

Countering Myths about American Muslims: The “American-ness” of Muslims

This is part of an open-ended series that will address some of the prevalent misconceptions about Islam and Muslims in America. Read about the motivation behind the series in the first installment.

Each set of misconceptions is followed by the reality. Recommendations for further reading and links to the previous installments of this series appear at the end of this article.

Misconception: Muslims are not well integrated into American society and culture.

Reality: Numerous measures indicate that the vast majority of American Muslims are satisfied with their life in the United States, financially secure, and indulge in American popular culture at the same rates as other Americans.

[Observing their own community](#), only 20% of Muslim Americans say that most new Muslim immigrants don't want to assimilate into American culture, while 56% believe that most do want to adopt an American way of life and 16% say that new Muslim immigrants want to adapt to American culture while still remaining a distinct community. [79% of Muslim Americans](#) rate their communities as excellent or good places to live. Even in places where mosques have been vandalized or there has been community pushback against building a mosque, 76% of Muslim Americans report their community as an excellent or good place to live. Muslim Americans are [overwhelmingly satisfied](#) with their lives (82% report being satisfied while 15% report being dissatisfied). They are also [much more satisfied](#) with the direction of the country than the average American, with 56% of Muslim Americans vs. 23% of all Americans reporting satisfaction. A [higher percentage](#) of Muslim Americans (46%) report being in good or excellent shape financially than the average American (38%). 74% Muslim Americans also believe that [“most people who want to get ahead can make it if they are willing to work hard,”](#) as compared to 62% of all Americans.

Muslim Americans report participating in pop cultural activities at [about the same rates as average Americans](#). This includes watching tv shows, sports games and playing video games.

Misconception: American Muslims cannot be both Muslim and “modern,” and this conflict of faith does not exist for American Christians.

Reality: About $\frac{2}{3}$ (63%) of American Muslims [do not see a conflict](#) between being a devout Muslim and living in a modern society, while about $\frac{1}{3}$ (31%) do. American Christians responded to this question in nearly identical proportions, with $\frac{2}{3}$ (64%) responding they don't see a conflict between being devout Christian and $\frac{1}{3}$ (31%) believing there is a conflict.

Further Reading:

[Becoming American?: The Forging of Arab and Muslim Identity](#) in Pluralist America by Yvonne Haddad

[Young American Muslims: Dynamics of Identity](#) by Nahid Kabir

Previous Installments

[Part 1: The First Muslim-Americans](#)

[Part 2: Demographics](#)