

Douglas Edward Cowan

Professor of Religious Studies and Social Development Studies

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Current Academic Position:

(2009–) Professor of Religious Studies and Social Development Studies
Renison University College, University of Waterloo

Past Academic Positions:

(2007–2009) Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Social Development Studies,
Renison University College, University of Waterloo
(2006–2007) Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and Social Development Studies,
Renison College, University of Waterloo (tenured)
(2005–2006) Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Sociology, University of Missouri-
Kansas City
(2000–2005) Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and Sociology, University of Missouri-
Kansas City
(1998-2000) Sessional Lecturer, Department of Religious Studies, University of Calgary
(1997-1998) Sessional Instructor, In-Community Program for Ordination, United Church of
Canada, Calgary, Alberta

Doctoral Education:

(1999) Doctor of Philosophy in Religious Studies, The University of Calgary,
Specialization in the History of Religious Movements and Institutions

Dissertation:

“Bearing False Witness: Propaganda, Reality-Maintenance, and Christian Anticult Apologetics”

Other Education and Professional Experience:

(1989) Master of Divinity (Honours), St. Andrew’s Theological College, Saskatoon,
Saskatchewan
(1985) Bachelor of Arts (with Distinction), University of Victoria, Victoria, British
Columbia
(1989) Ordained to the Ministry of Word, Sacrament, and Pastoral Care, The United
Church of Canada

(1989-1994) Minister of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care, Cardston and Magrath Pastoral
Charge, Alberta
(1994-2000) Minister of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care, Pleasant Heights United Church,
Calgary, Alberta

Research and Scholarship

Publications: Books

- (Forthcoming) *The Christian Countercult Movement*. Cambridge Elements Series. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- (2022) *The Forbidden Body: Sex, Horror, and the Religious Imagination*. New York: New York University Press.
- (2019) *Magic, Monsters, and Make-Believe Heroes: How Myth and Religion Shape Fantasy Culture*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- (2018) *America's Dark Theologian: The Religious Imagination of Stephen King*. New York: New York University Press.
- (2015) *Cults and New Religions: A Brief History*, with David G. Bromley. 2nd ed. Blackwell's Brief History Series. Oxford: Wiley/Blackwell.
- (2010) *Sacred Space: The Quest for Transcendence in Science Fiction Film and Television*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press.
- (2008) *Sacred Terror: Religion and Horror on the Silver Screen*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press.
- (2008) *Cults and New Religions: A Brief History*, with David G. Bromley. Blackwell's Brief History Series. London: Blackwell.
- Translated into Czech as *Sekty a nová náboženství*, trans. Jan Auský, Daniel Hosák, Zuzana Marie Kosticová, and Jan Sušer (Prague: Grada Publishing, 2013).
 - Translated into Japanese as *Cults and New Religions: A Brief History*, trans. Kirisuto Shimbun (Tokyo: Tuttle-Mori, 2010).
 - Translated into German as *Neureligionen und Ihre Kulte*, trans. Claus-Jürgen Thornton (Berlin: Verlag der Weltreligionen, 2010).
- (2005) *Cyberhenge: Modern Pagans on the Internet*. New York and London: Routledge.
- (2004) *Religion Online: Finding Faith on the Internet*, edited with Lorne L. Dawson. New York and London: Routledge.
- (2004) *Teaching the Sociology of Religion: Syllabi and Instructional Materials*, edited with Lutz Kaelber. Washington, DC: American Sociological Association.
- (2003) *The Remnant Spirit: Conservative Reform in Mainline Protestantism*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- (2003) *Bearing False Witness? An Introduction to the Christian Countercult*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- (2000) *Religion on the Internet: Research Prospects and Promises*, edited with Jeffrey K. Hadden. London and Amsterdam: Elsevier Science/JAI Press.
- (1991) *A Naked Entent Unto God: A Source/Commentary on The Cloud of Unknowing*. Wakefield, NH: Longwood Academic Press.

Publications: Books in Progress

America's Reluctant Prophet: The Religious Imagination of Philip K. Dick. (In preparation.)

