

K. Merinda Simmons

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Appointments

Fall 2015-Present: Associate Professor, Department of Religious Studies. The University of Alabama

*Affiliated Faculty Member in African American Studies, Women's Studies, and The Summersell Center for the Study of the South.

Fall 2010-Spring 2015: Assistant Professor, Department of Religious Studies. The University of Alabama

*Affiliated Faculty Member in African American Studies and Women's Studies.

June 1-July 31, 2013: Visiting Researcher, The Centre for Studies in Religion and Society. The University of Victoria, British Columbia

Fall 2008-Spring 2010: Full-Time Teaching Instructor, Department of Religious Studies. The University of Alabama

Fall 2002-Spring 2008: Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of English. The University of Alabama

Education

Ph.D. University of Alabama, 2009, English

M.A. University of Alabama, 2004, English

B.A. Lee University, *Magna Cum Laude*, 2002, English with Minors in Art and Religious Studies

Areas of Specialization

Gender Studies, Southern Studies, Method and Theory in the Study of Religion, Postcolonial Studies, African American Literature and Theory, Migration and Diaspora Studies

Areas of Scholarly Research and Interest

African American and Caribbean Religious Traditions, Early and 20th Century American Literature, Transnational Feminist Theory, Queer Theory

Publications

Monographs

Changing the Subject: Writing Women across the African Diaspora. July 2014. Columbus: The Ohio State University Press.

Responses to/Reviews of Monograph

Forthcoming issue of the *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* (edited by Philip L. Tite) will consist of a solicited panel of scholarly responses to *Changing the Subject*, to which I will reply with my own essay.

Edited Multi-Author Collections

The Trouble with Post-Blackness. Feb. 2015. Co-edited with Houston A. Baker, Jr. New York: Columbia University Press.

Race and Displacement. 2013. Co-edited with Maha Marouan. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press.

Books in Progress

Race and New Modernisms (contracted, Bloomsbury Academic)

*Co-authored with James A. Crank (U of Alabama), this book will be included in Bloomsbury Academic's series *New Modernisms* (series editors: Sean Latham and Gayle Rogers). *Expected draft completion date*: Jan. 2018

Sourcing Slave Religion: Theorizing Experience in the American South (monograph)

*This single-authored book manuscript is based on grant-funded research related to the category "slave religion" as used to describe slave communities in the region now known as the American South. *Expected draft completion date*: Dec. 2017

Theorizing Gender and Religion (contracted, Equinox Publishing)

*Currently in its early stages of writing, this project will culminate in a co-authored monograph with Craig Martin (St. Thomas Aquinas College). *Expected completion date*: May 2018

Peer-Reviewed Articles

"Canon Fodder: A Response to the *Norton Anthology of World Religions*." 2016.
Method & Theory in the Study of Religion.

Symposium: "Keeping 'Critical' Critical: A Conversation from Culture on the Edge." 2014.
Critical Research on Religion. 2 (3): 299-312.

*This essay is a co-authored conversation among the members of Culture on the Edge (Craig Martin, Monica R. Miller, Russell T. McCutcheon, Steven Ramey, Leslie Dorough Smith, K. Merinda Simmons, and Vaia Touna)

“Regulating Identities: The Limits of Critical Caretaking.” Nov. 2013. *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*. 25 (4-5): 362-381.

“Protective Parroting: A Rejoinder to Atalia Omer.” Nov. 2013. *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*. 25 (4-5): 403-407.

“Placing Theory: Thinking and Teaching ‘Women and Religion.’” June 2010. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. 78 (2): 542-563.

“Beyond ‘Authenticity’: Migration and the Epistemology of ‘Voice’ in Mary Prince’s *History of Mary Prince* and Maryse Condé’s *I, Tituba*.” Fall 2009. *College Literature*. 36 (4): 75-99.

Book Chapters

“The High Stakes of Identifying (with) One’s Object of Study.” *Theory in a Time of Excess*. Forthcoming 2017, Equinox Publishing.

“Coming to Terms.” *Theory in a Time of Excess*. 2017, Equinox Publishing.

“Constructing the Category ‘Religion.’” *Oxford Handbook of Religion and Race in American History*, edited by Kathryn Gin Lum and Paul Harvey. Forthcoming, Oxford University Press. *In progress, due: Jan. 15, 2016

“Power Play: Race Performance at the Margins.” *Codes of Conduct: Code Switching and the Everyday Performance of Identity*, edited by K. Merinda Simmons and Monica Miller. Forthcoming, Equinox Publishing.

