



## Canadian Council of Muslim Women Le conseil canadien des femmes musulmanes

December 2015



In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, The Most Compassionate,

The Canadian Council of Muslim Women would like to wish each and every one of you happy holidays and a blessed new year. We pray that this year brings peace, joy, and good health to you and your families. This year we were blessed to celebrate the birth of both Jesus Christ and our Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon them both. Two people whose character and mercy is an example for us all. As CCMW will continue to emphasize our shared humanity, not focus on our differences, and as Muslims, we will strive for the triumph of the gentle and compassionate message of Islam over pettiness and divisions. May your new year be

### Follow us for the latest updates

If you are not already following us on through the links below, make sure you do in 2015. We will keep you updated on the latest news for Canadian Muslim women, how you can get involved, and what our amazing partners have been up to.



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### In This Issue

- What It's Actually Like to be a Muslim Girl in Canada
- Fatema Mernissi, Founder of

filled with adoration, happiness, warmth, and cheer; and may you pass on these to those around you too.

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December 2015



### What It's Actually Like to be a Muslim Girl in Canada

"Conversations around Islam often result in sweeping generalizations about a very diverse group. In Canada alone, there are more than half a million Muslim girls and women, and Muslims represent nearly 3 percent of the total population — a figure that will more than double by 2030, according to the Pew Research Center. At the end of 2015, Chatelaine Magazine sat down with seven Muslim teenage girls from various places and different sects to talk about their lives and their feelings about Canada. You can read the full article on our [website](#).

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### Fatema Mernissi, Founder of Islamic Feminism, Dies at 75

Fatema Mernissi, a Moroccan sociologist who was one of the founders of Islamic feminism, whose work included studies of the

- Islamic Feminism Dies at 75
- Men in Charge? Rethinking Authority in the Muslim Legal Tradition
- FILM: Between Allah & Me (And Everyone Else)
- Mothercraft Ottawa is Recruiting Arabic Speaking Volunteers
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- CCMW Speaks with Evan Soloman from Everything is Political
- PETITION: Justice in FGM Case
- Alia Hogben: Interfaith Panel, We Refuse to be Enemies

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### CCMW Quick Links

[Publications](#)

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sexual politics of Islamic Scripture and a memoir of her childhood in a domestic harem, died on Nov. 30 in Rabat. She was 75. You can read more about Fatema Mernissi's life [here](#).

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## **Men in Charge? Rethinking Authority in Muslim Legal Tradition**

Men in Charge? Rethinking Authority in Muslim Legal Tradition is a book which seeks to clarify questions and suggest some answers with regards to the assumption that God gave men authority over women. The book is the first product of a research initiative that began in Musawah in 2010, to understand how male dominance became embedded within Muslim legal tradition, which has legitimated and institutionalized a patriarchal model of family and gender relations. For more information on this visit our [website](#)

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## **Documentary: Between Allah & Me (And Everyone Else)**

CCMW is excited to promote the film "Between Allah & Me (And Everyone Else)." The film explores the challenges of Farida, Shaila,

[Position Papers](#)

[Presentation](#)

[Resources of Interest](#)

[Newsletters](#)

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### **Read Our Blog**

Learn about what Canadian Muslim women are thinking. Please [read](#) and share!

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[Donate](#)

### **Five Ways to Support CCMW**

#### **Phone**

Donate by phone. Call CCMW at (613) 382-2847.

#### **Online**

Donate online through CCMW's [website](#).

#### **Mai/ Email**

Donate with a check and/ or a credit card. Print this [form](#), fill and mail it to CCMWTO, 200 Bay Street, PO Box 64056, Toronto, ON, M5J 2T6, Canada or email to [info@ccmw.com](mailto:info@ccmw.com).

#### **Legacy**

Please remember CCMW in your will.

*Please indicate if you would like to be recognized on our donor list.*

**Every little bit helps to provide a future to Canadian Muslim communities by supporting their women!**

Naima, and Sara, four Torontonians Muslim women making decisions about their personal dress codes. When these women decide to start or stop wearing hijab, they cannot foresee the range of reactions other people will have to their choices. The film follows the women's personal journeys and their interactions with different members of society, and in doing so reveals that the piece of fabric called hijab carries many diverse meanings and messages. You can learn more about the film [here](#).

