

## MAX PERRY MUELLER

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### EDUCATION

**Harvard University**, Cambridge, MA

Ph.D., June, 2015, The Committee on the Study of Religion (American religious history).  
*Dissertation*: “Black, White, and Red: Race and the Making of the Mormon People, 1830-1880.”

*Committee*: David Hempton (co-chair), Laurel Thatcher Ulrich (co-chair), Marla Frederick, David Holland.

Comprehensive Exams specializations (**with distinction**): Native American Religious History and African-American Religious History

Secondary Doctoral Field, 2013, African and African American Studies.

**Harvard Divinity School**, Cambridge, MA

M.T.S., 2008, Harvard Divinity School.

**Carleton College**, Northfield, MN

B.A., 2003, magna cum laude. Double major in Religion (Distinction in major) and French and Francophone Studies (Distinction in major).

### PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- 2016-Present The University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Department of Classics and Religious Studies, Assistant Professor.  
Fellow in the Center for Great Plains Studies  
Affiliated with the Institute for Ethnic Studies (applied)
- 2015-2016 Amherst College, Religion Department, Visiting Assistant Professor.
- 2014-2015 Mount Holyoke College, Religion Department, Visiting Lecturer.
- Fall 2013 Carleton College, Religion Department, Visiting Lecturer.
- 2010-2013 Harvard University, Teaching Fellow and Tutor.
- 2003-2006 Episcopal School of Acadiana (Lafayette, LA), Upper School French Teacher and Head Cross-Country and Track Coach (boys and girls).

## PUBLICATIONS

### Book Projects

*Race and the Making of the Mormon People, 1830-1908*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2017.

\* Winner of John Whitmore Historical Association, Best Documentary Book (2018)

Reviewed in: *The Atlantic*, *Harvard Divinity School Bulletin*, *Choice*, *Reading Religion*, *Church History*, *Nova Religio*, *BYU Studies Quarterly*, *The Journal of Mormon History*, *Mormon Studies Review*, *Western History Quarterly*, *American Historical Review*, *Utah Historical Quarterly*, among others.

Sample quotes from reviews of *Race and the Making of the Mormon People*.

“*Race and the Making of the Mormon People* successfully lays bare the problems with racism and conceptualizations of belonging that plague the history of Mormonism. Mueller complicates how race was initially imagined and later transformed. .... Readers might be astonished to learn how the Latter-day Saints Church was once radically inclusive of members of color. Still, this LDS drive toward tolerance grew out of paternalistic ideology to ‘convert, civilize, and create covenants’ with nonwhite peoples.”—*Journal of American History*.

“Ambitious ..... Advances a thesis with which all future works on Mormonism and race will have to contend.”--*Nova Religio*

“If the scholarship surrounding the history of Mormonism were a target ..... Max Perry Mueller’s *Race and the Making of the Mormon People* strikes the center of that target with pinpoint accuracy.”--*Western Historical Quarterly*

“Argues that Mormonism is a quintessentially American religion. . . . Yet, while the story of race and the LDS Church is similar to other American experiences of race, it’s also distinctive, leaving Mormons to grapple with the legacy of racism and white supremacy in their own way.” --*The Atlantic*

“Outstanding analysis of the role of race among Mormons.”—*Choice*

“A mature, meditative, and mighty engagement with a complex topic. Scholars of American religion and race, not to mention those engaged in the academic analysis of Mormonism, will be struggling with his conclusions for quite some time.”—Benjamin Park, *The Junto*

*Race and the Making of the Mormon People is an erudite examination of many of these complications. By looking closely at the obsession with race found in Mormonism’s founding text, at the recorded experiences of early Mormons of color, and at those moments in Mormonism’s early history especially weighted with racial questions, Mueller argues that a “project of racial purification and reunification was sui generis to the faith.” Mormonism, that is, is inseparable from a “divine mandate to solve humanity’s race problem ..... present in the minds of the founders and in the church’s foundational text, the Book of Mormon” (13). –Seth Perry (Princeton University) ([HDS Bulletin](#))*

“Unlike many other works of race and Mormonism, Mueller pushes beyond only understanding white Mormon identities. He explains Mormons sought to create a "distinctly white Mormon race" and then stresses nonwhite Mormon perspectives and experiences. He explores what "white" might mean to African American and Native American Mormons thereby (re) centering the focus of Mormon constructs of race on African Americans, Native Americans, and nonwhite Mormons who influenced the LDS Church and its community.”--Farina King (Dine), author of *The Earth Memory*

