

Be patient  
Be forgiving  
Visit the sick  
Be clean & tidy  
A smile is charity  
Respect your elders  
Love your neighbors  
Be nice to your parents  
Be honest & trustworthy  
Don't waste food or water  
Be fair & just in all dealings  
Speak good or remain silent  
Be good to your wife/husband  
Aid the poor & feed the hungry  
Take care of orphans and widows  
Be gentle & loving to your children  
Be kind & gentle with plants & animals  
Love for others what you love for yourself  
Don't be angry, don't be angry, don't be angry  
Your mother, your mother, your mother, your father





# Islam: An Exploration

BY THE ISLIP BAHA'I COMMUNITY'S LOCAL STUDY GROUP  
ON "ISLAM FOR DEEPENING AND DIALOGUE"  
(A COURSE BY THE WILMETTE INSTITUTE)



# Introduction

ELLEN HOMAYOON



# The 5 Pillars of Islam

- ▶ Declaration of Faith – There is only one God and the Prophet Muhammad is the Messenger of God
- ▶ Prayer – 5 times daily, involving postures/movements and recitation of Quran
- ▶ Fasting – 30 days of Ramadan, sunrise to sunset
- ▶ Charity – 2.5% of excess wealth to poor and needy
- ▶ Pilgrimage – Commemorates story of Abraham, primarily occurs in Makkah, only if one is able to



# Primary sources in Islam

## The Holy Quran

- ▶ 114 chapters or Suras containing verses or Ayahs, the longest Sura contains 286 verses and the shortest only 3.
- ▶ Revealed piecemeal over 23 years and recorded by witnesses onto palm leaves, animal bones, etc but primarily it was preserved through memory.
- ▶ Compiled into a final print book about 60 years after the death of the Prophet (pbuh) during reign of Caliph Uthman
- ▶ The opening verses 1:1-1:7 which ask for guidance from God are recited in every obligatory prayer. The remainder of the book is a response to this opening prayer.

## The Sunnah

- ▶ AKA the example and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad
- ▶ These are written records through a chain of authority
- ▶ In many cases these statements are traceable in "authentic" Hadith to the original observer of the Prophet Muhammad, but in some cases they are not reliably so.



# Life of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

- ▶ Born in 570 into an Arabian tribe called the Quraysh
- ▶ Orphaned by age 6 and raised by his uncle Abu Talib
- ▶ Married at age 25 to Khadijah, a 40 yr old businesswoman and his boss
- ▶ Received first words of the Quranic revelation at age 40. The first word was the command "Iqra!" which means to read or recite.
- ▶ Emigrated from Makkah to Medina at age 53 with his followers, this event marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar. It is now 1437 AH.
- ▶ Died in 632 without leaving a Last Will and Testament, though Hadith suggest he left a Last Sermon



# History of the Islamic Empire

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# Succession of the Prophet (Pbuh)

## The 4 Righteous Caliphs of Sunni Muslims

- ▶ Abu Bakr
- ▶ Umar
- ▶ Uthman
- ▶ Ali

The Sunni-Shia split occurred due to discrepancies on the position and role of Ali in the succession of the Prophet (4th vs 1st).

