

Dev Publishers
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What is Veiling?



Author: Sahar Amer

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About the Book

Ranging from simple head scarf to full-body burqa, the veil is worn by vast numbers of Muslim women around the world. *What Is Veiling?* explains one of the most visible, controversial, and least understood emblems of Islam. Sahar Amer's evenhanded approach is anchored in sharp cultural insight and rich historical context. Addressing the significance of veiling in the religious, cultural, political, and social lives of Muslims, past and present, she examines the complex roles the practice has played in history, religion, conservative and progressive perspectives, politics and regionalism, society and economics, feminism, fashion, and art.

By highlighting the multiple meanings of veiling, the book decisively shows that the realities of the practice cannot be homogenized or oversimplified and extend well beyond the religious and political accounts that are overwhelmingly proclaimed both inside and outside Muslim-majority societies. Neither defending nor criticizing the practice, *What Is Veiling?* clarifies the voices of Muslim women who struggle to be heard and who, veiled or not, demand the right to live spiritual, personal, and public lives in dignity.

About the Author

Sahar Amer is professor of Arabic and Islamic studies at the University of Sydney.

Review

"[Amer] offers perhaps the definitive glossary on veiling. . . . Amer's deliberate and caring scholarly treatment is pitch-perfect. This book about "hijabistas," "muhajababes," and veiled Muslim hip-hop artists, among others, is not just about veiling; it is the story of Islam, especially modern Islam, told through the prism of the veil."

–Publishers Weekly Starred Review

"In Amer's able hands, the often feminist, anti-colonist nature of veiling is brought to light. . . . In prose that is approachable and sympathetic, and with research spanning nations and centuries, Amer's project manages to be both comprehensive and illuminative. . . . An important work that stands to advance multicultural conversations and is a must-read for all those who wish to intelligently approach the subject of Muslim women and autonomy."

–Foreword

"Veiling is a difficult but timely and important topic. Sahar Amer explains that Muslims didn't invent the veil, not all Muslims veil the same way, and ideas about Muslim veiling have served and continue to serve political and polemical purposes. A vivid resource for general readers as well as students in courses on Islam and women's studies."

–Kecia Ali, author of Marriage and Slavery in Early Islam

"In this well written, succinct, and much needed overview of the role of veiling in the Muslim world, Sahar Amer interweaves the perspectives of Muslim women themselves, with emphasis on the many meanings attached to veiling. Given that veiling has been commonly practiced by many religions, why has the veil become so strongly associated with Islam? Why is it that Muslim women who veil are automatically assumed to be oppressed, ignorant, pious, or militant? How is it that a piece of clothing is so politically and emotionally charged? Amer answers these questions clearly over the course of this highly readable book."

–Lynne Huffer, author of Are the Lips a Grave?: A Queer Feminist on the Ethics of Sex

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