

Oral History Project Interview

Arab and Muslim Women's Research and Resource Institute (AMWRI)

Number of Interview: RJ 1.00

Date: July 28, 2015

Name: Anonymous

Gender: Male

Country of Origin: Palestine

Date of Birth: 08/22/1969

Year of Immigration: Born in U.S.

Abstract: The interviewee identifies himself first and foremost as an American-Muslim. Ahmad (name changed for confidentiality reasons) was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois and later moved to Palestine during his late childhood years and returned to the U.S. during his early adulthood years. Ahmad is an entrepreneur and was not able to complete college due to financial hardship. Religion is the most important factor to Ahmad and he believes it is an essential component throughout his daily life. Life has posed many challenges after 9/11 for him as an American-Muslim. He has strongly felt the pressure to educate his fellow peers and believes that education is a strong asset in portraying the real image of Islam. In addition to religion, Ahmad emphasized the importance of family and visiting his homeland Palestine to visit his parents and relatives. Ahmad resides in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and is married to a Palestinian Muslim and has four children.

Key Terms: Religion, American-Muslim, Family

Note: In the transcript, I refers to Interviewer, and R refers to Respondent/Interviewee.

Part One of Sound Recording

I: This interview is taking place July 25th, 2015. I'd like to start the interview by asking some general questions about your background. What is your name, age, and your level of education?

R: My name is (name omitted for interviewee confidentiality) and uh my age is 46 years old and my level of education is um high school diploma.

I: When and where was it completed?

R: It was completed ah in Jerusalem in Deir Debwan High School.

I: When you were growing up, where did you go to school: public schools, community schools, such as Salam School, or private/religious schools?

R: Uhhh I started at my elementary school in uhh city in Palestine uhh in Ramallah. It was called the Friends Boys School um my middle school and high school was completed in Deir Debwan High.

I: Tell me about places and buildings you spent a lot of time during your childhood?

R: Uhh places and buildings? Umm mostly we spent our time uhh in school – in the morning time. The afternoon we spent our time in the streets playing uh soccer, playing basketball, umm and at night time we uh made it back home.

I: Tell me more about your home, school or some such building that you remember fondly. Describe the various rooms: who lived there; who shared these spaces, what activities happened here?

R: That's like back in uh as family buildings.

I: Yes, back as long as you can remember.

R: I mean like what buildings – can you be more specific?

I: Like, where you lived?

R: Ohh, where I lived? Ummm due to my father was uhh working in the United States, so when he made it back uh to Jerusalem he umm decided to build a two story building um from... it includes three bedrooms, two bath, and a living room and uhhm a very big kitchen. And one of the things that really stands out from other houses is houses back then had um so many verandas. So we had uhh close to three verandas – yup.

I: Tell me how you felt about being Muslim in these different spaces. Did you feel like you expressed your Muslim identity differently in these different spaces - places?

R: Uh back then the uh faith was not so strong as nowadays, uh due to many factors. I believe social media uh the way how advanced we are that helps the – as they say now, “the whole globe is a small village,” so um these things – these factors do help um on bringing the faith stronger nowadays and bringing in its right picture where back then – um it was sources was very limited.

I: Did you serve in the U.S. military and, if so, when?

R: I did not, but I was registered into the select army.

I: Are you currently employed, which includes working outside the home? If so, what's your job?

R: Umm I am uhh employed – I am an entrepreneur I do – I'm a self-employed, I do have my own business.

I: Are you married?

R: Yes I am.

I: Was your marriage arranged?

R: Uhh well we cannot say the word arranged – um I did have the choice and and my uhh wife did have the choice to do the selections, so I mean the final answer was in our hands.

I: Did you know your spouse before getting married?

R: No I did not, but I knew her parents and I knew her uh brothers and sisters.

I: Do you have any children? If so, what are their names and ages?

R: Yes I do have children I have three – uh four beautiful children, three boys and a girl. And I love them dearly.

I: What are their names and ages?

R: Uhh my oldest daughter is Rehana and uh she's 19 years old. And then my uh second is Abdul and he's 18 years old, uh then I have Mohammed and he is 14 and then last the youngest Sharef-Eddin and he is 11 years old.

I: Where do they live?

R: Uh they do live with us here in the United States in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

I: What are their education levels?

R: Uh I have my oldest daughter she is a – she is going to be a sophomore for this year in college and I have my son will be a sophomore too as college in UWM and my daughter is in Marquette. Umm and then I have my uhh my third son which is Mohammed he is a freshman in high school and then I do have uh Sharef, which he is going to be uhh umm entering middle school sixth grade middle school.

