

# [PDF] Covering: The Hidden Assault On Our Civil Rights

Kenji Yoshino - pdf download free book

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**Books Details:**

Title: Covering: The Hidden Assault

Author: Kenji Yoshino

Released: 2007-02-20

Language:

Pages: 304

ISBN: 0375760210

ISBN13: 978-0375760211

ASIN: 0375760210



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## Description:

**From Publishers Weekly Starred Review.** Seldom has a work of such careful intellectual rigor and fairness been so deeply touching. Yoshino, a law professor at Yale and a gay, Asian-American man, masterfully melds autobiography and legal scholarship in this book, marking a move from more traditional pleas for civil equality to a case for individual autonomy in identity politics. In questioning the phenomenon of "covering," a term used for the coerced hiding of crucial aspects of one's self, Yoshino thrusts the reader into a battlefield of shifting gray areas. Yet, at every step, he anticipates the reader's questions and rebuttals, answering them not only with acute reasoning, but with disarming humility. What emerges is an eloquent, poetic protest against the hidden prejudices embedded in American civil rights legislation—legislation that tacitly apologizes for "immutable"

human difference from the white, male, straight norm, rather than defending one's "right to say what one is." Though Yoshino recognizes the law's potential to further (and hinder) liberty's cause, he admits that his "education in law has been an education in its limitations." Hence, by way of his unsparing accounts of self-realization, he reveals that the struggle against oppression lies not solely in fighting an imagined, monolithic state but as much in intimate discourse with the mother, the father and the colleague who constitute that state. As healing as it is polemical, this book has tremendous potential as a touchstone in the struggle for universal human dignity. (*Jan. 24*)

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**From** Yoshino's memoir-cum-treatise combines a provocative examination of the current state of civil rights with an account of his experiences as a gay Japanese-American. Arguing that discrimination now targets "the subset of the group that fails to assimilate to mainstream norms," Yoshino describes a phenomenon that he calls "covering": the pressure exerted on racial minorities to "act white," the social acceptance offered to gays as long as they don't "flaunt" their identities, the ways women in the workplace are expected to camouflage their lives as mothers. Exploring the history of civil-rights litigation in the United States, Yoshino concludes that courts have too often focussed on individuals' capacity to assimilate, rather than on the legitimacy of the demand that they do so.

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