

# CHANGING SIDES: 9/11 AND THE AMERICAN MUSLIM VOTER

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*Recent years have seen a resurgence of religion as a significant political variable. While current research in this area is expansive, these investigations neglect the importance of minority religious groups, particularly American Muslims—the fastest growing religion in America today. This study evaluates the efficacy of religious characteristics as motivators of respondents' voting choices, using a nationwide survey of American Muslim adults. Unlike dominant religious groups, measures of religiosity for American Muslim adults consistently had negative effects on support for the conservative candidate George W. Bush. In addition, measures of religiosity also influenced American Muslim voters' decision to move away from Bush between the 2000 and 2004 election cycles. These changes may be a result of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and recent hostility towards American Muslims. Further study with specific measures and evaluations of recent events may be necessary to address precise associations of religiosity with the voting preferences of American Muslims.*

## INTRODUCTION

**A**mong academic researchers, religiosity has resurfaced as an important factor within voter calculus. For instance, since 1960 measures of religiosity and culture have become highly correlated with presidential vote choice (Layman 2001). Nonetheless, nearly all recent research focuses on Protestants and Catholics, and largely excludes religious minorities other than Jews and racial minorities within the dominant religious groups (see Layman and Green 1998; Layman 2001; Kotler-Berkowitz 2001).<sup>1</sup>

This study seeks to narrow the gap between research on religious minorities and research on traditional religious groups by evaluating the role of American Muslims' faith during the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections. Specifically, I isolate the influence of American Muslims' religious characteristics of commitment, salience, tradition, and context on their expressed preferences for presidential candidates during the 2000 and 2004 elections, based on survey responses. Generally, research forgoes a descriptive introduction of the population being studied, but because of the absence of research it is necessary to introduce this topic with a brief description of the American Muslim political community.

### *Muslims as a Political Group*

With a population between two and five million, Islam is the fastest growing faith in the United States (Jamal 2005; Leonard 2003; Bagby, Perl, and Froehle 2001; Smith 1999; Smith 2002). In fact, Islam is poised to surpass Judaism and become second only to Christianity

in number of adherents in the U.S. (Jamal 2005; Leonard 2003). In another measure, the number of American mosques has increased 62% since 1980, to more than 1,200 in 2004 (Jamal 2005). This demonstrates an amplified potential for continued growth through converts as well as immigrants.

As a reflection of Muslims' political relevance, Islamic prayers were offered for the first time at both the Republican and Democratic presidential nomination conventions in 2000 (Leonard 2003). However, Muslims have traditionally not been integrated into American politics (Ramadan 2005). Similar to other ethnic/racial minority and immigrant groups, American Muslims are assumed to have low levels of political participation, but some have well-developed political ideologies and are becoming more integrated into political life under the leadership of Muslim professionals. Many Muslim doctors, lawyers, engineers, and software developers publish short religious texts (in English) that relate traditional Islam with modern society and democracy (Leonard, 2003).

The development of Muslims as a political group increased exponentially after September 11, 2001. Post 9/11, Muslims worldwide felt the brunt of American superpower as Muslims became a target of religious profiling. In some cases, American radicals targeted Muslims with acts of violence in retribution. Research suggests that American Muslims faced numerous threats along a number of fronts from government and social forces such as the U.S. Patriot Act (Cho, Gimpel, and Wu 2006). For instance, the immediate week following 9/11 resulted in seven anti-Muslim murders and forty-nine related assaults. One year after 9/11, Arab and Muslim groups reported a total of two thousand hate crime incidents (Human Rights Watch n.d.).

Some recent research places specific events in the context of an aggregate perception of American Muslims as an "other" and radically different from Judeo-Christian groups. Kalkan, Layman, and Uslander (2006) demonstrate that public opinion toward American Muslims is more negative compared to other religious minority and ethnic groups. As such, early political development and the ramifications of 9/11 provide American Muslims with mixed emotions and a catalyst for political mobilization.

### ***The Influence of Religiosity***

In the American context religious beliefs are remarkably strong. General Social Survey data reveal that 63% of all Americans believe in God without doubts, while only 2.2% do not believe in God. Furthermore, around a third of Americans believe that the Bible is the actual word of God and more than 80% believe that the Bible is divinely inspired. Finally, approximately 77% of Americans believe in heaven, 65% in hell, and 58% in the devil (Sherkat and Ellison 1999).

