S01E01D01

Ramy and his friends are attending a marriage ceremony, sitting along one wall of the room, away from the table where the Imam and couple sit with their closest family.

- 1 **Mo** You're gonna die alone, bro.
- 2 **Ramy** °What°?
- 3 **Mo** °Yeah°
- 4 **Ahmed** He's right, Ramy. >You're running out< of options.
- 5 **Ramy** D(hh)ude.
- 6 **Ahmed** There's only two hot Muslim girls left in town, and they'll be ↓gone by the end of the year.
- 7 **Mo** Are you talking about Fatima and Hadiya, bro?
- 8 **Ahmed** ↑Yeah
- 9 **Mo** They °are not° hot
- 10 **Ahmed** To me they are.
- 11 **Mo** °You need to get your eyes checked (.) Go and get some LASIK. They're <not> hot. You need to go
- 12 outside of the network if you want to find quality°
- 13 **Ramy** Dude, I'm ↓fine. It's not a big deal.
- 14 **Ahmed** My cousin had to do that. It took forever, man (.) Finally, my aunt found him a girl in Ohio,
- 15 **Ramy** Look

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- 16 **Mo** [Yeah, but now he lives in Ohio. Ohio ↓sucks
- 17 **Ramy** Okay its-
- 18 **Woman** [Shh!
- 19 **Ramy** [Sorry (.) It's just (.) Look-
- 20 **Mo** °You need to find a girl asap, okay? <a>sap.>You're getting< old, bro (.) and your hairline (.) is not
- 21 looking ↑good
- 22 **Ramy** It's fine=
- 23 **Mo** =°You're gonna be on Muslim Match, swiping through divorced chicks. You're gonna be raising other
- 24 people's babies°
- 25 (0.3)
- 26 **Ramy** All right, can we just stop, man? All right? I- °There's nothing-°
- 27 **Mo** ↑Bro, it's way worse than I thought. ((Mo picks at Ramy's hair))
- 28 **Ramy** Listen (.) Stop (.) stop. [It's ↓fine. Listen-
- 29 **Mo** [°It's not fine. You got a situation. Your curls are not gonna save you°
- 30 ((Ahmed nods in agreement and points to his own bald head.))
- 31 **Ramy** Okay, li[sten-
- 32 **Mo** [°There's only so much they can cover°
- 33 **Ramy** I don't have to find a Muslim girl, all right? I've actually been seeing this girl Chloe for a little bit
- 34 (.) and it's going ↓well.
- 35 **Ahmed** ↑No:!! Are you out of your ↑mind?

- 36 **Mo** He [must be!
- 37 **Ahmed** [White girls suck, bro. You can't keep dating 'em. One, they're always walking around barefoot=
- 38 **Mo** =That's crazy
- 39 **Ahmed** ↑They have no morals.=
- 40 **Mo** =No morals
- 41 **Ahmed** And they're ↑always jumping in ↓stuff.
- 42 **Mo** Always.
- 43 **Ramy** hh What do you mean? “jumping in stuff”=
- 44 →**Ahmed** =The- they're just jumping in stuff that's none of their business, man.
- 45 →**Ahmed** They skinny-dip. You don't want a wife that skinny-dips.
- 46 **Mo** Bro
- 47 **Ahmed** You want a ↓wife that swims at <normal> times=
- 48 **Mo** =yes=
- 49 →**Ahmed** =with ↓proper attire. Not this nakedness. You need to find someone (.) who knows where you
- 50 came from and what you believe in. And someone who's (.) <hot>
- 51 **Ramy** hh=
- 52 **Mo** =Just ↑have your parents hook it up. They keep tabs on everyone (.) That's what ↑I ↓did (.) It's the
- 53 best decision I made,
- 54 **Mo's wife** Shh!
- 55 **Mo** I'm ↑sorry, baby (.) She's so hot (0.3) My ↑mom did that

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- 56 →**Mo's wife** °These guys are idiots°
- 57 **Mo** Hey
- 58 **Mo's wife** But everything they said is ↑true
- 59 **Ahmed** White girls ↓suck (0.3) You don' want to ↑do ↓that (.) You don't wanna go down that ↓road

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S01E01D02

Ramy and Nour are on a date in a restaurant. At the same table, between them, is a man who acts as chaperone for the date. The chaperone smokes a water pipe and blows smoke in Ramy's direction

1 **Ramy** hh

2 **Ramy** So (0.4) have you lived in Jersey_i your whole life? ((directed at chaperone))

3 **Chaperone** No, no_ (.) You're here for her_ not me (.) I'm just the chaperone (.) Pretend I'm not even
4 here.

5 **Ramy** °Okay° (1) Nour (.) uh (.) you're from Jersey_i

6 **Chaperone** ↑Bo:rn and ↓raised

7 (6.5) ((Hookah bubbling, as chaperone smokes))

8 **Ramy** My mom said that (.) uh (.) you're an accountant.

