

HRC Foundation Summer Institute

2012 Institute Instructor: Dr. Rebecca Alpert



Rebecca Alpert was born in Brooklyn, New York and attended Erasmus High School. She went on to graduate from Barnard College before getting her Ph.D. in religion at Temple University and her Rabbinical training at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC) in Wyncote, Pennsylvania.

Her specialization is in American and especially Jewish American religious history, and she focuses on issues related to gender, sexuality and race. Her thinking about many of these issues was shaped by her teachers, who included Mordecai Kaplan, the founder of Reconstructionist Judaism.

After graduation, Alpert worked on a contractual basis with a number of synagogues in the U.S.A. and Canada. In this capacity, she was a member of the first generation of congregational women rabbis. During this time, she also taught courses in Holocaust Studies at Rutgers University and was the Dean of Students at the RRC until 1987. Thereafter she served in several capacities at Temple University: as Director of Adult Programs, Director of the Program in Women's Studies, and as a faculty member in the departments of religion and women's studies.

Alpert's research has focused on explaining and expounding the Reconstructionist tradition and the place of gays and lesbians in Jewish religious history. She has lectured at a number of colleges and universities, including Columbia, UPenn, Princeton and Swarthmore and is an active public intellectual who writes for mainstream publications and frequently speaks at rallies and on panels in the Philadelphia region and beyond. Her current work centers on the relationships between Jews, blacks and baseball during the years 1930-1950.

Alpert is a recipient of Temple's College of Liberal Arts Distinguished Teaching Award. She has recently taught courses on religion in American public life, Jews, America and sports, and sexuality in world religions.

2012 Mentors

Dr. Kent Brintnall



Kent L. Brintnall is an assistant professor in the Department of Religious Studies and an affiliate faculty member in the Women's & Gender Studies Program at The University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He received his B.A. in Philosophy from Fort Hays State University, his J.D. from Northeastern University School of Law, his M.A. from Pacific School of Religion and his Ph.D. from Emory University. He joined the UNC Charlotte faculty after serving as the inaugural post-doctoral fellow in religion and sexuality as well as a lecturer in film studies at Emory University. He teaches courses in feminist and queer theory, visual and popular culture, masculinity studies and the Christian tradition. His first book, *Ecce Homo: The Male-Body-in-Pain as Redemptive Figure*, is set to be released by University of Chicago Press in October 2011.

kbrintna@uncc.edu

Rev. Dr. Patrick Cheng



Rev. Dr. Patrick Cheng is the Assistant Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Dr. Cheng is an ordained minister with the Metropolitan Community Churches, and he writes for the religion section of the *Huffington Post*. He holds a B.A. from Yale College, a J.D. from Harvard Law School, and an M.A., M.Phil., and Ph.D. from Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York. Dr. Cheng's writings have been published in a number of peer-reviewed journals and anthologies, including the

second edition of *Sexuality and the Sacred* and *The Queer Bible Commentary*. He is the author of *Radical Love: An Introduction to Queer Theology*, and his current project is about sin, grace, and the queer Christ.

pcheng@eds.edu

Dr. Heather White



Heather White is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Religion at the New College of Florida. Dr. White began her education at Eastern University and went on to get a M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in American Religions from Princeton University. Her work brings attention to the plurality of religious perspectives around sexuality, particularly the influence of liberal Protestants within progressive sexuality politics. She writes about LGBT religious movements and religion and sexuality education and is currently finishing a book about the emergence of pro-LGBT Protestantism.

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Sample Schedule from 2011

Sunday, July 31

- 5:30 **Dinner and Introductions**
- 7:30 **Lecture - Janet Jakobsen**, Barnard College, "Building Coalitions: LGBTIQ Issues in Public Religion"
- 9:00 **Reception**

Monday, August 1

- 7:30 **Breakfast**
- 8:30-11 **Large Group Meeting** with instructors Room 122, VDS
- 11-11:45 **Lecture - Patrick Cheng**, Episcopal Divinity School, "'I Am Yellow and Beautiful': Reflections on Queer Asian Spirituality and Gay Male Cyberculture"
- 12-1:30 **Lunch**
- 1:30-2:15 **Panel** with HRC Summer Institute Alumni 2010 - "Radical Bridging: Intersectionality, Race, & Power" [Sara Rosenau, Drew University, Robyn Henderson-Espinoza, Iliff School of Theology, and Nikki Young, Bucknell University]
- 2:15-3:30 **Small Group Meetings** with mentors
- 5:30-6:30 **Dinner**
- 7:30 **Lecture - Mary Hunt**, Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual "Responsible Academics are Useful Activists"
- 9:00 **Reception**

