

8-2017

Islamophobia in America

Marina Rebecca Poudret

Fordham University, mpoudret@fordham.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://fordham.bepress.com/international_senior

Part of the [Social Influence and Political Communication Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Poudret, Marina Rebecca, "Islamophobia in America" (2017). *Senior Theses*. 6.
https://fordham.bepress.com/international_senior/6

This is brought to you for free and open access by the International Studies at DigitalResearch@Fordham. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senior Theses by an authorized administrator of DigitalResearch@Fordham. For more information, please contact considine@fordham.edu.



ISLAMOPHOBIA IN AMERICA

An examination of the social interaction between the cable news media and Donald Trump rhetoric upon the American public in regard to the increase of Islamophobia after the San Bernardino and Orlando Pulse Nightclub attacks in the United States.

by

Marina Poudret

BA in International Studies, International Track

Submitted to Leanne Tyler in fulfillment of undergraduate degree of
Bachelor of the Arts

Major Advisor: Thomas DeLuca; Thesis Advisor: Anjali Dayal

Fordham University

2016

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	3
Introduction.....	4
Literature Review/Historiography.....	6
Methodology.....	16
Case 1 – San Bernardino.....	20
Case 2 – Orlando Pulse Nightclub.....	35
Discussion.....	49
Conclusion.....	51
Appendix.....	54
Bibliography.....	63

Abstract

Despite the refinement of media and political bias, the presence of islamophobic narrative has re-emerged in the wake of ISIS associated terrorist attacks. This thesis examines the interaction between the implications of the media reporting surrounding the San Bernardino and Orlando terrorist attacks and the emergence of anti-muslim Trump rhetoric that results in a breeding environment for Islamophobia. To accomplish this, I examine the particular methodology and characterization of these attacks among major cable networks— CNN and Fox News— to understand the overall narrative understood by the average American. I then analyze the political speeches delivered by Donald Trump after each attack and analyze the effects of the anti-muslim rhetoric upon his supporters. In order to properly examine the effects of the media and political islamophobic narrative, I observe the american public opinions after each attack about issues of terrorism, islam, and muslims as well as the level and nature of anti-muslim hate crimes throughout 2015-2016. To distinguish between media and political influence, I analyze the behavior and commentary of Trump supporters that support anti-muslim policies and the increase of hate crimes connecting back to Trump rhetoric. Conclusions from this research show that both CNN and Fox News stick to a consistent narrow narrative of the islamic extremist killing innocent victims that represent Americans as a whole. Emotional appeal is a lot more apparent than detailed rationale. Meanwhile, Donald Trump uses very explicit diction that stereotypes Muslims as terrorists and pushes towards extreme measures to isolate them from the rest of the American population.

Introduction

“Trump might deport you...this woman is a stalker from the Middle East. She’s a Middle Eastern terrorist, she’s terrorizing citizens like me and she will probably get deported...”¹ The victim of this racist rant is an Iranian born U.S citizen. This occurred on November 10, 2016. How is it possible that a woman who has lived in the United States at least more than 10 years to become a U.S citizen is suddenly facing upfront discrimination? A type of discrimination that she has never experienced before that she was shaking when she tried to talk about the incident to NBC Bay Area news.

Within 7 months, the United States has experienced its first two major domestic terrorist attacks since 9/11. At the same time the 2017 presidential election cycle was well on its way with Donald Trump running as the GOP candidate. With major advancements in technology and equipment, television and its affiliated multimedia stories have become the #1 source of news for the average American citizen. While all of this has been happening, the rate of islamophobia in the country has increased and surpassed post 9/11 levels. This study is focused on the media and political reactions to these terrorist attacks. Particularly, I will be exploring the question of how does the current US media and political landscape help fuel an environment for islamophobic sentiments? To properly answer this question, I look at the media and political influence upon the average American public regarding terrorism and Islam. I argue that the media's narrow coverage of terrorism depicts it as the most significant threat to Americans. This coupled with the emergence of anti-Muslim Trump rhetoric justify a rising sense of Islamophobia in the United

¹ Bhattacharjee, Riya “‘Trump Might Deport You’: Racist Rant Against Woman Speaking Assyrian on BART Caught on Cam.” NBC Bay Area. Nov 11, 2016. Web.

States. These social interactions between the media's depiction of terrorism and Trump politics fuel and validate the fear and hatred caused by terrorist attacks.

The exact influence of the media and Trump rhetoric is generally difficult to quantify and separate from the initial shock of terrorist attacks. However, it is important to analyze the way they frame and characterize the attacks, which can lead to mediating or fueling the hysteria. The media is one of the primary sources where Americans receive their information and develop their understanding of current events. Americans see and read a repetitive narrative about terrorist attacks and some may come to understand the phenomenon of terrorism from this narrow angle: the assailant's background that proves ties to ISIS and radicalized actions that lead to heightened violence, the innocent victims who died helpless, the details of the event and how the government authority handled it. In the end, Americans understand that ISIS' primary goal is to attack the Western world in the name of Islam. This helps strengthen the message initially created by the terrorist attacks that terrorism is the biggest threat to U.S security.

Meanwhile, our political climate has become even more polarized and tense with the rise of Trump rhetoric. As a public figure running for president, Trump's speeches and opinions are influential and weigh a lot more than the average American's. His anti-Muslim speech validates the internal fear and hateful sentiments certain groups of Americans have been feeling post-terrorist attacks. Instead of mediating the fear and confusion of Americans, Trump fuels them. Hence, his rhetoric as an influential figure is perceived as a justification for Americans with those feelings to externally act upon them in acts such as hate speech, hate crimes and blatant anti-Muslim public opinion. The narrow narrative of terrorism along with the sense of

justification for the fear and hatred certain Americans feel from watching mainstream media and the Trump political campaign, interact to fuel their Islamophobia.

In order to convey my argument, I will provide a historiography of the war on terrorism and the literature discussing the effects of media and political rhetoric upon the American public in regard to terrorism. I will then describe the methodology, outlining how I will argue my case studies and the causal relationship between the media, politics, and the American public. This will be followed by the case studies for San Bernardino and Orlando Pulse Nightclub attacks. Both will be outlined in the following manner: the viewership of the two particular channels I will be studying at the time of each attack, CNN and Fox News, an analysis of media framing and characterization of the attacks, the demographic of Trump supporters, an analysis of Trump rhetoric from a speech he gave as a reaction to each attack, American public opinion polls about terrorism, Islam, and Muslim sentiments, and an analysis of the hate crimes after each attack. After the case studies, I will give a discussion of the evidence I found and the implications they suggest in regard to my thesis. Lastly, I will conclude my thesis with suggestions to broaden the narrative and educate the general American public especially after the outcome of the November 2016 election.

Literature Review/Historiography

The Roots of American's Definition of Terrorism

The phenomenon of terrorism has been around for years prior to 2001. Some of the better known attacks during that time period are the Iran Hostage Crisis in 1979 where Islamic

militants seized the US Embassy in Tehran² and the first bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993 where terrorists initiated bombs from a van in the basement garage.³ Both events significantly influenced the face of U.S foreign policy, however they did not drastically change the way American citizens viewed international terrorism overall. Since both attacks were abroad, few Americans felt the direct impact of these attacks and hence were psychologically or emotionally affected. However, the American people's perception of terrorism changed on September 11, 2001. Prior to 9/11, the narrative of terrorism was dominated by the domestic terrorism associated with US hate groups. In the post 9/11 era to today, this narrative shifted towards international terrorism dominated by attacks associated with two specific groups— Al Qaeda and now, ISIS based in the Middle East. This perception is largely due to Bush's declaration of war on terrorism directly after the 9/11 attacks. Within his declaration, Bush reveals Al Qaeda as the group responsible for the attack and describes its mission and goals that essentially threaten the values of the United States. He furthers his explanation of Al Qaeda with its ties to Afghanistan as Afghanistan is Al Qaeda's vision for the world with the Taliban regime.⁴ Bush ends this section with his declaration of war on terror beginning with Al Qaeda that later justifies the US invasion into Afghanistan:

“Great harm has been done to us. We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human

² Phillips, James “What Iran Learned From the Hostage Crisis: Terrorism Works” The Heritage Foundation: November 5, 2009. Web.

³ Greenspan, Jesse “Remembering the 1993 World Trade Center Bombing.” History In the Headlines: February 26, 2013. Web.

⁴ “Text of George Bush's Speech.” State of the Union address. The Guardian: September 21 2001. Web.

freedom - the great achievement of our time, and the great hope of every time - now depends on us. Our nation - this generation - will lift a dark threat of violence from our people and our future” (George Bush, State of the Union address).

After the devastation of 9/11, the American people hung heavily to Bush’s speech as he spoke to millions of citizens mourning and fearing what would come next. This declaration planted the roots of the developed image that intertwines terrorism and Islamic extremism.

The Islamic State and International Terrorism

For my thesis, it is important to understand terrorism in the context of ISIS — the infamous terrorist group associated with the attacks in the United States. Terrorism will be defined as international terrorism: large-scale attacks on civilians used to incite hysteria into the hearts of people. The Islamic State, better known as ISIS, originally arose from the Jihadist movement. ISIS holds a vision of purifying the Islamic community by attacking the Shi’a and other religious minorities in order to establish a purified Sunni State in the Middle East. It does not seek to unify the Muslim world and abolish western forces from it; rather they are fighting their enemies within the Islamic community.

ISIS’ most important goal is to conquer territory and set it up the way they see fit. “Though the Islamic State terrorizes its enemies, calling it a terrorist group, as the United States and many other Western countries do, is both true and misleading.”⁵ What does this mean in terms of the international terrorist attacks we have seen increase in 2015 and 2016? According to

⁵ Byman Daniel, “Al Qaeda, the Islamic State, and the Global Jihadist Movement.” Oxford University Press: 2015. 171. PDF.

Byman, ISIS is not focused on clashing with the United States or the West for their goals are mainly political within the Middle East. Two major attacks in the U.S associated with ISIS are the San Bernardino terrorist attack in 2015 and the Orlando Pulse Nightclub terrorist attack in 2016. The assailants were self-proclaimed followers of ISIS attacking on their own accord. These are just an example of attacks made against the Western world that are mainly planned and executed by Muslims in the Western world who feel compelled to act in the name of ISIS' religious vision. Byman's literature explains the mess that connects terrorist attacks and ISIS to reveal the true goals of ISIS as a group and where attacks are possibly coming from.

The Psychological Effects of Terrorist Attacks

Events such as terrorist attacks are considered to be tragedies, often leaving a large number of fatalities and shocked witnesses. With extensive media coverage allowing people to witness the events of a terrorist attack through images, live video, or newspaper, the number of people whom are psychologically affected by terrorist attacks have increased in the 21st century. To better gauge the effects of media and political rhetoric upon civilians, it is important to understand the direct affects of a terrorist attack. There is a diverse amount of literature analyzing these effects, particularly in the psychological field. After 9/11, the Department of Health and Services surveyed American citizens in New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey to measure the psychological impact of a terrorist attack of that scale. They found that a total of

49.5% felt anger above anything else while 37.5% felt worry and 23.9% felt nervousness. 75% of people surveyed they had a problem due to the attack.⁶

Another helpful literature to understand the psychological effects in theoretical terms is an article by Andrew Silke, a psychologist and director of Terrorism studies at the University of East London, UK. The common knowledge is that tragedies cause “a certain number of people develop psychological distress as might be expected of those who witness terrifying situations or tragedies or catastrophes” however he also introduces the idea that it can unify communities which he considers to be a positive psychological benefit.⁷ This unification occurs through the “perception that there is a shared enemy out there, such attacks also bolster an individual’s ties to their local community, deepening their sense of belonging and their identification with others living in the area” (Silke). This theory reveals how a terrorist attack can increase the sense of nationalism but also create a division between the "we" and the "other." This concept is crucial to understand the roots of Islamophobia after a terrorist attack. Another important theory he analyzes is mortality salience, an effect of “over-exposure to death-related thoughts or imagery... which are inherent in most media coverage of terrorism, are usually sufficient to produce a mortality salience effect” (Silke). This effect also leads to a surge in nationalist pride and identification with one's nation. However, Silke states the danger of mortality salience as it “can lead to an increase in support for extremism when it is linked to group identity [and] ...sympathy and support for the government, and increased hostility toward the country’s perceived

⁶ Department of Health and Human Services. “Psychological and Emotional Effects of the September 11 Attacks on the World Trade Center --- Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York, 2001.” Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: 2002. 9/05/2002. Web.

