



# Welcome to the 39th Loy H. Witherspoon Lecture

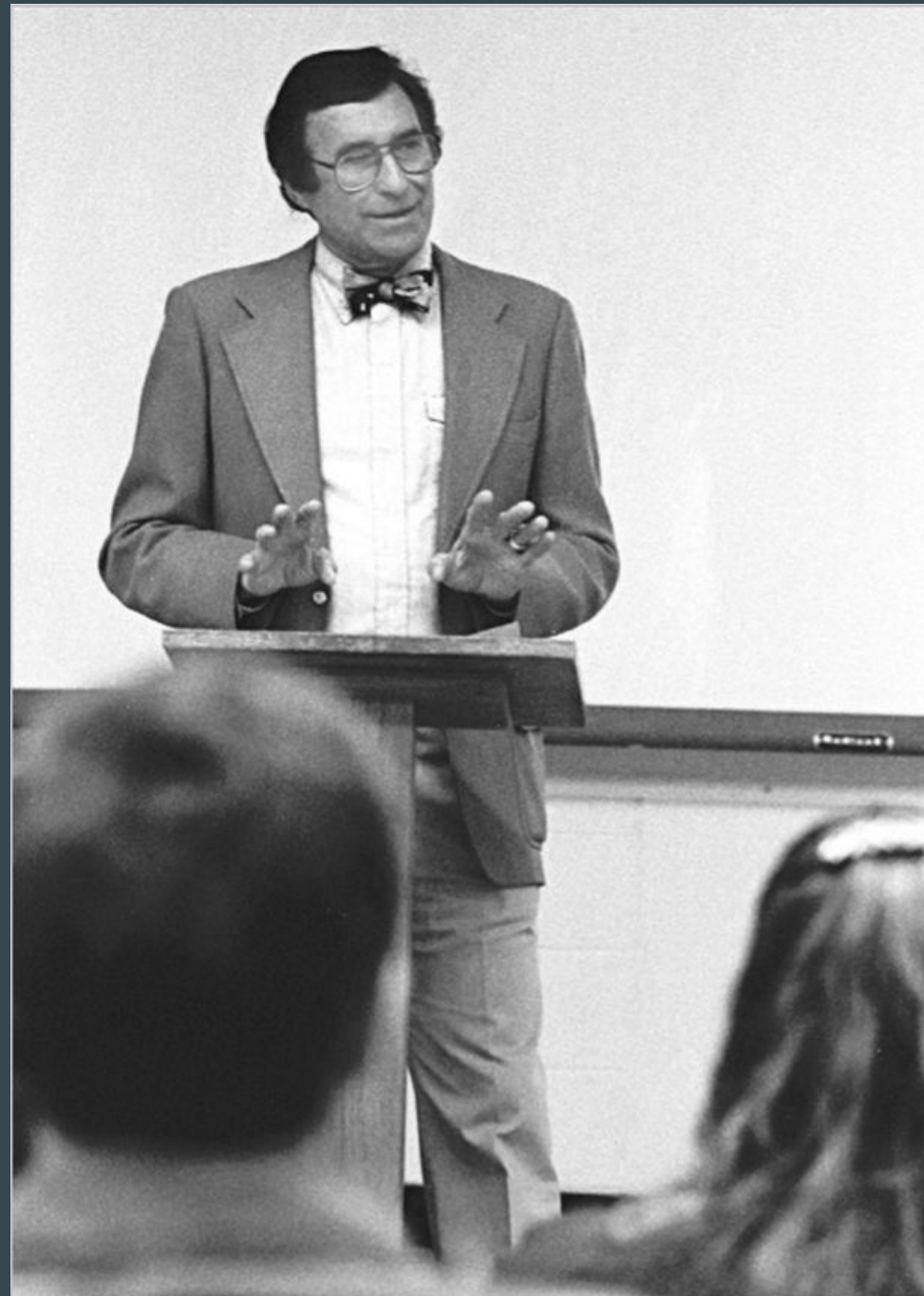


*Fostering a legacy of intellectual inquiry*

# Honoring Loy H. Witherspoon

## Professor Emeritus – Philosophy and Religious Studies

JAN. 17, 1930 - JAN. 15, 2017





Charlotte founder Bonnie Cone recruited Dr. Witherspoon in 1964 to join the faculty of what was then Charlotte College.