“Politics of Privacy: Distinguishing Religion in Postcolonial Discourse.” *Islam and Postcolonial Culture*, edited by Esra Santesso and James McClung. Forthcoming, Ashgate.

“Strategizing Subjectivity: Creolization and Intentionality in Studies of Caribbean Religions.” *The Problem of Nostalgia in the Study of Identity: Towards a Dynamic Theory of People and Place*, edited by Vaia Touna. Forthcoming, Equinox Publishing.

“‘Well, Isn’t That Special?’: What We Talk about When We Talk about Identity.” *Claiming Identity in the Study of Religion: Social and Rhetorical Techniques Examined*, edited by Monica R. Miller. Sept. 2015, Equinox Publishing.

“Remember the Ala-what-now?” *Fabricating Origins*, edited by Russell T. McCutcheon. May 2015, Equinox Publishing.

“The Way We Were...” *Fabricating Origins*, edited by Russell T. McCutcheon. May 2015, Equinox Publishing.

“The Dubious Stage of Post-Blackness: Performing Otherness, Conserving Dominance.” Feb. 2015 *The Trouble with Post-Blackness*, edited by Houston A. Baker, Jr., and K. Merinda Simmons. 1-20. Columbia University Press.

“Slain in the Spirit: Sexuality and Afro-Caribbean Religious Expression in Nella Larsen’s *Quicksand*.” Dec. 2007. *The African Diaspora and the Study of Religion*, edited by Theodore Trost, 93-110. Palgrave Macmillan Press.

Non Peer-Reviewed Publications

“Worlds Apart: The Essentials of Critical Thinking.” (Response to Caroline Schaffalitzky de Muckadell’s *JAAR* essay “On Essentialism and Real Definitions of Religion”). Dec. 2015. *Bulletin for the Study of Religion*. (44) (4): 26-33.

“Scary Scholarship: A Response to Bruce Lincoln’s *Gods and Demons, Priests and Scholars*.” Apr. 2013. *Bulletin for the Study of Religion*. 42 (2): 20-24.

“The Experiential Elephant and the Pursuit of Interdisciplinarity.” Sept. 2012. *Bulletin for the Study of Religion*. 41 (3): 2-6.

“Conversations in Black: K. Merinda Simmons.” May 12, 2015. *Marginalia: A Los Angeles Review of Books Channel*. <http://marginalia.lareviewofbooks.org/conversations-in-black-k-merinda-simmons/>

Book Reviews

Religion in the Thought of Mikhail Bakhtin, by Hilary B.P. Bagshaw. (Ashgate Publishing). Forthcoming, *Journal of Contemporary Religion*.

Mar. 2014. Review of *Encyclopedia of Caribbean Religions* (2 vols.), Patrick Taylor and Frederick I. Case, eds., with Sean Meighoo and Joyce Leung (University of Illinois Press, 2013). *CHOICE Magazine*.

Nov. 2012. Review of *Yoruba Traditions and African American Religious Nationalism*, Tracey E. Hucks (U of New Mexico Press, 2012). *CHOICE Magazine*.

July 2012, Review of *Masking Hegemony: A Genealogy of Liberalism, Religion and the Private Sphere*, by Craig Martin (Equinox, 2010). *Religion*. 42.3 (466-470).

Scholarly Blog Posts

Single-authored posts on the blog for Culture on the Edge Research Group (<http://edge.ua.edu>):

- <http://edge.ua.edu/category/k-merinda-simmons/>

Contributions to *Studying Religion in Culture: Ongoing Discussions at the University of Alabama*: <http://rel.as.ua.edu/blog/>

- <http://religion.ua.edu/blog/2014/02/ar-ti-facts-a-surprising-source/>
- <http://religion.ua.edu/blog/2013/10/a-few-moments-with-monica-miller-2/>
- <http://religion.ua.edu/blog/2014/01/backstory-prof-merinda-simmons/>
- <http://religion.ua.edu/blog/2014/08/meet-the-press/>

“Laying It All Out: On Moving from Dissertation-to-Book Series.” March 16, 2016. *Religion Bulletin: The Blogging Portal of the Bulletin for the Study of Religion*:

- <http://bulletin.equinoxpub.com/2016/03/laying-it-all-out-on-moving-from-dissertation-to-book-series-k-merinda-simmons/>

“Interview with Houston Baker and K. Merinda Simmons, editors of *The Trouble with Post-Blackness*.” February 17, 2015. *Columbia University Press Blog*:

- <http://www.cupblog.org/?p=15829>

“Honesty is the Best Pedagogy.” May 27, 2014. *Practicum: Critical Theory, Religion, and Pedagogy*.

