

SARAH F. PORTER

Harvard University | Committee on the Study of Religion
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EDUCATION

- Ph.D., Harvard University** expected 2022
Religion — New Testament and Early Christianity
Secondary Field: Archaeology
William R. Tyler Fellowship, Dumbarton Oaks
Dissertation: *Early Christian Deathscapes in Fourth-Century Antioch*
Committee: Karen L. King; Laura S. Nasrallah (Yale); Mark D. Jordan
- A.M., Harvard University** 2020
New Testament and Early Christianity
- M.Div., Vanderbilt University Divinity School** 2013
Early Christianity; Religion, Gender, and Sexuality
- B.A., Southwestern University** 2010
English, Religion (*summa cum laude*)

PUBLICATIONS (*designates peer-review)

Articles

- “A Church and Its Charms: Space, Affect, and Affiliation in Fourth-Century Antioch.” *Studies in Late Antiquity*. Accepted; forthcoming Winter 2021. *
- “Imagining Otherwise: *The Lives of Objects* and Other Expert Practitioners.” *Religious Studies Review* 47.3 (2021): 303–5.
- “Incompatible Sites: The Land of Israel and the Ambulant Body in the Museum of the Bible.” *Ancient Jew Review* ([Online](#)). 30 January 2018.

Chapters

- With Laura Nasrallah. “Things.” In *Religion and Context: Graeco-Roman Religious Practices in their Socio-Cultural Milieu*. Ed. Jan N. Bremmer, Jorg Rüpke, and Georgia Petridou. Neue Pauly Supplements. Stuttgart: Metzler. With the editor; forthcoming.
- “Teaching the Body: Spatial Strategies at the Museum of the Bible.” In *The Museum of the Bible: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Jill Hicks-Keeton and Cavan Concannon, pp. 121–42. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books / Fortress Academic, 2019.

Reference Entries

- With Jennifer A. Quigley. “Archaeology, Greco-Roman.” In *Oxford Bibliographies in Biblical Studies* (Online). Ed. Christopher Matthews. Accepted; forthcoming. *
- “Sardis.” *Bible Odyssey* ([Online](#)). Society of Biblical Literature. 2020. *
- “Ephesus.” *Bible Odyssey* ([Online](#)). Society of Biblical Literature. 2019. *

Book Reviews

Cavan Concannon, *Assembling Early Christianity: Trade, Networks, and the Letters of Dionysios of Corinth* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2017). *Ancient Jew Review* ([Online](#)). 10 December 2018.

Teresa Morgan, *Roman Faith and Christian Faith: Pistis and Fides in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches* (Oxford University Press, 2015). *Ancient Jew Review* ([Online](#)). 15 March 2017.

PRESENTATIONS

Conference Papers

“Riddled with Desire: Affect, Sticky Objects, and Material Culture in Early Christian Studies,” Archaeology of Religion in the Roman World Unit, Society of Biblical Literature (San Antonio, TX), November 2021.

“Bonds of Love: Conjuring Orthodoxy in John Chrysostom’s Homily in Praise of Meletios,” Tracing Christians in Global Late Antiquity Conference, June 2021.

“Temporality, Wonder, and Belonging: Mosaic Temporality in the Church at Qausiyyeh, Antioch,” Space, Place, and Lived Experience in Antiquity Section, Society of Biblical Literature (Boston, MA), November 2020.

“Feeling Forward: The Future of Late Antiquity,” Religious World of Late Antiquity and Religious Competition in Late Antiquity Units, Society of Biblical Literature (San Antonio, TX), November 2020. *Presentation cancelled due to COVID-19.*

“Bonds of Love: Conjuring Orthodoxy in John Chrysostom’s Homily in Praise of Meletios,” North American Patristics Society (Chicago, IL), May 2020. *Recipient of the Graduate Student Paper Prize. Presentation cancelled due to COVID-19.*

“Fear and Loathing of the Nekros: Affective Economies around an Antiochene Corpse,” Religious Competition in Late Antiquity Section, Society of Biblical Literature (San Diego, CA), November 2019.

