

## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM THE DETROIT ARAB AMERICAN STUDY

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The events of 9/11 were traumatic for Americans, especially those of Middle Eastern descent. The “war on terror” exposed Arab and Muslim Americans to intense public scrutiny and government surveillance. Yet accurate information about these populations is still in short supply.

The Detroit Arab American Study (DAAS), a comprehensive survey of the area's Arab and Chaldean communities, provides reliable information about one of the oldest, largest, and most visible Arab populations in North America.<sup>1</sup> This study explores their experiences in the wake of 9/11, their overall well-being, and their sense of identity and belonging.

The Detroit area Arab and Chaldean population is diverse and complex. Our study finds:

- Arabs and Chaldeans trace their ancestry to four sending areas: Lebanon/Syria (37 percent), Iraq (35 percent), Palestine/Jordan (12 percent), and Yemen (9 percent). Seventy-five percent were born outside the U.S.
- They are deeply religious, 58 percent Christian and 42 percent Muslim. Most Christian Arabs and Chaldeans are dispersed throughout Detroit’s suburbs, while two-thirds of Muslims live in the Dearborn area.
- Eighty percent say they speak English well or very well. Most are also bilingual and receive their news and information from both English and Arabic sources.
- Seventy-nine percent are American citizens; 86 percent say they feel at home in the United States; and 91 percent say they are proud to be American.
- Nearly two-thirds identify their race as "white," while another third identify as "other." Seventy percent say that the term "Arab American" describes them.

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<sup>1</sup> The margin of error for the DAAS is +/- 3.5 percent. See Appendix for technical documentation.

- Compared to Arab Americans nationwide, they are more likely to be immigrant, Muslim, and from Iraq or Yemen. They have larger families and lower family incomes. They speak more Arabic and Aramaic. Like other Arab Americans, most are U.S. citizens and are fluent in English.

The DAAS was designed to assess the impact of 9/11 on the Arab and Chaldean population.

- Fifteen percent say that, since 9/11, they personally had a bad experience due to their ethnicity. These experiences included verbal insults, workplace discrimination, special targeting by law enforcement or airport security, vandalism, and in rare cases, vehicular and physical assault. A third also say they received gestures of support from non-Arabs after the attacks.
- Over a quarter say they or someone in their family were verbally harassed during the last two years.
- They list the fight against negative stereotypes and misrepresentation as one of their community's most pressing needs. They also say they need to make a greater effort to communicate with and "be open to" other Americans.
- Muslims in particular worry about their future in the U.S. and believe their religion is not respected.

In addition to the Detroit Arab American Study, we also conducted a companion survey of the general population living in the same geographic area, which allows us to compare the two populations.

- Compared to the general population, Arabs and Chaldeans have higher levels of confidence in their local school systems, the police, and the U.S. legal system.
- A majority of both populations is willing to support increased surveillance in order to fight terrorism.
- The general population is significantly more willing to target Arabs and/or Muslims for surveillance, random stops and searches, and detention without sufficient evidence to prosecute.
- Seventy-three percent of Arabs and Chaldeans believe their community is doing all it can to fight terrorism. Only about 40 percent of the larger society agrees.
- Similar proportions of both populations believe American news sources are biased against Arabs and Muslims.
- Both populations agree that the beliefs of extremists and American foreign policy in the Middle East contributed to the 9/11 attacks. However, Arabs and

Chaldeans are less likely to attribute the attacks to religious conflict or dislike for American values.

The DAAS was produced through an intensive collaboration between the University of Michigan, the University of Michigan-Dearborn, and an advisory panel of community representatives from over twenty secular, religious, and social service organizations.<sup>2</sup> It is a representative survey of all adults of Arab or Chaldean descent who were 18 years and older and resided in households in Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties during the six-month survey period, July to December 2003.<sup>3</sup> Between July and November 2003, 1016 face-to-face interviews were conducted. Seventy-three percent of those who were asked to participate in the survey did so. All references to “Arabs and Chaldeans” in this report refer to this population. In addition, 508 members of the general population, age 18 and over, in these three counties were interviewed during roughly the same period through the Detroit Area Study. This is a representative sample of the Detroit area population, referred to in this report as the “general population.” About 85 percent of the questionnaire items are common to both surveys, permitting extensive comparison of the two populations.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The DAAS Advisory Panel was composed of representatives from the following organizations: American Arab Chamber of Commerce, American Muslim Center, American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, American Syrian Arab Cultural Association, Arab American and Chaldean Council, *Arab American News*, Arab American Political Action Committee, Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services, Chaldean American Ladies of Charity, Chaldean Federation of America, Congress of Arab American Organizations, Islamic Institute of Knowledge, Islamic Center of America, New Generation Club, Our Lady of Redemption Melkite Catholic Church, Ramallah Club, St. George’s Antiochian Orthodox Church, St. Mary’s Antiochian Orthodox Church, United American Lebanese Federation, and Yemeni American Benevolent Association.

<sup>3</sup> For details on our dual-frame probability sample design, sample weights, and other technical details, see Steve Heeringa and Terry Adams, “Technical Documentation: 2003 Detroit Arab American Study (DAAS).” Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan (April 2004).

<sup>4</sup> The Russell Sage Foundation provided major funding for the DAAS. Additional funds were provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; the University of Michigan-Dearborn; and the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, Provost’s Office and Office of the Vice President for Research, Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy (CLOSUP), the Michigan Business School, and the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>PART I: A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE.....</b>	<b>5</b>
CITIZENSHIP, ANCESTRY, AND RELIGION .....	5
LANGUAGE FACILITY .....	6
GENDER AND AGE .....	7
RESIDENCE .....	7
EDUCATION .....	8
INCOME .....	9
OCCUPATION .....	10
BUSINESS OWNERSHIP AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT .....	13
FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD SIZE .....	13
COMPARISONS TO ARAB AMERICANS NATIONWIDE .....	13
<b>PART II: IDENTITY AND BELONGING .....</b>	<b>15</b>
FEELING AT HOME IN AMERICA .....	15
ARAB AMERICAN IDENTITY .....	15
RACIAL IDENTITY .....	15
RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITY .....	16
<b>PART III: THE EXPERIENCE OF SEPTEMBER 11.....</b>	<b>18</b>
BACKLASH AND SOLIDARITY .....	18
MUSLIM VULNERABILITY AFTER SEPTEMBER 11 .....	19
CAUSES OF SEPTEMBER 11 .....	19
CIVIL LIBERTIES AND SECURITY .....	20
ASSISTING IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERROR .....	21
<b>PART IV: INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY WELL BEING .....</b>	<b>22</b>
COMMUNITY AND FAMILY NEEDS .....	22
HEALTH.....	22
HAPPINESS.....	23
ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION .....	24
<b>PART V: NEWS AND INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>26</b>
SOURCES OF NEWS .....	26
LANGUAGE AND NEWS REPORTING.....	27
BIAS IN NEWS REPORTING.....	28
THE DIGITAL DIVIDE.....	29
<b>PART VI: TRUST, POLITICS, AND PARTICIPATION .....</b>	<b>31</b>
CONFIDENCE IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS .....	31
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS .....	32
POLITICAL ACTIVITY .....	32
PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS .....	33
ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS .....	33
IRAQ .....	34
THE U.S. ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST .....	34
CREATING A PALESTINIAN STATE .....	34
<b>APPENDIX: TECHNICAL DOCUMENTATION: 2003 DETROIT ARAB AMERICAN STUDY</b>	

## PART I: A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

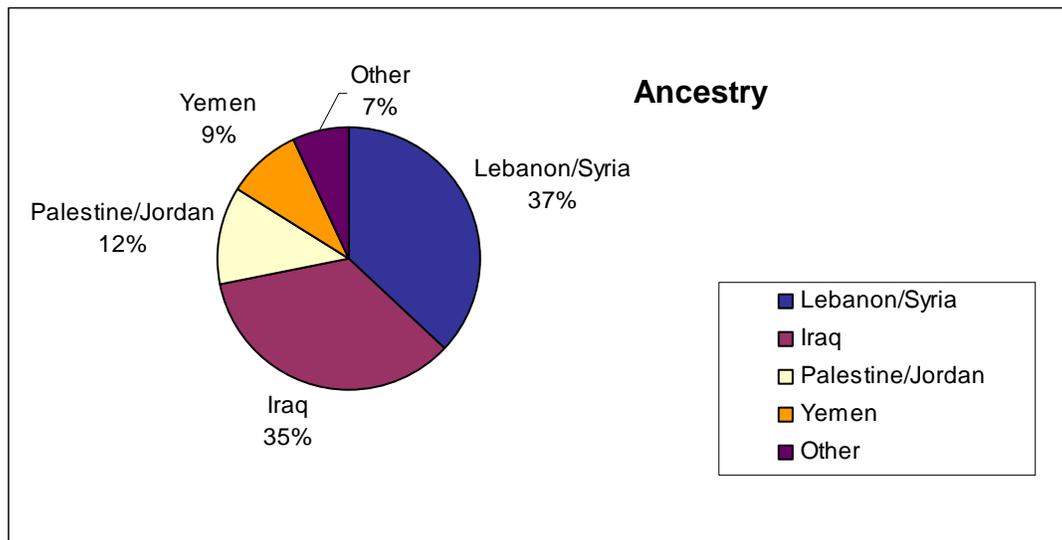
### Citizenship, Ancestry, and Religion

*The Arab and Chaldean population is majority immigrant, majority U.S. citizen.*

Seventy-five percent of Arabs and Chaldeans were born outside the U.S., yet over two-thirds (79 percent) are U.S. citizens. By contrast, 90 percent of the general population is American-born and 95 percent claim U.S. citizenship.

*Arabs and Chaldeans are mostly of Lebanese/Syrian and Iraqi origin.*

Seventy-two percent of the Arab and Chaldean populations trace their origins to Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq. Those from Palestine, Jordan, and Yemen account for 21 percent. Those tracing their ancestry to Lebanon/Syria are the largest group (37 percent), followed closely by Iraqis (35 percent), Palestinians/Jordanians (12 percent), and Yemenis (9 percent). The remaining 7 percent are from other national backgrounds, like Egypt, or have plural origins that typically include ancestors from one or more of the four largest national groups.

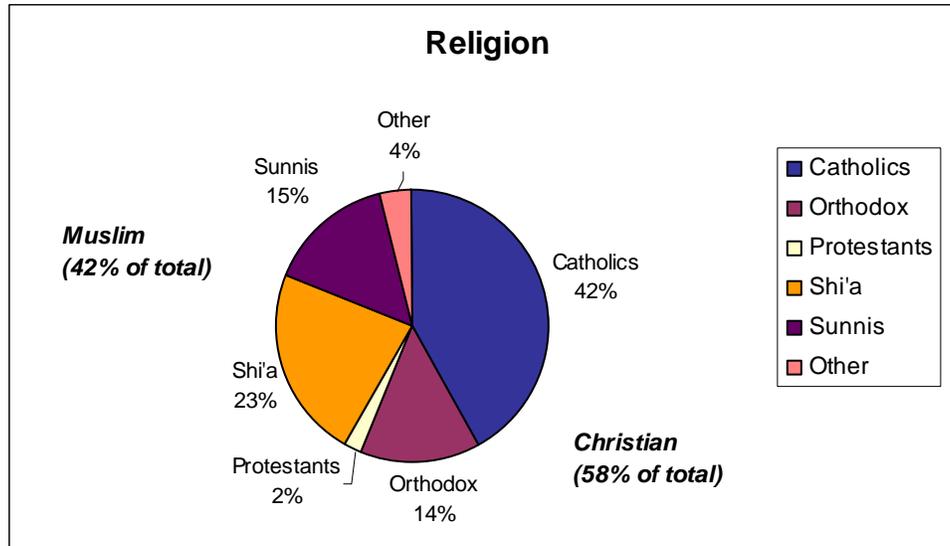


*The Arab and Chaldean population is majority Christian, and Arab Muslims are majority Shi`a.*

About 58 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans identify as Christian, while 42 percent are Muslim. The general population is more Christian (81 percent) but far less Muslim (only 2 percent). Twelve percent of the Detroit area's larger population belongs to other

religious traditions, or claims no religious affiliation at all, whereas less than 1 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans do not identify as Christian or Muslim.

