

## **SETH DOWLAND**

Professor of Religion & Director of the International Honors Program  
Pacific Lutheran University  
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### **PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS**

Pacific Lutheran University  
Professor of Religion, 2023-  
Associate Professor of Religion, 2016–2023  
Assistant Professor of Religion, 2011–2016  
Duke University, Thompson Writing Program  
Lecturing Fellow, 2007–2011  
Associate Director, 2008–2011

### **EDUCATION**

Duke University  
Ph.D. (2007), Graduate Program in Religion (American Religions)  
M.A. (2004), Graduate Program in Religion (American Religions)  
University of Virginia  
B.A. with distinction (2001), College of Arts & Sciences (Religious Studies & History)

### **BOOKS**

*Purity and Power: A History of White Christian Masculinity in America* (Oxford University Press, under advance contract)  
*Family Values and the Rise of the Christian Right* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015)  
Reviewed in: *American Historical Review*, *American Political Thought*, *The Christian Century*, *Fides et Historia*, *Journal of American Studies*, *Journal of Religious History*, *Journal of Southern History*, *Journal of Southern Religion*, *Marriage, Families, & Spirituality*, *Reading Religion*

### **EDITED BOOK**

*Purposeful Learning in a New Era: Exploring the Educational Mission of Pacific Lutheran University*, co-edited with Samuel Torvend (Pacific Lutheran University, 2024)

### **ACADEMIC JOURNAL ARTICLES & BOOK CHAPTERS**

- 2024 “Thoughtful Inquiry,” in *Purposeful Learning in a New Era: Exploring the Educational Mission of Pacific Lutheran University*, eds. Seth Dowland & Samuel Torvend (Pacific Lutheran University), 13-18
- 2024 “Culture Wars and the Supreme Court During the Cold War,” in *The Routledge History of U.S. Religion and Politics*, eds. Cara Burnidge and Lauren F. Turek (Routledge), 393-402
- 2023 “A Brutal Faith: College Football and Manhood at Amos Alonzo Stagg's University,” in *Baptists and Gender: Papers for the Ninth International Conference*

- on *Baptist Studies*, ed. Melody Maxwell and T. Laine Scales (Mercer University Press), 204-221
- 2019 “The Paradox of Christian Masculinity: Sports, War, and Internationalism at the 1919 Inter-Allied Games,” in *Gods, Games, and Globalization: New Perspectives on Religion and Sports*, eds. Rebecca T. Alpert and Art Remillard (Mercer University Press), 58-73
- 2018 “Gender, Marriage, and Sexual Purity in American Religious History,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion in America*
- 2017 “Billy Graham’s New Evangelical Manhood,” in *Billy Graham: American Pilgrim*, eds. Andrew Finstuen, Anne Blue Wills, and Grant Wacker (Oxford University Press), 216-231
- 2016 “Preserving Morality in an Urban Nation: Christian Reform Movements in the Progressive Era,” in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Religion and American Politics*, ed. Barbara McGraw (Wiley-Blackwell), 225-236
- 2016 “Making Sense of Twentieth-century American Evangelicalism,” *Reviews in American History* (March 2016): 152-159
- 2011 “War, Sports, and the Construction of Masculinity in American Christianity,” *Religion Compass* 5.7 (July 2011): 355-364
- 2011 “The Costs of Prestige: E.J. Carnell’s Quest for an Intellectual Orthodoxy,” in *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Authority of Scripture*, ed. Carlos Bovell (Pickwick Publications), 71-90
- 2010 “Conservative Christians and Environmentalism, 1970-2005,” in *Diversity and Dominion: Dialogues in Ecology, Ethics, and Theology*, ed. Kyle S. Van Houtan and Michael S. Northcott (Wipf & Stock), 157-165. Co-authored with Brantley W. Gasaway
- 2009 “A New Kind of Patriarchy: Inerrancy and Masculinity in the Southern Baptist Convention, 1979-2000,” in *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the New South*, ed. Craig T. Friend (University of Georgia Press), 246-268
- 2009 “Family Values and the Formation of a Christian Right Agenda,” *Church History* 78.3 (September 2009): 606-631

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Pacific Lutheran University courses taught (2011-2025)

American Christianity

Islam in the United States

Race, Gender, & American Christianity

American Evangelicalism

Religion & U.S. Politics

Modern Church History

Religion & Politics in the United Kingdom (study-away course in Oxford)

