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Abstract

Many have attributed anti-American sentiment within Arab countries to a highly negative information environment propagated by transnational Arab satellite TV news channels such as *Al-Jazeera*. However, theoretical models and empirical evidence evaluating the linkages between media exposure and opinion about the United States remains scant. Drawing on theories of media effects, identity, and public opinion, this article develops a theoretical framework explicating how the influence of transnational Arab TV on opinion formation is contingent on competing political identities within the region. Employing 5 years of survey data collected across six Arab countries, we empirically test several propositions about the relationship between Arab TV exposure and public opinion about the United States generated by our theoretical framework. Our results demonstrate significant associations between transnational Arab TV exposure and anti-American sentiment, but also show these associations vary substantially by channel and political identification. The theoretical and policy implications of the study are discussed.

Keywords

television, news, identity, public opinion, anti-Americanism, Arab, Muslim, *Al-Jazeera*

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Al Jazeera has a pattern of playing propaganda over and over and over again. What they do when there's a bomb goes down they grab some children and some women and pretend the bomb hit the women and children.

Donald Rumsfeld, U.S. Secretary of Defense, 2003

We reflect what happens on the ground from the Arab perspective as much as say, *CNN* reflects the American perspective. We are certainly not for or against anybody.

Jihad Ballout, Communications Director of *Al-Jazeera*, 2004

After the events of Sept. 11, Afghanistan and Iraq, people want the truth . . . They don't want their news from the Pentagon or from *Al Jazeera*.

Sheik Walid al-Ibrahim, Owner of *Al-Arabiya*, 2005

Introduction

Since the September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States, the problem of anti-American sentiment, especially among Arab publics, has preoccupied many policy makers and scholars alike. Addressing this issue has become a major component of American foreign policy as demonstrated by the dramatic increase in American-sponsored broadcasting, public diplomacy, and outreach efforts to Arab audiences since 2001 (Djerejian, 2003; GAO, 2006; Nisbet & Shanahan, 2008). The underlying logic of these "solutions" conceptualizes anti-American sentiment as stemming from biased communication and misperception rather than as rational reactions to U.S. policy and actions (Nisbet & Shanahan, 2008). A dominant belief within this perspective is that transnational Arab TV channels like *Al-Jazeera* are the primary drivers of Arab public opinion and highly negative media coverage of the United States creates anti-American sentiment within the region. In other words, anti-American sentiment in the Middle East is simplistically characterized as a *powerful and uniform media effect*. However, to date, scant quantitative, empirical scholarship in the United States has directly addressed this belief that underlies much of U.S. foreign policy and public diplomacy efforts.

In order to deepen our understanding of the relationship between the evolving information environment in the Middle East and Arab public opinion, this study proposes a theoretical model of how transnational Arab TV influences opinion formation among Arab publics. In particular, our model pays special attention to the moderating role of identity and how it may influence the relationship between television exposure and opinion formation. We then apply our model to the question of how exposure to transnational Arab TV channels *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* is associated with public opinion about the United States. We empirically test our propositions by employing a comprehensive set of surveys annually collected across six countries between 2004 and 2009 and representing media use behaviors and opinions of nearly 20,000 Arab respondents. Our results indicate the effects of Arab

media exposure on opinion about the United States vary substantially by channel and are highly contingent on the salience of competing Arab nationalist, Islamic nationalist, or state-centric political identities. We conclude by discussing the theoretical implications for understanding opinion dynamics involving media and political identity in Arab countries, as well as policy implications for American foreign policy and public diplomacy in the region.

Theoretical Framework

How may exposure to transnational Arab TV channels like *Al-Jazeera* or *Al-Arabiya* influence opinion formation within Arab audiences? When forming opinions and making evaluations about political issues and topics, audiences are usually conceptualized as “cognitive misers,” employing information shortcuts as a means to process new information, form attitudes, and reach decisions (Downs, 1957; Popkin, 1991). Most individuals, regardless of their location in the world, rely on a combination of their preexisting views and the information most readily available to them in the news media as the mutable material from which to mold their opinions. Moreover, when evaluating entities, issues, or topics that are especially socially or physically distant (like the United States is to Arab audiences), individuals are heavily dependent on the media for information or cues on which to form opinions or make decisions, and thus the media may play a disproportionate influence on public opinion (Ball-Rokeach, 1985; Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976; Graber, 1980; McLeod, Becker, & Byrnes, 1974).

Considering these premises and employing the “memory-based” or accessibility model of opinion formation, we may understand that one of the ways news media may shape public opinion is by making certain considerations more salient, and therefore more accessible, when an individual expresses an opinion or makes a judgment (Hastie & Park, 1986; Iyengar, 1990; Moy, Scheufele, Eveland, & McLeod 2001; Scheufele, 2000; Zaller, 1992). The memory-based model assumes that (a) some pieces of information are more accessible in a person’s mind than others; (b) that accessibility is mostly a function of “how much” or “how recently” a person has been exposed to these certain considerations; and (c) public opinion and/or evaluations are an outcome of the relative accessibility and prevalence of competing considerations (Kim, Scheufele, & Shanahan, 2002). Thus, the prevalence and balance of positive, neutral, and negative considerations embedded in media coverage about an issue or topic will influence whether positive or negative considerations are more accessible when individuals are asked to make judgments or evaluations about actors and/or policies, such as the United States and its foreign policy.

However, over 50 years ago, communication scholars realized that media effects are rarely the sole determinant of opinion, and they do not influence individuals in a uniform manner (McQuail, 2000). As McLeod and his colleagues (1989) note, opinion formation does not occur in social isolation and is not solely due to individual cognitive processes, but rather is a synthesis of communication processes and an individual’s predispositions. Thus, preexisting interpretative schemas, for example, may act as “perceptual screens” (Goidel, Shields, & Peffley, 1997) that influence the accessibility of a subset of considerations or attributes in memory over others when forming opinions or making judgments.

These interpretative schemas may interact with media content by either directing selective attention toward some considerations over others or “resisting” other considerations that do not resonate (Zaller, 1992). In other words, within the memory-based model of opinion formation, interpretive schemas may moderate the association between media use and the accessibility of some considerations, either amplifying or dampening media’s effect on opinion formation.

The *political identity* of Arab audiences is an interpretive schema with great potential to directly shape public opinion and moderate the effects of Arab TV news exposure on opinion formation. Political identities may be best understood as forms of collective social identities situated in a political context, and are “the social categories, attributes, or components of the self-concept that are shared with others and therefore define individuals as being similar to others” which are a result of the “interplay between cognitive processes and social or cultural influences” (Monroe, Hankin, & Van Vechten, 2000, p. 421; see also Simon & Klanderfans, 2001). In a sense, political identities may be best viewed as forms of socially constructed schemas that organize information about our political location, status, and relationships and make some aspects of our collective lifeworld—race, gender, language, religion, nationality, class, and so on—more politically applicable than others (Howard, 2000; Morgan & Schwalbe, 1990). When social identities (e.g., based on gender, race, religion, and so on) become the bases for political mobilization and organization, they become forms of political identity that shape political evaluations and judgments (Brewer, 2001; Huddy, 2001, 2003; Simon & Klanderfans, 2001).

