**Religious Studies 351 / Political Science 390:**

**Reporting Islam**

Profs. Elizabeth Shakman Hurd and Brannon Ingram

Fall Quarter 2018

Scott Hall 212

Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00 PM – 3:20 PM



**Course Description**

This course brings together Medill and Weinberg students with an interest in the politics and practices of reporting on Islam and Muslims in the United States and U.S. foreign policy. Through a combination of readings, site visits, individual and group projects, and critical writing assignments, the goals of this course are, first, to empower students to recognize the pitfalls of how Islam and Muslims are reported and represented in U.S. print media and other formats, and second, to innovate new ways of writing about Islam and Muslims that do not replicate the Islamophobic or Islamophilic tropes that dominate much of this reporting. To these ends, the course includes a ‘master class’ on reporting religion led by Manya Brachear Pashman, religion reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*. The course is part of the [“Talking ‘Religion’: Publics, Politics and the Media”](https://buffett.northwestern.edu/programs/gpr/talking-religion.html) project which is co-directed by the instructors. Students will have an opportunity to participate in project related activities including lectures, a film screening, and a spring 2019 workshop “Reporting Islam: Media, Policy, Politics” (April 25-26, 2019).

**Course Philosophy**

We will read published academic scholarship to provide context for the articles we read, but the articles are the focus of the course. We will read a variety of journalistic formats: long-form stories, short-form reportage, op-eds, blog posts, and some multimedia. All discussions of the journalism will be driven by a series of critical questions: What works well? What doesn’t? What rehashes well-worn tropes and narratives? What feels fresh and new? Are there questions that aren’t being asked but should be?

**Learning Objectives**

Through taking this course, students will:

* Engage with literature, research, and/or theories related to reporting on and representing Islam and Muslims, situating the American experience in global and comparative perspective
* Better understand the impact that histories, institutions, and social structures have on local issues and individual experiences and identities, including their own
* Demonstrate an ability to think and write critically about political, social, economic, and cultural issues related to the politics of religious diversity
* Demonstrate an ability to communicate effectively with student colleagues who may have different religious, social and political backgrounds and experiences

**Course Requirements**

Students are expected to come to class prepared for active participation. Take notes on the readings, bring them to class and use them to participate in discussion. Attendance and participation are crucial components of the final grade.

Each student will be responsible for researching, developing, and writing a long-form journalism article on a topic related to the class themes and readings. Students will be guided in this process by the instructors and will receive feedback and tips from Ms. Brachear Pashman. The length of the article should be approximately 2,000 words and the final draft is due on the last day of class.

**Grading and Academic Integrity**

Final grades will be based on: 1) attendance and participation (30%); 2) one-paragraph written responses and/or questions on each day’s readings posted on Canvas before class (20%) and 3) final long-form essay (50%). No late work will be accepted without a written medical excuse.

Any student who violates the University’s principles of academic integrity will automatically fail this course and be referred to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies’ office for further action by the University.

**Policy on Use of Personal Technology**

Because much of the material we will discuss is online, personal computers and mobile devices are permitted in class with the proviso that this is a discussion-based course and students are required to listen to others and participate actively in discussion.

**Formatting Guidelines for Written Assignments**

Double-space your essay

Use 12-point Times New Roman font

Number the pages

Use one-inch margins

Give your essay a title

Include your full name and the date at the top of the first page

**Disability Accommodation**

Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with AccessibleNU (accessiblenu@northwestern.edu; 847-467-5530) and provide the professor(s) with an accommodation notification from AccessibleNU, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential.

**Required Textbooks**

All readings are posted on Canvas Course Reserves except those that are open access. You may purchase the following required books from Beck’s Books (716 Clark St., Evanston) or check them out on 4-hour reserve at the Main library.

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *Beyond Religious Freedom: The New Global Politics of Religion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017.

Nadia Marzouki, *Islam: An American Religion*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017.

Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*. New York: Vintage, 1997 (revised ed.)

**Instructor Contacts**

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Ms. Brachear Pashman mbrachear@gmail.com

**Course Schedule**

**9/27**  **Introduction**

Foundations and Methods

**10/2 Islam as a “Story” (I)**

Edward Said, *Covering Islam*, xi-lxx, 3-35

**10/4 Islam as a “Story” (II)**

Edward Said, *Covering Islam*, 36-68, 135-173

Deepa Kumar, “The Right Kind of ‘Islam’,” *Journalism Studies* 19, 8 (2018): 1079-1097.

**10/9**  **Talking about “Religion” (I)**

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *Beyond Religious Freedom*, 1-36, 109-127

**10/11**  **Talking about “Religion” (II)**

Noah Salomon and Jeremy F. Walton, “Religious Criticism, Secular Critique, and the ‘Critical Study of Religion:’ Lessons from the Study of Islam,” in *Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies*, ed. Robert A. Orsi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 403-420.

