American Attitudes toward the Middle East

A PUBLIC OPINION POLL BY SHIBLEY TELHAMI
A survey sponsored by the

Sadat Chair
for Peace and Development
at the University of Maryland

fielded by
Nielsen Scarborough

Valuable assistance was provided by The Program for Public Consultation, especially its director Steven Kull, Evan Lewis, and Clay Ramsay. Neil Schwartz, Scott Willoth, and Jordan Evangelista from Nielsen Scarborough also provided assistance. Brittany Kyser and Rachel Slattery were particularly helpful.
Surveys Methodology (May 2016)

The survey was conducted May 20-31, 2016 with a panel consisting of a probability-based representative sample. The panel was recruited by Nielsen Scarborough from its larger probability-based national panel, which was recruited by mail and telephone using a random sample of households provided by Survey Sampling International. A total of 1580 panelists completed the survey including a national sample of 855 adults, plus an oversample of 735 millennials (18-34), making for a total sample of millennials of 863. Responses were weighted by age, gender, income, education, race, and geographic region using benchmarks from the US Census. The survey was also weighted by partisan identification and millennials were down-weighted consistent with these groups’ incidence rate in the U.S. Census. The margins of error for the national sample and for each subgroup is: National – 855 respondents, MoE: 3.4% Millennials – 863, MoE: 3.3%
The survey was conducted June 24-30, 2016 with a panel consisting of a probability-based representative sample. The panel was recruited by Nielsen Scarborough from its larger probability-based national panel, which was recruited by mail and telephone using a random sample of households provided by Survey Sampling International. A national sample of 1312 panelists completed the survey. Responses were weighted by age, gender, income, education, race, and geographic region using benchmarks from the US Census. The survey was also weighted by partisan identification. The margin of error is 2.7%
American Attitudes toward Islam and Muslims
What is your attitude about each of the following?

The Muslim People
What is your attitude about each of the following?

The Muslim People

- Favorable
  - Nov. 2015: 53%
  - May 2016 (Pre-Orlando): 58%
  - June 2016 (Post-Orlando): 62%

- Unfavorable
  - Nov. 2015: 46%
  - May 2016 (Pre-Orlando): 41%
  - June 2016 (Post-Orlando): 38%

Legend:
- □ Nov. 2015
- ▪ May 2016 (Pre-Orlando)
- ■ June 2016 (Post-Orlando)
What is your attitude about each of the following?

The Muslim People

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Nov. 2015</th>
<th>May 2016 (Pre-Orlando)</th>
<th>June 2016 (Post-Orlando)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>REP</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfavorable</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEM</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfavorable</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IND</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfavorable</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is your attitude about each of the following?

The Muslim People

Clinton Supporters

- Favorable: 74%
- Unfavorable: 26%

Trump Supporters

- Favorable: 36%
- Unfavorable: 63%

May 2016 (Pre-Orlando)  June 2016 (Post-Orlando)
What is your attitude about each of the following?

The Muslim Religion
What is your attitude about each of the following?

The Muslim Religion

- **Favorable**
  - Nov. 2015: 37
  - May 2016 (Pre-Orlando): 42
  - June 2016 (Post-Orlando): 44

- **Unfavorable**
  - Nov. 2015: 61
  - May 2016 (Pre-Orlando): 57
  - June 2016 (Post-Orlando): 55
What is your attitude about each of the following?

The Muslim Religion

- **Favorable**
  - REP: 26
  - DEM: 51
  - IND: 28

- **Unfavorable**
  - REP: 73
  - DEM: 47
  - IND: 68

**Note:**
- Nov. 2015
- May 2016 (Pre-Orlando)
- June 2016 (Post-Orlando)
What is your attitude about each of the following?

The Muslim Religion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>May 2016 (Pre-Orlando)</th>
<th>June 2016 (Post-Orlando)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinton Supporters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfavorable</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trump Supporters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfavorable</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Which position is closer to yours?
Islamic and Western religious and social traditions are incompatible with each other

Most people in the West & the Islamic world have similar needs & wants, so it is possible to find common ground

Which position is closer to yours?