“Incompatible Sites: The Ambulant Body and the Land of Israel in the Museum of the Bible,” Association of Jewish Studies (Washington, D.C.), December 2017.

“Holiness Machines: Holy Oil and the Senses in Early Christian Textual and Material Culture,” Religious Experience in Antiquity, Society of Biblical Literature (Boston, MA), November 2017.

“‘Rich in Stratagems’: A Tactile History of Holy Oil in the Early Christian Tradition,” Ways of Knowing Graduate Conference in Religion, Harvard University (Cambridge, MA), October 2016.

“A Three-Dimensional Analysis of Early Christian Responses to Statuary: Presences, Powers, and Actor-Network Theory,” Boston University Graduate Student Conference on Religious Studies (Boston, MA), October 2016.

“Reading Affect in a Lamp: A Case Study in Queer Archaeology,” Ways of Knowing Graduate Conference in Religion at Harvard University (Cambridge, MA), October 2015.

“Bound in Affection: The Confusions of Piety and Eroticism in Mary of Bethany and Thecla of Iconium,” Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion, Regional Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (Nashville, TN), March 2015.

“Unstable Bodies: Divine Polymorphy and the Imago Dei in the Christian Tradition,” Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion, Regional Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (Atlanta, GA), March 2014.

“Clothe Yourselves: Prophetic Performativity and Baptism in Col. 3: 5-14,” Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion, Regional Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (Greenville, SC), March 2013.

Invited Talks

“Nekropoleis and Divine Encounter,” Sites of Divine Encounter, Hamilton College (Clinton, NY via Zoom), 23 April 2021.

“Gender and Authority for Paul and Beyond,” Introduction to the New Testament, Harvard Divinity School (Cambridge, MA), 6 April 2021.

“Early Christian Deathscapes of Fourth-Century Antioch,” Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection (Washington, DC), 30 April 2020.

“How to Win Friends and Influence Demons in Late Antiquity,” Teaching Day, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection (Washington, DC), 27 March 2020. *Cancelled due to COVID-19.*

“Christianizing Things: How Stuff Changed in the Wake of Constantine,” Christianity after the New Testament, University of Mary Washington (Fredericksburg, VA), 11 March 2020.

“The Museum of the Bible: Ethics, Space, and Collecting,” Archaeology and the World of the New Testament, Drew University Theological School (Madison, NJ), 12 February 2020.

“On Looking,” Teaching with Material Sources Conference, Early Mediterranean World and Religions, Yale University (New Haven, CT), 5 October 2019.

“Masculinity and Sexuality in the New Testament,” Introduction to the New Testament, Harvard Divinity School (Cambridge, MA), 19 April 2019.

“Early Christian Deathscapes,” Authoritative Texts and Their Reception Spring Seminar, “Rhetorical Practices and Analysis,” Norwegian Institute at Athens (Athens, Greece), 18-21 March 2019.

“Fear and Loathing of the Nekros,” Dynamics of Religion and Religious Space in the Ancient Mediterranean Workshop, Harvard University (Cambridge, MA), 28 February 2019.

“Paul and the Early Christian Community at Corinth,” The American Excavations at Kenchreai (Isthmia, Greece), 4 June 2016.

Panels Organized / Chaired

Presider and Organizer, “Early Career Interdisciplinary Collaboration,” Student Advisory Board, Society of Biblical Literature (San Diego, CA), November 2019.

Presider, “Violence and Victimhood,” New Testament and Early Christian Studies Day, Yale University (New Haven, CT), April 2019.

Presider and Organizer, “Aposiopesis: Incomplete Sentences, Unfinished Thoughts, and Ideas that Sputtered,” Student Advisory Board, Society of Biblical Literature (Denver, CO), November 2018.

Presider, “Hegemonic Anxieties,” Violence and Representations of Violence in Antiquity Section, Society of Biblical Literature (Denver, CO), November 2018.

Presider, “Precarity and Violence in Antiquity,” Violence and Representations of Violence in Antiquity Section, Society of Biblical Literature (Boston, MA), November 2017.