⁷ Silke, Andrew “The Psychological Impact of the Continued Terrorist Threat.” The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress 2014. Article 216. Web.

enemies” (Silke). This particular psychological effect is pertinent to my thesis as it could incite hate upon Muslims in terrorist attacks associated with ISIS. It also reveals the particular influence of the media that intensifies the initial psychological effects of a terrorist attack into mortality salience.

The Influence of the Media upon Public Beliefs

The media’s ability to influence and persuade public beliefs and behavior has been a widely studied phenomenon. The literature I focus on analyzes the impact of Hate Radio in Rwanda during the Rwandan Genocide. In Elizabeth Levy Paluck’s “Reducing Intergroup Prejudice and Conflict Using the Media,” she bases her research off “theories of media persuasion that claim that beliefs are influenced by media cultures and programs.”⁸ These beliefs are often already integrated to some degree and then the media is able to curate and activate these beliefs to the forefront. This allows the media to shape beliefs with their story narratives upon a large audience. Paluck also introduces prejudiced behavior and the possible link with the media which leads to prejudiced behavior. Theoretical tradition on prejudice, conformity, and social consensus infers that social norms predict behavior rather than beliefs. Hence, individuals may value knowledge of a social norm over their own personal beliefs.⁹ If the media has a hand in controlling the sphere of social norms, it can control public behavior even though an

⁸ Paluck, Elizabeth Levy “Reducing Intergroup Prejudice and Conflict Using the Media: A Field Experiment in Rwanda.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2009, Vol96, No 3, 574-587. 2009 American Psychological Association. 575. PDF.

⁹ Paluck, Elizabeth Levy “Reducing Intergroup Prejudice and Conflict Using the Media: A Field Experiment in Rwanda.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2009, Vol96, No 3, 574-587. 2009 American Psychological Association. 576. PDF.

individuals personal values differ. Her experiment revealed a similar consensus that media is unable to alter personal beliefs but it is a lot more effective to target social norms.

Scott Strauss also talks about the effects of hate radio in the Rwandan genocide. His research focuses on the direct correlation between the media and behavior which led to violence. The conventional wisdom of media influence believes media has direct influence on behavior where “radio broadcasts implanted ideas in listeners that subsequently caused them to hate, dehumanize, and fear Tutsis. Radio thereby conditioned, facilitated and legitimized violence...”¹⁰ However, contrary to the conventional wisdom, Strauss finds that the radio had marginal effects on inciting violent acts in the Rwandan genocide. He argues instead that the “radio emboldened hard-liners and reinforced face-to-face mobilization, which helped those who advocated violence assert dominance and carry out the genocide.”¹¹ The two pieces of literature arguing the effects of media on the Rwandan genocide discuss theories that agree with each other as well as evidence that reveals a more complex picture about the effects of media over beliefs, social norms, and behavior. This complex picture infers that the media does not directly influence civilians but may take part in reinforcing certain behaviors along with other factors that have not been discussed.

¹⁰ Straus, Scott “What Is the Relationship between Hate Radio and Violence? Rethinking Rwanda’s ‘Radio Machete.’” *Politics Society* 2007; 35; 609. Sage Publications. 613. PDF.

¹¹ Straus, Scott “What Is the Relationship between Hate Radio and Violence? Rethinking Rwanda’s ‘Radio Machete.’” *Politics Society* 2007; 35; 609. Sage Publications. 631. PDF.

The United States Media's Reporting on Terrorist Attacks

The United States media has taken a large role in informing the public about hard news such as terrorist attacks in the past decade. This new role puts them in a place of power to influence the public and how they perceive their news. In special reports created after each terrorist attack, the association between Islam and terrorists has become a frequent narrative. One month before the Charlie Hebdo attack, the Journal of Communication released a study report in December 2014 which “found that among those described as domestic terrorists in the news reports, 81 percent were identifiable as Muslims. Yet in FBI reports from those years, only 6 percent of domestic terror suspects were Muslim.”¹² Furthermore, Media Tenor— a group that focuses on statistical evaluation of media data— observed that US TV news audiences from 2001 to 2015 received a large inflow of reports on terrorism that frame Muslims in a negative light.¹³ These reports were both used as evidence in UC Berkeley’s report on Islamophobia in the United States which concluded that overall, the US media is accountable for broadcasting islamophobic messages that help fuel the already existing Islamophobia in the United States.

When observing the amount of time dedicated to each news story, Mohamed Ghilan states that mainstream TV news channels like CNN and Fox dedicate the majority of their TV time to stories about violence committed by Muslims over other current news.¹⁴ The topics of

¹² Dixon Travis, Williams, Charlotte “The Changing Misrepresentation of Race and Crime on Network and Cable News.” *Journal of Communication*: December 13, 2014. Web.

¹³ UC Berkeley Center for Race and Gender “Confronting Fear | Islamophobia and its Impact in the United States.” Council on American-Islamic Relations and UC Berkeley Center for Race and Gender: 2016. Web.

¹⁴ Ghilan, Mohamed “How the US Media is Promoting Islamophobia #Media.” *Middle East Eye*: December 7, 2015. Web.

foreign committed violence and possible security threats prove to be covered a lot more than any other issue in the US. This creates the perception that terrorist attacks are a huge risk to Americans. However, the actual risk of terrorism in terms of American fatalities is low and drastically minor compared to the death toll of Muslims due to terrorist attacks in the Middle East. Times reporters documented 853 deaths that were not Westerners in April 2016 alone. Meanwhile, “since 1970, apart from 9/11, 397 Americans have been killed by terrorism.”¹⁵ These facts side by side are shocking and show the exaggeration of the real threat of terrorism to Americans. Meanwhile, Nathan Lean — as scholar at Georgetown University’s Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding— investigates how the media speculates right after a terrorist attack has occurred. He defers that journalists insinuate, infer and hypothesize a question such as, ““could it have been an attack carried out by Al-Qaeda?” which suddenly turns into a conversation dominated by Al-Qaeda.”¹⁶

Donald Trump and Islamophobia

Donald Trump, the GOP presidential candidate in the 2016 election, quickly became known for his campaign “Make America Great Again” and his disregard for political correctness. This disregard included his radical xenophobic rhetoric. Within this rhetoric included anti-Muslim opinions and policies that associated Muslims with terrorists. According to a study at the California State University of San Bernardino, Trump’s anti-Muslim ban announcement after the

¹⁵ Meyer, Dick “News media coverage of terrorism exaggerated true threat to Americans.” Talk 1170 Radio: July 1, 2016. Web.

¹⁶ Arana, Gabriel “Islamophobic Media Coverage is Out of Control. It Needs to Stop.” The Huffington Post US: November 19, 2015. Web.

San Bernardino attack possibly contributed to the massive increase of hate crimes committed against Muslims within the succeeding week after his announcement.¹⁷ Meanwhile, Pew Research indicates that this election cycle shows a larger increase in the “negative impression that Muslims are more likely to incite violence than members of other religious groups.”¹⁸

Although the increase is plausibly reactive to the larger amount of terrorist attacks being pushed forward in the news, the literature states that Trump rhetoric also has an influence upon these growing numbers. Politicians have a special influence over American citizens as politicians are supposed to reflect the opinions of the people. Publicly endorsing islamophobic behavior through self-suggested policies promotes the continuation of these negative sentiments towards Muslims especially within conservative Republicans. Literature reveals that as an important public figure, Trump has the power to unite and fuel negative public opinion.

Missing Literature

In terms of literature, there is plenty of literature analyzing the role and influence of the media and Trump rhetoric. However, there seems to be a lack of current literature on the effects of the media and Trump rhetoric working together to create a particular environment that caters to a certain behavior. The effects of these two factors separately have been well analyzed and theories point to positive correlations between each factor and violent behavior however evidence shows that the exact consequences are still controversial. I believe that I will provide a

¹⁷ Jenkins, Jack “Why It Matters That the President Rejected Islamophobia Last Night, and Why More Politicians Should.” ThinkProgress.org: December 7, 2015. Web.

¹⁸ Bush, Daniel “Could Trump’s anti-Muslim Rhetoric Influence Politics Well Beyond 2016?” PBS Newshour. PBS: December 11, 2015. Web.

missing piece to the debate by analyzing the possible correlation between violence behavior — specifically Islamophobia— and the dynamic created by the interaction of media and Trump rhetoric after terrorist attacks. I believe this could possibly detangle the complex picture Strauss speaks of that allows violent behavior to emerge.

Methodology

Time Period

September 11, 2001 marks the date of the terrorist attack on U.S soil that initiated the official war of terrorism and therefore the associated definition of terrorism we know today. Prior to 9/11, Americans did not have an established bias against Muslims in relation to terrorism. In the public eye, there seemed to be no danger of international terrorist attacks on Americans. After this initial shock, there were no large scale terrorist attacks affiliated with Al Qaeda or ISIS on US soil that directly affected American citizens until the San Bernardino attack in December 2015. The main focus of this study is between 2015 to October 2016. This specific timeline embodies the two vital terrorist attacks that have affected American opinion since 9/11. It is important to note that the effects of these attacks, media coverage, and political rhetoric are ongoing. However, the most radical shift of discussion about terrorism within media and politics occur in December 2015 to October 2016 as new media tactics and Trump rhetoric surrounding terrorism have only developed since 2015.

Case Studies

This paper explores the interaction between the media, politics and citizens in the discussion of terrorism in the United States that fuels Islamophobic sentiments within American citizens. I am focusing particularly on how this media coverage and anti-Muslim political rhetoric are received by a certain American demographic pre-disposed to Islamophobia. In order to create a thorough report of this social dynamic, I decided to focus on two case studies: San Bernardino attack on December 2, 2015 and Orlando Pulse Nightclub attack on June 12, 2016. I picked these two terrorist attacks because they all occurred on U.S soil after 9/11. I chose these attacks because they were both large-scale attacks with mass casualties that rekindled the fear Americans felt after 9/11. Furthermore, both attacks were reported as terrorist attacks affiliated with ISIS— the terrorist group with a connection to the Islamic faith and Muslims. Lastly, these attacks were heavily discussed within the media and political sphere which led to large shifts in American opinion about terrorism and Muslims.

Independent Variables

For my study, I will be analyzing two independent variables to understand how the terrorist attacks are perceived by the average American audience. The first independent variable will be the US media. When using the term media in this study, it is defined as two of the primary cable news sources in the United States: CNN and Fox News. There are three reasons I chose CNN and Fox News as the two outlets First, television is the main source by which Americans receive their news. According to a Gallup conducted poll, CNN and Fox News hold

the largest percentage of American viewers amongst specified news channels.¹⁹ Second, the way Americans perceive and understand events they have not witnessed firsthand is through the media. Therefore, the way CNN and Fox News cover terrorist attack heavily influences Americans' understanding of terrorism. Third, CNN and Fox News are politically biased as CNN is heavily liberal while Fox News is conservative— giving an additional filter upon the news Americans receive based on which channel they decide to watch. I will analyze the narrative media delivers on terrorism by analyzing the published articles supporting CNN and Fox News' live reporting of the terrorist attacks for each case study. In these articles, I will look at their choice of words for the headlines and the phrasing of facts along with any associating graphics in comparison to the official facts for each attack. I will obtain these articles directly from their websites and the official facts from the Federal Bureau of Investigation website.

The second independent variable in my study is the emergence of anti-Muslim Trump rhetoric. The definition of anti-Muslim rhetoric in this study is defined as a form of Islamophobia — prejudice and/or bigoted statements that target Muslims and Islam in a negative light. I will measure the levels of anti-Muslim sentiment he exudes and the influence his rhetoric holds through an in-depth analysis of his diction in public speeches as well as the diction and implications of his proposed immigration and security policies. I will be analyzing his speeches through the news articles posting the transcript of his speeches and video clippings.

¹⁹ Saad, Lydia "TV Is Americans' Main Source of News." Gallup Polling: Politics. Jul 8, 2013. Web.

Dependent Variables

There are two effects I will observe from my two independent variables: terrorism as one of the largest threats to Americans and the justification and fueling of islamophobia. Both independent variables are partnering causes to these effects through the dynamic interaction of the two. It is important to note that I will be mostly studying the effects of Trump rhetoric upon his supporters who are majority Republican white citizens outside of major urban areas.²⁰ This does not encompass every one of his supporters but describes the general observation of the majority.

