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Perpetuating Prejudice: Media Portrayal of Arabs and Arab Americans

> Let me tell you 'bout A-hab The A-rab
> The Sheik of the burning sand
> He had emeralds and rubies just dripping off 'a him
> And a ring on every finger of his hands
> He wore a big ol' turban wrapped around his head
> And a scimitar by his side
> And every evening about midnight
> He'd jump on his camel named Clyde...and ride
> *by Composer Ray Stevens (see Appendix A)*

1.   Introduction

Arabs today arguably are one of the world's largest groups of people that have been marginalized by the rest of the world. Insofar as the United States is concerned, Arabs are "people who have lived outside of history" (Suleiman 1999a, p. 36).

What is it about Arabs that over the centuries has evoked images that others perceive as negative? Or is it less about Arabs and more about others? And if the perceptions are negative, what is their origin? Or are the images more Islamic than Arabic? And if so, why the confusion? What is the role of the media in presenting information that leads to perceptions regarded as negative?

Those are a few questions driving this paper. The focus is on the United States – the settling of Arab immigrants in the United States and the portrayal by US media of Arabs and Arab-American communities in the United States. In many ways, the coverage of Arabs and Arab-American communities is inseparable. The overall objective here is threefold: (1) to review from a historical perspective the nature and extent of Arab immigration to the United States, (2) to identify and analyze media research portraying Arab immigrants in the United States, and (3) to offer suggestions for improved performance. More specifically, the paper will:

-       Place the U.S. Arabic immigrant in context by reviewing historically the story of peoples from Arab lands migrating to the United States.

- Present a conceptual basis centering on framing and "othering" in an attempt to explain media coverage of the Arabic immigrant communities.

- Review studies of how U.S. media have depicted peoples of Arabic heritage who live in the U.S.

- Show how the Arabic community has tried to refute negative stereotyping through the establishment of organizations and media promoting Arabic interests.

- Finally, identify means by which media might achieve a fairer, more accurate portrayal of an entire ethnic group.

Appearing regularly in the news media are items such as these:

- An Arab immigrant, Mohamed Ben Abdallah, filed a lawsuit saying he had been subjected to such ethnic slurs as "Bin Laden" and "Terrorist" as well as other indignities in his work as a plumber for a contractor (Bulkeley 2006).

- Northwest Airline apologized to 40 American Muslims barred from a recent flight returning to Detroit from a Hajj pilgrimage (Northwest 2007).

- A U.S. Congressman objected publicly to a newly elected Congressman (from Minnesota) who wanted to (and eventually did) use the Koran for his ceremonial swearing in (Zeller 2006).

There's more. USA Today reported on several promotional messages that Arab organizations objected to – and which ultimately were withdrawn (Koch 2006):

- An advertising billboard promoting ethanol, a corn-based product used in a blend with gasoline, showed a farmer in a cornfield and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia with this question between them: "Who would you rather buy your gas from?"

- Another billboard, this one planned for North Carolina and New Mexico, was designed to make driver's licenses more secure and showed a man in a traditional Arab head scarf holding a grenade and a driver's license with this message: "Don't License Terrorists, North Carolina."

- Boeing and Bell Helicopter apologized for a magazine advertisement that showed U.S. armed forces in one of their helicopters descending by rope from a plane onto a mosque surrounded by smoke and fire.

- A nutritional health company targeted a U.S. Congressman for opposing its interests by sending out flyers with a picture of U.S. Senator Dick Durbin in a turban with the messages: "Get a Turban for Durbin!" and "Keep Congressional Terrorists At Bay!"

At the outset we should fully understand that not all Muslims are Arabs. Nor are all Arabs Muslims. This is a confusion that persists widely, contributing to careless generalizations about groups of individuals. An effort will be made here to avoid such confusion, though the terms have become so intertwined that some ambiguity may still intrude. A few statistics concerning religion and ethnicity may lift some of the fog.

Though it is difficult if not impossible to classify with any precision immigrant populations over time, estimates are that of the roughly 3.5 million people of Arabic heritage living in the U.S. about 63 percent are Christian, 24 percent are Muslim and the remaining 13 percent are other or no religion (Kayyali 2006, whose data are based on several sources, including the Arab American Institute Foundation and Zogby International). For further context, it is worth noting that: there are 1.7 billion Muslims in the world; 44 countries have majority Muslim populations; Arabs make up about 16 percent of Muslims worldwide; and 90 percent of Arabs are Muslim.

Research for this paper is based on an extensive review of the literature pertaining to Arabs in the United States. It draws heavily on two bodies of literature. One is historical, tapping into the rich body of work sketching Arab immigration patterns. The other and predominant body of work for this project comes from the literature on media. This includes theoretical formulations concerning the role and impact of media in society as well as specific studies of Arab representation in media ranging from textbooks to films, from newspapers to television. The works have been analyzed and results synthesized from a critical perspective. While many studies deal with media portrayal of the Middle East, this paper's primary focus will be on Arab Americans, that is, those who have immigrated and settled in the U.S.[1] This paper does not purport to encompass the substantial body of literature pertaining specifically to Muslim immigrants in the United States (e.g., Haddad, Smith & Moore 2006; Haddad 2004; Haddad 2002; Waugh, Abu-Laban & Qureshi 1983), including their portrayal by media (e.g., Noakes 1998).

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1   A note concerning the hyphen: In general, the practice among scholars has been to omit the hyphen between "Arab" and "America" but to insert it when the two words are used in conjunction as an adjectival phrase, such as "Arab-American" community. That is the style employed in this paper and should not be construed to imply any particular significance.

2. Arabs in the United States: An Overview

The Arab connection with the United States goes back even before there was a United States. Though historians differ in the facts they uncover and the conclusions they draw, general agreement exists that Arabs came early to the new land and in subsequent years came in several waves. And despite post-9/11, which has subjected Arabs to rigorous scrutiny, they continue to migrate to the United States.

Who was the first Arab to arrive in the United States? In the overall scheme of events, it probably doesn't matter. But it is interesting to note that the first Arab may have accompanied Christopher Columbus on his voyage of discovery. In *The American Arabic Speaking Community 1975 Almanac*, Editor-Publisher Haiek cites a source claiming, somewhat curiously, that Columbus, believing his journey across the sea would take him to India, decided to take with him an Arab interpreter, Louis de Torre. De Torre had converted to Christianity, and hence the name, following the fall of Granada, the last Arab stronghold in Spain (Haiek 1975). Two Moroccans may have been the next pioneering Arabs to set foot in what was to become the United States. A former slave by the name of Zammouri is said to have led a Spanish expedition into Florida in 1528. A few years later, in 1539, the Viceroy of New Spain sent Estephan the Arab to assist as a guide in the exploration of the southwestern part of North America. The Moroccan connection was foretelling. In 1787 Morocco became the first nation to officially recognize the independence of the United States in a treaty signed by Mohammad III and George Washington (Orfalea 2006).

