

# Faith of his Fathers: Barack Obama, Islam, and Vote Choice in the 2008 Presidential Election\*

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## 1 Introduction

There is no question that the 2008 election of Barack Obama as the first African American President of the United States marked a true watershed in American political and social history. Given the historic nature of the election and Americas long, bitter, and often violent struggle with race relations, it is tempting to say that race did not matter in 2008. One might even be able to marshal some relatively serious evidence for such a claim. Obama, for example, won a bigger share of the popular vote than any Democratic candidate since 1964, and won a larger share of the white vote than either Al Gore or John Kerry, his Democratic predecessors in 2000 and 2004. Only nine percent of respondents to election-day exit polls said that race was an important factor in deciding their presidential votes, and 53 percent of those people voted for Obama.

However, while it may be true that “the election provided solid evidence that

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race matters less in America than pessimists suppose” (Economist 2008), it would be foolish to say that race was unimportant in the 2008 contest. It certainly would be historically nave in a country in which only 37 percent of Gallup poll respondents said that they would vote for an otherwise qualified black person to be president and where African Americans in many states were not even able to vote just 50 years prior to 2008. It also would ignore the fact that only 43 percent of whites supported Obama (as compared to 95 percent of blacks) in a year in which just 27 percent of exit poll respondents said they approved of the job being done by the incumbent Republican president and a minuscule seven percent of respondents said that the state of the national economy was either good or excellent.

On the other hand, what is particularly ironic about the 2008 election is that while Obamas racial and ethnic identity undoubtedly mattered, the most important part of that identity may not have been that he is black. What may have been most important was the perception by some that Obamas unique racial, ethnic, and cultural heritagehis multi-racial parents, his foreign-sounding name (and distinctively Muslim middle name), his African Muslim father and Indonesian Muslim stepfather, and his childhood spent partly outside of the United Statesrendered him not “American enough” to be President, and perhaps even a closet Muslim. As London Daily Telegraph columnist Janet Daley argued, the narrowness of Obamas lead over John McCain throughout much of the fall campaign may have been just

a little bit about race . . . and a very great deal about what it means to be identifiably American. . . . It is that core of experience of growing up American which Obama lacks. His problem is not so much that he is an African-American in the modern political sense of being a black American. It is that he is an African-American in the literal sense of

being half African and only half American (Daley 2008).

Of course, perceptions of questionable American-ness were fueled by Obamas political opponents, from the efforts of Hillary Clintons nomination campaign to “exploit Obamas lack of American roots and limited connection to basic American values and culture” (Beinart 2008), to conservative radio hosts consistently calling him “Barack Hussein Obama,” and to GOP vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palins laments that Obama “pals around with terrorists” and “is not a man who sees America the way that you and I see America.” In fact, even when race was explicitly discussed during the 2008 campaign – as it was with the controversies over comments made by Michelle Obama and the past statements of the Revered Jeremiah Wright, the pastor of the Obamas church in Chicago– the focus seemed to be less on black race and more on patriotism– Obamas statement that “for the first time in my adult life I am proud of my country” and the Wright rant of “God damn America” that was replayed constantly (particularly on Fox News) over the summer months. Noting this new way of using racial and ethnic identity as a political weapon, Time columnist Peter Beinart argued that “with their incessant talk about who loves their country and who doesnt, McCain and Palin are doing something different: theyre using race to make Obama seem anti-American.”

Such efforts seemed to bear fruit for some segments of the American electorate. A survey conducted in July 2008 showed that 12 percent of Americans thought that Obama was a Muslim and 14 percent of respondents in the data we use for this paper had that misperception.

In this paper, we use a two-pronged approach to assess the role of perceptions of Obama as an “outsider” and misperceptions of him being Muslim in the 2008 presidential election. First, using an original survey experiment conducted as part of the

2008 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES), we examine the factors that explained why some people mistakenly thought of Obama as a Muslim. Here, we find that certain cues that were prevalent in some elite-level discussions of Obama and his personal background made people with lower levels of education more likely to see him as a Muslim, but had no effect on this misperception among better-educated people. The other variables that were important predictors of seeing Obama as Muslim were party identification, ideological identification, and affect toward Muslims and Arabs as well as toward cultural outgroups in general.

Second, we assess the impact that perceptions of Obama being Muslim and feelings about either Muslims and Arabs or cultural outgroups in general had on vote choice in 2008. We find that viewing Obama as Muslim had a negative effect on the likelihood of voting for him. Meanwhile, affect toward both Muslims/Arabs and cultural outgroups in general had a much stronger influence than affect toward African Americans on voting behavior in 2008.

