

**BEFORE AND AFTER 9/11: THE PORTRAYAL OF ARAB  
AMERICANS IN U.S. NEWSPAPERS**

by

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## ABSTRACT

This research project will determine whether or not Arab Americans are portrayed as members of an out-group, in-group, or victim following the events of 9/11. This study improves upon previous research by analyzing the content of newspaper articles in *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post* pertaining to Arab Americans. Since the majority of research indicated the mass media has a tendency to perpetuate a negative stereotype of minorities and of Arabs, it was expected that the media would portray a negative stereotype of Arab Americans as well. The content analysis addressed the coverage of Arab Americans in the five years before and the five years after 9/11 in order to determine to what extent Arab Americans were depicted as members of an in-group, out-group, or victim following that date.

A total of 1379 articles were analyzed placed into the social categories of in-group, out-group, or victim utilizing a clearly defined coding method. Findings showed that overall Arab Americans were depicted as members of an out-group more than they were depicted as members of an in-group or victim. Since the total number of articles dramatically increased following 9/11, the number of articles placing Arab Americans as members of an in-group, out-group, or victim increased accordingly. However, approximately three years after 9/11, the number of articles pertaining to Arab Americans began returning to pre-9/11 levels. While the number of articles placing Arab Americans as members of an in-group or victim increased immediately following 9/11, articles in

both social categories steadily declined following 9/11. While the number of articles placing Arab Americans as members of an out-group decreased in the year immediately following 9/11, the number of articles placing Arab Americans as members of an out-group steadily increased following 9/11.

This thesis is dedicated in four parts...

To my young children, Tyler and Jakob, for time not spent with them when I would disappear for hours during nights and weekends in order to finish this writing.

To my husband, Robert, for his unwavering support throughout my entire academic career and supporting my dreams no matter where they take our family or how crazy they may seem.

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## INTRODUCTION

Following the events of September 11, 2001, Americans discovered the attacks were planned and executed by several Al Qaeda members. The majority of attackers were Arab men from Saudi Arabia. Consequently, many Arab Americans became the victims of public insults, discrimination, assault, and vandalism. Even though it has been several years since that tragic day, due to the ongoing war efforts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the world, Arab Americans continue to experience violence as a result of their ethnicity.

Over the past several years, the U.S. media has produced significant coverage of 9/11, the Middle East, and terrorism. Many of the news stories also covered the impact of these events on Arab Americans. The mass media plays a crucial role in the enhancement or destruction of the images people see on a daily basis (Kamalipour & Carilli, 1998). Much of the information a person receives, comes from television, newspapers, movies, and the Internet. Consequently, much of what a person knows (or believes they know) about other people or places comes from these sources of mass media (Kamalipour & Carilli, 1998). Since the media plays an influential role in how Americans see the world, it is important to understand to what extent the media has influenced the perception of Arab Americans. Therefore, the research question examined is whether or not Arab Americans are portrayed as members of an in-group, out-group, or victim following the events of September 11, 2001.

### Significance of Proposed Research

In the current global society, information is obtained through various forms of mass media. People no longer obtain information from only printed materials or by word of mouth. With the modern electronic media, national and international news is easily available to anyone with access to a newspaper, television, or computer. With twenty-four hour news stations and the Internet, people no longer have to wait for the news hour to obtain information. Consequently, the mass media plays a crucial and often decisive role in how people view other nations, cultures, and the world (Ghareeb, 1983; Kamalipour & Carilli, 1998; Said, 1981).

Social science studies focused on minorities and news are rare. Most of the research is based on the portrayal of minorities in entertainment and is often confined to Black Americans (Greenberg & Brand, 1998). Social science research has been conducted on the portrayal of other minority and religious groups in the mass media including Hispanics, Catholics, and Jews. Attention has also been paid to the portrayal of Arabs in various forms of media. The majority of research conducted, however, has been on Arabs in general, not Arab Americans. Previous work conducted of Arabs has focused on newspapers, news magazines, movies, political cartoons, television news, entertainment/documentary television, popular fiction, and textbooks (Lind & Danowski, 1998).

In today's world, Arab Americans continue to experience discrimination in many forms of media. Many argue this prejudice is a result of the hostile relations between the United States and many countries in the Middle East; the lack of Arab Americans in the

“political process;” the lack of organization of Arab Americans as an effective lobby; and the on-going problem between Israelis and Palestinians (Khleif, 1998). Discrimination against Arab Americans in the mass media will continue until there is cross-cultural awareness between Americans and Arabs. Therefore, it is important to understand how Arab Americans are being portrayed in U.S. newspapers, as well as other forms of media, in order to change the perception of Arab Americans and Arabs around the world.

### Hypotheses and Methodology

This study analyzes the content of U.S. newspaper articles pertaining to Arab Americans in order to determine how they are portrayed to the general public. The majority of research indicates the mass media has a tendency to perpetuate a negative stereotype of minorities and of Arabs. Therefore, it is expected that the media will portray a negative stereotype of Arab Americans as well, ultimately placing them as a member of an out-group.

A content analysis will be conducted of three newspapers in the United States to determine if Arab Americans are portrayed as an out-group member, an in-group member, or as a victim. *USA Today* will be analyzed since it is the national newspaper. In addition to *USA Today*, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* will also be analyzed. While *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* are not national newspapers, they have gained national recognition due to their vast readership. The research will address coverage of Arab Americans in the five years before and the five years following 9/11 in order to determine to what extent Arab Americans have been depicted as members of an out-group following that date. In the first hypothesis, the

portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an out-group will increase following September 11, 2001. In the second hypothesis, the portrayal of Arab Americans as victims will also increase following September 11, 2001. In the third hypothesis, the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an in-group will decrease after September 11, 2001.

### Data Collection

The units of analysis are the two search terms utilized in order to obtain the most articles related to the depiction of Arab Americans in the newspapers. In the three newspapers analyzed, the main search term utilized will be “Arab American(s).” However, since many people in the United States, including professionals, use the terms Arab and Muslim interchangeably, the search term “Muslim American(s)” will also be utilized. While the search term “Muslim American(s)” will inevitably promote the stereotype of Arab Americans as a monolithic group, it is a necessary component of social reality. Utilizing the two search terms will ensure that as many articles as possible pertaining to Arab Americans are included in the study. If only the search term “Arab American(s)” was utilized, the majority of articles would likely pertain to placing Arab Americans as members of an in-group; therefore, limiting their inclusion as members of an out-group. The results of both search terms will be viewed individually and as a whole to determine the outcome of Arab Americans as members of an out-group, in-group, or victim.

Analyzing *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post* will provide articles from three newspapers with national significance. The population will

include all articles drawn from a search of Lexis-Nexis for the time period of September 11, 1996 through September 11, 2006.

The dependent variables are grouped into three different categories: in-group, out-group, and victim variables. A total of 15 variables were utilized to determine the social category. The variables utilized were wealth, terrorism, barbarism, aggression, religion, culture, antisocial, politics, peace, productive, patriot, partnership, crime (against Arab Americans), discrimination, and civil rights/liberties violations. The out-group variables were labeled as wealth, terrorism, barbarism, aggression, religion, antisocial, politics and culture. The in-group variables were labeled as peace, productive, and patriot. The victim variables were labeled as violent crime, discrimination, and civil rights/liberties violations.

### Conclusion

Following 9/11, there were more than one thousand incidents of violence against Arab or Muslim Americans in the fall of 2001 alone. Additionally, at least five Arab or Muslim Americans were killed. Violence was not the only response toward Arab and Muslim Americans, as many were embraced and supported by their communities (McAlister, 2005). With the ongoing U.S. military action in Afghanistan, Iraq, and around the world, Arab Americans continue to experience ethnic stereotypes by the mass media and others.

In today's instant information age, it is important to determine the outcome of the mass media's influence on minority groups in the United States. While a significant amount of research has been conducted on certain minority groups, it is important to

determine the mass media's impact on other minority groups as well, especially those groups affected by current international political situations. This research project only touches on a small portion of the media's influence on the portrayal of Arab Americans. Much more research is needed in order to fully determine the mass media's influence on the portrayal of Arab Americans in all forms of media.



## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### The Role and Influence of Mass Media

American's understanding of other cultures and nations is impacted by the mass media. Mass media is comprised of newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and films. While the majority of Americans obtain their global information from the mass media, Americans are typically unfamiliar with international issues and are generally more interested in national issues than international issues (Ghareeb, 1983). Media stereotyping and image creation greatly affect cross-cultural relations in today's world (Hashem, 1997). Most Americans' perceptions are greatly influenced by the mass media during their adolescence and early adulthood (Iyengar & McGuire, 1993). Therefore, most Americans form their opinions of other cultures or people based on what they read in print, hear on the radio, see in films, see on television, and see on the Internet. Since the majority of Americans obtain information from various media outlets, the mass media plays an important role in the development of a person's opinions and worldview.

The majority of social science research regarding the portrayal of minorities in the mass media has been conducted on Black Americans, as well as a limited number of studies on Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and Arab Americans. Additionally, a significant amount of academic research has been conducted on the portrayal of Arabs, in general, while a limited number of studies have focused on the portrayal of Arab Americans in the U.S. media (Ghareeb, 1983; Kamalipour, 1997; Kamalipour & Carilli,

1998; McAlister, 2005; Pintak, 2006; Said, 1981; Semmerling, 2006; Shaheen, 1984, 2001). Much of the research conducted is outdated and needs to be expanded as a result of the treatment of Arab Americans following the events of 9/11 and the ongoing war efforts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the world (Brigitte L. Nacos & Torres-Reyna, 2002; Oh, 2003; Watson, 2003).

In our contemporary global society, the mass media connects and transfers information from one nation to another. The general public needs to obtain information in order to form opinions. Much of the information the public obtains is from the mass media. All forms of mass media communicate messages to the general public (Dunn & Slann, 2000). At the present time, television remains the primary and most believable source of news for Americans (Welch, Gruhl, Comer, & Rigdon, 2006). However, with television's tendency to sensationalize and condense news stories, it may not actually be the most reliable source for the general public (Dunn & Slann, 2000). According to a study pertaining to the 2008 presidential campaign, conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, approximately 60% of people surveyed indicated they obtained their campaign news information from television. This statistic is down from the 2004 and 2000 elections ("Internet's Broader Role in Campaign 2008", 2008).

In today's technological world, the Internet has become an increasingly popular news source for the younger generation (Welch, Gruhl, Comer, & Rigdon, 2006; Wilson & John J. Dilulio, 2001). According to the Pew Research study, nearly a quarter of all Americans use the Internet as their first or second news source. Additionally, among young people aged 18-29, 42% (the highest percentage for any news source) learn about

the campaign through the Internet. The Internet remains the second largest news source among Americans at 15%, more than double the statistic from 2004 ("Internet's Broader Role in Campaign 2008", 2008).

The mass media has several functions in the United States and almost all of them have some type of political implications. One function of the mass media is to entertain the viewing audience. Today, the majority of radio and television hours are devoted to entertainment. While entertainment does not have a direct political impact, the shows produced often involve or depict different issues suitable to the current political climate. The principal function of the mass media is to report the news. Almost all forms of mass media including newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and the Internet report news to the viewing audience (Bardes, Shelley, & Schmidt, 2006). In addition, the mass media identifies public problems, which is known as agenda setting. The mass media identifies the issues most important to the viewing public. As a result of the media's influence on the beliefs and opinions of Americans, the mass media also plays a role in socializing new generations. The programs and issues shown, especially on television, influence young people's beliefs and views of other countries, religions, and people (Bardes, Shelley, & Schmidt, 2006). Another function of the media is to provide a forum for political leaders to reach an audience. The media also provides a way for the public to participate in various forms of political debate. The final function of the mass media is to make profits. The mass media, like any other big business in the United States, must make profits in order to succeed. Most forms of mass media depend on advertisers in

order to obtain revenues and make profits. If they are unable to maintain profits, the media outlet often goes bankrupt or is sold (Bardes, Shelley, & Schmidt, 2006).

