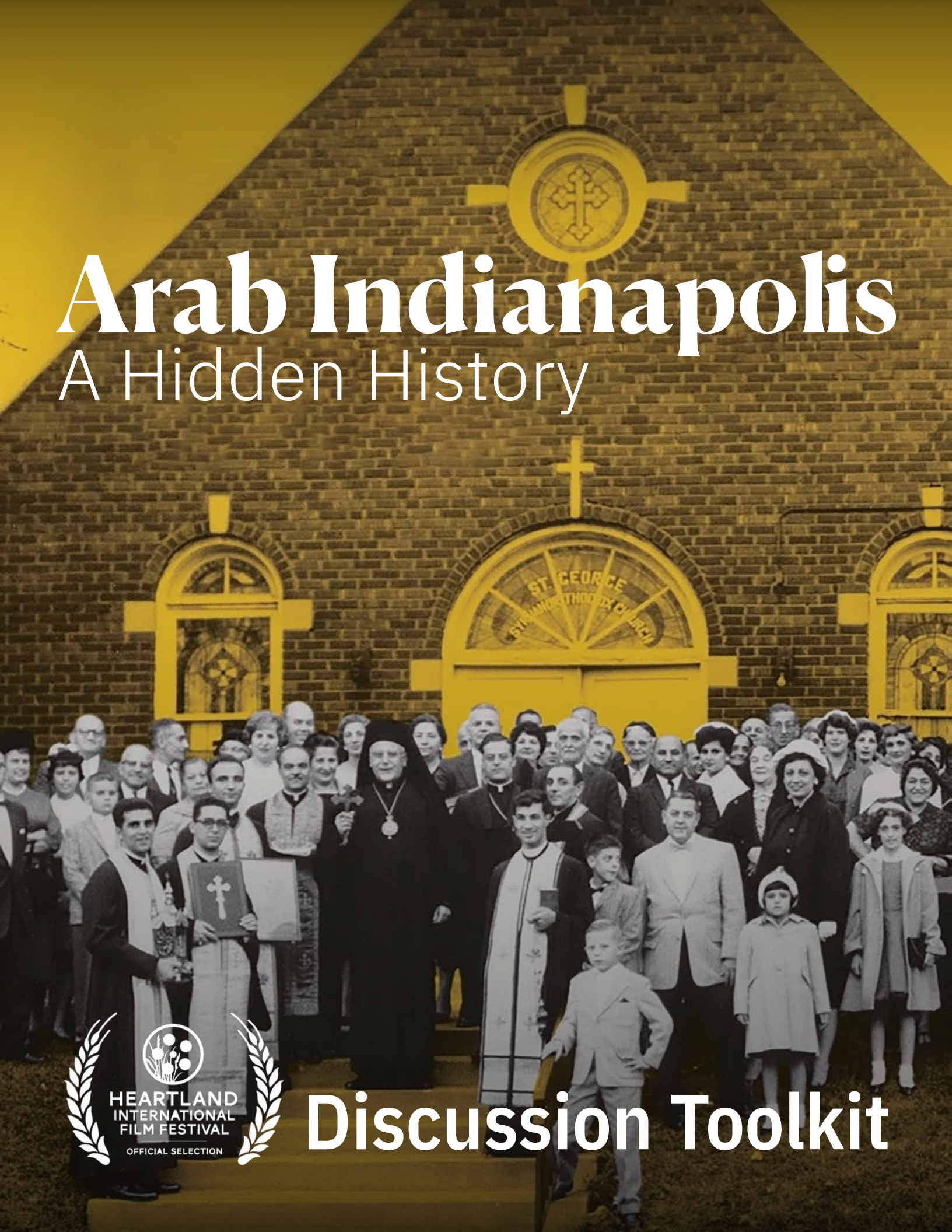


Arab Indianapolis

A Hidden History

HEARTLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
OFFICIAL SELECTION

Discussion Toolkit

Welcome!

مرحبًا!

Thank you for making the decision to share the film, *Arab Indianapolis: A Hidden History*, with your community!

I hope that it makes everyone in attendance, no matter where they trace their roots, feel more at home in Indiana.

In 2005, when I arrived in Indianapolis to take a new job, I had no idea that people like me had been living in the city since the 1800s. That hidden history inspired me to work with other Arab Americans to make a film that reveals our community's origins and development.

Viewers of the documentary have told me that the stories of Arab migration parallel those of many other Hoosiers, including in their own family.

Of course, we have our differences. But that is exactly the point. The stereotypes of Indianapolis and Indiana as homogenous cover up our true history, which is a shared history of racial, ethnic, and religious diversity from the beginning. We are one and we are many.

This toolkit provides lots of resources to explore this history with your community, to delve more deeply into researching our shared past, and to reflect on its meaning for our future.

Please feel free to use whatever resources are best suited for your particular group, and have fun!

Thanks again,

Edward E. Curtis

Edward E. Curtis IV, executive producer, *Arab Indianapolis: A Hidden History*
William M. and Gail M. Plater Chair of the Liberal Arts at IUPUI
ecurtis4@iupui.edu

About Indiana Humanities

Indiana Humanities connects people, opens minds and enriches lives by creating and facilitating programs that encourage Hoosiers to think, read and talk.

Indiana Humanities is a statewide nonprofit that infuses the humanities into our daily lives. We do this by providing grants, convening discussions, uplifting humanities scholars, spotlighting humanities organizations and activities, and creating our own programs that help Hoosiers think, read and talk.

Learn more: IndianaHumanities.org

About Arab Indianapolis

The Arab Indianapolis project explores and celebrates the history of Arab Americans in Greater Indianapolis, the diversity of our community, and our contributions to the city. We connect contemporary Hoosiers of all backgrounds to our shared past.

Arab Indianapolis began in March, 2020, as a blog featuring community history and interviews of Arab Americans in Greater Indianapolis. Directed by Edward Curtis, the project engaged two dozen other Arab Americans and nine student researchers. IU Indianapolis students Jay Brodzeller and Ronnie Kawak worked on the project from beginning to end; Dana Dobbins, Emma Eldridge, Lily Malcomb, Layla Mitiche, Asrar Jaber, Jamee West, and Mickey Yoder made significant contributions, as well. Ziad Hefni was the project's photographer. Prof. Paul Mullins and Prof. Jeff Wilson also supported the project.

After the first blogs posts appeared, a community advisory committee started by Hiba Alalami recommended publishing a book about the community, and local filmmaker Vinnie Manganello suggested that the topic deserved a full-length documentary. Two years later, in June 2022, with the help of over 75 individuals and about a dozen institutions, the film and the book appeared. Over half the funding for the project came from various units of Indiana University, including a significant portion from the William M. and Gail M. Plater Chair of the Liberal Arts and the IUPUI Indianapolis Vice Chancellor for Research.

