



Prejudice Towards Arabs/Middle Eastern Americans

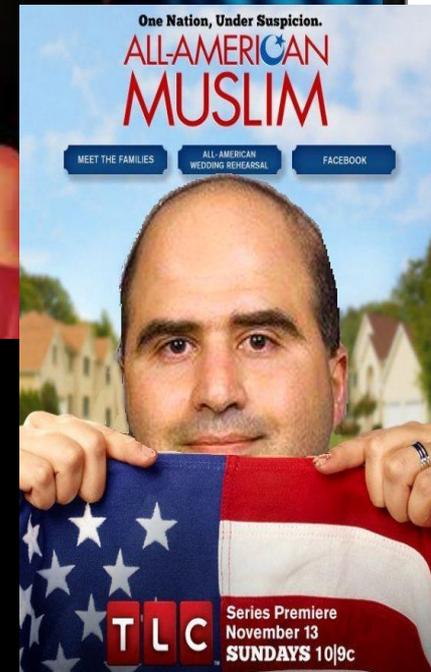
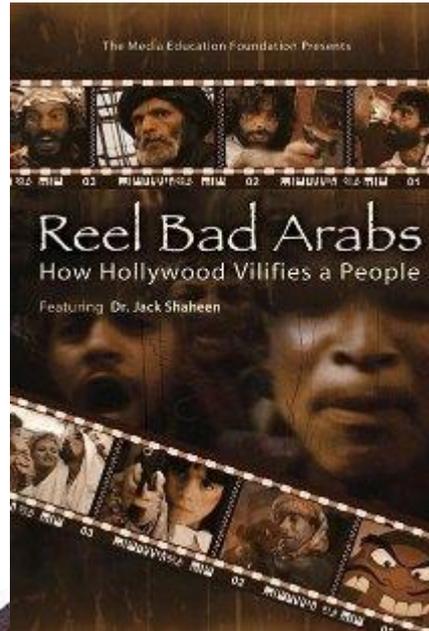
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The MENA Region



What do we know about Arab/MENA Americans?

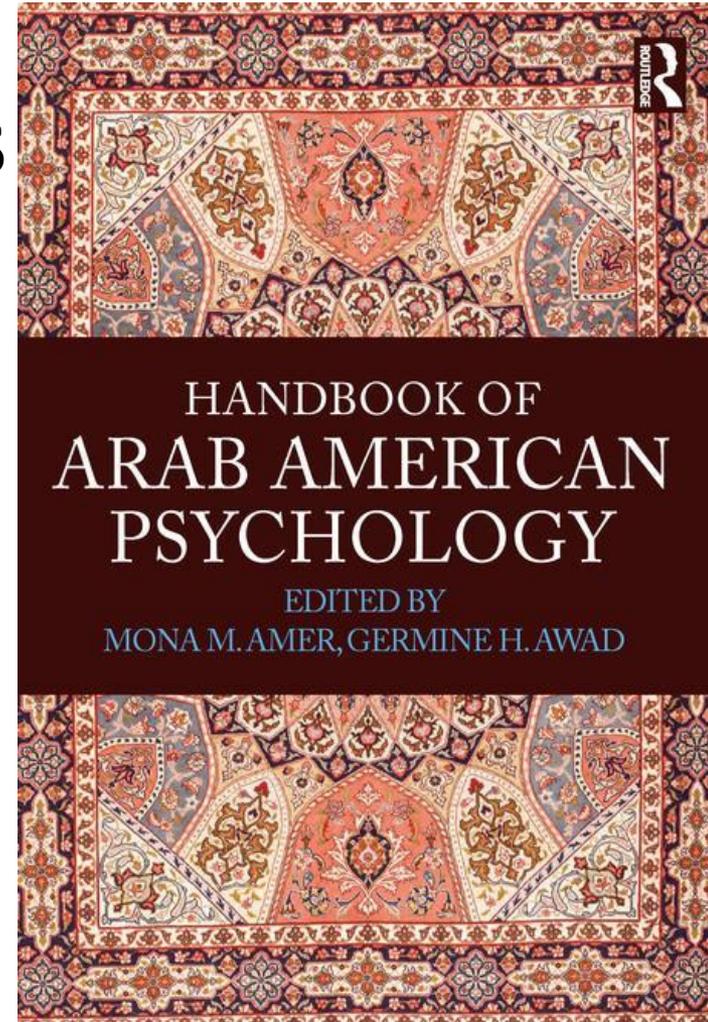


Diversity of the Middle East/North Africa



The Psychology of Arab/MENA Americans

- Simultaneous invisibility and hypervisibility
 - Lack of recognition by government structures
- Consistent “othering” leads to discrimination





