

PAUL HOUSTON BLANKENSHIP-LAI

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EDUCATION

Graduate Theological Union (& UC Berkeley by extension)

PhD in Christian Spirituality 2020

Field: Anthropology

Committee: Elizabeth Liebert, Arthur Holder, Wendy Farley, Lawrence Cohen (UC Berkeley), and Tanya Luhrmann (Stanford)

San Francisco Theological Seminary

Certificate in Spiritual Direction 2024 (expected)

Vanguard University of Southern California

2012

MA in Religious Studies

Field: Spiritual Leadership

2007

Vanguard University of Southern California

BA in Sociology

Field: Women's Studies

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Seattle University

2021-

Theology and Religious Studies

Adjunct and then Instructor in Spirituality, Theology, and Culture

Seattle University

2016-2022

School of Theology and Ministry (school closure in 2023)

Adjunct and then Core Faculty in Spirituality, Theology, and Culture

Fordham University

2018

Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education

Adjunct Professor in Spirituality

University of California at Berkeley

2014

Sociology Department

Instructor

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND APPOINTMENTS

- Visiting Scholar at the Jackson School of International Studies **2016-2019**
University of Washington
 [Research project lead on faith-based responses to homelessness in Seattle with sociologist Jim Wellman]
- Center for Religious Wisdom and World Affairs **2016-2019**
Seattle University
 [Member of international cohort of social scientists and theologians researching and writing on faith-based responses to homelessness]
- Research Grant **2019**
Graduate Theological Union
- Student Travel Grant [x2] **2018**
Graduate Theological Union
- Ethnography Fellow and 1st Place Research Prize **2017**
Eastern University via the John Templeton Foundation

SELECTED SCHOLARLY PUBLICATIONS

- “What Lucifer Taught me about how to be a Christian: Towards an Apophatic Ethnography.” *Ecclesial Practices* (Spring 2023).
- “The Beautiful Death of a School—and the Birth of a More Loving Pedagogy.” Revise and resubmit with *Teaching Theology and Religion*. Anticipated publication: Spring 2024.
- Soul Woundedness*. New York: Fordham University Press (Anticipated: Fall 2024).
- Co-editor with Rachel Wheeler. *Spirituality, Animals, and Creation Care*. Preface by Arthur Holder. In progress.
- “Wounds of Love: Homelessness, Suffering, and Christian Spirituality.” *Land of Stark Contrasts: Faith-Based Responses to Homelessness*. Edited by Manuel Mejido. New York: Fordham University Press, 2021.
- “Eclipse.” *Street Homelessness*. Edited by James Keenan. New York: Orbis Books, 2019.
- Review of *Transgressive Devolution: Theology as Performance Art* by Natalie Wigg-Stevenson. *Teaching Theology and Religion* 25, no 1 (Spring 2022).
- Review of *Theodicy and Spirituality in the Fourth Gospel: A Girardian Perspective* by Daniel DeForest London. *Spiritus* 21, no. 2 (Winter 2021).

Review of *Theologically Engaged Anthropology* by Don Lemons, ed. *On Knowing Humanity* 3, no 1 (July 2019).

Review of *Spiritual Friendship After Religion: Walking with People While the Rules are Changing* by Joseph A Stewart-Sicking. *Spiritus* 18, no. 1 (Spring 2018).

“Alive in Anthropology.” Review of *On Knowing Humanity: Insights from Theology for Anthropology*. Edited by Eloise Meneses and David Bronkema. *Current Anthropology* 59, no. 4 (August 2018).