- Islamic and Western religious and social traditions are incompatible with each other (Nov. 2015: 39%, May 2016: 37%, June 2016: 34%)
- Most people in the West & the Islamic world have similar needs & wants, so it is possible to find common ground (Nov. 2015: 57%, May 2016: 61%, June 2016: 64%)

• Nov. 2015  • May 2016 (Pre-Orlando)  • June 2016 (Post-Orlando)
Islamic and Western religious and social traditions are incompatible with each other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REP</th>
<th>Most people in the West &amp; the Islamic world have similar needs &amp; wants, so it is possible to find common ground</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Islamic and Western religious and social traditions are incompatible with each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most people in the West &amp; the Islamic world have similar needs &amp; wants, so it is possible to find common ground</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Bar chart showing positions of REP, DEM, and IND with Nov. 2015, May 2016 (Pre-Orlando), and June 2016 (Post-Orlando).]

Which position is closer to yours?
Islamic and Western religious and social traditions are incompatible with each other

Most people in the West & the Islamic world have similar needs & wants, so it is possible to find common ground

Clinton Supporters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>May 2016 (Pre-Orlando)</th>
<th>June 2016 (Post-Orlando)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incompatible</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similarity</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trump Supporters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>May 2016 (Pre-Orlando)</th>
<th>June 2016 (Post-Orlando)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incompatible</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similarity</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
American Responses to the Orlando Shooting
Based on what you have heard, is it your impression that the Orlando shooter, Omar Mateen, was:
An American citizen born in the United States

An American citizen who immigrated to the United States

A foreigner who has been living in the United States for some years

A foreigner who came to the United States recently

Based on what you have heard, is it your impression that the Orlando shooter, Omar Mateen, was:

- An American citizen born in the United States: 66
- An American citizen who immigrated to the United States: 10
- A foreigner who has been living in the United States for some years: 19
- A foreigner who came to the United States recently: 4

June 2016
Based on what you have heard, is it your impression that the Orlando shooter, Omar Mateen, was:

- **An American citizen born in the United States**: 65 Republicans, 68 Democrats, 64 Independents
- **An American citizen who immigrated to the United States**: 11 Republicans, 10 Democrats, 8 Independents
- **A foreigner who has been living in the United States for some years**: 17 Republicans, 19 Democrats, 25 Independents
- **A foreigner who came to the United States recently**: 5 Republicans, 2 Democrats, 1 Independent

June 2016
June 2016

Based on what you have heard, please rank your impression of each of the following factors that may have contributed to the Orlando shooter’s behavior. Use a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not important and 10 is most important.
[On a 0-10 scale, where 0 is not important and 10 is most important] Based on what you have heard, please rank your impression of each of the following factors that may have contributed to the Orlando shooter’s behavior (mean):

- Feeling rejected as a Muslim in America: 4.4
- Self-hate of his own sexuality: 6.6
- Mental illness: 6.93
- Militant Islamist ideology: 7.27
- Hate for LGBT Community: 7.52
Now, in your opinion, which one of these is the most important factor that may have contributed to the Orlando shooter’s behavior?
Now, in your opinion, which one of these is the most important factor that may have contributed to the Orlando shooter’s behavior?

- Hate for LGBT Community: 16
- Self-hate: 19
- Feeling rejected as a Muslim in America: 2
- Militant Islamist ideology: 33
- Mental illness: 21
June 2016

Based on your impression, was the Orlando shooter acting:
Based on your impression, was the Orlando shooter acting:

- Under the direction of ISIS: 8
- Independently, but inspired by ISIS ideology: 57
- Independently, for reasons unrelated to ISIS, but claiming links to ISIS for boasting: 34
Based on your impression, was the Orlando shooter acting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Republicans</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Independents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under the direction of ISIS</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independently, but inspired by ISIS ideology</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independently, for reasons unrelated to ISIS, but claiming links to ISIS for boasting</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

June 2016
June 2016

How much do you approve or disapprove of the following leaders’ reactions to the Orlando shooting?
How much do you approve or disapprove of the following leaders’ reactions to the Orlando shooting?

