

MARCUS LOUIS HARVEY

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EDUCATION

2012	PhD	Religion	Specialization: African Religious Thought Emory University, Atlanta, GA
2005	ThM	Literature and Religion	Specialization: Literature and Black Religion Emory University, Atlanta, GA
2004	MDiv	Religion and Culture	Specialization: Black Religious Hermeneutics Emory University, Atlanta, GA
2001	BA	English (Magna Cum Laude)	Morehouse College, Atlanta, GA

DISSERTATION

“‘Life is War:’ African Grammars of Knowing and the Interpretation of Black Religious Experience” (Awarded “Distinction”)
Advisor: Dr. Dianne M. Stewart

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

2023 –	Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
2019 –2023	Associate Professor of Religious Studies, University of North Carolina Asheville, Asheville, NC
2013-19	Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, University of North Carolina Asheville, Asheville, NC
2011-12	Visiting Faculty, Department of Philosophy and Religion, Northeastern University, Boston, MA
2007	Teaching Associate, Emory University, Atlanta, GA
2006	Teaching Assistant, Emory University, Atlanta, GA

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS: African and Africana Religious Thought; Phenomenology of Black Religion; Epistemology; Zora Neale Hurston and Black Folklore; Literature and Black Religion; Religion and Film; Religion and Horror

COURSES TAUGHT

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Vodou Gods and Atlantic Perils: African Religions in the New World
African Religions in the Western Imagination (Spring 2024)
Religion and American Horror (Spring 2024)

University of North Carolina Asheville

Introduction to the Study of Religion
African Religions in the Americas and the Caribbean

Zora Neale Hurston and Black Religion: Theoretical Foundations
Theory and Method in the Study of Religion
Religion and African American Literature (Senior Seminar in Religious Studies)
Critical Perspectives on Contemporaneity (Humanities Program Senior Capstone)
Religion and the Paranormal in the Contemporary American Imagination (Honors)
Religion and Film (First-Year Colloquium, Honors and Non-Honors)
Religion and Horror

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Books in Progress

“*Life is War:*” *African Grammars of Knowing and Black Religious Hermeneutics* (On Schedule for Full Manuscript Submission to Duke University Press by Spring 2023 for Review)

Peer-Reviewed Articles

"From the Sacred Sound of the Conch Shell to the Cemetery Dance: Reimagining an Africana Festival Created in a Southern Appalachian City." Special Issue, *Race and Religion: New Approaches to African American Religions*, *Religions* 8, no. 8 (2017): 1-30. doi: 10.3390/rel8080149.

“‘Hard Skies’ and Bottomless Questions: Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and Epistemological ‘Opacity’ in Black Religious Experience.” *Journal of Africana Religions* 4, no. 2 (2016): 186-214.

"Deity from a Python, Earth from a Hen, Humankind from Mystery: Narrative and Knowledge in Yorùbá Cosmology" ("Divindade de uma Pítón, Terra de uma Galinha, Humanidade do Mistério: Narrativa e Conhecimento na Cosmologia Iorubá"). *Estudos de Religião* 29, no. 2 (2015): 237-270.

"Medial Deities and Relational Meanings: Tracing Elements of an Akan Grammar of Knowing." *Journal of Africana Religions* 3, no. 4 (2015): 397-441.

"Engaging the Òrìṣà: An Exploration of the Yorùbá Concepts of Ìbejì and Olókun as Theoretical Principles in Black Theology." *Black Theology: An International Journal* 6, no. 1 (2008): 61-82.

Peer-Reviewed Book Chapters

“Gnostic and Epistemological Themes in African Traditional Religion.” In *The Palgrave Handbook of African Traditional Religion*, edited by Ibigbolade Aderibigbe and Toyin Falola, 535-546. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022.

“Ifá Divination Poetry.” In *Global Humanities Reader: Engaging Ancient Worlds and Perspectives* (Volume 1), edited by Brian S. Hook, Sophie Mills, Katherine C. Zubko, and Keya Maitra, 64-76. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2022.

Peer-Reviewed Articles Forthcoming, under Review, or in Progress

“Knowing the Gods in Public: Akan Religion and the Question of Popular Relevance.” In *Religion and Public Life in Africa and the African Diaspora*, edited by Jacob Olúpòṅà (In Progress).

