The systemic marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices: To what extent can Deliberative Democratic theory provide a response?

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A thesis in total fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

July 2017

School of Social and Political Science

Faculty of Arts

University of Melbourne
Abstract

Muslim communities in Australia are currently facing a number of political and social challenges. One major challenge is the widespread perception that the Australian government’s policy and political discourse concerning terrorism actually targets Muslims. In addition, of all minority groups, Muslim Australians have been disproportionately subjected to psychological and physical hostility by non-Muslim Australians. Compounding these challenges is the lack of genuine public platforms for Muslims to contribute to political discourse, policy-making, and public debate in areas that directly affect them; Muslim Australians are often spoken for and about, but rarely spoken directly to.

I argue that these political and social challenges are not and cannot be publicly expressed because of the systemic marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices. Muslim Australian opinions can be ignored, discredited, criticised, and/or publicly deemed “un-Australian” if they are not in accordance with the commonly held attitudes of the government and mainstream society.

This thesis critically examines if and how varying interpretations of deliberative democratic theory can be used as a response to the marginalisation of Muslim voices. Through a new configuration of existing critical models applied to a set of normative deliberative principles, I offer a toolkit for deliberation that could increase the influence of Muslim voices in Australian society.

My research provides an important contribution to the current literature in that while the impact of government policy and public hostility on Muslim Australians has been the subject of frequent scholarly analysis, there has been much less emphasis placed on designing a comprehensive critical response strategy using widely known and accessible democratic
frameworks. Even less research has been undertaken to determine *how* the practical application of deliberative democratic theory – a commonly advocated democratic tool that can empower marginalised voices – could be utilised to offer an appropriate response to the political and social challenges faced by Muslim communities. Indeed, while deliberative democratic initiatives will not completely resolve these issues, as a first step, the critical design for deliberative initiatives I propose in this thesis provides a valuable and applicable response framework that is consistent with increasing the capacity for political expression for Muslim Australians.
Candidates Declaration

I, Georgina Cole, declare that this thesis comprises only my original work towards the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used.

This thesis is fewer than the maximum word limit in length, exclusive of bibliography, as approved by the Research Higher Degrees Committee.

Georgina Cole

July 2017
Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the excellent advice, ideas and generous support from my two supervisors Professor Adrian Little and Dr Terry McDonald. Their dedication and encouragement has inspired me over this journey. I am lucky to have had their assistance.

I would additionally like to thank my wonderful husband James for his patience, guidance and love. I am also sincerely grateful for the tireless support and proofreading and intellectual assistance provided over the years by my father, Christopher Cole. Furthermore, thank you to my mother Wendy Cole and the rest of the Cole family: Adam, Emma, Darren, Ingrid as well as my nieces and nephews. Their love has pushed me forward. I am also grateful to the company: Proofread My Document, for the proofreading services on the final copy of this thesis.
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Introduction

Research problem

Since the terrorist attacks that took place in the United States on September 11, 2001, Muslim communities have been widely perceived by both Muslim and non-Muslim Australians as the target of the government’s hard-line counter-terrorism policies and corresponding public statements. Islamic culture, values, and practices have also been targeted in public statements by a number of politicians; for example, Sharia law has been singled out for its perceived incompatibility with Australian domestic law, while burqas and Islamic facial veils have been framed as symbols of radicalism and/or representative of an uncivilised culture and female oppression. Furthermore, some politicians have questioned whether funds received for certifying Halal products in Australia support Islamic terrorist groups. These and other examples of political discourse have fostered a precarious and in many cases discordant relationship between Muslims and the government in post-9/11 Australian society.

In addition to these political concerns, Muslim Australians have experienced ongoing social challenges; for example, Muslim communities have been subjected to psychological and physical hostility, including violent attacks, from non-Muslim Australians. Research on

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1 Hereafter September 11, 2001 will be referred to as 9/11.
social cohesion in the country has found that Muslims are the subject of the most negative public attitudes towards any minority ethnic or religious group. Compounding these challenges is a lack of genuine public platforms supported by the Australian government for Muslim communities to contribute to political discourse, policy-making, and public debate in areas that directly affect them. Muslim Australians are largely spoken for and about by the Australian government and broader mainstream society, rather than being spoken directly to.

In this way, political and social challenges are not and cannot be publicly expressed and potentially addressed because of what I argue to be the systemic marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices. I use the term “systemic marginalisation of Muslim voices” to explain how diverse Muslim Australian opinions – which can take the form of questioning elements of government policy and anti-Muslim public statements by politicians, and/or exposing experiences of broader public hostility – have been regularly excluded from public debate by the government, media, and wider mainstream society. Thus, Muslim Australian opinions are regularly ignored, discredited, criticised, and/or considered “un-Australian” if

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such views are not in accordance with the widely held attitudes of the government and mainstream public. The concept of marginalised Muslim voices can be considered a systemic problem because since 9/11, diverse Muslim Australians have been routinely and repeatedly excluded from contributing to public debates in matters that directly impact Muslim communities. For example, since 9/11, the exclusion of Muslim Australian voices by the Australian government has remained a consistent, ongoing feature of national security discourses.\(^5\) Political commentary from prominent Australian politicians has made Muslim Australians feel voiceless and targeted. This is particularly evident when the government has been implementing new counter-terrorism policies or after a terrorist attack has occurred somewhere in the world (particularly, if an attack occurs in a western nation such as the United States or in the United Kingdom).\(^6\) A sense of marginalisation can also be perpetuated across various media platforms, notably on commercial media platforms such as News Corp, when reporting on counter-terrorism policy and national security concerns.\(^7\) Along the same lines, Muslim Australians also find it difficult to contribute to public debates with government and in media reporting on matters concerning them, such as Sharia Law,

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burqas and Islamic facial veils and halal certification. Such a restricted position is concerning, given that debates regarding policy, political discourse, and public hostility towards Muslim Australians remain ongoing. This indicates that these challenges are unlikely to be alleviated without deliberate and strategic intervention, which demonstrates the urgency of a response.

**Aims of this thesis**

In this thesis, I will analyse if and how the theory of deliberative democracy could provide a potential solution to the marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices. As a normative analysis, my aim is to propose how a framework for deliberative democratic initiatives involving marginalised Muslim voices both could and should proceed. This is done in order to help Muslim voices become able to draw greater public attention to their perceived political and social challenges as a first step towards rectifying these issues. There are two primary reasons why it is logical to choose to consider deliberative democracy as a potential response to the research problem. Firstly, the general consensus within deliberative democratic theory suggests that exposure to deliberative initiatives can empower marginalised voices and enable others to empathise with the challenges faced by marginalised groups in society. The second reason is that deliberative democratic initiatives are not only popular within scholarship but have become an applicable, relevant tool for governments to

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9 Although I refer to “Muslim Australians” as a collective, I recognise that they do not speak with a homogenous voice because they belong to different denominations, such as Shia and Sunni. Muslim Australians also come from numerous ethnic backgrounds; this includes Australians from Middle Eastern countries such as Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Turkey; South Asia, including Pakistan and India; and Africa, including Somalia, Nigeria, Togo, and Ethiopia.

employ and act as frameworks for citizen-engagement initiatives. A number of deliberative initiatives have already been held in Australia, and it is an approach that the government has been increasingly embracing.\textsuperscript{11} Therefore, instead of analysing an entirely new government engagement platform that could be considered irrelevant, unconventional, or extreme, investigating the applicability of deliberative democratic initiatives seeks to improve already existing cross-cultural engagement platforms and attune them to acknowledge and deal with power differentiations operating between the government, non-Muslim society, and Muslim Australians. It is not only in academia and government spheres that deliberation is becoming a popular citizen-engagement tool; research has found that young people, racial minorities, and marginalised groups are more willing to participate in deliberative democratic initiatives than in other democratic processes.\textsuperscript{12} In light of this, I will argue that deliberative democratic theory \textit{could} empower the voices of diverse Muslim Australians to publicly express political and social challenges;\textsuperscript{13} however, as I will explain, this would be potentially successful only if careful consideration is made of the applicable critical deliberative democratic models.

For this introductory chapter to my thesis, I will first provide an overview of deliberative democratic theory. This theoretical context will be used to explain why it is logical to evaluate whether and how deliberative democracy could help address the problem

\textsuperscript{11} For example, at the national level, the Australian Citizens’ Parliament was held in 2009, featuring an Australian citizen from each of the 150 federal electorates. The citizens’ parliament asked these 150 participants, “How can Australia’s electoral system be strengthened to serve us better.” In 2016, a citizens’ jury was organised at the state level by the Victorian Government for Geelong citizens following the dismissal of the Geelong City Council in April 2016. A total of 100 citizens deliberated about “How the Geelong community can be democratically represented by future councils.” Furthermore, in South Australia in 2013, six deliberations were held between 43 randomly selected citizens regarding the question “How can we ensure we have a vibrant and safe Adelaide nightlife?” In yet another example, a consensus conference in Australia in 1999 provided key recommendations and a report to government regarding gene technology in food.


of marginalised Muslim voices, after which I will detail the research design used to diagnose the research problem and propose a critical deliberative framework as a response. Finally, I will provide a chapter outline describing how I will systematically build my argument and present my proposed deliberative democratic design within this thesis.

**Theoretical framework**

Deliberative democratic theory is a normative field of inquiry that seeks ways to enhance accountability in political decision-making by expanding citizen participation. Deliberative democratic ideals largely emerged due to dissatisfaction with decision-making in extant political systems and in the 1970s and 1980s, traditional deliberative democratic theory was influenced by the work of philosophers John Rawls and Jurgen Habermas. Rawls and Habermas advocated the mutual exchange of rational argumentation between a range of deliberative participants to collectively develop a “better argument” and reach a consensus regarding common issues in society. In the 1990s, deliberative democratic theorists such as Amy Gutmann, Dennis Thompson, James Bohman, Iris Marion Young, and Lynn Sanders sought to expand deliberative communicative processes in a number of ways to help solve the issues arising from pluralism and power differentiations in contemporary societies.\(^\text{14}\) Since the 2000s, concepts of deliberative democracy have shifted to working theories and practical applications of deliberative processes.\(^\text{15}\) Research on deliberative democracy by scholars such as James Fishkin and Bruce Ackerman has become more empirically grounded, focusing on applying theory to practice through the widespread development of deliberative democratic


initiatives on a larger scale. A more recent turn in deliberative research has expanded the scope of analysis to broader “deliberative systems.” In contrast to solely focusing on single mini-public initiatives, a deliberative systems approach recognises a wide variety of formal, informal, and quasi-formal deliberative sites, spaces, and institutions interacting and operating in contemporary democracies. Recent analyses of deliberative systems include the work of Jane Mansbridge and, in the Australian context, Simon Niemeyer and Carolyn Hendriks.

Ideally, deliberative democratic initiatives aim to broaden opportunities for all citizens of a community, organisation, or society to openly express their opinions, views, and ideas regarding certain issues. There are myriad examples of how deliberative initiatives have been practically implemented in society; popular models include citizens’ juries, world cafés, consensus conferences, citizens’ assemblies, and search conferences. The purpose of deliberative initiatives can range from diverse voices sharing alternative views as an outcome to directly advising or prescribing government policy.

In this thesis, I will propose an institutional framework that is configured from existing deliberative theoretical models to specifically respond to the problem of marginalised Muslim voices. To do so, I firstly concentrate my analysis on what I determine to be three core principles I have drawn out from a range of sources within the deliberative democratic literature: these are the principles of inclusion, communication, and consequence.

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18 Examples of these models will be provided in Chapter 2 of this thesis.
Firstly, the inclusion principle – which is relevant before deliberative initiatives – proposes that a greater diversity of citizens, including marginalised groups, who are impacted by a certain issue should be able to share their positions, interests, and grievances and participate in deliberation. Thus, not only should elites be included in deliberative initiatives but diverse general citizens as well, with a variety of views on societal issues. Secondly, the “communication” principle – required during the deliberative process – refers to the necessity for open and equal communication between diverse participants. Thus, communication should not be one-way and restricted due to existing hierarchies and power differentiations; all participants should be able to openly share their grievances and ideas equally. Thirdly, in the aftermath of deliberative initiatives, the “consequential” principle requires that deliberative initiatives be recognised in some form by participants as being consequential and leading to positive change in society.

At face value, these three principles undoubtedly increase the potential for marginalised voices to express their opinions. A key issue, however, is that despite general high-level agreement on the benefits to and necessity of core inclusive, communicative, and consequential principles, there is no scholarly consensus as to how these principles should be specifically theorised and practically instituted and operationalised in societies. Therefore, to address the marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices through deliberative democratic theory, I cannot effectively rely on the application of a universal framework, or expect any approach to be uniformly valid or applicable.

In response to this, I compare the different scope, rules, processes, and aims of different deliberative democratic designs to determine the models that have been developed to deal with culturally marginalised voices and embedded power differentiations operating in

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19 These key debates will be discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis.
society. Configured through different critical interpretations of inclusion, communication, and consequence principles, I will propose a specific normative toolkit for marginalised Muslim voices through a political theory that, at its foundation, is widely advocated by democratic scholars as a means for improving citizen expression on various issues in society and accountability in political decision-making. Ideally, this is by persuading government or other decision makers to follow a course of action that is more reflective of participants’ desires following a deliberative process – therefore, holding a government or a decision maker’s post-deliberation actions more accountable. For the context of Muslim Australians, an outcome that includes increased accountability would be an important objective. Indeed, ideally, following a deliberative process, non-Muslim Australians could become more informed about the political and social challenges faced by Muslim communities, which could then lead to increased public pressure on the government to begin to rectify these concerns. As such, I develop a normative toolkit that is founded on a critical application of deliberative democratic theories with a core focus on the marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices. In this way, this toolkit is also designed for the purpose of providing a potential remedy to previous problematic consultations between Muslims and government representatives.20 Furthermore, the deliberative toolkit I develop is not only applicable to more formalised mini-public style events; it is also relevant to broader sites of citizen engagement and government consultation incorporating Muslim, non-Muslim, and/or government participants.

The research presented in this thesis can influence theoretical debates regarding deliberative democratic theory by emphasising the need to consider deliberative approaches

20 The previous problematic consultations I am referring to are the 2014 counter-terrorism consultations between government representatives and a selection of handpicked Muslim Australian leaders and the formation of the Muslim Community Reference Group in 2005. Descriptions of these consultations and the reasons why they have proven controversial will be discussed further on in this introduction and throughout this thesis.
very carefully, particularly when dealing with culturally marginalised voices. I will show that deliberative initiatives are not always favourable for marginalised voices, which emphasises the importance of careful analysis regarding the differing scholarly interpretations of a deliberative democratic approach for future designs. Additionally, the deliberative democratic design I am proposing does not solely concern changing government policy or finding common ground and common “reason” between participants from the outset; instead, it aims to propose a platform on which Muslim voices can be heard for the purpose of influencing political and public debates and discourses. Ideally, in this way, the more controversial elements of policy, public political commentary, and public hostility could begin to be questioned and challenged by more informed members of the public.

**Research design**

This research was first influenced by key aspects of Critical Terrorism Studies, which is committed to adopting sceptical perspectives of established ideologies and orthodoxies, including state-centric orientations and understandings of terrorism. As Richard Jackson has explained, Critical Terrorism Studies offer an appreciation of the “politically constructed nature of terrorism knowledge,” as well as awareness of the “inherent ontological instability of the ‘terrorism’ category.” Furthermore, Critical Terrorism Studies is committed to “critical reflexivity regarding the uses to which research findings are put [and] a set of well-defined research ethics and a normative commitment to an emancipatory political praxis.”

From this foundation of Critical Terrorism Studies, to diagnose the research problem, I employed critical political discourse analysis, which aims to outline the relationships

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22 Jackson, “The Core Commitments of Critical Terrorism Studies,” 244.
between textual and social processes and the political consequences of employing certain modes of representation over others. As Richard Jackson has described, there are a number of broad theoretical commitments for critical discourse analysis:

- an understanding of language as constitutive or productive of meaning;
- an understanding of discourse as structures of signification that construct social realities, particularly in terms of defining subjects and establishing their relational positions within a system of signification;
- an understanding of discourse as being productive of subjects authorized to speak and act, legitimate forms of knowledge and political practices and importantly, common sense within particular social groups and historical settings;
- an understanding of discourse as necessarily exclusionary and silencing of other modes of representation;
- an understanding of discourse as historically and culturally contingent, intertextual, open-ended, requiring continuous articulation and re-articulation and therefore, open to destabilization and counter-hegemonic struggle.

More specifically, Teun van Dijk has described how critical political discourse analysis examines the “reproduction of political power, power abuse or domination through political discourse, including the various forms of resistance or counter-power against such forms of discursive dominance”; such an analysis “deals with the discursive conditions and consequences of social and political inequality that results from such domination.”

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25 Van Dijk, “What is Political Discourse Analysis?” 11.
26 Ibid., 11.
In employing critical political discourse analysis, my first focus is to understand the impact of Australian government policy on Muslims and to do so, I draw upon primary source information, including publicly available counter-terrorism legislation enacted in Australia since 9/11. This is largely sourced from the Federal Register of Legislation website, which contains the full text of all Australian government legislation. While this provides important background context, due to the culturally neutral language of legislation, as a next step I additionally analyse corresponding public statements by Australian politicians. In line with critical political discourse analysis that seeks to discover the construction and reproduction of power in political communication to the public, I present a variety of political statements made by various politicians since 9/11. These have been sourced from transcripts of national security statements, discussions about terrorism in parliament, interview transcripts with politicians, and political media releases that coincided with the enactment of various counter-terrorism policies. These examples of political commentary will show how the government has emphasised a national security threat to Australia that has directly and indirectly targeted Muslim Australians.

Following on from counter-terrorism policy, I then analyse political statements referencing Islamic culture, values, and practices. Being key topics of contention for some Australian politicians, these include public statements about Sharia law, the wearing of burqas and niqabs, halal certification, Muslim immigration to Australia, and the Racial

Discrimination Act.\textsuperscript{29} In this way, I argue that some political statements have differentiated and isolated Islamic culture, values and practices from the Australian mainstream. I seek out political statements and public commentary about these topics during time periods when they were high-profile news stories, largely sourced from news media. Primarily, I draw upon Fairfax Media and News Corp because they are Australia’s most widely read news media platforms. As well as providing a source for political commentary, these platforms have been important to consider how the media often popularises the government’s hard-line security discourses among the public. This helps to explain at least in part the substantial degree of public hostility towards Muslims.

To further determine the impact of policy and anti-Muslim public statements, I draw upon secondary source data that includes a wide range of published academic books, journal articles, and research reports based in Australia in the areas of political science, criminology, social science, and law. I draw on polling and survey data to ascertain the impact of policy and anti-Muslim public statements by politicians using statistical analysis on a larger scale,\textsuperscript{30} and transcripts of numerous media statements, interviews featuring Muslim Australians, and websites run by Muslim organisations, such as the Islam in Australia site and the Forum on Australia’s Islamic Relations. These websites not only contain information on Islamic cultural practices, but also feature blogs and public statements from prominent Muslim


Australian academics and leaders, specifically about the impact of government policy and public hostility towards Muslims.\textsuperscript{31} Additionally, I utilise public statements from Islamic council websites across Australian states and territories and the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils. These organisations are important sources, given that they act as the peak bodies representing Muslim communities in each state and territory.\textsuperscript{32} Importantly, the sources I have referred to above contain commentary and perspectives specifically from Muslim Australians, unlike other prominent Australian media platforms. I also analyse Muslim reactions to, and the outcomes of previous consultations between government and Muslim Australians. This includes: 1. Counter-terrorism consultations held in Sydney and Melbourne in 2014 and 2. the formation of the Muslim Community Reference Group and its various sub-groups in 2005. I have chosen to analyse these two consultations for a number of reasons. Firstly, they attracted media coverage in Australia from both mainstream media sources as well as generating media statements from prominent Muslim organisations such as the Islamic Council of Victoria. Secondly, they included a number of Muslim Australian leaders and thus could appear to be representative however, they were widely criticised by many of the Muslim participants for not being genuine and not an authentic attempt by the government to engage. Thirdly, they were specifically developed as a reaction to the enactment of hard-line counter-terrorism policy and for the purpose of gathering Muslim support for these policies. As case studies, these two examples additionally provide a foundation upon which I argue improvements to consultations between the government and Muslims through the development of deliberative initiatives can be made.

As a next step, to help ascertain the degree of social cohesion between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians, I examine well-known social research studies such as the annual Scanlon Social Cohesion reports that include direct references to Muslim and non-Muslim Australian relations. In addition, I focus on academic reports, surveys, and transcripts of interviews with Muslims regarding their perception of social cohesion between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians. Alongside this analysis, I also held semi-structured interviews with nine prominent Muslim Australian commentators in the media and/or members of key Muslim organisations that are representative of various Muslim Australian groups.

Interviews were with two Muslim Australian PhD candidates, one of whom was the former media spokesperson of the Islamic Council of Victoria, a member of the Australian Hizb ut-Tahrir group, an imam who wished to be referred to as Abdullah, the director of the Australian Multicultural Foundation, the director of the Islamic Friendship Association, and three other prominent Muslim community leaders who wished to remain anonymous. The interview questions that were asked were related to the marginalisation of Muslim voices as they aimed to determine the impact politics, policy and wider discourse have had on Muslim communities and to what degree interviewees believed Muslim Australians could and should contribute to public debate in areas that directly affect them. Questions were also asked regarding how participants would respond to the government and wider non-Muslim society.

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35 An interview with a director from a key federal government department involved in the design of counter-extremism initiatives was also held. Three other interviews had been organised with officers from the Australian Federal Police (AFP); however, these were cancelled because the officers were instructed that they could not discuss operational matters.
publicly acknowledging the existence of Muslim grievances, and if the interviewees believed there was benefit in increasing deliberative participation for Muslim Australians. These interviews were held with sample informant participants, meaning that they were individuals who have a role or employment position enabling them to speak on behalf of their community and/or organisation, such as being a director or media spokesperson. It is also important to note that numerous requests were sent to Muslim organisations across Melbourne and Sydney (being the cities in Australia with the largest Muslim Australian populations), with very few (nine) agreeing to interviews. This may be an indication that government policy, public hostility, and their impact on Muslim communities are topics Muslim Australians are reluctant to discuss. Similar experiences have occurred in other research studies; for example, an explanation for the research design in the *Social Implications of Fearing Terrorism: A Report on Australian Responses to the Images and Discourses of Terrorism and the Other* detailed how potential Muslim participants were concerned about being perceived as a security risk if they spoke openly.36 A number of participants declined to be audio recorded, despite the researcher also being Muslim. Another study in 2016 investigating the impact of the post 9/11 War on Terror on Muslim communities in Australia similarly reported a high level of reluctance from Muslims to participate.37

To track key themes in the sources I collected, I used the NVivo software to assist in finding patterns in my data. I coded various terms and then ran a text search query to discover corresponding references. I imported primary source information such as interviews and secondary source materials including academic journal articles and research reports. By

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37 Murphy, Cherney and Barkworth, “Avoiding Community Backlash in the Fight Against Terrorism: Research Report,” 7.
coding these different sources, I discovered a significant trend: a substantial amount of scholarship and Muslim Australian perspectives commented either directly or indirectly on the exclusion of a diverse array of Muslim voices from public debate. Directly, this was by asserting a specific need for increased political participation and/or more genuine opportunities for cross-cultural communication to address a range of policy and political discourses that negatively impact Muslim communities. This includes counter-terrorism policy and discourse as well as policy and discourse that impacts Islamic culture, values and practices. Indirectly, a substantial amount of scholarship and Muslim Australian perspectives commented that one source of grievance in Muslim communities is a lack of voice in Australian society. Integrating these issues, I propose that any solutions to these political and social concerns must first take into consideration common socio-political obstructions to Muslim political expression on public platforms; this is the systemic marginalisation of Muslim voices.

By asserting the marginalisation of Muslim voices, this then acts as an empirical basis for entering debates on deliberative democratic theory. I examine different deliberative democratic models by deliberative theorists through the lens of inclusion, communication, and consequential principles. To do so, I divide interpretations of these principles into traditional interpretations that include those by John Rawls and Jurgen Habermas and the various critical counterparts that have become more focused on pluralism and exposing power differentiations in a deliberative process.38 These more recent critical responses include the works of Iris Marion Young, John Dryzek, Carolyn Hendriks, and Simon Niemeyer.

38 Key differences were detailed in the “theoretical framework” section of the introduction.
As a logical starting point, I first compare different deliberative models by measuring what improvements they could make to previous problematic cross-cultural consultations between the Australian government and Muslim representatives. The primary example I use are the consultations between the government and selected Muslim leaders organised in response to the implementation of counter-terrorism amendments in 2014. For reasons that will be discussed throughout this thesis, these consultations were perceived by Muslim participants to be inauthentic, disorganised, highly restrictive, and, seemingly, the government had predetermined the outcome.\textsuperscript{39} As a response, I propose a framework incorporating existing models that could potentially counteract these issues, and not – as do some traditional deliberative models – merely replicate them.\textsuperscript{40} In this way, I seek to develop a critical deliberative framework that I believe would reflect the important difference between Muslim Australian voices being visible, and those voices being heard.\textsuperscript{41} For Muslim voices to be “heard,” the opinions and concerns of Muslim Australians expressed in deliberative initiatives need to be considered credible and potentially influence public attitudes and future policy-making; however, it should be borne in mind that the inclusion of participants does not necessarily entail the inclusion of their opinions in subsequent policy-making. With this key difference in mind, I discovered that the problem with previous engagement initiatives by the government, and what future designs must be cognisant of, is that Muslim Australians are frequently spoken for and about, as opposed to being critically and genuinely engaged with, even when present in consultations. It is the difference between the visibility of Muslim

\textsuperscript{39} This example will be detailed throughout this thesis.
\textsuperscript{40} I will first explain how some traditional deliberative democratic models are not appropriate for Muslim participants in Chapter 2.
\textsuperscript{41} This concept of visibility has been discussed by critical theorists including Iris Marion Young in her analysis of internal and external exclusion. Young argued that although minority groups may be included in deliberation, their claims may not be treated with equal respect in comparison to more dominant public attitudes from the mainstream. See: Young, Inclusion and Democracy, 55. Furthermore, Anne Phillip’s work on the politics of presence analyses whether different genders, ethnic groups and social classes can be visible to politicians and thus whether they can be effectively represented when they have different life experiences. See: Anne Phillips, Politics of Presence, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.
participants and their being listened to (which, of course, does not necessarily mean that their opinions *must* be agreed with) that becomes the key central focus as to why I contend that a certain combination of different critical deliberative designs are more appropriate for the positive, productive inclusion of Muslim Australians than others.

In addition, relevant deliberative democratic empirical case studies have been important for this thesis. One example is Australia Deliberates: Muslims and non-Muslims in Australia, held in 2007 between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians, which resulted in a greater understanding of the grievances perceived by Muslims. Analysing this case study is useful to examine the potential transformative benefits of deliberative initiatives when an opportunity is presented for Muslim and non-Muslim Australians to participate in deliberative based initiatives. I build on this case study by not only providing a snapshot of current relations between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians but by offering a design that would incorporate government representatives within proceedings to directly address political and social challenges.

**Chapter 1**

**Current challenges facing Muslim Australians: Targeting, hostility, and an increased risk of radicalisation**

**Introduction**

Muslim communities in Australia are currently facing a number of political and social challenges. One major challenge is a widespread perception by Muslim Australians that Australian government policy and political discourse targets and negatively impacts
Muslims. A substantial part of this perception is in regard to counter-terrorism policy; since 9/11, Muslim communities have been widely perceived by both Muslim and non-Muslim Australians to be the target of counter-terrorism policies and have thus been stereotyped as a homogenous group that poses a threat to Australia’s national security. The political challenges facing Muslim Australians are also prevalent in other policy areas; for example, Muslim Australians have seemingly been targeted in a number of public statements by Australian politicians regarding Sharia law, burqas and Islamic facial veils, and Halal certification on food items. This includes statements made by One Nation party leader Pauline Hanson, Liberal National Party representative George Christensen, Senator and leader of the Australian Conservatives Cory Bernardi, former Prime Ministers Tony Abbott and John Howard and former Speaker of the House of Representatives Bronwyn Bishop. Another example was the proposed repeal of Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act by former Prime Minister Tony Abbott in 2014. Documenting examples of these political challenges is the purpose of the first section of this chapter.

In addition to these political concerns, Muslim Australians have experienced ongoing social challenges; for example, there is a lack of social cohesion among Muslim and non-Muslim Australians. Since 9/11, Muslim communities have been subjected to experiences

See, for example: Dreher, “Targeted: Experiences of Racism in NSW After September 11, 2001.” See also the following studies: Al-Momani et. al., “Political Participation of Muslims in Australia: Final Report”; “Australia Deliberates: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Australia Final Report Summary.”


of psychological and physical public hostility by non-Muslim Australians, which is a response to Muslims being widely perceived by non-Muslim Australians as a threat to national security. It is also a response to the fact that Islamic cultural beliefs, values, and practices are often thought to be as incompatible with domestic law and so-called Australian values. To this end, Muslim Australians often feel alienated and excluded from the non-Muslim Australian mainstream. Providing examples of public hostility towards Muslim Australians is the purpose of the second section of this chapter, while the third section will outline a further challenge that impacts both Muslim and non-Muslim Australian communities – an increased risk of radicalisation. This is due in large part to the intensification of grievances among some Muslim Australians, who believe that government policy and public hostility negatively impacts and targets entire Muslim communities.

After documenting these political and social challenges affecting Muslim Australian communities, I will argue that any proposed solutions must first take into consideration some major obstructions to political expression that fuels the sentiment of disenfranchisement among Muslims. These concerns are not and cannot easily be publicly expressed and potentially addressed because of the systemic marginalisation of diverse Muslim Australian voices. I use the phrase “systemic marginalisation of Muslim voices” to mean that diverse Muslim Australian opinions have been regularly excluded from political discourse and public debate by government, media, and wider non-Muslim society. In this way, Muslim Australian opinions have been ignored, criticised, and/or deemed “un-Australian,” if they are not in

45 See, for example: Dreher, “Targeted: Experiences of Racism in NSW After September 11, 2001.” See also the following studies: Al-Momani et. al., “Political Participation of Muslims in Australia: Final Report”; “Australia Deliberates: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Australia Final Report Summary.”
46 Examples will be provided throughout this chapter.
47 Examples will be provided throughout this chapter.
48 See, for example: Yasmeen, “Understanding Muslim Identities: From Perceived Relative Exclusion to Inclusion,” iv.
accordance with the prevalent attitudes held by the Australian government and societal mainstream. The marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices is evident in that Muslim Australians have argued that they are unable to influence and/or contest the design of government policy or contribute to public debates around issues that directly affect them.

Therefore, I will argue that the marginalisation of Muslim voices is a systemic problem that serves to prevent Muslim grievances from being aired publicly. There currently exist limited genuine public platforms that are promoted by government that encourage the participation of a diverse range of Muslim Australians. Potential examples of this could be public consultations attended by government representatives to address the impacts of counter-terrorism policy and/or political and public hostility towards Islamic culture, values and practices. As there exist such limited platforms, no changes can be made, and the various concerns of Muslim Australians remain unheard, discredited, or dismissed. This marginalisation should be acknowledged and addressed.

**Muslim Australians consider that they are the target of counter-terrorism policies**

A major concern for Muslim Australians is that the country’s hard-line counter-terrorism policies are targeted at Muslim communities. When American Airlines Flight 11 hit the North Tower of New York’s World Trade Center at 8:46 a.m. on September 11, 2001, it significantly altered the way national security was viewed across the world. The threat of terrorism – elevated to the highest priority in a number of Western nations – seemed to largely overwhelm any other national security, social, or cultural policy concern. As such, the budgets, resources, and legislative mechanisms that law enforcement, security, and

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49 See: Carland, “Silenced: Muslim Women Commentators in the Australian Media.”
50 Specific examples will be provided in Chapter 1 of this thesis.
intelligence agencies were given to work with were dramatically increased, and Australia was not immune to these changes.

Before 9/11, only the Northern Territory in Australia had implemented laws dealing with terrorism.\(^{51}\) Following 9/11, the Australian government rapidly developed and enacted a multitude of hard-line counter-terrorism policies. Similar to the legislative path of other Western nations including the United States and the United Kingdom, expansive (and extremely expensive) law enforcement, intelligence, security, and military measures were put in place aimed at the pre-emption and prevention of terrorism in Australia. The Senate Standing Committee for the Scrutiny of Bills promised that the tough new measures would “set up mechanisms that will allow terrorist organisations to be stopped and potential terrorist activity to be stopped before that terrorist activity has actually taken place.”\(^{52}\) Between 9/11 and November 2007, on average, a new counter-terrorism statute was passed by the Liberal government of then-Prime Minister John Howard every 6.7 weeks.\(^{53}\)

According to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet’s review of counter-terrorism mechanisms, since 9/11, three terrorist attacks have occurred in Australia.\(^{54}\) The first was on September 23, 2014, when 18-year-old Abdul Numan Haider stabbed two counter-terrorism police officers in Melbourne. The second attack took place on December 15-16, 2014, when Man Haron Monis held 18 people hostage for 16 hours in the Lindt Café


in Sydney, before he was killed by police. The third attack occurred on October 2, 2015 in Parramatta in Sydney, when police accountant Curtis Cheng was shot and killed by 15-year-old Iranian Australian Farhad Khalil Mohammad Jabar. A total of 26 Australians have also been convicted on terrorism-related charges.

Since 2001, the Australian government has enacted 64 pieces of counter-terrorism legislation. This immense suite of legislation includes measures to define and classify terrorism, and enables the Attorney General to prescribe terrorist organisations without judicial oversight and criminalise association with terrorist organisations. New provisions have also criminalised sedition – it is now an offence to “urge” others to commit violence against the commonwealth; in addition, new measures were enacted against “advocating” terrorism. Another major component of Australia’s counter-terrorism apparatus has been a large-scale expansion of police, security, and intelligence powers. Following 9/11, the budget for the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) was increased by 655 per cent, while the budget for the Australian Federal Police (AFP) was increased by 161 per cent.

Amendments to the regulations governing the police, security, and intelligence organisations have also included unprecedented powers of detention and control; such changes in 2005

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55 There is debate among counter-terrorism experts concerning whether the 2014 Lindt café attack constitutes a terrorist act. In the official national inquest into the deaths of those killed in the attack, experts’ opinions have been divided. For example, Professor Rodger Shanahan told the inquest that Man Monis’ mental health was the driving factor behind the crime, stating, “I’m of the opinion it was not a terrorist act.” The results of the inquest are not yet publicly available. Jessica Kidd, “Sydney Siege Inquest: Experts Divided on Whether Lindt Café Attack was Terrorism or Result of Mental Illness,” ABC News, 26 August 2015, accessed 7 March 2017, http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-08-26/experts-divided-over-sydney-siege-as-terrorism-or-mental-illness/6726772.

56 “Review of Australia’s Counter-Terrorism Machinery,” iv.


gave police “stop, search, and seize” powers in areas determined by the Attorney General to be a “prescribed security zone.” These amendments gave the authorities the ability to implement control orders; a person who is placed under a control order can be subject to curfews, forbidden from communicating with certain individuals, must wear a tracking device, and must report daily to a police station. Furthermore, in 2005, preventative detention orders (PDOs) were made legal. If a PDO is issued, the subject can be held without charge when there is thought to be an imminent threat of a terrorist act. People can in this way be held for 48 hours under commonwealth law and 14 days under state and territory laws. In 2014, an amendment bill stipulated that individuals – including journalists – who disclose any details of (or errors made by) the ASIO during a “Special Intelligence Operation” could face up to ten years in jail. ASIO officers were also provided with immunity from criminal prosecution during such operations. In the same year, amendments were made permitting the cancellation of passports for people travelling to selected countries that have been deemed, according to government discretion, “no-go zones,” and people travelling to these no-go zones can face up to ten years in jail. While by no means a definitive overview of the Australian counter-terrorism apparatus, the above examples highlight a selection of novel and controversial counter-terrorism policies that have been enacted since 9/11.

62 Ibid.
63 Ibid.
64 Or, under PDOs, people can be held directly after a terrorist attack if it is assumed likely that without implementing the PDO, evidence will be lost.
When critically assessing the impact of the Australian government’s counter-terrorism policies, scholars have raised a number of prominent concerns. In one general area, concerns are related to the proportionality of Australia’s hard-line response compared to the risk of a terrorist attack.68 Australia’s counter-terrorism policies have been described in the literature as “irrational, unusable and extreme,”69 while other descriptions include “draconian” and comparisons to elements of McCarthyism.70 Chris Michaelsen in particular has argued that the initial planning behind the development of counter-terrorism policy “should have started with the realisation that the risk of terrorism in Australia is insignificant.”71 The Australian Law Council similarly addressed concerns over proportionality, stating that “no serious case has been made out by reference to existing or reasonably foreseeable circumstances to show these laws are necessary.”72

Another concern raised by scholars has been the speed with which hard-line policies have been enacted into Australian law. Despite bipartisan support from the Australian parliament since 9/11, the process of enacting hard-line counter-terrorism policies has been described by scholars as “practices of deflective law making” made in “inordinate haste” with “insufficient parliamentary scrutiny.”73 Jenny Hocking has claimed all counter-terrorism laws should be

70 Named after United States Senator Joseph McCarthy and the communist “Red Scare” during the 1950s, “McCarthyism” is a term referencing unfair accusations made against citizens to limit political dissent against the government. See: George Williams, “Australian Values and the War Against Terrorism,” 193.
thoroughly analysed before being debated and voted on in parliament, but the government’s rushed development and enactment reflects “an impatience with the workings of democracy itself.”

Discussing what he considered to be post-9/11 “knee-jerk” legislation, Daniel Baldino has remarked that in the case of Australia, “the rapid, politically-charged and often panic-stricken speed” with which counter-terrorism policies were enacted resulted in policy frameworks that were “conducive to error and over-reach.” In one example, Greens Senator Scott Ludlum claimed in 2009 that on some occasions, major counter-terrorism amendments were only made available for politicians to read 24 hours before they were due to be debated in the parliamentary chamber. Showcasing the hyper-legislative fecundity of Australia’s counter-terrorism approach in comparison to other Western nations, Kent Roach has stated:

Australia has exceeded the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada in the sheer number of new antiterrorism laws that it has enacted since 9/11 … this degree of legislative activism is striking compared even to the United Kingdom’s active agenda and much greater than the pace of legislation in the United States or Canada. Australia’s hyper-legislation strained the ability of the parliamentary opposition and civil society to keep up, let alone provide effective opposition to, the relentless legislative output.

Concerns about the proportionality of counter-terrorism policies and the speed with which such policies have been enacted are not isolated, but have led to an extensive range of critical scholarship across the fields of law, political science, social science, and criminology. The most commonly featured concern in the scholarship, however, and the area this section

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74 Hocking, “Protecting Democracy by Preserving Justice: ‘Even for the Feared and the Hated.’”
76 Ludlum, “Australia’s Anti-terrorism Laws on Trial."
77 Williams, “A Decade of Australian Anti-Terror Laws,” 1146.
of this chapter will focus on, has been the impact of counter-terrorism policies on Muslim Australian citizens.

Survey results show that most Muslims consider that the government’s counter-terrorism policies are targeted at their communities. For example, two-thirds of respondents to the Australian Muslim Civil Rights Advocacy Network in 2005 and 2006 said that the Muslim community was being targeted and discriminated against by counter-terrorism policies, while a 2015 study involving 104 Muslim Australian participants found that Muslims felt they were “under siege” and “labelled as a security threat” by the government and wider Australian society. It is also commonly assumed by Muslim Australians that the Australian mainstream thinks that counter-terrorism policies are targeted at Muslims. One Muslim community leader argued that “many non-Muslim Australians are ambivalent about these laws and when such laws are pointed out, they know that these laws are tailored for Muslims,” while another stated that for non-Muslim Australians, “there is a general feeling of ‘us and them’ attitude towards these laws. It affects ‘them’ [Muslim Australians] and not ‘us’ [non-Muslim mainstream Australians].” The result of this is that, as a third Muslim leader indicated, “many Muslims … feel that such laws divide Australian society and add to the apprehension and mistrust amongst the citizenry.” In addition, a 2010 Macquarie University report regarding Muslim political participation in Australia found that a perception that they were the target of counter-terrorism policy increased levels of social alienation.

79 Murphy, Cherney and Barkworth, “Avoiding Community Backlash in the Fight Against Terrorism: Research Report,” 11.
80 Interview with Muslim community leader, 2013.
81 Interview with Muslim community leader, 2013.
82 Interview with Muslim community leader, 2013.
Surveyed Muslim Australians consequently reported feeling that they were not accepted as a part of the Australian population, and that they are unable to openly exercise their democratic freedoms.

There also appears to be a widespread fear in the Australian Muslim community that counter-terrorism policies could undermine the human rights of ordinary Muslims because of their religious identity. For example, academic and former spokesperson of the Islamic Council of Victoria, Mohamad Tabbaa, has said that nearly all Muslims he knows fear that one day, they will “end up locked up, charged or whatever as a result of these laws… it [the counter-terrorism response] hasn’t been taken as ‘OK this is for bad people,’ or ‘this is for terrorists’ as such, it is very much known that this is a Muslim issue, to target Muslims.”

Research studies have also reported similar findings. The report *Social Implications of Fearing Terrorism* found that Muslim Australians’ fears of the effects of counter-terrorism policies generally fall in the following categories: fear of physical harm, political fears, fear of losing civil liberties, and feeling insecure. Of course, while Muslim Australians largely accept that a government response to the issue of terrorism is required, they do not support its seemingly religiously/racially profiled application.

Reinforcing these fears for Muslim communities, a number of Muslim Australian groups have been directly impacted by counter-terrorism policies. For example, currently, all but one of the 20 organisations proscribed as terrorist organisations by the Attorney General are self-described as Islamic organisations. Furthermore, in 2007, a PDO was placed on

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84 Interview with Muslim community leader, 2013.
85 “Political fear” is defined in the report as “the promotion and manipulation of fear in order to consolidate and maintain political control.” See: Aly and Green, “Social Implications of Fearing Terrorism: A Report on Australian Responses to the Images and Discourses of Terrorism and the Other,” 17.
86 Murphy, Cherney and Barkworth, “Avoiding Community Backlash in the Fight Against Terrorism: Research Report,” 23.
87 The one non-Islamic organisation is the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK). The listed organisations are as follows: Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), Al-Murabitun, Al-Qa’ida (AQ), Al-Qa’ida in the Arabian Peninsula.
Indian doctor Mohammed Haneef, whose second cousin Sabeel Ahmed was allegedly involved in the failed car bombings at Glasgow airport on June 30, 2007. Subject to a PDO, Haneef was held for 12 days by police, before being charged with recklessly providing support to a terrorist organisation. The charge was unsustainable, and Haneef was released. A similar case is that of Muslim Australian medical student Izhar ul-Haque, who was taken from a Sydney train station and interviewed by ASIO officials and accused of training with Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in Pakistan in 2003. He too was released without charge. On September 18, 2014 (five days before Abdul Numan Haider stabbed two police officers), 800 officers in Sydney and Melbourne and another 70 in Brisbane conducted counter-terrorism raids across on least 25 Muslim homes. This was the largest counter-terrorism operation ever undertaken in Australia, but the raids resulted in only two people being charged; one was charged for terrorism-related offences, and one for possession of an unauthorised firearm. Police also reportedly seized a plastic commemorative sword, common in Muslim Shiite homes. In comparison to these hard-line measures, it is important to point out that in recent years, the government has emphasised a “softer” approach by countering terrorism through increased community engagement. Although appearing more inclusive and involving engagement with Muslim communities, as I will now explain, these softer approaches can also be problematic.

The impact of “softer” counter-terrorism policies

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The “softer” approach to countering terrorism through increased community engagement was first demonstrated in the 2006 National Action Plan. The primary goal of the action plan was to “reinforce social cohesion [and] harmony and support the national security imperative in Australia by addressing extremism.”\(^{89}\) A softer approach was also emphasised as part of the Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Unit created in 2010 through the Attorney General’s Department. The CVE Unit was established with the aim of “developing and implementing a comprehensive and coordinated national strategy, and developing initiatives that lessen the appeal of the violent extremist ideologies that fuel terrorism.”\(^{90}\) To do so, the CVE Unit developed the Resilient Communities website (now renamed “Living Safe Together”), which publicly recognises how “extremists often exploit social and economic conditions and individual vulnerabilities to recruit and motivate others.”\(^{91}\) In 2013, the Attorney General’s Department claimed that the Resilient Communities grants program awarded $4.2 million to 50 projects across Australia.\(^{92}\) These grants were awarded to projects that:

give communities the skills and resources to understand and actively address intolerant or extremist messages and discourage violent extremism, support people who may be vulnerable to extremist views due to personal experiences of disengagement and marginalisation and/or educate groups and individuals about the avenues available to participate positively in political debate.\(^{93}\)

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\(^{89}\) Williams, “A Decade of Australian Anti-Terror Laws,” 1175.


