Spit Out of the Melting Pot

The Muslim-American Experience After 9/11

Tristan Johnson

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Supervisor: Dr. Maya Shatzmiller

Abstract

Many Muslim-Americans felt as if they had integrated into the great American melting pot. However, after the September 11th attacks, their experiences of discrimination, bias, and violence showed that the melting pot is indeed a myth. Through research, literature review, and theoretical analysis, this paper found that the case of Muslim-Americans after 9/11 problematizes the melting pot, showing the hurdles that multicultural societies like the United States must confront.

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Contents

Introduction

America sells itself as a great melting pot, the land where, as the country's motto says, many become one. Often times, the case referred to is the great European migrations of the 19th and 20th century, where immigrants from many countries came to America, and within a couple generations had completely assimilated into their identity. This, however, has its problems. The melting pot is an idealized image of the American immigration experience, but it seems to end at those of European descent. Many groups in America without European or Christian backgrounds found themselves exempt from this assimilation.

Many examples exist, but the most visible and recent example of the inadequacy of the melting pot is the experience of American Muslims after the terrorist attacks on September 11th, 2001. In the blink of an eye, a group that had felt they had found their place within the racial hierarchy in America had their lives turned upside-down. Cases rolled in of backlash violence, racial profiling, and other bias crimes.

This paper seeks to use the case of Muslims in America after 9/11 to question the great American melting pot. A religious minority became the target of persecution due to conflation with those who committed mass murder. They were spit out of the melting pot. It will provide support through review of reports from various sources as well as analysis and theoretical review.

Chapter 1 makes the case for the targeted discrimination of Muslims in America. It uses data gathered from Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), research groups, and government documents to build an image of a post-9/11 America. The country targeted Muslims for bias,

discrimination, and violence. This discrimination then spills over to other groups due to an association of Islam with brown skin and certain types of clothing.

Chapter 2 analyses just what was the nature of this discrimination. It examines the contradiction in the American psyche to the discrimination against Muslims, and frames it as a political issue. It also looks into the visual aspect of who entered the crosshairs of anti-Muslim discrimination. It finds how the visible lines of skin colour, and clothing became the markers to overcome the challenge of identifying an invisible minority for persecution. There is, lastly, the analysis of how the anti-Muslim discrimination moved from a position of fear to one of hate.

Chapter 3 investigates literature that may explain the mechanisms behind this discrimination. It analyses the melting pot as a historical event, and how it is problematic in concept. It also investigates the role of anti-immigration sentiment in the case of Muslim-Americans after 9/11. Lastly, it investigates a collection of theories from political philosophy, sociology, and cultural theory to develop a theoretical model for both why certain groups were targeted, and how the anti-Muslim discrimination developed to the point it did.

The case of Muslim-Americans presents the challenges faced by multicultural societies. The myth of the melting pot perpetuated the image of an intrinsic assimilative force that brings those that immigrate into the American fold. This case is just one of many that problematizes that. Multicultural societies have hurdles that must be overcome in order to thrive and settle intergroup conflicts. Negligence will simply lead to exacerbating these frictions.

Chapter 1: Evidence

Much research has been conducted on the topic of the experiences of Muslim-Americans in both the wake of September 11th and the subsequent War on Terror. This research has clearly made the case that Muslims or perceived Muslims experience a high amount of discrimination. As a group, Muslims in America found their status within the racial hierarchy in United States seismically shifted. In order to make the case, this chapter uses a mix of sources. Primarily, reports from NGOs have supplied data on the Muslim-American experience. Also used is a government report on the treatment of Muslim detainees gathered on immigration violations soon after the 9/11 attacks.

Data Collection

The events directly following the September 11th attacks and the subsequent War on Terror prompted many groups to investigate the human and civil rights of Muslim-Americans. The non-governmental organization Human Rights Watch assembled a series of reports on the status of American Muslims, legislation in the name of counterterrorism, and the human rights of Afghan refugees. The Pew Research Group collected opinion polls via telephone interviews and investigated public opinions towards Muslims, the unique community of the American Muslims, and how in the following decade after September 11th their perceptions deteriorated. Both organizations paint a picture of the Muslim-American as facing discrimination, mistrust, and negative opinions.

Human Rights Watch:

Human Right Watch (HRW) is an NGO that advocates for universal human rights. It is an international organization and global watchdog of human rights abuses. They investigate and

expose violations, and pressure governments to improve their respect for rights and justice. They do not take government funds in order to remain independent.[1]

Since the 9/11 attacks, HRW has released a number of documents on the abuses of Muslims from the War on Terror. Namely, they have published four documents on the domestic situation of Muslims in the United States. The report, *No Safe Refuge,* published a month after 9/11, outlines the effects of the attacks on Afghan refugees around the world, including the United States. In 2002, HRW published *We are Not the Enemy*. This report focused on hate crimes directed at Muslim-Americans after 9/11. It gives several recommendations to the United States to prevent many of these backlash incidents. Their report, *In the Name of Security,* analyses the worrying trend of new counterterrorism laws in the United States and around the world in the wake of 9/11, and the dangerous implications these trends have for global human rights. Lastly, they published a news article on religious profiling in New York City, and its tacit support by the Obama administration.

No Safe Refuge examined the experiences of Afghans around the world in the month following 9/11. For decades, Afghans had moved across the globe as refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers. September 11th, and the following American invasion of Afghanistan exacerbated this diaspora. Aid agencies warned that the conditions of Afghanistan were turning into a humanitarian disaster. Aid workers left and all six neighbouring states closed their borders to refugees.[2]

The report also looks at the United States, specifically at its very rapid anti-terrorism legislation in the wake of 9/11. Their worries were about the new legislation's ability to constrain

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[1]Human Rights Watch, "About Us."
[2]Human Rights Watch, *No Safe Refuge: The Impact of the September 11 Attacks on Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants in the Afghanistan Region and Worldwide.* p. 2-4

the rights of non-citizens. The Attorney General would gain huge, unprecedented powers, and limit judicial review. Any non-citizen could be detained with "reasonable grounds to believe" they are engaged with terrorism, or any other broad threats to national security. It also reported on increased racist and xenophobic attacks against Muslims, Sikhs, and people of South Asian and Middle-Eastern descent. It gives several examples of backlash violence. It also points out that President George W. Bush, Attorney General John Ashcroft, New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, and other US officials called for a rejection and condemnation of this stereotyping, discrimination, and violence.[3] The report calls for industrialized countries like the US to allow for access to fair and efficient asylum determination procedures. It calls for urgent measures to end the growing attacks and discrimination against citizens and non-citizens based on their ethnic origin, nationality, religious and political beliefs, and backgrounds. And lastly, a series of safeguards and judicial review for those detained under suspicion of terrorism.[4]

We are not the Enemy is the HRW report that best encapsulates the discussion on discrimination and violence towards Arabs and Muslims or those perceived as such like Sikhs or South Asians. This report focused on the resulting backlash violence after September 11th. While this was not without precedent, as Muslims have already experienced 20 years of hate crimes, the FBI reported a 17-fold increase in anti-Muslim violence since 2001 at its publishing in 2002. The state had come out to publicly condemn these hate crimes, and dissuade backlash violence. However, the anti-terrorism campaign directly following the attacks consisted of blanket arrests of a large number of Middle-Easterners and South Asians. This would contradict their message,

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[3]Human Rights Watch, *No Safe Refuge: The Impact of the September 11 Attacks on Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants in the Afghanistan Region and Worldwide.*, p. 11-12
[4]ibid, p. 18-19

as it reinforces the perception of these communities as suspect.[5]

The report recommended that this wave of violence displayed the need to develop a pre-emptive response after triggers like September 11th to protect communities at risk for backlash violence. They pointed to the case of Dearborn, Michigan, where within hours of the attacks, the city deployed police to protect Muslim communities. They also recommended that simply decrying these hate crimes would not be a sufficient official response. To stop these events, the state would need to maintain an ongoing commitment to tolerance, respect for multicultural diversity, and reaffirm that there is no role for guilt by association. Lastly, the report called for further work in preparation of police and prosecutors on preventing and convicting bias crime.[6]

What makes this report interesting to read is that it reports on the pre-emptive measures taken by the city of Dearborn. It also examines the role of the state in feeding the conflation and guilt by association. It expresses that there is a gap between the words of the state and its actions. While against backlash attacks, the state cast wide detention nets over Muslim communities. These roles of the state in both instances show that response was uneven, but largely the state participated in the conflation and discrimination that they disapproved of.

