

Debra Scoggins Ballentine
Associate Professor
Department of Religion, Rutgers
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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2018-present Associate Professor, Department of Religion, Rutgers
2012-2018 Assistant Professor, Department of Religion, Rutgers
2010 Instructor, Brown University Continuing Education
2006-2010 Graduate Student Instructor, Brown University
2004 Instructor, University of Georgia
2002-2003 Graduate Student Instructor, University of Georgia

EDUCATION

2012 PhD, Religious Studies, Brown University
2007 MA, Religious Studies, Brown University
2003 MA, Religion, University of Georgia
2001 BA, Major: Religion; Minors: Anthropology, Biology, University of Georgia

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Hebrew Bible
Ancient Israelite and Judean History and Religions
Ancient West Asian Literatures and Religions
Mythmaking in the Ancient World
Violence in Biblical Traditions
History of Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible
Early Jewish and Early Christian Exegesis
Second Temple Judaism
Hebrew and Northwest Semitic Languages

PUBLICATIONS

Book

The Conflict Myth and the Biblical Tradition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Journal Articles, Peer-reviewed

“Foreignization in Ancient Competition.” *Journal of Religious Competition in Antiquity* 1 (2019): 18-36.

“Exile and Return of the First Temple Vessels: Competing Postexilic Perspectives and Claims of Continuity.” *Near Eastern Archaeology* 82.3 (2019): 132-39.

Chapters in Collected Volumes

“Violence and the Bible.” In *The Cambridge World History of Violence, Volume 1: The Prehistoric and Ancient Worlds*. Edited by Linda Fibiger, Garrett G. Fagan, and Mark Hudson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.

“Israelite Religion in its Syro-Canaanite Context.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Religions in the Ancient Near East*. Edited by Tawny Holm. Oxford University Press, in production.

“‘It is God that Arbitrates the Scales of War’: Divine Agency in Judean Portrayals of Battle against Antiochus IV Epiphanes.” In *Visualizing War: Interplay between Battle Narratives Across Antiquity*. Edited by Alice König and Nicolas Wiater. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, expected publication 2020.

“Protective Violence, Punitive Mutilation, Spousal Relations, and Gender Hierarchies in the Legal Case of Deuteronomy 25:11-12.” In *With the Loyal You Shall Show Yourself Loyal: Essays on Relationships in Honor of Saul M. Olyan*. Edited by Tracy Lemos, Debra Scoggins Ballentine, Karen B. Stern, Jordan D. Rosenblum. Atlanta: SBL Press, expected publication November 2020.

“What Ends Might Ritual Violence Accomplish?: The Case of Rechab and Baanah in 2 Samuel 4.” Pages 9-26 in *Ritual Violence in the Hebrew Bible: New Perspectives*. Edited by Saul M. Olyan. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

“Revising a Myth: The Targum of Psalm 74 and the Exodus Tradition.” Pages 107-118 in *The One Who Sows Bountifully: Essays in Honor of Stanley K. Stowers*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013.

Encyclopedia Entries

“Ephraim.” Page 304 in *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Ancient Mediterranean Religions*. Edited by E. Orlin, L. Fried, N. Denzey Lewis, M. Satlow. New York: Routledge, 2016.

“Hannah.” Page 386 in *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Ancient Mediterranean Religions*. Edited by E. Orlin, L. Fried, N. Denzey Lewis, M. Satlow. New York: Routledge, 2016.

“Jonah.” Pages 485-86 in *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Ancient Mediterranean Religions*. Edited by E. Orlin, L. Fried, N. Denzey Lewis, M. Satlow. New York: Routledge, 2016.

“Obadiah.” Page 663 in *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Ancient Mediterranean Religions*. Edited by E. Orlin, L. Fried, N. Denzey Lewis, M. Satlow. New York: Routledge, 2016.

“Baal.” in *Bible Odyssey* (www.bibleodyssey.org). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014. (peer reviewed)

“The Kingdom of Judah.” in *Bible Odyssey* (www.bibleodyssey.org). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014. (peer reviewed)

Book Reviews

“Review of Brian R. Doak, *The Last of the Rephaim: Conquest and Cataclysm in the Heroic Ages of Ancient Israel*.” *Review of Biblical Literature*, 18 (2016).

“Review of Andrew R. Davis, *Reconstructing the Temple: The Royal Rhetoric of Temple Renovation in the Ancient Near East and Israel*.” *Journal of Semitic Studies*, under contract.

