

# THE HUMAN IDENTITY: OVERCOMING RELIGIOUS DIVISIONS?

by

ALISA N. ROGERS

(Under the Direction of KATHLEEN POWERS)

## ABSTRACT

Refugee resettlement is one solution to the current refugee crisis. However, refugee admittance and resettlement policies lack public support, largely due to a fear of terrorism (FoT) associated with the Muslim identity of many refugees. Social identity can explain the negative attitudes and, theoretically, how social identity can be used to reduce negative attitudes by manipulating salient identities. An experiment was conducted which increased the salience of a superordinate identity, hypothesizing that an identification with humanity (IWH) would increase support for pro-refugee policies regardless of religion. Results indicate that IWH was not strong enough to overcome religious identity. Interviews were conducted to refine the theory. Results indicate that IWH is a motivational factor for supporting refugee admittance. FoT was identified as the strongest contributor to negative attitudes. Changing rhetoric, increasing education, and increasing contact with refugees were proposed solutions to placate the FoT and increase support for refugee admittance policies.

INDEX WORDS: refugee, religion, humanity, identity, fear

THE HUMAN IDENTITY: OVERCOMING RELIGIOUS DIVISIONS?

by

ALISA N. ROGERS

BA, Texas Tech University, 2014

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2017

© 2017

Alisa N. Rogers

All Rights Reserved

THE HUMAN IDENTITY: OVERCOMING RELIGIOUS DIVISIONS?

by

ALISA N. ROGERS

Major Professor: Kathleen Powers  
Committee: Jeffrey Berejikian  
Lihi Ben Shitrit

Electronic Version Approved:

Suzanne Barbour  
Dean of the Graduate School  
The University of Georgia  
May 2017

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Drs. Kathleen Powers, Jeffrey Berejikian, and Lihi Ben Shitrit for their guidance and assistance throughout this process. I would also like to thank Dr. Ryan Bakker for all of his help battling with R code.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	iv
LIST OF TABLES .....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	viii
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
2 BACKGROUND .....	5
Psychology Background .....	9
3 THEORY .....	14
Identification with Humanity .....	15
4 METHODS .....	19
Experimental Procedures .....	20
Qualitative Procedures .....	23
5 EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS.....	24
6 QUALITATIVE RESULTS .....	27
Identification with Refugees.....	28
Why We Should Accept Refugees.....	31
Why We Should Not Accept Refugees.....	33
Finding a Solution.....	36
7 Discussion.....	41

REFERENCES .....46

APPENDICES

A EXPERIMENTAL PROTOCOL.....52

B INTERVIEW PROTOCOL .....60

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1: Demographic Tables.....	62
Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations .....	64
Table 2: Regression Analysis: Attitude Toward Refugee Policy .....	65
Table 3: Regression Analysis: Attitude Toward Refugee Policy with Party Affiliation.....	66

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1: Factor Analysis.....	67
Figure 2: Mediation Analysis.....	68
Figure 3: Coefficient Plot of Attitude Toward Refugee Policy .....	69
Figure 4: Coefficient Plot of Attitude Toward Refugee Policy with Party Affiliation.....	69
Figure 5: Attitudes Toward Refugee Admittance Policy.....	70

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The Syrian refugee crisis has become a prominent issue in the news. The Syrian conflict in the Middle East which began in 2011 has continued to grow more severe and more people are fleeing to seek refuge in a host country (Ostrand, 2015). Immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers all have different official definitions (Department of Homeland Security). The current research focuses specifically on refugees. According to the Department of Homeland Security, a refugee is:

“a person outside his or her country of nationality who is unable or unwilling to return to his or her country of nationality because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion”

At the close of 2015 there were over 21 million refugees and millions more displaced persons and asylum seekers with Syrians making up the largest percentage of those refugees (UNHCR, 2016). Former United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said, “We are facing the biggest refugee and displacement crisis of our time. Above all, this is not just a crisis of numbers; it is also a crisis of solidarity” (UNHCR, 2016). This has become a global situation and as the number of refugees continues to rise, the need to devise successful resettlement solutions intensifies (Esses, Hamilton, & Gaucher, 2017).

Refugee resettlement in host countries is one solution to the current refugee crisis. People of the host countries need to be supportive of the policies of resettlement of refugees in order for this solution to be successful (Esses et al., 2017). Thus far, smaller, less developed nations have been accepting disproportionately large numbers of refugees. The economically developed countries that are more capable of absorbing the economic impact of resettling

refugees have taken in far fewer refugees (UNHCR, 2016). This is due in part to the public holding negative attitudes toward refugees and the idea of resettlement in their country (Esses et al., 2017). One of the elements driving the negative attitudes is social identity. Social identity is an individual's membership in a social group and their emotional attachment to that group (Huddy, 2004; Tajfel, 1982). Being a fan of a certain sports team, identifying with a certain political party, and being an American are different social identities; people can have multiple social identities (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). Social identities can create animosity between two different groups, but they can also be used to unite multiple subgroup identities within one large superordinate social identity (Esses, Dovidio, Semanya, & Jackson, 2005; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Transue, 2007). An identification with humanity is the broadest, most inclusive level of social identification and can theoretically incorporate members of different nationalities and religious groups under one single identity (Turner et al., 1987). The current research manipulates social identity to examine whether or not a superordinate identification with humanity can overcome divisive religious identities (i.e., Muslim and Christianity) and lead to more tolerance of policies that favor refugee admittance.

There are many different religions that exist in the world today which create clear and strongly held differences in identity that can lead to conflict. Even within states, different ethnic and religious identities can lead to violent conflict (Arrow & Sundberg, 2004; Savigny & Marsden, 2009). Religious identity is particularly salient in the current refugee crisis due to the association between Islam and terrorism. The fear of terrorism that has been associated with the Islamic religion has led to disapproval of policies granting asylum to Muslim refugees (Esses, Hodson, & Dovidio, 2003; Esses et al., 2017). Reducing the level of negative attitudes toward

pro-refugee admittance policies requires overcoming the divisive differences in religious identity. Recategorization under a superordinate identity is the solution proposed here.

An identification with humanity is used as the superordinate identity in the current research because it will encompass all groups being examined in this refugee context. In previous research, national identity has been frequently used as a superordinate identity to unite various subgroups within a nation and eliminate previously held negative evaluations of the former outgroup members. For example, people of different racial groups report less favorable evaluations of outgroup members than of ingroup members; once a common national identity is made salient and both racial groups are recategorized under this common ingroup national identity, the difference in evaluation is eliminated (Dovidio et al., 2010; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). The current refugee crisis is a prime example of an instance in which the human category may be required to recategorize all people into one broad ingroup. Different national identities as well as different religious identities are present in this refugee context, however, religious identity appears to be exceptionally salient (Esses et al., 2017). An identification with humanity is used because it is all inclusive and should recategorize people of all subgroups into one single ingroup..

Ultimately, alleviating these negative attitudes and conflicts over policy will require extensive and exhaustive research, but understanding how different levels of identity influence the perception of policies regarding refugees is an important step. The current research aims to demonstrate one way negative attitudes toward refugees can be reduced by making a superordinate identity salient; this can result in the recategorization of former outgroup members into one single inclusive ingroup. This could reduce ingroup bias and potentially result in more support for policies favoring refugee admittance. Accepting more refugees would lessen the

burden of other states that have taken in disproportionate numbers of refugees (UNHCR, 2016). This research has potential implications for both domestic social situations and group situations at the international level. Beyond the current refugee crisis, understanding the role an identification with humanity has in attitude change toward various policies has implications for humanitarian organizations and how various humanitarian efforts can be framed to garner more support. Understanding and exploring this level of identity can reveal potential solutions regarding prejudice and stereotyping between different groups of different nationalities and religions and unite various outgroups under one common identity to aid in cooperation across such boundaries.

## CHAPTER 2

### BACKGROUND

Prejudice against Muslims in the West has been present for decades, especially since 9/11 which brought terrorism in the form of radical Islamic jihadists to the forefront of the minds of many Americans (Sheehi, 2011). Discrimination and anti-Muslim sentiment intensified following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centers and the Pentagon and this sentiment has persisted (Barkdull et al., 2011; Sheehi, 2011). This discrimination has affected Muslim Americans as well as Muslim refugees seeking sanctuary. Life became more difficult and more stressful for Muslim Americans post-9/11 as public scrutiny increased (Barkdull et al., 2011; Pew Research Center, 2007). Forty-three percent of Americans reported some amount of prejudice against Muslims according to a Gallup poll. People also reported they were more likely to view Muslims more negatively than Christians, Jews, or Buddhists (Gallup Center for Muslim Studies, 2010). The resettlement of refugees fleeing Syria is a growing problem that requires a global response, but the negative attitudes toward refugee admittance, specifically Muslim refugees because of the association between Islam and terrorism, is proving to be a serious obstacle in solving this problem (Esses et al., 2017).

The continuance of displacement and need for refugee resettlement combined with the need to unburden low income countries from taking in a disproportionate number of refugees requires a better understanding of how to reduce negative attitudes toward policies that favor refugee admittance. Economic size, level of development, and population are all pertinent factors for understanding the impact of accepting refugees that host countries need to consider

(UNHCR, 2016). This implies that more developed countries will be able to absorb the impact hosting refugees has on their country more successfully than still developing countries. Yet, it is the less wealthy and still developing countries that tend to be the ones accepting disproportionate numbers of refugees (UNHCR, 2016; Ostrand, 2015). This is due in part to geographic proximity; the countries closest to Syria's borders are less developed than the Western nations and provide easier access for the refugees because of their location. However, in the US and other developed Western countries there are high levels of intolerance and negative attitudes directed at the refugees seeking asylum (Esses et al., 2017; Fakhri & Marrouch, 2015; UN Security General, 2016). A recent IPSOS poll found, across 22 countries including the US, four out of ten believe state borders should be closed to refugees. Seven out of ten people in the US believe terrorists might be posing as refugees (IPSOS, 2016). Research has identified four main contributors to negative attitudes toward policies that promote refugee admittance: dehumanization, economic concerns, fear of terrorism, and perceived threat to social values and national identity (Esses et al., 2003; IPSOS, 2016; Wike, Stokes, & Simmons, 2016).

Dehumanization may be partially responsible for the negative attitudes toward refugees and immigrants according to some research (Esses, Veenvliet, Hodson, & Mihic, 2008). Dehumanization is regularly discussed in the context of ethnicity, race, immigration, and genocide and has been described as denying some human characteristics to the others and sometimes perceiving the dehumanized other as more animal-like (Bar-Tal, 2000; Haslam, 2006). Elements of dehumanization were present in the persecution of Jews and other victims during the Holocaust. According to one of Monroe's (1996) interviewees, the Nazi guards no longer perceived Jews as humans saying, "it's much easier to kill nonhumans than humans" (p. 205). Some research suggests that refugees and immigrants are dehumanized populations which

results in unfavorable attitudes towards this population (Esses et al., 2008). People can justify negative attitudes towards the other if they are not perceived as being part of the human ingroup (Opatow, 1995). However, this does not mean that all people automatically dehumanize refugees. Although Jews had been dehumanized by Nazis, not everyone perceived the Jews to be sub-human. On the other extreme, the rescuers perceived them as sharing a common human identity and the nonrescuers fell in the middle of the spectrum still perceiving the victims of the Holocaust as humans, but not identifying with them as sharing a common human identity (Monroe, 1996). Other research demonstrates that immigrants are still perceived as part of the human ingroup and activating national and international identity can lead to more positive evaluations of immigrants and immigration (Esses et al., 2003; Esses et al., 2005). Inducing a sense of identity with all people may combat the effects of dehumanization and lead to greater support of policies that assist refugees.

Refugees can pose different perceived threats to the citizens of host countries. People view an influx of refugees and immigrants as an economic threat (Esses et al., 2017). Incoming refugees will take away jobs that could be given to Americans. In addition to this, there is a belief that the people seeking entrance are not actually refugees but are instead seeking to take advantage of the current crisis by posing as refugees in order to gain access to welfare benefits and other economic advantages (IPSOS, 2016). This contributes to negative attitudes toward refugee admittance policy (Esses et al., 2017). If an identification with humanity is induced and refugees can be recategorized into the same ingroup as members of the host country, then reaping the economic benefits of the country should extend to all members of the new inclusive ingroup. In addition to fear of economic strain, different cultural and religious identities can be perceived as threatening to people of the host country (Esses et al., 2003). Religion, specifically

Islam, is a particularly salient issue in this refugee crisis (Lipka, 2017; Wike et al., 2016). This is not the first time religious identity created difficulties for Muslim asylum seekers. In 2006, interviews conducted with a number of asylum seekers and refugees in the UK revealed that a Muslim identity has been equated with a threatening identity since 9/11 (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh & Qasmiyeh, 2010). This fear of terrorism and the perceived threat of Middle Eastern refugees due to their association with Islam negatively influence attitudes toward refugees and refugee resettlement policies (Esses et al., 2003; Esses et al., 2017; Wike et al., 2016). Being perceived as a common human ingroup should overcome the divisive effects of different religious identities.

National identity and social values can be threatened by an influx of immigrants and refugees (Esses et al., 2005; Esses et al., 2017). National identity has been a focus of much research examining broad and inclusive identities that can be used to unite subgroups within a nation, such as different racial groups sharing the same national identity (Esses et al., 2005; Garetner & Dovidio, 2000; Transue, 2007). However, rising levels of nationalism demonstrate not only the power of social identities in turning groups against one another, but also the manner in which different social identities can be made salient by the circumstances in the environment (Postelnicescu, 2016). A large number of immigrants or refugees with cultural and social values that differ from those of the host nation can be viewed as threatening to the citizens, leading national identity to act as a divisive identity rather than a unifying one (Citrin, Reingold, & Green, 1990; Esses, Dovidio, & Hodson, 2002; Esses et al., 2005). Although an individual's national identity does not cease to exist, the boundaries of national identity can be overcome with global or cross-cutting identities like common heritage or humanity (Arrow & Sundberg, 2004). Refugees have a different national identity and most have a different religious identity than

people in the US; this religious identity seems to be more salient in the current refugee crisis.

