"Bands of Others"? Attitudes toward Muslims in Contemporary American Society

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The obvious explanation for the unpopularity of Muslims in contemporary American society centers on the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. However, we contend that feelings about Muslims are shaped primarily by a general sense of affect for groups that fall outside of the cultural mainstream and the personality and value orientations typically associated with such affect. Thus, the current structure of Muslim evaluations should not differ much from that before the 9/11 attacks. Moreover, Muslims may be distinctive in that, unlike most minority groups, they are associated with both positively viewed racial and religious minority groups and with negatively viewed cultural minority groups. Analyses of data from the 2004 American National Election Study and other surveys conducted between 2000 and 2007 strongly support our argument.

Prejudice toward religious and racial minority groups has long represented a challenge to values such as equality and liberty that are central to the American ethos (e.g., Myrdal 1944). Prejudice toward most minority groups has declined in recent decades, but Muslims are an exception: they are viewed much less favorably than most other religious and racial minorities.[1]

The most obvious explanation for American antipathy toward Muslims lies in the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the political circumstances that have followed. The attacks were carried out by Muslim extremists and led to a high-profile American "war on terror," directed principally at Islamic fundamentalist groups, and eventually to U.S. military action in the predominantly Muslim nations of Afghanistan and Iraq. These developments, together with negative media coverage of Muslims (Nacos and Torre-Reyna 2002) and negative comments about Islam by some political and religious leaders may have produced greater distaste for Muslims. Aversion to Muslims may be strongest among those Americans who are most concerned about further terrorism and who take their political cues from the Republican and conservative elites who have been the primary sources of negative portrayals of Islam.

We suggest that this is not the chief explanation for anti-Muslim attitudes in the United States. While the terrorist attacks and subsequent events may have led some Americans to form negative attitudes toward Muslims and to support restricting their civil liberties (Davis 2006; Davis and Silver 2004), antipathy toward Muslims should be part of a larger syndrome that predates 9/11. Social identity theory stresses that we are less likely to trust or tolerate people who seem different from ourselves, and Muslims' religious beliefs and practices, cultural orientations, and ethnicities have long made them different in key ways from the Judeo-Christian mainstream. Americans thus should connect Muslims to other cultural, racial, and ethnic minority groups—groups such as gays and lesbians, welfare recipients, illegal immigrants, and African Americans—that often are viewed as "outgroups," falling outside of the mainstream of American society. Thus, the predominant source of feelings about Muslims should be a general sense of affect for and tolerance toward these outgroups, and that should be

[1]Edgell, Gerteis, and Hartmann show that the percentage of Americans saying that Muslims "do not at all agree with my vision of American society" (2006, 218) is similar to that for atheists and gays and higher than that for Hispanics, Jews, Asian-Americans, African Americans, and whites. Sides and Gross (2007) report that Muslims rate more negatively than most other groups on trustworthy-untrustworthy and peaceful-violent scales.

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as true now as it was before 9/11. Orientations such as authoritarianism and patriotism that underlie negative views of outgroups also should shape opinions of Muslims.

In short, Muslims should be part of a "band of others" in the American mind. However, Americans actually may see two "bands," with racial and religious minority groups such as Jews and African Americans in one, and cultural minority groups such as illegal immigrants and gays and lesbians in another that white Americans view far more negatively. Muslims thus may be distinctive. Because they are a religious minority group with cultural practices that are very different from mainstream conventions, they may be associated with both bands.

Using data from the 2004 American National Election Study (NES) and from surveys conducted by Pew from 2000 to 2007, we explore the roots of Americans' views of Muslims. We find that affect for Muslims is strongly linked both before and after 9/11 to attitudes toward other outgroups and the orientations underlying them. While most minority groups are only associated with one of two clusters of "others," Muslims are connected to both clusters.

Muslims and the "Bands of Others"

Given the importance of feelings about salient groups for citizens' political and social attitudes (Brady and Sniderman 1985; Sears et al. 1980), the most important factor for how people evaluate politically relevant groups should be how they feel about other groups. The most relevant groups for Muslims should be other cultural, racial, and religious minorities. As Levin and Sidanius note, there is "a fundamental human desire to establish and maintain systems of group-based social hierarchy" (1999, 101), and most people agree about the groups at the top and bottom (Sidanius and Pratto 1993). The "mainstream" groups in American society—whites, Protestants, perhaps Catholics (Brewer 1999; Davis 2006)—should associate groups like Muslims that fall outside of the mainstream with other minority groups.

How do attitudes toward various minority groups fit together? Social balance theory suggests that individuals tend to balance negative evaluations of one social group with positive evaluations of groups that oppose or are in competition with the first group (Heider 1946, 1958; Khanafiah and Situngkir 2004). Thus, attitudes toward groups such as Jews, gays, and feminists should be negatively related to views of Muslims.

In contrast, social identity theory points to the centrality of an "in-group" bias in how people think about their own identity. People attempt to maintain or enhance their own self-esteem by comparing other social groups—"outgroups"—unfavorably to their own (Tajfel and Turner 1979). As Levinson argues, "outgroups are the objects of negative opinions and hostile attitudes . . . and [they] are regarded as properly subordinate to ingroups" (1949, 20). Thus, prejudice against one minority group is part of a tendency to denigrate outgroups more generally (Allport 1954; Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007; Stouffer 1955). As Tajfel argues, "One of the principal features . . . of intergroup behavior and attitudes [is] the tendency shown by the members of an ingroup to consider members of outgroups in a relatively uniform manner, as 'undifferentiated items in a unified social category'" (1982, 21). Thus, we expect positive relationships between views of Muslims and evaluations of a variety of religious minorities (e.g., Jews), racial minorities (e.g., African Americans), and cultural minorities (e.g., gays and illegal immigrants).

The Distinctiveness of Muslims?

At the same time, "mainstream" Americans do see differences among these outgroups. They view groups such as African Americans, Jews, and Hispanics quite positively, but view welfare recipients, gays and lesbians, illegal immigrants, and atheists—as well as Muslims—more negatively.[2] Rather than seeing "undifferentiated items," people in the American mainstream seem to distinguish between groups defined largely by ethnic, racial, and religious characteristics—blacks, Hispanics, and Jews, for example—and groups defined by behaviors or values that many find unusual or offensive: groups like illegal immigrants, welfare recipients, atheists, and gays and lesbians.