Publications: Refereed Articles

(2016) "Clearly Material: Objects, Meaning, and the Ongoing Construction of New Religious

- Reality.” *Acta Comparanda—Subsidia* 4.
- (2015) “The Crack in the World: New Thoughts on Religion and Horror.” *Religious Studies Review* 41, no. 4: 133-39.
- (2013) “‘And Take Your Invisible Friends with You’: Atheist Comedy and Religious Conversation (May Contain Offensive Language).” *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* 42, no. 3: 32-36.
- (2009) “Seeing the Saviour in the Stars: Religion, Conformity, and *The Day the Earth Stood Still*.” *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 21, no. 1; available at [http://www.usask.ca/relst/jrpc/art21\(1\)-EarthStoodStill.html](http://www.usask.ca/relst/jrpc/art21(1)-EarthStoodStill.html).
- (2008) “The First International Symposium on Cultic Studies,” with Rebecca Moore. *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religion*, 12, no. 2: 121–30.
- (2007) “‘Intellects vast and cool and unsympathetic’: Science, Religion, and *The War of the Worlds*,” Part 1, *Journal of Religion and Film*, 11, no. 1; available at <http://www.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol11no1/CowanWarWorlds.htm>.
- (2007) “‘Intellects vast and cool and unsympathetic’: Science, Religion, and *The War of the Worlds*,” Part 2, *Journal of Religion and Film*, 11, no. 2; available at http://www.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol11no1/CowanWarWorlds_PartII.htm.
- (2007) “‘Do I look like someone who cares what God thinks?’ Rethinking the Relationship Between Religion and Cinema Horror.” *GOLEM: The Journal of Religion and Monsters* 2; available at www.golemjournal.org/cowan%20pinhead.pdf.
- (2005) “Online U-Topia: Cyberspace and the Mythology of Placelessness.” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 44, no. 3: 257–63.
- (2005) “Episode 712: *South Park*, Ridicule, and the Cultural Construction of Religious Rivalry.” *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 10 (Summer); available at www.usask.ca/relst/jrpc/art-10southpark.html.
- (2004) “God, Guns, and Grist for the Media’s Mill: Constructing the Narratives of New Religious Movements and Violence,” with Jeffrey K. Hadden. *Nova Religio: The Journal of New and Emergent Religions* 8, no. 2: 64–82.
- (2003) “Confronting the Failed Failure: Y2K and Evangelical Eschatology in Light of the Passed Millennium.” *Nova Religio: The Journal of New and Emergent Religions* 7, no. 2: 71–85.
- (2003) “Exits and Migrations: Foregrounding the Christian Counter-cult.” *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 17, no. 3: 339–54.
- (2002) “Explaining Eggs in Terms of Bacon: A Response to *Secular Theories of Religion*.” *The Council of Societies for the Study of Religion Bulletin* 31, no. 2: 30–31.
- (2000) “No Harmony: Some Notes on Evangelical Response to Buddhism.” *Religious Studies and Theology* 19, no. 2: 17–52.
- (2000) “‘What’s In It For Us?’: Reflections on Membership, Commitment, and the Current Malaise.” *Touchstone: Heritage and Theology in a New Age* 18, no. 2: 7–21.
- (1998) “Too Narrow and Too Close: Some Problems with Participant Observation in the Study of New Religious Movements.” *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 4: 391–406.
- (1996) “Jack’s Buddhism: A Dharma Walk with Jack Kerouac.” *Journal of Buddhist and Tibetan Studies* 2: 38–91.
- (1990) “The Parson and the Landlord: Religion and Capitalism in *The Communist Manifesto* and Karl Marx’s ‘Contribution to *The Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right*’.” *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 19, no. 4: 458–69.

