

# Post-9/11 Racial Profiling of Arabs and its Coverage by the Print Media

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## What is racial profiling?

Racial profiling is *any* use of race, religion, ethnicity, or national origin by law enforcement agents as a means of deciding who should be investigated, *except* where these characteristics are part of a specific suspect description.  
-“Wrong Then, Wrong Now”

At least 32 million (one out of nine) people in the United States report having been racially profiled.

-“Threat and Humiliation”

## The Argument for Racial Profiling

•“We make no apologies for finding every legal way possible to protect the American public from further terrorist attacks.”  
-U.S. Dept. of Justice

•“If we insist that the unparalleled personal freedoms we enjoyed prior to September 11 will never be unabridged, not one iota, then our ability to thwart future terrorist attacks will be severely compromised.”  
-Malkin

## Why Racial Profiling is Ineffective and Unfair

•Unconstitutional: violates the fourth amendment—“The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause...”

•Ineffective:

- “Of the thousands of men who were detained and questioned, not one has been publicly charged with terrorism.”
- Its lack of specificity wastes resources and ineffectively allocates personnel.

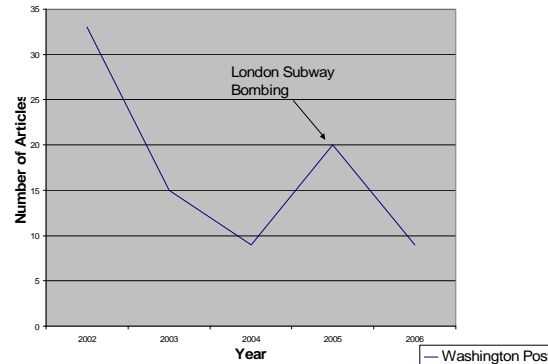
-“Sanctioned Bias: Racial Profiling Since 9/11”

•Lazy: “Racial profiling...is one of the most ineffective strategies, and I call it nothing less than lazy, sloppy police work. It’s basically saying...you don’t want to do your job, and don’t want to investigate, you just want to stop a lot of people and see if you can come up with some statistical number at the end of the evening”

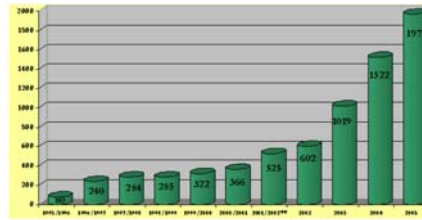
-Capt. Ron Davis, Oakland Police Dept.



Number of Articles mentioning “Arabs” or “Muslims” AND “Racial Profiling” each year beginning 2002 and ending 2006.



Number of Civil Rights Complaints to Center for American-Islamic Relations Each Year



CAIR  
2006 Civil Rights Report

## Experts Maintain that Racial Profiling is a Continuing Problem

“Racial profiling of citizens and visitors of Middle Eastern and South Asian descent, and others who appear to be from these areas or members of the Muslim and Sikh faiths, has substantially increased since September 11, 2001

-“Threat and Humiliation”, 2004 report by Amnesty International

“The truth is that Muslims have been US society’s latest scapegoats in the current environment of fear”

- Chip Pitts, Amnesty International USA Chairman

“With over 1,900 reports of civil rights violations against the American Muslim community in the last calendar year [2005], it is apparent that post-9/11 backlash against Muslims, Arabs and South Asians continues to be a societal problem which needs to be redressed accordingly”

-CAIR 2006 Executive Report

## Conclusion

Racial profiling is a continuing problem in today’s society, despite the drastic drop in news coverage. Print media is extremely near-sighted in order to maintain their profits and audience. However, they are neglecting their role as watchdogs by abandoning this significant issue.

**“In [the role of rhetorical amplifiers], journalists gain the attention of audiences and convey messages about political violence by providing the platform and amplification system by which this can be accomplished.”**

-Alali and Eke, authors of *Media Coverage of Terrorism: Methods of Diffusion*



## Moving Forward: The Next Step

27 states have no law explicitly prohibiting racial profiling.

-“Threat and Humiliation”

There is no national legislation banning the practice of racial profiling. In order to uphold the values of the constitution, it is imperative that the U.S. government construct and pass the End Racial Profiling Act.

The government should follow the recommendations set forth by both Amnesty International and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund. These recommendations include, but are not limited to:

- Making bans on racial profiling legally enforceable
- Increasing federal and state funds for law enforcement agencies to establish systems to end racial profiling
- Initiating and supporting public campaigns against racism

Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the media to report on the continuing existence of racial profiling against Arabs and Muslims. Creating public awareness of this issue plays a vital role in gaining support for any legislation that may be presented.