

## **Open Letter on Raquel Evita Saraswati / Rachel Elizabeth Seidel**

Concern is rising among the community of American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) staff, volunteers, and supporters regarding the controversy surrounding the recent hiring of Raquel Saraswati to AFSC's senior leadership. Saraswati currently serves as the organization's Chief Equity, Inclusion, and Culture Officer. Despite years of publicly and privately identifying herself as a person of color, evidence has emerged that contradicts her claims and confirms that her heritage is white/European, specifically German on the maternal side and Italian on the paternal side.

We are a group of individuals who care deeply about AFSC and have chosen to remain anonymous for protection from any potential retaliation. Saraswati has gone to great lengths to purge much of the public records that can correct her mistruths regarding her race and ethnicity.<sup>1</sup> Through in-depth research, we are summarizing the key findings of our careful investigation in this open letter. We hope that this will catalyze further truth-telling and accountability, particularly in light of the harms that Saraswati's lies have inflicted on communities of color that she purports to represent.

Saraswati's name changes have gone from Rachel Elizabeth Seidel to Raquel Evita Seidel to Raquel Evita Saraswati.<sup>2</sup> While Rachel and Elizabeth are recognizable European names, Raquel and Evita are recognizable Latinx names. And while Seidel is a recognizable European name, Saraswati is a recognizable South Asian name. Her choice of Saraswati refers to the Hindu goddess. Saraswati has represented herself as having Arab, Indian, and Latin roots. Yet we have confirmed with members of Saraswati's family directly that her claims to non-European heritage are false.

Rachel Elizabeth Seidel was born in Paterson, New Jersey on December 14, 1983. She spent a great deal of her childhood in Windham, New York<sup>3</sup> and she attended the public school system in Windham.<sup>4</sup> Seidel then attended the prestigious Emma Willard School as a boarding student in Troy, New York,<sup>5</sup> later going on to Simmons College (now Simmons University) in Boston, Massachusetts,<sup>6</sup> where she studied International Relations.<sup>7</sup> During college, she identified as a Catholic Latina, in addition to claims to Arab ancestry,<sup>8</sup> the latter of which she continues to narrate in the present.<sup>9</sup>

We have learned that Saraswati's grandparents are Carl Seidel and Winifred (Everett) Seidel, who married in 1942 and had roots in Europe, New Jersey, New York, and Delaware.<sup>10</sup> After their divorce, Carl Seidel married Jacqueline Haroldson in 1984. Winifred Seidel passed away in 2018 and was laid to rest at the Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Dagsboro, Delaware.<sup>11</sup> Her obituary lists her three children: Lorraine Seidel, Harry Seidel, and Carol Perone, as well as seven grandchildren, including Rachel Seidel.<sup>12</sup>

The Seidels owned a business, the Country Suite Bed and Breakfast, in Windham.<sup>13</sup> Lorraine Seidel ran the Country Suite B&B with her business partner, Sondra Clark, until they closed the establishment and moved to Delaware.<sup>14</sup> Rachel Seidel spent significant time at their Windham address. There is a record of a Lorraine Seidel marrying Vincent S. Tangelo in 1987 in Hackensack, New Jersey.<sup>15</sup>

Carol Perone married Flory Perone in 1986 in the same city of Hackensack, New Jersey.<sup>16</sup> Carol Perone is the biological mother of Rachel Seidel/Raquel Saraswati.<sup>17</sup> Carol Perone (whose biological parents were Ed Newman and Myrtle Burkhardt) was adopted by Carl and Winifred Seidel, has had several children of her own including a daughter she gave up for adoption in 1979.<sup>18</sup> Carol was in a relationship with a man of Italian heritage who is confirmed to be Raquel's biological father, but they separated before her marriage to Flory Perone.<sup>19</sup> Flory Perone, Raquel's stepfather, passed away in 2006, and his obituary lists Rachel Seidel as his daughter.<sup>20</sup>

