



## What Iranians Want: Women, Life, Freedom

**Arash Azizi**

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Arash Azizi's *What Iranians Want* documents the demands and aspirations behind the Iranian people's struggle for freedom.

On September 13, 2022, Mahsa Amini died in police custody in Tehran for the alleged crime of wearing her hijab inappropriately. Under the slogan "Women, Life, Freedom," Mahsa's death sparked protests across Iran that have yet to subside. These protests are the most recent in a long line of civil unrest targeting the Iranian Islamic regime. Despite the fact that all previous uprisings were violently struck down, the Iranian people rise again, slowly and painfully turning the pages of their own history.

An Iranian in exile, Azizi reveals his love for home and country in this exposé that supports the protest movement as much as it takes a critical stance. He breaks down the Iranian protests into categories: women's rights, human rights, and the rights of refugees; the labor movement; the environment; freedom of expression and of religion; a demand for peace; and the abolition of the law of Compulsory Hijab. The discussions are backed up by ample examples from protest movements since 1979, such as the Green Revolution in 2009 and the national rallying around the death of an endangered Persian cheetah.

Written in a matter-of-fact way, the book presents facts and events well while leaving room for personal conclusions and reactions. It also interweaves the discontent of the present day with the broken dreams of the Islamic Revolution. It exposes how, from the beginning, the religious leaders of Iran were upfront with what kind of society they wanted to build, showing how supporters in Iran and in the West chose to ignore those who sounded the warnings.

With insider insights into the Iranian protests for freedom and dignity, *What Iranians Want* declares love for people who refuse to cower.

ERIKA HARLITZ KERN (January / February 2024)

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