THE AMERICAN *MUSLIM* VOTER:
WHAT EXPLAINS VOTING WHEN NOBODY CARES?

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Over the past two decades the campaign for the presidency has become much more technically sophisticated, resulting campaigns ability to micro-target voters of specific groups and tailor unique campaign appeals accordingly (Hillygus and Shields 2008; DeFrancesco Soto and Merolla 2006). In fact, in 2008, Barack Obama had over 80 custom bumper stickers and web banners for different groups such as "Latinos for Obama," "Jews for Obama," "Greens for Obama," "NASCAR Dads for Obama," and so on. Despite the great lengths that campaigns go to in reaching out to small, but politically important "groups" of voters Muslim Americans, which number more than 7 million, were not targeted as political allies by either the Democratic or Republican campaigns in 2008 (nor 2002, 2004, or 2006 for that matter). On the contrary, Muslim Americans were a target of a different kind – political scapegoats that were seen as a liability rather than coalition partners (Zoll 2008). From the right, conservatives attacked Obama by claiming he was "secretly" a Muslim whose Kenyan ancestry and childhood days in Indonesia rendered him un-Christian and un-American. Rather than making an earnest stand in defense of those who practice Islam, the Obama campaign attempted to hide any possible connection to Muslims, even removing two women wearing the *hijab* from the stage behind him during a campaign stop in Michigan. In past decades, Jews, Italians, Blacks, and Latinos were all subject to political attack, but (eventually) also received political backing from the opposing party or candidate who tried to bring the minority vote into their coalition (Fraga and Leal 2004). Never before has a *group of voters* been subject to attacks and slights by both major political parties, yet this has been the case for Muslim

Americans since 2001. Still, hundreds of thousands of Muslims take part in American elections each year.

The research on voting has long held that voter mobilization is one of the most crucial components in understanding whether, and why someone votes (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). Voters follow the campaign as best they can, but in the end, it is get-out-the-vote drives and specific appeals that lead voters to the polls (Gerber and Green 2004). In fact, it is likely that other important predictors of turnout such as attention to news, psychological engagement and efficacy are directly a by-product of how much outreach and mobilization is directed at the voter, or her community (cite?). For Muslim Americans, our traditional models of the American voter are far less appropriate. Not because Muslim voters don't try to rely on similar pieces of information and resources necessary to cast a vote, but because the political system in place post 9/11 does not afford an opportunity for full electoral inclusion to the American Muslim voter. While life cycle and resource based variables are still relevant, community and group-based variables are likely to be more relevant. In this paper, we test a very interesting proposal: what motivates turnout when outreach and voter mobilization are essentially absent?

We identify a model of Muslim American voting, that draws in part on previous findings for minority groups as well as the role of religion in American politics. However the landscape is unique for Muslims, and thus our model incorporates new theoretical and empirical perspectives to account for the role of perceived discrimination, different religious traditions and race, the practice of Islamic tenets, and much more. In particular, we want to account for the low levels of campaign outreach, and the resulting

low levels of efficacy, that are taken for granted as being present in most studies of turnout. While this specific effort analyzes Muslim Americans, we suspect our model could apply to other groups of jilted voters including other religious minorities (Quakers, Mennonites, Jehovah's Witness, Rastafarians) and possibly to other ethnic minorities (e.g., Latino immigrants in Arizona).

"Outreach" to Muslim Voters

Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) offer the seminal work in political mobilization arguing that outreach to voters is a critical ingredient in understanding their decision to participate in politics. Since 2001, over 1 million Muslims have registered to vote and voted despite being considered "election year outcasts[1]," (Zoll 2008) According to Salam al-Marayati, executive director of the Muslim Public Affairs Council, presidential candidates "are not willing to have their photo taken, they don't meet with Muslim organizations, and they shy away from any issue that may link them to the Muslim community," (Zoll 2008).

Religion and the vote

Scholars who have studied religiosity and its connections to partisanship focused on the cleavages between Catholics, Jews and Protestants with regards to their voting choice. In Campbell's 1960 *The American Voter*, the importance of religiosity was strongly highlighted. Religious identity is, according to Campbell's edited volume, an important factor in an individual's voting choices. The scholars ask whether or not a high sense of social group identity with one's religious group drive in anyway partisan tendencies. They found that it

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[1] "U.S. Muslim voters are election year outcasts." Associated Press. October 23, 2008.
http://www.usatoday.com/news/politics/2008-10-23-4293296423_x.htm

matters. Jews were found to be more likely to vote Democrat consistently, as a result of high degrees of religious identity. Similarly, Catholics who identify strongly with the church behaved cohesively, and regularly voting Democrat, voted overwhelmingly for Democrats in the 1950s. on the other hand, Protestants and Evangelicals have tended to vote Republican, especially as their degree of religiosity increased. An exception to this was in 1976 they voted Democrat when Jimmy Carter, who is a born-again Southern Baptist, was the Democratic candidate. Though religious identity matters, one's denomination alone may not be the dominant cleavage anymore in religion in politics, as argued by several scholars: that the degree of orthodoxy and intensity of religious identity are the most relevant variables in understanding political orientations (Welch and Leege 1991; Layman 1997; Jelen 1997).