Learn More: ArabIndianapolis.com

Screenings are supported by:

indiana humanities
think. read. talk.

Funding from:

IUPUI
SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

Table of Contents

جدول المحتويات

Program Planning Checklist

قائمة التحقق لتخطيط البرنامج

Use this checklist to keep yourself on track as you plan, implement and report back about your *Arab Indianapolis: A Hidden History* screening and discussion.

Before the Event

- Choose a date, time and place to hold a public screening and discussion of *Arab Indianapolis: A Hidden History*. Reserve space as needed. You should expect your full program to last at least two hours.

- Find a facilitator to lead your film discussion. This may be you, someone who regularly leads discussions at your organization, or someone you invite because of their particular expertise related to the film's content. Guide them to the Arab Indianapolis website and strongly recommend that they view the film.

- Complete the application form at IndianaHumanities.org/arabindianapolis. In your application, tell us the date, time and location of your event, who your facilitator is, and your goals for community discussion. You will receive notification within two weeks of your application; awarded sites will receive an agreement letter from Indiana Humanities.

- Sign and return the agreement letter from Indiana Humanities. Signed agreement letters must be received before your scheduled event.

- Spread the word about your event! Use the press release template and logos provided by Indiana Humanities to get the word out to your local media. Post flyers, share on social media, post the event to community calendars, and use word-of mouth to make sure everyone knows about your screening and a discussion.

- Work out all the technical details. The film is available streaming online, so you will want to make sure you have a strong internet connection at your site, and a way to connect a computer with any projection equipment. On the next page are the options to access the film.

How to Access
Arab Indianapolis: A Hidden History

- https://www.pbs.org/show/arab-indianapolis-hidden-history/
- https://www.wfyi.org/programs/arab-indianapolis-hidden-history
- https://youtu.be/5rUQyc3Kt_k

Day of the Event

- Figure out how you can set up the space for both viewing the film and holding the discussion. We strongly suggest creating a space where folks can be seated in a circle for the discussion. Where applicable, make sure staff or volunteers are able to answer questions and distribute materials such as nametags.

- Keep careful track of attendance as you'll need to report this back to us. Consider collecting emails of attendees so you can invite them to related programs in the future and send a follow-up with additional information and resources.

- Take great photos, which can be used for your blog, newsletter or social media channels. We recommend you give your photographer a "shot list" of what kinds of photos you want her or him to capture. If you share your successes on social media, tag Indiana Humanities (@INHumanities on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram). Feel free to live tweet the conversation and tag @INHumanities and #ArabIndianapolis!

After the Event

- Complete the final report form on the Indiana Humanities website, telling us how your *Arab Indianapolis: A Hidden History* discussion went, how many people came and what your community talked about. All final reports must be submitted within two weeks of your program's completion.

- Indiana Humanities will send the $250 stipend upon submission of your final report. Please allow up to three weeks for checks to arrive. Funds may be used to reimburse costs associated with the event, to pay your facilitator an honorarium, and/or to cover staff time for the event.

- Send thank-you notes to facilitator(s) or others who help with each event.

Facilitation Tips

نصائح للمناقشة

- Ask open-ended questions that can be answered in a variety of ways.
- Use specific moments or quotes from the film to ground discussion. Encourage participants to take notes as they watch. Ask folks to make connections between what they heard and saw to their own communities and their own lives.
- Ask follow-up questions to get folks to dig a little deeper and make connections between different points of view in the room.
- Try to avoid questions that require a lot of background information. In other words, ask questions grounded in the film or in people's everyday lives. If your questions require a lot of background knowledge, they will exclude some people and make them feel unwelcome.
- Keep introductions brief so you can devote your time to real conversation. For instance, you might simply have everyone state his or her first name and share one word that describes how they cultivate a sense of community.
- Set guidelines at the start. Some important ones: All perspectives are valued and it's important to hear from everyone in the room. It's okay to disagree respectfully. Be wary of easy consensus—it's possible not all points of view have been considered.
- Scan the room for verbal and nonverbal cues: Are people feeling comfortable? Is there a shy person who looks like they want to talk but just needs to be asked? Is someone talking too much? Moderate your tone and body language to invite new participants into the discussion.
- Avoid sharing what you think, even when people ask! Your role is to lead the conversation, not contribute opinions. Always turn the discussion back to what participants think.
- As you draw to a close, ask a question that asks people to take the conversation "beyond the room." For example, who's someone you plan to tell about tonight's conversation and why?

Facilitation Guide

دليل المناقشة

Finding a Facilitator

Many kinds of people have what it takes to be a great facilitator. The most important qualities to look for are someone who is a great listener and someone who makes others feel comfortable talking about big ideas.

Skilled facilitators come from all walks of life and can be any age. Consider asking community leaders, librarians, teachers, humanities scholars or local religious leaders. If you're looking to gather the input of young people, find a committed college student or young professional—they may never have been asked before, and it's a great chance to engage the leadership skills of the next generation of Hoosiers.

Facilitators should understand what your goals for the discussion are and commit to using the guidelines in this discussion guide. Although we recommend using the questions presented here, they may want to add some of their own. You may pay your facilitator an honorarium or you can ask if they'll donate their time for free. How much you want to pay your facilitator is up to you.

Discussion Questions

أسئلة المناقشة

- The first significant population of Arabic-speaking people in Indiana arrived in the late 1800s. Can any audience members trace their Indiana roots to the same period? From where did they migrate (whether in the United States or abroad)? How were their experiences different from or similar to the people living on Willard Street?

- Why was immigration from the Arabic-speaking world virtually cut off in the 1920s? Are there similar anti-immigrant, anti-foreigner feelings in Indiana today? How is today similar to and different from the 1920s?

- What were your impressions of the scene about the founding of St. George Syrian Orthodox Church? Did anything in the scene surprise you? If so, what and why?

- What does the story of Arab American POW Raphael George mean to you? Do you think most Americans are aware that Arabs have served in the U.S. military since World War I? If not, why not?

- Did you know about Helen Corey's story before watching the film? Why is her life important to the state's history, in your view?

- Arabs have been healing Hoosiers since the 1920s. Do you know any Arab American physicians or other health care providers in your community?

- What did you learn about Arab cooking in the film? Have you made or eaten any of these foods? Do you agree with Sen. Fady Qaddoura and Dr. Eyas Raddad that food is a form of soft diplomacy? Is it important, as Hiba Alalami says, to pass on these food traditions to future generations? If so, why?

- Which theme in the film made the strongest impressions on you? Why?

- Why do you think the history of Arab Indianapolis has been hidden for so long?

- Do you think the film tells a hopeful story of Arab Americans in Indianapolis? Why or why not?

