

COURTNEY BENDER

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POSITIONS

Associate Professor. Columbia University, Department of Religion (2006-
Courtesy appointment, Department of Sociology, Columbia University
Faculty Fellow, Institute for Social and Economic Research and Policy, Columbia

Assistant Professor. Columbia University, Department of Religion (1999-2006)

Adjunct Assistant Professor. Columbia University Department of Sociology (1997)

EDUCATION

Princeton University, Princeton New Jersey. 1991-1997
Ph.D. awarded November 1997. Sociology
M.A. in Sociology with Distinction, October 1993

Swarthmore College, Swarthmore Pennsylvania. 1987-1991
B.A. with Honors in Religion and Sociology & Anthropology

PUBLICATIONS

Book

2003. *Heaven's Kitchen: Living Religion at God's Love We Deliver*. University of Chicago Press.

Published reviews:

John Bartkowski, *American Journal of Sociology* 109 (2004): 987-988. (Lead review)

Bryan S. Turner, *Sociology* 38(2004): 195-202. (Group review)

Steven M. Tipton, *Contemporary Sociology* 33 (2004): 460-2.

Gerardo Martí, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 43 (2004): 151-2.

Fred Kniss, *Journal of Religion* 84 (2004): 282-284.

Penny Edgell, *Social Forces* 84 (2005): 1318-1319.

Rhys Williams, *Social Movement Studies* 5 (2006): 83-89. (Group review)

Articles and chapters

Forthcoming. "American Reincarnations: What the Many Lives of Past Lives Tells us About Contemporary Spiritual Practice." Journal of the American Academy of Religion. September 2007.

2007. "Touching the Transcendent: On the Status of Religious Experience in the Sociological Study of Religion" Pp. 201-218 in Nancy T. Ammerman, ed. Everyday Religion: Observing Modern Religious Lives. Oxford University Press.

2006. "From Alleged Buddhists to Unreasonable Hindus: Assessing The Impact of Post-1965 Religious Pluralism on First Amendment Jurisprudence." with Jennifer Snow. Pp. 181-208 in Stephen Prothero, ed. A Nation of Religions: The Politics of Pluralism in Multireligious America. University of North Carolina Press. (First author)

2006. "Constructing Buddhism(s): Interreligious Dialogue and Religious Hybridity." with Wendy Cadge. Sociology of Religion. 67/3: 229-247. (Equal co-author)

2004. "Yoga and Rebirth in America: Asian Religions are Here to Stay" with Wendy Cadge. Contexts 3/1: 45-51. February 2004. (Equal co-author)

2004. "Religious Innovations Among New York's Muslim Taxi Drivers." with Elta Smith. Pp. 76-97 in Tony Carnes and Fenggang Yang, eds. Asian American Religions: Borders and Boundaries. New York: New York University Press. (First author)

1998. "Bakhtinian Perspectives on Everyday Life Sociology." In Michael M. Bell and Michael Gardiner, eds. Bakhtin and the Human Sciences. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

1997. "Place, Process and Practice: Perspectives on Changes in the Character of Mennonite Spirituality." Pp. 123-130 in Stephen Longenecker, ed. The Dilemma of Anabaptist Piety. Bridgewater, VA: Forum for Religious Studies.

1994. "Praying for the Saints: Single Mennonite Charismatics and the Conundrum of Community." Pp. 225-50 in Robert Wuthnow, ed. I Come Away Stronger: How Small Groups are Shaping American Religion, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

1992. "Mennonites and the Worship Center: Community Change and a Charismatic Context in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, 1968 to 1990." Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage 15/4: 17-29.

Manuscripts in preparation

Books

Under contract. *Worlds of Experience: Contemporary Spirituality and the American Religious Imagination*. University of Chicago Press. Expected manuscript delivery date: August 2007.

Under contract. *Religions in America Since 1965*. Blackwell Publishers. Expected manuscript delivery date: December 2008.

In preparation. *Religion, Spirituality, Secularism: Invidious Distinctions and Ambivalent Attachments*. [working title] Co-editor with Ann Taves.

Articles and Chapters

Under review. "Interpreting Lies: Matthew and his Brothers, Drugs, Suicide, AIDS and the Challenges of Narrative Interpretation." Journal of Contemporary Ethnography.

