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Boston Children's Hospital
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Somali Communities in Resettlement: Perceptions of Society and Security

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Refugees

- Worldwide more than 40 million people displaced by violence/unrest
- US one of the largest resettlement programs (~60,000/year, 3 million since 1975)
- Dynamic nature of geopolitical conflict leads to changing cultural groups resettled from conflict regions
- Somalis among largest refugee groups resettled in US over past decade

Somali refugees in North America

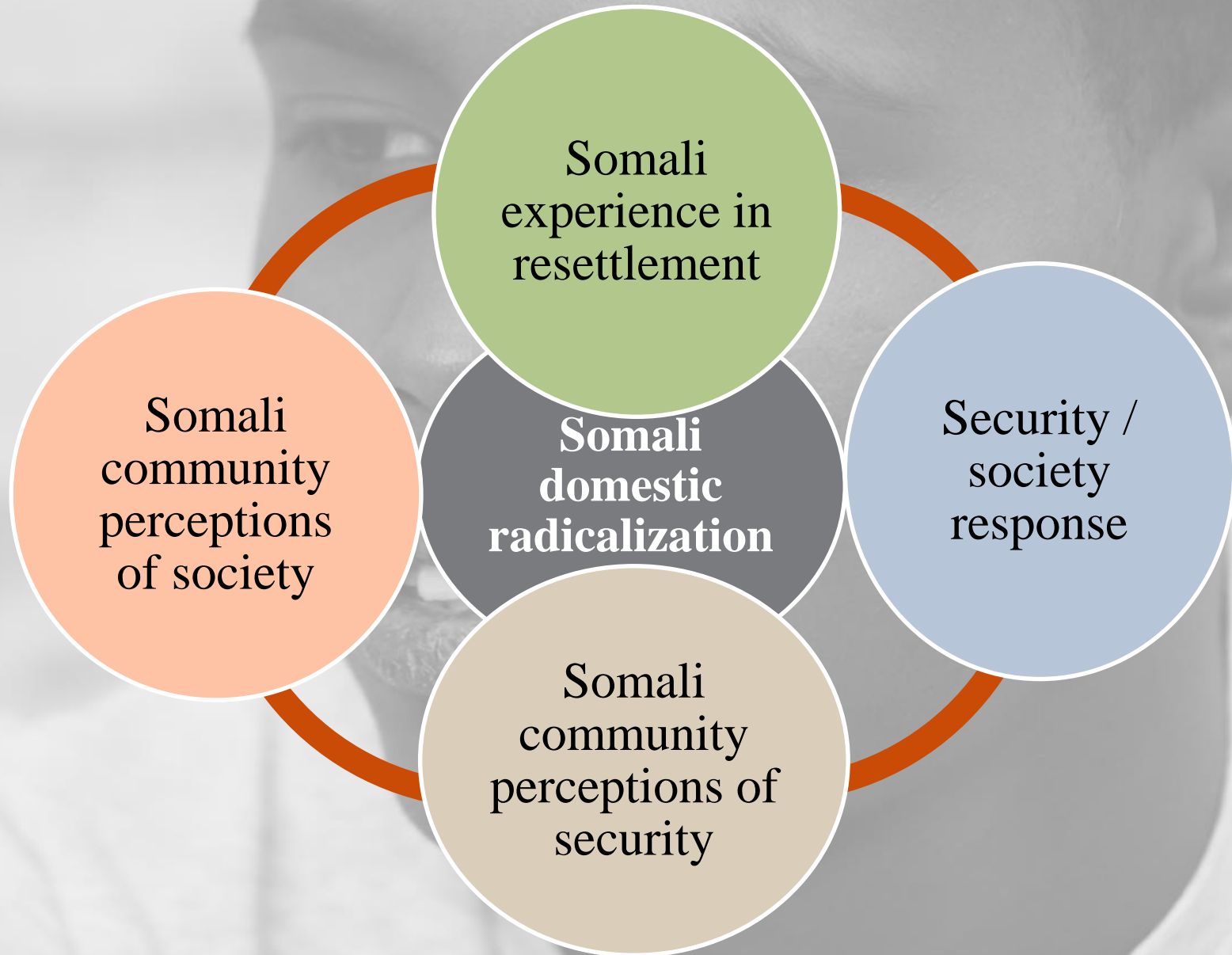
- High levels of trauma
- Discrimination
- Poverty, educational gaps, acculturative stress
- Highest unemployment rate among East African immigrants, lowest rate of college graduation (U.S. Census)



Domestic radicalization of Somalis

- In 2007 > 20 young Somalis left Minneapolis to join Al-Shabaab
- 15 Americans killed fighting on behalf of Al-Shabaab, 3 in martyrdom operations
- In 2010, Somali refugee indicted for allegedly plotting to bomb Christmas tree lighting in Oregon in FBI sting operation

How do we understand this?



First.. How do we *go about*
trying to understand this?

Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR)

Pillars of CBPR



Community ownership of both research topic and solution

Co-learning:
Of both the research culture and the community culture

Balance research and action:
Does it lead community programs and policy change?

