

Leonard Cornell McKinnis, II

Curriculum Vitae

Office:

Saint Louis University
Theological Studies
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Home:

1546 Fairmount Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63139

EDUCATION

Loyola University of Chicago | Chicago, IL

Doctor of Philosophy (*With Distinction*), 2010 | Constructive Theology

Dissertation: "I am Black and Beautiful: An Examination of the Black Coptic Church as the Manifestation of Liberation Theology"

Dissertation Committee: Dr. Jon Nilson (Chair), Dr. Loraine Mosley, Dr. Dwight Hopkins (The University of Chicago Divinity School)

Comprehensive Exams: History of Christian Thought to 1500; History of Christian Thought since 1500; Method in Black Theology; Theologies of James Cone and Karl Rahner

Harvard University | Cambridge, MA

Master of Theological Studies, 2005 | Constructive Theology and African American Religion

Lewis University | Romeoville, IL

Bachelor of Science, 2003 | Government and History

Kingston University | London, England

International Politics, 2002

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Black Theology
Womanist Theology
African American Religions
Social Justice
Karl Rahner

Patristic Theology
Theological Anthropology
Human Sexuality
Liberation Theologies

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Saint Louis University | Saint Louis, MO

Assistant Professor of Constructive Theology and African-American Religions, 2017 -

Saint Louis University | Saint Louis, MO

University Lecturer, Theological Studies, 2015 – 2017

DePaul University | Chicago, IL

Lecturer of Religious Studies, 2010 - 2015

Lewis University | Romeoville, IL

Adjunct Assistant Professor of Theology, 2010 - 2015

Loyola University of Chicago | Chicago, IL

Visiting Assistant Professor, Loyola University Chicago, 2010-2011

Teacher of Record, 2008-2010

COURSES TAUGHT

Undergraduate

- Religion and Social Change in Black America: Ethics and Theologies of Resistance
- The African-American Religious Experience
- Black Intellectual Traditions: Suffering and Evil in Black Religion
- Seeking God: Augustine, Clairvaux, Weil, and Cone
- Social Justice
- History of Christian Thought to 1500
- History of Christian Thought Since 1500
- History of Christianity
- Foundations of Theological Study
- Great Christian Thinkers: Christology
- Contemplation in Action
- Search for Faith
- Introduction to Liberation Theologies
- American Prophet: Theological and Ethical Thought of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Graduate

- Social Conflict in America: Black Theology and the Politics of Meaning
- Black Theology and its Critics (Doctoral Constructive Theology seminar)

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PUBLICATIONS

Monograph

(under consideration) *Divine Blackness: God, History, and Salvation in the Black Coptic Church*

Peer-Reviewed Articles

(Forthcoming) "Turn Toward the Spirit: An Epistemological Shift in Black Theology,"

"From Christ to Black Jesus: Black Theology's Christological move as operative in the Black Coptic Church," *Black Theology: An International Journal*, vol. 14, No. 3, 2016. (Autumn 2016).

Online

"Liberating the Incarnation of the Word: Michael Brown, Ferguson, and the Problem of the Normative Gaze," *Syndicate* July/August 2014: 124-129, Print.

In progress for submission

"Extreme Theology: Interconnectedness, Love, and Personhood in the Theological Tradition of Martin Luther King, Jr."

"Going Beyond: Transcendence in the Religion of the Slaves"

TALKS

Invited (Academic)

- Research Methods in African-American Theological Studies, Saint Louis University, October 2016
- Beyond the Categorical: Constructing an Ontology of the Person in Black Theology, Saint Louis University, African American Studies, February 2016
- Theological Praxis in an Age of Contested Bodies: Martin, Brown, Garner, and the Echoes of Strange Fruit, Theological Convocation, Wesleyan College, Macon, GA, February 2015
- Toward a Freeing Pneumatology: Karl Rahner's Theological Anthropology in Black Theology, invited lecturer, Lewis University, February 2011
- A Black God in the Metropolis: Revisiting Arthur Fausett *Black Gods*, Religion Convivium, DePaul University, August, 2010
- The Christology of Chalcedon in Contextual Theology, Loyola University Chicago, invited lecturer in Theology 318, March 2010
- Reading Irenaeus as a Liberationist, Department of Religion Faculty Colloquium, DePaul University, March 2010
- History and Development of Black Theology, Loyola University of Chicago, March 2008

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- Humiliating Deaths: The Relationship between the Crucifixion and the Lynched Black Bodies – A review of James Cone, Lewis University, Romeoville, IL, February 2007
- Jesus and the Poor: Reading the Infancy Narratives from the Underside, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Indianapolis, IN, December 2006
- Panelist, Broadening the Vision: The Challenges of Black and Womanist Theologies, Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, IL, November 2006
- Panelist, Community, Courage, and, Love: Lecture and Panel with Dr. Cornel West and Dr. Julius Bailey, Main Street Church of God, Decatur, IL, April 2005

