

BRIAN HAGEN COLLINS

Drs. Ram and Sushila Gawande Chair in Indian Religion and Philosophy,
Professor of Religious Studies, and Department Chair,
Department of Classics and Religious Studies, Ohio University

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Ohio University
Athens, OH 45701
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EDUCATION

August 2010 Ph.D. History of Religions, The Divinity School, University of Chicago

Dissertation: "Headless Mothers, Magic Cows, and Lakes of Blood: The Paraśurāma Cycle in the *Mahābhārata* and Beyond."

June 2003 M.A. History of Religions, The Divinity School, University of Chicago

August 2001 B.A. Religious Studies, North Carolina State University (Honors) *Magna Cum Laude*

June 2001 B.A Psychology, North Carolina State University (Honors) *Magna Cum Laude*

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2023-present Professor, Ohio University, Athens, OH

2018-2023 Associate Professor, Ohio University, Athens, OH

2013-2018 Assistant Professor, Ohio University, Athens, OH

2011-2012 Teaching Assistant Professor, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC

2004-2007 Instructor, Loyola University, Chicago, IL

2004 Instructor, St. Xavier University, Chicago, IL

PUBLICATIONS

Books:

Rāma Jāmadagnya as Symptom and Symbol of Brahmin Ideology. Sanctum Books, under contract.

Am I in Heaven? King Gizzard and the Lizard Wizard's Metamodern Music and Mythology. Studies in Metamodernism: Theory and Criticism across the Disciplines. Bloomsbury, in press.

Robert Eisler and the Magic of the Combinatory Mind: The Forgotten Life of a 20th Century Austrian Polymath. Palgrave Pivot, 2021.

The Other Rāma: Matricide and Genocide in the Mythology of Paraśurāma. SUNY Press, 2020.

The Head Beneath the Altar: Hindu Mythology and the Critique of Sacrifice. Michigan State University Press, 2014. (Published in India as *Hindu Mythology and the Critique of Sacrifice: The Head Beneath the Altar.* The Hindu Tradition Series, No. 7. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Ltd., 2018.)

Edited Books:

The Routledge Companion to the Mahābhārata. With Shubha Pathak and Frederick S. Smith. In progress, expected publication 2027.

Bollywood Horrors: Religion, Violence, and Cinematic Fears in India. With Ellen Goldberg and Aditi Sen. Bloomsbury Academic, 2020.

Journal Special Issues:

Special Issue on the Epic Scholarship of Alf Hiltebeitel (1942-2023). *International Journal of Hindu Studies.* In press.

With Jason Ānanda Josephson Storm. Special Issue on Metamodernism and the Study of Religion. *Religious Studies Review* Vol 48, No. 4 (Dec. 2022).

With Jodi Wille. Special Issue on New Religious Movements and Documentary Film. *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 47, No. 4 (Dec. 2021).

Annotated Bibliography:

“Rāma Jāmadagnya/Paraśurāma.” In *Oxford Bibliographies in Hinduism.* Alf Hiltebeitel, Editor in Chief. New York: Oxford University Press, Launched May 23, 2012. Revised and updated August 11, 2022.

Peer-Reviewed Articles:

“Topographies of Mind and *Mahābhārata*: Rethinking Alf Hiltebeitel’s Epic Scholarship through His Late Engagement with Freud.” *International Journal of Hindu Studies.* In press.

With Kristen Tobey. “From *Middlemarch* to *The Da Vinci Code*: Portrayals of Religious Studies in Popular Culture.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 44, No.2 (Jun. 2018), 173-182. DOI: 10.1111/rsr.13420

“The Sacrificial Ram and the Swan Queen: Mimetic Theory Fades to Black.” *Contagion: Journal of Violence, Mimesis and Culture* Vol. 20, No. 1 (Jan., 2013), 207-238. DOI: [10.14321/contagion.20.2013.0207](https://doi.org/10.14321/contagion.20.2013.0207)

“Avatāra or Cirajīvin? Paraśurāma and His Problems.” *Journal of Vaishnava Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (2012), 187-197.

Invited Note:

“By Post or by Ghost: Ruminations on Visions and Epistolary Archives.” *Jewish Quarterly Review* Vol. 107, No. 3 (Summer 2017), 393-404.

Essays:

“The Beginning Is a Shipwreck: Roberto Calasso’s Vision of the *Mahābhārata*.” In *The Routledge Companion to the Mahābhārata*. Edited by Shubha Pathak, Frederick S. Smith, and Brian Collins. Routledge. In progress.