Scholars have identified several subsequent waves of Arabic immigration with economic considerations often serving as the motivating force. But other factors, namely family as well as turmoil in the Arabic world and changes in U.S. immigration laws, also have come into play.

Those who entered the U.S. with the first wave – roughly 1878-1924 – were among more than 20 million immigrants from all over the world who came to the United States during that period called The Great Migration. It is difficult to determine precisely where they came from. Many came from Syria and Lebanon. And many new arrivals were simply placed in broad categories such as "Turkey in Asia" or "Syria", according to Kayyali (2006).[2] By 1924 it is estimated that some 200,000 Arabs were living in the United States. They were predominantly Christians, in part because of the work of missionaries

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2   Several excellent studies have been carried out on Arab immigration to the United States. Two relatively recent works primarily relied upon for this paper are Kayyali (2006) and Orfalea (2006).

who during this period established several universities in the region including what was to become the American Universities of Beirut and Cairo, both highly respected institutions to this day. The immigrants were mainly farmers and merchants. Males made up well over half of the early arrivals. Women were to come later. The experiences of these immigrants paralleled those of immigrants from other parts of the world. Finding funds and arranging travel, usually at the lowest level of accommodation called "steerage", were challenges not without danger. More than 100 Syrians were aboard the Titanic when it sank.

Arabs in the United States prior to World War I thought of themselves as "sojourners, as people who were in, but not part of, American society" (Suleiman 1999b, p. 4). Still, for many of these immigrants, their Arab ethnicity gave way relatively easily to Americanization. They gradually assimilated into the fabric of American society.

The second wave of Arab immigrants took place roughly 1925 to 1965. Much of the activity during this period was driven by world events. After World War II political and economic unrest made life untenable for many of those in the Arab world. Some Arab elites, especially from Iraq, Egypt, and Palestine, were permitted entry into the United States as political exiles. Others, such as the late Columbia University Professor Edward W. Said, came to the United States to study. During the 1950s and 1960s nearly 6,000 Palestinians came to the United States as political refugees. Their entry was facilitated by the U.S. Congress' passage of the Refugee Relief Act.

Immigrants during this period were markedly different from their earlier counterparts. Many were educated and had good English language skills as well as resources to draw on. They melded smoothly into mainstream American society.

During the third wave of immigration – roughly 1965 to 2006 – more than 400,000 Arab immigrants came to the United States. They were encouraged by changes in U.S. immigration law and quotas as well as continuing turmoil in the Middle East. The number of immigrants was significantly larger than those in the second wave and three times as large as those in the first wave, according to Kayyali (2006). Many of the immigrants fled their homelands following the humiliating defeat of the Arabs in the 1967 Six-Day War. Other conflicts, including the war in Lebanon and the 1991 Gulf War, resulted in the dislocation of many people in the region. Disenchanted with prospects for the future, people were attracted to the United States for its educational possibilities and its general attitude of tolerance. Kayyali (2006) notes that most

of the immigrants after 1965 were Muslims who valued the freedom to worship and to build mosques.[3]

Immigrants normally do not fit into their new environment easily, especially if they are perceived as minorities and appear visibly different from others. Such was the case with Arab immigrants. Arabs come in varying shades of white and black, and until 1909 Arabs generally were regarded as white and were granted citizenship. But then the U.S. government changed its census and immigration categories, and after 1911 the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization denied citizenship to Arab Americans. A number of court cases ensued, and it wasn't until late in the 1940s that Arabs could feel comfortable that they had established that they were to be classified as "white".[4] This was important due to struggles involving civil rights. Kayyali (2006) points to an interesting phenomenon among Arabs during this period of racial unease in the United States. In an effort to prove their worthiness to mainstream society, many Arabs gave up their cultural identity in favor of assimilating. Later, during the 1970-80s, the United States civil rights movement, along with revulsion over media coverage of the Six-Day War which depicted Arabs as evil, rekindled ethnic consciousness. Arabs also established a number of political and social organizations to assert their ethnicity and particular concerns.

Stereotypical images and offensive labels accompanied the establishment of Arab-American communities. One stereotype of early Arab immigrants was that of peddlers. This door-to-door selling became a popular way for immigrants to support themselves. The image quickly stamped itself into the mainstream mind. Because of their color, Arabs came to be called "wetbacks", "dago", and "sheeny" (Kayyali 2006, p. 53). Later the slurs turned ethnic with such terms as "camel jockey", "dirty Syrian", and "Turk.". Such labels were to multiply and become even more derogatory over time. Attitudes toward the later groups of immigrants were affected by events beyond their control, namely, the creation of Israel and subsequent disorder in the Middle East. As a result, some Arabic immigrants never completely became part of the American "melting pot" and have been searching for their American identity. Exacerbating the situation for Arabs in the U.S. were the attacks on 9/11 and events that followed.

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3   There is some debate over where the first mosque was built in the United States. Orfalea (2006) suggests that the first mosque likely was built in Ross, North Dakota, in 1929. Both Orfalea and Kayyali (2006), however, indicate that the oldest surviving mosque in America was built in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and that the dedication took place June 16, 1934 (Judge 2006).

4   For an interesting discussion of the Arab-American experience in relation to race, including possible implications in terms of social diversity, see Samhan (1999).

As to the number of Arabs in the United States, confusion abounds. The reason centers in large part on the definition of race, a volatile social issue for most of the history of the United States. U.S. Census Bureau efforts to compile accurate ethnic data have not been very successful when it comes to Arabs. For example, in one set of data collection, given a limited choice of racial categories, many Arabs marked "white" or "other." While the U.S. Census lists the total Arab-American population as 1.2 million, or 0.42 percent of the U.S. population, the Arab American Institute Foundation estimates the number to be 3.5 million, or 1.2 percent of the population. Problems associated with the data collection methodology aside, a U.S. Census Special Report helps provide a demographic profile of the Arab-American population in the United States (Brittingham and de la Cruz 2005). Based on 2000 data, the report shows that Arab families had a higher median income than all families ($52,300 compared to $50,000) while at the same time a higher proportion of Arabs than the general population was in poverty (17 percent compared to 12 percent). Arabs also were shown to be more highly educated than the general population with more than 40 percent holding at least a bachelor's degree. Also, more Arab Americans than the general population held management, professional, and related occupations (42 percent compared to 34 percent). Nearly half of U.S. residents of Arab ancestry were born in the United States (46 percent). The data also shed some light on the national origin of the Arab-American population according to ancestry:

National origin	Percentage of Arab-American population
Lebanese	28.8 %
Egyptian	14.5 %
Syrian	8.9 %
Palestinian	7.3 %
Jordanian	4.2 %
Moroccan	3.6 %
Iraqi	3.5 %
"Arab" or "Arabic"	19.7 %
Other Arab[5]	9.6 %

Table 1: National origin of the Arab-American population according to ancestry

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5 "Other Arab" includes Yemeni, Kurdish, Algerian, Saudi, Tunisian, Kuwaiti, Libyan, Berber, Emirati (United Arab Emirates), Omani, Qatari, Bahraini, Alhuceman, Bedouin, Rio de Oro, and the general terms Middle Eastern and North African. Source: Brittingham and de la Cruz 2005, p. 3.

