

MAYRA RIVERA
ANDREW W. MELLON PROFESSOR OF RELIGION AND LATINX STUDIES
HARVARD UNIVERSITY
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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Theological and Religious Studies, minor in Women's Studies, October 2005
Drew University, Madison, NJ
Dissertation: *The Touch of Transcendence*, with distinction

M.T.S., *Summa cum Laude*, May 2001
Drew University, Madison, NJ

B.S. Chemical Engineering, May 1988
University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez, PR

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Harvard University:

Professor of Religion and Latinx Studies, 2016-present
Associate Professor (2012-2016); Assistant Professor (2010-2012)
Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures, 2017-2020
Chair, Standing Committee on Ethnicity, Migration, Rights, Faculty of Arts and Sciences,
2017-2020

Courses Include:

Coloniality, Race, and Religion: Theoretical Approaches
Coloniality, Race, and Catastrophe
Decolonial Theory
Latinx Theory
Caribbean Materialisms
Sylvia Wynter Seminar
Theories in the Study of Religion

Assistant Professor of Theology, Pacific School of Religion, 2006-2010

Other Teaching:

Entre la tierra y el mar: Pesca y cambio climático, Harvard and the University of Puerto Rico,
January 2023, San Juan, PR
Liberation Theology and Decolonialism, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, Summer 2019
Fragmented Borders: Transnationalism, Inequality and Citizenship, Harvard and the University
of Puerto Rico, January 2017, San Juan, PR
Hispanic Summer Program 2008, Mundelein, IL
Visiting Professor of Theology, Drew University, Fall 2005

AWARDS and HONORS

President of the American Academy of Religion, 2021-22

2008 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz Feminist/Mujerista Professorship, awarded by the Hispanic
Summer Program for excellence in teaching feminist/mujerista theology

AWARDS and HONORS

2004 John R. Mulder Prize for Excellence, awarded for writing the Drew Graduate School's best comprehensive examinations in the past year

Hispanic Theological Initiative award, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005

Luis A. Monzón award for the best student of 1988 chemical engineering class

Student Research & Recognition Foundation, American Institute of Chemists 1988 award

American Institute of Chemical Engineers 1986 award for scholastic achievement

BOOKS

Poetics of the Flesh. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015.

The Touch of Transcendence: A Postcolonial Theology of God. Louisville, KY: WJK, 2007.

EDITED VOLUMES

Planetary Loves: Spivak, Postcoloniality, and Theology, Co-edited with Stephen Moore. New York: Fordham University Press, 2010.

Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire, Co-edited with Catherine Keller and Michael Nausner. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004.

ARTICLES

"*Reverdeceremos? Seeking Hope amid Climate Catastrophe.*" In Raúl Fornet-Betancourt (ed.), *Vernünftige Hoffnung – hoffende Vernunft. Quellen der Hoffnung in schwierigen Zeiten. Esperanza razonable – razón esperanzada. Fuentes de esperanza en tiempos difíciles*. Tomo 48 de la serie Denktraditionen im Dialog. Studien zur Befreiung und Interkulturalität. Wissenschaftsverlag Mainz, Aachen 2023, p. 23-31.

"*Caribbean Creations.*" *Resonancia de la Filosofía Intercultural*. Aachen: Verlag-Mainz, forthcoming 2023.

"*An Interview with Mayra Rivera: Postcolonial Women's Writers and Material Religion,*" with Fiona Darroch, *Literature and Theology* (December 2021).

"*Coloniality, Postsecularity, and Religious Lifeworlds.*" Review forum: Justin Beaumont (Ed.) *Reading The Routledge Handbook of Postsecularity, Political Geography*, Vol. 86 (March 2021).

"*Embodied Counterpoetics: Sylvia Wynter on Race and Religion.*" *In the Image of Man: Race, Coloniality and Philosophy of Religion*. Edited by An Yountae and Eleanor Craig. Durham: Duke University Press, 2021.

"*Theorizing Bodies and Religious Studies.*" *Contending Modernities, Decoloniality and the Study of Religion Series*, University of Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for International Studies. June 30, 2020. <https://contendingmodernities.nd.edu> .

"*Theological Metaphors of Anti-immigration Discourses.*" *American Journal of Theology and Philosophy*, 40:2 (2019).