## **2 Candidate Characteristics, Misperceptions, and Vote Choice**

A pervasive finding in the political behavior literature is the low level of political sophistication among Americans (Converse 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). Rather than engaging in detailed analyses of elections or candidates, most citizens make political decisions on the basis of information heuristics such as party identification (Downs 1957; Conover and Feldman 1982, 1989), incumbent/challenger status in congressional elections (Jacobson 2004; Herrnson 1995), and stereotypes about social groups (Brady and Sniderman 1985; Lau 1986; Fiske and Taylor 1991; Miller,

Wlezien and Hildreth 1991*a*). Voters use these cognitive heuristics as a way to act “rationally” under a low information environment, and one such shortcut is the demographic profile of the candidates in an election (Stokes and Miller 1962; Popkin 1994). Candidate characteristics provide low-cost information based on commonly-accepted social group stereotypes. Through early socialization in family and at school, past experiences, and stored knowledge, “voters can make reasonable assumptions about the ideology of a candidate based on associations with salient political or social groups” (McDermott 1997, 271). Reliance on socio-demographic heuristics is especially likely when candidates are from highly stereotyped minority or politically underrepresented groups (Hamilton 1981).

Among those socio-demographic characteristics, candidate race is perhaps the most important for making inferences about candidates ideologies and for structuring vote choice. The electoral impact of a candidates race seems to depend on contextual factors like the personal traits, prior record, and campaign style of the candidates (Citrin, Green, and Sears 1990) and the racial composition of the locale (Carsey 1995; Kaufmann 2004). In contrast, some researchers argue that voters, liberal or conservative, are no more or less likely to vote for black or Latino candidates than for Anglo (white) candidates (Sigelman et al. 1995; Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock 1991).

The 2008 presidential election provides opportunities to re-assess whether and how the race of minority-group candidates shape electoral outcomes. As we have noted, the primary concern that many non-black voters had about Barack Obamas racial and ethnic background may not have been that he was an African-American, but that he was somehow an outsider to American culture and perhaps even a Muslim.

One opportunity lies in examining how racial and ethnic perceptionsor, in this case, misperceptionsare formed by analyzing the role of certain cues, orientations, and

attitudes in shaping the view of Obama as a “closet Muslim.” As the polls showed, it was not a negligible portion of the population who held this misperception. Who were these people and why did they believe this falsehood? We argue that education was likely the key factor.

One of the most consistent findings in the literature on racial and political tolerance is the negative effect of education on levels of prejudice (Allport 1954; McClosky and Zaller 1984; Sniderman and Piazza 1993; Tarman and Sears 2008). Education not only decreases prejudice, it also decreases factors such as authoritarianism that are closely related to prejudice (Adorno et al. 1950; Stenner 2005). Moreover, less-well-educated people, because they have less knowledge about politics and less understanding of the political process (e.g. Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996)), should be more likely than better-educated citizens to believe false accusations against a political figure or to accept falsehoods spread by or implied by political and media elites. Thus, less-well-educated citizens be more likely than their better-educated peers not only to believe that Obama is a Muslim, but also to respond positively to cues about Obamas personal background that highlight his ties to Islam.

The literature on opinion formation and change also establishes that individuals are more likely to accept political cues from sources that correspond to their political predispositions than from other sources(e.g. Zaller (1992)). Discussions accusing Obama of being Muslim or implying that he was Muslim seemed more likely to come from conservative and Republican political and media elites than from liberal and Democratic sources, and probably most likely to come from sources associated with hostility toward Muslims and Arabs, and with societal outgroups in general. Thus, we expect Republican party identification, conservative ideological identification, negative affect toward Muslims and Arabs, and negative feelings about cultural outgroups

in general to be positively associated with viewing Obama as Muslim.<sup>1</sup>

Another opportunity provided by the 2008 election lies simply in assessing the degree to which racial attitudes were related to vote choice, and which racial and ethnic attitudes were most closely associated with the vote. A vast body of research documents the important role of group affect and group-based attitudes for citizens' political attitudes, orientations, and decisions (Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee 1954; Campbell et al. 1960; Sears et al. 1980; Conover and Feldman 1981; Brady and Sniderman 1985; Miller, Wlezien and Hildreth 1991*b*; Jelen 1993; Bolce and De Maio 1999; Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002), and evaluations and perceptions of the social groups to which candidates belong are quite important for determining attitudes toward and support for them. Thus, to the extent that Obamas racial and ethnic identity was perceived through the traditional racial lens of American politics – focusing, in other words, on his status as an African American – the closer the relationship between affect for African Americans and vote choice should be. However, to the degree that Obama was viewed as being Muslim or as being “foreign” or “an outsider”, the more important affect toward Muslims and Arabs and toward cultural outgroups in general should be for voting behavior. Given the principal frames of the 2008 presidential campaign and the nature of the accusations that Obamas political opponents made against him, we suspect that feelings about Muslims/Arabs and societal outgroups in general had stronger effects on vote choice than did affect toward African Americans.

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<sup>1</sup> Of course, the perspective on opinion formation provided by Zaller contends that the individuals most likely to receive and accept cues from elites sharing their predispositions are those who are most politically aware, which typically would be those with the highest education levels. In this case, we are arguing that accepting cues about Obama as a Muslim are most likely to be accepted by people with lower education levels. We realize the disjuncture, but have not yet figured out how to reconcile it.

