

David M. Freidenreich

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Chair, Department of Jewish Studies
Member, Department of Religious Studies
Associate Director, Center for Small Town Jewish Life

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EMPLOYMENT

- 2008– Pulver Family Professor of Jewish Studies, Colby College
(Assistant Professor: 2008–2013; Associate Professor: 2013–2021)
- 2012 Richard and Susan Master Visiting Professor in Jewish Studies,
Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome
- 2012 Visiting Researcher, Maison des Sciences de l’Homme Ange-Guépin, Nantes
- 2007–2008 Visiting Assistant Professor of Judaic Studies, Franklin & Marshall College
- 2006–2007 Teaching Fellow and Adjunct Professor of Religious Studies,
Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania

EDUCATION

- 2006 Ph.D. in Religion, with distinction, Columbia University
“Foreign Food: A Comparatively-Enriched Analysis of Jewish, Christian, and
Islamic Law”
- 2006 Rabbinic Ordination and M.A. in Jewish Studies, Jewish Theological Seminary
Specializations: midrash, liturgy and ritual, Jewish philosophy
- 2002 M.Phil. in Religion, with distinction, Columbia University
Fields: Jewish law, Christian law, Islamic law, the comparative study of religion
- 2000 M.A. in Religion, Columbia University
- 1999 B.A., **summa cum laude**, Brandeis University
with high honors in Politics and high honors in
Near Eastern and Judaic Studies

BOOKS

Jewish Muslims: How Christian Imagined Islam as the Enemy (Oakland: University of California Press, 2023)

Hatred of Jews and Muslims have been intertwined in Christian thought since the rise of Islam. In ***Jewish Muslims***, David Freidenreich explores the history of this complex, perplexing, and emotionally fraught phenomenon. He makes the compelling case that, then and now, hatemongers target “them” in an effort to define “us.” Analyzing anti-Muslim sentiments in texts and images produced over a thousand years across Europe and the Middle East, the author shows how Christians intentionally distorted reality by alleging that Muslims are just like Jews. They did so not only to justify assaults against Muslims on theological grounds, but also to motivate fellow believers to live as “good” Christians. The disdain premodern polemicists expressed for Islam and Judaism was never really about these religions. They sought to promote their own visions of Christianity—and a similar dynamic animates portrayals of Muslims and Jews today.

Foreigners and Their Food: Constructing Otherness in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Law (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011; paperback, 2015)

Foreigners and their Food explores how Jews, Christians, and Muslims conceptualize “us” and “them” through rules about the preparation of food by adherents of other religions and the act of eating with such outsiders. David M. Freidenreich analyzes the significance of food to religious formation, elucidating the ways ancient and medieval scholars use food restrictions to think about the “other.” Freidenreich illuminates the subtly different ways Jews, Christians, and Muslims perceive themselves, and he demonstrates how these distinctive self-conceptions shape ideas about religious foreigners and communal boundaries. This work, the first to analyze change over time across the legal literatures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, makes pathbreaking contributions to the history of interreligious intolerance and to the comparative study of religion.

EDITED VOLUME

Beyond Religious Borders: Interaction and Intellectual Exchange in the Medieval Islamic World, co-editor, with Miriam Goldstein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012)

CHRISTIAN–MUSLIM RELATIONS: ARTICLES ON LAW

Christian–Muslim Relations: A Bibliographic History, ed. David Thomas et al. (Leiden: Brill)

- “Muslims in Canon Law, 650–1000,” 1: 99–114 (2009)
“Muslims in Western Canon Law, 1000–1500,” 3: 41–68 (2011)
“Muslims in Eastern Canon Law, 1000–1500,” 4: 45–57 (2012)
- “Christians in Early and Classical Sunni Law,” 1: 83–98 (2009)
“Christians in Early and Classical Shi‘i Law,” 3: 27–40 (2011)

