

RICHARD NEWTON

Associate Professor and Undergraduate Director of Religious Studies
The University of Alabama
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<http://www.sowingtheseed.org>

Curriculum Vitae (11/27/23)

EDUCATION

2014 **PhD, Religion (Critical Comparative Scriptures)**
Claremont Graduate University

Comprehensive examinations: theories in comparative religion, the history and study of Christian scriptures (New Testament), and African American culture and religion

Dissertation: “Knowing One’s Roots: Alex Haley and the Anthropology of Scriptures,”
under the advisement of Vincent L. Wimbush

2009 **MDiv, *cum laude***
Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University

2005 **BA, Religion and Anthropology (double major)**
Texas Christian University

ACADEMIC WORK EXPERIENCE

2022— Associate Professor of Religious Studies, The University of Alabama

2020--- Undergraduate Director of Religious Studies, The University of Alabama

2018-2022 Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, The University of Alabama

2014-2018 Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Elizabethtown College

2012-2014 Instructor, Ethnic and Women’s Studies, California State Polytechnic University

2011-2013 Instructor, Academic Writing and Communications, Claremont University
Consortium

SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY

Monographs

- *Signifying Religion: An African American Worldview* (in development).
- 2020 *Identifying Roots: Alex Haley and the Anthropology of Scriptures* (Equinox 2020).
<https://www.equinoxpub.com/home/identifying-roots/>.
Published responses: [M. Cooper Harris](#), [Joseph L. Tucker-Edmonds](#), [Vincent L. Wimbush](#), [Rachel E. C. Beckley](#); Conference responses: [American Academy of Religion](#), [Society of Biblical Literature](#), [American Anthropological Association](#).

Edited Volumes

- 2023 *Fieldnotes in the Critical Study of Religion: Revisiting Classical Theorists*, co-edited with Vaia Touna (Bloomsbury, 2023).
<https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/fieldnotes-in-the-critical-study-of-religion-9781350251656/>

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

- 2023 “Revising Scriptures: Unbinding a Critical Comparative Subfield.” *Religion Compass*
<http://doi.org/10.1111/rec3.12480>.
- “Encuentros in the Cave: Aprovechar(se) Vernacular Revelations.” *Journal of the Hispanic Theological Institute* 25.1, 88-94. <https://repository.usfca.edu/jhlt/vol25/iss1/10>.
- 2021 “Hebrew, Hebrews, Hubris?: Controlling for Race in the Scriptural Constitution of Bodies During the COVID-19 Pandemic” *Religions* 12.11 (2021).
<https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/12/11/1020>.
- 2020 “Hallowed Haunts: The National African American Museum as Sacred Space,” *Religions* 11.12 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11120666>.
- “Racial Profiling: Reading Whiteness & the Bible in Postmodernity,” *Religion Compass* 14.8. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/rec3.12369>.
- “Scared Sheetless: Negrophobia, the Fear of God, and Justified Violence in the U.S. Christian-White Imaginary,” *Journal of Religion and Violence* 7.3 (2020 [2019]), 303-322. <https://doi.org/10.5840/jrv202031172>.
- 2019 “Remediating Scriptures: HTML as a Culture of Canon,” *The Abeng: A Journal of Transdisciplinary Criticism* 3.1 (2019): 95-108.
- 2018 “The Spooky Politics of Dark Truths,” *Religion and Theology* 25 (2018), 232-257.
- “Reading Alex Haley’s *Roots*: Toward an Anthropology of Scriptures,” *Postscripts: The*

Journal of Sacred Texts and Contemporary Worlds 9.1 (2018 [2013]), 1-16.

2017 “Locating Value in the Study of Religion,” *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 29.4-5: (May 2017), 459-478.

“The African American Bible: Bound in a Christian Nation,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 136.1 (Winter 2017), 221-228.

Peer-Reviewed Book Chapters

2023 “Afterword: Revisiting Classics and Plotting Futures for the Field of Religious Studies,” *Fieldnotes in the Critical Study of Religion: Revisiting Classical Theorists*, edited by Richard W. Newton Jr. and Vaia Touna (Bloomsbury, 2023), In-press.

2022 “Myth of the Auteur and the Authentic in *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*,” *Representing Religion in Film*, edited by Tenzan Eaghll and Rebekka King (Bloomsbury, 2022), 175-187.

“The Trope Has Been Set: Race and Religion as Critical Entanglement,” in *Key Categories in the Study of Religion: Contexts and Critiques*, edited by Rebekka King (Equinox, 2022), 123-131.

“Signifying “Der Rassist” in Religious Studies and the Axes of Social Difference,” *Key Categories in the Study of Religion: Contexts and Critiques*, edited by Rebekka King (Equinox, 2022), 73-91.

“A Man, A Tan, ‘God’s Plan,’” In *Fabricating Authenticity*, edited by Jason WM Ellsworth and Andie Alexander (Equinox, Submitted–in press).

2020 “On J.Z. Smith and the Remarkable,” In *Remembering J.Z. Smith*, edited by Russell T. McCutcheon and Emily D. Crews (Equinox 2020), 151-152.

2019 “Teaching in the Ideological State of Religious Studies: Notes Towards a Pedagogical Future,” *Constructing “Data” in Religious Studies: Examining the Architecture of the Academy*, ed. Leslie Dorrough Smith (Equinox, 2019), 235-245.

2018 “Third-Screen Teaching: Enhancing Classroom Learning with Mobile Devices,” *Teaching Religion Using Technology in Higher Education*, ed. John Hilton III (Routledge, 2018), 3-17

2017 “Naaaaaw you show me YOUR ID,” *Fabricating Identities*, ed. Russell T. McCutcheon (Equinox Publishers, 2017), 99-104.

