

M. Cooper Harriss
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Curriculum Vitae (July 2009)

Education:

University of Chicago, Chicago, IL:
The Divinity School: Ph.D. Candidate, Religion and Literature
Division of the Social Sciences: M.A. (1998)

Yale University, New Haven, CT:
The Divinity School and Institute of Sacred Music: M.A.R., Religion and the Arts (2003)

Washington & Lee University, Lexington, VA:
The College: B.A. in English (1997)

Details of Doctoral Study:

Qualifying Exams (February, 2007):

- 1) History of Criticism and Literary Theory
- 2) Genres of Literature (The Novel and Tragedy)
- 3) History of Modern Christianity (American and Transatlantic)
- 4) Modern and Contemporary Religious Thought: Enlightenment to 20th Century

Dissertation: *Race and the Religious Unconscious: Ralph Ellison's Invisible Theology*
Committee: Richard Rosengarten, Clark Gilpin, and Kenneth Warren

Teaching Experience:

Adjunct Professor, Elmhurst College, Department of Religious Studies

Fall 2009: Religion in America (REL 350)
Spring 2010: Religion in America (REL 350)
African-American Religious Traditions (REL 346)

Instructor, University of Chicago, Department of Religious Studies and Divinity School

Spring 2008: "Preachers and Preaching in American Literature" (CHRM 34500)
Winter 2009: "Irony in Religion and Literature" (RLST 28203)

Writing Consultant, Yale Divinity School, New Haven, CT (2002-03 academic year)

High School English Teacher (grades 10-12), Stratford Academy, Macon, GA (August 1998-June 2000)

Editorial Experience:

Religion and Culture Web Forum (Martin Marty Center for the Advanced Study of Religion, University of Chicago Divinity School)
Editor (July 2009-present)

Ethics: An International Journal of Social, Political and Legal Philosophy (University of Chicago Press)
Managing Editor (February, 2007-December, 2008)
Editorial Assistant (May, 2004-February, 2007)

Honors and Fellowships:

Dissertation Fellow, Martin E. Marty Center for the Advanced Study of Religion, University of Chicago Divinity School (2008-09)

Nathan and Charlotte Scott Dissertation Fellowship, University of Chicago Divinity School (2007-08)

Graduate Paper Prize: 2006 Midwest AAR Annual Meeting: "The Book of Nat: Biblical Rhetoric, Conversion Narratives, and the Textual Quagmire of Nat Turner's 'Confessions'"

Fellow, The Jerald Brauer Seminar, Martin E. Marty Center for the Advanced Study of Religion, University of Chicago Divinity School, Spring, 2006

Topic: *Religion and Violence in American Culture*

Paper: "Where is the Voice Coming From?: Rhetoric, Religion, and Violence in *The Confessions of Nat Turner*"

Perrin Fund Travel Grant, University of Chicago Divinity School, 2004-06

Doctoral Fellowship, University of Chicago Divinity School, 2003-2007

Institute Fellowship, Yale Divinity School and Institute of Sacred Music, 2000-03

Institute Travel Grant, Yale University Institute of Sacred Music, 2002-03

NEH Summer Institute for High School Teachers, Chapel Hill, NC, July, 1999

This three-week seminar took place at the National Humanities Center. Topic: *Writing Identity in African American Literature*

Publications:

Print Articles:

"Barack Obama and the Legacy of Ralph Ellison," in Heather Harris, Kimberly Moffitt, and Catherine Squires, eds., *The Obama Effect: Multidisciplinary Renderings of the 2008 Presidential Campaign* (Forthcoming edited volume, SUNY Press, 2009).

"Where is the Voice Coming From?: Rhetoric, Religion, and Violence in *The Confessions of Nat Turner*" *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 89:1-2 (Spring 2006): 135-70.

Online Articles:

Response to Jacqueline Bussie, "Flowers in the Dark: African American Consciousness, Laughter, and Resistance in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*," *Religion and Culture Web Forum* of the Martin Marty Center <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/martycenter/publications/webforum/072009/Harriss%20RCWF%20response.pdf>

"Updike's Motions of Grace," *Sightings* (February 5, 2009)

http://divinity.uchicago.edu/martycenter/publications/sightings/archive_2009/0205.shtml

"E Pluribus Obama," *Sightings* (November 13, 2008)

(http://divinity.uchicago.edu/martycenter/publications/sightings/archive_2008/1113.shtml). Reprinted in *Circa: News from the University of Chicago Divinity School* 31 (Winter 2009): 10-11, 15.

"The Preacher in the Text: Zora Neale Hurston and the Homiletics of Literature" *Religion and Culture Web Forum* of the Martin Marty Center (February 2008) (<http://marty-center.uchicago.edu/webforum/index.shtml>)

"Race, Myth, and Ritual in Jena," *Sightings* (October 4, 2007) (http://marty-center.uchicago.edu/sightings/archive_2007/1004.shtml)

"Religion in *Modern Times*," *Sightings* (August 10, 2006) (http://marty-center.uchicago.edu/sightings/archive_2006/0810.shtml). Reprinted in the *Criterion* Special Issue: "Celebrating *Sightings*" (2008): 33-34.

Book Reviews:

The Grateful Slave: The Emergence of Race in Eighteenth Century British and American Culture by George Boulukos, *Callaloo* (forthcoming)

The Talking Book: African Americans and the Bible by Allen Dwight Callahan, *Callaloo* 31:2 (Spring 2008): 636-40.

