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The Dynamics of Public Opinion on Ethnic Profiling After 9/11

Results From a Survey Experiment

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This study examines support for ethnic profiling in the United States as a counterterrorism tactic. It first compares support for counterterrorism profiling with support for profiling Black motorists. Then, it investigates whether the status of the profilee as a U.S. citizen of Arab or Middle Eastern appearance or as an immigrant alters either support for profiling or the determinants of that support. In both sets of analyses, the study investigates how competing ideas about the meaning of American identity shape opinions about profiling. Particular attention is paid to liberalism's emphasis on the rights of citizenship and ethnoculturalism's emphasis on the ascriptive boundaries of American identity. The results show that support for counterterrorism profiling is higher than support for profiling Black motorists, that people are more supportive of profiling immigrants than they are of profiling U.S. citizens, and that how people define what it means to be American is a powerful predictor of such support. The perspective promoted by the increasing number of radical activists on issues related to immigration—that being American means being a White European Christian—is the most powerful predictor of support for profiling. A liberal understanding of being American can offset some, but not all, of that support. The implications of these findings for future opinions and activism on post-9/11 issues are discussed.

Keywords: *American identity; 9/11; ethnic profiling; public opinion*

In recent years, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Amnesty International have issued reports decrying the use of ethnic profiling by law enforcement agencies in the United States in their efforts to combat terrorism. The ACLU report tells the story of Muhammad Siddiqui, a Houston architect who was contacted by FBI agents who said they wanted to ask him questions. Siddiqui told the agents, "I'd be happy to talk to you, but I'd like to have my attorney present," a request that frustrated the agents, with one telling him that getting a lawyer would only make him look guilty and another pulling his coat aside to reveal his gun (ACLU, 2004). Justice Department policy prohibits racial or ethnic profiling in federal law enforcement, but activities related to the border and national security are exempt. A recent Justice Department study of Arab Americans concluded that many of them fear being a victim of profiling by law enforcement more than they fear being the victim of a hate crime (Elliott, 2006).

Since 9/11, in addition to wondering if they would give up some of their own liberties, Americans have debated whether certain people, namely, Muslims and people of Middle Eastern or Arab descent, should give up more of their liberties than the rest of us. Polls have shown that many Americans are indeed willing to curtail the civil liberties of Arab Americans and Middle Eastern immigrants. In one survey conducted shortly after 9/11, 66% of Americans said it would be acceptable for law enforcement officials to stop and search anyone who looked Middle Eastern in order to prevent another attack, and in another, 31% said that they would support putting Arab Americans in camps until their innocence could be determined (Schildkraut, 2002).

Although no policy as extreme as internment developed after 9/11, support for profiling has been high enough to warrant further investigation. Investigation is warranted for other reasons as well. First, the issue of domestic counterterrorism policy is part of a broader class of salient and contentious “boundary related” policies generating debate and activism in the United States today, so called because they invoke both the territorial and conceptual boundaries of the nation. Other salient boundary related policies include immigration and language policy. In terms of territorial boundaries, these policies deal with the question of who is allowed in and who is not, and counterterrorism policy in particular addresses the very security of the nation’s physical space. In terms of conceptual boundaries, these policies call on us to consider factors that determine whether a person is “truly” American and, as such, deserving of the full range of rights and opportunities that come with membership in the American political community. Normative views about the boundaries of membership should therefore be key ingredients shaping how people evaluate such policies. Indeed, activists on both sides of the immigration debate often frame their efforts as representing what it means to be American. On the pro-immigration side, immigrants and their supporters at rallies have been praised as showing native-born Americans what active citizenship, a defining element of American identity, is all about. On the anti-immigration side, groups such as the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and the Council of Concerned Citizens have seen their membership surge and spread to parts of the country that have traditionally had low levels of White supremacy activism. Leaders of these groups point to their desire to preserve America’s European heritage as their motivation.¹ Ideas about the meaning of American identity are thus fueling activism. Studying systematically the role of these ideas in shaping opinions is the central goal of this article.

Second, Supreme Court rulings on Japanese internment as well as subsequent rulings on ethnic profiling near the U.S. border with Mexico suggest that profiling in the name of national security would likely be deemed constitutional should legal challenges arise (Braber, 2002; Harris, 2003). Third, non-White Americans who think that they or their group have suffered discrimination can become alienated and withdraw from the very political process that has the potential to protect them (Schildkraut, 2005b). Finally, elected officials and other prominent commentators have publicly advocated profiling. In August 2006, Representative Pete King

(R-NY), recent chair of the House Committee on Homeland Security, urged airport screeners to use ethnic and religious profiling at airports (Palmer, 2006).

