

CURRICULUM VITAE
MARCUS L. HARVEY, PhD
Department of Religious Studies
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
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EDUCATION

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|------|------|---------------------------|---|
| 2012 | PhD | Religion | Specialization: Indigenous African Religions and Epistemologies
Emory University, Atlanta, GA |
| 2005 | ThM | Literature and Religion | Specialization: Literature, Folklore, and Black Religion
Emory University, Atlanta, GA |
| 2004 | MDiv | Religion and Culture | Specialization: Black Religious Phenomenology and 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

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| 2023 – | Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Knoxville, TN |
| 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 INTERESTS: African and Africana Religious Thought; Phenomenology of Black Religion; Epistemology; Zora Neale Hurston; Black Folklore; Literature and Black Religion

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Books in Progress

“*Life is War*”: *African Epistemology and Black Religious Thought Worlds* (Submission to Duke University Press Anticipated Spring 2025)

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 Píton, 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 Book Chapters and Articles under Review or in Progress

“Knowing the Gods in Public: Akan Religion and the Question of Popular Relevance,” 20 ms pages. In *Religion and Public Life in Africa and the African Diaspora*, edited by Jacob Olúpòṅà (Under Review).

“Liquid Knowledge” and Other Fruits of Initiation: Strands of Decolonial Religious Theory in Malidoma Some’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,” 24 ms pages (In Progress).

SCHOLARLY PRESENTATIONS

Invited Conference Papers

“Thinking through Blackness: A Contribution from African Epistemology.” Paper Presented at the Blackness Beyond Protestantism Conference, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, April 19, 2024.

“Dianne Stewart, Tracey Hucks, and the Study of Africana Religions: Parsing a Seminal Methodological Innovation.” Paper Presented at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX, November 18-21, 2023.

“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, Ọbáfẹ́mi Awólọ́wọ̀ University, Ilé-Ifẹ̀, Nigeria, July 24-28, 2013.

Invited Lectures

“The Thing That Knowledge Can’t Eat: Malidoma Somé and the Future of Africana Religious Studies.” Lecture 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-Ifé, Modakeke)

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

AWARDS/HONORS

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| 2023 | F. Stanley Lusby and John O. Hodges Teaching Award (University of Tennessee, Knoxville) |
| 2018 | Award for Teaching Excellence in the Humanities (UNC Asheville – Top Teaching Award for 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) |
| 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

PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL WORK

NPR 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 is also accessible through on-demand listening at BPR.org ([Blue Ridge Public Radio](http://BPR.org)) and 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

"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^x UNC 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.

COURSES TAUGHT

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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

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
Critical Perspectives on Contemporaneity (Humanities Program Senior Capstone)
Religion and the Paranormal in the Contemporary American Imagination
Religion and Film
Religion and Horror

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

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

LANGUAGES

French: (competent) reading
Spanish: (competent) reading
Twi: Basic
Yorùbá: Basic

REFERENCES

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