Publications: Chapters and Essays

- (2022) “Religion and Spirituality.” In *The Routledge Companion to Star Trek*. Edited by Sean Guynes, Sabrina Mittermeier, and Stefan Rabitsch, 340-47. New York: Routledge.
- (2021) “Re-Iterations: On Tellings, Variants, and Why Monsters Always Come Back.” In *Religion, Culture, and the Monstrous: Of Gods and Monsters!* Edited by Natasha L. Mikles and Joseph P. Laycock, 17-28. Lanham, MD: Lexington Press.
- (2021) “Consider the Yattering: The Infernal Order and the Religious Imagination in Real Time.” In *Theology and Horror*. Edited by Brandon R. Grafius and John W. Morehead, 3-20. Lanham, MD: Lexington/Fortress Academic.
- (2020) “Reading Religion in the Dead of Night.” In *Scared Sacred: Idolatry, Religion and Worship in the Horror Film*. Edited by Rebecca Booth, Valeska Griffiths, and Erin Thompson, 7-15. House of Leaves Publishing.
- (2019) “‘Crap, we needed a god...’: Religion, Videogames, and the Digital Social.” In *The Digital Social: Religion and Belief*. Edited by Alpha Possamai-Inesedy and Alan Nixon, 93-109. Berlin: DeGrutyer.
- (2018). “Exposing Gnosticism.” In *The Gnostic World*, ed. Garry Trompf, Jay Johnston, and Gunner Mikkelsen, 673-80. New York and London: Routledge.
- (2017) “Cyberspace and Religion in America.” In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia, Religion*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press; DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780199340378.013.480
- (2016) “The Christian Countercult Movement.” In *The Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements*, ed. James R. Lewis and Inga B. Tøllefsen, 143-51. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- (2016) “New Religious Movements.” In *Religions in the Modern World: Traditions and Transformations*, ed. Linda Woodhead, Christopher Partridge, and Hiroko Kawanami, 399-430. London and New York: Routledge.
- (2015) “Psychics, Skeptics, and Popular Culture.” In *The Brill Handbook on Spiritualism and Channeling*, ed. Cathy Gutierrez, 444-63. Leiden: Brill.
- (2015) “The Occult and Modern Horror Fiction.” In *The Occult World*, ed. Christopher Partridge, 469-77. London: Routledge.
- (2015) “Opposition to the Occult.” In *The Occult World*, ed. Christopher Partridge, 744-51. London: Routledge.
- (2015) “The Occult on the Internet.” In *The Occult World*, ed. Christopher Partridge, 531-38. London: Routledge.
- (2014) “Scientology: History, Beliefs, and Practices.” Forthcoming in *Handbook of Religion: A Christian Engagement with Traditions, Teachings, and Practices*, ed. Terry Muck, Harold A. Netland, and Gerald R. McDermott, 608-614. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- (2014) “Scientology: Christian Contacts.” Forthcoming in *Handbook of Religion: A Christian Engagement with Traditions, Teachings, and Practices*, ed. Terry C. Muck, Harold A. Netland, and Gerald R. McDermott, 615-19. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- (2014) “Beyond Brainwashing: Conversion to New Religious Movements.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, ed. Lewis Rambo and Charles Farhadian, 687-705. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

- (2012). "The Christian Countercult." In *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, ed. Hans-Josef Klauck, Bernard McGinn et al., Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter; <https://doi.org/10.1515/ebr.christiancountercultmovement>.
- (2012) "New Religions and the Evolving Internet." In *Cambridge Companion to New Religious Movements*, ed. Olav Hammer and Mikael Rothstein, 29-43. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- (2012) "Religion in Science Fiction Film and Television." In *Understanding Religion and Popular Culture*, ed. Terry Ray Clark and Dan W. Clanton, Jr., 41-55. New York: Routledge.
- (2012) "Religion in Cinema Horror." In *Understanding Religion and Popular Culture*, ed. Terry Ray Clark and Dan W. Clanton, Jr., 56-71. New York: Routledge.
- (2012) "Dealing a New Religion: Material Culture, Divination, and Hyper-religious Innovation." In *The Brill Handbook of Hyper-Real Religion*, ed. Adam Possamai, 247-65. Leiden: Brill.
- (2011) "New Religious Movements: From the Extraordinary to Everyday Life." In *World Religions: Western Traditions*, ed. Doris Jakobsh, 238-63 Toronto: Nelson Publishing.
- (2011) "Dreams Wrapped in Nightmares: Millennium, Apocalypse, and American Popular Culture." In *The Oxford Handbook on Millennialism*, ed. Catherine Wessinger. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- (2011) "'A Sometimes Mysterious Place': Heaven's Gate and the Manufactured Crisis of the Internet." In *Heaven's Gate*, ed. George D. Chryssides and James R. Lewis, 139-54. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing.
- (2011) "The Internet." In *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, ed. Michael Strausberg and Steven Engler, 459-73. London and New York: Routledge.
- (2010) "Religion and the Internet." In *Encyclopedia of Religion in America*, ed. Charles Lippy and Peter Williams, v.N, pp-pp. New York: CQ Press.
- (2010) "The Internet and Religion." In *Religions of the World: A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Beliefs and Practices*, ed. J. Gordon Melton and Martin Baumann, 1485-89. 2nd ed. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.
- (2009) "Horror and the Demonic." In *The Routledge Companion to Religion and Film*, edited by John Lyden, 403–19. New York and London: Routledge.
- (2009) "New Religious Movements." In *Religions in the World: Traditions and Transformations*, 2nd ed., edited by Linda Woodhead, Hiroko Kawanami, and Christopher Partridge, 379–406. London and New York: Routledge.
- (2009). "Researching Scientology: Perceptions, Premises, Promises, and Problematics." In *Scientology*, ed. James R. Lewis, 53-79. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- (2008) "Fearing Planes, Trains, and Automobiles: Sociophobics and the Disincentive to Religious Diversity." In *Religion and Diversity in Canada*, edited by Peter Beyer and Lori G. Beaman, 67–84. Leiden and New York: Brill Academic Publishers.
- (2008) "Pulp Evangelism and Narrative Structure in Evangelical Fiction." In *Border Crossings: Explorations of an Interdisciplinary Historian*. Edited by Ulrich van der Heyden and Andreas Feldtkeller, 31-41. Munich: Franz Steiner Verlag.
- (2007) "New Religious Movements and Emotion." In *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, edited by John Corrigan, 125–41. Oxford and New York: Oxford University

