

NATIONAL SIKH FOCUS GROUP  
ISELIN, NEW JERSEY, JULY 14, 2014, 5:30 P.M.

**MODERATOR:** I would love to go around and have you introduce yourselves, and I'd love for you to tell me your first name, just so we can get it on tape, what you do for a living, and who lives with you in your household, and where in the area you live. I'm assuming you live somewhere in the area. But we can start to my right.

**EUGENE:** My name is Eugene. I live in Raleigh with my girlfriend, her three kids. I'm national service manager for a distribution company primarily dealing with musical instruments, sound equipment, things like that.

**MODERATOR:** Thank you for coming, Eugene.

**EUGENE:** Thank you.

**MODERATOR:** Next?

**MELANIE:** Melanie, and live in South Plainsville, and I live with my husband and four children.

**MODERATOR:** And tell me, out of curiosity, how old your kids are.

**MELANIE:** Nineteen, 13, 12, and 4.

**MODERATOR:** And what do you do for a living?

**MELANIE:** Housewife.

**MODERATOR:** You're a housewife, and what does your husband do?

**MELANIE:** He works for the Chatham Borough. He's the head of the work department.

**MODERATOR:** Thank you for coming. Next to Melanie?

**KYLE:** My name is Kyle.

**MODERATOR:** Hi, Kyle.

**KYLE:** And I live in Edison, right down the road, with my girlfriend. I'm an accountant for a media production company, and my girlfriend is a registered nurse.

**MODERATOR:** And how about Debbie?

**DEBBIE:** I'm Debbie. I live in Colonia with my husband and 27-year-old son. I'm currently working. I'm a fleet manager. I'm in charge of the company vehicles working in an education company right now. But most of my background is in pharmaceutical. I'm kind of working to get back into pharmaceutical.

**MODERATOR:** And how about next?

**SAM:** Sam.

**MODERATOR:** Hi, Sam.

**SAM:** I live in East Brunswick, wife, two children at home. I drive a truck for a produce company.

**MODERATOR:** And how old are your kids at home?

**SAM:** Twenty-three and 15.

**MODERATOR:** Pretty soon you can get them both out.

**SAM:** I wish.

**MODERATOR:** Maybe eventually. How about Jenny?

**JENNY:** I'm Jenny. I live in Highland Park with my husband and our two children. They're seven and ten. And I work at Rutgers as a program manager in one of the executive education groups.

**MODERATOR:** And next to Jenny?

**GERARD:** I'm Gerard. I'm from Middletown, New Jersey. I have a wife and 2 kids, a 16-year-old and a 20-year-old. I'm a chief compliance officer for an institutional broker dealer in Manhattan.

**MODERATOR:** Thank you for coming, Gerard.

**GERARD:** You're welcome.

**JOANNE:** Joanne.

**MODERATOR:** Not Joan?

**JOANNE:** No, not Joan, Joanne. I live in South Amboy with my boyfriend and five-year-old. And I am an executive assistant at an I-Bank.

**MODERATOR:** At an I-Bank?

**JOANNE:** Yes.

**MODERATOR:** Oh, interesting. And last, but certainly not least?

**SHAYNA:** My name is Shayna. I live in Kenilworth with my husband, my 11-year-old daughter, my 12-year-old daughter, and the one who will be born in 3 months.

**MODERATOR:** Congratulations.

**SHAYNA:** I'm an executive consultant for American Express, and my husband is a firefighter and paramedic.

**MODERATOR:** Well, thank you all again for coming. And we're going to start. I'm going to first hand these out to you. We're going to use these throughout our discussion. I'm going to ask you to put your first name in the box on the first page. And don't flip over any of the pages until I ask you to. We're just going to take it one piece at a time.

While you're doing that, I'm going to give you these sets of cards. And you can take the rubber band off the cards when you get it, and flip them over. I can't remember exactly how many are in here. I feel like there about 15 cards in here. Everybody has the same deck, and there are people's faces.

I want you to take a moment, and just look through them, without comment, without question, and then I will let you know what I would like you to do with it next. But go ahead and, you know, study each one. Just take a moment. You don't have to commit it to memory. Just to be sure, everybody should have A through P should be the last one. Does everyone have . . .

**MAN:** Q too.

**MODERATOR:** Oh, interesting. As long as everybody has Q, that's fine. They didn't give me Q. I'll grab an extra. So as long as everybody has A through Q, go ahead and turn to your green sheets. It says Handout A up at top. You might remember from high school, some of you more recently than others, that senior year you did some of the most likely to succeed, most likely to end up in jail, you know, that kind of thing.

You have a series of ten most likely here. I presume you don't know any of the people on here. If you do, you're way ahead of me. But assuming you don't, I want you to assign a most likely, using the letter of the person that's above their head next to each one of these.

There are more cards than there are categories, so some people you won't probably have any answers for at all. And you can reuse somebody too. So if you think this guy in letter A looks like he's pretty likely to succeed in business but also get caught in a political scandal, you can put him down for both of those. So you can reuse any of

them as many times as you want. It's just depending on what your sort of viewpoint of the person you see is. And you're looking, Shayna, very upset and disgusted.

**SHAYNA:** I'm not upset. I'm just curious how I'm supposed to judge based by someone's looks instead of knowing them and speaking with them.

**MODERATOR:** That's exactly what I'm asking you to do . . . for that and knowing you're speaking . . .

**SHAYNA:** That is so incredibly weird.

**MODERATOR:** It's a little unusual. I will be honest, this is not an exercise I've done a lot in focus groups. So we'll see how you guys do. So take a couple of minutes. Try to work kind of quickly, if you can. And remember, there are no right or wrong answers, unless there are, in which case, I'll tell you later.

**SAM:** Are we going to come off looking a little racist?

**MODERATOR:** I don't know. I don't know what your answers are yet.

**WOMAN:** It's not . . . yeah, right . . . point for symbolism.

**MODERATOR:** And you shouldn't be thinking too hard. I know you're all worried about where this is going, but you shouldn't be. This is really just supposed to be sort of a fun kind of icebreaker exercise. Take just a few more seconds to finish up, please.

**SAM:** Can you pick the same person for more than one category?

**MODERATOR:** You actually can, yes. At the bottom of the page, after you're done there, this may seem a little weird, I want you to write down if you think any of these people, just by looking at them, are Hindu. So just write down Hindu and then the letters of any. And you know what? Let's do a couple just while we're at it. Do Muslim also. While we're at it, Sikh also. Oh, one more, Catholic.

**WOMAN:** Do we have to put every . . . down . . .

**MODERATOR:** No, you don't. If you look at this, and you go, I have no idea if this person is Muslim, Sikh, Catholic, Jewish, Episcopalian, Universalist, don't worry about it. And not everybody is going to presumably fall into one of these categories. And if you want to leave them all blank because you just have absolutely no idea by looking at them what religion they may be, you can leave them all blank. That is perfectly acceptable.

**SAM:** Are we using all of them?

**MODERATOR:** I'm sorry?

**SAM:** We're using all of these from A to Q?

**MODERATOR:** You do not have to, no. You don't have to use any of them in point of fact, if you're not sure. I'd like to know some of your answers here. We won't talk about every one of the categories, because there are just sort of too many of them. But let's start with category number three, most likely to get elected to Congress. Everybody hold up your picture for most likely to get elected to Congress. So we've got a couple with letter M. We've got one with G. That's letter K. We've got a couple of K's. Okay. Tell me, Sam, why letter K is mostly likely to get elected to Congress.

**SAM:** She kind of looks like a politician to me.

**MODERATOR:** What is politician to you, does politician mean about her?

**SAM:** She's got like a professional kind of look, like every man kind of person, you know.

**MODERATOR:** Joanne, you also chose woman letter K. Why does she look like a potential congresswoman to you?

**JOANNE:** Because I think just the way that she's presenting herself in this photo. And I think she just looks like confident that . . .

**MODERATOR:** Confident.

**JOANNE:** Yeah, she has some kind of political agenda to me.

**MODERATOR:** Shayna, you chose the letter M, and Kyle, you chose the letter M. Shayna, tell me what about letter M?

**SHAYNA:** He just looks like your very typical white-bread politician.

**MODERATOR:** White-bread, clean-cut kind of guy?

**SHAYNA:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** Kyle?

**KYLE:** Yeah, I agree. He kinds of reminds me of Anthony Weiner.

[Simultaneous discussion]

**SHAYNA:** I was thinking the same thing, and I didn't want to say it.

**MODERATOR:** That makes sense. I can see that.

**SHAYNA:** I would not be that person. Thank you for being that person.

**KYLE:** No problem.

**MODERATOR:** Gerard, who did you choose, which letter?

**GERARD:** I have letter N.

**MODERATOR:** Anyone else choose letter N? I think it was the only one just. Gerard, tell me about letter N.

**GERARD:** Well, she's professionally dressed, women who are up and coming. I chose her over other women that were here. I heard them talk about the letter K. I felt that she looked more like a person who would be running for politics, especially since she looks like she's not like of the majority, the whites. She looks more like, maybe Middle Eastern, something like that, and they're up-and-coming people in this country.

**MODERATOR:** How about let's choose a new category? How about number nine, most likely to serve in the military? Hold up for me which picture you put up for number nine. I've got letter I. I've got A, C, C, C, C, C. I've got a bunch of I's. Okay, I got a bunch of I's and a bunch of Cs. Melanie, tell me about gentleman number C.

**MELANIE:** He looks like my uncle that served in the Navy. He served 25 years.

**MODERATOR:** Other people who chose that guy from letter C, tell me why.

**KYLE:** I think he was kind looks rugged looking, and the bald head gave me the impression of the military.

**SHAYNA:** He looks like my sister's lieutenant.

**MODERATOR:** So a couple people that actually looks like someone in the military. Others on that guy, letter C, why you chose him? There were a few of you.

**SAM:** I just thought kind of for the same reason, the short hair. He just looks like he was in the military to me.

**MODERATOR:** And how about you folks who chose letter I? There were three of you, Gerard, Jenny, and Debbie. Debbie, tell me why you chose the guy from letter I.

**DEBBIE:** He just looked conservative, ready to serve.

**MODERATOR:** What made you say conservative? That's an interesting comment.

**DEBBIE:** I don't know. For his age, he's not dressed wacky or anything, just dressed normal.

**MODERATOR:** Whatever that is, normal. Jenny, how about you?

**JENNY:** It looked to me like he was wearing some kind of a sports team jersey, so he just looks to me like your all-American high school kid who's going to join the military and maybe go to college afterwards on the GI Bill.

**MODERATOR:** Got it. Okay. And how about you, Gerard?

**GERARD:** It was the same thing. It was the sports. I saw that, the short hair. Seems like he'd be a kid who would go into the military.

**MODERATOR:** Joanne, you chose letter A?

**JOANNE:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** Tell me about that, him.

**JOANNE:** I just thought that he looked like he would be maybe going into the military but not as a soldier. I didn't think he looked like he would be fighting out there, maybe doing some kind of behind-the-scenes work like in IT or something technical, maybe in the Navy or the Air Force.

**MODERATOR:** So not combat, and it's sort of a military desk job look?

**JOANNE:** Right.

**MODERATOR:** That's interesting. Let's do number ten, most likely to attend an Ivy League college. I've got a letter A, a couple letter A's. I've got an H, Q, Q, and an E. Good. Jenny, which letter is yours?

**JENNY:** I believe H.

**MODERATOR:** H, good. Tell me about letter H.

**JENNY:** She looks to me like she's the right age to be going into college. She just looks composed and put together. It's really hard to judge based on just what she's wearing. Mostly her age and based on demographics, she doesn't look like she's from American descent, so maybe her parents are not. There are more and more minorities in Ivy League schools. But her age more than anything, actually.

**MODERATOR:** And there's at least one other who chose her, who chose H. Is there not some, another one just? Sorry. Joanne, tell me about letter E.