In a public interview, Saraswati has stated that she became estranged from her parents.<sup>21</sup> She also converted to Islam. In 2004, Saraswati wrote an article for *Boho Magazine*—a magazine “by women of color.” In it, she refers to her family's Latinx background and mentions her struggle to find a community of color at her predominantly white women's college (Simmons University). She writes about her happiness in eventually finding a space where she wasn't questioned as a woman of color.<sup>22</sup> In 2005, Saraswati married Anh Dao Kolb, though they later permanently separated. A *Boston Globe* article covering their marriage reported on Seidel's claim to her background's “Arab and Latin traditions.”<sup>23</sup> In 2006, Seidel referred to her marriage while participating in an *India New England News* profile of weddings of Indian-Americans.<sup>24</sup>

Saraswati has described herself in the public domain as a “performer” and spoken-word artist, and she began television appearances, becoming recognized for her queer identity and LGBTQ rights activism.<sup>25</sup> She established her public-facing career in conservative circles in a post-9-11 context rife with anti-Muslim bigotry and the search for token Muslim voices.<sup>26</sup> Saraswati served as the executive assistant for Irshad Manji,<sup>27</sup> one of the world's most infamous Islamophobes.<sup>28</sup> Saraswati's early media recognition included her 2007 CNN appearance with conservative Glenn Beck as a “moderate” Muslim opposed to extremism. Saraswati stated on air, “I feel like a lot of higher education at the moment is very concerned about multiculturalism, appearing to be racist, about all of that... I do think that if we are so afraid to look critically at Islam, because we don't want to offend people, then nothing is going to happen. And these people who get sent to these universities are just being made to think the way they think.”<sup>29</sup> Saraswati has also appeared on *Fox News*<sup>30</sup> and *Newsmax*<sup>31</sup> (the former is considered right-wing and the latter is considered a far-right news channel).

In 2013, Saraswati appeared in *Honor Diaries*,<sup>32</sup> a documentary film produced by the Clarion Project.<sup>33</sup> The Southern Poverty Law Center has listed the Clarion Project as an “anti-Muslim hate group.”<sup>34</sup> The U.S.-based Muslim advocacy group, the Council on American-Islamic Relations, stated that the Clarion Project is an organization that promotes Islamophobia in American society and has been described as part of the “counter-jihad movement.”<sup>35</sup> The Clarion Project’s films have been criticized for falsifying information. In the *Honor Diaries*, Saraswati claimed to be targeted by Muslim extremists, stating “There are threats of murder, there are threats of rape, physical mutilation. I’m certainly in fear when I receive an email threatening to sexually assault me.”<sup>36</sup> Saraswati also worked with the American Islamic Forum for Democracy,<sup>37</sup> which was funded by Islamophobe Zuhdi Jasser.<sup>38</sup> We are not aware of Saraswati ever publicly apologizing for her record of contributions to Islamophobia.

In 2009, Saraswati continued to claim having Arab blood during an interview focused on her relationship with her Israeli friend, Roi Ben-Yehuda, stating, “the lives in Israel/Palestine are connected to my own – not just because my lineage shares blood with theirs – but also because the welfare of Palestinians, of Israelis and of human beings the world over – is impacted by what happens in that region.”<sup>39</sup>

Saraswati presently identifies Spanish as her “native or bilingual proficiency” language.<sup>40</sup> An examination of her photographs, cross-referenced with our interviews with individuals who have known Saraswati personally over the years, reveal that the shades of bronzer she applies to her face have become darker over time. This parallels her political shift to the left as she entered the social justice world, rising up the progressive ranks, including the organization Family Equality, the City of Philadelphia Mayor’s Office, and now as the head of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for AFSC, with its wide national and global reach.<sup>41</sup> Saraswati also serves as the staff liaison for AFSC’s Board, Community, Equality, and Justice Committee, the chief governance unit focused on race relations, and its members have been led to believe that Saraswati is a person of color.

