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Candidate session number

Candidate name

School number

School name

Examination session (May or November)

May

Year

2013

Diploma Programme subject in which this extended essay is registered: Human Rights

(For an extended essay in the area of languages, state the language and whether it is group 1 or group 2.)

Title of the extended essay: 9/11 Backlash: Being Arab in America

### Candidate's declaration

*This declaration must be signed by the candidate; otherwise a grade may not be issued.*

The extended essay I am submitting is my own work (apart from guidance allowed by the International Baccalaureate).

I have acknowledged each use of the words, graphics or ideas of another person, whether written, oral or visual.

I am aware that the word limit for all extended essays is 4000 words and that examiners are not required to read beyond this limit.

This is the final version of my extended essay.

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Date

## Supervisor's report and declaration

The supervisor must complete this report, sign the declaration and then give the final version of the extended essay, with this cover attached, to the Diploma Programme coordinator.

Name of supervisor (CAPITAL letters)

Please comment, as appropriate, on the candidate's performance, the context in which the candidate undertook the research for the extended essay, any difficulties encountered and how these were overcome (see page 13 of the extended essay guide). The concluding interview (viva voce) may provide useful information. These comments can help the examiner award a level for criterion K (holistic judgment). Do not comment on any adverse personal circumstances that may have affected the candidate. If the amount of time spent with the candidate was zero, you must explain this, in particular how it was then possible to authenticate the essay as the candidate's own work. You may attach an additional sheet if there is insufficient space here.

was a pleasure to work with. She was on time or early with every aspect of the writing process. She was also extremely meticulous & detailed with her research & preparations for writing.

She was a little overwhelmed when beginning the writing process, but after the 1st draft was completed, she saw the light at the end of the tunnel! I told me that writing this paper sparked her personal interest in this topic → & the TOK class & experience was also contributed to!

This declaration must be signed by the supervisor; otherwise a grade may not be issued.

I have read the final version of the extended essay that will be submitted to the examiner.

To the best of my knowledge, the extended essay is the authentic work of the candidate.

I spent 3.5 hours with the candidate discussing the progress of the extended essay.

Supervisor's signature:

Date:

**Assessment form (for examiner use only)**

Criteria	Achievement level			
	Examiner 1	maximum	Examiner 2	maximum
A research question	1	2		2
B introduction	1	2		2
C investigation	2	4		4
D knowledge and understanding	2	4		4
E reasoned argument	2	4		4
F analysis and evaluation	2	4		4
G use of subject language	2	4		4
H conclusion	2	2		2
I formal presentation	2	4		4
J abstract	1	2		2
K holistic judgment	2	4		4
Total out of 36	19			

**9/11 Backlash: Being Arab in America**

Human Rights

Session Number:

## Abstract

During the aftermath of 9/11, religious leaders, politicians, media pundits, and supposed terrorism experts oppressed the feelings of already terrified citizens by offering over generalizations and blatantly incorrect depictions of Muslims as extremists and terrorists. In *The Everlasting Hatred*, published in 2002, a Christian prophetic writer Hal Lindsey warned Americans that "Islam represents the single greatest threat to the continued survival of the planet that the world has ever seen." This prejudice affected a whole society of Arab-Americans. "Over 700 violent incidents targeting Arab-Americans, or those perceived to be Arab-Americans, Arabs and Muslims in the first nine weeks occurred following the attacks, including several murders"(ADC 20). This leads to the question, is post 9/11 prejudice against Arab-Americans justified?

This question was answered with the use of primary sources, research essays, interviews, novels, and documentaries. Through the use of novels written by scholarly professors about the 9/11 backlash, ideas such as legal issues, educational and employment discrimination, media bias and defamation were formed. Interviews with attorneys of the ADC (Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee) gave examples of individuals affected by this prejudice. The video documentary also gave insight into the emotional component of this 9/11 backlash.

Arab-Americans suffered a serious backlash after the 9/11 events. Examples of this backlash include secret detentions, hearings, deportations, police and FBI misconduct, educational and employment discrimination, and media bias/defamation. Defamation against Arabs and Muslims, mainly the attacks against the Islamic faith, increased in number following the 9/11 attacks. "Despite numerous examples of support by public figures and thousands of citizens, Arab-Americans are still vulnerable to hate crimes, discrimination, extreme vilification

citizens, Arab-Americans are still vulnerable to hate crimes, discrimination, extreme vilification by prominent people, and derogations of civil rights and liberties"(ADC 9).

