

# Middle Eastern and North African Studies Colloquium Series

## Oil-Gotten Gains: Petrodollars, Abscam, and Arab American Activism, 1973–1981



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In the 1970s, soaring oil prices provided huge revenues to oil-producing Arab countries, which, together with private Arab companies and individuals, invested billions of dollars in the U.S. economy. Some feared that wealthy Arabs were “buying up America” and gaining control over the nation’s institutions. Others welcomed Arab investment as a boon to the U.S. economy and to global stability. Demeaning portrayals of oil-rich Arabs in media and government discourse—reaching a crescendo in the FBI’s “Abscam” sting operations of 1978–1980—goaded Arab Americans to adopt more organized methods of combating anti-Arab stereotypes. Salim Yaqub draws on his research to explore the complex legacy of Arab petrodollars in American life.

**Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 3pm**

**Zoom registration: [cmes.arizona.edu/colloquium](https://cmes.arizona.edu/colloquium)**

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