

# KELLY PEMBERTON

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## EDUCATION

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Ph.D. October, 2000 Columbia University, Religion  
M.A. June, 1994 University of Washington, International Studies/Comparative Religion  
B.A. May, 1990 Vassar College, French

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

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- 2004-present **Associate Professor**, George Washington University, Department of Religion and the Women's Studies Program. Tenure granted May 2012
- 2003-04 **Visiting Assistant Professor**, Mount Holyoke College, Department of Religion
- 2002-03 **Visiting Lecturer/Research Associate**, Harvard University Divinity School, Women's Studies in Religion Program
- 2000-02 **Instructor/Postdoctoral Fellow**, University of California, Berkeley, Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies

## SELECT PUBLICATIONS

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### Books

In Progress

*Islam and Gender Activism: A Global Perspective* (book manuscript)

*Gender, Piety, and the Sacred in Islam* (book manuscript)

2010

*Women Mystics and Sufi Shrines in the Indian Subcontinent*. University of South Carolina Press.

### Edited Books

2009

*Shared Idioms, Sacred Symbols, and the Articulation of Identities in South Asia* (co-edited with Michael Nijhawan, York University, Toronto) Routledge Books.

### Refereed journal articles

In progress

"Digital Da'wa: Agency, Authority, and Activism in Cyber Islamic Environments"

"What Can We Learn from Islamic Gender Activism in Indonesia? A Critical Inquiry"

2021

"A critical technocultural discourse analysis of Muslim fashion bloggers in France: Charting «restorative technoscapes»" with Jennifer Takhar, *Journal of Marketing Management* vol. 37, nos. 5-6 (January), 387-416.

2019

"Reproducing «rhetrickery» in online fertility marketing: Harnessing the «rhetoric of the possible»" with Jennifer Takhar, *Consumption Markets & Culture* vol. 22, no. 4 (August), 313-36.

2009

An Islamic Discursive Tradition on Reform as Seen in the Writing of Deoband's Maulana Taqi 'Usmani" *Muslim World* vol. 99, no. 3 (July), 452-477.

2006

"Women *Pirs*, Sainly Succession, and Spiritual Guidance in South Asian Sufism" *Muslim World* vol. 96, no. 1 (January), 61-87.

2004, 2005

"Muslim Women Mystics and Female Spiritual Authority in South Asian Sufism" *Journal of Ritual Studies* 18.2 (2004), 1-23 (also published in Pamela J. Stewart and Andrew J. Strathern, *Contesting Rituals: Islam and Practices of Identity Making*, Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2005).

### Refereed articles in Edited Books, Textbooks, and Encyclopedias

2016

"The Politics of Gender in the Sufi Imaginary", in *Islam, Sufism, and Everyday Politics of Belonging in South Asia*. Ed. Deepra Dandekar and Torsten Tschacher. Routledge Books, 2016.

2013

"Devotional Literature," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Women*. Ed. Heba Raouf, Natana de Long-Bas. Oxford University Press, USA.

2012

"A Chishti Response to Communal Strife in India Today," in Charles Ramsey and Clinton Bennett, eds., *In Search of South Asian Sufis*. Continuum Books.

2006

Entries for the *Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures*, vol. III. Suad Joseph, general ed. Brill Academic Publishers.

"Whither Urdu? Language, Community, and Power in India Today," in Ather Farouqui, ed. *Redefining Urdu Politics in India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press.

### Non-refereed journal articles

2011

Reclaiming Muslim Space in 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Turkey: Popular Didactic Writing for Women." *Near East Quarterly* (August).

### Blogs

Women and Gender in Islam <http://www.womenandgenderinislam.com>  
Huffington Post Religion <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kelly-pemberton/>

### Newspaper articles

1998

"So This is Bihar...India's Wild West." *The Times of India*, Patna, May 24.

"Foreigners in the Mix." *The Times of India*, Patna, May 31.

