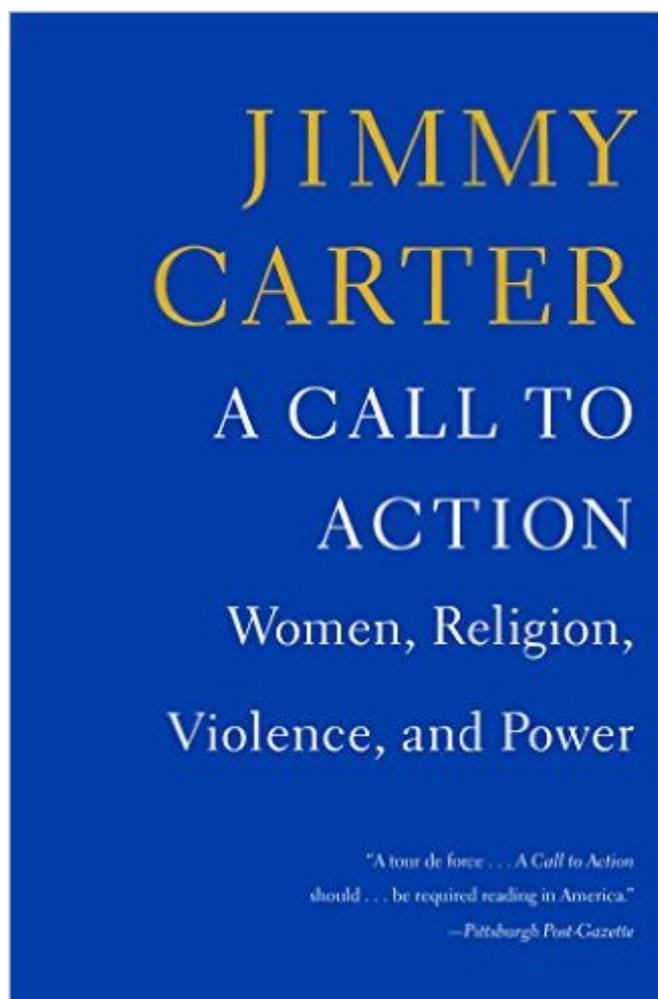


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A Call To Action: Women, Religion, Violence, And Power



Synopsis

In the highly acclaimed bestselling *A Call to Action*, President Jimmy Carter addresses the world's most serious, pervasive, and ignored violation of basic human rights: the ongoing discrimination and violence against women and girls. President Carter was encouraged to write this book by a wide coalition of leaders of all faiths. His urgent report covers a system of discrimination that extends to every nation. Women are deprived of equal opportunity in wealthier nations and oppressed by men in others, forced to suffer servitude, child marriage, and genital cutting. The most vulnerable and their children are trapped in war and violence. *A Call to Action* addresses the suffering inflicted upon women by a false interpretation of carefully selected religious texts and a growing tolerance of violence and warfare. Key verses are often omitted or quoted out of context by male religious leaders to exalt the status of men and exclude women. And in nations that accept or even glorify violence, this perceived inequality becomes the basis for abuse. Carter draws upon his own experiences and the testimony of courageous women from all regions and all major religions to demonstrate that women around the world, more than half of all human beings, are being denied equal rights. This is an informed and passionate charge about a devastating effect on economic prosperity and unconscionable human suffering. It affects us all.

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Customer Reviews

Carter will probably antagonize more people with this book than any of his others. He has documented his position with facts and statistics that can't be disputed. Such as, in India female genocide has become so common that women are only about two thirds as numerous as men.