Mass media assumes different roles when producing information to the public. As gatekeeper, the media can influence what becomes a national political issue and for how long that issue will remain in the public eye. As scorekeeper, the media can keep track of and help make certain people noteworthy, as well as decide who is winning and losing in the political arena. As watchdog, the media monitors the activities of government officials and the political environment (Wilson & John J. Dilulio, 2001).

The public is influenced by the mass media in several ways. The first form of the media's influence is through the selective process. The media has the ability to determine what issues are important and consequently, what information it will provide to the public. In response to the media's influence of selective process, the general public has the ability to utilize selective perception when there is discontent with the information being produced (Cottam, Dietz-Uhler, Mastors, & Preston, 2004; Flammia & Sadri, 2008; Wilson & John J. Dilulio, 2001). The second form of the media's influence is through priming. While the media cannot directly control what a person's thoughts will be, the media can certainly influence what a person should think about. The media utilizes images in order to influence the thoughts of the audience (Cottam, Dietz-Uhler, Mastors, & Preston, 2004; Flammia & Sadri, 2008). A third form of the media's influence is through agenda setting. With agenda setting, the media influences the process by which problems are identified and considered important. Generally, the media publicizes an issue, then people discuss the issue with neighbors or friends, and finally the issue is

considered important enough to pressure officials to address it (Welch, Gruhl, Comer, & Rigdon, 2006).

In addition to the media's roles and influences, there are a few negative aspects to various forms of mass media. Bias is often found in many forms of mass media. The general concern is that a reporter or editor will allow his or her personal beliefs to influence the news stories they choose to report and how they will report the news stories (Wilson, 1997; Wilson & John J. Dilulio, 2001). While the media must decide what news to report, it must also decide where and how to report it. Every reporter takes what he or she sees or hears and then in turn filters it through his or her own experience. As a result, it is likely that a journalists' beliefs or attitude may affect his or her coverage (Welch, Gruhl, Comer, & Rigdon, 2006; Wilson, 1997; Wilson & John J. Dilulio, 2001). Additionally, in mainstream media, journalists and commentators are not very representative of the general public. The majority are college-educated white males from the upper middle class. The journalists are disproportionately urban and secular; identify themselves as liberal more so than conservative; and more are Democrats than Republicans (Welch, Gruhl, Comer, & Rigdon, 2006). As Detmer explains, "the problem is not merely that 'objectivity' in the journalistic sense can never be fully achieved, as even many of the fiercest defenders of the theory of objectivity freely concede. The point, rather, is that what journalists call objectivity is always and necessarily shot through with what journalists call 'subjectivity'" (Detmer, 1997).

Cultivation theory (also referred to as the cultivation hypothesis or analysis) was developed by Professor George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of

Communications at the University of Pennsylvania. In the 1960's, Professor Gerbner started a research project to determine whether and how watching television would influence the viewer's perception of the real world (LaRose & Straubhaar, 2003). Cultivation theorists, best known for their study of television and viewers as well as their study of television violence, argue that the mass media cultivates attitudes and values present in a culture by maintaining and propagating the values to certain members of the culture. While the mass media cultivates an inaccurate worldview, the viewers may assume it actually reflects real life. Cultivation theorists believe the long term effects of television's influence are "small and gradual, yet cumulative and significant" (LaRose & Straubhaar, 2003). Gerbner has argued that television cultivates a moderate political perspective in viewers (LaRose & Straubhaar, 2003). Consequently, it is more important than ever to accurately portray ethnic, racial, and religious groups so they are not misjudged and misunderstood.

The mass media often uses sensationalism in order to increase their audience and ratings. The majority of Americans used to obtain their news information from three main television networks which were ABC, CBS, and NBC. Nowadays, Americans not only have the same three major television networks, they also have numerous cable channels with twenty-four hour news, sports networks, radio talk shows, television talk shows, and the Internet. With the increased competition for viewers, the media has turned toward sensationalizing news stories which often involve sex, violence, and intrigue (Wilson & John J. Dilulio, 2001).

Stereotyping of minorities and religious groups in the mass media remains an important issue and is the central issue in this research project. It has been well established that the mass media has a tendency to misrepresent certain minority or religious groups (Flammia & Sadri, 2008; Ghareeb, 1983; Gilens, 1996, 1999; Greenberg & Brand, 1998; Hashem, 1997; Kamalipour, 1997; Kamalipour & Carilli, 1998; Lind & Danowski, 1998; McAlister, 2005; Brigitte L. Nacos & Torres-Reyna, 2002; Brigitte L. Nacos & Torres-Reyna, 2007; Oh, 2003; Said, 1981; Salaita, Spring 2005; Semmerling, 2006; Shaheen, 1984, 2001; Suleiman, 1983; Welch, Gruhl, Comer, & Rigdon, 2006; Wilson, 1997; Wilson & John J. Dilulio, 2001). The influence of the mass media and the social universe go hand in hand. If members of minority or religious groups are consistently depicted in a poor manner, then it will often result in the minority or religious group participating in destructive behavior. For minority members of the target group, stereotyping can affect their view of opportunities and choices, as well as their overall identity (Flammia & Sadri, 2008; Kamalipour & Carilli, 1998). Consequently, the minority or religious group will only further receive negative coverage from the mass media. For people outside of the minority group, stereotypes can limit or contain the potential of the targeted minority group. The social universe also influences the media in the way it covers certain issues, groups, or places. Therefore, stereotypes depicted in the mass media can influence a person's perception of minority or religious groups (Flammia & Sadri, 2008; Kamalipour & Carilli, 1998).

As a result of the technological revolution, the media plays an important role in connecting nations around the world. With the increase of electronic communication

technology, countries have become more interdependent and therefore, cultures, ideas, and lifestyles are spread across the globe instantly (Flammia & Sadri, 2008). Unfortunately, in today's society, many news stories are accepted as fact without being questioned, especially when the public has no first hand knowledge of the events or cultures involved in the story (Wilson, 1997). Therefore, it is extremely important for the mass media to address the negative aspects of its dissemination of information to the general public. Additionally, the use of intercultural communication and international relations are more important than ever (Gudykunst & Kim, 1992).

#### In-group/Out-group Theory

The media also plays an influential role in determining the cultural values and norms in society (Pieterse, 1997). As individuals, we evolve into a particular social universe or group. Tajfel and Turner, define a social group as “a collection of individuals who perceive themselves to be members of the same social category, share some emotional involvement in this common definition of themselves, and achieve some degree of social consensus about the evaluation of their group and of their membership of it” (1985). In Social Identity Theory, social groups classify and organize the social world. Additionally, the creation of social groups provide a system for self-reference which also creates and defines an individual's place in society (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Individuals often identify themselves in terms of racial, ethnic, or religious categories (Flammia & Sadri, 2008). Thus, an individual's social identity is a self-image which is derived from the social categories or group a person perceives himself or herself as belonging to (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). The establishment of these categories or groups is necessary to



assist individuals in dealing with the overwhelming complexity of the social universe (Gudykunst & Kim, 1992). The media assists individuals in choosing a social universe by associating their identity visually with a specific social category (Dunn & Slann, 2000; Patterson, 2005; Wilson, 1997).

Intergroup behavior is behavior displayed by one or more persons toward another person or group of people based on that person's identification of himself or herself and the others as belonging to different social categories (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Intergroup behavior arises out of the classification of social groups. There are three major assumptions with intergroup behavior. The first assumption is all individuals will strive to maintain or enhance their self-esteem or social identity. By doing so, individuals will utilize discriminatory comparison of a social group with other groups. A second assumption is that social categories or groups are associated with positive or negative values. The social identity can be either positive or negative based upon the evaluation of the group of itself or by others and are typical socially consensual. The third and final assumption is the evaluation of an individual's group is based upon the comparison to other social groups through the value of certain characteristics or attributes (Gudykunst & Kim, 1992; Iyengar & McGuire, 1993; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Therefore, the pressure to positively evaluate one's own social group leads social groups to differentiate themselves from one another (Tajfel & Turner, 1985).

Tajfel and Turner's research showed that when individuals categorized themselves as members of a particular social group it lead them to display in-group favoritism (1985). Since individuals seek to achieve positive self-esteem or social

identity, they do so by differentiating their in-group with another social group, or out-group, based on the value of certain characteristics or attributes. The enhancement of the in-group is done so at the expense of the out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1985).

Social Identity Theory plays a significant role in the mass media. In the media, the newsworthiness of different issues is influenced by the perceptions of the journalists and editors of the target audience (Dunn & Slann, 2000; Patterson, 2005; Wilson, 1997; Wilson & John J. Dilulio, 2001). In the United States, the media's target audience has traditionally been the white middle class (Avraham, 2003). Therefore, the white middle class is considered the in-group or majority. The target audience or in-group affects the reporting of out-groups; influences the choice of events covered; and influences the terminology used in the coverage of the event (Dijk, 1988). The media frequently portrays out-groups in a negative light and ultimately shapes minority opinion. Stereotypes are often built upon by development and education in an individual's social universe. Subconscious stereotypes are not typically hostile, violent, or aggressive; however, they still transmit fallacies in the news stories produced (Dunn & Slann, 2000; Patterson, 2005; Wilson, 1997). Unfortunately, many journalists and editors may be unaware of the distortions and stereotypes present in their news stories.

#### The Mass Media's Stereotypical Arab

In the mass media, Arabs have been portrayed as wealthy, barbaric, violent, corrupt, dishonest, religious fanatics, ignorant, abusers of women, and fanatic terrorists. Additionally, Arabs are typically displayed with a black beard, headdress, and dark sunglasses (Ghareeb, 1983; Little, 1998; Shaheen, 1984, 2001; Suleiman, 1983).

Unfortunately, this stereotype is the result of the inheritance and embellishment of Europe's pre-existing image of Arabs (Haque, 1995; Little, 1998; Shaheen, 2001; Suleiman, 1983). Arabs, the millions who reside in or are from an Arab state, dress both traditional and Western. The majority of Arabs are peaceful, poor, and do not reside in desert tents. Arabs are not the only minority group to experience stereotyping from different forms of media. In recent history, Asians, American Indians, Black Americans, and Jews were also depicted in a poor light (Ghareeb, 1983; Little, 1998; Shaheen, 2001). Unfortunately, stereotyping affects how young Arabs and Arab Americans perceive themselves and how others perceive them as well. Consequently, it is difficult for young Arab Americans to openly express pride in their heritage when the majority of Americans believe the images they see in the various forms of media (Shaheen, 2001).

The most significant problem is that the overwhelming majority of Arab depictions in television and film, as well as other sources of media, portray them in a negative light. The *consistent*, negative portrayal of Arabs in film and television can tarnish and sustain negative views towards Arabs across generations (Shaheen, 2001). The majority of Americans have little knowledge of the Middle East and much of the knowledge they do have is from inaccurate sources. Consequently, the information obtained confirms inaccurate stereotypes of Arabs (Ghareeb, 1983). One example is that many Americans believe the terms "Arab" and "Muslims" are interchangeable. Not all Arabs are Muslims and not all Muslims are Arabs. Additionally, the majority of Americans are unaware of Arabs' numerous contributions to society throughout history (Suleiman, 1983). Negative stereotyping of Arabs has implications that many do not

realize. In the mass media, it makes it difficult for reporters to report about Arabs objectively, honestly, and adequately. Politicians are often surrounded by controversy if they appear to be too “pro-Arab.” Even Arab investments in the United States can be viewed with suspicion as a result of the negative stereotype (Suleiman, 1983).

