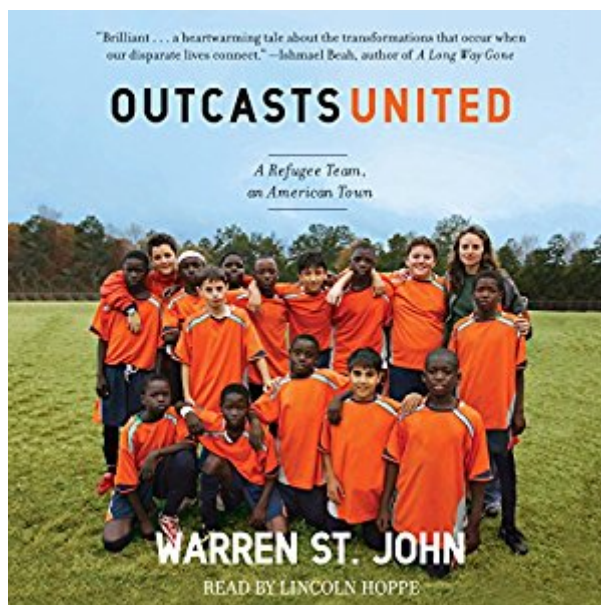


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# Outcasts United



## Synopsis

The extraordinary tale of a refugee youth soccer team and the transformation of a small American town Clarkston, Georgia, was a typical Southern town until it was designated a refugee settlement center in the 1990s, becoming the first American home for scores of families in flight from the world's war zones—from Liberia and Sudan to Iraq and Afghanistan. Suddenly Clarkston's streets were filled with women wearing the hijab, the smells of cumin and curry, and kids of all colors playing soccer in any open space they could find. The town also became home to Luma Mufleh, an American-educated Jordanian woman who founded a youth soccer team to unify Clarkston's refugee children and keep them off the streets. These kids named themselves the Fugees. Set against the backdrop of an American town that without its consent had become a vast social experiment, *Outcasts United* follows a pivotal season in the life of the Fugees and their charismatic coach. Warren St. John documents the lives of a diverse group of young people as they miraculously coalesce into a band of brothers, while also drawing a fascinating portrait of a fading American town struggling to accommodate its new arrivals. At the center of the story is fiery Coach Luma, who relentlessly drives her players to success on the soccer field while holding together their lives and the lives of their families in the face of a series of daunting challenges. This fast-paced chronicle of a single season is a complex and inspiring tale of a small town becoming a global community and an account of the ingenious and complicated ways we create a home in a changing world. From the Hardcover edition. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 6 hours and 33 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Abridged

Publisher: Random House Audio

Audible.com Release Date: April 21, 2009

Language: English

ASIN: B0027A3FYY

Best Sellers Rank: #79 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Miscellaneous > Sociology of Sports

#89 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Soccer #179 in Books > Sports & Outdoors >

Miscellaneous > History of Sports

## Customer Reviews

I chose this book from a course list for an undergrad liberal arts paper. I grew up playing soccer and thought, "I love soccer, and there is most likely something deeper to this story but it beats reading a biography or historical event novel." I very pleasantly surprised! This tugged on my heart strings, brought a smile to my face, a tear to my eye, and had me disgusted and appalled by various people/events throughout the book. I just finished the audio book while I was waiting for the paperback to arrive. Very well written. This story is honest, horrible and wonderful all at the same time. Many opportunities to step back and wonder: Do I think like that? How do I feel about this? What would I do if that happened?

Warren St. John relates the story of Luma Mufleh, a Jordanian responsible for serving the refugee community of Clarkston, Georgia. After graduating from Smith College, Ms. Mufleh decided to stay in the United States, as opportunities for women were few and far between in Jordan. As a result of this decision, her old-guard parents disowned her and she was left to fend for herself. A lifelong soccer enthusiast, she was surprised to see countless immigrant youths playing pickup games of soccer in empty lots in Clarkston. She organized a group into a team called The Fugees, pairing rigorous soccer practices with mandatory after-school classes. Managing 45 young men between the ages of 10 and 17 is no easy task, as St. John shows us thorough Mufleh's struggles to build solidarity and confidence amongst group of immigrants from all over the world. The author shows us, through first-person interviews with Mufleh, the players and their families, the tenacity and spirit of those who seek refuge from war-torn countries only to encounter difficulties in their new homes. Clarkston's mayor as well as a number of law enforcement officers and civil servants do all they can to prevent the Fugees from finding a home playing field, despite Mufleh's passionate advocacy of her charges. St. John points out how refugees' struggles in Clarkston are a microcosm of the immigrant experience as a whole. This deeply inspiring story is told artfully, in thoroughly readable prose.

Great book!

Good Read

School text

It is a wonderful story of a Jordanian woman's journey, who through forming a soccer team, pulls together refugee families. The author, a New York Times reporter, does a tremendous job of letting us meet a Southern town faced with accommodating refugees from many lands and the refugee families in adapting to a new culture.

This book is well-written a good way to get a high-level insight into the trouble immigrants and local natives in the United States face when placed in the same town in such a government enforced and large scale way. A great example of how one sport, one unrelenting woman, and the backlash of a scared town can do for a bunch of young kids that need nothing more than to have purpose.

The book has a good story and it is well written. The author wrote it in a way that is easy to understand, even with the larger words thrown in every now and then.

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