OTHER TITLES IN ARAB AMERICAN WRITING

The Cairo House: A Novel
SAMIA SERAGELDIN

A Community of Many Worlds: Arab Americans in New York City
MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Does the Land Remember Me? A Memoir of Palestine
AZIZ SHIHAB

Hayati, My Life: A Novel
MIRIAM COOKE

Letters from Cairo
PAULINE KALDAS

The New Belly Dancer of the Galaxy: A Novel
FRANCES KHIRALLAH NOBLE

Post Gibran: Anthology of New Arab American Writing
MUNIR AKASH and KHALED MATTAWA, eds.

Remember Me to Lebanon: Stories of Lebanese Women in America
EVELYN SHAKIR

The Situe Stories
FRANCES KHIRALLAH NOBLE

Swimming Toward the Light: A Novel
ANGELA TEHAAN LEONE

Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11

FROM INVISIBLE CITIZENS TO VISIBLE SUBJECTS

EDITED BY
AMANEY JAMAL AND **NADINE NABER**

Syracuse University Press

FOUR

Civil Liberties and the Otherization of Arab and Muslim Americans

AMANEY JAMAL

THE STATE OF CIVIL LIBERTIES has deteriorated noticeably for all Americans since 9/11. In particular, new legislation passed immediately after 9/11 undermined Muslim and Arab Americans' confidence in their own rights and security. The PATRIOT Acts I and II grant the government significant powers to monitor Americans, even allowing the indefinite detention of "noncitizens," and these new powers have been selectively applied—most noticeably to Muslims. In the interests of national security, nonimmigrant residents are now required to register under the newly implemented NSEER System (National Security Entry and Exit Registry), and noncompliance constitutes a violation punishable by deportation. Although NSEER initially targeted people from countries of origin in the Muslim world, these provisions have now expanded to include most visitors from across the globe. Yet in the weeks and months immediately following 9/11, these policies singled out Muslims and created a wave of fear and anxiety among visitors and immigrants from Muslim-majority countries. U.S. government agents have made thousands of "special interest" arrests, and thousands of people who feared arrest because of visa irregularities sought asylum in Canada (Murray 2004). Despite the antiterrorist rhetoric of this legislation, however, none of those imprisoned was ever directly linked to the September 2001 attacks. The vast majority of individuals arrested were eventually cleared of the crimes alleged to them but many lost months and years of their lives behind bars.

Although the stipulations in the PATRIOT Acts and other Department of Justice decrees ostensibly apply to all Americans, they effectively single out Arab

and Muslim Americans. As Louise Cainkar comments, "Ashcroft has already removed more Arabs and Muslims (who were neither terrorists nor criminals) from the United States in the past year than the total number of foreign nationals deported in the infamous Palmer raids of 1919" (Cainkar 2003).[1] Expanded secret evidence procedures are used to keep Muslims under arrest, and other provisions for the intelligence community resulted in FBI interrogations at Muslim and Arab community and religious centers across the United States.

A wave of anti-Muslim popular backlash followed post-9/11 government scrutiny. Passengers refused to board airplanes with apparently Muslim individuals on board and mosques were burned and vandalized. In 2003, the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) reported that hate crimes against Muslim Americans were up by at least 300 percent from 2001. By 2005, hate crimes against Muslim Americans had increased by another 50 percent from 2004 levels. "The violence, discrimination, defamation and intolerance now faced by Arabs [and Muslims] in American society have reached a level unparalleled in their 100-year history in the United States," reports Cainkar (2002). Recent "antiterrorism" legislation has caused high levels of fear and anxiety in the Muslim and Arab American communities. According to a Zogby poll conducted in 2002, 66 percent of all Arab and Muslim Americans worry about their future in this country, and 81 percent feel that their community is being profiled.

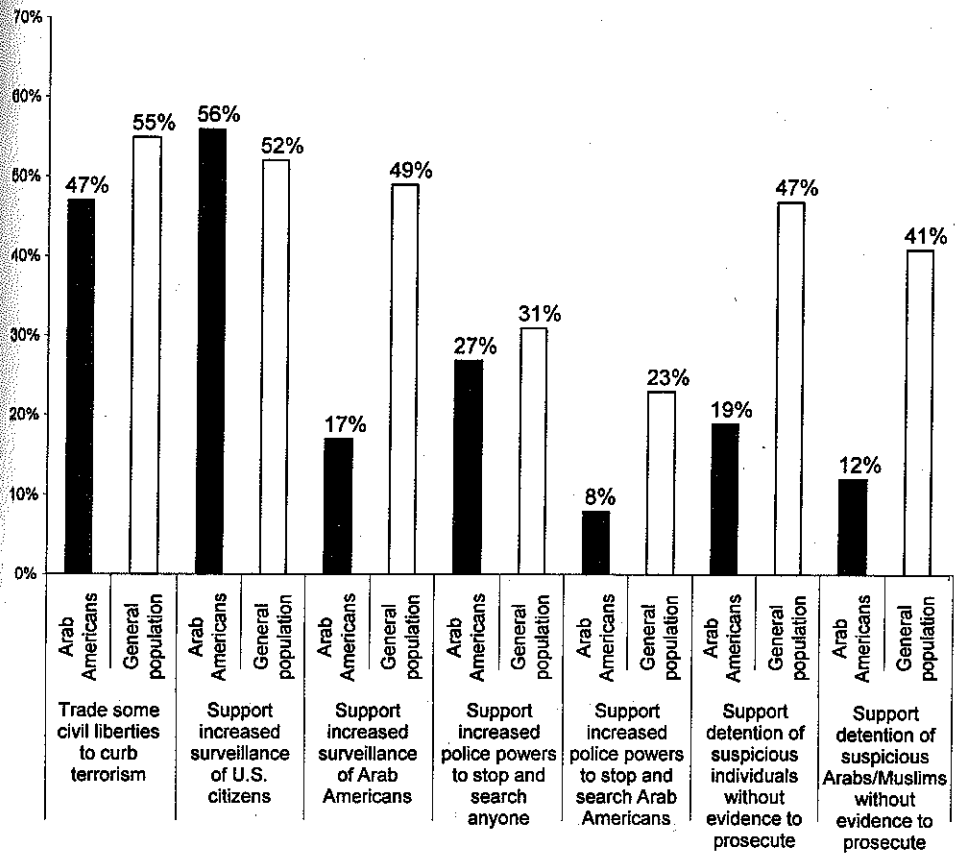
Exacerbating the sense of Muslim American vulnerability is mainstream American public opinion. More than ninety-six thousand calls to the FBI were made about "suspicious" Arabs and Muslims in the United States in the week following the 9/11 attacks alone (Murray 2004). In the days immediately after the attacks, the majority of Americans, according to Gallup polls, were in favor of profiling Muslims.