I: Do they have any children and if so, how many?

R: No they do not.

I: The next questions are about your culture and how you define yourself. How do you define or identify yourself?

R: I do identify myself as an American-Muslim and uhh I practice my faith religiously and I do love my country uhh which is the United States and also I do have a very strong love to uh my uh ancestors homeland, which is Palestine.

I: Can you list some places where you feel you best and most successfully express your identity?

R: There is no better to express my identity through my religion, uh as me being a Muslim in the West, I do believe that that will be umm the best and the strongest way to identify myself uh through my identity.

I: Are there any traditions of your religion or culture that you practice?

R: Ummm traditions – as far as religion it's the prayers umm the five daily prayers, the uhh zakat, the umm fasting, and as far as tradition umm yes we do practice tradition in home and outside the home umm I mean as far as tradition wise like weddings – we still hold on tight to what our fathers and grandparents and great grandparents use to do as far as weddings. Nowadays, we're following the same footsteps of our grandparents and fathers.

I: Do you use food recipes' that you learned from your parent/grandparents?

R: Ummm to tell you the truth, as far as food recipes me personally umm my mother never let me cook and so after I got married my wife did not even allow me to even get in the kitchen period, so we didn't get to that point of learning new recipes unfortunately [laughing].

I: Do you follow any food restrictions (e.g. halal meat)?

R: Umm it's very important for us as far as religious from a religious perspective to umm be very cautious umm as far as ummm pork-free products uhh alcohol and wine-free products as well umm but also we are allowed to – it's permissible for us to eat uhh from religions of the book such as the Judaism and in Christianity too as well.

I: What is your favorite food?

R: Uhh if we come to the Middle-Eastern parts uhh I do have – I do love uhh the umm what's so called uhh Maklooba, which is uhh contained from rice, cauliflower, uhh sometimes it's done with chicken, sometimes it is done with uhh lamb uhh and along with that sometimes eggplant is added to it and carrots and then it's all mixed up into one big pot and when it's done it's flipped on a big tray and that flip in Arabic is called uh Maklooba. So flipping in English and or upside down and then in Arabic it means Maklooba, that means you flipped it. And that is where the name comes from. Now as far as uh American food uh I like – uh you can't go wrong with a double cheeseburger [laughs] and a supersize French fries [laughs].

I: [laughs] What kind of food do you or your spouse cook at home?

R: Ohhhh man, that's uh I mean I can tell you I can spend the whole night long saying uh what she cooks mashallah, alhamdillah my wife she is one of the uh – Allah blessed me with a wife that she's very umm you know, she loves cooking you know religiously so and she cooks with passion and mashallah whatever she does, even the food that I never ate before uh in other houses, due to maybe don't like that specific food - if she makes it I eat it subhanallah. It's uhh – she's good. She's good at it.

I: What's it like finding the necessary ingredients?

R: What is what – I'm sorry.

I: What's it like finding the necessary ingredients?

R: In food?

I: Take Middle-Eastern...?

R: What are the ingredients? What are the necessary ingredients?

I: What's it like finding them? Like here?

R: Finding them? Ohh – nowadays its its available, it's all like – we do have Middle-Eastern uh places here in Milwaukee uh and we do have quite few uh in Chicago, but there's few couple of items that's not available here, it has to be from overseas eh one of them is the yogurt, which is they call kishik in Arabic and the other one is uhmm umm molokhia and that is something it's found over here, but the real good delicious tasty one that comes from overseas.

I: Where do you shop for groceries for this food?

R: Uhh we do shop here in Milwaukee uh we got quite few stores – umm me pacifically I don't have a pacific place I go to, but you know it depend on where I'm at that day ummm, but one of the most popular ones is the Holy Land Grocery Stores on Rawson Avenue.

I: Do you expect your children to learn these recipes?

R: Uhmmm, well I hope so! I hope so, uhh you know their mother mashallah she's a very good at it and she's always uh a person who likes to train and teach and she she well coaches people – thank you.

I: In what ways, if any, do you participate in cultural or religious community activities?

R: Can you repeat the question again please?

I: In what ways, if any, do you participate in cultural or religious community activities?

R: Uhmm I do consider myself umm active in the community when it comes to umm religious events uhh something that I would like to do it for blessings and rewards and also as a learning experience for me and also a learning experience uhh to my children – to instill that in my children. Now, as far as uh... what's the other part?