In recent studies, data from opinion polls indicate that discrimination of Muslim and Arab Americans has varied since the events of 9/11. As Houghton discusses, in a study conducted in May 2007 at the Pew Research Center, 33% of Muslims reported receiving positive support from non-Muslims and 32% reported receiving discrimination from non-Muslims (Houghton, 2008; "Muslim Americans: Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream", 2007). In another poll conducted by Cornell University in 2004, 27% of Americans believed that Muslims should be required to register their whereabouts with the government, 26% said that mosques should be placed under surveillance, 22% said that federal agencies should target individuals with Islamic or Middle Eastern backgrounds, and 29% said that Muslim civic associations should be infiltrated by federal agents to monitor their activities (Houghton, 2008; Nisbet & Shanahan, 2004). While there is not a clear indication of discrimination or support for Muslim Americans in varying polls, there is evidence to suggest discrimination against Muslim Americans exists. As Houghton suggests, the reaction of ordinary Americans shows how difficult it is to maintain discrimination or intolerance towards Muslim Americans. He further suggests, “It is not the mere existence of an ‘objective’ threat which feeds intolerance of out-groups, but our perceptions of the nature of that threat” (Houghton, 2008). Therefore,

an individual's perceptions and the process by which an individual's perceptions are influenced greatly affect views of and attitudes toward Muslims and Arab Americans.

#### Previous Academic Research Concerning Arab Americans

More academic research has been conducted on the portrayal of Arab Americans in Hollywood film, cartoons, and news broadcasts than has been conducted on portrayal of Arab Americans in newspapers. The majority of studies conducted pertained to Arabs in general or to other forms of media. When conducting research for the literature review, less than a handful of studies were found in which research was conducted on the portrayal of Arab Americans in U.S. newspapers either before and/or after 9/11. According to Gilens, "the race of people pictured in news stories is a salient aspect of the story to many viewers" (Gilens, 1996). In other studies, it has also been found that the race of the person depicted in the news story affected whether the reader formed a more positive or negative view of the person depicted in the story (Brigitte L. Nacos & Torres-Reyna, 2007). Therefore, it is important to research the portrayal of Arabs or Arab Americans in U.S. newspapers in addition to other forms of mass media.

A study conducted in 2002 at Columbia University analyzed the three largest daily newspapers published in New York City. The three newspapers included in the study were the *New York Times*, *New York Post*, and *Daily News*. In addition to the three newspapers, the researchers also analyzed the *USA Today*, as well as, transcripts of pertinent stories televised by CBS News on *The Early Show* and the *Evening News with Dan Rather* (Brigitte L. Nacos & Torres-Reyna, 2002). The analysis was restricted to one television network since previous research has established that news broadcasts have very

similar content on the major television networks. The researchers analyzed approximately 867 newspaper articles in addition to the transcripts from *The Early Show* and the *Evening News with Dan Rather*. During the analysis the researchers kept track of the article placement; type of news (straight reporting, news analysis, editorial, column, letters to the editor); the geographical context (New York City, domestic, international topics); news sources; themes or topics addressed; positions or policy preferences expressed; as well as whether the news story depicted Muslim and Arab Americans in a positive, negative, or neutral light. The study focused on the portrayal of Muslim Americans as well as Arab Americans and covered the time period from September 11, 2000 through March 11, 2002 (Brigitte L. Nacos & Torres-Reyna, 2002).

The researchers found that the four newspapers combined published nearly eleven times as many stories about Muslim or Arab Americans in the six months after 9/11 than in the six months before. Additionally, it was found that the four newspapers combined published nearly three times as many in the six months after 9/11 than in the twelve months before (Brigitte L. Nacos & Torres-Reyna, 2002). In the four newspapers analyzed, the articles pertaining to Muslim and Arab Americans were more positive and less negative following 9/11. However, in a follow-up study conducted from August 18, 2002 through September 18, 2002, utilizing the same retrieval methods and coding scheme, found that articles pertaining to Muslim and Arab Americans were more negative and less positive during the study period (Brigitte L. Nacos & Torres-Reyna, 2007).

The study conducted in 2002 showed a difference in the coverage of Muslim and Arab Americans following the events of 9/11. The researchers utilized more than one search term in order to obtain articles pertaining to Muslim and Arab Americans which allowed them to obtain a larger sample of articles to analyze in order to determine if Muslim and Arab Americans were portrayed in a positive, negative, or neutral light. One limitation of this study is the time period from which the sample was drawn. Since the study was conducted in 2002 only one year after 9/11, the researchers were limited in the length of time they could study following 9/11. While the researchers did return to the study at a later date and expanded it, it was only expanded for a few more months. Additionally, the researchers simply placed the articles in positive, negative, or neutral categories and did not consider the outcome of the portrayals on Social Identity Theory.

Another study conducted in 2003, analyzed newspapers using Lexis-Nexis academic from June 1, 2001 through October 11, 2001. Only news and feature stories from U.S. newspapers were analyzed. Additionally, Weston analyzed the *Chicago Tribune*, since it was a strong regional paper, and the *Detroit Free Press*, since it serves the area with the largest population of Arab Americans. A total of 195 news articles were analyzed. This study is more qualitative in nature since the researcher surveyed the themes, textures, and images of the stories instead of determining their frequency. In the study, it was determined that the dominant theme of pre-9/11 stories was of Arab Americans resisting stereotypes. In the months following 9/11, Weston determined that Arab Americans were depicted sympathetically as doubly victimized, as loyal patriotic members of the community, and as targets of government detentions. Weston indicated

the news articles reviewed failed to depict the diversity of Arab American culture; however, very few inaccurate or offensive portrayals were found (Weston, 2003).

In the study, Weston took a more qualitative approach to determining the portrayal of Arab Americans following the events of 9/11. It is interesting to see the outcome of the qualitative study differs from both of the quantitative studies found. Obviously, since this is a qualitative study, it has a higher probability of being less reliable than the quantitative studies. Additionally, Weston only analyzed articles over a very short time period from June 1, 2001 through October 11, 2001. The study only analyzed articles three months prior to 9/11 and only a month after 9/11, which does not take into consideration that initial media reporting directly following the incident might differ from reporting a few months later. Furthermore, Weston did not include her methodology in the research article; therefore, it was more difficult to ascertain her exact methods for determining the portrayal of Arab Americans in the articles analyzed.

In the final study found, the Oh analyzed the content of major U.S. newspapers with a circulation of over 200,000 from September 11, 2000 through September 11, 2002. The search term “Arab American” was utilized on Lexis-Nexis to obtain the newspapers articles analyzed. A sample was drawn from every fifth newspaper article, which resulted in 662 articles being analyzed. Oh analyzed the content of the newspaper articles to determine if Arab Americans were portrayed as members of an in-group, out-group, or victim (Oh, 2003).

The study yielded that the coverage of Arab Americans as members of an in-group decreased after 9/11; the portrayal of Arab Americans as victims increased after



9/11; and that it was not clear if the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an out-group increased after 9/11 (Oh, 2003). Oh determined there was no clear pattern in the portrayal of Arab Americans in U.S. newspapers. It was found that in the newspapers studied, not all of the coverage was negative, and that many of the articles contained positive depictions of Arab Americans. It was also noted that in the months immediately preceding 9/11, the newspaper articles did not rush to depict Arab Americans as members of an out-group; however, following 9/11 newspapers returned to depicting them as members of an out-group. Oh noted several limitations in his study which included; the use of only one search term “Arab American;” the lack of fully developed in-group variables; and the version of Lexis-Nexus used (Oh, 2003).

This study has also shown the changes that have occurred in the coverage of Arab Americans following 9/11. It is interesting that the coverage of Arab Americans immediately following 9/11 did not directly place them as members of an out-group; however, eventually the portrayals returned to placing them as members of an out-group. Oh analyzed a significant number of articles for the study. Additionally, the articles were obtained from a large number of sources. This study was also limited by the time period of the study. Since the study was conducted only a year or two following 9/11, Oh only analyzed articles from one year prior to 9/11 and one year following 9/11. Another limitation of the study results from the use of only one search term to locate the articles pertaining to Arab Americans.

All three of these studies have contributed to determining how Arab and Muslim Americans were portrayed following the events of 9/11. While two of the studies found

that the portrayals were more negative following 9/11, only one study actually placed Arab Americans as members of an out-group following the event. It will be interesting to determine if the portrayal of Arab and Muslim Americans differs when a larger time period is studied, when more search terms are utilized to locate articles pertaining to Arab Americans, and when more sources are utilized.

## METHODOLOGY

### Content Analysis

Research methodology is the general approach a researcher takes in carrying out a research project. Consequently, to some extent, the approach also dictates the particular tools a researcher selects. Since data and methodology are interdependent, it is necessary to take into account the nature of the data that will be collected (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Therefore, content analysis was chosen as the best-suited method for the purposes of this research project. According to Leedy and Ormrod, a content analysis is a “detailed and systematic examination of the contents of a particular body of material for the purpose of identifying patterns, themes, or biases” and it is typically conducted on forms of human communication such as books, newspapers, films, television, art, music, transcripts, and videotapes (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Broadly defined, content analysis can be considered a survey of documents (Buddenbaum & Novak, 2001). With content analysis, certain measures are taken in order to ensure the process is as objective as possible. In a typical content analysis, the researcher scrutinizes the material for each characteristic he or she has defined. In a content analysis, the tabulation of the frequency of each characteristic is determined as well as any descriptive or inferential statistical analyses needed to answer the proposed research question(s). The researcher then uses the tabulations and statistical analyses to interpret the data and its relation to the research problem (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

Since this research project analyzes newspapers for the inclusion or absence of certain variables, a content analysis is the most appropriate methodology. The research question in this particular study is to determine if Arab Americans are portrayed as members of an in-group, out-group, or victim following 9/11, therefore, it will be necessary to observe the frequencies of certain characteristics in order to determine how the variables increase or decrease following 9/11.

### The Hypotheses

As Leedy and Ormrod discuss that, “a content analysis involves the greatest amount of planning at the front end of the project” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Therefore, it is important for the researcher to define a specific research problem, to identify the sample to be studied, and to select the method of analysis at the very beginning. Additionally, it is important for the researcher to clearly define the characteristics to be examined in precise and concrete terms (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). In this study, a content analysis will be conducted on articles from *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post* to determine if Arab Americans are portrayed as an out-group member, an in-group member, or as a victim. *USA Today* was analyzed because it is the national newspaper in the United States. *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* were analyzed because they have gained national influence due to their vast audience, which includes influential political figures. The study will determine how Arab Americans are portrayed to the general public in articles from the three newspapers. Since the majority of mass media perpetuates a negative stereotype of minorities, it is expected that the newspapers will portray a negative stereotype of Arab Americans as well. Research

conducted will address the coverage of Arab Americans in the five years before and the five years after 9/11 in order to determine to what extent Arab Americans have been depicted as members of an out-group following that date.

In the first hypothesis, the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an out-group will increase following September 11, 2001. General research has indicated that minorities are depicted as members of an out-group and are subjected to negative stereotyping (Greenberg & Brand, 1998; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). While this would be assumed during peaceful time periods, it is expected that the placement of minorities as members of an out-group will increase in the years following a time of crisis. Following a time of crisis, it is expected that the relationship of members of an in-group will strengthen at the expense of the portrayal of the out-group. Due to the circumstances of 9/11, it is expected that the majority or in-group will view Arab Americans as a threatening out-group. Consequently, it is expected that the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an out-group will increase following 9/11.

In the second hypothesis, the portrayal of Arab Americans as victims will also increase following September 11, 2001. Since the events of 9/11, it has been documented that Arab Americans were victims of discrimination and hate crimes. Additionally, while literature pertaining to the portrayal of minorities as victims has not been fully researched, it appears in early research that minority groups are often overly portrayed as victims in the media (Akram, Spring-Summer 2002; Greenberg & Brand, 1998). Therefore, as a result of the circumstances surrounding 9/11, it is expected that the portrayal of Arab Americans as victims will increase following 9/11.

In the third hypothesis, the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an in-group will decrease after September 11, 2001. During a crisis such as 9/11, it is expected that the portrayals of Arab Americans as members of an in-group will decline following 9/11. Since it is expected that the majority or in-group will view Arab Americans as threatening following 9/11 it is logical to expect that there will be fewer instances in which Arab Americans are portrayed as members of an in-group following 9/11. Additionally, with the circumstances surrounding 9/11, it is expected that group beliefs will be polarized following the event, ultimately limiting the inclusion of Arab Americans as members of the in-group.

