

# Media bias

[Media](#)



On September 11, 2001, the citizens of the United States witnessed a horrific attack on two symbolic buildings in New York City. These tragic events have galvanized the creation and implementation of a myriad of prejudicial and unconstitutional policies designed to provide the illusion of national security while simultaneously creating more instability and animosity between the West and the Middle East. In the wake of 9/11, a multitude of Americans have been overtaken by hysteria and fear.

These emotional responses have been generated and intensified by the virtually unanimous Islamophobic propaganda that has been perpetuated by the main stream media. As a result of the media's anti-Islam campaign, Americans have been persuaded to distrust Muslims, instinctively categorize Muslims as terrorist or potential terrorist, as well as sacrifice essential civil liberties. Scapegoating theorists may argue that this portrayal of Arabs and Muslims is one of the ways the U. S. government is attempting to blame this group of individuals for the economic and societal woes that plague 21st-century-America. In addition, many would argue that decades of excessive Western consumption, along with globalization have contributed to a complicated, unjust, and turbulent geopolitical and economic climate, which has created a Western need for Middle Eastern dominance. Regardless of their true motives, we can clearly witness the media's hostile categorization of Arabs and Muslims as predominately terroristic or potentially terroristic.

The New York Post published a cartoon depicting two Muslims, who are complaining to the Associated Press about the NYPD conducting surveillance of their apartment while they are simultaneously constructing IED's. The suspects are also surrounded by other weapons, as well as ammunition, and

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contraband. This cartoon exemplifies prejudice, discrimination, and racial profiling, which contribute to a national hostility toward Arabs and animosity between ethnicities and social classes.

The ensuing tensions that foment as a result of the media's propaganda campaign provoke more instability and violence into American society.

Further complicating American culture is the increasing number of Arabs and Muslims who are immigrating to the New World. For years, the United States has accepted refugees from various tumultuous Middle Eastern territories, which are suffering from perpetual cultural and political chaos.

Unfortunately, while many are granted refugee status, they are also facing political and religious persecution in America.

The influx of Arabs into the United States and the terror hysteria created by the main stream media has spawned a new era of nativist xenophobia.

Richard T. Schaefer reports the frequent stereotypical portrayal of Arabs and Muslims in the media in Racial and Ethnic Groups Census Update. The author states that, "rarely are Arab and Muslim Americans shown doing "normal" behavior such as shopping, attending a sporting event, or just eating without a subtext of terrorism lurking literally in the shadows" (Schaefer, 296).

This pervasive and persistent misrepresentation of Arabs and Muslims has intensified and propagated the animosity most Americans have toward this group. In addition to presenting Muslims in a derogatory manner, the cartoon also attempts to justify the necessity of sacrificing civil liberties for supposed security. This cartoon asserts that the NYPD is conducting surveillance

because it is instrumental for securing the U. S. and preserving Western civilization as we know it.

In this cartoon, the NYPD may be viewed as an exemplary entity employed in the “ War on Terror” and New York City may represent all major cities in the United States, or the United States as a whole. This cartoon demonstrates the media’s attempt to guide public opinion toward accepting the increasingly aggressive behavior of the police and the state department by exaggerating instances of terror plots on American soil, as well as fabricating instances of governmental counter-terror success.

A large faction of the media attempts to portray the majority of Arabs as terrorist, and would argue that cities are vulnerable targets of these diabolical individuals. As a result of this propaganda, Americans are lulled into slowly forfeiting their inalienable rights while obtaining a deceiving feeling of safety. The media is a powerful force contributing to the ebbs and flows of social norms and cultural opinion. The aforementioned cartoon provides an example of the media’s efforts to persuade the public and control the masses.