I: Culture?

R: Oh culture. That umm...I'm not very highly um involved, but whenever it comes I do overhear.

I: How would you describe your religious life?

R: I do consider it umm – it's part of my daily life, its part of my life. I mean it does take a big chunk of my life – I mean every second, anything I do I just always measure it umm in my religious scale. Umm I consider myself and I hope that umm will remain and come closer to the Lord, cause this is where I find my uh find my enjoyment, is being close to the Lord.

I: Do you attend the Mosque or church on regular basis?

R: To say on regular basis quite frankly umm when we do have the the Friday prayers.. umm I do attend. I do attend when it's ah the two Eids that we have, the annual ones I do attend that as well. I do attend at least I try my best to attend at least one or two of our five daily prayers at the mosque, the others it would be quite challenging for me because it falls on a time where I'm working, but when its outside of the working uh time, I try to be... I try to make it at the mosque.

I: Where do you pray?

R: I do pray at two places, Friday prayers I do pray at the Da'wa Center and that's on Teutonia and Villard Da'wa Center and umm my other two daily prayers I do perform at the ISM on 13th and Layton.

I: Who mostly does the cooking in your household?

R: Mostly is my uhhh lovely dear wife and umm my lovely dear daughter uh at some occasions, she assists her mother.

I: What languages or... what language/languages do you speak?

R: Umm I do speak uh speak three languages – actually four um I do speak the English, I do speak the Arabic, I do speak Spanish, and a little bit Italiano.

I: [laughs] What are your connections with your parents' or grandparents' homeland?

R: My connection is religiously – it's very close. Umm I am always in uhh communication with them through phone and through social media.

I: Have you visited your parents' or grandparents' homeland and if so, when was this?

R: Umm yes I do I do try my best to stay in touch with my parents umm my grandparents may God have mercy upon their souls, they've passed away umm a long time ago. Umm my parents I do umm hold a very strong relation with them it's a religious from a religious point of view it's a it's mandatory upon our shoulders is to have a very strong relation with them and that's what's

called ber ber alwalidein and also I try uh to instill this values into my children and as far as us seeing them, we try every other year uh to visit and stay in touch with them.

I: Do you have relatives there that you are in contact with?

R: Umm yes I do.

I: Have you encouraged anyone there to visit or come live here?

R: Uhh no I do not.

I: Do you read the daily newspaper?

R: Uhh no I do not.

I: How do you get your news?

R: Umm I do get my news through social media, umm off uhh off the smartphone and also I do hear to news umm on the radio on my way to work.

I: In what ways, if any, have political events in your parents' or grandparents' homeland affected you?

R: Uh again can you repeat the question please?

I: In what ways, if any, have political events in your parents' or grandparents' homeland affected you?

R: Umm... unfortunately um as um being American Muslims/Palestinians, umm we are you know our homeland as you as you know it's been occupied for the last seventy years umm by the Zionists and unfortunately it's – we are umm day in and day out being affected umm by the occupation.

I: (Pause) Have you ever taken action on any of these situations?

R: Ehmm - unfortunately, me being uhh in the United States it's quite challenging to do so umm... but we always have uhh.. uh have them in our prayers, when we do our supplication to the Lord, we do ask for the Lord to bring uh peace and protect uh our families and friends and children back in Palestine.

I: Where do you get your information about the homeland?

R: Umm... we do get it umm through our umm – again by via social media – uhh that's one of the maybe one of the biggest uh one, also we do get it from through the umm TV news.

I: How would you describe your political participation in the U.S.?

R: Umm... actually umm I grew up in a family that know nothing about politics, and so it actually trickled down to me, so I'm not very – you know too familiar with that venue.

I: Do you regularly vote?

R: Yes I do.

I: Uh, what elections?

R: I do do the uhh presidential, I do the uhh mayoral, the aldermanic, uhh umm... basically... um any elections that I'm aware of that takes place in uhh – as far as on the city level, state level, or nation level... umm I do participate in it.

I: When it comes to candidates who are from your own culture or religion, does that affect your voting behavior?

R: Ehh... to say it does affect umm in my voting and it's something that might, but really I look as far as the competent and umm qualification for the job more than umm you know more than culture background.

I: Were you in the Uni – were you in the United States during the Gulf War?

R: Yes I was.

I: In what ways, if any, did your life or interactions with others change?

