

# SORAAAD 2018

## Race and the Analytical Study of Religion

The Study of Religion as Analytical Discipline Workshop at the  
University of Regina.

November 16, 2018

Media, Film, and Journalism Studies Department and

Religious Studies Department

University of Denver

Denver, Colorado

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## PREMISE

# Race and the Analytical Study of Religion

Friday, November 16, 2018, University of Denver, Denver, CO

“(The ideas) of Racecraft govern what goes with what and whom (sumptuary codes), how different people must deal with each other (rituals of deference and dominance), where human kinship begins and ends (blood), and how Americans look at themselves and each other (the gaze). These ideas do not exist purely in the mind, or only in the mind. They are social facts - like six o'clock, both an idea and a reality. Because Racecraft exists this way, its constant remaking constantly retreats from view. This, “now you see it, now you don't” quality is what makes racism - the practice of a double standard based on ancestry - possible.”

Karen E. Fields and Barbara J Fields, “A Tour of Racecraft,” *Racecraft*

“Evidence of the changing and inconsistent composition of racialized groups, and definitions of racial difference in the course of modern history, suggests that “race” must be recognized as at least as unstable, at least as contingent, as subject to the same historical contexts that have continually reproduced and reconstituted class, gender, and other social formations. Evidence for the inextricability of racial formation from other historical processes emerges in the frequent observation that the “new racism” of the late nineteenth century accompanied rising antisemitism, including pogroms, and the Dreyfus Affair, and enhanced class stratification in Europe. Yet how do we comprehend the relationship between race and other historical processes? “

Laura Tabili, “Race is a Relationship and Not a Thing.” *Journal of Social History*

In its 8th annual workshop, SORAAAD asks, How do we design research and collect data on race, the processes of racialization, and religion? How do we trace their intersections with disability, gender, orientation, and class while also challenging the idea that race or phenotypic preoccupation is a universal mode of human aggregation? How do we rejoin attention to these issues along with different scales of social and political aggregation and power? To address these issues and more, we are pleased to announce that Rudy Busto, Kelly J. Baker, Karen E. Fields, Chloe Martinez, Jolyon B. Thomas, Jens Kreinath, Angela C. Sutton, Monique Moultrie, and Sarah Dees will share their work and insights with regard to Race and: History, white supremacy, legal classifications, Racecraft, Japanese culture, visual culture, the Slave Societies Database, Womanist Ethnography, and Indigenous religion.

SORAAAD asserts that all discussions of race, racialization, and religion necessarily factor into larger social scientific discussions regarding principles of representation and responsible uses of evidence. At the same time we recognize that research on race and religion needs to integrate other facets of human existence and modes of aggregation, such as politics,

economics, culture, and organizations, and these at varied scales. Multiple disciplines are working now to decolonize themselves, and yet such efforts exist often alongside—and sometimes overlap with—others to defend empire. How do we construct studies of race that are not trapped in narratives of white supremacy or the impacts of colonialism retrojected over time? And how do we construct studies of race and religion that capture these categories as discursive sites and constructive processes?

SORAAAD is happy to host an alliance of scholars to discuss the state of different initiatives to correct public and scholarly understandings of race. Drawing on research from across the humanities and social sciences, and noting also new advances in the digital humanities that provide unprecedented access to primary sources, we ask together: How do we revisit the data of human history?

- Ipsita Chatterjea, David Walker, and Jamel Velji for the SORAAAD workshop committee.

Sponsored by:

SORAAAD at the University of Regina

Religious Studies Department, University of Regina

Media, Film, and Journalism Studies Department, University of Denver

Religious Studies Department, University of Denver

## SUGGESTED READINGS

Crenshaw, Kimberle, "[Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex, A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and AntiRacist Politics](#)," (University of Chicago Legal Forum, 1989), 139-67.

Fields, Karen E. and Barbara J., "A Tour of Racecraft" in *Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life*. (London; New York: Verso, 2012), 25-74.

Tabili, Laura. "Race is a Relationship Not a Thing" *Journal of Social History*, 37:1, Special Issue Autumn, 2003, 125-130 and 284.

## FURTHER READINGS

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Hill Collins, Patricia. *Black Feminist Thought : Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990.

## SCHEDULE

- 8:45-9:15 **Workshop Check in**, Pre workshop Refreshments and informal introductions.  
9:15 Introduction and Opening Statement  
9:25 Introductions across the room - Ipsita Chatterjea & David Walker - moderators.

