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White-Identifying Populations' Perceptions of Muslims in the United Kingdom and United States

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WHITE-IDENTIFYING POPULATIONS’ PERCEPTIONS OF MUSLIMS
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND UNITED STATES

A Capstone Experience/Thesis Project

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

The Degree Bachelor of Science with

Honors College Graduate Distinction at Western Kentucky University

By

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2019

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ABSTRACT

Much of Western society is engaging with complex ideas and events such as multiculturalism, immigration, assimilation, and terrorism. The United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US) are relevant to this larger discussion considering the 2016 finalization of the ‘Brexit’ decision to leave the European Union and the recent travel restriction policies in the US targeting some countries with Islam as majority religious affiliation. Given these events, my larger research question addresses how majority populations view minority groups. Several studies have provided a view of how Muslims in the West form their own identities (Hopkins, 2011; Modood & Ahmad, 2007; Peek et al., 2005), however there is very little research on how Muslims are perceived as a group by majority non-Muslim populations (Fischer et al., 2007; Gerges, 2003). The purpose of this comparative research project is to gain an understanding of white-identifying populations’ perceptions of Muslims in the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US) using qualitative and quantitative ethnographic methodologies.

Keywords: Islam, prejudice, religion, racism, symbolic racism, multiculturalism
Dedicated to my hardworking parents who inspire me more and more every day.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

An elderly woman running a food truck swathed in red and green tree lights handed me an aluminum bowl of stew through the serving window. The scent of beef hit the chilled wind, along with the shouts of nearby protesters demanding that the United Kingdom stem the flow of immigrants into the country. It was 2016 and I was at the Christmas market in Nottingham, a fashionable British town filled with luxury boutiques, designer shops, and approximately twenty mosques. Walking further into the fold of chocolate crafts, mittens, and giant snowmen, I passed an area sectioned off with waist-high plastic barriers filled with impassioned Brits. Some waved posters that reminded us of Christ’s timely importance, others that displayed strongly-worded sentiments towards Egypt and other predominantly Muslim countries. Along the cobbled streets, a few pedestrians stopped to engage with the protesters. Some donated money. I eventually walked away from the market to the tune of their shouting, their inflammatory sign waving, and the overwhelming loudspeaker Christmas music. Five months post-Brexit, the issues it brought to the attention of the public were still hitting home.

*   *   *

1
Western consciousness is inundated with reminders of recent terrorism, which is complicated further by complex ideas like immigration, multiculturalism, and assimilation. These concepts and events have become interwoven and difficult to tease apart alongside the global rise of populist movements (Buijs & Rath, 2006). Nationalism and xenophobia have become a prominent facet of modern politics. Knowledge and understanding of the ‘other’ is lacking. Muslim people living in the West exist in a liminal space between all of these points of contention and have become a focus of their debate.

Often the very possibility of a Muslim person existing within the space of the West is questioned. For hundreds of years Islam has been portrayed as contradictory to Western values, oppressive, savage, and violent in Orientalist historical accounts as well as fictional and journalistic media (Gerges, 2003; Listhaug & Strabac, 2008; Said, 1977; Shaheen, 2003). However, modern views of Muslims are affected by historical aspects, but also new cultural aspects. There are everyday acts of racism and prejudice towards this group and other minorities that feed into a Western, Christian, and colonialist hegemony that is rooted in this history.

It should be noted that ‘Muslim’ is an identity category related to religious affiliation, not a race. However, it is useful to utilize frameworks that examine racial prejudice in understanding bias against Muslim religious minority groups. Muslims are often racialized and conflated with other minority groups. It should also be noted that white populations in the West have most likely been exposed to Muslim populations less
often than black populations, though this will vary regionally. This could result in greater prevalence of symbolic racism expressed towards Muslims (Kinder & Sears, 1981).

Although there is a great deal of research on how Muslims form their own identities, there is a lack of nuanced research concerning how non-Muslim majority populations view the group (Fischer et al., 2007; Gerges, 2003; Hopkins, 2011; Modood & Ahmad, 2007; Peek et al., 2005). This thesis pursues a better understanding of how Muslims are perceived by majority populations in the West during a time of increased multiculturalism and reactionarism.

Utilizing anthropological and perceptual-based methodologies, this research captured a unique view of how Muslim populations are identified and how they are characterized in the United Kingdom (UK) and United States (US). The UK and the US are relevant to this larger discussion considering the recent ‘Brexit’ decision to leave the European Union and the recent travel restriction policies in the US targeting some countries with Islam as majority religious affiliation. This thesis consists of five chapters: an introduction, including a literature review and a background on the history and current status of Islam in the two studied areas; a methods section; a results section; a discussion; and a conclusion with recommendations for future policy and research.

Literature Review

Islam in the West

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1 Brexit, or the “British exit from the European Union (EU),” is a complex, still-pending decision by the United Kingdom to remove itself from the rules and restrictions as well as benefits of the EU. There were a number of arguments made for this exit, including the economic. The most salient arguments were perhaps focused on the cultural saturation of Britain with those who are not British as presented by UKIP.
The relationship between Islam and Western society is complex and conflict-filled. The root of this conflict and how far into the past it extends is controversial. While 9/11, the infamous attacks on the World Trade Center that occurred on September 11, 2001, is more recently understood to be the origin for the West’s clash with Islam, anti-Muslim prejudice was strong prior to this terrorist event in the US (Listhaug & Strabac, 2008). The word “Islamophobia” was created in 1997 in Britain as part of discourse concerning the victimization of Muslims (Cesari, 2004). Since scholarship on Islam is often a response to negative events, attitudes, or beliefs, these works mention general atmospheres of Islamophobia or misrepresentations of Islam rather than offering an alternative (Cesari, 2004). Some even argue that the negative views of Muslims common throughout Europe are rooted in the first Crusade and its opposition of Islam and Christianity (Husain & O’Brien, 2000).

Much of the literature refers to a political and ideological schism between the East and West, especially as a function of Islam and Christianity. This is depicted as a sort of epic, destined battle, going back to the Crusades. While many historians would refer to this as a clash of civilizations, Aga Khan and Asani (2009) refer to this as “the clash of ignorances” instead. This encapsulates the situation in a more precise way. They argue that the accumulation of misconceptions and misunderstandings about different cultures has led to fear of the other.

From a theoretical perspective, it is also important here to contextualize the term ‘Other’, which is often employed in literature on Orientalism, Islam, and the East in general. There is a long history of this term being used in order to establish the West as
an ingroup versus the East as an outgroup (Adamson, 2011). For example, during their first contact with Eastern countries and the subjugation of those peoples through the process of colonialization, Westerners formed their own identity out of this fabrication of difference and justification for their actions (Saeed, 2017; Said, 1977). The perception became that colonizers were then white, civilized, and moral, and the colonies were non-white, savage, and violent. While racism has since dramatically changed in its expression and justification, much of this dichotomous view persists in modern discourse and in the subconscious (Belton, 2002; Griffiths, 2002; Rony, 1996). ‘Other’ has for years implied alienness, immorality, cultural inferiority, and, it has been argued, still does today (Saeed, 2007).

In fact, the concept of a “clash of civilizations” may contribute to a negative stereotypical narrative in itself. Strabac and Listhaug (2008) delineated two broad categories of negative stereotypes of Islam of which “the clash of civilizations” is the first. It centers around the supposed political and military threat of Islam (Strabac & Listhaug, 2008). The second category surrounds the real or imagined cultural facets of Islam and the Muslim community that are perceived as being contradictory to the Western value system, especially when it concerns gender inequality (Strabac & Listhaug, 2008).

The perception of Islam as an impending threat is likely a function of the subsumption of Muslims into other marginalized groups, the portrayal of Islam as violent in fictional and journalistic media, and the long history of portrayals of Eastern countries as savage (Gerges, 2003; Listhaug & Strabac, 2008; Said, 1977; Shaheen, 2003).
Terrorism in modern society has simply reified past power structures and stereotypes. As Cesari states, there is “a widespread tendency to conflate Islam as an international political force with the ordinary Muslims living as a minority population in the countries of the West” (2004, p. 2). 9/11 is often seen as the event that initially led to the politicization of ‘Muslim’ as an identity. However, many events prior to 9/11 contributed greatly to changes in how Muslims are perceived in the West. Examples include the Iranian revolution, the Rushdie affair, the Gulf War, and the Palestinian intifada (Adamson, 2011; Buijs & Rath, 2006). Many events following 9/11 have changed the political and social landscape as well, including the 7/7 bombings in the UK that were particularly relevant to this research in participant interviews.

Not only are individual Muslims across the world conflated with a broader Islamic international political force, but they are also conflated with various other minority groups (Cesari, 2004). This conflation is evident in the large number of violent events that have occurred in both the US and UK aimed at harming minority victims (Sikhs, Jewish populations, Indian populations, and so on) perceived as being Muslim who in fact were not (Batchelor, 2018; McGreal, 2012; Mishra, 2017; Osborne, 2017; Prendergast, 2017; Suri & Wu, 2017). For example, in the UK, a Brazilian man the police had mistaken for a Muslim extremist who had attacked London was shot seven times (BBC, 2005; Sherriff, 2015).

In the West, Muslims are often perceived as being alien, or immigrants from another country. Immigrant prejudice is often closely linked to perceived threat (economic, etc.) and as a result of their subsumption, anti-Muslim prejudice may be
linked to it as well. When studying prejudice against Muslims, it is important to consider results from studies of immigrant prejudice while keeping in mind that these are often different groups. Hartman, Newman, and Scott (2014) proposed three categories for the most common concerns of anti-immigrant groups in America. These include: (1) whether illegal immigrants abide by their new country’s laws, (2) the threat of immigrants to material resources and wealth, and (3) the threat of immigrants to American culture. These concerns mirror those negative stereotypes of Muslims outlined by Strabac and Listhaug (2008) and extend to the rest of Western society.

Muslims are perhaps most often misconstrued as all being of Arab background, and Arabs are misconstrued as all being Muslim. In actuality, 85% of Muslims in the world are not Arab (Schaefer, 2010). Shaheen (2003) argues that movies and other media can be seen as taking much of the blame for this incorrect stereotype. Despite reality, the repetition of the presentation of Arabs and Muslims as being the same group has led to the attribution of imagined and real characteristics of Arabs to Muslims in the public mind (Shaheen, 2003). Movies, the news, and other sources of information and popular culture contribute greatly to the politicization of Islam and the formation of negative stereotypes (Abu-Lughod, 2002; Asani, 2009; Cesari, 2004; Listhaug & Strabac, 2008; Shaheen, 2003).

Media of various kinds acts as a form of cultural transmission, thereby influencing mass perceptions of cultural others. This is particularly salient in the case of Muslims and Arabs. According to Jack Shaheen’s analysis of over 900 Hollywood films, “only 5% of Arab film roles depict normal, human characters” (2003, p. 171), and the
other 95% depict them as being primitive and violent religious extremists obsessed with money and fair maidens they can ravage. In these films, male Arabs are almost always villains, are often bumbling buffoons, are often anti-Christian, and are often referred to by protagonists as “dogs” or “monkeys” (Shaheen, 2003). Arab women are instead mute on screen, absent from work places, and usually cloaked in black (Shaheen, 2003).

The presentation and continual repetition of these and similar negative images of or metaphors for Muslims creates and internalizes abstract, symbolic racism within the masses. Very few alternative narratives have been offered within Western pop culture in order to combat these visions of a foreign, savage, and extremist Muslim person. Instead, new portrayals often harken back to dusty images of the Crusades and suggestions that modernity and Islam are mutually exclusive. The continued view of Muslim groups as backwards contributes to a feeling of difference and Western superiority, and as a result, the desire for complete assimilation to modern, Western, and Christian ways.

The concepts of multiculturalism, assimilation, and nationalism are being heavily debated in the public sphere and are interconnected as concepts. Assimilation can be defined as the process of becoming like or similar to a majority culture, which is distinct from its all-encompassing and all-consuming connotations. Multiculturalism, the promotion of minority cultural values and practices within a majority context, has often been seen at odds with the process of assimilation. Nationalism, the promotion of one’s nation, is often seen as at odds with multiculturalism as well and instead intimately tied to racism and ethnocentrism.
Assimilation, to various degrees, has become an area of larger focus for political debate and research in the West (Brubaker, 2001). Throughout Europe, including the UK, there has been a widespread rejection of multicultural society and a feeling of being threatened by Islam and refugees, supported by a research study across ten European countries (Foster, 2016). According to Hopkins (2011):

In this regard Europe's Muslims are often placed in a difficult position. They are routinely viewed as "in" Europe, but not "of" Europe, and many of Europe's majority populations are wary of Muslims enacting their religious identity and prefer them to eschew minority identifications. Concerns about minority identity enactment and national loyalty are particularly prominent when the minorities are politicized. (p. 253)

Multiculturalism and assimilation are also viewed differently in the UK and US, which I discuss further later on. Muslims are especially suspect to prejudice considering their multiple attributed identities and the potential for misconstrual for several groups. As a result, this may lead to an increased level of prejudice expressed towards them. Strabac and Listhaug, after conducting an analysis of survey data from 30 countries, found that “prejudice against Muslims was more widespread than prejudice against other immigrants” (2008, p. 268).

While the increased prejudice towards Muslim groups could be seen as a function of race or geography, Muslims exist as a member of every ethnicity and nation and not all are immigrants. Unkelbach, Forgas, and Denson (2008) conducted an experiment in the UK utilizing a shooting simulator computer game. Results showed a shooter bias for targets wearing a turban or a hijab, and supported the idea that increased negative tendencies towards Muslims were a result of acquired negative stereotypes. Religious
garb, rather than other factors such as race, mediated the violence and prejudice expressed towards Muslim people. This suggests that cultural signifiers are particularly salient in anti-Muslim prejudice, but race cannot be thrown out as a prominent piece to such hostility.