I will prove the causality of the media and political rhetoric to the perception of terrorism as an imminent threat to Americans in three ways. The first will be the observation of his rallies within a week of each relevant terrorist attack: the demographic of his supporters, their conduct, and their commentary reflecting any of his anti-Muslim views. I will be using rally videos and new articles as my sources for this indicator. The second way will be through American public opinion polls on future immigration policies, sentiments towards Muslims, and terrorism itself. These polls will be drawn from research forums such as Pew Research and Gallup. It is important to establish the effect the media and political rhetoric has upon American public opinion around terrorism because the majority of American knowledge surrounding terrorism and its effects comes from these two outlets. Therefore, the public opinion will be heavily influenced by what they observe and absorb from the media and Trump rhetoric. Within the public opinions upon immigration and military/security policies, I will be looking specifically at

²⁰ Alcantara, Chris; Uhrmacher, Kevin & Guskin, Emily “Clinton and Trump’s demographic tug of war.” The Washington Post: Campaign 2016. 2016 The Washington Post. Oct 16, 2016. Web.

whether these policies are inclusive or exclusive of Muslim populations as well as if they target Muslim populations. The third indicator will be the increase of hate crimes after each attack. I will be drawing from specific incidents and the rhetoric used as well as data recording the number of hate crimes that occur prior to the attack, after the attack, and after any major speech if accessible.

I will prove how media coverage and Trump rhetoric justify and fuel Islamophobia through two different sources. The first source will be public opinion polls of American sentiments towards Muslims chronologically right before the San Bernardino and Orlando attacks, immediately after the attacks, and lastly after Trump speeches about the attacks. These polls will come from a variety of sources: Pew Research, Gallup as well as other research forums and news articles stating any poll data. The second source will be observing the levels of Muslim affiliated hate crimes in the US with the same chronology and sources as the previous source. It is important to study both public opinion and hate crimes since Islamophobia is not always expressed in external actions such as hate crimes and speech. However, negative opinions of Muslims due to terrorism equally imply Islamophobia.

Limitations to thesis/case studies

It is crucial to mention the limitations to this study. It is an ongoing phenomenon where there is no knowledge on future attacks and effects that they may have. Research about the role of media and politicians upon American opinion and islamophobia are still developing, leaving plenty of room for new data and theories to emerge. It is also important to note that the initial fear caused by the attacks can't be separated from the effects of the media and politicians

reporting on these events in the data I use due to the narrow timeline. It is also essential to understand and accept that media in the United States is a business as well as way of reporting the facts therefore the need for viewings and ratings influence the type of headlines and stories they focus on. Lastly, this particular dynamic is seen nationwide but is more prevalent in a specific demographic whose pre-established biases affect how they react to the narrative given by the media and politic rhetoric.

Case Study #1: San Bernardino in California

I will now be studying the San Bernardino terrorist attack in my first case study. As previously mentioned, this terrorist attack is important to the American people as it is the first major terrorist attack that has occurred in the United States after 9/11. I will first describe and analyze my two independent variables: the media and Trump rhetoric. This will be followed by an analysis of my dependent variables using the demographic and behavior of Trump supporters, American public opinion, and hate crime as indicators to show the causal effect between the two. In this case study, I hope to prove how the social interaction between the media's narrative of terrorism and Trump's xenophobic rhetoric creates an environment that allows islamophobia to grow after the San Bernardino terrorist attack.

What Happened

On December 2, 2015, two assailants attacked a holiday party at the Inland Regional Center for employees from The San Bernardino County Department of Public Health.²¹ They

²¹Epatko, Larisa "Everything we know about the San Bernardino shooting." PBS Newshour. December 3, 2015. Web.

shot and killed 14 people while 21 people were left wounded. Initially, people reported the possibility of 3 assailants that were all male. The intentions of the attack were unknown. On December 3rd, the investigation confirmed that there were only 2 assailants who were identified as Syed Farook, 28, and Tashfeen Malik, 29. Farook was an American citizen who married Malik, who moved from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on a fiancée visa and then became a lawful permanent resident. The couple was killed in a shootout after they fled the scene in an SUV. They had a 6 month old daughter that was with Farook's mother at the time of the attack.

On December 4, 2015, the FBI released to the press that they were investigating the attack as a terrorist attack. The FBI Director, Comey, stated that "...so far, there is no indication that these killers are part of an organized larger group."²² By December 7, 2015, the FBI confirmed that the attack was a planned out terrorist act by the two individuals who had pledged allegiance to ISIS prior to the attack.²³ ISIS praised the attack but did not claim it as their own doing.

Media Coverage

Who are the Viewers

In 2014, Pew Research Center ran a project to discover the political polarization within the news in America. If you could please refer to Figure 2 in the appendix, we see that 47% of consistent conservatives watch only Fox News as their source of information. Meanwhile,

²² "FBI Will Investigate San Bernardino Shootings as Terrorist Act" FBI.gov. December 4, 2015. Web.

²³ Nagourney, Adam, Masood, Salman & Schmidt, Michael S "Killers Were Long Radicalized, F.B.I Investigators Say." New York Times. December 7, 2015. Web.

consistent liberals name a variety of news outlets as their source of information including CNN.²⁴ Based on this data and the data from Figure 1 in the appendix, we can assume that a large percentage of Fox News viewers are relatively conservative while CNN viewers are relatively liberal. In the next few sections, I will be analyzing the framing and characterization of the attack by CNN and Fox News— keep in mind the political demographic of each news source.

Viewer Data in 2015

In October 2015, Fox News was ranked the number one cable news network while CNN was ranked second according to Nielsen data. Figure 1 compares the number of viewers in major cable networks from October 2015 and October 2016. Fox held the largest amount of viewers while CNN came in second during primetime.

On the day of the San Bernardino attack, Fox News was the most watched cable network for coverage on the attack. “Fox averaged over 5 million viewers [in primetime] and close to 1.383 million in the demo. CNN came close to Fox in the demo with 1.379 million, but only racked in a primetime average of 3.74 million viewers.”²⁵

The Framing and Characterization of the Attack

CNN

²⁴ Mitchell, Amy; Gottfried, Jeffrey; Kiley, Jocelyn; Matsa, Katerina Eva “Political Polarization & Media Habits.” PewResearchCenter: Journalism & Media. October 21, 2014. Web.

²⁵ Feldman, Josh “Fox News Most Watched on Cable News During San Bernardino Coverage.” media-ite.com. December 3, 2015. Web.

Upon Google searching CNN San Bernardino Attack, the top search I come upon is a CNN special edition. It frames the attack with a narrow focus on the personal lives of the assailants and the tragedy of the event renewing the fear felt from 9/11. The page consists of a layout dedicated to the attack divided into major topics comprising of videos, photos, and CNN story headlines explaining the attack. If you refer to Figure 3 in the appendix, you can see the visual of this layout. Some headlines that jumped out at me were “Farook built pipe bombs as hobby,” “ISIS: Shooters were on our side,” “Inside the killers’ home,” “What explains biggest U.S terror attack since 9/11?” and “Dramatic video shows San Bernardino shootout.”²⁶ CNN includes a picture of each assailant that resemble a mugshot above the three stories I first mention, visually strengthening the mental link between the three stories that involve the shooters. The body of the stories are not included in the layout therefore all the viewers can see immediately are the headlines and their specific phrasing without further details.

CNN characterizes the attack in a way that pushes the viewer’s focus to the assailants and their connections to ISIS and Islam. The diction of the chosen headlines along with the topics they represent create a mental picture that shape the viewer’s perception of the attack. CNN’s choice to pair mugshots of the assailants with the headlines “Farook built pipe bombs as hobby,” “ISIS: Shooters were on our side,” “Inside the killers’ home,” focus on the incriminating evidence of the ‘evil’ side of the assailants. In exaggerated terms, the assailants go from killers who are also human to monsters in the minds of shocked, fearful viewers. The other headlines focus on a narrow scope of topics surrounding the attack, voiding cultural and political issues.

²⁶ “San Bernardino shooting.” CNN news: U.S Edition. Web. <http://www.cnn.com/specials/san-bernardino-shooting>

There are lack of articles demonstrating a separation between radicalized jihadists committing terrorist attacks in the name of ISIS and peaceful Muslims condemning the attacks.

FOX News

Fox frames the attack in a straight-forward manner that directs the viewers towards the assailants as Islamic extremists killing the victims that represent America and what it stands for as a whole. Searching for information on the attack from Fox, I am given "...a guide to the shooting and investigation." There is no fancy formatting and no pictures besides a slideshow of three standard pictures of victim memorials and a vehicle at the scene of the shootout. Instead, they give a specific topic breakdown with headlines and short body paragraphs describing the essentials of each. The guide highlights it by "The Attack: Shooters Open Fire on a Luncheon," "The Shooters: Quiet, Religious," "The Investigation: FBI looks at Extremist Ties," and "The Victims: a Reflection of America's Diversity."²⁷ Without any direction to other videos, graphics, or stories on the guide, viewers only have the headlines and short explanations to rely on.

Fox's particular characterization of the attack brings a few specific words to the forefront — extremism, religion, victims representing America. Their topic division emphasizes empathy for the victims while characterizing the shooters' religion as a core reason for the attack without other explanations to put it into context. Fox chooses to focus on the diversity of the victims in the attack, labeling them as representatives of the diverse America we live in.

²⁷ "San Bernardino attack: A guide to the shooting and investigation." Fox News: US Edition. December 5, 2015. Web.

Under the victim heading, they list the victims being “white, black, hispanic, and asian.” Then, they give a glimpse into each victims life. In the initial list of ethnicities, they do not list middle eastern but the second victim in the detailed paragraph was born in Iran. There is no explicit mention that she is Muslim but they state she came to the U.S to escape persecution of the Christians in the Iranian Revolution. This implies that she is Muslim. Voiding this from the list of ethnicities allows a subliminal message to slip through— that being Muslim is not welcome in the population that represents America.

Live Content

CNN

A unique piece in the special edition of the San Bernardino attack is CNN’s live video “Inside the killers’ home.” The titling of the video invites the viewer to directly engage with the footage. Instead of calling the assailants ‘shooters’ as they do in other headlines, they call them ‘killers.’ The explicit decision to use that label instead of ‘shooters’ reveals a shift in characterization that incites a more emotional and negative response from viewers in comparison to the word ‘shooters.’ In the video itself, the reporter shows the back bedroom that belonged to Farook and Malik. Besides the typical bedroom stuff she mentions seeing, she focuses on the influence of religion. She shows the camera multiple prayer books by the bedside along with prayer beads. She reports that there are “a lot of signs of faith here within this bedroom...” among the rummaged id’s, passports, and other official documents.²⁸

²⁸ “Take a look inside the San Bernardino shooters’ home.” CNN: US Edition. December 3, 2015. <http://www.cnn.com/2015/12/04/us/san-bernardino-shooting/>

Typically, the media does not have such intimate access to the homes of assailants but in this attack, the media was invited by the landlord and CNN took this invitation to their advantage to give their viewers images of the assailant's home and personal belongings. However, based on this video, CNN's priority was the Islamic faith in the assailant's lives. Although they do not explicitly mention this connection, the orientation to detail of faith symbols in the assailant's home creates that mental shortcut.

FOX News

As the #1 news source for US viewers that night, I watched the O'Reilly Factor from Fox that aired December 2 to further understand what viewers saw and heard. The night of the attack, Bill O'Reilly, the host of the show, brought in 2 counter terror experts to discuss the situation even though they still thought there were 3 male assailants and no identity had yet been released. Without a thorough investigation in place, O'Reilly and the speakers discussed terrorism in light of the attack. Seeing the news discuss the attack as a terrorist attack pushes viewers to perceive the attack with an established filter that it is Islamic extremist terrorism.

Within their discussion, O'Reilly announces that Fox surveyed 100 randomly chosen mosques and "...out of those randomly chosen mosques 80 of them were either preaching jihad or had jihadist literature available. Those things are not compatible with the free society and at some point, the safety of our citizens demands that it's not freedom of religion if the religion you are preaching is preaching violence."²⁹ The three men on the show discuss and conclude that the

²⁹ O'reilly Factor "Shooting suspects' possible motivations." Youtube: Fox News. December 2, 2015. Web.

attack is a terrorist attack committed by Muslims who believe in jihad and that the U.S needs to get aggressive overseas and domestically with preventive measures to prevent this terror from striking again. This was live on December 2, 2015. The FBI only began to investigate the attack as a terrorist attack on December 4 and only confirmed it December 7, 2015.

