contribution to the existing literature. Kruks is a graceful writer and careful analyst, and her book is a pleasure to read. The insights that it offers into Beauvoir's political thought is a tribute to the profound influence that this thinker has had on the intellectual landscape of the contemporary world.

Arab America: Gender, Cultural Politics, and Activism.
By Nadine Naber. New York: New York University Press, 2013. 320p. $75.00 cloth, $25.00 paper.
doi:10.1017/S1537592714000139

— Rafia Zakaria, *Amnesty International*

"The impact of Orientalism, I began to see, was everywhere. Our Arab community had a plethora of cultural and political organizations that put on musical concerts, festivals, banquets, and a range of political organizations that focused on civil rights issues and homeland politics. And yet, there were no resources for dealing with difficult issues in our families and communities" (p.4). It is this silence on what happens in the diaspora and the "bifurcated existence" of her generation of Arab Americans that motivated Nadine Naber to make the Arab American community in San Francisco's Bay Area the subject of her scholarly research. In *Arab America*, she undertakes an exploration of the articulation of "Arabness" in America as it evolved in middle-class Arab American families and anti-imperialist social movements within the community.

The decade after 9/11 has seen much attention paid to the Arab American community in the United States. As Naber notes at various points in her investigation, it is a scrutiny motivated by, and curious about, the community's connections to Islamic radicalism, aiming often to reveal pathologies of alienation or insularity that would in turn add to the burgeoning scholarship on these subjects. It is in part because of this weighted focus only on the community and its dynamics in relation to terrorism that Naber concentrates her analysis on the community that "predates 9/11 while also considering the ramifications of that day" (p. 15).

Naber's research was conducted between January 1998 and August 2001, using a combination of participant observation and interviews of students and activists involved in two different groups. The first group consisted of Muslim American groups who were using a disaggregation of faith and race that said "Muslim First, Arab Second" and who "defined Islam as a politically constituted religious framework for addressing racial and imperial injustice and oppression" (p. 10). The second, "Leftist Arab Movements" (LAMs), were "a smaller collective of primarily middle class college students and graduates between the ages of eighteen and thirty, who bring to their work myriad histories of displacement" and with "ideas parallel to those of leftist Arab movements in the Arab world and its diasporas" (p. 11).

Ensuing chapters trace the history of the Arab community in the United States, from the first waves of migration as far back as the 1800s, providing unique insights into the changing ideas of locating "Arabs" within or beyond the spectrum of whiteness central to evolving American ideas of race. Crucial to these accounts is Naber's theoretical framework, "a diasporic feminist critique" that is particularly attentive to the experiences of internal minorities—women and homosexuals who experience the weight of maintaining authenticity through generations distanced from the home culture. Through personal stories and interviews, the author presents the dilemmas of Arab girls bearing the disproportionate burden of maintaining cultural identity by marrying within their communities and modeling ossified cultural values, such as cooking native delicacies, in order to ensure their continued acceptance and belonging. In interviews of homosexuals, she again reveals the contradictory pressures faced by gay and lesbian Arabs living out their sexual identities in secret or hidden from their Arab families to prevent a loss of strong family connections that are so integral to their identity as Arabs.

In the chapter on "Muslim First, Arab Second," Naber focuses on both the connections between American imperialist overtures in the Arab world and the resurgence of Islamic identity in the Arab diaspora in the United States. Again through interviews and personal stories, she consolidates theoretical divisions of Muslim-American identity into simplistic categories of "good Muslim citizens who participate in the American melting pot versus bad Muslims who are actively involved in homeland politics" (p. 155) or other binaries that divide Muslims into "immigrant Muslims" and "American Muslims."

Later chapters take these complications, unearthed through earlier interviews, and show how they map onto actual group dynamics in the community. Central again are issues of internal minorities who find it difficult to articulate issues of sexism and homophobia, under pressure to communicate dominant visions of a model minority. Within the LAMs, whose activism is often centered on issues relating to the Palestinian Intifada, one interviewee named Raya tells how several women were disproportionately marginalized and greater authenticity was imputed to "immigrant male activists" who were routinely selected over women to speak. At the same time, a male interviewee named Waseem refers to the female activists' sensitivity to sexism as "internalized Orientalism," saying: "there was a lot of internalized Orientalism. . . . [Y]ou would hear things like 'Well Middle Eastern men are so and so' . . . as if each Arab man is a sexist pig, acting like their counterpart sexist pigs . . . as if Arab men are a uniform group. . . . [T]his is no different from how we are perceived in the liberal U.S establishment" (p. 192).