Build capacity by developing long-term partnership

School-based
mental health
programs



Pilot study:
quantitative
interviews and
focus groups (n=79)



Multi-site
longitudinal mixed-
methods study
(n=400)

Somali
experiences in
resettlement



How
radicalization of
Somalis shapes
Somali
experiences in
resettlement



Understanding
pathways to and
away from
violent
extremism

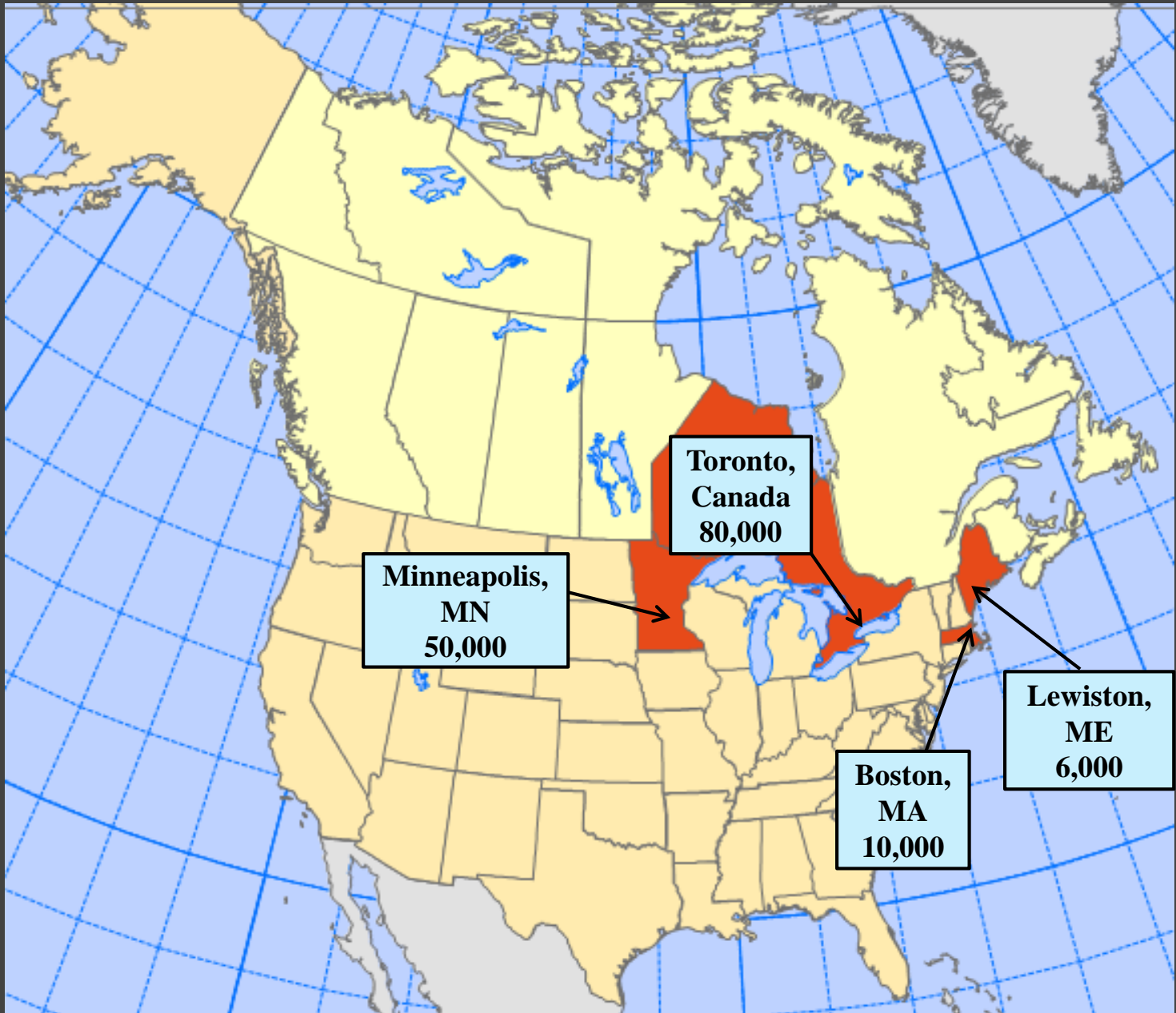
- Trauma
- Mental Health
- Belonging

- Trauma
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- Belonging
- Experience of media
- Openness to violent activism

- Trauma
- Mental health
- Belonging
- Violent activism, civic engagement, gangs, delinquency
- Experience of formal and informal institutions

Approach

- Pilot study: mixed methods (quantitative interviews n=79 and 8 focus groups), Somali males ages 18-25
- Longitudinal quantitative study
 - Structured interviews with 400 Somali participants at 2 time points separated by 1 year (time 1 nearly completed)
 - Somali young males and females (age 18-30)