Arjun Appadurai, “[Across the world, genocidal states are attacking Muslims. Is Islam really their target?](https://scroll.in/article/879591/from-israel-to-myanmar-genocidal-projects-are-less-about-religion-and-more-about-predatory-states)” *Scroll*

Campbell Robinson, “[A Weekend of Fear, Hate and Faith in Tennessee](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/02/us/tennessee-white-supremacists.html?smid=fb-share),” *New York Times*

Winnifred Sullivan, “[No, Religion is Not the Common Denominator](https://tif.ssrc.org/2017/11/06/no-religion-is-not-the-common-denominator/),” *The Immanent Frame*

**10/16** **Reporting Religion: Methods and Approaches with**

**Manya Brachear Pashman (I)**

In our first in-class session with Ms. Pashman, she will discuss

methods and approaches to reporting religion and distribute group field assignments.

**10/18 Reporting Islam Today: The Islamophobic Context (I)**

Nadia Marzouki, *Islam: An American Religion*, 1-68

**10/23 Reporting Islam Today: The Islamophobic Context (II)**

Andrew Shryock, “Attack of the Islamophobes: Religious War (and Peace) in Arab/Muslim Detroit,” in *Islamophobia in America*, 145-74

Hannah Allam and Talal Ansari, “[State and Local Republican Officials Have Been Bashing Muslims. We Counted](https://www.buzzfeed.com/hannahallam/trump-republicans-bashing-muslims-without-repercussions?utm_term=.kkwpNe6l3#.oaVmLB6kO),” *Buzzfeed*

Eric Benson, “[Faith and Hope](https://www.texasmonthly.com/the-culture/faith-and-hope-omar-suleiman/),” *Texas Monthly*

Issues and Narratives

**10/25 Liberal Islamophobia and Islamophilia**

Andrew Shryock, “Islam as an Object of Fear and Affection,” in *Islamophobia/Islamophilia*, 1-28

Khaled Beydoun, “[US liberal Islamophobia is rising - and more insidious than right-wing bigotry](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/may/26/us-liberal-islamophobia-rising-more-insidious),” *The Guardian*

Zaheer Kazmi, “[Beyond Liberal Islam](https://aeon.co/essays/is-it-time-to-look-beyond-the-idea-of-liberal-islam),” *Aeon*

Edward Moad, “[Islam’s Limits in the Liberal Imagination](https://muftah.org/islams-limits-in-the-liberal-imagination/?utm_source=Muftah+Newsletter&utm_campaign=1dcef54a8e-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_07_08_06_35&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_5449e93203-1dcef54a8e-82081297#.W0yoKhJJEnV),” *Muftah*

**10/30 Reporting Religion: Methods and Approaches with**

**Manya Brachear Pashman (II)**

Ms. Pashman will return to class to answer your questions and discuss any challenges you are having in your reporting projects.

**11/1 Who Speaks for “Islam”? Whose “Reformation”?**

Ayaan Hirsi Ali, “[Why Islam Needs a Reformation](http://www.wsj.com/articles/a-reformation-for-islam-1426859626),” *Wall Street Journal*

Mehdi Hasan, “[Why Islam Doesn’t Need a Reformation](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/may/17/islam-reformation-extremism-muslim-martin-luther-europe),” *The Guardian*

Mustafa Aykol, “[The Muslim World Doesn’t Need a Reformation](https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/10/muslim-reformation/544343/),”

*The Atlantic*

Mehdi Hasan and Ryan Grim, “[Leaked State Department Memo Advised Trump Administration to Push for ‘Islamic Reformation’](https://theintercept.com/2018/06/18/islamic-reformation-trump-administration/),” *The Intercept*

Nesrine Malik, “[Islam’s New ‘Native Informants’](https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2018/06/07/islams-new-native-informants/),” *New York Review of Books*

Nur Amali Ibrahim, “[The Problem with the ‘Moderate Muslims’ Label](https://csres.iu.edu/pages/forum-folder/forumspring2015.php),” Consortium for the Study of Religion, Ethics, and Society, Indiana University Bloomington (Winter 2015).

Lila Abu-Lughod, “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?” Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others,” *American Anthropologist* 104, 3 (2002): 783-790.

**11/6 American Muslim Exceptionalism?**

Abdallah El-Arian, “[Is American Islam Exceptional?](https://muftah.org/is-american-islam-exceptional/#.W0kTHxJJEnX)” *Muftah*

Read all articles linked to here (and listen to audio clips)

<https://www.npr.org/series/601112332/muslims-in-america>

Leila Fadel, “[How Muslims, often misunderstood, are thriving in America](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2018/05/being-muslim-in-america/?utm_source=NGP&utm_medium=crm-email&utm_content=Look_Newsletter_20180506&utm_campaign=Editorial&utm_rd=17960181775),” *National Geographic*

Leila Fadel, “[America’s next generation of Muslims insists on crafting its own story](https://www.npr.org/2018/04/12/599215203/americas-next-generation-of-muslims-insists-on-crafting-its-own-story),” *NPR*

Emma Green, “[How America is Transforming Islam](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/12/muslims-assimilation-weddings/549230/),” *The Atlantic*

Dayana Mustak, “[IHOP and Ramadan: A Uniquely American Tradition](https://wamu.org/story/18/05/24/ihop-and-ramadan-a-uniquely-american-muslim-tradition/),” *WAMU.org*



**11/8 Is there a “Muslim world”?**

Cemil Aydin, “[What is the Muslim world](https://aeon.co/amp/essays/the-idea-of-a-muslim-world-is-both-modern-and-misleading?__twitter_impression=true)?” *Aeon*

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, “[The Idea of the Muslim World and the Global Politics of Religion](https://tif.ssrc.org/2017/10/12/global-politics-of-religion/),” *The Immanent Frame* (Oct. 12, 2017).

