

# Attitude Formation Toward US Law Enforcement: An Experimental Assessment of Muslim-Americans\*

Rachel Gillum  
rgillum@stanford.edu  
Department of Political Science  
Stanford University

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## **Abstract**

How do Muslim-Americans form beliefs about the treatment they expect to receive from US law enforcement? The results of an original, nationally-representative survey of Muslim-Americans suggest three key findings. First, expectations of fairness on the part of Muslim immigrants are shaped, in part, by the level of institutional corruption in their country of origin. Experience living under corruption creates perceptions of systemic injustice, whereas immigrants coming from less corrupt countries hold more optimistic expectations US law enforcement. Second, home-country effects are less apparent however by the time immigrants have naturalized. Finally, greater socialization as an American leads to more pessimistic expectations of law enforcement. Naturalized citizens are less trusting in the government than newcomers, and Muslims who were born and raised in the United States are least likely to believe that law enforcement will deal with Muslims fairly. Ethnographic evidence drawn from interviews with Muslims-Americans suggests that Muslims update their expectations through interactions and familiarity with American institutions. US-born Muslims expect violations of their rights by the government and are politically concerned about such issues. Foreign-born Muslims, while aware of the controversies regarding US government surveillance and profiling of Muslim communities, tend to be less focused on issues related to citizen rights and more focused on the day-to-day concerns common to immigrants everywhere.

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# 1 Introduction

Among the high-stakes issues facing the American government is its ability to deter or detect potential terrorist threats. The April 2013 Boston Marathon bombings were a stark reminder of the fact that despite technological advances in surveillance, other sources of counterterrorism support remain a fundamental tool in preventing future attacks. The Muslim-American community has been essential to the success of US counterterrorism efforts by accounting for one of the single largest sources of disrupted terrorism plots since 2001 (Kruzman 2011). The Muslim-American community, however, has increasingly felt threatened by US law enforcement due to policies that many in the community believe infringe on their civil liberties and unfairly target Muslims. Such sentiments are not dissimilar to those of Muslims living in Europe who perceive discriminatory treatment by the police and other legal institutions (Adida, Laitin, and Valfort 2012).

Scholarly literature suggests that feelings of fair treatment by government authorities are consequential in enhancing government compliance through voluntary cooperation with law enforcement (Levi 1997; Tyler 1990; Weber 1968). Studies have found, however, that certain groups may not react as strongly as others to whether or not procedures are fair (Brockner et al. 2001). The Muslim-American community is a religious minority in the United States that is significantly more diverse than the American population as a whole and is composed of immigrants from more than 70 nations (Pew Research Center 2007). Such cultural and racial diversity has the potential to impact experiences that shape expectations of fair treatment by government authorities. Moreover, because the majority of terrorism suspects since 9/11 have claimed to be Islamic adherents, it is important to understand whether expectations about fair treatment at the hands of law enforcement depends on whether a suspect is an “in-group” or “out-group” member.

This study analyzes expectations of fairness on the part of law enforcement among Muslims living in the United States. Under what conditions do Muslim-Americans hold prior beliefs

that US law enforcement will be fair, and what accounts for these differences? I explore these questions with a survey experiment in an original, nation-wide survey of Muslim-Americans. The results suggest that Muslims who are new to the United States hold relatively positive prior beliefs about the fairness of law enforcement. By varying whether a criminal suspect is a Muslim or non-Muslim, I demonstrate that foreign-born Muslims generally anticipate that law enforcement will treat Muslim and non-Muslims equally fair. I also show that Muslims' priors of US government institutions are shaped by their experiences in their country of origin — Muslims coming from countries with highly corrupt government institutions are pessimistic about the legitimacy of American security institutions, whereas those coming from countries with low levels of corruption expect fair treatment by US law enforcement.

As Muslims assimilate and have new experiences in American society, their beliefs are updated to reflect a more pessimistic view of how Muslims are likely to be treated by US law enforcement relative to non-Muslim Americans. Immigrants who have gone through the naturalization process become more cynical, regardless of their country of origin. Muslims who were born and raised in the United States have the most negative expectations of US law enforcement and believe that Muslims will be treated less fairly than non-Muslims. The pattern of decreased expectations across successive generations generally persists for Muslims of all racial backgrounds; however, I observe the most dramatic drop in trust among US-born Arabs and Blacks. The study sheds light on how immigrants and their successive generations form expectations of government institutions and how those expectations shape political attitudes and behavior. The findings also have important implications for the continued cooperation by Muslims in counterterrorism policing.

The paper proceeds as follows. I begin by discussing the existing literature on citizens' perceptions of government, narrowing in on the determinants of perceived fairness among America's minority and immigrant populations. I argue that these theories contribute to our understanding of the perspectives within the Muslim-American community. I then subject

these theories to empirical testing using an original, nation-wide randomized survey experiment of Muslim-Americans. I discuss a variety of robustness checks and limitations of the study, and conclude with a discussion of the implications of my findings and avenues for future research.

## 2 Government Compliance and Procedural Justice

A fundamental requirement for governments is the compliance, in various forms, of its citizenry. Governments need widespread public cooperation for acts such as voting, military service, tax payment, and participation in community problem solving including assisting the police in crime prevention. Citizen compliance and cooperation have become increasingly important for the US government as it asks citizens to tolerate heightened security and monitoring, and be vigilant in reporting suspicious activity. Perceived legitimacy is a vital component of governmental institutions as it determines whether or not individuals choose to defer to and cooperate with authorities because they feel it is right to do so (Weber 1968; Levi 1997). Although it is possible for governments to rule using only coercive power, legitimate power makes governing easier and more effective. Without legitimacy, governments have to expend more resources on monitoring and enforcement to induce sacrifice and compliance.

Empirical research has demonstrated that perceptions of the legal process (whether one is being governed with fairness and objectivity) shape judgments and overall satisfaction with the legal system as much as does the outcome one receives (Levi, Sacks and Tyler 2009; Sunshine and Tyler 2003; Tyler and Blader 2000; Tyler and Fagan 2008).<sup>1</sup> According to Tyler (2009), procedural justice predicts cooperation, with legitimacy as the mediator. If

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<sup>1</sup>For example, Tyler and Folger (1980) found that when citizens are stopped for traffic violations, their evaluations of the interaction with the officer were influenced more by the perceived fairness with which they were treated than by the outcome itself (i.e., whether they were issued a traffic citation).

individuals believe they are being treated unfairly, perceptions of legitimacy, and therefore cooperation, will decline (Levi 1997). This then might encourage authorities to take a more punitive or aggressive stance— one which may well be perceived as procedurally unfair by members of the public, leading to a downward spiral of increasing distance and antagonism between police and public (see for example Brunson 2007; Carr et al. 2007; Loader 1996).

### **3 Determinants of Perceived Fairness and Compliance**

The majority of the Muslim-American community was born outside of the United States; however, only a handful of studies assess how immigrants' attitudes towards host-governments are formed. The bulk of the literature on expected fairness discusses various expressions of generalized trust in government or beliefs about government legitimacy. However, as America's immigrant and minority population continues to grow, taking into consideration the views of individuals who grew up under different government systems becomes increasingly important. Moreover, in considering debates over the treatment of ethnic minorities, particularly by law enforcement, it is also critical to assess how expectations of police behavior change when the suspect of interest is a majority or minority citizen.

I argue that expectations of how law enforcement is likely to treat criminal suspects are based on past experiences with government institutions. Past experiences form belief systems, or expectations, by which individuals then judge more ambiguous events. Muslims of different backgrounds will interpret US police behavior through the lens of their experiences with government in their home country— whether that be France or Pakistan —as well as direct experiences in the United States. Here I explore factors that are known to shape the considerations of ethnic minorities in the United States that I argue also contribute to perspectives of the government within the Muslim-American community.

### 3.1 Country of Origin

A long line of literature demonstrates that positive perceptions of government institutions, a byproduct of generalized trust, are associated with high quality government institutions (Almond and Verba 1963; Putnam 1993). The feature of institutions that has been shown to be most consistently and positively associated with government trust is freedom from corruption (Delhey and Newton 2005; Rothstein and Uslaner 2005). Compared to fair and impartial institutions, corrupt institutions are more likely to give way to negative experiences of discrimination and unfair treatment. Individuals experience corruption and develop views of institutional unfairness on the individual level through their experiences with bureaucrats and officials (Rothstein and Stolle 2008).

Trust is argued to be an enduring personal trait (Almond and Verba 1963; Putnam 1993); however, there is debate as to whether general attitudes toward government will endure once individuals are removed from their home-country institutions (Dinesen 2013; Levi 1996). Literature assessing the experience of immigrants suggests that foreign-born individuals use their experience with social institutions in their home country as a reference to interpret their experiences and evaluate the institutions in a new country (Waldinger and Lichter 2003; Suarez-Orozco 1990; Correia 2010; Wortley and Owusu-Bempah 2009). Positive evaluations of police in one's home country carry over to result in more positive perceptions of US law enforcement, as has been found with Chinese and Korean immigrants to America and Canada (Wu et al. 2010, Pogrebin and Poole 1990). Immigrants coming from poorly-governed, corrupt home countries may bring with them negative pre-conceived notions of government authorities in general, of which American institutions are no exception.