On December 9, 2015, the Kelly File also brought the viewers attention to U.S mosques ‘breeding terrorists’ when she states in the beginning of her program, “...did our immigration screeners raise any kind of alarms when this woman who had been attending a radical mosque, who’s family had extremist ties, who falsified her immigration form with a fake address. Did they raise any concerns? Not one.”³⁰ She implies the need for better preventive measures in immigration to prevent terrorist attacks, keeping with O’Reilly’s opinion from December 2. This provides the audience with a consistent message that mosques and US immigration are two primary root causes of domestic terrorist attacks.

Trump Rhetoric

On the other end of the news spectrum are political figures. After the San Bernardino attack, the president and other active political figures gave speeches to the public as a response to the tragedy. Their opinions and political platforms are informative reactions to the public that also influence citizens’ perceptions and public opinions of terrorism and the groups involved.

Donald Trump gave a speech at a rally on December 7, 2015 restating his desire for a Muslim travel ban as a result of the attack. He announced to his supporters that they “...have to

³⁰ Fox News “The Kelly File.” TV News Archive. December 9, 2015. Web.

look at mosques. We have no choice. We have to see what's happening..."³¹ This statement is awfully familiar as it echoes the sentiments of O'Reilly and Kelly from Fox News. Once again, mosques are put at the center of the issue for possible terrorist attacks. Trump went further and called for a "complete and total ban of Muslims." He then asked for citizens to protect the United States by coming forward if they believed anyone they knew may be radicalized or planning a terrorist attack. He promised to protect his supporters from profiling anyone they turn in, validating their fears of Muslims as terrorists.

This concludes my analysis of the media and Trump rhetoric in regard to the narrative they give after the terrorist attack. In the next section, I will look at the demographic and behavior of Trump supporters to see if they reveal islamophobic behavior influenced by Donald Trump and the media. I will also look at possible media and political affects on American public opinion and anti-Muslim hate crime.

Trump Supporter Demographic and Behavior

On December 21, 2015, Civics Analytics released data on the demographic of Trump supporters up until that day. In Figure 4, it shows Trump supporters are mostly white, male, and republican.³² However, the data also reveals a broad spectrum of voters from all ages and levels of education. This demographic data is important to note as it signifies a very specific coalition

³¹ Donald Trump "Donald Trump BAN ALL Muslims from USA Full Speech Breaking News December 7 2015." Youtube. December 7, 2015. Web.

³² Cohn, Nate "Donald Trump's Strongest Supporters: A Certain Kind of Democrat." New York Times: The Upshot. December 31, 2015. Web.

of supporters that are being affected by Trump's rhetoric. As supporters, they are more open to listening to Donald Trump as a public figure that they look up to as the next possible President of the United States. Therefore, they are more likely to be influenced by his rhetoric than demographics that are not included in this coalition.

On January 8, 2016, Trump held a rally in South Carolina where millions of supporters came to hear him speak. Among the crowd was a Muslim woman named Rose Hamid who came to silently protest against the Muslim ban and show Trump supporters what Muslims actually looked like. She was escorted out of the rally by security and supporters screamed at her, said insults and booed her with repeated rhetoric of what had been going on the campaign trail for the last couple months.³³ CNN's reference to the repeated rhetoric points to the Muslim ban and Trump's negative opinions of Muslims that has been coined as islamophobic by multiple news outlets and research institutes. Hamid was interviewed by CNN after she got escorted, bringing attention to the "hateful crowd mentality" that arose. She attributed this reaction to the "hateful rhetoric" that, "can incite a crowd where moments ago were very kind...one woman reached and shook [her] hand and said, 'im so sorry this is happening to you'" (Rose Hamid). This first hand-witness to Trump supporter mentality as a group provides insight into the anti-Muslim feelings of Trump supporters that attend the rally and listen to Trump's speeches. However, it shows that not all individual supporters feel that much hatred towards Muslim individuals. The environment at the rally itself along with overwhelming hate from certain supporters cause the group to act hateful as a whole. This follows the theory of following a social norm in Paluck's article in the

³³ "Video: Muslim Woman Abused by Crowd, Kicked Out of Donald Trump Rally Interviewed by CNN." Youtube: I Hooper. January 8, 2016. Web.

literature review section. Regardless of their personal beliefs as individuals, they follow a group mentality that can be paralleled as a social norm which ultimately affects their behavior.

This sentiment is easily seen in the commentary of a Trump supporter the Washington Post interviewed at a rally after the attack. He declares that, “Mr. Trump is not against Muslims...not all Muslims are bad, but ISIS, they are Muslims, so I have to think we have to group them together now,” said Charlie Shane, 21, a junior at Texas Tech University who decided to vote for Trump when he promised to bomb the Islamic State, also known as ISIS and ISIL. “He’s trying to keep Americans safe. Our lives are more important than theirs, and that’s just the reality.”³⁴ Shane’s comment reveals heavy dependence upon Trump and a strong belief in what Trump thinks is right. Although his personal beliefs do not reflect islamophobic tendencies that group all Muslims as terrorists, he places higher priority upon what Trump preaches to his supporters. Trump’s influence is revealed in Shane’s statement that can push one to become an active participant in islamophobic behavior.

American Public Opinion

Terrorism as a Large Threat to Americans

A few days after the San Bernardino attack, multiple news sources and data forums ran polls to gauge how American adults felt about terrorism as a threat nationwide. Overall, more Republicans believed that terrorism was a larger threat to Americans than Democrats and Independents. CBS News Poll investigated how people felt about Muslims in immigration

³⁴ Johnson, Jenna “Trump’s rhetoric on Muslims plays well with fans, but horrifies others.” The Washington Post. February 29, 2015. Web.

policies in the US. In Figure 5, the first question is about keeping a database of all US Muslims. The data is grouped by political leaning. Figure 5 reveals that a majority of Republicans favor this initiative while a majority of Democrats opposed and Independents were split. The other poll questioned people about whether or not they would feel safer from terrorist attacks if Muslims were temporarily banned from entering the US. This question is directed towards Trump's proposal of a Muslim Travel Ban. A majority of Republicans answered that they would feel safer while a majority of Democrats and Independents answered that it would have no effect on terrorist attacks.

CBS News also partnered with the New York Times poll to gauge how much American citizens fear upcoming terrorist attacks. If you please refer to Figure 6, you can see the shift in percentages prior to the San Bernardino attack and then after when they asked the same question to the same group of people. Within a month, the percentage of people who thought it was very likely almost doubled after the attack. This shows the immense fear that pushed many Americans to believe that terrorism was a large threat in the US right after the San Bernardino attack. Besides the psychological effects mentioned in the literature review directly affecting the numbers, the constant narrative that terrorism is a very real and dangerous threat to Americans projected by the media and Trump can intensify the fear. This poll does not differentiate between political leanings however the data from Figure 5 combined with Figure 6 indicates the exponential increase is largely Republican.

Anti-Muslim Sentiment

CBS news also asked adults nationwide December 9-10, 2015 about how they felt about Islam and Muslims. A little over half of Republicans showed negative attitudes towards Islam and Muslims and a little over a quarter of Democrats and Independents felt negative attitudes towards Islam and Muslims. In Figure 7, they asked whether Republicans, Democrats, and Independents thought Islam encouraged violence more or less than other religions in the world. The second question asked whether adults thought Muslim Americans are more sympathetic to terrorists than other American citizens. Please refer to Figure 7 for the exact percentages. Overall, Republicans show the highest percentage of skepticism and negative perceptions towards Muslims. They are the largest group to associate Muslims with terrorism, making them more susceptible to the environment of Islamophobia surrounding the media and Trump rhetoric.

Significance

Based off the Fox News and Trump rhetoric framing the San Bernardino attack to their majority Republican viewers and the data below, the media and politician's negative framing of Muslims have a heavy influence on Republican citizens. Democrats also partake in policies against Muslims however a lot fewer of them feel the same way as Republicans. CNN has a more liberal following but Trump is mostly Republican, so his influence does not reach Democrats as much. Morality salience seems to be prominent in the Republican demographic who unify under a coalition that supports Trump. This coalition unites under specific values and a vision for the nation they live in which supports the theory of morality salience. This infers the influence of media. Overall, these correlations help explain the significant split of opinion in the

polls between Republicans and Democrats. These polls indicate the emotional fear Americans citizens feel towards terrorism and Muslims in quantitative data. The increase in anti-Muslim sentiments as time goes on shows how Trump's policies and the media's framing of Islam as a violent religion create a dynamic that fuels islamophobic sentiments.

Anti-Muslim Hate Crimes

During 2015, the United States experienced a 300% increase in crimes that targeted mosques. In 2014, only 9 mosques were targeted for crimes according to the Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism at CSU San Bernardino. However, according to Figure 8 below, 31 crimes were recorded in 2015. Meanwhile, hate crimes between December 2 and December 6 after the attack but before Trump's speech are recorded in Figure 9 in appendix. 8 crimes were reported with an average of 2 anti-Muslim hate crimes per day. After Trump's speech about the Muslim ban on December 7, hate crimes are recorded from December 7 to December 11. According to Figure 10 in appendix, within the same amount of days as the previous, 15 hate crimes were reported with an average of 3 hate crimes per day. These hate crimes were explicitly against Muslims according to the data source.

The initial shock of the attack mixed in with how the media presented the information to the public led to people feeling angry and lashing out in hate crimes during December 3-6, 2015. Typically, initial anger recedes over time which means that the largest number of retaliation occurs immediately after the attacks. However, after Trump's speech on December 7, hate crimes heavily increased instead of decreased. The link between Trump's speech and the spike in hate crimes days after reveals the impact of his anti-Muslim rhetoric and policies. The presidential

candidate justified the fear of Muslims by calling for a total Muslim ban as well as the need to look into mosques as centers for terrorists. Prior to San Bernardino, mosques were not as targeted but the tripling of crimes against mosques after Fox News and Trump emphasized the need to look into mosques points to their narratives as the culprit to this increase. This is even more so heightened with the environment of the Trump rally. It fueled a hateful group mentality that validates an individual's anger that he or she is not alone in feeling this way and that it is okay to act out.

Furthermore, the presence of the media influencing this violent behavior is very probably when considering the conventional wisdom mentions by Straus in the literature review. Although the influence of Trump is at the forefront on the scene, the media lays the foundation for an extreme islamophobic public figure with its narrative that allows the generalization of Muslims all possibly becoming terrorists to exist with its portrayal of the assailants within the Islamic faith.

Case Study #2: Orlando Pulse Nightclub attack

I will now proceed to my second case study on the Orlando Pulse Nightclub attack. Within the timeline, it follows close behind the San Bernardino attack in the same 2016 election cycle. American citizens have now felt the hysteria and anger that came after San Bernardino and have experienced how the media and Trump frame and discuss a terrorist attack in the US within the post 9/11 era— the narrative has been established. The reactions of citizens post-attack can reveal the direct effects of how the media and Trump discuss Orlando because the initial shock of a large attack after a time of 'peace' has passed. This attack is also important to analyze to

understand how the media and Trump rhetoric interact to influence the large increase of islamophobia in the United States. I will follow the same structure used in San Bernardino to analyze my second case study.

What Happened

On June 12, 2016, one assailant entered Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida around 2am and began shooting people in the club. Police respond immediately.³⁵ According to the FBI on June 13, 2016, the shooter who was identified as Omar Mateen (29) from Fort Pierce, Florida. Mateen made a 911 call around 2:35pm while he was inside Pulse and pledged allegiance to the Islamic State. The FBI admitted to have investigated Mateen prior to this event in 2013 when he was brought upon their radar due to comments he made to his co-workers and claimed a family connection to Al-Qaeda. He was interviewed twice and the case closed 10 months later.³⁶ The attack is America's deadliest mass shooting, leaving 49 people dead and a dozen more injured.³⁷ Lastly, ISIS did not claim the attack as their own although ISIS supporters applauded the attack on various internet platforms.

³⁵ Couvertier, Dave (Special Agent) "Investigative Update Regarding Pulse Nightclub Shooting." FBI.gov: Tampa. Jun 20, 2016. Web.

³⁶ Comey, James B. "Director Provides Update on Orlando Shootings Investigation." FBI.gov: News. Jun 13, 2016. Web.