“Review of Gregory Mobley, *The Return of the Chaos Monsters—And Other Backstories of the Bible*.” *Review of Biblical Literature*, under contract.

“Review of Dexter Callender, ed., *Myth and Scripture*.” *Review of Biblical Literature*, under contract.

Under review, submitted, or in progress, tentative titles

“Theorizing Myth to Facilitate Comparison and Re-Description in Biblical Studies.” Special Issue on “Myth-making in the Hebrew Bible,” *Religions*, expected publication Summer 2020.

“Zechariah’s Disposal of ‘Wickedness’ in Post-exilic Judah.” Submitted to the *Journal of Ancient Judaism*.

“Smiting in the Fifth [Rib]: How a Peculiar Phrase for Assassination Elucidates a Text Critical Question.” for submission to the *Journal of Biblical Literature*.

“The Vocabulary of Violence in Biblical Narratives.” for submission to the *Journal of Ancient Judaism*.

“‘Sanctification’ of Violence: When ‘Scripture’ Features Divine Beings and ‘Holy Men’ as Agents of Violence.” for submission to *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*.

“*Shēdīm*: Shades of Difference Between ‘Demons’ and God(s).” for submission to the *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions*.

“The Feast Trap Motif in Ancient Near Eastern Literature.” for submission to the *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Society*.

“Translating ‘Monotheism’: How Theological Paradigms Shape Biblical Translations.” for submission to *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions*.

“A Commentary on the Queen of Heaven, ‘Foreign Gods,’ ‘Other Gods,’ and Theological Apologies in Jeremiah 44.” for submission to the *Journal of Ancient Judaism*.

“*So Says the Lord, ‘I Am Against You’*”: *Competing Theological Apologies in Ancient Near Eastern Discourse on Political Disasters*. book proposal for submission to an academic press.

Edited and Co-edited Volumes

Co-editor, *With the Loyal You Shall Show Yourself Loyal: Essays on Relationships in Honor of Saul M. Olyan*. Edited by Tracy Lemos, Debra Scoggins Ballentine, Karen B. Stern, Jordan D. Rosenblum. SBL Press, expected publication November 2020.

Guest Editor for Special Issue, “Myth-making in the Hebrew Bible,” *Religions*, expected publication Summer 2020.

Editorial Board, *Journal of Religious Competition in Antiquity*, 2019-present

CONFERENCE PAPERS

2019 Response Paper to “Myth Theory in the Study of Ancient Religion; Bible, Myth, and Myth Theory,” Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, San Diego, CA, November 23-26

2019 Response Paper to “Religion and the Comparative Method; Religions of Israel and Judah in their West Asian Environment,” Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, San Diego, CA, November 23-26 (invited)

2018 “Theological Play with Foreign Kings in Biblical Explanations of Violence,” Annual Meeting for the New England and Eastern Canada Region of the Society of Biblical Literature, New Haven, CT, April 20

2017 “‘They Smote Him in the Fifth’: The Rhetorical Work of an Uncommon Phrase in 2 Samuel,” Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Boston, MA, November 18-21

2017 “Exile and Return of the First Temple Vessels: Claims of Continuity after Disruption within Post-exilic Competition,” Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Boston, MA, November 18-21

2017 Panel member for “Session 2: The Tenure Track Position - What You Should Know and What I Wish I Had Known,” 2017 Brandeis-Brown-Harvard-Yale Day for Hebrew Bible, Brown University, April 7 (invited)

2016 Response to Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, “Building a Back-story: Archaeology and the Crafting of Israel’s Conquest Narratives,” Princeton Theological Seminary Old Testament Research Colloquium, Princeton, NJ, October 18 (invited)

2016 “Violence and the Bible,” Conference on the World History of Violence, Rome, June 20-22 (invited)

2016 Panel member for “Online Teaching,” RU Online Learning Conference Mid-Atlantic Region, New Brunswick, January 11 (invited)

2015 Panel member for “Moving Beyond the Lecture: Online Teaching,” Office of Instructional and Research Technology Annual Showcase, Rutgers University, December 4 (invited)

2015 “The (Mis)Foreignization Problem in Hebrew Bible Studies,” Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, GA November 23 (invited)

2014 Panel member on how the Brown Religious Studies graduate program prepared us for the professional responsibilities of being a full time faculty member, Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning and Department of Religious Studies, Brown University, April 4 (invited)

2013 “What Ends Might Ritual Violence Accomplish?: The Case of Rechab and Baanah in 2 Samuel 4,” Moskow Symposium: Theorizing Ritual Violence in the Hebrew Bible, Brown University, May 5-6 (invited)