Word Count: 275

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## **Introduction**

Should 9/11 have affected how people look at Arab-Americans? Have Arab-Americans changed from how they were before the attacks? Post 9/11 society has treated Arab-American irrationally due to their religion, skin color, language, and dress. Arab Americans suffered from a serious backlash including an increase in violence and hate crimes following the years of September 11. It is true that September 11 was a dreadful day for people across the United States; however, Arab Americans or those who looked like Arabs were directly and adversely affected. One's actual ethnicity didn't matter, if one looked Arab or had an Arab sounding name, they were targeted. The terrorist attacks of September 11 put Arabs at risk of danger and discrimination. The topic of 9/11 prejudice against Arab Americans is broken down into three categories: legal issues, education/employment discrimination, and media bias/defamation. In a legal sense, the Patriot Act allowed the Federal Bureau of Investigation easier access to monitor potential terrorist activities by detaining, deporting, or sending Arab-Americans to hearings. Due to these new discriminatory policies, many cases of FBI and police misconduct were reported. There were also cases of education and employment discrimination. There is considerable evidence showing that individual groups including racial and ethnic minorities are often treated unfairly by their peers and professors. There has also been an increase in public harassment, hate mail, and workplace discrimination toward Arab individuals. Researching individual stories/experiences and human rights theories has helped me formulate the question for the aim of my essay: Is post-9/11 prejudice against Arab-Americans justified?

## **Human Rights Theories**

As stated in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, human rights are defined as rights, such as



freedom from unlawful imprisonment, torture, and execution, regarded as belonging fundamentally to all persons. During the twentieth century, nations have set up a moral code describing the benefits and treatment of all humans. Many countries debate the denial or abuse of human rights. Many theories have been made based on this highly debated topic in order to develop a further understanding of rights for every human being.

The United States Government has falsely utilized human rights records. The government promotes democracy and equality abroad; however, many of its citizens face discrimination and/or persecution at home (Bayoumi 26). Moustafa Bayoumi is an award winning writer and professor at Brooklyn College and University of New York. His article on *Arab America's September 11* focuses on the experiences of Arab-America after September 11 terrorist attacks. Bayoumi compares the discrimination of Arab Americans to the history of racism in the U.S. As seen in his statement, the US is condemned by other international communities for violating the human rights of citizens at home and of potential terrorists abroad. Through this we arrive at the theory that legal issues such as discriminatory immigration policies, the Patriot Act, FBI and police misconduct are against human rights policies. The Bush administration, after the 9/11 attacks, authorized illegal wiretapping of domestic telephone conversation and email transmission. As well, the Patriot Act was renewed in December 2005, allowing the FBI easier access to monitor potential terrorist activities (Bayoumi 22). There have also been allegations pertaining to secret prisons or "black sites" in which the prisoners are taken to other countries and tortured. These acts infringe upon the civil and privacy rights of law abiding citizens.

The following theory pertains to the education and employment discrimination of Arab-Americans within their respective communities. According to the *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, "The Social Contract theory, nearly as old as philosophy itself, is the view that

persons' moral and/or political obligations are dependent upon a contract or agreement among them to form the society in which they live." In this case, the "contract" or "agreement" made by the U.S. government is in articles 23 and 26 of the The Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 23 of the Declaration broadly states, "Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work" while Article 26 states, "Everyone has the right to education. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. Education shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace". Contrary to this, after the 9/11 attacks, many incidences occurred in schools and workplaces. There were a fewer number of Arab students accepted into higher education, reduced knowledge of Arab history, increased public harassment, hate mail, and workplace discrimination toward Arab individuals. This theory explains how the US government has not followed their own policies for discrimination.

Media bias and defamation were very common proceeding the 9/11 attacks. However, most of this media bias was encouraged by prominent leaders in society, thus leading to the theory of legal rights for all Arab-Americans. Legal rights are the rules that exist under the rules of legal systems. Thus, article 2, paragraph 1, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights obligates each State party to respect and ensure to all persons within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the Covenant without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Speeches made by prominent people against a certain group of individuals are a form of racism. This theory informs us that Arab-Americans are not receiving their legal rights if politicians and the media recognize them differently based on race, color,

language, and religion.

