

WILLIAM ALDEN ROBERT

Syracuse University
Department of Religion
Hall of Languages 501
Syracuse NY 13244
wrobert@syr.edu

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Syracuse University

Professor, Department of Religion, 2022–present

Affiliated faculty, Department of Women’s and Gender Studies

Affiliated faculty, Program in Global Premodern Studies

Affiliated faculty, Program in LGBTQ Studies

Associate Professor, Department of Religion, 2016–22

Assistant Professor, Department of Religion, 2011–16

Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Religion, 2010–11

Humanities Postdoctoral Faculty Fellow, Department of Religion, 2006–10

Louisiana State University

Instructor, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, 2005–06

University of California, Santa Barbara

Instructor, Department of Religious Studies, 2002–05

EDUCATION

PhD Religious Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2005

Dissertation: “Crossing: Simone Weil, Mystics, Politics”

MA Religion, University of Chicago Divinity School, 1999

MA Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities, University of Chicago, 1997

BA Philosophy and Literature (high honors, *cum laude*), Davidson College, 1996

What follows documents selected work done between 2010 and 2025.

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Unbridled: Studying Religion in Performance (University of Chicago Press, 2022)

Revivals: Of Antigone (State University of New York Press, 2015)

Trials: Of Antigone and Jesus (Fordham University Press, 2010)

Journal Articles

- “Learning Nothing,” *Religious Studies Review* 51, no. 2 (2025): 353–56
- “My Neuromatic Cut-Up,” *Religious Studies Review* 49, no. 3 (2023): 323–24
- “Pedagogical Cliff-Jumping,” *Teaching Theology and Religion* 24, no. 1 (2021): 55–64
- “Signs and Presents,” *Nabokov Studies* 15 (2017) doi 10.1353/nab.2017.0006
- “Nude, Glorious, Living,” *Political Theology* 14, no. 1 (2013): 115–30
- “Performing Religiously Between Passion and Resistance,” *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory* 12, no. 2 (2012): 69–84
- “A Mystic Impulse: From Apophatics to Decreation in Pseudo-Dionysius, Meister Eckhart, and Simone Weil,” *Medieval Mystical Theology* 21, no. 1 (2012): 113–32
- “Antigone’s Nature,” *Hypatia* 25, no. 2 (2010): 412–36

Book Chapters

- “Angela of Foligno, In Love, With Animals,” *Animals on the Edge*, ed. Katja Falt (Trivent, 2023), 159–74
- “To Live, By Grace,” *Living Together: Jacques Derrida’s Communities of Violence and Peace*, ed. Elisabeth Weber (Fordham University Press, 2013), 153–67

Invited Essays

- “Writing Without Nets,” *The Immanent Frame: Forum on Experimental Books*, ed. Mona Oraby, 2024 (<https://tif.ssrc.org/category/book-blog/book-forums/experimental-books>)
- “Vibrating,” *Machines in Between*, ed. John Lardas Modern, 2022 (<https://www.machinesinbetween.com/episodes/saturation>)
- “Queer,” *Critical Theory for Political Theology*, ed. Alex Dubilet and Vincent Lloyd, 2022 (<https://politicaltheology.com/queer>)
- “Performance,” *The Immanent Frame: A Universe of Terms*, ed. Mona Oraby and Daniel Vaca, 2019 (<https://tif.ssrc.org/2019/12/20/performance-robert>); reprinted in Mona Oraby and Emilie Flamme, *A Universe of Terms: Religion in Visual Metaphor* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2022), 78–83
- “Quite a Table,” *Exeter Exchange*, 2018 (<https://www.exeter.edu/news/quite-table-student-reflects>)
- “Concerning Method: Of Narratives and Names,” *Syndicate*, 2015 (<https://syndicate.network/symposia/literature/minding-the-modern/#william-robert>)

Reference Article

- “Medieval Drama: Western European Religious Contexts,” *Folgerpedia*, 2017 (https://folgerpedia.folger.edu/Medieval_Drama:_Western_European_Religious_Contexts)

CONFERENCE PAPERS

- “Rumoured,” *Spiritual Powers: A Conference on Cultural Icons*, Arizona State University, April 2024
- “Transgendered Questioning,” *American Academy of Religion*, November 2023
- “My Neuromatic Cut-Up,” *American Academy of Religion*, November 2022
- “Mystéréthiques,” *Luce Irigaray Circle*, May 2022
- “Angela of Foligno With Animals,” *International Medieval Congress*, July 2019
- “Angela of Foligno’s Poly-Performativity,” *International Congress on Medieval Studies*, May 2019
- “The Truth of Angela of Foligno’s Confession,” *Confession, Truth, and Power*, Syracuse University, May 2019
- “Mothers and Sons, or When Angela of Foligno Misquoted Jesus,” *Reusing Religious Sites and Reactivating Normative Texts*, Syracuse University, March 2019
- “How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Introduction to the Study of Religion,” *American Academy of Religion*, November 2017
- “Engendering Vulnerability,” *American Academy of Religion*, November 2017
- “Signs and Presents,” *South Atlantic Modern Language Association*, November 2017
- “Michel Foucault’s True Love,” *American Academy of Religion*, November 2016
- “Mystifying Queer Genealogies,” *American Academy of Religion*, November 2014
- “Writing Monks, Rewriting Humans,” *International Medieval Congress*, July 2014
- “Reviving Antigone,” *Luce Irigaray Circle*, June 2013
- “Singular Plural Sacrality,” *American Academy of Religion*, November 2011
- “Namely, Mystical Desire,” *Eastern International Regional American Academy of Religion*, May 2011
- “Future Blindness,” *Postmodernism, Culture, and Religion: The Future of Continental Philosophy of Religion*, Syracuse University, April 2011
- “Queerly Mystical,” *Medieval Voices and Postmodern Theory*, University of California, Santa Barbara, March 2011
- “The Sense of Passion,” *American Academy of Religion*, November 2010
- “Angela of Foligno’s Mystical Erotics,” *Passions and Transgressions from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance*, Syracuse University, April 2010