To date, however, few studies have examined public opinion about profiling of any kind, including the more traditional form of profiling targeting African American drivers. This study builds on these investigations using a national telephone survey with split-sample manipulations in question wording. These wording experiments allow me to compare support for counterterrorism profiling with support for profiling Black motorists. It also allows me to investigate whether the status of the profilee as a U.S. citizen of Arab or Middle Eastern appearance or as an immigrant alters support for allowing law enforcement authorities to use high-discretion methods for preventing terrorist activity. In both analyses, I draw on public opinion scholarship that shows how competing ideas about the meaning of American identity can be strong influences over opinions on boundary related policies (Citrin, Reingold, & Green, 1990; Schildkraut, 2005a). I pay particular attention to liberalism's emphasis on the rights of citizenship and ethnoculturalism's emphasis on the ascriptive boundaries of American identity. I find that support for profiling Arabs and Arab Americans is higher than support for profiling Black motorists, that people are more supportive of profiling immigrants than they are of profiling U.S. citizens of Arab descent, and that how people define what it means to be American is a powerful predictor of such support, in some cases overshadowing "the usual suspects," including race, partisanship, education, and fearing another terrorist attack. The perspective promoted by groups like the KKK—that being American means being a White European Christian—is the most powerful predictor of support. A liberal understanding of being American can offset some, but not all, of that support.

Defining Ethnic Profiling

Ethnic profiling is when law enforcement authorities use racial or ethnic characteristics to determine which people to subject to heightened scrutiny in order to prevent crimes from occurring. Heightened scrutiny can range from interrogation to searches of one's person or property to arrests or even removal from the community, as in the case of Japanese internment during World War II. Profiling does not refer to the use of ethnic characteristics to catch a particular suspect once a crime has been committed and when the suspect has been described by witnesses. The phrase *racial profiling* entered popular discourse in the 1990s with increased media attention devoted to charges that Black motorists were disproportionately pulled over, with traffic violations serving as a pretext for police officers to search for drugs or weapons. The conventional wisdom was that such profiling constituted efficient policing because Blacks were considered to be more likely to commit drug and weapons crimes than Whites. Subsequent investigations have failed to confirm the conventional wisdom (Harris, 2003). In this study, *traditional profiling* refers to this kind

of profiling. In contrast, *9/11 profiling* refers to practices that involve subjecting people who look Middle Eastern, Arab, or Muslim to discretionary law enforcement attention as a way to *prevent* terrorist activity.

Public Opinion About Profiling

Traditional Profiling

Polls consistently show that a majority of Americans disapprove of traditional profiling. In March 2005, Princeton Survey Research Associates found that 75% of Americans say they disapprove of the practice.² This figure is in line with other recent surveys (Weitzer & Tuch, 2002). Despite the media and legislative attention that traditional profiling has received in recent years, few studies examine public opinion about its use. Indeed, a literature search returned only two studies, both by Weitzer and Tuch (2002, 2005). They note that overall support for profiling is low for both Blacks and Whites but that the race of the respondent was one of the strongest predictors of support. Other factors generating support included living in a high crime neighborhood and being personally afraid of crime. Black respondents with more education were less likely to approve of profiling than Black respondents with lower levels of education, and having personal experience with racial profiling also decreased approval.

Profiling After Attack: Pearl Harbor and 9/11 Profiling

As with traditional profiling, few studies look at views on 9/11 profiling. But first, it is instructive to examine what is known about public reactions to Japanese internment after Pearl Harbor, our most well-known case of profiling after a foreign attack. Although the survey industry was in its infancy in the 1940s, studies suggest that there was little sustained outrage at the time, with even Black and Jewish anti-discrimination organizations largely silent on the matter. Their silence has been attributed to a combination of factors, including a desire to seem patriotic and loyal, a preoccupation with defeating Germany, and prevailing anti-Japanese stereotypes (Greenberg, 1995). Analysis of editorials in *The New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* in 1942 likewise reveals an acceptance of internment (Schildkraut, 2002). A 1942 survey by the National Opinion Research Center found that 93% of Americans felt that the government was doing the right thing with internment. Fifty-nine percent still approved when asked about moving American citizens of Japanese descent. A 1942 Gallup poll found that 49% of Americans thought the internees should not be allowed to return to the coast when the war ended. Of those, 55% thought they should be sent to Japan, 11% thought they should stay in camps, and 8% thought they should be “destroyed” (Berinsky, n.d.). It is thus clear that the attack at Pearl

Harbor was met with majoritarian support of internment. Yet, we know little about the individual-level factors that led to such views because the original data sets are not available.

After the attacks on 9/11, the topic of internment reentered popular discourse. As noted earlier, roughly one third of Americans expressed support for placing Arab Americans in camps until their innocence could be determined. Although support for internment is not as high as it was in 1942, it is still at a nontrivial level. And support for milder forms of profiling, including random searches of people who look Middle Eastern, have been considerably higher. Existing studies of such support show some important similarities with studies of traditional profiling as well as some differences. For instance, just as being afraid of crime generates support for traditional profiling, being afraid of another attack on the United States (“sociotropic threat”) and being afraid that one or one’s family will be victims of an attack (“personal threat”) have each been shown to generate support for 9/11 profiling. Likewise, people with lower levels of education have higher levels of support for profiling (Huddy, Feldman, Taber, & Lahav, 2005; Kim, 2004; Schildkraut, 2002). Unlike studies of traditional profiling, however, the race of the respondent has not proven to be a significant determinant of support for 9/11 profiling. And whereas studies of traditional profiling do not examine political attitudes, studies of 9/11 profiling find that Republicans and conservatives are often more supportive than Democrats and liberals.

