

Introduction: Muslim Americans and the Post-9/11 Security Environment

One afternoon in the Queens neighborhood where he grew up, Jawad Rasul, a film major at City College of New York, picked up a fellow student on his way to a whitewater rafting trip. They were meeting with several other Muslim Student Association (MSA) members on one of their regular outdoor excursions. Unbeknownst to Jawad at the time, the fellow student he picked up was actually an undercover New York Police Department (NYPD) agent. The agent had followed the group on several trips before, carefully recording their activities. These were not the only students being watched. Adeela Khan, a student 300 miles away at the University at Buffalo, ended up under NYPD surveillance after forwarding an email announcing an upcoming Islamic conference in Toronto to a group of friends at her school. This simple act landed Adeela on a secret document for NYPD Commissioner Raymond Kelly.

Why did the NYPD find these students threatening enough to commit such resources to track their activity? Adeela and Jawad were among thousands of Muslim Americans that were under surveillance by a secret NYPD program from 2007 to 2014. The program monitored Muslim neighborhoods, mosques, businesses, and student activity groups across the Northeast, with dozens being infiltrated by undercover officers and hired informants. They were monitored not because of crimes they had committed, or for having close associates involved in illegal activity. Simply put, they were deemed potential threats because they were Muslim. Though Mayor Michael Bloomberg defended the NYPD's actions as necessary preventative measures, the NYPD acknowledged in 2013 that since its inception, the program did not produce a single lead or terrorism investigation (Apuzzo and Goldman 2013). The program was terminated in 2014.

After learning that she was the target of such surveillance from an *Associated Press* reporter, Adeela said she empathized with the NYPD trying to get ahead of future terrorist threats, though she classified the wide-reaching program as “a waste of resources” (Hawley 2012). Jawad said that as an American citizen he was disheartened. “We are in America, not in Syria or Egypt. We’re not supposed to expect these kinds of things.” He said he was willing to work with the NYPD to more genuinely engage Muslim youth because he believes such broad-brush surveillance tactics hurt the NYPD’s efforts to fight homegrown terrorism by creating animosity toward law enforcement agencies and “destroy[ing] the trust that youth might have developed with the government” (Rasul 2012). In other words, the tremendous amount of resources put toward tracking these Muslim American communities may have actually been counterproductive in making the country safer and eroded confidence in American institutions.

The Inadvertent Outcomes of Security Policies

Political and academic discourse in the West on national security and the fight against terrorism has focused largely on understanding and stopping extremists—with a particular focus on Muslim extremists—who have committed or may commit violent or criminal actions. What these discussions about U.S. national security largely miss is how some of the negative externalities of post-9/11 security policies impact the majority of nonviolent, noncriminal Muslim Americans, and can actually undermine the efficacy of counter violent extremism (CVE) and counterterrorism (CT) policies. Though most Americans likely understand that these policies cast a much wider net than the actual risk posed, some are willing, due to the gravity of the perceived threat, to justify any fallout, while others argue for more targeted approaches that limit negative repercussions. More precise policies, however, require a fuller and more nuanced understanding of the Muslim American population in all its diversity. In order to discern the full impact of CVE and CT policies, one must first examine both the premises and assumptions about Muslim Americans that underlie the policies on the one hand, and the actual circumstances, features, and attitudes of this diverse population in the United States on the other.

The goal of this book is to offer a better and more accurate picture of the Muslim population in America—a set of communities the government has tried to co-opt to help fight terrorism—in order to highlight the gap be-

tween the policy premises and the reality and to help bring them into alignment. Using nationwide survey and interview data about Muslims in America, this study brings new empirical evidence to bear on the key assumptions commonly discussed in popular discourse. It examines the makeup of the Muslim American population and looks at how the securitized post-9/11 environment is viewed by more- and less-integrated segments of this population. How have Muslim Americans responded to the threat of violent extremism in the United States? How have Muslims' perspectives and past experiences shaped their views toward the government and in particular law enforcement? What can patterns observed under the Bush and Obama administrations tell us about the potential outcomes of policies under President Trump and future administrations? The views of this population and the answers to these questions have implications for government policy toward, and the treatment of, immigrant and U.S.-born Muslims and for U.S. national security policy into the future.

The ratcheting up of security measures following the 9/11 attacks changed the way of life for all Americans, restricting some civil liberties in exchange for security. While Muslim communities faced various challenges in America long before 2001, the concentration on radical Islam in discussions of violent extremism since that time has particularly put Muslim Americans under intense scrutiny and suspicion. In the effort to identify the small number of would-be terrorists among the millions of individuals living in or traveling to the United States, some U.S. law enforcement strategies introduced under the Bush administration and many continued under the Obama administration led to extensive monitoring, indefinite detentions, and other actions that violated the constitutional rights of nonviolent, noncriminal Muslim citizens, often without probable cause for suspicion or material benefit to national security. Such scrutiny has only been exacerbated under President Trump, and a significant number of Americans do not oppose these changes. By the end of 2016, nearly half of all Americans believed that Islam is more likely than other religions to encourage violence (Pew 2016c). A similar percentage of people believe Muslim Americans are anti-American, and a third feel that Muslims should be subject to more scrutiny than people of other religions (Pew 2016b; Pew 2015b).

At the same time that many Muslims face such scrutiny, they are being asked to do more to help stop the threat. Government officials have asserted that Muslim Americans play an important role in keeping the country safe (Mueller 2009; Jensen 2006; Obama 2015), and at times have

accused Muslim communities of not doing enough. Beyond reporting criminal activity, Muslims in America are being asked to identify friends and family members who could *possibly* become violent but have not yet committed a crime. Predicting acts of violence, a daunting and risk-filled task even for the most well-resourced law enforcement agency, is even more so for average people.

Despite the burdensome and complicated nature of taking such an active role in securing the country, Muslim Americans have indeed been helpful to law enforcement; some scholars have cited Muslims as one of the largest known sources of initial information leading to disrupted terrorism plots in the United States since 9/11 (Bergen et al. 2014; Kurzman 2014; New America 2017).