OTHER ACADEMIC ARTICLES AND SIMILAR PUBLICATIONS

- 2022 “Muhammad, the Monk, and the Jews: Comparative Religion in Versions of the Baḥīrā Legend,” ***Entangled Religions*** 13.2.
- 2022 “‘You Still Believe Like a Jew!’: Polemical Comparisons and Other Eastern Christian Rhetoric Associating Muslims with Jews from the 7th–9th Centuries,” ***Entangled Religions*** 11.4.
- 2020 “Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Perspectives on Food and Jewishness,” in ***Feasting and Fasting: The History and Ethics of Jewish Food***, ed. Aaron A. Gross, Jody Myers, and Jordan D. Rosenblum (New York University Press), 157–69.
- 2020 “‘What is That to Us?’: The Eucharistic Liturgy and the Enemies of Christ in the Beam of the Passion,” co-authored with Véronique Plesch, ***Studies in Iconography*** 41: 104–30.
- 2020 “With a Little Help from My Friends: Jewish Mutual Assistance in Nineteenth-Century Maine,” co-authored with Kristin Esdale (Colby ’16), ***Maine History*** 53.2: 41–55.
- 2018 “Against the Grain and Over the Line: Reflections on Comparative Methodology,” ***Religions*** 9(2), 44: 1–13.
- 2018 “Maine + Jewish: Two Centuries,” ***Maine State Museum Exhibition Handbook Series*** 3: 7–26.
- 2017 “Christians and Muslims in One Another’s Legal Texts,” in ***Routledge Handbook on Christian–Muslim Relations***, ed. David Thomas (London: Routledge), 185–93.
- 2015 “Dietary Law,” in ***The Oxford Handbook of the Abrahamic Religions***, ed. Adam Silverstein and Guy G. Stroumsa (Oxford University Press), 466–82.

- 2015 “Making It in Maine: Stories of Jewish Life in Small-Town America,” **Maine History** 49.1: 5–38.
- 2014 “Food and Drink – Medieval Period,” **The Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World**, ed. Norman A. Stillman (Brill Online).
- 2014 “Intermarriage in Judaism,” in **Sharing the Well: A Resource Guide for Jewish–Muslim Engagement**, ed. Kimberly Zeitman and Mohamed Elsanousi (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America Press, 2014), 75–78.
- 2014 “Jews, Pagans, and Heretics in Early Medieval Canon Law,” in **Jews in Early Christian Law: Byzantium and the Latin West, 6th–11th Centuries**, ed. John Tolan et al. (Turnhout: Brepols), 73–91.
- 2014 “Walking Side by Side: Engagement with Islamic Law and Theology in Rabbinic Legal Literature,” **Muslim World** 104.4 (2014): 413–17.
- 2013 “The Food of the Damned,” in **Between Heaven and Hell: Islam, Salvation, and the Fate of Others**, ed. Mohammad Hasan Khalil (Oxford University Press), 253–72.
- 2013 “Food-Related Interaction among Christians, Muslims, and Jews in High and Late Medieval Latin Christendom,” **History Compass** 11.11: 957–66.
- 2013 “Reconstructing the Social History of Rabbinic Ideas,” **Jewish Quarterly Review** 103.4: 581–88.
- 2012 “Contextualizing Bread: An Analysis of Talmudic Discourse in Light of Christian and Islamic Counterparts,” **Journal of the American Academy of Religion** 80: 411–33.
- 2012 “Fusion Cooking in an Islamic Milieu: Jewish and Christian Jurists on Food Associated with Foreigners,” in **Beyond Religious Borders: Interaction and Intellectual Exchange in the Medieval Islamic World**, ed. David M. Freidenreich and Miriam Goldstein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 144–60.
- 2011, 2016 “Food and Table Fellowship,” in **The Jewish Annotated New Testament**, ed. Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Brettler (Oxford: Oxford University Press), first ed.: 521–24; second ed., revised and expanded: 650–53.
- 2011 “The Implications of Unbelief: Tracing the Emergence of Distinctively Shi’i Notions Regarding the Food and Impurity of Non-Muslims,” **Islamic Law and Society**, 18: 53–84.
- 2010 “Five Questions about Non-Muslim Meat: Toward a New Appreciation of Ibn Qayyim al-Ġawziyyah’s Contribution to Islamic Law,” in **Re-evaluating Ibn**

Qayyim al-Ġawziyyah's Literary Stature: Religious and Historical Issues, ed. Caterina Bori and Livnat Holtzman, **Oriente Moderno** 90: 85–104.

