

The Center for Middle East Studies presents

# **It's Complicated: Sexuality in Premodern Islamic Societies**

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**2017 R. Stephen Humphreys Distinguished Visiting Scholar**



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**6:00 PM**

**Humanities and Social Sciences Building  
Room 4080**

Views of sexuality in modern and contemporary Islamic societies are in general completely at variance with those held in premodern Islamic societies, largely due to the impact of Western colonialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This talk will attempt to sketch out some of the complexities of premodern attitudes, noting that our available Arabic textual sources are anything but reticent about questions of gender and sexuality, aspiring to a full and frank taxonomy of variations in both realms, but also exhibiting a range of attitudes that can by no means be reduced to a simple exposition of what "Islam" says about sex.

**Everett K. Rowson** is Associate Professor of Islamic Studies at New York University. He earned a B.A. in Classics from Princeton and a Ph.D. in Arabic and Islamic Studies from Yale. Before coming to NYU he held positions at Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania. His initial specialization was in Islamic philosophy and his first book was on a tenth-century work on the immortality of the soul. He has subsequently translated historical chronicles, explored aspects of medieval Arabic prose literature, and published a series of articles on gender and sexuality in premodern Islamic societies.

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