### **Race and the Analytical Study of Religion — Sean McCloud, Session Chair**

- 9:45 **Rudy Busto** "Race, Religion and the Chains of Human History"  
10:25 **Kelly Baker** "Foregrounding White Supremacists in Religious Studies"

11:00 -11:15 Break

### **Race, Religion, Categories, and Classification — David Walker, Session Chair**

- 11:15 **Karen Fields (via Skype)** "Race as America's Totemic Constructions"  
11:50 **Chloe Martinez** "Making Race, Making Space: Bhagat Singh Thind Beyond the Supreme Court Case"

12:25- 1:30 Lunch

### **Race, Religion, Reframing the Data of Racialization — Tim Jensen, Session Chair**

- 1:30 **Jolyon Thomas** ""Japanese People Don't See Race": Linguistic Tics, Ambient Norms, and the Constructed Qualities of Race and Religion in Japan"  
2:10 **Jens Kreinath** "Visual Culture and the Formation of the Anthropological Category of Race: Implications and Consequences for the Study of Religion and Culture, with a Particular Focus on Islam and the Middle East"  
2:50 **Angela Sutton** (via Skype) "Religious Documents in the Slave Societies Digital Archive (SSDA)"

3:25- 3:40 Break

### **Race and Methodology — Ipsita Chatterjea, Session Chair**

- 3:40 **Sarah Dees** "Presence, Absence, Refusal: Race and Indigenous Religions in the Academy "  
4:20 **Monique Moultrie** "Womanist Ethnography, Race, Sexuality and Media"

4:55-5:20 **Conversation Across Sessions — David Walker, Moderator**

5:20 Announcements and clean up.

SORAAAD Reception - 6:00- 8:00 TBD

## SORAAAD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

SORAAAD was created as a means to further the reach of the best qualitative analytical work in the study of religion. Our objective has been to function as both a workshop and a medium of scholarly exchange respecting critical, social, and behavioral theories, methodology, conceptualization, and research design. Having underwritten SORAAAD's since 2014, as of 2017, The University of Regina Department of Religious Studies is now the official institutional center for SORAAAD's activities. This alliance has been established to sustain the innovation of research design, proliferate techniques, and further the immediate integration of findings into the training of graduate students and undergraduate curriculum. Please note Appendix I. SORAAAD's Participation and Non-Discrimination Statement and that we have adopted the [ALA's conduct policy](#) as our own.

### Our Sponsors

We want to thank our hosts the Departments of Media, Film, and Journalism Studies and Religious Studies at the University of Denver, most especially Lynn Schofield Clark. We also wish to thank the University of Regina, Religious Studies Department, for its ongoing support and the support of William Arnal, Head of Department.

### Acknowledgments

SORAAAD's committee would like to thank Lynn Schofield Clark, Laurens De Rooij, Francis Stewart, Malory Nye, David Walker, Sean McCloud, the Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group, Aadita Chaudhury, Christopher Cotter, and David Robertson for their ongoing support of the workshop.

### Registration

Please send an email to [william.arnal@uregina.ca](mailto:william.arnal@uregina.ca). Place "SORAAAD 2018 Registration" in the subject line, and include your name, indication of rank (independent scholar, graduate student, professor, etc.), and institution, if applicable, in the body of the email. Please indicate if you are a Vegan, Vegetarian, avoiding Gluten or Soy, or are a Non-Vegetarian avoiding a specific type of meat. If you are parent who needs to attend with a child, please let us know what you need to accommodate your participation; at this time we have no formal child care arrangements. The workshop site has a number of single occupancy gender neutral bathrooms. You may wish to review the [SORAAAD Workshop Ethos](#).

**Registration is free.** SORAAAD thanks its sponsors for making this possible.

**Participation Limit:** 40.

**Registration—and confirmation of registration—are required of all attending.**

# SORAAAD COMMITTEE & BOARD OF ADVISORS

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

We ask our panelists to use their abstracts, suggested and further readings to connect with those in the room and those online. The variance across abstracts and explanations accompanying the readings reflects how they wanted to work with you.

## CITATIONS

The SORAAAD workshop uses the [Chicago Manual of Style](#)

### **Individual Papers**

First Name, Last Name. "Paper Title." Paper presented at the Study of Religion as an Analytical Discipline Workshop, November, 2018.

### **The Workshop Program**

The SORAAAD Workshop at the University of Regina, Religious Studies Department. "Race and the Analytical Study of Religion" the Study of Religion as an Analytical Discipline Workshop, Denver, CO, November, 2018

## SOCIAL MEDIA

#SORAAAD2018 is the official hashtag for "Race and the Analytical Study of Religion."

Please respect the limits expressed by speakers and other participants with regard to circulating their thoughts, ideas, or images on media of any kind.