By analyzing Muslim Americans' relationship with American law enforcement and Muslims' reactions toward violent extremism and the government's efforts to counter it, this study empirically demonstrates that Muslim Americans support law enforcement's goal of keeping Americans safe. Some government efforts to counter violent extremism, however, inadvertently alienate otherwise well-integrated segments of the Muslim population from law enforcement. As the study documents, laws and policies meant to enhance homeland security lead some Muslim Americans to adopt a more distrustful lens toward U.S. law enforcement efforts. Concerned about unlawful activity by security officials toward fellow Muslims, the country's most integrated Muslims—second- and third-generation Muslims¹—are more hesitant to engage in CT and CVE investigations despite their objections to violence.

This introduction sets the stage for the book by looking into some of the post-9/11 policies that placed large swaths of American Muslims under intense scrutiny, at times with little demonstrative benefit to national security. A chapter outline is then followed by a description of the methods and data used in this study. The findings are based on a nationwide survey of Muslims living in the United States, supported by in-depth interviews with Muslims across the country. The chapter concludes with a brief portrait of the Muslim American population, highlighting its heterogeneity and diversity.

A Different Reality for Muslim Americans

During the 2016 U.S. presidential race, Donald Trump, on his campaign website and in several media appearances, called for "a total and complete

shutdown of Muslims entering the United States" (Trump 2015). In an apparent attempt to keep his promise of a "Muslim ban," within his first ten days in office President Trump signed an executive order indefinitely suspending the resettlement of Syrian refugees and temporarily preventing people from seven predominantly Muslim nations from entering the United States.

Such high-profile rhetoric and actions—by casting suspicion on members of Muslim American communities and characterizing them as inherently "un-American" and violent—can foster anti-Islam sentiment more broadly (Das et al. 2009; Jamal 2008; Huddy et al. 2005; Sirin and Fine 2007). Indeed, in the campaign year leading up to the election, the country witnessed its highest levels of hate crimes against Muslims since 2001 (FBI 2015, 2016a), culminating in a spike of anti-Muslim incidents in November 2016 (SPLC 2016). Heightened anti-Muslim sentiment can work against government efforts to secure the country, such as in the Department of Homeland Security's "See Something, Say Something" campaign introduced in 2010, which appeals to the public to be extra vigilant about possible terrorist plans and threats. A flood of tips based on stereotyping and anti-Muslim sentiment threatens to obscure truly valuable information and keep law enforcement busy tracking down false leads. Kurzman (2017) finds that very few—less than 5 percent—of the FBI's investigations into Muslim American links to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) have resulted in indictments. What's more, as the findings of this book confirm, in such environments where citizens are fearful of unfair treatment or being wrongly associated with criminal activity, they may hesitate to approach law enforcement or government officials with potentially helpful information.

Though Muslim Americans have been experiencing various forms of scrutiny since long before 2001,² the surprise attacks of September 11, 2001, which brought unprecedented changes in America's security apparatus, caused a key shift in how the U.S. government interacted with Muslim Americans. Several high-level policymakers recall the days following the attacks as a time of overwhelming preoccupation with trying to avoid another attack by a little-known foreign enemy, Al-Qaeda. Leaders did not know where the next attack might be coming from, and without the security institutions in place to deal with this new kind of threat, ad hoc arrangements filled the void.³ As noted above, as government officials aimed to secure the country in the years following, Muslim Americans witnessed a series of pre-emptive security policies that inadvertently placed large swaths of noncriminal and nonviolent Muslims under government scru-

tiny due to their religious orientation. Though President Bush made concerted efforts to disassociate Islam with terrorism in public statements, some security programs that treated law-abiding Muslims as potential criminals have been criticized as an unfair overstep by the government and have spawned distrust among Muslim communities toward law enforcement.

In the days after the devastating attacks, as a safety precaution, the United States closed its borders completely and used federal immigration laws to detain thousands of “special interest” immigrants from Muslim-majority countries until they were determined to have no links to or knowledge of terrorism. This “hold until cleared” policy turned on its head the presumption of innocence. Hundreds were held without being charged within the prescribed window, without access to lawyers or the justice system, and often without being told why they were being detained. Their families were not informed of the charges and there were reports of physical and verbal abuse against some detainees (Office of the Inspector General 2003).

The Patriot Act amended more than 15 federal statutes, expanding surveillance laws permitting the government to spy on Americans to an unprecedented degree while diminishing checks and balances meant to prevent abuse of the system.⁴ Numerous privacy and civil rights organizations have extensively critiqued the Patriot Act’s most troublesome provisions, including the expanded definition of “material support” to terrorism.⁵ The Patriot Act enabled a series of policies and programs, including the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS) Special Registration Program, which scholars believe disproportionately affected Muslims and those perceived to be Muslim (Jamal 2008; Cainkar 2009; Zaman, Maznavi, and Samur 2011; Akbar and Narula 2011).

NSEERS operated as a tracking program that required nonimmigrant males arriving from 25 countries—nearly all Muslim-majority countries—to register annually with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Both entry into the country and activity while in the United States were monitored. The number of individuals who participated in the program or were removed on the grounds of participation in terrorism-related activities is unknown because information has not been made publicly available. A report from Penn State’s Dickinson School of Law, however, presents evidence that of the 85,000 individuals who complied with the program, no terrorist suspects were convicted (Wadhia and Shora 2009). The *New York Times* reported in 2003 that only 11 individuals who

complied with the program were found to have any ties to terrorist organizations (Swarns 2003).

Government scrutiny of Muslims is not limited to federal law enforcement. In a case that surfaced well after the 9/11 attacks, in 2007 the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), after an outcry from concerned community and civil liberties groups, scrapped a controversial plan to map its local Muslim population. In 2011 it was revealed that the NYPD, in an unprecedented collaboration with the Central Intelligence Agency, had gone forward with building a similar secret human-mapping program, the same program mentioned above that implicated Jawad and Adeela.

