

CALEB IYER ELFENBEIN

GRINNELL COLLEGE

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EDUCATION

University of California, Santa Barbara
Ph.D., Religious Studies, 2009

Harvard University Divinity School
Master of Theological Studies, 2001

Vassar College
Bachelor of Arts, Political Science, 1998

FACULTY APPOINTMENTS (SELECTED)

Grinnell College

- Professor, Departments of History and Religious Studies, 2022 —
- Associate Professor, Departments of History and Religious Studies, 2016 — 2022
- Assistant Professor, Islamic and Middle East Studies, Departments of History and Religious Studies, 2010 — 2016

ADMINISTRATIVE & INSTITUTIONAL POSITIONS AT GRINNELL COLLEGE

Associate Dean of the College for Faculty Development and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, 2023-

- Manage the review process for faculty at all stages of career
- Collaborate with Chief Diversity Officer and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Senior Leadership team to initiate and steward institution-level efforts, including Bias Incident Report Tracking system
- Support faculty recruitment and retention efforts
- Chair governance committee relating to support for faculty scholarship, including internal grants
- Collaborate with staff and faculty to provide a range of teaching and research development opportunities for faculty
- Supervise academic support staff, research compliance officer, and assistive technology team
- Support academic department and program chairs
- Support new Department of African Diaspora Studies, including leading search for inaugural endowed chair and partnering with the chair on program development and additional faculty hires

Principal Investigator, *Humanities in Action*, \$1 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, 2022 — 2024

- Manage grant in consultation with institutional grant and finance officers
- Engage campus educators in discussions around teaching and learning, humanistic inquiry in the curriculum, and professional development, with a particular focus on accessibility and inclusivity
- Plan and execute grant-related programming

Faculty Co-Lead, Strategic Planning, 2021 — 2023

- Appointed by the President to collaborate with senior staff and staff co-lead on design and execution of Grinnell College's strategic planning process, including
 - Identifying key constituencies
 - Designing and executing constituency engagement opportunities
 - Reviewing and synthesizing constituency engagement
 - Providing regular updates to the Board of Trustees
 - Participating in senior leadership position searches
 - Contributing to College-wide budgeting process
 - Preparation of reporting materials for on-campus and off-campus constituencies

Covid-19 Academic Planning and Operations Appointments, 2020

- Covid-19 Academic Planning Project Manager (7/1/20 — 12/31/20)
 - Appointed by the President, collaborated with Dean of the College and faculty and staff partners to coordinate planning, decision-making, internal and external communications, and operations for the 2020-2021 academic program.
- Co-Chair, Recovery and Stewardship Academic Planning Committee (4/1/20 — 7/1/20)
 - Appointed by the President and Dean of the College, collaborated with members of administration, staff, and faculty to create curricular framework most suited to maintaining academic equity and continuity amidst pandemic conditions.
 - As Co-Chair, worked with full Recovery and Stewardship committee, consisting of senior staff from across the institution, to assess initial effects of the pandemic and to set recovery plan in place.

Member-at-Large, Executive Council, 2019 — 2021

- Working with the President and the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College, members of this elected body
 - Oversee institutional academic policy and coordinate policy implementation and review with area-specific governance bodies
 - Set academic budgeting priorities and reconcile annual academic unit budget requests with overall academic affairs budget
 - Review and allocate annual tenure track position proposals and contribute to each tenure track search
 - Support institution-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts

Director, Center for the Humanities, 2016 — 2023

- Oversee programming, planning, and budgeting for college-wide unit that advocates for and supports humanistic work of faculty, staff, students, and the Grinnell community
 - Transformed Center programming to focus on grant-making, capacity-building, and humanistic exploration opportunities for faculty, staff, and students at Grinnell, with a particular emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion, collaborative research, and public engagement
 - Partner with colleagues across the Grinnell College to provide responsive curricular and co-curricular teaching and learning opportunities
 - Build relationships with k-12 educators in support of literacy efforts and continuing diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives in the local public school district

RESEARCH

Research interests: American Islam, Islamophobia, race in the United States, theories of public life, human welfare, histories of the modern Middle East, modern Egyptian history, religion and modernity, histories of Islamist thought, comparative colonial and intellectual history

Scholarly Projects and Publications

Current project: *Habits of History: What we lose when we think past is past*, which explores how race affects our relationship to history and how, in turn, our relationship to history can affect how we understand some of the most pressing issues in our shared public lives, such as voting rights.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "Stream If You Want: See Something, Say Something and the Humanizing Potential of Digital Islam," in *Cyber Muslims: Mapping Islamic Digital Media in the Internet Age*, ed. Rob Rozehnal. Bloomsbury Press, 2022.