9 **Nour** ↑Yeah (.) My ↑mom said you worked in ↑a (.) ↓start-up or something

10 **Ramy** [Ye-

11 →**Chaperone** [Too much small talk (.) MoRe personal.

12 (2.5)

13 →**Nour** So ↓how did you pick this restaurant? You think because I'm E↑gyp↓tian, I like to eat Egyptian
14 ↑food?

15 (1)

16 **Ramy** You ↓know (0.3) I just figured you ↓probably had a lot of ↑homemade Egyptian food (.) but I
17 really wanted you to taste it (.) when it's made by (0.3) the Russian guys in the kitchen here.

18 **Nour** ((heh heh heh))

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- 19 **Ramy** Yeah, no, the bread here is actua=
- 20 →**Joey** =Yo! fuckin' ↑Ramy! Look at this ↓guy!
- 21 **Johnny** This motherfucker!
- 22 **Joey** How you [doin'?
- 23 **Johnny** [Bro, we haven't seen you in forever! How's it going?
- 24 **Joey** You too good to ↓call my ↑sis↓ter? Get ↓out of here!
- 25 **Joey** ((stretching out hand to Nour)) Yo, how you doin' My name's Joey' This is ↓Johnny.
- 26 **Johnny** How's it going?
- 27 **Nour** Hi (.) I'm ↑Nour.
- 28 **Joey** You guys try the fa↓lafels yet? They're ↓bomb as shit (.) Come ↓on.
- 29 **Johnny** Bomb as fuckin' ↑shit.
- 30 **Joey** I wouldn't lie about ↓that.
- 31 **Johnny** Unbelievable. What are ↑you guys up to? ↑What's going ↓on?
- 32 **Ramy** Just (.) hanging out.
- 33 →**Johnny** Ah (.) no (.) ↑What you're <act>ually doin is coming with us to Dan↑te's.
- 34 **Johnny** [We got a big group.
- 35 **Joey** [Gonna do some ↑dancing (.) Gonna ↑dance a little bit.
- 36 ((Joey mimes dancing))
- 37 **Ramy** Sure (.) yeah (.) Maybe we'll just (.) ↓like (.) meet you there later.
- 38 →**Chaperone** You want to meet these peop↓le at Dante's_?

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- 39 **Ramy** N-n- no, no, no. I (.) I was just (0.3)
- 40 **Chaperone** ((lifting forefinger to Joey and Johnny)) Listen to me (0.8) You ↓don't want to go to Dante's
41 on a ↓Friday. ((Pointing fingers to own thigh for emphasis))
- 42 →**Chaperone** ((holding hands palm up, signaling import of statement)) What you want to do is go to PJ's.
- 43 **Chaperone** Very hard to get into (.) Tell the guy at the door (.) you know Masoud (.) ((Points to self))
44 He'll get you in.
- 45 **Johnny** All right (.) ↓thanks.
- 46 **Nour** You ↑know (.) it sounds like it's (.) ↑really ↓hard to get into,
- 47 **Chaperone** It is_
- 48 **Nour** And I feel ↑like (.) they really need you right now=
- 49 **Ramy** =Yeah (.) uh (.) you know (.) they ↓probably need a connection (.) to get ↓in.
- 50 **Chaperone** ((snaps fingers pointing to Ramy)) That's true (.) It took me many years to get an “IN” at
51 pj's.
- 52 **Johnny** No, no, [listen. It's no ↓problem.
- 53 **Joey** [Wait, wait. What's happening?
- 54 **Chaperone** No, no (.) I insist (.) I'll ↓be your chaPerone.
- 55 **Johnny** Huh?
- 56 **Chaperone** Let's ↓go.
- 57 **Joey** Little funny (.) All ↑right. Ok↓ay.
- 58 ((chattering))

- 59 **Joey** Be ↑good, Ramy.
- 60 **Chaperone** Relax a little bit (.) ↓man. You're carrying a lot of tension. ((while rubbing Ramy's trapezii))
- 61 **Chaperone** °You seem like a good guy° (.) but she's not gonna see the ↓real you: if you're so wound up_
- 62 **Ramy** °Okay°
- 63 ((Chaperone leaves, following Joey and Johnny))
- 64 (2)
- 65 **Nour** °Wow° ((heh heh))
- 66 **Ramy** £Oh£ (.) so your cousin's a- (0.3)
- 67 **Nour** Y(hh)eah.
- 68 **Ramy** really interesting ↓guy
- 69 (0.4)
- 70 **Nour** He's not ↑really my cousin (.) He's just one of ↓those (.) you know-
- 71 **Ramy** ↑Oh (.) like an Arab cousin;
- 72 **Nour** Yes.
- 73 **Ramy** ↓Yeah (.) just (.) like (.) anyone that your dad's ever me(h)t hh
- 74 **Nour** Yeah. His ↓dad fixed my dad's transmission ↑two years ag↑↑o, so=
- 75 **Ramy** =Oh, yeah (.) no (.) that's definitely a cousin. He might even be an ↓uncle, just 'cause the
- 76 transmission's such a (.) big part of the car (.) I mean, that's (.) that's family forever.
- 77 **Nour** ((heh)) .hh

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S01E01D04

Nour and Ramy are walking into an alley where Nour's car is parked.