Continued on next page →

- Were you surprised by the long history of discrimination against Arab Americans? How has that discrimination changed over time?
- Immigration policy is controversial, as the film points out. How has immigration affected our state? Why are immigrants still the victim hate crimes or other forms of discrimination?
- What is your migration story–or that of your ancestors? Is it important to you? Why or why not?
- What other elements in the film parallel aspects of your own family history?

Communication Tips

نصائح للتواصل

- Create a Facebook event or Eventbrite page (or both!) for the event. Both of these tools often reach people who aren't already involved with your organization.

- Consider sending a dedicated email to your organization's mailing list about the event. Below is a sample message:

  Greetings! I'd like to extend a personal invitation to a special screening of the film *Arab Indianapolis: A Hidden History* at [location] on [date] at [time]. This film, produced with funding from @INHumanities, introduces you to the rich Arab history of Indianapolis through food, health, religion and more. If you're interested in seeing the film and joining a guided discussion to explore how Arab history is Hoosier history, be sure to RSVP for tickets with this link. [Eventbrite link] Don't forget to forward this email to a friend and share on social, where you can tag @INHumanities and use #ArabIndianapolis!

- When you share on social media, be sure to tag us (@INHumanities). We're on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Below are some examples you can customize to fit your event:

  Facebook: You're invited! Join me on [date] at [time] for a special screening of *Arab Indianapolis: A Hidden History* at [location], followed by a guided discussion. This film, produced by Dr. Edward E. Curtis IV with funding from @INHumanities, takes you along to Indianapolis sites and introduces you to Arab Hoosiers as they explore the city's rich Arab past. RSVP for tickets here: [Eventbrite link]

  Instagram: Come explore stories and sites of Arab history in Indianapolis through food, health, religion and more. This special screening of *Arab Indianapolis: A Hidden History* is followed by a discussion to help Hoosiers connect our shared pasts. The film will be hosted by [location] on [date] at [time] and was produced with funding from @INHumanities'. Reserve your tickets today and help spread the word! [Eventbrite link]

  Twitter: Join me on [date] at [time] for a special screening of *Arab Indianapolis: A Hidden History* hosted by [location]. The film, produced with funding from @INHumanities, tells the story of Arab Americans in Indianapolis and illuminates our shared Hoosier history. RSVP: [Eventbrite link]

- On our website you'll find additional resources, like social media graphics, logos and a press release template, to help you get the word out about your event. When sending a press release, it's a best practice to send it at least one month in advance.

Historical Research Exercises

تمارين البحوث التاريخية

Become a history sleuth! These exercises will guide you through how to research the first Arabic-speaking neighborhood in Indianapolis.

This activity can be done in small groups or in one large group.

You will examine three primary source documents that the filmmakers utilized to research the history of *Arab Indianapolis: A Hidden History.*

1898 Sanborn Map (Page 13)

- We need to determine where Willard Street is located since it no longer exists. The documentary superimposes a map on the current site of Lucas Oil Stadium. But how did the filmmakers figure out that this is where Willard Street was located?

- Use the Sanborn Map, and supplement with a Google Map (page 14). Look for Capitol and Merrill streets. Ask someone to explain where Willard used to be located on the Google map.

- A yellow-colored building is wood-framed; a red-colored building is brick. Note the narrow, long townhomes in which Willard Street residents lived.

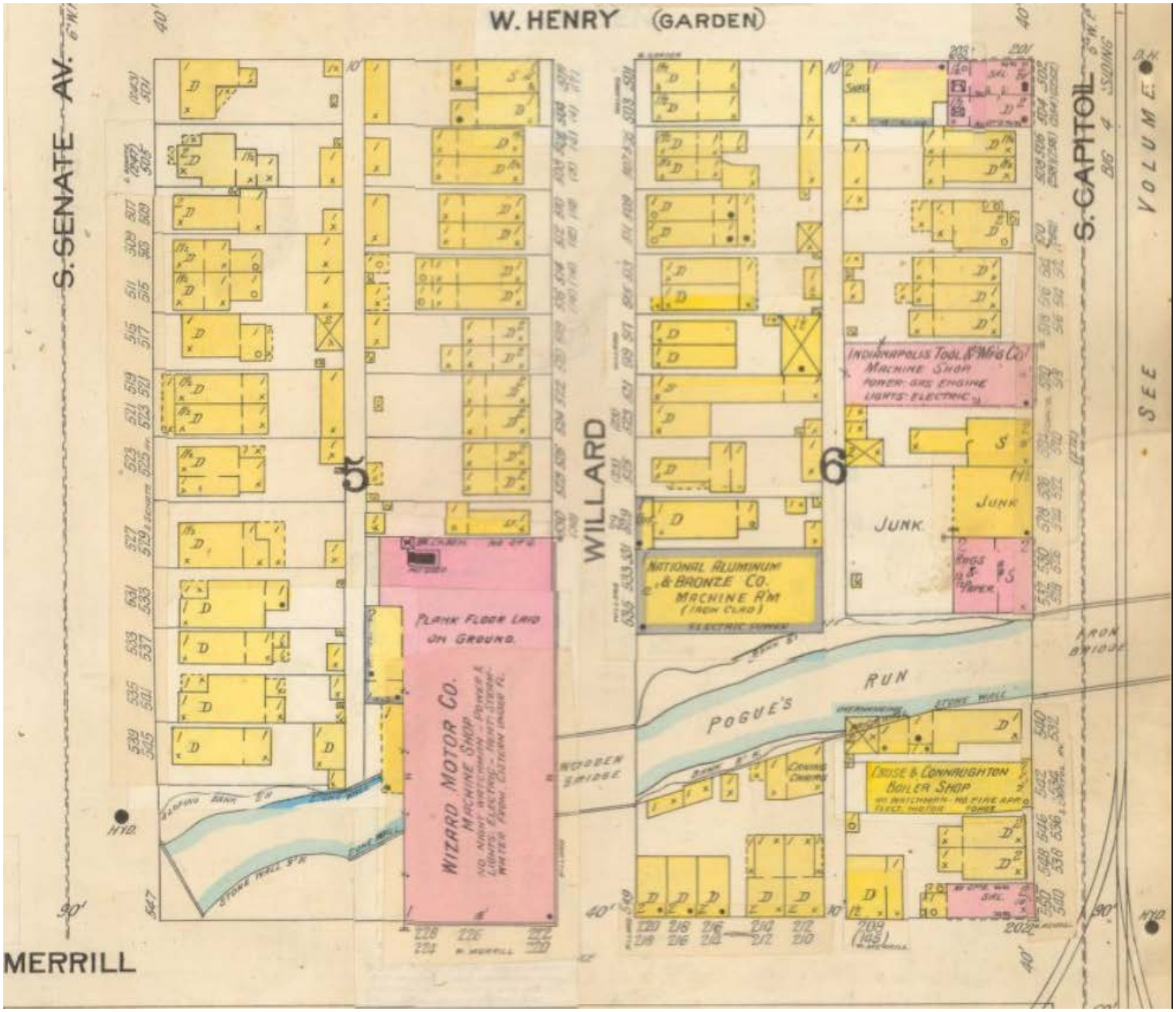
U.S. Census Page (Page 15)

Perhaps explain what the U.S. Census is and that the U.S. Constitution requires that the federal government count the number of people who reside in the United States every ten years. This is a major source of information about the people of the United States, including how many people live in each state, where exactly they live, whether they are married and have kids, whether they work outside the home, and many other pieces of information.

