

MAX PERRY MUELLER

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Department of Classics and Religious Studies
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EDUCATION

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

Ph.D., June, 2015, The Committee on the Study of Religion (American religious history).

Dissertation: “Black, White, and Red: Race and the Making of the Mormon People, 1830-1880.”

Committee: David Hempton (co-chair), Laurel Thatcher Ulrich (co-chair), Marla Frederick, David Holland.

Comprehensive Exams specializations (with distinction): Native American Religious History and African-American Religious History

Secondary Doctoral Field, 2013, African and African American Studies.

Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, MA

M.T.S., 2008, Harvard Divinity School.

Carleton College, Northfield, MN

B.A., 2003, magna cum laude. Double major in Religion (Distinction in major) and French and Francophone Studies (Distinction in major).

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

2016-	The University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Department of Classics and Religious Studies, Associate Professor. Fellow, The Center for Great Plains Studies Affiliate with Nineteenth-Century Studies (Steering Committee Member) Courtesy Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology
2015-2016	Amherst College, Religion Department, Visiting Assistant Professor.
2014-2015	Mount Holyoke College, Religion Department, Visiting Lecturer.
Fall 2013	Carleton College, Religion Department, Visiting Lecturer.
2010-2013	Harvard University, Teaching Fellow and Tutor.
2003-2006	Episcopal School of Acadiana (Lafayette, LA), Upper School French Teacher and Head Cross-Country and Track Coach (boys and girls)

PUBLICATIONS

Book Projects

Race and the Making of the Mormon People. The University of North Carolina Press, 2017.

* Winner of John Whitmore Historical Association, Best Documentary Book (2018)

(Forthcoming, 2023) *Wakara's America: A Native and American History of the West*.

NOTE: *Wakara's America* is under contract with Basic Books. It will be edited by Brian Distelberg (formerly of Harvard University Press), who has edited and published award-winning works, including Martha Jones's *Vanguard*, Peniel Joseph's *The Sword and the Shield*, Walter Johnson's *The Broken Heart of America*, Erika Lee's *America for Americans*, and R. Marie Griffith's *Moral Combat*.

Editor of Peer-Reviewed Journal

(2015) Guest co-editor with Gina Colvin and author of Introduction: "Mormonism and Race: Beyond the Priesthood Ban," special issue of *Journal of Mormon History* 41 no. 3 (July 2015): 1- 10.

Peer-Reviewed Journal Essays

(2021) (Forthcoming). "Baptism for the Dead: The History of the Mormons' Most Audacious and Controversial Ritual." [*In Bloomsbury Religion in North America*](#).

(2019) "The 'Negro Problem,' the 'Mormon Problem,' and the Pursuit of 'Usefulness' in the White American Republic." *Church History* 88 no. 4 (December 2019): 978-1012.

*Won the Jan Shipps Best Article Award (2019), Mormon History Association

(2015) "History Lessons: Race and the LDS Church." *Journal of Mormon History* (special edition for 50th anniversary of the Mormon History Association) 41 no. 1 (January 2015): 139-155.

(2013) "Playing Jane: Re-presenting Black Mormon Memory through Reenacting the Black Mormon Past." *Journal of Africana Religions* 1 no. 4 (October 2013): 513-561.

* Won Award for Excellence (2014), Mormon History Association

(2011) "Changing Portraits of The Elect Lady: Emma Smith in the 'Secular,' RLDS and LDS Historiography, 1933-2005." *Journal of Mormon History* 37 no. 2 (Spring 2011): 183-214.

Chapters in Edited Volumes

(2022) (Forthcoming) "Wakara's Skull: Settler Religion and Settler Science and the Creation of the American West." *Journal of Religion and Society*.

(2019) "When Wakara Wrote Back: The Creation and Contestation of the 'Paper Indian' in Early Mormon Utah." In *Essays on American Indian & Mormon History*, edited by Jane Hafen and Brenden Rensink, 61-84. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press.

(2018) "Religion (and Race) Problems on the Way to the White House: An Analysis of Obama and Romney's 'Faith' Speeches." In *Religion in the Age of Obama*, edited by Anthony Pinn and Juan Floyd-Thomas, 19-35. New York: Bloomsbury Press.