#### The Data and Variables

Conducting a content analysis of *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post* will provide articles from three newspapers with national significance. The population will include all articles drawn from a search of Lexis-Nexis for the time period of September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2006, which includes the search terms “Arab American(s)” and “Muslim American(s).” The independent variable for analysis is the time period before and after September 11, 2001. The time periods will be broken down by year in order to yield a more accurate degree of analysis with the first stage occurring before September 11, 2001 and the second stage occurring after September 11, 2001. The dependent variables for analysis are out-group, in-group, and victims. A nominal level of measurement will be used to determine the presence or absence of the variables for out-group, in-group, or victim.

For the purpose of this study, *in-group* is defined as a group of individuals considered socially acceptable by the majority or individuals a person has positive feelings about. *Out-group* is defined as a group of individuals distinct from one's own or a group not considered socially acceptable by the majority. *Victim* is defined as a person injured or a person subjected to oppression, hardship, or mistreatment.

The dependent variables are grouped into three different categories: in-group, out-group, and victim variables. The out-group variables were labeled as wealth, terrorism, barbarism, aggression, religion, antisocial, politics and culture. Since Arabs, in general, are often stereotyped as extremely wealthy, involved in terrorist activities, barbaric, aggressive, extremely religious, and as having a strange culture, coding these variables is relatively self-explanatory. Previous research has established that Arabs are often viewed and portrayed as being extremely wealthy and obtaining large sums of money from oil profits. Therefore, the first out-group variable wealth was coded utilizing the terms money, rich, economic, and wealthy. Since Arabs are often viewed or portrayed as participating in terrorist activities, the variable terrorism was coded utilizing the terms terror, terrorist, extremism, and terrorism. Throughout history, Arabs have been portrayed and often viewed as being barbaric. Consequently, barbarism was coded utilizing the terms bloodshed, slaughter, extermination, enemies, massacre, lunatic, fanatic, dismembering, and treacherous. Since the out-group variable aggression is also included in this study, the coding of the terms barbarism and aggression were viewed very carefully in order to ensure the terms were not intercoded. Aggression was coded utilizing the terms war, conflict, kill, fighting, attack, bombing, jihad, threat, violence,

hostility, hate, and crime (crime committed *by* an Arab American, not against). Previous research has also indicated that Arabs are often portrayed and viewed as being overly religious or practicing a religion not familiar to mainstream America. Thus, religion was coded utilizing the terms Muslims, Christians, holy, Allah (or God), Islamic, and religion(ous). Arabs are also viewed as being antisocial. As a result, antisocial was coded utilizing the terms lying, cheating, and scheming, which allowed for antisocial activities that were not a crime. Since minority groups are portrayed as practicing in special interest politics, it was also expected that Arab Americans would also participate in special interest politics. Therefore, the politics variable was coded as any special interest politics practiced by Arab Americans as a group. Finally, the variable culture was coded as any practices and beliefs by Arab Americans not consistent with mainstream America.

Due to the limited amount of research of members of an in-group in general, there are a limited number of in-group variables. The in-group variables were labeled as peace, productive, and patriot. The opposite of the out-group variables would assume that members of an in-group are peaceful, productive, and patriotic members of society. The first in-group variable peace was coded utilizing the terms peaceful, peace-making, peace-keeping, peace-loving, and peace. The variable productive was coded utilizing the terms student, employee, and contributing to society. Finally, the patriot variable was coded as partnership between the government and Arab Americans as a group and utilizing the various forms of the term patriotic.

The victim variables were labeled as violent crime, discrimination, and civil rights/liberties violations. The coding of the victim variables is also fairly self-



explanatory. The first victim variable violent crime was coded as any violent crime committed *against* an Arab American. The next variable discrimination was coded as any discriminatory act committed against an Arab American. Finally, the last variable, civil rights/liberties violations was coded as any suspected civil rights or liberties violation against Arab Americans.

### Strengths and Limitations

Content analysis is economical meaning the cost of collecting the data (typically available articles) is low, when compared to other methods of research such as surveys or participant observation. This research method is very convenient because the documents are in a fixed format. The documents are readily available to be reviewed by the researcher at any time or place (Buddenbaum & Novak, 2001). By creating and defining procedures, content analysis can be reliable. Additionally, since this method of research required clear definitions of the characteristics or qualities to be examined, it is easier for the research project to be replicated (Buddenbaum & Novak, 2001). Since there is no contact with subjects, content analysis is very safe with minimal ethical problems. Content analysis is the only method which enables the researcher to study the past. It is a method capable of measuring, describing, and analyzing temporal change. Therefore, it can be used historically or longitudinally in order to study change over time. Content analysis also allows the researcher to compare content across many texts and analyze it utilizing quantitative techniques (Goldenberg, 1992; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

While content analysis is a “tried and true” research method, it has a few weaknesses. Even with the aid of computers, content analysis can be very time

consuming and labor intensive depending on the documents researched (Buddenbaum & Novak, 2001). When utilizing content analysis, there are often problems with validity and reliability. If manifest coding is utilized, the variable can be reliable, but the validity questionable. If latent coding is utilized, the variable can be less reliable, but achieve greater validity. There is also the limitation of using recorded communications when utilizing content analysis. Additionally, the data used is often obtained from selectively deposited or retained communications. In some cases, the retained data may not be a representative sample of the original data (especially when using content analysis for a historical study). Therefore, it may make generalizing the result of the data to the population more difficult (Goldenberg, 1992; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

## RESEARCH AND RESULTS

### The Frequencies

The research question examined is whether or not Arab Americans are portrayed as members of an in-group, out-group, or victim following the events of September 11, 2001. From this research question, the following hypotheses were derived. In the first hypothesis, the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an out-group will increase following September 11, 2001. In the second hypothesis, the portrayal of Arab Americans as victims will also increase following September 11, 2001. In the third hypothesis, the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an in-group will decrease following September 11, 2001. Articles were obtained from a Lexis Nexis search of *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post* for the time period of September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2006.

A total of 1379 articles were reviewed from *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post* from September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2006. Of the 1379 articles analyzed, 927 or 67.2% of the articles were analyzed as a result of utilizing the search term Arab American and 452 or 32.8% of the articles were analyzed as a result of utilizing the search term Muslim American. Nearly 80% of the articles were printed following 9/11. As shown in Figure 1, only 284 articles were printed prior to 9/11, while 1095 articles were printed following 9/11.

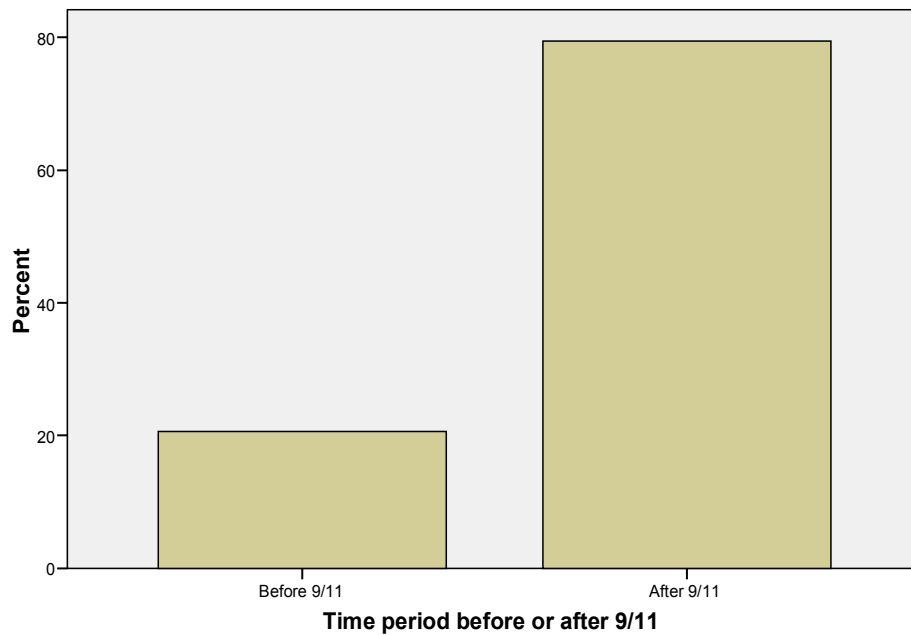


Figure 1: Number of Articles Printed Before and After 9/11

The Lexis Nexis search of *USA Today* yielded the fewest articles, only 158. The search of *The New York Times* yielded almost 50% of the articles with 671. The search of the *The Washington Post* yielded approximately 40% of the articles with 550. These percentages are shown in Figure 2.

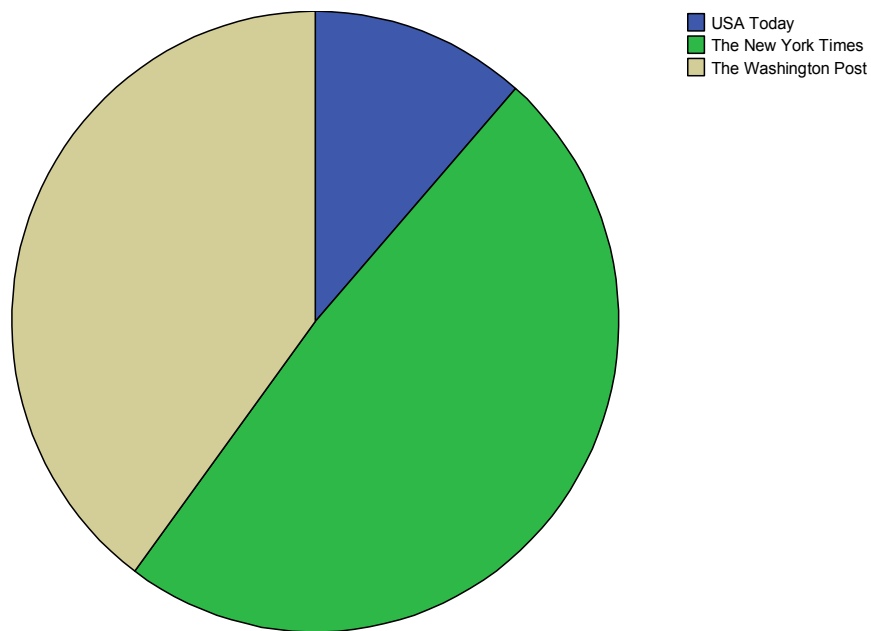


Figure 2: Number of Articles Printed in Each Newspaper

The articles analyzed were placed in the social categories of out-group, in-group, or victim utilizing certain variables for each category. A total of 15 variables were utilized in order to place articles in the appropriate social category. The out-group variables utilized were wealth, terrorism, barbarism, aggression, religion, culture, antisocial, and politics. The in-group variables utilized were peace, productive, patriot, and partnership. The victim variables utilized were crime, discrimination, and civil rights/liberties violation. As shown in Figure 3, the terrorism, politics, and discrimination variables resulted in the largest number of articles. The politics variable had 342 or 24.8% of the articles, the terrorism variable had 256 or 18.6% of the articles, and the discrimination variable had 205 or 14.9% of the articles. The wealth, barbarism, and

antisocial variables resulted in the lowest number of articles. The wealth variable had 1 or .1% of the articles, the barbarism variable had 2 or .1% of the articles, and the antisocial variable had 4 or .3% of the articles.