Ask audience members to count how many people living on Willard Street are originally from Syria. (Note that this is not the whole census of Willard Street; it's just one page). In small groups, pair and share, or as one large group, consider asking audience members to list where people on Willard Street were born. How many Syrians versus non-Syrians were there?

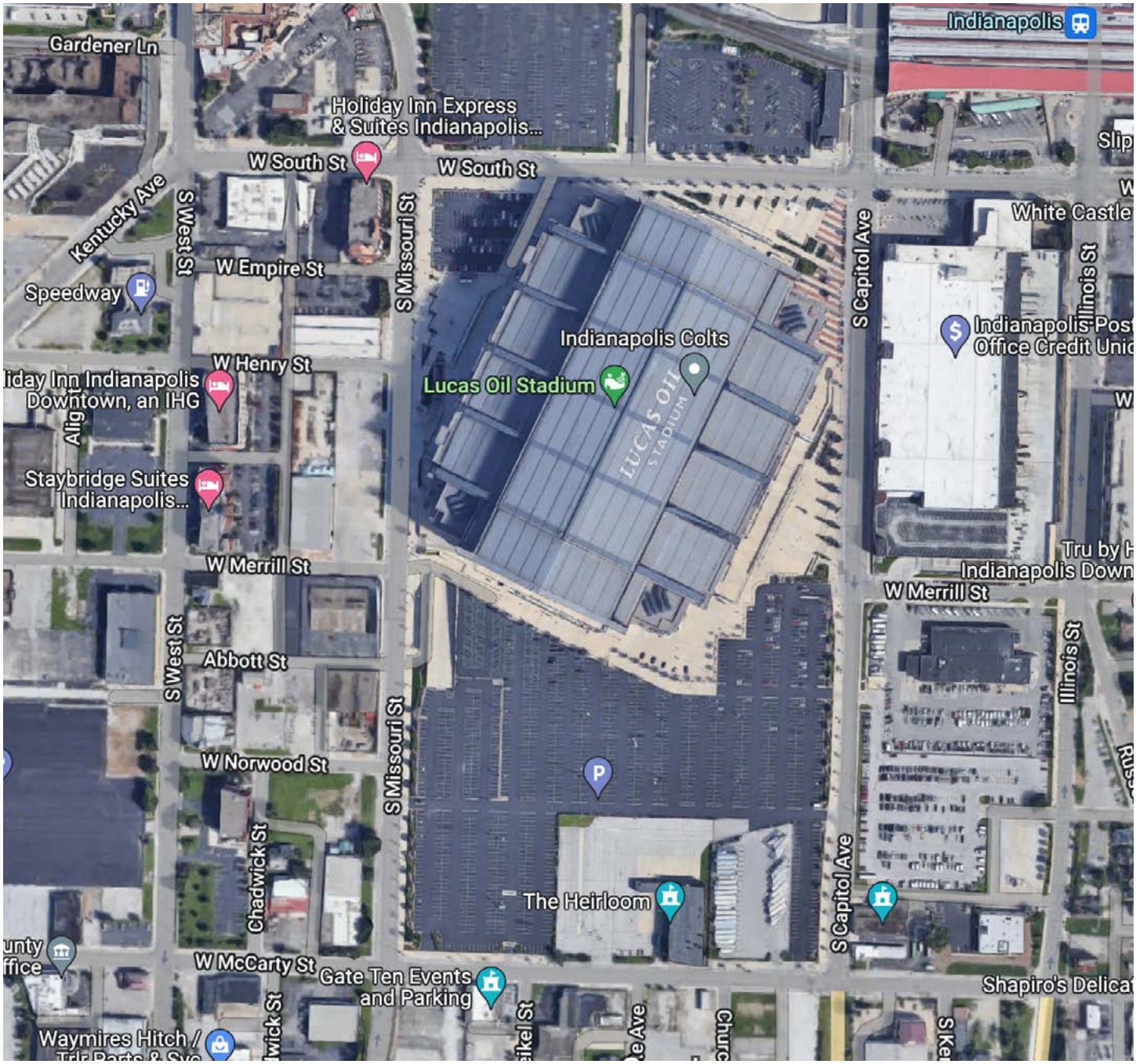
Indianapolis News, Dec. 14, 1893 (Page 16)

This newspaper article contains invaluable information about Arabic-speaking Syrians on Willard Street, but it also expresses anti-immigrant, xenophobic bias. After reading the article, which parts of the article seem to contain reliable information? How do we distinguish between fact and opinion? If you wish, you can work individually, in pairs, or in groups, and if you have time, you can share the results with the entire audience. Make time for people to express their feelings about the prejudices inherent in the article.