- Press.
- (2007) "Religion on the Internet." In *The Sage Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, edited by James A. Beckford and Jay Demerath, 357–76. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- (2007) "The Invention of a Counter-Tradition: The Case of the North American Anticult Movement," with David G. Bromley, 96–117. In *The Invention of Sacred Traditions*, edited by James R. Lewis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- (2007) "Teaching New Religious Movements on the World Wide Web." In *Teaching New Religious Movements*, edited by David G. Bromley, 291–308. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- (2006) "The Evangelical Christian Countercult." In *New and Alternative Religions in the United States*, edited by Eugene V. Gallagher and W. Michael Ashcraft, v.1, 143–64. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- (2006) "The Church of Scientology," with David G. Bromley. In *New and Alternative Religions in the United States*, edited by Eugene V. Gallagher and W. Michael Ashcraft, v.5, 169–96. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- (2006) "Wicca, Witchcraft, and Modern Paganism." In *New and Alternative Religions in the United States*, edited by Eugene V. Gallagher and W. Michael Ashcraft, v.3, 176–99. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- (2006) "The Internet and American Religious Life." In *Faith in America*, edited by Charles H. Lippy, v.3, 119–40. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- (2005) "Constructing the New Religious Threat: Anticult and Countercult Movements." In *New Religious Movements: A Documentary Reader*, edited by Dereck Daschke and W. Michael Ashcraft, 317–30. New York: New York University Press.
- (2005) "Book Excerpt: 'The Mists of Cyberhenge: Mapping the Modern Pagan Internet'." *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies* 7, no. 1: 59–97.
- (2004) "Contested Spaces: Movement, Countermovement, and E-Space Propaganda." In *Religion Online: Finding Faith on the Internet*, edited by Lorne L. Dawson and Douglas E. Cowan, 255–71. New York: Routledge.
- (2004) "Introduction," with Lorne L. Dawson. In *Religion Online: Finding Faith on the Internet*, edited by Lorne L. Dawson and Douglas E. Cowan, 1–16. New York: Routledge.
- (2004) "Virtually Religious: New Religious Movements and the World Wide Web," with Jeffrey K. Hadden. In *The Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements*, edited by James R. Lewis, 119–40. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- (2004) "Online Rites." In *Encyclopedia of Religious Rites, Rituals, and Festivals*, edited by Frank A. Salamone, 300–302. London: Routledge/Berkshire.
- (2004) "Religion on the Internet: Some Reflections on Research and Pedagogy." In *Teaching the Sociology of Religion: Syllabi and Instructional Materials*, edited by Lutz Kaelber and Douglas E. Cowan, 177–82. Washington, DC: American Sociological Association.
- (2003) "Theologizing Race: The Construction of 'Christian Identity'." In *Religion, Myth, and the Creation of Race and Ethnicity*, edited by Craig Prentiss, 124–39. New York: New York University Press.
- (2002) "Martial Arts." In *Dictionary of Contemporary Religion in the Western World*, edited by Christopher Partridge and Douglas Groothuis, 90–91. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press.
- (2000) "Religion, Rhetoric, and Scholarship: Managing Vested Interest in Cyberspace." In *Religion on the Internet: Research Prospects and Promises*, edited by Jeffrey K. Hadden