*H1: Immigrants from countries with corrupt institutions will have more negative expectations of the police overall compared with immigrants coming from less-corrupt countries.*

### 3.2 Acclimation and Naturalization

Regardless of whether an immigrant's prior experience with her home country's institutions was positive or negative, as an immigrant assimilates, the home frame-of-reference effects will fade as the immigrant acquires new information and updates her beliefs. As an extension of this logic, it should be expected that as immigrants become more familiar with American institutions and have more contact with law enforcement, they will look more similar to their native-born counterparts.

Political science and sociology literature finds that as immigrants have more contact with government authorities, they become less trusting of the government (Michelson 2001, 2003). Chu et al. (2005) and Chow (2002) find that immigrants who had more previous contact with the police have less respect for law enforcement. Studies have shown that immigrants' experience with immigration officials also directly affects perceptions of other US legal authorities. This is because some immigrants, particularly those from countries with centralized civil service systems, may not distinguish US police officers from immigration officers (Wu et al. 2010; Chaundry et al. 2010).<sup>2</sup>

The blurring of roles between immigration officials and local police means that immigrants who have gone through the naturalization process— and who have thus had direct experience with US authorities— are more likely to make judgments of American legal institutions based on their personal interactions in the US. They therefore will be relatively less influenced by previous experiences under institutional corruption. So while I anticipate that Muslim immigrants' expectations of American law enforcement are shaped by the quality of institutions in their home-country, I also expect those pre-conceived expectations to be updated as immigrants become exposed to the American system, whether through socialization, police contact, or more general contact with government institutions frequented by immigrants.

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<sup>2</sup>In addition to this confusion, in the post-9/11 era, local police departments have become increasingly involved in the enforcement of federal immigration laws, an issue by which Muslim-Americans have faced particular scrutiny (Skogan 2009).

*H2: Naturalized citizens will be influenced less by previous institutional corruption than non-citizens.*

### **3.3 In-Group Considerations**

Political science literature has demonstrated that when assessing police behavior in interactions with suspects, the degree to which one sympathizes with the suspect affects judgments of police legitimacy. Individuals tend to sympathize more with individuals who share similar traits and backgrounds. For instance, support for punitive polices such as the death penalty decrease significantly when whites learn that the criminal perpetrator is white rather than non-white (Gilliam and Iyengar 2000; Hurwitz and Peffley 2005; Eberhart et al. 2004). Hurwitz and Peffley (2005) find that blacks tend to sympathize and be more sensitive toward the treatment of black suspects. They anticipate mistreatment towards black suspects relative to white suspects, whereas white respondents expect police to treat whites and blacks in an identical fashion.

Such discrepancies in perceptions between blacks and whites, the literature suggests, are related to past experiences with law enforcement in the United States— whether that be direct experience or the experience of those in one’s social network. The mere mention of police dealing with a suspect of a particular background will prime and arouse expectations related to the respondent’s beliefs and experiences about interpersonal interactions between the police and similar suspects. A long line of empirical evidence demonstrates that racial minorities in the US are more likely to be the victims of police violence and racial profiling (Tyler and Huo 2002; Weitzer 2002; Tyler and Wakslak 2004). Consequently, minority residents tend to perceive that they and other racial-group members are unfairly targeted for aggressive and discourteous treatment by the police because of their race (Brunson 2007; Sharp and Atherton 2007; Cao et al. 1996; Garcia and Cao 2005; Hurst et al. 2000).

In the past decade, Muslim-Americans have reported extensive religious profiling and have been frustrated by their seeming inability to have a voice politically or legally. Their relationship with the US government has been strained by a variety of policies that many in the community believe infringe on their civil liberties and unfairly target Muslims, including mosque infiltrations, wrongful detention, and abuse of Muslims both in US detention centers in the homeland<sup>3</sup> and in Guantanamo Bay. According to a 2007 poll by the Pew Research Center, sixty-eight percent of Muslim-Americans believe that the government's anti-terrorism policies single out Muslims for increased surveillance and monitoring, and 43 percent report being called offensive names, singled out by airport security or law enforcement, or physically threatened for being Muslim (Pew Research Center 2007). These experiences in the post-9/11 environment are likely to prime Muslims to expect mistreatment of Muslims by the US government.

*H3: Respondents will expect Muslim suspects to be treated less fairly than non-Muslim suspects.*

### 3.4 Minority Status and Generational Effects

If Americans who experience more police mistreatment in their communities are more likely to anticipate future mistreatment of their group members, we could imagine that individuals who have multiple minority identities may be particularly attuned to potential police mistreatment. Immigrants, and particularly those who are non-white, have the potential to experience discrimination based on various social identities, ranging from race, religion,

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<sup>3</sup>About 1,200 Middle Eastern men were arrested on suspicion of terrorism after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Brooklyn's nine-story Metropolitan Detention Center was well known by the Muslim American community. "In a special unit on the top floor, detainees were smashed into walls, repeatedly stripped and searched, and often denied basic legal rights and religious privileges, according to federal investigations...Five investigations by the Department of Justice inspector general's office, most of them never publicized, documented wholesale abuse of the Muslim detainees at the Brooklyn detention center" (Serrano 2006).

language, and cultural difference. Political science literature however finds that immigrants who have not fully assimilated into American society are actually *more* trusting of government than those who have assimilated into the American political system (Michelson 2001, 2003). Newly arriving immigrants are thought to perceive very little discrimination in part because of an initial ignorance of ethnic stereotypes among the American population. Portes (1980) finds that among Cuban migrants to Miami, perceptions of discrimination increase substantially after only three to six years of living in the United States. Correia (2010) similarly finds that Latino immigrants put more trust in and feel less discriminated against by the police than US-born Latinos.

Negative encounters with law enforcement among second and third generation immigrants lead to more pessimistic and negative views of American society and government. Even without experiences of ill-treatment, as later generations assimilate into American society, they adopt expectations of fairness and equal treatment. Familiar with American laws, history, and an understanding of common prejudices, native-born individuals are better able to identify when government authorities are acting inappropriately or systematically mistreating members of particular social groups. As a result, we see later generation immigrants become more cynical and distrustful of government under certain situations, similar to other Americans (Garcia Bedolla 2005). I expect then that US-born Muslims will be in a particular position to identify *group-based* mistreatment of Muslim suspects relative to non-Muslim suspects.

*H4: US-born respondents will expect less fair treatment by police, especially towards Muslim suspects, than immigrant respondents.*

Even among US-born Muslims who are generally more aware of group-based discrimination in the United States, some are more likely to have experienced mistreatment first-hand compared to others. The Muslim-American community is the most racially diverse religious group in the United States. American mosques and Islamic organizations tend to be divided

along racial and ethnic lines (Cesari 2007), allowing for particular ethnic groups to have unique views of the Muslim community’s relationship with law enforcement. Muslims who are racial minorities are more likely to have hostile or negative interactions with the government due to profiling or wrongful association with criminal activity. US-born individuals in these communities may thus be more familiar with instances of police misconduct toward Muslims and as a result more likely to expect the mistreatment of Muslims by law enforcement in ambiguous situations. Indeed, Muslims who are also racial minorities (identify as a race other than white) report the highest levels of religious and racial mistreatment, with those who identify as black reporting the highest levels of discrimination (Gillum 2012).

*H5: US-born Muslims who identify as racial minorities will expect less fair treatment by police, especially toward Muslim suspects, than those who identify as white.*

## 4 Data and Methods

I use data from the Muslim-American National Opinion Survey (MANOS), an original survey administered to an online panel of 500 self-identified Muslims living across the United States. The survey was fielded from February 2, 2013 through March 19, 2013 and was conducted by the international polling firm, YouGov.<sup>4</sup> The data set captures respondents living in 45 US states plus the District of Columbia, as well as foreign-born respondents from 46 different nations. After filling out the online questionnaire, YouGov then weighted the set of survey respondents to characteristics of US Muslims from the 2007 Pew Religious Landscape survey using propensity score weights based on gender, age, education, and voter registration status. This survey was only available in English. As a result, the sample’s proportion of US-born Muslims is about 20 percent higher than that of Pew’s. Even so, the respondents look remarkably similar to Pew’s across other major demographic factors including the proportion of Shias to Sunnis and match on attitudinal variables such as religiosity. An assessment of

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<sup>4</sup>A full discussion of YouGov’s sampling methods can be found in the appendix.

how having an English-only survey may affect the results of this study can be found in the robustness check and limitations section.

## 4.1 Independent Variables

The literature suggests that willingness to comply with the government is motivated largely by perceptions of fairness. However, as mentioned, given the diversity of the Muslim American community, it is not clear how perceptions of fairness are formed among Muslims. Thus, for the empirical analysis, I focus on four key variables: Immigration status, citizenship, country of origin, and ethnic makeup. I discuss the measurement of each of these in turn.

