

## Curriculum Vitae

### ACADEMIC POSITIONS

#### **Syracuse University**

Associate Professor, Department of Religion, 2023-present

Assistant Professor, Department of Religion, 2017-2023

#### **University of Houston**

Lecturer, Department of Religion, 2014-2016

### EDUCATION

**PhD** Rice University, Department of Religion, 2017

**MA** Rice University, Department of Religion, 2014

**MTS** Vanderbilt Divinity School, 2010

**BA** Xavier University of Louisiana, Political Science, 2008

### PUBLICATIONS

#### Monographs

*Black-Life-Matter: Blackness, Religion, and the Subject* (Duke University Press, October 2022).

#### Collaborative Book Projects

Co-authored with Ryan Johnson, *The Phenomenology of Black Spirit* (Edinburgh University Press, November 2022).

Co-Edited with Lori Martin and Stephen C. Finley, *The Religion of White Rage: White Workers, Religious Fervor, and the Myth of Black Racial Progress*. (Edinburgh University Press, September 2020)

Co-authored as part of the Center for Engaged Research and Collaborative Learning Writing Collective, *Embodiment and Black Religion: Rethinking the Body in African American Religious Experience* (Equinox Publishing, 2017)

Co-authored as part of the Center for Engaged Research and Collaborative Learning Writing Collective, *Breaking Bread, Breaking Beats: Churches and Hip-Hop—A Basic Guide to Key Issues* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014).

#### Peer-Reviewed Single-Authored Journal Articles

“The Trouble with Gender: *Gender Trouble*, “Mama’s Baby,” and Antiblack Violence,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, March 2025, Roundtable issue on Judith

Butler's *Gender Trouble*, accessible here: [https://academic.oup.com/jaar/advance-article/doi/10.1093/jaarel/lfa008/8087948?utm\\_source=authorollfreelink&utm\\_campaign=jaar&utm\\_medium=email&guestAccessKey=cc03e8ee-b5aa-49cc-a14b-9a1b270b15de](https://academic.oup.com/jaar/advance-article/doi/10.1093/jaarel/lfa008/8087948?utm_source=authorollfreelink&utm_campaign=jaar&utm_medium=email&guestAccessKey=cc03e8ee-b5aa-49cc-a14b-9a1b270b15de)

"Futile Plans: *Map*, Wandering, and the Study of Religion," in *TOPIA: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies*, Vol. 46 (March 2023), 66-78

"Now it is Always Now," *Political Theology Journal*, available digitally, released 2022: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1462317X.2022.2093693>

"The Traumatic Mysticism of Othered Others," *Correspondences: Journal for the Study of Esotericism*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2019), 201-237.

"Religion in/and Black Lives Matter: Celebrating the Impossible," *Religion Compass*, Vol. 13, Issue 1 (2019).

#### Peer-Reviewed Co-Authored Journal Articles

Co-authored with Stephen Finley and Hugh Page, "Africana Esoteric Studies and Western Intellectual Hegemony: A Conversation with Western Esotericism," *History of Religions*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (February 2021), 163-187.

Co-Authored (Second Author), "Endangered and Vulnerable: The Black Professoriate, Bullying, and the Limits of Academic Freedom," *Journal of Academic Freedom*, Vol. 10, 2019.

Co-Authored (second author) with Linda Zhang, "Canfield Drive: Commemorative Atmospheres of Impasse," *Journal of Architectural Education*, No. 73, Vol. 1, 66-75.

Co-authored (First Author) with Stephen Finley and Lori Martin, "'High-Tech Lynching': White Virtual Mobs and University Administrators as Policing Agents in Higher Education," *Issues in Race and Society*, Vol. 9, 2018.

Co-Authored (second author) with Stephen C. Finley and Lori Martin, "Affirming Our Values": African American Scholars, White Virtual Mobs, and the Complicity of White University Administrators," *Journal of Academic Freedom*, Vol 9, 2018, accessed online <https://www.aaup.org/reports-publications/journal-academic-freedom/volume-9>.

#### Roundtable Articles

"Confessions from Black Flesh: a Close (Counter-)Reading of Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, *Theology and Sexuality*, Book Review Symposium, July 2022, 13-16.

"The Deliverance of Christian Queer," Roundtable review of Adriaan Van Klinken's *Kenyan, Christian, Queer*, *Religious Studies Review*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (September 2020), 321-324.

Co-authored with Stephen C. Finley, “God is a White Racist: Immanent Atheism as a Religious Response to Black Lives Matter and Antiblack State-Sanctioned Violence,” published as part of a Roundtable discussion in the *Journal of Africana Religions*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (2015), 443-453.

### Book Chapters

“‘Legitimate Political Discourse’: January 6<sup>th</sup> and the Brutality of White Theodicy,” in *In Sheep’s Clothing*, ed. George Yancy (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2023)

Co-Authored with Marcia Robinson, “Sojourner Truth: Aesthetics, Bad Faith, and the ‘Night-Time’ State of America,” in *Oxford Handbook of American and British Women Philosophers in the Nineteenth Century*, eds. Lydia Moland and Alison Laura Stone (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023).