With Kristen Tobey, “‘You’re Crashing Out for Christ’: Counter-apologetics, Shifting Religious Identities, and ‘Getting Cooked’ in Contemporary Online Religion Debates.” In *Metamodern Spiritualities*. Edited by Linda Ceriello and Dave Vliegthart. Bloomsbury. In progress.

“Hinduism and Buddhism.” In *Bloomsbury Handbook of Mimetic Theory*. Edited by Scott Cowdell, Joel Hodge, and Chris Fleming. Bloomsbury. In press.

“The Hiltēbhārata: Rethinking Alf Hiltebeitel’s Epic (of) Scholarship Through His Late Engagement with Freud.” *International Journal of Hindu Studies*. In press.

“The Ambā-Upākhyāna Reconsidered: Reading Ambā’s Story as Part of the Rāma Jāmadagnya Myth Cycle.” In *Visions and Revisions in Sanskrit Narratives: Studies in the Indian Epics and Puranas*. Edited by Raj Balkaran and McComas Taylor, 127-151. Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2023.

With Jason Ānanda Josephson Storm. “Metamodernism and the Study of Religion: An Introduction.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol 48, No. 4 (Dec. 2022), 481-482. DOI: 10.1111/rsr.16189.

“Lightning Bugs and Fireflies: Can Metamodernism Help Us Do Better Comparative Mythology?” *Religious Studies Review* Vol 48, No. 4 (Dec. 2022), 497-500. DOI: 10.1111/rsr.16197.

“Myth.” In *The Encyclopedia of Religious Ethics: Volume 1-Moral Inquiry*. Edited by William Schweiker, Maria Antonaccio, Elizabeth Bucar, and David Clairmont, 445-452. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2022.

“Paraśurāma, Droṇa, and Aśvatthāman: A Comparative Study of Brahmin Warriors in the *Mahābhārata*.” In *NOMEN NVMEN: Espressioni del sacro tra storia delle religioni*,

linguistica e archeologia. Edited by Marcello do Martino and Claudia Santi, 177-192. Lugano: Agora & Co, 2021.

“Introduction.” In *Bollywood Horrors: Religion, Violence, and Cinematic Fears in India*, edited by Ellen Goldberg, Aditi Sen, and Brian Collins, 1-18. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020.

“Monsters, *Masala*, and Materiality: Close Encounters with Hindi Horror Movie Ephemera.” In *Bollywood Horrors: Religion, Violence, and Cinematic Fears in India*, edited by Ellen Goldberg, Aditi Sen, and Brian Collins, 21-43. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020.

“Vampire Man Varma: The Untold Story of the ‘Hindu Mystic’ Who Decolonized Dracula.” In *Bollywood Horrors: Religion, Violence, and Cinematic Fears in India*, edited by Ellen Goldberg, Aditi Sen, and Brian Collins, 44-65. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020.

“Un pezzo troppo quadrato: la vita e l’opera di Robert Eisler” [“A Very Square Peg: The Life and Work of Robert Eisler”]. In *Uomo diventa lupo: un’interpretazione antropologica di sadism, masochismo e licanthropia* [*Man into Wolf: An Anthropological Interpretation of Sadism, Masochism, and Lycanthropy*] by Robert Eisler, 323-391. Translated by Raul Montanari. Milan: Adelphi Edizioni, 2019.

“The Eastern Revolution: From the Vedas to Buddhism, Jainism, and the Upanishads.” In *The Handbook of Mimetic Theory and Religion*, edited by James Alison and Wolfgang Palaver, 111-117. London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017.

“Burning Desires, Burning Corpses: Girardian Reflections on Fire in Hinduism and Buddhism.” In *René Girard and World Religions*, edited by Wolfgang Palaver and Richard Schenk, 303-317. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2017.

“A Voice and Something More: Jigsaw as Acousmêtre and Existential Guru.” In *To See the Saw Movies: Essays on Torture Porn and Post-9/11 Horror*, edited by James Aston and John Walliss, 86-105. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2013.

“The Rig Veda” and “The Jain Sutras.” In *Milestone Documents of World Religions: Exploring Traditions of Faith through Primary Sources*, edited by David M. Fahey. The Schlager Group, 2010.

“Indian Mythology.” In *Essential Visual History of World Mythology*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2008.