Tuesday, August 2

- 7:30 **Breakfast**
- 9:00-11:30 **Lecture and dialogue - Traci West**, Drew University, "LGBT Rights, Sexual Violence Research, and Intercultural Black Solidarity"
- 12-1:30 **Lunch and Small Group Conversations with members of the HRC Religion Council**
[Miguel de la Torre, Rebecca Voelkel, Denise Eger, Sharon Groves]
- 1:30-2:15 **Lecture - Heather White**, "Why LGBTIQ Movement Organizing Needs a Religious History"
- 2:15-3:30 **Small Group Meetings** with mentors

- 5:30-6:30 **Dinner**
- 7:30-9:00 **Lecture - Amanullah De Soudy**, University of Miami, “The Challenge of LGBTIQ Issues in the Study of Islam”
- 9:00 **Reception**

Wednesday August 3

- 7:30-8:30 **Breakfast**
- 8:30-11 **Large Group Meeting** with instructors
- 11-11:45 **Lecture - Kent Brintnall**, The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, “Aesthetics as Politics”
- 12-1:30 **Lunch**
- 1:30-5 **Free Time OR trips** to Nashville sites
- 5:30-6:30 **Dinner**
- 7:30 **Lecture - Emilie Townes**, Yale University, and **Laurel Schneider**, Chicago Theological Seminary, “Musings on Writing and Life”
- 9:00 **Reception**

Thursday, August 4

- 7:30-8:30 **Breakfast** Dining Hall, SBC
- 8:30-11 **Large Group Meeting** with instructors Room 122, VDS
- 11-12 **Lecture - Megan Goodwin**, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, "Captive Bodies, Queer Religions: Scripting American Religious Intolerance."
- 12-1:30 **Lunch**
- 1:30-3 **Small Group Meetings** with mentors
- 5:30-6:30 **Dinner**
- 7:30-9 **Lecture - Jay Michaelson**, Hebrew University, “Queer Scholarship and Queer Activism: Liminality, Identity, and the Plight of the ‘Good Gays’”
- 9:00 **PARTY**

Friday, August 5

- 7:30 **Breakfast**

8:30-9:45 **Large Group Meeting**

9:45-11
Mean” **Lecture and Dialogue - Ellen Armour**, Vanderbilt Divinity School, “What Does It All

11-12 **Wrapping Up** - Where Do We Go from Here?

12-1:30 **Lunch**

Class of 2011 Summer Institute Fellows

Philip Abrahamson



Philip Abrahamson completed his undergraduate work at Concordia College, Moorhead in Religion. There he also discovered Eastern Orthodoxy which he has since been pursuing both academically and spiritually. He completed his MTS at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology where he is also working to finish his Th.M. thesis. In the fall he will be starting at Fordham in their doctoral program. His interests include doing critical work in Queer Theology from an Eastern Orthodoxy perspective and challenging the assumptions of each.

Egon D. Cohen



Egon D. Cohen is completing a Masters of Theological Studies at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas. His research focuses on gender, sexuality, ethics, hermeneutics, and the intersection of liturgical praxis, politics, and BDSM. Egon likes riding motorcycles and eating Haribo gummibears. He is secretly still 10.

Jacob Erickson



Jacob J. Erickson is a doctoral student in the Graduate Division of Religion at Drew University. His work in constructive theology explores the entanglements of queer theory, political ecology, and divine immanence. He is also a candidate for ordination in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

Kelly Francis Fenelon



completed a year-long internship with Planned Parenthood.

Kelley Frances Fenelon's research and activism focuses on the relationship of religion, social movements, and queered justice. She graduated from Princeton University in 2009, where she studied religion and public policy at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs and also completed a certificate in Women and Gender Studies. In May, she also earned a M.T.S. from Vanderbilt Divinity School where she continued her focus on gender and sexuality through the Carpenter Program. Currently an intern with the local union at Vanderbilt through Interfaith Worker Justice's Seminary Summer program, Kelley Frances also organizes for the Reconciling Ministries Network (United Methodist) and recently

Chad Gurley



study of the intersections of psychology and spirituality, especially as it pertains to depression, so as to facilitate hope and work towards suicide prevention especially in the LGBTQ community.