### 3 Assessing Misperceptions about Obamas Faith

Our analysis of perceptions about Obamas faith is based on a unique experiment included in the University of Maryland and University of Akron modules of the 2008 CCES survey, administered online to a national sample of 2,000 respondents (1,000 each in the two modules). Our experiment randomly varies the amount and type of information provided to respondents about the two presidential candidates middle names and childhood religious backgrounds. Although our main focus was on perceptions about Barack Obama, we also provided biographical information about John McCain in order to make the cues about Obama more subtle and to replicate the conditions of information gathering about candidates in a two-candidate race as closely as possible. We randomly placed respondents into four experimental groups, provided each group with varied biographical information about the two candidates, and then asked them open-ended religious identification questions about Obama and McCain.<sup>2</sup>

The control group was not told the candidates middle names and was not provided with any information about the candidates religious backgrounds. Then, so that we could isolate the effects of references to Obamas middle name (Hussein) and of the Islamic faiths of his father and stepfather, we provided one experimental group with the candidates middle names, one with information about their childhood religious backgrounds, and one with both their middle names and their childhood religious backgrounds. The information provided to the control group was as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> The exact wording of the open-ended questions was There has been a lot of talk recently about the candidates religious backgrounds. Do you happen to know what John McCains current religious affiliation is? If you are not sure about his specific religious denomination, please give us your general sense of what McCains religion is. . . . Do you happen to know what Barack Obamas current religious affiliation is? If you are not sure about his specific religious denomination, please give us your general sense of what Obamas religion is. The order of the question about McCain and the question about Obama was randomly varied across respondents.

Democratic candidate Barack Obama, a Senator from Illinois, has served 4 years in the U.S. Senate. Before that, he served for 7 years in the Illinois state legislature. . . Republican candidate John McCain, a Senator from Arizona, has served 20 years in the U.S Senate. Before that, he served for 4 years in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The first treatment group received the same candidate biographies with their middle names:

Democratic candidate Barack *Hussein* Obama II, a Senator from Illinois, has served 4 years in the U.S. Senate. Before that, he served for 7 years in the Illinois state legislature. . . Republican candidate John *Sidney* McCain III, a Senator from Arizona, has served 20 years in the U.S Senate. Before that, he served for 4 years in the U.S. House of Representatives.

In the second treatment, we provided information about the candidates religious backgrounds without mentioning their middle names:

Democratic candidate Barack Obama, a Senator from Illinois, has served 4 years in the U.S. Senate. Before that, he served for 7 years in the Illinois state legislature. *Obama lived in both Hawaii and Indonesia as a child. His father and step-father were both Muslims, and Obama received teaching in both the Muslim and Catholic faiths while in Indonesia.* . . Republican candidate John McCain, a Senator from Arizona, has served 20 years in the U.S Senate. Before that, he served for 4 years in the U.S. House of Representatives. *As a child, McCain, lived in many places where his Naval officer father was stationed in the U.S. and abroad. McCain was raised in the Episcopal Church.*

In the final group, we combined both of these treatments:

Democratic candidate Barack *Hussein* Obama II, a Senator from Illinois, has served 4 years in the U.S. Senate. Before that, he served for 7 years in the Illinois state legislature. *Obama lived in both Hawaii and Indonesia as a child. His father and step-father were both Muslims, and Obama received teaching in both the Muslim and Catholic faiths while in Indonesia.* . . Republican candidate John *Sidney* McCain III, a Senator from Arizona, has served 20 years in the U.S Senate. Before that, he served for 4 years in the U.S. House of Representatives. *As a child, McCain, lived in many places where his Naval officer father was stationed in the U.S. and abroad. McCain was raised in the Episcopal Church.*

For each treatment group, those whose open-ended responses indicated that they thought that Obama was a Muslim are coded to 1, and all other respondents are

coded to 0. An initial investigation of how the treatments conditioned the responses showed that the American public has already been subject to this misperception. As depicted in Table 1, 14 percent of the control group respondents, who got neither the middle name nor religious background treatments, thought that Obama was a Muslim. The middle name treatment increased this ratio to 16 percent. Information about the candidates religious backgrounds did not produce any change, but the combined treatment raised the ratio to 20 percent. That is, one in five people who heard Obamas middle name and his step fathers religious affiliation thought that he also was a Muslim.<sup>3</sup>

In line with our first hypothesis, education played a key role in shaping the perception that Obama was Muslim and in conditioning the effect of our treatments on this perception. Whereas only seven percent of non-black respondents with college degrees believed that Obama was a Muslim, 16 percent of non-blacks with some college experience but no college degree held this misperception, and nearly 21 percent of non-blacks who held no more than a high school degree identified Obama as a Muslim ( $\chi^2 = 14.75, p = .001$ ).