Arabs today live throughout the United States. About a third are in the states of California, New York, and Michigan. Cities with the largest Arab American populations are Los Angeles, Detroit, New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. (Haddad 2004).

With this as the backdrop, we now begin turning our attention to the media. The next section presents several useful concepts in carrying out this inquiry.

3. Toward a Conceptual Approach: Framing, Othering

Two primary concepts have been utilized in guiding the preparation of this paper. One has emerged in the area of media studies as a useful idea in the formulation, transmission, and interpretation of messages. That is the notion of framing. The other is just that – the "other," a concept which in its application attempts to define the self in relation to others, especially those who are different in some significant aspect, such as appearance, behavior, or belief. Both concepts have enjoyed wide popularity and, as a result, have generated a wide variety of applications and interpretations. The concepts of framing and othering, as used in this paper, will be assumed to have both serious political and social ramifications.

First, let us turn to framing. This is a relatively recent approach in media research. It simply, yet powerfully, tries to illuminate the ways in which information is selected from a larger context – say, an event or an issue – and then is organized and, ultimately, communicated to others and, in the process, takes on new or different meanings. Or, as Reese (2001) writes,

> Framing is concerned with the way interests, communicators, sources, and culture combine to yield coherent ways of understanding the world, which are developed using all of the available verbal and visual symbolic resources (p. 11).

Further, in a thoughtful review of media research utilizing framing, Reese offers his own working definition which, though oriented toward the social, has obvious implications in the political realm:

> Frames are *organizing principles* that are socially *shared* and *persistent* over time, that work *symbolically* to meaningfully *structure* the social world (p. 11; italics in original).

Organizing refers to comprehensiveness, while principle refers to something abstract and not necessarily conveyed explicitly in a message. Shared refers to

communication that is mutually relevant. Persistence refers to durability that over time becomes routine. Symbolically points to various forms of expression, and structure is the organizing of the material into identifiable patterns, or frames.

What is the significance of framing? Framing is fundamental to what takes place in communication. It helps us identify and define the world around us and to find our place – or be placed – in it. As for the part that news media play, Reese states, "...the media are powerful, economic concerns, often distant from the audiences they serve, producing news as a commodity, generating frames that may distort as much as they illuminate..." (p. 29)

As for othering, this is a similarly ambiguous term. The concept traces its origin back several centuries to the works of a number of philosophers and scholars. Combined with the notion of symbolic interactionism, which holds that people actively and creatively participate in the construction of their social being, othering presents a potent tool in understanding oneself or groups of people in relation to others. Here is a visualization of what is meant: Two mirrors face one another; one individual or group (the self) looks toward the other person or group (the other) and vice versa.

Scholars have adapted the notion of othering to probe relationships among a variety of groups – professional, nationality, regional, sexual, among others. Our interest here involves minority groups. Othering, at least in one sense as used by Riggins (1997), is seen as the application of communication processes "that contribute to the marginalization of minority groups" (p. 1). Such analysis, Riggins asserts, can be useful in "advancing the study of prejudice and social inequality in modern multicultural societies" (p. 1).

An example of the application of the approach is Schneider's (2001) examination of the German debate on immigration and the search for national identity. In the study, Schneider referred to the self as the "internal Other," that is, German self-definition, while Others – he capitalized the first letter – referred to foreigners ("Ausländer"). Further, he stressed the role of the media "as the main transmitter of all sorts of public discourse" (p. 356) as well as access to and use of media by those in the other category.

This othering model of self-definition is also the conceptual basis of the approach used by Ibish (2001) in his examination of anti-Arab discourse in the U.S. To support his charge of negative stereotyping of Arabs, Ibis developed the thesis that building the "illusion of the unity of the collective self" requires creation of "an illusion of superiority" (p. 120).

The idea carries over into more extreme sentiments toward another group. In reviewing a variety of analytical approaches, Fiebig-von Hase (1997) wrote that extreme images – "enemy images" is the term used – seem to exist in all

modern societies. He noted that such images are complex and imprecise. He continued:

> In its widest and colloquial form, an enemy image is a culturally influenced, very negative, and stereotyped evaluation of the "other" – be it individuals, groups, nations, or ideologies. (p. 2).

Feelings of one group toward another theoretically could range all the way from tolerance to violence. There's no problem tolerating a small, non-threatening group. But violence could come into play if one group threatened another's security. Sentiments toward others exist at several levels and especially come into play when immigrants – "foreigners", if you will – are involved. When immigrants begin organizing and ultimately form a nation, do they reach a point that they must negate others in order to discover and retain their own national or ethnic identity? This is an intriguing question raised by Fiebig-von Hase (1997) and harkens back to Schneider's (2001) probing of German identity, or "Germanness". Unfortunately, the examination of that question must remain for another time and another place.

To sum up, we've kept our conceptualization of this paper relatively simple. The goal was to devise an approach that offered possibilities of explanation and organization. So, to help us understand the way in which U.S. media have portrayed the indigenous Arab community, we have combined the notions of framing – media professionals conceptualizing and developing stories – with othering – the propensity for individuals and groups to define themselves by excluding or marginalizing others.

4.   What Research Tells Us about U.S. Media Portrayal of Arabs and Arab Americans

This section will review studies that have centered on the ways in which Arabs have been portrayed in the U.S. media. Hundreds of such studies have been carried out, though few focus exclusively on Arab Americans. Most deal with Arabs and other people of the Middle East, but the impact of such coverage inevitably affects perceptions of those Arabs who have chosen to make their homes in the U.S. The intention here is not to present a complete or even exhaustive accounting of all the studies. Instead, we will identify what appear to be some of the more significant studies with the intention of attaining a relatively representative sample over time. Many of the studies contain extensive literature reviews up to the time of publication and thus would represent a

rich pool of resources for anyone wishing to carry out a more extensive review of the literature. Let us begin with a few general observations.

In his seminal work exploring the relationship between culture and imperialism, the late Edward W. Said (1993) noted that media mold and manipulate perceptions and political attitudes. Since 1967 (year of the Six-Day War, also known as the 1967 Arab-Israeli War), he wrote that the Western press representation of the Arab world was "crude, reductionist, coarsely racialist", all of which, he noted, had been well documented earlier (p. 36). Despite this earlier documentation, film and television continued to portray Arabs as "sleazy, 'camel-jockeys,' terrorists, and offensively wealthy 'sheikhs'" (p. 36). Not much changed up to or during the first Gulf War. Media rallied behind the first President George Bush and devoted little attention to dealing with the political, social, and cultural developments in the Arab world. The same thing appears to have occurred with the second President George W. Bush's incursion into Iraq.

