

ABSTRACT

This paper looks at the U.S. media coverage and treatment of Islam and Muslims in the post 9/11 landscape. This study tests the concepts of media bias and portrayals when applied to mentions of and presentations about Islam. The historical connotations and inherent factors for such bias and portrayals are then discussed. U.S. policy with Iran, U.S. involvement in South America and conflicts in Afghanistan involving the U.S.S.R and U.S. are used as examples to explain negative portrayals in the U.S. media. For this purpose, the web versions of the *New York Times* (as a major U.S. print medium) and CNN (as one of the leading U.S. broadcast news network) will be followed over the period of a week and its stories mentioning “Islam” or “Muslims” will be examined for a balanced or complete picture about Islam and Muslims. Journalistic ignorance and cultural proximity, editorial agenda-setting and selection and U.S. foreign policy and media control are examined against the coverage. The results indicate a general trend towards framing and communicating negative messages about Islam and Muslims with a significant degree of bias in presenting an unbalanced or distorted view of “Islam” and “Muslims” to the audiences. The negative messages include using stereotypical words such as “Radical”, “Violent” or “Extremists” to define “Islam” and “Muslims.” In addition, stories about violence, conflict and extremism are part of the agenda when discussing “Islam” and “Muslims.” Overall there are mostly negative images portrayed about “Islam” and “Muslims” within the context in which they are being discussed in the articles.

EXPLORING U.S. MEDIA REPORTING ABOUT “ISLAM” AND “MUSLIMS”: MEASURING BIASED OR UNBALANCED COVERAGE

1. INTRODUCTION:

Image creation, formation and reinforcement have achieved utmost importance in today’s global media age, where audience may rely on media powerhouses to make sense of the world

around them. This is especially true for many Western audiences that avidly obtain their daily news from television, print and the Internet. As a result of technological changes and convenience, many traditional newspaper readers have shifted over to the “new media” of the Internet. Now, many people may get their news from blogs or websites of major newspapers or broadcast media outlets. In such a quick-paced global environment where people are often inter-dependent and rely on ever diminishing sources of information, the dissemination of foreign news and treatment of certain peoples, religions and groups is of utmost importance. People often do not travel abroad and their only construction of reality of “far-off” lands, different cultures, religions or groups of people may be based on the images constructed and information available to them through their local media. In fact, for some people, local and domestic media are perhaps the first and only contact with the international world, events and people. Still others may rely on their hometown newspapers or dailies to make sense of much of the political and social happenings locally, nationally and globally. Many of these media messages may employ framing or agenda-setting that may be shaped by the media management keeping in view the media outlet interests, state policies and audience demographics. In terms of Islam, the U.S. media particularly acts as a gate-keeper for a variety of information content, blocking some messages and allowing others to reach across to its targeted audiences.

In terms of unbalanced reporting on an issue or matter, Chomsky (1988) believes that the U.S. media is guilty of leaving out many aspects of an issue, including the understanding of the origins and nature of the problems reported, as Chomsky (1988) states: “such matters are not fit topics for reporting, commentary and debate. Rather, the agenda must conform to elite requirements, generally set by state propaganda, though debate is permissible insofar as dominant elites disagree on tactical and procedural matters” (p. 114). In this case, the elite refers

to the rich and powerful segments of society who control and own the U.S. media and influence U.S. policymakers and assist political candidates to office.

We have witnessed the conflicts of the Cold War era, particularly the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (First Afghan conflict), U.S. invasion of Afghanistan (Second Afghan conflict), the U.S. involvement in Nicaragua and other South American states, covert CIA operations in Iran and the current Iraq conflict. In many of these scenarios, we have often seen the U.S. media's treatment of the "opposing" camp in an unbalanced way in line with changing U.S. governmental positions regarding the people, ideologies or events. For example, many of the same "mujahideen" of the First Afghan war who were hailed as "heroes" by the Americans against the "Communist" enemies, have now been transformed into "terrorists" in the Second Afghan war. Policy changes and shifts in strategic and national interests meant that the once glorified "freedom fighters" were all categorized and generalized as "terrorists" and "extremists" in the American media without much reference to the root causes of their transformation. Since 9/11, the U.S. media, both print and broadcast, especially following the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, have covered "Islam" and "Muslims" from a limited scope of reference. Terms like "Muslim extremists," "Islamic terrorists," and "jihadists," have dominated U.S. media communication about "Islam" and "Muslims."

The purpose of this study is to understand the communication patterns of the U.S. media regarding such terms as "Islam" and "Muslims" and to examine instances of bias or limited reporting when such mentions take place. The paper will then look at the various factors that can possibly cause such communication (about Islam or Muslims) to occur, such as journalistic ignorance and cultural proximity, editorial agenda setting and selection, and U.S. foreign policy and media control. To this end, the web versions of the *New York Times* (as a major U.S. print

medium) and CNN (as one of the leading U.S. news networks) will be followed over the course of a week and their communication regarding “Islam” and “Muslim” will be examined for their portrayals of Islam and Muslims. The *New York Times* and CNN are also selected for their extensive coverage of international news and presence of international news bureaus. These U.S. media outlets will be evaluated for instances of bias and narrow framing that may distort the image of “Islam” and “Muslims” or at the very least, present an incomplete picture or story.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

I. Journalistic Ignorance, Editorial Agenda Setting and Cultural Proximity Factors

Journalistic ignorance can stem from lack of knowledge in reporting about foreign lands, people, cultures and ideals. As James Mann puts it,

Reporters do not always get the story right; neither do their editors and publishers.

This is especially the case when they report about distant lands and unfamiliar cultures...the readers, who are already conditioned by the prevalent stereotypes, accept the misleading stories as true and react accordingly. (as cited in Saleem, 2002, p. 133)

This evokes the term “cultural proximity.” Most U.S. reporters are physically distant from Islam and Muslims and lack knowledge of Islamic cultures, nor do they have any direct contacts with the daily lives of most Muslims, or knowledge of Islamic texts. Thereby, the reporting often emits “ignorance” in its discourses, portrayals and treatments of “Islam” and “Muslims.” It can also be guided by ideological preferences, patriotism and systematic filtering processes involved in news gathering and reporting. Cultural proximity factors explain most U.S. media reporting about “Islam” and “Muslims” as there are barely any Muslim or Arab reporters in major U.S. media outlets. The ones that are present however, are not usually consigned to

report on matters concerning “Muslims” or “Islam,” nor are they visible in reporting from Middle Eastern or other Muslim countries. Time constraints, cultural illiteracy and editorial agenda-setting practices ensure that the stories, reports and communication regarding “Islam” and “Muslims” may include instances of bias, stemming from this “distance” between the “reporter” and the “reported.”

Perhaps the most significant study in this regard was done by Karim (2003) who looked at the media coverage of violence around the globe, as it primarily involved Muslim individuals and groups. He blamed journalistic ignorance and lack of knowledge for the biased representations of Islam, Islamic groups and people. He studied how Islam was constructed in the Canadian print media since the early 1980’s and believed that many times images of Islam were “formed by history, myth, socialization, and propaganda, as well as by the political manipulation of Islamic symbols by Muslims themselves” (Karim, 2003, p. 4). As such he rejected the notion that “there is a centrally-organized journalistic conspiracy against Islam” (Karim, 2003, p. 4). His comprehensive study looked at the coverage of events such as the holding of Western hostages in Beirut, the Iran-Iraq war, various wars in the Caucasus and Balkans, hijacking of an American airliner by a Lebanese group, the Gulf war and the intifada in the West Bank.

Karim’s (2003) study was an attempt to show media hypocrisy and ignorance in dealing with “Islam” or “Muslims” as compared to other groups, where “dominant media discourses simultaneously highlight and downplay specific types of violence” (p. 4). Thus, violence involving a Muslim group received more coverage and interpretations in the media, as compared to a “non-Muslim” group. In discussing terrorism Karim (2003) alleged: “the only terrorists whom Israel acknowledges are those who oppose Israel. The only terrorists the United States

acknowledges are those who oppose the United States or their allies” (p. 19). Thus, where does the true definition of terrorism lie for the media to interpret for the audiences, in order for them to make an informed decision about a group, religion, people, war or event? Karim (2003) alluded to the fact that violence involving Muslims as victims was barely covered in the “Northern” media, and if at all covered it was in favor of the victims of Muslim actions. The North is generally referred to as the group of the wealthy, developed (First and much of Second World) countries while the South consists of the poor, underdeveloped and developing nations (Third World). As such, countries like the U.S., Canada, Australia, U.K. and Netherlands would consist of the Northern nations while countries like Iran, Philippines, India, Pakistan and Kenya would make up the Southern nations.

Karim (2003) believed that the age-old Eurocentric discourses on Islam have continued to this day and with regard to the Western media “not only are these age-old images used as frames to interpret current events, but when Muslim groups are in conflict with a Northern power the reporting tends inevitably to favor the latter” (p. 176). As such, Islam “becomes a composite entity, with little distinction made between its diverse followers and their respective beliefs, cultures and actions” (Karim, 2003, p. 176). He believed that the Northern-based transnational media had a strong and far reaching influence in “global image and decision-making” (Karim, 2003, p. 193). Criticizing the transnational media, Karim (2003) stated:

The operational nature of mass media institutions leads to the continual production of hegemonic messages which veil the structural and direct violence of dominant states while highlighting the violent activities of “terrorists” and “terrorist states”...in naming only certain kinds of political violence as terrorism, in assigning casual and remedial responsibilities for this public problem, and in legitimating a depoliticized way of

viewing it, the mass media are vital participants in engineering consensus about this issue. (p. 34)

Karim's (2003) study was important as it looked at the "dependence of the Canadian print media on the global narrative on Islam" (p. 14). He stated that "newspapers in Canada tend to be heavily reliant on American, British, and French global wire services for foreign news" (Karim, 2003, p. 14). Thus, Muslim responses to American cultural, economic, ideological and military influences involving Muslims or Muslim lands may be interpreted by the Canadian media in much the same way as the Americans (Karim, 2003).

The other important feature of the study was Karim's (2003) highlighting of the inclusiveness of Muslims in North American societies, pointing to the fact that Islam is the second fastest growing religion in the world with a significant membership and presence throughout North America. As Karim (2003) pointed out, "polarized frameworks of 'us versus them' are becoming even more invalid than ever" (p. 179). Presently, Muslims are part of the North American society in much the same way as other religious groups and ethnicities and as such, there seems to be no place for biased portrayals in these civilized societies.