\(^{91}\) Ibid.


Despite this emphasis on softer, cross-cultural engagement, these responses are still problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, these strategies – akin to a hard-line approach – are still directly targeted at Muslim Australians. For example, Kate Grealy has argued that by primarily focusing on projects countering violent extremism among Muslim communities, these softer strategies still stereotype Muslims as a national security threat.\(^{94}\) Grealy stated that these targeted CVE strategies have the potential to alienate Muslim communities by treating Muslims “not as partners but as ‘suspect’ communities.”\(^ {95}\) As of May 2017, the Living Safe Together website predominantly features images of Muslims on its homepage – one Muslim woman wearing an Islamic veil, and a child wearing an Islamic veil.\(^ {96}\) This presents significant challenges for Muslim Australians, despite the seemingly softer engagement-style approach by the government. Correspondingly, softer strategies, similar to a hard-line approach, are rarely conducted as a two-way cooperative engagement among Muslims and police and/or security officers. As a result, concerns are raised as to whether “engagement of Muslim communities allows Muslims the opportunity to voice real concerns, which are then taken into account.”\(^ {97}\)

A related issue is that the grants given to non-government organisations are still overseen by the government. While government oversight may be considered a necessary component of any grants scheme, then-president of the Islamic Council of Victoria, Ghaith Krayem, highlighted a potential conflict that could sabotage any positive work done by a government-funded program. Krayem explained: “if I’m a young person who’s been radicalised, what


\(^{95}\) Ibid.


makes you think I’m willingly going to participate in a program run by the same government that I’m radicalised against?”

After receiving government grants to create anti-radicalisation podcasts, Australian Senator Anne Aly, the founding chairperson of the “People Against Violent Extremism” organisation, said that in her experience, “even taking the money to do this work attracts suspicion – that we’re doing the government’s dirty work, that it’s all about monitoring and surveillance.” Aly said the result of this is that it is “harder to get people on board and allay their suspicions when the term ‘countering violent extremism’ is seen as being about countering Muslim violence only.”

For these reasons, the softer approach by the government still engenders widespread perceptions of discriminative targeting against Muslim Australians. Also relevant are the numerous community policing initiatives within Muslim communities that have been developed since 9/11. The purpose of these initiatives is to enable police officers to work closely with Muslim communities in certain areas and develop partnerships with Muslim leaders. While this too seemingly deviates from a hard-line approach, there are concerns that these initiatives rarely involve two-way engagement; instead, it is seen as a matter of Muslims acquiescing to police demands. As Adrian Cherney and Kristina Murphy have argued, often, the officers involved in community policing initiatives focus “more on intelligence gathering than on sincere efforts to ensure Muslims have input into CT [counter-terrorism] policies.” Any resistance or non-participation among Muslim Australians could raise police suspicion; as such, Cherney and Murphy


100 Ibid.

101 Cherney and Murphy, “Being a Suspect Community in the Post 9/11 World: The Impact of the War on Terror for Muslim Communities in Australia,” 482.

102 Ibid., 482.
queried whether “police engagement of Muslim communities allows Muslims the opportunity to voice real concerns, which are then taken into account.”

In comparison to the perceived targeting of Muslims through both hard and soft counter-terrorism strategies, it is worth noting that other forms of extremism have been under-acknowledged and overlooked since 9/11 – particularly the extremist threat from the far right. One notorious example of right-wing terrorism was on July 22, 2011, Anders Behring Breivik killed 77 people. Breivik’s anti-Islamic and anti-immigration motivations were outlined in a 1,518-page, self-published manifesto describing how “you cannot reason with Islam. Islam consumes everything eventually unless it is stopped in a decisive manner.” In another example, Wade Michael Page killed six people at a Sikh temple in Wisconsin in 2012 and in 2017, right-wing nationalist Alexandre Bissonnette killed six people in Canada. In addition to these specific terrorist attacks, there are also hundreds of organised right-wing hate groups in operation in the United States. In 2015, 892 right-wing groups were operating; these groups include 190 Ku Klux Klan chapters as well as neo-Nazis, white nationalists, racist skinhead groups, Christian groups, black separatists, neo-confederate groups, and other “general hate” groups that are largely based on anti-Muslim or anti-LGTBI beliefs.

Australia has also experienced right-wing violence. For example, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the anti-immigration/anti-multiculturalist-based Australian Nationalist

103 Ibid., 482.
107 Ibid.
Movement led by Jack van Tongeren was responsible for multiple firebombs, assaults, and burglaries targeting Asian people. On July 16, 2001, Peter James Knight killed a security guard at an East Melbourne Fertility Control Clinic as a protest against abortion. In 2004, three Asian restaurants in Perth were covered in swastikas and set on fire. In 2006, a neo-Nazi group from Victoria circulated bomb-making instructions in an article titled “How to make a David Copeland special.” In 2010, the Canning Mosque in Perth was shot at by an Australian branch of a United Kingdom neo-Nazi group. In 2012, two Australian neo-Nazis severely assaulted and stabbed Vietnamese student Minh Duong. In 2013, neo-Nazi Christopher James Gray was charged with making improvised explosive devices and manufacturing and possessing weapons. And, in August 2016, Phillip Michael Galea was arrested and charged with planning or preparing for a terrorist act and collecting or making documents likely to facilitate a terrorist attack. Galea was linked to a number of Australian anti-Islamic organisations.

It can also be argued that right-wing populism is likely to increase in Australia. This comes against a backdrop of the United Kingdom voting to leave the European Union in June 2016 and the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States in November 2016. In what could be a reflection of this shift in Australia, controversial One Nation party leader Pauline Hanson was elected to the Australian Senate in July 2016. According to Newspoll, as of March 2017, Hanson’s party has doubled its primary support to 10 per

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109 David Copeland was responsible for a series of bombings in London in 1999.
110 Ibid.
113 This allegedly includes the Reclaim Australia group and the True-Blue Crew.
cent, while in Queensland, they are polling at 30 per cent. Furthermore, in April 2017, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Immigration Minister Peter Dutton announced changes to Australia’s citizenship and immigration program, in the form of the abolition of the “457” skilled migrant visa. This visa is a program that enable skilled migrants to apply for permanent residency after living for four years in Australia. Turnbull and Dutton announced that this visa was being abolished for the purpose of putting Australian values “first” and to “protect” Australian values and jobs, despite the fact that 457 visas are currently held by approximately 95,000 people in Australia, constituting less than 1 per cent of the country’s combined workforce. It can thus be argued that these changes were done due to broader fears of migration impacting and undermining Australian values. Hanson even claimed that the abolition of the 457 visa was due to the influence of her One Nation party. I will now discuss how, similar to a number of policy changes, certain public statements by Australian politicians have portrayed Muslim Australians as a threat to Australian values and national security.

The impact of public statements by Australian politicians

Public statements made by Australian politicians can alienate Muslim communities. Indeed, by employing critical political discourse analysis, I argue that, in some cases,

115 “The Turnbull Effect: Labor Leads Coalition by 10 Points in Horror Newspoll as Pauline Hanson Polls Massive Primary Vote.”
116 Ibid.
120 Ibid.
political speeches and commentary from Australian politicians in the years following 9/11 can position Muslims as a national security threat and “different” and separate from other, mainstream Australians. This then acts to highlight and emphasise the necessity for the government to implement a hard-line counter-terrorism approach against this threat. For example, in 2006, then-Treasurer and Deputy Prime Minister Peter Costello singled out Muslims, proclaiming that migrants who did not respect Australia’s laws and values should lose their citizenship. Similarly, in the same year, then-Prime Minister John Howard asserted that a section of the Australian Islamic community held extremist views and that “it is not a problem that we have ever faced with other immigrant communities who become easily absorbed by Australia's mainstream.” In 2016, Immigration Minister Peter Dutton linked security concerns with immigration policy. He suggested that the immigration of Lebanese Muslims in the 1970s under the government of then-Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser was a mistake, given that 22 of the 33 Australians who have been charged with

121 A hard-line counter-terrorism approach is supported by many Australians. For example, a 2016 study of attitudes to national security, undertaken by the Australian National University, found that fifty-six percent of those surveyed believed that the government should be doing more to prevent terrorist attacks in Australia. See: “Attitudes to National Security: Balancing Safety and Privacy,” Australian National University, October 2016, accessed 2 January 2017, http://politicsir.cass.anu.edu.au/sites/politicsir.anu.edu.au/files/ANUpoll-22-Security.pdf, 5. A couple years prior to this study from the Australian National University, results from a 2013 poll from the Lowy Institute of over a thousand Australians showed that sixty-eight percent of those surveyed believed the government has struck the right balance between fighting terrorism and protecting the rights of citizens. Only nineteen percent thought that the “government leans too much towards fighting terrorism over protecting the rights of Australian citizens” and eleven percent said, “the government leans too much towards protecting the rights of citizens over fighting terrorism.” This indicates that almost eight out of ten Australians believe the government is acting appropriately or should be doing more in regards to its hard-line counter-terrorism stance. See: Ian McAllister and Juliet Pietch, “Terrorism and Public opinion in Australia,” in Australia: Identity, Fear and Governance in the 21st Century, edited by Juliet Pietch and Haydn Aarons, (Canberra: ANU E-press, 2012), accessed 19 January 2016, http://press.anu.edu.au/apps/bookworm/view/Australia%3A+Identity%2C+Fear+and+Governance+in+the+21st +Century/10171/ch06.html#toc_marker-10, 85.


terrorism-related offences were second- and third-generation Lebanese Muslims.124 Highlighting the direct impact of Dutton’s comments, Senator Anne Aly reported that she had received a number of abusive emails and death threats, including one email that stated that “Peter Dutton is correct and that I need to [go] home and take all my terrorist friends with me.”125

As another example, in 2015, then-Prime Minister Tony Abbott said in a national security statement, “I’ve often heard Western leaders describe Islam as a ‘religion of peace.’ I wish more Muslim leaders would say that more often and mean it.”126 This statement is evidently detrimental to both Muslim and non-Muslim Australians, as explained by Islamic Council of Victoria spokesperson Kuranda Seyit:

The prime minister’s lack of acknowledgement or appreciation of Muslim community leaders and members who volunteer their time to consult with all levels of government and enforcement agencies misleads and incites ill-feeling from the broader community.127

An official statement to the media from a number of imams and Muslim community leaders in 2015 also detailed the impact that public statements by politicians can have on Muslim Australians. The statement made it clear that the authors “unequivocally reject Prime Minister Abbott’s and his party members’ use of language that portrays Muslims and the Muslim community as a security threat. This narrative threatens social cohesion as it invites

127 Ibid.
suspicion and ill feeling from members of the broader community.”

The report *Social Implications of Fearing Terrorism* found a direct connection between government discourse and a sense of fear, in that “for Muslim participants, feelings of safety in their everyday lives are strongly affected by the current social climate in which Australian Muslims are arguably the victims of negative ... political discourses.” According to the report, security-oriented public statements were a result of “politically modulated fear” that fuels anti-Muslim sentiment in wider society and provides support for hard-line policies that facilitate control over society. Summarising this sentiment, the study presented the following findings:

participants from ethnic backgrounds were especially concerned about the impact of political manipulation of fear upon their personal safety. Unlike the fear of a terrorist attack that, in Australia, is based on a perceived threat of terrorism as opposed to actual experience, a community based fear of political manipulation of the discourse on terrorism is grounded in personal experiences of being vilified or discriminated against in the aftermath of terrorist attacks.

Furthermore, Scott Poynting and Barbara Perry have argued that post 9/11 political discourse “reaffirms and legitimates the negative evaluations of difference which give rise to hate crime,” while Muslims in Australia have been subjected to the “stigmatising effects of state action intended to control and contain the terrorist threat by which all Muslims become suspect.” The authors assert that public statements should rather aim to increase public

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129 Aly and Green, “Social Implications of Fearing Terrorism: A Report on Australian Responses to the Images and Discourses of Terrorism and the Other,” 17.

130 Ibid., 17.

131 Poynting and Perry, “Climates of Hate: Media and State Inspired Victimisation of Muslims in Canada and Australia since 9/11”: 162.
awareness that Muslim Australian community leaders have condemned acts of terrorism since 9/11.  

Also highlighting the effects of anti-Muslim public statements by some politicians, the report *Australia Deliberates: Muslims and non-Muslims in Australia* recognised that “the language of political leaders is seen to have a direct impact on the level of racism and prejudice in the wider Australian community.” One Muslim Australian participant specifically connected public statements by politicians with increased physical violence against Muslim communities. The participant noted that “every time there is a politician’s comment we see an increase in the attacks, especially against Muslim women … straight after… it’s incredible. And then it goes all quiet for a while until another comment is made.” Another Muslim participant even argued that the approach of some politicians has become “increasingly extremist,” which can increase “the likelihood of a bad reaction from a weak-minded person who is just fed up and feels victimised and has his anger bottled up.”

As this chapter has described, an ongoing concern for Muslim Australian communities is that they feel they are the actual target of the government’s counter-terrorism policies and corresponding public statements. However, it is not only counter-terrorism policies and public statements that have had an impact on Muslim communities in the post-9/11 context; the targeting of Muslim Australians is a broader issue and has been widely perceived to denigrate Islamic values, practice, and beliefs.

**Thesis chapter outline**

In Chapter 1, “Challenges facing Muslim Australians: Targeting, hostility, and an increased risk of radicalisation,” I will document examples of how Australian government

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132 Ibid., 162.
133 “Australia Deliberates: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Australia Final Report Summary.”
134 Ibid.
135 Ibid.
The text discusses how policy and political discourse targets and negatively impacts Muslim communities. Following this, it provides examples showing that a number of Muslim Australian citizens, including Muslim women and children, have been subjected to ongoing experiences of psychological and physical hostility, including violent attacks, by non-Muslim Australians. This public hostility is a response to Muslims being widely perceived as a threat to national security, coupled with a widespread perception that Islamic cultural beliefs, values, and practices are incompatible with Australian society. It then outlines another challenge that impacts both Muslim and non-Muslim Australian communities: the increased risk of radicalisation. This is due in part to the intensification of the grievances from some Muslim Australians, who consider that government policy and public hostility negatively impacts and targets them. It concludes by contending that these issues are not being publicly addressed because of the systemic marginalisation of Muslim voices.

Chapter 2, “Increasing the influence of Muslim voices through deliberative democratic initiatives,” will mark the transition point between stating the research problem and, as a response, analysing the applicability of deliberative democratic initiatives. In this chapter, it will detail the key debates between traditional and critical deliberative democratic theories by analysing varying interpretations of the inclusion, communication, and consequential principles. By doing so, it will provide a background to deliberative democratic theory, provide examples of its practical applications, and detail the potential transformative benefits of the deliberative process. In Chapter 3, “The inclusion principle: Who should participate in deliberative initiatives?” it will argue that a “mixed” approach underpins an ideal model for the inclusion principle. It uses the term “mixed” approach to argue that deliberation should combine “ordinary” Muslim and non-Muslim citizens with government actors and enable these public and political participants to come together in different
environments – not only in formal government settings. This should include in particular Muslim youth, Muslim women, and Muslims considered more radical. In addition, I will argue that representatives from the Australian government should become involved in an active listening role. In Chapter 4, “The communication principle: How should participants communicate during deliberative initiatives?” I will contend that relying only on rational argumentation in deliberative initiatives, as advocated by Rawls and Habermas, could disadvantage Muslim participants. One potential solution to these problems would be expanding the communicative tools for Muslim participants. The example that I will use is Iris Marion Young’s “communication proposal” – to expand the tools of communication to include greeting, rhetoric, and narrative.

The purpose of the final two chapters will be to connect deliberative democratic initiatives with platforms for social and political change in Australian society. In Chapter 5, “The consequential principle: What should Muslim, non-Muslim, and government participants aim to do when deliberating.” I will argue that immediately and only focusing on decision-making during deliberative initiatives could be to the detriment of Muslim participants. Ideally, deliberative initiatives should be consequential in the form of increased public acknowledgement and understanding of non-Muslim Australians of the grievances of Muslim Australians, rather than immediately focusing on consensual policy outcomes. As such, I recommend Kanra’s “social learning model,” which does not solely rely on decision-making in deliberative initiatives, but rather aims to foster greater understanding for the grievances of marginalised voices by focusing on a separate phase of cross-cultural listening and learning. In the final section of this chapter, I will suggest four practical ways that organisers and facilitators could implement a cross-cultural listening and learning programme for participants.
In Chapter 6, “Upscaling social learning to impact broader society,” I will argue that ideally, deliberative initiatives among Muslim, non-Muslim, and government representatives would not simply be a series of one-off processes; the design of deliberative initiatives I develop in this thesis is intended to act as a foundational springboard that, over time, could arguably maximise the potential for Muslim voices to be influential in national discourses. As a larger goal for deliberative initiatives, attempts should be made by organisers, facilitators, and participants to “scale up” social learning. In line with the current “systemic turn” in deliberative democratic scholarship, the term “scaled up” is used by scholars such as Simon Niemeyer, Nicole Curato and Carolyn Hendriks to mean that deliberative outcomes should not operate in isolation but rather should have an impact on wider society. I contend that the purpose of scaling up should, in this case, be to encourage and provide the means for Muslim voices to express their political and social challenges to broader society. I will argue, however, that while this would seem to be the ideal next step for deliberative initiatives, scaling up is a highly complex and challenging task.

Through this deliberative design, my research will constitute an important contribution to the current literature because the impact of government policy and public hostility on Muslim Australians is frequently analysed in scholarship, but less analysis has been undertaken to design a critical response strategy using widely known and accessible democratic frameworks. Even less research has been undertaken to determine how the practical application of deliberative democratic theory – a commonly advocated democratic tool to increase the influence of marginalised voices – should be configured to become an appropriate response to the political and social challenges facing Muslim communities. Indeed, although deliberative democratic initiatives would not completely resolve the

136 Research from these scholars will be discussed in Chapter 6.
marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices, as a first step, the institutional framework I propose in this thesis is consistent with increasing political expression for Muslim Australians to address potentially more receptive audiences.
Muslim Australians consider that Islamic values, practices, and beliefs are being targeted by the government

Since 9/11, in an environment of increased political and media scrutiny of Islam, Islamic religious practices, rituals, clothing, and customs have frequently been treated with suspicion and hostility. This is not merely apparent in the media or the broader Australian mainstream, but is also prevalent in Australian policy-making and politics. I will now briefly document examples of how Islamic culture, practices, and values have been targeted by the government in a number of social policy areas. The examples I will discuss in this section are Sharia law, burqas and Islamic facial veils, and Halal certification.

Sharia law

Just as in Western nations such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and France, some Australian politicians have raised concerns about Sharia law and have questioned its compatibility with Western democracies. The main concern is that Sharia law will infiltrate Australian domestic law and that all Muslims seek a separate legal system. Another general misconception about Sharia is that Muslims want Sharia law to apply to all Australians. Furthermore, Sharia is thought to be a religious text that primarily details archaic forms of punishment that all Muslims abide by; for example, in 2016, in her maiden speech to the Senate, Pauline Hanson claimed that:

Muslims want to see Sharia Law introduced in Australia. This law is a totalitarian civil code which prescribes harsh feudal rules imposed on everything, firstly for Muslims, later

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138 Sharia law primarily consists of information on sustaining a personal relationship with God. While it does include verses about punishment by stoning (similarly to the Bible), this is only practiced in a handful of conservative Muslim nations such as Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen.
for everyone. As long as Islam is considered a religion, Sharia conflicts with our secular state.139

This concern about Sharia law was one of the reasons that, according to Hanson, Muslims should be prevented from immigrating to Australia. She proclaimed that Australia is “in danger of being swamped by Muslims who bear a culture and ideology that is incompatible with our own,”140 despite Muslim Australians comprising only 2.2 per cent of the population. A similar sentiment was expressed by Liberal National Party representative George Christensen in 2015, who warned of a “slow spread of a Sharia-style dispensation of justice which is quietly executed in Australian mosques on a daily basis.”141 Former Australian Senator Jacqui Lambie has also been outspoken on the topic, claiming that people who follow Sharia law are “maniacs and depraved humans” and that anyone “supporting” Sharia should leave the country.142 She further stated that believers of the Islamic code would not stop committing their “cold blooded butchery and rapes until every woman in Australia wears a burqa and is subservient to men.”143

Burqas and Islamic facial veils

Muslim Australian women have been targeted in relation to the wearing of burqas, niqabs and other Islamic facial veils. Political debates have frequently cited burqas as a symbol of radicalism and politicians have stated rather than being a source of pride of religious identity, they are symbolic of an uncivilised culture and/or female oppression. For some politicians, the burqa is a garment that should not be worn in Australia. For example, Australian Senator

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139 Hanson, “Transcript, Maiden Speech to the Australian Senate.”
140 Ibid.
141 Christensen, “Transcript, Reclaim Australia Address.”
143 Ibid.
Cory Bernardi commented in 2010 that “in my mind, the burqa has no place in Australian society. I would go as far as to say it is un-Australian.” Former Prime Minister Tony Abbott similarly contended that he found the burqa to be a “confronting” form of attire that he would prefer not to be worn by Australians. Unsurprisingly, official policy positions for the One Nation party calls for the burqa and niqab to be banned in public places in Australia and that security cameras should be installed in all mosques and Islamic schools.

As well as calls by some Australian politicians to ban burqas and niqabs in parliament, other female Islamic religious garments have also been targeted. For example, in 2005, then-Liberal Party backbencher Sophie Panopoulos spoke in parliament about the necessity of banning Muslim hijabs in public schools by directly linking them to an oppressive religious practice. As part of her campaign as to why she believed the hijab should be banned, Panopoulos stated:

I hear a frightening Islamic class emerging, supported by a perverse interpretation of the Koran where disenchantment breeds disengagement, where powerful and subversive orthodoxies are inculcated into passionate and impressionable young Muslims, where the Islamic mosque becomes the breeding ground for violence and rejection of Australian law and ideals, where extremists highjack the Islamic faith and their own prescriptive and unbending version of the Koran and where extremist views are given currency and

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validity… why should one section of the community be stuck in the Dark Ages of compliance cloaked under a veil of some distorted form of religious freedom?\textsuperscript{147}

When asked to respond to this speech, instead of defending Muslims and their freedom to wear religious garments, then-Prime Minister John Howard said that he disagreed with a ban only because of its impracticality. On the ABC radio program \textit{PM}, Howard stated: “I don’t think it’s practical to bring in such a prohibition. If you ban a headscarf you might for consistency’s sake have to ban a yarmulke or a turban; it does become rather difficult and rather impractical.”\textsuperscript{148}

In 2014, members of the Australian government including Bronwyn Bishop – at that time the speaker of the House of Representatives – publicly announced plans to segregate Muslim women wearing a burqa during Question Time in Parliament House.\textsuperscript{149} The proposal entailed that for security reasons, Muslim women would be required to sit in a separate glass room reserved for school children’s visits. This proposal of cultural segregation sparked controversy, and also aroused comment due to the fact that it was the niqab that was being described by members of the Australian parliament, rather than the burqa.\textsuperscript{150} It is also a questionable proposal in that if the burqa – or indeed, the niqab – is considered a security risk, why would Muslim women wearing this item of clothing be relegated to a room in Parliament House that is reserved for – and thus to potentially sit with – school children. Furthermore, there has only been one recorded incident in which an Islamic facial veil was


\textsuperscript{149}Barker, “Rebutting the Ban the Burqa Rhetoric: A Critical Analysis of the Arguments for a Ban of the Islamic Face Veil in Australia,” 207-209.

\textsuperscript{150}A niqab is a veil that covers the face but not the eyes. The burqa covers the entire face and can have mesh covering the eyes.
used as a disguise to commit a crime, when a man was robbed in a car park in Sydney. In addition, a 2011 ASIO report stated that a move to ban the wearing of burqas “would likely have negative implications, including increased tensions and distrust between communities, and providing further fuel for extremist propaganda, recruitment, and radicalisation efforts.” The proposed segregation of Muslim women wearing these forms of attire is arguably proscribed by the right to non-discrimination enshrined in Section 116 of the Australian Constitution, which stipulates that “the Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth.”

**Halal certification**

Similar to linking burqas with national security concerns, some Australian politicians have suggested that Halal certification is used as a financial enterprise to fund terrorist groups. In Australia, fees must be paid for Halal certification and accreditation, including Australian products that are exported to Islamic countries. If a product is labelled Halal, Muslims are permitted to consume or use it. In 2014, George Christensen claimed that money for Halal certification could be used to fund terrorist movements and helping to implement Sharia law in Australia. He argued on his public online blog, “I don’t know whether my grocery spend is going to fund extremist versions of that religion or extremist religious

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152 Ibid., 210.
activities that I would rather not see in Australia.” Christensen also stated: “There is no doubt that halal certification is funding organisations with extremist views and activities in Australia. AFIC [Australian Federation of Islamic Councils] which is responsible for halal-certifying Vegemite, have publicly advocated for Sharia to play a role in family law determinations.” Senator Cory Bernardi suggested in 2015 that there is “surely” a link between certification organisations and “the end outcome of extremism.” Berardi consequently demanded that a Senate inquiry be established into third-party food certification. On December 1, 2015, the results of the inquiry were publicly released. The inquiry found that while there may be fraudulent conduct in terms of potential money-scaming practices, there was no evidence to support the assertion that Halal certification processes funded terrorist organisations or any criminal organisations. A website and mobile phone app called “Halal Choices” has also been created to enable Australian consumers to search for supermarket products and avoid buying Halal-certified goods. At a Halal Choices fundraising group dinner held in February 2017, Christensen and Bernardi were guest speakers.

These broader examples are, of course, not the only policy areas impacting Muslim Australian communities; other concerns have been the public and political backlash for the incorporation of Islamic customs into Australian political traditions. For example, in 2013, Australia’s first Muslim Australian minister, Ed Husic, took his oath of office on the Quran in

155 Ibid.
156 Ibid.
his swearing-in ceremony with then-Governor General Quentin Bryce. This action created a major public backlash and Husic was subject to a wave of online abuse and religious attacks, including being described as “disgusting” and “un-Australian.” This is despite Jewish Australian politicians Josh Frydenberg, the member for Kooyong in Victoria in 2010, and Michael Danby representing the division Melbourne Ports in 1998, taking their oath of office on the Hebrew Bible with minimal public outcry. Thus, it is not only security policy and corresponding public statements by politicians that impact Muslim communities in the post-9/11 context; Islamic values, practices, and beliefs have also been targeted.

**Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act**

It is important to point out that Muslim Australians have also been targeted by proposals to amend existing social policies. One example of this is Australia’s Racial Discrimination Act. In 2014, as part of his election promise, former Prime Minister Tony Abbott proposed that Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act would be repealed. Section 18C prohibits offensive behaviour against anyone on the basis of race, colour, or national or ethnic origin. Section 18C of the act reads:

> Offensive behaviour because of race, colour or national or ethnic origin

(1) It is unlawful for a person to do an act, otherwise than in private, if:

(a) the act is reasonably likely, in all the circumstances, to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate another person or a group of people; and

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(b) the act is done because of the race, colour or national or ethnic origin of the other person or of some or all of the people in the group.

Exemptions to section 18C of the Act are detailed in section 18D. They read as follows:

Section 18C does not render unlawful anything said or done reasonably and in good faith:

(a) in the performance, exhibition or distribution of an artistic work; or

(b) in the course of any statement, publication, discussion or debate made or held for any genuine academic, artistic or scientific purpose or any other genuine purpose in the public interest; or

(c) in making or publishing:

   (i) a fair and accurate report of any event or matter of public interest; or

   (ii) a fair comment on any event or matter of public interest if the comment is an expression of a genuine belief held by the person making the comment.162

Curiously, what proved particularly controversial was the public announcement by Abbott that Section 18C would not be repealed. This is because Abbott claimed that a repeal would “complicate” relations with Muslim communities due to the imminent implementation of the government’s 2014 counter-terrorism amendments.163 As such, ethical reasons and the

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The protection of minorities were seemingly not the reason why Section 18C was not repealed, but rather the change was made to persuade Muslim leaders to publicly support security policy. In a public statement, the Islamic Council of Victoria highlighted this perception, claiming that “the veiled assertion that the changes to the Anti-Discrimination legislation were stopped as a trade-off for community support for the security legislation changes have caused extreme distress and anxiety to our community.”\footnote{Press Release: ICV’s Response to National Security Legislation,” \textit{Islam in Australia}, August 9, 2014, accessed June 3, 2015, http://islaminaustralia.com/2014/08/09/icvs-response-to-national-security-legislation/} Correspondingly, this decision implies that counter-terrorism laws are directly targeted at Muslim communities and that the repeal of Section 18C would detrimentally impact Muslim Australians. With Muslims seemingly the target of both policy frameworks, upholding racial discrimination laws becomes a precarious compromise with hard-line counter-terrorism policy. In this way, it could be argued that if Muslims do not publicly give support for the counter-terrorism measures (that are widely perceived to directly reduce their democratic freedoms), they may be forced to accept a repeal of Section 18C as a consequence.

So far in this chapter, I have provided examples of policy and public statements by Australian politicians that are widely perceived to target Muslims. In the next section, I will give examples of another major challenge currently faced by Muslim Australians. Moving outside the political sphere, this involves a lack of social cohesion among Muslim and non-Muslims in broader Australian society.

**Muslim Australians experience ongoing physical and psychological hostility from non-Muslim Australians**

Since 9/11, the phenomenon of Islamophobia has increasingly impacted Muslim communities.\footnote{Linda Briskman, “The Creeping Blight of Islamophobia in Australia,” \textit{International Journal of Crime, Justice and Social Democracy} 4, no. 3 (2015): 113.} Frequently manifesting in the form of public hostility, Islamophobia can
include “prejudice towards or discrimination against Muslims due to their religion, or perceived religious, national, or ethnic identity associated with Islam.”\(^{166}\) Of course, Muslim Australians experienced public hostility before 9/11; for example, during the 1990s, “moral panics” gripped Australian society concerning Lebanese crime gangs in metropolitan cities, and in 2000 and early 2001 about the influx of “Middle Eastern” boat people.\(^{167}\) After 9/11, however, one noticeable difference has been the use of labels regarding people’s public identities; people who were previously referred to as, for example, “Arabs” or “Lebs” (Lebanese) have been homogenised and publicly grouped together as “Muslims,”\(^{168}\) rather than by ethnicity. As a supposed national security threat, Muslims have become a collective symbol of public fear that can engender religious tension and exclusion from wider Australian society.\(^{169}\) This public hostility has been underpinned by the perceived incompatibility between Islamic culture, values, and practices and mainstream Australian society and the Muslims represent an “out-group” in Australian society.\(^{170}\)

Negative public attitudes towards Muslim Australians has been demonstrated in a number of national surveys. These surveys also show that negative public attitudes have remained a consistent feature of Muslim and non-Muslim relations over a number of years. For example, the 2007 Australia Deliberates: Muslims and non-Muslims in Australia report revealed that 48 per cent of non-Muslim Australians thought that Muslim Australians had a

\(^{166}\) “What is Islamophobia?” The Bridge Initiative, Georgetown University, accessed March 19, 2016, http://bridge.georgetown.edu/what-is-islamophobia/.


\(^{168}\) Ibid., 81.


negative impact on the nation’s social harmony, with 47 per cent feeling the same way about national security.\textsuperscript{171} Parallel to this, the report found that 70 per cent of Muslims felt they were discriminated against by wider Australian society as a result of national security concerns.\textsuperscript{172} Similarly, the 2007 Bogardus Social Distance Scale with a sample of 1,500 non-Muslim Australians found that 19.7 per cent of respondents thought that Muslims should “keep out of Australia altogether.”\textsuperscript{173} The 2015 report \textit{Avoiding Community Backlash in the Fight Against Terrorism}, which examined the views of 800 Muslim Australians, found that 67 per cent of Muslims believe, “I sometimes feel the Australian public views me as a potential terrorist because of my faith.”\textsuperscript{174} The Scanlon Foundation’s report \textit{Mapping Social Cohesion} also discovered that negative attitudes towards Muslim Australians in the period of 2010-2016 hovered between 22-25 per cent.\textsuperscript{175} This is the highest percentage of negative public attitudes towards any minority ethnic or religious group in Australia. In comparison, negative attitudes towards Christians over the same time period averaged 4.2 per cent, and Buddhists 4.6 per cent.\textsuperscript{176}

Specific instances of public hostility include frequent protests against the building of mosques in Australia. In 2014 and 2015, for example, large-scale protests were held in the towns of Bendigo in Victoria, Kalgoorlie in Western Australia, and Currumbin, Maroochydore, and Logan in Queensland. In Bendigo, protestors stated there would be an increased threat of terrorism in Australia if the mosque were to be built, and that they were concerned about the impact of Sharia law on Australian law.\textsuperscript{177} One protestor went as far as

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\textsuperscript{171} “Australia Deliberates: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Australia Final Report Summary.”
\textsuperscript{172} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{173} Bouma, “ Minority Religious Identity and Religious Social Distance in Australia,” 51.
\textsuperscript{174} Murphy, Cherney and Barkworth, “Avoiding Community Backlash in the Fight Against Terrorism: Research Report,” 79.
\textsuperscript{176} Ibid., 43.
\textsuperscript{177} Briskman, “The Creeping Blight of Islamophobia in Australia,” 114.
\end{flushright}
to say, “If you’re Muslim and you want a mosque, go back to the Middle East. This is Australia.” In another example, in 2014, two City of Gold Coast councillors reported receiving death threats regarding plans for the proposed mosque in Currumbin. The proposal for the mosque led to 3,500 objections from the public, and the plan was rejected by councillors on town-planning grounds.

Since 9/11, a number of anti-Islam groups have also formed in Australia, “Reclaim Australia” being one notable example. The loosely structured group believes that Muslims pose a national security threat and that Sharia law and Halal certification are gradual Islamic infiltrations into Australian law and society. The group has been able to mobilise individuals to form a self-proclaimed “grassroots movement” providing a central voice and platform for anti-Islam protests. This has included staging 16 rallies across Australia on Easter Saturday in 2015. Numerous other rallies have been conducted around the nation since then, and both Pauline Hanson and George Christensen have been guest speakers at rallies in Queensland, while 70,000 have registered their support for the group by “liking” the Reclaim Australia support page on the online social networking site Facebook. A splinter group of Reclaim Australia, the far-right United Patriots Front (UPF), have also participated in anti-Muslim public protests since 2015. UPF followers have been responsible for a number of public incidents intended to vilify Muslims; in one example, as a protest about the building

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178 Ibid., 114.
183 Hussein, “Not Eating the Muslim Other,” 92.
of the mosque in Bendigo, UPF supporters beheaded a dummy outside the Bendigo Council office. The group also held up a large banner at two Australian Football League matches in April 2016 bearing the words “stop the mosques.” Over 100,000 people registered their support for the UPF on Facebook; however, as of May 2017, it appears that the Facebook page for the UPF has been removed. With a number of chapters across Australia, Q Society is another anti-Muslim organisation operating in the country. While the more loosely structured Reclaim Australia and UPF predominately conduct street protests, Q Society is more formalised and has been active in organising a series of official seminars. For example, over three days in March 2014, the organisation hosted the 1st International Symposium on Liberty and Islam in Australia, which featured a number of workshops and presentations.184

It is also important to observe that when the government conducts counter-terrorism operations, public hostility towards Muslim Australians can quickly intensify, and result in increased physical violence toward Muslim communities.185 Scott Poynting and Barbara Perry have claimed that public hostility against Muslim Australians is fuelled by the actions – or inaction – of the government. They argue:

hate-motivated vilification and violence can only flourish in an enabling environment.

In Western nations like Australia and Canada, such an environment has historically been conditioned by the activity - and inactivity - of the state. State practices, policy and rhetoric have often provided the formal framework within which hate crime as an informal mechanism of control emerges. Practices within the state, at an individual

185 See, for example: Briskman, “The Creeping Blight of Islamophobia in Australia,” 112-121; Dreher, “Targeted: Experiences of Racism in NSW After September 11, 2001.”
and institutional level, which stigmatise, demonise or marginalise traditionally oppressed groups legitimate the mistreatment of these same groups on the streets.\textsuperscript{186}

One prominent period of violence directed towards Muslim Australians directly followed the September 2014 terror raids in Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne. In the space of only a few months, a number of mosques across Australia were vandalised; in one, a pig’s head was impaled on a cross,\textsuperscript{187} while in another in Queensland, the word “evil” was spray-painted.\textsuperscript{188} One man on the Gold Coast was also threatened with beheading.\textsuperscript{189} In addition, Muslim Australians reported finding graffiti on their cars and being spat upon.\textsuperscript{190} In other incidents, a woman had a cup of coffee thrown on her, another woman’s pram was kicked, while yet another had her headscarf ripped off, and the attacker threatened to set it on fire.\textsuperscript{191} At a train station in Melbourne, a Muslim woman’s head was bashed against a train window while she was being racially abused,\textsuperscript{192} while another woman’s arm was broken after she was pushed onto a road.\textsuperscript{193} Furthermore, one man entered a school with a knife, asked whether it was a “Muslim school,” and then threatened students and teachers.\textsuperscript{194} During this time, numerous threatening letters were sent to mosques and Islamic organisations and anti-Muslim

\textsuperscript{186} Poynting and Perry, “Climates of Hate: Media and State Inspired Victimisation of Muslims in Canada and Australia since 9/11,” 161.
\textsuperscript{190} “Security Stepped Up and Religious Leaders Call for Calm in Wake of Attack and Shooting.”
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid.
leaflets dispersed, while numerous bomb and death threats were made on social media.\(^{195}\) Many of these attacks have been perpetrated against Muslim Australia women because, given that many of them wear some form of Islamic veil or head covering, they are highly visible and recognisable in society.

As such, a further challenge for Muslim Australians has been ongoing experiences of psychological and physical hostility at the hands of non-Muslim Australians. The third challenge I will now discuss impacts both Muslim and non-Muslim Australian communities. I argue that one result of the seemingly targeted government policy and public hostility is an increased risk of Muslim radicalisation.

**The increased risk of Muslim radicalisation**

A number of Muslim Australian scholars and commentators have asserted that there is a clear connection between a perception of being targeted by government policies and an increased risk of radicalisation. For example, Anne Aly has argued that the threat of radicalisation has come about “largely because of hard counter-terrorism measures that then feed into a division in the community”\(^{196}\); in addition, Nasya Bahfen has claimed that counter-terrorism policies have created an unjust and unequal environment in which people are too afraid to speak out freely and publicly express their grievances. The consequence of this, Bahfen suggested, is that Muslim Australians with views that diverge from the dominant discourse who are afraid to speak up may instead “action them.”\(^{197}\) In addition, an Australian Muslim youth worker has voiced fears that the future will see “a generation of young people who have so much hatred and so much anger and so much frustration within them – and

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when that happens you’re on basically dangerous grounds.” Similarly, Uthman Badar from the Australian branch of Hizb ut-Tahrir has stated that connecting an increase of radicalisation with government policy is “an obvious possibility” because the latter creates “a real grievance.” Furthermore, a Griffith University study of 800 Muslims found that due to a “siege mentality” and “overreach” from the Australian government, 21 per cent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that terrorists had “legitimate grievances.” One participant commented that counter-terrorism responses are “what drives people to become radical,” while another participant stated that government policy fuels a sentiment among some Muslim Australians that “if they’re going to target us, we might as well give them something to target.” Commenting on this significant proportion of Muslims who support the legitimacy of terrorists’ grievances, community activist Rebecca Kay appealed for a deeper understanding of the foundational drivers of radical thought. She asserted that “we have to stop thinking that terrorism is caused by ideology and start acknowledging that terrorism is caused by politics.” In this regard, the study also pointed out that:

the above results should not be taken to mean that respondents did not support authorities in their efforts to tackle terrorism or extremism, rather it was how policies and laws were being applied; the key theme was a sense of unfairness in how laws were being used to

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199 Interview with Uthman Badar, 2013.
200 See: Murphy, Cherney and Barkworth, “Avoiding Community Backlash in the Fight Against Terrorism: Research Report,” 23.
201 Ibid., 23.
202 Ibid., 23.
target the Muslim community in Australia. Also respondents voiced support for police, recognizing that police “had a job to do.”

The alleged motivation for Abdul Numan Haider to attack two police officers in 2014 also supports the argument that government policy can increase the risk of radicalisation. A man who attended the same mosque as Haider said that a perception that there is a war on Muslims was an evident motivation for Haider’s actions. He said that Haider was becoming increasingly frustrated with Australian counter-terrorism policy, which he considered to be directly targeting Muslims. Before attacking the counter-terrorism officers, Haider had allegedly commented on a social media account: “Let’s not put the focus on other things. The main message I’m sending with these [social media] statuses and photos is to the dogs AFP and ASIO who are declaring war on Islam and Muslims.” As previously mentioned in this chapter, five days before Haider attacked the police officers, counter-terrorism raids took place in Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne. The raids generated substantial criticism and anger among Muslim communities; for example, at a public protest that came as a direct response to the raids, Hizb ut-Tahrir spokesman Wassim Doureihi stated, “Let me say clearly, even if a single bomb went off, even if a thousand bombs went off in this country all it will prove is that Muslims are angry.”