Podcast:

“A Very Square Peg: A Podcast About Robert Eisler.” June 2020. New Books Network. <https://newbooksnetwork.com/category/nbn-special-series/very-square-peg/>

Book Review Essays:

“Lightning Bugs and Fireflies: Can Metamodernism Help Us Do Better Comparative Mythology?” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 48, No. 4 (Dec. 2022), 497-500. doi: [10.1111/rsr.16197](https://doi.org/10.1111/rsr.16197)

“A Response to *Sovereignty and the Sacred* in Three Parts.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 48, No. 4 (Dec. 2022), 533-536. doi: [10.1111/rsr.16203](https://doi.org/10.1111/rsr.16203)

“Biblical Boogeymen, Holy Ghosts, and the New Demonology: A Review of Three Recent Books on Religion and Horror—Brandon R. Grafius, *Reading the Bible with Horror*; Brandon R. Grafius and John Morehead (eds.), *Theology and Horror: Explorations of the Dark Religious Imagination*; and Steve A. Wiggins, *Nightmares with the Bible: The Good Book and Cinematic Demons*.” *Journal of Religion and Film* Volume 26, Issue 2 (October 2022). <http://doi.org/10.32873/uno.dc.jrf.26.02.10>
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol26/iss2/10>

“Of Demons and Disciplines: *Old Thiess, a Livonian Werewolf: A Classic Case in Comparative Perspective* by Carlo Ginzburg and Bruce Lincoln and *Daemons Are Forever: Contacts and Exchanges in the Eurasian Pandemonium* by David Gordon White.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 47, No.1 (Mar. 2021), 5-14.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/rsr.15031>

Book Reviews:

“*Many Mahābhāratas*. Edited by Nell Shapiro Hawley and Sohini Sarah Pillai. Albany: SUNY Press, 2021.” *Reading Religion*. January 17, 2025.
<https://readingreligion.org/9781438482408/many-mahabharatas/>

“*The ‘Early Medieval’ Origins of India*. By Manu V. Devadevan.” *Religion*. DOI: 10.1080/0048721X.2024.2269775

“*Religion: Super Religion*. Edited by Jeffrey J. Kripal.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 46, No.1 (Mar. 2020), 17-20.

“*From Indra’s Net to Internet: Community, Technology, and the Spread of Buddhist Ideas*. By Daniel Veidlinger.” *The Historian* Vol. 82, No. 1 (2020), 91-93.

“*Religion: Sources, Perspectives, and Methodologies*. Edited by Jeffrey J. Kripal.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 45, No. 2 (June 2019), 131-133.

“*Oedipal God: The Chinese Nezha and His Indian Origins*. By Meir Shahar.” *Religions of South Asia* Vol. 12, No. 3 (2019), 405-409.

“*The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*. By Kaiser Haq.” *South Asian Review* Vol. 38, No. 3 (2017), 99-101.

“*Crossing the Lines of Caste: Viśvāmitra and the Construction of Brahmin Power in Hindu Mythology*. By Adheesh A. Sathaye.” *International Journal of Hindu Studies* Vol. 22, No. 3 (2018), 541-542.

“*Disorienting Dharma: Ethics and the Aesthetics of Suffering in the Mahābhārata* by Emily T. Hudson.” *The Journal of Religion* Vol. 96 No. 2 (2016), 273-275.

“*Brahman: A Study in the Solar Rituals of the Indo-Europeans* by Alexander Jacob.” *The Journal of Hindu Studies* Vol. 8 No. 1 (2015), 155-157.

“*Ardor* by Roberto Calasso” *The Bulletin of the Colloquium on Violence & Religion* No. 46 (May 2015), 11-13.

“*The One by Whom Scandal Comes* by René Girard.” *History of Religions* Vol. 54, No. 4 (May 2015), 466-468.

“*Strong Arms and Drinking Strength: Masculinity, Violence, and the Body in Ancient India* by Jarrod L. Whitaker.” *History of Religions* Vol. 53, No. 1 (Aug. 2013), 105-107.

“*Invoking Lakshmi: The Goddess of Wealth in Song and Ceremony* by Constantina Rhodes.” *International Journal of Hindu Studies* Vol. 17, No. 1 (2013), 118-120.

“*Dharma and Ecology of Hindu Communities: Sustenance and Sustainability* by Pankaj Jain.” *Philosophy East and West* Vol. 63, No. 1 (Jan. 2013), 92-95.