**JOANNE:** I just think that she looks a little bit more well off and put together. She would probably have the funds to attend this school, and a little bit more prim and proper.

**MODERATOR:** Prim and proper is who you think of when you think of Ivy League?

**JOANNE:** Mm-hmm.

**MODERATOR:** Anyone else want to make a strong case as, Debbie, you were the same answer?

**DEBBIE:** Conservative.

**MODERATOR:** Conservative again, and what's conservative about this one?

**DEBBIE:** She looks put together, again, not wild looking or whatever. It looks like maybe she already graduated from an Ivy League college.

**MODERATOR:** Kyle, how about your letter A?

**KYLE:** I think of Asians being smart all the time, and the glasses.

**DEBBIE:** The glasses . . .

**KYLE:** Overall smart people.

**MODERATOR:** And you associate Ivy League with smart people, obviously. Okay, got that.

**SHAYNA:** The lacrosse stick.

**MODERATOR:** The lacrosse stick, that's a tipoff to you?

**SHAYNA:** Ivy League is very big on lacrosse. It's a very big game. People get in with full scholarships. That's what I thought.

**MODERATOR:** I like this one, number two, most likely to have been the school bully. I've got letter C. I've got B and a couple, a bunch for C. I've got a lot of I's. That's a popular answer here. Melanie, tell me why. And if you guys could just hold onto it, sort of just put it down on the table so I can remember whatever you had. Melanie, tell me.

**MELANIE:** A lot of times the sports guys are the guys that are bullying the smart kids, and he's got a cocky smile on his face.

**MODERATOR:** A cocky smile. Who else on him? Gerard?

**GERARD:** Almost the identical thing. He plays lacrosse. I can see that was a lacrosse stick, usually a very rough game. Sports kids are usually the ones that bully other kids inside the school.

**SAM:** I feel the same way. Jocks are usually the bullies in school.

**MODERATOR:** Why letter C, Shayna?

**SHAYNA:** Because he looks like my sister's lieutenant, and he's rough. I make the connection between the two. I think he's probably not a nice guy.

**KYLE:** Jerk? Not a nice guy?

**SHAYNA:** With the way that he screams at the rest of us . . . I can only imagine with he was like in high school.

**MODERATOR:** How about Joanne on letter C?

**JOANNE:** I think he just looks older than what he really is, and he just looks like kind of beat up and just like . . . and he would probably have been a wise guy and a bully for other people.

**MODERATOR:** Eugene, you've got to tell me about letter F. I love that selection.

**EUGENE:** He looks like trouble.

**MODERATOR:** It's the red hair, isn't it?

**EUGENE:** It's the bad haircut with the crest on his shirt. It's just trouble written all over him.

**MODERATOR:** Now let's go the other way. Number seven is mostly likely to have been bullied or to be bullied, depending on the age of the person you choose. Hold up your category for number seven. I've got D. I've got M. I've B, B, F, F, M, L, and that's B down there. Tell me, Debbie, about letter B.

**DEBBIE:** Not so much nowadays, but I'm thinking about when I was in school, a long, long, long time ago.

**MODERATOR:** Last year?

**DEBBIE:** Thank you. This would have been probably somebody that would have been, because they're different.

**MODERATOR:** Because they're different?

**DEBBIE:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** Who else? Joanne, on letter B.

**JOANNE:** I just feel that even now he would be picked on or bullied because he's different, and was of a Middle Eastern descent. And kids are pretty mean, so I think they would just be gunning for him.

**MODERATOR:** And someone else had letter B too.

**EUGENE:** I did.

**MODERATOR:** Go ahead, Eugene.

**EUGENE:** Same deal, he just looks, dresses a little different. He might be standing out and a prime target kind of thing.

**MODERATOR:** And how about you, Kyle, for letter D?

**KYLE:** Same thing, being the least . . . probably minority . . . and I think women can be more judgmental towards each other.

**MODERATOR:** Interesting. Okay, good. I want to do just one more, and then we're going to move onto the next thing. Let's end with number eight, most likely to get extra scrutiny by the TSA at the airport. There's a lot of uniformity of opinion here. I've got one, two, three, four, five, six letter J's and one, two, three letter G's. Gerard, tell me about letter G.

**GERARD:** He looks Middle Eastern, and I would say they'd probably target him in a line and for extra scrutiny.

**MODERATOR:** Specifically because?

**GERARD:** Because of the way he looks.

**MODERATOR:** And how about you, Sam?

**SAM:** I chose him because he looks a little bit more professional like he might be under the wire, where the other guy that's Middle Eastern was very obvious in your face, the beard, and the headgear.

**MODERATOR:** Is that the one that everyone else is, a bunch of other people?

**SAM:** Right, I think he'd be too obvious, and I think that they're a lot sneakier.

**MODERATOR:** And who is the other person? Go ahead, Joanne.

**JOANNE:** Pretty much the same thing that Sam and Gerard said. He's Middle Eastern. And he just has a very sneaky look about him, the smirk and just the way he's looking.

**MODERATOR:** A little shifty?

**JOANNE:** Yeah, definitely.

**MODERATOR:** How about Eugene? You chose letter J.

**EUGENE:** Strictly by appearance, profiling, whatever you want to call it.

**MODERATOR:** Others on letter J, Kyle?

**KYLE:** Same thing, profiling.

**MODERATOR:** Anybody? And did you only do that because I sort of forced you to? I mean, if I had just . . . a bunch of pictures you'd be like, oh, this guy, whether it's G or J, that guy would have a problem at the airport? Is that sort of something that if I hadn't asked you to put these people into a category you would have thought that guy might have a difficulty?

**SHAYNA:** I'm in travel, so that's exactly what I would think. That's what I do for AmEx, I help them travel.

**MODERATOR:** Oh, you do travel stuff?

**SHAYNA:** Yeah, I help them with all their executives.

**MODERATOR:** So you're attuned to that?

**SHAYNA:** Yeah, they would be profiled immediately. TSA has said that they profile immediately. So they pull other people aside so that it doesn't look like it.

**MODERATOR:** Has anyone else heard that, that TSA actually does sort of physical profiling of people that way?

**EUGENE:** I don't think it's just the TSA. I think there's a lot of people . . .

**MODERATOR:** Have you heard that the TSA does what Shayna said? Have you ever sort of heard that before?

**EUGENE:** No.

**SHAYNA:** Yeah, that came straight from the TSA agent.

**MODERATOR:** Had anyone else ever heard that before?

**EUGENE:** No, but I would believe it.

**MODERATOR:** You believe it?

**JOANNE:** I would believe it.

**EUGENE:** Yeah, it makes sense.

**MODERATOR:** You would buy it anyway. Pull out letter J again. Put him aside. Let's put letter G aside. How about letter E, letter Q, and letter N and letter H while we're at it.

**WOMAN:** So H and N?

**MODERATOR:** H and N, and put them to the side, or put them where you can see them. Start with letter N. Go to Handout B. We'll pick three to look at. We'll start with letter N. Where it says image, write letter N at the top. And then I just want you to write down a few words. And this is sort of more, asking you to judge a book by its cover, quite literally. But you started doing that already.

Just tell me a little bit about this woman. Look at her. Tell me what you think she does for a living. Tell me where, if she does anything. Tell me where you think maybe she lives, what kind of person she is, and I don't mean a good or bad person necessarily, but if someone looks at her and says she seems like a really good person, you can write that down. Make a snap judgment about the person and tell me about them. Tell me a little bit more about mystery woman N. What are some of the things you wrote down? Anybody?

**EUGENE:** And just blurt it out?

**MODERATOR:** Blurt it out.

**EUGENE:** I put her down as a smart professional, perhaps a doctor.

**MODERATOR:** Perhaps a doctor? And Kyle?

**KYLE:** I put a lawyer, because of the suit.

**GERARD:** I wrote is Middle Eastern descent, professional real estate, possibly financial or educational.

**MODERATOR:** In education?

**GERARD:** . . . education.

**MODERATOR:** Education. Okay.

**DEBBIE:** Just wants to fit into the U.S. culture.

**JENNY:** I thought that she might live on the East or West Coast or in a big city in the Midwest rather than in small town USA, Kentucky.

**DEBBIE:** Just keep that in mind. So I want to come back to that one. What else? What other things do people think about Woman J, Woman N, rather?

**WOMAN:** She's upper middle class.

**MODERATOR:** Upper middle class?

**DEBBIE:** A business professional.

**MODERATOR:** Business professional.

**SHAYNA:** She just seems nice, friendly, like she works in an office, lives in the suburbs.

**MODERATOR:** That should be good. I'll write that one down. What else? Anything else? Jenny, why do think, or why do you sort of think she must live in a larger city?

**JENNY:** Again, it's hard to judge just based on just a photograph, but I'm assuming based on her appearance, that she is a successful professional of some kind. I feel like a woman of her age who maybe looks like she's from a minority population to be successful in her career, that requires a nice . . . education, probably does live in a more urban, kind of enlightened, diverse area. I think it would be harder to be this woman's age and look like she does and be a successful professional in the breadbasket of America than it would in Chicago or L.A. or New York or Boston.

**MODERATOR:** Interesting. And, Debbie, you wrote down it looks like she wants to or is trying to fit into American or U.S. culture. Tell me about that. That's an interesting comment too.

**DEBBIE:** She's not wearing Mid-Eastern garb. She's wearing what a professional American woman would be wearing.

**MODERATOR:** And what else, or is it mainly just her dress that's . . .

**DEBBIE:** Even her hairstyle or whatever, she just looks like she wants to fit in.

**MODERATOR:** Anyone else have a comment you want to make or a comment on anyone else's comments? Feel free to build on each other comments.

**GERARD:** I had her pegged for a suburb rather than in the city.

**SHAYNA:** I don't think city so much as . . .

**JOANNE:** I had suburb too.

**MODERATOR:** Urban area?

**SHAYNA:** . . . an urban area, and then . . . yeah.

**MODERATOR:** Why do you think suburbs then?

**EUGENE:** She looks like she's got two adult children. She lives in a McMansion.

**MODERATOR:** Affluent, you know.

**EUGENE:** I think so, yeah.

**MODERATOR:** Melanie?

**MELANIE:** I also said wife and mother and lives in the suburbs. She looks like a business professional, successful.

**WOMAN:** I agree, yes.

**KYLE:** Late 40's, maybe, her age.

**MELANIE:** She looks like she commutes to the city, comes home to the suburbs.

**MODERATOR:** How about let's go back to letter J, who we were talking about before. What are some of the things you wrote down about the gentleman who is picture J?

**MELANIE:** I put that he looks that he's a quiet and friendly person, because he has a nice smile, and he looks he could maybe be an engineer.

**MODERATOR:** He could be an engineer.

**MELANIE:** That just popped into my head. I don't know why.

**MODERATOR:** So before I ask you, you're just going to tell me that you don't know why?

**SHAYNA:** I said friendly, works in corporate, college grad, lives in the suburbs.

**MODERATOR:** Why works in corporate?

**SHAYNA:** The suit, the jacket. It wasn't just the button-down, it was the jacket also. It makes me think more corporate.

**MODERATOR:** And why do you think lives in the suburbs?

**SHAYNA:** There are trees behind him and a lot of grass. That just makes me feel like suburbs more that when you're in the city, which is usually when you give a headshot for a job or something like that, you're behind a white screen as opposed to a floral background.

**MODERATOR:** Eugene, what did you write down?

**EUGENE:** I put down that he's a happy guy, possibly an exchange student.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. What else did people write down?

**DEBBIE:** He doesn't want to totally conform to U.S. ways, so he's wearing the head thing, even though he's dressed, it looks like the rest of him is conforming, but he doesn't give up his background.