Figure 4.1 summarizes some findings from the Detroit Arab American Study (DAAS) conducted in 2003 (see below for more details on the study). The study finds that comparable numbers of Arab Americans and members of the general mainstream population were willing to support increased surveillance of U.S. citizens in order to ensure security at home. Granting the police more powers to stop and search anyone at random received support from 27 percent of Arab Americans and 31 percent of the general population. When asked a general question about giving up some civil liberties to curb terrorism, 55 percent

1. See also Howell and Shryock (2003).

of the general population and 47 percent of Arab Americans expressed support. The general population, however, is much more likely to support civil rights infringements that specifically target Arabs and Muslims. The DAAS found that 49 percent of the general population would support increasing surveillance of Muslim and Arab Americans, while only 17 percent of Arab Americans agreed. Forty-one percent of the general population would uphold the detention of suspicious Arabs and Muslims even without sufficient evidence to prosecute, as compared to only 12 percent of Arab Americans. And 23 percent of the general population would support increased police powers to stop and search Muslim and Arab Americans, while only 8 percent of Arabs supported this infringement on their rights. The Detroit findings are in accord with nationwide polls about attitudes toward Muslims, the purported relation between Islam and violence, and toward Muslim Americans. This backlash granted the U.S. government extended authority and a groundswell of popular support to further promote policies that clash with basic American freedoms and rights.

Why is there so much support for policies that so apparently are anathema to basic American values? Several hypotheses can plausibly explain support for taking away the civil rights and liberties of Muslim and Arab Americans. They range from a general sense of vulnerability to more specific anti-Muslim attitudes and predispositions. While the former can be explained away as general fear and worry in the aftermath of the attacks, the latter, I argue, is far more troubling. For if the American population is willing to support infringements on civil liberties by reason of misperceptions that characterize Arabs and Muslims as "enemy Others," then we must also address the larger phenomenon of the racialization or "otherization" of Arabs and Muslims in mainstream American culture. This racialization process essentially sees Muslims and Arabs as different from and inferior to whites, potentially violent and threatening, and therefore deserving of policies that target them as a distinct group of people and criminalize them without evidence of criminal activity. The binary logic of "us" versus "them," based on a constructed myth of racial difference, permeates U.S. society and provides the lenses through which group differences are organized, imagined, and understood. In the case of the denial of Muslim and Arab American civil liberties, unequal access to civil liberties is justified through a racial logic that is not always based on an association between phenotype and backwardness but still follows various historical patterns of racism in the United States. U.S. history is rife with examples of immigrants being targeted



4.1. Restrictions on Civil Liberties to Ensure Security

and denied the benefits of citizenship because of their appearance and cultural backgrounds. Nadine Naber reminds us of this history, arguing that these nonimmigrant groups, whether blacks, Asians, or Mexicans, have been denied the benefits of citizenship based on the assumption that they are unassimilable and foreign (2006, 241).

The single most durable explanation of widespread support for ethnic civil liberty infringement, I argue, rests on the racialization of Muslim and Arab Americans as the enemy "Other." Here, I use the term "racialization" to describe the perception and production of an inherent threatening difference between "us" and "them" that provides a scaffold legitimating and supporting the violation of the ethnic minority's civil liberties. Although racialization has its roots

in domestic politics, the findings of this chapter also demonstrate that geopolitical realities shape the ways average Americans construct images of the Arab and Muslim "Other" in their midst. Both domestic politics and existing geopolitical realities, especially when the homelands of those "othered" populations are sites of U.S. military campaigns, combine to justify the domestic subordination of less-tolerated populations.

THE CIVIL LIBERTIES DEBATE AND ARAB AND MUSLIM AMERICANS

The current civil-liberties debate in the wake of 9/11 has raised vital and existential questions. The American public's willingness to give up civil liberties may derive from an intense feeling of individual and collective vulnerability, ideology, religiosity, racism, or media exposure. For Muslim and Arab Americans, however, the debate on civil liberties after 9/11 is of more instrumental and immediate concern. If legislation that singles out Muslim Americans continues to be passed with widespread acceptance, then there may be no end in sight for discrimination. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the sources of support for such infringements on civil rights and liberties. Several explanations of support for these infringements have been advanced both in general and for Muslim Americans more specifically.

One set of explanations for support on infringements on civil liberties draws from party identification as "Democrat" or "Republican," and ideological commitment as "liberal" or "conservative." It has been argued that liberal ideologues tend to hold civil liberties to be inalienable rights for all. Conservative ideologues, on the other hand, tend to view civil liberties as rescindable because of the value placed on "security," respect for authority, obedience, and the law (McClosky and Brill 1983; McClosky 1964).