For news about the workshop, analytical scholarship in religion and cognate fields, the latest from our partners and your peers, and issues facing higher education, please follow:

[@SORAAADWorkshop on Twitter.](#)

## PROGRAM

### Race and the Analytical Study of Religion

9:45- 11:00          Sean McCloud — Session Chair

9:45                  Rudy Busto "Race, Religion and the Chains of Human History"

10:25                Kelly Baker "Foregrounding White Supremacists in Religious Studies"

### "Race, Religion, and the Chains of Human History"

Rudy Busto

This paper is provoked by the question posed by the organizers of the SORAAAD workshop committee, "How do we revisit the data of human history?" An initial response to the question might begin with the gratuitous query: "Who is 'we'?" Following Omi and Winant's claim that concepts of race "structure state and civil society" and "shape both identities and institutions in significant ways," questions about access to, interpretation, representation, and certainly the delimiting of what constitutes "the data" is fettered by the burdens of race even as the question is posed. What can it mean to interrogate race in "human history" from within an academic discipline whose racial supremacist origins in colonialism and violence can at times be conveniently shackled and hidden beneath the irenic tactics of dialogue, comparison, Perennialism, multi-faith universalism, or set aside under the lock and key of objective scientific inquiry. Now that race has become a normalized, legitimate topic in the academic study of religion how can these "containment" strategies in the study of religion be avoided, or at least be confronted? Is there a way to revisit the data of human history and decouple the parts of a seamless, teleological, and often described liberal Protestant narrative of human freedom, flourishing and salvation?

Taking an Asian American religion perspective this paper considers the relationship between race and religion as linked through the particular history and experience of Japanese Americans. The role Japanese Americans occupy in the dataset of American race relations,

and especially their responses to a history of discrimination, violence and internment suggest that race and religion may be operate in similar ways, or perhaps as tethered dynamics shackled by “chains of memory.” Set within the enclosure of U.S. religion, how do the conjoined doppelgangers “race” and “religion” in Japanese America instruct us in how to approach the data of human history?

## SUGGESTED READINGS

Hervieu-Léger, Danièle. *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, Newark, Rutgers, 2004.

Iwamura, Jane Naomi. “Critical Faith: Japanese Americans and the Birth of a New Civil Religion,” *American Quarterly* 59:3 (Sept 2007), 937-968.

Kanda, Shigeo. “Recovering Cultural Symbols: A Case for Buddhism in the Japanese American Communities,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Volume XLVI, Issue 4, 1 December 1978 [Supplement], 445-475.

Takaki, Ronald. *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in 19th-Century America*, New York, Oxford, 2000.

Yoo, David. “A Religious History of Japanese Americans in California,” *Religions in Asian America: Building Faith Communities*, Pyong Gap Min and Jung Ha Kim, eds., 121-141. Lanham, MD, Altamira, 2002.

## FURTHER READINGS

Omi, Michael., and Howard Winant. *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 1994.

## “Foregrounding White Supremacists in Religious Studies”

Kelly J. Baker

How do we directly address white supremacy and white supremacists in our scholarship and teaching? (Or do we?) How should we approach these controversial, but common groups? These questions plagued me since I began my research on the Ku Klux Klan and white supremacy 13 years ago. Trained as an American religious historian, I realized early on that white supremacists, much less white supremacy, were often excluded, overlooked or marginalized in narratives about American religions. White supremacists appeared as weird,

fringe, or worse, inconsequential, especially in works that emphasized democracy, progress and pluralism. In my book, *Gospel According to the Klan*, I attempted to revise of the standard narrative of American history by showing how religion and racism work together--fostering, affirming, and justifying one another--in the white Protestant nationalism of the 1920s Klan. White nationalism is not a historical artifact, but it remains influential today, as became obvious in the 2016 presidential election.

For this conversation, I want us to think together about how norms of civility (and assumptions of community) within religious studies (and stories about the United States) have produced historical amnesia about white supremacists, so their actions always appear new, newsworthy, and never historical. As I've written previously, "to see the Klan as citizens rather than villains" helps create a more complex—more troubling and likely more controversial—narrative of American religions. To understand the Klan this way also brings into question how some scholars understand what religion is and cannot be. To study the Klan as a religious and racist movement pushes against professional norms of how to study religion, which has everything to do with whiteness and systems of white supremacy. This session aims to be a dialogue, in which we can think through together why religious studies still seems to have a hard time approaching white supremacists and white supremacy.

## SUGGESTED READINGS

Baker Kelly J., "[The Artifacts of White Supremacy](#)," *Religion and Culture Forum*, June 14, 2017.

\_\_\_\_\_. "[The New White Nationalists?](#)" *Religion and Politics*, October 20, 2016.

Butler, Anthea, "[The Fire This Time](#)," *Religion Dispatches*, July 10, 2016.

Daniels, Jessie, "[White Supremacy Isn't A Fad, It's A System](#)," *Racism Review*, November 27, 2016.

Newton, Richard, "[The Bible and Race in the USA: Dreaming of Ahistories](#)," *Sowing the Seed Blog*, November 5, 2016.

Weisenfeld, Judith, "[A Dreadful and Improbable Creature: Race Aesthetics and the Burdens of Greatness](#)," *Sacred Matters*, April 21, 2016.

## FURTHER READINGS

Berry, Damon. Amanda Mbuvi, Brandy Daniels. "[Religious Strategies of White Nationalism at Charlottesville: A Roundtable on Charlottesville](#)," *Religion and Culture Forum*, October 13, 2017.

Butler, Anthea. "[America's Racist God](#)," *Religion Dispatches*, July 16, 2013.