AWARDS AND HONORS

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| Faculty Fellow in Community Engaged Learning Seattle University | 2023-2024 |
| Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning Project Director for “A Contemplative Pedagogy for our More-Than-Human World.” | 2021-2022 |
| Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning Digital Saloon Cohort Member on Re-Imaging Teaching and Learning | 2020-2021 |
| Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning Doctoral Student Award | 2018 |
| Center for Ethnographic Research University of California at Berkeley | 2018 |
| Emerging Scholar Award International Religion and Spirituality in Society Research Network | 2018 |
| Sole Recipient of the Outstanding Dissertation Proposal Award Graduate Theological Union | 2018 |
| Honorable Mention in Founder’s Circle Essay Contest Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality [“Wounds of Love: Homelessness, Suffering, and Christian Spirituality”] | 2018 |
| First Place Winner of Vilma Seelaus Prize for New Carmelite Writing Carmelite Institute [“Theresian Spirituality as a Resource of Healing for Abused Children”] | 2013 |
| Voted Student Sole Commencement Speaker by Faculty at VUSC [For outstanding service to mankind] | 2005 |
| Delta Kappa Honor Society [Award for “outstanding service to humanity” at VUSC] | 2005 |

Students for Social Action at VUSC 2004-2005
President

The Catalyst Newspaper 2004-2005
Founder and contributing writer

RELATED WORK AND VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality

Peer reviewer 2023-

Religions

Peer reviewer 2023-

***On Knowing Humanity Journal* via Eastern University**

Associate Ethnography Editor 2022-

The International Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality

Emerging Scholars Co-Coordinator and Board Member 2021-

Eastern University

Ethnography mentor for graduate students in theological anthropology 2021-

The Berkeley Journal of Theology and Religion

Peer reviewer 2020-

Seattle Koyasan Buddhist Temple

Meditation organizer and facilitator 2021

Operation Nightwatch

Street minister to people living on streets of Seattle 2018-

North Seattle Friends

Interim minister 2021

Spokane Friends

Interim minister 2019-2020

Amare

Meditation facilitator 2017-2018

Catholic Worker Berkeley

2017

Food delivery for the homeless

Graduate Student Religion Researchers at UC Berkeley 2017-2018

Meeting and event facilitator

Graduate Theological Union 2015-2016

Assistant to Department Chairs John Endres and Kevin Burke

Stanford University 2013-2015

Research Assistant to anthropologist Tanya Luhmann

Mika Community Development 2012-2013

Spirituality program developer in California

SELECTED ACADEMIC CONFERENCES, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS, AND MEDIA

Seattle University Campus Ministry. 2023. "Quaker Spirituality: A Brief, Experiential Introduction."

International Network for the Society of Spirituality. 2023. "Spiritual Friendship and Inner Development Goals." Paper accepted but not presented.

Religious Educators Association. 2022. Academic conference online (due to COVID). "How to Teach for the Future When Things Are Falling Apart in the Present."

South East Technological University, Ireland. 2022. Intersectoral book launch. "Spiritual Accompaniment and Marginalization in the Vincentian Tradition" by Éibhlís nic Uaithuas."

San Francisco Night Ministry. 2022. Public gathering in San Francisco (Tenderloin District). "Soul Friendship and Social Transformation for a More Loving Love."

St. Therese Church in Seattle. 2022. Presentation to local charity online (due to COVID). "Developing a Comprehensive Response to Homelessness in Seattle."

Center for Religious Wisdom and World Affairs. 2020. Podcast in online, public course on intersectoral responses to homelessness. "Viable Ministries for the Homeless."

American Academy of Religion. 2020. Academic conference online (due to COVID). "A Dark Night of the Ethnographic Theologian."

The Society for the Scientific Study of Religion. 2020. Academic conference cancelled (due to COVID). "Luciferianism and Freedom on the Streets of Seattle."

The Spokesman Review. 2020. County newspaper article. "Politics and patriotism should not stand in the way of learning to love God's children."

University of Washington. 2019. Intersectoral presentation in Seattle. "Faith-Based Responses to Homelessness in Seattle."

The Society for the Scientific Study of Religion. 2018. Las Vegas. "Wounds of Love: Homelessness, Christian Spirituality, and Social Transformation."

American Academy of Religion. 2017. Boston, Massachusetts. "Wounds of Love: Homelessness, Christian Spirituality, and Social Transformation."