

Curtis J. Evans

Associate Professor of American Religions and the History of Christianity
University of Chicago Divinity School
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TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Associate Professor, American Religions and the History of Christianity, University of Chicago Divinity School, 2014-present

Assistant Professor, History of Christianity, University of Chicago Divinity School, 2007-2014

Assistant Professor of Religion, Florida State University, 2005-2007

EDUCATION

Ph.D. 2005 Harvard University

M.A. 1999 Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

B.A. 1995 University of Houston

PUBLICATIONS:

Books

The Burden of Black Religion (Oxford University Press, 2008)

A Theology of Brotherhood: The Federal Council of Churches and the Problem of Race (forthcoming)

Articles/Essays

“A Politics of Conversion: Billy Graham’s Political and Social Vision,” in *Billy Graham: American Pilgrim*. Eds. Andrew Finstuen, Anne Blue Wills, and Grant Wacker (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

Forum Contributor: The Role and Future of Academic Journals, *Religion and American Culture* (Summer 2015), 149-177.

“Billy Graham As American Religious and Cultural Symbol,” (Book Review Essay) *Harvard Theological Review* (July 2015), 471-481.

“‘The Chief Glory of God [is] in Self-Denying, Suffering Love!’: True Religion in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.” *Journal of Religion* 92:4 (October 2012), 498-514.

“African American Christianity and the Burden of Race” *American Christianities: A History of Dominance and Diversity*. Eds. W. Clark Gilpin and Catherine A. Brekus (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

“On Judging the Dead” and “Concluding Remarks on Booker T. Washington.” *Journal of Southern Religion* 11 (Spring 2009), online.

- “White Evangelical Protestant Responses to the Civil Rights Movement.” *Harvard Theological Review* 102:2 (April 2009), 245-273.
- “The Religious and Racial Meanings of *The Green Pastures*.” *Religion and American Culture* 18:1 (Winter 2008), 59-94.
- “Booker T. Washington and the Quest for an Industrialized and Civilized Religion for Black Southerners.” *Journal of Southern Religion* 10:7 (Fall 2007), online.
- “Urbanization and the End of Black Churches in the Modern World.” *Church History* 76:4 (December 2007), 799-822.
- “W. E. B. Du Bois: Interpreting Religion and the Problem of the Negro Church.” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 75:2 (June 2007), 268-297.

BOOK REVIEWS

Published in the following journals: *African American Review*, *American Studies*, *Books and Culture*, *Harvard Divinity Bulletin*, *History of Religions*, *H-Net*, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, *Journal of American Ethnic History*, *Journal of American History*, *Journal of Church History*, *Journal of Religion*, *Journal of Southern History*, *Journal of Southern Religion*, *Michigan Historical Review*, and *New England Quarterly*.

PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES AND PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

- “On the Intersection of Race and Women’s Work: Katherine Gardner and the Federal Council of Churches,” paper read for panel: “Women and American Christianity: Twenty Years Since Catherine Brekus’ *Strangers and Pilgrims*,” American Society of Church History, New York, NY, January 3, 2020
- “The Imaginary Turn in Evangelical Scholarship,” Chair, American Society of Church History, New York, NY, January 4, 2020.
- “A Theology of Brotherhood: The Federal Council of Churches and the Problem of Race,” paper read for roundtable: “New Directions in Social Christianity and American Global Consciousness,” American Society of Church History, Chicago, IL, January 5, 2019
- “Race and the Other: Whose Church, Which Histories?” panel discussion, American Society of Church History, Chicago, IL, January 5, 2019
- “The Historiography of Neo-Evangelicalism: The Absence of Race,” paper read for panel: “Putting the ‘White’ In Evangelical: The History and Historiography of a Racial-Religious Boundary,” American Society of Church History, Chicago, IL, January 4, 2019
- “Christianity and the Problem of Anti-Intellectualism,” Roundtable, Society for U.S. Intellectual History, Chicago, IL, November 9, 2018
- “Christian Brotherhood and Christian Mission in Black Religious Thought,” American Society of Church History, Washington, DC, January 5, 2018
- “The Federal Council of Churches and the Struggle for a Federal Anti-Lynching Bill,” American Religious History Workshop, Princeton University, April 20, 2017 (Invited Talk)
- African Religions in the Americas, University of Chicago Divinity School, May 20-21, 2016, The Martin Marty Center (coordinator, organizer, and participant)
- “The Federal Council of Churches and the Social Gospel,” North American Religions Colloquium, Harvard Divinity School, May 3, 2016 (Invited Talk)

