

COMBATTING THE ANTI-MUSLIM
RHETORIC OF THE 2016 PRESIDENTIAL
CAMPAIGN:

AN EXPERIMENTAL INVESTIGATION OF
THE IMPACT OF CORRECTIVE NEWS

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Experimental Stimuli



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Anti-Muslim Rhetoric Takes Center Stage in 2016 Presidential Campaign

WASHINGTON | BY ADAM LIPTAK



Dec. 16, 2015. Wheaton College associate professor Larycia Hawkins, center, is greeted with applause from supporters as she begins her remarks during a news conference in Chicago. REUTERS/AP

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Wheaton College associate professor Larycia Hawkins, center, is greeted with applause from supporters as she begins her remarks during a news conference in Chicago. Dec. 16, 2015 **Photo by Katherine Taylor/AP**

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By Adam Liptak

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Dec. 16, 2015. Wheaton College associate professor Larycia Hawkins, center, is greeted with applause from supporters as she begins her remarks during a news conference in Chicago (AP)

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Table 2. OLS Regression Examining the Impact of Source and Respondent Characteristics on Learning from the News

	<u>Number of Correct Responses</u> Unstandardized Coefficient (Standard Error)	Standardized Coefficient
<u>Source</u>		
Fox News	-.33 (.17) *	-.08
MSNBC	-.06 (.17)	-.01
<u>Respondent Characteristics</u>		
Need for Cognition	.03 (.007) ***	.19
Party Identification	-.03 (.04)	-.03
Perceived Threat	.07 (.06)	.04
Political Knowledge	.23 (.07) ***	.13
Right-Wing Authoritarianism	-.03 (.006) ***	-.18
Constant	5.13 (.63) ***	
R ²	.15	
N	673	

Note: The dependent variable is the number of factual questions answering correctly, ranging from 0 to 9. Fox News indicates people who received the article labeled Fox News. MSNBC indicates people who received the article labeled MSNBC. The excluded dummy variable is Reuters; people who receive the article labeled Reuters. Need for cognition is measured with the short version of the NCS scale (see Cacioppo, Petty, Kao, 1984). Party Identification is measured during the pretest with the seven-point scale ranging from 1 (Strong Democrat) to 7 (Strong Republican). Perceived threat is measured during the pretest with the following question: "How likely do you think it is that in the near future there will be a terrorist attack in the United States causing large numbers of lives to be lost?" with answers ranging from not likely at all (1) to very likely (4). Political sophistication is measured correct answers to four knowledge questions (see text for more information). Right-Wing Authoritarianism is measured with the short version of the RWA scale (see Zakrisson, 2005).

See Appendix C for exact question wording.

*** p<.01

** p<.05

* p<.10.

Table 3. OLS Regression Examining the Impact of Source and Respondent Characteristics On People's Views of Muslims, Syrian Refugees, and American Muslims¹

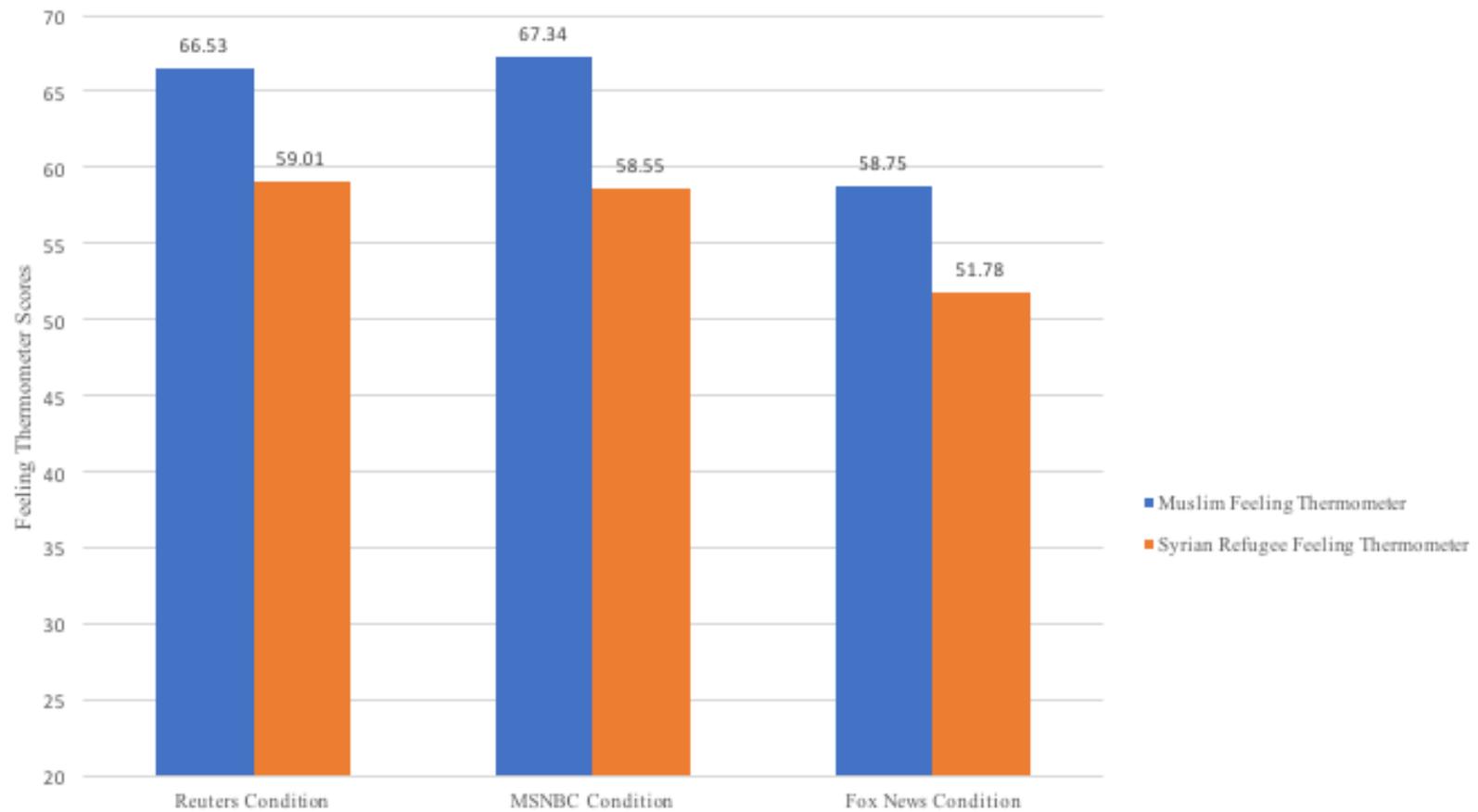
<u>Source</u>	<u>Muslims</u>		<u>Syrian Refugees</u>		<u>American Muslims</u>	
Fox News	-7.78 (2.65) ***	-.12	-7.23 (2.55) ***	-.11	-0.16 (.07) **	-.09
MSNBC	0.81 (2.69)	.01	-0.53 (2.58)	-.01	0.04 (.07)	.02
<u>Respondent Characteristics</u>						
Party Identification	-2.03 (.68) ***	-.13	-4.21 (0.65) ***	-.25	-0.09 (.02) ***	-.19
Perceived Threat	-3.07 (1.05) ***	-.11	-4.76 (1.01) ***	-.16	-0.10 (.03) ***	-.12
Right-Wing Authoritarianism	-0.62 (.09) ***	-.30	-0.77 (.09) ***	-.35	-0.02 (.002) ***	-.34
Intercept	114.98 (5.05) ***		128.82 (4.84) ***		4.87 (.14) ***	
R ²	.18		.34		.27	
N	642		630		601	