**MODERATOR:** Sort of the opposite of the first woman?

**DEBBIE:** Mm-hmm, and probably an IT guy. He probably lives in Iselin.

**GERARD:** I tagged him as a professional, either in the computer field or maybe even a business owner.

**MODERATOR:** And what was the last thing you said, he probably lives in Iselin?

**DEBBIE:** Mm-hmm.

**MODERATOR:** Why do you say that?

**DEBBIE:** Because when you drive down Oak Tree Road, a lot of people are dressed very similar.

**MODERATOR:** Oh, is that right?

**SAM:** I have him as a cab driver.

**MODERATOR:** And why is that, Sam?

**SAM:** Because every time I'm in the city the cab driver looks like that, for the most part.

**MODERATOR:** So a cab driver in the city?

**SAM:** Yeah, I have him living in the city and honest and hardworking.

**MODERATOR:** And what tells you that?

**SAM:** He just seems like a salt of the earth kind of guy.

**DEBBIE:** He seems friendly looking.

**MODERATOR:** What makes you? And the friendly I get, because he has a sort of friendly smile. What makes you say salt of the earth kind of guy?

**SAM:** He just looks like an honest guy that just goes to work every day.

**MODERATOR:** Is the impression you get?

**SAM:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** Anyone else have a comment about letter J?

**JENNY:** I wrote that he has a family, because I feel like the way that he's dressed suggests that he is very attached to his cultural background and that often this cultural background comes with a real commitment to family and . . . married on the young side, getting married, be a family person.

**MODERATOR:** That was Jenny. Good.

**KYLE:** I think that he actually lives with several generations of his family, in one household.

**MODERATOR:** Why is that, Kyle?

**KYLE:** That just seems to be their culture. Generations stick together, aunts, uncles, grandparents, grandkids.

**MODERATOR:** Whose culture?

**KYLE:** I don't want to say Muslim. I guess Indian, Hindu type cultures seem to all stick together. The family is . . .

**MODERATOR:** Committed to multiple, like Jenny said, commitment to family, but across generations?

**KYLE:** Right.

**MODERATOR:** Okay, good. How about letter Q? She didn't come up on the previous exercise. Tell me a little bit about the woman in letter Q.

**EUGENE:** To me she looks like a college student.

**WOMAN:** I have a college student.

**WOMAN:** I thought she looked college bound.

**GERARD:** I had a student as well. I put her as shy and not too wild, not a party girl.

**MODERATOR:** Why is that?

**GERARD:** She just seems a little plain and, she doesn't seem like one with the glasses, I guess.

**DEBBIE:** All-American girl next door.

**MODERATOR:** Girl next door, all-American.

**DEBBIE:** Personable.

**MODERATOR:** Personable.

**SHAYNA:** Lives and works in the city, seems nice, probably in some kind of TV production, not on TV but in the background, and she's definitely Yippee yet crunchy.

**MODERATOR:** And why is that?

**JENNY:** Just the look, the oversized glasses. It's very typical, very trendy, but at the same time the lime necklace. It looks a little bit more crunchy like you would see her at Whole Foods, running on a treadmill, taking up a lot of energy, yeah.

**DEBBIE:** He owns a company. She's an HR vice president, and this is the secretary.

**KYLE:** It looks like she'd be a journalist maybe, artist. Maybe she'd got an artistic side of her.

**MODERATOR:** Why is that?

**KYLE:** It's like she said, it's trendy now. It's the style. It also gives the appearance of being intelligent. I'd say she's maybe in her late 20's.

**MODERATOR:** Look back at all the pictures again that you have. Looking at the whole pile. When we did the bully part, you did a lot. You came up with the guy who was letter C and the guy who was I. You didn't like maybe he looks a little too cocky in letter I. The guy in letter G, someone said maybe he looks a little shifty, like not totally trustworthy.

Do you sort of have any sort of others that you look at here and that so you give a visceral, negative reaction to? For whether they fit into one of the categories or not, you look at them, and you go, I'm just not sure about that woman, or I'm not sure about that beady-eyed little girl or whatever?

**SAM:** I had M picked for the political scandal, because he does look like he'd be involved in the scandal.

**DEBBIE:** He does look like Anthony Weiner.

**EUGENE:** I had the same thing, only because it's the resemblance to Anthony Weiner . . .

[Simultaneous discussion]

**SHAYNA:** It's hard to get over that.

**KYLE:** You don't have to go any further.

**DEBBIE:** It's his high school picture.

**EUGENE:** If you went with Jim McGreevey, though, I went the other way.

**DEBBIE:** He does look like McGreevey.

**GERARD:** He looks like he would be in politics in Detroit.

**MODERATOR:** Why that one, Jenny?

**JENNY:** I just feel like he's looking at the camera, and his lips are curled up, and he does not look like he's really smiling. I don't know. His eyes look like he's not involved in this whole smiling for the camera situation. He just looks a little shifty to me, actually.

**MODERATOR:** Shifty. Others that you just don't like the looks of the person for one reason or another, or you have questions or concerns about them?

**GERARD:** It's just really not his fault that he happens to look like two political parties who were involved in a scandal. He's just similar to them.

**MODERATOR:** The bastard love child of Jim McGreevey and Anthony Weiner, Carlos Danger?

**GERARD:** Spends a lot of time on the Internet.

**WOMAN:** Carlos Danger.

**MODERATOR:** I have a few of these blown up, and I have a few others to add. I'm just going to . . . those down there. So the ones that are blown up that are from the cards you see here, but . . . their letter above them.

**EUGENE:** We don't have all those people.

**MODERATOR:** No, you don't. The ones that don't have a letter above them are new. And these are just examples. So these are all people, the answer may be totally you don't know at all, which is fine, A, sort of what would be the common thread among them, which there is, by the way?

**KYLE:** Middle Eastern.

**DEBBIE:** Yeah . . .

**MAN:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** They're actually Sikh. I mentioned Sikh before. I wrote it up there. I don't know. Did anybody write down that any of these sort of fell into the Sikh category?

**WOMAN:** I wrote E and J . . .

**KYLE:** I've never heard of Sikh.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. Good answer, Kyle. Who hasn't heard of Sikh? I've got two of you who have never heard of Sikh. Okay, good. The rest of you, did you pick any of these? You can just tell me yes or no.

**WOMAN:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** You did?

**WOMAN:** I picked J.

**MODERATOR:** You picked J . . .

**GERARD:** Yeah, I had J as Sikh because he had the turban on.

**MODERATOR:** Because of the turban?

**WOMAN:** Yeah.

**SAM:** And also B because he had the turban on also.

**SHAYNA:** I picked B and J.

**MODERATOR:** So several picked B and J. Eugene, did you pick any?

**EUGENE:** I opted out.

**MODERATOR:** You didn't pick any for any?

**EUGENE:** No.

**MODERATOR:** Fair enough.

**SAM:** B because of the headwear, isn't that a Sikh thing that . . .

**GERARD:** And also D I had.

**MODERATOR:** You picked her as Sikh as well?

**GERARD:** Yes.

**MODERATOR:** Do this for me. Your next handout is a pretty simple one. I want you to just write down sort of a stream of consciousness here. I want you to write down, when you hear the word or you see the word Sikh, what does it bring to mind? What do you think of?

And I want you to tell me if they're positive associations that come to mind, write them near the top of the page. If they're things you've heard that are not positive and not negative, just kind of neutral associations you would have, put those in the middle of the page.

And then if you have sort of any negative associations, any negative feelings or things that come to mind, write those down at the bottom. So positive, neutral, and negative. And if you don't have any idea, that is totally fine. You can just write down, I have no idea, and that is a perfectly acceptable answer. What are some of the positive things? How many people wrote down, no idea, I just don't know? We have three. Okay. For the rest of you, what are some of the positive things you wrote down?

**SAM:** I put very religious and clean living, because I don't think they drink. I don't think they smoke. And they're all about their religion.

**MODERATOR:** Okay, good. What were you going to say, Shayna?

**SHAYNA:** It's a very peaceful religion. It's very calm. They're very dedicated to their beliefs. They don't push their religion onto others. They don't even believe in harming animals. Most of them are vegetarians. They're just a very, very calm and peaceful religion.

**MODERATOR:** Okay, good. Eugene, did you write anything down?

**EUGENE:** I did. Without being stereotypical, somebody mentioned cab drivers in New York. Obviously, they work hard, long hours.

**MODERATOR:** So just hardworking.

**EUGENE:** Mm-hmm.

**MODERATOR:** Okay, good. What other positives did people write down?

**GERARD:** I had friendly, hard workers also, family-oriented, community-oriented, and 7-Eleven comes to mind. I've seen a lot of Sikh owners in a lot of these.

**DEBBIE:** I had very smart, professional.

**MODERATOR:** Smart and professional?

**EUGENE:** Sikh is a religion, right? It's not a nationality.

**SHAYNA:** No, it's a religion.

**MAN:** It's a religion . . .

**MODERATOR:** What tells you community-oriented, Gerard?

**GERARD:** I'm just familiar with the Sikhs, and they tend to keep to their communities. Like most groups, they stay in their communities.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. Were they any sort of neutral things people wrote down? I'm not going to pass judgment. It's not positive. It's not negative. It's just something I think. Yeah, go ahead, Debbie.

**DEBBIE:** I have two sisters that are teachers, and they both told me that the students that they have in their class, their parents are very into them studying and staying home.

**MODERATOR:** They have Sikh children in their class, and the parents?

**DEBBIE:** Yeah, they want them to learn and do well, and they're very involved with their school.

**MODERATOR:** Good. Anything else people wrote down sort of in the middle of the page, in the neutral? Go ahead, Jenny.

**JENNY:** I just wrote, because I don't know a whole lot about the religion, that it's an Eastern religion, but they are not Muslim or Hindu or Buddhist. It is a separate religious group. It's not a subset of another religion. I'm sure there are shades of gray, but fairly traditional gender roles in their communities.

**MODERATOR:** Is that, anyone else heard that or . . .

**SHAYNA:** From what I've read actually is that Sikh, the woman or the women in the Sikh religion are treated very equally, if not above men, because they are the ones who create the life. They're the ones who bring life into the world, raise the families, raise the boys to be men, things like that. So they're actually more along the lines of almost American tradition when it comes to placement of women.

**MODERATOR:** Interesting. Others? How about on the negative side, anybody write down anything negative? And don't be afraid to say so.

**SAM:** It sounds racist, but ever since 9/11 I'm just a little cautious around Middle Eastern people. So I guess that is racism.

**MODERATOR:** But it's a feeling you have.

**SAM:** Right. Exactly.

**KYLE:** I think when people say I'm not trying to be racist, stereotypes just don't come out of nowhere. So you base your racism off of almost like facts, in a way.

**MODERATOR:** Okay.

**KYLE:** Not all stereotypes are negative.

**MODERATOR:** Do you have a similar reaction to what Sam, I mean, just for that reason, sort of same sort of reasons?

**KYLE:** Mm-hmm.

**MODERATOR:** Go ahead, Debbie. What were you going to say?

**DEBBIE:** Going back to my sisters that are teachers, they indicated that there are a lot of families living in one household, and they're taking up a lot of space in the schools, because they'll have like six or seven kids living in the same house and attending a school that was only, it was supposed to be two kids in that house or whatever that was attending the school. So they're kind of like clogging the school system.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. Any others people wrote down? Anyone else have a similar belief, whether you wrote it down or not, a similar reaction to Sam and Kyle? It was like saying, it's not meant to be an assessment on the person, but I think cautious is the word you used. I think that's a good word.

**GERARD:** Right.

**MODERATOR:** Debbie feels that way as well?

**DEBBIE:** No, I was going to say the jobs, taking jobs away from the U.S., a lot of jobs are getting outsourced.

**SAM:** But that's not Sikhs, per se. If you're pinpointing Sikhs, because I wouldn't know the difference, except for the headgear. I'm just talking Middle Eastern in general, that's where the caution comes in. And I hate to say it, and I'm kind of embarrassed, but I feel that way and . . .