- <http://practicumreligionblog.blogspot.com/2014/05/honesty-is-best-pedagogy.html>
*reposted by *Religion Bulletin*, May 28, 2014:
<http://www.equinoxpub.com/blog/2014/05/honesty-is-the-best-pedagogy/>

“Critical Questions Series 2: K. Merinda Simmons.” March 4, 2013. *Religion Bulletin: The Blogging Portal of the Bulletin for the Study of Religion*: <http://www.equinoxpub.com/blog/>

- <http://www.equinoxpub.com/blog/2013/03/critical-questions-series-2-k-merinda-simmons/>

Encyclopedia Entries

“Creole Revolt,” “Derek Walcott,” “Obeah,” and “Transatlantic Feminist/Women’s Equality Movements” in *The Encyclopedia of Africa and the Americas*, edited by Richard M. Juang and Noelle Morrisette. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2008.

Scholarly and Professional Presentations

Invited Conference Presentations

Discussion and Workshop Leader, “...But What Do You *Study*?”: A NAASR Workshop on Theory & Method in the Job Market. North American Association for the Study of Religion (at the annual meeting for the American Academy of Religion). Atlanta, GA. Nov. 21-24, 2015.

“The High Stakes of Identifying (with) One’s Object of Study.” North American Association for the Study of Religion (at the annual meeting for the American Academy of Religion). Atlanta, GA. Nov. 21-24, 2015. **The NAASR proceedings will be collected in a volume to be published by Equinox.*

Race Noted: A Workshop on Race and Poststructuralism. Lehigh University. Nov. 7, 2015. *co-organized with Monica R. Miller (participants: Houston Baker, Vanderbilt; Christopher Driscoll, Lehigh; Leigh Anne Duck, U of Mississippi; John L. Jackson, Jr., UPenn; Monica R. Miller, Lehigh; K. Merinda Simmons, U of Alabama; C. Riley Snorton, Cornell; Alex Weheliye, Northwestern)

Roundtable on the topic of gender, race, and religion in the American South. The Idlewild Conference: The U.S. South and New Black Scholarship. Wake Forest University. Feb. 27, 2015.

“The Politics of Biography: Complicating the ‘Real’ Zora Neale Hurston.” Modern Studies Association. Nov. 6-9, 2014. Pittsburgh, PA.

“Power Play: Race Performance at the Margins.” Code-Switching Workshop. Lehigh University. Apr. 14-15, 2014.

“The Dubious Stage of Post-Blackness: Performing Otherness, Conserving Dominance.” *The Trouble with Post-Blackness* Symposium. University of Rochester. Apr. 11, 2014.

“‘These Are the Wrong Questions’: Placing the Subject, Problematizing Nostalgia.” The Kristeva Circle. Vanderbilt University. Mar. 27-30, 2014.

Response to Ron Neal’s *Democracy in 21st Century America: Race, Class, Religion and Region*. The Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion. Atlanta, GA. Mar. 7-9, 2014.

“Offering Origins, Abdicating Analysis: A Response to the Scholarly Discourse on ‘Slave Religion.’” The Centre for Studies of Religion and Society Lecture Series. University of Victoria, British Columbia. July 24, 2013.

“On the Limits of Feminist Exegesis.” The Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion. Mar. 15-17, 2013

“‘Objectivity,’ Falsifiability, Method, Theory and Norms.” American Academy of Religion, *The Study of Religion as an Analytic Discipline* group (SORAAAD). Nov. 17-20, 2012.

Response to Ann Taves’ *Religious Experience Reconsidered*. The Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion. Atlanta, GA, Mar. 1-4, 2012.

Invited Public Lectures

“Slaves, Souths, and Scholarship: On Religion and Regional Exceptionalism in the Academy.” University of Alberta. Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Feb. 2012.

“Commemoration as Invention: Self Representation and Imagining ‘Race’ in the Deep South.” University of Alberta. Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Feb. 2012.

Response to Jennifer Shoaff’s Religion *in Culture* Lecture. University of Alabama. Jan. 26, 2012.