The Obama administration, publicly distancing itself from the Bush administration's "Global War on Terror," oversaw a shift toward what was termed "Countering Violent Extremism" to emphasize the need to challenge the underlying ideologies and narratives that motivate recruits to join violent extremist organizations. These measures, however, have been criticized by some academics and practitioners for their reliance on controversial theories of radicalization that stigmatize Muslims by equating religious and political activity, which is constitutionally protected, with the propensity to commit violence.⁶ Critics argued that while the Obama administration took care to avoid focusing explicitly and exclusively on Islamist extremists, President Obama's policies were largely a continuation of those under the Bush administration, and a number of the new CVE programs were speculated to single out Muslim youth for increased surveillance under the guise of community outreach. While these and similar policies were put in place in an attempt to protect the United States from threats of terrorism, few studies seek to assess, as this one does, the potential consequences of such broad-brush tactics, both on American security and on the often-stereotyped Muslim citizens they implicate.

Outline of the Book

Public discussions about fears of terrorism and the increased scrutiny faced by Muslim Americans often point to perceived fundamental differences between Muslims and other Americans and their lack of integration into the mainstream society. Although the connection between terrorism and integration is contested empirically,⁷ Muslims have been accused of failing to integrate into Western societies, with the idea that such isolation can foster support for violent extremism.

The first two chapters in this book address the notions upon which some of the ideas about the inverse connection between integration and violent extremism are based: that Muslims are more likely than other immigrant groups to support violence and that Muslim Americans are failing or, worse, *refusing* to integrate into American society. Chapter 1 examines whether Muslims' tolerance toward violent political groups differs from other Americans and how these views vary within different segments of the community. The data suggest that, contrary to the beliefs of much of the American public, Muslims and Christians reject at the same rate the idea of resorting to violence for a political cause. The chapter also assesses available data on Muslims' views and involvement in violent extremism and CVE efforts in the United States and shows data demonstrating that Muslim Americans have played a significant role in helping law enforcement disrupt terror plots and have played an active role speaking out against such acts. Interviewees share their views on those who do choose to engage in violence, and they discuss the pressure they constantly face to explain that most Muslims share other Americans' fear and contempt of violent extremism.

Chapter 2 then takes a look at observable data to gauge how well various segments of the Muslim population are integrating into the United States across a variety of dimensions: economic, social, civic, cultural, and psychological. The data reveal that Muslims reflect their non-Muslim counterparts across these measures, with a diversity of experiences across various segments of the population. Challenging public beliefs that Muslims are anti-American, the findings of the chapter reveal that Muslims express high levels of attachment to their American identity, a sentiment that grows across generations and matches that of native-born non-Muslims. Muslim economic performance mirrors that of the larger American population, as does their engagement with other Americans through interfaith friendships, marriages, and other institutions. Muslim American communities continue to debate the role of women in the home and in the mosque, with more progressive voices challenging traditional expectations. As with other American faith communities, the level of Muslim American involvement in religious practices and services varies widely from secular to extremely pious. Taken together, U.S.-born Muslims are largely indistinguishable from their non-Muslim counterparts, despite popular assertions to the contrary.

Chapter 3 delves into the personal stories of Muslims in America and their post-9/11 experiences. The themes uncovered through interviews

suggest that Muslims' socialization experiences in their countries of origin—whether that country be the United States or another country abroad—shape how they are affected by and respond to the post-9/11 security environment. The chapter takes a close look at the differing perspectives of native versus foreign-born Muslims and how the values, norms, and laws under which they were raised shape how they interpret the intentions of U.S. government security measures and their sense of identity with the broader Muslim American community. Interviewees suggest that U.S.-born Muslims' greater level of sensitivity and attachment to the broader Muslim American community is *because of* their greater integration into American society. With more experience and knowledge of the American system, Muslims, like other Americans, hold higher expectations of the American government and American values of fairness, equality, and good governance. Moreover, with greater investment in U.S. politics and the American Muslim community, later-generation Muslims are better able to recognize when the government is treating Muslim citizens less well compared to other Americans. Such perceptions of mistreatment further heighten the salience of a Muslim American identity.

Chapters 4 and 5 more systematically assess how the post-9/11 scrutiny has affected Muslims' relationship with U.S. law enforcement. Chapter 4 examines how Muslim Americans' expectations of fair police treatment change based on whether the suspect is a Muslim or not. It explores the reasons for the variance in Muslims' levels of trust in the police and attitudes toward government, including the effect of immigrants' experiences with law enforcement in their country of origin. The data suggest that U.S.-born Muslims have internalized negative beliefs of government behavior toward Muslims and are more likely to anticipate that police behavior toward Muslims will be discriminatory. Foreign-born Muslims do not necessarily believe that the police treat Muslims differently than non-Muslims, and instead base their judgments of American law enforcement on their experiences in their country of origin. Specifically, immigrant Muslims whose home countries had corrupt institutions expect similar bad behavior from American police forces.

Chapter 6 discusses how these judgments of law enforcement—as well as recent events deterring Muslims from interacting with police—in turn affect Muslims' comfort levels and inclinations to approach law enforcement with information on a criminal suspect or even a hate crime against their community. Even while Muslims actively support the fight against terrorism and have a track record of assisting authorities in investigations,

our interviews also revealed hesitation among immigrant Muslims to engage with law enforcement due to past policies that have broadly implicated noncriminal immigrants. Weighing the personal risk to themselves and families, as discussed above, many Muslims avoid law enforcement to avoid being wrongly accused or associated with criminal activity. U.S.-born Muslims hesitate to engage with the police when they believe the investigation will not be legitimate and that the suspect will not be treated fairly.

These findings suggest that the large majority of the Muslim American population is no different than other segments of the American population, eager to assist the government when they believe that government representatives will uphold citizens' rights and not discriminate against them.

Contributions of the Book

Given all the attention, from academics and policymakers alike, to fears of violent extremism and reactions to the growing Muslim populations in the United States and Europe, it is surprising that so few studies have assessed the effects of the post-9/11 security environment on various segments of this population or have looked, in turn, at the impact of these effects on the efficacy of the very policies that created them. This study demonstrates how policy changes toward Muslims have shaped not only their views of the U.S. government as a whole, as discussed above, but how they see themselves in relation to the broader American society. By offering a rare assessment of Muslim American attitudes toward post-9/11 security changes, this book adds to our understanding of the unintended consequences of new security policies and the effectiveness of various CVE efforts involving Muslim community assistance. As noted above, the study finds that Muslims who understand their legal protections the best are among the most offended and concerned by policies that appear to violate concepts of equal treatment under the law, and their trust in America's police and criminal justice system is eroded. Such sweeping policies thus impede the success of programs that rely on ever-important Muslim American community assistance.