“Do scholars of religion study texts or do they study the religion firsthand, like an

anthropologist might?” *Religion in Five Minutes: Scholars Answer Your Questions* (Equinox Publishers, 2017).

“Is it possible to study religion academically and still be religious?” *Religion in Five Minutes: Scholars Answer Your Questions* (Equinox Publishers, 2017).

“Richard Newton Responds to Blum,” in *Theory in a Time of Excess—The Case for the Academic Study of Religion* (Equinox Publishers, 2017).

2015 “Writing Basically,” in *Writing Theologically*, edited by Eric D. Barreto (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), 5-20.

Invited Essays for Reference Volumes (Peer Reviewed)

2023 “Professionalization,” *Teaching the Study of Religion: A Practical Guide for Undergraduate Classes*, ed. Russell T. McCutchen (Bloomsbury [Submitted]).

“Public Humanities,” *Teaching the Study of Religion: A Practical Guide for Undergraduate Classes*, ed. Russell T. McCutchen (Bloomsbury [Submitted]).

“Recruiting Majors,” *Teaching the Study of Religion: A Practical Guide for Undergraduate Classes*, ed. Russell T. McCutchen (Bloomsbury [Submitted]).

“Syllabi,” *Teaching the Study of Religion: A Practical Guide for Undergraduate Classes*, ed. Russell T. McCutchen (Bloomsbury [Submitted]).

2022 “Philemon--Commentary, Notes, and Excursus,” *The Westminster Study Bible for the New Revised Standard Version--Updated Edition*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press (Accepted, in press).

2021 “The Bible in the Civil War,” *Bible Odyssey*, February 8, 2021.
<https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/bible-in-the-civil-war>.

2015 “An Exegetical Perspective on John 11:28-37,” in *Feasting on the Gospels*, eds. E. Elizabeth Johnson and Cynthia A. Jarvis (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), 57, 59, 61.

“An Exegetical Perspective on John 11:17-27,” in *Feasting on the Gospels*, eds. by E. Elizabeth Johnson and Cynthia A. Jarvis (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), 51, 53, 55.

Invited Essays, Editorials, Review Essays, and Symposia (Non-Peer Reviewed)

2023 Foreword. *The Bible and Violence*. Sheffield University Press (Submitted).

- 2022 “An Upstanding Study of Religion.” *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* 51.1, 1-3.
- 2021 “The *Bulletin* at 50?, You Don’t Look a Day Over 52,” *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* 50.4, 123-124.
- “The *Bulletin* of the 90’s–It’s the End of the Field as We Know It (And I Feel Fine),” *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* 50.3. 79-81. <https://doi.org/10.1558/bsor.21354>
- “The Field Gets Technical? Hey, It’s the 80s,” *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* 50.2. 39-41.
- “The 70s *Bulletin*–When the Field Was Disco” *Bulletin for the Study of Religion*, 50.1. 1-3.
- “Afterword,” *American Examples: New Conversations about Religion*, vol. 1. (The University of Alabama Press), 147-152.
- “Can We Be Colleagues,” *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* 49. 3-4, 1. <https://doi.org/10.1558/bsor.18910>.
- 2020 “For the Good of the Field.” *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* 49.1-2, 1. <https://doi.org/10.1558/bsor.17708>.
- 2019 “The Politics of Cultural Approaches in Teaching the Study of Religion,” *The Wabash Center Journal on Teaching* (in review).
- Kathleen Fisher, Richard Newton, and Kathryn McClymond, “Conversation: Student-Self Authorship and the Goals of Higher Education,” *Teaching Theology and Religion* 22.2 (April 2019). <https://doi.org/10.1111/teth.12482>.
- “Curating Religion in the Teacher-Scholar’s Study,” *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art, and Belief* 15.1 (February 2019), <https://doi.org/10.1080/17432200.2018.1534971>.
- 2017 “Whither the Study of Religion and Culture,” *Implicit Religion* 20.4 (2017), 401-406.
- Purposeful Life Work: Stories in Process,” *Voices of Vocation*, ed. Tracy Wenger Sadd (CIC-NetVUE, 2017), 13-20.
- 2015 “Signifying on the World Religions Paradigm: My Version of RELIGION 101,” *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* 44.3 (September 2015), 35-37.
- 2016 “Theory Throw Down,” *Teaching Theology and Religion* 19.3 (July 2016).

Book Reviews

- 2018 Review of *Womanist Interpretations of the Bible: Expanding the Discourse*, eds. Gay L. Byron and Vanessa Lovelace. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 80.2 (April 2018), 353-355. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/718793/pdf>.
- Review of *Iconic Books and Texts*, ed. James W. Watts. *The Abeng: A Journal of Transdisciplinary Criticism* 2.1 (2018), 69-70.
- 2016 Review of *A Child Shall Lead Them: Martin Luther King, Jr., Young People, and the Movement*, Rufus Burrow, Jr. *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* (in press, 2016).
- 2011 Review of *Transforming Scriptures: African American Women Writers and the Bible*, Katherine Clay Bassard, *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion* 2 (2011): 1-7. http://www.raceandreligion.com/JRER/Book_Reviews_files/Newton%20review%20of%20Brassard.pdf.
- 2011 Review of *Transforming Scriptures: African American Women Writers and the Bible*, Katherine Clay Bassard. *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion* 2 (2011): 1-7. http://www.raceandreligion.com/JRER/Book_Reviews_files/Newton%20review%20of%20Brassard.pdf.

Selected Scholarly Web Essays

See also the following scholarly blogs where I have posted regularly.