Thus, all in all, Karim's (2003) work was exhaustive and comprehensive in its investigation of the Canadian print media's treatment of Islam and Muslims. However, more work needs to be done in the changing world environment following the Iraq war, election of Obama and increased complexity of the "war on terror". This study will observe both print and broadcast media in the U.S. and try to observe the bias in reporting about "Islam" and "Muslims" and account for other factors, in addition to journalistic ignorance or unfamiliarity with Islam and Muslims, in U.S. media coverage. This subject is of paramount importance in today's

informational and global age and further scholarship may help us better understand the world and the people that exist in it.

II. Media Control, Power, State Influence and Media Interests in News Reporting

In terms of state influence and media control, Nurullah (2010) endorses Said's (1981) argument that the Western media's coverage and interpretation of Islam "can be attributed to the political influence of those people and institutions producing it rather than necessarily truth or accuracy" (as cited in Nurullah, 2010, p. 1022). Media control and media interests can profoundly influence projections of images and ideals about groups, religions or ideologies in today's ever globalizing society. U.S. media is becoming increasingly concentrated with large media outlets such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Times*, CNN and Fox Network dominating coverage of national and international news. Many local and smaller media outlets in the U.S. get their news from these bigger outlets and rely on the expertise of 'their' journalists and news gathering, reporting and documenting procedures.

Thus, monopoly over news production and dissemination of news content gives major outlets a privileged position in formulating public opinion and guiding foreign policy, where needed. It also means that if there is misreporting, unbalanced coverage or bias at the top tier of a media organization, especially in coverage of "foreign" events, issues or national security concerns, it may transfer to other, smaller outlets and their respective audiences, irrespective of partisanship.

With control comes responsibility and if a media organization is unable to question the government, investigate issues or present balanced views on important matters of public interest, the media organization may be guilty of irresponsible behavior, bias and distortion.

In terms of questioning the government and investigating issues for balanced coverage, Kumar (2006) conducted one study that looked at the U.S. media's coverage prior to the Iraq war of 2003. Kumar (2006) believed that since the mainstream U.S. media did not adequately investigate the call for war against Iraq in 2003, it assisted the Bush administration in misleading the nation into war based on faulty information (Kumar, 2006). In her study, Kumar (2006) analyzed "media coverage of the 2003 war on Iraq, both in the build up to war and during the war, in order to delineate media and government strategies that ensured a preponderance of pro-war arguments" (p. 49). She believed that one of the major factors that explained such media action was the "emergence of a for-profit giant conglomerate media system that lends itself to propaganda due to its structural limitations" (Kumar, 2006, p. 49). Her analysis revealed that the media were complicit with the military industrial complex in the propagandistic coverage of the war on Iraq (Kumar, 2006). As she pointed out:

Military planners had finally devised a system of media control: restrict access to the battlefield and thus minimize coverage of casualties, provide the media with military approved images of war, create a "pool" of trusted journalists who could be relied upon, and drum up patriotism. (Kumar, 2006, p. 50)

She indicated that the news media received large sums of information from the corporate public relations department of the military and the government. As she points out: "Pentagon alone employs thousands of people, and spends millions of dollars on its public relations every year ...reporters are sent to established locations such as the White House, the Pentagon, the State Department, and so on to routinely cover events" (Kumar, 2006, p. 52). As such the "outcome of this dependency is that government (and corporate) sources acquire enormous power to manipulate the news" (Kumar, 2006, p. 52). In her study, many major outlets created a

climate supportive of the war rather than “downplaying or omitting facts that would refute the administration’s case for war” (Kumar, 2006, p. 60). She presented examples of various talk show hosts and reporters who lost their jobs or were intimidated while questioning the government on its facts or policies on Iraq. She states, “The message to journalists was clear: either censor yourself or face disciplining. This message came not only from the elites who run the mass media, but also from the White House” (Kumar, 2006, p. 60). Although her study was instrumental in understanding “how” the media supported and facilitated the government and military in the 2003 Iraq war, this study will try to explain some of the major reasons “why” the media act in a certain way and how evident is the bias in such reporting.

In another significant study, Van Dijk (1996) looked at the social power of the news media. He defined social power as “a social relation between groups or institution (and its members) of the actions and the minds of (the members) a less powerful group” (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 10). He was of the view that the media power is “generally symbolic and persuasive, in the sense that the media primarily have the potential to control to some extent the minds of readers and viewers, but not directly their actions” (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 10). However, he believed that media has the power to manipulate information i.e. “mediated information is biased or concealed in such a way that the knowledge and beliefs of the audience are changed in a direction that is not necessarily in its best interest” (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 11). This is a theme that will be referred to in this study as well. Van Dijk (1996) employed discourse analysis in his inquiry of the news media, defined as a domain of study “that systematically examines the structures and functions of text and talk in their social, political and cultural contexts” (p. 10). Van Dijk (1996) believed that power of the media is not just measured by their influence on the audience but also in relation to “the broader framework of the social, cultural, political, or economic power structures

of society” (p. 9). Van Dijk (1996) suggested that:

news media are being controlled by these other power elites...their common ideologies are jointly produced, each acting within its own sphere of influence and control, but each also dependent on the other. Foreign policies without support from the press can hardly be legitimated and sustained and are difficult to implement when the corporate lobby is opposed to them. (p. 29)

Thus, with the level of access and power that the news media possess, we saw the marginalization of critical minority voices

that do not confirm the prevailing white elite consensus...are deemed to be less credible...too ‘radical’. On the other hand, those minority spokespersons who do happen to agree with the white elite perspective will be given special access to the media and be prominently displayed as representing minority points of view. (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 19)

This is seen most prominently in the case of Muslim voices post 9/11, such that ones that legitimize the dominant elite perspective on Muslims, Islam or the U.S. foreign wars, are allowed to be represented in the U.S. mainstream media, while others may be ignored or sidelined.

Van Dijk (1996) aptly summarized the double standards of the Western news media in reporting war, coups, oppression and violence from the Third World, especially when they are interpreted as a threat to the First World. The blame for most of these ills or conditions is placed solely on the Third World and “such explanations play down the direct or indirect effects or legacies of Western colonialism, corporate practices, military intervention, international trade, and politics” (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 26). These double standards are also seen in this study of U.S. reporting on Islam and Muslims after 9/11. While Van Dijk’s (1996) study focused on the press, this study looks at both the print and broadcast media outlets, albeit on their respective websites.

Noam Chomsky, a renowned American linguist and political scientist, critically examined the ways in which the U.S. media works in conjunction with the U.S. government. The connection between the political elites and media elites is one of interdependence and co-existence. Political elites may rely on media elites for favorable coverage while running for office, while media elites may rely on political elites for official documents, information and sound bites. Together they both participate in policy-formulation and implementation, as we will see in Naveh's (2004) study. However, there is an umbrella group of ideological elites, with power and money, which influences both these groups. They may include political financiers, think tank intellectuals and corporate owners.

Chomsky's (1988) research was based on extensive coverage of interventions in Central and South America and the role of the U.S. media in acquiescing to the state machinery. The U.S. media he argued, participated in presenting a distorted, biased and unbalanced coverage of events in Latin America, with considerable influence from political and economic elites.

The record he studied indicated that the pattern of use of force, violence and covert operations by the U.S. will continue along with guarding and protection of this damaging information, repackaged for the domestic audience by the U.S. media. Chomsky (1988) made references to the role of the media in highlighting the Vietnam War and how it was successful in mobilizing the domestic audience. He stated:

During the Vietnam years, the public played a significant though indirect role in influencing policy...it was fear of the public that led to the expansion of clandestine operations in those years, on the usual principle that in our form of democracy, if the public escapes passivity, it must be deceived--for its own good. (Chomsky, 1988, p. 6)

Thus, according to Chomsky (1988) the true form of democracy lies in an informed

populace able to make collective and informed decisions. He feels that in the U.S. system of democracy the public is provided biased information by the state apparatus, with the help of the U.S. media, resulting in a passive population, unable to question the motives and goals of the U.S. political elites in world affairs (Chomsky, 1988).

In this study, this is one of the factors examined, whereby the media can be complicit with state policies regarding the treatment of “Islam” and “Muslims” in the post 9/11 political landscape, providing media coverage that predominantly favors one side, thus encouraging biased versions of stories. It is now seen in this study how communication about “Islam” and “Muslims” takes place in the U.S. media in light of the current scenario where the terrorist groups, often erroneously synonymous with “Islam” and “Muslims,” are operating against the U.S. interests.

The changing characterization of the “Taliban” during and after the First Afghan War is a noteworthy example. The Taliban were hailed as “heroes” and “fighters” fighting on behalf of the forces of good i.e. the U.S. and its allies during much of the 1980’s. When the U.S. left the region at the end of the 1980’s, the Taliban were ignored by both the U.S. media and the U.S. government, as the in-fighting between various groups ensued for control of Afghanistan. The Taliban rose in prominence with the control of Afghanistan in 1996 and were invited to the U.S. to broker a pipeline deal, in line with U.S. political and economic elite interests, which nevertheless failed to materialize. After 9/11, the Taliban were seen as harboring the terrorist group Al-Qaeda and their struggle against the U.S. forces in Afghanistan was seen along the same lines as Al-Qaeda’s fight against the U.S.-led coalition in the “war on terror.” Thus, resentment against the Taliban grew in the U.S. media with an increasingly hostile atmosphere built around stereotypes and gross generalizations of all “Taliban” groups in Afghanistan. Once

again, with the changing administration in Washington and a review of foreign policy calling for dialogue with certain segments of the “Taliban,” we saw the emergence of such terms like “good Taliban” and “bad Taliban” within different representatives of the U.S. media. Thus, foreign policy, guided by economic and political elite interests, was responsible for fluctuating media characterizations and portrayals of the “Taliban.” As Chomsky (1988) states

the state must spin an elaborate web of illusion and deceit, with the cooperation of the ideological institutions that generally serve its interests-not at all surprisingly, given the distribution of domestic wealth and power and natural workings of the ‘free market of ideas’ functioning within these constraints. (p. 2)

The underlying theme of the 1980’s was the “Communist threat” and “Communist scare”. That seems to have been merely replaced by the “Islamic threat” in the post 9/11 scenario. Perhaps the most interesting observations of Chomsky (1988) regarding the U.S. media were about the conformity with the political elite agenda. Chomsky (1988) believed that the “agenda must conform to elite requirements, generally set by state propaganda, though debate is permissible insofar as dominant elites disagree on tactical and procedural matters” (p. 114).

Thus, the U.S. media needed to do damage control to successfully protect the U.S. government and military against “embarrassing” moments in front of domestic audience and shape all their reporting according to these principles which implies that all action taken was with “good intention” on the part of the American government. However, Chomsky’s study was conducted in the Cold War scenario and more studies need to be conducted after 9/11 to measure any changes in the way the U.S. media, specifically, has evolved over the course of time in its treatment of perceived U.S. “enemies”, whether real or imagined.