Despite these insights, there is still much to learn about public opinion about profiling. First, existing studies look at only “mild” forms of 9/11 profiling, such as allowing searches or vaguely worded “greater surveillance.” No study looks at the one third of people who support measures as extreme as internment. Second, no study looks at whether support for profiling is tempered when the profilee is described as an American citizen or whether respondents would treat all people who look Arab or Muslim the same regardless of whether they are U.S. citizens or immigrants. Third, no study compares attitudes about traditional profiling with attitudes about 9/11 profiling. Do people see these as essentially the same kind of “efficient” policy, or are they situated in fundamentally different frameworks?

Finally, there is an important set of independent variables that has been absent from studies of profiling, namely, the ways in which people define what being American means. Yet, when talking about policies that involve the boundaries of the nation, the norms and values people use to constitute their vision of what makes being American unique can be a powerful influence over how they interpret the specific policy debates and whether their attitudes become translated into activism. How people define being American has been shown to be a powerful influence over attitudes on other boundary related policies such as immigration, language policy, and social welfare programs (Citrin et al., 1990; Schildkraut, 2005a; Theiss-Morse, 2006). In the case of a foreign attack, the territorial and conceptual boundaries of the nation are clearly salient. Many people believe that what the United States stands for was attacked on 9/11 just as much as U.S. territory was. But Americans

have wide-ranging views of what it is, exactly, that the United States stands for. To understand what motivates attitudes and behaviors in response to 9/11, we thus need to include measures of what people think being American means. When we see which elements of American identity are brought to bear on these debates, we learn more about what people think such debates are even about, and we learn about the type of America that people seek to preserve through their preferred policy solution.

Although scholarship has identified multiple sets of norms that popularly constitute American identity (Schildkraut, 2005a; Smith, 1997), two are particularly relevant here: liberalism and ethnoculturalism. Liberalism stresses universal rights, calls for minimal government intervention in private life, and promotes economic and political freedoms along with equality of opportunity. Most Americans consider liberal norms to be an essential element of American identity (Citrin, Haas, Muste, & Reingold, 1994; McClosky & Zaller, 1984). Liberalism emphasizes the rights of people to be free from arbitrary government intervention and provides a normative prescription to provide civil liberties even in cases where the majority would prefer restrictions. As such, people who use liberalism to define American identity might be less likely than others to support profiling.

Ethnoculturalism, on the other hand, is an ascriptive tradition that sets rigid boundaries on group membership. In its extreme, it maintains that Americans are White, English-speaking Protestants of northern European ancestry (Smith, 1997). Over time, this tradition has become discredited, although many people still say that to be a true American, a person should be Christian and be born in the United States (Citrin et al., 1990; Schildkraut, 2005a). Ethnoculturalism promotes exclusion from the national community based on ascriptive characteristics, which could lead to a greater willingness to deny the rights and liberties that come with membership to people who do not possess such characteristics. Thus, people who use ethnoculturalism to define American identity might be more likely than others to support profiling.

The remainder of this analysis seeks to advance the study of public opinion on profiling by testing three hypotheses: first, that support for 9/11 profiling is higher than support for traditional profiling and that support for 9/11 profiling is higher when the profilee is an immigrant than when the profilee is a U.S. citizen; second, that liberalism and ethnoculturalism are as influential over support for profiling, if not more so, as more tangible factors such as sociotropic threat, with liberalism leading to opposition and ethnoculturalism leading to support; and third, that the factors that dictate support are similar across all types of profiling, indicating more similarities across these realms of high-discretion tactics than differences.

Data and Key Measures

To test these hypotheses, I used the 21st Century Americanism Survey (21-CAS), a national random-digit-dial (RDD) telephone survey conducted in

2004 with oversamples of Blacks, Latinos, and Asians.³ It has 2,800 respondents: 1,633 White, non-Hispanic; 300 Black; 441 Latino; and 299 Asian.⁴ The 21-CAS contains two split-sample question wording manipulations that can test the hypotheses described above. In the first manipulation, half of the respondents (randomly determined) were asked if they approve or disapprove of traditional profiling, whereas the other half were asked if they approve or disapprove of stopping and searching people who look Arab or Muslim to see if they may have ties to terrorism. In the second manipulation, half of the respondents (randomly determined) were asked if they would support or oppose internment Arab Americans should there be another attack on the United States, whereas the other half were asked if they would support or oppose internment Arab immigrants. The split-sample methodology was used to avoid bias toward consistency in respondents' answers. Had all respondents been asked all questions, a person objecting to traditional profiling might then feel the need to be consistent and object to 9/11 profiling even if he or she really feels that 9/11 profiling is acceptable. Because the question wording is randomly assigned, any statistically significant differences between aggregate responses to the two versions can reasonably be assumed to be due to the question wording itself and not to any other factor.⁵