Presider, “Spaces and Structures, Public and Private,” Ways of Knowing Graduate Conference in Religion at Harvard University (Cambridge, MA), October 2017.

Organizer, “How Religion Matters: Critical Perspectives on Material Culture,” Ways of Knowing Graduate Conference in Religion at Harvard University (Cambridge, MA), October 2016.

Presider, “Women, Gender, and Religion: Reading against the Grain: Sexual Scripts in Sacred Texts,” Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion, Regional Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (Nashville, TN), March 2015.

Presider, “Undergraduate Student Research I: Religion Engaging Space,” Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion, Regional Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (Greenville, SC), March 2013.

CONFERENCES ORGANIZED

Co-Organizer, Tracing Christians in Global Late Antiquity Conference, sponsored by the University of Iowa, June 2021.

Co-Organizer, Politics, Pedagogy, and the Profession Syllabus Workshop (Cambridge, MA), funded by Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning and the North American Patristics Society, November 2017.

Co-Organizer, Harvard-Yale-Brown Ethical Pedagogy and Ancient History Workshop (Cambridge, MA), October 2017.

TEACHING

Harvard College | *undergraduate students*

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| “Stories from the End of the World,” Dr. Giovanni Bazzana | Fall 2020 |
| “Sex and Ethical Reasoning,” Dr. Mark Jordan | Spring 2019 |

Harvard Divinity School | *graduate students*

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| “Introduction to the New Testament,” Dr. Karen King | Spring 2019, Spring 2021 |
| “Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion,” Dr. David Holland | Fall 2018 |
| “The Letters of Paul,” Dr. Laura Nasrallah | Spring 2018 |
| “Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion,” Dr. David Lamberth | Fall 2017 |

Drew Theological School | *graduate students*

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| “Archaeology and the World of the New Testament,” Dr. Jennifer Quigley | Spring 2020 |
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Vanderbilt Program for Talented Youth | *secondary students*

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| “Visual Scriptures: Jewish and Christian Art and Identity” | February 2014 |
| “Parody, Satire, and Wit” | October 2013 |
| “Religious Intolerance in the U.S.” | July 2013 |
| “Religion and Politics in the U.S.” | June 2013 |
| “American Utopias” | June 2013 |

Vanderbilt University | *undergraduate students*

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| “Religions in China,” Dr. Robert Campany | Fall 2013 |
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Belmont University | *undergraduate students*

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| “Ethics in World Religions,” Dr. Sally Holt | Spring 2013 |
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| “Christian Ethics,” Dr. Sally Holt | Fall 2012 |
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Pedagogical Training

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| Wabash Teaching Seminar for Doctoral Students | March 2019 |
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| Bok Center Teaching Certificate, Harvard University | |
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| Course Design: From Transparency to Transfer | Spring 2019 |
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| Teaching General Education | January 2019 |
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| Teaching for Equity | Fall 2017 |
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| Teaching Fellow Training | August 2017 |
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FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, & AWARDS

Fellowships and Grants

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| Harvard University Dissertation Completion Fellowship | 2021 – 2022 |
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| William R. Tyler Fellowship, Dumbarton Oaks | 2019 – 2021 |
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| Dissertation Research Grant, North American Patristics Society | 2020 |
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| Vanderbilt Divinity School Imagination Grant for Independent Research | 2013 |
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| Brandon Honor Award, Vanderbilt Divinity School | 2011 – 2013 |
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| Dean’s Scholar Tuition Award, Vanderbilt Divinity School | 2010 – 2011 |
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Distinctions and Prizes

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| Sacred Writes Public Scholarship Training Cohort | 2020 – 2021 |
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| Harvard University Certificate of Distinction in Teaching | 2020 |
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| Graduate Student Paper Prize, North American Patristics Society | 2020 |
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| Elliott F. Shepard Prize in Church History, Vanderbilt Divinity School | 2014 |
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| J.D. Owen Prize in New Testament, Vanderbilt Divinity School | 2014 |
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| Carpenter Certificate in Religion, Gender, and Sexuality | 2013 |
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| Vanderbilt Divinity School Dean’s List | 2010 – 2013 |
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| Human Rights Campaign Summer Institute for Religious and Theological Study | July 2012 |
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| Phi Beta Kappa | 2010 |
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| Spellman Award, Department of Religion, Southwestern University | 2010 |
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| Alpha Chi | 2009 |
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| Southwestern University Dean’s List | 2007 – 2010 |
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FIELD & MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