R: Uhhh... it did because unfortunately umm the media did – does deceive – does deceive – does deceive the uhh... the uhhh... the American public and that uh which makes it really frustration on my part and it gives me more – it does put more responsibility and more challenging upon my shoulders for me to go out and umm uhhh... For them to hear the truth about these uhhh dishonest information that's brought by uh the media outlets.

I: How were your interactions with non-Arab/Muslim friends, neighbors, teachers, coworkers?

R: Umm... to – quite honestly my action with uh non-muslims and muslims – I do consider it's all the uh the same.

I: How did you feel at this time?

R: In regards...?

I: In regards to the Gulf War.

R: The Gulf War? Ummm... I mean I'm happy that it's over – umm unfortunately, but still uhhh there's a lot of a lot of umm scars and heals that need to be umm dealt with, unfortunately because of the consequences and the results of the umm of any war that takes place.

I: From where did you get your support?

R: In regards? Of the Gulf War?

I: (Nods)

R: Always my support – I do seek support and I do seek umm uh knowledge and power and strength anytime it's needed it's from the Lord.

I: Were you in the United States on September 11, 2001?

R: Yes I was.

I: How did your experiences after 9/11 compare to your experiences after the Gulf War?

R: Uhhh... this one – the experience with September 11 was more – it was more umm.... Brutal, to me because here in the September 11 we got hit twice – I got hit because terror hit my country and second my religion was hijacked, so it was devastating to to to me...

I: How did you feel at the time of 9/11 and the days or months that followed?

R: Unfortunately we felt very devastated – again as I said, uh uh we got hit twice on that day – we got hit on my county on my fellow citizens and we lost a lot of lives andddd also um my religion has been hijacked by unfortunately what-is-so-called extremists and umm people have nothing to do umm with religion and faith.

I: Since 9/11, in what ways, if any, has your life or interactions with others changed?

R: Umm as I said it's it changed in a way that it did put umm more pressure upon my shoulders – is to go out and speak the truth of Islam, unfortunately Islam was the umm where the media outlets went out and umm held the faith – not unfortunately the individuals who committed, but the faith that was the umm guilt of these of these attacks and now which put pressure and umm a burden upon my shoulders is to go out and speak the truth about Islam and and speak what is Islam and what Islam is about peace and about uh umm you know about helping the others has nothing to do with harming anybody period – not even the tree – not even an animal, so yeah it just put more pressure upon my shoulders for me to go out and and uhh umm inform and empower people around me about Islam.

I: Thank you for sharing your experiences. I'd like to switch topics to marriage.

Part Two of Sound Recording

I: What are some common cultural understandings of Muslim women/men?

R: (laughs) you want to repeat the question again please?

I: What are some common cultural understandings of Muslim women/men?

R: I'll pass.

I: How does religion affect your identity?

R: Uhh how does – well religion is a very umm important thing in my daily life, so the affection is throughout the day on on each matter every small thing and big thing – its all measured with the scale of religion – so...

I: How does culture affect your identity?

R: My culture...? It affects my identity – its its built in.. in.. in me – umm these are values and cultures that's been instilled in me umm at a very young age back in Jerusalem and it still lives with me, in a very positive way.

I: Culture and religion are intertwined. What are some ways in which you balance faith and the American identity?

R: Hmm, I'll pass.

I: How did your religious or ethnic upbringing contribute to who you are today?

R: How did what... I'm sorry.

I: How did your religious or ethnic upbringing contribute to who you are today?

R: I'll pass.

I: What does marriage mean to you?

R: It means a lot. It means bringing up family, bringing up a whole uhh a new generation.

I: What factors play a role in marriage?

R: Uhh there is many factors that plays a role – it's a matter of selecting the right spouse on both sides, for men and males and females. Ummm... the most factor one is the religion – you know being a religious person is very important.

I: What are the first characteristics you look for in a spouse?

R: Like I said, the very first thing it's uh being a religious... that's the main – the very first factor...

I: Would education income social class contribute to your decision or your parents' decision?

R: It does, but it won't be like the primary factors.

I: Would you move because of marriage or relocating because of marriage?

R: Umm... I won't have that as an a matter... uhh to me for me to move. I doubt it, no.

I: Hmm okay. Tell me about your wedding and the ceremonies you went through. How many days did you celebrate?

R: Actually we do celebrate – back when I was married... three... three events umm total... three days.

I: Would these be the same ceremonies your siblings would go through?

R: Umm... most likely yes, but maybe in a - on a – some would be on a less scale maybe compared to mine, some would be on a bigger scale.