This distinction is an important one because while negative attitudes about cultural outgroups may persist over time, prejudice against racial and religious groups tends to fade as citizens in the societal mainstream come into contact with members of these groups and become more familiar with them (Allport 1954; Stouffer 1955). Extensive contact with outgroup members reduces uncertainty about and stereotyping of the outgroup, increases cultural sensitivity toward

[2]In the 2004 NES, for example, the mean of white respondents' average feeling thermometer ratings of all groups was 62.8. Whites' mean ratings of Jews (68.1), Asian Americans (67.6), Hispanics (66.6), and blacks (69.2) were all above that overall mean, while their mean ratings of illegal immigrants (38.7), gays and lesbians (48.5), Muslims (52.2), welfare recipients (54.6), and feminists (55.1) all fell below the overall mean.

it, and ultimately lessens prejudice and negative affect (Dovidio, Gaertner, and Kawakami 2003; Pettigrew 1997).

Over the last century, several groups that were once viewed with considerable derision have moved more or less into the American mainstream. From the mid-nineteenth century through the 1930s, Catholic and Jewish immigrants were widely viewed as "so much slag in the melting pot" (cited in Higham 1981, 277) by the Protestant majority. The Know-Nothing Party in the 1850s sought to restrict the voting rights of Catholics, while other associations sought to end immigration from ethnic and religious minorities because they were seen as genetically inferior (McCloskey and Zaller 1984, 68–69). However, as white Protestants had more contact with and grew more familiar with these minority religious groups, Catholics and Jews eventually "became white" (Goldstein 2006) and were accepted by mainstream society. The same may not yet be true of African Americans, but as whites have grown more familiar with black people—through personal contacts and the increasingly prominent role of blacks in American public life—their feelings have grown more positive (Bobo 1988). In short, contact and increased familiarity may make the mainstream less prejudiced toward racial and religious minorities.

The same process may be less likely for behaviorally defined outgroups for several reasons. First, citizens in the mainstream may be more likely to avoid contact with groups defined principally by values or behaviors they find troubling than with groups defined mainly by racial or religious characteristics. Second, there may be more desire on the part of behavioral outgroups to isolate themselves from the larger society. Part of the reason why Catholics, Jews, and, to some extent, African Americans and other racial minorities have become more accepted by the American mainstream is that members of these groups have accepted the norms of the larger society and have tried to integrate themselves into it (Goldstein 2006, chap. 4). By contrast, behavioral outgroups are often defined by their rejection of the values and norms of the larger society. Third, even if those in the mainstream do have frequent contact with the members of an outgroup, that contact may simply serve to reinforce their aversion to the group. As Forbes argues, "If the groups in question differ in language or culture, increasing contact between the groups will mean increasing competition between incompatible ways of life" (1997, 167).

Thus, societal views of behavioral outgroups may grow more positive very slowly, if at all. Hostility toward gays and lesbians has declined significantly over time (Wood and Bartkowski 2004), but they still were the second most-disliked group among 2004 NES respondents (with illegal immigrants being the least favored), and there is little reason to believe that illegal immigrants and welfare recipients will become more accepted any time soon.

Mainstream society may view Muslims both as racial and religious minorities and as a behavioral outgroup. On the one hand, the most obvious ways in which Muslim Americans differ from the American mainstream are in their religious and ethnic/racial characteristics, and they generally are well integrated into American society: they are slightly more likely than other Americans to be self-employed or business owners, and a large majority of them believe that success comes through hard work (Pew Research Center 2007). On the other hand, Muslims are disproportionately foreign born (65% according to Pew Research Center 2007) and their religious practices and teachings are clearly "strange" from the standpoint of the Judeo-Christian tradition (Jamal 2008, 120–21). Moreover, many Muslims are reluctant to accommodate themselves to American secular society. Nearly half (and 60% of those under 30) think of themselves as Muslims first, rather than Americans (Pew Research Center 2007).

Thus, while there may really be two bands of others from the perspective of mainstream America, Muslims may play in both bands. Affect toward most minority groups may be shaped only by feelings about the other groups in their particular band. For example, views of African Americans may be structured only by affect toward other racial and religious minorities. Meanwhile, illegal immigrants are predominantly Hispanic, but may be defined most clearly by their "illegal" behavior—so opinions of them may be influenced only by views about other cultural outgroups. In contrast, feelings about Muslims should be shaped by opinions of both racial and religious minorities and cultural outgroups. They may be associated most closely with behavioral outgroups now, but as mainstream citizens grow more familiar with them, Muslims may grow more connected to the positively viewed racial and religious minority groups.

The Factors Underlying Outgroup Affect

Evaluations of Muslims also should be structured by the factors that typically underlie attitudes toward outgroups. One such factor is authoritarianism. Authoritarians value conformity, sameness, and convention,

and this translates into intolerance of groups such as Muslims that are outside of the mainstream (Adorno et al. 1950; Altemeyer 1996; Stouffer 1955). Perceptions of threat and fear magnify the impact of authoritarian tendencies (Davis 1995; Hetherington and Weiler n.d.). Although we do not expect threat perceptions to directly affect views of Muslims, the events of 9/11 and the fear of terrorism may reinforce the link between authoritarianism and anti-Muslim opinion.

Two other factors that may shape Muslim affect are patriotism and religious traditionalism. Patriotism often has been linked to a strong preference for ingroups (e.g., Adorno et al. 1950), and since Muslims often are portrayed as hostile to the United States, patriotic feelings may be linked to negative views of Muslims. There also are strong links between religious traditionalism and aversion to groups that have unfamiliar characteristics, behaviors, or cultural practices (e.g., Altemeyer 2003).

Certain religious affiliations also may be connected to anti-Muslim sentiments. White evangelical Protestants may view Muslims negatively because of their traditionalist religious orientations and their strong support for Israel and an aggressive posture toward Islamic extremism (Guth 2006; Mayer 2004). Jews may have negative views of Muslims due to Israel's longstanding conflicts with the Palestinians and large portions of the Muslim world.

Alternative Explanations

The most prominent alternative explanations of American evaluations of Muslims focus on ideological and partisan orientations and on perceptions of threat. However, there is mixed evidence for these accounts. There are findings that liberals are more likely than conservatives to view minority groups positively and to support expanding civil rights for them (Huddy et al. 2005; McClosky and Brill 1983; Sidanius, Pratto, and Bobo 1996), but also that ideology has little impact on attitudes toward groups such as atheists, communists, and gays (Edgell, Gerteis, and Hartmann 2006; Sniderman et al. 1989). Citizens often take cues from elites who share their political predispositions (Zaller 1992), and conservative or Republican figures have made most of the more-prominent negative comments about Islam since 9/11 while a Republican president has included two Muslim nations in his "axis of evil." Yet the cues have often been indistinct. Democratic politicians generally have supported the war on terror and initially favored the Iraq war, and President Bush has taken pains to not implicate Muslims in general for terrorist actions.