ARTICLES

"Where Life Itself Lives." In *Beyond the Doctrine of Man*. Edited by Joseph Drexler-Drei and Kristien Justaert. New York: Fordham University Press, 2019.

"Poetics Ashore," *Literature and Theology*, Oxford University Press, 33:3 (2019) 241-247.

"Poética de la supervivencia." *Concilium* 373 (2017); 91-98. Also published in German as "Poetik des Überlebens" *Concilium* 5 (2017); 575-581 and in Italian as "Poetica di sopravvivenza" *Concilium* 53 (2017) 105-113.

"Emptying God: The Ethics of Theology in Merleau-Ponty's Work." in *God and the Moral Life*. Edited by Myriam Renaud. New York: Routledge, 2017.

"A Labyrinth of Incarnations: The Social Materiality of Bodies." *Journal of the European Society of Women in Theological Research* 22 (2014): 187-198.

"Flesh of the World: Corporeality in Relation," *Concilium* 2 (2013).

"Carnal Corporeality: Tensions in Continental and Caribbean Thought," *Concordia: International Journal of Philosophy* 63 (2013): 83-96.

"Ränder und die sich verändernde Spatialität von Macht. Einführende Notizen." *Interkulturelle Theologie* 1-2 (2012): 90-109.

"Thinking Bodies: The Spirit of a Latina Incarnational Imagination." In *Decolonizing Epistemologies: Latina/o Theology and Philosophy*. Edited by Ada María Isasi Díaz and Eduardo Mendieta. New York: Fordham University Press, 2011. Pp. 207-225.

"Glory: The First Passion of Theology?" In *Polydoxy: Theologies of the Manifold*. Edited by Catherine Keller and Laurel Schneider. New York: Routledge, 2010. Pp. 167-181.

"Ghostly Encounters: Spirits, Memory, and the Holy Ghost." In *Planetary Loves: Spivak, Postcoloniality, and Theology*. Edited by Stephen Moore and Mayra Rivera. New York: Fordham University Press, 2010. Pp 118-135.

"A Tentative Topography of Postcolonial Theology" (with Stephen Moore). In *Planetary Loves: Spivak, Postcoloniality, and Theology*. Edited by Stephen Moore and Mayra Rivera. New York: Fordham University Press, 2010. Pp. 3-14.

"Unsettling Bodies." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 26, No. 2 (Fall 2010): 119-123.

"Corporeal Visions and Apparitions: The Narrative Strategies of an Indecent Theologian." In *Dancing Theology in Fetish Boots: Essays in Honour of Marcella Althaus-Reid*. Edited by Lisa Isherwood and Mark D. Jordan. London: SCM, 2010. Pp. 79-94.

"Elemental Bonds: Scene for an Earthy Postcolonial Theology." In *Postcolonial Interventions: Essays in Honor of R. S. Sugirtharajah*. Edited by Tat-siong Benny Liew. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009. Pp. 347-360.

ARTICLES

"Memory of the Flesh: Theological Reflections on Word and Flesh." In *Creating Ourselves: African Americans and Hispanic Americans, Popular Culture, and Religious Expression*. Edited by Anthony Pinn and Benjamín Valentín. Durham and London: Duke University, 2009. Pp. 70-89.

"God and Difference." In *Building Bridges and Doing Justice: Constructing a Latino/a Ecumenical Theology*. Edited by Orlando Espín. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009. Pp. 29-44.

"Incarnate Words: Images of God and Reading Practices." In *They Were All Together in One Place? Toward Minority Biblical Criticism*. Edited by Randall C. Bailey, Tat-siong Benny Liew, and Fernando F. Segovia. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009. Pp. 314-329.

"Margins and the Changing Spatiality of Power: Preliminary Notes." In *Still at the Margins: Biblical Scholarship Fifteen Years after Voices from the Margin*. Edited by R.S. Sugirtharajah. New York: T&T Clark, 2008. Pp. 114-127.

"Ethical Desires: Toward a Theology of Relational Transcendence." In *Toward a Theology of Eros: Transfiguring Passion at the Limits of Discipline*. Edited by Virginia Burrus and Catherine Keller. New York: Fordham University Press, 2006. Pp. 255-270.

