Network Against Islamophobia

Race, Racism and Racialization Module

Purpose of Module:
This module looks at the ways that race, racism, and racialization are constructed in relation to U.S. Muslims from Middle Eastern and South Asian immigrant communities, Arab Americans, and Black American Muslims. It also examines Islamophobia, how it manifests itself and is enforced, and its wider political consequences. This module and its analysis can help shape and inform our organizing by considering our assumptions and understanding how they may contribute to the very racist rhetoric and policies that we work to dismantle. We recommend using this module after, or in conjunction with, the full NAI curriculum or Intro module. Other ideas about how to use the NAI curriculum can be found in the Facilitator Guide.

Goals:
- To develop our understanding of the ways that constructions of race, racism and racialization are embedded in anti-Muslim racism, anti-Arab racism and other manifestations of Islamophobia
- To incorporate facts and historical and conceptual frameworks into our political analyses
- To help us challenge Islamophobic and racist assumptions and current Islamophobic and anti-Arab rhetoric and policies

Materials:
- Handout #1: Basic Definitions of Islamophobia and Anti-Arab Racism

- Handout #2: Examples of Islamophobic Assumptions
- Handout #3: Islamophobic Acts/Hate Speech and State-Sponsored Islamophobia
- Handout #5: Race, Racism and Racialization
- Handout #6: Race, Racism, and Racialization of U.S. Muslims from Middle Eastern and South Asian Immigrant Communities
- Handout #7: Race, Racism, and Racialization and Arab Americans
- Handout #8: Islamophobia, Racism, and Black American Muslims
- Yasmin Nouh, Fusion, "No Extremists Here" video
- Handout #19: Post-Workshop Readings and Videos on Islamophobia in the United States
- Handout #20: Groups to Work with and Support in Muslim and Other Impacted Communities
- Kalia Abiade's video, Fighting Islamophobia in This Time
- Islamophobia Is Racism Syllabus

I. How do we define and understand Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism? (15 minutes)

This activity is from the full NAI curriculum and the Intro module. If you have not done this exercise before, please do it here. If you have done it and want a refresher, you can do it here . We have also added guiding questions that are specific to this module.

Facilitator:
10 minutes: Write the word "Islamophobia" on the center of chart paper or board. Ask participants for phrases or thoughts and experiences that come to mind when they hear this term and jot down responses on chart paper. Guide a discussion on these thoughts and experiences and review handout #1: Basic Definitions of Islamophobia and Anti-Arab Racism; and handout #2: Some Examples of Islamophobic Assumptions.

Guiding Questions:
- What are some of your personal experiences with Islamophobia?
- How do you think Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism are promoted?
- What are some of the ways that Islamophobia connects to other forms of racism?

II. Race, Racialization, Racism and Arab Americans: What are some of the Islamophobic assumptions we hold, and how do they connect to systemic racism? (30 minutes)

Facilitator:
10 minutes: Conduct a full group brainstorm based on the prompts. Who or what comes to mind when you think about:
- Who is Arab?
- Who is Muslim?
- What do Muslims look like?

15 minutes: After brainstorm, participants divide into pairs. Pass out handout #3: Islamophobic Acts/Hate Speech and State-Sponsored Islamophobia; and handout #5: Race, Racism and Racialization. Pairs look at handouts and consider these questions:
- How do racialized conflations (physical appearance, dress, origin) connect to the "Othering" and racialization of Muslims?
- What are some policies you are aware of (such as immigrant exclusion) that exemplify this Othering?
- How are Muslims commonly portrayed in the media?
- How do myths and common misconceptions related to Muslims contribute to anti-Arab racism and systemic Islamophobia?

5 minutes: Whole group go-around to share anything that stood out from the handouts and pair discussion.

III. Common misinformation, and setting the record straight (45 minutes)

Facilitator:
15 minutes: Divide into 3 groups. Each group looks over corresponding handout to find examples that refute the common (mis)understandings that were shared in the brainstorm in activity #2, as well as other common Islamophobic assumptions.
- Group #1--Immigrant Communities: Race, Racialization and the Racialization of U.S. Muslims from Middle Eastern and South Asian Immigrant Communities (Handout #6)
- Group #2--Arab Americans: Race, Racialization, and Arab Americans (Handout #7)
- Group #3--Black American Muslims: Islamophobia, Racism, and Black American Muslims (Handout #8)

15 minutes: After discussing the handouts, each group develops a brief role play scenario. Depending on the size of the group, either one person or a few people share false beliefs and preconceived misconceptions, and another person/others from the group work on refuting those misunderstandings through a meaningful discussion/scenario. The handouts can be used as guides and to help build arguments.

15 minutes: Each group acts out its role play scenario and shares the examples and refutations from their handouts with the whole group. Guiding Questions:

- What did you learn that you didn't know before?
- What was surprising and why?
- What are some of ways that common misconceptions and falsehoods can hinder a complex understanding of Islamophobia?
- What is the effect of the dominant narratives in media and literature that erase certain groups from the narrative?

Optional activity

IV. Challenging the Islamophobic Notion of "Terrorism" as Muslim-Americans' Responsibility (10 minutes)

This activity is from the full NAI curriculum and the Intro module. If you have not done this exercise before, please do it here. If you have done it and want a refresher, you can do it here.

Facilitator:
2 minutes: Yasmin Nouh's "No Extremists Here" [video].

8 minutes: Guide group conversation on major U.S. political parties and media telling American Muslims they need to be responsible for combating "terrorism."
Guiding questions:

- What is most striking about this video and the belief that Muslims should be at the forefront of fighting "Islamic extremism"?
- How does this belief perpetuate Islamophobia?
- How does this framing connect to other forms of Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism?

V. Closing (10 minutes)

Facilitator:
Pass or point out additional resources: [Islamophobia Is Racism Syllabus (PDF)]; handout #19: Post-Workshop Readings and Videos on Islamophobia in the United States; and handout #20: Groups to Work with and Support in Muslim and Other Impacted Communities. Bring participants' special attention to Kalia Abiade's video, [Fighting Islamophobia in This Time].

Go around the room and ask each participant to share:

- One thing they will take away with them from the training
- An action step they can take to counter anti-Muslim racism, anti-Arab racism and other manifestations of Islamophobia