According to these studies, Religious groups in the United States do tend to have distinct patterns of partisanship, and religiosity has consistently been found to be a predictor of vote choice or party identification. An important point of contrast is that in today's political arena, both Democrats and Republicans emphasize their support for Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, while distancing themselves from Muslims. In 2006 Republican Congressman Peter King called for increased FBI surveillance of all Mosques (Reilly September 19, 2007), and during the 2008 presidential election event organizers for Democrat Barack Obama prevented two Muslim women wearing the Hijab from sitting in the televised audience behind the candidate on stage citing concerns over their religion (Council on American-Islamic Relations August 6, 2008). Religiosity, faith, and church attendance have consistently been found to be correlated with political engagement and party identification in American Politics, in no small part because candidates and parties often focus on mobilizing religious communities, while embracing the various "mainstream" religions.

Within the field of minority politics, scholars have addressed the role of the Black church in African American political engagement (Harris 1999; McDaniel and Ellison 2008; Mattis 2001; Alex-Assensoh 2001). Similarly, Latino identity as Catholic or evangelical Christian in Latino political incorporation (Jones-Correa and Leal 2001; Kelly and Kelly 2005; Lee and Pachon 2007), and Asian American Christian religiosity as a source of social and political assimilation (Lien 2004). For all three minority groups, religion and religiosity is known to be an important variable in party identification. Research on religion and the African American community finds that more religious individuals are more likely to vote Democrat, a result of the Black church's critical role in the civil rights movement. Higher church attendance has also been found to increase Democratic partisanship among Blacks, especially in the South. One contributing factor is social group identity and the concept of linked fate. Harris (1999) notes that Blacks and African Americans have a high sense of linked fate, in part based on similar experiences within Black churches, which have promoted social group cohesion, group identity, and a sense of empowerment. While many studies link religious conservativism with Republican identification among Whites, McDaniel and Ellison (2008) found that religiosity does not operate the same way for Blacks, and that religiously conservative Blacks still side with the Democratic Party. Their findings are particularly important because they highlight the differences between religion and partisanship among Whites and minority groups in America, and suggest that scholars identify fresh perspectives for religion and politics for Blacks and Latinos, and we would argue, for Muslim Americans. McDaniel and Ellison argue, "the histories and cultures of racial/ethnic groups act as a prism, refracting the interpretation of religious texts through differences in group experiences," (183). If these differences exist among minority groups within the same religious tradition of Christianity, even deeper differences in how religiosity

influences partisanship may exist for Muslims as a non-Christian, a mainly-immigrant non-White religious minority group in a Christian society.

While religiosity has been most noted as an important variable in Black political engagement, more recently research on Latinos and Asian Americans has emerged. Among Latinos, Lee and Pachon examine religiosity and vote choice in the 2004 election and find that religiosity is a very salient variable for Latino evangelicals, who were significantly more likely to vote Republican, while religion had little to no effect for other Latinos who tended to vote Democrat regardless of religiosity (2007). Looking at a pooled sample of NES data, Kelly and Kelly (2005) explained that Latinos are religiously diverse, and that evangelicals and mainline Protestants are significantly more likely to be Republicans, while Catholics and non-religious Latinos are more Democratically-oriented. Likewise, Barreto and Pantoja (2006) find born-again and evangelical Latinos to be significantly more conservative on education issues and more like to be Republican. On the other hand, the Catholic church has provided less political cues or mobilization to Latinos, and seen as less of a source of political engagement (Verba et al. 1995). However, the strong role of the Catholic church in the 2006 immigrant rights marches may be changing this notion as the church plays a larger role in Latino political socialization.

When we look Asian Americans, we find that they are a diverse group, with equally diverse religious practices. The PNAAPS, a major national survey of Asian Americans found that religiosity is a relevant political force. Lien (2004) finds that religiosity among Asian Americans greatly shapes their ethnic identity, which in turn, influences their partisanship and political attitudes. One reason religion has been important to Asian Americans is the role of the church in providing services and also a sense of community. Kim (1996) found the Korean Church to provide four major sociological functions: a social center for