Newton, Richard. "[The Bible and Race in the USA: the Redundancy of Identity Politics](#)" *Sowing the Seed Blog*, December 21, 2015

\_\_\_\_\_. "[Comparing the Games We Play: The Limits of Privilege-Checking](#)," *Sowing the Seed Blog*, October 7, 2015

11:00 -11:15 Break

## Race, Religion, Categories, and Classification

11:15- 12:25      David Walker — Session Chair

11:15              Karen E. Fields (via Skype) "Race as America's Totemic Constructions"

11:50              Chloe Martinez "Making Race, Making Space: Bhagat Singh Thind  
Beyond the Supreme Court Case"

"Race as America's Totemic Constructions"

Karen E. Fields (via skype)

**ABSTRACT & Bio - PENDING**

# “Making Race, Making Space: Bhagat Singh Thind Beyond the Supreme Court Case”

Chloe Martinez

If we consider the conflation of race and religion as a type of “racial project” (Omi and Winant), how might we turn our attention to the ways in which such projects not only produce vulnerability, but also resist it?

The 1923 Thind case has gained a great deal of scholarly attention as a key moment in the history of what Khyati Joshi calls the “racialization of religion.” In the case, Bhagat Singh Thind’s lawyers argued that as a “high-caste Hindu” and an “Aryan,” their client should be given the status of a white person, and thus access to U.S. citizenship. The Supreme Court disagreed, refusing Thind on the grounds, basically, of a “common sense” agreement that he was not, and never could be, perceived as white. In this paper I’d like to look at Thind himself as an active participant in these negotiations of race, religion, and identity, someone who conducted ongoing experiments with these taxonomies in order to mitigate his vulnerability within them. He was in fact not a Hindu but a turbaned and bearded Sikh who attended the prestigious Khalsa College in Amritsar, served in the U.S. military, participated in the transnational Gadar movement for Indian independence, and eventually styled himself as a spiritual teacher for an American audience.

I argue that the conflation of racial and religious categories was necessary to Thind’s survival in early-to-mid-twentieth century America. Further, his multiple approaches to racial and religious identity—from his self-presentation as “high-caste Hindu” in court to his image as a “Sikh Savior” on the lecture circuit—illuminate the polyvalence of racial and religious categories.

## SUGGESTED READINGS \*

Joshi, Khyati Y. “The Racialization of Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism in the United States,” *Equity & Excellence in Education* 39 (2006): 211-226.

Snow, Jennifer, “The Civilization of White Men: The Race of the Hindu in *The United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind*,” in *Race, Nation and Religion in the Americas*, ed. Henry Goldschmidt and Elizabeth McAlister (New York: Oxford, 2004): 259-280.

## FURTHER READING

Omi, Michael., and Howard Winant. *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 1994.

\* PDFs will be made available via [SORAAAD.org](http://SORAAAD.org), post launch.

12:25- 1:30 Lunch

## Race, Religion, Reframing the Data of Racialization

1:30-3:25 **Tim Jensen** — Session Chair.

1:30 **Jolyon Thomas** ““Japanese People Don’t See Race”: Linguistic Tics, Ambient Norms, and the Constructed Qualities of Race and Religion in Japan”

2:10 **Jens Kreinath** “Visual Culture and the Formation of the Anthropological Category of Race: Implications and Consequences for the Study of Religion and Culture, with a Particular Focus on Islam and the Middle East”

2:50 **Angela Sutton (via Skype)** “Religious Documents in the Slave Societies Digital Archive (SSDA)”

### ““Japanese People Don’t See Race”: Linguistic Tics, Ambient Norms, and the Constructed Qualities of Race and Religion in Japan”

**Jolyon Thomas**

While the concepts of “race” (*jinshu*) and “racial discrimination” (*jinshu sabetsu*) exist in contemporary Japanese, these terms feature as loan words that fit imperfectly with the English terms that they translate. Japanese perceptions of race are no less real for that fact, but Japanese sensitivities about race manifest themselves somewhat differently than, say, American perceptions of the same. For example, references to Japaneseness pervade daily

conversation, from overheard conversations in coffeeshops to nighttime news broadcasts. The idea of Japaneseness cloaks personal opinion with the mantle of common sense, renders specific dispositions aspects of a timeless culture, and censures undesirable behavior while establishing social norms. Little of this discussion is about race as such, but the language of Japaneseness creates a social center that tolerates, but does not fully include, marginal communities (Brown 2006). Insensitivity to racial discrimination appears in the continued Japanese use of blackface in comedic situations, the ubiquity of minstrel kitsch in Japanese bars and cafes, nostalgia for Nazi paraphernalia in Japanese sub-communities, and casual indifference to the continuing marginal status of Japanese-born Koreans (now fourth-generation, but technically not fully “Japanese,” immigrants; Chung 2010) and traditional outcaste communities (*burakumin*; see Bondy 2014).