(2016) "The Pageantry of Protest in Temple Square." In *Out of Obscurity: Mormonism After 1945*, edited by Patrick Mason and John Turner, 143-22. New York: Oxford University Press.

(2015) "Twice-told Tale: Telling Two Histories of Mormon-Black Relations during the 2012 Presidential Election." In *Mormonism and American Politics*, edited by Randall Balmer and Jana Reiss, 155-174. New York: Columbia University Press.

Book Reviews (selected)

(2022) Review of David Walker, *Railroading Religion: Mormons, Tourists, and the Corporate Spirit of the West*. In *Journal of Religion* (forthcoming).

(2022) Review of Seth Perry, *Bible Culture and Authority in the Early United States*. In *Church History* (forthcoming).

(2019) Review of Adam Jortner, *Blood from the Sky: Miracles and Politics in the Early American Republic*. In *The Journal of the Early American Republic* 29 no. 2 (Summer 2019): 359-362.

(2019) Review of Mary Campbell, *Charles Ellis Johnson, and the Erotic Mormon Image*. In *Material Religion* 15 no. 2 (February 2019): 258-259.

(2019) Review of Kathryn Gin Lum and Paul Harvey, *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Race in American History*. In *The Journal of American History* 106 no. 1 (June 2019): 142.

*Lead Review of the issue.

(2018) Review of W. Paul Reeve, *Religion of a Different Color: Race and the Mormon Struggle for Whiteness*. In *The Journal of Religion* 98 no. 1 (January 2018): 163-165.

(2017) Review of Matthew Garrett, *Making Lamanites: Mormons, Native Americans, and the Indian Student Placement Program, 1947-2000*. In *The Journal of American History* 104, no. 3 (December 2017): 76.

(2017) Review of Terryl L. Givens and Reild L. Neilson eds. *The Columbia Sourcebook of Mormons in the United States*. In *Mormon Studies Review* 4 (2017): 129-137.

Work in Progress (Books)

Republics of Race and Religion. Working with colleagues from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's School of Global Integrated Studies, I am developing a proposal for the Henry Luce Foundation Religion and International Affairs grant program for a multi-institutional, multi-national project to study the rise of ethno-nationalism in democracies across the globe.

PRIZES AND AWARDS

2020 Mormon History Association, Best Article Award, "The 'Negro Problem,' the 'Mormon Problem,' and the Pursuit of 'Usefulness' in the White American Republic." *Church History* (December 2019): 978-1012.

- 2018 John Whitmore Historical Association, Best Documentary Book for *Race and the Making of the Mormon People* (2017).
- 2015 Mormon History Association, Best Dissertation: "Black, White, and Red: Race and the Making of the Mormon People, 1830- 1880.
- 2014 Mormon History Association, Award for Excellence, Journal Article, "Playing Jane: Re-presenting Black Mormon Memory through Reenacting the Black Mormon Past." *Journal of Africana Religions* 1 no. 4 (October 2013): 513-561.

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND HONORS (selected)

- (Applied)** ACLS Faculty Fellowship (\$60,000)
- (Applied)** NEH Public Scholars Fellowship (\$60,000)
- (Applied)** Tanner Humanities Center, in-residence visiting research fellowship (U. of Utah) (\$60,000)
- 2021 Phillips Fund for Native American Research (American Philosophical Society) (\$3,500)
- 2021 Racial Equality & Interfaith Cooperation Award, Interfaith Youth Core (\$1,000)
- 2020-2022 Young Scholars in American Religion, IUPUI
- 2020-2021 Layman Seed Grant (UNL) (\$10,000)
- 2020 Maxwell Center for Religious Scholarship, Summer Fellow
- 2019 Wabash Center Early Career Fellowship (\$5,000)
- 2019 Charles Redd Center Faculty Grant (Summer Research) (\$2,250)
- 2018-2019 Wabash Center Early Career Workshop for Religion Faculty
- 2016-2017 Faculty ENHANCE Grant (\$5,000), CAS University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- 2015-2017 Robert E. Keiter 1957 Postdoctoral Fellow, Amherst College
- 2014 Charles Warren Center Term-Time Fellowship Grant, Harvard University
- 2008-2014 Graduate School of Arts and Science Fellowship, Harvard University
- 2011-2012 Mormon Studies Fellowship, Tanner Humanities Center, University of Utah
- 2012 Mormon Historical Association Juanita Brooks Award (best graduate paper)
- 2011 Charles Warren Center Summer Dissertation Research Grant, Harvard University
- 2011 Bok Center Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Harvard University
- 2011 Distinction in Doctoral Examinations, Harvard University
- 2010 John L. Loeb Fellowship, Harvard Divinity School
- 2010 Graduate Society Summer Pre-Dissertation Fellowship, Harvard University
- 2003 Fulbright Fellowship, teaching and study in France (declined to teach in Louisiana)
- 2003 Distinction on Religion Senior Thesis, Carleton College
- 2003 Distinction on French Senior Thesis, Carleton College
- 2002 Class of 1963 Fellowship for summer study abroad in France
- 1999 William Carleton Scholar (top 10 percent of entering class)