Moreover, as Table 2 shows, the effect of the treatments was much stronger for respondents with a high school diploma or less education than it was for better educated groups. In the control group, only 12 percent of these thought that Obama was a Muslim. The ratio increased to 18 and 20 percents for the middle name and religious background treatments, respectively. A particularly large jump occurred among the less-well-educated respondents who got the combined treatment: nearly one in three of them saw Obama as Muslim. The relationship between the treatments and the view of Obama as Muslim approached standard levels of statistical signifi-

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<sup>3</sup> Because nearly all of the black respondents to our CCES modules voted for Obama, all of our analyses are conducted only among non-black respondents.

cance for these respondents. The relationship for the better-educated groups was not significant.

These simple analyses have two important implications. First, a nontrivial portion of the American public thought that Obama was a Muslim even without any exposure to his middle name or religious background. Second, the most severe impact of this misperception was among less-well-educated people. The lack of contextual information that typically characterizes those with lower education levels seemed to make people believe false information about Obama during the campaign.

To provide a more rigorous test of this apparent interaction between our treatments and education and to assess the impact of a range of other factors on perceptions of Obamas faith, we conducted multivariate logit analyses in which the dependent variable is the dummy variable for respondents believing that Obama is Muslim. To see whether the treatments effect on this variable is conditioned by education, we combined all three treatments into a single dummy variable coded one for respondents who received any of the Muslim identity cues in the description of Obama and zero for the control group respondents and interacted this variable with the CCES six-category education variable. These analyses include the other factors that we have identified as likely predictors of viewing Obama as a Muslim: party identification (a 7-point scale ranging from strong Democrat to strong Republican)<sup>4</sup>, ideological identification (a 5-point scale ranging from very liberal to very conservative), affect toward Muslims and Arabs (the average of respondents feeling thermometer ratings of Muslims and Arabs)<sup>5</sup>, and feelings about cultural outgroups more generally (Muslims, Arabs,

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<sup>4</sup> While only 6 percent of non-black Democratic respondents thought that Obama was a Muslim, this belief was held by 18 and 24 percent of independents and Republicans, respectively.

<sup>5</sup> Respondents were asked to rate several groups on scales ranging from 0 for the most negative view of the group to 100 for the most positive view. Thermometer ratings of Arabs and Muslims are correlated at .76 among non-black respondents. Our measure of Arab and Muslim affect is the average of the ratings of the two groups for respondents who rated them both, but is either just the Arab rating or just the Muslim rating for respondents who rated one group, but not

gays and lesbians, welfare recipients, and illegal immigrants).<sup>6</sup> We also included three other factors—a dummy variable for residents of the South, a dummy variable for born again Christians, and a variable that are typically associated with cultural traditionalism and thus possibly related to misperceiving Obama as a Muslim in 2008, as well as a control for thermometer ratings of African Americans. Because feelings about Arabs and Muslims are included in our measure of cultural outgroup affect, we estimated models include Arab and Muslim affect and generalized outgroup affect separately.<sup>7</sup>

Table 3 displays the logit estimates of our models. There is a significant interactive effect of the Muslim identity cues and education on the likelihood of calling Obama a Muslim in both of our models. We illustrate this interaction in Figure 1 by showing the effect of education on the predicted probabilities of believing that Obama is Muslim for our control group and the groups who heard Obamas middle name and/or received information about his childhood religious background.<sup>8</sup> Receiving one of the Muslim identity cues increases the probability of viewing Obama as a Muslim by 14 percentage points. However, as education increases, the difference in the likelihood of holding this misperception between the treatment groups and the control group diminishes significantly, and at the highest education levels, respondents receiving one of the treatments actually are slightly less likely to hold it.<sup>9</sup> Cueing Obamas background

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the other.

<sup>6</sup> Our measure of cultural outgroup affect is the score from a factor analysis of thermometer ratings of these five groups. Details of the factor analysis are provided in Appendix Table 1A. As in other work (Kalkan, Layman and Uslaner 2009), when we included thermometer ratings of blacks and Jews in the factor analysis, they formed a separate factor rather than loading with the cultural outgroup ratings.

<sup>7</sup> All of the independent variables in the models range from 0 to 1.

<sup>8</sup> We computed these predicted probabilities by letting education level change across its full range, setting the Muslim identity treatment dummy variable to either 0 or 1, and holding other variables at their actual values (see Hanmer and Kalkan 2009 for more details on this method of computing probabilities).

<sup>9</sup> These predicted probabilities are computed from the model with Arab and Muslim feeling thermometer (second column of the table 3). If we replicate the same algorithm for the model with the generalized outgroup affect variable, we get stronger results. At the minimum level of education, treatment increases the likelihood of calling Obama by 16 percentage points. At

characteristics clearly seems to make less-well-educated people more likely to see him as a Muslim, but does not have the same effect for better-educated individuals.