A study in Canada found that participants held more amicable views towards immigrants more similar to themselves, specifically toward British immigrants rather than Arab Muslim immigrants (Safdar, Dupuis, Lewis, El-Geledi, & Bourhis, 2008). The greatest predictor of acculturation orientations (welcoming individualism or integrationism versus unwelcoming assimilationism or segregationism) toward Arab Muslims was religiosity of the participant (Safdar et al., 2008). However, religiosity’s influence on anti-Muslim prejudice is still being contested. Strabac (2008) found religiosity did not mediate prejudice towards Muslims. Whether or not perceived personal threat influences anti-Muslim prejudice is still a question to be answered as well (Gonzalez, Verkuyten, Weesie, & Poppe, 2008; Hartman et al., 2014; Kinder & Sears, 1981).

As a result of these ethnic and religious misconstruals and the subsumption of Muslims into groups of various races, the theory of modern racism was utilized as a framework for analysis of the data collected for this thesis. In the literature, this is also sometimes referred to as “symbolic racism,” “subtle racism,” or “aversive racism.” Often used to describe anti-black prejudice, it argues that racism persists in white majority populations today, but that it is expressed more covertly as opposition to political policies that would aid the black community and as lamentations of the way the black community
is imagined to violate traditional American values (Hartman et al., 2014). As shown for white-black relations and anti-Hispanic prejudice, individuals understand on some level that openly and directly denigrating minority populations, such as Muslims, violates the societal norms, values, and narrative of mainstream America (equality, tolerance, the melting pot, etc.) (Hartman et al., 2014).

As in other cases of prejudice, anti-Muslim prejudice manifests through the invocation of (perceived or real) minority behaviors that are deemed inappropriate for typical American or British values. These behaviors may include refusing to learn English, dressing in a way outside the norm, not allowing women to work, praying too often or seeming too religious, and much more. It too is expressed in the form of support for ‘race neutral,’ or perhaps ‘religion neutral,’ policies that are in opposition to Muslims, such as Executive Order 13769 (often colloquially referred to as the ‘travel ban’ or ‘Muslim ban’).

While social psychology research tends to define prejudice as developing naturally out of the close association between ingroup love and outgroup hate, the requirement of outgroup hate for prejudice has since been disproven (Brewer, 1999). One can be well-intentioned, ambivalent, or unaware when concerning outgroups, yet still express prejudice. This could be a result of positive feelings, empathy, and goodwill existing for someone when concerning their ingroup, but not for those outside of it. This, while not outright, hostile prejudice to the casual observer, is the makings of subtle, or symbolic racism. Many participants found themselves in this position, though to varying
degrees. Brewer (1999) explains how loyalty to one’s ingroup can be linked to outgroup hatred, though the former is not a prerequisite for the latter. He writes:

   Ingroup love is not a necessary precursor of outgroup hate. However, the very factors that make ingroup attachment and allegiance important to individuals also provide a fertile ground for antagonism and distrust of those outside the ingroup boundaries. The need to justify ingroup values in the form of moral superiority to others, sensitivity to threat, the anticipation of interdependence under conditions of distrust, social comparison processes, and power politics all conspire to connect ingroup identification and loyalty to disdain and overt hostility toward outgroups. (p. 442)

Muslims are perceived as being obviously different from majority populations based on dress. Muslims are often politicized either as a function of 1) the immigration debate, 2) terrorism, and 3) moral superiority (when concerning jihad, violence, treatment of women, etc.), which has often been invoked by critics of Islam and its followers. Thus, they as an outgroup may sit in a particularly vulnerable position for ambivalence to transform into hatred.

   However, as I found during my research in 2016 and 2017, recent resistance to multiculturalism and the rise of populist political movements are causing large-scale rifts in the way modern racism theory plays out (Farage, 2015; The BBC, 2006; Wright, 2011). There is a violent, extremist minority, particularly spurred on by the anonymity of the internet, expressing racism in more direct, blatant forms that would likely be considered outdated if performed in-person (i.e. neo-nazi subreddits and 4chan’s “politically incorrect” message board) (Glaser, Dixit, & Green, 2002; Nithyanand, Schaffner, & Gill, 2017; Suler, 2004). This trend, unlike modern racism theory, is starkly
inconsistent with discourse surrounding modern societal norms and values of the US and UK. Still, UKIP (the UK Independence Party that lobbied for ‘Brexit’) and other parties and political leaders, are attempting to change political discourse and the values of their communities at large. Many now feel that not talking about these issues is a greater moral transgression than offending someone with a different skin color, religion, or set of beliefs from their own.

This is supported by previous social psychology research. Merritt, Effron, and Monin (2010) argue that “moral self-licensing can alleviate anxiety about saying something offensive; thus, self-licensing could be a valuable strategy to facilitate open conversations about sensitive topics (e.g., affirmative action)” (p. 355). However, moral licensing could also have led to the expression of racism towards minorities through this discourse or through political action. Moral licensing occurs when someone does one of two things: 1) does something morally wrong but feels it is offset by a previous good deed, thus still viewing the action as wrong but being more comfortable in performing it or 2) uses a previous good deed to re-contextualize and argue that their ‘bad’ deed was not a transgression at all (Merritt et al., 2010). There are several nationally relevant political developments in UK and US recent history that may have been used as a foundation for moral licensing, such as the election of the first Muslim mayor of London, the election of the first black US president, the prevalence of multiculturalist policies, and so on (Merritt et al., 2010). These events could be seen as an object for moral licensing validating support of anti-immigrant policies, anti-Muslim policies, etc. or as a breaking point for those already angry.
There is a persistent narrative of class directly influencing political affiliation, prejudice, and biases. This often involves economics as a motivator for voting decisions and thus with the white, working class being vilified and patronized in works like *Hillbilly Elegy*. However, class is not the sole motivator of political decisions. This narrative is not completely true when faced with further examination. As Achterberg described in 2006, cultural issues and “identity politics” have increasingly become important influences upon voting behavior for those on all sides of the political spectrum in several Western countries, including both the US and Britain. Further, he argued that these cultural interests could explain ‘unnatural’ voting behavior, for example the US middle class supporting a Republican candidate that will not benefit them in terms of class mobility. The recent ‘freeing’ of discourse surrounding cultural issues, its increasing importance to voting behavior, and the use of culture rather than biology for racist justification likely contribute to expressions of symbolic racism, whether they be intentional or not (Glaser et al., 2002; Klein, A., 2017; Nithyanand et al., 2017; Saeed, 2007).

**US Background**

There are at least 2.6 million Muslims in the US, two-thirds of whom are US-born citizens (Schaefer, 2010). Black Muslims comprise only 5% of African Americans but are estimated to comprise 90% of all converts to Islam in the US (Schaefer, 2010). This likely stems from the 10% of African slaves who were Muslim before being forced into Christianity by white colonialists (Schaefer, 2010).
American contact with Islam resulted from a number of different events. Spanish Muslims came with conquistadors to the Americas (Schaefer, 2010). World’s fairs brought Arab presenters to American cities in the 19th century, a positive experience for viewers although filtered through orientalism (Griffiths, 2002; Rony, 1996; Schaefer, 2010). This and US-funded missionary programs in the Middle East, encouraged Arab immigration to the US, but after 9/11, there was a decline of approximately 30% in Arab and Muslim immigration to the US (Schaefer, 2010). Numbers rebounded in later years, but since the institution of the ‘travel ban’ there is a great deal of uncertainty for the future of immigration from Muslim predominant countries (Schaefer, 2010).

Out of 9/11 came a shift in political and social organization called the “war on terrorism.” This entailed war in the Middle East, imprisonment of accused people in Guantanamo Bay, and also a cultural change with pervasive effects. An “atmosphere of extreme suspicion” persists in America, arguably resulting in greater discrimination against Muslims (Cesari, 2004).

Obsessing over Muslim women and their treatment, US media often attempts to “understand” 9/11 using perceived negative cultural differences rather than providing historical and political basis for the attacks (Abu-Lughod, 2002). This contributes to the East versus West dichotomy. Much like in the UK, this is rooted in an extensive history of colonialism, which is bolstered by the idea of the white savior (US citizens) helping the oppressed woman (Muslim women in the Middle East). This narrative also contributes to the gendered view that Muslim women lack agency (Abu-Lughod, 2002).
More recently, political events have displayed a prejudice against the perceived ethnic, religious, and geographical composition of Muslims. The rhetoric of the 2016 presidential campaign of Donald Trump, and others, was vehemently anti-immigrant. Following Trump’s election, there was an increase in the prevalence of hate crimes (Williams, 2018). Although this is common during election years, there has been a palpable change in rhetoric, policy, and prejudice expression when it concerns minority groups, especially those existing at the intersection of minority labels such as Muslims (Williams, 2018). The rise in hate crimes specifically against Muslims during 2016 also surpassed that of 2001 (the year of 9/11) (Kishi, 2017).

One policy that exemplifies prejudice on a broader, public scale is the “Muslim ban,” which was specifically aimed to obstruct the immigration of those from countries with Muslim majority affiliation. In 2018, this culminated in the Supreme Court case Trump v. Hawaii, wherein the court upheld the ban. The rationale behind the decision, provided by judges both for and against the ban, focused on the preservation of families (Fetters, 2018). Familial loyalty and love is a traditional value often espoused as being one uniquely Christian and American. It can also act as a poignant appeal to the similarities that majority populations may share with marginalized groups. In support of the ban, Chief Justice Roberts argued that provisions had been made for the reuniting of families as an exemption. This argument suggests that ‘normal’ Muslims with traditional values are the exception rather than the rule; it is then assumed the majority is composed of threats to the US. In the end, the fear surrounding a group of people perceived as being an unfamiliar, threatening international political force overpowered the potential
familiarity one could find in the desire to be with one’s family (See historic Supreme Court cases Ozawa v. United States and United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind). This exemplifies well the ambivalence the West holds concerning Islam that Said (1977) describes as going back to their first encounters. As he explained, the threat of Islam can either be handled via Christian understandings or be feared for its alienness.

Negative attitudes towards Islam in the aftermath of terrorist events can be seen on a local scale as well. In Murfreesboro, TN, a city of approximately 130,000 people near my US-based research field site, there has been great controversy over the construction of a larger Islamic Center aimed at accommodating the 1,000 members of a smaller facility. This smaller facility has existed since the early 1980’s, and yet it was in 2010 that local unrest began (Smietana, 2014).

In 2010, the Rutherford County judge approved construction of a new Islamic Center. Following this, hundreds marched in protest and the televangelist Pat Robertson called it a “mega mosque,” claiming Muslims were taking over Murfreesboro (Smietana, 2014). In the same year, an arsonist set fire to one of the new center’s construction vehicles. In 2011, a bomb threat was made against the center (Kemph, 2012). For several years those fighting the center attempted to block its construction by suing the county, many arguing that Islam is not a religion. A local judge initially ruled in favor of those opposing the mosque, but a federal court overturned the decision. The mosque was opened despite resistance in 2012. The case against the center was brought to the Supreme Court, but they declined to hear it in June 2014, ending the long struggle. In total, this cost Rutherford County over $340,000 in legal fees (Smietana, 2014). This was
not the end, however, of opposition to the mosque. In 2016, several thousand dollars in cash donations were stolen from the center in a burglary at the end of Ramadan, and in 2017, a group of vandals defaced the building with graffiti and bacon. The two men responsible for the vandalism have since been arrested (Timms, 2017).

In contrast, the site of my study, Bowling Green, KY, has multiple mosques. Participants often said they were aware that the mosques existed but did not notice them or think about them. When construction of a new mosque was being proposed in 2004, a Muslim doctor managing the plans was interviewed. He explained to the local newspaper,
“In a sense the religion [of Islam] is an extension of both the Jewish and Christian religions, adding to them the revelations of the Prophet Mohammad. We are part of this community. Our children are Americans. We love our country” (Miller, 2004). The Muslim community appeared to bear the burden of addressing and dissipating any fears held by the majority population. They had to distance themselves from images of terrorists as much as possible.

The original Islamic Center was a place where people of all cultures, ethnicities, and geographical origins could meet to worship. The group who wished to build a new mosque was comprised entirely of Bosnians. During the interim period before the completion of the building, they worshipped in a maintenance garage separate from other Muslims, collecting dues from committee members in order to fund their ultimate goal (Mink, 2012). Now, the Bosnian mosque sits next to a Church of Christ. It was dedicated in 2012 during the 17th convention of Bosniaks in North America. Over 10,000 Bosnians from around the world converged in Bowling Green, KY with this event at its center (Mink, 2012).

The differing reception of the construction of these two mosques could be rooted in a number of fears and prejudices. The Muslim community in Bowling Green appeared to succeed primarily because of their ethnic composition—Bosnians who present as being white. They may have succeeded also partly because the Muslim community leaders attempted to conform their group to Christian images of Islam, speaking of it as an extension of familiar religions. This is the familiar strategy of the West in coping with

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B Bowling Green, Kentucky is a refugee resettlement location with a high number of Bosnian refugees having been relocated there in recent years.
fears of the Muslim other. Said (1977) describes this in his influential text, Orientalism, saying:

Islam is judged to be a fraudulent new version of some previous experience, in this case Christianity. The threat is muted, familiar values impose themselves, and in the end the mind reduces the pressure upon it by accommodating things to itself as either "original" or "repetitious." Islam thereafter is "handled": its novelty and its suggestiveness are brought under control so that relatively nuanced discriminations are now made that would have been impossible had the raw novelty of Islam been left unattended. The Orient at large, therefore, vacillates between the West's contempt for what is familiar and its shivers of delight in—or fear of—novelty. (p. 59)

It is also important to consider the compositional differences between these two towns. Bowling Green, while smaller and consisting of 65,000 people, is also a “preferred community” for refugee resettlement and a college town. Murfreesboro is about twice as large in terms of population and is known for its ties to regional civil war and plantation history.

