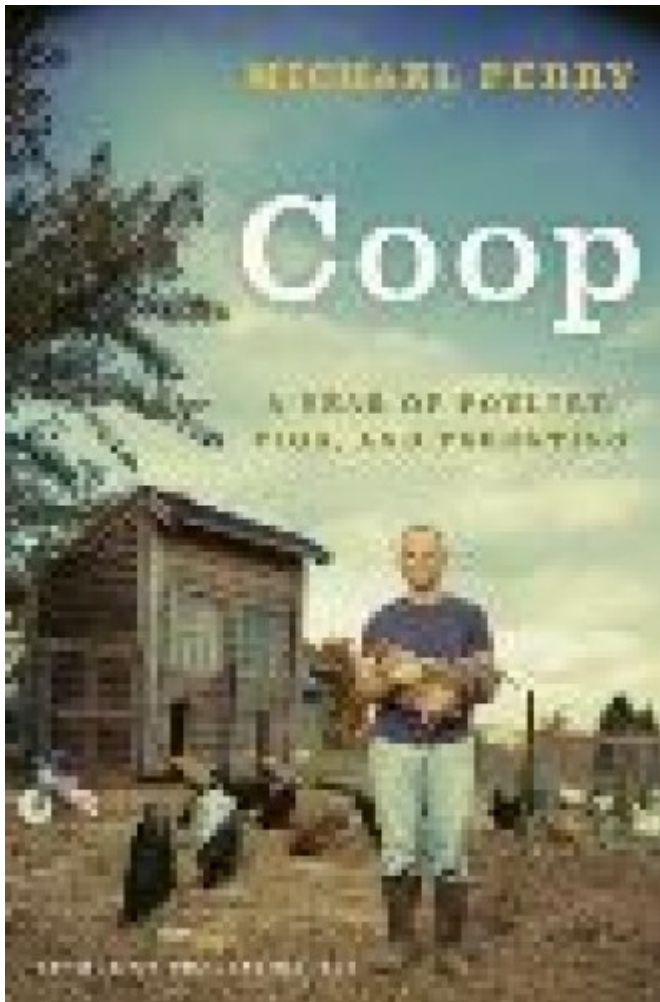


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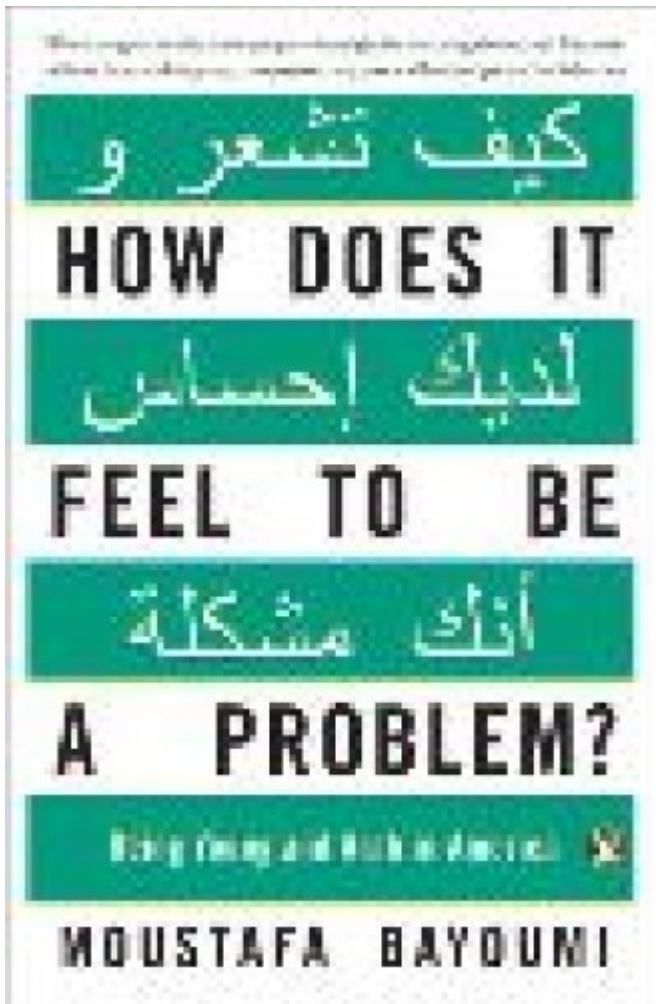
Books in the [October 6, 2009](#) issue

## In Review



### **Coop: A Year of Poultry, Pigs, and Parenting**

Michael Perry  
Harper



## **How Does It Feel to Be a Problem? Being Young and Arab in America**

Moustafa Bayoumi  
Penguin

Michael Perry (author of *Population: 485* and *Truck: A Love Story*) turns his attention to balancing work and marriage, starting a family and dabbling in small-scale farming and other domestic do-it-yourself projects. A fundamentalist-turned-agnostic, Perry also finds himself pondering the church and the spiritual life once he becomes a dad. He approaches all this with deep self-awareness, great humor and considerable craft. It'd be nice to read more about how Perry's reflections on faith inform his thinking on career, family, home economics and community. Perry shares Annie Dillard's fascination with the natural and quotidian realms and her knack for making the serious funny and the funny dreadfully serious. But whereas Dillard's audacious ambition led her to make *Holy the Firm* a dense and challenging work in

theodicy (her second by age 32!), Perry seems content to leave us with a few loosely connected thoughts.

Bayoumi answers his question with stories about seven young Arab-Americans in Brooklyn. The seven are as different from one another as young people in any group. One is a budding poet, one is a marine. One dreams of a new life in Dubai. One struggles to find work as a journalist after completing an internship at Al Jazeera. All seven resist discrimination and cultural misunderstandings.