Said, who died in 2003 and is still recognized as one of the most profound scholars of East-West thought, was a severe and early critic of the media. Though focusing primarily on Islam, his ideas concerning Western attitudes toward the Middle East resonate in any discussion of Arab communities in general. In an introduction to a later edition of what has become at least a minor classic, Covering Islam, Said accused journalists of "making extravagant statements, which are instantly picked up and further dramatized by the media" (1981, p. xvi). Further, he argued journalists were only part of an inter-related apparatus that included the academy and government, all of which were driven mainly by politics rather than by truth or accuracy.

That media and government reciprocate in depicting the Middle East is perhaps nowhere more evident than in several addresses delivered by President Bush immediately following the events of September 11, 2001. Merskin found that the speeches turned popular cultural depictions of people of Arab and Middle East descent into a rhetoric that then drew upon the "collective consciousness to revivify, reinforce, and ratify the Arab as terrorist stereotype" (2004, p. 172). In constructing the enemy's image, President Bush used such terms as "them", "evil", "those people", "demons", and "wanted: dead or alive" in references to people of Arab and Middle Eastern descent. Merskin found stereotypical characterizations of Arabs and Middle Easterners in a wide array of media, from news to magazine stories, from cartoons to movies. While President Bush appeared to be speaking mainly about non-U.S. citizens, as Merskin notes, the remarks could not help but register with the millions of Arab Americans.

What is the danger of ethnic stereotyping? Shaheen, whose work on Arab American portrayals in films, put it well in one of his early works: "Ethnic

stereotypes and caricatures corrupt the imagination, narrow our vision and blur reality" (1984, p. 3).

Several fundamental problems in U.S. media coverage of the Middle East were identified by Edmund Ghareeb (1983), a former journalist in the Middle East with a Ph.D. in history from Georgetown University. His study encompassed two time periods, 1975-77 and 1979-82. The research was supported by the American-Arab Affairs Council, a nonprofit group whose goal is to promote understanding between the U.S. and Arab countries. His approach was to interview nearly two dozen prominent journalists and review content analysis studies of U.S. newspapers and magazines by several scholars. He was interested to see if the media over time adopted a more balanced approach to covering the Middle East. He identified a number of reasons for media's failure to be fair, including cultural bias, the Arab-Israel conflict, media ignorance of the history and origins of the conflict, and a sophisticated Israeli lobby. Other factors were Arab failure to understand the U.S. media and apathy by the Arab-American community. During the second period, Ghareeb detected only a "perceptible change" of less distortion and bias in U.S. media performance. This resulted in part from the efforts of Arab-American organizations combating stereotyping. This 1983 examination of U.S. media treatment of Arabs included essays by scholars who were among the first to analyze other media – cartoons, contemporary fiction, television and textbooks – for bias and distortion. Their findings were similar to those found in the newspapers and magazines.

A scholar who has studied broadly and published widely on the topic of America and Arabs is Michael W. Suleiman. He has severely criticized media – films, the entertainment industry, television, literature, textbooks – for their general and repeated portrayal of Arabs in negative terms (1989 and 1999a). Further, he argues that Arab Americans tend to be visible and invisible at the same time – visible when there is turmoil in the Middle East and invisible when they experience bias and discrimination (1999a). Arabs in the U.S., he noted, are "white but not quite" (p. 44). Arabs and Muslims in the U.S. represent not only the "other," but their counterparts in other parts of the world are seen as even worse, leading Suleiman to assert that "...for Americans, the non-western Muslims/Arabs have become the other of the other of the other..." (p. 44).

In an extensive content analysis of the representation of Arabs in U.S. television and radio stations, Lind and Danowski (1998) found that stereotypes of previous research were being repeated and reinforced. They examined three years of transcripts of news and public affairs programming for three U.S. networks, ABC (American Broadcasting Company), CNN (Cable News Network), PBS (Public Broadcasting Service), and a non-profit radio station,

NPR (National Public Radio). They sifted through nearly 136 million words. They discovered the invisible Arab – references were made to Arabs only about one hundredth of one percent. Further, they found an "overwhelming association in the media between Arabs and violence, threats, and war, which serves to foster the stereotypes of 'Arab as barbarian/aggressor/terrorist'" (p. 165).

Books, including novels and textbooks, also have been scrutinized in efforts to identify inaccuracies, bias, and distortion. Seldom have the investigators come away empty handed. In an informal analysis of contemporary writing (e.g., biographies, histories, novels with Leon Uris' Exodus [published in 1958] serving as a prototype of popular literature), Terry concluded that the works demonstrated "the pervasive negative character of the portrayal of Islam and Arabs throughout a wide variety of popular writing" (1985, p. 107).

In her study of children's books, both fiction and nonfiction and over an extended period of time, Little (1998) identified five patterns of representation of Arabs, all associated with neocolonialism – Arabs are: (1) dirty and lazy; (2) ignorant, superstitious, and silly; (3) irrational, cruel, and violent; (4) guilty of mistreating women; and (5) hateful of Christians and engage in slave trade. From an historical perspective, she concluded that prevailing Arab stereotypes "are as deeply ingrained in Western teachings as mistrust of the West is a part of the typical Arab worldview", that the images simply "have been updated, dressed in the fashion of the time, directed at children, yet deliver the same negative message" (p. 267).

Other scholars also have pointed out how stereotypes somehow maintain their stereotypical tendencies yet change with events and the fashion of the time. Crime fiction centering on the Middle East provides another example. Simon found that writers had slightly altered the stereotyping of Arabs but basically perpetuated those stereotypes. The stereotypes had morphed, as Simon in her study of *The Middle East in Crime Fiction*, wrote, from an era of "camels to Cadillacs" and "nomad to petrosheikh" (1989, pp. 34-35).

A study of the first 100 years (1888 to 1989) of the popular U.S. magazine *National Geographic* also added to the notion that old stereotypes do not die; at best, they become clothed in new attire. Analyzing articles and photographs, Steet provides numerous examples of racist, colonialist, and sexist bias (2000). After her exhaustive analysis, Steet wrote that she found so little change "disturbing if for no other reason than that one would have liked to think that certain stereotypes and assumptions eventually die of old age" (p. 154).

To be sure, changing contexts and circumstances can figure prominently in how different groups, including Arab Americans, are portrayed over time. In a study of news media coverage of Arab American reactions to the 1991

Gulf War, Gavrilos (2002) found that sympathetic coverage of Arab American reactions to the war revealed a heightened loyalty of this group of people toward America. The author concluded that Arab Americans "were ultimately represented as part of the nation's imagined community," reinforcing the media's "hegemonic construction" of the United States (p. 443). The result was an image of patriotic Americans – an image distinctly different from the usual, negative stereotypical depictions. What Gavrilos found appears similar to Fiebig-von Hase's notion of "enemy images", wherein groups behave toward one another on the basis of self-interest, such as security.