Among Arab Christians, Catholics are the largest group (73 percent), followed by Orthodox (24 percent), and Protestants (3 percent). Arab Muslims have a Shi'i majority (56 percent), whereas Sunnis, who make up the majority of Muslims in the Arab countries and worldwide, are 35 percent.

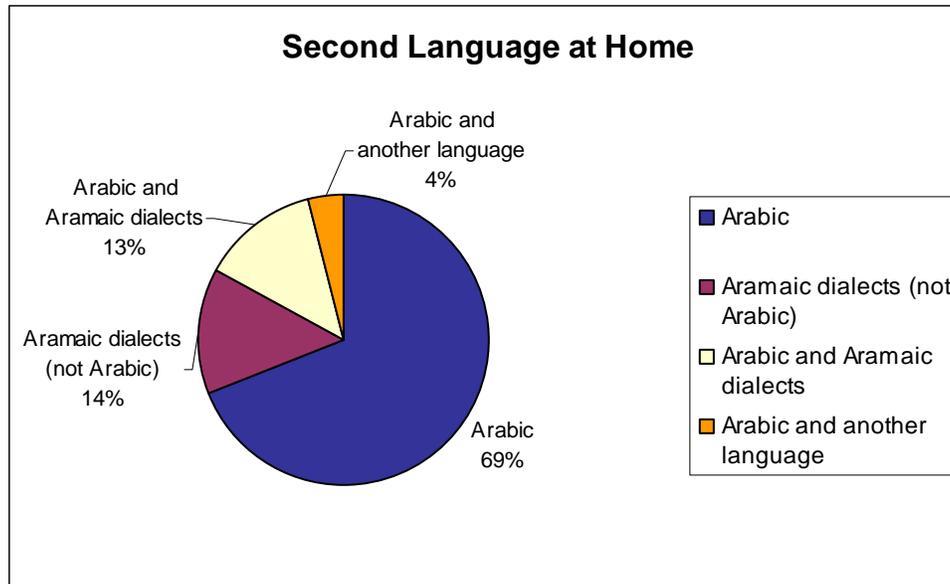


### Language Facility

*A large majority of Arabs and Chaldeans are fluent in English, and nearly 90 percent speak a second language at home.*

Arabs and Chaldeans have high rates of bilingualism, and many are trilingual. Eighty percent say they speak English very well or well. Figures for reading and writing English very well or well (78 percent and 74 percent respectively) are only slightly lower. A very high percentage (86 percent) say they speak a language other than English at home, compared to only 12 percent of the general population. For 69 percent, this other language is Arabic only, but another 17 percent speak Arabic along with third languages. Most of these (about 13 percent) speak both Arabic and an Aramaic dialect, variously referred to as "Chaldean," "Assyrian," "Athury," or "Aramaic". Another 14 percent speak dialects of Aramaic (but not Arabic) in the home.

In the general population, Arabic and Spanish are the most commonly spoken languages after English, each representing just under 3 percent.



### Gender and Age

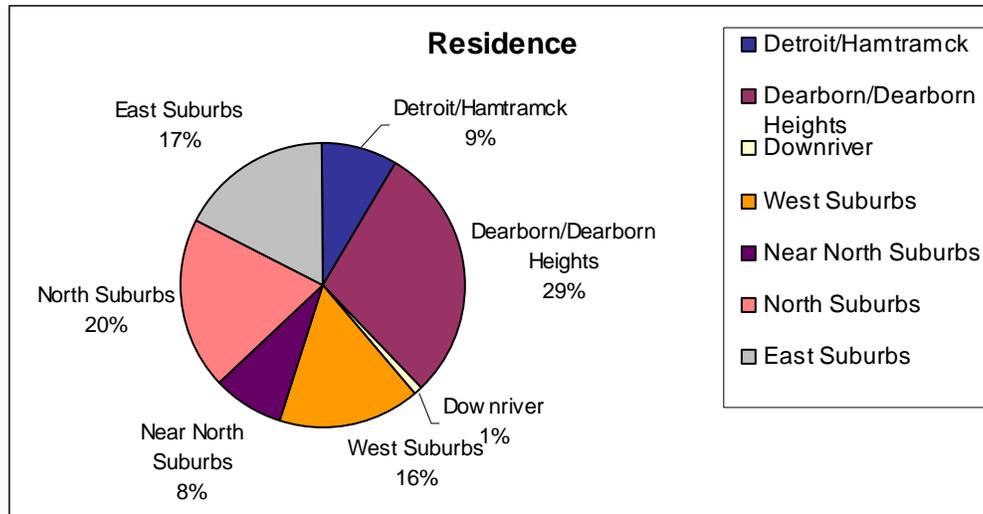
*Arabs and Chaldeans are slightly younger, on average, than the general population.*

The gender breakdown for the overall population and for Arabs and Chaldeans is the same: 46 percent male and 54 percent female. Arabs and Chaldeans are slightly younger than the overall population, with 16 percent age 25 or younger (compared to 13 percent of the general population), 59 percent between the ages of 26 and 54 (the same as the general population), and 25 percent age 55 or older (compared to 28 percent of the general population).

### Residence

*Nine percent of the area's Arab and Chaldean population live in Detroit and Hamtramck. Nearly 30 percent reside in Dearborn and Dearborn Heights, and the majority (62 percent) lives in other suburbs.*

Twenty-nine percent of Arabs and Chaldeans reside in Dearborn and Dearborn Heights, in heavily concentrated, highly visible communities. The rest are spread throughout Detroit and its suburbs, typically in much smaller concentrations.



Muslims and Christians tend not to live in the same neighborhoods. About two-thirds of Arab Muslims (64 percent) live in the Dearborn enclaves, whereas very few Christian Arabs (only 5 percent) are located in or near Dearborn. Christians are more likely to be dispersed in suburban communities, especially in the north, but sizeable populations live in Detroit’s western and eastern suburbs as well.

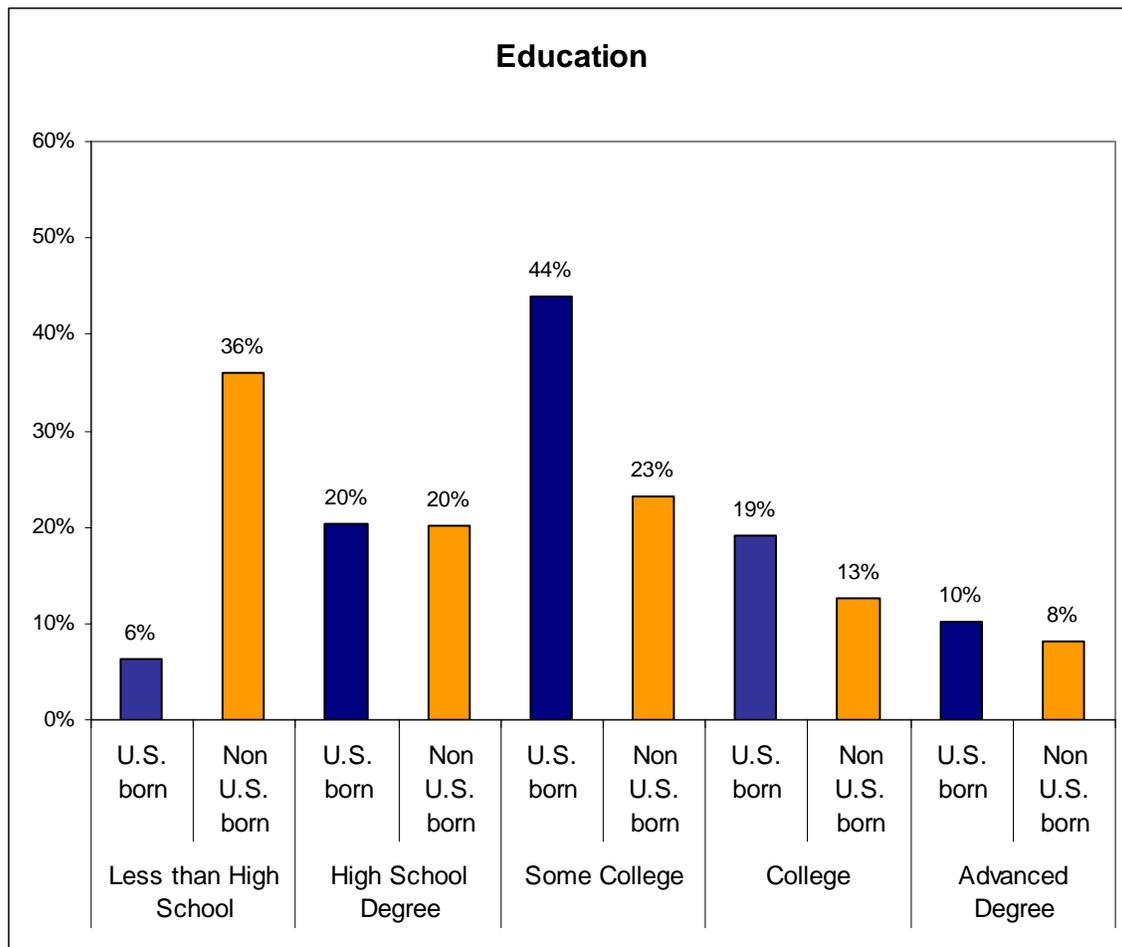
The highly visible Dearborn community provokes mixed feelings among Arabs and Chaldeans. Muslims in general (55 percent), and Arabs who live in the area of Dearborn (55 percent), tend to believe the Dearborn population has “improved the image of the Arab community.” However, only 37 percent of Arab Christians – and only 40 percent of those who live outside Dearborn, both Muslim and Christian – hold this opinion. Arab Christians and Chaldeans (43 percent) are more likely than Muslims (38 percent) to say that Dearborn has “brought political influence to Arab Americans.” Among Arabs and Chaldeans born in the U.S., over half (53 percent) say the Dearborn community is a source of political influence; only 38 percent of the foreign-born share this view.

### Education

*Arabs and Chaldeans have roughly the same percentage of college and advanced degrees as the general population, but a higher percentage has less than a high school degree. Those born in the U.S. have more education than either the general population or Arabs and Chaldeans born abroad.*

Twenty-eight percent of Arabs and Chaldeans do not have a high school degree, compared to 13 percent of the general population. Fourteen percent have college degrees and 9 percent report advanced degrees (17 percent and 10 percent respectively, in the overall population). Among American-born Arabs and Chaldeans, only 6 percent are not high school graduates, whereas over a third of those born abroad (36 percent) have not

completed high school. Rates of college and advanced degrees among American-born Arabs and Chaldeans are about the same as the general population.