INVITED LECTURES/PRESENTATIONS (selected)

- 2022 "Wakara's Skull: Settler Religion and Settler Science and the Creation of the American West." "Religion, Race, and the Other," Creighton University, February 17-18, Omaha, NE.
- 2019 Plenary Speaker: Hearing Indigenous Voices: The Challenges and Rewards of Cultivating Relationships with Utah's Native American Communities. Oral History

Association, Salt Lake City, October 19.

- 2018 Book Talk: *Race and the Making of the Mormon People*. Claremont Graduate University, October 20.
- 2018 Book Talk: *Race and the Making of the Mormon People*. The University of Virginia (Mormon Studies Program), February 22.
- 2017 Book Talk: *Race and the Making of the Mormon People*. The Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard Divinity School, November 16.
- 2017 Book Talk: *Race and the Making of the Mormon People*. The Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, Brigham Young University, September 27.
- 2016 “That Old Time (Race) and Religion: How the Trump/Pence Ticket Wants to Make America White and Christian Again,” The University of Nebraska-Lincoln, October 27.
- 2016 “A Singular, Communal Voice: Sojourner Truth in the Northampton
“Community, 1843-1846,” Center for Humanistic Inquiry, Amherst College, May 4.
- 2014 “Joseph F. Smith’s Republican Vision: Centralized Government, Centralized Church,” Beyond the Culture Wars, John C. Danforth Center on Religion & Politics, Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis, MO March 27-29.
- 2013 “Contracting Covenants: Changes to Mormon Universality, 1830-1844,” Beyond the Mormon Moment: Directions for Mormon Studies in The New Century,” Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, CA, March 15-16.
- 2012 “Liberal Mormonism and the 2012 Election,” Religion and the Election, Does it Matter?, Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, MA, October 10.
- 2012 “The Book of Mormon, ‘Samuel the Lamanite,’ Jane Manning James and the ‘White Universal,’” Tanner Humanities Center, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT, March 26.
- 2012 “Jane’s Faith,” Men and Women of Faith Lecture Series, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, UT, March 8.
- 2012 ““Twice-told Tale: Telling Two Histories of Mormon-Black Relations during the 2012 Presidential Election,” Mormonism and American Politics Conference, Columbia University, New York, NY, February 3-4.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (selected)

Panels Organized

- 2020 Roundtable: “Missions as Migration in the American West,” Western History Association Conference, Albuquerque, NM, October 14-17. (Postponed due to COVID)
- 2016 “Religion, Postcolonial Pedagogies and #BlackLivesMatter on Campus,” American

Academy of Religion Conference, San Antonio, TX, November 19-22.

2014 “Religious Communitarianism, Utopianism, and the ‘Race Problem’ in Nineteenth-century North America,” American Academy of Religion Conference, San Diego, CA, November 22-25.

2012 “In the Aftermath of Contact with ‘Others’: The Reformulation of Religious and Racial Identity in the American West,” Organization of American Historians Conference, Milwaukee, WI, April 21.

2011 “Out of Place: African American Religious Lives in Catholic, Mormon, and Orthodox Spaces,” American Academy of Religion Conference, San Francisco, CA, November 19-21.

Papers Presented (selected)

2021 Roundtable: “Religion and Democracy,” Organization of American Historians (moved to online due to COVID), April 15-18.