Perceptions of threat are another crucial factor explaining support for civil liberties infringements. A wealth of literature demonstrates that those individuals who feel most personally threatened are most likely to protect themselves. As Davis and Silver indicate, the response to such perceived threats may become overwhelmingly intolerant" (Davis 1995; Davis and Silver 2004). Further, others find that those who perceive future threat are more likely to support even extreme antiterrorism policies domestically (Huddy et al. 2005; Herrmann, Tetlock, and Visser 1999; Jentleson 1992). This sense of threat not only leads to an increased toleration for civil-liberties violations, it also increases prejudice

against the suspected group (Bettencourt et al. 2001; Levine and Campbell 1972; Struch and Schwartz 1989). Anxiety and threat are powerful tools in the way the war on terror is fought.

An alternative explanation focuses on racial motivations. According to this logic, Americans in favor of infringing on Muslim and Arab American civil liberties do so because they hold negative views about an entire "people." These negative views are fed by a variety of misperceptions and stereotypes. The Muslim and Arab American had been popularly constructed as an irrational, terror-supporting, and fanatical "enemy Other" long before 9/11. American foreign policy has consistently justified intervention in the Muslim world along similar lines. When U.S. leaders characterize the Arab and Muslim world as inherently undemocratic owing to fundamental value differences between "us" and "them," they promote an environment of intolerance at home. Thus, the racialization of Arab and Muslim Americans, a process decades in the making, also explains the overwhelming support for the infringement of Arab and Muslim civil liberties (Moallem 2005).

In this chapter I move beyond the narrow phenotypical definition of racialization, wherein race relations are strictly structured by biological differences. Rather, I adopt a larger definition of racialization that incorporates the process of "othering." More specifically here, I argue that the racialization of Muslims and Arabs stems from the consistent deployment of an "us" versus "them" mentality, excessively propped up for the justification of military campaigns in the Arab world. The racialization of Arabs and Muslims is not simply contingent on phenotypical differences; rather, this racialization of difference is driven by a perceived clash of values and exacerbated by cultural ethnocentrism. This process of "othering" is based on assumptions about culture and religion instead of phenotype. It is not based on racial divides; instead, it conforms to the process of racialization that has characterized the ways in which the dominant elements in society have interacted with minority ethnic groups more generally. The racialization of Arabs and Muslims stems from two intertwined processes.

First, in a society that is already constructed along racial lines, any perceived difference between the dominant mainstream and a minority "Other" tends to conform to racism's framework. This "othering" process lends itself to the *already existing* paradigm of defining oneself vis-à-vis other groups along the lines of racial categories. This form of racism is not contingent on differences in appearance but on differences in cultural attributes. These differences

are exacerbated by popular and government discourses that deem the group an "enemy Other," especially after 9/11.

The loyalties of the Arab and Muslim communities have consistently been questioned since the attacks. Only 38 percent of Americans in the Detroit metro area believe that Arabs and Muslims are doing all that they can to fight the war on terror. Muslims and Arabs across the United States are consistently asked to apologize for 9/11, as if they were behind the attacks. And yet, ironically, the numerous and countless condemnations emanating from mosques and organizations in the United States that emphatically denounce the attacks have received little media attention. Americans remain suspicious of Arabs and Muslims. When asked whether Arabs and Muslims could be trusted, Americans in the Detroit metro area ranked them as the least trustworthy subpopulation. Twenty percent of Americans have little or no trust for whites; 24 percent have little or no trust for blacks, and 30 percent have little or no trust for Muslims and Arabs. Not only are Arabs and Muslims different, they are also a threat treated with great suspicion because they are assumed to originate from the Middle East. They are presumed to be operating "against us."

The binary construction of "us" versus "them" is not new to American social relations in the United States or abroad. Racial relations in the United States have been constructed through the binary lens of the dominant and the subordinate, a legacy of the history of race relations in this country. Likewise, the lens through which America sees the rest of the world is tinted with this dichotomy: "we," whoever and wherever "we" are, enjoy both cultural and moral superiority. Such interactions with "Others" abroad translate into a racial logic in a U.S. context that views ethnic and religious group differences through racial lenses at home. The process of othering, be it based on phenotype or cultural difference, therefore lends itself to racialization, particularly when it involves attributing essentializing characteristics to the *entire* group. The racialization of Arabs and Muslims, however, draws on yet another element of difference. Not only are they different at home, but their difference is exacerbated by geopolitical realities where the United States has utilized the construction of the "Other" as enemy-terrorist to justify its campaigns abroad.

The second process of racialization involves the direct subordination of the minority Other. The very process of rendering the Other inferior to white Americans, or some imagined group of acceptable Americans, is at the heart of racialization. In the case of Muslim and Arab Americans, the way that Otherness

is determined is through a process by which the dominant social group claims moral and cultural superiority in the process of producing an essentialized, homogenous image of Muslim and Arab Americans as nonwhites who are naturally, morally, and culturally inferior to real Americans. Terrorism, according to this logic, is not the modus operandi of a few radical individuals, but a by-product of a larger cultural and civilizational heritage: the Arab and Islamic Other.

In Omi and Winant's words, racialization is "a matter of both social structure and cultural representation" (1994, 56). Cultural representations of Muslims and Arabs derive from an American media regime that has vilified this population for decades, and from a social structure that adopts and resorts to the rhetoric of moral superiority to justify its intervention in the Middle East and discrimination against Arab and Muslim Americans.[2] Racialization is not static but is produced, reproduced, and solidified in a variety of forums: family networks, religious institutions, government offices, and even schools (Coates 2004). Since "immigrant America" is a conglomeration of these "subordinate" minority groups, these perceptions of "Other" manifest themselves in the daily interactions that govern the incorporation of minority groups into the mainstream. In this regard, the incorporation of minority groups is not only about the acquisition of necessary language tools and specific, technical labor skills; it is also about confronting one's place in the context of U.S. racial hierarchies.