immigrants; provides information on social services in America; leadership opportunities; and strengthens ethnic identification. While none of the functions is overtly political, they provide the bases for many in the community to engage the political system. Data from the PNAAPS suggests that religion does play a role in the political involvement of Asians. Lien finds that Catholic Asians have the highest rates of citizenship, and Christians have the highest rates of voter registration (2004). Beyond engagement, religion was found to influence Asian American political preferences. Lien notes, "among Asians variation in religious preference are strongly related to variations in these mainstream political ideologies and parties," (2004).   She finds that Christians and Protestants are the most likely to align themselves with the Republican Party. Similar analysis by Wong and Iwamura (2007) also concludes that Asian American Protestants were significantly more likely to be Republican as compared to non-Protestant Asians, though the result is not as strong as among White Protestants (see also Wong et. al. 2008). With respect to Muslim Americans, one article has investigated the development of partisan identification as of yet (Barreto and Bozonelos, 2009). While religious institutions themselves can serve as sources of political socialization through sermons, religious beliefs and degree of religiosity may also be a lens through which an individual evaluates candidates and political parties (Jelen 1991; Wilcox 1993). These established findings, however, are based on Christian, Catholic, and Jewish Americans. Given differences in institutional structure, religious belief systems, and most importantly, their social status in American society, it is important to examine Muslim Americans as a religious and/or ethnic minority group, and ask what role religiosity has in understanding partisan orientations.

Data and Methodological Approach

To address the issue of Muslim American voting behavior we implemented a unique public opinion survey of Muslim Americans. Scholars familiar with the study of Muslim Americans as well as racial and ethnic politics know well that very little empirical data exists regarding Muslims in America. Among the few MAPS/Zogby polls that do exist, none contain the precise questions we are interested in analyzing. Thus, we fielded an original survey of Muslims Americans across eleven cities: Seattle, WA, Dearborn, MI, San Diego, CA, Irvine, CA, Riverside, CA, Los Angeles, CA and Raleigh-Durham, NC, Chicago, IL, Dallas, TX, Houston, TX, Washington D.C., and Oklahoma City, OK. The sample represents an incredibly diverse cross-section of American cities and the Muslim population, including interview sites in the East, West, and Midwest, as well as the major Muslim population centers in the U.S. Our sample includes large numbers of Arab, Asian, and (U.S. born) African American Muslim respondents, making it quite representative of the overall U.S. Muslim population.

The survey was recruited face-to-face, and subjects then self-administered the survey whereby research assistants[2] handed out clipboards to participants who completed the survey in their own privacy. Participants were selected using a traditional skip pattern to randomize recruitment and could chose to answer the survey in English, Arabic, or Farsi. Naturally, drawing a sample of Muslims in the United States is not easy or efficient given their relatively small population. To address this concern, the survey was implemented at 22 randomly selected mosques and Islamic centers across eleven locales. In addition, we gathered a large number of interviews outside the prayer services

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[2] Research assistants were themselves Muslim, predominantly second generation, most fluent in a second language (Arabic or Urdu) and were balanced between men and women. All research assistants attending two training sessions, and participated in a pilot survey to ensure consistency and professionalism.

during Eid al Adha and Eid al Fitr[3]. In total, 1,410 surveys were completed across the

eleven locations, and the demographics of our sample closely match those reported in a

recent Pew survey of Muslim Americans[4] (see appendix, table 2 for sample

characteristics). Finally, due to the high propensity for social desirability among Muslim

Americans, a self-administered survey offers a considerable advantage over a telephone

survey. Considerable research has demonstrated that attitudes on sensitive topics are

more truthfully given in private self-administered surveys (Krysan 1998), and that

minorities are likely to moderate their attitudes when being interviewed by non-whites,

the typical method in telephone surveys (Krysan and Couper 2003; Davis 1997)

Given that our sample is drawn from religious centers and places of worship, the

reader may question if there is any inherent bias. However, we are confident in our

sample selection for two specific reasons. First, we are actually interested in the more

religious Muslim population, given the nature of our research question: is Islam

compatible with participation in American democracy? Scholars, pundits, and journalists

who state that it is not compatible often point to the ultra religious segment of the Islamic

population as the source of tension. As we illustrate above, the potential for conflict

between Islam and the West is consistently explained by religious dogmatic differences.

Thus, it is important that we sample the Muslim population in America that continues to

actively practice their religion, as opposed to a sample that is predominantly secularized

and assimilated. Second, our sample still demonstrates a nice range of religious diversity.

While attending the mosque and the prayer of Eid are descriptively religious practices,

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[3] Our survey was in the field from December 30, 2006 to December 9, 2008. Of the 1,410 completed
interviews, 373 were collected during Eid al Adha prayers, 726 during Eid al Fitr prayers, and 311 were
collected regular Jum'ah prayers.
[4] The Pew survey was conducted by telephone, and went into the field at roughly the same time as our survey,
however its data is not yet publicly available.

they are also cultural and social practices, just as attending Sunday church services or

Easter Mass are both religious and cultural events for Christian and Catholic Americans.

In response to a question about the importance of religion in their daily life, 50% stated

religion was very important, 38% stated it was somewhat important, and 12% stated not

too important. Likewise, when asked how involved they were with their local mosque,

26% said very active, 40% said somewhat, 20% said not much, and 13% said not at all

active. Overall, we are quite confident that our sample provides the appropriate mix of

religiously oriented Muslims, and at the same time providing a spectrum of religiosity

that ranges from very low to very high.