³⁷ "Minute by minute: How the attack in Orlando unfolded." The Washington Post: National. 2016 The Washington Post. Aug 1, 2016. Web.

Media Coverage

Who are the Viewers/Viewer data in 2016

Due to the close time period of both case studies, the viewer demographic does not differ from the San Bernardino case study. Please refer to the previous case study and Figure 2 in the appendix. For the number of viewers watching each network, I use the same data from San Bernardino, however this case study is pertinent to the numbers for 2016. If you could please refer to Figure 1 in the 2016 data, Fox News continued to be the number 1 cable network while CNN was ranked number 2 based on the number of viewers.

The Framing and Characterization of the Attack

CNN

CNN's framing of the Orlando Pulse nightclub shooting in their special edition layout created a graphic narrative similar to a preview of a thriller novel. They used black and red font and blow up pictures of the victims and assailant followed by short paragraphs that summarized the most important points of the attack for their viewers. The first headline: "Who We Lost" is dedicated to the victims who were killed with head shots and a short eulogy describing who they were and their accomplishments. The second headline—"Inside Pulse Nightclub" gives a summary of the reporting of witnesses along with videos and pictures of eyewitnesses looking horrified or injured. The third section is labeled as "The Shooter"—a paragraph that paints who he is to the audience. There are also two selfies pictures of him followed by other CNN stories about the event.³⁸ CNN's approach reinforces the innocence of the victims and the unfair tragedy

³⁸ "Terror in Orlando." CNN Special Report. 2016 Cable News Network. Web.

they experienced. By placing their stories first, the audience sees the direct pain of the event first with pictures backing up the writing. This framing invokes emotional reactions from the viewers prior to providing further facts about the event.

Meanwhile, CNN characterizes the assailant as an unmerciful predator and killer who targeted helpless people in the LGBTQ community with the diction they use to describe him. Upon describing what the eyewitnesses say, “Inside Pulse Nightclub,” CNN focuses upon the killer among the other surroundings with the opening lines of the paragraph: “A figure loomed outside the stall door. A man collapsed in a pool of his own blood. His killer laughed.”³⁹ These lines describe the assailant in the bathrooms where he trapped a group of nightclub goers and fired shots at them. However, those certain details aren’t mentioned at first. Instead, CNN gives an ambiguous gory description that paints the horror of what people saw in the viewers minds. Although the description is an accurate depiction of the scene, the ambiguity characterizes the assailant as every other villain of a crime. It also embraces an emotional angle rather than a rational one to the viewers.

Under “The Shooter” section, the first few sentences on the assailant are, “Omar Mateen. He visited gay chat rooms. His wife knew he wanted jihadist attack. He pledged allegiance to ISIS. And the FBI had already investigated him.”⁴⁰ The short sentences are direct statements that create a picture of Mateen in the viewer’s mind. These statements reinforce that he fits the profile of a shooter of a terrorist attack without spelling out the words terrorist. Without further explaining his motives with detailed evidence from Mateen’s life, CNN has provided the viewer

³⁹ “Terror in Orlando.” CNN Special Report. 2016 Cable News Network. Web.

⁴⁰ “Terror in Orlando.” CNN Special Report. 2016 Cable News Network. Web.

with these mental shortcuts. In this edition, CNN gives viewers the conclusions without the detailed evidence. The lack of rationale given to the viewers lets CNN make up their minds for them without further explanations to let them choose for themselves what to believe.

FOX News

Fox News narrowly frames the Orlando attack around three main topics— the assailant, victims, and the attack itself— providing a small scope of information for their viewers. Fox News does not have a special edition page for the attack. Instead, viewers can read about the attack from a list of stories Fox News put together about the attack. The page presentation itself is very simple as seen in Figure 12. Within the first 10 stories, three of the article headlines are : “Wife of Orlando nightclub killer describes violent warning signs,” “Video: Pulse terrorist prayed at Kissimmee mosque days before attack,” and “Transcripts of Orlando shooter’s conversation with police reveal ISIS influence.” Although all three headlines and stories are facts from the attack and the assailant’s life, Fox labels the assailant differently in each headline depending on the context of the story. Fox could have labeled the assailant a “shooter” or “killer” like the other headlines but they chose the word “terrorist.” The decision to label the assailant as the “Pulse terrorist” in a story about his visit to a mosque as an active Muslim puts terrorists and Islam in the same picture. This can create a mental shortcut for viewers that leads to the generalization of Muslims as terrorists when this could be easily avoided by using the word “shooter” or “killer.” Besides these stories about the assailant, the story topics are about the victims and the timeline of the attack.

Fox characterizes the assailant as a violent man that would have caused trouble sooner or later, the victims as innocent people who tried to survive together, and the police force as inefficient when dealing with the situation. Please refer to Figure 12 to see the articles discussing the assailant's aggressive behavior and the 9/11 transcript revealing ISIS' influence over the assailant and the attack. Both articles point directly to 'ISIS terrorist' without further discussion about his life that would typically humanize the assailant.

However, an outlier among the overall characterization of the event is the specific article mentioned above: "Video: Pulse terrorist prayed at Kissimmee mosque days before attack." The headline does not mention any Muslim community input however upon reading the article, the article is a type of interview with the imam of the Kissimmee mosque who released the video to the authorities to "show American Muslims stand united with law enforcement." Fox includes a quote from the imam, called Helmi Elagha who repeats frantically. "We're not associated with this terrorist..." This article is the only article shown that gives the viewer a Muslim voice about the attack. The article characterizes the Muslim community as innocent but desperate to show that they are not affiliated with the attack. FOX's specific wording of the headlines and narrow range of topics discussed in the articles does not educate the viewers beyond the horrific violence of the crime and frantic, unorganized handling of the situation from the government and the involved communities.

What Voices Were Heard

CNN and Fox lacked a diverse range of opinions from the Muslim and LGBTQ communities in the reports surrounding the attack. A study analyzed the different types of voices

that were heard by guest appearances discussing the attack on June 13, 2016 over cable news. According to Figure 11 in the appendix, there were 7 Muslim appearances and 21 LGBTQ appearances out of 101 guests on CNN. Together, they only made up about 28% of the voices heard. On Fox News, there were 4 Muslim appearances and 3 LGBTQ appearances out of 80 guests. They represented about 9% out of all the guest appearances.⁴¹

In an event that directly attacked the LGBTQ community and affected both the LGBTQ Muslim community, both cable networks almost ignored the opinions of the communities. The chance for an average viewer to hear a different angle surrounding the attack that might provide better context and perspective is so slim. This data reveals the narrow angle both CNN and Fox provided in the news coverage and analysis of this attack.

Trump Rhetoric

Donald Trump, the GOP presidential candidate at the time of the attack, publicized his reaction to the shooting at a supporter rally. In his reaction, he reinforces the fear within the American people about Islam being a faith directly against the West and Muslims as terrorists.

Trump focuses on the aspect of radical Islam as the overarching problem that is causing terrorist attacks such as the Orlando one because “many principles of radical Islam are incompatible with Western values and institutions...[it] is anti-woman, anti-gay and anti-American.”⁴² He restates his Muslim ban where they “cannot continue to allow thousands upon

⁴¹ Fitzgerald, Erin; Percelay, Rachel & Lopez, Cristina G. “STUDY: What Voices Were Heard On Cable News Following The Orlando Shooting.” Media Matters For America: Research. Jun 21, 2016. Web.

⁴² Beckwith, Ryan Teague “Read Donald Trump’s Speech on the Orlando Shooting.” TIME: Politics. 2016 Time Inc. Jun 13, 2016. Web.

thousands of people to pour into our country...”, framing it as the only solution to keep Americans safe from these types of attacks. He then proceeds to generalize all Muslims as possible terrorists when he labels all of them with “...the same thought process as [the] savage killer”— Mateen. This widens his supporters fear from a specific event to all Muslims in the United States. He furthers this idea by placing radical Islam as the antithesis of American values, making Islam the problem. This implications fuel the Islamophobia already created by the initial shock from the attack by justifying this fear as well-warranted rather than mediating it by isolating the attack to Mateen and his specific context.

Both the media and Trump reiterated the narrative of Muslims and terrorists they laid out during the San Bernardino attack for the Orlando Pulse Nightclub attack. Trump did not deviate from how he reacted in this first case study, rather he enforced his islamophobic statements using Orlando as further evidence for his policies. The media as a whole kept to its way of reporting as well however CNN seemed more dramatic while FOX toned it down compared to its explicit comments about immigration and terrorism in San Bernardino. Like the previous case study, I will now analyze the dependent variables to prove whether there is a positive correlation between the media and Trump rhetoric and the growing fear in Americans towards terrorism and Muslims.

Trump Supporter Demographic and Behavior

On June 23, 2016, the majority of Trump supporters were white, rural, and republican. In Figure 13, the Washington Post breaks down his supporters into specific demographic groups.

Among his supporters (from small to large margin) were independents, white women without college degrees, whites, rural, conservatives, white men without college degrees, white evangelical protestants, and republicans. Based off these demographics and the political partisanship shown in Figure 2, the majority of Trump supporters are also Fox News viewers. This overlap makes these demographics strongly susceptible to the combined influences of both Fox News and Donald Trump.

In another Trump rally after the Orlando attack, a Trump supporter was interviewed by an independent journalist after being escorted out by security. He was escorted out because he refused to remove his graphic shirt that said, “F***k Islam.” Although he was removed from the rally due to this behavior, his insistence on wearing it to the Trump rally as a supporter and the reinforcement he received from other supporters due to his shirt reveal the aggressive anti-Muslim sentiments Trump supporters have and believe Trump is promoting. In this interview, the supporter defends his actions and states “Islam is the problem.” He also mentions how other supporters cheered him on and asked to take pictures with him because of his shirt.⁴³ Besides his own personal opinion about Islam, he chose to wear the shirt to a Trump rally because he believes that Trump agrees with him and will solve ‘the problem.’ This implies a general consensus that Trump supporters are anti-Muslim/islamophobic as well as their belief that Trump is promoting and justifying their fear as the correct way to feel. Therefore, openly expressing themselves upon these sentiments is now allowed because of Trump’s stance as a public political figure.

⁴³ Rosenwald, Eric “ARMED Man Wears ‘F*** ISLAM’ Shirt | Donald Trump Rally | Phoenix, AZ | June 18, 2016.” Youtube Video: Eric Rosenwald Photography. Web.

American Public Opinion

Terrorism as a Large Threat to Americans

After the Orlando attack, the majority of Americans felt unsafe in the U.S, recognizing terrorism as one of the top threats to their safety. The growing concern in 2015-2016 can be attributed to the growing number of terrorist attacks. However, the lasting shock of the events are heavily influenced by the dominant hard news media narrative and Trump rhetoric that focus upon terrorism as a large threat to Americans. In Figure 14, 54% of Americans felt less safe thinking about the past 5 to 10 years at the end of June 2016. This time frame does not include 9/11. In Figure 6, a large majority believe it is at least somewhat likely that another terrorist attack will strike the United States in the near future, causing a large number of deaths in 2016. However, it is important to note that after a large scale attack that occurred in Paris in November, 2015, there was a significant 10% increase in the percentage of Americans that believed an attack would be very likely. After the Orlando attack, this percentage had decreased by 8%. This may signify American reassurance that U.S government actions are taking place to prevent large scale terrorist attacks such as the Trump suggested Muslim ban or simply a quieting of the previous hysteria directly after several large scale attacks. This could suggest that the media and Trump do not create extreme lasting effects upon American public opinion about the danger of terrorism. This would reflect the evidence found by Straus that goes against the conventional wisdom that media has a direct correlation with behavior and therefore emotions. Instead, the media is indeed just venue for those who already feel strong islamophobic sentiments to use to justify their pre-existing feelings. However, it is important to note that the data does not separate Republican and

Democrat opinions in this figure which if done so, could clarify where the decrease in fear occurred.