The racialization of Arabs and Muslims has involved a process of juxtaposing the Other with and separating the Other from dominant mainstream culture. This process did not begin with 9/11, though those events galvanized it. Susan Akram discovers this process in the "deliberate mythmaking" tactics of film and media, in the polemical stereotyping strategies of "experts" on the Middle East, in the selling of foreign policy agendas, and in "a public susceptible to images identifying the unwelcome 'other' in its midst" (Akram 2002). A long history of misrepresentation and the promotion of violent stereotypes mark the popular American media; Arab and Muslim Americans were portrayed as terrorists long before 9/11 (Suleiman 2002; Mandel 2001; Tessler and Corstange 2002; Shaheen 2003; Gerges 2003.) Muslims and Arabs, Akram says, are consistently absent from that desirable group of "ordinary people, families with social interactions, or outstanding members of communities such as scholars

2. According to Rodney Coates, these depictions of "other" entire subgroups is commonplace in American popular culture.

or writers or scientists." This process of demonization, she goes on to say, "has been so complete and so successful that film critics, most Americans and social commentators have barely noticed" (Akram 2002, 4). In fact, since the 1960s large segments of U.S. culture have unofficially classified Arabs and Muslim as terrorists and perceived them as threats to national security (Hassan 2003).

The racialization of Arab and Muslim Americans captures the ways in which the dominant social structure of this country has positioned itself vis-à-vis this subpopulation. Americans have come to know and learn about Islam and Arabs through the prisms of terrorism and barbarism. It is no surprise that 42 percent of Americans in the Detroit metro area believe that 9/11 was a result of a deeply rooted disrespect for democracy, freedom, and the rights of women. A good percentage of Americans clearly believe that there is a fundamental clash of values between "us" and "them." Simply put, the United States was attacked because it is fundamentally "good," while the Other is fundamentally "evil." These perceptions of the Other have shaped post-9/11 discussions and introspective deliberations. Even in our attempts to understand, we still claim moral superiority. Hence we ask the question "Why do they hate us?" Seldom has the question been asked, "Why do *we* hate them?" And "Why have we always considered Arabs and Muslims a threat to our values?" These perceptions of "Other," I argue, are a by-product of the racialization patterns of Muslims and Arabs in the United States. This pattern of racialization explains why large sections of the general American population are willing to do away with the civil liberties of Muslims and Arabs in the United States. Racialization occurs as Arab and Muslim American civil rights are removed; in such infringements, we are witnessing the continual production of the "Arab" and the "Muslim" as a violent race. In what follows, I test this hypothesis on survey data from the Detroit area.

DATA AND TEST

I use data gathered in 2003 as part of the Detroit Arab American Study (DAAS). The DAAS was produced through an intensive collaboration between the University of Michigan, the University of Michigan–Dearborn, and an advisory panel of community representatives from more than twenty secular, religious, and social-service organizations. The DAAS is a representative survey of adults (eighteen years and older) of Arab or Chaldean descent who resided in households in Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties during the six-month survey

period, July to December 2003. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 1,016 subjects between July and November 2003. Seventy-three percent of those who were asked to participate in the survey did so. All references to "Arabs and Chaldeans" in this report refer to that population. In addition, 508 members of the general adult population in these three counties were interviewed during roughly the same period through the Detroit Area Study (DAS). This is a representative sample of the Detroit area population, referred to in this study as the "general population." About 85 percent of the questionnaire items are common to both surveys, permitting extensive comparison of the two populations. Analysis performed in this part of the chapter relies on the DAS data.

In order to test my argument, I construct two ordered logit models. The first model examines the factors associated with Americans who support the infringement of civil liberties for members of the *general* population. The dependent variable reflects the answers of respondents to questions about whether they are willing to infringe on the rights of the general population. It is an index variable based on answers to three questions. The first question asks whether the respondent supports an increase of surveillance of the general population by the U.S. government. The second question asks whether the respondent would support giving the police more power to search anyone at random. And the last question asks whether the interviewee supports detaining suspicious individuals even if there is insufficient evidence to prosecute. The second dependent variable asks specifically about the respondent's willingness to infringe on the civil liberties of *Arab and Muslim Americans.* This, too, is an index variable consisting of three questions. The first question asks whether a respondent would support the increased surveillance of Arab and Muslim Americans; the second question, whether he or she would support giving the police more powers to stop and search anyone who looks Arab or Muslim; and the third, whether those surveyed support the detention of suspicious Muslims and Arabs even when there is insufficient evidence to prosecute. The scores were aggregated such that one affirmative response placed the individual in category one, two affirmative responses were assigned to the second category and three affirmative responses placed individuals in the third category. Respondents who disagreed with all three statements were assigned to the zero category.

Several independent variables are included in the equation to test the overall hypotheses I discuss in the previous section. To capture anxiety and perceptions of threat, I include a variable that gauges individual levels of security after the

attacks. The question asks: "How much—if any—have the events of 9/11 shaken your own personal sense of safety and security? Have they shaken it a great deal, a good amount, not too much, or not at all?" To capture ideological inclinations, I include measures of party identification: whether a respondent identifies as Democrat or a Republican. I also include a measure of conservative or liberal leanings. The question asks: "Thinking politically and socially, how would you describe your own general outlook—as being very conservative, moderately conservative, middle-of-the-road, moderately liberal, or very liberal?" Finally, I include a set of variables that serve as plausible explanations for the 9/11 attacks. Two of the explanations describe the results as related to either U.S. foreign policy in the region or to the acts of a few extremists. The other two measures address the "clash of civilizations" hypothesis. The first asks whether there is a religious conflict between Islam, on the one side, and Christianity and Judaism, on the other. The second question asks whether respondents believe that the attacks occurred because the United States supports democracy, freedom, and the rights of women. Finally, I also include several demographic variables to gauge whether basic demographic patterns explain support for civil liberties infringements. In the model are controls for religion, education, income, age, and gender. I also include a measure of exposure to the news in the aftermath of 9/11 to gauge whether media consumption is associated with a willingness to infringe on the civil liberties of the general population as well as of Arab and Muslim Americans. Table 4.1 presents the logit coefficients and the chapter appendix provides a complete coding sheet.

