

METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX

This article draws on data gathered from a case study of American Muslims in Philadelphia, one of three field sites where I conducted participant observation and ethnographic interviews. I selected Philadelphia as my first field site because it is home to a large community of Arab and Black American Muslims, who demonstrate heterogeneity along the dimensions that I am keen on evaluating. In particular, these co-religionists vary not only in terms of race and ethnicity but also in native-birth and foreign-birth; key dimensions of group identity that can profoundly shape citizenship and political integration in the United States. Therefore, when collecting data, I selected for range. Selecting for range is an effective approach for interview-based social science research, especially when the objective is not representativeness but the identification of underlying mechanisms and the generation of hypotheses that can be tested with additional data (Small 2009, 13).

I planned for fieldwork by creating a directory of mosques, Muslim organizations, health clinics, restaurants, local businesses, and community groups, organized by neighborhood. This first step in planning allowed me to develop an approximate sense of where the Philadelphia Muslim population resided and worked. Next, I conducted extensive outreach, in-person and by phone and email correspondence, to introduce myself and arrange for participant observation. When researchers utilize participant observation, they “take part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people” as a method for “learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture” (Musante and DeWalt 2010, 13). Throughout my seven months of fieldwork, participant observation entailed immersion and engagement at mosques, women’s groups, associations of professionals and students, neighborhood block gatherings, meals with local families, and Islamic organizations. In some of these settings, like

the women's group meetings that I attended, I carried my notebook with me and positioned myself as an onlooker, listening and taking notes on how local Muslims interacted with one another and the issues they prioritized at their gatherings. Other settings, like attending meals with local families or mosque worship services, required not just immersion but also direct engagement. Participant observation allowed me to understand the political, social, and economic landscape that Muslims navigate in their daily lives. In addition, it provided subtle information that is "unscripted, unrepeatable, and often unutterable" such as the internal Muslim community workings, tensions, and aspirations (Desmond 2007, 288).

Coupled with participant observation, I conducted ethnographic interviews that allowed me to engage respondents in a manner that encouraged reflection and in-depth discussion. Interviews, in particular, helped me to understand how Muslims were thinking about their citizenship and describing their experiences in the United States. To recruit respondents, I conducted outreach and met with community contacts and leaders in Muslim organizations. Concurrently, I circulated information about my study to local contacts, both Muslim and non-Muslim, with the goal of reaching Muslims who are situated in different social networks. My objective in taking this approach was to ensure that I would gather a selection of respondents that would offer a range of perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences. In other words, I drew on multiple networks to ensure that my sample would not be homogenous. Ultimately, I interviewed 36 Arab American and 33 Black American Muslims.¹

¹ I completed over 69 interviews because I conducted a few pilot interviews to determine if I needed to adjust my interview protocol or technique. I also completed interviews with Muslims, who were not Arab American or Black American, but who led Muslim organizations, were active in Muslim social circles, or who had extensive knowledge of the local Muslim community. These interviews helped me understand the history of Muslims in the region as well as the economic, social, and political landscape which surrounded the community. Neither these interviews nor the pilot interviews are included in my data analysis.

Snowball sampling proved to be essential in my recruitment of respondents. Social scientists describe snowball sampling as an effective method for research with hard-to-reach populations, like American Muslims (Small 2009, 14). Cohen and Arieli (2011, 423) explain that snowball sampling facilitates outreach and access by increasing “the likelihood of trusting the researcher by introduction through a trusted social network.” Going into each interview, I relied on a battery of more than two dozen, open-ended questions to discuss with each research participant. The interview questions covered a range of different topics, from family history, to religiosity, and partisanship. Prior to the start of each interview, I secured informed consent, provided the respondents with an overview of my research, and encouraged questions throughout our conversations.

In terms of format, the interviews were semi-structured and ranged in time from two hours to six hours, though the majority of interviews lasted approximately two and a half hours. All of the interviews were conducted in English, the shared language of American Muslims. The interviews took place in many different locations across Philadelphia, including: barbershops, grocery store stock rooms, halal restaurants, coffee shops, public parks, school offices, work offices, and kitchen tables, depending on the preferences of my respondents. To minimize the perceived costs of participation in these interviews, I was flexible with scheduling and prioritized the convenience of respondents.

With the permission of participants, I audio-recorded our interviews and took handwritten notes that allowed me to retain the contextual details of the interviews, as well some of my initial thoughts and questions. Both during and after the interviews, respondents often wanted to continue the conversation and learn about my background. I found these post-interview interactions to be crucial in the development of trust because these were pathways for me to

engage candidly, answer questions, and reiterate my commitment to maintaining anonymity and confidentiality. I continued to recruit respondents and complete interviews until I reached a point of data saturation. Grady (1998, 26) describes this as a point in the data collection process when incoming, “new data tend[s] to be redundant of data already collected.” In other words, when my interviews no longer revealed new themes, I stopped recruitment.

Focusing on data analysis, I spent several months reading my field notes and interview transcripts. Initially, I coded my notes from participant observation and my interview transcripts for major recurring themes, such as community engagement, experiences confronting stereotypes, and patterns in partisan identification. Then I conducted additional rounds of coding by identifying overlapping narratives and connections between recurring themes as well as points of variation among the respondents on key questions. The findings and analysis presented in this article emerged from the coding and evaluation of my participant observation field notes and interview transcripts. Below, I note the details of the interviews presented in this article:

Research Participant	Interview Location	Interview Date
Khalila	Center City, Philadelphia	March 29, 2019
Malik	Northern Liberties, Philadelphia	May 7, 2019
Sarah	West Philadelphia	May 10, 2019
Musa	Brewerytown, Philadelphia	April 30, 2019
Jameel	Fishtown, Philadelphia	June 6, 2019
Sehar	Manayunk, Philadelphia	May 27, 2019
Rahim	West Philadelphia	April 19, 2019
Eliya	Old City, Philadelphia	March 17, 2019
Amal	South Philadelphia	February 3, 2019

Zayn	Fishtown, Philadelphia	April 26, 2019
Mahmoud	Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia	February 24, 2019
Andre	Center City, Philadelphia	March 21, 2019
Farah	West Philadelphia	May 30, 2019
Zareena	Point Breeze, Philadelphia	March 29, 2019
Imam William	Germantown, Philadelphia	May 10, 2019
Suleiman	Old City, Philadelphia	March 28, 2019

References:

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