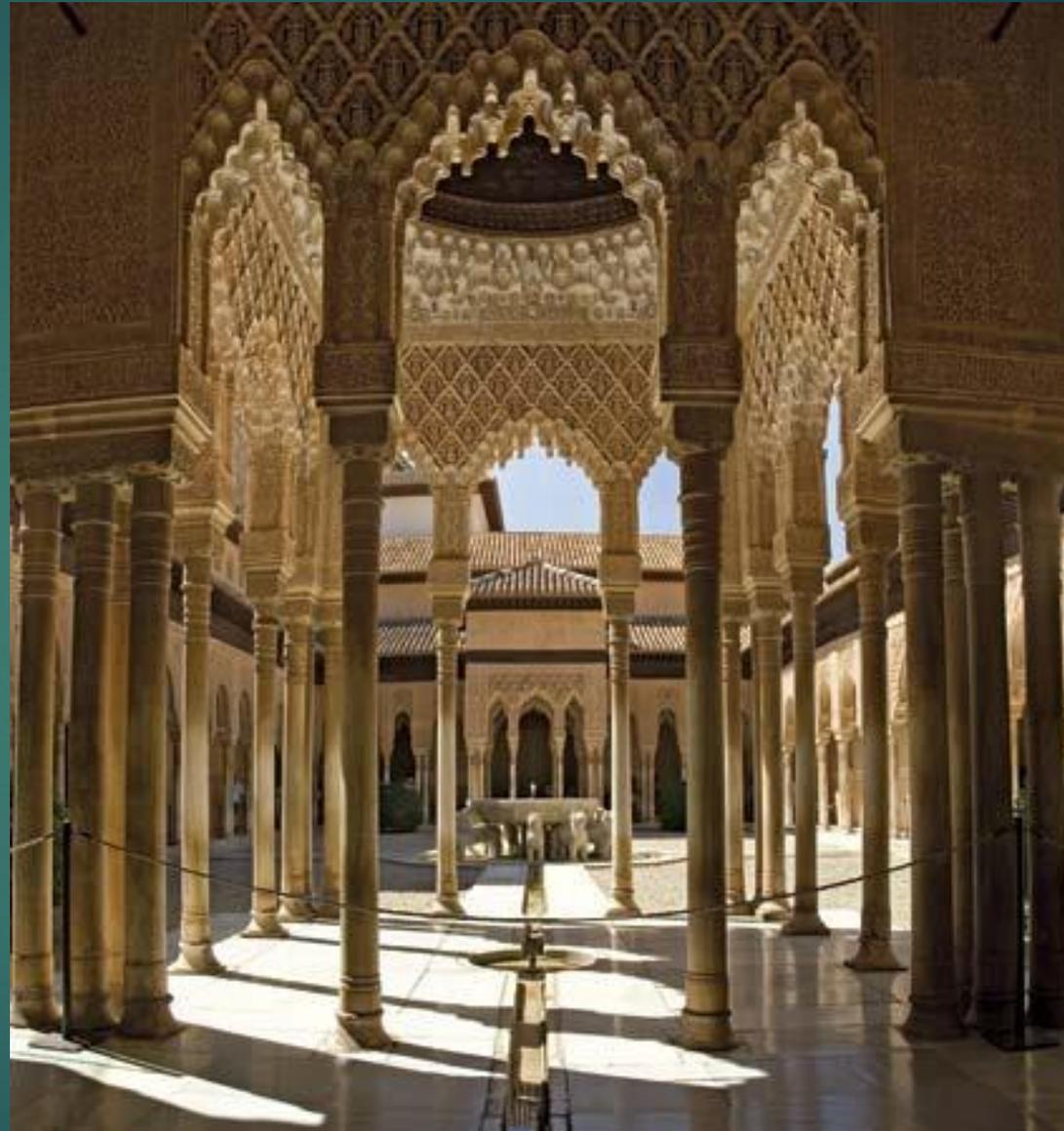
Over time a few different dynasties came to be (Umayyad, Abassid and Fatimid for example), which spread the word of Islam globally.

## Imam Ali and the Imamate of Shia Islam

- ▶ Imam Ali – fourth Caliph and first Imam
- ▶ Hasan and Husayn – grandsons of Muhammad, brutally martyred at Kerbala
- ▶ Eight other imams, also martyred
- ▶ Followed by the 12th Imam who went into "occultation" a state of hiding and is thus referred to as the Hidden Imam, expected to return before the Day of Judgment

## The Islamic Empire

- Flourished during about the 8th to 12th centuries
- The Dark Ages of Europe coincided with the Golden Age of Islam
- Islamic libraries contained and preserved texts from both Islamic and other religious traditions
- A time of great scientific, medical and mathematic advancements
- Al Andalus, Muslim Spain, was a great center of learning