- 2010 “Holiness and Impurity in the Torah and the Quran: Differences within a Common Typology,” **Comparative Islamic Studies** 6: 5–22.
- 2009 “Muslim–Jewish Dialogue,” **Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World**, ed. John Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press).
- 2008 “Sharing Meals with Non-Christians in Canon Law Commentaries, ca. 1160–1260: A Case Study in Legal Development,” **Medieval Encounters** 14: 41–77.
- 2008/9 “Kiddushin—A Service for Yom Hashoah,” **Conservative Judaism** 61.1/2: 120–52.
- 2004 “Comparisons Compared: A Methodological Survey of Comparisons of Religion from ‘A Magic Dwells’ to **A Magic Still Dwells**,” **Method and Theory in the Study of Religion** 16: 80–101.
- 2003 “The Use of Islamic Sources in Saadia Gaon’s **Tafsīr** of the Torah,” **Jewish Quarterly Review** 93: 353–95.

FORTHCOMING ARTICLE

“**De Iudaeis, Sarracenis, et eorum canonibus**: On Local Reception of Laws about Jews and Muslims Canonized in the **Corpus iuris canonici**,” in Rowan Dorin, ed., **The History of Local Ecclesiastical Legislation**

INVITED SCHOLARLY LECTURES

- 2023 “Contextualizing Current Events in Israel and Gaza,” Chaminade University, Honolulu
- 2020 “Legal Alchemy: How and Why Canonists Turned Muslims into Jews,” presented with Tori Paquette (Colby ’20), University of California Los Angeles
- 2019 “Muhammad, the Monk, and the Jews: Tales of Triangular Relations at the Origins of Islam,” Ruhr-Universität Bochum
- 2019 “Why Did Christians Use Ideas about Jews to Think about Muslims?,” Pomona College
- 2019 “Food and Jewishness: Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Perspectives,” Claremont McKenna College

- 2018 "Instructing Christians by Constructing Jew-ish Muslims: Case Studies in Medieval Rhetoric about the Old Testament," Universität Bielefeld
- 2018 "Maine + Jewish: Two Centuries," Maine State Museum
- 2013–2017 "Muslims Killed Christ? A Preposterous Medieval Allegation and Its Implications," Denison College, Middlebury College, New York University, University of California Los Angeles
- 2011–2017 "Food and Identity in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam," Bowdoin College, Coe College, Cornell University, University of New England, University of Wisconsin
- 2014 "Reading Islamic Studies through the Lens of Jewish Studies," Trinity College
- 2013 "Islamic Studies and Jewish Studies: Differences in Context," Columbia University
- 2012 "Judaizing Muslims: An Overlooked Trope in Christian Portrayals of Islam," NEH Summer Institute, "Networks and Knowledge: Innovation and Synthesis in the Muslim-Christian-Jewish Medieval Mediterranean"
- 2012 "Foreigners and Their Food in Medieval Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Law," Universität Konstanz
- 2012 "Conceptions of Muslims and Christians in the Halakhic Literature of the Geonim and Rishonim," Ben Gurion University in the Negev
- 2012 "Food and Identity as 'Basic Needs' in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Law," Maison des sciences de l'homme Ange-Guépin
- 2011 "Jews, Pagans, and Heretics in Early Medieval Canon Law," RELMIN Workshop "Jews in Ecclesiastical, Roman-Barbarian, and Byzantine Law (6th–11th Centuries): Changes, Ruptures, Adaptations," Fontevraud, France
- 2011 "Jews, Pagans, and Heretics in Early Medieval Canon Law," Brandeis University
- 2011 "Ways of Walking: Rabbinic and Academic Approaches to Comparing Jewish and Islamic Law," Hartford Theological Seminary
- 2011 "How Jewish are Muslims? Conceptions of Judaism and Islam in Medieval Canon Law," Dartmouth College
- 2010 "Old Memory in New Media: How Colby's Maine Jewish History Project Collects and Presents Its Data," Annual Meeting, Maine Archives and Museums
- 2010 "The Food of the Damned," University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

- 2007 “Foreign Food under Foreign Rule: Developments in Jewish and Christian Law within an Islamic Milieu,” University of Pennsylvania
- 2003 “Building Walls at the Borders: The Creation of Restrictions on Foreign Food in Modern Islam and Medieval Christianity,” Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin Working Group on Modernity and Islam