Activating a superordinate identity may provide a way of preserving the social values associated with one's national identity while simultaneously becoming more tolerant of accepting people from a different nation and religion. All-inclusive identities can envelop and unite many different types of identities.

The emergence of globalization has brought with it some indications that an international identity exists (Coe & Newman, 2011; Esses et al., 2005). Research has shown that emphasizing the more inclusive international identity or emphasizing a dual national and international identity can result in a reduction of unfavorable attitudes towards immigrants. For example, one can self-categorize as a global citizen while simultaneously identifying as an American citizen or a Canadian citizen (Esses et al., 2005). However, different religious identities have not been a focus in the research examining international identity. Recategorizing refugees as ingroup members of a shared human identity may lead to a reduction in the negative attitudes toward refugee policy that result from dehumanization and perceived threats of economic strain, terrorism, and different social identities.

### *Psychology Background*

Intergroup relations has long been a subject of research for social scientists. There is a vast literature on social identities and how these identities can influence intergroup behavior and attitudes. Social identity is frequently described as a cognitive awareness of one's objective membership in a group as well as a psychological attachment to that group (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012; Huddy & Khatib, 2007; Tajfel, 1982). Many different social identities can exist and these identities are malleable. Different identities can be made salient at different times depending on the environment (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Ellemers & Haslam, 2012; Dovidio et al., 2010;

Tajfel, 1982). Psychological boundaries can be threatened when an outgroup becomes salient which leads to ingroup favoritism and discrimination against the psychological other (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Esses, et al., 2005). Increasing the scope of identity by making a more inclusive social identity salient will redistribute the benefits of ingroup favoritism to include all members who share that social identity

Three theoretical approaches to social identity and intergroup relations that build upon one another form the psychological foundation of this project: social identity theory, self-categorization theory, and the common ingroup identity model. Social identity theory (SIT) provides a foundation for explaining how social identities affect interactions. Self-categorization theory (SCT) expands the idea of social identity and postulates that individuals categorize themselves in different groups and these categorizations are malleable depending on context and environmental factors. The Common Ingroup Identity Model (CIIM) demonstrates that a superordinate identity (i.e., a higher level identity) can unite subgroup identities (i.e., lower level identities) under a common inclusive identity that can reduce intergroup bias (Hornsey, 2008).

### Theoretical Background

Social identity theory (SIT) establishes and defines social identities and the effects these social identities have on interactions between groups. At its core, SIT posits that, rather than perceiving oneself and others as unique individuals, people frequently conceive of themselves and others as members of social groups (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012; Tajfel, 1982). Every group to which a person belongs is a social identity and becomes part of that individual's self-concept (e.g., white, male, liberal, middle class). Because of an inherent human need to have a positive self-concept, individuals evaluate their group more positively than outgroups, which can result in intergroup tensions (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Hornsey, 2008; van

Vugt & Park, 2010; Worchel, Iuzzini, Coutant, & Ivaldi, 2000). SIT explains the clash between ingroups and outgroups by establishing the connection between self-concept and ingroup favoritism which leads to higher evaluations of the ingroup as compared to the outgroup (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). Once a group is formed and an individual has identified with and become invested in that group, all ingroup members will be evaluated more positively than outgroup members (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012).

Self-categorization theory (SCT) establishes the different levels of identity (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Hornsey, 2008; van Vugt & Park, 2010). SCT posits that three levels of identification exist. The lowest level of identification is at the interpersonal level and is composed of unique individuals and comparisons between individuals. The intermediate level examines group identities in which individuals are conceived of as group members and ingroups and outgroups are compared. The highest level is composed of a superordinate identity. At this level, an individual is categorized as a human being as opposed to non-human life forms. This is the broadest and most inclusive identity (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012; Hornsey, 2008). Self-categorization is a dynamic process and the salient identity is dependent upon how the individual perceives the given situation (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Hornsey, 2008). One's individual needs, beliefs, and motives drive behavior when personal identity is salient. Conversely, when a group identity is salient, an individual will place his or her group's needs above his or her own individual needs focusing on the collective rather than the individual. In essence, the salient identity shapes perceptions of ingroups and outgroups; this influences attitudes and behavior in intergroup relations (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000).

This project is focusing on the superordinate level of categorization emphasizing the overarching human identity and adding to the growing body of research on identification with humanity. Most research has focused on the intermediate group identification level and the superordinate level has been largely neglected, but recently, researchers have begun to investigate the uses of an identification with all humanity (Hornsey, 2008; McFarland, Webb, & Brown, 2012). According to evolutionary psychology, the formation of distinctive social groups was critical for survival and can result in strong social identification. Superordinate identities are too broad to allow for individuals to identify with as strongly (Brewer, 1999). This is likely why more research has focused on lower level identities. However, Oliner and Oliner (1988) and Monroe (1996) posit that an identification with humanity does exist. McFarland and colleagues (2012) have created and validated a measure of this identification with all humanity (IWAH) providing empirical evidence that such an identification does exist.

The Common Ingroup Identity Model (CIIM) allows former outgroup members to be recategorized under one common ingroup identity (Dovidio et al., 2010; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Transue, 2007). The goal of the CIIM is to reduce intergroup bias through recategorization by altering how people perceive group boundaries. The CIIM builds on the different levels of categorization posited in SCT demonstrating how the malleability of self-categorization allows for multiple groups at a lower level identity to be united under a single higher level group identity to reduce intergroup bias (Dovidio et al., 2010; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). Recategorizing individuals into a common superordinate group encourages prosocial behavior and eliminates the negative evaluations of the former outgroup members (Dovidio et al., 2010; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). The development of social identities and phenomenon of ingroup favoritism, the superordinate level of social identification, and ability to recategorize

former outgroup members into a single inclusive ingroup demonstrate one method of manipulating identity to shift attitudes by reducing intergroup bias.

## CHAPTER 3

### THEORY

Social identities can be manipulated to affect attitude change regarding refugee policy. For many people, Islam has become synonymous with terrorism and Middle Eastern immigrants are perceived as threatening (Esses et al., 2003; Savigny & Marsden, 2009; Sheehi, 2011). This fear of terrorism and perception of threat have resulted in a lack of support for policies promoting the admittance of refugees because of their Muslim identity (Esses et al., 2003; Lipka, 2017; Wike et al, 2016). The growing need to resettle refugees first requires a shift in the public attitude to support policies for the resettlement of Middle Eastern refugees; social identity may provide a solution. The malleability of social identities makes it possible to manipulate which social identity is salient at a given time (Dovidio, 2010; Ellemers & Haslam, 2012; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Tajfel, 1982). Making salient an inclusive identification with humanity recategorizes all people as belonging to the same ingroup; this should overcome religious hostility according to the CIIM. The recategorization of people into a more inclusive group should result in more support for policies that promote refugee assistance, as refugees have been reclassified as members of the same human ingroup therefore eliminating intergroup bias.

Much research using the CIIM has manipulated national identity as a way to unite subgroups within a nation (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Transue, 2007). However, a broader, more inclusive identity is necessary to unite groups with different national and religious identities. This research manipulates an identification with all humanity as a superordinate identity to unite different religious identities (i.e., Christian vs. Muslim). Bringing together

different identities under a common ingroup identity should result in more positive attitudes toward policies that favor the former outgroup.

### *Identification with Humanity*

An identification with humanity can unite different groups of people including people with different religious identities. Since Hobbes, many social science theories explaining human behavior focus on the self-interested nature of human beings, but these theories fail to account for altruistic behavior (Monroe, 1996; Oliner & Oliner, 1988). Studies of altruism, specifically examining the motivation underlying the rescuing behavior that occurred during the Holocaust, demonstrate the existence of a human identity (Monroe, 1996; Monroe, 2008; Oliner & Oliner, 1988). Understanding the motivation behind rescuers' altruistic behavior holds implications for the current research because it allowed for those individuals to transcend traditional group boundaries. Most rescuers emphasized that their helping behavior resulted from what they believed was their human duty. They frequently cited emotions of caring, compassion, and pity and a universalistic and inclusive orientation toward other people. Cognitive thought processes relating to perception of one's self in relation to others seems to be the explanation behind this type of prosocial behavior that can overcome potentially divisive subgroup identities (Monroe, 1996; Monroe, 2008; Oliner & Oliner, 1988). Rescuers voiced a perception of themselves and others as part of a common shared humanity,

“just like the cells in your own body altogether make up your body... we are all like cells of a community that is very important. Not American; I mean the human race. And you should always be aware that every other person is basically you” (Monroe, 1996, p. 92)

The rescuers did not view other people in terms of race, religion, or nationality. The rescuers viewed them as people (Monroe, 1996; Monroe, 2008; Oliner & Oliner, 1988) demonstrating that religious identity can be overcome in the presence of an identification with others on a human level.

### Components of an Identification with Humanity

An identification with humanity has been studied empirically. McFarland et al. (2012) has been active in pursuing this idea of identification with humanity and developed and validated a 9-item measure, the Identification With All Humanity scale (IWAH), intended to gauge how closely one identifies to humanity as a whole. They find that this identification is not just the absence of an ethnocentric outlook, nor is it just a result of high moral and empathetic standards of universalism. Throughout their studies they find that this identification with humanity is tied to the perception of the relationship between the self and the other, to put it in psychological terms. This identification with humanity seems to be inherent in some people and results in prosocial behavior (McFarland et al., 2012).

This identification with humanity is composed of two different dimensions (Reese, Proch, & Finn, 2015). Social identities are multidimensional. Leach and colleagues (2008) developed a two-dimensional hierarchy of social identity. The two components of social identity which characterize an identification with all humanity are global self-definition and global self-investment (Reese et al., 2015). The self-definition component of any identity is the objective categorization within the group which is characterized by self-stereotyping and ingroup homogeneity. The second major dimension of identity is self-investment. Unlike self-definition's objective categorization, self-investment is characterized by group solidarity, group satisfaction, and group centrality; this dimension of identity embodies the investment with and attachment to the group (Leach et al., 2008).

Reese et al. (2015) found that the IWAH scale captures the two-dimensional structure of this social identity. The components within the IWAH scale are termed global self-definition (GSD) and global self-investment (GSI). The former represents one's cognitive placement with

the humanity ingroup, the latter represents one's attachment to and investment with the humanity ingroup (Reese et al., 2015). They show that a humanity prime can successfully activate the GSI dimension of identity, the affective component of identity, which mediates the relationship between priming an identification with all humanity and prosocial behavior (i.e., higher levels of donations to global charities). Research seems to indicate that the GSI dimension and understanding an individual's subjective attachment to an ingroup is more important with regard to behavioral intentions and prosocial behavior than the GSD dimension, the mere categorization into a group (Reese et al., 2015). This leads to hypothesis 1 (H1), participants who receive the humanity prime will have higher scores on the GSI items of the IWAH scale. Additionally, the GSI dimension will mediate the relationship between the humanity prime and people's attitude toward refugee admittance policy (H2).

Superordinate identities can be used to alter people's attitudes toward policies. Making salient a common ingroup identity recategorized former racial outgroup members as part of a broader national ingroup. This resulted in people indicating more support of policies that raised taxes to fund programs which would benefit minorities (Transue, 2007). Esses and colleagues (2005) found that emphasizing an international identity, an identification with a world community, results in an attitude shift in favor of immigration. The current research intends to expand on this foundation and continue the investigation into the manipulation of identity, specifically the identification with humanity, and its effect on attitudes toward refugee policy. This leads to the third hypothesis (H3) that participants primed with humanity will support policy options that are more favorable toward refugee admittance than participants not primed with humanity regardless of religion.

Theoretically, manipulating the salient identity should recategorize former outgroup members into one single ingroup. This should eliminate former feelings of intergroup bias (based on religious social identities) and lead to more positive attitudes toward policies that are designed to assist those former outgroup members (i.e., Muslim refugees) as they are now perceived as members of a common ingroup (i.e., humanity).

## CHAPTER 4

### METHODS

Experiments can be used for hypothesis testing and examining a causal mechanism whereas qualitative research is frequently used to build or refine a theory (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012). Experiments provide researchers the opportunity to test the effect of a given factor on the outcome variable of interest in a controlled setting. Social science experimental findings are usually not generalizable to all people and all circumstances but are, nevertheless, critical to gaining a better understanding of human behavior and testing hypotheses. Experiments conducted in a controlled laboratory setting can only test the factors presented to participants. There is little flexibility due to their highly structured nature (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012). Conducting qualitative research is one research method that is more flexible and can be used to uncover other factors potentially influencing the outcome variable (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995).

In the current research, an experiment was used to test a hypothesis and interviews were conducted to uncover additional factors and refine the theory under examination. An experiment was designed to examine the causal relationship between priming an identification with humanity and attitudes toward refugee admittance policy varying the religion of the refugee. Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted to better understand the thought processes underlying individuals' support or lack of support for refugee policies. These interviews were used to identify more concretely whether or not an identification with humanity is salient when people formulate their opinions regarding refugees. The interviews were also used to identify

other factors that influence the formation of attitudes toward refugee policy and to uncover the factors that lead to negative attitudes toward policies that favor refugee admittance. The interviews provide a more comprehensive examination of all the factors involved in attitude toward policy than can be found in the experiment and provide implications for future research that can be conducted regarding attitude shifts in refugee policy.

### *Experimental Procedures*

Traditionally, SIT has been used in ‘minimal group’ experiments in which the researcher categorizes participants based on arbitrary designations (Hornsey, 2008). This experiment aims to use real world identities in a relevant context; Transue (2007) argues that the use of real identities results in greater external validity. There were 601 undergraduate students at the University of Georgia with a variety of majors who participated in this study. Four hundred and twenty students identified as female and 174 identified as male. Ninety-six percent of respondents were between 18 and 24 years old. Most participants were either freshmen or sophomores, although upperclassmen made up about 30% of the sample. The majority of participants identified as white and reported their family income to be either upper-middle class or middle class. The sample was fairly evenly split regarding party affiliation, about half of participants identified as Democrats to some degree and about half as Republicans with about 13% identifying Independent. Lastly, almost 75% of participants identified with some form of Christianity. Many of the participants who answered ‘other’ and specified their religion indicated one of the sects of Protestantism (Methodist, Baptist, etc.) or listed non-denominational Christian. The items in the ‘other’ category were individually coded as being either Christian or not Christian. Tables with demographics data are listed on page 60.