**MODERATOR:** I appreciate your honesty very much, and I appreciate Kyle's as well. I'm just wondering if anyone else has a similar sort of caution or hesitance that they feel . . .

**EUGENE:** Maybe at the airport.

**MODERATOR:** Maybe at the airport a little bit, says Eugene. Joanne, you nodded a little bit?

**JOANNE:** Mm-hmm.

**EUGENE:** When 9/11 first came, I didn't know really that much about Sikhs, and then I learned about Sikhs. And then I learned that they're not of the same cloth of the Islamist stuff.

**MODERATOR:** So you can make that total separation?

**EUGENE:** I can make that total separation.

**KYLE:** I think a lot of people look at any people and really go to terrorism, which is not . . . it's completely different from Muslims and Pakistanis.

**MODERATOR:** Jenny?

**JENNY:** Yeah, I agree. I think that for a lot of us we're probably a little ignorant and not able to discern when we look at somebody, is this person from Saudi Arabia, or is this person from Pakistan, or is this person from wherever? I think that intellectually, there is a big difference in my perception of people who are Sikh.

I don't know a lot about the religion, but I do know fundamentally that the principles are very peaceful behaviors. So I think that I can tell in my head, there is a difference between who I can discern visually, and my ability to discern visually is not very refined. So, really, if I were able to put labels on people then my perceptions might be more in terms of sort of categories.

**MODERATOR:** So if people went around wearing a sign that said Sikh versus something else it would be, and I'm not making fun of you. You're saying that just based on looking at somebody you don't feel equipped to be able to classify people quite the right way, whereas, when you hear Sikh versus Muslim versus Hindu versus Buddhist, you know enough to be able to make differentiations among them.

**JENNY:** I think so.

**MODERATOR:** Okay, good. That's a really important distinction. Is there a way you can tell if is somebody is a Sikh to that point, by sort of just by looking at them? Are there cues? Shayna says she probably couldn't.

**SHAYNA:** I wouldn't be able to. Some people wear headpieces. Some people don't, so . . .

**JOANNE:** Some of them wrap their beards up. I used to work with, some guys, they used to wrap their beards. If it would be flat and you didn't know.

**SHAYNA:** It's very hard to tell because there's . . .

**JOANNE:** There's like different extremes.

**SHAYNA:** Exactly, and there's different levels.

**MODERATOR:** Within?

**JOANNE:** Within a religion.

**JENNY:** I feel like a Sikh person can probably tell from a mile away how to kind of categorize somebody, but we probably just don't know that, by and large.

**MAN:** And . . . have to have a beard as part of their religion.

**WOMAN:** Yeah, and they can't shave it off.

**MODERATOR:** A few of you have alluded to this. How many people know somebody personally who is Sikh? I have one, nobody else.

**SHAYNA:** Not anymore. I went to high school with people who were Sikh.

**MODERATOR:** Previously did.

**SHAYNA:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** Who in your life has known somebody who is Sikh? So we have about three of you. Has anyone had a conversation with a Sikh person recently? Melanie, you were sort of the first one to raise your hand . . .

**MELANIE:** E-mail stuff when I used to work. He was my boss.

**MODERATOR:** He was your boss?

**MELANIE:** Yes, and I wouldn't have been able to have my daughter 14 years ago . . .

**MODERATOR:** Gerard, I think you were, or perhaps Debbie made some reference to, are there a lot of Sikhs in this part of New Jersey? Do you see them on the street, and if you don't know them personally, you sort of encounter them?

**GERARD:** That was . . .

**DEBBIE:** I don't know specifically what religion they are but I know a lot are Middle Eastern.

**KYLE:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** It's people who look like this, basically?

**DEBBIE:** Yeah, like the whole town pretty much is...probably 80%.

**SAM:** I actually think that's mostly Hindu though or Indian.

**KYLE:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** Take your sheets. Skip over Handout D. Go to Handout E. Some of you clearly know more than others about Sikhs and the Sikh community. I want to get your general impressions based on either what you know from your own personal experiences, things you might have heard, even just gut feelings you have.

Several of you are being good about being honest about your gut feelings. This is probably even worse kind of generalizing that I've been asking you to so far, but I'm going to ask you to group them all together as a Sikh community and rate them.

Is a Sikh person somebody who would be a good neighbor? A good neighbor would describe Sikhs very well, it would not describe them at all, based on your guts, based on your experience. Hardworking, holds American values, etc., I just want you to give a rating somewhere on that scale from zero to ten. You can use the same number multiple times. You don't have to give a different number to each category.

**JOANNE:** Since I'm not familiar with this, should I base this off of what I was just hearing here?

**MODERATOR:** If you have a feeling about some of them based on what you've heard or based around any other experiences you've had, go ahead and answer it. If there are others you just completely don't feel like putting the answer, just leave it blank.

**JOANNE:** Thanks.

**MAN:** Just this one page?

**MODERATOR:** Mm-hmm, just the one page. I don't actually care a whole lot what answers you gave this time. We're going to come back to this a little bit later for your specific answers. But what I would like to know is, were there ones on here that were an easy answer to give? Whether you gave a low number or a high number, you knew sort of immediately what number you were going to circle. Does everyone have one that was easy to answer? Jenny, tell me which one that you found easy to give a good rating, or easy to give a rating to.

**JENNY:** F, the regular . . . experiences . . . discrimination.

**MODERATOR:** How many people had an easy time rating F? A lot of people. And what number did you put down, Jenny?

**JENNY:** Ten.

**MODERATOR:** Ten?

**EUGENE:** I as well.

**MODERATOR:** I?

**DEBBIE:** Five.

**MODERATOR:** Five, tell me about five, Debbie, right in the middle.

**DEBBIE:** I think there are a lot of people that may feel that way but don't verbalize how they feel.

**MODERATOR:** So it could be worse? It could actually be worse than what it . . .

**DEBBIE:** Mm-hmm.

**MODERATOR:** Okay, got it. Other ones that people had an easy time giving an answer to? Go ahead, Shayna.

**SHAYNA:** Honestly . . .

**MODERATOR:** All of them?

**SHAYNA:** It pretty much sums it up when you read the top. It says Sikh American. They're still Americans, so, yeah. They're good neighbors. They're hard workers. They Americanize because they're Americans. They're patriotic, generous, and kind, what you would expect from any American.

Just because they're Sikh doesn't necessarily mean that they were born out of the country. They could have been born here. They could be here for generations. I just don't think, of necessarily someone who immigrated here. I'm just thinking that this American holds this particular religion. I would think the same way about a Catholic or a Christian. They're still American.

**MODERATOR:** That was Shayna. Good answer. Debbie, you raised your hand a moment ago. Was there another one you had?

**DEBBIE:** For B, is a hard worker.

**MODERATOR:** And what number did you write down for that one?

**DEBBIE:** Eight.

**MODERATOR:** Anyone else have an easy time writing that one down? What number did you give it?

**DEBBIE:** Eight.

**MODERATOR:** How about you, Eugene, what did you give it?

**EUGENE:** Also eight.

**MODERATOR:** Why is that?

**EUGENE:** Again, the New York cab driver, working long hours.

**MODERATOR:** Gerard?

**GERARD:** I gave it a nine. It was really the only one out of my experience with Sikhs that I could just give an answer.

**MODERATOR:** You knew for sure?

**GERARD:** Based upon my experience with them, I gave them a nine. The rest of them, are they a good neighbor? I've never lived with them. I don't know. Do they hold America's values? I haven't had a conversation alone with one, so I really couldn't put an answer really down for that. But when I started putting answers down, they're not really true answers.

Are they patriotic? I have no idea. Do they regularly experience prejudice and discrimination? I'm not in their life. I really don't know. Just to generalize it, just to say because of the color of their skin they're getting prejudiced against, I couldn't answer that honestly.

**MODERATOR:** Okay, good. Good answer.

**GERARD:** Are we talking people that were born in this country or migrated here from other, you know, from? As far as American values, I just feel like a lot of foreigners don't assimilate to American values. I think they did years ago. I think it was something that they strived for and wanted, and now I think they really don't.

**MODERATOR:** Less so now?

**GERARD:** Right.

**MODERATOR:** And that's regardless of where people are immigrated from?

**GERARD:** Right.

**MODERATOR:** Do you think it's particularly acute for Sikhs or for any other group, or not necessarily so?

**GERARD:** Not Sikhs, because I wouldn't be able to pinpoint that. It's just in general, don't assimilate like they did years ago.

**MODERATOR:** Oh, Kyle had his hand up. I wanted to hear from Kyle, and then Joanne, and then Jenny.

**KYLE:** I feel like people who have migrated here from whatever country, and oftentimes they'll say my country. But if they're living here, and if they're a citizen, isn't this now your country? Why aren't proud of America if you wanted to migrate here and you're, if you're proud of this country that you're living in, and if you're a citizen, don't you want to . . .

**MODERATOR:** If you were to sort of walk by any of these people, and what is it, the three, four, five, six, eight or nine people up there, would you have an assumption that they were or were not American citizens, or would it sort of just not occur to you either way? Or, what would be sort of your gut level reaction, Kyle?

**KYLE:** I would say the younger people, maybe, who were born here, and the older people who weren't. It's tough to tell. I may look at one of these people and think that they have an accent from their country, but then, for instance, the J, he might have an Americanized accent.

**SAM:** I feel H looks very Americanized. She looks like she could host a show on *The Food Network*.

**DEBBIE:** Yeah . . .

**MODERATOR:** Joanne, what did you want to say before?

**JOANNE:** I actually don't remember.

**MODERATOR:** Oh, okay. And if it comes back to you, just shout it out. Jenny, what did you want to say?

**JENNY:** I actually agree with Sam that becoming American in behaviors and appearances is not really necessarily a goal with that many people, immigrants that . . . today. But I think that you can still have that attitude if you want to have to hold on to your culture or live in a community that's similar to you and hold on to those values while still being very patriotic. Because people are moving to America for the freedom and for the opportunity and for the diversity that is here.

So I can see how somebody coming from another country and another culture is Americanized, not coming to become American, per se, and want to look and behave

like everybody else, but at the same time can still be very patriotic. I don't think that those two things are exclusive.

**DEBBIE:** I think also now, years ago when there wasn't such an abundance of people living in the same neighborhood or whatever, from the same countries or same religious background, they have assimilated a little bit more. Now that there are so many groups, and it's so easy for them to find groups of people that are similar to their background, that they don't need to really associate so much with the American, so to speak, people.

**MODERATOR:** That's a good point too. And one more question on this one before I go on to the next handout. Among this, ignoring letter F for a second, that's sort of clearly in its own category, but if I had pictures of all of you up there instead of, what would be the most important one of these characteristics that you would want to be known?

If I was up here with a group of nine other people, but I had the pictures of nine of you up there, and I was asking them to judge you on patriotism and hard work and everything else, what would you want them to think by looking at a picture of you that, among all of these more than anything they want you, would you want them to think you're a good neighbor, you're a hard worker, you're patriotic, you're generous and kind? What's the most important quality in your mind on this list, Eugene?

**EUGENE:** Good neighbor, probably.

**MODERATOR:** Good neighbor.

**MELANIE:** Generous and kind.

**KYLE:** Hard worker.

**MODERATOR:** Hard worker.

**DEBBIE:** Generous and kind.

**SAM:** I went with E as well.

**MODERATOR:** Generous and kind? Good.

**JENNY:** Me too.

**GERARD:** E for me also.

**JOANNE:** Mm-hmm.

**SHAYNA:** Generous and kind.

**MODERATOR:** I was just curious.

**GERARD:** That's all right. I don't want to live next to anyone.

**MODERATOR:** You'd be a great neighbor, though, Eugene. I just know it.

**SHAYNA:** A kind of tossup between a good neighbor and generous and kind, because as a neighbor you have to deal with the rest of . . .

