

Sierra L. Lawson
(919) 962-5666
sielaw@live.unc.edu
www.sierrallynnlawson.com

Dept. of Religious Studies
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
125 Carolina Hall CB 3225
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3225

EDUCATION

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Ph.D. in Religion and Culture, expected May 2024
Supervisors: Jes Boon and Brandon Bayne

The University of Alabama

M.A. in Religion in Culture, May 2019
Thesis: "Theorizing Origins: An Analysis of Descriptions of Hybridity in Marian Devotional Cultures"
Supervisor: Russell T. McCutcheon

Graduate Certifications:
Digital Humanities (Alabama Digital Humanities Center)
Online Pedagogy (College of Continuing Studies)

B.A. (summa cum laude), May 2017
Majors: Religious Studies, Anthropology
Minor: Spanish

PUBLICATIONS

Edited Volumes

- "How might we talk about Indigeneity and Catholicism in the Andes?" in [*Indigenous Religious Traditions in Five Minutes*](#), eds. Molly Bassett and Natalie Avalos; part of the *Religion in Five Minutes* series contracted with Equinox Publishers (forthcoming January 7th, 2022)
- "Satisfaction Not Guaranteed: COVID-19, Higher Ed, and the Politics of 'Experience'" in [*Fabricating Authenticity*](#), eds. Andie Alexander and Jason W.M. Ellsworth; part of the Working with Culture on the Edge series contracted with Equinox Publishers (forthcoming January 9th, 2022).

Articles

- "Sourcing Stereotypes: Constructing and Challenging Simplified Knowledge", a coauthored paper evaluating essentialism in nursing texts on cultural groups in

contradistinction to texts on religious groups with Dr. Steven Ramey (August 2018, *Culture and Religion*).
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14755610.2018.1505759>

Book Reviews

Print

- Harold D. Morales, *Latino and Muslim in America: Race, Religion, and the Making of a New Minority* (Oxford University Press, 2018), *Religion* (December 2019). <https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/EVSVJTYQRKDD9TJYSCJR/full?target=10.1080/0048721X.2019.1704584>
- Maria Del Socorro Castañeda-Liles, *Our Lady of Everyday Life: La Virgen de Guadalupe and the Catholic Imagination of Mexican Women in America* (Oxford University Press, 2018), *Religion* (June 2019). <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0048721X.2019.1624452>
- Kristin Bloomer, *Possessed by the Virgin: Hinduism, Roman Catholicism, and Marian Possession in South India* (Oxford University Press, 2018), *Religion* (August 2018). <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0048721X.2018.1505126>

Online

- Solimar Otero, *Archives of Conjure: Stories of the Dead in Afrolatinx Cultures* (Columbia University Press, 2020), *Reading Religion* (forthcoming).
- Brett Hendrickson, *The Healing Power of the Santuario de Chimayó* (New York University Press, 2018), *Religious Studies Review* (December 2019).
- Amy S. Adams and Vera Shevzov, *Framing Mary: The Mother of God in Modern, Revolutionary, and Post-Soviet Russian Culture* (Northern Illinois University Press, 2018), *Reading Religion* (September 2018). <http://readingreligion.org/books/framing-mary>
- Aaron T. Wolf, *The Spirit of Dialogue* (Island Press, 2017), *Reading Religion* (February 2018). <http://readingreligion.org/books/spirit-dialogue>

Scholarly Blog Posts

Religious Studies Department Blog (www.religion.ua.edu/blog):

- On the Worlds We Conceive Within Ourselves (Spring 2018)
- Marian Apparitions: religious ephemera and politics of classification (Spring 2018)
- The REL Journal Group: Health or Perceived Health Benefits (Fall 2017)
- Road Trip (Fall 2017)
- Structure and Agency in Starbucks (Spring 2017)
- Barometers in the Field (Spring 2017)

Social Theory & Religious Studies Blog (<https://blogs.religion.ua.edu/rel501/>):

- Recordings from My Closet (Fall 2017)
- Choking Down the Red Pill (Fall 2017)
- Viewing and Dividing The World Through Eclipse Glasses (Fall 2017)

