

Douglas Edward Cowan

Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and Sociology

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Current Position:

(2000 – present) Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and Sociology; member of Graduate and Doctoral Faculty, University of Missouri-Kansas City

Doctoral Education:

Doctor of Philosophy in Religious Studies, The University of Calgary, 1999.
Specialization in the History of Religious Movements and Institutions

Dissertation:

“Bearing False Witness: Propaganda, Reality-Maintenance, and Christian Anticult Apologetics”

Other Education and Professional Experience:

Master of Divinity (Honours), St. Andrew’s Theological College, Saskatoon, SK, 1989.
Bachelor of Arts (with Distinction), University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, 1985.

Ordained to the Ministry of Word, Sacrament, and Pastoral Care, The United Church of Canada, 1989.

Citizenship:

Canadian

Teaching

Teaching Experience:

(* indicates core doctoral course in the UMKC Interdisciplinary Ph.D. program)

(2003-2004)

- Religion and Violence: A Sociological Look at the Dark Side of Faith (Soc 300/580)
- Cults, Sects, and New Religious Movements: Doctoral Colloquium (RS 680)*
- Religion and Politics: A Sociological Look at the Sacred and the Profane (Soc 300/580)
- Methodological Approached to the Study of Religion (RS 596)*
- Writing for Academic Publication: Doctoral Seminar (RS 697)

(2002-2003)

- Cults, Sects, and New Religious Movements: A Sociological Introduction (Soc 300/580)
- Writing Faith: Sacred Biography and Autobiography (RS 400/500)
- Religion in America: Introduction to the Sociology of Religion (Soc 300/580)
- Sacred Narratives and Texts (RS 584)*

(2001-2002)

- World Religions: A Sociological Introduction (Soc 300/580)
- Sex and Religion: The Erotic and Anti-Erotic in Comparative Perspective (RS 400/500)
- Religion in America: Sociological and Historical Perspectives (Soc 303/580)
- Religious Fundamentalisms in Comparative Perspective (RS 400/500)

(2000-2001)

- Cults, Sects, and New Religious Movements: A Sociological Approach (Soc 300/580)
- Great Religious Traditions of the World (RS 510)*
- Introduction to the Sociology of Religion (Soc 300/580)
- Sacred Narratives and Texts (RS 584)*

(Fall 2000)

- Introduction to Sociology (Soc 101)
- Religion and the Social Sciences (RS 400/500)

Since arriving at UMKC in 2000, I have served on thirty-one graduate student committees, most of these at the Ph.D. level. From 2001-2003, I served as a faculty mentor in the Preparing Future Faculty program. I have been nominated three times (2002, 2003, 2004) for the UMKC Outstanding Interdisciplinary Faculty Award, and nominated in 2004 for both the Dean's Outstanding Teaching Award and the Alumni Good Teaching Award.

Statement of Teaching Philosophy available upon request.

Research and Scholarship

Publications: Books

- (2005). *Cyberhenge: Modern Pagans on the Internet*. New York and London: Routledge.
- (2004). *Religion Online: Finding Faith on the Internet*, edited with Lorne L. Dawson. New York and London: Routledge.
- (2004). *Teaching the Sociology of Religion: Syllabi and Instructional Materials*, edited with Lutz Kaelber. Washington, DC: American Sociological Association.
- (2003). *The Remnant Spirit: Conservative Reform in Mainline Protestantism*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- (2003). *Bearing False Witness? An Introduction to the Christian Countercult*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- (2000). *Religion on the Internet: Research Prospects and Promises*, edited with Jeffrey K. Hadden. London and Amsterdam: Elsevier Science/JAI Press.
- (1991). *A Naked Entent Unto God: A Source/Commentary on The Cloud of Unknowing*. Wakefield, NH: Longwood Academic Press.