- and Douglas E. Cowan, 101–124. London and Amsterdam: Elsevier Science/JAI Press.
- (2000) “The Promised Land or Electronic Chaos? Toward Understanding Religion on the Internet,” with Jeffrey K. Hadden. In *Religion on the Internet: Research Prospects and Promises*, edited by Jeffrey K. Hadden and Douglas E. Cowan, 3–21. London and Amsterdam: Elsevier Science/JAI Press.

Publications: Chapters and Articles Accepted for Publication and in Process

- “Nothing is What It Seems, No One is Who They Are: Religion and the Problem of Cosmic Indifference in the Work of Junji Ito.” Forthcoming in *Religion and Horror Comics*. Edited by John W. Morehead and Brandon R. Grafius. Claremont, CA: Claremont Press.
- “Out of This World: Religious Aspects of Science Fiction.” Forthcoming in *Religion and Outer Space*. Edited by Eric Mazur and Sarah McFarland Taylor. New York: Routledge.
- “Monster Theory: An Overview.” Forthcoming in *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Monsters*. Edited by Brandon R. Grafius and John W. Morehead. New York: Oxford University Press.
- “Cinema and Religion: The Horror Genre.” Forthcoming in *Understanding Religion and Popular Culture*. Edited by Elizabeth Coody, Dan Clanton, and Terry Clark. New York: Routledge.
- “The Dangerous Cult Exercise: Popular Culture and the Ongoing Construction of New Religious Threats.” Forthcoming in *‘Cult’ Rhetoric in Contemporary Society: Deconstructing the Study of New Religious Movements*. Edited by Edd Graham-Hyde and Aled Thomas. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- “Why Stephen King Matters: Popular Culture and the Religious Imagination.” Forthcoming in *Theorizing Stephen King*. Edited by Michael Blouin. Amsterdam University Press.

Editorial: Journal Issues Edited

- (2009) *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 13, no. 2 (October).
- (2009) *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 12, no. 3 (February).
- (2008) *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 11, no. 4 (May).
- (2007) *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 11, no. 1 (August).
- (2006) *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 10, no. 2 (October).

Grants

- (2009) SSSHRCC Research Grant: “Contested Visions: The Social Construction of New Religious Movements”; \$74,000 awarded.
- (2007) SSHRCC Institutional Grant: “Religion, Sociophobics, and Popular Cinema Horror: A Preliminary Reconnaissance”; \$4732 awarded; resulted in publication of *Sacred Terror: Religion and Horror on the Silver Screen*.
- (2006) UW/SSHRCC Travel Grant: American Academy of Religion

Academic Conference Participation and Invited Presentations

Invited Presentations

(2019)

- Keynote address on *America's Dark Theologian: The Religious Imagination of Stephen King*. Gods and Monsters Conference (April 4-6); Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas.

(2016)

- “On Committing the Sin of Genre, or, Reading Stephen King and Calling It Work.” Public lecture, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta.

(2015)

- “Lo(o)se Canons: Rethinking the Need for Canons At All.” Study of Religion as an Analytical Discipline, American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, GA.

(2012)

- “Sacred Space: The Quest for Transcendence in Science Fiction Film and Television”; Department of Religion, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC.
- “Sacred Terror: Religion and Horror on the Silver Screen”; public lecture, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC.

(2008)

- “Magic Today.” Roundtable presentation at the First International Conference of the Societas Magica, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario.

(2007)

- “Fighting for (E-) Space: New Religions, the Anticult, and the Internet.” Paper presented at the International Symposium on Cultic Studies, sponsored by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Shenzhen, China.
- “Dreams Wrapped in Nightmares: Millennium, Apocalypse, and American Popular Culture.” Plenary address delivered at the Millennialism Conference 2007, Liverpool-Hope University, Liverpool, England.
- “More than an Inch Deep and a Mile Wide: Theorising Religion and Popular Culture.” Paper delivered at the Eastern Regional meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Waterloo, Ontario.