In 2012, HRW published the report *In the Name of Security*, in which they analyse the growing world trend of new legislation and legal habits in the name of counterterrorism since 9/11.[7] They found that in the United States, and worldwide, a number of laws about terrorism were passed with several trends. These broad extensions of government powers inspired the

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[5] Human Rights Watch, *"We are not the Enemy" Hate Crimes Against Arabs, Muslims, and Those Perceived to be Arab or Muslim after September 11*, p. 3

[6] ibid, p. 4-5

[7] Human Rights Watch, *In the Name of Security: Counterterrorism Laws Worldwide Since September 11th*. p. 3

report.[8] According to the report, these new laws have some serious implications for human rights.

Procedural rules like due process, fair trials, and judge authorization all appear threatened. Since September 11th, the world went from 51 countries with counterterrorism laws, to 140 by 2012. Many of the countries that had antiterrorism laws also revised them. Many of these revisions and new laws worried HRW on eight major elements. They found that many had very loose definitions of terrorism or terrorist acts, allowing too much room for ambiguity. This ambiguity then spills over into the defining of which groups are and are not terrorist, and the state's interventions to shut them down. This led to a worrying trend of the restriction of funding to certain groups in the name of counterterrorism. There have been notable limits on expression or assembly that states think encourage, incite, justify, or lend support to terrorism. Police powers have expanded, undermining basic rights including warrantless arrests, searches, surveillance, and property seizures. Suspects have been held in incommunicado and without charge. Restrictions have been put in place that limits access to challenging wrongdoing or accountability from the police. There was a creation of special courts and modification of trial procedures to favour prosecution. The death penalty began to become more widely applied to terrorism related offenses. Lastly, they report an increase in administrative detention and control.[9]

In regards to the United States, HRW makes the claim that the war paradigm introduced by the War on Terror has legitimized a state of exception. American safeguards in criminal law and human rights became subverted, or greatly reduced. It further accuses that these abuses have

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[8]Human Rights Watch, *In the Name of Security: Counterterrorism Laws Worldwide Since September 11th*, p. 4
[9]ibid, p. 4-5

been acknowledged, but continued under the changing of the presidential guard from George

Bush to Barack Obama.[10]

One short article in 2012 shows that the policy of profiling based on religion continued

after the changing of executive administrations. At the time of the publishing of this article, the

police of New York were under scrutiny for a campaign of undercover police surveillance of

Muslim communities around the state. Examples ranged from an undercover police officer

reporting on a Muslim student group's camping trip, to reports on mosques and Muslim

frequented cafes and supermarkets. These events were reported by the author Antonio Ginatta as

religious targeting without reasonable suspicion.

These events happened with the approval of John Brennan, the chief counterterrorism

advisor to Barack Obama.[11] The controversial practice of profiling based on either religion or

race, despite promises of reform, has at least some administration support. This practice,

however, was officially discontinued in 2014.[12] Up to 12 years after the attacks of September

11th, these initiatives that practice racial and religious profiling persisted.

Pew Research Center

The Pew Research Center describes itself as a 'fact tank' that gathers information and

informs the public about issues, attitudes, and trends in both America and abroad. Primarily, their

work involves opinion polling, demographic research, and media content analysis. It claims no

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[10]Human Rights Watch, *In the Name of Security: Counterterrorism Laws Worldwide Since September 11th.*, p. 6
[11]Ginatta, Antonio. Human Rights Watch, "US: White House is 'puzzling' on racial profiling." US: White House is 'puzzling' on racial profiling. http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/05/01/us-white-house-puzzling-racial-profiling

[12]Pearson, Jake, and Tom Hays. Yahoo News, "End of NYPD Muslim surveillance program applauded." Last modified April 16, 2014.Accessed June 2, 2014. http://news.yahoo.com/end-nypd-muslim-surveillance-program-applauded-060801209.html.

partisan or policy position, and that it conducts empirical social science research. [13] Since 2001,

Pew has collected a series of polls with information both from Muslims and about Muslims. The

three reports listed here are a 2009 report on discrimination and perceptions of which groups are

the most discriminated against; a 2010 report done during the time of the controversial mosque

proposed near the former World Trade Center buildings measuring attitudes towards Muslims;

and a 2012 report comparing Muslims in America with Muslims abroad. The reports give a very

reliable view of attitudes and opinions about Muslims in the War on Terror. It shows the

dichotomous nature of sympathy and antipathy towards them. It also shows how different

American Muslims are from the images they are depicted in media reports from abroad. This is

the most useful data available on these public opinions.

A 2009 poll of Americans on views of difference and perceived discrimination showed

that while Americans did perceive Muslims as one of the most different religions compared to

their own, they also acknowledged the high amount of discrimination. The poll first took a list of

different religious and other subgroups within the US, and asked whether or not they thought

these people experienced a lot of discrimination. Muslims came in at 58%, second only to gays

and lesbians.[14] The report also had respondents compare other religions with their own, and

Islam was described as the least similar, above even Hinduism and Buddhism. This shows that a

pattern of differentiation is still at play.[15] This dichotomy of sympathetic and otherized attitudes

seems emblematic to the reaction to September 11th.

What these portrayals seems to show, is that Americans were aware of unfair treatment of

Muslims by their fellow citizens, and yet were still hesitant to consider them as close to their

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[13]Pew Research Center, "About the Pew Research Center."Accessed June 4, 2014.
http://www.pewresearch.org/about/.
[14]See: Appendix Table 1
[15]See: Appendix Table 2

own spiritual norms. While hate crimes and discrimination were rampant, a not insignificant proportion of the national discussion is on the unfairly maligned Muslims in America.

In the wake of the public controversy over the decision to build a mosque in New York City in close proximity to where the World Trade Centre buildings, destroyed on September 11th, once stood, Pew polled the American public on their attitudes towards Islam. The results showed several interesting findings on these social attitudes, and described in what sectors of the population discrimination against Muslims can take place. The first surprising finding of the poll was a decrease in favourable views on Islam since a previous study in 2005.[16] However, Americans still mostly agree that Islam is no more violent than any other religion.[17] The study also displayed that the majority opinion of Americans at the time of the debate over the Islamic centre were against its construction.[18] The responses to these questions, however, fall heavily on demographic lines.

Favourable attitudes towards Muslims are defined along political, educational, and age lines. Unfavourable views tend to skew towards those Americans who are older, less educated, and Republican.[19] This manifested in a much more dramatic way when breaking down the support or objection to the building of the Islamic centre.[20] Interestingly, the majority of Americans across most demographics agreed that Muslims should have the same rights as anybody else to build houses of worship where they want.[21] This shows a contradictory, almost exceptional desire to stop the building of a mosque near the former World Trade Center, but generally, despite unfavourable views, does not see Islam as distinctly violent, or deserving of

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[16]See: Appendix Table 3
[17]See: Appendix Table 4
[18]See: Appendix Table 5
[19]See: Appendix Table 6
[20]See: Appendix Table 7
[21]See: Appendix Table 8

special discrimination. Given the reality of experience by Muslims in America, this shows a discrepancy in attitudes and actions. Most Americans have admitted they do not know much about Islam, but as the War on Terror progresses over the years since September 11th, this has changed slightly as will be discussed in chapter 2.[22] If anything, this study exemplifies the trend of increased negative attitudes towards Muslims as time progresses rather than a dulling, as well as firm demographic strata where this ire comes from based on political affiliation, age, and education.