For this experiment, participants first answered a series of demographic questions. Following this, participants were assigned to one of two priming conditions in which all participants completed a sentence scramble task. Priming via a sentence scramble task has been used to make different identities salient (Bargh, Chen, & Burrows, 1996). Subconsciously, activating the concept of humanity should be sufficient to make that superordinate identity salient in the mind of an individual. This sentence scramble exercise was described in the experiment as a language proficiency task to disguise its real purpose and avoid compromising the study. Participants were presented with twelve word sets consisting of five words each. Every set had to be made into a sentence using four or five of the words in the set. One of these conditions was a control condition and consisted of 12 neutral word sets that had to be unscrambled into short sentences. The treatment condition contained six words that are associated with humanity word sets (e.g., *binds together our humanity us* is unscrambled into *our humanity binds us together*) and six neutral word sets (e.g. *dispenser out is tape the is* unscrambled into *the tape dispenser is out*). This sentence scramble task was modeled after the priming task used in (Bargh et al., 1996). The sentence scramble task has been shown to be an effective priming technique for activating stereotypes and leading to changes in attitude and behavior (Bargh et al., 1996). Following the priming exercise, there was a manipulation check to evaluate the effectiveness of this priming technique for activating an identification with humanity. This was done using the Identification With All Humanity (IWAH) scale developed and validated by McFarland and colleagues (2012). This is a 9-item scale that measures the extent to which people relate to others in various groups, the community level, the national level, and the humanity level. The GSD questions on the scale target one's objective categorization in a group asking, *how close to you feel to each of the following groups?* Participants answer on a

Likert scale for how close they feel to people in their community, Americans, and people all over the world. The GSI questions focus on a person's attachment to the group; these items ask about emotions toward the group (i.e. *how much would you say you care (feel upset, want to help) when bad things happen to: people in your community, Americans, people all over the world*). Again, each of those categorizes is answered using a Likert scale response system. People's responses to the humanity level were analyzed for this study.

All participants were then separated into three different religious conditions. All were presented with the same refugee scenario, but the type of religion indicated in each scenario was varied. The control condition described "people" fleeing persecution therefore not indicating any religious identity, the first treatment condition described "Muslims" fleeing persecution, and the final treatment condition described "Christians" fleeing persecution. This was followed by a series of questions, the dependent measurement, asking how many refugees should be accepted into the US in the following year. The dependent measure was answered on a 7-point scale with options ranging from *allow none in* to *no limit on the number allowed in*. This was followed by a series of measures that have been correlated with the IWAH in previous studies (McFarland et al., 2012; Reese et al., 2015). These include empathy and perspective taking measures created by Davis (1983), a moral identity measure from Aquino and Reed (2002), as well as a global injustice and behavioral intentions questionnaire created by Reese et al. (2015). Lastly, participants were asked if they identified with a particular religion, what religion if any, and how strongly they identified with that religion. This was used as a control for religious identity. This completes the procedures for the experiment portion. All questions and materials can be found in the appendix.

### *Qualitative Procedures*

Qualitative methods were employed to gain a better understanding of the thought processes behind the formation of attitudes relating to refugees. The interviews provided useful information for the refinement of the theory and provided implications for future research. For this portion of the study, interviews were conducted on a sample of undergraduate students who indicated an interest in general immigration and refugee policies. Students were asked to volunteer to participate in the interview process; it was assumed that this would result in recruiting individuals who already have an interest in the current refugee situation self-selecting to be interviewed. One of the goals of these interviews was to uncover peoples' opinions regarding refugees and policy as well as how people frame their arguments when discussing the topic with others who may have differing opinions. Another goal was to better understand how people already interested in immigration issues came to identify with refugees and how this interest developed. Having a better understanding will serve to inform future experiments. Understanding how advocates of refugees frame their arguments and what they think are the most effective framing techniques will provide insight regarding the most effective ways of framing policies so they will receive the most public support. The interview questions can be found in the appendix.

## CHAPTER 5

### EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

The results from the experiment are not entirely consistent with the expectations, but the results of the experiment in conjunction with the results of the interviews hold interesting and important implications for refugee policies. In order to test H1 and H2, that the humanity prime will activate the GSI items of the IWAH scale which will mediate the relationship between the humanity prime and attitudes toward refugee policy, a factor analysis on the IWAH scale was performed. Consistent with the findings of Reese et al. (2015), the factor analysis revealed that the IWAH scale does load onto two separate factors with the first four items in the scale loading onto one factor (GSD) and the last four loading on a separate factor (GSI). Item five does not load definitively onto either factor (see Figure 1). After this, a mediation analysis was conducted; but unlike Reese et al. (2015), there was no significant mediation effect. Neither component of the IWAH appeared to mediate the relationship between the humanity prime and attitudes toward refugee policy. Thus, H1 and H2 are not supported.

There does appear to be a direct effect of the humanity prime on attitudes toward refugee policy revealing that participants who received the humanity prime indicated more favorable attitudes toward accepting refugees into the US ( $\beta = 0.4795$ ,  $SE = 0.1511$ ,  $p = 0.0015$ ; see Figure 2). However, the effect of the prime on attitude becomes insignificant when the different religious conditions are accounted for in the model.

A linear regression was conducted to address whether or not a humanity prime would eliminate any differences between the religious conditions as compared with no prime (H3). It

was assumed that the majority of respondents would identify with some form of Christianity. Seventy-four percent of respondents did, in fact, indicate an identification with Christianity. After controlling for religious identity, results indicate that participants in the Christian condition (i.e. those whose scenario described the refugees as Christian) indicated more support for policies that were favorable to the refugees ( $\beta = 0.590885$ ,  $SE = 0.22834$ ,  $p = 0.009920$ ; see Table 1). The Muslim condition did not reveal significant results. Once religious conditions were added into the model, the humanity prime failed to show it had any significant influence, thus H3 was not supported. It appears that an abstract identity like humanity is unable to overcome different religious identities.

The increased salience of this topic as a result of the recent controversial executive order may have increased salience of party identification. The results of my interviews suggest that party affiliation likely has an influence on people's attitudes regarding refugee policy. Multiple interlocutors claim that Republicans and Democrats simply agree with their party's stance regarding the executive order relating to refugee and immigration policy regardless of their attitude prior to the recent executive order concerning immigration and refugees (I3, I4, I6, I9). Research supports the observations of my interlocutors regarding the power of party identification influencing individual attitude. Political polarization in the US has grown over the past few decades and continues to intensify (Davis & Dunaway, 2016; Iyengar & Westwood, 2015; & Westfall, Boven, Chambers, & Judd, 2015). People tend to categorize themselves and others into political party groups (Iyengar & Westwood, 2015). The continuing growth in party polarization can lead to higher levels of aversion for the opposing political party, intensifying the already strong partisan bias (Davis & Dunaway, 2016). Partisan identity not only impacts political attitudes and opinions, but also impacts attitudes in one's personal life (Iyengar &

Westwood, 2015). Party identification has become all-encompassing in its influence over people's political attitudes; for this reason party affiliation was used as a control in some of the regression models.

Adding a control for party affiliation showed that, in the condition that specified that the refugees were Christian, participants indicated more support of policies that increase the admittance of refugees ( $\beta = 0.70677$ ,  $SE = 0.18865$ ,  $p < 0.000198$ ; see Table 2). The Muslim condition was not significant. Party affiliation did have a significant effect on attitudes toward refugee admittance policy; participants who revealed a stronger identification with the Republican party indicated less support of policies that promote the admittance of refugees ( $\beta = -0.51757$ ,  $SE = 0.03191$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). My interlocutors are correct that party affiliation has a significant influence on people's attitudes toward refugee policy and this party label seems to be stronger than an identification with humanity prime.

An identification with humanity does not appear to be strong enough to overcome different religious identities. Consistent with Brewer (2007), my results show that ingroup favoritism does not equate to outgroup derogation. Policy attitudes for increasing admittance of Muslim refugees was not negative, attitudes were simply not significantly positive; the ingroup was favored (Christianity as the ingroup since a majority of my participants identified as Christian), but the outgroup was not evaluated poorly. Party affiliation was significant and negative. Participants who identified with the Republican Party were less likely to support policies admitting more refugees. This supports the literature claiming that party polarization and the strength of party identification impacts people's policy attitudes. Although insignificant, in the appendix there is a graph of the differences of means for each religious condition showing the effect of the prime on attitude toward refugee admittance (Graph 1).

## CHAPTER 6

### QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Thirteen students at the University of Georgia volunteered for interviews. Twelve of the students were female and one was male. All but one of the students self-identified as liberal during the interviews. Overall, my interlocutors hold pro-refugee sentiment. This resulted in an underrepresentation of the beliefs that underlie opinions less favorable toward open immigration policy in the refugee context but still provides insights into different thought processes. However, all reported interactions with people who hold differing opinions about what types of policies the US should have for refugee admittance. This allowed my interlocutors to provide insight into how other Americans feel about refugees and resettlement policy in addition to providing information about their personal attitudes regarding this subject. Though the sample is small and not representative of the general population, the interviews do provide important information into the thought process of individuals and what elements of refugee policy are the most salient to people.

The results from my interviews support the theory that an identification with humanity does influence attitudes toward refugees, but also reveal that there are more pieces to the puzzle. Additionally, the interviews show how the theory can be revised to focus more heavily on alleviating fear rather than focusing strictly on inclusion of the Muslim identity within a broader human ingroup. My interlocutors revealed different factors that may be responsible for the negative attitudes. Fear of terrorism seems to be the driving force behind negative attitudes toward refugees and pro-refugee policies. According to my interlocutors, the solution to reversing

negative attitudes lies in reducing fear of terrorism by disseminating information about the vetting process currently implemented in the US. This starts with a change in rhetoric at the leadership level and increasing contact between refugees and the public so they can see that the refugees are just people. These interviews uncovered the potential reasoning underlying negative attitudes towards refugee policies and some means that could be utilized in the design of policies that may result in greater support for policies that favor refugee admittance.

### *Identification with Refugees*

The first goal of these interviews was to establish how people conceive of and identify with refugees. These interviews indicate that feelings of connectedness with humanity are associated with positive attitudes toward policies that favor refugee admittance. In order to establish how people were objectively defining refugees, I asked my interlocutors how he or she defined a refugee. This allowed me to ensure that everyone I spoke to was working from the same basic definition of a refugee. All of my interviewees provided similar answers to this question typically involving the need to flee from or escape persecution, violence, or war with only slight variations in their definitions. Seeking safety due to home destruction and fleeing an unsafe, unlivable situation were frequent definitions. Next, I examined whether or not people indicated the presence of an identification with humanity by asking how my interviewees identified with the refugees. The majority of the students voiced a worldview indicating a shared sense of humanity as the root of the motivation to assist refugees by allowing them to seek refuge in this country (I1, I3, I4, I5, I7, I10, I11, I12, I13). But this identification with humanity was not the only method used to forge a bond with the refugees. My interviewees also used perspective-taking approaches, seeing a situation from the point of view of another (Davis &

Maitner, 2012), and reciprocity reasoning to explain how they relate to the refugees and why they believe the US should offer asylum to these people.

Throughout the interviews, my interlocutors repeatedly spoke about refugees as being human and that this identification as a member of the human ingroup was the motivation for helping people by supporting policies that favor immigration, regardless of other identifications like religion, nationality, gender, or sexuality. The responses of my interlocutors likened back to the worldviews reported by Oliner and Oliner (1988) and Monroe (1996) in their studies of altruistic behavior during the Holocaust. My interlocutors described helping the refugees in need as being a duty or an obligation to help other humans in need (I1, I3, I8). Some also mentioned feeling a sense of “global citizenship” or “global community” as one of the reasons they were inclined to offer supportive policies for refugees (I3, I5). My interlocutors frequently emphasized the human component by reiterating that it is people who are suffering, “these are humans that we’re talking about and they’re coming from a bad situation no matter what religion they are, what they speak, or anything” (I1). The suffering of humans was cited by all as one of the main reasons for supporting refugee admittance policy; helping people in need is “just the right thing to do” (I12). Thus, those supporting liberal refugee policy were closely aligned with the more inclusive view of humanity.

Perspective-taking made the situation more real to my interviewees (I2, I7). They reported asking themselves what they would do if they were displaced and found themselves in the same situation as the refugees or how they would feel if their family was unable to come back to America. One student hoped that people who did not have a personal connection to refugees or immigrants would use “imagination” and “compassion” to better understand and make the crisis more relevant to their own lives (I7). Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce, and

Neuberg (1997) show that perspective-taking techniques can produce a sense of oneness with others and increase empathic concern for them. Perspective-taking is distinct from an identification with humanity in that it does not involve a recategorization of former outgroup members, but it does activate the concept of empathy which is also highly correlated with an identification with humanity (McFarland et al., 2012). Other students voiced a reciprocity approach to the situation, stating that it would be prudent to accept refugees into the US during the current crisis should US citizens ever find themselves in a similar situation seeking asylum (I3, I4, I12).

Students reported a variety of different ways they identify with refugees, but feeling a sense of shared humanity was the most common one cited. The results of my interviews do lend partial support for my theory that an identification with humanity can create an ingroup, which motivates people to assist fellow ingroup members by supporting policies that would allow refugees into this country. This worldview and the associated prosocial behavioral intentions reported in my interviews are consistent with past research relating to this shared humanity (Monroe, 1996; Oliner & Oliner, 1988). The identification with humanity expressed by my interlocutors is inherent rather than primed, but the interviews do demonstrate the important role this inclusive worldview plays in the perception of global situations.

The remainder of this discussion provides information that will help to refine and improve this theory for further empirical testing by addressing the factors responsible for negative attitudes toward pro-refugee policies as identified by my interlocutors. Whether or not an identification with humanity can be activated in other people and result in increased support for pro-refugee policy from the perspective of my interlocutors will be addressed as well as an analysis of their proposed solutions to reduce these negative attitudes toward pro-refugee policy.