III. U.S. Foreign Policy, U.S. Media and Audience

As we saw with Chomsky's (1988) study, foreign policy can also contribute to the way images are portrayed regarding certain groups, religions, ethnicities, events or ideologies in the world. U.S. foreign policy in the 1980's was built on a strong anti-Communist agenda worldwide, manifested in the actions in Latin America and Afghanistan during the 1980's. These covert wars received U.S. media support, as narrated in Chomsky's (1988) "Culture of Terrorism," and as such, the subsequent reporting and writing was done through this narrow frame of reference, filtering and agenda-setting. In the current age, it is reasonable to expect that U.S. media reporting will support U.S. foreign policy dictates wherein groups like "Al-Qaeda" and "Taliban" are the enemies of the U.S. As such, reporting on "Islam" and "Muslims" may become distortedly anti-Islam and anti-Muslim, synonymous with the anti-Taliban and anti-al-Qaeda sentiment that seems to exist in U.S. media circles and across much of U.S. public in the aftermath of 9/11. Thus, this study will look at how the images of "Islam" and "Muslims" are being presented in the U.S. media in light of the current scenario.

Hurwitz & Peffley (1990) did a significant study that looked at how the images of the Soviet Union impacted the foreign policy attitudes of the citizens in the United States. Studying American attitudes towards the Soviet Union was important for two reasons: 1) the Soviet Union was allied with the Americans during World War II and 2) U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War was united in action and implementation across all U.S. institutions, Presidents and media communications during that period. When World War II ended with the emergence of two distinct "major powers" on the world stage, the U.S. and U.S.S.R confronted each other in a decades-long Cold War, which split the world into two camps: Communist and Anti-Communist. In this battle of ideals and control, we saw allies turning to foes, as a result of shifting U.S. policies, strategies and world events.

This was observed once again, when many members of Al-Qaeda and Taliban previously funded and armed by the U.S. to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan, were now in confrontation with the U.S. as a result of changing U.S. policies and strategies after 9/11. One of the differences however, was the generalization by the media, of a 1.6 billion strong religion of mostly diverse and multi-faceted people as America's "new enemies." This study will look at how the communications about "Islam" and "Muslim" evolved as a result of this changed international environment. Historically, communications regarding "Islam" and "Muslims" have often been negative in the Western media, as suggested by Said (1997). However, it was worthwhile to observe in this study if the current U.S. foreign policy, which favors a continuation of the war against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, despite its unpopularity, had any impact on the way U.S. media frames communication about "Islam" and "Muslims."

As one of the factors that may influence media reporting or fact-finding, U.S. foreign policy may have a role to play in how the media treats certain people, religion, events or ideals. Thus, Hurwitz & Peffley (1990) asked the following questions: "To what degree do basic understandings of the U.S.S.R. shape individuals' foreign policy preferences? And what are the origins of anti-Soviet beliefs?" (p. 3). To answer these questions, they collected data through a "telephone survey conducted by the Survey Research Center at the University of Kentucky (UKSRC). Through a variant of random digit dialing, 610 adults in the Lexington, Kentucky area were interviewed in June 1987" (Hurwitz & Peffley, 1990, p. 11). The results were in line with the view that "foreign policy opinions are motivated by a fear of foreign nations" (Hurwitz & Peffley, 1990, p. 16). Thus, those respondents that viewed the Soviet Union as a threat to U.S. interests and untrustworthy "are more likely to favor higher levels of defense spending, expanding the nation's nuclear arsenal, and using American troops south of the border"

(Hurwitz & Peffley, 1990, p. 17). This strategy of outlining generalized threats by countries, ideologies or groups to the United States seems too commonly observed with the U.S. media rhetoric in the fight against the “terrorists,” many of whom are presented as representatives of Islam or Muslims.

TABLE 2
PREDICTING SPECIFIC FOREIGN POLICY ATTITUDES

	Defense Spending Policy	Nuclear Policy	Military Policy	Contra Policy
Postures				
Militarism	.206**	.177**	.142**	.129**
Containment	.133*	.182**	.187**	.290**
Soviet Images				
Trust	.085*	.188**	.054	-.028
Threat	.054	.111**	.199**	.157**
Core Values and Predispositions				
Patriotism	.052	.072*	.120**	.033
Moral Trad.	.010	-.040	-.029	-.022
Fundamentalism	.113**	.133**	.121**	.018
Party ID	.082*	.050	.088*	.148**
Ideology	.036	.123**	-.033	.124**
<i>N</i>	610	610	610	610
<i>R</i> ²	.216	.406	.322	.318
<i>R</i> ² Adj.	.205	.397	.312	.308

* $p < .05$

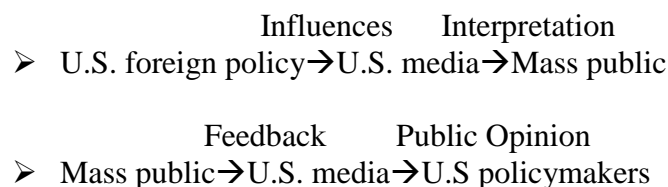
** $p < .01$

Cell entries are standardized beta coefficients.

(Source: Hurwitz & Peffley, 1990, p. 17)

As the table illustrates, respondents “display a decided preference for an assertive stance emphasizing military strength if they perceive the Soviet Union as untrustworthy and, especially, as threatening” (Hurwitz & Peffley, 1990, p. 16). This was seen with the U.S. media build up to

the Afghan and Iraq wars post 9/11, which stirred up public sentiment decidedly in favor of both wars. In simpler terms, policymakers may influence the media in line with foreign policy objectives, which may in turn interpret the issue and formulate public opinion on it. Once the public form an opinion for or against the issue, surveys and polls may then return that feedback to policymakers through the media.



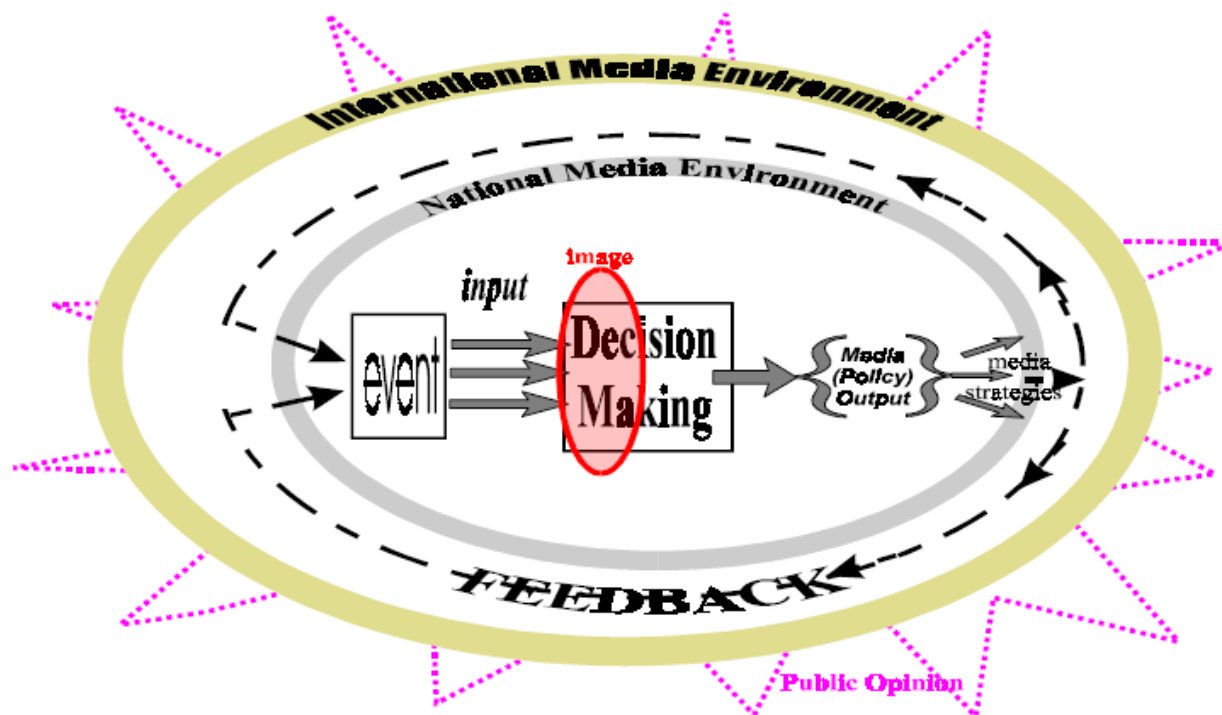
Thus, the table in Hurwitz & Peffley's (1990) study indicates that respondents with a more militaristic approach will likely favor an increase in the nation's nuclear arsenal, increasing defense budgets and spending and even using American troops in Latin America, to protect against Soviet influence and presence in that area. Many people may develop their beliefs about "foreign" issues by relying on the media as not everyone is able to get a direct and first-hand experience of foreign nations, peoples and cultures. This measure is applicable to this study as well, whereby the coverage of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, portrayal of Muslim individuals/groups and public sentiment post 9/11 may all impact the audience's perceptions as well as the U.S. media communications regarding "Islam" and "Muslims."

Hurwitz & Peffley's (1990) study pointed to the dependence of people on pre-existing beliefs in guiding their policy choices and explained how the image of U.S.S.R. was shaped by U.S. foreign policy, U.S. media and audience sentiment of the time. In the same way, my study will examine how the image of "Muslims," most heroically referred to in terms such as "holy" and "heroic" warriors during the First Afghan war, has transformed into various negative terms, some of them being "fanatics," "extremists," "terrorists" and "radicals," as a result of 9/11.

A pertinent study by Naveh (2002) looked at the role of the media in foreign policy decision-making. According to the study, which looked at the roles of the media and policymakers in decision-making, if the U.S. government and foreign policy elites were biased against a certain entity for which a respective policy-action needed to be taken or image presented to the mass public, then most media outlets presented information about that entity in a biased manner to the audience. Consequently, since the audience only have a limited scope of materials, information and facts to choose from, then they are being denied access to form a complete picture in making an informed decision.

