

Justice, Iranian Style

Ameneh Bahrami is a woman from Iran who now lives in Spain. While attending a university in Iran in 2002, she had the misfortune of sitting down in a lecture hall next to a man named Majid Movahedi. She was 24, he was 19. He purposefully brushed up against Bahrami, but she declined his advances. He repeated his actions, and she moved away. He tried it again, and Bahrami screamed for him to stop. He stopped – but only for the remainder of that lecture hour. Movahedi's actions turned to harassment and threats. The abuse – in between proposals for marriage – continued for two years.

On the way home from work one day in 2004, Bahrami was silently approached from behind by Movahedi. When she sensed his presence and turned toward him, he threw acid in her face. She was disfigured and blinded in both eyes.

Eventually a court in Tehran ruled that Bahrami was entitled to justice. In Iranian terms, that did not mean a prison term for her attacker, it meant she was entitled to blind him as well – the proverbial “eye for an eye.” The court ruled that Bahrami is entitled to blind Movahedi in the same manner in which he attacked her, with acid.

But justice, Iranian style, allows the victim to blind her attacker in only *one* of his eyes. Why? Because “each man is worth two women” under Iranian law.

Bahrami is less interested in blinding her attacker than in trying to ensure that men like him are not allowed to mistreat women in the future.

Ms. Bahrami She did not comment on how she felt about Obama's offer to meet Iranian President Ahmadinejad without preconditions. Gloria Steinem was unavailable for comment.

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