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### **Mothercraft Ottawa is Recruiting Arabic Speaking Volunteers**

Birth companions support vulnerable women during the prenatal, labour, and postnatal stages by providing reassurance and support necessary to navigate the world of parenting with confidence. Mothercraft Ottawa is seeking Arabic speaking volunteers to provide support and guidance to the many expectant women and families arriving from Syria. For more information visit their [website](#)

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### **Did you know?**

#### **Last year for our Violence Against Women project:**

CCMW trained **72** members to go into their local communities and train other women how to deliver violence against women community workshops.

CCMW held **22** national workshops.

CCMW provided **659** Canadians information on the **4** different forms of violence affecting Canadian Muslim women.

CCMW served **7** communities across Canada: Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

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#### **Last year for our Women in Niqab Speak project:**

CCWM surveyed **81** women in Ontario who wear the niqab.

CCMW held **4** media launches in London, Guelph, Toronto and Ottawa.

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### **CCMW Honouring Our Volunteers!**

We would like to honour some of our volunteers, Eman Aboelsaud and Zainab Gilani for their dedication and amazing contributions to CCMW. Eman is has been part of the member of CCMW Toronto and has done extensive work on our brand



**There will be some hard things said:  
Muslim Group Hears about Truth and Reconciliation**

The Ottawa chapter of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women organized a panel, including moderator Ferrukh Faruqi, The panel spent much of its time talking about echoes of the residential school system, which operated for more than 150 years. Some 150,000 aboriginal children went through the system, and thousands never returned home. The last school closed only about 20 years ago. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which probed the history of that school system and its lasting repercussions were released last June in a summary report. Read the full article [here](#).

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strategy. Zainab is also a member of the Toronto Chapter and has helped us to create an extensive fundraising manual to sustain our projects. Our volunteers are the backbone of this organization and we want to recognize and appreciate their hard work and dedication.

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**Eman Aboelsaud  
Marketing Volunteer**

Eman Aboelsaud was born in Manila, grew up in Cairo but spent most years of her life in Toronto. She is a marketing professional with over 10 years of experience both in corporate and non-profit organizations. Although her skill set is vast, her greatest expertise revolve in the worlds of branding, social media marketing and project planning. She's always learning and loves to help. She has worked with CCMW extensively to create a brand strategy to use nationally.

When she's not busy planning a corporate function with multiple stakeholders on a tight deadline and a non-profit budget, you can find her travelling to remote locales, re-reading the collected works of Oscar Wilde or baking with an obscene amount of butter.

## **Montreal Jews and Muslims Unite to Help Syrian Refugees.**

Jews and Muslims can find common cause in assisting Syrian refugees, and in doing so, appreciate the similarity of their religious values. That was the message conveyed at a meeting of members of the two communities addressed by Rabbi Lisa Grushcow, senior rabbi of Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, and Shaheen Ashraf, secretary of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women, Montreal chapter. You can read the full article on our [website](#)

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### **CCMW Ottawa Attends NAACJ 40th Anniversary**

On November 25 CCMW Ottawa member Farhat Rehman attended a reception at National Associations Active in Criminal Justice. It was their 40th anniversary attended by representatives of Justice agencies. Senator Cowan, active in Justice issues spoke of the work to improve the justice system, and optimism in the rescinding of repressive legislations like C-51. You can learn more about NAACJ at [www.naacj.org](http://www.naacj.org)

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### **Zainab Gilani National Volunteer**

Zainab Gilani is a CCMW Toronto Chapter volunteer. She holds a BA Honours in Political Science from the University of Toronto. She is a Client advisor at RBC. Traveller. Political Junkie. Contributed to different non profit organizations in the Greater Toronto Area. Event planner by passion. Strong advocate of children's right to education. Zainab dedicated much of her time to creating a manual for CCMW's annual fundraiser, Women Who Inspire. She is definitely an inspiring and dedicated woman.