*Compass: Dine Landscapes and Education in the Twentieth Century*

“Argues that the Book of Mormon both reinforced and challenged nineteenth-century Americans' ideas about race--and that it set the stage for how Mormonism would develop in the decades to come.” --Jana Riess, *Religion News Service*

“Mueller’s account is both arresting and insightful. His understanding of Mormon scripture—particularly the Book of Mormon—is thorough and comprehensive. And his contextualization of Mormon racial teachings vis-a-vis broader currents in nineteenth-century America helps readers discern what was unique about Mormon racial teachings.”--*BYU Studies Quarterly*

“Mueller’s excellent book tells us that race is a story we collectively write about ourselves.”--*Association for Mormon Letters*

“Engages deeply with the text of the Book of Mormon.”--*Juvenile Instructor: A Mormon History Blog*

### **Books in Progress**

*Wakara’s America: A Native And American History of The West.*

### **Future Research**

*Jesus: A Global History*

### **Editor of Peer-Reviewed Journal**

(2015) Guest co-editor with Gina Colvin and author of Introduction: “Mormonism and Race: Beyond the Priesthood Ban,” special issue of *Journal of Mormon History* 41 no. 3 (July 2015): 1-10.

### **Peer-Reviewed Journal Essays**

(2019) “The ‘Negro Problem,’ the ‘Mormon Problem,’ and the Pursuit of ‘Usefulness’ in the White American Republic.” *Church History* 88 no. 4 (December 2019): 978-1012.

(2015) “History Lessons: Race and the LDS Church.” *Journal of Mormon History* (special edition for 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mormon History Association) (January 2015): 239-255.

(2013) “Playing Jane: Re-presenting Black Mormon Memory through Reenacting the Black Mormon Past.” *Journal of Africana Religions* 1 no. 4 (October 2013): 513-561.

\* Won Award for Excellence (2014), Mormon History Association

(2011) “Changing Portraits of *Elect Lady*: Emma Smith in the ‘Secular,’ RLDS and LDS Historiography, 1933-2005.” *Journal of Mormon History* (Spring 2011): 183-214.

### **Chapters in Peer-Reviewed Edited Volumes**

(2019) “When Wakara Wrote Back: The Creation and Contestation of the ‘Paper Indian’ in Early Mormon Utah.” In *Essays on American Indian & Mormon History*, edited by Jane Hafen and Brenden Rensink, 61-84. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press.

- (2018) “Religion (and Race) Problems on the Way to the White House: An Analysis of Obama and Romney’s ‘Faith’ Speeches.” In *Religion in the Age of Obama*, edited by Anthony Pinn and Juan Floyd-Thomas, 19-35. New York: Bloomsbury Press.
- (2016) “The Pageantry of Protest in Temple Square.” In *Out of Obscurity: Mormonism After 1945*, edited by Patrick Mason and John Turner, 143-22. New York: Oxford University Press.
- (2015) “Twice-told Tale: Telling Two Histories of Mormon-Black Relations during the 2012 Presidential Election.” In *Mormonism and American Politics*, edited by Randall Balmer and Jana Reiss, 155-174. New York: Columbia University Press.

### **Book Reviews (selected)**

- (2020) Review of Clyde A. Milner and Brian Q. Cannon (eds.), *Reconstruction and Mormon America*. In *The Journal of Church and State* (forthcoming).
- (2020) Review of Seth Perry, *Bible Culture and Authority in the Early United States*. In *Church History* (forthcoming).
- (2019) Review of Adam Jortner, *Blood from the Sky: Miracles and Politics in the Early American Republic*. In *The Journal of the Early American Republic* 29 no. 2 (Summer 2019): 359-362.
- (2019) Review of Mary Campbell, *Charles Ellis Johnson and the Erotic Mormon Image*. In *Material Religion* 15 no. 2 (February 2019): 258-259.
- (2019) Review of Kathryn Gin Lum and Paul Harvey, *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Race in American History*. In *The Journal of American History* 106 no. 1 (June 2019): 142.  
\*Lead Review of the issue.
- (2018) Review of W. Paul Reeve, *Religion of a Different Color: Race and the Mormon Struggle for Whiteness*. In *The Journal of Religion* 98 no. 1 (January 2018): 163-165.
- (2017) Review of Matthew Garrett, *Making Lamanites: Mormons, Native Americans, and the Indian Student Placement Program, 1947-2000*. In *The Journal of American History* 104, no. 3 (December 2017): 76.
- (2017) Review of Terry L. Givens and Reid L. Neilson eds. *The Columbia Sourcebook of Mormons in the United States*. In *Mormon Studies Review* 4 (2017): 129-137.

