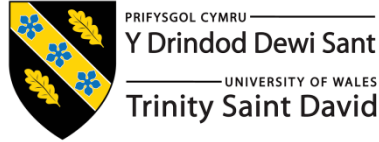MA The World's Religions

Allen's Islamophobia and the British News Media:

A critical evaluation of Islamophobia as a concept and its application to the written news media in Britain between 2001 and 2008.

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Master's Degrees by Examination and Dissertation

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Abstract

This Dissertation firstly regards the definition of Islamophobia by Christopher Allen and its development out of Orientalism. Secondly it regards the written news media between 2001 and 2008 which includes the events of 9/11 and 7/7. Then the levels of representation Islam and Muslims receive the kinds of news hooks and discourses as well as types of language used are aspects covered that are then compared to Allen's definition of Islamophobia. Thirdly specific stories from immediately after the 9/11 attacks are analysed and again compared to Allen's definition.

It is the aim of this dissertation to firstly assess to what extent the news media can be classified as Islamophobic, or have created trends in the papers where Islamophobic sentiments are standard and that negative stances have either gone unnoticed or have been deemed acceptable. Secondly this dissertation aims to establish how applicable and useful Allen's definition is, especially in regards to the news media.

This dissertation uses a Phenomenological approach and critical analysis on two research papers. Firstly: *Images of Islam in the UK: The Representation of British Muslims in the National Press, 2000-8* – found in *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media* – which is an analysis on how written reporting of Islam and Muslims has changed over an eight year period. Secondly: *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press* which covers specific instances of representation of Muslims and Islam in the written media.

It is the findings of this paper that the levels of representation Islam and Muslims received dramatically raised at the time of 9/11 and as such was the primary lens through which Islam and Muslims were viewed. It is also established that the types of News Hooks, Discourses and Language used during this time period were primarily negative in nature, either focusing on Terrorism or Extremism. Also feelings that are deemed to be Islamophobic are clearly more prevalent, or at least more conspicuous, in modern times as well being quite explicit directly after 9/11. However it is the argument of this paper that it is unclear as to whether this negative trend of representation and Islamophobia is due to the Media portraying a view on Islam and Muslims or if the Media is merely reflecting the already established prevalent view.

It is established that Allen's description of Islamophobia and its comprehensive nature demonstrate a model that can be easily utilised. As a definition it is similar in theme and form to that of racism and anti-Semitism. However it is the argument of this dissertation that Allen's definition is too vague and open to vast application that can limit academic or critical evaluation of Islam and therefore needs to become more concise.

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<u>Introduction</u>

In contemporary society the media has a unique power to portray and re-tell events, stories, cultures and individuals so that for the audience these representations have a claim of truth that is unquestionable. In this way, audiences will very often only receive one side of any story or understand one interpretation of a culture or people. However it must be emphasised that no matter how realistic images or stories in the media are they never simply present the world as it is. They are always a construction a re-presentation rather than a window to reality. As such the media has a unique power to convey, explain and articulate specific discourses that either present or miss-represent a social group or minority[1].

This poses the question of how certain groups are routinely represented in the media and how images and stories are re-presented over and over, making them seem natural and familiar. If these trends are negative then they can often marginalise or even vilify others making them seem unfamiliar or even threatening. Islam has been subject to certain trends of representation that are as old as the news media itself; in Edward Said's book *Covering Islam* he discusses how present coverage of Islam effectively "canonises certain notions, texts and authorities[2]" that can be deemed as negative or discriminatory. Recent studies have shown that this role of the media in social systems has played a crucial part in the construction of these social identities[3], in fact it has been argued by media critics that the Medias 'misrepresentation' of Islam has been vastly influential in the spread of negative feelings towards Islam in the west[4].

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[1] Simon Cottle, *Ethnic Minorities and the Media: Changing Cultural Boundaries*, (Buckingham: open University Press, 2000)

[2] Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*, (NY: Vintage Books, 1997), 157

[3] David O sears & P.J. Henry, "Ethnic Identity and Group Threat in American Politics", *The Political Psychologist*, 4:1 (1999), 12-17

[4] E. Poole & Richardson John, eds, *Muslims & The News Media*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006); Paul Gilroy "The End of Anti-Racism"- in – James Donald && Ali Rattunsi, *Race, Culture and Difference*, (London: Sage, 1992), 49-61; Akbar S. Ahmed, Living Islam : From Samarkind to Stornoway, (London: BBC Books, 1993);

However, the bulk of literature about Islam and the West predominantly looks at the media representation within a wider context, that of international power relations, within which we find this concept of coverage of Islam being "misrepresenting". This implies that there is a reality about Islam, or a definitive essence about Islam that can be represented in the media fairly and accurately[5]. Edward Said tackles this problem by saying that "Orientalism draws our attention to the problems of cross cultural representation", he maintains that while there is no 'real' Islam out there to be represented, as this kind of material will always be subject to interpretation and scrutiny, there are however gradations of knowledge that can be classified loosely as 'good' or 'bad', 'accurate' or 'indifferent', that can be useful to the more pressing issue of representing the 'other' fairly[6].

Mustansir Mir, however, questions this concept that there is just a simple choice of self-representation or representation by a hegemonic or a sympathetic other. Due to the process of globalisation and the increasing plurality of societies, identities are not so distinctly aligned[7]. In this way representation is a continuous and developmental process whereby it is not uniform, and cannot be so easily defined or even identified. However it is the media that forms the primary cultural apparatus through which Europeans and Americans derive their knowledge and consciousness of Islam from[8], the success of which is not in their 'accuracy' or their intentions or even their position from which they can represent. Their

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The Runnymede Trust, *Islamophobia: A challenge for us all Report of the Runnymede Trust commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia*, (www.runnymedetrust.org/projects/commisiononbritishmuslims), (10/01/13); Chris Allen, "From Race to Religion: The New Face of Discrimination" – in – Abbas Tariq, Muslim Britian: Communities Under Preasure, (London: Zed Books, 2005), 24-47; E. Poole, *Reporting Islam: Media reps of British Muslims*, (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2002); Barbara Zelizer & Allan Stuart, Journalism after 9/11, (London: Routledge, 2002)

[5] Elisabeth Poole, *Media Representations of British Muslims: Reporting Islam*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002), 41-2

[6] Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*, (NY: Vintage Books, 1997)

[7] Mustansir Mir, *Literary Heritage of Classical Islam: Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honour of james A. Bellamy,* American Oriental Society (1995) 9 (1): 63-64

[8] Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*, (NY: Vintage Books, 1997), 43

success derives from the power of these people to reach the market and represent widely, and that this is hardly ever challenged[9].

There are many factors involved in this news making process such as the predominance of the elite media personnel, the news selection and gathering process, the continued persistence of news values and the privileging of elite and institutional news sources, that work to marginalise alternative voices. Here we see the structure and routine of journalists combine with the dormant interpretive frameworks, resulting in consensual output based on preconceptions and assumptions, rather than on just will full manipulation[10]. Market driven media must maximise profitability by attracting large well defined audiences for their sponsors, hence the tendency of these outcomes leaning towards a conservative consensual ideology which reinforces the status quo[11].

Images of Islam in the news therefore tend to correspond with what the prominent sectors of society have already established them to be, the purpose of which is to circulate antipathy, positioning people by news items that are, according to Dahlgren and Chakrapani, "evidence of an implied commitment to a particular form of global order[12]". This results in readers who are unable to consider the real cause of confrontation but who were provoked to imagine a 'clash of cultures[13]'

This mind set, where the opinions and perceptions of Islam are already decided in a certain way, that can be referred to as 'negative' or 'inaccurate' holds its route, according to

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[9] Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*, (NY: Vintage Books, 1997), 9

[10] A. Bell, *The Language of News Media*, (Oxford: Blackwell,1991); S. Chibnall, *The Production of Crime Reporters* – in – S. Cohen and J. Young, Eds, *The Manufacture of News: Deviance, Social Problemsand the Mass Media*, (London: Constable, 1981); S. Epstein, *The self-concept revisited: Or a theory of a theory*, American Psychologist, Vol 28(5), May 1973, 404-416; Galtung, J. & Ruge, M. Holmboe, *The Structure of Foreign News. The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises in Four Norwegian Newspapers*, Journal of Peace Research, vol. 2,1965, pp. 64-91; H. Gans, *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time*, (NY: North-western University Press, 1979)

[11] James Curran and Jean Seaton, *Power Without Responsibility: The Press, Broadcasting and New Media in Britain*, (London: Routledge, 1992)

[12] P. Dahlgren and S. Chakrapani, *The Third World on TV NewS: Western Ways of Seeing the Other*, (Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1982), 62

[13] Elisabeth Poole, *Media Representations of British Muslims: Reporting Islam*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002), 54

Said, in the Orientalist discipline, which has developed many thought systems in our modern culture, specifically relating to Islam and Muslims. Christopher Allen has developed criteria or a definition that encompasses these kinds of sentiments, perceptions or ideologies that are specifically 'negative' or 'discriminatory' towards Islam, under the term Islamophobia.

It is the aim of this dissertation to assess to what extent the news media can be classified as Islamophobic, or have created trends in the papers where Islamophobic sentiments are standard and that negative stances have either gone unnoticed or have been deemed acceptable, as is explained by Edward Said theorem. It is the argument of this paper that the news media has portrayed Islam and Muslims in such a way that it could be regarded as Islamophobic under Allen's definition if so then this definition is in line with Said theories on Orientalism and its development. It is also my argument that these feelings and nuances of Islamophobia in the media have become more conspicuous in recent times as they become a social norm and affect social consensuses.

To do so first this paper will establish whether Islam and Muslims receive more coverage or representation in the news media at key points of interest and what kinds of points of interest cause this rise in representation. It is my argument that Muslims and Islam received more, and more negative, coverage In the news media after events such as 9/11 and 7/7, as well as when negative foreign news stories came to light in this country.

Also the extent to which Islamophobic feelings are more prevalent in the modern news media, will also be assessed in three ways, firstly by the kinds of News hooks used in conjunction with Islam and Muslims, secondly the kinds of language used and thirdly and much more broadly by reviewing specific news articles from around the time of the attacks on September 11th as this is a key point in the development of Islamophobia in the modern world. It is this papers argument that, the News Hooks used in the Media along with the kinds of language used are essentially negative and derogative, that the Hooks will draw attention

in by focusing on negative stories and the language will use key terms that will make the public think in negative ways about Islam and Muslim. It will also be argued that the specific news stories after the attacks on 9/11 will show specifically how these two news factors of Language and News Hooks can be used to create stories that can deemed acceptable in these times while also being Islamophobic.

However it is also the argument of this paper that while these nuances are more conspicuous and becoming a social norm, these feelings have not become any more established than they have been for centuries in the mind-set of the public. This dissertation is using the Media as a tool to test Allen's definition; it is this paper's argument that some forms of the newspaper media will have expressed more Islamophobic impressions than others, there will of course be variations between different papers and time periods. In this way we should be able to establish whether Allen's definition applies to the news media, how comprehensive it is as well as how accurate and 'fair' it is.

To achieve this goal this piece will take a phenomenological stance when reviewing the stories in these cases, assessing them for their effects and stances as individual instances, as well as within a wider spectrum, to obtain an unbiased and helpful trend of representation.

This piece will firstly contextualise the phenomenon of Islamophobia by assessing Said's work on Orientalism, as the foundation of Allen's work. Then we shall see how Allen applies these theories to the modern era and formulates his definition of Islamophobia. It will also be established in what types of information are applicable to this definition.

Then this paper will review a case study carried out by Julian Petley and Robin Richardson in their book *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*. This case study is compiled from the Nexus database of British Newspapers and consists of a scientific sample of some of the newspapers from between the years of 2001 and 2008 to be

assessed and compared in regards to levels of coverage over this period of time, language used in relation to Muslims and Islam as well as the types of News hooks used.

The case study used includes a few different newspapers, of differing political and social stances. It must also be considered which are the most popular papers and recognise that they would have the most influence. As such *The Times*, being, arguably, one of the more respectable conservative newspapers, and *The Guardian* will be chosen as this gives us two well-known papers of differing stances, *The Times* being largely conservative and *The Guardian* being mostly Labour, which is widely read.

Lastly this paper will review a case study by Elzain Elgamri in his book *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The impact of Orientalism on Representations of Islam in the British Press*, in which he focus on three key papers *The Times*, *The Independent* and *The Guardian* and how they deployed the themes of perceived Islamic Violence, Monolithism and British Foreignness to construct particular Images of Islam. All three of these themes covered are directly covered by Allen's definition, combined with the article proximity with the events of 9/11 should provide a good insight into how Islam and Muslims are represented in conjunction to this major event.

It is this papers hypothesis that there will be demonstrated an increase in: News hooks, language and stories that specifically cover Muslims and Islam in relation to negative events or connotation, which can be deemed as Islamophobic, under Allen's Definition. Due to this the news media, at least in its newspaper form, can be deemed to be increasingly Islamophobic, over the time period covered, that this is partly due to the influence of Orientalist studies combined with an increase in Media studies that plays on the ingrained ideas the public already have especially in relation to events and connotations to do with Islam and Muslims.

This paper will be limited to Newspapers which have been chosen instead of TV news programmes and internet based news feeds for three reasons, firstly, there is very little variation in the stances and feel of TV based news programs also some forms of news on the internet have less credibility than published newspapers, and secondly the majority of credible news websites have the same news on their sites as they do in their papers. However, the main reason is that the scope of this piece would be far too wide to do it justice in this paper. The dates parameters of this piece have been chosen again for two reasons: these years give us a frame to look within that is bookended by two significant events, namely 9/11 and 7/7, and as such due to the nature of these events there should be a higher density of representation of Islam. Also this piece will not be able to relate Allen's definition to the Public in general due to firstly a lack of extensive research and also the scope of the paper would be too large. Lastly this paper will be limited to using Just Allen's definition as this is realistically the only definition concise and academically sound, in its context and development, currently available.

This topic of Islamophobia and the written British news media was chosen primarily due to its relevance in modern society, especially considering the schisms and frictions that are ever growing in the Middle East. In addition this topic is also relevant to modern academia in terms of how and if Islamophobia impacts on British society as well as the increasing news worthiness of Islam and Muslims in modern media in this post 9/11 world. This topic is also vastly under researched and discussed in a critical and academic way. Considering the nature of the Media and its reputation for representation of minorities, especially in its written form, which is often considered to be far more biased than its televised counterpart, a better understanding of this representation, its complexities and its outcomes is an essential part of understanding how and if the media perpetuates Islamophobia.

This dissertation's first chapter will regard Edward Said and Orientalism, what it is and its nature as well as how this developed into what Christopher Allen refers to as Islamophobia. Islamophobia as Allen describes it will then be discussed and defined for its nature and relevance as well as an analysis of Allen's definition. Chapter two will initially discuss the levels of Representation that Islam and Muslims receive over a near decade period to give a broad idea of how Islam and Muslims have increase or decrease, as a topic, in the news media. Then the types of News Hooks that are used in conjunction with Islam will be discussed and compared with Allen's definition, along with the types of Language and Discourses that are used in the news media over this time period. Chapter three will be more specific and regard the news media immediately after 9/11, looking at specific stories and quotes in regards to topics that are prevalent, which are Islam as a monolithic block, Islam as violent and anti-western, Islam as foreign, Alien and Dangerous, and the perceived fault line between Islam and the West. Allen's Definition will then be compared to these finding to see if it is applicable to these themes. There will then be a conclusion to determine this papers stance on whether the representation of Islam and Muslims in the Media can be classified as Islamophobic according to Allen's definition and if so to what degree.

Chapter 1 – From Orientalism to Islamophobia

Edward Said[14] describes a story from the 1980's, where a company, Consolidated Edison of New York were trying to make a point about alternative energy sources for Americans. To do so they ran a television clip that consisted of immediately recognisable OPEC[15] personalities. Amongst these were Yamani, Qaddafi, and other lesser known robed Arab figures intercut with stills or clips of other people associated with oil and Islam: Khomeini, Arafat, Hafez al-Assad, however none of these men where mentioned by name however the audience was informed that these men were in control of American oil, and the voice over informed them that these ominous men were an all cast of villains. This was enough to leave the American audience with a combination of Anger, resentment and fear, feelings which Consolidated Edison exploited for commercial gain. However they weren't the only people who used this new emotion In the American public for their own purposes, Stuart Eizenstat, President Carter's domestic policy advisor and then a senior official in the Clinton administration had urged the president "with strong steps we [should] mobilize the nation around a real crisis and with a clear enemy – OPEC[16]". Using this event Said emphasis the Image of Islam in the West and more importantly how the image of Islam is used[17].