A study that looked directly at a newspaper's coverage of the Arab American community in Detroit was carried out just before September 11, 2001 (Weston and Dunsky 2002). The study, which also looked at media coverage of Arabs abroad, found that the Detroit Free Press presented a multifaceted view of Arab Americans though not entirely absent of what the authors call the "strange and exotic". Themes emerging depicted Arabs as becoming a growing political force, as struggling immigrants, and as striving against discrimination and stereotyping. Significantly, the articles during the period under study were written by two reporters who spoke Arabic and aggressively covered the community. An important observation by the authors:

> [...] the local press tends to treat such (ethnic) groups as multifaceted members of the community and the stereotyping and over-generalizations increase as distance from the community increases. (p. 142).

Ibrahim (2003) prepared an extensive compilation of studies of U.S. media coverage of Arabs and the Middle East focusing on three main communication areas: production, content, and effects. The object was to point to possible gaps in the research, such as insufficient attention given to the journalistic producers and media websites. Many of the observations in this literature review which encompassed more than half a century underscore common themes that have emerged in the research. U.S. media depended heavily on American (as opposed to Arab) sources for coverage. Stereotyping in the 1950s regarded Arabs as dishonest, undemocratic, and unreliable with low standards of education and living. Stereotyping in the 1980s moved to association with oil, wealth, and extravagance. Coverage itself tended to lack historical and cultural context. In terms of media effects, the author rightfully points out that the research shows that the predominant negative portrayals of Arabs and the Middle East produce palpable effects on the lives of Arab Americans. The result for Arabs living in the U.S.: hate crimes, job discrimina-tion, bomb threats, verbal and physical harassment, threats, and so on. The

research cited included film and the work of Jack Shaheen, to whom we now turn our attention.

No one has studied more thoroughly or written with more passion about the negative depiction of Arabs in film than Jack Shaheen (2001). Of Arab descent, Shaheen is an American scholar who over a period of 20 years analyzed Arab portraits and themes in more than 900 films. These have been compiled in a 574-page book from A (*Abbott and Costello in the Foreign Legion*) to Z (actually Y, *Your Ticket Is No Longer Valid*, also known as *A Slow Descent Into Hell* and *Finishing Tough*). There is pertinent data about each film, plus a summary and the author's observations.

What emerges is not a pretty picture. Over the years Arabs appear in a wide range of settings, nearly always disparagingly and seldom as normal human beings. Shaheen wrote:

> I am not saying an Arab should never be portrayed as the villain. What I am saying is that almost *all* Hollywood depictions of Arabs are *bad* ones. This is a grave injustice. Repetitious and negative images of the reel Arab literally sustain adverse portraits across generations. The fact is that for more than a century producers have tarred an entire group of people with the same sinister brush (p. 11).

His evidence speaks volumes. There are the slurs – "rag-head", "devil-worshiper", "camel-dick", "dune dumper", "desert bandit", and more. There are the characters – billionaires, bombers, and belly dancers, as he writes. In sum, the "reel" Arabs are not, after all, real Arabs. According to his analysis, five Arab character types emerged from the films he reviewed:

-   Villains – "Beginning with *Imar the Servitor* (1914), up to and including *The Mummy Returns* (2001), a synergy of images equates Arabs from Syria to the Sudan with quintessential evil" (p. 14).

-   Sheikhs – "The word 'sheikh' means, literally, a wise elderly person, the head of the family, but you would not know that from watching any of Hollywood's `sheikh` features, more than 160 scenarios, including the Kinetoscope short *Sheik Hadj Tahar Hadj Cherif* (1894) and the Selig Company's *The Power of the Sultan* (1907) – the first movie to be filmed in Los Angeles" (p. 19).

-   Maidens – "They (Arab women) appear as bosomy bellydancers leering out from diaphanous veils, or as disposable 'knick-knacks,' scantily-clad harem maidens with bare midriffs, closeted in the palace's women's quarters" (p. 22).

-   Egyptians – "Reel Egyptians routinely descend upon Westerners, Israelis, and fellow Egyptians. Interspersed throughout the movies are souk swindlers as well as begging children scratching for baksheesh" (p. 24).

-   Palestinians – "Absent from Hollywood's Israeli-Palestinian movies are human dramas revealing Palestinians as normal folk – computer specialists, domestic engineers, farmers, teachers, and artists. Never do movies present Palestinians as innocent victims and Israelis as brutal oppressors" (p. 26).

The author's own biases may creep through the excerpts cited here. The study, though exhaustive in its own way, lacks a clear scientific methodology. Yet the work deserves careful attention because of the author's observations, often simple descriptions, and insights. The study reveals what happens when framing turns into stereotyping which, in turn, leads to an unconscious – and even perhaps conscious – distancing of oneself from others, that is, engaging in "othering"[6].

Images in particular command authority in affecting viewers. In an aptly titled chapter ("Images That Injure: Pictorial Stereotypes in the Media"), Lester noted, "Because pictures affect a viewer emotionally more than words alone do, pictorial stereotypes often become misinformed perceptions that have the weight of established facts" (2000, p. 78). He is concerned primarily with different cultures and ethnic groups. Since people mostly encounter those of other cultures through mass media, he concluded, people aren't normally challenged to examine their prejudices. One might go further and argue that not only do prejudices go unexamined, prejudices are reinforced.

What impact did the events of September 11, 2001, have on the way media have dealt with Arabs and Arab Americans? Several studies suggest that after September 11 daily newspapers took a more sympathetic or positive view of Arab Americans (Weston 2003, Nacos and Torres-Reyna 2007).

Utilizing the Lexis-Nexis data base, Weston examined nearly 200 newspaper articles for the three months before September 11 and for the month following September 11. The pre-September 11 coverage centered on Arab Americans resisting stereotypes and discrimination. An example was the Los Angeles Times article headlined "Negative Stereotyping Distorts Arabs' Image" (Rosenberg 2001). Afterwards newspaper coverage presented Arabs as, in the words of the author, "double victims", having suffered from the attacks themselves, including the loss of loved ones, but also being subjected after-

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6   See also Semmerling's examination of six films (e.g., The Exorcist, Three Kings, Rules of Engagement) in which he analyzes portraits of Arabs as imagined by America to exist in relation to American ideologies and myths (2006).

wards to harassment and intimidation. Headlines from two major newspapers reflect the framing of the stories: "St. Louis Muslims Lead Diverse Lives that Defy Stereotypes" (Aisha Sultan 2001) and "Overcoming the Stereotypes" (Saeed Ahmed 2001). Again, it is worth noting the Arabic names of the reporters. Weston concluded that portrayal of Arab Americans following September 11 contrasted "vividly with the historic stereotype of the Arab terrorist" (2003, p. 103).