### SELECT CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS, INVITED LECTURES

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10/2023

"Digital Da'wa: Agency, Authority, and Activism in Cyber Islamic Environments" GARNET (GWU Religion and International Affairs)

10/2022

"Sexual and Gender Based Violence Claims (SGBV) with Specific Reference to Pakistan and India," invited lecture, UNHCR Country of Origin Information Seminar Series

10/2021

"Sufis as Social Actors," invited lecture and discussion of *Modern Sufis and the State*, Kathering Pratt Ewing and Rosemary Corbett, eds. Columbia University (October 6, 2021)

6/2019

“Transforming Minds? The Growing Impact of Muslim Fashion Bloggers in France.” Race in the Marketplace Conference, Université de Paris-Dauphine, Paris, France (June 2019)

7/2016, 11/2016

“Securing State Support for Gender Activism in Pakistan: An Uphill Battle?” GWU-LCWU Conference on Gender: Global Gender Perspective, Lahore Pakistan, (November 2016)

“User-gendered content? Evaluating the rhetoric of online fertility marketing discourses,” ESCP-EAP 13<sup>th</sup> Conference on Gender, Marketing, and Consumer Behavior, Paris, France (July 2016)

5/2015

Invited Lecture: “Religion, Gender and Ecology in the MENA,” The American University of Kuwait

11/2014

Keynote address, “The Politics of Gender in the Sufi Imaginary,” The University of Heidelberg (Germany), Sufi Islam and the Politics of Belonging in South Asia Conference, (by invitation)

Panelist, Global Women’s Institute’s “I Am Malala” resource guide launch event, featuring Ziauddin Yousafzai.

8/2014

“What Can We Learn from Islamic Gender Activism in Indonesia? A Critical Inquiry,” International Conference on “Southeast Asian Islam: Legacy and New Interpretation,” Jakarta, Indonesia, August 14-16, 2014, organized by the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM), State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta

9/2013

“Religion, Rights, and Reform: A Panel Discussion on Women's Political Participation in the Middle East and North Africa,” Sponsored by: Sigma Iota Rho, George Washington University’s Honors Society for International Affairs (by invitation)

10/2012

“An Introduction to Islam and Women,” GWU IMES (Institute for Middle East Studies) K-12 teacher Outreach Program: Gender and Islam: Law, Society, and Rights (by invitation)

6/2012

“Women in Islam, and in Islamic history, culture, society, and politics,” guest lecture for the Foreign Service Institute (by invitation)

1/2012

“Religious Authority: Law, Mysticism, and Scholarship in Islam,” guest lecture for the Foreign Service Institute (by invitation)

## **SELECT HONORS AND AWARDS**

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2017-18	Columbian College Facilitating Fund Award, George Washington University
2016-17	Columbian College Facilitating Fund Award, The George Washington University
2015	Mount Vernon Faculty Fellows Initiative, The George Washington University
2014	Research Fellowship, Global Women’s Institute, The George Washington University Dean’s Enhanced Travel Award, The George Washington University (Columbian College)
2008-09	Larson Fellowship in Health and Spirituality, Library of Congress, Kluge Center
2007, 2009	University Facilitating Fund Fellowship, George Washington University
2002–03	Research Associate and Visiting Lecturer, Women’s Studies in Religion Program, Harvard University
2000–02	Chancellor’s Postdoctoral Fellowship, UC Berkeley
1999–2000	Charlotte Newcombe Dissertation Fellowship
1998–99	President’s Fellow, Columbia University
1997–98	USED-Fulbright Fellowship for Dissertation Research (DDRA)
1997	GSAS Merit and Departmental Summer Fellowships, Columbia University

1993-94 FLAS Academic Year Fellowship (partial), and Graduate Unrestricted Fellowship, University of Washington (Seattle)

## CONSULTING AND RELATED EXPERIENCE

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- 2024 **Country of Origin Information Expert, Wilsons Solicitors.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a family of Pakistan nationals seeking asylum in the U.K. Case pending.
- 2023 **Country of Origin Information Expert, Palmer Rey, PLLC.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistani national seeking asylum in the U.S. Asylum granted.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, Terkiana PC Immigration.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving an Indian national seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, KB& A Associates.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving an Indian national seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, SRA Law.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving an Indian national seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.
- 2022 **Country of Origin Information Expert, KB& A Associates.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistani national seeking asylum in the U.S. Asylum denied.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, KB& A Associates.** Provided expert report and advice for 4 legal cases involving 4 Indian nationals seeking asylum in the U.S. 3 cases pending; 1 case asylum granted.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, SRA Law.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving an Indian national seeking asylum in the U.S. Asylum denied.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, Relis Law.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving an Indian national seeking asylum in the U.S. Asylum granted.
- 2021 **Country of Origin Information Expert, Davis Polk and Wardwell, LLP.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in Hong Kong. Case pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, Mondair Solicitors, U.K.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.K. Case pending.
- 2020 **Country of Origin Information Expert, Law Offices of Jason M. Sullivan.** Provided expert analysis and report for a legal case involving an American national seeking a divorce from a Pakistan national. Case settled.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, Law Offices of Tsirina Goroshit & Associates, PC.** Provided expert report for a legal case involving two Indian nationals seeking asylum in the U.S. Case and testimony pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, SWLLC, UK.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.K. Case pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, African Advocacy Network.** Provided expert report for a legal case involving two Pakistan nationals seeking asylum in the U.S. Case and testimony pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, Luke Abrusley Law, LLC.** Provided expert report and testimony for a legal case involving an Egyptian national seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.