Ethnoreligious Prejudice

- “Arab” and “Muslim” conflated
 - Arab Muslims constitute only 26% of the Muslim community in the U.S.
 - According to an 2002 AAIF survey, approximately 63% of Arab Americans identify as Christians and 24% identify as Muslim
- Islamophobia impacts all Arab/MENA Americans



Discrimination Timeline

- Discrimination towards Arabs and individuals of Middle Eastern descent in the United States was reported as early as the 1900's (Naber, 2000).
- The events of September 11th, 2001 led to a sharp increase in prejudice and discrimination towards persons of Arab and Middle Eastern descent (Ajrouch, 2005; Ibish, 2003).
- Shortly after 9/11, President George W. Bush was quoted as saying “This crusade, this war on terrorism is going to take a while...”
- Fast forward to 2017: Muslim Ban

A vertical decorative border on the left side of the slide, featuring a complex, repeating geometric and floral pattern in shades of brown, gold, and red, characteristic of traditional Middle Eastern or Persian rug designs.

What Predicts Prejudice towards Middle Easterners/Arabs?

- Religiosity
 - To what extent does religiosity impact prejudice toward Middle Easterners (Awad & Hall-Clark, 2009)



Right-Wing Authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1981)

- Individuals high in RWA
 - exhibit high degrees of deference to authority
 - Aggression toward out-groups when authorities permit that aggression
 - Hold traditional values endorsed by authorities
- RWA is related to prejudicial attitudes
- Two characteristics of individuals high RWA lead them to be prejudiced
 - Organize worldview in terms of in-groups and out-groups and perceive the out-group as a threat
 - Self-righteousness



Predictors of Prejudice: RWA

- Mediation results extended to religious fundamentalism (Johnson, Labou , Rowatt, Patock-Peckham, & Carlisle, 2012)
- RWA also positively predicted
 - endorsement of violent action toward the Middle East (Henry, Sidanius, Levin, & Pratto, 2005)
 - support of the death penalty when linked to Arabs (Dambrun, 2007)



Predictors of Prejudice: SDO

- Those high in Social Dominance Orientation (SDO; e.g. with a tendency to think one's ingroup is superior and outgroups are inferior)
 - were more likely to hold negative prejudices toward Arab groups (Dambrun, 2007; Henry et al., 2005; Rowatt, Franklin, & Cotton, 2005)
- The endorsement of SDO has been associated with
 - offering less help to Arab students (Halabi, Dovidio, & Nadler, 2008)
 - less leniency toward Arab immigrant criminal offenders (Green, Thomsen, Sidanius, Staerklé, & Potanina, 2009).
 - more stereotyping of Arabs (Oswald, 2005)
 - greater social distance between themselves and Arabs



Experience of Discrimination

- In Zogby's (2002) poll of 505 Arab Americans, 1 in 3 individuals reported that they have experienced discrimination.
- In addition, 40% of those surveyed know someone who was discriminated against since 9/11.
- Approximately 66% expressed concern about the "long term effects of discrimination"
- 78% reported feeling that there has been more profiling of Arab Americans since September 11.