The 9/11 attacks may have increased Americans' sense of threat from Muslims (Davis 2006; Kam and Kinder 2007). Threat increases ethnocentrism and hostility to perceived enemies (Duckitt 2003), and there is evidence that perceived threats led to post-9/11 antipathy toward Arab-Americans (Davis and Silver 2004; Huddy et al. 2005). However, Davis (2006, 207) finds that "whites were fairly uniform in their negative feelings toward Islamic fundamentalists and Arabs, regardless of threat," and Panagopoulos (2006) shows that opinions about Arabs and Muslims remained negative even as the threat of the 9/11 attacks receded. Aversion to Muslims may be based more in negativity toward outgroups than to a post-9/11 sense of threat.

While we take these alternative explanations seriously, our primary expectation is that Muslims have joined the "bands of others" in the minds of most Americans. The principal orientations shaping evaluations of Muslims should be views of other cultural, ethnic, and racial minorities and factors such as authoritarianism that typically influence such feelings.

The Structure of Outgroup Affect in 2004

For a first test of this argument, we conducted confirmatory factor analyses of outgroup affect among white respondents to the 2004 NES.[3] These analyses assess the degree to which Muslim affect—ratings of Muslims on a "feeling thermometer" in the 2004 NES—is related to affect among whites for eight other groups—Jews, blacks, Asian-Americans, Hispanics, gays and lesbians, illegal immigrants, feminists, and people on welfare—that have often been seen as outgroups in American society.[4] The first four groups are ethnic, racial, or religious minorities. The

[3]Our analysis focuses only on whites because our argument suggests that "mainstream" groups tend to view the whole variety of minority groups in a similar fashion. We conducted all of the analyses presented here with both whites and nonwhites in the sample and the results were very similar to those for whites only.

[4]Affect toward the other groups also is measured through feeling thermometer ratings. The ratings of these groups and of Muslims all were part of the 2004 postelection survey, and the groups were identified in the survey exactly as they are listed here. Variation across individuals in thermometer ratings is due not only to real differences in group affect, but also to some individuals tending to rate all groups relatively warmly (Wilcox, Sigelman, and Cook 1989). Thus, we employ relative measures of group affect—the difference between the respondent's rating of the particular group and the average rating that he or she gave to all of the groups asked about in the 2004 NES.

latter four are cultural minority groups that many citizens view as not conforming to conventional cultural norms or traditional values. In keeping with our argument that people distinguish between these two types of minority groups, we expect attitudes toward them to be explained by two different latent variables, with Muslim affect being shaped by both factors.

To assess these expectations, Table 1 presents the estimates of two different confirmatory factor models,[5] both correcting for measurement error in the observed thermometer ratings.[6] The first model (model A) allows only one latent variable to influence attitudes toward all of the groups, and this single factor has a statistically significant influence on evaluations of nearly all of the groups. Its effect on attitudes toward Muslims is highly significant and relatively strong, clearly confirming that Muslim affect is part of a general syndrome of feelings about societal outgroups. However, the single factor does not have a significant influence on ratings of feminists, and its effects are generally stronger for evaluations of racial and religious minorities than for those of cultural outgroups. Thus, a two-factor solution may be more appropriate.

The second model (model B) represents our theoretical expectations by allowing ratings of the cultural outgroups to be affected by one latent variable, ratings of the ethnic and racial minorities to be influenced by another latent variable, and views about Muslims to be structured by both factors. This model clearly fits the data better than the single-factor model. Both the chi-square statistic of overall fit and that statistic divided by its degrees of freedom are nearly three times smaller for model B than for model A, the difference in the chi-square statistics for the two models is highly significant,[7] and the unconstrained parameters are all significant.

[5]We estimate these models using Amos 4.0, which computes full information maximum likelihood (FIML) estimates even in the presence of missing data, meaning that it does not drop missing values from the analysis. Because our focus is on affect toward Muslims, we estimate our models only for white respondents who rated Muslims on a feeling thermometer. That brings the total number of observations for each analysis to 738.

[6]To provide a scale for the latent variables, we constrain the factor loading for one observed indicator of each latent variable to be equal to one. Because we have coded all of the thermometer ratings to range from 0 for most negative to 1 for most positive, the latent variables take on the same scale.

[7]This difference also follows the chi-square distribution with degrees of freedom equal to the difference in the degrees of freedom between the model with more estimated parameters and the model with fewer unconstrained parameters (Kline 2005). The difference here ($\chi^2 = 270.72$, df = 2, $p < .0001$) indicates that model B explains a significantly larger proportion of the variance in the observed indicators than does model A.

Latent affect for cultural outgroups has a highly significant effect on evaluations of feminists, illegal immigrants, and people on welfare, while the standardized coefficient for its effect on gay and lesbian affect is quite large. Latent affect for ethnic/racial/religious minorities has a highly significant influence on feelings about Jews, Asian-Americans, and Hispanics, and the standardized coefficient for its effect on attitudes toward blacks is also strong. There is a modest, but significant, correlation between the cultural factor and the racial and religious factor—attitudes toward them may be distinct, but they are positively related.

Most importantly, both latent variables shape evaluations of Muslims. Given the low ratings that white Americans give to Muslims, it is not surprising that Muslim evaluations are more closely associated with feelings about cultural outgroups than with views of religious and racial minorities—the standardized coefficient for the former is more than twice that for the latter. However, both factors have highly significant effects. Muslims appear to be unique among minority groups in that affect for them is associated with evaluations of both cultural minority groups and ethnic and racial minorities.[8]

A Path Model of Muslim Affect

We also expect factors such as authoritarianism and patriotism that tend to be associated with negative evaluations of societal outgroups to structure attitudes toward Muslims. To examine the impact of these factors, as well as that of partisanship, ideology, and threat perceptions, we estimate a path model in which affect for cultural outgroups (not including Muslims), feelings about racial and religious minorities, and Muslim affect are endogenous to a variety of social, psychological, and political orientations. Muslim affect, as the ultimate dependent variable, is also endogenous to the cultural outgroup and racial/religious minorities variables. Thus, the model allows all of the exogenous

[8]We estimated another model in which attitudes toward all of the groups except for feminists and gays and lesbians (groups that are not ethnic, religious, or racial minorities) as well as blacks (affect toward one of the racial minority groups had to be a function of only one latent factor in order for the model to be identified) are affected by both latent factors. This model did not perform as well as model B in Table 1. The only variable in the model that was significantly influenced by both latent variables was Muslim affect. The ratio of χ^2 to its degrees of freedom was larger for this model (7.13) than for model B (5.87). The model did not explain more of the variation in outgroup attitudes than model B despite having more estimated parameters. The difference in χ^2 between the two models did not approach statistical significance ($\chi^2 = 4.12$, df = 5, $p > .10$).