### **FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND HONORS (selected)**

2020-2022	Young Scholars in American Religion, IUPUI
2020	Maxwell Center for Religious Scholarship, Summer Fellow
2021	(APPLIED) National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend
2018-2019	Wabash Center Early Career Workshop for Religion Faculty
2018	John Whitmore Association, Best Documentary Book, <i>Race and the Making of the Mormon People</i> .
2016-2017	Faculty ENHANCE Grant (\$5,000), CAS University of Nebraska-Lincoln
2015-2017	Robert E. Keiter 1957 Postdoctoral Fellow, Amherst College

- 2015 Mormon History Association, Best Dissertation
- 2014 Mormon History Association, Award for Excellence, Journal Article, "Playing Jane: Re-presenting Black Mormon Memory through Reenacting the Black Mormon Past." *Journal of Africana Religions* (October 2013): 513-561.
- 2014 Charles Warren Center Term-Time Fellowship Grant, Harvard University
- 2008-2014 Graduate School of Arts And Science Fellowship, Harvard University
- 2011-2012 Mormon Studies Fellowship, Tanner Humanities Center, University of Utah
- 2012 Mormon Historical Association Juanita Brooks Award (best graduate paper)
- 2011 Charles Warren Center Summer Dissertation Research Grant, Harvard University
- 2011 Bok Center Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Harvard University
- 2011 Distinction in Doctoral Examinations, Harvard University
- 2010 John L. Loeb Fellowship, Harvard Divinity School
- 2010 Graduate Society Summer Pre-Dissertation Fellowship, Harvard University
- 2003 Fulbright Fellowship, teaching and study in France (declined to teach in Louisiana)
- 2003 Distinction on Religion Senior Thesis, Carleton College
- 2003 Distinction on French Senior Thesis, Carleton College
- 2002 Class of 1963 Fellowship for summer study abroad in France
- 1999 William Carleton Scholar (top 10 percent of entering class)

#### **INVITED LECTURES/PRESENTATIONS (selected)**

- 2019 Plenary Speaker: Hearing Indigenous Voices: The Challenges and Rewards of Cultivating Relationships with Utah's Native American Communities. Oral History Association, Salt Lake City, October 19.
- 2018 Book Talk: *Race and the Making of the Mormon People*. Claremont Graduate University, October 20.
- 2018 Book Talk: *Race and the Making of the Mormon People*. The University of Virginia (Mormon Studies Program), February 22.
- 2017 Book Talk: *Race and the Making of the Mormon People*. The Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard Divinity School, November 16.
- 2017 Book Talk: *Race and the Making of the Mormon People*. The Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, Brigham Young University, September 27.
- 2016 "That Old Time (Race) and Religion: How the Trump/Pence Ticket Wants to Make America White and Christian Again," The University of Nebraska-Lincoln, October 27.
- 2016 "A Singular, Communal Voice: Sojourner Truth in the Northampton "Community, 1843-1846," Center for Humanistic Inquiry, Amherst College, May 4.
- 2014 "Joseph F. Smith's Republican Vision: Centralized Government, Centralized

Church,” Beyond the Culture Wars, John C. Danforth Center on Religion & Politics, Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis, MO March 27-29.

- 2013 “Contracting Covenants: Changes to Mormon Universality, 1830-1844,” Beyond the Mormon Moment: Directions for Mormon Studies in The New Century,” Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, CA, March 15-16.
- 2012 “Liberal Mormonism and the 2012 Election,” Religion and the Election, Does it Matter?, Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, MA, October 10.
- 2012 “The Book of Mormon, ‘Samuel the Lamanite,’ Jane Manning James and the ‘White Universal,’” Tanner Humanities Center, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT, March 26.
- 2012 “Jane’s Faith,” Men and Women of Faith Lecture Series, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, UT, March 8.
- 2012 “‘Twice-told Tale: Telling Two Histories of Mormon-Black Relations during the 2012 Presidential Election,” Mormonism and American Politics Conference, Columbia University, New York, NY, February 3-4.