- 1 **Nour** ↑So, for something my mom helped set up (.) this wasn't too ↑bad.
- 2 **Ramy** #Yeah# (0.3) I mean (.) Tinder doesn't really have shit on our moms.
- 3 **Nour** ((heh heh heh))
- 4 (3.5)
- 5 **Nour** We should ↑do this again.
- 6 (1)
- 7 **Ramy** Yeah, definitely.
- 8 (3)
- 9 **Nour** °Right?°
- 10 (5.5)
- 11 **Ramy** Get home safe (.) okay?
- 12 **Nour** ↑What, I don't get a good-night kiss?
- 13 (1)
- 14 **Ramy** I just (0.5) I wasn't ↓sure if you did #that#
- 15 **Nour** If I ↓kissed?
- 16 →**Ramy** I mean, I'm sure you kiss (.). I just didn't ↓know if, you know, because we're, like, a-
- 17 →**Nour** ((starts kissing Ramy))
- 18 ((kissing)) (12.7)

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- 19 **Nour** Let's get in my car.
- 20 **Ramy** (2.5) Okahhy.
- 21 ((Ramy and Nour are kissing, moaning, breathing in the car's back seat)) (15)
- 22 **Ramy** Whoa, whoa. ((heh))
- 23 **Nour** You all right?
- 24 **Ramy** Yea(hh)
- 25 **Nour** Okay, good (1) Do you have a condom? ((sniff))
- 26 **Ramy** Uh, yeah, but, um (.) ((heh))
- 27 (1)
- 28 →**Nour** ↑What, you don't wanna have sex?
- 29 **Ramy** Yeah, but I- I (.) I didn't know if- if you could, you know, just 'cause (.) we're not ↓married.
- 30 →**Nour** Oh, I- I didn't even know you were that strict (.) I ↑mean, yeah, we can get married. Um (.) my
- 31 >cousin does (.) like, nik↓ahs over the phone if you want to do (.) like (.) a temporary marriage (.)There's
- 32 this imam she uses<
- 33 →**Ramy** No, no, no (.) I'm not (.) I don't think we should try and, like (.) ↓trick God or whatever. I just
- 34 think maybe we should .hh (.) you know (.) slow down?
- 35 →**Nour** >Oh, okay (.) Yeah, we can take it slow<
- 36 **Ramy** Yeah?
- 37 **Nour** Yeah, of course.
- 38 **Ramy** Okay

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- 39 **Nour** Yeah, there are other things we can ↑do
- 40 **Ramy** Okay.
- 41 **Nour** Yea(hh) ((kissing)) ((shuffling on top of Ramy))
- 42 ((Putting Ramy's hands on her throat))
- 43 **Nour** Yeah, right ↓there. ((kissing)) Yeah.
- 44 ((panting))
- 45 →**Nour** #Choke# me while I f(hh)inger myself
- 46 **Ramy** What?
- 47 **Nour** I want you to choke me .hh
- 48 **Ramy** Um (0,4)
- 49 **Nour** Use both (hh)ands .hh
- 50 **Ramy** Um (.) okay. (0.3) Are you ↑sure?
- 51 **Nour** Yeah. .hh ah
- 52 **Ramy** Okay.
- 53 **Nour** Harder.
- 54 **Ramy** Yes_ (.) Okay
- 55 →**Nour** Like (.) actually harder. It's not a masshhage.
- 56 ((panting))
- 57 **Ramy** Yeah, yeah, okay (.) Um (.)
- 58 **Nour** Yeah. ((grunting))

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59 ((moaning))

60 **Ramy** I-

61 **Nour** ((panting)) #ah# ((panting)) #ah# ((panting))

62 **Ramy** No (.) no. Hey.

63 **Nour** Don't stohhp

64 **Ramy** ((stops))

65 **Nour** ↑What?

66 **Ramy** I don't ↓want to do this.

67 **Nour** ↑↑No, what? ↑Why?

68 →**Ramy** I'm not into choking. I don't (.) I don't want to chohhke you.

69 **Nour** Oh, God. (hh) God, you're so full of shit. ((heavy breathing))

70 **Ramy** What?

71 **Nour** It's not the #choking# that's the ↓problem.

