Part I
Islam and Muslims at a Glance
What are we talking about?

- Arabs? -- Race
- Islam? Muslims? -- Religion
- Middle East? -- Region
- Mediterranean? -- Region

![Muslim Population Map](source: Pew Research Center, June 2014)
Youth

- Strong ties to family
- Rebel all the time
- Have wonderful dreams
Government

• Monarchies (Saudi, Morocco, …)
• Republics (Lebanon, Algeria, Indonesia, …)
• Dictatorships (Egypt, Libya, …)
• Theocracy (Iran)
• More female heads of state than the US 😊
Abrahamic Faith

- Oneness of God
- Judeo-Christian-Islamic
- Commonality
  - Five Core Abrahamic Beliefs
  - Jesus in Islam
  - Law of Moses and Islam
- Difference is mainly regarding salvation
  - No one carries the sin of another
  - No salvation by birth or race
  - Based on God’s Mercy, One’s Belief and Deeds
Beliefs of Muslims

1. God (Allah)
2. Angels
3. Prophets
4. Revealed Scriptures
5. A Day of Judgment
6. Divine Destiny

Who is Muhammad? Born in 570 CE in Makkah, Muhammad was a descendant of Prophet Ismail. He is considered the seal of God's revelation, the Last Messenger.
Basic Practices of Muslims

1. Shahadah: Declaration of Faith
2. Salah: Five Daily prayers
3. Zakah: Alms Giving
4. Ramadan: Fasting
5. Hajj: Pilgrimage to Mecca
Family in Quran [46:15-18]

- We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents: In pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth. The carrying of the (child) to his weaning is (a period of) thirty months. At length, when he reaches the age of full strength and attains forty years, he says, "O my Lord! Grant me that I may be grateful for Thy favor which Thou has bestowed upon me, and upon both my parents, and that I may work righteousness such as Thou mayest approve; and be gracious to me and mend my progeny. Truly have I turned to Thee and truly do I bow (to Thee) in submission."

- Such are they from whom We shall accept the best of their deeds and pass by their ill deeds: (They shall be) among the Companions of the Garden: a promise! of truth, which was made to them (in this life).

- But (there is one) who says to his parents, "Fie on you! Do ye hold out the promise to me that I shall be raised up, even though generations have passed before me (without rising again)?" And they two seek Allah's aid, (and rebuke the son): "Woe to thee! Have faith! for the promise of Allah is true." But he says, "This is nothing but tales of the ancients!"

- Such are they against whom is proved the sentence among the previous generations of spirits and men, that have passed away; for they will be (utterly) lost.
Family in the Prophet’s Life

• “The best among you, are those best to their families, and I am the best of you to my family.”

• “He is not one of us, he who does not respect our elders, or does not show mercy to our young ones.”

• “God rewards for gentleness far more than he rewards for firmness.”

• “Who is the person most deserving of my good companionship?”
  - “Your mother.”
  - “Then who?”
  - “Your mother.”
  - “Then who?”
  - “Your mother.”
  - “Then who?”
  - “Your father.”

• When he would prostrate in prayer, his grandchildren would climb on his back as they play, and he would remain in prostration until they were done.
Education in Islam

Quran:
• “Say are they equal, those who know and those who do not know?.”
  “And he who is given wisdom has, indeed, been given a great good.”

Prophet Muhammad:
• “Who ever seeks a path to knowledge, God will facilitate with it for him a path to paradise.”
• “Who ever seeks a path to knowledge, then he is in the cause of God until he returns.”

Islamic Tradition:
• Learning reading and writing is mandatory for both genders.
• Quranic study tradition.
Muslims around the World

- 1.6 Billion worldwide (1 out of 4 people)
- Only 18% are Arabs
- Majority live outside the middle east.
- Most populous Muslim country: Indonesia
- Most populous region: South Asia
- Africa.. The Muslim Continent
Muslims in America

There’s an estimated 100,000 Muslims in the Western Washington area.