[Simultaneous discussion]

**EUGENE:** Anybody with a tall fence can be a great neighbor.

**MODERATOR:** The quiet neighbors . . . The one you never see is the best neighbor. Turn to Handout F. This is going to fill in a lot of blanks for those of you who are less about Sikhism and probably, and none of you, I assume, are total experts on it. It's just a couple of paragraphs that's little bit of history and a little bit of information.

I want you to read with your pencil in hand, and I want you to do a couple things as you're going along. If there's something that particularly impresses you or that you find to be particularly important, underline it for me. If there's something that gives you a negative impression for one reason or another, you don't think it's an important piece of information at all, cross it out.

So, underlining something means it's good. Crossing something out means it gives you a negative reaction. And you can feel free to make notes in the margins as you go along if something particularly you want to comment on for some reason or another. We'll talk about it in a second, but you can make any notes you like. So go ahead and read this. I'm going to step out for just a second, and please don't discuss it until I come back in the room. Everyone know what you're doing?

**MAN:** Yes, sir.

**MODERATOR:** Before we talk about anything you might have underlined or crossed out, overall, anyone have an overall reaction? You read this, and you say, huh.

**SAM:** I never realized they were like, that's a really nice religion.

**MODERATOR:** What tells you it's really nice, Sam?

**SAM:** Well, you told us not to discuss what we underlined.

**MODERATOR:** I know. I said before we discuss what you underlined, but you've started, so go ahead.

**SAM:** All people are equal, and each can experience freedom through loving and serving others. I mean, come on.

**DEBBIE:** I'm thinking of converting.

**MODERATOR:** What? I'm assuming that that's a joke comment, but, what would make you say that though? If you really were thinking about it, what in here would say?

**DEBBIE:** Someone who is actually following the religion just sounds like they'd be such a nice person.

**MODERATOR:** Okay, good. Other overarching reactions? Go ahead, Jenny.

**JENNY:** I also had that initial positive reaction of, this sounds so great. But then my second thought, and this was without a lot of deep analysis, was that I think most religions would say that they share these values. This is not particularly unique, or just what religion does not have some value of honesty and generosity and service and spirituality, that that's a little bit vanilla. This is obviously two paragraphs describing what is really a whole very complex religious system. My first reaction was also like this sounds great, but then my reaction was but all religions sound like this at some very fundamental . . .

**MODERATOR:** Fair point. No, that's a very good point.

**JENNY:** I think that's more a function of a very high-level description of this and nothing else, but.

**MODERATOR:** That is a totally legitimate point. Thank you, Jenny. And, Joanne, what did you want to say?

**JOANNE:** What I found surprisingly shocking is that, and not all religions do this, is that they welcome people of all faiths and backgrounds. And I thought that was something particularly important.

**MODERATOR:** Anyone else underline that? Nobody did? Why is that particularly important, Joanne?

**JOANNE:** They're not judging others. And like I said, other religions don't welcome everybody.

**SAM:** What religions don't welcome everybody? I think anybody can convert to a religion.

**JOANNE:** You can convert, but there's a lot of people don't want to go into, say, a Catholic church if they're a different religion. They're not going to sit there and go through Mass.

**SAM:** No, but if they wanted to, they wouldn't be turned away.

**JOANNE:** No, they wouldn't be turned away, but they wouldn't be able to receive. They would have to convert to being Catholic and go through all the . . .

**SAM:** They would have to go through the process, but you would have to do that with any religion.

**JOANNE:** Well, this didn't look like, here it just says their, where their place was and that they accept people of all faiths and backgrounds to go to their place of worship.

**SAM:** Oh, I see what you're saying.

**KYLE:** Like they accept what you are.

**JOANNE:** Yeah, they're not trying to change you.

**SAM:** They're not converting.

**JOANNE:** They're not converting you.

**SAM:** They're just accepting you.

**JOANNE:** They're accepting you to come in and listen, and that's what I got out of it.

**MODERATOR:** Okay, good. Go ahead, Shayna.

**SHAYNA:** I was pretty familiar with the religion. I had done research into it before. And like I said, where I grew up I grew up with people and their families. So, it's a wonderful religion.

**MODERATOR:** Was any of this new information to you?

**SHAYNA:** No. I know that they do welcome people of all faiths and backgrounds. I was invited to go and go with them and observe and to learn. But it was never to force, it was never to like . . .

**MODERATOR:** Try and convert you, proselytize you.

**SHAYNA:** It's not like, here, this is what you should do. They're very laid back, and they're just so incredibly nice, and like I said, I grew up in a very diverse neighborhood. I grew up in New Jersey. I grew up in New York in a city with tons and tons and tons of different people. It wasn't very white bread. It wasn't very Asian. It wasn't very any of this. It was just everybody.

So, I was exposed to a lot. And this was one of the many religions that I was exposed to, and I just thought it was so cool. Their families were always in the

community. They were always helping out. They were always donating. They were always part of it, and they were part of their kids and their lives. And it was really great, and it was just how they are.

**MODERATOR:** Eugene, is there anything in here that you underlined in particular?

**EUGENE:** There was. It was interesting to learn some of the history that I was not aware of, that they've been here for so long and fought in the wars and helped build the railroads. It was very interesting.

**MODERATOR:** So the end of paragraph one was particularly interesting?

**EUGENE:** Mm-hmm.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. Other things? Yeah, Kyle?

**KYLE:** Considering I've never heard of this religion, they're the fifth largest organization, and the fact that they were some of the first responders towards 9/11. You would think people would be shocked to see people dressed like this and have a perception that their people caused this.

**SAM:** I think 9/11 might have done them a great injustice.

**MODERATOR:** Why is that, Sam?

**SAM:** Because people are lumping them in with terrorist type.

**MODERATOR:** Other things people underlined?

**MELANIE:** I underlined that about the equality of men and women.

**DEBBIE:** Me too.

**MELANIE:** Because a lot of the other Middle Eastern religions, the women have no place.

**KYLE:** Degrading them.

**MELANIE:** They're looked down upon.

**GERARD:** Yeah, the equality of the men and women. It's just not women. It's men and women.

**MELANIE:** Yeah, but more so women.

**GERARD:** That was an important thing.

**MODERATOR:** So a couple of you. Anything that anybody crossed out or sort of rubbed you the wrong way for any iteration or form? Yeah, Jenny?

**JENNY:** The fact that it was founded 500 years ago, to me that's just very new in the reality of religions. Most of the other religions that we're exposed to are probably thousands of years old or if not older. So there's a part of me that's a little skeptical that that's such a, kind of new religion.

**MODERATOR:** Good point.

**JENNY:** I did not know that it was the fifth largest organized religion. I'm curious what the other four are, if there's another one in there that I don't even know about. But that there are more than 25 million Sikhs throughout the world, and only 500,000 of those 25 live in the United States is also just kind of a slap in the face. I think we're so U.S.-centric, and we think everything revolves around us, and there is a whole other part of the world doing things that none of us know anything about.

**MODERATOR:** So you read that 500,000 as being like no wonder I don't see very many of them, 500,000 isn't that many people?

**JENNY:** It's like the dual side of it. One is that it's really not a very large representation in the United States, so it's not surprising that we don't know a lot about it. But then on the other side it's almost horrifying that this is a huge population that's on the other side of the world, apparently that we really don't know anything about.

**MODERATOR:** Twenty-five million people, yeah.

**JENNY:** And we're so self-centric here, I think, that that whole idea of there's this enormous organized group halfway around the world, and I don't know anything about them, and they don't probably care that much about me, and the world keeps turning. Like that runs a little counter . . .

**MODERATOR:** They don't know much about you either, Jenny, so don't feel bad.

**JENNY:** So like I can . . . that. I feel like we're so U.S.-centric . . . there's a whole other side of the world. We don't know about them. They don't know about us, and that's fine. It's just different than how I think our usual American-centered mindset.

**MODERATOR:** Other people, something that you were skittish about for one reason or another, crossed out, Gerard?

**GERARD:** I just said, one God, which God are they talking about? Whose God?

**MODERATOR:** So that's just a question?

**GERARD:** Yeah, it's a question I have, what God?

**SAM:** I took that as a positive, because, you know.

**GERARD:** Which God?

**SAM:** There's only one.

**GERARD:** The Jews' God?

**SHAYNA:** Your God, that's what it is.

**GERARD:** There's only one.

**SHAYNA:** It's your God. It's how you perceive it.

**MODERATOR:** So you'd like to know more about that? If there was one thing on here you would be, you would like to ask a question about it would be on that?

**GERARD:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** Okay, good. Anyone else have a comment for positive or for negative on this? Were there any that you just want of sort of comment on?

**EUGENE:** As far as the bullying goes, it's a shame, but I don't think it's just exclusively them, although they did isolate cases of it. Bullying takes place. Anybody who looks different . . .

**MODERATOR:** Oh, you jumped ahead.

**EUGENE:** I'm sorry.

**MODERATOR:** None of the rest are there yet, so you'll have to hold that thought.

**EUGENE:** Hold that thought, gotcha.

**MODERATOR:** Before we go on, everybody has in their family kind of your quirky great aunt, right? If one of your cousins was marrying a Sikh guy, your quirky great aunt, really, was not cool with it. What would you tell her? What would be like this is how you'd calm her down? Either based on what you already know or based on what you read here, what would you say to them, Auntie Bea, it's fine because. How would you, what was the case you would make, Joanne?

**JOANNE:** If they're that quirky I don't think anything you say is going to calm them down.

**MODERATOR:** But try.

**JOANNE:** No, I'm just saying if you told them that they're not looking to hurt anyone, and they just want to promote love, and they're all about good values and accepting people, and they're not going to change whomever he's getting married to them, and they shouldn't be worried about it. But I really think that everyone is going to think what they want, and it's hard to sway someone.

**MODERATOR:** Fair point. Kyle?

**KYLE:** Basically, if that person is happy and safe with the person they're marrying, that's all that matters. There are marriages where they're the same religion, the same culture, and they're the most dysfunctional marriages.

**MODERATOR:** Debbie, what would you say to your Great Aunt Bea?

**DEBBIE:** Being sarcastic like I usually am?

**MODERATOR:** Being sincere instead.

**DEBBIE:** What I would probably really say is that he's going to make a good living. He's going to be supportive of the family and is a good family man. And whoever it is that he's marrying, my cousin or whatever, is, they're in love. He treats her well, and that's really what counts.

**MODERATOR:** Go ahead, Shayna.

**SHAYNA:** I don't have any . . . with them. I have a very mixed family as well. But I would tell her to stop being ignorant, do a little bit of research, because ignorance breeds hatred.

**MODERATOR:** Turn to Handout G. What I need you to do here is actually we're going to divide this into two pieces. So there's the first paragraph, then there's the second one. Just read the first one for the moment. We'll do it out loud together, and then we're going to discuss it.

In 2014 a research study found that more than 50% of Sikh children endure bullying in schools, and the numbers are worse for children who wear turbans. Two in three, 67% of turban children report being bullied in schools, more than double the national rate for all American children.

In recent of years there have been a number of high-profile, violent school attacks on Sikh American children. In May 2007 a student wrestled down a Sikh boy at New York City public school, forcibly cut his hair, and flushed it down the toilet. The

next year a portion of a Sikh girl's hair was intentionally cut by another student, and in New Jersey a Sikh boy's turban was set on fire by another student. So we'll skip the bottom paragraph for a second. Reactions to this?

**GERARD:** Disgusting.

**MODERATOR:** Disgusting, Gerard said. I'm going to have you hold on for a little while, Shayna, because your knowledge is a few steps above everyone else, so I'm going to hold you until the end. Disgusting.

**GERARD:** It's just disgusting. They're peaceful people. They're just going about their life. They're wearing that for religious observance, and people, and these kids are just attacking them for that. That's just disgusting. It's wrong.

