

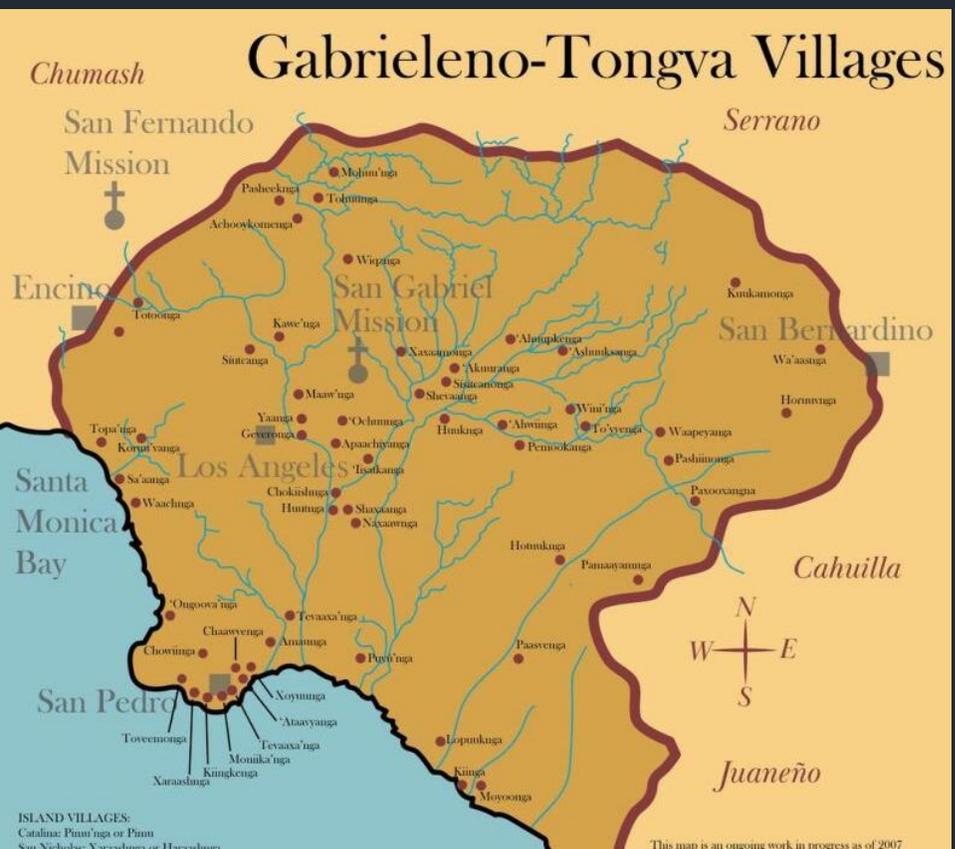
A group of people, likely of Arab descent, are shown from the chest up, playing large, round, decorated drums. The drums have intricate, colorful patterns on their heads. The people are wearing light-colored, possibly white or light blue, clothing. The background is slightly blurred, suggesting an outdoor or semi-outdoor setting. The overall mood is one of cultural celebration and community.

A Collective Praxis of *Sumoud*

Arab American Heritage Month
Los Angeles Civil + Human Rights and Equity Department

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Acknowledgements



We gather today on the unceded lands of the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples. I acknowledge these Native Nations as the rightful care-takers and stewards of this place. I understand that as a guest on indigenous lands I hold responsibility to the environment, ancestors, and kin of the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples and support the repatriation of stolen lands to them.

I recognize that the Civil and Human Rights and Equity Department for the City of Los Angeles was formed following the 1965 Los Angeles Rebellion which sought to overturn systematic anti-Black racist-state violence. I acknowledge, am indebted to, and pay homage to the enduring legacy of Black freedom struggle. I join the movement for Black lives in calling to defund the police and carceral structures as we collectively co-create an otherwise world that centers safety, protection, rights, freedom, care, dignity, joy, rest, and love for us all.

ISLAND VILLAGES:
Catalina: Pimí'nga or Pimí
San Nicholas: Yagud'ra or Hecolbu
San Pedro: ...

This map is an ongoing work in progress as of 2007

Overview

- **Cultural Grounding: *Sumoud***
- **Background: Who Are Arabs and Arab Americans?**
 - The Arab World
 - Arabs in the U.S.
 - Arab Immigration
 - Arab Americans and Race
- **Anti-Arab Oppression**
 - Ideological
 - Institutional
- **Living Legacies of Arab American Social Movements**
 - Cultural Movements
 - Labor Movements
 - Feminist Movements
 - Student and Youth Movements
- **Looking Back, Forging Forward: A Collective Praxis of *Sumoud***



Cultural Grounding: *Sumoud (Steadfastness)*

- Patience
- Perseverance
- Resilience
- Defiance
- Dignity
- Creativity
- Ingenuity
- Hope
- Respect for all life
- Reciprocity with land
- Love for each other
- Devotion to liberation

Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars. — Kahlil Gibran



Saber by Palestinian Artist Ahmed Yasin

Background
Who are Arabs and
Arab Americans?