Said argues that since the end of the Eighteenth Century modern occidental, or western, reactions to Islam have been dominated by a radically simplified type of thinking that can be called Orientalist[18]. The basis of this Orientalism thought is a drastically polarised

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[14] Edward Said was one of the leading literary Critiqs of the latter half of the twientieth Centurary. He was professor of English and Comparitive Literature at Colombia University in New York. Orientalism (1978), arguably his most influential book is acreditied with helping to change the direction of several disciplines by exposing an alliance between the enlightmnement and colonialism. – Malise Ruthven, "Edward Said: Controversial literary critique and bold advocate of the Palestinian cause in America", *The Guardian*, 26/09/03, (http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/2003/sep/26/guardianobituaries.highereducation) , (29/07/13)
[15] Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries.
[16] Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*, (NY: Vintage Books, 1997), 3-4
[17] Ibid, 4
[18] Ibid

understanding of the geography of the world where it is divided into unequal parts. The larger of which is deemed as 'different' and is labelled the Orient, the other being 'ours' being referred to as the Occident or the West[19]. Islam is regarded in this thought set as part of the orient and of being one static and monolithic entity. There is of course various reasons both psychological and political for this mind frame, as far as the West is concerned, however it can be argued that Islam, for the west, became a very serious competitor as well as a late coming challenge to Christianity[20].

As we can see this negative sentiment is not a new phenomenon; Norman Daniel notes that for the most part of the Middle Ages Islam was regarded as "other, demonic, apostic, blasphemous and obscure…[21]" For the West it must of appeared like a younger, more vivile and energetic version of Christianity had arisen, which was equipped with the learning of the ancient Greeks, invigorated with itself with a simple, fearless creed, and set about destroying Christianity. Even when the world of Islam went into a period of decline and the nations of Europe into a period of ascendency there was still a fear of 'Mohammedanism', especially its adjacency[22].

Events in the seventies such as Iran's global political sphere, especially when they were a major oil supplier in a period of oil scarcity, and the capturing of the United states Embassy in 1979 by a group of students made links between the west and the East tenuous and reactions to this were negative. However it is Said's argument that reactions these kinds of events did not occur inside a 'vacuum'. Far back in the public's subliminal and cultural consciousness there was the longstanding attitude to Islam and the Orient in general that Said refers to as Orientalism. He argues that whether you look at "critically acclaimed fiction such

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[19] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (London: Penguin, 2003), 49-73

[20] Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*, (NY: Vintage Books, 1997), 4-5

[21] Norman Daniel, *The Arabs and Medieval Europe,* (London, Longmans Green & co: 1975), Norman Daniel, *Islam & the West: The making of the Image*, (Edingburgh: University Press, 1960)

[22] Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*, (NY: Vintage Books, 1997), 5

as V.S. Naipaul's *A Bend in the River*[23]and John Updike's *The Coup*[24], or at school history textbooks, comic strips, television serials, films and cartoons the iconography of Islam was uniformly ubiquitous, and drew its material from the same time honoured view of Islam: hence the frequent caricatures of Muslims as Oil suppliers and terrorist[25]".

The concepts of Islam being medieval, dangerous and threatening specifically to "us" have gained a place in our very culture and polity. The extent of this is undeniable, arguments and references can be made to it not just by academics or journalists but by anyone[26], and so such an idea creates a kind of *a priori* touchstone to be taken into account of by anyone wishing to discuss Islam. From being something 'other' or 'out there', Islam and the material invariably associated therein has become part of the social and cultural canon, it has become a kind of orthodoxy[27]. Conversely, whether in culture generally or in specific discourse, to discuss Islam or even to think of Islam in a sympathetic manner is near impossible and as such an understanding of Islam is hard to achieve[28]. Instead the understanding of 'Islam' that we do have is a reduced form of all aspects of the diverse Muslim World, reducing them to a special malevolent and unthinking essence[29].

For the Western World it does not matter what Muslims, no matter their cultural background, think of their sense of justice, history of oppression or their visions of their own societies, it is irrelevant. For the west is more concerned with more menial things such as oil,

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[23] Arguably one of the greatest Novels about the process of "becoming" as opposed to "being" a nation, especially after the colonisation powers have departed. – Neel Mukherjee, "Book of a Lifetime: A Bend in the River, By VS Naipaul", *The Independent*, 15/04/11, (http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/features/book-of-a-lifetime-a-bend-in-the-river-by-vs-naipaul-2267764.html), (29/07/13)

[24] *The Coup* is the reputed memoir of Jakim Felix Ellelloû the then president of Kush, a sub Saharan country suffering from a long-term drought. It is Updike's imaginative recreation of an Africa of the mind as well as a commentary on American technological rationalism and materialistic values. – Kathleen Lathrop, "The Coup: John Updike's modernist Masterpiece", *MFS: Modern Fiction Studies*, (Volume 31, Number 2, Summer 1985), 249-262

[25] Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*, (NY: Vintage Books, 1997), 6-7

[26] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (London: Penguin, 2003), 157

[27] Ibid

[28] Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*, (NY: Vintage Books, 1997), 6-7

[29] Ibid, 8-9

rebellion, dictators and terrorism[30]. As such a conclusion can be argued that there is no discernible time period of European or American history since the Middle Ages where Islam was discussed or thought of generally outside of a framework created by passion, prejudice and political intrigue[31]. It is only a slight overstatement to say that Muslims and Arabs are essentially covered and discussed as either oil suppliers or as potential terrorists, very little of the detail, way of life, diversity or passion of the Arab world of even those who were reporting on them ever reaches the public sphere[32].

These Orientalist stances that were prevalent in the Nineteenth through to Twentieth Century may be dated models, however they still could be considered to be true in many respects. The ways in which Islam is reported in the media is the topic of this paper but what Said has provided is a context in which the engrained perceptions and what is referred to as 'common knowledge' about Islam is on the whole negative. It is from the roots of this Orientalist school that modern understanding of Islam has developed. When we regard the media, it is fair to say that these negative connotations are often used to sell stories and it unfortunately fits into the pre-established mind frame of the western world.

As such the kinds of stories that make sense or "ring true" regarding Islam are the kinds of stories that are limited or have negative or stereotypical content[33]. The news media will portray a side of a story that makes most cultural sense to their audience, and their audience will deem it acceptable, or will not even recognise that there could be another stance. In the case of Islam, these negative connotations that are centuries old are utilised by news media.

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[30] Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*, (NY: Vintage Books, 1997), 9
[31] Ibid, 24-25
[32] Ibid, 28
[33] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Mulsims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 41

Christopher Allen refers to this kind of connotation, specifically those of the aftermath of the events of 9/11 and 7/7, as Islamophobic or as Islamophobia a term that he has championed in his book *Islamophobia*, which discusses its nature and context. For the past decade or so Allen has been the forefront academic for the research into the phenomenon of Islamophobia, he has worked alongside British Government in an advisory capacity, having submitted both written and oral evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on Religious Offences and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Islamophobia. His Ashgate published book *Islamophobia* was the first academic piece to forward a full theoretical exposition of Islamophobia whilst also establishing a new definition for the phenomenon[34].

He describes Islamophobia as a term that is similar to that of Anti-Semitism and has the same forms and understanding as racism. Allen refers to the concept of 'Islamophobia[35]' as a term in common use, as holding its origins in a highly influential report entitled *Islamophobia: A challenge for us all Report of the Runnymede Trust commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia*[36] in 1997. Of course he argues this is not the year 'Islamophobia' began rather the year that the first major report was published. The term is most often used in the public sphere as either a rallying point or a target of conjecture as to its legitimacy as a term[37].

In the most vocal instances claim and counter claim are pitched from opposing views on the side are those who cry and denounce those who would criticise Muslims as Islamophobic whether it is truly malicious or not, and on the other is those who are actively and openly espousing a vitriolic hatred both of which sides basing their stance on a multitude

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[34]University of Birmingham, *Dr Chris Allen*, (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/social-policy/allen-chris.aspx), (08/05/13)

[35] A term he coined in a 'think piece' entitled *The first decade of Islamophobia* in October of 2007 – Christopher Allen, *The 'First' Decade of Islamophobia: 10 years of the Runnymede Trust report "Islamophobia: a Challenge for us all"*, (Stourbridge: Christopher Allen, 2007).

[36] The Runnymede Trust, *Islamophobia: A challenge for us all Report of the Runnymede Trust commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia*, (www.runnymedetrust.org/projects/commisiononbritishmuslims), (10/01/13)

[37] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 3

of causes and justifications[38]. For example on the one hand are the loosely veiled aggression against Islam and Muslims by such public personalities as Robert Kilroy Silk[39] and 'Will Cummings'[40] through to other high ranking voices in British Political spheres describing Muslims as 'Whining Maniacs[41]'. On the more extreme side of this spectrum are the BNP who have claimed that Muslims intend to establish an Islamic republic by 2025 and they take the East London super mosque as proof of such plans, this in their eyes will lead to the eventual overthrow of Christian Europe[42].

At the same time these have been countered by a somewhat reciprocal process that has seen the establishment of legislative measures and various social policies, In addition to a number of different European reports published to consider the phenomenon, the UK has a flourishing cultural awareness industry designed to tackle the perceived growing acceptance of negative attitudes and ideas towards Muslims and Islam. However there are more extreme examples of cultural awareness that have taken a different path, there is now an award ceremony recognising the Islamophobe of the year, established by the Islamic Human Rights Commission, and there is set up an organisation dedicated to the combating of Islamophobia, the Forum against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR[43])[44].

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[38] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 3

[39] It is commonly known that Robert Kilroy-Silk wrote an article in the *Express on Sunday* entitled 'We owe Arabs Nothing', one of many an article that caused complaints amongst the Muslim and other communities, consequently he lost his daily chat show of seventeen years on BBC1 – Robert Kilroy-Silk, 'We owe Arabs Nothing', *Express on Sunday*, (4th January 2004)

[40] 'Will Cummings' was a pseudonym for a Harry Cummings who was an employee of the British Council, to write four articles which were overtly anti-Muslim and anti-Islamic. Following its uncovering he was fired from his position in the British Council. The articles written were: Will Cummings, 'We must be allowed to critise Islam', *Sunday Telegraph,* 4th July 2004; Will Cummings, 'The Tories must confront Islam instead of kowtowing to it', *Sunday Telegraph*, 11th July 2004; and Will Cummings, 'Muslims are a threat to our way of life', *Sunday Telegraph*, 18th July 2004. A useful over view of the 'Cummins Affair' can be found at http://bmcs.gotadsl.co.uk/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=60

[41] Chris Allen, *Fair Justice: The Bradford Disturbances, the Sentencing and the Impact,* (London: FAIR, 2003), 36

[42] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 4

[43] www.fairuk.org

[44] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 4

However all that has been established and argued from both sides of the table it is fair to say that Islamophobia in its language, discourse, notion and concept has failed to acquire a contemporary relevance in the Global or even the European sphere[45].

It has often been surmised that the term Islamophobia originated in Britain; however this is likely to be untrue. Whilst the Oxford English Dictionary suggests that the term was first used in print in 1991 American periodical *Insight*, other sources and literature would suggest that it originated from France by Etienne Dinet and Slimu Ben Ibrahim, when in 1925 they wrote '*accès de délire islamophobe*'[46], referring to the Prophet and so this probably did not mean the same as the contemporary understanding. Other competing claims have the term as used during the Iranian Revolution to refer to Iranian women who refused to use the hijab and less so, Muslim feminists and liberals[47]. However this too has dis-similar meaning to the current usage.

However indifferent they be, it was these definitions that were used to re-contextualise by those such as al-Muhajiroun and the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) to name the fear of non-Muslims towards Islam and Muslims. This is the definition that Allen attempts to affirm and contextualise[48].

At this point in the history of the term we see the input of the academically inclined enquiry of Islam and Muslims already noted as Orientalism. A tradition that as Murden puts it "… was based on myth, misunderstanding and what was left unsaid about the 'orient'[49]", emerging out of these misunderstandings, that had for centuries considered Islam and Muslims to be an enemy and rival, a new perception formed based on a more dominant

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[45] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 4

[46] Etienne Dinet and Sliman Ben Ibrahim, *L'Orient vu de l'Occident,* (Paris: Piazza-Geuthner, 1925) – accessible at – Alain Gresh, *A propes dé l'Islamophobie*, (http://oumma.com/article.php3?id_article=964), (10/01/13)

[47] Caroline Fourest, Fiammetta Venne, Islamophobia?: Islamophobes? Ou Simplement Laiques!' *Pro Choix,* (Autumn/Winter 03), 27-8

[48] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 5-6

[49] S.Murden, Cultural Conflict in International Relations: The West and Islam – In – J. Baylis, S. Smith, Eds, *The Globalisation of the World Politics an Introduction to International Relation,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 381

position that the European west boasted, an understanding that was much more politically fuelled. As Said suggests much of this continues to inform and shape understandings of Islam in the contemporary setting and the academic pursuit of knowledge of Islam and Muslims, within which the perceptions of the past are ever prevalent[50]. As Husain states this process establishes 'an absolute and systematic difference between the west… and the Orient, which is abhorrent, undeveloped and inferior.[51]' he explains that what emerged was a notion and preconception of the orient that was "Uniform and incapable of defining itself… either to be feared… or to be controlled[52]", and so the establishment of the orient as the inevitable other to the normative Occident would appear to be the first legitimised manifestation of the dichotomous relationship Islam and the West have.

Orientalism did little to better our understanding of Islam rather it embedded the concepts of Islam being an inferior civilisation, backwards and irrational, populated by violent and barbaric people who paradoxically were also considered to be highly sensual exotic and romanticised.

In 1968 we see the first real step towards the recognition of Islamophobia, this came in the form of the Runnymede Trust which was set up to deal with issues of ethnicity and cultural diversity, in their own words aim to "To challenge racial discrimination to influence anti-racist legislation and to promote a successful multi ethnic Britain and [to] advice on… how best to promote the value of diversity in our communities[53]". It was in there publication *A Very Light Sleeper: The Persistence and Dangers of Anti-Semitism* that Islamophobia got some recognition as a concept that was relevant in the modern world[54]. In noting that in the

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[50] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 31

[51] A. Hussain, *Western Conflict With Islam: Survey of the Anti-Islamic Tradition,* (Leicester: Volcano Books, 1990), 30-31

[52] Ibid

[53] Runnymede Trust, 'Who We Are', *The Runnymede Trust Website,* (http://www.runnymedetrust.org/who.html), (11/01/13)

[54] Runnymede Commission on Anti-Semitism, *A Very Light Sleeper: The Persistence and Dangers of Anti-Semitism*, (London: Runnymede Trust, 1994)

Jewish communities as in other minority communities in Modern Britain there is a growing sense of threat and fear[55]. This report broadly describes anti-Semitism as a term that "subsumes a wide spectrum of attitudes from unconscious and implicit prejudice through to open hostility and to individual and organised acts of violence[56]"

The inclusion of Islamophobia in this report is somewhat interesting as it has not included other forms of racism, such as those based on skin colour or race. Also the report has failed to define Islamophobia as a form of racism; however this is also the case for the Islamophobia report published two years later[57].

The Runnymede Report was published in October of 1997 and is one of the key stages of the development of Islamophobia as a concept and as a phenomenon. The report acknowledged the limitations and the credibility's of Islamophobia as a suitable and adequate neologism. Its use was justified by suggesting that a new phenomenon, like the established Islamophobia that is formulated in the report, required a new name especially due to the increasing voracity of its nature[58]. Within the opening statements of this report the definition of Islamophobia was changed from the 'short hand way of referring to dread or hatred of Islam – and therefore, to fear or dislike of all or most Muslims[59]. The transformation made it 'the recurring characteristics of closed views[60]'. Still referring to a phobic dread but one which is best understood through the conceptualised Runnymede report which regards Islam and closed views.

Philip Lewis provides us with a succinct definition of what a closed view means in this circumstance:

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[55] Runnymede Commission on Anti-Semitism, *A Very Light Sleeper: The Persistence and Dangers of Anti-Semitism*, (London: Runnymede Trust, 1994), 11
[56] Ibid
[57] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 51
[58] Ibid, 54
[59] Robin Richardson, Ed, *Islamophobia: Issues, Challenges and Action: A report by the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia*, (Staffordshire, Trentham Books Ltd,1997), 1
[60] Ibid

> "A Closed View Presents Islam as monolithic, static, an aggressive and ideological enemy to be combated. Muslim minorities should thus be exposed to scrutiny and social control; and there is no need to take seriously any criticisms they may make of western society… The open view acknowledges that Islam like Christianity is diverse, dynamic and in dialogue with wider society.[61]"

These closed views and also to some extent open views have become the frame upon which all discourse on Islam has been viewed, conceptualised, defined and even identified. The report has since permeated all the ensuing debates and discourses about Islamophobia, so the Runneymede model constructed around the closed views has been the foundation upon which most of the ideas and theories about Islamophobia have been constructed[62]. This model has a series of clearly defined concepts that really define and mould its conceptualisation and so are integral to the overall definition and relate to the nature of closed views.