- [Culture on the Edge-](#)
 - [Study Religion \(The University of Alabama\)](#)
 - [Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Religion and Theology](#)
 - [Seminarium: The Elements of Great Teaching](#)
 - [Sowing the Seed: Fruitful Conversations in Religion, Culture, and Teaching](#)
- 2018 “UN 16 Days of Activism-- Day 7: An Interview with Richard Newton,” *The Shiloh Project: Rape Culture, Religion, and the Bible*, December 1, 2018. <http://shiloh-project.group.shef.ac.uk/un-16-days-of-activism-day-7-richard-newton/>.
- “Skin in the Game: Raising the Stakes with The Race Card Project,” *Religious Studies News: Spotlight on Teaching*, November 5, 2018, <http://rsn.aarweb.org/spotlight-on/teaching/anti-racism/raising-stakes-race-card-project>.
- “Insider Baseball: Sessions, the Bible, and Approaches to the Law,” *National Center for Institutional Diversity*, The University of Michigan, August 8, 2018. <https://medium.com/national-center-for-institutional-diversity/insider-baseball-sessions-the-bible-and-approaches-to-the-law-e70739d0fb20>.

2017 Comments in “Explaining a Religious Studies Degree,” *Practicum: Critical Theory, Religion, and Pedagogy*, October 13, 2017.
<http://practicumreligionblog.blogspot.com/2017/10/explaining-religious-studies-degree.html>.

[“Words and Things: Happily Ever After Religion,”](#) A Response to Brent Nongbri’s *Before Religion: A History of a Modern Concept* (Yale University Press: 2015), *Studying Religion in Culture Blog*, University of Alabama–Tuscaloosa, February 20, 2017. <https://religion.ua.edu/blog/2017/02/words-and-things-happily-ever-after-religion/>

[“Better Know a Religion Blog: Sowing the Seed: Fruitful Conversations in Religion, Culture, and Teaching.”](#) *Religion Bulletin: The Blogging Portal of the Bulletin for the Study of Religion*, January 26, 2017.

<http://bulletin.equinoxpub.com/2017/01/better-know-a-religion-blog-sowing-the-seed-fruitful-conversations-in-religion-culture-and-teaching/>

2016 “Revolutionary Love: Scholar’s Respond to the AAR’s 2016: Conference Theme: Richard Newton, *Religion Bulletin: The Blogging Portal of the Bulletin for the Study of Religion*, February 22, 2016.

“Learning Curve: The Confidence Game,” *Practicum: Critical Theory, Religion, and Pedagogy*, February 23, 2016. <http://practicumreligionblog.blogspot.com/2016/02/learning-curve-confidence-game.html>

“I am Richard Newton and This Was My Doctoral Defense,” *PhD Talk*, April 5, 2016. <https://phdtalk.blogspot.com/2016/04/phd-defenses-around-world-defense-in.html?show>

“*Realia* and the Teacher’s Toolbox in the Postmodern New Testament Classroom,” *Ancient Jew Review*, February, 2, 2016. <http://www.ancientjewreview.com/articles/2016/2/2/realia-and-the-teachers-toolbox-in-the-postmodern-new-testament-classroom>.

“Sorry About the Mess: *Star Wars* and the Virtue of Garbage,” *Killing the Buddha*, January 5, 2016. <http://killingthebuddha.com/ktblog/sorry-about-the-mess-star-wars-and-the-virtues-of-garbage/>.

2015 “Syllabus Project: Signifying Religion: An African American Worldview,” *Practicum: Critical Theory, Religion, and Pedagogy*, Equinox Publishers, January 2015. <http://practicumreligionblog.blogspot.com/2015/01/syllabus-project-signifying-religion.html>

2014 “AAR + SBL: Toward an Anthropological Study,” *Seminarium: The Elements of Great*

Teaching, Fortress Academic, November 14, 2014,
<http://seminariumblog.org/author/richard-newton>.

“A Student’s Guide to Maximizing Your Time At SBL,” *SBL Students*, Society of Biblical Literature’s Student Advisory Board, <http://sblstudents.org>.
November 3, 2014.

2011 “President Bartlet’s Bully Pulpit,” *In Media Res*, MediaCommons, June 28, 2011,
<http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/imr/2011/06/28/president-bartlets-bully-pulpit>.

“Gleaning Alex Haley’s Scriptural Roots,” *In Media Res*, MediaCommons, March 21, 2011, <http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/imr/2011/03/21/gleaning-alex-haleys-scriptural-roots>.

Invited University Lectures and Presentations

2023 “Diagnosing Dis-ease: Slavery, Covid-19, and the Study of Scriptural Pandemics,”
Invited Lecture, University of Leeds, January 21, 2023.

2022 “Thinking Through Trauma in the Religious Studies Classroom,” Invited Lecture,
University of Mississippi, October 17, 2022.

“Signifying Der Rassist?: The Problematics of Theorizing Race and Religion in the
Field.” Class Visit, University of Ottawa, September 21, 2022.

Response to “*Profaning Paul* with Cavan Concannon,” Invited Respondent, Levan
Institute for the Humanities’ Book Chats, University of Southern California, February 8,
2022.

2021 “Scripting American Identity: The Story of Alex Haley’s *Roots*,” Invited Lecture, Blount
Scholars Program, University of Alabama, October 25, 2021.

“The Bible and Other Myths ‘that the Dark Past Has Taught Us,’” Invited Lecture,
Abrahamic Vernaculars Symposium, University of Michigan--Ann Arbor, October 11,
2021.

“Race and Religion: Theorizing with the Anthropology of Scriptures,” Class Visit,
University of Ottawa, September 23, 2021.