INVITED TALKS

- “Approaching Reading Staging Devotion,” *Performing Religion in Early Modern England*, University of California, Santa Barbara, May 2025 (keynote address)
- “Performing Attention,” *Le Moyne College*, November 2024
- “Queerly Religious Study,” *Stanford University*, October 2024
- “Studying Religion in Play,” *Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard Divinity School*, January 2024 (weeklong workshop)

- “Wisdom, through Tragedy, in Pieces” Transcendence and Transformation symposium, Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard Divinity School, July 2023
- “Everybody’s Medieval Christianities?,” Program in Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Syracuse University, November 2022
- “& Fragments,” Religion and Literature workshop, Indiana University, October 2021
- “How We Value: G.W.F. Hegel and Karl Marx,” Davidson College, September 2019
- “Showing and Telling Incongruities,” Department of Religion, Syracuse University, March 2018
- “Angela of Foligno’s Mystical Passions,” Le Moyne College, November 2017
- “Performing, Transforming,” Center for Religious Studies, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany, June 2017
- “Humanities In Extremis,” Le Moyne College, May 2017
- “How About Religion,” Theta Alpha Kappa induction ceremony, Syracuse University, April 2016
- “Attending to Sappho,” Le Moyne College, February 2016
- “How Do You Solve a Problem like Angela of Foligno?,” Program in Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Syracuse University, April 2015
- “Porosity and Sensuality,” Humanities Center, Syracuse University, February 2015
- “Extreme Humanities,” Le Moyne College, February 2015
- “Genre Questioning Songs of Songs,” University of Oxford, England, November 2014
- “Une Question de Rapports: L’anthropologie d’Irénée de Lyon,” Institut Catholique de Paris, France, November 2014
- “Mystical Lips and Other Sexual Differences,” University of Chicago Divinity School, May 2014
- “Denuding Angela of Foligno,” Harvard Divinity School, April 2013
- “Remnants: Of Giorgio Agamben,” Harvard Divinity School, April 2013
- “A Commencement, A Moment, A Question,” Phi Beta Kappa induction ceremony, Syracuse University, May 2012

PUBLIC DISCUSSIONS

- Discussant of Ludger Viefhues-Bailey’s *No Separation: Christians, Secular Democracy, and Sex*, Le Moyne College, November 2023
- Discussant of Alexis Pauline Gumbs’s *Undrowned: Black Feminist Lessons from Marine Mammals*, Honors Program, Syracuse University, September 2023
- Discussant of the pilot episode of *Pose*, Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse University, November 2021
- Discussant of Richard Blanco’s *How To Love A Country*, Forum on Education Abroad, March 2021
- Discussant of Ensemble Parallax’s multimedia performance “On the Edge of Silence: Ecstatic Utterances and Inspired Breath,” Syracuse Symposium, September 2019
- Discussant of Geoffrey Nauffts’s *Next Fall*, Department of Drama, Syracuse University, November 2018

PODCASTS

- “Studying Religion in Performance,” Religious Studies News, June 2025 (<https://aarweb.org/podcast/studying-religion-in-performance-with-william-robert>)
- “Confronting Tragedy, Confronting Ourselves,” Wonderstruck, May 2024 (<https://wonderstruck.org/episodes/william-robert-confronting-tragedy-confronting-ourselves>)

COURSES TAUGHT

Undergraduate

God Sex Death
Introduction to the Study of Religion
Living With Others
Medieval Christianities
Performing Religion
Questioning Religion
Queerly Religious
Queer Theories
Queer Histories, Politics, and Communities
Religion and Its Critics
Sexualities, Genders, Bodies
Transgression
What Is Belief?
We Animals

Graduate

Continental Philosophy of Religion
Religious Corporealities
Sensuality, Sexuality, Religion
Textual Bodies in the Study of Religion
Textual Practices in the Study of Religion
Textual Scripts in the Study of Religion
Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Syracuse University

Department of Religion

Chair, 2022–25
Chair, Executive committee, 2022–25
Member, Graduate committee, 2012–14, 2015–16, 2020–21, 2022–25
Member, Undergraduate committee, 2011–12, 2017–19, 2022–25