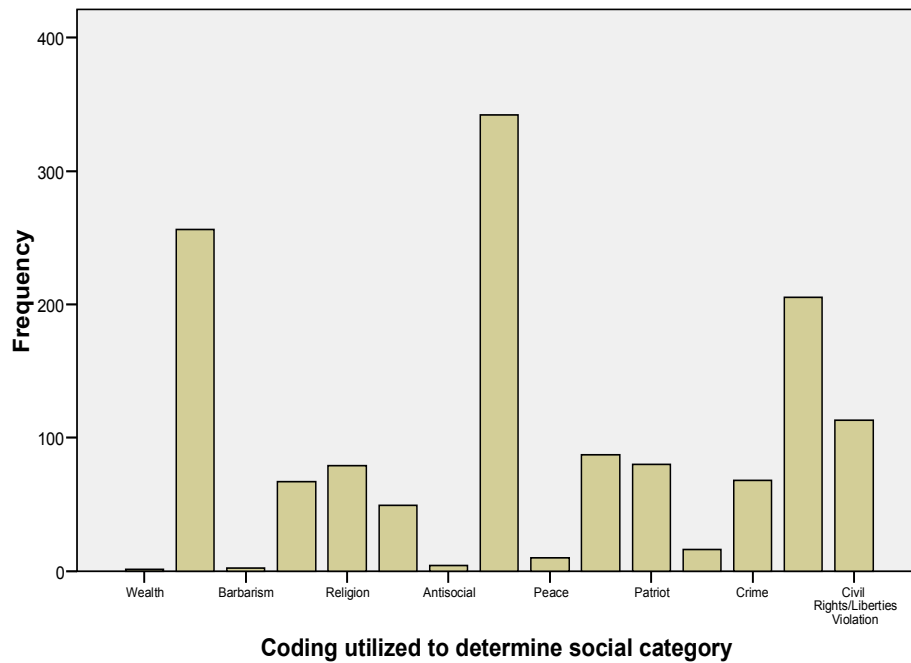


Figure 3: Frequency of Variables to Determine Social Category

A total of 801 or 58.1% of the articles were placed in the out-group social category; 386 or 28.0% of the articles were placed in the victim social category; and 192 or 13.9% of the articles were placed in the in-group social category. According to Leedy and Ormrod, “the mean represents the single point at which the two sides of a distribution balance (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).” The mean is the arithmetic average of the scores

within the data set. A normal distribution of a data set indicates that the largest amount of the examples in the given set of data fall close to the average, while a relatively small amount of the examples fall at one extreme or the other (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). During the coding process, in-group was labeled as 1, out-group was labeled as 2, and victim was labeled as 3 in order to run analyses of the data. Since the data fell into a normal distribution or normal curve as shown in the histogram (Figure 4), the mean of the social categories was determined as 2.14, falling within the out-group social category.

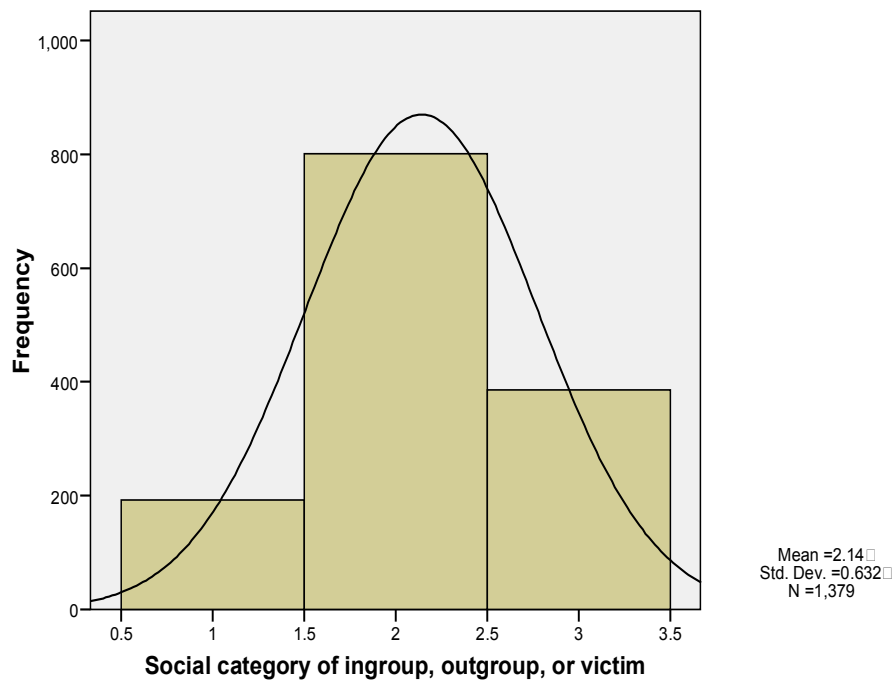


Figure 4: Histogram of Social Categories of In-group, Out-group, and Victim

In order to yield a finer degree of analysis, the articles were also distributed by year during the time period from September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2006. The first year from September 11, 1996 through September 10, 1997 was coded as 1 and the last year from September 11, 2005 through September 10, 2006 was coded as 10. Each year in between was coded with appropriate number from the earliest year to the latest year. As shown in Table 1 and Figure 5, the two years immediately following 9/11 resulted in the largest number of articles. A total of 442 or 32.1% of the articles were printed from September 11, 2001 through September 10, 2002 and a total of 253 or 18.3% of the articles were printed from September 11, 2002 through September 10, 2003. From September 11, 2003 through September 10, 2006, there continued to be twice as many articles printed per year than in the years before 9/11 from September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2000. In the year immediately prior to the attacks of 9/11, there was a total of 96 or 11% of the articles, similar to the number of articles in the last three years of the research project. Therefore, in the last three years of the study, the number of articles returned to the levels immediately preceding 9/11.



Table 1

Frequency of Articles Each Year of Search Period

Year of Search Period	Frequency	Percent
9/11/1996-9/10/1997	41	3.0
9/11/1997-9/10/1998	52	3.8
9/11/1998-9/10/1999	48	3.5
9/11/1999-9/10/2000	47	3.4
9/11/2000-9/10/2001	96	7.0
9/11/2001-9/10/2002	442	32.1
9/11/2002-9/10/2003	253	18.3
9/11/2003-9/10/2004	159	11.5
9/11/2004-9/10/2005	124	9.0
9/11/2005-9/10/2006	117	8.5

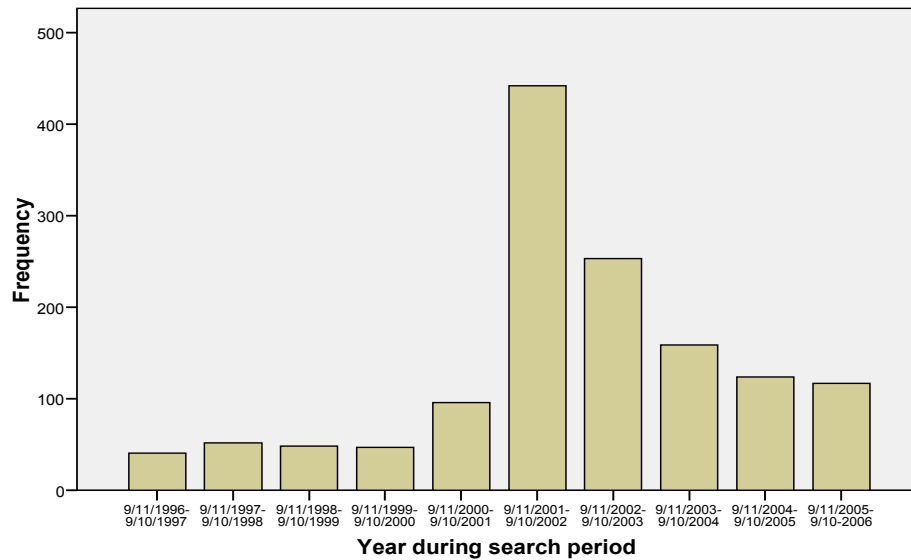


Figure 5: Frequency of Articles for Each Year of Search Period

In order to learn more about the data and determine its characteristics, measures of variability (dispersion and deviation) were analyzed. Once a mean is established, further measurements of the data can be conducted. When analyzing data, it is important to determine the centrality and the spread in order to see the two parameters of the data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The range is the simplest measure of variability. In a typical range, the data tend to be clustered around the mean. In a less typical range, the data are dispersed farther from the mean and tend to less resemble the data qualities of the mean (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). As shown in Figure 4, the data falls in a typical range. The standard deviation is the standard measure of variability. The standard deviation indicates how closely all of the examples in the data set are clustered around the mean. If a large number of data are close to the mean, then the standard deviation will be small and if a large number of the data are far away from the mean, then the standard deviation will be large (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The standard deviation of the social categories in-group, out-group, and victim was determined as 0.632, meaning a large amount of the data fell close to the mean. Since the data for the years of the search period also fell into a normal distribution or normal curve, as shown below in Figure 6, the mean and standard deviation were determined for this data set as well. The mean was determined to be 6.48, falling into the year immediately following the attacks of 9/11. The standard deviation was determined to be 2.109, which indicates that the articles are dispersed slightly farther from the mean than they were when viewing the social category variables of in-group, out-group, and victim.

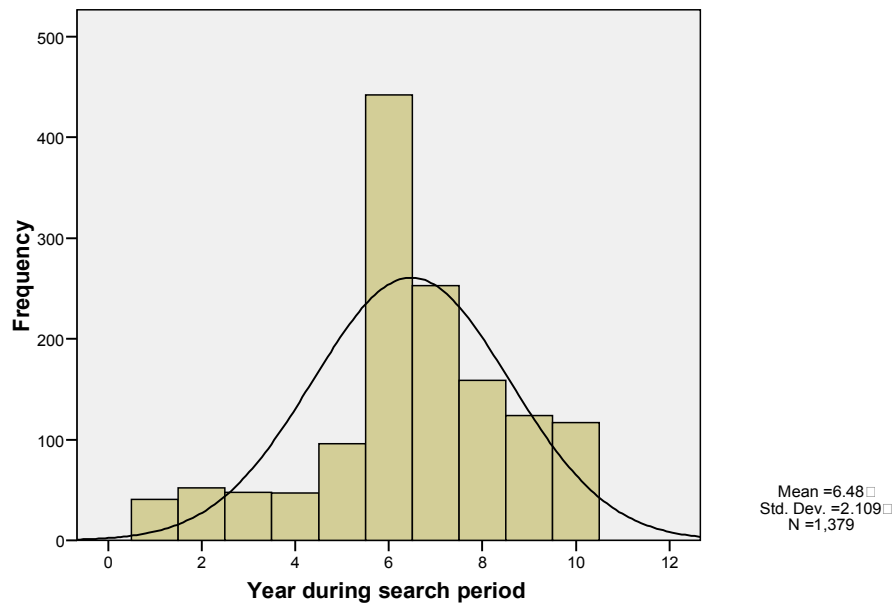


Figure 6: Histogram of Years of Search Period

In summary, the frequencies have shown some unique features of the data obtained from the three newspapers. The frequencies have shown that the majority of articles were printed after the events of 9/11. The search of *The New York Times* produced the most articles and the search of *USA Today*, the national newspaper, produced the fewest articles. Additionally, the majority of articles were obtained by utilizing the “Arab American” search term rather than “Muslim American” search term. The out-group social category was coded the most frequently, while the in-group and victim social categories were coded less frequently. In the social categories, the politics, terrorism, and discrimination variables were coded the most frequently. Two of the variables coded the most frequently, politics and terrorism, are out-group variables. In the

social categories, the wealth, barbarism, and antisocial variables were coded the least. Finally, while a large number of articles were printed in the two years immediately following 9/11, there continued to remain at least two times as many articles from September 11, 2003 through September 10, 2006 than in the years prior to 9/11. All of this information has provided an initial description and first look at the data obtained from the three newspapers in this research project.

#### Arab American vs. Muslim American

In order to obtain the 1379 articles analyzed, the search terms “Arab American” and “Muslim American” were utilized. It was determined a necessity to use the search term “Muslim American” as well, since many people often confuse the terms Arab and Muslim. A crosstabs was performed to determine if there was a difference between the two search terms utilized; the time periods “before 9/11” and “after 9/11”; and the social categories of in-group, out-group, and victim. The results are shown in Table 2 and Figure 7. For the in group social category, the results yielded an increase in the percentage of articles coded as in-group for the time periods “before 9/11” and “after 9/11” from 9.8% to 16.0% for the term “Arab American” and from 3.0% to 14.8% for the term “Muslim American.” For the out-group social category, the results yielded a decrease in the percentage of articles coded as an out-group for the time periods “before 9/11” and “after 9/11” from 72.3% to 46.0% for the term “Arab American” and from 83.0% to 69.0% for the term “Muslim American.” For the victim social category, the results yielded an increase for the time periods “before 9/11” and “after 9/11” from 17.9% to 38.0% for the term “Arab American” and 14.0% to 16.2% for the term “Muslim

American.” It is interesting to note, that the increases on both the in-group and out-group social categories were similar when utilizing each search term; however, on the victim social category, the increase was quite large when utilizing the search term “Arab American” when compared to the very small increase when utilizing the search term “Muslim American.”