In draft. "(How) Does God Speak Back?" Article-length paper. For the Cognitive and Textual Methods Project, Princeton University. To be submitted to Poetics, December 2007.

In draft. "Religion in Events" Article-length paper. For the Social Science Research Council initiative, "Are We Living in a Post-Secular World? Shifting Patterns of Scholarly Attention to Religion."

In preparation. "Practicing Religion," chapter nine of *The Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies*. Cambridge University Press. Robert Orsi, editor.

In preparation. "'... And Every Meaning Shall Have Its Homecoming Festival': *Secularism* in an Age of Immanence" Essay commissioned by the Social Science Research Council for an edited volume in response to Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age*.

Reviews and other publications

2007. "Religion and Spirituality: History, Discourse, Measurement." Social Science Research Council Forum: The Religious Engagements of American Undergraduates. <http://religion.ssrc.org/reforum/>

2006. Book review of *Sacred Circles, Public Squares: the Multicentering of American Religion*. Arthur Farnsley, N.J. Demerath, Etan Diamond, Mary Mapes and Elfriede Wedam. American Historical Review. 111/5: 1537.

2006. Book review of *Elusive Togetherness*. Paul Lichterman. Social Forces. 84/3: 1850-1852.

2006. Book review of *Born Again Bodies: Flesh and Spirit in American Christianities*. R. Marie Griffith. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion. 45: 300-1.

2005. Book review of *Religion in America Since 1945*. Patrick Allitt. Church History 74: 419-21.

2005. Book review of *Congregations in America*. Mark Chaves. Social Forces. 83/4: 1785-1786.

2004. "Spiritual Sisters? Catholic and Buddhist Nuns in Interreligious Dialogue" Executive Report to the Monastic Interreligious Dialogue. With Wendy Cadge.

2004. Book review of *Thin Politics, Thick Moralities: Social Integration Across Communities of Belief*. Benjamin Gregg. Contemporary Sociology 33/3: 371-2.

2003. Book review of *Feminist Narratives and the Sociology of Religion*. Nancy Nason-Clark and Mary Jo Neitz, eds. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion. 42/3: 489.

2002. "Mennonite" entry in the New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements. Stanley Burgess, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

2000. "'You Meet So Many Different People Here': Deciphering Volunteer Appraisal of Diversity and its Consequences." Program on Non-Profit Organizations Working Paper No. 259. New Haven: Yale University.

1999. Book review of *Congregation and Community* Nancy Ammerman, Arthur Farnsley et al. Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly. 28/1: 100-102.

1999. Book review of *Women Against the Good War; Conscientious Objection and Gender on the American Home Front*. Rachel Goossen. Mennonite Quarterly Review 73/2.

1998. Book review of *Disquiet in the Land: Cultural Conflict in American Mennonite Communities*. Fred Kniss American Journal of Sociology. 104/2: 530-1.

1995. "The Meals are the Message: The Growth and Congestion of an AIDS Service Organization's Mission in Multiple Institutional Fields." Program on Non-Profit Organizations Working Paper No. 221. New Haven: Yale University.

1995. Book review of *Vanishing Boundaries: the Religion of Mainline Protestant Baby Boomers*. Contemporary Sociology 24/ 2: 183-4.

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS AND AWARDS

2006. "Teaching and Researching New York City Religions." Wabash Center for Theological Inquiry, Small Project Grants. \$1430.

2006. MacDonald Summer Fellow. Columbia University. \$3000.

2006-08. Faculty Fellow. Cognitive and Textual Methods Project. Center for the Study of Religion, Princeton University. PI: Robert Wuthnow. \$24,000.

2005-06. Young Scholars in American Religion Fellow. Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture, IUPUI.

2004. Research Grant. Society for the Scientific Study of Religion. "Spiritual Sisters? Catholic and Buddhist Nuns in America" \$1500.

2003. Chamberlain Fellowship for Junior Faculty. Columbia University.

2002. Junior Faculty Development Leave. Columbia University.

2002. Junior Faculty Summer Research Grant. Columbia University. \$3000.

2001. Seed Grant. Institute for Social and Economic Research and Policy. Columbia University. \$6000.

1998-2001. Visiting Fellow. Yale University Program on Non-Profit Organizations.