The level of religiosity in America has led political scientists to contend that religious beliefs may be a source of socio-political values and attitudes that influence political behavior (Kellstedt and Smidt 1993). Other researchers underline the effect of religion as adding "a transcendent and immanent supernatural dimension to identity, norms, and boundaries...and [it] is therefore a powerful instrument for persuasion" (Leege et al. 2002:45). Similarly, Wildavsky's (1987) view of culture may be applicable to religious faith. While religion does not take away one's free will, it can direct one's preferences in such a way as to limit the range of acceptable choices and values in any given situation. In addition, religious factors have long been incorporated into behavioral models (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954), as religious values are thought to alter the framing and filtering of issues reinforced by a

group identity, thus contributing to distinctive party affiliation and voting behavior (Miller and Shanks 1996).

A great deal of research on voting consistently finds that religiously devout voters are more often Republican, while secular or nominal religious adherents tend to be Democratic (Hunter 1991; Wunthnow 1988, 1989; Petrocik 1998; Layman 1997, 2001; Kellstedt and Green 1993; Kohut et al. 2000). Religiosity's prediction of party affiliation is thought to be a result of the increased political salience of cultural and social issues since 1960 (Layman and Carmines 2001; Edsall 1997; Kohut et al. 2000; Hunter 1991). The religiously orthodox are socially conservative and agree on moral grounds with the Republican Party, whereas secular and nominal religious adherents tend to agree with Democrats on issues such as abortion (White 2003; Himmelfarb 1999; Hunter 1991). However, broad generalizations of these findings may not apply across all religious groups, genders, and races.

In particular, Jews and other non-Christian believers do not become more Republican as they become more religious (Kohut 2000; Layman 2001; Layman et al. 1998). Similarly, women and racial minorities retain more liberal partisanship across all levels of religiosity (Tolleson-Rinehart and Perkins 1989; Kaufmann 2004). While not resulting in conservative partisanship, research has recognized a heightened effect of religiosity as strengthening group identity among racial minorities. This is particularly true among Black Protestants where church is a bastion for racial minority leadership and community beyond the threats of racism (Harris 1994; Alex-Assensoh and Assensoh 2001).

Theories of religiosity's influence on voting are generally derived from theological models. Theological models emphasize the effect of faith as creating a division between orthodox and progressive adherents within and across religious faiths (Hunter 1991; White 2003; Himmelfarb 1999; Layman 1997; Wunthnow 1988, 1989). For instance, devout believers of all faiths are expected to support conservative parties, whereas unbelievers and nominal religious adherents favor liberal parties.

Borrowing from theological models, American Muslims' religious faith may yield conservative partisan support as Muslims make connections between traditional religious values and Republican social conservatism. On the other hand, American Muslims may identify with Democrats on issues of national security, the war in Iraq, and strengthened support of Palestinian statehood. I hypothesize that Muslims who are more religious will be more likely to support the socially conservative candidate George W. Bush, other things equal, than persons who are less religious. However, the events of 9/11 and subsequent war on terror could mitigate these expectations.

## METHOD

The data are drawn from a nationally representative survey of American Muslims commissioned by Project MAPS (Muslim Americans in the Public Square), funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, and conducted by Zogby International. Collected in 2004, the MAPS survey represents the second in the only pair of representative studies of American Muslims' political behavior to date. A total of 1,846 respondents, all of whom self-identified as Muslim, were surveyed by telephone or personal contact in August and September 2004.

### *Dependent Variable Measures*

The dependent variable was measured by responses to "If the election for president and vice president were held today and the candidates were Republicans George W. Bush and

Dick Cheney, and Democrats John Kerry and John Edwards, for whom would you vote?" and "In the 2000 presidential election, the candidates were Democrat Al Gore, Republican George W. Bush, Reform Party's Pat Buchanan, and the Green Party's Ralph Nader. For whom did you vote?"

### ***Independent Variable Measures***

Religious values models identify three dimensions of religion: belonging, behaving, and believing (Layman et al. 1998; Kotler-Berkowitz 2001; Leege et al. 1993; Kellstedt et al. 1996). Belonging measures *religious tradition* or ascription to faith. Behaving captures the actual practice of faith or *religious commitment*—a combination of ritual and devotional practices. Believing is defined by doctrinal orthodoxy or *religious salience*. In addition, recent scholarship has identified a fourth component, *religious context*, which is measured by family religious characteristics acting as social reinforcers (Kotler-Berkowitz 2001). Consolidating a body of research, this analysis utilizes a multidimensional evaluation of religiosity.