“*The Inordinately Strange Life of Dyce Sombre, Victorian Anglo-Indian and Chancery ‘Lunatic’* by Michael H. Fisher.” *The Journal of Asian Studies* Vol. 70, No. 2 (May 2011), 611-612.

Book Notes:

“*Explaining, Interpreting, and Theorizing Religion and Myth: Contributions in Honor of Robert A. Segal*. Edited by Nickolas P. Roubekas and Thomas Ryba. *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 48, No. 2 (Jun. 2022), 248.

“*Magic: A History: From Alchemy to Witchcraft, from the Ice Age to the Present*. By Chris Gosden.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 48, No. 1 (Mar. 2022), 101-102.

“*How God Becomes Real: Kindling the Presence of Invisible Others*. By T. M. Luhrmann.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 47, No. 3 (Sep. 2021), 362-363.

“*Origins of the Witches’ Sabbath*. By Michael D. Bailey.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 47, No.2 (Jun. 2021), 213.

“*Method Today: Redescribing Approaches to the Study of Religion*. Edited by Brad Stoddard.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 47, No. 2 (Jun. 2021), 213-214.

“Arjuna-Odysseus: Shared Heritage in Indian and Greek Epic. By N. J. Allen.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 46, No.3 (Sept. 2020), 375.

“Who Owns Religion? Scholars and Their Publics in the Late Twentieth Century. By Laurie L. Patton.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 46, No. 3 (Sep. 2020), 376-377.

“Among the Scientologists: History, Theology, and Praxis. By Donald A. Westbrook.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 45, No. 4 (Dec. 2019), 504.

“Irreverence and the Sacred: Critical Studies in the History of Religions. Edited by Hugh Urban and Greg Johnson.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 45, No. 3 (Sep. 2019), 342-343.

“Magic’s Reason: An Anthropology of Analogy. By Graham M. Jones.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 45, No. 3 (Sep. 2019), 342.

“An Ancient Theory of Religion: Euhemerism from Antiquity to the Present. By Nicholas P. Roubekas.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 45, No. 3 (Sep. 2019), 342.

“Comparison: A Critical Primer. By Aaron W. Hughes.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 45, No.1 (Mar. 2019), 45-46.

“Ritual Gone Wrong: What We Learn from Ritual Disruption. By Kathryn T. McClymond.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 44, No. 4 (Dec. 2018), 451.

“New Patterns for Comparative Religion: Passages to an Evolutionary Perspective. By William E. Paden.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 44, No. 4 (Dec. 2018), 449-450.

“The Returns of Fetishism: Charles de Brosses and the Afterlives of an Idea, with a New Translation of On the Worship of Fetish Gods. By Rosalind C. Morris and Daniel H. Leonard.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 44, No. 4 (Dec. 2018), 450-451.

“Homa Variations: The Study of Ritual Change Across the Longue Durée. Edited by Richard K. Payne and Axel Michaels.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 44, No. 4 (Dec. 2018), 449.

“Ellipsis... The Collected Writings of Charles H. Long. By Charles H. Long.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 44, No. 3 (Sep. 2018), 316.

“Why Religions Matter. By John Bowker.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 44, No. 3 (Sep. 2018), 316.

“Love of Ruins: Letters on Lovecraft. By Scott Cutler Shershow and Scott Michaelsen.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 44, No. 2 (Jun. 2018), 208-209.

“Homo Ritualis: Hindu Ritual and Its Significance for Ritual Theory. By Axel Michaels.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 44, No. 2 (Jun. 2018), 207.

“*After World Religions: Reconstructing Religious Studies*. Edited by Christopher R. Cotter and David G. Robertson.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 44, No. 2 (Jun. 2018), 207-208.

“*Realizing the Witch: Science, Cinema, and the Mastery of the Invisible*. By Richard Baxstrom and Todd Meyers.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 43, No. 2 (Jun. 2017).

“*Fields of Blood: Religion and the History of Violence*. By Karen Armstrong.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 43, No. 1 (Mar. 2017), 39.

“*Negative Ecstasies: Georges Bataille and The Study of Religion*. Edited by Jeremy Biles and Kent L. Brintnall.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 42, No. 1 (Mar. 2016), 30.

“*The Weight of Violence: Religion, Language, Politics*. Edited by Saitya Brata Das and Soumyabrata Choudhury.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 42, No.1 (Mar. 2016), 28.

