

Speaker 1 ([00:13](#)):

Welcome to the study religion podcast. My name is Erica Bennett and I'm a current student in the religion and culture master's program at the university of Alabama. This is the second episode to a special series on jobs after graduate school and the humanities take a listen to the first episode where Jacob Barrett and I listen to Bradley summer. Describe his experience with the job market after his PhD program. In this episode, Jacob and I dive deeper into the problems facing the academic job market with a professor from the university of Florida.

Speaker 2 ([00:49](#)):

So what was your favorite part about Bradley's interview?

Speaker 3 ([00:53](#)):

I really liked what he had to say about, um, kind of the breakdown between individual support and institutional support that he has seen and experienced, um, that, like, he felt like he received a lot of, um, help and support from his network and from, um, individual, you know, faculty members, but that he kind of felt that at the university level, um, there wasn't any institutional sort of support and kind of individual support only goes so far. Um, I think it'd be really interesting to see what someone on the faculty side of that who might be like trying to offer that sort of individual support to make up for the lack of institutional support. I think it'd be interesting to see what someone like that has to say about this problem.

Speaker 2 ([01:43](#)):

Yeah, definitely. Maybe we can look back on Twitter. I saw that there was a ton of responses to Bradley's original tweet, and I see one in particular, Pamela Gilbert,

Speaker 4 ([01:56](#)):

Um, while my name is Pamela Gilbert

Speaker 2 ([01:58](#)):

Responded a few separate times, so maybe we can talk with her.

Speaker 4 ([02:09](#)):

I am, uh, a, the Albert brick professor of English at the university of Florida. I specialize in 19th century British and I do a lot with history of the body and history of medicine. Um, and I came on the market for the first time in 1990 in early 1990s, which were pretty bad, actually it was a bad market. It's, it's worse now. Um, but the, um, the sort of long standing practice of, um, relying on precarious employment had been going on for a while. And in fact, I was a freeway flyer during my entire PhD. Um, because of course I did my PhD in Los Angeles and it was expensive and you couldn't possibly live on a graduate student stipend. And so, you know, you cobbled things together. We all, we all did really. So I took my first position at the university of Wisconsin Parkside, which is a branch campus of the, um, state university, a four year campus. Uh, I think, think it may have a couple of master's programs, but call it a four year campus. Um, and I was there from 93 to 97 and then I came to the university of Florida and this will be my 25th year here.

Speaker 2 ([03:22](#)):

Cause you had commented on a tweet mm-hmm <affirmative>, uh, by Bradley Soer and then by Russell McCutchin. And so that's how we need to contact you. Um, but specifically regarding that tweet, you mentioned, so your response to the tweet that faculty have this responsibility in mentoring students, but they kind of remain, uh, removed and kind of outside of the current job market outside of academia. Right. And I just wanted to ask, why do you think that is?

Speaker 4 ([03:53](#)):

Well, I mean, the, the simple answer is that, you know, with the best intentions in the world, um, I've, this is my 25th year here. <laugh> yeah. Um, so, um, I haven't been on the job market and also the job I have interviewed for various positions, but at my stage it's very different. I mean, people are looking at me for chairships or deanships or directorships it's, you know, it's a completely different skill set that they're looking at. So that's part of it. Um, part of it is that, you know, if you've worked for decades in one employment context, you're not gonna know a lot about other employment context. Yeah. If you've worked for decades and decades in it, you're probably not going to know a lot about working in higher ed. Right. So, um, that's one of the problems. Yeah. Um, another problem is that, um, for example, after the 1990, uh, I'm sorry, after the 2008 crash.

