

Scholars Circle Resource Guide

Double-sided

The 10/7 HAMAS Attack: When Sexually Assaulted Women Are Not Believed

SCHOLARS CIRCLE



About Dr. Mia Bloom

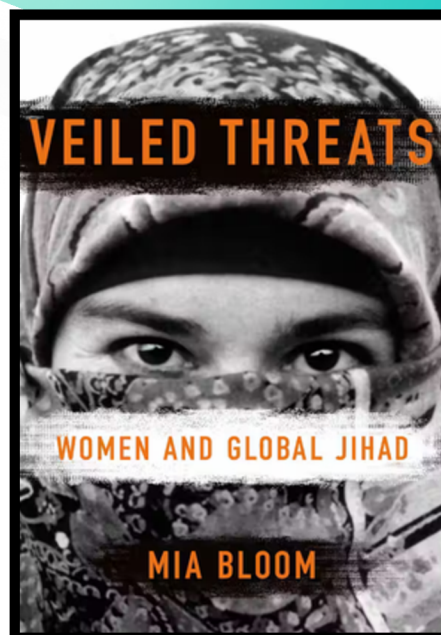
Mia is an International Security Fellow at New America and a Professor at Georgia State University. She speaks eight languages and has authored six books on violent extremism, including "Dying to Kill" and "Bombshell." Her most recent book, "Veiled Threats", coming out Winter 2025, explores the diverse roles of women involved in jihad. Mia has held appointments at Cornell, Harvard, Princeton, and McGill, and serves on several Counter-Radicalization boards. She holds a PhD from Columbia University and advanced degrees from Georgetown and McGill.

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Veiled Threats explores the range of roles of the women involved in jihad.

Pre-order available - visit cornellpress.cornell.edu



MIA'S UPCOMING LECTURES

- Veiled Threats: Women and Jihad
- The Anti-Semitic Roots of QAnon
- Common Ground: Where Extremists Converge

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Common Q&A's

Why is gender based violence used in conflict?

Gender-based violence in conflict is often used to demoralize the opposing side, especially in territorial disputes. While debates exist on whether it's more common in ethnic or ideological conflicts, its occurrence has clearly increased in recent years.

Why was 10/7 treated differently by feminist groups and women-led CSO's (civil society organizations)?

October 7th has been treated differently than women kidnapped in Nigeria by Boko Haram or ISIS capture of Mount Sinjar of Yazidis, in part because the conflict is seen through a post-colonial lens. For many of the female-led civil society organizations, they perceive (incorrectly) that Israel is a settler colonial endeavor and that Palestinians are a colonized people of color. The reality of this is much more complex and fails to account for the majority of Israelis being of Middle Eastern descent or the 160,000 Israelis whose families are from Ethiopia and are clearly NOT white. The international organizations link the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to protests in support of people of color and the justice protests after George Floyd was killed in 2020.

How do Jihadi groups justify using sexual violence?

Thirty years ago, jihadi groups avoided sexual violence, with Osama Bin Laden opposing female hostages due to this risk. However, a shift occurred after Darfur, as groups like Boko Haram and ISIS revived the practice of sexual slavery (sabiyya), which modern Muslim states have outlawed. Recently, jihadi groups have increasingly ignored the abuse of women, justifying it as war booty (anfal) rather than temporary hostage-taking.

Key Takeaways

- ☑ When the study of Gender Based Violence began after the conflict in Bosnia, very few groups using rape during war were Islamic. In fact al Qaeda and other groups eschewed using violence against women.
- ☑ Al Qaeda and other Jihadi groups differentiate between women they intend to use as a hostage for negotiation purposes and those they capture and consider sex slaves.
- ☑ Women in these conflict rarely help other women and some even participate in sexual violence committed against other women. This challenges many assumptions in the feminist literature about a sisterhood.

The views expressed by the speaker don't necessarily reflect Chai Mitzvah's official position.

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