22 Arab League Countries: Algeria, Bahrain, the Comoros Islands, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

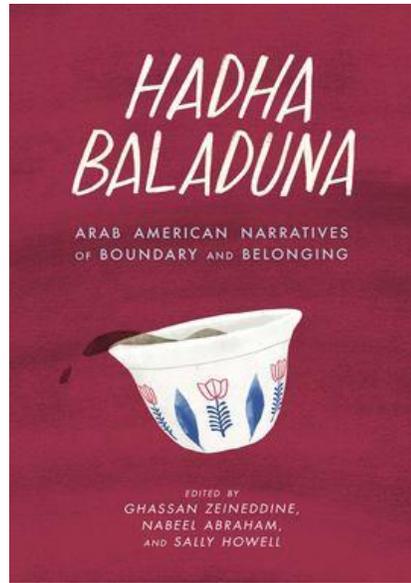
Note: Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan are **not** Arab Countries.

Background: The Arab World

- Arabs are an ethnic majority of peoples who derive from **North Africa and portions of Southwest Asia**.
- Arabs are bound by a **shared history, culture, and language**.
- **471,857,658 people** live in the Arab World.
- The Arab World includes **ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples who are not Arab** including but not limited to: Kurds, Azeris, Copts, Assyrians, Circassians, Nubians, Armenians, Druze, and Amazigh.
- **Islam** is the dominant religion in the Arab World and among its global diaspora followed by **Christianity** and **Judaism**.



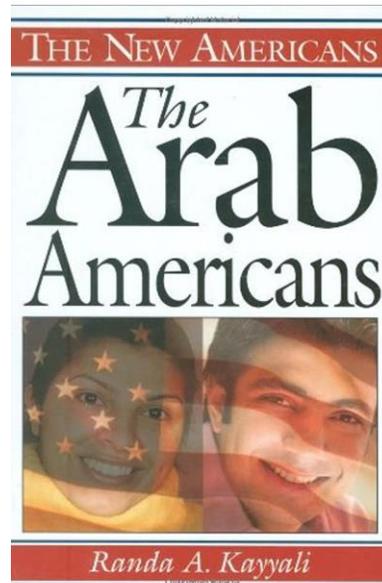
THE MAKING OF
ARAB AMERICANS
FROM SYRIAN NATIONALISM
TO U.S. CITIZENSHIP
HANI J. BAWARDI



HADHA
BALADUNA

ARAB AMERICAN NARRATIVES
OF BOUNDARY AND BELONGING

EDITED BY
GHASSAN ZEINEDDINE,
NABEEL ABRAHAM,
AND SALLY HOWELL

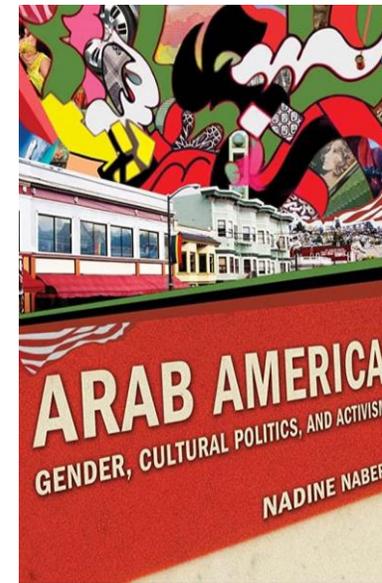


THE NEW AMERICANS

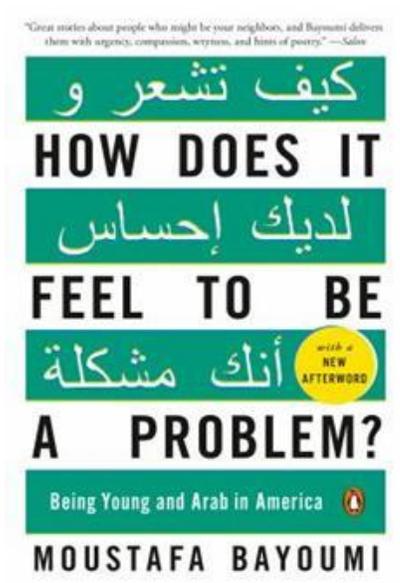
The
Arab
Americans



Randa A. Kayyali



ARAB AMERICA
GENDER, CULTURAL POLITICS, AND ACTIVISM
NADINE NABER



"Great stories about people who might be your neighbors, and Bayoumi delivers them with urgency, compassion, wryness, and hints of poetry." —Salon

كيف تشعر و
HOW DOES IT
لديك إحساس
FEEL TO BE
أنت مشكلة
with a
NEW
AFTERWORD
A PROBLEM?
Being Young and Arab in America
MOUSTAFA BAYOUMI

