

ELAYNE OLIPHANT

Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Religious Studies, New York University

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Professor, New York University, Department of Anthropology and the Religious Studies Program, September 2015-Present

Postdoctoral Fellow, Brown University, Department of Religious Studies and the Cogut Center for the Humanities, July 2013-June 2015

Visiting Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Sweet Briar College, Department of Anthropology, January 2013-June 2013

Lecturer, Knox College, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, September 2011-December 2011

Lecturer, University of Chicago, International Studies Program, Spring 2010 and Winter 2012

EDUCATION

University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, 2005-2012

Ph.D. in Anthropology, conferred on December 12, 2012

Supervisors: Danilyn Rutherford and Susan Gal (Anthropology)

Dissertation: *Signs of an Unmarked Faith: Visions of Catholicism, Secularism, and Islam in Paris*

Committee members: Rachel Fulton Brown (History) and Martha Ward (Art History)

Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, 2003-2005

M.A. in Political Economy

Thesis: *"Il n'y a pas de 'potentially hot issues'": Exhibiting Arab-Canadian Art after 9/11*

Awards: Thomas Betz Memorial Award

Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario, 1999-2003

B.A. in International Development Studies and Political Studies

Awards: Champlain Scholarship, Honourable George S. Henry Prize, John Hillman Prize,
Denis Smith Prize, *Cum Laude*

AREAS OF RESEARCH

Christianity; the secular; visual culture; France; Europe; contemporary art; museum studies;
media studies; public space; capitalism; xenophobia

SCHOLARSHIP

Signs of an Unmarked Faith: Contemporary Art and Secular Catholicism in Paris, currently
revising manuscript.

2015. "Beyond Blasphemy or Devotion: Art, the Secular, and Catholicism in Paris." In *Journal
of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 21 (2): 352-373.

2015. "Circulations of the Sacred: Contemporary Art as 'Cultural' Catholicism in Paris." In
*Global
Secularisms in a Post-Secular Age*. Edited by Michael Rectenwald, et al. Pp. 287-294. Berlin:
De Gruyters.

Forthcoming. "The Intimate Provocations of Dress, Display, and Religion in France." In
*Showing
Off/Showing Up*. Edited by Catherine Schuler, Laurie Frederik Meer, and Kim Marra.
Under review in University of Michigan Press.

2012. "The Crucifix as a Symbol of Secular Europe: The Unlikely Semiotics of the European
Court of
Human Rights." *Anthropology Today* 28 (2): 16-18.

2007. "Voices and Apparitions in Jules Bastien-Lepage's Joan of Arc." In *Looking and Listening in*

Nineteenth-Century France, edited by Martha Ward and Anne Leonard. Exhibition Catalogue.

Chicago: Smart Museum of Art, 42-49.

WORK IN PROGRESS

"Christianity and the European Public Sphere, 1919-1989."

"Catholic Capital: Shifting Visions of the Church and Patronage in a Neoliberal Age."

The Visual Traces of Politics: Art, Religion, and Secularism in Contemporary Europe, co-edited volume with Alexandra Brown, Amsterdam University College.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

2013. "Signs of an Unmarked Faith: Visions of Secularism, Catholicism, and Islam in Paris."

Anthropology News (February). Section News: Society for the Anthropology of Religion.

2012. "The Great Debate: Can Europe Balance Secular Values and Religious Tolerance?"

Invited

contributor, *The Morningside Post*. October 15. Online

publication. <http://www.themorningsidepost.com/2012/10/15/can-you-be-a-religious-minority-and-european/>

SCHOLARSHIPS, FELLOWSHIPS, & PRIZES

Creative Arts Council Grant, Brown University, 2014

Humanities Research Group Grant, Cogut Center for the Humanities, Brown University, 2014

Mark Watkins Dissertation Fellowship, Dept. of Anthropology, University of Chicago, 2011

International Dissertation Research Fellowship, Social Science Research Council, 2008-2009