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2023 Respondent: “David Freidenreich’s **Jewish Muslims**: Author Meets Respondents,” Annual Meeting, American Academy of Religion (AAR)
- 2023 “A Geographical Analysis of Local Ecclesiastical Legislation on Jews and Muslims,” Annual Conference, Medieval Academy of America (MAA)
- 2022 Respondent: “History and Literature in Medieval Iberia,” Annual Conference, Association for Jewish Studies (AJS)
- 2021 Respondent: “COVID Pedagogy,” Annual Conference, Society of Jewish Ethics
- 2020 Convener and Panelist: “Author-Meets Critics: Oliver Freiberger, **Considering Comparison**,” AAR
- 2019 “Appeals to Anti-Jewish Tropes in Christian Texts about Early Muslims,” AAR
- 2019 “Muhammad the Jew,” AAR
- 2018 Roundtable panelist, “The Role of Jewish Studies within Colleges and Universities,” AJS
- 2018 Respondent: “Inward Acculturation in Medieval Law and Exegesis,” AJS
- 2018 “The Dome of the Rock as the Biblical Temple in Premodern Christian Thought,” AAR
- 2017 Respondent: “Jews and Muslims in the Geniza Age,” AJS
- 2017 Roundtable panelist (and organizer), “Partnerships between Jewish Studies Programs and Off-Campus Jewish Organizations,” AJS
- 2017 Respondent: “Meals in the Greco-Roman World,” Annual Meeting, Society of Biblical Literature (SBL)
- 2017 “Jewish’ Muslims in Martin Luther’s Rhetoric,” Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the Reformation Era (an international conference organized by the Verien für Reformationsgeschichte and the Society for Reformation Research)

- 2016 "What Happened to Jewry Law When Muslims became 'Jewish'?" AJS
- 2016 "Moriscos as Jews in Spanish Christian Rhetoric," Annual Conference, Middle Eastern Studies Association
- 2015 "Muslim Christ-Killers in Medieval Iberian Art," presented with Anna Spencer (Colby '16), AAR
- 2015 Roundtable panelist, "Methodical Aspects of Comparison," AAR
- 2015 Roundtable panelist, "Jewish Muslims in Muhammad's Community," AJS
- 2014 "Anti-Judaism and Pope Benedict XVI's Regensburg Address," AJS
- 2014 Roundtable panelist, "Flipping the Jewish Studies Classroom," AJS
- 2014 Respondent: "Identity and Otherness: Reflections on David Freidenreich's ***Foreigners and Their Food***," AAR
- 2013 "Reading Islamic Studies through the Lens of Jewish Studies," AAR
- 2013 "Laws on Food as a Source for Medieval Interreligious Interactions," MAA
- 2012 "Conceptions of Gentiles in Halakhic Literature from Christian Spain," AJS
- 2011 "Food and Identity in the Pauline Communities," SBL
- 2011 Respondent: "Religion and Law in the Medieval Mediterranean World," AAR
- 2010 "A Tale of Two Colleges: Jews and Baptist Institutions in Maine during the Interwar Years," co-presented with Desiree Shayer (Colby '12), AJS
- 2008 "Poking Holes in Israel's Holiness: Explorations in the Juxtaposition of Leviticus and the Qur'an," SBL
- 2008 "The Scholar as Community Educator: Lessons I've Learned Teaching Islam to Jews... as a Rabbi," AAR
- 2007 "People of the Oral Book? Attitudes toward Rabbinic Law in Islamic Legal Literature," AJS
- 2006 "Foreign Food in the Marketplace: Recovering Historical Data through Comparison," Annual Meeting, American Historical Association
- 2005 "Reading Scripture against the Grain in Christian and Islamic Communities: A Comparatively-Enriched Study," SBL
- 2005 "Prohibitions of Commensality with Jews in Early Medieval Canon Law," Annual Meeting, International Congress of Medieval Studies

- 2004 “Jewish and Islamic Restrictions on Foreign Food: A Case Study in the Significance of Similarity,” AAR
- 2003 “On the Literary Dependency of the Tosefta,” AJS
- 2002 “Preliminary Observations on the Source of the Mishnah and Tosefta,” AJS
- 2002 “Neither Fish nor Fowl: The Conception of Islam in Canon Law Sources on Commensality,” AAR