They are as follows: 1) "Islam is seen as Monolithic and static rather than diverse and dynamic"; 2) "Islam seen as other and separate rather than similar and interdependent"; 3) "Islam seen as inferior not different"; 4) "Islam seen as an enemy not as a partner"; 5) "Muslims seen as manipulative not as sincere"; 6) "Racial discrimination against Muslims defended rather than challenged"; 7) "Muslims criticisms of 'the west' rejected not considered"; 8) "Anti-Muslims discourse seen as natural not problematic"[63].

The final closed view mentioned implies that Islamophobic discourse while is sometimes blatant but also frequently coded and subtle is seen as part of the everyday life of people in much the same way that anti-Semitism was seen earlier in the twentieth century[64], again drawing the similarities between anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. The closed views may be classified into three types: perception, those of the first five which construct a neat basis from which negatively conceived perceptions of Islam and Muslims are identified. The

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[61] Philip Lewis, 'Islamophobia: A challenge to us all', *The Church Times*, (24th October 1997)
[62] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 65
[63] Ibid, 69-73
[64] Robin Richardson, Ed, *Islamophobia: Issues, Challenges and Action: A report by the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia*, (Staffordshire, Trentham Books Ltd,1997), 11

second is prejudicial in nature, the sixth and seventh could be classified as such and lastly naturalised, only the eighth one falls in to this category being more of an observation of the state of the current climate than a view or a perception. These latter 'views' may be in need of questioning there appropriateness especially when the corresponding 'open view' for the last merely points of the need for good practice when it comes to established normalities. As such these 'views' are rather inconsistent and possibly even incoherent when considered as a typology for Islamophobia[65].

These 'closed' 'open' differentials create a series of dualisms that to some degree reinforce the closed views themselves. As closed and open are largely interchangeable with negative and positive, so the report suggests, one can only presume that Islam is to be both understood and engaged with openly or indeed positively, irrespective of whether any closed views or negative realities exist to the contrary[66]. Additionally for Halliday the term Islam as an identifying marker ensures that it is little more than a unitary object, something of relative abstraction[67]. The usage of Islam as an identifying term in the majority of these closed views suggests two things 1) The dynamics of the phenomenon, Islamophobia, are against the religion itself and 2) the model assumes a shared identity of all Muslims without differentiation behind a homogenising marker of 'Islam'[68].

In regards to the first conclusion Halliday comments that whilst historically it was Islam that was the focus of negative feelings, in the contemporary, this has shifted to Muslims themselves[69]. Allen supports this view "It is the proximity and closeness of Muslims that are more the focus of today's hostility[70]" as for the second, Muslims are reduced from a

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[65] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 74
[66] Ibid
[67] M. A. K., Halliday, *Linguistic Studies on text and Discourse*, (London: Continuum, 2002), 123
[68] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 74
[69] M. A. K., Halliday, *Linguistic Studies on text and Discourse*, (London: Continuum, 2002), 123
[70] Christopher Allen, 'Undoing proximity: the impact of the local-global nexus on perceptions of Muslims in Britain', *The Globalisation and Localisation of Religion: EASR Congress 2003*, 11 May 2003, (University of Bergen: Norway)

vibrant myriad of religiously affiliated peoples and communities to an over simplified and a uni-dimensional marker, which irretrievably reduces them, in which we see the first 'closed view' that the report challenges[71].

Allen as such attempts to construct a more viable definition and conceptualisation, due to the issues regarding the Runneymede's definition. He attempts to avoid the mistakes of the past and so does not create a list of criteria, in which any given discourse, act or event, is identified as either Islamophobic or otherwise. In avoiding this he avoids the obscuring the asymmetric, multi-dimensional, specifics, complexities and imbedded-ness of the phenomenon. Allen at length defines Islamophobia as such:

> "Islamophobia is an ideology, similar in theory, function and purpose to racism and other similar phenomena, that sustains and perpetuates negatively evaluated meaning about Muslims and Islam in the contemporary setting in similar ways to that which it has historically, although not necessarily as a continuum, subsequently pertaining, influencing and impacting upon social action, interaction, response and so on shaping and determining understanding, perceptions and attitudes in the social consensus – the shared languages and conceptual maps – that inform and construct thinking about Muslims and Islam as Other."[72]

This definition can be split into three manageable chunks that can be used to analyse latter case studies. Firstly and in some respects most importantly, it is defined as 1) "Similar in theme, function, purpose to Racism and other similar phenomenon[73]". This is quite important as it gives us a point of reference when trying to understand this term, it also gives the definition, although it may not be intentional, an ethical stance right from the go. It says this is like racism, a concept that is almost unanimously deemed to be wrong in most parts of the world. 2) "It sustains and perpetuates negatively evaluated meaning to Muslims and Islam

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[71] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 75-56
[72] Ibid, 190
[73] Ibid

in the contemporary setting in similar ways to that which it has historically[74]". This means that like in its Orientalist past, Islamophobia would hold views about Islam that is non-progressive and negative and in some cases derogatory and that this view will maintain itself unaided if unchecked. 3) "Pertains, influences and impacts upon social action, interaction, response – and shapes and determines understanding, perception and attitudes in the social consensus that inform and contrast thinking about Muslims as other.[75]" this part is really about how this impacts on society. In this definition Islamophobia affects a person in every regards to how they relate to Islam or Muslims and as such this has an effect on the person in general and in the wider public. Ultimately these means that if people are thinking negatively then this becomes a social norm and is not dealt with.

Allen claims that an understanding of Islamophobia as a concept must be first qualified with an understanding of the British context, as this is the starting place of its recognition, as well as the significance of the Runneymede report[76]. This report stated that Islamophobia in Britain was getting increasingly "More explicit, more extreme and more dangerous[77]"; a concept that was beginning to be less of a cultural normality with a universal acceptance, to a feeling that began to stand out in the minds of people specifically and as such was growing and was being aggravated.

However it is arguable that no matter how strong these feelings are the use of the word phobia to describe these kinds of antagonisms towards Islam is debateable, depending on which dictionary definition you ascribe to. The Collins English Dictionary describes a Phobia as "an abnormal intense and irrational fear of a given situation, organism, or object[78]", using this definition then the term Islamophobia makes little sense seeing as the manifestations of

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[74] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 190
[75] Ibid
[76] Ibid, 83
[77] Robin Richardson, Ed, *Islamophobia: Issues, Challenges and Action: A report by the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia*, (Staffordshire, Trentham Books Ltd,1997), 1
[78] Collins English Dictionary, 'Phobia', *Collins English Dictionary*, (http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/phobia?showCookiePolicy=true), (29/01/13)

Islamophobia often involve offensive actions and attacks against Muslims not just negative emotions[79]. However the OED (Oxford English Dictionary) includes hatred in its definition of phobia besides mere fear and this definition has more synergy to that of Allen's usage of Islamophobia[80]. Using this definition then we can see that Islamophobia implies fear of Islam and its followers. And that it is this fear that generates feelings of hatred which in turn provides reasons for offensive actions thus Islamophobia manifests itself in various forms of behavioural patterns, mostly negative against Islam and Muslims and not it just simple fear or aversion[81].

However this creates a range of different personal understandings of what this word could potentially mean. It could be argued that the person who is merely afraid of the unknown is Islamophobia while at the same the vitriolic outspoken person who insights and performs attacks against Muslims is also Islamophobic, In this way we can see that the use of phobia as a term in Islamophobia can be contested on grounds on definition as well as the term referring to a range of 'Islamophobias' rather than a set understood definition.

The EUMC 9/11 report noted a backlash of Islamophobia across the whole of the European Union including the United Kingdom. It was those such as Dr Lorraine Sheridan at the University of Leicester in her paper entitled: *Effects of the Events of September 11th 2001 on Discrimination and Implicit Racism in Five Religious and Seven Racial Groups*[82] that noted the effects within the UK. There have also been dossiers complied by FAIR and the IHRC as well as the *Muslim News* of evidence of the effects of 9/11 whilst others such as the

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[79] Zafar Iqbal, 'Islamophobia or Islamophobias: towards developing a process model', *Islamic Studies*, (spring '10), (Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University: Islamabad), 81-101 (Vol. 49, No.1) , 91
[80] Sally Wehmeier, *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary*, 7th edn, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1132
[81] Zafar Iqbal, 'Islamophobia or Islamophobias: towards developing a process model', *Islamic Studies*, (spring '10), (Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University: Islamabad), 81-101 (Vol. 49, No.1) , 91
[82] Sheridan Lorraine, *Effects of the Events of September 11th 2001 on Discrimination and Implicit Racism in Five Religious and Seven Ethnic Groups: A Brief Overview,* (Leicester: University of Leicester, 2002)

European Muslim Research and the Muslim Safety Forum have continued to do so in more recent years[83].

At this point it is interesting to note some of the findings these kinds of surveys have. For example a YouGov poll conducted shortly after 9/11[84] found that 84% of British people tended to be more suspicious about Muslims post 9/11; 35% stated that their opinions of Muslims had gone down; 82% believed that Muslims were too isolationist; 56% felt that generally they had nothing in common with Muslims; 63% suggested that Muslims did little to promote tolerance between themselves and others and finally 1/6 felt they would be disappointed if Muslims became their neighbours[85].

The 2010 British Social Attitudes survey suggested that 52% of all respondents believed that Britain was divided along religious lines and 45% thought that religious diversity was having a negative effect on the nation. In addition to this more than half would oppose the building of a mosque within their local community as opposed to only 15% who would oppose a Church[86]. While these points cannot be classed as Islamophobic per se, it would be hard to ignore the correlation between the findings of the YouGov report and the British Social Attitudes Survey[87]. These two surveys together suggest a growing trend in the social attitudes of the British People towards Muslims.

Allen notes that Muslim communities are not only the second largest faith group in the UK as but also the most easily recognisable with traditional attire or even with mere aspects of the tradition being easily identifiable as 'other' or different to the prevalent British norm. He argues that from this recognition of difference there has been "a wider demarcation

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[83] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010),84
[84] Poll Conducted by YouGov in October 2002 on behalf of the Islamic Society of Britain as part of their Islam Awareness Week 2002. Further details and information relating to this can be found posted on their website at http://www.isb.org.uk
[85] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010),84
[86] National Centre for Social Research, British Social Attitudes Survey 2010 26th Edition (2010, http://tinyurl.com/yeo48hf)
[87] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010),84 - 85

that embodies Muslims with notions of otherness and inferiority[88]" or more precisely the kind of otherness or inferiority that is seen as contrary to the British norms. As this kind of 'otherness' has developed Muslims have also gained more immediacy both socially and religiously, and so this new immediacy has been understood and contextualised through a largely negative evaluation[89].

Supporting Said, Allen establishes that the language, terminology and ideas that are circulated publically and politically that relate to Islam and Muslims are not originating purely from the political or academic elites. The media has had increasing importance in the circulation and dissemination of such ideas[90]. As identified by the Runneymede Report:

> "closed as open views of Islam are routinely reflected and perpetuated in both broadsheets and tabloid, in both the local press and the national, in both considered statements, and casual throwaway remarks, and in editorial, columns, articles, reader's letters, cartoons and headlines as well as in reports of events.[91]"

In this way, negative representation of Islam is an ingredient of all aspects of the media[92] and post 9/11 the volume of coverage that Muslims received increased dramatically[93]. This becomes problematic when one of the findings of the report states that 74% of Britons claim they know "nothing or next to nothing about Islam" and that 64% of the population claim that what they do know is derived purely from the media[94]. However the role of the media is debateable and contentious and as such it is hard to pinpoint its effects. It is important to note that none of these reports directly suggested that the media caused or were responsible for any change of attitude or act of aggression. While this cannot dismiss its

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[88] Panina Werbner and Tariq Modood, eds, *Debating Cultural Hybridity: Multi-Cultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism*, (London: Zed, 1997)
[89] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010),85
[90] Ibid, 96
[91] Robin Richardson, Ed, *Islamophobia: Issues, Challenges and Action: A report by the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia*, (Staffordshire, Trentham Books Ltd,1997), 20
[92] Ibid
[93] Robert Whitaker, *Mad in American: Bad Science, Bad medicine, and the Enduring Mistreat of the Mentally Ill,* (NY: Perseus Publishing, 2002)
[94] YOUGOV, *Attitudes towards British Muslims*, Islam Awareness Week (4 November 2002)

impact in anyway, the media play a major role in the formulation and establishment of perceptions and themes that are popular in the public sphere[95].

In conclusion it is clear that the concept of Islamophobia as a definition has a deep foundation especially in the works of Orientalist scholars. Orientalism as a topic had made Islam appear Medieval, dangerous and seem threatening specifically to the western world, so much so that even now decades later it still has an ingrained place in our very culture. When we observe Islamophobia as a term in this light it is easy to draw the connections between past feelings and ideas and current issues, orientalism is defiantly the context through which what Allen describes as Islamophobias has developed and become recognised.

Allen has argued that the news media will portray a side or a nuance of a story that makes most cultural sense, and as such will write these articles in such a way that they could be classified as Islamophobic under Allen's definition. It could even be that the very nature of some articles could be defined as such. This is the topic of the rest of this paper, and will be discussed at length using case studies performed to show the kinds of way Islam and Muslims are represented in the media and also a study showing some specific examples of how they are represented.

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[95] Christopher Allen, Jørgen Nielsen, *Summary Report on Islamophobia: in the EU after 11th September 2001*, (Vienna: University of Birmingham Press, 2002), 46-8

Chapter 2 - Trends in the Coverage of Islam and Muslims

This section will be analysing the levels of representation that Islam and Muslims received between the parameter dates of 2000 and 2008. The importance of this is to establish a trend in the levels of representation that Islam and Muslims received between these dates to see if they correlate with topics regarding Islamophobia that will be covered in the next section. This will be achieved be analysing graphs of levels of representation for any significant increase in representation that Muslims or Islam received, to what they pertained and why they followed that trend. This section will not be making any analysis of the content of news media story or on what methods they used to report. This will be done by focusing on a case study produced by Justin Lewis, Paul Mason and Kerry Moore entitled *Images of Islam in the UK: The Representation of British Muslims in the National Press, 2000-8*, in which they examine print media representation of British Muslims. This case study was chosen as they avoid the use of claims and counter claims about context or typicality and apply a more discursive analysis to a large sample based on a systematic analysis[96], additionally the parameter dates used are effective for demonstrating how levels of representation of Islam in the news media can change and give us some clues as to why.

The sample for this case study was taken from the Nexus database of British Newspapers with which all stories about British Muslims between 2000 and May 2008 which was gathered using various Keywords that connected Muslims and Islam to the UK. The search yielded around twenty three thousand results. They used a corpus to construct a sample of just under a thousand articles focusing on five alternate years from 2000 – 2008. From which they selected one in every twenty articles eliminating those that only refer to Islam in passing.

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[96] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 40-42

This gave a sample of nine hundred and seventy four stories across the selected eight years to focus on[97].

Islam in the news has unarguably increased since 2001 and so has its audience, for example in the aftermath following the terrorist attacks on the two towers over thirteen million national newspapers were bought everyday by British people alone. In total *The Times*, *The Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Financial Times*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Daily Express*, *The Daily Star*, *The Mirror* and *The Sun* added an additional two and a half million papers to their usual prints all of which were sold out each day for some time following 9/11. As such the disseminative audience of the British press was substantially wider, post 9/11 than in what would be referred to as a normal day[98].

The amount of coverage that Muslims and Islam received during this period of 2001 to 2002 also increased dramatically parallel to the extensive amount of press that the attacks and its aftermath received. The majority of this additional press that Muslims received fell immediately after 9/11, firmly establishing the context in which Muslims were reported in that and the following year[99].

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[97] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 43-44
[98] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 97
[99] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 45

Levels of representation

If we look at a scientific sample, as per Whitaker[100]: -

	01/01/01 - 09/09/01	20/07/01 - 19/07/02	
Newspapers	No. of Articles	No. of Articles	% Increase
Guardian	817	2043	250%
Independent	681	1556	228%
Times	535	1486	278%
Daily Telegraph	417	1176	282%
Daily Mail	202	650	322%
Mirror	164	920	561%
Daily Express	139	305	219%
The Sun	80	526	658%
Daily Star	40	144	360%

Table 1 - Number of Articles Regarding Islam

From the 1st January to the 9th September 2001 inclusive of all the articles in the national press that were in regards or refer to Muslims or Islam.

