



For release Tuesday, December 22, 2015

5 pp.

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NEW FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON POLL SHOWS TRUMP CLAIM ABOUT MUSLIMS CELEBRATING 9/11 IN NEW JERSEY SPOTLIGHTS DIFFERENCES AMONG PARTISANS

LATEST FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY PUBLICMIND POLL TRACKS DISTRUST OF MEDIA AND DISAGREEMENT ON THE FACTS SURROUNDING CONTROVERSIAL STATEMENT

Fairleigh Dickinson University, December 22, 2015 – Twenty percent of Americans say that large groups of Muslims in New Jersey celebrated the fall of the twin towers following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, with another 38 percent saying that they're not sure whether or not the celebrations occurred. These latest results from Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind provide a window into wide variations in trust toward the media among Americans across the political spectrum.

According to the poll numbers, 68 percent of conservatives, 36 percent of Republican presidential frontrunner Donald Trump supporters, and 24 percent of less educated Americans say that Muslims in New Jersey celebrated the attacks. That compares to 25 percent of liberals, 13 percent of Hillary Clinton supporters, and 16 percent of more educated Americans who accept that the celebrations occurred.

Media outlets have reported at length that the alleged celebrations never happened, but the Fairleigh Dickinson poll shows that the same groups that believe the celebrations took place have the least trust in the media, limiting the impact of any potential debunking.

"The belief that American Muslims celebrated 9/11 has become part of a broader anti-Muslim narrative in American politics," said Dan Cassino, PhD, a professor of Political Science at Fairleigh Dickinson University, and poll analyst. "This is less about what actually happened, and more about what seems consistent with existing beliefs."

According to the poll, only 11 percent of Americans say that they trust the media "a great deal," with another 40 percent saying that they trust it "some." On the flip side, about 49 percent of Americans say that they have no or "not very much" trust in the media. The party divide on trust is significant, with 58 percent of Republicans having no or "not very much" trust in the media, compared to only 38 percent of Democrats. Drilling down further, a full 60 percent of Trump supporters report similarly low levels of media trust, compared to 36 percent of Clinton supporters.

"Fact checking isn't going to have much of an effect on people who don't trust the fact-checkers," said Cassino. "Since many consider the media to be partisan, we need another way to help determine what is or isn't true."

Looking at the question by party lines, 32 percent of Republicans say that the celebrations happened, with another 40 percent who say they aren't sure. In contrast, only 13 percent of Democrats nationwide say that the celebrations happened, with 30 percent who say they aren't sure.

“Increasingly, Republicans and Democrats aren’t just disagreeing about policies, but about facts,” said Cassino. “And the more politically charged a claim is, the more likely we are to see a divide in what people believe.”

From a demographic perspective, more educated Americans are more likely to doubt that the celebrations took place: 58 percent of Americans with a college degree say that they did not occur, compared with 36 percent of those who never attended college.

Methodology - The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone December 4-8, 2015 among a random national sample of 1009 adults. Results have a margin of sampling error of +/-3.8 percentage points, including the design effect.

Methodology, questions, and tables on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>

Radio actualities at 201.692.2846

For more information, please call 201.692.7032

Methodology

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University’s PublicMind was conducted by telephone from December 4-8, 2015 using a randomly selected sample of 1009 adults nationwide. One can be 95 percent confident that the error attributable to sampling has a range of +/- 3.8 percentage points, including the design effect. The margin of error for subgroups is larger and varies by the size of that subgroup. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from a number of factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations among interviewers.

Interviews were conducted by SSRS of Media, Pennsylvania, with professionally trained interviewers using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection is achieved by computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a landline or cellular phone number (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected.

The total combined sample is mathematically weighted to match known demographics of age, sex, race, and education. 504 interviews were conducted on landlines and 505 were conducted on cellular telephones.