Split-Sample Results

For the first split-sample manipulation, half of the sample was asked, "It has been reported that some police officers stop motorists of certain racial or ethnic groups because the officers believe that these groups are more likely than others to commit certain types of crime. This practice is known as racial profiling. Do you approve or disapprove of the use of racial profiling by police?"⁶ Twenty-three percent approve and 77% disapprove.⁷ The other half was asked, "Since September 11th, some law enforcement agencies have stopped and searched people who are Arab or of Middle Eastern descent to see if they may be involved in potential terrorist activities. Do you approve or disapprove of this kind of profiling?"⁸ Here, 66% approve and 34% disapprove. The increase in approval of 9/11 profiling compared with traditional profiling is an impressive 43 percentage points ($p < .000$).

In the second split-sample manipulation, half of the sample was asked, "If there were another terrorist attack in the U.S. with Arab or Middle Eastern suspects, would you support or oppose allowing the government to hold Arabs who are U.S. citizens in camps until it can be determined whether they have links to terrorist organizations?"⁹ Of those who were asked this question, 29.5% support internment and 70.5% oppose. The other half was asked the same question but with "Arab immigrants" replacing "Arabs who are U.S. citizens." Here, 34% support internment and 66% oppose, a small but statistically significant increase in approval of 4.5 percentage points ($p < .006$).¹⁰

These results confirm the first hypothesis. Support for 9/11 profiling is considerably higher than support for traditional profiling. People are even more likely to approve of placing people who fit the 9/11 profile into camps than they are to approve of pulling over minority motorists. There are two other points to note here. First, of the four questions, the only one in which a majority of respondents approves is the case of searching people who look Middle Eastern. In the remaining questions, most respondents oppose the profiling in question. Second, although a majority opposes placing people in camps, the percentage of people supporting it a full 3 years after the 9/11 attacks is high, accounting for roughly one third of the respondents in both conditions.

Why People Support or Oppose Profiling

In the aggregate, the type of profiling and the type of profilee in question can affect levels of support for profiling. But what about at the individual level? To investigate the remaining hypotheses, individual-level analysis is necessary. In this section, I first describe the independent variables under investigation. Next, I examine bivariate relationships between those variables and support for profiling, and then I conduct more rigorous probit analyses.

Based on the findings of earlier studies, I examine the role of the respondent's race, level of education, and partisan identification, with the expectation that Whites, people with lower levels of education, and Republicans will be more supportive of profiling (see the appendix for question wording not described in text). I also examine whether people who feel they personally have been a victim of discrimination or that their ethnic group is discriminated against ("panethnic discrimination") are less supportive of profiling than people who do not perceive discrimination. In all but the traditional profiling models, I test whether personal threat and/or sociotropic threat increase support for profiling. Likewise, in all but the traditional profiling models, I test whether one's level of pride in being American influences support (Davis & Silver, 2004; Greenberg, 1995).

Finally, I include measures that account for the extent to which respondents define the content of American identity in liberal and/or ethnocultural terms. Respondents were asked, "I'm going to read a list of things that some people say are important in making someone a true American. The first one is _____. Would you say that it should be very important, somewhat important, somewhat unimportant, or very unimportant in making someone a true American?" To measure liberalism's emphasis on political freedoms, people were asked if "letting other people say what they want no matter how much you disagree with them" is an important aspect of being American, where 0 = *very unimportant* and 1 = *very important*. Sixty-six percent of respondents said "very important" and 22% said "somewhat important." To measure ethnoculturalism's exclusivity, respondents

were asked to rate the importance of being born in America, being a Christian, having European ancestors, and being White. Answers were combined to form a 0–1 ethnoculturalism scale, where 0 means that all items were very unimportant and 1 means that all items were very important ($\alpha = 0.72$, $M = 0.30$, $SD = 0.26$, average inter-item correlation = 0.40).¹¹

Table 1 shows bivariate relationships between these independent variables and support for the four types of profiling, with significant differences between split-sample manipulations noted.¹² The results show that most people across each category within each independent variable (reading across the rows) feel differently when asked about motorists than when asked about profiling Arabs and Muslims. In all cases, the higher level of support for 9/11 profiling is statistically significant, with a majority supporting it and a majority opposing traditional profiling. In contrast, people within each independent variable often feel similarly when asked about interning citizens versus interning immigrants. The differences are insignificant in 17 of the 28 comparisons and significant in 11. In all significant cases, support is higher for interning immigrants. In general, however, the aggregate differences across the types of profiling and profilee hold up regardless of the individual-level characteristics under investigation.

However, some strong differences in the level of support for profiling exist within the independent variables. Looking down each column, most independent variables seem to influence attitudes toward profiling in the three 9/11-related questions. With education, for instance, 55% of people with a high school diploma or less approve of interning Arab immigrants compared with only 17% of people with a graduate education. Likewise, only 18.0% of people who do not fear being a victim of a terrorist attack approve of interning Arab Americans compared with 48.5% of people who harbor such fears. With regard to ideas about the meaning of American identity, ethnoculturalism looks to be a more powerful influence over attitudes than liberalism, although both seem to shape opinions in the expected direction. In contrast to the 9/11-related columns, most differences in the column for traditional profiling are more modest.