Co-Authored with Ryan Johnson, “The Problem and the Blemish,” in *George Yancy: a Critical Introduction* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2021)

“Going Backstage: Soaphead Church and the (Religious) Problem of Goodness in *The Bluest Eye*,” in *Goodness and the Literary Imagination* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2019), 178-198.

“Bun B on Religion and Hip Hop: An Interview (by Biko Gray),” in *Religion in Hip Hop: Mapping the New Terrain*, ed. Anthony Pinn, Monica Miller, and Bernard “Bun B” Freeman (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 124-134.

“Show and Prove: Five Percenters and the Study of African American Esotericism,” in *There is a Mystery*, editors Margarita Guillory, Stephen Finley, and Hugh Page (Leiden: Brill Press, 2014), 177-195.

### Book Reviews

Ashon Crawley, *The Lonely Letters*, Reading Religion (American Academy of Religion), May 29, 2022. <https://readingreligion.org/9781478008248/the-lonely-letters/>

Robert P. Jones, *White Too Long*, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 136, No. 3. (Fall 2021) 583-585.

### Invited Public Scholarship

On Evil: A Speech to our Antiblack Despisers, given at the Black Studies and the Crises of Our Times Conference, State University of New York at Buffalo, March 13, 2025.

“Dis/Appearing,” *Harvard Divinity Bulletin*, Autumn/Winter 2023, accessed here: <https://bulletin.hds.harvard.edu/dis-appearing/>

“Blackness,” part of the Critical Theory for Political Theology” series at *The Political Theology*. April 19, 2022. <https://politicaltheology.com/blackness/>

“Frank Wilderson III,” part of the “Critical Theory for Political Theology” series *The Political Theology Network*. September 21, 2021. <https://politicaltheology.com/frank-wilderson-iii/>

“A Theodicy of the Unliving, or, why I won’t teach my Black Lives Matter Class anymore,” *The Immanent Frame*, January 7, 2021. <https://tif.ssrc.org/2021/01/07/a-theodicy-of-the-unliving/>

“Unwilling Sacrifices: Antiracism, Religion, and the Clearing,” Post for the Georgetown Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs. June 16, 2020. <https://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/responses/unwilling-sacrifices-anti-blackness-religion-and-the-clearing>

“On Faith as Activism in Black Lives Matter,” Post for the Leeds Centre for Religion and Public Life. January 6, 2020. <https://ahc.leeds.ac.uk/centre-religion-public-life#:~:text=The%20CRP%20has%20been%20one,different%20localities%20within%20the%20UK.>

### Works in Progress

*Ivory Towers, Regulatory Technologies, and the (Re)Production of Anti-Black Violence in the Academy: Introducing Black Faculty Studies*, Co-authored with Stephen Finley and Lori Martin. Under Contract with Johns Hopkins University Press, all but one chapter and the introduction drafted

*The Gospel of Truth*, two of five chapters drafted.

*When They Call us Devils: A Black Political Theology*, three of five chapters drafted

*Into the Clearing: Toni Morrison, Blackness, and Religion*, three chapters drafted

### **ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC LECTURES**

Critic on Author Meets Critics Panel for Beatrice Marovich’s *Sister Death*, American Academy of Religion, November 18, 2023.

Book Panel on *Phenomenology of Black Spirit*, at the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (SPEP) Conference, October 12, 2023.

“On Eulogy.” Presentation given at Yale’s 10.23 conference Commemorating the Birmingham Church Bombing in Alabama. September 15, 2023.

“Black Life Matter,” lecture given to the Westar Institute’s God seminar, June 10, 2023.

“Dis/Appearing: Black Life, Theodicy, and the Study of Religion,” Greeley lecture

Biko Mandela Gray CV

delivered at Harvard's Center for the Study of World Religions, April 6, 2023

"Sojourner Truth, *Parrhesia*, and Critical Praxis," paper delivered at the American Academy of Religion, November 2022.

"Ghost Stories: Toni Morrison and the Study of American Religion," Keynote Lecture, Indiana University Graduate Conference on the Fetish, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

"The Dangers of Taking Flight," paper delivered at the *Black Superhumanism* gathering held at the Esalen Center for Theory and Research, December 9, 2021.

"Confessions from Black Flesh," Paper delivered at the American Academy of Religion, November 22, 2021.

"The Trouble with Gender," Paper delivered at the American Academy of Religion, November 21, 2021.

"Futile Plans: *Map*, Wandering, and the Study of Religion," paper delivered at the *Map at 20* conference, November 5, 2021.

"More in Store," Public Lecture delivered to the Kent University School of Architecture as part of the *Get Lectured* Series. March 26, 2021.

"Now, it is always now; Blackness, Time, and State-Sanctioned violence." Public lecture delivered as part of the Alumni panel for the Rice University Rockwell Lecture series. February 22, 2021.

"Race, Religion, and the Moment we're in: The Religion of White Rage," Panel discussion as part of LSU's *Racism: Dismantling the System* lecture series. February 23, 2021.