Elfenbein, Caleb. *Fear in Our Hearts: What Islamophobia Tells Us about America*. New York University Press, 2021.

Elfenbein, Caleb, et. al. *Mapping Islamophobia: Visualizing Islamophobia and its Effects in the United States*, <http://mappingislamophobia.org>

- Publicly facing, on-going web-based project on anti-Muslim hate and its effects on American Muslim participation in public life in the United States
- Project includes two original datasets documenting anti-Muslim and anti-Islam activity in the United States and American Muslim participation in public life
- Utilizes data visualization to provide users with interactive maps of both datasets to encourage humanistic engagement with data
- Winner, Best Data Visualization, 2017 Digital Humanities Awards
- Project and related activities have included collaboration with more than a dozen undergraduates

Elfenbein, Caleb, Farah Bakaari, and Julia Schafer. "Mapping Anti-Muslim Hostility and its Effects," in *Introduction to Digital Humanities: Research Methods for the Study of Religion*, ed. Kristian Petersen and Christopher Cantwell. DeGruyter Press, 2021.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "Ministering to Other People's Fears: Effects of Anti-Muslim Hostility on American Muslim Participation in Public life." *Journal of Hate Studies* 15 (1) 2019: 105-132.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "[Public Gallery: Mapping Islamophobia](#)." *Public: A Journal of Imagining America* 4 no. 2 (2018).

Elfenbein, Caleb. "Debating the Common Good: Islam, Modernity, and the Ethics of Cross-Cultural Analysis." *The Muslim World* 106 no. 4 (2016): 671-695.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "Full Bellies and Sincere Intentions: Re-Reading Sayyid Qutb as a Theorist of Human Welfare." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 83 no. 4 (2015): 1024-1057.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "Contingency in the Age of Religion: The Hajj and Religion-Making in Colonial and Postcolonial India." *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 27 no. 3 (2015): 247-277.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "[Muhammad's Hair](#)." *Frequencies: A Collaborative Genealogy of Spirituality*. Social Science Research Council.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "Establishing Religion in Iraq: Islam and the Modern State." *Comparative Islamic Studies* 3 no. 1 (2007): 57-71.

Elfenbein, Caleb and Richard Reitano. "Diplomacy in the 21st Century: Civil Society Versus the State," in *Multilateral Diplomacy and the United Nations Today* (2nd edition), ed. JoAnn Fagot Aviel, James Muldoon, Richard Reitano and Earl Sullivan. Boulder: Westview Press, 2005: 234-244.

Public Writing

Elfenbein, Caleb. "[The Past Isn't Dead: Teaching the Truth about American's Racial History is Critical](#)," *Salon*, 6 August 2023.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "[Suit Seeks to Limit Anti-Muslim Speech on Facebook but Roots of Islamophobia Run Far Deeper](#)," *The Conversation*, 24 May 2021.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "[The Silencing of American Muslims](#)." *The Hill*, 22 April 2019.

Elfenbein, Caleb and Peter Hanson. "[What Does It Mean to Be a 'Real' American?](#)" *Washington Post*, 3 January 2019.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "[More Americans Have Positive Views of Muslims Today Than Two Years Ago. So Why Are Anti-Muslim Hate Crimes on the Rise?](#)" *Washington Post*, 14 December 2017.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "[Can Ivanka Trump Change the President's Policies On Immigration?](#)" *Fortune*, 24 February 2017.

Scholarship on Teaching

Elfenbein, Caleb. "The Value of Historicizing Sexual Violence." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 33 no. 1 (2017): 169-171.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "Big questions and critical inquiry: harmonizing learning goals in the religious studies classroom." *Teaching Theology and Religion* 19 no. 1 (2016).

Book Reviews and Encyclopedia Articles

Elfenbein, Caleb. Review of *Making the Arab World: Nasser, Qutb, and the Clash that Shaped the Middle East*, by Fawaz Gerges. *Reading Religion* (September 2018).
<http://readingreligion.org/books/making-arab-world>

Elfenbein, Caleb. Review of *The Age of the Efendiyya: Passages to Modernity in Colonial-National Egypt*, by Lucie Ryzova. *History: Review of New Books* 44 no. 1 (2016).