I: What marriage ceremonies and rituals are most important to you?

R: Out of the wedding itself?

I: What marriage ceremonies and rituals are most important to you?

R: The very – the most important is is uh umm to be married Islamically according to uh Islamic Sharia Law. That's – that's the very uh that's like the top priority for any umm person to be married and Muslim – to be married.

I: Is there anything you would have changed?

R: No changing the Islamic Sharia.

I: (Both laugh) Ok.

R: These are set! (Both laugh)

I: Do you have any pictures that you think will help you remember?

R: (Laughs) my wife will be – my spouse will be the best thing for me to remember... (both laugh)

I: Would you share some of these with us so we can use for educational purposes?

R: I'm sorry I cannot, these are like personal uhh and they are very near and dear to my heart. (laughs) I won't be able to share – I have to have them with me always... (both laugh)

I: How open are your parents – How open are your parents when it comes to marriage outside their religious or national group?

R: Umm I believe they won't be very comfortable – it's uhh umm according to my parents or grandparents uhh they would like to keep it in a very close circle... umm within the family if possible.

I: Would it be a problem if someone from outside your ethnic or religious group, someone with less education or a lower social status, asked for your daughter or son?

R: Umm it's not the social status, it's not the um level of education again it's uh it's the factor of being comfortable in making the decision umm and I do strongly believe its its uh... to stay within the same circle, family, umm country – you know that may be something that will play a big factor in making the decision.

I: Who among your parents would have a hard time when it comes to marriage outside national/ethnic or religious community?

R: Um I do strongly believe it will be my father and mother.

I: Who influenced your decision to get engaged or married to this specific person?

R: Actually nobody... I – it was me who made the decision.

I: Uh, what is your major?

R: Uh I'm an entrepreneur.

I: Uh, why did you choose it?

R: Umm... it's the the – there's so many factors that I chose and one of them it's the financially umm did not umm I was not able to continue my umm my umm higher education due to uh financial issues.

I: Would you consider marrying a person older than you?

R: Would I consider what...?

I: Marrying a person older than you...

R: You know we umm we in any um decision we make again we can always use the the religion side and you know and we could uh follow the footsteps and learn from our Prophet Muhammad

(Alayhe salat wa salam), when uh he married the sitna Khadija and she was um about twenty years older than him and I mean this is a lesson for us to learn that age does not matter.

I: When it comes to marriage – who would have – who would have played the major role in the decision making?

R: It's the uh person who – who's getting married himself.

I: Do you think the Internet and Facebook or social media have made it easier for Arab and Muslim Americans to meet their future spouses?

R: Maybe to meet, but um that won't be as a primary factor for making the decision – I do strongly believe is umm having the time and meeting that person in in person and will be uh a factor that should decide umm should decide umm and be a factor in making the decision.

I: Do you think communication types such as cell phones/texting and Skype made it easier – easy for males and females to get to know each other before making the decision to marry?

R: No I do not.

I: Do you think community events/centers/weddings are places where people tend to see future mates and proceed from there?

R: It could be a uhh a good place to start – yes. As a starting point, sure.

I: What things made marriage in American different than your parent's way of marriage?

R: (Pause) I won't see no difference at all – it's it's basically the same for us.

I: Would you think in a family of more than one daughter, marriage restrictions and process would differ from the oldest daughter to the youngest daughter?

R: Mmm... Can you repeat the question again please?

I: Would you think in a family of more than one daughter, marriage restrictions and processes would differ from the oldest daughter to the youngest daughter?

R: I believe all should be the same

I: Ok. Now let's discuss parenting. In what ways, if any, do you think boys should be raised differently from girls?

R: I believe both should be raised the same.

I: What are the major issues uh – that concern you when raising your children?

R: Uhhh... the very first one would be the religion should be the most concerned umm... the rest should follow.

I: Are these the same issues that mainly concern your spouse as well?

R: Yes.

I: Did you have any particular concerns with your daughter or daughters that you didn't have with your son or sons?

R: Uhh I did not alhamdulillah rab el alameen.

I: Did you raise your boys uh differently than your girl or girls?

R: No, I always look at both as the same and they both should be raised the same way.

I: What were some of the major conflicts you had with your children?

R: Did not.

I: When your children were deciding on their careers or major in college, what role did you play in leading them to choose their career?

R: Ummm... just guiding them and advise them – you know things that I know that could make or help them in making the decisions, but the final decisions was left to them.

I: What kind of husband or wife would you like for your children?

