

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 6, 2008

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**MESA President Inaugurates Distinguished Edward Said Lecture:
Egyptian American Professor on *Orientalism* and “War on Terrorism”**

San Francisco, CA – Dr. Mervat Hatem, President of the one of the largest and most influential academic organization, will speak on the connections between the U.S. declared war on terrorism, the struggles of Arab and Muslim women, and Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, on Thursday, October 9, 2008, 6-8 pm, on the campus of San Francisco State University (SFSU).

A leading Egyptian political scientist and a widely cited Arab American scholar, Dr. Hatem will share her critical analysis at the inaugural *Edward Said Distinguished Lecture*, presented by the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Initiative (AMED), a brand new initiative in the College of Ethnic Studies that is concerned with the study of Arab and Muslim communities in the US and other Diasporas.

“Naming the Distinguished Lecture Series for the late Edward Said; honoring Professor Hatem on the 30th anniversary of the publication of his influential work, *Orientalism*; and doing so during SFSU commemorations of the 40th anniversary of the 1968 Student Strike that resulted in the founding of AMED’s home, the College of Ethnic Studies, is fitting, appropriate, and relevant to our intellectual, academic, and communal commitments,” said Dr. Rabab Abdulhadi, AMED’s Senior Scholar who was recruited by San Francisco State University to lead intellectual efforts aimed at building an academic program in Arab and Muslim Diasporas Studies.

In a post 9/11 world environment that is fueled by fear, Dr. Hatem exposes the destructive nature of vilifying an entire group of people. Her topic “shows that the presumed separation between the Occident and the Orient, which Said viewed as the central premise of orientalism, collapses when one looks at how the US and Arab States, such as Egypt, have approached the war on terrorism in very similar ways--using the same discourses, tactics and definitions to deal with the same enemy.” Criticizing feminist groups in the U.S. and Egypt who “let themselves be used or support the war on terror in the name of fighting for the liberation of women,” Dr. Hatem explains her pedagogical approach, “by making these connections I hope to challenge the audience to think critically of themselves and to also present a critique of Arab states (who are their allies) and of feminists on both sides.”

Hatem’s work defies Orientalist stereotyping of Arab and Muslim women (and men) while sending a strong message of AMED’s intent to develop an academic program that counters discrimination, ethnic profiling and Islamophobia through rigorous pedagogy, sobering and level-headed analysis, and the insistence on critical thinking in the classroom.

For more information, interviews, and press accreditation, please contact amedstaf@sfsu.edu or call +1 (415) 405-2668.

Inaugural
Edward Said Distinguished Lecture

Dr. Mervat Hatem

President, Middle East Studies Association (MESA)
Professor, Political Science, Howard University

**The Occident Meets the Orient in the
War on Terrorism**

**Thursday, October 9, 2008
6-8 pm, Science Bldg, Room 101
San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Avenue**



- Author, *Muslim Women and Politics: Past and Present Debates*
- National Endowment for the Humanities Research Award
- Academic Excellence and Merit Awards, Howard University
- International Peace Scholarship
- Association of American University Women (AAUW) International Fellowship
- Articles in: *Comparative Studies in Society and History, International Journal of Middle East Studies, Middle East Journal, Middle East Reports, Arab Studies Journal, Feminist Studies, Feminist Issues, Women's Studies International Forum, JMEWS: Journal of Middle East Women's Studies, and MIT EJMES: Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies.*

**Admission Sliding Scale – \$100 • \$75 • \$50 • \$25
Students & Fixed Income • \$10**

(No one will be turned away for lack of funds)

Space is Limited

Please RSVP no later than 5pm on Tuesday, October 7, 2008



For more information, please contact the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diaspora Initiative (AMED) at amedstaf@sfsu.edu or call (415) 405-2668