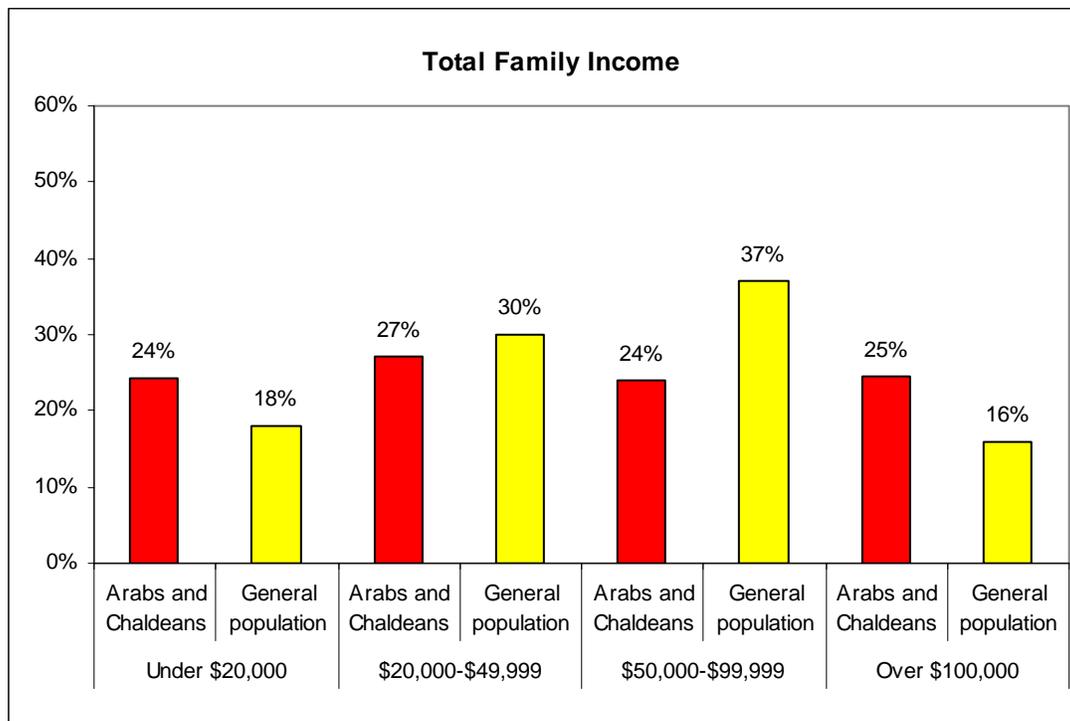
### Income

*Arabs and Chaldeans are disproportionately represented among the area's wealthiest and poorest households.*

The relatively high number of Arabs and Chaldeans without a high school degree is reflected in income figures. Twenty-four percent claim an annual total family income of under \$20,000, 6 percentage points higher than in the general population.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, 25 percent report total family incomes of \$100,000 or more per year, compared to 16 percent in the larger population. Those born in the U.S. are more affluent still: 36 percent report an annual total family income of \$100,000 or more, and only 7 percent report less than \$20,000 a year. In the middle income ranges, the differences are less

<sup>5</sup> Respondents were asked about the total family income for the respondent and all family members residing in the household.

apparent. Twenty-seven percent put their total family incomes between \$20,000-\$49,999, and 24 percent between \$50,000-\$99,999. The comparable numbers for the general population are 30 percent and 37 percent respectively.



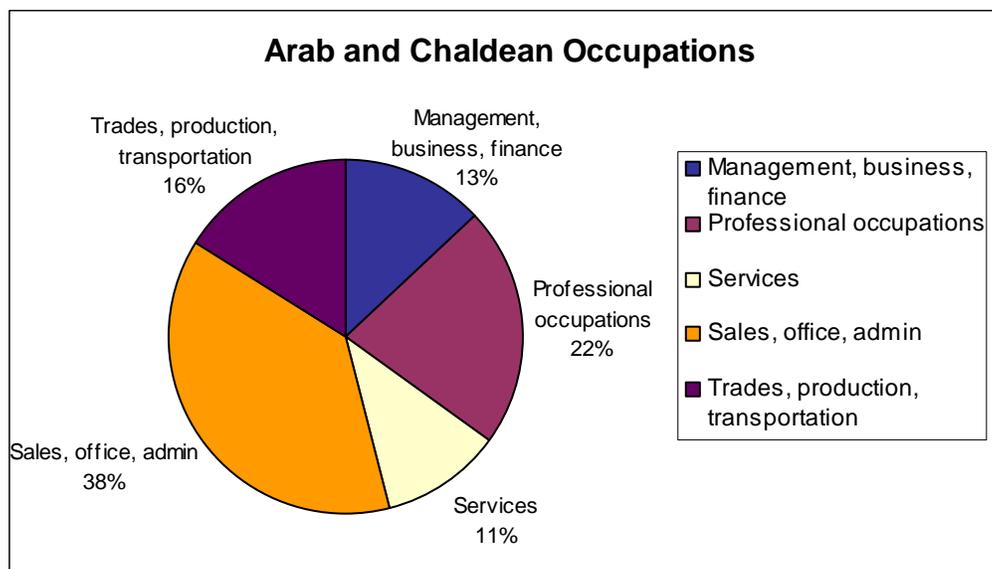
### Occupation

*Most Arabs and Chaldeans work in sales, office, and administrative positions, and another fifth are in professional occupations. Women are more likely to be in professional occupations than men. Managers and those in professional occupations tend to be U.S. citizens, whereas non-citizens are concentrated in sales, service, and the trades.*

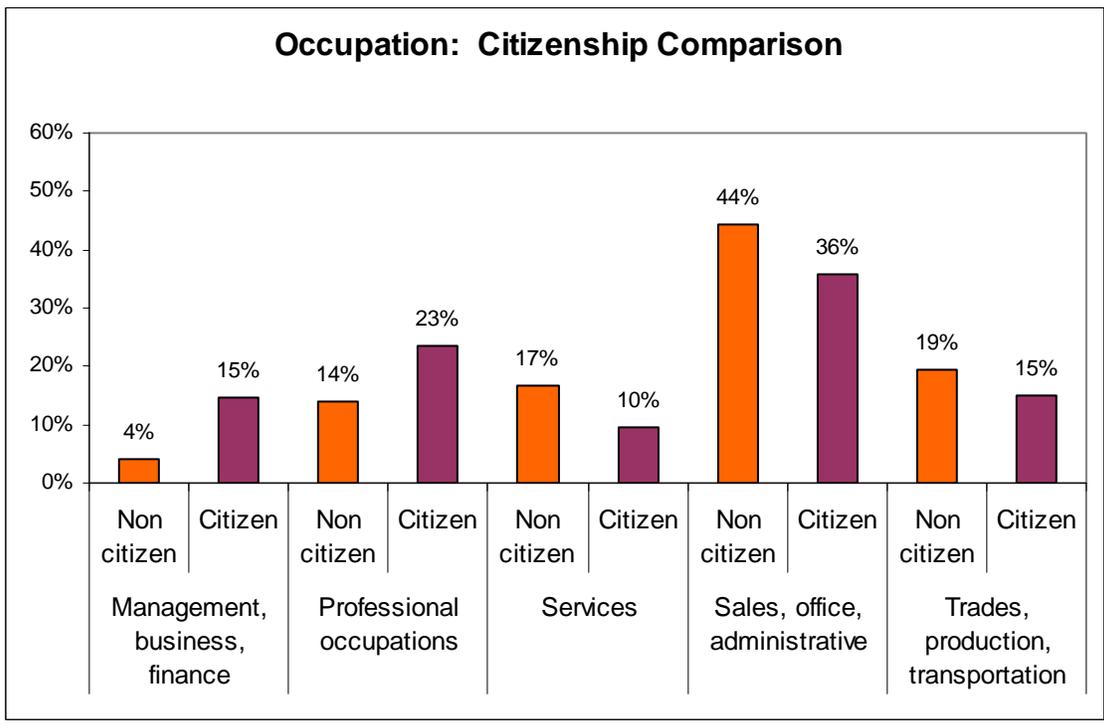
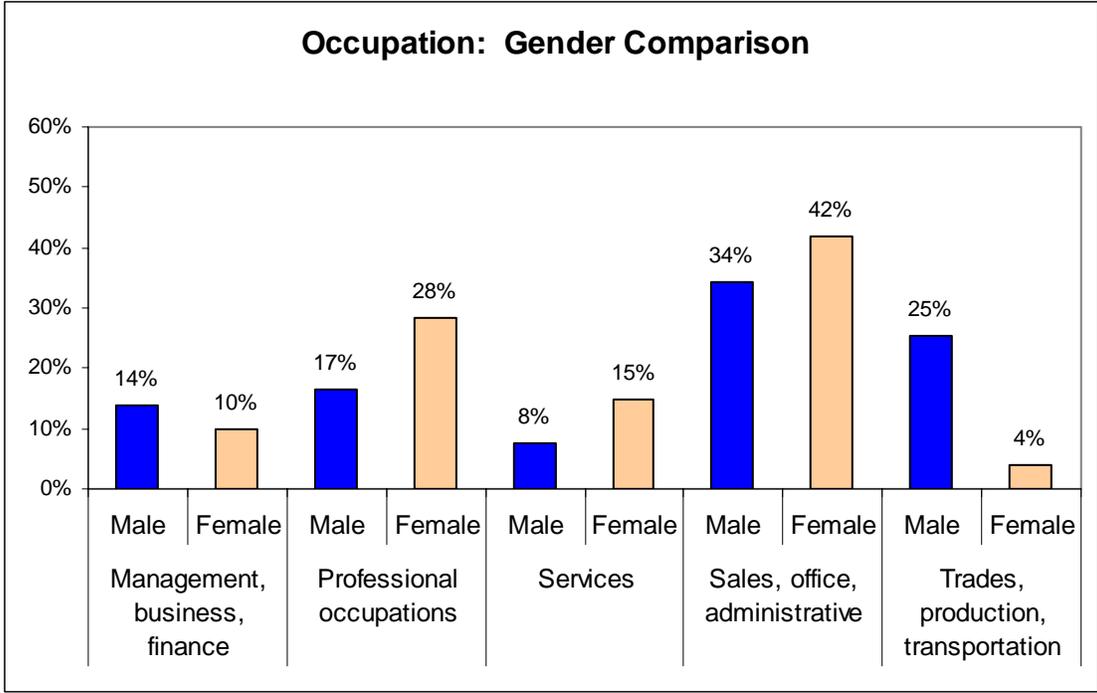
Arabs and Chaldeans are more likely to work in sales, office, and administrative positions (38 percent) than the general population (25 percent).<sup>6</sup> The percentages in

<sup>6</sup> (1) "Management, business, finance" includes Management Occupations, Business Operations Specialists, and Financial Specialists. (2) "Professional occupations" includes Computer and Mathematical Occupations, Architecture and Engineering Occupations, Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations, Community and Social Services Occupations, Legal Occupations, Education, Training, and Library Occupations, Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations, Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations, and Healthcare Support Occupations. (3) "Services" includes Protective Service Occupations, Food Preparation and Serving Occupations, Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations, and Personal Care and Service Occupations. (4) "Sales, office, administrative" include Sales Occupations, Office and Administrative Support Occupations. (5) "Trades, Production, Transportation" includes Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations, Construction Trades, Extraction Workers,

management, business, or financial occupations (13 percent), services (11 percent), and the trades (16 percent) are lower than for others in the Detroit area (17 percent, 16 percent, and 19 percent respectively). Both populations have a roughly 22 percent participation rate in professional occupations.