The Bowling Green mosque and its attendees are perceived to be more similar to the majority population in terms of both religious belief and ethnic composition. They appear to be less of a cultural threat and have effectively distanced themselves from terrorism and appearing as a political threat. Instead, the Murfreesboro community appears to perceive a cultural distance between them and Muslims, leading to the direct demonstration of it by vandals when they decorated the local mosque with bacon.

UK Background

Post-colonialist ties are some of the most well-established factors influencing modern day perceptions of Muslims in Britain. British ties to countries with majority
Muslim populations began with colonization and the arms of the empire. According to Phillips, “The now-familiar debate about identity and citizenship was sparked off when the first Caribbeans stepped off the Windrush” (2011, para. 10). The Windrush was a wave of immigration after WWII from the new Commonwealth countries of India, various Caribbean islands, Pakistan, and others. Further examples can be found in the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, which continued to leave its “mark on subcontinental politics fifty years after the event” (Gilmartin, 1998, p. 1068). Each were once a piece of pre-partition “British” India. Immigration patterns throughout British history can be traced back to this. Footholds like Leicester, an area near this project’s studied region that was often referenced as a diverse Muslim hub, were established as a result of this major change (Ballard, 2002).

Muslims, and other post-colonial minority populations exist somewhere on the dividing line between West and non-West (Pedziwiatr, 2009). One historian theorized that the British Empire helped to solidify Muslim identity as a result of British understandings of India and religious revivalism (Robinson, 1998). The majority of Muslims in the UK are South Asian and they can be placed into three major categories: the Gujaratis, the Punjabis, and the Bangladeshis (Dwyer, 2008). Distinguishing between post-colonial prejudice against these South Asian communities and expressions of Islamophobia in Britain can be difficult due to the populations’ overlap (Thomas & Sanderson, 2011). One survey found that 90% of South Asians use religion as a self-identifier and that it holds primacy over skin color, which was as significant as height to their sense of self (Husain & O’Brien, 2000).
Often prejudice against Muslims is intimately intertwined with that against immigrant groups and various other minorities. This is partly due to population overlap and to media portrayals such as those analyzed by Shaheen (2003). It has been shown that as early as the 1970s there was a fear of foreigners and their cultures saturating Britain and undoing the status quo (Barker, 1981; Gonzalez et al., 2008). This argument is not unlike that of the UKIP party in recent years.

Richardson (2004) cites four main themes of negative stereotypes of Muslims and Islam that appear in British broadsheet press: (1) Muslim countries pose a military threat; (2) Islam poses a threat of political violence and extremism; (3) Muslim political leaders/parties in the UK pose a threat to democracy; and (4) There is great gender inequality within the Muslim community, which poses a social threat. These slot well into the two categories of negative stereotypes of Islam from Strabac and Listhaug (2008): political and military threats; and cultural contradictions to the Western value system.

One aspect of modern fear of cultural saturation and the popularity of British populism is the concept of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism in this context could be defined as the promotion, or allowance, of a variety of cultures and lifeways to coexist within Britain without the pressure of assimilation. A study in the Netherlands found that those who endorse multiculturalism perceive less symbolic threat from and have fewer negative stereotypes of Muslims (Gonzalez et al., 2008). Multiculturalism may reduce group threat and promote social equality. However, multiculturalism has been challenged
by British political leaders and recent events (Farage, 2015; The BBC, 2006; Wright, 2011).

Brexit has changed the political and social landscape of Britain. In the weeks following the referendum, there was a sharp increase in hate crimes (Westcott, 2016). The Muslim Council of Britain collected images of these from social media, creating a gallery of “100 hate incidents,” shown in Figure 1.2, in an argument for the Home Secretary to help in better protecting migrants (Westcott, 2016). Some argue that there is more freedom to talk about issues such as immigration.

Fig. 1.2 Examples of hate incidents catalogued by the MCB following the referendum

Source: The MCB
To complicate matters further, one must also consider the question of Ummah\(^3\), and whether it is perceived as being an essential part of Muslim identity to other groups. With globalization and technological advances, it is easier for Muslims to identify with others across borders. Many organizations define Muslim identity as transnational. There are two British organizations with different orientations, intentions, and beliefs, who do so. The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB, est. 1997) lobbies for Muslim representation as a traditional interest group does, while the Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT, est. 1953) focuses more on the global identity of Islam and finds its interests to be at odds with that of ‘Western’ ideas and liberalism (Adamson, 2011). Complicating matters further, between March 2009 and January 2010, the British government suspended its relationship with the HT after its release of a controversial stance on Israel (Adamson, 2011). Which type of organization the general public perceives as representative of Islam and its followers is central to their perception of and interactions with Muslims.

The bombings of July 7, 2005 first catapulted Islam to the forefront of British society’s consciousness. Researchers today see this as the event that “confirmed the picture of Muslim youth as oppositional to British values, prompting the blaming of multiculturalism and attempts to ‘prevent violent extremism’” (Thomas & Sanderson, 2011, p. 1028).

The BBC interviewed experts and regular citizens in the aftermath of the calamitous event. Dr. Waheed, a representative from the Hizb ut-Tahrir, explained that

\(^3\) Ummah is a term referring to the concept of a broader transnational community of Muslims. This has been used as a way to increase identity cohesion in a positive way within the community and as a form of recruitment for extremists. It is something questioned by the West as it is perceived as exemplifying the broader political force of Islam.
the whole of society should accept responsibility for the attacks, rather than placing it all on the shoulders of the Muslim community. He went further to say that “the media needs to stop demonizing Muslims and fanning the flames of Islamophobia” (*The BBC*, 2005).

The average citizen responded quite differently. R.S. of Bath said, “Surely the problem is not that Muslims are not given opportunity to integrate - it is that the Muslim leaders have not been clear enough in rejecting many of the non-inclusive aspects of Islam” (*The BBC*, 2005). Paul, a citizen from Cambridgeshire, worried about the loyalty of Muslims to the UK, saying that “it does seem British born Muslims are first and foremost Muslim. Any other attachments, such as nationality, come a very poor second, at best” (*The BBC*, 2005). These comments reflect the concerns expressed by UK citizens eleven years later in my own research: terrorism, extremism, integration, self-segregation, identity, and loyalty, among others. These broader issues were exemplified in local reactions to Islam and its expansion at the UK site of my research. While nearby cities had mosques, Grantham was bereft of a place of worship for Muslims, and in the past there had been conflict surrounding the construction of a mosque. In 2014 a petition was created on Change.org against the construction of an Islamic Centre in Grantham by a user called, “People of Grantham No Longer Silent” with the Queen of England as their avatar. It intended to force decision-makers of the South Kesten District Council to reject the proposed plans for the Islamic Centre. In a town of approximately 44,000, this garnered 626 supporters in total.

Then, in February 2014, a protest was staged against the building of the mosque by the Grantham Town English Defense League (“Proposed Islamic centre,” 2014). The
English Defense League is a far-right movement that opposes the spread of Islam and Sharia Law in the UK. A counter-protest was led by a local activist as well, so overall there were around 250 police officers and 250 protesters involved (Corker, 2014). In the end, those against the construction of the mosque succeeded. The Lincolnshire County Council directed the building application to be named invalid based on bureaucratic issues.

However, a group called the Grantham Muslim Community Association (GMCA) has existed since 1984, according to their website, and began to construct a Grantham Islamic Centre in 2016. They offer the current space up for prayer in the meantime and have staged events with the local non-Muslim community. In July 2016, the month following the referendum, the GMCA hosted a celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr at a nearby village. The mayor and other non-Muslim political leaders attended (Newton, 2016). This suggests progress is occurring within the community.
In the city of the nearest mosque, Lincoln, a new mosque was proposed in 2014 as well due to the rapidly growing Muslim population in the area. This is currently in the process of being built. There are multiple reasons for its success and Grantham’s backlash. First, Lincoln is a much larger and more diverse city. Second, it has had a mosque already since 1981, though it can only accommodate 60 people at maximum capacity. Third, and finally, the Lincoln mosque was written about by the BBC and marketed as a way to prevent radicalization and religious extremism via utilization of transnational Muslim internet sources. The Grantham mosque was instead viewed as a transgression against the traditional British way of life.
This set of events helps to mirror the overall picture of UK concerns and the model utilized in this thesis for negative stereotypes of Islam. The Lincoln mosque succeeded because it prevented further political and military threats and the Grantham mosque initially failed because of its cultural contradictions to the British value system. With this historical, scholarly, and regional context, I will now explain what methods I employed to collect data in order to understand current attitudes towards Islam and Muslims.
CHAPTER 2

METHODS

To collect data regarding my research questions, a variety of methods were combined, thereby triangulating and strengthening resulting findings. These were intended to provide a multi-faceted view of the interaction between white-identifying populations and Muslim groups by producing an array of qualitative and quantitative data and decipherable patterns. Due to the fact that this research project involved human subjects, I obtained certification for social and behavioral research with human subjects through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative Program (CITI) (11/19/2015) and fulfilled Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (04/22/2016).

Participants were initially recruited through the use of flyers and followed up by phone and email (Appendix A). Flyers were generally less effective for recruitment than word of mouth and personal communication. Key informants were identified as I built rapport in both the US and the UK. Thus, snowball sampling, wherein participants recruit further participants and so on, was relied upon. Participants were assigned alphabetically-based pseudonyms and thus their responses were confidential. Twenty-five participants were recruited overall, fifteen from the US and ten from the UK. Participants completed a demographic survey wherein gender, ethnicity, religion, and level of religiousness were self-reported. Then participants completed card sorting and free listing tasks.
Approximately half of participants proceeded to take part in a semi-structured interview. Each participant was offered a $10 or £10 gift card incentive for participation. One US interview was excluded due to the poor quality of audio.

Methods were chosen and carefully considered due to the sensitive nature of this topic. Interviews were fairly successful partly because of my identity as a white European-seeming young woman. Due to the subjective and reflexive nature of ethnography, this resulted in a disinhibition where white populations expressed views they may not have with an outgroup member. While interviews were vital to gaining a nuanced view of participants’ views and allowing them to express it in their own words, they are also a very direct and explicit way to approach this topic. It follows that some participants may have expressed views which they do not actually believe, a more palatable version of their beliefs, or perhaps an explicit attitude that differs from their implicit biases. The card sorting and free listing tasks were vital to getting at these potential issues in a less explicit format.

Field Site Descriptions

The US site used in this research project was a suburban college town one hour from a large metropolitan area. Its residents were predominantly Republican, Christian, and white, though there was a large Eastern European immigrant population (United States Census Bureau, 2017; “2016 Kentucky presidential election results,” 2016). Several mosques were active in the area. Data was collected from February to August 2017.
The average age of the 15 participants in the US was 42, with the youngest being 18 and the oldest being 73. All US participants were white and their average reported level of religiousness was 3.4. Four of them were male and eleven were female. 53.33% were Christian, 20% were agnostic, and 26.66% were non-religious.

![Map of Kentucky](image)

*Fig. 2.1* The shaded region corresponds to the county studied

The UK site used in this research project (pictures in Appendix B) was semi-rural with a college in the area. The residents were primarily Conservative, Christian, and white, but there was a large Eastern European immigrant population. It was an hour train ride from a large metropolitan area and close to several cities with large Muslim populations and a number of mosques. Data was collected in the UK from August to December 2016.

Of the 10 UK participants, all were over the age of 40, with the oldest being 71. Their average age was 58. 50% of UK participants were male and 50% were female. All
participants identified as white and they reported an average religiousness of 4.4. 80% identified as Christian and the other 20% identified as agnostic.

![Map of England with a shaded region]

*Fig. 2.2* The shaded region corresponds to the shire studied

**Participant Observation**

As is typical of Anthropology, I conducted participant observation while at my field sites and surrounding areas (Schensul, Schensul, & LeCompte, 1999). I took photographs of the region and material items and I took notes on notable events I encountered, such as the failed school trip to Leicester or the protest in Nottingham. In addition to the recordings I engaged in daily interactions and informal conversations with people living at my field sites. This data provided necessary contextualization for the other forms of data I collected.
Card Sorting

Drawing on Bernard (1988) and Burton & Romney’s (1975) research methodologies, I developed a card sorting task for the US and UK participants. The card sorting task consisted of participants sorting through a set of 22 cards and arranging them according to predetermined categories (see Appendix C). The cards depicted different people, including variables for race, gender and faith affiliation as indicated vis-à-vis apparel. Each participant sorted the 22 cards six times. Cards were coded with letters representing characteristics of those depicted on them. The order of each card sorting was recorded, utilizing the codes. This task allowed for the analysis of distinctions white-identifying populations in the US and UK make between those they perceive as being Muslim and non-Muslim. It also allowed for the identification of what values they associate with the general populace versus Muslim groups. Below is the categorization in which participants sorted the cards:

1. Piousness (most to least)
2. Trustworthiness (most to least)
3. Sociability (most to least)
4. Similarity to self (most to least)
5. How British/American they seem (most to least)
6. Organize into three groups: Muslim, not Muslim, and unsure
Free Listing

Utilizing Brewer’s (2002) methodology, I constructed a free listing task. The free listing tasks consisted of participants delineating any lexical items they could recall that fit within predetermined categories. This provided a methodological instrument to assess linguistic associations my research participants had about Muslims, and citizens of the UK or US. Below is a list of the prompts used in this study:

1. Write down any qualities that signal someone is British/American to you.
2. Write down any qualities that signal someone is Muslim to you.
3. Name all the famous or influential Muslim people you can think of.
4. Name all the famous or influential Christian people you can think of.