Pew's most recent report on Muslims in America comes from an international survey of Muslims globally. It shows a picture of the American Muslim community as quite an outlier. Further adding distance between Muslim-Americans and portrayals from other countries they become associated with. Muslims worldwide were asked questions in regard to the strength of their religious convictions, and their dedication to religious ritual. Sixty-nine percent of American Muslims reported that religion was important in their lives, compared to an 87% international average. This shows that many more American Muslims are not particularly religious. Sixty-five percent of American Muslims pray once a day or more, as opposed to a 76% global median, and 47% attend mosque at least once a week compared to a 61% median. These communal activities could be restricted by being minorities in a primarily non-Muslim country, but these are also much of the opportunity for Muslims to congregate as a religion, suggesting that American Muslims may take a more atomized, and less organized identity than in some other countries. Their theology seems to have been more open compared to Muslims internationally as 57% of American Muslims, as opposed to a 27% global median, believe that Islam can be viewed in more than one way. Thirty-seven percent claim only one interpretation,

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[22]See: Appendix Table 9

in stark contrast with a 63% global median. This would show that even in Muslim circles, that different schools and sects are much less rigid towards their interpretation. Again, this can be explained as a natural compromise of being a minority religion, but it does establish that American Muslims have a rather unique level of religious conviction and participation compared to international images that media portrayal would build an identity on.[23]

The evidence comes through rather clear, American Muslims, despite being very different from those that committed the September 11 attacks, found themselves experiencing discrimination. Human Rights Watch investigated the retaliatory violence, and discrimination Muslims faced directly because of the September 11th attacks. It also exposed the worrying trends of human rights infringing legislation in the United States and around the world in response to the War on Terror. Pew data measures the perceptions of Muslim-Americans as a group facing negative attitudes and otherization, and acknowledged a high-level of discrimination through public opinion polls. Despite all of this data, the state has been slow and sparse in response. It was commonplace to hear public officials decry discrimination against Muslims in the direct wake of the 9/11 attacks, but very little of the state's own racial profiling or harsh detention tactics are admitted. A search yielded only a single admission of wrongdoing on the part of the state.

The Glenn Fine Report

Inspector General Glenn Fine published a report on the treatment of the prisoners detained in the direct wake of September 11th. The June 2003 report analyses the detaining of 762 suspects of immigration violation with the help of the federal immigration laws. In the

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[23]Pew Research Center. "The World's Muslims: Unity and Diversity, Appendix A: U.S. Muslims: Beliefs and Practices in a Global Context." . http://www.pewforum.org/2012/08/09/the-worlds-muslims-unity-and-diversity-appendix-a/ (accessed July 9, 2014).

report, he listed five major problems. His main issues were with classification, notices of charges, the clearance process, bond issues, and the conditions of confinement.

The first issue Fine raised was that of classification. All of those rounded up for detention in the wake of the attacks were brought in on immigration charges. However, this led to September 11th suspects being undistinguished from those arrested for minor immigration violations like an expired visa. Given the sheer number of those arrested, this meant that even those who had no probable link to the attacks were attached because of their countries of origin.

The second issue was that of notice of charges. According to immigration law, notices of charges must be given to the suspect in a timely manner. These arrests were committed far too quickly for the suspects to prepare a defence, or to set their affairs in order, which would violate immigration law.

Thirdly, Fine had issues with the clearance process. The FBI was given leeway to overreach based on the belief that they would clear the innocent quickly. After three weeks, less than 3% of those detained were cleared. After three months, more than 25% of them were still detained. This slow processing caused Fine to turn against the temporary exceptional powers they used to arrest these 762 people. This feeds well into his fourth issue that these people were held without a bond, and without support for their incarceration.

The last and largest of Fine's issues was the conditions of detention. Fine used the conditions of detainees at the Metropolitan Detention Center in New York City as an example. Detainees were subjected to a total communications blackout, with limited information to and from them. This process lasted several weeks. Telephone access was restrictive and inconsistent, and usually limited to one telephone call per week. Guards would ask the ambiguous question

"Are you ok?" as the way to ask a prisoner if they wished to use the phone. They were kept in handcuffs, leg irons, and heavy chains when moved. There would be delays of days to weeks between clearance and release. Conditions in the prison were also unduly harsh, with 24 hour lighting. Prisoners were also subject to a number of physical and verbal abuses. They reported being slammed into walls, having guards step on their leg chains, and twisted arms, hands, wrists and fingers. They were subjected to ethnic slurs from the guards. They received threats like "you will feel pain" or "you will die here". They also failed to inform prisoners about the process of making a formal complaint about their conditions.

Fine's report exemplifies the actions of the state in the years following 9/11. Retrospective criticism is common, and preventative action is rare. It reports from an official government source that the detentions and security actions in the months following September 11th were heavy-handed and overreaching in their approach. Muslims in the programs were subjected to dehumanization and abuse. The state is setting an example here by blanket detaining these people and denying them their rights of due process.

The evidence is clear, Muslim-Americans - both immigrants and homegrown - found themselves in extremely different circumstances after September 11th. Data collected by Human Rights Watch organization as well as the Pew Research Center show that Muslims suffered retaliatory violence, discrimination, mistrust, otherization, and a myriad of other indignities. The report from the Inspector General Glenn Fine shows an admission from the government of the United States that it was heavy-handed in its response to detaining 9/11 suspects months after the attacks. Next, we will look at the distinct nature of this discrimination, specifically on the contradictory nature of the American response, the visual nature of targeting Muslims, and the direct wake of the attacks and the transition to the greater War on Terror.

Chapter 2: Analysis

The evidence put forth in the previous chapter settles any question that in the case of Muslims after 9/11, a distinct sentiment of hate and mistrust for those identified took place. However, what was going on? In order to understand the reason behind just how massive this effect was, understanding the minutia of who was targeted, why, and by whom is necessary.

The first line of analysis is the contradiction between the antagonistic and sympathetic in America's ideas towards Muslims. Some media representation and a good portion of studies show a negative opinion of Muslims. However, some of these portrayals show Muslims as victims of unfair bias. The split opinion seems to fall under which political party Americans identified with.

The second line of analysis is the visual element of targeting for discrimination. For Muslims to be targeted, Americans built a list of visible markers to identify what they thought of as Muslims to discriminate. The major marker was brown skin. Clothing and hairstyles like beards and turbans also became part of the visual marker. Evidence of this comes from the false positive of anti-Muslim violence endured by Sikhs.

The last line is a shift in the nature of discrimination in the years following 9/11. In the first months, Muslims were treated with fear, and discrimination came in a form of paranoia. As the US engaged in the War on Terror, attitudes towards Muslims became more violent and generalized towards the religion itself. The nature of the discrimination turned from fear, to hate.

Contradiction

The evidence presented in the previous chapter shows a deep contradiction in attitudes towards Muslims, and their image. On one end, the image of the fanatical, subversive threat is

prevalent in their idea of Muslims, and the attitudes reflect that it has had an impact. However, some data, shows that a not insignificant part of the population opposed this discrimination. The demographic evidence leads to a conclusion that this is a function of the American political system and its stark contrasts. Like with many issues, the portrayal of Muslims became a political issue.

The data presented from Pew, points to the image of Islam and Muslims as very different, and unwanted in the picture of the American experience. This depiction contrasts with another more benign aspect of the American attitude towards Muslims. The Pew data shows a contrasting sympathetic response to the discrimination Muslims faced after September 11th. The data showing that Muslims are not perceived as more violent than other religions shows that there is a sense that what Muslims are experiencing is not desirable. This is also reinforced by organizations like Human Rights Watch, which spoke out against the discrimination towards Muslims in America, and made suggestions to try and prevent it. Glenn Fine's report, even with its 'ask for forgiveness instead of permission' approach shows a segment of the population that sees the overreaching of the state as excessive.

So what is the reasoning behind this contradiction? The best answer seems to come from Pew's demographics data. As mentioned in the previous chapter, negative attitudes towards Muslims skew towards older, less educated, and Republican supporting segments of the population. The United States has always been a much divided political society, and contradictory attitudes falling on opposite ends of party lines are a common occurrence. Likely the Republican led government's overreaching in detaining Muslim-Americans, and slow action to stop hate crimes directed at them would be opposed as a point of rhetoric by the Democratic

Party in opposition because while education and age played a part, party affiliation was the biggest contrast.

The portrayal of Muslims as either a threat or victim in the United States appears to be a partisan issue between the two major political parties. Republican leaning citizens tended to support ideas of Muslims as unfavourable and dangerous. Democratic leaning citizens seemed to challenge this. Like with many major issues in the United States, the image of the Muslim fell on political lines of red and blue.

Visible Markers

Religion is a series of beliefs and norms. As such, there is no real way to target the bodies of a population unless there is a way to visually distinguish members of a particular religion. This problem is solved by using visual markers. The primary ways that Muslims were identified and targeted is based on skin colour and garb. Islam became associated with brown skin. Also, garb such as turbans, hijabs, burqas, and beards became signifiers of Islam.