Among Arabs and Chaldeans, both men and women work in sales and administrative positions at high rates (34 and 42 percent respectively), but there is greater variation in other occupations. Women are more likely to be in professional occupations (28 percent) than men (17 percent), and to work in services (15 percent and 8 percent respectively). Men are better represented in management, business, and finance (14 percent compared to 10 percent for women) and the trades (25 percent and 4 percent, respectively). Iraqis are more likely to specialize in sales and administration (48 percent), compared to other Arabs (between 30-35 percent), and Yemenis are more likely to work in the trades (43 percent, compared to a range of 7 to 17 percent for other Arabs and Chaldeans). Lebanese/Syrians have the highest proportion of those in professional occupations (29 percent compared to 5-19 percent). Finally, citizenship status has great bearing on occupation. Citizens are far more likely to work in the professional or management, business, and financial occupations, while non-citizens cluster in the trades, services, and sales.



### Business Ownership and Self-Employment

*Arabs and Chaldeans own their own businesses in greater numbers than others in the tri-county area and are more likely to be self-employed.*

Nineteen percent of Arabs and Chaldeans own their own businesses, while only 14 percent of the larger population owns a business. Arab and Chaldean men are nearly three times as likely to own a business as are women (28 percent for men, 11 percent for women), while the figures for the general population are 19 percent for men and 9 percent for women. Immigrants from Iraq (23 percent) and Lebanon/Syria (21 percent) are most likely to own a business, with Palestinians/Jordanians (17 percent) following closely behind. Only 3 percent of Yemenis are business owners. In general, business owners report the highest levels of income among immigrants. Among the American-born, by contrast, higher incomes are associated with higher levels of education rather than with business ownership.

Among currently employed Arabs and Chaldeans, 31 percent say they are self-employed, while another 9 percent are both self-employed and employed by others. These numbers are nearly twice as high as those found among the general population, 16 percent of whom are self-employed and 5 percent of whom are both self-employed and working for others.

### Family and Household Size

*Arabs and Chaldeans tend to have more children and to live in larger households than members of the general population.*

Arab and Chaldean families have an average of 2.6 children. Yemenis have the largest families (3.8 children), followed by Iraqis (2.7), Palestinians/Jordanians (2.7), and Lebanese/Syrians (2.4). Those born abroad have 3 children on average, while those born in the U.S. average 1.2 children.

The average household in the general population has 2.7 members. Arabs and Chaldeans, by comparison, have an average of 4.0 members. Yemenis, at 5.0 members, and Iraqis, at 4.3, live in the largest households. On average, American-born Arabs and Chaldeans have 3.5 people living in their households, whereas those born abroad have 4.1.

### Comparisons to Arab Americans Nationwide

*Compared to Arab Americans nationally, those living in the Detroit area are more likely to be foreign born and Muslim. They are also more likely to be Iraqi or Yemeni. Nationally, Arab Americans are more highly educated but less likely to be bilingual than those living in the Detroit area.*

Seventy-five percent of Arabs and Chaldeans in the Detroit area were born outside the U.S, while just under 40 percent of Arabs nationwide are foreign born.<sup>7</sup> Roughly 80 percent of both populations are U.S. citizens.

In the Detroit area and nationally, people of Lebanese and Syrian descent outnumber other nationalities (37 percent in the Detroit area, compared to 45 percent nationally). The local Iraqi population, however, is unusually large. Thirty-five percent of Arabs and Chaldeans in the Detroit area are Iraqi, compared to about 10 percent of Arab Americans nationally. The Detroit area also has higher percentages of Palestinians/Jordanians and Yemenis, but its Egyptian and North African communities are relatively small. Arab Christians outnumber Arab Muslims in the Detroit area, as they do nationally, but the margin locally is not large. Muslim Arabs are 42 percent of the Detroit area population, while they represent less than a fourth of Arabs nationwide (23 percent).<sup>8</sup>

Levels of English fluency are high in the Detroit area and among Arab Americans elsewhere, but Arabs and Chaldeans in the Detroit area are more often bilingual. Eighty-six percent speak a second (and often a third) language at home, compared to only 50 percent nationwide.

Local educational achievement rates for Arabs and Chaldeans fall short of the national averages. Seventy-two percent have high school degrees, compared to 85 percent of Arabs nationwide. While more than 40 percent of Arab Americans nationally have a bachelor's degree or higher, only 23 percent in the Detroit area do.

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<sup>7</sup> National figures on Arab Americans are from "By the numbers," a synopsis of U.S. Census 2000 data written by Helen Hatab Samhan for *Arab-American Business Magazine* (October 2003, Vol. 3, Issue 10:27-28, 35).

<sup>8</sup> The U.S. Census does not collect information on religion. The national breakdown cited here is drawn from a survey of Arab Americans conducted in 2000 by Zogby International and reported by the Arab American Institute (<http://www.aaiusa.org/demographics.htm>).

## PART II: IDENTITY AND BELONGING

### Feeling at Home in America

*Arabs and Chaldeans are proud to be American and feel at home in the U.S.*

Eighty-six percent of all Arabs and Chaldeans say they feel at home in the U.S. Ninety-four percent of those who are U.S. citizens say they are very or quite proud to be American, compared to 98 percent of the general population. Eighty percent of non-citizens feel the same way, while 12 percent say the question is not applicable to them. Arabs and Chaldeans are more likely to be optimistic about America than the general population: 86 percent believe that America is a land of equal opportunity, compared to 74 percent of the general population.

### Arab American Identity

*Not all Arabs and Chaldeans are comfortable with the label “Arab American,” yet a solid majority (70 percent) feels the term describes them accurately.*

Given the diverse national, religious, and ethnic origins of Arabs and Chaldeans, it is hardly surprising that the term “Arab American” would not appeal to everyone. Thirty percent prefer to be called something else. In fact, respondents provided roughly 100 alternative identity labels when asked if there was “any other term like ‘Arab American’ that better describes you.”

Christians are less likely than Muslims to accept the “Arab American” label. While 61 percent of Christians think the term describes them accurately, only 45 percent of Iraqi Christians do. Thirty percent of Christians from Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt would prefer to be called something other than “Arab American.” Muslims, regardless of national origin, welcome the term, with 82 percent saying it describes them.

In general, half of Iraqis resist the Arab American label, while overwhelming majorities from Yemen, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria embrace the term. Citizenship and place of birth seem to have no bearing on whether a person identifies as Arab American. Citizens and non-citizens accept the label at a rate of 70 percent; the same is true of those born in the U.S. and those born abroad.

### Racial Identity

*Arabs and Chaldeans differ on matters of racial identification, with nearly two-thirds calling themselves “white” but about a third opting to describe themselves as “other.”*

Arabs and Chaldeans have divergent views on racial identity. Those living outside the Dearborn enclaves, Christians in particular, are more likely to belong to the 64 percent majority who identify as “white.” However, a substantial minority (31 percent)

does not think any of the racial categories used by the U.S. Census accurately describes them. In the Dearborn area, 45 percent call themselves “other,” compared to 25 percent who live elsewhere. And while 73 percent of Christians identify as “white,” only 50 percent of Muslims do. Those born in America, and those with U.S. citizenship, are more likely to identify as “white.”

The preference for “white” or “other” is nearly exclusive. Only 4 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans call themselves “Asian,” and only two individuals (out of 1016 surveyed) say they are “black.” When asked to specify what kind of “other” they might be, most suggest variants of “Arab” (43 percent), “Middle Eastern” (29 percent), or “Chaldean” (15 percent). A smaller number (9 percent) opts for a national identity, with “Lebanese” (4 percent) being the most common.

### Religion and Religious Identity

*An overwhelming majority of Arabs and Chaldeans believe God to be central to their lives and are affiliated with churches or mosques.*

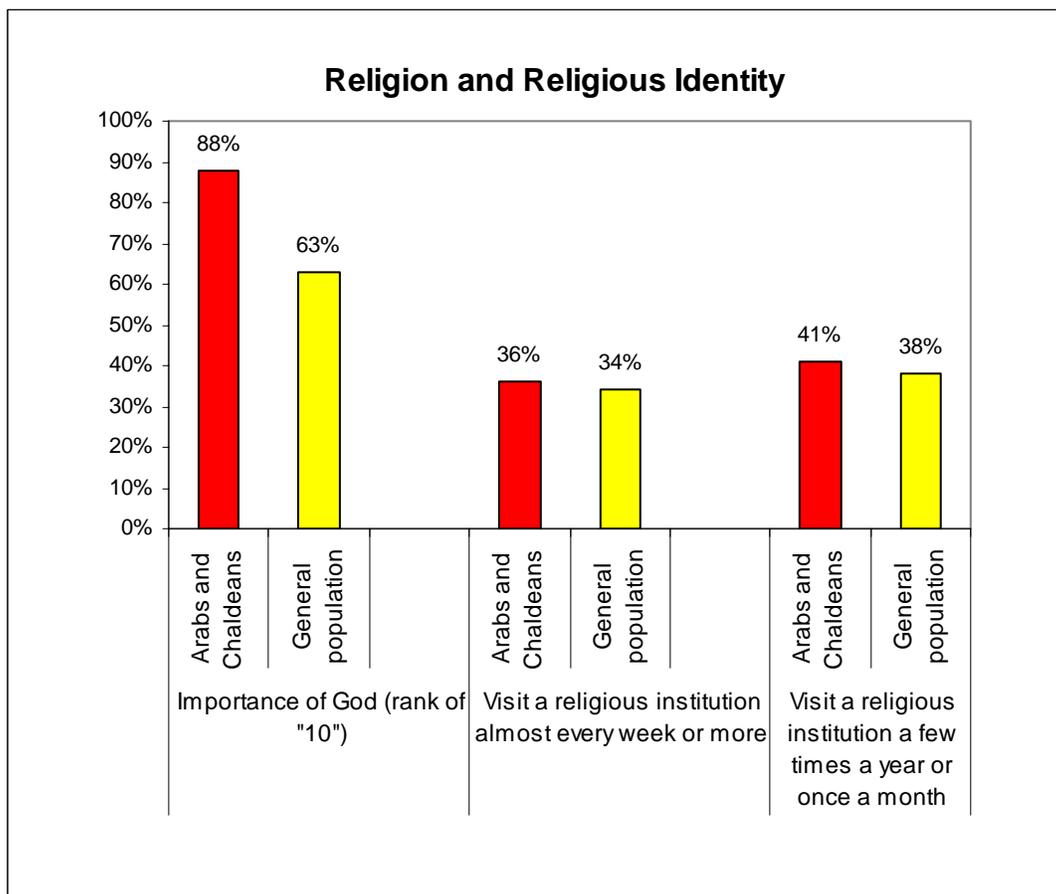
Arabs and Chaldeans are much more likely than the general population to say that God is very important in their lives. Eighty-eight percent rank God a “10” in importance on a scale of 1-10, compared to 63 percent of the general population. Religious institutions play important roles in the lives of Arabs and Chaldeans, as well as in the general population. Thirty-six percent (34 percent of the general population) visit religious institutions almost every week or more. Another 41 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans (38 percent of the general population) visit a few times a year or once or twice a month.