2020 “‘We Would Never Sell Our Children!’: The Limits of Decolonizing Slavery and Missions Histories in the American Southwest.” *American Society of Church History*, New York, NY, January 3-6.

2018 “Wakara’s Horse: Toward a Post-Human History of Early Mormon-Indian Relations,” American Academy of Religion Conference, Denver, November 17- 20.

2016 “Debating Indian Partition while Amherst Rises Up against Lord Jeffs,” American Academy of Religion Conference, San Antonio, TX, November 19-22.

2014 “Can a Mormon Have Tattoos? ‘I’m a Mormon Campaign’ & the Politics of Online Identity,” American Historical Association, Washington, January 2-5.

2013 “Contested Freedoms, Contested Identities: Temple Square during the Civil Rights Era,” Mormon History Association Conference, Layton, UT, June 6-9.

2012 “Joseph F. Smith’s Republican Vision: Centralized Government, Centralized Church,” Conference on Faith and History, Gordon College, Wenham, MA, October 4-6.

2012 “The Other Mormon Presidential Candidate: Yeah Samaké and 21st Century Mormonism,” American Academy of Religion Conference, Chicago, IL, November 17-20.

2012 “William McCary’s Racial Ventriloquism during the Mormon Exodus,” Organization of American Historians Conference, Milwaukee, WI, April 19-21.

2011 “Reenacting and Reclaiming the Black *and* Mormon Past,” American Academy of Religion Conference, San Francisco, CA, November 19-21.

2011 “Joseph F. Smith and ‘Black Jane’: Challenges to the Formalization of Mormon

Racial Identity,” American Studies Association Conference, Baltimore, MD, October 20-22.

- 2011 “Schools for the Saints: Utah Civil Religion in Public Education in a Framework of ‘Expanding Borders of Sacred Communities,’” Ethics, Religion and Civil Discourse Conference, Fresno State University, Fresno, CA, October 13-14.
- 2010 “Changing Portraits of *Elect Lady*: Emma Smith in the ‘Secular,’ RLDS and LDS Historiography,” Mormon History Association Conference, Independence, MO, May 24-26.

TEACHING

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (ongoing)

Assistant Professor

How to be Happy (in College)

Jesus: A Global History

Graduate Seminar: History of the American West

“Sons of the Forest: Native American Religious Autobiographies”

“Written by Herself: African-American Religious Autobiographies”

“To Be Religious *and Modern*: Religion and Modernity in the U.S., France, and India”

“Religious Diversity of America”

“Religion and Politics in America”

African-American Religious Experience

(Honors): “Nebraska 151: The First Century and a Half of the Global University on the Great Plains”

Supervise Honors thesis (undergraduate) in Religious Studies, Global Studies, English, and Environmental Studies

Serve on master’s and PhD committees in English, History, and Ethnic Studies

Supervise UCARE students annually (2019-2022)

Amherst College

Visiting Assistant Professor

“Getting Religion: Religion, Media and Culture” (Spring 2016)

“To be Religious *and Modern*: Religion and Modernity in the U.S., France, and India” (Fall 2015)

Mount Holyoke College

Visiting Lecturer

“Getting Religion: Religion, Media and Culture” (Spring 2015)

“Religion and Politics in the United States” (Spring 2015)

“Religious Movements in America” (Fall 2014)

“African-American Religious Experience” (Fall 2014)

Carleton College

Visiting Lecturer

“Religion in American Culture” (Fall 2013)

“American Holy Lands” (Fall 2013)

Harvard University

Tutor (Instructor of record)

“Religions under the Big Sky: The Religious History of the American West” (Fall 2011)

Teaching Fellow

“Ethics, Race and Punishment” (Spring 2013)

“Religion, Law and American Politics” (Fall 2012)

“The World’s Religions in Multicultural America: Case Studies in Religious Pluralism”
(Spring 2011)

“Race, Gender, Class and Ethnicity in the Early Films of Spike Lee” (Fall 2011)

“Religion and American Society: Global Traditions in a Changing Culture” (Spring 2010)

SERVICE TO UNIVERSITY

2021- Steering Committee Member, Nineteenth-Century Studies

2021- Faculty Mentor for Center for Great Plains Studies Series, “Voices of the Pains”
(launching 2022)

2019- “Spiritual Well-being” Committee.