We can see that across what is the majority of 2001 there are an uneven spread of stories across the varying papers[101]. Across a near year period this is not a large amount of articles however when we view the levels for 20th June 2001 to 19th June 2002 a time frame that includes 9/11 we can see a drastic increase across the board.

The number of articles that were produced regarding Muslims and Islam in this time period are significantly increased some being in the thousands. All of the noted papers have increased by over two hundred percent and some have increased by over five hundred percent[102]. This would appear to be a starting point or a catalyst for a period of dramatic

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[100] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 97
[101] Brian Whitaker, 'Islam and the British Press', Hamid and sharif (2002), 53-7
[102] Ibid

increase in representation of Islam and Muslims across all of the British Newspapers[103]. As we can see from Figure 1[104]: -
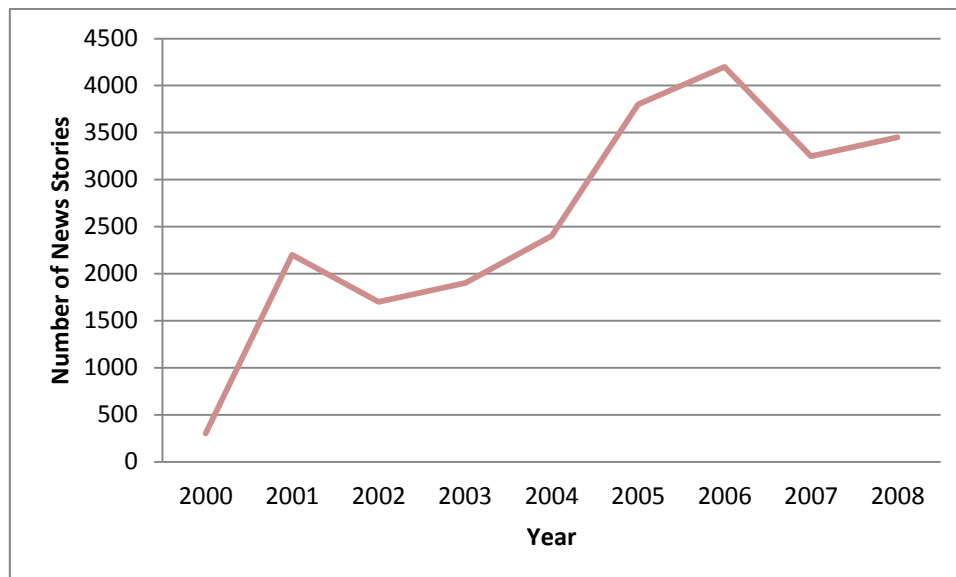

Figure 1 - Stories about British Muslims over Time (all UK national newspapers)

There is a different trend of increasing representation that holds its starting place in 9/11, even though in 2002 this dropped briefly overall coverage was five times greater than it was in 2000 across all newspapers[105]. We can see another dramatic increase in representation on top of the already high levels of representation at the time of the 7/7 bomb attacks in London, as would be expected. After this coverage continues to increase into 2006 reaching a level that is twelve times higher than that of 2000. Going into 2007 and 2008 coverage drops a little and begins to level out into a constant, at a level that is still higher than in 2005[106].

This high level of representation seems even greater when compared to a time period ten years before hand. Based on an analysis of the representation of Islam and Muslims in the British Press between 8th May 2006 and 14th may 2006 inclusive research has been compiled

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[103] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 45
[104] Ibid
[105] Ibid
[106] Ibid

as to the levels of representation that a normal week in the press had. These dates were chosen as they were deemed to be to be normal as in there was no evidence to show that this week was any different from any other randomly chosen week from the stance of events that related to Muslims and Islam. Comparing this week to previously compiled research by Poole from 1996[107] it is estimated that the levels of representation of Islam and Muslims as measured by articles and items in the news had increased by about 270% across the whole of the national press[108]. This demonstrates that this dramatic increase in representation is not only unusual for the immediate time period, but is a phenomenon that has significance across a broader length of time than the parameters of this research.

It is interesting to note that between the dates of 2002 and 2005 we can see that there is a gradual increase in representation that is unconnected to a significant event such as 9/11. As we can see after the rapid increase post 9/11 it begins to drop into 2002 but still not to a level of that in 2000. It then starts to increase less dramatically but more consistently over this three year period, gathering its own momentum. This trend happens again after the 7/7 attacks in 2005 however at a much higher level[109]. This demonstrates that although the terrorist events seem to have kick started increased levels of representation they are not the whole context in which this representation is conceived, or at least there is other factors that contribute, or the events have changed something so as to warrant this trend[110].

It is unfair to suggest that all of the articles that are post 9/11 have a negative stance or are negatively conceived, even though the increase of representation is directly related to a significant terrorist attack. However it is fair to presume that any negative representation that was being presented before 9/11 would have also increased in numbers at the same rate as the

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[107] E. Poole, *Reporting Islam: Media reps of British Muslims*, (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2002), 23 + 57
[108] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 98
[109] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 45
[110] Ibid

overall representation[111] and that the war on terror, or the terrorist attacks were initially the lens that through which British Muslims were conceived in the Newspapers between 2001 and 2002 and then again between 2005 and 2006 as others have suggested[112]. In between these dates where representation was gradually increasing it also fair to say that this increase in representation was at least kick started by the terrorist attack and the war on terror, although may not be directly related to these specifically[113].

It is important to understand the reasons for this dramatic increase of representation so as to give context to the proceeding chapters. We can see that as representation of 9/11 increased so did that of Islam and Muslims between the dates of 2001 and 2002, this has been established to be the catalyst for future increase of representation. It is well known that Islam is heavily associated to 9/11 however it is clear that while this was the lens for many years, and could still be, through which Islam and Muslims are reported in the news media it is not the sole topic. Between 2001 and 2005 representation of 9/11 would have inevitably dropped while representation of Islam increased showing that topics for covering Islam had moved away from 9/11 on to perhaps more cultural or political spheres rather than focusing purely on the attack in New York. It can be assumed that when the dramatic increase in representation, occurring post 7/7, began it was this lens that was primarily used to refer to Islam and Muslims in the same trend as 9/11 and that when the dip in representation ended in 2006 it was back to more cultural and political spheres that Islam and Muslims were regarded by.

This increase in representation could fit into Allen's definition of Islamophobia it could be 'sustaining and perpetuating' negative representation of Islam. However as we cannot yet judge the content of this representation then we do not know if it is negative or positive

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[111] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 98
[112] E. Poole, *Reporting Islam: Media reps of British Muslims*, (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2002)
[113] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 45 - 6

representation that is being sustained and perpetuated but as stated we can fairly deduce that negative representation would have also increased. The gradual increase between 2002 and 2005 of representation is systematic with the definition used as it is not directly connected to a significant global newsworthy event. Before this increase representation of Islam had actually gone down to a rounded of level that was the basis for this increase, and the same pattern is evident of post 2005 and the 7/7 bombings. However the disseminative audience post 9/11 was much wider, due to the attack. Before this event there was no focus to draw on for representation of Islam and so only demonstrates that a news worthy event combined with Islam and Muslims association causes the level of representation of Islam to go up, it doesn't demonstrate a dramatic change in public opinion. For example it has been shown that the increase in representation of Islam has been growing at least since the nineties and would probably have continued to do so if 9/11 had not happened.

The levels of representation of Islam and Muslims have increased in a context of the attacks on 9/11. For 9/11 to be the lens through which Islam and Muslims are observed automatically positions them as 'Other' according to Allen's definition, no matter of the actual content. 9/11 was the lens through which Islam and Muslims was observed which is in itself detaining to "…the understanding, perceptions and attitudes in the social consensus…[114]" If Islam and Muslims are often referred to in regards to a terrorist attack then that will have an impact on the attitudes of the readers of said newspaper. After the drop in representation post 9/11, representation of Islam and Muslims began to gradually increase. This representation, while perhaps not referring to 9/11, will still be viewed through this lens that would have impacted on the readers mind set.

What we can definitely see is that Islam and Muslims had a gradually increasing level of representation that spiked at 9/11 and continued to grow after until it levelled out at a high

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[114] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 190

level after 7/7. Now this chapter will focus on the kinds of stories in these papers that were representing Islam and Muslims, what types of news hooks were used and what kinds of language and signifiers.

Islam as a News Hook

Using the same focus group as previous, of nine hundred and seventy four stories, Figure 2, as per Petley and Richardson, regards the levels of differing news hooks, pertaining to Islam and Muslims, used in the newspaper media.
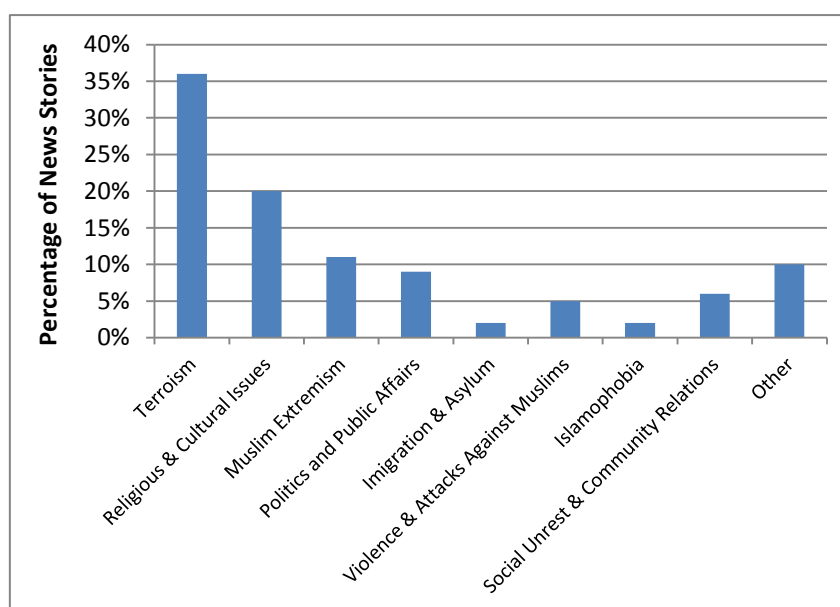

Figure 2 - News hooks for stories about British Muslims

As can be seen there are three main news hooks that prevalent: Terrorism, Religious and cultural issues and Muslim Extremism[115].

As would be expected terrorism or the war on terror accounted for the highest level as a news hook, 36%, and as such is the most conspicuous on the graph. These stories included stories about terrorism trials, the war on terror and hostage taking. However the news hooks

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[115] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 46-48

mostly referred to terrorism In general rather than a specific event. The second most common news hook regarded religious and cultural issues which accounted for 22% of the stories overall. These included discussions on Sharia Law, debates about the wearing of the veil, dress codes, forced marriages, the role of Islam in Britain and the Danish Cartoon scandal. These kinds of stories more than the others highlighted the differences between British Muslims and other British people. The third most common story was that of Muslim Extremism which accounted for 11% of the stories overall. These kinds of stories were almost exclusively about Abu Hamza who was potentially the single most news worthy Muslim of the time; he was very prevalent across all the news media[116]. It is interesting to note that News Hooks about terrorism percentage wise was more prevalent than that of Religious and cultural issues and Muslim Extremism put together, adding to the evidence that terrorism or the war on terror is the main lens through which Islam and Muslims were viewed in the UK Media. It is also possible to say, though not definitively that these three news hooks are likely to cast Muslims as the source of Problems or in opposition to traditional British Culture[117].

In contrast only 5% of the stories were based on attacks on or problems for British Muslims and as such the concept of Islamophobia or any of its other related terms scarcely features in the news stories at all let alone as a news hook, this is somewhat ironic as this kind of news inevitably will lead to some kind of increase in Islamophobia[118].

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[116] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 46-48
[117] Ibid
[118] Ibid, 48-49

These news hooks will now be regarded in how they have increased or decreased in prominence over an eight year period in Table 2: -

	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008
Terrorism	28%	51%	34%	34%	27%
Religious Cultural Issues	20%	8%	12%	27%	32%
Muslim Extremism	3%	8%	14%	11%	10%
Politics and Public affairs	10%	8%	8%	10%	8%
Immigration and Asylum	0%	3%	1%	1%	2%
Violence and Attacks against Muslims	10%	5%	9%	3%	1%
Islamophobia	0%	1%	4%	1%	1%
Social Unrest and Community Relations	13%	6%	7%	7%	2%
Other	18%	12%	12%	7%	16%
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 2 - Prominence of News Hooks over Time from 2000 – 2008

Over the period terrorism as a News hook has remained at a consistently high level however as a proportion of the coverage it reaches its peak in 2002 and then reduces in level afterwards. This is not because there are fewer terrorism related stories post 2002, as the previous chapter shows coverage of Islam and Muslims goes up after this period, rather after this date other kinds of stories gain more prominence and stories of Islam and Muslims all get more coverage. Interestingly stories of religious or cultural phenomena gradually increase in proportion over the time frame from 8% to 32%[119]. Strikingly in 2008 it overtakes terrorism as a main news hook. Stories of Muslim Extremism also increase in prominence between 2000 and 2004 and remain high in 2005 through to 2008. However the increase in attacks on British Muslims is not reflected in this data, on the contrary while the coverage about anti-Muslim racism and attacks on British Muslim constitute 10% and 9% of stories in 2000 and 2004, this drops to 3% in 2006 and 1% in 2008[120].

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[119] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 48-49
[120] Ibid, 48-49

If we break these news hooks down into that published in the tabloids and that published in the broadsheets, Figure 3[121]: -
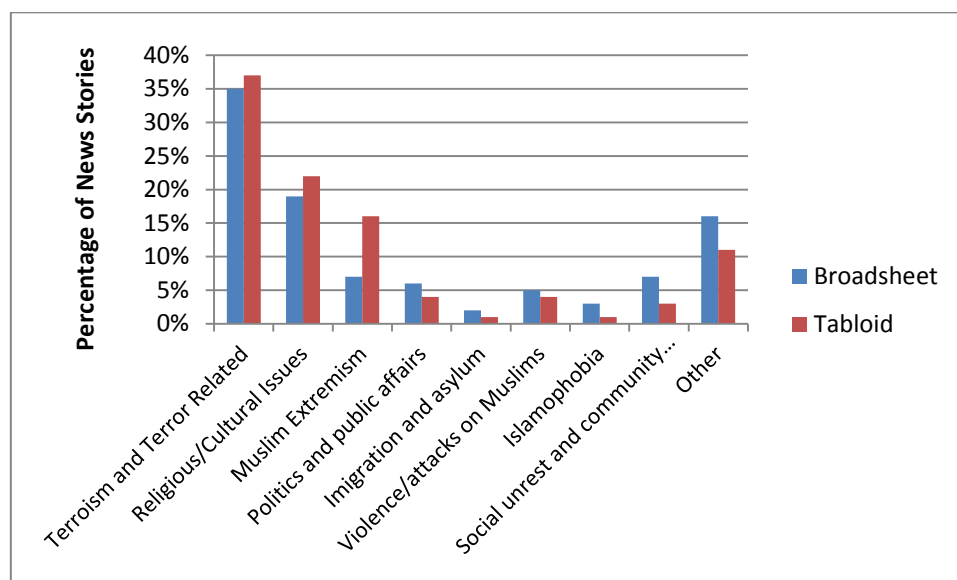

Figure 3- Broadsheet Vs. Tabloid News Hooks.

We can see that there are not dramatic variations and trends remain fairly consistent. The main difference being between the levels of coverage dedicated to Muslim extremism where tabloid papers had a far greater coverage level, most likely due to coverage of Abu Hamza who has become a popular figure in tabloid journalism for negative connotation almost to the extent of being a sub-genre in its own right[122].

In contrast the tabloids were far less concerned with reporting social unrest and community relations in general. This could be explained by considering the target market of both Tabloid and Broadsheet journalism. It is likely that Tabloids stereotypically write for a working class reader and as such are much more concerned with social unrest and how taxes are used. However your broadsheet newspaper stereotypically is writing for a more middle to upper class reader, who potentially will find the state of the economy and international politics more important and interesting than local unrest.

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[121] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 49-50
[122] Ibid, 49-50

Allen's definition is quite strongly relates to these findings, the very fact that the most prominent News hook is Terrorism demonstrates how the media can "…shape and determine understanding and perception and attitudes in the social consensus…[123]". The repeated association of Islam and Muslims to terrorism instead of an actual group or organisation creates an understanding in the social sphere that associates the entire Muslims world with the actions and thoughts of a small group, or individual. This is "Similar in theme function, purpose to racism and other similar phenomenon…[124]", associating negative connotations to a group of people based on caricatures that derive from the few, which also covers "sustained and perpetuated negatively evaluated meaning to Muslims and Islam…[125]".