204 Murphy, Cherney and Barkworth, “Avoiding Community Backlash in the Fight Against Terrorism: Research Report,” 23.
206 Ibid.
Numerous non-Muslim Australian scholars have also connected the government’s counter-terrorism measures with an increased risk of radicalisation. For example, George Williams has argued that the “disproportionality of the [counter-terrorism] laws can … lead to grievance and alienation,” and that compromising democratic freedoms such as freedom of expression “has a negative effect on the capacity of the laws to prevent terrorism.” 209 Williams further claimed, “Even where anti-terror laws are applied fairly and drafted appropriately, their exceptional nature means that there will always be a risk that they will produce a community counter-reaction. This is turn can contribute to radicalisation and the growth of domestic extremism.” 210 In addition, Daniel Baldino has suggested that the accelerated enactment of hard-line policies and the lack of public consultation can also increase the risk of radicalisation. 211 Baldino warned that “the creation of shortcuts in the administration of justice and oversimplified understanding of root causes of terrorism will actually hinder national security by creating an environment that acts to cultivate support or sympathy for terrorist movements.” 212

Shifting from a hard-line approach, Matt McDonald and Suzanna Fay-Ramirez believe that a more effective response to radicalisation would be a framework that encourages citizens “to be more open and engaged, finding new opportunities for drawing such communities into the national community.” 213 To this end, a Muslim Australian community worker argued that merely asserting that the motivations behind radicalisation are religious and ideological is not always sufficient; the community worker advocated conversations among Muslims and the government to become more honest and mature, and for the

209 Williams, “A Decade of Australian Anti-Terror Laws,” 1173.
210 Ibid., 1173-1174.
211 Baldino, “Good Instincts or Poor Judgement? Australia’s Counter-Terrorism Response after 9/11.”
212 Ibid.
government to engage with frustrated Muslims who feel they have been targeted and ask them why they are angry, rather than assuming that religion alone is responsible for their anger.\textsuperscript{214} Waleed Aly similarly argued that the government is too concerned with the end of the terrorism process, finding people who are about to commit a terrorist act and “locking them up.”\textsuperscript{215} He said that the more formative stages of radicalisation that are fuelled through hard-line counter-terrorism strategies are beyond the conventional gaze of governments, and this is why the threat consistently grows.\textsuperscript{216}

Not all members of the Australian government have been blind to these potentially formative stages of radicalisation. For example, in response to Australia’s 2005 counter-terrorism package, then-ACT Chief Minister Jon Stanhope released online a Draft in Confidence of the Anti-terrorism Bill (No. 2), warning that a “law of this significance, made in this haste can’t be good law.”\textsuperscript{217} Stanhope added that he thought the bill “put too much of a focus on what Muslims should do to reassure us of their intentions and not nearly enough emphasis on honestly acknowledging our own role in creating the conditions that lead inexorably to disaffection.”\textsuperscript{218} He continued, “this is not to be an apologist for terror or to appease those who respond to terror, it is simply to acknowledge cause and effect.”\textsuperscript{219} In another example, a Countering Violent Extremism Literature Review by Australia’s Department of Defence quoted Rui De Figueiredo and Barry Weingast, who proposed that government crackdowns in the counter-terrorism sphere can radicalise moderates and

\textsuperscript{214} Interview with Australian Muslim community leader, 2013.
\textsuperscript{216} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{217} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{218} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{219} Ibid.
therefore lead to an increase in violence.\textsuperscript{220} The review also referenced Aldo Borgu, who stated that “terrorism evolves in reaction to the counterterrorist measures taken against it.”\textsuperscript{221} While dissenting voices to the government’s dominant security discourse do exist, they are rare. For example, despite its establishment as a “softer” approach to countering extremism, the Australian government’s Living Safe Together website claims that political grievances are not a cause of radicalisation, which are instead listed as an indication of “significant behavioural changes in major areas of a person's life including ideology, social relations and criminal activity.”\textsuperscript{222}

As such, I have provided examples of scholarship and commentary arguing that government policy can increase the risk of radicalisation. The literature in this field has connected an increased risk of radicalisation with experiences of psychological and physical hostility from non-Muslim mainstream society. For example, the study \textit{Community and Radicalisation: An Examination of Perceptions, Ideas, Beliefs and Solutions Throughout Australia} found that “the dominant perceived driver in relation to socio-cultural factors informing radicalisation and extremism was the broad domain of marginalisation, racism and social exclusion.”\textsuperscript{223} According to the study, this includes:

[the] rejection or marginalisation of minority groups by mainstream society; the phenomenon of self-exclusion and insularity by minority groups from the mainstream in


\textsuperscript{221} Ibid., 59.


an effort to preserve a coherent cultural identity; and the corrosive experience of
discrimination and racism in the community.224

A connection between social marginalisation and an increased risk of radicalisation has
also been drawn in official Australian government literature. For example, the Countering
Violent Extremism Literature Review reported that “discrimination, marginalisation, lack of
acceptance, rejection, alienation, unemployment, lack of opportunity, and an uneasy sense of
not belonging” can be powerful contributors to the risk of radicalisation.225 In 2011, then-
Attorney General Robert McClelland pointed to a “range of personal experiences that can
make young people vulnerable to extremist messages. This can relate to a lack of opportunity
– such as jobs, education or discrimination – or a sense of isolation that can lead to
resentment and marginalisation from the broader community.”226

There have been similar findings in international studies on the causes of extremism. In a
comparative study of the discrimination and marginalisation experienced by Muslim and non-
Muslim youth, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights directly connected
marginalisation from wider mainstream society with an increased risk of violence. The study,
which involved 3,000 Muslim and non-Muslim youths aged between 12 and 18 across the
United Kingdom, France, and Spain, discovered a “strong connection” between social
marginalisation and violence.227 The study reported that youth “who have experienced social
marginalisation and discrimination are highly likely to be more disposed to physical or

224 Ibid., 9.
227 “Experience of Discrimination, Marginalisation and Violence: A Comparative Study of Muslim and Non-
Muslim Youth in Three EU Member States,” European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2010, 5,
marginalisation_en.pdf.
emotional violence in comparison with those not experiencing marginalisation,”228 and that when social marginalisation has been accounted for, there is no indication that Muslims are more likely to resort to violence than non-Muslims.229 Furthermore, youths who “reported feeling alienated and marginalised within their communities and youths in the United Kingdom who were victimised on the basis of their cultural or religious origins, were highly likely to be physically violent towards others.”230 Identifying the impact of excluding Muslim voices from social and political discourses, the study further found that “young Muslims appeared to feel more powerless to participate in legitimate forms of protest or active citizenship than young non-Muslims.”231 In this regard, the study advised that “as long as discrimination and racism exist, and are tolerated or remain neglected by states, national identities will be exclusive and inaccessible to those who are subjected to racist attacks and unequal treatment.”232 This Europe-based study clearly supports a causational relationship between social marginalisation and experiences of cross-cultural hostility and an increased risk of radicalisation.

**The marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices**

So far in this chapter, I have documented the political and social challenges currently affecting Muslim Australian communities. One such challenge is a widespread perception by Muslim Australians that Australian government policy and public statements target and negatively impact Muslim communities, while a second challenge is the current lack of social cohesion among Muslim and non-Muslim Australians, and the former’s ongoing experiences of psychological and physical hostility. A third challenge is the impact of government policy

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228 Ibid., 5.
229 Ibid., 5.
230 Ibid., 12.
231 Ibid., 9.
232 Ibid., 35.
and public hostility, which can result in an increased risk of Muslim radicalisation.

Integrating these issues, I will now argue that any proposed solutions to these political and social concerns must first take into consideration a major obstruction to political expression that fuel the disenfranchisement of Muslims – the systemic marginalisation of Muslim voices. It is this marginalisation that should be acknowledged and addressed as a first step towards rectifying social and political challenges in the long term.

As referenced in the introduction to this chapter, the marginalisation of Muslim voices refers to the exclusion of diverse Muslim Australian opinions from public debate when they challenge elements of government policy and/or expose broader public hostility. In this way, Muslim Australian opinions can be ignored, criticised, and/or deemed “un-Australian” if Muslims’ views on policy, political discourse, and treatment by non-Muslim Australians are not in accordance with the broadly held attitudes of the Australian government and mainstream.233

I argue that this concept of the systemic marginalisation of Muslim voices is a key social and cultural issue that does not allow other phenomenon such as Islamophobia (through which Muslims can experience racism and discrimination from non-Muslim Australians) to begin to be addressed in post 9/11 Australian society. According to Riaz Hassan, the concept of Islamophobia denotes:

negative and hostile attitudes towards Islam and Muslims. The term has been used by academics for some time, and has more recently become part of political and media discourse. Islamophobia can cover hostile feelings, discrimination, exclusion, fear, suspicion or anxiety directed towards Islam or Muslims. 234

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233 See, for example: Aly and Green, “Moderate Islam: Defining the Good Citizen.”
In this way, an examination of the marginalisation of Muslim voices in this thesis adds to recent analyses of Islamophobia and the exclusion of Muslims in Australia by researchers such as Randa Abdel-Fattah, Laura Briskman, Riaz Hassan, Yassir Morsi, Mohamad Tabbaa and Scott Poynting and Barbara Perry. I contribute to this research by attempting to expose an overarching barrier that can help to fortify Islamophobia and perpetuate the impacts of political and social challenges on Muslim Australians' everyday lives.

Since 9/11, the marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices has become increasingly evident. Both Muslim Australian leaders and citizens argue that they are unable to influence or contest the design of government policy and discourse, or contribute to public debates about issues that directly affect them. A number of Muslim Australian however express a strong desire for diverse Muslim voices to reach wider public mainstream audiences. Remarking on the lack of government-supported public outlets for Muslim Australians to express their grievances, Professor Salman Sayyid remarked that “the fundamental issue that afflicts Muslims is precisely the lack of legitimacy of their government and the lack of representation, that for example, the government are unwilling to defend Muslim interests as

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237 See, for example: Aly and Green, “Moderate Islam: Defining the Good Citizen.”
people see them,” and also asserted that “Muslims do not have a political structure that can express their opinions.” Consequently, a key problem fostering the marginalisation of Muslim voices appears to be a lack of genuine public platforms and political avenues for Muslims to express their positions, interests, and grievances and contribute to dominant discourses. In particular, this involves topics where Muslims are spoken for by the Australian government but not to. This exclusion is increasingly concerning, given that debates regarding policy, anti-Muslim public statements, and public hostility towards Muslim Australians have not lessened in the years following 9/11.

Mohamad Tabbaa has argued that political engagement has not been focused on trying to understand Muslim Australians but is instead used to re-legitimise the “status-quo,” while Farid Farid has described how Muslim Australians “exist outside of the ideological space of ‘belonging’” and are blemished with homogenised, pre-configured perceptions of Muslims as security threats or misogynistic religious fanatics who oppress women. A key problem, as Sahar Ghumkhor has explained, is that at the national-debate level, Muslim Australians are problematised and treated as “outsiders” and a whole range of their opinions can, even when they are publicly expressed, be routinely disregarded or discredited if they contradict dominant political discourse and public attitudes. For example, in her research on the silencing of Muslim Australian women in the media, Susan Carland found that Muslim women speak about Muslim Australian women’s experiences quite frequently, but that the latter’s own opinions and experiences are regularly ignored or

239 Ibid.
240 Interview with Mohamad Tabbaa, 2013.
242 Interview with Muslim community leader, 2013.
criticised. A 2015 research report investigating the existence of backlash in Muslim communities to government authorities found that many Muslim Australians felt that the Australian police rarely took their views into account whenever community members were questioned about extremism and terrorism. In one survey, Muslims were asked “How much they felt police considered their views when making decisions about how to address terrorism, and when trying to deal with radicalisation in their community.” The results were:

police scored very low on this indicator of voice. On average, Muslims felt police rarely considered their views on this matter (Mean=2.62; SD=0.75). In fact, about forty-six per cent of the sample felt police ‘never’ or ‘rarely’ considered their views when trying to deal with radicalisation in their community.

Not only does this marginalisation exclude Muslim opinions, it can also lead Muslims to become too afraid to speak out against the impact of government policies in general and counter-terrorism policies in particular. The difficulty of challenging such policies was made clear immediately following 9/11, when then-Prime Minister John Howard stated that any public dissent to counter-terrorism legislation was “un-Australian.” Since then, the fear

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243 It is important to mention that both male and female Muslim Australians perceive that their opinions can be silenced if their views on policy (particularly counter-terrorism policy), political discourse, and treatment by non-Muslim Australians are not in accordance with the broadly held attitudes of the Australian government and mainstream. However, in chapter 3 of this thesis, I do argue that Muslim Australian women should be specifically targeted to participate in deliberative initiatives (also with Muslim men) because their voices have generally been neglected in previous cross-cultural engagement initiatives with the government and in the media. Indeed, Muslim Australian women have generally not had opportunities to publicly represent themselves, even in matters that directly affect them. See: Carland, “Silenced: Muslim Women Commentators in the Australian Media,” 140-150; Barker, “Rebutting the Ban the Burqa Rhetoric: A Critical Analysis of the Arguments for a Ban of the Islamic Face Veil in Australia,” 191-218.

244 Murphy, Cherney and Barkworth, “Avoiding Community Backlash in the Fight Against Terrorism: Research Report,” 42.

245 Ibid., 42.

246 Marie Breen-Smyth has argued that Muslim communities in Western nations have been positioned as “suspect communities.” According to Breen-Smyth, this can result in self-censorship and disengagement from democratic processes on the part of Muslims. See: Marie Breen-Smyth, “Theorising the “Suspect Community”: Counterterrorism, Security Practices and the Public Imagination,” Critical Studies on Terrorism 7, no. 2 (2014): 223-240.
of expressing one’s positions, interests, and grievances appears to be a prominent everyday component of the Muslim Australian experience. For example, the report *Social Implications of Fearing Terrorism* identified how the most common fear for Muslim Australians has been being silenced as a result of hard-line counter-terrorism measures.247 This is intertwined with a fear of being arrested; for many of the Muslim Australian participants that were surveyed in the report, “the threat of being incarcerated and questioned as a result of voicing dissent is tied to their Muslim identity, their community experiences and the subject positions imposed on them in the discourse on terrorism which implicates them as the enemy.”248

In one specific example of this fear, the Australian Review of Security and Counter Terrorism Legislation by the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Intelligence and Security found that Muslim parents sometimes restrict their children from attending mosques and youth community activities because they are scared of attracting attention from ASIO and the wider public and being deemed potential national security threats.249 According to the report, even information sessions about counter-terrorism policies are avoided by certain people in Muslim communities out of a fear that their attendance leads the security authorities to think that they have an interest in terrorism.250 Hass Dellal has commented on a sense of fear and displacement for Muslim Australians and a subsequent tendency to self-exclude. He stated that “a lot of Muslims were fearful of speaking up because they thought there would be retribution. All of this obviously adds to the perceptions and the divisions and the relationship between communities.”251

248 Ibid., 20.
249 Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, “Effectiveness and Implications: Impact on Arab and Muslim Australians.”
250 Ibid.
251 Interview with Hass Dellal, 2013.
Muslim Australians also resort to self-censorship due to the legal ramifications embedded within counter-terrorism policy. For example, in 2014, the Australian government’s counter-terrorism amendments developed a new offence of “advocating terrorism.” A person can be deemed to have advocated terrorism if they:

counsel, promote, encourage or urge the doing of a terrorist act or the commission of a terrorism offence where the person intentionally engages in the conduct reckless as to whether another person will engage in a terrorist act or commit a terrorism offence.\(^{252}\)

Ben Saul has argued that the inherent vagueness of what “advocating” terrorism might mean entails that “it is unclear what kinds of speech would fall within the definition of the offence, rendering it difficult for individuals to prospectively know the scope of their criminal liability.”\(^{253}\) Saul warned that such a generalised amendment punishing thoughts rather than actions “may capture speech which is not proximately or causally connected to the likely commission of terrorism.”\(^{254}\) Kieran Hardy has also raised concerns about recent limits to freedom of expression, arguing that “there is this real risk of a chilling effect where people won't want to contribute to public debate.”\(^{255}\) In addition, the 2015 Human Rights Watch Global Report reported that Australia’s counter-terrorism amendments have significant consequences for freedom of opinion and expression in the country.\(^{256}\) A related concern is the inability of the media and the public to report on the conduct of security and intelligence


\(^{254}\) Ibid.


officers. For example, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the Australian
government’s 2014 counter-terrorism amendments stipulated that persons – including
journalists – who disclose any details of (or errors made by ASIO officers conducting) a
“Special Intelligence Operation” could face up to ten years in jail. Journalists can be
penalised even if a public disclosure regarding a Special Intelligence Operation does not
endanger lives or harm an intelligence operation; the law simply states that “a person
commits an offence if the person discloses information and the information relates to a
special intelligence operation.”

Whether being excluded or excluding themselves, the marginalisation of Muslim
Australian voices is a systemic problem that substantially limits Muslims’ ability to challenge
social and political discourses in areas that directly affect them. Because there are no
government-supported public platforms for Muslim Australians to genuinely address the
impacts of government policy and public hostility, no changes can be made, and the
community’s concerns go unheard or are discredited or dismissed.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have documented political and social challenges currently faced by
Muslim Australian communities. One challenge is the widespread perception among Muslim
Australians that government policy and some public statements by Australian politicians
target and negatively impact Muslims. A large and ongoing area here is counter-terrorism
policy and corresponding public statements by politicians. More broadly, however, Muslims
have been negatively targeted in political discourse regarding Sharia law, the wearing of
burqas and Islamic face veils, Halal certification, and the potential repeal of Section 18C of

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the Racial Discrimination Act. Another challenge I have discussed is the current lack of social cohesion among Muslim and non-Muslim Australians and the ongoing experiences of psychological and physical hostility directed by the latter towards the former; the result is that Muslim Australians feel themselves to be excluded from the wider non-Muslim Australian mainstream. A third concern is that the impact of government policy and public hostility is an increased risk of Muslim radicalisation due to the intensification of grievances that cannot be adequately expressed and addressed in public.

After documenting the challenges facing Muslim Australian communities, I then provided a key reason why Muslim Australians do not publicly discuss these challenges with the larger, non-Muslim Australian community – the systemic marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices. Because currently, there are no government-supported public platforms for Muslim Australians to address their concerns, no changes can be made, these concerns go unheard or are dismissed. This is a substantial ongoing problem, and debates regarding policy, public statements by politicians, and public hostility towards Muslim Australians have not lessened over time. This indicates that these challenges are unlikely to be alleviated without strategic intervention, consequently emphasising the urgency of a response.

The conclusion of this chapter marks a transition point in this thesis between describing the research problem and proposing a potential solution. The conclusion that marginalisation is the key issue leads to an analysis of the applicability of deliberative democratic initiatives as a response because it is a prominent institutional framework advocated by a number of scholars as a method to increase the influence of marginalised

258 Examples will be provided in Chapter 2 of this thesis.
259 See, for example: Yasmeen, “Understanding Muslim Identities: From Perceived Relative Exclusion to Inclusion.”
In the next chapter of this thesis, I will examine if and how deliberative democratic initiatives could provide a potential solution to this marginalisation of Muslim voices. I will begin by detailing the key debates between traditional and critical deliberative democratic theory and explain how it could become a theoretical framework used to respond to the types of challenges impacting Muslim Australians that I have documented in this chapter.

See, for example: Dryzek, Deliberative Global Politics: Discourse and Democracy in a Divided World; Fishkin, When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation; Gutmann and Thompson, Why Deliberative Democracy?; Young, Inclusion and Democracy.
Chapter 2

Increasing the influence of Muslim voices through deliberative democratic initiatives

Introduction

In the previous chapter of this thesis, I argued that political and social challenges cannot yet be publicly addressed because of the systemic marginalisation of diverse Muslim Australian voices. This chapter will now begin to analyse if and how deliberative democratic theory could provide a potential solution. In the first section of this chapter, I will provide background theoretical context by outlining what deliberative democratic theory advocates. In the second section, I will then explain how deliberative democratic initiatives could potentially increase the influence of marginalised voices. To do so, I draw upon what I determine to be the three core principles in deliberative democratic theory: inclusion, communication, and consequence.\(^\text{261}\) Firstly, the inclusion principle – which is relevant before deliberative initiatives – proposes that a greater diversity of citizens, including marginalised groups, be given the ability to share their positions, interests, and grievances and participate in policy deliberation. In this way, deliberative initiatives would not be limited to elites but rather involve a more diverse cross-section of citizens. Secondly, the communication principle – which comes into place during deliberative initiatives – refers to the necessity for open and equal communication between diverse participants; communication should not be one-way, and all participants should be able to communicate their own preferences and ideas equally. Thirdly, after deliberative initiatives, the consequential principle requires that deliberative initiatives be recognised in some form by

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\(^{261}\) For example, although they discuss the matter in different ways and to varying degrees, scholars such as John Rawls, Jurgen Habermas, Amy Gutmann, Dennis Thompson, Iris Marion-Young and John Dryzek place emphasis on these three principles in deliberative democracy.
participants as having real consequences and outcomes, and leading to change in society after deliberation has taken place.

On the surface, the three principles of inclusion, communication, and consequence sound promising ways of increasing the influence of marginalised Muslim Australian voices to address political and social challenges. As I will explain, however, beyond a basic advocacy for more inclusive, communicative, and consequential deliberation, there are numerous conflicting interpretations in deliberative theory as to how these principles should be theoretically conceptualised and practically instituted and operationalised in societies. Therefore, any process addressing the marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices cannot rely wholly on the application of a universal framework of deliberative democratic theory, or expect any approach to be uniformly valid or applicable. To this end, I will analyse key scholarly debates in deliberative democratic theory by examining the two main conceptual camps. The first of these is the traditional rationalist approach to deliberation advocated by, among others, John Rawls and Jurgen Habermas. The second is a range of critical approaches to deliberative theory such as those by researchers Carolyn Hendriks, Iris Marion Young, John Dryzek, and Bora Kanra that emphasise pluralistic-oriented models more cognisant of power differentiations operating in society. After navigating the differences between traditional and critical approaches, I will conclude this chapter by arguing that applying more traditional interpretations of the inclusion, communication, and consequential principles could in fact increase the marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices. Instead, I will argue that a carefully considered selection of critical deliberative models could enable diverse Muslim voices to more effectively express and address political and social challenges. In this way, I will offer a configuration of existing deliberative models that is consistent with increasing political expression for marginalised voices to potentially more receptive
audiences. In doing so, I primarily draw upon and analyse theoretical frameworks and deliberative models developed by democratic theorists and practitioners including Carolyn Hendriks, Iris Marion Young and Bora Kanra.262

What is deliberative democratic theory?

The modern idea of democracy is founded on the view that society should be self-governed among free and equal individuals. In a number of Western nations, two democratic approaches have become particularly salient. The first key approach is the aggregative model of democracy, advocated by Joseph Schumpeter in 1947 in his seminal work Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, which endorses the electoral process and majoritarian style of decision-making.263 Schumpeter asserted that the “democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote.”264 As such, Schumpeter’s conception of democracy emphasises the importance of preference aggregation through a competitive capacity to vote for different political parties in elections. It is this practice that is generally instituted in contemporary democratic societies today. The deliberative model of democracy, however, emphasises the importance of the decision-making process, as opposed to solely its outcome. It also emphasises the inclusion of general citizens in more proactive roles in the democratic process, as opposed to only elites.


Differentiating between aggregative and deliberative models of democracy, James Fishkin has stated that at the best of times, ordinary elections offer only a “snapshot of public opinion,”265 while Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson argue that “it is not enough that citizens [can only] assert their power through interest-group bargaining, or by voting in elections.” 266 In this regard, a deliberative democratic process aims to transcend the fixed and uninformed preference-making common to the aggregative model. 267 Of course, both the deliberative and aggregative approaches have individual strengths and weaknesses and the two do not generally act in opposition, but frequently overlap and even help to authenticate and legitimise the other. For example, initial deliberation can justify and/or legitimate the results of a voting process and similarly, the voting process can more quickly and effectively bring about an outcome from deliberation. At the same time, though, increased deliberation does not guarantee that voting will be more conscious and representative of marginalised views; simply voting without deliberation does not usually take marginalised views into account. It is indubitable, however, that both democratic theorists and government bodies are increasingly analysing and experimenting with deliberative models as a normative approach to democracy.

Deliberative democratic theory analyses ways to enhance accountability in political decision-making by expanding citizen participation. At its foundation, deliberative democratic theory is frequently advocated as a means of promoting the voices of marginalised groups and engaging with their opinions, values, and interests.268 Despite a

266 Gutmann and Thompson, Why Deliberative Democracy? 4.
268 See, for example: Dryzek, Deliberative Global Politics: Discourse and Democracy in a Divided World; Fishkin, When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation; Gutmann and Thompson, Why Deliberative Democracy?: Young, Inclusion and Democracy.
number of variants of the theory (to be discussed in the next section of this chapter), scholars would generally agree with the following high-level definition of deliberative democracy, as summarised by Julie Ozanne, Canan Corus, and Bige Saatcioglu:

Deliberative democracy is an idealised system in which citizens deliberate before voting and try to make thoughtful judgements for the collective good. The citizens must be free and equal and must operate within a political system that guarantees basic rights and within a social life that provides them with basic resources. People are diverse and may form their own ideas about what is in the common good, but they must provide supporting evidence that reasonable people can understand.269

Deliberative democratic theory was largely influenced by classical pluralist theory in the mid-20th century. During the 1950s and 1960s, pluralist theory promoted the dispersal of political power. A prominent early theorist in classical pluralism, Robert Dahl, argued that political power should be dispersed across groups with diverse interests in an attempt to curtail a bias towards the majority when making political decisions, and that no one group should have overarching political power in society. While this has obvious benefits for marginalised groups, pluralist theory still faces a number of challenges. Firstly, some groups may not have the resources to mobilise group representation; this could include sections of society that are uneducated or disenfranchised. Secondly, even when there is group representation, one group can have power over other groups when competing for political influence; for example, larger groups such as corporations, media conglomerates, and/or groups with substantial wealth can become politically powerful, to the detriment of others. A third problem is that internally, individual interests within groups can be dismissed; for

example, some members of a group may be manipulated by leaders and decisions made against their will. Despite these challenges, an emphasis on power dispersal helped paved the way for a “deliberative turn” in research on democratic theory.

Traditional deliberative democratic theory emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, influenced by the work of John Rawls and Jurgen Habermas. Rawls was important in reigniting normative approaches to political philosophy. Although his main contributions to political theory were largely in relation to his concept of “justness as fairness” in his 1971 *Theory of Justice*, he developed ideas regarding democratic decision-making processes through deliberation, particularly in his book *Political Liberalism*. Rawls advocated the hypothetical thought experiment of the “original position” as a “traditional conception of justice.” Rawls proposed that in a process of deliberation, people can leave behind their individual opinions, values, and interests and collectively exercise “public reason” for a just, democratic society.

A cornerstone of Rawls’ view of deliberation is his contention that this “public reason” is created through the exchange of rational argumentation among free and equal agents. Rational argumentation in this context means an orderly exchange of logical debate among deliberators – or, importantly, the orderly exchange of opinions that are popularly considered to constitute conventional “rational” debate; for Rawls, rational arguments can concern “constitutional essentials” and “basic questions of justice,” in the context of a shared goal of stable social cooperation. Public reason derives from his idea of “reflective equilibrium” in his *Theory of Justice*, in which individuals reflect on and revise beliefs based

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272 Ibid., 22.
273 Ibid., 10.
upon a supposed shared sense of what is uniformly considered morally justified in society.\textsuperscript{274}

Thus, despite people possessing divergent “comprehensive doctrines” such as religious beliefs, Rawls envisaged an “overlapping consensus” during deliberation to promote a just and stable society.\textsuperscript{275} Therefore, Rawls believed, in the pursuit of justified decision-making, collectively generated public reason means people putting aside divergent views when debating political and social norms, even in the face of deep moral or political differences.\textsuperscript{276}

The foundations of deliberative democratic theory are also embedded within Jurgen Habermas’s research into the power of communicative rationality.\textsuperscript{277} Habermas advocated the mutual exchange of rational argumentation between a range of deliberative participants to collectively develop the “better argument” regarding common issues in society. Focusing on the importance of “legitimacy” in decision-making, Habermas argued for a large-scale approach to deliberation involving general citizens from wider society. This stands in marked contrast to Rawls, whose interpretations of deliberation were largely envisaged to take place within micro-oriented settings, such as parliamentary assemblies. However, Habermas is aligned with Rawls in his belief that deliberation requires the exchange of rational argumentation among free and equal citizens. Furthermore, both theorists agree that to reach a legitimate outcome and foster change in society, consensus is required between participants.

In his interpretation of deliberative initiatives, Habermas specifically advocated the importance of the “ideal speech situation” as the practice upon which mass deliberation can be exercised and in which free and equal deliberators will reason and form rational


\textsuperscript{275} Rawls, \textit{Political Liberalism}, 15.


consensual outcomes. For Habermas, the ideal speech situation lays out the ideal conditions required for rational discourse. One necessary condition is that everyone with competence to speak can contribute to deliberation, any opinion can be introduced and expressed, and any assertion can be questioned. An ideal speech situation also requires that attitudes and assertions should not be impacted by internal or external coercion. Habermas believed that in these ideal conditions, the force of the “better argument” will prevail and thereby enable participants to reach a rational consensual decision. In this regard, the seminal works of Rawls and Habermas have, albeit in different ways, developed a class of traditional and formal interpretations of deliberative democracy that emphasise the importance of rational argumentation and consensus between free and equal citizens.

In the 1990s, deliberative democratic theorists including Amy Gutmann, Dennis Thompson, James Bohman, Iris Marion Young, and Lynn Sanders looked to expand communicative processes in a number of ways to help resolve power differentiations and pluralism in society. Since the 2000s, concepts of deliberative democracy have shifted to working theories and practical applications of deliberative processes. Analysis on deliberative democracy by researchers such as James Fishkin and Bruce Ackerman became more empirically grounded, focusing on applying theory to practice through the widespread development of deliberative democratic-based initiatives, including on a large scale. A more recent turn in deliberative research has expanded the scope of analysis to examine broader “deliberative systems.” Rather than solely focusing on single mini-public initiatives,

280 See, for example: Ackerman and Fishkin, “Deliberation Day”; Fishkin, When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation.
a deliberative systems approach recognises a wide variety of formal, informal, and quasi-formal deliberative sites, spaces, and institutions interacting and operating in contemporary democracies. For example, Jane Mansbridge et al. (2012) state that:

No single forum, however ideally constituted could possess deliberative capacity sufficient to legitimate most of the decisions and policies that democracies adopt. To understand the larger goal of deliberation, we suggest that it is necessary to go beyond the study of individual institutions and processes to examine their interaction in the system as a whole. We recognize that most democracies are complex entities in which a wide variety of institutions, associations, and sites of contestation accomplish political work — including informal networks, the media, organised advocacy groups, schools, foundations, private and non-profit institutions, legislatures, executive agencies, and the courts. We thus advocate what may be called a systemic approach to deliberative democracy.

Building on this initial background information, I will now provide examples of how practical applications of deliberative initiatives can be designed.

**What does deliberative democracy look like?**

At a practical level, deliberative democratic initiatives involve diverse voices interacting in face-to-face or online situations to discuss societal issues. This can range from formal or informal small-group discussions within community groups to larger public forums at a national – or even international – level. There are numerous examples of how

281 The potential for scaling up deliberative initiatives to impact broader society will be discussed in Chapter 6 of this thesis.
283 The possibilities for deliberation in the international arena are detailed by Dryzek in his book: Dryzek, Deliberative Global Politics: Discourse and Democracy in a Divided World.
deliberative initiatives have been practically implemented in society; one notable example is a citizens’ jury. Similar to the process undertaken by a legal jury, a citizens’ jury involves a representative sample of people convening for several days to explore and discuss a social or political issue and eventually make a policy recommendation. Within the jury, experts can be cross-examined and witnesses be called. Numerous citizens’ juries have been held around the world, including in Australia; for example, a citizens’ jury was organised by the Victorian government following the dismissal of the Geelong City Council in April 2016. Over three deliberative events, 100 randomly selected Geelong citizens deliberated “Our Council was dismissed. How do we want to be democratically represented by a future Council?.”

A report was issued that included a series of recommendations for the government put forward by participants and this was tabled in the Victorian parliament. The Victorian Minister for Local Government publicly responded to the jury’s findings. On behalf of the Minister, The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, then developed a report directly responding to each of the jury’s recommendations identifying how they would be supported and actioned. If a recommendation was not supported, the report provided an explanation why. Another example of a citizens’ jury took place in South Australia in 2013, when 43 randomly selected citizens deliberated the question, “How can we ensure we have a vibrant and safe Adelaide nightlife?” The jury members then met with the South Australian premier to report their findings.

As these examples from Geelong and South Australia show, the government (in these two cases at the state level) has in recent years funded citizen jury initiatives that have been

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designed to gather a representative group of ordinary citizens over a series of deliberative based events to explore and discuss various political and social issues existing in society in order to make a series of recommendations. Politicians have made various commitments to these initiatives such as tabling reports in parliament and developing official reports responding to each of the citizen recommendations. Therefore, deliberative democratic based citizen juries are a tool that governments are embracing, and they have previously acted as a framework for citizen-engagement initiatives, thus highlighting the contemporary relevance of deliberative democracy in connecting communities to government decision-making.

A further practical application of deliberative democracy is a consensus conference. The idea of a consensus conference was proposed by the Danish Board of Technology to assess citizens’ opinions regarding various technologies. During this process, citizens can invite and question experts in order to come to a consensus and make policy recommendations. More than 60 of these conferences have been held around the world, including in Australia. The first consensus conference in Australia was held in 1999 when, brought together by the Australian Museum, a panel of 14 laypersons provided key recommendations and a report to the government regarding the use of gene technology in food. A similar platform is the scenario workshop. Along with consensus conferences, scenario workshops were developed in Denmark and bring together citizens, policy-makers, experts, and businesspeople to explore and discuss various scenarios regarding a certain set of issues. Citizens determine the issues that will be discussed, and the workshops consist of three stages: criticism of the scenarios, the proposal of a vision, and the realisation.

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to this focus on the future, a number of deliberative democratic workshops have also been framed around an “appreciative inquiry” model. An appreciative inquiry is generally used for change management in organisations. This strength-based model does not focus on an organisation’s deficiencies and dysfunctions but rather its positive aspects to generate new ideas for the future. In this process, participants discover the values and strengths of an organisation and then collectively develop strategies to improve on these positive elements in the future. By utilising technology, some deliberative models have been designed for larger-scale participation across great geographical distances. One model that can accommodate thousands of participants is known as a 21st-century town meeting, which divides participants into small groups with a facilitator for face-to-face discussions. Each facilitator has a computer networked to other groups, which can be spread across a number of locations. A further example of a popular deliberative model is a citizens’ assembly. This is a selected cross-section of society, generally comprising over 100 people, who periodically gather face-to-face to discuss societal issues. One of the most well-documented citizens’ assemblies to have occurred was the Australian Citizens’ Parliament, held in 2009, which asked 150 participants “How can Australia’s electoral system be strengthened to serve us better.”

Another example is a “search conference,” in which citizens come together to learn about each other in order to collectively devise a shared common vision for the future to improve social cohesion. In the next chapter, I contend that it is this last model on which deliberative initiatives among Muslim, non-Muslim and government representatives should be based.

Despite its many variations, at its core, a deliberative initiative is a discussion space intended to broaden opportunities for a wide range of citizens to express their opinions openly. Therefore, what becomes important in a deliberative democratic process is that all

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289 This example will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.
citizens have an opportunity to participate in and communicate about issues that directly affect them. In this regard, a key benefit of deliberative democracy lies in its potential to increase the influence of marginalised voices in society.

How can deliberative democratic initiatives benefit marginalised voices?

There are a number of ways deliberative democratic initiatives can strengthen and empower marginalised voices. Firstly, deliberative theorists describe enhanced capabilities through deliberative initiatives for marginalised voices to express themselves. This is because deliberation ideally seeks the opinions of society’s more marginalised groups. Although this does not occur in every case, a deliberative process has the potential to promote enhanced levels of political efficacy and civic engagement for marginalised communities. Deliberative initiatives can consequently strengthen “citizen voices in governance by including people of all races, classes, ages and geographies in deliberations that directly affect public decisions.” Claus Offe has claimed that people who tend to participate less in traditional partisan politics, such as racial minorities, generally express more interest in participating in deliberation.

A second potential benefit of deliberative initiatives is that the wider mainstream population has a chance to listen to and learn from the positions, interests, and grievances of marginalised voices. Offe suggests that the broader public can subsequently discover that:

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290 See, for example: Dryzek, Deliberative Global Politics: Discourse and Democracy in a Divided World; Fishkin, When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation; Gutmann and Thompson, Why Deliberative Democracy?; Young, Inclusion and Democracy.
292 Offe, “Crisis and Innovation of Liberal Democracy: Can Deliberation be Institutionalised?” 466.
[the] “will of the people” is highly malleable and contingent upon contexts of communication. This learning is driven by a demonstration effect: if people actually had the time, expertise, and appropriate communicative framework to think seriously and competently about issues on the political agenda, chances are that they would change their original views and preferences. 293

The ability for participants to change their opinions and preferences and gain increased empathy towards marginalised groups is commonly recognised as the transformative benefit of deliberative democracy. In both theory and practice, deliberative researchers such as James Fishkin have found that exposure to different positions, interests, and grievances can enable individuals to understand and empathise with marginalised groups to a greater degree. 294 One way these changes of opinion can be measured is via a deliberative poll, which surveys participants before and after deliberation and compares these results to statistically measure the impact that the deliberative process has had on people’s opinions. 295 One example in which a deliberative poll was used to measure changes of opinion about marginalised groups was during a three-day deliberative initiative in 2007 regarding the Roma in Bulgaria. Despite the fact that members of mainstream Bulgarian society expressed negative sentiments towards Roma prior to the deliberation, a poll revealed dramatic changes of opinion after the deliberative process in the direction of increased acceptance. Specifically, comparisons of pre- and post-deliberation polls showed that the percentage of non-Roma participants who thought that “The Roma should live in separate Roma neighbourhoods” declined from 43 to 21 per cent. 296 Furthermore, those agreeing that “The government should help people living in illegal housing to get and repay loans to build

293 Ibid., 465.
294 See: Fishkin, When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation.
295 An example of this in the Australian context will be provided further on in this chapter.
new houses” rose from 47 to 55 per cent.\textsuperscript{297} The percentage of non-Roma participants believing that “the government should hire more Roma police officers” rose from 32 to 56 per cent, while those agreeing that “the government should hire more Roma in the courts” rose from 26 to 45 per cent.\textsuperscript{298} In this case, deliberative initiatives resulted in a greater level of support for the fuller integration of Roma people into Bulgarian society.\textsuperscript{299} This example of the generation of a greater degree of empathy towards minority groups highlights the transformative benefits of deliberative initiatives between culturally conflicted groups.\textsuperscript{300}

It is important to point out that there are different types of transformation. For example, “deliberative construction” occurs when, without a particular prior perspective or opinion on a certain issue or topic, participants begin to formulate their own ideas around the topic during the process of deliberation.\textsuperscript{301} A second type of transformation is “deliberative reconstruction,” which refers to opinions being partially changed as a result of listening to various perspectives and experiences during the deliberative process.\textsuperscript{302} Simon Niemeyer has explained that for deliberative reconstruction, a participant’s preference or opinions are “updated in light of new information or taking into account a point of view that directly challenges a particular discourse element.”\textsuperscript{303} A final type of transformation is “deliberative confutation,” whereby a person’s previous opinion is completely changed, once they are exposed to alternate views. According to Niemeyer, in some cases, this type of transformation can include the “wholesale negation of previously existing discourses. In this type of transformation, the perspective embodied by the discourse cannot be sustained in the

\textsuperscript{297} Ibid, 69.  
\textsuperscript{298} Ibid, 69.  
\textsuperscript{299} Ibid, 69.  
\textsuperscript{300} In another example, a deliberative initiative between Protestant and Catholics in Northern Ireland achieved similar positive results. Fishkin explained, “After only one day of deliberation, Protestants and Catholics rose about fifteen points in their willingness to grant that the other group was ‘trustworthy’ or ‘open to reason’.”  
\textsuperscript{301} Niemeyer, “From the Minipublic to a Deliberative System: Is Scaling Up Deliberation Possible?” 11.  
\textsuperscript{302} Ibid., 12.  
\textsuperscript{303} Ibid., 12.
face of deliberative scrutiny. It either becomes less influential, or is completely discarded following deliberation.”

304 To this end, Niemeyer explains:

this kind of deliberative transformation is the one that has been the most acute, if not most consistent, from observation of mini-public deliberation ...that is to say, it has yielded the strongest transformation in preferences. This kind of transformation may not dominate deliberation in terms of outright number of issues, but the kind of preference transformation that follows is the most dramatic. In some, clear-cut cases citizens may come to completely reverse their pre-existing positions.

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So far in this chapter, I have provided a background of deliberative democratic theory, listed examples of its practical applications, and detailed potential transformative benefits of the deliberative process. While I have argued that deliberative democracy can increase the influence of marginalised voices, I will now explain how it could potentially do this. To do so, I will outline the three core principles central to most prominent deliberative democratic models.

**Three core principles central to increasing the influence of marginalised voices**

To develop a deliberative framework to respond to the problem of marginalised Muslim voices, I focus on three core principles that have been taken from deliberative democratic theory as central components that, I argue, can provide a framework for engaging marginalised voices. These are the principles of inclusion, communication, and consequence. Firstly, the inclusion principle – which, as stated previously, is relevant before deliberative initiatives – proposes that a greater diversity of citizens who are impacted by a certain issue,
including marginalised groups, should be able to share their positions, interests, and grievances and participate in deliberation. In this way, deliberative initiatives should not be limited to elites but rather involve a more diverse cross-section of citizens. The communication principle – required during deliberative initiatives – refers to the necessity for open and equal communication among diverse participants; communication should not be one-way, and all participants can communicate their own preferences and ideas equally.

Thirdly, after deliberative initiatives have taken place, the consequential principle requires that deliberative initiatives be recognised in some form as consequential by participants and lead to change in society.

On the surface, the principles appear to be promising ways of increasing the influence of marginalised Muslim Australian voices. However, as I will now explain, beyond a basic advocacy for more inclusive, communicative, and consequential deliberation, there are numerous conflicting interpretations in deliberative theory as to how these principles should be theoretically conceptualised and practically instituted and operationalised in societies.

Differences in how the three principles are interpreted in the deliberative democratic literature can be broadly divided between the more formalised, traditional rationalist approaches such as those of John Rawls and Jurgen Habermas and their more recent critical counterparts including Carolyn Hendriks, John Dryzek, Iris Marion Young, and Bora Kanra. Responding to the formal, traditional models prioritising rational argumentation and consensus, a number of critical interpretations aim to increase the influence of marginalised voices in pluralistic and power-differentiated societies. In doing so, these critical responses have challenged the original interpretations of deliberative principles in a number of ways. I will argue that applying more basic, traditional interpretations of the three principles could in fact increase the marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices. Alternatively, I will propose
that a carefully considered selection of critical deliberative models could enable diverse Muslim voices to address political and social challenges.

**The inclusion principle**

The general consensus in deliberative democratic literature advocates the equal and open inclusion of anyone who wishes to publicly express their positions, interests, and grievances in a process of deliberation and for their opinions to play a role in decision-making outcomes. Underlying this basic tenet, Iris Marion Young has argued that “the normative legitimacy of a democratic decision depends on the degree to which those affected by it have been included in the decision-making processes and have had the opportunity to influence its outcomes.”

Habermas’s conception of deliberation primarily involves engaging the public sphere. According to Habermas, the public sphere refers to the assembling of politically mobilised citizens to discuss problems occurring in society through the exchange of rational argumentation. For Habermas, the public sphere will ideally generate the most prevalent attitudes informing broader public opinion. For the democratic process in policy creation to be legitimate, the government should then listen and action the will of the public sphere.

In more recent analyses, Carolyn Hendriks has argued for an integrated approach that incorporates both the public sphere and elites in deliberation. To do so, Hendriks differentiated between a micro and macro sphere of inclusion. The former focuses on “the procedural conditions for structured fora” by encouraging “civil society to engage in collaborative practices, usually with the state,” while the latter is the “messy and informal

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308 See: Hendriks, “Integrated Deliberation: Reconciling Civil Society’s Dual Role in Deliberative Democracy.”
309 Ibid., 486.
deliberation in the public sphere.”

Being a more informal, large-scale process incorporating politically mobilised citizens, the macro sphere theory asserts that “civil society should work discursively outside and against the state.” Instead of treating these two spheres separately, Hendriks has advocated a “mixed approach” and seeks to incorporate both spheres in deliberative processes. To this end, Hendriks has explained that “to conceive of Deliberative Democracy as an entirely micro or macro enterprise is not only unrealistic, but potentially exclusive.”

She argues that through its formality, a purely micro-oriented sphere can be elitist and exclusionary, while a macro-oriented sphere can be undemocratic in its populist formations. Hendriks asserts that in its development, public deliberation is best conceptualised as an activity occurring across a wealth of discursive spheres, as well as incorporating a range of diverse actors. According to Hendriks, the crucial aspects are:

[the] mixed discursive spheres that combine formal and informal modes of deliberation. Mixed spheres also serve to connect the micro and macro deliberative worlds. They encourage actors who might normally inhabit macro spaces (e.g. activists, interest groups, corporations) and micro venues (e.g. parliamentarians, experts, academics, government officials) to come into contact with actors who are typically underrepresented in both (e.g. individual citizens). More fundamentally, ‘mixed’ venues encourage the cross fertilisation of ideas across different kinds of actors, connecting broader public discourse to the conversations and decisions of the political elite.

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310 Ibid., 486.
311 Ibid., 486.
312 Ibid., 486.
313 Ibid., 496.
314 Ibid., 501.
For the context of this thesis, I will argue that a “mixed approach” underpins an ideal model for the inclusion principle. I use the term “mixed approach” to refer to the incorporation of participants from both political and public spheres in deliberative initiatives. Along these lines, I argue for the inclusion of diverse Muslim and non-Muslim Australian citizens, as well as government representatives. Ideally, this mixed inclusion would also take place in more informal settings outside of, for example, parliamentary chambers or other government controlled venues and instead take place in environments where Muslim Australians feel more comfortable to participate.

In Chapter 3 specifically, I will contend that there are particular Muslim and non-Muslim Australian citizens and government representatives who should ideally be targeted by organisers and facilitators to participate in deliberation. I will first propose that contrary to previous engagement efforts with Muslim communities by the government, deliberative initiatives should include diverse, ordinary Muslim Australian citizens, and not only Muslim community leaders handpicked by the government. I use the term “ordinary” Muslim Australians to refer to Muslims who do not have a prominent public role such as that of a religious or community leader or public commentator. I will then argue that deliberative initiatives should also include more “radical” Muslims. I define “more radical” Muslims as people who vocally and publicly oppose various government policies and anti-Muslim public statements made by a number of Australian politicians (as opposed to directly inciting physical violence), and highlight perceptions of negative treatment by wider, non-Muslim Australian society. To an unprecedented degree, this would provide an opportunity for solutions that genuinely focus on the causal factors leading to radicalisation, rather than the effects.
The third group who should be included are a cross section of members of the non-Muslim Australian mainstream. Including non-Muslim Australians could help address the political challenges faced by Muslims by increasing public scrutiny of government policy, in addition to solving social challenges through an increased awareness of the impact of public hostility. Finally, as part of a “mixed approach,” I will suggest involving representatives from the Australian government – albeit at least initially in a limited “active listener” role. This initially restricted active listening role would be so that representatives of the Australian government are not perceived to overtly control, overtake, and/or intimidate the deliberative process, yet nevertheless add legitimacy to the importance of such deliberations. The presence of government representatives could emphasise an institutional commitment to genuinely listen to ordinary Muslims citizens, and could signify that the problems that Muslim citizens are discussing are considered important. To this end, government representation could provide a measure of accountability through a requirement for subsequent feedback on the needs of Muslim Australians. As part of my analysis of the inclusion principle, I will also describe where deliberative initiatives should take place and who should facilitate them. A setting for deliberative initiatives must provide Muslim Australian participants with a greater capacity to more openly and comfortably voice their positions, interests, and grievances. Furthermore, one or more Muslim Australian facilitators should be designated to oversee and direct proceedings.

