The Framing of Muslim Americans: The Effect of Terrorist Threat and Elite Frames on Attitudes Toward Muslims

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**Abstract:**

This study argues that attitudes toward Muslims are affected by fear of terrorism and elite frames. After explaining the theoretical basis for this argument, I use ANES data and a Pew survey to test the paper’s hypotheses. The results of this paper show: 1) Fear of terrorism alone is insufficient to substantially increase negative attitudes toward Muslims; 2) Heightened fear of terrorism followed by a negative elite frame attributing blame for terrorism to Muslims substantially increases negative attitudes toward them; 3) However, a heightened fear of terrorism followed by a positive elite frame increases positive attitudes toward Muslims.