### **Legal issues**

After the incidences of hate crime following the September 11 attack, new discriminatory policies were introduced into the American Immigration system for the first time. These policies took measures against discrimination of Arab-Americans with regard to alien registration, visa screening, secret detaining, and deportation for minor visa violations. These new discriminatory immigration policies instead increased racism and prejudice by the general public. Following the implementation of these policies, secret detentions of Arab or Muslim people in facilities around the country increased. According to the ADC's *Report on Hate Crimes and Discrimination Against Arab American*, "The government claims there was approximately 1,200 people detained. These individuals were not accused or even suspected of involvement in any form of terrorism, or having knowledge of any form of terrorism"(ADC 32). In this report the American Arab Anti-discrimination Committee surveys the experience of Arab-Americans in the year following September 2001, terrorist attacks. This is an appropriate source to assess due to the fact that this source was written from the actual committee involved in fighting against the cause, ADC. The individuals who were accused were mostly Arab or Muslim taken into custody after September 11 for no reason. "The government claims to have released or deported all but 73 detainees, ADC has no way of knowing how many people have been held and are still being held under such circumstances"(ADC 32). Once behind the bars, those detained would wait from several hours to several months before learning the reason behind their arrest or being allowed to contact an attorney. These immigrants were imprisoned for weeks before charges were brought against them. The rights of these citizens were cruelly taken away by the government in

violation of article 2, paragraph 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Many legislative and administrative policies have raised issues about civil liberties of the United States. One of these policies includes the USA Patriot Act. The Patriot Act is a general decrease in concern for civil rights that adds abuse of power by government agencies following September 11, 2001. Specific parts of the USA Patriot Act and other post 9/11 federal legislation empower law enforcement officials to do the following: “Arbitrarily choose foreign or domestic organizations suspected of supporting terrorism and then using secret evidence [;] jail or deport anyone who gives them material support [;] jail those who commit even minor criminal offenses deemed ‘dangers to human life’ whose intent to ‘intimidate society’ or ‘influence government policy.’” They also have the power to, “Detain US citizens and non-citizens suspected of being enemy combatant without bail and without access to attorneys[;] try such individuals in secret before military tribunals[;] prepare detention camps to incarcerate US citizens and foreign national for prolonged periods of time”(Peek 32-33). Lori Peek is an Assistant Professor of Sociology and Co-director of the center for Disaster and Risk analysis at Colorado State University. In *Behind the Backlash: Muslim Americans after 9/11*, Peek offers insight into the voices of American Muslims and the life they lived post-9/11. This book portrays the challenges and the adversities they faced after the attack. The previously mentioned Act has expanded the definition of terrorism, detention, and deportation power. It defies many rights given to U.S. citizens in the Declaration of Independence specifically in the Fourth Amendment which prevents any search or seizure without a warrant that has to be sanctioned and supported by a probable cause.

There have been several cases with misconduct by enforcement agencies. After the passing of the USA Patriot Act, “Attorney General John Ashcroft announced further measures

authorizing FBI agents to spy on domestic groups without having to show evidence of a crime.” In the week following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, “local, state and federal law enforcement agencies rounded up and imprisoned between 1,200 to 5,000 Muslim and Arab men(Peek 33).

The government refused to reveal the detainees’ identities, give them access to lawyers, disclose information about charges against them, or allow contact with their families. These men were subjected to “a pattern of physical and verbal abuse by some correctional officers” (Peek 33). It was later found that some of these men were picked up for minor immigration violations and others deported after months or years of detention. In the end none of these men were charged with any terror-related activity. In order to take action against Arab-American discrimination, cases involving misconduct by enforcement agencies needs to be ended.

### **Education and Employment Discrimination**

According to the Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, “Education shall promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.” However, many incidences occur on school grounds due to religion, skin color, or clothing. Schools do not inform students about Arab history. There is research supporting the fact that Arab history is rarely taught to young children and high school students; it is not taught to university students studying at American universities.

Hate crimes and acts of illegal discrimination also increased in the employment sector, particularly in the airline industry. Arab-Americans were one of the groups that "were barred from boarding airlines based solely on their names, appearances, or countries of origin"(Peek 6).