The following will identify reasons why my interlocutors believe we should provide assistance for refugees, the reasons behind the dissent of these pro-refugee policies, and potential ways of reducing the negative attitudes toward pro-refugee policy.

### *Why We Should Accept Refugees*

According to my interlocutors, the Syrian refugee crisis is not just a European problem simply because of geographical proximity, but neither does the responsibility to provide assistance fall solely or disproportionately on the US because of the amount of resources available. My interlocutors were in consensus that the Syrian refugee crisis is a global problem that requires a global response. Throughout the interviews, three main reasons emerged to support the arguments that refugees should be accepted into the US: humanitarian concerns, economic capability, and US responsibility.

The focus on the Syrian refugee crisis as a humanitarian issue stems from the same feeling of identification with other humans and the accompanying sense of duty to help other humans in need; this appears to be partially responsible for the belief that the Syrian crisis is a global problem that requires a global response. People taking this view focused on the human aspect and the crisis as a humanitarian dilemma. Nine of thirteen students indicated that the US should be involved in assisting refugees regardless of geographic proximity because this is a “collective human problem” (I7) and we have an obligation to assist people if they need help (I2). These students stressed that this is a humanitarian crisis involving the violation of human rights which requires intervention regardless of whether or not the crisis is affecting one’s own country (I1, I2, I4, I7, I8, I9, I11, I12, I13). The need to help refugees because of their status as human beings was the most commonly cited reason for accepting refugees into the country, but it was not the only reason.

Economic capability was the second most cited reason for why the US and other developed countries should be accepting refugees. Eight interviewees claimed that the US should accept refugees because the country is economically capable of absorbing the impact of a certain number of them into the country (I1, I3, I4, I6, I7, I9, I10, I13). This economic capability argument extended beyond just the US with my interlocutors claiming that all industrialized, developed nations need to be taking in their fair share of refugees. It was also argued that there will be a global economic impact resulting from the crisis that will certainly impact the US due to the interconnected nature of economies in this era of globalization, implying it may actually be beneficial for the US to accept some amount of refugees to insulate the impact on the world economy (I1). My interlocutors indicated that the least developed countries were taking on more refugees due in part to geographic location and ease of access, but it was pointed out that industrialized countries stepping up to the plate and making a global effort to resettle refugees would ease the burden on countries who have taken in disproportionate numbers of the refugees (I8, I11). Research confirms that smaller and less economically developed countries have taken in more refugees than industrialized nations in the current crisis (UNHCR, 2016).

Lastly, six people indicated that the US should accept refugees out of a sense of responsibility and obligation. About half of these said the US should be actively assisting in the crisis and resettlement efforts because the advent of the Syrian civil war that led to the refugee crisis was partly a result of US involvement in the Middle East (I3, I7, I10). These interlocutors argued that the US helping refugees would be righting past wrongs. The other half that argued in favor of US involvement reasoned that, as a world leader, the US needed to be acting first and setting the example so other countries could follow (I5, I6, I7, I8). According to these students,

in global crises, the US needs to lead way because of its status in the international order and this refugee crisis is no different.

The reasons expressed by my interlocutors in favor of admitting refugees fell into three main categories: humanitarian concerns, economic ability, and responsibility. The most cited reason was related to humanitarian concerns arguing that people who need help should be given help regardless of geographic proximity. This is consistent with the theory that identifying with others as members of a common human ingroup can result in more support for policies that favor members of different religious groups. The other two reasons cited are more concrete arguments in favor of pro-refugee policy that do not relate to identity, but shed light on other ways people conceive of the refugee crisis.

#### *Why We Should Not Accept Refugees*

Even though all of my interlocutors expressed favorable attitudes for pro-refugee policies, they were able to provide valuable insight into the thought processes of people who have negative attitudes toward pro-refugee policies because of past experiences my interlocutors have had with people who hold different opinions. Dehumanization and fear were the fundamental concepts cited as reasons for negative attitudes toward policies that favor the admittance of refugees. The most frequently cited reason why people have negative attitudes toward refugees was fear, “fear of the unknown” (I3). The fear seems to stem from three perceived categories: threats to national security (i.e., terrorism), threat to American culture and values, and threats to the economy.

#### Dehumanization

Elements of dehumanization were suggested by my interviewees as contributing to the negative attitudes and lack of support for refugee admittance policies. Some of my interlocutors

spoke of the refugees as a “mass” or a “wave” of people making it easy to objectify them and “let them just be like a collective group or term to refer to” (I1, I3, I6, I7). It was also stated that people too frequently fail to recognize that the refugees are also people, and instead think that “they’re not people, like they can’t love and laugh and, you know, like, like enjoy food and company and music” (I5). In cases in which refugees have been truly dehumanized, an identification with humanity may not be effective in shifting attitudes, but dehumanization is not a simple ‘on/off’ switch. It was suggested that finding ways to humanize the refugees may help to alleviate the negativity (I7) research has also suggested humanizing refugees as a way to reduce negative attitudes (Esses et al., 2008). Dehumanization was not the sole contributing factor to negative attitudes provided by my interlocutors; all also listed fear as underlying negative attitudes for refugee policy.

#### A Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing

Fear was the leading factor my interlocutors listed as the root of negative attitudes toward pro-refugee admittance policy. Middle Eastern and Muslim immigrants have been singled out as potentially posing national security threats since 9/11 (Sheehi, 2011; Esses et al., 2003). Those attacks made terrorism real for Americans and the fear has continued to grow. A female interviewee believes terrorism will always be present and will always play a role in refugee situations; the association between radical Islam and terrorism will continue to be an influencing factor regarding policies toward the Middle East (I13).

Fear mongering is largely responsible for negativity toward refugee admittance policy, according to my interlocutors (I3, I5, I11, I12). My interlocutors blame not only the media, but also the political rhetoric for the strong association between Islam and terrorism. The media has been focusing on terrorism, the terrorist attacks in Europe have been highly publicized, and

political rhetoric in some instances has equated Islam with terrorism. According to one student, politicians have equated Islam with terrorism (I2). Multiple interlocutors also referenced the bias in reporting acts of terrorism focusing on the religious identity of the perpetrator if he or she is Muslim and labeling any white terrorist as a “lone wolf” whose actions were the result of a poor upbringing in a broken home (I3, I4, I12). This fear of terrorism has been reinforced by the media’s focus on terrorist acts and the media’s portrayal of Islam. Much like Samuel Huntington’s (1993) claim that the future will be characterized by a clash of civilizations, one of my interviewees believes “a war of the East and the West” is emerging because of the clash of religious identity and the fear of terrorism that has been equated with Islam (I4).

The interviews suggested that people are not necessarily afraid of the refugees, but are afraid terrorists are trying to sneak into the country as refugees; the proverbial “wolf in sheep’s clothing” (I3). The media and politicians have manipulated people’s fear of terrorism which has resulted in a fear of Islam and a lack of support for refugee resettlement in the US. Fear can easily be manipulated,

“it’s like if you go to sleep in your bedroom and it’s dark and you’re not afraid, but then you watch a horror movie and all of a sudden you can’t sleep anymore. Nothing in the room changed, it was your mindset that changed” (I3).

Another interlocutor claimed that the fear which many people feel toward refugees is a “reflexive emotional response” to a distant danger (I11). None of my interlocutors believe that many of the refugees are terrorists pretending to be refugees, but they all recognized that the arguments against allowing in refugees was based on a fear of refugees bringing terrorism into American with them. IPSOS (2016) poll shows that a majority of Americans do hold that fear. My interlocutors agree that the rhetoric and media are largely responsible for this fear, and research supports that claim (Dunn, Klocker, Salabay, 2007; Esses et al., 2008; Nacos & Torres-Reyn, 2006; Sheehi, 2011). Negative attitudes toward pro-refugee policy seem to be based on a fear of

terrorism that is associated with Islam rather than a fear of Islam itself. Alleviating that fear prior to attempts at recategorization under a superordinate identity may be a necessary in order to enact an attitude shift in favor of pro-refugee policies.

#### Values, Culture, and Economics

Refugees posing a threat to US values and culture was also cited as a contributing factor to negative attitudes toward policy, although less strongly than the national security threat, according to my interviewees. This also stems from the fear of the unknown. Some interviewees claimed that this refugee crisis is different from crises in the past because they are coming from Muslim majority countries rather than European countries and the sheer number of refugees seeking admission has caused some concern that egalitarian American values will be lost with this influx of people coming from a very different strongly patriarchal culture (I2, I6, I10, I13). My interviewees revealed that people also fear negative impacts from an influx of refugees as that will introduce more competition for jobs and resources (I1, I3, I6, I9). These factors and perceived threats have implications for what policies should be implemented regarding refugee admittance as well as how they should be framed to demonstrate to the public that any negative effects on America will be minimal. This may alleviate some of the fears associated with refugee admittance and result in more favorable attitude for these types of policies.

#### *Finding a Solution*

Four main steps to reducing the level of negativity toward pro-refugee policies were identified as a result of the interviews. Each of the following steps works toward alleviating the fear of terrorism associated with Islam which appears to be the root of most negative attitudes toward open refugee policies. First, there must be a change in the political rhetoric and the

media regarding Islam and refugees. Closely associated with this, politicians and the media need to make more clear distinctions between mainstream Islam and radical Islam. Third, the public needs to be better educated on the facts of the Syrian crisis as well as the vetting process and procedures the US has in place for all immigrants and refugees entering the country. This information needs to come from politicians or other trusted official sources. And lastly, increased contact between American citizens and refugees may result in more support for refugee admittance policy.

#### Rhetoric and Labeling

The strong association between Islam and terrorism and the resulting fear of Muslims was cited by my interlocutors as one of the leading causes of negative attitudes toward pro-refugee policy. They believe that this association requires political figures to alter their rhetoric and draw a stronger distinction between mainstream Islam and extremist Islam (I2, I3, I4, I5, I7, I9). Although politicians are guided by the public interest to ensure reelection, the public are also influenced by political rhetoric (Domke, McCoy, & Torres, 1999). Politicians equating Islam with terrorism only intensifies the divide between many Americans and Muslims. The change in rhetoric must start at the top and work its way down (I5, I6, I9). This applies to the media as well. Until politicians and the media cease emphasizing the link between Islam and terrorism, the fear will continue to exist among the public and continue to influence policy attitudes.

A stronger distinction between mainstream Islam and Islamic extremism needs to be made by politicians and the media. One interlocutor referenced the Westboro Baptist Church as a well-know Christian extremist group that exists in the background but that it has not become the face of Christianity (I11), but many discussed the difference in media coverage regarding

extremist Christianity and extreme Islam (I3, I4, I5, I7, I8, I11, I12, I13). In contrast, extreme Islamic groups seem to define the entire Islamic religion to many. My interlocutors indicated that a stronger distinction made between these two forms of Islam would help to alleviate the fear associated with the religion. Once the fear of terrorism is reduced, my interviewees indicated people would likely show more support for policies that accept refugees. The negative attitudes appear not to be a direct result of Islam itself but rather a result of misconceptions about the religion that are reinforced by political rhetoric and media labeling of Muslims as terrorists. Making a more clear distinction between the small minority who engage in Islamic extremism as compared with the vast number of peaceful Muslims may alleviate some of the fear of terrorism associated with Muslim refugees.

#### Education

Better educating the public and disseminating information on the facts of the Syrian conflict as well as the vetting process already in place in the US was identified as a way to alleviate the fear of terrorism and possibly lead to more favorable evaluations of policies that promote accepting refugees. Some of my interlocutors expressed the opinion that some amount of the belief that terrorists are sneaking in posing as refugees stems from a lack of understanding regarding the seriousness of the refugee crisis and current living conditions in Syria (I8, I9). Fully understanding how dire the situation of many of the refugees is could shift attitudes in favor of admittance policies.

Increasing public knowledge on the screening procedures already in place as a way to placate fear and increase support for refugee admittance was advocated by a majority of my interlocutors. Most of my interviewees admitted to being poorly informed about the vetting process, although most believed it to be more than adequate at successfully screening out

potential terrorists (I3, I6, I7, I8, I9). My interlocutors strongly indicated that informing the public about the screening process would make significant strides toward reducing fear that a terrorist will be able to enter the country disguised as a refugee (I3, I4, I5, I6, I7, I8, I9, I12, I13). The process is intensive, but my interlocutors do not believe that most of the public is aware of how rigorous the procedures are. Almost all stated more education about vetting procedures would be beneficial. Some added that in order for skeptical, cautious people to believe the vetting process is thorough, the information about procedures has to come from politicians or the official departments involved in the vetting (I5, I6, I9). A better education about the crisis and more information regarding the vetting process may reduce negative attitudes toward policies by demonstrating to people that the refugees are, in fact, fleeing violent, unsuitable living conditions and are being properly vetted to ensure no terrorists are posing as refugees. This education may placate enough fear that an identification with humanity may be able to shift attitudes in favor of refugee admittance.

#### Increased Contact

Lastly, increasing contact between Americans and refugees was frequently cited as one method to humanize the other and put a “face to such a broad topic” (I3), therefore, resulting in increased support for refugee admittance. Increased contact is expected to reduce the level of negativity toward more open immigration policies by showing citizens in America that the refugees are just normal people. This is not the first time contact between groups has been cited as a way to reduce intergroup tensions. A reduction in negative attitudes following contact with an individual of a different group can generalize to more positive attitudes to the entire group (Brown, Vivian, & Hewstone, 1999; Sherif et al., 1988; Vezzali, Giovannini, & Capozza, 2010). Over time this contact may alleviate fear and lead to more favorable attitudes toward refugee

policy. All discussion revealed that increased positive contact between Americans and refugees would be beneficial as they would humanize the other and likely decrease fear.