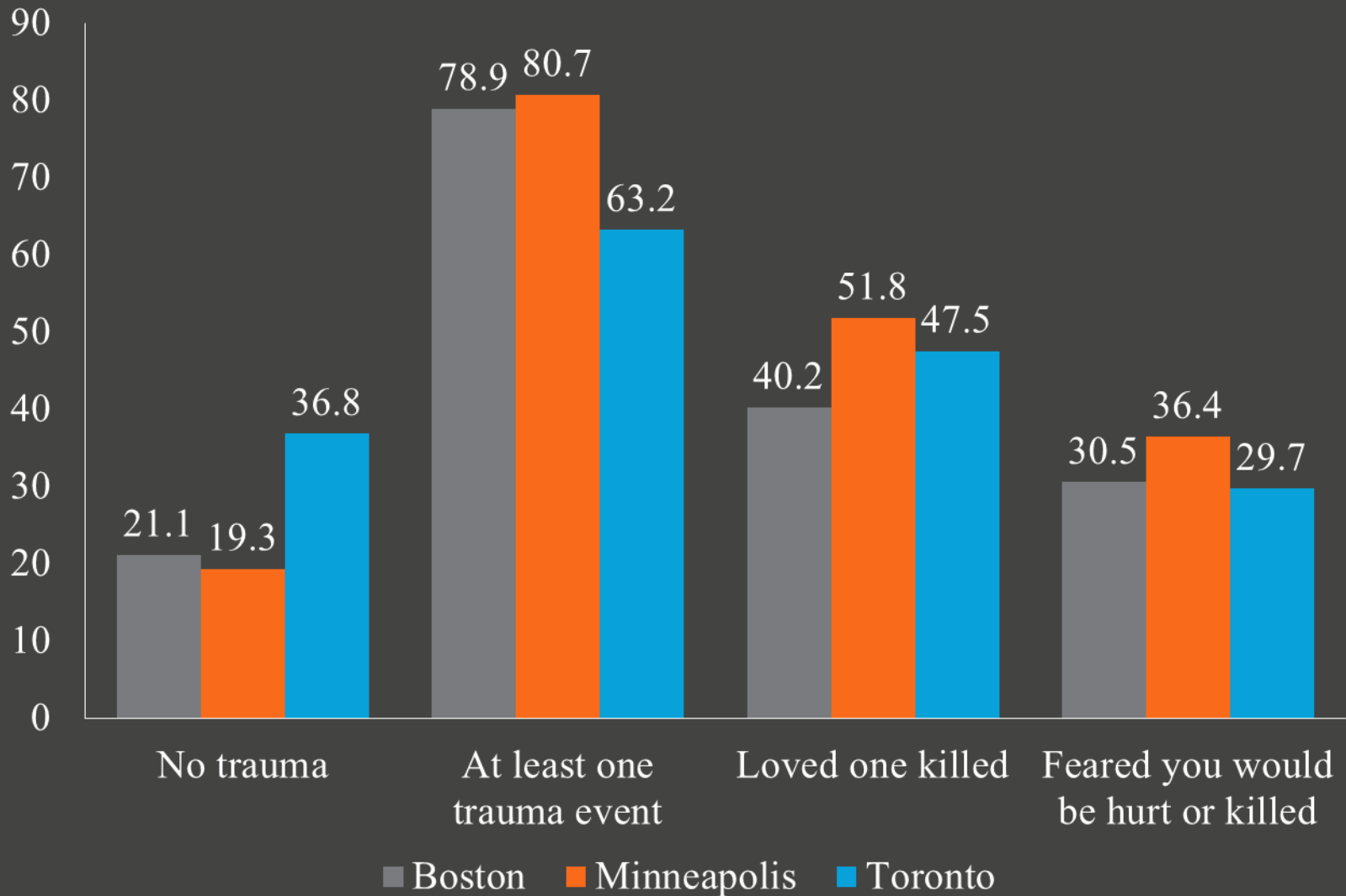
Experience in resettlement, perceptions of society



