

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Dec. 18, 2019

**Contact:** Leann Garms

[leanngarms@gmail.com](mailto:leanngarms@gmail.com)

214-289-3563

**“Why Do They Hate Us? Making Peace with the Muslim World”  
named one of Best Books of 2019**

*Author/Peace Activist Steve Slocum receives recognition for book challenging Islamophobia,  
shedding light on Islam’s peaceful mainstream*

**San Diego, CA (Dec. 18, 2019)** — Local author and peace activist Steve Slocum ([www.steveslocum.com](http://www.steveslocum.com)) put his heart and soul into writing *Why Do They Hate Us? Making Peace with the Muslim World* on behalf of his Muslim friends who were being misunderstood, disparaged and attacked after the 9/11 tragedy. Today, Slocum’s efforts are being rewarded — his book was named one of the **Best Indie Books of 2019** by **Kirkus Reviews** and one of the **Top 10 Books of 2019** by **Booklist** in Religion and Spirituality.

[Kirkus Reviews](#) called the book “A clear, concise, and thoughtful introduction to Islam. An exploration of Islamic beliefs and history that aims to challenge American Islamophobia.” The review continues, “Debut author Slocum, a former Christian missionary to Kazakhstan, writes that he was horrified at ignorant depictions of Muslims in American media after the 9/11 attacks. During his years as a missionary, he “never changed anyone’s mind to become a believer in the Bible,” he says, but his newfound Muslim friends left an indelible mark on his own life — particularly, the fact that their culture prized hospitality toward strangers.”

[Booklist](#) reviewer Muhammed Hassanali describes the book as “well-researched, cogently argued, and drawing on the work of scholars as well as personal insights. Slocum’s work avoids clichés and deeply examines the complex relationship between Islam and the West. In the end, Slocum unmask a clash of ignorance and reveals a shared humanity to which we can all relate.”

Slocum, an outspoken peace activist, former Christian missionary and founder of the nonpartisan, nonreligious [SalaamUSA.org](http://SalaamUSA.org), is on a mission to challenge Islamophobia and encourage readers to see through the rising anti-Muslim sentiment. He toured North America from San Diego to Vancouver, B.C. following his book release in July, sharing his message of peace and denouncing the use of [Islamophobia as a political weapon](#).

*“I put my heart and soul into writing this book on behalf of my many, many Muslim friends — the warmest, kindest, most generous people I know,”* said Slocum. *“It breaks my heart to see them targeted in hate crimes because of prolific misrepresentation and generalization, often used intentionally for political purposes. My hope is that my book will make a difference.”*

Vista, California-based [Top Reads Publishing](#) released Slocum’s book to chart-topping sales, [rave reviews](#), and widespread [media coverage](#).

"As a publisher, part of my mission is to spread the ideas of authors who have a purpose and a drive to make change in the world," said Teri Rider, founder of Top Reads Publishing. "Steve had that passion, and a well-thought out manuscript, and I felt sure there would be a strong readership for his book."

"With the help of his publicist, Leann Garms of [Build Buzz Launch Media](#), and the timeliness of his topic, we were able to get Steve's message to the media and top trade reviews from Kirkus, Publishers Weekly, and Booklist."

According to Publicist Leann Garms, timing and pivoting the narrative to fit current events has a lot to do with raising a book's visibility in traditional media. "Timing and relevancy for the media is key, as is monitoring current media cycles for stories to tap into," said Garms. "With another 9/11 anniversary in September, Steve and his book offered a solution to rising anti-Muslim sentiment and political fear-mongering in general." The result to date was several print, radio and even top-tier television interviews, including the top morning show in [Los Angeles, KTLA 5](#).

Teamwork and dedication to excellence have given *Why Do they Hate Us?* the success it deserves, added Rider.

Through his book and his nonprofit, Slocum will continue his efforts to address common misconceptions about Islam such as Sharia law, jihad against infidels, women in Islam, and the true cause for the rise in Islamic terror. The next Salaam event, "Friendship Over Fear: *Strategies to Counter Anti-Muslim Bias, Discrimination and Violence*" is scheduled for January 18, 2020 in Escondido. For more information, [www.steveslocum.com](http://www.steveslocum.com) or [www.salaamusa.org](http://www.salaamusa.org).

###

#### **About Steve Slocum:**

Steve Slocum, author and peace activist, founded [SalaamUSA.org](http://SalaamUSA.org) to create friendship between Muslims and non-Muslims. Motivated by his experience as a missionary in Kazakhstan, Slocum wrote *Why Do They Hate Us? Making Peace with the Muslim World* to counter rampant Islamophobic political rhetoric and give a voice to Islam's peaceful mainstream. Through SalaamUSA and his new book, Slocum hopes to fight the fear, prejudice, and violence surrounding Islamophobia. He is an ambassador for the Parliament of World Religions and a presenter at the 2018 Parliament in Toronto. He is a frequent keynote speaker and media expert based in San Diego.

#### **About SalaamUSA.org:**

[SalaamUSA.org](http://SalaamUSA.org) is a non-profit organization that focuses on creating mutual understanding between Muslims, Christians, Jews and the non-religious. Salaam uses events, community outreach, and media to raise awareness of Islam from an unbiased, non-religious, nonpartisan perspective.

#### **About Top Reads Publishing:**

Top Reads, based in Vista, CA, primarily publishes a collection of non-fiction books that demonstrate a clear value for improving and enriching the lives of readers, including self-help, inspirational, spirituality, healing, improving world views on peace, animal welfare, and some fiction with a message toward social change. Top Reads Publishing was the recipient of the 2015 Benjamin Franklin Bill Fisher Award for Best First Book by a Publisher and many titles in the Top Reads catalog have become award winners, supporting Top Reads' motto of "Dedication to Excellence."

###