Experiences of Discrimination

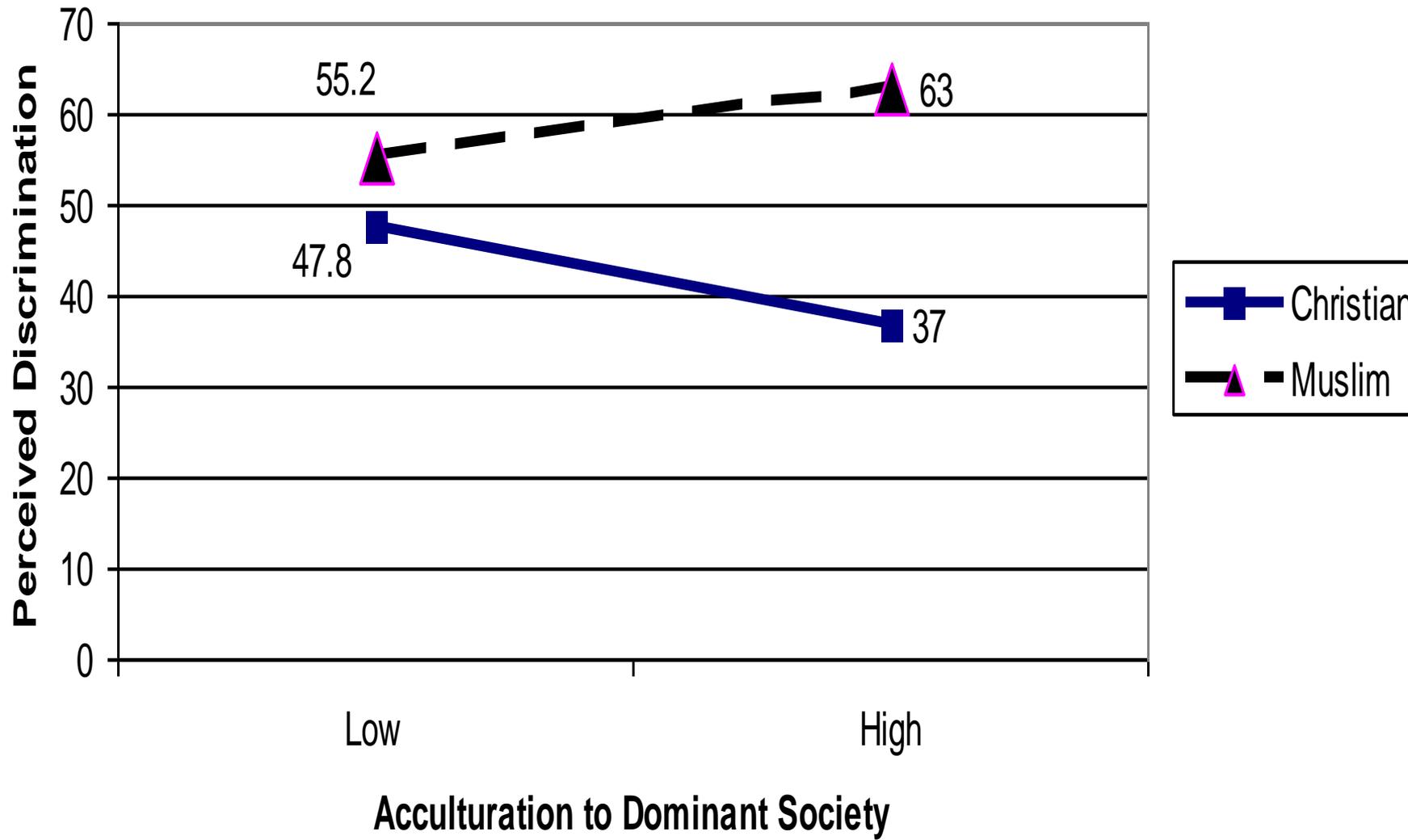
- Post 9/11 (Sept 11, 2001- October 11, 2002)
 - 80 cases of Arab Americans being removed from planes
 - 800 cases of employment discrimination
 - 700 cases of violence
- More recent data shows that “anti-Arab” hate crimes surged by 219% from 2014 to 2015
- Increase in immigration and deportation fears



How does Acculturation Impact the Experience of Discrimination?

- Awad (2010) indicates a continued problem of discrimination for Arab-American/Middle Eastern Americans
 - 52% of the study sample reported that it has been implied that they were dangerous or violent as a result of their ethnicity.
- Muslims perceived more discrimination than did Christians in the sample.