72 **Ramy** Look, it's just our first date, and I feel like maybe this is happening=

73 **Nour** =↑What, you don't hook up on the first date;

74 **Ramy** (2)

75 **Nour** >Yeah, that's what I ↓thought<

76 **Ramy** Look, this is, like (.) just throwing me for a loop a little bit. I didn't think that a girl like you was

77 gonna want to, like=

- 78 →**Nour** =A girl like ↑me? ((panting)) (2) Look, we had this, like, really nice night, and you felt weirded
79 out by (.) the idea (.) of kissing ↓me .hh (.) I get it if you don't want to have sex, but .hh I'm, like, in this
80 little Muslim box in your head (0.3) and I'm (0.3) the wife or the mother of your kids (0.3) right? (.) .hh
81 I'm not supposed to cum.
- 82 **Ramy** hh .hh Okay, I'll #choke# you
- 83 **Nour** just get ↑out of my ↑car.
- 84 **Ramy** No, I- ((Cut to Ramy standing outside the car))
- 85 ((door slams shut))
- 86 ((engine starts))
- 87 **Ramy** Just-
- 88 ((Car drives off))

A twelve-year-old Ramy and a few of his friends from school are walking to school. They have been obsessively occupied with masturbation and have been bragging about their proficiency, without anyone of them actually knowing whether or not any of the others have masturbated, or ejaculated. Ramy has neither, and has unsuccessfully tried to research methodology and masturbatory iconography, while he has been intimating to his friends that he has indeed masturbated for a while now. Complicating Ramy's view of how he thinks others view him, is the recent attack on the World Trade Center in New York on the eleventh of September.

- 1 **James** Hey, ↓man, can I ↑ask you somethin'?
- 2 **Ramy** Yeah. (1) What's up?
- 3 →**James** Are you a ↓terrorist?
- 4 (3)
- 5 **Ramy** ↑↑What?
- 6 You know, like (0.3) are you, uh-
- 7 **Alex** He means, ↓like (.) is your family terrorists? Like, are you (araibic) and stuff?
- 8 **Moses** We were ↑just wondering because, you know, ↓you're from the Middle East and everything, so (.)
- 9 we ↑thought maybe you ↓guys were terrorists.
- 10 **Ramy** Guys, ↑I'm ↓from ↑Egypt. That's ↓not ↑even the Middle East. (0.4)
- 11 **Ramy** Egypt's in Afr↑ica! If anyth↑ing, I'm ↓black.
- 12 **Ramy** Come ↓on, you don't really bel↑ieve I'm a ↓terrorist, do ↑you? (1) You guys know ↑me.

- 13 **James** °Do we?°
- 14 (2)
- 15 **Ramy** ↑Yeah (.) Uh (1) what do you ↑mean?
- 16 →**James** You've been ↓lying to us.
- 17 **Ramy** ↑When?
- 18 **James** Whenever we talk about jerking ↓off and stuff, you always (.) say something weird;
- 19 **James** The other day, you ↓said you ↓jerked off six times in a ↓row (.) That's crazy.
- 20 **James** So I asked my brother about ↑it (.)
- 21 **James** He said you can end up in the hospital from doing ↓that
- 22 →**Alex** He said you could've °died°
- 23 →**Ramy** ↑↑No (.) You ↑can (0.3) ↑You can ↑↑do it.
- 24 **Ramy** Look, ↓man, your brother just hasn't done it before=
- 25 **James** =My brother's done everything.
- 26 **Moses** £His£ brother jerks off a lot, ↓man.
- 27 →**Alex** Have you ever <even> done ↑it?
- 28 (1)
- 29 **Ramy** ↑Yeah.
- 30 →**Moses** Just be HONEST with ↓us.
- 31 **Ramy** Of course I #↑↑have#!
- 32 (2)

- 33 **James** You're ↓lying.
- 34 **James** I don't even think you know ↑how to jerk ↓off.
- 35 **Alex** And I don't think you're ↓black.
- 36 →**Ramy** I'm not ↓ly↑ing, #guys#
- 37 **James** ↓Fine.
- 38 **James** Then ↑prove it.
- 39 ((takes leaf from ground))
- 40 **James** ↓Go in ↑there. ((points across the street))
- 41 →**James** Jerk off on this ↓leaf. ((holds out leaf to Ramy)) ↓Show us ↑you're not a ↓terrorist.
- 42 ((Ramy goes into the woods with the leaf and attempts to masturbate, but is overwhelmed by noises
43 around him))
- 44 ((When Ramy comes back out, he can see his friends walking away in the distance))

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S01E05D01

Ramy is in line for food at the mosque. A man wearing a kufi hat (a male garment signifying the wearer is Muslim) is behind him in the line.

1 ((chatter))

2 **Ramy** hh ((looking dejected at food table))

3 →**Man** (Salaam alaykum) brothe:r. Peace and ↓blessings be upon you.

4 **Ramy** (Waleikum salaam)

5 **Man** How's your Rama↓dan?

6 (1.3)

7 **Ramy** You know (.) honestly (.) it's not really been that great. It's ↓been-

8 ((Mo cuts in line in front of the man, touches the man on the shoulder))

9 **Mo** We're good, bro (.) all right?

