

**Institute for
Social Policy &
Understanding**

RESEARCH MAKING AN IMPACT

About the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU)

ISPU provides objective research and education about American Muslims to support well-informed dialogue and decision-making. Since 2002, ISPU has been at the forefront of discovering trends and opportunities that impact American Muslim communities. Our research aims to educate the general public and enable community change agents, the media, and policymakers to make evidence-based decisions. In addition to building in-house capacity, ISPU has assembled leading experts across multiple disciplines, building a solid reputation as a trusted source for information for and about American Muslims.

For more information, please visit: www.ISPU.org.

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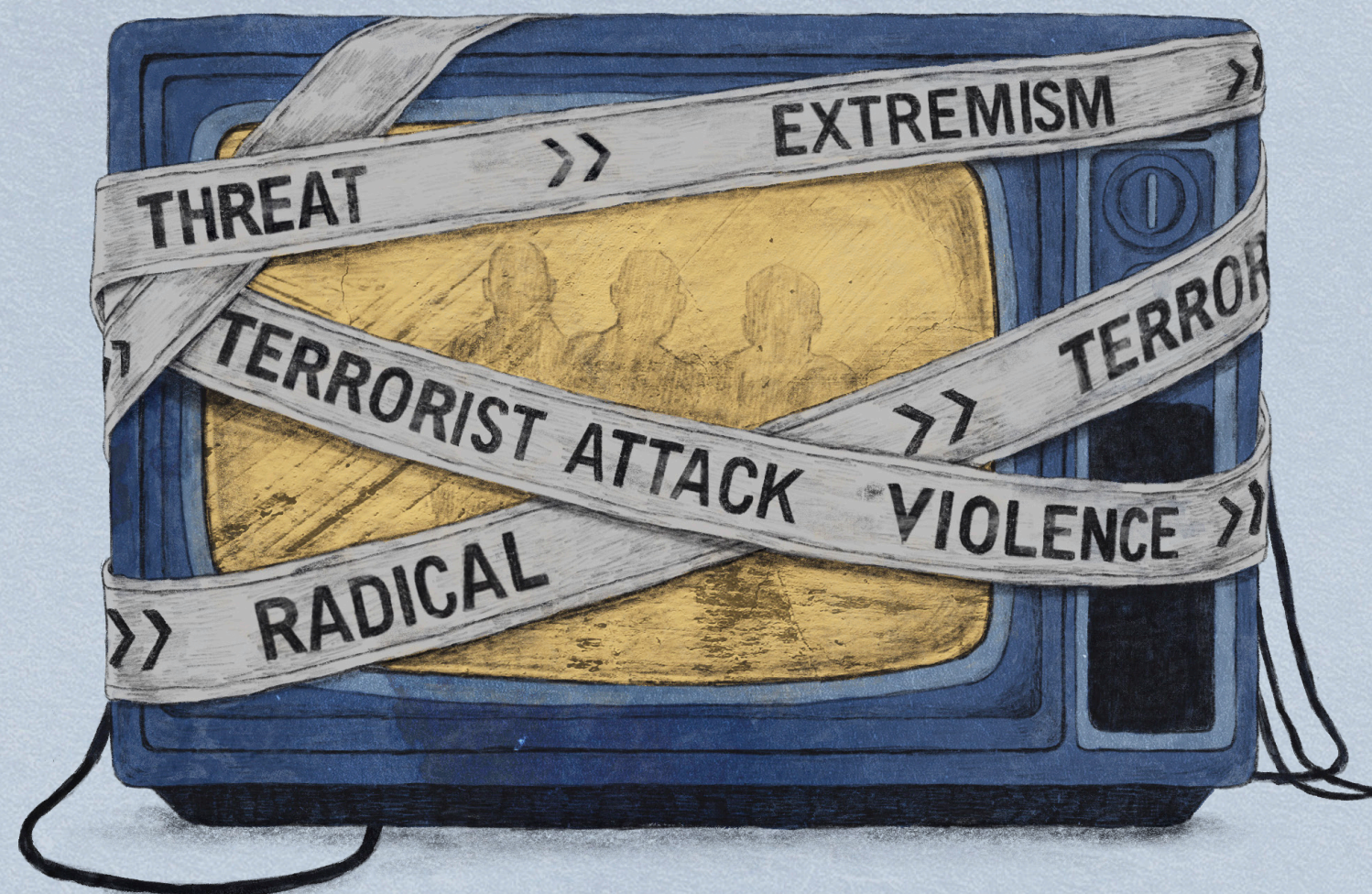
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Stereotypes on Screen:

THE EFFECTS OF MUSLIM PORTRAYALS IN ENTERTAINMENT
MEDIA ON ATTITUDES TOWARD DEMOCRACY AND POLICY

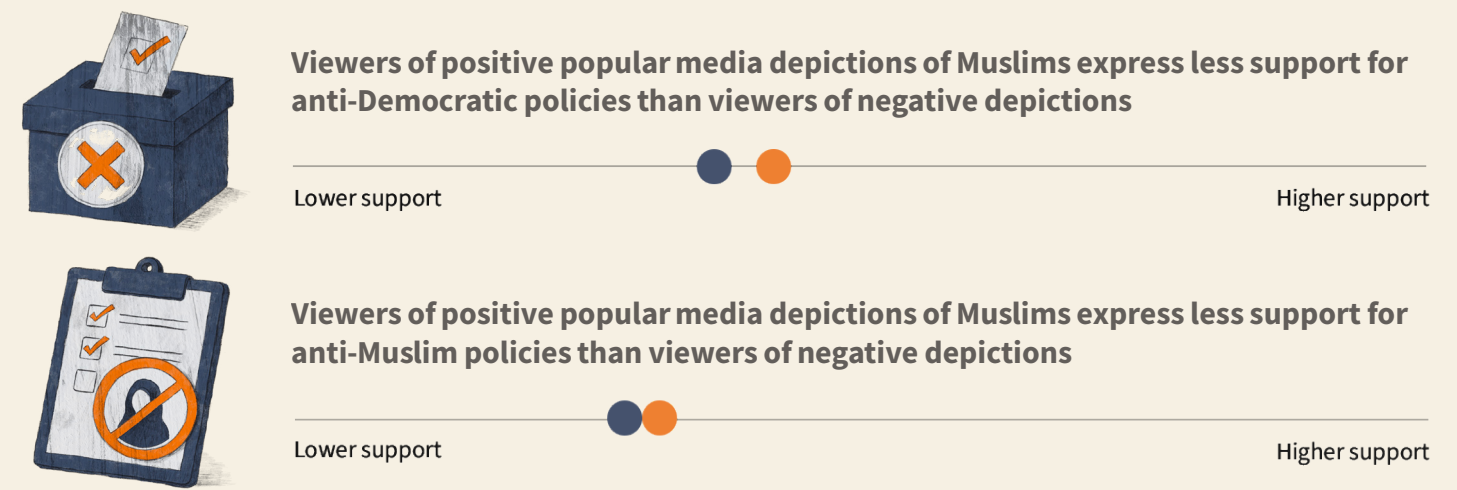


While biased news coverage of Muslims is known to increase prejudice and support for anti-Muslim policies, the effects of entertainment television remain underexplored. Muslims are often portrayed as villains in popular media, which may shape public attitudes and policy preferences. This study by the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding examines how positive and negative portrayals of Muslims in entertainment television influence perceptions of Muslims, intergroup attitudes, and support for undemocratic or anti-Muslim policies.