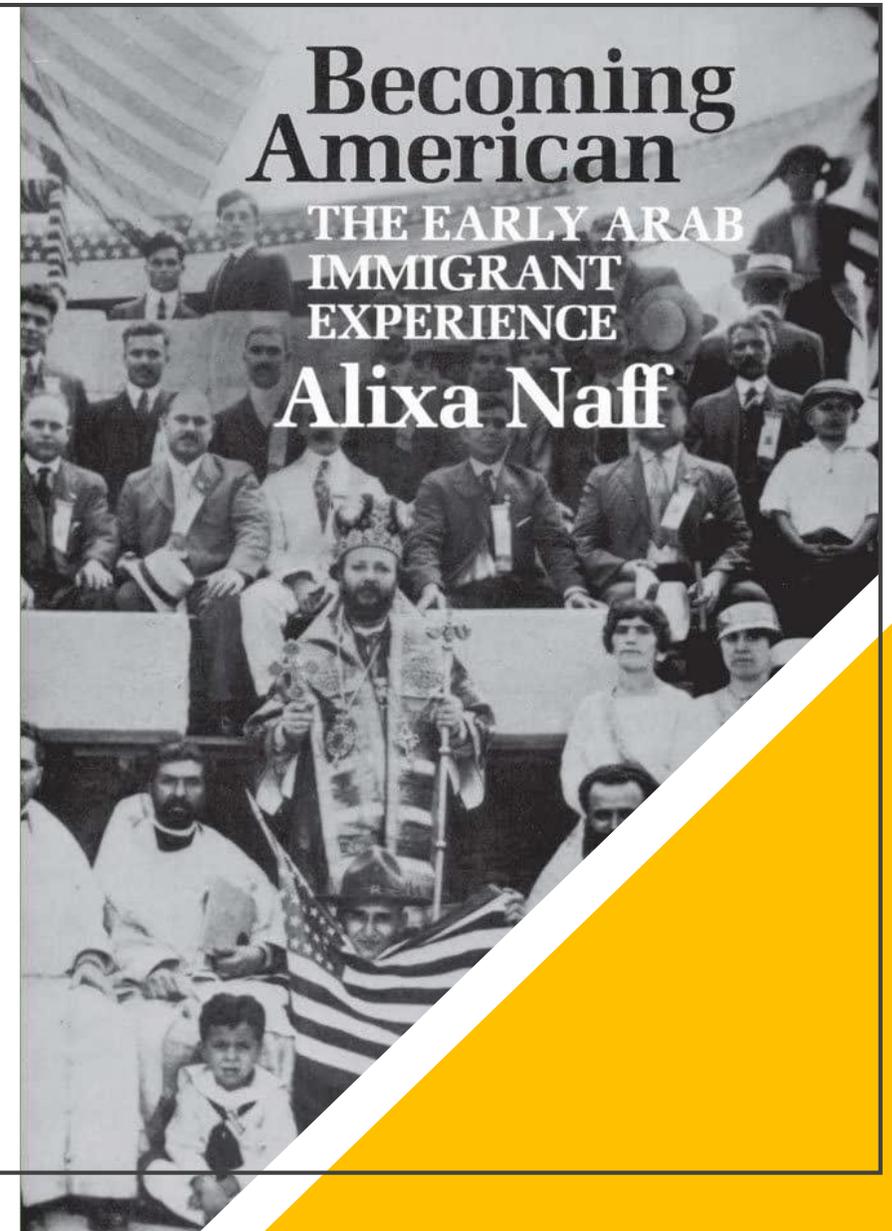
Background: Arabs in the U.S.

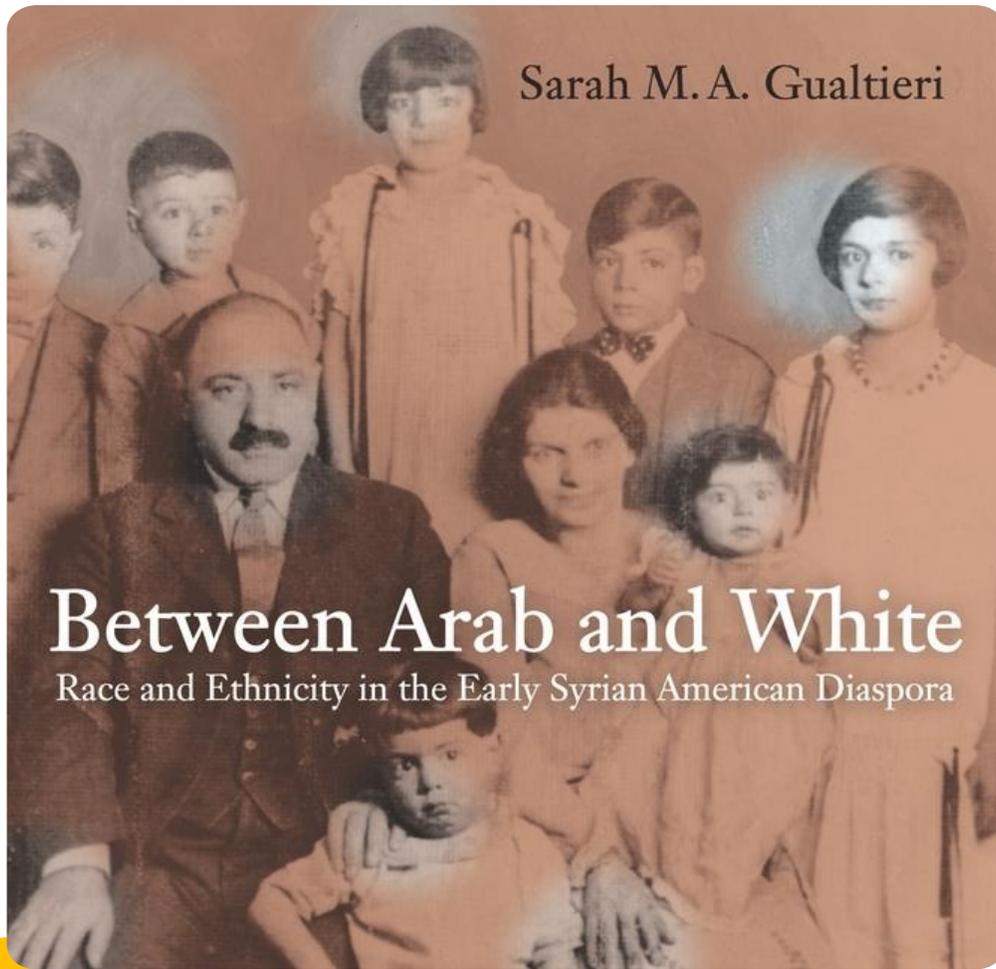
Sources: [The Arab American Institute](#) and [American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee](#)

