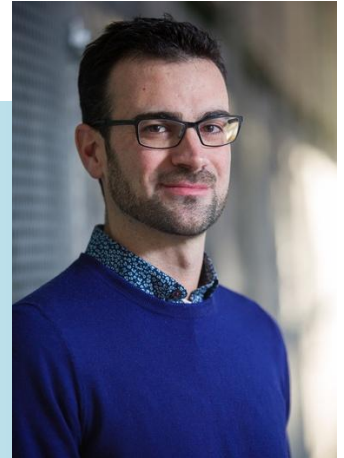




UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

Institute of Criminology

# *Everyday Ethics and Becoming a Good Muslim in a High Security Prison*



**Dr Ryan J. Williams**

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Institute of Criminology Public Seminar Series

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017, 5.30pm

Seminar Room B3, Institute of Criminology,  
Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge, CB3 9DA

*A drinks reception in the basement foyer will follow this seminar for attendees*

Prison ethnographers are often confronted with everyday examples of people trying to achieve some conception of the human good. Yet, descriptions of how people achieve this good in a prison environment – the techniques and aspirations of the ethical subject – are rare. In this seminar I will reflect upon the task of understanding the formation of ethical subjects by drawing on the ‘reflective freedom’ practiced by Muslim prisoners in a high security prison. I will give shape to this project with the help of recent developments in the anthropology of ethics and Foucault’s later work. The case of Muslim piety as I present it serves two purposes: to sharpen and deepen ethnographic research in prison through recognizing the place of ethics in everyday life, and to present a challenge to how we think about power, agency and structure in view of how people accomplish virtue.

Ryan Williams is a Research Associate with the Centre of Islamic Studies in Cambridge and jointly an associate member in the Prisons Research Centre. He has held fellowships in Canada and at Cambridge and recently served as co-Investigator for an ESRC-funded study on faith identity and trust in two high security English prisons. His current research focuses on lived experiences of citizenship among Muslims through the criminal justice system. He has published in the areas of interfaith dialogue, the sociology of religion, and religion and health.

This seminar is free, and is open to all interested in attending, with no ticket required.  
If you wish to be added to the seminar mailing list, please contact: Joanne Garner, on: [jf225@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jf225@cam.ac.uk)  
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