“*Methods for the Study of Religious Change: From Religious Studies to Worldview Studies*. Edited by André Droogers and Anton van Harskamp.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 42, No.1 (Mar. 2016), 28–29.

“*Ritual Textuality: Pattern and Motion in Performance*. By Matt Tomlinson.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 42, No. 1 (Mar. 2016), 29.

“*Semiotics of Religion: Signs of the Sacred in History*. By Robert A. Yelle. *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 42, No.1 (Mar. 2016), 29-30.

“*The Nay Science: A History of German Indology*. By Vishwa Adluri and Joydeep Bagchee.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 41, No.2 (Jun. 2015), 53-54.

“*Egyptian Oedipus: Athanasius Kircher and the Secrets of Antiquity*. By Daniel Stolzenberg.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 41, No. 2 (Jun. 2015), 54.

“*Ardor*. By Roberto Calasso.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 41, No. 2 (Jun. 2015), 88-89.

“*Culture and the Death of God*. By Terry Eagleton.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 40, No. 4 (Dec. 2014), 197.

“*The Craft of Ritual Studies*. By Ronald Grimes.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 40, No. 4 (Dec. 2014), 197.

“*The Origins of the World’s Mythologies*. By E. J. Michael Witzel.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 40, No. 2 (Jun. 2014), 78.

“Reinventing Religious Studies: Key Writings in the History of a Discipline. Edited By Scott S. Elliot.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 40, No. 2 (Jun. 2014), 79.

“Figuring Religions: Comparing Ideas, Images, and Activities. Edited by Shubha Pathak.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 40, No. 2 (Jun. 2014), 80.

Music and Film Notes:

“Midsommar. Directed by Ari Aster.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 45, No. 3 (Sep. 2019), 364.

“Hereditary. Directed by Ari Aster.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 45, No.1 (Mar. 2019), 61.

“Sacred Games. Season One.” Religious Studies Review Vol. 45, No.1 (Mar. 2019), 62.

“The Killing of a Sacred Deer. Directed by Yorgos Lanthimos.” *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 44, No. 3 (Sep. 2018), 463.

“Game of Thrones. Created by David Benioff and D. B. Weiss” *Religious Studies Review* 41.4 (Dec. 2015), 186.

“Orange is the New Black. Created by Jenji Kohan.” *Religious Studies Review* 41.4 (Dec. 2015), 186-187.

“Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief. Directed by Alex Gibney.” *Religious Studies Review* 41.3 (Sep. 2015), 107.

“True Detective: Season One. Created by Nic Pizzolatto.” *Religious Studies Review* 41.3 (Sep. 2015), 108.

“Annabelle. Film. Directed by John R. Leonetti.” *Religious Studies Review* 41.2 (Jun. 2015), 64-65.

“Ouija. Directed by Stiles White.” *Religious Studies Review* 41.2 (Jun. 2015), 65.

“Perfection & Permanence. By Trepaneringsritualen.” *Religious Studies Review* 40.4 (Dec. 2014), 219.

“Noah. Film. Directed by Darren Aronofsky.” *Religious Studies Review* 40.3 (Sep. 2014), 147.

“The Pervert's Guide to Ideology. Film. Directed by Sophie Fiennes.” *Religious Studies Review* 40.3 (Sep. 2014), 147.

“Nymphomaniac Volume I and Nymphomaniac Volume II. Film. Directed by Lars Von Trier. *Religious Studies Review* 40.3 (Sep. 2014), 147.

“*Cults and Static*. By Cults.” *Religious Studies Review* 40.2 (Jun. 2014), 96.

“*The Word as Power*. By Lustmord.” *Religious Studies Review* 40.2 (Jun. 2014), 96.

“*The Conjuring*. Film. Directed by James Wan.” *Religious Studies Review* 39:4 (Dec. 2013), 253-254

“*The Comedy*. Film. Directed by Rick Alverson.” *Religious Studies Review* 39:3 (Sep. 2013), 164

“*The Cabin in the Woods*. Film. Directed by Drew Goddard.” *Religious Studies Review* 39:2 (Jun. 2013), 96-97

“*It Stands to Conceal*. Musical Recording. By Vatican Shadow.” *Religious Studies Review* 39:2 (Jun. 2013), 98

PRESENTATIONS, PAPERS, AND PANELS:

Paper: “Killing to Create: The Energetics of Corpse Magic in Folk Religion and Horror Cinema.” Religion, Media, and Culture Unit, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Denver, CO, November 21-24, 2026. Accepted.