There have been attempts since 2015 to call for accountability in light of Saraswati’s cultural vulturism, including from Al Jazeera journalist Sana Saeed, who has drawn parallels between the case of Rachel Dolezal and the case of Raquel Saraswati.<sup>42</sup> Yet Saraswati’s wiping of public information online has been so far-reaching that it has taken significant time and access to records for us to be able to uncover the realities of her racial and ethnic background.<sup>43</sup> While there is ample evidence of her European roots, Saraswati’s family members have confirmed that she does not have South Asian, Latinx, or Arab heritage.

This raises urgent questions for AFSC:

*Will the organization investigate why a member of its most senior leadership has so profoundly eroded trust among the people of color on staff and in the communities that the organization serves?*

*Given Quaker testimonies, and the commitment to integrity, will Saraswati continue to represent AFSC?*

*Should this position, with tremendous power to lead DEI initiatives within the organization, instead be assigned to a deserving and qualified person of color?*

*Are there external entities with whom Saraswati is collaborating?*

*Will Saraswati maintain her access to extensive records related to human resources, programs, expenditures, personal details of staff, volunteers, and communities across the United States and globally?*

*Will Saraswati apologize for the harm she continues to inflict on marginalized people?*

*How long will it take before Saraswati steps down from her current role?*

## References

<sup>1</sup> On May 1, 2013, Saraswati's Wikipedia page was deleted at her request.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Articles\\_for\\_deletion/Raquel\\_Evita\\_Saraswati\\_\(2nd\\_nomination\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Articles_for_deletion/Raquel_Evita_Saraswati_(2nd_nomination)) Screenshot:

The following discussion is an archived debate of the proposed deletion of the article below. **Please do not modify it.** Subsequent comments should be made on the appropriate discussion page (such as the article's talk page or in a deletion review). No further edits should be made to this page.

The result was **delete**. J04n(talk page) 02:25, 1 May 2013 (UTC) [ reply ]

**Raquel Evita Saraswati** [ edit ]

Raquel Evita Saraswati (edit) | talk | history | links | watch | logs | views) – (View log · Stats)  
(Find sources: Google (books · news · scholar · free images · WP refs) · FENS · JSTOR · NYT · TWL)

**AIDs for this article:**

- Articles for deletion:Raquel Evita Saraswati
- Articles for deletion:Raquel Evita Saraswati (2nd nomination)

Seems to fail WP:GNG. No real claim of notability or coverage in multiple independent sources. WP:RS source material I could find consistent of only trivial mentions. **Errant** (talk) 20:05, 24 April 2013 (UTC) [ reply ]

Note: This debate has been included in the list of Islam-related deletion discussions. **car** 21:41, 24 April 2013 (UTC) [ reply ]

Note: This debate has been included in the list of Sexuality and gender-related deletion discussions. **car** 21:41, 24 April 2013 (UTC) [ reply ]

Note: This debate has been included in the list of People-related deletion discussions. **car** 21:41, 24 April 2013 (UTC) [ reply ]

- Delete per nom.** Im surprised that after being deleted in 2006, it then returns in 2007 undetected... - **Davey2010** --> **Talk to me!** -- 22:19, 24 April 2013 (UTC) [ reply ]
- Delete - n/n and subject has requested deletion via OTR:** In borderline cases we defer to the subject's wishes. **ukexpat** (talk) 12:28, 26 April 2013 (UTC) [ reply ]
- Delete per nom.** — **Joaquin008** (talk) 13:35, 26 April 2013 (UTC) [ reply ]
- Delete per** the fact that it was already deleted before, doesn't seem any better now. subject has requested deletion in a borderline case... the reasons for deletion are overwhelming. **MezzoMezzo** (talk) 03:58, 26 April 2013 (UTC) [ reply ]

The above discussion is preserved as an archive of the debate. **Please do not modify it.** Subsequent comments should be made on the appropriate discussion page (such as the article's talk page or in a deletion review). No further edits should be made to this page.