Nacos and Torres-Reyna (2007), in their extensive content analysis of newspapers, magazines and broadcast media over a number of years, found "significantly more positive and less negative media coverage of American Muslims and Arabs" (p. 19) in the months following the September 11 attacks. Among changes cited were increased use of Muslim/Arab sources and more coverage that was thematic (in-depth) rather than episodic (short, snappy). But this change did not last long. Extending their analysis beyond the immediate aftermath of September 11, the investigators found coverage of the American Muslim and Arab communities reverted to pre-September 11 coverage, namely, stereotypical and negative.

Six years after 2001 the view from the Middle East reflects a similarly somber tone. In an article about Arab-American artists, a reporter for the Gulf News published in the United Arab Emirates, wrote that while millions of Arabs call America home many are searching for identity. They ponder such questions as whether they are Arabs or Arab Americans or U.S. citizens. While many Arabs still dream of a bright future in America, the events of September 11 "changed everything". The article goes on:

> Arab Americans became the target of hate crimes, illegal detention and unexplained deportations. Some suffered from civil rights violations... Suddenly, stereotypes against them multiplied and their lives became governed by the ever-changing laws and regulations (Patriot Act) [...] (Alafrangi 2007).

The reporter wrote that while Arab-American artists understood the problems, e.g., the generalization of all Arabs being Muslims, they also remained relatively optimistic. One artist, a comedian, commented that the U.S. was "the only place in the entire world where one can create something from nothing." Another artist, an actor, pointed to a basic problem in the portrayal of ethnic groups, namely, that so very few of them – in this case Arabs – work in the American media.

The point about being heard, that is, having a voice in the discourse on matters directly pertinent to one's own well-being, is terribly important if not

essential to being able to correct inaccurate information and to dispel mis-perceptions. In the mid-1960s Arab Americans began finding that voice.

5.   Giving Voice to the Arab-American Perspective

Though it is not the focus of this paper, some mention must be made of efforts by Arab Americans to correct the inaccurate stereotypes and negative portrayals of themselves and their communities. Until the 1967 Six-Day War, Arab-American organizational activity centered on social and religious activities. The war signaled the need for Arab-American voices to be heard in political and foreign affairs. Samhan underscored this line of reasoning. While blaming Israeli propaganda for discrediting Arab-American activity, Samhan pointed to "a clear relationship between the pervasiveness of negative images and stereotypes in the media and anti-Arab prejudice" (1987, p. 18). During the late 1960s to the mid-1980s, Arab Americans formed a number of influential organizations (Kayyali 2006). Four are introduced here. Additional details about each appear in Appendix B.

The first national organization to promote Arab-American interests was the Association of Arab-American University Graduates (AAUG). It was founded in 1968. Besides trying to assure the dissemination of accurate infor-mation about the Arab world and the Arab-American community, it serves as a network for Arab academics and professionals. Its publications include the Arab Studies Quarterly. Among its founders was Edward Said. (More infor-mation about AAUG and other Arab organizations appears in Appendix B.)

A local organization with national influence is the Arab Community Cen-ter for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) based in Dearborn, Michigan, which is among the largest and most prominent Arab-American communities in the United States. It was founded in 1972 to assist immigrants in coping with language, cultural, and social barriers.

Another organization established in 1972 was the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA). Formed by businessmen and professionals with Arab backgrounds, the NAAA served as a lobbying organization, which, according to its Website (see Appendix B), is "dedicated to the formulation and implementation of an objective and nonpartisan U.S. foreign policy agenda in the Middle East". In January 2002 officials of the NAAA and the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) announced the merger of the two organizations, bringing together two of the oldest and most prominent Arab-American organizations.

The ADC, mentioned in the preceding paragraph, was founded in 1980 by former U.S. Senator James Abourezk of South Dakota and has chapters

throughout the U.S. Abourezk was the first Arab American to be elected to the U.S. Senate. His parents of Lebanese descent were homesteaders and peddlers. The ADC is a civil rights organization committed to defending the rights of people of Arab descent and promoting their cultural heritage. The ADC Website (See Appendix B) states that it "is at the forefront in combating defamation and negative stereotyping of Arab Americans in the media and wherever else it is practiced." Members of the ADC Advisory Committee include Muhammad Ali, Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan, U.S. Congressmen John Conyers of Michigan, and radio personality Casey Kasem.

Arab language media also have been instrumental in helping build a sense of community among the diverse groups of Arab Americans. The first Arabic language publication in the United States was *Kawkab Amirka* (Star of America). A weekly, it was founded in New York in 1892 by two brothers, Ibrahim and Najib, of a prominent Syrian family, Arbeely. By 1919 some 70,000 immigrants supported nine Arabic language newspapers, many of them dailies. The most important publication of the time was a journal, Syrian World, whose distinguished writers included Gibran Khalil Gibran (1883-1931) of Lebanese descent (Al-Issa, 2003).

By the end of 2002, according to Kayyali (2006), there were some 45 Arabic print publications with a combined circulation of half a million. Electronically, Arabic media also have amplified the voice of Arab Americans. The Arab Network of America was the first Arabic-language cable television network to broadcast in North America and parts of Central and South America. The Internet also has seen the rise of sites focusing on political and social issues. One study showed Arab Americans boasting the highest level of connectivity of any group with three-fourths of all Arab American adults having access to the Internet and a majority regularly visiting Arabic websites (Stapp 2005).

Organization and influence, however, do not necessarily go hand in hand. This was evident during the Lebanese conflict of the summer of 2006. Both Jewish and Arab organizations sprang into action in the U.S. Arab-American efforts to get the White House or legislators to call for an immediate ceasefire were mostly rebuffed, as noted by James Zogby. Zogby has been a leader in the Arab-American community and a staunch advocate of Arabs telling their own story. He is founder and president of the Arab American Institute, which was established in 1985 to take on an activist role in terms of political and civic engagement. Concerning the negligible impact the Arab voice had on efforts to achieve a ceasefire, he commented, "I'm devastated. I thought we'd come further" (Goodstein 2006).

6.   Analysis and Commentary: Toward Tolerance and Respect

The evidence of negative portrayal of Arabs is compelling. Arabs, both those who have settled in the United States and others, have been portrayed in a generally negative light by the media ever since research has focused on the topic. The early stereotype of, say, a struggling immigrant peddler, keeps re-emerging to be reincarnated constantly and variously from a camel-riding, nomadic Bedouin to a wealthy oil tycoon, from a profligate "petrosheikh" to a threatening, bearded terrorist.