Most of the other variables in the models do not have statistically significant effects. Despite their tendencies toward cultural traditionalism, southerners, born-again Christians, and older people were not more likely than non-southerners, individuals outside of the born-again camp, and younger people to believe that Obama was Muslim. However, party identification, ideological identification, and either Arab and Muslim affect or cultural outgroup affect are significantly related to this misperception. Republican party identification and conservative ideology are positively related to labeling Obama as Muslim. Each variables effect is only statistically significant in one of our models, but the substantive impact of the variables is not negligible. Moving party identification from strong Democrat to strong Republican increases the probability of viewing Obama as a Muslim by .07 in the Arab/Muslim model and by .08 in the cultural outgroup model. Moving ideology from very liberal to very conservative increases that probability by .15 in the Arab/Muslim model and by .11 in the cultural outgroup model.

Positive feelings about both Arabs and Muslims and cultural outgroups in general reduce the likelihood of misperceiving Obama as being Muslim. Both variables have highly significant effects, and the substantive effect of each variable on the probability of holding this misperception is relatively strong. Moving from the most negative to most positive view of Arabs and Muslims decreases the probability by .18 and increasing cultural outgroup affect from its lowest value to its highest value decreases the probability by .25. The view that Obama is really a Muslim clearly was disproportionately located among those with negative views of Muslims, Arabs, and cultural

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the maximum, it decreases the predicted probability by 9 percentage points holding all else at their actual values. Figure 1 is replicated for this model, and it is the appendix figure 1.

outgroups in general.

## 4 The Electoral Consequences of Group Affect and Misperceptions in 2008

In the remainder of the paper, we assess the impact of affect toward these groups and of believing that Obama is Muslim on vote choice in the 2008 presidential election. A first look at the data suggests that misperceptions about Obamas faith did, in fact, have an important impact on the vote. Only 11 percent of those non-black respondents who recalled Obamas religion as Islam voted for him, while 58 percent of those who did not identify Obama as a Muslim supported him.

These factors, of course, are not the only influences on vote choice. So, to assess their real electoral influence, we examine their effects in logit models of the two-party presidential vote that include a wide range of factors that are commonly associated with voting behavior: party identification, ideology, attitudes toward a range of non-economic issues (including cultural issues like abortion and gay marriage, racial issues such as affirmative action, and foreign policy issues) and preferences on social welfare issues<sup>10</sup>, current and retrospective evaluations of economic circumstances, prospective economic evaluations, and a number of socio-demographic characteristics (education, income, gender, age, southern residence, and identification as a born-again Christian).

Because our candidate religion experiment was only conducted among one-third of the respondents, we first show the results of these models for all non-black re-

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<sup>10</sup> We conducted a factor analysis of attitudes toward a wide range of policy issues and it resulted in a two-factor solution, with social welfare preferences loading on one factor and attitudes toward all of the other (non-economic issues loading on a second factor). Our measures of preferences on these issues are the factor scores from this analysis. Details are provided in appendix table 3A.

spondents, leaving perceptions of Obama as a Muslim out of the analysis. Table 4 shows these results one set of results with Arab and Muslim affect as an independent variable and another with cultural outgroup affect in the model displaying both the logit estimates and our the effect of an increase in each independent variable (from its minimum value to its maximum value, while holding all other independent variables at their actual values) on the probability of voting for Obama.

The key finding is that even when we control for a whole host of factors that are strongly and significantly related to vote choice, feelings about Arabs and Muslims have an effect on voting decisions that is not only statistically significant, but also stronger than feelings about African Americans. Cultural outgroups impact on vote choice did not quite reach standard levels of statistical significance, but it came very close, and was still substantively stronger than the influence of black affect.

To evaluate the electoral influence of viewing Obama as a Muslim, we re-estimated our vote choice model for only those respondents who participated in our candidate religion experiment and included the misperception variable<sup>11</sup>. Table 5 displays the results, and shows that believing that Obama is Muslim did indeed have a statistically and substantively important influence on electoral behavior. Individuals who identified Obama as Muslim were 11 and 15 percentage points less likely (in the Arab/Muslim and cultural outgroup models, respectively) than people who did not hold the misperception to vote for him, even controlling for party identification, ideology, and economic evaluations. The effects of feelings about Arabs and Muslims and about cultural outgroups in general are even stronger and more statistically significant than they were in table 4, and they remain clearly more important than feelings

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<sup>11</sup> Because of the rather small number of observations this leaves for analysis, we simplified our models by taking policy attitudes out as independent variables. The effects of our key variables of interest (the misperception variable, Arab and Muslim affect, and cultural outgroup affect) are very similar in models including issue attitudes.

about African Americans.