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, “[The Myth of the Muslim Country](http://bostonreview.net/politics/elizabeth-shakman-hurd-myth-muslim-country),” *Boston Review*

Zareena Grewal, “[The Muslim World Does Not Exist](https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/05/the-muslim-world-is-a-place-that-does-not-exist/527550/),” *The Atlantic*

Asma Afsaruddin, “[The Myth of the Muslim World](https://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Myth-of-the-Muslim-World/240069),” *Chronicle of Higher Education*

**11/13 Islamophobia is/as Racism**

Bayoumi, “Racing Religion,” *The New Centennial Review*, 267-88

Kathryn Schultz, “[Citizen Khan](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/06/06/zarif-khans-tamales-and-the-muslims-of-sheridan-wyoming),” *The Atlantic*

Center for Constitutional Rights, “[Settlement Reached in NYPD Muslim Surveillance Lawsuit](https://ccrjustice.org/home/press-center/press-releases/settlement-reached-nypd-muslim-surveillance-lawsuit)”

Muslim Advocates, [Hasan v. City of New York](https://www.muslimadvocates.org/endspying/) and in particular the [Stipulation of Settlement](https://www.muslimadvocates.org/files/Hassan-Stipulation-of-Settlement-FILED.pdf)

**11/15 Debating “Shari’a”**

Anver Emon, “Shari‘a and the Rule of Law,” in *Shari‘a: Law and Modern Muslim Ethics*, ed. Robert W. Hefner (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), 37-64

Nadia Marzouki, *Islam: An American Religion*, 106-137.

Aymann Ismail and Jeffrey Toomer, “[Sharia Has Come to Texas,](http://www.slate.com/articles/video/whos_afraid_of_aymann_ismail/2017/10/inside_a_sharia_law_court_in_texas.html)” *Slate*

**11/20** **Politics of Radicalization**

Arun Kundnani, “Radicalisation: The Journey of a Concept,” *Race & Class* 54, 2 (2012): 3–25.

Tim Aistrope, “The Muslim Paranoia Narrative in Counter-radicalisation Policy,” *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 9, 2 (2016): 182-204.

Darryl Li, “[A Jihadism Anti-Primer](http://www.merip.org/mer/mer276/jihadism-anti-primer),” Middle East Research and Information Project, vol. 45 (Fall 2015).

Emma Green, “[How Two Mississippi College Students Fell in Love and Decided to Join a Terrorist Group](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/05/mississippi-young-dakhlalla/524751/),” *The Atlantic*

**11/27 “Countering Violent Extremism” (CVE) in Context** (with

guest journalist from Chicago Tonight [Alex Ruppenthal](https://www.alexruppenthal.com))

Edward Curtis, “The Black Muslim Scare: The History of State Islamophobia and its Post-9/11 Variations,” *Islamophobia in America*, 75-102.

Emily Alpert Reyes, “[In L.A., federal grant to combat extremism stirs up concerns about targeting Muslims](http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-extremism-grant-20180703-story.html),” *Los Angeles Times*

Forum: [Islam on Trial](http://bostonreview.net/forum/amna-akbar-jeanne-theoharis-islam-trial), *Boston Review*

Nazia Kazi, “[Against a Muslim Misleadership Class](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2017/06/islamophobia-countering-violent-extremism-muslim-leaders),” *Jacobin Magazine*

Anuj Shrestha and Nazia Kazi (comic), “[Countering Terrorism … With Racism?](https://thenib.com/countering-terrorism-with-racism)” *The Nib*

Margari Aziza Hill, “[Logging it All: CVE and Schisms in the Muslim Community](https://www.theislamicmonthly.com/logging-it-all-cve-and-schisms-in-the-muslim-community/),” *The Islamic Monthly*

Alex Ruppenthal, “[DHS Approves Illinois Grant to ‘Off-Ramp’ Potential Extremists](https://chicagotonight.wttw.com/2017/06/30/dhs-approves-illinois-grant-ramp-potential-extremists),” Chicago Tonight, WTTW (June 30, 2017).

David Graham, “[The Unlabeling of an Anti-Muslim Extremist](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/06/maajid-nawaz-v-splc/562646/),” *The Atlantic*

Ben Taub, “[The Spy Who Came Home](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/05/07/the-spy-who-came-home),” *The New Yorker* (May 7, 2018).

Browse:

<http://www.stopcve.com/>

<https://www.radicalisationresearch.org>

<https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/cve-programs-resource-page>

**11/28** **Screening**: *The Feeling of Being Watched* (7pm, Block Cinema)

**11/29 In-class Discussion (with director Assia Boundaoui)**: *The*

*Feeling of Being Watched*

**\*\*NB: Final essays due in class today.\*\***