# Discoveries of the Golden Age of the Islamic Empire

- Cotton
- Paper
- Glass
- Mirrors
- Street lamps
- Salt
- Colored glass
- Silk
- Satin
- Pepper
- Cinnamon
- Handkerchiefs
- Deodorant
- Linen
- Firearms
- Cotton balls
- Paper money
- Book binding
- Postage stamps
- Clocks
- Nitric acid
- Ceramic tiles
- Soap
- Astrolabes
- Compass for navigation
- Slide rules
- Surgical instruments
- Windmills
- Spinning wheels
- Rose water
- Maps
- Globes
- Carpets
- Eyeglasses
- Curtains
- Test tubes
- Porcelain
- Fine furs
- Velvet
- Almanacs
- Encyclopedias
- And more!

# The Fall of the Islamic Empire

Fall of the Ottomans in the 1920s

<https://youtu.be/vw44GXRSOdY>



From the Huffington Post Article "10 Common Misconceptions about Islam"  
Paul McNamara 9/25/15

## Misconception

1. Allah is exclusively the God of Islam
2. Jihad refers to offensive "holy war"
3. Suicide with terror leads to martyrdom
4. Muslims generally support Isis
5. Isis members are Muslims

## Reality

1. Allah simply means God in the language of Arabic, as Dios is God in Spanish. Christian Arabs and Baha'is also refer to God as Allah
2. It means "to strive" primarily internally as a person but even "fighting" (qital) is only prescribed in specific defensive situations.
3. The Quran expressly prohibits such behavior. Surah (4:29) states: "Nor kill (or destroy) yourselves" and surah (2:195) says: "And do not throw yourselves in destruction"
4. PEW research suggests the majority of Muslims worldwide reject the ideology of Isis.
5. Religious illiteracy plays a huge part in extremism. Isis ignores the solid Quranic dictate in surah (5:32) which says, "If anyone kills a person, it is as if he kills all mankind while if anyone saves a life it is as if he saves the lives of all mankind." And surah (2:256) says "There shall be no compulsion in religion."



# Misconceptions about Muslim Women

HARRIET PASCA-ORTGIES







“ O mankind! Fear your Guardian-Lord, Who created you from a single Person, created, of like nature, his mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women; fear Allah, through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (that bore you): for Allah ever watches over you.



The Holy Quran, Sura 4, "The Women," Ayah 1

# Some Myths about Muslim Women

## From CAIR Chicago

Myth: Hijab is a form of women's subjugation

- ▶ Actually to dress appropriately, cover one's body, lower one's gaze and live a chaste life is obligated for both women and men. And women who do not wear hijab but follow the 5 pillars are still Muslim.

Myth: Women hold a lower status in Islam

- ▶ Islam holds women in the highest regard in every phase of her life: "when she is a daughter, she opens a door of Jannah (Heaven) for her father. When she is a wife, she completes half of the Deen (Religion) of her husband. When she is a mother, Jannah (Heaven) lies under her feet."
- ▶ The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, "None but a noble man treats women in an honorable manner, and none but an ignorant man treats women disgracefully."
- ▶ The status of the mother is three times higher than of the father: A man came to the Messenger (P.B.U.H.) and asked, "O Messenger of God! Who among the people is the most worthy of my good companionship? The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: 'Your mother.' The man said: 'Then who?' The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: 'Then your mother.' The man further asked: 'Then who?' The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: "Then your mother." The man asked again: 'Then who?' The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: 'Then your father.'"