Simply put, all political identities are a form of social identity, but not all social identities are political identities that define one’s political orientations. For example, although there are clearly broad aspects of feminine, Christian, and African American social identities, *feminism* is a political identity centered on gender (Huddy 1997, 1998), *Christian nationalism* is a political identity centered on religion (McDaniel, Nooruddin, & Shortle, 2010), and *African American nationalism* is a political identity centered on race (Van De Burg, 1997). In other words, feminism, Christian nationalism, and African American nationalism are politicized forms of these broader social identities. In terms of the Middle Eastern identities, extensive scholarship from a range of sources have examined how cultural (Arab nationalism) and religious identities (Islamic nationalism) has been politicized and employed for mass political mobilization and to influence public opinion in competition with state-centric (eg., Egyptian, Moroccan, Saudi Arabian, and so on) political identification (see, for example, Dawn, 1988; Nisbet & Myers, 2010; Lynch, 2006a; Moaddel, 2002; Sadowski, 2006; Telhami, 2002; Telhami & Barnett, 2002; Tessler & Nachtwey, 1998).

Political identity schemas not only organize information about who we are, they also organize information about who we are not, integrating the definitions of both *the self and the other*. The “oppositional” nature of identity schemas means that identity must be defined in relation, and often in opposition, to some other identity or “imagined other” (Bowen, 2006). Identity schemas differentiate and define the self and other through *identity markers*. Identity markers may be any “characteristics associated with an individual that they might choose to present to others” to support an identity claim, or alternatively they may be the “characteristics that people look to in others when they seek to attribute” an identity to them

(Kiely, Bechhofer, Stewart, & McCrone, 2001, p. 35). These identity markers are woven into identity schema and provide the interpretive cues that include not only considerations about the self, but also (negative) considerations that differentiate the “self” from an “imagined other” (defined in terms of ethnicity, religion, nationality, and so on).

In this sense, the negative considerations about imagined others may become an identity marker that “serves as an alter image of one’s own country or tradition, and thus retains a diacritic particularism” (Bowen, 2006, p. 228). Once these negative cues are woven into political identities, then how individuals view themselves, how they publicly present themselves to others in their society or community, and how they recognize others who share their identity is at least partially defined in opposition to that imagined other, in whatever manner that “other” may be defined in terms of nationality, ethnicity, religion, culture, and so on. As a consequence, the salience or accessibility of a particular political identity may increase the accessibility of negative considerations about the “imagined other” against which the identity is defined, and thus influence the valence of public opinion toward this “imagined other.” Thus, within the context of our explicated theoretical framework, in order to evaluate how Arab media influence public opinion we need not only to understand the nature of the political information environment, but also how prevalent political identity schemas in the region may interact with media use to influence opinion formation.

Arab TV News and Public Opinion About the United States

Turning first to understanding the nature of the political information environment, the combination of political liberalization and diffusion of satellite TV and Internet technology in the Middle East during the late 1990s has led to a relatively open, transnational, and electronic communicative space that some scholars herald as a “new” Arab Public Sphere (Ayish, 2002, 2008; Eickelman & Anderson, 1999; Hafez, 2001; Lynch, 2006a; Rugh, 2004). Previous to the emergence of this transnational public sphere, most mass communication in Arab countries was focused on national news and characterized by low levels of press freedom with most mass media tightly controlled either directly or indirectly by the national governments (Ayish, 2002, 2008; Rugh, 2004). In contrast, transnational Arab TV news focuses primarily on issues of foreign policy and international politics—and the role of transnational or religious identities within these arenas (Fandy, 2007; Lynch, 2006a). For example, a recent research report by Media Tenor analyzing Arab television news content found that nearly half of all reporting on the two most popular Arab transnational TV channels, *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya*, focused on international politics (Media Tenor, 2006a).

Lynch (2006a) credits the private satellite television network *Al-Jazeera*, founded by the emir of Qatar in 1996, as the primary transformative force behind the changes in the Middle Eastern political information environment. From the beginning, *Al-Jazeera* had several content characteristics that differentiated it from other government-controlled national TV stations in the Middle East (Ayish, 2002, 2008; Lynch, 2006a; Miles, 2005; Rugh, 2004). For example, *Al-Jazeera* has a high degree of sensationalism and technically alluring formats compared to traditional Arab news. Sensationalism is embodied in *Al-Jazeera*’s editorial choices in terms of focus on victims and images that highlight the consequences

for Arabs and Muslims of Israeli and American actions in Palestine, Afghanistan, and Iraq (Ayish, 2002, 2008; Lynch, 2006a). Second, its news values often deviate from the “Western notion of objectivity” in that *Al-Jazeera* explicitly attempts to present information from an Arab or Muslim perspective that challenges what the news organization views as a dominant Western perspective embodied in news broadcasts from other international news sources such as *CNN International* or the *BBC* (Ayish, 2002, 2008; Lynch, 2006a; Zayani, 2005).

The rise and success of *Al-Jazeera* as the dominant information channel for news, especially about regional and international topics, spawned several private and public competitors, with the Saudi-sponsored *Al-Arabiya* launched in 2003 as the most popular. Saudi Arabia, due to its level of economic development, has long played a major role in shaping the media environment within the Arab world (Boyd, 2001). Over time, Saudi Arabia has moved from outright government ownership of media outlets to using complex financial networks of private ownership to influence media outlets and content (Boyd, 2001; Lynch, 2006a; Rugh, 2004). However, the primary goal of this form of media ownership remains to promote Saudi national and regional interests even though these stations are promoted as “regional” or “Pan-Arab” rather than Saudi, information sources (Boyd, 2001; Lynch, 2006a).

Al-Arabiya attempts to “offer a more moderate (and, of course, more deferential to Saudi sensitivities) alternative to *Al-Jazeera*” (Lynch, 2006a, p. 43). As *Al-Arabiya*’s first managing director was quoted as stating, “we are not going to make problems for Arab countries . . . We’ll stick with the truth, but there’s no sensationalism” (Feuilherade, 2003). This task is accomplished in a variety of ways: using less sensationalist video footage, appointing pro-American and pro-Saudi editorial staff, playing down regional or transnational issues, covering Iraq from a more pro-American perspective, and featuring more official Arab governmental or American sources on its talk and commentary shows rather than independent or critical sources (Lynch, 2006a). For example, former President Bush favored *Al-Arabiya* with multiple interviews and addresses during his tenure, more than any other Arab television station, including the United States’ own *Al-Hurra* network. Likewise, rather than select the most widely watched Arab TV network *Al-Jazeera*, or the U.S.-sponsored Arab TV network *Al-Hurra*, President Obama gave his first postinaugural interview on *Al-Arabiya* in January 2009 instead.