Further, the information for Saraswati has been removed from many common online directories, such as Whitepages and Spokeo. Screenshots:

<https://www.whitepages.com/name/Raquel-Evita-Saraswati?fs=1&searchedName=Raquel%20Evita%20Saraswati>

**whitepages**  
SEARCH. FIND. KNOW.

PEOPLE	PHONE	ADDRESS
Raquel Evita Saraswati	City, State, or ZIP	

Sorry, we didn't find any results for **Raquel Evita Saraswati**

Try modifying your search using these tips to find the person you're looking for:

[https://www.spokeo.com/Raquel-Saraswati?middle\\_name=Evita](https://www.spokeo.com/Raquel-Saraswati?middle_name=Evita)

**SPOKEO**

**Sorry, we don't have anyone by the name Raquel Evita Saraswati**

Lastly, the website *Ijtihadist*, which conducted research on Saraswati in 2008, noted that Saraswati “has been the subject of much mysterious deleting elsewhere on the web... [besides Wikipedia].”

<https://web.archive.org/web/20140413094253/https://ijtihadist.wordpress.com/2008/07/18/raquel-evita-wikipedia-censorship/>

<sup>2</sup> Index to Public Records, 1994-2019 and Public Records Index, 1950-1993, Volume 2, supported by information from Saraswati's family members.

<sup>3</sup> Public Records Index, 1950-1993, Volumes 1 and 2, Phone and Address Directories, 1993-2002.

<sup>4</sup> Windham-Ashland-Jewett High School Yearbook, 1995. Saraswati in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Screenshot:



16 MRS. VARELAS CLASS: Row 1: C. Holdridge, E. Chase, A. Hoyt, J. Lonecke, N. Hodridge, M. Balasinowicz, J. Pelham, J. Monahan, M. Sherman, W. Matthews, P. Dedrick. Row 2: P. Pallwods, M. Jaeger, D. Ahart, C. Dolan, S. McMann, K. Jenas, J. Meehan, R. Seidel, D. Siegel, J. Erickson.

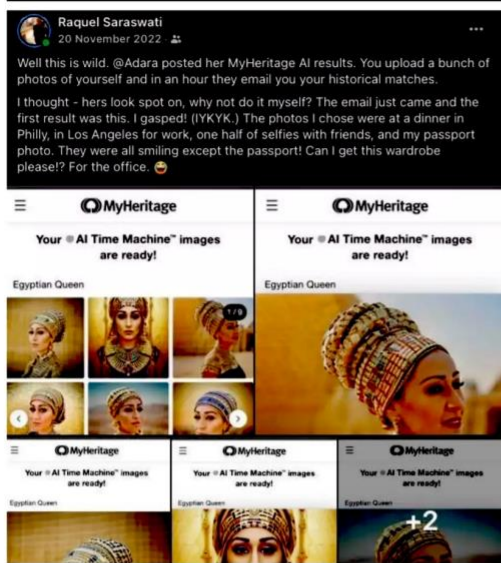
- <sup>5</sup> Information provided by Saraswati's family members.
- <sup>6</sup> Simmons University Yearbook, 2005. Saraswati as a senior.



- <sup>7</sup> From Sarawasti's LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/raquelevita/>. Screenshot:

**Simmons University**  
 BA, International Relations, Women's Studies, Economics, Diplomacy & Conflict Resolution  
 Activities and societies: International Multicultural Student Association  
 Muslim Students Association  
 Amnesty International  
 etc.

- <sup>8</sup> See endnote 23.
- <sup>9</sup> See, for example, Saraswati posting her MyHeritage AI "Egyptian Queen" results on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/raquelevita.saraswati/> Screenshot:



<sup>10</sup> "Miss Winifred Everett Weds Allendale Man," *The Morning Call*, September 21, 1942. Screenshot:



<sup>11</sup> Find a Grave Index

[https://web.archive.org/web/20230210051927/https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/218046277/winifred-e-seidel?\\_gl=1%2Aa03nfy%2A\\_ga%2AMTkzNjI1MDkoMy4xNjc1Nzg4OTg4%2A\\_ga\\_4QT8FMEX30%2AMTY3NjAwNDMzMC4xMS4xLjE2NzYwMDYzZmZuNC4wLjA.%2A\\_ga\\_B2YGR3SSMB%2ANjM3MWZiMTQtNWl3OSooMTE3LTg5ZDAZTlIM2QxMjlkNDIzLjExLjEuMTY3NjAwNjMzMS4zLjAuMA..](https://web.archive.org/web/20230210051927/https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/218046277/winifred-e-seidel?_gl=1%2Aa03nfy%2A_ga%2AMTkzNjI1MDkoMy4xNjc1Nzg4OTg4%2A_ga_4QT8FMEX30%2AMTY3NjAwNDMzMC4xMS4xLjE2NzYwMDYzZmZuNC4wLjA.%2A_ga_B2YGR3SSMB%2ANjM3MWZiMTQtNWl3OSooMTE3LTg5ZDAZTlIM2QxMjlkNDIzLjExLjEuMTY3NjAwNjMzMS4zLjAuMA..)

<sup>12</sup> "Winifred Seidel, September 24, 1922 - March 30, 2018," Bishop-Hastings Funeral Home Obituary, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230210052335/https://www.bishophastingsfh.com/obituaries/Winifred-Seidel?obId=26303602>

<sup>13</sup> See above.

<sup>14</sup> Via *Purple Roofs*.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20200815053856/https://purpleroots.com/listing/country-suite-bb/>

<sup>15</sup> New Jersey, U.S., Marriage Index, 1901-2016. Screenshot:

12/06/89 WIFE NAME	HUSBAND NAME	ANNUAL INDEX FOR YEAR 87	FILE NO	MARRIAGE PLACE	DOM
SEICH, KATHLEEN. S	SANTIMAURO, EDWARD. M		0025414	MIDD CRANT	06/09/87
SEICKENDICK, KATHRYN. E	MORRIS, GLENN. E		0045286	BERG L VNDY	10/03/87
SEIDEL, BEVERLY. A	CARAMIA, IGNAZIO.		0048152	PASS CLIFC	10/23/87
SEIDEL, LORRAINE.	TANGALO, VINCENT. S		0023560	BERG HACKC	06/24/87

<sup>16</sup> New Jersey, U.S., Marriage Index, 1901-2016. Screenshot:

SEIBERT, BETTY. M	COLEMAN, GARRY.	0027788	BERG RUTHB	07/27/86
SEIDEL, CAROL. G	PERONE, JR, FLORY. L	0000088	BERG HACKC	01/04/86
SEIDEL, HEATHER.	SEIXAS, FREDERICK.	0017876	MONM ENGLB	05/03/86

<sup>17</sup> Information provided by Saraswati's family members.

<sup>18</sup> Riss, Suzanne, "In Search of mom: A bad dream come true," *The Herald News*, July 10, 1988, Passaic, New Jersey. Screenshot:

**In search of mom  
A bad dream come true**

By Suzanne Riss  
Staff Writer

**GARFIELD** — Carol Perone wanted to find her natural mother. She looked in three states. She spent more than \$15,000. Eleven years after she started looking, Perone found Myrtle Burkhart in Alliance, Ohio.

Now she wonders whether she should have gone to all the trouble. The mother she found put most of her 18 children up for adoption, suffers from cancer and advanced cirrhosis and she smokes.

"Myrtle gave me life and I needed to know what she was like," Perone, 27, said. "But after all these years, she was not what I expected. I had hoped she would have cleaned herself up, stopped drinking. But she hadn't."

While Perone's case is extreme, fantasy often does not live up to reality for many adult adoptees who look for their parents, said Mary Lou Sweener, a supervisor with the adoption unit of the Division of Youth and Family Services.

But in Perone's case, reality is a bad dream come true.

"Myrtle wants to see me and calls all the time now — collect," said Perone, who has not met her mother in person. "But I already went through a lot of money and grief to find her, and now she wants me to pay for her plane ticket."

See ADOPT, Page A-4

Carol Perone with her husband, Flory, and sons Flory Jr. 3, at left and Adam, 10 months.

<sup>19</sup> Information provided by Saraswati's family members.