TABLE 1 Confirmatory Factor Analyses of Feeling Thermometer Ratings of Outgroups

		Model B[b]	
Feeling Thermometer	**Model A[a]**	**Cultural Outgroup Affect**	**Racial and Religious Minority Affect**
Muslims	.90**	.53**	.46**
	(.16)	(.07)	(.12)
	.31	*.41*	*.17*
Gays and Lesbians	1.00	1.00	—
	—	—	
	.29	*.65*	
Feminists	−.12	.51**	—
	(.12)	(.07)	
	−.04	*.38*	
Illegal Immigrants	.59**	.75**	—
	(.15)	(.09)	
	.18	*.51*	
People on Welfare	.21*	.28**	—
	(.10)	(.05)	
	.08	*.24*	
Blacks	1.01**	—	1.00
	(.16)		—
	.38		*.39*
Jews	.94**	—	.92**
	(.15)		(.12)
	.40		*.41*
Asian-Americans	1.78**	—	1.79**
	(.25)		(.20)
	.66		*.68*
Hispanics	1.71**	—	1.68**
	(.24)		(.18)
	.69		*.70*
χ^2 (df)	417.47 (27)	146.75 (25)	
χ^2/df	15.46	5.87	
Δ_1/Δ_2[c]	.98/.99	.99/.99	
ρ_1/ρ_2[d]	.97/.98	.99/.99	
Correlation between two factors	—	.21**	

Source: 2004 National Election Study (whites only).
Note: The number of observations for each model is 738. The top entry in each cell is the unstandardized regression weight. Standard errors are in parentheses. Standardized regression weights are in italics. Estimates are computed by full-information maximum likelihood, correcting for measurement error in all observed indicators, with Amos 4.0.
[a]Model with all thermometer ratings loading on a single factor. The loading for the gay/lesbian thermometer is set to one.
[b]Model with only ratings of Muslims loading on both factors. The loadings for black ratings on the first factor and gay/lesbian ratings on the second factor are set to one.
[c]Bentler and Bonett's (1980) normed fit index/Bollen's (1989) incremental fit index.
[d]Bollen's (1986) relative fit index/Bentler and Bonett's (1980) non-normed fit index.
**p < .01, *p < .05.

variables (with a few exceptions) to have direct effects on Muslim evaluations as well as indirect effects through their impact on the minority affect variables.[9] All of the variables are shown in the left-hand column of Table 2.[10]

[9]Because the model is fully recursive (the exogenous variables have effects on cultural outgroup affect, racial and religious minority affect, and Muslim affect, but are not influenced by them), we estimate it with OLS.

[10]All of the variables are coded to range from zero to one, with zero representing the most Democratic, liberal, or modernist orientation and one representing the most Republican, conservative, or traditionalist orientation. All of the indices in the model were constructed by taking each respondent's mean score on all of the variables on which he or she had nonmissing values. More details on variable measurement are provided in the appendix.

In addition to cultural outgroup affect and racial and religious minority affect, the model includes one other indicator of prejudice toward minority groups: the degree to which individuals are willing to attribute negative stereotypes to African Americans, Asian-Americans, and Hispanic-Americans.[11] This variable may not influence cultural outgroup affect given the distinction people seem to make between racial minorities and cultural and behavioral minorities. So, its indirect influence on Muslim affect should come principally through a strong negative effect on views of racial and religious minorities. It also may have a direct impact on Muslim affect given Muslims association with racial minorities.

Given that authoritarianism, patriotism, and religious traditionalism are key predictors of negative evaluations of outgroups in general, they should have negative effects on views of Muslims, but effects that are primarily indirect Following the recent literature, we measure authoritarianism through a series of questions in the NES about desirable qualities in children (Hetherington and Weiler n.d.; Mockabee 2007).[12] Patriotism is measured through questions about whether seeing the flag flying makes one feel good, whether there are things about America that make one feel ashamed, whether there are things about America that make one feel angry, how strong is love for one's country, and how important is being an American. Religious traditionalism is a latent variable with view of the Bible, worship attendance, religious salience, and frequency of prayer serving as observed indicators.

The next three variables tap into the principal alternative explanations for Muslim evaluations. Partisanship and liberal-conservative ideology are both 7-point self-identification scales. These variables might have direct effects on Muslim affect, but the mixed nature of the cues on the Muslim world offered by party and ideological elites makes it more likely that their effects will be indirect, with Republicans and conservatives exhibiting more negative attitudes toward minority groups in general. To measure the sense of threat from further terrorist attacks, we use questions about the importance of combating terrorism as a foreign policy goal and the proper level of government spending on fighting terrorism. Because there is no reason to expect perceptions of threat from terrorism to influence attitudes toward groups other than Muslims, the model does not allow this variable to affect views about other cultural outgroups and racial minority groups. Its effect on Muslim affect is only direct.

Finally, the model includes dummy variables for Jews and evangelical Protestants,[13] and several demographic variables. The religious dummies may have direct, as well as indirect, effects on Muslim evaluations given the unique history between Jews and Muslims and evangelicals particularly strong feelings about Israel and the war on terror. The demographic variables—education, income, age, and southern residence—are included because of their possible relationship to tolerance or intolerance for outgroups in general. Thus, their effects on Muslim affect are likely to be indirect.

Table 2 presents the estimates of the path model, showing the direct effects of variables on cultural outgroup affect, racial and religious minority affect, and Muslim affect, as well as their indirect effects on Muslim affect through the two group affect variables. The results provide strong support for our ''bands of others'' thesis. Even with an array of exogenous variables in the model, cultural outgroup affect still has the largest impact of any variable on attitudes toward Muslims, and racial and religious minority has the second largest impact.