Speaker 4 ([04:51](#)):

Yeah. Um, we didn't hire for several years. And so we didn't have any people who had gone through the market recently. Yeah. Now we have some, and so that's been huge for us and they've been really significant in helping us mentor people in. Yeah. But again, they're coming into a higher ed context from a higher ed context. Yeah. So they haven't for the most part had that kind of experience either. So where I've gone to try to understand more about, um, what people are doing is to my own students, who've done other things. Most of them are in higher ed they're in a range of positions. Yeah. Right. So they're in, they may be in permanent lectureships right. Where they have continuing employment, but they're not on the tenure track. Yeah. Um, some of them are tenure track. Some of them have decided to leave the tenure track because it wasn't giving them what they wanted.

Speaker 4 ([05:40](#)):

Um, in terms of region, in terms of, you know, opportunities for their partner or whatnot. Um, several have gone on in private secondary education. And I have to say their starting salaries and benefits are much better than most of the people who've gone on in higher ed. Yeah. Um, some have gone on in instructional design, um, one person who decided she just didn't even wanna look in higher ed, not because of the job market, because she actually, she's very good at it. Yeah. But she didn't love teaching. And if you don't love teaching, this is really yeah. Not the job for you. So she went on to, um, she's building a career and doing publicity and she G she graduated very recently. So, you know, I haven't gotten a lot of feedback on that. Yeah. Um, what I've encouraged people to do, or what I've tried to do is put them in touch with my own network of graduate students to explore these things. I've encouraged them to do. Um, I have some people have gone on to, into library work. I've encouraged them to do informational interviews. Um, I've encouraged them to, you know, really, and I encourage my students now really think about what you wanna do. What are you good at doing? What do you love about this?

Speaker 2 ([06:52](#)):

Yeah.

Speaker 4 ([06:54](#)):

What are other things that will allow you to do those things?

Speaker 2 ([06:59](#)):

Yeah.

Speaker 4 ([06:59](#)):

What would a resume look like that would highlight those strengths? Yeah. In a way that would be appealing outside of the university. And, you know, to some extent I've had luck with referring them to the campus employment, you know, um, job career

Speaker 2 ([07:16](#)):

Centers. Yeah.

Speaker 4 ([07:18](#)):

They're not great with dealing with people who are moving from the academic track. They really aren't. Um, they don't understand it. Um, but, um, they have been able to talk to other people who've gone into various other positions and use that network basically. And I encourage them to use their other networks and to get a LinkedIn account because apparently that's a thing. So <laugh> um, so I try to gather the information I have from my informants that are out there and pass on that information to them. The other thing that I would say is that there are tons of jobs in, um, community college situations. There, again, I taught in a community college over 30 years ago, the job process has changed. What they look for has changed. The flooding of the market with PhDs is up the anti for everyone. A lot of two year, uh, colleges have become for your kind of technical training things kind of not. So there, again, you really need to talk to people who are in those positions to understand what those, you know, job, uh, committees are looking for. It's a completely different process, different things should be highlighted in your letters. Yeah. And faculty don't always know that. Yeah. Um, I have the, the good fortune of having a lot of students of having worked with a lot of students. And so I can contact them and say, I have someone who's interested. Do you have any sample letters, et cetera, but not everybody has that network.

Speaker 2 ([08:44](#)):

You're clearly working really hard for the students that you have, who are coming to you, but that's clearly, uh, indicating a disconnect between the individual and the departments as a whole, the institutions as a whole. Um, and I was just wondering if you, what do you think could help change that disconnect or, well,

Speaker 4 ([09:05](#)):

I think there's a couple of things I would say. I would say that our department is working very hard and much more effectively than in the past to address this. And we've done it in part, the advantage of having zoom <laugh> is that you can contact alumni and have them zoom in and give a presentation to your current grads who are on the market. Whereas before it was like, oh, let's take our non-existent budget and try to get someone to come back and talk to people and, you know, yeah. Um, you know, my department is working very hard to do that and I have junior colleagues who have really revolutionized our market wise, uh, you know, program, um, to kind of, you know, encourage students to think about it earlier, to think about, you know, shaping their experience for, um, for the job market

search. So I wouldn't say that that necessarily, it's a disconnect between departments and individual faculty.

