

Letters to the Editor

2 May 1996
Beirut, Lebanon

Dear Editor:

Al-Raida is an important magazine that deals with women's problems throughout the world, especially in the Arab world. *Al-Raida* takes upon itself the responsibility of the defense of women's rights and offers solutions to the problems from which they suffer. As a magazine having a feminist orientation, *Al-Raida* has very interesting articles that both male and female readers enjoy. However, I would also like to see some other human and social problems discussed so that we, the male readers, may find something that interests us other than simply women's issues.

Yours truly,
Rabih Fakih

Response:

We are happy to receive comments from a young male reader, and to know that you enjoy *Al-Raida*. Although *Al-Raida* is a feminist publication, we do not aim to attract only women readers. All articles published address problems which, in affecting women's lives, have a significant impact on the lives of men and children as well.

Correction

In the last issue of *Al-Raida*, No.72, we presented the story of a young woman named Hala who was murdered by her brother in an "honor killing". The initial reports we received indicated that the brother received a jail sentence of only one year. We have subsequently learned that the young man did in fact receive a life sentence from the military court in which he was tried. We apologize for this error.

4 April 1996
Beaverton, Oregon, USA

Dear Editor:

I am a graduate of the Beirut College for Women who has been a subscriber to *Al-Raida* from its very inception. Although *Al-Raida* is published by the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, there is a preponderance of articles, especially in the last few years, concerning Lebanon. Very few articles address the problems of women and children in the wider Arab world. The most glaring omission is the lack of articles on women and children in Iraq. *Al-Raida's* last article on Iraq appeared in 1991. The deaths of more than one million Iraqi children as well as hundreds of thousands of deaths among those most vulnerable — women and the elderly — since the end of the 1991 Gulf War has elicited nothing but a deafening silence from the pages of *Al-Raida*. I find this very disturbing and can only conclude that you have turned your backs on the very objectives and purpose of *Al-Raida's* mission. Shame!

Sincerely,
Aseel Nasir Dyck

Response:

You are correct in noting that *Al-Raida* has been focusing most of its attention on women's issues in Lebanon for the past two years, but it is not correct to assume that we are turning our backs on the concerns of women throughout the Arab world. With the cessation of the Lebanese civil war, we have had the security, freedom and opportunity to make a comprehensive study of the social, economic and psychological repercussions of the long conflict on women and children with a view to formulating hypotheses and recommendations that may be useful in other societies torn by years of fighting, including Iraq. Because of funding constraints and physical dangers, the Institute is not able to send researchers or reporters into Iraq. Because of the closure of the Iraqi embassy in Lebanon, it is difficult to obtain direct, factual information on the truly dire, dangerous and unjust situation confronting all Iraqi citizens. We would be very interested in receiving articles, reports and studies from readers who do have access to up-to-date information on Iraq for publication in future issues of *Al-Raida*.