Language and Discourses used for Islam

In order to qualify this theory this paper will now regard more specific coverage of Islam in relation to specific words, ideas, statements and discourses which are repeatedly used in the newspaper when referring to British Muslims[126]. While it may be possible to cluster these discourses under such a heading as positive or negative a closer examination of them will enable the precise meaning of this data to be observed.

Of the nine hundred and seventy four stories that were taken from the nexus database and used by Petley and Richardson there were one thousand four hundred and twelve instances of specific discourses. Each of the covered stories may contain more than one discourse so for example a story may regard how moderate Muslims oppose terrorism but that there are more and more Muslims are listening to the preaching's of terrorist extremists. There are two discourses in this story as the first regards moderate Muslims and their views

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[123] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 190
[124] Ibid
[125] Ibid
[126] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 52-53

on terrorism and the second regards the problem of Muslims following extremists. The most prevalent of these discourses are displayed in Figure 4, as per Petley and Richardson[127]: -
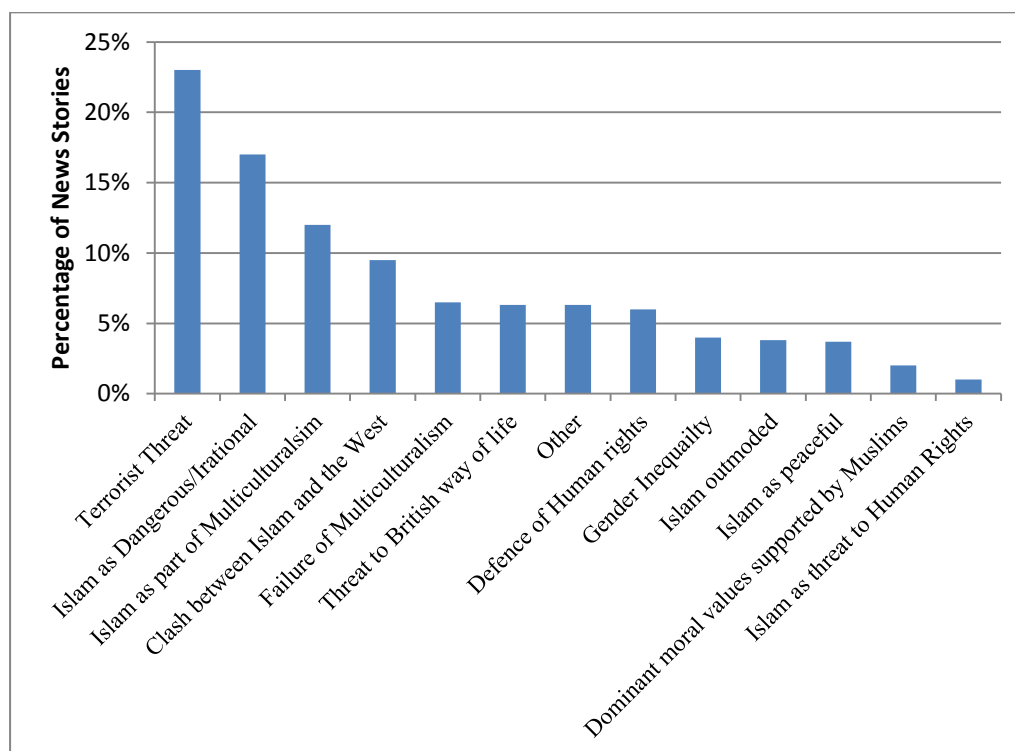

Figure 4 - Most Common Discourses Used about Muslims

As can be seen the two most common discourses are very similar and have symbolic if not explicit links to each other. The first two is discourses in which British Muslims are linked to a threat of terrorism followed by the discourses in which Islam and Muslims in the UK are seen as dangerous or irrational. The third most common discourse is about British Muslims and British Multiculturalism and as such may be much less pejorative, although this is generalisation in that the context will determine this[128].

The next three are clearly orientalist in nature in that they are to do with the "clash of civilisations" between Islam and the West, the problematic nature of Islam demonstrating the failure of multiculturalism and Islam portrayed as a threat to British values and traditions[129]. Again it has to be emphasised that the nature as to whether these discourses are positive or

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[127] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 52-53
[128] Ibid, 53-54
[129] Ibid

negative cannot be presumed, neither can the nature of the assertions of these articles be presumed either, rather it can be established that whether positive or negative these articles with these discourses are they bring Islam to light within the context of these themes on a regular basis throughout the time period. Also it can also be noted that four out of five of the most common discourses used associate Islam and Muslims in Britain with themes that are threatening or problematic or are in opposition to dominate British culture and values. In contrast to this only two per cent of the stories contain themes that say that Islam and British Muslims support or contribute to the dominant or main stream social values[130].

Most of these discourses are prominent from 2000 through to 2008 however there are some shifts between the prominences of the varying themes. For example discourses on the defence of Muslim human rights have become less prominent and the idea that Islam is more dangerous and irrational has become more prominent[131]. It is interesting to note that this shift in prominence between these two themes takes place over the years 2000 to 2008, a time period in which it has been established that the levels of coverage Islam receives generally goes up, It may well be that the amount of stories about Muslim human rights has not actually decreased but that the amount of stories regarding Islam as dangerous and irrational has increased proportionally with the increase that Islam receives in this time period.

If we compare these discourses broadsheet to tabloid we can see that that the similarities far outweigh any differences in the discourses that they use. However some of the more overtly negative discourses are more prominent in the tabloids also the two most common discourses of Muslims linked to terrorism and Muslims as dangerous or irrational are both more prominent in the Tabloids. However this data can be misleading as they are the most prominent in the broadsheets as well but by a smaller margin[132]. The broadsheets are

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[130] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 54
[131] Ibid
[132] Ibid

accordingly less likely to feature some of the more negative discourses and to feature more of the more positive themes. For example a broadsheet might very well feature a story about the defence of Muslim Human rights and Islam as a part of multiculturalism; however this last one could also be about the failure of multiculturalism as well. The theme of the clash of civilisations, with its more negative connotations, also tends to be more of a broadsheet topic rather than tabloids. This places Muslims in opposition to western values in a more internationalist framework[133]. This demonstrates that even though generally speaking the tabloids tend to be using more themes with a negative connotation than the broadsheets, it is never as simple as that, any of these discourses could be used in a multitude of ways.

If we now take this discursive argument further by analysing the individual nouns and adjectives that are used in conjunction with Muslims and Islam in the articles with which a more specific and firmly grounded context will be formed. Of the stories used by Petley and Richardson seven hundred and ninety six are found where descriptive nouns were used in conjunction with either Islam or Muslims, for example "Muslim Zealot" or "Islamic Preacher" as in Figure 5[134]: -
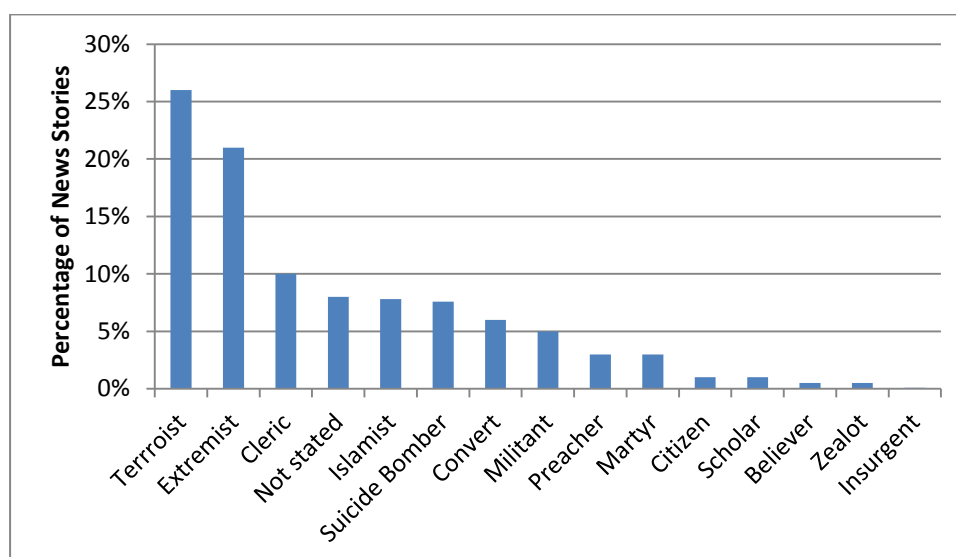

Figure 5 - Most Common Nouns used in Conjunction with British Muslims

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[133] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 54-55
[134] Ibid 55

As we can see straight away the most common nouns are 'terrorist' with twenty two per cent of the total amount and extremist with eighteen per cent of the total amount. It is also clear that apart from cleric and convert and of course those which are not stated, it is fair to say that all of the most popular nouns used have negative connotations[135]. In fact there are very few nouns which on their own have a positive connotation, scholar is one but with zero point five per cent of the total amount it is barely registered[136]. As the findings from the news hooks analysis would suggest if the hooks are mostly to do with terrorism or extremism or religious and cultural issues that the nouns used in conjunction to these hooks would reflect the topic. What is quite clear at this point is to what extent the dominant news hooks directly influence how Muslims and Islam are presented in the news media[137].

The same analysis is conducted with adjectives where there are two hundred and eighty seven varying examples were found in conjunction with Islam or Muslims, for example militant Muslim or extremist Islam. The most common are shown in Figure 6 as per Petley and Richardson[138]: -
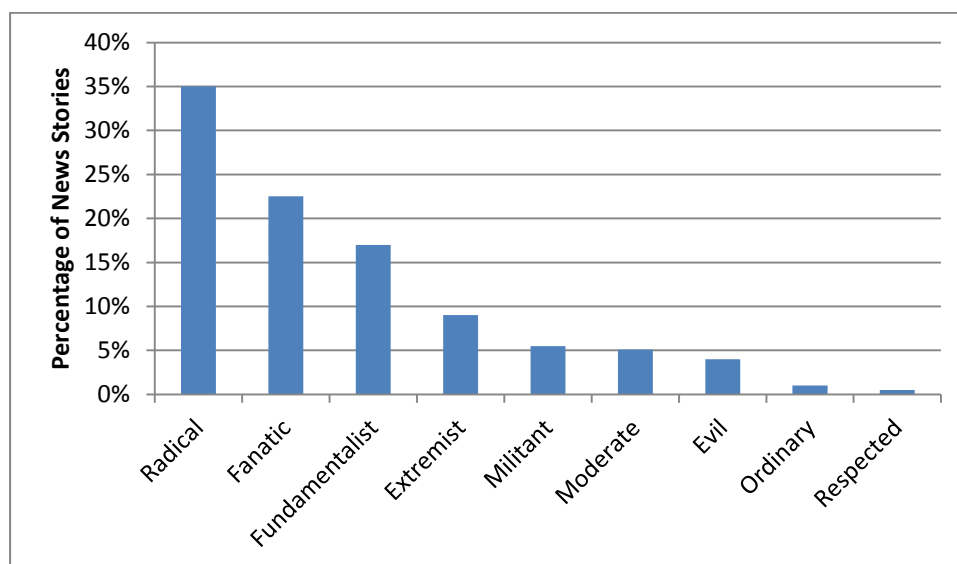

Figure 6 - Most Common Adjectives in conjunction with British Muslims

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[135] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 55
[136] Ibid
[137] Ibid
[138] Ibid, 56

As can be seen there are few instances of more positive adjectives such as respected or moderate, even though some of them are fairly unambiguous such as Evil, a conclusion of the context of these words cannot be reasonably jumped to. However when viewed under the context of our more discursive analysis, a series of contexts that would only show a word such as radical negatively with negative connotations[139].

What is striking is that the most common adjectives: Fanatical, fundamentalist, extremist and militant, all of which might be found under the same heading in a thesaurus, and all of which being in stark contrast to the less used adjectives of moderate. In short we see a 'radical', 'fanatical', 'fundamentalist', and 'extremist' or a 'militant Islam' than to a moderate Islam. In fact references to a radical Islam outnumber references to a moderate one seventeen to one[140].

If we break down this data into that of different types of papers then we see a remarkable level of consistency suggesting that these words are not just a part of a more colourful tabloid vocabulary[141]. They are universal across the board emphasising the extent to which the contexts and hooks for these stories affect the vocabulary in use in conjunction with Islam and Muslims. The differences that do emerge suggest a distinctly class related form of lexical preferences. So for example broadsheet newspapers favoured the term 'Islamist' in a way that the tabloids do not. They also use the word cleric when describing religious figures while the tabloids prefer the term preacher. But otherwise there were very little variations in the terms used by the British Press with even the most pejorative such as 'fanatical' or 'evil' being used by broadsheets and tabloids equally[142].

The types of discourses used designate what it is that the newspaper is regarding in its article. A similar concept to that of news hooks. As per Petley and Richardson we see the

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[139] Julian Petley, Robin Richardson, Eds, *Pointing the Finger: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2011), 56
[140] Ibid
[141] Ibid, 57
[142] Ibid

most common Discourses. What we can see immediately about the types of discourses used in the British Papers is that they are very similar to the Types of News Hooks as mentioned before. British Muslims as a threat or linked to the threat of terrorism, Islam and Muslims seen as dangerous or irrational are both very much core aspects of Allen's definition being concepts that "sustain and Perpetuate negatively evaluated meaning to Muslims and Islam in the contemporary setting" as well as "pertaining , influencing and impacting upon social action interaction response…"[143]. The general public cannot read how Islam is Dangerous in the UK and that not have an influence on how they perceive and interact with Muslims. These views are being enhanced by the media the way that they deliver and report on Islam, especially in their use of nouns an adjective. When an article uses a noun or an adjective like Terrorist in conjunction with a Muslim or Islam then that word is associated with Islam or Muslims as a whole in the mind-set of the readers, this is influencing social action and interaction as well as attitudes of the social consensus. This kind of news reporting was often used in regards to the Jews over the previous few centuries and was classed as anti-Semitism and as such is this phenomenon is similar to Racism and other such phenomenon. All of this is key aspects of how Allen Defines Islamophobia.

What is clear is that language is one of the most telling and prevalent methods of representing without explicitly doing so. For example as stated earlier four of the most common Nouns used in conjunction with Islam and Muslims associate with Threatening or problematic to British Culture or society. The articles are not explicitly saying that Islam or Muslims are a threat, but by referring to them using terms such as terrorist or extremist the representation by association with given ideas that are prevalent in the public's mind set, they do. The same is true with Adjectives used in conjunction with Islam and Muslims, though it is harder to discern the same principle applies, terms like 'Radical', especially used in a

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[143] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 190

discourse that is negative produces a negative idea of the term and its meaning, thus perpetuating the concept. This is very much in line with Allen's definition of "…Perpetuating negatively evaluated meanings…" nouns and adjectives are not specifically Islamophobic according to Allen's definition; however they are key factors for the sustaining and perpetuating Islamophobia.

<u>Summery</u>

This chapter has regarded the levels of representation that Islam and Muslims have received over a time period of just under a decade, as well as what kinds of news hooks, discourses and language was used in the media during this time period. This chapter has also regarded how this information lines up with Allen's definition of Islamophobia. What is clear about the levels of representation That Islam and Muslims receive over this time period is that it increases substantially at the time of 9/11 and then gradually continues to grow afterwards even as coverage of 9/11 decreases. This shows that 9/11 was a kick starter for an increase in representation of Islam and Muslims and could even be the lens through which they are perceived later, which, due to the nature of 9/11, will place Islam and Muslims as 'Other' In the mind-set of the reader automatically, no matter whether the representation is good or bad.

What can be seen though is that the kinds of news hooks and discourses predominantly being used about Islam and Muslims at this time is indeed negative in essence, Terrorism and the threat of terrorism is of course a key topic, but this stems other topics such has extremism and other Orientalist discourses that naturally place Islam and Muslims as other. The views of people like Abu Hamza in these articles creates an impression that suggests that this standard views for Islam which acts as a catalyst for the negative representation Islam and Muslims receive. What is also clear is that negative language in both

its Noun and Adjective forms are used to describe Muslims generally speaking without qualifier that explains for accurately creating again if nothing else false impressions. Allen's definition states that Islamophobia sustains and perpetuates negatively evaluated meanings while also impacting on the social mind set of those involved or affected about Islam and Muslims. This is clearly a definition that can be attributed to this kind of representation, even without knowing the explicit details of each article, it is the hooks that grabs people attention the general topics of the articles and the kinds of language used that would most significantly add to a feeling of Islamophobia, without explicitly stating anything.

Chapter 3 – The fallout of 9/11

There are certain kinds of events that can have such an effect on the course of History that its course can be altered by the event. In the contemporary world, since the start of the Twentieth Century, there have been several events that have escalated such changes, the bombings on 9/11 was such an epochal event[144]. Few events, such as the assassination of Duke Ferdinand in 1914, which essentially kick-started WWI, or the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, effectively ending WWII have had such as big an impact on the polity of the world like 9/11[145]. With the additions of the bombings on the 7th July 2005, the increasing wars in the Gulf and the Afghan 'War on Terror' there is left a wealth of material of this nature for the media to continuously display to the world all over[146].