*Christian religious practice is centered on church attendance, while Muslim practice emphasizes daily prayer and fasting. Gender affects religious practice differently among Muslims and Christians.*

Christians (80 percent) are most likely to mention church attendance as an important aspect of their practice, while Muslims are equally likely to mention fasting (84 percent) and daily prayer (82 percent). Christians are more likely to mention “giving charity” than Muslims: 75 percent compared to 67 percent. Forty-eight percent of Muslims say it is important to them to make a point of discussing their faith with others, whereas 39 percent of Christians agree. Nearly 80 percent of both Muslims and Christians believe it is important to marry someone of their own faith.

In general, Christian women are more active in their churches than men, while Muslim men tend to be more active in mosques than Muslim women. Fifty-seven percent of Muslim men and 35 percent of Muslim women feel it is important to attend Friday prayers at a mosque, while 72 percent of Christian men and 85 percent of Christian women feel it is important to attend church on Sunday. Inversely, 77 percent of Muslim men and 88 percent of Muslim women feel it is important to pray daily, compared to 61 percent of Christian men and 76 percent of Christian women.

Both Christian and Muslim women emphasize the importance of modest dress more than men. Sixty-five percent of Muslim women say that wearing “hijab” (a scarf that covers a woman’s hair) is an important religious practice, compared to 40 percent of Muslim men. Christian women do not wear the hijab, but 66 percent say “dressing modestly” is an important part of their faith, compared to 53 percent of men.



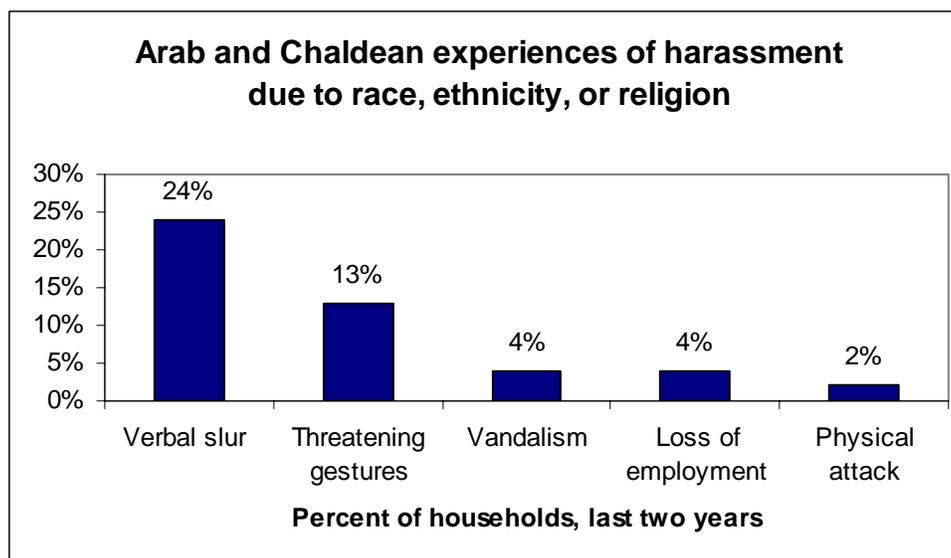
### PART III: THE EXPERIENCE OF SEPTEMBER 11

#### Backlash and Solidarity

*Two years after the September 11 attacks, Arabs and Chaldeans report instances of verbal and physical abuse and feelings of vulnerability, but they also report acts of solidarity and support.*

Fifteen percent of Arabs and Chaldeans report personally having “a bad experience” due to their ethnicity after 9/11. These experiences included verbal insults, workplace discrimination, targeting by law enforcement or airport security, vandalism, and, in rare cases, vehicular and physical assault. In the two years since 9/11, a fourth (24 percent) report that they or a member of their household suffered a verbal insult due to their ethnicity or religion, and 13 percent report threatening gestures. At the same time, even greater numbers (33 percent) say that someone not of Middle Eastern background showed them support or solidarity in the weeks after 9/11.

Among the general population, 19 percent report that they or members of their household suffered an ethnic, racial, or religious slur in the past two years, but the targets of these insults have a very different profile. Among Arabs and Chaldeans, Muslims, especially the more highly educated, and non-citizens of both faiths are more likely to report a negative experience since 9/11. By contrast, in the general population, Blacks and those between ages 18-25 are more likely to report negative experiences.



More serious negative experiences are far less frequent in both populations. Only 2-4 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans and the overall population report that their ethnicity, race, or religion resulted in a loss of employment, vandalism, or physical attack.

*Like the general population, Arabs and Chaldeans feel less secure after September 11.*

The 9/11 attacks had similar effects on individual levels of personal security among Arabs, Chaldeans, and the general population. Forty-eight percent of Arabs and Chaldeans and 44 percent of the general population report a “great deal” or a “good” amount of insecurity. Arab Muslims, women, and those with less education are more likely to feel that their personal security has been shaken.

### Muslim Vulnerability After September 11

*Muslims are more likely than Christians to report that their religion is not respected by mainstream society. Muslims feel more vulnerable than Christians do as a result of the September 11 terrorist attacks.*

Forty-two percent of Muslim Arabs feel that their religion is not respected by mainstream society, while only 11 percent of Christian Arabs and Chaldeans feel the same. Among Muslims, it is women, the more highly educated, and those who earn more who are most likely to express these sentiments.

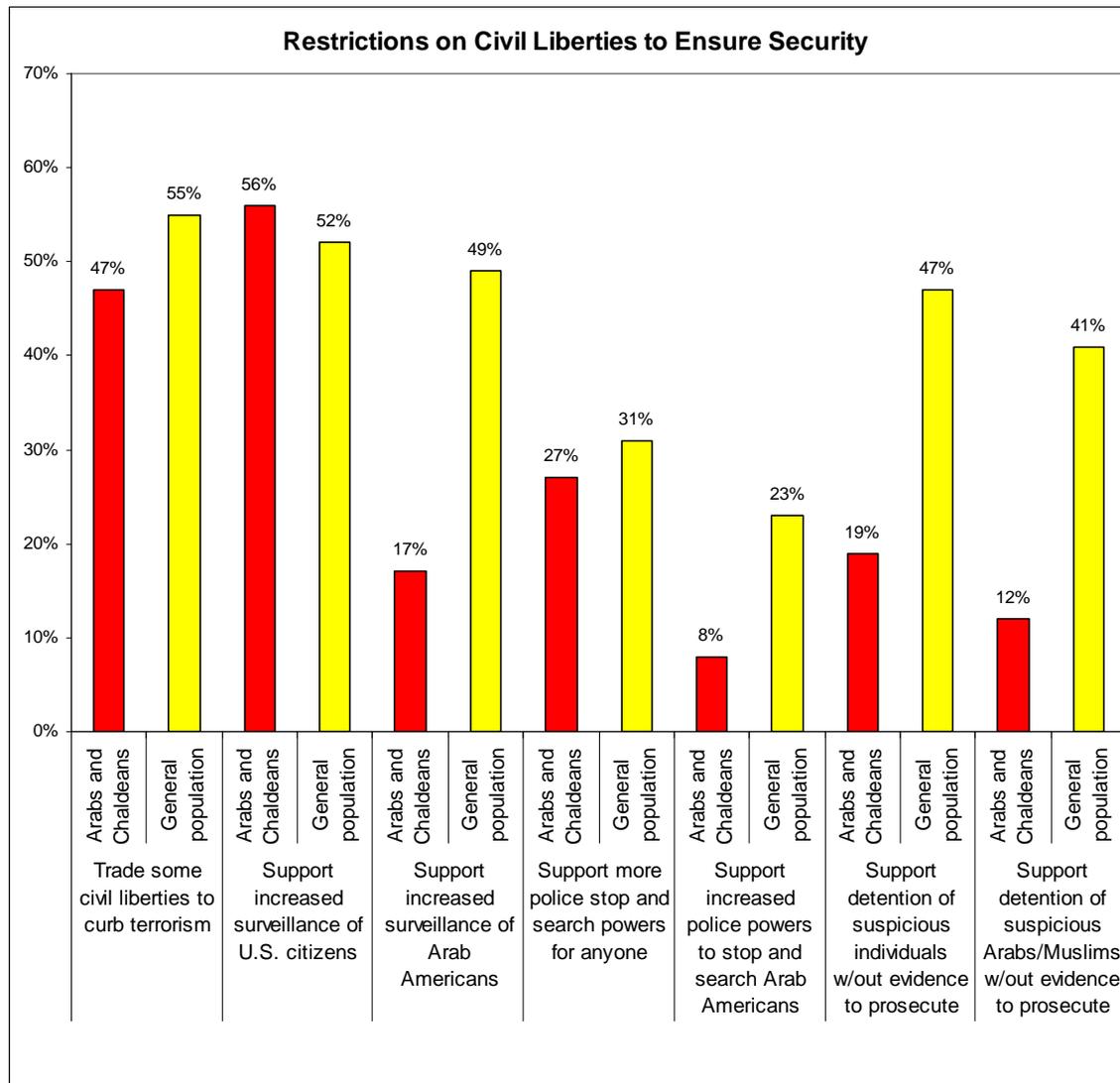
A perceived lack of respect for Islam compounds the heightened sense of vulnerability that Arab Muslims face. Asked whether they worry more about the future of their families in the U.S. after 9/11, 58 percent of Muslims indicate that they do, compared to 31 percent of Christians. Feelings of vulnerability are related to different characteristics for Muslims and Christians. Among Christians, those who earn less worry more. Among Muslims, however, women, those who earn more, and those with higher education worry most. Muslims who report feeling the most vulnerable about the future are also the most likely to say they received acts of kindness or solidarity from non-Arabs after 9/11.

### Causes of September 11

*Arabs and Chaldeans and the general population share the belief that extremists were responsible for the September 11 attacks and that American foreign policy was a cause. But they disagree on the role played by religious values and cultural conflict.*

Arabs and Chaldeans are more likely to say that they “don’t know” to questions about the possible causes of 9/11; about 20 percent give this answer to each of the questions below, compared to about 10 percent of the general population. This caveat noted, similar numbers of Arabs and Chaldeans (69 percent) agree with the general population (77 percent) that the 9/11 attacks should be attributed to “the extremist beliefs of a few terrorists.” They also show strikingly similar levels of agreement that U.S. support of Israel (55 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans and 56 percent of the general population) and U.S. intervention in the Persian Gulf (45 percent in both populations) were possible explanations.

There is disagreement on two other explanations that have been advanced for 9/11. Forty-eight percent of the larger population, but only 22 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans, believe that 9/11 should be attributed to “the conflict between Christianity and Judaism on one hand and Islam on the other.” Asked whether American beliefs in “democracy, freedom, and equal rights for women” were a cause, 37 percent of the general population but only 22 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans agree. Christian Arabs and Chaldeans are more likely to support this point: 31 percent believe that American beliefs were a cause, compared to only 9 percent of Muslims.