Allowing people to attend a deliberative process is not, however, the same as guaranteeing inclusion of their views; it is not enough for deliberative initiatives to merely increase and diversify the participation of Muslim Australians, along with non-Muslim Australians and government representatives. While this is an important first step that should be arranged by organisers and facilitators prior to the initiatives, increasing and diversifying
voices in deliberative environments does not by itself guarantee that the marginalisation of Muslim voices will be rectified and the political and social challenges facing Muslim communities be addressed. Therefore, the next step is to analyse how these diverse Muslim, non-Muslim, and government participants should communicate with each other. This leads to the communication principle.

**The communication principle**

To increase engagement with marginalised voices, there is a general consensus in deliberative democratic literature concerning the necessity of open communication among diverse citizens regarding issues in society that impact them all. This is understood by many scholars to form part of the deliberative process whereby misunderstandings can be rectified because various positions, interests, and grievances that others may not be aware of can be openly expressed. When analysing the wealth of deliberative democratic scholarship, however, beyond basic support for open communication among participants, there are conflicting interpretations of what (and how) communicative tools should be used in deliberative initiatives.

At the Rawlsian and Habermasian end of the deliberative spectrum, communication tools have been focused on the formal exchange of rational argumentation among participants. As previously stated, rational argumentation refers to an orderly, controlled exchange of logical debate – or, importantly, the orderly exchange of opinions that are *popularly considered* to constitute conventional, “logical” debate. Confronting Rawls and Habermas’ prioritisation of rational argument, a number of scholars have analysed the use of communication tools among citizens beyond formalised argumentation. For example, Jane Mansbridge has analysed democratic qualities through the exchange of “everyday talk,”
while Lynn Sanders has advocated the sharing of personal testimonies.\textsuperscript{315} Furthermore, Iris Marion Young has argued that solely insisting on the exchange of rational argumentation can privilege dominant groups in society. Young explained that while formal, traditional frameworks of deliberative initiatives may \textit{appear} to promote open engagement, if communication tools favour certain groups and opinions, then deliberation becomes exclusionary, despite an outward appearance of inclusivity. To this end, Young argues that Rawlsian and Habermasian interpretations of required communication tools can be culturally homogenising. This may prevent people with distinctive, diverse knowledge and methods of expression from being considered “reasonable” and fully brought into the deliberative process as equal participants. Young thus recognises that using rational argumentation alone can serve to entrench “the hegemonic terms of debate,”\textsuperscript{316} and therefore a critical reconfiguration of communicative tools in deliberative designs is required.

In Chapter 4 of this thesis, I will discuss an applicable design for the communication principle in terms of how Muslim, non-Muslim, and government participants should communicate with one another. I will argue that applying the more traditional interpretations of Rawls and Habermas prioritising the exchange of rational argumentation could in fact worsen the marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices. Curiously, this comes despite a public appearance of Muslim Australians having \textit{more} voice through the establishment of deliberative initiatives among Muslim Australians and the government. This is because merely allowing the exchange of rational argumentation may mean that only arguments \textit{popularly considered} to constitute conventional “logical” debate will be considered credible, and Muslims who contest elements of government policy may be considered irrational. As


\textsuperscript{316} Young, \textit{Inclusion and Democracy}, 5.
such, even before an argument is made by a Muslim Australian participant, the “rationality” of their opinion (and thus the possibility of it being treated credibly) may have already been established. As one example of this, in previous engagement initiatives with government, Muslim Australian participants have understood that the design of hard-line counter-terrorism policy is considered by the government to be the only rational approach to national security and thus non-negotiable.\(^{317}\) I will contend that these concerns could be potentially alleviated if organisers and facilitators encourage the expanded use of communicative devices for participants during deliberative initiatives. The example that I will use is a communication proposal by Iris Marion Young. This expanded use of communicative tools is intended to provide a more open and accessible framework for Muslims to express their opinions and personal experiences of discrimination during deliberative initiatives. Young attempts to broaden deliberative democratic theory to allow for the views of a “heterogeneous public” to be recognised through expanded communicative tools.\(^{318}\) By doing so, she recognises that in order for deliberative initiatives to be cross-culturally receptive and thus potentially transformative, for the voices of a variety of ethnic groups to be heard, a wide variety of communicative tools need to be used.

Simply diversifying participation and encouraging new and different communication tools among Muslim, non-Muslim, and government representatives will not necessarily be sufficient to enable political and social challenges to be expressed and addressed effectively. While this is important during deliberative initiatives, the encouragement of expanded communication tools should be underpinned by a specific stated aim or aims as to why such

\(^{317}\) See, for example: “Press Release: ICV’s Response to National Security Legislation.”

\(^{318}\) Young, *Inclusion and Democracy*, 12.
techniques should be used. This leads to the need to discuss debates among democratic theorists regarding the ideal aim of deliberative initiatives.

The consequential principle

The “consequential” principle requires that deliberative initiatives be recognised in some form as consequential by participants and lead to change in society after the deliberative initiatives have taken place. There is a general agreement among theorists that outcomes from deliberative democratic initiatives should, in some form or another, be consequential. For example, Julie Ozanne has asserted that the validity of a deliberative outcome requires that solutions generated from deliberations hold broad public support and be able to lead to sustainable change.319 While there is a general agreement in the literature for deliberation to be consequential, debate has emerged over whether it needs to result in a consensus.

Traditionally, Rawlsian and Habermasian deliberative frameworks have largely standardised the view that consensus between participants is required for deliberative initiatives to be consequential. More recently, however, critical responses from scholars such as John Dyrzek and Iris Marion Young have asserted that solely striving for consensus can be inauthentic and not representative of the views of marginalised communities because when consensus between participants is subject to time constraints, the preferences of more powerful groups may be prioritised or reaffirmed through the stress and pressure to reach a decision.320 Thus, while Habermas and Rawls argue that consensus is a required element of deliberation, Young and Dryzek argue that although consensus can come about, it is not

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always necessary in every situation. Another standpoint in this debate is provided by agonistic theorists such as Chantal Mouffe, who believe that consensus can never be legitimate because of embedded power differentiations existing between groups in society.\textsuperscript{321}

Considering the matter from yet another perspective, scholars such as Bora Kanra have shifted from an outcome-only oriented focus to looking at the importance of the process of deliberation as consequential. Remaining largely outside the central focus of analysis among key thinkers in deliberative democratic theory, Kanra theorised that solely seeking a consensus among participants can undermine other advantages and stages of deliberative democracy – particularly the listening and learning element. This is a central focus of Kanra’s social learning model, in which he argues that deliberation should first be conceptualised as a social learning process involving listening and learning between culturally divided groups. In this way, Kanra highlights the importance of making an analytical distinction between the phases of social learning and decision-making. Although these phases are not opposites, he argues they require a separate scholarly emphasis and systematic treatment within deliberative theory, and that the social learning process warrants its own category of analysis in assessing the effectiveness of deliberative democratic initiatives. Kanra states that the benefit to this focus on listening and learning is that:

If societal divisions are linked to ethical disagreements in general, then the solution to the problems of divided societies has to be conceptualized first at the level of a social-learning phase of deliberation oriented to understanding.

Therefore, it is more important at this stage that deliberation is driven by a

commitment to understand the needs of others than that an agreement is reached at the end. In other words, deliberation oriented to social learning and understanding should be analytically distinguished from decision-making processes. Then the issues, related to ethical and cultural differences that constitute the background for any potential disagreement at the decision-making level, could be dealt with due consideration, ultimately increasing the quality of decisions.\(^{322}\)

In this way, a social learning model can maximise the potential for the transformation of preferences and increasing understanding and empathy towards marginalised groups. Further highlighting the restrictions placed on social learning when deliberation is entirely consensus oriented, Kanra writes that “orientation towards decision-making undermines the role of cooperative interaction by triggering an inclination towards protecting the existing configuration of interests, thus leading to a strategic power struggle among participants.”\(^{323}\) He also warns that the pressure for consensus can undermine the social benefits of the deliberative process by entrenching clashing identities and thus negating the transformative potential of deliberation to play a role in reconciling differences.

Along with Kanra, Dryzek conceptualises deliberation as a separate analytical focus apart from decision-making, and that “the key involves partially decoupling the deliberation and decision aspects of democracy, locating deliberation in engagement of discourses in the public sphere at a distance from any contest for sovereign authority.”\(^{324}\) It is important to mention that although the focus for deliberation can be oriented towards the process of social learning, this is not to say that a decision (whether entirely consensual or not) is undesired. Furthermore, while Kanra purports a horizontal model of deliberation, rather than a vertical

\(^{322}\) Kanra, “Binary Deliberation: The Role of Social Learning in Divided Societies,” 11-12.
\(^{323}\) Ibid., 4.
\(^{324}\) Dryzek, *Deliberative Global Politics: Discourse and Democracy in a Divided World*, 47.
process leading to a consensus, this does not entail that deliberation is not consequential without official consensus; on the contrary, social learning can have a cohesive impact on cross-cultural relations in the direction of increased understanding of and acceptance for marginalised communities.

When describing an applicable model for the consequential principle in Chapter 5, I will suggest what deliberative participants should aim to do. I will argue that if organisers and facilitators *immediately* and *only* focus on decision-making, this could be to the detriment of Muslim Australians. Instead, deliberative initiatives should ideally be consequential in the form of increased public acknowledgement and understanding among non-Muslim Australians about the grievances of Muslim Australian, rather than immediately focusing on consensual policy outcomes. As such, I will recommend Kanra’s social learning model as an approach that does not solely rely on decision-making in deliberative initiatives and aims to foster greater understanding of the grievances of marginalised voices by means of a separate phase of listening and learning.

As I have shown in this chapter, interpretations of deliberative democratic principles can be generally divided into two main conceptual camps. The first of these is the traditional rationalist argumentative approach that includes Rawls and Habermas. The second is the critical response to deliberative democratic theory that emphasises a more pluralistic approach that is aware of power differentiations operating in deliberative initiatives. I argue that only with a more carefully considered selection of critical frameworks can Muslim voices have a positive platform to potentially address their perceived political and social challenges.
Conclusion

The extant theoretical and empirical research on deliberative democracy provides a good reason to assume that the practical applications of deliberative democratic theory are an appropriate response to increase the influence of marginalised Muslim voices. One problem, however, is that there is no universal model for deliberative initiatives, and therefore an analysis of the various models is required to find those components that are the most relevant for the context of this thesis.

In this chapter, I introduced a design for deliberative initiatives based upon what I determine to be three core principles. I argue that as a first step, these principles – and their tailored critical applications – could help increase the influence of Muslim voices within a deliberative group; however, this is only if particular actors, communication tools, and aims for participants are included within the design. Therefore, what becomes important in the design of deliberative initiatives is not only enabling Muslim Australians to become visible, but constructing initiatives that aim to give weight and credibility to their positions, interests, and grievances as contributing Australian citizens.

I have broadly argued in this chapter that one applicable response framework would be incorporating mixed participation among citizens and government, emotive communication beyond rational argumentation and, at least initially, cross-cultural listening and learning over consensus. In the following chapters of this thesis, I will present this design that I have introduced in far greater detail. In this way, I will offer a configuration of existing deliberative models that can be specifically applied to the problem of marginalised Muslim voices. In the next chapter, I will begin to outline my proposal for a mixed approach for the inclusion principle.
Chapter 3

The inclusion principle: Who should participate in deliberative initiatives?

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed how deliberative democratic initiatives could potentially increase the influence of marginalised voices in society. Although discussed using different terminology and to varying degrees, both traditional and critical theorists generally emphasise three foundational principles in deliberative democratic theory: the principles of inclusion, communication, and consequence. In this chapter, I will propose a design for the inclusion principle, and in doing so, I will argue who should be included in deliberative initiatives.

The inclusion principle – relevant before deliberative initiatives – proposes that a greater diversity of citizens with diverse views from the general community be able to share their positions, interests, and grievances and participate in deliberation, rather than elites alone. Opening up participation is a primary reason how deliberative democratic initiatives can increase the voices of marginalised groups. For the purpose of addressing the political and social challenges faced by Muslim communities, I will argue that there are particular Muslim and non-Muslim Australian citizens and government representatives who should be invited by organisers and facilitators to participate in deliberative initiatives. Firstly, a broad range of “ordinary” Muslim Australians, rather than hand-picked Muslim community leaders, should be included. I use the term “ordinary” Muslim Australians to refer to Muslims who do not have a prominent public role, such as a religious or community leader or public commentator. This group should also contain diverse Muslim Australian women and Muslim
Australian youth whose voices have been generally neglected in previous cross-cultural engagement initiatives with the government and in the media.

Secondly, I argue that Muslim Australians considered “more radical” should be given the option to participate in deliberative initiatives. I define “more radical” Muslims as people who vocally and publicly oppose various government policies and public statements by certain Australian politicians (as opposed to people directly inciting physical violence), and highlight perceptions of negative treatment by wider non-Muslim society.\(^{325}\) This is important for two reasons. Firstly, the term “radical” can in some cases be used too hastily or too expeditiously as a result of the tendency in post-9/11 society for Muslim identities to be routinely categorised as either a “moderate” or a “radical” by the government and media channels.\(^{326}\) The second reason is that excluding these voices from a genuine platform to express their grievances could only increase the substantive risk of Muslim radicalisation.\(^{327}\)

The next group that I will suggest should be included in deliberative initiatives are a cross section of ordinary citizens from the non-Muslim Australian mainstream. Including ordinary non-Muslim Australian citizens is important because while studies have shown Muslims are the most negatively received minority group in Australian society, participation in cross-cultural engagement initiatives has resulted in an increased understanding and acceptance of Muslim cultural practices and a decreased belief that Muslims pose a national security threat.\(^{328}\) In this way, including non-Muslim Australians could also increase public

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\(^{325}\) Of course, some individuals about whom there is proof they are about to commit physical violence would not be appropriate for participation in deliberative initiatives.


scrutiny of government policy. The last group that I will suggest be included are representatives from the Australian government from multicultural, social welfare, and community development areas, as well as counter-terrorism agencies. I will propose that this participation should be at least initially limited to an “active listener” role. This would require Australian government representatives to pay close attention to Muslim Australian speakers and repeat in their own words what a Muslim Australian speaker has been discussing and their psychological response to an issue. Including government representatives would add legitimacy to the importance of such deliberations and also provide a measure of accountability through a requirement for subsequent feedback on the experiences of Muslim Australians.

After outlining an initial design and the potential participants, I will conclude this chapter by describing where deliberative initiatives should take place and who should facilitate them. I will argue that a setting for deliberative initiatives should provide ordinary Muslim Australian participants with a greater capacity to more openly and comfortably voice their positions, interests, and grievances. Furthermore, one or more Muslim Australian facilitators should be designated to oversee and direct the proceedings in order to allow a greater diversity of Muslim Australians to not only participate but also be influential in the deliberative process. This would ensure that political and social challenges can be expressed, and hopefully addressed, to an unprecedented degree.
Muslim Australian participants

The inclusion of “ordinary” Muslim Australians

As Chapter 1 documented, politically active Muslim Australians can find it difficult to access public and political platforms to address political and social challenges. Of course, this is not to say that these platforms do not exist; on a number of occasions since 9/11, Muslim Australians have been provided with opportunities to participate in consultations with the Australian government. The purpose of these cross-cultural consultations has largely been to discuss government policy, particularly counter-terrorism policy; however, in these consultations, Muslim representatives have generally been personally invited and hand-picked by the government.

An example of this was in September 2014 when, coinciding with the imminent enactment of new counter-terrorism amendments, the government of then-Prime Minister Tony Abbott requested consultations with around 20 Muslim Australian leaders. The 2014 counter-terrorism amendments included three major bills: the National Security Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 1) 2014, the Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Bill, and the Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Amendment (Data Retention) Bill. The first stipulated that persons – including journalists – who disclose any details of (or errors by) ASIO during a “Special Intelligence Operation” could face up to ten years in jail. ASIO officers were also provided with immunity from criminal prosecution concerning their actions during such operations. The second bill – the Foreign Fighters bill –

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329 See, for example: Anne Aly and Lelia Green, “Fear, Anxiety and the State of Terror,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 33, no.3 (2010): 268-281; Carland, “Silenced: Muslim Women Commentators in the Australian Media,” 140-150; Murphy, Cherney and Barkworth, “Avoiding Community Backlash in the Fight Against Terrorism: Research Report.”

330 See: Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment Bill (no. 1) 2014.
permitted the cancelling of passports for people travelling to selected countries that have been, according to government discretion, declared “no-go zones,” and people travelling to these areas can face up to ten years in jail. The third bill permitted telecommunication providers to preserve citizens’ phones and Internet records for two years, and for them to be made accessible to intelligence and security officers upon request. These amendments were highly controversial because they provided government and security agencies with unprecedented powers to intrude into the lives of ordinary citizens. Thus, before the implementation of this legislation, consultations were held with Muslim community members as the perceived target of counter-terrorism policy.

Despite being requested to participate in consultations about these amendments, some Muslim participants argued that they did not receive adequate information prior to the meetings that would clearly indicate that the government intended to genuinely engage with their opinions. For example, the head of the Australian Muslim Women’s Association, Silma Ihram, said that the first meeting was only one hour in length and that “we don't even know what we're speaking about ... A productive consultation has an agenda. There was no agenda.” In addition, Ihram claimed that the meeting took place on a Monday morning and that invitees were only told about it on the previous Friday evening. The Islamic Council of Victoria expressed its frustration in a public media statement, stating that consultations “were called at extremely short notice with little or no information as to who the attendees would be or what the agenda was.” Muslim participants were also not given prior- or post-meeting access to any of the draft counter-terrorism legislation items that they were meant to be

331 See: Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Bill 2014.
332 See: Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Amendment (Data Retention) Bill 2014.
334 Ibid.
deliberating about. Thus, these organisational shortcomings suggest that even before the deliberation had begun, Muslim Australian participants were at a disadvantage compared to government representatives and the ability of Muslim participants to provide critical feedback is severely compromised.

A further concern with these consultations for a number of Muslim Australians is who was allowed to participate. Following the first consultation with the government regarding the counter-terrorism amendments, a media statement posted on the Islam in Australia website identified a sense of frustration felt in the community with the limited number of Muslims who were invited and able to participate in genuine discussions with the government. The statement stressed the importance of:

engaging with the Australian Muslim community – not just the people who put their hands up as leaders, but a range of voices from within the community. It means representing the diversity of experiences and viewpoints – across gender, age, ethnicity and sect – that make up the Muslim communities”

Due to the organisational shortcomings of the government and a perceived lack of diversity and representativeness when engaging with Muslims, a number of Islamic organisations including the Islamic Council of Victoria boycotted proposed follow-up meetings with the government.

Rather than solely handpicked community leaders, I argue that “ordinary” Muslim Australian citizens should be included in deliberative initiatives. Expanding the demographic of Muslims participants could mean that the political and social challenges facing Muslim

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communities can be addressed far more comprehensively than if deliberative initiatives only included Muslim leaders. The importance of including ordinary Muslim Australians in deliberative initiatives is particularly relevant to two groups. The first group is Muslim Australian women, who have largely been used as a subject of conversation among the government, media and the public, but have generally not had opportunities to publicly represent themselves, even in matters that directly affect them. This has been particularly noticeable in public and political debates concerning the burqa and Islamic facial veils. For example, despite the fact that many Muslim women choose to wear facial veils, these articles of clothing have been regularly framed in government discourse and the media as representative of a national security threat and/or symbolising a misogynistic culture or domestic abuse. Muslim Australian women, who are highly visible and recognisable in society, are frequently the target of public hostility, but rarely do their voices influence public and political discourse. In her research on Muslim women being “silenced” in Australia, Susan Carland noted that Muslim women are rarely able to genuinely contribute to debates about Muslim women, and that:

when there is public discourse on Muslims or in the media, whatever—too often I feel that Muslims aren’t part of the discussion, or if they are it’s one or two individuals that aren’t really that representative, or worse, there’s discussions on Muslim women I find often exist without Muslim women at all. Or if it’s like discussions about the hijab they don’t bother to ask a woman who covers her hair.

Carland also explained that there are a number of ways Muslim women are silenced and censored from contributing to public and political debate, such as “being ignored, being criticised for their appearance as a way to diminish their arguments, only being welcome to address certain topics, and being condescended because of the stereotypical view of Muslim women that exists.”338 Evidently, this type of experience that Carland describes illuminates the important difference between diverse Muslim voices being visible in public and political discourse, and diverse Muslim voices being heard and influential. This is particularly relevant for Muslim Australian women who, since 9/11, have largely been spoken for and about, but not to.

A specific example of Muslim women’s voices not being heard concerned the “Islamic gender segregation” controversy at the University of Melbourne in April 2013. In a public lecture theatre at the University of Melbourne, an event held by the Islamic education organisation Hikmah Way was segregated by gender, with “brothers” sitting at the front of the lecture theatre and “sisters” at the back. This separation sparked a major backlash in media and from some Australian politicians. Then-Prime Minister Tony Abbott and a number of (non-Muslim) academics and public commentators were asked to publicly share their opinions on the gender segregation. Abbott said, “I just think it’s un-Australian what’s happened here and I can’t understand for a second why Melbourne University would tolerate it.”339 Despite being the direct focus of the debate, the media did not ask Muslim women themselves to present their own views on segregation in these types of events, or give them an opportunity to participate in the largely one-sided debate.340 If diverse women’s opinions

339 “Transcript, Tony Abbott Interview.”
had been sought, the responses may have proved surprising; as Sahar Ghumkhor and Yassir Morsi claimed, it is generally Muslim women who ask for the events to be segregated.341 As such, Muslim Australian women have generally not been given opportunities to publicly represent themselves, even in matters that directly affect them, which is why it is important to include a wider range of ordinary Muslim citizens in deliberative initiatives.

Along with Muslim women, the second group of ordinary Muslim citizens who should be asked to participate in deliberative initiatives is Muslim Australian youth, who have been largely absent from public and political debates in favour of engaging with older Muslim leaders. A number of Muslim Australians have, however, stated that this is a deficient approach because such leaders can be disconnected from their communities. Mohamad Tabbaa has claimed that Muslim leaders can be “politically naïve” and that they “find themselves constantly on the wrong side of the table when it comes to these issues.”342 Muslim youth can perceive their leaders to be failing to confront the government about perceived discrimination against Muslims, which can make young people “very angry.”343 As Tabbaa explains, “When the government think it's speaking to Muslims by speaking to their leaders, it's actually not engaging [the] Muslim community at all; it's actually making the rift even wider.”344 In her work as the founding chairperson of the group People Against Violent Extremism, Senator Anne Aly has also asserted that Muslim youth need to be included in cross-cultural consultations with the government. In her experience, Aly has heard many politically active Muslim youth say, “We need to be a part of the political process ... governments need to hear us.”345 A sense of voicelessness can fuel a cycle of frustration, in

341 Ibid.
343 Ibid.
344 Ibid.
345 Gartrell, O'Brien and Bachelard, “Secret Grants for Countering Violent Extremism Programs Split Communities.”
an environment where Muslim youth can think that neither the Australian government nor their own community leaders are listening to their concerns.\textsuperscript{346} Tabbaa said that an example of this frustration peaking was the 2012 Sydney protests by Muslim youth and “non-elites” who were “fed up” with a lack of outlets to genuinely voice their concerns.\textsuperscript{347}

The 2012 protests in Sydney have been cited by a number of Muslim Australians as a recent example of the potential social repercussions of Muslim youth being unable to publicly express their grievances.\textsuperscript{348} The protest occurred on September 15 and involved hundreds of Muslim Australians (most of them young people) in response to an amateur online film titled \textit{Innocence of Muslims} denigrating the Prophet Muhammad. Six police officers were injured, in addition to 19 protestors. The participants in the protest were immediately condemned by the wider public due to the injuries sustained by the police officers, and the widely dispersed image of a child holding a placard reading “Behead all those who insult Islam.” A number of Australian Muslims, however, argued that the catalyst of the protest was not the film but rather the result of a deeper sentiment of voicelessness among frustrated Muslim Australian youth, who felt that they lack other platforms to express their grievances in relation to government policy and perceptions of discrimination. For example, Salman Sayyid remarked:

\begin{quote}
I think the movie is actually a metaphor for a sense of a larger grievance that many Muslims have. The fundamental issue that afflicts Muslims is precisely the lack of legitimacy of their government and the lack of representation. That for example, the government are unwilling to defend Muslims interests as people see them. So it’s something like a trigger rather than anything in itself.\textsuperscript{349}
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{347} Interview with Mohamad Tabbaa, 2013.
\textsuperscript{348} Interview with Mohamad Tabbaa, 2013.
\textsuperscript{349} See: “Transcript, Deeper Reasons Behind the Riots in the Muslim World.”
\end{footnotesize}
Journalist Jamila Rizvi also stated in response to the protests that there is “a small minority of Australian Muslims, mostly men, who feel very disenfranchised, who feel very disconnected, and alone and feel misunderstood by Australian society.”350 Due to this, a film such as *Innocence of Muslims* that aims to denigrate Islam “gives them somewhere to channel their anger, and that’s incredibly dangerous.”351

Instead of restricting public expression for Muslim youth and solely engaging with older community leaders, Tabbaa suggested, “how about we actually genuinely engage the youth for a change, and speak to them rather than about them?”352 One Muslim community leader argued that the provision of public platforms for Muslim youth could prove to them that “there are peaceful political means to bring about change and to bring about solutions to our issues.”353 For these reasons, the second group who, I argue, should be targeted by organisers and facilitators to participate in deliberative initiatives is diverse Muslim Australian youth because like Muslim women, young people have rarely been engaged with by the government or media in public and political debates.354 Furthermore, a number of Muslim Australians have argued that a lack of public platforms can lead to large-scale protests – with the 2012 protests in Sydney being an example of this.355 The study by Anita Harris and Joshua Roose has also suggested that broader experiences of civic engagement by Muslim youths should be publicly recognised.356 This could include the more personal and

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350 Ibid.
353 Interview with Muslim community leader, 2013.
354 Of course, while Muslim women and youth should be approached to participate in deliberative initiatives, Muslim community leaders and other demographics such as “ordinary” Muslim men should also be included. See, for example: Breen-Smyth, “Theorising the Suspect Community: Counterterrorism, Security Practices and the Public Imagination,” 237; Interview with Mohamad Tabbaa (2013).
informal experiences of Muslim youths who, for example, participate in radio shows, fundraisers, sporting events or web-based activities that occur in everyday spaces, including in traditional institutions such as at work or in schools.\textsuperscript{357}

It is important to reiterate that organisers and facilitators might need to be proactively pursue the participation of ordinary Muslim Australians, including women and youth. While deliberative initiatives generally will involve participants who register their interest after a mass invitation has been sent out, a specific recruitment drive may be required for Muslims in, for example, mosques, community centres, and/or online Muslim forums. There are two reasons for this. The first is often a challenge for deliberative democratic initiatives – that they frequently attract only the “usual suspects” to participate. These “usual suspects” include individuals who consistently volunteer for deliberative events, such as the leaders of various advocacy or interest groups. For example, as Alison Kadlec and Will Friedman state:

on the surface, inviting participants through ads in the local paper sounds democratic enough, but it tends to result in a collection of the usual suspects who, for whatever reasons, love to attend traditional public meetings and thrive in them.\textsuperscript{358}

While it is important that these voices have an opportunity to speak in deliberative initiatives, it is even more important to reach out to less actively engaged citizens. In this way, taking deliberation beyond the “usual suspects” is one of the key theoretical commitments of the inclusion principle. The second reason participation might need to be proactively pursued is because, as Chapter 1 described, some Muslims may be unwilling to take part in deliberation out of a fear that there may be negative repercussions from the

\textsuperscript{357} Ibid., 810.
government. Getting Muslim Australians to participate in forums and focus groups is a common challenge; for example, while holding a series of focus groups discussing the negative attitudes common in the Muslim community concerning government authorities, researchers Kristina Murphy, Adrian Cherney, and Julie Barkworth found that there was a “high level of initial reluctance” to participate because Muslims were concerned that these focus groups had a “hidden agenda” to gather counter-terrorism intelligence.\(^359\) The researchers said that “a significant amount of work [needed to be] undertaken to allay any fears among Muslim leaders and community groups to gain the trust of participants about the intentions of the research.”\(^360\) In another example, the researchers who compiled the report *Social Implications of Fearing Terrorism* found that there was substantial apprehension among Muslim Australians about openly participating in the research project. The authors commented:

> Australian Muslims’ concern of losing civil liberties means that they choose to be silent and are unwilling to discuss issues around terrorism for fear they are marked as a security risk. This was evident in the interviews in which Muslim participants either declined to be audio recorded or were visibly uncomfortable about being recorded, despite the reassurances of anonymity and the fact that the researcher was also Muslim. It was also observable in off-the-record comments by some Muslim participants which alluded to reports about fellow Australian Muslims being detained and questioned by authorities for articulating certain opinions.\(^361\)

\(^{359}\) Murphy, Cherney and Barkworth, “Avoiding Community Backlash in the Fight Against Terrorism: Research Report,” 7.

\(^{360}\) Ibid., 7.

\(^{361}\) Aly and Green, “Social Implications of Fearing Terrorism: A Report on Australian Responses to the Images and Discourses of Terrorism and the Other,” 20.
Therefore, due to the need to expand inclusion beyond the “usual suspects,” as well as the fear and scepticism ordinary Muslim Australian citizens can feel about becoming involved in public forums, it should be expected that organisers and facilitators have to proactively persuade ordinary Muslims to participate.

In this section, I have argued that deliberative initiatives specifically designed to engage with Muslim Australians and their positions, interests and grievances in areas such as the impact of counter-terrorism policy and/or political and public hostility, should include ordinary Muslim Australian citizens, with an emphasis on women and youth. This is because these two demographics have largely been unable to represent themselves in public and political discourses, and including these groups would diversify the voices that can contribute to deliberation and generate broader understandings of diverse cultural experiences. This could help the political and social challenges facing Muslim Australians to be addressed far more comprehensively than if deliberative initiatives only included Muslim leaders. In addition to ordinary Muslim citizens, I will now discuss the importance of including Muslim Australians exhibiting a type of behaviour that is perceived as more radical.

The inclusion of Muslim Australians considered to be “radical”

Since 9/11, there has been little or no engagement with Australian Muslims considered “more radical.” As referenced in the introduction to this chapter, I define “more radical” Muslim Australians as citizens who vocally and publicly oppose various government policies and anti-Muslim public statements (without directly inciting physical violence), and are able to more aptly highlight perceptions of negative treatment by wider non-Muslim mainstream society. Australian government officials have worried that providing a voice to people considered more radical could grant these voices credibility, and thus potentially enable them
to disseminate anti-Western or anti-government messages.\textsuperscript{362} Previous attempts at cross-cultural consultations among the Australian government and Muslims have sought to single out Muslims deemed “moderate.” One example of this was the Muslim Community Reference Group formed by the government on August 23, 2005 following the terrorist attacks in London on July 7 of that year.\textsuperscript{363} The reference group was designed to “assist Australia’s Muslim communities and help them build a common future with all Australians.”\textsuperscript{364} One outcome of this process was the development of an action plan,\textsuperscript{365} and in addition, the group released a “Statement of Principles” that broadly outlined that Muslims should try to “stop” other Muslims from becoming radicalised and direct Muslims to pursue the preferred “moderate” Islam.\textsuperscript{366} Despite the cross-cultural engagement purpose inherent in the formation of the group, Michalis S. Michael has noted that:

there was disquiet and a questioning of whether the process should have included Muslim leaders with more extreme political dispositions. However, this proposition was ruled out by the government’s idea that such outspoken figures not be granted the credibility, and therefore legitimacy, by participating in government committees.\textsuperscript{367}

There were a number of problems with the Muslim community reference group. Firstly, the government failed to recognise diversity within Muslim communities\textsuperscript{368}; secondly, the problem of extremism in Australia was configured as an internal Muslim problem, operating

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\textsuperscript{363} On July 7, 2005, four Muslim British citizens – Hasib Mir Hussain, 18, Germaine Lindsay, 19, Shehzad Tanweer, 22, and Mohammad Sidique Khan, 30 – detonated a series of bombs on underground train lines and a bus in London, killing 52 civilians and injuring over 700.

\textsuperscript{364} Aly and Green, “Moderate Islam: Defining the Good Citizen.”


\textsuperscript{366} Aly and Green, “Moderate Islam: Defining the Good Citizen.”

\textsuperscript{367} Michael, “Australia’s Handling of Tensions Between Islam and the West Under the Howard Government,” 60.

\textsuperscript{368} Rashid, “Australia’s War on Terrorism: Impact on Muslim Communities,” 71.
\end{flushleft}
independently from government influence; and thirdly, not only did the construction of this group on the government’s terms reinforce a divide between Muslims and mainstream communities, it fostered a divide within Muslim communities. This is because instead of being differentiated according to cultural, racial, sectarian, or ethnic differences, Muslims were solely distinguished as either “moderate” or “radical.”369 This is remarkable, given that Australian Muslims come from 183 different countries and are one of the most nationally heterogeneous communities in the country.370 Despite this, Muslim Australians were routinely categorised according to the government’s perceptions of how dangerous their ideological opinions are – if they are deemed to have a moderate ideological persuasion, or are considered radical. In this way, the identity of Muslim Australians as citizens has become largely framed by counter-terrorism policy, and the construction of the Muslim Community Reference Group to 2005 is no exception.

Contrasting to these previous approaches, I argue that Muslim Australians considered “more radical” should be given the option of participating in deliberative initiatives because the term “radical” can in some cases be used hastily or too expeditiously. Since 9/11, Muslim Australians have been routinely categorised as either “moderate” or “radical”371; Ann Aly and Leila Green have spoken of how “the ill-defined” description of people as “moderate Muslims” has been used in political and media discourses to “refer to a preferred form of Islamic practice that does not challenge the hegemony of the nation state and that is coherent with the principles of secularism.”372 Conversely, someone categorised as a radical Muslim can be perceived as incompatible with Western democracy, anti-government, and a threat to

369 Ibid., 71.
371 Aly and Green, “Moderate Islam: Defining the Good Citizen.”
372 Ibid.
national security. Furthermore, Fethi Mansouri, Matteo Vergani, Amelia Johns and Michele Lobo have argued that from the perspective of the Australian government, national security concerns seemingly justify any interference on Muslim communities and that to “protect” their religious freedoms, Muslims must prove to the government that they are worthy of these protections according to what “duties” the government determines Muslims should perform.373

Waleed Aly has asserted that Muslims become “caged” by these categories of moderate or radical Muslim.374 No Muslims in either of these categories can contribute to public discourses because “the fundamentalist repulses, frightens and inflames, and the moderate condemns, but neither is permitted to connect to mainstream society.”375 Richard Jackson has also noted that this existence of strictly defined categories for Muslim communities implies that “not only is there an identifiable line between ‘moderates’ and ‘extremists,’ but the problem of terrorism is largely internal to the ‘Islamic world’ and it is the responsibility of the ‘Islamic world’ to fix it.”376

Because mainstream society offers only two recognisable social identifications, any form of political dissent can be more easily (in comparison to a non-Muslim Australian) associated with radical thought. To deviate from a sentiment that supports, for example, Australian on-ground military assistance to the War on Terror or domestic hard-line counter-terrorism policies – the criterion for being a “moderate” Muslim – may mean a Muslim becomes “radical” by default. Thus, the label of “moderate” is largely conditional for Muslim Australians, despite many non-Muslim Australians expressing political dissent regarding the

373 Vergani et. al, “Examining Islamic Religiosity and Civic Engagement in Melbourne.”
375 Ibid., 243.
War on Terror and hard-line domestic counter-terrorism strategy. Reflecting on the substantial impact this asymmetrical labelling has on Muslims, a joint statement by a number of Muslim community leaders, organisations, activists, and student bodies in 2015 pledged, “We deplore the undefined and politically expedient use of the words ‘radicalisation’ and ‘extremism’ to criminalise legitimate political discourse and critique of the Government’s policies by members of the Muslim community.”\textsuperscript{377} In addition, the study \textit{Community and Radicalisation: An Examination of Perceptions, Ideas, Beliefs and Solutions Throughout Australia} revealed that Muslim Australian participants “felt that extremism and Islam had become increasingly interchangeable terms in the post-9/11 and 7/7 environments.”\textsuperscript{378} Participants attributed this to a “perceived highly politicised consensus in the West around radicalisation and extremism in relation to Islamic belief and culture.”\textsuperscript{379}

As discussed in Chapter 1 of this thesis, Muslim Australians can fear that dissenting opinions against government policy could automatically lead to them to being labelled as sympathetic or supportive of terrorists.\textsuperscript{380} Anne Aly has discussed how Muslims’ desire to not be perceived as radical could mean that “the moderate Muslim may be not so much a ‘preferred’ citizen as one whose rights has been constrained.”\textsuperscript{381} Faisal Al-Asaad has explained that due to this embedded fear experienced by a number of Muslims, neither a categorisation of “moderate” or “radical” can authentically represent different Muslim interests and grievances. Al-Asaad remarked that within this bind:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{377} “Muslim Community Rejects Abbott Government’s Demonisation and Condemns Move to Silence Legitimate Critique.”
  \item \textsuperscript{378} Tahiri and Grossman, “Community and Radicalisation: An Examination of Perceptions, Ideas, Beliefs and Solutions Throughout Australia,” 8.
  \item \textsuperscript{379} Ibid., 8.
  \item \textsuperscript{380} See, for example: Aly and Green, “Social Implications of Fearing Terrorism: A Report on Australian Responses to the Images and Discourses of Terrorism and the Other,” 20.
  \item \textsuperscript{381} Aly and Green, “Moderate Islam: Defining the Good Citizen.”
\end{itemize}
on the one hand, the [Muslim] community is placed in a condition of extended interrogation, in which it must go on the defensive and continuously justify its actions and its handling of ‘radical’ elements. On the other hand, it is pushed into a condition of social isolation, in which its inclination towards political action is more easily checked, and its dissenting and independent voices are either demonised as examples of radicalism and extensions of the ‘terrorist threat’, or brought into line by the more ‘moderate’ and pliable old guard.382

Al-Asaad further argues that the problem is that concerns raised by Muslim Australians regarding racially/religiously profiled government policy and cross-cultural hostility remain ignored. As a result:

this double burden serves to transform the legitimate grievances of a variety of groups and individuals into a ‘problem’ within a homogenised Muslim community, and with the Muslim identity itself. The regime of consensus warps the figure of the Muslim from a coercively excluded other, who can at least act politically to initiate disputes with an accountable government, into a coercively ‘included’ semi-other, who must negotiate with a self-legitimating authority in order to be rehabilitated and acquitted.383

Therefore, Muslims face a number of obstacles preventing them from being able to contribute to public and political debates. Firstly, Muslims must be perceived by non-Muslims as being moderate. However, this categorisation is still problematic because to remain moderate, any publicly expressed opinions should not be critical of dominant discourses; Muslims who attempt to speak critically of the government or voice their

383 Ibid.
experience of negative treatment by the wider non-Muslim Australian mainstream can have their opinions automatically excluded.

An example of diverse Muslim voices being swiftly labelled “radical” and excluded from public discourse was during the 2014 Festival of Dangerous Ideas in Sydney. Uthman Badar, then media spokesperson for Hizb ut-Tahrir Australia, was scheduled to present a talk titled “Honour Killings are Morally Justified.” Due to public outrage and media labelling of Badar as “radical,” the talk was cancelled and Badar was widely condemned for supporting honour killings. In the actual content of the talk, however, Badar did not argue that honour killings were justified and claimed that such a suggestion was “ludicrous.” In follow-up press conferences and interviews, Badar said that he did not condone honour killings, and that “Islam does not condone any form of abuse or violence towards women.” The synopsis of the talk, which was printed on the same page as the title, also stated that Badar did not support honour killings and that the talk was simply intended to challenge the political and cultural imposition of Western liberal values on third-world countries, while violence against women also takes place in Western countries. Festival co-curator Simon Longstaff claimed that the decision was made to cancel the talk because “it would be unfair for the speaker to put them in a situation where they wouldn't get a word out without … condemnation.”

Responding to the cancellation of Badar’s talk, Yassir Morsi said that “without uttering a
single word in defence of “honour” killings – not that he was ever planning to – Badar had his face plastered all over the nation’s imagination as a bigot, misogynist, and an extremist Muslim. ³³⁸ Consequently, Badar’s opinions, swiftly categorised as “radical,” were immediately excluded from the public debate, despite the assumptions regarding the talk having been shown to be incorrect. In follow-up interviews, Badar argued that his opinions on honour killings should not be considered the primary issue, and that the overarching problem was the “groundswell of hysteria and outrage before I even open my mouth.”³³⁹ It is this reaction, Badar believes, that illustrates the restricted and unbalanced position that marginalised groups inhabit in public discourse and demonstrates the “extent and nature of Islamophobia in this country, the reality of freedom in terms of the theory and the practice and how much space so called minorities actually have to move.”³⁴⁰

This section has argued that it may be excessively easy to apply the label “radical” to Muslim Australians who publicly oppose government policy or seek to highlight negative treatment by wider non-Muslim mainstream society. In this way, politicians, the media, and/or members of the wider Australian mainstream may equate certain dissenting political opinions – such as challenging government policies – as representing radical views. A primary example of this is opinions that dispute the necessity of the government’s hard-line counter-terrorism policy. For these reasons, I argue that Muslims who oppose government policy and negative treatment by the wider non-Muslim mainstream should be included in deliberative initiatives.

A second major concern with prohibiting “radical” voices from participating in deliberative initiatives is that exclusion might only serve to increase the risk of radicalisation.

³³⁸ Yassir Morsi, “Uthman Badar both Islamophobia’s Victim and Willing Accomplice,”
³⁴⁰ Ibid.
This concern has been frequently raised in research studies and counter-terrorism scholarship. For example, the Australia-based study *Community and Radicalisation: An Examination of Perceptions, Ideas, Beliefs and Solutions Throughout Australia* found that the risk of radicalisation is increased when “minority needs and concerns may go unheard or unmet in a democracy that favours majority rule … and that democracy cannot benefit those who lack capacity to engage with it, which can then discourage or alienate them from relying on democratic processes to resolve their grievances.”  

Similarly linking people not having access to a public platform to a systemic risk of radicalisation, Charles Laffiteau has argued that “the inability to express ones political views is often cited as one of the key structural factors which explain why some groups of ethnic, political and religious dissidents resort to uses of terrorism to advance their respective causes.”

Rachel Briggs has suggested that one way to “eliminate” extremism is to influence Muslim political activism, rather than stifling it. She noted that “a commitment to institutional and discursive reform which develops engagement of marginalised groups is an important part of the movement away from terrorism,” and that “if a lack of social justice, a young population and a sense of grievance help to explain the emergence of terrorism … then it will be through the ballot box, organised marches, and other forms of civic mobilisation and entrepreneurialism that we will eventually find long-term solutions to the terror threat.” Corresponding with this, a RAND Corporation report found that 43 per cent of terrorist groups disbanded when they became involved with political processes, while only

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393 Briggs, “Hearts and Minds and Votes: The Role of Democratic Participation in Countering Terrorism,” 274.
394 Ibid., 282.
7 per cent disbanded as a result of military force.\textsuperscript{395} Commenting on these statistics, Rohan Gunaratna said, “as most politically motivated groups adopted violence due to circumstances, if the right opportunities are created, many terrorist groups will negotiate, join mainstream politics and end the violence.”\textsuperscript{396}

The potential danger in excluding aggrieved voices from public debate also correlates with Fathali Moghaddam’s “Staircase to Terrorism” theoretical model. Employing the metaphor of a five-level narrowing staircase, Moghaddam constructed a general framework examining the origins of terrorism and the key role that voicelessness and a lack of outlets for expressing grievances plays in increasing the risk of radicalisation. Moghaddam argues that every year, citizens who feel that they and their communities are treated unjustly “are motivated to march along alternative paths, even desperate and radical ones, to address their grievances.”\textsuperscript{397} In his “Staircase to Terrorism,” Moghaddam asserts that a government’s strategic goal to identify and eliminate individual terrorists using only hard-line measures can


\textsuperscript{397} In Moghaddam’s staircase, the ground floor describes the psychological interrelation of material conditions between different groups in society. The minorities on the ground floor can feel as if they have no means to air grievances, nor anyone willing to listen, and may feel materially disadvantaged and consider themselves unjustly treated, in comparison to the mainstream population. Once these grievances have been laid on the ground floor, the first floor on Moghaddam’s staircase engages with the perceived options to fight unfair treatment. This stage is where the various options to address the grievances become apparent. Individuals who reach the second floor experience a “displacement of aggression” in which they systematically shift their aggression and grievances to those who they perceive to be the enemy. The third step on Moghaddam’s staircase concerns an individual’s moral engagement with terrorist organisations. On the fourth floor, membership in terrorist organisations becomes categorised into an “us versus them” frame of mind, with members being instructed that those who do not actively resist government measures can be a legitimate target of terrorist violence. The top floor of Moghaddam’s staircase is the “Terrorist Act and a Sidestepping of Inhibitory Principles.” This involves individuals “sidestepping” the usual inner belief systems that would generally restrain someone from killing others and themselves. Fathali M. Moghaddam, “The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration,” American Psychologist 60, no. 2 (2005): 163.
be time consuming and “counter-productive” because terrorists who are eliminated will be replaced by others “as long as conditions on the ground floor remain the same.”

