

ALEXIS WELLS-OGHOGHOMEH

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EDUCATION

- Ph.D. Emory University, Religion, 2015
- M.Div. Emory University, *Magna Cum Laude*, 2007
- B.A. Spelman College, English, *Summa Cum Laude*, Phi Beta Kappa, 2004

EMPLOYMENT

Assistant Professor, Stanford University, Department of Religious Studies, September 2021 – Present.

Assistant Professor, Vanderbilt University, Department of Religious Studies, 2015–2021.

BOOKS

The Souls of Womenfolk: The Religious Cultures of Enslaved Women in the Lower South (University of North Carolina Press, 2021)

Finalist, 2022 Frederick Douglass Book Prize, Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition and Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

“Best Books of 2021: Religion,” *Publisher’s Weekly*

Religion and Slavery in the Nineteenth Century, 2 volumes, co-edited with Jordan T. Watkins (Routledge, forthcoming)

JOURNAL ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

“Engendering ‘Slave Religion:’ Methodology Beyond the Invisible Institution.” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. (forthcoming)

“The Benighted Soul?: Africana Religions and the Diabolical in the Time of Revolution” in *Religion and the American Revolution*, ed. Katherine Carté. (forthcoming)

“Decolonial Magic: Africana Religions in America and the Work of Ronald Hutton” in *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* 17, no. 1 (2022): 13-20.

“Re-evaluating Roots: Slavery as Source and Challenge for African-American Theology.” In *T&T Clark Companion to African American Theology*, ed. Frederick L. Ware, Antonia M. Daymond, Eric Lewis Williams, 19-31. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.

“She Come Like a Nightmare:’ Hags, Witches, and the Gendered Trans-Sense among the Enslaved in the Lower South.” *The Journal of Africana Religions*, 5, No. 2 (2017): 239-274.

“The Gendered Ethics of Female Enslavement: Searching for Southern Slave Women’s Religiosity in the African Atlantic.” *The Journal of Southern Religion*, 18 (2016): jsreligion.org/vol18/wells.

Kaiser, Bonnie N., Dennis M. Mishler, Whitney A. Peoples, Alexis S. Wells. “Undergraduate Research and a Liberal Arts Education: Similar Goals, Similar Solutions.” *Journal of College Science Teaching* 43, No. 5 (May/June 2014): 36-42.

BOOK REVIEWS

Review of *Denmark Vesey’s Bible: The Thwarted Revolt That Put Slavery and Scripture on Trial*, by Jeremy Schipper. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. (forthcoming)

Review of *Father James Page: An Enslaved Preacher’s Climb to Freedom*, by Larry Eugene Rivers. *Journal of Southern History* 88, No. 3 (2022): 552-53.

Review of *Christian Citizens: Reading the Bible in Black and White in the Postemancipation South*, by Elizabeth L. Jemison. *Church History* 90, No. 1 (2022): 192-94.

Review of *Your Sister in the Gospel: The Life of Jane Manning James, A Nineteenth Century Black Mormon*, by Quincy D. Newell. *Mormon Studies Review* 8 (2021): 133-36.

Review of *Being Muslim: A Cultural History of Women of Color in American Islam*, by Sylvia Chan-Malik. *American Religion* 2, No. 1 (Fall 2020): 183-85.

“Race and Religion in the Afterlife of Protestant Supremacy.” Forum on *Christian Slavery: Conversion and Race in the Protestant Atlantic World*, by Katharine Gerbner. *Church History* 88, Issue 3 (September 2019): 767-72.

“Spirits of the Landscape Rediscovered: Ras Michael Brown’s *African-Atlantic Cultures and the South Carolina Lowcountry*.” Review of *African-Atlantic Cultures and the South Carolina Lowcountry*, by Ras Michael Brown. *Southern Spaces*, August 26, 2013.
<http://www.southernspaces.org/2013/spirits-landscape-rediscovered>.