Linking Arab TV to Anti-American Sentiment

Anti-American sentiment among Arab publics existed prior to the rise of the new Arab Public Sphere, the September 11th attacks, and subsequent United States’s invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. Some scholars have argued that anti-Americanism may be viewed best a cyclical phenomenon that rises and falls over time based on the political, economic, or informational context (Isernia, 2006; Keohane & Katzenstein, 2006). Other scholars have pointed to recent trends in media globalization over the last decade, with the rise of transnational TV channels like *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* as prime examples, as creating a vivid, emotional informational context in which public engagement with international affairs is enhanced, Western information sources are displaced by local and regional sources, and consequently anti-Americanism may be heightened among

foreign publics (Alozie, 2004; Cho et al., 2003; Kohut & Stokes, 2006; Nossek, 2007; Pintak, 2006; Seib, 2005).

The attribution of heightened anti-American sentiment among Arab publics over the last 10 years due to structural changes in the regional information environment have been found to have some empirical merit, though key differences have emerged between *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya*. For example, Aday, Livingston, and Hebert (2005) conducted a content analysis comparing U.S. cable and broadcast news and *Al-Jazeera* coverage of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. They concluded that *Al-Jazeera* had a higher percentage of critical reporting than the other networks, had a strong focus on civilian casualties in comparison to other media outlets, and “carried an antiwar, or even anti-American, tone” (Aday et al., 2005, p. 17).

Employing data from Media Tenor collected in late 2005, Nisbet and Shanahan (2008) also quantitatively analyzed 3 months of *Al-Jazeera* news coverage of the United States and compared it to *Al-Arabiya* coverage from the same time period. They found the prevalence of negative considerations about the United States and its representatives on *Al-Jazeera* were significantly higher than its counterpart *Al-Arabiya* (31.8% vs. 23.9% of total coverage, respectively). Furthermore, *Al-Jazeera* was substantially more negative toward the social and cultural aspects of the United States and tended to differentiate less between the United States as whole and its representatives (i.e., President Bush, U.S. military) compared to *Al-Arabiya* (Nisbet & Shanahan, 2008).

Analyzing several years of Arab transnational TV through 2006, Lynch (2006b) found that “negative images of the United States clearly predominated over positive images” on Arab transnational TV stations like *Al-Jazeera* with the highest levels of negativity in 2002 and 2003 (p. 218). Most of the expressed anti-American sentiment focused around American power, arrogance, hypocrisy, and irrational hostility toward Arabs and Muslims (Lynch, 2006b). In addition, Lynch (2006a, 2006b) argued that anti-American sentiment expressed on transnational Arab TV is encapsulated in Arab and Islamic nationalist narratives that present news and information from these identity perspectives, which is also consistent with findings from other scholars (Miles, 2005; Zayani, 2005). Furthermore, Lynch (2006a) argued that this negativity about the United States has extended beyond *Al-Jazeera* to other Arab TV channels like *Al-Arabiya*.

Survey research has also found support for the idea that exposure to transnational Arab TV news may increase anti-American sentiment. Nisbet, Nisbet, Scheufele, & Shanahan (2004) employed the 2002 Gallup Poll of Islamic countries to examine the association of Arab national (domestic) TV, Pan-Arab satellite TV, and Western TV news use with negative perceptions of the United States. They found that across all TV news sources, media use was associated with an increase in negative perceptions of the United States. However, they also found that transnational TV news use (such as *Al-Jazeera*) was associated with an amplification of anti-American sentiment compared to other news sources. In other words, no matter the information source, Arab audiences had higher levels of anti-American sentiment the more they watched television news about the United States. However, this anti-American sentiment was more prevalent for audience members who watched transnational Arab TV compared to those who watched other TV channels. A second analysis by Nisbet and Shanahan (2008) of cross-national survey data collected in 2005 by Zogby International

and the University of Maryland also found evidence that exposure to *Al-Jazeera* was associated with greater anti-American sentiment. However, consistent with the content data they analyzed, their analysis also showed exposure to *Al-Arabiya* was associated with *reduced* anti-American sentiment.

Thus, collectively, the empirical content and survey evidence indicates reliance on transnational Arab TV news for information may influence opinion formation about the United States among Arab audiences, but the valence of the relationship may differ by channel. We may expect Arab audiences who rely on *Al-Jazeera* to have a more negative opinion of the United States, while audiences who rely on *Al-Arabiya* may have a more positive, or at least a less negative, opinion of the United States. However, as noted in our theoretical framework, media effects on opinion formation are often contingent on prior cognitions like political identity. Thus, the question arises, what are the prevalent political identity schemas among Arab audiences that are most likely to moderate the influence of Arab TV exposure on public opinion about the United States?

Political Identity in the Middle East

How does political identity among Arab audiences relate to anti-American sentiment and the moderation of media effects? Historically, the Middle East has had three competing political identities: Arab nationalism, Islamic nationalism, and nationalist-state identity (i.e., Egyptian, Saudi Arabian, and so on); this competition for political identity has been well documented across a variety of texts (see, for example, Anderson, 1986; Chouerie, 2000; Dawisha, 2003; Dawn, 1988; Nisbet & Myers, 2010; Razi, 1990; Telhami & Barnett, 2002). Simply put, in the second half of the 20th century, the historical and cultural legacies of the Ottoman Empire and Western colonialism left “a still unresolved contest among three principal sources of political identity and political loyalty: Islam, Arabism, and the local state” (Anderson, 1986, p. 65). In fact, Muslim and Arab nationalism has become increasingly salient for Arab publics over the last few years, partially driven by changes in the media and information environment (Nisbet & Myers, 2010). According to a recent 2008 cross-national survey across six Arab states, when asked what their most important identity was, 35% cited a national identity, 32% cited a Muslim identity, and 32% cited an Arab identity (Telhami, 2009).

Though some scholars have argued that the growing salience of an Islamic nationalist political identity has led to a “clash of civilizations” between the United States and the Islamic World (Huntington, 1995), there have been very few studies empirically testing the relationship between Arab nationalist, Islamic nationalist, or state-centric political identification and opinion about the United States. However, there is some indirect survey evidence that Islamic nationalist political identity may play a role in shaping opinion toward the United States, partially due to the perception that the United States threatens Islam itself. For instance, a series of U.S. State Department surveys conducted across 10 Muslim-majority countries in 2003 found that the primary driver of anti-American sentiment was the belief that the United States was hostile toward Islam in general (U. S. Government Accounting Office

[U. S. GAO], 2006). This belief was a stronger predictor of anti-American sentiment than a respondent's belief in how the U.S. treated their own country (GAO, 2006).

