

“Visiting Scholars on Islam”

Thursday, February 2

Lane’s Center for Meeting and Learning
CML 220 • 1–2:30 pm and 4–5:30 pm



Jamillah Karim

CML 220 • 1–2:30 pm

Title: *The Nation of Islam—
Radical Islam or American Religion?*

Abstract:

Most people know the Nation of Islam by Louis Farrakhan and Malcolm X, both known for their radical, militant views. Karim will analyze the teachings of Elijah Muhammad, the original leader of the Nation of Islam, and Warith Deen Mohammed, his son and successor. She will explore the ways in which the two leaders negotiated black protest and conservative American values.

Bio:

Jamillah Karim is an associate professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Spelman College in Atlanta, GA. She obtained her Ph.D. in Islamic Studies at Duke University, and she specializes in Islam in America, women and Islam, and race and immigration. Dr. Karim is author of *American Muslim Women: Negotiating Race, Class, and Gender within the Ummah*. She is currently writing her second book in collaboration with an American history scholar. Due out in 2013 by New York University Press, the book explores women’s experiences and contributions in the Nation of Islam from the 1930s to the present. Dr. Karim has a blog entitled “Race+Gender+Faith.”

CML 220 • 4–5:30 pm

Title: *Black Muslim Feminism—
Sunni Muslim Women and the Nation of Islam*

Abstract:

To understand the legacy of black feminism, or womanism, in Islam, one must begin with the Nation of Islam (NOI). Karim provides fresh ethnographic accounts of Sunni, or Orthodox, Muslim converts who explain why the Nation of Islam appealed to them, what it meant to be a woman in a patriarchal black nationalist group, and how their beginnings in the NOI continue to impact their Sunni Muslim identity. Karim’s research particularly embraces the call for new methodologies in the field of womanist philosophy, ones that open womanist traditions beyond Christianity. The Nation of Islam, Karim argues, engaged race and gender as much as, if not more than, other movements that black women participated in the last century. The women who left Christianity for the Nation of Islam shared the same web of religious, educational, class, and racial experiences as the scholars and subjects of womanist theologies. Muslim women, therefore, fully embody the black feminist legacy, only channeling it in new directions.

— This series is part of Lane’s Initiative on Islam and Other Religions. —