Similar findings are documented for China, and the inferiority of women is glaringly obvious in the Middle East. What will raise so much objection to his work is that he points out how all the major religions can be used to justify female inferiority and thus the ill treatment of women. The Bible, the Koran, and Hindu texts all have passages explicitly claiming male superiority. Of course, the statements are contradicted elsewhere in the sacred writings, but male leaders have no trouble selecting the passages that enforce their superiority. Carter doesn't hesitate to shine light on the United States and its rampant sex trade. One can't help but admire his courage when he picks out Atlanta as the busiest place in the business of sex, but what must be most admired is how he tells of leaving the religion in which he was raised-and served as a Sunday School teacher-when he realized how much sex discrimination existed in the Southern Baptist denomination. He also takes on the Catholic Church for its sex discrimination. Its a book that's sure to be discussed and cursed for a long time. A tremendous eye opener. eschusky.com

I know Jimmy Carter takes a lot of flack for his performance as a President, fine .But he is truly an incredible American. This book lays out in clear, direct language the global ills and lack of progress we can make if we face if we oppress 50% of the population. Often dismissed as 'women's issues', sexual repression in the form of gendercide, family violence, political and religious attacks on family planning, etc affect the human race as a whole. He points to examples in history and illustrates his points with comparative cultures. I'm drawn to his humble approach and peace-driven (very logical) reasoning. He points out we have become a world where violence is the first choice instead of a last resort. Not to sound hippy-dippy, but he makes a very good point that it does not make for a better world. I would love to put this in the hands of every religious fundamentalist out there, because it would be a dose of intelligence, rationale and humility in their willfully ignorant worlds. I feel this book was timely, as it seems there is a push-back on women's progression in the past few years. It feels like women have to defend themselves for their sexuality and their desire for equality at every turn. His common sense views feel almost damn therapeutic in a world full of crazy.

This is an eye opening and startling account of what happens to little girls in the Middle East, Asia and other countries. The sickening practice of genital mutilation of young girls is a horror in any day and age. The slavery of young women in the world is rampant. There is much more in this book that needs to be read by all people. Thank you President Carter for exposing these horrors in today's world.

Actually, all thinking men and women should. If you open your mind, this will open your eyes. It is hard to read. You will be appalled. You will be very troubled. You may even lose some sleep. But take your medicine. This is stuff you need to know, an inconvenient truth. Jimmy Carter manages to present the overwhelming extent of abuse and treatment of women and girls with devastating effect in a very few pages. I knew about much of this before reading this book, and I found this hard to read myself. And the complicity of presumably the greatest nation in the world and especially those who claim to be followers of Jesus is beyond appalling. But this book is a call to action, and Jimmy Carter is a modern-day prophet. He is right: Buy-in and action by men is critical. Whether this book is important or not will depend on the actions of the readers. If enough men (and women) use their influence, no matter how small, to address this injustice, the book will be important. The following remarks are directed specifically to groups of which I am, or have been, an insider. I will leave addressing other groups, such as Muslims, to insiders of those groups. As a biblical scholar, I am all too aware of selective interpretation of the Bible. Actually, I believe some of the texts used to bludgeon women into submission say what the fundamentalists think they say. But as a former fundamentalist, I also believe that those scriptures are inimical to Jesus, and that the trajectory of Christianity moved in concert with the paternalistic culture of the ancient world until the original message of Jesus was almost forgotten, and certainly ignored. I selectively interpret the Bible myself: My conclusion is that the teachings of Jesus trump those later time- and culture-bound instructions. I would ask religionists of all stripes to reflect that 110 million abortions, not to say the untold and untellable tragedy of consequent disease, poverty, and unwanted children, would be eliminated by universal birth control education and access. I would ask them to reflect that fighting the human sexual instinct makes about as much sense as trying to keep the sun from rising. This does not preclude teaching that higher principles should govern human sexual behavior (as Carter agrees). I ask fundamentalists: Why focus on a few carefully-selected texts rather than being fundamentally passionate about what mattered to Jesus: The Kingdom of God, the poor, the marginalized, the dispossessed, the nobodies, and yes, the women and the children? I ask evangelicals: Why is the good news of the gospel (evangelium) made into such bad news for women and girls, over half the world's population? Remember that Jimmy Carter is one of us, and reflect on how painful it must have been for him to renounce his denominational affiliation because of their attitudes towards women. If enough men and religious women open their eyes and minds, this book will be important. There are many so hidebound and narrow that they will persist in their prejudices no matter what, and these cannot be taught. Nothing can be done about them. It is my hope that there are enough of the rest of us, influenced by this voice, and an increasing chorus

of voices of many others, that eventually, the tipping point will be reached, the rest of us will prevail, and *Justice* will roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

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