Semi-Structured Interviewing

Drawing on Bernard (1988), my classroom fieldwork experiences, and a review of the literature as a reference point, I developed a semi-structured interview protocol. The semi-structured interviewing consisted of a set of seventeen interview questions (see Appendix D). As per the instrument design, semi-structured interviews incorporate a level of fluidity, relying on the conversation to further shape the interview. This results in the ability to delve more deeply into a particular topic of importance and allows the interviewer to ask detailed follow-up questions (as opposed to formal interview design) (Agar, 1996; Schensul et al., 1999). An H4n zoom recorder was used during interviews. Interviews lasted approximately one hour each. Eleven interviews were fully transcribed and a content analysis was performed. This provided qualitative data that allowed for
identification of more complex and subtle patterns in language and ideas concerning Muslim groups and identity more generally. Appendix E delineates each of the six themes drawn out of the interviewing data and provides examples of words and phrases coded for each along with the frequency of their expression.
CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Card Sorting

T-tests were used for statistical analysis of card sorting data, both linear and nonlinear. All of the cards were sorted similarly across the two countries for the different categories, except for one card for trustworthiness, two cards for sociability, two cards for similarity to self, and six cards for how British/American they seemed. See Appendix F for the list of individual card differences between countries. These differences are further dissected in the comparison section of the chapter 4. Generally, results showed that those cards displaying characteristics typically associated with Muslims (i.e. dark skin and traditional clothing) were sorted as being less similar to participants, trustworthy and sociable, and more pious. Nine out of the 25 participants produced at least one nonlinear response. Based on analysis of nonlinear responses, piousness was the most difficult to sort and nationality was the least difficult to sort.

Though my first five card sorting tasks asked participants to sort the cards continuously from most to least, participants struggled with making direct comparisons between cards. Some preferred to compare them indirectly so much that they created groups of their own. Participants seemed to struggle the most with the first and second
card sorts—most to least pious and most to least trustworthy. This manifested in participants creating their own groups more often and there being fewer groups per participant for the categories. For example, participants may have chosen to create most and least groups (or 2 groups), others chose to create a most, middle, and least group (or 3 groups). Some participants said they were all the same and put every card into a single group. These were all labeled as non-linear, or non-continuous responses and were seen as categorically different from linear responses. Some non-continuous responses were more complex, with some cards being put in a continuous line and then a few designated as most or least but without internal order. I interpreted these more complex responses as indicative of increased ability to make direct comparisons. The number of categories employed in responses to Card Sorting Task One was significantly smaller than the number of categories employed for Card Sorting Task Three, \( t(24) = -1.79, p = 0.043, d = -0.36 \), and Card Sorting Task Five, \( t(24) = -1.865, p = 0.037, d = -0.37 \). The difference in the number of categories employed for Card Sorting Task One versus Card Sorting Task Four also approached significance, \( t(24) = -1.60, p = 0.061, d = -0.32 \).

For piousness, there was a significant difference indicating people categorized those with medium or dark skin as more pious than those with light or olive skin, \( t(23) = -4.259, p < .001, d = -0.87 \); those wearing traditional dress as more pious than those wearing western dress, \( t(23) = -8.527, p < .001, d = -1.74 \); women as more pious than men, \( t(23) = -2.683, p = 0.013, d = -0.55 \); women wearing plain traditional dress as more pious than women wearing fashionable traditional dress, \( t(23) = 4.110, p < .001, d = 0.84 \).
For trustworthiness, there was a significant difference indicating people categorized women as more trustworthy than men, $t(23) = -4.460, p < .001, d = -0.91$; those with light or olive skin as more trustworthy than those with medium or dark skin, $t(23) = -2.448, p = 0.022, d = -0.50$; women with fashionable traditional clothing as more trustworthy than women with plain traditional clothing, $t(23) = 6.527, p < .001, d = 1.33$; those with more obvious and more concealing traditional clothing as less trustworthy than those with western clothes, $t(23) = 3.777, p < .001, d = 0.77$, and than those with less obvious and less concealing traditional clothing, $t(23) = -6.525, p < .001, d = -1.33$. There however, was not a significant difference between all stimuli with traditional clothing versus stimuli with western clothing, or the less obvious and less concealing traditional clothing versus western clothing.

For sociability, there was a significant difference indicating people categorized women as more sociable than men, $t(24) = -3.545, p = 0.002, d = -0.71$; those with light or olive skin as more sociable than those with medium or dark skin, $t(24) = -4.071, p < .001, d = -0.81$; those with western dress as more sociable than those with traditional dress, $t(24) = -4.662, p < .001, d = -0.93$; those with less obvious and less concealing traditional dress as more sociable than those with more obvious and more concealing traditional dress, $t(24) = 7.017, p < .001, d = 1.40$; women with fashionable traditional dress as more sociable than women with plain traditional dress, $t(24) = 7.255, p < .001, d = 1.45$.

For similarity to self, there was a significant difference indicating people categorized those with Western clothing as more similar to self than those with traditional
clothing, \( t(24) = -6.180, p < .001, d = -1.24 \); those with less obvious and less concealing traditional clothing as more similar to self than those with more obvious and more concealing traditional clothing, \( t(24) = 5.962, p < .001, d = 1.19 \); women with fashionable traditional clothing as more similar to self than women with plain traditional clothing, \( t(24) = -5.982, p < .001, d = -1.20 \); those with light or olive skin as more similar to self than those with medium or dark skin, \( t(24) = -5.873, p < .001, d = -1.18 \).

For how British or American they seemed, there was a significant difference indicating people categorized those with western clothing as more British or American than those with traditional clothing, \( t(23) = -11.147, p < .001, d = -2.28 \); those with less obvious and less concealing traditional clothing as more British or American than those with more obvious and more concealing traditional clothing, \( t(23) = 8.978, p < .001, d = 1.83 \); women with fashionable traditional clothing as more British or American than women with plain traditional clothing, \( t(23) = -3.803, p < .001, d = -0.78 \); those with light or olive skin as more British or American than those with medium or dark skin, \( t(23) = -5.135, p < .001, d = -1.05 \).
Card Sorting Task Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stimuli Attribute</th>
<th>Pious</th>
<th>Trustworthy</th>
<th>Sociable</th>
<th>Similar to Self</th>
<th>British/American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium/dark skin</td>
<td>More**</td>
<td>Less*</td>
<td>Less**</td>
<td>Less**</td>
<td>Less*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional religious dress</td>
<td>More**</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Less**</td>
<td>Less**</td>
<td>Less**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More obvious/concealing traditional</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Less**</td>
<td>Less**</td>
<td>Less**</td>
<td>Less**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unembellished women’s traditional dress</td>
<td>More**</td>
<td>Less**</td>
<td>Less**</td>
<td>Less**</td>
<td>Less**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = t-test; p < 0.05  ** = t-test; p < 0.001

**Fig. 3.1** Card Sorting Task Analysis Table

**Free Listing**

T-tests were also used to statistically analyze free listing data. Data showed some differences between the US and UK. However, overall the US and UK appeared to perceive Muslims more negatively than Christians.

Across countries, there were no significant differences between the total number of answers or the number of negative responses except for Free Listing Task One, where UK participants provided significantly more responses than US participants, \( t(9) = 2.509, p = 0.033, d = 0.79 \). While there was a significant difference between number of responses for Free Listing Task One (qualities of British/American people) versus Free Listing Task Two (qualities of Muslim people) for the UK data, with more responses to Free Listing Task One than Two, \( t(9) = 2.756, p = 0.022, d = 0.87 \), there was not for the US data. And while there was not a significant difference for number of responses for
Free Listing Task Three (famous/influential Muslims) versus Free Listing Task Four (famous/influential Christians) for the UK data, there was a significant difference for the US data, with more responses for Free Listing Task Four, \( t(14) = -3.613, p = 0.003, d = -0.93 \). Both the UK and US participants wrote significantly more negative responses for Free Listing Task Three (influential Muslims) than for Free Listing Task Four (influential Christians), \( t(9) = 2.449, p = 0.037, d = 0.78, t(13) = 2.797, p = 0.015, d = 0.75 \).

**Fig. 3.2 Free Listing Task Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>FL 1 total # responses</th>
<th>FL 2 total # responses</th>
<th>FL 3 total # responses</th>
<th>FL 4 total # responses</th>
<th>FL 3 # negative responses</th>
<th>FL 4 # negative responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>Fewer than UK FL 1*</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Fewer than US FL 4*</td>
<td>More than US FL 3*</td>
<td>More than US FL 4*</td>
<td>Fewer than US FL 3*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>More than UK FL 2* and US FL 1*</td>
<td>Fewer than UK FL 1*</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>More than UK FL 4*</td>
<td>Fewer than UK FL 3*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = t-test; \( p < 0.05 \)

**Semi-Structured Interviewing**

Six key themes were drawn out of content analysis of each of the fully transcribed semi-structured interviews. These, in order of their frequency of expression, were: (1) perceived rigidity of Muslim culture, (2) unfamiliarity with Muslim culture, (3) societal pressure causing fear to interact with and talk about the Muslim community, (4) perceived isolation of Muslim groups, (5) perceived negative ties associated with
traditional Muslim clothing, and (6) difficulty identifying individuals in specific
groupings. These themes were further broken down into more complex subthemes. The
complete taxonomy of these themes can be found in Figure 3.3. There were 522 instances
of these themes catalogued in participant interviews. Figure 3.4 displays the frequency of
expression of each of these themes in a bar graph. A table of interview quotes
exemplifying each of these themes can be found in Appendix G. As can be seen in
Appendix G, several of these themes overlapped. For example, concern about Islam’s
strict qualities often involved or led into a discussion of Muslim women’s safety and
participant’s negative perceptions of traditional headwear.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived rigidity of Muslim culture</th>
<th>Perceived as restricted by nature of religion</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived as having strict practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfamiliarity with Muslim culture</td>
<td>Perceived Alienness</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Perceived difference</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Equating community with immigrants</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Perceived as being ‘scary’</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ignorance of majority population</td>
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<tr>
<td>Societal pressure</td>
<td>Fear on both sides</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fear majority population experiences</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fear Muslims experience</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Neoliberalism</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Political correctness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived isolation of Muslim community</td>
<td>Muslim community isolated and not integrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local area homogeneous and closed off to outsiders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative ties associated with traditional Muslim clothing</td>
<td>For wearer</td>
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<td></td>
<td>For others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulty identifying individuals in specific groupings</td>
<td>A spectrum of Muslim practice and religious belief</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hard to tell if someone is Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hard to say what it means to be American/British</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig. 3.3 Taxonomy of themes and subthemes in interviews**
Having presented the results here, the next chapter will elaborate further on more descriptive analyses, the implications of these findings and the context surrounding them.

The data from card sorting, free listing, interviews, and participant observation will be examined in combination for each of the various themes presented above. Further cross-cultural differences will then be dissected separately.
CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

In this section, I will go through each of the six broad themes drawn out of the interview data in order of their frequency of expression. Each will be contextualized and triangulated with results from the card sorting and free listing tasks. This will be based upon the combined data of UK and US participants. Areas of divergence between the two countries’ data sets will be addressed separately.

The data conformed well to Strabac and Listhaug’s (2008) two categories of negative stereotypes, the clash of civilizations and cultural concern. However, however, the frequency of data was higher in the cultural concern category. This could be a result of the level of expression that was studied (individual rather than societal), the intimacy of the study (done one-on-one in cafes and libraries), the nature of the types of questions asked, or unspoken societal standards for this sort of discourse. Concerns about the political implications of Islam were often stronger statements that perhaps surpassed the limits usually set by certain sections of society.

Participants often conflated Muslims with immigrants as an identity category, and therefore spoke of economic threat. However, an overwhelming majority focused on their perceptions of the Muslim community as violating societal standards and expectations.
due to culture. This was defined in a number of ways: unapproachability, strangeness, lack of integration, not following American laws but their own religion’s, resistance to learning English, and negative aspects of the burqa and the hijab. The data then supports both a perception and practice-based reasoning for negative view of Muslims. This kind of disapproval appeared to be much more immediate and pressing than that stemming from an economic threat. Some participants criticized a simplistic financial view being employed by media sources and academics to understand conservative attitudes. All of the above cultural lamentations could be labeled as coded expressions of prejudice. This represents how anti-Muslim prejudice is generally expressed on an individual level—in the form of symbolic racism.

There were some instances of concern about the political and military threat of Islam conveyed in interviews as well, but these were less often indicated when discussing Western Muslim populations. This was communicated by referring to Islam or its practices as ‘scary,’ describing the religion or its practitioners as strict or sometimes extremist, conflating Muslims in the West with those in the Middle East, and expressing concern for one’s safety as a result of women’s traditional dress.

1. Rigidity

Followers of the Muslim faith were characterized by participants as being more devout and more restricted. Often conversations about restriction shifted to the perceived gender inequality in Muslim culture. There were 168 total instances of the theme of rigidity in interviews. This was further broken down into two sub-themes: (1) Muslims
being restricted, which includes the perceived oppression of Muslim women, general restriction by the nature of their faith, and the wearing of uniforms that eschew individuality; and (2) Muslims being strict, which entails the enactment of more structured rules and rites of behavior.

