

**Nine Parts of Desire
The Hidden World of Islamic Women
By Geraldine Brooks**

Review by Newsletter Editor Ruth Brodman

Nine Parts of Desire: The Hidden World of Islamic Women is the story of Brooks' intrepid journey toward an understanding of the women behind the veils, and of the often contradictory political, religious, and cultural forces that shape their lives. **This statement is true.** However this book is a travesty. It shows the hypocrisy of the teaching of Mohammad who used his faith to achieve his sexual desires or changed the laws of the faith to keep peace in his household. The author points to how he would add different devotions depending on his needs. For example if his wives bickered amongst themselves, he added language to the rules of the faith to separate his wives for peace in his household. He did not like other men looking at his wives therefore he covered them completely. His revelations were self serving. If not ludicrous. From his taking of a bride at the age of 9 to his being kept by his rich first wife (almost not heard of in the 10th Century) I lost track of how many wives he had (14 or more). They were merely property. There to serve man in any way he sees fit.

I am astounded that this faith can flourish and become the world's fastest growing religion with women being forced to live as chattels. They have no say in anything. They accept this as their role in life. Even in the communities that allow women to hold positions of in government and educate themselves, they choose to live this way. Brooks pointed out several women that she encountered that began as educated and western orientated who donned the garb and followed the faith because it was the wish of her family or if she loved the man selected for her. The barbarianism in the treatment of women is horrendous. From the cutting of the clitoris to instant divorce with no grounds, to the husband bringing more wives into the household, to the stoning of women for talking to a man other than her immediate family etc. Stuff for nightmares. The Koran has been manipulated to justify the treatment and repression of women.

Not so long ago in the Western World women could not vote, own property, inherit and in essence forced to live under man's rule. Women fought hard to change all that. Yet we do not care what is happening to our sisters in Arabia. The newspapers rarely report it and if they do it is on the back page. The most frightening idea is that this faith is spreading throughout Europe, Africa, Asia, India and has already gotten a foothold in the Americas. They do not wish to live side by side with all faiths but instead wish everyone to change to Islam. Violently if necessary. The hatred for non-believers is shared by many women of the Islamic faith. This I find unfathomable. Can you imagine living under this type of regime. This book is one that should be read by all.