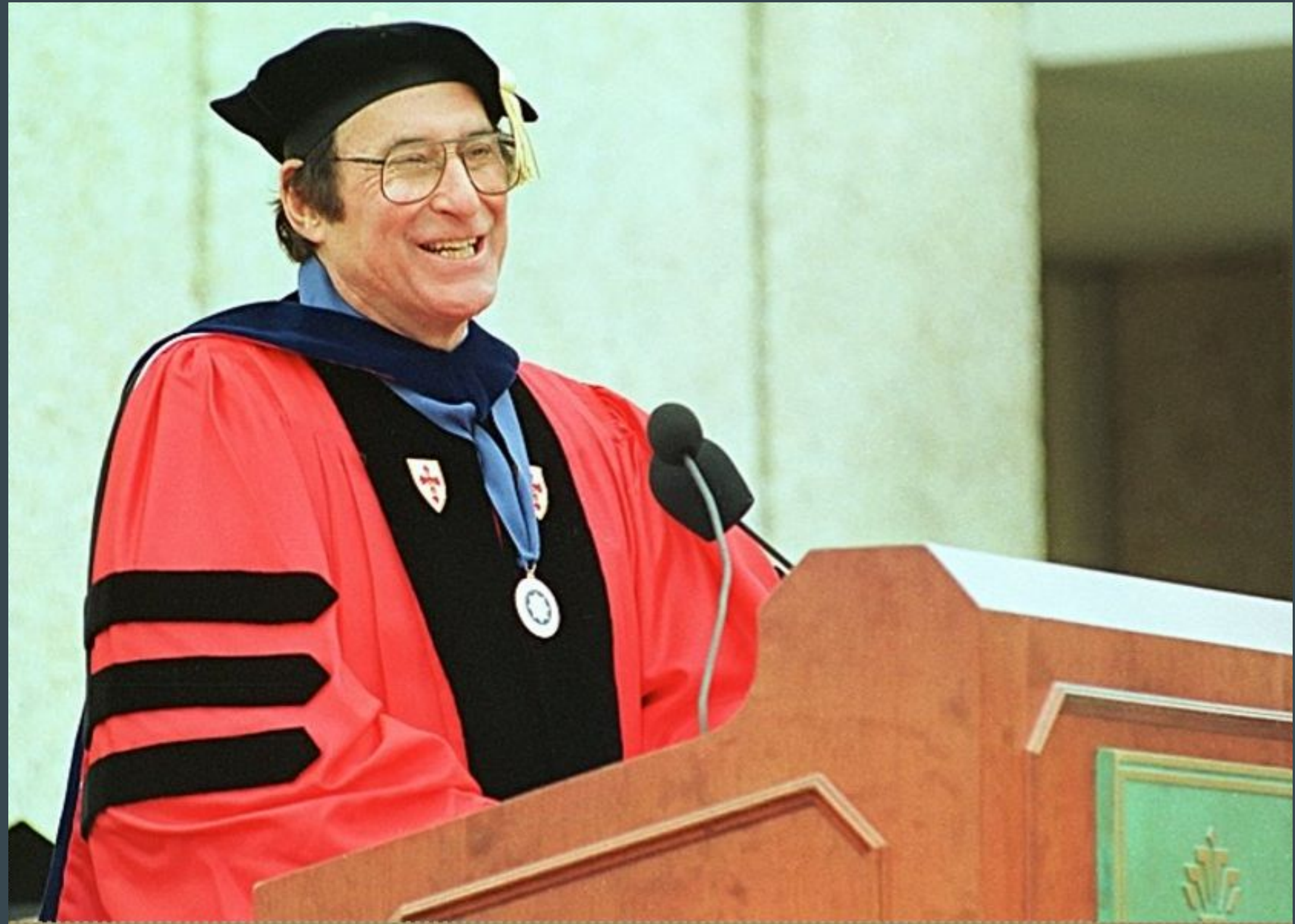
Dr. Witherspoon said he and Bonnie Cone knew certain things needed to be done to build a great University. "By hook or by crook, she and I found the money to get things done in the right way," he said.



“People who join an organization early define the culture of the organization. I don’t think there was anybody – other than Bonnie Cone – who contributed to the University so thoroughly.”

- Former Chancellor James Woodward

Dr. Witherspoon advocated for and was the first Chair of the Department of Philosophy and Religion and of the Department of Religious Studies when it became independent.



Dr. Witherspoon was known as a great teacher, caring counselor, skilled ombudsman, patron, and troubleshooter.

He was a recipient of the Bank of America Award for Teaching Excellence, which is the university's highest teaching honor.





Dr. Witherspoon was key to bringing the Greek system to campus and formed a special bond with Lambda Chi Alpha, which endowed a scholarship in his name.



Witherspoon Hall opened in 1990.

