



Who Speaks For Islam?: What a Billion Muslims Really Think

By John L. Esposito, Dalia Mogahed

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Based on the largest study of its kind, this book is the first to present the fascinating findings of the Gallup Poll of the Muslim World. Coauthored by bestselling author and Georgetown University professor John L. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, Gallup's executive director of Muslim studies.

The horrific events of 9/11 dramatically intensified what many saw as an ongoing conflict between the U.S. and parts of the Muslim world. Extremism has grown exponentially as Muslims and non-Muslims alike continue to be victims of global terrorism. Terrorist attacks have occurred from Morocco to Indonesia and from Madrid to London, as U.S.-led wars rage in Iraq and Afghanistan. As of this writing, war and terrorism have already claimed more than 300,000 lives since 9/11; the vast majority have been civilians.

As we face savage actions in a world that seems ever more dangerous and out of control, we are confronted daily by analysis from terrorism experts and pundits who see the religion of Islam as responsible for global terrorism. At the same time, terrorist groups like al-Qaeda beam messages throughout the world that demonize the West as the enemy of Islam, responsible for all the ills of the Muslim world.

Amid the rhetoric of hate and growing violence, both anti-Americanism in the Muslim world and Islamophobia — discrimination against or hostility toward Islam or Muslims — have increased precipitously. In the aftermath of 9/11, President George W. Bush emphasized that America was waging war against global terrorism, not against Islam. However, the continued acts of a terrorist minority, coupled with statements by preachers of hate (Muslim and Christian) as well as anti-Muslim talk show hosts and political commentators have inflamed our emotions and distorted our views. The religion of Islam and the mainstream Muslim majority have been conflated with the beliefs and actions of an extremist minority. The result was reflected in a USA Today/Gallup poll, which found substantial minorities of Americans admitting to negative feelings or prejudice against Muslims and favoring heightened security measures with Muslims to help prevent terrorism. Nearly one-quarter of Americans, 22%, say they would not

want a Muslim as a neighbor; fewer than half believe U.S. Muslims are loyal to the United States; and 44% say Muslims are too extreme in their religious beliefs.

Are the growing violence and negative perceptions on all sides only a prelude to an inevitable all-out war between the West and 1.3 billion Muslims?

The vital missing piece among the many voices weighing in on this question is the actual views of Muslim publics. With all that is at stake for U.S. and Muslim societies, indeed for the future of the world, the time has come to democratize the debate.

Who Speaks for Islam? Listening to the Voices of a Billion Muslims is about this silenced majority. It is the product of a mammoth Gallup research study over the last six years. Gallup conducted tens of thousands of face-to-face interviews with residents of more than 35 predominantly Muslim nations. Gallup's sample represents urban and rural, young and old, educated and illiterate, women and men. In total, we surveyed a sample representing over 90% of the world's 1.3 billion Muslims, including Muslims in the West, making this the largest, most comprehensive study of contemporary Muslims ever.

The concept of this book is simple. After collecting vast amounts of data representing the views of the world's Muslims, we asked the questions everyone wants answers to: What is at the root of anti-Americanism in the Muslim world? Who are the extremists? Is democracy a desired construct among Muslims, and if so, what might it look like? What do Muslim women really want? With questions in hand, we let the empirical evidence — the voices of a billion Muslims, not individual "experts" or "extremists," dictate the answer.

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Editorial Review

From the Publisher

In the wake of the terrorist attacks on 9/11, U.S. public officials seemed to have no idea whether or not many Muslims supported the bombings. This troubled Gallup Chairman and CEO Jim Clifton, who felt that "no one in Washington had any idea what 1.3 billion Muslims were thinking, and yet we were working on intricate strategies that were going to change the world for all time." Clifton commissioned his company to undertake the enormous job.

The result is Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think, based on six years of research and more than 50,000 interviews representing 1.3 billion Muslims who reside in more than 35 nations that are predominantly Muslim or have sizable Muslim populations. Representing more than 90% of the world's Muslim community, it makes this poll the largest, most comprehensive study of its kind.

What the data reveal and the authors illuminate may surprise you:

- * Muslims and Americans are equally likely to reject attacks on civilians as morally unjustifiable.
- * Large majorities of Muslims would guarantee free speech if it were up to them to write a new constitution AND they say religious leaders should have no direct role in drafting that constitution.
- * Muslims around the world say that what they LEAST admire about the West is its perceived moral decay and breakdown of traditional values -- the same answers that Americans themselves give when asked this question.
- * When asked about their dreams for the future, Muslims say they want better jobs and security, not conflict and violence.
- * Muslims say the most important thing Westerners can do to improve relations with their societies is to change their negative views toward Muslims and respect Islam.

