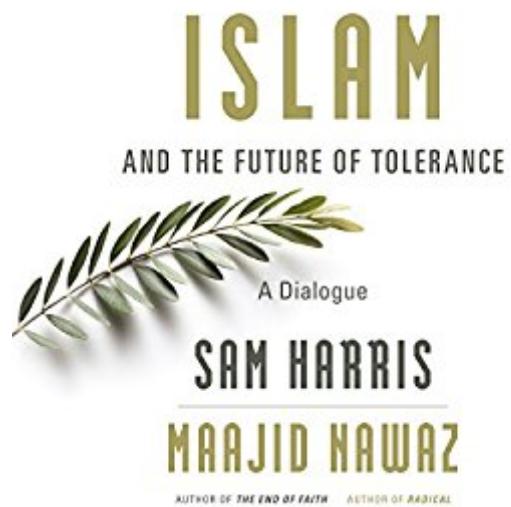


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# Islam And The Future Of Tolerance: A Dialogue



## **Synopsis**

In this short book, Sam Harris and Maajid Nawaz invite you to join an urgently needed conversation: Is Islam a religion of peace or war? Is it amenable to reform? Why do so many Muslims seem drawn to extremism? What do words like Islamism, jihadism, and fundamentalism mean in today's world? Remarkable for the breadth and depth of its analysis, this dialogue between a famous atheist and a former radical is all the more startling for its decorum. Harris and Nawaz have produced something genuinely new: they engage one of the most polarizing issues of our time - fearlessly and fully - and actually make progress. Islam and the Future of Tolerance has been published with the explicit goal of inspiring a wider public discussion by way of example. In a world riven by misunderstanding and violence, Harris and Nawaz demonstrate how two people with very different views can find common ground.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Sam Harris and Maajid Nawaz know more about Islam than Reza Aslan, Glenn Greenwald, Karen Armstrong, and all the other smears of critics of Islam combined, and they prove it in this wonderful short book. With unwavering honesty, they delve into what truly inspires Islamic violence, oppression, and hate, whether it is the Quran, Hadith, or Muslims following Muhammad's example, they aren't afraid to address the true inspiration for radical Islam. Each approaches the subject from their own background, Nawaz as a moderate Muslim, and Harris as a free thinker, to address what can be done to increase tolerance in the Islamic world. This book is vital to both non-Muslims AND

Muslims to realize that beliefs matter, motivation matters, religious doctrines matter, and increasing secularism in the Islamic world is essential if Islamic oppression is going to recede. This book is a strong primer that everyone who buys into the hype of 'Islamophobia' should read. It is OKAY and NECESSARY to criticize religion. This book is a much needed critique and discussion that more people ought to have the courage to have.

Not much new ground is covered, but proves that conversation is possible on a difficult subject. (Nawaz provides helpful definitions of "Islamist", "jihadist" and other similar terms.) Compare this with the pouting racist vitriol of the regressive left (Glenn Greenwald, Murtaza Husain, Nathan Lean) and it clarifies the better way forward.

Followers of Harris probably won't pick up much new from him, but the arguments Maajid puts forth regarding a logical approach for Islamic reform are compelling and encouraging. Among the absurd conflict that exists among progressives (I use that term loosely), it's refreshing to see a truly civilized dialog between opposing views that understand a common goal (to persuade a relative minority of Muslims that faith and human rights are not mutually exclusive) without accusations of fallacies, racism, bigotry and whatever other vocabulary "regressives" can pull out of their ninth grade English hats.

The read is fantastically quick, but it lays an amazingly useful mental frame-work in order to understand the global phenomena of political Islam. It is fascinating how the two have managed to shift the weight of the arguments back onto the turf of the pseudo-liberals, who apologize for all radical behavior as if its causes could never be Islam. Those critics have a lot to answer for according to Harris and Nawaz, in the books brilliantly explained concept of the "low expectations of reverse racism." I am hesitant to say that this book will change anyones views who has deeply held convictions on the topic, because of the sheer polarization of the discourse; however, given the nature of the conversation in its civility, tone and the specificity of terms I think anyone giving this book an honest read will come out challenging one or more of their preconceived notions about Islam, minority-groups, liberalism, radicalization ect.

This is one of those books you end up finishing in a day because you can't stop reading. Harris and Nawaz are both very knowledgeable about the topic of Islam, although Nawaz has experience in actually being someone who grew up as Muslim and who had been an Islamist. This book truly is a

dialogue, and explores more nuanced aspects of various issues that Harris has attempted to engage others in before (not with any success, until now). They also define specific terms so that meaning is clarified, which is the basis of any real conversation. The devil is in the details, as the phrase goes, and we can see now that the problem of Islamism and jihad is much more complicated than the tribalistic notion of "the West versus Islam." Read this book and learn, think...start a conversation.

In this honest and respectful exchange, Sam Harris and Maajid Nawaz illuminate the issue of "jihadist terrorism" by explaining the distinctions between Islam (the religion), Islamism (the desire to impose some version of Islamic law on society), and Jihadism (the willingness to impose Islamic law through the use of force). It distinguishes between criticizing Islamic ideas and Muslims as people. This should be an obvious distinction, but in the current political climate, criticizing such ideas is often equated to bigotry, "racism" and "Islamophobia." The book shows how stifling honest discussion of the problems of radical Islamist ideology interferes with a much needed reformation and modernization of Islam, and undermines the work of the many brave Muslims who are seeking this reformation. This book couldn't have been written at a better time, or by two better minds.

Amidst ubiquitous criticisms that seem to intentionally misrepresent [Harris and Nawaz's] positions, this new work seems to clearly describe an objective that respects and bolsters every human's right to flourishing autonomy while condemning the same's iterations that diminishes that of others. Harris continues to impress as a philosopher, communicator, and scientist.

The work of both of these men is important, as is this book. I have a new, nuanced view of Islam, the problem extremism poses for the world, and more practical solutions. I bought this because I love Sam's other work and I expected an honest, unapologetic criticism of Islam and the dangerous "Islamophobia" meme, which he doesn't fail to deliver. The two start with the understanding that a successful reform of Islam will have to be done from within, which is why the work of the brilliant Nawaz and his organization is so important. The beauty of these two joining forces is they don't focus on the truth of Islam or the destructive force that is religion. Instead, they discuss more pragmatic solutions to jihadism such as more liberal interpretations of scripture or establishing better secular democracies in Muslim-majority countries.

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