- **President Obama**: 52% Approve, 47% Disapprove
- **Hillary Clinton**: 50% Approve, 49% Disapprove
- **Donald Trump**: 42% Approve, 57% Disapprove

June 2016
June 2016

How would you rate the effectiveness of the following actions in reducing the chance of an Orlando-like shooting? Please rate on a scale of 0-10 where 0 is not effective and 10 is most effective.
[On a 0-10 scale, where 0 is not effective and 10 is most effective] How would you rate the effectiveness of the following actions in reducing the chance of an Orlando-like shooting (mean)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banning the sale of any weapons to people on terrorist and criminal watch lists</td>
<td>7.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better security at public venues</td>
<td>7.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting ISIS and similar groups abroad more effectively</td>
<td>7.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banning the sale of assault rifles, that is a rifle that fires rapid bursts of bullets</td>
<td>5.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closely monitoring Mosques and Muslim American groups</td>
<td>5.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
June 2016

Now, of these actions, which would be the most likely to reduce the chance of an Orlando-like shooting?
Now, of these actions, which would be the most likely to reduce the chance of an Orlando-like shooting?

- Banning the sale of any weapons to people on terrorist and criminal watch lists: 25
- Banning the sale of assault rifles, that is a rifle that fires rapid bursts of bullets: 23
- Better security at public venues: 17
- Fighting ISIS and similar groups abroad more: 12
- Closely monitoring Mosques and Muslim American groups: 10

June 2016
Foreign Policy
On a scale of 1-10, where ten is very important and one is not important, how important are the following issues in American global priorities:
On a scale of 1-10, where ten is very important and one is not important, how important are the following issues in American global priorities (mean)?

- The War on ISIS: 8.36
- U.S. Immigration Policy: 8
- The War on al-Qaeda: 7.77
- Trade Deficit: 7.41
- The Rise of China: 6.92
- Iran: 6.91
- North Korea: 6.87
- The Assertiveness of Russia: 6.72
- The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: 6.17
- Relations with Egypt and Saudi Arabia: 5.91
- The Civil War in Libya: 5.2
- The Civil War in Yemen: 5.04

May 2016
May 2016

Which of the following issues should be America’s top global priorities? (Please select two)
Which of the following issues should be America’s top global priorities? (Please select two)

- The rise of China: 9
- The assertiveness of Russia: 5
- North Korea: 10
- Iran: 7
- Trade Deficit: 25
- The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: 7
- The War on ISIS: 61
- The War on al-Qaeda: 11
- The Civil War in Libya: 1
- The Civil War in Yemen: 1
- U.S. Immigration Policy: 41
- Relations with Egypt and Saudi Arabia: 2
- Other Issue: 19
May 2016

[Open-Ended Question]

Please name a national or world leader you admire most:
[Open-Ended Question]
Please name a national or world leader you admire most:

- Benjamin Netanyahu (14)
- Ronald Reagan (6)
- Barack Obama (4)
- Barack Obama (40)
- Pope Francis (5)
- Justin Trudeau (3)
- Barack Obama (9)
- Angela Merkel (6)
- Vladimir Putin (6)

May 2016
June 2016

In your opinion, which one of the following two factors do you think has been most important in the emergence and growth of ISIS?
Which one of the two factors do you believe is most important?

- Going to war with Iraq in 2003: 55
- Withdrawing most U.S. troops from Iraq: 41
Which one of the two factors do you believe is most important?

Going to war with Iraq in 2003
- Republicans: 74
- Democrats: 34
- Independents: 53

Withdrawing most U.S. troops from Iraq
- Republicans: 61
- Democrats: 22
- Independents: 44

June 2016
American Attitudes on the Arab-Israeli Conflict
As you may know, the United States has been acting as a mediator between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority, with the aim of reaching an agreement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Whether or not these efforts succeed, there is a question about what kind of future for Israel and the Palestinians the U.S. should be supporting over the long term, and many analysts feel that time is running out for some options. Here are four possible approaches that are frequently discussed. Please select the one you think the U.S. should support.
Please select the one you think the U.S. should support.

- A two-state solution: 35 (Nov. 2015) vs. 34 (May 2016)
- A one-state solution: 31 (Nov. 2015) vs. 33 (May 2016)
- Annexation without equal citizenship: 10 (Nov. 2015) vs. 13 (May 2016)
- Maintain the occupation: 17 (Nov. 2015) vs. 16 (May 2016)
Please select the one you think the U.S. should support.

- **A two-state solution**
  - Republicans: 27
  - Democrats: 41
  - Independents: 30

- **A one-state solution**
  - Republicans: 28
  - Democrats: 37
  - Independents: 34

- **Annexation without equal citizenship**
  - Republicans: 16
  - Democrats: 9
  - Independents: 11

- **Maintain the occupation**
  - Republicans: 23
  - Democrats: 8
  - Independents: 18

May 2016
Please select the one you think the U.S. should support.