To test the remaining hypotheses more thoroughly, a more rigorous test is needed. Table 2, therefore, shows the results of four probit analyses, one for each dependent variable. All nondummy variables were coded to range from 0 to 1. The results partially confirm the second and third hypotheses. The second hypothesis was that liberalism and ethnoculturalism would be strong predictors of opinions, possibly even overshadowing traditional variables. Liberalism and ethnoculturalism are indeed strong predictors in some models, but not in all of them, with liberal ideas about being American generating opposition to 9/11 profiling and to interning Arab Americans, and ethnocultural ideas about being American generating support for all three types of 9/11 profiling. Whether these conceptions of American identity are more influential than other predictors is addressed below. It is notable that neither conception of American identity is a significant predictor of attitudes toward

Table 1
Bivariate Relationships: Percentage Who Approve or Support

	Profiling of Motorists (Form 1)	Profiling of Arabs (Form 2)	Internment of Arab Americans (Form 1)	Internment of Arab Immigrants (Form 2)	N (Form 1/ Form 2)
White	26.44	70.31**	27.01	30.30	779/741
Black	6.52	53.02**	35.59	43.66	138/149
Asian	21.12	50.43**	26.92	31.93	161/115
Latino	20.28	66.34**	39.90	49.45**	217/202
High school or less	22.88	71.39**	52.09	55.00	329/339
Some college	21.00	67.69**	32.22	36.32	419/390
College graduate	26.09	64.02**	18.50	27.57**	253/239
Some grad/grad degree	23.23	56.04**	15.56	17.09	310/273
Democrat (including leaners)	13.88	52.36**	23.45	28.47**	598/573
Independent	13.85	65.06**	39.06	29.41	65/83
Republican (including leaners)	35.54	82.17**	33.63	42.90**	453/387
Victim racial discrimination (scale)					
Low	22.96	66.10**	29.04	33.08**	1150/1059
Medium	25.00	57.02**	37.63	45.61	104/114
High	15.87	69.57**	37.50	50.00	63/69
Panethnic group discrimination (scale)					
Low	22.01	64.12**	23.95	27.26	668/641
Medium	23.72	69.72**	34.95	41.57*	392/360
High	23.35	62.66**	39.57	46.98	257/241
Doesn't fear being victim of terrorism	—	58.72	18.00	26.72**	470/470
Fears being victim of terrorism	—	77.62	48.50	55.61	275/210
Doesn't fear nation being attacked	—	46.98	21.43	27.51	238/232
Fears nation being attacked	—	77.17	39.32	47.34**	395/346
Proud to be American					
Disagree strongly/ somewhat	—	30.56	7.32	18.92	40/36
Agree strongly/somewhat	—	66.95	29.58	33.55	1153/1077
Political liberalism					
Very/somewhat unimportant	27.95	68.93**	45.58	38.92	161/177
Very/somewhat important	21.81	64.51**	27.83	34.28**	1105/1034

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

	Profiling of Motorists (Form 1)	Profiling of Arabs (Form 2)	Internment of Arab Americans (Form 1)	Internment of Arab Immigrants (Form 2)	<i>N</i> (Form 1/ Form 2)
Low ethnoculturalism	21.07	60.79**	17.04	21.99**	859/806
Medium ethnoculturalism	24.42	74.06**	51.07	57.65*	356/320
High ethnoculturalism	30.39	74.14**	73.20	70.09	102/116

Source: 21st Century Americanism Survey (2004).¹³

Note: Unweighted results; DK/NA dropped.

* $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$.

traditional profiling, suggesting that 9/11 profiling invokes the conceptual boundaries of the United States in a way that traditional profiling does not.

This last point brings us to the third hypothesis, that the factors that dictate support for profiling would be similar across all types of profiling. This hypothesis is confirmed for only three variables: Black respondents are less supportive of traditional and 9/11 profiling than White respondents (but race does not matter for internment), Republicans are more supportive of all kinds of profiling than Democrats, and a greater sense of group-level, or panethnic, discrimination also leads to more support. The positive coefficient on panethnic discrimination at first seems curious. But, it is important to remember that most of the respondents in the survey are White Americans, and the way in which White perceptions of mistreatment influence attitudes is poorly understood (Wong & Cho, 2005). Moreover, the average level of perceived panethnic discrimination was much lower for Whites (0.29 on a 0–1 scale) than for other groups (0.74 for Blacks, 0.47 for Asians, and 0.57 for Latinos). When each model was run separately for Whites, Blacks, Latinos, and Asians (results not shown), the measure of group-level discrimination was significant only for Whites. In all other models, this variable failed to achieve significance, although it was negative in nearly every case. For Whites, then, feeling that Whites have been mistreated in the United States leads to a greater willingness to curtail the civil liberties of both minority motorists and Middle Easterners, whereas for all other groups, perceptions of group-level mistreatment are insignificant.¹⁴