Commentators, politicians and journalists continue to argue that the events of 9/11 signal a kind of rupture, that the world was required to respond to, and that now the world is a different political, economic and social place. In this aftermath a new world order was founded[147].

At a global level it is arguable that the media have played a fundamental part in this, by constructing this mental image in the psyches of the readers and watchers, providing them with scripts of previous events and guiding an interpretation of 9/11. In such ways boundaries were forged and lines drawn, none more obvious than in the speech immediately after 9/11 by George Bush declaring that you are either with us, the democratic world, or you are with them, the terrorists. Such reductionism is an attempt to force countries to choose sides which are strongly identified as good or evil. The rhetoric around 9/11 suggests that we have a new evil to fight with a new kind of war, however it is the nature of modern warfare that it shields

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[144] Zafar Iqbal, 'Islamophobia or Islamophobias: towards developing a process model', *Islamic Studies*, (spring '10), (Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University: Islamabad), 81-101 (Vol. 49, No.1), 81
[145] Ibid
[146] Ibid
[147] Elisabeth Poole, *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002)

itself from the public eye only supplying 'Official' information. As such the extent to which propaganda played a part in this campaign is unknown, we do know from recent history that how often policy can be drive by the need to make a media performance so that the public can be gratified by seeing the threat dealt with[148]. Evidence is already emerging of the extent to which the British media are minimizing the reporting of public dissent[149].

In such ways the 9/11 attacks have been the most contributing factor, in recent times, to the development and reinforcement of the widely held presumption that Islam and Muslims are inherently anti-Western, violent and are willing and able to provide justification for this violence, unlike other world religions. It is arguable that it is this development of this perceived stance that lead to the kind of generalisations and miscomprehensions in the British Press, shortly after 9/11, that tarnished Islam, Muslims and Islamic movements with the brush of violence and anti-Western-ism. Whilst Many British National Newspapers used their lead column to defend Islam and British Muslims following 9/11[150], many Muslims still blame the British Press for its blanket coverage and generalisations that portrayed them as monolithic and violent as well as overlooking the diversity and difference in opinion from within the Muslim faith and Islamic orientated movements[151].

Consequently a vast array of negative sentiments and characteristics have been indiscriminately attributed to Islam and Muslims, that has arguably derived from, or been enhanced by, the use of phrases such as 'Islamic Terrorist', 'Islamic fanaticism' and 'Islamic Extremism', in the British Press, to refer to Islam as a whole and not just members of Al-Qaida or other fringe groups that the article is actually referring to[152].

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[148] Elisabeth Poole, *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002)
[149] D, Miller, 'World Opinion Opposes the Attack on Afghanistan', *Religion* Online, (http://staff.stir.ac.uk/david.miller), 21/11/13
[150] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 181
[151] Ibid
[152] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 181

Indeed during the sheer hyperbolic overstatement of the time after 911, the resonance of the terms "Islam" or "Muslim" had potential irreversible impact across a vast range of social , economic, political and cultural strata[153]. When we consider the July 7th bombings, the failed terrorist attack of July 21st and at Glasgow airport, as well as various terror raids and plots to behead serving British soldiers amongst other incidents, then it maybe that the use of terms like Islam or Muslim, in conjunction to these events, has caused irreversible damage to the status of British Muslims in Britain[154]. Nonetheless 9/11 provides an unprecedented and unique perspective to contextualise as well to be able to better understand manifestations of Islamophobia in the British media. As Allen puts it Islamophobia and its acknowledgements has never been more recurrent and prevalent across the British public and political spheres[155].

This paper will cover an analysis of the newspaper coverage of September 11th carried out by Elzain Elgamri in his book *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*. This piece regards some excerpts from the British press coverage of the September 11th attacks, on New York and Washington, for its deployment of the themes of perceived Islamic Violence, monolithism and British Muslims' foreignness to construct a particular image of Islam. This analysis includes articles from *The Guardian, The Times and The Independent* from the dates of 12th September through to the 24th October 2001, a period of six weeks. During this time the average amount of articles that each of these papers produced, which dealt with Islam or Muslims, was well over three hundred, the combined articles of these three papers regarding Muslims or Islam was one thousand one hundred and sixty four[156].

I have chosen to cover this research as it covers *The Times*, *The Guardian* and *The Independent*, arguably the three most influential newspapers in Britain as well as being from

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[153] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 83
[154] Ibid
[155] Ibid
[156] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 182

three different political stances. Also it is clear that many of these articles fall into a few set themes of perceived ideas about Islam and Muslims; which this analysis focuses on. These themes are: 1) Islam is regarded as a monolithic uncompromising block, with its diversity either minimised, unrecognised or ignored to create an image of a single undifferentiated global phenomenon, 2) Islam is viewed as a violent religion harbouring hatred of the west and espousing and justifying the use of violence, 3) British Muslims are considered foreign, alien and dangerous, 4) the representation that Muslims receive in this kind of coverage suggests the presence of a perceived fault line between the Muslim world and the Western world[157].

In this way this paper provides a broad analysis of the papers coverage of 9/11 as well as providing four perceived ideas with which this paper will analysis this research as compared to Allen's definition of Islamophobia. These categories used also fit rather well with the previous chapter's analysis on how Islam and Muslims are portrayed in the media; this will allow a concise analysis on the overarching issues that mainstream media portray.

Each of these sections will be analysed compared to Allen's definition as well as Said theories to see whether the coverage from around the 9/11 attacks firstly fits into the kind of trends established in the previous chapter as well as to what degree Allen's definition is useful in regarding the coverage.

Islam as a Monolithic Block

The first theme or perception that is prevalent in Elzain's analysis of the media that will be assed, is the representation of Islam as a monolithic entity and how it is perceived to be incompatible with modernism and the Western world as a whole. This concept is a

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[157] Ibid

common theme in the Press coverage especially in regards to Islamic Militant movements, or acts of violence and terrorism that has been committed by them[158].

On the 13th of September 2001 *The Independent* published an article under the title 'Blair to demand action against fundamentalists'. Within this article Prime Minister Tony Blair was quoted saying that: 'This was not an attack on America alone. This was an attack on the free and democratic world everywhere and this is the responsibility that the free and democratic world have got to shoulder together with America', from this quotation two relevant points can be deferred in regards to Islam being perceived as monolithic. First of which, at the time of the articles publishing no Muslim group had claimed responsibility for the attack, however the term 'fundamentalist' is used in regards to the terrorists that suggests the suspicion of Muslim involvement, 'Although British Intelligence experts suspect the involvement of Islamic Terrorists, Mr Blair tried to damp down tensions." - *The Independent* (13/09/2001) [159].

Secondly, is the suggestion of a 'fault line' between the terrorist and the 'free and democratic world', the term 'fundamentalist' used in this context enhances the view that they are not of the 'free and democratic world' but are rather part of an opposing 'world'[160]. To reinforce this theme the article uses the cliché term 'Muslim Terrorist' to portray Islam and Muslims negatively. It is interesting to note that the terrorists mentioned are referred to simply as Muslim rather than 'Al-Qaida Terrorist' or 'Taliban Terrorist'. In using these cliché terms the article associates all of Islam and Muslims with terrorism and violence unapologetically and with no differentiation between moderate Muslims and extremists. It is clear that the Medias consumer's image of Islam and Muslims largely derive from reports which mainly cover political and violent events in the Muslim world and the Western World.

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[158] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 182

[159] *The Independent (13/09/2001)* – as cited in – Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 182 - 3

[160] Ibid

Since the media often associate Islam with violence, terrorism and extremism it is arguable that readers develop negative images about Islam and Muslims as a whole as there is little differentiation[161].

This especially true when people who claim to speak for Islam are reported, on the Thursday following the attacks on September 11th, newspapers including *The Guardian*, *The Times* and *The Independent*, reported shocking comments and statements by Abu-Hamza Al-Masiri and Omer Bakri Mohammad who are London based Muslim radical clerics. The Press gave significantly more coverage and highlighted the opinions and statements of these two men whereas the comments and statements of more moderate speakers were either: ignored, marginalised or relegated. Overall the images that were portrayed by these papers were based mainly on the views of Intolerance and extremism that were expressed by the voices of these men[162],

> "Al-Muhajiroun's leader Sheikh Omer Bakri Mohammad has praised the terrorist attacks against the twin towers, of the world trade centre in NY and the Pentagon in Washington, other leading figures have claimed that around 1800 British Muslims take part in 'military service' each year recruited at mosques and University Campuses across the country" - *The Guardian* (19/09/01)[163]

The Times issued a report entitled *British Muslims Divided by Attack* (08/10/01), the spokesperson for Al-Muhajiron, a group of radical Muslims especially known for its anti-Western policies, a vitriolic cleric named Abu-Hamza Al-Masri who was the former Imam of Finsbury park Mosque and the director for Manchester based council for community relations, were all quoted but significantly more emphasis was placed on the Al-Muhajiroun representative and Abu-Hamza. The Spokesperson of Al-Muhajiroun was reported as threatening against retaliations in 'everyway', whereas Abu-Hamza was reported to have

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[161] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 183
[162] Ibid
[163] *The Guardian* (19/09/01) – as cited in - Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 183

claimed that all Muslims around the world will eventually become supporters of Osama bin-Laden[164]. Even though Muslims all come from a different strata in life all were lumped together and all were treated as though these two men represented them and that they represented all of Islam.

This trend of representing Islam as a monolithic faith, within the Newspapers, continues, the director for the Manchester based council for community relations reported to have supported the military action against Afghanistan. However *The Times* reported that the war in Afghan was the sole dividing line between British Muslims, which suggests that if there wasn't a war in Afghan then there would not be any division within the Muslims faith, at least in Britain, at all. This concept is contrary to the vast array of cultures ideologies, politics and theologies that is present within Islam[165].

The 9/11 attacks received less explicit forms of this kind of representation, which in of itself demonstrates how this concept of Islam being one monolithic entity is second nature to the writers and readers of such articles.

> "The Home Secretary (David Blunkett) risked the wrath of Muslim Groups by saying that he shared the outrage felt by those who did not want asylum granted to anyone who spoke out in favour of the September 11th Terrorist attacks" – The Times (24/10/01)[166].

In this extract we can see that there is heavy use of metaphor to describe how extreme British Muslims would possible react to David Blunkett's comments. There are no specifics as to which Muslims groups, only the general term that could refer to all the Muslims in Britain. The word 'wrath' which derives from the domain of divine retribution i.e. a religious discourse, is used metaphorically to depict Muslim group's possible reactions as a fit or

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[164] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 184

[165] Ibid

[166] The Times (24/10/01) – as cited in - Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 185

manifestation of intense anger and indignation. The use of the metaphor here is arguably aimed at negatively representing Muslim group's possible reaction to David Blunkett, given that violence and threat have often been properties of news discourses concerning British Muslims[167].

The Diversity of Islam seems to have been deliberately overlooked by the British Press; instead it is often portrayed as a one-dimensional monolithic entity which is also often attributed with many negative characteristics indiscriminately. The more extreme fringe voices are highlighted and given much more weight and emphasis as speakers for Islam than they truly do, while more moderate voices are marginalised. This could show that the papers are seeking out voices that fit their agenda, or are more interested in selling stories that would been deemed shocking based on reflecting a monolithic picture of Islam itself based on the perception that all Muslims have the same views[168].

When terms such 'Muslim Terrorist' are used without qualifier of Al-Qaida or Taliban, then it raises a meaning in the readers mind that is negative as well as regarding Islam as a whole. This falls directly into Allen's definition as "…Sustains and perpetuates negatively evaluate meaning to Muslims and Islam…" as well as "…Influencing and impacting on social action interaction, response that shapes and determines understanding perception and attitudes…" This is clearly the way to report a group of people as if there are no differences between them. As if they are all like the Taliban or Al-Qaida, this is the root of all types of racism, that they are all the same, which makes this also fit into "Similar in theme function, purpose to racism and other similar phenomenon." This is supported by the way in that Extremist spokes persons such as Abu Hamza and Omar Bakri is reported in such a way as if they spoke for Islam as a whole. Creating this monolithic identity, especially when they

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[167] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 185
[168] Ibid

are quoted as saying all Muslims will eventually support Osama bin Laden. There is also this

concept brought up that Islam in Britain is only divided in terms of the war on terror. All of

which nullifies the great wealth of cultural diversity, opinions and social attributes that Islam

has, creating concepts that fit into all aspects of Allen's definition.

Islam as Violent and Anti-Western

The next predominant theme that is raised in this analysis is that the media had started

associating Islam and Muslims with extremism and anti-Western sentiments. It is clear that

the media had blamed 9/11 Muslims even before anyone had claimed responsibility. Even a

day after the event newspapers were running headlines such as: "Middle Eastern Studies

'essential' for understanding terrorism" *The Guardian* (12/09/01), as well as the use of words

such as terror and fundamentalism to connect Islam with the event: "Attacks echo earlier

failed 'Day of Terror' aimed at NY in reference to 1993 attack of World Trade centre by an

Islamic Militant group" *The Times* 12/09/01)[169], and under the headline of 'Blair to Demand

Action Against Fundamentalism':

> "Tony Blair yesterday said that he feared many Britons had been killed in the
> terrorist attacks in America… although the PM declined to disclose the details,
> British officials said that he was worried that fundamentalist groups were allowed
> to operate freely in some countries though they were outlawed in others" (*The
> Independent* 13/09/01)[170]

In the media it becomes clear that the term fundamentalist or even fundamentalism is

exclusively used to refer to Islam and Muslims even to the extent that its commonly used

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[169] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 185
[170] Ibid, 185-6

modifier e.g. most notably 'Islam' and 'Muslim' are no longer required for it to refer to Islam and Muslims. As such *The Independent*'s mentioning of fundamentalist is most likely to be referring as such. These terms of fundamentalism and fundamentalist are used in the media as blanket constructs to portray Islamic groups in such a way that they are increasingly associated with extremism, terrorism and violence[171].

This theme of Islam being equivilated with anti-Western sentiments is also prevalent from the other stance. *The Times* reported that the Italian PM Silvio Berlusconi saying ""West is superior to Islam" (27/09/01), US President George Bush used the term Crusade to declare that the West was better than Islam, *The Times* also reported former British Prime Minister Baroness Margret Thatcher as she attacks Muslim leaders for not condemning 9/11, "the people who brought down those towers were Muslims and she has not heard enough condemnation from Muslim priests" (04/09/01). This kind of sentiment is at times more extreme, in several western countries Muslim men and even Arab and Asian looking people were attacked, harassed and detained as well as Muslim women and girls who were identified by their headscarves[172].

While it is true that Middle Eastern countries are volatile, reducing the region to a mere source of terrorism only reinforces these commonly held misconceptions and negative images of those countries and nations[173]. These negative sentiments that are prevalent in the media have obviously made their way into the psyche of the ill-informed Public, which has created a wave of anti-Muslim sentiments and increasingly stirring feelings of Islamophobia[174].

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[171]Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 186
[172] Ibid, 186-7
[173] Ibid, 187
[174] Christopher Allen, Jørgen Nielsen, *Summary Report on Islamphobia: in the EU after 11th September 2001*, (Vienna: University of Birmingham Press, 2002), 3-4

The media provided support for even helped create a context in which armed intervention was both excepted and expected, for example the characterisation of bin Laden that is constructed tells us little about him and rather more about the cultural political context in which the coverage was formulated. He is the personification of evil which makes fighting him easy. Religion fits into this in contradictorily ways, on the one hand bin Laden and his followers are perceived to be manipulating Islam for their own ends and Muslims that follow him are seen as mindless and are assigned irrationality. Yet on the other by continuing to refer to Muslim and Islamic terrorists the perpetrators are seen as an irrational strain of Islam, something that has evolved out of the religion itself[175].