The book also offers a number of contributions to the current literature on immigration, integration, and identity. It places the Muslim American experience in an analytical framework that relates the formation of Muslim American attitudes and identity to that of other ethnic and racial

groups in American society. Similar to those of African Americans and other racial minority groups, experiences of discrimination based on one's Muslim identity creates a sense of commonality and closeness among individuals who otherwise might have relatively little in common in terms of cultural or socioeconomic background, and even religious belief. This heightened sense of identification with other Muslim Americans has created greater incentive for political mobilization on behalf of issues of common concern to Muslim communities.

Furthermore, the data presented here goes beyond most previous research on Muslim Americans, which tends to focus primarily on Arab Muslims, who make up only a quarter of the total Muslim American population (Pew 2011). Highlighting the vast diversity of the American Muslim population, this study includes perspectives from Muslims across the varying ethnic and national communities, from African Americans to those of Pakistani, Iranian, or Eastern European descent. African American Muslims, in particular, are an understudied population with a complicated history; this book offers a rare and nuanced picture of the various communities that make up this group, how they relate to other American Muslim communities, and how they fit into national security policy calculations.

This study also looks across at least three generations of Muslim Americans by including Muslim immigrants, their children, and grandchildren. This allows us to assess how these segments of the Muslim American population respond differently to U.S. security policy changes and events in the years since the terrorist incidents of 9/11.

The findings help us to understand more broadly how immigrants' experiences in their country of origin shape how they view and relate to the U.S. government, as noted above, as well as to other Muslim Americans. The data allow for an assessment of how immigrants' attitudes toward the government vary across generations. As discussed above, immigrants differ from Muslims born and raised in the United States in terms of how fairly they expect the government to behave toward criminal suspects, with later-generation Muslims perceiving greater amounts of discrimination.

In a departure from most other studies in this realm, which focus on the Muslim American population in isolation to others, this book compares Muslim American beliefs and behaviors to other segments of American society. Without such comparisons, our understanding of how different (or similar) Muslims are to other Americans in terms of their attitudes toward American identity and values, national security and political violence remains open to interpretation and manipulation. Such compari-

sons are particularly important at a time of heightened scrutiny toward Muslim Americans by the government and the American populace.

Finally, the findings of this study are based on a large sample of Muslim and non-Muslim Americans, drawn from across the United States. Most recent studies of Muslim Americans are based on small samples from limited geographic regions, typically focused on a single ethnic group. Access to systematic, nationwide data allows us to see meaningful correlations that have previously been theorized but not tested. It also makes it possible to simultaneously examine how other features—such as time lived in the United States, generation, gender, and race—can shape Muslim Americans' views of the post-9/11 environment.

Data Sources and Methods

One reason that few studies have systematically assessed the features and attitudes of Muslim Americans is that reliable data on Muslim Americans is so difficult to come by. This is because the U.S. Census does not solicit information on religious affiliation and the Muslim American community is believed to make up a relatively small percentage of the overall American population, about 1 percent (Mohamed 2016). As a result, most of what is known about the Muslim American community is based on small sample sizes in concentrated segments of the overall community.

Muslim American National Opinion Survey (MANOS)

This book provides what is arguably one of the most comprehensive pictures available of the Muslim American community by using data from an original and nationally representative survey, the Muslim American National Opinion Survey (MANOS). This survey was designed specifically for this study and was administered online by the international Internet-based market research firm, YouGov. YouGov administered the survey to individuals living around the United States from a sample of millions of Americans who had previously been surveyed and had identified themselves as Muslim.⁸ The ability to survey those who had independently self-identified as Muslim was beneficial to this study, because MANOS participants did not know they were given the survey *because* of their religious affiliation. This limits the degree to which individuals may either refuse to engage in the survey due to suspicion or might respond to certain questions in a way that aims to provide a particular representation of Muslims.

The bulk of the survey made no mention of Islam, and respondents were only asked about their religious beliefs at the end of the survey.

MANOS was fielded from February 2, 2013, through March 19, 2013. The dataset captures 501 self-identified Muslims living in 45 U.S. states plus the District of Columbia, including foreign-born respondents from 46 different nations. The survey included standard political questions as well as randomized survey experiments. Because there is no census data on the Muslim American population, for sample weighting YouGov relied on the American Social Survey, conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, as well as the Pew Research Center's 2011 estimates on the composition of the Muslim American community.⁹

The attitudes of Muslims are compared to the broader American population in certain sections of the book by assessing the MANOS findings side-by-side with a representative survey of more than one thousand non-Muslim Americans, also collected through YouGov for the purpose of this study in August 2013.¹⁰

The MANOS survey was administered in English. Foreign-born Muslims in the United States are believed to have similar, if not higher, levels of English acquisition compared to other American immigrant groups; up-

TABLE 1. MANOS Summary Statistics

Muslim American National Opinion Survey (MANOS)	
Foreign-Born	34%
Second Generation	22%
Third Generation	44%
Female	49%
Average Age	36
Arab	17%
Asian	19%
Black	23%
White	32%
N	501

Note: Table 1 presents weighted MANOS respondent demographic features. All respondents are self-identified Muslims. Second-generation Muslims are those born in the United States with foreign-born parents, third-generation are those born in the U.S. with U.S.-born parents. MANOS respondents were able to identify with multiple racial categories. Thirty-two percent of Muslims in the MANOS survey identified as white only. Among white-only respondents, 57 percent identify as third-generation, 11 percent as second generation, and 33 percent as foreign-born. Among white-only second-generation respondents, about 38 percent are of Arab descent and 25 percent are of Turkish descent. Among white-only respondents who were born abroad, 45 percent indicate that they were born in Arab countries, 25 percent in Turkey, and the remaining from various parts of Europe. Seventy-one percent, 13 percent, and 16 percent of respondents who identify as black are third-generation, second-generation, and foreign-born, respectively.

wards of 80 percent or more are fluent in English.¹¹ This limits the degree to which the sample composition would be skewed by being administered in English only. While the MANOS survey's proportion of U.S.-born Muslims is about 15 percentage points higher than that of Pew's (2017), the respondents look remarkably similar to Pew's across other major demographic factors that were not weighted, including the proportion of Shias to Sunnis, and they match on attitudinal variables such as religiosity.