Publications: Refereed Articles

- (2004). "God, Guns, and Grist for the Media's Mill: Constructing the Narratives of New Religious Movements and Violence," with Jeffrey K. Hadden. *Nova Religio: The Journal of New and Emergent Religions* 8 (2): 64-82.
- (2003). "Confronting the Failed Failure: Y2K and Evangelical Eschatology in Light of the Passed Millennium." *Nova Religio: The Journal of New and Emergent Religions* 7 (2): 71-85.
- (2003). "Exits and Migrations: Foregrounding the Christian Counter-cult." *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 17 (3): 339-54.
- (2002). "Explaining Eggs in Terms of Bacon: A Response to *Secular Theories of Religion*." *The Council of Societies for the Study of Religion Bulletin* 31 (2): 30-31.
- (2000). "No Harmony: Some Notes on Evangelical Response to Buddhism." *Religious Studies and Theology* 19 (2): 17-52.
- (2000). "'What's In It For Us?': Reflections on Membership, Commitment, and the Current Malaise." *Touchstone: Heritage and Theology in a New Age* 18 (2): 7-21.
- (1998). "Too Narrow and Too Close: Some Problems with Participant Observation in the Study of New Religious Movements." *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 4: 391-406.
- (1996). "Jack's Buddhism: A Dharma Walk with Jack Kerouac." *Journal of Buddhist and Tibetan Studies* 2: 38-91.
- (1990). "The Parson and the Landlord: Religion and Capitalism in *The Communist Manifesto* and Karl Marx's 'Contribution to *The Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*'." *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 19 (4): 458-69.

Publications: Chapters

- (2004). "Contested Spaces: Movement, Countermovement, and E-Space Propaganda." In *Religion Online: Finding Faith on the Internet*, edited by Lorne L. Dawson and Douglas E. Cowan, 255-71. New York: Routledge.
- (2004). "Introduction," with Lorne L. Dawson. In *Religion Online: Finding Faith on the Internet*, edited by Lorne L. Dawson and Douglas E. Cowan, 1-16. New York: Routledge.
- (2004). "Virtually Religious: New Religious Movements and the World Wide Web," with Jeffrey K. Hadden. In *The Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements*, edited by James R. Lewis, 119-40. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- (2004). "Online Rites." In *Encyclopedia of Religious Rites, Rituals, and Festivals*, edited by Frank A. Salamone, 300-302. London: Routledge/Berkshire.
- (2004). "Religion on the Internet: Some Reflections on Research and Pedagogy." In *Teaching the Sociology of Religion: Syllabi and Instructional Materials*, edited by Lutz Kaelber and Douglas E. Cowan, 177-82. Washington, DC: American Sociological Association.
- (2003). "Theologizing Race: The Construction of 'Christian Identity'." In *Religion, Myth, and the Creation of Race and Ethnicity*, edited by Craig Prentiss, 124-39. New York: New York University Press.
- (2002). "Martial Arts." In *Dictionary of Contemporary Religion in the Western World*, edited by Christopher Partridge and Douglas Groothuis, 90-91. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press.
- (2000). "Religion, Rhetoric, and Scholarship: Managing Vested Interest in Cyberspace." In *Religion on the Internet: Research Prospects and Promises*, edited by Jeffrey K. Hadden and Douglas E. Cowan, 101-124. London and Amsterdam: Elsevier Science/JAI Press.
- (2000). "The Promised Land or Electronic Chaos? Toward Understanding Religion on the Internet," with Jeffrey K. Hadden. In *Religion on the Internet: Research Prospects and Promises*, edited by Jeffrey K. Hadden and Douglas E. Cowan, 3-21. London and Amsterdam: Elsevier Science/JAI Press.

