

## Social Science Study Describes Typical Muslim Family in America

(Muhammad Speaks  
New York Bureau)

NEW YORK—"The X's are a model of what a self-respecting family ought to be. Mr. X works hard at his job, and when he isn't at work he labors for his church or is at home with his family. Mrs. X devotes herself to being a good wife and mother. She does not have an outside job. She does not wear flashy clothes, elaborate hairdos, or cosmetics. She defers in all important matters to her husband's judgement. Both husband and wife are conscientious parents. They expect their children to behave well, and to work hard at school. They neither drink nor smoke. They do not use profane language."

THE ABOVE paragraph is from a recent issue of *Transaction*, a journal of social science and modern society, and describes a typical Muslim family in the United States. The publication was reporting a study by Olympic boycott leader Harry Edwards, who was a professor at San Jose State College and now at Cornell, in which he studied both Black Christian and Nation of Islam families and compared the two. His study also received favorable attention in a

recent issue of the *Journal of Marriage and the Family*.

Some 28 Afro-American families were selected for the study—half were Muslim, the other half Christian. All the families lived in the same Black neighborhood, which like most, was characterized by dilapidated housing, rats, roaches and a high unemployment rate.

Here are some areas where Edwards found that the followers of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad differed from the believers in Jesus Christ:

**THE HOME:** Fathers were mostly unemployed and the wife was the main breadwinner in several Christian homes, while Muslim families left all the wage-earning and important decision-making to the husband by mutual agreement.

While Muslim women were instructed in special classes at the mosque in how to be good housekeepers and cooks and how to sew, some Christian women lacked some of these skills. Conflict in the Christian home was taken for granted to be "inevitable," including violence, but not so in the Muslim home. "When Muslim couples felt that a quarrel was brewing, they 'got on the

side of Islam,' that is, they went back to the fundamental principles of their religion, and quarrel dissipated," reported magazine article.

**CHILDREN:** Although Christian parents used physical punishment frequently, they had fatalistic attitude toward their children's wrong-doing. They expected that their youngsters would be involved in plenty mis-deeds, including stealing. On the other hand, Muslim parents the Edwards study showed that the magazine related, rarely punished their children but expected them "to be upright in both thought and action." While Christian parents tended to be lax in encouraging their off-springs to learn from Muslim mothers and fathers encouraged their children to study and learn but be equally aware of the racist-tainted textbooks and teachers.

"What makes these Muslims in contrast to their Christian neighbors, so law-abiding and hard-working?" asks the *Transaction* article. "Edwards cited two factors that help explain the success of the Nation of Islam in changing the situation of the Black man in the ghetto: First, assistance toward economic sufficiency comes with membership. Each new member helped to find work he can do is trained for a job. Second, the Nation of Islam tries to show each new convert that his poverty is closely intertwined with social and psychological orientations to life. To change his situation in life, he must change attitudes and habits. He is helped in his very difficult reorientation by the same people who have already helped him to find a job—his Muslim brothers, providing material aid and training in a new way of living at the same time, the Muslims try to each convert to see his economic, his social, and his religious salvation as one entity. It sees to be a successful recipe."

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