**MODERATOR:** Melanie, what's your reaction?

**MELANIE:** It's horrible. They're children. They shouldn't be doing that for any reason. If their religion is not something they're forcing upon you, mind your own business and leave them alone.

**MODERATOR:** Hearing stories like this, can you relate to it in your own life?

**MELANIE:** It's heartbreaking.

**MODERATOR:** Is there any bearing on your own life, Sam?

**SAM:** It sounds like my high school. It was not Sikhs though, but anybody that's different. I'm sure that every type of person gets bullied in one way or another for whatever reason.

**MODERATOR:** Is that what you were going to say before when you started talking about bullying?

**SAM:** They specifically gave you these statistics to Sikh in a school environment. They'll just pick on anybody. Anybody is fair game. And I think, again, 9/11 probably, although that had nothing to do with it, stupid people who hate will think they do.

**MODERATOR:** Made things all the worse?

**SAM:** Right.

**MODERATOR:** Jenny, your reaction here?

**JENNY:** I have young children. I have a seven-year-old and a ten-year-old. And I'm not under any illusion that they don't do things that they shouldn't do or that they will not

continue as they get older, and should know more what to do. You know, they're not perfect.

But this, to me, is like what is going on in those children's houses that they think, for the people who are doing the bullying, whether they're picking out someone because they're Sikh or just because they look different, or they're having a bad day, or they want their lunch money or whatever, what in the world is going on in the home of the child who thinks that it's okay to cut someone's hair off and flush it down the toilet, even if you don't have the faintest idea why that kid has long hair?

That, to me, is, and if I saw an article like this in the newspaper, my kids would get a little lecture from me that night about look at this thing in, read in the newspaper and how far, and I would kill you if you ever did anything like that and if you ever saw anything like that. And I'm glad your friends are not like that. To me, the most alarming thing is not the specific incidents but what it represents about kids in the homes that they're growing up in and behaviors that you think are even remotely acceptable, which they're clearly not.

**MODERATOR:** Would you say anything should be done about this? Again focusing specifically on Sikhs, which is what the discussion is, should anything be done about it, Eugene? Can anything be done about it? Should anything be done about it?

**EUGENE:** In the school, hold assemblies teaching tolerance. But I think it all goes back to the home and what goes on there and what the kids listen, hear, see when their parents are watching the news or whatever, I don't know.

**MELANIE:** It doesn't say what age the children are either. But how would they know to cut their hair, that that's against their religion? So they're getting that from somewhere. So that's probably come from home, or they did research. That's really violent. I know my kids' schools there are bullying assemblies at least once a month. And these, if they're older, they're probably older kids, so they know better than just. Maybe they had racist parents, that's their agenda.

**MODERATOR:** Kyle, should or could anything be done to rectify this or to address this?

**KYLE:** My first thought was it just stems down from the parents and how they're raised. With anything, the way the parent raises you to follow their religion or political views until you're old enough to think on your own and make decisions.

**MODERATOR:** So is that a way of saying that it's hard to do anything about it?

**KYLE:** Oh, no, I think it comes down to the parents, the way they teach their kids, trying to act morally.

**MODERATOR:** Debbie, if a mother of, a Sikh mother of a child who had been bullied at school came to you and said, a neighbor, what am I going, what should I be doing, what have I got to do about this, what kind of advice would you give her?

**DEBBIE:** Talk to the principal. If it's in a school system that doesn't offer any kind of training, I would suggest that. Or specifically the kids that were doing the bullying to talk with their guidance counselor and have some kind of punishment, just get some education in that respect.

**MODERATOR:** Gerard, what advice would you give the mother?

**GERARD:** My first reaction would be to try and talk to the parents of the child. But then I know that can only increase the bullying.

**MODERATOR:** The bullying child?

**GERARD:** Yeah, it could increase the bullying. Really, it's got to be through the school. She's got to go to the school. She's got to report it. She's got to work with the school to get it straightened out, get it rectified. And if it doesn't cease, they may have to consider transferring to a different school. If the school can't get relief for you, take legal action.

**MELANIE:** That involves the police.

**DEBBIE:** A legal action.

**GERARD:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** What did you say, Debbie?

**DEBBIE:** A legal action.

**MODERATOR:** A legal action. Melanie said involve the police.

**GERARD:** Cutting hair is a violent act. It could escalate. I mean, look at that kid in New York who just went back to school after being bullied and was killed. He got back into school. Well, he didn't. He ended up killing the bully. I'm sorry. He didn't get killed. He killed the bully, because it just wouldn't stop.

**KYLE:** I don't think there's ever any 100% way to stop this. There will always be a kid or two or a dozen that just don't care.

**MODERATOR:** Before we move onto the next paragraph, I want to read this knockdown. It's really short. There have been many reports of Sikh individuals and families having difficulty traveling through airports. Men in turbans receive suspicious

looks from other travelers and can often count on secondary inspections and extra delays whenever they travel. Reaction there?

**SHAYNA:** Yep.

**MODERATOR:** Yep, says Shayna.

**JENNY:** I think that's unfortunate, but I think that that is part of the overall bigger picture of safety that probably everybody is committed to except for terrorists.

**MODERATOR:** Tell me what that means, Jenny.

**JENNY:** Every law enforcement agency will tell you that, whether it's politically correct or not, profiling works. So if you look like a profile that is a red flag, even if you are not that profile, you're going to get pulled over. And I understand that it can be very personally difficult and embarrassing. But if we're talking about the bigger picture of security, I feel like that's something that maybe you're going to have to get over.

I don't think for a minute, every time I see them pull somebody over, that there's a real problem. But I'm happy that the people who are responsible for overall travel safety have systems that they can pretty reliably follow to make sure that travel is safe.

Maybe there could be better education so they could visually discern between somebody who is a Sikh and somebody who is something else that might look identical to me but really is not . . . the public education issue. You used to hear after when they started with the taking the shoes off, I guess, when they started to do that at the airports people were going crazy. They stopped me to take off my shoes, and it's an inconvenience that people behind me are angry. At the end of the day, if that's going to increase overall safety, that's just the way that it is.

**SAM:** Sometimes you have to get rid of a few liberties.

**MODERATOR:** Shayna, what is your reaction to the, what I just read a moment ago about travel?

**SHAYNA:** About travel? You can profile as much as you want, but there is a huge difference between someone who abides by a religion and an extremist, and an extremist who looks just like me, not necessarily from one particular religion. It could be someone who converted.

I think it's a gross misrepresentation to think that because one wears a turban that, naturally, they must be Muslim, and they must be an extremist. You can ask any one of my Muslim friends, and they're very much against any kind of extremists. And that's not even what the Muslim religion is based on. That's not what it's about.

The same thing with any kind of, Jewish religion or Catholicism. I think people go way, way too far. But, unfortunately, because of terrorist attacks and because people now identify terrorism as looking a certain way, because it was pushed so hard by the

news that this is who commits these acts. This is who we need to be afraid of. That, unfortunately, they're kind of subject to really crappy treatment in airports.

**MODERATOR:** So do you think it is unfair but ultimately worth it?

**SHAYNA:** I think it's unfair and inevitable.

**MODERATOR:** Unfair and inevitable?

**SHAYNA:** Yes.

**MODERATOR:** Whether it's worth it or not, it's just going to happen?

**SHAYNA:** If you look at history of the terrorist attacks . . . I don't think it's necessary. No, I don't.

**MODERATOR:** Unnecessary. Okay.

**SHAYNA:** I really don't think it's necessary to be.

**MODERATOR:** So two opinions. Jenny says unfortunate, but ultimately worth it if . . .

**JENNY:** Effective.

**MODERATOR:** . . . effective, unfortunate but effective. Shayna says unfortunate and unnecessary, do we take one side of it, these are two very well-stated positions.

**GERARD:** They kind of wear it on their sleeve. It's visible. A Catholic terrorist who bombs abortion clinics, they just look like everybody else.

**JENNY:** Those are the scary ones.

**GERARD:** Absolutely.

**MODERATOR:** So which? So do you tend to come down more on the side of Jenny or more on the side of Shayna?

**GERARD:** Unfortunately, Jenny. I have a feeling that's just the way it's going to have to be. And I think airports, it's because of 9/11 though. What was it like before 9/11 for these people to get through airports? I never even knew about it. Were they stopped? Were they profiled?

**MODERATOR:** Debbie, which side do you come down on?

**DEBBIE:** I'm more conservative. I think you need to . . .

**MODERATOR:** So closer to the side of Jenny?

**DEBBIE:** You need to go on the side of safety. So I'd rather be too safe than not safe enough.

**MODERATOR:** I want to go around and get everyone. Kyle?

**KYLE:** Yeah, I agree with Shayna completely.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. Melanie?

**MELANIE:** They don't need to check everybody. It's not fair to. I'm with my girlfriend, and she's very Italian, and she's Muslim. She was pregnant. They patted her down, made her pull up her shirt.

**MODERATOR:** So you come down more on the side of Shayna?

**MELANIE:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** Eugene?

**EUGENE:** I'm the one who gets the second good look all the time. I don't know why. But anyway, I'm going to go with Jenny there.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. Well, why is that?

**EUGENE:** I think it's something that needs to be done, whether it's to stop the next attack or to make us flying feel safer.

**MODERATOR:** Joanne?

**JOANNE:** I guess I'm going to go with Jenny.

**MODERATOR:** Why is that?

**JOANNE:** I just think that I know what Shayna is saying, and I think it's just inevitable that that's what's going to happen. And I think it's because of what happened on 9/11. And I think that maybe you are going to get some bad people out by . . .

**MODERATOR:** Ultimately, it might work a little bit?

**JOANNE:** Mm-hmm.

**MODERATOR:** And, Gerard, how about you?

**GERARD:** I'm concerned about all of the liberties we are losing.

**MODERATOR:** I'm sorry, could you . . .

**GERARD:** I'm concerned about all the liberties we collectively are losing every day and our privacy and everything else. At the airport, right after 9/11, I got stopped a lot. I am half Middle Eastern descent, and I got stopped a lot at the airports and that really bothered me. I would be pulled out of line, pulled off to the side, and I would be pat down and all that stuff. And not everybody is a terrorist. Okay. I just, it's unfortunate, and I don't think it should be, the profiling should go on like it is.

**MODERATOR:** So you come down more on Shayna's side?

**GERARD:** More on Shayna's side.

**MODERATOR:** That was good, a very helpful conversation. Let's read the second paragraph here. Since September 11, 2001, there's been a dramatic increase in hate-based violence against Sikhs. Four days after the attacks a Sikh man was shot and killed while planting flowers in front of his store in Mesa, Arizona.

In the years since, victim's rights advocacy groups have identified more than a dozen Sikhs across the country who have also been murdered because of their Sikh identity. On August 5, 2012, a man fatally shot six people and wounded four others at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. It was the greatest act of violence against a faith community in the United States since the 1963 church bombing in Birmingham that took four little girls.

And in November 2013, a Sikh American assistant professor at Columbia University was beaten in New York City by men shouting, get Osama and terrorists. Many Sikh Americans report that these violent acts are only the tip of the iceberg. Many experience daily encounters with discrimination and hate incidents that go unreported and unrecognized by the general public. Same for general reactions? Before you get, has anyone heard of any of these incidents? Shayna has. You?

**MAN:** No.

**JENNY:** The shooting in Wisconsin. I remember when that happened, yeah.

**MODERATOR:** The shooting in Wisconsin, anyone else hear about that or recall hearing about that?

**GERARD:** I think Sikhs better get some better PR.

**JENNY:** That's probably . . .

**MODERATOR:** What does that mean?

**GERARD:** There's religions that advertise, billboards, television. I think maybe they need to get the message out that they're not terrorists, and they shouldn't be lumped in with them.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. Sam, other reactions? Melanie, what's your reaction to this?