10 **Man** Salaams, brother.

11 →**Mo** Yeah, (waleikum assalaam), bro (.) I see you, okay; ((Do not fuck with me. I know what's going
12 on, buddy.))

13 ((Mo turns to Ramy, pulling him away from the man))

14 →**Mo** Come on, ↓man, let's go. Don't be a fuckin' idiot. He's under↓cover, bro.

15 **Ramy** What?

16 →**Mo** ↑Dude's Dom↑ini↓can (.) Straight-up Dominican (.) FBI's not even trying anymore (.) They're
17 fuckin' la:zy

18 **Mo** Just puttin' [anybody in here now

19 **Ramy** [<Stop>

20 →**Mo** >Yeah, ↑he is. Hundred percent (.) ↑Who says “Salam alaykum” and “Peace be up↓on ↓you”?

21 (0.4)

22 **Ramy** Muslims (.) Muslims [say that.

23 →**Mo** [No, nobody says it twice. He said it twice. ↓Translated it for you. ↑Who translates that shit?_ (.)

24 By the way (.) you really ↓fucked <up> that thing with Far↑ida (0.2) Okay? Ahmed's over there

25 res↓cheduling other ↑dudes

26 **Ramy** I- dude (.) I don't care about that, ↓man. That- That was messed up, ↓dude (.) That really put me in

27 my head

28 **Mo** hh it's all men↓tal, bro (.) Get over it (.) I work with ↑food all ↓day.

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S01E06D02

Dena and Kyle are making out in Dena's bed.

- 1 ((Music with Latin rhythm plays, lyrics in Arabic))
- 2 **Kyle** °Sure nobody's home?°
- 3 **Dena** No, nohh. (.) They're ↓gone for a few hohhurs.
- 4 **Kyle** °You're so fucking hot.° (.) °I've been wahhnting this for so ↓long.°
- 5 **Dena** Me too.
- 6 **Kyle** °I see you at the student center, and I'm like .hh hh “<fuhhck>. I just wanna taste ↓her.”° ((pulls off
- 7 Dena's jeans))
- 8 **Dena** ((heh heh heh)) Oh! Hh .hh O↑k
- 9 ((Kyle grunting, moving his head down between Dena's legs)))
- 10 ((breathing))
- 11 **Dena** ((sits up)) Um (.) you know ↑what? (1) Let's just have ↓sehnx.
- 12 **Kyle** Yeah ((digs for condom)) (3) How do you ↓want me?
- 13 (1.2)
- 14 **Dena** What do you ↑mean?
- 15 **Kyle** Like, .hh what position?
- 16 (0.5)
- 17 →**Dena** Um (0.3) >whatever<

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- 18 ((Kyle opens condom packet))
- 19 **Dena** I'm cool with, like >any of ↓them<.
- 20 (1)
- 21 **Kyle** hh .hh hh .hh What Have y- (0.3) have you done this before¿
- 22 (2)
- 23 **Dena** What (.) do you meanhh¿
- 24 →**Kyle** Like, (.) have you done <anything>?
- 25 (1)
- 26 **Dena** Uhhm (1)
- 27 **Maysa** ((from outside Dena's bedroom)) DENA, [have you seen this video on YouTube?]
- 28 →**Dena** [[[gasps]] What the fuck?] ((covering herself and Kyle with duvet))
- 29 **Dena** ↑Mo:m!
- 30 →**Maysa** [(ya leila soda) ((*What a terrible night!*))]
- 31 **Dena** [Oh, my °god°
- 32 (1)
- 33 **Maysa** (YA LEILA SODA) ((*WHAT A TERRIBLE NIGHT!*))
- 34 **Farouk** Yeah, MAYSA, ↑WHY are you always ye:lling?
- 35 **Dena** #Oh# my ↓gosh.
- 36 →**Farouk** What's going ↓on, Dena¿ ((Farouk and Maysa are standing passively at the foot of the bed))
- 37 **Dena** I ↓thought you guys were at uncle Nas↑eem's!

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- 38 →**Farouk** ((to Kyle)) Who are ↑you?
- 39 **Kyle** Kinda what it looks like.
- 40 ((uncle Naseem's voice can be heard from the hallway))
- 41 **Dena** °shit°!
- 42 **Uncle Naseem** ((Arabic)) Farouk ((heh)) ((Arabic))!
- 43 →**Dena** Get OUT! ↑Ple:ase!
- 44 ((Naseem and Farouk speaking Arabic, Naseem is very agitated upon seeing Dena and Kyle))
- 45 **Naseem** ((Arabic)) It's all your [fault! ((to Farouk))
- 46 **Dena** [Mom, TELL him!
- 47 →**Uncle Naseem** [Now ↑she's having ↓sex! (.) ((to Kyle)) ↓You white animal!
- 48 **Dena** [Get #out#!
- 49 ((Naseem is coming with violence towards the bed, Farouk and Maysa try to hold him))
- 50 **Naseem** [How dare you? I kill you!
- 51 →**Dena** [One second, ↑PLEASE!
- 52 **Uncle Naseem** [I ↓KILL you!
- 53 ((Ramy saunters into the room))
- 54 **Maysa** ↓Naseem- Ramy:, (habibi)!
- 55 **Ramy** Hey, ↓what's up? .pt ((hugs Maysa)) What's going ↓on?
- 56 ((Naseem, Farouk, Maysa and Ramy chattering, hugging, cheek kisses))
- 57 **Dena** °Wait a minute° RAMY!