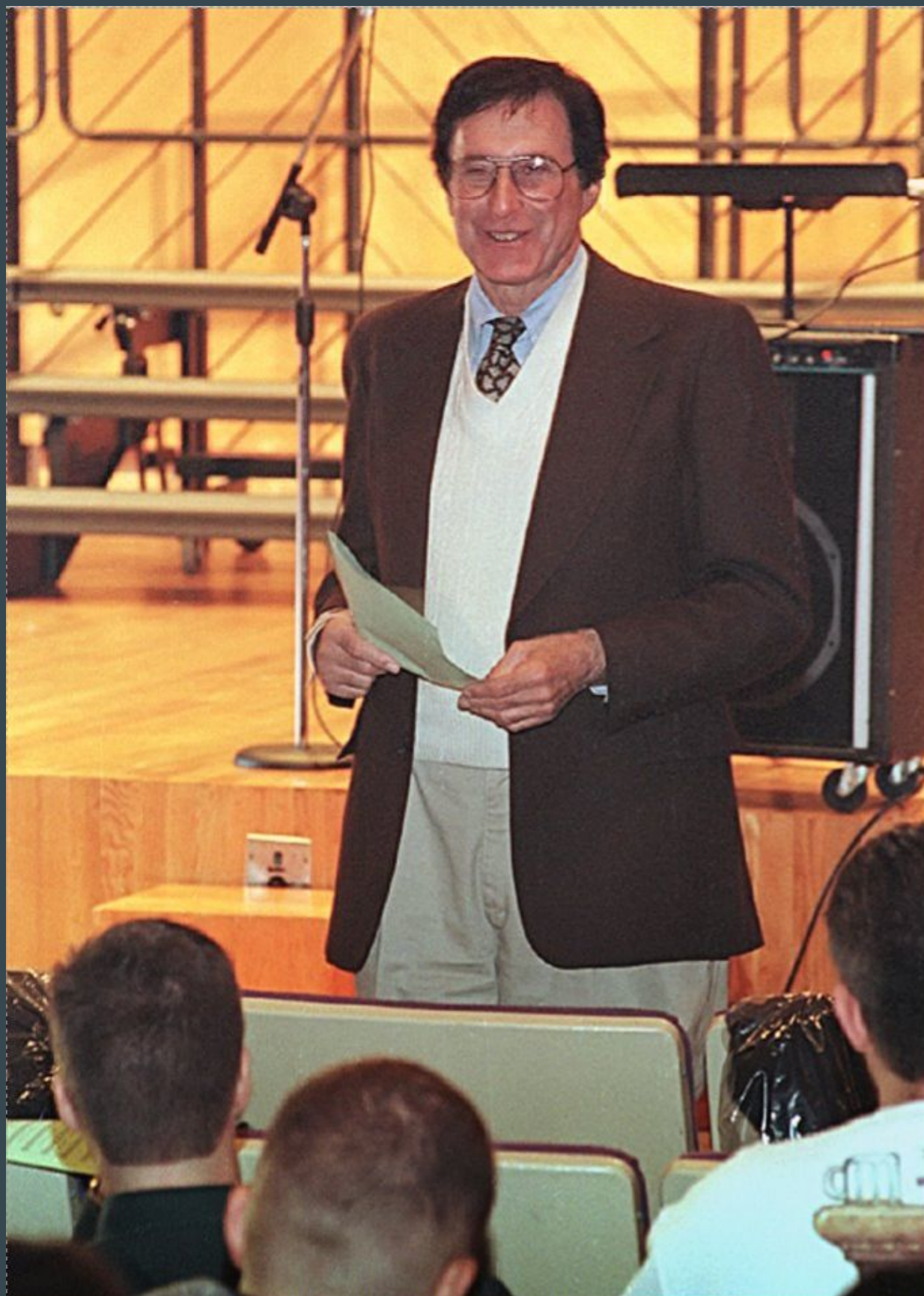




“Loy was truly a legendary teacher and a mentor to scores of students, and he was one of the most active members of the campus community.”

- Chancellor Philip L. Dubois





Dr. Witherspoon served as college chaplain and was an ordained United Methodist minister.

Among his honors, the UNC Charlotte Board of Trustees presented him the Distinguished Service Award.

# A Charlotte Legend

Department of Religious Studies faculty and friends established the Witherspoon Lectures in Religious Studies in 1984 to honor him.

This is the oldest and most prestigious endowed lecture series at UNC Charlotte.