Note: Attitudes towards Muslims and Syrian Refugees are measured with the 100-point feeling thermometer during the posttest. Attitudes toward American Muslims is measured on a four-point scale ranging from (1) very unfavorable to (4) very favorable during the posttest. These measures are taken from the posttest questionnaire. Learning from news is the number of factual questions answered correctly. Fox News indicates people who received the article labeled Fox News and recalled the source correctly. MSNBC indicates people who received the article labeled MSNBC and recalled the source correctly. The excluded dummy variable is Reuters; people who receive the article labeled Reuters and correctly recalled the source. Party Identification (asked during the pretest) is measured with seven-point scale ranging from 1 (Strong Democrat) to 7 (Strong Republican). Right-Wing Authoritarianism is measured with the short version of the RWA scale. Perceived threat is measured during the pretest and ranges from a terrorist attack being not likely at all (1) to very likely (4). See Appendix C for exact question wording for all questions.

¹ In each cell, we present the unstandardized coefficient with the standard error in parentheses, followed by the standardized coefficient.

*** p<.01
 ** p<.05
 * p<.10

Figure 2. Estimates of Feelings Towards Muslims and Syrian Refugees by Condition



Note: The estimates in this figure are based on the OLS regression results presented in Table 3 (Model 1 and 2).

Table 4. Ordinal Regression Examining the Impact of Source and Respondent Characteristics on People's Opinions about Syrian Refugee Policy¹

	<u>Syrian Refugees</u>	<u>Identify Terrorists</u>
<u>Source</u>		
Fox News	-.54 (.19) ***	-.29 (.17) *
MSNBC	-.07 (.19)	-.04 (.006)
<u>Respondent Characteristics</u>		
Party Identification	-.38 (.05) ***	-.35 (.05) ***
Right-Wing Authoritarianism	-.05 (.007) ***	.03 (.006) ***
Perceived Threat	-.47 (.08) ***	-.47 (.07) ***
Threshold 1	-7.55 (.52) ***	-6.10 (.45) ***
Threshold 2	-6.09 (.49) ***	-4.58 (.43) ***
Threshold 3	-4.16 (.45) ***	-2.02 (.40) ***
Model Fit	$\chi^2=297.58$ ***	$\chi^2=222.13$ ***
Cox and Snell	.38	.28

Note: The first dependent variable examines people's support for allowing Syrian refugees into the United States, with positive values indicating greater support. The second dependent variable measures whether people believe that potential terrorists can be identified among Syrians refugees coming into the country, with positive values indicating more confidence in the ability to identify terrorists among Syrian refugees. Fox News indicates people who received the article labeled Fox News. MSNBC indicates people who received the article labeled MSNBC. The excluded dummy variable is people who receive the article labeled Reuters. Party Identification (asked during the pretest) is measured with seven-point scale ranging from 1 (Strong Democrat) to 7 (Strong Republican). Right-Wing Authoritarianism is measured with the short version of the RWA scale. Perceived threat is measured during the pretest and ranges from a terrorist attack being not likely at all (1) to very likely (4). See Appendix C for exact question wording for all questions.

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