A large part of this perceived rigidity comes from a stereotype of Muslims as being more heavily religious. Many echoed the sentiments of US participant G, who described Islam as a much more “religious religion.” This is an example of reduplication, which itself implies a magnification of the level of religious devotion that Muslims enact to a higher level than other adjectival forms could achieve. From this it can be inferred that Islam and its followers particularly stands apart from other religions in terms of piety. In the card sorting task, those images that displayed features that were more commonly associated with Muslim populations were sorted as being more pious. Those with medium or dark skin and those wearing traditional Muslim dress were sorted as more pious than those with light skin and western dress. Those viewed as being the most pious, however, were women, especially those wearing unembellished, more concealing traditional clothing. This was reflected in interviews as well. Women were often used to demonstrate the restriction and strict qualities of Islam yet pitied for their perceived forcible situation.

Participants’ focus on perceived negative cultural aspects of the Muslim community in interviews often included a disapproval of their lack of agency and individual thought. As Stromberg (2012) points out, Western societies are heavily individualistic; free will and individual autonomy are foundational cultural assumptions.
intimately linked with God and capitalism. The author suggests then that lapses in this sense of agency are particularly culturally salient and therefore often result in confusion and political conflict (Stromberg, 2012). Muslims were often described as conforming to their religion blindly, wearing a homogenizing uniform, and having no choice in their actions, especially so for women. Even if someone is well-informed about cultural practices within the Muslim community, if they perceive that Muslim culture or religion is taking away the members’ sense of agency, it could evoke a visceral, negative response.

This was especially salient when participants were also concerned about the well-being of women within the Muslim community. Muslim women were spoken of as if they simply had no choice in matters of their own lives, whether they exist in the East or West. Muslim men were then the oppressors— the villains taking away agency from fragile foreign women in need of Western freedom. For example, UK participant E said, “About modesty… I think they expect it of the women. So, I think it’s almost like an obligation they put on the women, but it comes from their scriptures and their beliefs.” This gender differential in perception of Muslims’ sense of agency, conformity, strictness, and restriction fit the archetype built by Hollywood movies analyzed by Shaheen (2003). Women lacked agency and were restricted while men enforced their will on others and were strict.

Often in interviews and the free listing task, participants conflated Islam with the political force of the Middle East and extremists. Participants spoke of extremist imams
preaching hatred of the West in the UK, and 9/11 and other events of terrorism in the US.

US participant D recalled anti-Muslim prejudice he had seen before in the area, saying,

D: Most of what I’ve noticed locally are bumper stickers that are infuriating about— oh there was one guy who drove around a pickup truck that he had put decals on of the towers in New York being hit on 9/11 and a bumper sticker on the back that said, “I learned all I need to know about Islam on 9/11.” You go, “Alright. Oh. At least we know where you stand. (laughs)

Participants overwhelmingly listed Muslim extremists and terrorists in Free Listing Task Three, which involved naming any famous or influential Muslim people they could recall. Examples of violent figures listed included Saddam Hussein, Osama Bin Laden, ISIS, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Nidal Hasan (listed as “the Fort Hood shooter”), Muammar Gaddafi, Idi Amin, Genghis Khan, and Assad (current president of Syria).

Material culture during participant observation reflected a conflation of Islam in the West with a political Islamic force and a focus on extremism and violence as well. Some bookstores I came across held specialized sections about Islam, the Middle East, or various Muslim cultures. These can be seen in Appendix H. Many of the books within these special displays were about Jihad, ISIS, women’s subordination, or other violent or oppressive aspects of Islam. Still, there were some books by authors from predominantly Muslim countries written in English or Arabic with more positive outlooks. One book proudly displayed the variety of Muslim fashion, a direct contradiction to the typical Western view that traditional coverings are uniforms preventing expression of individuality.

2. Unfamiliarity
Participants expressed a general lack of knowledge of Islam and the Muslim community. Often, they referred to Muslim populations in terms of their strangeness or foreign qualities. This theme greatly stemmed from ethnocentrism. This was broken down further into two sub-themes: (1) alienness of the Muslim community, which includes references to the community as different, conflation with immigrants and foreign peoples, and descriptions of aspects of the community as scary, and (2) ignorance of Muslim culture. There were 157 instances of words or phrases indicating unfamiliarity with the Muslim community.

Lack of knowledge of or unfamiliarity with the Muslim community was the most pervasive sub-theme expressed in interviews overall. Variations of the phrase “I don’t know,” with 77 instances, were the most common indicated by participants in interviews. “I don’t know” can act as a discourse marker and in these instances there is the potential for it to function as a hedging feature, redirecting the conversation away from a particular topic. Secondarily, the discourse marker can also function as a linguistic filler to allow my participants to organize their thoughts. Lastly, if we take the phrase at face value, it demonstrates a lack of familiarity, which is illustrated by a conversation with UK participant F below:

AG: Are there any kind of indicators that help you identify a male Muslim, because a lot of what you talked about before—head coverings—seems to more apply to women?

F: They wear head coverings as well, don’t they? They wear turbans. Yeah, they tend to wear head coverings as well. Are they allowed to cut their hair? I don’t think they’re allowed to cut their hair, are they? I don’t know.
During free listing tasks, participants often bemoaned their lack of knowledge concerning Muslim communities, culture, and history. They felt that if the task were an actual test, they would have failed.

In both the UK and US, the little familiarity residents did have with Islam was very negative in nature. This was likely a result of lack of exposure, more identifiable religious dress, and behaviors perceived as being strict. Both the US and UK have histories of Christianity and are therefore inherently biased towards a more positive and comprehensive view of it in comparison to Islam. Since the initial European medieval encounters with Islam, understandings of it have often been images filtered through the perspectives of Christians rather than being influenced by actual practices and beliefs of Muslims (Said, 1977). These portrayals often focus on distinguishing between the barbaric, backward other (Muslims) and the civilized, white Westerner (Saeed, 2007).

Cards displaying superficial characteristics pointed out in interviews as signals of Muslim identity, like darker skin color and traditional religious dress, were categorized as being more pious and less similar to self. This emphasizes the distance participants unconsciously placed between themselves and the Muslim community. In the UK, strong religious belief of any sort is out of place. In the US, strength in Christian belief is praised but strength in Muslim belief is discouraged.

Muslim populations were often seen as alien and strange, but also as being comprised of foreign people and immigrants. Only 14 out of the 145, or 9.7% of the, influential Muslim figures listed in Free Listing Task Three were from the West and correctly identified as Muslim. In Free Listing Task Two, participants listed things like
“country of origin,” “more recent immigrant,” and “usually Orientals from far East” as defining characteristics of Muslims.

3. Societal Pressure

Participants expressed a desire to ‘just get on’ with others and to avoid subjects that are difficult to broach, such as this. Societal pressure also causes fear when interacting with the Muslim community, so as not to offend them or infringe on their cultural values, but also prevents speaking about them. There were 64 instances of the theme of societal pressure in the interviews. This was further broken down into three sub-themes: (1) fear of interaction, which includes fear the majority population holds of talking to or approaching the Muslim community, or fear the Muslim population holds of getting a negative reaction from the majority population for expressing their identity; (2) neoliberalism; and (3) political correctness.

In interviews, many participants spoke of not knowing what was acceptable for interaction with the Muslim community, getting the impression from clothing that they do not wish to be approached, and therefore avoiding speaking to Muslims. US participant E talks about this below:

E: And you wouldn’t necessarily… I would say… approach somebody like that to just, you know, like if you were standing next ‘em on the bus or whatever… because I think there would— there’s a perception that they’re dressed like that, they’re adhering to some kind of rules and they’re rules that we don’t know, so that’s kind of—

AG: Afraid of like crossing the line or something


AG: ‘Cause you don’t know what it is.
E: Exactly. So kinda don’t wanna be unintentionally offensive, so you know… that might translate into being— you’re not being very friendly, but it’s more— I think it’s more like, “Oh! Maybe they’re not supposed to talk to strangers.” You know.

One participant in the US wept near the end of our interview. She considered herself to be a liberal, accepting person, yet found herself experiencing fear when passing by Muslim women wearing coverings.

Societal pressure was evident through analysis of card sorting task and free listing results as well. While participants explicitly said there are no hard and fast rules for Muslim identity, their card sorting results spoke to the contrary. Those superficial characteristics pointed out in interviews as signals of Muslim identity, like darker skin color and traditional religious dress, were categorized in card sorts as being more pious and less similar to self. Most participants found the tasks difficult, felt as if they were being tested, and worried about being seen as racist. During free listing, some participants were self-aware and said they did not want to only list radical and extremist Muslims for Free Listing Task Three.

4. Isolation

Muslim groups were seen as being separated spatially and culturally from the rest of society, isolated and not integrating enough. In interviews, there were 59 instances of words or phrases indicative of this theme of disparate communities. There were two sub-themes within this: (1) participants generally described Muslim communities as being unintegrated and isolated in terms of geography and intergroup relations; (2) some described local majority populations as being closed off to outsiders and homogenous.
Various cultural aspects of the Muslim community were referenced by participants as evidence of their isolation. In the card sorting task, traditional Muslim dress was seen as less sociable, less British/American, and less similar to self by participants. While women were sorted as being more sociable than men, women in traditional dress were sorted as less sociable. Often participants mentioned lack of English skills as the reason they found Muslim groups to be unintegrated and unapproachable. This weighed more heavily upon Muslim women, who were described as essentially being uneducated wives hidden away from the male gaze with no motivation to learn English due to their lack of a career and lack of contribution to the British or American economy. Participant C elaborated on this thoroughly, explaining:

C: Multiculturalism basically is the home culture allowing— and that’s the wrong word— allowing the incomers— the people who come into the country— to carry on practices— to encourage them to practice their own culture and what have you rather than try to assimilate into the home culture. Now, it shouldn’t be an either or, but they’ve over-encouraged one versus the other. So you have the situation where particularly women who haven’t learned— Bangladeshi women is the one— who are not encouraged to learn English for example, therefore don’t have access to education and access to other social services and things because of the language barrier. So it’s things like that where I think there’s been an over-emphasis on— not deliberately ghettoizing people— that just happens because people tend to want to move into areas where there are other people like them. There’s nothing wrong with that. There has been a ghettoization but a balkanization in the sense that there’s no overlap. There doesn’t seem to be any marginal activities going on. Of course there’s lots of people trying to do this, but it’s hard— very, very hard. I think part of that is because of politicians encouraging multiculturalism more than they were encouraging efforts to integrate such that nowadays politicians are turning
completely on the head and are now thinking about things like you must have a certain proficiency in English to come and that sort of thing. From one extreme to the other. I don’t know about that either, but in a sense it’s a reaction to what’s happening.

Participants often described Muslim communities within their local and broader regions as existing within niche areas, such as neighborhoods or boroughs within cities. In free listing, participants listed characteristics of Muslims that signaled this geographic and cultural disparity, for example “can tend to niche groups,” “separate,” “poor integration with existing communities,” “do not participate in Western socializing.” This is at least partly true. Muslims are geographically widely dispersed, however there is concentration in inner cities across the UK (Muslim Council of Britain, 2015). Tower Hamlets, for example, is a London borough to the east of the City of London with the highest proportion of Muslims in the country (34.5%), which is seven times that of England and Wales (UK Office for National Statistics, 2012). This could be related to half of Muslims residing in the most deprived areas of the UK (Muslim Council of Britain, 2015).

Often participants’ only interaction with actual Muslims consisted of shopping in or perusing of ethnic shops within these niche communities. Appendix I contains photographs I took of ethnic shops in various areas throughout the UK and Western Europe. Often these shops are filled to the brim with stereotypical items of a multitude of Eastern cultures, reflecting orientalism, or an array of spices or stereotypical Eastern foods. These are generally the only places where people of Central Asian, Southeast Asian, African, or Middle Eastern descent will be found in cities other than London.
Some seem aimed at garnering white tourist customers via the commodification of traditional cultural practices and artifacts, fewer aim to serve insiders within the same culture, and many seem to attempt to fulfill both to maximize profits.

If cities consist of large amounts of these sorts of stores, they can be perceived by majority populations as being lower class, shady, or impoverished. One bus driver who took students at my study abroad program to Leicester refused to drive too far into the city, saying that he never set foot in the town. This caused the tour group to walk several miles before reaching downtown and almost immediately having to board the bus back to our program’s campus. Leicester was specifically mentioned during my UK interviews many times as a local hub for Muslim populations and an especially diverse area. However, even it was stratified and had a town map strictly codified by race, ethnicity, and religion. One area was occupied primarily by immigrants and ethnic shops, the other by white majority populations. It is safe to assume the bus driver was referencing the poverty and ethnic composition of the more diverse areas of Leicester, especially when considering the second tour group on the bus was let off directly at their destination of an observatory on the other side of town aimed at serving white majority populations.

There are exceptions to this common structure. Camden Town is unique because of its gentrification, hip qualities, and existence within the sphere of London, often described as an entirely different country within the UK (Image 2 in Appendix H is an example of one hip store whose customers primarily consisted of white majority populations). Other stores where one will often encounter those from majority Muslim countries usually are tourist shops, hocking items praising the location of sale that seem
slightly off. An example of such an item can be seen in image 14 in Appendix I. At the store selling this item, I found out the owner was a hopeful citizen of Spain. He immigrated there with a dream of getting a citizenship and passport more appealing to his real destination, the United States, than that of his Eastern country of origin.