Speaker 2 ([09:57](#)):

Yeah. Okay.

Speaker 4 ([09:58](#)):

But it is true that, um, English is a diverse enough department field, whatever. Yeah. Um, that, you know, my ability to mentor people in my field has limits if I apply it to people in a very different field. Mm-hmm, <affirmative>, you know, we graduate film studies PhDs here. Yeah. My ability to mentor them is limited. Yeah. Um, so, and I have to say most of them are mentoring themselves better than I could anyway. <laugh> I get mentored a lot by my graduate students, um, in terms of the job market. But, um, one thing that I've seen that I think is really encouraging is that professional organizations are really stepping up. Mm. So MLA has taken on some of these duties, but again, they're a huge tent and yeah, there's only so much that that can do. I belong to an organization called nav, which is north American Victorian studies association.

Speaker 4 ([10:53](#)):

And over the last, you know, decade and some odd years, they've added a professionalization seminar that covers everything from the job market to grants, to networking. Yeah. A lot of students don't know how to network. I certainly didn't. I was a first generation student. I had no idea how to do it. And nobody in my department told me it was important or taught me how to do it. Um, so we've tried to do more of that. And social media does make that more possible than it was when I was coming up. Um, so that's been very helpful. Um, and this is enormously helpful, especially in eras where lots of people do not have travel budgets, this kind of opportunity to network online, to network on zoom, to attend things, allows people access in a way that many, that many people otherwise would never have.

Speaker 2 ([11:41](#)):

Yeah, no, that's true.

Speaker 4 ([11:43](#)):

So I'll add one more thing is, um, one thing that our, our organization is experimented with, and of course this kind of fell fell apart during the, um, during the, the pandemic. But, um, as part of our national meeting, you would pair one graduate student with one senior scholar from a different institution. That's cool. You would read some of your stuff and give you feedback. And, you know, and the idea was to build a kind of connection where someone might be able to write for you or give you advice from a different, just from a different standpoint.

Speaker 4 ([12:19](#)):

I also did wanna say, and this is a little bit sideways from what we're discussing. Yeah. But, um, you know, one thing that's, that's always been a kind of problem in the academy is that, um, PhD students tend to do their PhDs at R one and R twos because that's the nature of the beast. That's where PhD programs are. Yeah. And academia is a pyramid and most of most jobs are not in those kinds of institutions. Um, and for a long time, it was kind of assumed that you would figure it out. Uh, and that's, uh, first of all, that was never true. Secondly, it's a sort of bad model. Um, and increasingly, because

again, you know, it's a buyer's market, so to speak, um, people don't wanna take the risk on people figuring it out. Um, so I think that many institutions, not all, but many institutions are now doing a little bit better job mentoring people in for, um, positions in institutions that are not like their own, but there again, um, faculty ability to do that is limited because this is, this is the water that this fish swims in.

Speaker 4 ([13:24](#)):

Right. <laugh> yeah. You don't know what you don't know. Um, I've taught at a variety of institutions, but again, it's been many years and some people have got their first job and sort of stayed in that yeah. In that lane. Um, so that's also, I think, you know, I, I see our students here very often graduate students will get a chance to teach an upper division class and they're so excited. And then they say, oh my God, there are 35 students in this class. And, you know, they're used to teaching, um, the writing classes, which are kept smaller. Yeah. Um, and you know, and, and they say, you know, how, how can I do this? You know, or I'm teaching two classes. And it's like, most people are teaching four classes. Yeah. Some are teaching five and six. Some are teaching three. Yeah. But you will probably never teach only two classes again.

