Delve Deeper into New Muslim Cool
A film by Jennifer Maytorena Taylor

This multi-media resource list, compiled by Susan Conlon and Martha Perry of the Princeton Public Library includes books, films and other materials related to the issues presented in the film New Muslim Cool.

Puerto Rican-American rapper Hamza Pérez pulled himself out of drug dealing and street life 12 years ago and became a Muslim. Now he’s moved to Pittsburgh’s tough North Side to start a new religious community, rebuild his shattered family and take his message of faith to other young people through hard-hitting hip-hop music. But when the FBI raids his mosque, Hamza must confront the realities of the post-9/11 world, and himself. New Muslim Cool takes viewers on Hamza’s ride through streets, slums and jail cells — following his spiritual journey to some surprising places in an America that never stops changing.

ADULT NONFICTION

Abdo, Geneive. Mecca and Main Street: Muslim Life in America after 9/11. Oxford University Press, U.S. (paperback), 2007. The author traveled across the country, visiting schools, mosques, Islamic centers, radio stations, and homes. She reveals a community tired of being judged by American perceptions of Muslims overseas and eager to tell their own stories.


Al-Qazwini, Imam Sayid Hassanabnd Brad Crawford. American Crescent: A Muslim Cleric on the Power of His Faith, the Struggle Against Prejudice, and the Future of Islam and America. New York: Random House, 2007. In this inspiring narrative, one of this country’s most important Muslim leaders reveals the story of his life and his faith, and why Islam is good for America.


Aslan, Reza. No God, But God. New York: RandomHouse, INC, 2006. In this book, Reza Aslan examines the history of the origins of Islam and investigates the circumstances under which it was created.


Bayoumi, Moustafa. How Does It Feel to be a Problem?: Being Young and Arab in America. New York: Penguin Press, 2008. The story of how young Arab and Muslim Americans are forging lives for themselves in a country that often mistakes them for the enemy.


Cooke, Miriam and Lawrence, Bruce B. Muslim Networks from Hajj to Hip Hop. The University of North Carolina Press, 2005. Explores connections between Muslim networks and how it has shaped Islam. Relates the past to the present and shows how the two are intertwined; from Ibn Battuta to hip hopper Mos Def.


Grieve, Paul. A Brief Guide to Islam: History, Faith and Politics: The Complete Introduction. New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, 2006. An accessible but never simplistic guide that challenges stereotypical views, from women and banking to war and Malcolm X. Complete with advice for visitors to Muslim countries, and with carefully chosen primary sources, maps and illustrations, this is the ideal summary for the reader looking for an unbiased overview of the religious and political world issues that have become part of our everyday lives.

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Idliby, Ranya, Suzanne Oliver, Priscilla Warner. The Faith Club: A Muslim, a Christian, a Jew - Three Women Search for Understanding. New York: Free Press, 2007. Traces how three American women of different faiths worked together to understand one another while identifying the connections between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, during which they openly discussed the issues that divided them.

Karabell, Zachary. Peace Be Upon You: The Story of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish Coexistence. New York: Random House, Inc., 2007. The story of conflict and confrontation between Islam and the West has become daily news, but throughout the ages Muslims, Christians, and Jews have shared more than enmity and war: there is also a rich and textured history of coexistence that has all but disappeared from our collective memory. In this timely and revealing book, Karabell traces the legacy of tolerance and cooperation from the advent of Islam to the present day.

Lang, Jeffery. Even Angels Ask: A Journey to Islam in America. Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 1997. This book takes the reader along the path to Islam by discussing conflicts between faith and reason, difficulties associated with the decision to convert to Islam, obstructions to conversion erected by Muslims themselves, the indispensable experience of Islamic rituals, extremism within the Muslim community, and what the future may hold for American Muslims. Also by same author, Struggling to Surrender: Some Impressions of an American Convert to Islam, 2000.