- There are appx. **3.7 Million** Arabs in the U.S. (2020)
- **93%** of Arab Americans live in **metropolitan cities** with the largest communities residing in Detroit, New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco-Bay Area, Chicago, and Washington D.C.
- Appx. **82%** of Arabs in the U.S. are **citizens**
- There are appx. **308,295** Arabs in Los Angeles (2011)
- The majority of Arabs in the U.S. come from **Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Iraq**
- Arab Americans hold **diverse spiritual, national, racial, class, and social backgrounds**

Background: Arab Immigration

- **First Wave: 1891-1924: Appx 95,000 Arrivals**
 - Curtailed by the 1917 Barred Zone Act
 - Ended by the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act
- **Second Wave: 1945-1953 Appx 50,000 Arrivals**
 - Immigration granted primarily to Arab professional class and students
 - Immigration granted to 2000 Palestinian Refugee Families in accordance with the 1953 Refugee Relief Act
- **Third Wave: 1966-1990: Appx 400,000 Arrivals**
 - Opened immigration quotas to non-European peoples expands Arab arrivals to the U.S.
- **Fourth Wave: 1991-2017:**
 - Primarily refugees and immigrants fleeing war, economic precarity, and authoritarian regimes
 - Curtailed by Trumps 2017 Executive Order 13769 (The Muslim Ban)

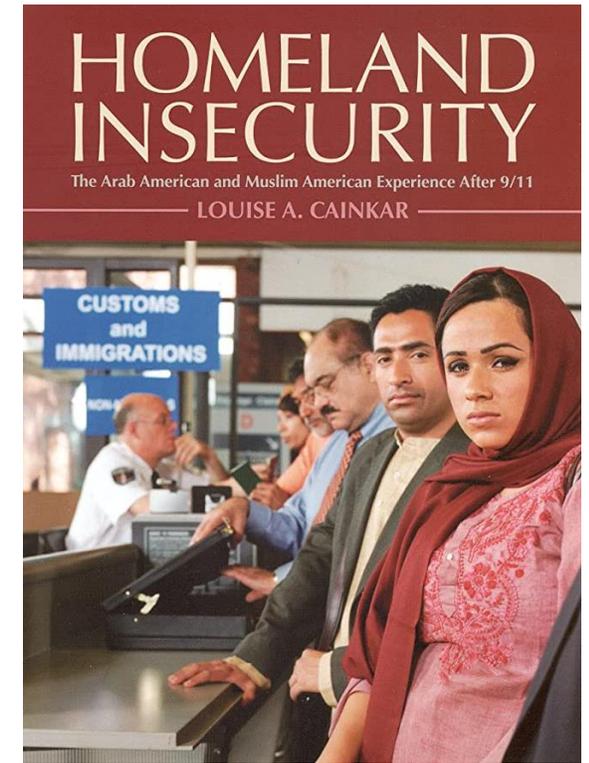
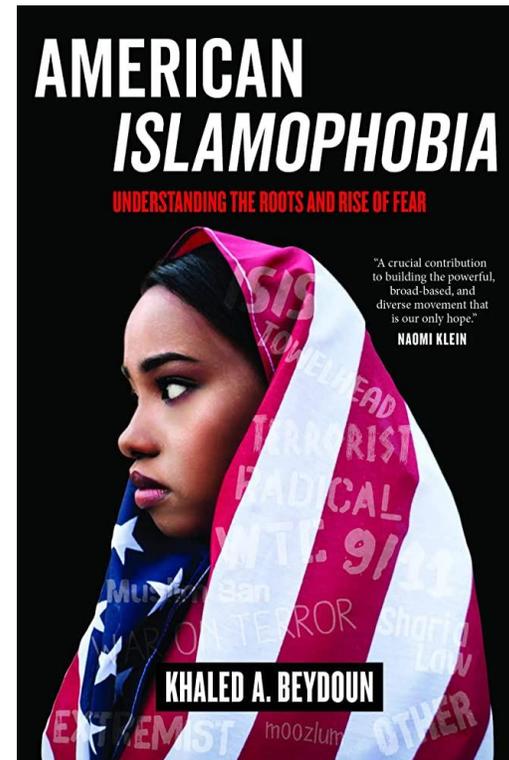
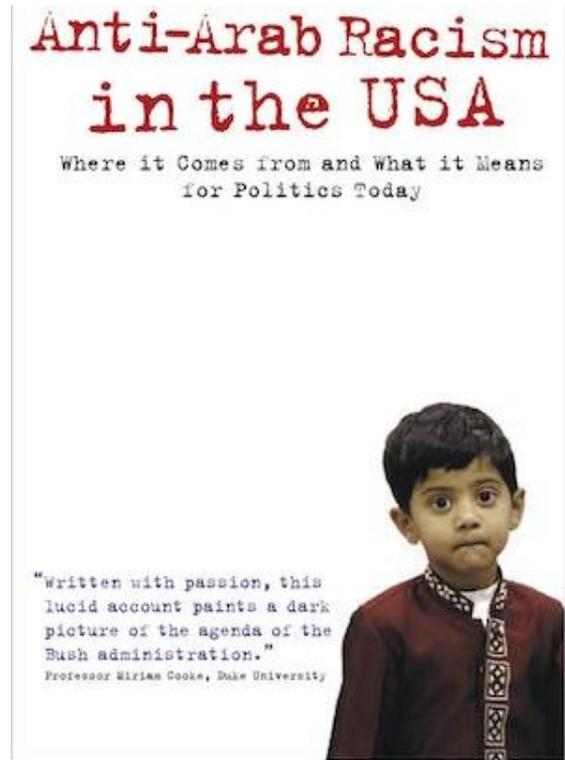
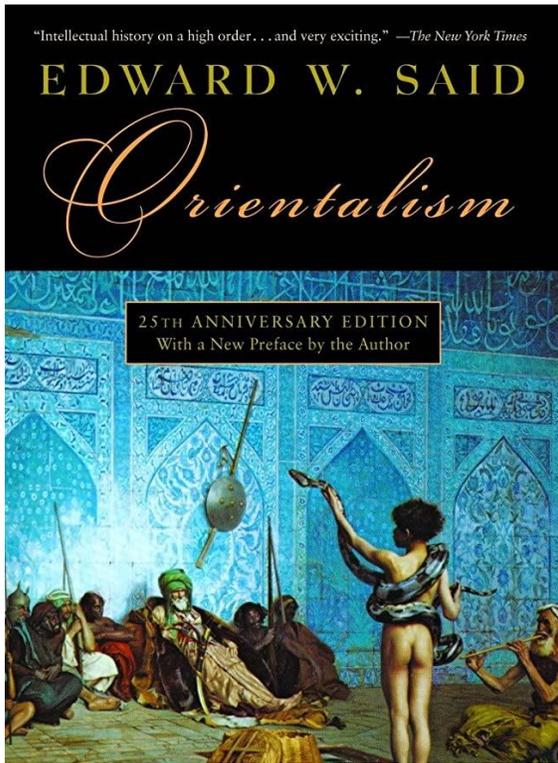




