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The Divinity School
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Personal

Born December 10, 1964, Memphis, Tennessee. Roman Catholic.

Areas of Interest

The problem of God: Fundamental challenges of conceiving the divine; the history of Trinitarian thinking, and its current problems and possibilities; theorizations of the relation between God and the created order, with their theological and philosophical lineages; debates concerning divine action in the world.

Theological anthropology: Human freedom and willing; the nature of human intellection and its metaphysical significance; questions arising from artificial intelligence and cognitive science; the transcendent end of humanity, and related debates surrounding the concept of the supernatural.

The nature and history of Christian theology: The self-understanding of theology, its structure and procedures, and its relationships to trends in metaphysics, epistemology, historical thought and the broader culture of the academy; the contemporary situation in conversation with the tradition of the discipline, especially from the medieval through the early modern periods, and the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The continuing relevance of Thomas Aquinas: His contributions to all the areas of interest outlined above; special concern with questions at the boundary between metaphysics and natural science.

Other figures of particular interest: Augustine, Leibniz, Kant, Schleiermacher, Schelling, Kierkegaard, Maurice Blondel, Ernst Troeltsch, Karl Barth, Henri de Lubac, Austin Farrer, Bernard Lonergan, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Donald MacKinnon, Hans Frei, Michel de Certeau, Eberhard Jüngel, Manfred Frank; Carl Schmitt; Erik Peterson.

Professional Experience

Vanderbilt University, Divinity School and Graduate School

- *Professor of Theology (2014-present)
- *Chair, Graduate Department of Religion (2010-16)
- *Associate Professor of Theology [with tenure] (2005-14)
- *Assistant Professor of Theology [tenure track] (1998-2005)
- *Assistant Professor of Theology [term] (1997-98)

University of Chicago, Basic Program of Liberal Education, Instructor (1995-1996)

Education

Ph.D., University of Chicago, 1997 (Divinity: Theology)

[Thesis: "Divine Simplicity: Theistic Reconstruction in Eberhard Jüngel's Trinitarian *Glaubenslehre*."
Supervisor: David Tracy; Readers, Kathryn Tanner and Bernard McGinn]

M.A.R., Yale University, 1990 (Divinity: Philosophical Theology)

B.A., University of Chicago, 1987 (English Literature and Creative Writing)

Grants, Awards, and Honors

Elected to the American Theological Society (2012)
Vanderbilt University Central Research Scholar Grant (August-December 2009)
Resident Membership [declined] at Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton NJ (February-June 2009)
Visiting Fellowship [declined] at Clare Hall, Cambridge (January-June 2009)
Doctoral thesis sustained 'with distinction' (1997)
William Rainey Harper Dissertation Fellowship, University of Chicago (1996-1997)
Junior Fellowship, Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion, University of Chicago (1994-1995)
Ph.D. qualifying examinations completed 'with distinction' (1994)
Century Fellowship, University of Chicago (1990-1994)
Summa cum laude, Yale Divinity School (1990)
Oliver Ellsworth Daggett Scholarship Prize, Yale Divinity School (1990)
Mary Cady Tew Prize for exceptional ability in philosophy, literature, ethics or history, Yale University (1990)
Graduated with General Honors in the College and Special Honors in English, University of Chicago (1987)
Phi Beta Kappa, University of Chicago (1987)
Academy of American Poets Prize (1986)
John Billings Fiske Poetry Prize (1986)

Published Work: Books

Unspeakable Cults: An Essay in Christology
(Baylor University Press, 2021)

Creation and Transcendence: Theological Essays on the Divine Sublime
(T&T Clark / Bloomsbury, 2021)

Aquinas and Radical Orthodoxy: A Critical Inquiry
(Routledge Press, "Studies in Religion" series, 2011)

Reviews:

Reviews in Religion and Theology 20 (2013), 563-6
International Journal of Systematic Theology 16 (2014), 483-6
The Thomist 79 (2015), 155-60
The Heythrop Journal 59 (2018), 615-6

The Trial of the Witnesses: The Rise and Decline of Postliberal Theology
(Blackwell Publishers, "Challenges in Contemporary Theology" series, 2006)

Reviews:

International Journal of Systematic Theology 9 (2007), 222-4
International Journal of Public Theology 1 (2007), 136-7
Heythrop Journal 49 (2008), 145-7
Modern Theology 24 (2008), 525-8
Religious Studies Review 34 (Mar 2008), 37-8
Journal of Religion 88 (2008), 414-6
European Journal of Theology 17 (2008), 42-4
Toronto Journal of Theology 24 (2008), 316-7
Sino-Christian Studies 5 (2008), 183-6
Theology 111 (2008), 127-8
Wesleyan Theological Journal (2009), 256-9
Scottish Journal of Theology 64 (2011), 110-1