“The African American Bible: Bound in a Christian Nation,” Invited Lecture,
Shenandoah University, April 6, 2021.

“Begin Again: Equity, Black Scholars Matter, and Reimagining the Field,” Class Visit,
Florida State University, April 1, 2021.

“The Publishing Academic in the Information Age,” Class Visit, Georgia State University March 30, 2021.

“The African American Bible: Bound in a Christian Nation,” Annual Quayle Bible Lecturer, Baker University, March 8, 2021.

“Identifying *Roots*: Alex Haley and the Anthropology of Scriptures,” Interview and Public Discussion, Center for Religious Diversity and Public Life, University of Colorado--Colorado Springs, March 3, 2021.

“The Anthropology of Scriptures: Reading Cultural Texts and Social Difference,” Centre of Religion and Public Life--University of Leeds, February 25, 2021.

“Zakhor: Alex Haley’s *Roots*, Scriptures, and the Race for America,” The Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, February 4, 2021.

“The Anthropology of Scriptures: Correcting for Progressivist Retrograde in the Study of Religion,” Invited Lecturer, Society of Religion as an Analytical Discipline at the University of Regina, January 23, 2021.

“Twisted Roots and Growing Pains: Interfaith Studies and the Anthropology of Scriptures,” Panel Presentation, Typologies of Interfaith Education, The Martin Marty Center for Public Understanding of Religion at the University of Chicago, January 14, 2021.

Response to “Zipporah’s Knife: A Jewish Reckoning with Race with Elliot Ratzman,” Invited Respondent, New Directions in Jewish Studies Lecture Series, The University of California--Davis Jewish Studies Program, January 12, 2021.

2020 “Scriptural Roots: How Alex Haley Read ‘America Great Again,’” Lecturer for the Religion and Race Series, The Department of Religion at Princeton University, November 19, 2020

“The Roots of Social Difference and the Anthropology of Scriptures,” Class Visit, Yale University, October 29, 2020.

“The Bible, Trump Cards, and the Roots of Discourse,” Invited Lecture, Sheffield Institute for Interdisciplinary Biblical Studies, University of Sheffield, October 19, 2020.

“Origin Stories: Religion, Race, and Nation in Alex Haley’s *Roots*,” Invited Lecture, Department of Religious Studies, Skidmore College, October 7, 2020.

“Race and Religion: Theorizing with the Anthropology of Scriptures,” Class Visit,

University of Ottawa, September 16, 2020.

- 2019 “Scriptural Roots: How Alex Haley Read ‘America Great Again,’” Invited Lecture Department of Religious Studies and the Department of African & African-American Studies, The University of Oklahoma, November 7, 2019.
- 2016 “The African American Bible: Bound in a Christian Nation,” Invited Lecture, Religion in Culture Lecture Series, University of Alabama—Tuscaloosa, April 18, 2016.
- “Teaching on Social Difference in Your Racialized Classroom,” Invited Lecture for the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning & Educational Technology, Lebanon Valley College, March 2, 2016.
- 2015 “Using “Third-Screen” Technologies in the Classroom,” Educator Development Day, Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences, Lancaster, PA June 11, 2015.
- “Dinner Table Conversation After Ferguson,” Education in a Post-Ferguson Society, The Anna Reese Distinguished Lecture Series, Elizabethtown College, March 30, 2015.
- “The African American Bible: Bound in a Christian Nation,” Days-Massolo Center Lecture Series, Hamilton College, Clinton, NY, February 16, 2015.
- 2014 “Get Carded: Documenting Identity in a Christian Nation,” Arts & Culture at Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA, October 20, 2014.

Conference Presentations and Panel Participation

- 2022 “Decolonizing the Study of Religion: Debates and Practical Strategies,” Panelist, Academic Relations Committee, American Academy of Religion, November 21, 2022.
- “Revelation in the Vernacular: A Discussion with Jean-Pierre Ruiz about His Work and the Future of the Study of Revelation and Scriptures,” Respondent, Latino/a and Latin American Biblical Interpretation, Society of Biblical Literature, November 19, 2022.
- 2021 “Conceiving Scripture: Responses to Richard Newton's *Identifying Roots*.” Respondent, Metacriticism of Biblical Scholarship, Society of Biblical Literature, November 23, 2021.
- “Beyond Publishing: How Else to Prepare for the Academic Job Market,” Panelist, Student Advisory Board, Society of Biblical Literature, November 22, 2021.
- “*Roots* as Scripture: Alex Haley and American Book Religion after Civil Rights,” Bible in America, Society of Biblical Literature, November 21, 2021.

