

Responding to a growing demand for global curriculum, **Link TV** (www.linktv.org), an independent television channel dedicated to presenting diverse international perspectives, is proud to launch the **Global Link of World Educators (GLOWE)** pilot initiative. The **GLOWE** project uses **Link TV** programming to develop global cultural understanding and media literacy. All media is delivered **free of charge, online** (www.linktv.org/teachers) or via DVD, and accompanied by standards-based, participatory learning guides. To contact us: teachers@linktv.org



FAST FACTS: Women and Islam

Early Years of Women in Islam

The Islamic faith has historically upheld beliefs that respect women and their role in society, although these teachings have often been misrepresented and misinterpreted by Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

When Islam first developed on the Arabian Peninsula 14 centuries ago, women and girls faced oppression in many forms. Women were denied basic human rights: they were often kept as slaves and unwanted baby girls were killed (female infanticide). The teachings of Muhammad led to important legal and societal changes that helped eliminate these cruel customs.

With the introduction of Islam, women in the region gained many rights, including the right to: inherit property from their parents; keep the assets of their deceased husbands; keep the revenues from their labor; marry according to their preference; vote and be involved in decision-making; and acquire an education.

Origin of Hijab

The origin of **hijab**, women's head and body covering, dates back to ancient times and the teachings of the Qur'an. The Qur'an encourages **both** men and women to dress modestly and to avert their eyes when encountering each other—in order to understand each other first as human beings, not as men or women.

In Islamic scholarship, hijab also refers more broadly to modesty, privacy, and morality. Many religions, including Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism, also have traditions of modesty and head coverings.

Today, Muslim women from different countries and cultures adopt many varieties of hijab, ranging from a simple headscarf to a full-length robe and facial veil.

Many Muslim women choose not to wear any head covering. In the United States, about as many Muslim women wear hijab as those who don't.

American Muslim Women Today

Today's American Muslim women hold leadership positions at a number of civil rights organizations. They also work as doctors and nurses, college professors, corporate executives, fashion designers, musicians, and a host of other careers.

Excerpted and adapted from the One Nation website: www.onenationforall.org

To learn about an American woman, and former U.S. soldier, who converted to Islam and chose to wear hijab, see the One Nation 2008 award-winning film, "The Colors of Veil" at <http://www.linktv.org/onenation/films/view/414/>

For more on women and the hijab, see our learning guide for [Global Pulse: Turkey's Headscarf Battle](#)

To see different types of head coverings from around the world, see the "Interpreting Veils"

Illustrations in the Seattle Times:

http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/news/lifestyles/links/veils_05.html