

DONYELLE C. MCCRAY

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

I study homiletics and the history of Christian spirituality. Within these fields, I focus on African American preaching and spirituality, medieval women's spirituality, and sermon genre.

EDUCATION

Duke Divinity School, Doctor of Theology, December 2014.

Dissertation: The Censored Pulpit: Julian of Norwich as Preacher
Advisor, Charles L. Campbell

Virginia Theological Seminary, Master of Divinity, May 2006.

Harvard Law School, Juris Doctor, June 1999.

Spelman College, Bachelor of Arts in English, *magna cum laude*, May 1996.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Yale Divinity School July 2016 to present
Assistant Professor of Homiletics

Virginia Theological Seminary July 2012-June 2016
Assistant Professor of Homiletics and Director of Multicultural Ministries
Martha J. Horne Visiting Professor of Homiletics (2012-2013)

Duke Divinity School January 2009-May 2012
Doctoral Research Assistant & Preceptor

SCHOLARLY PUBLICATIONS

Monograph

The Censored Pulpit: Julian of Norwich as Preacher (Lexington Books/Fortress Academic Press, October 2019).

Journal Articles

“Pauli Murray In & Out of the Pulpit,” 2018 *Societas Homiletica* Keynote Address, *International Journal of Homiletics*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (2019);

“Quilting the Sermon: Homiletical Insights from Harriet Powers,” *Religions*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (2018):1-7;

“Holy Moments in the Risky Life of Pauli Murray,” *Perspectives in Religious Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (Spring 2018): 393-403;

“Preaching to Fans: Barbara Brown Taylor Fandom and the Possibilities for Mainline Aesthetics,” *Anglican Theological Review*, Vol. 99, No. 2 (Spring 2017): 299-304;

“Mothering Souls: A Vocation of Intercession,” *Anglican Theological Review: Women and Prayer*, Vol. 98 No. 2 (Spring 2016): 285-301;

“As Faithful as the Whirling Sea,” *Journal for Preachers*, Vol. 39 No. 4 (2016): 43-48;

“Sweating, Spitting, and Cursing: Intimations of the Sacred,” *Practical Matters* 8 (2015): 52-62; and

“What’s at Stake in a Preacher’s Spirituality of Time,” *International Journal of Homiletics*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2015): 71-81.

Contributions to Books and Commentaries:

“Solomon’s Son: The Wise Tenderness of Howard Thurman” in *Can I Get a Witness: Thirteen Peacemakers, Community-Builders, and Agitators for Faith and Justice*, 39-57(Eerdmans Press, 2019); and

Exegetical Reflection on Select Psalms, *Connections: A Lectionary Commentary Series, Year C* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2019).

Other Publications

“Credibility in the Kingdom of God: Insights on Preaching from Julian of Norwich,” *Divinity Magazine*, Spring (2016): 21-23;

Review of Paul S. Chung’s Church and Ethical Responsibility in the Midst of World Economy, *Homiletic*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (2014): 42-43; and

Guest Cultural Resource Commentator, *The African American Lectionary*, March 2012.

CURRENT WORKS-IN-PROGRESS

The Apostle Pauli: Preaching as the Invitation to Freedom (An exploration of Pauli Murray's spirituality and contributions to homiletics);

Is it a Sermon? Genre Fluidity in African American Preaching, Westminster John Knox Press (A survey of understudied African American approaches to sermon genre); and

In the Basement: Race, Church, & Theological Practices (A documentary film and experimental multimedia project on race and materiality in ecclesial space funded by the Henry Luce Foundation).

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

- Pauli Murray: Preaching in Many Voices, Yale Divinity School Dean's Advisory Council, October 2019;
- Pauli Murray: Life & Ministry in Division, Theologian in Residence for Gathering of Leaders October 2019;
- The Spirituality of Risk-taking, Faculty Address for Yale Divinity School Visiting Students, November 2019;
- Preaching & Transformation, Two Advent Addresses for the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey, December 2019;
- The Apostle Pauli: Preaching as the Invitation to Freedom, Academy of Homiletics Identity, Imagination, and Narrative Working Group, December 2019;
- Encumbered Spaces: Finding Antiracist Ways Forward, Academy of Homiletics Plenary Panel on Homiletical Whiteness, December 2019;
- Emerging Issues in Homiletical Research: Keynote Panel of Junior Scholars, Academy of Homiletics, December 2018;
- Race and Worship: Reflections on *Christian Preaching and Worship in Multicultural Contexts* by Eunjoo Kim, Preaching and Culture Workgroup, Academy of Homiletics, December 2018;
- Risking in Dangerous Times, Inaugural Tea Talk, Pauli Murray College, September 2017;