- Response to “The Social Lives of the Quran and the Anthropology of Scriptures,”
American Anthropological Association, November 17, 2021.
- 2020 Response to Kathryn Lofton, Judith Weisenfeld, Monica R. Miller for “Author Meet Critics: Richard W. Newton, Jr. *Identifying Roots: Alex Haley and the Anthropology of Scriptures* (Equinox 2020).” American Academy of Religion, December 8, 2020
- “Habits & Habitus: Religion and Other Roleplaying Games,” Panelist, The Localized Politics of Defining Religion, North American Association for the Study of Religion, November 21, 2020.
- 2019 “Navigating the Politics of Academia--Graduate Student Workshop, North American Association for the Study of Religion,” with Rebekka King, November 24, 2019.
- “Critical Considerations on ‘Race’ in Religious Studies,” North American Association for the Study of Religion, with K. Merinda Simmons and Emily D. Crews, November 23, 2019. (research activities)
- 2018 Response to “The World Needs Us: Serving the Public Sphere through the Study of Religion,” Graduate Student Committee Panel, American Academy of Religion, November 19, 2018.
- A Conversation about Pedagogy: Reading *Of Education, Fishbowls, and Rabbit Holes: Rethinking Teaching and Liberal Education for an Interconnected World* (Stylus Publishing, 2016), Teaching Religion Panel, with Dr. Kathryn McClymond, November 18, 2018.
- Politics and Pedagogy Panel, Student Advisory Board, Society of Biblical Literature, November 18, 2018.
- Response to *Re-Thinking the Teaching of Theories and Methods: A Discussion of Cultural Approaches to the Study of Religion* (Bloomsbury, 2018) and *The Bloomsbury Reader for Cultural Approaches to the Study of Religion* (2018), Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Unit Panel, American Academy of Religion, November 17, 2018.
- “Signifying “Der Rassist” in Religious Studies and the Axes of Social Difference,” North American Association for the Study of Religion, November 17, 2018.
- “Teaching and Traumatic Events,” Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion, co-led with Dr. Ella Johnson, November 16, 2018.
- 2017 “Skin in the Game: Racing the Stakes of Student-Scholarship,” Teaching Religion, American Academy of Religion, November 18, 2017.
- “Teaching: The State of the Field,” North American Association for the Study of

- Religion, November 18, 2017.
- 2016 “Digital Scholarship Reconsidered for the Graduate Student Pursuing the Tenure-Track,” Graduate Student Committee Panel, American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, November 21, 2016.
- “Sowing the Seed: Creating an Online Student-Scholar Magazine,” Digital Futures of Religious Studies, American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, November 19, 2016.
- “Demystifying the Teaching Philosophy: A Workshop,” Student Advisory Board, Society of Biblical Literature, November 19, 2016.
- 2015 “Sculpting ‘Source-Places’: Alex Haley ‘Wroughts’ a Scripture,” Society for Comparative Research on Iconic and Performative Texts, Annual Meetings of the American Academy of Religion and Society of Biblical Literature, November 22, 2015.
- “Signifying Theory: A Method Toward Mutually Assured Deconstruction,” “Theory in a Time of Excess: Response to Jason N. Blum’s ‘On the Restraint of Theory,’” North American Association for the Study of Religion, Annual Meetings of the American Academy of Religion and Society of Biblical Literature, November 20, 2015.
- “Third Screen Teaching: A Solution in Disguise,” Lancaster Learns: A Teaching and Technology Conference, Lancaster, PA, February 27, 2015.
- 2014 “Motivation and Learning in Biblical Studies-A Panel Discussion,” Academic Teaching and Biblical Studies, Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, San Diego, CA, November 23, 2014.
- 2013 “Alex Haley’s *Roots*: A Scriptural Story,” Brown Bag Lunch Discussion Series, Institute for Signifying Scriptures, Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, CA, September 26, 2013.
- 2012 “Writing Like an A.C.E.: Teaching Critical Reasoning for the Last Time,” Academic Teaching and Biblical Studies, Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Chicago, IL, November 16-20, 2012.
- 2011 “When Texts Sell: The Scriptural Economies of ‘Macabre’ Religion and ‘Born-Again’ Relationships,” Academic Teaching and Biblical Studies, Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, San Francisco, CA, November 19-22, 2011.
- “Excavating the Significance of Nazareth via the Church of the Nazarene,” Use and Impact of the Bible, Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, San Francisco, CA, November 19-22, 2011.

“Excavating the Significance of Nazareth via the Church of the Nazarene,”
Western Commission on the Study of Religion, Whittier, CA, March 28, 2011.

“Nurturing the Next Generation of Scholars: A Consultation with the Fund for
Theological Education,” Western Commission for the Study of Religion, March
27, 2011.

2010 “Glimpses of Alex Haley’s Scriptural Roots,” African American Biblical Hermeneutics,
Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, GA, November 20-23,
2010.

“Excavating the Significance of Nazareth via the Church of the Nazarene,”
Annual Meeting of the Wesleyan Theological Society, Azusa, CA, March 5,
2010.

Panels Moderated

2015 “Teaching with Technology,” Academic Teaching and Biblical Studies and Global
Education and Research Technology, Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical
Literature, Atlanta, GA, November 21, 2015.

2014 “Teaching the Bible Visually or Geographically,” Academic Teaching and Biblical
Studies, Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, San Diego, CA, November
23, 2014.

2013 “Teaching the Bible: Practical Strategies for Blended Learning and Linking Learning to
Assessment,” Academic Teaching and Biblical Studies, Annual Meeting of the Society of
Biblical Literature, Baltimore, MD, November 23-26, 2013.

2011 “Understanding Humans and Arousal” The Second Annual Southern California McNair
Scholars Program Conference: Dynamic Discourse: Representing Revolutionary
Research, Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, CA, October 1, 2011.

2010 “Economy of Space, Place, and Land,” The First Annual Southern California McNair
Scholars Program Conference: Changing the Face of Academia, Claremont Graduate
University, Claremont, CA, October 2, 2010.

“Ain’t I a Womanist Too?”: Third Wave Womanist Religious Thought
Conference, Claremont Lincoln University, Claremont, CA, February 25-26,
2010.

Scholarly Projects and Research

ONGOING RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

2021– **Decoding Diaspora: J. A. Rogers' Mythic “Africa”**

Examines a newspaper series of one of the forerunners in African diasporic history in order to theorize about how “Africa,” “myth,” and “history” work in the modern world. The project involves the digitization of Rogers’ “Facts About the Negro” series, concordancing and texts analysis, podcasting, and data set sharing.