Dissertation Proposal Development Fellowship, Social Science Research Council, 2007

Doctoral Award, Social Science Humanities Research Council, 2005-2009

Canadian Graduate Scholarship, Social Science Humanities Research Council, 2005, Declined Tuition Scholarship, University of Chicago, 2005-2009

Tuition Scholarship, Graduate Studies, Carleton University, 2003-2005
Ontario Graduate Scholarship, Government of Ontario, 2003-2004
Institute of Political Economy Scholarship, Carleton University, 2003-2004

TEACHING

Instructor, Brown University

- “Religion and Global Media,” Spring 2015
- “Religion and Visual Culture,” Fall 2014
- “Religious Ethnographies,” Spring 2014
- “Varieties of Secularism,” Fall 2013

Instructor, Sweet Briar College

- “Introduction to Cultural Anthropology,” Spring 2013
- “Art and Anthropology,” Spring 2013
- “Religion and Worldview,” Spring 2013

Instructor, University of Chicago

- “Religions and Secularisms in Europe,” Spring 2011
- “Contemporary Global Issues,” Winter 2012

Instructor, Knox College

- “Introduction to Culture and Society,” two sections, Fall 2011

Teacher, Fall Program for Freshmen, University of California, Berkeley

- “Introduction to Culture and Natural Resources,” Professor Kurt Spreyer, Fall 2012

Teaching Assistant, University of Chicago

- “Human Rights: Alien and Citizen,” Professor Susan Gzesh, Winter 2011
- “Anthropological Theory,” Professor Stephen Palmié, Fall 2010

EXHIBITION CURATOR

2015 “The Art of Invisibility: Encountering Religion and the Secular in Contemporary Art.”
Granoff

Center, Brown University, Providence RI, February 18-March 6.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

Invited Lectures

2015 “The Disenchanted City: Paris, Karachi, and the Invisibility of Religion.” Religion and Internationalism Project. Brown University. May 5.

2014 “The Catholic Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism: Art and Leisure in a Neoliberal Age.”

Invited

lecture at Leiden University Center for the Study of Religion, The Netherlands, November 6.

2014 “Critical Theories of Secularism.” Invited lecture for *Islam Today*, an undergraduate course at

Brown University, Professor Nancy Khalek, Providence, Rhode Island, April 22.

2014 “Cultural Catholicism and Contemporary Art.” Invited lecture for *Spiritual Not Religious*, an

undergraduate course at Brown University, Professor Dan Vaca, Providence, Rhode Island, April 24.

2013 “The Catholicism of Frenchness: Displaying Religious Identities in Secular Paris,” invited contributor to *Archaeologies of Frenchness*, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, April 27.

Conference Presentations

2015 “Resurrecting the Faith: Catholicism and the Secular Public Sphere in France.” French Historical Society Annual Conference, Colorado Springs, CO, April 16, 2015.

2014 “Funding French Catholic ‘Culture’: The Limits of Secular-Catholicism in a Capitalist Age.”

Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Diego, CA, November 25, 2014.

2014 “Disciplining Catho-Secular Publics: Museum Technologies and Cultural Catholicism in Paris,”

Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, DC, December 6.

2014 “Signs of an Unmarked Faith: Negotiating Catholic Visibility in Secular Paris.” Annual Meeting

of the American Ethnological Society, Boston, MA, April 12.

2014 “Resurrecting the Church: Catholicism As European Cultural History,” Annual Meeting of the

Council of European Studies, Washington DC, March 16.

2013 “Circulations of the Sacred: Contemporary Art as ‘Cultural’ Catholicism in 21st Century Paris,”

Global Secularisms, New York University, New York, NY: November 16.

2013 “Reversals of the Sacred: Unlikely Partnerships between Museums and the French Catholic

Church,” Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Chicago, IL, November 22.

2013 “Making the Invisible Visible: The Unmarking of Catholicism in Secular France,” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Baltimore, MD. November 25.