As a number of scholars and research studies have shown, rather than minimising political grievances, excluding “radical” voices from deliberative initiatives could unwittingly increase the risk of radicalisation. Furthermore, it is grievances against government policies and negative treatment by wider non-Muslim mainstream society that need to be addressed more urgently (although addressed is also not analogous with agreed with). These grievances can also expose socio-political concerns that for some Muslim Australians fuel anger and frustration. As such, without these diverse voices, the full gamut of grievances impacting Muslim Australians cannot be expressed.

An example of a “softer approach” to countering radicalisation that includes dialogue with more radical members of the Muslim community is occurring in Aarhus, Denmark. In contrast with Australian counter-terror laws, in Aarhus, returning Danish nationals who have participated in military confrontations abroad as “foreign fighters” are entered into a rehabilitation program when they return home. These foreign fighters are offered psychological counselling and officials try to find them employment or places in schools and universities. In 2013, around 30 Muslim residents of Aarhus went to fight in Syria and as of late 2014, ten of the 15 foreign fighters who have returned to Aarhus have received help

398 Ibid., 167.
399 Aarhus is the second largest city in Denmark, with a population of around 300,000.
through this initiative, which is founded on the view that “discrimination at home is as criminal as Islamic State recruiting.”

Demonstrating a different political mindset to a number of Western nations, Aarhus Mayor Jacob Bundsgaard argued, “We cannot pass legislation that changes the way they think and feel. What we can do is show them we are sincere about integration, about dialogue.”

Crime prevention advisor Steffen Nielsen further said:

You can choose to shut them out and say okay, you chose to be a jihadist, we can’t use you anymore. Or you can take the inclusive way and say, okay, there is always a door if you want to be a contributing member to society. Not because we are nice people, but because we think that is what works.

Of course, not everyone is supportive of these softer approaches. Marie Krarup, from Denmark’s third-largest political party, the Danish People’s Party, stated that the government is “being much too soft, and they fail to see the problem.” She claims that “the problem is Islam. Islam itself is radical. You cannot integrate a great number of Muslims into a Christian country.”

Despite its opponents, officials in Aarhus believed that their softer approach is working. Aarhus police commissioner Jorgen Ilum has argued that the reason for their

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404 Ibid.
405 Ibid.
407 Faiola and Mekhennet, “Aarhus: The Danish Town Where Syria’s Jihadist Fighters are Welcomed Home.”
success is their “contact and dialogue with the Muslim community.”

In 2013, 30 Muslim youths went to fight in Syria, while in 2014, only one person did the same.

In contrast to approaches by the Australian government and media since 9/11, I argue that more radical voices should be given the option of participating in deliberative initiatives. This is firstly because, as I previously stated, the term “radical” can in some cases be used hastily or too expeditiously. Secondly, preventing these voices from accessing a genuine platform to express their grievances may only increase the substantive risk of Muslim radicalisation, while including these more radical voices can foster a more comprehensive, foundational understanding of Muslim grievances regarding government policy and public hostility. This subsequently provides a greater opportunity for genuine solutions that focus on foundational causal factors leading to radicalisation, rather than the negative repercussions that radicalisation has on broader society after an individual is radicalised. So far, this chapter has identified the importance of including both ordinary Muslim Australians and Muslims classified as “more radical” in deliberative initiatives. I will now argue that non-Muslim Australians should also participate in debates alongside Muslim Australians. However, they could be selected through a more random selection process that aims to be representative across key demographics.

**Non-Muslim Australian participants**

**Including a cross section of non-Muslim Australians**

The next group that should be included in deliberative initiatives are a cross section of citizens from the non-Muslim Australian mainstream. These participants should be

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407 Ibid.
408 Ibid.
representative of mainstream Australian society across various demographic indicators including gender, age, location, socio-economic status, education, and vocation. The reason for including non-Muslims is because their participation in deliberative initiatives could result in non-Muslims feeling substantially different about Muslims in the areas of increased understanding and acceptance, as well as lead to a decrease in the belief that Muslims pose a national security threat.409

Muslim Australians experience a higher proportion of negative sentiment than any other minority communities in Australia. For example, as documented in Chapter 1, between 2012-2016, the Scanlon Foundation Mapping Social Cohesion Survey found that between 22 and 25 per cent of non-Muslim Australians felt negatively or very negatively about Muslim Australians.410 Similarly, the Bogardus Social Distance Scale (BSDS) conducted in Australia with a sample of 1,500 non-Muslim Australians showed that one-fifth – 19.7 per cent – of respondents thought that Muslims should “keep out of Australia altogether.” Interestingly, this type of widespread negative sentiment about Muslim Australians exists despite a majority of non-Muslim Australians having little or no contact with Muslims. For example, one poll of 1,700 non-Muslim Australians showed around 50 per cent rarely or never had any contact with Muslims,411 indicating that negative attitudes towards Muslims can develop when people do not experience any direct interaction or engagement with Muslims. While this may appear concerning, for the purpose of implementing deliberative initiatives, there is good reason to be optimistic, primarily because studies have shown negative attitudes towards Muslims can be substantially reduced as a result of cross-cultural engagement.

411 “Australia Deliberates: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Australia Final Report Summary.”
One such example was the *Australia Deliberates: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Australia* initiative held in 2007 and conducted with over 1,700 Muslim and non-Muslim Australians by the non-partisan political psychology and public policy think tank Issues Deliberation Australia. There was a two-fold purpose to the initiative. The first was to “explore the current state of Muslim and non-Muslim relations in Australia and the world,” while the second was to “ensure that a diversity of perspectives, representing the spectrum of knowledge and opinions on this controversial issue were canvassed and represented throughout the entire research project.”

The first phase was a survey that involved over 1,000 Muslim and non-Muslim Australians, some of whom then volunteered to participate in cross-cultural deliberation. These volunteers – 329 non-Muslim Australians and 47 Muslim Australians – were divided into a number of small groups for an intensive three-day deliberative initiative. Differentiating between the first survey and these more intimate cross-cultural experiences, the smaller groups became known as “informed Australians.” After three days of deliberating, these “informed Australians” completed a follow-up survey, and a comparison of pre- and post-deliberation survey results revealed that the non-Muslim Australians felt substantially different about Muslim Australians after deliberation in terms of increased understanding and acceptance. For example, before the deliberation, 32 per cent of non-Muslim Australians believed that there should be a decrease of Muslim immigration to Australia, while only 20 per cent voiced the same sentiment after the workshop. Before deliberation, only 42 per cent of non-Muslim Australians said that minority cultures should be able to live according to their own traditions; this was increased to 71 per cent following

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412 Ibid.
413 Ibid.
414 Ibid.
415 Ibid.
deliberation.\textsuperscript{416} In addition, around half of the non-Muslim Australian participants initially believed that Muslim immigrants should be required to blend into wider Australian society; this dropped to 31 per cent after deliberation. A total of 42 per cent of non-Muslim Australians thought Muslims caused social disharmony, while after deliberation, this decreased to 29 per cent.\textsuperscript{417} The proportion of non-Muslim Australians who believed Muslims made the nation a worse place to live also dropped substantially, from almost one-third (28 per cent) to under one-tenth (8 per cent).\textsuperscript{418} This example supports the general consensus within deliberative democratic theory that exposure to deliberative initiatives can enable individuals to empathise to a greater degree with the challenges faced by marginalised groups in society.\textsuperscript{419} Following deliberation, 93 per cent of the non-Muslim Australians in the study said that they considered the process of cross-cultural deliberation with Muslims to be valuable, with 70 per cent rating their experience in the two highest categories (eight or nine out of ten).\textsuperscript{420} The Issues Deliberation advisory board concluded that the cross-cultural deliberative process had made “Australians feel less threatened by Muslims living in Australia after the opportunity to talk and think about the issues that concern them like terrorism, national security and any threat to the Australian way of life.”\textsuperscript{421}

As well as having benefits for social cohesion, the Australia Deliberates initiative fostered an increased level of scrutiny among non-Muslim Australians towards hard-line counter-terrorism policies. For example, before deliberation, 34 per cent of the non-Muslim Australian participants were in favour of employing ethnic profiling techniques in counter-

\textsuperscript{416} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{417} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{418} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{419} See, for example: Fishkin, \textit{When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation}; Gutmann and Thompson, \textit{Why Deliberative Democracy?}; Young, \textit{Inclusion and Democracy}.  
\textsuperscript{420} \textit{Australia Deliberates: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Australia Final Report Summary.}  
terrorism responses,\textsuperscript{422} which was reduced to 21 per cent after deliberation.\textsuperscript{423} The percentage of non-Muslim Australians outwardly opposed to ethnic profiling also increased from 48 to 60 per cent.\textsuperscript{424} Furthermore, only 17 per cent of people who interacted with Muslims in smaller deliberative groups subsequently believed that Muslims were still a threat to national security, while the figure was 30 per cent for those who did not deliberate with Muslim individuals.\textsuperscript{425} This suggests the potential deliberative initiatives have to improve social cohesion and increase public scrutiny of government policy and demonstrates why non-Muslim Australians should be included in deliberative initiatives.

While these results do not show definitive long-term changes of opinion about Muslim Australians, they are indicative of the ability of cross-cultural deliberation to potentially challenge unfavourable views and stereotypes about Muslim Australian communities and increase public scrutiny of government policy. Of course, it must be kept in mind that deliberative initiatives can aid but are unlikely to fully heal hostile cross-cultural relations among Muslim and non-Muslim Australians. Providing a balanced perspective, James Fishkin has advised that “while the dynamic is not fool proof, [deliberative democracy] does seem to be part of what makes it possible for greater mutual understanding and substantive policy attitude change to both result from deliberation – even in situations where there is undoubtedly a great deal of prejudice and ethnic division.”\textsuperscript{426} I will now discuss why, as part of a “mixed approach,” representatives of the Australian government should also be included in deliberative initiatives alongside Muslim and non-Muslim citizens.

\textsuperscript{422} “Australia Deliberates: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Australia Final Report Summary.”
\textsuperscript{423} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{424} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{425} Ibid.
The inclusion of government representatives as active listeners

Deliberative initiatives among Muslim and non-Muslim Australians should include representatives from the Australian government from multicultural, social welfare, and community development offices, as well as counter-terrorism agencies. However, in order to help address potential coercion and balance the asymmetrical relations between ordinary Muslims and government representatives, I argue that government participation should be limited – at least initially – to an “active listening” role. The purpose of active listening is to increase awareness of the positions of others, thereby improving mutual understanding.427 Active listening requires that a speaker is listened to attentively to avoid common misconceptions. In this way, active listening can become a tool with which the varying perspectives of different groups can be listened to and appreciated. This role would require government representatives to pay close attention to Muslim Australian speakers and repeat in their own words what a speaker has been discussing and their psychological response to political and social challenges.

Including government representatives in this way may allow Muslims to feel more comfortable discussing political and social concerns, without being interrupted or immediately confronted and challenged once they begin to speak. Furthermore, the presence of government representatives would emphasise an institutional commitment to genuinely listen to ordinary citizens, signifying that they consider the problems citizens are discussing to be important. The role of an active listener also promotes the importance of ordinary citizens contributing to public and political debates, as opposed to being merely passive bystanders to government discourse. To take further control of the direction of proceedings,

Muslim Australian participants should also decide on the topics to be discussed in deliberative initiatives (this will be further discussed in Chapter 5 of this thesis). This is important because, as John Dryzek and Simon Niemeyer have explained:

> deliberation isn't just about how the communicator should act. It is also important for the listener to engage with the message or argument with an open mind; a willingness to engage with alternative positions, attempting to understand any merit that arguments might have. This contrasts with the kind of politics that is often witnessed where protagonists stick to their particular message, whatever the circumstances, refusing to adjust or accommodate.  

While not a panacea, active listening can reduce coercion and intimidation from government representatives, and making potential Muslim participants aware of this confined role for government representatives may also increase their willingness to participate. This is important, given the apprehension that can be felt by ordinary Muslim Australian citizens at the idea of becoming involved in public forums out of a fear that there may be negative repercussions from the government.

In this way, an active listener role for the government could provide an environment in which previously unknown experiences of Muslims can be expressed through a model that is designed to directly value their input. Furthermore, the requirement for government representatives to provide feedback during and after deliberative initiatives could expose non-Muslim Australian participants to diverse narratives that acknowledge the grievances of Muslim Australians, and not merely reaffirm established government discourses.

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429 Ibid.
It is also important to mention that while, according to this proposal, the government would by default initially adopt an active listener approach, this does not mean that government representatives could not and should not express their opinions and/or provide their own policy justifications; calling on government representatives to provide evidence is a common practice in deliberative models such as citizens’ juries and assemblies. Therefore, if facilitators decide, it may be relevant for government representatives to speak openly with other participants at certain points during the deliberative process. To drive discussion forward, facilitators may also decide that it is appropriate for Muslim and non-Muslim participants to ask questions to government representatives and request that they respond. For example, participants could enquire whether counter-terrorism policies have appropriate oversight mechanisms in place and how democratic freedoms are protected; or, it may be deemed relevant for government representatives from social welfare offices to discuss what they are currently doing with new Muslim immigrants to Australia.

I argue that initially limiting Australian government participation to the role of an active listener could encourage Muslim participants to more openly share their interests, opinions, and grievances because the government would not be perceived to overtly control, overtake, and/or intimidate the deliberative process among Australian citizens, while nevertheless adding legitimacy to the deliberations. Of course, in arguing this, I cannot guarantee that coercion and intimidation towards Muslim Australians would not exist; however, this structure is an attempt to mitigate these issues and create conditions that enable Muslim Australian voices to be heard to an unprecedented degree. To conclude this chapter, I will now describe where these deliberative initiatives should take place and who should facilitate them.
Where should deliberative initiatives take place and who should organise and facilitate them?

There are a number of different ways that cross-cultural deliberation among Muslim, non-Muslim, and government participants could take place. The type of deliberative design I suggest is not necessarily only applicable to more formalised mini-public-style events; it could also be relevant to broader sites of citizen engagement and government consultation.

In a more formalised design, deliberative initiatives could take place in a large interactive forum, with specific speakers conversing with audience members. Another variation could see a number of smaller group discussions occurring between a mix of Muslim and non-Muslim Australians. There could also be a mixture of formats; for example, an event that begins in the form of a forum, with speakers conversing with an audience, before moving into smaller group discussions. The overall aim should be for participants to gather face-to-face in a single space to discuss societal issues and be given sufficient time for participants to listen to each other.

One of the aims of assembling citizens in this way would be to hold a “search conference.” In a search conference, ordinary citizens come together to learn about each other in order to collectively devise a shared common vision for the future to improve social cohesion. In this way, search conferences help a group of citizens organise their own goals for the future, for the potential benefit of all citizens. This shared learning focus requires participants to detail to one another a range of experiences from their past and present ideas of what an ideal future could be. Adopting a search conference direction could in this way be an appropriate method of “constructively approaching politically divisive topics.”

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conference is also a deliberative forum with the intended potential to influence government action and have an impact on government-decision making.

The purpose of such deliberative initiatives in their initial stages would be to allow Muslim participants to express themselves to a cross-section of society and have their opinions listened to and debated. Deliberative initiatives resembling a search conference become relevant for this specific purpose when compared to, for example, a scenario workshop, a citizens’ jury, or a consensus conference – in particular because, as will be discussed in Chapter 5, consensus between participants should not necessarily be the aim of deliberative initiatives.

A selected group of Muslim Australians or other representative groups should be the organisers of these initiatives. I argue that this is important because in previous consultations with Muslim Australians, representatives of the Australian government have controlled the direction of the discussion and thus from the beginning, this does not enable a genuine engagement with Muslim opinions. In a role as organisers, particular Muslim Australians should prepare the agenda for discussion among deliberative participants. As was described at the start of this chapter, in the 2014 consultations with the government regarding counter-terrorism amendments, the Muslim participants did not receive adequate information prior to the meeting that would have indicated that the government genuinely intended to engage with their opinions and grievances, and neither were the Muslim participants informed of who the other attendees were to be, nor given prior- or post-meeting access to any of the government’s draft counter-terrorism legislation. Therefore, before the deliberation had even begun, Muslim Australian participants were at a disadvantage because

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431 However, for Muslim representatives who may not have the experience or time to organise such a large-scale event, non-partisan organisations could be contracted for assistance. Two examples are: New Democracy or Our Say. See: New Democracy, https://www.newdemocracy.com.au/; Our Say, https://oursay.org/.

432 “Press Release: ICV has Withdrawn its Attendance From Today’s Meeting with Tony Abbott.”
the government had chosen the Muslim attendees and provided only minimal information beforehand.

Another important component for the setting of deliberative initiatives is that they should be held at a venue decided upon by Muslim Australian participants. Thus, as opposed to deliberation taking place in parliamentary chambers or government offices, deliberative initiatives should be held in, for example, a community centre or a mosque so they can be developed in environments more comfortable for Muslim Australians. To help focus the direction of discussion on political and social challenges, I argue that one or more delegated Muslim Australian participants should be designated as facilitators. This would assist in creating an environment in which non-Muslim Australian participants listen to Muslim voices and discussion is not dominated by one or a few individuals. This could also limit the risk of certain individuals overtaking, controlling, or coercing Muslim participants. An applicable body to which to delegate the position of facilitator could be Islamic councils such as the Islamic Council of Victoria or the Islamic Council of New South Wales, depending on the region where the initiative is held. This shift of control over proceedings to Muslim Australian participants is important because, as Kadlec and Friedman argue:

deliberation must always be anchored and controlled from outside officialdom to some extent if it is to address issues—and solutions to issues—that are controversial and threaten to significantly upset the status quo. Officially sanctioned and organized deliberation will naturally tend to be limited to those issues and solutions with which officials are comfortable. And should issues and solutions uncomfortable to officials make their way onto the policy agenda through the efforts of enterprising citizens,
officially controlled deliberation is likely to be conducted in a less than whole-hearted fashion.\textsuperscript{433}

Therefore, rather than the government having the power to determine who is included in deliberative initiatives and how they should be run, this design is intended to abide by the inclusion principle by providing a more equitable foundation for diverse marginalised Muslim Australian voices before deliberation has begun. Furthermore, designating Muslim Australians as facilitators has previously been done to benefit focus groups. For example, a 2016 study analysing the impact of the War on Terror on Muslim Australian communities found that “the use of Muslim moderators to conduct some of the interviews was done to ensure there was congruence between participants and interviewers, which can help in facilitating discussion on controversial topics with Muslims.”\textsuperscript{434}

In this chapter, I have detailed a design for the inclusion principle in deliberative initiatives. This design is intended to provide the foundations that would enable Muslims to be heard, rather than being merely visible. Primarily, this would be done by altering the demographic of Muslim Australians who are included in deliberative initiatives and, at least initially, minimising the role of the government to that of an active listener. This design is also intended to give Muslim Australians more control over the venue, agenda items, and facilitating proceedings.

**Conclusion**

The focus of this chapter was to outline the Muslim, non-Muslim, and government representatives who should ideally be targeted by organisers and facilitators to be included in

\textsuperscript{433} Kadlec and Friedman, “Deliberative Democracy and the Problem of Power,” 19.

\textsuperscript{434} Cherney and Murphy, “Being a Suspect Community in the Post 9/11 World: The Impact of the War on Terror for Muslim Communities in Australia,” 484.
deliberative initiatives. I firstly argued for the inclusion of diverse, ordinary Muslim Australians as opposed to solely hand-picked Muslim community leaders, and this should particularly involve the voices of Muslim women and youth. This would be done so a wider range of political and social challenges can be expressed and addressed more comprehensively by focusing on different experiences that have previously been neglected in public debate. I then argued that deliberative initiatives should include “more radical” Muslims who publicly oppose counter-terrorism policy and can more readily highlight perceptions of negative treatment at the hands of non-Muslim, mainstream society. In contrast to previous approaches from the Australian government and media since 9/11, including these voices could provide a more comprehensive, foundational understanding of Muslim grievances regarding government policy and public hostility. To an unprecedented degree, this would provide a greater opportunity for solutions to genuinely focus on the causal factors leading to radicalisation in Australia, rather than dealing with the results of radicalisation.

The second group I suggest should be included are a cross section of members of the non-Muslim Australian mainstream. This is important because while studies have shown that Muslims are the most negatively perceived minority group in Australian society, involving non-Muslim Australians in cross-cultural engagement initiatives has resulted in participants feeling substantially different about Muslim Australians in the areas of increased understanding and acceptance.435 In addition to the social challenges, including non-Muslim Australians could help address the political challenges faced by Muslim communities by increasing public scrutiny of government policy. Finally, I argued for including

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representatives from the Australian government – albeit, at least initially, in a limited “active listener” role. Including government representatives would add legitimacy to the importance of such deliberations, and also provide a measure of accountability through a requirement for subsequent feedback on the experiences of Muslim Australians. Restricting the role of the government is important to ensure that representatives do not overtly control, overtake, and/or intimidate the deliberative process.

After detailing the participants, I then suggested that deliberative initiatives should take the form of a search conference and take place in a venue more comfortable for Muslim participants such as a mosque or community hall. Finally, I argued that a select group of Muslim Australians or a representative group such as the Islamic Council of Victoria or the Islamic Council of New South Wales should be the organisers and/or facilitators designated to oversee and direct proceedings. The purpose of this is to increase the diversity of Muslim participation and ensure that Muslim Australians manage proceedings, while at the same time limiting the role of government participants. While this is an important first step, physically including more diverse Muslim voices would not by itself guarantee that the political and social challenges facing Muslim communities are debated and addressed. Therefore, I argue that the next important step is to analyse how the participants should communicate with each other.

In the next chapter of this thesis, I will identify an applicable framework for the communicative principle. To do so, I will argue that a sole reliance on rational argumentation could be detrimental to Muslim Australian participants and instead, I will contend that these concerns could potentially be alleviated if organisers and facilitators encourage the expanded use of communicative devices in deliberative initiatives so Muslim Australian participants can detail their experiences regarding the impacts of government policy and public hostility
on their own terms. I will argue that this should include incorporating more emotive and impassioned methods of expression that are conducive to sharing one’s personal experiences. Iris Marion Young’s communicative proposal is one example I will draw on as a framework that seeks to expand the inventory of communication tools during deliberation. Indeed, the inclusion of people in deliberative initiatives is not the same as the inclusion of their views. It is important to bear this in mind when assessing the appropriate deliberative models for the context of addressing the political and social challenges that impact marginalised Muslim communities.
Chapter 4

The communicative principle: How should participants communicate during deliberative initiatives?

Introduction

The previous chapter of this thesis described the Muslim, non-Muslim, and government representatives who should ideally be targeted by organisers and facilitators to be included in deliberative initiatives. It also detailed where these initiatives should take place and the key role Muslim Australians should take in organising and facilitating them. While the previous chapter detailed a direction for organisers and facilitators before deliberative initiatives are held, in this chapter I will discuss how organisers and facilitators should encourage participants to communicate with one another during these deliberative initiatives.

Along with the inclusion principle, a second factor showing how deliberative democracy can increase marginalised voices is explained by the communication principle, which refers to the necessity for open and equal communication among diverse participants. Communication should not be one-way, and all participants should be able to openly and equally share their grievances and ideas. While theorists broadly agree that two-way open communication is required, there are stark differences among traditional and critical theorists on what type of communication tools should be allowed in deliberative initiatives. As explained in Chapter 2 of this thesis, Rawls and Habermas support the formal exchange of rational argumentation; this refers to an orderly interchange of logical debate – or, the orderly interchange of opinions that are popularly considered to constitute conventional “logical” debate. In previous consultations among Muslim Australians and the Australian government, rational argumentation has been consistently employed for example, Muslim Australian participants have been told that hard-line counter-terrorism policy is the only rational
approach to national security and thus non-negotiable. In such a context, even before an argument can be made by a Muslim Australian participant, it can be deemed unreasonable, and government representatives can regulate what opinions are considered to constitute a rational argument without considering other views. For this reason, solely relying on the exchange of rational argumentation may not be the most appropriate communication technique for genuinely expressing and addressing the political and social challenges facing Muslim communities. In this way, through the institutional control of discourses, the government’s overarching attitude to cross-cultural engagement is arguably based on exclusion and one-way allocution, rather than inclusion and intersubjective and enlightening cross-cultural dialogue.

Following this discussion of the problem with solely using rational argumentation, I will contend that these concerns could potentially be alleviated if organisers and facilitators encourage the expanded use of communication devices for participants. This would be done so Muslim Australian participants can to an unprecedented level share more emotive personal experiences regarding the impact of government policy and their perceived negative treatment by wider society. Iris Marion Young’s communicative proposal is one example I will make use of in this chapter as a normative framework that promotes the practice of more emotive and impassioned methods of expression that are conducive to sharing personal experiences. This proposal specifically recommends the incorporation of greeting, rhetoric, and narrative components for culturally marginalised groups in deliberative initiatives. According to Young, the act of greeting concerns public acknowledgement and requires participants to recognise and respectfully acknowledge the identity and subjectivity of other culturally diverse participants. This is opposed to assuming that deliberation will not be

437 Ibid.
tainted by power differentiations and will take place among equal and culturally homogenous participants. Secondly, rhetoric is used to personalise an argument and the relationships between two supposedly opposed cultural groups, while narrative is a tool for story-telling that is conducive to the sharing of personal experiences to help challenge dominant government and media discourses about Muslim Australians. These three components of communication are not intended to replace argument during deliberation but are rather proposed as expanded tools for expression that can be used by marginalised voices, as opposed to insisting on the exchange of rational argumentation alone. As such, while the physical inclusion of diverse people is an initial important requirement, the task for a more genuine deliberative process does not end there; inviting more people does not automatically mean their views will be heard, let alone be influential.

**The problem with “rational argumentation” for Muslim Australian participants in deliberative initiatives**

Iris Marion Young has argued that the traditional Rawlsian and Habermasian interpretations of rational argumentation are culturally homogenising; the assumption that different cultures would choose to express themselves identically in deliberation does not permit people with a distinctive knowledge and means of cultural expression to be fully brought into the deliberative process on their own terms. Young notes in particular that the traditional exchange of rational speech consists of “universalistic, dispassionate, culturally and stylistically neutral arguments that focus the mind on their evidence and logical connections, rather than move the heart or engage the imagination.” Due to the discursive rigidity of the traditional approach, rational argumentation may not provide an open, accessible, or comfortable communicative platform for ordinary Muslim Australians to voice

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438 Young, *Inclusion and Democracy*, 63.
their experiences of political and social challenges. In this regard, an initial problem with relying on the exchange of rational argumentation in deliberative initiatives could mean that some Muslim Australians may not wish to use this type of formalised argumentation as their preferred method of communication. Of course, this is not to say that Muslim Australians are any less capable than non-Muslim Australians of conversing through rational argumentation; however, given the emphasis on including ordinary Muslim Australian citizens, these non-governmental participants may not be comfortable or accustomed to this type of public expression. This is especially the case when participating with politicians or other representatives from the Australian government (albeit in an active listener role), for whom the formal exchange of argument is the customary discursive tool, such as during Question Time in parliament.

While this initial concern with rational argumentation concerns the physical tools of speech-making and individual preferences for expression, there is a deeper concern regarding how “rationality” is understood and generated in post-9/11 Australian society. Understanding the role of power differentiations and asymmetrical relationships in deliberative initiatives is vital to understanding how perceptions of rationality can be monopolised by some to the detriment of others. Carolyn Hendriks et al. (2010) have stated that:

power is not something that can be ‘designed’ out of political and public debate; it is instead an inherent and important part of the context within which all forms of public deliberation operate. For example, interpretive studies have revealed how power can shape who participates in deliberative processes …and how power can subtly pervade the very process of argumentation and communication.439

While power relationships between participants may remain a part of deliberation, the impact of power differentiations can be recognised and to some degree regulated. As proposed in the previous chapter, one step would be to initially limit government representatives to an active listening role in deliberative initiatives. Another step could be for facilitators and organisers to recognise and then prepare a plan to deal with potential cultural bias regarding the “rationality” of certain opinions because the opinions voiced by Muslim Australian participants may only be considered “reasonable” if they are in accordance with the widely held views and attitudes of the Australian government and a majority of the population. Understanding these nuances of inclusion are critical when assessing appropriate deliberative models.

The inclusion of people in a deliberative process is not the same as including their views; physically including Muslim Australians in discussions does not guarantee that their opinions will be heard. For this reason, when examining applicable deliberative democratic designs, it will not be enough for a greater number of Muslims to “stand up” and “speak out” if the conditions and rules of deliberation overwhelmingly favour government representatives. As Gerard Hauser and Chantal Benoit-Barne explained, the concept of inclusion in deliberative processes “means more than giving voice to a point of view. It also treats reasons acceptable to that point of view, even if they fall outside the mainstream, as legitimate contributions to the deliberative process.”440 A number of Muslim Australians have argued that contemporary political and media discourses are used to fortify the dominant attitudes of the “status-quo,” rather than trying to understand Muslim Australians.441 In this way, there appears to be substantial pressure on Muslim Australians to “say the right things” in Australian society. For

441 Interview with Mohamad Tabbas, 2013.
Sahar Ghumkhor, the problem is that on a broad scale, Muslim Australian grievances cannot be discussed because Muslims upholding a critical view are excluded in favour of arguments supporting government and media discourse.442 Explaining this predicament, Waleed Aly has commented how Australia can seem a “very tolerant” society, but “the minute someone in a minority position demonstrates that they're not a mere supplicant, we lose our minds.”443 Furthermore, Andrew Jakubowicz has argued that the degree of tolerance that is expressed to Muslim Australians is determined by the dominant Anglo-Australian culture and their perceptions if Muslims can abide by Australia’s “core values.”444 In their research on relations among Muslims and wider non-Muslim society in Australia and the United Kingdom, Basia Spalek and Alia Imatoul have found that Muslims must present a wholly pro-Western sentiment or face exclusion from prominent channels into the national discourse.445 They remarked that engagement between Muslims and government “can only be carried out according to the terms set out by the government regarding what a legitimate Muslim identity should be, and this approach can potentially alienate many Muslims.”446 In this way, through the institutionalised control of discourses, the government’s overarching attitude to cross-cultural engagement is arguably based on exclusion and one-way allocution, rather than inclusion and intersubjective and enlightening cross-cultural dialogue.

Highlighting the current difficulty for Muslim Australians to influence or challenge dominant discourses, Tabbaa has argued that “it goes back to … the envisioning of the ideal citizen … the recognisable citizen, the legitimate citizen, your enlightened subject basically,

442 Interview with Sahar Ghumkhor, 2013.
446 Ibid., 197.
the white, rational, secular male and so on and [Muslims] not fitting in to that category automatically says that you are only legitimised to the extent that you can reach or almost reach that particular subject.”

In one example, in her research into Muslim Australian women in the media, Susan Carland found that for many of the Muslim women she interviewed, it was made clear that “they were only welcome to challenge stereotypes and buck against the norm when they were saying things that the wider community wanted to hear.” Carland asserted that a common technique employed by the media and government is “bemoaning the lack of Muslim women speaking out in the media, and then ignoring them when they do.” Carland noted that this “serves the double purpose of silencing women in a very absolute way, it is literally as if they are not there, while still giving the impression that the audience is eager and open to hearing from them if they should ever wish to speak.”

There are a number of examples documenting the inability of Muslim Australians to genuinely influence the government or media unless they support “rational” and “reasonable” dominant discourses. A specific example of the inability of Muslims to control the direction of discourse, and being visible yet not heard, was when Hizb ut-Tahrir Australian branch spokesman Wassim Doureihi was invited on the national broadcaster ABC news and current affairs program *Lateline* for an interview in 2014. At the beginning of the interview, host Emma Alberici stated that the purpose for inviting Doureihi was so “Australians better understand what it is that you [Hizb ut-Tahrir] stand for,” given that the organisation had

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447 Interview with Mohamad Tabbaa, 2013.
449 Ibid., 147.
450 Ibid., 147.
been widely labelled a radical group, including by then-Prime Minister Tony Abbott.\footnote{452 “Lateline Transcript,” ABC, October 8, 2014, accessed January 9, 2015, http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2014/s4103227.htm.}

However, this request to understand the stance of Hizb ut-Tahrir was soon relegated to what non-Muslim Australians \textit{required or} demanded to know about the group, rather than the Hizb ut-Tahrir spokesman sharing his own views so “Australians better understand” what the group stands for. At the beginning of the interview, Alberici consistently demanded that Doureihi say whether he condemned the actions of the Islamic State group.\footnote{453 The Islamic State group has gone by a number of names, including: the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham, or Daesh or Da’ish as a broad acronym for “al-Dawla al-Islamiya fil Iraq wa al-Sham.”} Doureihi subsequently refused to answer, beyond asserting that he could not condone any action that took innocent lives. Doureihi explained that he found the question offensive, in regard to the expectation for all Muslim Australians to publicly denounce the violent actions of Muslims that are not associated with them.

After repeated requests to share his opinion on Islamic State, Doureihi accused Alberici of “baiting for a particular response.” He argued, “You've invited me on to this platform to express my views…. you're not allowing me to do that.”\footnote{454 “Lateline Transcript.”} Doureihi’s argument, which he was briefly able to share, was that groups like Islamic State and al-Qaeda emerged “as a reaction to Western interference in the Islamic lands and they view themselves, rightfully or wrongfully, irrespective of my opinion or otherwise, as a resistance effort to what they regard as an unjust occupation.”\footnote{455 Ibid} However, Alberici stated that she did not want to discuss this “wider context” that condemned government policy and demanded to know his position on Islamic State tactics. Identifying the confines of public discourse for Muslims, Doureihi argued that “the fact that we don't want to have this discussion now [regarding Western actions in the Middle East] is indicative of where the entire discussion on the war on terror
narrative goes. The fact is the entire response isn't what Muslims are doing or may not be
doing, but no-one legitimately or sincerely is discussing what Western governments are doing
in the Muslim world."\textsuperscript{456} He further argued, “I'm doing the public a great favour by
refocusing this discussion where it needs to be.”\textsuperscript{457}

Commenting on the Lateline interview, Abbott framed Doureihi’s opinions as an
unacceptable form of political dissent, and said that Alberici’s anger at her interviewee
“spoke for our country last night,” labelling Doureihi’s anti-War on Terror sentiment “un-
Australian.”\textsuperscript{458} Doureihi subsequently received a substantial backlash from politicians, media,
and the wider public and was condemned as “radical.” Thus, Doureihi’s presumption that he
was being invited on to a program to help “Australians better understand what Hizb ut-Tahrir
stands for” was immediately negated, after the discussion turned into the discursive
expectations of what the dominant group demanded to know. Any discussion outside the
government’s security discourse was completely dismissed as, in the prime minister’s words,
“un-Australian” and labelled “radical.” This is despite clear public statements made by Hizb
ut-Tahrir about its “strong disagreements” with groups such as Islamic State and that “those
who are allured to the path of the latter do not come to us for advice. Rather, in most cases,
they mock and look down upon us as too weak and compromising.”\textsuperscript{459} As such, a design for
deliberative initiatives must take into account that the discursive expectations of what is

\textsuperscript{456} Ibid
\textsuperscript{457} Ibid
\textsuperscript{458} Latika Bourke, “Tony Abbott Backs Lateline Host Emma Alberici Over Fiery Hizb ut-Tahrir Interview,”
politics/political-news/tony-abbott-backs-lateline-host-emma-alberici-over-fiery-hizb-uttahrir-interview-
20141008-113fxd.html.
\textsuperscript{459} Uthman Badar, “Is it Now an Offence to Oppose Government Policy? If so, Let It Be Said Plainly,” Islam in
Australia, February 23, 2015, accessed August 17, 2015, http://islaminaustralia.com/2015/02/23/is-it-now-an-
offence-to-oppose-government-policy-if-so-let-it-be-said-plainly/.
considered “reasonable” by the non-Muslim majority may not allow any alternative narratives to penetrate dominant discourses.

It is also important to mention that this example and that involving Uthman Badar from the previous chapter illustrates that the direction and confines of discourse can be dictated to Muslim Australians by the Australian media and government. While these two examples appear to represent different problems – Badar was not permitted to talk, while Doureihi was forced to respond in a certain way – on a foundational level, the key issue in both examples is the same: the seeming right of non-Muslim Australians to manage not only Muslim participation in public debate, but also the direction of discourse involving Muslims – the power to either refuse Muslims public platforms to share their opinions or demand that they contribute. In both the Badar and Doureihi cases, Muslim Australian voices were only permitted for public exposure if they were approved by and in accordance with the discursive expectations of the government and media.

There are several other examples documenting the inability of Muslim Australians to publicly discuss the impact of government policy. In July 2015, Liberal National Party representative George Christensen was a guest speaker at a Reclaim Australia rally of around 300 people at Mackay, Queensland. Christensen addressed the rally, proclaiming that “we would be foolishly naive to think that we are not at war” – referring to Islamic State and radical Islam. Interestingly, at the same time, then-Prime Minister Tony Abbott announced a boycott on cabinet ministers appearing on the ABC news panel television program Q&A in response to the brief June 2015 appearance on Q&A of Zaky Mallah, a Muslim Australian who in 2003 was prosecuted for two terrorism-related charges and one charge of threatening to harm a Commonwealth public official, regarding threats he had made against ASIO.

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460 Christensen, “Transcript, Reclaim Australia Address.”
Mallah was not on the panel of guests on the program, but was invited to ask a question from the audience. Following his arrest, Mallah was found not guilty of the two terrorism-related charges by a jury and, in a plea bargain, pleaded guilty to the charge of threatening to harm a public official, and spent two and a half years in jail. Since then, Mallah has made a number of media appearances, including on Channel Ten’s news entertainment program *The Project* and SBS’s current affairs program *Insight*, as well as radio and print media. On *Q&A*, however, Mallah questioned Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs Steve Ciobo about a proposal by the government to strip dual nationals convicted on terrorism-related charges of their Australian citizenship. Ciobo said to Mallah that if these laws had been enacted at the time of Mallah’s charge and conviction, he would be “happy to look [Mallah] straight in the eye and say that I’d be pleased to be part of the government that would say you were out of the country.” Mallah responded to this comment by stating, “The Liberals have just justified to many Australian Muslims in the community tonight to leave and go to Syria and Iraq and join IS because of ministers like him.”

Following the airing of the program, Abbott stated that “heads should roll” at the ABC network for allowing Mallah to share his opinions publicly, labelling it a “betrayal” against Australia. Abbott also proclaimed that “the ABC has once again given a platform to someone who hates us, who hates our way of life, who supports terrorists, and again, I ask of the national broadcaster: whose side are you on?” In this way, not only was Mallah

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462 Ibid.
attacked by prominent politicians for voicing his opinions, but so was the media platform that provided an opportunity for a Muslim to challenge the government’s counter-terrorism policy and security discourse. Also alienating Mallah’s opinions and framing them as incompatible with broader Australian society, Liberal MP Alex Hawke declared that the rebroadcasting of the episode on ABC a few days later showed “callous disregard for the mainstream.”\footnote{Ibid.} Hawke also showed his inability or refusal to understand Mallah’s comments in any great depth; instead of understanding Mallah’s comments as recognising that hard-line counter-terrorism policy could increase radicalism, this causal connection was considered irrelevant, as demonstrated by Hawke’s claim that “it appears the ABC is not sorry at all for broadcasting what was in effect an advertisement for Islamic State.”\footnote{Ibid.} Following the backlash, Mallah stated that he does not support Islamic State or Muslims travelling to fight with the group,\footnote{Timna Jacks, “Zaky Mallah Tells Angry Waleed Aly He Stands By His Words,” \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}, June 23, 2015, accessed August 11, 2016, http://www.smh.com.au/national/zaky-mallah-tells-angry-waleed-aly-he-stands-by-his-words-20150623-ghvwqu.html.} but was simply trying to explain that these types of public statements by politicians and hard-line – and seemingly targeted – policy can increase radicalisation. Thus, I argue it is important to compare the difference between the backlash the ABC received from the Australian government and the ability of George Christensen to freely declare that Australia is at war with radical Islam at the Reclaim Australia rally. While Mallah was accused of being an Islamic extremist and anyone who gave him a platform to speak was said to be “advertising” terrorism, Christensen publicly admitted he was aware that right-wing extremists, including neo-Nazis, were frequently in attendance at Reclaim rallies.\footnote{See: Christensen, “Transcript, Reclaim Australia Address.”} These examples highlight the power of the government and media to determine which opinions are considered to constitute a rational argument, without considering other relevant views. This
demonstrates a controlled milieu for the government in which opinions that contest dominant discourses may not be genuinely considered but instead automatically discredited and excluded.

Previous counter-terrorism consultations have also been perceived by Muslim Australian citizens to be confined to a narrow security agenda that has been accused of merely seeking to re-establish the government’s security discourse, while negating genuine discussion about public hostility. This denies Muslim participants the opportunity to critically influence consultations and put forward ideas for sound and justified policies that are not perceived to target Muslims and fuel cross-cultural hostility. For example, a number of Muslim Australians claimed that the 2014 counter-terrorism amendment discussions with then-Prime Minister Abbott were only designed for Muslim participants to provide an immediate “rubber stamp” for counter-terrorism policy that “has already been decided.” These engagement initiatives were described by Muslim participants as having “outcomes [that were] predetermined” and as being merely a “token gesture” to “tick the box of consultation” that effectively “gagged any engagement on the issues of real concern to the community.” These initiatives were further accused of being “staged processes that have no purpose other than as public relations exercises.” One Muslim Australian commentator highlighted his experience of being visible but not heard in consultations with media and the government, stating that “frustratingly, in the majority of cases, while my conversants listened to me, they did not hear, and at the end of the conversation they would reiterate their

469 See, for example: Basia Spalek and Alia Intoual, “Muslim Communities and Counter-Terror Responses: ‘Hard’ Approaches to Community Engagement in the UK and Australia,” 185-202.
earlier views as if our discussion were irrelevant.\textsuperscript{473} Therefore, the problem with previous deliberative initiatives, and what future designs must be cognisant of, is that Muslim Australians are frequently spoken for and about, as opposed to being critically and genuinely engaged with, despite being present in cross-cultural consultations. Such a restricted approach is detrimental to Muslim Australian participants if the onus is solely on Muslims to concede (under the guise of genuine consultation) to the government’s agenda.

To deal with these concerns and genuinely include diverse Muslim Australian voices to a greater extent, Salman Sayyid argued that what is required:

is a society which has evolved a new code of etiquette in how the public conversation, the conversation of the nation, takes place, which means allowing new people to come and to be part of that conversation, and having to modify that conversation and the rules of those conversations to make sure that that participation is active and engaged.\textsuperscript{474}

A design for deliberative initiatives including the communication principle would need to acknowledge the important difference between Muslim Australians being visible in deliberative initiatives and their voices being listened to. Without this focus, Muslim Australian voices would have less influence because any other either silences Muslim Australians in order to preserve the “status quo,” or further alienates and attacks those who voice dissent against Australian government policy and public hostility. Curiously, this is despite the public appearance that Muslim Australians have more voice through the visible practice of consultation between them and the government. In this way, Muslim Australians arguably participate in their own marginalisation because being visible in deliberation seems to indicate that a consultation is occurring between “free” and “equal” citizens. The problem is

\textsuperscript{473} Carland, “Silenced: Muslim Women Commentators in the Australian Media,” 147.
\textsuperscript{474} “Transcript, Deeper Reasons Behind the Riots in the Muslim World.”
that the restricted discursive conditions regulating what Muslim Australians are able to freely talk about does not allow any genuine challenges to government policy or public hostility — despite a public front of equal opportunity. Consequently, through the perception that Muslims have had their “say,” Muslims appear to support the government and/or mainstream agenda by not being able to openly challenge it. This difference between the visibility of Muslim participants in deliberative initiatives and actually being listened to is the key reason why, I contend, relying on rational argumentation could potentially strengthen the marginalisation of Muslim voices; this is why certain deliberative designs for the communication principle are more appropriate than others. It is also worth noting that just as argumentation may not benefit marginalised Muslim voices, rational argumentation may not be the preferred tool for the non-Muslim listener to acknowledge the impact of government policy and public hostility on Muslim communities; instead, more impassioned and emotive communicative tools that enable the sharing of personal experiences may encourage empathy and understanding from listeners.