Speaker 4 ([14:11](#)):

Yeah. Let alone one class. I mean, you know, unless you landed a research one and I mean, you know, even when I was on the market, you know, most people, you know, I worked my way to a research one, but you know, I also got lucky. Right. You can work very hard and not hit that moment where, where the job opens for you. Yeah. So, um, you know, that's something that people need to think about both in terms of like, is this the life I want. Right. But also in terms of like, what skills am I building to be able to manage a full workload of teaching? Yeah. And still be able to do the things that I need to do for the institution and want to do, and also, you know, most graduate students, well, I won't say this actually, because many graduate students are very active in service. They're active in their graduate organizations. And so on service for the institution is a little bit of a different beast. It's a little less, it's often a little less rewarding. <laugh>

Speaker 2 ([15:12](#)):

Shaking his head. He, uh, worked with the GSA or graduate student association or whatever the acronym is. And it was, it was a, a rough semester <laugh>

Speaker 4 ([15:23](#)):

Well, yes. I mean, you know, working, working with others can always, you know, wow, there's, you know, many, especially in the humanities where we are often kind of working on our own, we're not like scientists who have to go into a lab and somehow figure out how to work with these people. And, you know, the idealized experience of being in the conference room and the actuality of dealing with the people in the conference room are two whole different, different kinds of things. And then when you layer in the, the institution and its demands and, you know, very often the feeling that you're kind of slogging up a hill that no one wants you to get to the top of anyway, <laugh>, um, um, that can, that can feel demoralizing and it can also absorb an enormous amount of time. Yeah. So, um, thinking about time management, et cetera, you know, um, yeah. Yes. You know, we all love the life of the mind, but the idea that we're gonna be able to kind of, like, I don't think anyone really believes this, but that's sort of, that's sort of fantasy that you're going to, you know, have long hours at the library and think deep thoughts. I mean, yes. You can have some of that, but that's not gonna be your daily life. Yeah.

Speaker 2 ([16:33](#)):

Not even close. Yeah. Yeah. Um, kind of transitioning a little bit, but not too far. Um, what, when you, like, we've been talking about how the market has changed, but not much since, uh, you were first in the market, what was a piece of advice that you wish you would have heard when going into your graduate studies, um, and kind of side note, what piece of advice do you try to give those who are looking about going into the graduate, uh, graduate schools?

Speaker 4 ([17:06](#)):

Right. Um, I thought hard about this and this was surprisingly difficult for me. <laugh> um, I suppose, you know, when I was, when I was thinking of, you know, my career and what I wanted to do, I was very focused on the university. I believe that that was the place where you did the thing I wanted to do. Yeah. Um, and, and that was largely true, but I wish that someone had told me to think about the things that I wanted to do in broader terms to think that this is not the only institution out there where you can use some of the, the, the skills and talents that we associate with being at the university. And what I tell people who are coming to me for the first time, you know, I talk to them about how difficult the, the job market is. I try because a couple of people had this talk with me and of course I assumed it was them telling me that they thought I couldn't do it.

Speaker 4 ([18:06](#)):

So of course I was like, well, watch me do it. <laugh> um, I didn't hear, like, it's not about you. So I do try to say that like, like, let me tell you that I thought this, and it's, I'm really not saying this. This is about you. And this is not, um, I tell them, don't go on, unless you are basically willing to do it, just to do it. Mm-hmm <affirmative> um, because it may not lead to, to a career path in the university. Um, and I also tell them what I think most young people don't understand. And I certainly didn't was that this is gonna have a knock on economic effect for the rest of your, um, and I'm not complaining. I've had a, ultimately I had a soft landing, so I'm, you know, that's been good for me, but you are, you're giving up many, many years where other people, your age are entering the job market, and they're gonna build wealth over those, let's say seven years.

Speaker 4 ([19:08](#)):

Yeah. And you're still going to be at zero or below zero to having taken on more debt. Yeah. Also avoid taking on debt <laugh>. Yeah. Um, uh, and you know, that it's hard to catch up and then, you know, if you, it's not, uh, an easy lateral move when you enter the market, if you decide, oh, I'm leaving academia, I'm gonna go over here. They're comparing you to 21 and 22 year olds. And they're looking at you and thinking, well, those people are cheaper. I can train them. They're gonna be less demanding because they're just getting started. Yeah. Um, I can mold them. Right. <laugh> so, you know, the longer that you delay the more, and then, and then that's, that's wealth that you're not putting away. It's not just that you're not earning that wealth. Then it's a deficit that rolls out for the rest of your life.

