Driscoll: A comparison of Christianity and Islam

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In response to Austin Culp's letter published Dec. 5 depicting Islam and the Quran as inherently violent, I'd like to provide a counter argument. Within every religious scripture exists a fundamental pretense which is left up to interpretation. Like Islam, Christianity has also been the justification for acts of violence and terrorism. If the old testament from the Bible were interpreted literally, putting gay people, rebellious children and atheists to death would be socially acceptable. Many would argue that the Bible is far more violent and bloody than the Quran, but for the sake of my argument we can say that they are equally shocking when interpreted in the context of modern society.

If you don't believe me, visit the Southern Poverty Law Center website and discover the hundreds of violent hate groups in the United States including the Ku Klux Klan, who are ideologically Christian, and consist of an estimated 5,000 to 8,000 members today.

There is an undeniable global upsurge in Islamic terrorism in recent decades, but the threat exists in very small proportion to any other cause for concern in Europe and the United States, yet the narrative surrounding Muslim immigrants and refugees is that of caution and distrust.

Three million Muslims live in the United States, yet the odds of an American being crushed to death by their own furniture or television exceed those of being killed by an Islamist.

Despite President Trump's call to ban further Muslim immigration, in the time frame of 2011 to 2016 only 12 percent of terrorist attacks in the United States were perpetrated by Muslims compared to 55 percent by Neo-Nazis, white supremacists, and other far-right extremists. Banning Muslim immigration out of fear is statistically unjustifiable.

If we look back 100 years ago, fascists were the greatest concern globally, and yet as we see a rise in fascist, white supremacist ideologies in the United States, there is little mention of it compared to the constant warn of Islamic threat. Perhaps the alarming rise in white supremacy and the openly racist rhetoric encouraged by our president are related? Yes, it is undeniably so.

In a study conducted by the CATO Institute, from 1975 through 2015, the chance that an American would be killed in a terrorist attack committed by a refugee was 1 in 3.64 billion a year. Compare that to the chance of getting murdered by another American, which is about 5 in 100,000.

What is accomplished of continually demonizing an entire religion or culture? If anything, it incites further violence from far-right extremists targeting anyone who denounces white nationalism. Channeling fear and rage through the lens of white superiority, blaming immigrants, religious groups, and progressive movements for economic decline and social decay will only lead to further social disruption.