Also in keeping with our argument is that individuals' willingness to accept negative stereotypes about racial minority groups has a significant and negative direct effect on feelings about Muslims. Negative stereotyping also influences Muslim affect indirectly through its substantial negative impact on attitudes toward religious and racial minority groups.

The only other variables with significant direct effects on attitudes toward Muslims are age and the Jewish variable. Not surprisingly, older people like Muslims less than do younger people. Jews are known

[11]We measure negative racial stereotypes with the placements of each of the three groups on three 7-point scales: hard-working versus lazy, trustworthy versus untrustworthy, and intelligent versus unintelligent. We include stereotypes of these groups in a model in which feeling thermometers of the same groups are included because stereotypes and affect have differential effects on behavior and tolerance toward minority groups. Affect has more influence than stereotypes on behavioral discrimination (Cuddy, Fiske, and Glick 2007). Negative stereotypes about blacks predict feelings toward welfare recipients more strongly than do affective ratings (Gilens 1999). Affect for racial minorities and stereotypes may have distinct effects on views of Muslims.

[12]The questions ask people to choose which of a pair of desirable qualities for children is more important: independence or respect for elders; obedience or self-reliance; curiosity or good manners; being considerate or well-behaved. We coded the authoritarian choice (respect for elders, obedience, good manners, and well behaved) as one, the nonauthoritarian choice as zero, and volunteered responses of ''both'' as .5.

[13]We define evangelical Protestants as those individuals affiliating with predominantly white evangelical churches, coded according to the most recent literature (e.g., Layman and Green 2006).

TABLE 2 Estimates of the Path Model of Attitudes Toward Muslims

	Endogenous Variables				
	Cultural Outgroup Affect	Ethnic/Racial Minority Affect	Muslim Affect		
Independent Variables	Direct Effects[a]	Direct Effects[a]	Direct Effects[a]	Indirect Effects[b]	Total Effects[b]
Cultural Outgroup Affect	—	—	.23 (.23/.05)	—	.23
Racial/Religious Minority Affect	—	—	.14 (.19/.05)	—	.14
Negative Racial Stereotypes	0 (−.03/.04)	−.22 (−.18/.03)	−.10 (−.11/.04)	−.04	−.14
Authoritarianism	−.20 (−.09/.02)	−.08 (−.03/.015)	0 (−.03/.02)	−.06	−.06
Patriotism	−.12 (−.08/.02)	−.14 (−.06/.02)	0 (−.03/.03)	−.05	−.05
Religious Traditionalism	−.13 (−.07/.02)	0 (−.01/.02)	0 (−.004/.02)	−.03	−.03
Party Identification	−.17 (−.07/.02)	0 (−.0007/.01)	0 (−.02/.02)	−.04	−.04
Ideology	−.21 (−.14/.03)	0 (.02/.02)	0 (.05/.03)	−.05	−.05
Perceived Threat from Terrorism	—	—	0(−.05/.03)	—	0
Jewish	0 (−.04/.03)	.07 (.05/.02)	−.10 (−.09/.03)	.01	−.09
Evangelical	−.08 (−.03/.01)	0 (−.004/.01)	0 (−.01/.01)	−.02	−.02
Age	0 (−.03/.02)	0 (−.001/.02)	−.09 (−.06/.02)	−.02	−.11
Education	.10 (.06/.02)	.15 (.06/.02)	0 (.02/.02)	.03	.03
South	0 (.01/.01)	0 (−.01/.01)	0 (−.01/.01)	0	0
Income	0 (−.02/.03)	0 (.01/.02)	0 (−.02/.06)	0	0
	N = 677 Adj R^2 = .37	N = 673 Adj R^2 = .13	N = 643 Adj R^2 = .18		

Source: 2004 National Election Study (whites only).
[a]The top entry in each cell for direct effects is the standardized regression coefficient. Unstandardized coefficients over their standard errors are in parentheses. All direct effects that are not statistically significant are denoted by zeroes. All non-zero direct effects are statistically significant ($p < .05$).
[b]Indirect and total effects are computed based on standardized coefficients.

for high levels of tolerance of other minority groups. However, we have controlled for several indicators of such tolerance, and the remaining negative feelings toward Muslims may be due to the long history of Jewish-Muslim animosity in the Middle East.

As we expected, the core value orientations that are associated with intolerance toward cultural and racial minority groups all have negative total effects on views of Muslims, but their effects are entirely indirect—through their impact on feelings about cultural outgroups and racial and religious minorities. Both authoritarianism and patriotism have strong negative effects on attitudes toward cultural outgroups and toward racial and religious minority groups, giving them a strong indirect influence on Muslim affect. Both indicators of traditionalist religious orientations—religious traditionalism and the evangelical Protestant variable—are negatively related to views of

cultural outgroups and thus have negative indirect effects on Muslim affect.

Threat from the possibility of further terrorist attacks does not produce greater hostility toward Muslims. Its effect is negative, but does not approach statistical significance. There is a bit more support for a partisan or ideological interpretation of Muslim affect since both partisanship and ideology have negative indirect effects on opinions about Muslims. However, neither variable has a direct effect on either Muslim affect or feelings about racial and religious minority groups. Their influence on Muslim evaluations is entirely due to Republicans and conservatives rating cultural outgroups more negatively than Democrats and liberals do.

In short, the best predictor of how individuals feel about Muslims is how they feel about other minority groups. Factors such as authoritarianism that are commonly associated with intolerance toward outgroups are negatively related to Muslim affect, but only indirectly. Explanations based on threat and political orientations have relatively little traction.

The Persistence of the "Bands of Others"

If American evaluations of Muslims really are defined principally by a general pattern of positive or negative feelings about other outgroups, then the structure of Muslim affect that we have observed with 2004 data should have been in place prior to 9/11, and should have persisted after the 2004 presidential election. To see if that is true, we turn to five surveys conducted since 2000 by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press and the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. Two of these—the Fall 2000 Campaign Typology survey of 2000 and the March 2001 Religion in Public Life survey—were carried out before the 9/11 attacks, and the others —the Religion in Public Life surveys of February 2002, July 2005, and August 2007—were conducted after them. Respondents to each survey rated either "Muslims" or "Muslim Americans" on a four-category scale ranging from "very unfavorable" to "very favorable," and also rated other minority religious groups—Jews and atheists ("people with no religion" in 2002) in all five surveys, Buddhists in 2001, and Mormons in 2007.[14] Muslim affect did not change much after the 9/11 attacks: The percentage of respondents rating Muslim Americans favorably was 71 in 2000, 67 in 2001, 72 in 2002, 70 in 2005, and 64 in 2007.