Background: Arabs and Race

- In the early 1900's Arab immigrants, like other non-European newcomers, appealed to the U.S. courts for white-legal classification to circumvent racialized exclusion from citizenship, political disenfranchisement, and denial of freedoms and rights. At the time **rights-bearing citizenship was tied to whiteness by law.**
- Based on a 1915 and 1944 court ruling, **Arabs became legally classified as white.**
- Since the 1980's Arab American organizations including [ADC](#), [AAI](#), and the [National Network of Arab American Communities \(NNAAC\)](#) have been **advocating for census reclassification** which is still yet to be realized.
- The **absence of a census category disenfranchises** Arab communities and Community-Based-Organizations (CBO's) economically, politically, socially and culturally by making invisible community needs, data, and aspirations.

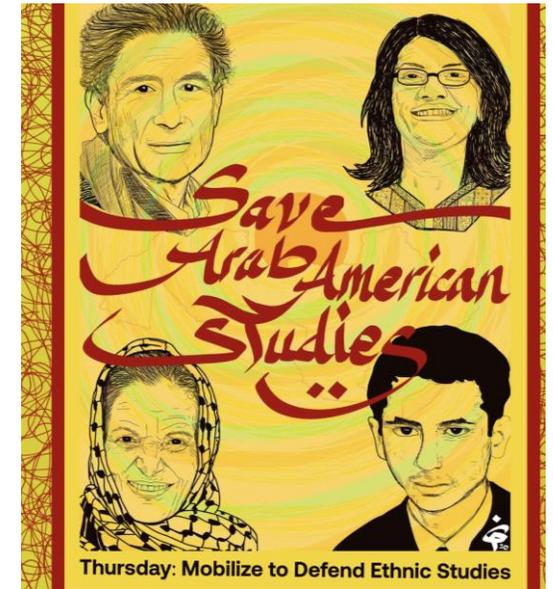
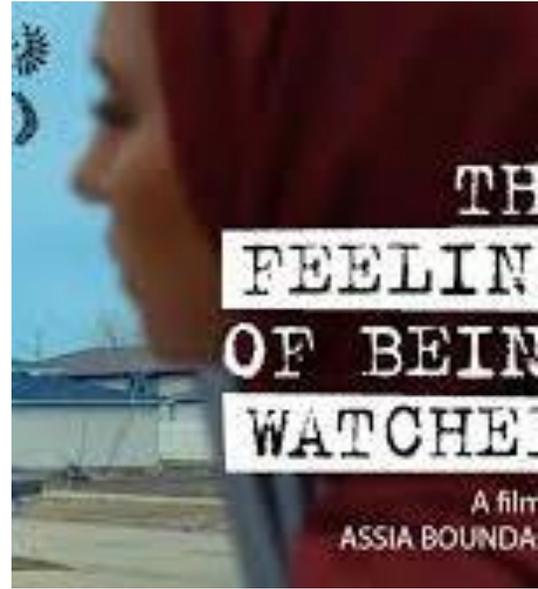
Anti-Arab Oppression



