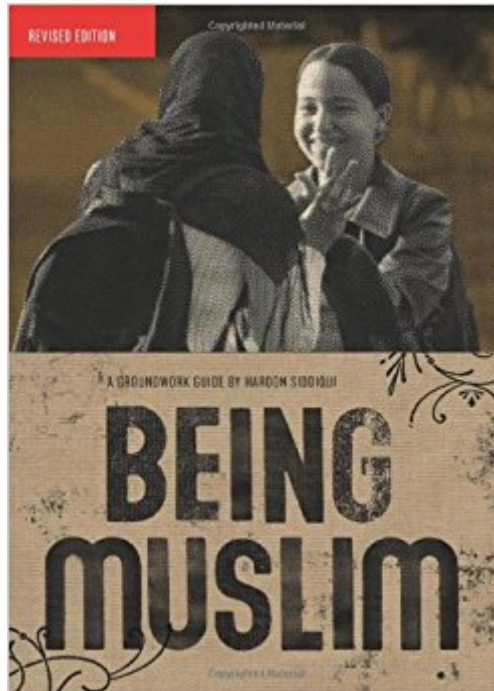


The book was found

Being Muslim (Groundwork Guides)



Synopsis

Long a charged topic in the West, Islam has become incendiary since 9/11, drawing heated reactions from both defenders and critics. The two sides rarely talk, and when they try neither seems to listen. Equally helpful for Muslims and non-Muslims, this book is a cross-cultural attempt to bridge these worlds. Based on the author's travels in Muslim lands and his interviews with experts, *Being Muslim* examines the impact of terrorism on Muslims and explains how Islam works in the daily lives of believers. Siddiqui dissects the Western media's treatment of Islam and Muslims, shows how extremists are being challenged by a new Islamic generation, and tackles the controversial topics, from terrorism to the treatment of women, that have been used to mischaracterize Islam and its adherents. *Being Muslim* also shows why there are good reasons to expect a future of mutual understanding. Charts, a glossary, and suggestions for further reading accompany the text.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Adult/High School – This balanced, concise book is an excellent resource for social studies or debate class. Siddiqui explores the current political, religious, and secular aspects of being a member of the world's fastest-growing religion. He challenges Western assumptions about Islam and assigns blame to both the West and Islamic fundamentalists for fanning the flames of Islamophobia. Although he tackles stereotypes, the author is not a Muslim apologist—he describes the tenets of the religion in objective, non-proselytizing prose, acknowledging the need for reforms

while explaining that most oppression of women results from traditional cultural practices rather than Islamic teachings. Siddiqui acknowledges the desperate living conditions many Muslims endure in the developing world, emphasizing the need to address these circumstances instead of offering them as a valid excuse for violence. He describes what post-9/11 life has been like for Muslims in the United States, in Europe, and in Muslim countries. Sidebars illustrate Islamic contributions to popular culture (e.g., Muslim stand-up comics and hip-hop artists), and the index, notes, bibliography, and illustrative charts are all useful. The author's tone is conversational and engaging, and frequent breaks in the text make this small book very readable.

—Sondra VanderPloeg,
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this title.

Starred Review In the wake of 9/11, "Islam-bashing" bears all the symptoms of racism as it holds up the relatively few fanatics as representative of all 1.3 billion Muslims. That's the argument of award-winning Canadian journalist Siddiqui, past president of PEN Canada, a writers' group that is a leading advocate of free speech. His clear, passionate discussion confronts international issues that are in the news now, including recent controversies over cartoon representations of Prophet Muhammad, the debate surrounding the wearing of the hijab (traditional headscarf), and issues of faith and feminism, suicide bombing, and more. While clearly concerned about terrorism and other dangers, Siddiqui attacks the propaganda of collective guilt. Without preaching or political jargon and drawing on his travels and interviews in Muslim countries, he shows that the extremists are being challenged by a new generation of Muslims, and welcomes the current internal reformation. He also asks penetrating questions: for example, Why does the U.S. turn a blind eye to suffocating restrictions on women in Saudi Arabia? Including documented chapter notes and an "Essential Reading" list, this timely volume in the Groundwork Guide series is sure to spark debate. Like Jane Springer's *Genocide* (2006), also part of the series, this is excellent for classroom discussion. Hazel Rochman
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Tons of data and numbers and justifications but little or no insights the title suggests. It's pretty aggressive and defensive. I was hoping for something informative and neutral. It is not. If acceptance comes from understanding... find another book.

A Muslim perspective on Western-Muslim relations during the first 8 or so years of the 21st century. We need to hear more like this, even if we might not agree with all of it.

great

This book is perfect for those who know little about the Muslim world. It is very relevant to today considering the Mosque in New York and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. I hope everyone that reads this book enjoys it as much as I have.

This is an extraordinary frank and honest look at what it means to be Muslims. It does not dodge hard questions that Muslims face about their religion, nor does it flinch from helping non-Muslims feel the sense of threat that Muslims often feel. It is unfortunate that toward the end the author's defensiveness comes through too much.

This is indeed the best book on the subject. I heard the interview of the author on NPR while driving to the airport from a client site! I could not wait to get this book from the library. I just finished reading the book and I will soon be buying it to add to my library. The author takes a very balanced view on the sensitive topic but spares no punches when dealing with the facts. The book deals with post 9/11 issues very directly and at the same time provides a very nice intro to the Islamic culture and traditions. I recommend this book to anyone who really wants to know what it is to be a muslim in this world that is torn apart by religious conflicts.

This book was a good idea. It helps to explain what it really means to be Muslim, especially in America. But its intentions of bringing support and tolerance to Muslim beliefs and behaviors is undermined by the arguments of the author. Too many remarks are hostile or laced with malice. Too often the author criticized Americans and American policy and how it has affected Muslims. I'm not saying the author is wrong, but this approach is not going to breed sympathy. There's surely a better alternative out there.

If it's an easy overview of key issues, topics and social and political concerns you need to serve as an introduction to Muslim concerns, you can't go wrong with BEING MUSLIM, based on travels in Muslim lands and interviews with experts there and in the West. Here's an analysis of the impact of terrorism on Muslims, explaining how Islam affects daily living and surveying differences between

East and West perspectives. A very simple, easy introduction, this lends equally well to middle to high school libraries strong in social and political history. Diane C. Donovan California Bookwatch

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