Religion and Violence (International Honors Program)

Christianity and the Origins of Race (International Honors Program)

Religion & Social Justice (First-Year Experience Program)

Jesus in America (First-Year Experience Program)

Capstone Research Seminar (Religion Dept.; Gender, Sexuality, & Race Studies)

Duke University courses taught (2007-2011)  
Religion in American Life  
Religion and American Politics  
Religious Faith in the American South  
Religion & Popular Culture  
Religious Theory & Experience  
American Religious Autobiography  
Jesus in America

#### INVITED LECTURES

- 2024 “Racist & Anti-Democratic Christianity in American History,” Bishop’s Convocation, Northwest Washington ELCA Synod (Seabeck, WA)
- 2021 “A Brutal Faith: College Football and Manhood at Amos Alonzo Stagg’s University,” International Conference of Baptist Studies IX: Baptists and Gender, North Greenville University (Greenville, SC) – canceled due to COVID
- 2019 “Evangelical Homeschooling and the Development of Family Values,” Russia in the Global Culture Wars Conference, Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, Georgetown University (Washington, DC)
- 2019 “Cooperation or Conquest: Christian Masculinity in the Era of the Great War,” MF School of Theology (Oslo, Norway)
- 2013 “Billy Graham’s New Evangelical Manhood,” Worlds of Billy Graham Conference, Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals (Wheaton, IL)
- 2010 “Peace with God, Peace through Strength: Billy Graham and the Struggle for Nuclear Disarmament,” Aurora University Chaplain’s Forum (Aurora, IL)
- 2008 “Religion and Politics in the Twentieth Century,” Divining America Lecture Series, Durham County Library (Durham, NC)
- 2006 “Christian Academies and the Reordering of Southern Conservatism, 1965-1975,” Southern Studies Seminar, University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill, NC)

#### POPULAR ARTICLES

- 2021 “A New Book Argues This ‘Divine Institution’ is the Key to Understanding White Evangelical Culture,” *Religion Dispatches*
- 2020 “White Evangelical Voters: Trump as a Spiritual Leader,” *PostAlley*
- 2019 “Evangelical Homeschooling and the Development of “Family Values,” *Berkeley Forum: The Culture Wars Today*
- 2018 “American Evangelicalism and the Politics of Whiteness,” *The Christian Century*
- 2018 “Is Evangelical Support Good for the Jews?” *Jewish in Seattle*
- 2017 “Where Are the Culture Wars?” *Religion & Culture Forum*, University of Chicago Divinity School
- 2015 “A Hard-Edged Gospel: The Rise and Fall of Mark Driscoll,” *Religion in the News*
- 2013 “Government End Times? Pray for the Individual,” *The [Toronto] Globe & Mail*. Co-authored with Kate Bowler.
- 2012 “The New Dominionist Politics,” *Religion in the News*

## **MEDIA APPEARANCES**

Interviewed by *New York Times*, *Le Monde*, *Slate*, NPR, *FiveThirtyEight*/ABC News, KNKX Public Radio, CNN, *Washington Post*, *The Daily Beast*, *WhoWhatWhy*, Kaiser Foundation News, *Congressional Quarterly*, *Newark Star-Ledger*, *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, *Salon*, *The Way of Improvement Leads Home*, *Marginalia Review of Books*, *Religion Dispatches*

Consultant for *Slow Burn* podcast, season 2

On-camera interview & Humanities Advisor for *To Have and To Hold: A History of Marriage*, 6-episode documentary by Audacious Women, LLC

## **GRANTS AND AWARDS**

- 2022 Kelmer-Roe Faculty-Student Research Award, Pacific Lutheran University (with Prof. Adela Ramos and Allyson Lessard)
- 2019 Erasmus+ (EU) Staff Mobility Grant, MF School of Theology in Oslo
- 2018 Wang Center for Global Education Faculty Research Grant, Pacific Lutheran University
- 2015 Karen Hille Phillips Regency Advancement Award, Pacific Lutheran University
- 2014 Kelmer-Roe Faculty-Student Research Award, Pacific Lutheran University (with Clayton Bracht)
- 2009 Award for Excellence in Teaching Writing, Duke University
- 2008 Research Travel Grant, Thompson Writing Program, Duke University
- 2006 Louisville Institute Dissertation Fellowship
- 2005 Mellon Dissertation fellow, Franklin Humanities Institute, Duke University
- 2005 Preparing Future Faculty fellow, Duke University/Elon University
- 2001 Duke University Graduate Fellowship
- 2001 Phi Beta Kappa