Ideological Anti-Arab Oppression

- Orientalism
- Anti-Arab Racism
- Islamophobia

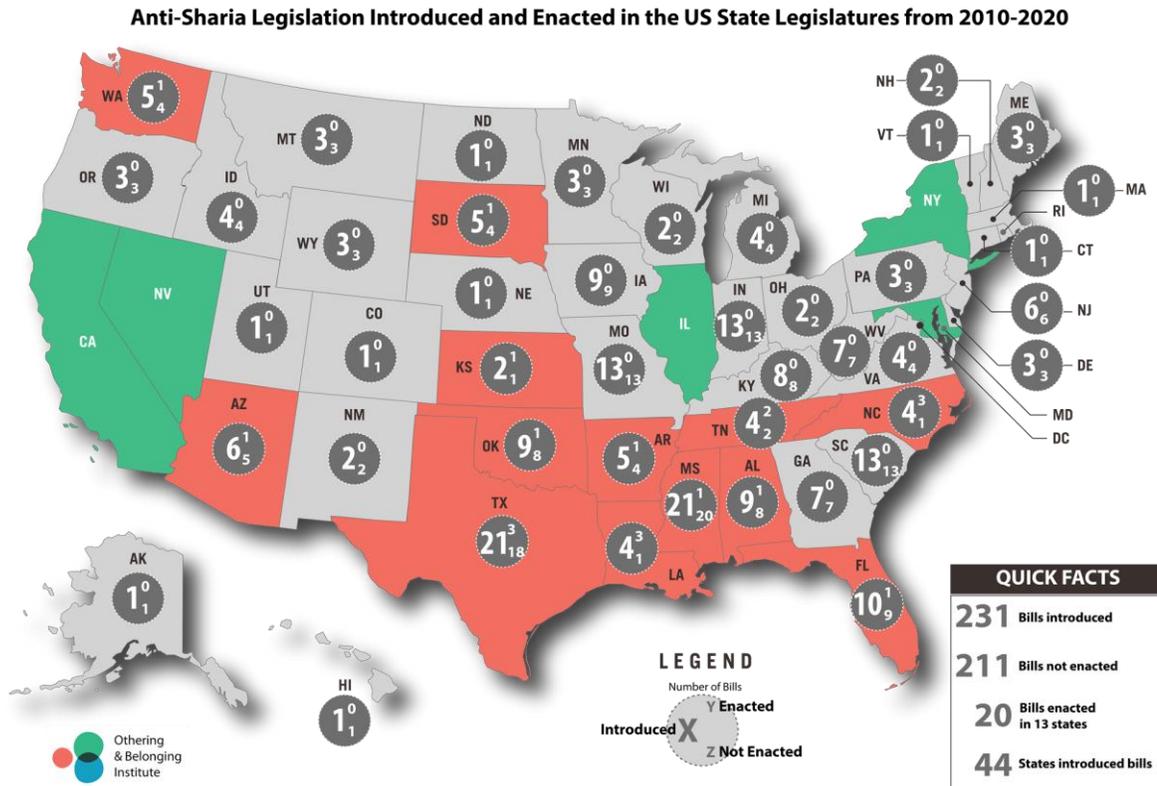
Every empire, however, tells itself and the world that it is unlike all other empires, that its mission is not to plunder and control but to educate and liberate. —Edward Said



Institutional Anti-Arab Oppression

- U.S. imperialism and war in the Arab World
- State-sanctioned surveillance, deportation, detention, and criminalization of Arabs and Arab Americans
- Racialized bans and restrictions on Arab immigration and refugee resettlement
- Denial of of cultural and political representation and resources for Arab and Arab American communities

Source: Elsadig Elsheikh and Basima Sisemore.
 “[Legalizing Xenophobia and Islamophobia in the United States.](#)” Othering and Belonging Institute. 2019.



Institutional Anti-Arab Oppression Cont.

- 2001: Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (**USA Patriot Act**)
- 2002: National Security Entry Exit Registration System (**NSEERS**)
- 2011: Countering Violent Extremism (**CVE**)
- 2017: Executive Order 13769 (**Muslim Ban**)
- 2010-2020: **231 “Anti-Sharia” Bills** Introduced in 44 U.S. State Legislatures

Living Legacies of Arab American Social Movements

Arab American Cultural Movements

1915: *Al-Mahjar*: An Arab literary movement dedicated to the cultural revitalization of Arabic literature as part of a broader commitment to the sovereignty of Arab peoples and lands from both Ottoman and European colonial rule.