2020 Faculty advisory committee, “Climate Change & Culture in the Great Plains,”
symposium, Center for Great Plains Studies, April 9-10, Lincoln, NE.

2019- Member, Committee on Committees (College of Arts and Sciences)

2017- Religious Studies Advisor, Department of Classics and Religious Studies, The
University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

2017- Faculty advisor and organizer of “Night of Listening,” The University of Nebraska-
Lincoln, February 22, 2017.

SERVICE TO PROFESSION

2022- Consultant, Traveling Exhibit, “Religion and the American West,” the New-
York Historical Society.

2020 National Endowment for the Humanities, Review of Proposals of Humanities
Collections and References Resources for Indigenous Studies

2020- Dissertation and Graduate Paper Prize Committee, Mormon History Association

2018- Board member, *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*

2017-2022 Council Member, American Society of Church History

2011-2017 Co-Founder, (formerly Associate Editor), *Religion & Politics*, the online journal of the John C. Danforth Center on Religion & Politics, Washington University in St. Louis

PUBLIC HISTORY & JOURNALISM (selected)

- 2022 “Under the Banner of Heaven Repeats the Book’s Fundamental Mistake,” *Slate*, May 19, 2022..
- 2018 “Mitt Romney’s Mormon Mission,” *Slate*, February 20, 2018.
- 2017 “‘Not My Choir,’” *Slate*, January 19, 2017.
- 2016 “Why Mormons Don’t Like Trump,” *Slate*, August 4, 2016.
- 2016 “Why Global Churches Struggles Over LGBT Rights,” *Religion & Politics*, February 23.
- 2015 “Mormonism and the Problem of Jon Krakauer,” *Religion & Politics*, July 14.
- 2013 “Speaking Truth to Power in Love: An Interview with Jonathan Walton,” *Religion & Politics*, April 4.
- 2013 “2012: The Mormon Moment of Diversity,” *Religion & Politics*, January 9.
- 2012 “What Can Jeremiah Wright and Joseph Smith Teach Us about the American Presidency?,” *Religion & Politics*, October 29.
- 2012 “Mia Love: The Most Interesting Mormon Speaking at the RNC,” *Religion & Politics*, August 28.
- 2012 “A Cringe-Worthy Depiction of Africa,” *Harvard Divinity School Bulletin*, Summer/Autumn.
- 2012 “Mormonism’s Occasionally Unrequited Love for Israel,” *The New Republic*, July 30.
- 2012 “A Spirit of Persecution: What the Hill Cumorah Page tells us about Mormonism’s past—and its present,” *Slate*, July 19.
- 2012 “Romney among the Evangelicals,” *The Atlantic*, May 11.
- 2012 “Hemings and Jefferson Together Forever?: Troubling Cases of Mormon ‘Proxy Sealing,’” *Slate*, March 29.

REFeree OF MANUSCRIPTS AND ARTICLES FOR:

Oxford University Press
University of Utah Press
Routledge
Material Religion

Journal of American Academy of Religion
Church History
Journal of Religion
Journal of Book of Mormon Studies
Journal of Arizona History
Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon of Mormon Thought
Religion Compass
Sage
Journal of the Early American Republic

TEACHING FIELDS

American Religious History
Native American History
African American History
Religion and Politics
History of the American West
Religion and Global Studies
Race and Ethnicity in America

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Academy of Religion
American Society of Church History
Native American and Indigenous Studies Association
Organization of American Historians
Oral History Association
Western History Association
Mormon History Association

REFERENCES

Sarah Barringer Gordon
Arlin M. Adams Professor of Constitutional Law and Professor of History
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Paul Harvey
Professor of History
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs
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Laurel Thatcher Ulrich
(Former) 300th Anniversary University Professor
Harvard University
ulrich@fas.harvard.edu
(617) 496-9548

David F. Holland
John A. Bartlett Professor of New England Church History
Harvard Divinity School
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TEACHING REFERENCES

Patrice McMahon
Director, Honors Program and Professor of Political Science
University of Nebraska-Lincoln,
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Michael Penn
Professor of Religion
Stanford University
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u (650) 723-3322