The false attribution of the Muslim identity towards multiple groups that are not Muslims shows a tying of Islam to brown skin rather than a belief structure. The interchangeability of brown skin in Islam appears in the evidence many times. Many non-Muslims with brown skin experienced anti-Muslim discrimination. Brown skin is considered dangerous and threatening, because of its association with Islamic terrorism.

Part of the stereotype formation of Muslims has always expressed itself through clothing. For women, the stereotypical clothing comes in the form of the hijab, or the burqa, and for the men the turban. Often religious garb is used as a way to mark those for discrimination. The best

example of this comes as with the brown skin, from misattribution. Most men who wear turbans in the United States are not Muslims, but part of the Sikh faith.

Sikhs are in need of special mention in this analysis. The increase in bias against them gives credence to the conflated Muslim identity. Most Sikhs have roots to the Punjab region of India and Pakistan, and have brown skin. Their religion also requires a number of iconic visual garbs, such as turbans and long beards. These people not only were victims of high levels of discrimination after 9/11, but a search of Lexis Nexis showed an overrepresentation in violent incidents directed at Sikhs. One need only think back to the 2012 shooting of a Sikh Gujarat in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. The misattribution based on skin colour and religious clothing is the best evidence for the conflated Muslim stereotype.

With the lack of an ability to read minds, Americans discriminating against Muslims used visual identifiers to determine who they considered Muslims. These signifiers primarily came from skin colour and garb. These became the mechanisms that falsely targeted many non-Muslims for anti-Muslim discrimination.

9/11 vs. The War on Terror

The post-9/11 nature of discrimination went through a shift in nature as the panic directly following the attacks morphed into the long running War on Terror. Instead of a dulling of the affected attitude towards Muslims, it if anything deepened. Right after the attacks, the response was fear. As the US got involved in wars abroad, and Muslims began to be seen by Americans as the enemy, the fear morphed into hate. Instead of dulling, or fading away, the negative attitudes towards Muslims deepened in the decade following 9/11.

The discrimination Muslims faced directly after September 11th took a much more intense and fearful turn. In the cases discovered both on Lexis Nexis and in the research, the first few months after September 11th were intense. Many brown skinned people found themselves kicked off airplanes, or shifted away from the pilot. Muslims were rounded up in huge numbers and interrogated as suspects when only held over minor immigration violations. This paints the picture of a time period of shock, when paranoia was extremely high, and the focus was based on a sense of insecurity rather than complete hatred.

As the years passed, the United States engaged in armed conflicts in both Iraq and Afghanistan. This series of conflicts, collectively called the 'War on Terror', changed the discrimination pattern into one of a slow burn and systemic abuses. Reports of harassment by security on public transit appear to decrease, but data like the ones gathered by Pew result in a deteriorating of Islam's perceptions. The major shift seems to be the forgetting of the rhetoric put forward by the state in the direct wake of 9/11. Early, when this was framed as a conflict against the Taliban, and terrorists, the discrimination was an act of conflation and insecurity. As time wore on, this turned into a negative attitude towards Muslims in general. Violence against Muslims continued, but more cases of conflation, like shaming the Muslim community for their not condemning terrorist attacks enough. Another example would be a handful of US states passing anti-sharia laws. It appears that the War on Terror morphed this discrimination into distaste for all things Muslim instead of fear.

The nature of the bias incidents Muslims in America suffered has morphed from fear to hate as the direct wake if 9/11 became the War on Terror. The immediate months after September 11th, Muslims were subject to fear and paranoia. Later, as the US engaged in over a decade of warfare with Iraq and Afghanistan, this fear turned into a hate of all things Muslim.

This shift showed that the 9/11 fallout had lasting effects on the American public, and that the attitude change towards Muslims was one of longevity.

American interactions with American Muslims after 9/11 became more violent, antagonistic, and racialized. In different demographics, a contrasting reaction of fear and hate with sympathy became the American attitude towards Muslims. They were targeted primarily through visible markers such as skin colour, and dress. This period of discrimination began as a fear reaction, and evolved during the War on Terror into one of hate.

Yet, what are the mechanisms behind this wave of discrimination? What can looking at trends in American history, as well as theories from other disciplines say as to how this backlash grew to the extent it did? The next chapter will attempt to explain why this phenomenon took place, and how it festered and grew.

Chapter 3: The American Experience and Theory

The research and speculation over the mechanisms of this discrimination of Muslim-Americans is plentiful. Fields as diverse as cultural theorists, to sociologists have posited as to why Muslim-Americans found themselves subject to discrimination and violence. The historical theme of anti-immigrant sentiment in America, collectively referred to as nativism, frames the War on Terror as a continuation of a familiar xenophobia. The experience of Muslim-Americans also hammers another nail into the coffin of the myth of the great American melting pot. Michel Foucault's theory of biopolitics, with Roberto Esposito's addition of immunity frames the War on Terror as further efforts by the state to regulate the bodies it controls. Stuart Hall's theory of the moral panic explains why the state overreacted in response to 9/11, and how the feedback loop of the citizenry, media, and American government led to the harsh forms of discrimination. Lastly, the sociological theory of racialization frames the War on Terror as a systemic attribution of dangerous traits to the image of brown skin. These explanations are not mutually exclusive, and give different insights into the mechanisms of the discrimination against Muslim-Americans.

Nativism

American historians have long discussed the anti-immigrant sentiments that flare up throughout the country's history. Groups such as the 'know-nothings' of the 19th century, and the ongoing hysteria over Mexican immigration shows that as a political movement, there is always an anti-immigrant streak to the American experience. In this case of Muslims and those of brown skin after September 11th, there appears to be no exception. The state responded to an explosion in anti-immigrant sentiments after 9/11 by passing laws that helped to target immigrants. Media had a role in turning Muslims into a group that was un-American, or in conflict with core American values. In turn, the debate over addressing terrorism became an attack on immigrants.

In various periods of US history, when moral panics occur, a strong anti-immigration and anti-immigrant mentality begins to emerge.[24] Stereotypes have a potent effect on the American psyche.[25] Famous cases such as the backlash against Catholic immigrants in the early 20th century places the War on Terror in the realm of US historical themes, and makes for a useful contextual understanding. Even in relatively recent times, a lot of national attention towards immigration is in unfavourable terms.

In the lead up to the 9/11 attacks, nativist sentiments were growing for at least a decade towards the immigrant community. The 1990s were famous for a crackdown on illegal immigrants and the panic over them garnered a lot of media attention. The media would stoke negative stereotypes of immigrants, casting them as predatory villains, drug dealers, or even terrorists. Public intellectuals like Peter Brimelow with his book *Alien Nation*, Dan Stein's work as the president for the Federation for American Immigration Reform, and Roy Beck's *The Case Against Immigration* stirred up anti-immigrant sentiments, especially focused on the Mexican community. The state even responded to this hype with the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996.[26] By 2001, the US was already in the midst of an anti-immigration moral panic.

The state continued to pass and renew policies that would allow for the targeting of Muslim and Arab Americans.[27] Several pieces of legislation facilitated this targeting. As an

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[24] Tom De Luca, and John Buell, *Liars! Cheaters! Evildoers!: Demonization and the End of Civil Debate in American Politics.*, (New York City: New York University Press, 2005). p. 137

[25] Mary Bosworth, and Jeanne Flavin, *Race, Gender, And Punishment: From Colonialism to the War on Terror.*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2006). p. 150

[26] ibid, p. 149-151

[27] Evelyn Alsultany, *Arabs and Muslims in the Media: Race and Representation after 9/11.*, (New York City: New York University Press, 2012). p. 4

extension of the anti-immigrant mentality building in the 1990s, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility acts would be extended by the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, and, most notoriously, the USA Patriot Act.[28]The coercive detention policy witnessed during the immediate wake of the attacks expanded with the passing of the infamous USA Patriot Act.[29] This act, passed in October 2001, and renewed in 2005, 2006, 2010, and 2011, allowed for the monitoring of Arab and Muslim groups, indefinite detention of non-citizens suspected of terrorism, secret wiretapping without probable cause, the ability to arrest someone as a material witness, collection of secret evidence, and the trying of 'enemy combatants' in military tribunals.[30] All of these policies served to 'de-americanize' the immigrant communities.

