Interfaith Response to Islamophobia

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Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign
What is Islamophobia?

- A dislike or prejudice against Islam or Muslims, especially as a political force
Soon shall We cast terror into the hearts of the Unbelievers.  
(Quran 3:151)
The Islamophobia megaphone

How a tight network of anti-Muslim, anti-Islam foundations, misinformation experts, validators, grassroots organizations, religious right groups, and their allies in the media and in politics profoundly misrepresent Islam and American Muslims in the United States

Source: Fear, Inc.
The Islamophobia echo chamber

The religious right
- Pat Robertson
- John Hagee
- Ralph Reed
- Franklin Graham

The media
- Fox News Channel
- David Horowitz
- Freedom Center
- Pamela Geller and Atlas Shrugs
- Washington Times
- The National Review
- Christian Broadcast Network
- Clarion Fund
- Rush Limbaugh
- Sean Hannity
- Mike Savage
- Glenn Beck
- Mark Levin
- Bryan Fischer

The political players
- Rep. Peter King
- Rep. Sue Myrick
- Rep. Allen West
- Rep. Renee Elmers
- Rep. Paul Broun
- Rep. Michele Bachmann

The grassroots organizations
- Brigitte Gabriel's
- ACT! For America
- Pamela Geller's
- Stop Islamization of America
- Eagle Forum
- Tennessee Freedom Coalition
- State Tea Party movements
- American Family Association

Amplifying fear and misinformation in this Islamophobia echo chamber

The public

Source: Fear, Inc.
Policy Impact

- Rep. Peter King Hearings on “Homegrown Islamic Terrorism”
- NYPD surveillance of Muslim businesses, mosques, and restaurants
- Anti-shariah or anti-foreign law legislation
- Designating Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization
- Muslim, refugee travel ban
The Islamic Center of Eastside in Bellevue, Washington. AP

Four Mosques Have Burned In Seven Weeks — Leaving Many Muslims and Advocates Stunned

"The short answer is we haven't seen anything like this in the past."


Albert Samaha
BuzzFeed News Reporter

Talal Ansari
BuzzFeed News Reporter

Islamic Society of New Tampa mosque @KellieCowan
Manifesto citations
Right-wing pundits and organizations cited in Anders Breivik’s anti-Muslim manifesto

- Robert Spencer/Jihad Watch: 162
- Bat Ye'or: 59
- Daniel Pipes/Middle East Forum: 18
- Middle East Media Research Institute: 16
- Pamela Geller/Atlas Shrugs: 12
- Center for Security Policy/Frank Gaffney: 7
- Foundation for Defense of Democracies: 2
- Steven Emerson: 2
- Pajamas Media: 2
- Obsession: Radical Islam’s War Against The West: 1
- David Horowitz: 1
Hate speech is not civilized. Support peace in word and deed.
#mysubwayad
@umwomen
Going Forward

- Muslims: define our own narrative and protect our rights
- Partner with interfaith allies
American Baptist Churches USA
Arab American Institute
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Christian Reformed Church of North America
Church of the Brethren
Church World Service
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
The Episcopal Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church of America
Faith in Public Life
Friends Committee on National Legislation
The Foundation for Ethnic Understanding
General Board of Church and Society of the United Methodist Church
HIAS
Interfaith Alliance
Islamic Society of North America
Jewish Council on Public Affairs
Milstein Center @ Jewish Theological Seminary
National Council of Churches
National Religious Campaign Against Torture
New Evangelical Partnership for the Common Good
Peace Catalyst International
Presbyterian Church (USA)
Progressive National Baptist Convention
Reconstructionist Rabbinical College
Reformed Church in America
Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism
Sisters of Mercy
Sojourners
T’ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
Unitarian Universalist Association
United Church of Christ
US Conference of Catholic Bishops
Universal Muslim Association of America
Toolkit for Mobilizing to Protect and Support American Muslims

Please note: This toolkit is a living document- we will be updating it as new developments arise in order to help equip you to work against anti-Muslim discrimination and bigotry.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SPECIFIC THREATS THAT AMERICAN MUSLIMS FACE TODAY?