Building on the constructivist insight that both race and religion are invented categories that exist as socially dependent facts but not as ahistorical essences, in this presentation I look at some ways that religion and race intertwine in Japanese public life. Critically examining language that appears in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party’s draft constitution of 2012 and the revised Fundamental Law on Education (FLE) of 2006, I show that majoritarian approaches to constitutional revision and national legislation would render some aspects of religion as facets of a timeless Japanese culture. Specifically, by making Shinto essentially Japanese (it is not), conservative lawmakers can make public sponsorship of shrine rites immune from allegations of violating the constitutional principle of religion-state separation. Furthermore, by defining Japaneseness quite narrowly, lawmakers can restrict political participation to people bearing linguistic fluency (a high exclusionary hurdle given that Japanese is among the most difficult foreign languages to master), a narrow phenotype (e.g., black hair), and set of fetishized cultural dispositions (e.g., “harmony,” *wa*) that may include ritual practices. Not all of these ideals appear explicitly in the draft charter or the FLE, but by tying these legal issues to recent debates over the role of morality and patriotism in public schools, I show that children learn a type of racist thinking that refuses the language of race and a type of religious thinking that eschews explicit mention of religion.

## FURTHER READINGS - Annotated Bibliography\*

Amos, Timothy. *Embodying Difference: The Making of Burakumin in Modern Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011.

Amos questions what he calls the “master narrative” of burakumin status in modern Japan.

Bondy, Christopher. *Voice, Silence, and Self: Negotiations of Buraku Identity in Contemporary Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2015.

Bondy shows that treatment of Japan's traditional outcaste communities are generally rendered through silence rather than speech: allusive language, subtle cues, and tacit understandings mark specific geographic areas and their populations as "not really Japanese."

Chung, Erin Aeran. *Immigration and Citizenship in Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Japan is unusual in that it hosts a fourth-generation immigrant population that is not fully naturalized. Chung shows that this (mostly) invisible minority is still subject to discriminatory treatment and that members are caught between the high politics of Korean-Japanese international relations and the mundane politics of microaggressions and exclusionary policies.

Watt, Lori. *When Empire Comes Home*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2010.

Watt shows that post-defeat Allied policies assumed that ethnicities matched national geographies, an assumption that did not match the realities of the multiethnic Japanese empire. Japanese repatriates to the metropole were often treated as outsiders by their own country, and occupation authorities expropriated significant wealth generated through generations of colonial endeavor. Both pitiable and threatening, the repatriates were quintessentially "Japanese" and not quite Japanese enough.

\* PDFs will be made available via [SORAAAD.org](http://SORAAAD.org), post launch.

## **"Visual Culture and the Formation of the Anthropological Category of Race: Implications and Consequences for the Study of Religion and Culture, with a Particular Focus on Islam and the Middle East"**

**Jens Kreinath**

The aim of this presentation is to sketch out some implications and consequences of the emergence of visual technologies, like photography and film, on the formation of racial

categories in the study of religion and culture. The attempt is to trace the impact of the parallel history of photography and anthropology on the formation of anthropological categories. By taking the formation of the anthropological categories of race and religion as the primary points of reference, it will be shown how categories like race, religion, and ethnicity and their biological, political, and cultural implications played different roles in the aesthetic formation of categories for the study of Islam and the Middle East. A culturally sensitive and historically relativistic approach to the study of race and religion will be presented by demonstrating how diverse the concept formation developed within Europe, North America, and the Middle East.

## SUGGESTED READINGS

Boas, Franz. 1940. "Race and Progress (1931)." In Franz Boas: [Race, Language, and Culture](#), 3-24. New York: Macmillan.

Taras, Raymond. 2013. "'Islamophobia Never Stands Still': Race, Religion, and Culture." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36 (3):417-433.

Poole, Deborah. 2005. "[An Excess of Description: Ethnography, Race, and Visual Technologies](#)." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34:159-179.

## FURTHER READINGS

Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1983. "Race and History (1945)." In *Claude Lévi-Strauss: Structural Anthropology*, vol. 2, 323-335. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1992. "Race and Culture." In *Claude Lévi-Strauss: The View from Afar*, 3-24. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lewis, Bernhard. 1971. *Race and Color in Islam*. New York: Harper & Row.

Lewis, Bernhard. 1992. "Race." In *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: An Historical Enquiry*, 16-20. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

# “Religious Documents in the Slave Societies Digital Archive (SSDA)”

Angela Sutton (via Skype)

The Slave Societies Digital Archive preserves endangered ecclesiastical and secular documents related to Africans and African-descended peoples in slave societies across the Atlantic World. SSDA holdings include close to 500,000 digital images drawn from more than 1,500 unique volumes dating from the sixteenth through twentieth centuries that document the lives of an estimated four to six million individuals, the vast majority of whom have previously not entered the historic record. A large portion of these records, namely those from Cuba, Brazil, and Spanish-occupied Florida, are Catholic records from churches which served majority black populations, and often housed black brotherhoods and religious fraternities which functioned as the safety net and means of upward mobility for both enslaved and free blacks in the colonial period. Their extensive documentation reveals social networks, economic patterns, population shifts, pandemics, inheritance patterns and milestones important to the African-descended populations of these nations. Within these records, scholars have discovered new ways to think about slave resistance, family structures, cultural continuities and disruptions, syncretism, black religion, and African-influenced medical practices in the Americas.