Some employers are reluctant to hire Arab-Americans because of their race. Arab-Americans are routinely dismissed by employers who create hostile work conditions for them. The non-profit Discrimination Research Center conducted a study supporting the concern of Arabs and Muslims. In a 2004 study, the Center sent out six thousand fictional resumes to employment firms throughout California. The names of the applicants represented different ethnicities such as White, Latino, African American, Asian American, Arab-American, and South Asian. All these applicants were similarly qualified. In the study “The name Heidi McKenzie got the highest response (36.7 percent) and Abdul-Aziz Mansour got the lowest (23 percent)” (Peek 78). This research was conducted in the United Kingdom, Canada, and France. All these countries gave similar results when researched. In every study, candidates with Arabic or Muslim sounding names were less prone to be requested for an interview than an applicant with a name of European or African descent. This data supports the fact that Arab-Americans are wrongly discriminated in both schools and work. In order to end further racial occurrences in the work environment, employers should keep a chart of the racial diversity in their business. Schools should involve Arab history into their curriculum and no student should face any consequences or punishments based on their race.

### **Media Bias and Defamation**

In the book titled *Images that Injure* Susan Dante Ross states,

The overwhelming message of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox film *The Seige* is that every Muslim is a fundamentalist and a potential terrorist. The enemies of America in *Wrong Is Right* (1982), *Iron eagle* (1986), and *True Lies* (1994) are nuclear-bomb wielding, fundamentalist Arab terrorists. And according to the ADC, every Muslim or Arab in

HBO's drama *Path to Paradise: The Untold Story of the World Trade center bombing (1997)* is portrayed as an "ugly stereotype". (59)

Ross is Associate Professor at the Edward R. Murrow School of Communication at Washington State University. This informational book describes certain images that create a harmful, negative, and deceptive depiction of various groups of people. Ross and Lester successfully describe how post-9/11 stereotyping in the media has affected Arab-Americans. In this quote, Muslims or Arabs are "terrorists", "ugly stereotype", "fundamentalist", and "nuclear-bomb wielding." All these movies convey Arabs or Muslims with a negative connotation. Since 9/11, television shows and movies have portrayed Arabs as villains. The ADC, American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee has continuously fought to prevent this negative depiction of Muslims in TV shows and movies. However, they have been continuously unsuccessful. At one point they mobilized in 2000 to boycott Paramount Pictures for the release of *Rules of Engagement*. According to the ADC the film clearly elicited the message, "All Arabs deserve to be killed because of their inherent hatred of America and Americans" (Ross 60).

Racist comments against Arab-Americans have been made by many prominent people. This includes politicians, religious leaders, film stars, radio anchors, and others. "In his 2002 book, *The Everlasting Hatred*, Christian prophetic writer Hal Lindsey warned Americans that 'Islam represents the single greatest threat to the continued survival of the planet that the world has ever seen'" (Peek 5). Doesn't the American pledge of allegiance state 'one nation under God'? It doesn't specify what god. Lori Peek also mentioned that, "Franklin Graham, an evangelical Christian leader who delivered the invocation and sermon at President George W. Bush's 2001 inauguration described Islam as 'a very evil and wicked religion' after the terrorist attacks'" (Peek5). Muslim and Arab-Americans had never been victims of hostility from so many different

corners. Politicians from Truman to other presidents contradict the government in advocating freedom overseas while maintaining segregation home. “Saxby Chambliss, a Republican congressional representative and future senator of Georgia, informed a group of law enforcement officers that the best antiterrorist measure for this district would be to ‘turn loose’ the local sheriff and ‘let him arrest every Muslim that cross the state line’”(Peek 5). These stereotypes appear in documentaries, TV, news coverage, and editorials. These images are not accurate or real. "The media and public officials used 'Muslim' and 'Arab' interchangeably"(Peek 11). This mix up of categories has caused confusion among American citizens to differentiate between the two. Not all Arabs are Muslim, and not all Muslims are Arabs. Such statements have injured their recipients and their subjects. Due to this idea, these images cause misunderstandings, hatred, and mutual contempt. Public anger is directed towards Muslim and Arab-Americans due to their religion. The government needs to take measures to eradicate these images leading to violence. The media needs to change their viewpoint of Arabs/Muslims and portray them in a positive connotation such as compassion and tolerance.