Factor analyses of the ratings of all of the minority religious groups in each year clearly showed that evaluations of Muslims are positively and strongly related to attitudes toward other religious and cultural outgroups.[15] To see if outgroup attitudes are the main factor shaping views of Muslims, we first created a measure of religious outgroup affect based on ratings of the non-Muslim religious minority groups.[16] We then estimated ordered logit models in which non-Muslim white respondents' views of Muslims or Muslim Americans are the dependent variables and religious outgroup affect is the primary independent variable. The other independent variables are party identification, ideology, worship attendance, age, education, and dummy variables for born-again Christians and southerners.[17]

The results, shown in table 3, clearly support our thesis. In every survey—both the two conducted before 9/11 and the three conducted since then—affect toward other religious outgroups has a positive and highly significant impact on evaluations of Muslims or Muslim Americans. The impact of outgroup affect on attitudes toward Muslims is far stronger than that of any other variable in the model.

Some of the other variables do have significant effects on Muslim ratings, but those effects are weaker, inconsistent, and sometimes surprising. Conservative ideology leads to less favorable views of Muslims in 2002 and of Muslims and Muslim Americans in 2007, but does not affect Muslim evaluations in the other three years. Republican partisanship has a negative effect on views of Muslim Americans, but only in 2005 and 2007. Born-again Christians and older people have less favorable views

[14]Respondents were asked to rate "Muslim Americans" in 2000, 2001, and 2005 and both "Muslims" and "Muslim Americans" in 2002 and 2007. We show the results for both groups in 2007, but only for Muslims in 2002. The results for ratings of Muslim Americans in 2002 are nearly identical to those shown here.

[15]Principal components factor analyses produced a single factor in each year, all of the group ratings loaded strongly (.58 or higher) on that factor, and the percentage of total variance explained ranged from 52.3 to 57.3.

[16]This measure is simply each respondent's mean rating of all of the non-Muslim religious minority groups that he or she evaluated (Jews and Atheists in all years, with Buddhists added in 2001 and Mormons added in 2007).

[17]The Pew surveys did not include measures of authoritarianism, patriotism, moral intolerance, or racial prejudice. There was an indicator of perceptions of threat from future terrorist attacks—how worried respondents were that there will soon be another terrorist attack in the United States—in the 2005 survey, but it did not have a statistically significant effect.

TABLE 3 Analyzing Evaluations of Muslims Over Time

	Year and Wording of Muslim Evaluation					
Independent Variables	**2000 *Muslim Americans***	**2001 *Muslim Americans***	**2002 *Muslims***	**2005 *Muslim Americans***	**2007 *Muslims***	**2007 *Muslim Americans***
Religious Outgroup Affect	6.01**	7.93**	4.84**	4.36**	5.80**	6.76**
	(.53)	(.49)	(.54)	(.54)	(.50)	(.48)
	.54	*.59*	*.26*	*.29*	*.27*	*.45*
Party Identification[a]	−.09	−.29	−.23	−.46	−.34	−.69**
	(.29)	(.20)	(.25)	(.24)	(.24)	(.24)
	.01	*−.01*	*−.02*	*−.03*	*−.01*	*−.04*
Ideological Identification[a]	−.72	−.63	−1.26*	−.13	−2.12**	−1.27**
	(.45)	(.39)	(.54)	(.50)	(.43)	(.40)
	−.08	*−.04*	*−.12*	*−.001*	*−.11*	*−.09*
Born Again Christian	−.04	−.44*	−.38*	.05	−.44*	−.18
	(.22)	(.18)	(.21)	(.22)	(.17)	(.17)
	−.01	*−.02*	*−.03*	*.001*	*−.02*	*−.01*
Worship Attendance	.53	.39	.10	.05	.25	.89*
	(.36)	(.30)	(.37)	(.37)	(.32)	(.30)
	.05	*.03*	*.01*	*.001*	*−.01*	*.06*
South	−.24	−.001	−.43*	.16	−.07	−.26
	(.20)	(.16)	(.20)	(.20)	(.16)	(.16)
	−.02	*.0001*	*−.04*	*.001*	*−.001*	*−.01*
Age	−1.67**	−1.56**	−.69	−.23	−1.43**	−2.19**
	(.47)	(.35)	(.43)	(.45)	(.37)	(.40)
	−.15	*−.08*	*−.06*	*−.001*	*−.06*	*−.13*
Education	.33	−.59	1.15**	1.61**	.26	.02
	(.37)	(.32)	(.38)	(.39)	(.31)	(.32)
	.03	*−.03*	*.09*	*.08*	*.01*	*.001*
(N)	(470)	(793)	(507)	(468)	(700)	(769)
χ^2 (df)	184.38 (8)	431.10 (8)	120.67 (8)	127.98 (8)	316.48 (8)	341.50 (8)
Pseudo R^2	.17	.24	.12	.13	.19	.19
EPCP[c]	.14	.14	.10	.12	.17	.14

Source: 2000 Pew Campaign Typology Survey; 2001, 2002, 2005, and 2007 Pew Religion in American Public Life Surveys (whites only)
Note: The top entries are unstandardized ordered logit coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses. The impact of a minimum to maximum change in each variable on the probability of having a "very favorable" evaluation of Muslims, by holding all other variables at their actual values, is in italics. All variables are coded to range from 0 to 1.
[a]Range from the most Democratic/liberal identification to the most Republican/conservative identification. Party identification is a seven-point scale in 2000 and 2007 and a five-point scale in 2001, 2002, and 2005. Ideology is a five-point scale in all years.
[b]The Jewish variable was perfectly collinear with the other independent variables and was dropped from all of the models.
[c]EPCP refers to Expected Percent Correctly Predicted by Michael Herron.
**$p < .01$, *$p < .05$.

of Muslims or Muslim Americans in multiple years, as do southerners in 2002. Education leads to more favorable views in 2002 and 2005. Somewhat surprising is the positive effect of worship attendance on affect for Muslim Americans in 2007. In short, the only variable that is consistently and strongly related to views of Muslims is affect toward other religious outgroups. As did our 2004 analysis, these results clearly show that white Americans' views of Muslims are shaped principally by evaluations of other minority groups. That was true before the 9/11 attacks and has remained true in the years since.