The sample was purchased from Marketing Systems Group and the research was funded by Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Tables

<i>As far as you know, did large groups of Muslims in New Jersey celebrate the fall of the Twin Towers on 9/11, or did that not happen?</i>						
	Candidate Choice					Total
	Hillary Clinton, the Democratic candidate	Donald Trump, the Republican candidate	Other	Don't know	Refused	
Yes, that occurred	13%	36%	5%	13%	12%	20%
No, that did not occur	59%	22%	35%	20%	33%	42%
Don't know	27%	41%	60%	65%	50%	38%
Refused	1%	1%	0%	2%	5%	1%

<i>As far as you know, did large groups of Muslims in New Jersey celebrate the fall of the Twin Towers on 9/11, or did that not happen?</i>								
	Total	Ideology						
		Very conservative	Somewhat conservative	Moderate	Somewhat liberal	Very liberal	Don't know	Refused
Yes, that occurred	20%	43%	25%	14%	13%	12%	19%	7%
No, that did not occur	42%	22%	34%	42%	55%	76%	18%	13%
Don't know	38%	35%	41%	43%	32%	12%	60%	53%
Refused	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	4%	27%

<i>As far as you know, did large groups of Muslims in New Jersey celebrate the fall of the Twin Towers on 9/11, or did that not happen?</i>									
	Total	Party ID			Gender		Education		
		Rep	Dem	Ind	Male	Female	HS or less	Some College	College or PostGrad
Yes, that occurred	20%	32%	13%	17%	23%	17%	24%	19%	16%
No, that did not occur	42%	28%	56%	31%	41%	43%	36%	33%	58%
Don't know	38%	40%	31%	51%	36%	39%	40%	48%	25%
Refused	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%

In general, how much trust do you have in the news media - such as newspapers, TV, radio and the Internet - when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately, and fairly?

	Total	Party ID			Gender		Education		
		Rep	Dem	Ind	Male	Female	HS or less	Some College	College or PostGrad
A great deal	11%	7%	15%	8%	11%	11%	13%	10%	9%
Some	40%	35%	45%	38%	35%	44%	33%	43%	48%
Not very much	34%	40%	28%	33%	34%	33%	35%	36%	30%
None at all	15%	18%	10%	20%	18%	11%	18%	10%	12%
Don't know	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Refused	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%

In general, how much trust do you have in the news media - such as newspapers, TV, radio and the Internet - when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately, and fairly?

	Total	Ideology						
		Very conservative	Somewhat conservative	Moderate	Somewhat liberal	Very liberal	Don't know	Refused
A great deal	11%	13%	8%	10%	14%	16%	5%	13%
Some	40%	34%	37%	43%	42%	42%	36%	33%
Not very much	34%	33%	43%	29%	29%	29%	36%	47%
None at all	15%	19%	12%	16%	13%	12%	21%	7%
Don't know	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	2%	0%
Refused	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

In general, how much trust do you have in the news media - such as newspapers, TV, radio and the Internet - when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately, and fairly?

	Total	Candidate Choice				
		Hillary Clinton, the Democratic candidate	Donald Trump, the Republican candidate	Other	Don't know	Refused
A great deal	11%	16%	7%	15%	3%	8%
Some	40%	47%	31%	20%	35%	37%
Not very much	34%	26%	40%	45%	40%	45%
None at all	15%	10%	20%	20%	18%	10%
Don't know	1%	0%	1%	0%	4%	0%
Refused	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

Question Wording

ELEC1 As far as you know, did large groups of Muslims in New Jersey celebrate the fall of the Twin Towers on 9/11, or did that not happen?

- 1 Occurred
- 2 Did not occur
- 3 Neither (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

ELEC2 I know it's early, but if the election for President of the United States were held today, who would you vote for in the following matchups?[rotate names and order of matchups]

- Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump
- Hillary Clinton or Ben Carson
- Hillary Clinton or Marco Rubio
- Hillary Clinton or Ted Cruz
- Hillary Clinton or Jeb Bush

- 1 Democratic candidate
- 2 Republican candidate
- 3 Other (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

ELEC4 In general, how much trust do you have in the news media – such as newspapers, TV, radio and the Internet – when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately, and fairly?

- 1 A great deal
- 2 Some
- 3 Not very much
- 4 None at all
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

Weighted Sample Characteristics

Gender	<i>Male</i>	49%
	<i>Female</i>	51%
Age	<i>18-29</i>	22%
	<i>30-49</i>	33%
	<i>50-64</i>	26%
	<i>65+</i>	19%
	<i>Refused</i>	0
	<i>Refused</i>	1%
Race	<i>White Non-Hispanic</i>	63%
	<i>Black Non-Hispanic</i>	11%
	<i>Hispanic</i>	15%
	<i>Asian</i>	3%
	<i>Other/Refused</i>	8%
Education	<i>HS or less</i>	45%
	<i>Some college/AA degree</i>	24%
	<i>College and beyond</i>	30%
	<i>DK/Refused</i>	1%