This extremism is attributed to all Muslims by linking every conflict to the concept of Jihad and Islam, a term the media has adopted which has often been equated to mean Holy War, which in turn implies an association between Islam and violence and militarism was used in several reports about 9/11[176]. A view that is commonly held about Islamic politics is that it is radical, bellicose, anti-secular and consequently anti-democratic and anti-Western, as a result Islam is often depicted as a threat to the international order in its contemporary perception: according Muslims are depicted as engaged in a Jihad against the West[177]. To support this view the following are a few instances where the term Jihad, or its ill-conceived translation of Holy War, are used about 9/11 by the news media: "Young Muslims are ready for Holy War" - *The Times* (29/09/01), "US attacks would start a Jihad, say Mullahs" - *The Times* (21/09/01), Taliban call for Holy War" - *The Independent* (18/09/01), "Clerics called to council of Holy War" - *The Guardian* (19/09/01)[178]. The call of Muslims to return to the 'pure' faith was also deemed to be aggressive by the news media:

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[175] Elisabeth Poole, *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002), 4

[176] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 188

[177] H. Donnan, Ed, *Interpreting Islam*, (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2002), 33

[178] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 188-9

> "The decision by Muslim clerics yesterday that Osama bin Laden should leave Afghanistan of his own accord was accompanied by the threat of a Holy War against the US if it attacked the country… If infidels attack the soil of a Muslim country Jihad (Holy War) becomes an order for the Muslims of that country" – *The Times* 21/09/01

The source of this called was identified as Muslim clerics not more specifically Afghan Muslim clerics. This was in fact made by a group of pro-Taliban Afghan tribal leaders, a handpicked pro-Taliban collection of one thousand village clerics and Mullahs. The report however only identified them as Muslim clerics without this qualifier. This clearly demonstrates how Islam is often portrayed as a monolithic block, and as such deemed to be dangerous when the words such as these people are taken as literal for every one of the Islamic faith[179]. Likewise Osama bin Laden has been quoted as such so as to give the impression that he is able to speak for all of Islam;

> "Our Islamic Nation has been testing the same more than 80 years of humiliation and disgrace, its sons killed and their blood spilled its sanctities desecrated… every Muslim must rise to defend this religion… God is great and glory be to Islam" – *The Independent* 08/10/01[180]

In this instance Islam is conflated and identified with the ideas, interpretations and stances of the then leader of the Muslim radical fringe group, Al-Qaida. In fact the papers have rarely used interpretations or stances in there article from Politicians who have said British Muslims were not to blame for 9/11 rather than headlines that point the finger[181]. For example:

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[179] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010),
[180] Ibid, 189-90
[181] Ibid, 189-90

"Muslim student group [the UK based Al-Muhajroun] linked to terrorist attack" – *The Guardian* (18/09/01); "Suspect lived in Brixton before joining US flying school" – *The Guardian* (10/09/01); "Guard mounted on mosques" – *The Times* (13/09/01); "Police seek bin Ladens British links – *The Times* (17/09/01); "London Deploys 1000 more police as security is tightened at likely targets" – *The Independent* (13/09/01); "Fundraising links lead to man's arrest in London" – *The Independent* (02/10/01),[182]

These kinds of headlines are common place, and demonstrate a single view of British Muslims that is negative and affects how the audience perceives them. This perceived view is that British Muslims are threatening and dangerous this idea of threat from the enemy within featured in the reports if several papers especially The Times, The Guardian and The Independent. Within which radical clerics known for their anti-western sentiments, such as Omar Bakri Mohammad and Abu Hamza Al-Masri were quite often the focus and were quoted regularly as they invoke images that recalled anti-Islamic prejudice and negative archetypical stereotypes about Islam. Both of these men were always identified as "Muslim Clerics" or "Sheikhs", both were often quoted when expressing radical anti-Western attitudes. They were reported to have praised 9/11 as well as saying that military training is required for Muslim youth and are provided for by the Qur'an. As such these two men personify the perceived image of Anti-Western-ism and violence which is associated to Islam in the media[183].

Omer Bakri Mohammad, leader of Al-Muhajiroun Islamic group was reported as supporting British Muslims who wished to take part in military actions alongside other Muslims; "The British leader of Al-Muhajiroun, Omar Bakri Mohamma, has previously spoken in support of young British Muslims who travel abroad to join in military action on behalf of Islam's causes" – *The Independent* (23/10/01) this kind of reference to extreme radical figures and groups demonstrate that the media prefers this kind of representation over

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[182] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 189-190
[183] Ibid, 193

that of moderate mainstream Muslims so as to distort Islam and ignore the views of the majority of Islam. In doing so Islam is typified and identified with what is arguably considered by most of Islam as radical fringe groups. The conflation of moderate Islam and this radical version only serves to strengthen negative impressions to those for which newspapers are the main source of news and information about Islam[184].

Other impressions of Islam that are made are that such people, as Omer Bakri, have religious authority for all of Islam for example the calling for a religious edict, or a *fatwa*[185], against President Musharaf of Pakistan for taking part in the War against the Taliban regime and Al-Qaida: "He must be put on trial. The punishment if he does not repent is capital punishment. He will be killed if he does not repent" *The Times* 20/09/01, this was probably included to remind people of the Khomeini *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie in 1989, however neither Khomeini nor Omar Bakri speak for Islam as a whole. Radical comments and stances that are used in conjunction with titles such as "cleric" or "Mullah" without this authority being clarified or explained can lead to those who are reading said article to have the impression that these people speak for Islam and not just there radical fringe group[186].

This authority which is perceived to be possessed by such "clerics" extends to them making decisions three issues that in the contemporary west are widely considered medieval like remnants; the first of which is the Authority to issue Jihad or Holy War, the second is being able to issue religious edicts excommunicating another and the third is being able to issue fatwas against those they consider to be apostates such as:

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[184] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 194

[185] A definitive legal pronouncement given in response to a question about an Islamic legal practice, based on authoritative precedents, not personal opinion alone – Gordon Newby, *A Concise Encyclopaedia of* Islam, (Oxford: Oneworld, 2002), 62

[186] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 194

"Sheikh Omar was unrepentant. He said that the Pakistan leader had, under Islamic Law, become an apostate for siding with the west against Muslim forces. He must be put on trial. The punishment if he does not repent is capitol punishment. He will be killed. If he does not repent." *The Times* (20/09/01), "Warning of possible US invasion, Taliban leaders urged Afghans to prepare for a Jihad, or Holy War, against the US." *The Independent* (19/09/01)[187].

This constructed theme of Islam reiterates the image of Orientalist discourses that associated Islam with violence and belligerence and perceived war as inherent is Islam, inscribed in its teachings and a fact of its civilisation, The image also portrays Islam as still involved in practises that were prevalent long ago in medieval Europe, such as excommunication and issuing edicts to execute heretics and apostates which suggests that it is still trapped in a historical stage that Europe overcame centuries ago[188].

This concept that Islam is violent, dangerous and still stuck in a time period the western world came out of a long time ago is a very influential in the media's coverage of Islam and Muslims. This is very much at the heart of how Said describes Orientalist studies, the view that the 'Orient' is inferior and primitive. This could be argued to be one of the most basic and historical root causes of what Allen describes as Islamophobia. When this concept specifically relates to 9/11 and terrorism we see that the orientalist background is very prominent. Quotes describing a requirement to understand eastern culture to understand terrorism, implying that terrorism are a specific aspect of eastern culture and society.

This kind of mind frame can be argued develops into more specific connotation that falls into Allen's definition: Islamic groups and people portrayed in such a way that they are routinely associated with extremism, terrorism and violence on no other account than that they are Muslim, and with no differentiation between groups, cultures, societies, political ideals and religious differences, which is under Allen's definition of Islamophobia as

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[187] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the Britsih Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 194-5
[188] Ibid

"sustaining and perpetuating negatively evaluated meaning…" as well as being similar to racism[189]. People who cannot claim to speak for Islam as a whole, who carry vitriolic ideas are quoted as speakers for the religion, primarily for the news worthiness of their opinions and proclamations giving a further impression of Islam as violent and essentially anti-western and anti-secularism which impacts on the perceptions and also influences social action and interaction with Muslims as well as how the public perceives the religion and its people, usually in a negative way which can only be described as enhancing any feelings of Islamophobia, as per Allen's definition.

Islam as Foreign Alien and Dangerous

The identity of some British Muslims became a newspaper theme after it came into question when a number of them joined the Taliban and Al-Qaida in the fight against the Anglo-American forces in 2001. Nine British citizens were held in Guantanamo bay after they were allegedly captured while fighting against British and American forces. Richard Reid another British citizen was imprisoned in America for attempting to bomb an air liner on 1st December of that year. The perceived agenda of these people was one imposed by a foreign source and is part of the established fault line between the West and the Islamic world, especially since 9/11[190]. This fear of an imposed agenda for a foreign source can be seen with the words of Tony Blair in regards to 9/11, he describes it as "an attack on our civilisation, our democratic values and our way of life[191]", in this statement he is using the in group designator 'our' to establish clear lines between 'us' and 'them', 'our civilisation', 'our democratic values' and 'our way of life'. These sentiments can be argued to encapsulate a

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[189] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 190
[190] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 196
[191] B. Quraishi, 'Islam in the Western Media', *The Multicultural Skyscraper Newsletter*, (Vol1, October 2001), 2

clear contrast between us and them and the perceived fault line between the Western World

and the Islamic World[192].

It is clear that this sentiment is prevalent at least in the thoughts of the public if not

believed by the public as it is explicitly and implicitly reiterated in the press, for example *The*

Guardian 19/09/01 published a report entitled "Europe in Terror Alert" which suggested that

European national security was at risk as a result of 9/11 which were by this time entirely

blamed on Islamic Militants. This report described some 'western' countries whose security

was reportedly under threat as a result of the attacks including: Britain, France, Germany,

Belgium and Japan[193]. The article describes different security measures that were

implemented as a result of 9/11 such as : - "British Ministers began considering measures

curtail Civil Liberties", "1000 CRS riot Police and 700 Soldiers have been called in to

reinforce the capitals 3400 regular police officers", "Crack down on suspected Islamist

fundamentalists and upgraded security measures", "National Identity cards are

compulsory[194]". This guardian report demonstrates an unusual level of security measures in

the European countries and Japan. However in these reports Islam or Muslims are not

explicitly mentioned per se. However it can be presumed that seeing as in this report the type

of trend that the security measures are being implemented for make explicit references to

9/11 and at the point of this articles publication the link between Islam and the attacks was

well founded[195].

The Times implemented a strategy of establishing a theory that Britain has become a

'hot spot' or a base from bin Laden's Al-Qaida has been using as an operations base. In this

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[192] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 196
[193] Ibid
[194] *The Guardian* 19/09/01 – cited in - Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 197
[195] Ibid

report British cities are described as "centres" from which terrorist activity is planned and implemented:

> "British cities are believed to have valuable centres over the past three years... key figures in his organisations have provided vital communication and travel links for terrorist attacks... using High street banks... to launder money, helping to secure false passports for recruits and finding printing firms for producing bin Laden's propaganda[196]"

In much the same way Muslims are negatively portrayed in different ways, for example they are claimed to abuse hospitality and liberal laws, that they become involved in illegal and criminal activity such as terrorism, passport forgery and money laundering. This feeling of fear and threat from internal attack and exploitation is exasperated by strong assertions in the press, assertions that were mostly premature seeing as at the time they were merely speculated[197]. Such stories were fairly common place at the time, where assertions were made where proof was not prevalent for example under the heading "POLICE SEEK BIN LADEN'S BRITISH LINKS" *The Times* report only evidence for this statement however was "Detectives are questioning four asylum seekers who recently arrived at Heathrow...[198]", what is clear is that *The Times* has jumped to a conclusion about these people in the story that there is, at the time, no real evidence.

The Guardian ran an article entitled "THREE MORE HELD IN UK" within which the evidence is as such, "The arrests... were made following information received from the FBI... the suspects were being Questioned said the Home Secretary David Blunkett[199]", this articles title gives the impression of relating to previous arrests i.e. to do with terrorism, however in the content of the article there is no specific evidence to this affect. There is also a specific rhetoric style that is used to support these strong assertions when quoting David

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[196] *The Times* 17/09/01 Cited In - Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 197-8
[197] Ibid
[198] Ibid
[199] The Guardian 24/09/01 – cited in - Ibid

Blunkett as well as the FBI. It also uses a specific linguistic register that suggests future threat such as "British Links", "Terror Suspects", "anti-Terror officers" and "Terror Networks". Such phrases given the reader a specific impression about the content of the article and its context that is used by the paper to portray the information in the way they want[200].

Lastly *The Independent* ran an article entitled "YARD INVESTIGATING 24 TERROR SUSPECTS FOR FBI" the evidence was being "24 terror suspects are being questioned by Scotland Yard in connection with 11th September attacks… Scotland Yard also disclosed yesterday that of the suspects already investigated 3 people in Britain already had 'Strong Links' to the suicide Hi-Jacking and the support network of Osama bin Laden[201]". The evidence for this last article seems to be in line with the title however they are running information about the links of British Muslims to bin Laden and his support network, the way this is portrayed gives the reader clear links that are not actually proven, however this is based on information they have.

Elgamri argues that these kinds of reports may be there to implement public condiment and acceptance so as to prepare for upcoming domestic anti-terror measures including the curtailment of Civil Liberties, for example when the identity of the perpetrators of 9/11 were identified as Muslims , and public fear and distaste of Muslims rose, British Home Secretary David Blunkett prepared a set of measures one of which was compulsory I.D. cards and seeing as the suspects behind the attacks were Muslims it can be concluded that it was Muslims and not any other specific religion or sect that had impelled British authorities to implement these cards[202].

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[200] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 188-9
[201] Independent 19/09/01 - cited in - Ibid
[202] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 199

In the context of the atmosphere which followed 9/11 and the sentiments that were prevalent towards Muslims in general, British Muslims who have gone to fight British troops in the imminent war in Afghanistan might be looked on as traitors. As such the perceived view is that the root of the problem, therefore, lies at the heart of the Islamic tradition because the youths were going to go fight a so called 'holy war' in Afghanistan against troops of fellow citizens. It follows that, for the media, so long as Muslims are treated as a monolithic single entity which influences the acts and opinions of people of the faith no matter their nationality, then the perceived threat will be dealt with seriously. In a way it seems that at this time western attitude towards communism and the cold war had transferred onto "Terrorist Fundamentalism[203]".

This concept of the estranged other, behind the 'Iron Curtain' as it were, where there is a feeling of threat and anxiety like during the Cold War is like what is being felt about Islam now. There are seen as other, not British Tony Blair commented that this was an attack on "our civilization…" while not drawing the line of who is and is not in our civilisation. For the reader of this article anyone associated with Islam could be deemed not of our civilisation and part of the attack. This is exemplified when, like previously, terms such as Islamic Militants are used without explaining more clearly or even more explicitly by saying British Muslims are aiding the Taliban, or exploit British systems and do not belong here. To the extent that British Muslims who have gone to fight British Troops are deemed as traitors demonstrating that the perceived problem is at the root of the Islamic tradition. While this does sustain negatively evaluated meaning about Islam it also "pertains and Influences and impacts upon social action, interaction response"[204], as part of Allen's definition, that ultimately results in Muslims being deemed as other. This kind of representation can cause

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[203] Ibid, 201-2

[204] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 190

fear of the unknown primarily due to non-balanced representation, leading to Islamophobic sentiments, according to Allen's definition.

The Perceived Fault Line between Islam and the West

While trying to comprehend what had happened on September 11th many newspapers referred to what is perceived to be a fault line between the West and the Muslim World which is referred to in Samuel Huntington's thesis *"The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of the World Order"* (1997). Huntington, in this thesis predicted that he biggest clash between nations would be between the Western World and the Muslim World. Here we can refer to Tony Blair's comment four days after 9/11:

> "This was not an attack on America alone. This was an attack on the free and democratic world everywhere and this is the responsibility that the free and democratic world have to shoulder together with America" – The Independent (13/09/01)[205]

The times did report a similar story but in a different context where Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi was reported to have reasserted the superiority of the Western World over the Islamic World under a headline clearly indicating his meaning: "Berlusconi says West is superior to Islam" within this article he comments that "…he hopes the West will conquer Islam"[206] *The Independents* report was noting what the British Prime minister had said not a week after the attacks on 9/11, and in fact he does not mention any particulars over who they may or may not think is involved. However the Italian Prime Minister is reported on two

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[205] Independent 13/09/01 – cited in - Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 200- 3
[206] Times 27/09/01 – cited in - ibid

weeks after the event in an atmosphere of anti-Muslim sentiments and before the United States led war on Terrorism against the Al-Qaida and Taliban regimes[207].

Berlusconi was also reported as saying: "We must be aware of the superiority of our civilisation a system that has guaranteed well-being, respect for human rights and – in contrast with Islamic Countries – respect for religious and political rights.[208]" these quotes are clearly been picked by *The Times* newspaper from Berlusconi's speech at a news conference with the German Chancellor and the Russian President in Berlin on the 26th September 2001. These comments constitute the perceived core of the alleged fault line between the Western World and the Islamic one[209]. This Times report also features lexical items and phrases such as 'conquer' and 'confrontation of civilisations' that fit into Huntington's model.