<sup>20</sup> "Flory L. Perone, November 5, 2006," Vander Plaat Memorial Home, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220808230607/https://www.vanderplaat.com/obituaries/Flory-L-Perone?obId=12741122>

<sup>21</sup> Beck, Glenn, "Moderate Muslims Speak out Against Extremism," *CNN*, March 5, 2007, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230210054602/https://transcripts.cnn.com/show/gb/date/2007-03-05/segment/01> Screenshot:

BECK: How do you live with that? How does your mom live with that, your dad?

SARASWATI: I'm estranged from them for other reasons that I can't get into.

<sup>22</sup> Seidel, Raquel Evita, "Letta's Truth," *Boho Magazine*, January 11, 2004, <https://web.archive.org/web/20230208170448/http://bohomagazine.blogspot.com/> Screenshot:

I first encountered Letta Neely's work in 2002 at Sistah Summit, an annual poetry slam/open mike at Unity Pride. Now, I'd seen her name around and knew of her, but I just came to Boston and couldn't imagine how I could find a queer community of color, particularly one where I could be recognized as a poet and performer. I was frustrated with Boston at the time, feeling like there was no place where I could be me—but my experience at the time consisted of a year at a predominantly white women's college.

Then, I heard about the event and decided to check it out. This event was so pivotal for me in many ways: I wasn't questioned as a dyke, as a woman of color, or as a writer. That night, I read what was a brand-new piece, "Beltane 2002," and one much older work. I left feeling satiated, at peace, rejuvenated and whole.

<sup>23</sup> Yonan, Joe, "Will gay couples take hurried walks down the aisle?," *The Boston Globe*, May 15, 2004, [https://web.archive.org/web/20230208165456/http://archive.boston.com/news/globe/living/articles/2004/05/15/will\\_gay\\_couples\\_take\\_hurried\\_walks\\_down\\_the\\_aisle/](https://web.archive.org/web/20230208165456/http://archive.boston.com/news/globe/living/articles/2004/05/15/will_gay_couples_take_hurried_walks_down_the_aisle/) Screenshot:

Raquel Evita Seidel, 20, of Brookline, said she and her girlfriend, Anh Dao Kolbe, have been together nine months. While they are confident they want to marry, they also want to take the time to plan something that respects Seidel's Arab and Latin traditions and 33-year-old Kolbe's Vietnamese traditions. "We want it to be something special, not about hype and not about media," Seidel said.

<sup>24</sup> Rajagopalan, Meera, "Despite mixed feelings about registries, Indian American couples signing on," *India New England News*, March, 2006.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20140413175540/http://www.indianewengland.com/ME2/Audiences/dirm od.asp?sid=&nm=&type=Publishing&mod=Publications%3A%3AArticle&mid=8F3A7027421841978F18B E895F87F791&tier=4&id=DF114A0F50B94E7C88D88C7B06BA7A41&AudID=Education%20%26%20Pa renting> Screenshot:

Raquel Evita Saraswati and Anh Dao Kolbe of Brookline, Mass. were married last summer, and registered at Bed Bath & Beyond and at Crate & Barrel. They mainly looked for items that were practical and fun. Some of their favorite items were a red blender and toaster, matching set of dishes, and gold toss pillows.

"The idea was to get little things, but filled with love, from our friends," says Saraswati. The couple deliberately chose items that would be used for entertaining, like stoneware bowls, so that friends could see the gifts being used and appreciated.

Patel tried to have items that meant something to her and her husband. "We both had various things to contribute to the house when we got married," says Patel. "However, most of our stuff did not consist of complete sets." They included towels, vases, pots and pans in their registry.

South Asian couples try to get cookware and Indian themed gifts in their registry wherever possible, though they receive most of the things from their parents who buy the items on trips to India. Pressure cookers and spice racks are two items that many South Asians list on their registries.

Saraswati wanted some Indian themed decor items for her home, but found it difficult to find inexpensive gifts to include in her registry. She tried an Indian Web site, but could not find anything suitable.