## SUGGESTED READINGS

Articles where Angela Sutton discusses the SSDA.

Sutton, Angela, "[Digital History Profile](#)," *Madison Historical Review*: Vol. 15, Article 2, 2018.

\_\_\_\_\_. "[Strategies of Survival: Resistance to Enslavement in the Slave Societies Digital Archive](#)" *Afro-Hispanic Review*, Vol. 36, No. 1, Spring 2017. (links to excerpt)

\_\_\_\_\_. "[The Digital Overhaul of the Archive of Ecclesiastical and Secular Sources for Slave Societies](#)," *SX Archipelagos*, Issue 2, 2017.

## PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY - S S D A P r o j e c t s

A sample of English-language scholarship that has emerged using documents of the Slave Societies Digital Archive.

Gómez, Pablo F. [The Experiential Caribbean: Creating Knowledge and Healing in the Early Modern Atlantic](#) (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

Landers, Jane. ["New Sources and New Findings for Slavery and Abolition in the Atlantic World."](#) *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, 36(3): 2015, 421-423.

Landers, Jane. ["Catholic Conspirators? Religious Rebels in Nineteenth-Century Cuba."](#) *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, 36(3): 2015, 495-520.

Ramos, Miguel. ["Lucumí \(Yoruba\) Culture in Cuba: A Reevaluation \(1830s -1940s\)."](#) PhD Dissertation, Miami: Florida International University, 2013 (cites SSSA on pages 265, 283, 294, 416).

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3:25- 3:40 Break

## Race and Qualitative Methodologies

3:40-4:55 **Ipsita Chatterjea** — Session Chair.

3:40 **Sarah Dees** “Presence, Absence, Refusal: Race and Indigenous Religions in the Academy”

4:20 **Monique Moultrie** “Passionate and Pious: Womanist Ethnography, Race, and Sexuality”

### “Presence, Absence, Refusal: Race and Indigenous Religions in the Academy”

**Sarah Dees**

For some scholars of religion, conversations about race might seem tangential—a sub-field, a special interest topic, a current fad. My work on the history of the study of Native American religions considers the extent to which racialization has always (already) been a part of the project of the academic study of religion—at once present and absent. Most religious studies method and theory courses include works by key European and Euro-American “founding fathers” who studied traditions scholars would now describe as “Indigenous religions.” Yet Indigenous religions occupy a marginalized position within other topics and conversations in many departments. Through this presentation, I hope to work through questions that arise in my own work on theories of Native religions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. I consider the extent to which the early study of Native American religions was itself a form of racial science. In addition, I hope to foster a broader conversation about the ways Indigenous religions fit into the academic study of religion. An examination of Indigenous religions offers insight into issues at the heart of the academic study of religion—about method, theory, definitions of religion, and the relationship between the category of religion as it relates to broader culture and society. What legacies of early, explicitly settler-colonial scholarship linger in the refusal to adequately attend not only to Native religions but also to Native theories of religion? Looking closely at the history of the study of Native American religions today helps us better understand the relationships between the “studiers” and the “studied” and necessitates a serious consideration of the racialized undertones of this distinction. Who might theorize? What types of theories are valid or welcome in discussions about religion? What insights can critical race, ethnic, and cultural studies offer scholars of

religion? How should we conceptualize the religious studies “canon” in light of our new perspectives on the field’s history?

## SOURCES

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## SUGGESTED READINGS

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## FURTHER READINGS

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## “Womanist Ethnography, Race, Sexuality, and Media”

### Monique Moultrie

In an epoch when some are chanting “Black Lives Matter” and the United States is once again forced to plunge into discussions about race and its citizens, W. E. B. DuBois’ words, “How does it feel to be a problem?” (*Souls of Black Folk*, 1903) still ring true as the continuing problem into this new century appears to be the color line. Despite electing a mixed race president, Americans still have polarized views of racial relations, and these views are often intricately connected to a person’s religious beliefs. The Black Lives Matter movement captured a national surge of resistance to the treatment of black bodies as dispensable and

inconsequential. Despite the Black Lives Matter participants' use of religion to highlight black bodies as divinely created, there has been overwhelming silence from most religious communities choosing not to weigh in publicly on these secular concerns. This silence echoes the sense that some bodies matter more than others, and some people use religion as a justification for this belief.

In this way, religion has imprinted morality onto racial groups. Religious myths about race are important markers for determining societal hierarchies. Socio-religious myths provide an answer for why the world is the way that it is. The myth of race lingers partially because it is deemed by so many to have religious sanctioning.