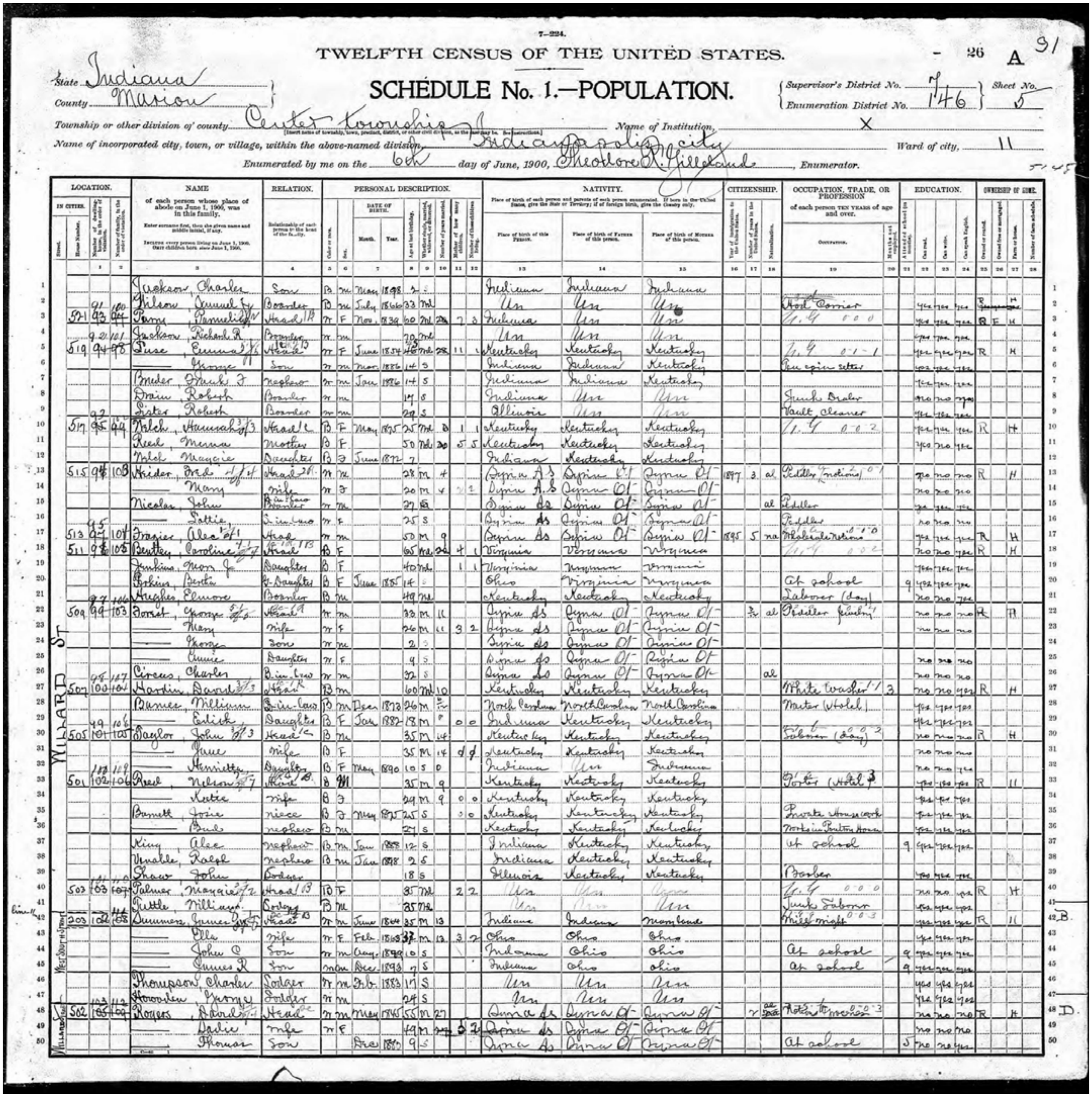


1898
Sanborn Map

Click Here for Larger Image



2022
Google Map



7—224.

TWELFTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES.

SCHEDULE No. 1.—POPULATION.

State: Indiana
County: Marion
Township or other division of county: Center Township
Name of incorporated city, town, or village, within the above-named division: Indianapolis City
Enumerated by me on the 6th day of June, 1900, Theodore R. Gillespie, Enumerator.
Supervisor's District No. 7
Enumeration District No. 146
Sheet No. 5
Ward of city, 11

Name	Relation	Color	Sex	Age	Place of birth	Occupation
Jackson, Charles	Son	B	M	2	Indiana	
Wilson, Samuel J.	Boarder	B	M	33	Un	Hod Carrier
Payne, Pamelia	Head	W	F	60	Indiana	
Jackson, Richard R.	Boarder	W	M	70	Un	
Pease, Emma J.	Head	W	F	46	Kentucky	
—, George H.	Son	W	M	14	Indiana	Engine setter
Bruder, Frank J.	Nephew	W	M	14	Indiana	
Drain, Robert	Boarder	W	M	17	Indiana	Junk Dealer
Lister, Robert	Boarder	W	M	29	Illinois	Vault cleaner
Welch, Hannah	Head	B	F	25	Kentucky	
Reed, Minna	Mother	B	F	50	Kentucky	
Welch, Maggie	Daughter	B	F	7	Indiana	
Haider, Fred	Head	W	M	28	Syria As	Peddler (notions)
—, Mary	Wife	W	F	20	Syria As	
Nicolas, John	Brother-in-law	W	M	27	Syria As	Peddler
—, Lottie	Sister-in-law	W	F	25	Syria As	Peddler
Frazier, Alec	Head	W	M	50	Syria As	Wholesale notions
Bentley, Caroline	Head	B	F	65	Virginia	
Jenkins, Mary J.	Daughter	B	F	40	Virginia	
Perkins, Bertie	Grand-Daughter	B	F	14	Ohio	At school
Hughes, Elmore	Boarder	B	M	49	Kentucky	Laborer (day)
Forest, George	Head	W	M	33	Syria As	Peddler (jewelry)
—, Mary	Wife	W	F	26	Syria As	
—, George	Son	W	M	2	Syria As	
—, Annie	Daughter	W	F	4	Syria As	
Circus, Charles	Brother-in-law	W	M	32	Syria As	
Hardin, David	Head	B	M	60	Kentucky	White washer
Barnes, William	Son-in-law	B	M	26	North Carolina	Waiter (Hotel)
—, Edith	Daughter	B	F	18	Indiana	
Baylor, John	Head	B	M	35	Kentucky	Laborer (day)
—, Jane	Wife	B	F	35	Kentucky	
—, Henrietta	Daughter	B	F	10	Indiana	
Reed, Nelson	Head	B	M	35	Kentucky	Porter (Hotel)
—, Katie	Wife	B	F	29	Kentucky	
Burnett, Josie	Niece	B	F	25	Kentucky	Private Housework
—, Bud	Nephew	B	M	21	Kentucky	[illegible]
King, Alec	Nephew	B	M	12	Indiana	At school
Venable, Ralph	Nephew	B	M	2	Indiana	
Shaw, John	Lodger			18	Illinois	Barber
Palmer, Maggie	Head	B	F	35	Un	
Tuttle, William	Lodger	B	M	35	Un	Junk Laborer
Summers, James	Head	W	M	35	Indiana	Mill wright
—, Ella	Wife	W	F	37	Ohio	
—, John C.	Son	W	M	10	Indiana	At school
—, James R.	Son	W	M	7	Indiana	At school
Thompson, Charles	Lodger	W	M	17	Un	
Howden, George	Lodger	W	M	24	Un	
Rogers, David	Head	W	M	55	Syria As	[illegible]
—, Sadie	Wife	W	F	49	Syria As	
—, Thomas	Son			9	Syria As	At school

1900
U.S. Census Page

Click Here for Larger Image

THE INDIANAPOLIS NEWS, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1893.

CASES OF SQUALOR.

The Wretched Hovels of Syrian Peddlers.

Men, Women and Children Crowded Together in Small Rooms and Revolting Filth.

A Night Police Visit to Some of These "Homes"—They Are Breeders of Disease, a Doctor Says—Life of the Inmates.