## **CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

- 2026 “From Social Activism to Sovereign Individualism: White Christian Masculinity at the End of the Progressive Era,” American Society of Church History Annual Meeting (Chicago, upcoming)
- 2022 “Religion of Fear: Response to Papers on White Christian Denominations & the 1920s KKK,” American Society of Church History Annual Meeting (New Orleans)
- 2019 “Women and the New Christian Right: A Response to Emily Suzanne Johnson’s *This is Our Message*,” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting (San Diego)
- 2018 “Feminism and Evangelical Family Men,” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting (Denver)
- 2018 “Teaching American Religious History in the Trump Era,” American Society of Church History Annual Meeting (Washington, D.C.)
- 2017 “Vanishing Masculinity in the Midcentury YMCA,” American Society of Church History Annual Meeting (Denver)
- 2015 “American Evangelicals Looking Abroad” panel respondent, American Historical Association (New York)

- 2014 “Evolving Notions of Christian Manhood in the YMCA,” American Academy of Religion, Pacific Northwest Regional Meeting (Calgary) (co-presenter Clayton Bracht)
- 2013 “Southern Baptist Apostate: Bill Clinton’s Fight with the Religious Right,” American Society for Church History Spring Meeting (Portland)
- 2013 “How the Bible Works: Scripture and the Body in Nineteenth Century Religion” panel respondent, American Society for Church History Spring Meeting (Portland)
- 2012 “Go, Fight, Win: Masculinity, Sports, and War in the 1919 Inter-Allied Games,” American Society for Church History (Chicago)
- 2010 “A Surprising Advocate for Disarmament: Billy Graham’s Opposition to ‘Peace through Strength,’” Southern Historical Association (Charlotte)
- 2010 Respondent: “Changing Attitudes Towards Women” panel, American Society of Church History (San Diego)
- 2009 “Conservative Christian Activists and Coal Miners in the Kanawha County (WV) Textbook Controversy of 1974,” American Historical Association (New York)
- 2007 “Focusing on the Family: How the Religious Right Defined the Common Good,” American Academy of Religion (San Diego)
- 2006 “Gender Battles in Southern Schools, 1967-1975,” American Academy of Religion, Southeast Region Meeting (Atlanta)
- 2005 “‘Is this the religion of my adorable Master Jesus?’ James Meacham and the Tensions of Southern Methodism, 1788-1797,” American Society of Church History (Seattle)
- 2003 “Moral Majority and the Mobilization of White Evangelicals in Alabama,” American Academy of Religion (Atlanta)

#### **CHURCH PRESENTATIONS & LOCAL LECTURES**

- 2025 “Resisting Christian Nationalism,” Vocational Vistas Lecture Series, Pacific Lutheran University Alumni Relations (Tacoma, WA)
- 2023-5 “Christian Nationalism,” 3-part lecture series, St. Mark’s Lutheran Church (Tacoma, WA), Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Olympia, WA), Mount Cross Lutheran Church (University Place, WA)
- 2022 “Reproductive Justice After Dobbs: An Interdisciplinary Roundtable Discussion,” Pacific Lutheran University (Tacoma, WA)
- 2022 “Anti-Semitism and Christian Nationalism,” Lutheran Studies Conference on Antisemitism in Church and Society, Pacific Lutheran University (Tacoma, WA)
- 2022 “New Ways of Thinking About the Cross: An Introduction to René Girard,” virtual lecture, Roswell United Methodist Church (Roswell, GA)
- 2022 “Christianity and the Supreme Court,” 3-part lecture series, Creator Lutheran Church (Bonney Lake, WA)
- 2021 “Divided Church, Divided Nation,” 3-part lecture series, Our Savior Lutheran Church (Everett, WA)
- 2021 “Gender, Sexism, and Justice in American Christianity,” 2-part virtual lecture series, Mt. View Lutheran Church (Edgewood, WA)
- 2020 “Race and American Christianity,” 2-part virtual lecture series, Trinity Presbyterian Church, (Tacoma, WA); Roswell United Methodist Church (Roswell, GA)