### Civil Liberties and Security

*Arabs and Chaldeans and members of the general population are equally willing to trade off specific civil liberties to stop terrorism when these actions apply to all Americans.*

In order to ensure security at home, a comparable number of Arabs and Chaldeans (56 percent) and members of the general population (52 percent) are willing to support increased surveillance of U.S. citizens. Granting the police more powers to stop and search anyone at random receives support from 27 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans, and 31 percent of the general population. Asked a general question about giving up some civil liberties to curb terrorism, 55 percent of the general population and 47 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans express support.

*The general population is more willing to support targeting infringement of civil rights on Arabs and Muslims.*

When asked whether they support civil rights infringements that specifically target Arabs and Muslims, the general population is much more likely to agree. Forty-nine percent of the general population would support increasing surveillance of Arab Americans, while only 17 percent of Arab and Chaldean Americans agree. Forty-one percent of the general population would uphold the detention of suspicious Arabs and Muslims even without sufficient evidence to prosecute, while only 12 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans support such acts. And 23 percent of the general population would support increased police powers to stop and search Arab Americans, while only 8 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans support this infringement.

#### Assisting in the Fight Against Terror

*A large majority of Arabs and Chaldeans believe Arab Americans are doing all they can to assist in the fight against terror, while under 40 percent of the general population agrees.*

Arabs and Chaldeans respond very differently than the general population when asked whether the Arab American community is doing all it can to assist in the fight against terror. Nearly three-fourths (73 percent) of Arabs and Chaldeans agree that the community is doing all it can, and only 7 percent dissent. This agreement persists across all income, education, and age levels, as well as across religion and citizenship. In the general population, however, the proportion who agree that Arab Americans are doing all they can to curtail terrorism drops to 38 percent, and there are almost as many dissenters (33 percent) as supporters. This polarization of opinion about the Arab community may explain the general population's willingness to restrict their civil liberties as a response to terrorism, as well as the prejudice that many Arabs and Chaldeans sense or have experienced.

## PART IV: INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY WELL BEING

### Community and Family Needs

*Arabs and Chaldeans express a need to combat anti-Arab stereotypes and discrimination. They want to improve their relations with other communities, achieve better representation in government and the media, and become more involved in American society while strengthening their own identity.*

When asked to list three pressing needs facing the “local Arab and Chaldean community,” 21 percent say they want the larger society to understand them better in order to fight stereotypes and foster a more equitable, less hostile environment for Arabs in America. Sixteen percent say the community needs to achieve better representation in the media and government to attain these goals. Twenty-seven percent express a desire “to keep Arab culture alive” in America and to build stronger cultural institutions in the community. This category also includes those who call for greater Arab and Chaldean “unity” and those who want more “community gatherings.”

Twenty percent say “unity” between Arabs and non-Arabs in the Detroit area is a pressing need, and many call for programs that educate people about cultural issues. Many also say Arabs and Chaldeans should try harder to “accept” American culture and “assimilate” or “be open” to life in mainstream society. Finally, immigration concerns receive mention, as does the targeting of Arabs or Muslims by law enforcement, but these issues are usually situated within a larger context of discrimination and prejudice.

Concerns affecting the larger society are also on the minds of Arabs and Chaldeans. These include improved health care (7 percent), better educational opportunities (14 percent), the economy (7 percent), jobs (7 percent), safety and security (12 percent), and problems of youth and drugs (2 percent).

When thinking about personal and family needs, Arabs and Chaldeans look remarkably similar to others in the Detroit area. Economic and employment concerns weigh on the minds of both populations, with the general population mentioning them 30 percent of the time, and Arabs and Chaldeans mentioning them 25 percent of the time. Education, health care, and overall safety each represent about 10 percent of mentions on both surveys. Arabs and Chaldeans also mentioned learning English, changing their immigration status, and bringing stability to their home countries or the Arab world as a whole. About 14 percent in both surveys could think of no pressing needs facing themselves or their families.

### Health

*Arabs and Chaldeans report levels of health similar to the general population.*

Fifty-eight percent of Arabs and Chaldeans say their overall state of health is excellent or very good, while 54 percent of the general population reports the same. Sixteen percent of Arabs and Chaldeans and 15 percent of the general population say their overall state of health is fair or poor.

*Muslims and Christians report similar levels of health.*

Seventeen percent of Muslims and 16 percent of Christians say that their overall health is fair or poor. Fifty-eight percent of both Muslims and Christians say their health is excellent or good.

*Health is linked to higher levels of education and household income.*

Health varies directly with household income, with dramatic differences at the extremes. Only 15 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans with total family incomes of less than \$20,000 report excellent health, but 40 percent with total family incomes of \$100,000 or more do. Similarly, 37 percent with total family incomes less than \$20,000 say their health is fair or poor, compared to 6 percent of those with total family incomes of \$100,000 or more.

Better health is associated with higher levels of education. Only 14 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans with less than a high school education say their health is excellent, compared to 31 percent of those with a college degree and 47 percent with an advanced degree.

*Younger Arabs and Chaldeans are healthier than those who are older, and those born in the U.S. are healthier than those born elsewhere.*

Younger persons report better health than those who are older. Fifty-two percent of those age 18 – 25 report excellent overall health, compared to only 17 percent of those 55 and older. Twenty-eight percent of those over 55 report fair or poor health.

Those born in the U.S. are healthier than those born elsewhere. Forty-three percent of the U.S.-born report excellent overall health, compared to 23 percent of those born outside the U.S. Only 5 percent of those born in America report fair or poor health, compared to 20 percent of the foreign-born.

### Happiness

*Arabs and Chaldeans, like the general population, report high levels of happiness.*

Ninety-two percent of Arabs and Chaldeans say they are happy, compared with 95 percent of the general population. Ninety-four percent of Christians and 90 percent of Muslims say they are happy.

*Happiness is less dependent on education and income than is health.*

Education and total family income are associated with levels of happiness, but the effects are not as strong as they are for health. Arabs and Chaldeans with more education report greater happiness, but the contrast is not dramatic. Ninety-eight percent of those with advanced degrees say they are happy, but 87 percent with less than high school say the same. Similarly, 96 percent of those with total family incomes of \$100,000 or more say they are happy, but 84 percent with less than \$20,000 are also happy.

### Anxiety and Depression

*Arabs and Chaldeans are at lower risk for anxiety or depression than the general population.*

Twenty-seven percent of Arabs and Chaldeans are at low risk for anxiety or depressive disorders, compared to 18 percent of the general population. Sixty-six percent are at medium risk, compared with 75 percent of the general population. The proportions at high risk are equal for both populations at 7 percent. Similar proportions of Muslims and Christians are at high risk: 8 percent and 7 percent, respectively.<sup>9</sup>

*Arabs and Chaldeans with lower household incomes are more likely to be at high risk for anxiety and depression.*

The prevalence of anxiety or depressive disorders varies with total family income. About 11 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans with total family incomes less than \$50,000 are at high risk, compared to only 3 percent of those with total family incomes of \$50,000 or more.

*The main stressors in the lives of Arabs and Chaldeans and the general population are largely the same: family and work.*

Each person who indicated some stress was asked, “What are some of the things that made you feel that way?”<sup>10</sup> At 15 percent in the Arab and Chaldean population and 14 percent in the general population, family concerns are the most frequently mentioned item. These include worries about parenting, children, parents, and other relatives, as well as any mention of “family” or “family life.”

Work is the second most frequently cited stressor in both populations (14 percent among Arabs and Chaldeans and 13 percent in the general population). This includes responses such as working too much, working long hours, or working multiple jobs.

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<sup>9</sup> The DAAS and the general population surveys use the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10), a well-known, validated method of determining the prevalence of anxiety or depressive disorders. It consists of ten questions on the level of anxiety and depressive symptoms in the preceding 12-month period. Combining the ten items produces a scale that varies between 10 and 50. A score of 10 – 15 is considered low or no risk; a score of 16 – 29 is considered medium risk; a score of 30 – 50 is considered high risk.

<sup>10</sup> This was an open-ended question, where respondents could say anything they wanted and interviewers wrote down word-for-word their responses. Responses or “mentions” were categorized using a coding scheme that was developed to apply to both studies.

Other top stressors in both populations include health and/or medical concerns, money and financial issues, and the frustrations of everyday life, such as juggling multiple responsibilities. (Each of these accounts for 7 percent or more of all mentions in each population.) Members of both populations make reference to 9/11, terrorism, and war in Iraq, but these provide only 3 percent of mentions.

Arabs and Chaldeans mention a number of items specific to their community, such as concerns about tolerance and discrimination, missing the homeland, issues about assimilation and immigration (such as having trouble fitting into American society), government treatment of the Arab community, and concerns about political problems in one's home country. Combined, however, these stressors account for only 6 percent of all mentions.

## PART V: NEWS AND INFORMATION

### Sources of News

*As with the general population, television is much more popular than radio or newspapers as a source of news for Arabs and Chaldeans.*

About three-quarters (72 percent) of Arabs and Chaldeans watch the news on television every day or several days a week, and only 11 percent never do so. This compares to 78 percent and 6 percent of the general population. Television is the most popular source of news for all age groups, education levels, and total family incomes. Over half of every age group watches the news on television several days a week or more. Over half of every education level and half of every level of total family income watch the news on television every day.

Radio and newspapers reach a lower percentage of Arabs and Chaldeans. Forty-six percent never listen to the news on the radio, compared to 33 percent of the general population, and 44 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans never read a newspaper, compared to 22 percent of the general population. Thirty-eight percent of Arabs and Chaldeans listen to the news on the radio every day or several days a week, while 45 percent of the general population does the same. Twenty-eight percent of Arabs and Chaldeans and 40 percent of the general population read a newspaper every day or several days a week.