Elfenbein, Caleb and Juan Eduardo Campo. "Terrorism." *McMillan Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*, ed. Richard Martin, et. al. 2 ed. New York: McMillan Reference USA, 2016.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "Hajj." *Encyclopedia of Global Studies*, ed. Mark Jurgensmeyer. New York: Sage Publications, 2012.

Elfenbein, Caleb. "'Umar 'abd al-Rahman," "Afghan Mujahedin," "Citizenship," "International Law," "Jihad Movements," "Mohammedanism," "Secularism," "Tablighi Jama'at," "Terrorism," "Westernization." *Facts on File Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World* (2009), ed. Juan Eduardo Campo.

PRESENTATIONS

Professional Presentations

"Contextualizing Islamophobia in the Classroom," roundtable participant in session of Teaching against Islamophobia unit at the American Academic of Religion, November 2022.

"Stream If You Want: The Humanizing Potential of Digital Islam," invited presentation at Lehigh University, April 2022.

"Race and Fear in Public Life: What Islamophobia Tells Us about America," invited presentation at Franklin and Marshall College, March 2022.

"Race and Fear in Public Life: What Islamophobia Tells Us about America," invited presentation at the James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference, Emory University, March 2022.

“Religion and Teaching in and Beyond the Classroom,” panelist in session of ongoing series at the Center for Religion and American Culture, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis, May 2021.

“The Futures of Postcolonialism and Religion,” roundtable participant in session of the Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism unit at the American Academic of Religion, November 2020.

“Fear In Your Heart: What Islamophobia Can Tells Us about Public Life in Today’s America,” invited as 2019 Religious Studies Colloquium speaker, Middle Tennessee State University, September 2019.

“What Is the Role of Local Media in Muslim Self-Representation?” invited presentation at Reporting Islam, Northwestern university, April 2019.

“When Digital Publics Become Three-Dimensional: Questions from Park 51,” invited presentation at Religion and Its Many American Publics, Lehigh University, April 2019.

“*Mapping Islamophobia: Knowledge Production, Digital Humanities, and Islamic Studies,*” presented at American Academy of Religion, November 2018.

“Public Humanities in Context,” presented at Liberal Arts and the Humanities: Innovation, Engagement, and Cross-Disciplinary Opportunities,” Colby College, October 2018.

“*Mapping Islamophobia and the Social Studies Classroom,*” invited presentation at Hacking the Symposium: Digital Bridges for Humanistic Inquiry, University of Iowa, August 2018.

“Mapping Campus Religious Culture,” presented at Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning Theology and Religion Conference on Curricular Innovation, Indianapolis, Indiana, November 2017.

“Specter of Hate: Effects of Islamophobia on American Muslim Public Participation,” presented at Fourth International Conference on Hate Studies, Gonzaga University, October 2017.

“Mapping Islamophobia as Inquiry-Based Learning,” invited presentation at the Iowa Global Scholars Workshop, University of Iowa, October 2017.

“Applying Social Theory in Digital Media: Video Essays in Being Muslim in America,” invited presentation at Religious Studies at a Crossroads, Carleton College, May 2017.

“Is This Activism? Mapping Islamophobia as Public Humanities,” invited presentation at Humanizing Data: Data, Humanities, and the City, New York University, April 2017.

“The Specter of Hate: Islamophobia and the Conditions of Public Life,” presented as the Burchenal Lecture in Religion and Public Life, Eckerd College, February 2017.

“The Fallacy of Non-Interference; or ‘Pauper Pilgrims Are Un-Islamic!’” presented at the Annual Midwest Conference on British Studies, September 2016.

“The Circulation of Colonial Histories and Their Effects: Teaching Islam and Gender in a Liberal Arts Context,” invited presentation at the Rethinking Islamic Studies Workshop, American Academy of Religion, November 2015.

“Debating the Common Good: Islam, Social Theory, and Ethical Cross-Cultural Analysis,” invited presentation at the Center for Global Islamic Studies, Lehigh University, October 2015.

“Sayyid Qutb, Humanism, and the Common Good,” presented at Shifting Boundaries: The Study of Islam in the Humanities, University of Vermont, April 2015.

“Governing the Hajj: Differentiation and the Character of Empire,” presented at meeting of Religion and Colonialism Consultation, annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 2009.

“Sayyid Qutb and the Concept of Prophecy,” invited presentation at Prophecy, an interdisciplinary workshop held at New York University, April 2009.