- 2019 “Gender, Sexuality, and the Construction of American Christianity: A Brief History,” Lutheran Studies Conference on Sexuality, Pacific Lutheran University (Tacoma, WA)
- 2018 “Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism in America,” 4-part lecture series, Mt. View Lutheran Church (Edgewood, WA)
- 2017 “Liberal Protestants and Christian Humanitarianism,” 2-part lecture series, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church (Olympia, WA)
- 2017 “Christianity and Politics in America,” 3-part lecture series, Hope Lutheran Church (Enumclaw, WA); Mt. View Lutheran Church (Edgewood, WA); Creator Lutheran Church (Bonney Lake, WA); Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (Port Angeles, WA)
- 2016 “Family Values and the Rise of the Christian Right,” Religion Department Annual Lecture (Tacoma, WA); Pacific Lutheran University
- 2016 “America: A Christian Nation?” Christ Church Episcopal (Tacoma, WA)
- 2016 “New Religious Movements in America,” 5-part lecture series, St. Mary’s Episcopal Church (Lakewood, WA)
- 2016 “The Spread of Global Christianity,” 4-part lecture series, Mt. View Lutheran Church (Edgewood, WA)
- 2015 “Islam in America,” 2-part lecture series, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church (Olympia, WA); Christ Church Episcopal (Tacoma, WA)
- 2015 “Church History,” 2-part lecture series, Tacoma First Presbyterian Church (Tacoma, WA)
- 2015 “Gender and Christianity in America: 4 Stories,” 4-part lecture series, Mt. View Lutheran Church (Edgewood, WA); Creator Lutheran Church (Bonney Lake, WA)
- 2014 “Family Values and the Rise of the Christian Right,” 3-part lecture series, Mt. View Lutheran Church (Edgewood, WA), St. Mary’s Episcopal Church (Lakewood, WA)
- 2012 “From Civil Rights to the Christian Right: King, Neuhaus, and Christian Political Action,” Lutheran Studies Conference on Political Life, Pacific Lutheran University, (Tacoma, WA)
- 2011 “Christian Political Activism in America,” Bethany of the Northwest Pastor’s Lecture (Everett, WA)
- 2008 “Christianity and Politics: the Example of Martin Luther King, Jr.,” St. Luke’s United Methodist Church (Houston)

**PRESENTATIONS ON TEACHING**

- 2014 “Grading with iPads,” Instructional Technology workshop, Pacific Lutheran University (Tacoma, WA)
- 2013 “Teaching in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Spaces,” Faculty Fall Conference, Pacific Lutheran University (Tacoma, WA)
- 2012 “Teaching with Interactive Lectures,” Provost Workshop on Teaching, Pacific Lutheran University (Tacoma, WA)
- 2010 “Using WordPress to Facilitate Multi-Modal Writing,” Duke Center for Instructional Technology Faculty Showcase (Durham) (with Susanne E. Hall)
- 2008 “Teaching Religion and Politics through Blogging,” American Academy of Religion, (Chicago)