Table 2

Crosstabs of Time Period Before and After 9/11; Social Category of In-group, Out-group, and Victim; and Search Terms Utilized

Search Term Utilized	Time Period	In-group	Out-group	Victim
Arab American	Before 9/11	18 9.8%	133 72.3%	33 17.9%
	After 9/11	119 16.0%	342 46.0%	282 38.0%
	Total	137 14.8%	475 51.2%	315 34.0%
Muslim American	Before 9/11	3 3.0%	83 83.0%	14 14.0%
	After 9/11	52 14.8%	243 69.0%	57 16.2%
	Total	55 12.2%	326 72.1%	57 16.2%

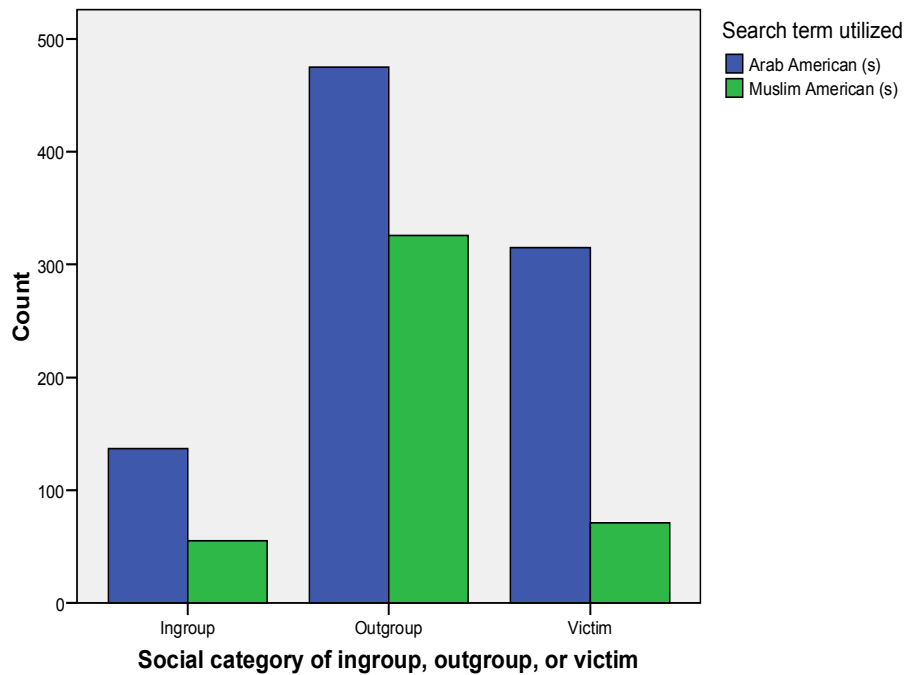


Figure 7: Crosstabs of Search Term Utilized and Social Category of In-group, Out-group, or Victim

A crosstabs was also performed to determine differences in the search term utilized and each year of the search period for the research project. During each year of the search period nearly two to three times as many articles were obtained utilizing the search term “Arab American” than utilizing the search term “Muslim American.” There were two exceptions to this, which were the last two years of the research project. For the time periods of September 11, 2004 through September 10, 2005 and September 11, 2005 through September 10, 2006, it is interesting to note that number of articles obtained utilizing both search terms are very similar. For the time period of September 11, 2004

through September 10, 2005, a total of 62 articles were obtained utilizing the search term “Arab American” and a total of 62 articles were obtained utilizing the search term “Muslim American.” For the time period of September 11, 2005 through September 10, 2006, a total of 64 articles were obtained utilizing the search term “Arab American” and a total of 53 articles were obtained utilizing the search term “Muslim American.” The results are shown in Figure 8.

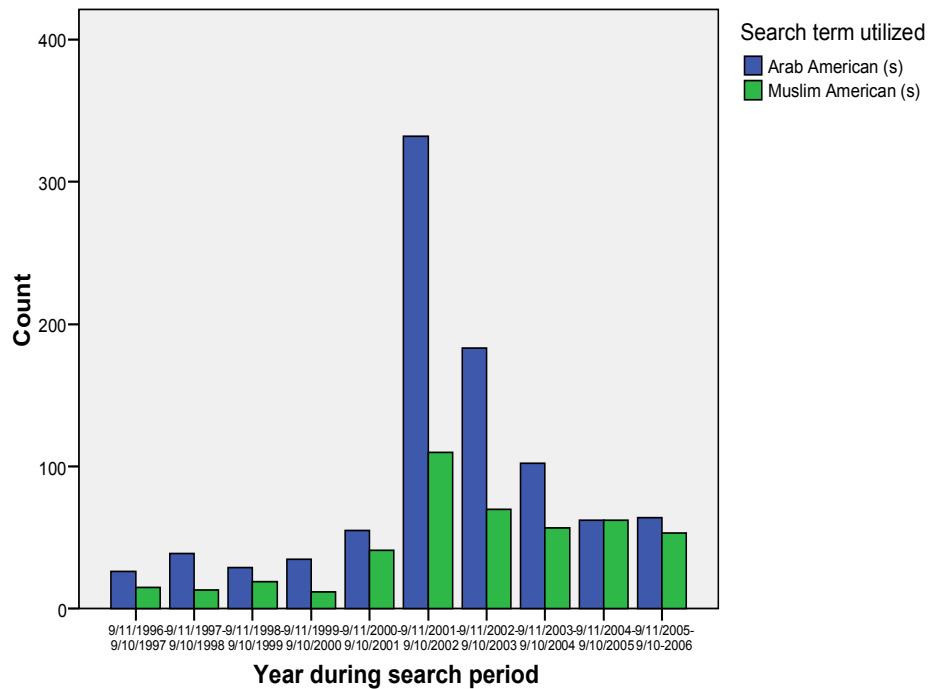


Figure 8: Crosstabs of Search Term Utilized and Year of Search Period

While this information does not play a central role in the hypotheses at hand, it is important to determine if there were significant differences in the outcome of the research

when utilizing the two search terms “Arab American” and “Muslim Americans.” As discussed in the paragraphs above, there is not a significant difference in the outcome of the research project when utilizing the two different search terms. Consistently more articles were printed pertaining to Arab Americans than Muslim Americans for each year of the study with the exception of the last two years, where a balance between the two occurred. The only difference between the two search terms was when the “Muslim American” search term was utilized with the victim social category, which resulted in a smaller increase from the time period “before 9/11” and the time period “after 9/11” than the other social categories for the search term. Otherwise, it appears that both search terms yielded a similar outcome of the articles.

#### The Out-group, In-group and Victim Variables

As previously discussed, 15 variables were used in order to code the articles as portraying Arab Americans as members of an out-group, in-group, or victim. The eight out-group variables utilized were wealth, terrorism, barbarism, aggression, religion, culture, antisocial, and politics. The four in-group variables utilized were peace, productive, patriot, and partnership. The three victim variables utilized were crime, discrimination, and civil rights/liberties violations. As predicted, some of the variables were coded more frequently while others were not coded at all. The out-group variables coded the most frequently were politics with 342 or 24.8% of the articles; terrorism with 256 or 18.6% of the articles; religion with 79 or 5.7% of the articles; and aggression with 67 or 4.9% of the articles. The in-group variables coded the most frequently were productive with 87 or 6.3% of the articles and patriot with 80 or 5.8% of the articles. The



in-group variables coded the most frequently were discrimination with 205 or 14.9% of the articles and civil rights/liberties violations with 113 or 8.2% of the articles.

A crosstabs was also performed for each year of the search period and each variable utilized to code the social categories. The results are shown below in Figure 9. Since a large number of variables were utilized to code the articles into each of the social categories, only the most frequently coded articles will be discussed in detail. Each of the out-group variables showed their own unique pattern during the time period of the research project. As shown in Table 3, the aggression and politics variables increased following 9/11 while the terrorism and religion variables actually decreased following 9/11.

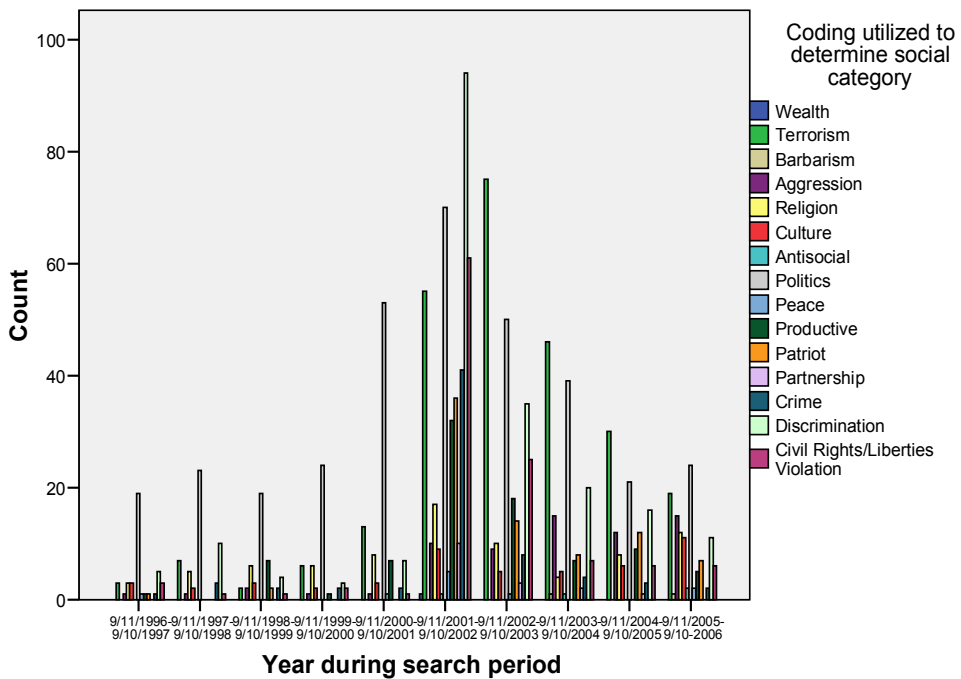


Figure 9: Crosstabs of the Variables Utilized to Determine the Social Category and Each Year of Search Period

When analyzing the data, it appears the politics variable increased following 9/11. During the time period of September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2001, the percentage of articles coded utilizing the politics variable ranged from 39.6% to 55.2% of the articles. During the year immediately following 9/11, the percentage of articles decreased dramatically to 15.8%. From September 11, 2002 through September 10, 2006 the percentage of articles coded utilizing the politics variable began to increase again over the years from 16.9% to 24.5%; however they never returned to pre/911 levels.

When analyzing the data, it appears the terrorism variable actually decreased following 9/11. The percentage of articles coded utilizing the terrorism variable from September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2001 ranged from 4.2% to 13.5%. During the year immediately following 9/11, the percentage of articles decreased slightly to 12.4%. However, from September 11, 2002 through September 10, 2003, the percentage of articles coded utilizing the terrorism variable increased dramatically to 29.6% and then decreased slightly each year until it reached 16.2% for the time period of September 11, 2005 through September 10, 2006.

Similar to the terrorism variable, the religion variable also decreased following 9/11. During the time period of September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2001, the percentage of articles coded utilizing the religion variable ranged from 7.3% to 12.8%. In the year immediately following 9/11, the percentage decreased to 3.8%. During the years following 9/11, the percentages were all over the board from 2.5% for the time period of September 11, 2003 through September 11, 2004 to 10.3% for the time period of September 11, 2005 through September 10, 2006. However, when comparing all of the percentages before 9/11 to all of the percentages after 9/11, it appears that the articles coded utilizing the religion variable decreased following 9/11.