5. Negative ties to traditional clothing

As mentioned previously, traditional Muslim clothing as a whole was viewed by majority Western populations in a negative light. It was perceived as being boring, uncomfortable, unapproachable, and a threat to safety. There were 42 instances of the theme of negative perceptions of traditional Muslim clothing. This consisted of two major sub-themes: (1) negative aspects of the clothing for the wearer, such as its lack of individuality, unfashionable qualities, and uncomfortable qualities; and (2) negative aspects of the clothing for the majority populations who may have to interact with the wearer, such as it acting as a barrier to communication, it being a mysterious threat to safety, it signaling the wearer cannot be or does not want to be approached, and it simply not being up to snuff with the predilections and tastes of those in the West.

This broader bias against traditional clothing was present in card sorting task results. Men and women wearing traditional religious dress were categorized as being more pious, less sociable, less similar to self, and less British/American than those in Western dress. Men and women wearing more obvious or concealing traditional dress (such as the niqab or a shemagh scarf covering the majority of the face) were seen as being less trustworthy, sociable, similar to self, and British/American than those in less
concealing traditional dress. So, both men and women, when presented to participants in photos, were associated with negative characteristics based on their clothing. Women wearing unembellished, plain traditional clothing were sorted as more pious and less trustworthy, sociable, similar to self, and British/American than women in more elaborate or decorated traditional clothing. Women were particularly susceptible to negative associations based upon dress due to their traditional clothing being more prevalent and often more obvious to those in the West. This is also partly a result of Western perceptions of lack of agency, restriction, and oppression of Muslim women being exemplified by their clothing.

Focus was often put on women’s clothing throughout participant interactions. During interviews, when speaking generally about Muslim clothing, participants seemed to naturally talk about women’s full coverings without prompting. In the majority of interviews, I had to prompt participants to speak on Muslim men’s clothing. When asked what they think and feel when seeing someone in a hijab, participants usually responded by wondering whether they were forced to do so, why they are doing so, and if they are safe. One participant worried the potential beauty of a woman was wasted when covered. When asked what it would be like to wear a head covering, UK participant A replied, “If I was going to rob a bank it’d be alright. I think it’d be pretty horrible really to be covered up like that.” My participant’s phrasing here was strong than others but it was still reflective of the views I generally encountered.

Participants often related traditional clothing to a school uniform, some nostalgically, but always in a way to imply there was a lack of individuality and
expression. One participant marveled at how Muslims were able to distinguish emotions on each other’s faces and communicate with their beards and scarves in the way. Many focused on the covering as a barrier to communication, UK participant J even emphasizing it as a defining characteristic of Muslims in Free Listing Task Two, writing, “females face covered (poor communication).” Ingroup versus outgroup identification could be part of the explanation of this common perception.

Kret and Gelder (2012) conducted a study wherein emotions were judged from faces. They found that fear was recognized better in women wearing a niqab than in women wearing a cap and shawl. The opposite was true for happy and sad expressions. This is likely a result of the common view of Muslim women as captives or victims and their perceived status as an outsider group. It would be more evolutionarily beneficial to recognize happiness and sadness within one’s insider group and fear and anger in outsider groups, and in the past emotion perception has been shown to be influenced by outgroup stereotypes and in-group favoritism (Zebrowitz, Bronstad, & Lee, 2007). This could help explain why participants found traditional Muslim clothing to be a barrier to communication, since it is a signal for someone who is part of an outgroup. However, race could mitigate or contribute to this as well.

Politicians too have contributed to the fear and uncertainty surrounding white British citizens’ view of Muslim populations. In 2006, Jack Straw, the leader of the House of Commons and former Foreign Secretary, wrote in the *Lancashire Telegraph* that he asked Muslim women wearing the niqab to remove their veil when meeting in his office (Bartlett, 2006). His reasoning was much like that of other UK citizens: one could
more effectively have a face to face conversation when you could “see what they mean” and the veil acted as “a statement of separation,” which made relationships difficult to form (Dwyer, 2008, p. 140). There was worry that the niqab was representative of patriarchal control and was “an assertion of cultural separateness” (Dwyer, 2008, p. 140).

6. Difficulty in defining groups due to aspects of globalization

Participants often said it was difficult to make black and white distinctions between groups and to define them. This theme split further into three more specific subthemes: (1) the difficulty they experienced in defining Islam and Muslims generally because of the variety of Muslim belief and practice, (2) the difficulty they experienced in trying to identify someone they interacted with or saw as being Muslim, and (3) the difficulty they experienced in defining what the collective British or American identity was. There were 32 instances of expression of this theme throughout interviews.

It is likely that globalization is partly at fault for this difficulty in forming clear definitions of and distinctions between various group identities. The specific aspects of globalization affecting identification here are the overall individualism of the West, the pervasiveness of Western culture throughout the rest of the world, and the diversity of the UK and US. According to Connolly (1991), “Identity requires difference in order to be, and it converts difference into otherness in order to secure its own self-certainty” (p. 64). Identity, in some sense, is formed by defining what one is not. If there is difficulty in defining your insider group, Americans or Brits, there will similarly be difficulty in defining outsider groups, Muslims. It should be noted that there is often overlap between
the two, partly due to conversion, Ummah’s reach via the internet, and past and more recent diasporas. This mobility of culture and religion in the modern era is also an important facet of globalization and influence (Cesari 2004). This inability to secure self-certainty could contribute to a dislike of multiculturalism, fear of cultural differences, and focus on assimilation. US participant C expressed this lack of group identity within America well:

C: … well first of all we don’t have a homogenous sense of self, right? We have all different color people, all different religions, and all of that. It’s kind of where we come from even though we seem to be having this surge of America’s greatest, you know, what is that? Exactly. I don’t even like apple pie, you know? So we don’t have that good sense of what it is ‘cause we have so much of a sense of let’s be individuals. The average American could be someone walking down the street with blue hair and, you know, what makes the American? I feel like we have less of a very specific identity sometimes than even other countries do, but not all other countries. I think we tend to assume people in Europe are very similar— certainly western Europe. So, it’s hard to say become like us when we don’t even know what us is (laughs).

In the free listing task, participants hinted at globalization in two ways, either indirectly or directly. There were eight instances of phrases in Free Lists One and Two that were directly associated with difficulty identifying groups or with globalization. Direct references included phrases such as: “lots of variety among beliefs, ideas”; “very mixed group”; “melting pot”. Figure 4.1 illustrates the indirect way participants hinted at the difficulty involved in distinguishing between various group identities based upon physical characteristics. Participant G in the UK only listed personality characteristics for what signals someone as being both British (item one) and Muslim (item two). However,
the majority of responses to Free Lists One and Two mention and focus on physical characteristics (i.e. clothes, ethnicity, food, etc.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th># in FR1</th>
<th>FR1 Item</th>
<th># in FR2</th>
<th>FR2 Item</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Open-minded</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sense of Humor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Considerate</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Serious</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Outspoken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Polite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tolerant</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Wanting to please</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
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<td>Narrow in outlook</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Law abiding</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Studious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Appreciative of beauty</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Stoic</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Uncomplaining</td>
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*Fig. 4.1 Indirect example of theme six*

This is complicated further by card sorting results and ingroup-outgroup theory. While participants claimed during interviews to have difficulty identifying people as being a part of a specific nationality or religion based upon appearance, this was contrary to card sorting results. More abstract value judgements led to decreased ability to make direct comparisons in the card sorting task. It was easier for participants to think in terms of direct comparisons for similarity to self and how British/American they seemed. This is likely because these judgements could be interpreted as related to appearance more than morals.

Many participants commented on how it was difficult to organize people in terms of religious strength and trustworthiness based on an image. They often formed a framework of their own to aid in organization for the trustworthiness task, focusing on
the eyes of the people pictured, or imagining them as a stranger they might ask for a favor. Participants did not create hypothetical situations, or even question the ability to judge based on a photograph, when it came to the ‘Britishness’ or ‘Americanness’ sorting task. This suggests they do hold someone in mind who appears to be Muslim, Christian, American, or British.

Comparisons

While the broad data patterns across the US and UK mirror each other and support similar conclusions, there are still differences in the way prejudice is manifested cross-culturally and in what cultural attitudes or practices contribute to this. This ranges from the typical terms employed in speaking about Muslims to the pertinent national political events. For example, in both countries there was an overarching theme of societal pressure, which entails fear of interacting with or talking about Muslims as a result of societal expectations. In the US, this was discussed using the phrases “political correctness” and a “fear of offending.” Alternately, UK participants talked about multiculturalism and a singularly British “desire to just get on.” These concepts are similar in their complexity and modern connotative meaning yet provide vital context to the current state of affairs in both areas. Multiculturalism has been lambasted by a number of conservative political leaders in the UK and become a sort of cautionary tale of labour party failure in an age of populism (Farage, 2015; The BBC, 2006; Wright, 2011). Political correctness has been similarly bucked against by conservatives in the US, who consider it a major weakness of the opposing side. These reactions have both become intimately linked with conversations surrounding Muslims, immigrants, and
various minority identities, but exist in different political and social environments. The rest of this section will dissect the national idiosyncrasies and unique expressions of and influences on prejudice in the US and UK.

It is apparent that there is systemic Islamophobia and discrimination against Muslims in the UK. This is expressed at a number of socio-structural levels: the average individual citizen, the political sphere, and in media representation. This is rooted firmly in British post-colonialism and relationships with South Asian immigrants and immigrants more broadly. Terrorist attacks such as the 7/7 London bombings have only spurred on this tension and fear of the “Other.” As Modood (2002, p. 24) explained, blame was placed on the perceived “cultural separatism and self-imposed segregation of Muslim migrants and on a ‘politically correct’ multiculturalism that had fostered fragmentation rather than integration and Britishness.” British citizens feel alienated themselves due to political failings and find it hard to identify with and understand the group put forth as a scapegoat—a group they often perceive as being too pious, rigid, traditional, sexist, violent, or standoffish.

Citizens of the UK feel as if the Muslim community is unfamiliar in its cultural practices and is not making enough of an effort to assimilate, especially in a post-“Brexit” society rebelling against the multiculturalism so emblematic of the Labour party’s ‘failures’. According to O’Brien,

\[
\text{minority groups suffer discrimination not just based on the colour of their skin, but also based on cultural differences exemplified by the group’s adherence to certain norms and practices. Discrimination is accentuated when these norms and practices appear to be in direct opposition to the dominant majority way of life. (2000, p. 3-4)}
\]
This encapsulates the sort of discrimination South Asian Muslims face in the modern United Kingdom. Saeed (2007) explains this, saying:

Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities in particular have been represented in the media as separatist, insular and unwilling to integrate with wider society. Furthermore, the old stereotypical image of ‘Asian passivity’ has been replaced by a more militant aggressive identity that is meant to be further at odds with ‘British secular society’. The concept of culture clash has been reintroduced to imply that British Muslims are at odds with mainstream society (Ansari 2003; Modood 1994, 1997). (p. 453)

This cultural difference is particularly stark to the majority British citizen when considering the perceived rigidity of Muslims. Muslims were described as being, “more regimented in the way they go about their religion” by UK participant A, and this sentiment was echoed in various ways by others. When trying to name all of the famous or influential Muslims and Christians they could think of, nearly all UK participants struggled to think of any, saying that faith was not something British people viewed each other by and that it was not something you blatantly presented to the world, especially for politicians. This suggests that the perception of Muslims as being heavily strict and highly visible in their religious practice is directly contradictory to British norms. This could be seen in that rigidity was the most common theme in UK interviews (34.1% of instances) with unfamiliarity being the second most common (26.3% of instances). This was not true for the US, with the two themes within US interviews being relatively similar in prevalence (30.5% versus 32.9%).

The secularity of the UK could accentuate the ‘alienness’ of the Muslim community since they are seen as extremely religious. This was evident in free listing
task data, wherein UK participants delineated more qualities of those in the UK than US participants did for the US. However, UK participants did not repeat the US pattern of providing more influential Christian people than influential Muslim people. This hints at the secularity and nationalism of UK residents, ignorance of the Muslim faith broadly, or potentially political correctness holding back responses. However, the UK mirrored the US in that participants provided more negative influential Muslim people than negative influential Christian people. This suggests that the information participants are aware of is negative in nature and that both countries are influenced by a predominantly Christian history.

The US’ history with Islam began much differently. Since the US lacked the extensive colonial history within predominantly Muslim countries that Europe held, it was successful in forming more amicable relationships with Arabs and Muslims (Gerges, 2003). At this time, xenophobia and assimilationism, too, seemed more pointed at Hispanics rather than Middle Easterners or South Asians (Gerges, 2003). It was in the 1970’s, with the Iranian revolution and other violent regional events, that America shifted from the strategic gaining of Middle Eastern countries’ trust to a fear of Islam (Gerges, 2003). With this, Muslims became politicized, viewed as contradictory to the West, and associated with anti-American sentiments. 9/11 only worsened this. Muslims at this point were transformed into an image of a transnational political force. The war on terror and a great deal of anti-Muslim discrimination emerged out of this.

Alongside this tumultuous history with Arab and Muslim countries, the ethnic composition of US Muslims is still uncertain (Pew Research Center, 2017). 41% of US
Muslims are classified as white by the census, however this may be an inaccurate appraisal of their ethnic composition (Pew Research Center, 2017). There is currently no way for those of Middle East or North African descent to specify their race, thus they are counted as white instead (Pew Research Center, 2017). Arab American advocacy groups are attempting to change this. 28% of US Muslims self-identify as Asian or South Asian and 20% as black (Pew Research Center, 2017). 58% of US Muslim adults are first generation immigrants, and among them, 35% are from South Asia, 25% are from the Middle East-North Africa region, and 23% are from the Asia-Pacific region (Pew Research Center, 2017).