I return now to the question of whether liberal and ethnocultural conceptions of American national identity matter more than other significant predictors. It is difficult to assess this question simply by comparing the size of probit coefficients. Instead, it is necessary to examine the results in terms of predicted probabilities. Tables 3 and 4 show the predicted probability that a respondent would approve of each type of profiling as the independent variable in question (across each row) changes from its minimum to its maximum value (from 0 to 1).¹⁵ The results

Table 2
Support for Profiling and Internment, Probit

Independent Variable	Profiling Motorists	Profiling Arabs	Internment of Arab Americans	Internment of Arab Immigrants
Black	-0.90*** (0.23)	-0.52*** (0.16)	-0.29 (0.19)	0.12 (0.16)
Asian	-0.19 (0.19)	-0.61*** (0.24)	0.15 (0.22)	-0.05 (0.26)
Latino	-0.19 (0.16)	-0.34** (0.17)	-0.17 (0.18)	0.08 (0.17)
Education	0.08 (0.17)	-0.24 (0.17)	-0.73*** (0.19)	-0.64*** (0.17)
Partisan identification (higher value = GOP)	0.78*** (0.12)	0.95*** (0.13)	0.45*** (0.14)	0.62*** (0.13)
Perceives individual level discrimination	-0.16 (0.23)	0.18 (0.20)	-0.15 (0.24)	0.09 (0.20)
Perceives group level discrimination	0.34** (0.17)	0.26 (0.18)	0.61*** (0.19)	0.43** (0.18)
Liberal definition of American identity	-0.26 (0.17)	-0.29* (0.16)	-0.51*** (0.58)	0.06 (0.17)
Ethnocultural definition of American identity	0.24 (0.20)	0.52** (0.21)	2.22*** (0.23)	1.57*** (0.20)
Fears being victim of attack	—	0.13 (0.16)	0.52*** (0.17)	0.43*** (0.16)
Fears U.S. will be attacked	—	0.42*** (0.16)	0.28 (0.19)	-0.02 (0.16)
Proud to be American	—	1.02*** (0.29)	0.99** (0.47)	0.39 (0.34)
Constant	-1.05	-0.96	-2.24	-1.66
Chi-square	89.38	181.24	293.98	219.77
<i>N</i>	1038	960	951	952

Source: 21st Century Americanism Survey (2004).

Note: All nondummy variables coded 0 to 1. Weighted data. Standard errors in parentheses.

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

indicate which variables produce the most change and which variables lead to a change in the predicted outcome (i.e., changing from likely to approve to likely to disapprove).

With regard to the hypothesis that liberal and ethnocultural Americanism will matter as much, if not more, than other significant predictors, the predicted probabilities show mixed results. Table 3 underscores that neither conception of American identity influences attitudes toward traditional profiling. Both conceptions of American identity are significant predictors of support for allowing searches of people who look Arab or Muslim, although both are weaker in magnitude compared with partisanship and patriotism. Partisanship yields a 30 percentage

Table 3
Predicted Probability of Approving of Profiling

Independent Variable	Profiling Motorists			Profiling Arabs		
	0	1	Change	0	1	Change
White to Black	0.25	0.06	-0.19**	0.73	0.54	-0.19**
Education	0.23	0.26	0.03	0.77	0.69	-0.08
Democrat to Republican	0.15	0.39	0.24**	0.57	0.87	0.30**
Liberal definition of American identity	0.32	0.23	-0.09	0.80	0.71	-0.09*
Ethnocultural definition of American identity	0.23	0.30	0.07	0.67	0.83	0.16**
Fears being victim of attack	—	—	—	0.78	0.75	-0.03
Fears U.S. will be attacked	—	—	—	0.64	0.79	0.15**
Proud to be American	—	—	—	0.37	0.75	0.38**

Source: 21st Century Americanism Survey (2004).

Note: Cell entries = probability of approving when independent variable equals 0 or 1.

* $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$.

point jump in support when the average respondent goes from being a Democrat (57%) to being a Republican (87%), whereas patriotism yields an impressive increase in support of 38 percentage points when the average respondent goes from not being proud to be American (37%) to being proud (75%). Strong Republicans have the highest level of support for 9/11 profiling, shown in Table 3, whereas patriotism is the only variable that changes a person's predicted response from disapprove to approve. The corresponding changes in probability for ethnoculturalism and liberalism, in contrast, are 16 and 9 percentage points, respectively, comparable to sociotropic threat.

Table 4, on the other hand, shows that how a person defines the meaning of American identity can be a very powerful influence over support for internment. People who define American identity ethnoculturally are much more likely to approve of internment than are people who reject ethnoculturalism. Indeed, ethnoculturalism is the most powerful variable in both internment models, and it is the only one that changes a person's predicted response from oppose to support. People who score a 0 on the ethnoculturalism scale have an 8% chance of supporting the internment of Arab Americans, whereas people who score a 1 have a 79% chance. Likewise, people who score a 0 on ethnoculturalism have a 15% chance of supporting the internment of Arab immigrants, whereas people who score a 1 have a 71% chance. This influence far surpasses that of patriotism and partisanship. Roughly 8.4% of the sample scores in the top third of the ethnoculturalism scale, which means that this substantial level of support for internment applies to a small but non-trivial portion of the U.S. population.