(2004)

- “The Algorithmic Oracle: Online Divination in (Surprisingly Enough) Cross-Cultural Perspective.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Kansas City, MO.

(2003)

- “Remembering the Work of Jeffrey K. Hadden.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Norfolk, VA.
- “The Legacy of Soc 257.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, Atlanta, GA.
- “Bearing False Witness: Countercult Apologetics or Christian Hate Literature?” Keynote address at the Communiversity Annual Conference (Pacific Lutheran University/University of Puget Sound), Tacoma, WA.

(2002)

- “Cult Apology: A Modest (Topological) Proposal.” Paper delivered at annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Salt Lake City, UT.

- “Cyberhenge: Creating Neopagan Community on the Web.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, Chicago, IL.
- “Apologia and Academia: Prospects for a Rapprochement?” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Ministries to New Religions, Louisville, KY.

(2001)

- “From Parchment to Pixels: The Christian Countercult on the Internet.” Paper delivered at the international conference of CESNUR/INFORM, London, England.

Presentations

(2006)

- ““Do I look like someone who cares what God thinks?”: Rethinking the Relationship Between Religion and Cinema Horror.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Washington, DC.
- “Material Culture and the Sociology of Religion: Speaking the Language of Objects.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, Montréal, Que.
- “Defining Pagan Studies.” Roundtable presentation at the annual meeting of the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion, Toronto, Ont.

(2005)

- “Dating Modern Paganism: Material Culture and Calendrical Subversion.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Philadelphia, PA.
- “Writing as an Academic versus Writing as a Practitioner.” Paper delivered at the annual Conference on Contemporary Pagan Studies, Philadelphia, PA.
- “Count the Candles and Divide by Two: Methodological Considerations in the Quantification of Modern Paganism.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Rochester, NY.

(2004)

- “Researching Scientology: Premises, Promises, and Problematics.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, TX.
- “Cyberhenge: By way of an executive summary.” Paper delivered at the annual Conference on Contemporary Pagan Studies, San Antonio, TX.
- ““Do I Look Like Someone Who Cares What God Thinks?”: Religion and the Moral Discourse of B-Grade Horror Cinema.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, San Francisco, CA.
- “I know it when I see it: Propaganda and the Moral Economy of Pornography.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, San Francisco, CA.
- “Researching Scientology: Premises, Promises, and Problematics.” Paper delivered at the international conference of CESNUR/INFORM, Waco, TX.

(2002)

- “Reflections on Louisville: The Christian Countercult in Conversation.” Paper delivered at the international conference of CESNUR/INFORM, Salt Lake City, UT.

(2000)

- “Y2K and Religion: Looking Backward at the Great Non-Event.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Houston, TX.

Awards

- (2021) Nominated for Molson Prize
 (2021) Nominated for Killam Award
 (2019) Awarded University of Waterloo Faculty of Arts Award for Excellence in Research
 (2019) Nominated for Grawmeyer Award in Religion (*America's Dark Theologian*).
 (2016) Awarded Centre for Extended Learning Online Course Design Award, University of Waterloo.
 (2005) Awarded Interdisciplinary PhD Teaching Award, University of Missouri-Kansas City.
 (2004) Awarded Undergraduate Teaching Award, University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Teaching

Renison University College, University of Waterloo

(2022-2023)

- RS/SDS 242 Religious Diversity and Social Development
- RS/SDS 420 Critical Encounters with Human Nature
- On sabbatical Winter 2023

(2021-2022)

- RS/SDS 242 Religious Diversity and Social Development
- RS/SDS 420 Critical Encounters with Human Nature
- RS/SDS 242 Critical Encounters with Human Nature
- RS/Fine 377 Religion in Science Fiction Film and Television

(2020-2021)

- RS/SDS 420 Critical Encounters with Human Nature
- RS/SDS 242 Religious Diversity and Social Development
- RS/SDS 420 Critical Encounters with Human Nature

(2019-2020)

- RS/SDS 420 Critical Encounters with Human Nature
- RS 260 How to Study Religion
- RS/SDS 420 Critical Encounters with Human Nature

(2018-2019)

- RS/SDS 242 Religious Diversity and Social Development
- RS/SDS 420 Critical Encounters with Human Nature
- RS 280/SOC 262 Cults and New Religions
- RS/SDS 420 Critical Encounters with Human Nature

(2017-2018)