Naveh (2002) maintained that the “media is involved in all stages of foreign policy formulation processes and that political leaders take the media into consideration in its national and international aspects” (p. 1). His study

develops and presents a framework for the analysis of foreign policy decision-making which tries to compensate for some of the flaws of existing models in the field, incorporating the complex processes of media input into decision-making, as well as reflecting the role of the press and TV in the formulation stage of policy-making. (Naveh, 2002, p. 1)



(Source: Naveh, 2002, p. 11)

According to the figure above, Naveh (2002) stated that:

When an external international event occurs, leaders learn [sic] about it from the media (the input process, CNN effect, etc.), information is processed via the various image components, and the policy or decision-formulating process is set in motion. Media advisors and PR professionals participate in the process, and officials consult with them and consider their advice. When a decision is made, or a policy is formulated (the output phase), leaders take into consideration the media environment (national and international in the decision itself, and mainly in the publication (MM) process. (p. 11)

Thus, according to Naveh's (2002) theory, the foreign policy decision-making process takes place "within an environment partly created by the media" (p. 10). The media performance is "dictated by the state's political communication regime, government communication policy, the political-economy structure and by the specific communication channels which perform the

relevant media functions” (Naveh, 2002, p. 10). Thus, his study sees the media as a pro-active participant which has a significant role in foreign policy endorsement and should be held accountable for any ramifications of such policies. However, this study will also discuss how the media is shaped and influenced, if at all, by bias in its handling of any “foreign” issues and depictions.

IV. Media Bias Across Outlets

Media bias is generally caused by a number of factors and as such it is hard to trace back media bias to any specific source. Said (1997) suggests that in the American portrayals of Islam and Muslims, “covering Islam is a one-sided activity that obscures what ‘we’ *do*, and highlights instead what Muslims and Arabs by their very flawed nature *are*” (p. xxii). Much of this is due to editorial agenda-setting and selection processes in news stories. When media bias is prevalent in a report, news package or article, it has significant impact on the audience members in question, as they are deprived of a balanced picture of events and issues. Regarding bias against “Islam” and “Muslims,” Esposito (1992) asserts that

Publishing houses, journals, consulting firms, and the media seek out that which captures headlines and all too often confirms stereotypes and fears of extremism and terrorism.

Think how often any reference to an Islamic organization inevitably includes adjectives like “fundamentalism”, “conservativeness”, and “extremist”.” (cited in Saleem, 2002, p. 145)

With such biased portrayals the media may pass on these biases to their audience, some of whom are passive consumers of such stereotypes, portrayals and framing. In terms of biased portrayals about “Islam” and “Muslims” it may further stereotypes, deepen hatred or accentuate the divisions between Western audiences and Muslims/Muslim countries. Thus, not only do such

portrayals employ agenda-setting, but also framing. Perhaps the best way to understand such biased framing is to look at the definition of Entman (1991) who argues that,

frames package key ideas, stock phrases, and stereotypical images to bolster a particular interpretation. Through repetition, placement and reinforcement, the texts and images provide a dominant interpretation more readily perceivable, acceptable, and memorable than other interpretations (as cited in Lee et. al, 2005, p. 313).

Bias can be caused by many factors, some of which we have already talked about in this study. Government influence, including foreign policy, market forces, editorial preferences and framing, as well as journalistic ignorance about reported issues may cause bias. Apart from these, agenda-setting, time factors and economic restraints may have some role to play in biased representations in the media.

In terms of analyzing media bias, Groseclose & Milyo (2005) examined several major media outlets for liberal and conservative bias. Their results indicate a tendency towards liberal bias in the twenty major U.S. media outlets that they studied (Groseclose & Milyo, 2005). As we have seen with the controversy around the community center in New York near Ground Zero, conservative media tend to be more negative in their reporting about “Islam” and “Muslims” compared to the liberal media. However, there could be a possibility of the liberal media reporting “against” the conservative stance on the issue, rather than reporting “for” the community center. Thus, for the purpose of this study, Groseclose & Milyo’s (2005) work indicates two important features. One, they claim to demonstrate that the *New York Times* is more liberal than conservative, using their measure. Two, the authors argue that most major U.S. media outlets are comparatively more liberal leaning than conservative, including journalists that work for these outlets. This is an argument that has long been made by conservative politicians,

yet the definition of liberal remains elusive. However, if these claims are true, then it would be expected that both CNN and the *New York Times*, with “liberal slants and liberal journalists” would be less “Islamophobic” and more balanced in their reporting about “Islam” and “Muslims.”

In their separate goal of measuring a news outlet’s position as left, right or center, Groseclose & Milyo (2005) found that 18 out of 20 outlets are left of center. Thus, using their measure they find that *CNN NewsNight with Aaron Brown* is the second most centrist outlet, while the *New York Times* is the second most left-of-center outlet out of the 20 outlets they studied, as shown in the following table (Groseclose & Milyo, 2005).

TABLE IV
RANKINGS BASED ON DISTANCE FROM CENTER

Rank	Media outlet	Estimated ADA score
1	<i>Newshour with Jim Lehrer</i>	55.8
2	<i>CNN NewsNight with Aaron Brown</i>	56.0
3	<i>ABC Good Morning America</i>	56.1
4	<i>Drudge Report</i>	60.4
5	<i>Fox News’ Special Report with Brit Hume</i>	39.7
6	<i>ABC World News Tonight</i>	61.0
7	<i>NBC Nightly News</i>	61.6
8	<i>USA Today</i>	63.4
9	<i>NBC Today Show</i>	64.0
10	<i>Washington Times</i>	35.4
11	<i>Time Magazine</i>	65.4
12	<i>U.S. News and World Report</i>	65.8
13	<i>NPR Morning Edition</i>	66.3
14	<i>Newsweek</i>	66.3
15	<i>CBS Early Show</i>	66.6
16	<i>Washington Post</i>	66.6
17	<i>Los Angeles Times</i>	70.0
18	<i>CBS Evening News</i>	73.7
19	<i>New York Times</i>	73.7
20	<i>Wall Street Journal</i>	85.1

The table gives our method’s rankings of the most to least centrist news outlet. The rankings are based on the distance of the outlet’s estimated ADA score (from Table III) to 50.06, our estimate of the average United States voter’s ADA score.

(Source: Groseclose & Milyo, 2005, p. 1220)

According to their results, this study should then expect CNN and the *New York Times* to have relatively more balanced and neutral in reporting on “Islam” and “Muslims,” as they are both centrist or left of center outlets, with no conservative biases. Thus, even though Groseclose & Milyo’s (2005) study provides one way to measure media outlets’ conservative, liberal or centrist standings, this study attempts to measure the overall bias in CNN and the *New York Times*, regardless of partisan orientation, concerning “Islam” and “Muslims.” Thus, if the conservatives are seen as anti-Islam, the relatively liberal CNN and *New York Times* should have more balanced messages and reporting concerning “Islam” and “Muslims.” If not, then this should mean a relatively homogenous national discourse, communication and reporting pattern in the U.S. in terms of “Islam” and “Muslims.”

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS/METHODOLOGY:

The research sought to ask the following questions:

Q1. 1. What kind of connotations are associated with “Islam” and “Muslim,” 2. What are the overall portrayals about “Islam” and “Muslim” and 3. Are there signs of bias in the overall stories?

Q2. How do the results compare in measurement with CNN vs. the *New York Times*?

Q3. If the coverage is unbalanced, limited or biased, how is that explained in terms of journalistic ignorance and cultural proximity, editorial agenda-setting and selection and U.S. foreign policy dictates?

Quantitative content analysis was chosen as the methodology for this particular study.

Neuendorf (2002) defined content analysis as:

a summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method (including attention to objectivity, intersubjectivity, a priori design, reliability, validity,

generalizability, replicability, and hypothesis testing) and is not limited as to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the messages are created or presented. (p. 10)

Content analysis is effective as a research tool as we not only get the frequency of word usage surrounding “Islam” and “Muslims,” but also the context in which it occurs. As such, all variables can be measured as they appear. As Neuendorf (2002) suggests:

In a content analysis, an attempt is made to measure all variables as they naturally or normally occur. No manipulation of independent variables is attempted. Some type of random sampling of the units of data collection is typical, making the finding generalizable to a larger grouping or *population* of messages. (p. 49).

However, content analysis also has certain limitations. Neuendorf (2002) explains them as follows:

the questionable validity of the measures in a survey also applies to the content analysis. Just as the self-report nature of most surveys calls into question the objectivity and validity of their measures, so, too, the involvement of human decision makers in the content analysis process calls into question the validity of the coding or dictionary construction. (p. 49)

As such, the same limitations of subjectivity in a survey questionnaire also apply to content analysis. Additionally, content analysis leaves less room for in-depth examination of text. In measuring positive or negative depictions and connotations associated with certain words, mainly to account for any biased forms of representations that may be prevalent, a quantitative content analysis was performed using HyperPo using “Words in Context,” “Word Collocates” and “Frequency” to analyze word count and word mentions before and after the

terms “Islam” and “Muslim” in the stories and op-ed columns on www.cnn.com and www.nytimes.com using the coding category (see Appendix A).

CNN and *New York Times* are both relatively liberal media outlets that are considered “news leaders” in their respective print and broadcast arenas, due to their vast national and international operations, international news bureaus, personnel on ground in international countries and economic standing. It is to be noted though, that the CNN website is bound to differ in quality and depth of articles for two main reasons: 1) as a broadcast media’s website which relies on newscasts and visual reporting and 2) as a media outlet unlike the *New York Times*, which provides more in depth coverage of articles due to its functioning as a print medium.

In terms of “Words in Context,” 10 words to either side of “Islam” and “Muslim” were analyzed in context. For “Word Collocates,” 5 words in collocation with “Islam” and “Muslim” were measured, capping the total count of words to a maximum of 100. “Islam” and “Muslim” were also quantified for CNN and the *New York Times* to measure the frequency with which they occur in each sample. The results were then classified in terms of positive or negative mentions surrounding “Islam” and “Muslim,” bearing in mind that these categorizations may vary according to context and use.

The coverage period relied on stratified and random sampling as a week was constructed from Monday to Sunday during a randomly selected month of May, 2010. Thereupon, all journalistic stories and op-ed stories with mentions of “Islam” and “Muslim” were selected for each randomly selected Monday, Tuesday... until Sunday. The headlines were manually examined for positive, negative or neutral connotations associated with the story to which it corresponded and respectively classified as such. The number of articles analyzed were N=8 and

N=10 for the *New York Times* and CNN respectively. Articles that were repeated were not counted twice. The portrayal in the headlines and articles (including word count and words in context) were analyzed separately for negative, positive or neutral depictions.

Overall Portrayal: Online Media Outlets

1. Positive (if at least two of three are positive in Words, Headlines or Context)
2. Negative (if at least two of three are negative in Words, Headlines or Context)
3. Neutral (if all neutral OR one positive, one negative and one neutral)

Unit of Analysis:

The Unit of Analysis was the individual word preceding and following the mention of “Islam” and “Muslim” (including word count and words in context, See Appendix A) anywhere in the article excluding the headlines. The other unit of analysis was the headline itself, excluding the body of the article.