The primary independent variables evaluate respondents' religiosity among religious commitment, salience, tradition, and context.<sup>2</sup> Religious commitment summarizes the actual practice of faith, frequency of mosque attendance, prayer, and volunteerism. Responses to each item were first standardized and then summed to form the composite measure, mean 0.000 and standard deviation 2.433 (Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.756$ ). Religious salience was measured by responses to "Would you say the role of Islam in your life is very important, somewhat important, or not very important?" respondents' reporting "very important" were coded 1, all else coded 0. Utilizing a sample of only Muslims this study identifies religious tradition based on socialization characteristics. Responses to "Were you raised as a Muslim or did you convert?" coded as 1 "raised," all else 0. Religious context is derived from responses to "Is your husband or wife a Muslim?" coded 1 yes, all else 0.

### ***Control Variable Measures***

A number of covariates demonstrated by a great deal of research to be related to vote choice and religiosity are also included (see Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet 1944). The series of covariates included self reports of education, race, gender, income, and age.

Political ideology and party identification, consistently strong correlates of vote choice, were measured by responses to: "In which party are you either registered to vote or do you consider yourself to be a member of—Democrat, Republican, Independent/minor party, or Libertarian?" and "Which description best represents your political ideology?...Progressive/very liberal, liberal, moderate, conservative, or very conservative" Party identification was scored from a high (Republican) to a low (Democrat) with "independent/minority party" coded as a middle value. Other responses were coded as missing. Ideology was coded from a low (very liberal) to a high (very conservative) with "moderate" coded as a middle value. Other responses were coded as missing. Of voters, 51.9% reported a Democratic affiliation compared to 14.0% Republican and 34.1% independent or third party affiliation. Using an alternative measure, ideology, 32.4% of respondents self identified as liberal and 22.3% conservative, with 45.3% as moderates.

From the sample, 34.1% of American Muslims reported being "born outside the U.S." and 12.4% of these are recent immigrants of ten years or less. Analysis of respondents immigrating more than ten years ago reveals that 56.4% had arrived since the beginning of the Reagan administration (1980). The sample represents fourteen ethnic backgrounds, which

were collapsed into four categories: Middle Eastern (40.7%), West Asian (33.3%), African American (14.1%), and other (11.8%). The sampled population of American Muslims appear to be highly educated and affluent: 62.1% of the respondents reported earning at least a four-year college degree, and 37.6% reported family income greater than \$75,000 annually. About 57.7% of the respondents were male, and the average age was about 43 years. American Muslims appear to be engaged politically, as 80.4% of citizen respondents reported voting in the 2004 presidential election. In 2000, 40.2% of American Muslim voters reported voting for Bush and 42.8% for Gore; in 2004, 7.8% reported a preference for Bush compared to 86.3% for Kerry.

### FINDINGS

The most straightforward methodology for analyzing religious effects on vote choice is a bivariate analysis among selected predictors and candidate preference. Of respondents with higher levels of religious commitment (when divided along the mean), 93.4% supported Kerry. In contrast, respondents with lower levels of religious commitment showed a preference for Kerry of 89.6%. The difference of 3.8% is statistically significant ( $\chi_{(1)}= 5.716, P=. 016$ ). Muslim respondents with lower levels of religious salience supported Kerry 89.3%, while those with high values of religious salience supported Kerry 92.4%. The difference of 3.1% is statistically significant at the less stringent .10 level ( $\chi_{(1)}= 2.705, P=. 099$ ).

**Table 1.**  
**Crosstabulation of 2004 Vote Preference and Religious Characteristics**  
**among American Muslim Adults, 2004.<sup>a</sup>**

Vote Preference	Religious Commitment		Religious Salience		Religious Tradition		Religious Context	
	Low	High	Low	High	Convert	Raised	Differing Faith	Same Faith
Kerry	89.6%	93.4%	89.3%	92.4%	81.8%	81.7%	89.6%	92.1%
Bush	10.4%	6.6%	10.7%	7.6%	8.2%	8.3%	10.4%	7.9%
(N)	(549)	(655)	(261)	(939)	(220)	(976)	(96)	(762)
	$\chi_{(1)}=5.716,$ P=.016		$\chi_{(1)}=2.705,$ P=.099.		$\chi_{(1)}=.003,$ P=.954.		$\chi_{(1)}=.735,$ P=.391.	