- RS 170 Religion and Popular Culture

- RS/SDS 242 Religious Diversity and Social Development
 - RS 270/FA 252 Religion in Popular Film (Online)
 - RS/SDS 420 Critical Encounters with Human Nature
 - RS 703 Advanced Sociology of Religion
- (2016-2017)
- RS 170 Religion and Popular Culture
 - RS 260 How to Study Religion
 - RS 270/FA 252 Religion in Popular Film (Online)
 - RS 271/FA 253 Religion and Comedy
 - SDS 420R Critical Encounters with Human Nature
 - RS 703 Advanced Sociology of Religion
- (2015-2016)
- RS 273 Religion and the Media
 - RS 282 Christian Fundamentalism
- (2014-2015)
- RS 370 Atheism, Skepticism, and Free Thought
- (2013-2014)
- RS 270/FA 252 Religion in Popular Film
 - RS 273 Religion and the Media
 - RS 271/FA 253 Religion and Science Fiction Film
 - RS 270/FA 253 Religion in Popular Film (Online)
- (2012-2013)
- RS 270/FA 252 Religion in Popular Film
 - RS 260 The Study of Religion
 - RS 370 Atheism, Skepticism, and Free Thought
 - RS 499 RS Honours Seminar
 - RS 730 Advanced Sociology of Religion
- (2011-2012)
- On sabbatical.
- (2010-2011)
- RS 270/FA 252 Religion in Popular Film
 - RS 260 The Study of Religion
- (2009-2010)
- RS 270/FA 252 Religion in Popular Film
 - RS 703 Advanced Readings in the Study of Religion
 - RS 120 Introduction to Religion
 - RS 499 Religious Studies Honours Seminar
 - RS 280 Cults and New Religious Movements
- (2008-2009)
- RS 270/FA 252 Religion in Popular Film
 - RS 280 Cults and New Religious Movements
 - RS 271/FA 253 Thematic Approaches to Religion and Film
 - RS 730 Advanced Sociology of Religion
 - RS 260 The Study of Religion

(2007–2008)

- RS 100C Religious Quests
- RS 200 The Study of Religion
- RS 222 Fundamentalism 1: Christian
- RS 266/FA 252 Religion in Popular Film
- RS 267/FA 253 Thematic Approaches to Religion and Film
- RS 398 Cults and New Religions: Reading Course
- RS 703 Advanced Readings in the Study of Religion

(2006–2007)

- RS 200 The Study of Religion
- RS 222 Fundamentalism 1: Christian
- RS 266/FA 252 Film and the Quest for Meaning 1
- RS 267/FA 253 Thematic Approaches to Religion and Film
- RS 730/SOC 730 Advanced Sociology of Religion

(Spring 2006)

- RS 267/FA 253 Film and the Quest for Meaning 2

(Winter 2006)

- RS 100C Religious Quests
- RS 267/FA 253 Film and the Quest for Meaning 2

University of Missouri-Kansas City (* indicates core PhD course)

(Fall 2005)

- Soc 372 The Sociology of Religion: An Introduction
- RS 510 Religions of the World*

(2004-2005)

- Soc 300RN Religion and Politics: A Sociology of the Sacred and the Profane
- RS 586 Methodological Approaches to the Study of Religion*
- Soc 361 Social Theory
- RS 493/593 Sex and Religion: The Erotic and the Anti-Erotic

(2003-2004)

- Soc 300RN Cults, Sects, and New Religious Movements
- RS 400/500 Writing Faith: Sacred Biography and Autobiography
- Soc 300 Religion and Violence
- RS 680 Cults, Sects, and New Religious Movements (PhD Colloquium)*

(2002-2003)

- Soc 300RN World Religions: A Sociological Perspective
- RS 400/500 Sex and Religion: The Erotic and the Anti-Erotic
- Soc 300T Introduction to the Sociology of Religion
- RS 584 Sacred Narratives and Texts*

(2001-2002)

- Soc 300RO Cults, Sects, and New Religious Movements
- RS 510 Religious Traditions of the World*

- Soc 303CP Religion in America
 - RS 400/500 Religious Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective
- (2000-2001)
- Soc 101 Sociology: An Introduction
 - RS 400/500 Religion and the Social Sciences
 - Soc 300T Introduction to the Sociology of Religion
 - RS 584 Sacred Narratives and Texts*

Undergraduate Supervision and Advising

Undergraduate Honours Thesis Supervision

Amberlee Bolton (2008-2009): completed.