Publications: Books in Progress

Sacred Terror: Religion and Horror on the Silver Screen

Pentacles and Pointy Hats: The Material Culture of Modern Paganism

Publications: Chapters under Contract and Accepted for Publication

- "Anticult and Countercult Movements." Forthcoming in *New Religious Movements: A Documentary Reader*, edited by Dereck Daschke and Mike Ashcraft. New York: New York University Press.
- "New Religious Movements and Emotion." Forthcoming in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, edited by John Corrigan. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- "Teaching New Religious Movements on the Internet." Forthcoming in *Teaching New Religious Movements*, edited by David G. Bromley. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Publications: Articles in Progress

- “Episode 712: *South Park*, Ridicule, and the Cultural Construction of Religious Rivalry.”
- “On Finding the Bones of Jesus: *The Da Vinci Code* and the Management of Cognitive Dissonance.
- “Hacking Religion: Open Source, Closed Source, and a Theory of Modern Paganism.”
- “Researching Scientology: Academic Premises, Promises, and Problematics”

Academic Conference Participation: Invited Presentations

- (2004). “The Algorithmic Oracle: Online Divination in (Surprisingly Enough) Cross-Cultural Perspective.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Kansas City, MO.
- (2003). “Remembering the Work of Jeffrey K. Hadden.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Norfolk, VA.
- (2003). “The Legacy of Soc 257.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, Atlanta, GA.
- (2003). “Bearing False Witness: Countercult Apologetics or Christian Hate Literature?” Keynote address at the Communiiversity Annual Conference (Pacific Lutheran University/University of Puget Sound), Tacoma, WA.
- (2002). “Cult Apology: A Modest (Typological) Proposal.” Paper delivered at annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Salt Lake City, UT.
- (2002). “Cyberhenge: Creating Neopagan Community on the Web.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, Chicago, IL.
- (2002). “Apologia and Academia: Prospects for a Rapprochement?” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Ministries to New Religions, Louisville, KY.
- (2001). “From Parchment to Pixels: The Christian Countercult on the Internet.” Paper delivered at the international conference of CESNUR/INFORM, London, England.

Academic Conference Participation: Presentations

- (2004). “Researching Scientology: Premises, Promises, and Problematics.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, TX.
- (2004). “Cyberhenge: By way of an executive summary.” Paper delivered at the annual Conference on Contemporary Pagan Studies, San Antonio, TX.
- (2004). ““Do I Look Like Someone Who Cares What God Thinks?”: Religion and the Moral Discourse of B-Grade Horror Cinema.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, San Francisco, CA.
- (2004). “I know it when I see it: Propaganda and the Moral Economy of Pornography.” Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, San Francisco, CA.
- (2004). “Researching Scientology: Premises, Promises, and Problematics.” Paper delivered at the international conference of CESNUR/INFORM, Waco, TX.

- (2002). "Reflections on Louisville: The Christian Countercult in Conversation." Paper delivered at the international conference of CESNUR/INFORM, Salt Lake City, UT.
- (2000). "Y2K and Religion: Looking Backward at the Great Non-Event." Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Houston, TX.

Other Creative Scholarship

I am the editor-in-chief of the New Religious Movements Homepage Project, begun in 1996 by Jeffrey K. Hadden. Currently housed on servers at the University of Virginia, the project Web site (www.religiousmovements.org) is internationally recognized by scholars of new religious movements as one of the finest Internet-based resources available.

Grants and Awards

- (2003). Faculty Travel Grant. (Winter/Fall)
- (2002). Faculty Travel Grant. (Winter/Fall)
- (2001). Faculty Travel Grant. (Winter)
- (2001). University of Missouri Research Board Grant. "Religion in the Mass Media: The Case of Islam."
- (2000). Faculty Travel Grant. (Fall)

Professional Service

Departmental

Undergraduate Advisor, Department of Sociology/CJC (2003)
 Graduate Coordinator, Department of Sociology (2003 – present)

University

Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Executive Committee (Nominating Committee Chair 2004)
 Graduate Coordinators Committee
 Preparing Future Faculty Steering Committee

Professional

Co-General Editor, *Nova Religio: The Journal of New and Emergent Religions* (2005 -)
 Editor-in-Chief, The New Religious Movements Homepage Project (2003 - present)
 Association for the Sociology of Religion Executive Council (2003 - present)

References

Available on request.