So far, this chapter has identified potential problems with a reliance on rational argumentation for Muslim participants in deliberative initiatives. Now, I will identify one potential solution to these concerns: Iris Marion Young’s “communicative proposal,” which goes beyond a one-dimensional focus on rational argumentation and offers examples of how to expand methods of expression to cross-culturally engage with and empower marginalised voices in deliberative initiatives.
Expanding communication tools for Muslim Australians

A number of democratic theorists have analysed the use of communication tools among citizens beyond formalised rational argumentation. For example, Jane Mansbridge has analysed democratic qualities through the exchange of “everyday talk,” while Lynn Sanders also advocated the sharing of testimonies and telling “one’s particular story,” to a broader group. Iris Marion Young has devised a proposal for increasing the ability of culturally marginalised individuals to articulate opinions on their own terms. Young recognised a requirement for a pluralistic cross-cultural communicative approach to deliberation that expands ways for marginalised groups to appeal to and persuade diverse audiences, beyond merely employing argumentation. Young explains that “even though all citizens have the right to participate in the decision-making process, the experience and perspectives of some groups tend to be silenced for many reasons.”

An example that she uses is that “white middle-class men assume authority more than others and they are more practiced at speaking persuasively; mothers and old people often find it more difficult than others to get to meetings.”

Young envisages cultural difference as a tool to enrich the communicative and transformative potential of deliberation, rather than being envisaged as something to be overcome in a deliberative democratic process through, for example, the Rawlsian notion of the original position. In this regard, Young proposes that:

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478 Ibid., 224.
479 As described in Chapter 2, John Rawls advocated the hypothetical thought experiment of the “original position” as a “traditional conception of justice.” He proposes that through a process of deliberation, people can leave behind their individual opinions, values, and interests to exercise an impartial and formally defined “public reason” to create a just, democratic society.
a democratic process is inclusive not simply by formally including all potentially affected individuals in the same way, but by attending to the social relations that differently position people and condition their experiences, opportunities, and knowledge of the society. A democratic public arrives at objective political judgement from discussion not by bracketing these differences, but by communicating the experiences and perspectives conditioned by them to one another. Communication of the experience and knowledge derived from different social positions helps correct biases derived from the dominance of partial perspective over the definition of problems or their possible solutions. Such differentiated communication also enables a public collectively to construct a more comprehensive account of how social processes work and therefore of the likely consequences of proposed policies.480

As such, while the physical inclusion of diverse people is an important initial requirement, the requirements for a more genuine deliberative process do not end there; inviting more people does not automatically mean their views will be influential, and inclusion can be merely an outward performance of consultation that masks embedded power differentiations. The genuine inclusion of people’s opinions for the purpose of informing proposed policy-making is a much more complex task.

Young made an important distinction in a deliberative process, identifying two forms of exclusion for marginalised voices when rational argumentation is used as the sole communicative tool. The first is external exclusion; Young states that “participatory processes often exclude members of racial and ethnic minorities, have fewer women than men, fewer working-class people than professionals, are often age-biased, and rarely involve

480 Young, Inclusion and Democracy, 83.
people with disabilities.”^481 To add a necessary degree of nuance to this discussion of inclusion and exclusion, Young said that even when the voices of marginalised groups are included in deliberative initiatives, without the assistance of special measures for communication among participants, structural inequalities will remain in the deliberative space, which she terms the “internal exclusion” of marginalised voices. Young states that:

though formally included in a forum or process, people may find that their claims are not taken seriously and may believe that they are not treated with equal respect. The dominant mood may find their ideas or modes of expression silly or simple, and not worthy of consideration. They may find that their experiences as relevant to the issues under discussion are so different from others’ in the public that their views are discounted.\(^482\)

Thus, when the voices of marginalised groups are included in deliberative initiatives, power differentiations can mean deliberation is neither truly free nor equal among participants. Young states about this culturally biased scenario, “though formally included in a forum or process, people may find that their claims are not taken seriously and may believe that they are not treated with equal respect.”^483

Internal exclusion is a relevant scenario recognised by a number of Muslim Australians. For example, Randa Abdel-Fattah explains, “You can exclude people in a racist way but you can also include them in a racist way and the way that you do that is through your language … as long as you follow our Australian way, our Australian values, our core values, that is a way of including people but always qualifying their acceptance and their


\(^{482}\) Young, Inclusion and Democracy, 55.

\(^{483}\) Young, Inclusion and Democracy, 55.
belonging and managing them and schooling them. Thus, a genuine sense of inclusion can depend on the ability of Muslim Australians to behave like and express similar opinions to the mainstream; for example, sometimes, the media and even advocacy groups seek to improve cross-cultural relations by “humanising” Muslims. This term “humanising” means that non-Muslim Australians attempt – via the media, for example – to make Muslims appear more humane and civilised and show how relatable Muslim Australians can be to mainstream society. Instead of exploring cultural differences and rectifying misconceptions that Muslim Australians are a monolithic group, humanising Muslims has generally involved displays of how “civilised” Muslims are and how similar to the mainstream they can be. Thus, while perhaps well-intentioned, attempts to humanise Muslims can be counterproductive if they are solely confined to the standards expected by mainstream Australians. Of course, while finding common ground among participants is important and desired, basing such initiatives on the degree to which Muslims can “assimilate” and “act” like the mainstream may not lead to their concerns being genuinely considered.

Randa Abdel-Fattah has discussed this predicament in further depth, describing how many non-Muslim Australians perceive that they have a right to “tolerate or not tolerate” and “include or exclude” Muslim communities. This implies that the acceptance of Muslims in Australian society is negotiable and contingent on their behaviour and, arguably, their ability to conform to mainstream Australian expectations. Abdel-Fattah states:

the vast majority of the people I have interviewed consider Islam from a Western position of supposed intellectual superiority, presuming Western epistemology as a

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484 Randa Abdel-Fattah, “Transcript of Q&A episode, Alert but not Alarmed.”
486 Abdel-Fattah, “Hate Islam, Love Muslims? Exploring the Ambiguities of Islamophobia.”
universal fact. For such people, Islamic thought and knowledge is allocated a limited space. The “West” is assumed to be the only legitimate tradition of thought capable of producing knowledge, “rationality” and “truth.” Such a view precludes Muslims from meaningfully contributing to debates about human rights, democracy, citizenship, free speech and so on, unless they are subjects of the debate itself.487

In this way, Muslims can be included in public and political discussions only to the extent that they act like, and share the same opinions as, the broader mainstream, and exhibit traits representative of so-called Western values.

As a potential solution to this type of exclusion, Young theorised three modes of cross-cultural communication that could benefit marginalised groups in deliberation – greeting, narrative, and rhetoric. Young explained that “all three modes of communication aid the making of arguments and enable understanding and interaction in ways that argument alone cannot. While each is subject to abuse or manipulation, so is argument.”488 Young described these tools in the following way:

Greetings, or in political contexts public acknowledgement, is a form of communication where a subject directly recognizes the subjectivity of others, thereby fostering trust. Rhetoric, the ways that political assertions and arguments are expressed, has several functions that contribute to inclusive and persuasive political communication, including calling attention to points and situating speakers and audience in relation to one another. Narrative also has several functions that counter exclusive tendencies and further argument. Among other functions, narrative empowers relatively disfranchised groups to assert themselves publicly; it also offers

487 Ibid.
488 Young, Inclusion and Democracy, 57.
means by which people whose experiences and beliefs differ so much that they do not share enough premises to engage in fruitful debate can nevertheless reach dialogical understanding.\textsuperscript{489}

Specifically, Young’s conception of a “greeting” at an initial phase of deliberation refers to “communicative political gestures through which those who have conflicts aim to solve problems, recognise others as included in the discussion, especially those with whom they differ in opinion, interest or societal location.”\textsuperscript{490} Young argued that by engaging in greeting, “discussion participants acknowledge that they are together with those they name, and that they are obliged to listen to their opinions and take them seriously.”\textsuperscript{491} As such, the act of greeting requires participants to verbally acknowledge, recognise and respectfully acknowledge the identity and subjectivity of marginalised individuals. This is opposed to assuming that deliberation will take place between equal, culturally homogenous participants. Furthermore, Paul Healy highlighted a requirement to more openly and authentically engage with a plurality of communication tools to deliberate on key issues in society. He argues:

we need to allow others to articulate their own positions in their own terms and accord them the status of equal partners in the conjoint exploration of a topic, to the extent that we are prepared to allow their views actively to challenge our own ‘settled opinion’, to modify our preconceptions when they are found wanting, and to learn from what they have to tell us rather than simply asserting the superiority of our own viewpoint.\textsuperscript{492}

\textsuperscript{489} Ibid., 53.
\textsuperscript{490} Ibid., 61.
\textsuperscript{491} Ibid., 61.
The benefit of greeting for marginalised groups was also analysed by Axel Honneth and Charles Taylor. Honneth has described the “struggle for recognition” faced by individuals and groups in society. For Honneth, recognition is vital for social justice and thus the struggle for recognition is a critical factor in social conflicts. Social relationships are crucial to the formation of personal identity and thus, Honneth claims, without mutual recognition, individuals cannot attain “self-realisation” – meaning they cannot be who they want to be. Taylor similarly saw recognition of groups as a “vital human need” constituting the basic element of justice, as well as identity formation. Taylor argued that “our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves.” Indeed, non-recognition and misrecognition can be harmful to a person’s or a group’s identity. From these understandings, Taylor asserted the importance of the “politics of equal recognition,” suggesting that “we all recognise the equal value of different cultures; that we not only let them survive, but acknowledge their worth.”

Employing the communication tool of greeting is widely recognised as potentially beneficial for Muslim Australians. Following 2014 counter-terrorism consultations with the government, which were perceived by Muslim Australian participants to be exclusionary and insincere, Silma Ihram pointed out that “the Muslim community wants to... be seen as Australians who are sincere and we want to make sure that the government is also sincere in

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495 Ibid., 25.
496 Ibid., 25.
how it tackles these issues and [does not see] us as the Other."497 Sahar Ghumkhor similarly recognised the importance of framing a deliberative process in a way that acknowledges and recognises Muslim Australians as citizens in an equal partnership, given that currently, Muslims are problematised and treated as outsiders.498 As a starting point, Ghumkhor suggests that the parameters under which cross-cultural deliberation take place among Muslim, non-Muslim Australians, and government representatives cannot be considered as being between “us” and “Muslims,” or as White Australians “lending” Muslim Australians an opportunity to vent their issues, but rather “Muslims have to enter into the conversation as citizens and full partnership and not just as Others and minorities; [it is important] that the space is not established under white [Australian] parameters.”499

For deliberative initiatives, an initial gesture of greeting may grant Muslim Australians the initial recognition required to provide a foundation for more sincere engagement, and signify a greater commitment that diverse Muslim Australians will be recognised and thus engaged with and listened to, as opposed to being merely visible. In this way, problems can begin to be addressed by slight discursive changes, and simply by framing deliberation as one that recognises Muslims as Australian citizens in equal partnership. Of course, there are different scopes of recognition, but as a first step in deliberative initiatives, Muslim Australian participants should be recognised as able to contribute to and influence discussions about Muslim Australians, and thus as Australian citizens who can openly contribute to discourse on matters that directly impact them. This would include participants’ opinions about how counter-terrorism policy impacts Muslims and direct experiences of public hostility, and could also concern other policy issues and topics of contention fuelling division

498 Interview with Sahar Ghumkhor, 2013.
499 Ibid.
in Australian society such as the wearing of Islamic facial veils, Sharia law, and Halal certification. Beyond this initial focus, there should also be a broader aim for recognition, recognising that Muslims can contribute to discourse and influence public attitudes on issues that impact Australians as a whole, not just those that involve Muslims. In addition, participants should recognise that Muslims (as well as non-Muslims) will have a variety of opinions and preferences on different issues and would not be speaking as a homogenous bloc.

The second tool Young recommends to more authentically include marginalised voices in deliberative initiatives is rhetoric, which is a communicative device that utilises passions over reason through the employment of persuasive language, including emotional appeals with the aim of persuading an audience instead of solely relying on rational argumentation. John Dryzek has explained that the use of rhetoric in deliberation can involve “vivid metaphors, creative interpretation of evidence, arresting figures of speech, irony, humour, exaggeration, gestures, performance, and dramaturgy … crucially, rhetoric recognizes the situated character of its audience.”

Promoting the dialogical benefits of employing rhetoric as a communicative tool, Dryzek argues that rhetoric can “play an essential part in communicating across and so linking differently situated and differently disposed actors, forums, and institutions.”

Dryzek identifies two types of rhetoric – “bridging” and “bonding.” The former aims to bring conflicting groups together by using language that references areas that have compatible discourses and can be made appealing to both groups. Dryzek provides the


example of Martin Luther King who, in his use of bridging rhetoric to promote civil liberties for African Americans, was able to exert a greater impact on a white audience when referencing and invoking the language of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. This form of rhetoric can help shape public policy in the direction of greater understanding and acceptance of the needs of marginalised groups.

Bridging rhetoric could also foster positive relationships among Muslim and non-Muslim Australians by acknowledging compatible discourses. For example, to address the impact of hard-line counter-terrorism policies, Muslim Australians could ensure their opinions have a greater impact on non-Muslim Australians by invoking the importance of one’s democratic freedoms – a compatible discourse between both groups. Muslim Australians could also draw on a common ideology wherein both groups share the common goal of keeping Australia free from terrorism, and a cross-cultural agreement that there needs to be certain kinds of counter-terrorism laws enacted in Australia. For example, the report *Avoiding Community Backlash in the Fight Against Terrorism*, which looked at the opinions of 800 Muslims, found that most participants agreed that the government needed to enact counter-terrorism laws, but 74 per cent thought that the current policies unfairly targeted Muslims, and only 6.4 per cent believed that counter-terrorism laws were not targeted at Muslims. The report also stated that:

the above results should not be taken to mean that respondents did not support authorities in their efforts to tackle terrorism or extremism, rather it was how policies and laws were being applied; the key theme was a sense of unfairness in how laws were being used to

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502 See: Murphy, Cherney and Barkworth, “Avoiding Community Backlash in the Fight Against Terrorism: Research Report,” 43.
503 Ibid., 43.
target the Muslim community in Australia. Also, respondents voiced support for police, recognising that police “had a job to do.”  

By emphasising that both Muslim and non-Muslim Australians share the common goal of keeping Australia free from terrorism (and that some sort of counter-terrorism apparatus is required), experiences of profiling and discrimination towards Muslim Australians can then be explored in greater detail, instead of implying that Muslim participants are opposed to counter-terrorism policy altogether, or that the threat of terrorism is only a concern for non-Muslim Australians.

It is important to recognise that rhetoric is not a universally beneficial tool for marginalised groups in deliberation; despite the benefit of bridging rhetoric, it does not always serve a socially equitable purpose. The other form of rhetoric Dryzek identifies is bonding rhetoric, which refers to the use of persuasive language to build further support for goals among already like-minded people. This form of rhetoric can be harmful to marginalised groups when used by dominant groups in society; according to Dryzek, “It is not hard to find ‘bonding’ demagogues, who interpret every violent act perpetrated by members of the ‘other’ ethnic, racial, or religious group as evidence of the irredeemable perfidy of the group as a whole as opposed to an isolated instance of criminality, or a violation of universal human rights principles.” Dryzek employs the example of former United States President George W. Bush’s insistence on using the phrase “with us or against us” following 9/11, which prevented any form of debate or alternative opinion regarding the War on Terror. Supporting his infamous comment to then-United States Senator Joe Biden that “I don’t do nuance,” Bush proclaimed that “every nation in every region now has a

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504 Ibid., 23.
decision to make: either you are with us or you are with the terrorists.” This sentiment was politically and militarily represented in the formation of the “Coalition of the Willing,” with the United States and the United Kingdom at the forefront of operations. However, over 100 nations across the world refused to join the coalition, including Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, and Switzerland.

Bridging rhetoric was also used for the purpose of garnering public support for Australia’s involvement in the War on Terror. One example of this was a 2004 speech to the National Press Club by then-Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, who professed the importance of Australia’s involvement in the elective allied invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and the pre-emptive war waged against the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq in 2003. Downer warned Australians of an existential “struggle to the death over values” against “Islamo-Fascists” who were “convinced that their destiny was to overshadow the democratic West.”

He also attempted to cement the importance of an alliance with the Coalition of the Willing, asking rhetorically: “Australians must ask themselves: would they feel more secure in the war against terrorism if we downgraded our alliance with America? Is this really the time in our history to weaken those ties which have given us such security for so long?”

Downer further framed Australia’s involvement in the War on Terror as one not of choice but rather an obligation, saying: “At the outset, we should be clear that this is a war that we did not choose. The terrorists have declared war on us because of who we are and what we value. Our only choice is whether or not we defend ourselves.”

Further dismissing and

508 Ibid.
discrediting any alternative narrative to the government’s security discourse, Downer declared:

there are some who believe that the war against terror is something that we can avoid, that we can roll into a ball and, in the false security of an inward gaze, behave like we are a small target ... and leave others to fight our battles. These people are wrong.509

Despite this potential for manipulation at the expense of marginalised groups, Dryzek explains that bonding rhetoric can be beneficial when it is used to build internal support within marginalised groups because it can enable “an oppressed group to generate a degree of solidarity that will enable it subsequently to enter with confidence into a larger public sphere where its representatives can make claims to other actors, audiences, and institutions (as well as solve their own collective action problem).”510 A large-scale example of this was the anti-Apartheid Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa during the 1970s. In this regard, the use of bonding rhetoric among Muslim Australians could encourage other Muslims to publicly express their positions, interests, and grievances. This becomes particularly relevant because despite the fact that Muslim Australian leaders and ordinary citizens have requested more genuine platforms to express themselves, many others are apprehensive about discussing government policy and public hostility out of a fear of being labelled radical and/or incompatible with Australian values.511

Finally, along with greeting and rhetoric, Young recommended the use of narrative as a communicative tool, asserting the importance of extending a communicative framework to allow personal experiences to become part of larger conversations in the national discourse.

509 Ibid.
511 See, for example: Aly and Green, “Social Implications of Fearing Terrorism: A Report on Australian Responses to the Images and Discourses of Terrorism and the Other,” 20.
Narrative uses devices such as personal testimonies and storytelling to show how people generate different meanings from their experiences. The use of narrative in a deliberative process has been described by Carol Lee et al. (2004) as “a way of imposing meaning on experience and that the forms of narrative – including the cultural models, schemas, and scripts that they capture – are culturally specific.”

John Burgess noted that through its “sense-making” properties, narrative can be used in a deliberative process as “a chronological account that helps actors to make sense of and argue about a political issue” In addition, in their research, Francesca Polletta and John Lee found that “ordinary conventions of storytelling helped deliberators to identify their own preferences, demonstrate their appreciation of competing preferences, advance unfamiliar views, and reach areas of unanticipated agreement.”

Similarly, John Boswell asserted that narrative can be beneficial by “opening a window of the mind, or, if we are analysing narratives of a specific group of tellers, as opening a window on their culture.” Corresponding to the “deliberative turn” in democratic research, Boswell claimed that the social sciences are experiencing a “narrative turn” which for Boswell is not necessarily acting in parallel to the deliberative turn, but has become “a crucial aspect of democratic deliberation.” In this way, narratives can be used as persuasive devises that foster empathy and understanding for political and social concerns that impact marginalised groups. While narrative can enable Muslim Australians to share their personal experiences of targeting and cross-cultural hostility, similarly to rhetoric,

516 Ibid., 622.
517 Ibid., 620.
narratives can also be manipulated to demarcate or reinforce power differentiations in society.\textsuperscript{518} As Boswell states, “the narratives that swirl around a political dilemma … constrain agency by limiting the possible ways of viewing that issue.”\textsuperscript{519}

Despite this ability to manipulate and demarcate power differentiations, the use of narratives is “not just the preserve of political analysts and elites”\textsuperscript{520}; within a process of deliberation, narratives can be used by marginalised groups to provide a “counter-narrative” that challenges established discourses. As such, the use of narrative in deliberation that incorporates participants from different cultures can “secure a sympathetic hearing for positions unlikely to gain such a hearing otherwise. It is also well equipped to convey the bias in ostensibly universal principles and to represent new interests and identities.”\textsuperscript{521} Boswell asserts that this use of (counter-) narrative can expose power differentiations by leading to “more nuanced understandings of how voices can be excluded, silenced or misrepresented in such settings.”\textsuperscript{522} In this way, narrative can also be a tool to assess the current deliberative quality in a power-differentiated society. For example:

a deeper understanding of the contest of narratives in a deliberative system can reveal the extent to which everyone has an opportunity to take part in and understand a complex and meaningful debate, or to which that debate descends into sensationalism and vitriol. It can reveal the extent to which ideas are effectively transferred across spaces in a deliberative system, or to which they are marginalised in particular spaces. It can reveal the extent to which communication within and across deliberative spaces facilitates transformation, or to which it simply exacerbates tensions. And it can

\textsuperscript{518} Ibid., 621.
\textsuperscript{519} Ibid., 623.
\textsuperscript{520} Ibid., 620.
\textsuperscript{521} Poletta and Lee, “Is Telling Stories Good for Democracy?” 718.
reveal the extent to which the compromises made within and across deliberative spaces are sound, or to which they act as camouflage for elite control.

Narrative could provide a tool for Muslims to challenge government policy and cross-cultural hostility by providing “evidence” in the form of their own personal experiences. Indeed, narrative is important for Muslim Australian participants in that it could provide an avenue for alternative perspectives to begin to penetrate political discourse and broader public attitudes. In one example, for a number of Australian politicians in 2014, a “rational” discourse was that Muslim Australians wearing a burqa should be segregated in Parliament House. Narratives that could challenge this discourse include personal experiences of public abuse directed at Muslim women wearing burqas or Islamic facial veils that could be increased by implementing such a ban, and also by recalling that such a move could constitute discrimination, according to the Australian Constitution. Another narrative would be that such a move to segregate women wearing a burqa in parliament house could actually increase the risk of radicalisation. It is not only in this narrow context that personal narratives can become relevant. More broadly, sharing personal stories of public hostility towards Muslim Australians could challenge the government’s security discourse as a whole. This could help to illuminate the impact of counter-terrorism policy and anti-Muslim public

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523 As Chapter 1 of this thesis detailed, in 2014, members of the Australian government publicly announced plans to segregate Muslim women wearing a burqa who were viewing parliament’s Question Time. The proposal meant that Muslim women would for security reasons be required to sit in a room reserved for schoolchildren.


525 As described in Chapter 1, a 2011 ASIO report stated that such a move “would likely have negative implications, including increased tensions and distrust between communities, and providing further fuel for extremist propaganda, recruitment, and radicalisation efforts.” See: Barker, “Rebutting the Ban the Burqa Rhetoric: A Critical Analysis of the Arguments for a Ban of the Islamic Face Veil in Australia,” 191-218.
statements on Muslim communities that has occurred since 9/11. Another alternative narrative on this broader scale could be that instead of countering national security threats, the government’s blanket hard-line approach to countering terrorism could increase the risk of radicalisation.

Through the expression of personal (counter-) narratives, this communication tool could help to deconstruct the dominant discourses that reinforce political and social challenges for Muslim communities. Waleed Aly has commented on the importance of personalising government policy. Discussing how general perceptions of Muslim communities are currently limited, he argues: “If you imagine the community like a big house, the only time someone looks through the window is when something bad is happening, but there’s lots of things happening in the house you don’t see. The story of community is rich and complex, and you can’t get access to it via worrying snapshots.”

Omeima Sukkarieh, the manager of the Auburn Community Development Network and the Victorian state finalist for 2012 Australian of the Year, has said on the matter, “We only know what we really hear on TV or what we think we know, or what we perceive to know” about Muslims, but “it’s not until you really start talking to people and communicating with them, and engaging with them at a meaningful level that you start to realise that your perceptions are thrown completely out the window, and you’ve got to start afresh and start to learn what the diversity is within one particular community.” The Australia Deliberates initiative discussed in the previous chapter showed that when Muslims are given platforms to share their experiences on their own terms, non-Muslim Australians develop substantially

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different feelings about Muslim Australians and report increased understanding and acceptance.⁵²⁸

As such, relying solely on the exchange of rational argumentation may not be the most appropriate communication technique for genuinely expressing and addressing the political and social challenges facing Muslim communities. The difference between ensuring the visibility of Muslim participants in deliberative initiatives and actually listening to them is the key reason why I am contending that relying on rational argumentation alone can simply strengthen the marginalisation of Muslim voices, which is why certain deliberative designs for the communication principle are more appropriate than others. In this regard, I argue that organisers and facilitators should encourage the expanded use of communicative tools for participants during deliberative initiatives.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have argued that relying on rational argumentation alone in deliberative initiatives can be detrimental to Muslim Australian participants because the perception of what opinions are considered to constitute a rational argument can be controlled by the government and popular public opinion. Even before a point of view is put forward by a Muslim Australian participant, the “rationality” or otherwise of their opinion may have already been established. While the physical inclusion of diverse sections of minority groups is an important first step, it is crucial to be aware that including more people can merely be a pretence or an outward performance of consultation, without genuine intentions or follow-up. The inclusion of diverse people’s views and experiences for the purpose of genuinely informing policy-making is a much more complex and important task.

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⁵²⁸ “Australia Deliberates: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Australia Final Report Summary.”
I then argued that these concerns could potentially be alleviated if organisers and facilitators encourage the expanded use of communicative devices for participants during deliberative initiatives to try to ensure that Muslim Australian participants can, to an unprecedented level, share emotive personal experiences regarding the impact of government policy and perceptions of negative treatment by wider society. The example I use in this chapter is Iris Marion Young’s communication proposal and the tools of greeting, narrative, and rhetoric. I propose this design to provide a more open and accessible framework for Muslims to express their opinions during deliberative initiatives.

Although it represents an important development for deliberative initiatives, encouraging new and different communication tools between Muslim, non-Muslim, and government representatives is an insufficient means of addressing social and political challenges. The encouragement of expanded communication tools should be underpinned by specific aims that provide an overarching framework guiding the deliberative process, which is the purpose of the consequential principle. In the next chapter of this thesis, I will contend that if organisers and facilitators immediately and only focus on decision-making during deliberative initiatives, this could be to the detriment of Muslim Australians. A better way would be to – at least initially – prioritise listening and learning among Muslim, non-Muslim Australian, and government participants, rather than solely focusing on consensus. Prioritising listening and learning in deliberative initiatives is a relatively novel approach in deliberative democratic literature. As a further contribution to this literature, I will discuss

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a series of practical approaches specific to the Muslim and non-Muslim Australian post 9/11 context that can assist with implementing a focus on listening and learning across cultures.
Chapter 5

The consequential principle: What should Muslim, non-Muslim, and government participants aim to do when deliberating?

Introduction

In Chapter 3 of this thesis, I discussed who should participate in deliberative initiatives. I argued that there are particular Muslim and non-Muslim Australian citizens and government representatives who should ideally be targeted by organisers and facilitators. In Chapter 4, I described how Muslim, non-Muslim, and government participants should communicate with one another, and argued that organisers and facilitators should encourage the expanded use of more emotive and impassioned communicative devices for participants beyond rational argumentation. In this chapter, I will recommend what participants should aim to do when involved in the process; in doing so, the purpose of the final two chapters of this thesis will be to connect deliberative democratic initiatives with platforms for social and political change in Australian society.

Along with the principles of inclusion and communication, a third principle that details how deliberative democracy can empower marginalised voices is the consequential principle, which requires that deliberative initiatives must to some degree be consequential, and have some impact on society. Ideally, a deliberative process should have a discernible outcome and make a difference for participants and the social issues on which they have deliberated. There is a wide range of outcomes that could be considered to be consequential deliberation; for example, deliberation can be consequential for participants if it is used to directly inform government policy. Deliberation can also be consequential by broadening
views and enabling opinion transformation – listening to diverse voices that participants would not otherwise have had an opportunity to connect with.

Similar to the inclusion and communication principles, deliberative theorists have different interpretations of the consequential principle. These different interpretations can be broadly divided between scholars such as Rawls and Habermas, who argue that to be consequential, deliberative initiatives should focus on decision-making and consensus among participants, and researchers such as Iris Marion Young, Bora Kanra, and John Dryzek, who propose that deliberation does not always have to result in decision-making in order to be considered consequential and have a positive outcome. With this key difference in mind, the main question to be answered in this chapter is whether the sole purpose of deliberative initiatives among Muslim and non-Muslim Australians should be decision-making, or whether only aiming for a decision could undermine genuine cross-cultural engagement with Muslim Australians.

I argue that ideally, the deliberative process would increase non-Muslim participants’ acknowledgement and comprehension of the political and social challenges currently faced by Muslim Australian communities. This could in turn increase public pressure on the Australian government to explore ways to address and rectify these challenges and decrease negative attitudes towards Muslim Australians in broader society. A number of critical research analyses and tools such as Iris Marion Young’s communicative proposal, John Dryzek’s analysis of discursive democracy, and James Fishkin’s use of deliberative polls suggest there is potential for participants to empathise with grievances expressed by marginalised groups.530 Research studies such as the *Australia Deliberates: Muslims and

530 See, for example: Dryzek, *Foundations and Frontiers of Deliberative Governance*; Fishkin, *When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation*. Deliberative polls were discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis.
non-Muslims in Australia initiative have also discovered an increased understanding of Muslim grievances, however, this goal is not an automatic outcome of a deliberative process and would not happen in every case. A framework for the consequential principle must therefore be considered carefully. I argue that it could be to the detriment of Muslim Australians if organisers and facilitators immediately and only focus on decision-making during deliberative initiatives. This is because the pressure placed on participants to reach a decision in a particular timeframe becomes a burden and can benefit powerful, mainstream voices by yielding to their existing interests before a thorough comprehension of the challenges and their impact on Muslims can be grasped and understood.

I propose that during deliberative initiatives among Muslim and non-Muslim Australian participants, organisers and facilitators should at least initially prioritise cross-cultural listening and learning. Bora Kanra’s social learning model is one example I will use as a framework that seeks to foster cross-cultural understanding of the concerns of marginalised voices during deliberation. This model is a relatively novel approach to understanding the benefits of deliberation that places an emphasis on mainstream participants listening to and learning from the opinions and unique experiences of marginalised voices. This is a separate phase from a traditional decision-making purpose, and can be considered a consequential outcome without a decision necessarily being made. To conclude this chapter, I will then propose some practical ways that organisers and facilitators can practically implement cross-cultural listening and learning. Firstly, the purpose of deliberative initiatives should be explained to participants as, at least initially, a social learning exercise; the second approach is that the number of deliberative initiatives be left flexible and open-ended; thirdly, the degree of cross-cultural listening and learning should be empirically measured using

531 “Australia Deliberates: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Australia Final Report Summary.”
deliberative polls; and finally, after a period of time, organisers and facilitators should be prepared to shift deliberation towards decision-making processes among Muslim, non-Muslim, and government participants. Decisions can be made by more informed participants who are potentially enlightened after the social learning process. Indeed, I argue that without an initial listening and learning phase, it is less likely that comprehensive solutions to political and social challenges facing Muslim communities will be effectively developed.

**Potential problems with focusing on decision-making**

As discussed in Chapter 2, one of the key normative claims of deliberative democratic theory is its transformative potential for changing people’s opinions.\(^{532}\) The general consensus in the deliberative democratic literature is that exposure to different positions, interests, and grievances can make individuals revise their views and instead sympathise with marginalised groups in society.\(^{533}\) Deliberative democratic initiatives can thus “open up” people’s minds as a result of the cross-cultural “listening” and “learning” that occurs during the process. As Claus Offe has said, “Opinions and preferences are essentially in flux and constantly being *formed*, reproduced, validated, tested, abandoned, adapted, revised, upgraded and reflectively enriched in the light of new information and experience.”\(^ {534}\) Offe adds:

> the public can thus learn that this “will of the people” is highly malleable and contingent upon contexts of communication. This learning is driven by a demonstration effect: if people actually had the time, expertise, and appropriate communicative framework to think seriously and competently about issues on the

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\(^{532}\) See, for example: Fishkin, *When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation*.

\(^{533}\) See, for example: Dryzek, *Foundations and Frontiers of Deliberative Governance*; Young, *Inclusion and Democracy*.

\(^{534}\) Offe, “Crisis and Innovation of Liberal Democracy: Can Deliberation be Institutionalised?” 459.
political agenda, chances are that they would change their original views and preferences.\footnote{Ibid., 465.}

Iris Marion Young similarly identified how the process of deliberation can be enlightening for participants because they can change their opinions as they “gain new information, learn of different experiences of their collective problems, or find that their own initial opinions are founded on prejudice or ignorance, or that they have misunderstood the relation of their own interests to others.”\footnote{Young, \textit{Inclusion and Democracy}, 26.} In addition, according to John Dryzek and Simon Niemeyer, “Deliberation is supposed to change positions—not in every case, but at the least there is some kind of mutual accommodation. What we know from actually observing deliberation in practice ... is that, insofar as we can create these ideal kinds of conditions, there is indeed a good deal of change to the positions of individuals.”\footnote{John Dryzek and Simon Niemeyer, “What is Deliberative Democracy,” Centre for Deliberative Democracy and Global Governance, accessed June 5, 2016, https://deldem.weblogs.anu.edu.au/2012/02/15/what-is-deliberative-democracy/.} Even if participants do not change their opinions, research has shown that they are more likely to recognise other opinions as legitimate.\footnote{Poletta and Lee, “Is Telling Stories Good for Democracy?” 701.}

While such transformative benefits are desired, it is unrealistic to presume that these benefits will be an automatic outcome of deliberative initiatives. Similar to the principles of inclusion and communication, potential transformative benefits are largely dependent on the careful adoption of particular interpretations of the consequential principle. While there is a general agreement in deliberative democratic scholarship that deliberation can be consequential, a debate has emerged over whether it should necessarily reach consensus, or whether the only purpose of deliberation should be for decisions to be made. Traditionally, Rawlsian and Habermasian deliberative frameworks have proposed that for deliberative
initiatives to be consequential this requires rationally motivated consensus among participants and if this cannot be achieved by deliberation, an issue must go to a vote to reach a decision. More recently, Jane Mansbridge et al. (2010) have argued that while voting is not a deliberative act, in some cases, when preceded by deliberative procedures, it can be accepted as a legitimate component of democracy.\textsuperscript{539}

While Rawls and Habermas proposed that rationally derived decision-making is the only justified and legitimate outcome, other theorists have suggested that even without consensus, deliberation can still be consequential. A major concern for theorists such as Young, Dryzek, and Kanra is that only striving for decision-making in deliberative initiatives can be unauthentic and not representative of marginalised views. As opinions are formed and (re)evaluated during the process of deliberation, restricting the deliberative process by prioritising decision-making can, according to these scholars, leave cultural divisions unexplored and consequently undermine the transformative potential of deliberation. In this way, deliberative spaces can be controlled by socioeconomic and/or other powerful mobilised groups and because of this, the pressure to reach a consensus can undermine a genuine understanding of the grievances expressed by marginalised participants.\textsuperscript{540} Alison Kadlec and Will Friedman have recognised that in practice, “A consensus orientation tends to elide conflicts in such a way that the interests of the less powerful are rendered silent, invisible, or unthinkable.”\textsuperscript{541} Thus, by not allowing the deliberative process to mature organically, existing political and public attitudes can be strengthened, even if they are uninformed. Emphasising the competitive nature inherent within a deliberative process, Kanra highlights that

\textsuperscript{541} Kadlec and Friedman, “Deliberative Democracy and the Problem of Power,” 13.
“orientation towards decision-making undermines the role of cooperative interaction by triggering an inclination towards protecting the existing configuration of interests, thus leading to a strategic power struggle among participants.”

Another perspective on this debate is provided by agonistic theorists such as Chantal Mouffe, who believe that consensus can never be legitimate because of embedded power differentiations existing between different groups in society. Mouffe argues that rather than consensus, contestation should be the aim of a democratic process and that dissent should be embraced in deliberation because it is impossible to reach a consensus without exclusion. The demand for consensus does not result in just or legitimate democratic decision-making because “reason” and “democracy” are interpreted according to mainstream expectations of what is considered reasonable opinion. Mouffe identifies the “ineradicability of antagonism and the impossibility of achieving a fully inclusive rational consensus,” and states that “the ideas that power could be dissolved through a rational debate and that legitimacy could be based on pure rationality are illusions which can endanger democratic institutions.”

Therefore, putting pressure on participants to reach a decision in a particular timeframe can simply re-establish the existing interests of powerful voices, before a thorough comprehension of the challenges facing marginalised groups can be genuinely grasped and understood.

Without direct intervention by organisers and facilitators, there is good reason for Muslim participants to be concerned because previous consultations that have required consensual decision-making between Muslim Australians and government representatives have

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543 See, for example: Mouffe, “Deliberative Democracy or Agonistic Pluralism”; Mouffe, The Democratic Paradox.
545 Mouffe, The Democratic Paradox, 104.
prioritised the government’s position. As similarly relevant to the inclusion and communication principles before and during deliberation, the 2014 counter-terrorism consultations are also relevant to the consequential principle and show the importance of focusing on listening and learning between Muslim, non-Muslim and government participants.546 For example, despite the government’s claim that these consultations constituted equal and open discussion with Muslims, they were widely perceived by Muslim Australian participants as only having been set up to “rubber stamp” predetermined hard-line government policy.547 Then-Islamic Council of Victoria President Ghrraith Krayem argues that the government’s stated goal for initiating these consultations was “not genuine,” and that they only served to strengthen established security discourses that “gagged any engagement on the issues of real concern to the community.”548 Krayem claimed that the government dismissed any discussion of political and social challenges and “made no effort in any way to engage with us and understand, let alone address, our concerns.”549 These consultations were seemingly constructed around predetermined outcomes and were perceived by Muslim participants as “nothing more than a token gesture to tick the box marked ‘consultation’ before proceeding to do as he [then-Prime Minister Tony Abbott] pleases.”550 Recognising the restricted roles Muslims had before, during, and after the consultations, Krayem further detailed that “there was no consultation with our community before the proposals were developed, during the process of them being developed and clearly there is no genuine consultation intended now on the most fundamental issues in the changes.”551 In this way, consultation has arguably been aimed at re-establishing the

546 “Official Statement: Muslim Community Denounces Anti-Terror Law Proposals.”
547 Ibid.
549 Ibid.
550 “Press Release: Islamic Council of Victoria to Boycott Meeting With Tony Abbott.”
government’s security discourse and “signing off” its counter-terrorism policy, while overlooking the political and social challenges faced by Muslim Australians.

Following the 2014 consultations, a number of Muslim organisations including the Islamic Council of Victoria boycotted follow-up meetings with the government. A public statement signed by a number of imams, activists, leaders, community organisations, and student bodies from a variety of Muslim groups asserted that cross-cultural engagement with the government was only a tokenistic formality to ascertain their public approval, rather than an attempt to genuinely understand Muslim grievances. The statement read:

the Muslim community is being asked to sign off on laws and policies that have already been decided. Prime Minister Tony Abbott is merely seeking approval under the cover of consultation. He seeks that the Muslim community be on board because the policy entails the community policing itself. We refuse to provide such a rubber stamp on what is an unjust and hypocritical policy.552

Rather than acknowledging and expressing why Muslim participants were aggrieved, Abbott characterised the boycott as “petty” and “foolish” and said that Muslim participants were “offered” a dialogue with government. This comment further implies that consultations on matters that are shown to directly impact Muslim Australians should be considered a privilege granted by the government, rather than an equal right for all Australians citizens.553

Instead of assuring Muslims that their views are taken seriously and can influence

552 “Official Statement: Muslim Community Denounces Anti-Terror Law Proposals.”
government policy, Abbott replied, “You can hardly complain people aren’t talking to you and then when you offer them a talk, say sorry, we are not coming.”

The outcomes of previous consultations that have occurred between Muslim and non-Muslim participants can be considered detrimental in that a number of Muslim participants have perceived that their participation was merely a “rubber stamp” and was not intended to critically influence the outcome of consultations concerning the design of policy that does not target Muslims and fuel cross-cultural hostility. Such a closed agenda could also shut down future consultation opportunities because a decision was deemed to have already been made; through the perception that Muslims have been given an opportunity and have had “their say,” the agenda can seem to have moved on and the consultation requirement for the government to have been completed.

It is important to emphasise the arduous task facing Muslim Australians to challenge counter-terrorism policy and the anti-Muslim public statements made by some politicians. This is evident in that even recommendations by the government-implemented and -legislated Independent National Security Legislation Monitor (INSLM) about the severity of hard-line policy have previously been disregarded by the government. The INSLM was established by the Australian government in 2011 in accordance with the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor Act 2010 with the purpose of overseeing Australia’s counter-terrorism policies, and its specific purpose was to ascertain whether counter-terrorism policies have appropriate safeguards in place to protect democratic freedoms. In particular, this includes consideration whether “the laws contain appropriate safeguards for protecting the rights of

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554 Ibid.
individuals, remain proportionate to any threat of terrorism or threat to national security or both, and remain necessary.”

The first head of the INSLM, Bret Walker SC, held the statutory office from April 21, 2011 to April 20, 2014. In his 2012 INSLM report, Walker recommended the repeal of control orders, labelling them “not effective, not appropriate and not necessary.” Despite this recommendation, control orders were not repealed and instead, in 2014, control orders became easier to apply after the removal of a previous requirement for police to notify the attorney general of particular factors that would support not implementing a control order against an individual. Furthermore, in October 2015, the government lowered the age at which a person could be given a control order from 16 to 14. Contradicting Walker’s critical assessment of control orders, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull proposed that lowering the age for control orders was a necessary step in order to “protect against the incitement of genocide.” Evidently, it is concerning for Muslim Australians attempting to challenge government policy if an official legislated report is disregarded by the government, which also supports the case for at least attempting a social learning approach. Through cross-cultural listening and learning, the sharing of personal and emotive experiences from Muslim Australians could increase public pressure from non-Muslim Australians to address the government’s hard-line and seemingly targeted approach.

556 Ibid.
558 This was stipulated in: “Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Bill.”
Analogously to the previous chapter challenging the traditional prioritisation of rational argumentation, the widespread perception that consultation outcomes are predetermined stems from the key difference between Muslims being visible and being heard. Such a pressurised process of seeking consensus in a highly restrictive timeframe could in fact worsen the marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices by reducing their ability to identify the impact of government policy and public hostility, despite being visible in deliberation. To help avoid these concerns, I will argue that deliberative initiatives should at least initially prioritise a process of dialogical cross-cultural listening and learning. Bora Kanra’s social learning model is one example I will draw upon as a model that seeks to foster cross-cultural understanding to promote the concerns of marginalised voices during deliberation.

The benefits of listening to and learning from Muslim Australians

Scholars such as Bora Kanra have shifted from an outcome-only oriented focus of deliberative initiatives to emphasising the importance of the process of deliberation. Remaining largely outside the central focus of key theorists in deliberative democratic theory, Kanra argues that only striving for decision-making can undermine the other advantages and stages of deliberative democracy and has designed a “social learning model” that places an initial emphasis on listening to and learning about the needs of marginalised groups in deliberative initiatives. In doing so, Kanra recognises an analytical distinction between the phases of social learning and decision-making, calling this separation “binary deliberation.” Although these phases are not oppositional, he argues that they require a separate scholarly emphasis within deliberative theory. Therefore, to analyse the

effectiveness of deliberative initiatives, the social learning aspect of deliberation should contribute a category of analysis under its own merit.\textsuperscript{562}

In the framework of binary deliberation, Kanra proposes a two-phase model. The first phase is a process of social learning among participants in which “the aim of interaction between participants is to develop an understanding of each other’s claims. In other words, the purpose of deliberation becomes one of assessment and evaluation of other perspectives.”\textsuperscript{563} The second phase shifts into the decision-making sphere, whereby decisions are built upon, and influenced by, the learnings discovered by participants in the first phase. In addition to Kanra, in his research on mass-scale deliberation, John Dryzek has asserted the importance of decoupling the deliberation from decision-making to enhance genuine listening and learning among participants.\textsuperscript{564} Similarly, Kadlec and Friedman have argued that social learning is an effective method to deal with power differentiations. They propose that social learning encourages participants to:

reach across boundaries and explore multiple perspectives by focusing together on the examination of an issue from as many vantage points as possible. Such a problem-oriented approach seeks ongoing input and insight from the range of possible stakeholders in a process that clarifies serious differences as well as potential common ground, and suggests ways of moving ahead on an issue that are, if provisional, nevertheless practical and dynamic.\textsuperscript{565}

\textsuperscript{562} Ibid., 1.
\textsuperscript{563} Ibid., 2.
\textsuperscript{564} Dryzek, \textit{Deliberative Global Politics: Discourse and Democracy in a Divided World}, 47.
Kadlec and Friedman found that when exposed to listening and learning approaches, people show “on average, participants develop thoughtful, well-founded, judgments that compare favourably with not only with general public opinion, but also with expert judgment.”