This perception of an American threat to the Islamic World was also evident in a 2007 survey conducted in four Muslim-majority countries by the University of Maryland. The survey found that large majorities of Muslims in each country (ranging from 73% to 92%) believed a primary goal of the United States was to weaken and divide the Muslim world (Kull, 2007a). Testifying before Congress, Dr. Steven Kull, director of the Program on International Policy Attitudes at the University of Maryland, concluded from these poll trends and others that there is

a new feeling about the US that has emerged in the wake of 9-11. This is not so much an intensification of negative feelings toward the US as much as a new perception of American intentions. There now seems to be a perception that the US has entered into a war against Islam itself. (Kull, 2007b)

Beyond directly influencing opinion about the United States, political identification may also influence public opinion by acting as an aforementioned "perceptual screen" that influences either the accessibility or applicability of considerations about the United States found in Arab TV news content. Previous research has pointed to political identities (e.g., Brewer, 2001; Gamson, 1992; Huddy, 2001, 2003; Walsh, 2004) as cognitive resources that audiences use to make sense of public affairs issues in conjunction with other resources like media cues, and may influence how they process information (Goidel et al., 1997; Huddy, 2001, 2003; Walsh, 2004; Zaller, 1992). This potential moderation of media content is most likely to occur when political identity is most salient, for example, when media content portrays an issue in terms of identity and group conflict, such as U.S. involvement in Iraq, Afghanistan, or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Exposure to such content activates processes of social categorization, increases internal cohesion, and promotes the formation of in-group/out-group judgments (Cosler, 1956; Huddy, 2003; Price, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The effect of conflict-oriented media exposure, therefore, is contingent upon audiences' group membership or attachment relative to the groups portrayed in conflict and the valence/framing of the media content. Thus, we may conclude that in the case of transnational Arab TV news channels like *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya*, which present information encapsulated in Arab and Islamic nationalist narratives or frames, *the salient political identity of audiences* will be an important factor in how audiences interpret and process their news coverage of the United States, its actions, and policies.

Hypotheses

Combining our explicated theoretical framework with the discussion of prior scholarship on media content, political identity, public opinion in the Middle East, we may formulate some specific hypotheses and research questions regarding the relationships between transnational Arab media use, political identity, and public opinion about the United States. First,

we are interested in how exposure to *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* may be associated with anti-American sentiment. The evidence presented above suggests that *Al-Jazeera* may be associated with increased anti-American sentiment. However, in comparison to *Al-Jazeera* and other Arab TV channels, previous research suggests *Al-Arabiya* may have less negative coverage of the United States (but not necessarily more favorable), and thus reliance on *Al-Arabiya* may consequently be associated with less unfavorable opinions of the United States. Thus we hypothesize as follows:

Hypothesis 1a: Increased exposure to *Al-Jazeera* will increase the probability of holding an unfavorable opinion of the United States.

Hypothesis 1b: Increased exposure to *Al-Arabiya* will decrease the probability of holding an unfavorable opinion of the United States.

Also based on the theoretical framework outlined above, we posit that political identity may moderate the relationship between media exposure and opinion formation.

Therefore we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 2: Political identity (Arab nationalism, Islamic nationalism, state-centric nationalism) will moderate the relationship between transnational Arab TV (*Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya*) exposure and the probability of holding an unfavorable opinion of the United States.

Furthermore, though previous research on which to base formal hypotheses is scant, we are curious about how political identification is directly associated with opinion about the United States. Therefore we pose the following research question:

Research Question 1: How is political identification (i.e., Arab nationalism, Islamic nationalism, state-centric nationalism) associated with the probability of holding an unfavorable opinion of the United States?

Last, the foreign relations context in the Middle East is highly dynamic with evolving conditions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and furthermore, the United States has made increasing efforts to engage the Arab media and public since 2001. Unfortunately, most previous empirical research examining the relationship between Arab media use and public opinion about the United States has relied on single, cross-sectional surveys that tap opinion at a single point in time (eg., Nisbet et al., 2004; Nisbet & Shanahan, 2008). We argue that the nature of the relationship between media exposure and anti-American sentiment may be dependent on the nature of an evolving political information environment in the Middle East (which may be reasonably presumed to vary by year), thus we take advantage of possessing 5 years of survey data and pose a research question asking how stable the relationships between media exposure and anti-American sentiment are over time.

Research Question 2: Does the relationship between transnational Arab TV exposure and the probability of holding an unfavorable opinion of the United States vary over time?

Method

Data Collection

We evaluated our hypotheses/research questions by employing data collected between 2004 and 2009 by Zogby International and Dr. Shibley Telhami at the University of Maryland and acquired by the authors for secondary analysis. The surveys were conducted across six Arab countries: Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Lebanon, and the United Arab Emirates, with data collection taking place approximately a year apart in October of 2004, 2005, 2006, and February of 2008 and 2009. The combined data set contains a total of 19,036 interview responses. The advantage of employing survey data collected across multiple years is that we may fully evaluate the stability and validity of the relationships we explicate over time rather than simply rely on one point in time. Probability household sampling of selected urban areas was employed within each country and weighted to produce representative samples.¹ Interviews were conducted face-to-face by local interviewers. The full descriptive results of the surveys are available online at http://www.sadat.umd.edu/new_surveys/surveys.htm

Data Coding

The survey data was pooled across both years and countries, and therefore we employed a secondary weight that accounted for the population distribution between the six countries for each year. Nominal dummy variables (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon, and Morocco were included with the U.A.E comprising the reference group) corresponding to each country were coded as controls for any country-level variance associated with individual-level variables. Likewise, nominal dummy variables were created (2005, 2006, 2008, 2009 were included with 2004 comprising the reference group) corresponding to each survey year were also controlled for to account for variance in anti-American sentiment across survey years. Due to the small number of contextual units (six for country and five for time), we decided that a full multilevel (mixed) model was not appropriate.

Four sets of variables were included in the data analyses: (a) demographic controls, (b) transnational Arab media use, and (c) political identity, with (d) opinion about the United States as the outcome. Demographic controls included in the analyses were *age*, *gender*, *educational attainment*, and *Muslim religious affiliation*.² Measures of transnational media use included both *preference for* and *exposure to Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya TV channels*.³ Measures were constructed that assessed the respondents' most salient political identity as *state-centric nationalism*, *Islamic nationalism*, or *Arab nationalism*.⁴ Opinion of the United States was assessed by a single indicator of whether the respondent

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Variables in Analysis

Variable	M	SD
Age	34.8	12.3
Education	3.5	1.8
<i>Al-Jazeera</i> choice	1.2	.90
<i>Al-Arabiya</i> choice	0.33	0.60
<i>Al-Jazeera</i> exposure	2.7	1.2
<i>Al-Arabiya</i> exposure	2.0	1.2
Opinion of United States	3.4	0.80

had a *favorable or unfavorable opinion of the United States* (with unfavorable opinions coded high).⁵ Table 1 presents the means the standard deviations for these variables.