Variable construction

To assess political participation among Muslim Americans we examine both voter

turnout and vote choice. The first dependent variable related to turnout is measured as

self-reported decision to vote in the most recent election (2006 or 2008). While we would

prefer to have validated turnout, exit polls do not have a sample of non-voters, and due to

anonymity requirements we could not follow-up and validate the turnout of each survey

respondent. While we acknowledge self-reported turnout has some bias, we are not

interested in quoting a precise turnout rate, but rather discovering predictors of turnout,

and thus we follow a long tradition of political science research using self-reported

turnout data (cites here). In fact, our sample reports appropriate variation on the turnout

variable, with 61% stating they had voted and 39% admitting they had not voted. We

suspect there may be less social desirability on a turnout question for American Muslims

because their group has been labeled outcasts as we note above, and hence not much

pressure to say they voted, given the low levels of outreach. Our second dependent variable measures vote choice in either the 2006 or 2008 election, and asks respondents if they voted for the Democratic candidate, the Republican candidate, or some other candidate[5]. Overall, 70% say they supported a Democrat, 9% supported a Republican, and 21% say they supported a third party candidate.

Many of the variables that we are interested in revolve around the practice of Islam and the degree of religiosity among our Muslim respondents. There are four specific variables that we focus on to test the relationship between religiosity and support for American democratic values. The first variable measures the religio-ethnic context in which each respondent lives. We asked, "In general, are the people you live around, Muslim, non-Muslim, or both?" and coded this from 0 – 2 where 0 represents non-Muslim and 2 represents Muslim. Overall, 30% said they live around non-Muslims, 58% said both, and 12% said they live mostly around other Muslims. The second variable in this series is mosque involvement, and we use a similar question to Jamal (2005) as to how involved one is in their local mosque, beyond Friday prayers, ranging from not at all to very involved.

The next religious-based independent variable, which we call *religious guidance*, is based on the question, "How much do you follow the Qu'ran and Hadith in your daily life? Very much / Somewhat / Only a little / Not at all." This variable is important because it assesses the degree to which Muslims bring Islam into their personal, and daily lives, as opposed to a once a week experience for Friday prayers in the mosque. The

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[5] To keep the question comparable across years, we asked, "In the contest for U.S. Congress, even if you did not vote, did you support the Republican candidate, Democratic candidate, Other?" Later in the survey we asked if they had voted, and if they were U.S. citizens, which allows us to screen out non-voters, or non-citizens. We chose to ask this question of all respondents regardless of voter registration or citizenship status to allow us to compare voters and non-voters preferences, which we do in other work.

subpopulation that stated 'very much' is of particular interest, because they are the source of conflicting opinions on Muslims and incorporation into the West. One the one hand, Huntington and Lewis clearly state religiously devout Muslims reject the rule of misbelievers. On the other hand, March and Abdul Rauf argue that obedient practitioners of the Qu'ran and Hadith would be quick to support the ideals of a democratic society.

Finally, we include a variable called *follow Islam*, which measures the knowledge and actual practice of Islamic teachings. This variable is constructed based on the following two questions in the survey: "Which is not a month in the Islamic calendar?" and "During 2006 did you provide *Sadakah* to a Muslim individual or organization?" The first question about the Islamic calendar presented four possible options, and respondents were re-coded as simply correct or incorrect. Among our sample, 79% knew which month was not in the Islamic calendar. The second question about *Sadakah* determines practice. *Sadakah* (or sometimes *zakat*), means voluntary charity and is one of the pillars of Islam. According to the Qu'ran Muslims are required to give *Sadakah* every year. In our sample, two-thirds of respondents practiced *Sadakah*. Thus in combination, the variable *follow Islam* is a measure of how closely the respondent knows and follows the pillars of the religion.

While our main focus is on these four religious Islamic variables, we also include many standard demographic and expected control variables. As we noted above, experiences with discrimination are particularly relevant to formulating positive or negative attitudes about political participation among racial and ethnic minority groups. As such, we include a variable, *airport discrimination*, for whether or not respondents believe airport security measures are targeted at Muslims (1), or to all American equally

(0). Next we include a series of demographic dummy variables for whether the respondent is Black or Asian (Arab is the comparison group), Sunni Muslim, foreign born, a U.S. citizen, and if they speak mostly English at home. Finally, we include many standard predictors of political participation such as age, income, education, gender, news consumption, and tenure in the community. Full details on how each of our independent variables are coded can be found in the appendix.

The Findings

Results are reported for two different dependent variables – the decision to vote, and Democratic versus Republican vote choice. For each, we present two models – first a baseline model using very traditional predictors of voting behavior, and second an expanded regression with additional Muslim-related independent variables.