The night wind is blowing raw and chill, and the chattering teeth of the pedestrian, who has not had faith enough in the weather to take off his autumnal gauze, tells that wrathful winter has come. A little company is seated about a warm and cheerful fire. It is made up of Superintendent Powell, Chief Detective Splan, Dr. S. E. Earp, police surgeon, an artist and a reporter. There is a wild whistle from the wind, that seems to be chasing some one around the corner of the house and prying into every cranny lest he be hidden there.

"U-u-ugh," shudders the Superintendent, "this is a bad night for the destitute. Do you know," and he touches a match to a fresh cigar, "that there are places in this town that equal in squalor and misery anything that can be found in the larger cities?"

"Don't believe it!" exclaims one of the party, bluntly.

"Certainly not. There are not two hundred people in the city that would believe it. Seeing is believing, though."

The Superintendent smiles. In a few minutes a carriage rolls up to the door. It is well equipped with robes and blankets. Fresh cigars are lighted, and the party gets inside.

"Have you plenty of disinfectants, Doctor?" asked the Superintendent, knocking his knee against that of the police surgeon.

"Oh, yes. All that we will use."

"Well," says the artist, "if you have any to spare you might put some on this hack."

SUPT. POWELL.

"Where to, sir?" says the long-coated, big-buttoned driver, as he steps to the window and cuts a hole in the smoke with his head.

"Do you know where Willard street is?"

"Oh, yes."

"Well, drive us to the north end of it!"

The door shuts with a slam, the driver mounts his box and the venerable "night-hawk," with the rattling noises of an old-fashioned thrashing-machine, goes lumbering over the asphalt of Kentucky avenue, South Tennessee street and with a sudden [...]

[...] covered with every conceivable object. There are no cupboards or closets and everything possible is hung up on the wall. Old clothes, tinware, dishes with handles, dresses, shawls, old hats for men and women, boots, shoes, peddler's packs, until one imagines himself in a second-hand clothing store or a junk shop. The floor is carpetless and thick with dirt and litter of various kinds.

SYRIAN TYPES.

At one end is a little "monkey" stove, heated almost white, and the pipe leading to near the roof is red hot in half a dozen places. The flues must be well constructed to prevent the stove from firing the house. A backless chair and a partially demolished soap box are in front of the stove. On each side of the room are the beds. A frame work, supported by sawed-off stanchions, supports the outer end, and a cleat nailed against the shaky wall holds up the other. On this frame are thrown a number of cheap mattresses, rough blankets and common quilts, while long bags filled with coarse straw serve as pillows.

There is but one window in this room and that is on the north side. The panes, or what there are left, are thick with dirt and smoke; it would be an excellent smoked-glass observatory on an eclipse day. As if for sarcasm, only a dirty shawl is pinned across the window (it is full of humps made by the articles shoved into the sash where once there had been glass) to prevent passers on the street from seeing into the room. But a person who could discover anything through that dirt-begrimed window must have a gaze with the penetrating power of a two-inch auger.

On the south side of the room is another frame work supporting more cheap mattresses, rough blankets and common quilts. There is a narrow passageway the whole length of the room between the rows of beds. At one end of this passage is the stove, at the other the door. The row of beds on the south side is shorter than on the north in order to make room for the swinging of a door to another room.

THE STORE ROOM.

This room is the "store" where the peddlers' supplies are kept and from which the packs are filled. The goods are bought wholesale from a Syrian merchant in Chicago. A row of shelves is on the north side of the room, and on these are piles of goods in boxes and bundles. A filthy cot is placed at one end of the "store," and on this sleeps one of the men, for the purpose of guarding the goods. On a shelf within easy reach is a long-handled, rusty-bladed hatchet—why it is there needs no explanation. When the visitors have examined the store and looked [...]

[...] covered with paper torn from a meal sack. The Chief knocks loudly.

"A superb place to get sand-bagged," whispers one of the visitors, glancing about him at the shadows hanging over the place. Again and again the Chief knocks, but his vigorous poundings bring no reply. He tries the door. It is locked.

"Open this door," he calls.

A shuffling noise is heard from the inside, and the Chief knocks again.

"What you wanta?" inquires a shrill voice.

"Open the door. We want to come in."

"I hava no mach. Have you a mach?"

The Chief strikes a match and displays his badge. This is the open sesame.

"Waita minuta."

In a few seconds a light is thrown on the yellow paper. There is a sound of shooting bolts and dropping chains and the door opens. "Mother Shipmon," as she is called, stands there with a lamp held high above her head. She is a Syrian woman of middle age, slouchily dressed, a faded shawl over her shoulders and a scarlet cloth bound about her forehead. Her black eyes peer at the visitors. She recognizes the Superintendent and the Chief.

"You cuma to see me all the timee. You must likee me."

And she displays a row of white, glistening teeth that many a society belle would pay a small fortune to possess. "Mother Shipmon" peddles herself occasionally, but she is really the business manager of several men and women, who look to her to make their purchases for them, fix their prices and attend to other matters. She speaks fairly good English, and is very shrewd and cunning.

"Where is everybody?"

"All gone. They peddle. Be here Sunday."

"Where is the girl?"

"She peddle to. In the country. They no man here."

"MOTHER SHIPMON."

This place is on the same, general plan as the other. The beds are made on shoe and hat-boxes, evidently procured from the wholesale merchants in South Meridian street. Whether they are paid for is another story. The regulation tin lamp hangs to the wall. The bed clothes are dirty; filth predominates everywhere. In girlhood "Mother Shipmon" was no doubt beautiful, and if a few layers of dirt are removed from her features she is not bad-looking now. The Superintendent points toward the ceiling.

"No ovra," and she shakes her head energetically. "No mans here. Go see."

The Chief takes the lamp and leads the way up a creaking trembling stairway to [...]

[...] band speaks English fluently, and says he will never again return to "my country." He likes America very much and will become a citizen of the United States. His brother is reading a book. The Superintendent takes it and glances over the pages. It is Syriac.

"No, sabe," and he hands it back. At this the three laugh—the woman the loudest and most discordantly. On the floor is a tin cup, filled with pale blue milk and holding a spoon. An improvised hammock swings from one bedpost to the wall. It is filled—perhaps with old clothes. The Superintendent accidentally jostles it. A gurgling noise comes from under the dirt-stained clothes.

"Have you a baby here?" is the astonished inquiry. Again that gurgling sound.

"Yes, and it is on the verge of pneumonia; don't uncover it; keep it warm;" and the hammock is swung until the wheezing, gurgling voice ceases. The baby is asleep.

"We have another one," exclaims the husband, proudly pointing to the bed. The mother, just as proudly, begins to haul away layer after layer of bed clothes. A faint whimper is heard.

"Oh, Louie! Louie! here."

"Louie," she calls, and drags forth a chunky, chubby, little fellow, with bright, red cheeks, black eyes, half submerged in tears, and clad in the garments he has worn all day—even to the shoes.