After the 9/11 attacks, the media was flooded with discussion of the nature of the terrorist threat. The running mantra quickly became that they must hate the US because of its freedoms and dedication to liberty. This quickly built out of the popular works by writers like Samuel Huntington who foresaw a clash of civilizations in a post-ideology world.[31] He claimed that civilizations like the one in the Middle-East dislike the West because of their individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, rule of law, and democracy.[32] Writers like Jean Elshtain claimed that "they" hate the US because of their commitment to freedom.[33] This established Islam as something outside of the American experience. During the campaign and

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[28] Bosworth and Flavin p. 160

[29] ibid, p. 156

[30] Alsultany, p. 5

[31] De Luca and Buell, p. 140

[32] Lansford, Tom, Robert Watson, and Jack Covarrubias. *America's War on Terror*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009. p. 8

[33] De Luca and Buell, p. 143

presidency of Barack Obama, the repeated false accusation that he is a Muslim was used to delegitimize him as an American.[34] To be a Muslim was to be un-American, and that would have an impact on the Muslim-American experience.

Stigmatized as un-American, Muslims in the US found it difficult to navigate their national identity. With the pressure to assimilate ever present, Muslims reported trouble with integration.[35] They constantly felt the need to defend their religion or profess their American loyalty.[36] The Council on American Islamic Relations reported a need to focus on secular angles for their advocacy due to anti-Muslim sentiment.[37] Though this otherization of foreign ethnicities and religions is not unprecedented, it was extremely acute, and dominated discourse in the years following 9/11. This process does, however, have a deep history in the United States and falls under the theme of nativism.

This unfavourable attention applied towards the immigrant community simply exacerbated after 9/11. Many in the news media framed the issue as one of immigration. Under the umbrella of security measures, a sizable discussion began about immigration restrictions.[38] In response, the Federal government did tighten control over the border.[39] After 9/11, commonplace

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[34] Joseph Margulies, *What Changed When Everything Changed: 9/11 and the Making of National Identity*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013). p. 89

[35] Stephen Rice, and William Parkin, *Race, Ethnicity, and Policing: New and Essential Readings.*, (New York City: New York University Press, 2010). p. 455, Reed Ueda, *A Companion to American Immigration*, (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2006), p. 147

[36] Ueda, p. 525

[37] Grace Yukich, *One Family Under God Immigration Politics and Progressive Religion in America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). p. 33

[38] Ueda, p. 27

[39] ibid, p. 73

mass deportations would send shockwaves through the community.[40] This reaction would then serve to frame the War on Terror as a war on immigrants.

The Melting Pot

Part of the myth of the American identity comes in the form of the great melting pot. The US population boomed in the late 19th and early 20th century from European immigration. The melting pot is based on how these different ethnicities immersed and integrated into American culture. This builds the image of an America that is a place where anyone can come and be welcomed into the American experience. This theory has fallen under ill repute in academia, due to several examples showing that this may work for white Americans, but in cases such as African-Americans, Chinese-Americans, and Muslim-Americans, the problems of the great melting pot begin to show.

Beginning with African-Americans, a group that have been in the United States its entire existence, have fully integrated into the American experience without this 'melting'. African-Americans the nation over found themselves, even after slavery, segregated from the American experience. Legislation such as the Jim Crow laws in the southern states enforced African-Americans into a distinct underclass within society. Bans on the intermarriage of African and European Americans persisted for centuries in an explicit attempt to prevent this melting. Even after these laws were repealed, their underclass status resumed through unofficial channels. Many Americans claim they live in a post-racial society, when African-Americans find themselves underrepresented in the upper-classes, overrepresented in prisons, and with a stigma on interracial marriage still prevalent in American culture today.

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[40] Bosworth and Flavin 160

Chinese-Americans upon arrival found themselves experiencing hostility. Chinese-Americans were segregated, forced to live in 'chinatowns' where they would live in substandard housing, and separated from the greater society.

The experience of Muslim-Americans, especially after 9/11, also shows the problems with the myth of the melting pot. Representation of them as an immigrant group is of an anti-American threat. Random vigilante violence creates a fear and resentment of white society that pushes the Muslim population into the periphery. The myth of the melting pot promotes an idea of what an American is as a white, Christian identity. Those that do not fit the model, such as Muslims, are otherized.

Muslims are just the most recent example of the racial exclusivity of the melting pot. African-Americans, Chinese-Americans, and Muslim-Americans are just three small examples of the problems within this national myth. Their separation, subjugation, and demonization created racial minorities in the country as a permanent underclass, and exempt from the 'American experience'.

Theory

Michel Foucault's theory of biopower, combined with Roberto Esposito's addition of immunity, begins to build a theoretical model of interpretation for the events that so deeply impacted the Islamic community of the United States. After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, both the American citizenry and law enforcement began to attack a subgroup of its own citizens. Faced with the problem of identifying members of a religious group that was largely non-visible, these elements began identifying those whom they sought out through a process of 'racialization'. This led to a moral panic which exacerbated stereotypes about Arabs, conflated Arabs with Muslims,

and made them a target for harassment, discrimination, and violence in the American national psyche. What processes were these people subjected to and how does society undo this structure?

These intense sets of reactions following the September 11th attacks and the following War on Terror are a complex set of reciprocal and interconnected factors. The culprit is not simply the forces of the state, the ignorance of population, or the media response, but an ongoing dialogue between the three, fuelling off each other. To understand how the state reacted and identified the agents they did, we need to have an understanding of Michel Foucault's theory of biopolitics, with the addition of Roberto Esposito's notion of immunity and autoimmunity. To understand the reaction of the American citizenry to September 11th and the following War on Terror, we must understand the racial lens they perceived it through. Sociologists have studies this attribution of traits to ethnicities in a theory called racialization. To understand the state, citizenry, and media fuelling off of each other's panic over terrorism, we must turn to Stuart Hall and his theory of the moral panic.

Biopolitics

Biopolitics and immunity frame this theoretical paradigm. The theory is focused on the use of power to regulate bodies, and immunity predicts that violence can be used as an instrument to attempt to preserve life. However, when this turns against agents of the state's own population, this becomes an autoimmune response, and represents a breakdown of the state's functions. I reason that the immune response, like that in the body which biopolitics establishes a metaphor, external markers must exist to distinguish friend from foe. In the case of 9/11 and the War on Terror, the identification comes through visual markers, primarily race and clothing. Racialization explains how the enemy is determined, and conflates many identities into one

danger element to target. This then expands in a feedback loop between the state, population, and media in a process Stuart Hall theorized as a moral panic.

Biopolitics is a theory regarding the increasing concern of the state and capital with the bodies of its subjects. It is built upon the assertion that politics' only purpose is the maintenance and expansion of life. This leads states to extend the sovereignty of the law to biological boundaries. It also justifies the state's actions by building a metaphor of the state with a biological body, and biological systems. Repeated political behaviours such as the subjugation of women or territory are considered base human biological tendencies. Human history is then framed as human nature. This leads to progress observed in terms of evolution, and as will be mentioned later, the dynamics of immunity.[41]

Roberto Esposito found a stark contradiction in this life-focused view of state function; namely, the use of death in the preservation of life. In the context of the American war in Afghanistan, bombs and food packs would be dropped in the same location, often around the same time. The state commits acts of killing with a focus on preserving lives. The state is essentially killing to save lives. Esposito sought to solve this apparent contradiction. He posited that the old sovereign state, marked by war and domination, was at a crisis and needed a new form of disciplinary power. Life-centered values, such as human rights, become the new legitimization for violence. Introduction of death is used in the name of the health of the society being attacked. Esposito called this use of the act of death to preserve life immunity.[42] Building upon the state-body metaphor, the immune response is the use of power to preserve life. Like the

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[41] Esposito, Roberto, Timothy Campbell trans. *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008. p. vii - 24

[42] ibid, p. 4-27

immune system of a body, the negative and lethal is introduced in the name of the health of the society.[43] By bombing areas of Afghanistan, the United States assumes it is destroying disease agents within Afghan society, and by aiding with food, hoping to mitigate their damage.