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### **Campaigns**

#### **Annual fundraiser: Women Who Inspire**

The Lila Fahlman Scholarship is named after the late Dr. Lila Fahlman, a renowned educator and founder of CCMW (Canadian Council of Muslim Women). The scholarship is sponsored by CCMW with generous donations from CCMW members and supporters. Each year, at CCMW's annual brunch, funds are raised for Canadian Muslim women to assist in their education.

At the same event CCMW awards Canadian Muslim women who achieved excellence in sports, business, education, the arts,



## CCMW Participates in a Muslim-Catholic Student Dialogue Meeting

CCMW National attended a Muslim-Catholic Student Dialogue at the Multifaith Centre at the University of Toronto. The Muslim-Catholic Student Dialogue, supported by the Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto and the Canadian Council of Imams, strives to foster mutual and deeper understandings of the Islamic and Catholic faiths. The dialogue supports uniting and life-giving friendships between Catholic and Muslim students through thought-provoking dialogues on topics related to both faiths and by living out these faiths through social service activities. To learn more about this initiative you can email us at [info@ccmw.com](mailto:info@ccmw.com)



## Dear Friends and Supporters of the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group

Fighting terrorism should never be an excuse to eliminate or diminish our civil liberties. Unfortunately, the new Anti-Terrorism Act 2015, or what everyone knows as C-51, was passed this year. It greatly endangers our civil rights and makes them vulnerable. Meanwhile, the government never brought any evidence to show how this new highly intrusive piece of legislation will make Canadians safer or feel more secure. Read the full article [here](#).

community service and leadership.

Learn more about the [scholarships](#) and the [awards](#).

### Monthly Giving

CCMW is always looking for support from its members and partners from various communities across Canada. If you would like to participate, access the [form](#).



### Vision

Ensure the equality, equity and empowerment of Canadian Muslim women.

### Values

- To promote Muslim women's identity in the Canadian context.
- To assist Muslim women to gain an understanding of their rights, responsibilities and roles in Canadian society.
- To promote and encourage understanding and interfaith dialogue between Muslims and other faith communities.
- To contribute to Canadian society the knowledge, life experiences and ideas of Muslim women for the benefit of all.
- To strengthen the bonds of sisterhood among the Muslim communities and among Muslim individuals.
- To stimulate Islamic thinking and action among Muslim women in the Canadian setting.

Shema & Iqra': The Jewish-Muslim Text Project  
Presents

## Blood, Milk, and Tears.

### Menstruating, Nursing, and Mourning in Islamic and Jewish Sources

A text-study course & arts collective for Muslim and Jewish women


Where:  
Multi-Faith Centre  
Multi-Purpose Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
569 Spadina Road



When:  
Tuesday, January 26<sup>th</sup>-March 2<sup>nd</sup>  
7:00-9:30 pm  
Text-study: 7pm -8:30 pm  
Arts collaboration: 8:30-9:30  
Featuring art, music and writings of guest artists and participants

Fee  
**Students – free**  
**Others -\$15 per class**  
Co-curricular credit also available

**Capacity is Limited**  
Please register @ [www.multifaith.utoronto.ca](http://www.multifaith.utoronto.ca)

Taught by Shari Goldberg, PhD, in collaboration with guest artists



- To acknowledge and respect the cultural differences among Canadian Muslim women, and to recognize and develop our common cultural heritage.
- To promote a better understanding of Islam and the Islamic way of life in the North American setting.
- To represent Canadian Muslim women at national and international forums.
- To encourage the organization and coordination of Muslim women's organizations across Canada.

### Guiding Principles

- We are guided by the Quranic message of God's mercy and justice, and of the equality of all persons, and that each person is directly answerable to God.
- We value a pluralistic society, and foster the goal of strength and diversity within a unifying vision and the values of Canada. Our identity of being Muslim women and of diverse ethnicity and race is integral to being Canadian.
- As Canadians, we abide by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the law of Canada.
- We believe in the universality of human rights, which means equality and social justice, with no restrictions or discrimination based on gender or race.
- We are vigilant in safeguarding and enhancing our identity and our rights to make informed choices amongst a variety of options.
- We acknowledge that CCMW is one voice amongst many who speak on behalf of Muslim women, and that there are others who may represent differing perspectives.
- We aim to be actively inclusive and accepting of diversity among ourselves, as Muslim women.