Speaker 4 ([19:57](#)):

So there's that? Um, so yeah, that's a, that's a real issue. I would say. Um, I think a lot of people, you know, want to do some graduate work or interested in pursuing things. Maybe it's a bad, maybe it's a bad market and you're thinking, why do I wanna go out there now? An ma degree is a completely different animal than a PhD. Yeah. An ma kind of allows you to explore those things and maybe have the teaching experience and see what you think of it. And it doesn't really cost you that much provided you don't, you know, stupidly go into a lot of debt <laugh> um, because those two years aren't gonna make

a radical difference. Yeah. But the, the time that you put into a PhD, it's a real commitment. I mean, we do talk about, you know, the fact, yes, there are fungible skills and abilities that will be respected in other domains.

Speaker 4 ([20:48](#)):

And that's absolutely true. But the reality is you're spending many years training due to something specific. And if you're not doing that specific thing, then you have lost something. Yeah. In terms of economic progress. And you've lost something anyway, because, you know, even if you, as I did get a full-time job, I mean, I took actually a huge pay cut to take my first full-time job, because I was teaching four to six courses a semester as a freeway flyer. And I took a \$10,000 a year pay cut to take, uh, a job in a place that I didn't particularly wanna move to. Yeah. Because it was a career move and I'm very lucky to have had the opportunity to do that. I'm not complaining, but again, it's all along the way is a series of a series of decisions, which are going to affect you over time and which are going to affect your income over time.

Speaker 4 ([21:34](#)):

And that may feel unimportant when you're in your twenties. It might feel more important. If you have a child, perhaps a child with special needs, it might feel more important if your parents get sick and suddenly need you to support them, et cetera, life, a lot of life happens in those seven to 10 years. Yeah. And things can change on the ground a lot. And finally, um, <laugh>, you know, uh, the wisdom, as long as I've been in this career is you go wherever the job is, you're not gonna be able to stay where you are. You have to be willing to go anywhere. And that is still essentially true. Mm-hmm <affirmative> um, if you want to try for the BrassRing such as it is, but, um, I really think people need to think about what's important to them because first having a tenure track job at a not great university, whatever tenure means these days or will mean in a few years.

Speaker 4 ([22:30](#)):

Yeah. Um, it may be an unacceptable sacrifice. I just had a former student of mine leave of a tenured full professorship. Yeah. And she was just done with live living there and it was a good job and she didn't hate her colleagues. It was, they valued her, but she just wanted to be in a different place. And she couldn't do that. She couldn't make it work. So she left, she's working for an NGO now. She's very happy. Yeah. Um, you know, that's a, that's a valid decision. Yeah. Um, I had students that I, you know, had great hopes for. I thought that they, you know, they could have a research career and do the whole tenure track thing. I mean, they were well positioned for it and, you know, but the reality is it's like, well, it's important to me to be by my family and Miami and I have kids and I want them to know their grandparents and, you know, and my partner needs this job. And yeah, all of those are real valid reasons to make choices. And you shouldn't feel, you shouldn't feel influenced by anything other than your own priorities because this, this career does not reward you enough in other ways to, uh, compensate you for what you'll lose. Yeah. In making those decisions. Yeah.

Speaker 2 ([23:45](#)):

That's no, that's really great advice. And I think that could advice could go anywhere out, even outside academia, but I think that's really good advice, especially for those who are seeking academic success, because I think it's built into people young to like, be the best, do the best, read more books. Right. Get the A's mm-hmm <affirmative>. Um, but I think that's really good advice for lots of fields

Speaker 4 ([24:08](#)):

<laugh> right, right. Um,

Speaker 2 ([24:12](#)):

And then kind of my last question, I think, um, do you think humanities programs are preparing students for jobs outside of academia?