When these forms of coercion, along with the state, begin to attack its own constituents, Esposito likened it to an immune response. According to Esposito, when incidents like preventative war, war to avoid war, are invoked, it is a sign of autoimmunity. When the demands of immunity expand, this, Esposito claims, is the path to totalitarianism.[44] This autoimmune reaction manifests in sporadic occurrences that Hall would call a 'moral panic'.

Moral Panics

Cultural theorist Stuart Hall would challenge this top-down approach and show that it is the result of a moral panic that reciprocates between the government response, the public, and media portrayal. Moral panics are turbulent societal reactions to social problems accompanied with a sense of immediacy and a disaster mentality. They provoke intense hostility, and condemnation of a certain group.[45] In his famous work *Policing the Crisis*, Stuart Hall builds this model of the moral panic through the lens of the 1972-3 mugging panic in the United Kingdom. Mugging incidents were covered widely, and vividly, in the press, and the label became one associated with young black men, subjecting them to public condemnation, and police harassment.[46]

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[43] Esposito, p. 46, 59

[44] ibid, p. 147, 158

[45] Bosworth and Flavin, p. 160

[46] Stuart Hall, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order.*, (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1978). p. 19-21, 27

Moral panics begin with a greater use of the law to combat whatever problem the society is reacting to.[47] In the case of the mugging crisis, this led to the creation of a police declared 'war on muggers'.[48] Freedoms are limited, regardless of citizenship, as a preventative measure. The pressure to end the offending actions leads to an increase in informal executive action. Inevitably, minorities are disproportionately harassed.[49] During the mugging crisis, police gave many dubious reports of black youth.[50] The term mugger connoted fear of a complex set of themes like expansion of black crime, ghettos, as well as social and political militancy.[51] This overreaction leading to the state's harassment of minorities and false associations falls under the definition of Esposito's autoimmune response.

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[47] Roy Coleman, Joe Sim, Steve Tombs, and David Whyte. *State, Power, Crime*. : SAGE Publications, 2009. p. 150

[48] Hall, p. 8

[49] Coleman et al., p. 150

[50] Hall, p. 39-40

[51] ibid, p. 19

The state's reactions after the 9/11 attacks demonstrate the effect of the moral panic initiating an autoimmune reaction. Legality was simply overwritten.[52] There were mass arrests across the United States.[53] Twelve hundred Muslim men were rounded up without charges in the weeks following the attacks.[54] In Los Angeles, over 400 foreign nationals were detained, strip searched, verbally accosted, and deprived of food, water, bedding, adequate clothing, and information as to why they were being detained. In Brooklyn, 84 detainees reported being physically and verbally assaulted by authorities, subjected to harsh detention policies, shackled in handcuffs and leg irons, kept under 23 hour lockdown, and only allowed one phone call per week. Despite admitting these mistakes, the policies that the War on Terror enacted would continue to allow for the harassment of Arabs and Muslims to the present day.

The immune reaction against identified Muslims was not limited to the actions of the state. The citizen population, through acts of violence and discrimination, attempted to expel the 'devil' target of the moral panic brought on by the 9/11 attacks. In 2002, the FBI reported over 1,000 bias incidents in the US directed at Muslims, and today there is still a 50% increase in anti-Muslim hate crimes from pre-9/11 numbers. These are described by the FBI as vigilante violence.[55]

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[52]Bosworth and Flavin p. 159

[53] ibid. p. 156

[54]Alsultany, p. 5

[55]Vani Kannan. ""Model Minority" or Potential Terrorist? Affective Economies, Rhetorics of Silence & the Murder of Sunando Sen." *Studies on Asia* 4.1: 7-43. p. 8-9

The targets of this War on Terror are a fanatical subset of the religion of Islam. Religion is a collection of beliefs, norms, and values, and, as such is functionally invisible. Americans felt that the terrorists managed to blend easily into American life,[56] and needed some sort of outward marker to target for discrimination. In a process like the immune response, they needed something outward to latch on to. The next section will explore how this occurred in the context of the War on Terror. Through multiple facets, a racialized ethnic category of the conflated 'Arab-Muslim-South Asian' was expanded as never seen before.

Racialization

When the 9/11 attacks took place, the US did not take the opportunity to examine its role on the world stage. It did not discuss the factors of class and imperialism that resulted in the attacks. Rather, the American psyche defaulted to their most comfortable lens of race and religion.[57] Terrorism, through a process called racialization, created a popular Muslim identity that encompassed a wide range of ethnicities. This created the visible markers needed in order to perform the autoimmune response and discrimination mentioned previously. Racialization is about the creation of the power relationships, colour lines and hierarchies attached to the social construct of race. It is the process of the creation of difference,[58] the process of associating traits and attributes with skin colours.

How does racialization take place? Without the humanizing effect of regular interaction, media representation becomes a key part of racializing attribution. Media portrayal of ethnic

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[56]De Luca and Buell p. 137

[57] Margulies, p. 65

[58] Sean Hier, Daniel Lett, and B Singh Bolaria, *Racism & Justice: Critical Dialogue on the Politics of Identity, Inequality and Change*, (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing Co., Ltd., 2009). p. 27, 29

groups then plays an important role in shaping popular perception and affecting society.[59] That

being said, the media representation of Muslims and Arabs has been generally unfavourable.[60]

Media, in various forms, has stereotyped the Arab and the Muslim for over a century; however,

the image has changed from the mystic oriental to the dangerous terrorist.

Portrayals of most Asian cultures in the earliest visual media were combined in an image

of the mystic land of the orient and Muslims were no exception. To this day, the stereotype

follows orientalist tropes. Arab stereotypes range from rich oil Sheiks, belly dancers, and harem

girls, to veiled oppressed women and terrorists. Early films such as Fatima (1897), The Sheik

(1921), and The Thief of Baghdad (1924) portrayed the Islamic world as a mystical land. The

image of the violent Arab would emerge in the 1940s, linked to with the American emergence on

the world stage. The 1940s to the 1970s and 80s would see the trope of the flashy, rich oil Sheik.

The image would show the Arabs as rich men with more money than sense, and ultimately, an

economic threat to America. With the events such as the Iranian revolution and hostage crisis, as

well as increased violence in the Middle East region, the image of Arabs and Muslims began to

change. Events like the tragedy of the Munich Olympics, and the famous plane hijackings of the

1970s and 80s formed the beginning of the image of the Arab-as-terrorist. Harem girls and belly

dancers morphed into the repressed veiled woman.[61] This image was reinforced by film,

television, and news alike. They would craft a narrative of Arabs and Muslims that reinforced the

conflated nature of the Islamic identity and racialized threatening traits.

The conflated Arab-South Asian-Muslim identity is not a new one. Anti-Muslim

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[59] Hier et al., p. 159

[60] Rice and Parkin p. 455

[61]Alsultany, p. 7, 8

sentiments formed in the latter half of the 20th century due to events such as the Iranian

Revolution and hostage crisis as well as reports of increasing violence in the Middle-East.[62]

Iranians, despite not being Arabs, became folded into an Arab identity as did South Asian

ethnicities such as Pakistanis.[63] This useful conflation reduced all these diverse groups into a

single ethnicity, identified as "Muslim".[64] Often these diaspora communities would be

considered "Muslim looking" or labeled "potential terrorists" and, thus, would be placed into an

orientalist racialized category.[65] Television and film did not help this conflation, when often

Arab villains would be portrayed primarily by Latino, South Asian, or Greek actors

interchangeably; and, of course, all Arabs are assumed to be Muslim.[66] Hate crimes directed at

Middle-Eastern or Middle-Eastern Looking people rose dramatically soon after the attacks.[67]

This trend continued resulting in hundreds of violent incidents in the decade following. The War

on Terror was destined to become a war on brown skin.

   After the attacks, Arabs and South Asians in particular had to renegotiate their place

within the American racial hierarchy. Once seen as model minorities, these groups became

threatening terrorists, and their once small stereotypes became entrenched in the American racial

lexicon. In the wake of 9/11, the image of the Muslim, already associated with the terrorist,

solidified and entrenched in the American psyche. Entire communities of Muslim and Middle-

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[62]ibid p. 455

[63]Alsultany, p. 9

[64]Rice and Parkin p. 455

[65]Kannan, p. 17

[66]Alsultany, p. 9-10

[67]Ueda, p. 26

Eastern immigrants were racialized as "terrorists" or "potential terrorists".[68] In a Texas terrorism case, the prosecutor attached over 300 Muslim organizations as unindicted co-conspirators.[69] A 2012 billboard ad displayed the World Trade Centre towers overlayed with qur'anic verses.[70] The demonization of all things Muslim and its association with Terrorism spilled over into the debate during the War on Terror as to the Terrorist's motivations.