In presenting the varying pressures of cultural authenticity, both as perceived by Arab Americans themselves and as imposed by the dominant culture and perceptions

in the United States, Naber is successful in complicating notions of "Arab-American identity" as it is emerging as a category in the United States. In focusing on how both leftist Arab movements and American Muslim groups vary in the way they conceptualize identity and experience these pressures, she demonstrates an understanding of the intersectional location of Arab Americans as a religio-racial category, one that cannot be adequately understood when investigations are limited to analyses of organizations and activism, focusing on just race or just religion and determined by misguided notions of categorical purity.

Naber presents an engaging account of the multilayered construction of identity in the diaspora and its varied relationships with the politics of both homeland and the new cultural milieu. By situating the inquiry in the years before 2001, she demonstrates how some of these strains—the dominance of "Muslim First, Arab Second" and the decline of Pan-Arabism as a basis for constructing Arab selfhood—were not all constructed in the aftermath of 9/11 and the ensuing U.S. invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan.

At the beginning of the book, Naber is forthcoming about how her own location as an Arab American Christian growing up in the Bay Area influenced her choice of scholarly research. Given this, and the fact that so much of her research is based on participant observation of a community and community members in which she is personally involved, one of the insights to be gleaned from her work is perhaps not deliberate but incidental. As an attempt by an Arab Christian woman, raised in the United States, to retain and dissect the varied pressures and constructions of identity, *Arab America* is an evocative account of trying to retain, through distance and generations, a way of being and belonging whose imprint is being erased by demography and Islamist consciousness in the Arab world. Arab Christians in the United States face a conundrum: Melting into American Christianity may erase their Arab-ness, while coming too close to Arab American Muslims in the diaspora threatens to blur the religious identity they worked so hard to retain in their homeland. The study of this choice, truly intersectional and so set against dominant racial and religious paradigms at home and in the diaspora, is what makes Naber's investigation a crucial one for the development of racial and religious identity in our multilayered world.

Republic of Women: Rethinking the Republic of Letters in the Seventeenth Century. By Carol Pal. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 342p. $94.00.
doi:10.1017/S1537592714000140

— Ruth Abbey, *University of Notre Dame*

This enjoyable, accessible, thoroughly researched book reinserts women into a significant scene in modern Western intellectual history. Carol Pal identifies seven women who were active participants in the seventeenth-century republic of letters: women who were sufficiently educated, confident, and leisured to engage in correspondence and sometimes face-to-face communication with such figures as Descartes, Montaigne, Robert Boyle, John Amos Comenius, and Marin Mersenne. Depicting the republic of letters as transnational and multiconfessional, Pal writes to correct the perception that it excluded women. Instead, she nominates Anna Maria von Shurman (German-Dutch, 1607–78); Bathusa Makin (English, 1600–80); Dorothy Moore (Anglo-Irish, 1612–64); Katherine Jones (also known as Lady Ranelagh, Anglo-Irish, 1615–91); Marie de Gournay (French, 1565–1645); Marie du Moulin (French, 1613–99); and Princess Elisabeth (Bohemian, 1618–80) as full citizens of this republic.

Drawing from their letters, and letters by others about them, Pal documents the ways in which these women were, saw themselves to be, and were seen by others as active participants in the exchange and advancement of many branches of scientific, humanistic, and religious inquiry. This sense of community held despite differences of nation, religion, and intellectual orientation. The author identifies four major types of community-building and sustaining practices that male and female denizens of the republic engaged in: correspondence, networking, publication, and mentorship. As an illustration of networking, Pal notes that along with the princess herself, three of her seven female scholars (van Schurman, Moore, and de Moulin) attended Elisabeth's court in exile in The Hague during the 1630s. The other three were linked to it via connections with other individuals at the court.

Pal reflects briefly on the social and political forces that made women's involvement in this virtual republic possible. They include the political instability of the time—the wars of religion, civil war in England, the massive intellectual upheaval and ferment associated with the scientific revolution, and the fact that knowledge production and transmission were not yet fully institutionalized within universities and academies. The author also touches at several points on the key role that fathers played in the formation of these female scholars by either encouraging their daughters to acquire an education at home or even just allowing them to audit the lessons their brothers were receiving. We do not, unfortunately, get any insight into the motivation of those fathers who encouraged or permitted their daughters' unconventional education. As the book draws to a close, Pal mentions some of the changes in the organization of knowledge and learning that were unfolding at the end of the seventeenth century. Knowledge was becoming more organized along disciplinary lines, the lingua franca of Latin was losing ground to vernacular languages, and institutions of learning that excluded women were becoming more influential.