“The Faux Pas of Feminist Phenomenology: Or, How I Learned to Think of the Personal and Political in a Whole New Way.” *Brown Bag Lecture Series*, Co-Sponsored by the Women’s Resource Center and Women’s Studies Program. University of Alabama. Oct. 5, 2011.

“Between Politics and Practice: Academic Projections and African American Religious Rituals.” Hendrix College. Conway, AR, Oct. 22, 2009.

“Is Feminism an Ethics?: Reconciling Feminist Philosophy and Practice.” Hendrix College. Conway, AR, Apr. 10, 2009.

“From Sapphira to *The Skeleton Key*: Myth and Identity Formation in the South.” Department of Religious Studies. Religion *in Culture* Lunchtime Discussion Series. University of Alabama. Tuscaloosa, AL, Feb. 18, 2009.

“Pedagogical Strategies for First-year Teachers.” Department of English Teaching Seminar, University of Alabama. Tuscaloosa, AL, Aug. 13, 2008.

“Slain in the Spirit: Sexuality and Afro-Caribbean Religious Expression in Nella Larsen’s *Quicksand*.” Religion *in Culture* Lecture Series: Department of Religious Studies. University of Alabama. Tuscaloosa, AL, Apr. 26, 2006.

Refereed Conference Presentations

“Coming to Terms: Identifying Slave Religion in the Atlantic World.” Denmark and African American Culture Symposium. University of Copenhagen, Sept. 21-22, 2016

“Manufactured Authenticities: Race, Region, Realism.” Society for the Study of Southern Literature. Boston University, Mar. 10-12, 2016.

*part of roundtable: “Currencies / Exchanges / Conversions: Contemporary Southern Media”

“The Commerce of Categories: Scholarship and ‘Slave Religion’ in the American South.” The Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion. Atlanta, GA, March 1-4, 2012.

“Trading Faith: Religion as Market Force in the Colonial South.” Modern Language Association. Seattle, WA. Jan. 5-8, 2012.

“Colonizing Religion: Faith as a Market Force in the American South.” American Academy of Religion. San Francisco, CA. Nov. 19-22, 2011.

*part of the North American Religion Section

“Placing Gender: Ethics, Responsibility, and Refugee Subjectivity.” Southeastern Women’s Studies Association. Atlanta, GA. Mar. 24-26, 2011.

“Existentialism and Refugee Subjectivity.” The Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion. Louisville, KY, Mar. 4-6, 2011.

“Religion in the Two Souths: Reading Safety and Danger through Race, Religion, and Representation.” Southern American Studies Association. Atlanta, GA (Georgia State U), Feb. 17-19, 2011.

“Approaching ‘Women and Religion’ from the Outside-In.” National Women’s Studies Association Conference. Denver, CO, Nov. 11-14, 2010.

“Living Like a Refugee: Religious Existence in Levinas, Derrida, and the Music of Wyclef Jean.” Mid-Atlantic Popular & American Culture Association. Alexandria, VA, Oct. 28-30 2010.

“The Poetics of Grief: Violence, Memory, and Textual Migration in Edwidge Danticat’s *The Dew Breaker*.” Contemporary Women’s Writing: New Texts, Approaches, and Technologies. In Collaboration with San Diego State University; San Diego, CA, July 7-9, 2010.

“Familiar Ground: Gender and the Transnational South in Naylor’s *Mama Day*,” as part of the panel “Navigating Gender: Women’s Experiences within the African Diaspora.” National Women’s Studies Association Conference. Atlanta, GA, Nov. 12-15, 2009.

*panel organizer

“A ‘High Time Woman’: ‘Classing Off’ and the Problem of ‘a Woman’s Work’ in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.” The Image of the Outsider in Literature, Media, and Society. Colorado State University-Pueblo. Colorado Springs, CO, Mar. 13-15, 2008.

“(Re)Moving/Remembering Mary Prince: Gender, Labor, and the Formation of ‘Authenticity’ in Afro-Caribbean Women’s Migration Narratives.” 38th Annual CEA Conference: “Empathy and Ethics,” Special Session: Afro-Caribbean Literature. New Orleans, Louisiana, Apr. 12-14, 2007.

“Interrogating Intersectionality: Thinking Beyond Constructions of Gender, Labor, and Race in Diasporic Contexts.” First Annual Black Cultural Interventions into Gender and Sexuality Studies (Past, Present, and Future) Conference. University of Florida. Gainesville, FL, Mar. 23-24, 2007.