- 2019 **Country of Origin Information Expert, Mondair Solicitors.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.K. Case pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, Wilsons Solicitors.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.K. Case pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, NLS Solicitors.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.K. Case pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, KB & A Associates.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, Naimeh Salem & Associates.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, Berdyev Law, P.C.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.
- 2018 **Expert Witness, DCMA Law** Provided expert report, advice, and court testimony for a legal case involving Pakistani nationals seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.
- Expert Witness, Quan Law Group** Provided expert report, advice, and court testimony for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, Kobre & Kim** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in Hong Kong. Case pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert, Davis Polk** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in Hong Kong. Case pending.
- 2017 **Expert Witness, Monty & Ramirez** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistani man seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.
- Country of Origin Information Expert Wilson Solicitors.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistani woman seeking asylum in the U.K. Case pending.
- 2016 **Expert Witness, Coram Children’s Legal Centre, U.K..** Provided expert report legal case involving a Pakistani family seeking asylum in the U.K.
- Expert Witness, Capital Area Immigrants’ Rights Coalition.** Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistani woman seeking asylum in the U.S. Asylum was granted.
- 2015 **Consultant, Raising Voices.** Review and evaluation of violence prevention programming documents for faith-based program – SASA! –for the prevention of violence against Muslim women and girls in Uganda.
- Expert Witness, Arnold & Porter, LLP.** Provided expert report and testimony for a legal case involving a Muslim-American client seeking redress for workplace discrimination
- Expert Witness, Bhogal Partners, U.K.** Provided expert report and advice for two legal cases: one involving a Pakistani national seeking asylum in the U.K., and another involving an Indian national seeking asylum in the U.K. Asylum was granted in both cases.

- 2014 **Consultant, Savan Group.** Served as Lead Researcher, Writing Lead, and Subject Matter Expert for publication, “A Working Woman’s Guide to Her Job Rights,” for the U.S. Department of Labor, Women’s Bureau
- 2013 **Expert Witness, Law Offices of Renee C Redman, LLC.** Prepared expert report and court testimony for a legal case involving a client from Pakistan seeking asylum
- Consultant, American Council on Education.** Curriculum evaluation, Cappella University (Sophia Learning, LLC)
- 2012 **Expert Witness, Law Offices of Usman B. Ahmad.** Prepared expert witness report on a legal case involving a client from Pakistan seeking asylum
- Consultant, American Council on Education.** Part of a team of scholars of religion that reviewed and evaluated curricular materials for the College Network, Indianapolis, IN
- 2011 **Expert Witness, Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen, and Hamilton, LLC.** Provided consultation and testimony (pending), prepared expert witness report on a legal case involving a client from Pakistan seeking asylum
- 2010 **Expert Witness for Asylum case (Pakistan-US) for University of Connecticut Law Clinic.** Provided consultation, prepared expert witness report on a legal case involving a client from Pakistan seeking asylum
- Research and Consultation, Burdeshaw Associates.** Provided brief reports pertaining to country, political, and cultural conditions in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India
- Consultant and delegate, Brown Lloyd James.** Member of a delegation of gender experts sent to visit Libya at the invitation of El Fatah University and the Ministry of Women’s Affairs
- 2009 **Consultant, Council of American Overseas Research Centers.** Reviewed applications for Arabic language study programs
- 2008 **Consultant, American Council on Education.** Member of a team of scholars of religion that reviewed and evaluated curricular materials for the (Baptist) Seminary Extension, Nashville, TN
- 2007 **Consultant, Prometric.** Member of a team of scholars of religion that designed and evaluated test items for the DSST (Dantes Subject Standardized Test) examination. The questions were designed for an “Introduction to World Religions” survey course
- 2006 **Consultant, USAID and HED.** Asia and Near East Bureau’s “Leadership Training for Women” Initiative. Developed concept design for women’s higher education programs in multiple countries of Asia and the Near East
- 2005 **Consultant, Co-coordinator for GWU faculty consulting partners.** Kidz Online’s “Shaqa`iq” Arabic Channel project on women, education, and work in the Arab World, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State’s Middle East Partnership Initiative
- 2001-04 **Grantwriting and Research Consultant** for various non-profit organizations (CA, NY, MA)