Results

Predicting Anti-American sentiment

As anti-American sentiment, the outcome of interest, was nonnormally distributed, models were fit using a probit-link function for the regression (see Long, 1997). First, a model was estimated including all predictors, but not allowing the effects of exposure to *Al-Jazeera* or *Al-Arabiya* to vary by political identification or by year (see Table 2, Model 1). Results suggest that being Muslim, relatively older, and less educated were all associated with expressing more anti-American sentiment. Furthermore, preferring to watch *Al-Jazeera* was associated with increased anti-American sentiment, while increased exposure to *Al-Jazeera* was associated with less anti-American sentiment (neither preference for *Al-Arabiya*, nor increased exposure were associated with anti-American sentiment). Those whose primary political identification was Islamic nationalism were more anti-American than those whose political identification was mixed, while those whose primary identification was Arab nationalism did not differ from mixed identifiers, and those individuals whose identification was state-centric nationalism were less anti-American than these mixed identifiers. 2004 was the year that individuals surveyed expressed the highest level of anti-American sentiment followed by 2008, 2006, 2005, and 2009. The reason for this trend is outside the scope of this study, but we speculate that anti-American sentiment may have been highest in 2004 compared to later periods due to the 2003 Iraq invasion and onset of Iraqi sectarian violence involving the United States during 2004.

Next, a model was estimated that tested whether the effects of exposure to *Al-Jazeera* or *Al-Arabiya* depended on ones' political identification (see Table 2, Model 2). Including these interactions (of exposure to each of these media channels with dummy coded identity variables) as a block significantly reduced the unexplained variance, indicating evidence that the effects of exposure to these media outlets did vary by identity ($\Delta\chi^2(6) = 28.63, p < .001$, see Table 2, Model 2). Among those with a mixed political identity, exposure to *Al-Jazeera* decreased anti-American sentiment ($b_{\text{Mixed}} = -.035, p < .001$); similarly, among those who politically identified as a state-centric nationalist or as Islamic nationalist,

Table 2. Probit Regressions Estimating Anti-American Sentiment

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Education	-.011*	-.011*	-.005
Age	.004***	.004***	.004**
Gender	.028	.031	.032
Muslim religion	.680***	.685***	.686***
<i>Al-Jazeera</i> choice	.095***	.097***	.098***
<i>Al-Arabiya</i> choice	-.018	-.019	-.011
<i>Al-Jazeera</i> exposure	-.045***	-.035**	-.019
<i>Al-Arabiya</i> exposure	.019	.016	.057
Identity ^a			
Muslim	.379***	.385***	.431***
Arab	.024	-.087	-.075
National	-.084***	.023	.039
Year ^b			
2009	-.485***	-.486***	-.478***
2008	-.134***	-.133***	.343***
2006	-.153***	-.152***	-.146+
2005	-.276***	-.279***	-.090
<i>Al-Jazeera</i> by ID interactions			
<i>Al-Jazeera</i> × Muslim ID		-.020	-.019
<i>Al-Jazeera</i> × Arab ID		.093**	.093**
<i>Al-Jazeera</i> × National ID		-.059**	-.067***
<i>Al-Arabiya</i> by ID interactions			
<i>Al-Arabiya</i> × Muslim ID		.023	.004
<i>Al-Arabiya</i> × Arab ID		-.070*	-.068*
<i>Al-Arabiya</i> × National ID		.025	.025
<i>Al-Jazeera</i> by Year interactions			
<i>Al-Jazeera</i> × 2009			.047
<i>Al-Jazeera</i> × 2008			-.121***
<i>Al-Jazeera</i> × 2006			-.062
<i>Al-Jazeera</i> × 2005			.052
<i>Al-Arabiya</i> by Year interactions			
<i>Al-Arabiya</i> × 2009			-.066*
<i>Al-Arabiya</i> × 2008			-.073*
<i>Al-Arabiya</i> × 2006			.081*
<i>Al-Arabiya</i> × 2005			-.162***
Threshold 1	-0.656***	-0.623***	-0.481**
Threshold 2	0.130	0.163	0.310**
Threshold 3	0.959***	0.994***	1.146***
Nagelkerke R ²	.098	.100	.109

a. Reference identity is Mixed Identity.

b. Reference year is 2004.

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Table 3. Specific Effects of *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* viewing on Anti-American sentiment by Year and Political Identification

	<i>Al-Jazeera</i>	<i>Al-Arabiya</i>
2004		
Mixed	-0.019	0.057
Muslim	-0.038	0.061
Arab	0.074	-0.011
National	-0.085**	0.082**
2005		
Mixed	0.033	-0.105***
Muslim	0.014	-0.101***
Arab	0.126***	-0.173***
National	-0.034	-0.080***
2006		
Mixed	-0.080***	0.138***
Muslim	-0.100***	0.142***
Arab	0.013	0.070
National	-0.147***	0.163***
2008		
Mixed	-0.140***	-0.016
Muslim	-0.159***	-0.012
Arab	-0.047	-0.084*
National	-0.207***	0.009
2009		
Mixed	0.029	-0.009
Muslim	0.009	-0.005
Arab	0.122***	-0.077*
National	-0.038+	0.016

Note: Chart entries are unstandardized beta coefficients in a probit regression estimating anti-American sentiment. Unfavorable opinions toward the United States are coded high.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

exposure decreased anti-American sentiment ($b_{\text{National}} = -.094, p < .001$; $b_{\text{Muslim}} = -.056, p < .05$). However, among Arab nationalists, exposure to *Al-Jazeera* increased anti-American sentiment ($b_{\text{Arab}} = .058, p < .05$). Exposure to *Al-Arabiya* was unassociated with anti-American sentiment among those who identify politically as Islamic nationalists, Arab nationalists, or a Mixed identity ($b_{\text{Muslim}} = .039, p = \text{ns}$; $b_{\text{Arab}} = -.054, p = \text{ns}$; $b_{\text{Mixed}} = .016, p = \text{ns}$). Among state-centric nationalists, exposure to *Al-Arabiya* was associated with an increase in anti-American sentiment, ($b = .041, p < .05$). In sum, for both *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya*, the effect of exposure to these transnational TV stations was dependent upon an individual's political identification.

Next, it was tested whether the effects of exposure to these media outlets on anti-American sentiment varied by year. Including these interactions as a block significantly reduced the unexplained variance, indicating evidence that the effects of exposure to these media

outlets on anti-American sentiment did vary by year ($\Delta\chi^2(8) = 143.18, p < .001$, see Table 2, Model 3). The specific effects of *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* on anti-American sentiment are shown in Table 3, depicting how they vary by political identity and by year. The magnitude and direction of the effects of these channels is conditioned on both the time when the effect is measured and the political identity of the viewer.

However, across all years, a pattern emerged when examining how political identity and exposure to these media outlets interact (see Figures 1 and 2). Across all years, and both channels, the group that showed the most movement was Arab nationalists. Considering *Al-Jazeera*, increased exposure among Arab nationalists moved the predicted level of anti-American sentiment from being similar to state-centric nationalists to being similar to Islamic nationalists. The opposite is true of exposure to *Al-Arabiya*; increased exposure moved Arab nationalists from being similar to Islamic nationalists to being similar to state-centric nationalist political identifiers.