Limiting the analysis to English speakers eliminates concerns of question comprehension and comparability, but, as suggested above, it also runs the risk of skewing the results. Yet, given the key questions and findings of this study, including non-English speakers would likely make the findings more pronounced, if anything. One of the central findings throughout this study is that U.S.-born Muslims tend to hold relatively more critical feelings toward government than immigrant Muslims. Several existing studies find that immigrants in the United States and Europe who speak a different language from the official language of their host country have more positive attitudes toward government than immigrants who speak an official host country language at home (Correia 2010, Wortley and Owusu-Bempah 2009, Roder and Muhlau 2012). Including non-English speakers in the dataset would only strengthen this relationship. Even so, the absence of even a small group of non-English speaking Muslims in the survey limits the degree to which this survey can capture the full range of experiences in the Muslim American population.

Interviews

In addition to large nationwide surveys, this project includes descriptive fieldwork in several major U.S. cities with sizable concentrations of American Muslims, including (but not limited to) Chicago; Detroit; Los Angeles; Newark, NJ; New York; San Francisco; Seattle; and Washington, DC. Additional interviews were conducted by phone or through online communication. Interviews were conducted between April 2011 and February 2017. The one-on-one interviews ranged in length from 30 minutes to three hours. These interviews consisted of a series of semi-structured, open-ended questions about the everyday lives of the participants, as well as new issues facing them or the broader community in the years after 9/11. The topics included news consumption and political activity, ethnic, national, and religious identification, immigrant experience, discrimination, security issues, policing, and government policy. All interviews were

conducted in confidentiality, and the names of the interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement. Throughout the book, the interviewees are referred to as an "anonymous interviewee" (AI) with a corresponding reference number.

Though I compile a diverse set of interviewees—representing Muslims from different ethnic communities, geographic regions, and socioeconomic backgrounds—the interview data, unlike the survey data, is not necessarily statistically representative of the population. It serves as a supplement to the survey data, providing illustrative stories of Muslim American experiences. Interview participants were identified on two tracks. On track one, I identified Islamic organizations as well as ethnic-based political and social organizations with substantial Muslim membership across the country for interviews. I aimed to find individuals and leaders who represented diverse segments of the community and had varying relationships with government entities. These interviewees were then asked to refer other prospective interviewees within and outside their organization. On track two, my research assistant—herself a Muslim American—identified individuals in her extended network for interviews and similarly used snowball sampling to identify other interviewees.

One limitation of this method of identifying interviewees is the risk that it will not represent people from Muslim backgrounds who choose not to publicly identify with Islam or associate with other Muslims. This might include both the most secular Muslims as well as the most isolated. By potentially limiting participation by secular Muslims, the interviewees may on average appear more religious than the broader community. Leaving out isolated individuals risks excluding those with views—religious or otherwise—that are outside the mainstream within the community.

This study also incorporates qualitative data from more than 15 conferences, meetings, or working groups put on by various Islamic and government organizations discussing issues pertaining to the community. These ranged from large conferences with national organizations to security meetings with both Muslim American leaders and top law enforcement officials from the White House and the Department of Homeland Security. While several of these meetings were off the record or conducted under Chatham House Rules, the information is used to inform a variety of insights, including the government's perspective on the relationship between law enforcement and the Muslim American community and ways it could be improved.

One-on-one interviews were also conducted with high-level govern-

ment officials from several government agencies, including the White House, the U.S. Congress, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of Homeland Security, the State Department, and the Justice Department.

A total of 182 individuals are included in the qualitative interviews and working groups. Fifty-nine percent of the interviewees were born in the United States and 29 percent were female. Ages ranged from 18 to about 65 years old. The single largest ethnic group represented was Arab (32 percent), followed by Southeast Asian (28 percent), white¹² (16 percent), and African American (13 percent).

Who Are Muslim Americans?

Before turning to the substantive chapters, the following section provides a brief picture of the diversity of the Muslim American population.

The number of Muslims in the United States is expected to more than double over the next few decades. While estimates on the composition of the Muslim American population vary due to the lack of official census data on religious affiliation in the United States, as noted above, the size of the community is projected to increase from an estimated 3.3 million in 2015 to nearly 7 million in 2050 (Mohamed 2016). This growth is expected to come not only from this group's higher birth rates, but also from immigration. Muslims are now believed to represent approximately 10 percent of all legal immigrants arriving in the United States, and a significantly smaller percentage of unauthorized immigrants (Mohamed 2016).

Pew (2017) reports that Muslim American immigrants have come from at least 75 different countries, with no single country accounting for more than one in six Muslim immigrants. This stands in contrast to many Muslim communities in Europe that have large concentrations of specific national groups. For many Muslim immigrants, life in the United States provides their first encounter with Muslims from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, making for unique community dynamics and relations.