“Religion and Religions:  
The Problem of Living in a Multi-religious World”

Seyyed Hossein Nasr  
George Washington University

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“The Question of the Book:  
Religion as Texture”

David L. Miller  
Syracuse University

185



# “Evolving Jewish Views of Jesus”

Michael J. Cook

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

1886



“In the Combat Zone Over American Values:  
The Vision of One America versus the Vision of Many Americas”

Martin E. Marty  
University of Chicago

187



“The Banality of Evil:  
The Darkness at the Center”

William H. Poteat  
Duke University





“Sexual Masquerades in the Hebrew Bible:  
Rachel and Tamar”

Wendy Doniger  
University of Chicago

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“Religiopolis:  
Beyond the Secular City”

Harvey G. Cox  
Harvard University

'90



“Ecofeminism and Christian Theology: Symbolic and Social Connections between the Domination of Women and of Nature”

Rosemary Radford Ruether  
Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

'91



"Martin & Malcolm & America:  
A Dream or a Nightmare"

James H. Cone

Union Theological Seminary (NY)

'92



# “Satan in the New Testament Gospels”

Elaine Pagels  
Princeton University

'93



“Schindler’s List”

Thomas Keneally

University of California at Irvine

'94



# “Re-Viewing Religious Knowledge”

Vine Deloria, Jr.

University of Colorado at Boulder

'95



# “Translating Womanism into Pedagogical Praxis”

Katie G. Cannon

Temple University

'96



“Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls:  
What do we Know After Fifty Years?”

James H. Charlesworth  
Princeton Theological Seminary

'97





“Jerusalem:  
The Contested Inheritance”

Francis E. Peters  
New York University

1998



# “Searching for Shangri-La”

Donald S. Lopez  
University of Michigan

'999



“Caring for Creation:  
Religious Faith and the Challenge of Building a Sustainable World”

Max Oelschlager  
Northern Arizona University

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“Can the State be Virtuous?  
Muslim Political Philosophy, Old and New”

John Williams  
College of William and Mary

'01



“What Does It Mean to Say I Saw?:  
On the Varieties of Visionary Experiences”

Barbara Newman  
Northwestern University

'02



“Christians and the So-called State (We Are In):  
A Meditation on Loyalty after September 11, 2001”

Stanley Hauerwas  
Duke University Divinity School

'03



“Wooing Rebekah:  
How Isaac Got a Wife”

Jack Sasson

Vanderbilt University

'04



“Misquoting Jesus:  
Do We Have the Original New Testament?”

Bart Ehrman  
UNC Chapel Hill

'05





“No Free Pass:  
An Apocalyptic Call for Prophetic Witness in the Book of Revelation”

Brian Blount

Union Theological Seminary

'06



“Jesus in Jerusalem:  
New Archaeological Discoveries”

Shimon Gibson

W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research

'07

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“Things Said / Things Done:  
The Relations of Myth and Ritual”

Jonathan Z. Smith  
University of Chicago

'08



“What's the Matter with Marriage?  
Some Early Christian Answers”

Elizabeth A. Clark  
Duke University

'09



# “Secret Books and Secret Traditions of Ancient Judaism”

Michael E. Stone

Professor Emeritus of Judaic Studies, Hebrew University

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“Morality Without Religion: Empathy,  
Fairness and Prosocial Primates”

Frans B. M. de Waal,  
Yerkes Center, Emory University





“The Ancient New Age:  
How Gnostic Spirituality Revolutionized Religion in Antiquity”

April DeConick  
Rice University

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“Secrets of the Confessional:  
Children, the Sacrament of Penance, and the Making of  
20th Century U.S. Catholicism”

Robert A. Orsi  
Northwestern University

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“The Impossibility of Religious Freedom”

Winnifred Fallers Sullivan  
Indiana University

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“Biological Gods:  
Science (Fiction) and Some Emergent Mythologies”

Jeffrey Kripal  
Rice University

'15



“Neighboring Faiths:  
Judaism, Christianity, and Islam”

David Nirenberg  
University of Chicago

'16



“Paradise Lost?  
Krishna’s Forest Playground Confronts the 21st Century”

John Stratton Hawley  
Columbia University

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“Shamans and Schizophrenia:  
How Religious Practice May Change Psychotic Experience”

Tanya Marie Luhrman  
Stanford University

'19



# “The Very Idea of Queer Religion”

Mark D. Jordan  
Harvard Divinity School

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“Spiritual Madness:  
American Psychiatry, Race and Black Religion”

Judith Weisenfeld  
Princeton University

2022



“Work Pray Code:  
When Work Becomes Religion in Silicon Valley”

Carolyn Chen  
UC Berkeley

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Thank you  
for joining us this evening!