An analysis of the data shows that the aggression variable, like the politics variable, increased following 9/11. The percentage of articles coded utilizing the aggression variable from September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2001 ranged from 1.0% to 4.2%. During the year immediately following 9/11, the percentage of articles remained steady at 2.3%. However, from September 11, 2002 through September 10,

2006, the percentage of articles coded utilizing the aggression variable increased dramatically from 3.6% to 12.8%. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Crosstabs of Year of Search Period and Out-group Variables

Year of Search Period	Politics	Terrorism	Religion	Aggression
9/11/1996-9/10/1997	19 46.3%	3 7.3%	3 7.3%	1 2.4%
9/11/1997-9/10/1998	23 44.2%	7 13.5%	5 9.6%	1 1.9%
9/11/1998-9/10/1999	19 39.6%	2 4.2%	6 12.5%	2 4.2%
9/11/1999-9/10/2000	24 51.1%	6 12.8%	6 12.8%	1 2.1%
9/11/2000-9/10/2001	53 55.2%	13 13.5%	8 8.3%	1 1.0%
9/11/2001-9/10/2002	70 15.8%	55 12.4%	17 3.8%	10 2.3%
9/11/2002-9/10/2003	50 19.8%	75 29.6%	10 4.0%	9 3.6%
9/11/2003-9/10/2004	39 24.5%	46 28.9%	4 2.5%	15 9.4%
9/11/2004-9/10/2005	21 16.9%	30 24.2%	8 6.5%	12 9.7%
9/11/2005-9/10/2006	24 20.5%	19 16.2%	12 10.3%	15 12.8%
Total	342 24.8%	256 18.6%	79 5.7%	67 4.9%

The discrimination and civil rights/liberties variables were coded the most frequently for the victim social category. As shown in Table 4, both the discrimination and civil rights/liberties victim variables decreased when compared to the year

immediately following 9/11 and appeared to return to pre-9/11 levels. During the time period of September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2001, the percentage of articles coded utilizing the discrimination variable ranged from 6.4% to 19.2%. In the three years immediately before 9/11, the percentages ranged from 6.4% to 8.3%. For the year immediately following 9/11, the percentage increased dramatically to 21.3%. During the time period of September 11, 2002 through September 11, 2006, the percentages decreased each year following 9/11 from 13.8% to 9.4%. When compared to the year immediately following 9/11, the percentage of articles coded utilizing the discrimination variable slowly decreased each year following 9/11.

The civil rights/liberties variable also decreased following 9/11. The percentage of articles coded utilizing the civil rights/liberties violations variable ranged from 1.0% to 7.3% for the time period of September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2001. For the year immediately following 9/11, the percentage increased to 13.8%. However, similar to the productive variable, for each year following 9/11, the percentage of articles utilizing the civil rights/liberties variable decreased from 9.9% to 4.4% although not in a particular yearly order like the productive variable.

Table 4

## Crosstabs of Year of Search Period and Victim Variables

Year of Search Period	Discrimination	Civil Rights/Liberties Violations
9/11/1996-9/10/1997	5 12.2%	3 7.3%
9/11/1997-9/10/1998	10 19.2%	1 1.9%
9/11/1998-9/10/1999	4 8.3%	1 2.1%
9/11/1999-9/10/2000	3 6.4%	2 4.3%
9/11/2000-9/10/2001	7 7.3%	1 1.0%
9/11/2001-9/10/2002	94 21.3%	61 13.8%
9/11/2002-9/10/2003	35 13.8%	25 9.9%
9/11/2003-9/10/2004	20 12.6%	7 4.4%
9/11/2004-9/10/2005	16 12.9%	6 4.8%
9/11/2005-9/10/2006	11 9.4%	6 5.1%
Total	205 14.9%	113 8.2%

As discussed, the two in-group variables coded the most frequently were the productive and patriot variables. As shown in Table 5, when analyzing the data for the productive and patriot in-group variables, it appears that both of the variables increased following 9/11. During the time period of September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2001, the percentage of articles coded utilizing the productive variable varied each year from .0% through 14.6%. During the year immediately following 9/11, the percentage

remained steady at 7.2%, similar to the previous year. From September 11, 2002 through September 10, 2006, the percentage of articles coded utilizing the productive variable continued to remain similar to the previous years ranging from 4.4% to 7.3%. When analyzing the years before 9/11 to all of the years after 9/11 as a whole, it appears that the percentages increased as a whole with the exception of the one year before 9/11, from September 11, 1998 through September 10, 1999, in which 14.6% of the articles were coded utilizing the productive variable.

Similar to the productive variable, when analyzing the data, it appears the patriot variable also increased following 9/11. The percentage coded utilizing the patriot variable during the time period of September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2001 ranged from .0% to 4.2%. During the year immediately following 9/11, the percentage of articles increased to 8.1%. For the time period of September 11, 2002 through September 10, 2006, the percentage of articles coded utilizing the search term patriot remained higher at 5.0% to 9.7%. When analyzing the years before 9/11 to all of the years after 9/11 as a whole, it appears that the percentages increased as a whole as well.

Table 5

## Crosstabs of Year of Search Period and In-group Variables

Year of Search Period	Productive	Patriot
9/11/1996-9/10/1997	1 2.4%	1 2.4%
9/11/1997-9/10/1998	0 .0%	0 .0%
9/11/1998-9/10/1999	7 14.6%	2 4.2%
9/11/1999-9/10/2000	1 2.1%	0 .0%
9/11/2000-9/10/2001	7 7.3%	0 .0%
9/11/2001-9/10/2002	32 7.2%	36 8.1%
9/11/2002-9/10/2003	18 7.1%	14 5.5%
9/11/2003-9/10/2004	7 4.4%	8 5.0%
9/11/2004-9/10/2005	9 7.3%	12 9.7%
9/11/2005-9/10/2006	5 4.3%	7 6.0%
Total	87 6.3%	80 5.8%

In summary, the variables coded the most frequently have their own unique pattern when comparing before and after 9/11 by each year. In the out-group social category, the aggression and politics both increased following 9/11; however, the terrorism and religion variables both decreased following 9/11. In the in-group social category, both the productive and patriot variables increased following 9/11. Finally, in the victim social category, both the discrimination and civil rights/liberties violations



variables decreased following 9/11. While this analysis is only of the most frequently coded variables for the social categories, it will be interesting to determine if the analysis of the outcome as a whole is similar to the frequently coded variables discussed in detail.

### The Hypotheses and Quantitative Findings

Several crosstabs were performed in order to determine the relationship between the variables. A crosstabs was performed of the time periods “before 9/11” and “after 9/11” and the social categories of in-group, out-group, and victim. For the time period “before 9/11,” a total of 21 or 7.4% of the articles were coded as the in-group social category; a total of 216 or 76.1% of the articles were coded as the out-group social category; and a total of 47 or 16.5% of the articles were coded as the victim social category. For the time period “after 9/11” a total of 171 or 15.6% of the articles were coded as the in-group social category; a total of 585 or 53.4% of the articles were coded as the out-group social category; and a total of 339 or 31.0% of the articles were coded as the victim social category. The results are shown in Figure 10.

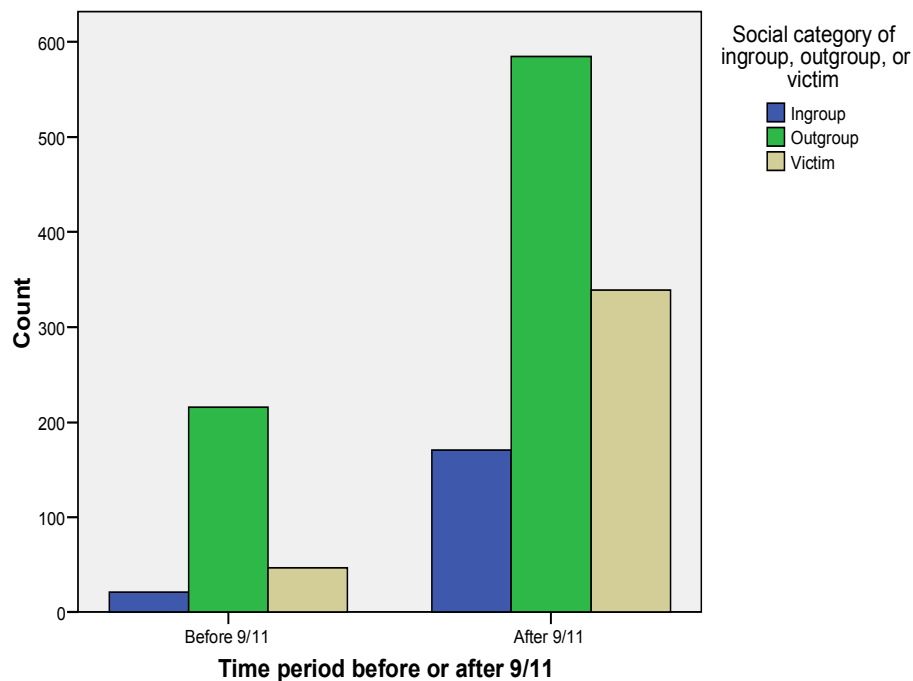


Figure 10: Crosstabs of Time Period Before or After 9/11 and Social Category of In-group, Out-group, or Victim

After viewing the frequencies of the data and the relationships of the variables, crosstabs of the variables were run to determine if the hypotheses set forth were true. The first hypothesis stated that the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an out-group would increase following 9/11. In the first crosstab, the relationship between the time period “before 9/11” and “after 9/11” and the out-group social category were determined. Since the total number of articles printed after 9/11 dramatically increased, the number of articles portraying Arab Americans as members of an in-group, out-group, or victim also increased. When initially looking at the results of the data, it appears that the portrayal of

Arab Americans as members of an out-group actually decreases following 9/11, which does not support the hypothesis. As shown in Table 6, 216 or 76.1% of the articles portrayed Arab Americans as members of an out-group before 9/11 and 585 or 53.4% of the articles portrayed Arab Americans as members of an out-group following 9/11. While the total number of articles portraying Arab Americans as members of an out-group increased after 9/11, the data actually shows a decrease in the percentage of articles portraying Arab Americans as members of an out-group following 9/11 in relation to the total number of articles printed following 9/11, when compared to the time period before 9/11.

Table 6

Crosstabs for Time Period Before and After 9/11 and Social Category of Out-group

Time Period	Out-group	Total # of Articles
Before 9/11	216 76.1%	284
After 9/11	585 53.4%	1095

In order to determine if the results were statistically significant, a Chi-Square Test was performed. A Chi-Square test is a standard test of the relationship between two variables. The Chi-Square test is used in order to determine how closely the observed frequencies or probabilities match the expected frequencies or probabilities. The lower

the significance value or p-value, the less likely it is that the two variables are independent. If the result of the p-value is .05 or less, the researcher can conclude that the results observed are statistically significant (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). In the Chi-Square test performed, the p-value was .000, which means the variables are related and the results shown in Table 6 can be considered statistically significant.

As discussed, the articles were also categorized by year in order to obtain a finer degree of analysis. A crosstabs was also performed of each year of the search period and the out-group social category. When looking at the results of the data, a more thorough analysis can be performed. For the time period of September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2001, approximately 67% to 83% of the articles printed portrayed Arab Americans as members of an out-group. However, immediately following 9/11, the percentage decreased dramatically to approximately 37% of the articles portraying Arab Americans as members of an out-group. What is interesting is that for each year following 9/11, the percentage of articles steadily increased from approximately 59% to 71.8%. The results are shown in Table 7. A Chi-Square test was also performed which yielded a p-value of .000, indicating the variables are related and that the results observed are also statistically significant.