Paper: “Mars for the Rich: Two Metamodern Heavy Metal Jeremiads Against Technofuturism.” Religion and Popular Culture Unit, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Denver, CO, November 21-24, 2026. Accepted.

Presentation: “The Haunting and Human Sacrifice Complex.” Esotericism, Occultism, and Magic Area, Southwest Popular/American Culture Association Summer Salon, online, June 25, 2026. Accepted.

Presentation: “Hindu and Buddhist Attitudes toward Sacrificial Violence.” John D. Stratton Conference on “The Spirit of Peace,” Ashland University, March 21, 2026. Invited.

Panelist: “Roundtable on *Brahmins and Kings: Royal Counsel in the Sanskrit Narrative Literature*.” 53rd Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Madison-Wisconsin. October 23, 2025. Invited.

Presentation: “Revisiting Dimock and Stewart’s *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* a Quarter-Century On.” 53rd Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Madison-Wisconsin. October 22, 2025. Invited.

Presentation: “Religion and Other True Ghost Stories: Introducing the Haunting and Human Sacrifice Complex.” Colloquium on Narrative & Belief, Ohio State University. March 22-23, 2024. Invited.

Presentation: “Lord Veṭāl: Konkan Ghost-God and Exemplar of the Haunting and Human Sacrifice Complex.” 16th Annual Conference of the International Association for Comparative Mythology Conference, Tusk, Ireland, August 21-25, 2023. Accepted.

Presentation: “Paraśurāma and the Konkan Coast.” Centre for Study for Mythology and Culture. Panaji, India, January 19, 2023. Invited.

Presentation: “A New Look at Media Franchise Fandom and Comparative Mythology: The Case of the ‘Once-ler Fandom.’” 15th Annual Conference of the International Association for Comparative Mythology: Sacred Ground: Place and Space in Mythology and Religion, Serbian Academy of Sciences & Arts, Belgrade, Serbia, June 7-11, 2022. Accepted.

Paper: “The Hildebrand: Rethinking Alf Hiltebeitel’s Epic Scholarship Through His Late Engagement with Freud; Including an Upākhyāna from Interwar Vienna.” *Mahābhārata* and Classical Hinduism Seminar, 2021 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, TX, November 18-23, 2021. Accepted.

Presentation: “Theorizing Sacrifice with Indian Myth and Ritual.” Mythology Classroom, Online, October 31, 2021. Invited.

Presentation: “Why Does Paraśurāma Throw His Axe into the Ocean and Drive Back the Water? A Study in the Circulation and Transformation of Myth Motifs.” 14th Annual Conference of the International Association for Comparative Mythology: Death and Migration in World Mythology, School of Anthropology and History of Northern Mexico (Escuela de Antropología e Historia del Norte de México), Online, August 23-27, 2021. Accepted.

Panelist. “The Dangers of QAnon.” Ohio University Contemporary History Institute. February 18, 2021. Invited.

Presider: “The *Mahābhārata*: A Text for Classical Hinduism.” 2019 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Diego, CA., November 25, 2019. Accepted.

Paper: “The Other Rāma: Matricide and Genocide in the Mythology of Paraśurāma.” Kuttan Lecture in Religious Studies, Claremont McKenna College, Claremont, CA., November 21, 2019. Invited.

Paper: “Paraśurāma, Drona, and Aśvatthāman: Dumézilian Perspectives on Brahmin Warriors in the *Mahābhārata*.” The Second International Meeting of “Comparative Mythology Today,” University of Campania, Santa Maria Capua Vetere, Italy, April 15, 2019. Invited.

Respondent: Alf Hiltebeitel, “Freud’s *Mahābhārata*.” George Washington University, September 28, 2017. Invited.

Presider: Western Esotericism Group's session "South Asian Yoga and Tantra in Western Esoteric and Occult Traditions: A Cross-Fertilization of Practice." 2016 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion San Antonio, November 20, 2016. Invited.

Paper: "Whistling Past the Kabrasthān: Aesthetics, Demonology and Politics in Hindi Horror Film Posters and Ephemera." Given in Hinduism Group's session, "Theorizing Horror in Bollywood." 2016 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, November 20, 2016. Accepted.