<sup>a</sup>Numbers in cells are percentages indicating a Bush and Kerry preferences prior to the 2004 presidential election. Religious Commitment, composite of frequency of prayer, mosque attendance, and general religious volunteerism; coded low, below the mean and high, above the mean. Religious Salience, "Would you say the role of Islam in your life is very important, somewhat important, or not very important?" respondents' reporting "very important" coded as high, else coded as low. Religious Tradition, "Were you raised as a Muslim or did you convert?" and Religious Context, "Is your husband or wife a Muslim?"

An initial review tentatively supports the contention that religious commitment and religious salience were associated with Muslim vote choice. However, contrary to my hypoth-

esis, increased religiosity was associated with support of the liberal candidate John Kerry. Religious tradition and religious context did not appear to make an appreciable difference in presidential candidate support among Muslims in the sample; these variables were statistically and substantively insignificant. In addition, the variances of candidate preference were diminutive among all concepts of religiosity, ranging from 0.1% to 3.8%.

Plausible alternative explanations are available that might render these findings spurious, and it is always possible that suppressor variables influenced the choices. Analysis of candidate preferences was computed using multivariate logistic regression to control for possible confounding variables.

Voter preference (Kerry coded 1, Bush 0) in 2004 was regressed on Muslims' religious characteristics, with control variables for partisanship, ideology, income, education, ethnicity, age, and gender. Results of the logistic regressions are reported in Table 2 and below.

**Table 2.**  
**Logistic Regression of Kerry/Bush Candidate Preference on Religious and Selected Predictors among American Muslim Adults, 2004.<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Predictor</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>P=</i>	<i>OR</i>
Religious Commitment	.079	.078	.306	1.083
Religious Salience	.964	.401	.016	2.623
Religious Tradition	.309	.541	.567	1.363
Religious Context	.091	.471	.846	1.095
Partisanship	-1.539	.224	.000	.214
Ideology	-.769	.223	.000	.463
Education	.104	.253	.678	1.110
African American	-.101	.739	.891	.903
Male	-.039	.399	.920	.961
Income	.213	.121	.078	1.237
Age	-.016	.012	.194	.983
Constant	5.503	1.286		

Chi square=99.371 (df=11),  $P<.001$ , pseudo  $R^2=.255$

<sup>a</sup>Numbers in cells are regression coefficients, associated standard errors, significance values, and bivariate odds ratios between each variable and 2004 vote preference. The dependent variable was "If the election for president and vice president were held today and the candidates were Republicans George W. Bush and Dick Cheney, and Democrats John Kerry and John Edwards, for whom would you vote?" Kerry responses were code 1 and Bush responses were coded 0. Religious Commitment, a standardized composite of frequency of prayer, mosque attendance, and general religious volunteerism. Religious Salience, "Would you say the role of Islam in your life is very important, somewhat important, or not very important?" respondents' reporting "very important" coded as 1, else coded 0. Religious Tradition, "Were you raised as a Muslim or did you convert?" coded 1 for raised, else 0. Religious Context, "Is your husband or wife a Muslim?" coded 1 for same faith, else 0. Pseudo  $R^2$  is the proportion of reduction in -2LL due to the model. Listwise deletion yielded  $n=680$  for final analysis.

Religious commitment, religious tradition, and religious context did not appear to affect Muslim voter choice when other variables are controlled. Among religious characteristics,

religious salience was the only significant predictor, positively influencing a vote for Kerry and was the strongest influence on vote choice (OR 2.623,  $P < .016$ ).

Given the difficulty of interpreting odds ratios, I used Clarify software to demonstrate predicted changes in support for Kerry (King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000). Identifying a hypothetical respondent who is male, about 43 years of age, not African American, total family income between \$50,000 to \$75,000, a college graduate, moderate political ideology, independent party affiliation, average religious commitment, raised as a Muslim, and married to a Muslim; I vary the influence of religious salience. With lower levels of religious salience the respondent is 86% likely on average to support Kerry. However, if the respondent reports high values of religious salience the average likelihood of supporting Kerry increases to 94%, a difference of 8% and statistically significant.

Among Muslims, partisanship, ideology ( $P < .01$ ), and income ( $P < .10$ ) were significant predictors of presidential two party preference in 2004. These findings contradict the hypothesis that Muslims with higher levels of religiosity would support the socially conservative candidate George W. Bush. Unlike Christian populations, more religious Muslims, like Jews, do not appear to favor Republicans but more strongly support Democratic candidates.