***Immigrant Status.*** Respondents who were born in the United States are considered US-born or native-born, and those born outside the United States are considered foreign-born. 42% of respondents in this study are foreign-born. Based on the literature, generational distinction, although an imperfect measure, is meant to represent differing levels of integration and familiarity with American society and institutions. There is an extensive literature on how to define, operationalize and measure concepts of political integration and acculturation that is beyond the scope of this article. Findings by Ceullar, Nyberg and Maldonado (1997) and Perez and Padilla (2000) however show that integration and acculturation are highly correlated with generational status, such that later generation individuals are more familiar with American society than immigrants or even second-generation individuals.<sup>5</sup>

***Naturalized Citizens.*** Among foreign-born respondents, there are both naturalized US citizens and non-citizens. Sixty-one percent of the sampled respondents report being naturalized US citizens. Muslims have a very high naturalization rate which is strongly correlated with immigration year. Having gone through the process of naturalization suggests extensive contact with US immigration officials and American legal institutions, which is shown

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<sup>5</sup>The measure does not necessarily assume that later generations must also lose connection with their cultural identity, although generation and loss of cultural attachment are also highly correlated (Ceullar et al. 1997).

to directly impact perceptions of other US legal authorities, specifically the police (Wu et al. 2010; Chaundry et al. 2010).

***Ethnic Difference.*** Muslim-Americans are a remarkably diverse group. In the survey, respondents self-identify into various ethnic and racial categories. The survey was designed to allow respondents to select into as many ethnic and racial categories as they would like, although most chose just one.<sup>6</sup> About 32% of respondents identify as “white” only, 17% as “Arab,” 19% as “Asian” and 23% as “black.”<sup>7</sup>

***Country of Origin.*** In order to assess whether the quality of institutions in the respondents’ home country affects their perceptions of American law enforcement, a measure of the corruption levels in foreign-born respondents’ sending-country is measured using the inverse of the dimension “Corruption Control” from the Political Indicators published by the World Bank (Kaufman et al. 2009).<sup>8</sup> Figures are averaged from 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 for more reliable estimates. Levels of Corruption Control for each country from which respondents came are presented in Figure 1. “Corruption” used in the analysis is the inverse of the Corruption Control Index. Higher values of Corruption represent poor control of corruption (higher levels of corruption).

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<sup>6</sup>Less than six percent of respondents reported being more than one major racial category. Half of those reported being Arab and White.

<sup>7</sup>Ethnic breakdowns and country of origin vary considerably by racial identification. Among respondents who identified as white only, 68% were born in the United States. Of whites born in the US, 19% are second-generation. Among foreign-born whites, 32% emigrated from Arab countries, 25% are from Turkey, 18% came from Canada, 8% from Western European Nations, and 6% from Eastern Europe. Forty-two percent of Arabs report being born in the United States and foreign-born Arabs emigrate almost exclusively from Arab countries. Thirty-two percent of Asian Muslims are born in the United States, 40% of which have Pakistani-born parents. Among foreign-born Asians, 31% come from Pakistan and 63% from other Asian countries. Seventy-one percent of black respondents were born in the United States and have US-born parents. Thirteen percent are second generation and report being primarily of Africa and Caribbean descent and 16% of blacks are foreign-born, the majority of which emigrated from sub-Saharan Africa.

<sup>8</sup>I rerun all analyses in this study using Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2012 and achieve identical results. The World Bank’s Control of Corruption Index and CPI are significantly correlated at .99.

In this sample, 17 percent of respondents came from countries with a corruption control index score greater than one— those countries include Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK and Qatar. The bulk of the foreign-born sample (56%) was born in countries with corruption control scores between 1 and 0, including countries like Turkey, Jordan, and Israel. Seventeen percent came from countries with scores between 0 and -1, the majority of which are from Pakistan and India. Just ten percent of foreign born respondents in this sample came from countries with corruption control index score less than -1, those countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Somalia.

[Figure 1 about here]

***Control Variables.*** To increase confidence in any empirical findings, my analyses control for demographic variables known to be associated with trust in the criminal justice system and government institutions. These include gender, education, income and age.

## 5 Empirical Models and Results

This study utilizes a randomized survey experiment to assess how expectations of police behavior vary based on the religious identity of the suspect. The analysis is composed of two parts. The first section will assess whether experiences under immigrants' home-country institutions carry over to the US and affect expectations of American law enforcement officials. I assess whether the effect is similar for newly arrived immigrants and those who have gone through the naturalization process.

The second part of the analysis utilizes the entire sample to compare the attitudes for foreign-born Muslims with their US-born counterparts. I assess the effect of the treatment (religious identity of the suspect) on expectations of police fairness, as well as within various ethnic subsets of interest. I finish with a discussion of the findings and implications of the study.

## 5.1 Experimental Manipulation

To assess American Muslims' expectations of US law enforcement, respondents answered a series of questions in response to a theoretical criminal investigation. The questionnaire included an experiment with a between-subjects design that manipulates the identity of the suspect in question. Respondents are randomly assigned to either a treatment or control condition. In the control condition, the suspect is a presumably non-Muslim American named "Jake Lewis" ( $T_i = 0$ ). In the treatment condition, the suspect is presumably a Muslim American named "Umar Sayyid" ( $T_i = 1$ ). I thus observe responses when the suspect is a non-Muslim or a Muslim, but not both.

Subjects are told that "the police have received an anonymous tip that a 23-year-old American citizen, [Jake Lewis/Umar Sayyid], a man without a criminal record, is planning to commit a major crime." Following the prompt, respondents are then asked about their expectations of police fairness. Specifically, respondents were asked, "Generally speaking, do you think US law enforcement will treat a person like this fairly?" Answers were on a 7-point scale from completely agree (7) to completely disagree (1), and are rescaled to range from 1-0 in the following analyses.<sup>9</sup>

Random assignment of the treatment was successful. Thirty-seven percent of respondents think that Jake will be treated fairly by police in this situation, compared to 29% who believe that Umar will be treated fairly.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>The exact language of the experiment can be found in the appendix.

<sup>10</sup>This compares to a nationally representative sample of Latinos, where 43% believe Jake will be treated fairly and 39% believe Umar will be treated fairly.

## 5.2 Foreign-born Muslims and Sending-Country Effects

In Table 1, I estimate the degree to which expectations of fairness are related to the levels of *Corruption*<sup>11</sup> or whether or not an immigrant has gone through the naturalization process using an OLS regression. In the second model, I include an interaction of *Corruption* and *Naturalization* in order to determine whether any effects of corruption depend on whether the respondent is a naturalized citizen or not. Finally, I estimate a third model to assess whether an immigrants' background differentially affects their perceptions of fairness depending on the identity of the suspect. To do this, I add interactions between the treatment and home-level *Corruption*, the treatment and *Naturalization*, and a triple interaction between *Corruption*, *Naturalization*, and the treatment. All models control for age, income, education and gender. The results of these three estimates are reported as Model 1- 3 in Table 1.

### 5.2.1 Sending-Country Corruption Levels

[Table 1 about here]

Model 1 in Table 1 shows that the treatment has no direct effect on expectations of fairness for foreign-born Muslims. Whether law enforcement are engaging with a suspect identified as a Muslim or non-Muslim, foreign-born respondents are no more likely to think law enforcement will behave unfairly. This finding is consistent with literature that suggests immigrants are less familiar with group-based prejudices in the United States. The coefficient for the level of corruption of one's sending country is negative, as is the coefficient for naturalized citizens; however, neither is statistically distinguishable from zero. When the interaction of *Corruption* and *Naturalization* is included (Model 2), the coefficient of the interaction

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<sup>11</sup>I rerun all analyses in this study using Transparency Internationals Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2012 and achieve identical results. The World Bank's Control of Corruption Index and CPI are significantly correlated at .99.

term is positive and statistically significant. This can be interpreted as meaning the effect of the level of corruption of one's sending country depends on whether the respondent is a naturalized citizen or not.

The effect of the interaction in Model 2 is visualized in Figure 2. Looking first at non-citizens, individuals who emigrated from countries with low levels of corruption (largely western democracies such as the Netherlands or Canada) come to the United States with relatively optimistic priors regarding fair treatment of law enforcement. As levels of country corruption increase, perceptions of fairness decrease for non-naturalized citizens. Non-citizens coming from countries with the highest levels of corruption, such as Somalia, Afghanistan, and Iraq, have the most pessimistic views of US law enforcement. The observation that non-citizens coming from non-corrupt countries expect the most fairness and those coming from highly corrupt countries expect the least fairness, is robust to the inclusion of standard demographics controls as well as controls for racial identification.<sup>12</sup>

[Figure 2 about here]

### 5.2.2 Naturalization Process

The positive expectations of those coming from non-corrupt societies appear to be wiped away by the time Muslims have gone through the naturalization process. As displayed in Figure 2, naturalized citizens' expectations of fairness do not vary by the corruption level of their sending-country. To judge the importance of the naturalization process, I simulate how naturalization impacts perceptions of fairness, while holding other variables at their means. Among those who emigrated from a country with low corruption (corruption-control score higher than 1), moving from non-citizen to citizen, the probability of expecting fair treatment decreases from .80 to .52, a 28 point difference. The difference between non-

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<sup>12</sup>The models in Table 2 do not include controls for race; however, race is not significantly related to expectations of fairness for foreign-born Muslims, and including race does not change the findings of the model.

citizens and citizens becomes smaller as levels of corruption increase. Among those coming from countries with moderate levels of corruption, citizens' probability of expecting fairness is about 10 points less than that of non-citizens. Among those from the most corrupt countries (corruption-control score less than -1), the probability of expecting fair treatment is actually lower among non-citizens (.37) than citizens (.47).<sup>13</sup>

In order to assess whether an immigrant's background differentially affects her perceptions of fairness depending on the identity of the suspect, Model 3 in Table 2 presents interactions between the treatment, citizenship status, and level of sending-country corruption. The lack of significance indicates that while previous experiences of corruption and familiarity with the US system reduces overall expectations of fairness, fairness is not reduced at a greater rate for a Muslim suspect versus a non-Muslim suspect.