The most interesting finding that emerges from the regressions is that the segments of the population supporting civil liberties infringements in general, and those supporting it for Arab and Muslim Americans only, are quite different. Women are more likely than men to support reducing civil liberties of the general population in the hope of achieving greater security. This is a phenomenon well documented after 9/11; the term "security moms" has become part of our cultural jargon (Lawrence 2005). Some have even speculated that George Bush won a significant number of 2004 votes from women who were concerned about security issues. The model also finds that conservatives, as expected, are more likely than liberals to support the civil liberties infringements of the general population. Personal security and whether respondents were shaken by the events of 9/11 are also significant in this model. Those who felt most vulnerable after the attacks were also most likely to express support

Table 4.1
Ordered Logit Regressions on Support for Civil Liberties Infringements for the General Population and for Muslim/Arab Americans

	General population		Arab and Muslim populations	
	Coeff.	*R.S.E.*	*Coeff.*	*R.S.E.*
Demographics				
Gender	**.763****	**(.207)**	.054	(.215)
Education	-.094	(.089)	-.136	(.090)
Income	-.008	(.053)	-.022	(.051)
Age	.281	(.167)	-.023	(.162)
Ideology				
Liberal/conservative	**-.218****	**(.112)**	-.111	(.119)
Republican	**.557****	**(.277)**	-.443	(.300)
Democrat	**-.459****	**(.229)**	-.353	(.228)
Reasons for 9/11				
Religious conflict	.048	(.203)	.199	(.195)
Clash of values	.366	(.202)	**.366****	**(.200)**
U.S. intervention	-.053	(.204)	-.133	(.199)
A few extremists	**.637****	**(.287)**	.296	(.269)
Safety/security				
Personal sense of security shaken	**.454****	**(.233)**	.104	(.269)
Religion and attendance				
Protestant	-.128	(.254)	**.575****	**(.273)**
Catholic	.235	(.261)	.273	(.269)
News exposure				
Follow news	.035	(.049)	-.014	(.051)
N	365	369		

*$p<.10$
**$p<.05$
***$p<.01$

for a reduction in civil liberties. Finally, respondents who believe that the attacks of 9/11 were committed by a few extremists also support a reduction in civil liberties. The clash of civilization indicators (religious conflict and clash

of values) are not pertinent here. In sum, gender, ideology and personal safety play an important part in explaining support for civil liberties infringements for all. Further, those who believe that the 9/11 attacks were the actions of a few extremists support civil liberties infringements of the general population. Perhaps they believe that decreased liberties are a good way to guarantee security from those extremist elements.

The characteristics of individuals supporting infringements on the civil liberties of Arab and Muslim Americans are different. Those Americans willing to support reduced rights for Arabs and Muslims are more likely to be Protestant, and they are more likely to attribute 9/11 to an inherent clash of values between the United States and the Muslim world. Ideology, gender, and personal safety are not statistically significant in this model. While the first model supports conventional wisdom—women more likely than men, conservatives more likely than liberals, and Republicans more likely than Democrats are willing to do away with civil liberties—the findings on Arabs and Muslims are more troubling. It appears that those people who believe that the United States was attacked because of a clash of values are more likely to encourage reduced rights for Arab and Muslim Americans. These respondents, who seem most comfortable with constructions of "us" and "them," are willing to do away with the civil liberties of Arabs and Muslims. That Protestants are more likely to be willing to curb Arab and Muslim civil liberties further illustrates that perceived differences based on religious values explain this pattern of support. Religious denomination was not at all significant in the model that gauged support for civil liberties infringements of the general population. Yet when the target group is Arab and Muslim, Protestants (who constitute about 40 percent of the DAS sample) are more willing to reduce their civil liberties.

These worrisome trends raise the most concern among members of the U.S. Arab and Muslim minorities. A Zogby survey (2002) found that 66 percent of Muslim Americans worry about their future in the United States. If the dominant culture sees them not only as different but also as a threat, as adhering to a value system that opposes "American values," then it is all the more acceptable to do away with their civil rights. Since the attacks of 9/11, hate crimes against Arabs and Muslims in the United States have consistently been on the rise year after year. The racialization of Arabs and Muslims by the mainstream, decades in the making, has manifested itself after 9/11 in support for discriminatory legislation and law enforcement. The media has long portrayed this minority

as a population to guard against. The general population, these results show, is following suit.

THE DEBATE ON TOLERANCE

The disturbing reality reflected in the findings above has also paved the way for an opportunity. While worrying about the presence of the "Other" in their midst, Americans are also attempting to learn more about this population. Since 9/11, copies of the Quran have been selling briskly at bookstores across the country. Interfaith dialogue and mosque open houses, which strive to educate Americans about Islam, became more common features after the attacks. In fact, a third of the DAAS respondents reported that they had received an act of solidarity or kindness from a member of the general population. Although many Americans remain wary, they also seek tolerance for the Arab and Muslim "Other."