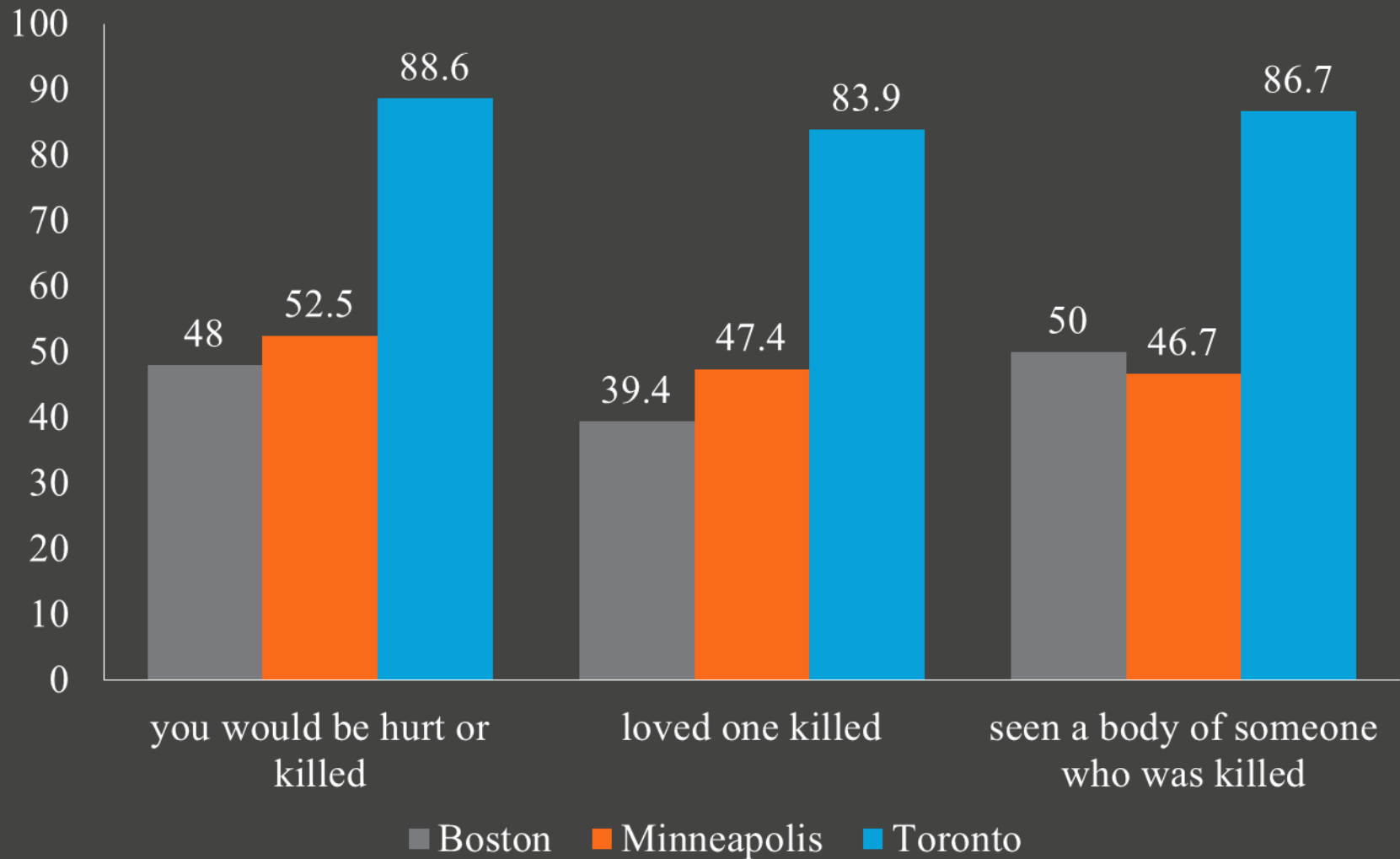
Sample characteristics

	Boston (N = 83)	Minneapolis (N = 115)	Toronto (N = 118)
Average age	21.59	22.58	19.97
% female	48.2	26.1	32.2
% born in U.S./Canada	4.8	3.5	74.6
% born in Somalia	61.4	68.7	14.4
Average years in U.S./Canada	10.54	12.86	16.60
% in school	75.9	51.3	63.6
% employed	51.8	52.2	37.3

