

## **Religion & Islamophobia Resources from Panelists**

As the political and human casualties of the Israel-Palestine crisis continue to increase and shape the current state of the Arabic world, there has been a rise in instances of Islamophobia as well as a rise in protests, especially on university campuses, against this surging anti-Islamic sentiment. During this episode, panelists will discuss the history of the concept Islamophobia, its impact on American culture, and what other concepts might better explain the historical and contemporary moments that we face. The panelists will also explore the relationship between antisemitism and Islamophobia and why scholars and thinkers of religion are uniquely placed to think through the complex and often unclear relationship of these phenomena. Join us for a conversation at the intersection of religion, Islamophobia, and the current state of political unrest.

### **Khadija Khaja**

Khadija Khaja is Associate Professor of Social Work at Indiana University Indianapolis. Her research interests include building inclusive teaching and learning climates, international social work practice, Islamophobia, Muslim social work needs, bullying of Muslims, civil discourse in higher education, the practice of female circumcision, addressing the growth of white nationalist movements, and effective teaching/learning in online communities.

### **Books**

#### [Islamophobia](#)

The Pew Research Center, the Council of Islamic Relations, many other organizations, and individual researchers have found Muslims experiences of stigma and discrimination increased dramatically after 9/11, after the invasion of Iraq, with the growth of ISIS, and significantly during our recent past election seasons. Heated rhetoric used by some politicians against Muslims is increasingly growing with many more hate groups also targeting Muslims. This piece addresses some of the things that Muslims are facing in the United States due to growing islamophobia and provides recommendations for social workers on how to build cultural awareness to assist Muslims facing racism and discrimination due to their faith.

### **Talha Kahf**

Talha Kahf, a senior at the Indiana University School of Social Work, is a Muslim Syrian living in the Midwest. Born to a mother who came from a refugee background, Talha grew up learning to identify structural gaps in society. Along the journey, Talha and his family experienced Islamophobia within the education, healthcare, and legal systems. With each experience, Talha developed his personal values and began on a journey of ancestral connection and decolonization.

#### [Healthy Masculinity as a Form of Decolonization: A Preventionist's Guide to Analyzing Gender Norms in the US](#)

### **Zareena Grewal**

Zareena Grewal is Associate Professor of American Studies, Ethnicity, Race, & Migration, and Religious Studies at Yale University. She is a historical anthropologist and a documentary filmmaker whose

research focuses on race, gender, religion, nationalism, and transnationalism across a wide spectrum of American Muslim communities. Her first book, *Islam is a Foreign Country: American Muslims and the Global Crisis of Authority* (NYU 2013), is an ethnography of transnational Muslim networks that link US mosques to Islamic movements in the post-colonial Middle East through debates about the reform of Islam.

## **Book**

[\*Islam is a Foreign Country: American Muslims and the Global Crisis of Authority\* \(NYU 2013\)](#)

“In *Islam Is a Foreign Country*, Zareena Grewal explores some of the most pressing debates about and among American Muslims: what does it mean to be Muslim and American? Who has the authority to speak for Islam and to lead the stunningly diverse population of American Muslims? Do their ties to the larger Muslim world undermine their efforts to make Islam an American religion?”

[\*Imagined Cartographies: Crisis, Displacement, and Islam in America\*](#)

## **Film**

[\*By the Dawn's Early Light: Chris Jackson's Journey to Islam\* \(Cinema Guild 2004\)](#)

“In 1996, basketball star Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf (formerly Chris Jackson) caused a national stir when the NBA suspended him for refusing to stand during the national anthem because of his "Muslim conscience." The documentary reexamines this controversy, the media misrepresentations and the reactions of the Muslim immigrants who responded with an embarrassed disavowal.”

## **Writings**

[\*Biennial Conference Paper, p. 26, \(2015\).\*](#)

## **Kayla Renée Wheeler**

Kayla Renée Wheeler is Assistant Professor of Critical Ethnic Studies and Theology and the Africana Studies Program Director at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio. Dr. Wheeler is an expert in Black Islam, Islamic bioethics, and material religion. Currently, she is writing a book entitled, *Fashioning Black Islam: Race, Gender, and Belonging in the American Ummah*, which provides a history of Black Muslim fashion in the United States from the 1930s to the present. She is the author of the digital humanities project, *Mapping Malcolm's Boston*, which explores Malcolm X's life in Boston from the 1940s to 1950s. Dr. Wheeler is also the curator of the award-winning Black Islam Syllabus.

## **Website**

<https://kaylarenewheeler.com/>

## **Articles & Chapters**

[\*Article in The Black American Muslim\*](#)

["The Good Muslim" in Hussein Rashid, Huma Mohibullah, Vincent Biondo \(eds.\) Islam in North America An Introduction \(Bloomsbury: 2024\)](#)

**Major question their work looks at and seeks to**

How does anti-Black racism inform Islamophobia? How would our understandings of Islam in America and Islamophobia shift if we centered Black Muslims and Black Muslim history?

**Fun Fact!**

“I learned how to design and sew as research for my book.”

**Teaching Syllabi**

[Black Islam Syllabus](#)

“The goal of this project is to provide teachers, professors, researchers, journalists, and people interested in learning more about Islam with resources on Black Muslims to promote a more inclusive approach to the study of Islam.”

**Materials that are helpful in understanding and learning the topic.**

[Forever Suspect by Saher Selod](#)

Abstract: The declaration of a “War on Terror” in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks brought sweeping changes to the American criminal justice and national security systems, as well as a massive shift in the American public opinion of both individual Muslims and the Islamic religion generally. Since that time, sociologist Saher Selod argues, Muslim Americans have experienced higher levels of racism in their everyday lives. In *Forever Suspect*, Selod shows how a specific American religious identity has acquired racial meanings, resulting in the hyper surveillance of Muslim citizens. Drawing on forty-eight in-depth interviews with South Asian and Arab Muslim Americans, she investigates how Muslim Americans are subjected to racialized surveillance in both an institutional context by the state and a social context by their neighbors and co-workers. *Forever Suspect* underscores how this newly racialized religious identity changes the social location of Arabs and South Asians on the racial hierarchy further away from whiteness and compromises their status as American citizens.

[Islamophobia in America: The Anatomy of Intolerance edited by Carl Ernst](#)

*Islamophobia in America* offers new perspectives on prejudice against Muslims, which has become increasingly widespread in the USA in the past decade. The contributors document the history of anti-Islamic sentiment in American culture, the scope of organized anti-Muslim propaganda, and the institutionalization of this kind of intolerance.

**Anti-Black Islamophobia Tropes by Margari Hill**