Review Articles:

William Placher and Paul DeHart, "Review Article and Author Response," *Conversations in Religion and Theology* 5 (2007), 136-45

Jason Fout, "Liberalism, Postliberalism, and What (Maybe) Comes After," *Reviews in Religion and Theology* 14 (2008), 556-64

Panel Discussions:

"Responses to *The Trial of the Witnesses*," Philosophy of Religion and Theology Section, Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Conference on the Study of Religion, Nashville, TN, March 2007

Beyond the Necessary God: Trinitarian Faith and Philosophy in the Thought of Eberhard Jüngel (Oxford University Press / American Academy of Religion, 1999).

Reviews:

Theological Studies 62 (2001), 207

Theology Today 58 (2002), 590-3

Journal of Religion 82 (2002), 129-30

Published Work: Articles in Refereed Journals

"Divine Virtues and Divine Ideas of Virtues [*Quaestio Disputata*]," *Theological Studies* 81 (2020), 467-77

"The Creature Makes Itself: Aquinas, the De-idealization of the Eternal Ideas, and the Fate of the Individual," *Theological Studies* 78 (2017), 412-34

"The Eclipse of the Divine Mind: Aquinas, Creation, and Eternal Ideas as Anti-Platonic Epistemology," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovaniensis* 93 (2017), 1-27

"Improvising the Paradigms: Aquinas, Creation and the Eternal Ideas as Anti-Platonic Ontology," *Modern Theology* 32 (2016), 594-621 [Top 20 downloaded article during initial 12 months after online publication.]

"What is not, was not, and will never be: creaturely possibility, divine ideas and the creator's will in Thomas Aquinas," *Nova et Vetera* 13 (2015), 1009-58

"The passage from mind to heart is so long': the riddle of 'repetition' and Kierkegaard's ontology of agency," *Modern Theology* 31 (2015), 91-122

"*Ter mundus accipit infinitum*: the dogmatic coordinates of Schleiermacher's Trinitarian treatise," *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 52 (2010), 17-39

"On being heard but not seen: Milbank and Lash on Aquinas, analogy and agnosticism," *Modern Theology* 26 (2010), 243-77

Response to Review Article by William Placher of *The Trial of the Witnesses*, *Conversations in Religion and Theology* 5 (2007), 140-5

"The Ambiguous Infinite: Jüngel, Marion and the God of Descartes," *Journal of Religion* 82 (Jan 2002), 75-96

"Doctrine of Creation, Creation of Doctrine," *Anglican Theological Review* 83 no 2 (Spring 2001), 297-306
[Invited Review Article]

"Eberhard Jüngel on the Structure of Theology," *Theological Studies* 57 (1996), 46-64

Published Work: Book Chapters

"Farrer's Theism: *Finite and Infinite*"

(in *Austin Farrer for Today: A Prophetic Agenda*, edited by Richard Harries and Stephen Platten, SCM Press, 2020)

"The instance of pattern: Kathryn Tanner's Trinitarianism"

(in *The Gift of Theology: The Contribution of Kathryn Tanner*, edited by Hilda P. Koster and Rosemary P. Carbine, Fortress Press, 2015)

“On the contrary: Thomistic second thoughts on analogy and Trinity in Eberhard Jüngel”

(in *Indicative of Grace – Imperative of Freedom: Essays in Honor of Eberhard Jüngel*, edited by R. David Nelson, T&T Clark 2014)

“Absolute Dependence or Infinite Desire? Comparing Soteriological Themes in Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard”

(in *Schleiermacher und Kierkegaard: Subjektivität und Wahrheit / Subjectivity and Truth*, edited by Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Richard Crouter, Theodor Jørgensen and Claus-Dieter Osthövener, Walter de Gruyter, 2006)

Published Work: Solicited Submissions

“Involved Surfaces” (Review Forum on Linn Tonstad, *God and Difference*, with author response), *Syndicate Theology* (online publication), May 2017.