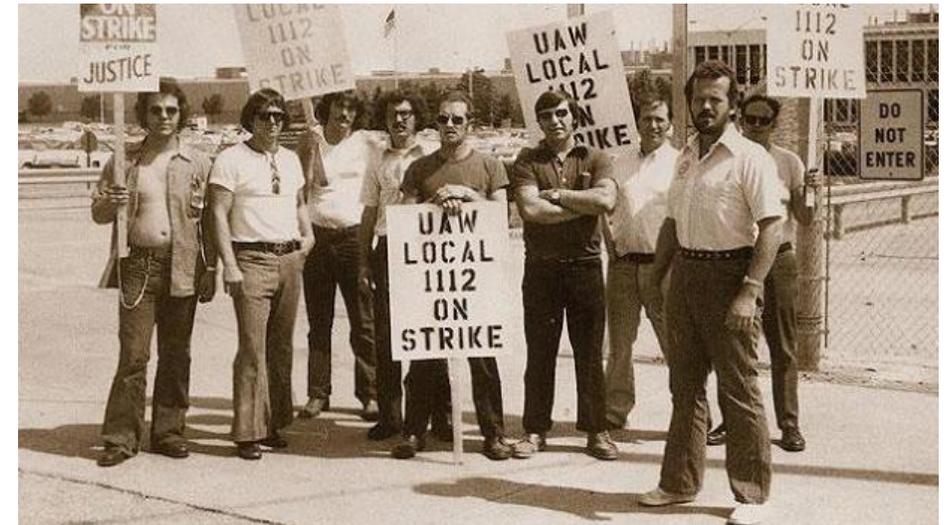
1967: Association of Arab American University Graduates (AAUG): A group of intellectuals and cultural workers formed in the wake of 1967 war to create and disseminated knowledge that countered demonized cultural representations of Arabs, Muslims and Palestinians.

1980's-Present: Arab American feminist literature, poetry, art, and theory grows to be an intellectual and cultural movement demonstrating the personal and political are inseparable.

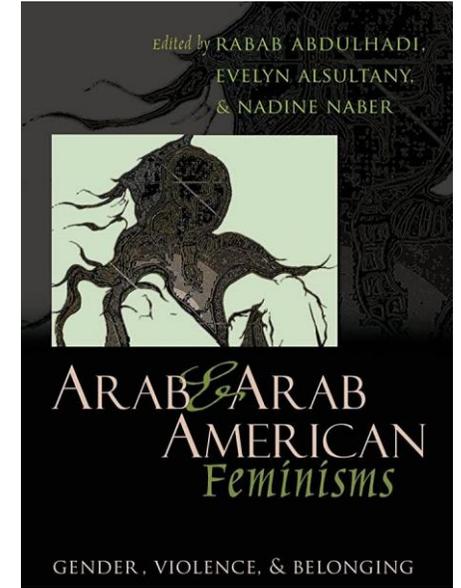
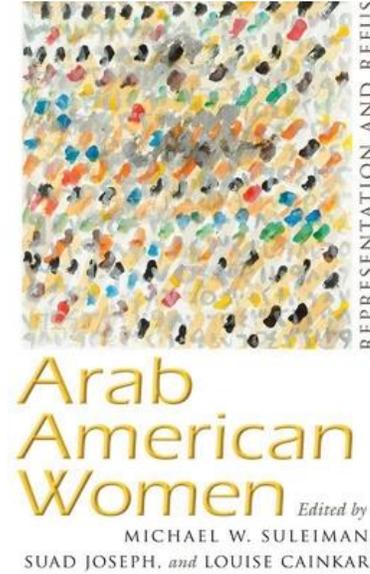
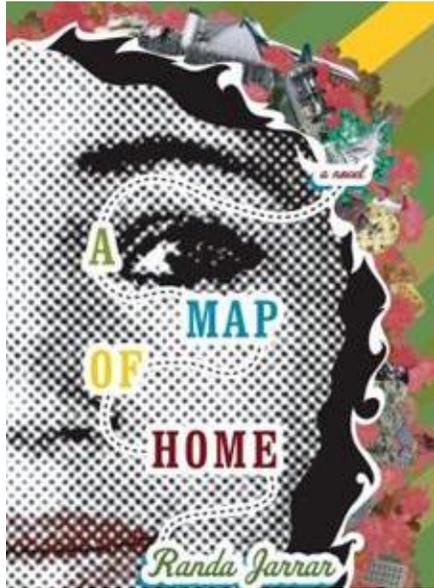


Arab American Labor Movements

- **1970: 1000 California Yemeni Farmworkers** attend a funeral march in Porterville, California, to mourn the death of Egyptian President and pan-Arab leader Gamal Abdel Nasser.
- **1973: Nagi Daifallah**, a Yemeni farmworker and union organizer is killed by police while protesting the arrest of Frank Quintana, picket captain for the UFW.
- **1974: UAW Local 1112 Detroit Arab Autoworkers Strike** to demand divestment from Israel and investment in worker wages, human rights, and social and racial justice.