# Some Myths about Muslim Women

## From CAIR Chicago

Myth: Honor Killing is justified

- ▶ The Qur'an does not talk about "honor killing". In fact, there is no Islamic evidence that would justify it. What has been termed as "honor killing" describes incidents that are inflicted on both men and women. Murders of innocents and civilians occur throughout every part of the world, however, the myth that is perpetuated is that murder is not only condoned in Islam, but that it is common practice. In actuality, there are Fatwas and political campaigns against murder of innocents across the Muslim world.
- ▶ The Qur'an upholds the right and sanctity of life as the most basic form of human rights, and it condemns the killings of innocents: "That if anyone slays a human being – unless it be [in punishment] for murder or for spreading corruption on earth – it shall be as though he had slain all mankind; whereas, if anyone saves a life, it shall be as though he had saved the lives of all mankind." [Qur'an 5:32]

# Rights of Women in Islam

- ▶ Equality of reward from Allah for their deeds
- ▶ The right and duty to obtain an education
- ▶ The right to obtain provisions from her father or brothers until she gets married
- ▶ The right to have her own independent property
- ▶ The right to provisions from her husband for all her needs and more
- ▶ The right to work to earn money if she needs or wants to do that
- ▶ The right to keep all her own earnings
- ▶ The right to express her opinion and be heard
- ▶ The right to negotiate marriage terms of her choice
- ▶ The right to refuse a marriage that is proposed to her
- ▶ The right to obtain a divorce from her husband
- ▶ The right to have custody of her children after divorce
- ▶ And more...



# Misconceptions about Muslims and Violence

Muslim-Americans after Orlando

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/muslim-americans-face-backlash-after-orlando-mass-shooting/>



# Muslims Speaking Out

SANJIDA CABOT



Billboard on I-294 in Chicago

In a brief Google search, there were at least 41 recent news articles of Muslims speaking out against terrorism.

- ▶ From major US news outlets like CNN, ABC, CBS, NBC, Time, USNews, Washington Post, BuzzFeed, Huffington Post, and local news reports worldwide including Great Britain, Canada, India, Australia, and several Arab news outlets, just to name a few!
- ▶ Mostly from the last year and a couple were from two years ago.
- ▶ Multiple articles mentioned the strong and outspoken objection to terrorism by groups of Muslim Imams around the world - hundreds in some areas (200+ from the Middle East, US) or even many thousands in one area (70,000+ in SE Asia).

Efforts have also been underway in many mosques to educate Muslims and their communities about the false bases of ISIS, whether

- ▶ individually through the Imam at Friday prayers or by Muslim leaders using social media (e.g. Imam Shuaib Webb)
- ▶ collectively through the Islamic community's efforts to show they support peace and justice (e.g. blood drive after Orlando attack)
- ▶ an anti-terrorism March on the National Mall in DC in July 2016.
- ▶ A Facebook group entitled Muslims Against ISIS has nearly 100,000 members.

These many reports, which only scratch the surface of what's happening in our world, suggests that Muslims including leadership are indeed speaking out against terrorism and that at least some good part of this is being reported by reputable news agencies in many areas around the globe. In addition, many individual Muslims are speaking out using social media as a platform, such as in the #CanYouHearMeNow campaign recently.

- ▶ However, the Muslim community overall continues to be asked to "speak up". Those asking are often in positions of power and influence but clearly are not hearing or are ignoring the many reports.
- ▶ One major reason that prevents a single unified "speaking out" is that the Muslim community does not have a single leader like the Pope for the Catholic Church.
- ▶ Ways we can all help include educating ourselves about Islam, carefully investigating the realities of our perceptions, defending Muslims experiencing stigma, and working closely with Muslims in the community to achieve common goals.