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

Interview. *Abraham Lincoln’s Religion: The Second Inaugural Address*. The National Museum of American Religion. June 2022.

“The Possibilities of a Black Religious Multiverse.” *The Immanent Frame*. May 20, 2022.
<https://tif.ssrc.org/2022/05/20/the-possibilities-of-a-black-religious-multiverse/>

(Black Tea). Interview with JoHannah Valentin and Shay Milner. *VandyVox*. Podcast audio. July 27, 2020. <http://vandyvox.com/2020/07/episode-24-black-tea-by-johannah-valentin-shay-milner/>.

(Race and Religion in America). Interview with Alexandra Trevisan. *Spiriosity*. Podcast audio. June 22, 2020.

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/spiriosity/id1505855245#episodeGuid=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.messy.fm%2Fapi%2Fplayepisode%2Fefaf13ee0-b49f-11ea-9af4-0b38a3295fa9.mp3>.

(The Issue of Females). Interview with Matthew Cressler. *Port of Entry: An African American Studies Podcast*. Podcast audio. November 12, 2019. <http://blogs.cofc.edu/aast/2020/08/28/port-of-entry-episode-5-the-issue-of-females/>.

“Sanctifying the Senses: Thoughts on *Beyoncé* as Liberative Praxis.” *Sacred Matters: Religious Currents in Culture*, January 21, 2014.

<https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/sacredmatters/2014/01/21/sanctifying-the-senses-thoughts-on-beyonce-as-liberative-praxis/>.

COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

Fellow, International Initiative for the Study of Slave Societies, Vanderbilt University, 2019-2021.

ACADEMIC AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2021 Clayman Institute Faculty Research Fellow, Stanford University
- 2018 Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship
- 2018 Woodrow Wilson Foundation Career Enhancement Fellowship for Junior Faculty, 6 Month
- 2018 Young Scholars in American Religion
- 2016 Junior Faculty Teaching Fellowship, Vanderbilt University
- 2014 Mellon Graduate Teaching Fellowship
- 2013 Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship
- 2012 W.E.B. DuBois Noomo Award for the Pursuit of Academic Excellence (Emory University)
- 2011 Race and Difference Initiative Travel Grant
- 2011 On Recent Discoveries By Emory Researchers (ORDER) Fellowship
- 2009 The Fund For Theological Education Doctoral Fellowship
- 2009 Emory University Graduate Diversity Fellowship
- 2001 Dean’s Scholarship, Spelman College

INVITED TALKS AND PANELS

Guest Lecture, Christianity and Race in America
Center for Faith and Justice, June 2022

“Dangerous Magic: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Opacity of Conjure”
Columbia University, April 2022

“Conjuring Death: Black Women and Retribution in the Era of Slavery”
Center for the Study of Religion, Ohio State University, April 2022

“Race and Religion in America” Senior Scholars Roundtable
Religion Graduate Student Conference, Columbia University, March 2022

Guest Lecture, Spirituality of War Course, Drs. Kenneth Appold and James Denning

- Princeton Theological Seminary, March 2022
- Guest Lecture, Religion and Sexuality Course, Dr. Gary Laderman
Emory University, March 2022
- Panelist, “A Meeting at the Crossroads: Transitions and Transformations in the Study of Black Religion”
Princeton University, March 2022
- “Africana Religions and the Diabolical in the Time of Revolution”
The McNeil Center for Early American Studies, University of Pennsylvania, March 2022
- “The Intimate Lives of Enslaved Women” Roundtable
Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University, January 2022
- “Humanizing the “Slave:” Methodology as Racial Justice”
Humanities Institute, University of Montana, October 2021.
- Roundtable on Henry Louis Gates Jr.’s *This Is Our Story: This Is Our Song*
University of Minnesota and American Society of Church History, September 2021.
- “Race and Religion in Early America” Roundtable
Society for Historians of the Early American Republic, July 2021
- “What to the Slave is Religion?: Women, Race, and Reproduction in the Definition of a Category”
Princeton University, February 2021
- Roundtable in Honor of Professor Ronald K. Hutton
American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, December 2020
- “Do We Need God for Racial Justice?: The History of Protest, Religion, and Reform”
Veritas Forum, June 2020
- “Policing the Academy” Roundtable
Policing the Academy Graduate Student Symposium, Florida State University, February 2020
- “Beyond Tituba: Black Women, Slavery, and Witchcraft After Salem”
Space, Time, and Religion in Early America Conference, Princeton University, February 2020
- “The Issue of Females: Abortion, Infanticide, and Ethics in Southern Slavery”
College of Charleston, November 2019
- “Women, Slavery, and the Study of African-Atlantic Religion in the United States South”
Southern Historical Association Annual Meeting, Black Atlantic Religion Roundtable,
November 2019
- “First and Last Rites: Childbirth, Women, and Religion in Slavery”