### 5.3 Combined Sample

Looking now at the entire sample of Muslim-Americans, I estimate the effect of being randomly assigned the Muslim suspect prime (Umar Sayyid) on expectations of police fairness. I do this by subtracting the expected level of fairness under the control condition from the expected level of fairness in the baseline condition. Table 2 presents a series of predicted probabilities that were derived from two OLS regressions, one which predicts levels of expected fairness in the baseline condition, and another that predicts levels of expected fairness in the treatment condition.<sup>14</sup> Details of the full models are presented in the appendix.

<sup>13</sup>Many of those coming from the most corrupt countries are likely to be refugees, as Iraqi, Afghani, and Somali nationals have made up some of the largest percentages of refugees to the United States between 2009 and 2011 (Dept. of Homeland Security 2011). If this is the case, it would suggest that refugees' expectations actually improve somewhat after becoming citizens.

<sup>14</sup>Specifically, I estimate the following OLS regression models:  $Fair_i(T = 0) = B_0 + B_1USBorn_i + B_2Black_i + B_3White_i + B_4Asian_i + B_5USborn_i * Black_i + B_6USBorn_i * White_i + B_7USBorn_i * Asian_i + B_8X_i + \epsilon_i$ ; and  $Fair_i(T = 1) = B_0 + B_1USBorn_i + B_2Black_i + B_3White_i + B_4Asian_i + B_5USborn_i * Black_i + B_6USBorn_i * White_i + B_7USBorn_i * Asian_i + B_8X_i + \epsilon_i$  where  $Fair_i(T = 0)$  is the measure of expected fairness of respondent  $i$  when under

The results presented in Table 2 are robust to the inclusion of basic demographic controls—age, income, education, gender and religiosity. The first column of the table lists the subgroups under consideration. For each subgroup listed, the second column displays predicted levels of expected fairness in the baseline condition (when the suspect is presumably a non-Muslim) along with corresponding confidence intervals. The third column displays predicted levels of expected fairness under the treatment condition, (when the suspect is presumably a Muslim) along with corresponding confidence intervals. The final column visually displays the predicted treatment effect for the sub-group of interest.

### 5.3.1 Generational Differences

Looking at the entire sample of Muslim-Americans, we see that priming respondents to consider the treatment of Muslims under police scrutiny reduces perceptions of fairness by 13 percentage points, a statistically significant difference. Such a difference indicates that on average, Muslim-Americans expect US law enforcement to treat Muslim suspects less well than non-Muslim suspects in identical situations.

The next row in Table 2 assesses the treatment effect by generation. Looking at the baseline condition, foreign-born and US-born Muslims have nearly identical prior expectations of fairness for non-Muslims suspects. This is contrary to studies that suggest generational differences influence perceptions of government and law enforcement. There is a striking difference however between how foreign-born and US-born Muslims respond to the treatment condition. While foreign-born Muslims expect equal treatment under the law regardless of the identity of the suspect (as indicated in Table 1), Muslims born in the United States are

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the control condition and  $Fair_i(T = 1)$  is the measure of expected fairness of respondent  $i$  when under the treatment condition.  $USBorn_i$  is a binary indicator for whether the respondent was born in the United States or not,  $Black_i$ ,  $White_i$  and  $Asian_i$  are binary indicators for whether the respondent identifies as either black, white, or Asian, with Arab and “other race” as the reference categories.  $X_i$  denotes a vector of control variables, and  $\epsilon_i$  represents the error term.

20 percentage points less likely to expect fair treatment of Muslim suspects, a statistically significant difference. When considering the treatment of a Muslim criminal suspect, Muslims who were born and raised in the United States are significantly less likely (19%) than their foreign-born counterparts to expect that the police will treat that person fairly through an investigation.

### 5.3.2 Racial Differences

I am also interested in whether the identity of the suspect affects certain segments of the Muslim-American population more than others. I first assess respondents by their self-identified racial category. By looking at just the baseline condition, Asians begin with the most positive expectations of police conduct, followed by whites, blacks, and finally Arabs. However, the differences between the racial groups are not statistically distinguishable from zero.

Looking to the observed expectations of fairness by racial group under the treatment condition, we see major movement in levels of trust. The effect size of the treatment is largest for black Muslims who show a much stronger, negative response to the treatment than Muslims of other racial classifications. Moving from a suspect named Jake to Umar results in a 24 point drop in expectations of fair treatment by police. This change is substantively large and statistically significant. Under the treatment condition, black Muslims are least likely to expect the police to treat the suspect with procedural fairness, although the difference barely misses statistical significance.

Asian respondents drop their levels of trust (12 points) when considering a Muslim suspect instead of a non-Muslim suspect. White Muslims see a ten point drop and Arabs a 5 point drop in expected fairness when moving from the baseline condition to the treatment condition. Overall, black Muslims have substantively lower expectations of fairness compared

to Muslims of other racial and ethnic backgrounds, but again, the differences across races are statistically indistinguishable from zero, against expectations set out in the literature.

### 5.3.3 Generational Differences across Races

Moving down the table, it becomes clear that the effect of generation on perceived fairness is generally consistent across racial groups. Among Muslims of all races, foreign-born and US-born individuals generally anticipate similar levels of police fairness when considering a non-Muslim criminal suspect. Those born in the United States, however, are significantly more sensitive and pessimistic about the treatment of Muslim police suspects, whereas foreign-born respondents of all races tend to anticipate equal treatment for both Muslim and non-Muslim suspects. The exception to this pattern is Asian respondents. Foreign-born Asian's expectations of fairness also drop by 12% when considering the treatment of a Muslim suspect; however, this treatment effect does not quite reach statistical significance.

The largest significant decrease in expectations of fairness is observed among US-born Arab Muslims and Black Muslims, 25 and 27 point drops, respectively. This suggests that the experiences of Arab and Black Muslims may make them particularly sensitive to scenarios that involve Muslim suspects and law enforcement.

The data point to the importance of generational differences and experiences in explaining perceptions of America's security apparatus. The findings provide preliminary support for the argument that suggests Muslim immigrants come to the United States with optimistic priors toward the treatment of Muslim suspects; however, US-born Muslims who are more familiar with America's security apparatus and its history hold greater cynicism towards the government when dealing with a Muslim suspect. However, the data show that in the baseline condition, US-born and foreign-born respondents hold equal generalized expectations of police fairness. Expectations of police fairness seem to only differ significantly by race among US-born Muslims.

## 6 Robustness Checks and Limitations

The finding that home-country effects carry over into the United States and then fade as individuals become more familiar with the American institutions is consistent with the extant literature and robust to the inclusion of a variety of control variables. Nonetheless, here potential alternative explanations to the theory laid out in this article are assessed.

### 6.1 Corruption, or something else?

While the quality of government institutions is known to shape levels of trust in government (Uslaner 2008), corruption levels are also correlated with levels of economic development, as well as levels of anti-American sentiment (Gillum 2009). It could be that newcomers from corrupt, war-ridden countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan, for instance, bring negative conceptions of the US security apparatus due to not only poor experiences with their country's institutions, but also negative interactions with US military personnel or extensive exposure to anti-American rhetoric.

As a robustness check, I rerun the models from Table 1 using the International Monetary Fund's 2012 per capita GDP estimates (Regression results are not presented here but available upon request). While GDP has a positive effect on expectations of fairness, the effect is not statistically distinguishable from zero. Similarly, the effects of GDP are larger for non-citizens, but this effect is not statistically significant. I also rerun the models using the average levels of anti-American sentiment (based on Pew Research Center's 2007 estimates) in one's sending country. Similar to GDP, while anti-American sentiment has a negative effect on expectations of fairness, the effect is not statistically distinguishable from zero. The effects of anti-American sentiment are larger for non-citizens, but this effect is not statistically significant.

## 6.2 Are Naturalized Citizens Different?

Sixty-one percent of the foreign-born sampled respondents report being naturalized US citizens. Muslims have a very high naturalization rate which is significantly correlated with immigration year.<sup>15</sup> Since it typically takes three to five years to become eligible for citizenship, many of the more recent arrivals have not been in the country long enough to apply. Moreover, having gone through the process of naturalization suggests extensive contact with US immigration officials and American legal institutions, which is shown to directly affect perceptions of other US legal authorities, specifically the police (Wu et al. 2010; Chaundry et al. 2010).

However, because naturalization requires action on the part of the respondent, there could be a selection effect on who decides to naturalize and who does not. On the one hand, we would expect that those with more negative perceptions of the US would choose *not* to naturalize; however, that is precisely opposite from what is observed in this study. In another case, it could be that the types of individuals who naturalize are qualitatively different than those who do not. To assess whether individuals who choose to naturalize are significantly different than those who do not, Table 3 presents mean levels of a variety of socioeconomic and behavioral indicators. The table reveals that naturalized citizens and non-citizens do not significantly differ on these indicators, including age, socioeconomic status, race, political preference, or religiosity.

[Table 3 about here]

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<sup>15</sup>According to Pew Research Center (2007), among Muslims who arrived to the US before 1980, virtually all (more than 99%) have become US citizens. Of those who arrived in the 1980s, 95% are now citizens. Of those who arrived in the 1990s, 80% are citizens. And of those who arrived after 2000, 42% already have become citizens. Most foreign-born Muslims came to the United States after 2000 (40%) or during the 1990s (31%). An additional 16% arrived in the 1980s and just 12% arrived before 1980 (Pew 2007).