### Why We Should Welcome Refugees

CCMW Board Member Shaheen Ashraf spoke on a panel at the Canadian Association for Race Relations and the Muslim Jewish Dialogue where she gave an inspiring talk. The following is an excerpt from that speech: "Canada is known around the world as a Compassionate Country. I mean we did admit a lot of Europeans



after World War II. We also cannot forget admitting Vietnamese people who came to be known as Boat People as they arrived in them. I think, if I am not mistaken, many European countries ARE taking in refugees from Syria. Germany for one, is taking a large number. (somewhere around 800,000- a million). God has blessed us with this huge wonderful country where these 25,000 would be like a drop in a bucket." Read the full speech [here](#).

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### How to Engage Men and Boys to End Violence in the Family? Have a say!

The **Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW)** and **White Ribbon (WR)** will be hosting a focus group to hear from Muslim communities about how to engage men and boys to end violence in families. Feedback from participants will be used to help develop an engagement model toolkit for Canadian Muslim men and boys.

**Topics of discussion will include, but not limited to:** Female genital mutilation, forced marriage, marital rape and other sexualized violence, elder abuse, physical violence, emotional violence, spiritual abuse, body shaming and guilt, etc.

**Looking to hear from:** Male youth and adults, service professionals, civic leaders, faith leaders, and female youth and adults.

**Meeting date & time:**

Saturday, January 23, 2016; 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm  
Training Room, 219 Argyle Avenue, Suite 400, Ottawa, ON, K2P 2H4

Refreshments will be provided. We welcome you to join us in the discussion.

This event is free but registration is required.

**To register please contact:** [projects@ccmw.com](mailto:projects@ccmw.com)

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Equity  
Equality  
Empowerment

Équité  
Égalité  
Émancipation

## TORONTO and OTTAWA Focus Group Call Out: Engaging Boys and Men to End Violence in the Family.

CCMW in conjunction with White Ribbon is hosting focus groups to hear from Muslim communities about how to engage men and boys to end violence in families. Feedback will be used to help develop a toolkit. The Ottawa focus group will be held on Saturday January 23 2016 at 12:30 pm, at 2194 Argyle Avenue, Suite 400, Ottawa, K2P

2H4. The Toronto focus group will be held on Saturday January 16th 2016 from 1:00pm, at Forest Glen West Room, Burnhamthorpe Community Center. 1500 Gulleden Dr., Mississauga, ON L4X 2T7

For more information on these focus groups visit our [website](#).

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**CCMW Speaks with Evan Soloman  
from Everything is Political**

CCMW Executive director spoke with Evan Solomon host of Everything is Political after his interview with Ann Coulter. You can listen to the full interview below [here](#)

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**PETITION: Egypt Enforce Conviction Against Doctor  
in FGM Related Death of Soheir Al-Batea**

In July 2013 Equality Now called for enforcement of the anti-FGM law and justice in the case of 13-year-old Soheir al-Batea who died after Dr. Raslan Fadl allegedly performed female genital mutilation (FGM) on her at her father's request in a clinic north-east of Cairo. Dr. Fadl was interrogated by prosecutors and released on bail pending investigation. Sign the petition [here](#) to support.

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**Alia Hogben:  
Holy Blossom Synagog**

I said that if we refuse to be enemies, then what is required of us to

ensure we don't fall into the trap of intolerance and discrimination? If we don't try to learn from each other and build on our shared common ground then we will continue to be isolated from each other as religious communities. It is through interfaith dialogue that we will find our common ground so we can take concrete actions of solidarity for our common good. This is not to ignore our differences but it is to emphasize our shared values and goals for peace and the welfare of all peoples. Read the full article [here](#)

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