Another way of looking at the issue is to view shifts in voter preference among Muslims who reported voting for either Gore or Bush in 2000 and a preference for Kerry or Bush in 2004. Among all respondents voting for Gore in 2000, 96.7% indicated a Kerry preference in 2004. Among respondents voting for Bush in 2000, only 15.9% indicated a preference for Bush in 2004; this represents a significant shift away from Bush. Analysis of candidate preference switching from 2000 to 2004 was computed using multivariate ordered logistic regression to control for possible confounds in the analysis.

The dependent variable represents voters' presidential preference from 2000 to 2004. Respondents switching from Gore in 2000 to Bush in 2004 coded -1 and respondents switching from Bush in 2000 to Kerry in 2004 coded 1; others consistent with their preference, were coded 0. The results are discussed below and reported in Table 3.

Increased religious salience was positively associated with switching support from Bush in 2000 to Kerry in 2004 and was statistically significant ( $B = .755$ ,  $P = .004$ ). Again, I use Clarify techniques holding other variables at previous values and vary religious salience to demonstrate changes in predicted probabilities for switching from Bush in 2000 to Kerry in 2004. With lower levels of religious salience, the respondent is 26% likely on average to have switched from a Bush preference in 2000 to Kerry in 2004. If the identified respondent reports high values of religious salience, the average likelihood of switching from Bush to Kerry increases to 43%, a difference of 17% and statistically significant.

All other measures of religiosity were also associated with a Bush-Kerry switch, but were statistically insignificant. Among Muslims, partisanship and race ( $P < .05$ ) were significant predictors of changing presidential vote preference from 2000 and 2004. While African Americans were statistically significant in this model, the relationship did not influence a Bush-Kerry switch but demonstrate a consistent support of Democratic presidential candidates in 2000 and 2004. For instance, predicted probabilities for non-African American Muslims are 0% for changing from Gore to Bush support, 56% for maintaining vote preference, and 43% for moving away from Bush in 2004. But for African Americans, likelihoods are 2% for changing from Gore to Bush support, 86% for maintaining vote preference, and 11% for moving away from Bush in 2004, demonstrating their consistent Democratic support and illustrating the changing support for other non-African American Muslims.

**Table 3**  
**Ordered Logistic Regression of Switching Candidate Preference from the 2000 to 2004 Presidential Elections among Political Parties on Religious and Selected Predictors among American Muslim Adults, 2004.<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Predictor</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>P=</i>
Religious Commitment	.066	.043	.128
Religious Saliency	.755	.263	.004
Religious Tradition	.454	.320	.157
Religious Context	.355	.316	.261
Partisanship	.376	.116	.001
Ideology	.124	.121	.307
Education	.106	.143	.457
African American	-1.935	.511	.000
Male	.263	.193	.173
Income	.054	.067	.417
Age	.004	.007	.518
Cut Point 1	-2.081	.804	
Cut Point 2	4.132	.753	

Chi square=74.190 (df=11),  $P<.001$ , pseudo  $R^2=.077$

<sup>a</sup>Numbers in cells are regression coefficients, and associated standard errors, and probabilities. The dependent variable was a composite based upon voters' presidential preference from 2000 to 2004; responses were code -1, 0, and 1. Respondents who consistently voted for Bush (or Gore and Kerry) in 2000 and 2004 were coded 0. Respondents switching from Gore in 2000 to Bush in 2004 were coded -1 and respondents switching from Bush 2000 to Kerry 2004 were coded 1. Religious Commitment, a standardized composite of frequency of prayer, mosque attendance, and general religious volunteerism. Religious Saliency, "Would you say the role of Islam in your life is very important, somewhat important, or not very important?" respondents' reporting "very important" coded as 1, else coded 0. Religious Tradition, "Were you raised as a Muslim or did you convert?" coded 1 for raised, else 0. Religious Context, "Is your husband or wife a Muslim?" coded 1 for same faith, else 0. Listwise deletion yielded  $n=766$  for final analysis.

These findings demonstrate that a large portion of Muslim voters, 84.1%, moved away from Bush between the 2000 and 2004 election. A portion of this shift was explained by religious saliency—a distinct representation of Muslim group identity. The shift in preferences from Bush to Kerry in 2004 among American Muslim voters who regard Islam as "very important" in their lives may be a reflection of 9/11 and the embodiment of fear and distrust among the Muslim community.<sup>3</sup>

## DISCUSSION

These findings concur with other responses in the MAPS survey. For instance, nearly 40% of American Muslims believe "the U.S. is fighting a war against Islam" and 39.2% of American Muslims reported anti-Muslim discrimination since 9/11. In other data, opinion polls by the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) report that 57% of the American Muslims experienced bias or discrimination since 9/11 and 87% say they knew of a fel-



low Muslim who experienced verbal abuse, religious profiling, and workplace discrimination. The shifting of voter preference may be a reflection of Bush's foreign policy, and of Muslim voters sanctioning the incumbent candidate for perceived discrimination and fear among the general population.