Coverage:

<https://digitallab.religion.ua.edu/research/joel-augustus-rogers-newspaper-clippings/>

Data Set:

<https://scalar.usc.edu/works/decoding-diaspora/data>

2020-2023 **Project Participant, The Shiloh Project: Rape Culture, Religion and the Bible, Sheffield Institute for Interdisciplinary Biblical Studies.**

Provide insights into constructions of whiteness and biblicism, especially as manifested in gender-based violence. Help PIs think about the role of race in theorizing religion as part of ongoing international research by The Shiloh Project. [Grant Project Participant/Senior-Key Personnel]

<https://app.dimensions.ai/details/grant/grant.8101640>

2017-- **Member, Culture on the Edge**

Work with an international scholarly collaborative on using social theory to offer more nuanced understanding of how things that we commonly call “identities” are manufacture, managed, and continually reproduced. The working group actively blogs, publishes anthologies, and monographs used in a variety of public and academic spaces.

2008--- **Founder and Curator, *Sowing the Seed: Fruitful Conversation on Religion, Culture, and Teaching***

SowingTheSeed.org

Established in 2006, this social media professional development platform presents insights on social formation and pedagogy. There are guiding essays to initiate conversation and published posts from undergraduate students and scholars from all over the nation. It also hosts blog posts, podcasts, videos, and other multimedia resources to enhance the religious studies classroom.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

2018 **Project Supervisor, The William V. Puffenberger Digital Collection of Religious Artifacts, Elizabethtown College Scholarship and Creative Arts Research Program, Summer 2018**

Mentored two students in the development of a digital collection of artifacts using the Omeka environment. Students learned basic HTML, rudimentary Dublin Core catalog protocols, and various office enterprise programs.

<http://puffenberger.omeka.net>

2016 **Boko Haram Violence in Nigeria Project,**

Elizabethtown College Spring and Summer 2016

Led eight students in a collaborative effort with the Church of the Brethren to create the most comprehensive documentation of abductions and casualties related to Boko Haram's violence in Nigeria (2009-2015). Students gathered demographic, historical, and discursive data and created a briefing report for distribution among government and NGO agencies.

<http://blog.brethren.org/2016/brethren-collaborate-on-nigeria-research/>

Seminar Participant, "Bodies of Christ: Visualizing Jesus Then & Now, Calvin College Summer Seminar, June 12-24, 2016.

Investigated depictions of Christ and their effects on race, gender, and sexuality in church, state, and society. Worked with a select group of historians, religious studies scholars, artists, theologians, and pastors with funding from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship with funding by Lilly Endowment, Inc.

Boko Haram Violence in Nigeria Project,

Elizabethtown College Spring and Summer 2016

Led eight students in a collaborative effort with the Church of the Brethren to create the most comprehensive documentation of abductions and casualties related to Boko Haram's violence in Nigeria (2009-2015). Students gathered demographic, historical, and discursive data and created a briefing report for distribution among government and NGO agencies.

<http://blog.brethren.org/2016/brethren-collaborate-on-nigeria-research/>

2015-2017 Member, Community-Based Learning Faculty Learning Community

Elizabethtown College

Joined other faculty in developing our understanding of Community-Based Learning pedagogy and courses in support of the College's strategic plan. Sponsored by the Dean of Faculty, the Office of the Provost, and the Center for Community and Civic Engagement.

2009-2014 Research Assistant, Institute for Signifying Scriptures

Claremont Graduate University

Assisted with logistics and planning of program initiatives. Participated in on-going conversation around ethnological research projects. Worked under the direction of Vincent L. Wimbush.

Study Abroad, "The Bible in Global Context: Reading the Bible in Hong Kong and Taiwan"

Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University

Visited religious communities, religious studies programs, and seminaries in Hong Kong and Taiwan to investigate the Bible's emerging role in their social formation. Studied under Sze-Kar Wan.

2008 Summer Volunteer, Bethsaida Excavation Project

University of Nebraska at Omaha and Creighton University
Participated in an archaeological dig of a Galilean town. Received introductory knowledge of surveying, mapping, and pottery reading while serving as assistant square supervisor under Nicolae Roddy.

2004-2007 Research Assistant, Maya Research Program

Texas Christian University

Assisted with logistics needs of the MRP ethnographic field school at Yaxunah, Yucatan, Mexico. Led students in mapping a village. Served as a Spanish-English translator. Coded and tabulated medical and ecological data of the community. Served under the direction of Grace Bascope.

SERVICE TO THE ACADEMY

2020--- Editor, *The Bulletin for the Study of Religion* (Equinox Publishing)

Manuscript Referee:

Journal of the American Academy of Religion, Religion Compass, Journal of Africana Religions, Method & Theory in the Study of Religion, Open Library of Humanities, Palgrave MacMillan, Routledge, Bloomsbury, Wiley, Rowan Littlefield.

Editorial Board Membership:

Journal of Interdisciplinary Biblical Studies, Religion & Theology.

Guild Leadership:

20th Anniversary Meeting Planning Committee, Institute for Signifying Scriptures, 2023; Annual Meeting Planning Committee, North American Association for the Study of Religion, 2023; Executive Councilor, North American Association for the Study of Religion 2016-2019; Trustee, Society for Comparative Research in Iconic and Performative Texts 2015---; Board Member, Society of Biblical Literature: Metacriticism and Biblical Studies, 2019-2021; Board Member, Society of Biblical Literature: Bible and Cultural Studies, 2017-2018; Board Member, Society of Biblical Literature Academic Teaching and Biblical Studies, 2014-2016.

MEDIA COMMENTARY

2023 “Signifying Scriptures.” *Nothing Never Happens Podcast*. September 26, 2023.