Unit of Sampling:

The Unit of Sampling was the article itself. For this purpose, all articles mentioning “Islam” and “Muslim” in the headlines or the body content over the course of the specified week were collected and sampled for both media outlets.

Unit of Data Collection:

The Unit of Data Collection was also the article itself and the headlines and body of the entire article were used to measure for positive, negative or neutral portrayals of the mention of “Islam” and “Muslim.”

It is noteworthy to mention that while measuring for positive or negative portrayals in the word count, only words that evoked definite positive or negative connotations and stand-alone neutral connotations were used. As such, many words like “the,” “is,” “so,” “was,” and “does,” were omitted from the word count measure, even if they fell inside the word corpus of 100.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS:

A table summarizing the results is presented below, followed by a discussion of findings:

Type of Portrayal: Word **New York Times**

Negative:	#	Positive:	#	Neutral	#
1. Militant	4	Building	1	Reform	3
2. Radical	6	Communities	6	Agents	1
3. Agents	1	Conversation	1	Critic(s)	4
4. Conquering	1	Innocents	1	People	10
5. Strictest	1	Interest (s)	2	Understanding	4
6. Crusade	1	Compassion	7	Faith	3
7. Fighting	3	Education	1		
8. Forbids	1				
9. Humiliate/(tion)	3				
10. Killing	8				
11. Murder	8				
12. Forces	5				
13. Rigid	2				
Keyword: Islam			Frequency: 36		
1. Violent	2	Community	19	Against	18
2. Anti	8	Communities	6	Minority	5
3. Assault	5	Greetings	1	Diaspora	1
4. Backward	1	Activists	1		
5. Blood	2	Imam	3		
6. Dangerous	5	Family	13		
7. Fired	1	Love	2		
8. Bomb	3	Respect	2		
9. Radical	2				
10. Violence	2				
Keyword: Muslim			Frequency: 35		

Type of Portrayal: Word **CNN**

Negative:	#	Positive:	#	Neutral	#
1. Attacks	7	Devout	1	Leave(ing)	6
2. Target	2	Family	2	Against	17
3. War	12			Forbidden	1
4. Threatening	1			Religion	5
5. Bashing	1			Misconceptions	1
6. Bogus	1			Stereotypes	1
7. Islamization	2			Disrespect	1
8. Notorious	1			Distortion	1
9. (al) Qaeda	20			Islamophobes	1
10. Radical	3				
Keyword: Islam			Frequency: 13		
1. Extremists	2	Brotherhood	2	Targeted	2
2. ACEH	8	CAIR	2	Tragedy	2
3. Cleric	4	Community	12	Society	2
4. Conspirator	1	Victims	5	Palestinian	8
5. Condemnation	1	Bows	1	Faith	4
6. Hamas	6			Government	7
7. Oppressing	1			Hurt	1
8. Radical	3			Prayer	2
				Reaction	1
Keyword: Muslim			Frequency: 21		

Type of Portrayal: Headline

New York Times	Number of Articles: 8	Positive: 3	Negative: 2	Neutral: 3
CNN	Number of Articles: 10	Positive: 2	Negative: 5	Neutral: 3

Type of Portrayal: Context (“ISLAM” AND “MUSLIM”)

NY Times→	Islam: Negative,	Muslim: Negative,	Overall: Negative
CNN→	Islam: Positive,	Muslim: Neutral,	Overall: Positive

Summary of All Results:

Online Media Outlet	New York Times	CNN
Coverage Period	One Week during May 1 st 2010 to May 31 st 2010	One Week during May 1 st 2010 to May 31 st 2010
Number of Stories	8	10
Type of Portrayal: Words	Negative	Negative
Type of Portrayal: Headlines	Positive	Negative
Type of Portrayal: Context	Negative	Positive
Overall Portrayal→Media Outlet	Negative	Negative

5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS:**The New York Times****Type of Portrayal: Word**

When looking at the word portrayal and word count for the *New York Times* with reference to “Islam,” we see a significantly high percentage of negative words such as Militant, Radical, Killing and Murder scoring the highest in frequency in the word count. There is almost an equal number of positive and neutral words. However, what is interesting is that a word like “compassion” is used the most in terms of positive words in conjunction with “Islam” but a word

like “innocents” is only mentioned once. And perhaps a most generic term such as “people” leads the frequency of neutral words in terms of “Islam” on the *New York Times*. In terms of “Muslim” we see that words like Anti, Assault and Dangerous make up the highest frequency of words in the negative word count on the *New York Times*. However, there is also a tendency to repeatedly use positive terms such as Community, Communities and Family in conjunction with “Muslim,” with lesser number of neutral words used in comparison with positive words. Overall though, the negative word usage is still higher than the positive and neutral, and thus the *New York Times* presents a distorted depiction of “Islam” and “Muslim” in terms of word count and usage, leading to an unbalanced treatment of the religion of Islam and the people that follow the faith. Thus, a significant degree of bias can be attributed to the overarching portrayal in the *New York Times* in terms of word count and frequency.

Type of Portrayal: Headline

When examining the headlines for the stories in the *New York Times* (see Appendix B), we observe that the *New York Times* has 3 positive, 3 neutral and 2 negative headlines for its total of 8 stories. Headlines such as “Munich Imam Strives to Dilute the Elixir of Radical Islam for Some Young People” and “Attackers Hit Mosques of Islamic Sect in Pakistan” are observed to be negative with violent and radical connotations associated with “Islam” and “Muslim” when examined alone, irrespective of the corresponding body of the story. Headlines such as “OP-ED Contributor; Many Faiths, One Truth” and “Vote Endorses Muslim Center Near Ground Zero” were correspondingly positive in nature in terms of “Islam” and “Muslim.” Overall, the *New York Times* had a greater amount of positive and neutral headlines, thereby giving an overall positive portrayal of “Islam” and “Muslim.”

Type of Portrayal: Context

Word Context was measured with 10 words to either side of “Islam” and “Muslim” in both *New York Times* (See Appendix C). In measuring the “word context” for “Islam” in the *New York Times*, we see that highly negative mentions such as “war with Islam,” “critics of Islam,” “Reform Islam,” “wary of political Islam,” “fighting for Islam,” “agents of radical Islam,” “strictest form of Islam,” “paint Islam as a militant faith” and “rigid version of Islam,” far outnumber positive contextual mentions such as “tribute to Islam” and “Compassion is equally important in Islam.” In terms of “word context” for “Muslim” in the *New York Times*, we see that negative mentions such as “in a Muslim family, the honor of the man is between the legs...,” “U.S. is acting against Muslim interests globally,” “position of Western women and the position of Muslim women,” “proselytizing in the Muslim community,” “attackers stayed with the Tablighi Jamaat, a Muslim missionary group that is often described by terrorism experts” and “brink of insanity by the ways of the Muslim men,” were again higher in number and more definitive in presence than meaningful positive portrayals such as “Many Muslim activists and scholars,” “violence against Muslim immigrants” and “a true Muslim should love and respect all of Allah’s creatures.” Thus, the overall portrayal in the *New York Times* was significantly negative and biased towards depicting a more intolerant, violent and radical portrayal in context with the terms “Islam” and “Muslim.”

Analysis of Results

The *New York Times* had 8 stories during the covered period, with negative contextual and word portrayals of “Islam” and “Muslim” and positive portrayal of the headlines. Overall, their coverage was found to be negative. If we look at the word count index for *New York Times*, we see that various negative words with biased connotations such as “killing,” “radical,” “murder” and “dangerous” were used in conjunction with mentions of “Islam” and “Muslim.” In

terms of the context and word usage, these stereotypical reinforcements of negative communication can be explained in terms of the stories covered during this period. Thus, looking at the headlines we see that most of the headlines corresponded to stories about local American Imams, the Muslim community center near Ground Zero, the Faisal Shahzad terrorism plot and U.S. plans to eliminate an American born Al-Qaeda member in Yemen. The underlying themes of most stories are local and national in nature with regard to the U.S., without any significant mentions of “foreign” terrorism, extremism or war threats. However, as the stories themselves indicate, many hint at “homegrown” terrorism or terrorism fears, attributed more to conservative media outlets. Thus, it is surprising to see skewed coverage of “Islam” and “Muslim” by a fairly left-of-center print media powerhouse such as the *New York Times*. Although, it is hard to predict from such a small sample, considering that the *New York Times* is seen to be a widely circulated newspaper which may play a role as an opinion-maker in the U.S., many of these stories are expected to be similarly constructed across other smaller newspapers in the continental U.S.

The most significant story from the *New York Times* was concerning Faisal Shahzad’s background and upbringing, historically narrated and constructed to show his transformation from being a regular, normal person studying, living and working in the U.S. to a radical “Muslim” who plotted to blow up part of New York’s Times Square. The most interesting observation is the failure of both authors to address the causes of his transformation. Even the headlines hint at this aspect: “Money Woes, Long Silences and an Islamic Zeal.” What the “Islamic Zeal” meant is mentioned in the story, but why it came about was missing in most of the narrative on Faisal Shahzad’s life. Perhaps, the reasons could be an unwillingness to discuss the repercussions of American foreign policies, patriotism of the journalists or ignorance on their part. Nevertheless, this discussion is missing in the depiction of Faisal Shahzad as a

“transformed” radical, “Muslim” terrorist. This unwillingness to seek a wider view and perspective on “Muslim deviants” is observed again in the *New York Times* in its story about the American-born Yemeni cleric Al-Awlaki. Thus, while U.S. media outlets are quick to hold “Muslim” or “Islamic” people, organizations or groups to account for violence, murder and terrorism, the underlying themes, causes and motivations for such actions are often left out, leading to unbalanced and distorted interpretations of issues and events.

CNN

Type of Portrayal: Word

In terms of the word portrayal and word count for CNN, we see that there is a tendency to have a high frequency and count of negative words in conjunction with “Islam” such as war, attacks and (al) Qaeda, with neutral words coming in next, followed by only two positive words. Even the highest repeated neutral word, such as “against” is negative, when seen in context of reference with “Islam.” In terms of “Muslim,” we see that CNN repeats words like ACEH, Hamas, radical and cleric in conjunction with “Muslim” with an almost equal frequency of negative and neutral words, albeit with lesser usage of positive words, the word “community” being the most used positive word in the word count, followed by “victims.” Overall, there is a tendency for an unbalanced treatment of the mention of “Islam” and “Muslim” on CNN, in terms of the word count and frequency, thereby presenting a somewhat biased representation of the religion and Muslim people.