Paul van Straten (2009-2010): completed.

Graduate Student Supervision and Advising

Joint WLU-UW PhD Program in Religious Studies

As supervisor:

- David S. Feltmate: graduated 2011.
- Denis Bekkering: graduated 2015.
- Peter Schuurman: graduated 2016.
- Kathleen Riddell: in process, ABD.
- Chris Miller: graduated 2022.
- Zachary Doiron: in process.
- Lisa Duggan: left program.
- John G. D. Holton: left program.

As committee member:

- Sarah Best: in process, ABD
- Kathemo Mukucha: in process
- Elijah Smith: in process, ABD.
- Brooke Brassard: graduated 2018.
- Scott Wall: graduated 2020.
- Doug Wilson: left program.
- Mandy Furney: left program.
- Margie Patrick: graduated 2011.
- Adam Stewart: graduated 2012.
- Siobhan Chandler: graduated 2011.
- Jon Callegher: graduated 2013.

UMKC Interdisciplinary PhD in Religious Studies

Paul B. Thomas, PhD (committee member; completed 2006)
 Deborah Engelbrecht, PhD (committee member; completed 2007)
 Glenn Young, (committee member; completed 2010)

Professional Service

Departmental: Renison University College and the University of Waterloo

(2022) Research Committee, Renison University College
 (2021-) Director, Joint WLU/UW PhD Program in Religious Studies
 (2021-2022) Tenure and Promotion Committee, Renison University College
 (2021) President's Search Committee, Renison University College
 (2020-2021) Associate Chair, Culture and Language Studies, Renison University College
 (2020-) Associate Chair, Graduate Studies, Department of Religious Studies, University of Waterloo
 (2018) Acting Chair, Department of Culture and Language Studies, Renison University College
 (2016-2018) Renison Faculty Rep to UW Senate
 (2014-2015) Academic Dean, Renison University College
 (2013) Principal Search Committee, Renison University College
 (2010-2014) Principal's Advisory Committee, Renison University College
 (2010) OGS Review Committee, University of Waterloo
 (2010-2011) College Council, Renison University College
 (2009-2011) Director, Joint Laurier-Waterloo PhD Program in Religious Studies
 (2009-2011) College Representative, Arts Faculty Council Executive, University of Waterloo
 (2009-2015) Chair, Humanities Division, Renison University College
 (2009) Acting Director, East Asian Studies Program, Renison University College
 (2009) Faculty Mentor, East Asian Studies Program, Renison University College
 (2008-2010) Curriculum Committee, Renison University College
 (2007-2016) Chaplaincy Committee, Renison University College
 (2006-2009) Graduate Officer, Department of Religious Studies, Waterloo-Laurier Joint PhD Program
 (2006-2009) Graduate Affairs Committee, University of Waterloo
 (2006-2009) Academic Review Committee, Renison University College

Departmental: University of Missouri-Kansas City

(2003-2005) Graduate Coordinator, Department of Sociology, University of Missouri-Kansas City
 (2003) Undergraduate Advisor, Department of Sociology, University of Missouri-Kansas City

University: University of Missouri-Kansas City

(2005) University Awards Review Committee
 (2004-2005) Preparing Future Faculty Steering Committee

- (2003–2005) Graduate Coordinators Committee
- (2002–2005) Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Executive Committee

Professional

- (2011-2013) Program Committee, American Academy of Religion
- (2009-2012) Editor, New Religious Movements section, *Religion Compass*, Blackwell Publishing
- (2007–2008) Steering Committee, Contemporary Paganism Group, American Academy of Religion
- (2005–2011) Chair, New Religious Movements Group, American Academy of Religion
- (2005–) Editorial Board, *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies*
- (2004–2010) Co-General Editor, *Nova Religio: The Journal of New and Emergent Religions*
- (2005–) Executive Board, Association for the Academic Study of New Religions
- (2005–2012) Editorial Board, *Religion Compass*, Blackwell Publishing
- (2005–2007) Steering Committee, Consultation on Contemporary Paganism, American Academy of Religion
- (2003–2006) Executive Council, Association for the Sociology of Religion
- (2003–2007) Editor-in-Chief, The New Religious Movements Homepage Project

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