

# Islamophobia

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# What is Islamophobia?

Intense dislike or fear of Islam, especially as a political force; hostility or prejudice towards Muslims

- 44% of people in the UK believe that Islam is a serious threat to Western Civilisation (June 2017)
- 1 in 3 muslim university students have experienced abuse and 70% of these students attributed this abuse to their religious identity (NUS 2018)



# Factors Enabling Islamophobia

## Historic Factors:

- Orientalism
- Racialisation

## Contemporary Factors

- Internalisation
- Xenophobia
- Ignorance of Islam



# Islamophobia in the United Kingdom

1 in 20 people in the UK are muslim.

- Large increase in Islamophobia since 7/7 attacks
- In 2018 to 2019 hate crimes against Muslims account for almost half of all hate crimes committed against religious groups. Yet the attention this received has been pale in comparison
- The EDL regularly refers to Islam as a cult and a threat to Western culture
- Occurs on a daily basis:
  - "I've been spat on in the street when I've worn my headscarf,"
  - "I've been on the bus and had people refuse to sit next to me when I've had my scarf on. I was walking with a friend once, when a man on a bike slammed his brakes and tried to ram it into us,"

# Representation of Muslims in Media

- Commonly stereotyped as terrorists in films and tv shows following 9/11 attacks and also long before
- A more recent stereotype: Muslim teenagers who hate Islam and must break free from the religion to become happy
- The Riz Test



# Islamophobia in Politics: United Kingdom

- Government rejected the definition of Islamophobia on the basis that it had ‘potential consequences for freedom of speech’ (May 2019)
- Conservative party members were said to have called Islam a ‘cult’ and ‘infestation’ who ‘cause mayhem wherever they decide to invade’ (Dossier leaked in May 2019)
- Richard Braine (leader of UKIP till October 2019) has made comparisons between regular believing Muslims and Hitler.
- Almost half of voters view Islam, not extremists or radicals, but regular working Muslims as a threat



# Islamophobia in Politics: India

- 14.9% of the Indian population is Muslim
- BJP is in power currently, a Hindu Nationalist Party
- Recent citizenship law is discriminatory towards Muslims:
- Citizenship Amendment Act 2019 states that:

“The Bill amends the Citizenship Act of 1955 to give eligibility for Indian citizenship to illegal migrants who are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, and who entered India on or before 31 December 2014. The bill does not mention Muslims”

- When used in conjunction with the NRC (National Register of Citizens), many muslims could become stateless
- Has led to large scale protests across India especially in universities
- Increase in police brutality against muslims in India



# China- Xinjiang

- There are around 11 million Uighurs Muslims in western China, with most populated in Xinjiang China.
- It is estimated that over a million Uighurs have been detained in ‘re-education’ camps.
- China has said they are responding to “ethnic separatism and violent terrorist criminal activities”.
- Since 2014, there has been surveillance for signs of religious ‘extremism’.

‘They wouldn’t let me sleep, they would hang me up for hours and would beat me. They had thick wooden and rubber batons, whips made from twisted wire, needles to pierce the skin, pliers for pulling out the nails. All these tools were displayed on the table in front of me, ready to use at any time. And I could hear other people screaming as well’





# What you should do:

If you see someone being abused:

- Once the victim is alone make sure that they are okay and can get the help that they need
- If the attack is physical, be extremely cautious and call the police or an ambulance if needed
- write an account in your notes as it is happening so you can provide the police with a witness statement if needed in the future
- ‘Tell MAMA (Measuring Anti Muslim Attacks)’ is a project that records hate crimes towards muslims and also provides support for victims

# THANK YOU!

We hope you've learnt something new today.