Table 7

## Crosstabs of Each Year of Search Period and the Out-group Social Category

Year of Search Period	Out-group	Total # of Articles
9/11/1996-9/10/1997	29 70.7%	41
9/11/1997-9/10/1998	38 73.1%	52
9/11/1998-9/10/1999	32 66.7%	48
9/11/1999-9/10/2000	39 83.0%	47
9/11/2000-9/10/2001	78 81.3%	96
9/11/2001-9/10/2002	164 37.1%	442
9/11/2002-9/10/2003	149 58.9%	253
9/11/2003-9/10/2004	111 69.8%	159
9/11/2004-9/10/2005	77 62.1%	124
9/11/2005-9/10/2006	84 71.8%	117
Total	801 58.1%	1379

When analyzing the data for each year of the search period, it appears the first hypothesis that the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an out-group would increase after 9/11 is actually supported to a certain extent when compared to the year immediately following 9/11. However, when comparing the years before 9/11 to the years after 9/11 as a whole (with the exception of the year immediately following 9/11), the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an out-group basically returned to pre-9/11 levels.

The second hypothesis stated that the portrayal of Arab Americans as victims would also increase following 9/11. In the first crosstab, the relationship between the time period “before 9/11” and “after 9/11” and the victim social category were compared. When initially looking at the results of the data, it appears the portrayal of Arab Americans as victims actually increases following 9/11, which supports the stated hypothesis. As shown in Table 8, 47 or 16.5% of the articles portrayed Arab Americans as victims before 9/11 and 339 or 31.0% of the articles portrayed Arab Americans as victims following 9/11. According to the data presented, the total number of articles portraying Arab Americans as victims increased as well as the percentage of the articles when compared to the total number of articles. The Chi-Square test performed also yielded a result of .000 indicating the variables are related and the results observed are statistically significant.

Table 8

Crosstabs for Time Period Before and After 9/11 and Social Category of Victim

Time Period	Victim	Total # of Articles
Before 9/11	47 16.5%	284
After 9/11	339 31.0%	1095

A crosstabs was also performed of each year of the search period and the victim social category. For the time period of September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2001,

approximately 10% to 27% of the articles printed portrayed Arab Americans as victims; however, immediately following 9/11 the percentage increased dramatically to approximately 44.3% of the articles portraying Arab Americans as victims. What is interesting is that for each year following 9/11, the percentage of articles steadily decreased from approximately 27% to 16%. The results are shown in Table 9. A Chi-Square test was also performed which yielded a p-value of .000, indicating the variables are related and that the results observed are also statistically significant.

Table 9

## Crosstabs of Each Year of Search Period and the Victim Social Category

Year of Search Period	Victim	Total # of Articles
9/11/1996-9/10/1997	9 22.0%	41
9/11/1997-9/10/1998	14 26.9%	52
9/11/1998-9/10/1999	7 14.6%	48
9/11/1999-9/10/2000	7 14.9%	47
9/11/2000-9/10/2001	10 10.4%	96
9/11/2001-9/10/2002	196 44.3%	442
9/11/2002-9/10/2003	68 26.9%	253
9/11/2003-9/10/2004	31 19.5%	159
9/11/2004-9/10/2005	25 20.2%	124
9/11/2005-9/10/2006	19 16.2%	117
Total	386 28.0%	1379

When analyzing the data for each year of the search period it appears the second hypothesis that the portrayal of Arab Americans as victims would increase after 9/11 is not supported by the data when compared to the year immediately following 9/11. However, when comparing the years before 9/11 to the years after 9/11 as a whole (with the exception of the year immediately following 9/11), the portrayal of Arab Americans as victims basically returned to pre-9/11 levels, which is similar to the out-group variable.



The third hypothesis stated that the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an in-group would decrease following 9/11. In the first crosstab, the relationship between the time period “before 9/11” and “after 9/11” and the in-group social category were compared. When initially looking at the results of the data, it appears the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an in-group actually increases following 9/11, which does not support the stated hypothesis. As shown in Table 10, 21 or 7.4% of the articles portrayed Arab Americans as members of an in-group before 9/11 and 171 or 15.6% of the articles portrayed Arab Americans as members of an in-group following 9/11. According to the data presented, the total number of articles portraying Arab Americans as members of an in-group increased as well as the percentage of the articles when compared to the total number of articles. The Chi-Square test performed also yielded a result of .000 indicating the variables are related and the results observed are statistically significant.

Table 10

Crosstabs for Time Period Before and After 9/11 and Social Category of In-group

Time Period	In-group	Total # of Articles
Before 9/11	21 7.4%	284
After 9/11	171 15.6%	1095

A crosstabs was also performed of each year of the search period and the in-group social category. For the time period of September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2001, approximately .0% to 8.3% of the articles printed portrayed Arab Americans as members of an in-group. The one exception was the year from September 11, 1998 through September 10, 1999 in which approximately 18.8% of the articles portrayed Arab Americans as members of an in-group. Immediately following 9/11, the percentage of articles portraying Arab Americans as members of an in-group was approximately 18.6%. For each year following 9/11, the percentage of articles portraying Arab Americans as members of an in-group varied from 14.2% for September 11, 2002 through September 10, 2003; to 10.7% for September 11, 2003 through September 10, 2004; to 17.7% for September 11, 2004 through September 10, 2005; and to 12.0% for September 11, 2005 through September 10, 2006. While the percentages are lower than the year immediately following 9/11, there was not a clear decrease or increase per year as there was with the other out-group and victim social categories. With the exception of the one year from September 11, 1998 through September 10, 1999 with 18.8%, the percentages for the years following 9/11 were significantly larger than the years prior to 9/11. The results are shown in Table 11. A Chi-Square test was also performed which yielded a p-value of .000, indicating the variables are related and that the results observed are also statistically significant.

Table 11

## Crosstabs of Each Year of Search Period and the In-group Social Category

Year of Search Period	In-group	Total # of Articles
9/11/1996-9/10/1997	3 7.3%	41
9/11/1997-9/10/1998	0 .0%	52
9/11/1998-9/10/1999	9 18.8%	48
9/11/1999-9/10/2000	1 2.1%	47
9/11/2000-9/10/2001	8 8.3%	96
9/11/2001-9/10/2002	82 18.6%	442
9/11/2002-9/10/2003	36 14.2%	253
9/11/2003-9/10/2004	17 10.7%	159
9/11/2004-9/10/2005	22 17.7%	124
9/11/2005-9/10/2006	14 12.0%	117
Total	192 13.9%	1379

When analyzing the data for each year of the search period, it appears the third hypothesis that the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an in-group would decrease after 9/11 is supported by the data when compared to the year immediately following 9/11. However, when comparing the years before 9/11 to the years after 9/11 as a whole (with the exception of the year immediately following 9/11 and the time period from September 11, 1998 through September 10, 1999), the articles portraying Arab Americans as members of an in-group actually increased.

## CONCLUSIONS

### Summary of Findings

This research project examined whether or not Arab Americans are portrayed as members of an in-group, out-group, or victim following the events of September 11, 2001. The answer to this question, however, was not clear cut. While the first hypothesis that the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an out-group would increase following 9/11 was confirmed, the second hypothesis that the portrayal of Arab Americans as victims would increase following 9/11 was not confirmed. Further, the third hypothesis that the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of in-group would decrease following 9/11 was also confirmed. While these findings may appear contradictory, the results of the study do actually move in the hypothesized direction.

The straightforward comparison of the time periods “before 9/11” and “after 9/11” indicated that the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an out-group decreased after 9/11; however, when analyzing each year of the time period from September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2006, the data showed an increase for each year following 9/11, which supports the proposed hypothesis. According to the data, in the year immediately following 9/11, the newspapers exercised constraint when printing articles portraying Arab Americans as members of an out-group. When analyzing the data for each year of the search period in comparison to each of the eight out-group variables, six of the variables (wealth, barbarism, aggression, culture, antisocial, and

politics) increased following 9/11 and only two of the variables (terrorism and religion) decreased following 9/11. When examining the years prior to 9/11 and the years following 9/11 as a whole, the data shows that the number of articles printed portraying Arab Americans as members of an out-group returned to pre-9/11 levels.

While the first hypothesis was supported by the data, the second hypothesis was not. The straightforward comparison of the time periods “before 9/11” and “after 9/11” indicated that the portrayal of Arab Americans as victims increased following 9/11, as the hypothesis suggests. However, when analyzing each year of the time period from September 11, 1996 through September 10, 2006, the data actually shows a decrease for each year following 9/11, which does not support the proposed hypothesis. When analyzing the data for each year of the search period in comparison to each of the three victim variables, all three of the variables (crime, discrimination, and civil rights/liberties violations) decreased following 9/11. Additionally, in the year immediately following 9/11, the percentage of articles portraying Arab Americans as victims increased dramatically. This can likely be attributed to the increase in hate crimes and other crimes against Arab Americans following 9/11. The number of articles portraying Arab Americans as victims returned to pre-9/11 levels, which is similar to the out-group social category.

The third hypothesis was also supported by the data for the most part. The straightforward comparison of the time periods “before 9/11” and “after 9/11” indicated that the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an in-group increased following 9/11. However, when analyzing each year of the time period from September 11, 1996

through September 10, 2006, the data actually shows a decrease for each year following 9/11, which supports the proposed hypothesis. When analyzing the data for each year of the search period in comparison to each of the four in-group variables, two of the variables (productive and patriot) increased following 9/11 and two of the variables (peace and partnership) decreased following 9/11. Additionally, in the year immediately following 9/11, the percentage of articles portraying Arab Americans as members of an in-group increased as well. Consequently, according to the data, the newspapers printed more articles including Arab Americans as members of the in-group immediately following 9/11. Finally, when analyzing the years before 9/11 and the years after 9/11 as a whole, it does appear that the number of articles portraying Arab Americans as members of an in-group increased.

These findings indicate that newspapers do not follow a clear pattern in their portrayals of Arab Americans. While the newspapers initially exercised caution when portraying Arab Americans as members of an out-group immediately following 9/11, they eventually returned to the pre-9/11 levels. This basically shows that in times of crisis, the newspapers and American readers do indeed rally together and limit the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an out-group.

While the articles portraying Arab Americans as victims increased immediately following 9/11, they also eventually returned to pre-9/11 levels. When articles portray Arab Americans as victims, it accomplishes two things. The first is that it points out to the audience that there are deviant individuals in our society, yet at the same time, it

shows that Americans are concerned with the hardships faced by Arab Americans. After a crisis has passed, newspapers and the American readers return to the status quo.

In the year immediately following 9/11, the newspapers increased the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an in-group. Consequently, this further confirms the rallying together aspect and the inclusion of Arab Americans as part of the in-group. Similar to the other variables, the percentage of articles including Arab Americans as members of an in-group actually decreased following 9/11. Further, when analyzing the percentages of the years after 9/11 to the percentages of the years before 9/11, the percentages after 9/11 remain higher than those before 9/11. Therefore, while the inclusion of Arab Americans as members of an in-group is certainly more frequent than it was before 9/11, it has continued to decline each year following 9/11.

#### Study Limitations and Future Considerations

While this research project offers several important findings to the literature, there are some limitations to this research project as well. The first limitation is the development of the in-group variables. Since the majority of research pertains to discrimination and the placement of minorities as members of an out-group, it was quite difficult to fully develop the in-group variables. Once additional research of the placement of minorities as members of in-groups has been performed, additional in-group variables may need to be included in the research project. A second limitation of the research project is the limited number of newspapers involved in the study. Due to money and time constraints, it is quite difficult to analyze the complete number of articles that would be obtained from even the top ten major newspapers in the United States when

utilizing multiple search terms over a ten year period. This would be a great area of future expansion for this research project. If more regional newspapers were included in the study, it would be interesting to determine how much the outcome of the data would change. Another limitation is that only a content analysis of the articles was performed. In a future study, it may be beneficial to actually perform a textual analysis of the articles in order to understand the articles beyond their initial content. By doing so, it may be determined that articles should actually be coded utilizing a different variable, which could ultimately change the outcome of the study. Finally, the use of only two search terms is a limitation to the research project. While the two search terms were utilized due to the interchangeable use of the terms by many when discussing Arab Americans, it may be beneficial to use other search terms as well in future research. Arab Americans are also categorized using the term Middle Eastern as well as other similar terms. Therefore, the inclusion of other terms in the study may also change the outcome and include more articles in the study.



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