Perhaps the most commonly referenced community of Muslims in America is located in a suburb just outside Detroit—Dearborn, Michigan. Dubbed the "Arab capital of North America," the city of Dearborn is believed to have the largest concentration of Arabs outside of the Middle East; more than 30 percent of its residents trace their ancestry back to the region

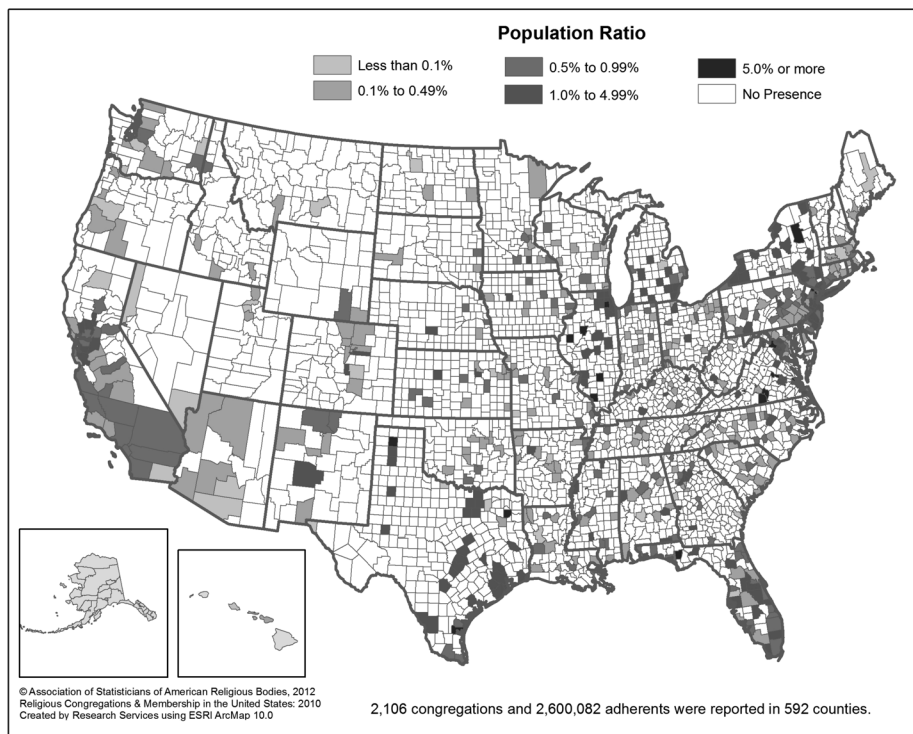


Fig. 1. Estimated Muslim Adherents in the United States

(Source: 2010 U.S. Religion Census [Grammich et al. 2012])

(AAI 2011). While an estimated two-thirds of the Arab population in the United States is Christian, the concentration of Muslims in Dearborn is high relative to other metropolitan areas of the United States. The Dearborn Muslim community, however, differs significantly from the majority of Muslims living in the United States in that the majority of its members are Shia, a minority in the Muslim world, and mostly Arab (mainly Lebanese, with smaller pockets of Iraqis, Palestinians, and Yemenis).

While data on the concentration of Muslims around the United States is difficult to come by, Pew Research Center (2015a) estimates that the highest concentration of Muslims in any particular U.S. state is in New Jersey at about 3 percent of the total state population. This is followed by New York, Washington D.C., and Arkansas, each at 2 percent. All other states are estimated to have Muslim populations of 1 percent or less. At a more micro-level, Pew estimates that the *metropolitan* areas with the high-

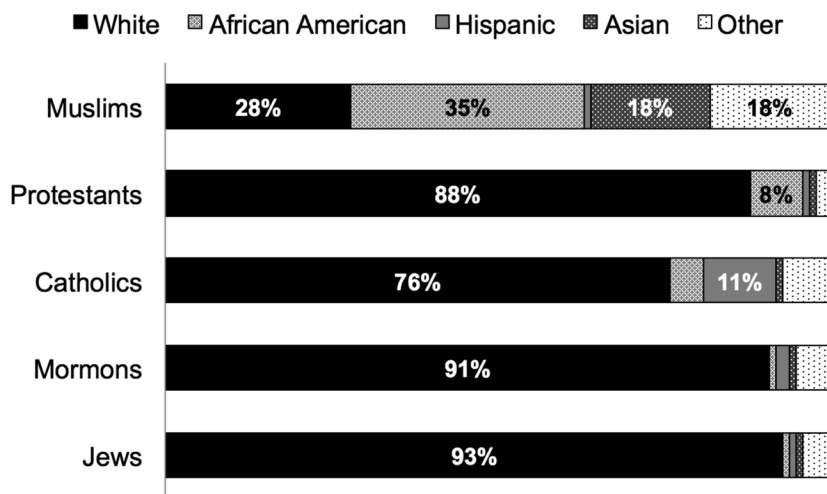


Fig. 2. Racial Composition of American Religious Groups
(Source: Gallup 2009)

est concentration of Muslims in the United States are Detroit and New York City, both with an estimated 3 percent Muslim population. In New York City, this compares with a 3 percent Hindu population and 8 percent Jewish population. While there are examples of large concentrations of Muslim refugees, such as Somalis in Minnesota and Iraqis in San Diego County, these communities are often concentrated around refugee resettlement programs that intentionally place people of the same national background together to help with acclimation.

Muslim Americans are the most racially diverse religious group in the United States. Many Muslims acknowledge, however, that the American Muslim population is divided along geographic, racial, ethnic, and sectarian lines and that numerous Muslim mosques and organizations across the United States are organized along these lines as well (Cesari 2007). This is in part because American Muslims follow divergent beliefs and practices rooted in many countries (Lebanon, Egypt, Iran, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, and more) and in many sectarian traditions (the dominant Sunnis, the various Shias, Ahmadis, Druze, and others). The decentralization of Islam and its lack of a single source of leadership means that much freedom and choice exists for individual Muslims and local faith communities.

In light of such diversity, boundaries along the lines of race, nationality, generation, religious beliefs, and levels of conservatism are particularly important in understanding the Muslim experience in the United States. To highlight some of its heterogeneity, I note, though not comprehensively, some key religious and demographics features of the Muslim American population.

African American Muslims

Of Muslims who were born in the United States, a substantial number are African American. By most estimates, the group is thought to be the largest single ethnic American Muslim group, making up anywhere from 20 to 40 percent of the entire Muslim American community (Pew 2017; Cessari 2007; Gallup 2009).

