

Reporting British Muslims: death cults and misogyny

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Now here's an unusual take on Muslims and the media: a feminist woman with a Muslim background who believes that young Muslims are falling victim to a Death Cult fuelled by misogyny. The [Channel 4 News](#)' presenter and reporter Samira Ahmed believes that the British media simply can't cope with the complexity of reporting the current debates with and within Islam. She told an audience at the LSE last night that she spends much of her time in the newsroom correcting false assumptions and crass depictions of stories involving Muslims. Pressed hard by Senior LSE lecturer [Damien Tambini](#), she refused to accuse fellow journalists of fuelling the flames of cultural division. Her point was more that the issues are so difficult, so contradictory and so alien to the media mainstream, that news professionals aren't coming up to scratch.

Samira cited the infamous case of ['Molly' Campbell](#) or Misbah Iram Ahmed Rana as she now wants to be known. The media assumed that the Pakistani father of this Stornaway teenager had dragged her off for an arranged marriage. Cue endless features on this pernicious aspect of Islam. In fact it was a straight-forward, good old-fashioned custody battle. But the damage was done before everyone got their facts straight (except, of course at Channel 4 News, thanks to Samira...) [Samira Ahmed](#)

But Samira Ahmed's point was not that poor old British Muslims are being done down by a wicked press. She said she doesn't believe in "Islamophobia". What made her especially interesting was her view that the UK media often *fails* to recognise extremist dangers, partly because of "over-sensitivity". She feels that there is, for example, an under-reporting of misogyny among political extremists, including certain Islamic groups. And she thinks that this is a crucial factor in creating the 'Death Cult' of suicide bombers prepared to kill innocent people for their beliefs.

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