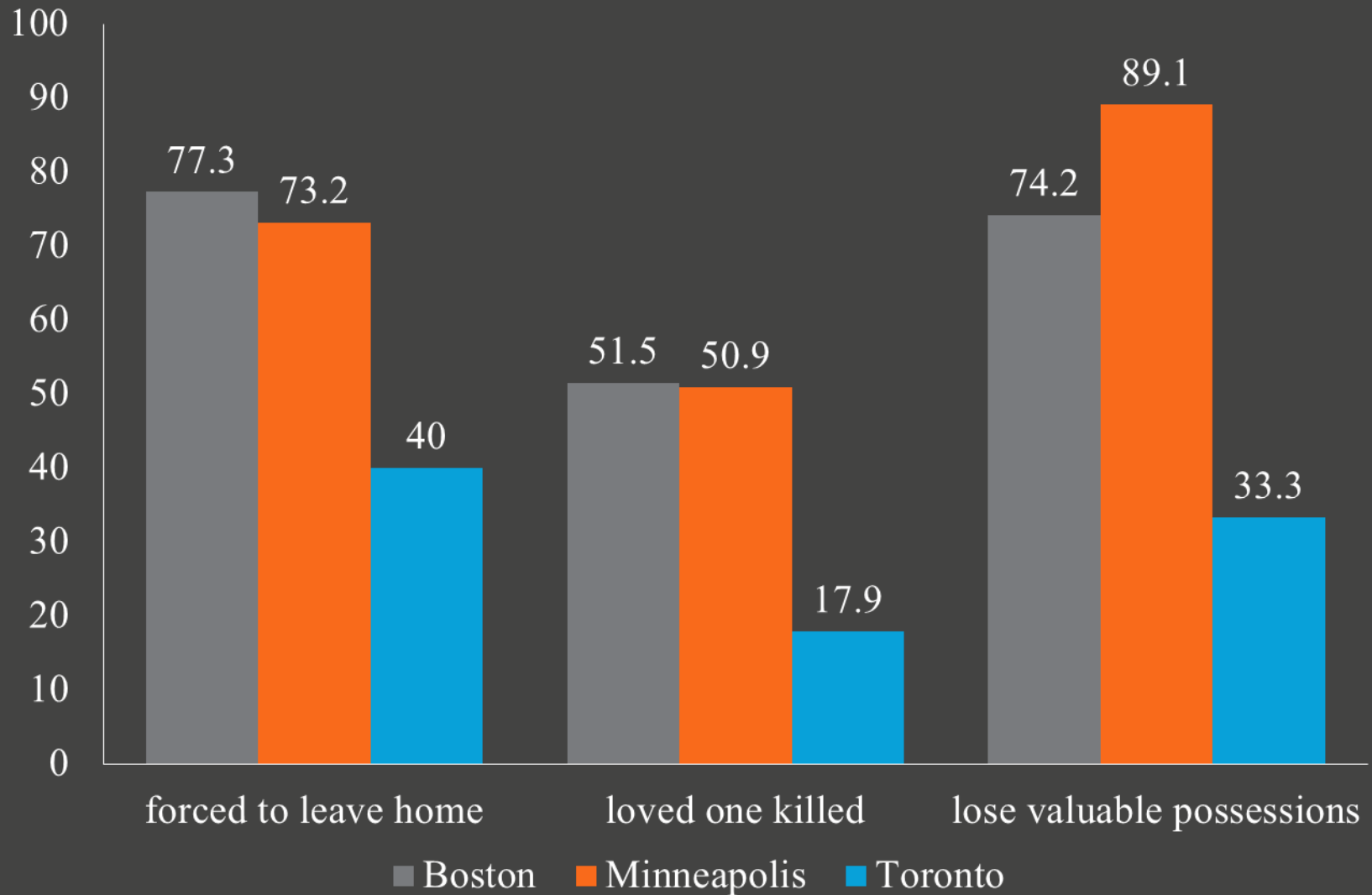
Trauma



Trauma types (trauma in the United States/Canada)