'Muslim Looking' Americans were subjected to passenger paranoia after 9/11. Brown skinned people were frequently removed from aircrafts. One pilot rearranged seating on an airplane because he thought there were "too many brown people near the front". These actions were carried out despite their illegality.[71] This is not to put the US governments outside of culpability for the targeted discrimination against Muslims in the post-9/11 world. The state's own forms of coercion, following both the model of autoimmunity and the moral panic, began to harass and abuse Muslim Americans.

On the small screen we saw, through the cinematic nature of the attacks of 9/11, the importance of visual culture. This was demonstrated through the television coverage of things like the images of the victims from Abu Ghraib and the video of the execution of western hostages. The War on Terror took place in the realm of a gigantic expansion in media technology.[72] Entertainment became ubiquitous and images became even more important.

The small screen showed quite a complicated portrayal of Arabs and Muslims. While

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[68]Ueda, p. 26

[69] Rice and Parkin p. 453

[70]Kannan, p. 23

[71]Kristel Halter. "Flying While Brown." *Washington Report on Middle-East Affairs* 21.6: 85. p. 85

[72] Andrew Hill, *Re-Imagining the War on Terror: Seeing, Waiting, Travelling*, (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). p. 3

American Muslims experienced huge increases in hate crimes, workplace discrimination, bias incidents, and airline discrimination, some media chose to portray Muslims and Arabs sympathetically. Shows like *Law and Order*, *Law and Order SVU*, *NYPD Blue*, *7th Heaven*, *The Education of Max Bickford*, *The Guardian*, and *The West Wing* showed innocent Arabs and Muslims as subjects of unjust hate. Even these sympathetic portrayals would produce a dialogue of exception central to the War on Terror, and justify denial of rights to Muslims and Arabs. These sympathetic shows aired right alongside dramas such as *24*, *Sleeper Cell*, *NCIS*, *JAG*, *The Grid*, *The Agency*, *LAX*, and *Threat Matrix* where the villains were often Muslim/Arab terrorists. In the case of *24*, one season's villains lived in the US for many years conspiring, feeding the distrust of Muslim Americans as potential hidden threats. Portrayals such as these fueled the autoimmune response. The terrorist's motivations and reasoning are of course never explained.[73] These portrayals, reinforced by the news, fold Arabs and South Asians into a criminal identity that is un-American, dangerous, and lurking unseen in the American populace. This is not merely harmless entertainment. These unfair portrayals would result in the autoimmune reaction of American society; feed the moral panic over immigrants, support racial profiling, and target the innocent; even those that may not actually be Muslims.

The structure of news media contributes to racialization. News systematically sorts and selects what to cover based on socially constructed categories. Reporting on crime constructs society as one of consensus. It is also heavily influenced by the news media's relationship with power. With an extremely rich and corporate media, the perspective then comes as from the interests of a corporate and bourgeoisie elite. Crime, and criminality, then reaffirms their

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[73]Alsultany, p. 2-4, 16

perspective as the consensual.[74] When reports on terrorism and violence are shown over and over

again perpetrated by a brown, bearded face, it attempts to build the consensus that the Arab, the

Muslim, is a criminal element.

The news media contributed to this treatment of Muslims and Muslim looking people on

many separate occasions, either through false assumptions, dehumanizing images, ignoring

important issues, or straight antagonism. In the direct wake of the Oklahoma City bombings, the

media originally crafted the story around the suspicion of an Arab terrorist.[75] After the Boston

Bombings, the cover of The Week portrayed a darkened and Arabized caricature of the Tsarnev

brothers who perpetrated the attack.[76] The Muslim council of Britain reported that media

inundated Western society with an unending stream of pictures depicting Iraqis tortured,

brutalized, and degraded by the US and UK troops.[77] Fox News has become infamous for their

antagonism as well.[78] In the wake of the Boston Bombings, contributor Ann Coulter called for

the arrest of all women wearing hijabs.[79] Often, such as in the case of the Oklahoma City

bombing, when the perpetrator turns out to be white, the discussion then turns away from race,

and poignantly changes to a discussion on mental illness.[80] This constructs an identity of

criminality, and conflates very different ethnicities under the Muslim umbrella. In the case of

Ann Coulter this coverage borders on outright sedition. The news media, however, does not

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[74] Hall, p. 53, 55, 59, 66

[75] De Luca and Buell, p. 138

[76] Kannan, p. 20

[77] Victoria Basham, *War, Identity and the Liberal State: Everyday Experiences of the Geopolitical in the Armed Forces*, (London: Routledge, 2013). p. 133

[78] Alsultany, p. 2

[79] Kannan, p. 19-20

[80] ibid, p. 10

work in a vacuum, and formation of racialized traits takes place in entertainment as well.

Returning to Hall's model of the moral panic for a moment, the end result of the moral panic for black youth in Britain was an association with criminality. The word 'mugger' became a racial reference for black youth.[81] Likewise, the War on Terror reaction patterned on lines of race and ethnicity. It fostered a new panic over immigration, criminalized immigrants of colour, and turned the term 'terrorist' into a racial reference.[82] 'Muslim-looking' Americans were targeted as threats based on their skin colour, whether or not they were even actually Muslims.

One major effect of the criminalization of brown skin in the War on Terror is racial profiling. Racial profiling is the pinpointing of an individual as a threat based on race.[83] Many Muslim Americans claimed experiencing profiling on many forms of mass transit. Flying while Arab became the new Driving while Black. From 2001 to 2003, radiation levels at Muslim sites in the US were monitored.[84] And people, such as Michelle Malkin, advocated for racial profiling.[85] New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristall claimed that racial profiling is what made Israel a safe place to fly.[86] Human Rights Watch discovered growing use of profiling on nationality, religion, and gender.[87] These incidents made navigating life as a Muslim in America difficult, and with the conflated racialized identity, led to a number of non-Muslims also victimized by this discrimination.

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[81]Hall, p. 327-8

[82] Bosworth and Flavin p. 149, 160

[83]Halter, K. p. 85

[84] Rice and Parkin p. 451-3

[85]Alsultany, p. 6

[86]De Luca and Buell, p. 138

[87]Bosworth and Flavin p. 156

The image of the Muslim stereotype needs the ability to generate legitimization for the War on Terror, and so it is built to be feminine enough to be subordinate, aberrant enough to be grotesque, barbaric enough to need civilization, Islamic enough to require Christianity, and yet potent enough to legitimize war.[88] Muslims are stereotyped as fanatical, misogynistic, and anti-American.[89] The men are irrational and violent. The women are oppressed, a place of both public sympathy and moral outrage.[90] The image is that of barbarism and religious fundamentalism gone wild. With these stereotypes, it is easy to construct the image of the Muslim as terrorist.

In 2007, two men on a ferry in Washington state were taking photographs and were reported to the FBI as suspicious. They were "Middle-Eastern looking" and the FBI photographed them. Later, the two men were listed as wanted. As it turns out, these men ended up being European citizens. They were taking photographs, as there were no ferries as large in Europe.[91] Since the War on Terror was drawn along lines of race, often those who have a non-white skin colour will become targets of anti-Muslim discrimination. The conflation of all Arabs as Muslims drove a man in Brooklyn to killing a series of Middle-Eastern shopkeepers.[92] Because of their long facial hair and turbans, Sikh Americans have experienced these false positives especially hard.[93] Soon after the 9/11 attacks, a Mesa Arizona Sikh gas station owner was murdered by someone wanting to "kill a Muslim".[94] Most notoriously, in Oak Creek

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[88]Robin L Riley, *Interrogating Imperialism: Conversations on Gender, Race, and War*, (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006). p. 224

[89]Alsultany, p. 9

[90] Rice and Parkin p. 455, Alsultany, p. 17

[91]Rice and Parkin p. 450

[92]Kannan, p. 16

[93] ibid, p. 15

[94]Ueda, p. 26

Wisconsin, a white supremacist committed a mass shooting in a Sikh temple, killing six.[95] These startling images would reverberate throughout Arab and South Asian communities around the United States. Their behaviour and attitudes towards their nation have changed dramatically as a result.