While the prominent position religion holds to Muslims was seen as particularly distinctive in the UK, traditional Muslim dress appeared to be particularly salient to American participants. Out of the six cards that were categorized as significantly less American, sociable, or similar to self by American participants, five held images of people wearing traditional religious dress (four Muslim, one Sikh). By contrast, all three of the cards sorted by UK participants as significantly less British or trustworthy than US participants held images of people wearing western dress. Two of them were often pointed out as seeming American rather than British during the card sorting tasks. In the UK, the isolation of Muslim communities was a more prevalent theme of interviews (15.5% of total instances) than negative associations tied to traditional Muslim clothing (7.3% of total instances). The reverse was true for the US and the two were much closer in prevalence (7.9% vs 8.6%).
It should also be considered that while Arab and Muslim Americans tend to be socially conservative, they also tend to vote Democrat, because they see them as being more sensitive to adversity they face (Schaefer, 2010). This is perhaps unsurprising considering recent political developments within the US. There has been an exponential rise in resistance to political correctness. Much like the word multiculturalism in the UK, political correctness envelopes an American concept that is much more than its dictionary definition. It has become equated with weakness by members of right-wing groups. While this may not be a majority view, the repetition of such imagery (of spineless losers and “cucks”) by the internet is pervasive and could be having a strong influence on politics and social interactions generally. This lack of sensitivity is likely being recognized by minority groups within the US.

In both the US and UK there has been a rise in direct forms of prejudice against Muslims, for example the rise in hate crimes or general violence, as well as a continued presentation of more indirect prejudice, often focusing upon the cultural rather than the biological (Batchelor, 2018; Kishi, 2017; McGreal, 2012; Mishra, 2017; Osborne, 2017; Prendergast, 2017; Saeed, 2007; Sherriff, 2015; Suri & Wu, 2017; The BBC, 2005; Westcott, 2016; Williams, 2018). In the UK post-colonialist ties play a key role in its relationship with Islam and in the US a more recent focus on Muslim religious fundamentalists and perceived gender inequality has dramatically changed its orientation. For both countries, terrorism and the rise in populist anti-political correctness or anti-multiculturalist movements have also significantly contributed to these complex relationships. The aspects of Islam that are particularly salient to each country differed
based on their individual cultures. While the US is heavily Christian and individualistic, the UK is more secular and often quieter about expression of faith. It follows that the US was particularly focused on traditional Muslim clothing, which they saw as an example of a lack of one of their foundational values, autonomy or individuality, and that the UK was more concerned with the perceived strictness of Muslims who present their religion in a way that contradicts typical British norms.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Islam in the West has been treated according to two paths and forms of Western understanding: 1) it is filtered through predominant Christian beliefs in order to ‘tame’ it 2) it is seen as unfamiliar and scary, therefore causing opposition (Said, 1977). In this research project, this dichotomy, originating with Said (1977), was evident in the national and local political milieu of the US and UK. White-presenting Bosnians, who positioned themselves as extensions of Christianity and Judaism, built a new mosque in Bowling Green with little resistance and a celebration involving thousands of people; but Muslims in Murfreesboro, who were perceived as a cultural other, were met with thousands of dollars in county legal fees, arson, graffiti, and religiously-motivated vandalism when they attempted to build a larger Islamic center (Miller, 2004; Mink, 2012; Kemph, 2012; Timms, 2017).

On a larger scale, the Trump versus Hawaii case juxtaposed these two forms of Western understanding in its conclusion with the same basic concept at the root of both (Fetters, 2018). The importance of family and their remaining intact was utilized to create an atmosphere of empathy and argument against the ‘Muslim ban,’ but too was used to
argue in favor of it, saying an exemption was made within it for these cases. The latter succeeded. In the US and UK it seems the second approach to understandings of Islam, one of unfamiliarity with the ‘other’ and a resulting reaction to perceived cultural threat, is predominant.

The relationship between Islam and Western society is one best characterized as a clash of ignorances (Asani, 2009). This clash of ignorances is manifested in two broad categories of Western majority populations’ prejudices towards Islam: (1) real or imagined cultural threats, especially dealing with oppression of women, and (2) the supposed political and military threat of Islam, which includes the misleading popular concept of a “clash of civilizations” (Strabac & Listhaug, 2008). While the historical events, such as the Crusades, that typically define the clash of civilizations provide important historical context, they are also often invoked as a biased justification for the ‘innate’ opposition of Islam and the West (Strabac & Listhaug, 2008). The six themes drawn out in this thesis’ data analysis of individual expressions of prejudice towards Islam generally coincide with these categories, with cultural concerns more prevalent than political threat. These included:

1. Rigidity of the Muslim community
2. Unfamiliarity with the Muslim community
3. Societal pressure
4. Isolation of the Muslim community
5. Negative ties to traditional Muslim clothing
6. Difficulty in defining groups due to aspects of globalization
This then provides a useful framework for Western majority populations’ attitudes towards Islam. Both the UK and US fit well within this framework. However, the manifestation of these ideas orally and verbally differed between the two countries due to different socio-political influences.

In both the US and UK, it is important to keep in mind that one way identity is expressed is by defining what one is not when evaluating the conception of Muslim identity by those not of Islamic faith (Connolly, 1991). Participants seem to consciously struggle with distinguishing between and defining group identities due to societal pressure and globalization. Yet, participants at least unconsciously view the Muslim culture and faith in a negative light. They are then by contrast simultaneously defining themselves, as non-Muslims, as good. Symbolic racism then stems from this internal conception of difference, bolstered by lack of familiarity with the Muslim community, past historical images of Islam, and fictional and journalistic media depictions of Muslims as savage and backwards (Gerges, 2003; Lishaug & Strabac, 2008; Said, 1977; Shaheen, 2003).

However, encapsulating expression of prejudice has become increasingly difficult. Recent political movements in both the US and UK have begun to complicate national norms and values surrounding prejudice. Participants spoke of a freeing of discourse, allowing the expression of a wider field of political, religious, and social beliefs. And while on the level of broader public discourse there appears to be a return to and a rise in assimilationism, populism, and expressions of prejudice that violate norms for modern racism, at the individual level, participants often fit more neatly into the
narrative of symbolic racism, which appears benign to enactors, but not to those acted upon (Brubaker, 2001; Merritt et al., 2010). This combined with moral licensing has resulted in further support for public officials with more abrasive approaches questioning the status quo. Recent terrorist events, politicization of Muslims, people of color, and immigrants, and a persisting perception of Western moral superiority that is rooted in early accounts of the Oriental ‘Other’ have all contributed to Muslims existing in a unique position for increased outgroup hatred in the eyes of majority populations (Saeed, 2017; Said, 1977). The question is then, is this blunter approach to discourse about minorities significantly different from the symbolic racism that had once been the best theory for modern prejudice? This should be explored further in future research.

Majority Western populations fear interaction with Muslim people because of their compounded lack of knowledge of Muslim cultural traditions and their perception of Islam as being strict with imperceptible rules and rite of behavior. This is more palpable when speaking of Muslim women who wear traditional clothing more obvious and condemnable to Western populations. Majority Western populations often feel protective over Muslim women, mourning the imagined death of their freedom (Abu-Lughod, 2002). This, too, stems from a lack of knowledge of and interaction with Muslim groups. Muslim women often derive freedom from their traditional coverings. Their choice to cover is a willful, autonomous decision regarding expression of their faith. As Abu-Lughod argued, “Not only are there many forms of covering, which themselves have different meanings in the communities in which they are used, but also veiling itself must not be confused with, or made to stand for, lack of agency” (2002, p. 786). Majority
Western populations fear Muslim men’s societally imagined violence and oppression. They use this, their lack of knowledge of Muslim culture, and their fear of offending Muslim peoples as a validation for their separatism.

In order to keep abreast of the sea of biased perspectives on Islam, one needs to bridge the gap of ignorance. According to Asani (2009), the most important thing to keep in mind when encountering or taking part in discourse surrounding Islam is, “Which Islam? Whose Islam? In which context?” (p. 2). As participants acknowledged themselves, there are many forms of Islam and types of Islamic practices. Beyond that, there are a multitude of opinions regarding Islam from outsiders with varying amounts of foundational knowledge. Interacting with Muslim people is a direct way to better understand their culture and religion and to resolve the modern clash of ignorances. Events such as the GMCA’s Eid-ul-Fitir celebration are good examples of forms of recontextualization that could help promote better outgroup relationships.

Yet, many participants’ only interactions with or knowledge of Islam derived from negative, sensationalized news sources and stereotype-riddled movies. They cited Muslim women’s perceived separatist characteristics, for example lack of English ability and the wearing of conservative clothing that creates a barrier to communication, as well as societal pressure stemming from political correctness and the fear of offending, as what prevented them from directly interacting with the Muslim people they do see in their daily lives. This was often a large facet of interviews with participants and a common political battle across the West (Bartlett, 2006; Dwyer, 2008). As a result, I intend to conduct a further study focused on this phenomenon and if non-religious and
religious (specifically Muslim) head coverings have the same effect on social and emotional perception.
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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH ON PERCEPTION OF MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

I am looking for white-identifying volunteers to complete a demographic survey, card sorts, and free lists concerning Muslim populations.

Participants can also take part in an interview. 30 of those interviewed will receive a $10 or £10 gift card and all will receive an audio recording of their interview afterwards.

If interested, contact Ashley Gilliam

US Phone: 931-551-5422
UK Phone: +44 785 705 8537
Email: ashley.gilliam123@topper.wku.edu

Thank you!
APPENDIX B.

Pictures of UK Site

*Image 1.* The more rural area of the UK site

*Images 2. & 3.* Images of the downtown area of the UK site
APPENDIX C.

Table of cards used for sorting task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WWLR</th>
<th>Card 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MWL</td>
<td>Card 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWLB</td>
<td>Card 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWO</td>
<td>Card 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MWO</td>
<td>Card 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MWDB</td>
<td>Card 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WWD  Card 7
MWDM  Card 8
MWMM  Card 9

MWMB  Card 10
WWM  Card 11
WTD  Card 12
APPENDIX D.

Semi-structured interview questions

1. Tell me a little about your background.
2. Where have you traveled before?
3. Describe your local community?
4. Do you think there is a large Muslim community in your local area? And what about the US (or UK) as a whole?
5. Are you aware of any mosques near where you live or any previous plans to build one?
6. Are there any organizations for Muslims that you are aware of?
7. Have you ever met a Muslim person?
8. What signals someone as being Muslim to you?
9. How do you think the typical lifestyle of Muslims within your broader or local community differs from your own?
10. What do you think and feel when you see someone wearing a hijab?
11. Describe what modesty means to you versus someone within the Muslim community.
12. How do you think treatment of women differs between those of the Muslim faith and those not?
13. How do you think Muslims in the United States (or UK) differ from those in the Middle East?
14. To what extent should Muslim groups assimilate into American (or British) society?

15. Could you briefly describe what you think or know Islamic practice consists of?

16. How did you learn what you do know about Islam and Muslims?

17. Do you think Muslim populations face discrimination in the US (or UK)? And do you think it is more or less common in the local area?

18. Do you have anything you would like to add?
APPENDIX E.

Examples of Words and Phrases Coded for Six Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expressed Theme</th>
<th>Word or Phrase Coded for</th>
<th># of Instances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Rigidity</td>
<td>Restrict/restrictive/restriction</td>
<td>15 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Rigidity</td>
<td>Control (within the Muslim community)</td>
<td>9 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Rigidity</td>
<td>Strict/stricter</td>
<td>8 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Rigidity</td>
<td>You can/can’t (in reference to Muslim groups)</td>
<td>7 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Rigidity</td>
<td>You should/shouldn’t (role-playing as Muslims speaking to their ingroup)</td>
<td>3 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Unfamiliarity</td>
<td>Not know/don’t know/don’t really know (not knowing about aspects of Muslims/Islam)</td>
<td>77 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Unfamiliarity</td>
<td>Assuming/assumption (excluded if about other immigrants)</td>
<td>7 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Unfamiliarity</td>
<td>Strange</td>
<td>3 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Unfamiliarity</td>
<td>Alien</td>
<td>3 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Unfamiliarity</td>
<td>Frighten me</td>
<td>1 instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Societal Pressure</td>
<td>Get on (if in reference to majority populations; unique to UK participants)</td>
<td>8 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Societal Pressure</td>
<td>Political correctness</td>
<td>3 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Societal Pressure</td>
<td>It’s not hurting (ambivalence to others’ behaviors)</td>
<td>3 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Societal Pressure</td>
<td>Polite society wouldn’t talk about this sort of thing</td>
<td>1 instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Societal Pressure</td>
<td>People can’t air their feelings</td>
<td>1 instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Isolation</td>
<td>Ghetto/ghettoization</td>
<td>4 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Isolation</td>
<td>Niche (excluded if referenced non-Muslim group)</td>
<td>2 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Isolation</td>
<td>Don’t mix/not mixing</td>
<td>2 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Isolation</td>
<td>Pocket (of Muslim people)</td>
<td>2 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Isolation</td>
<td>Grouping (spatial groupings, areas of cities)</td>
<td>2 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Negative ties to traditional clothing</td>
<td>Scary (in reference to coverings)</td>
<td>1 instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Negative ties to traditional clothing</td>
<td>Wouldn’t approach somebody wearing that</td>
<td>1 instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Negative ties to traditional clothing</td>
<td>Detrimental to the communication process</td>
<td>1 instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Negative ties to traditional clothing</td>
<td>It gives me an unease</td>
<td>1 instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Negative ties to traditional clothing</td>
<td>It’d be pretty horrible (in reference to wearing a covering)</td>
<td>1 instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Difficulty identifying individuals &amp; groups</td>
<td>Blurring/blurred (in reference to distinctions between groups)</td>
<td>3 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Difficulty identifying individuals &amp; groups</td>
<td>You can’t tell (whether someone is Muslim or not)</td>
<td>2 instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty identifying individuals &amp; groups</td>
<td>What is a British accent now?</td>
<td>1 instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>You’d have no idea (whether someone is Muslim or not)</td>
<td>1 instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Difficulty identifying individuals &amp; groups</td>
<td>It’s not this exclusive (definitions of various group identities)</td>
<td>1 instance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F.