1998-2000. Research Grant. Program on Non-Profit Organizations, Yale University. PI: Richard Wood. "Religion and Public Life in an Era of Institutional Transformation." Funded by the Lilly Endowment. \$2,000.

1999. Ursula M. Niebuhr Lectureship in American Religion. Barnard College.

1998. Research Grant. Program on Non-Profit Organizations, Yale University. PI: Peter Dobkin Hall. Funded by the Kellogg Foundation. \$15,000.

1995-1996. Dissertation Fellowship. Louisville Institute for the Study of Protestantism and American Culture. Louisville, KY.

1995. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Graduate Fellow. Program on Non-Profit Organizations, Yale University. New Haven, CT. \$3300.

1992-1995. Graduate Research Fellow. Center for the Study of American Religion, Princeton University.

1992. Research Grant. Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals, Wheaton Illinois. For the project "Pentecostal Currents in the Mainstream Church." Funded by the Lilly Endowment. \$3200.

PRESENTATIONS

2008. "Mystical Cosmopolitanism." Conference on "Religion, Spirituality, Secularism: Invidious Distinctions and Ambivalent Attachments." Social Science Research Council.

2008. "... And Every Meaning Shall Have Its Homecoming Festival": *Secularism* in an Enchanted Age." Symposium on Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age*. Yale University. (invited lecture)

2008. "The Shock of the Old: American Alternative Spirituality in a New Key." Samuel D. Maloney Lectures in Religion and Society, Davidson College. (invited lectureship)

2006. "Religion and Spirituality: History, Discourse, Measurement." Social Scientific Research Council Seminar Series, New York, New York. (invited lecture)

2006. "Wild-Type Religion." Thematic session, "Identifying Boundaries in Social Research." American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Montreal.

2006. "American Reincarnations." Harvard University Religion and Ethnography Group. (invited lecture)

2006. "Revisiting Religious Experience." Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting. Boston.

2005. "Wonder." Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting. Rochester, New York.

2003. "Interpretive and Relational Practices in Contemporary Spirituality." University of Chicago Divinity School. (invited lecture)

2003. "Religion in Events." Center for the Study of Religion, Princeton University. (invited lecture)

2002. "The Position of the Sacred in Contemporary Alternative Medicine." Center for the Study of Science and Religion, Columbia University. (invited lecture)

2002. "Visions of the Moral Life." Paper presentation at the *Festschrift* for Donald K. Swearer and J. William Frost. Swarthmore College Department of Religion, Swarthmore Pennsylvania. (invited lecture)

2002. "The Elusive Subject: Studying Religion in Non-Religious Institutions" American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Toronto.

2002. "New York's South Asian Muslim Taxi Drivers as Religious Innovators: The Challenges of Daily Practice and Their Challenge to the Study of New Immigrant Religions" Association for the Sociology of Religion Annual Meetings, Chicago.

2001. "Hints Followed by Guesses: Interpreting Religious Talk in Daily Life." Loyola University of Chicago. (invited lecture)

2001. 'You Meet So Many Different People Here': Deciphering Volunteer Appraisal of Diversity and its Consequences." New York Non-profit Network. Rockefeller Brothers Fund Offices, New York New York. (invited lecture)

2000. Deciphering Volunteer Appraisal of Diversity and its Consequences." Yale University Program on Non-Profit Organizations.

1999. "You Meet So Many Different People Here: What Volunteering Might Mean For Citizenship in the Twenty-first Century." Thematic Session, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Chicago.

1997. "Food is Love? The Hazards of Calling Cooking for People with AIDS Religious Practice." Paper presentation at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meetings, San Francisco.

1997. "Religion, Spirituality and Practice: Beyond the Institutional/Individual Divide." Paper presentation at the American Sociological Association Meetings, Religion Section Session, Toronto.

1996. "Contagion and Contamination: Practical and Methodological Hazards of Defining Cooking for People with AIDS a Religious Practice." Paper presentation at the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting. Nashville, TN.