More specifically, at the lowest level of exposure to *Al-Jazeera*,⁶ those who identified politically as Arab nationalists were less likely to express anti-American sentiment than those who identified as state-centric nationalists ($b = -.138, p < .05$) and those who identified as Islamic nationalists ($b = -.536, p < .001$; see Figure 1). At this low level of exposure to *Al-Jazeera*, Arab nationalists were more similar to those who identified nationally than to those who identified politically as Islamic nationalists. However, at the highest levels of exposure to *Al-Jazeera*, Arab nationalists were closer to those who identified politically as Islamic nationalists (although Arab nationalists were still significantly lower in anti-American sentiment than Islamic nationalists, $b = -.199, p < .01$) than to those who identified politically as state-centric nationalists (Arab nationalists were significantly higher in anti-American sentiment than state-centric nationalists, $b = .341, p < .001$).

The story is different when looking at the pattern for *Al-Arabiya*. At the lowest levels of exposure to *Al-Arabiya*, Arab nationalists were significantly lower in anti-American sentiment than Islamic nationalists ($b = -.281, p < .001$), but significantly higher in anti-American sentiment than state-centric nationalists ($b = .215, p < .001$; see Figure 2). Watching more *Al-Arabiya*, however, was associated with a change in anti-American sentiment among Arab nationalists, so that they became more similar in opinion about the United States to those who were state-centric nationalists. At the highest level of exposure to *Al-Arabiya*, there was no difference between Arab nationalists and state-centric nationalists in anti-American sentiment ($b = -.065, p = ns$).

Discussion

Some Theoretical Considerations

This article presented a theoretical model of how transnational Arab TV news in combination with political identity may influence opinion formation among Arab audiences. When applying our model specifically to the issue of anti-American sentiment, a complex picture emerges that deepens our understanding of how media and identity influence Arab public opinion in the region. If we simply relied on Model 1 in Table 2 of our results, and did not

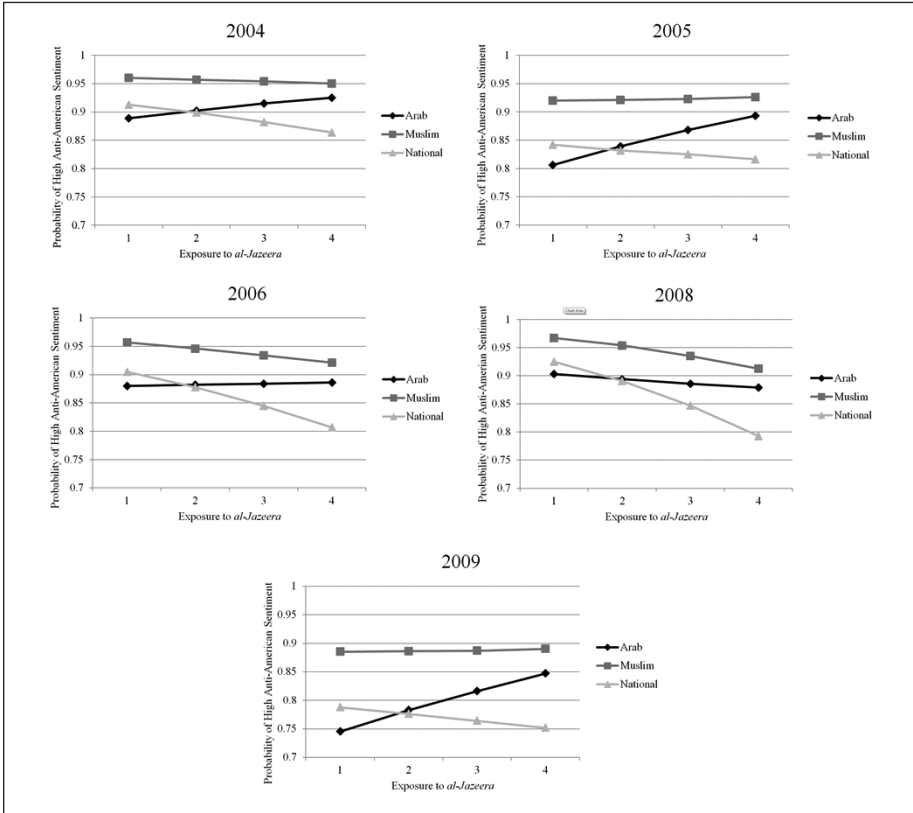


Figure 1. Effect of exposure to Al-Jazeera on anti-American sentiment by political identification for all years

take into account the moderating influence of political identity, it would appear that exposure to *Al-Jazeera* was associated with less anti-American sentiment and *Al-Arabiya* exposure had no association with opinion about the United States. However, Models 2 and 3 of our analysis demonstrate the “effect” of Arab media use is highly contingent on the salience of political identity among Arab audiences and varies across channels—Arab media do not display a “powerful and uniform media effect.” In general, *Al-Jazeera* contributes to greater anti-American sentiment by increasing the probability of an unfavorable opinion about the United States among viewers for whom an Arab nationalist political identity is most salient. In comparison, those who rely on *Al-Arabiya* and for whom an Arab nationalist identity is most salient, increased media exposure reduces anti-American sentiment.

The pattern is different when considering the interaction between Arab media use and those for whom a state-centric political identity (i.e., Egyptian, Moroccan, and so on) was most salient. In the case of *Al-Jazeera*, state-centric nationalist viewers were less likely to express an unfavorable opinion of the United States for most of the 5 years as media

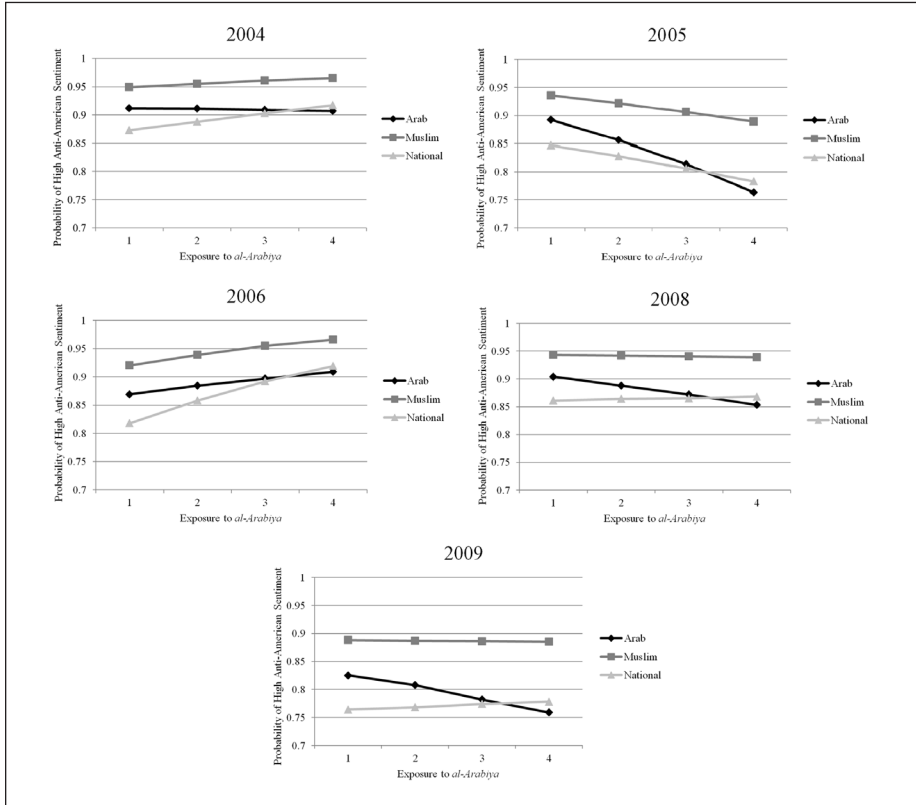


Figure 2. Effect of exposure to *Al-Arabiya* on anti-American sentiment by political identification for all years