## BOOK REVIEWS & ENCYCLOPEDIA ARTICLES

- Book Review: Michael W. Austin, American Christian Nationalism: Neither American nor Christian, *Theology Today* (forthcoming)
- “Religion and Donald Trump,” *The Palace of Thundering Gods* (collaborative history of U.S. religions, forthcoming)
- Book Review: Keith Harper, ed., Southern Baptists Re-Observed: Perspectives on Race, Gender, and Politics, *Journal of Church History* (Fall 2025)
- Book Review: Michael Graziano, Errand Into the Wilderness of Mirrors: Religion and the History of the CIA, *Journal of Church and State* (Winter 2023)
- Book Review: Hilde Løvdal Stephens, Family Matters: James Dobson and Focus on the Family’s Crusade for the Christian Home, *The Journal of Religion* 102.1 (January 2022): 139-141.
- “Masculinity and Christianity,” *Bloomsbury Religion in North America* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021)
- Book Review: James M. Patterson, Religion in the Public Square: Sheen, King, Falwell, *Journal of Church and State* 62.4 (Autumn 2020): 771-773.
- Book Review: Gillian Frank, Bethany Moreton, and Heather R. White, editors. Devotions and Desires: Histories of Sexuality and Religion in the Twentieth-Century United States. *American Historical Review* 125.1 (February 2020): 262-263.
- Book Review: Daniel Rodgers, As a City on a Hill: The Story of America’s Most Famous Lay Sermon, *Reading Religion*, May 2019
- Book Review: Richard G. Kyle, Popular Evangelicalism in American Culture, *Reading Religion*, August 2018
- Book Review: Regina D. Sullivan and Monte Harrell Hampton, eds., Varieties of Southern Religious History: Essays in Honor of Donald G. Mathews, *Journal of Southern Religion* 18, April 2016
- Book Review: Michael J. McVicar, Christian Reconstruction: R.J. Rushdoony and American Religious Conservatism, *Political Science Quarterly* 130, Winter 2015
- “Billy Graham,” *Dictionary of American History, Supplement: America in the World, 1776 to the Present*, ed. Edward J. Blum, New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 2015
- Book Review: Rachel Hope Cleves, Charity and Sylvia: A Same-Sex Marriage in Early America, *Religion in American History* blog, March 13, 2015
- Book Review: Brian Steensland and Philip Goff, eds., The New Evangelical Social Engagement, *Religion in American History* blog, March 12, 2014
- Book Review: Carol Howard Merritt, Reframing Hope: Vital Ministry in a New Generation, *Religion in American History* blog, September 26, 2013
- “The Christian Right,” in *The Oxford Companion to American Politics*, ed. David Coates, Oxford University Press, 2012
- Book Review: Darren Dochuk, From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism, *Church History* 81, 2012
- Book Review: Gastón Espinosa, ed., Religion and the American Presidency, *Journal of Church & State* 52, 2010
- “Benjamin Lawson Hooks,” in *African American National Biography*, ed. Henry Louis Gates and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, Oxford University Press, 2008

- Book Review: Michael Lienesch, In the Beginning: Fundamentalism, the Scopes Trial, and the Making of the Antievolution Movement, H-Net Review, H-Law, 2007
- “Judgment Days: Two New Books Find Good and Evil in the Rev. Billy Graham’s Presidential Politics,” *Asheville Mountain Xpress*, 10 October 2007
- Book Review: Donald G. Mathews and Beth Barton Schweiger, eds., Religion in the American South, *Journal of Presbyterian History* 84, 2006
- “Moral Majority,” in *Encyclopedia of Protestantism*, ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand, Routledge, 2004
- Book Review: D.G. Hart, That Old Time Religion in Modern America, *Journal of Presbyterian History* 81, 2003

#### **ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION & SERVICE – HOME INSTITUTION**

- International Honors Program, Pacific Lutheran University  
Director (2023- ); Steering Committee (2022- )
- Core Curriculum Committee, Pacific Lutheran University (2022- )
- Gender, Sexuality, and Race Studies Program, Pacific Lutheran University  
Chair (2018-2020); Steering Committee (2014-2024)
- Faculty Affairs Committee, Pacific Lutheran University (2014-2017)  
Chair (2016-2017)
- Faculty Joint Committee on Reduction in Force, Pacific Lutheran University (2016-17)
- Knutson Lecture Organizer, Pacific Lutheran University (2015, 2019)
- First-Year Experience Program Committee, Pacific Lutheran University (2013-2016)
- Women’s Center Advisory Board, Pacific Lutheran University (2013-15)
- Search Committee for History of Christianity faculty position, Pacific Lutheran University (2013-14)
- Webmaster, Religion Department, Pacific Lutheran University (2011-14)
- Editor, *Deliberations: A Journal of First-Year Writing at Duke University* (2010-11)
- Steering Committee, Thompson Writing Program, Duke University (2008-11)
- Search Committee for Fellows, Thompson Writing Program, Duke University (2009-10)
- Associate Director of First-year Writing, Thompson Writing Program, Duke University (2008-11)
- Teaching & Learning Program coordinator, Duke Graduate Program in Religion (2004-05)
- Graduate Student Advisory Board, Duke Graduate Program in Religion (2003-05)

#### **SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION**

- External Promotion Review (2025)
- External Tenure & Promotion Review (2024)
- American Society of Church History  
Program Committee (2022-23); Membership Committee (2015-2018)
- American Academy of Religion  
Religion and Families Group Steering Committee (2017-2022)
- External Dissertation Examiner, Claremont Graduate University (2022)
- External Dissertation Examiner, University of Waterloo (2021)
- Blog Contributor, *Religion & American History* (2009-2015)