Yale University, April 2019

“From Female Captive to Negro Wench: Slavery in Religious and Gendered Perspective”
Middle Tennessee State University, April 2018

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Presenter, American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, November 2021
“The Third Consciousness: Africana Religious History and the Work of Hortense Spillers”

Panelist, American Studies Association Annual Meeting, October 2021
On the Creation of Women: Redefining the Politics of Religion

“Moving from ‘Slave’ to Human in Africana Religions: Conjure, Conflict, and Opacity in the Study of Religion and Slavery”
Tradition, Transcendence, and Opacity Conference, Michigan State University, October 2021

Co-Organizer and Panelist, American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, November 2019
Theory and Method 2.0: Decolonizing the Field

Presenter, American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, November 2016
Paper: “Of Hags and Witches: The Limits and Possibilities of Magic in the Study of Enslaved Religiosity in the Lower South”

Presenter, American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, November 2016
Paper: “Rituals of Reproduction: Childbirth, Midwifery, and Initiation Among Enslaved Women in the Lower South”

Panelist, Southern Historical Association Annual Meeting, November 2016
Paper: “Enslaved Women’s Religious History: A Category for the Twenty-First Century”
Panel: “Southern Religious History in the Twenty-First Century”

Presenter, American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, November 2014
Paper: “Womb Ethics and Female ‘Common Sense’: Gendering ‘Slave Religion’ in the Colonial and Antebellum Lower South”

Presenter, Ford Fellows Annual Conference, September 2013
Paper: “Resignifying Sunday: Rethinking Gender, Space, and Time in the Religious Cultures Of Enslaved Peoples”

Presenter, American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, November 2010
Paper: “‘I Just Wanna Sex-tify!’ Flesh, Body, and Desire in the Discourse of Juanita Bynum”

TEACHING

Stanford University

Researching Religious History
Magic and Marvel: Theorizing Religion Through Popular Culture
The Religions and Cultures of Enslaved People in America
Defining the Moral Body: Race, Sex, and Gender in Religion
Black Religion in America

Vanderbilt University

Introduction to Southern Religions and Culture
Slave Thought and Culture in the American South
Introduction to African-American Religious Traditions
Women and Religion
Race and Religion in America
Readings in the History and Theory of African-American Religion
Readings in Methods in Women's Religious History

Morehouse College

Trajectories of African-American Religious History– Spring 2015
Perspectives on Religion: Moods, Methods, and Major Questions in Christianity, Native American Religions, Islam, and Africana Religions of the U.S. South – Fall 2014

Oxford College of Emory University

Perspectives on Religion: Moods, Methods, and Moments in Christianity, Islam, and Native American Religions – Fall 2012

Emory University

Religion and Sexuality, Co-Instructor – Fall 2013
History of Religions in America, Co-Instructor – Spring 2012
Layers of Human Experience: Molecules, Methods, and Metaphysics, Co-Instructor – Fall 2011, Spring 2012