“Slain in the Spirit: Sexuality and Afro-Caribbean Religious Expression in Nella Larsen’s *Quicksand*.” Denmark and the Black Atlantic Conference. University of Copenhagen. Copenhagen, Denmark, May 4-6, 2006.

“Haiti in Harlem: Zora Neale Hurston, Nella Larsen, and *Quicksand*’s Critique of Western Body/Spirit Binaries.” Pan-Africanisms: The Work of Diaspora Within and Without the Academy. Yale University. New Haven, CT, Apr. 20-22, 2005.

“‘Clutching Shadows’: Religion Inscribing Female Sexuality in Harlem Renaissance Women’s Writings.” African Diaspora and the Study of Religion Conference. University of Alabama; Tuscaloosa, AL, Apr. 7-9, 2005.

“Dark Ship Sailing: Race and Threatened Domesticity in Romantic Literature.” Graduate Student Association Conference. University of Alabama; Tuscaloosa, AL, Mar. 16-18, 2004.

“Slavery’s Suitcases: Traveling Otherness in *Frankenstein* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.” International Conference on Romanticism. Marquette University; Milwaukee, WI, Nov. 13-16, 2003.

Grants, Honors, and Awards

University of Alabama

President’s Faculty Research Award, March 2016.

Awarded to one faculty in each division “in recognition and celebration of scholarly excellence”

Research Grants Committee: *Trading Faith: Colonizing Religion in the American South*, 2011-2013. \$4,863.50

Outstanding Dissertation Award, October 2009

Composition Teaching Award, Spring 2008

Graduate Student Research and Travel Support Award, Spring 2008
 English Department Research and Travel Support Award, Spring 2008
 Buford Boone Fellowship, 2007-2008

Awarded by the Department of English for distinction in teaching and writing

Stephen Karatheodoris Memorial Paper Award for essay entitled "'This New Tiding:' 'Spirit' as Physical Space in Black and Transnational Feminist Theory," 2006

Awarded by the Department of Women's Studies for excellence in feminist writing and research

Graduate Student Association Travel Grant, September 2003

Awarded at the graduate school level to students chosen by an extensive application and interview process for current scholarly projects that require travel

Graduate Student Research and Travel Support Award, October 2003

Awarded at the graduate school level to approved students who are traveling for or participating in scholarly research

Graduate Teaching Assistantship, 2002-2008

Courses Taught

Religious Studies

- “Introduction to the Study of Religion” (REL 100)
- “Advanced Introduction to the Academic Study of Religion” (REL 105)
- “Religion, Media, and the South” (REL 124)
- “Women and Religion” (REL 234)
- “African Diaspora Religions” (REL 226)
- “Self, Society, and Religion” (REL 237)
- “Religion, Religious Studies, and Colonialism” (REL 370, cross-listed with Blount)
- “Religion in the American South” (REL 415, “W” designation with writing concentration)
- “Slave Religion in the United States” (REL 419, “W” designation with writing concentration)
- “Religion and Literature” (REL 430, “W” designation with writing concentration)
- “Gender Theory and Religion” (REL 480)

English

- “English Composition 102” (Writing-centered course with a literature focus intended to enhance students’ abilities regarding literary analysis and criticism)
- “English Composition 101” (Writing-centered course intended to develop students’ writing and research skills)
- “English Composition 101 and 102” (in the Harris/Parker Adams Living/Learning Community)
- “Community and the Other” (advanced writing course)
- “Music and Culture” (advanced writing course)
- “Place, Passage, and Identity” (advanced writing course)
- “Writing and Globalization”
- “Early American Literature: Beginnings-1865” (EN 209)
- “American Literature, 1865-Present” (EN 210)
- “Twentieth Century Literature in English” (EN 227)

Graduate Supervision, University of Alabama

Juliann Friel—"Cultural Models about Sexual Violence among Male Undergraduate University Students" (M.A. Thesis, Department of Anthropology), Fall 2016-Spring 2017.

Sarah Kelly—*Sad Girl Montage* (M.F.A. Thesis, Poetry, Department of English), Spring 2016.

Anne Franklin Lamar—Title TBA: Using Women's Studies and Religious Studies to Read 19th-Century Women's Narratives (Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of English), Ongoing.