- **A two-state solution**
  - 18-34: 36
  - 35-54: 34
  - 55+: 32

- **A one-state solution**
  - 18-34: 40
  - 35-54: 32
  - 55+: 28

- **Annexation without equal citizenship**
  - 18-34: 9
  - 35-54: 15
  - 55+: 13

- **Maintain the occupation**
  - 18-34: 12
  - 35-54: 15
  - 55+: 19

May 2016
Please select the one you think the U.S. should support.

- **A two-state solution**
  - Favor Trump: 25
  - Favor Clinton: 39
  - Favor Sanders: 40

- **A one-state solution**
  - Favor Trump: 24
  - Favor Clinton: 43
  - Favor Sanders: 37

- **Annexation without equal citizenship**
  - Favor Trump: 18
  - Favor Clinton: 5
  - Favor Sanders: 12

- **Maintain the occupation**
  - Favor Trump: 25
  - Favor Clinton: 8
  - Favor Sanders: 8

May 2016
May 2016

Which of the following statements is closer to your view if a two-state solution is not an option?
Which of the following statements is closer to your view if a two-state solution is not an option?

- I favor the Jewishness of Israel more than its democracy
  - Nov. 2015: 22
  - May 2016: 26

- I favor Israel's democracy more than its Jewishness
  - Nov. 2015: 72
  - May 2016: 69
Which of the following statements is closer to your view if a two-state solution is not an option?

- I favor the Jewishness of Israel more than its democracy
- I favor Israel's democracy more than its Jewishness

![Bar graph showing the distribution of responses among Republicans, Democrats, and Independents for each statement.]

May 2016
Which of the following statements is closer to your view if a two-state solution is not an option?

I favor the Jewishness of Israel more than its democracy

I favor Israel's democracy more than its Jewishness

May 2016
Which of the following statements is closer to your view if a two-state solution is not an option?

- I favor the Jewishness of Israel more than its democracy
- I favor Israel's democracy more than its Jewishness

May 2016
May 2016

In general, what role do you want the United States to play in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

Should the United States:
In general, what role do you want the United States to play in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
Should the United States:

- Lean toward Israel: 29 (Nov. 2015), 32 (May 2016)
- Lean toward the Palestinians: 3 (Nov. 2015), 4 (May 2016)
- Lean toward neither side: 66 (Nov. 2015), 63 (May 2016)
In general, what role do you want the United States to play in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Should the United States:

- Lean toward Israel: Republicans 52, Democrats 15, Independents 30
- Lean toward the Palestinians: Republicans 2, Democrats 6, Independents 3
- Lean toward neither side: Republicans 46, Democrats 65, Independents 65
In general, what role do you want the United States to play in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

Should the United States:

- Lean toward Israel
- Lean toward the Palestinians
- Lean toward neither side

May 2016
In general, what role do you want the United States to play in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Should the United States:

- Favor Trump
- Favor Clinton
- Favor Sanders

Lean toward Israel
- Favor Trump: 55
- Favor Clinton: 14
- Favor Sanders: 15

Lean toward the Palestinians
- Favor Trump: 43
- Favor Clinton: 5
- Favor Sanders: 6

Lean toward neither side
- Favor Trump: 80
- Favor Clinton: 78
- Favor Sanders: 80

May 2016
May 2016

As you may know, there have been suggestions that the UN Security Council should endorse the establishment of a Palestinian state. This idea has received some support in Europe, but opposition in Israel. If the UN Security Council considers such a plan, what do you think the U.S. should do as a member of the UN Security Council?
What do you think the U.S. should do as a member of the UN Security Council?

- Vote in favor of endorsing the establishment of a Palestinian state: 27 (Nov. 2015) and 27 (May 2016)
- Vote against endorsing the establishment of a Palestinian state: 26 (Nov. 2015) and 35 (May 2016)
- Abstain from voting: 43 (Nov. 2015) and 43 (May 2016)
What do you think the U.S. should do as a member of the UN Security Council?