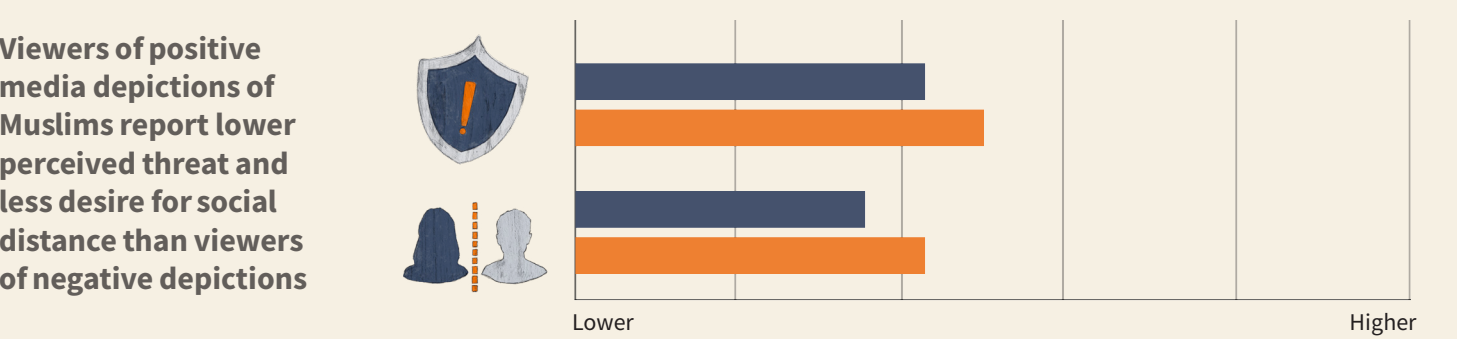
HOW MEDIA PORTRAYALS SHAPE ATTITUDES TOWARD MUSLIMS

Viewers exposed to positive portrayals of Muslims report greater warmth and identification, stronger support for inclusion, and lower perceptions of threat and social distance, while negative portrayals are associated with the opposite pattern. Even brief exposure is linked to meaningful differences in attitudes and policy preferences.

Support for Exclusionary and Undemocratic Policies (7-point Likert scale):

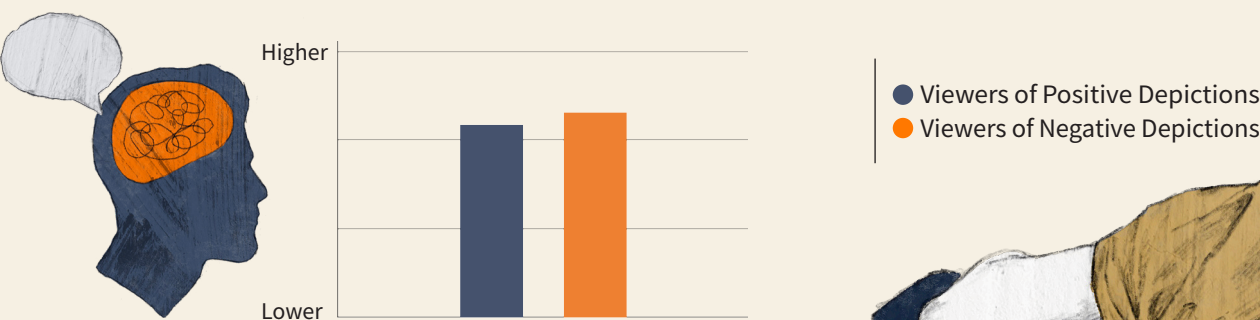


Perceived Threat and Desire for Social Distance (7-point Likert scale):



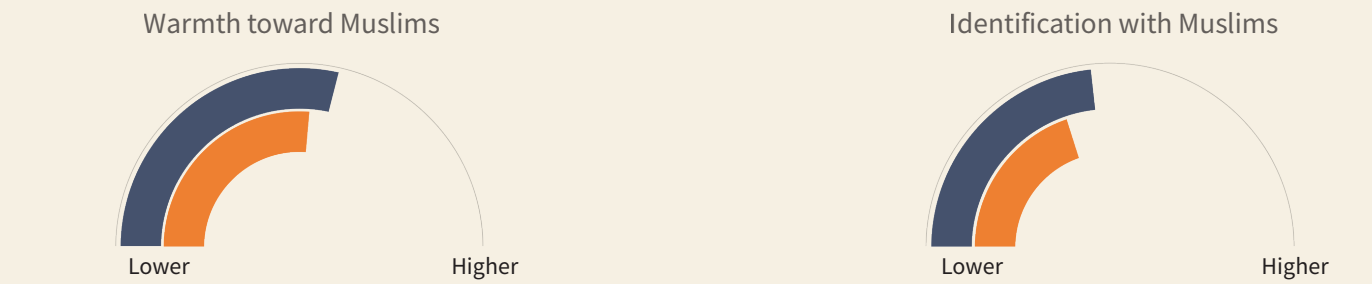
Intergroup Anxiety (5-point Likert scale):

Viewers of positive and negative depictions of Muslims report similar anxiety interacting with Muslims



Warmth and Identification (100-point slider scale):

Viewers of positive popular media depictions of Muslims express greater warmth and identification with Muslims than viewers of negative depictions.



Negative Stereotypes and Emotional Responses (7-point Likert scale):

Viewers of positive and negative depictions of Muslims report similar levels of negative stereotypes and emotional responses toward Muslims



General Social Values (7-point Likert scale):

Viewers of positive and negative depictions of Muslims report similar support for diversity in society, but viewers of positive depictions express greater support for the positive treatment of Muslims