Samantha Caddis—"Broken English, Broken Morality: European Language as a Symbol of Virtue in *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*" (M.A. Thesis, Department of English), Fall 2014-Spring 2015.

Michael Forst—"Understanding Marginalized Queer Voices: An Ethnography of Place" (M.A. Thesis, Department of Communication Studies), Fall 2014-Spring 2015.

David Kumler—*Floating to Nowhere: A Novel* (M.F.A. Thesis, Fiction, Department of English), Spring 2014.

Clay Nelson—"Mortuary Practices, Social Status, and Wealth at the Rhodes Site in Moundville, Alabama" (M.A. Thesis, Department of Anthropology), Spring 2013-Spring 2014.

Allison Schuver—"Hemingway and the Textual Struggle of Paternity" (M.A. Thesis, Department of English), Fall 2012.

Guest Lectures

On Discourses of Creolization and Intentionality in Religious Studies. Course: "Critical Approaches to Religious Identity" (Professor of record: Pat McCullough). UCLA. May 27, 2015.

On Judith Butler and Performativity in Literary Criticism. Course: "Introduction to English Studies: Theory and Multivocality" (Professor of record: James A. Crank). University of Alabama. Nov. 17, 2015.

On Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. Course: "The Great Divide: Black Men and Black Women Writers Representing Themselves and One Another" (Professor of record: Houston A. Baker, Jr.). Vanderbilt University. Mar. 10, 2015.

On Toni Morrison's *Sula*. "African American Literature: (Professor of record: Houston A. Baker, Jr.). Vanderbilt University. Nov. 18, 2014.

"Authorship and Authority in the Slave Narrative Genre." Course: "Afro-American Literature" (Professor of record: Houston A. Baker, Jr.). Vanderbilt University. Sept. 5-7, 2012.

Professional Service

Outside Reader for Abigail Manzella's manuscript *Migrating Fictions: 20th-century Internal Displacements and Race in U.S. Women's Literature*, Ohio State UP. Sept. 2015.

Outside Reader for edited volume *Irreverence and the Sacred: Critical Studies in the History of Religion*. (Hugh Urban and Greg Johnson, eds.). Oxford UP. Sept. 2015.

Series Editor, *Concepts in the Study of Religion: Critical Primers* book series, Equinox Publishing. Dec. 2015-present. <https://www.equinoxpub.com/home/concepts-in-the-study-of-religion/>

Member of Executive Council, North American Association for the Study of Religion (NAASR). Dec. 2015-Dec. 2017 (previous term: Dec. 2011-Dec. 2013).

Associate Editor, *Bulletin for the Study of Religion*. Nov. 2015-present.

Editorial Board Member. *Culture on the Edge: Studies in Identity Formation* book series. Equinox Publishing. Mar. 2013-present.

Editorial Board Member. *Practicum: Critical Theory, Religion, and Pedagogy Blog*. Apr. 2014-Present.

*blog site: <http://practicumreligionblog.blogspot.ca/>

Reviewer for *CHOICE: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*. Publication of the Association of College and Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association. Apr. 2012-Present.

Outside Reader for the *Journal of Africana Religions*. June 2014.

*essay title: "Always Already Alien: Black Women Writers, Spiritual Realism, and Speculative Fiction"

Referee and book reviewer for the academic peer-review journal *College Literature*. March 2012-May 2013.

Outside Reader for the *Journal of Contemporary Religion*. June 2012.

*essay title: "Syncretism and Sacred Sexuality"

Referee for Prof. Michael D. Jackson's manuscript *The Stone and the Living Stream*, Columbia UP. Feb. 2011.

University Service (University of Alabama)

Service to Department of Religious Studies

Director of Graduate Studies. Fall 2016-present (three-year appointment)

MA Program Proposal Committee Chair. Fall 2015-Spring 2016.

Search Committee Chair, Tenure-track faculty line in Social Theory and Religion in Modernity. Fall 2015-Spring 2016.

Search Committee Chair, Tenure-track faculty line in Social Theory and the Ancient World. Fall 2014-Spring 2015.

Events Coordinator. Fall 2013-Spring 2015.

Responsibilities include the coordination/hosting of visiting lecturers and planning of various departmental events.

Textbook Committee Chair. Fall 2013-Present.

Search Committee Member, Tenure-track faculty line in Religion, Global Conflict, and Law. Fall 2013-Spring 2014.

Search Committee Chair, Tenure-track faculty line in Modern Middle East/Islam. Fall 2012-Spring 2013.