Member, Hinduism search committee, 2022–23
Member, Undergraduate program review committee, 2022
Director, Future professoriate program, 2012–14, 2015–16, 2020–21
Member, Executive committee, 2020
Scholarship reviewer, Third-year personnel case, 2020
Member, Ancient Christianities search committee, 2012–13
Speaker, Future professoriate program workshops, 2010–16, 2020–21

College of Arts and Sciences

Member, Coronat Scholars selection committee, 2012–25
Member, Humanities Council, 2021–25
Member, Grade appeal panel, 2018–25
Co-chair, Academic strategic planning committee, 2022–23
Director, LGBTQ Studies, 2020–22
Co-director, Coronat Scholars, 2019–22
Co-investigator, Engaged Humanities research project, 2020
Member, IDEA course review committee, 2019–20
Member, LGBTQ Studies minor review committee, 2018–19
Member, Academic strategic planning committee, 2016–17
Chair, Academic strategic planning working group on research and discovery,
2017
Faculty speaker, Tolley dinner for new humanities faculty, 2016
Faculty discussion leader, Board of Visitors meeting, 2016
Faculty panelist, Board of Visitors meeting, 2015
Faculty speaker, On-campus receptions for prospective student recruitment,
2011, 2013, 2015
Faculty speaker, On-campus receptions for admitted student recruitment, 2012,
2013, 2014
Undergraduate advisor, 2011–13
Instructor, Transfer Forum, 2012, 2013
Member, Veteran's roundtable, First-Year Forum workshop, 2011, 2012
Faculty member, Academic integrity hearing panel, 2012
Instructor, First-Year Forum, 2010, 2011
Faculty speaker, Los Angeles reception for prospective student recruitment,
2011

University

Leader, Workshop on inclusive teaching, Center for Teaching and Learning
Excellence, 2025
Member, University Senate, 2023–25

Member, University Senate committee on academic freedom, tenure, and professional ethics, 2024–25
Member, Social Differences, Social Justice research cluster, 2021–25
Contributor, *Flashpoints* video project, College of Education, 2024
Member, University Senate committee on LGBTQA justice and advocacy, 2021–22
Member, Humanities Center faculty advisory board, 2013–14, 2016–22
Member, Humanities Center director review committee, 2022
Member, Humanities Center faculty fellows selection committee, 2017, 2020
Faculty leader, Certificate of University Teaching seminar on lesson planning, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021
Member, Outstanding TA selection committee, 2019
Instructor, Honors Orientation seminar, 2015, 2016, 2018
Organizer, Porosity, Sensuality, Relation: Rethinking Religion’s Terms, Humanities Center faculty fellow symposium, 2015
Member, Syracuse Symposium speaker selection committee, 2014
Member, Judith Seinfeld Fellowship selection committee, 2014
Faculty evaluator, Fulbright Fellowship applications, 2012, 2013
Faculty speaker, Baltimore and Washington, DC, receptions for admitted student recruitment, 2012, 2013
Faculty speaker, Baltimore reception for admitted student recruitment, 2012, 2013
Faculty mentor, McNair Scholars program, 2011–12

Additional

Gender and sexuality area editor, *Religious Studies Review*, 2025–27
Member, Performance Pedagogy working group, Central New York Humanities Corridor, 2019–25
Reviewer, Tenure case, University of Notre Dame, 2024
Reviewer, Tenure and promotion case, Indiana University, 2022
President, Theta Chi Beta chapter of Theta Alpha Kappa, 2015–22
Mentor (through Committee on the Status of LGBTQI+ Persons), American Academy of Religion, 2016–17, 2019–20, 2021–22
Mentor, Political Theology Network, 2020–21
Co-organizer, Critical LGBTQ+/Sexuality Studies working group, Central New York Humanities Corridor, 2020–21
Reviewer, Tenure and promotion case, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2018
Reviewer, Tenure and promotion case, Fordham University, 2017
Reviewer, Promotion case, Skidmore College, 2017

Co-director, Sacred Literature, Secular Religion: A Conference on Cultural Practices,
2015

Co-director, The Return of the Text: A Conference on the Cultural Value of Close
Reading, 2013

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Academy of Religion

Association for Theatre in Higher Education

Performance Studies International

AWARDS

American Academy of Religion Religion and the Arts Book Award (*Unbridled*)

Folger Institute colloquium grant (Teaching Medieval Drama and Performance)

Syracuse University Humanities Center faculty fellowship

National Endowment for the Humanities Enduring Questions course grant (What Is Belief?)

Theta Alpha Kappa

REFeree

Presses

Bloomsbury, Columbia University Press, Fordham University Press, Oxford University
Press, Palgrave Macmillan, Polity, Routledge, Rowman and Littlefield, State University
of New York Press, University of Chicago Press

Journals

*American Ethnologist, American Religion, Arthuriana, Hypatia, Journal of Religion,
InVisible Culture, Law, Culture, and the Humanities, Literature and Theology, Mosaic,
Nabokov Studies, philoSOPHIA, Political Theology, Polity, Practical Matters,
Religions, Toronto Journal of Theology*

September 2025