"More in Store," Public lecture delivered to the Syracuse University School of Architecture as part of the lecture series "Hidden histories." February 19, 2021.

"Works in Progress" Panel, Theology and Continental Philosophy Unit, AAR National Meeting, December 2020.

Author Meets Critics: Niki Clements' *Sites of the Ascetic Self: John Cassian and Christian Ethical Formation*, AAR National Meeting, December 2020.

"The Religion of White Rage," Collaborative public lecture delivered to the Harvard Center for World Religions. November 2, 2020.

"Sandra Bland's Love: Faith, Eros, and Religious Experience," Public lecture delivered digitally at University of Leeds's Centre for Religion and Public Life. June 4, 2020.

"Sacred Blackness, Mystical Resistance: Religion and BlackLivesMatter," Public lecture

delivered at Queens University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, on February 26, 2020.

“Sacred Blackness, Mystical Resistance,” Given at the Esalen Center for Theory and Research, December 10, 2019.

“Sandy (Still) Speaks: Sandra Bland, Black Lives Matter, and the (Continued) Production of Digital Clearings,” Given at the American Academy of Religion, November 21, 2019.

“The Question(s) of Noticing: Black Unhappiness and Hegel’s Unhappy Consciousness,” Given at the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy, October 31, 2019.

“Canfield Drive: Commemorative Atmospheres of Impasse,” given at the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, March 28-30, 2019.

“On Crying in Class,” Presentation given at the American Academy of Religion’s Religion, Affect, and Emotion Group, November 18, 2018.

“On Not Standing a Chance: Black Life and (the Problem of) the Object,” Ferris E. Reynolds Lecture given at Elon University, October 2018.

“A White Theology of Inspiration,” Presentation given at the *Capacious* conference, August 8-11, 2018.

“Road Trip,” Presentation given for the Boghosian Architectural Fellowship Symposium, *Beta-Real*, March 23, 2018.

“‘Wonder What God had in Mind’: Affect, Theodicy, and Whiteness,” Presentation given at the *Once More, With Feeling* Conference, University of Dayton, February 24-25, 2018.

“Wondering Aloud: A Fleshy Preamble to Theology,” Presentation given at the *God Talk in the Atlantic World* conference, Xavier University of Louisiana, January 13, 2018.

“Wonder what God had in Mind? Exploring the Role of the Black Body in White Supremacy.” Public Lecture given at Louisiana State University’s Sociology Department. Louisiana State University, April 1, 2016.

“The Whole Procedure was Wrong, Alien: An Ontological Exploration of the Alien in Octavia Butler’s ‘Bloodchild.’” Presentation given at the *Alien Bodies* conference, Emory University, February 8-9, 2013.

“The New Esoteric God Flow: Five Percenters and the Study of African American Esotericism.” Presentation given at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, November 2012.

“Selling Salvation: a Phenomenology of Kanye West’s ‘Jesus Walks’ in Light of the Quest for Complex Subjectivity.” Presentation given at the American Academy of Religion

Annual Meeting, November 2011.

## **AWARDS**

Syracuse University's Excellence in Graduate Education Award, awarded spring semester 2020.

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

American Academy of Religion, 2010-Present

Society for the Study of Black Religion, 2018-Present

## **SERVICE**

### Professional Service

Steering Committee Member, Foucault and the Study of Religion, American Academy of Religion, 2022-present

Steering Committee Member, Religion, Affect, and Emotion, American Academy of Religion, 2018-2022

Steering Committee Member, New Religious Movements, American Academy of Religion, 2017-22

### University Service

Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Religion, Syracuse University, 2023-present.

Committee Member, Courtney O'Dell-Chaib's dissertation defense. Thesis Title: "Desiring Devastated Landscapes: Love After Ecological Collapse," January 23, 2019.

"Acting Out," Keynote talk at the Shaw Center for Public and Community Service Tutor conference, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

First Reader, Hayden Hains MA Thesis Defense. Thesis Title: "Theory and Practice: The Formation and Limitation of Feminist Scholarship in the Study of Religion." Date: August 3, 2018.

Chair (liaison between committee and university), Seth Davis's PhD defense. Thesis title:

Biko Mandela Gray CV

“Fierce: Black Queer Literacies of Survival.” March 9, 2018.

Co-organizer, “REAL talks,” A brown-bag series that explored and critiqued the various modes of exclusion that occur on and beyond campus. February-April 2018.

Judge for Linda Zhang’s Boghosian Fellowship Elective class in Ceramics, December 2017.

Panel Member, Syracuse University Remembrance Scholars Symposium, October 2017.

Presentation on Race, Religion, and politics, Charlottesville Teach-in, September 2017.

### Community Involvement

Mayor Sylvester Turner’s Criminal Justice Transition Team, Houston, TX, January 2016

Core Member, Houston’s Right to Justice Campaign, Houston, TX, July-December 2016

Mentor, KIPP Spirit, Houston TX, 2015-2016

Curriculum Chair and Executive Board Member, A. Philip Randolph Institute’s Youth Leadership Development conference, 2012-2016