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Blurring the future: AI regurgitation and the Singapore Muslim community

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CURRICULUM VITAE

James McGrail was born in Brent, The UK, on May 12, 1994. Between 2005 and 2012 they attended John F. Kennedy Roman Catholic Secondary School, where they received three A-levels. Between their graduation from secondary school, and enrolling in university, they volunteered in Sierra Leone, and worked as a Mental Health advocate for the UK charity Time to Talk. In 2015 they enrolled in the Study of Religion at SOAS University of London. There they received a first-class degree, and their thesis on the role of social media filter bubbles on Islamophobia in the UK won the award for best Undergraduate thesis. During their degree, they conducted several internships including working on the BBC documentary “My Stolen Childhood” which won the AIB Award for best Human-Interest documentary. After graduating in 2018, they worked at the women’s legal rights charity Equality Now as press assistant for the Middle East and North Africa. In 2019, they enrolled in the Master programme in Cultural Anthropology and Development sociology at Leiden University. There they received Leiden University funding to conduct fieldwork on the transition to adulthood of young men working for Uber in Accra, Ghana. For this project they graduated cum laude in 2020. After graduation, they produced the 8-part podcast “Notes from the Field Desk” which has received thousands of listens. In 2022, they began their PhD trajectory at Leiden University as part of the NWO funded One Among Zeroes research project within the department of Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology. During the PhD, James spoke at several international conferences, and published their article “Act Blur, Live Longer: Muslim Artists Blurring the Categories of Singapore’s Smart City” in the journal Cultural Anthropology.