"Here are some gentlemen to see you, Louie."

But "Louie" is not entertaining visitors to-night, and gives evidence of displeasure by dropping his head on his mother's shoulder, and uttering a series of screams and yells augumented by sundry kicks and punches that cause his mother hastily to drop him back into bed and pile the vile-smelling clothes over him from head to heels.

CHRISTINE AND BABY

AT THE "LAFAYETTE" HOUSE.

There is a row of tenement houses in South Meridian street, near the Union station, and in the rear part of it are a number of Syrian, Greek and Arabian families. Most of them have a better understanding [...]

"Oh, yes; I went to school in my country, and then I went to school in this country. Thomas and Aseba go to school here."

"Why are you all named David?"

"That's the custom in my country. The children are all named after the father. They take his two names."

"All of your people that we have seen to-night have tattoo marks on. Why is this?"

THE HOME OF SEVENTEEN.

"That's another custom of my country. As soon as the child is born he is tattooed with his name and the time he is born, so when he goes away he can always be found by the marks. See, here is mine," and he pulls a ragged coat-cuff from a dirt-begrimed and red-cold wrist to display some hieroglyphics in blue ink.

"That means," continues the boy, "that means that my name is Solomon David Frazer, and I was born in 1876. Some have swords, birds and other pictures on their arms, but that is just style."

"How is it done?"

"The picture is drawn with India ink, and then it is pricked in with needles until the blood comes. It's sore for a while, but it gets well, and will never wear out."

"Where do you work, Solomon?"

"Oh, I peddle. I support the family."

"What!" exclaims the Superintendent, looking at the figure against the wall. "Doesn't your father work and help you?"

"Me no works," explains the head of the family with a suggestive shrug of the shoulder. "Me taka care of the family."

"He lika to be near thea fire," croaks one of the old women.

"Where is your mother, Solomon?"

"She is at the city hospital. She is sick."

"Humph! I should think she would be. How much do you make a day?"

"Sometimes a dollar and a half, or a dollar, or fifty cents, or a quarter—anything I can get; but business is very dull now, and I am not doing much. It's mighty hard times with us merchants."

"You a merchant?"

"Of course. I sell a fifty-dollar diamond for 25 cents!" and a shout of laughter goes up from Solomon David's Syrian friends.

"This boy, with half a chance, will make his mark," said one of the party.

THE POLICE SURGEON'S OPINION.

These Places Are Breeders of Pestilence and Disease—Bad Morals.

The hour is almost midnight, and again around the blazing fire the explorers are assembled. The police surgeon, as he thaws out his benumbed toes, is asked what he [...]

Dec. 14 1893

Indianapolis News

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Small Group Dialogue On Immigration

حوار جماعي صغير العدد حول الهجرة

- Moving from one place to another, going on pilgrimage, traveling, and resettlement are part of the human condition. All Hoosiers, including Indigenous Hoosiers, have migration stories. For some of us, these are triumphant tales of overcoming adversity. For others, our origin stories, or those of our ancestors, are obscure, buried, perhaps too painful or distant to recall.

- Paying attention to the many reasons why people move both to our state and within it, take a moment to think about your own stories of Indiana migration. Write down some thoughts you are willing to share with others.

- How did you or your people get here? Do you claim roots elsewhere, whether outside or inside Indiana? How did this migration affect you or your family? What does it mean to you today?

- Now, break up into small groups. Consider appointing a facilitator in each group to make sure that everyone who wishes to speak can do so. Perhaps share the facilitation tips in this toolkit by projecting them on the screen or passing out handouts.

- After listening to one another, discuss whether hearing about other people's stories of migration affects the way you think about your own. If so, how? What do we learn when we listen to other people's stories of migration?

- As a final step in the discussion, consider reporting out the results of your conversations to the larger group.

The History of Arab Immigration to Indianapolis & Defining Arab Identity

تاريخ هجرة العرب إلى إنديانابوليس وتعريف الهوية العربية

By: Edward E. Curtis IV
Executive producer, *Arab Indianapolis: A Hidden History*
William M. and Gail M. Plater Chair of the Liberal Arts at IUPUI

Arabic-speaking people began settling in Indianapolis in the late 1800s. Coming mainly from what are today the countries of Syria and Lebanon, these immigrants were people of modest means who arrived in the United States in search of economic opportunity. Life in the eastern Mediterranean, as in most of the world, was changing. Even as the global economy expanded, many people were actually worse off as their traditional ways of making a living disappeared. During the same period, America was in need of inexpensive labor, and it encouraged mass immigration. As a result, more than a million immigrants from Eastern and

Southern Europe and the Ottoman Empire came to the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Tens of thousands of them were Arabic speakers. By 1910, there were about one thousand people of Arab descent in Indianapolis. Some worked in area factories, while others—especially those who lived in the Syrian quarter on Willard Street—made their living as peddlers. By World War I, the Syrians of Indianapolis also established successful businesses, including grocery stores and retail shops. Their male and female children—sometimes born in Ottoman Syria, sometimes born in America—attended public schools and sometimes college or university. Some followed in their parents' footsteps as entrepreneurs; others became professionals and nonprofit leaders in Indianapolis. Many served in World War I.

Despite their decades-long presence in America, there was strong anti-immigrant feeling in the country, and the 1924 National Origins Act virtually banned immigration from Syria and other parts of Asia. It would not be until after World War II that significant numbers of Arab people would once again come to the United States. In the 1950s, students from North Africa and the Middle East began to study in Indiana's colleges and universities. After 1965, when the United States reformed its racist immigration system, more and more Arabs, especially health care professionals, scientists, and engineers, settled in the area. These Arabs, both Christians and Muslims, immigrated for what they saw as the unprecedented economic opportunity as well as the freedom to practice their religion without government interference.

Some Arab immigrants, especially political exiles and refugees, also came to the United States in order to escape repression or violence in their homelands. Events such as the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, the 1975 Lebanese civil war, the 1991 Somali civil war, the 1992 military coup in Algeria, the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, and the 2011 Syrian civil war resulted in an increase in the Arabic-speaking population of Indianapolis.

In 2017, the US Census Bureau estimated that there were 28,314 Hoosiers of Arab descent. Marion County was home to 5,688 Arab Americans, while 3,197 lived in Hamilton County. These two central Indiana counties accounted for almost a third of all Arab Hoosiers. People who traced their ancestry to Lebanon remained the largest single group of Arab Americans in the state. But between 2009 and 2016, there were significant increases in the number of immigrants from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, and Yemen. According to the Arab American Institute, these numbers from the US Census Bureau likely underestimate the

number of Arab-descended people in Arab Indianapolis.

Whatever the precise number of Arab Americans living in Greater Indianapolis, they have made a remarkable impact. From establishing businesses to working in the fields of health care and education, they have contributed to the cultural vitality, economic growth, and social fabric of central Indiana.