Chad Gurley received his B.A. from Harding University and is presently pursuing a Masters of Divinity degree from Vanderbilt Divinity School. He has served as Convener of the ministry, Maranatha: Riversiders for LGBTQ Concerns, and as a lay leader of the Mission and Social Justice Commission, both at The Riverside Church in New York City. As a writer, Gurley has published works such as poetry in the book, *Sanctified: An Anthology of Poetry by LGBT Christians* and the webzine, *The Epistle: A Web Magazine for Christian LGBT People*, as well as a short story in *InTheFray Magazine*. Of academic and ministerial interest to Gurley is the development of Queer theology as it pertains to the inclusion and affirmation of queer persons who have been deemed outsiders by our heteronormative society. Additionally, he plans to pursue the

Megan Goodwin



Megan Goodwin is a doctoral candidate in the Religion and Culture concentration with the Department of Religious Studies at University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill. She has earned master's degrees in Religious Studies and Women's Studies from UNC Chapel Hill and Drew University respectively. Her research interests include American religions, gender and sexuality, religious language and literature, religious intolerance, and contemporary critical thought. Goodwin is particularly concerned with the ways American religious alterity is written on the sexual body. Her dissertation, entitled "Captive Bodies, Queer Religions: Scripting American Religious Intolerance," addresses the ways captivity narratives articulate American Protestant anxieties about the challenges marginal religions pose to heteronormative masculinity.

Brett Krutzsch



Brett Krutzsch is a Ph.D. student in Religion at Temple University. He holds a B.A. in Religion from Emory University, spent one year studying Religion and Society at Harvard Divinity School, and holds an M.A. in Higher Education from New York University. His research interests include examining the ways in which openly-gay Orthodox Jews negotiate and perform their queer and Jewish identities, as well as the ways they navigate and either uphold or subvert Orthodox Judaism's highly-gendered religio-cultural system.

Jennifer Leath



Jennifer Leath is a PhD candidate in Religious Ethics and African American Studies at Yale University; she is also pursuing a certificate in Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies. Jennifer's work focuses on the co-development of Afro-Diasporic women's work, spiritual, and sexual ethics.

Brock Perry



Brock Perry is completing an MA at Chicago Theological Seminary. His scholarly interests are focused on bringing queer theory and constructive theology into dialogue with one another to address issues of queer embodiment. Recently, this focus has taken the shape of re-thinking the ontology of both queerness and divinity, using affect theory as critical support for articulating the ways that divinity emerges within queer atmospheres of everyday experience.

Amanda Pumphrey



Amanda Pumphrey is a 2011 graduate from Claremont School of Theology with a MA in Religion focused in ethics. Amanda will begin her PhD in Women's Studies in Religion at Claremont Graduate University this fall. Her academic concentrations are feminist and queer theologies and Christian sexual ethics.

Jacob Quiring



Jacob Quiring is a doctoral student at Harvard Divinity School in Religion, Gender, and Culture. His particular area of interest is around queer theologies and Christian practices of community and discipleship.

Marissa Rohrbach



Marissa Rohrbach is a Candidate for a Master of Sacred Theology at Yale Divinity School where she received her Master of Divinity in May of 2011. She is pursuing ordination to the priesthood in the Episcopal Church and hopes to combine her call to serve the Church with her academic interest in the intersection of liturgical, theological, gender, and queer studies. She is particularly interested in ritual practice and the ways in which liturgy serves as a site for justice, hospitality, and reconciliation. A native of Pennsylvania, Marissa came to Yale by way of Washington, D.C. and The George Washington University where she studied French Literature with a special interest in early modern texts about gender and religion.

Nicolas Vancayzeele



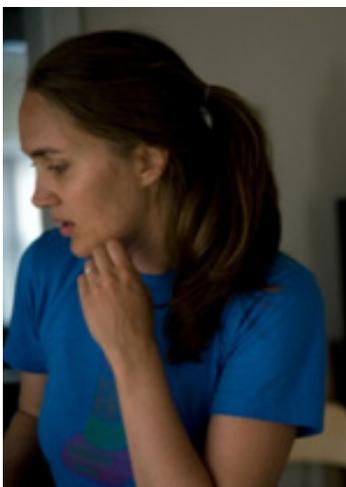
Nicolas Vancayzeele is currently finishing his Master of Theology and Religious Studies at the Catholic University of Louvain (K.U.Leuven). At the age of 15 he discovered his sexual feelings could be labeled 'homosexual'. Although his close environment accepted him fairly easy, he kept feeling the burden of a heterosexual normativity in society. He recently discovered queer theology and is now writing his Master's thesis on Queer Theology and Marcella Althaus-Reid.