## CHAPTER 7

### DISCUSSION

The experimental results do not tell the entire story. The qualitative research has shed light on valuable ways in which the current theory should be revised. The experiment shows that uniting different religious identities under a common humanity identity may not be the key to gaining support for refugee admittance policy. However, the interviews do indicate that an identification with humanity is activated for some people in the current refugee context. But the fear of terrorism, which has been translated into a fear of Islam, may be too strong for an identification with humanity to overcome. The first step must be to reduce or eliminate this fear. Research has shown that the fear resulting from terrorist attacks can linger for years (Antonius, 2016). Fear can be used as a policy tool to influence people's perceptions and attitudes across a number of policy areas like economic and foreign policy (Caplin, 2003). Emotional responses to terrorist attacks have a significant influence on the policy position of the public regarding counter-terrorism measures the government is taking such as anti-immigration policy (Antonius, 2016; Kim, 2016). The impact of fear on attitude can be tremendous and different options for alleviating this fear should be investigated.

Results indicate that the humanity prime did not have a significant effect on scores on the IWAH scale, although the prime did have a direct effect on attitude (prior to controlling for religious conditions). The prime seems to have activated some concept, likely related to humanity, but this concept is somehow different from the identification with humanity as measured by the IWAH scale. It could be that there are different levels of this identification or

that there are fundamental differences between activating an identification with humanity and activating the concept of humanity. To fully understand the nuances in this identification and concept of humanity, further research needs to be conducted. It could also be that some people are more susceptible to an identification with humanity prime than others. For example, people who are more liberal may be more susceptible to an abstract humanity prime because they tend to be more concerned with welfare issues in general. This also requires further investigation.

As alluded to in the results section, timing and current events may have significantly impacted this study. The executive order temporarily restricting the admittance of immigrants and refugees was made public the same week as the experiment was opened up to respondents. The executive order resulted in nationwide protests which almost assuredly increased the salience of religious identity and also resulted in a higher salience of party affiliation. This event certainly added noise to the results. While the subject was almost unavoidable in the news, this event likely resulted in a variation in media exposure of participants which could have influenced results. As the refugee crisis and the emphasis on Muslim majority countries became more frequently referenced in the media, both the type of coverage and the amount of exposure to that coverage varied among my participants. This increased salience may have strengthened religious identity to the point that it could not be overcome by an abstract identification with humanity.

Additionally, the increased salience of the refugee issue and the associated concerns about religious identity that characterize the environment in which the experiment was conducted allow for speculations on the effectiveness of an identification with humanity during a time when the perception of a threat is high. Results imply that religious identity is too strong to be

overcome by an identification with humanity in the current political atmosphere. Perhaps when the threat is less salient, an IWH would be more successful.

There is an undertone of fear associated with the Muslim identity because of its highly publicized ties to terrorism may be very important to this study. The interview data supports the idea that fear is playing a leading role in people's aversion to policies that favor refugee admittance. It seems that fear can work both for and against helping behavior. In the research by Monroe (1996) and Oliner and Oliner (1988), interviewees admitted, not surprisingly, that fear of the Nazis was salient during the time of their rescuing behavior. However, the fear was directed at the Nazis rather than the Jews and other victims being rescued. In the current refugee crisis, fear is directed at Muslims in general; both victims and perpetrators are feared. There is no reliable distinction between who should be feared and who should be helped, as both belong to the same general religious category. Showing the public which group should be feared and which group should be helped may be a necessary first step prior to utilizing an IWH to affect attitude change for pro-refugee policies.

Framing policies in a way that helps assuage the fear of possibly admitting terrorists by emphasizing the intensive vetting process and security screening may be more effective in shifting public attitudes in favor of generous refugee admittance policy than creating a common identity. Another possible way of reducing the fear that allowing more refugees into the country will lead to an upsurge in terrorist acts is to inform and educate the public more thoroughly on the rigorous screening and vetting procedures that all refugees must go through before entering the country. For individuals who do not have an inherent identification with humanity, decreasing fear of outgroups might be the best method for changing opinions to be more favorable toward refugee admittance policies. From this, further experimental research can be

conducted focusing on disseminating information regarding vetting processes prior to asking about support for refugee admittance policies. This would provide a test of whether or not alleviating fear by addressing the thorough vetting process leads to a shift in attitude toward US refugee policy. It is also possible that once the fear of terrorism has been placated, an identification with humanity will be effective in shifting attitudes in favor of refugee admittance policy. These are areas for future research to explore.

There are a variety of ways in which this research can be expanded in addition to the ones listed above. One line of research could examine whether it is truly the religion that matters or if the negative attitudes are really stemming from an aversion to people that are different. Attitudes have been unfavorable toward immigration and refugee policies when Jews and others were seeking admittance in the past (Allport, 1958). It is possible that a significant amount of the current negative attitudes are not specific to religion, but rather the fact that all refugees are different from people in the host country. There are a number of different experimental designs that could investigate this.

As a comparison study, this same experiment could be conducted in a Muslim-majority country that is experiencing an influx of Christian refugees. This may provide insights into whether or not religious identity and specifically the Muslim identity is responsible for negative attitudes or if these negative attitudes are really driven by an aversion to dissimilarity. Another option could include a few different scenarios, one describing refugees as Muslim; one describing refugees as a lesser known sect of Islam, like Sufi; a condition describing the refugees as Hindu, a relatively well-known religion that is distinct from Islam; and lastly a condition describing refugees as Orthodox, a lesser known sect of Christianity. This experiment would provide insight into how important religious identity is in attitude toward refugee policy by

examining differences between the religious groups and attitude toward policies. A similar design could be used but could instead vary national identity; this would provide further insight into whether negative attitudes regarding refugee policy are religiously motivated or are simply the result of a dislike of people who are different. All of these areas of future research have the potential to provide insight into the design of policies for refugee admittance. Understanding how people perceive and evaluate refugee policies is important when policy makers are deciding how to frame policies to garner the most support from the public. Further understanding the role of religion and the strength of religious identity at the intermediate level are necessary to understand how a superordinate identification with humanity can be used as a tool for recategorization in the future.

## REFERENCES

- Allport, G. W. (1958). *The Nature of Prejudice*. Garden City, New York: Adoubleday Anchor Books Doubleday & Company, Inc.
- Antonius, D. (March 23, 2016). When fear is a weapon: how terror attacks influence mental health. *The Conversation*. Retrieved from <http://theconversation.com/when-fear-is-a-weapon-how-terror-attacks-influence-mental-health-51010>
- Aquino, K., & Americus Reed, I. (2002). The Self-Importance of Moral Identity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83(6), 1423-1440. doi:10.1037//0022-3514.83.6.1423
- Arrow, H., & Sundberg, N. D. (2004). International identity: Definitions, development, and some implications for global conflict and peace. In B. N. Setiadi, A. Supratiknya, W. J. Lonner, & Y. H. Poortinga (Eds.), *Ongoing themes in Psychology and Culture* (pp. 55-69). Deresan, Yogyakarta: Kanisius Printing and Publishing House.
- Bar-Tal, D. (2000). *Shared Beliefs in a Society: Social Psychological Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Bargh, J. A., Chen, M., & Burrows, L. (1996). Automaticity of Social Behavior: Direct Effects of Trait Construct and Stereotype Activation on Action. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71(2), 230-244.
- Barkdull, C., Khaja, K., Queiro-Tajalli, I., Swart, A., Cunningham, D., & Dennis, S. (2011). Experiences of Muslims in Four Western Countries Post-9/11. *Affilia Journal of Women and Social Work*, 26(2), 139-153. doi:10.1177/0886109911405491
- Brewer, M. B. (1999). The Psychology of Prejudice: Ingroup Love or Outgroup Hate? *Journal of Social Issues*, 55(3), 429-444.
- Brewer, M. B. (2007). The importance of being we: Human nature and intergroup relations. *American Psychologist*, 62(8), 728-738.
- Brown, R., Vivian, J., & Hewstone, M. (1999). Changing attitudes through intergroup contact: the effects of group membership salience. *European Journal of Psychology*, 29, 741-764.
- Caplin, A. (2003). Fear as a policy instrument. In G. Loewenstein, D. Read, & R. Baumeister (Eds.), *Time and decision: Economic and Psychological perspectives on intertemporal choice* (pp. 441-458). New York: NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

- Cialdini, R. B., Brown, S. L., Lewis, B. P., Luce, C., & Neuberg, S. L. (1997). Reinterpreting the Empathy-Altruism Relationship: When One Into One Equals Oneness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73(3), 481-494.
- Citrin, J., Reingold, B., & Green, D. P. (1990). American Identity and the Politics of Ethnic Change. *Journal of Politics*, 52(4), 1125-1154.
- Coe, K., & Neumann, R. (2011). International Identity in Theory and Practice: The Case of the Modern American Presidency. *Communication Monographs*, 78, 2(139-161).
- Davis, M. H. (1983). Measuring Individual Differences in Empathy: Evidence for a Multidimensional Approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44(1), 113-126.
- Davis, M. H., & Maitner, A. T. Perspective Taking and Intergroup Helping. In S. Sturmer & M. Snyder (Eds.), *The Psychology of Prosocial Behavior: Group Processes, Intergroup Relations, and Helping* (pp. 175-190). United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing Lt. .
- Davis, N. T., & Dunaway, J. L. (2016). Party Polarization, Media Choice, and Mass Partisan-Ideological Sorting. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 80(Special Issue), 272-297.
- Department of Homeland Security. Refugees and Asylees. Retrieved from <https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/refugees-asylees>
- Domke, D., McCoy, K., & Torres, M. (1999). News Media, Racial Perceptions, and Political Cognition. *Communication Research*, 26(5), 570-607.
- Dovidio, J. F., Gaertner, S. L., Shnabel, N., Sagy, T., & Jonson, J. (2010). Recategorization and Prosocial Behavior: Common In-group Identity and a Dual Identity. In S. Strumer & M. Snyder (Eds.), *The Psychology of Prosocial Behavior: Group Processes, Intergroup Relations, and Helping* (pp. 191-207). United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing Lt.
- Dunn, K. M., Klocker, N., & Salabay, T. (2007). Contemporary racism and Islamophobia in Australia. *Ethnicities*, 7(4), 564-589. doi:10.1177/1468796807084017
- Ellemers, N., & Haslam, S. A. (2012). Social Identity Theory. In P. A. M. V. Lange, A. W. Kruglanski, & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology* (Vol. 2, pp. 379-398). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (2 ed.). London: University of Chicago Press, Ltd.
- Esses, V., Hamilton, L. K., & Gaucher, D. (2017). The Global Refugee Crisis: Empirical Evidence and Policy Implications for Improving Public Attitudes and Facilitating Refugee Resettlement. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 11(1), 78-123.

- Esses, V. M., Dovidio, J. F., & Hodson, G. (2002). Public Attitudes Toward Immigration in the United States and Canada in Response to the September 11, 2001 "Attack on America". *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 69-85.
- Esses, V. M., Dovidio, J. F., Semenza, A. H., & Jackson, L. M. (2005). Attitudes toward Immigrants and Immigration: The Role of National and International Identity. In D. Abrams, M. A. Hogg, & J. M. Marques (Eds.), *The Social Psychology of Inclusion and Exclusion* (pp. 317-337). New York, New York: Psychology Press.
- Esses, V. M., Hodson, G., & Dovidio, J. F. (2003). Public Attitudes Towards Immigrants and Immigration: Determinants and Policy Implications. In C. M. Beach, A. G. Green, & J. G. Reitz (Eds.), *Canadian Immigration Policy for the 21st Century* (pp. 507-535). Kingston, Ontario: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Esses, V. M., Veenvliet, S., Hodson, G., & Mihic, L. (2008). Justice, Morality, and the Dehumanization of Refugees. *Social Justice Research*, 21, 4-25. doi:10.1007/s11211-0058-4
- Fakih, A., & Marrouch, W. (Nov. 10, 2015). The Economic Impacts of the Syrian Refugees: Challenges and Opportunities in Host Countries. Retrieved from <http://journal.georgetown.edu/the-economic-impacts-of-syrian-refugees-challenges-and-opportunities-in-host-countries/>
- Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E., & Qasmiyeh, Y. M. (2010). Muslim Asylum-Seekers and Refugees: Negotiating Identity, Politics and Religion in the UK. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 23(3), 294-314. doi:10.1093/jrd/feq022
- Gaertner, S. L., & Dovidio, J. F. (2000). *Reducing Intergroup Bias: The Common Ingroup Identity Model*. Ann Arbor, MI: Sheridan Books.
- Gallup Center for Muslim Studies. (2010). In U.S., religious prejudice stronger against Muslims.
- General, U. N. S. (2016). *In safety and dignity: Addressing large movements of refugees and migrants*. Retrieved from [http://www.un.org/pga/70/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2015/08/21-Apr\\_Refugees-and-Migrants-21-April-2016.pdf](http://www.un.org/pga/70/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2015/08/21-Apr_Refugees-and-Migrants-21-April-2016.pdf).
- Goertz, G., & Mahoney, J. (2012). *A Tale of Two Cultures: Quantitative and Qualitative Research in the Social Sciences*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Haslam, N. (2006). Dehumanization: An Integrative Review. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 10(3), 252-264.
- Hornsey, M. J. (2008). Social Identity Theory and Self-categorization Theory: A Historical Review. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2(1), 204-222. doi:10.1111/j.1751-9004.2007.00066.x

- Huddy, L. (2004). Contrasting Theoretical Approaches to Intergroup Relations. *Political Psychology*, 25(6).
- Huddy, L., & Khatib, N. (2007). American Patriotism, National Identity, and Political Involvement. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 63-77.
- Huntington, S. P. (1993). The Clash of Civilizations? *Foreign Affairs*, 72(3), 22-49.  
doi:10.2307/20045621
- IPSOS. (2016, August 11). Global study shows many around the world uncomfortable with levels of immigration. Retrieved from <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/3771/Global-study-shows-many-around-the-world-uncomfortable-withlevels-of-immigration.aspx>
- Iyengar, S., & Westwood, S. J. (2015). Fear and Loathing across Party Lines: New Evidence on Group Polarization. *American Journal of Political Science*, 59(3), 690-707.  
doi:10.1111/ajps.12152
- Kim, J. (2016). The effects of collective anger and fear on policy support in response to terrorist attacks. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 165(5), 455-468.  
doi:10.1080/00224545.2015.1119669
- Leach, C. W., Zomeran, M. v., Zebel, S., Vliek, M. L. W., Pennekamp, S. F., Doosje, B., & Ouwerkerk, J. W. (2008). Group-Level Self-Definition and Self-Investment: A Hierarchical (Multicomponent) Model of In-Group Identification. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95(1), 144-165.
- Lipka, M. (Feb. 27, 2017). Muslims and Islam: Key findings in the U.S. and around the world. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/02/27/muslims-and-islam-key-findings-in-the-u-s-and-around-the-world/>
- McFarland, S., Webb, M., & Brown, D. (2012). All Humanity Is My Ingroup: A Measure and Studies of Identification With All Humanity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 103(5), 830-853. doi:10.1037/a0028724
- Monroe, K. R. (1996). *The Heart of Altruism: Perceptions of a Common Humanity*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Monroe, K. R. (2008). Cracking the Code of Genocide: The Moral Psychology of Rescuers, Bystanders, and Nazis during the Holocaust. *Political Psychology*, 29(5), 699-736.
- Nacos, B. L., & Torres-Reyn, O. (2006). Framing Muslim-Americans before and after 9/11. In P. Norris, M. Kern, & M. Just (Eds.), *Framing terrorism: the news media, the government, and the public* (pp. 133-157). New York and London: Routledge.