Throughout and following the 2016 elections, we heard a lot of rhetoric demeaning and threatening Muslims, and we saw a spike in hate crimes and incidents of violence against Muslims in our country. There were many times
1. Connect, Listen, Learn

2. Amplify

2. Speak Up/Out & Show Up

2. Call Others In

2. Strategic organizing & pushback
Educate yourself & your community about Islam and American Muslims

There is a lot of bad information out there about Islam and Muslims, and if you only learn about this religious community through the news, you’re hearing a very tiny fragment of the story. Here are some resources to learn more:

- Harvard’s Pluralism Project has some great resources for learning the basics about Islam and American Muslims, as does ING

- This PBS video series and this Unity Production Foundation film give great educational overviews

- American Muslim poll, from the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding

- The Diversity of Muslims in the United States (a report from US Institute of Peace)

- Responses to FAQs about American Muslims
Interfaith Iftar opportunities
1. Connect, Listen, Learn

2. Amplify

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Some great American Muslims to follow on social media (among the MANY more!)

Like any community, the American Muslim community is diverse, so when you want to know “what are American Muslims feeling/thinking right now?”, there is no single answer. This list is not meant to be a substitute for getting to know American Muslims in person and building deeper relationships, but for those looking to hear multiple, diverse voices from the American Muslim community, this list is a good place to start, to “listen in.”

- @AltMuslimah—Tweets from Asma T. Uddin and the altM editors on gender, Islam and more.
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Tactics for lifting your voice publicly

Faith leaders can play an important role in our public discourse by writing about anti-Muslim bigotry for your local newspaper or online news outlets. Writing an op-ed or Letter to the Editor (LTE) can seem like a time-consuming and difficult task. That’s why we’ve put this brief how-to together for faith leaders. We know you have a lot of passion, but not a lot of time!

Letters-to-the-editor

These are brief (no more than 200 words) responses to specific articles. If you see something in your local paper that catches your attention, a letter to the editor can be a great way to make one specific point in response. Here
Faith leader op-ed sign-up – email
Catherine.Orsborn@s2scampaign.org
Sorry, Islamophobes: Your Anti-Muslim Rallies Ended Up Inspiring Acts Of Love And Service

After hearing about armed protests scheduled to take place around mosques, the interfaith community rallied around Muslims.

Carol Kuruvilla
Religion Associate Editor, The Huffington Post

A loosely affiliated group of armed protestors organized across the country on Friday and Saturday. But dividing the communities they targeted, news about the rallies strengthened bonds between interfaith allies and inspired...
IAHR Banners Oppose Anti-Muslim Bigotry

To counter anti-Muslim bigotry, Interfaith Action for Human Rights joins with Shoulder to Shoulder and Truah: The Rabbinic Call for Justice to call on U.S. religious communities to display banners signaling their support for the Muslim American community.

The campaign follows in the tradition of similar banner campaigns, such as Save Darfur, Stand with Israel and Black Lives Matter. It aims to demonstrate that faith communities stand together with the Muslim American community.

Read two outstanding editorials by Austin, Texas Clergy!

- Rabbi Steven Folberg's Message to Cong Beth Israel
- Rev John Elford's op-ed in the Austin American-Statesman

United Church of Christ News: Austin interfaith community
1. Connect, Listen, Learn

2. Amplify

2. Speak Up/Out & Show Up

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2. Strategic organizing & pushback
Myths or stereotypes about your work, the change you seek, the people involved

Undocumented immigrants are dangerous criminals

Churches have no role in politics

Things you’re proud of or give you joy about the work, the change you seek, and the people involved

Daniel and his family are our neighbors and they are in danger

For all of time, from Exodus to the Underground Railroad, faith communities have taken action for justice
1. Connect, Listen, Learn

2. Amplify

2. Speak Up/Out & Show Up

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American Leaders Against Hate and Anti-Muslim Bigotry Campaign

July 25, 2016 | 4:08 EDT

This year, Local Progress and the Young Elected Officials Action Network (YEO Action) partnered hand-in-hand with our constituents – including many from the Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities – to speak out and fight back against anti-Muslim bigotry, and the related xenophobia, racism, and hate that surrounds it. We believe progressive leaders must stand together to reject it and denounce anti-Muslim bigotry.

Hate crimes have spiked drastically since the 2016 presidential election. Xenophobic and racist rhetoric, as well as calls for horrendous public policies based on religious discrimination are very much a reality. Now, more than ever, it is important to stand up