### 6.3 Time in the US

How does time in the US, versus the naturalization process, affect expectations of fairness towards law enforcement? The effect of time is a difficult thing to measure namely because the effect of time may depend on the age during which one migrated to the US. For example, the effect of being in the US for 20 years is likely to mean something different for those who came to the US as infants compared to those who came as adults.

[Figure 3 about here]

To assess the effect of time as a function of age, Figure 3 presents the effect of time in the US on predicted values of expected fairness, by age group of the respondent. Specifically, the figure shows how this relationship differs based on whether the respondent is under 30 years of age or over. Looking first to immigrants who are over 30 years of age, we see that, on average, time in the US actually does not significantly change the attitudes individuals have of US law enforcement. Looking then to individuals who are under the age of 30, we see that their attitudes are more malleable with time. Specifically, for individuals who came to the US at a young age, overtime their expectations of fairness drop significantly, making their expectations of US law enforcement identical to those of native-born Muslims.

[Figure 4 about here]

Just as those who came to the US as children and adolescents are more likely to have attitudes towards law enforcement similar to US-born Muslims, it should also be the case that country-of-origin effects should be weak among those who have spent very few years living in the countries they were born. Figure 4 presents the marginal effect of home-country corruption on predicted values of expected fairness by the proportion of one's life spent abroad (Years lived in the US/Age). We see from the figure that home-country corruption does not affect the expectations of those who have lived the majority of their lives in the United States. For

those who have spent most their lives in their country of origin, home-country corruption significantly reduces expectations of fairness.

## 6.4 Limitations

While this study contributes to the current literature, as with any research project, it also has some limitations. A challenge to studying Muslim-American attitudes is that the collection of a Muslim-American sample is extremely difficult to obtain because of the relatively small size of the Muslim community in America (less than one percent). Furthermore, the Muslim community is comprised primarily of immigrants and racial minorities, groups that are generally more difficult to reach for survey research. Obtaining a large enough sample size of the population is thus extremely costly and time consuming. Considering these challenges, obtaining a cross-country sample size of 501 respondents is an accomplishment; however, a larger sample size would have been ideal for increased statistical power and more in-depth analysis of subgroup communities.

A large percentage of the Muslim-American community is composed of immigrants, and as a result there is inevitably a portion that does not speak English. The survey of this study was only available in English. Limiting the analysis to English speakers only can be seen as a strength, as foreign-born respondents in this sample are more akin to US-born respondents as a comparison group. Moreover, using a sample of English speakers limits concerns of question comprehension.

Nevertheless, some of the results, as they pertain to foreign-born Muslims, might be biased. Fortunately, Muslim immigrants in America tend to have a high level of English proficiency. 83 percent of Pew's foreign-born respondents chose to interview in English, suggesting that

the potential bias in this sample is minimal.<sup>16</sup> Such limitations and potential biases can be remedied by further research and data collections.

In what direction would the lack of English speakers bias the findings? Roder and Muhlau (2011) find that immigrants who speak a different language from the official language of their host country are more trusting than immigrants who speak an official host country language at home. Provided that one of the central findings of this study is about the relatively higher trust among immigrants compared to US-born Muslims, including non-English speakers in the dataset would only make the findings of this study more pronounced. However, if non-English speakers tend to come from more corrupt nations, then the lack of non-English speakers could bias the findings in the other direction. That is, had we included more individuals from corrupt nations, the foreign-born population may have had lower average levels of trust in law enforcement, and thus look more like US-born Muslims in their overall levels of perceived fairness, although not necessarily changing the size of the average treatment effect.

## 7 Ethnographic Evidence

Many of these results are consistent with the lessons I was able to draw from descriptive interviews. My ethnographic evidence suggests that US-born Muslims have come to expect violations of their rights by the government and are politically concerned about the mistreatment of Muslims in America. Foreign-born Muslims, while aware of the controversies regarding US government surveillance and profiling of Muslim communities, tend to be less focused on issues related to citizen rights.

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<sup>16</sup>In Pew's most recent national survey of Muslims, in which interviewees could choose to have their interview conducted in English, Arabic, Farsi, or Urdu, 17 percent of respondents chose to interview in a language other than English (Pew Research Center 2007)

## 7.1 Data Collection

Between April 2011 and July 2012, I employed descriptive fieldwork in seven major US cities with large concentrations of American Muslims including Chicago, IL; Los Angeles, CA; Newark, NJ; New York, NY; San Francisco, CA, Seattle, WA; and Washington, D.C. My research assistant and I conducted over forty face-to-face and phone interviews, each lasting between 30 minutes and three hours. I also received over twenty-three open-form questionnaires administered to Muslim-Americans using the online Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), and engaged with at least 15 larger group meetings (10 attendees or more) lasting between two and three hours each.

In an effort to understand the views of the community's various leaders, I also sat down with various imams and representatives from a variety of Islamic political organizations, as well as Muslim-American security officials. Finally, I interviewed and sat in on meetings with officials from several government agencies including the White House, Congress, the Department of Homeland Security, the State Department, and the Justice Department. Several of these conversations were "off the record" and I thereby do not always provide direct quotes or names of individuals attending meetings. Contacts were generally drawn from recommendations and personal referrals, which allowed for more candid discussion. After each interview or meeting I asked for additional referrals for interviews. While interview respondents do not represent a random sample of all Muslims or Islamic leaders, I made an effort to identify a diverse and representative set of respondents in terms of the type and size of the constituency they represented.

## 7.2 US-born Muslims

In speaking with US-born Muslims around the United States with varying backgrounds, it became clear that US-born Muslims hold American security institutions to very high stan-

dards due to their socialization and upbringing in American schools. US-born Muslims seemed much more familiar with American political and legal concepts surrounding law enforcement's recent handling of Muslims, relating their experiences to other groups such as African-Americans, Japanese-Americans and others. They repeatedly expressed an expectation that Muslims be treated equally under the law and have their civil liberties upheld as they are for other Americans. US-born Muslims see themselves as “not just Muslims who happen to be living in America, but Muslim-*Americans*” (Interview 33). As such, “[they] expect to be treated as American and are invested in seeing improvements in the country” (Interview 17).

### 7.2.1 Concerns About Civil Liberties

When discussing the treatment of Muslims in the United States, US-born Muslims often brought up the 2011 revelations of the NYPD's extensive monitoring of Muslims over the past decade on the basis of their religion (DeFalco et al. 2012). This event, and similar instances involving religious profiling, has incited resentment by many in the Muslim community. Such cases have not only altered the perception of the local police department who are in cooperation with the CIA, but complicated the trust in the fairness and equality of the legal system.

In response to the 2011 NYPD spying case, a US-born Egyptian female stressed what she described as a “serious imbalance between civil liberties and national security in America.” She believes that more regulation is needed in light of surveillance methods which she sees as “violating the 4th amendment,” and detention practices that “violate habeas corpus...hurting the *entire* American population” (Interview 27). Another US-born female Muslim attorney pointed out that such scrutiny towards Muslims by the government not only illegally places Muslims under surveillance and invades privacy, but by treating Muslims like criminals, the government tells the American people that Muslims are indeed criminals and cannot be

trusted. She suggested that such a narrative fuels and incites the violence against Muslims that has persisted since 9/11.<sup>17</sup>

Several Muslims noted that these injustices significantly reduce the trust Muslims have in America's security institutions. A New Jersey African-American imam stated that the government presented the Muslim community with a double standard: While the government asks Muslims and Muslim leaders to trust them in their methods, it is apparent to the community that the government does not trust Muslims. He emphasized that trust is a two-way street.<sup>18</sup> Eugene O'Donnell of John Jay College of Criminal Justice— and a former police officer—says that such government surveillance of Muslims “is alienating the very groups the NYPD need to keep sweet in order to induce them to give information about extremists.”<sup>19</sup>

### 7.2.2 Awareness of Government Abuses

Even without personal experiences of ill-treatment, the more familiar US-born respondents were with high-profile cases of discrimination, the more they adopted cynical views and negative expectations of US law enforcement. Such distrust seems to have become common knowledge among some in the community. A US-born Indian female college student told me, “I’ve never actually interacted with the FBI, but at my college, they trailed some students...it was scary that the FBI wastes time following people just because they are politically active, especially when a very normal thing for college students to do is get involved politically. They approached them to talk to them about getting extreme...their work in that instance undermined the work that mosques and organizations like CAIR do to work with the FBI....

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<sup>17</sup>Statement from roundtable meeting I attended with President Barack Obama's Homeland Security adviser, John Brennan, and White House staff. The meeting was conducted on April 21, 2012, at Masjid Waarith ud Deen at the Waris Cultural Research and Development Center in Irvington, New Jersey.

<sup>18</sup>Statement from roundtable meeting I sat in on with President Barack Obama's Homeland Security adviser, John Brennan, and White House staff conducted on April 21, 2012, at Masjid Waarith ud Deen at the Waris Cultural Research and Development Center in Irvington, New Jersey.

<sup>19</sup>A Snoop Too Far: Has New York's police department crossed a line? *The Economist*. March 10, 2012.