2012 “‘The City Just Doesn’t Look Very French Anymore’: Religious Orderings of Secular Paris,”

Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Francisco, CA., November.

- 2012 “Faith in an Absent Future,” Biannual Meeting of the Society for Cultural Anthropology, Providence, RI, April.
- 2012 “The Performative Economies of Objects and Dress in Religious and Secular Identities in Europe,” Second City Anthropology Conference, University of Illinois, Chicago, March 3.
- 2011 “The Medieval as Contemporary: Exhibiting Cistercian Aesthetics in Current Day Paris,” Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Montreal, Québec, November.
- 2011 “Catholicism as European Culture: The Intersection of Race, Religion, and Culture,” Rethinking Europe, University of Minnesota Graduate Student Conference, Minneapolis, MN, October.
- 2011 “The Art and Aesthetics of a Republican Faith,” Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, New Orleans, LA, November.

LECTURES AND PANELS ORGANIZED

- 2015 (with Prof. Dan Vaca, Brown University) Exploratory Session to create a new section in the American Academy of Religion on “Religion and Economy.” American Academy of Religion Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA, November 22-25.
- 2015 (with Profs. Nathaniel Berman and Thomas Lewis, Brown University) “The Subject of Modern Art: Spiritualizing Art, Secularizing Religion.” Lecture by Professor David Morgan, Duke University. Brown University, Providence, RI, April 14.
- 2014 (with Profs. Nathaniel Berman and Thomas Lewis, Brown University) Film Screening and Discussion with Professor Kathryn Myers, University of Connecticut. Brown University, Providence RI, September 18.

2014 (with Kimberly A. Arkin) Secular Europe? What, Where, When Who? Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, DC, December 3-7, 2014.

2014 (with Profs. Nathaniel Berman and Thomas Lewis Brown University) “The Art of Secularism: The Cultural Politics of Modernist Art in India.” Lecture by Professor Karin Zitzewitz, Michigan State University, Brown University, Providence, RI, April 1.

2013 (with Profs. Nathaniel Berman and Thomas Lewis, Brown University) Improper Intimacies and the Cunning of Secular Power. Lecture by Professor Mayanthi L. Fernando, University of California, Santa Cruz, Brown University, October 22.

2011 (with Alexandra Brown) Visual Traces of Politics. Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Montréal, Québec, November 16-20.

INVITED RESPONSE PRESENTATIONS

2012 Maidhof, Caillie, University of California, Berkeley. “Theories of Secularism,” Anthropological Inquiry Workshop, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, CA, November.

2011 Eisenlohr, Patrick, Utrecht University. “Media authenticity and authority in Mauritius: On the mediality of language in religion.” Semiotics Workshop, University of Chicago, April 26.

2011 Rosen, Tracy, University of Chicago. “Chinatown In A Fenceless Vineyard,” Anthropology of Europe Workshop, University of Chicago, Chicago IL, June.

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Postdoctoral Advisory Council, Brown University, (2013-2015)

Steering Committee, *The Art of Invisibility*, Brown University, (2014-2015)
B.A. Thesis Advisor, Department of Religious Studies, Brown University (2014-2015)
Research Assistant, Center for Teaching and Learning, University of Chicago, 2010-11
Research Assistant to Professor Jennifer Cole, University of Chicago, 2006-09
Research Assistant to Professor Marshall Sahlins, University of Chicago, 2005-06

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Academy of Religion
American Anthropological Association
American Ethnological Society
Society for Cultural Anthropology
Society for the Anthropology of Religion
Council for European Studies
French Historical Society

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Processing Assistant, University of Chicago Library Special Collections, Chicago, IL, 2010-11
English Language Instructor, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Paris, France, 2009-10
English Language Instructor, *École nationale des Chartes*, Sorbonne, Paris, France, 2008-10
Contemporary Art Mediator, *Collège des Bernardins*, Paris, France, 2009-10
Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Government Services, Toronto, Ontario, 2005
Junior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Government Services, Toronto, Ontario, 2004

LANGUAGES

English, French