In his speech less than two weeks before the war began Berlusconi went on to say that he "trusts the west will continue to conquer peoples like it conquered Communism, even if it means a confrontation with an 'other civilisation'" he also commented that he considered the Islamic civilisations to be "stuck were it was 1400 years ago"[210]. As shocking as these comments are they are not isolated instances, but are part of an implicit suggestion and the explicit statements that make up the perceived confrontation between two monolithic worlds, the so called West and the allegedly 'uncivilised' Muslim World, which is often represented as hostile to western civilisations, cultures and values[211].

Berlusconi's comments are in reaction to 9/11 and are, as such, another example of the conflating of mainstream Islam with Militant Islam and of associating Islam with extremism and violence. Thus reasserting the perceived fault line between these two 'worlds' which is based on commonly held binary opposites such as 'civilised' vs. 'uncivilised',

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[207] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 204
[208] Times 27/09/01 – cited in - Ibid
[209] Ibid, 204-5
[210] Times 27/09/01 – cited in - Ibid
[211] Ibid, 205

'superior' vs. 'inferior' which, as such, hold the West up while reinforcing a negative image of Islam. This suggested 'otherness' of Islam accompanied by a sense of bounded identity and reassertion of a in-group, western, solidarity and the shared values of its members, vis-à-vis the out group, the Muslim world[212]. However this 'us' vs. 'them' mentality is rooted in the continual historical antagonism between Islam and the Christian West, as such Berlusconi's comments, and this perceived fault line are in essence a contemporary recurrence of an age old notion of the Orient against Western Europe[213] that is the main focus of the Orientalist discipline.

There are similarities and differences in how *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent* covered stories on Islam or Muslims in the aftermath of 9/11, but the representation used and how they're formulated are different. From Elzain's study we can see three prevalent themes in the reporting style: 1) Alleged threat from within the two weeks immediately following 9/11, whereas the United Kingdom is usually seen as a safe haven. 2) The newspapers seemed to focus on David Blunkett's anti-terrorist laws to curb the perceived terrorist threat. In this context focus was given to perceived threat from within. 3) The three papers focussed on the British Muslims who decided to take up arms against the Anglo-American military campaign after the attacks[214].

The differences lie in how each paper treated these issues. Unlike *The Guardian* and *The Independent*, *The Times* gave much more focus and detailed accounts of the dramatic aspects of alarming events. Also they reported events in such a way that was characterised by strong assertions so as to reinforce the suspected terrorist connection with the United Kingdom and British Muslim Involvement with Jihad attacks. While *The Guardian* and *The Independent* did report on these issues they did not give such dramatic and sensationalised accounts. The

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[212] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 205-6
[213] Ibid, 206-8
[214] Ibid, 208

strong assertions used in *The Times* language implies that guilt of the reported stories had already been attained whereas usually their stories were still under investigation[215] such as: "Eleven of the hijackers who took part in the attacks in America stayed in Britain this year before going on their suicide mission[216]", and "The Terrorist attacks in America prove that Al-Qaida uses recruits who have spent years leading what appear to be respectable lives in Britain and America[217]".

The Guardian and *The Independent* also cover the threat from within story, however they always refer to those involved as suspects and not as if they are already proven to be guilty. While representation of Islam in such stories is evident in all three it is more prevalent in *The Times* newspaper due to their language register[218].

It is arguable that this perceived fault line, stemming from an Orientalist tradition and a history of conflicts and prejudice, is the root cause and central stem of Islamophobia as Allen describes it. Even at a government level Orientalist ideals still hold, the words and thought of Tony Blair and Silvio Berlusconi more than adequately demonstrate that there is a perceived fault line that the media disseminates to the public. Muslims are attacking the 'West' or even attacking us is the principle idea behind Tony Blair's words, and the Western world is better than and should be rid of the Islamic World is behind Silvio Berlusconi's words. Now this may only be defence mechanisms in the aftermath of 9/11, nationalist ideas such as the West is superior and Islamic world inferior etc. however they start a train of thought in the readers that leads to changes in perception and ideas that are accommodated by Allen's definition.

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[215] Elzain Elgamri, *Islam in the British Broadsheets: The Impact of Orientalism on Representations on Islam in the British Press*, (Reading: Ithica Press, 2010), 208-9
[216] Times 26/09/01 – cited in - Ibid
[217] Times 21/09/01 – cited in - Ibid
[218] Ibid, 208-9

Summery

It is clear that the media, during the period immediately after 9/11, portrayed Islam in ways that are deemed by Allen's definition as Islamophobic in that all categories mentioned above are extensively documented and are consistent with Allen's definition. While these feelings are likely to be in existence before 9/11 they were not as prominent or as acceptable in the news media and in the minds of their readers. It was the reporting of 9/11 that created an atmosphere that made it normal, and even to some extent 'common knowledge' that all of Islam is monolithic, opposed to the west, dangerous specifically to Britain and that British Muslim have outside influences that are dangerous. The media use the opinions of extreme Muslims which compound these negative Islamophobic feelings, something that Muslims generally strongly object to, as they cannot be deemed appropriate spokespeople[219]. E Poole argues that it was the reporting of 9/11 in such ways that brought these opinions and phobias about the people of Islam into sharp focus and that these have not really changed since orientalist times[220].

The western ideology of modernisation and the Islamic-isation of Muslim politics have provided a way of seeing Islam as an anti-modern when in fact it is doctrinally blameless[221] Schulze 1995 refutes the medieval nature of Muslim societies, he argues that Islamic societies have their own versions of modernity that share many aspects of the 'universal kind' but have also been shaped by Islamic cultural traditions[222]. This is based on images of oriental irrationality and the fanatical masses allowing Muslims to be kept at a

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[219] B. Gunter, R. Viney, *Seeing is Believing: Religion and Television in the 1990's*, ITC Independent Research Monograph, (London: John Libbey, 1993)
[220] Elisabeth Poole, *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002, 16
[221] Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*, (NY: Vintage Books, 1997)
[222] R. Schulze, 'How medieval is Islam? Muslim Intelectuals and Modernity' – in – J. Hippler and A. Lueg, Eds, *The Next Threat: Western preconceptions of Islam*, (London: Pluto Press, 1995), 57-70

distance and impersonalized[223], for example the fundamentalist is by far the most prevalent image that is used to constitute a threat[224]. It is this aspect of Orientalist discourse that results in Muslims being subjects to rituals of degradation[225]. Focusing on stories of inhumane punishments in the Muslim world and ignoring stories about their victimisation creates a distorted picture of Muslims created for a public that has few alternatives[226].

Sayyid argues that the reporting of 9/11 has made the Islamic Fundamentalist a metaphor for fundamentalism as a whole, all Muslim acts deemed extreme are then called fundamentalist and are then limited to terrorism[227]. Yet as Bishara maintains there is a large difference between fundamentalisms, which Bishara calls 'political religion' and that which is practised by British Muslims generally[228].

What is clear is that these kinds of attitudes all derive from a deep set cultural feeling or norm that was, perhaps not established but certainly, emphasized by Orientalism. As such it could be argued that, like racism of not so long ago, Islamophobia is so engrained in are collective cultural psyche that it is not really even a stance that the media, or its readers, may have, however this topic is beyond this papers scope. Islamophobia maybe too harsh a term to use in conjunction to the media coverage of 9/11, it is clear that the way in which Muslims and Islam were reported certainly leads to developments of Islamophobia but this may not be able to be said about the articles themselves. Fear of the unknown and requirement to sell a story means that terms like 'fundamentalism' or 'extremist' are used, however it is not the use of these words that are Islamophobic but rather the lack of qualification as to which people this refers to rather than the umbrella terms of Islamic or Muslim.

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[223] P. Levy, *Qu'est-ce que le virtual?*, (Paris: La Decouverte, 1995), 15

[224] A. Lueg, 'The perceptions of Islam in Western debate' – in - J. Hippler and A. Lueg, Eds, *The Next Threat: Western preconceptions of Islam*, (London: Pluto Press, 1995), 7-32

[225] S, Hall, 'The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power' – in – S. Hall and B. Gieben, Eds, *Formations of modernity*, (Cambridge: Poliety Press, 1992), 275-332

[226] Ibid

[227] B. Sayyid, *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrismand the Emergence of Islam,* (London: Zed Books, 1997)

[228] A. Bishara, 'Islam and Politics in the Middle East' – In - J. Hippler and A. Lueg, Eds, *The Next Threat: Western preconceptions of Islam*, (London: Pluto Press, 1995), 82-115

<u>Conclusion</u>

It has been the purpose of this dissertation to ascertain to what extent the news media can be classified under Allen's definition, as Islamophobic, whether the news media has contributed to a growing trend of Islamophobic sentiments which are either deemed acceptable or have gone unnoticed and to establish whether Allen's definition of Islamophobia is applicable to the Media. To this end it has been important to: a) determine what kinds and to what extent discourses, language and news hooks have impacted on this growing trend; b) to determine whether this can be regarded as Islamophobic.

I want to start this conclusion by talking about the limitations of this dissertation. It is clear from this short analysis, that this is a topic that not only stems wider than the written form of media, but also stems into most other, if not all, areas of life in Britain and the wider World. The religion of Islam is a rapidly expanding and diverse phenomenon of the human existence that has become an integral aspect of British life. This paper has only been able to regard Islamophobia within the written news media rather than analysing a much broader range of cultural studies. As such it must be emphasised that the conclusions and findings here are limited in their scope when it comes to the topic as a whole. It is also important to emphasise that the timescale in which this analysis has taken place is a highly volatile period when it comes to representation of British Muslims. To some extent this dissertation has chosen this time period for precisely that reason. However, this dissertation does not look at trends over an extended period of time and so the results of this analysis may be limited by this factor. Lastly, as a concept Islamophobia, unlike anti-Semitism and racism, is a very recent phenomenon in the general public's mind-frame and as such is somewhat under researched and criticized. All the above limitations ultimately and inevitably, limit the scope from being suitably broad enough to give the topic much justice.

From this study it has been established that the levels of representation Islam and Muslims received dramatically rose at the time of 9/11. Therefore, it is logical to assume that 9/11, being the major event of the time period, was the primary lens through which Islam and Muslims were viewed. It is also clear that the types of News Hooks and Discourses used during this time period were primarily negative in nature, either focusing on Terrorism or Extremism. The language of these discourses, especially in relation to the way in which Muslims are referred, demonstrates to the reader the primary angle to which the Media are regarding a given story. A paper may be reporting a terrorist attack, but it is how the paper refers to the individuals involved that is a key indicator, which is mostly negative. We can see from the more in depth study of specific stories, which focused on 9/11, that the prominent themes from the discourses and news hooks of this time period were that Islam was a Monolithic block, opposed to the west and dangerous specifically to Britain and that British Muslims have outside influences that are dangerous.

Throughout this dissertation it has been established that parts of Allen's definition apply to each of the above aspects of the reporting method that have been covered. Thus at first glance it is easy to say that the written news media has been Islamophobic, and that Allen's definition of Islamophobia certainly is applicable to the news media. Also the growing levels of coverage of Islamophobia and the increasing levels of negative News hooks, language and Discourses used in the Media indicates that the Media is finding it easier and easier to print stories of an Islamophobic nature and as such building on the trend.

From this we can see that my hypothesis was correct, that there would be a demonstrated increase in News Hook, language and stories that specifically cover Muslims and Islam. That this increase would regard negative events or connotations which can be deemed to be Islamophobic under Allen's definition and that in such ways the news media

can be regarded as increasingly Islamophobic over the time period of this dissertations analysis.

The reasons for this are arguably very clear, stories of this kind are printed primarily because they sell. From this stance it is hard to argue that a growth of Islamophobic sentiments was caused by the media, when the media prints what sells. Lacey and Longman state: "The media influence our ideas about Islam by interpreting events to fit with the majority view of beliefs, concerns and values of the threat audience which in this case was already prepositioned to an orientalist discourse.[229]" As such it is not the media that grows this trend rather it is the pre-existent Orientalist discourse that is almost subliminal in the minds of the consumer that prompt the news media to print stories that can be classed as Islamophobic.

However this argument can go both ways. To the same extent the Media and its potential influence over the public is able to steer the minds of its readers. It is in this scenario that the media has defined the meaning and presence of Muslims in Britain as found in previous research on the ethnic other[230] that also provides us with the selected way of seeing and interpreting these meaning[231]. It is beyond the scope of this analysis to regard media theory on mass manipulation but it is a possibility that holds water especially when an Orientalist background is where the mass media has derived.

Either way feelings that are deemed to be Islamophobic are clearly more prevalent, or at least more conspicuous, in modern times as these nuances are brandished more explicitly. Again however it is hard to see whether there are more Islamophobic nuances or sentiments present, or whether people are more vocal or accepting of them. Orientalism historically has

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[229] C. Lacey and D. Longman, *The Press as Public Educator: Cultures of understanding, cultures of ignorance*, (Luton: University of Luton John Libbey Media, 1997)

[230] P. Hartmann, et al, *Race as News: a study in the handling of race in the British Press 1963 to 1970*, (Paris: UNESCO, 1974)

[231] P. Dahlgren and S. Chakrapani, *The Third World on TV News: Western Ways of Seeing the Other*, (Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1982)

ensured that the way people view Islam and Muslims in Britain generally is on the whole rather negative. However it was the events of 9/11 that really established a new stage of this nuance's development. Whereas the deep engrained fear of the nation was previously focused on communism, the IRA etc., 9/11 firmly switched this to terrorism form a Islamic source, reverting this fear to one of the oldest that this nation has. The news media has always sold terror stories; David Miller says "Terror stories are always the easiest for government to sell. Headlines write themselves and the pictures always burn or bleed[232]"

As we can see, on a second glance, the argument is not so cut and dry. With a British media that thrives on the freedom of speech and critical analysis it is extremely difficult to pin down actual explicit instances of Islamophobia. The papers report on events that have happened, it is unfair to say the media is Islamophobic simply because they are reporting more on Islam or Muslims. It is in the nature of the news media to report what sells, so they report on terrorism. It is only in the specific ways that stories are reported that the argument has a real hold. Sometimes what could be regarded as Islamophobic on these grounds however could be just ignorance, which breeds fear of the very same ignorance.

The other key point that this dissertation covers is how definitive and useful Allen's definition of Islamophobia is. This is a somewhat difficult task seeing that stated previously there has not been a large amount of research into this topic. Allen's description of Islamophobia, its comprehensive nature and its three key points, which have been used throughout this dissertation, demonstrate a model that can be easily utilised. As a definition it is similar in theme and form to that of racism and anti-Semitism. However, currently there is an issue in its utilisation.

The definition is, naturally considering its potential for utilisation, very vague. Its' very vagueness leaves scope for all manner of statements about Islam or Muslims to be

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[232] E. Poole & Richardson John, eds, *Muslims & The News Media*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006)

deemed as Islamophobic. Its core principle is to establish that Islamophobic actions and statements affect the social sphere and make Islam and Muslims seem as other, as well as "sustaining and evaluating negatively evaluated meaning"[233]. To some extent this is of course going to be the key factors of Islamophobia, in much the same ways as anti-Semitism and racism. It is just its extreme scope of application that may cause the loss of something that all cultures, religions, communities and people need, which is critical evaluation. A commentator on Islam may not necessarily be meaning to deem Islam as 'Other' in his or her evaluation; however he may be interpreted as so under this definition. This may be due to an Orientalist past which has shaped this nation's knowledge of Islam, or it may be the volatile times in which Islam and Muslims live in Britain. In short what Allen's definition needs is to be more concise and directly hit the core problems that Islamophobia as a term should be regarding.

When Allen's definition is applied specifically to written news media relating to 9/11 it is clear that there is a trend of Islamophobia that is culturally acceptable at the time. The definition seems almost specifically tailored in its intricacies of application to the news media from how they report to the very language that they use. This is likely to be the primary focus of the definition as it is the media that reaches the nation as a whole. However, what is lacking in this definition in regards to, but not exclusively, the news media is a lack of a description of cause or origin of these sentiments. As described above it is unclear whether the media is Islamophobic and so influences the public or vice versa.

In short the dissertation has ascertained that under Allen's definition the news media can be classified as Islamophobic during the perimeter dates. However it is unclear if the newspapers are just selling Islamophobic stories as these are the ones that sell, or if they are themselves Islamophobic and print what they like and bring out Orientalist nuances ingrained

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[233] Chris Allen, *Islamophobia*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010), 190

in the readers. This dissertation has established that due to our Orientalist past Islamophobic sentiments have been a pre-existing phenomenon that are ingrained in our culture, but it was the effects of 9/11 that have brought these feelings to the surface, on which the media have monopolised on. Allen's definition in regards to the media seems to have been specifically designed for it; therefore it lacks any kind of description in regards to the reasons and origins of these nuances. As such Allen's definition is too vague and open to vast application that can limit academic or critical evaluation of Islam and therefore needs to become more concise if we are to further the study of Islamophobia within British Society.

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