If the FBI wants to work with the Muslim community, it needs to stop sending informants!” (Interview 34).

One US-born Egyptian female admitted that she didn’t actually know what the FBI did, she just knew it was bad and was secretive in its operations. She also said its leaders were biased and that those who worked for the FBI “do what they’re told, without using personal judgment” (Interview 24). A white US-born, female convert told me the FBI is “corrupt...they are unfair by labeling and stereotyping Muslims as terrorists. They do too much fake stuff to stop extremism...like tracking and spying and bugging... and it’s all done under the excuse that it’s protecting America from extremists... it’s so excessive and it’s ineffective” (Interview 40).

Several interviewees highlighted that there is a division in the community between “those who feel victimized and hopeless, and those who feel like they should work [with the government] towards securing their liberties” (Interview 24). Many had very favorable views of the FBI and encouraged further cooperation between intelligence agencies to make America safer. One US-born Egyptian living in New York, suggested, “while there is occasional corruption, like in any government agency, I don’t think organizations like the FBI, CIA and the like conspire against any particular group...There are some Muslims who come to the US as refugees and are truly unaware of the culture...but I don’t understand why some Muslims choose to look visibly different, like by growing a beard, and then complain about being discriminated against. You should expect to be viewed differently. There’s no excuse for discrimination but if people are coming into the US, they might as well assimilate and leave their cultural customs behind” (Interview 30).

### **7.3 Foreign-born Muslims**

Muslims born overseas were very aware of the controversies surrounding the treatment of Muslims in the United States; however, the issue was not a top priority relative to other

competing concerns faced by immigrants. Foreign-born Muslims were much more concerned about conflicts the US was engaged in overseas. Moreover, few described the controversies involving Muslims as “discrimination.” Several believed that those who were not involved in terrorism or other illegal activities would not face any problems. Even among those who were concerned about the profiling and harassment of Muslims, many felt that it was more appropriate for US-born Muslims to be involved politically, since they knew more about the issues and the political landscape.

Several individuals noted that first-generation Muslims are more focused on acclimation, putting food on the table, and blending in rather than concerning themselves with domestic conflicts in the United States. “The second and third generations have an opportunity to worry about more than just putting food on the table...they get an education and get involved in issues beyond their ethnic group and beyond their parents’ country of origin...they are more concerned with things like civil rights, abuse, etc...they grew up with other American kids and they are involved with their peers on issues that concern them” (Interview 6). Others suggested that many first-generation Muslims believe they will return to their home country, “so they are less invested in American politics... They don’t yet feel like this is their own country” (Interview 17).

### **7.3.1 Expectations of Fairness Developed Abroad**

Many of the foreign-born interviewees seemed to use their experience with the social institutions in their home country as a reference to interpret their experiences and evaluate the institutions in the United States. Those coming from more corrupt, non-democratic nations were cynical towards government institutions more generally. When asked about general views towards national security agencies in our country such as the FBI, an Egyptian-born man assured me that he “does not trust the security agencies of any country, not exclusively the American security agencies....worldwide, security agencies protect the government, not

the people” (Interview 33). Many did not grow up engaging politically when they were unhappy with policy outcomes, and did not expect political action in the United States to be particularly fruitful. One Arab man from the San Francisco area suggested that Muslim immigrants “come from countries where there is distrust in government because the government is not democratic,” therefore the “goal is to keep our head down and establish ourselves... politics become second priority” (Interview 33). A Jordanian-born woman of Palestinian descent told me that foreign-born Muslims are not as engaged with issues concerning the fair treatment of Muslims “because the older generations were not raised in a way that allowed them to be politically active. Being a minority makes Muslims not want to be seen— we just want to blend in” (Interview 29).

### **7.3.2 Increasing Cynicism over Time**

Despite varying levels of skepticism towards government institutions, most foreign-born interviewees expressed genuine support for and optimism about the FBI’s goal and responsibility of protecting the United States. Several foreign-born Muslims were very open about discussing terrorism as a real and major threat. Deep disappointment was expressed, however, towards what interviewees described as the FBI blackmailing foreign-born Muslims into spying on other Muslims, by threatening things like deportation due to immigration violations. “Although its employees are normal, good people, what the FBI is doing is dangerous” (Interview 19). Several foreign-born respondents suggested that more Muslims and Arabs should join the FBI, believing that more Muslims would be cooperative and “less afraid to turn in other Muslims who pose a threat to America because it is the right thing to do...But with all the moles and spies and informants forcing young Muslims to do bad things like set up bombs, Muslim youth feel unwelcome in America” (Interview 22).

Immigrants who were more familiar with recent controversies surrounding counterterrorism policing involving Muslims were more cynical towards America’s security apparatus,

sounding more like native-born Muslim-Americans when discussing these issues. Many were angered by policies such as the use of informants and what was referred to as entrapment by the FBI. This sentiment was captured by the remarks of one Pakistan-born man, who said, “When Muslims are given money to place bombs by the FBI and then later arrested to make it look like they planned it themselves, this is not helping bring safety to Americans...the FBI pretends to befriend Muslims when its goal is actually to spy on mosques, even if it has no real suspicions. That makes the FBI inherently discriminatory, which is unfair” (Interview 18). In response to the NYPD spying case, multiple New Jersey imams expressed that they supported the goal of counterterrorism investigations, but not the tactics. They were deeply interested in the safety of their congregations and communities, and if there was someone dangerous in their mosque, they would want to know about it. They wanted more dialogue with law enforcement and expressed the view that the community feels left out of the process and is disturbed by the idea of investigators secretly attending their worship services.

## 8 Discussion and Conclusions

This study set out to understand patterns of expected fairness among Muslims living in the United States. It narrows in on whether expectations of police behavior depend on whether a suspect is an in-group or out-group member. The data show that, on average, foreign-born and US-born Muslims hold similar levels of trust in America’s security institutions when discussing the treatment of non-Muslims. The groups differ, however, when considering the treatment of Muslims in the United States. Muslims born outside of the United States, who make up the majority of the community, tend to expect equal treatment of Muslim and non-Muslim suspects by police, whereas US-born respondents expect Muslims to be treated significantly worse than non-Muslims.

As immigrants, foreign-born Muslims bring with them conceptions of authority from their home countries. Muslims coming from countries with low levels of institutional corruption arrive in the United States with more optimistic prior beliefs about the fairness of law enforcement than those who come from corruption-ridden countries. Home-country effects, however, fade as Muslims become more familiar with the US system and update their beliefs about US law enforcement. As Muslims become more familiar with the United States security apparatus, they become more skeptical and distrusting of police, especially in cases dealing with Muslim suspects. Citizens who have gone through the naturalization process have much more pessimistic views towards law enforcement overall, regardless of their country of origin. US-born Muslims hold the greatest amount of cynicism in their expectations of police treatment of Muslims.

Arab and black US-born Muslims have the most pessimistic expectations for the treatment of Muslim suspects. While Arab-Americans have been the target of government scrutiny prior to 9/11, Arab-Americans' distrust of US law enforcement is likely tied to policies that have disproportionately affected Arabs living in the US. Scholars suggest that Arabs were held collectively responsible for the 9/11 attacks, leading Arab-Americans to mobilize through prominent pan-Arab American organizations in response to a series of post-9/11 policies that targeted Arabs, including citizens (Cainker 2008).<sup>20</sup> However, many of these same post-9/11 policies have similarly affected the experience of Pakistani Muslims, therefore it is curious that we do not see the same reaction among Asian respondents.

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<sup>20</sup>The US government detained an estimated twelve hundred citizens and noncitizens, most of Middle Eastern descent, directly after the September 11 attacks. The conditions under which persons were arrested and detained indicate profiling based on looks, names, and being at the wrong place at the wrong time. Measures included mass arrests, secret and indefinite detentions, prolonged detention of "material witnesses" closed hearings, secret evidence, government eavesdropping, FBI interviews wiretapping, seizures of property, removal of aliens with technical visa violations, mandatory special registration. Other policies such as the USA PATRIOT Act have further damaged Arab-law enforcement relations in the US.

The observation that African-American Muslims are significantly more pessimistic about the treatment of Muslim suspects by police relative to the treatment of non-Muslims is consistent with studies that repeatedly show that African-Americans are particularly distrustful of police relative to other Americans based on a long history of disproportionate discrimination and brutality by police (Tyler and Blader 2000). Moreover, the historical roots of the black Muslim community are largely tied to Black Nationalist movements such as the Nation of Islam. The formation of such movements were understood “as a mass protest against the state of race relations in the United States” and the doctrines of such movements advocate self-defense against police brutality in place of non-violence (Moore 1994). While the majority of African-American Muslims no longer affiliate with the Nation of Islam, black Muslims’ distrustful stance towards the police reflects the Nation’s adversarial view of the US law enforcement (Gillum 2013).

This article makes three main sets of contributions to the literature on attitudes towards government. First, it provides an empirical account of the effects of sending-country institutions on immigrants’ attitudes and experiences in their new host countries. Due to the vast diversity of country-of-origin for Muslim-Americans, this study is able to distinguish between cultural and institutional sources of attitudes by analyzing how the views of immigrants from a variety of countries change once they arrive to the US. The data provide evidence that attitudes of trust in government are indeed sticky, as non-naturalized citizens’ expectations of the US government reflect the quality of institutions in their sending-country. Observing that naturalized citizens’ attitudes largely do not reflect the institutions of their sending-country suggests that beliefs are subject to change with new interactions with different institutional contexts.