The research suggests that conflict between Muslims and the West is NOT inevitable and, in fact, is more about policy than principles. "However," caution Esposito and Mogahed, "until and unless decision makers listen directly to the people and gain an accurate understanding of this conflict, extremists on all sides will continue to gain ground."

Who Speaks for Islam? is an important book that challenges conventional wisdom and sheds greater light on what motivates Muslims worldwide. It is a must-read for anyone committed to creating peace and security in our lifetime.

From the Back Cover

"In these fraught days of heightened tension and increasing hostility, few books could be more timely."
--Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize winner

"As our world spirals out of control with greater violence and misunderstanding between the West and the Muslim world, Who Speaks for Islam? cuts through the conflicting rhetoric of politicians and pundits and presents the often-silenced voice of Muslims everywhere. I cannot imagine a more important or more badly needed intervention."

--Deepak Chopra, author of Peace is the Way

"The data presented in this book are not only arresting, but indispensable. Who Speaks for Islam? should be

required reading for policy makers, journalists, broadcasters, teachers, students, and scholars."

--Karen Armstrong, author of *A History of God*

"At once incisive and provocative, this book is brimming with valuable insights into what Muslims think about religion, democracy, women's rights, extremism, and Muslims' relations with the West. This is a must-read for pundits and policy makers, specialists and non-specialists, American or Muslim."

--Vali Nasr, author of *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts Within Islam Will Shape the Future*

"Who Speaks for Islam? teaches us about one of the most important issues of our time. The book contains many surprises about how Westerners and Muslims view one another."

--Jessica Stern, author of *Terror in the Name of God* and Academic Director of the Program on Terrorism and the Law at Harvard Law School

"This is an important book. Years after 9/11, politics and quick judgments continue to stand in the way of a clear-eyed view of the Muslim world. Not so for Esposito and Mogahed. They provide powerful evidence and compelling logic that shows Muslims around the world have many of the same hopes and dreams, and face many of the same issues and concerns, as other people do."

--Robert Pape, author of *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* and Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago

"Who Speaks for Islam? could not be more timely. It provides essential insights into the thinking and attitudes of a large part of the global Muslim population on critical issues such as democracy, theocracy, extremism, jihad, women's rights, and the prospects of cooperation or conflict between the West and the Muslim world."

--Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian, former assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs; founding director, James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University

About the Author

John L. Esposito, Ph.D., is a leading expert on the Muslim world. He is a university professor and a professor of religion and international affairs and of Islamic studies at Georgetown University and the founding director of Georgetown's Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding in the Walsh School of Foreign Service. He is also the past president of the Middle East Studies Association of North America and of the American Council for the Study of Islamic Societies and a consultant to governments and multinational corporations. He is editor in chief of the Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World and Oxford Islamic Studies Online. His more than 35 books include *What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam* and *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam*. He currently resides in Washington, D.C. with his wife, Jeanette P. Esposito, Ph.D.

Dalia Mogahed is a Senior Analyst and Executive Director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies. She leads the analysis of Gallup's unprecedented survey of more than one billion Muslims worldwide. Mogahed also directs the Muslim-West Facts Initiative (www.muslimwestfacts.com), through which Gallup, in collaboration with The Coexist Foundation, is disseminating the findings of the Gallup World Poll to key opinion leaders in the Muslim World and the West. She travels the globe engaging audiences on what Muslims around the world really think. Her analysis has appeared in a number of leading publications, including the *Economist*, the *Financial Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Foreign Policy Magazine*, *Harvard International Review*, the *Journal of Middle East Policy*, and many other academic and popular journals. She lives in Washington, D.C. with her husband Mohamed and two sons, Tariq and Jibreel.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Matthew Wallace:

This Who Speaks For Islam?: What a Billion Muslims Really Think book is not really ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you receive by reading this book is information inside this e-book incredible fresh, you will get information which is getting deeper an individual read a lot of information you will get. This particular Who Speaks For Islam?: What a Billion Muslims Really Think without we realize teach the one who examining it become critical in contemplating and analyzing. Don't possibly be worry Who Speaks For Islam?: What a Billion Muslims Really Think can bring if you are and not make your case space or bookshelves' turn into full because you can have it in the lovely laptop even mobile phone. This Who Speaks For Islam?: What a Billion Muslims Really Think having great arrangement in word as well as layout, so you will not truly feel uninterested in reading.

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