Presentation: "Square Peg, Round Hole: The Challenges of Doing Student Research on Religion with an Institutional Research Board." Co-presented with Grace Eberly in Teaching Religion Group's session, "Issues in Teaching Religion." 2016 Annual Conference of the Midwest Region of the American Academy of Religion, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, April 2, 2016. Accepted.

Book Panel: *Fields of Blood: Religion and the History of Violence* by Karen Armstrong. Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Atlanta, November 22, 2015. Invited.

Presentation: "How to Narrow Your Students' Minds: Irony, Liberalism, and Polemic in the Teaching of Religion." Presented on "Teaching Religion Panel," 2015 Midwest Regional Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. Ohio Northern University, Ada, Ohio, April 12, 2015. Accepted.

Book Panel: *The Head Beneath the Altar* by Brian Collins. Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion in San Diego, November 23, 2014. Invited.

Book Panel: *Sacrifice* by René Girard. With Francis X. Clooney, Katherine McClymond and David Dawson at the 2013 American Academy of Religion conference in Chicago. Invited.

Paper: "The Sacrificial Ram and the Swan Queen: The Surrogate Victim Mechanism and Mimetic Rivalry in *The Wrestler* and *Black Swan*." Delivered at the 2011 American Academy of Religion conference in San Francisco. Accepted.

Paper: "Burning Desires: War, Sacrifice, and Delusion in Ancient India." Delivered at the Symposium on René Girard and World Religions at the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, April 14-16, 2011. Invited.

Paper: "Taking Things out of Context: Down the Post-Colonial Rabbit Hole with Alain Badiou, St. Paul and Wendy Doniger." Delivered at Postmodernism, Culture and Religion 4: The Future of Continental Philosophy of Religion, Syracuse University, April 7-9, 2010. Accepted.

Paper: "Lying Down with Dogs: The Canine Element in Tantra." Delivered at the Society for Tantric Studies conference in Flagstaff, Arizona, 2010. Accepted.

Paper: “Unmasking the Sovereign Sadist: Robert Eisler’s *Man into Wolf*.” Delivered at the American Academy of Religion conference in Atlanta, 2010. Accepted.

Panel Proposal: “Non-canonical Scholarship in the Study of Religion,” with Jeffrey J. Kripal (Rice University), Jason Bivins (North Carolina State University), Hugh Urban (Ohio State University), and Paul C. Johnson (University of Michigan). Delivered at the American Academy of Religion conference in Atlanta, 2010. Accepted.

Paper: “*Āpaddharma* as a State of Exception; or, Paraśurāma the Werewolf.” Delivered as part of the “New Directions in the Study of Religion in South Asia” papers panel at the American Academy of Religion conference in Atlanta, 2010. Accepted.

Paper: “Barking up the Wrong Tree: Arboreal Themes in the Paraśurāma-Reṇukā Myth Cycle.” Delivered at American Academy of Religion conference in Montreal, 2009. Accepted.

Panel Proposal: “Trees, Procreation, and Conflict in Myth and Theology,” with Patrizia Granziera (University of Morelos, Mexico), Meg Withgott (Harvard Divinity School), and Bruce Sullivan (Northern Arizona University). Delivered at American Academy of Religion conference in Montreal, Fall 2009. Accepted.

Paper: “Kill ‘Em All. Let God Sort ‘Em Out: Feuding, Sacrifice, and Varnicide in the Mythology of Paraśurāma.” Delivered at American Academy of Religion Midwest Regional Conference in Chicago, Fall 2009. Accepted.

TEACHING

Courses:

Buddhism

Gandhi and the *Gītā*: Religious Roots of Nonviolent Resistance in Colonial India**

The Global Occult: Ghosts, Demonology, and the Paranormal in World Religions*

Hinduism

The History of Yoga: From Ancient Discipline to Modern Movement*

Indian Epics: *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyāṇa**

Introduction to the Study of Religion

Magic, Sorcery, and Witchcraft in Classical Civilizations and the World’s Religions**

Myth, Ritual, and Symbolism

Religion and Identity (Cutler Scholars Seminar)*

Religion on Film

Religious Traditions of India (Study Abroad Course)*

* *Proposed, developed, and taught*

** *Proposed and developed*

Theses and Dissertations Directed:

As Dissertation Committee Member:

Kripa Radhakrishnan, “The Complete Human Being: Revisiting through Schiller, Goya, and Abhinavagupta,” 2026.