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|---|-------------|
| Seals Fellow, Dr. Jonathan Shea, Dumbarton Oaks Museum | 2019 – 2020 |
| Numismatics Assistant, Dr. Carmen Arnold-Biucchi, Harvard Art Museums | 2019 |
| Registrar, Dr. Nicholas Cahill, The Archaeological Exploration at Sardis | 2017, 2018 |
| Program Assistant, Dr. Joseph Rife, The American Excavations at Kenchreai | 2013, 2016 |

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

“Episode 200: Early Christian Deathscapes with Sarah F. Porter,” *The Classical Ideas Podcast*, hosted by Gregory Soden, April 1, 2021. [Link](#).

“As bad as the 1776 Commission’s report is the ‘heroes’ garden that goes with it,” *Religion News Service*, January 20, 2021. [Link](#).

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| Workshop Leader, OUT in Front | 2012 – 2014 |
| Vanderbilt University Office of LGBTQI Life event for undergraduates in the Southeast. | |
| “Witness: Queering the Good Book and the Power of Queer Testimony.” | February 2014 |
| “Responding to Homophobic ‘Christian Values.’” | February 2013 |
| “Spirituality and LGBTQI Life.” | February 2012 |

Lead Organizer, Scarritt Bennett Center, Nashville, TN

“Draw the Circle Wide: Honest Conversations on and with LGBTQ Folk in Religious Communities.” April 2012

RESEARCH & EDITORIAL EXPERIENCE

| | |
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| Editorial Assistant, <i>Harvard Theological Review</i> | 2020 – present |
| Editorial Fellow, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library | 2020 |
| Freelance Copyeditor and Proofreader | 2014 – present |
| Research Assistant, Dr. Laura Nasrallah, Harvard University | 2015 – 2019 |
| Research Assistant, Dr. Joseph Rife, The American Excavations at Kenchreai | 2013 – 2014 |
| Research Assistant, Dr. Robin Jensen, Vanderbilt University | 2013 – 2014 |
| Research Assistant, Dr. David Michelson, Vanderbilt University | 2012 – 2013 |

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

Society of Biblical Literature

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| Steering Committee, Society of Biblical Literature | |
| Space, Place, and Lived Experience in Antiquity Unit | 2020 – 2022 |
| Student Advisory Board, Society of Biblical Literature | |
| Chair | 2019 – 2020 |
| Vice Chair | 2018 – 2019 |
| Program Manager | 2017 – 2018 |

Steering Committee, Southeastern Committee for the Study of Religion (AAR/SBL)
Women, Gender, and Religion Section 2014 – 2015

North American Patristics Society

Student Member-at-Large, Board of Directors 2020 – 2021

Harvard University

Graduate Representative, Faculty Search Committee, New Testament / Early Christianity 2021

Vanderbilt University Divinity School

Co-Chair, Office of Women's Concerns, Vanderbilt Divinity School 2011 – 2013

Co-Chair, GABLE: Office of LGBTQ Concerns, Vanderbilt Divinity School 2011 – 2013

Chair, Antoinette Brown Lecture Committee, Vanderbilt Divinity School 2011 – 2013

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church, Nashville, TN
Program Coordinator, Collegiate Ministries 2013 – 2015
• Event planning for up to 700 undergraduates; social media outreach; administrative work.

Scarritt Bennett Center, Nashville, TN
Intern, Education and Programming 2011 – 2012
• Facilitated community dialogues on race; organized a conference on sexuality.

Southwestern University, Georgetown, TX
Resident Assistant 2008 – 2010
Student Life Assistant 2007 – 2010

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCIES

Ancient: Greek, Latin
Modern: English, French (reading), German (reading)

AFFILIATIONS

American Academy of Religion
North American Patristics Society
Society of Biblical Literature