Who is Arab?

Today, the people who refer to themselves as Arabs live mainly in North Africa and West Asia (also called the Middle East). The Arab world includes the countries or territories of Mauritania, Western Sahara, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Djibouti, Somalia, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, and Iraq.

As of 2019, the World Bank estimated that the total population of Arabs was 428 million. Arabs also live in other parts of the world, including the United States, where 2 to 3.7 million people claim Arab ancestry.

But what else makes an Arab person "Arab"?

It's not race. Arabs can be white, brown, or Black.

It's also not religion. The majority of Arabs are Muslim, but there are also Arbic-speaking Christians and Jews, as well as other religious minorities and people without any religious affiliation in the Arab world. In the United States, Arab American Christians may be more numerous than Arab American Muslims.

Today, the term "Arab" is much more akin to the label of "Latinx" or "Hispanic." It is often used by Arab people to say that they share a common heritage that is tied, one way or another, to the Arabic language.

People called Arabs lived in ancient Syria and Arabia hundreds of years before the Common Era. An early myth of their origins is that they were the children of Ishmael. Their language was spoken by a relatively small number of people until Muslim political authority extended beyond the Arabian Peninsula. During the Middle Ages, Arabic became the predominant language of traders, scientists, philosophers, lawyers, scholars, poets, religious teachers, and mystics across North Africa, the Middle East, and parts of Europe, including Spain and Sicily.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the term "Arab" took on a different meaning as it became associated with the political movement to establish independent nation-states in

North Africa and the Middle East. The idea that people shared a common heritage was a powerful way to bridge or even repress various differences under a common national banner. It also became a social and cultural label used by people who, just a century prior, would have identified more with their city or their village than with any one nation-state or empire.

In the United States, the term “Arab American” has a history tied for many to political empowerment and cultural pride. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the term “Arab American” became increasingly popular as an ethnic label and people like me were raised to identify with it. My Arab grandmother, for example, told me that I was Syrian, Lebanese, and Arab, and she believed that these were complementary rather than conflicting identities.

Where are you from?

من أين أنت ؟

by: Hiba Alalami
Inaugural Executive Director, Indiana Muslim Advocacy Network

A question that looms over most immigrants. In my case, it is paired with a confused look since my fair complexion and blue eyes little prepare anyone for my accent. As a white-passing, immigrant woman, I am often received with a smile, welcoming words, or indifference. This white privilege has most likely shielded me from numerous unpleasant experiences in the last twenty years. Other times, however, I face bigotry and discrimination, especially when I reveal that I am from Jordan or the Middle East. Many Americans assume that, though I don't wear a hijab, or headscarf, chances are I'm Muslim. And being Muslim in the United States is sometimes hard, even terrifying when one of us is attacked.

Born to a Palestinian, middle-class family, I grew up in Amman, the capital of Jordan, and attended a private Christian school. Jordan has a small, but vibrant Christian minority. I remember learning about being a religious minority from my Christian friends, only to experience that later in life. At age 23, I got married to the love of my life. I met Mohammad while he was a medical student at the University of Jordan and once he secured a spot at Cleveland Clinic to continue his postgraduate medical training, we moved together to the United States.

It was not easy to start a new life and learn the ropes of a new system. Fortunately, I didn't face a language barrier since I started learning English early on at school and my undergraduate degree was in English language and literature. I also had some understanding of American culture, thanks to my graduate degree in American studies from University of Jordan. Nonetheless, just like any other immigrant, I had to adjust to a new norm. I experienced many joys and sorrows.

Democracy, with all its fundamental freedoms and rights, serves as a beacon of hope to those coming from autocratic governments. A moment I still cherish to this day is when I cast my first vote as a U.S. citizen. I felt empowered to make choices, valued as an individual, and respected as a human being. Yet, to my dismay, it is the same system that allows gun violence to go rampant across our nation. Praying for the safety of their children every morning before sending them to school is a foreign concept to many Americans, let alone an immigrant. I find it extremely concerning that America normalizes school shootings, while it is unheard of in other nations.

Another paradox of fundamental freedoms that baffles me is religious freedom. Although I celebrate religious freedom every day when I pray five times, I still feel that this enshrined right falls short when new mosques face growing opposition nationwide. Remonstrators usually cite random reasons, like traffic jams and safety, but in most cases, their sentiments are fueled by religious bigotry. Our Forefathers envisioned an America free of religious persecution, but I feel we are still grappling with that concept, especially when a religious majority attempts to control public opinion and policy.

My desire to enter the U.S. labor market stemmed from a flawed understanding that my two college degrees would open doors for me. My hopes were shattered when I attempted to join the Indiana workforce in 2008. I learned then about the career trajectory of immigrants and the glass ceiling for immigrant women. With the full support of my husband, I decided to go back to school. In 2012, I earned a graduate degree in nonprofit management from IUPUI O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. I started my career in the nonprofit sector as a development coordinator at the Islamic Society of North America. Serving the Muslim community on the national level was rewarding, but I found even more fulfillment making connections with the local community when I led the Indiana Muslim Advocacy Network in 2017 as its inaugural executive director. Representing the Indiana Muslim community for the last ten years solidified my identity and kept me grounded. It also helped me connect with and serve the Central Indiana community in different capacities. I currently serve as a co-chair of the Greater Indianapolis Multifaith Alliance, treasurer at the Arab Indianapolis Foundation, and board member at the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana. I'm a founding member of the Muslim Women Giving 100, the first and only giving circle for Muslim women in Central Indiana to support non-Muslim causes. I hope this community service will flourish in the next four years as I undertake a Ph.D. degree in American studies at the IUPUI School

of Liberal Arts.

Upward mobility can sometimes be achieved when aspiration and hard work meet. This is why immigrants have always believed in the American Dream, and it proved right in my husband's case. After decades of diligence, commitment, and hard work, Mohammad is now a professor of medicine and the interim chief director of the IU School of Medicine Gastroenterology Division, one of the largest and most successful units in the country. With this success came financial mobility that allowed us to reside in the suburbs and send our three children to a strong public school system. Ali, who is starting second year of Honors Engineering at Purdue University, is a kind and goal-driven young man. His kindness inspires him to give back to the community whenever the opportunity presents itself. Sarah, our middle child and only daughter, is a senior in Carmel High School. A compassionate and smart young lady, she has big dreams to conquer the corporate world with a business degree from Indiana University. Adam just started middle school at Creekside Middle School, and so far he is enjoying playing the violin and the cross country team. I have no doubt he will grow into a caring and aspiring young man, unapologetic about his cultural and religious identity.

While my immigrant story is similar to others, it is also the story of just one Arab American Muslim woman. One thing I know for sure is that immigrants will continue to enrich the American social fabric for many decades to come.