We start by examining predictors of turnout and find that, predictably, Muslim Americans exhibit many of the same relationships between resources and turnout as the general public (Table 1, column A). Age, education and attention to news are all positively related to voting, while being foreign-born is negatively related. Length of residence in one's city is also positively related to voting. We also find that Arab Muslims are more likely to report having voted than those who identify as White. Finally, stating a preference for no political party is negatively related to turnout, and offers the first clue of how the ambiguous and lackluster outreach by political parties to Muslim Americans may stifle political participation. Barreto and Bozonelos (2009) demonstrate that a significant portion of American Muslims answer "none" to the

question of which party they feel closer to, and this may be the result of perceptions of

anti-Muslim attitudes in America.

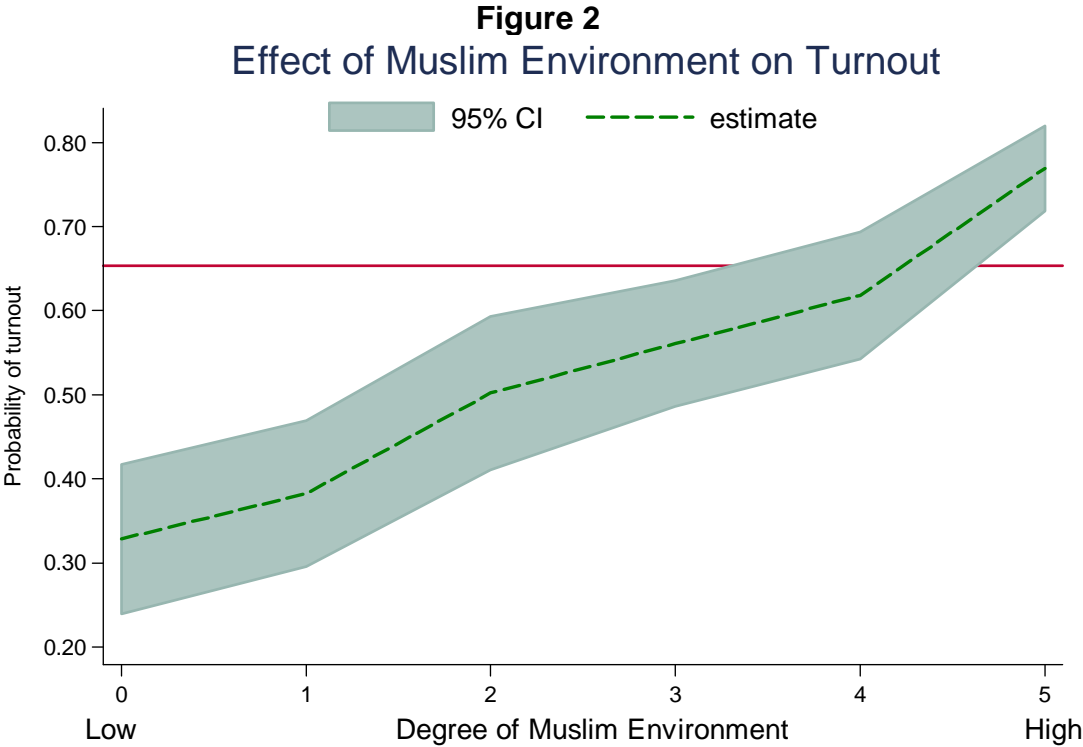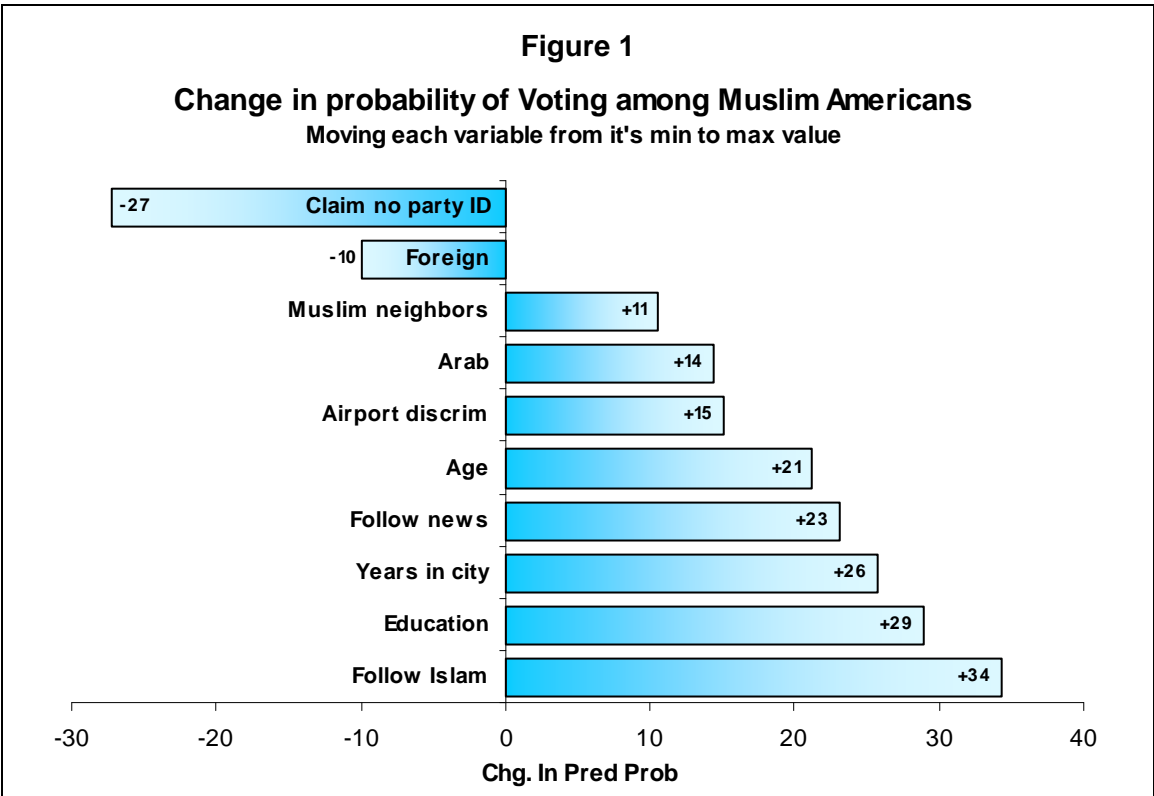Table 1: Predictors of Voter Turnout among Muslim Americans