Muslim Distinctiveness and the Impact of Familiarity

We have argued not only that Muslim affect is shaped by affect for other societal outgroups, but also that

Muslims are a distinctive outgroup from the perspective of mainstream opinion. To see if Muslims really are viewed in a unique light, we return to the 2004 NES data and examine the impact of the variables in the Muslim affect model in Table 2 on feelings toward two other minority groups: African Americans, the racial/religious minority group that has long been the most prominent outgroup in American society, and illegal immigrants, a group that recently has become the most salient component of the cultural minorities mosaic.

There are only two differences between our Muslim affect model and the models for evaluations of blacks and illegal immigrants. The first is simply that we include Muslims in the cultural outgroup affect variable in the latter two models, and we remove blacks from the racial/religious minority affect variable in the African-American model and illegal immigrants from the cultural outgroup variable in their model. The second difference is in the threat variables, given that affect toward blacks and illegal immigrants is unlikely to be shaped by perceived threat from terrorism. In the illegal immigrants model, we include a measure of perceived threat from illegal immigrants that combines opinions about the likelihood that Hispanic immigration will take jobs away from people already here, federal spending on border security, and the importance of controlling illegal immigration as a foreign policy goal. There is no variable in the 2004 NES that taps directly or obviously into a sense of threat from African Americans. However, we do include the well-known measure of "symbolic racism," which may capture the degree to which blacks are seen as a threat to traditional American values (Kinder and Sanders 1996).[18]

Table 4 shows the direct effects of the independent variables on affect for African Americans and illegal immigrants, with the direct effects on Muslim affect shown again for comparison. One key difference in the estimates is that while Muslim affect is not shaped at all by the perceived threat of terrorism, threat plays a significant role in shaping views of both African Americans and illegal immigrants. Perceived threat from illegal immigrants has a very strong negative effect, while the symbolic racism variable has a negative impact on black affect.

The reason for the lesser impact of threat on Muslim affect may be that the threat potentially posed by Muslims is not as direct as that which African Americans or illegal immigrants may be seen as posing. Most Americans know, work with, or live around black people. Thus, if some whites see blacks as threats to their jobs, their schools, or their neighborhoods, the threat may be viewed as rather immediate. Most whites probably either come into direct contact with illegal immigrants—through their own jobs, through the local jobs that illegal immigrants take, or through their experiences in their own cities or towns—or hear of their growing numbers in surrounding areas. Thus, there may be a sense of a fairly immediate threat posed by illegal immigrants to jobs, schools, and the functioning of local governments. The threat posed by Muslims may be viewed as less direct both because most Americans do not have contact with Muslims and because the vast majority of Muslims do not participate in and are not sympathetic to terrorist activities and thus do not pose a direct threat in that regard.

Also different from the Muslims model is that patriotism has a significant negative impact on views of illegal immigrants, but the most relevant difference for us is in the effects of affect toward other minority groups. While evaluations of Muslims are shaped by attitudes toward both cultural outgroups and racial/religious minorities, feelings about African Americans are influenced strongly by racial/religious minority affect, but not at all by cultural outgroup affect. Attitudes toward illegal immigrants are structured by feelings toward other cultural outgroups, but not by views of racial and religious minorities. This provides further support for our argument that Muslims seem to be distinctive in the minds of white Americans. For them, Muslims play in both bands of others while blacks and illegal immigrants only play in one band.

Because Muslims are associated not just with cultural outgroups, who continue to be viewed quite negatively by mainstream society, but also with racial and religious minority groups, who became more accepted as contact with them grew, views of Muslims might grow more favorable as other Americans become more familiar with them. To assess this

[18]The measure combines reactions to four statements: "Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class," "It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder, they could be just as well off as whites," "Irish, Italian, Jewish, and other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors," and "Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve." We recoded all of the items to range from least to most symbolically racist. For both symbolic racism and threat from illegal immigrants, we took each respondent's mean score on all of the items on which he or she had nonmissing values.

Table 4 The Factors Shaping Affect Toward Muslims, African-Americans, and Illegal Immigrants

	Dependent Variables		
	Muslim Affect	Black Affect	Illegal Immigrant Affect
Independent Variables	Coefficient Estimates[a]	Coefficient Estimates[a]	Coefficient Estimates[a]
Cultural Outgroup Affect	.23**	−.04	.25**
	(.05)	(.04)	(.05)
Racial/Religious Minority Affect	.19**	.38**	−.09
	(.05)	(.04)	(.05)
Negative Racial Stereotypes	−.11**	−.07*	−.01
	(.04)	(.03)	(.04)
Authoritarianism	−.03	−.02	.01
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Patriotism	−.03	−.03	−.08**
	(.03)	(.02)	(.03)
Religious Traditionalism	−.004	.003	.03
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Party Identification	−.02	−.003	−.01
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Ideology	.05	−.0003	−.03
	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)
Perceived Threat from Terrorism	−.05	—	—
	(.03)		
Symbolic (Anti-Black) Racism	—	−.05*	—
		(.02)	
Perceived Threat from Illegal Immigrants	—	—	−.34**
			(.03)
Jewish	−.09*	−.02	−.04
	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)
Evangelical	−.01	−.01	−.01
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Age	−.06**	−.04*	.01
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Education	.02	.01	−.02
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
South	−.01	−.0008	.01
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Income	−.02	−.02	.001
	(.06)	(.02)	(.001)
	N = 643	N = 668	N = 663
	Adj R^2 = .18	Adj R^2 = .18	Adj R^2 = .33

Source: 2004 National Election Study (whites only).
[a]Unstandardized coefficient estimates with standard errors in parentheses.
**p < .01, *p < .05.

possibility, we take advantage of two questions in Pew's 2007 Religion in American Public Life survey. The first question simply asked respondents if they know anyone who is Muslim. The second asked which factor had the "biggest influence" on respondents' views of Muslims and offered personal experience, the views of friends and family, the media, religious beliefs, and education as possibilities.[19] We estimated two separate logit models of views of Muslims—one for knowing a Muslim and one for the influence

[19]There was one other response option ("something else"), but we have dropped the respondents in that category from our analysis and treat respondents in the "religious beliefs" category as our comparison group.

factors—that included these variables and all of the variables in the models in Table 3. We report the probabilities of favorable opinions of Muslims for the values of these two variables in Table 5.[20]

Knowing someone who is Muslim has a positive and statistically significant relationship with favorable views of Muslims, increasing the probability to .58 from .44 among those who do not know any Muslims. In our second model, people with personal experience with Muslims have a probability of viewing Muslims favorably of .75, compared to .54 for the full sample. People with personal experience with Muslims or who rely upon views of friends and family are much more likely to have positive views of Muslims, with probabilities of .75 and .82, respectively. While immediate experiences may lead to far more positive evaluations, they are infrequent compared to acquiring perceptions through the media. Only 19% of white non-Muslims cited personal experience and only 5% denoted friends and family. Meanwhile, 35% relied on the media and they only had a .32 probability of favorable views.