# Islamophobia

KEN CABOT

HEALTH SPECIAL: The Organic Food Debate

# TIME

## Is America Islamophobic?

What the anti-mosque uproar tells us about how the U.S. regards Muslims



BY BOBBY GHOSH

# Use of the term

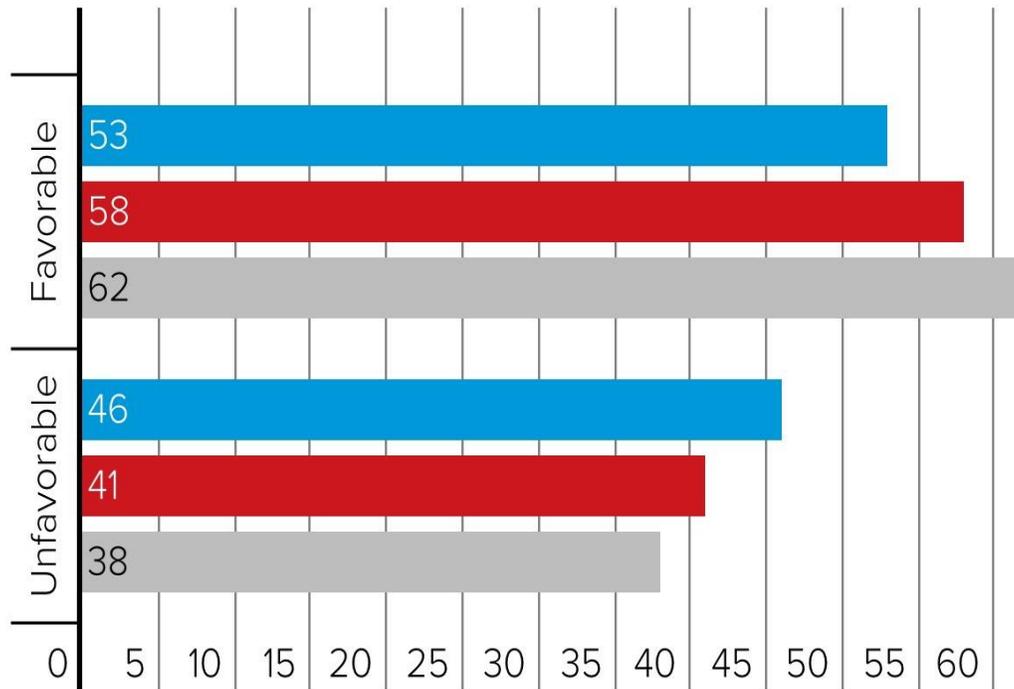
- ▶ First used by the painter Alphonse Étienne Dinet and Algerian intellectual Sliman ben Ibrahim in their 1918 biography of the prophet Muhammad. Writing in French, they used the term islamophobie. But the English version of the book the word was not translated as "Islamophobia" but rather as "feelings inimical to Islam".
- ▶ There were several other uses of the term from around that time but the early uses of the term did not have the same meaning as in contemporary usage, as they described a fear of Islam by liberal Muslims and Muslim feminists, rather than a fear or dislike/hatred of Muslims by non-Muslims.
- ▶ The first recorded use of the term in English, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, was in 1923 in an article in The Journal of Theological Studies.
- ▶ It entered popular use in 1997 with the publication of the Runnymede Trust's report.
- ▶ Kofi Annan asserted at a 2004 conference entitled "Confronting Islamophobia" that the word Islamophobia had to be coined in order to "take account of increasingly widespread bigotry".

# How Americans View Islam in 2016

- ▶ In a poll conducted 3 weeks after 9/11, only 39% of Americans had a negative view of Islam
- ▶ This negative percentage peaked a decade later at 61% - perhaps due to war and further acts of global terrorism
- ▶ Subsequently, it has leveled off

<http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/07/measuring-the-backlash-against-the-muslim-backlash-214034>