- The Preacher and the Whirling Sea, Yale ISM Conference, Worshipping God in the Face of Violence, June 2017;
- Pauli Murray's Spirituality of Risk-taking, Association of Yale Alumni, June 2017;
- Pauli Murray: A Pictorial Biography, Berkeley Divinity School, April 2017;
- Westervelt Lectures, Austin Presbyterian Seminary, January 2017;
- Sparkling in the Darkness: The Spirituality of Pauli Murray, Virginia Theological Seminary, May 2015;
- Preaching and Spirituality in the Work of Barbara Brown Taylor, November 2015;
- The Dimensions of Reconciliation, Respondent to Professor Miroslav Volf, American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature, November 2014;
- Preaching and Domestic Violence, Virginia Theological Seminary, October 2014;
- John Jasper: Insights from a Folk Preacher, Virginia Theological Seminary Convocation, 2014;
- Julian of Norwich and Anchoritic Spirituality, Duke Divinity School, Annually 2013-2016;
- Spirituality of the Black Prophetic Tradition: Examining Sermonic Space, Duke Divinity School, March 2012; and
- When Illness Calls: Insights from Julian of Norwich's Call to Frailty, American Academy of Religion/Academy of Homiletics, November 2010.

RECENT COURSES

- ◆ Principles and Practices of Preaching
- ◆ Radical Lives of Proclamation
- ◆ Introduction to Homiletics
- ◆ Introduction to the African American Preaching Traditions
- ◆ Pauli Murray In & Out of the Pulpit
- ◆ Is it a Sermon?
- ◆ Introduction to the Christian Spiritual Tradition

ADDITIONAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor, Duke Divinity School United Methodist Course of Study: Women of Fire, Women of Light: Legacies of Women Mystics, 2012 and The Multiethnic Church, 2011.

Preceptor, Duke Divinity School: Introduction to Christian Preaching, 2009-2012; African American Spiritualities, 2012; The Life & Thought of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 2011; The Church's Ministry of Preaching, 2011; Preaching the Parables, 2011; and The Holy Spirit & Ministry, 2010.

FELLOWSHIPS

Wabash Center Pre-Tenure Religion Faculty of African Descent, 2015-2016;
Bell-Woolfall Fellowship, 2009-2012; and
James H. Costen North American Doctoral Fellowship, 2012-2013.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

- Race, Church & Theological Practices Clergy-Scholar Research Team, Louisville Institute;
- Editorial Board Member, *International Journal of Homiletics*;
- Co-convener, Academy of Homiletics Work Group on Identity, Imagination & Narrative;
- Nominating Committee Member, Academy of Homiletics, 2018;
- Peer Reviewer, *Religious Education*; and
- Member, *Societas Homiletica*, Academy of Homiletics, and American Academy of Religion.

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Fellow, Pauli Murray College;
Member, Yale Divinity School Committee on Spiritual Formation & Faith Practices; and
2018 Lavender Graduation Speaker (for Graduate Students), Office of LGBTQ Resources.

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Washington Home & Community Hospices, Washington, DC. 2006 – 2008

Interfaith Chaplain

Served as interfaith spiritual counselor to both adult and pediatric patients and their families; Advised patients and caregivers on ethical and existential issues related to treatment options; Monitored patients and caregivers for suicide risks and other psychosocial challenges; and Provided spiritual support to nurses, social workers, and other members of the hospice care team.

Trinity Volunteer Corps, Washington, DC. 2006 – 2008

Chaplain

Served as primary supervisor for young adult poverty relief volunteers; Facilitated group spiritual direction and discernment; Led worship and retreats; and Designed program, recruited volunteers, and engaged in strategic planning with the Board of Directors.

Saint Elizabeth's Mental Hospital, Washington, DC. Summer 2004

Interfaith Chaplain & Clinical Pastoral Education Student

Planned worship services, preached, and served as a liturgical leader; Facilitated interfaith groups and rehabilitation classes for patients in civil and forensic units; Taught a variety of classes in spirituality that also integrated the creative arts; and Provided individual counseling to patients.

Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP, Washington, DC. 1999 – 2003

Attorney

Represented and managed the interests of clients by drafting wills, trusts, powers of attorney and other estate-planning instruments; Counseled not-for-profit organizations on tax and related legal matters; and Served as the firm's liaison for pro bono services, including representation in court proceedings.