African American Muslims for the most part consider themselves to be among the earliest Muslims in America, or “native Muslims,” in part because scholars largely agree that the first Muslims arrived in America in the 17th century as enslaved Africans (Gomez 2005).¹³ While the Sunni Islam of those early Africans largely did not survive in the United States after the Civil War (Curtis 2002; McCloud 1995), the early 20th century marks a time of growth for unorthodox Islamic movements within the African American community. The Nation of Islam (NOI), founded in Detroit in 1930, is considered the longest-lived institutionalized Black Nationalist movement in the United States, upholding Islam as the national religion of African Americans. The formation of the Nation of Islam, like the broader Black Nationalist movement, is understood “as a mass protest against the state of race relations in the United States” (Moore 1995) and was rooted in the discontent of lower-class black migrants from the Jim Crow South in northern industrial American cities (Lincoln 1994). Thirty-one percent of African Americans in the MANOS sample report being associated with the Nation of Islam.

While the NOI was particularly influential in the United States during the civil rights movement, the smaller offshoots that remain today are largely alienated from the larger Muslim community. Many Muslims consider these groups to be only nominally Islamic, with teachings that contradict the Qurʾan and Sunnah.

In 1976, Warith Deen Mohammed, who was handed leadership of the Nation of Islam by his late father, Elijah Muhammad,¹⁴ structurally and theologically reformed the NOI to bring its beliefs in line with mainstream

Sunni Islam and worked to build closer ties with other Muslim communities in the United States. The organization eventually disbanded in 1985 and allowed its several hundred *masjids* (formerly referred to as “temples”) to go their own way (Allen 1996). Despite the organizational break, the Nation of Islam still exists today. Louis Farrakhan, after resigning from W. D. Mohammed’s reformed organization in 1977, later worked to rebuild the original NOI upon the foundation established.¹⁵

Today the majority of black Muslims are believed to adhere to some form of mainstream Sunni Islam, and they won early legal victories that broadened the rights of all Muslims in America (Moore 1995). It is worth noting that despite common perceptions, not all black Muslims are converts. Many whose parents or grandparents converted to Islam before their birth, refer to themselves as “second-” or “third-generation” Muslims. Even so, African Americans make up a sizable portion of those who identify as converts to Islam in the United States. Of the 30 percent of MANOS respondents who listed themselves as converts, 46 percent identified as white and 39 percent as black. Among white converts, 70 percent were women, whereas among blacks, nearly 70 percent were men.

As is discussed throughout the book, while they are an integral part of the community, African American Muslims stand out from other segments of the Muslim American population in several ways, including socioeconomic and attitudinal differences based on their unique history in the United States. These differences, where relevant, are discussed in more depth in each chapter.

Muslims from Immigrant Communities

Around 50 to 60 percent of Muslims in the United States today are believed to be foreign-born, first-generation immigrants, with the rest born in the United States (Gallup 2011; Pew 2017). While modern Muslim immigration to the United States began in the late 19th century, the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 helped to open America’s doors to Muslim migration by replacing America’s previous quota system, based on national origin, with a new system based on the principles of family reunification and special occupational skills. The bulk of Muslim immigrants in the United States today arrived during or after the 1990s, with large majorities pursuing economic opportunities and advanced degrees.

Arab American Muslims

The story of Arab immigration to the United States is generally characterized by three waves, the first of which took place between the 1880s and mid-1920s. These migrants were mainly Christians from the Levant, better known today as Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. The Ford Motor Company in Dearborn, Michigan, was a major employer of Arabs (and blacks), who were often the only people willing to work in the hot, difficult conditions of the factories (Hassoun 2005). Many Arabs during this time settled in midwestern states such as Michigan, Ohio, Iowa, and even the Dakotas, with their later Muslim counterparts to follow.¹⁶

The second surge of Arab migration to the United States, which occurred after the Second World War, was triggered by political unrest in the Middle East. This group differed from the first in that it consisted primarily of professionals and university students coming for educational and economic purposes (GhaneaBassiri 2010). The third wave of migration occurred following the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, which allowed for a diverse group of immigrants, a higher percentage of which were Muslim. The Migration Policy Institute estimates that most immigrants from the Middle East arrived to the United States recently, increasing the size of the community fourfold between 1980 and 2010 (Zong and Batalova 2015).

The Arab American Institute, based on a 2002 Zogby International poll, estimates that 63 percent of Arab Americans are Christian, 24 percent are Muslim, and 13 percent belong to another religion or have no religious affiliation. The community is politically active and well-institutionalized, and it has benefited from a long presence in the United States, a shared language, and a history of community organization. Their first organizations included churches, mosques, and community centers, which allowed for the preservation of their ethnic and cultural identities and religious values (Hassoun 2005).

Asian American Muslims

Asians, representing many strands of Islamic beliefs and practices, make up the fastest-growing Muslim immigrant population in the United States. This group, composed of Pakistanis, Indians, Bangladeshis, Afghans, and other Asian nationalities, accounts for about a quarter of the Muslim American population (Pew 2017).

As with other immigrant groups, small numbers of Asian Muslims arrived in America prior to the changes to immigration laws in 1965. South Asian Indian immigrants entered the United States as laborers following the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1885, though they too were eventually outlawed in 1917 when Congress declared India to be part of the Pacific-Barred Zone of excluded Asian countries.

In the midst of anti-Asian sentiment in the United States, it was Muslims from South Asia—the Ahmadiyya Muslim community from Punjab, British India—who first reached out to African American Muslims in the 1920s. The Ahmadis brought English translations of the Qur'an, taught early African American groups about the five pillars of Islam, and directed their attention to Sunni teachings (Allen 1998; McCloud 1995).¹⁷

The much larger numbers of Asian Muslim immigrants who arrived in the first decade after the passage of the 1965 law were part of a large "brain drain" from the region. Physicians, engineers, scientists, nurses, and computer specialists were needed in the growing American economy. South Asian immigrants in the 1970s and 80s were among the best educated, most professionally advanced, and the most successful of any immigrant groups at the time. These immigrants were influential in Muslim American organizations started by earlier Arab migrants, and they also started several of their own. Leonard (2002) argues that Muslim leaders from South Asia went to great lengths to unite Muslims of various ethnic backgrounds in the United States.

Later waves of South Asian migrants, who began coming to the United States through the family reunification laws, are generally believed to be less affluent and less credentialed than their predecessors. These more recent immigrants generally live in urban areas within the United States, often in multiethnic communities, and work in service-sector jobs or in small businesses (Williams 1998).

