

Hanifa Deen

Institute of Cultural Diversity
Chair
Editor, *Sultana's Dream*



Hanifa Deen is a Melbourne-based award winning author who writes narrative non-fiction. Previous positions: Hearing Commissioner, Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission; Board of Directors, Special Broadcasting Services (SBS) as well as Deputy Commissioner Multicultural & Ethnic Affairs WA and Director Community Education at the inaugural Victorian Ethnic Affairs Commission. Publications include:

- *Caravanserai: Journey Among Australian Muslims*;
- *Broken Bangles*;
- *The Jihad Seminar*;
- *Ali Abdul v. The King* and
- *On the Trail of Taslima*.

She is also the Founding Editor of *Sultana's Dream* an online magazine written and produced by Australian Muslim women, and Chairs the Institute of Cultural Diversity.

Narrative Non-Fiction: Subverting Muslim Stereotypes

Narrative non-fiction can make a unique contribution towards confronting stereotypes and facilitating social cohesion especially in times of heightened Islamophobia. Portraying Australian Muslims in their diversity and in their individuality to an often untouched, unmoved audience, helps reduce social distance. Muslim women especially are rendered less 'invisible'.

The stories collected in *Caravanserai* and *Broken Bangles* combine literary methods with the skill of the investigative journalist. Based on hundreds of interviews they portray modern Australian Muslims with their diversity of origins and individual life journeys. The *Jihad Seminar* analyses Victoria's first religious vilification case in 2003. The narratives in *Ali Abdul v. The King* are based on material from the National Australian Archives. Bringing together the skills of the historian and of the literary writer, these books portray individual Muslims living in Australia in the past and in the present. By being entertaining and by harnessing the subjectivity of the writer, narrative non-fiction can subvert stereotypes and give minorities a human face.