**MELANIE:** I don't know. I just don't understand how people can group people by look, first of all. You don't know who somebody is.

**KYLE:** Because people are crazy.

**MELANIE:** It's getting overboard now. People are just out of control saying things. It's beyond ignorance.

**SHAYNA:** It's horrific.

**SAM:** I think it's been around for every small group, forever.

**SHAYNA:** I think it's escalating.

**KYLE:** There's just more media, so there sort of seems like more.

**SAM:** But they commonly just say, it goes right back to the TSA. They do it. Our government sanctions profiling.

**MELANIE:** They do. Anybody could be a terrorist. You don't know. One of you could be a terrorist. We don't know that.

**SAM:** But our government sanctions basically profile, and it's gone into the general population. And so these people, this is why this guy did it. In his head he profiled the Sikhs as a terrorist.

**JENNY:** My takeaway from this is not that people are attacking Sikhs because they're Sikhs and they think they're terrorists. I think that in some cases the people who are committing these crimes thought they were attacking Muslims because they don't know how to distinguish visually.

**MELANIE:** Yeah, they're between Sikhs and Muslims.

**JENNY:** I mean, people who are nationality . . .

**MELANIE:** . . . and they really didn't any idea that the people they were attacking was not a Muslim, because I think they were just so unexposed to this religion. And the visual difference is not like, it comes back to this. I can't tell from their headgear who's

wearing a Muslim . . . turban and who's wearing a Sikh turban. If I were looking to attack a Muslim, at least maybe I should know what they look like and not lookalikes.

I bet that in some of these cases it was not a question of attacking a Sikh because he looks different, it was a question of I'm trying to attack a Muslim for whatever other ignorant, hateful reason I have, but I kind of got the wrong guy, because I don't know how to distinguish.

**MODERATOR:** I asked before about the bullying one, if it sort of means anything to you personally in your life, or you can sort of relate to the situation in any way, shape, or form. I would ask the same thing here. For a roomful of people who are not Sikhs, not Muslims, I assume, or one of you may be. Now I'm profiling, but I don't know. But does this sort of have any meaning for you in your own personal life? Hold on. I want to come back to you, Shayna. Eugene?

**EUGENE:** Not so much. It's sad. There's nuts out there, and they're going to profile people incorrectly, because they just don't know their business.

**MODERATOR:** Kyle?

**KYLE:** I just think that there's profiling with all religions, and I think people see and feel like there's a lot more acts of violence, but I feel like it's just because there's so much more media now than there was even 20 years ago.

**MODERATOR:** So whatever happens you know about it as opposed to before you might have never heard?

**KYLE:** Yeah, news travels real fast now. Before it was actually social network . . .

**MODERATOR:** Shayna, what did you want to say?

**SHAYNA:** I was just saying that I don't know if anybody remembers when the shooting happened at the temple, but it was very interesting. Within an hour of them interviewing and everything happening, there were people who had attended the temple that day who were there for the shooting, and they were immediately saying how they forgave the shooter after they had watched their loved ones being shot to death. And it's close to home to me only because I was raised Buddhist, and it's just that instant you forgive people for essentially being people, being human, making mistakes. It just makes me appreciate the religion that much more.

**MODERATOR:** Good. Debbie?

**DEBBIE:** I'm not in favor, obviously, of just because you look a certain way that you should be beat up or whatever. But I'm not adverse, I don't mind taking off my shoes at the airport if it means we're going to be safe. And if profiling, if 99% of the time a terrorist act happens because somebody is of a specific background or religion or

whatever, I mean, is that really profiling? You know, 80 times out of 100 you're going to get the person just because, I don't mind being, extra careful or having everybody else extra careful. I'm sure that everybody that was . . .

**MODERATOR:** And what's your reaction, Debbie, to the second paragraph at the bottom of Handout G, the one that starts, that I just read?

**DEBBIE:** I don't think, again, just because the person either thought they were Sikh or because they actually were Sikh that they should be penalized or brutalized for not doing anything. But, again, it's better to be safe than sorry. I'm not saying to beat people up, I'm just saying like in the situation at the airport it's I think, a commendable way to go at this point.

**MODERATOR:** Is there anything that can or should be done about this second situation, the sort of general violence against the Sikh community?

**DEBBIE:** Well, they should be handled through the legal system and punished appropriately.

**MODERATOR:** On an act-by-act basis?

**DEBBIE:** Mm-hmm.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. Anything else? Joanne, did you sort of see anything that could or should be done?

**JOANNE:** No, I think that people are just going to do what they want to do anyway, and I don't think there's any way to stop these acts of violence. They should be handled, like you said, on a case-by-case basis by going to court. I really don't think there's anything we can do.

**MODERATOR:** What do you think, Eugene?

**EUGENE:** Maybe better education. I don't know how, but, I learned a lot just sitting here today, and I'm going to take that back with me.

**MODERATOR:** Go ahead, Jenny.

**JENNY:** I think that in general crimes like this are hate crimes, and hate crimes are prosecuted much more toughly than average violence. And I don't know if some kind of campaign to remind people that if you commit a hate crime, that's a federal crime. It's not a state crime or whatever, that the penalty is much, much stronger for attacking people because they are Sikh than because they're in your way when you're trying to get across the street.

You might be attacking the same number of people in the same method, but if it is a hate crime it's taken much, much more seriously. And I wonder sometimes if people who do these kinds of things quite realize what they're getting into if they're caught, because it is treated differently.

**EUGENE:** I think tolerance has to be taught in schools of just not only religion, just other people, regardless of religion.

**SHAYNA:** That much has to be . . .

**SAM:** I think they do though, don't they? They do teach tolerance in schools.

**EUGENE:** Obviously, whatever they're doing isn't working.

**GERARD:** Unfortunately, it's human nature, and, historically, minorities of all kinds always got picked on.

**MODERATOR:** This is a good discussion. Turn to Handout H for me. Now you should know Handout H crosses one, two, three pages. There's the first page that says Handout H, so the next two don't have anything at the top. It's sort of a list of different statements about Sikh Americans. I want you to read through them, and I want you to rate each one on a zero-to-ten scale. And the scale in this case is how much does this help you sort of understand or relate to the Sikh community, Sikh Americans, Sikh people?

If you read a statement, and you say you know what, this gives me a lot more, within the bounds of what one paragraph can do, it gives me a better understanding of this community, helps me sort of relate to them a lot, give it a higher rating, circle a higher number.

If you read it and you say, this doesn't really do anything for me in that regard, circle a lower number. And again, as you're going through it, underline things that are particularly important to you. You may not like a statement overall. You may give it a low rating, but there may be one phrase within it that you find particularly important or interesting. Just go ahead and underline that for me so I know what you're reacting to.

And then after you've done all of them, I want you to go back and put a star next to whichever one is your favorite. You may like several of them. You may not like any of them. But you've got to pick one that's a favorite for you. And again, please don't discuss until I come back in the room. I'll be right back. Everybody remember to do all six statements? Is everybody done? Anybody still working?

**MAN:** I'm still working.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. You guys go for another minute or two. Did everyone remember to star your favorite as you finished? Okay. I'm going to quick run around the room and have you tell me which one you starred as your favorite. I'm going to start that way. Eugene, which one did you put a star next to?

**EUGENE:** Well, unfortunately, I had to combine three and six to do the star, but both of them were . . .

**MODERATOR:** Three and six?

**EUGENE:** Yes.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. So I'll take them both. That's fine. And, Melanie?

**MELANIE:** One.

**KYLE:** Six.

**MODERATOR:** Six.

**DEBBIE:** Six.

**SAM:** Four.

**JENNY:** Three.

**GERARD:** Three.

**MODERATOR:** Three.

**JOANNE:** Three.

**SHAYNA:** Three as well.

**MODERATOR:** Three as well. So five for three and three for six. So talk to me about number three, Gerard.

**GERARD:** It seems like they're so in tune with the founding . . .

**MODERATOR:** What number did you say? I'm sorry, I should have asked.

**GERARD:** Three.

**MODERATOR:** Yeah, which rating did you give it?

**GERARD:** Oh, I gave it a ten.

**MODERATOR:** Gave it a ten, so continue, please. Sorry.

**GERARD:** They're so in tune with the founding of this country and with the principles of the founding fathers. And I just felt like it was a good fit.

**MODERATOR:** With?

**GERARD:** With this country, and the fact that they protect the rights of others just as the founding fathers wanted to do, although . . . on slavery. But, it's just the principles we were founded on are the principles of their religion.

**MODERATOR:** And why is that impressive or important to you?

**GERARD:** Because I think we are all created equal, and I think we all should have the freedoms to pursue our own lives and happiness, without intervention. And they just seem to be in tune with that.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. Jenny, you also starred this one?

**JENNY:** Yeah. I know that I find, I just like the way this is framed where it really provides some context that we can all understand. And we all have a frame of reference that's so familiar to everybody here that it helps us understand a little bit what some of the core religious beliefs are.

**MODERATOR:** And what number did you circle for this one?

**JENNY:** I circled eight.

**MODERATOR:** Eight. Okay.

**JENNY:** I'm a little personally uncomfortable, actually, with the idea of a religion that is very similar to a political setup. Something about that sort of rubs me wrong. But overall, I think that this explains a lot, and I just think that it's a good frame of reference, because I think that most people here and out there can understand, if you feel positive about the theories of the founding fathers, look at this religion and see the similarities.

**MODERATOR:** Did it sort of help you in that regard?

**JENNY:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** Your discomfort aside?

**JENNY:** Yeah.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. Who were the other ones who, Shayna, you were number three? Joanne, were you? Tell me, Joanne, why number three was your favorite. What number did you give it, first of all?

**JOANNE:** I gave it an eight. And I just think that it was the way it was worded was very helpful.

**MODERATOR:** Anything in particular that jumped out at you as being important?

**JOANNE:** Well, as far as being important, I underlined protecting the rights of others to practice their own religion. They're, again, not trying to force their religion on you, and it doesn't matter. They just see everybody as equal. I thought referencing the political aspect gave me a better understanding.

I think I'm a little bit . . . maybe by some of the comments. I don't know if I read it wrong, or I don't really think that what it's saying is that they're mimicking the American Revolution. I don't think they're looking at their religion to mirror that. I think they're just, in this paragraph they're trying to say if the American Revolution was a religion, it's similar. This is what it would look like.

**MODERATOR:** I think you were reading that the right way.

**JOANNE:** Because I wasn't sure. They're not exactly saying that they're looking at our history and forming . . .

**MODERATOR:** But you thought if you got a little confused in that regard, maybe it seemed like it was leaning that way.

**JOANNE:** Yeah, from other comments.

**MODERATOR:** That's a good comment. That's a very helpful point. Who else on number three? There was Shayna, and there was one other person who, Eugene?

**EUGENE:** I had both.

**MODERATOR:** Oh, right, so tell me about this one.

**EUGENE:** Well, I gave it an eight. And I just think it gives, it's well written. It gives the average person a frame of reference they can probably relate to.

**MODERATOR:** Is there a particular part of it that you found to be important?

**EUGENE:** The whole thing, the comparison to our Bill of Rights. I don't have a problem with it, not so much a religion that follows politics, but politics that follows a religion. If they have the same core beliefs, go for it.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. How about number six? Who were the three? I know, Eugene, you were one of those. Kyle, and who was the third on number six, who put a star next to number six? Debbie. Kyle, tell me why this one was important to you.

**KYLE:** I gave it a ten.

**MODERATOR:** What number did you give a first of all, ten?

**KYLE:** Ten, yeah. Just the fact of I'm usually thinking having Sikhs on our side that look like people were complaining against seemed kind of interesting, and I could picture on the battleground almost it looks like the same people fighting against each other. Obviously, it's not, but you think of the American forces, white, black people, overall, so you think.

