

Women And Men in The Qur'an

Asma Lamrabet

Translated by Muneera Salem-Murdock

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Review by Sara Jamil

Women and Men in The Qur'an is a breath of fresh air in the discourse around gender equality in Islam. Dr. Lamrabet, a Muslim woman and extremely knowledgeable scholar, takes the reader on an intricate and comprehensive journey of dismantling and disrupting stereotypical narratives through a beautiful, in-depth study of the sacred text of the Quran. The universal egalitarian message of the Qur'an is the red thread, which is skillfully interwoven throughout the book. *Women and Men in the Qur'an* is divided into three main parts:

1. Women in Islam: A New Approach
2. Women and Men in the Qur'an: The Key Concepts
3. Equality, the Time of a Revolution.

The eighteen chapters of the book each meticulously analyse selected relevant verses in the Quran as well as traditional interpretations, which are referred to in most of the Muslim world.

Dr. Lamrabet challenges these and uses the spiritual source itself in her arguments in a clear and confident manner, so as to shift the perspective from a fixed to an evolving interpretation that transcends the discourse of women or men to one of gender equality.

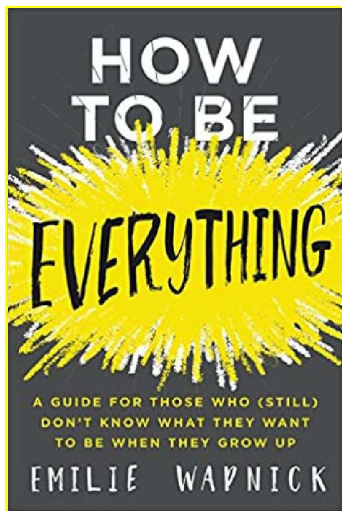
Nonetheless, empowered with sound knowledge and refreshing perspective, Dr. Lamrabet does not shy away from calling out the prevalent patriarchal, misogynistic and manipulative interpretations of the spiritual message of the Qur'an. She thoroughly addresses the underlying biases, as well as those outside Islam, of "the Muslim woman, the general tendency being to view all Muslim women as a monolithic group – often done deliberately with the intent of marginalizing this group. For too long the opponents of Islam, the media and the power-hungry Muslim clerics have been allowed and enabled to make the sacred message of the Qur'an profane – not so on Dr. Lamrabet's watch!

She concludes by suggesting that it is time for those who love and honour this sacred, spiritual message to educate themselves by studying the text from within the context in which it was revealed, and to consult various interpretations. This would allow the next generation in particular to be presented with a model, grounded in the spirit of democracy that relates to current times: an interpretation that serves not only women but all of humanity. She invites anyone outside Islam, regardless of sex, gender, race and social status, to also consider embracing this universal egalitarian message of the Qur'an.



There is no doubt that the author's approach will push boundaries. In fact, that is her stated intent in the introduction. I am confident that it will be graciously received by scholars with a keen interest in studying Islam, gender equity and interfaith studies among other disciplines. Furthermore, it will resonate with the younger generation of Muslims – especially women and their feminist allies – as it offers hope and possibility for a narrative that serves everyone equally. However, the wording at times is too academic and scholarly for a layperson to truly connect with the important message that Dr. Lamrabet wishes to convey. Nonetheless, I strongly believe that increasing self-awareness is the only way to empower people in their agency, and this book undoubtedly provides a strong and sound foundation for anyone who is on a journey of self-discovery to explore further.

Sara Jamil is an educator, mentor and sacred activist. She is the contributing author of "Dreams Unleashed", founder of CompassionFirst and Lead Volunteer of Charter for Compassion International. As a lover of humanity, Sara passionately advocates for her faith community's motto "Love For All Hatred For None" as well as her own message of "A Better World Starts With Me".



How to Be Everything: A Guide for Those Who (Still) Don't Know What They Want to Be When They Grow Up

Emily Wapnick

HarperCollins : HarperOne (2017)

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<https://www.harpercollins.com/products/how-to-be-everything-emilie-wapnick?variant=32122185547810>

Review by Marie-Eve Monette

Emily Wapnick's *How to Be Everything: A Guide for Those Who (Still) Don't Know What They Want to Be When They Grow Up* is an introductory guide to becoming a "multipotentialite," what Wapnick calls those trying to find alternative and flexible professional

paths that are defined by interests, skills, and finances. Wapnick argues against the "Myth of the One True Calling," and invites her readers to embrace creative pursuits, rather than follow linear and vertical career trajectories. Her aim throughout the book is to guide