LeVine, Mark. Heavy Metal Islam: Rock, Resistance, and the Struggle for the Soul of Islam. New York: Three Rivers Press, c2008. LeVine explores the influence of Western music on the Middle East through interviews with musicians and fans, introducing young Muslims struggling to reconcile their religion with a passion for music and a desire for change. The result is a revealing tour of contemporary Islamic culture through the evolving music scene in the Middle East and Northern Africa.


Safi, Omid. Progressive Muslims Speak. Oxford: OneWorld, 2003. This collection of articles from fifteen Muslim scholars and activists addresses the challenging and complex issues that confront Muslims today. Subjects range from the alienation of Muslim youth; Islamic law, marriage, feminism; to the role of democracy in Islam.

Smith, Jane I. Islam in America. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000. This book introduces the basic tenets of the Muslim faith, surveys the history of Islam in this country, and profiles the lifestyles, religious practices, and worldviews of American Muslims. The volume pays particular attention to the tension felt by many in this community as they attempt to live faithfully, adhering to their traditions while at the same time adapting to an alien culture that appears to many Muslims to be excessively secular and materialistic.

ADULT FICTION


Haji, Nafisa. The Writing on My Forehead. New York: William Morrow, 2009. From childhood, willful, intelligent Saira Qader broke the boundaries between her family’s traditions and her desire for independence. A free-spirited and rebellious Muslim-American of Indo-Pakistani descent, she rejected the constricting notions of family, duty, obligation, and fate, choosing instead to become a journalist, the world her home. Five years later, tragedy strikes, throwing Saira’s life into turmoil. Now the woman who chased the world to uncover the
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details of other lives must confront the truths of her own. In need of understanding, she looks to the stories of those who came before her grandparents, a beloved aunt, her mother and father. As Saira discovers the hope, pain, joy, and passion that defined their lives, she begins to face what she never wanted to admit—choice is not always our own, and that faith is not just an intellectual preference.

NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS


Wallace, Holly. Islam. Hauppauge, NY: Barrons Educational Series, Inc., 2006. Grades 2-4. Each book in the enlightening This Is My Faith series features true-life photographs and interviews with a child who talks about his or her faith and discusses its role in the life of the family. A boy from New Delhi talks about his faith in the one God, Allah, and its sacred scripture, the Koran. He recalls some of the teachings of Allah’s many prophets, including Mohammad.


FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Abdel-Fattah, Randa. Does My Head Look Big in This? New York: Orchard Books, c2007, c2005. Grades 7 and up. Year Eleven at an exclusive prep school in the suburbs of Melbourne, Australia, would be tough enough, but it is further complicated for Amal when she decides to wear the hijab, the Muslim head scarf, full-time as a badge of her faith—without losing her identity or sense of style.

Budhos, Marina. Ask Me No Questions. Grades 7-10. Fourteen-year-old Nadira, her sister, and their parents leave Bangladesh for New York City, but the expiration of their visas and the events of September 11, 2001, bring frustration, sorrow, and terror for the whole family.

Zakiyyah, Umm. If I Should Speak. Grades 8 and up. Al Walaa Publications, 2000. This book is about three college students, one Christian and the others Muslim, who find themselves unlikely roommates at a small, private American university.

FILMS,/videos AND BROADCASTS

Empires - Islam: Empire of Faith. Directed by Robert H. Gardner. PBS Paramount, DVD release 2005. TRT: 160 min. Islam: Empire of Faith is the epic, three-part PBS documentary series that charts the history of Islam from its beginnings in Mecca and Medina in the seventh century to the glory of the Ottoman Empire 1,000 years later. www.amazon.com

Inside Islam. Directed by Mark Hufnail. A&E Home Video, 2002. TRT: 100 min. The program traces Islam roots back to the Hebrew Bible and discover how the Five Pillars, the religion’s central tenets, helped spread Islam to the far corners of the world. Illuminating, important and objective and exposes the heart of a faith mired in controversy.