In Figure 15, we see a separation of Republican and Democrat opinion in data about a blanket immigration ban from countries with a history of terrorism against the West. This includes almost the entire Middle East and several European countries where their citizens were radicalized. Here, we see the significant split that shows that while the majority of people polled overall oppose a blanket immigration ban, the majority of Republicans polled support it. From this poll, we can denote that the Republican demographic views terrorism as a much larger threat in comparison to other political demographic groups. Figure 14 and 6 do not make this distinction but we do see a persistent percentage of Americans placing terrorism at the top of the threat list. Considering that the majority of Trump supporters are Republican who also mostly only watch Fox News and the very low percentage of Democrats in Figure 15 who support a blanket immigration ban in fear of terrorism, the fearful narrative of terrorism seems to dominate the Republican demographic. This further strengthens the theory of morality salience where behavior and values are influenced by group identity. This theory also supports the correlation between media and a shift in views. Although morality salience does not mention the influence of politicians in the current literature, I make the case that since Trump brings together a very particular coalition of supporters and uses the tactic of fear in his xenophobic speeches, he can also be a factor that creates morality salience in his supporters.

Anti-Muslim Sentiment

The anti-Muslim sentiment increased after the Orlando attack within the general American public, and even more so within the Republican demographic in comparison to the polls taken after the San Bernardino attack. The increase reveals the continuous growth in fear about terrorism specifically associated with Islam, making Muslims a target of negative stereotypes and prejudice. In Figure 16, Americans were asked whether or not leaders should say, “Radical Islam” when discussing terrorism to avoid falsely suggesting that terrorist actions are supported by Islamic teachings. This question targets the various implications that Islam is a violent and dangerous religion due to its association with the assailants that killed for the ISIS cause. Overall, 48% of Americans polled believed that leaders should use the words radical Islam. Americans may make this decision because they demand the political sphere to call ISIS for what it is however it does reveal the indifference people have to the consequences it can have on Muslims. Leaders could use the word jihad which is the particular term for what ISIS fighters believe which would prevent any Muslim incrimination and assumptions, but this decision also reveals the possibility that many Americans are not properly educated around the issue to understand that the term is the correct term to be used in order to call these events ‘what they are.’

In Figure 17, the question of the Trump suggested Muslim ban is polled again at the end of June. Overall, the majority of Americans still opposed it but the opinion per political party is very polarized. Since the San Bernardino attack, a higher majority of Republicans supported the ban (increasing from 45% believing the ban would make them safer to 73% supporting the ban). Democrats supporting the ban actually decreased from 14% to 13%, however Independents

increased from 27% to 38%. These statistics reveal the heavily one-sided bias as well as how on its own, the media does not seem to heavily influence negative Muslim sentiments. The political leaning of an American citizen is a strong indicator about how they feel towards Muslims.

Anti-Muslim Hate Crimes

In 2016, the United States has experienced an escalation of anti-Muslim hate crimes in degree of violence and numbers. These hate crimes indicate support of Donald Trump and anger towards Muslims for the terrorist attacks that have occurred. Due to the close time period of this event and the months following, there is no official data reports on the number of hate crimes. However, several news companies began tracking hate crimes due to the immense spike in hate crimes. Two quotes from specific incidents are listed below:

“ On July 18, a note left at the home of a married couple in Tennessee read “I’m going to kill you Muslim bitches...I’m coming for your baby.” — Anonymous⁴⁴

“...the man began by “insist[ing] that the two women go back home and take their bombs with them.” She told the New York Daily News that he went on to note that, “‘Donald Trump is right’ and railed against the welfare system and undocumented immigrants.” — Anonymous⁴⁵

The first quote indicates an explicit death threat in connection to their assumed religious identity to be Muslim. The perpetrator felt justified to suggest this level of violence because they thought the couple and their baby were Muslim. The other incident implies that the perpetrator

⁴⁴ Farivar, Masood “Attacks Against US Muslims Growing in Frequency, Violence.” VOA News: USA. Aug 17, 2016. Web.

⁴⁵ Farivar, Masood “Attacks Against US Muslims Growing in Frequency, Violence.” VOA News: USA. Aug 17, 2016. Web.

accused the two Muslim women to be terrorists and that Donald Trump's opinions about Muslims like the Muslim ban were justified. These two incidents reflect the growing anger and fear among Americans in regard to terrorism and Islam. Through their fear, they emotionally link Islam as a root cause for the attacks that had occurred, making all Muslims potential terrorists. Figure 18 shows a large spike in hate crime incidents around the time of the Orlando shooting which is expected due to the initial anger from the attack but the levels before the attack and a month after the attack were still higher than previous months in 2015. The steady amount of anti-muslim hate crimes outside the initial shock of the attack suggests that the media and Trump rhetoric that is specifically mentioned in the second quote above are allowing islamophobic feelings to grow rather than mediating them.

Like the data after San Bernardino, these events embody the consequences of the media and Trump interacting together to create an environment that influences the social norm or 'status quo' about Muslims and terrorism. Through these reinforced social norms, public values form through a type of group mentality like morality salience that overshadow individual personal beliefs. After this step, the probability of violent behavior emerging to reflect the anger towards Muslims and terrorism is very likely in comparison to if there was only the initial shock of the attack (no media and Trump rhetoric). The amplification of hate crimes seen after the Orlando Pulse Nightclub attack can be attributed to the environment created by the social interaction between the media's constant narrative of Muslim terrorists against the western world and Trump's explicit islamophobia. Although it still remains a complex picture like Straus and his analysis of hate radio during the Rwandan genocide, the explicit mentions of Trump in the

hate crimes above put him in direct correlation to the crimes. The media's influence over these crimes is less noticeable but can be linked to the possible presence of morality salience.

Discussion

My hypotheses about the impact of the media and Trump rhetoric was partially correct. After extensive analysis on the media coverage of events, there is no denial that the majority of their reporting was based on facts that viewers have the right to know. The important discovery is how they frame the facts and the context they surround the facts with. For the San Bernardino case, both Fox News and CNN made a good amount of assumptions prior to official investigation facts and their media bias shone through in the stories they chose to highlight. Fox News in particular speculated with the O'Reilly talks and the constant discussion of mosques within the story revealed their media bias. However, the Orlando case showed a lot more refinement from Fox News and even had a story from a Muslim perspective, although minimal. It surprised me that CNN was a lot more dramatic in this case than Fox News and the framing seemed story-like, selling the fear factor of the story in the broad descriptive adjectives they used. Considering that the Orlando case was also a mass shooting that targeted the marginalized LGBTQ community, I suppose that CNN felt more entitled to make a big story out of this horrible event as a liberal cable news network. Overall, the media has some subliminal messaging that generalizes Muslims as terrorists. However as a single entity, the media does not seem to drive the islamophobia to levels they are at for each case in Trump supporter behavior, American public opinion and hate crimes.

The emergence of blatant anti-Muslim Trump rhetoric as a primary cause for fueling public islamophobia is a lot more obvious in the analysis of Trump supporter behavior, American public opinion and hate crimes. In both the San Bernardino and Orlando cases, his speeches explicitly discriminated against Muslims and incriminated Islam as a root cause of terrorist attacks. His unfiltered comments seemed to have made an example of what is considered to be 'okay.' Hate crimes and unfavorable Muslim opinions that spiked after each of his speeches from the attack seem to be partially justified by his suggested policies like the Muslim ban. Several accounts mention his name and the deportation of Muslims. I believe that Trump rhetoric by itself seems to be enough to cause the high increase in islamophobia without the media right after each attack.

However, the reason my hypothesis still holds is that the social dynamic created by the media and Trump rhetoric projects the same narrative whether it is implied or explicit. The steady level of islamophobia suggests that even once the initial anger from the attack and speeches die down, there is an islamophobic narrative that is being maintained. The media does not seem to try and mediate the fear caused by the attacks or educate the audience to reduce Trump justified islamophobia. It is also important to note that through the course of my case studies, a certain demographic revealed to be heavily affected by the social dynamic of media and Trump rhetoric. Since the majority of Trump supporters are of Republican or conservative political leanings, they are the receiving end of this influence in comparison to more liberal Americans who only receive the media narrative—which is also more often CNN than Fox news. This discovery reveals that one's political leaning is a heavy indicator of whether or not one is affected by this social dynamic. In these cases, it seems that being Republican and/or

conservative is a more concise indicator of higher islamophobic sentiments rather than the average American citizen as stated in my original hypothesis.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study revealed that although the US media and Trump rhetoric do stimulate and nurture an environment for the pre-established islamophobia within the American public, the level of influence varies upon political demographic. In terms of cable news reporting, subliminal messaging was a lot more prominent than blatant bias. In both cases, CNN and Fox News focused on three main categories: the assailant and his/her life, the victims, and the security details of the event. In the San Bernardino case, CNN's reporting was heavy on the assailants and their actions that pointed to the making of terrorists. Fox News speculated a lot on the intent of the attack, assuming ISIS was behind it prior to any official investigation evidence. In the Orlando case, CNN spun a horror narrative with graphic descriptions painting an anonymous, merciless killer shooting helpless victims. Fox News used various labels to describe the assailant that changed depending on the context of the headlines. The subliminal messaging from the networks decisions created mental shortcuts for their viewers that generalized Muslims as terrorists. However, the media centered their reports on investigative facts. The Trump rhetoric for both cases was explicit and blatantly prejudiced. His anti-Muslim opinions and exclusive policies were mentioned in various hate crimes and his Muslim ban became a leading question in the public opinion polls to gauge islamophobic sentiment.

In recent months, the power of anti-Muslim Trump rhetoric has become an even bigger concern after Donald Trump became the president-elect on November 9, 2016. Since then, news

stations and newspapers have reported a large influx of anti-Muslim hate crime throughout the entire country. Unfortunately, it seems that the perpetrators are majority Trump supporters. From my study, these supporters are heavily Republican and Conservative. The hysteria initially created by terrorist attacks is typically mediated by the government and media. However, Trump rhetoric fed on that hysteria and justified it. With recent events, the media seems to be shifting a lot to better understand the development of open islamophobia. The new question that now dominates the public sphere is how can we mediate the islamophobia in the United States? After the research and evidence from my study, I have two suggestions in regard to this question based off what I found and the unrolling of current events.

1. The media and political sphere must work to educate the average viewer about terrorism and ISIS from historical and cultural perspectives. They can not just focus on the security threat of the matter. Islamophobia is growing due to the lack of knowledge that explains and reveals the true inner workings of radicalism that could potentially lead to terrorism.
2. The media and political sphere must actively work to mediate and stereotypes and generalizations surrounding Muslims in current events. One way they can do that is by giving proper representation to the Muslim community and a platform for their voices to be heard. Many islamophobic sentiments stem from the unknown of Muslim culture. Polls show that many Americans do not know many Muslims and fewer interact with the Muslim community on a daily basis. This unknown allows for the generalizations and stereotypes to grow.

As two influential sources in the public sphere, the media and political figures need to work together to educate their audience. They cannot properly inform an audience that does not

have the basic understanding of all parties involved in the news being reported. The United States has dealt with islamophobic hysteria before after 9/11, they can deal with it again. The emergence of Trump rhetoric, coupled with a constant media narrative of the scary Muslim terrorist aiming to destroy western values has unearthed the ignorance of the average American. There is a lot of work needed to undo the prejudice surrounding Muslims. This all starts with the people everyone in the United States listens to: the media and political sphere.

Appendix

Figure 1: A breakdown of viewers for 4 cable networks, including CNN and FOX news, from 2015 and 2016. Total Day shows average viewers throughout the entire day while M-SU Prime reveals the average viewers during primetime. The rank is categorized 1-4 by the highest number of viewers to the lowest. Source: The Nielsen Company via MultiTrak. Oct 2016 (9/26/16-10/30/16), Oct 2015 (9/28/15-10/25/15).

Cable News Oct 2016 vs. Oct 2015

MONTH	TOTAL DAY				M-SU PRIME											
	P2+		P25-54		P2+		P25-54									
NET	Cur. Mth. (000s)	Yr-Ago (000s)	Rank	%Chg	Cur. Mth. (000s)	Yr-Ago (000s)	Rank	%Chg	Cur. Mth. (000s)	Yr-Ago (000s)	Rank	%Chg	Cur. Mth. (000s)	Yr-Ago (000s)	Rank	%Chg
CNN	1,022	515	2	96%	335	145	1	131%	1,821	906	2	95%	710	307	1	131%
HLN	261	276	4	-6%	108	117	4	-8%	287	276	4	3%	103	99	4	4%
FXNC	1,552	1089	1	43%	329	197	2	67%	3,089	1795	1	72%	671	300	2	124%
MSNBC	888	392	3	127%	223	88	3	153%	1,703	654	3	160%	438	135	3	224%

Source: The Nielsen Company via MultiTrak. Oct 2016 (9/26/16-10/30/16), Oct 2015 (9/28/15-10/25/15). Program Based Dayparts: M-Su 6a-6a, M-Su 8p-11p. P2+ and P25-54 AA (000s). Most current and complete available data: Live+7 (thru 10/16/16) blended with Live+30 (10/17/16-10/30/16). Sun 10/30/16 3a-6a data currently not available.