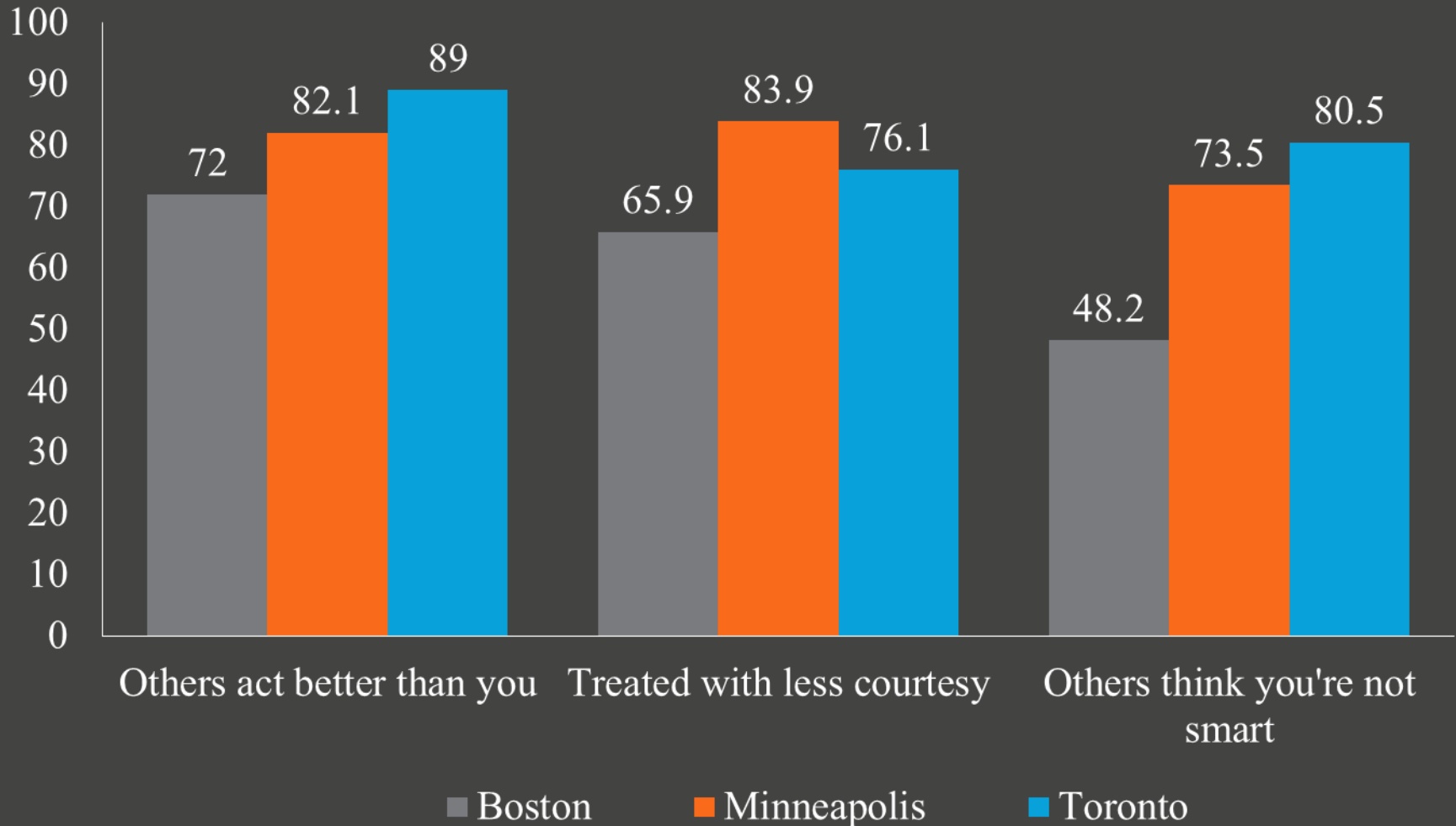


Trauma types (War Trauma)



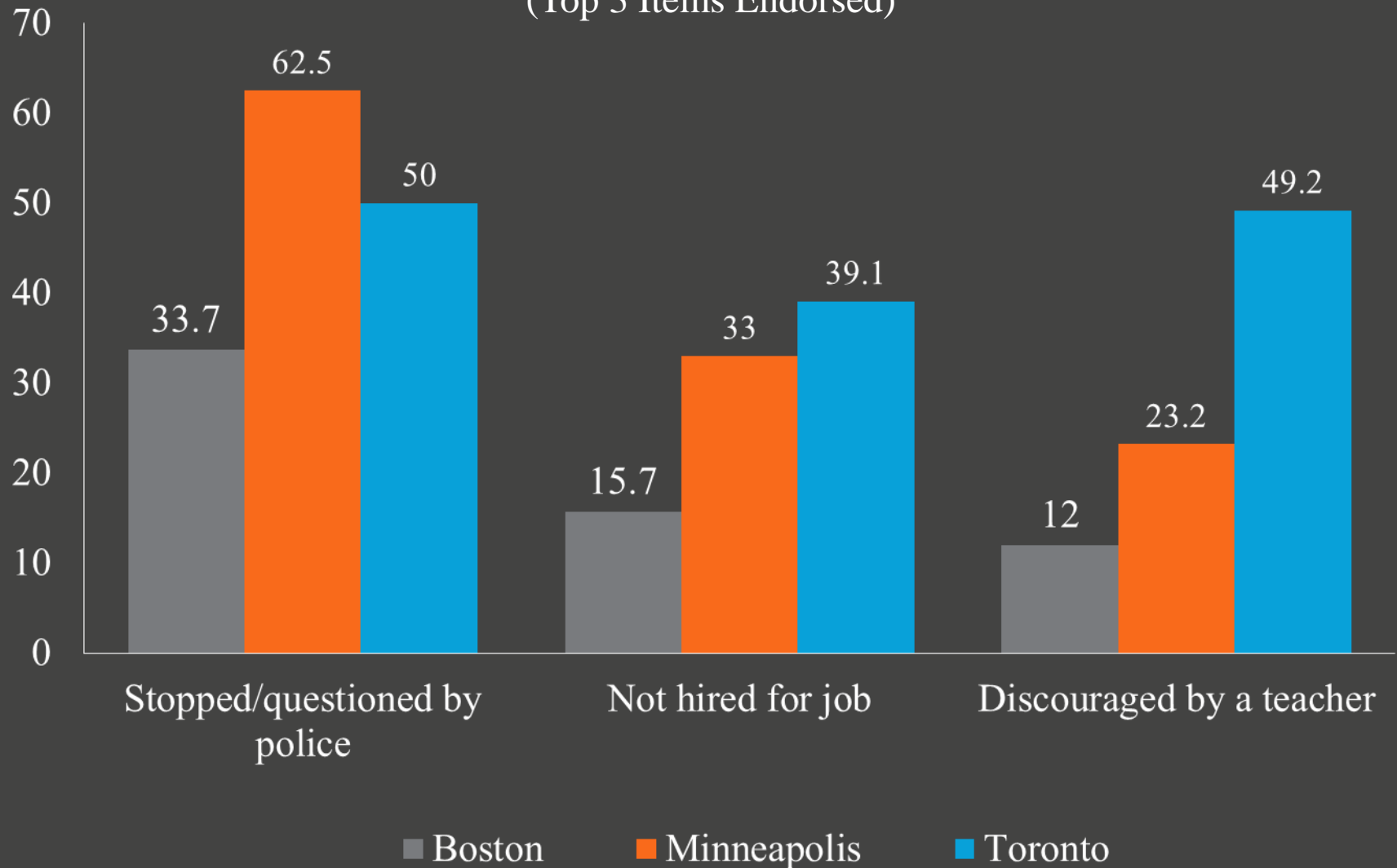
Everyday Discrimination

(Top 3 Items Endorsed)