Type of Portrayal: Headline

When examining the headlines for the CNN stories (See Appendix B), we see that out of the 10 story headlines, only 2 are positive, while there are 5 negative and 3 neutral headlines. Headlines such as “Israeli assault on Gaza-bound flotilla leaves at least 9 dead” were seen as

positive while headlines like “Fugitive cleric al-Awlaki warns of future attack,” “PC on Islamic extremism puts us at risk” and “Ads on NYC buses target those wanting to leave Islam,” were correspondingly coded as negative. There were mostly negative headlines, with just three neutral and two positive headlines, thereby giving a significantly negative and biased portrayal of “Islam” and “Muslim” in terms of headlines.

Type of Portrayal: Context

In measuring the “word context” for “Islam” in CNN (See Appendix C), we find that the negative contexts such as “Islam bashing,” “thinking of leaving Islam or are leaving Islam,” “mention of radical Islam as the cause of his rampage,” “broader American war against Islam,” “the United States wants to replace with a ‘bogus’ Islam,” “the 9/11 terrorists did this in the name of Islam” and “forbidden to followers of Islam,” were equally mentioned alongside “stereotypes and misconceptions about Islam,” “Extremists want a war between America and Islam, but Muslims are a part of our national life,” “al Qaeda’s gross distortion of Islam” and “Islam is an American religion,” which were seen as highly positive mentions of “Islam” in context. Thus, there was a more positive picture painted with the selection of words used in context with “Islam” in CNN. At the same time, in observing the “word context” for “Muslim” in CNN, we see negative mentions like “Muslim Brotherhood, a hard-line Islamic political movement,” “superfan of the radical Muslim cleric,” “CAIR (Council on American-Islamic Relations) an ‘unindicted co-conspirator Muslim-brotherhood front Hamas-tied’ organization” and “many Muslim extremists have targeted them.” However, they are more or less equally matched to the dominantly positive discourses such as “oppressing the Muslim world,” “Muslim ally in the region,” “Muslim troops,” “victims were Muslim,” “American Society for Muslim

Advancement,” “The 9/11 tragedy hurt everybody including the Muslim community” and “Muslim call to prayer.” Thus, such positive mentions painted a “Muslim victimhood” and “participation in American life” image, thereby giving an overall neutral portrayal to the “word context” of “Muslim” in CNN.

Analysis of Results

Although CNN had 10 stories during the covered period with a positive portrayal of “Islam” and “Muslim” in the word context of its stories, it also included mostly negative headlines and word portrayals of “Islam” and “Muslim.” As a result, its coverage was found to be significantly negative. If we look at the word count index for CNN, we arrive at a similar conclusion to the coverage in the *New York Times*, whereby negative words with biased connotations such as “war,” “al-Qaeda” and “ Hamas,” were used in conjunction with mentions of “Islam” and “Muslim.” War, Al-Qaeda and Hamas are significantly “international” words in terms of the U.S. and are different from the “homegrown terrorism” themes we observed in the *New York Times*. Perhaps, such words may be expected in the coverage by CNN, as it is seen as a broadcast media outlet with far-reaching “international” operations. “War” is used in context with U.S. military operations outside the U.S., while “al-Qaeda” and “Hamas” are negative terms used to describe militant, “foreign” organizations that are at odds with the U.S. In terms of the headlines, they were coded to be mostly negative and although some of the stories mirrored the *New York Times* in terms of content, there were also some international stories on the agenda.

The most significant story, which also affected the context in a positive way, was the one concerning Barack Obama’s address to West Point cadets. Most of the positive word counts, and significantly positive word context, were found within this one story. The most interesting aspect of this story, which had considerable quotes from Barack Obama, was the sharp contrast of U.S.

media portrayals of “Islamic” and “Muslim” images to those that were presented by the President of the United States. Thus, in referring to the enemies in Afghanistan, Obama refers to them as “violent extremists” as opposed to “Muslim extremists” or “Islamic extremists.” In other references, from the word context, we observe Obama’s efforts in projecting “Islam” in a very different light from many of the representations on the U.S. media. He mentions “al-Qaeda’s gross distortion of Islam, their disrespect for human life,” signaling the fact that Islam is indeed a peace-loving and humanity-loving religion that is being twisted and used by groups like al-Qaeda. Such distinctions between “Islam” and “al-Qaeda” may show that groups like al-Qaeda may be following a particular ideology for their own vested interests, political and social gains. The other interesting theme in this story alone, is the correction of the concept of “Muslims” as “aliens” or “enemies” in America, a theme we saw throughout the rest of the CNN articles. Thus, from the word context we also find Obama saying “Extremists want a war between America and Islam, but Muslims are a part of our national life.” Thus, overall this particular article added much to the positive coverage of “Islam” and “Muslim” in CNN, compared to most other articles.

Another feature exclusive to CNN, was the coverage of the Israeli assault on a Gaza-bound flotilla in an article. The mention of an “Israeli assault” and statement of “leaves 9 dead” was framed from a Muslim victimhood viewpoint. The international outrage over the incident and the lengthy coverage of CNN’s broadcast on the issue during the initial moments can explain the inclusion of the article on CNN.com, as it was one of the first articles on CNN since the issue erupted in world media. It could not be determined, however if stories such as these were covered by CNN, compared to the *New York Times*, on the basis of its working as a broadcast media website or their claims as the “World’s News Leader,” which must “lead” the “breaking

news” phenomenon around major world events.

With regards to research question 1, in sum, there are overall negative connotations associated with “Islam” and “Muslim” in both *New York Times* and CNN, a trend towards presenting a negatively skewed portrayal or image of “Islam” and “Muslim” and a bias in presenting stories with themes of confrontation, violence, terrorism, threats and general vilification of the terms “Islam” and “Muslim,” when mentioned. However, *New York Times* had positive headline portrayals while CNN had positive “word context” portrayals for “Islam” and “Muslim,” as the exceptions to the overtly negative depictions.

In terms of research question 2, we do not find a significant difference in the overall results to indicate any higher/lower instances of bias across the two media outlets. Although this is a relatively small sample from the population, it does indicate a pattern of portrayal for “Islam” and “Muslim” in major American media outlets. Thus, there might be a case for predicting some homogeneity across American media for similar kinds of results and reporting patterns. Said (1997) aptly puts across this point, mentioning that:

This sheer mass and density of foreign-news reporting usually means greater authority and hence more frequent citation by people using the news, so that a *New York Times* or CBS report will have credibility by virtue of its source, its institutional prestige, its frequency (daily, hourly, etc.), its air of expertise and experience. (p. 54-55)

Regarding the representation of the American society at large, and a general American consensus, Said (1997) points out, “together, the small group of principal news suppliers and the extraordinary array of much smaller suppliers that are independent of and yet in many ways dependent on the giants furnish an *American* image of reality that does have a recognizable coherence” (p. 55). Thus, it can be inferred that many other news organizations may look up to

CNN stories and re-present and re-endorse these stories and broadcasts to other segments of the American audience, locally and nationally. While the role of the *New York Times* as an opinion leader can be seen from its wide circulation, large readership base and credibility as one of the oldest print media outlets in the U.S.

Finally, with regard to research question 3, we can see a number of factors that may influence the presence, narration and framing of each news story that we have examined in this small sample. We will look at some of these factors separately.

U.S. Foreign Policy

U.S. foreign policy has traditionally and historically influenced U.S. media reporting in some ways. We have seen examples of this during the First Afghan War, First Gulf War and the Iranian Hostage Crisis, amongst other events from the past. As we see in *Culture of Terrorism*, U.S. media often presented the state version of events throughout Latin America in the 1980's, as it did in other Middle Eastern and Asian States. When U.S. foreign policy changed from a pro-Shah to an anti-Ayatollah policy in its dealings with Iran after the Iranian Revolution and the subsequent hostage crisis, we saw the U.S. media following in line with the state policies. As Said (1997) narrates, "no public official and few columnists and journalists were interested in reevaluating the long American history of intervention in Iran and other parts of the Islamic world" (p. 1xi). Instead, Iran was outcast as an intolerant and brutal regime and often portrayed negatively in the U.S. media circles. With the coming to power of Barack Obama, we have again seen a shift in U.S. foreign policy towards Iran, with certain political circles proposing dialogue while others advocating for sanctions, a sentiment often echoed by the U.S. media. As Paterson (1999) predicts, "bias in foreign news coverage produced by established broadcasting networks is usually consistent with the foreign policy of the network's government" (as cited in Nossek,

H., 2004, p. 347).

Similarly, as has been earlier mentioned, the U.S. media treatment of the “mujahideen” during the first Afghan War was in line with the U.S. policy of supporting and arming the warriors against the Soviet Union during the 1980’s. As a result of 9/11, the policy changed course such that many of the same “mujahideen” and their supporters became U.S. enemies in the region. Thus, the current media treatment of “Islam” and “Muslim” can often mistakenly be generalized as a whole and seen erroneously as being synonymous with violence, terrorism and extremism, which can be attributed at least partly to changing U.S. policies towards Muslims or groups that fight or challenge the U.S. in the name of “Islam.”

Journalistic Ignorance or Cultural Proximity

Said (1997) theorizes: ““Islam”” as it is used today seems to mean one simple thing but in fact is part fiction, part ideological label, part minimal designation of a religion called Islam” (p. 1).

Said (1997) goes on to say that:

there is no direct correspondence between the “Islam” in common Western usage and the enormously varied life that goes on within the world of Islam, with its more than 800,000,000 people, its millions of square miles of territory principally in Africa and Asia, its dozens of societies, states, histories, geographies, cultures. (p. 1)

As Said (1997) says about reporters in a foreign country, “instead of trying to find out more about the country, the reporter takes hold of what is nearest at hand, usually a cliché or some bit of journalistic wisdom that readers at home are unlikely to challenge” (p. li-lii). This is even truer for stories about “Islam” and “Muslims” abroad or local news in the U.S. as the bulk of the American audience which constitute the readership/viewership are ignorant about news and issues concerning “Islam” and “Muslim” and rely on these media reporters to make sense of

such phenomena.

Said (1997) believes that with respect to cultural proximity, Europe benefitted from close interactions and colonial rule over Muslims and Islamic societies, which may have informed the European society about language, culture and other attributes of Islam and Muslims. The U.S., he believes, has not done so despite a sizeable Muslim population living in the U.S. Having said that, the historical encounters with Muslims, Crusades and reservations about Islam as a religion may still affect many European experiences, discourses and discussions. With regard to America, Said (1997) argues: “The absence in America either of a colonial past or of a long-standing cultural attention to Islam makes the current obsession all the more peculiar, more abstract, more secondhand” (p. 13) and that “Islam is unlikely to mean anything one knows either directly or objectively” (Said, 1997, p. 10). Thus, reporting under these conditions lead to unbalanced coverage, culminating in biased depictions and portrayals of Islam and Muslims in the U.S. media.