PH.D., MASTER'S, AND UNDERGRADUATE COMMITTEES

Thesis Advisor, Daryn Rockett, 2022-Present
Field Education Supervisor, Christian Crawford, Fall 2020
Ph.D. Committee Member, Martina Schaefer, History, 2019-Present
Ph.D. Committee Member, Abena Boakyewa-Ansah, History, 2018-2022
Ph.D. Committee Member, Chelsea Yarborough, Religion, 2017-2021
Ph.D. Committee Member, Erika Nelson, Religion, 2016-Present
Honors Thesis Reader, Kaleigh Clemons, African-American and Diaspora Studies, 2019-2020
Honors Thesis Advisor, Alexis Gordon, History, 2019
Master's Advisor, Devin Burns, M.A. Religion-Historical Studies, 2017-2019

RELATED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Writing and Composition Coach, Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program, Emory University, 2011–2015
Graduate Research Assistant to the Faculty Council and University Senate, Emory University 2012–2013

SERVICE

Professional

Advisory Board Member, The National Museum of American Religion, 2022
Editorial Board Member, *American Religions*, January 2022
Editorial Board Member, *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft*, 2021 – Present
Advisory Board Member, *Sounding Spirit*, Emory Center for Digital Scholarship, Emory University, 2020 – Present
Co-Chair, Afro-American Religious History Unit Steering Committee, The American Academy of Religion, 2019 – 2021
Committee Member, Afro-American Religious History Unit Steering Committee, The American Academy of Religion, January 2016 - 2021
Reviewer, *Nineteenth Century American History*; *Psychology of Violence*; *Abolition: A Journal of Insurgent Politics*; *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*; *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*; *Black Schola*, Oxford University Press, Eerdman's

Departmental and University

Stanford University

Faculty Mentor, Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education Doctoral Fellowship Program (2021-2022)
Panelist, "Instructor Identity and Classroom Power Dynamics," Course Design Institute (March 2022)
Selection Committee, Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity, Stanford University (Winter 2022)

Vanderbilt University

Member, Phi Beta Kappa Selection Committee, Alpha of Tennessee Chapter (2021)
Chair, Religious Studies Department Fiftieth Anniversary Committee (2019-2020)
Overlook Seminar Coordinator, Religious Studies Department (Spring 2018)
Panelist, "Interviewing 101: What Nobody Tells You About the Academic Job Interview," Margaret Cuninggam Women's Center (2018)
Presenter, "Enslaved Women's Religious History: Outlining a New Subject of Inquiry," Faculty/ Staff Connection Group, Robert Penn Warren Center (2018)
Judge, Vanderbilt Three Minute Thesis, Preliminary Round (2017)
Co-Organizer, Black Feminist Methods and Methodologies Conference (February 2017)
Presenter, Gender and Sexualities Seminar, Robert Penn Warren Center (2017)
Presenter, "Not American Enough: Slavery and Legacies of Exclusion in the American Metanarrative," McGill Dialogue, McGill Residence Hall (2017)

Other

Judge, Tennessee History Day North Middle Regional Contest, Tennessee State University, 2021
African American Studies Collective (AASC) Charter Member and Secretary, Emory University, 2012–2014
Finance Committee Chair, Alien Bodies: Race, Space, and Sex in the African Diaspora Conference, 2013
ORDER Fellowship Selection Committee, Emory University, 2012
Judge, Undergraduate Research Symposium, Emory University, 2011

Public

Community Advisory Board Member, Nashville Public Television, 2019-2021

Public Lecture, "The Foundations and Origins of Black Baptists in America," African-American Heritage Society of Maury County, Tennessee, October 2015

Instructor, Heshima Rites of Passage Program for Young Women, Atlanta, Georgia, 2008-2011

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Academy of Religion, 2009 – Present

Southern Historical Association, 2010 – Present

Southern Association for Women Historians, 2014 – Present

Feminist Studies in Religion Forum, 2016-Present

Association of Black Women Historians – Life Member