## What is your attitude about the Muslim people?

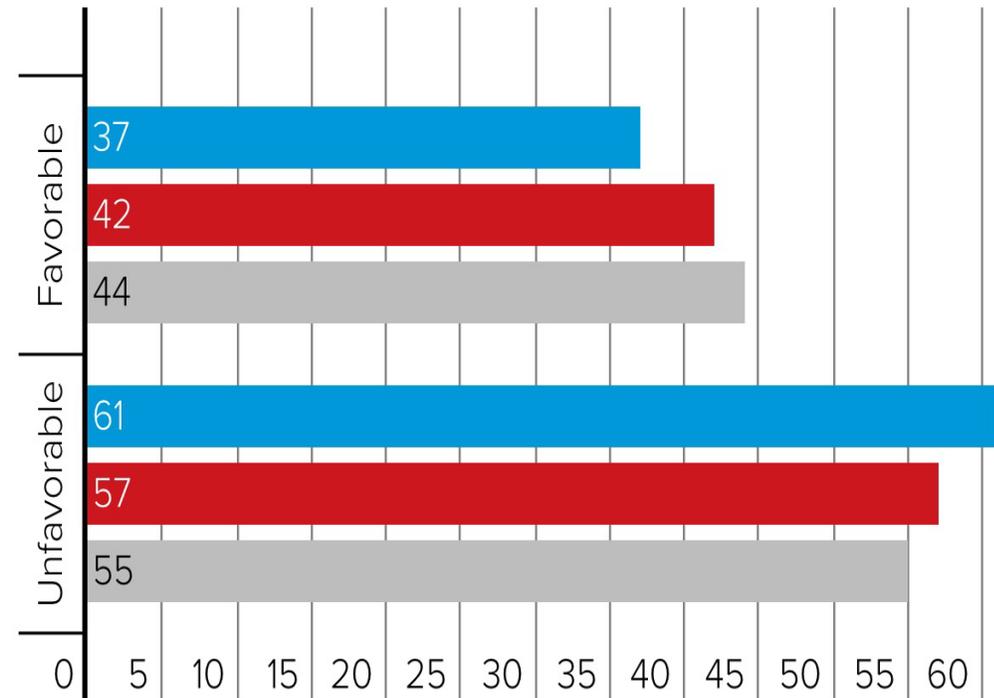


● Nov. 2015 ● May 2016 (Pre-Orlando)  
● June 2016 (Post-Orlando)

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## What is your attitude about the Muslim religion?