Editorial Agenda Setting and Selection

Wanta, Golan & Lee (2004) believe that there are two levels of agenda setting. With regard to first and second level agenda setting functions, they predict that “while first-level agenda setting suggests media coverage influences what we think about, second-level agenda setting suggests media coverage influences how we think” (Wanta et. al, 2004, p. 367). Thus, the news is filtered through a narrow tunnel of reference at the first level of agenda setting where audience are asked to focus exclusively on the stories presented to them, such that stories about “Islam” and “Muslims” may involve violence, terrorism or extremism themes. The second level of agenda setting then ensures that we absorb the coverage of these stories in ways which may influence our thinking about them.

Zachary Karabell believes that much of the negativity surrounding Islam and Muslims in society is a result of the information that is filtered through the media. The media, he suggests, is full of negative images about Islam: “Ask American college students, in the elite universities or elsewhere, what they think of when the word ‘Muslim’ is mentioned. The response is inevitably the same: gun-toting, bearded, fanatic terrorists hellbent on destroying the great enemy, the United States” (as cited in Said, 1997, p. xxvi). Regarding media selection practices, Said (1997) proclaims: “For like all modes of communication, television, radio, and newspapers observe certain rules and conventions to get things across intelligibly, and it is these, often more than the reality being conveyed, that shape the material delivered by the media” (p. 48-49).

As an example from this study, “Five dead in Indonesian police terror raids” by Andy Saputra, was a negative story in terms of “Islam” and “Muslims,” and was probably selected as a result of agenda-setting functions that seek to keep such stories in the public eye and mind, whereby they reinforce public stereotypes about violence in Muslim countries, provide “sensationalism” or serve self-satisfying functions. Indonesia, the largest Muslim nation, and perhaps one of the more economically developed and relatively peaceful ones, was chosen to be represented in the news for all the wrong reasons. Amongst the many stories from Indonesia that may have had a chance to make it to CNN, this particular story evoking themes of instability, terror and violence, was selected by the gate keepers at CNN. Thus, we see that editorial agenda setting, more than economic and social factors, continues to play a role in portraying and selecting the kinds of stories that receive public attention through the U.S. media. Said (1997) agrees that the U.S. media and society are diverse and full of opposing views on virtually every issue. However, Said (1997) also points out that “despite this extraordinary variety there is a qualitative and a quantitative tendency to favor certain views and certain representations of

reality over others” (p. 49)

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Many of the results in this study indicate some bias in mentions of “Islam” and “Muslim” in the *New York Times* and CNN. However, we must guard against the generalization of this study, due to its methodological limitations and relatively small sample size. The overall results indicate negative mentions of “Islam” and “Muslims” in the headlines, word usage and context in the stories that were covered over a week from both media outlets. Further studies can employ more than one methodology, such as discourse or textual analysis to arrive at a more in-depth analysis of the results. The studies could also benefit from a larger sample, which can be more generalizable. Considering the varied ways in which “Islam” and “Muslim” are used and communicated, other researchers could perhaps also use similar meaning words like “Islamic” or “Moslem” to arrive at better and more comprehensive results in similar studies. An interesting study by Esposito & Mogahed (2007) based on Gallup’s World Poll provided insight into the views and thinking of many common Muslims, as well as the views expressed by many Americans about Muslims. Some interesting results from their study are as follows:

- Forty-four percent of Americans say Muslims are too extreme in their religious beliefs. Less than half believe that U.S. Muslims are loyal to the United States.
- Nearly one-quarter of Americans, 22%, say they would not want a Muslim as a neighbor. As we have seen, 32% of Americans say they admire nothing about the Muslim world, and 25% admit they simply “don’t know.”

(Source: Esposito & Mogahed, 2007, p. 155)

Another relevant result cited in this study was a Washington Post/ABC News poll in 2006 which “found that nearly half of Americans—46%—have a negative view of Islam, seven

percentage points higher than observed a few months after Sept. 11, 2001” (Esposito & Mogahed, 2007, p. 46). These poll results are important for further studies about the subject to determine if there is any direct linkage between U.S. media reporting on “Islam” and “Muslims” and American public opinion about “Islam” and “Muslims.” Perhaps, a controlled experiment could be conducted that exposes people to selected articles and broadcasts concerning Islam and Muslims, and their views recorded before and after the exposure.

This study was also limited in its measurement of the “web” versions of the *New York Times* and CNN, despite the fact that many print stories are also available on the web versions and vice versa. Also, due to the limitations of this research, broadcast video or news from CNN could not be included in the study, which may have better helped define the corpus or changed the results. All in all, bias against “Islam” and “Muslims” does seem to exist in the U.S. media in some form, whether it is caused by U.S. foreign policy dictates, journalistic ignorance and cultural proximity factors or a result of editorial decisions. Considering the alienation of most “Muslims” and the religion of Islam by such outright generalizations and negative connotations associated with it, I would agree, as Said (1997) has said, to “dispose finally of both the residual hatred and the offensive generality of labels like “the Muslim,” “the Persian,” “the Turk,” “the Arab,” or “the Westerner” (p. lxx).

Appendix A

CODE BOOK

Online Newspaper/TV Stories

1. New York Times
2. CNN

Coverage Period

One Week Constructed (Mon-Sun) from May 1st-May 31st, 2010

Number of Articles

N=1 to 30

Type of Portrayal: Words

Negative:

1. Militant
2. Radical
3. Agents
4. Conquering
5. Strictest
6. Crusade
7. Fighting
8. Forbids
9. Humiliate/Humiliation
10. Killing
11. Murder
12. Forces
13. Rigid
14. Violent
15. Anti
16. Assault
17. Backward
18. Blood
19. Dangerous
20. Fired
21. Bomb
22. Radical
23. Violence
11. Attacks
12. Target
13. War
14. Bashing
15. Bogus

Positive:

- Building
- Communities
- Conversation
- Innocents
- Interest (s)
- Compassion
- Education
- Community
- Greetings
- Activists
- Imam
- Family
- Love
- Respect
- Devout
- Brotherhood
- CAIR
- Victims
- Bows

Neutral:

- Reform
- Agents
- Critic(s)
- People
- Understanding
- Faith
- Against
- Minority
- Diaspora
- Leave(ing)
- Forbidden
- Religion
- Misconceptions
- Stereotypes
- Disrespect
- Distortion
- Islamophobes
- Tragedy
- Society
- Palestinian
- Faith
- Government
- Hurt
- Prayer
- Targeted
- Reaction

16. Islamization
17. Notorious
18. (al) Qaeda
19. Radical
20. Threatening
24. Attacks
25. Extremists
26. ACEH
27. Cleric
28. Conspirator
29. Condemnation
30. Hamas
31. Oppressing
32. Radical

CODER FORM

Online Media Outlet	New York Times	CNN
Coverage Period	One Week during May 1 st 2010 to May 31 st 2010	One Week during May 1 st 2010 to May 31 st 2010
Number of Stories	N=	N=
Type of Portrayal: Words	Positive, Negative or Neutral	Positive, Negative or Neutral
Type of Portrayal: Headlines	Positive, Negative or Neutral	Positive, Negative or Neutral
Type of Portrayal: Context	Positive, Negative or Neutral	Positive, Negative or Neutral
Overall Portrayal→Media Outlet	Positive, Negative or Neutral	Positive, Negative or Neutral

Appendix B

New York Times Search Results “Islam AND Muslim” in May 2010

1. **Munich Imam Strives to Dilute the Elixir of Radical Islam for Some Young People** by Souad Mekhennet
Monday May 17th, 2010
2. **OP-ED Contributor; Many Faiths, One Truth** by Tenzin Gyasto
Tuesday May 25th, 2010
3. **U.S. is a Top Villain in Pakistan’s Conspiracy Talk** by Sabrina Tavernise
Wednesday May 26th, 2010
4. **Vote Endorses Muslim Center Near Ground Zero** by Javier C. Hernandez
Wednesday May 26th, 2010
5. **Money Woes, Long Silences and an Islamic Zeal** by James Barron and Sabrina Tavernise
Thursday May 6th, 2010
6. **U.S. Approval of Killing of Cleric Causes Unease** by Scott Shane
Friday May 14th, 2010
7. **Attackers Hit Mosques of Islamic Sect in Pakistan** by Waqar Gillani and Jane Perlez
Saturday May 29th, 2010
8. **Questions for Ayaan Hirsi Ali “The Feminist”** by Deborah Solomon
Sunday May 23rd, 2010

CNN Search Results “Islam AND Muslim” in May 2010

1. **Israeli assault on Gaza-bound flotilla leaves at least 9 dead** by CNN Wire Staff
Monday May 31st, 2010
2. **Gunmen kill 5 at Pakistani Hospital** by CNN Wire Staff
Monday May 31st, 2010
3. **Court: Pakistan Can Unblock Facebook with Right Filter** by Reza Seyah
Monday May 31st, 2010
4. **Times Square bomb suspect eyed other targets, official says** by CNN Wire Staff
Tuesday May 18th, 2010
5. **Five dead in Indonesian police terror raids** by Andy Saputra CNN
Wednesday May 12th, 2010
6. **Ads on NYC buses target those wanting to leave Islam** by Mythili Rao CNN
Thursday May 27th, 2010
7. **PC on Islamic extremism puts us at risk** by S.E. Cupp, Special to CNN
Friday May 7th, 2010

8. **Mosque to go up near New York's ground zero** by Nicole Bliman
Friday May 7th, 2010
9. **Obama praises West Point cadets, lays out challenges** by CNN Wire Staff
Saturday May 22nd, 2010
10. **Fugitive cleric al-Awlaki warns of future attacks** by CNN Wire Staff
Sunday May 23rd, 2010