“Why the US Gun Epidemic is also a Scriptural Pandemic.” *The Shiloh Podcast*, February 28, 2023. <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/the-shiloh-podcast/id1517019190>

- "What You Always Wanted to Know about the Bible but were Afraid to Ask..." *The Shiloh Podcast*, February 21, 2023. <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/the-shiloh-podcast/id1517019190?i=1000600798737>
- "Scholars of Religion Gather to Talk in-depth about the Bible in Otley" *Wharfedale Observer*, February 6, 2023. <https://www.wharfedaleobserver.co.uk/news/23301620.scholars-religion-gather-talk-in-depth-bible-otley/>
- 2022 "Presentism and Politics," *The Religious Studies Project–Discourse*, August 30, 2022. <https://www.religiousstudiesproject.com/podcast/discourse-august-2022/>
- "When Religion Doesn't Behave!" *The Religious Studies Project–Discourse*, January 31, 2022. <https://www.religiousstudiesproject.com/podcast/when-religion-doesnt-behave-discourse-january-2022/>
- "Desacralized Pt2.: It's Going to be Hard to Drive Down That Street," *Dig Boston* January 6, 2022. <https://digboston.com/desacralized-pt-2-its-going-to-be-hard-to-drive-down-that-street/>
- 2020 "Identifying Roots w/ Dr. Richard Newton," *The Classical Ideas Podcast*, November 16, 2020. <https://classicalideaspodcast.libsyn.com/ep-183-identifying-roots-wdr-richard-newton>
- "The Anthropology of Scriptures," *Ideas of Jesus Podcast* w/ Dr. Matthew Baldwin, episode 9, November 15, 2020. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qg_0shcMAAA.
- Imbibing Scripture: A Zoom Conversation with Dr. Jill Hicks-Keeton and Dr. Richard Newton on "The Bible in the American Imagination,"* October 14, 2020.
- "Roots, Race, and The Anthropology of Scriptures," *The Religious Studies Project*, October 5, 2020.
- "Richard Newton on Religion, Culture, Identity, Racism, Education, Roots," *Rendering Unconscious*, episode 99, August 3, 2020. <http://www.renderingunconscious.org/writing/ru99-dr-richard-newton-on-african-american-history-religion-culture-education-roots/>
- "What do Religion Scholars Think of Trump's Violent Bible Photo Op," *Straight White American Jesus*, June 3, 2020. https://www.podomatic.com/podcasts/straightwhiteamericanjesus/episodes/2020-06-03T22_38_59-07_00
- "What Does Religious Literacy Mean in Your Context?" *The Religious Studies Project*,

May 25, 2020.

<https://www.religiousstudiesproject.com/podcast/what-does-religious-literacy-mean-in-your-context/>

“Is *Star Wars* a Religion,” Guest Interview w/ Robyn Faith Walsh, University of Miami, March 28, 2020.

https://soundcloud.com/user-312739367/interview-with-richard-newton/s-0ubvX3U4YRQ?fbclid=IwAR010b_nPscrlM72KMMB8ZdFh9XsYhcDKHG6oOD4xSacryfjmFLHKieTsug

- 2019 “Less Than United: The People of the United Methodist Church,” *Faithfully Magazine*, Feature Essay, August 9, 2019.

https://faithfullymagazine.com/less-united-methodist-church/?fbclid=IwAR1i8PgexefQe-G3ec0cTmbPJ1hTaPSasJBxXGqy_k312A5yygrFOJvinLc

Q&A with A&S featuring Dr. Richard Newton on Facebook Live, University of Alabama College of Arts and Sciences, Facebook Live, March 25 2019.

<https://www.facebook.com/UAArtsSciences/videos/2083465705022939/>.

“The ‘Roots’ of Scriptures,” Feature Interview, *UA News*, March 7, 2019.

(<https://www.ua.edu/news/2019/03/the-roots-of-scriptures>).

- 2018 “Alabama Will Vote to Display the Ten Commandments on State Property,” *WNYC: The Takeaway*, Expert Interview, September 27, 2018. <https://www.wnycstudios.org/story/alabama-will-vote-display-ten-commandments-state-property>.

Earle Cornelius, “Rapper Drake’s \$1M Giveaway: Academics Debate Ethics of Publicly Giving Away Money, *Lancaster Online (LNP)*,” Expert Commenter, March 10, 2018.

https://lancasteronline.com/features/faith_values/rapper-drake-s-m-giveaway-academic-s-debate-ethics-of-publicly/article_356410b8-1e40-11e8-81ca-cb596386c64c.html.

- 2017 Clara Turnage, “More than a ‘Summer Slump’: How the Loss of Structure Affects Academics.” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 15, 2017.

<http://www.chronicle.com/article/More-Than-a-Summer/240357>.

- 2016 *Smart Talk with Scott LaMar: “Roots,”* Interview Guest, WITF, May 31, 2016.

<https://soundcloud.com/witf/sets/smart-talk-53116-the-recovery-of-rust-belt-cities-roots>.

“Who is My Neighbor—Islam,” Invited Lecture, Church of the Apostles United Church of Christ (Lancaster), March 6 and March 13, 2016.

http://lancasteronline.com/features/faith_values/who-is-your-neighbor-a-concert-and-a-trip-are/article_62032d8e-c6b8-11e5-bd86-8f3df720fe6f.html

Earle Cornelius, “The Religious Landscape in America is Changing,” *Lancaster*

Online (LNP),” Expert Commenter, February 20, 2016.
http://lancasteronline.com/features/faith_values/the-religious-landscape-in-america-is-changing/article_6105bd54-d683-11e5-b429-f36827e9bc82.html.