	A: Baseline voting model				B: Additional Muslim variables			
	Coef	SE		PrCh	Coef	SE		PrCh
Age	0.3300	(0.1450)	*	20.8	0.3403	(0.1404)	*	21.2
Income	0.0798	(0.1093)			0.0634	(0.1096)		
Education	0.2909	(0.1035)	**	27.2	0.3108	(0.1067)	**	28.9
Female	-0.0644	(0.1768)			-0.1028	(0.2019)		
Arab	0.8259	(0.3597)	*	18.4	0.6453	(0.2926)	*	14.4
Asian	0.2782	(0.2879)			0.1406	(0.2381)		
Black	0.3971	(0.3945)			0.4037	(0.4005)		
Other Race	0.2638	(0.4338)			0.0416	(0.4475)		
Foreign	-0.5604	(0.1213)	***	-12.7	-0.4422	(0.2025)	*	-10.0
Homeowner	0.1876	(0.2430)			0.3127	(0.2154)		
Years city	0.3102	(0.0864)	***	27.1	0.2960	(0.0924)	***	25.8
Ideology	-0.0782	(0.0952)			-0.1168	(0.1379)		
Democrat	-0.0232	(0.4265)			-0.1268	(0.4579)		
Independent	0.2103	(0.4417)			0.1231	(0.5411)		
No PID	-1.0257	(0.4447)	*	-24.6	-1.1429	(0.4512)	**	-27.3
Pol knowledge	-0.0960	(0.0927)			-0.1148	(0.0984)		
Follow news	0.3425	(0.1237)	**	24.3	0.3267	(0.1245)	**	23.1
Quran guidance	--	--			-0.1089	(0.2300)		
Mosque	--	--			0.1416	(0.1675)		
English	--	--			0.1136	(0.1863)		
Airport discrim	--	--			0.6406	(0.1384)	***	15.1
Muslim neighbors	--	--			0.2362	(0.0816)	**	10.6
Mosque diversity	--	--			-0.0008	(0.0011)		
Sunni	--	--			-0.1821	(0.2960)		
Follow Islam	--	--			0.7233	(0.0692)	***	34.3
Constant	-3.1606	(0.5492)	***		-4.1015	(0.6503)	***	
N	881				865			
PPC	.707				.719			
PRE	.216				.250			

*** p < .001   ** p < .010   * p < .050   † p < .100

Note: Dependent variable is self-reported turnout in most recent election (0,1) and higher values for
coefficients indicate higher probability of voting. (Variable coded: 0=did not vote; 1=voted)

In the expanded model, we add in additional variables related to religiosity, language, perceived discrimination, and neighborhood context (Table 1, column B). Looking to the new independent variables, we find that perceived discrimination increases the likelihood to vote. Those who perceive airport measures to be unfairly targeted at Muslims, where on average, 15 percent more likely to vote (Figure 1). In previous work, scholars have demonstrated that alienation, perceived prejudice and discrimination may have a mobilizing effect on racial and ethnic minorities. Lien (1994) finds discrimination to increase Mexican-American political participation, though have no direct effect on Asian Americans. Later, Wong (2003) finds some evidence that discrimination can encourage Asian American participation. Among African Americans, Marable (1985) finds perceived discrimination greatly motivates participation, and Dawson (1994) explains the black utility heuristic, heavily influenced by a shared common perception of discrimination, encourages black political participation.