Table 4
Predicted Probability of Approving of Internment

Independent Variable	Internment of Arab Americans			Internment of Arab Immigrants		
	0	1	Change	0	1	Change
White to Black	0.22	0.15	-0.07	0.28	0.33	0.05
Education	0.36	0.14	-0.22**	0.42	0.20	-0.22**
Democrat to Republican	0.17	0.30	0.13**	0.20	0.41	0.21**
Liberal definition of American identity	0.37	0.20	-0.17**	0.27	0.29	0.02
Ethnocultural definition of American identity	0.08	0.79	0.71**	0.15	0.71	0.56**
Fears being victim of attack	0.17	0.33	0.16**	0.24	0.39	0.15**
Fears U.S. will be attacked	0.18	0.26	0.08	0.29	0.28	-0.01
Proud to be American	0.06	0.24	0.18**	0.19	0.30	0.11

Source: 21st Century Americanism Survey (2004).

Note: Cell entries = probability of approving when independent variable equals 0 or 1.

** $p < .05$.

Political liberalism is also an important determinant of support for internment, but only when the target group consists of U.S. citizens of Arab descent. People who say that political freedom is an unimportant component of American identity are 17 percentage points more likely than people who say political freedom is an important component of American identity to support interning Arab Americans. This effect is greater than the magnitude of partisanship, less than the magnitude of education, and roughly the same as personal threat. When the target group is changed to immigrants, political liberalism loses its significance. This finding underscores that people distinguish between citizens and immigrants when it comes to granting the full range of rights that come with being a member of the political community. Seeing America as uniquely defined by its respect for political freedoms such as speech rights decreases support for internment, but only when the potential detainees are legally American.

Finally, a brief word is in order about the race of the respondent and the role of sociotropic and personal threat, because both have received much attention in existing literature. In line with earlier studies, Black respondents are less supportive of traditional profiling than Whites, whereas the race of the respondent returns inconsistent results with 9/11 profiling. Black, Asian, and Latino respondents are less likely than White respondents to support allowing searches of people who look Middle Eastern, but the race of the respondent is insignificant in both internment models. And as in previous studies, both sociotropic and personal threat increase support for profiling, but they do so inconsistently. Sociotropic threat increases support only for searches, whereas personal threat increases support for both kinds of internment.

Conclusion

This analysis advances the study of public opinion on profiling in several respects. First, it devotes attention to the sizeable portion of Americans who say they would support removing people from the community and placing them into camps to prevent a terrorist attack. Given how far the United States has come in the past several decades in the march toward racial equality, that one third of Americans would support internment demands scrutiny. I find that lower levels of education, being a Republican, fearing being a victim of an attack, being proud to be an American, and having an ethnocultural definition of American identity all make such support more likely, whereas having a liberal definition of American identity makes such support less likely. Of these factors, ethnoculturalism has the greatest effect.

Second, this study finds that support for profiling is tempered when the profilee is expressly described as an American citizen instead of as an immigrant. However, the individual-level factors that influence opinions in both cases are generally the same. The only notable exceptions are a liberal view of American identity and patriotism, which both influence attitudes toward interning citizens, but not immigrants.

Third, this study compares attitudes about traditional profiling with attitudes about 9/11 profiling. People are much more approving of 9/11 profiling than of traditional profiling. Some factors, such as being a Republican and White, generate support for both kinds of profiling, whereas other factors, such as education and how people define American identity, influence only 9/11 profiling. People think that 9/11 profiling is about preserving one's sense of what America stands for whereas traditional profiling is not.

This last point gets to the final contribution of this study, which is that it demonstrates the powerful role that abstract and entrenched ideas about national identity can have over salient and contentious policy debates relative to more immediate, tangible, and fluctuating concerns about national and personal security. Public opinion about what being American means changes slowly, if at all. Yet, its influence over profiling attitudes remains strong, even years after the 9/11 attacks. On 9/11 profiling, defining America in ascriptive terms is the main factor leading people to be willing to resort to measures as extreme as internment. Framing opposition to 9/11 profiling in terms of America's liberal tradition has the potential to temper the power of ethnoculturalism, in particular with regard to interning Arab Americans. Such framing could also diminish support for milder and more common forms of profiling, such as those detailed by the ACLU and Amnesty International. On internment, however, the frame of liberal Americanism will only temper support when the profilees are fellow Americans. When the profilees are immigrants, America's liberal tradition does not seem to be able to stand in the way of ethnoculturalism's substantial effect. Despite this finding, policy makers and activists concerned about extreme profiling would be wise to do what they can to make this conception of American identity salient when they engage in this

policy debate, given how central liberalism is defining what people think it means to be American.