Yet tolerance and the discourse on tolerance are not void of the context in which tolerance is either granted or withdrawn. The very fact that Muslims and Arabs are rallying Americans to be more tolerant illustrates a conundrum surrounding the issue of toleration itself. Some Arabs and Muslims who have accepted racial profiling claim to understand lengthy interrogations as their children stand by at airports, and apologize over and over for 9/11 because they feel this self-subjugation will win tolerance from the mainstream. However, tolerance assumes equality and good faith in interactions. It also assumes that dominant forces—media, religion, government, and so on—are not operating to espouse intolerance against a certain population. In the end, tolerance is granted by elite members of a dominant mainstream that is united in its culture and values toward a subordinate Other. In the words of Herbert Marcuse, tolerance is "determined and defined by the institutionalized inequality (which is certainly compatible with constitutional equality). . . . In such a society, tolerance is de facto limited on the dual ground of legalized violence or suppression (police, armed forces, guards of all sorts) and of the privileged position held by the predominant interest and their connections" (Marcuse 1965). He goes on to say, "In the United States, this tendency goes hand in hand with the monopolistic or oligopolistic concentration of capital in the formation of public opinion, i.e., the majority." Essentially, tolerance is a tool of racialization.

Whether tolerated or rejected, the construction of the Other is similar. We can take great pride in our toleration of those who do not share our values. Or

we can take great pride in resisting accommodation because others don't share our values. In the end, the construction of the Other is the same. Whether tolerated or resisted, the Other is, for the general population, always that which is different. This element of difference—and the ways it is constructed and manifested—define how tolerant we are. The process of racialization is inherent to our toleration of the Other. Rather than look for the commonalities that unite all humankind, we erect differences, and applaud our tolerance, or justify our intolerance. Thus, the debate on whether Arabs and Muslims are worthy of civil liberties protections is the wrong one to have. The racialized symptomatology of constructing Arabs and Muslims as "enemy Others" itself needs to be scrutinized and fixed. Unfortunately, Arabs and Muslims possess neither the resources nor the power nor the media necessary to alter mainstream public opinion. The tides of public opinion continue to operate against them.

APPENDIX

1. *Gender:* Male or Female
   Coding: 1: Male; 2: Female
2. *Education:*
   Coding: 1: Less than High School; 2: High School; 3: Some College; 4: BA; 5: Professional Degree
3. *Age:*
   Coding: 1: 18–24; 2:25–57; 3: 58+
4. *Household Income:*
   Coding: 1: less than $19,999; 2: $20,000–49,999; 3: $50,000–74,999; 4: $75,000+
5. *Republican:* Generally, speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, Independent or what?
   Coding: 1: Republican; 0: All Else
6. *Democrat:* Generally, speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, Independent or what?
   Coding: 1: Democrat; 0: All Else
7. *Liberal/Conservative:* Thinking *politically and socially,* how would you describe your own general outlook—are you very conservative, moderately conservative, middle-of-the-road, moderately liberal, or very liberal?

   Coding: 1: Very Conservative; 2: Moderately Conservative; 3: Middle of Road; 4: Moderately Liberal; 5: Very Liberal
8. *Protestant:* Are you Protestant, Catholic, or Orthodox Christian?
   Coding: 1: Protestant; 0: Other
9. *Catholic:* Are you Protestant, Catholic, or Orthodox Christian
   Coding: 1: Catholic; 0: Other
10. *Follow 9/11 Events/Media:* Since 9/11, how closely have you been following the news about the "war on terrorism"—very closely, closely, a little, or not much at all?
   Coding: 1: Very Closely; 2: Somewhat Closely; 3: A Little; 4: Not Much at All
11. *Explanations for 9/11:* Now I'll read you some possible explanations for the terrorist attacks on 9/11. For each one, please tell me whether you think this is a possible explanation or not. Just answer yes or no.
   a. *U.S. Intervention:* It's because of the U.S. intervention in the Persian Gulf.
   b. *Extremist Beliefs:* It's because of the extremist beliefs of a few terrorists.
   c. *Religious Conflict:* It's because of the conflict between Christianity and Judaism on one side and Islam on the other.
   d. *Clash of Values:* It's because the U.S. believes in democracy, freedom, and equal rights for women.
   Coding: 1: Yes; 0: No
12. *Personal Security Shaken by Events of 9/11:* How much—if any—have the events of 9/11 shaken your own personal sense of safety and security? Have they shaken it a great deal, a good amount, not too much, or not at all?
   Coding: 1: A Great Deal; 2: A Good Amount; 3: Not too Much; 4: Not at All
13. *Civil Liberties:* General Population
   a. Do you support increasing surveillance of U.S. citizens by the government? [Response Options: Yes or No]
   b. Do you support giving the police powers to stop and search anyone at random? [Response Options: Yes or No]
   c. Do you support detaining some suspicious individuals even if there is not sufficient evidence to prosecute them in the courts? [Response Options: Yes or No]
14. *Willingness to Give up Civil Liberties of Arab Americans:* Index variable consisting of the following three questions:

a. Do you support increasing surveillance of Arab Americans by the government? [Response Options: Yes or No]

b. Do you support giving the police powers to stop and search anyone who appears to be Arab or Muslim, at random? [Response Options: Yes or No]

c. Do you support detaining some suspicious Arabs and/or Muslims even if there is not sufficient evidence to prosecute them in the courts? [Response Options: Yes or No]

F I V E

"Whiteness" and the Arab Immigrant Experience

SAWSAN ABDULRAHIM

MOST OF THE LITERATURE on Arab Americans weaves a relatively consistent narrative—one that celebrates the "assimilation" of an early wave of immigrants and bemoans the current "racialization" of the group. This narrative recounts that, while Arabic-speaking immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century faced prejudice, they overcame hardship and eventually joined the "American mainstream."[1] At the same time, they became incorporated into the United States' system of racial categorization as white. However, a number of political forces and events taking place over the past few decades brought this process to a halt. The Arab world and Islam presently embody the marked "Other" against which an American identity is constructed. By virtue of their historical, cultural, and transnational connections to a perceived foreign enemy, Arab Americans are pushed outside the national consensus and marked as the "enemy within."[2] As nation and race in the United States have historically entwined,[3] it has been argued that members of the group feel the white racial designation no longer reflects their experience (Samhan 1999; Majaj 2000; Naber 2000).