We also find evidence that those who live in heavily Muslim neighborhoods are more likely to vote as compared to those who live in more isolated areas with few Muslim neighbors. Muslims who live closer to other Muslims tend to civically engage and voting more than others who do not live within close proximity to other Muslims. This is a finding that is consistent with other minority groups like Latinos and Blacks, who would vote more if they live in neighborhoods that are predominantly inhabited of their own minority group. The fact that Muslims, who live close to one another, are more likely to vote and identify as democrat may have a higher level of liked-fate, and perceived discrimination, which are communicated through the proximity that they experience in their daily lives, compared to those Muslims who do not live as closely to

Figure 1

Change in probability of Voting among Muslim Americans

Moving each variable from it's min to max value

Variable	Chg. In Pred Prob
Claim no party ID	-27
Foreign	-10
Muslim neighbors	+11
Arab	+14
Airport discrim	+15
Age	+21
Follow news	+23
Years in city	+26
Education	+29
Follow Islam	+34

Chg. In Pred Prob

Figure 2

Effect of Muslim Environment on Turnout

95% CI — — — estimate

Probability of turnout

Degree of Muslim Environment

Low — High

*Muslim environment = have Muslim neighbors, practice Sadakah, know Calendar

other Muslims. The cohesion of the religious identity and its salience in voting and party identification has no religious explanation. If Muslims hesitate to participate in politics, they are less likely to do so when they live closer and interact more frequently with other Muslims. This phenomenon can be best explained by viewing Muslims as a minority group, similar to Latinos and Blacks, where ethnically concentrated areas in the US provide a cohesion that is not found in other urban settings.

While mosque involvement and qu'ran guidance do not make Muslims more likely to vote, those who follow Islam, measured here as through the practice of Sadakah, and having knowledge of the Islamic calendar, are significantly more likely to vote. This suggests a more active Muslim lifestyle whereby civic engagement is encouraged individually and through the community. We find those who follow Islam more actively, are 34 percent more likely to vote than those who do not – the most robust finding among of any significant variables in the model. As depicted in figure 2, when we take into account both following Islam, and living in a Muslim neighborhood, turnout is expected to be 45 points higher, from an estimated low of 33 percent likelihood of voting, to a high of 78 percent likelihood of voting for those who live in Muslim neighborhoods, practice Sadakah, and know the Islamic calendar.

Turning now to the vote choice models, we find support for traditional models of two-party vote, as well as need evidence that Muslim-specific variables are relevant. Looking to the fully specified model, younger Muslims are more likely to vote Democrat while Arab and Asian Muslims were less likely to vote Democrat. Partisanship works as expected, with Democratic identifiers heavily voting Democrat, though we also

find strong evidence that those who identify as Independent or choose no party, are also

significantly more likely to prefer Democratic candidates. Last, those who more closely

follow political news and events were more likely to vote Democrat.

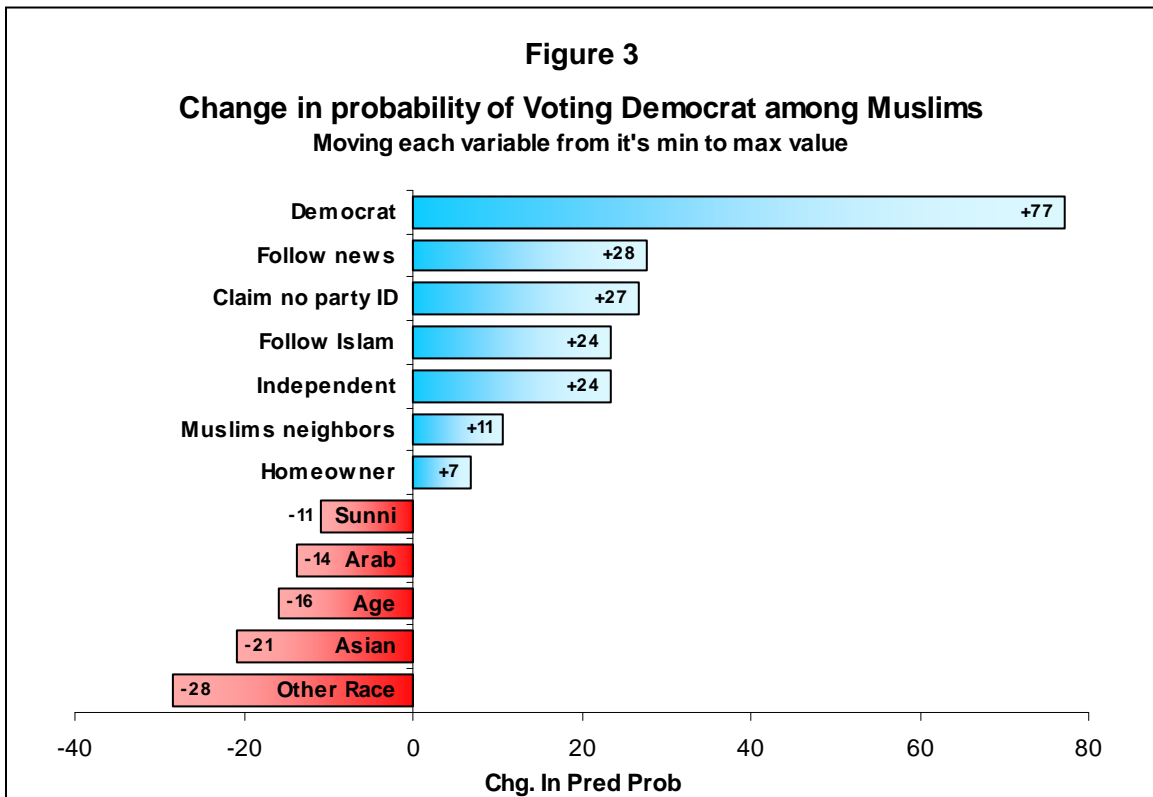Table 2: Predictors of Democratic Vote among Muslim Americans