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- 58 **Uncle Naseem** All ↓right! ((Arabic))
- 59 **Ramy** I'm ↑good (.) yeah, I ↓gotta go.
- 60 **Maysa** Where are you ↓go:ing?
- 61 →**Ramy** Uh (.) I'm gonna go ↓hang out with this ↓girl.
- 62 →**Uncle Naseem** E::y₆ All ↓right! (.) Oh, yeah!
- 63 ((chattering))
- 64 **Farouk** Proud of you.
- 65 →**Maysa** Enj↑OY it!
- 66 →**Uncle Naseem** Wear a ↓condom, ah?
- 67 **Maysa** (Habibi)
- 68 →**Uncle Naseem** Send a ↑picture to ↓Uncle Naseem! ((distorted voice and laughing))-
- 69 ((a big music note, and then uncle Naseem and Maysa stares silently at Dena))
- 70 **Farouk** ((echoing)) °Grandma°!
- 71 **Farouk** Your ↓grandmother came all the way from Egypt. ((So that she could see you have sex?))
- 72 **Grandmother** ((quavering noise))
- 73 ((creepy music, lights flashing and spark noises))
- 74 **Uncle Naseem** ((distorted)) You ↑don't care about your ↓ancestors or your family₆ (.) And I'm sure you
- 75 don't care about the ((echoing)) refugees.
- 76 **Anchor on TV** Thousands of refugees have ↑nowhere to ↓go.
- 77 **Disembodied voice** ((Shame on you))

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- 78 **Small boy refugee speaking Arabic** *((You don't care about us. I don't have a home. Instead of praying*
79 *for us, you are having sex))*
- 80 *((Sirens))*
- 81 **Man on radio** *((static distortion))* Awkward ↓female trying sex.
- 82 →**Kyle** Hey man (.) I'm Kyle (.) *((fist bumps refugee boy))* You let me know if I can ↑do °anything°.
- 83 *((It's dark, Dena is alone in her bed))*
- 84 *((she is no longer dreaming))*
- 85 **Dena** hh *((turns over, tips mug of water onto laptop on the floor))* fuhhck (1) shit
- 86 *((Door opens))*
- 87 **Maysa** °Dena (.) are you okay¿ (0.6) I ↓heard the #crash#. °
- 88 **Dena** It's fi:ne (.) What are you ↑doing here? (.) I barely ↑moved (.) I don't know ↓how you heard me _
- 89 **Maysa** °What happened to your comp↑uter? (.) You broke ↑it (.) It's very° [expensive.
- 90 **Dena** [Mom (.) it didn't ↓break (.) Okay¿ Some ↓water fell on it (.) It's fine (.) Just, just go (.) Go sleep.
- 91 →**Maysa** °This door, keep it open. I told you ↑hundred times, you and your ↓brother. °
- 92 **Dena** Oka:y.
- 93 **Maysa** Open.
- 94 **Farouk** Is ↑she okay¿
- 95 **Maysa** She broke her computer=
- 96 **Farouk** =fucking ↓shit! *((it was so expensive))*

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S01E06D03

Dena and Kyle are making out on Kyles bed after dinner at Kyle's place. This time it is a real make out session.

- 1 **Kyle** ((starts removing shirt))
- 2 **Dena** Okay. Hh ((starts pulling at her own top))
- 3 →**Kyle** Oh, no, °no°. Keep yours on for a minute (.) Yeah, ↓no, we'll take it slow.
- 4 **Dena** Oh, hh °okay° Okay.
- 5 **Kyle** Yeah. That's a very sexy outfit. ((kissing))
- 6 (2)
- 7 **Dena** ((starts pulling down trousers))
- 8 **Kyle** >No, no, no<. I mean (.) Keep 'em on, keep 'em on.
- 9 **Dena** Just like that? ((trousers at knee height))
- 10 **Kyle** >Yeah, yeah<
- 11 **Dena** Okay¿ (.) Yeah.
- 12 **Kyle** ((puts his hand on Dena's crotch))
- 13 **Dena** ((moans)) hh °Oh, my God°.
- 14 **Kyle** Do you speak hhany Arabic?
- 15 **Dena** M↑m, yeah. Hh .hh
- 16 **Kyle** hh Oh, that's so fu(hh)cking cool. .hh Will you speak (.) for me (.) a ↑little?
- 17 **Dena** Uh, m-