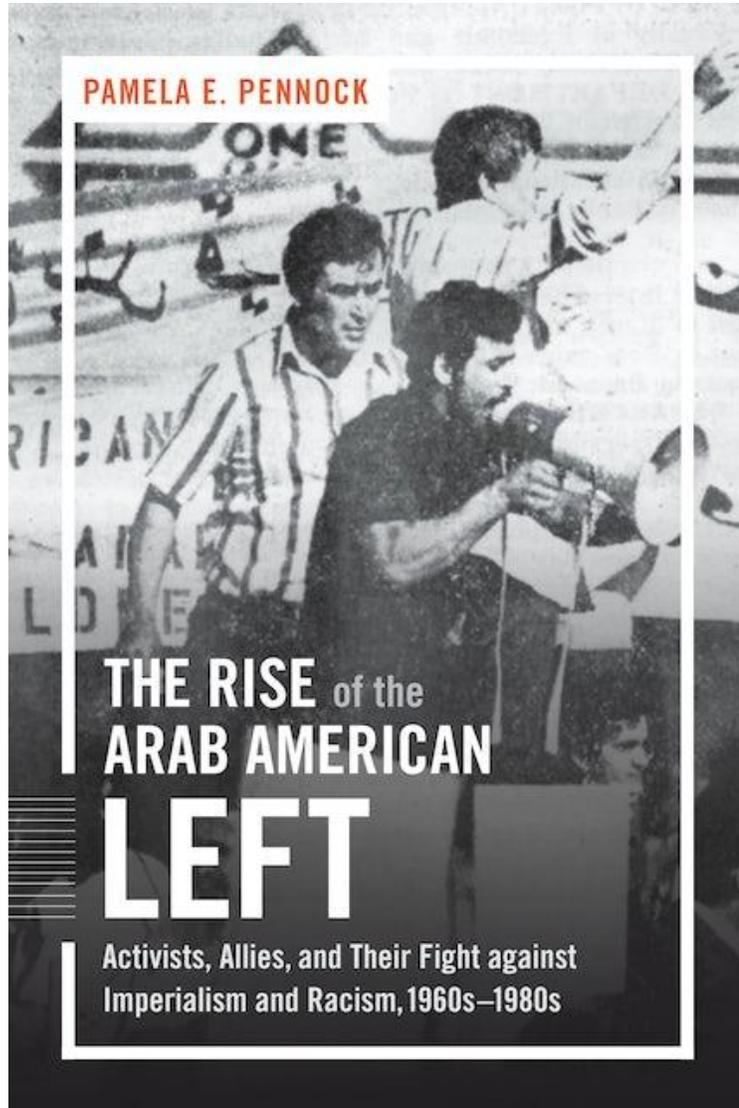


UAW Pickets at Lordstown, Ohio in 1974. Source: Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University



Arab American Feminist Movements

- 1985: National Arab American Women's Association (NAAWA)
- 1986: Union of Palestinian Women's Associations (UPWA)
- 2001: Arab Women's Solidarity Association (AWSA)
- 2005: Arab Movement of Women Arising for Justice (AMWAJ)
- 2020: Palestinian Feminist Collective (PFC)

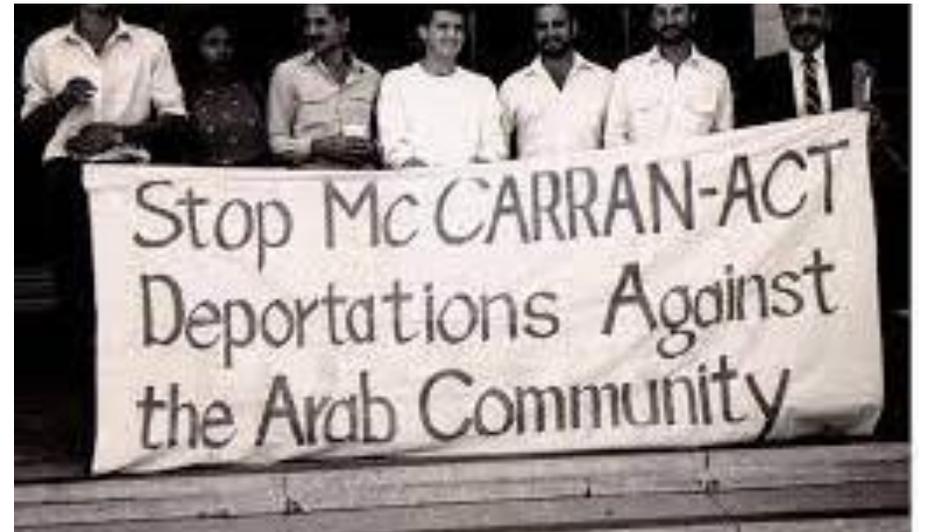


Arab and Arab American Student and Youth Movements

- 1952-1979: **Organization of Arab Students (OAS)**
- 1980-1993: **General Union of Palestine Students (GUPS)**
- 1999-Present: **250 Campus based chapters of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP)**
- 2007-Present: **Palestinian Youth Movement (PYM)**

Looking Back

Remembering Alex Odeh and
the Los Angeles Eight



Forging Forward



- Support the MENA Category on the 2030 Census
- End support for authoritarian Arab regimes
- Halt US intervention, imperialism, and destruction in Arab countries
- Divest from Israel and invest in local Communities
- Affirm and uplift Palestinian truth and narratives
- Condemn the censorship of Palestinian activists, and reject the conflation of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism
- End deportations and imprisonment of Arab American activists
- Fund and support Arab CBO's and seek their direct input on policy matters that impact the Arab community.
- Defend the Arab American/Ethnic Studies curriculum, endorsed by UTLA, and implement it across K-12 schools in LA County
- Open doors to, welcome, and embrace Arab refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants and endorse sanctuary city initiatives that ban ICE policing of immigrants, and The Sanctuary Motion, which forbids information transfers from LA County to ICE
- End all racialized secret spying, surveillance, and criminalization programs including CVE which currently operates as PATHE and is a partnership between LAPD, DHS, and the Department of Mental Health in Los Angeles County
- Celebrate and make space for diverse Arab and Arab American identities and histories
- Support, listen to, and uplift young Arab and Arab American organizers



A Collective Praxis of *Sumoud*

Everything in this world can be robbed and stolen; except one thing. This one thing is the love that emanates from a human being towards a solid commitment to a conviction or cause.

–Ghassan Kanafani