"Radical Transcendence? A Latina Postcolonial Reading of Divine Otherness." In *Interpreting the Postmodern: Responses to 'Radical Orthodoxy.'* Edited by Rosemary Radford Ruether and Marion Grau. New York and London: T&T Clark, 2006. Pp. 119-138.

"God at the Crossroads: A Postcolonial Reading of Sophia." In *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire*. Edited by Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004. Pp. 186-203. Reprinted in *The Postcolonial Biblical Reader*. Edited by R.S. Sugirtharajah. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2006. Pp. 238-253.

"God op het kruispunt." In *Vreemde Aanrakingen: De krach van het vreemde in religie, kunst en literatuur*. Edited by Inez Van der Spek. Belgium: DSTS, 2007. Pp. 167-182.

"Alien/nation, Liberation, and the Postcolonial Underground" (with Catherine Keller and Michael Nausner). In *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire*. Edited by Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004. Pp. 1-20.

"En-Gendered Territory: U.S. Missionaries' Discourse in Puerto Rico (1898-1920)." In *New Horizons in Hispanic/Latino(a) Theology*. Edited by Benjamín Valentín. Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2003. Pp. 79-97.

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES AND TALKS

"Religion and Catastrophe," *Counterpoint: Navigating Knowledge*, February 2, 2022

"Coloniality of Apocalypse," with Catherine Keller. *The Immanent Frame*. Social Science Research Council (March 2021).

LECTURES and PRESENTATIONS

"What Is the Role of the Study of Religion in Times of Catastrophe?" Presidential Address, AAR, Denver, November 19, 2022

LECTURES and PRESENTATIONS

"Glissant and the Right to Opacity," Black Critical Thought Group, Harvard, March 2, 2023

"Feminismo, Género y Materialidad," Jornadas Académicas De La Asociación De Teólogas Españolas, June 5, 2022

"Reverdecemos? Seeking Hope amid Climate Catastrophe," International Congress of Intercultural Philosophy, Aachen, Germany, May 25, 2022

"A Procession of Catastrophes," Centre College, March 28, 2022

Response to Janet Jakobsen's *The Sex Obsession: Perversity and Possibility in American Politics*, American Academy of Religion (AAR), San Antonio, November 20, 2021

Response to Catherine Keller's *Facing Apocalypse: Climate, Democracy, and Other Last Chances*, AAR, San Antonio, November 22, 2021

"The Place of Religion," Keynote for AAR Virtual Symposium, April 9, 2021

"A Procession of Catastrophes," Distinguished Guest Lecture, Rice University, February 6, 2020

"Caribbean Materialisms: Sylvia Wynter's Contributions," Union Theological Seminary, New York, October 18, 2019

"A Procession of Catastrophes: Coloniality and Ecology from the Caribbean," Entangled Worlds: Soil, Space and Place Conference, University of Toronto, September 19, 2019

"Enfleshing Bodies: In Honor of M. Shawn Copeland," Boston College, April 27, 2019

"Theological Metaphors in U.S. Anti-Immigration Debates," American Theological Society, Princeton University, March 22-23, 2019

"Embodied Counterpoetics: Sylvia Wynter on Religion and Race," Brown University, March 7, 2019

"Belief Materialized in Deeds: Engaging Sylvia Wynter," University of Chicago, December 8, 2017

"Belief Materialized in Deeds: Engaging Sylvia Wynter," Rice University, September 15, 2017

"Poetics of the Flesh," Boston University, December 1, 2016

"Transformaciones de la carne," Keynote lecture for *Reshaping Hispanic Cultures* symposium, The Cervantes Institute at Harvard, May 12, 2016

"Poetics of the Flesh," University of Chicago Divinity School, May 5, 2016

Response to Janet Jakobsen, *Why Sex?* American Philosophical Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, April 2, 2016

LECTURES and PRESENTATIONS

"Poetics of the Flesh: Response to Review Panel," American Philosophical Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, April 1, 2016

"Theopoetics," Boston University, March 19, 2016

"Poetics of the Flesh," Vanderbilt University, March 14, 2016

"Where Life Itself Lives: Words Made Flesh in Sylvia Wynter's Work," Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, December 18, 2015

"Poetics of the Flesh: Response to Review Panel," AAR Annual Meeting, November 23, 2015

