

# Cultural diversity muslims and arabs



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Cultural Diversity Muslims and Arabs Arab Americans and Muslim Americans are often confused as the same subordinate group but are in fact quite different. Many people do not realize that Muslims are considered a religious group and Arabs are an ethnic group. Muslim American and Arab American communities are among the most rapidly growing subordinate groups in the United States (Schaefer, 2006). Muslims and Arabs practice their own traditions and have their own beliefs. More than half of Arab Americans have been living in the United States for generations and the rest have emigrated from other foreign countries.

Arabs emigrate from mostly the Middle East, which includes the countries of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Yemen, and Qatar. After entering the United States many settle and have remained in New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington D. C. , and the largest population can be found in Dearborn, Michigan. Because Muslim is considered a religion it is hard to estimate how many are residing in the United States because there are no census data from which to work (Schaefer, 2006). Muslims populate most of the Middle East, Africa, and Europe.

Islam, with approximately 1.3 billion followers worldwide, is second to Christianity among the world's religion (Schaefer, 2006). Muslims take their religion serious praying up to five times a day and the government also reinforces Islamic practices through their laws. Not all Muslims are Arab American; they are of all ethnic groups because of convergence. Arabs practice different religions not just Islamic, such as Catholic, Christianity, and even Buddhism. Depending on the Arabic individual they do not take religion serious.

African Americans are one of the largest ethnic groups to converge to Muslim. African Americans are estimated to account for 90 % of all converts to Islam in the United States (Schaefer, 2006). Many African Americans convert to Islam while incarcerated in prison. The Muslim prayer, a different diet, and commitment to a highly moral lifestyle help the inmates create an alternative social space within the prison (Dannin, 2002). Islam has been part of African Americans since slavery, though many of them were forced into Christianity, they held on to their beliefs.

The beliefs vary between Muslims and Arabs but family plays a central role in both groups. Islamic men are allowed to have more than one wife as long as they are able to support and provide for them. Women and men within the Muslim community have dress codes that they must follow. Women and men are not allowed to wear revealing or form fitting clothing. Women are to wear head coverings they are allowed to only expose their hands, feet, and face. When it is time to pray women are to pray in separate rooms from the men. The role of the Muslim man is to work at making this world safe for children.

Muslim men have to support always their wives making sure they have food, clothes, and a home. They must always be respectful and obey their mother. Muslims have a diet that must be followed, and they are not allowed to eat meat. Arabs have different beliefs and guidelines that they follow depending on where they live. Most married Arab women are not allowed to greet another man unless they know them or their husband is present. When they are at a gathering the women sit across the room if not in another room away from the men.

Arabs residing in the United States have more American ways and some even forget how to speak their language. Many Arabs leave their customs behind, especially when they marry out of their ethnic group. When they choose to have a family they debate on which way of belief they will raise the children. Not all Arab Americans are Muslims as not all Muslims are Arab Americans (Schaefer, 2006). Each group has their own way of thinking, rules, guidelines, and beliefs that they practice. The traditions and rules vary within each group depending where they live.

It is said that Arabs and Muslims that reside in the Middle East have stricter guidelines than those in the United States. Muslim Americans and Arab Americans living in the United States are more liberal but must return to their homeland at least once throughout their lives. Even though they may look the same and come from the same country they have completely different style of living, and many feel offended and disturbed when they are confused with one another. References: Schaefer, R. T. (2006). Racial and Ethnic Groups (10th ed. )