## 5 Summary

There is no question that racial and ethnic attitudes did matter in the 2008 presidential election. However, as the country elected its first black president, it was not feelings about African-Americans that were most important. Instead, it was attitudes toward Muslims, Arabs, and societal outgroups in general that seemed to be of greatest consequence. The belief that Obama was, in fact, a closet Muslim was held by a non-trivial percentage of people. As our candidate religion experiment showed, that belief seems to have been prompted by elite-level cues about Obamas middle name and his childhood religious background, at least among less-well-educated citizens. That misperception about Obamas faith then had a significant and relatively strong negative impact on the likelihood of voting for him. Meanwhile, in models of 2008 vote choice that controlled for nearly all of the usual suspects in presidential vote models, feelings about Muslims and Arabs and about cultural outgroups in general had strong and statistically significant effects and demonstrated a greater influence on voting behavior than did affect toward African Americans.

## Tables and Figures

Table 1: Calling Obama a Muslim Across Treatment Groups

Obama is Muslim	Groups			
	Control	Middle Name	Muslim	Combined
No	86%	84%	86%	81%
Yes	14	16	14	19
$\chi^2 = 1.84$ (df = 3)			$p < .61$	
<i>N</i>	150	141	151	154

Source: 2008 CCES

Cell entries are column percentages for non-black respondents.

Table 2: Calling Obama a Muslim Across Treatment Groups By Education Levels

High School or Less		Groups		
Obama is Muslim	Control	Middle Name	Muslim	Combined
No	87%	82%	79%	69%
Yes	13	18	21	31
		$\chi^2 = 7.02$ (df = 3) $p < .07$		
Some College		Groups		
Obama is Muslim	Control	Middle Name	Muslim	Combined
No	78%	87%	86%	85%
Yes	22	13	14	15
		$\chi^2 = 1.77$ (df = 3) $p < .62$		
College and Higher		Groups		
Obama is Muslim	Control	Middle Name	Muslim	Combined
No	93%	86%	92%	100%
Yes	7	14	8	0
		$\chi^2 = 5.52$ (df = 3) $p < .14$		

Source: 2008 CCES

Cell entries are column percentages for non-black respondents

Table 3: The Effect of Education and Treatments on Calling Obama a Muslim

	Arab and Muslim Affect	Generalized Outgroup Affect
Muslim Identity Treatment	1.10* (0.65)	1.35* (0.72)
Education	-0.37 (1.04)	0.32 (1.15)
Muslim Identity Treatment X Education	-2.17* (1.27)	-2.64* (1.37)
Arab/Muslim Affect	-2.12*** (0.69)	
Generalized Outgroup Affect		-3.31*** (1.07)
Black Affect	-0.49 (0.64)	-0.04 (0.71)
Party Identification	0.86 (0.52)	1.07* (0.60)
Ideology	1.84** (0.86)	1.44 (0.97)
South	0.23 (0.31)	0.37 (0.34)
Age	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)
Born Again Christian	-0.41 (0.34)	-0.31 (0.37)
Constant	-1.72 (1.07)	-2.30* (1.21)
<i>N</i>	465	409
Pseudo <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.17	0.20

Source: 2008 CCES

Cell entries are logit coefficient estimates with standard errors in parentheses

Notes: Dependent variable is coded to 1 for those who think that Obama is a Muslim, and to 0 for other responses.

The model is estimated among non-black respondents.

All independent variables range from 0 to 1.

\*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table 4: The Effect of Minority Affect on Vote Choice in 2008

	Arab/Muslim Model		Generalized Outgroup Model	
	Coefficient Estimates	$\Delta$ in Predicted Probability <sup>1</sup>	Coefficient Estimates	$\Delta$ in Predicted Probability <sup>1</sup>
Arab/Muslim Affect	2.09** (0.73)	.10	—	—
Generalized Outgroup Affect	—	—	1.83 <sup>†</sup> (1.02)	.10
Black Affect	1.38 <sup>†</sup> (0.75)	.06	1.50 <sup>†</sup> (0.81)	.07
Party Identification	-2.75*** (0.52)	-.17	-2.58*** (0.56)	-.15
Ideology	-4.44*** (1.04)	-.25	-4.47*** (1.10)	-.25
Non-Economic Issues	-6.53*** (0.94)	-.48	-6.87*** (1.06)	-.52
Social Welfare Issues	-7.39*** (0.98)	-.53	-6.67*** (1.02)	-.47
Retrospective Evaluations	-0.93 (0.99)	-.04	-0.81 (1.07)	-.03
Prospective Evaluations	0.54 (0.60)	.02	0.84 (0.64)	.03
South	-0.14 (0.33)	-.001	-0.07 (0.36)	-.002
Age	0.01 (0.01)	.02	0.01 (0.01)	.02
Sex	-0.27 (0.32)	-.02	-0.17 (0.34)	-.01
Income	0.05 (0.05)	.02	0.03 (0.06)	.001
Education	0.03 (0.12)	.007	0.05 (0.14)	.01
Born Again Christian	0.12 (0.36)	.006	0.27 (0.39)	.01
Constant	7.61*** (1.43)		7.01*** (1.50)	
<i>N</i>	1013		911	
pseudo <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.78		0.79	

Source: 2008 CCES

Cell entries are logit coefficient estimates with standard errors in parentheses.