Jared Vazquez



Jared Vazquez is a third year Masters of Divinity student at Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, OK. Jared's research interests lie in body, identity and intersectionality. He plans to pursue a Ph.D. in social ethics with focus on latina/o experience.

Jeanine Viau



Jeanine Viau is a PhD candidate in Christian Ethics at Loyola University Chicago. Her dissertation project is a biographical interview study with LGBTQ student activists at two urban Catholic universities. She explores the category of resurrection as an imperative to participate in the work of justice, as well as a vision of transformation adequate for theologizing the experiences of queer youth, particularly their strategies of agency. As a queer, Catholic ethicist, she works to support the voices of gender and sexually marginalized youth, and to heal a tradition that is ravaged by the structural sins of heterosexism and homophobia.

Natalie Williams



Natalie Williams is a graduate of Vanderbilt Divinity School (MTS) and a current PhD student in Religion and Society at Drew University. Her work focuses on Christian social ethics, especially on sexual ethics. Her research interests include heteronormativity, shame, heterosexual marriage, and divorce.

Bryant Woodford



Bryant Woodford is a third year seminarian at Lancaster Theological Seminary in Lancaster, PA. Before entering seminary, Bryant spent almost a decade working in church ministry in Cleveland, OH. Bryant not only wants to continue his work in ministry, but also seeks to incorporate the concerns of the LGBT community into his ministerial vocation.

Class of 2010 Summer Institute Fellows

Rev. Sofia Betancourt



Rev. Sofia Betancourt is an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister currently working on a doctorate at Yale University in Religious Ethics and African American Studies.

Rev. Julianne Buenting



Rev. Julianne Buenting is a doctoral student at Chicago Theological Seminary. Her work focuses on the intersection between queer studies and Christian practical theology, specifically worship and ritual practice.

Brandy Daniels



Brandy Daniels will be beginning her PhD work in Theology, Ethics and Human Sciences at Chicago Theological Seminary this fall. She intends to study Christian theology, gender and sexuality.

Robyn Henderson-Espinoza



Robyn Henderson-Espinoza is a doctoral student at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver, CO, studying social ethics with a primary interest in queering Latino/a social ethics.

Tadhi Coulter



Tadhi Coulter is currently finishing up a Masters of Divinity at Vanderbilt University School of Divinity. His scholarship is rooted in African and African American studies with a primary emphasis on anthropology of race, African American performances and spiritual traditions.

Malachi Kosanovich



Malachi Kosanovich is a third year student in the Masters of Divinity at Wake Forest University focusing on Queer Theory and Theology.

Peter Anthony Mena



Peter Anthony Mena is a doctoral student at Drew University Theological School. His research centers on the history of Christianity in late antiquity; gender, sexuality, the body in late antiquity; and constructions of orthodoxy and heresy.

Sara Rosenau



Sara Rosenau is a doctoral student at Drew University Theological School. Her scholarly interest is in pragmatic, justice-oriented theology that combines contemporary social theory with the experiences of marginalized peoples.

Rev. Cody J. Sanders



Rev. Cody J. Sanders is a PhD student in pastoral theology and pastoral counseling at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas. Cody is an ordained minister in the Alliance of Baptists and interested in the intersections of pastoral theology with queer theory.

Barbara Schwartz

Barbara Schwartz will begin her doctoral studies this fall at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary pursuing a PhD in theology, ethics and history.

Miak Siew



Miak Siew is completing a Masters of Divinity at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, CA. He is from Singapore and is interested in LGBT religious advocacy and public education in Singapore.

Rev. Teresa L. Smallwood, Esq.



Rev. Teresa L. Smallwood, Esq. is a doctoral student at Howard University School of Divinity. She is particularly interested in thinking critically about how scholarship may be used to engage young adults more intensely in faith.

Krista Wuertz



Krista Wuertz is a doctoral student at Claremont School of Theology. Her research focus is spiritual care and counseling. She is currently writing a book about her childhood experience growing up with lesbian parents in the late 1970s and 1980s.