"Becoming Flesh: The Socio-Material Implications of the Incarnation," Drury University, November 2, 2015

"Becoming Flesh: The Socio-Material Implications of the Incarnation," Orlando Costas Lecture, Andover Newton Theological School, October 14, 2015

"Poetics of the Flesh," Fordham University, May 2, 2015

"Practical Commitments: The Ethics of Critical Education," Diversity in Explorations, Harvard Divinity School, November 5, 2014

"Society is a Labyrinth of Incarnations: Identity, Bodies, and Religion," Committee on Ethnicity, Migrations, and Rights, Harvard University, November 3, 2014

"Emptying God: The Ethics of Theology in Merleau-Ponty's Work," God: Theological Accounts and Ethical Possibilities Conference, University of Chicago, April 10, 2014

Response to Karen Barad's "Deep Calls unto Deep," Entangled Worlds: Science, Religion, Materiality Conference, Drew University, March 29, 2014

Panel presentation for "Sexual and Gender Identity at the Intersections, Part 1 – Scholarship," AAR Annual Meeting, November 24, 2013

Panel presentation for "Postcolonialism Meets Open and Relational Theologies," AAR Annual Meeting, November 23, 2013

Panel presentation for "Emerging Questions: Fernando F. Segovia and the Challenges of Cultural Interpretation," AAR Annual Meeting, November 23, 2013

"A Labyrinth of Incarnations: Body and Society in the Twenty-first Century," European Society of Women in Theological Research, Dresden, Germany, August 29, 2013

"Poéticas de la Encarnación: Lecturas Postmodernas del Cuerpo y la Carne," Religious Studies Department, Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City, January 17, 2013

"Teología y corporalidad en el Siglo XXI," Religious Studies Department, Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City, January 14, 2013

LECTURES and PRESENTATIONS

"Flesh of the World: Caribbean Contributions," Annual Hispanic Lecture, Drew University, April 10, 2012

"Carnal Exposure: Regarding Christian Flesh," Yale Divinity School, February 14, 2012

"Poéticas de Encarnación" II Congreso Internacional el Cuerpo en el Siglo XXI. Aproximaciones Minoritarias Desde Latinoamérica, UNAM, Mexico City, November 10, 2011

"Theological Metaphors of Anti-Immigration Discourse," American Theological Society, Princeton, March 22, 2019.

Theologians Engaging Trauma panel, Boston University. February 28, 2011. Transcript published in *Theology Today* (Oct. 2011): 224–237

"Glory," Panel discussion of *Polydoxy*, AAR Annual Meeting. October 31, 2010

Response to Cherrié Moraga, "A Small Nation to Remember: Performance & Xicana Indígena Resistance," Harvard Divinity School. September 30, 2010

"From Other Shores: Postcolonial Theology and the Caribbean," Latina/o Critical and Comparative Studies, AAR. November 10, 2009

Panel Review, *The Theology of Food*, by Angel Méndez, with John Milbank and Anthony Baker, AAR. November 8, 2009

"Glory," *Polydoxy: Theologies of the Manifold*, Drew Transdisciplinary Theological Colloquium IX. October 1-4, 2009

"Corporeal Transfigurations: The Spirit of a Latina Theology of Embodiment," Harvard Divinity School. February 23, 2009

"Thinking Bodies: The Paradoxes of Latina Incarnational Theologies," Decolonizing Epistemology: New Knowing in Latina/o Philosophy and Theology, Drew Transdisciplinary Theological Colloquium VIII. November 20-23, 2008

"Women of Color and the Study of Religion and Theology," AAR wildcard session. November 2, 2008

"Of Spirit, Cultures, and Flesh," Feminist Intercultural Theology: Broken Bodies-Sacred Lives, On Women's Sexuality and Human Dignity. San José, Costa Rica, June 10-15, 2008

"Burning Bushes: Seeking Earthy Glimpses of Divine Glory," PSR Earl Lectures. January 23, 2008

"Ghostly Encounters: Spirits, Memory, and the Holy Ghost," Planetary Loves: Postcoloniality, Gender, and Theology, Drew Transdisciplinary Theological Colloquium VII. November 1-4, 2007

"The Touch of Transcendence," Voices and Visions: Latina Theologians Speak, McCormick Theological Seminary. October 15, 2007