- Key Words in the Study of American Religion, American Society of Church History, Atlanta, GA, January 2016.
- Panel Participant, New Studies of the Social Gospel, American Society of Church History, Atlanta, GA, January 2016.
- Panel Discussion Respondent, Religious and Racial Discourses, American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, GA, November 2015.
- “A Politics of Conversion: Billy Graham’s Political and Social Vision,” Worlds of Billy Graham Conference, May 30-June 1, 2013, Kennebunkport, ME
- “‘A Stain Upon Our National Honor’: The Anti-Lynching Campaign of the Federal Council of the Churches in Christ,” March 20, 2013, Vanderbilt University, Religious History Workshop (Invited Talk)
- “Uniting ‘Social Engineering with the Emotional Enthusiasm and the Moral Power of Religious Motivation’: The Federal Council of Churches and the Race Problem,” Chicago, IL, November 19, 2012, American Academy of Religion
- “Beyond the Black Church,” Dean’s Lecture Series, April 11, 2012, Candler School of Theology, Emory University
- “Perceiving No One from a Human Point of View: Replacing the Tainted Lens of Race,” March 23, 2012, Social Justice Summit, North Park University
- “Demonstrating the Sufficiency of Christianity to Solve the Race Problem: The Federal Council of Churches and Race Relations, 1920-1950,” December 1, 2011, American Religious History Workshop, University of Chicago Divinity School
- Presiding Chair, “Out of Place: African American Religious Lives in Catholic, Mormon, and Orthodox Spaces” (Afro-American Religious History Group), San Francisco, CA, November 22, 2011, American Academy of Religion Annual Convention
- “‘What We Could Not Do Through Ourselves Alone. Is There Anything to That Belief Any More?’: The Federal Council of Churches and the Challenge of Social Change,” Baltimore, MD, October 30, 2011, Southern Historical Association
- “‘Filling One’s Head with a Thousand Questions’: White Antislavery Activists Wrestle with Doubt and Authenticity,” Writing Religion: Representation, Difference, and Authority (Conference to Honor W. Clark Gilpin), May 19, 2011, University of Chicago Divinity School
- “Reflections on the Problem of the Black Church,” New Directions in African Diaspora Studies, Lecture Series, March 31, 2011, Boston College
- Panel Respondent, “African-American and Latino/a Mennonites: Marginal No More” (Afro-American Religious History Group), and Panel Discussion, “The Future of Southern Religious History” (North American Religions Section), Atlanta, GA, October 31 and November 1, 2010, American Academy of Religion
- Paper Presented, “*Divided by Faith: A Decade Retrospective*,” October 15-16, 2010, Indiana Wesleyan University
- “Black and White Christians in the Racial Struggle,” Otts-Maloney Lectures, January 26-27, 2010, Davidson College
- Seminar in American Religion, Panel (Anthea Butler and Milton Sernett) on *The Burden of Black Religion*, September 12, 2009, Cushwa Center, University of Notre Dame
- Dean’s Forum on *The Burden of Black Religion*, May 20, 2009, University of Chicago Divinity School

- “An Inner Law Written Upon the Heart,” (Adult Education and Sermon), February 22, 2009, University Church, Chicago, IL (Black History Month Address)
- “The Problem of ‘the Black Church’,” Race and Religion Workshop, December 2, 2008, University of Chicago Divinity School
- Panelist, “Albert Raboteau’s No-Longer ‘Invisible Institution’: An Anniversary Retrospective,” North American Religions Section, Chicago, IL, November 1, 2008, American Academy of Religion Annual Convention
- Presentation by Invitation, “The Problem of ‘the Black Church’,” August 29, 2008 Interdisciplinary Workshop on American Religion, Center for the Study of Religion and Society, University of Notre Dame
- “Assessing the Cultural History of the Study of Religion with Great Pain and Terror,” San Diego, CA, November 2007, American Academy of Religion Annual Convention
- “Emotionalism Described and Dissected: The New Psychology and the Pathologizing of Black Religion,” Cultural History of the Study of Religion Section, Washington, D.C., November 2006, American Academy of Religion Annual Convention
- “The Problem of the Negro Church: W. E. B. Du Bois and His Analysis of Black Religion,” Afro Am Religions Group Section, Philadelphia, PA, November 2005, American Academy of Religion Annual Convention
- Attendee and Participant, “Conversation on African American Religion in the Mid-20th Century,” November 2003, Amherst College, MA
- Attendee and Participant, “Color Lines Conference,” August 29-September 1, 2003, Harvard University
- Attendee and Participant, “Science and Religion: The New Imperative?,” January 4-9, 2001, The Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences, Berkeley, CA
- Guest Lecture, “Black Theology in the Thought of James Cone and Kelly Brown Douglas,” March 3, 2000, Merrimack College, North Andover, MA
- Visiting Lecturer, “Debates on the Nature of Christ,” November 20, 1999, Emmanuel Temple Gospel Center, Roxbury, MA
- “The Emerging Church in South Africa: Church Life and Theology Since ‘Truth and Reconciliation’ in the Context of Social Change in South Africa,” May 29-June 19, 1999 Workshop in Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa, and Accra, Ghana, sponsored by the Boston Theological Institute