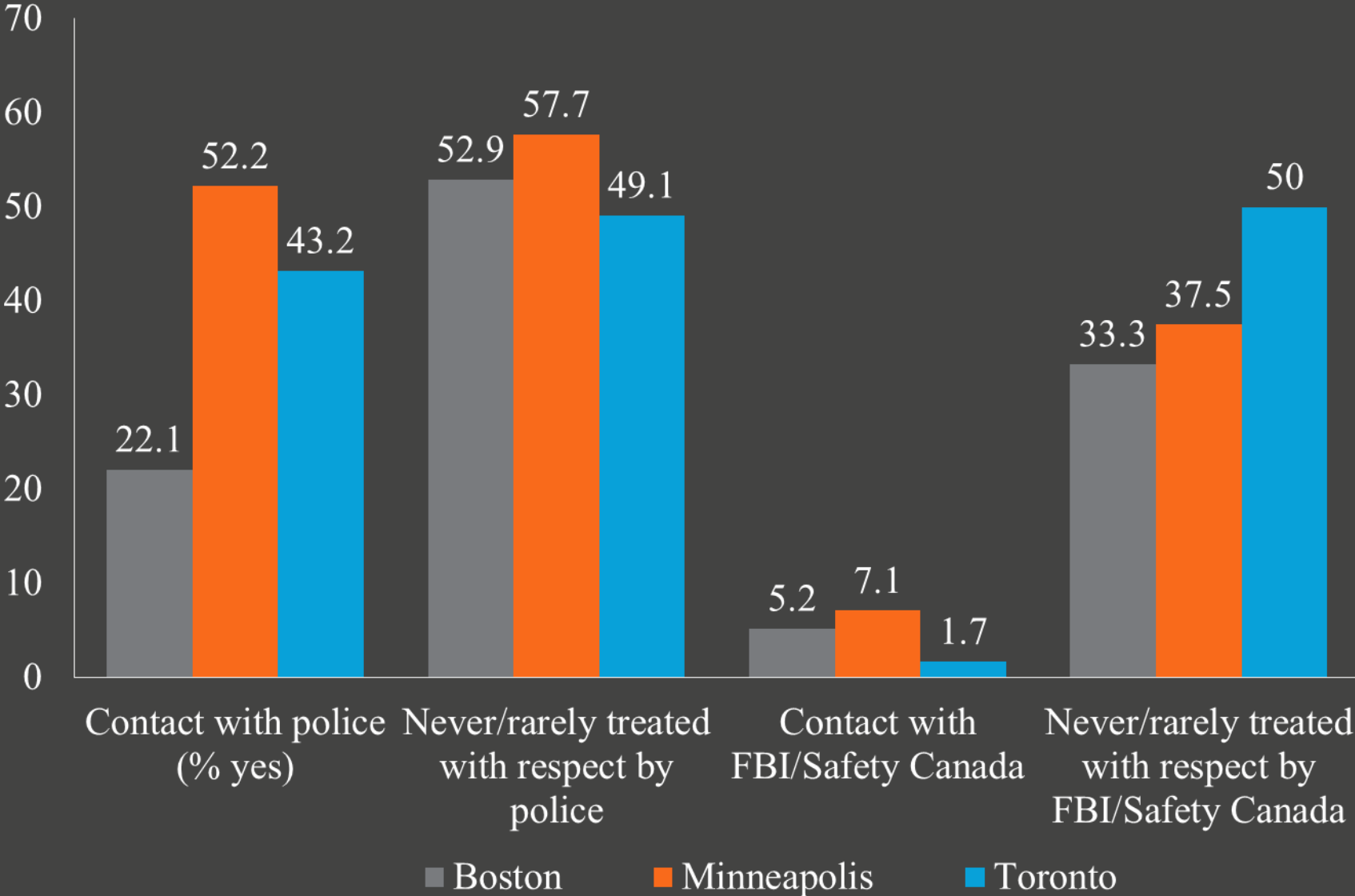
Lifetime Discrimination

(Top 3 Items Endorsed)