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- 18 **Kyle** Just anything. >Whatever<. Whatever comes to mind.
- 19 **Dena** (Ismi Dena) Ohh.
- 20 **Kyle** .hh What does that mean? hh
- 21 **Dena** Um (.) “My name is ↑De(hh)na.”
- 22 →**Kyle** Oh my Gohhd (.) that's ↓so hot (.) ((starts unbuttoning his trousers)) >Okay okay< (.) Will you
- 23 say my name in Arabic? Will you sahhy my name?
- 24 **Dena** Oh. (0.3) It's (.) it's (.) just, ↓“Kyle” there isn't really, like (.) there isn't, like, an equivalent to it.
- 25 →**Kyle** Oh, yeah. No, that (0.3) Yeah, that makes sense. (.) Okay (0.3) ((removing trousers)) will you just
- 26 say something else?
- 27 (1.5) ((Dena is grasping at the air with her hands, at a loss))
- 28 **Dena** Um-
- 29 **Kyle** Just anything.
- 30 **Dena** Uh (0.3) ((Arabic))
- 31 **Kyle** Oh, °yeah°.
- 32 **Dena** Ye:ah.
- 33 ((kissing))
- 34 **Kyle** What is that?
- 35 **Dena** “I lihkhke you.”
- 36 →**Kyle** Oh, <°wow°>
- 37 **Dena** Yeah.

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- 38 →**Kyle** ba (.) bah (.) bek
- 39 **Dena** ((heh))
- 40 **Kyle** Yeah.
- 41 **Dena** Mm. Yes.
- 42 ((kissing))
- 43 →**Kyle** Oh, God, you're so sex↑y (.) This olive skin.
- 44 ((kissing))
- 45 **Dena** °Yeah°.
- 46 **Kyle** Yeah. (1.5) You ↓sure you want to have sex with me?
- 47 **Dena** Yeah. Mmh↑mm.
- 48 →**Kyle** Yeah? (.) Even though I'm a ↓white infid↓el?
- 49 **Dena** Uh (.) ↓m↑m?
- 50 →**Kyle** I can just stick it in your ass (.) so you can still be a ↓virgin. hh Is that what you [want?
- 51 **Dena** [Wait, what?
- 52 (1)
- 53 **Kyle** What?
- 54 (1)
- 55 **Dena** What are you ↓saying?
- 56 (2)
- 57 →**Kyle** Oh, no (.) I was just- I was doing, like (.) a little ↓role-play.

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- 58 **Dena** .hh
- 59 **Kyle** Like-
- 60 →**Dena** ↓Oh.
- 61 **Kyle** ((inaudible))
- 62 **Dena** Oh, ok↓ay.
- 63 **Kyle** Yeah.
- 64 →**Dena** Uh (0.3) yeah. (.) Can we just (.) have ↓normal ↑sex?
- 65 **Kyle** (1) Yeah, no (.) totally.
- 66 **Dena** Mmh↑mm?
- 67 →**Kyle** >Yeah, yeah, yeah<. Yeah, for sure.
- 68 **Dena** Yeah. (.) Okay. Do you wanna get the condom?
- 69 **Kyle** Yes (.) Yeah, yeah. ((gets condom)) Yeah. Uh, okay, yeah. Let's get these clothes off you.
- 70 **Dena** Yeah.
- 71 **Kyle** Okay.
- 72 ((kissing))
- 73 **Kyle** You can just, like (.) be yourself.
- 74 **Dena** ↓Yeah.
- 75 →**Kyle** I accept you (.) You don't have to wear a fu(hh)cking ((kissing)) head scarf or-
- 76 →**Dena** ↑What? (.) ↑Dude!
- 77 **Kyle** No, right, sorry (.) No, I'll ↓stop (.) 'cause you want (.) you want me to stop, right?

78 (0.6)

79 **Dena** ↓Yeah.

80 **Kyle** °Yeah°.

81 →**Dena** Um, (.) can we just role-play that I'm, (.) like, a white girl, and-

82 →**Kyle** Uh, (.) I mean ((2.5)) <w:hy>?

83 →**Dena** Okay, so (1.5) are you ↑just (0.3) hooking up with ↓me because I'm Egyptian?

84 (1)

85 →**Kyle** I mean- (1.3) I think it's <hot> that you're <Egyptian> (.) Like, is that (.) No, I think it's like (0.3)

86 I think it's a <cool> (0.3) part of you. I think it's inter↓esting. It's just, like, ↓so (0.3) unknown, and I just

87 want to (0.3) ↓know it. ((starts kissing Dena's neck))

88 **Dena** Mm. (.) Yeah. (.) Um, does everything have to be about me being Arab? (0.3) Like, I don't know,

89 can it just (1.3) <be> normal?