These communities found themselves the victims of a huge increase in hate crimes. They found themselves removed from flights, receiving hate mail, assaulted, their property damaged, and their Mosques and community centres vandalized or set on fire. Many bias incidents in the years since 9/11 were aimed at Middle-Easterners and South Asians. Muslim communities even began to arrange escorts to protect themselves.[96] This climate of hate and persecution entrenched the 'Muslim' as a second class citizen with little hope for recourse.

A distinct feeling of hopelessness and fear rocked the Muslim community. They reported high amounts of depression, sadness, isolation, shock and fear. They censored themselves in public, avoided religious or ethnic markers, and reduced Mosque attendance. Many felt excluded from grieving over the events of 9/11, as if associated with the enemy. Many Middle-Eastern families in the US fled to countries like Canada for political asylum. Thousands of Pakistani Americans 'voluntarily' returned to their nation of origin.[97] Many remaining landed immigrants kept their immigration papers on them at all times.[98] Some, however, began to wear the hijab as an act of Muslim solidarity.[99] Through all the hardship and hopelessness this one act shows the possibility of organizing, and fighting for their rights as American citizens.

[95]Kannan, p. 16

[96]Alsultany, p. 4, Kannan, p. 7

[97]Alsultany, p. 4,5

[98]Halter, p. 85

[99]Alsultany, p. 4

The evidence presented seems to fit what we would expect from this theoretical paradigm. The state-body metaphor of biopolitics, and Esposito's autoimmune response seems to explain the reaction against the Muslim population of the United States. A false identity of threat, created through a racializing process via state reaction to 9/11 and media fuelling of a conflated Islamic identity. This fuelled the population of the US and resulted in increased discrimination and violence. These three pillars then fed off each other in a moral panic that turned into an attack of Muslims, brown skin, turbans, and immigrants.

It has been, as of this writing, 12 and a half years since the 9/11 attacks and this biopolitical moral panic persists today. The vigilante hate crimes and racial profiling will continue unless action takes place. Understanding the mechanisms of this discrimination may give clues as to how to prevent it in the future. Many different theories have developed to explain this.

The historian may think this is the result of major themes in American historiography. Nativism, an important aspect of understanding American interactions with immigrants, may explain the anti-immigrant sentiments lying beneath the War on Terror. This experience also further problematizes the national myth of the melting pot.

Outside of history, many theorists from fields such as political theory, cultural theory, and sociology have posited their explanations as to why Muslims experiences what they did in America after 9/11. Foucault's biopolitics shows a state interested in fostering violence in order to create desire for war. Hall's moral panic frames the War on Terror as an echo chamber of fear and reaction between citizens, the state, and the media. Sociologists would argue it is the

attribution of a dangerous trait to the visual of brown skin. Together, these theories fit with what happened, and who was targeted.

With this theoretical model of understanding the events Muslims were subjected to, the key lies in portrayal. With limited connection, media is often the lens Americans see when forming ideas of other ethnicities. Breaking down the conflated identity and showing the diversity of the Islamic world, and de-criminalizing the Muslim identity would go a long way to fostering an environment of understanding between communities.

Conclusion

The case of Muslims in America after 9/11 exhibits the kind of hurdles a multicultural society faces. In a nation with myths such as the melting pot, the negligence of these hurdles can lead to violence and discrimination towards minority groups. This we have witnessed here. Muslims across the United States found themselves burdening the guilt of the attacks of September 11th from the majority society.

Muslims faced a wall of bias after the attacks. Data collection from groups such as Human Rights Watch and the Pew Research Centre painted a picture of an American society turning against Muslims. When combined with the report from Glenn Fine, we see a state that is overreacting to detain and criminalize Muslims, but slow or unwilling to protect them. Secondary research has shown that the target of who was a Muslim became murky and conflated to anyone with brown skin or odd clothing.

With the case for discrimination against Muslims after 9/11 made, there are peculiar aspects to the events that occurred. There appeared to be a contradiction on political lines between vilifying them in Republican circles, and sympathizing with their discrimination in Democratic ones. Attitudes towards Muslims appeared to be a political issue. In the process of identifying for discrimination members of an invisible minority, Americans turned towards visible markers. Primarily, they used skin colour, and garb in order to determine who was a Muslim, with all the false positives to show for it. There was also a transition from a fear-based discrimination in the direct wake of the attacks, to one of hate and bias in the years that followed, merely changing nature rather than intensity.

To explain this phenomenon, research into American history turns up a few themes that this discrimination wave fits into. American history is rife with waves of anti-immigrant sentiments that are nearly as old as the nation itself. There is also the visit to the myth of the American melting pot, its contradictions, and where Muslims add to the problematizing of it. There is also the attempt to build a theoretical model from various disciplines to explain why these events occurred this way. Muslim bodies became interpreted by the United States as dangerous bodies that needed to be found and monitored. Using a racialized image of the Muslim, the autoimmune reaction took place. It grew and exacerbated due to a mutual reinforcement between the population, media, and state.

Multicultural societies require work, and have many hurdles to success. Proactive, preventative action, such as those seen in Dearborn show that reducing violence requires a response. The case of Muslims in the United States following the September 11th attacks shows the divisions that can be made when myths like the melting pot gloss over issues of immigrant societies. America is a heterogeneous country, and assimilation is a fable. Integration of a heterogeneous society is a process, and one that takes effort. The case of Muslims in America after 9/11 begs for this process to get the attention it needs.

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Appendix

Table 1: There is a lot of discrimination against

Religions	%
Muslims	**58**
Jews	35
Evangelical Christians	27
Atheists	26
Mormons	24
Other	
Gays and Lesbians	**64**
Hispanics	52
Blacks	49
Women	37

Table 2: Perception of religious differences

	Very / Somewhat Similar	Very / Somewhat Different	Don't Know
Protestants	**44**	38	18
Catholics	43	49	8
Judaism	35	47	18
Mormonism	21	59	20
Islam	17	**65**	19
Buddhism	15	60	25
Hinduism	12	57	**32**

Table 3: Public Views of Islam

Opinion	July 2005	August 2010
Favourable	**41**	30
Unfavourable	36	**38**
Don't Know	23	32

Table 4: Compared to other religions, Islam

	August 2009	August 2010
More Likely to encourage violence	38	35
Does not encourage violence more than others	**45**	**42**
Neither / Don't Know	16	24

Table 5: Agree more with...

	August 2010
Those who object to building Islamic centre and mosque near the World Trade Center	**51**
Those who think the mosque should be allowed	34
Don't know	15

Table 6: Public views of Islam, demographics

August 2010	Favourable	Unfavourable	Don't Know
18-29	**35**	33	32
30-49	34	**35**	31
50-64	27	**40**	32
65+	20	**49**	31
College Graduate +	**47**	28	25
Some College	29	**37**	34
Highschool or Less	20	**45**	35
Republican	21	**54**	25
Democrat	**41**	27	32
Independent	28	**40**	32

Table 7: Object to or allow mosque near the World Trade Center, demographics

	Object	Allow	Don't Know
Total	**51**	34	15
18-29	36	**50**	14
30-49	**49**	36	16
50-64	**61**	28	11
65+	**63**	21	16

College Graduate +	**48**	41	12
Some College	**50**	34	16
High School or Less	**54**	30	16
Republican	**74**	17	8
Democrat	39	**47**	14
Independent	**50**	37	13

Table 8: Muslim rights to build houses of worship, demographics

	Local communities should be able to prohibit mosques	Muslims should have same rights as other groups to build	Don't Know
Total	25	**62**	13
18-29	29	**64**	6
30-49	21	**68**	12
50-64	25	**59**	16
65+	33	**48**	19
College Graduate +	19	**74**	7
Some College	28	**62**	10
High School or Less	28	**54**	18
Republican	42	**47**	11
Democrat	14	**74**	12
Independent	25	**65**	10

Table 9: How much do you know about Islam?

	November 2001	March 2002	July 2003	July 2005	August 2007	August 2010
A Great Deal	6	5	4	5	7	**9**
Some	32	29	27	28	34	**35**
Not Very Much	37	37	**39**	36	33	30
Nothing	24	28	29	**30**	25	25
Don't Know	1	1	1	1	1	*