The reasons for such treatment are not altogether clear, though it should be pointed out that media do not operate in a vacuum. Media are influenced heavily by the environment in which they operate. They are influenced by other circumstances including most especially government policies. This is a point underscored by Said (1981) in his discussion of the coverage of Islam. A full analysis of why this is the case with regard to Arab Americans is beyond the scope of this paper. Still, it is worth informed speculation. One reason certainly is simply the nature of the immigrant, that is, a person who not only comes to visit but to stay. Such people can represent a threat, economically, socially, culturally. In this regard, the Arab immigrant may be little different from other immigrants to the United States, say, Germans or Japanese. But there are other factors involved in the case of Arabs. These would seem to be largely political which in turn are related to economic and foreign interests. The Arab-American voice came late to the U.S. political process. It was only in the 1960s that Arab Americans caught on to the notion of organizing them-selves in a way to care for one another and to have a voice in the political process. As noted earlier, it took the Six-Day War of 1967 to provoke Arab Americans to political and social action.

It is a shame that, as the research affirms, so little seems to have changed over time in the media portrayal of the Arab-American community. Could the research be suspect? Perhaps in some instances, say, where Arab organizations have sponsored the research. Or perhaps some investigators let their judg-ments be guided by the emotional and ideological nature of the topic. Even taking such factors into account, the evidence is overwhelming.

An unmistakable and easily recognizable example of how media can portray the same facts in decidedly different ways occurred in reporting results of a nationwide Pew Research Center poll of Muslim Americans. The report found that Muslim Americans were "largely assimilated, happy with their lives, and moderate with respect to many of the issues that have divided Muslims and Westerners around the world" ("Muslim Americans" 2007). Yet some media reports, including the Associated Press, focused on the finding that Muslims younger than 30 were more likely than older Muslim Americans to

say that suicide bombing in the defense of Islam might be justifiable. While 78 percent of respondents said suicide bombings against civilian targets could never be justified, 13 percent disagreed – and the margin of error for this subgroup was plus or minus 10 percentage points. As the ombudsman pointed out, such decisions often come down to what is news and what is sensationalism (Parry 2007). Too often, sensationalism prevails.

Assuming U.S. media could do better, the question is how? Both media and their audiences have roles to play.

One of the basic roles of media, most especially in a society supportive of free speech, is to provide a means for individuals and groups in the community to carry on a dialogue. That is, media can serve as a conversational conduit for diverse communities. For example, a study of opinion discourse (editorials, letters to the editor, op-ed articles) in U.S. newspapers during the Iraq war suggested the "conversation" helped Arab Americans to "negotiate" their national identity during a time of crisis (Youssef 2005). She identified three main themes in the discourse. Though the author suggested findings should be considered preliminary, each theme throws a little light on the matter of ethnicity and media in the U.S. The first suggested what may be obvious, namely, that the term "American" stands for a multi-layered identity. The second theme was that in discussions of current issues references to past experiences (e.g., internment of Japanese Americans during World War II) were seen as relevant. Third, belief in "American" values defined what it was to be "American."

Lester (2000) pointed out that members of a multicultural society often become stigmatized because they are unable to understand and communicate in the symbols of the dominant culture. The effect is compounded when media professionals do not represent the diverse cultural groups. In the United States, according to Lester, only 5.8 percent of all media personnel identify themselves as members of another culture (e.g., Irish, German, Latino, etc.). No such data appear to exist for Arab media personnel in the U.S. Yet it is generally agreed that a communicator's background, including cultural, cannot help but influence perceptions of events and affect interpretation of those events.

Though Russell and Kelly (2003) were not studying culture in the sense we are using the concept here (they were studying homosexuality as a cultural phenomenon), their examination of what they call "subtle stereotyping" by media is instructive. Their research provides insights into media treatment of any group, cultural or otherwise. They studied the Boston Globe's 2002 coverage of the priests caught up in a sexual abuse scandal and how the newspaper sometimes erroneously linked gay sexual orientation to child sexual abuse. In the interests of fairer and more accurate reporting, they offered a

number of recommendations worthy of consideration by all media professionals covering the activities of any ethnic group let alone any identifiable segment of society (pp. 21-22):

- Adherence to the journalistic goals of truth and fairness requires that journalists avoid activating false stereotypes that will result in the transmission of information that is both inaccurate and unfair to particular groups of people.

- Journalists need to cultivate an ongoing awareness of the false stereotypes that may be associated with particular stories.

- Editors should be aware that false stereotypes can be activated not only through the content of stories but also through their placement. They should be especially alert to the potential for stereotypes contained in and or implied by supporting documents accompanying news stories.

  When stereotypes and other false information are included within a story, journalists need to make clear-cut statements that correct the misinformation. Rebuttals are most effective when they a) explicitly acknowledge that false information is conveyed by the stereotype and b) offer accurate information to counteract the stereotype's false content. When rebuttals are cautious and unclear, they leave room for the stereotype to persist.

- In an ongoing story that involves the persistent presence of a particular stereotype, journalists and editors might focus specific articles on the stereotype itself: the nature of the stereotype, its origins, how it is expressed socially, and what is actually true.

- Because journalists stand in the midst of the culture they describe, they cannot be expected to achieve a perfect ability to rise above stereotypes. They should seek consultation from communication specialists to help avoid coverage that activates stereotypes, particularly when covering stories that are closely linked to strong cultural stereotypes that might easily be imbedded in the story over time.

From the standpoint of the audience, the best safeguard against being duped is *caveat emptor* ("buyer beware"). This is the advice from Steet (2000) who examined a century's worth of the magazine *National Geographic*. Readers must read critically and challenge assumptions. Each person, after all, is judge and jury in choosing what to read and assessing what is read. This, in turn, suggests the need to create a society that is not only media literate but also culturally literate.

Lester's concluding words on images that injure are appropriate as a conclusion here:

> When the media regularly show images of members of all cultural groups as normal, everyday people that are just like everyone else, the goal of ending prejudice and discrimination will come a little closer. (2000, p. 92)

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8.   Appendix A: Lyrics to *A-hab, The A-rab*

This song by Composer Ray Stevens was No. 5 on Billboard's top 40 list in 1962.

A-hab, The A-rab

Let me tell you 'bout A-hab The A-rab
The Sheik of the burning sand
He had emeralds and rubies just dripping off 'a him
And a ring on every finger of his hands
He wore a big ol' turban wrapped around his head
And a scimitar by his side
And every evening about midnight
He'd jump on his camel named Clyde...and ride

(SPOKEN) Silently through the night to the sultan's tent where he would secretly meet up with Fatima of the Seven Veils, swingingest grade "A" number one U.S. choice dancer in the Sultan's whole harem, 'cause, heh, him and her had a thing going. You know, and they'd been carrying on for some time now behind the Sultan's back and you could hear him talk to his camel as he rode out across the dunes, his voice would cut through the still night desert air and he'd say (imitate Arabian speech) which is arabic for, "stop, Clyde!" and Clyde would say, (imitate camel voice). Which is camel for, "What the heck did he say anyway?"

Well....
He brought that camel to a screeching halt
At the rear of Fatima's tent jumped off Clyde,
Snuck around the corner and into the tent he went
There he saw Fatima laying on a Zebra skin rug
Wearing rings on her fingers and bells on her toes
And a bone in her nose ho, ho.