exposure increased. However, for *Al-Arabiya*, there was considerable variance in the nature of the interaction between state-centric political identity and exposure from year to year, with no clear pattern emerging. For both channels, viewers for whom an Islamic nationalist political identity was most salient were least effected by media exposure, primarily due to ceiling effects and high intensity of opinion. Overall, the study results highlight the important role that political identification may play as a moderator of media influence on public opinion. Yet, within the fields of political communication and public opinion, empirical scholarship examining the role of political identity in opinion and communication processes, especially in relation to national and transnational identities, remains undeveloped.

An additional noteworthy pattern also emerged from our analysis. Reliance on *Al-Jazeera* increased convergence of opinion about the United States between those for whom *Arab and Islamic* nationalist identities were most salient (see Figure 1). Conversely, reliance on *Al-Arabiya* increased convergence of opinion between viewers for whom *Arab and state-centric nationalist* political identities were most salient (see Figure 2). This pattern is

consistent with the scholarship examining the organizational biases and content of these two transnational channels. While *Al-Jazeera* promotes and reports news primarily from Islamic and Arab nationalist perspectives and moves political discourse to a regional, transnational level, *Al-Arabiya*'s goal is to promote state interests and maintain a state-centric focus on political discourse and activity in the region (Boyd, 2001; Cherribi, 2006; Fandy, 2007; Lynch, 2006a, 2006b).

Besides possibly moderating media effects, our Research Question 1 posed the question of how political identity is associated with public opinion about the United States. The results indicate that at mean levels of media use and across years those for whom an Islamic national identity is most salient are more likely to hold an unfavorable opinion of the United States than those who have an Arab nationalist, state-centric, or mixed-identity schema. Islamic nationalists were also the least likely to vary in opinion across levels of media exposure to either *Al-Jazeera* or *Al-Arabiya*. Collectively, these findings suggest that those with a highly salient Islamic nationalist political identity may employ the "United States" as an "imagined other" against which they may forge a distinctive identity. The consequence is that Islamic nationalists may employ negative considerations about the United States as "identity markers," whereas Arab nationalists and state-centric identities do not—and thus negative considerations about the United States are more likely to be accessible for Islamic nationalists than others regardless of the level of individual media use. However, our present study does not have the means to explicitly and conclusively test this process and the relationship between the salience of political identity schema and the accessibility of negative considerations about the United States—but future research should attempt to explicate these relationships between identity formation and public opinion.

Our last research question (Research Question 2) asked how the relationships explicated in our models varied over time as the political context and U.S. foreign policy evolved in the region. As mentioned above, the effects of *Al-Jazeera* exposure among state-centric identifiers, and Arab and Islamic nationalists to a lesser degree, were very consistent across all 5 years (see Table 3 and Figures 1 and 2). The effects of *Al-Arabiya* among Arab nationalists were also fairly consistent across the 5-year time frame, but for others the relationship between exposure to *Al-Arabiya* and opinion about the United States seemed to vary over time, and more so than *Al-Jazeera* in comparison. We can only speculate on the reason for this variance, with possibilities including (a) the effects of events like the 2006 Israeli-Lebanon War on public opinion and/or (b) a greater degree of variance in *Al-Arabiya* content over time compared to *Al-Jazeera* due to institutional differences in the media organizations. These findings suggest additional content analysis examining variance in how both *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* report and portray the United States over time and in response to specific events may be needed.

Policy Implications

Some policy makers may question the relevance of understanding processes of Arab opinion formation and public opinion as most Arab countries are authoritarian regimes. However, evidence suggests that authoritarian regimes are not immune to the influence of public

opinion, including issues of foreign policy. Employing the 1991 Gulf War and public opinion in Arab states as a case study, Pollock (1992) and Telhami (1993) illustrate the power of public opinion to shape foreign policy decisions in nondemocratic regimes. Pollock (1992), for example, asserts that the misperception that public opinion has no impact in nondemocratic Arab regimes stems from the misapplication to Arab society of an idealized Western model of political democracy and formal institutions. According to Pollock (1992), the influence of Arab mass opinion functions through informal channels and processes to influence Arab governments, rather than in the more visible channels typical of the West. Telhami (1993) expands on this criticism, arguing that the contrasting roles several Arab governments took in the 1991 Persian Gulf War demonstrated the power and impact of mass opinion, not its weakness. Telhami (1993, 2002) argues that it is the very autocratic nature and the need to sustain legitimacy outside of democratic institutions that creates influence for mass opinion in nondemocratic national governments. According to Telhami (2002), public opinion can threaten the legitimacy and support of these autocratic states, creating the need for either the expenditure of more coercive resources or greater repression to sustain power.

In this context, the rise of transnational media in the region, the corresponding growth of Islamic nationalist political identity, and the possible long-term weakening of state-centric political identities all may have significant policy implications for both Arab states and U.S. policy. Though state-centric, Islamic nationalist, and Arab nationalist identities are not mutually exclusive and may be blended in different manners and proportions by political elites and entrepreneurs to support state-building projects, the potential for tension and conflict between these different political identities remains (Telhami & Barnett, 2002). Referring to Dittmer and Kim (1983), Telhami and Barnett argue that evolving political conditions may shift a state's collective identity to be "at odds with the demands and defining characteristics of the broader community" (pp.15-16). Thus, taking a constructivist view (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001) of *state identity* as a primary determinant of *state interests* in international relations, continued structural transformations in regional media and identity (Lynch, 2006a; Nisbet & Myers, 2010) may eventually influence how Arab states *reinterpret* their national interests in regards to United States policies and objectives.

In regards to U.S.-mediated public diplomacy efforts in the region (e.g., *Al-Hurra*, *Radio Sawa*, and other regional media) our findings suggest both opportunities and challenges. First, as Entman (2008) argues, the success of mediated public diplomacy partially rests on messages resonating with audiences and "cultural congruence." This cultural congruence is partially dependent on the level of identification and predisposition toward the United States. Our findings suggest that those for whom an Arab nationalist identity is most salient are the most "persuadable" as their opinions are more likely to reflect the valence of media content to which they are exposed more so than either Islamic nationalists or state-centric nationalists.