## **CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (selected)**

### **Panels Organized**

- 2020 Roundtable: “Missions as Migration in the American West,” Western History Association Conference, Albuquerque, NM, October 14-17.
- 2016 “Religion, Postcolonial Pedagogies and #BlackLivesMatter on Campus,” American Academy of Religion Conference, San Antonio, TX, November 19-22.
- 2014 “Religious Communitarianism, Utopianism, and the ‘Race Problem’ in Nineteenth-century North America,” American Academy of Religion Conference, San Diego, CA, November 22-25.
- 2012 “In the Aftermath of Contact with ‘Others’: The Reformulation of Religious and Racial Identity in the American West,” Organization of American Historians Conference, Milwaukee, WI, April 21.
- 2011 “Out of Place: African American Religious Lives in Catholic, Mormon, and Orthodox Spaces,” American Academy of Religion Conference, San Francisco, CA, November 19-21.

### **Papers Presented (selected)**

- 2020 “‘We Would Never Sell Our Children!’: The Limits of Decolonizing Slavery and Missions Histories in the American Southwest.” *American Society of Church History*, New York, NY, January 3-6.

- 2018 “Wakara’s Horse: Toward a Post-Human History of Early Mormon-Indian Relations,” American Academy of Religion Conference, Denver, CO, November 17-20.
- 2016 “Debating Indian Partition while Amherst Rises Up against Lord Jeffs,” American Academy of Religion Conference, San Antonio, TX, November 19-22.
- 2014 “Can a Mormon Have Tattoos? ‘I’m a Mormon Campaign’ & the Politics of Online Identity,” American Historical Association, Washington, January 2-5.
- 2013 “Contested Freedoms, Contested Identities: Temple Square during the Civil Rights Era,” Mormon History Association Conference, Layton, UT, June 6-9.
- 2012 “Joseph F. Smith’s Republican Vision: Centralized Government, Centralized Church,” Conference on Faith and History, Gordon College, Wenham, MA, October 4-6.
- 2012 “The Other Mormon Presidential Candidate: Yeah Samaké and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Mormonism,” American Academy of Religion Conference, Chicago, IL, November 17-20.
- 2012 “William McCary’s Racial Ventriloquism during the Mormon Exodus,” Organization of American Historians Conference, Milwaukee, WI, April 19-21.
- 2011 “Reenacting and Reclaiming the Black *and* Mormon Past,” American Academy of Religion Conference, San Francisco, CA, November 19-21.
- 2011 “Joseph F. Smith and ‘Black Jane’: Challenges to the Formalization of Mormon Racial Identity,” American Studies Association Conference, Baltimore, MD, October 20-22.
- 2011 “Schools for the Saints: Utah Civil Religion in Public Education in a Framework of ‘Expanding Borders of Sacred Communities,’” Ethics, Religion and Civil Discourse Conference, Fresno State University, Fresno, CA, October 13-14.
- 2010 “Changing Portraits of *Elect Lady*: Emma Smith in the ‘Secular,’ RLDS and LDS Historiography,” Mormon History Association Conference, Independence, MO, May 24-26.

## TEACHING

### The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (ongoing)

Assistant Professor

Jesus: A Global History

Graduate Seminar: History of the American West

“To Be Religious *and* Modern: Religion and Modernity in the U.S., France, and India”

“Religious Diversity of America”

“Written by Herself: African-American Religious Autobiographies”

“Sons of the Forest: Native American Religious Autobiographies”  
“Religion and Politics in America”

### **Amherst College**

Visiting Assistant Professor

“Getting Religion: Religion, Media and Culture” (Spring 2016)  
“To be Religious *and* Modern: Religion and Modernity in the U.S., France, and India”  
(Fall 2015)

### **Mount Holyoke College**

Visiting Lecturer

“Getting Religion: Religion, Media and Culture” (Spring 2015)  
“Religion and Politics in the United States” (Spring 2015)  
“Religious Movements in America” (Fall 2014)  
“African-American Religious Experience” (Fall 2014)

### **Carleton College**

Visiting Lecturer

“Religion in American Culture” (Fall 2013)  
“American Holy Lands” (Fall 2013)

### **Harvard University**

Tutor (Instructor of record)

“Religions under the Big Sky: The Religious History of the American West” (Fall 2011)