	A: Baseline vote choice model			B: Additional Muslim variables		
	Coef	SE	PrCh	Coef	SE	PrCh
Age	-0.1032	(0.1045)		-0.2170	(0.1283) †	-15.8
Income	-0.0719	(0.0624)		-0.0583	(0.0461)	
Education	0.0607	(0.1293)		0.1462	(0.1116)	
Female	-0.0101	(0.1634)		-0.0640	(0.1880)	
Arab	-0.2580	(0.3656)		-0.5993	(0.3374) †	-13.7
Asian	-0.5173	(0.3202) †	-13.1	-0.8368	(0.2704) ***	-20.8
Black	0.1450	(0.3848)		-0.0036	(0.3186)	
Other Race	-0.8010	(0.3849) *	-23.0	-0.9954	(0.3519) **	-28.3
Foreign	0.0750	(0.1909)		0.0029	(0.1509)	
Homeowner	0.2368	(0.1031) *	5.7	0.3007	(0.1218) *	6.8
Years city	-0.0207	(0.1185)		-0.0514	(0.1165)	
Ideology	-0.0516	(0.1028)		-0.0632	(0.1266)	
Democrat	2.9238	(0.4510) ***	79.5	2.9689	(0.4716) ***	77.1
Independent	1.6126	(0.3068) ***	26.2	1.5087	(0.3392) ***	23.5
No PID	1.6031	(0.4429) ***	28.3	1.6143	(0.4332) ***	26.7
Pol knowledge	-0.1340	(0.1846)		-0.2106	(0.1890)	
Follow news	0.3430	(0.1040) ***	27.9	0.3557	(0.1210) **	27.6
Quran guidance	--	--		-0.0036	(0.0840)	
Mosque	--	--		0.2593	(0.2717)	
English	--	--		-0.1443	(0.1911)	
Airport discrim	--	--		0.2468	(0.2228)	
Muslims neighbors	--	--		0.2451	(0.1255) *	10.7
Mosque diversity	--	--		-0.0032	(0.0023)	
Sunni	--	--		-0.5340	(0.2639) *	-11.0
Follow Islam	--	--		0.4523	(0.1247) ***	23.5
/cut1	1.5494	(0.4151)		1.1542	(0.6844)	
/cut2	-0.0876	(0.4704)		-0.5673	(0.8392)	
N	881			865		
PPC	.732			.745		
PRE	.021			.064		

*** p < .001   ** p < .010   * p < .050   † p < .100

Note: Dependent variable is self-reported vote choice in most recent election (0,1,2) and higher values for coefficients indicate higher probability of voting Democrat, while negative values indicate higher probability of voting Republican (Variable coded: 2=Dem; 1=Undec/Oth; 0=Repub)

Among the additional variables included, two are consistent with the turnout model in Table 1 – living around other Muslims, and following Islam more closely leads to higher Democratic vote share. Finally, as compared to non-Sunni's, Sunni Muslims are somewhat less likely to vote Democrat.

The change in probability of voting Democrat for each of the significant variables is reported in figure 3. While party identification does much of the work of vote, as we would expect, other variables also tell an important story, especially in connection with the previous model for turnout. We find that living in a Muslim neighborhood and actively following Islam, lead to both higher turnout, and higher propensity to vote Democrat. Similar results have been documented for Latinos and African Americans, but this is the first to consider both neighborhood context and ethnically-relevant variables for Muslim Americans.

Figure 3

Change in probability of Voting Democrat among Muslims

Moving each variable from it's min to max value

Variable	Chg. In Pred Prob
Democrat	+77
Follow news	+28
Claim no party ID	+27
Follow Islam	+24
Independent	+24
Muslims neighbors	+11
Homeowner	+7
Sunni	-11
Arab	-14
Age	-16
Asian	-21
Other Race	-28

Chg. In Pred Prob

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