“Liquid Knowledge” and Other Fruits of Initiation: Strands of Decolonial Religious Theory in Malidoma Somé’s *Of Water and the Spirit*, 22 ms pages (In Progress).

“I Received My *Bayi* in a Bible:” Ritual, Matter, and the Regulation of Spiritual Aggression in Akan Religion (In Progress).

Reviews

“We Come as Friends,” review of *We Come as Friends* by Hubert Sauper. *Religious Studies Review* 43, no. 1 (March 2017): 74.

SCHOLARLY PRESENTATIONS

Invited Conference Papers

“Zora Neale Hurston and the Frontier of Black Religious Hermeneutics.” Paper Presented at the Hurston on the Horizon Mini Conference, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS, January 28-29, 2022.

"Melville J. Herskovits, Africa, and the Black Religious Imagination." Paper Presented at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX, November 20-23, 2021.

“Suffering as Signal:’ Reflections on the Coronavirus Pandemic and Dagara Cosmology.” Paper Presented at the American Academy of Religion Virtual Annual Meeting, November 29-December 10, 2020.

“What It Means to ‘Know’ in African Traditional Religion.” Paper Presented at the Nimi Wariboko Conference on Ethics, Economy, Society, Religion, and African Social Traditions, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX, November 21, 2020.

“Knowing the Gods in Public: Akan Religion and the Question of Sociopolitical Relevance.” Paper Presented at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs Symposium on Indigeneity, Religion, and Remaking the Public Sphere, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, December 5-6, 2019.

“Ears to the Conch Shell, Feet to the Ancestors: Reimagining Asheville’s Goombay Festival.” Paper Presented at the African Americans in Western North Carolina Conference, Asheville, NC, October 22-23, 2015.

“Yorùbá Cosmology as Epistemology and Cultural Matrix.” Paper Presented at the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute for College and University Teachers (Theme: Black Aesthetics and African Centered Cultural Expressions: Sacred Systems in the Nexus between Cultural Studies, Religion and Philosophy), Atlanta, GA, July 13-August 1, 2014.

“Approaching Yorùbá Epistemology: A Heuristic Investigation.” Paper Presented at the Tenth Òrìṣà World Congress, Ọbáfẹmi Awólówọ University, Ilé-Ife, Nigeria, July 24-28, 2013.

Invited Lectures

“‘The Thing That Knowledge Can’t Eat:’ Malidoma Somé and the Future of Africana Religious Studies.” Lecture to Be Presented as Part of the Jerry Jackson Lecture Series at Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC, October 18, 2018.

Conference Papers

“There Are No Boundaries in the Body”: Notes on an Akan Spiritual Theory. Paper Presented at the African and Diasporic Religious Studies Association Conference, Charlotte, NC, April 21, 2023.

“The ‘Speech of Silence’ and Other Decolonizing Concepts: New Theoretical Horizons in Malidoma Somé’s *Of Water and the Spirit*.” Paper Presented at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, November 18-21, 2017.

"If You Want to See Everything, You Become Blind': Phenomenological Epistemology as an Approach to the Study of Autochthonous African Spiritual Cultures." Paper Presented at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX, November 19-22, 2016.

“‘Hard Skies’ and Bottomless Questions: Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and Epistemological ‘Opacity’ in Black Religious Experience.” Paper Presented at the National Association of African American Studies Conference, Baton Rouge, LA, February 9-14, 2015.

“Engaging the Òrìṣà: An Exploration of the Yorùbá Concepts of Ìbejì and Olókun as Theoretical Principles in Black Theology.” Paper Presented at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, November 18-21, 2006.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Scholarly Research: Ghana, 2014, 2011 (Field Interviews - Accra, Kumasi, Larteh, Kwahu, Ananse Village, Koforidua, Asikuma, Mampong, Cape Coast); Nigeria, 2013 (Field Interviews - Lagos, Ilé-Ifè, Modakeke)

Scholarly Presentations: Nigeria, 2013 (Tenth Òrìṣà World Congress)