1. The term "Arabic-speaking" has been used in other writings in reference to immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century because, while they spoke Arabic, not all necessarily identified as Arab.

2. For writings on the impact of September 11 on this process, see Cainkar (2004b) and Hagopian (2004).

3. See Omi and Winant (1994).

TWELVE

Conclusion

Arab American Racialization

AMANEY JAMAL

THIS BOOK HAS PLACED THEORIES of racialization in conversation with Arab American studies. As this volume illustrates, the sources of Arab American racialization are both many and multifaceted. The racialization of Arab Americans is a dynamic process that encompasses the ways in which Arab Americans are differentiated yet also "accepted" in mainstream society. Arab American racialization is about the social construction of "Arab Americanness" in multiple contexts and the varied ways in which Arab Americans continue to negotiate their existence and respond to these different modalities.

Arab American racialization does not rely on phenotype alone, nor is it entirely contingent on the federal government's existing racial categories (i.e., the U.S. Census). How individual Arab Americans identify reveals that Arab Americans place themselves along multiple axes within the existing—and limiting—racial structures of U.S. society. Yet that is only part of the story when it comes to conceptualizing Arab Americans and "race." As many essays in this volume illustrate, dominant U.S. discourses and institutions have also positioned Arab Americans in terms of multiple, contradictory, and often ambiguous identities within existing racial structures.

The contributions in this volume repeatedly illustrate that within some contexts, Arab Americans have been positioned as "white but not quite." Other contributors have pointed to statistics that reveal that many Arab Americans do identify as white (Shryock). This statistic of "white identity" (for instance, 61 percent in the Detroit Arab American Study, 2003) is telling. First, it demonstrates that there is a "desire" among a significant majority of Arab Americans to

situate themselves neatly within existing categories of racial identification. Some Arab Americans who can credibly identify as white might choose to see themselves as part of the dominant social structure in U.S. society, even while they may not always be accorded mainstream privileges linked with such identification. The Detroit Arab American Study reveals that 31 percent of Arab Americans identify as "other"—and among Muslim Arabs, that percentage is closer to 50 percent. This otherness could be a recognition that they don't fit neatly in any available racial classifications, are not accepted, or choose not to be identified as "white." These identifications are not based on phenotypical classifications or orientations. Rather, they are based on a series of interrelated processes whereby Arab Americans make sense of their own identity vis-à-vis existing hierarchies of race and how others see them in relation to these classifications. These identifications illustrate that even though the U.S. census continues to classify Arab Americans as "white," a solely "white" designation may not capture the diverse and complex ways that Arab American individuals experience "race."

What is absolutely compelling about the ways in which Arab Americans engage the racial markers that pervade U.S. society and the history of race relations in this country is the obvious limitations of the federal government's racial classifications. In this volume, some argue that "white" identification is built on the assumption of protected interests and security. Even while most Arabs identify as white, they are denied cultural citizenship. Still others have argued that this identification with whiteness has its own limitation. First of all, even though Arabs may choose to identify with whiteness, the "host society" may deny them that classification. And second, some Arabs and Arab Americans may not see themselves as white or experience "race" in terms of white privilege. Arab American whiteness presumes that Arab Americans are part of the dominant mainstream. Many of the contributions in this volume, however, have shown that while some Arab Americans claim whiteness, others have been denied this status or choose not to identify as white. These Arabs are not part or not accepted as part of the "white" superstructure, nor do they comfortably fit into other racial identity categories available to them. Where Arabs choose an identity other than white, they proclaim "Otherness."

ARAB AMERICAN OTHERNESS

This book illustrates that Arab American Otherness has been shaped by the ways that Arab Americans have been located within U.S. racial classification

systems. The dichotomies of "white or nonwhite," "us or them," "American or enemy," "with us or against us": these are some of the binaries that construct Arab Americans within existing "racial" hierarchies in the United States. Within dominant U.S. discourses, the ideal Arab is one who consistently and repeatedly pays his allegiance to all things American, and one who is "with" the dominant discourse that prevails at any given time, even if that discourse is anti-Arab. If we look at the history of Arab American integration in the United States, it is rife with accounts of Arab Americans asserting their whiteness not only in relation to economic mobility and integration but also in relation to all things "American." In other words, for Arab Americans the words "white" and "American" are often experienced interchangeably.

Yet more recently, identification with white America has not resulted in Arab American acceptance as either white or American. Dominant representations of Arab Americans as un-American have only been exacerbated since 9/11. It is not lost on the average Arab that she does not neatly occupy a place within this white racial category. Yet, given the alternatives, some Arab Americans may argue that the white label has remained the one label that can protect Arab Americans from losing even the semblance of "American" status. Other Arab Americans may argue that gaining acceptance is not their objective and may instead reject the white identity label. Some Arab Americans may instead prioritize a vision that would entail ending anti-Arab racism and U.S.-led wars in their homeland. Therefore, they opt for identifying as persons of color as part of a strategy for participating in racial justice movements as antiracist/antiwar Arab Americans.