Published Work: Book Reviews and Notices

Review of Jean-Luc Marion, *The Rigor of Things*, in *Theological Studies* [forthcoming]

Review of Andreas Schuele, ed, *Who is Jesus Christ for Us Today?* in *Interpretation* 64 (2010), 320-1

Review of Eberhard Jüngel, *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith*, in *Theological Studies* 63 (2002), 625-7

Review of Eberhard Jüngel, *God's Being is in Becoming*, in *Bulletin of the Institute for Reformed Theology* 2 (2002), 11-2

Review of Eberhard Jüngel, *Theological Essays II*, in *Anglican Theological Review* 79 (1997), 280-1

Review of Roland Zimany, *Vehicle for God*, in *Journal of Religion* 77 (1997), 480-1

Published Work: Encyclopedia or Dictionary Entries

“Radical Orthodoxy” in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*, ed Daniel Patte (Cambridge Univ Press, 2010)

“Postliberal Theology” in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology*, ed Ian MacFarland et al (Cambridge Univ Press, 2011)

Work in Progress

(Book) *God's Other Life: Schleiermacher, the Modern Trinity, and the Nicene Faith*

Invited and/or Refereed Lectures

“Paul's Christology and Barth's Early Political Theology”

Invited address at the 2019 Karl Barth Graduate Student Colloquium

Center for Barth Studies, Princeton Theological Seminary (Princeton, NJ, August 2019)

“Creation, Nature, Grace: Clashing Visions in Milbank and Aquinas”

Invited lecture at the Lumen Christi Institute, co-sponsored by the Martin Marty Center

Swift Hall, Divinity School, University of Chicago (Chicago, IL, February 2019)

“The Original Impossibility of Political Theology”

Address at the inaugural meeting of the Political Theology Network

Emory University (Atlanta, GA, February 2018)

“Theology: Protestant, Catholic, Natural—A Report”

Invited lecture to the Theology Department and other University members

Lee University (Cleveland, TN, February 2017)

“Mapping Christian theology today: Where is the field, and where is it going?”

Invited lecture before the Faculty of Theology
Cambridge University (Cambridge, U.K., February 2015)

“Theology and the Archaeology of Human Personhood”

Response to paper by Wentzel van Huyssteen
American Theological Society Meeting, Princeton Seminary (Princeton, March 2014)

“God, Freedom and Human Dignity”

Response to the volume by Ronald Highfield
Christian Scholars Conference, Lipscomb University (Nashville, June 2013)

“Karl Barth: the Great No and the Great Yes”

Relevant Religion Lecture Series
Vanderbilt Divinity School (Nashville, December 2012)

“The Return of Metaphysics”

Responses to the volume *Belief and Metaphysics*
Annual Meeting, American Academy of Religion (Chicago, October 2008)

“The Author Responds,” Panel Session devoted to *The Trial of the Witnesses*

Philosophy of Religion and Theology Section
Annual Meeting, Southeastern Conference on the Study of Religion (Nashville, March 2007)

“Absolute Dependence or Infinite Desire?”

International Schleiermacher Kierkegaard Congress (Copenhagen, October 2003)

“Troeltsch and Tillich,” Response to the panel

Nineteenth Century Theology and Tillich Groups Joint Session.
Annual Meeting, American Academy of Religion (Toronto, November 2002)

“Schleiermacher’s Theory of Subjectivity,” Response to the panel

Schleiermacher Group
Annual Meeting, American Academy of Religion (Nashville, November 2000)

Professional Practice

Book manuscripts reviewed for Westminster John Knox Press (2000), Oxford University Press (2007, 2011, 2018), and Catholic University of America Press (2020)

Article manuscripts reviewed for *Journal of Religion* (2005, 2012), *Harvard Theological Review* (2008, 2011), *International Journal of Systematic Theology* (2013), *Modern Theology* (2014, 2018), *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* (2014, 2016), *Theological Studies* (2014, 2017, 2018, 2020), *Forum Philosophicum* [Cracow] (2016), *Scottish Journal of Theology* (2017), *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* (2018), *Religions* (2019), *Studia Theologica* [Oslo] (2020)

Reviewed cases for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure for Baylor University, Fordham University, the University of Chicago, and Boston College

Reviewed case for promotion to Professor, St. Olaf College

Member of external review team, contributor to report on Boston University’s Graduate Division of Religious Studies (2016)

Committee Memberships (Divinity School or Graduate Department of Religion)