**MODERATOR:** But why is that an important sort of piece of information or important image for people?

**KYLE:** Because they don't follow the Iraqi and Afghanistani beliefs that they have to sacrifice for their God, like killing those who don't believe in their religion.

**MODERATOR:** Okay, good. Debbie, how about you on this one?

**DEBBIE:** I marked a nine. I thought also it was interesting thinking of the soldiers dressed up in the uniform that they would have to wear, not wearing what they would wear as a Sikh to show that they were Sikh with the turbans and things like that. And just that it was not so much nice to know that people have died for the country that were, we think of being patriotic to the United States, but just that they, you know, that they were on our side, and they were fighting for our rights.

**MODERATOR:** And your assumption is that they are fighting without wearing their turbans?

**DEBBIE:** Right.

**SHAYNA:** They wear a turban.

**DEBBIE:** They do?

**JENNY:** They do, they have military-issued turbans.

**DEBBIE:** Really? I didn't know that. I didn't know you were, see, live and learn.

**MODERATOR:** Does that change your point of view on it at all?

**DEBBIE:** It's surprising. I didn't think the military would conform to that. I thought it was their way or no way.

**MODERATOR:** Are you comfortable with it? Do you think it's okay?

**DEBBIE:** Oh, it's interesting. I don't know.

**MODERATOR:** That's not a yes.

**DEBBIE:** I'm surprised, very surprised, and I would think that in the military everyone has to kind of conform to what they want you to do. And I'm surprised even with the facial hair. I don't know, are you allowed to have facial hair in the Army?

**JENNY:** It's their civil right to . . . I think they're probably the most . . . because that was a lawsuit once upon a time. I think it's really a religious freedom issue.

**MODERATOR:** And I think it was Sam, you liked number one?

**SAM:** Four.

**MODERATOR:** Tell me about number four and what you liked about that one.

**SAM:** Well, I related to that one.

**MODERATOR:** What number did you give this one?

**SAM:** A nine.

**MODERATOR:** A nine. Okay.

**SAM:** My parents were immigrants, and for the same reasons.

**MODERATOR:** Anything in particular?

**SAM:** No, they came here for a better life, and you can make a better life for yourself in this country.

**MODERATOR:** And so you can relate in that regard?

**SAM:** That's why. Though they're all very positive, I just related to that one more.

**MODERATOR:** Okay, good. That was totally fair. And who was the one person on number one?

**MELANIE:** Me.

**MODERATOR:** Tell me, Melanie, why number one?

**MELANIE:** I gave it a ten, because it helps you see how Sikhs are just like everybody else. It's a religion, they're American. They're proud to be American. They're involved in the community as a whole, not just their religious group.

**MODERATOR:** Were there any on here that people gave a low rating to, you gave sort of a four or lower, you were under four that you didn't find to be particularly persuasive, enlightening? Kyle, which one did you give a lower rating to?

**KYLE:** I gave a four for four.

**MODERATOR:** A four for four.

**KYLE:** All races and cultures can be successful. I think it comes down to the individual that they have the drive to be successful and work hard. And there are plenty of people born in this country that don't make it or become homeless, and then there are other people who migrate here that do the opposite. I don't think it's just culture or religion.

**MODERATOR:** Anyone else give a low rating to any of them, a lower rating? Yeah, Debbie, which one?

**DEBBIE:** Five, I gave it a two.

**MODERATOR:** And why did you give five a two?

**DEBBIE:** It pretty much didn't mention anything that pertains to me. It's really just something specific to a Sikh.

**MODERATOR:** It's about them, it's not about . . .

**DEBBIE:** Yeah, because it doesn't involve me at all.

**MODERATOR:** That's fair. Something somebody said a moment ago, I think it was Melanie, when you were talking about how you liked number one, that was you, right? It made me think of something. I've been asking your opinions up to now. Now I'm just going to quick ask you what someone else is thinking. That's right.

**DEBBIE:** Do females wear turbans?

**SHAYNA:** Yes, they can. Yes, they don't have to, but they can.

**MODERATOR:** Some do and some don't. Do you think that, would you guess that Sikh Americans think of themselves more as Sikh or more as American?

**MELANIE:** I'd probably think American.

**JENNY:** I would think it depends on what . . .

**MELANIE:** I don't think of myself as Russian Orthodox. I think of myself as American.

**JENNY:** But you're, when did you come here? I feel like it totally depends on how long you've been here.

**MODERATOR:** It depends on how long you've been here.

**JENNY:** If you're first generation, you might want to think of yourself as American. I don't know. I feel like it depends on how long you've been here, how you've been educated.

**MODERATOR:** So a Sikh American who was born here.

**JENNY:** I think a lot of it depends on how Sikh people are holding to traditions.

**MODERATOR:** What do you think, Gerard?

**GERARD:** I think American, especially if they're born here.

**MODERATOR:** Joanne, would you venture a guess?

**JOANNE:** I'm a little bit confused, because I thought Sikh was their religion, not a nationality.

**SHAYNA:** Right.

**MODERATOR:** It is.

**GERARD:** And that's exactly what I think. It's not a nationality, it's a religion.

**MODERATOR:** Correct.

**JOANNE:** So it would have to be American, because they could be from anywhere, right? Basically, they can be from France, they can be from Europe, and continue as Sikh.

**MODERATOR:** All right, but it's a matter of identity, right? I'm not asking for fact. I'm asking, so I was raised Catholic, and I live in Philadelphia. One has nothing to do with the other. But if you say to me do I identify more as a Catholic or more as a Philadelphian, I'd say I identify more as a Philadelphian, which is very typical of Philadelphians, by the way. I'm just asking you, do you think they identify more one way or the other, culturally, sort of, in terms of how they view themselves? And maybe a better question is does it matter?

**GERARD:** I don't really think so.

**MODERATOR:** Does it matter to you? Do you think it matters to them?

**SHAYNA:** I think everybody can identify with themselves as where they're from, their heritage, and their religion. I think it's three very similar things, very different things.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. That's Shayna. Jenny, do you think it matters?

**JENNY:** I come from a religious group where we have to talk about this all the time, do you identify more with your religious group or with where you are . . .

**MODERATOR:** Which religion is that, if I may ask?

**JENNY:** I'm Jewish. Where you're located, my Jewish identity is much more a part of me than my American identity, and that doesn't mean that I'm not very patriotic and that I'm not extremely grateful for the opportunities that this country offers me and has offered my family who came here four generations ago or whatever. But in terms of who I am most similar to, kind of overall American population or my cultural community, it's really my cultural community.

I have relatives who would say something totally opposite, but we shared great grandparents four generations ago or three generations ago and grew up very differently and were educated differently. But I think that that's very, very personal. I don't think you can make generalizations like that.

**MODERATOR:** Debbie, do you think that generally Sikhs would identify themselves more as Sikh or more as American?

**DEBBIE:** I think they would identify more as Sikhs just from . . . again, I don't know if they're specifically Sikhs or Muslims or whatever religious group they're in, but they tend to gravitate and stay together as a group. And I think that that dictates a lot of how their life is.

**SHAYNA:** I think it might also come down to, again, there are degrees of, many shades of gray within every religious group. But someone who identifies strongly as Sikh and that's important to them would be Sikh, whether they lived in America or lived in France or lived in India.

**GERARD:** I think that's with any religious group.

**SHAYNA:** Yeah, I think . . .

**GERARD:** . . . more strongly towards their religion they would probably put their religion first.

**SHAYNA:** Right, and if it's more you consider . . . your life, then you wouldn't think that, you know.

**GERARD:** Right, I think it depends on how strongly their faith is.

**MODERATOR:** And one more thing I need you to do before you go.

**GERARD:** And they seem very strong faith-wise.

**SHAYNA:** Right.

**MODERATOR:** Turn to Handout I. This is very identical to the one you did earlier on. All of you or most of you have much more information about Sikh Americans than you had two hours ago, I'm gathering. I want you to go ahead and, based on what you know now and what you've heard others say and what your experiences are, go ahead and rate each one of these Sikh Americans.

Does it describe them well that they're, would you think it would describe them well that they're a good neighbor, a hard worker, etc., etc. And don't look back at what you answered before. I just want you to, based on what you know now, go through every one of these. With that, you can send me down your green sheets. Can you take your cards, please, if you haven't already, pile them up, and throw the rubber band around them? You don't have to put them in alphabetical order for me.

**GERARD:** Oh, you don't want them back in alphabetical order?

**MODERATOR:** If you've already done it, then great.

**GERARD:** I started to.

[Simultaneous discussion]

**MODERATOR:** Then you get extra credit. But, just you can just send them back. We'll re-alphabetize them later. Thank you. One last thing as you're passing your stuff up. A lot of people walk out of my focus groups, and the next day they've forgotten them all and forgotten what we discussed. Is there anything where you would wake up tomorrow and say, if I'm likely to remember one thing about this discussion, this is going to be it? Sam?

**SAM:** I would think that Sikhs are not as horrible as we might have preconceived them to be.

**MODERATOR:** Debbie?

**DEBBIE:** Yeah, that's pretty much how I would feel. I know a lot more about them than I did when I walked in here.

**MODERATOR:** Is there a particular fact that will stick in your head or a particular piece of information?

**DEBBIE:** It seems like they're more patriotic, they've done more for the country than I've ever given them credit for.

**MODERATOR:** Okay, good. Jenny, one thing, one piece of information that will stick in your head?

**JENNY:** I'm really kind of stuck on the fact that it is such a large religion and such a small percentage . . .

**MODERATOR:** We were talking about that before.

**JENNY:** Yeah, that's me . . .

**MODERATOR:** Eugene, anything that will stick in your head?

**EUGENE:** It kind of takes the fear factor away a little bit.

**MODERATOR:** Take the fear factor. Is there a particular fact that will stay with you?

**EUGENE:** Peaceful, religious, yeah.

**MODERATOR:** Peaceful? And how about Melanie?

**MELANIE:** That just the number of practicing Sikh. I didn't know that there was that many. Actually, I didn't know it was the fifth largest religion.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. Kyle?

**KYLE:** That it's not just Muslims that wear turbans.

**MODERATOR:** And, Joanne, what would stay with you?

**JOANNE:** I think just that they're so accepting and loving of everyone.

**MODERATOR:** Gerard?

**GERARD:** How misunderstood they are from the general population based upon the answers I heard today. Is all the information in this absolutely true?

**MODERATOR:** Yes.

**GERARD:** So then why isn't it more known?

**MODERATOR:** Why do you think it's not more known?

**GERARD:** I have no idea. They teach religion in schools, don't they? Is that part of?

**SAM:** They don't teach religion in . . .

**MELANIE:** They do in my children's school.

**SHAYNA:** They don't in my kids' school. Like comparative religion, is there a . . .

[Simultaneous discussion]

**GERARD:** We seem to know everything about every other religion or at least some of it.

**MODERATOR:** Something about it.

**SHAYNA:** Yeah, very little.

**GERARD:** Right. Some people knew nothing. How did it fly under the radar for so long?

**JENNY:** I think because in terms of the American population it's such a small percentage. Half a million Sikh live in this country, that's what it said, right?

**MODERATOR:** That's what it said.

**JENNY:** Half a million in the whole country. There's probably a lot of religions that have half a million people living in America that never are . . .

**GERARD:** We even know about Scientologists.

**SHAYNA:** There's probably more of them.

**GERARD:** Do you think, or just more powerful?

**SHAYNA:** I don't know. Maybe.

**DEBBIE:** Famous people mostly.

**MODERATOR:** Okay. You've all been absolutely fantastic. I thank you very much.

**GERARD:** Oh, you say that to all the groups.

**MODERATOR:** Yes, I do, but I mean it this time. That's the difference. We have thank-you notes for you on the way out. Don't forget to pick those up. If you want to keep your name cards, you're welcome to. Otherwise, if you want to toss them in the trash when you get out, that's fine. Thank you very much. And everybody have a good night. Try not to get wet when you leave.