Vote in favor of endorsing the establishment of a Palestinian state

- Republicans: 15
- Democrats: 39
- Independents: 20

Vote against endorsing the establishment of a Palestinian state

- Republicans: 53
- Democrats: 19
- Independents: 29

Abstain from voting

- Republicans: 29
- Democrats: 37
- Independents: 48

May 2016
What do you think the U.S. should do as a member of the UN Security Council?

Vote in favor of endorsing the establishment of a Palestinian state
- 18-34: 29
- 35-54: 24
- 55+: 28

Vote against endorsing the establishment of a Palestinian state
- 18-34: 27
- 35-54: 38
- 55+: 37

Abstain from voting
- 18-34: 41
- 35-54: 33
- 55+: 31

May 2016
What do you think the U.S. should do as a member of the UN Security Council?

- **Vote in favor of endorsing the establishment of a Palestinian state**
  - Favor Trump: 11
  - Favor Clinton: 44
  - Favor Sanders: 35

- **Vote against endorsing the establishment of a Palestinian state**
  - Favor Trump: 56
  - Favor Clinton: 18
  - Favor Sanders: 20

- **Abstain from voting**
  - Favor Trump: 31
  - Favor Clinton: 35
  - Favor Sanders: 39

May 2016
One of the issues of tension between the United States and Israel has been its construction of Israeli settlements in the territories occupied by Israel in the 1967 war. These settlements are considered illegal by most of the international community and have been opposed by every U.S. administration, both Republican and Democratic. The Israeli government has continued to build settlements arguing that they have the right to do so, or that these are not obstacles to peace. How do you believe the U.S. should react to new settlements?
How do you believe the U.S. should react to new settlements?

- Do nothing/Limit U.S. opposition to words (59% in May 2016, 58% in Nov. 2015)
- Impose some economic sanctions/Take more serious action (39% in May 2016, 37% in Nov. 2015)
How do you believe the U.S. should react to new settlements?

- **Do nothing/Limit U.S. opposition to words**
  - Republicans: 73
  - Democrats: 47
  - Independents: 56

- **Impose some economic sanctions/Take more serious action**
  - Republicans: 26
  - Democrats: 51
  - Independents: 40

May 2016
How do you believe the U.S. should react to new settlements?

- Do nothing/Limit U.S. opposition to words:
  - 18-34: 52%
  - 35-54: 59%
  - 55+: 64%

- Impose some economic sanctions/Take more serious action:
  - 18-34: 46%
  - 35-54: 39%
  - 55+: 34%

May 2016
How do you believe the U.S. should react to new settlements?

- Favor Trump
- Favor Clinton
- Favor Sanders

Do nothing/Limit U.S. opposition to words:
- Favor Trump: 74
- Favor Clinton: 44
- Favor Sanders: 48

Impose some economic sanctions/Take more serious action:
- Favor Trump: 24
- Favor Clinton: 54
- Favor Sanders: 50

May 2016
How much influence do you believe the Israeli government has on American politics and policies?
How much influence do you believe the Israeli government has on American politics and policies?

- Too little influence: 18 (Nov. 2015), 16 (May 2016)
- Too much influence: 37 (Nov. 2015), 41 (May 2016)
- About the right level of influence: 44 (Nov. 2015), 42 (May 2016)

■ Nov. 2015   ▼ May 2016
How much influence do you believe the Israeli government has on American politics and policies?

- Too little influence:
  - Republicans: 23
  - Democrats: 8
  - Independents: 21

- Too much influence:
  - Republicans: 27
  - Democrats: 53
  - Independents: 46

- About the right level of influence:
  - Republicans: 48
  - Democrats: 38
  - Independents: 34

May 2016
How much influence do you believe the Israeli government has on American politics and policies?

- Too little influence:
  - 18-34: 13
  - 35-54: 11
  - 55+: 23

- Too much influence:
  - 18-34: 43
  - 35-54: 48
  - 55+: 32

- About the right level of influence:
  - 18-34: 43
  - 35-54: 43
  - 55+: 43

May 2016
How much influence do you believe the Israeli government has on American politics and policies?

- **Too little influence**
  - Favor Trump: 24
  - Favor Clinton: 6
  - Favor Sanders: 12

- **Too much influence**
  - Favor Trump: 27
  - Favor Clinton: 48
  - Favor Sanders: 57

- **About the right level of influence**
  - Favor Trump: 47
  - Favor Clinton: 44
  - Favor Sanders: 29

May 2016