Dependent variable represents presidential vote choice (Obama=1, McCain=0).

The model is estimated among non-black respondents.

<sup>1</sup> Change in predicted probability as independent variable changes from its maximum value, holding all other variables at their actual values

<sup>†</sup>  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table 5: The Effect of Minority Affect on Vote Choice (with the Misperception about Obama's Faith) in 2008

	Arab/Muslim Model		Generalized Outgroup Model	
	Coefficient Estimates	$\Delta$ in Predicted Probability <sup>1</sup>	Coefficient Estimates	$\Delta$ in Predicted Probability <sup>1</sup>
Obama is a Muslim	-1.54* (0.70)	-.11	-2.30** (0.87)	-.15
Arab/Muslim Affect	3.87** (1.09)	.27	—	—
Generalized Outgroup Affect	—	—	4.25** (1.54)	.28
Black Affect	1.14 (1.04)	.07	1.49 (1.22)	.09
Party Identification	-4.25*** (0.75)	-.42	-4.50*** (0.90)	-.42
Ideology	-7.75*** (1.63)	-.75	-7.53*** (1.80)	-.68
Current/Retrospective Economic Evaluations	1.81 (1.38)	.12	1.47 (1.53)	.09
Prospective Economic Evaluations	0.62 (0.87)	.04	1.56 (0.99)	.09
South	-0.17 (0.45)	-.01	-0.15 (0.51)	-.01
Age	0.02 (0.02)	.07	0.02 (0.02)	.07
Sex	-0.09 (0.43)	-.01	-0.32 (0.49)	-.02
Income	-0.02 (0.07)	-.01	-0.07 (0.08)	-.05
Education	0.13 (0.17)	.05	0.08 (0.20)	.02
Born Again Christian	-0.03 (0.50)	-.01	0.31 (0.59)	.02
Constant	1.12 (1.80)		1.42 (2.01)	
<i>N</i>	375		335	

Source: 2008 CCES

Cell entries are logit coefficient estimates with standard errors in parentheses.

Dependent variable represents presidential vote choice (Obama=1, McCain=0).

The model is estimated among non-black respondents.

<sup>1</sup> Change in predicted probability as independent variable changes from its maximum value, holding all other variables at their actual values

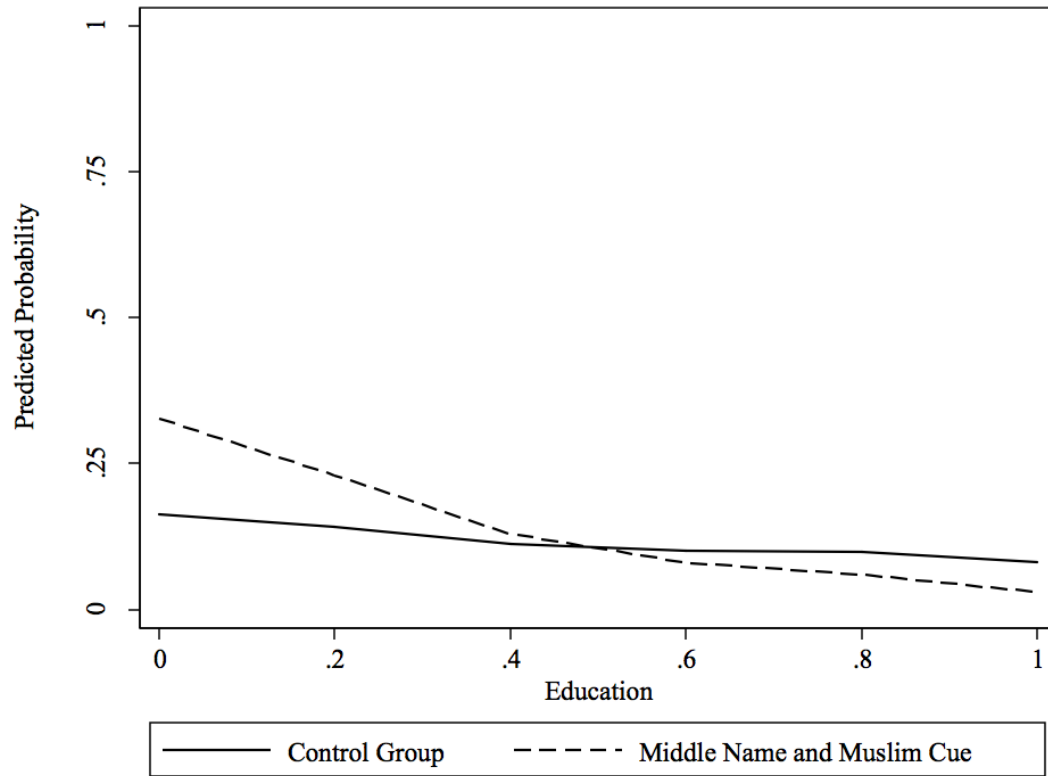


Figure 1: The Effect of Interaction between Treatments and Education on Calling Obama a Muslim