Speaker 4 ([24:24](#)):

Undergraduate programs are doing a great job, good preparing students for a wide range of careers. And we see that, that in terms of their lifetime earnings and work experience, that they actually eventually do better than a lot of people in more technical fields who may place at higher earning jobs, uh, immediately out of college and then stagnate some of them stagnate. Um, I think the ma is still like, if you want to take a couple of years to really deeply explore, you know, a topic that, that is still, you know, an acceptable trade off and, um, and you will learn things. And, um, and if, especially if you, um, take advantage of all the opportunities to work with digital things and work with multi, you know, take advantage of all of those things that are going on at the university, right? Yeah. Um, even the things that maybe you feel a little uncomfortable with, that's the whole point of higher ed is that you can take some risks and get a little uncomfortable, right?

Speaker 4 ([25:25](#)):

The PhD, as it stands is not doing a fabulous job, preparing people for positions outside of academia. It's not designed to do that. I know we've talked about, oh, well, we could change it. But yeah, many years ago the MLA tried to promote a different kind of doctoral degree. That would be more, um, that would be more skills focused, um, more sort of a wide range of skills, skills applicable another, and people didn't want it. Yeah. Right. People tend to want to go into the humanities because they want to study deeply, deeply study and immerse themselves in the scholarship on the questions about human values and how humans make meaning. And, you know, obviously I have a particular perspective, but I think that that's what that that's well worth doing. Um, but you shouldn't go into it with your eyes closed. You shouldn't go into it thinking that there is a clear career path, because at this point in history, there is not.

Speaker 2 ([26:27](#)):

Yeah.

Speaker 4 ([26:28](#)):

Um, and also, I mean, to some extent, it was never true that everyone who got a, a, who did a dissertation was then gonna spend the rest of their life doing that kind of work. They were gonna go and teach a four, four, and, you know, and administer and serve the, the community in that way, which is super important. Right. <laugh> yeah. Um, and it prepares you for that in the sense that you are a member of the academic community and you know, what it is to make, uh, to create something, to create a contribution to knowledge, which is what graduate work is supposed to be. And, um, so that is a valid preparation, even if you don't spend the rest of your career doing that all the time. Yeah. Um, you know, there's still a need for education, which means that there should still be lots of full-time jobs in education.

Speaker 4 ([27:19](#)):

Yeah. The reason that there aren't is an economic structure, it's not that there's a shortage of need. If there were a shortage of need, we wouldn't be hiring a bunch of adjuncts <laugh> <laugh> and, or very poorly paid lecturers. Um, and I will say that, uh, a lot of institutions are making progress, having sort of dual tracks where teaching track positions that are full time and with some, you know, protection, some permanency built into them. So, you know, we've done that here at UF. So, I mean, there are, there are ways that some improvements are happening, but it's not enough and it's not widespread enough. Yeah.

Speaker 4 ([28:07](#)):

I think honestly, I think the most important thing academics can do is join a union. <laugh> be part of a union, collectively bargain. I mean, I'm in a right to work state. So I'm in a union that doesn't have a lot of, you know, it doesn't have a lot of, um, legal power and yet it does a lot for us. Um, it does a lot to maneuver and I think that's, that's very important because the casualization of labor has been going on for a hell of a long time. I mean, like I said, I was a freeway flyer when I was working on my PhD and I had no illusions about the market because even though I had faculty who had placed back in, you know, the sixties and had no idea what the market was like, I looked at my peers who were really good and they were working on three campuses and not having a, you know, a permanent job.