From the very onset of early immigration in the late 1880s, Arab racialization was solidified by markers of "outsider" status. Especially after World War II, when the United States became more involved in the Arab world, Arabs were consistently portrayed in popular representations as occupying the category of "other"—and too often, "enemy Other." It is this struggle to be accepted as an "ordinary citizen" that has dominated the lives of many Arab Americans. These same Arabs, along with other Arab Americans, have also been eagerly working toward ending U.S. military engagements in their countries of origin and the government and media's misrepresentation of Arab Americans.

The classification of "other" resonates much more strongly with Muslim Arab Americans than it does with Christian Arabs. Because Islam is not a major religion in the United States, and because the current war on terror has been widely perceived as a war against Islam, for Muslim Arab Americans the

"non-American" status is all the more compounded. The Detroit Arab American Study found that Arab Muslim identification with otherness (at roughly 50 percent) was systematic among different immigrant and citizenship cohorts. On the other hand, Christian Arabs who had arrived earlier or were born in the United States and enjoy citizenship status were more likely to identify as white (Baker et al. 2004). However, identification by no means implies acceptance. Although the barriers to Americanness are more exacerbated for Arab Muslims, the same sources that stigmatize Arab Muslims are those that touch Arab Christian lives as well.

To Arabs, then, identifying as "other" as in the Detroit Arab American study, suggests marginalization, the lack of acceptance, the lack of comfortably fitting into any of the existent racial categories. Many of the processes of racialization and othering that have touched other minority groups extend to Arab Americans as well. Arab American racialization stems not only or even primarily from physical appearance but also from a deep and prolonged history of reduction to "Suspicious Arab."

Arab Americans—especially after 9/11—have not only experienced an increase in discrimination but also have seen the legal system turn against them. Not only is the denial of their Americanness more pervasive than ever, but the assumption of their guilt by ethnic association has never been more pronounced. Arabs and Muslims are seen and monitored as enemies residing within. Not all segments of the "mainstream," however, galvanize their efforts to treat Arabs as "enemies" within. While a third of Detroit Arabs reported receiving a gesture of support from a non–Middle Easterner after 9/11, significant percentages of Detroit Arabs also document a sense that their identities are not respected by American society (Baker et al. 2004). It is clear that although Arab Americans are the recipients of kind gestures from non-Arabs, there nevertheless exists an undeniable perception that Arabs are considered as suspicious Other.

It is this challenge of confronting a general environment that has been unwelcoming toward Arab Americans that provides altogether a more contextualized understanding of the label "other." Arabs neither are seen as white nor are they granted an officially defined minority status; rather, they stand outside all racial demarcations in an ambiguous, precarious position of Otherness compounded by existing policies and perceptions. Regardless, then, of the boxes Arabs check—whether white, black, or other—their racialization, which has resulted in a perception of Otherness, is real.

The post-9/11 environment has therefore reinforced Arab American existence in this elusive category of "other." September 11 has put the spotlight on Arabs as never before. To prove their loyalty to the state, they must denounce terrorism and fight a "war" that has entailed the monitoring of their own communities (Howell and Jamal forthcoming). In so doing, Arab Americans are not only asserting their "Americanness"; rather, the prevailing sentiment is that asserting loyalty, again and again, is one way to secure residential rights in the United States. Because dominant U.S. discourses and the media continue to portray Arabs as un-American, their inclusion in the war on terror is premised on the assumption that Arabs possess and have knowledge about terrorism that the Department of Homeland Security lacks. Hence, Arabs are seen as tools available for use and not American citizens situated on equal grounds. In this current "war on terror," most Arabs have not been able to address the sources of their marginalization; rather, their loyal involvement in helping fight the war on terror has reinforced the essential assumptions about that marginalization: they possess the propensities of suspicious enemies living within, un-loyal to America and thus not worthy of the Americanness enjoyed by "real Americans." Resulting in Otherness, racialization—as different than and inferior to "real" Americans—is a challenge that has contributed to further marginalization.

THE CHAPTERS in this volume have several commonalities worthy of highlighting. Primarily, all the chapters move beyond straightforward assimilationist models in the study of the integration of ethnic groups. That real barriers exist within the "host" society itself, relegating ethnic groups in "subordinate" classifications, even while Arab Americans themselves take pride in their identities, remains a key challenge to ethnic groups and in particular to Arab Americans. The chapters in this volume converge on a common theme, illustrating the ways in which processes of racialization have affected Arab American citizenship and patterns of civic engagement. Most of the contributors agree that racialization serves as one prism through which Arab Americans interact with the dominant society. These interactions are multifaceted, varied, and contingent on a plethora of factors. Yet there are noteworthy commonalities that have structured the racialization of Arab Americans. These commonalities include the construction of Arab Americans in terms of inferiority, suspicion, Otherness, and foreignness, and stem from a complicated history of U.S. intervention in the

Arab world. It is this reality that has paved the way to Arab American racialization. But the patterns of responses among Arab Americans to these racialization processes have not been monolithic. Some Arabs have embraced whiteness and not only pass as white but have benefited from this identity, while others have turned to "Otherness."

The chapters in this book document the historical roots and current trajectories of these racialization processes, the impact they have had on Arab Americans, and the varied ways in which Arab Americans continue to engage these racialization processes. This book's strength is that it brings the study of Arab Americans in direct dialogue with studies of "race" in the United States. By doing so, it offers ample empirical evidence that the process of othering is one where dominant elements in the society (often aided by the media and legal establishment) separate and distinguish themselves—proclaiming superiority—at the expense of the marginalized group. The challenge for Arab Americanists is to continue to uncover the ways in which the racialization process structures Arab American histories and experiences and their responses and reactions to these realities. By engaging in new conversations about the sources of Arab American identities (those freely chosen and those imposed by circumstance), we hope to generate new possibilities for future research.