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Refusing the Veil (Provocations)

Yasmin Alibhai-Brown

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Many Muslims worldwide either support or adopt religious veiling, and those who argue against it are often criticized, or worse.

But, according to Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, the veil throws up a number of concerns, from questions of health and freedom of choice, to issues of gender and personal identity.

She argues that veiling conceals abuse, propagates eating disorders, and restricts access to sunlight and exercise. It is imposed on babies and young girls, allows women to be shamed for not covering up, and has become associated with extremist factions. It demonizes men, oppresses feminism, and presents obstacles to performance and success. It even encourages racism, distorts Muslim values, and strips women of autonomy and individuality.

Written from a unique perspective, and packed with personal experiences as well as public examples, Yasmin addresses the ultimate question: why Muslim women everywhere should refuse the veil.

Provocations is a groundbreaking new series of short polemics composed by some of the most intriguing voices in contemporary culture. Never less than sharp, intelligent, and controversial, the series provides insightful contributions to some of the most vital discussions in society today.

Yasmin Alibhai-Brown is a journalist, broadcaster, writer, and professor of journalism at Middlesex University. A regular columnist for *The Independent* and the *Daily Mail*. She is a past winner of the Orwell Prize for Journalism.

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