Sayan Chatterjee, “Morality, Modernity, and the Indigenization of the Victorian Novel in Bengali Literature and Cinema,” 2022.

Nandaka Kalugampitiya, “The *Mahābhārata* in Dialogue,” 2014-16.

As Thesis Committee Chair

Namrata Jain, “History of ‘Fashion’: Women’s Clothing in India Under the British Raj, 1857-1947,” 2018-2020.

Zeya Zhu, “Examination of Political Use of Buddhism in Thailand,” 2015-16.

As Thesis Committee Member:

Erica Taylor, “Her-Story in Mythology: Re-imagining Lesbian Sexuality and Desire in Contemporary Films Directed by Women,” 2020.

Jinyu Liu, “Zhang Yuan (1885-1919): Constructing a Public Garden in Cosmopolitan Shanghai,” 2016-17.

Golnar Yarmohamad, “Odes to Incongruity: Iranian Contemporary Art in Diaspora,” 2014.

As Outside Reviewer

Dong Jin Kim, “Western Buddhist Feminists’ Contribution to Christian Theology,” Toronto School of Theology, 2020.

As Undergraduate Honors Thesis Director

Yashvita Kanuganti, “Narrating in Diaspora: Nested Storytelling as Perennial Solace in the Aranyaka Parva and *The Conference of the Birds*,” 2025-2026.

Grace Eberly, “New Vrindaban: Pilgrimage, Patronage, and Demographic Change.” 2015-16.

SERVICE

University:

Summer Study Abroad Program, “India: Gender, Culture, and Development,” Co-developer and Co-director, 2015-2020

Gawande Lectures in Indian Religion and Philosophy, Program Organizer, 2013-
Professors Rajindar and Manjulika Koshal Lecture Series, Selection Committee, 2020-

College:

Cutler Scholars Admissions Board Member, Spring 2021

Cutler Scholars Seminar Leader, Spring 2019

Asian Studies Executive Committee, Board Member

Department:

HTC Program Director of Studies, 2025-present.

Department Chair, 2019-2024.

Ohio University Comparative Religion Club, Faculty Advisor, 2013-2024.

Ohio University Chapter of Theta Alpha Kappa, Faculty Advisor, 2013-2019

Professional:

As Blogger:

“The Craft of Teaching in the Academic Study of Religion Blog,” Winter/Spring 2021

February 22, 2021, “When Map Is Territory: Specialization and Silos in the Transition from PhD Student to Department Member.”

April 12, 2021, “Q: What Are You Doing? A: Modeling the Life of the Mind for College Students.”

As Editor:

SUNY Series in Hindu Studies (2024-present)

Religious Studies Review, Methodology and Theory/Comparative Studies Book Notes (2014-2025)

As Steering Committee Member:

AAR’s *Mahābhārata* and Classical Hinduism Seminar (2019-2025)

As Peer Reviewer:

For Monographs:

Oxford University Press

Palgrave MacMillan

University of California Press

Routledge India

For Journal Articles:

Contemporary South Asia

Cracow Indological Studies

Critical Research on Religion

History of Religions

International Journal of Hindu Studies

The Journal of Global South Studies

Journal of Religion and Film

Polish Review of Oriental Studies

Religions of South Asia

SARE: Southeast Asian Review of English

The Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities

For Fellowships:

American Council of Learned Societies

As Consultant:

Nina Storchlic, "The Holy Days." *National Geographic*, December 2017.

Paul Salopek, "Water Everywhere and Nowhere." *National Geographic*, August 2020, 74-95.

Community:

Friends of India, Board Member, 2014-Present.

Friends of India, Interim Chairman of the Board, 2022.

Friends of India, Chairman of the Board, 2014-2018

Organizer, Ping Institute Summer Workshop for Secondary Teachers, June 2015

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Ohio University College of Arts and Sciences Humanities Research Fund, Fall 2019 (\$2422).

Ohio University Publication Subvention Award, Summer 2019 (\$500).

Ohio University Honors Tutorial College Apprenticeship, Summer 2019 (\$3000 in student labor).

Ohio University Global Travel Fund Award (\$750), January 2019.

Ohio University-Gopikabai Sitaram Gawande (GSG) College Partnership Support Program Travel Grant (\$3000), July 2018.

Untenured Fellow of the Charles J. Ping Institute for the Teaching of the Humanities, 2014-17.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ohio University Bruning Teaching Fellow, 2017-18.