1996. "Social Movement Organizations and Cultural Congestion: The Case of God's Love We Deliver." Paper presentation at the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Culture Section Roundtables. New York, NY.

1996. "God is in the Details: Religion, AIDS, and Daily Practice." Presentation at the Faculty Lunch Series, Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Swarthmore College, Swarthmore PA. (invited lecture)

1995. "'Whatever Work I Do Here -- It's as Though I'm Praying" Paper presentation at the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting. St. Louis, MI.

1995. "'Work is Prayer': Religion, AIDS, and Daily Practice. " Paper presentation at the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Regular Session, Religion. Washington D.C.

1994. "Interpreting Stories in Two Mennonite Charismatic Congregations." Presented at the conference, Pentecostal Currents in the American Church. Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. Sponsored by the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals.

1993. "Mennonites and the Charismatic Movement." Presentation to the Lilly Endowment, Indianapolis, IN.

1993. "Mennonites and Charismatics: Exploring Locations of Power in Congregations." Presented at the conference, Anabaptists and Power: Its Use and Abuse, Elizabethtown College, PA.

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

Reviewer

Competitive grants: Louisville Institute for the Study of Protestantism and American Culture, National Endowment for the Humanities.

Journals (last three years): *American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, *Social Problems*, *Sociological Theory*, *Sociology of Religion*, *Review of Religious Research*, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *Social Psychology Quarterly*

Monographs (last five years): Oxford University Press, Columbia University Press, New York University Press, Alta Mira Press, Temple University Press, Indiana University Press

Consultant

"Ecologies of Learning," New York Theological Seminary/Lilly Endowment, Inc. PI; Lowell Livezey, Ph.D. 2005-2007.

"Mobilizing the Black Church in the Fight Against HIV/AIDS," Columbia School of Applied Public Health. Funded by the National Institutes of Health PI: Joyce Moon-Howard. 2005-06.

"Service and Faith: The Impact on Christian Faith and Congregational Life of Organized Community Caring" Baylor University. PI: Diana Garland. 2002.

"Practicing Christian Faith: Interpreting the Contexts-Strengthening the People" Louisville Institute 1997.

"The Church in the Culture." Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research, Collegeville, MN 1996.

Lilly Endowment Initiative on Christian Faith and Life in Contemporary America. Louisville Institute for the Study of Protestantism in American Culture. 1995.

Conference Organizer

"After Pluralism: Imagining Models of Interreligious Engagement." Two-part, six-day conference planned for the University of Toronto and Columbia University, 2007.

Invited panelist.

- "Are We Living in a Post-Secular World? A Working Meeting on Social Science and the 'Return' of Religion." Sponsored by CUNY Graduate Center and the Social Science Research Council. New York (June 2007).
- "Religious Liberty and the American Creed." Fulbright Institute on the Civilization of the United States. New York University. (June 2007).
- "Can There Be a Social Science of Spirituality? A Working Meeting on Religion, Secularity and Spirituality." Sponsored by the Social Science Research Council and the School for Advanced Research. Santa Fe, New Mexico. (May 2007).
- "Exploring Everyday Intersections of Sacred and Secular: A Consultation." Institute for the Study of Economic Culture, Boston University (2003).

- "A Nation of Religions: The Politics of Pluralism in Multireligious America." Institute for the Study of Economic Culture, Boston University (2002-03).
- Lived Religion Workshop. Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life. Boston College (2002).
- "Healing and the Care of the Patient. Academic and Clinical Colloquium on Spirituality, Religious Wisdom, and the Care of the Patient." St. Vincent's Cancer Center, New York NY (2002).
- "Summer Institute on Religion in U.S. History" sponsored by the United States Information Agency and the Fulbright Commission. New York University (1999).

Association membership and activities.

American Sociological Association:

Section on the Sociology of Culture Council Member 2007-2010

Section on the Sociology of Religion Distinguished Book Award Committee, 2006-07

Religion Regular Sessions Organizer, 2006

Section on Religion Nominations Committee, 2000-2001

American Academy of Religion:

Steering Committee member, "Religion and Cities Consultation" 2006-

Association for the Sociology of Religion:

Executive Council Member 2006-2009

Membership Committee Chair 2006-09

Eastern Sociological Society

Society for the Scientific Study of Religion

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SERVICE AND TEACHING

Religion Department Committees and Service.