Figure 2: Data showing the types of news consistent liberals and consistent conservatives watch. Source: Mitchell, Amy; Gottfried, Jeffrey; Kiley, Jocelyn & Matsa, Katerina Eva “Political Polarization & Media Habits.” Pew Research Center: Analysis. Journalism & Media. Survey Conducted Mar 19- Apr, 29, 2014. Oct 21, 2014. Web.

Striking Differences Between Liberals and Conservatives

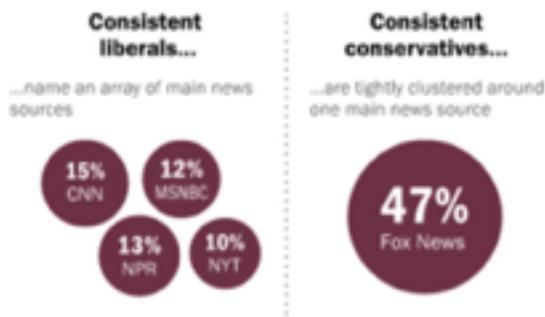


Figure 3: The layout of the CNN special edition for the San Bernardino shooting with headlines linking to full stories. Source: “San Bernardino shooting.” CNN news: U.S Edition. Web. <http://www.cnn.com/specials/san-bernardino-shooting>

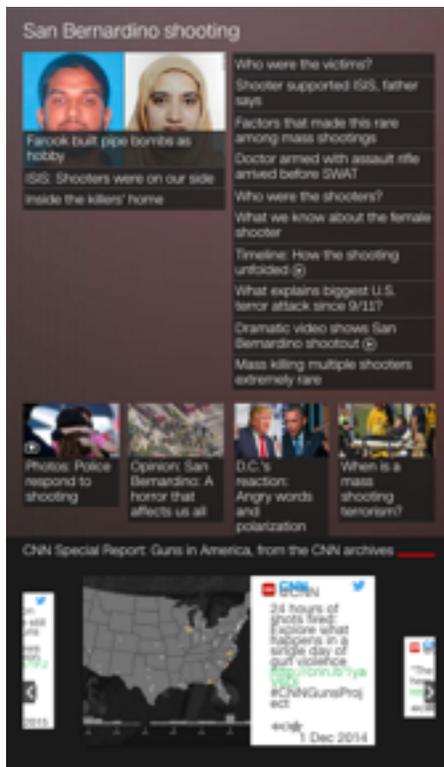


Figure 4: This shows the coalition of Trump supporters divided by different demographics on December 21, 2015. Source: Cohn, Nate “Donald Trump’s Strongest Supporters: A Certain Kind of Democrat.” The New York Times: The Upshot. Poll Source: 2015 Civic Analytics. Dec 31, 2015. Web.

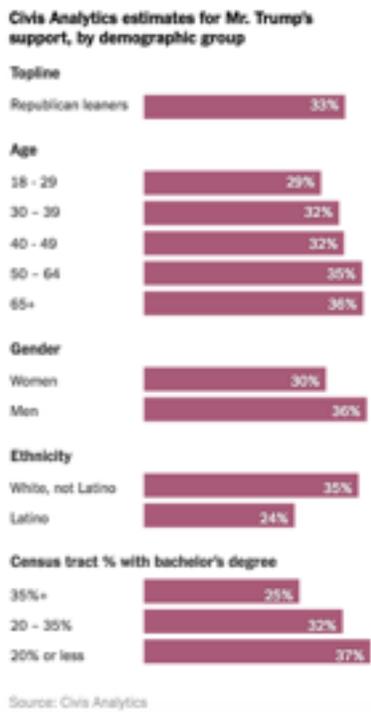


Figure 5: The poll below shows different two questions asked by CBS News from Dec 9-10, 2015. The results of the poll are divided by political leaning. Source: “Terrorism.” PollingReport. CBS News: Dec 9-10, 2015. Web.

CBS News Poll, Dec. 9-10, 2015. N=1,011 adults nationwide. Margin of error ± 4.

"Would you favor or oppose the federal government keeping a database containing the names of Muslims in the United States?"

	Favor %	Oppose %	Unsure/ No answer %
ALL	44	46	10
Republicans	60	31	9
Democrats	31	61	7
Independents	44	44	12

"If Muslims are temporarily banned from entering the U.S. do you think the United States will be safer from terrorism, less safe from terrorism or will temporarily banning Muslims from entering the U.S. have no effect on the United States' safety from terrorism?"

	Safer %	Less safe %	No effect %	Unsure/ No answer %
ALL	28	19	46	6
Republicans	45	15	35	5
Democrats	14	27	52	7
Independents	27	17	49	7

Figure 6: The collective poll shows two different questions conducted by CBS News and New York Times over three different period of times. The first two polls were in 2015 and the third poll was in 2016. Source: “Terrorism.” PollingReport. CBS News/New York Times: Oct 29-Nov 2, 2015; Nov 23-30, 2015; Sept 8-13, 2016. Web.

"How likely do you think it is that in the near future there will be a terrorist attack in the United States causing large numbers of lives to be lost: very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not likely at all?"

	Very likely %	Somewhat likely %	Not very likely %	Not likely at all %	Unsure/ No answer %
9/8-13/16	36	43	16	3	2
<i>Among registered voters:</i>					
11/23-30/15	44	39	11	3	3
10/29 - 11/2/15	32	41	19	5	3

"How concerned are you that you or someone in your family will be the victim of a terrorist attack: very concerned, somewhat concerned, not so concerned, or not concerned at all?"

	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Not so concerned %	Not concerned at all %
9/8-13/16	14	33	29	23

Figure 7: The poll below is also taken by CBS News during the same time as figure 5. The two questions are asked from Dec 9-10, 2015. They are also decided by political leaning. Source: "Terrorism." PollingReport. CBS News: Dec 9-10, 2015. Web.

"Generally speaking, do you think the Islamic religion encourages violence more than other religions around the world, less than other religions around the world, or about the same as other religions around the world?"

	More %	Less %	About the same %	Unsure/ No answer %
ALL	38	4	48	10
Republicans	55	3	32	10
Democrats	25	7	57	12
Independents	37	3	50	10

"Do you think Muslim Americans are more sympathetic to terrorists than other American citizens are, or not?"

	Are more sympathetic %	Are not more sympathetic %	Unsure/ No answer %
ALL	32	54	14
Republicans	42	44	13
Democrats	28	62	10
Independents	30	54	16

Figure 8: The data below shows crimes reported by year where mosques were targeted from the FBI crime reports.

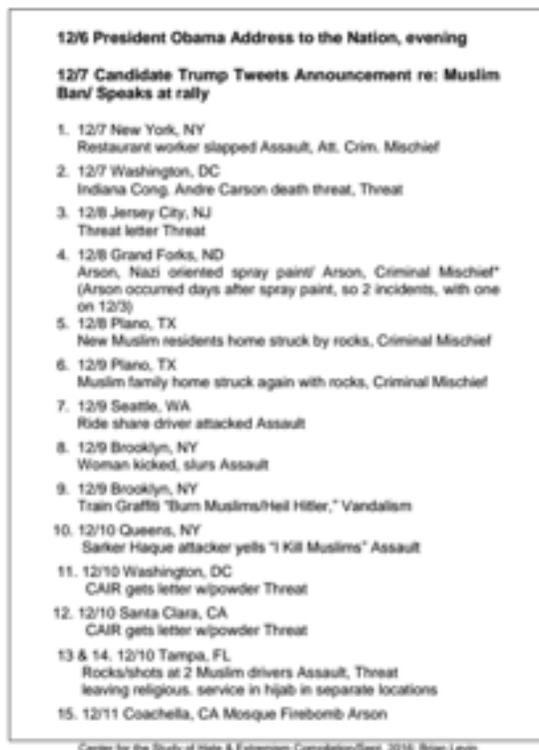
Mosques Targeted for Crimes by Year/ Confronting Fear-Final Report⁷

2015 - 31	2011 - 13
2014 - 9	2010 - 18
2013 - 13	2009 - 10
2012 -14	

Figure 9: The data below are the hate crimes recorded during a 5 day period since the San Bernardino attack occurred. These crimes were recorded to the state or the FBI.

12/2 No hate crimes
1. 12/3 Palm Beach, FL All windows smashed at Mosque Criminal Mischief
2. 12/3 Hawthorne, CA Islamic school threat to shoot everyone there, Threat
3. 12/3 Grand Forks, ND Somali restaurant vandalized with Nazi slogans, Crim. Mischief (firebombed on 12/8)*
4. 12/5 Astoria, NY Store owner beaten Assault, Threat
5. 12/5 Washington, DC Muslim Cong. Carson death threat, Threat
6. 12/6 Buena Park, CA Sikh Temple Vandalism, Crim. Mischief
7. 12/6 West Philadelphia, PA Pigs head, Crim. Mischief/Threat
8. 12/6 Alameda County., CA Hot coffee attack, slurs Assault

Figure 10: The data below are the hate crimes recorded during a 5 day period after the Trump rally speech that publicly announced the Muslim immigration ban. These crimes were also recorded to the state of the FBI.



Source for Figure 8-10: Levin, Brian & Grisham, Kevin. "Special Status Report: Hate Crime in the United States." Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism 2016: California State University, San Bernadino. PDF. 20 Sept. 2016.

Figure 11: The data below shows the number of appearances made across three different cable networks of Hispanic, LGBT, and Muslim during the coverage of the Orlando Massacre. Source: Fitzgerald, Erin; Percelay, Rachel & Lopez, Cristina G. "STUDY: What Voices Were Heard On Cable News Following The Orlando Shooting." Media Matters For America: Research. Jun 21, 2016. Web.

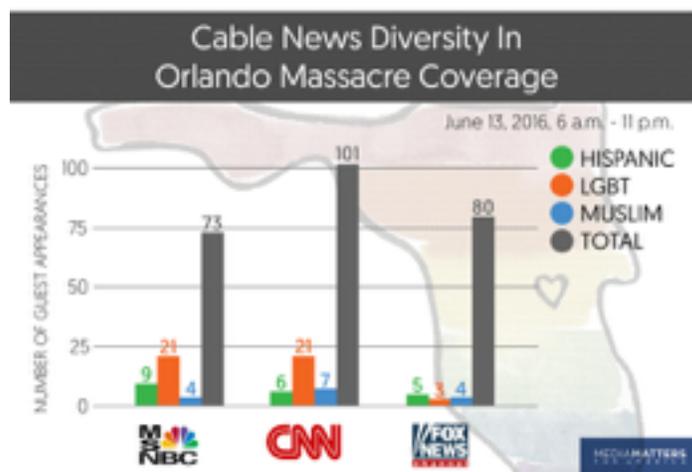


Figure 12: The image below is a screenshot of the articles collected under the category of the Orlando Massacre from Fox News (taken Oct 12, 2016). The headlines and brief descriptions are connected with links that lead to the full stories. Source: Fox News “Orlando Massacre.” Fox News: Category US. 2016 Fox News. Oct 12, 2016. Web.

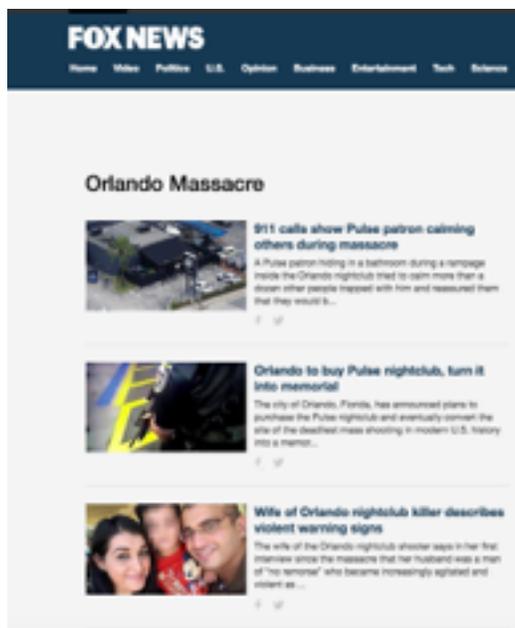


Figure 13: A collective poll that shows the demographics supporting Trump on June 23, 2015. Source: Alcantara, Chris, Uhrmacher, Kevin & Guskin, Emily. “Clinton and Trump’s demographic tug of war.” The Washington Post: Campaign 2016. 2016 The Washington Post. Oct. 16, 2016. Web.

