

# Rebekah Trollinger

Department of Religion  
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## Academic Employment

- 2024-present: Assistant Professor, Department of Religion, University of Vermont  
2023-2024: Plowshares Associate Professor of Religion and African and African American Studies, Earlham College  
2018-2023: Plowshares Assistant Professor of Religion, Earlham College  
2016-2018: Visiting Assistant Professor, Religion Department, Department of English, African and African American Studies Program, Earlham College  
2015-2016: Visiting Assistant Professor, African and African American Studies Program and Religion Department, Earlham College  
2014-2015: Visiting Lecturer, Department of English, Indiana University-Bloomington

## Education

- Ph.D., Department of English, Indiana University Bloomington, August 2014  
Minor Field: Religious Studies  
M.A., English, Indiana University Bloomington, August 2007  
B.A., English, *summa cum laude*, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, May 2004

## Research Interests

African American religious history; Nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century American fiction and religion; Religious autobiography and conversion narratives; African American literature; theories of race and gender; literature and psychology; secularisms.

## Book Project, *Acts of Obedience: Race and Gender in Rebecca Jackson's Visionary Writing*

My current book examines the writings of Black Shaker visionary Rebecca Jackson. Active in the middle of the nineteenth century, Jackson's accounts of her dreams, visions, and theology are a rare look at mid-century Black women itinerant preachers, as well as of African American members of Shaker communities—radical Christian utopian communities committed to racial and gender equality, economic sharing, and celibacy. This work will expand current understandings of Black religious women in nineteenth-century America. Further, my study of Jackson's writings also has the potential to reshape the map of contemporary feminisms. Recent works in religious studies have helpfully identified how American feminisms' reliance on concepts such as agency and self-determination fail to address religious women, and especially religious women of color. I want to draw on Rebecca Jackson in order to ask how our understandings of concepts such as bodily self-determination and agency change when meditating on the writings of a Black Shaker woman.

### **Grants, Fellowships, and Awards**

American Association of University Women American Short-Term Research Publication Grant, Summer, 2022.

Professional Development Grant, Earlham College, Summer 2022.

American Association of University Women Postdoctoral Research Leave Fellowship, Alternate, 2021-2022.

NetVUE Vocation Workshop Grant, Summer 2020 (moved to Summer 2021).

Professional Development Grant, Earlham College, Summer 2018.

Digital Writing Workshop, Earlham College, Spring 2017.

Tarkington Fellowship in American Literature, Indiana University, Fall 2010.

### **Selected Publications**

“Rebecca Jackson and the Problem of Celibacy.” *Religion and American Culture*, vol. 32, no. 3, fall 2022, pp. 375-404.

Book review of *Realist Ecstasy: Religion, Race, and Performance in American Literature*, by Lindsay V. Reckson. *American Studies*, vol. 59, no. 4 (2020): 71-72.

“Revivals and Camp Meetings.” *The World of Jim Crow America: A Daily Life Encyclopedia*, edited by Steven A. Reich, ABC-CLIO, 2019, pp. 589-92.

“‘A New Religious Ideal’: George Albert Coe, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Religious Emotion.” *Arizona Quarterly*, vol. 72, no. 2, summer 2016, pp. 61-82.

“Sweet and Clean Like a Washing Machine: Turn-of-the-Century Crowd Psychology and a Pentecostal Politics of Race.” [Revise and Resubmit with *American Studies*]

“The Pleasure of Habit.” *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, vol. 71, no. 4, 2007, pp. 531-47.

Book review of *The Rabbi’s Daughter: A Memoir*, by Reva Mann. *The Indiana Review*, vol. 31, no. 1, 2009, pp. 80.

### **Invited Talks**

Presentation on my research on Rebecca Jackson (December 2022), Indianapolis Branch of the AAUW, Indianapolis, IN.

Interview (March 2021), *Philosophy Outreach Project*, Philosophy Department, Ball State University.

“19<sup>th</sup>-Century Spiritualism and NRMs” (November 2020), Religion in American Life undergraduate class, Alleghany College.

“Sweet and Clean Like a Washing Machine: Turn of the Century Crowd Psychology and a Pentecostal Politics of Race” (September 2012), Americanist Research Colloquium, Indiana University.

“Pentecostalism in Print: Reading *The Apostolic Faith*” (March 2010), Protestant Christianities Master’s Class, Department of Religious Studies, University of Dayton.

### **Conference Presentations**

“What we teach the dead: Rebecca Jackson, Spiritualist Practices, and Refusing Abuse” (March 2022), C19: The Society of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Americanists, Miami.

“‘He Had Not Power to Touch Me’: Rebecca Cox Jackson’s Celibacy” (November 2021), Religion and Sexuality Unit, American Academy of Religion.

“The Powerful Celibacy of Shaker Visionary Rebecca Cox Jackson” (March 2020), Feminist Theologies in American Literature session, Northeast Modern Language Association, Boston.