Graduate Curriculum Committee (2001-2003)

Director of Undergraduate Studies, General Studies (2001-2002)

Director of Undergraduate Studies, Columbia College & General Studies (2003- 2004)

Junior search committee (Shinto/Japanese religions) 2004-05

Courses taught.

Columbia Religion

Theory and Method in the Study of Religion (advanced undergraduate and graduate seminars)

Religious Worlds of New York (advanced undergraduate ethnographic seminar)

Religion in the American Public Sphere (graduate/undergraduate seminar)

Religions and the Modern World (introductory undergraduate)

Columbia Sociology-Religion

Sociology of Religion (graduate/undergraduate)

Columbia Sociology

Sociology of Mass Media and Popular Culture (introductory undergraduate course)

Columbia Core Curriculum

Contemporary Civilization

Selected undergraduate theses and supervised research.

Rebecca Mermelstein, (2000-01) Messianic Judaism and religious identity formation

Charlotte Raedemakers (2000-01) Sri Rajneesh/OSHO and religious individualism

Isaac Souweine (2000-01) Religion and utopian communities

Alison Hirsh (2001-02) Faith-based social services in New York congregations

Megan Greenwell (2001-02) Tibetan Buddhist rituals in historical and contexts

Seth Wax, (2002-03). Jewish-Buddhist meditation

Michael Agresta, (2003-04). Bolivian land disputes and religious syncretism

Alicia Leibowitz, (2003-04) Domestic abuse in American Judaism

Stephanie Wolfe (2004-05) Postmodern and emerging evangelical congregations

Katharine Gerbner (2005-06) Seventeenth century American Quaker anti-slavery documents

Iman Ahmed (2006-07) Liberation Theology

Shira Danan (2006-07) Teaching religious pluralism in New York public schools

Graduate examination committees.

Jennifer Brunton (Sociology) M.A. 9/01

Elizabeth Seth (Religion) M.A. 12/03

Brian Larsen (Religion) M.A. 6/03

Erika Dyson (Religion) M.A. 3/04, M.Phil 1/06

Tommy Faris (Religion) M.Phil. 3/04

Vanessa Bailey (Religion) M.A. and M.Phil 3/04

Simon Steiner (Religion) M.A. 3/04; M.Phil 10/05

Neil Jackson Young (History) M. A. 11/04, M.Phil 9/05

Joel Bordeaux (Religion) M.A. 6/05

Jodi Eichler-Levine (Religion) M.Phil 4/06

Rosemary Hicks (Religion) M. Phil. 5/06
Brooke-Dodson Lavelle (Religion) M.A. 5/06
Kathryn Aronsohn (Religion) M.A. 12/06
Shana Lessing (Religion) M.A. 12/06
Eric Munson (Religion) M.A. 4/07
Jason Franklin (Religion) M.A. 4/07
Daniel Cheifer (Religion) M.A. 5/07
Jenna Alden (History) M.A. 11/07

Jana Riess (Religion). Ph.D. 9/00. Outside reader.
Mark Hansen, (History) Ph.D. 1/03. Outside reader.
Jennifer Snow (Religion) Ph.D. June 2003. Chair.
Tommy Faris (Religion) Ph.D. June 2007. Chair.
Jodi Eichler-Levine (Religion) Ph.D. July 2007. Chair.

Additional Columbia activities

2005. Author of Columbia University's submission to the Ford Foundation "Difficult Dialogues" initiative to fund new campus programming relating to religious and cultural awareness. (Finalist.)

2006. "New York Religions Map/Sacred Gotham." Faculty director and initiator. Columbia Center for New Media Technology and Learning.

2006-. Invited co-instructor, Columbia School of Journalism Masters of Arts programs in "Politics and Government" (Alexander Stille, instructor) and "Arts and Culture" (Alisa Solomon, instructor).

2006. School of General Studies "First Fridays" Lecturer.

2006- Luce Faculty Seminar on Religion. participant.

2006- Ford Faculty Seminar on Academic Freedom and Religion. participant.

2007- University Seminar on Religion in New York. Founder and Chair.