2012 “Revising a Myth: The Targum of Psalm 74 and the Exodus Tradition,” Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Chicago, IL, November 20

2012 “What Ends Might Ritual Violence Accomplish?: The Case of Rechab and Baanah in 2 Samuel 4,” International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, July 23 (invited)

2011 “The Mythic Motif of YHWH’s Authority over the Sea: The Cases of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, Jesus, and Gamaliel,” Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, San Francisco, CA, November 21

2011 “YHWH Among Warrior Deities,” New England Regional Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Newton, MA, April 29

2006 “The Development of the ‘Way of YHWH’ Motif in Second Isaiah,” European Association of Biblical Scholars Conference, Piliscaba, Hungary, August 8

2006 “Cain, heretical (br)Other,” Religious Studies Conference: “How Intense is the Zeal”: Creating Religious Orthodoxy in the Ancient Mediterranean and Near East, Providence, RI, April 9

TEACHING

Undergraduate Courses Taught

Introduction to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Religions of the Western World

Ancient Near Eastern Religions

Introduction to the Bible I: Torah and Prose

Introduction to the Bible II: Prophets and Poetry

Hebrew Bible

Hebrew Prophets

The Bible and Archeology

Gods in the Bible

“Scripture” in the First Century

Who Wrote the Bible?

The Birth and Death of God from Mesopotamia to Post-Modernity

The ‘Way of the Lord’ in the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, and Dead Sea Scrolls

The New Testament World

Introduction to Biblical Hebrew

Readings in Biblical Hebrew

extra-curricular Aramaic reading independent study

Graduate-level Courses Taught

Sanctifying Violence and the Biblical Tradition

Theory and Method in the Study of Religion

Targumic Aramaic

Activities for Specific Graduate Students

MA Capstone Advisor, Matthew DeRosa, Spring 2019

MA Comprehensive Exams Reader, Pnina Zunger, Jewish Studies, Rutgers, Spring 2017

MA Thesis Defense Committee Member, Charles Loder, Jewish Studies, Rutgers, 2016

MA Thesis Defense Committee Member, Daniyah Hannini, Religion, Rutgers, 2015

MA Comprehensive Exams Reader, Charles Loder, Jewish Studies, Rutgers, 2015

Pedagogical Training

Certificate in the Teaching of Higher Education, Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning, Brown University

RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

2008 Research in the Mari Archives for Saul Olyan, Brown University

2009 Assistant Editor, *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, Brown University

2005-2006 Research on contemporary conservative religious culture for Elizabeth Castelli, visiting scholar at the Pembroke Center, Brown University

2005-2006 Assistant Editor, *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, Brown University

GRANTS

2020-2021 Rutgers Humanities Plus Grant

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Field Service

2015-present Co-chair 'Bible, Myth, and Myth Theory' Unit, Society of Biblical Literature

2016-2018 Steering Committee 'Religious Competition in Late Antiquity' Unit, Society of Biblical Literature

2012-present Steering Committee, 'Bible, Myth, and Myth Theory' Unit, Society of Biblical Literature

review of book proposals for Oxford University Press

review of book proposals for Routledge Press

review of book manuscript for T & T Clark

review of articles for journal *Religions*

review of research funding proposals for European Research Council

University Service

2019 Fall-present committee member for planning Ancient Mediterranean Studies programming

2018 Fall Semester-present Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Religion

2017 Spring Semester, Acting Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Religion
2015-2018 Department Representative on the Rutgers Faculty Council
2015-present member of Department of Religion Curriculum Committee
2015 Humanities Faculty Representative, Rutgers Honors College Showcase, February 20
2015 Humanities Faculty Representative, Rutgers Honors College Showcase, March 9
2015 Rutgers Day organizer for Department of Religion program and table
2014 Rutgers Day organizer for Department of Religion program and table
2013-2014 Educational Enrichment Review Committee for UAA, Faculty Member
2013 representative for the Department of Religion at University SAS Majors Fair
2011 Graduate Student Liaison for the Graduate Student and Postgraduate Parents group, Sarah
Doyle Women's Center, Brown University

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Society of Biblical Literature
North American Association for the Study of Religion

LANGUAGES

Ancient Languages

Hebrew (biblical, Qumran, Rabbinic), Aramaic, Ugaritic, Akkadian, Greek, Latin
Rudimentary reading: Syriac, Ge'ez, Phoenician

Modern Languages

Reading Proficiency: French, German, modern Hebrew
Rudimentary reading: Spanish, Italian