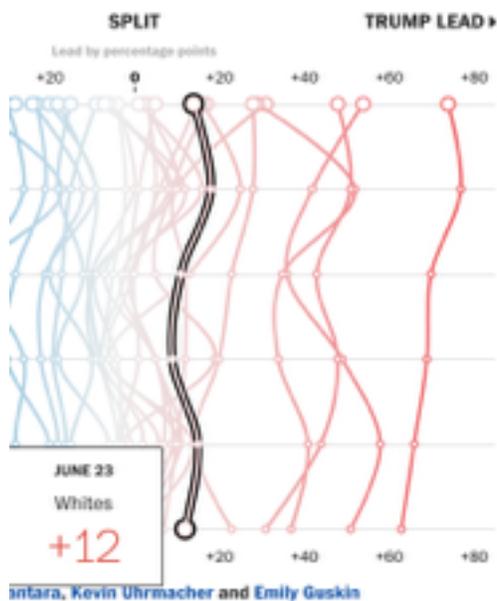


Figure 14: This poll was conducted by Suffolk University and USA Today from June 26-29, 2016. The poll asked the question to a group of registered voters. Source: "Terrorism." PollingReport. Suffolk University/USA Today: Jun 26-29, 2016. Web.

"Thinking about the last 5-10 years, do you feel more or less safe, living in America -- or, has it not changed in your view?"

	More safe %	Less safe %	No change %	Unsure %	Refused %
6/26-29/16	10	54	32	3	2

Figure 15: This poll was conducted by Monmouth University from Sept 22-25, 2016. The answers are divided by political leaning and then show a total percentage of each opinion all together at the top. Source: "Terrorism." PollingReport. Monmouth University: Sept 22-25, 2016. Web.

"Do you support or oppose a blanket ban on the immigration of any person who lives in a country where there has been a history of terrorism against the west?"

	Support %	Oppose %	Depends (vol.) %	Unsure %
ALL	32	60	3	4
Republicans	54	38	2	6
Independents	32	61	5	3
Democrats	16	78	3	2

Figure 16: This poll was conducted by ABC News and the Washington Post with various questions among registered voters. The one I use is below where the poll occurred during the time period of Nov 16-19, 2016. Source: "Terrorism." PollingReport. ABC News/Washington Post: Nov 16-19, 2016. Web.

"Which comes closer to your view? Leaders should say terror attacks are caused by 'radical Islam,' because this accurately identifies the cause. OR, Leaders should not use the phrase 'radical Islam' because it lends legitimacy to terrorists by falsely suggesting that their actions are supported by Islamic teachings." Options rotated

	Should say 'radical Islam' %	Should not say 'radical Islam' %	Unsure %
6/20-23/16	48	40	12

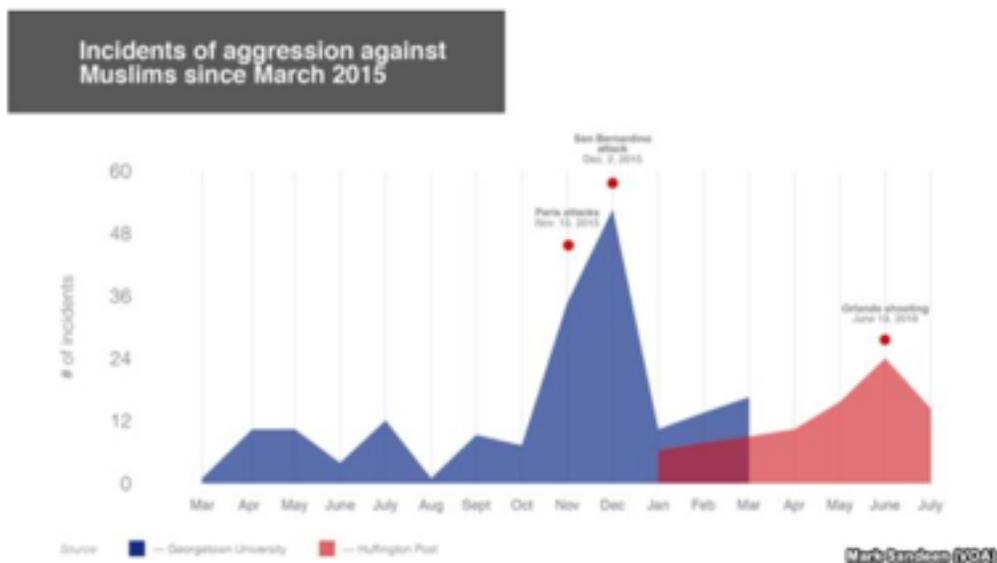
Figure 17: This poll was conducted by Quinnipiac University from June 21-27, 2016 among registered voters nationwide. The answers are divided by political leaning. Source: "Terrorism." PollingReport. Quinnipiac University: Jun 21-27, 2016. Web.

Quinnipiac University. June 21-27, 2016. N=1,610 registered voters nationwide. Margin of error ± 2.4.

"Do you support or oppose temporarily banning Muslims who are not citizens from entering the U.S.?"

	Support %	Oppose %	Unsure/ No answer %
ALL	40	52	8
Republicans	73	22	6
Democrats	13	80	7
Independents	38	52	9

Figure 18: The data below is a record of hate crime incidents recorded by Georgetown University and the Huffington Post from March 2015 to July 2016. The date of the Paris attack, San Bernardino attack, and Orlando shooting are marked on the time line. The y axis shows the # of incidents to gauge the increase in incidents over a long time period. Source: Sandeen, Mark “Incidents of aggression against Muslims since March 2015.” VOA News: USA. Seen in: Farivar, Masood “Attacks Against US Muslims Growing in Frequency, Violence.” VOA News: USA. Aug 17, 2016. Web.



Bibliography

*in order of appearance

1. Bhattacharjee, Riya “‘Trump Might Deport You’: Racist Rant Against Woman Speaking Assyrian on BART Caught on Cam.” NBC Bay Area. Nov 11, 2016. Web.
2. Phillips, James “What Iran Learned From the Hostage Crisis: Terrorism Works” The Heritage Foundation: November 5, 2009. Web.
3. Greenspan, Jesse “Remembering the 1993 World Trade Center Bombing.” History In the Headlines: February 26, 2013. Web.
4. “Text of George Bush’s Speech.” State of the Union address. The Guardian: September 21 2001. Web.
5. Byman Daniel, “Al Qaeda, the Islamic State, and the Global Jihadist Movement.” Oxford University Press: 2015. 171. PDF.
6. Department of Health and Human Services. “Psychological and Emotional Effects of the September 11 Attacks on the World Trade Center --- Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York, 2001.” Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: 2002. 9/05/2002. Web.
7. Silke, Andrew “The Psychological Impact of the Continued Terrorist Threat.” The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress 2014. Article 216. Web.
8. Paluck, Elizabeth Levy “Reducing Intergroup Prejudice and Conflict Using the Media: A Field Experiment in Rwanda.” Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2009, Vol96, No 3, 574-587. 2009 American Psychological Association. PDF.
9. Straus, Scott “What Is the Relationship between Hate Radio and Violence? Rethinking Rwanda’s ‘Radio Machete.’” Politics Society 2007; 35; 609. Sage Publications. PDF.

10. Dixon Travis, Williams, Charlotte “The Changing Misrepresentation of Race and Crime on Network and Cable News.” *Journal of Communication*: December 13, 2014. Web.
11. UC Berkeley Center for Race and Gender “Confronting Fear | Islamophobia and its Impact in the United States.” Council on American-Islamic Relations and UC Berkeley Center for Race and Gender: 2016. Web.
12. Ghilan, Mohamed “How the US Media is Promoting Islamophobia #Media.” *Middle East Eye*: December 7, 2015. Web.
13. Meyer, Dick “News media coverage of terrorism exaggerated true threat to Americans.” *Talk 1170 Radio*: July 1, 2016. Web.
14. Arana, Gabriel “Islamophobic Media Coverage is Out of Control. It Needs to Stop.” *The Huffington Post US*: November 19, 2015. Web.
15. Jenkins, Jack “Why It Matters That the President Rejected Islamophobia Last Night, and Why More Politicians Should.” ThinkProgress.org: December 7, 2015. Web.
16. Bush, Daniel “Could Trump’s anti-Muslim Rhetoric Influence Politics Well Beyond 2016?” *PBS Newshour*. PBS: December 11, 2015. Web.
17. Saad, Lydia “TV Is Americans’ Main Source of News.” *Gallup Polling: Politics*. Jul 8, 2013. Web.
18. Alcantara, Chris; Uhrmacher, Kevin & Guskin, Emily “Clinton and Trump’s demographic tug of war.” *The Washington Post: Campaign 2016*. 2016 *The Washington Post*. Oct 16, 2016. Web.
19. Epatko, Larisa “Everything we know about the San Bernardino shooting.” *PBS Newshour*. December 3, 2015. Web.

20. "FBI Will Investigate San Bernardino Shootings as Terrorist Act" [FBI.gov](http://www.fbi.gov). December 4, 2015. Web.
21. Nagourney, Adam, Masood, Salman & Schmidt, Michael S "Killers Were Long Radicalized, F.B.I Investigators Say." New York Times. December 7, 2015. Web.
22. Mitchell, Amy; Gottfried, Jeffrey; Kiley, Jocelyn; Matsa, Katerina Eva "Political Polarization & Media Habits." PewResearchCenter: Journalism & Media. October 21, 2014. Web.
23. Feldman, Josh "Fox News Most Watched on Cable News During San Bernardino Coverage." [media-ite.com](http://www.media-ite.com). December 3, 2015. Web.
24. "San Bernardino shooting." CNN news: U.S Edition. Web. <http://www.cnn.com/specials/san-bernardino-shooting>
25. "San Bernardino attack: A guide to the shooting and investigation." Fox News: US Edition. December 5, 2015. Web.
26. "Take a look inside the San Bernardino shooters' home." CNN: US Edition. December 3, 2015. <http://www.cnn.com/2015/12/04/us/san-bernardino-shooting/>
27. O'reilly Factor "Shooting suspects' possible motivations." Youtube: Fox News. December 2, 2015. Web.
28. Fox News "The Kelly File." TV News Archive. December 9, 2015. Web.
29. Donald Trump "Donald Trump BAN ALL Muslims from USA Full Speech Breaking News December 7 2015." Youtube. December 7, 2015. Web.
30. Cohn, Nate "Donald Trump's Strongest Supporters: A Certain Kind of Democrat." New York Times: The Upshot. December 31, 2015. Web.

31. "Video: Muslim Woman Abused by Crowd, Kicked Out of Donald Trump Rally Interviewed by CNN." Youtube: I Hooper. January 8, 2016. Web.
32. Johnson, Jenna "Trump's rhetoric on Muslims plays well with fans, but horrifies others." The Washington Post. February 29, 2015. Web.
33. Couvertier, Dave (Special Agent) "Investigative Update Regarding Pulse Nightclub Shooting." FBI.gov: Tampa. Jun 20, 2016. Web.
34. Comey, James B. "Director Provides Update on Orlando Shootings Investigation." FBI.gov: News. Jun 13, 2016. Web.
35. "Minute by minute: How the attack in Orlando unfolded." The Washington Post: National. 2016 The Washington Post. Aug 1, 2016. Web.
36. "Terror in Orlando." CNN Special Report. 2016 Cable News Network. Web.
37. Fitzgerald, Erin; Percelay, Rachel & Lopez, Cristina G. "STUDY: What Voices Were Heard On Cable News Following The Orlando Shooting." Media Matters For America: Research. Jun 21, 2016. Web.
38. Beckwith, Ryan Teague "Read Donald Trump's Speech on the Orlando Shooting." TIME: Politics. 2016 Time Inc. Jun 13, 2016. Web.
39. Rosenwald, Eric "ARMED Man Wears 'F*** ISLAM' Shirt | Donald Trump Rally | Phoenix, AZ | June 18, 2016." Youtube Video: Eric Rosenwald Photography. Web.
40. Farivar, Masood "Attacks Against US Muslims Growing in Frequency, Violence." VOA News: USA. Aug 17, 2016. Web.