### **Personal Research**

During the summer of 2012, I was able to speak with two attorneys in the American-Arab Anti-discrimination committee. The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination committee, founded in 1980, is basically a civil rights organization that defends the right of people of Arab descent while promoting their cultural heritage. My first interview was with Nicole Saleem. Saleem is currently a staff attorney at ADC. She has directly worked with Arab-American clients on legal matters and policy matters impacting the Arab-American community. She also represented the ADC organization at meetings with community partners and government officials concerning



legal matters. Saleem is a second-generation Arab-American who is Lebanese descent born and raised throughout the Midwest. Since high school, she has been a member of the ADC. When asked whether racial discrimination against Arab-Americans is still evident today she said, “Yes there are still examples of racial discrimination such as on August 5, 2012 when a white supremacist and post-army veteran killed six people and wounded 3 others in a Sikh Temple in Wisconsin. Another example is on August 10, 2012 when a 51 year old man was shooting at a Chicago-area mosque with a pellet rifle while hundreds were praying.” Saleem then mentioned their future plans to end Arab-American discrimination with the passing of certain policies, initiatives by committee members, and their plan to educate the public about matters concerning this discrimination. Currently, Saleem is working with minority, employment, and immigration cases for Arab-Americans.

Renee Marie Moorad is another attorney that I had the privilege to speak with. Renee Marie Moorad is an ADC attorney currently working on the Kahlil Gibran Legal Fellow case. This case is a mission to gain additional appreciation for the cherished works of Gibran. Gibran was known in the Arab community to bridge the Arab and American world. The Arab community recognizes and appreciates him for his significant effect on the world as a whole. Similar to Saleem, Moorad works with clients and addresses their legal needs. She with the help of others has been working to petition the Postal Service to consider a Kahlil Gibran stamp since 1987. Moorad is a first generation Arab American of Lebanese and Syrian descent from Oklahoma City. Moorad has been an ADC Legal intern since January 2012 and has a strong passion for Kahlil Gibran. When I spoke with Renee Moorad, she described her most significant employment case. “One of my clients was a U.S. citizen suffering from employment discrimination. During work he was treated badly, called names such as a terrorist, and

embarrassed in front of his coworkers. Many legal work policies were broken. When this citizen complained he was initially demoted and over time he was eventually fired.” Moorad believed this case was significant because “We are more than 10 years past 9/11, but cases of hate crime have still not decreased.” When asked what rights these citizens were given when taken into custody by the government she said, “In cases where citizens are detained, they are not given the reason for detainment even after request for reason and there are also cases where they are not allowed to call their attorneys, family members, or anybody.” Renee also shared with me a personal story of a case in which a man at a high position in a corporate office (CEO or COO) was physically and verbally abused in front of many employees. He was threatened and his coworkers spread news that he was a terrorist. Similar to the other man she mentioned, after this man complained he was demoted and eventually fired. “The man went from working in a high-office position to living in a trailer with no restroom!” Both these attorneys gave perfect examples of people who have been wrongly accused due to racial discrimination and had to suffer major consequences. My personal research has further proved that racial discrimination exists today and it needs to be stopped.

### **Conclusion**

After the events of September 11, citizens of the United States were devastated. Some American citizens argued that Arabs or Muslims caused 9/11; they are the ones responsible for killing 3,000 U.S. citizens. However, can we blame all Arabs or Muslims just because of 19 extremists? Out of all the citizens, Arab and Muslim-Americans had the most fear because they were the victims of hate crime. They had been racially segregated due to skin color, dress, language, and religion. Arab and Muslim Americans have been victims of hate crime, media bias

and defamation, education and employment discrimination, and much more. Due to this segregation, I have concluded that Arab-American discrimination is not justified. As shown, Arab-American prejudice has existed for the last 11 years and will continue to exist in the future. The shooting in Wisconsin and Chicago are only a couple examples of how this discrimination continues today. Will this ever end? Can Arab-Americans ever be safe? Do they have the freedom to pray, to work, to go to school, or to do any other daily activities without being racially discriminated? My research has shown the answer is no. Every day the FBI monitors potential terrorists, who they define as Arab or Muslim American, by detaining, deporting, or sending Arab or Muslim American to hearings. Who can we hold responsible for the hate crimes in general that have occurred: the government, the president, or current United States citizens? The government attempted to help by introducing new discriminatory policies, but that backfired and instead increased racism and prejudice by the general public. I have answered some of these questions with my own personal research but others remain unanswered unless we take action to end Arab-American discrimination. As conveyed through various examples presented in my research, Arab-Americans are being discriminated against and little has been done to help prevent this. One can only hope that in the future we will live in a society where no one is racially discriminated. Until we take action, we have to accept the fact that we live in a country where hate crimes against Arab-Americans exist.

**Word Count: 3,559**

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