Co-Chair (with Fred Whiting, Dept. of English) of interdisciplinary panel on the role of the Humanities as part of the 2012-2013 lecture series in the Department of Religious Studies (panel will coincide with the Aronov Lecture by Cary Nelson, April 8-9, 2013).

Faculty Advisor for the Religious Studies Student Association, Fall 2009-Spring 2013.

Responsibilities include not only working with students to plan events but also organizing the departmental participation in the biannual university-wide "Get on Board Day," which makes university students familiar with the departments and organizations on campus.

Long-Range Planning Committee, August 2010-2014.

Co-Director (with Russell McCutcheon) for the Religious Studies Study Abroad in Thessaloniki, Greece. May 2012.

Coordinator of the Religious Studies Greece Initiative. August 2011-May 2012.

Responsibilities included facilitating a working and institutional relationship with faculty at Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, Greece, and bringing a PhD student in the study of religion to serve as a Full-Time Teaching Instructor in the Department of Religious Studies at The University of Alabama during the Spring semester.

Faculty Advisor for Theta Alpha Kappa (Religious Studies Student Honors Society), Fall 2011-Fall 2012.

Course Designer for Online Version of REL 100: Introduction to Religious Studies.

Greece Initiative Event Planning Committee (with Steven Ramey, Andrew Dewar, Russell McCutcheon, and Tatiana Tsakiropoulou-Summers), Fall 2010-Spring 2011.

Co-Chair (with Professor Steven Jacobs) of Student Initiatives Committee, University of Alabama, August-December 2009.

Service to College of Arts and Sciences

Tenure and Promotion Committee, Fall 2015-Spring 2017.

The T&P committee reviews applications for tenure from faculty in the College of Arts and

Sciences and makes recommendations to the Dean.

College Academy of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (CARSCA), Fall 2015-Spring 2018.

CARSCA offers financial support to faculty involved in innovative research, creative, and professional projects. Details can be found at <http://carsca.as.ua.edu/>.

The Undergraduate Creativity and Research Academy (UCRA), Fall 2014-Present.

The UCRA aims to encourage and facilitate undergraduate research and creative activity by soliciting and funding project proposals from UA students.

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, August 2011-Present.

Responsibilities include promoting intradepartmental review of all courses, implementing a review process for courses which have not been offered for successive years, optimizing the capacities of the online CourseLeaf Software System, supporting submission of online syllabi for all active Arts and Sciences courses.

Diversity Committee, August 2010-August 2013.

Participant in the College of Arts & Sciences Learner-Centered Initiative workshops, led by Beverly Roskos. Fall 2011-Spring 2012.

Organizing Committee, *Recovering Black Women's Voices and Lives* Symposium. Department of Gender and Race Studies, Fall 2011.

Faculty Liason for Ladyfest, January-April, 2011.

Academic symposium "Race and Displacement" (co-organizer with Prof. Phil Beidler and Prof. Maha Marouan), October 1-3 2009, with keynote addresses by Houston Baker (Vanderbilt University) and Queen Quet (spokesperson and chieftess of the Gullah/Geechee Nation).

First-Year Writing Committee, August 2008-May 2009.

Service to University

Faculty Senate, 2014-2016.

The purpose of the Faculty Senate is to aid The University of Alabama in making judgments on questions of policy, development, and operations and thereby to assist the University in its continuing quest for excellence. It seeks to accomplish this goal by: 1) Facilitating and encouraging meaningful input on matters of general faculty concern. 2) Providing a readily accessible channel of communication through which continual dialogue and exchange of information and ideas may be carried on between the Faculty and University Officials. (from UA website)

Member of Capstone Alliance and Safe Zone Ally, August 2008-Present.

Having completed Safe Zone Ally training, I am one of the many resource people on campus who provide an open door for individuals seeking information or assistance regarding issues related to sexual orientation, gender identity, harassment, and/or discrimination.

Reading Languages

French
Spanish

Professional Organizations

American Academy of Religion
North American Association for the Study of Religion
Modern Language Association
Modernist Studies Association
Society for the Study of Southern Literature
Southern American Studies Association

References

Houston A. Baker, Jr.
Distinguished University Professor and Professor of English
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Professor of Religious Studies
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Theodore L. Trost
Associate Professor and Department Chair of Religious Studies
University of Alabama
(205) 348-7534
ttrost@bama.ua.edu