COURSES TAUGHT AT COLBY

* ***in active rotation***

- 120: Personal Writings about God (2013, 2015)
- * 123: Beit Midrash—Jewish Ideas Lab (every semester, 2022–)
- 152: Israeli Popular Music (2015)
- * 181: Conceptions of Jews and Judaism (annually, 2008–)
- * 182: Jews, Judaism, and the Modern World (annually, 2009–)
- 197: Biblical Hebrew (2019)
- 197: Introduction to the Talmud (2009)
- 221: The Jews of Maine (2010, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2018)
- 223: Readings Course on Topics Related to the Modern State of Israel (2018, 2021)
- 282: The Making of Judaism (2009)
- * 285: Faith, Class, and Community (2019, 2022)
- * 322: Food and Religious Identity (2010, 2013, 2016, 2019)
- 346: Jews of Germany, Past and Present (2020)
- 382: Abraham in the Abrahamic Religions (2009)
- 384: Religious Responses to Ethical Dilemmas (2008, 2012, 2014)
- * 387: Anti-Judaism and Islamophobia in Christian/Western Thought (2014, 2017, 2023)
- 398: Exhibiting Maine’s Jewish Experiences (2011)
- * 423: Capstone: Designing the Jewish Ideas Lab (every semester, 2023–)

CURRENT SERVICE TO COLBY AND THE ACADEMY

Chair, Colby Department of Jewish Studies (2013–)

Associate director and co-founder, Colby Center for Small Town Jewish Life (2015–)

Member, Colby Center for Teaching and Learning Advisory Board (2019–)

Member, First-Year Advising Task Force (2023–)

Chair, Association for Jewish Studies governance committee (2020–; member since 2017)

RESEARCH WEBSITES I MANAGE

Corona Guidance: Religious Norms for Navigating the COVID-19 Pandemic
(web.colby.edu/coronaguidance)

Maine Jewish History Project (web.colby.edu/jewsinmaine)

Medieval Canon Law Virtual Library (web.colby.edu/canonlaw)

SUCCESSFUL EXTERNAL GRANT APPLICATIONS

2023–2024 Crown Family Philanthropies (Center for Small Town Jewish Life national impact)

2022–2024 Covenant Foundation, Jim Joseph Foundation, Rigueous Persons Foundation, Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation (Center for Small Town Jewish Life national impact)

2021–2024 Natan Fund (Center for Small Town Jewish Life national impact)

2014–2015 Legacy Heritage Jewish Studies Project, directed by the Association for Jewish Studies: “Perspectives on Israel” (public programming)

2014 New England–Maritimes Region of the American Academy of Religion: “Anti-Judaism and Its Implications” (one-day conference)

2011 Schusterman Visiting Artist Program, supported by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation (Israeli filmmaker-in-residence at Colby)

2010–2011 Legacy Heritage Jewish Studies Project, directed by the Association for Jewish Studies: “Telling the Stories of Maine’s Jewish History” (public programming)

ACADEMIC CONFERENCES ORGANIZED

- 2015 Maine Migrations, Past and Present (Colby)
- 2014 Anti-Judaism and Its Implications (Colby)
- 2011 Discovering Maine's Jewish History (Colby)
- 2007 Jews, Christians, and Muslims under Caliphs and Sultans (U. Pennsylvania)

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND SCHOLARSHIPS

- 2015 James Phinney Baxter Award (superior scholarship), Maine Historical Society
- 2012 Award for Excellence in the Study of Religion (textual studies category), American Academy of Religion (for ***Foreigners and Their Food***)
- 2012 NEH Summer Institute, "Networks and Knowledge: Synthesis and Innovation in the Muslim-Christian-Jewish Medieval Mediterranean"
- 2005-2006 Mrs. Giles Whiting Foundation Fellow, Columbia University
- 2005-2006 Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Doctoral Dissertation Fellow, National Foundation for Jewish Culture
- 2003, 2005 Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Summer Fellow, Columbia University
- 2004-2005 Doctoral Scholarship Grant recipient, Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture
- 2003-2004 Paul H. Klingenstein Fellow, Columbia University
- 1999-2003 Presidential Fellow, Columbia University
- 1999-2000 Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Humanistic Studies, Woodrow Wilson Foundation
- 1995-1999 Justice Brandeis Scholar, Brandeis University