Second, this study contributes to our understanding of why attitudes change across generations of immigrants. The extant literature, largely focusing on the experience of Latinos, observes that trust in government declines over successive generations. The findings in this

study more clearly identify that what appears to change across generations is an increased awareness of *group-based* injustices. US-born individuals are more familiar with America's history of group-based discrimination, and perhaps as a result are more sensitive to the treatment of minorities. The data show however that general perception of government legitimacy is actually similar between US-born and foreign-born Muslims. This finding has implications for studies of other US immigrant groups such as Latinos and Asians. Future studies assessing generational differences in government trust among minority populations should continue to specify the subject of government treatment; it could be that residents are confident of an institution's overall functionality, but distrust when dealing with particular sub-groups of the population.

The third set of contributions are methodological. Little is known about the attitudes of Muslims namely because Muslim-Americans are a difficult group to survey given they comprise a relatively small share of the US population. The majority of studies on Muslim-Americans utilize limited, regional samples, or focus on one particular ethnic group. While these studies play an important role in understanding specific Muslim-American communities, the present survey provides a representative assessment of Muslim attitudes, and is able to compare the perspectives of Muslims across a wide range of cultural backgrounds. This approach allows us to identify the common experiences across various sub-groups that shape experiences. This study also goes beyond the few existing national samples of Muslim-Americans<sup>21</sup> by capturing important background information about respondents' country of birth as well as their parents' country of birth, allowing assessment of home-county influences.

Several important political and policy implications can be drawn from this study. The observation that Muslims are becoming more cynical over time and across successive generations may be seen as a simple sign of assimilation into American society (Fuchs 1990). For years, scholars have noted the increasing political cynicism of the American public, and some

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<sup>21</sup>To my knowledge, the only other nationally-representative surveys of Muslim-Americans were conducted by Pew Research Center and Gallup Inc.

scholars view low levels of trust as being part of American democratic culture and central in motivating citizens to challenge government infringements on civil liberties (Hetherington 1998; Weatherford 1987). The findings of this study show that foreign-born Muslims grow more distrustful of law enforcement generally as they become more familiar with the American system. The adoption of cynical views by Muslims in this perspective is a sign of an adoption of American culture.

Alternatively, it could be that the cynicism felt by Muslims is not the same as the cynicism felt by Americans in general, but is specifically related to the exposure or awareness of discrimination against individuals who are Muslim. The findings of the study reveal the US-born Muslims identify a difference in treatment between Muslims and non-Muslims, suggesting that their more cynical views towards the US government is not a mere growth of disillusionment with the US system, but rather a reflection of alienation and a sense of “otherness.” This sort of mistrust breeds feelings of not belonging, and increases the likelihood that Muslims will identify as members of a “racialized” group that is mistreated by the government.

# 9 Tables and Figures

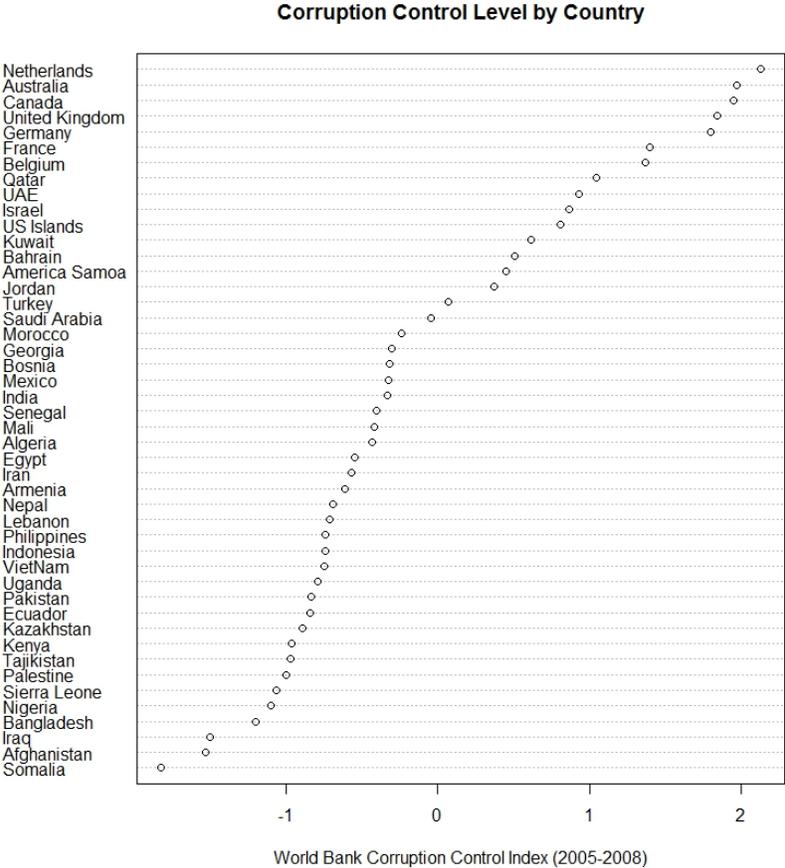


Figure 1: *Corruption Control Index by Sending Country. Values reflect index scores drawn from the World Bank Governance Indicators project (Kaufmann et al. 2009). Scores range from 2 to -2; higher values represent better control of corruption (lower levels of corruption). Figures are averaged from 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008 for more reliable estimates. Variable “Corruption” used in the analysis is the inverse of the Corruption Control Index.*

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept	0.232*	0.234*	0.215*
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Corruption (sending-country)	-0.038	-0.091*	-0.112*
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Naturalized	-0.050	-0.070	-0.073
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
x Corrupt		0.094*	0.144*
		(0.05)	(0.06)
Umar (Treatment)	0.058	0.073	0.021
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.07)
x Naturalized			0.047
			(0.10)
x Corrupt			0.114
			(0.11)
x Corrupt x Naturalized			-0.177
			(0.12)
Controls?	Y	Y	Y
$R^2$	0.17	0.19	0.21
$N$	168	168	168

Table 1: *Determinants of Expected Fairness among Foreign-born Muslims. Models control for age, income, education and gender. Dependent variable is the perceived fairness of law enforcement, a continuous variable rescaled to range from 0-1 where higher values indicate greater expectations of fairness.*



	Jake Predicted Value (CI)	Umar Predicted Value (CI)	Treatment Effect
<b>Total</b>	.54 (.50-.57)	.41 (.36-.46)	-13% 
<b>Race</b>			
Arab	.51 (.46-.57)	.46 (.41-.52)	-5% 
Asian	.60 (.51-.68)	.48 (.38-.58)	-12% 
Black	.52 (.45-.60)	.28 (.15-.40)	-24% 
White	.52 (.46-.58)	.42 (.34-.50)	-10% 
<b>Generation</b>			
Foreign-born	.53 (.48-.59)	.53 (.47-.60)	10% 
US-born	.54 (.49-.59)	.34 (.28-.41)	-20% 
<b>Race x Generation</b>			
Arabs Only			
Foreign-born	.42 (.34-.50)	.58 (.48-.68)	16% 
US-born	.60 (.52-.67)	.35 (.28-.43)	-25% 
Asian Only			
Foreign-born	.61 (.52-.70)	.49 (.38-.60)	-12% 
US-born	.56 (.39-.73)	.45 (.24-.66)	-11% 
Blacks Only			
Foreign-born	.50 (.39-.61)	.44 (.27-.61)	-6% 
US-born	.53 (.45-.61)	.26 (.12-.39)	-27% 
White Only			
Foreign-born	.55 (.45-.66)	.58 (.47-.68)	3% 
US-born	.51 (.43-.58)	.37 (.27-.47)	-14% 

Table 2: *Predicted Values of the Effect of “Umar” on Perceptions of Fairness. Generation, race, gender, income, education, and age set at 0 or their mean.*

	Foreign-born (Non-citizen)	Foreign-born (Citizen)	US-born
N	69	103	331
Age	38.2 (33.3-43.1)	42.5 (37.9-47.1)	44.1 (40.7-47.5)
Female	.49 (.34-.65)	.35 (.21-.49)	.53 (.44-.62)
Education	4.0 (3.5-4.5)	3.7 (3.4-4.0)	3.5 (3.3-3.7)
Income	5.1 (4.1-6.2)	6.1 (4.6-7.5)	5.7 (5.1-6.2)
Black	.05 (.00-.10)	.14 (.01-.27)	.33 (.24-.41)
Arab	.25 (.10-.39)	.23 (.09-.37)	.12 (.06-.18)
Asian	.34 (.20-.47)	.28 (.15-.40)	.10 (.05-.15)
White	.37 (.21-.52)	.28 (.16-.41)	.40 (.32-.49)
Convert	.10 (.02-.18)	.15 (.01-.28)	.42 (.32-.50)
Republican	.11 (.04-.18)	.15 (.05-.26)	.14 (.09-.19)
Support Political Activism	.56 (.46-.65)	.52 (.39-.65)	.68 (.63-.72)
Religious Discrimination	.54 (.44-.64)	.52 (.43-.61)	.61 (.56-.66)
Ethnic Discrimination	.47 (.38-.57)	.43 (.34-.52)	.52 (.47-.57)
Religiosity (Pray)	.78 (.70-.87)	.75 (.66-.83)	.76 (.70-.82)