Global Education Ad Hoc Committee (Fall 2019)
Chair, Review Committee for Promotion to Full (Research) Professor, Jay Geller (2018-9)
Curriculum Transformation Steering Committee (Fall 2016)
Divinity School Strategic Plan Workgroup (2015-6)
Chair, Ad Hoc Self-Study Committee of the Graduate Department of Religion (2014-5)
Lilly Fund / Theology and Practice Program Steering Committee (2010-16)
Academic Planning / Institutional Planning Group (2010-16 [ex officio as GDR Chair])
Chair, Graduate Department of Religion Policy and Admissions Committee (2010-16)
Convener, Dean's Task Force on Divinity School Faculty Governance (2008-9)
Chair, Review Committee for Promotion and Tenure, Kathleen Flake (2006-7)
Tenure-Track Second-Year Reappointment Review Committee for Paul Lim (2007-8)
Term Reappointment Review Committee for Alice Hunt (2005-6)
ATS Accreditation Subcommittee for Faculty and Research (2004-5)
Divinity School Admissions Committee (2004-5)
Search Committee, E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Chair in Theology (2003-4)
Chair, Academic Programs Committee (2002-3)
Master of Divinity Curriculum Revision Committee (2001-2)
Search Committee, Junior Position in Theology (2000-3)
Graduate Department of Religion Policy and Admissions Committee (2000-01, 2001-2, 2002-3, 2003-4, 2007-8, Fall 2008, 2018-9)
Search Committee, E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Chair in Theology (1999-2000)
Search Committee, Junior Position in American Religious History (1999-2000)
Personnel and Policy Committee (1998-9, 1999-2000, 2002-3, 2003-4, 2007-8, 2010-16 [ex officio as GDR Chair], 2019-20, Fall 2020)
Search Committee, Malloy Chair in Catholic Studies (1998-9)
Academic Programs Committee (1997-8, 1999-2000, 2000-1, Spring 2006, Spring 2010, Spring 2018, 2018-9)

Committee Memberships (University)

University Promotion and Tenure Review Committee (Spring 2018- Spring 2020)
Search Committee, Dean of the Graduate School (2015-6)
Committee on the Future of the Vanderbilt Libraries (2014-5)
Graduate Faculty Council (2010-16)
Search Committee, Chair of Department of Religious Studies (2009-10)
Faculty Senate Committee on Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom (Fall 2008)
Chair, Faculty Senate Committee on Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom (2007-8)
Faculty Senate Committee on Senate Affairs (2006-7)
Vanderbilt University Faculty Senator representing Divinity School (2006-Fall 2008)
Institutional Repository Policy Board (Spring 2004)
Community Giving Campaign Allocation Committee (2001-2, 2002-3, 2003-4, 2004-5)
Library Committee (1998-9, 1999-2000, 2000-1, 2001-2)
Scholarly Communications Group (1998-9, 1999-2000)

Courses Taught

Theology of Martin Luther
The Doctrine of the Trinity
Calvin as Systematician: *The Institutes*
Kierkegaard the Theologian
Schleiermacher
Seminar: Recent Works in Theological Method
God in the Western Tradition
Introduction to Constructive Christian Theology I & II
Postliberalism in Theology

Contemporary Theology: Twentieth Century Survey
Readings in Theological Postmodernism
Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century
Seminar: The Thought of John Milbank
Theology of Karl Barth
Thomas Aquinas
Seminar: Bonhoeffer
Jewish-Christian Relations (co-taught with A.J. Levine)
Trinity: The Nicene Heritage
Readings in Political Theology and the Philosopher's Paul

Dissertations Supervised at Vanderbilt (completed)

Joshua Braley, "Jonathan Z. Smith and the Revision of Constructive Christian Theological Method"
Burt Fulmer, "Identities Bought and Sold, Identities Received as Grace: A Theological Criticism of and Alternative to Consumerist Understandings of the Self"
Nathan Kerr, "Christ, History and Apocalyptic: The Politics of Christian Mission"
David Dault, "The Covert Magisterium: Theology, Textuality, and the Question of Scripture"
Joshua Davis, "Act and Exigence: Creation, Grace, and Christian Subjectivity"
Travis Ables, "The Pneumatological Construction of the Graced Subject in the Western Tradition"
Sean Hayden, "Democracy and Revelation: the Early Theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in its Weimar Context, 1918-1933"
Sarah Sanderson-Doughty, "The Practice of Forgiveness as the Visible Holiness of the Church: A Proposed Reformed Position"
Daryl Ellis, "Word and Trauma: Retrieving the Augustinian Inner Word as a Theology of Desire"
Christopher Corbin, "Uniting Warmth and Light: The Centrality of the Imagination in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's Theological and Philosophical Synthesis of Reason and the Affections"

Professional Memberships

American Academy of Religion
American Theological Society
Catholic Theological Society of America

Languages

Latin, German, French

References (contact information available upon request)

J. Patout Burns
Edward A. Malloy Professor of Catholic Studies (Emeritus)
Vanderbilt University

Sarah Coakley
Norris-Hulse Professor of Divinity
University of Cambridge

David Tracy
Greeley Distinguished Service Professor of Catholic Studies, Theology, Philosophy of Religions (Emeritus)
University of Chicago

M. Douglas Meeks
Cal Turner Chancellor's Professor of Wesleyan Studies

Vanderbilt University

Kathryn Tanner
Frederick Marquand Professor of Systematic Theology
Yale University