Myths are also so persuasive because they are often based on storytelling, and the use of myth is especially significant in religious stories. According to religion historian Bruce Lincoln myths are encoded with the fundamental values of a group such that storytelling is actually just a reflection of the values and persona of the storyteller. Thus, it is important to recognize the power involved in religious myths because some groups are given authority to shape stories that are deemed fact. An African proverb states "Until the lions have their own storyteller, tales of the hunt will always glorify the hunter." Using womanist analysis in religious studies requires listening for the story of the lion and questioning the tale of the hunter.

Womanist sexual ethics is invested in determining how religion and race ought to be theorized and discussed as it is conscious of what happens in and to the bodies of people of color. My scholarship is rooted in the bodily experiences of black women as I amplify their meaning making about how faith impacts their lives. My research utilizes womanist ethnography and qualitative research to use the stories, voices, and experiences of black women as sources for scholarly inquiry. Womanist anthropologist Linda Thomas asserts that womanist ethnography involves entering the communities of black women, learning and living among these people to utilize their life experiences as primary sources with the task of reflecting their polyvalent stories. Just like womanists who use biomythographies, autobiographies, or historiographies, the major emphasis is on creating space for the validity of black women's religious experiences.

In my discussion of research with this group, I plan to bring forth some of the promise and challenges involved with qualitative research and virtual ethnography as methodologies for scholarship. My book follows faith-based sexuality ministries (Christian ministries/media that discuss sexuality) and the women who are consumers of such messages as I documented their

deep desire for their sexuality and faith to align. Yet, my participant observation of these ministries was possible because of my prior participation in these movements and the research (particularly the online ethnography) was particularly helped by my compassion towards the research subjects. Yet, I was clear in my goal of illuminating my ethnographic subjects' experiences while at the same time offering a womanist corrective.

Each book chapter takes a part of the womanist definition to construct a womanist sexual ethics for contemporary times as I ponder what would it mean to live into this contemporary womanist sexual ethics. For example, I investigate how scholars think about sexual freedom, flourishing, and thriving that actually deals with people's everyday realities and not just what the norm would be. My job as an ethnographer was to listen, record, and then interpret all the while being consciously aware of the stereotypes that abound about black women's sexuality. As a scholar of racialized faith, I remain conscious of the impact of socio-religious myths and how they impact public perceptions of race. Thus, being critical and ethically attuned to these women's daily lives often brought challenges to the research that SORAAAD will help me explore.

## SUGGESTED READING

Moultrie, Monique. ["Introduction. For All the Single Ladies: Black Women's Stories of Faith and Sexuality"](#) *Passionate and Pious: Religious Media and Black Women's Sexuality*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2017.

## FURTHER READING

Moultrie, Monique. [\*Passionate and Pious: Religious Media and Black Women's Sexuality\*](#), Durham, Duke University Press, 2017.

## Conversation Across Sessions

4:55            **David Walker** — Moderator.

5:20            Announcements and clean up.

## SORAAAD 2011-18

### 2018 [Race and the Analytical Study of Religion](#)

[University of Regina, Religious Studies Department](#)

University of Denver, Media, Film, and Journalism Studies Department and  
the Religious Studies Department- Institutional Host,  
with thanks to Lynn Schofield Clark

### 2017 [Appropriation and the Analytical Study of Religion](#)

[University of Regina, Religious Studies Department](#)

Northeastern University, Philosophy and Religious Studies Department-  
Institutional Host, with thanks to Elizabeth Bucar

[Wellesley College, The Religion Department](#)

### 2016 [Aesthetics and the Analytical Study of Religion](#)

In partnership with [Arbeitskreis Religionsästhetik](#)

[Trinity University, Religion Department](#) - Institutional Host,

with thanks to Angela Tarango & Sarah K. Pinnock

[University of Regina, Religious Studies Department](#)

[Texas State University, Department of Philosophy](#)

[Wellesley College, The Religion Department](#)

### 2015 [Canon and the Analytical Study of Religion](#)

Georgia State University, Religious Studies Department Institutional Host,

with thanks to Monique Moultrie & Kathryn McClymond

University of Regina, Religious Studies Department

Critical Theories and Discourses on Religion Group - AAR

Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group - AAR

Metacriticism of Biblical Scholarship Consultation - SBL

Redescribing Early Christianity Group - SBL

**2014 Comparison and the Analytical Study of Religion**

University of Regina, Religious Studies Department  
Critical Theories and Discourses on Religion Group - AAR  
Redescribing Early Christianity Group - SBL  
Sociology of Religion Group - AAR  
Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group - AAR  
Metacriticism of Biblical Scholarship Consultation - SBL

**2013 Methodologies and the Analytical Study of Religion**

Critical Theories and Discourses on Religion Group - AAR  
Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group - AAR  
Sociology of Religion Group - AAR  
Ideological Criticisms of Biblical Studies Group - SBL  
Metacriticism of Biblical Scholarship Consultation - SBL  
Bible and Cultural Studies Section - SBL