More blog posts available at sierralynnlawson.com

PRESENTATIONS

Regional / International

- Panelist for Mclester panel on embodiment in Department of Religious Studies at UNC Chapel Hill, “Wet Nursing and Colonial Anxieties” (Chapel Hill, NC March 2021)
- Chair for “Religion in the Americas,” AAR SE (Online hosted by Florida State University, March 2021)
- Panelist for “Digital Humanities in the South,” Digitorium (Tuscaloosa, AL October 2020)
- Panelist for “NAASR Working Papers: Review Panel,” Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion (Athens, GA March 2020)
- Chair for “International Perspectives on the Field,” North American Association for the Study of Religion (San Diego, CA November 2019)
- Panelist for “Digital Humanities and Religious Studies: Building Archives of Ephemera with Omeka,” Digitorium hosted by the Alabama Digital Humanities Center and Summersell Center for the Study of the South (Tuscaloosa, AL October 2018)
- Panelist for “Digital Humanities and Religious Studies,” Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion (Atlanta, GA March 2018)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Appointments as a Graduate Teaching Assistant for large enrollment (150+ students) courses:

RELI246: Supernatural Encounters (Spring 2021)
Supervisor: Dr. Brenden Jamal Thornton

RELI121: Introduction to Religion and Culture (Fall 2020)
Supervisor: Dr. Todd Ramón-Ochoa

RELI246: Supernatural Encounters (Spring 2020)
Supervisor: Dr. Brenden Jamal Thornton

RELI103: Introduction to Hebrew Bible (Fall 2019)
Supervisor: Dr. David Lambert

Duties: Leading separate recitation sections, grading assignments, managing the online gradebook, planning and running review sessions, meeting one-on-one with students.

Other Teaching Appointments:

Summer Course Teaching Assistant for RELI283/ASIA 300: The Buddhist Tradition:
India, Nepal, Tibet (Summer II Session 2021)
Supervisor: Dr. Lauren Leve

Graduate Research Consultant for RELI067: Nature, Culture, and Self-Identity: Religion
in the Construction of Social Life (Fall 2020)
Supervisor: Dr. Lauren Leve

Graduate Research Consultant for RELI246: Supernatural Encounters (Maymester 2020)
Supervisor: Dr. Brenden Jamal Thornton

Duties: Directing students in terms of their final projects by helping them synthesize a thesis,
draft bibliographies and further consulting with them for each stage of development in project.

Guest Lectures:

“Stereotypes and Systems of Classification” in Muslim Bodies: Islam, Gender, Health
(September 2020, Dr. Candace Mixon at Occidental College)

The University of Alabama

Appointments as an online grader / instructor of record:

REL104: Religion and Pop Culture (Summer 2019)
-Section 910

REL100: Introduction to Religious Studies (Summer 2018)
-Section 910
-Section 920

Appointments as a Graduate Teaching Assistant for large enrollment (150+ students) courses:

REL100: Introduction to Religious Studies (Spring 2019)
Supervisor: Dr. Russell T. McCutcheon

REL100: Introduction to Religious Studies (Fall 2018)
Supervisor: Dr. K. Merinda Simmons

REL102: Religions of the World (Spring 2018)
Supervisor: Dr. Steven Ramey

REL100: Introduction to Religious Studies (Fall 2017)
Supervisor: Dr. Russell T. McCutcheon

Guest Lectures:

“Introducing the Study of Religion: Why Classification Matters” in Introductory course (January
2019, Professor Russell McCutcheon)

“Marian Apparitions and Mexican Identity” in Religions of the World course (March 2018, Professor Steven Ramey)

“Inventing the Buddha” in Religions of the World course (March 2018, Professor Steven Ramey)

“The Politics of Memorial Making and the Holocaust” in Religions of the World course (January 2018, Professor Steven Ramey)

FUNDING / AWARDS

Center for the Study of Religion and the City

- Research fellowship as coordinator of archive team, focus on community partnership and digital humanities toolkits, funded by Henry Luce foundation—provided additional funding through partnership with my collaborators via my project as a Andrew W. Mellon Humanities for the Public Good Fellow, see below. (Summer 2021)
- Research fellowship as member of archive team that helped document and reflect on relief and restoration work by community partners in response to COVID-19, funded by Henry Luce foundation. (Summer 2020)
- Travel grant for Religion | City and Philosophy and HBCUs conference “5 Years After the Baltimore Uprising” (Spring 2020—canceled due to COVID-19)

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Department of Religious Studies

- Peer Teaching Award recipient (Spring 2020)
- Dean’s Fellow (Fall 2019-Spring 2020)
- Weiss Urban Livability Fellow (Fall 2019-Spring 2020)

Humanities for the Public Good

- Humanities Professional Pathways fellow partnering with educators and the head curriculum coordinator at a local, public middle school in North Carolina to create lesson plans for teaching about indigenous religious traditions of Latin America, funded by Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. (Summer 2021)
 - Additional funding provided to curriculum coordinator / supervisor Sarah Montello through CSRC, see above.