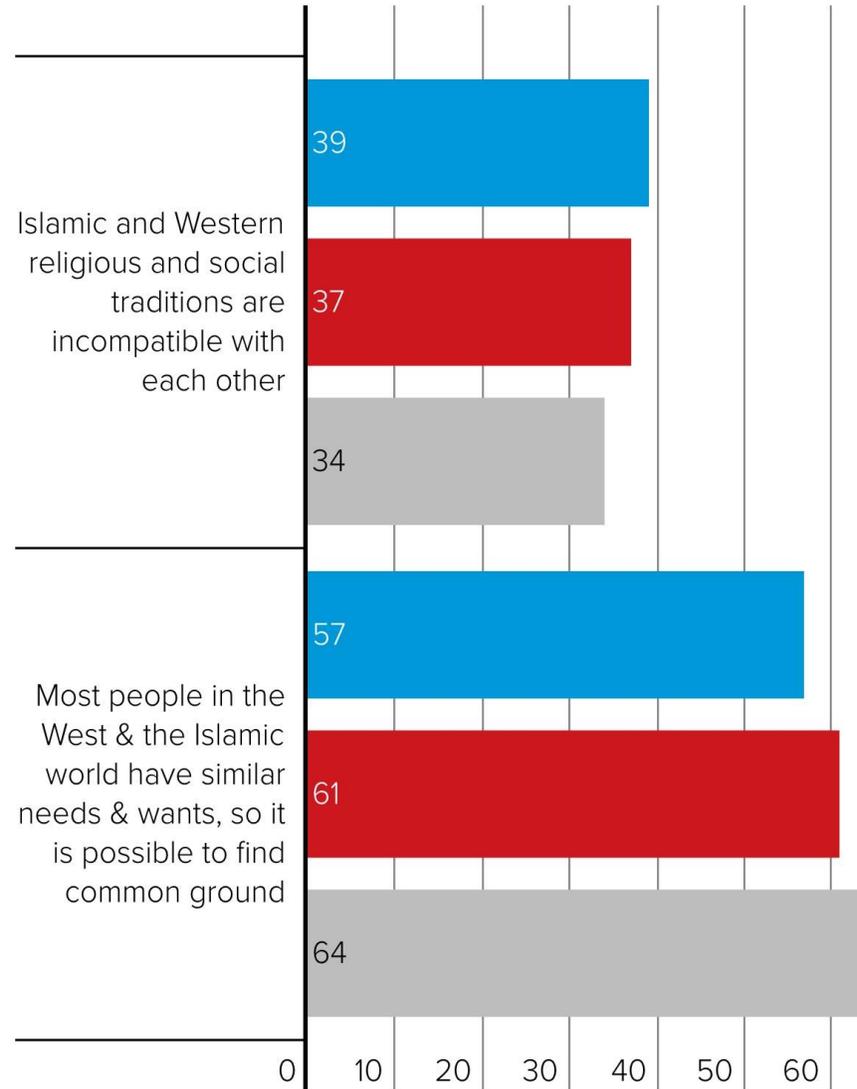


● Nov. 2015 ● May 2016 (Pre-Orlando)  
● June 2016 (Post-Orlando)

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# What position is closer to yours?



● Nov. 2015 ● May 2016 (Pre-Orlando)

● June 2016 (Post-Orlando)





# Supporting Muslims

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# Support for Muslims from outside the Muslim Community

Organizations to promote legal rights, including:

- ▶ Council of American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)
- ▶ Karamah

Interfaith and Multifaith efforts

University campus organizations like Muslim Student Association

Social media campaigns

- ▶ One example is the lawn sign campaign undertaken by the Minnesota Council of Churches



# Conclusion

SANJIDA CABOT



# We are All Responsible for Investigating Reality

Surely the worst of beasts in God's sight are those that are deaf and dumb and do not reason.

- ▶ The Holy Quran 8:22

And similarly, We did not send before you any warner into a city except that its affluent said, "Indeed, we found our fathers upon a religion, and we are, in their footsteps, following.

- ▶ The Holy Quran 43:23

Say: Bring your proof if you are truthful.

- ▶ The Holy Quran 2:111

- ▶ Furthermore, know ye that God has created in man the power of reason, whereby man is enabled to investigate reality. God has not intended man to imitate blindly his fathers and ancestors. He has endowed him with mind, or the faculty of reasoning, by the exercise of which he is to investigate and discover the truth, and that which he finds real and true he must accept."

- ▶ `Abdu'l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 291



“ O Mankind. We created you from a single pair of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know each other. Verily the most honored of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you.

”

The Holy Quran, Sura 49:13

# Familiarity with Islam is a Good Thing

## Most Familiar with Islam Less Likely to See Link with Violence

*Islam encourages violence  
more than other faiths?*

■ No ■ Yes ■ Neither/DK

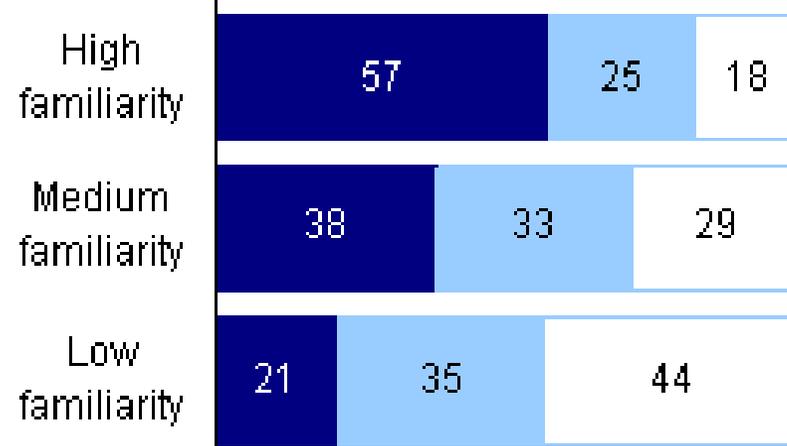


Q176

## Most Familiar with Islam View Muslims More Favorably

*Overall opinion of Muslims*

■ Favorable ■ Unfavorable ■ DK



Q141e

From PEW forum 2009



# ISLAM FOR DEEPENING AND DIALOGUE

An Online Course with  
Susan Maneck,  
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Let's learn from one another.  
Your thoughts?