Experience in resettlement,
perceptions of security

Contact with Law Enforcement



Focus groups

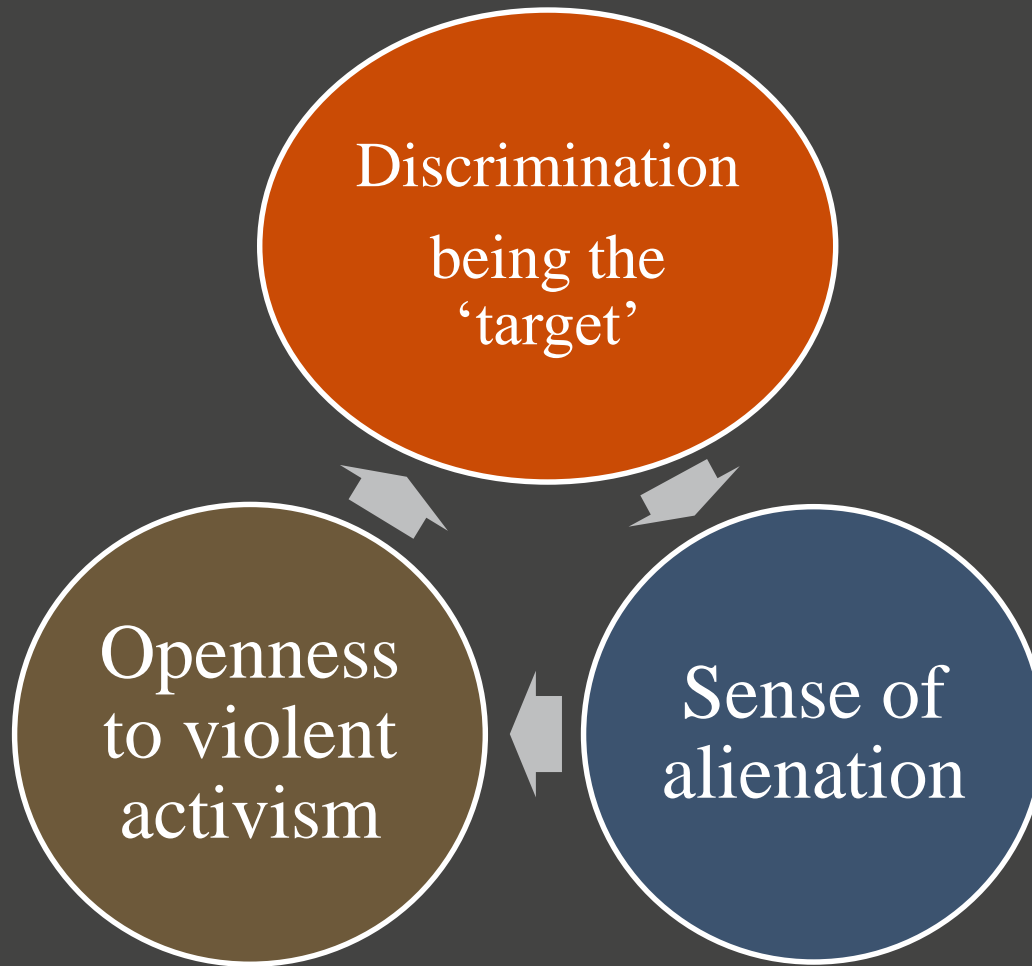
“The Americans living in the US feel unsafe, and the Somalis feel, you know, disrespected”

“... I’m planning to go to Somalia in June. I’m going to be profiled in June. Like, I’m going to be profiled. I’m gonna get stopped, checked... ‘Cause, look, Somali youth. I’m already a target... I feel that I’m a target and they feel that I’m a threat...”

Moderation of Trauma and Violent Extremism by Level of U.S. Importance



A self-fulfilling prophecy?



- The *process* of how we go about trying to understand and prevent radicalization can be part of the problem *or* solution



Key measures

Trauma and Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> War Trauma Screening Scale (WTSS; Layne, Stuvland, Saltzman, Djapo, & Pynoos, 1999)
Political Activism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activism and Radicalism Intention Scales (ARIS; Moskalenko & McCauley, 2009) Civic Engagement Measure (Stepick, Stepick, & Labissiere, 2008)
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posttraumatic Growth Inventory (PGI; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996) Harvard Trauma Questionnaire, Part IV (Symptoms subscale) (HTQ; Mollica et al., 1996) Hopkins Symptom Checklist 25 (HSCL-25; Parloff, Kelman, & Frank, 1954)
Social Bonds and Social identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ARIS (Activism and Radicalism Intention Scale, adapted) (Moskalenko and McCauley) Psychological Sense of Community Membership (PSCM; Goodenow, 1993; Hagborg, 1998) Acculturation scale (developed by Barry, 2001, modified by Jorden, Matheson, & Anisman, 2009) Interpersonal Needs Questionnaire (INQ; Van Orden, Witte, Gordon, Bender, and Joiner, 2008). Adapted Measure of Identification with the National Group (Roccas, Klar, & Liviatan, 2006) Every Day Discrimination (EDD; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997)
Neighborhood scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapted from neighborhood assessment measures developed by Rothman et al., 2011, Brennan et al., 2007, and Boston Neighborhood Survey 2008
Religiousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 10-item scale was developed for the current study to assess participants' religious opinions and beliefs
Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Social Media Use Questionnaire (7 items) was developed for the current study to assess the frequency and types of social media that refugee youth use

Activism Radicalism Intention Scale (Moskalenko and McCauley), adapted

1. I can understand someone who would join/belong to an organization that fights for his people
2. I can understand someone who would donate money to an organization that fights for his people
3. I can understand someone who would volunteer his time working (i.e. write petitions, distribute flyers, recruit people, etc.) for an organization that fights for his people
4. I can understand someone who would travel for one hour to join in a public rally, protest, or demonstration in support of his people
5. I can understand someone who would continue to support an organization that fights for his people even if the organization sometimes breaks the law
6. I can understand someone who would continue to support an organization that fights for his people even if the organization sometimes resorts to violence
7. I can understand someone who would participate in a public protest against oppression of his people even if he thought the protest might turn violent
8. I can understand someone who would attack police or security forces if he saw the police beating members of his people