R: Again, I repeat it over and over it's umm the religious factor should be the priority – the top priority factor in making my decision and umm then the rest will follow, as far as financial and social status and all the others.

I: How important is it to you that they marry someone from the same culture as yours?

R: It would be really nice, it's – this is what were umm how I was brought up and everyone was brought up around me and try to keep it in the same circle, well it is not from the point of discrimination but it is from – the amount of the comfortability.

I: The next questions are about your life growing up. What aspects of your parents' homeland culture did they keep as you were growing up?

R: Uh can you repeat the question please?

I: What aspects of your parents' homeland culture did they keep as you were growing up?

R: (Pause) Uhh... I'll pass.

I: What languages did they speak?

R: My parents?

I: Or do they speak....

R: My parents? They speak two languages Arabic and English.

I: What languages were spoken at home?

R: Uhh... Arabic.

I: Did your parents encourage you to work (in their stores, or elsewhere) or did they discourage you from working?

R: Actually umm they instilled the working factor in me at a very young age.

I: Did you ever work for or with your parents?

R: Yes I did.

I: When did you first start to drive?

R: Uhh,, (laughs) that's a good one, (both laugh) – when I was fifteen. (laughs)

I: How would you describe your parent's involvement in your education?

R: Uhh they were very umm helpful and they were always uh advising and uh guiding me to what's right.

I: Ok, the next questions are about your parents. Who are your parents?

R: My parents are both uh American Palestinians.

I: What's their current status – still working, retired, etc.?

R: Umm my father is still working and my mother is umm a housewife.

I: From where did they immigrate and about when did they immigrate?

R: Uhh they immigrated from Palestine and that was back in the 1960s.

I: How did they make a living in the U.S.?

R: Ummm... my father was uh working at a in entrepreneurship... ummm... owned a groceries stores back then.

I: What is their level of education?

R: Uhh my father has a associate degree – a two year associate degree and my mother has a high school degree.

I: How do you think they defined themselves?

R: As far was what? Define themselves? They defined themselves as very hard working people and as far as raising umm strong families.

I: Did they used to mention their homeland?

R: Yes – uh homeland was a big part of their life umm it was always there, even living here in the United States, it was a very big item that's always there in our daily lives, yes.

I: Do you remember specific historic events (such as the Great Depression, major wars in the Middle East) and how your parents responded to them?

R: No I do not.

I: Did any of your grandparents immigrate to the U.S.?

R: My grandparents – yes!

I: Uh, what are the names of your grandparents who immigrated to the U.S.?

R: Uhh.. the name of one of my grandparents is Mohammed Jamaledin and he immigrated back in 1950.

I: From where did they immigrate and about when? So yeah...

R: Well yeah he immigrated from Palestine and that was back in 1952 to be specific.

I: What kind of jobs did your immigrating grandparents have before immigration?

R: Uhh they were farmers.

I: Do you know how they paid for their trip fare?

R: Yes umm my great grand – my grandfather actually is uh – had to pawn a piece of land to pay for his umm to pay for his ticket through with through a ship, he came through a cargo ship from Palestine.

I: What was the reason for their immigration?

R: It's economy.

I: Uh did they immigrate alone or with other members of the family?

R: They immigrated with other members of the village back then.

I: Were they married before the immigrated?

R: Yes they were.

I: Do you know if it was an arranged marriage?

R: That I don't know.

I: Uh where did they settle?

R: They settled back in Palestine.

I: I meant like in the U.S...

R: In the U.S., Chicago – Chicago, Illinois

I: What kind of jobs did they have after immigration?

R: Umm he was a seller on the streets – he use to sell umm blankets and radios back then and umm you soliciting from house to house.

I: Next, I'd like to switch topics and discuss cultural clothing. Do you have any traditional or cultural clothing?

R: Do I have personally? No I do not. (laughs) The only thing that I have is a hatta.

I: Is there anything else about your history that you would like to tell me?

R: No, (laughs)

I: (both laugh) Are there any particular services or resources that you think the Arab and Muslim Women's Resource and Research Institute should provide, to meet the needs of communities to which you belong?

R: No, (laughs)

I: Do you have any other family or friends you think we should interview?

R: (laughs) umm... I don't know I'm going to have to look (laughs) call around and see who would like to.

I: (laughs) Lastly, do you have any letters, old photographs, notes, or any kind of documents (awards, certificates, diplomas) that you think will help us understand your family history?

R: Unfortunately in the meantime I do not.

I: Ok, thank you!