**2012 The Analytical Handling of Norms and Values in the Study of Religion**

Critical Theories and Discourses on Religion Group - AAR  
Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group - AAR  
Sociology of Religion Group - AAR  
Ideological Criticisms of Biblical Studies Group - SBL  
Bible and Cultural Studies Section - SBL  
Equinox Publishing

**2011 The Study of Religion as an Analytical Discipline**

Critical Theories and Discourses on Religion Group - AAR  
Sociology of Religion Group - AAR  
Ideological Criticisms of Biblical Studies Group - SBL  
Bible and Cultural Studies Section - SBL

Former SORAAAD Committee Members

<a href="#"><u>Greg Alles*</u></a>	2011
<a href="#"><u>Jorunn Jacobsen Buckley *</u></a>	2011-2012
<a href="#"><u>Randall Reed*</u></a>	2011-2013
<a href="#"><u>Craig Martin</u></a>	2012-2013
<a href="#"><u>Jacques Berlinerblau</u></a>	2012-2013
<a href="#"><u>Emma Wasserman</u></a>	2014-2016

\* Founding committee member of the SORAAAD Steering Committee

## Appendix I. Statement of Participation and Non-Discrimination

The SORAAAD network and community welcomes participants of all ethnic origins, races, genders, orientations, (dis)abilities, religious backgrounds, financial means, and professional or immigration statuses. You are valued and wanted at this workshop. Your voices, ideas, papers, and personage matter. We refer you to our [speaker and participant ethos](#) (2012) to emphasize our editorial and professional commitments and our adoption of the [ALA's conduct policy](#) as our own, to emphasize our work to create a productive, interdisciplinary, and intersectional atmosphere ([Crenshaw](#), 1989) where all are treated with respect.

We work with our sponsors to ensure that there are neither registration fees nor membership dues, to reduce barriers to professional development and scholarly community. We recognize that attending the SORAAAD workshop often requires arrangements to cover teaching obligations, child and eldercare, and the costs of an additional day's travel. With this in mind we provide hospitality that accommodates vegetarians, vegans, and those who must eat gluten-free. We welcome parents and families to the conference, and we encourage young parents and nursing parents to attend with their infants and children. We will work to support your needs and the needs of your children and family. We also welcome persons with mobility or disability issues. We will accommodate your needs throughout the conference for all resources we develop, and this holds regardless of the legal status of the Americans with Disabilities Act. All are welcome and valued.

Please note that we are a small organization, and as such we do not have the financial capacity to offer funding for travel or conference-related costs at this time. At present we are also not in a position to support visa applications beyond providing a letter confirming participation.

To our participants, speakers, and the larger community of analysts of religion: if you are impacted by the travel ban to the USA, or if you wish to avoid travelling to the US as a means of protesting it, we fully recognize that attending an academic conference is not worth the risks of being denied entry or return, being detained or deported, or losing immigration status. We respect stances of conscience. You are valued, wanted, and welcome.

For those who cannot attend the workshop, we are exploring the possibility of podcasting talks (crucially, while protecting the intellectual property and process of our speakers and participants). We are also working to develop further 1) the interactive elements of the program PDF, to aid your research from home; and 2) mechanisms of interaction with SORAAAD speakers.

If you know that you cannot attend SORAAAD without financial assistance, we will work with you to ensure that you can present and discuss your work via digital means / video conferencing. We will try to facilitate your digital participation during other segments of the conference, as well.

SORAAAD's committee would like to thank Dr. Francis Stewart and the Implicit Religion Conference. Both groups share an ethos of enabling and accommodating participation. With their permission, the statement above is a close adaptation of their conference participation statement that addresses SORAAAD's distinct operating circumstances.

## Appendix II. Biographies for Skype Presenters

**Angela Sutton** is a postdoctoral fellow at Vanderbilt University, working with the Slave Societies Digital Archive ([www.slavesocieties.org](http://www.slavesocieties.org)) to make available online 16th-19th century records from the era of Atlantic world slavery. Her PhD from Vanderbilt University is in the field of Atlantic History, and her doctoral thesis focused on the 17th century slave trade in what is now the nation of Ghana. This semester, she is teaching a 7-week symposium on the History of Atlantic Slavery at First Evangelical Lutheran Church in downtown Nashville as part of their Faith, World and Word Community Forum.

Other forms of public history and community engagement with the history of African descended populations involves the [Fort Negley Descendants Project](#) , an oral history repository of the descendants of the Union Civil War Fort Negley. It was built by enslaved Africans and free blacks, and defended by the US Colored Troops. After emancipation, descendants of these builders and soldiers founded the black neighborhoods of Nashville, which in turn created Fisk University and Tennessee State University, two HBCUs which played prominent roles in training up the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement. The Fort Negley Descendants Project collects the voices of these descendants in a time off rapid growth and unfettered gentrification in order to amplify the voices of Nashville's urban black community which is getting displaced during the city's transition. The Project has recently won a Catalyst Grant to continue its work in the 2018-2019 academic year.