Household items such as bedsheets, and kitchen appliances are often tops on bridal registry lists. Some Indian American

<sup>25</sup> Around 2005, publications list Saraswati as a poet, a spoken-word artist, a visual artist, a dancer, and a performance artist.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20150603202531/https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2004/2/13/casy-sponsors-art-exhibit-as-part/>  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20220728232930/https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c5892be755be22cb5bc3a5d/t/5ccod276c83025c764b4f971/1556140668611/2004.pdf>  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20230210055906/https://uppn.com/mxg8wgt/irshad-manji-wedding>

Saraswati also performed belly-dance in 2005.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20221207132644/http://www.bigmoves.org/about/history/>

<sup>26</sup> See endnote 21.

<sup>27</sup> "Fighting the Good Fight," *Curve Magazine*, September 6, 2008,

<https://web.archive.org/web/20211021024025/https://www.curvemag.com/blog/activism/fighting-the-good-fight/>

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, Todd, Douglas, "The Trouble with Irshad Manji," *Vancouver Sun*, May 13, 2008.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20220706030935/https://vancouversun.com/news/staff-blogs/the-trouble-with-irshad-manji>

<sup>29</sup> See endnote 21.

<sup>30</sup> "Raquel Evita Saraswati discusses women's rights on Huckabee 05.17.2014," May 19, 2014,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LXY3bDF4rx8>

<sup>31</sup> "MidPoint | Raquel Evita Saraswati speaks out against radical Muslims," January 9, 2015,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnMj5Bq4PX0>

<sup>32</sup> "Honor Diaries - Raquel Saraswati Mini-Doc," January 7, 2014,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=deiD8Taoug>

<sup>33</sup> <https://clarionproject.org/films/honor-diaries-2/>

<sup>34</sup> Piggott, Stephen, "Anti-Muslim National Security "Expert" Ryan Mauro to Address Homeland Security Professionals Conference," October 20, 2016, <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2016/10/20/anti-muslim-national-security-expert-ryan-mauro-address-homeland-security-professionals>

<sup>35</sup> Allison, Ismail, "CAIR Calls on Milwaukee City Attorney to Drop Attorney Who Worked for Anti-Muslim Hate Groups," *Council on American-Islamic Relations*, November 3, 2021,

[https://www.cair.com/press\\_releases/cair-calls-on-milwaukee-city-attorney-to-drop-attorney-who-worked-for-anti-muslim-hate-groups/](https://www.cair.com/press_releases/cair-calls-on-milwaukee-city-attorney-to-drop-attorney-who-worked-for-anti-muslim-hate-groups/)

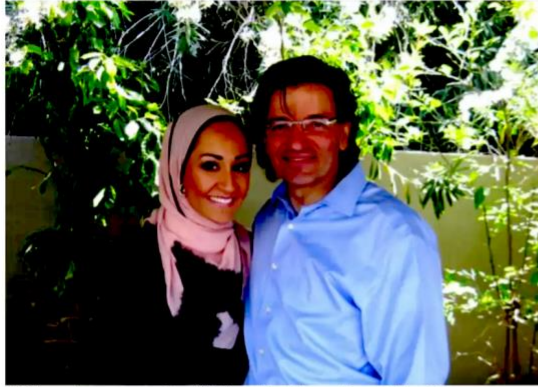
<sup>36</sup> See endnote 32.

<sup>37</sup> Mauro, Ryan and Saraswati, Raquel, "Raquel Evita Saraswati: Combating Abuse of Women," December 30, 2012, <https://web.archive.org/web/20210727110616/https://www.meforum.org/islamist-watch/38490/raquel-evita-saraswati-combating-abuse-of-women>

See also, a photo of Raquel Evita Saraswati and Dr. M. Zuhdi Jasser posted by the American Islamic Forum for Democracy

<https://web.archive.org/web/20230210062852/https://www.flickr.com/photos/aifdemocracy/14103808676/>

Screenshot:



<sup>38</sup> See, for example, “Why the American Muslim community should be concerned about Zuhdi Jasser,” *Council on American-Islamic Relations*, July 24, 2012,

<https://web.archive.org/web/20230210063254/https://www.cairchicago.org/blog/blog/2012/07/why-the-american-muslim-community-should-be-concerned-about-zuhdi-jasser>