Other Immigrant Muslim Communities

Iranians make up a significant portion of the Muslim community in the United States. Many Iranians living in the United States migrated following the 1979 Iranian Revolution, escaping the rule of the Islamic Republic. Los Angeles is believed to have the second-largest Iranian population of any city after Tehran, with the area of highest concentration dubbed "Tehrangeles." In addition to seeking political asylum, some Iranians have

come to the United States to pursue greater financial success, improved education opportunities, secularism, and gender equality (Cesari 2007).

In recent years, a higher percentage of Muslim immigrants have been coming from sub-Saharan Africa. Among Muslim immigrants to the United States in 2012, an estimated 16 percent were born in countries such as Somalia and Ethiopia; 20 years earlier only 5 percent of immigrants hailed from sub-Saharan Africa (Pew 2013c). Substantial numbers of Muslims of European and Central Asian descent (e.g., Turks, Albanians, Bosnians) live in the United States as well, along with a growing number of white and Latino converts (Aidi 2003).

Muslim American Ideological Differences

Sunni–Shia Divide

Within Islam, the historic sectarian division between Sunnis and Shias remains a source of tension and conflict in some parts of the world. While Sunni and Shia identities first formed around a dispute over leadership succession soon after the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632 AD, the political divide between the two groups broadened over time to include theological distinctions and differences in religious practices. Practices and beliefs among Sunnis and Shias vary according to local culture, legal school of thought, and other factors. About 10 to 20 percent of the world's Muslims are believed to be Shia, the rest primarily Sunni. Countries where Shias make up a majority of the total population include Iran, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, and Iraq. There are also sizable Shia populations in Pakistan, India, Turkey, Yemen, Syria, and Afghanistan. In the MANOS sample, 17 percent of respondents self-identify as Shia and 59 percent as Sunni, with the remaining identifying as something else (primarily the Nation of Islam).

Schools of Thought

An important institution within Islam that influences social thought and practice among some believers is that of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), which is essentially the human interpretation of the Qur'an and Sunnah (the way of the Prophet) by Islamic jurists. The most prominent schools of thought (*madhhab*, or plural *madhāhib*) guiding some Muslims today were developed and solidified in the classical period of Islamic civilization, which reflected the world at that time. Most individuals who strictly follow particular schools of thought tend to be traditionalists and there-

fore relatively conservative in their practice of Islam. Levels of conservatism also vary across schools. Bagby (2011) explains in practical terms that for Muslims in the United States, “follow[ing] a particular *madhhab*” is analogous to following “the traditional way of doing things like it was done back in the old country” (Bagby 2011, 18).¹⁸ Though schools of thought generally agree on the main issues of Islam, schools may differ in their interpretations of basic Islamic precepts.

The MANOS survey asks which Islamic approach best describes how the respondent makes an Islamic decision. A plurality of the Muslim American community—about 46 percent of the sample—do not believe it is required to follow a particular school of thought and do not use an Islamic approach in making decisions. These individuals follow a more flexible, liberal approach to Islam.¹⁹ Another sizable portion of the sample—39 percent—noted that they refer to the Qur’an and Sunnah as their authority, as opposed to following traditional schools of thought. They generally believe that the Qur’an and Sunnah are open to interpretations that consider the underlying purposes of the texts and modern circumstances, as opposed to the literal meaning. This is also a more flexible approach to Islam compared to traditional schools of thought. About 16 percent indicated that they look to all the *madhāhib* instead of just one, a slightly more flexible but still a conservative interpretation. Only a small fraction—about 8 percent of MANOS respondents—indicated that they follow a traditional *madhhab*, or school of thought.

Salafism

Salafism, which emerged in the early 20th century, was a modernist reform movement and a reaction to religious innovation (departure from orthodoxy or traditional practice in the face of social change) and the spread of European ideas. (The word *salaf* is Arabic for “ancient one” and refers to the companions of the Prophet Mohammed.) It claims that Islam has strayed from its origins and advocates a return to the traditions of the first three generations of devout ancestors, a more literal and strict understanding of Islam that rejects historical developments in Islamic thought.²⁰ Salafism represents a diverse community of individuals who carry out this goal differently but tend to be alienated from mainstream society. Individuals who indicated that they “follow the *Salafi minhaj*” (way of thought) made up about 9 percent of MANOS respondents. Kepel (2002) explains that the original Salafist movement was nonviolent, encouraged re-Islamization in day-to-day living, and did not necessarily advocate violent

revolts against government powers. But since 9/11, the term is often associated with the jihadi branch of Salafism that justifies violence to achieve political objectives (Wiktorowicz 2006).

Bagby (2011) reports that most Salafi mosques in the United States are African American. In the MANOS sample, however, only 39 percent of Salafis identified as black, accounting for 17 percent of the overall black Muslim population. In discussing why Salafi communities were attractive, one African American interviewee noted that many Salafi mosques offer a welcoming place for black Muslims, some of whom otherwise feel socially and culturally alienated at other mosques. He explained that in contrast to "cultural" approaches to Islam (i.e., traditions transplanted from other countries and services conducted in foreign languages), Salafism is attractive to some U.S.-born Muslims and converts because it is more "pure" and does not require knowledge of practices or norms from other countries (AI 64). Twenty percent of Salafis in the MANOS dataset reported being converts to Islam and 74 percent were U.S.-born.

While Muslims in America are often erroneously cast as one homogeneous group, the wide diversity and histories of various Muslim American communities means that not all individuals who are Muslim view, and have experienced, the post-9/11 environment in the same way. Indeed while I refer to a "Muslim American community" throughout the book, I use it as a term to reference the Muslim population or signal identification with a group of people, but I do not wish to suggest that there is a single politically or religiously unified Muslim community in the United States. As the findings of this study demonstrate, individuals within the community do not agree on a wide range of religious, political, or social topics. Much less do they agree on the severity of the post-9/11 security environment or what if anything should be done to change Muslims' relationship with the government, law enforcement, or the broader American society. This book attempts to shed light on some of these diverse views by giving voice to a group that is the subject of much discussion and debate, but whose voices are less commonly heard.