Acculturation X Religion Interaction

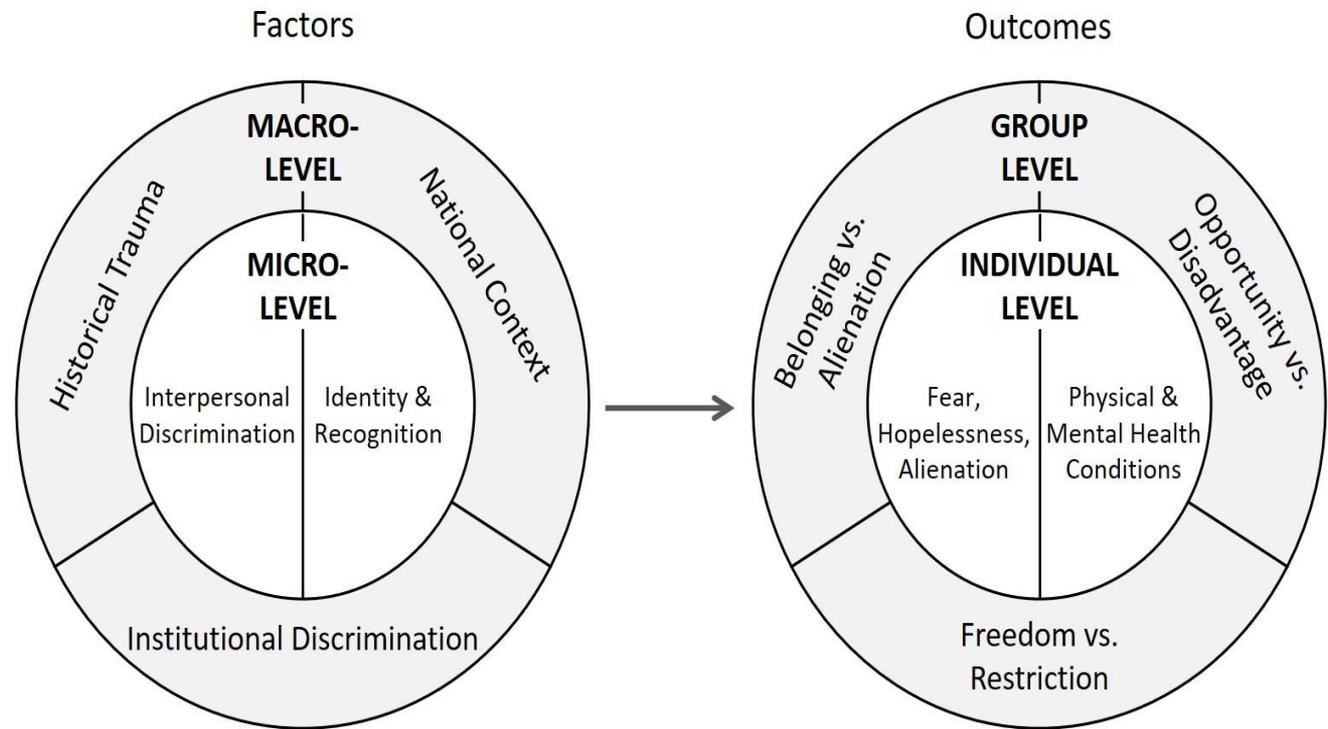




Consequences of Discrimination

- Arab Americans who experience discrimination report higher levels of psychological distress (Ahmed, Kia-Keating, & Tsai, 2011; Moradi & Hasan, 2004; Padela & Heisler, 2010).
- Related to lower levels of happiness and poorer overall health
- According to the Health Minds study, Arab/MENA Americans have the highest prevalence of depression and anxiety compared to other students of color and white students (Lipson, Kern, Eisenberg & Breland-Noble, 2018).

Cumulative Racial/Ethnic Trauma of MENA Americans



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- The current political climate in the U.S. continues to contribute to prejudice toward people of Middle Eastern descent.
 - Future Directions
 - Comparisons across ethnic minority groups similar to the Healthy Minds Study
 - We need a separate census category for Arab/Middle Eastern and North African populations.

AMENA-Psy

- The American Arab, Middle Eastern, and North African Psychological Association (AMENA-Psy)

-  www.amenapsy.org

- @amenapsy