LECTURES and PRESENTATIONS

"Power Relations and Social Issues: Do/Should These Shape and Critique Latina/o (Christian) Understandings of God?" Annual Colloquium of ACHTUS, Mount Saint Mary's College, Los Angeles. June 3-6, 2007

"Human Otherness and the U. S. Immigration Debate," Theology and Ministry in the US/Latin@ Context: Crossing Borders & Redefining Margins, Harvard Divinity School. April 2006

"Memory of the Flesh: Divine Transcendence and Human Otherness," Transfiguring Passions: Theologies and Theories of Eros, Transdisciplinary Theological Colloquium IV. November 1, 2004

"God at the Crossroads," Orlando E. Costas Spring Lecture, Andover Newton Theological School. March 2004

"Sophia the Hybrid: A Latina Postcolonial Perspective," AAR, Christian Systematic Theology Group and Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Group. November 25, 2003

"Postcolonialism and Theology," First Hispanic Alumni Meeting, Drew University. October 2002

GRANTS

Participant, Project, *Finite Futures Research: Imagining Alternative Ways Forward in the Anthropocene*, funded by Henry Luce Foundation, 2022-2024

Co-Principal Researcher, Religion and Sexuality Seminar, funded by Ford Foundation, 2014, \$85,000

Lilly Faculty Fellowship, "Manifold Incarnations: On Body, Flesh, and Spirit," 2011-12, \$61,000

Participant in "Theological Education Between the Times," funded by the Lilly Endowment, 2015

AAR/Luce seminar on Theologies of Religious Pluralism and Comparative Theology, 2010-2011

Participant in *Transforming Theology*, a project funded by a Ford Foundation grant

Wabash Center Colloquy for Latino/a faculty, 2008-2009

Consultant for the project, *Reading and Teaching the Bible as Asian, Black, and Latino/a Scholars in the United States*, two-year consultation funded by a Wabash Center grant, 2003-2005

UNIVERSITY SERVICE (Select)

Committee on the Study of Religion, Faculty of Arts and Sciences (2010-present)

Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History, Administrative Committee (2017-present)

Graduate Program in American Studies, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (2014-2022)

Committee on Women, Gender and Sexuality, Faculty of Arts and Sciences (2017-2018)

Committee on Degrees on History and Literature, Faculty of Arts and Sciences (2017-2019)

Co-chair of University-wide Interfaculty Initiative on Politics, Identity, Culture (2018-2019)

Co-chair of the search committee for Harvard's FAS Cluster Hire in Ethnic Studies (2019-2021)

DISSERTATIONS DIRECTED (Select)

Pearl Barros, "Transforming Suffering: Insights from the Work of Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa"

Filipe Maia, "Trading Futures: Future-Talk, Finance, and Christian Eschatology"

Colin Bossen, "'Onward Christian Soldiers': American Populism and the Religious Imagination in the Wake of World War I"

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE (select)

Comité Científico Internacional, Revista Iberoamericana de Teología 2022-present

President, American Academy of Religion, 2021-22

Editorial Board, *Journal on Teaching*, 2021-present

International Academic Board, International School of Intercultural Philosophy, Barcelona, Spain, 2017-present

Editorial board, *ANTESIS: Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales*, Universidad La Salle, México, 2020-present

Editorial board, *Harvard Theological Review*, 2012-present

Faculty Mentor, Hispanic Theological Initiative, 2021-present

Board of Directors, American Academy of Religion, 2014-2016

Excellence in the Study of Religion Book Awards Jury, Chair (2015), American Academy of Religion, 2012-2015

Faculty Mentor, Hispanic Theological Initiative, 2015-2019

Editorial board, *Perspectivas*, 2015-2016

Editorial board, *The Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 2009-2016

Member of the Constructive Theology Workgroup, 2009-2016

Editorial board, *The Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion*, 2010-2013

Co-chair, Theology and Religious Reflection Section, American Academy of Religion, 2008-2010

Steering Committee, Latina/o Critical and Comparative Studies, American Academy of Religion, 2009-2012

Steering Committee, Theology, Bible, Postmodernity Group, American Academy of Religion, 2006-2009

Steering Committee, Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Group, American Academy of Religion, 2004-2008