

SARAH F. PORTER

Harvard University | Committee on the Study of Religion
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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Harvard University

Religion — New Testament and Early Christianity

expected 2022

Secondary Field: Archaeology

William R. Tyler Fellowship, Dumbarton Oaks

Dissertation: *Early Christian Deathscape 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 Qausīyeh, 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

“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

“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

“Archaeology and the World of the New Testament,” Dr. Jennifer Quigley Spring 2020

Vanderbilt Program for Talented Youth | secondary students

“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

“Religions in China,” Dr. Robert Campany

Fall 2013

Belmont University | undergraduate students

“Ethics in World Religions,” Dr. Sally Holt

Spring 2013

“Christian Ethics,” Dr. Sally Holt

Fall 2012

Pedagogical Training

Wabash Teaching Seminar for Doctoral Students

March 2019

Bok Center Teaching Certificate, Harvard University

Course Design: From Transparency to Transfer

Spring 2019

Teaching General Education

January 2019

Teaching for Equity

Fall 2017

Teaching Fellow Training

August 2017

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, & AWARDS

Fellowships and Grants

Harvard University Dissertation Completion Fellowship

2021 – 2022

William R. Tyler Fellowship, Dumbarton Oaks

2019 – 2021

Dissertation Research Grant, North American Patristics Society

2020

Vanderbilt Divinity School Imagination Grant for Independent Research

2013

Brandon Honor Award, Vanderbilt Divinity School

2011 – 2013

Dean’s Scholar Tuition Award, Vanderbilt Divinity School

2010 – 2011

Distinctions and Prizes

Sacred Writes Public Scholarship Training Cohort

2020 – 2021

Harvard University Certificate of Distinction in Teaching

2020

Graduate Student Paper Prize, North American Patristics Society

2020

Elliott F. Shepard Prize in Church History, Vanderbilt Divinity School

2014

J.D. Owen Prize in New Testament, Vanderbilt Divinity School

2014

Carpenter Certificate in Religion, Gender, and Sexuality

2013

Vanderbilt Divinity School Dean’s List

2010 – 2013

Human Rights Campaign Summer Institute for Religious and Theological Study

July 2012

Phi Beta Kappa

2010

Spellman Award, Department of Religion, Southwestern University

2010

Alpha Chi

2009

Southwestern University Dean’s List

2007 – 2010

FIELD & MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

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](#).

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

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

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