“Establishing Religion in Iraq,” revised draft presented at Re-Stating Religion, Columbia University, March 2006.

“Establishing Religion in Iraq,” presented at meeting of Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group, annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 2005.

“Scholarship, Power and Politics: federal funding of Area Studies following September 11,” presented at annual conference on Islam in the Middle East and South Asia, University of California at Santa Barbara, March 2004.

“Religious Violence in International Law,” presented at Symposium on Religion and Violence, Stanford University, May 2003.

Public Presentations

“Is History in the Past?” presented at Drake Community Library, Grinnell, Iowa, April 2023.

“Religious Conflict in the United States,” presented at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, August 2021.

“Narrating Islam,” presented at Newton United Church of Christ, Newton, Iowa, November 2019.

“Mapping Islamophobia as Policy Tool,” presented at the 2019 Public Leaders for Inclusion Council Summit, organized in Washington, DC, by America Indivisible, July 2019.

“Fear in Your Heart,” presented at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Grinnell, Iowa, December 2018.

“Global Citizenship: What is it? How can we teach it?” presented with Jason Harshman (University of Iowa) and Alisa Meggitt (Iowa City Community School District) at the Iowa City Public Library, Iowa City, Iowa, April 2018.

“The United States in the Middle East: A History in Moments,” presented at Drake Public Library, Grinnell, Iowa, October 2017.

“Hate, Islamophobia, and American Public Life,” presented at St. John’s Lutheran Church, Grinnell, Iowa, September 2017.

“Specter of Hate: Islamophobia and American Public Life,” presented at Grinnell College Summerfest, Grinnell, Iowa, June 2017.

“Muhammad’s Biographies,” presented at Drake Public Library, Grinnell, Iowa, September 2014.

“100 Years of Change: World War I and the Contemporary Middle East,” presented at Drake Public Library, Grinnell, Iowa, September 2014.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND SERVICE

External Reviewer, Department of Religious Studies, Bates College, 2024

Tenure Reviewer, Department of Religious Studies, North Carolina State University, 2024

Promotion Reviewer, Department of Religious Studies, Franklin and Marshall College, 2023

Peer Reviewer, New York University Press, 2022 —

External Reviewer, Gould Center for Humanistic Studies, Claremont McKenna College, 2022;
principal author of review report

Tenure Reviewer, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Ursinus College, 2021

Peer Reviewer, *Journal of Hate Studies*, 2019 —

Peer Reviewer, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 2019 —

Peer Reviewer, *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, 2016 —

Co-Organizer and Facilitator, Teaching against Islamophobia Workshop, American Academy of Religion, November 2019.

Organizer and Facilitator, Countering Islamophobia Workshop, American Academy of Religion, November 2018.

Steering Committee Member, Conference Planning Committee of the Liberal Arts College and Small University Network of the Consortium for Humanities Centers and Institutes, 2018-2019.

Tenure Reviewer, Department of Religious Studies, Lehigh University, 2018

Tenure Reviewer, Department of Religious Studies, Franklin and Marshall College, 2017

Co-Organizer, Rethinking Islamic Studies Workshop, American Academy of Religion, November 2015.

Invited Facilitator and Respondent, Islam, Gender, and Women Group, American Academy of Religion, November 2015.

Co-Founder, Co-Chair and Co-Organizer, Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Group, American Academy of Religion, 2006-2013, and Member of Steering Committee, 2013-2018.

Assistant Director, *Leaps of Faith*

- Hour-long documentary film (2004) presenting the breadth of public sentiment in Poughkeepsie, NY, surrounding the 2002 invasion of Iraq, the capture of Saddam Hussein and more general views on citizenship and contemporary international affairs.
- Screened in Rhinebeck, NY (Upstate Films), Poughkeepsie, NY (Vassar College), and Istanbul, Turkey (Boğaziçi University).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Selected, 2020 — 2021 Cohort of the Sacred Writes Public Scholarship Program (Northeastern University)

Recipient and Co-Director, Grinnell College Innovation Fund (2015 — 2018)
Awarded three-year, \$18,000 grant to facilitate expansion of faculty and student research communities.

Participant, Wabash Center Workshop for Pre-Tenure Faculty (2014 — 2015)

FUNDING AND AWARDS

Co-Recipient, "Habits," 2019 — 2020

- Award from Humanities in Action, a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon foundation to Grinnell College, to develop an interdisciplinary, co-taught gateway course to the humanities

Co-Leader, "Mapping Islamophobia in the Secondary Classroom," 2017 — 2018

- Collaborative award from Digital Bridges for Humanistic Inquiry, a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon foundation to Grinnell College and the University of Iowa.