Narrowing from this more general focus, Kanra specifically touches on the importance of social learning for cross-culturally divided communities and proposes that:

if societal divisions are linked to ethical disagreements in general, then the solution to the problems of divided societies has to be conceptualized first at the level of a social-learning phase of deliberation oriented to understanding. Therefore, it is more important at this stage that deliberation is driven by a commitment to understand the needs of others than that an agreement is reached at the end. In other words, deliberation oriented to social learning and understanding should be analytically distinguished from decision-making processes. Then the issues, related to ethical and cultural differences that constitute the background for any potential disagreement at the decision-making level, could be dealt with due consideration, ultimately increasing the quality of decisions.

In this way, a social learning model can maximise the potential for the transformation of preferences and increased understanding and empathy towards marginalised groups. The transformative benefits of deliberative democracy are thus a key component of a social learning approach. In Chapter 2, I described three categories of opinion transformation – deliberative construction, reconstruction, and confutation. After a social learning process, I argue that a transformation of the opinions of non-Muslim Australians and government

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participants would ideally take the form of deliberative reconstruction and/or deliberative confutation. Deliberative reconstruction refers to the transformation of discourses that exist prior to deliberation; as Niemeyer states, “Discourses can change during deliberation, where basic positions remain very similar, but are updated in light of new information or taking into account a point of view that directly challenges a particular discourse element.” Deliberative confutation, however, is particularly relevant for Muslim Australians to address political and social challenges. This takes place when “one particular discourse that tended to dominate the issue or at least cause greatest division [becomes] an issue that turned out not to be substantive and was thus discarded or its effect diluted during deliberation.” To this end, a social learning model could have greater transformative potential because it is specifically oriented towards listening to and learning from the grievances of marginalised groups. In this way, non-Muslim Australians can then become more informed about the political and social challenges faced by Muslim communities, which could lead to the development of ideas of how these challenges can begin to be redressed. Supporting this, a study by Dryzek and Kanra found that even Muslim and non-Muslim Australians with the most polarised positions are not beyond the reach of dialogue in deliberation.

Contextualising this emphasis on cross-cultural listening and learning, in the next section of this chapter I will propose which discussion topics should be on a deliberative agenda. In contrast to the government’s previous approach when consulting Muslims, I will argue that by utilising a social learning model, specific discussion topics on a deliberative agenda could have greater transformative potential because it is specifically oriented towards listening to and learning from the grievances of marginalised groups. In this way, non-Muslim Australians can then become more informed about the political and social challenges faced by Muslim communities, which could lead to the development of ideas of how these challenges can begin to be redressed. Supporting this, a study by Dryzek and Kanra found that even Muslim and non-Muslim Australians with the most polarised positions are not beyond the reach of dialogue in deliberation.

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568 See: Niemeyer, “From the Minipublic to a Deliberative System,” 1-31.
569 Ibid., 12.
570 Ibid., 13.
571 The term “informed” was used in the 2007 Issues Deliberation: Australia Deliberates initiative to describe Muslim and non-Muslim citizens who have engaged in a cross-cultural listening and learning process. As previous chapters have mentioned, after a process of listening and learning, informed non-Muslim Australians were more inclined to change their initial negative preconceptions about Muslim Australians.
initiative’s agenda should address the varying personal impact of targeted policy and cross-cultural hostility.

**What discussion topics should be on a deliberative initiative’s agenda?**

Muslim Australians have a narrow selection of set topics that they can publicly speak about, which includes reassuring the public that Islamic culture and practices are not undermining Australian values. Primarily, Muslims are compelled to reassure the public and politicians that Muslims do not pose a homogenous threat to Australia’s national security, and topics of discussion between Muslims and the government have overwhelmingly concerned terrorism and what Muslims can do to stop other Muslims from becoming radicalised. Moreover, the necessity of a hard-line counter-terrorism approach has been non-negotiable. Such a limited focus reinforces a political and public expectation for Muslim Australians to apologise for terrorist events.

Indeed, for a number of Muslim Australians, apologising for terrorist attacks has been the *only* circumstance in which they are provided with an opportunity for public expression. This restricted scope does not allow alternative narratives to penetrate dominant discourses and confines the public identity of Muslims to the microcosm of security discourses. Such a limited scope can mean that Muslims can feel under siege and, as Linda Briskman has argued, “forever obliged to explain the criminal actions of others in order to defend Islam while at the same time assuring their interrogators of their loyalty to Australia.”

Mohamad Tabbaa argues that apologising for events that have occurred in foreign nations is counterproductive because it “only further entrenches that terrorism is a Muslim problem;

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after all, why would someone apologise for something they were not responsible for?"575

Sharing his experience of the limited number of topics that are up for public discussion, Yassir Morsi states that:

I have, as a Muslim, a limited scope to discuss complex issues, and have to do so in thirty seconds. I have a choice between caricatures, and not much else. I am either the person who condemns the terrorists, or I will be condemned as the Muslim who does not condemn. We have to talk within the co-ordinates of a set speech about being Muslim.576

A specific example for Morsi is the emergence of the Islamic State group. Morsi explained that Muslim Australians can be given a public platform, but only to say “sorry” for actions by Islamic State that “they have neither committed nor supported.”577 Due to this, Morsi argues, “Islamophobia … is better understood as the continual debate about Muslims’ innocence (or otherwise) … It is marked by a demand they confess what resides within their thinking.”578 An example of this was the ABC *Lateline* interview between Wassim Doureihi and Emma Alberici referenced in the previous chapter. Doureihi was given a public platform but was only able to discuss the actions of Islamic State and not Hizb ut-Tahrir, for which he was originally invited on the program. It is also important to point out that since 9/11, there has been a tendency in the media and government consultation to discuss matters of terrorism with Muslims who have no background in counter-terrorism or security-related studies. This approach may only result in the creation of a perceived connection between terrorism and Muslims by implying that all Muslims – even if not considered radicalised themselves – know the intricate details of what motivates extremists and terrorists. Therefore, if any

575 Morsi and Tabbaa, “Disguising Islamophobia.”
577 Morsi, “Coercing Confessions: Islamophobia and the Demand for Muslim Loyalty.”
578 Ibid.
Muslim can be called upon to discuss the intimate details of terrorist motivations, the supposed connection between Muslims and terrorism remains uncontested.

While it may be necessary to discuss terrorism-related matters on some occasions, this should not be the only discussion point (and especially, not the only interaction point) between Muslims, non-Muslims, and government. Instead of a primary focus on national security and/or broader concerns with the compatibility of Muslims, topics of discussion should first focus on the various personal impacts of policy and public hostility on diverse Muslim Australians, such as by challenging the “rationality” of hard-line counter-terrorism policy by exposing its impact on Muslim Australians. Following the 2014 consultations, Ghraith Krayem argued that if then-Prime Minister Abbott was genuine about his desire to tackle the disenfranchisement of Muslim Australians and the risk of radicalisation, he needed to “be prepared to engage with us about Australian foreign policy, about the growing Islamophobia on the rise in this country, about the systematic and institutionalised discrimination young Muslims are subjected to amongst other factors.”

Supporting a shift of focus, Randa Abdel-Fattah states: “what is desperately needed here in Australia is a complete transformation of the way we address Islamophobia, starting not from its victims but from those who perpetrate it. It is time to stop interrogating Muslims and start interrogating their attackers.” She further argues that it is “only then can we begin a serious conversation with those who want genuine dialogue and offer constructive critiques.”

In addition, in her study of Muslim identities in Australia, Samina Yasmeen suggests that:

the excessive emphasis on radicalisation and the need to explain militancy … suffers from a problem: it focuses on the minority phenomenon. While the need to explain the

579 “Press Release: ICV has Withdrawn its Attendance From Today’s Meeting with Tony Abbott.”
580 Abdel-Fattah, “Hate Islam, Love Muslims? Exploring the Ambiguities of Islamophobia.”
581 Interview with Sahar Ghumkhor, 2013.
actions of the militant minority with the ultimate goal of providing security for the society is understandable, such an approach denies us the ability to appreciate the views and experiences of the majority of Muslims living in western liberal societies. A need exists to understand the dynamic and diverse nature of views, beliefs and meanings assigned to ‘being a Muslim’ by Muslims in western societies. This diversity of meanings needs to be linked to both local and international conditions, institutions and structures that introduce and/or reinforce these ideas and practices, as well as the multiple manifestations of resulting Muslim identities in western liberal societies. Through such an understanding, we can become aware of the areas that may contribute to radicalisation. But more importantly, such knowledge can help us identify positive spaces that can be capitalised upon to build and reinforce harmony and social cohesion.\textsuperscript{582}

As such, political and social challenges could be considered the baseline of critical enquiry, instead of consulting Muslims as to why Muslims are a terrorist threat. This initial focus could encourage more in-depth consideration of the costs and benefits of previous policy responses and potential future options. As discussed in Chapter 3, to help facilitate and maintain an alternative direction of discussion, a delegated Muslim Australian participant should be given the position of a facilitator during deliberative initiatives to help assure an environment in which participants listen to each other, and that discussion is not dominated by one or a few individuals. This could also limit the risk of certain individuals overtaking, controlling, or coercing Muslim participants; by driving the direction of discussion, Muslim participants could begin to challenge the “rationality” of government discourse by focusing on political and social challenges, in contrast to previous consultations in which the design of government policy has seemingly been non-negotiable and public hostility is not directly

\textsuperscript{582} Yasmeen, “Understanding Muslim Identities: From Perceived Relative Exclusion to Inclusion,” 2.
dealt with. A focus on social learning would be beneficial not only for Muslim Australians and their democratic freedoms but also for broader society because addressing these challenges help begin to address the causal factors that lead to an increased risk of radicalisation. The next section of this chapter will provide examples of how a cross-cultural listening and learning model could be practically implemented by organisers and facilitators as the initial aim of deliberative initiatives.

**Examples of practical approaches to prioritise listening and learning between participants**

The incorporation of a cross-cultural listening and learning model in deliberative initiatives could take many forms. The first factor is how the purpose of deliberative initiatives should be *framed* to participants. From the outset, Muslim and non-Muslim Australian participants would need to be notified by organisers and facilitators that the initiatives would initially be primarily focused on cross-cultural listening and learning, and would not immediately be a decision-making process. To maintain transparency and a clear direction, this initial prioritisation would need to be clearly identified during the open invitation calling for participants, as well as announced at the beginning of and reinforced during deliberative events. Participants would need to commit to this initial purpose, while at the same time, organisers and facilitators would need to implement clear rules for participation. The rules would need to be designed around producing a productive, open environment in which participants listen to each other, communication is non-coercive, and discussion is not dominated by one or a few individuals.

Involving participants in a process of listening and learning should begin *before* deliberation. To encourage listening and learning, at least a few weeks before the first deliberative initiative is scheduled to begin, organisers should provide participants with a
series of background reading materials specifically tailored to the political and social challenges faced by Muslim communities. These materials should also clearly outline the reasons why a cross-cultural listening and learning approach is important; for example, participants could be told that Muslim Australians are the minority group in Australia that experiences the highest degree of negative attitudes. As described in Chapter 1, between 2010-2016, the level of animosity towards Muslim Australians among their non-Muslim counterparts ranged from 22 to 25 per cent. Another reason a social learning approach is important is because previous deliberative initiatives with the government have been perceived by Muslim attendees as being unproductive, tokenistic, and only established to solidify the government’s existing stance on policy issues.583

A further way to introduce and encourage a social learning approach prior to deliberation would be for organisers to provide participants with relevant topical questions to consider before a deliberative event. Questions could focus on various contentious issues coinciding with the reading materials that exist between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians and are regularly discussed in commercial media and public commentary; for instance, “Should counter-terrorism policy maintain a commitment to democratic freedoms?” or “What impact would repealing Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act have on Muslim Australians?” Both Muslim and non-Muslim participants should be required to answer these questions before the deliberative process begins, and therefore an initial consideration for organisers and facilitators should be to clearly frame a social learning purpose for participants and provide them with ways to engage with it prior to deliberation.

A second approach that could assist in a practical application of social learning is that the number of deliberative initiatives that are planned should be left flexible and open-ended. Restricting the listening and learning process to a concrete timeframe in its early stages could undermine the legitimacy of any decisions that are reached at the end of the process.\footnote{See: Kanra, “Democracy, Islam and Dialogue: The Case of Turkey,” 515-539; Kanra, “Binary Deliberation: The Role of Social Learning in Divided Societies,” 1-24.} Therefore the number of initiatives and the time period in which they take place should not be predetermined by organisers because as opposed to a solitary exercise, the replication of a social learning process can incrementally increase the acknowledgement of Muslim grievances and deepen understanding of why they exist. As Kanra explains, “Repeated applications of this model could in turn influence the outcomes of future social learning phases. That is, each repeated application of the model could potentially facilitate the development of new and higher levels of social understanding.”\footnote{Kanra, “Binary Deliberation: The Role of Social Learning in Divided Societies,” 7.}

Consequently, organisers and facilitators should notify participants (both during the open invitations and reminding them at both the beginning and during deliberative initiatives) that the initiatives are an ongoing process, which could result in a series of deliberative events taking place over a number of weeks, months, or even years. Allowing the deliberative process to mature organically is crucial, given that since 9/11, government discourse has monopolised political and public attitudes about Muslim Australians. Sufficient time is, therefore, required for diverse Muslim Australian voices to begin to chip away at these dominant discourses and for non-Muslim participants to reconsider long-established positions that have become normalised and entrenched in mainstream Australian society.

A third way to implement social learning would be to empirically measure cross-cultural listening and learning among Muslim and non-Muslim Australian participants to
ascertain if and to what degree deliberative initiatives can increase public understanding of the political and social challenges impacting Muslim communities. One method of attempting to empirically measure the degree of listening that has occurred in deliberative initiatives is through a deliberative poll. As described in Chapter 2, this tool, developed by James Fishkin in the late 1980s, surveys participants before and after deliberation and compares the results to statistically measure the impact that the deliberative process has had on forming people’s opinions.\textsuperscript{586} As one example, the 2007 initiative \textit{Australia Deliberates: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Australia} used a deliberative poll to measure the effect that deliberation had on changing Muslim and non-Muslim participant’s opinions; the report described deliberative polling as follows:

a random, representative sample is polled on the issues. After this baseline poll, members of the sample are invited to gather at a single place to discuss the issues. Carefully balanced briefing materials are sent to the participants and are also made publicly available. The participants spend a good part of the weekend deliberating with each other in small group discussions run by trained moderators, weighing the costs and trade-offs of various policy options. They also engage in dialogue with competing experts and political leaders based on questions they develop in small group discussions ... After the weekend’s deliberations, the sample is asked the same questions again. The resulting changes in opinion represent the conclusions the public would reach under ideal circumstances, that is, when it has an opportunity to become

\textsuperscript{586} See: for example: Fishkin, \textit{When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation} and Fishkin, “Making Deliberative Democracy Practical: Public Consultation and Dispute Resolution.”
more informed and engaged by the issues and to work through the pros and cons of a variety of options.\textsuperscript{587}

The results from the Australia Deliberates poll showed “dramatic, statistically significant changes in views.”\textsuperscript{588} As outlined in Chapter 3, when comparing pre-deliberation polls to post-deliberation polls, it was discovered that non-Muslim Australians felt substantially different about Muslim Australians in terms of increased understanding and acceptance.\textsuperscript{589} As such, cross-cultural listening and learning should be empirically measured by deliberative polls and the results made publicly available online on government websites, Muslim organisation websites, and via other prominent media avenues.\textsuperscript{590}

The final approach I suggest is that after a period of time, organisers and facilitators should be prepared to shift deliberation into the decision-making arena. Although I argue for an initial listening-and-learning approach, this does not mean that decision-making among participants is undesired; as a separate phase, it is an important part of a deliberative process, particularly when partnered with cross-cultural listening and learning. There are two considerations for organisers and facilitators before deciding when to shift deliberations into a decision-making mode. Firstly, guided by outcomes from deliberative polls and in consultation with participants, organisers and facilitators should agree that a satisfactory

\textsuperscript{588} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{589} For example, as described in chapter 3, the number of non-Muslim Australians who believed Muslims made the nation a worse place to live dropped substantially, from almost one-third (28 per cent) in pre-deliberation polls to only 8 per cent in post-deliberation polls. Furthermore, only 17 per cent of people who interacted with Muslims at a deliberative workshop believed Muslims were still a threat to national security. This is in comparison to the 30 per cent of people who did not deliberate with Muslim individuals. The results also showed an increased level of scrutiny from non-Muslim participants towards the government’s hard-line counter-terrorism policies. For example, before deliberation, 34 per cent of non-Muslim Australians were in favour of using ethnic profiling techniques in counter-terrorism responses. This was reduced to 21 per cent after deliberation. Additionally, the number of non-Muslim Australians outwardly opposed to ethnic profiling increased from 48 to 60 per cent.
\textsuperscript{590} The importance of publicly promoting the outcomes of deliberative initiatives will be discussed in the next chapter of this thesis.
amount of listening and learning has been achieved by both Muslim and non-Muslim Australian participants; secondly, there has to be an actual issue or measure that can be decided upon.

There are a number of ways that “decisions” could be made. One example is the development of a public report for the government written by participants. This report could be a public response to counter-terrorism policy and could, after a process of listening and learning from the experiences of Muslim participants, feature recommendations about how participants believe counter-terrorism policy should be designed in the future. Participants could be given a range of potential options and viewpoints and be asked by facilitators to make recommendations or statements on government accountability, the impact of policy on democratic freedoms, or the importance of engaging with diverse Muslim voices during the development of policy. 591 Ideally, the government would give a commitment to table participant reports in parliament, and representatives from the Australian government would agree to respond both verbally and in a follow-up report and detail how the recommendations will be incorporated in future counter-terrorism responses. If any recommendations are disregarded, the government should have to explain why they were not included. This participant-driven approach would be different from previous examples such as the INSLM’s annual reports and the counter-terrorism recommendations supplied by the Australian Public

591 Providing a range of options for participants may prove particularly beneficial for capturing attitudes about marginalised Muslim communities. Interestingly, the Scanlon Foundation report on social cohesion suggested that the survey results indicating negative sentiment towards marginalised groups in society could be in part due to the “black and white” wording of a question, rather than a genuine reflection of public sentiment. An example of this was Australian citizens’ opinions of policy concerning asylum seekers. The report stated that “nine surveys between 2001 and 2010 using various methodologies asked respondents if they favoured or opposed the turning back of boats. The average for the surveys was sixty-seven per cent in support. In contrast, the 2010 Scanlon Foundation survey tested opinion by offering four policy options, ranging from eligibility for permanent settlement to turning back of boats, which in this context was supported by a minority of just twenty-seven per cent.” See: “Mapping Social Cohesion National Report 2016,” 42.
Service, including the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2013, and the recommendations devised by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet in 2015 because such recommendations would be jointly decided upon and written by informed citizens, rather than government agencies, and would incorporate an unprecedented level of feedback from Muslim Australians.

It should be mentioned here that a citizen-driven document responding to counter-terrorism approaches and their impact on democratic freedoms should also be considered important because Australia is currently the only democratic nation in the world that does not have a human rights instrument within federal legislation; although Australia has signed and ratified a number of treaties concerning international human rights, none of these are protected by Australian law. Human rights charters in Australia currently only exist at the state level, including the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 in Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory’s Human Rights Act 2004. International instruments to which Australia is a signatory, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, are not legally binding in Australia unless they are directly incorporated into legislation. This means that a human rights instrument is not necessarily taken into account when drafting Australia’s counter-terrorism laws. With nothing comprehensive or enforceable at the domestic level, the lack of a statutory human rights instrument removes

593 See: “Review of Australia’s Counter-Terrorism Machinery,” Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
oversight when implementing new and controversial laws, and the absence of a legislated bill of rights helps to explain why “Australian law after 11 September 2001 has restricted individual rights more than the equivalent regimes in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States.” In a comparative study of Australian and Canadian counter-terrorism policy, Kent Roach found that the Canadian response to terrorism has generally been more restrained and more reflective of democratic freedoms because Canada has a Bill of Rights. A deliberative, participant-driven document outlining recommendations for counter-terrorism policy could be one way to partially address this.

Of course, recommendations could focus on a broader range of government policy that impacts Muslim Australians. For example, Muslim Australians have seemingly been targeted regarding the potential repeal of Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act, as well as by a number of public statements by politicians regarding Sharia law, burqas, and Halal certification. In the same way, recommendations could be made about public hostility towards Muslims and how participants believe that social cohesion could be improved among Muslim and non-Muslim Australians.

While cross-cultural listening and learning will not necessarily result in universal understanding of Muslim Australian grievances, it could to some extent advance public comprehension of the political and social challenges currently faced by Muslim communities, and non-Muslim Australian participants and government representatives would have an opportunity to re-evaluate their own positions regarding Muslim communities in Australia. Of course, it is evident that increasing non-Muslim Australians’ understanding of Muslim

grievances will be an ongoing, long-term process; there is a risk that deliberative initiatives may be outwardly rejected or not taken seriously by both Muslim and non-Muslim Australians. For non-Muslims, one reason could be heightened tensions and fear of Muslims due to terrorist attacks that have recently occurred around the world such as the Paris attacks on November 13, 2015 in which 137 people died, the Orlando nightclub shooting incident in which 49 people were killed on June 12, 2016, the market attack Berlin on December 20, 2016 in which 12 people died, and the Manchester Arena attack on May 22, 2017, in which 23 people were killed. In yet another incident, on June 3, 2017, seven people were killed in an attack on London Bridge and Borough Market. On the other hand, Muslims may be too afraid to participate due to fears of a backlash. Therefore, an initial prioritisation of a cross-cultural listening and learning approach is to act as a preliminary step in addressing the political and social challenges faced by Muslim communities. As the final chapter of this thesis will discuss, these initial steps could potentially expand from deliberative initiatives to impacting broader society.

Conclusion

Along with the principles of inclusion and communication, a third factor explaining why deliberative democracy can help marginalised voices is the consequential principle, which outlines that deliberative initiatives must be to some degree consequential and have some impact on society. In line with this requirement, I argue that deliberative initiatives should be consequential in that they result in increased acknowledgement and understanding among non-Muslim Australians of the grievances felt in Muslim communities.

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However, as Chapter 3 identified, there are different interpretations in the deliberative democratic literature of the consequential principle that can be broadly divided between scholars who believe that to be consequential, deliberative initiatives should focus on decision-making among participants, while the critical interpretations of researchers such as Young and Dryzek assert that deliberation does not always have to result in decision-making to be consequential. These scholars also point out that the pressure to reach a decision in a particular timeframe can be detrimental to marginalised voices. Due to power differentiations between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians, the pressure to come to a decision could lead to prioritising the government’s goals, before a thorough and nuanced understanding of Muslim Australian grievances is achieved. Allowing the deliberative process to mature organically is crucial given that since 9/11, government discourse has monopolised political and public attitudes about Muslim Australians. Sufficient time therefore is required for diverse Muslim Australian voices to chip away at these dominant discourses and for non-Muslim participants to reconsider long established positions that have become normalised and much of the Australian public are conditioned to.

I have proposed that deliberative initiatives among Muslim and non-Muslim Australian participants should, at least initially, prioritise cross-cultural listening and learning, and have provided an example of a critical framework in Bora Kanra’s social learning model. This model does not single out decision-making as the immediate focus of deliberative initiatives but rather aims to foster a greater understanding of the grievances of marginalised voices by focusing on a separate phase of listening and learning. To conclude this chapter, I then argued that there are four practical measures that would assist in the implementation of a cross-cultural listening and learning approach for deliberative initiatives. The first approach concerns how the purpose of deliberative initiatives should be *framed* to
participants; from the outset, participants would need to be notified by organisers and facilitators that the initiatives would be, at least initially, restricted to cross-cultural listening and learning between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians and would not immediately include a decision-making process. The second approach requires that the number of deliberative initiatives be left flexible and open-ended. The third measure is that the degree of cross-cultural listening and learning should be empirically measured through deliberative polls. The final approach I suggest is that after a period of time, organisers and facilitators should be prepared to shift deliberation to decision-making, where relevant and necessary. Enlightened by the social learning process, decisions can then be informed by the experiences discovered by participants in the listening and learning phase, without which comprehensive solutions to the political and social challenges faced by Muslim communities are less likely.

Although this chapter has outlined a cross-cultural social learning model, I argue that listening and learning practices in deliberative initiatives among Muslim, non-Muslim, and government participants should not be held in isolation; efforts to increase listening and learning about political and social challenges should not remain within the microcosm of deliberative initiatives but rather expanded to potentially impact broader Australian society. In the next chapter, I will suggest a larger goal for deliberative initiatives – to “scale up” social learning approaches to increase the exposure and influence of Muslim Australians voices and ability to impact non-Muslim Australians in broader society. In this way, scaling up social learning can connect deliberative democratic initiatives with platforms for social and political change for Muslim Australians. As I will explain, however, in the current environment, this would be very complex and challenging.
Chapter 6

Scaling up Social Learning

Introduction

Using a new configuration of existing critical models, I have built a toolkit for deliberation that has the potential to increase the influence of Muslim voices. The principles and their applied models are reliant on one another; one is not enough without the incorporation of the others. The type of deliberative framework I propose is not necessarily only applicable to more formalised mini-public style events; it could also be relevant for broader sites of citizen engagement and government consultation. Thus, the proposals laid out here provide a general framework that could be tuned to a range of cross-cultural engagement sites, spaces, and institutions.

In the previous chapter of this thesis, I recommended a social learning model for the consequential principle that aims to foster greater understanding of the grievances of marginalised voices through a process of listening and learning. In this chapter, I will argue that ideally, attempts should be made at “scaling up” this social learning aim. The term “scaling up” is used by scholars such as Simon Niemeyer, Nicole Curato, and Carolyn Hendriks to mean that deliberative initiatives should not operate in isolation, and efforts should be made to ensure that the potential transformative benefits experienced by participants during a deliberative process can be reproduced in society at large. As I explained in the previous chapter, the reason why social learning aims are employed in deliberative initiatives is because they can maximise the potential for the transformation of

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preferences and increased understanding towards marginalised groups. This is also the reason why this thesis supports the scaling-up of social learning; expanding the scope and reach of social learning platforms could provide marginalised Muslim voices with more genuine opportunities to engage with and speak to mainstream post-9/11 Australian society. In this way, scaling up social learning offers considerable opportunities. For example, in addition to only the deliberative participants, more non-Muslim Australians could become informed about – and thus potentially more receptive and empathetic to – the political and social grievances of Muslim Australians. Ideally, this heightened public awareness could ultimately impact government decision-making and future policy design.

Although scaling up social learning is an important step in deliberative democratic research, it is also a highly complex and challenging task. There are a number of reasons for this. A controlled environment that can be strategically designed in the context of different types of deliberative forums, such as the deliberative design I have presented in this thesis, cannot easily be replicated in broader society600; citizens may not be interested in the matter or willing to engage in broader deliberation – or with the voices of marginalised groups. In addition, those with positions of power in society, such as government representatives, may not wish to participate, take the time to become informed, or commit to any of the outcomes that are proposed, particularly if the opinions of marginalised voices challenge dominant discourses.

While scaling up may not be applicable in some contexts, I will argue that a social learning focus is relevant and important in order to increase public awareness about political and social issues impacting Muslim communities. Furthermore, I argue that efforts to scale

up social learning should first employ the same critical interpretations I have suggested for
the inclusion and communication principles within deliberative initiatives. In this way,
scaling up should involve seeking platforms that include a greater diversity of Muslims and
promote the use of emotive communication tools that go beyond rational argumentation. As I
mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the three principles of inclusion, communication,
and consequence and their applied models are reliant on one another; one is not enough
without the incorporation of the others.

In this chapter, I will first describe what scaling up is. Then, I will argue that the
organisers and facilitators of deliberative initiatives should be responsible for efforts to scale
up social learning, and will outline some methods they could employ to do so. It is my
contention that in the short term, organisers and facilitators could disseminate information
about the outcomes and experiences of deliberation through controlled public statements and
online platforms. In the longer term, I argue, attempts should not necessarily be made to
physically replicate larger and more frequent deliberative initiatives, but support should
rather be given to replicate their social learning aims and link them with existing institutions
(such as media outlets and the government) and broader discourses in post-9/11 Australian
society. In this way, attempts should be made to build from deliberative initiatives, and not
necessarily build more.

While it could potentially prove complex to navigate the pathways through which the
experiences of Muslims can be disseminated in broader society and thereby listened to, the
design for deliberative initiatives that I have built is intended to provide the necessary
groundwork to support Muslim voices more broadly and act as a foundational springboard for
the application of social learning efforts on a much larger scale.
What is upscaling?

As discussed in Chapter 2, since the 2000s, there has been a systemic change in deliberative democratic research.⁶⁰¹ A deliberative-systems approach recognises a wide variety of formal, informal, and quasi-formal deliberative sites, spaces, and institutions that interact and operate in contemporary democracies. Deliberative initiatives are just one component of deliberative systems; other areas include the media, universities, schools, various private and non-private institutions, courts, and advocacy groups.

In research on deliberative systems, a number of scholars have argued that there are benefits to attempting to scale up deliberative initiatives so that they are not merely a series of disconnected and disparate one-off events. For example, Nicole Curato, John Dryzek, and Selen A. Ercan state that the scaling-up of deliberative initiatives can be “used as a tool to democratize other facets of political life and deepen the quality of political participation.”⁶⁰² To some extent, “mini-public experiments on deeply divided societies … [can] generate crucial lessons on how conversations in the public sphere can be organised in such a way that they aid in forging mutual respect and understanding across discursive enclaves.”⁶⁰³ Furthermore, Mark Warren and Michael MacKenzie have argued that to entrench its place in the broader field of deliberative systems, deliberative initiatives could even function as “trusted information proxies” that guide political judgements in mainstream society.⁶⁰⁴ However, as Simon Niemeyer has explained, the central challenge is that there “are numerous examples of deliberative mini-publics having little or no impact on political outcomes or …

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⁶⁰¹ See: Mansbridge et al., “A Systemic Approach to Deliberative Democracy.”
⁶⁰³ Ibid., 8.
on the opinions or votes of the wider public.” In some contexts, therefore, a broader application of deliberative initiatives may not be applicable or viable, and the same deliberative quality experienced within mini-public-style initiatives may not be replicable in wider society.

A major challenge with scaling up is reproducing the more controlled environments designed in deliberative forums. Niemeyer, for instance, has described how “the process of fully synthesising the underlying beliefs and desires of individuals (which themselves are transformed to some extent by deliberation) into preferences does appear to work best during the kind of group deliberation that is found in minipublics.” Citizens may not be interested in engaging or willing to engage in such deliberation on a broader social scale. Moreover, those with power in society, such as government representatives who are directly responsible for designing government policy, may not wish to be informed about the outcomes of deliberative initiatives, or actively participate in future initiatives.

Evidence of the successful scaling-up of deliberative initiatives is mixed, and the quality of a deliberative event does not necessarily guarantee its suitability for scaling up. There are examples of deliberative initiatives that have been designed with a high degree of deliberative quality internally, but have struggled to impact broader society. One such example was the Australian Citizens’ Parliament held in 2009 involving 150 Australian citizens, one from each House of Representatives constituency. Designed as a larger scale “think-tank” exercise, participants were asked to deliberate over a four-day period and devise recommendations on the following question: “How can Australia’s electoral system be strengthened to serve us better?” To prepare for the event, 9,000 invitations were sent out by

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605 Niemeyer, “From the Minipublic to a Deliberative System: Is Scaling Up Deliberation Possible?” 17.
606 Ibid., 15.
organisers across Australia, of which almost 30 per cent responded. After the four-day process, the participants came up with the following six key recommendations:

1. Reduce duplication across various levels of government by harmonising laws across state boundaries;
2. Empower citizens to participate in politics through education;
3. Improved accountability regarding political promises and procedures for redress;
4. Empower citizens to participate in politics through community engagement;
5. Change the electoral system to Optional Preferential Voting;
6. Encourage youth engagement in politics.

A few months after its conclusion, Dryzek described the parliament as a “world pioneer” due to its efforts to ensure broad inclusion by incorporating one citizen from each House of Representatives constituency, and because the participants had the ability to craft the agenda and were largely unrestricted in putting forward their proposals. However, Nicole Curato and Marit Böker have explained that although internally, the Citizens’ Parliament had a high deliberative quality, this was not replicated across broader society and as such, the parliament had a weak systemic impact. This was primarily because the recommendations sparked little deliberation and debate among citizens and government representatives outside the boundaries of the event, and there was also less media coverage than expected. It should be noted, however, that one reason for the lack of media coverage

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609 Ibid., 3.
610 Ibid., 3.
611 Ibid., 5.
613 Ibid., 180.
was the Victorian Black Saturday bushfires that occurred around the same time. This example shows that even when they display high internal deliberative quality, deliberative initiatives may not necessarily have a substantial impact on society at large.

Similarly, even if there is high internal deliberative quality among Muslims, non-Muslims, and government participants in the course of the deliberative framework outlined in this thesis, this does not mean that positive environments of cross-cultural listening and learning can be easily reproduced in the post-9/11 Australian society. Nevertheless, there are numerous reasons why the scaling-up of social learning should be proactively pursued. A prominent reason is the Australian government’s security discourse and counter-terrorism policy. For example, the government has an evident desire to exert a primary influence on broader public attitudes about national security, and hard-line security discourse and the magnification of a terrorist threat can be used as political capital to increase the public popularity of politicians. Therefore, without a strategic plan for scaling up deliberative initiatives, the government is unlikely to independently invite diverse Muslim voices to public platforms to genuinely challenge elements of security discourse and policy.

Another reason why scaling up Muslim voices is important is that although the broader Australian public may be critical of the government in certain areas, it appears that since 9/11, the government’s hard-line approach to counter-terrorism policy has received widespread support, despite its unprecedented impact on citizens’ democratic freedoms.

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614 From February 7 to March 14 in 2009, the Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria cost the lives of 173 people across the state.


616 As one example that was mentioned in chapter 1, a 2016 study of attitudes towards national security by the Australian National University found that 56 per cent of those surveyed believed that the government should be doing more to prevent terrorist attacks in Australia. See: “Attitudes to National Security: Balancing Safety and Privacy,” Australian National University, October 2016, 5, accessed January 2, 2017, http://politicsir.cass.anu.edu.au/sites/politicsir.anu.edu.au/files/ANUpoll-22-Security.pdf. Another example
and the fact that it could potentially lead to increased radicalisation. Such a widespread public acceptance of hard-line policy has meant that the government has been relatively immune thus far to serious public challenges to the design and enactment of novel and severe measures. Furthermore, the scaling-up of Muslim voices is important because political and public hostility towards the Muslim community is to a large extent underpinned by a perceived incompatibility of Islamic culture, values, and practices with Australian society. Therefore, efforts to scale up social learning could enable alternative perspectives to chip away at certain discourses that entrench the political and social challenges faced by Muslim communities.

It is important to mention recent research findings that suggest the mainstream Australian public could be willing to acknowledge the political and social challenges faced by Muslim Australians. For example, a 2016 nationwide study by the Australian National University found that 70 per cent of Australians did not believe that Muslims should be subjected to additional scrutiny by counter-terrorism authorities solely due to their religion. In addition, a 2015 study by the Centre of Muslim and Non-Muslim Understanding at the University of South Australia found that 70 per cent of non-Muslim Australians surveyed demonstrated little or no Islamophobia; only 10 per cent were highly Islamophobic, and 30 per cent undecided. The study also revealed that the more cross-cultural engagement non-Muslims had had with Muslims, the less Islamophobic they were, and the more empathetic they were to Muslim communities’ concerns; in addition, the more interaction participants had had

617 Examples of this were provided in Chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis.
618 Examples of how Islamic culture, practices, and values have been targeted by some Australian politicians were provided in Chapter 1 of this thesis.
621 More specifically, the study found that “respondents who have had some work contact or came into regular contact with Muslims are significantly more likely to feel completely comfortable having a Muslim as an
with Muslims, the less they suspected Muslims of being potential terrorists. These findings suggest that scaling up social learning with Muslim voices could potentially have a positive impact on relations between Muslims and mainstream Australian society.

It is also worth discussing a recent example of the scaling-up of marginalised voices in Australia that did result in increased public awareness of and engagement with the hardships of different groups. This example concerns the Australian government’s 2015 response to the Syrian refugee crisis. As a result of the Syrian civil war, it is estimated that 13.5 million Syrians are in need of humanitarian assistance. Having to respond to arguably the worst humanitarian crisis of the present day, on September 6, 2015, then-Prime Minister Tony Abbott made a public announcement that Australia would accept a certain number of Syrian refugees. However, these refugees would only be accepted within the nation’s existing humanitarian quota of 13,750. Four days prior to this announcement, the image of a drowned three-year-old Syrian refugee, Aylan Kurdi, was widely disseminated across media channels and social media. The image raised greater awareness of the migrant crisis and generated increased empathy for the Syrian refugees throughout the world.

In the aftermath of the appearance online of the image of Aylan Kurdi, tens of thousands of Australian citizens attended various pro-refugee rallies across a number of cities.

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immediate family member (81 per cent) than those who have no such contact (57 per cent).” See: Hassan, “Islamophobia, Social Distance and Fear of Terrorism in Australia,” 14.

622 Ibid., 6.


According to the Australian Greens member of parliament Adam Bandt, it was largely due to the mobilisation of public pressure that the government was “forced to respond” and felt it needed to readdress its controversial stance on Syrian refugees.\textsuperscript{626} The government announced that it would accept 12,000 Syrian refugees in addition to Australia’s existing humanitarian refugee intake. While 12,000 additional refugees is certainly not a ground-breaking political turnaround, in light of the millions of Syrian refugees still in crisis, it is an important change, given that Abbott had only days before refused to amend Australia’s existing humanitarian intake. This development resulted in the largest commitment to refugee intake by the Australian government in one year since World War II.\textsuperscript{627}

The public response to the photograph of Aylan Kurdi is an example of social learning being scaled up – when social learning is taken to mean listening to and learning about the experiences and hardships of marginalised others. While not a direct action of ongoing face-to-face engagement among citizens, this example is arguably functionally equivalent, if judged by its outcome. The image allowed the personal, emotive positions of asylum seekers and their traumatic experiences to influence the public domain to a greater degree than previously and its dissemination could be considered a social learning tool because it generated greater public interest in the government’s evolving Syrian refugee policy.\textsuperscript{628} The type of scaled-up social learning that I suggest for organisers and facilitators similarly aims to

\textsuperscript{626} Bourke, “Abbott Government Agrees to Settle 12,000 Syrian Refugees in Australia.”


\textsuperscript{628} It is important to note that suggestions were made by then-Prime Minister Tony Abbott, then-Communications Minister Malcolm Turnbull, then-Senate leader Eric Abetz, and then-backbencher Corey Bernardi that Christian Syrian refugees should be prioritised over Muslim Syrian refugees. This suggestion met with a substantial public backlash. Furthermore, the 2016 Scanlon Report on social cohesion found that in terms of the Liberal government’s suggestion, 69 per cent of respondents disagreed and thought no preference should be given. And, when asked whether “some of these refugees from the Syrian conflict came to live in your community, do you think they would be welcomed, or not?” 66 per cent stated that they would be welcome, and only 19 per cent said they would not be welcome. See: “Mapping Social Cohesion National Report 2016,” 46-50; Jackson Gothe-Snape, “Persecuted Minorities’ Pledge Delivers Christian Refugee Boom,” SBS, February 27, 2017, accessed March 22, 2017, http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2017/02/23/persecuted-minorities-pledge-delivers-christian-refugee-boom.
show the human side of the political and social challenges faced by Muslim Australians at a broad societal level. While the case of Aylan Kurdi and the increased intake of extra Syrian refugees is not intended to provide definitive evidence that the Australian public will become more empathetic towards the political and social challenges impacting Muslim communities, it does show the potential for greater public empathy towards the hardships of marginalised groups after the public becomes more informed about that group. Higher levels of public awareness could then force governments into a reassessment of certain policies.

**How could deliberative initiatives be promoted among mainstream society in the short term?**

In the previous section, I discussed what scaling up entails and provided the example of an occasion when the scaling-up of social learning has helped encourage public criticism of controversial policies; in this section, I will outline who should be responsible for this scaling-up, and offer some short-term methods that could support it.

The primary political agents who should be responsible for supporting the scaling-up of social learning are the organisers and facilitators of deliberative initiatives. As described in Chapter 3, these organisers and facilitators could be a selected group of Muslim Australians and/or Muslim organisations. It is logical to look to the organisers and facilitators for this task given that they would be Muslim Australian, and thus likely have more intimate knowledge of the political and social grievances felt in Muslim communities. Furthermore, they would

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It is also worth mentioning that in terms of the “profile” of Muslim Australians and Syrian refugees, there are a number of correlations that could suggest possibilities for the broader public to engage with the voices of Muslim Australians and empathise with the political and social challenges they face. Firstly, at a foundational level, both groups are marginalised voices in Australian society. Secondly, asylum seekers more broadly have on a number of occasions been associated with national security threats by the Australian government. Australia has also adopted a hard-line refugee and asylum seeker policy. Furthermore, hostility towards both asylum seekers and Muslim Australians has frequently been tapped into by certain politicians, while a significant proportion of the Australian public also has negative perceptions of asylum seekers, particularly “boat people.” See, for example: Jacqueline Laughland-Booy, Zlatko Skrbis and Bruce Tranter, “Toleration or Trust? Investigating the Acceptance of ‘Boat People’ Among Young Australians,” *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 49, no. 2 (2014): 195-217.
have first-hand experience of running deliberative initiatives and would comprehend the major positions, interests, and grievances. Of course, while initial responsibility to seek out ways and media platforms for scaling up could lie with these Muslim Australian organisers and facilitators, it could also be beneficial to connect with and incorporate different bodies to assist in the dissemination of information to larger audiences. This could include, for example, various media outlets, advocacy groups, private or not-for-profit organisations, research organisations, universities, or certain government bodies or their representatives.

For these organisers and facilitators and other relevant interest groups, the first step in scaling up social learning could be to publicly detail what has occurred in the deliberative initiatives. This sharing of information could establish a foundational precedent for more large-scale social learning efforts and in doing so, organisers and facilitators should initially aim to control their own message in the media regarding the experiences and outcomes of the deliberative initiatives; instead of waiting for media outlets – which may be prone to misconceptions – to develop their own analyses of deliberative initiatives. To do this, organisers and facilitators could nominate a range of Muslim participants to issue a series of official verbal and written public statements about their deliberative experiences across different media platforms during and immediately after deliberative initiatives. Given that for pragmatic reasons, not all deliberative participants can publicly present findings and experiences, a cross-section of “active participants” could be chosen by organisers and facilitators as spokespeople, who have the responsibility and public-speaking capabilities to share stories and experiences from a range of diverse Muslim participants.