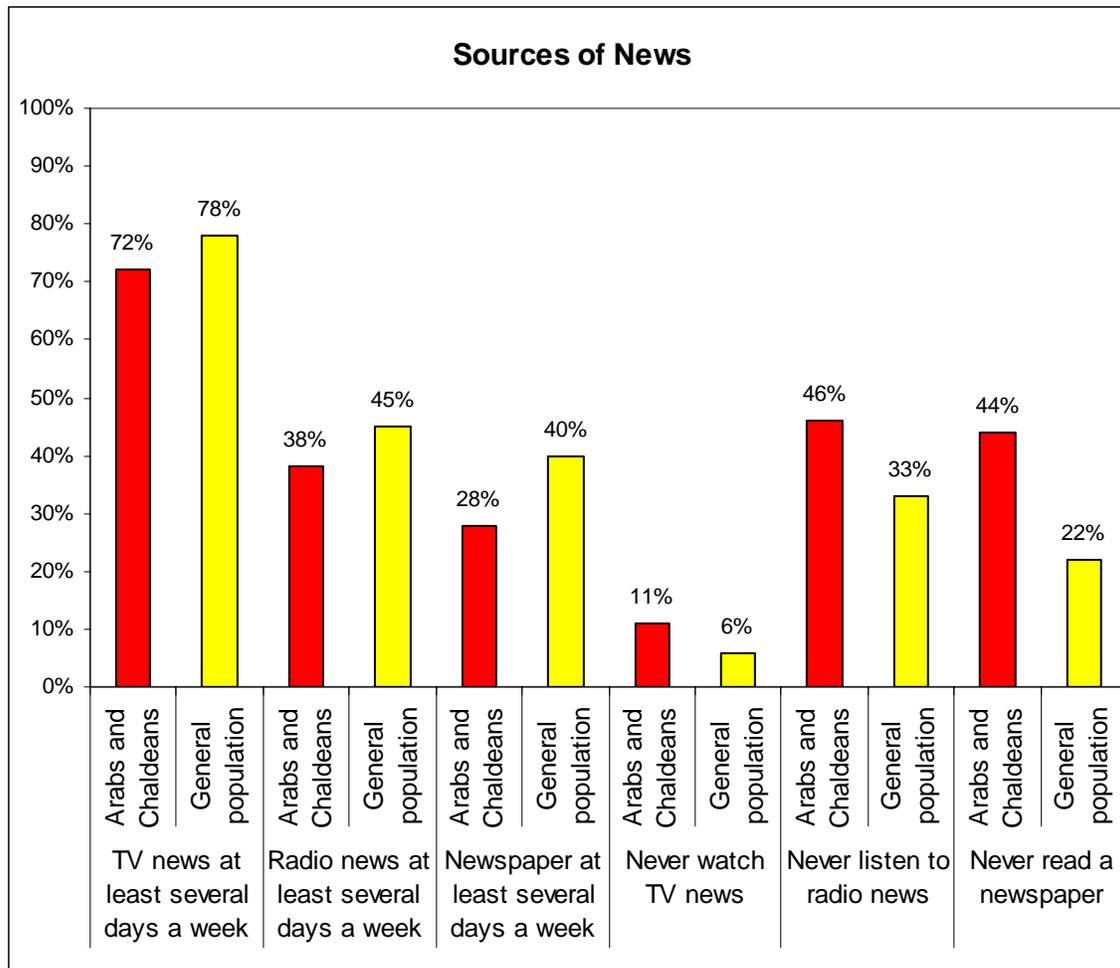
*Attention to the news on radio, television, and the newspaper varies by age, education, and household income.*

Older Arabs and Chaldeans pay more attention to the news on television and the radio than do their younger counterparts. Eighty-five percent of those age 55 and up watch the news on television several days a week or more, and 49 percent listen to radio as frequently. These numbers drop to 54 percent of those age 18 – 25 watching television news and 20 percent listening to radio news this often. The difference narrows but does not disappear for reading a newspaper several days a week: 27 percent of those age 18 – 25, compared to 32 percent of those age 55 and up.

Those with higher levels of education are more likely to read newspapers and listen to radio news. Only 15 percent of those with less than a high school education read a newspaper several days a week or more, while 44 percent of those with advanced degrees do so. Twenty-six percent of those with less than a high school degree listen to radio news several days a week or more, compared to 67 percent of those with advanced degrees.

Attention to the news on radio and in newspapers also varies by total family income. Twenty-five percent of those with total family incomes less than \$20,000 listen to radio news several days a week or more, versus 53 percent of those with incomes between \$50,000 – \$99,999, and 42 percent of those with incomes of \$100,000 or more.

Fifteen percent of those in the lowest income bracket read a newspaper several days a week or more, compared with 35 percent of those in the two highest income brackets.



### Language and News Reporting

*About 6 percent of the general population watches the news in a language other than English, while the majority of Arabs and Chaldeans watch some news in Arabic.*

Fifty-six percent of Arabs and Chaldeans watch some news broadcasts in Arabic. Of the 94 percent of the general population who watch the news on television, only 6 percent watch news in a language other than English. The prevalence of satellite dishes is much higher among Arabs and Chaldeans (63 percent) than among the general population (17 percent). Ninety-four percent of satellite dishes in Arab and Chaldean homes receive Arabic programs. The most popular channels are Al Jazeera (67 percent) and Lebanese Broadcasting (LBC) (66 percent). Three other channels are watched by at least half of those with satellite dishes: Arabic Radio and Television (ART), Dubai, and Egypt (ECS).

### Bias in News Reporting

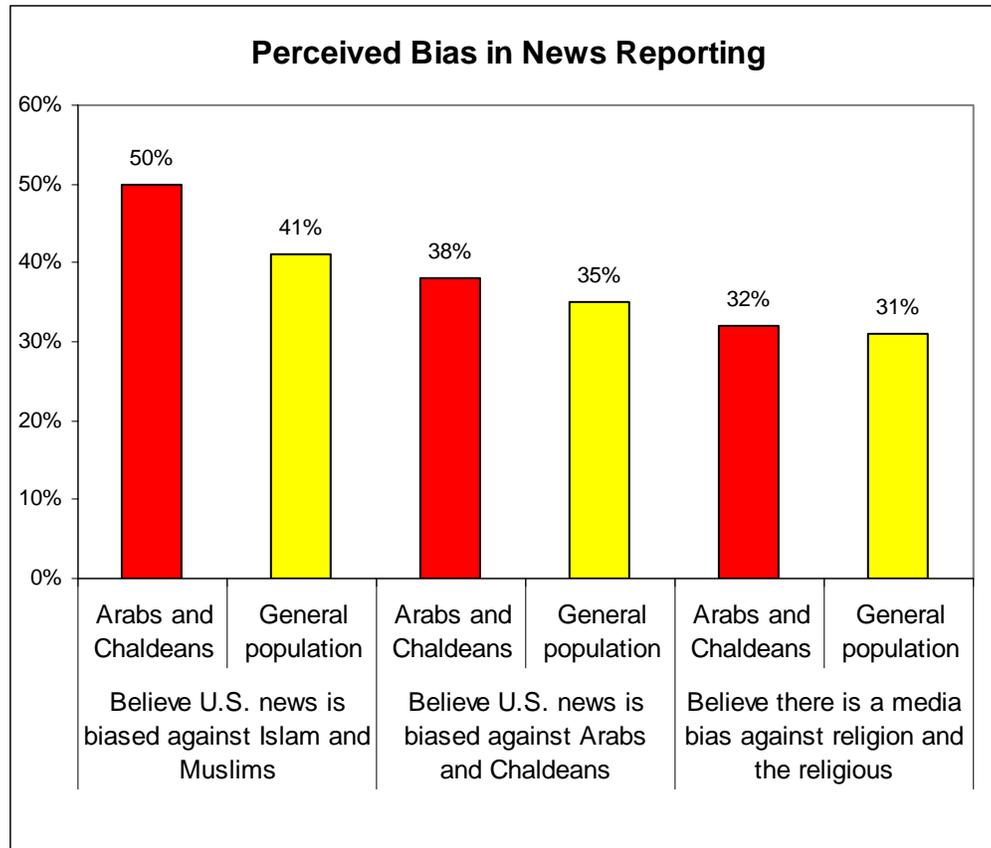
*Half of Arabs and Chaldeans feel that American news coverage is biased against Muslims, and 41 percent of the general population agrees.*

Fifty percent of Arabs and Chaldeans believe that American news is biased against Islam and Muslims, a belief shared by 41 percent of those in the general population. Arabs and Chaldeans with incomes over \$100,000 hold particularly strong views on this issue (61 percent perceiving bias), while only 35 percent of those with an income under \$20,000 agree. Likewise, Arab and Chaldean citizens perceive bias more than non-citizens (52 percent and 44 percent respectively), as do those born in the U.S. (63 percent compared to 46 percent of those born abroad) and Muslims (60 percent versus 42 percent of Christians).

*About a third of both populations perceive news bias against Arab and Chaldean Americans and against religion and religious people in general.*

Over a third of Arabs and Chaldeans (38 percent) believe that American news coverage is biased against them. Thirty-five percent of the general population perceives this bias as well. Arabs and Chaldeans who are U.S. citizens are more likely to see bias than non-citizens (41 percent versus 29 percent). Those who are Muslim (47 percent), born in the U.S. (48 percent), or have advanced degrees (54 percent) are most likely to identify this bias. Perceptions of bias increase with the level of education, from 23 percent of those without a high school degree to 54 percent of those with advanced degrees.

Perception of media bias against religion and religious people follows the same pattern, but the differences are less stark. Thirty-one percent of the general population and 32 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans see bias against religion and religious people. Arabs and Chaldeans born in the U.S. (42 percent compared to 29 percent of those born abroad), or who have an advanced degree (44 percent compared to 22 percent for those without a high school degree) or a total family income over \$100,000 (44 percent compared to 16 percent of those with an income under \$20,000) are most likely to perceive bias against religion and religious people.



### The Digital Divide

*The digital divide is wider among Arabs and Chaldeans than in the general population, but some of the main causes—differences in household income, education, and age—are the same.*

Unequal access to computers and the Internet, often referred to as a “digital divide,” is narrowing in the general population, but it is still wide among Arabs and Chaldeans. Seventy-five percent of the general population uses a computer, compared to 55 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans.

The main causes of the digital divide in the general population are household income, education, and age. The same is true for the Arab and Chaldean community, but place of birth—U.S. or abroad—is also important. Eighty percent of Arabs and Chaldeans age 18 – 25 use a computer, compared to only 28 percent of those 55 and older. Only 14 percent of those with less than a high school education use computers, while almost half of those with high school degrees do. Some college or more makes a big difference. Seventy-five percent of Arabs and Chaldeans with some college use computers, as do 80 percent of those with a college degree and 94 percent with an advanced degree. Total family income has a similar effect on computer use. Only 20 percent of those with family incomes less than \$20,000 use a computer, while over 70

percent of those with \$50,000 or more do. And 86 percent of those born in the U.S. use a computer, compared with only 44 percent of those born abroad.

*Arabs and Chaldeans who use a computer use it to communicate and get news in ways similar to the general population.*

Almost all Arabs and Chaldeans who use a computer use it for email (85 percent) and the Internet (92 percent). Similarly, the large majority of computer users in the general population use it for email (83 percent) and the Internet (89 percent). Both populations use the Internet to read news items. Among Arabs and Chaldeans, 45 percent of computer users read Internet news items every day or several days a week. Similarly, in the general population, 38 percent read Internet news items every day or several days a week

*The prevalence of cell phones, television, cable TV, and personal digital assistants among Arabs and Chaldeans is about the same as in the general population.*

Ninety-eight percent of Arabs and Chaldeans have television, virtually the same proportion as the general population. Cable TV is received by about three-quarters of each population. Sixty-six percent of Arabs and Chaldeans have cell phones, compared with 72 percent of the general population. Personal digital assistants, such as Palm Pilots, are used by only about 10 percent of each population.