- Oliner, S. P. & Oliner, P. M. (1988). *The Altruistic Personality: Rescuers of Jews in Nazi Europe*. New York: The Free Press.
- Opatow, S. (1995). Drawing the Line: Social Categorization, Moral Exclusion, and the Scope of Justice. In B. B. Bunker, J. Z. Rubin, & a. Associates (Eds.), *Conflict, Cooperation, and Justice* (pp. 347-369). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Ostrand, N. (2015). The Syrian Refugee Crisis: A Comparison of Responses by Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States. *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 3(3), 255-279.
- Pew Research Center. (2007, May 22). *Muslim Americans: Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream*. Paper presented at the Religion & Public Life.
- Postelnicescu, C. (2016). Europe's New Identity: the Refugee Crisis and the Rise of Nationalism. *European Journal of Psychology*, 12(2), 203-209. doi:10.5964/ejop.v12i2.1191
- Reese, G., Proch, J., & Finn, C. (2015). Identification With All Humanity: The role of self-definition and self-investment. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 45, 426-440.
- Savigny, H., & Marsden, L. (2009). Media, Religion, and Conflict. In H. Savigny & L. Marsden (Eds.), *Media, Religion, and Conflict* (pp. 1-16). Farnham, England: Routledge.
- Sheehi, S. (2011). *Islamophobia: The Ideological Campaign Against Muslims*. Atlanta, GA: Clarity Press, Inc.
- Sherif, M., Harvey, O. J., White, B. J., Hood, W. R., & Sherif, C. W. (1988). *The Robbers Cave Experiment*. University of Oklahoma: Institute of Group Relations.
- Tajfel, H. (1982). Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 33, 1-39. doi:10.1146/annurev.ps.33.020182.000245
- Transue, J. E. (2007). Identity Salience, Identity Acceptance, and Racial Policy Attitudes: American National Identity as a Uniting Force. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 78-91.
- Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.
- UNHCR *Global Trends: Forced displacement in 2015*. (2016). Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/576408cd7.pdf>
- Vezzali, L., Giovannini, D., & Capozza, D. (2010). Longitudinal Effects of Contact on Intergroup Relations: The Role of Majority and Minority Group Membership and

- Intergroup Emotions. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 20, 462-479. doi: 10.1002/casp.1058.
- van Vugt, M., & Park, J. H. (2010). The Tribal Instinct Hypothesis: Evolution and the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations. In S. Sturmer & M. Snyder (Eds.), *The Psychology of Prosocial Behavior: Group Processes, Intergroup Relations, and Helping* (pp. 13-32). United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Westfall, J., Boven, L. V., Chambers, J. R., & Judd, C. M. (2015). Perceiving Political Polarization in the United States: Party Identity Strength and Attitude Extremity Exacerbate the Perceived Partisan Divide. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 10(2), 145-158. doi:10.1177/1745691615569849
- Wike, R., Stokes, B., & Simmons, K. (2016 July 11). Europeans Fear Wave of Refugees Will Mean More Terrorism, Fewer Jobs: Pew Research Center.
- Worchel, S., Iuzzini, J., Coutant, D., & Ivaldi, M. (2000). A Multidimensional Model of Identity: Relating Individual and Group Identities to Intergroup Behavior. In D. Capozza & R. Brown (Eds.), *Social Identity Processes* (pp. 15-32). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

APPENDIX A  
EXPERIMENTAL PROTOCOL

**Demographics:**

Gender:

- a. Male
- b. Female

What is your age?

- a. <18
- b. 18-24
- c. 25-29
- d. 30-34
- e. 35-39
- f. 40-44
- g. >45

What is your classification at UGA?

- a. Freshman
- b. Sophomore
- c. Junior
- d. Senior

What is your major?

Please specify:

Are you an American citizen?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If no, please specify in which country you hold citizenship.

In terms of income, would you say your parents are:

- a. Upper class
- b. Upper-middle class
- c. Middle class
- d. Lower-middle class
- e. Working class
- f. Decline to answer

What is your racial/ethnic background?

- a. Black

- b. Chinese
- c. Indian
- d. Japanese
- e. Korean
- f. Southeast Asian
- g. White Caucasian (Non-Hispanic)
- h. Hispanic or Latino
- i. Mexican
- j. American Indian
- k. Middle Eastern
- l. More than one race
- m. Decline to answer

What is your political orientation?

- a. Very liberal
- b. Somewhat liberal
- c. Slightly liberal
- d. Neither liberal nor conservative
- e. Slightly conservative
- f. Somewhat conservative
- g. Very conservative

What is your political party affiliation?

- a. Strong democrat
- b. Democrat
- c. Independent, but lean Democrat
- d. Independent
- e. Independent, but lean Republican
- f. Republican
- g. Strong Republican

**Priming Task: Sentence Scramble: (language proficiency)**

Unscramble each of the following word sets below to form a complete sentence. Some of the completed sentences will use all five words, some of the completed sentences will use only four words.

Humanity words: universal, world, people, mankind, global, humanity

Humanity Prime Condition:

1. There are universal truths. (are umbrella universal there truths)
2. Mankind has evolved over time. (time mankind has evolved over)
3. The world is vast. (vast world pumpkin the is)
4. Our humanity binds us together. (binds together our humanity us)
5. Earthquakes are global disasters. (global earthquakes disasters apple are)
6. People need to work together. (together to people need work)
7. The glass is full. (full is sunrise glass the)

8. The chair is over there. (is there over chair the)
9. Plants need water to grow. (need plants grow to water)
10. The car broke down. (notebook car down the broke)
11. The door is open. (is open door tool the)
12. The building is tall. (tall the building is tissue)

Neutral Condition:

1. The glass is full. (full is sunrise glass the)
2. The chair is over there. (is there over chair the)
3. Plants need water to grow. (need plants grow to water)
4. The dog ran home. (home spoon the ran dog)
5. The car broke down. (notebook car down the broke)
6. The door is open. (is open door tool the)
7. The building is tall. (tall the building is tissue)
8. She could whistle a tune. (could tune a whistle she)
9. Candles can provide light. (provide can chapstick candle light)
10. Acorns fall from trees. (acorns laundry trees from fall)
11. The timer is going off. (is off the going timer)
12. The tape dispenser is out. (dispenser out is tape the)

**Identification With All Humanity Scale (IWAH)**

McFarland, S., Webb, M., & Brown, D. (2012). All Humanity Is My Ingroup: A Measure and Studies of Identification With All Humanity. *Journal Of Personality And Social Psychology*, 103(5), 830-853.

1. How close do you feel to each of the following groups?  
(1 = not at all, 2 = not very close, 3 = just a little or somewhat close, 4 = pretty close, 5 = very close)
  - a. People in my community
  - b. Americans
  - c. People all over the world
2. How often do you use the word “we” to refer to the following groups of people?  
(1 = almost never, 2 = rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = often, 5 = very often)
  - a. People in my community
  - b. Americans
  - c. People all over the world
3. How much would you say you have in common with the following groups?  
(1 = almost nothing in common, 2 = little in common, 3 = some in common, 4 = quite a bit in common, 5 = very much in common)
  - a. People in my community
  - b. Americans
  - c. People all over the world

Please answer all the remaining questions using the following choices: 1 = not at all, 2 = just a little, 3 = somewhat, 4 = quite a bit, 5 = very much

4. Sometimes people think of those who are not a part of their immediate family as “family.” To what degree do you think of the following groups of people as “family”?

- a. People in my community
  - b. Americans
  - c. All humans everywhere
5. How much do you identify with (that is, feel a part of, feel love toward, have concern for) each of the following?
  - a. People in my community
  - b. Americans
  - c. All humans everywhere
6. How much would you say you care (feel upset, want to help) when bad things happen to
  - a. People in my community
  - b. Americans
  - c. People all over the world
7. How much do you want to be:
  - a. A responsible citizen of my community
  - b. A responsible American citizen
  - c. A responsible citizen of the world
8. How much do you believe in:
  - a. Being loyal to my community
  - b. Being loyal to America
  - c. Being loyal to all mankind
9. When they are in need, how much do you want to help:
  - a. People in my community
  - b. Americans
  - c. People all over the world

**Refugee Scenario:**

There is an international crisis and (people/Muslim/Christian) are fleeing their home country. (People/Muslims/Christians) are abandoning their countries to escape persecution from their government and neighboring governments. Over 1 million refugees are seeking entrance into Europe and the United States to find safety. On average, the US accepts 10,000 refugees per year in a crisis similar to this. The average refugee has a wife and three young children.

Q1: How many refugees should the US accept in 2017?

- a. Allow none in
- b. Decrease the number allowed in by a lot
- c. Decrease the number allowed in only a little
- d. Same amount allowed in
- e. Increase the number allowed in only a little
- f. Increase the number allowed in by a lot
- g. No limit on the number allowed in

Q2: Some people argue that there should be restrictions on which child refugees are allowed in, do you agree or disagree that restrictions should be placed on children?

- a) Strongly disagree
- b) Somewhat disagree
- c) Neither agree nor disagree
- d) Somewhat agree
- e) Strongly agree

Q3: Some people say that all refugees should be accepted, while others say that female refugees should be accepted but male refugees should not be accepted. Do you agree or disagree that there should be restrictions on which refugees are admitted based on gender?

- a) Strongly disagree
- b) Somewhat disagree
- c) Neither agree nor disagree
- d) Somewhat agree
- e) Strongly agree

Q4: Some people say that all refugees should be accepted, while others say that Christian refugees should be accepted but Muslim refugees should not be accepted. Do you agree or disagree that there should be restrictions on which refugees are admitted based on religion?

- a) Strongly disagree
- b) Somewhat disagree
- c) Neither agree nor disagree
- d) Somewhat agree
- e) Strongly agree

**Empathy measure:**

Davis, M. H. (1980). A multidimensional approach to individual differences in empathy. *JSAS Catalog of Selected Documents in Psychology, 10*, 85.

Interpersonal Reactivity Scale (Perspective Taking and Empathic Concern subscales included, Fantasy and Personal Distress subscales not included)

Perspective Taking:

1. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the “other guy’s” point of view. (R)
2. I try to look at everybody’s side of a disagreement before I make a decision.
3. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.
4. If I’m sure I’m right about something, I don’t waste much time listening to other people’s arguments. (R)
5. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.
6. When I’m upset at someone, I usually try to “put myself in his shoes” for a while.
7. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.

Empathic Concern:

1. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.
2. Sometimes I don’t feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems. (R)
3. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them.
4. Other people’s misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal. (R)

5. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them. (R)
6. I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.
7. I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.

Higher values indicate higher levels of empathy and perspective taking. 7-point scale

1-Does not describe me well

2-

3-

4-Neutral

5-

6-

7-Describes me very well

### **Moral Identity Measure:**

Aquino & Reed. (2002). The Self-Importance of Moral Identity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83(6), 1423-1440.

### Moral Identity Scale

Listed below are some characteristics that may describe a person.

- Caring
- Compassionate
- Fair
- Friendly
- Generous
- Helpful
- Hardworking
- Honest
- Kind

The person with these characteristics could be you or it could be someone else. For a moment, visualize in your mind the kind of person who has these characteristics. Imagine how that person would think, feel, and act. When you have a clear image of what this person would be like, answer the following questions.

1. It would make me feel good to be a person who has these characteristics.
2. Being someone who has these characteristics is an important part of who I am.
3. A big part of my emotional well-being is tied up in having these characteristics.
4. I would be ashamed to be a person who has these characteristics. (R)
5. Having these characteristics is not really important to me. (R)
6. Having these characteristics is an important part of my sense of self.
7. I strongly desire to have these characteristics.
8. I often buy products that communicate the fact that I have these characteristics.
9. I often wear clothes that identify me as having these characteristics.
10. The types of things I do in my spare time (e.g., hobbies) clearly identify me as having these characteristics.
11. The kinds of books and magazines that I read identify me as having these characteristics.

12. The fact that I have these characteristics is communicated to others by my membership in certain organizations.

13. I am actively involved in activities that communicate to others that I have these characteristics.

Scored on a 7 point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Higher values indicate a stronger moral identity.

1-strongly disagree

2-disagree

3-somewhat disagree

4-neither agree nor disagree

5-somewhat agree

6-agree

7-strongly agree

### **Justice Beliefs about Global Inequality**

Reese, G., Proch, J., & Finn, C. (2015). Identification With All Humanity: The role of self-definition and self-investment. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 45*, 426-440.

1. I think it is justified that people from developed countries have better chances in life than people from developing countries.
2. Overall, I think that the inequality between developed and developing countries is somewhat just.
3. Global inequality between people from developed and developing countries is unjust. (R)
4. The unequal chances and conditions for people from developed and developing countries are unfair. (R)
5. The increasing gap between poor and rich in the world worries me. (R)

Scored on a 7 point scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. Higher values indicate global inequality to be perceived as just.