Co-Director, Undergraduate Department Grant, 2015 — 2018

Awarded by Wabash Center for Teaching Theology and Religion

- \$30,000 in funding from Lily Endowment, Inc., in support of “Exploring and Addressing the Effects of Campus Culture on the Religious Studies Classroom,” a long-term project investigating public questions of religion and religious diversity at Grinnell College as they relate to the curricular goals of the Department of Religious Studies

Summer Fellowship in Research and Teaching, 2014 — 2015

Awarded by Wabash Center for Teaching Theology and Religion

- \$5000 in funding from Lily Endowment, Inc., in support of “Teaching and Researching American Islam in the Post-9/11 Landscape.”

Phillip Hammond Fellow in Religion and Politics, 2006 — 2007

Awarded by the Department of Religious Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara

Institute on Global Conflict & Cooperation Dissertation Fellowship, 2005 — 2006

Awarded by IGCC, University of California, San Diego

The Professor Charles Wendell Memorial Award in Islamic Studies, 2004 — 2005

Awarded by the Department of Religious Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara

Rowny Graduate Fellowship in Religious Studies, 2001 — 2006

Awarded by the Department of Religious Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara

U.S. State Department Academic Foreign Language Area Studies Award, 2002 — 2004

- Completed two years of on-site advanced Arabic language training with assistance of funding

U.S. State Department Summer Foreign Language Area Studies Award, 2001 — 2003

- Completed intensive advanced courses in Arabic at the American University in Cairo, summer 2003
- Completed intensive courses in Arabic at Georgetown University, Washington, DC, summer 2002

SERVICE TO THE INSTITUTION

In addition to contributing to the life of two academic departments, I serve the broader Grinnell College in a variety of ways. The following is a selection of my service to the institution and to the broader Grinnell community.

Continuing Service at Grinnell College

Studies in Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East Concentration Committee, 2019—

Restorative Practices Steering Committee, 2018—2023

Ombuds Advisory Council, 2017—2023

Selected Completed Service at Grinnell College

Humanities in Action Mellon Grant Advisory Committee, 2019—2022
 Grinnell College National Poll Advisory Committee, 2018—2022
 Search Committee for Associate Chaplain and Campus Rabbi, 2018—2022
 Representative to Humanities Division Personnel Committee, 2020—2021
 Faculty adviser to the Student Government Association, 2020—2021
 Restorative Practices Steering Committee, 2019—2021
 Presidential Search Committee, 2019—2020
 Co-Chair, Recovery, Stewardship, and Renaissance Curriculum Planning Committee, 2020
 Search Committee for Muslim Prayer Leader/Muslim Chaplain, 2018—
 Development and Alumni Affairs Gift Acceptance Committee, 2018—2020
 Planning Committee for Grinnell Humanities Mellon Grant Proposal, 2018—2019
 Site Visit and Program Evaluation, SIT Study Abroad in Jordan, 2018
 Facilitator, Board of Trustees Discussions of Philanthropy, 2017—2019
 Board of Trustees Advancement Committee, Faculty Representative, 2017—2019
 Digital Bridges Mellon Grant Advisory Committee, 2017—2019
 Search Committee for Director of OCS, Institute for Global Engagement, 2017
 Site Visit and Program Evaluation, IFSA-Butler Study Abroad in Jerusalem, 2016
 Search Committee for Associate Dean of Students/Director of Intercultural Affairs, 2016
 Sexual Cultures Initiative, Co-Organizer with Carolyn Herbst-Lewis, 2015—2016
 Global Grinnell Taskforce, 2014—2016
 Site Visit and Program Viability Evaluation, ACM Study Abroad in Jordan, 2012
 Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies Committee, 2011-2015
 Grinnell College Center for the Humanities Advisory Board, 2011—2014

SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY (SELECTED)

Member, Advisory Board for Tiger Packs Program for Food Insecure Kids, 2016—2024
 Member, Strategic Planning Committee, Tiger Packs Program, 2018—2019
 Member, Citizen School Bond Committee, 2017—2019
 Volunteer, Davis Elementary School Expanded Learning Program, 2016—2018
 Member, Citizen School Bond Committee, 2015—2016
 Member, Grinnell Human Rights Commission, 2015—2019

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- American Academy of Religion
- American Studies Association
- American Historical Association