Teaching Fellow

“Ethics, Race and Punishment” (Spring 2013)  
“Religion, Law and American Politics” (Fall 2012)  
“The World’s Religions in Multicultural America: Case Studies in Religious Pluralism”  
(Spring 2011)  
“Race, Gender, Class and Ethnicity in the Early Films of Spike Lee” (Fall 2011)  
“Religion and American Society: Global Traditions in a Changing Culture” (Spring 2010)

### **SERVICE TO UNIVERSITY**

- 2019- “Spiritual Well-being” Committee.
- 2020- Faculty advisory committee, “Climate Change & Culture in the Great Plains,”  
symposium, Center for Great Plains Studies, April 9-10, Lincoln, NE.
- 2019- Member, Committee on Committees (College of Arts and Sciences)
- 2017- Religious Studies Advisor, Department of Classics and Religious Studies, The  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
- 2017- Faculty advisor and organizer of “Night of Listening,” The University of Nebraska-  
Lincoln, February 22, 2017.



2016 Faculty facilitator of Husker Dialogues, The University of Nebraska-Lincoln, February 22, 2017, September 6.

### **SERVICE TO PROFESSION**

2020- Dissertation Prize Committee, Mormon History Association.

2018- Board member, *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*

2017- Council Member, American Society of Church History

2011-2017 Co-Founder, (formerly Associate Editor), *Religion & Politics*, the online journal of the John C. Danforth Center on Religion & Politics, Washington University in St. Louis

### **PUBLIC HISTORY & JOURNALISM (selected)**

2018 “Mitt Romney’s Mormon Mission,” *Slate*, February 20, 2018

2017 “Not My Choir,” *Slate*, January 19, 2017.

2016 “Why Mormons Don’t Like Trump,” *Slate*, August 4, 2016.

2016 “Why Global Churches Struggles Over LGBT Rights,” *Religion & Politics*, February 23.

2015 “Mormonism and the Problem of Jon Krakauer,” *Religion & Politics*, July 14.

2013 “Speaking Truth to Power in Love: An Interview with Jonathan Walton,” *Religion & Politics*, April 4.

2013 “2012: The Mormon Moment of Diversity,” *Religion & Politics*, January 9.

2012 “What Can Jeremiah Wright and Joseph Smith Teach Us about the American Presidency?,” *Religion & Politics*, October 29.

2012 “Mia Love: The Most Interesting Mormon Speaking at the RNC,” *Religion & Politics*, August 28.

2012 “A Cringe-Worthy Depiction of Africa,” *Harvard Divinity School Bulletin*, Summer/Autumn.

2012 “Mormonism’s Occasionally Unrequited Love for Israel,” *The New Republic*, July 30.

2012 “A Spirit of Persecution: What the Hill Cumorah Page tells us about Mormonism’s past—and its present,” *Slate*, July 19.

2012 “Romney among the Evangelicals,” *The Atlantic*, May 11.

2012            “Hemings and Jefferson Together Forever?: Troubling Cases of Mormon ‘Proxy Sealing,’” *Slate*, March 29.

**REFEREE OF MANUSCRIPTS AND ARTICLES FOR:**

**Oxford University Press**  
**University of Utah Press**  
**Routledge**  
***Material Religion***  
***Journal of American Academy of Religion***  
***Church History***  
***Journal of Book of Mormon Studies***  
***Journal of Arizona History***  
***Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon of Mormon Thought***  
***Religion Compass***  
***Sage***

**TEACHING AREAS**

American Religious History  
History of the American West  
Native American History  
African American History  
Race and Ethnicity in America  
Religion and Politics

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

American Academy of Religion  
American Society of Church History  
Oral History Association  
Western History Association  
Mormon History Association

## REFERENCES

David Hempton, Ph.D.  
Dean  
Harvard Divinity School  
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Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, Ph.D.  
(Former) 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary University Professor  
Harvard University  
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Candy Gunther Brown, Ph.D.  
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Indiana University  
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(812) 855-3531

David F. Holland, Ph.D.  
John A. Bartlett Professor of New England Church History  
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### **Teaching References**

Patrice McMahon  
Director, Honors Program and Professor of Political Science  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
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Michael Penn, Ph.D.  
Professor of Religion  
Stanford University  
[mppenn@stanford.edu](mailto:mppenn@stanford.edu)  
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