If possible, government representatives should also be responsible for scaling up knowledge of what has occurred in deliberative initiatives. Ideally, this could involve information being publicly relayed by government representatives as part of their role as
active listeners. As described in Chapter 3, being designated the role of active listeners, government representatives who participate in deliberative initiatives would be required to pay close attention to Muslim Australian speakers and repeat in their own words what Muslims have been discussing regarding the social and political challenges they have experienced since 9/11. Then, widening the audience scope, this role of active listener should not only be experienced by citizens participating in deliberative initiatives, but the principles of active listening could also contribute to the scaling-up process in the form of public statements from the government representatives. This does not mean that government participants would be required to publicly state anything that is not in their interest, because they would be unlikely to do that. Instead, they could discuss their experiences as active listeners during the deliberative process, which would ideally include reflection on the experiences of the Muslim participants. The issuing of public statements by government representatives is important, when analysing the impact that previous public statements have had on Muslim communities since 9/11. Muslim Australians can believe that very differently to the role of active listener, uninformed public political statements by politicians implicating Muslims as a national security threat and incompatible with the values of a democratic society strain their relationship with non-Muslim Australians.630 Government representatives could also publicise deliberative initiatives across different media channels prior to the start of the deliberation process. According to Alison Kadlec and Will Friedman, this type of public endorsement would mean that government representatives would be more likely to “take the results seriously, or … be made to do so through public pressure.”631

630 See, for example: “Social Implications of Fearing Terrorism: A Report on Australian Responses to the Images and Discourses of Terrorism and the Other.”
In the short term, organisers and facilitators could also promote the experiences of deliberative initiatives through a dedicated website. This website should have the function of disseminating background information concerning why deliberative initiatives have been established, an area describing the process of deliberation, submissions from academics detailing political and social challenges and the benefits of deliberative democracy, and public profiles of the deliberative participants. A dedicated website could also take into account the various personal impacts of policy and public hostility towards diverse Muslim Australians, and publish results from deliberative polls and any citizen-driven public reports that are developed. As suggested in the previous chapter, facilitators could request participants to collectively develop a public report for the government that could respond to counter-terrorism policy and, after a process of listening and learning from the experiences of Muslim participants, could feature recommendations from participants concerning how counter-terrorism policy should be designed. In addition, such reports could look at a broad range of government policies that impact Muslim Australians. For example, Muslim Australians have seemingly been targeted regarding the potential repeal of Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act, and by public statements by politicians regarding burqas and Halal certification. In the same way, a public report could consider the perceived public hostility shown towards Muslim Australians and describe how participants believe social cohesion could be improved between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians.

Of course, the development of such a website does not guarantee that people would visit it, or read the material published on it. It would, however, provide an additional avenue for the publication of cross-cultural, citizen-driven information and experiences, which has been rare in post-9/11 political discourse. In this way, the publication of online resources through a central, dedicated, and moderated website would mean findings from deliberative
initiatives are made permanent, referenceable, and readily accessible to all communities. Such records could potentially make the government more accountable to Muslim participants and advocacy groups regarding any commitments made during the deliberative process. For example, government representatives could make a commitment to table reports in parliament or publicly respond to recommendations devised by participants in the reports, if this is what the participants choose to do. While not guaranteeing a wide readership, it would be more difficult for the government to ignore citizen-driven recommendations or the results of deliberative polls if they are easily accessible for interested audiences.

These ideas for short-term methods of communication are intended to be a first step to improve the public awareness of and outcomes from deliberative initiatives. Sharing this information could arguably establish a foundational basis or precedent to stimulate and accelerate attempts by organisers and facilitators to support social learning in post-9/11 Australian society.

**Longer-term goals and their challenges**

**Self-representation in the media**

In the longer term, organisers and facilitators should not necessarily assume that scaling up social learning requires the ongoing creation of larger deliberative initiatives incorporating more citizens; instead, the purposes and aims of deliberative initiatives, rather than their physical construction (because realistically, not every citizen can participate), is what should be scaled up and embedded within existing discourses. In this way, moving beyond the microcosm of deliberative initiatives, organisers and facilitators can attempt to transform how Muslim Australians contribute to public platforms and debates in order to communicate with wider audiences and attempt to challenge and reform post-9/11 discourses
(such as security discourses) that maintain political and social challenges, rather than operating outside them.

One longer-term goal for scaling up social learning could be to engage with broader deliberative systems – and the media is an important part of this. Upscaling social learning through various media channels can provide an unprecedented platform to address misconceptions about Muslim communities. In this way, one longer-term goal could be to provide more genuine opportunities for Muslims to represent themselves and express their political and social realities, experiences, and grievances across different media platforms and thus provide opportunities to interact with different institutions, spaces and sites within broader deliberative systems. For example, in the public space, this can include politicians, interest groups, academics, journalists and citizens. In the empowered space, this can include parliament and other formalised decision-making institutions that can be influenced by those in the public arena. 632

While the media forms a crucial part of deliberative systems, as Jane Mansbridge et al. have explained, it has generally not played a substantial role in deliberative democratic theory. 633 Mansbridge et al. argue that this is an incomplete approach because the media should be considered a key opportunity to scale up deliberative initiatives. In essence, the primary purpose of the media is to inform citizens and act as a potential vehicle for political inclusion by presenting different opinions. This is important because, as Mansbridge et al. suggest, few citizens would “read the transcripts of parliamentary and committee debates or even know what other citizens in other parts of the country are saying.” 634

634 Ibid., 20.
Using the media to ensure the self-representation of Muslims presents evident challenges. Indeed, a number of Muslim Australian commentators have stated in the media that they believe Muslims are usually portrayed in the media as a threat to Australia’s national security. Contrary to the aims of social learning, the media often reinvigorates and perpetuates broader Orientalist interpretations that Islamic practices are incompatible with democratic societies. The 2007 *Australia Deliberates: Muslims and non-Muslims in Australia* initiative found that 94 per cent of non-Muslim Australians believed the media played a role in straining relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in the country. Similarly, 96 per cent of Muslims felt that the media had a negative impact on Muslim-non-Muslim relations.

Although many media platforms have questioned Muslim compatibility with Australian society, as Scott Poynting and Barbara Perry have stated, not all media outlets are “monolithically Islamophobic.” Organisers and facilitators could work with certain media platforms to provide Muslims with opportunities to represent themselves through an in-depth navigation of current political and social issues. Initially, this could include Muslims who have participated in deliberative initiatives while in the future, this would ideally be expanded to incorporate a greater diversity of Muslims across Australian society.

In order to be persuasive to the public, it is important to state that, similarly to deliberative initiatives, a social learning aim should be underpinned by critical interpretations

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637 “Australia Deliberates: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Australia Final Report Summary.”

638 Poynting and Perry, “Climates of Hate: Media and State Inspired Victimisation of Muslims in Canada and Australia since 9/11,” 161.
of the principles of inclusion and communication. As an example of the inclusion principle, a social learning approach through media self-representation should include the oft-neglected voices of Muslim women and young people, as well as Muslims perceived to be more radical. Including these voices in a process of self-representation could potentially challenge misconceptions and persistent post-9/11 stereotypes about these groups. For example, being able to represent one’s own story and experiences could challenge the engrained perception among many non-Muslim Australians that Muslim women are passive and submissive, that Muslim young people are aggressive, and that “radical” voices are irrational, terroristic, and are inherently anti-Western and anti-government. In line with this, expanding the use of communicative tools beyond rational argumentation is important to cultivate social learning and ensure that diverse Muslim Australian voices can persuade non-Muslims to empathise with their grievances by sharing emotive personal experiences of the impact of government policy and perceptions of negative treatment by wider Australian society.

While the purpose of self-representation would be different for different Muslim voices, as a response to the research problem described in this thesis, one primary purpose of utilising the inclusion, communication, and consequential principles on a larger scale could be to deconstruct the various political narratives that sustain the political and social challenges faced by Muslim communities on public platforms, not just in deliberation. Despite the fact that Muslims can face a challenging environment, Richard Jackson has argued that dominant security discourses in Western nations can be deconstructed:

Discourses are never completely hegemonic; there is always room for counter-hegemonic struggle and subversive forms of knowledge. In this case, not only is the discourse inherently unstable and vulnerable to different forms of critique, but the continual setbacks in Iraq and Afghanistan, ongoing revelations of torture and
rendition and increasing resistance to government attempts to restrict civil liberties suggest that the present juncture provides an opportune moment to engage in deliberate and sustained critique.\footnote{Jackson, “Constructing Enemies: ‘Islamic Terrorism’ in Political and Academic Discourse,” 425.}

As discussed in Chapter 4, a longer-term goal would be for a broad diversity of Muslim Australian voices to directly contribute to and influence discussions \textit{about} Muslim Australians, and diverse Muslims should be recognised as Australian citizens who can openly contribute to discourse on matters that directly impact them. This would include their opinions on the impact of counter-terrorism policies and their direct experiences of public hostility. It could also include other policy issues and topics of contention fuelling division in Australian society such as the wearing of Islamic facial veils, Sharia law, and Halal certification. A promising recent example was a series of in-depth interviews and family photographs with nine Muslim Australians published in \textit{The Age} and \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald} in 2016. The purpose of these interviews was to examine different experiences of Islamophobia and discrimination since 9/11 from different, “ordinary” Muslim voices.\footnote{“Australian Muslim Voices,” \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}, accessed May 12, 2017, http://www.smh.com.au/interactive/2016/australian-muslim-voices/muhammed/} 

Beyond this initial focus, there could be a broader aim for organisers and facilitators to support Muslim self-representation by enabling Muslims to contribute to discourse and influence public attitudes on issues that impact Australians \textit{as a whole}, rather than only issues that relate to Muslim communities to ensure that non-Muslims become more informed about and thus potentially more receptive and empathetic to their political and social grievances. This would be for both the well-being of Muslim Australian communities and to potentially decrease the risk of future radicalisation. While this is an ideal goal, as John Parkinson noted in his analysis of deliberative systems, both traditional and new media have their own
incentives and filters that could undermine such goals for self-representation; self-representation is difficult, when it can be subjected to editing and subjective framing by the media.

As I will now describe, ideas and ideal platforms for diverse Muslim Australian voices could be established by organisers and facilitators after first understanding the nuances of including more Muslims in the media. These nuances once again draw on the difference between Muslims being visible and being heard. Firstly, for Muslims to represent themselves on public platforms, social media may seem like an obvious tool; social media platforms were created to enable people to represent themselves through user-generated content and the sharing of information. However, while this may be true in the creation of a “personal profile,” it is not as true for persuading others to agree with your social and political messages. Nevertheless, there are benefits to social media. According to Parkinson, “citizen journalists are now much more effective at communicating perspectives and telling stories that traditional media, for various reasons, do not cover well; or as in the Arab Spring, set the agenda for traditional media, formal institutions, and informal deliberation alike.”

However, at the same time, there are reasons to be cautious; as Parkinson has stated, it is the “proliferation and fragmentation of media that makes it relatively easy to reach particular groups, but much harder to reach citizens in general without significant resources going into attracting attention to a story.”

Effective self-representation on social media could pose a number of challenges for marginalised Muslim voices. One challenge is that although positive, supportive messages can be easily disseminated, counter messages can be put into circulation just as easily. This is

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642 Ibid., 165.
643 Ibid., 165.
particularly relevant because many non-Muslim Australians already have negative attitudes towards Muslim Australians, as shown by, for example, the rise of anti-Islamic groups such as Reclaim Australia and the United Patriots Front, which largely spread their far-right political messages and garner like-minded supporters through their online social media presence. A connected issue is that social media platforms often use algorithms to tailor sites or media stories based on users’ previous searches or interests, so a risk with solely utilising social media to discuss political or social issues is that these messages could “preach to the converted,” while the purveyors of counter messaging continue to proliferate their messages to their own supporters. In this way, social media may not necessarily make a positive contribution to up-scaling alternative narratives to established discourses. In addition, a study by Keith Hampton, Inyoung Shin, and Weixu Lu found that social media can silence people regarding political issues outside social media, given that “with the exception of those with very strong attitudes, social media generally have a negative impact on the willingness of people to join a political conversation in face-to-face contexts.”

Therefore, despite appearing to be an applicable method for mass communication, social media could prove to be a tool leading to further polarisation. This is not to say that social media cannot be used to the benefit of diverse Muslim voices and increase their presence on public platforms, but rather to caution against the use of this tool alone as the medium of cross-cultural communication and self-representation.

The next consideration I will discuss is that positive external messaging is different to self-representation. In this way, both right wing and more progressive orientations on the political spectrum can undermine the goal of having a diverse range of Muslims to represent themselves. Indeed, it is not only prominent right-wing and conservative commentators in

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Australia (such as columnists Andrew Bolt and Miranda Devine and radio host Alan Jones) who could undermine the voices and political agency of Muslims but in some cases, commentary from progressive commentators can have the same effect. The differences appear stark: right-wing commentators can frame Muslim Australians as an enemy, whereas more progressive commentators can frame Muslims as the government’s prey, victims, and needing protection. However, both these common forms of commentary in Australian media outlets can supress Muslim voices; the exclusion of Muslim voices can also be, somewhat surprisingly, perpetuated by those who believe they are helping marginalised groups and solidifying more positive cross-cultural relations.

One example of this was the “I’ll ride with you” hashtag campaign following the 2014 Lindt café siege. The hashtag went viral on the social networking sites Twitter and Facebook. On the former, within hours, nearly 150,000 people had “retweeted” the hashtag. Following the events at the Lindt café, the campaign concerned non-Muslim Australians offering to meet Muslim women on public transport if they felt vulnerable and afraid to travel alone in fear of a public backlash and verbal or physical attacks. For many general Muslim and non-Muslim Australian citizens, this gesture was a powerful sign of solidarity across cultural boundaries. Indeed, while this campaign was positive, compared to treating Muslims as enemies, it is not necessarily a practical example of Muslim self-representation. Such a campaign has the risk of further positioning the white mainstream Australian as – if they choose to be – the protector of a vulnerable Muslim woman. The campaign arguably framed Muslim women as voiceless, or incapable of having a voice unless they are spoken for. An additional risk is a perception that periodic campaigns such as this imply to the mainstream society that Muslims have been “saved”; this could lead to a widespread perception that Muslims no longer need to raise concerns about political and social challenges because
mainstream Australians have spoken for them and “done their part.” This, therefore, does not substantially encompass what I propose is required for Muslims to represent themselves on public platforms.

In this way, asserting that Muslims may need protection and to be spoken for by progressive non-Muslim Australians could limit the political agency of Muslims and their ability to self-represent. Once again, this highlights the difference between the visibility of Muslim Australians and their being listened to and heard. It is these nuances that can be easily overlooked. This is also connected to a point made in Chapter 4, that the media – and even advocacy groups – can attempt to improve cross-cultural relations by “humanising” Muslims. As previously described, I use the term “humanising” to refer to non-Muslim Australians attempts to make Muslims appear more humane and civilised and show how relatable Muslims can be to mainstream society. Rather than exploring cultural differences and rectifying the misconception that Muslim Australians are a monolithic, homogenised group, humanising Muslims has generally involved displays of how “civilised” Muslims are by showing how similar to the mainstream they can be. While perhaps well-intentioned, such attempts to ethnocentrically humanise Muslims can be counterproductive if solely confined to the standards expected by mainstream Australians. Of course, while finding common ground among participants is important and desired, solely basing this on the degree to which Muslims can “assimilate” and “act” like the mainstream may not enable genuine consideration of their political and social concerns. Thus, instead of solely advocating the sharing of more positive stories about Muslims on various media platforms by non-Muslims, it should be kept in mind that this is not the same as Muslims representing themselves on public platforms.

645 See, for example: Alarian, “How Attempts to Humanise Muslims Often Do the Exact Opposite.”
A third consideration for the self-representation of Muslims in the media is that public platforms should not limit their invitations to “popular” Muslims or the “usual Muslim suspects.” In line with Chapter 3’s recommendation to expand inclusion to incorporate more Muslims in deliberation, these “usual suspects” can be thought of as Muslims who are widely considered by non-Muslim Australians to be representative of all Muslims. One notable example is Waleed Aly, a popular academic and radio and television personality who has featured on a number of national media platforms, including the radio national program Big Ideas and the news entertainment program The Project. In 2016, Aly won the Australian television award the “Gold Logie,” an award given to the person publicly voted to have the “best personality on Australian television.”

Given his role as a television personality, combined with his academic background studying terrorism, Aly is arguably perceived by many non-Muslim Australians to be representative of all Muslims and that his informed view as an academic mirrors other Muslims’ views. However, not all Muslim Australian academics share Aly’s views. Yassir Morsi, for example, has been an ongoing critic of Aly, and has stated that he distances himself from the grievances felt by a number of Muslim Australians. For example, in response to the 15 September 2012 Sydney protests,646 Morsi wrote an article in which he claimed that a previous article Aly published had unfairly attacked the protestors by referring to them as seeking a “shortcut to self-worth.”647 By depicting the protestors in this way, Morsi argued, Aly denied the protestors their political agency.648 Similarly, Nora Amath’s study on various Muslim civil society organisations found that in the years after 9/11, many

646 As referenced in chapter 3, the 15 September 2012 protests in Sydney involved hundreds of Muslim Australians protesting in response to an amateur online film titled Innocence of Muslims denigrating the Prophet Muhammad.
648 Ibid.
Australian Muslims felt that they could not trust some Muslim organisations and questioned whether they were “spies,” “moles,” or “sell-outs” by seemingly acquiescing to government demands and expectations. Through these findings, the nuances of inclusion become even more complex; in some instances, not even representative organisations can represent all the grievances felt by Muslim communities. Thus, there is not only division among Muslim and non-Muslim Australians but among Muslims themselves, and these opinions need to be accommodated across various public platforms.

By concentrating on a select few Muslims, there is an additional risk that non-Muslim Australians may come to believe that Muslims are being spoken for and represented. As Yassir Morsi has said, this could mean that Muslim grievances such as those felt by protestors in Sydney in 2012 are dismissed as volatile reactions and not examined. Therefore, greater efforts are required to first acknowledge that there are different opinions, and then provide public platform opportunities for more diverse Muslim actors. In saying this, there are evident issues with regards to practicality in including all the various Muslim voices. The point is, however, that non-Muslim Australians should not presume that one set of opinions, interests, and grievances is universally shared and accepted by all Muslims.

650 In Yassir Morsi’s new book, he mentions that Muslim Australian voices can be trapped and unable to openly share their opinions in post-9/11 societies. Morsi’s book includes a chapter on the “fabulous mask” of Waleed Aly. See: Yassir Morsi, Radical Skin, Moderate Masks: De-radicalising the Muslim and Racism in Post-Racial Societies (United Kingdom: Rowman and Littlefield International, 2017).
651 In their study of Muslim Australian active citizenship, Mario Peucker, Joshua M. Roose, and Shahram Akbarzadeh have argued that a schism has developed in Muslim communities and that “over the past decade some Muslims have accumulated socioeconomic capital and resources, allowing them to be civically and politically engaged citizens, but this has not changed the persistent picture of socioeconomic disparity. Moreover, the data analysis points to a growing schism within the Muslim community. A substantial proportion of Muslims have failed to climb the socioeconomic mobility ladder and have remained – or have become even more – socially marginalised and disenfranchised.” See: Mario Peucker, Joshua M. Roose and Shahram Akbarzadeh, “Muslim Active Citizenship in Australia: Socioeconomic Challenges and the Emergence of a Muslim Elite,” Australian Journal of Political Science 49, no. 2 (2014): 282.
More engagement with government

Because most deliberative initiatives struggle to ensure that they are recognised and influence institutions, it is important to discover ways to couple government and citizens. In this way, another long-term goal for scaling up social learning could be to give Muslims opportunities for more genuine engagement with the government and decision-making processes in policy areas that directly affect them.

One applicable framework worth considering is “designed coupling.” Carolyn Hendriks has written that such coupling can take many forms in deliberative systems ranging from “self-generated linkages between actors or institutions through to more ‘designed’ approaches where disconnected spaces of policy debate are formally linked.” In her research, Hendriks has found that “designed coupling” has encouraged elites involved in the deliberative process to “deliberate with a broader public constituency in mind, and engage in arguments beyond the concerns of their colleagues and electorate.” While Mansbridge et al. claim that a healthy deliberative system requires loose coupling so that different sites are not at risk of “co-option,” Hendriks suggests that “designed coupling” between citizens and elites could work and thereby benefit deliberative systems and “at a minimum … would provide procedural guarantees to link the more informal (public) parts of the system with the more formal empowered sites.”

In her analysis of “designed coupling,” Hendriks uses a case study of citizens who were invited to participate in an energy enquiry for the Public Accounts Committee in the New South Wales parliament. These types of committees comprised of elected officials can conduct inquiries into legislation, draft proposals, and debate and scrutinise bills and

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653 Ibid., 52.
654 Ibid., 44.
executives, as well as being called in to examine specific policy issues. Hendriks discusses how two citizen juries were organised for the energy inquiry. The juries deliberated and provided the Public Accounts Committee with a series of recommendations. Hendriks argues that such an incorporation of citizens into formal committees is currently underutilised by the government and “is not only feasible, but … can generate a number of complementary effects for the sites involved. In this instance, the mini-public expanded the legislative committee’s understanding of the public, and the public consequences of policy decisions.”655 In the same way, incorporating diverse Muslim Australians into government committees could be similarly beneficial, particularly for committees responding to counter-terrorism policies and broader social welfare policy areas. Such efforts could involve Muslim participants from deliberative initiatives, or be expanded to include other Muslims across Australian society.

One possible critique of this suggestion concerns its feasibility, and whether the government would encourage such an incorporation of Muslim Australian citizens into government committees. However, it should be remembered that (albeit less formalised) consultations in these areas have already taken place; the problem is that for Muslim participants, they have largely been inadequate and ineffectual. As I have explained, in the 2014 consultations with the government regarding counter-terrorism amendments, Muslim participants did not obtain adequate information prior to the meeting which, if received, would have indicated that the government intended to genuinely engage with their opinions and grievances.656 Muslim participants were also not informed who the other attendees were to be and were not given prior- or post-meeting access to any of the government’s draft counter-terrorism legislation. In 2005, the Muslim Community Reference Group had similar issues with the government setting the terms of reference and agenda and choosing the

655 Ibid., 55
656 “Press Release: ICV has Withdrawn its Attendance From Today’s Meeting with Tony Abbott.”
participants. Analysing these two consultations that were designed as a reaction to hard-line counter-terrorism policy is important because while they included numerous Muslim Australians, they were widely criticised by the Muslim participants and other Muslim leaders. Acknowledging these problems with these two previous consultations provides a potential opportunity for these issues to be rectified in future deliberative initiatives between Muslims and the government. Ideally, future consultations would be guided by the deliberative design developed in this thesis.

As explained at the beginning of this chapter, the type of deliberative framework and the social learning aim I propose would not only be applicable for more formalised mini-public-style events; it could be relevant for broader sites of citizen-engagement practices and these types of government consultations. Similar to self-representation in the media, this would also be a platform for the inclusion and communication principles to enrich a social learning aim. For example, in Chapters 2 and 3, I described the benefits of a “mixed approach” that incorporates both diverse ordinary Muslims and government representatives. More formalised connections with government representatives would ideally emphasise an institutional commitment to genuinely listen to ordinary Muslims citizens, including Muslim women, young people, and those perceived to be more radical. When forging connections between the government and Muslims, it would be useful to encourage the use of expanded communication tools beyond merely rational argumentation, given that – as explained in Chapter 4 – since 9/11, government representatives have largely regulated what opinions are considered to constitute a rational argument, without considering other views.

If the government wants to be considered more genuine in its attempts at consultation regarding counter-terrorism policy, then including Muslim Australians in existing

government committees should not be considered out of the question, but such a move would require strong leadership from relevant government representatives. As Hendriks explains, to be effective, “designed coupling” would require:

actors to step outside their comfort zone to build new relationships and engage in new spaces with different sets of ideas, actors and rules. This can be facilitated by institutional design, but it also requires leaders and champions who are well-placed to encourage actors to think differently. 658

It should also be mentioned that longer-term goals for social learning engagement between Muslim Australians and the government would not necessarily have to be officially “coupled” or designed; a number of cross-cultural listening and learning opportunities already exist and could be tapped into. One example could be a greater acknowledgement of and engagement with events taking place in Muslim communities by the government, such as encouraging the mainstream public to attend annual mosque open days. 659 Since 2014, the Lebanese Muslim Association of Australia has organised annual mosque open days in different states across Australia. With a pre-existing social learning focus in place, these open days include opportunities for non-Muslim Australians to take guided tours of mosques and participate in Q&A sessions about “Islamic beliefs and the positive role mosques can play in Australian society.” 660 Similar open days take place annually in mosques in the United Kingdom and the United States. The Islamic Council of Victoria President Mohamed Mohideen has described the purpose of these open days as being to change widespread negative perceptions of mosques; aligning with a social learning approach, the purpose is for

659 Mosque open days do receive funding at the state government level. In Victoria, funding is given by the Victorian Multicultural Commission.
the broader community to “look beyond what is portrayed of Muslims and build dialogue and friendships while sharing mutual respect and understanding.”

Prominent members of the government could be more proactive in promoting these type of events to the broader public. For example, in 2014, the government only advertised the mosque open day on the Living Safe Together website. As outlined in Chapter 1, the Living Safe Together website was created for the purpose of developing softer approaches to countering violent extremism. Therefore, such events should not only be promoted on websites dedicated to providing the public with information about how the government is aiming to control extremism; this only strengthens the perceived association between mosques, extremism, and national security threats.

The potential for engagement between Muslim communities and the government could go beyond periodic events. There are over 450 Muslim organisations operating in Australia involved in areas such as in charity work, youth and Muslim women’s advocacy, broader civil and human rights advocacy, religious education, environmental sustainability, and interfaith initiatives. While I am not suggesting that representatives from the Australian government should have any form of control over these organisations, it could be beneficial to engage with and promote their work to the public in a more proactive manner. Another option that may be worth considering would be working with the different levels of government. For example, local government authorities are the closest government links to communities, so instead of a federal- or state-centric focus, ideas for links and engagement with Muslims could be done at the municipal level, which is currently an underutilised

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661 Ibid.
resource. For example, the study *The Voices Shaping the Perspectives of Young Muslim Australians* found that:

little was being done at the local level to build bridges between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians and suggested that there was great scope for more participation by councils in this area. The best initiatives were those that provided ongoing personal contact and informal interaction between Muslim and non-Muslim women, with few successful initiatives involving working class Muslim and non-Muslim men identified.663

As this chapter has described, the purpose of scaling up social learning would be to empower diverse Muslim voices in Australian society to enable them to express political and social challenges. While not claiming that the scaling-up of social learning would result in universal understanding of the political and social challenges currently faced by Muslim communities, I argue that it could to some degree advance greater public comprehension of the impact of policy and public hostility. Therefore, through the provision of an ongoing cross-cultural listening-and-learning process, public attitudes could shift and become more critical of government policy and discourse, and influence its design in the future.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of Chapters 5 and 6 has been to connect deliberative democratic initiatives with potential platforms for social and political change for Muslim Australians. A key consideration in this chapter is that deliberative initiatives should not just be a series of one-off processes; attempts should be made by their organisers and facilitators, as well as other relevant interest groups, to scale up social learning. For both self-representation in the

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media and “designed coupling” between Muslims and the government, scaling up can effectively be guided by the same deliberative framework and social learning aim I have developed in this thesis.

While scaling up may prove a challenging task in the post-9/11 Australian context, I have described some short-term practical methods by which Muslim voices can influence broader public and political discourses, as well as a number of longer-term goals. Scaling up may not universally shift public attitudes, but could give certain issues more public attention and generate greater consideration of alternative narratives and help them to permeate established post-9/11 discourses. Therefore, to some extent, the scaling-up of social learning could foster increased public attention concerning the political and social challenges faced by Muslim communities in Australian society and, ideally, go beyond this to impact government decision-making and policy design.

In this thesis, I support critical scholars such as Iris Marion Young, John Dryzek and Bora Kanra who argue that deliberation does not necessarily need to result in consensus between participants and that decision making should not automatically be prioritised as the optimal outcome.664 I make an important contribution to analyses by these scholars by suggesting a series of practical measures and guidelines that would assist in the implementation of a cross-cultural listening and learning approach between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians within deliberative initiatives. As a step beyond this, I additionally design a practical plan for “scaling up” listening and learning in order to impact broader society and its institutions. There are of course possible objections to focussing on social learning between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians, for example, as I have provided

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examples of in chapter 5 and 6, promoting social learning may be outwardly rejected or not taken seriously by both Muslim and non-Muslim Australians. For non-Muslims, one reason could be heightened tensions and fear of Muslims due to terrorist attacks that have occurred around the world since 9/11 that Islamic groups, such as Islamic State or Al Qaeda, have claimed responsibility for. For many Muslim Australians, there is a widespread fear of expressing one’s positions, interests and grievances in case of negative repercussions from government and media discourse as well as broader mainstream society. Despite this, I argue that by engaging with the positions, interests and grievances of diverse Muslim Australians through a listening and learning focus, this could to some extent advance public comprehension of the political and social challenges currently faced by Muslim communities.
Thesis conclusion

In this thesis, my purpose has been to critically examine when and how deliberative democratic initiatives could be used to respond to the systemic marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices, which is the primary barrier inhibiting Muslim Australians from publicly expressing political and social challenges they face. There are two reasons why I chose deliberative democratic theory as a response to this marginalisation. Firstly, the general consensus within deliberative democratic theory suggests that exposing people to deliberative initiatives can enable them to empathise to a greater degree with the challenges faced by marginalised groups in society\textsuperscript{665}; secondly, deliberative democratic initiatives have not only been popular within scholarship but have also become a useful, relevant tool for governments and have previously acted as a framework for citizen-engagement initiatives.

To show how and why deliberative democratic initiatives could potentially increase the influence of marginalised voices, I focused on three core principles: inclusion, communication, and consequence. At face value, these principles undoubtedly increase the potential for marginalised voices to be able to express their opinions in a deliberative process. A key issue, however, is that despite general, high-level agreement about core inclusive, communicative, and consequential principles, there are numerous and conflicting interpretations among traditional and critical theorists regarding how these principles should be first theorised and then practically instituted and operationalised in society.\textsuperscript{666} Therefore, I could not effectively rely on the application of a universal framework, or expect any approach to be uniformly valid or applicable.

\textsuperscript{665} See, for example: Dryzek, \textit{Deliberative Global Politics: Discourse and Democracy in a Divided World}; Fishkin, \textit{When the People Speak: Deliberative Democracy and Public Consultation}; Gutmann and Thompson, \textit{Why Deliberative Democracy?}; Young, \textit{Inclusion and Democracy}.

\textsuperscript{666} These key debates were discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis.
In this thesis, I have evaluated various interpretations of these principles, from traditional interpretations such as those by Jurgen Habermas and John Rawls to more recent critical responses including Iris Marion Young, John Dryzek, Bora Kanra, Carolyn Hendriks, and Simon Niemeyer. I did this by comparing the scope, rules, processes, and aims of different models. For the inclusion principle, I argued that “ordinary Muslim citizens” should be included in deliberative initiatives. As opposed to selecting participants from a random sample (which is what deliberative theorists generally advocate), I supported the deliberate inclusion of Muslim youth, Muslim women, and Muslims considered to be more radical. In addition, I argued that representatives from the Australian government should be involved in deliberation, albeit mainly in an active listening role.

For the communication principle, I suggested that only relying on rational argumentation in deliberative initiatives could disadvantage Muslim Australian participants. One potential solution would be by expanding communicative tools in deliberation; the example I used was Iris Marion Young’s “communication proposal,” which incorporates the use of greeting, rhetoric, and narrative. These communication techniques are not intended to replace argument during deliberation; instead, these expanded tools for expression can be used by marginalised voices, as opposed to solely insisting on the exchange of rational argumentation. For the consequential principle, I argued that immediately and only focusing on decision-making during deliberative initiatives could be to the detriment of Muslim Australians. As such, I recommended Kanra’s “social learning model,” which does not solely rely on decision-making in deliberative initiatives but rather aims to foster greater understanding of the grievances of marginalised voices by focusing on a separate phase of listening and learning. Finally, I argued that an initial focus on cross-cultural listening and learning should be “scaled up” to impact broader Australian society. In this way, the outcomes of deliberative
initiatives could lead to practical change in government policy and influence the formation of public attitudes towards Muslim Australians.

It is worth reiterating that the type of deliberative framework I have proposed in this thesis is not only applicable to more formalised mini-public-style events but could also be relevant to broader sites of citizen engagement and government consultation. Thus, the design developed in this thesis provides a broad framework that could be tuned to a range of cross-cultural engagement sites and spaces. I do not claim that deliberative democratic initiatives will resolve all the challenges facing Muslim Australians, but that the critical design for deliberative initiatives that I have detailed utilises a valuable and applicable response framework that is consistent with increasing political expression for Muslims more often, more effectively, and to larger audiences. In comparison to more traditional models of deliberative democracy, the aim of my design for deliberative initiatives is not merely about finding common ground and “reason” between participants; the more pressing issue is first allowing previously excluded Muslim voices to contribute to and potentially influence dominant discourses in Australian society. As such, in this thesis, I have sought to modify the way Muslims, non-Muslims, and the Australian government discuss government policy and social cohesion by allowing Muslim voices to be heard to a greater degree. In this concluding chapter, I will document a number of reasons why this research is significant and after identifying the strengths and contributions of this research, I will provide two examples of directions for future research in the field of political science.
The significance of the research findings

There are a number of reasons why the research findings presented in this thesis are significant. Firstly, this research can influence theoretical debates regarding deliberative democracy by emphasising the necessity of considering deliberative approaches very carefully, particularly when dealing with culturally marginalised voices in power-differentiated societies. Thus, because I contend that deliberative initiatives are not necessarily favourable for marginalised voices, there is a need for careful analysis regarding the differing scholarly interpretations of a deliberative democratic approach in future research designs. To this end, my research exposes and seeks to improve previous problematic cross-cultural engagement attempts governments have made to connect with Muslim communities. The specific examples I used in this thesis were the Muslim Community Reference Group in 2005 and counter-terrorism policy consultations with a number of Muslim leaders in 2014. I sought to identify ways to improve on these consultations by emphasising the important distinction between marginalised voices being visible in deliberative initiatives, in terms of their actual presence in a deliberative venue, and being heard. To be “heard” would mean that the opinions of Muslim Australians regarding government policy and experiences of public hostility are deemed credible and have the potential to influence future policy design. Using this definition, an analysis of previous engagement initiatives between the government and Muslim Australians reveals that Muslim voices have not always been heard. Indeed, while Muslim Australians may be visible in engagement initiatives with the government (in terms of their actual presence in a venue), Muslim Australians have found that they have not been able to influence the government’s policy decisions and limit anti-Muslim public statements.
I discovered that the problem with previous engagement initiatives – and what future designs must be cognisant of – is that Muslim Australians are frequently spoken for and about, rather than being critically and genuinely listened to, despite their presence in consultations. This difference between visibility and being heard (of course, this does not necessarily mean that their opinions must be agreed with) is key, and it is why I argued that certain critical deliberative designs would be more appropriate than others. Therefore, the deliberative design I have presented in this thesis is important for the post-9/11 Australian context, given both the scholarly divergence in deliberative democratic theory and the tendency for previous attempts by the Australian government to conduct cross-cultural consultation to be, under the surface, highly exclusionary.

A corresponding reason that this research is important is due to deliberative democracy’s increasing popularity as a theoretical framework that can be practically applied in the political and public spheres; the theoretical model of deliberative democracy has not only been popular within scholarship but has become an applicable, relevant tool for governments and has previously acted as a framework for citizen-engagement initiatives. As Chapters 2 and 6 observed, a number of deliberative initiatives such as citizens’ juries, citizen assemblies, and consensus conferences have already been developed and used in Australia. The New Democracy foundation has estimated that it receives six to eight enquiries per week from the government and elected representatives for assistance with facilitating deliberative initiatives with citizens. Therefore, instead of advocating an entirely new engagement platform that Australian government bodies have not previously experimented with or a

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platform that could be considered irrelevant, unconventional, or extreme, this design seeks to improve already existing cross-cultural engagement platforms and attune them to deal with power differentiations between government, non-Muslim Australians, and marginalised Muslim Australian voices. Of course, it is not only for the government that deliberative initiatives are becoming an increasingly popular tool, but also for marginalised groups; research has found that youth, racial minorities, and marginalised groups are more willing to participate in deliberative democratic initiatives than other democratic processes.668 In this way, the contemporary relevance of deliberative democracy in connecting communities to government decision-making becomes an important and useful framework. Deliberative democracy could potentially act as a baseline for social and political change in Australia, given that it is an approach that governments have been increasingly testing and marginalised groups indicate they are willing to embrace.

This research is also significant as a result of the current prominent exposure of Muslim Australians in the Australian media. Debates regarding controversial government policies and their impact on Muslim Australians have not abated over time and since 9/11, this has been especially evident in regard to counter-terrorism policy and anti-Muslim public statements. For example, in 2014, preventative detention orders were strengthened by providing security officials with the capacity to detain “foreign fighters” and declare entire countries “no-go zones,” both without the onus of proof. In addition, despite calls by the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor (INSLM) to repeal control orders, in 2014, they became easier to enact. This was done by the removal of a previous requirement for police to notify the attorney general of particular factors that would support not

668 Offe, “Crisis and Innovation of Liberal Democracy: Can Deliberation be Institutionalised?” 466.
implementing a control order against an individual.\textsuperscript{669} Furthermore, in October 2015, the
government lowered the age at which a control order could be applied from 16 to 14. Beyond
the counter-terrorism sphere, debate about banning the immigration of Muslims into Australia
has intensified with the election of One Nation party leader Pauline Hanson to the Australian
Senate in 2016. According to Newspoll, as of March 2017, the One Nation party commands a
primary vote of 10 per cent,\textsuperscript{670} while in Queensland, they are polling at 30 per cent.\textsuperscript{671}
Furthermore, as mentioned in Chapter 1, in April 2017, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull
and Immigration Minister Peter Dutton announced changes to Australia’s citizenship and
immigration program through the abolition of “457” skilled migrant visas.\textsuperscript{672}

While many of the current analyses of targeted government policy and public hostility
focus on the negative impacts, this research also fills a gap in the literature by designing a
critical response strategy to change the way Muslims Australians can contribute to political
and public debates, thereby allowing Muslim voices to be heard. It has been necessary to
draw on existing critical analyses. In terms of Australia’s post-9/11 counter-terrorism
response, this includes the work of Sarah Joseph and Jenny Hocking and their comparative
analyses of counter-terrorism legislation and international human rights frameworks, and also
includes the work of Ben Saul, George Williams, and Daniel Baldino, among others, who
highlight the severity of the Australian government’s novel and overreaching counter-
terrorism apparatus. A related reason why this research is significant is because it supports

\textsuperscript{670} “The Turnbull Effect: Labor Leads Coalition by 10 Points in Horror Newspoll as Pauline Hanson Polls Massive Primary Vote.”
\textsuperscript{671} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{672} As mentioned in Chapter 1, 457 visas are a program in Australia that enables highly skilled migrants to apply
critical arguments put forward by scholars such as Anne Aly, who argue that the Australian government’s hard-line counter-terrorism policies and the perceived public hostility towards Muslims could increase the risk of radicalisation. This is an argument that is largely dismissed by the Australian government, as well governments in other Western nations including the United States and the United Kingdom.\textsuperscript{673} Therefore, contributing to an existing body of knowledge, I similarly discredit a blanket and targeted hard-line policy response due to its potential future security implications. Such findings contradict the security discourses of consecutive Australian governments and emphasise the necessity of acknowledging and addressing these foundational issues. Additionally, my research findings seek a “softer” strategy to counter potential future terrorist threats. In relation to this, Richard Jackson has stated that “given the enormous material and social destruction of the war on terror thus far, the possibility of articulating non-violent or constructive responses to acts of terrorism takes on immense normative significance.”\textsuperscript{674}

Furthermore, this research is significant because of the ongoing physical and psychological hostility among Muslim and non-Muslim Australians.\textsuperscript{675} Negative perceptions of Muslim Australians were made evident in the Scanlon Foundation Survey’s National Report “Mapping Social Cohesion, 2010-2016,” as well as a number of other polls and surveys.\textsuperscript{676} This is further evidenced by large-scale protests that have taken place as a


\textsuperscript{675} Examples of these were provided in Chapter 1 of this thesis.

\textsuperscript{676} As described in Chapter 1, negative attitudes towards Muslim Australians between 2010-2016 have ranged between 22 and 25 per cent – consistently the highest percentage of negative attitudes faced by any minority group.
reaction to the building of mosques, and a wave of violent attacks perpetrated against Muslim Australians. Many of these attacks have been perpetrated against Muslim women because many of them wear some form of Islamic veil, and so are highly visible and recognisable in society. The rising popularity of the Reclaim Australia party, the United Patriots’ Front, and the Q Society of Australia additionally indicates the growth of animosity towards Islam and Muslim Australians. Because concern over the escalating severity of public hostility towards Muslim Australians remains an issue, these problems are likely to continue; indeed, without strategic intervention, it is unlikely that genuine deliberative platforms among Muslims, non-Muslim Australians, and the government will spontaneously develop. This reveals the urgency of a response and the significance of the deliberative democratic design advocated in this thesis.

While this research makes a number of significant contributions to the literature, there are conclusions that I cannot definitively predict. For example, although transformative benefits during deliberation are desired to bring about greater understanding of the grievances of Muslim Australians, presuming that these benefits will be generated automatically is unrealistic. However, while I cannot guarantee a transformative outcome, I can argue that the critical design I have configured is a preferable approach to engaging with Muslim Australians, particularly when compared to previous consultations between the government and Muslims, and when acknowledging the degree of public hostility towards Muslims that still exists, as well as the argument that a lack of voice for Muslims could actually increase the risk of radicalisation.\footnote{This was detailed in Chapter 3 of this thesis.} In this way, I have proposed a specific normative toolkit for marginalised Muslim voices using a political theory that is widely advocated by democratic scholars as a means for improving citizen expression on various issues in society and
accountability in political decision-making. As such, this critical approach to deliberative democratic theory seeks to increase the influence of diverse Muslim Australian voices in more equitable environments.

**Directions for future research**

I propose two directions for future research. Firstly, this research provides a largely theoretical case for implementing deliberative democratic initiatives, rather than being based on an actual case study. Transitioning the theory of deliberative democracy to practical applications between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians previously occurred in the form of the 2007 Australia Deliberates initiative.\(^{678}\) However, this thesis has not been configured in such a way as to offer a practical deliberative democratic case study. As such, for future research projects, the theoretical insights I offer should move into empirical research by developing real-life case studies of deliberative initiatives that align with the critical interpretations of the inclusion, communication, and consequential principles, as advocated by this thesis. This will test the “real-life” effectiveness of deliberative initiatives that attempt to mitigate power differentiations between Muslim Australians, non-Muslim Australians, and government representatives, as well as increasing opportunities to refine, add to, or even critically challenge the ideas presented in this thesis. The prescriptions that could be tested in a real-life case study could include how non-Muslim Australians and government representatives would react to the inclusion of Muslims considered more radical, which cannot be conclusively determined in a theoretical study. Furthermore, a real-life case study could ascertain whether a wider breadth of communication techniques benefits Muslim Australian participants. Another case study could help determine the most appropriate ways

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\(^{678}\) Examples from the 2007 Issues Deliberation: Australia Deliberates initiative have been used throughout this thesis.
to scale up social learning to the Australian mainstream; specifically, if social learning could be scaled up when the findings of deliberative initiatives (such as participant reports) and experiences (such as the results of deliberative polls) are widely disseminated by Australian media outlets and publicised by participating politicians. It can also help determine what types of media are the most effective platforms to do this. While these are just a few examples, a real-life case study could provide an important foundation for empirically testing the theoretical prescriptions I advocate in this thesis.

A second direction for future research could be to expand the scope of deliberative democratic initiatives and apply it to the experiences of other marginalised groups in Australia. This could include groups that, similarly to diverse Muslim Australian communities, have been the focus of ongoing public debates regarding controversial government policies and public hostility. For example, asylum seekers and/or asylum seeker advocates would offer an interesting comparable subject for this research. Australia’s counter-terrorism response is similar to controversial and highly topical asylum-seeker and refugee policies from a number of social, cultural, and political standpoints, beyond the direct connection of politicians, commentators, and certain news media sources framing asylum seekers as an infiltration of potential terrorists. For example, the policy frameworks employed for border security and countering terrorism are analogous in their seemingly minority-targeted nature, as well as the tendency for policy amendments to “break new ground” in their severity. A large proportion of the Australian public have negative perceptions of asylum seekers, and they constitute a group largely unable to contribute to public and political debates in Australian society.

While proposing deliberative democratic initiatives will not completely resolve the marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices, as a first step, I offer a configuration of existing deliberative models that is consistent with increasing political expression for marginalised voices to potentially more receptive audiences. The deliberative democratic design I have detailed does not solely concern changing government policy and discourse, or finding common ground among participants from the outset; instead, it seeks to improve the way Muslims, non-Muslims, and the Australian government approach the conversation of policy and discourse and provide platforms for Muslim voices to be heard in Australian society. As a normative framework that can respond to targeted policy, ongoing public hostility, and potentially an increased risk of radicalisation, a deliberative approach should be considered a more desired democratic direction.
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Author/s:
Cole, Georgina

Title:
The systemic marginalisation of Muslim Australian voices: to what extent can Deliberative Democratic theory provide a response?

Date:
2017

Persistent Link:
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