(SPOKEN) There she was friends lying there in all her radiant beauty. Eating on a raisin, grape, apricot, pomegranate, bowl of chitterlings, two bananas, three Hershey bars, sipping on a "R C" Co-Cola listening to her transistor, watching the Grand Ole Opry on the tube reading the Mad magazine while she sung, "Does your chewing gum lose its flavor?" and Ahab walked up to her and he said, (imitate Arabian speech) which is arabic for, "Let's twist again like we did last summer, baby." (laughter) You know what I mean!

Whew! She looked up at him from off the rug, give him one of the
sly looks, she said, (coy, girlish laugh) "Crazy baby".

'Round and around and around and around...etc.
And that's the story 'bout Ahab the Arab
The Sheik of the Burnin' sand
Ahab the Arab
The swinging Sheik of the burnin' sand

(Source: http://www.raystevens.com/SongLyrics/AhabLyrics.html;
accessed June 8, 2007)

9.   Appendix B: Organizations Promoting Arab Interests[7]

9.1   Association of Arab-American University Graduates (AAUG)
        http://www.aaug-asq.org/about_the_aaug.htm

*Mission Statement: To develop, foster, and promote educational and cultural information
and activities on the Arab World and the Arab-American community.*

The Association of Arab-American University Graduates is a membership
organization and its programs include an annual conference, cultural events,
summer study visits to the Middle East, publishing a journal, the Arab Studies
Quarterly, as well as books on the Arab world and Arab-American community.
The AAUG also provides a network for members and people who are
interested in furthering the aims of the Association, as stated in the mission
statement.

Academics such as Edward Said and Ibrahim Abu-Lughod were among
the founders of the AAUG in the late 1960s and 1970s. The need for aca-
demics of their caliber and depth are still needed to bridge the immense
information gap between the Arab world and the American people. The
AAUG continues to network and publish works by young Arab-American gra-
duate students, relying on membership dues for income. The strength and
commitment of the members new and old alike – is a testimony to its vibrant
educational exchanges and discussions. Objectives:

-    To publish and provide accurate, scientific, cultural and educational
     information about the Arab World and the Arab-American community

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7   (Information collected from Websites; all sites accessed June 8, 2007).

- To build bridges of mutual respect and understanding between the Arabic-speaking and American peoples

- To create networks for Arab-American professionals, academics and students

- To present the Arab and Arab-American cultural arts in their various forms to American audiences (U.S. and Canada)

- To assist in the growth and development of the Arab World by providing the professional services and skills of its membership when needed

The history of the Association of Arab-American University Graduates is the history of a profound and irreversible intellectual and personal awakening of Arab-Americans to the critical issues affecting their original homeland and the powerful role of the United States in shaping the forms and the consequences of those issues. It is a history also of the events in the Arab world and their impact on the status and rights of Arab-Americans.

The June 1967 war changed the Arab-American community by jolting many of second and third-generation Arab-Americans and causing a highly hostile attitude toward Arab-origin individuals in the U.S. and Canada. In a book about the early years of the association, The First Decade, an overview of early AAUG history, describes the feelings of depression, anxiety, guilt and despair and helplessness that engulfed the community. The earlier immigrants began to understand the reasons for the hostility directed against them and became more active in understanding that part of the world that was now so much to affect their lives in their American environment. The June 1967 war acted as a catalyst for the older and newer Arab-Americans to realize and emphasize their common cultural and linguistic heritage.

9.2 The Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS)
http://www.accesscommunity.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ACCESS_History2

The Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services began operating out of a storefront in Dearborn's south end in 1971. It was truly amazing – people volunteering their time to serve the community. ACCESS' beginnings are humble, and we have made such great progress in the past 36 years…

The 1960s was an extremely volatile time both politically and socially, and this volatility deeply affected the Arab-American community. The burgeoning Dearborn Arab community was developing an identity, and it was in the midst of this a small group of dedicated and concerned people came together determined to provide assistance for immigrants in any way we could. We saw the daily struggles many Arabs who immigrated to the United States faced – the linguistic, cultural, and social barriers – and we knew we had to do something.

ACCESS was literally a labor of love; it was completely staffed by volunteers assisting those who had trouble with English fill out applications, complete their tax forms, translation, and anything else they needed. In 1970, George Khoury (a current lifetime member of ACCESS' Board of Directors) was elected our first board president.

9.3   National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA)
http://www.cafearabica.com/organizations/org12/orgnaaa.html

The National Association of Arab Americans is a foreign policy lobbying group dedicated to the formulation and implementation of an objective and nonpartisan U.S. foreign policy agenda in the Middle East. Founded in 1972, NAAA works to strengthen U.S. relations with Arab countries and to promote an evenhanded American policy based on justice and peace for all parties in the Middle East. The premier Arab-American political organization, NAAA serves as a spearhead for the community's lobbying activities in Washington, D.C. and is the only such organization registered with Congress.

9.4   American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
http://www.adc.org/index.php?id=125

Mission: The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) is a civil rights organization committed to defending the rights of people of Arab descent and promoting their rich cultural heritage.

ADC, which is non-sectarian & non-partisan, is the largest Arab-American grassroots organization in the United States. It was founded in 1980 by former U.S. Senator James Abourezk and has chapters nationwide.

ADC's Advisory Committee is made up of an impressive group of people that include: Muhammad Ali, Her Majesty Queen Noor, U.S. Congressmen John Conyers (D-MI), Darrell Issa (R-CA), & Nick Joe Rahall (D-WV), as well

as the Honorable Paul Findley, Clovis Maksoud, Casey Kasem, Archbishop Philip Saliba and others.

ADC is at the forefront in combating defamation and negative stereo-typing of Arab Americans in the media and wherever else it is practiced. In doing so, it acts as an organized framework through which Arab Americans can channel their efforts toward unified, collective and effective advocacy; by promoting a more balanced U.S. Middle East policy and serving as a reliable source for the news media and educators. By promoting cultural events and participating in community activities, ADC has made great strides in correcting anti-Arab stereotypes and humanizing the image of the Arab people. In all these efforts, ADC coordinates closely with other civil rights and human rights organizations on issues of common concern. Through its Department of Legal Services, ADC offers counseling in cases of discrimination and defamation and selected impact litigation in the areas of immigration. Additional information on the ADC at http://www.adc.org/index.php?id=119

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee is committed to:

-       Empowering Arab Americans;

-       Defending the civil rights of all people of Arab heritage in the United States;

-       Promoting civic participation;

-       Encouraging a balanced U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and;

-       Supporting freedom and development in the Arab World.

Now more than ever, the Arab-American community needs a powerful, effective national and local organization to defend its interests. ADC is that organization. ADC was founded in 1980 by former U.S. Senator James Abourezk.