# Appendix

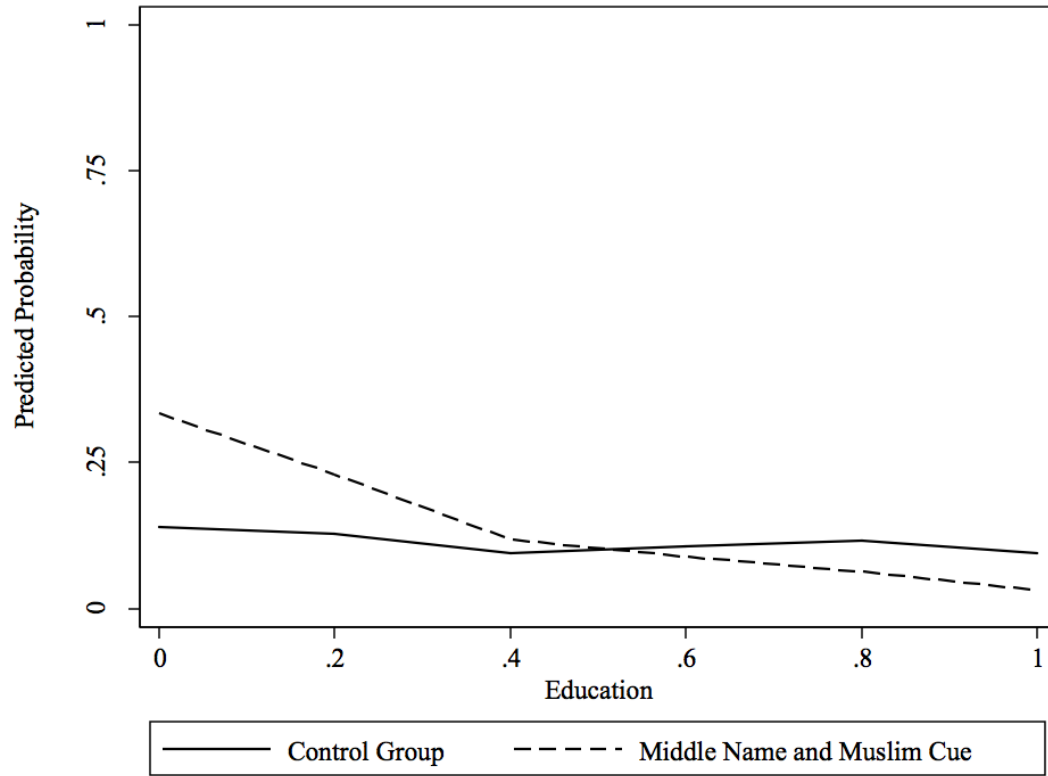


Figure 1A: The Effect of Interaction between Treatments and Education (with Generalized Outgroup Affect) on Calling Obama a Muslim

Table 1A: Factor Structure of Affect Toward Outgroups

Variables	Loadings
Muslim FT	.84
Arab FT	.84
Gays and Lesbians FT	.69
Welfare Recipients FT	.68
Illegal Immigrants FT	.72
Eigenvalue/Variance Explained	2.87/58%
N	1443

Source: 2008 CCES.

Notes: The factors are retained via principal-component factor method.

Table 2A: The Effect of Education with Outgroup Affect (No Muslim and Arab) on Calling Obama a Muslim

	Coefficients
Muslim Identity Treatment	1.04 (0.68)
Education	-0.40 (1.11)
Muslim Identity Treatment X Education	-2.00 (1.33)
Generalized Outgroup Affect (no Muslim and Arab)	-1.83* (0.97)
Black Affect	-0.01 (0.01)
Party Identification	0.76 (0.58)
Ideology	2.36** (0.94)
South	0.47 (0.32)
Age	-0.00 (0.01)
Born Again Christian	-0.46 (0.35)
Constant	-2.38** (1.15)
<i>N</i>	437

Source: 2008 CCES

Cell entries are logit coefficient estimates with standard errors in parentheses

Generalized outgroup variables is a factor score without Arabs and Muslims.

The model is estimated among non-black respondents.

\*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$

Table 3A: Factor Structure of Issue/Policy Preferences

Variables	Loadings	
	Factor 1	Factor 2
Abortion	.85	-.12
Gay Marriage	.83	-.08
Stem cell Research	.71	.04
Environment/Jobs	.54	.13
Withdraw Troops	.44	.46
Eaves Drop	.54	.13
View on Iraq War	.55	.35
Minimum Wage	.03	.72
Health Insurance	.10	.74
Federal Housing	-.20	.83
Affirmative Action	.04	.71
Eigenvalue	4.18	3.90
N	1914	

Source: 2008 CCES

Notes: The factors are retained via principal component factor method with oblique rotation.

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