Prior to 9/11, many Muslims did not have a strong stake in American political affairs, but the aftermath of 9/11 provided Muslims a visible claim in U.S. government policy. The effects of the global culture wars and the increased association between Islam and terror appear to have influenced both Muslims' Kerry preference in 2004 and changing preference from Bush in 2000 to Kerry after 9/11. Understanding the long term effects of 9/11 requires further testing; however, some historical voting research may provide insight, using Jews as an example.

During and immediately following World War II, American Jews strongly supported Democratic candidates as a result of Roosevelt's intervention against the Nazis and Truman's support of a nation state in the Holy Land (Berelson et al. 1954). An example of party identification demonstrates that American Jews between 1936 and 1952 increased their Democratic partisanship from 45% to 68%. During the same period, Jewish voters decreased partisanship in the Republican Party from 24% to 1% (Fisher 1979). Since WWII, except for 1980, American Jews have given at least 60% of their vote to the Democratic presidential candidate, even though the religious right has increasingly supported Israel since 1984 (Maisel and Forman 2001).

The long term effects of American Muslims' political shift are yet to be seen. Yet in light of American Jews' experiences after World War II, one might hypothesize that Muslims' recent preference for Democratic presidential candidates is a reflection of future long-term support. However, American Muslims may not maintain a strong relationship with Democratic candidates, given the current political climate requiring *all* candidates to symbolically fight terror. In some cases, naïve voters may expect the war on terror to include anti-Muslim rhetoric and policies that place American Muslims in disadvantaged positions, which would alienate Muslims from all aspects of American politics. In addition, unlike American Jews, Muslims have not benefited from a particular party's policies. Rather, Muslims' cues are largely derived from the perceived negative policies of a Republican Congress and President. Faced with "what have you done for me lately?" Muslim voters may have difficulty assessing clear benefits and attribution from one party over the other. The recent change to Democratic leadership of Congress and prospects for presidential candidates gives opportunity for Democrats to support American Muslims and possibly solidify their support.

Other research emphasizes the emotional component in Muslims' electoral choice. Recent research has specified that emotions carry significant weight in how voters perceive issues and candidates (see Marcus, Nueman, and Mackuen 2000). For American Muslims post-9/11, the element of fear could be a significant factor explaining their support of Kerry in 2004 and switching support in favor of Kerry from 2000 to 2004. Brader (2005) evaluates the role of fear in the context of campaign messages and finds that fear is associated with decreased salience of prior beliefs and encourages critical reevaluations. In this case, if fear is a significant mood, given the frequency of perceived discrimination, one might expect future swings in support across parties as American Muslims act as a sophisticated electorate, critically reevaluating recent issues before each election. In this case, the stability of Muslims' vote choice may vary greatly, as it did between 2000 and 2004, but the influence of religious characteristics would remain a significant factor.

These results are tentative, based upon a public data set with limited measures and some missing data. In addition, samples were collected in August and September, before the election, and significant preference shifting could have occurred during the interim period. Future research should investigate the possible effects of 9/11 and the war on terror on Muslims' vote preference and changing support between 2000 and 2004. Specifically, explanations and measures connecting Muslims' affective orientation of fear and their vote choice are needed.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>The literature on religio-political studies primarily draws from American politics. However, Kotler-Berkowitz (2001) studies religio-political behavior of British citizens. While Britain has greater religious diversity and larger populations of religious minorities than the United States does, Britain's religious minorities, particularly its Muslims, were nevertheless excluded from his study.

<sup>2</sup>Utilizing many related variables tests of collinearity were conducted. Tolerances ranged from .63 to .90 with the lowest tolerances computed for African American (.63), religious commitment (.66), and religious tradition (.65). Religious tradition and African American (.56), education and income (.47) and religious salience and religious commitment (.49) are correlated. However, the standard errors for these variables were not excessively high, which suggests that multicollinearity was not a major problem in the analyses.

<sup>3</sup>Statistical Analysis of the data was conducted using SPSS Version 6.1.3 (1995) and STATA Version 9.0 (2005). The related syntax and codebooks are available upon request from the author.

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