Table 3: *Covariate Comparisons Across Sub-groups. Means presented with 95% confidence intervals in parentheses, N=501.*

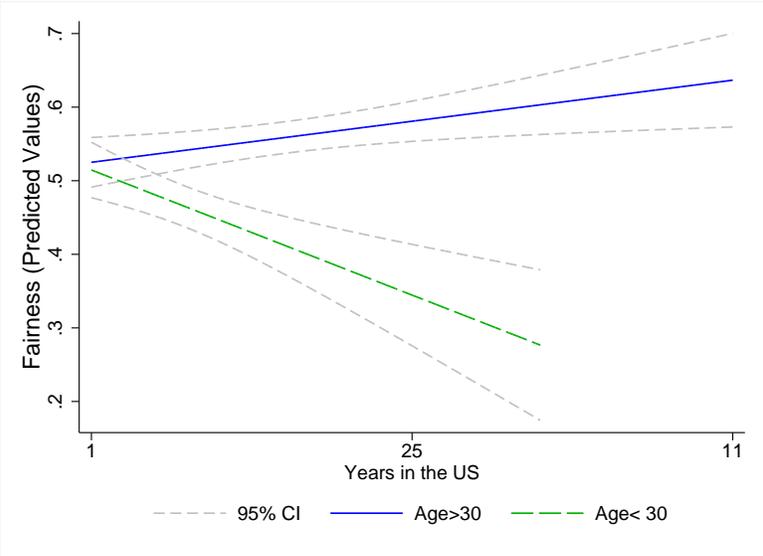


Figure 3: Figure presents expected values of perceived Fairness among Foreign-born Muslims by time in the US. Figure is based on results from an OLS regression controlling for age, income, gender, and education.

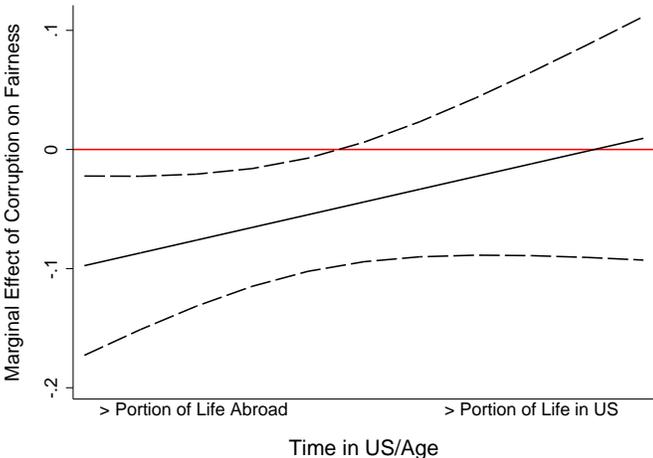


Figure 4: *Figure presents the marginal effect of home-country corruption on perceived Fairness among Foreign-born Muslims by proportion of life lived in the US. Proportion of life lived in the US is measured by dividing years lived in the US by the respondent’s age. Figure is based on results from an OLS regression controlling for age, income, gender, and education.*

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## 10 Appendix

### 10.1 Comparability of Treatment and Control

	Control Group (Jake Prime)	Treatment Group (Umar Prime)
Age	43.2 (1.7)	41.1 (1.7)
Female	.50 (.05)	.48 (.05)
Education	3.6 (.13)	3.8 (.13)
Income	5.5 (.30)	5.7 (.40)
US-born	.60 (.05)	.56 (.05)
Black	.25 (.04)	.19 (.04)
Arab	.17 (.04)	.14 (.04)
Asian	.17 (.03)	.21 (.04)
White	.38 (.04)	.38 (.05)

Table 4: *Covariate Balance by Experimental Assignment. Means presented with standard errors in parentheses, N=501.*

Table 5: OLS Regression Results, Full Model from Table 2

	Coefficient (standard error) Umar=0	Coefficient (standard error) Umar=1
Intercept	0.373** (0.10)	0.373** (0.14)
Black	0.094 (0.09)	-0.113 (0.13)
White	0.118 (0.09)	-0.009 (0.11)
Asian	0.157* (0.08)	-0.092 (0.10)
U.S-born	0.186** (0.08)	-0.240** (0.10)
x Black	-0.173 (0.11)	0.019 (0.16)
x White	-0.239** (0.11)	0.009 (0.13)
x Asian	-0.233* (0.14)	0.203 (0.17)
Age	-0.002* (0.00)	-0.000 (0.00)
Income	0.000 (0.01)	0.015** (0.01)
Education	0.029* (0.02)	-0.002 (0.02)
Female	0.142** (0.04)	0.033 (0.06)
Religiosity	-0.078 (0.06)	0.162 (0.11)
$R^2$	0.15	0.17
$N$	272	226

Table reports the unstandardized coefficients of an OLS regression. Standard errors are in parentheses. Models control for age, income, education and gender. The dependent variable is the perceived fairness of law enforcement. It is measured by the item, “Generally speaking, do you think US law enforcement will treat a person like this fairly?” The item is a continuous variable rescaled to range from 0-1. Higher values indicate agreement with the statement.

\*\*  $P < 0.05$ , \*  $P < 0.1$

## 10.2 Alternative Explanation Tables

Table 6: Effect of sending-country GDP on Expected Fairness

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Log GDP (sending-country)	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)	0.00 (0.04)
Umar (Treatment)	0.05 (0.05)	0.06 (0.05)	0.06 (0.05)
Naturalized		-0.03 (0.06)	0.10 (0.46)
x Log GDP			-0.02 (0.05)
$R^2$	0.15	0.16	0.16
$N$	164	164	164

Table reports the unstandardized coefficients of an OLS regression. The models include foreign-born respondents only. Standard errors are in parentheses. Models control for age, income, education and gender. The dependent variable is the perceived fairness of law enforcement. It is measured by the item, “Generally speaking, do you think US law enforcement will treat a person like this fairly?” The item is a continuous variable rescaled to range from 0-1. Higher values indicate agreement with the statement. The variable “Log GDP” is the natural log of IMF’s 2012 GDP per capita estimates in the respondents’ sending country (country of origin).

\*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$

Table 7: Effect of sending-country Anti-American Sentiment on Expected Fairness

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Anti-US sentiment (sending-country)	0.01 (0.00)	0.01 (0.00)	0.02 (0.00)
Umar (Treatment)	0.04 (0.05)	0.04 (0.05)	0.05 (0.05)
Naturalized		-0.07 (0.05)	0.05 (0.12)
x Anti-US			-0.00 (0.00)
$R^2$	0.20	0.21	0.22
N. of cases	122	122	122

Table reports the unstandardized coefficients of an OLS regression. Standard errors are in parentheses. Models control for age, income, education and gender. The dependent variable is the perceived fairness of law enforcement. It is measured by the item, “Generally speaking, do you think US law enforcement will treat a person like this fairly?” The item is a continuous variable rescaled to range from 0-1. Higher values indicate agreement with the statement. The variable “Anti-US” is average level of anti-American sentiment in the respondents’ sending country (country of origin) as reported in the Pew Global Attitudes 2007 report (<http://www.pewglobal.org/2007/06/27/global-unease-with-major-world-powers/>).

\*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$

### 10.3 Converts

US-born Muslims differ from foreign-born Muslims in the percentage of the population which is made up of converts. Overall, the findings of this study are not driven by the large percentage of converts among US-born compared to foreign-born Muslims.

42 percent of US-born Muslims in this sample are converts, compared to 12 percent of foreign-born. 53 percent of US-born blacks in this sample are converts, and 50 percent of US-born whites are converts. As a robustness check, I rerun the models presented in Table 1 (and Table 5 of the appendix) removing converts. As expected, the estimated values of fairness change only for white and black US-born respondents; however, these changes are not substantively or statistically significant. By removing converts, white respondents are somewhat more trusting of police in the baseline condition (moving from .51(.43-.58) to .58(.50-.65)). Blacks are also somewhat more trusting in the baseline condition when we remove converts (moving from .53 (.45-.61) to .58 (.47-.70)). In the treatment condition, by removing converts, whites expected fairness rises from .37 (.27-.47) to .39 (.27-.50) and blacks from .26 (.12-.39) to .40 (.18-.62). This leads to the treatment effect for whites to be somewhat larger (19% instead of 14%) and blacks to be somewhat smaller (14% instead of 27%).

### 10.4 YouGov Sampling Methods

Muslim-American National Opinion Survey (MANOS) is an original survey administered to an online panel of 501 self-identified Muslims living across the United States. The survey was fielded from February 2, 2013 through March 19, 2013 and was conducted by the international polling firm, YouGov.

All data were collected via the Internet. YouGov recruited respondents who self-identified as Muslims using two methods. First, YouGov contacted previous participants in their

American polls via e-mail and solicited their participation. Second, people who were on electronic mailing lists purchased from Internet marketing firms were contacted and invited to join the panel.

YouGov interviewed 557 respondents who were then matched down to a sample of 500 to produce the final dataset. The respondents were matched on gender, age, race, education, party identification, ideology, and political interest. YouGov then weighted the set of survey respondents to characteristics of the US Muslim population using data from the 2007 Pew Religious Landscape survey using propensity score weights based on gender, age, education, and voter registration status. The maximum weight for this dataset was 7.11, and the minimum weight was .15.