Earle Cornelius, “How Local Academicians View Wheaton College’s Decisions to Oust a Professor who Says Christians and Muslims Worship the Same God,” *LancasterOnline (LNP)*, Expert Commenter, January 23, 2016. http://lancasteronline.com/features/faith_values/how-local-academicians-view-wheaton-college-s-decision-to-oust/article_d8721388-c139-11e5-a4b2-3b9dd5087f87.html.

- 2015 Earle Cornelius, “The Spirituality of *Star Wars*,” *Lancaster Online (LNP)*, Expert Commenter, December 12, 2015. http://lancasteronline.com/features/faith_values/the-spirituality-of-star-wars/article_7b01cc44-a027-11e5-acc4-a7765b7fb4ec.html.

Amanda Berg, “Elizabethtown College Takes on Challenge of Discussing Race on Campus,” *PennLive/The Patriot*,” Featured Subject, November 26, 2015. http://www.pennlive.com/news/2015/12/elizabethtown_college_takes_on.html.

Tim Stuhldreher, “Local College Campuses Re-examining Issues of Race, Diversity, and Inclusion,” *Lancaster Online (LNP)*, Expert Commenter, November 27, 2015. http://lancasteronline.com/news/local/local-college-campuses-re-examining-issues-of-race-diversity-and/article_31db0f8a-93b6-11e5-9497-73a949533da3.html.

Earle Cornelius, “Just How Do We Measure Faith,” *Lancaster Online (LNP)*, Expert Commenter, November 6, 2015. http://lancasteronline.com/features/faith_values/just-how-do-we-measure-faith-in-the-us/article_43b4e0fa-83fd-11e5-a657-db21618f5caa.html.

Tim Stuhldreher, “College Events Look at Post-Ferguson, Race, Justice Question,” *Lancaster Online (LNP)*,” Expert Commenter, January 9, 2015, http://lancasteronline.com/news/local/college-events-look-at-post-ferguson-race-justice-questions/article_237b9e6c-985f-11e4-bd45-6ff63a5f15ff.html.

- 2014 “Afraid of the Dark: A Black Professor’s Reflections on Michael Brown’s Killing,” *Urban Cusp*, August 11, 2014, <http://www.urbancusp.com/2014/08/afraid-dark-black-professors-reflections-death-michael-brown/>.

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, & HONORS

- 2023 **Distinguished Teaching with Technology Fellow**
College of Arts & Sciences, 2023-2026)

- University of Alabama
- 2021 **President's Faculty Research Award**
(Emerging Scholar--Arts & Humanities)
University of Alabama
- 2017 **National Center for Institutional Diversity, Diversity Scholars Network,**
(Invited Membership, 2017—)
University of Michigan
- 2016 **Faculty Peer-Mentor Cluster (2016-2017)**
(Stipend for focused professional development)
Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning
- Faculty Starter Grant**
(Funding for research assistant for Sowing the Seed online magazine)
Elizabethtown College
- Interfaith Leadership Faculty Grant**
(funding for research assistant for Sowing the Seed online magazine)
Elizabethtown College funded by Interfaith Youth Core/Teagle Foundation
- 2015 **Workshop for Pre-Tenure Religion Faculty of African Descent (2015-2016)**
(Retreats and stipend)
Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning
- Religious Life Interfaith Leadership Award**
Elizabethtown College
- 2013 **Albert B. Friedman Grant**
(Research funding)
Claremont Graduate University
- Selina Reed-Brown Fellowship Fund**
(Continued full merit scholarship)
Claremont Graduate University
- 2011 **Maguire Intercollegiate Award**
(Graduate teaching assistantship)
Claremont Colleges Consortium
- 2010 **John Dempster Doctoral Fellowship**
General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church
- 2009 **FTE Doctoral Fellowship**

Fund for Theological Education

Paul K. Richter and Evalyn E. Cook Richter Memorial Fellowship

(full merit scholarship)

Claremont Graduate University

2008 **Nancy Underwood Graduate Student and Leadership Achievement Award**

(Scholarship)

Southern Methodist University

Jean Audrey Powers' Leadership for Change Award

(Scholarship)

Pacific School of Religion

Special Seminary Scholarship

General Board of Higher Education & Ministry of the United Methodist Church

Archaeological Dig Fellowship

Biblical Archaeology Society

John Hicks Fellowship for Biblical Research

Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University

2006 **Charles and Elizabeth Perkins-Prothro Fellowship**

(Full merit scholarship)

Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University

FTE Ministry Fellowship (research project funding)

Fund for Theological Education

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Anthropology of Scriptures
- Politics of Biblical Interpretation
- African American Culture and Politics
- Theory and Method in the Study of Religion
- History of Religion
- Identity Politics and Social Formation

SCHOLARLY AFFILIATIONS

- Society of Biblical Literature
- American Academy of Religion

- Institute for Signifying Scriptures
- Society for Comparative Research on Iconographic and Performative Texts
- North American Association for the Study of Religion
- Sheffield Interdisciplinary Institute for Biblical Studies
- Culture on the Edge
- The Society for Theory of Religion and Theology
- Humanities, Arts, Science, Technology, Alliance, and Collaboratory (HASTAC)

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OFFERINGS

Religion & Race; Signifying Religion: An African American Worldview/African Diaspora Religions; History of Religion in the United States; Scoping Out Religion: Theories and Methods; The Bible and Race in the USA; Introduction to Islam; Ethnicity, Gender, and Religion; New Testament; *Watching the Watchmen: A Study in Modern Mythology*; Capstone in Religious Studies: Religion in Public Life; Introduction to Religious Studies; Scriptures in Comparative Perspective

GRADUATE COURSE OFFERINGS

Social Theory in Religious Studies, History of the Academic Study of Religion; Field Research Methods in Cultural Studies; Academic Writing and Speaking