Conversely, our findings suggest that Islamic nationalism may employ the United States as an "oppositional other" and therefore may be negatively predisposed toward the United States in comparison to Arab and state-centric national identities. In turn, Islamic nationalists may be more resistant to informational effects again in comparison to state-centric and

Arab nationalists. As a consequence, U.S. communication efforts should focus on creating messages congruent with state-centric and Arab nationalist identities as there is more potential for informational effects on these audiences through mediated public diplomacy. However, at the same time, if transnational media continue to grow in popularity and reach, and Islamic nationalism correspondingly grows and challenges other political identities, it may be increasingly more difficult for U.S.-mediated public diplomacy to positively influence public opinion in the region over time.

Limitations of the Study

We conclude by discussing some possible limitations of the study. First, there are some noteworthy measurement limitations. For instance, television exposure was measured on a daily basis, rather than average number of hours per day. Other key media measures, such as level attention to specific types of TV content or measures of other types of media use (such as newspaper readership) were lacking. Additional survey items combined with more granulated measurement would allow a fuller analysis of Arab media use patterns and their relationship with public opinion. In addition, more robust measures of political identification and anti-American sentiment would be helpful.

The indicator of anti-American sentiment was especially problematic as it was a single four-point measure and sensitive to ceiling effects. Furthermore, some may argue that merely possessing an unfavorable opinion of the United States is not necessarily an indicator of anti-Americanism as anti-Americanism involves multiple opinion dimensions such as perceived threat, trust, and social distance (Keohane & Katzenstein, 2006; Nisbet & Shanahan, 2008). We acknowledge this critique, yet respond that while unfavorable opinions of the United States are not a sufficient condition for anti-Americanism, they are a necessary one and facilitate an opinion environment in which political entrepreneurs may use unfavorable opinion of the United States as tool for political mobilization.

The cross-sectional nature of the data also hampers the study. The optimal design would be a longitudinal panel, especially in regards to the long-term impact of media use and transnational identity formation. A longitudinal design would allow (a) a better evaluation of political identity formation over time through interpersonal and mediated processes of social representation; (b) a more causal explication of the relationship between media use and anti-American sentiment. We attempted to compensate for this limitation by analyzing 5 years of cross-sectional data to evaluate the variation and stability of explicated relationships over time.

Furthermore, though we only test associations between variables and cannot make strong causal statements regarding the direction of the relationship between media use, identity schemas, and public opinion about the United States, cross-sectional designs such as this study are the best available indicators to test how the deep structural transformations to the information environment over the last 10 years may be associated with public opinion among Arab audiences, due to the obvious inherent difficulties to collecting either experimental or longitudinal survey data within the region. As such, our study allows a unique and important look into the dynamics of media use and opinion formation in the Middle East.

Our argument is that exposure to *Al-Jazeera* or *Al-Arabiya*, in combination with political identity, influences individual opinions about the United States. One evident alternative explanation for the relationship between media exposure and opinion of the United States is those who are more likely to disfavor the United States select *Al-Jazeera* as their news source and those who are less likely to disfavor the United States select *Al-Arabiya*. In order to rule out this alternative “self-selection” hypothesis, we included a measure of media selection/choice as a control in our analysis, and thus our analysis provides the results of exposure taking into account explicit channel preferences. We argue the pattern of relationships we identify in our analysis, when controlling for media selection, strengthens the evidence that exposure to transnational media in combination with prior cognitions uniquely influences public opinion about the United States, rather than our findings merely representing a process of self-selection bias into different Arab TV channels. Nevertheless, our inability to capture the longitudinal process of how political attitudes might be related to choice of media preference over time, and subsequently to increased exposure, merits consideration—and as in any study such as this one that utilizes cross-sectional survey data, the usual caveats about overstating causal relationships should be observed.

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Notes

1. Surveyed areas/regions, total sample size across years, and sample size by year for each country are as follows:
 - a. Egypt (Cairo, Alexandria, Luxor): Total Sample: 3290; 2004: 850; 2005: 800; 2006: 800; 2008: 840; 2009: 853.
 - b. Saudi Arabia (Dammam, Riyadh, Jeddah, and Mecca): Total Sample: 3000; 2004: 700; 2005: 800; 2006: 750; 2008: 750; 2009: 760.
 - c. Jordan (Amman, Irbid, and Al Zarqa): Total Sample: 1950; 2004: 400; 2005: 500; 2006: 450; 2008: 600; 2009: 600.
 - d. Lebanon (Beirut, Beqaa, Mountain Lebanon, North Lebanon, and South Lebanon): Total Sample: 2100; 2004: 400; 2005: 500; 2006: 600; 2008: 600.
 - e. Morocco (Rabat, Casablanca, Marrakech, and Tangier): Total Sample: 3006; 2004: 700; 2005: 800; 2006: 700; 2008: 756; 2009: 774.
 - f. United Arab Emirates (Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Sharjah) Total Sample: 1603; 2004: 386; 2005: 217; 2006: 500; 2008: 500; 2009: 500.

2. Age was measured with a continuous variable with a respondent range of 18 to 76 years of age. Education was measured on a six-point scale, ranging from elementary school and below to graduate studies, with the mean level being secondary education. Gender is dummy coded with women coded high (49.0%). Muslim respondents are dummy coded with Muslims coded high (93.4%).
3. Measures of Arab TV news channel preference and exposure were created to assess how much respondents self-selected into the two most popular regional transnational TV stations (*Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya*) and as well as how often they watched each channel. Channel preference was assessed by combining two open-ended measures asking respondents to name the first and second TV channels they turned to for international news. Based on responses, separate measures were coded for *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* ranging from 0 to 2 (with 2 = *first choice*, 1 = *second choice*, and 0 = *neither first nor second choice*). A second set of questions asked respondents how many days a week they watched each station on a four-point scale where zero meant *0-1 days* and four meant *every day*. These scores for *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* were included in the models as indicators of media exposure.
4. Respondents were categorized into one of four types of political identity based upon responses for two questions about identity on the surveys. The first question asked respondents “when you think about yourself, which of the following is your most important identity” and the second question asked whether respondents believe their government should base its decisions mostly on what is best either “for their country,” “for Arabs,” or “for Muslims.” Respondents who answered their most important identity was their nationality and believed that their government should do what is best for their country were coded as having state-centric political identity (27.9%). Likewise, respondents who cited “Muslim(s)” or “Arab(s)” to both questions were coded as either having Islamic nationalist (16.6%) or Arab nationalist (8.7%) political identities, respectively. Last, respondents who did not match on both questions were coded as mixed nationalist identities, including Christian respondents (40.1%).
5. Respondents were asked on a four-point scale whether they had a very favorable, favorable, unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of the United States with unfavorable opinions coded high.
6. These specific effects are estimated at the mean of other media exposure (e.g., the estimate of the effect of exposure to *Al-Jazeera* has among those who politically identify as Muslims is conditioned on *Al-Arabiya* being at the mean).

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