Appendix C

NY TIMES-ISLAM

up to become one of the most outspoken critics of Islam , you fled to Amsterdam and served in the Dutch Parliament
militant Internet forums: that the West is at war with Islam , and Muslims are suffering humiliation because they have strayed from
intolerant, but because he believed that building a tribute to Islam so close to the World Trade Center would be insensitive
ideas. What Islam really needs is a reform branch? Reform Islam , which, like the Reform Jewish movement, would reconcile an ancient faith
anyone under the table.? He showed little interest in Islam . Mr. Shahzad rarely seemed pressed for cash? he had a
wrestling with how to respond. He understood the notion that Islam forbids the killing of innocents, he wrote. But to those
about my security. In your new book, ?Nomad: From Islam to America,? you urge American Christians to try to
1889, was the messiah foretold by Muhammad, the prophet of Islam . There are sizable communities of well-educated Ahmadis in the
his father. Mr. Haq had long been wary of political Islam , and found his son?s evolution troubling, friends recalled in
problem is that those of us who were born into Islam and who don?t want to live according to scripture
Islamabad. Lawyers in Pakistan have a strong streak of political Islam . Mr. Habib, who has had militants as clients, argues that
to the moment as a kind of original sin, when Islam became embedded in the country?s democratic blueprint, handing immense
cabal that dominated Dutch politics with an aim to humiliate Islam . It was only one murder, yet it convulsed the city
discussion. ?We?re in this mess because political forces evoke Islam to further their own interests,? said Aasim Sajjad, an
Koran as proof of what?Allah commands about fighting for Islam .? During casual conversations with friends, Mr. Shahzad had taken
criticizes Cohen?s approach using the same dire language about Islam that put her at the center of the Dutch political
member of the Dutch Parliament, was an outspoken critic of Islam , and Cohen himself, who it said was part of a
and abstain from competing in the marketplace of ideas. What Islam really needs is a reform branch? Reform Islam, which, like
Islam to spread must compete with the agents of radical Islam . I want to see what would happen if Christians, feminists
dealing with European peoples. The most essential factor is that Islam is a conquering philosophy. It?s interesting that the only
duty to fight back. ?The crusade has already started against Islam and Muslims with cartoons of our beloved Prophet,? wrote
limitations of their faith. We who don?t want radical Islam to spread must compete with the agents of radical Islam
a donation to his colony. Compassion is equally important in Islam ? and recognizing that has become crucial in the years since
community for around 400 years, although my richest contacts with Islam have been in India, which has the world?s second
Darul Quran mosque in Munich, follows the strictest form of Islam , Salafi. But the people who want to kill him are
Jews and Christians, but I want people to follow what Islam really says," said Mr. Shashaa, who with his beard
who were looking for a specific book about women in Islam that is not allowed in Germany, a Munich security official
years since Sept. 11, especially in answering those who paint Islam as a militant faith. On the first anniversary of 9
6th, 2010 Money Woes, Long Silences and a Zeal for Islam By JAMES BARRON and SABRINA TAVERNISE Theirs was an arranged
respect all of Allah?s creatures. And in my understanding, Islam enshrines compassion as a core spiritual principle, reflected in the
he disapproved of the mission and reminding his son that Islam does not permit a man to abandon his wife or
define an entire religion. Let me tell you about the Islam I know. Tibet has had an Islamic community for around
and fathering two children, Mr. Shahzad?started talking more of Islam .? The guest spoke on the condition he not be
Zia ul-Haq, began to inject a rigid version of Islam into Pakistan?s education system. At the same time, hard
2010 Munich Imam Strives to Dilute the Elixir of Radical Islam for Some Young People By SOUAD MEKHENNET MUNICH-- Hesham Shashaa
Shashaa openly declares that they are violating the tenets of Islam . He travels to mosques and madrasas throughout Europe, as well

NY TIMES-MUSLIM

board backed a proposal on Tuesday evening to build a	Muslim	community center near the World Trade Center. The 29-to
martyr status and amplify his violent message. Mohamed ElLibiary, a	Muslim	community advocate in Texas who advises law enforcement on countering
Hafeez Malik said. More than 80 worshipers of a minority	Muslim	sect, the Ahmadis, were killed and more than 110 wounded
herself. She can choose her own lifestyle. But in a	Muslim	family, the honor of the man is between the legs
at the moment.? May 25, 2010 Wednesday Vote Endorses	Muslim	Center Near Ground Zero By JAVIER C. HERNANDEZ After a
at us and	Muslim	blood flows? ?Everyone knows how the
society, Aboutaleb is today the mayor of Rotterdam, the first	Muslim	mayor of a major Dutch city. Cohen was criticized from
it quantified the threat: about 2 percent of Amsterdam's	Muslim	population? 1,400 people in all? were potentially becoming radicalized
to give a sympathetic ear even to insular and orthodox	Muslim	communities. ?Drinking tea in mosques? became a term of
to fight back when rockets are fired at us and	Muslim	blood flows? ?Everyone knows how the
the city's immigrant groups, focusing on what made certain	Muslim	communities turn toward a violent, radical philosophy, and he issued
SOLOMON As a Somali native who was raised as a	Muslim	and grew up to become one of the most outspoken
whether killing Mr. Awlaki would be a good idea. Many	Muslim	activists and scholars say it would accord him martyr status
in early March, his party, riding on his virulent anti-	Muslim	rhetoric, won the city of Almere and came in second
refer to themselves as Muslims or to engage in any	Muslim	practices, including using
kind of contact do you have with all the different	Muslim	communities?? ?Cohen told me recently. ?And his answer
But he should point out to certain parts of the	Muslim	community the obligations that religious freedom brings with it.?
on the other hand, the U.S. is acting against	Muslim	interests globally. A sort of self-loathing came about.?
to extremist violence.? The Ahmadis were declared a non-	Muslim	minority in the 1970s during the rule of the military
Muslims or to engage in any	Muslim	practices, including using
the Labor Party have bent over backward to please the	Muslim	minority in Amsterdam,? said Frits Bolkestein, the former leader
Jew? and?Turk.? Crudely unpacking them, ?Turk? meant	Muslim	, Arab, infidel, the threat from without; a Jew was the
between the position of Western women and the position of	Muslim	women. A Western woman is not her brother's or
the country's Moroccan population, which, of course, is mostly	Muslim	. (Muslims account for 5 percent of the population, according
the phone. She says, Please go back to being a	Muslim	because that's the only way that you're going
Scroggins, an American journalist who is writing a book on	Muslim	women in the West. Paul Scheffer, the prominent Labor Party
feminists and Enlightenment thinkers were to start proselytizing in the	Muslim	community. That could be dangerous for the proselytizers. It may
in the United States, Britain and other parts of the	Muslim	diaspora. The assault, which began during Friday Prayer and lasted
their assault, the attackers stayed with the Tablighi Jamaat, a	Muslim	missionary group that is often described by terrorism experts as
to the brink of insanity by the ways of the	Muslim	men in their lives? One of the women is prohibited
peace script; the on-the-streets information-gathering indicated that	Muslim	areas of the city were radicalizing. He held a series
or wanting to erect minarets and episodes of violence against	Muslim	immigrants. Radical atheists issue blanket condemnations of those who hold
surfaced in connection with the car bomb, he canvassed Connecticut	Muslim	and Pakistani groups and found he was not involved with
An imam in Ladakh once told me that a true	Muslim	should love and respect all of Allah's creatures. And
been in India, which has the world's second-largest	Muslim	population. An imam in Ladakh once told me that a

CNN-ISLAM

Quran and seeks to "challenge popular stereotypes and misconceptions about Islam" -- on the subway system. All subway and bus ads
in New York says the ads are nothing more than "Islam bashing." "Islamophobes are notorious for their cheap tactics that
a website designed "for people who are thinking of leaving Islam or are leaving Islam and need resources" to protect them
asks. "Is your community or family threatening you? Leaving Islam?" The ads, sponsored by an organization called Stop the
27th, 2010 STORY HIGHLIGHTS ? Controversial NYC ads target those leaving Islam ? Ads funded by Stop Islamization of America group ? New York
Ads on NYC buses target those wanting to leave Islam By Mythili Rao, CNN Thursday May 27th, 2010 STORY HIGHLIGHTS
on Hasan also failed to include any mention of radical Islam as the cause of his rampage, echoing the liberal media
for Israel were part of a broader American war against Islam, which he said the United States wants to replace with
their lives unafraid. Extremists want a war between America and Islam, but Muslims are a part of our national life, including
said the United States wants to replace with a "bogus" Islam. He praised Hasan, who is accused of killing 13 people
people who are thinking of leaving Islam or are leaving Islam and need resources" to protect them from harm. Practicing Muslims
We see it in al Qaeda's gross distortion of Islam, their disrespect for human life, and their attempts to prey
In three to five years RELATED TOPICS ? September 11 Attacks ? Islam ? Manhattan ? New York City New York(CNN) -- Plans to
The 9/11 terrorists] did this in the name of Islam," Zelman said. "It's a sacred ground where
The time for a center like this has come because Islam is an American religion," Khan said. "We need
Drawing depictions of the prophet is forbidden to followers of Islam ; devout Muslims consider such depictions offensive. The Telecommunication Authority
of Islam issued

CNN-MUSLIM

a sponsor of the flotilla. IHH is affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, a hard-line Islamic political movement. Get the latest
in February 2006, Shahzad wrote, "Everyone knows how the Muslim country bows down to pressure from the west. Everyone knows
back against "foreign infidel forces" he believed were oppressing the Muslim world. In one, sent to a large group of recipients
an Anwar al Awlaki groupie, a superfan of the radical Muslim cleric that Obama now wants dead. The FBI reportedly knew
earlier this week, Geller called CAIR an "unindicted co-conspirator Muslim -brotherhood front Hamas-tied" organization. Although the same campaign caused
.. Read more about world reaction Turkey, Israel's closest Muslim ally in the region, recalled its ambassador, while Deputy Prime
at the largest U.S. Army post, and urged other Muslim troops to follow his example. And he said Umar Farouk
group that has run a training camp in the majority-Muslim Indonesian province of Aceh, Aritonang said. Two of the suspects
caused a diplomatic row between Israel and Turkey, its closest Muslim ally; and brought condemnation worldwide. A number of nations recalled
job. On November 5, 2009, about eight hours after the Muslim -Palestinian U.S. Army Maj. Nidal Hasan opened fire at
disappointment, suggesting some of us actually wanted him to be Muslim so we could revel in our bigotry: "There are
from the Quran or display the basic affirmation of the Muslim faith." The agency says it's illegal for the
attacks killed Muslims, too. "Three hundred of the victims were Muslim, that's 10 percent of the victims," she said
the mayor's office. Daisy Khan, executive director of the Muslim society, described her vision of a center led by Muslims
The project is a collaboration between the American Society for Muslim Advancement and the Cordoba Initiative, both of which work to
and another was detained, police said. Ahmadis regard themselves as Muslim, but the government says they aren't, and many Muslim
Americans too. The 9/11 tragedy hurt everybody including the Muslim community. We are all in this together and together we
said, because it will support the needs of the growing Muslim community. "The time for a center like this has come
targeted them. Sunni and Shiite Muslims say Ahmadis are not Muslim because they do not regard Mohammed as the last prophet
Muslim, but the government says they aren't, and many Muslim extremists have targeted them. Sunni and Shiite Muslims say Ahmadis
rooms which are otherwise open to all Muslims, perform the Muslim call to prayer, use the traditional Islamic greeting in public

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