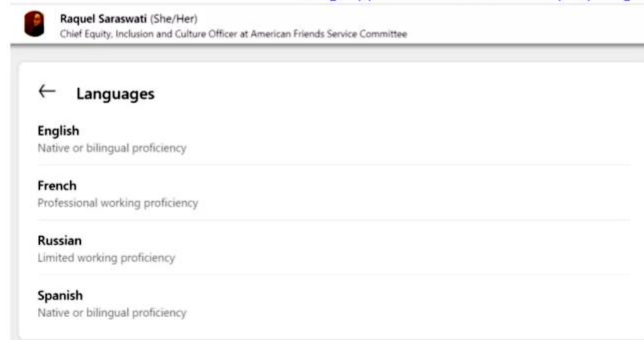
<sup>39</sup> Lopes, Margarida Santos, “Step into the shoes of whomever we cast as villains,” *My East-West*, January 6, 2009,

<https://web.archive.org/web/20221007061339/https://margaridasantoslopes.com/2009/01/06/interview-with-roi-ben-yehuda-and-raquel-evita-saraswati/> Screenshot:

**SARASWATI:** The welfare of man is reliant on our ability to communicate across the self-imposed boundaries of religious identity, so therefore I must reject the idea of speaking only to the “camp” this question would have me address.

This false dichotomy is the essence of conflict in every case. I am an American Muslim who has never stepped foot on the soil of Israel/Palestine. However, the lives in Israel/Palestine are connected to my own – not just because my lineage shares blood with theirs – but also because the welfare of Palestinians, of Israelis and of human beings the world over – is impacted by what happens in that region. Therefore it is our collective responsibility to make positive change.

<sup>40</sup> From Sarawasti’s LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/raquelevita/>. Screenshot:



<sup>41</sup> From Sarawasti’s LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/raquelevita/>. Screenshot:

**Raquel Saraswati** (She/Her)  
Chief Equity, Inclusion and Culture Officer at American Friends Service Committee

### Experience

- Board Member, Board of Directors**  
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice - Full-time  
Dec 2021 - Present · 1 yr 3 mos
- Chief Equity, Inclusion and Culture Officer**  
American Friends Service Committee - Full-time  
Jun 2021 - Present · 1 yr 9 mos  
Remote  
I serve as the chief equity, inclusion and culture officer of a 100+ year old organization focused on peace and justice. AFSC is located in 17 countries and has 300+ staff worldwide.
- Independent Consultant**  
Self-employed  
Jan 2009 - Present · 14 yrs 2 mos  
Global  
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; operations and strategy for mission-driven organizations and companies looking to improve policies, practices and community engagement.
- Senior Consultant, Diversity Equity and Inclusion**  
Collaborate Consulting, LLC - Contract  
Jul 2020 - Jun 2021 · 1 yr
- City of Philadelphia**  
4 yrs 4 mos
  - Chair, Mayor's Commission on LGBT Affairs**  
Jan 2019 - Jun 2021 · 2 yrs 5 mos
  - Commissioner, Mayor's Commission on LGBT Affairs**  
Mar 2017 - Jun 2021 · 4 yrs 4 mos

42 Via Twitter. <https://twitter.com/sanasaeed/status/621500121310625793?lang=en> Screenshot:

**Sana Saeed** @SanaSaeed · Jul 15, 2015  
Can we talk about "Raquel Dolzai" in the Muslim community. Y'all know who I mean.  
10:02 PM · Jul 15, 2015  
17 Retweets · 23 Likes

**Sana Saeed** @SanaSaeed · Jul 15, 2015  
Replying to @SanaSaeed  
From Seidel to Saraswati.  
1 · 1 · 2

**Sana Saeed** @SanaSaeed · Jul 15, 2015  
Replying to @SanaSaeed  
Fake "ethnic" name + bronzer + dark foundation + Orientalism used to legitimize Islamophobic orgs & events.  
9 · 5 · 11

43 See endnote 1.