1-strongly disagree

2-disagree

3-somewhat disagree

4-neither agree nor disagree

5-somewhat agree

6-agree

7-strongly agree

### **Behavioral Intentions to Reduce Global Inequality**

Reese, G., Proch, J., & Finn, C. (2015). Identification With All Humanity: The role of self-definition and self-investment. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 45*, 426-440.

1. Developed countries should support developing countries more strongly.
2. Developed countries should make stronger efforts in order to fight against global inequality.

3. I would adjust my standard of living substantially if I could thereby contribute to global justice.
4. If other people in developed countries were willing to decrease their standard of living in order to contribute to global inequality, I would do the same.
5. I would constrain my standard of living if I could thereby contribute to decreasing global inequality.
6. It makes sense to purchase Fair Trade Products.
7. For me, it is important to know the production conditions of products I consume.

Scored on a 7 point scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. Higher values indicate stronger behavioral intentions to reduce global inequality.

1-strongly disagree

2-disagree

3-somewhat disagree

4-neither agree nor disagree

5-somewhat agree

6-agree

7-strongly agree

### **Religious Identification Questions:**

Do you currently or have you ever identified with a particular religion?

- a) Protestant
- b) Roman Catholic
- c) Mormon
- d) Orthodox
- e) Jewish
- f) Muslim
- g) Buddhist
- h) Hindu
- i) Atheist
- j) Agnostic
- k) Other (please specify)
- l) Nothing in particular

How strongly do you identify with that religion?

- a) Very strongly
- b) Somewhat strongly
- c) Neutral
- d) Somewhat weakly
- e) Very weak

## APPENDIX B

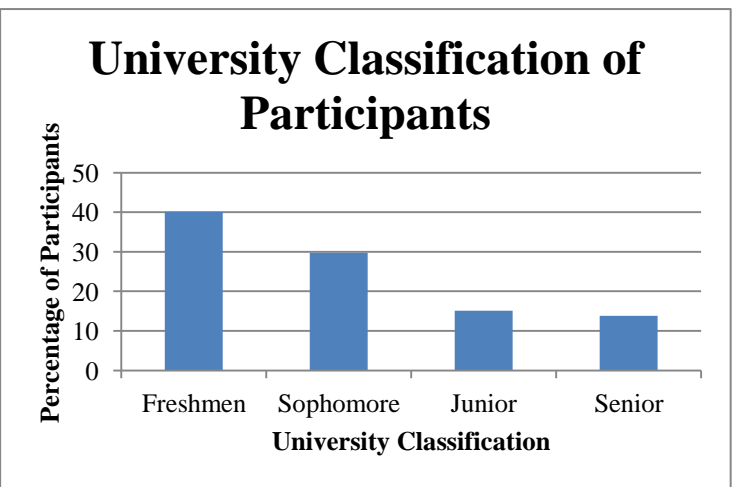
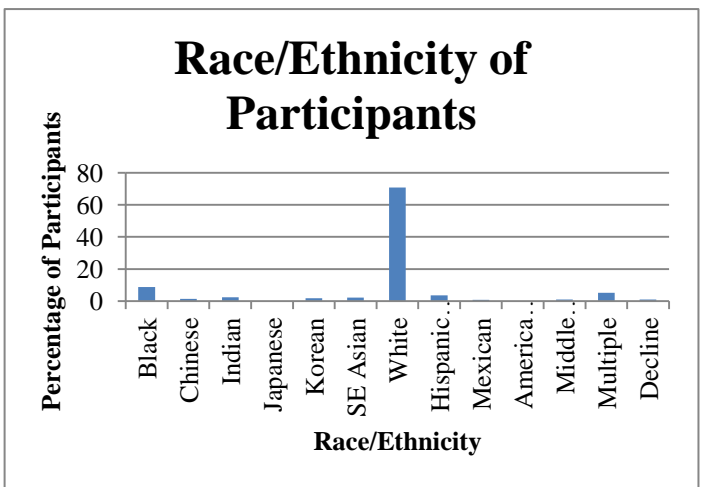
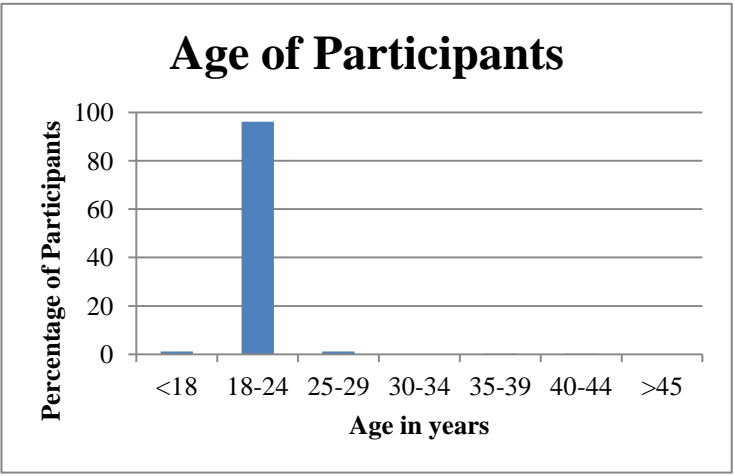
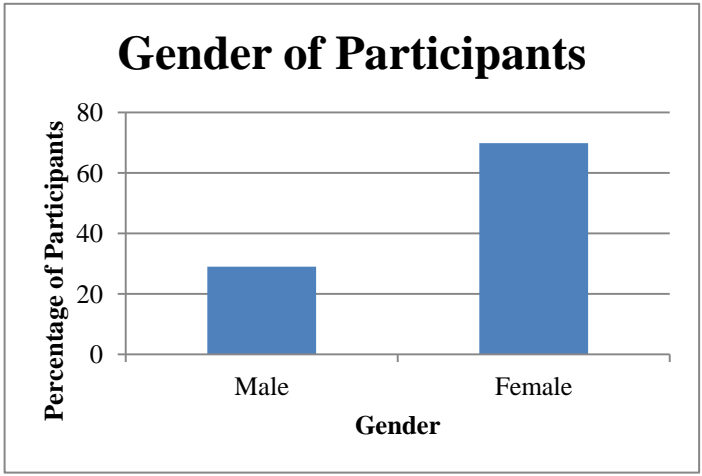
## INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. What do you think constitutes the designation of ‘refugee’?
2. What is your opinion of refugees in general?
3. Are you interested in the current refugee situation?
4. Do you think the US should accept more refugees into the country?
  - a. Can you expand on that?
  - b. What is it about the refugee crisis that interests you so much?
5. Do you think there should be conditions on who is allowed into the country?
  - a. Why?
  - b. What types of conditions?
    - i. Why?
6. Some have called the refugee crisis a European problem saying the US should not get involved. Do you agree or disagree with this?
  - a. Why?
7. Some US officials have called financial aid “the most effective way by far” to help those on the ground. Do you agree or do you think we could do more?
  - a. Why?
  - b. Is there anything else we could do?
8. Does accepting refugees uphold US values and is it consistent with past US policy?
  - a. Why or why not?
9. Others have argued that Syrian refugees should be allowed in, but “in a way that allows us to ensure that among them...[there are not] people who were, you know, part of a terrorist organization that are using this crisis.” In your opinion, do you think many of the refugees are terrorists? Do you think it is important to screen for potential terrorists when processing refugees?
  - a. Why?
10. In the past, some have argued that charming children allowed into the country would soon grow into ugly adults. In your opinion, is this a concern with refugees?
  - a. Why?
  - b. Do you think there should be special programs or education systems for children that are brought in?
11. Some have argued that female but not males refugees should be admitted. Do you think refugees should be screened based on gender?
  - a. Why?

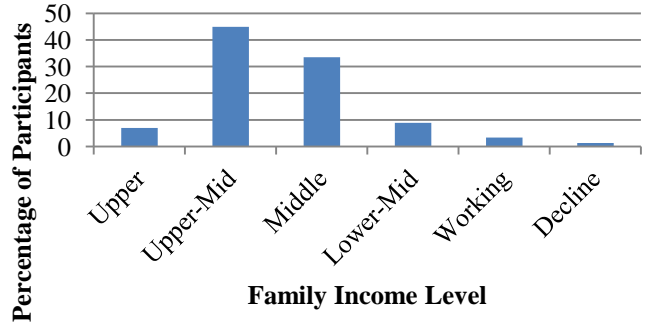
12. Some politicians have called the refugees “a Trojan horse” and suggested that only Christians be admitted. Do you agree that refugees should be screened based on their religion?
  - a. Why?
13. JFK reminded the United States that we are “A Nation of Immigrants,” with this in mind, what role do you think the US should play in refugee crises in general?
  - a. Why?
14. Do you discuss the refugee situation with other people frequently?
15. How do you frame the refugee situation when you talk to people who have a different opinion about refugees?
16. What do you think is the most effective way to frame the refugee situation to other people to get support?
17. Has the recent executive order concerning immigrants and refugees had any effect on your opinion regarding refugees and immigration policy?

LIST OF TABLES

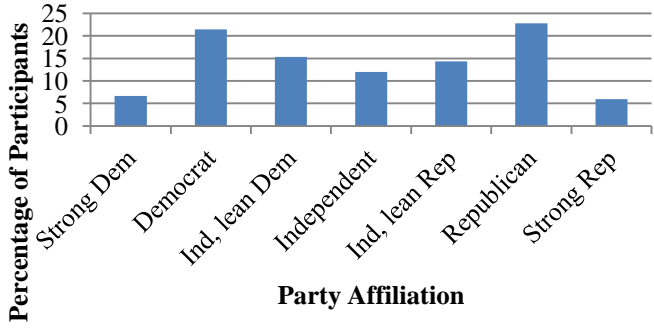
Table 1: Demographic Tables



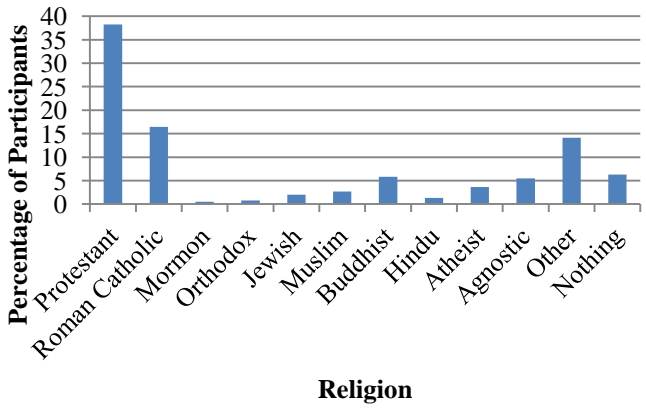
### Reported Family Income Level of Participants



### Party Affiliation of Participants



### Religion of Participants



### Strength of Religious ID of Participants

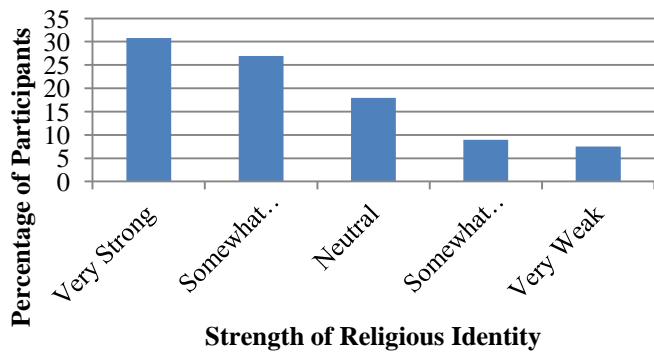


Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations

	<b>IWAH</b> (5 point scale)		<b>GSD</b> (5 point scale)		<b>GSI</b> (5 point scale)		<b>DV-Attitude</b> (7 point scale)	
	Mean	StdDv	Mean	StdDv	Mean	StdDv	Mean	StdDv
Prime	3.50	0.66	4.29	0.71	2.69	0.77	4.76	1.63
No Prime	3.43	0.63	4.23	0.71	2.57	0.77	4.28	1.61

Table 1: Regression Analysis: Attitude Toward Refugee Policy

	Attitude
Muslim	0.075 (0.225)
Christian	0.591** (0.228)
Humanity Prime	0.112 (0.227)
Religious ID	-0.580*** (0.151)
Muslim*Humanity Prime	0.181 (0.321)
Christian*Humanity Prime	-0.337 (0.321)
Constant	4.944*** (0.191)
Observations	556
R <sup>2</sup>	0.043
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.032
Residual Std. Error	1.547 (df = 549)
F Statistic	4.095 (df = 6; 549)
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2: Regression Analysis: Attitude Toward Refugee Policy  
with Party Affiliation

	Attitude
Muslim	0.328 (0.186)
Christian	0.707*** (0.189)
Humanity Prime	0.163 (0.187)
Religious ID	0.105 (0.131)
Party Affiliation	-0.518*** (0.032)
Muslim*Humanity prime	-0.069 (0.265)
Christian*Humanity prime	-0.430 (0.266)
Constant	6.435*** (0.182)
Observations	554
R <sup>2</sup>	0.353
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.345
Residual Std. Error	1.275 (df = 546)
F Statistic	42.626(df = 7; 546)

Note:

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

## LIST OF FIGURES

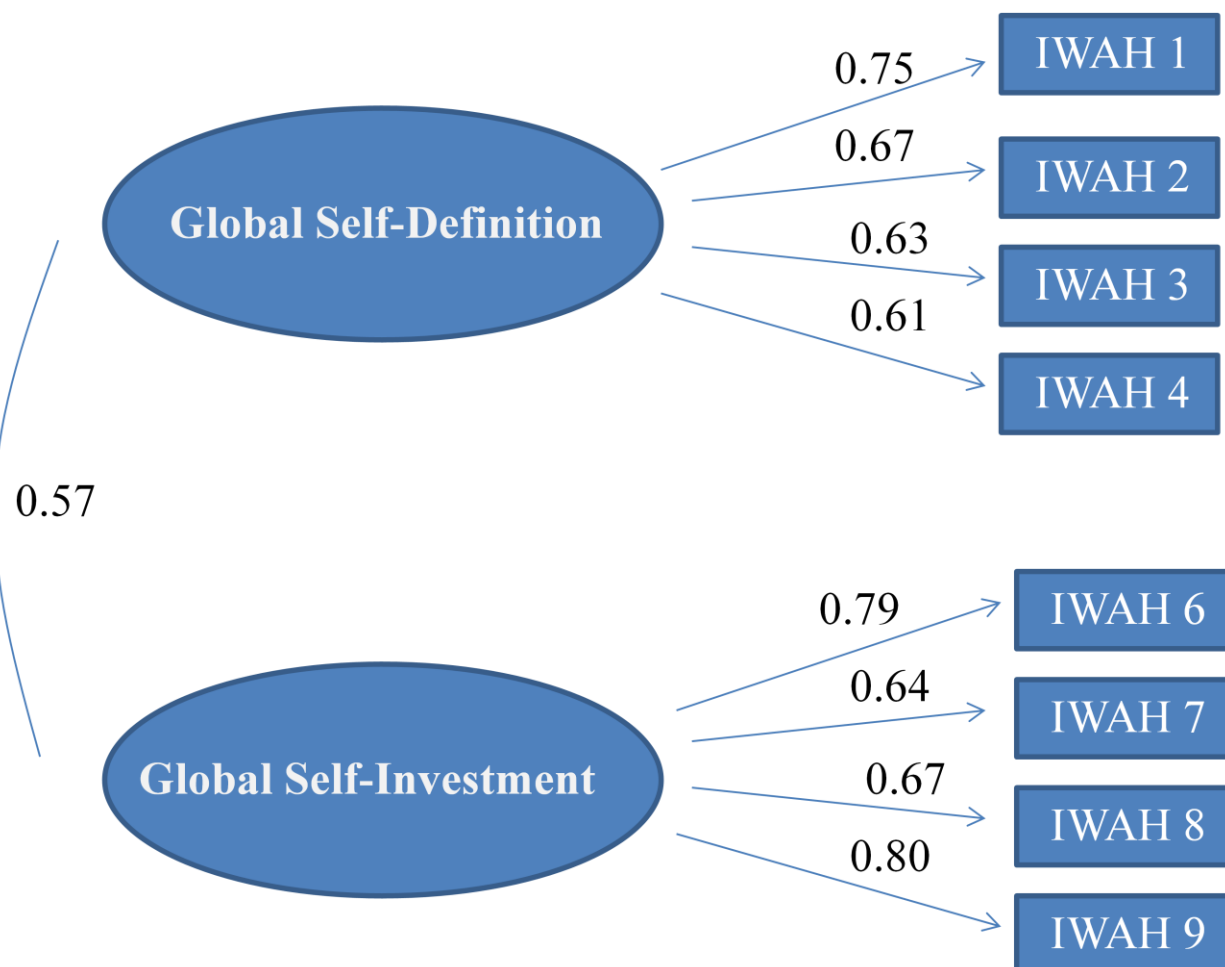
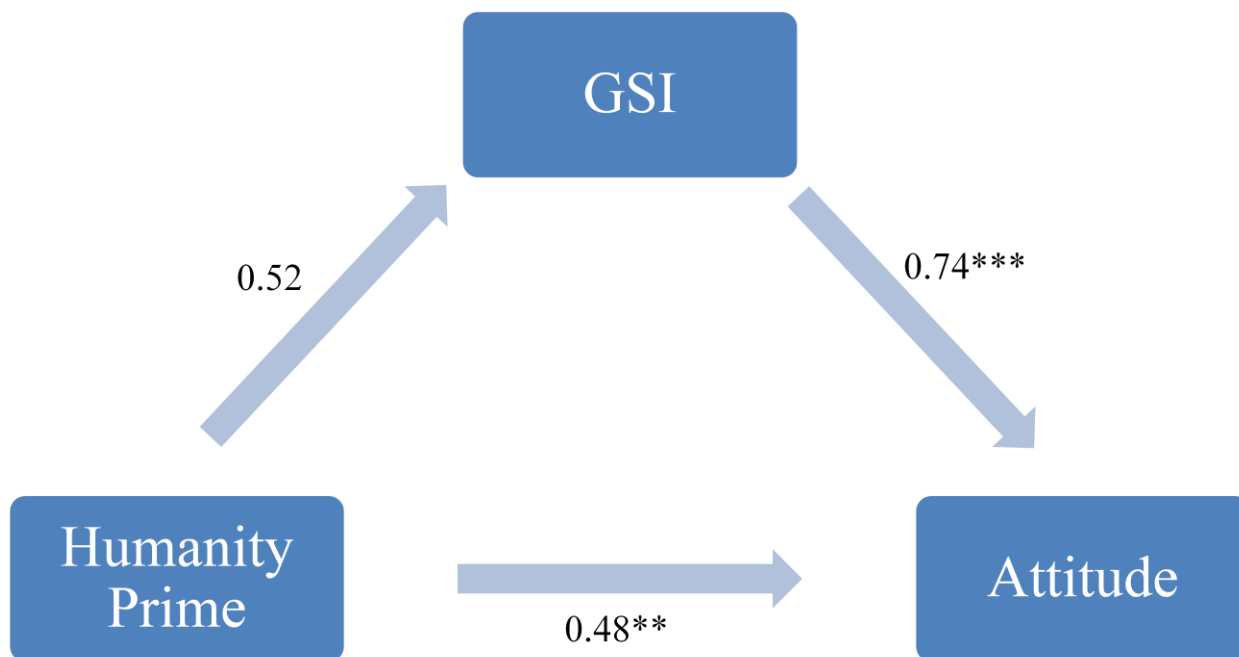


Figure 1: Factor Analysis



Note: \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

Figure 2: Mediation Analysis

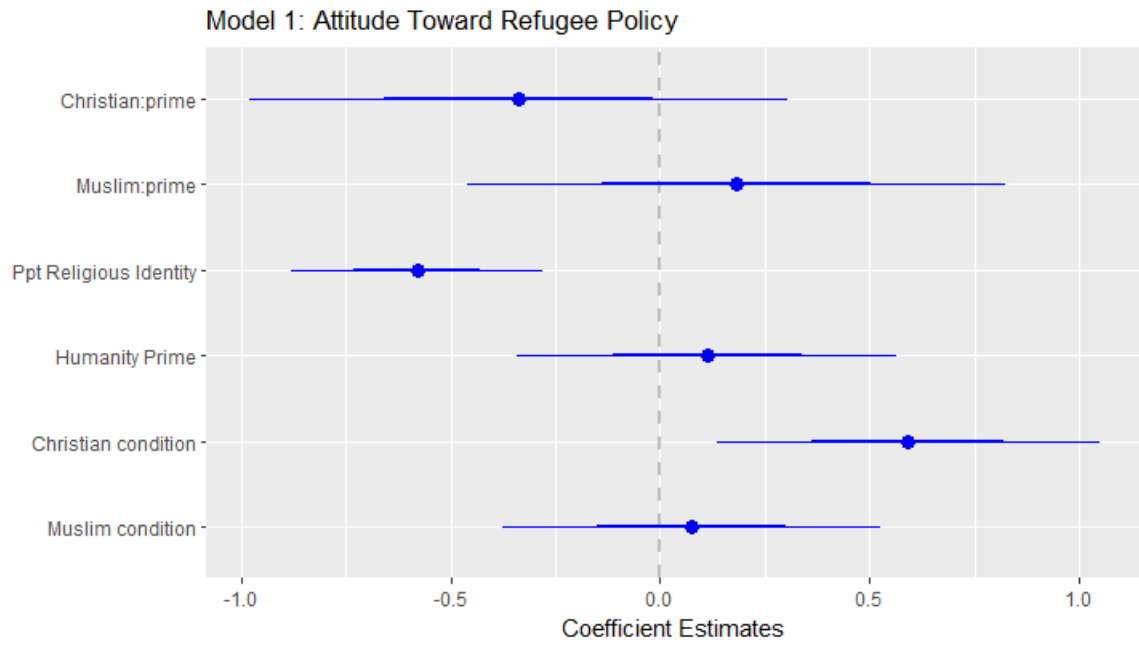


Figure 3: Coefficient Plot of Attitude Toward Refugee Policy

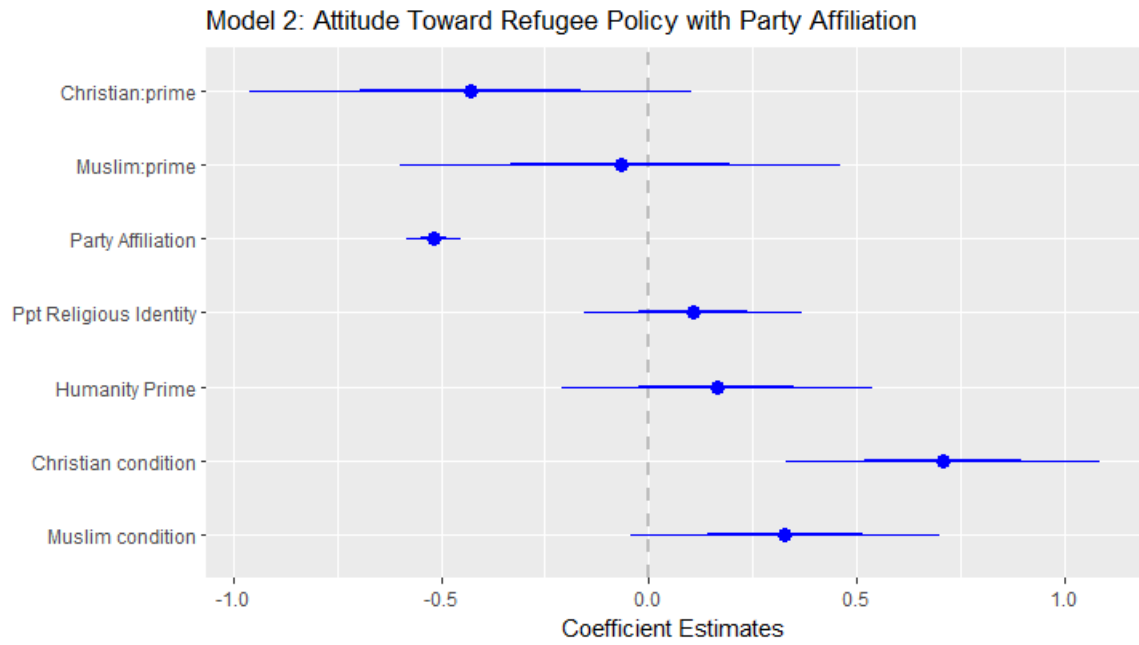


Figure 4: Coefficient Plot of Attitude Toward Refugee Policy with Party Affiliation

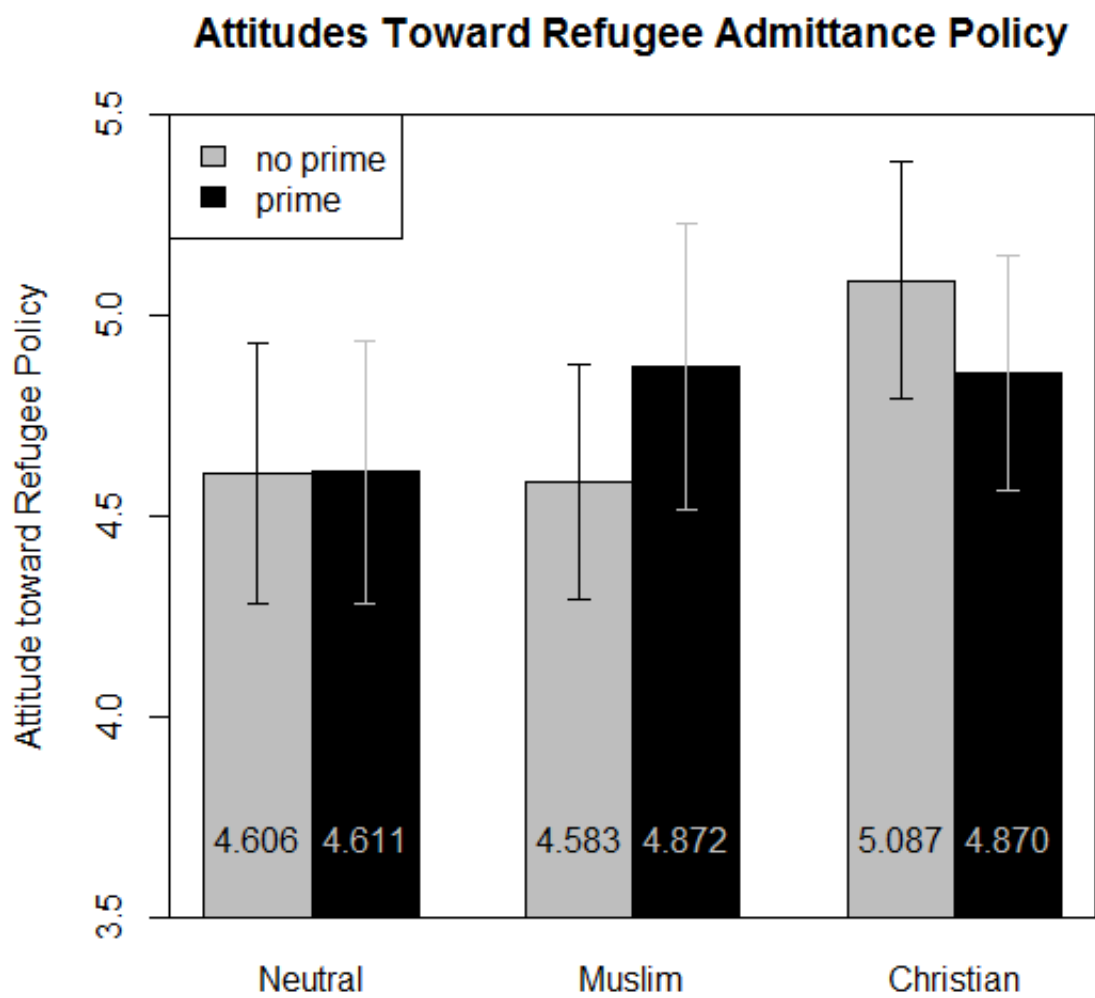


Figure 5: Attitudes Toward Refugee Admittance Policy