Appendix

Question Wording and Coding

Level of Education

What is the highest grade of school or year of college you have completed? (recoded to run from 0 to 1)

1 = less than high school diploma; 2 = high school graduate; 3 = trade/vocational school; 4 = some college; 5 = BA or BS; 6 = some graduate school; 7 = graduate level degree

Partisan Identification

Generally speaking, do you consider yourself a Republican, an independent, a Democrat, or something else? (if R or D) Would you call yourself a strong Republican/Democrat or a not very strong Republican/Democrat? (if something else) Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or Democratic party? (recoded to run from 0 to 1)

1 = strong Democrat; 2 = Democrat; 3 = leans Democrat; 4 = Independent; 5 = leans Republican; 6 = Republican; 7 = strong Republican

Panethnic Discrimination Scale

In general, do you think discrimination against [Whites/Blacks/Latinos/Asians] is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem in schools?

What about in the workplace?

What about in preventing [Whites/Blacks/Latinos/Asians] in general from succeeding in America?

Answers were combined to form a 0 to 1 scale ($\alpha = 0.84$), where 0 means that all three were not a problem, and 1 means that all three were a major problem.

Victim of Discrimination Scale

Do you think you have ever been denied a job or promotion because of your racial or ethnic background?

Do you think you generally receive worse service than other people at restaurants or stores because of your racial or ethnic background?

Do you think your racial or ethnic background has made it difficult for you to succeed in America?

Answers were combined to form a 0 to 1 scale ($\alpha = 0.64$), where 0 means that the respondent said "no" to all three, and 1 means that the respondent said "yes" to all three.

(continued)

Appendix (continued)

Personal Threat

How worried are you that you or a close relative or friend might be the victim of a terrorist attack in the United States—are you very worried, somewhat worried, or not worried at all? (recoded to run from 0 to 1, where 1 = very worried)

1 = very worried; 2 = somewhat worried; 3 = not worried at all

Sociotropic Threat

How worried are you about the possibility that there will be more major terrorist attacks in the United States in the near future—are you very worried, somewhat worried, or not worried at all? (recoded to run from 0 to 1, where 1 = strongly agree)

1 = very worried; 2 = somewhat worried; 3 = not worried at all

Proud to be American

Please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree: I am proud to be an American. (recoded to run from 0 to 1)

1 = strongly agree; 2 = somewhat agree; 3 = somewhat disagree; 4 = strongly disagree

Notes

1. Information on recent White supremacist activity was found at the Anti-Defamation League Web site (http://www.adl.org/PresRele/Extremism_72/4973_72.htm, retrieved March 20, 2007) and at the National Public Radio Web site (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=7725295>, retrieved March 20, 2007).

2. Survey results available at the Polling the Nations Web site (<http://poll.orpub.com>, retrieved November 29, 2006).

3. Data collection was conducted from July 12 to October 8, 2004, by the Social and Economic Sciences Research Center at Washington State University and was funded by the Russell Sage Foundation. Any U.S. resident older than 18 years and living in a household with a telephone was eligible for selection in the sample. Counties with higher percentages of Black, Latino, and Asian residents were targeted more heavily with random-digit dialing for the oversamples. The cooperation rate, the ratio of interviews to interviews plus refusals, was 31.2%. A Spanish version of the survey was available and was used by 137 respondents. The average interview length was 26 minutes.

4. The remaining respondents identified as either mixed race or Native American or answered the race question in a way that could not be incorporated into this breakdown (e.g., “human”).

5. Respondents were randomly assigned to Form 1 or Form 2, where Form 1 asked about profiling motorists and interning citizens and Form 2 asked about 9/11 profiling and interning immigrants.

6. This question wording was adopted from a poll conducted shortly after 9/11 by the Kaiser Family Foundation, the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and National Public Radio. The original survey is available at <http://kff.org/kaiserpolls/loader.cfm?url=/commonsport/security/getfile.cfm&PageID=13879>.

7. Unless noted otherwise, all percentages represent weighed results, using weights provided by the Social and Economic Sciences Research Center.

8. This question wording was adopted from the poll conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation, the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and National Public Radio.

9. This question wording was adopted from a *Time/CNN* poll taken shortly after 9/11, available at <http://poll.orspub.com>.

10. All percentages exclude respondents who said "don't know." The percentages offering that response were as follows: traditional profiling (61%), 9/11 profiling (6.7%), interning U.S. citizens (9.0%), and interning Arab immigrants (8.9%).

11. For a discussion of why liberalism is measured with one item whereas ethnoculturalism is measured with a four-variable scale, see Schildkraut (2007).

12. Independent variables with more than four categories are collapsed in Table 1 but are restored to their full precision in subsequent probit analyses.

13. 21-CAS data are available from the author upon request.

14. The 21st Century Americanism Survey does not ask respondents about their personal or sociotropic fear of crime, precluding a test of whether sociotropic and/or personal threat generate support for both traditional and 9/11 profiling.

15. Predicted probabilities are calculated while holding all other variables constant at their means.

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