AWARDS/HONORS

- 2018 Award for Teaching Excellence in the Humanities (UNC Asheville – Top Teaching Award for Entire Humanities Division)
- 2017-18 Wabash Grant for Project on Critical Pedagogy (“Cultivating Intellectual Patience for the Study of African Diaspora Religions,” Funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc.)
- 2016-18 Wabash Fellow (Workshop for Early Career Religion Faculty at Colleges and Universities, Funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc.)
- 2015 University Research Council Grant (UNC Asheville)
- 2013 John Fenton Prize in the Comparative Study of Religion (Dissertation, Emory University)
- 2011-12 Northeast Consortium for Faculty Diversity Dissertation-Year Fellowship
- 2005-10 Graduate Diversity Fellowship (Emory University)
- 2009 The Fund for Theological Education Dissertation Fellowship
- 2005 The Fund for Theological Education Doctoral Fellowship
- 2000 Phi Beta Kappa National Honor Society
- 2000 Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society
- 2000 Golden Key International Honor Society
- 1999 UNCF/Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (2012 –)

African Studies Association (2012 –)

American Academy of Religion (2006 –)

DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

2023 – Curriculum Committee

University of North Carolina Asheville

2015 –2023 Advising/Admissions Liaison

2015 Principal Organizer, Sam Hill Lecture in Southern Religion (“Crossing the Color Line: Tracing Burdens of Religious ‘Difference’ from Africa to Appalachia,”

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

University of North Carolina Asheville

- 2019 – Alternate, Faculty Senate
2017-21 Coordinator, Critical Perspectives on Contemporaneity (Humanities Program Senior Capstone)
2016 Faculty Host, National Conference on Undergraduate Research Plenary Speaker (Dr. Dianne Stewart)
2015 Convener, “Africa as Construct” Faculty Reading Group, Center for Teaching and Learning
2015 Organized Guest Lecture featuring landscape architect and historian Dr. Kwesi Degraft-Hanson; His lecture was titled “Unearthing the ‘Weeping Time,’” and the 1859 Savannah Slave Auction: A Genealogy of People and Place.”
2014-15 Humanities Program Curriculum Consultant
2014 Presenter, “Foundations of Yorùbá Cosmology,” Humanities 124 Faculty Workshop
2014 Presenter, “Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, and Indigenous ‘Research,’” Humanities 324 Faculty Workshop

Committees

- 2015 – Minority Affairs Commission
2015 National Endowment for the Humanities Distinguished Professorship Screening Committee

Program Affiliations

Honors Program (2016 –2023), Humanities Program (2014 –2023), First-Year Colloquium Program (2014 –2023), Africana Studies Program (2013 –2023)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- 2016 –2020 Steering Committee, Anthropology of Religion Unit, American Academy of Religion

PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL WORK

NPR Radio Show and Podcast

2017 – Co-creator and co-host of *The Waters and Harvey Show*, an NPR platform for in-depth conversations that address the unacknowledged historical experience and cultural signature of black communities in western North Carolina as well as a range of vexing challenges facing other communities of color across the United States and abroad. The show airs Fridays at 9:00am and Saturdays at 3:00pm on Blue Ridge Public Radio. It is also accessible through on-demand listening at BPR.org and via podcast on the BPR and NPR mobile apps, Apple Podcasts, and Google Play.

Radio Interviews

WUNC-FM 91.5 (North Carolina Public Radio), *The State of Things* with Frank Stasio, Chapel Hill, NC, March 14, 2017.

Editorials/Articles

"America's Africa and Black Cultural Identity." *The Urban News* (Asheville, NC), August 12, 2014.

Speeches/Papers

"A Reflection on *Tambores de Agua: Un Encuentro Ancestral*. Speech, Fourth Seminar of the William C. Friday Fellowship for Human Relations, Asheville, NC, October 22, 2021.

"Africanity and the Problem of Afrophobia." Speech, TED^xUNC Asheville, Asheville, NC, March 3, 2018.

“The Discursive Prison of Race: A Critical Response to Darin J. Waters’ Essay on ‘Brazil and the Idea of a Racial Democracy.’” Response, Monthly Meeting of the Pen and Plate Club, Asheville, NC, July 16, 2015.

“Reimagining Community through an African Ancestral Perspective.” Keynote Address, African American Summit, Asheville, NC, May 29, 2015.

LANGUAGES

French: (competent) reading

Spanish: (competent) reading

REFERENCES

Dr. Dianne M. Stewart

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