

## Chapter Two\_history

00:00:03: (girl at festival) We're unique and we're original. And look how cool we are. We have a whole festival just for us. C'mon! (another girl says, "we're special.")

:11-:17: (images of festival)

:17: (man with sunglasses) To be an Arab American – I am an American but I have like background, Arabic background, Lebanese background. So I feel like I have two citizenships. One is a Lebanese citizenship and one is an American citizenship. I feel both.

:36: (Arab Americans in Detroit)

:47: AYOOB: The Arab Muslims came here largely to work, and this is very true in Michigan, in Detroit, the auto capital of the world, they came to work on the assembly lines. (image of workers at the Rouge Plant)

1:00: NARRATOR: Dearborn's Arab community traces its roots to 1927 when thousands of Lebanese immigrants moved to Detroit. It was the year Henry Ford opened up his car factory. He needed workers for his assembly line. When immigration reform began in the 1960s and 70s, Muslims, Iraqis, Yemenis, Palestinians and Syrians joined the predominantly Christian Lebanese community. By the 1990s, Dearborn had a larger Arab population than any other U.S. city.

1:34: AHMED: Here in Detroit there are 300,000 Arab Americans in the tri-county area and there's a half a million in the state.

1:42: WARIKOO: Michigan has the highest concentration of Arab Americans than any other state in the country according to 2000 census figures.

1:51: AHMED: So we're the equivalent of Asians in California or Latinos in the southwest. So it's a hard population to ignore.

2:02: BARRETT: Dearborn, as the unofficial capital of Arab America, is almost obligatory, I think, in any book on American Muslims.

2:09: AHMED: It's also a hard population to ignore because of its concentrations, not only in terms of communities. There's a three-mile long Arab business strip here. There are very few ethnic strips that long in the entire country.

2:27: (man in a "come back to Detroit" shirt): It just reminds me, just like the stores back home, just the stores overseas.

2:32: BARRETT: At any given moment, if you go to Warren Avenue and duck into a bakery, you can find people who sound very bitter, saying there's no way they're ever going to fit into American society. But my feeling about that is, come back in a few years and talk to their children ten years later and you'll hear very different stories.

2:51: WARIKOO: The largest group, according to census figures, is the Lebanese community, followed by the Iraqi community. Within the Iraqi community, the Chaldean community – Chaldeans as you may know are Iraqi Catholics, they're a huge community. And both the Lebanese and Iraqis, Chaldeans, have been here for a long time. Their community goes back generations.

3:15: BARRETT: You realize how efficient the place has been as an immigration machine, of pulling people through. The experience of coming here, many people without a lot of getting either education or factory jobs; moving from the southend to East Dearborn, and oftentimes further out to the suburbs. I think you can see the great American immigration machine at work.

3:49: WARIKOO: I also should say the earlier community in Metro Detroit was a Christian community, whereas the recent arrivals tend to be more Muslim.

3:58: BARRETT: When you have a whole new arrival of several populations that have just arrived in the last ten years, both the Iraqi population and now the group that dominates the old south end which is the Yemeni immigrants, and some of whom are literally assembling the Ford F-150 pickup trucks that are still being built in the old Ford Rouge Plant. You know, the idea that Muslims have been coming, and Arabs, generally, in more recent times, more Muslims, to this one small city to assemble cars for almost a century is a pretty extraordinary, extraordinary thing.

4:39: AYOOB: There were other sources of Muslim immigration into the United States and one of the major sources were the countries of South Asia – Pakistan, India, Bangladesh. From there came mostly professionals, students, or professionals who have already have high degrees and so many of them had settled down in the United States. And thus built a layer of Muslim middle class, that was reasonably well-integrated into American society

5:15-5:59: BARRETT: The main current of thought and experience in Muslim America is one of assimilation. By any measure, Muslims as a group, not necessarily every single Muslim, but Muslims as a group, are integrating into American society and doing so successfully. As a group, there better educated than Americans overall, in terms of the percentages of those who graduated from college. As a group, there more prosperous than Americans overall, as measured by median family income. They even register to vote, in higher percentages, than Americans do overall. So by those, and many other measures, we are witnessing the latest of what has been many immigration stories to this country. And as others are taking advantage of this large and capacious society, Muslims are, too.