## PART VI: TRUST, POLITICS, AND PARTICIPATION

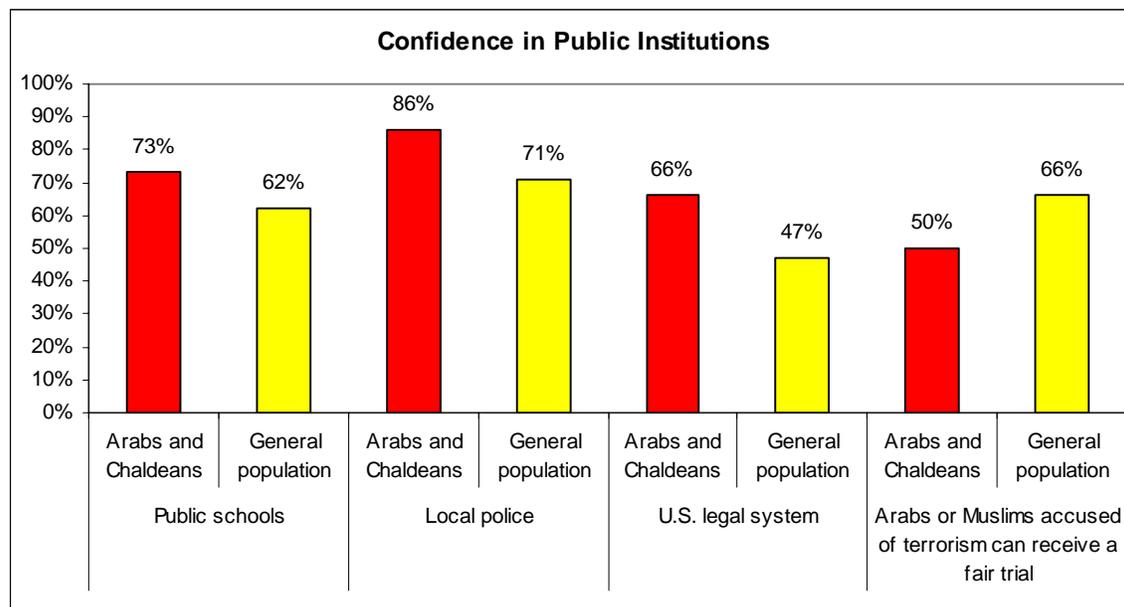
### Confidence in Public Institutions

*Arabs and Chaldeans express more confidence in local and government institutions than does the general population.*

Across the board, Arabs and Chaldeans are more pleased with their public schools, with their local police, and with the American legal system than the general population. Seventy-three percent of Arabs and Chaldeans have a lot or a great deal of confidence in public schools, compared with 62 percent of the general population. While the percentage of the general population expressing confidence in local police is very high (71 percent), Arab and Chaldean confidence in the police is even higher, at 86 percent. Although only 47 percent of the general population has a lot or a great deal of confidence in the U.S. legal system, 66 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans do.

*The general population is more confident that Arabs and Muslims accused of terrorism will receive a fair trial than they are of the legal system itself. Arabs and Chaldeans, by contrast, believe in the U.S. legal system overall even as they worry about fair trials for those accused of terrorism.*

The confidence of Arabs and Chaldeans falters only on the question of fair trials for Arabs or Muslims accused of terrorism. Confidence that those accused of terrorism will receive a fair trial is 50 percent, 16 percentage points lower than confidence in the U.S. legal system as a whole. In contrast, 66 percent of the general population believes that Arabs or Muslims accused of terrorism will receive fair trials, which is 19 percentage points higher than confidence in the legal system as a whole.



*Arabs and Chaldeans have lower levels of confidence in the U.N. than in other institutions.*

Although Arabs and Chaldeans have more confidence than the general population in U.S. legal and local institutions, these levels do not hold steady for the United Nations. Forty-eight percent, compared to 55 percent of the general population, have little or no confidence in this body.

### Community Organizations

*Arabs and Chaldeans express great confidence in their community organizations.*

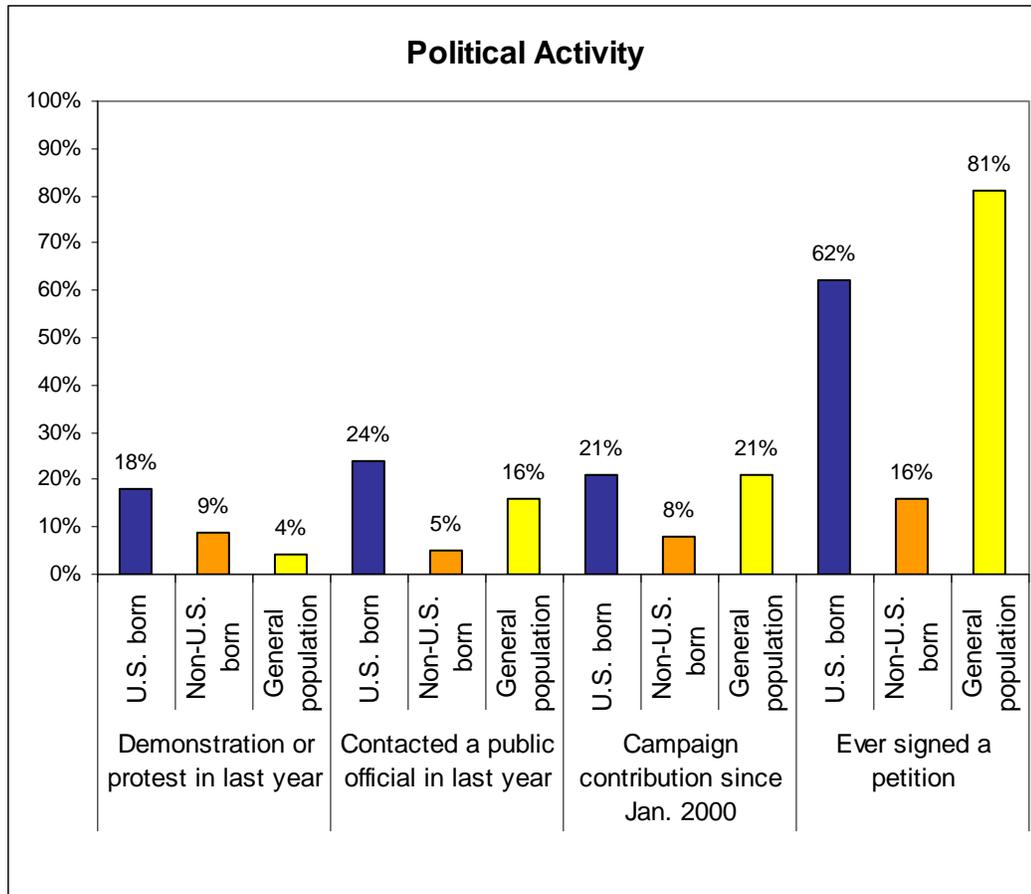
A large majority of Arabs and Chaldeans believe that their local organizations are effective. Over 70 percent say that their business and professional organizations, civil liberties and anti-discrimination groups, and local Arab media are very or somewhat effective. Arab and Chaldean social service agencies top this list, with 40 percent saying that they are very effective, and another 45 percent saying they are somewhat effective. Those who live outside Dearborn and Dearborn Heights, who earn more, and who are younger tend to believe more in the effectiveness of such organizations.

Ninety-three percent of Christians say churches are very effective or somewhat effective in meeting community needs. Among Muslims, 84 percent agree that mosques are very effective or somewhat effective in meeting community needs. Women, both Christian and Muslim, are more likely to feel that religious institutions are effective.

### Political Activity

*Arabs and Chaldeans are more likely to take part in political protests but less likely to petition or make contributions to political campaigns.*

Arabs and Chaldeans do not shy away from political expression. Eighteen percent of those born in the U.S. and 9 percent of those born abroad say they have participated in demonstrations and protests in the last year, compared to only 4 percent of the general population. Twenty-four percent of the U.S.-born contacted a government official in the last year, compared to 16 percent of the general population; however, those born abroad have lower rates, at only 5 percent. Being born in the U.S. is also important for campaign contributions: 21 percent of both U.S.-born Arabs and Chaldeans and the general population made at least one campaign contribution since January 2000, but only 8 percent of foreign-born Arabs and Chaldeans did so. The one area where the general population is indisputably more politically active is in signing petitions: 81 percent, as compared to only 62 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans born in the U.S. and 16 percent of those born elsewhere. Arabs and Chaldeans who are citizens, who have a college or advanced degree, or have higher incomes, are also more likely to sign petitions.



### Presidential Politics

*Arabs and Chaldeans overwhelmingly supported Bush in the 2000 presidential election.*

Fifty-one percent of Arab and Chaldean citizens voted in 2000. Of these, 67 percent voted for Bush, 24 percent for Gore, and 9 percent for Nader. Only 42 percent of the general population voted for Bush, while 55 percent voted for Gore. Muslim Arabs supported Bush by a 9 percent margin (75 percent to 66 percent) over Christian Arabs and Chaldeans in the Detroit area.

### Attitudes towards Immigrants

*Arabs and Chaldeans believe that immigrants help the American economy, while the general population is dubious.*

Eighty-eight percent of Arabs and Chaldeans who were born abroad believe immigrants are good for the American economy. The figure drops slightly, to 70 percent, for those born in the U.S. By contrast, only 35 percent of the general population believes that immigrants are good for the American economy. This is true even though 66 percent

of the general population believes immigrants make the United States more open to new ideas and cultures.

### Iraq

*Arabs and Chaldeans and the general population are equally attentive, and anxious, about events in Iraq.*

Whether Arab and Chaldean or from the general population, both populations paid equal amounts of attention to events in Iraq as the U.S. invasion unfolded. Sixty-eight percent of Arabs and Chaldeans and 71 percent of the general population report that they were following the news on Iraq very closely or closely. A third of both populations say their personal security was shaken by the Iraqi events.

### The U.S. Role in the Middle East

*Arabs and Chaldeans are more likely than the general population to believe that U.S. involvement in the Middle East does not promote stability.*

Arabs and Chaldeans are far more skeptical than the general population when asked, "In recent times, the United States has been deeply involved in the Middle East in various ways. On the whole, do you think that involvement is helping stabilize the region?" Fifty-three percent of the general population thinks U.S. involvement is helping bring stability. By contrast, only 36 percent of Arabs and Chaldeans believe the same. A solid majority of Arabs and Chaldeans (64 percent) do not think U.S. involvement in the Middle East is contributing to stability in the region.

*Iraqis are the most likely to see U.S. involvement as stabilizing, and Palestinians/Jordanians the least.*

The greatest optimism about the U.S. role comes from Iraqis, 47 percent of whom believe the U.S. is stabilizing the region. Least optimistic about the U.S. role are the Palestinians/Jordanians, of whom only 22 percent see the U.S. role as stabilizing. The more educated are noticeably more pessimistic, ranging from 54 percent at the lowest level to 71 percent of those with advanced degrees.

### Creating a Palestinian State

*There is strong support for a Palestinian state among Arabs and Chaldeans, and support increases with education and income.*

Among Arabs and Chaldeans, 70 percent support an independent Palestinian state. Only 3 percent oppose it, while 22 percent say they have not thought much about it and 5 percent are undecided. In the general population, 33 percent support a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, while only 8 percent oppose and 6 percent are undecided. Many more (53 percent) say they have not thought much about it.

Among Arabs and Chaldeans, there is overwhelming, across-the-board support for the creation of a Palestinian state. In no single sub-group does resistance rise above 4 percent. Among Palestinians/Jordanians, the ratio is 89 percent in favor, 0 percent opposed. Support increases with education and income. Fifty-nine percent of the least educated support a Palestinian state, compared with 82 percent of the most educated. Similarly, 61 percent of the least wealthy and 77 percent of the most wealthy support it. Those under 26 years of age and those with lower incomes are most likely to say that they have not thought much about the issue.