8-10 million Muslims in America

Muslims in America

Racial/Ethnic Breakdown of Religious Groups in the United States
What is your race? Are you white, African American, Asian, or some other race?
- White
- African American
- Hispanic
- Asian
- Other

Muslims: 28%
Protestants: 35%
Catholics: 18%
Mormons: 18%
Jews: 10%

Muslim American Men and Women Report Similar Monthly Household Incomes
What is your total monthly household incomes, before taxes? Please include income from wages and salaries, remittances from family members living elsewhere, farming, and all other sources.
- % Women: $1,999 and less
- % Women: $5,000 and more

For Most Muslim Americans, Religion Plays Key Role in Life
Is religion an important part of your daily life?
- % Yes, religion is important

80% Muslims
76% Protestants
68% Catholics
85% Mormons
39% Jews
65% U.S. general population
Part II
Cultural Sensitivity
Interacting with Muslim families
Talking with Muslims

- Some may avoid eye contact especially with the opposite gender, this is for modesty.
- Soft spoken does not necessarily mean oppressed, weak or guilty.
- Men may presume to speak for their wives, sisters or daughters. Women may not want to speak up in the presence of fathers, husbands or brothers.
- May be reserved about showing affection in front of strangers.
Visiting with Muslims

- Women and teenage girls may need a moment to cover themselves before opening the door.
- A woman by herself maybe reluctant/averse to letting in a single male visitor.
- They may act more quiet and reserved, even though you heard them sing and yell through the door moments earlier.
- Some may be averse to physical contact with or close proximity to opposite gender.
A few more tips...

• Mistrust of authorities
• Make use of Translators whenever possible
• Try and find translators from the same culture and region
• Build trust and take time to explain
• Muslims are not a Monolith: In practicing Islam, in customs, in views, …
Part III
Cultural Sensitivity
Religious practice

- Prayer:
  - A clean place to pray, a prayer rug
  - Prayer times ([www.islamicfinder.org](http://www.islamicfinder.org))
  - 10-15 minutes of time (travel, wash, pray, return)
  - Girls prefer to pray out of sight

- Bathroom etiquettes (some may clean up with water)

- Friday prayers
Religious practice

• Fasting entering the school year in June
  ➢ Those older than puberty may want to fast
  ➢ Smaller children may fast part of the day
  ➢ Remember them when giving out treats

• Eid: Two Eid celebrations
  ➢ One at the end of fasting, one during Pilgrimage
  ➢ Festive fun time
  ➢ Encourage children to show and tell
  ➢ Encourage parents to participate
Dietary restrictions

• Cannot eat any meat products that come from swine, such as: Pork, Bacon, Ham, Gelatin

• Cannot consume any food that’s been mixed with alcohol, even if it “cooks away.”

• Some only eat “Zabiha” meat (ritually slaughtered)

• Some popular treats are usually not consumed by Muslim kids (marshmallows, jello, …)

Engage Parents, no need to guess
The Child’s Life

• Modesty & gender separation
• Ethnic Identity
• Extra-curricular activities related to their cultural identity and Islamic study
• Sex education
• Allowed and Illicit substances
Part IV

Issues and Concerns
Looking through their eyes

- Many Muslim families feel pressure, especially migrants, especially refugees
- There’s no model of state-run child services like in the United States
- Fear of non-Muslims taking their kids to convert them, fear of “losing” their kids
- Horror stories they hear about other Muslims and CPS
- Negative portrayal in the Media
- Radicalization
Muslims want happy families too

- Muslims are people like all other people, no data that Muslims harm their children more than others, in fact Muslim kids are among the most successful in the US.

- As a post-colonial population we are still struggling with internal reforms

- As an immigrant community we’re still adjusting

- Beware of the “superiority complex”
  - Media stigmatization
  - Clash of civilizations!
Micro-inequities and unconscious bias

• If you assume a position, flip the race and gender, and see if you still have the same assumption
  - 5 year old Hassan says X, you feel it’s a part of his conservative Muslim upbringing, if 5 year old Timothy had said it, would you have interpreted it the same?
  - 10 year old Aisha says she doesn’t want to participate in Y, you feel that her she is too passive and needs to assert herself, if it was 10 year old Samantha, would you have felt the same way?