Education also leads to more favorable evaluations—with a probability of .66 of positive views, but only 7% form their views on what they have learned. Religious beliefs lead to a slight decline—to a probability of .47 of favorable views, but just 4% of respondents base their views of Muslims on their faith.

The biggest negative effects on attitudes toward Muslims come from the media, the biggest positive effects from personal experience. Yet the effects of both direct and indirect contacts may be endogenous. We avoid contact with people belonging to groups we dislike (Forbes 1997, 167), and people with favorable views of Muslims are 21% more likely than those with unfavorable views to know someone who is a Muslim.

TABLE 5 Personal Experience, Sources of Opinions, and Views of Muslims

	Probability of Favorable Opinion of Muslims
Know Anyone Who is Muslim?	
No	.44
	(*.38, .50*)
Yes	.58
	(*.51, .65*)
(N)	(695)
Biggest Influence on Your View of Muslims?	
Personal Experience	.75
	(*.65, .84*)
Views of Friends and Family	.82
	(*.66, .99*)
Media	.32
	(*.26, .39*)
Education	.66
	(*.56, .77*)
Religious Beliefs	.47
	(*.34, .60*)
(N)	(619)

Source: 2007 Pew Religion in American Public Life Survey(whites only).

Note: Entries are predicted probabilities of having a favorable opinion of Muslims from binary logit models including all of the control variables shown in Table 3. The numbers in parentheses are 95 percent confidence intervals computed using SPOST. Predicted probabilities are different from each other at $p < .05$ if their confidence intervals do not overlap. The logit models for the effect of knowing a Muslim and for the effect of the source of one's view of Muslims were estimated separately.

Summary and Conclusion

The relationship between the United States and the Muslim world has become increasingly central to international and American domestic politics. That makes the question of what explains Americans' attitudes toward Muslims a crucial one. We have shown that Americans see Muslims as part of the "bands of others" in American society. Positive affect for Muslims is largely determined by favorable views of other minority groups—in contrast to social balance theory and in keeping with social identity theory. Orientations typically associated with negative evaluations of outgroups—authoritarianism, patriotism, and religious traditionalism—lead indirectly to unfavorable views of Muslims. Perceptions of threat, party identification, and ideology have considerably less influence. Importantly, the structure of Muslim affect was much the same before the 9/11 terrorist attacks as it has been since then.

That structure is relatively distinct when compared to the factors shaping evaluations of other minority groups. Muslim affect is shaped by feelings about both cultural outgroups and racial/religious

[20]For the dependent variable in these models, we collapsed the "mostly favorable" and "very favorable" responses in the ordinal variable into a single category (coded 1) and the "mostly unfavorable" and "very unfavorable" responses into one category (coded 0). We also estimated these models with ordered logit and the ordinal dependent variable. The results for the logit and ordered logit models were nearly identical, so we show the probabilities from the logit model here for ease of presentation. The coefficient estimates are available in an online appendix at http://journalofpolitics.org.

Appendix: Variables Used in the Path Model of Muslim Affect (Table 2)

Index Variable[a]	Variables Used (NES variable numbers)	Scale Reliability (α)[b]
Muslim Affect Model		
Cultural Outgroup Affect	V045074, V045059, V045068, V045081	.53
Racial/ Religious Minority Affect	V045077, V045061, V045056, V045075	.67
Negative Racial Stereotypes	V045223, V045224, V045225, V045227, V045228, V045229, V045231, V045232, V045233	.87
Authoritarianism	V045208, V045209, V045210, V045211	.58
Patriotism	V045145x, V045148x, V045149x, V045146x, V045147x	.67
Religious Traditionalism	V043223, V043224, and V043225 (combined into a single worship attendance variable); V043221 (prayer); V043220 and V043221 (combined into a single religious guidance variable); and V043222 (view of the Bible)	.64
Perceived Threat from Terrorism	V045107, V043174	.40
Black Affect Model		
Cultural Outgroup Affect	V045088, V045074, V045059, V045068, V045081	.58
Racial/ Religious Minority Affect	V045061, V045056, V045075	.62
Symbolic Racism	V045193, V045194, V045195, V045196	.78
Illegal Immigrant Affect Model		
Cultural Outgroup Affect	V045088, V045074, V045059, V045068	.49
Racial/ Religious Minority Affect	V045077, V045061, V045056, V045075	.67
Perceived Threat from Illegal Immigrants	V045116, V043173, V045105	.59

Source: 2004 NES.
Notes: Only valid responses are used in variable coding. All of the model variables were recoded so that they range from 0 to 1. We subtracted the mean universal feeling thermometer score from each feeling thermometer to reduce positivity bias.
[a]Index variables are computed by taking each respondent's mean score on all of the items on which he/she has non-missing values.
[b]Cronbach's alpha is computed among only white respondents.

minorities, while affect for most other minority groups is influenced by either cultural outgroup affect or racial/religious minority affect, but not both. As we have shown, this is particularly true for African Americans and illegal immigrants, two of the most salient minority groups in contemporary America.

Feelings about Muslims appear to be more closely connected to cultural outgroups than to racial and religious minorities. This has important implications for the future of American views of Muslims because racial/religious minorities are far more popular than cultural outgroups. While all of the religious and racial minority groups have mean feeling thermometer ratings that are higher than the mean that respondents gave to all groups ranked in the 2004 NES, all of the cultural outgroups are ranked lower than the overall group mean. Even as most ethnic and racial minorities are viewed far more favorably than they were in the past, only one of the cultural outgroups—gays and lesbians—is viewed much more favorably than it was 30 years ago, and average ratings of that group still fall nearly 15 points lower than the overall mean.

Thus, attitudes toward Muslims will not be easy to change. But change is possible. Americans rate Muslims only slightly less favorably now than they rated Latinos in the 1970s and 1980s and Asian-Americans in

the 1970s, and we have shown that personal ties to Muslims lead to more favorable views. The key issue is whether Americans will come to see Muslims as part of the American melting pot, as they do with other racial and religious minorities, or continue to see them as a suspicious "other," as they do with other cultural minorities.

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