Table of individual cards sorted differently between US and UK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Card Sorted Differently across countries</th>
<th>Category sorted differently for</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Card 3</td>
<td>Less British (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card 4</td>
<td>Less British (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card 6</td>
<td>Less Trustworthy (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card 8</td>
<td>Less American (US)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card 12</td>
<td>Less sociable (US)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card 16</td>
<td>Less American (US)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card 17</td>
<td>Less American (US); Less sociable (US); Less similar (US)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card 18</td>
<td>Less similar to self (US)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card 21</td>
<td>Less American (US)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX G.

Example quotes from interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Quotation</th>
<th>Theme Expressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I think some of them are forced into it. It’s a bit of each. I think some are forced into it and I think some of them, because of the way their religion tells them that they’ve got to cover up and they just follow the religion, you know. And I also think that a lot of it is to do with the family saying oh, you know, “you shouldn’t go out. You shouldn’t be seen. You shouldn’t have people looking at you” sort of thing, so that’s why they cover up.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— UK male interviewee, September 18, 2016</td>
<td>1. Perceived rigidity of Muslim community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Restricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;My guess would be that the stereotype is ‘gonna be from the extreme side of things. Where Muslims are crazy devout, willing to blow themselves up for their religion, they all think that if they martyr themselves that they’ll go to heaven and have 99 virgins, and are slightly crazy. That all the men are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Perceived rigidity of Muslim community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Restricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Men free and women not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Strict</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
abusive and shackle their wives and make them wander around in ridiculous outfits that nobody can really see anything of them and it must be difficult to operate in. *laughs* That’s my fear that is the image that comes to mind in most Americans’ heads when they think Muslim as opposed to, you know, a liberal 20 something Muslim girl who lives in Lebanon is college educated and prays at her mosque but isn’t shackled to her faith."

— US male interviewee, March 29, 2017

“You know, they have a very, very almost like a strict code of conduct if you challenge or ask an open question around, “Why do you do that?”", the answer typically is, “because that’s how it’s done”. There’s less of a discussion, less openness to have a discussion around why— just accept it.”

— UK female interviewee, October 23, 2016

“Muslims yes they have a very in certain countries—not all—but in certain countries. The worst is like Saudi Arabia from what my friends have told me who have been there. Saudi Arabia

1. Perceived rigidity of Muslim community
   b. Strict
doesn’t have a big problem with terrorism, because all their terrorists leave and come here or go to other countries and start shit, so yeah. They have a more devout way men and women dress than Christian countries.”
— US male interviewee, July 9, 2017

“A lot of what I said is based on a stereotypical kind of thinking that Muslims eat curry and stuff like that. It’s all stereotypical isn’t it? And based on people not quite knowing all the facts. I feel very ignorant about their beliefs and all the different headdresses and just their way of life really. It’s just, I’m just making judgements on assumptions because I haven’t done any kind of research about it.”
— UK female interviewee, November 10, 2016

“Um, I know Ramadan is like a month long or—and it’s not— like our Easter’s the same time—roughly the same time every year, but— or Christians’ Easter is roughly the same time every year, but for some, they must—I don’t know if it’s

2. Unfamiliarity of Islam/Muslim community
   a. Ignorance
on—being on a different calendar—I don’t understand how they know when Ramadan is but I know it’s not the same time every year. Um, and they fast most of the day, maybe eat at night… Let’s see…I mean I know Muhammad’s the… the prophet the… I don’t know if he’s like Jesus and supposed to be like synonymous with God or if he’s just the last greatest prophet. I forget. Um… that’s all I can think of.”

— US female interviewee, April 13, 2017

“I mean if they’re a recent immigrant then they’re different because they’re just getting their lives restarted in a new land and there’s some issues with learning customs, potentially learning a language, just logistics of being in a new place, getting a new driver’s license, car, place to live, your kids to school, and all that stuff. I don’t know that you can really attribute that to their faith. It’s more just because, well, they’re immigrant.”

— US male interviewee, March 29, 2017

2. Unfamiliarity of Islam/Muslim community
   b. Alienness
      i. Muslim = immigrant
“And certainly in the case of an English Anglican church, you probably expect to go to church once a week on a Sunday, if you were devout I believe possibly to one other service, whereas for a lot of Muslims I know that you’re talking about regular services and things happening regularly during the day— prayers need to be said at certain times and places, etcetera, and those things are quite distinctive and I think they add to the what you might call strangeness to people who are indigenous to Britain, you know.”

— UK male interviewee, November 12, 2016

“And you wouldn’t necessarily… approach somebody like that”… “because I think there would— there’s a perception that they’re dressed like that, they’re adhering to some kind of rules and they’re rules that we don’t know.”

— US female interviewee, April 13, 2017

“But if they’re not immigrant, then I wouldn’t think that they would be much different than I am. They might be very careful about speaking about their

3. Societal Pressure
   b. Afraid on both sides
      i. Majority population fearful

1. Perceived rigidity of Muslim community
   b. Strict

2. Unfamiliarity of Islam/Muslim community
   b. Alienness
      ii. Different

3. Societal Pressure
   b. Afraid on both sides
      ii. Muslim population fearful
faith because of prejudice that might come their way, but aside from that I think they would be really like everybody else.”

— US male interviewee, March 29, 2017

“If you’re behaving in a way that’s like you give even just visually the person that you don’t want somebody to come near you, you know, that would be a barrier too. But that could be for any number of reasons— fear of how they’re going to be treated, you know that sort of stuff so… I’m sure I give off the same vibe when I feel nervous or uncomfortable and obviously— not obviously but I feel like a lot times that feeds off of each other. They seem nervous then I get nervous then we’re both nervous and we’re like “oh”. (laughter)”

— US female interviewee, March 28, 2017

“Brexit has also brought it out. It was very difficult to talk about this subject. You’re obviously aware of that because of the way you’re phrasing this. Polite society wouldn’t talk about this sort of thing.

— US male interviewee, March 29, 2017

3. Societal Pressure
   b. Afraid on both sides
      i. Majority population fearful
      ii. Muslim population fearful

3. Societal pressure
   a. Political correctness
And you certainly weren’t allowed to talk about it. Politicians wouldn’t talk about it.”

— UK male interviewee, October 7, 2016

“You know? You’re with me. You know what I mean. It’s hard to describe it to a young lady like you. I could do it quite easy talking to [indistinct] or one of the others, you know. We use, uh, explicit words...”

— UK male interviewee, September 18, 2016

“Most of them— most of the communities do. They keep their selves to their selves. But I think they should all learn English, make it compulsory to learn English, and get on with the people that are in your area. It’s part and parcel of it. I mean, I have no problems with anybody at all. I get on with everyone. Well, try to anyway.”

— UK male interviewee, September 18, 2016

“They just don’t wanna assimilate is their biggest problem. They don’t wanna understand it. You come here, you love your neighbor, you assimilate

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into American culture, you’re not gonna impose your silly stuff from your last country. Sorry. It’s just not how it is. That’s the biggest thing that they have going against them.”

— US male interviewee, July 9, 2017

“I do feel that sometimes the Muslim group needs to challenge itself— needs to integrate more and I think that’s a really difficult thing to ask because in many ways the faith is one which wants, I think, to be pervasive and it believes it’s right, as most faiths do.”

— UK male interviewee, November 12, 2016

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<th>a. Not integrated</th>
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“All the politicians over the years have encouraged multiculturalism. On a political level it’s something I don’t like. And I think I’m justified in that now when you see the result of it, which is ghettos and groups of people who don’t mix and we see that a lot in the UK. You can go to parts of Leicester for example, which is diverse if you look at Leicester’s statistics as a whole, but you’ll find this group here, that group there, etc.”
“Yeah. Like if all the sudden people just started like very obviously doing like praying five times a day and doing all that people would definitely here be like, “what is going on? This is super weird. Why is this happening?” ’Cuz since it is such a more insular like, “we are over here,” kind of thing.”

— US female interviewee, April 9, 2017

[on communicating to someone wearing a veil] “It’s like being on the end of a telephone.”

— UK male interviewee, October 7, 2016

[on what it’d be like to wear a form of covering] “If I was going to rob a bank it’d be alright. I think it’d be pretty horrible really to be covered up like that.”

— UK male interviewee, September 18, 2016

“Unless they approach me, I don’t feel like I should. And maybe if it’s a woman I’d probably be safer to do so. But I feel like the clothing says this is where everything stops. So I don’t know what is

4. Isolation and lack of integration of Muslim community  
a. Not integrated

5. Negative ties associated with traditional Muslim clothing  
a. Coverings bad for others  
i. Communication

5. Negative ties associated with traditional Muslim clothing  
a. Coverings bad for others  
ii. Safety

5. Negative ties associated with traditional Muslim clothing  
a. Coverings bad for others  
ii. Unapproachable
the appropriate way to approach someone who is
dressed in that manner. But if it’s like, you know,
headscarf in the hair but not covering the face, that
feels more open and then I can tell from facial
expressions I can approach that person or not—
that kind of a thing. I think. So, I do think the full
body covering type of clothing is definitely a
barrier, but I don’t know that just modest, like a
headscarf or something like that is necessarily.”

— US female interviewee, March 28, 2017

“Um, (laughing) that’s a funny question ‘cause
sometimes I think if I could just wear a uniform
every day my life would be so much easier.
(laughing) Um, I think it would be fairly restrictive
feeling. Um, uncomfortable… hot… um… and I
think it would feel like a barrier… um.. Yeah.”

— US female interviewee, April 13, 2017

“So I don’t think there’s an absolute hard and fast
set of consistent cues that you can go, “that person
is a Muslim.””

— UK female interviewee, October 23, 2016

5. Negative ties associated with
traditional Muslim clothing
   a. Coverings bad for
      wearers
      iii. Uncomfortable

6. Difficulty identifying
individuals in specific groupings
   a. Hard to identify if person
      is Muslim
“I mean, one of the amusing things about this country is that we have quite strong accents in relatively small areas and very often if you were to listen to someone on the radio, you’d have no idea whatsoever whether they were English or Muslim or whatever because they’ve perhaps grown up in somewhere like Yorkshire where there’s a very strong accent and it’s only when you actually see them that you think, “Oh, crikey, that’s not a white yorkshireman. That’s a guy wearing a funny hat or a woman in a burqa,” you know, but actually they’re speaking in a Yorkshire accent. And that’s because, as I say, we’ve got on to second third and more generations now and I mean you get people with very strong Glasgow accents.”

— UK male interviewee, November 12, 2016

“But I think it is unreasonable to—well first of all we don’t have a homogenous sense of self, right? We have all different color people, all different religions, and all of that. It’s kind of where we come from even though we seem to be having this

6. Difficulty identifying individuals in specific groupings
   a. Hard to identify if person is Muslim

   b. Hard to define Western identity
surge of America’s greatest, you know, what is that? Exactly. I don’t even like apple pie, you know? So we don’t have that good sense of what it is ‘cause we have so much of a sense of let’s be individuals. The average American could be someone walking down the street with blue hair and, you know, what makes the American? I feel like we have less of a very specific identity sometimes than even other countries do, but not all other countries. I think we tend to assume people in Europe are very similar—certainly western Europe. So it’s hard to say become like us when we don’t even know what us is.”

— US female interviewee, March 28, 2017

“Because they are so restricted when they can show it off, but, you know, it depends on the environment I’m sure. And again like everybody else you’ve got this huge spectrum. You can’t expect millions of people to all behave exactly the same. We don’t manage it over here. And there are other countries that are more committed to

6. Difficulty identifying individuals in specific groupings
   c. Hard to define Muslim identity
community and religion I think as a whole, but still.

Get any five people from anywhere in the room and see if they can agree on anything—like dinner even.”

— US female interviewee, March 28, 2017
APPENDIX H.

Bookshop Material Culture

*Image 1.* A section of a London bookshop dedicated to books on the East with multiple books on extremist violence
Image 2. A section of the same London bookshop as image 1 filled with books written in Arabic

Image 3. One shelf of books focused on Islam in Blackwell’s bookshop in Oxford, UK; There is a focus on the political force of Islam and on oppression of women
Images 4. & 5. books from a local, smaller book store in Nottingham, UK displaying and explaining the diversity of Muslim dress
APPENDIX I.

Contextual Photos of Ethnic Shops

*Image 1.* Street view of an ethnic shop sandwiched between a shoe store and tattoo shop in Camden Town, London
Image 2. The tattoo shop adjacent to the ethnic shop in Camden Town, London
Image 3. The inside of the Camden Town, London ethnic shop
Images 4. & 5. Other views of the inside of the Camden Town, London ethnic shop
Images 6. & 7. The inside of a Cambridge ethnic shop
Images 8. & 9. More images of the inside of a Cambridge ethnic shop
Image 10. & Image 11. of the inside of the Cambridge, UK ethnic shop and of the inside of a Cork, Ireland Turkish dessert shop, respectively
Image 12. The front area of the Turkish dessert shop in Cork, Ireland

Image 13. A close-up of one of the Turkish delight jars in the Cork, Ireland shop
Image 14. An odd item for sale in a Barcelona, Spain tourist shop run by a recent immigrant