From Nature to Experience: The American Search for Cultural Authority by Roger Lundin, *Journal of Religion* 88:2 (April 2008): 253-55.

James Baldwin's God: Sex, Hope, and Crisis in Black Holiness Culture by Clarence Hardy, III, *Journal of the American Studies Association of Texas* 37 (November 2006).

Invited Lectures, Panels, and Chairs:

Lecture Chair and Moderator for Larry Bouchard (University of Virginia), "Tony Kushner's *Homebody / Kabul*: Kenosis Resisting Innocence," The D. R. Sharpe Lectures: "Culturing Theologies, Theologizing Cultures," University of Chicago Divinity School, April, 2009.

"Barack Obama, Ellisonian: What Ralph Ellison Can Teach Us about President Obama." Part of a panel (with Professors Dwight Hopkins and Margaret Mitchell) on the religious dimensions of Obama's candidacy and presidency. Presented to the Visiting Committee of the University of Chicago Divinity School, Chicago, IL, February 10, 2009.

"Twentieth Century American Preachers and Their Contexts." A series of five sessions given March / April, 2008 at Western Springs Congregational Church, Western Springs, IL. Topics: Harry Emerson Fosdick, Aimee Semple McPherson, Reinhold Niebuhr, Martin Luther King, Jr., and William Sloane Coffin, Jr.

Conference Papers and Workshop Presentations:

"The Center Cannot Hold: *E Pluribus Unum* and Civil Religion in Ralph Ellison's Second Novel" (**American Religious History Workshop, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, April 2009**)

"The Center Cannot Hold: *E Pluribus Unum* and Civil Religion in Ralph Ellison's Second Novel" (**Annual Meeting of the Southern Humanities Council, Durham, NC, February 2009**)

"'Black Is an' Black A'int': Ralph Ellison's Cosmology of Race" (**North American Religions Workshop, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, January 2009**)

"'Brave Words for a Startling Occasion': Barak Obama's 'More Perfect Union' and the Legacy of Ralph Ellison" (**The Obama Effect, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, October 2008**)

"Ralph Ellison, Reinhold Niebuhr, and the Irony of the Common Good" (**The Common Good in Transition and Translation, University of Notre Dame, South Bend, IN, October 2008**)

"On Vocation and Pedagogy" (**Border Crossings Presentation, University of Chicago Divinity School, Chicago, IL, May 2008**)

"Exile Blues: Ralph Ellison's 'Territory' and the Inventions of Home" (**Annual Meeting of the Southern Humanities Council, Knoxville, TN, February 2008**)

"Preacherly Antecedents of the Speakerly Text: Sermons in the Anthropological Writing of Zora Neale Hurston" (**Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Diego, CA, November 2007**)

"Where is the Voice Coming From?: Rhetoric, Religion, and Violence in *The Confessions of Nat Turner*" (**Race and Religion Workshop, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, November 2006**)

"The Book of Nat: Biblical Rhetoric, Conversion Narratives, and the Textual Quagmire of Nat Turner's 'Confessions'" (Annual Meeting of the Midwest American Academy of Religion, Chicago, IL, March / April 2006) Winner of the meeting's Graduate Student Prize

"The Sermon in the Anthropological Writings of Zora Neale Hurston" (Annual Meeting of the Southern Humanities Council, Asheville, NC, February 2006)

"Defender of the Faith: Religion in the Chicago *Defender*, 1935-53" (Annual Meeting of the Midwest American Academy of Religion, Chicago, IL, April 2005)

"Defender of the Faith: Religion in the Chicago *Defender*, 1935-53" (Annual Meeting of the Southern Humanities Council, Richmond, VA, February 2005)

"The Biblical Rhetoric of Civil Rights: Isaiah's Suffering Servant in Birmingham, AL, 1963" (Annual Meeting of the Southern Humanities Council, Chattanooga, TN, February 2004)

"Ruminations on Ruination: Gillian Welch's 'Ruination Day (April the 14th),' Bob Dylan's 'High Water (for Charley Patton),' and the Cataclysmic Memory" (Colloquium of the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, New Haven, CT, February 2003)

"Everything Is Broken: American Vernacular Music and the Theology of Culture" (Session Chair and Organizer, Annual Meeting of the Southern Humanities Council, Athens, GA, February 2003)

"The Best Juneteenth Pageant Ever: Carnival and Ralph Ellison's Preacherly Voice" (Annual Meeting of the Southern Humanities Council, New Orleans, LA, March, 2002)

"The Blues and Walter Brueggemann's 'Psalms of Reorientation'" (Panel Discussion on Brueggemann and the Psalms for the Colloquium of the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, New Haven, CT, September, 2000)

References:

Richard A. Rosengarten, Dean and Associate Professor of Religion and Literature in the Divinity School. 1025 E. 58th Street, Chicago, IL 60637, (773) 702-8221, raroseng@uchicago.edu

W. Clark Gilpin, Margaret E. Burton Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Christianity and Theology in the Divinity School; also in the College. 1025 E. 58th Street, Chicago, IL 60637, (773) 702-8231, w-gilpin@uchicago.edu

Kenneth Warren, Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor in the Department of English, Committee on African & African-American Studies, Committee on Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities, Committee on the History of Culture and Deputy Provost for Research & Minority Issues. 1115 E. 58th Street, Chicago, IL 60637, (773) 702-9761, kwarren@uchicago.edu