90 (1.5)

91 **Kyle** ((Scoff-laugh)) N- (.) Normal sucks. (.) Right? Like, I wish that I [was-

92 **Dena** °[Oh, God°

93 **Kyle** I just wish I was something (.) Like, anything (.) 'Cause I'm this, (.) like, all the time (.) I'm just

94 ↓white.

95 **Dena** °Uhhm°

96 →**Kyle** Do you know how weird it is to be nothing? hh Okay. (.) Like, my art, (.) right? I've got, like, this

97 voice. (0.8) And fuck (.) like, ↑nobody gives a shit (.) 'cause I'm not (0.3) Indian (.) or (.) <trans>.

98 **Dena** Mm-↑hmm.

99 **Kyle** I would fucking kill- (.) Not that- that's not the ↓point.

100 **Dena** ((starts pulling trousers on))

101 **Kyle** >No, no, no< (.) >No, no, no< What I mean (.) Dena, I'm saying I would want to be like you (.) I'd

102 wanna have-

103 **Dena** Mm-↓hmm (.) >Yea'< (.) I'm done. hh

104 ((Dena gets dressed and leaves))

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EON200

S01E09D03

Ramy is at a party that Shadi invited him to. He has come back inside after talking to a woman outside.

- 1 **Ramy** Yo.
- 2 **Shadi** Yo, ↓Bro.
- 3 →**Ramy** Yo, ↓man, I (.) I ↓just met ↓someone, I (.) I think she's your friend? (.) This, like really (0.3)
- 4 cute girl (.) she (.) she said they were going to another party that was more chill. May maybe we ↑could
- 5 ↓go with ↑them?
- 6 **Shadi** DUDE, ↓that's fuckin' ↓awesome. You ↓found a chick alr↑eady?
- 7 **Shadi** I knew my ↓cousin was a ↓play↑er!
- 8 **Shadi** You're ↓like fuckin' ↑Hitch, ↓man. ((offers a plate with lines of cocaine)) ↓Here. Try this.
- 9 →**Ramy** ↓Wha? ((looking at plate))
- 10 →**Shadi** HITCH. Will Smith in that ↑film? ↓He's really good with ↑chicks?
- 11 **Ramy** No, yeah, but, du-
- 12 ((Shadi snorts a line of cocaine))
- 13 **Ramy** ↓Shadi, I-
- 14 **Shadi** Ihht'll help with the ↑jet ↓lag.
- 15 →**Ramy** ↓Are you serious, ↑bro?
- 16 **Shadi** What?
- 17 (1)

18 **Ramy** I-

19 ((Shadi places tray down))

20 (4)

21 →**Shadi** ↓Bro (1) can I talk to you outside for a minute?

22 ((Shadi and Ramy are at the back of the building, facing the Nile River))

23 →**Shadi** What the fuck, bro? Like, wha- what are you ↓on about? I thought you were cool, ↓man, from

24 New York-

25 →**Shadi** I ↓thought you were my nigga, ↓man.

26 →**Ramy** All right, ↓dude, you really GOTTA stop saying ↓that.

27 **Shadi** Saying what?

28 →**Ramy** The N-word. You can't ↓say that ↑shit, you can't just shout it.

29 →**Ramy** You real↓ize how offensive that is to ↓black ↑people?

30 →**Shadi** Dude, Egypt's IN ↓Africa! We're ↓African! You're black, I'm black (.) we can say that ↓shit.

31 **Ramy** ↓No, °dude°, ↑I am ↓not black.

32 **Shadi** I didn't ↑know you were so judgy, ↓bro.

33 →**Shadi** ↑You judged me earlier for not ↓prayin', and now- and ↓now you tell me what I ↓can say and

34 what I ↑can't say?

35 →**Ramy** I'm just worried about you, dude. You're doin' coke. ↓That's dangerous.

36 **Shadi** What do you think of ↓us here?

37 **Shadi** You- you're comin' in here, ↓talkin' to people about the revolution and ↓shit.

- 38 **Shadi** ↓Bro, we saw people die in front of our ↓fuckin' ↓eyes.
- 39 **Shadi** You think we wanna ↑keep ↓talkin' about ↑that ↑shit?
- 40 →**Shadi** >Man, Todi< (.) his ↓sister went to jail for holding up a ↑sign, and she fuckin' DIED.
- 41 **Shadi** And I see you being all ↓spiritual and shit and trying to make (.) meaning of all of ↑this? (1)
- 42 →**Shadi** Look, I don't know where ↓God is (.) but I sure as fuck know he's not here right now_
- 43 **Shadi** I'm ↑lost, ↓man. Everybody's lost.
- 44 **Shadi** I'm (.) like ↓fuckin' ↓Ashton Kutcher, but I'm like (.) but I'm like," ↑Dude, where's my country?"
- 45 **Shadi** >I don't know. < I don't fuckin' ↓know.
- 46 **Shadi** So ↓yeah, I thought you were my nigga. (.) But I ↑guess I was ↓wrong ((walks away))