Speaker 4 ([28:55](#)):

And I knew that that was a possibility for me too, right. From jump. Um, so, uh, and I don't mean to minimize the fact that things are much worse today. Um, but, uh, this has been a long term strategy of, um, you know, more of one party than the other, but really of sort of the entire economic system. And, you know, it's, it's become, it's become untenable. It's been untenable for a while. Uh, and I don't see any way out of that except collective bargaining and, you know, making different laws to protect people and, and so on.

Speaker 2 ([29:34](#)):

Yeah. I think, uh, a lot it's easy to fall into the trap of, it's just me. It's just our generation. It's just my problem. And it's nice. See, not nice to hear, but it's good to have the foresight of, no, this isn't just a today issue. It is a today issue, but let's look at the longer issue that has been happening. Right. And it's like you said, it's not, it didn't just start yesterday. There's a lot of things that were put into place or not put into place really to lead us to this moment.

Speaker 4 ([30:07](#)):

That is absolutely true. Um, um, well, I mean, I guess I'll just leave you with that. This is higher. Ed's been in crisis. Labor's been in crisis. That's been true for a while, but that the political moment right now is the worst I've seen in my lifetime and probably the worst that we've seen since maybe the twenties. Um, so I think that there is, you know, obviously there's the labor front and there's the institutional reform front, but I think that, um, people really need to think through their political choices and they need to be politically active at the local level and not just at the national level and even at the state level, um, because, uh, freedom of speech is under threat. Um, academic freedom is under threat. Tenure is under threat, but more importantly, the institution of higher education, as we know it as a place where we explore ideas as a place where not everything has to be driven by a profit, um, is, is really, I think at an inflection point. And it's either, either we're gonna save it, um, or it's, it's not gonna exist in a decade or so. Uh, except maybe in very few elite institutions for wealthy people. That's the, um, the question underlying all of this, and it's not unrelated to the economic and labor questions we're talking about.

Speaker 3 ([31:43](#)):

It was so great hearing from Pamela. Um, I think I really enjoyed what she had to say about, um, how the problem of the job market is not, um, a new problem that it's something that she remembers hearing about and experiencing when she first went on the job market. Um, and I think that was really interesting to hear about, because I think we talk about it so much as like a problem right now that like it's only happening right now, and this is a new thing, but it sounds like from what Pamela was saying, that this is a problem that's been around for years. And so, um, I don't know. I guess it's interesting to me that it's still a problem and that we haven't really figured out how to fix it and navigate it completely.

Speaker 2 ([32:30](#)):

I really like talking with Pamela as well, because she helped shed a light on how faculty members are in most cases doing all they can, mm-hmm, <affirmative>, they're doing what they have the resources for, for the students, um, that they have under their wing. And I think that's probably true for most faculty members. I think the issue comes when we ask people within the academic system to help those leaving the academic world with so many people getting PhDs and humanities. And so little of those doctorates getting tenure track positions are programs are in trouble. The students leaving the humanities are not prepared for the job market and their advisors and colleges are not preparing them for a job outside of the academic system. It has left many students reconsidering their degrees in the middle of their programs.

Speaker 3 ([33:34](#)):

Yeah, I think that's exactly right. And you know, I've seen many doctoral students, um, change career paths before finishing their PhD.

Speaker 5 ([33:43](#)):

So my name is Jared Powell. Yeah. There were many factors. It was, it was many things kind of coming to head at once. I'll try to hit the main ones though. I'll say

Speaker 1 ([33:54](#)):

First, next time, on the special series of the study religion podcast, we listen to Jared Powell, a graduate of the university of Alabama in both religious studies and English on his recent decision to stop his PhD program. The study religion podcast is a production of the department of religious studies at the university of Alabama. This episode was made with the help of Pamela Gilbert, Jacob Barrett, and Erica Bennet follow the department of religious studies on Twitter and [instagram@studyreligionorfacebookatfacebook.com](https://www.instagram.com/studyreligionorfacebookatfacebook.com) slash R E L UA. If you enjoyed this episode, please subscribe to our podcast on SoundCloud, Spotify, or apple podcast and give us a rating and review.