## SERVICE ACTIVITIES AND MEDIA INTERVIEWS

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### SERVICE

- 2020-23 Steering Committee, GW Humanities Center
- 2004-23 Women’s Studies Executive Committee (GWU)
- 2019-22 Director of Undergraduate Studies, Women’s Gender and Sexuality Studies Program

2019-20 Search and Hiring Committee, Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies Program  
Diversity Coordinator for Director Hire, Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies Program

2014-23 Program Advisor, M.A. Program in Islam

2017 GWU Undergraduate Studies Committee

2016 Volunteer work with Moms Clean Air Force for legislative action on climate change

2013-14, 2018 poll volunteer for reelection campaign of Maryland State Delegate Ariana B. Kelly

2013-14 Curriculum Project (based on Malala Yousafzai's autobiography), The GWU Global Women's Institute and the Malala Foundation; recorded panel discussion

2011 Presentation of Religion Department programs, Colonial Inauguration (GWU)

2011-14 Member, Research Advisory Committee, the George Washington University (Faculty Senate)

2011 Principal Investigator and co-Director, "Women, Reconstruction, and the Challenges of Civil Society in Afghanistan." Led a team of partners at George Washington University to coordinate round table and keynote speech by activists, government and business representatives from Afghanistan, Canada, and the U.S.

2010 Presentation of Religion Department programs, Colonial Inauguration (GWU)

2009-10 Committee Member, Research Advisory Committee,  
Committee Member, President's Task Force on Gender and Development

2008 Presentation of Religion Department programs, Colonial Inauguration (GWU)

2005-13 Director of Graduate Studies, M.A. Program in Hinduism and Islam, George Washington University, Department of Religion

2006, 2007 Committee Member, grantwriting proposal for Luce Foundation's "Henry R. Luce Initiative on Religion and International Affairs

2003-04 Member, 5-College Near East Studies Group (Mount Holyoke College and affiliated schools)  
Vassar College Alumni Admission Program Volunteer

2002 Organizer, Association for Asian Studies panel, "Hindu Na, Nahin Musulman: Shared Idioms of Piety and Sanctity"

2001 Grantwriting volunteer, Women of Color Resource Center, Berkeley; California State Parks

1989-90 Literacy Volunteers of America (ESL, adult reading and writing)

1990 Prison Release Field Work Program (Greenhaven Prison, NY)

#### MEDIA INTERVIEWS

2019 Interview with Nexus Media on Gender, Sexuality and Recycling  
Interview with *GW Today*, "GW Researchers Converge on Paris" (August 12)

2016 Interviews with Pakistan media agencies on Gender and Development in Pakistan

2015 Volunteer work with Moms Clean Air Force for legislative action on climate change  
interview with CCTV for segment on why women are joining ISIS (Islamic State)  
PBS interview about women and Islam for special on Karamah, Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights

2013-14 Voice of America, interview about Muslim Youth in Europe  
Invited lecture presentation on Islam and globalism, Alice Deal high school  
On-camera interview for Discovery Learning Channel documentary on Islamic medicine (expected release date winter 2014)  
Televised Interview, Voice of America Pakistan, "Views on President Obama One Year after the Cairo Speech"  
Televised Interview, Voice of America Pakistan, "Unani Medicine"

#### LANGUAGES

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##### Fluent

French  
Hindi  
Urdu

##### Working knowledge

Arabic (Modern Standard Arabic)  
Persian  
Turkish  
Spanish

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

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American Institute of Pakistan Studies

American Academy of Religion (past; not currently a member)

Middle East Studies Association (past; not currently a member)

Association for the Study of Persianate Societies (past; not currently a member)