The University of Alabama

Department of Religious Studies

- Graduate Teaching Assistantship (Fall 2017-Spring 2018)
- Amy Lynn Memorial Scholarship (Fall 2017)
- Outstanding Student in Study of Religion (Spring 2017)
- Sliverstein Scholar (Spring 2016)

LANGUAGES

Spanish: conversation, reading, and writing proficiency

Specializations: economic theory, literary theory, history of Iberian Peninsula

French: reading novice

PUBLIC AND DIGITAL HUMANITIES

Proficiencies:

Omeka

Wordpress

TAGs

NVivo

Orange

Python, Java, html

Tropy

Digital Projects

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Passion of Christ in Spanish Altarpieces Database built using Tropy: an index of artistic themes and portrayals of Mary's compassion at various points in the life of Christ using photographs of Spanish cathedrals provided by advisor Dr. Jes Boon.

The University of Alabama

AARtifacts: online collaboration among graduate students in Religious Studies department, curation and documentation of material culture from annual meetings of the American Academy of Religion.

International

Guest on podcasts episodes for the Religious Studies Project, produced by scholars of religion Chris Cotter and David Robertson and Contagion, Religion, and Cities podcast produced by the Center for the Study of Religion and the City.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Regional

Board Member: Director of Marketing and Publicity and Member at Large

•American Academy of Religion / Society of Biblical Literature, Southeastern Region (Fall 2021—present)

Editor

•Digitorium Crossroads hosted by H-Net: Humanities and Social Sciences Online (Fall 2020)

Co-Chair

- American Academy of Religion Southeastern Region, Religion in Americas Section (Spring 2020 – present)

Webmaster

- The Southeastern Commission for the Academic Study of Religion (Spring 2018 – Fall 2021)

The University of Alabama

Production Assistant

- Study Religion Podcast (Spring 2018 – Spring 2019)
Supervisor: Dr. Michael J. Altman

Editorial Assistant

- Jesus and Addiction to Origins: Towards an Anthropocentric Study of Religion* by Willi Braun (Published by Equinox Publishing, United States in Fall 2020)
Supervisor: Dr. Russell T. McCutcheon
- “Religion” in Theory and Practice: Demystifying the Field for Burgeoning Academics (Published by Equinox Publishing, United States in Fall 2020)
Supervisor: Dr. Russell T. McCutcheon
- Current Approaches to the Study of Religion (anthology contracted by Walter de Gruyter, Berlin)
Supervisor: Dr. Russell T. McCutcheon

Organizational Aid

- Digitorium
Supervisor: Dr. Tom Wilson, Associate Dean of Library and Digital Student Services (Fall 2018, Fall 2020)
- Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium
Supervisor: Dr. Russell T. McCutcheon, Department of Religious Studies (Spring 2018)
- Southeastern Evolutional Perspectives Conference
Supervisor: Dr. Christopher Lynn, Department of Anthropology (Spring 2017)

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

North American Association for the Study of Religion (Fall 2018 – present)
American Academy of Religion / Society for Biblical Literature, SE Region (Fall 2018 – present)
Association for Gravestone Studies (Fall 2015 – Fall 2017)

OTHER RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

Human Behavioral Ecology Research Group
Undergraduate researcher (Fall 2016-Spring 2017)
Supervisor: Dr. Christopher Lynn, Department of Anthropology at the University of Alabama

Head Start (Funded by Administration for Children and Families)
Undergraduate researcher (Fall 2015)
Supervisor: Dr. Jason DeCaro, Department of Anthropology at the University of Alabama

REFERENCES

Harold D. Morales
Associate Professor of Religious Studies
Director of the Center for the Study of Religion and the City
Morgan State University
(410) 205-9284
harold.morales@morgan.edu

Lauren Leve
Associate Professor of Religious Studies
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
(919)-929-3295
leve@email.unc.edu

Russell T. McCutcheon
Professor and Department Chair of Religious Studies
University of Alabama
(205) 348-8412
russell.mccutcheon@ua.edu