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- American Religious History Workshop, Coordinator and Leader, 2013-present
- Editorial Committee, *Journal of Religion*, 2014-present
- Manuscript reader/reviewer for Oxford, Cambridge, Northern Illinois, New York, and Yale University Press, 2009-Present
- Editorial Board, *Religion Compass*, 2008-2014
- Steering Committee Member, Cultural History of the Study of Religion, American Academy of Religion, 2008-2010
- Editorial Assistant, *Harvard Theological Review*, 2003-2005

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Academy of Religion
American Society of Church History

FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS, AWARDS

Charles Warren Center Faculty Fellow, Harvard University, 2020-21
Henry Luce III Fellow in Theology, 2012-2013
First Book Grant for Minority Scholars Program, Louisville Institute, 2007-2008
First Year Assistant Professor Award, Florida State University, Summer 2006
Fund for Theological Education Dissertation Fellow, 2004-05
Louisville Institute Honorary Dissertation Fellow, 2004-05
Boston Theological Institute Grant: two-week trip to South Africa to study the role of churches in supporting or ending apartheid, May-June 1999
Theology Division Award for Christian Thought: Master's Thesis on Evangelical Protestants and the Civil Rights Movement, May 1999

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE WORK

Committee on Degrees, 2019-20, 2021 to present
Committee on Doctoral Admissions, 2021 to present
Undergraduate Study Committee, 2018-20
Promotion and Tenure, 2014-18
Ministry, 2008-2010
Academic Policy, 2011-2012, 2016-18 (chair, 2017-18)

DISSERTATIONS SUPERVISED

Advisor

Greg Chatterley, "Salt and Light: Free Churches, Suburban Evangelicals and the Transformation of White Supremacy in the United States," University of Chicago Divinity School, August 2020 (Richard Rosengarten and Jane Dailey)
Michele Ferris, "The Religious Bildungsbürgertum in the Queen City: Race and Cultural Politics in Cincinnati's German Denominational Newspapers, 1830-1862," University of Chicago Divinity School, June 2020 (Kathleen Conzen and Paul Mendes-Flohr)
Susan Christopher Shields, "Beyond Words: Reading the Bible in Antebellum Contexts," University of Chicago Divinity School, June 2019 (Catherine Brekus, Co-Advisor, and Richard Rosengarten)
Paul Chang, "'The Spiritual is Discerned by No One': An Intellectual Biography of Watchmen Nee," University of Chicago Divinity School, June 2017 (Catherine Brekus, Co-Advisor, and Guy Alitto)

Committee Member

Daniel Wyche, "The Politics of Self-Overcoming: Spiritual Exercises and Political Liberation," University of Chicago Divinity School, December 2019 (Arnold Davison, Advisor, and Brian Harcourt)

Alison Tyner Davis, "Troping Protestant Desire: Patterns of Time and Space in Nineteenth-Century American Religious History," University of Chicago Divinity School, June 2018 (Richard Rosengarten, Advisor, and W. Clark Gilpin)

Casey Bohlen, "The Politics of Conscience: Religious Activism and Social Change in Postwar America," Harvard University, June 2016 (Lizabeth Cohen, Advisor, James Kloppenberg, and Lisa McGirr)

COURSES TAUGHT

African American Religion: Themes and Issues (undergraduate survey)

African American Religion in the 20th Century: History and Historiography

Becoming Modern: American Religion in the 1920s

Christianity and Slavery in America, 1619-1865

Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism in 20th Century America: Interpretations

Race and Religion in 20th Century American Culture

Religion in Modern America, 1865-1920

Religion and the American Civil Rights Movement (undergraduate course)

Religion in Twentieth-Century America

The Long 1960s: Religion and Social Change

The Age of Walter Rauschenbusch: History and Historiography of the Social Gospel

The Christian Right: History and Historiography

VOLUNTEER/SERVICE WORK

Faculty Mentor, 2021 Leadership Alliance Summer Research/Early Identification Program

Faculty Mentor, 2011 Leadership Alliance Summer Research-Early Identification Program

REFERENCES

Available upon Request