“Religious Rhetoric and Alternative Feminisms: Rebecca Cox Jackson and Black Womanhood in a Shaker Community” (October 2017), Feminisms and Rhetorics, University of Dayton.

“Subconscious and Soul in Pauline Hopkins’s *Of One Blood*” (October 2015), Sacred Literature, Secular Religion: A Conference on Cultural Practices, Le Moyne College.

“Pauline Hopkins and the Idea of the Soul” (May 2015), Christianity and Literature Conference: West Coast Regional, Seattle University [regretfully declined].

“Sweet and Clean as a Washing Machine: Early Pentecostalism and Psychology at the Turn of the Century” (January 2011), MLA, Los Angeles, CA.

“The Potential of Ecstasy: Race, Pentecostalism, and Psychology at the Turn of the Century” (May 2010), C19: The Society of 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Americanists, Penn State University, University Park, PA.

“The Pleasure of Habit in Mennonite Cookbooks” (Fall 2006), Mennonite/s Writing, Bluffton University, Bluffton, Ohio.

“An Act of Faith: Allegory and Narrative in Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*” (Spring 2006), Festival of Faith and Writing, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

### **Organized Symposia**

Co-Organizer and Presenter, “Building an Equitable Search: Best Practices for an Antiracist, DEI-informed Search Committee” (April 2021), Earlham College.

Co-Organizer, Faculty Retreat, “Antiracist Pedagogies in the Classroom, the Field, Collaborative Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity” (Summer-Fall 2020), Earlham College.

Organizer, Celebration of Toni Morrison (Spring 2020), Earlham College.

Co-Organizer, Women’s History Month events (Spring 2020), Earlham College.

### **Teaching Experience**

*University of Vermont*

Courses: Race and Religion in America; Interpretations of Religion; Prophetic Black Women

*Earlham College*

Courses: Senior Capstone in Religion; Theories and Methods of Religion; Prophetic Black Women; Radical Christianities; History of African American Religious Experiences; Black American Women Preachers of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century; Religion and Spirit in African American Literature; Religion and Popular Literature

### **Senior Thesis Advising**

*Earlham College*

Grace Neudek. “The Public Universal Friend and the Lives of Members of the Society of Universal Friends.” (B.A. thesis, Religion, Earlham College, 2022). Chair.

Nick Carrizales. “A Biblical Argument of How Capital Punishment Prevents Redemption.” (B.A. thesis, Religion, Earlham College, 2022). Chair.

Bridget Lewis. “Inviting Complexity: Loss and Higher Calling in the Life of Yashodhara.” (B.A. thesis, Religion, Earlham College, 2022). Chair.

Eva Coley. “The Case for a ‘Rational’ Suicide: Examining the Relationship Between Self-Interest and Emotion through the Lens of LaVeyan Satanism.” (B.A. thesis, Religion, Earlham College, 2020). Chair.

Karly Hagerty. “These Children that Come at You With Knives: The Construction of the Castrated Woman as Told Through *The Haunting of Sharon Tate*.” (B.A. thesis, Religion, Earlham College, 2020). Chair.

Celia Carr. “Toward a Mycotheology.” (B.A. thesis, Religion, Earlham College, 2019). Chair.

Raven Thibodeaux, “Just Pray on It: Addressing the Sources of Damaging Stigmas that Surround Mental Illness in the Black Church.” (B.A. thesis, African and African American Studies, Earlham College, 2019). Chair.

Izzi Wilhelm. “The Evolution of Emptiness: How Racism in White Buddhist Communities Led to the Emergence of Black Dharma.” (B.A. thesis, Religion, Earlham College, 2018). Second reader.

Cherrah Barclay. “The Reverberation of Prophetic Black Voices: A Critique of Popular Culture, the Exclusion of Women in Prophethood, and the Value of Prophetic Voice Through Music.” (B.A. thesis, African and African American Studies, Earlham College, 2017). Chair.

Louisa Perry-Farr. “Black Women in the Church: Their Everyday Struggles of Faith and Life.” (B.A. thesis, Religious, Earlham College, 2017). Second reader.

### **Departmental and College Service**

*Earlham College*

Chair, Religion Department (2018-present)

Chair, Diversity Progress Committee (2020)

Nominating Committee, (2022-present)

Diversity Progress Committee (2018-present)

Student Conduct Council (2020-present)

Search Committee, Registrar position (Spring 2021)

Search Committee, CIO position (Spring 2021)

Chair, Search Committee, Jewish Studies VAP and Chair of Jewish Studies Program (Spring 2020)

Admissions and Financial Aid Advisory Committee (2018-2019)

Major advising in Religion, African and African American Studies, and English (2016-present)

First-year advising (2016-present)

### **Professional Affiliations**

American Academy of Religion

C19: The Society of Nineteenth-Century Americanists

Modern Language Association

Northeast Modern Language Association

United Academics