Conference Presentations

- Re-claiming Heritage: Religion and the Politics of Identity in the Black Coptic Church, Oxford University Religious Studies Symposium, Oxford, December, 2017 (accepted, in progress)
- “Personhood, Conscience, and the Law: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Theological Ethical of Resistance in the Age of ’45,” Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr., American Academy of Religion, Boston, 2017 (accepted, in progress)
- “The Black Coptic Church of Chicago: Advancing Arthur Fausett’s *Black Gods of the Metropolis*, Afro-American Religion Section, American Academy of Religion, Chicago 2012
- “Jesus on the Margins: Examining the Paradox of Liberation in light of Human Sexuality in the Black Church,” Student Theological Conference, Garrett Evangelical Seminary, April 2010
- Deconstructing Diversity: Examining the Ideal of the Post-Racial Society, Lewis University, November 2009

Conferences Organized

- Race, Religion, and Justice: Religion and Social Change in Black America, DePaul University, 10 November 2010

Panelists: Father Michael Pfleger (St. Sabina, Chicago), Minister Ishmael Muhammad (Assistant Minister, Nation of Islam), and Royal Priest Meshach Gardiner (Spiritual Leader, Black Coptic Church)

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

University Committees:

College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Council (Undergraduate Curriculum sub-committee), 2017-2020

Department Committees

Undergraduate Studies Committee, Saint Louis University, 2016 –

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M.A. Thesis Director

David Justice, 2018 (expected); Kevin Seahy, 2018 (expected)

Comprehensive Exams Committees

Creighton Coleman (M.A.), 2017

Senior Thesis Advisor (B.A.)

- Maria Yamnitz, “Method in Liberation Theology,” 2017
- Liz Vestal, “What’s the Intention? The Praxis of Womanist Theology in the Catholic Community at Saint Louis University,” 2016
- Andrew Sullivan, “Economics, Social Justice, and Public Choice,” 2016
- Caroline Belden, “Denying Denial, “Towards a Theology of White Liberation,” 2016

Undergraduate Faculty Advisor

Brenden Eckhert,

Campus Sponsored Panels/Lectures

- The intersection of Faith and Vocation, Agape Latte, Saint Louis University, April 2017
- The Election of Donald Trump and its Theological Implications on Black America, keynote speaker, Black Student Alliance Black History Month, February, 2017
- Bad Theology: Queer Struggles for Identity and Recognition in Religious Communities, Saint Louis University, November, 2016
- Religious Diversity in America and Abroad, panel, Saint Louis University, April 2016
- Intersection of Faith, Race and Justice: Black Theology and the Black Lives Matter Movement, Free to [be] panel, Saint Louis University, March 2016
- Heart and Head: The Impact of Jesuit Heritage on Scholarship, Saint Louis University, February, 2016
- My Brother’s Keeper: A Dialogue on the Progress of President Obama Black Male Initiative, Saint Louis University, October 2015

Student Organization Advisor

LUCHA: Latinx Student Organization, Saint Louis University, 2016 –

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FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Summer Research Award, Saint Louis University, \$9,755.00 | 2017

Diversifying Faculty in Illinois Colleges and Universities Fellowship (DFI) | 2006-2010
Full tuition and \$12,000 annual stipend

Harvard Divinity School Tuition Fellowship | 2003-2005

Chicago Humanities Fellowship | 2000-2001

Lewis University LaSallian Scholarship | 1999-2003

PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING

Loyola University Chicago

Certificate in Theological Pedagogy | 2008

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Academy of Religion

Catholic Theological Society of America

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

National Policy Director | 2011 - 15

Center for Labor and Community Research

Mayoral Fellow (crime prevention policies) | 2005 - 07

City of Chicago, Office of the Mayor (Richard M. Daley)

Secretary of Labor Senior Policy Fellow | 2004 – 05

United States Department of Labor, Office of the Secretary of Labor, Elaine Chao

White House Intern | 2002 - 03

Executive Office of the President,

George W. Bush Administration

RESEARCH LANGUAGES

French (reading and speaking proficiency)

German (reading)

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REFERENCES

Jon Nilson, PhD (Dissertation Director)
Professor Emeritus of Theology
Loyola University of Chicago
jnilson@luc.edu
630.484.5697

Dwight Hopkins, PhD
Professor of Theology
The University of Chicago Divinity School
dhopkins@uchicago.edu
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Jay Hammond, PhD
Associate Professor of Theology
Saint Louis University
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Marla Frederick, PhD
Professor of African and African American Studies and the Study of Religion
Harvard University
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