

# Sarah Elizabeth Shortall

Assistant Professor  
Department of History  
University of Notre Dame  
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## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

### University of Notre Dame (USA)

*Assistant Professor of History*

2017 – present

### University College, Oxford University (UK)

*Sanderson Junior Research Fellow*

2015 – 2017

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## EDUCATION

### Harvard University (USA)

*Doctor of Philosophy, History*

November 2015

- Dissertation: “Soldiers of God in a Secular World: The Politics of Catholic Theology, 1905-1962” **Awarded the 2015 Harold K. Gross Prize (best dissertation in History at Harvard University)**
- Advisor: Peter Gordon (Harvard University, History Department)
- Committee: Judith Surkis (Rutgers University, History Department), Francis Schüssler Fiorenza (Harvard University, Divinity School), Ann Blair (Harvard University, History Department)

### Harvard University (USA)

*Master of Arts, History*

2010

- General examination fields: Modern France (Judith Surkis), Modern European Intellectual History (Peter Gordon), Early Modern European Intellectual and Cultural History (Ann Blair), Modern Catholic Theology (Francis Schüssler Fiorenza)

### Queen’s University (Canada)

*Bachelor of Arts (Honours, with Distinction), History*

2007

- Honours Thesis: “Reactionary Avant-Gardism: The Catholic Counter-Revolution, Transgressive Catholicism, and the Roots of the French Postmodern”
  - Advisor: Harold Mah (Queen’s University, History Department)
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## PUBLICATIONS

### Books

*Soldiers of God in a Secular World: Catholic Theology and Twentieth-Century French Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021).

**Laurence Wylie Prize in French Cultural Studies**

**Giuseppe Alberigo Award (Junior category), European Academy of Religion**

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**College Theology Society Book Award**  
**First place, History category, Catholic Media Association Book Awards**

Co-edited with Daniel Steinmetz-Jenkins: *Christianity and Human Rights Reconsidered* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

**Peer-Reviewed Publications**

“Decolonizing Theology: EATWOT and the Rise of Third World Theologies,” in *Decolonization and Christianity*, ed. Elizabeth Foster and Udi Greenberg (forthcoming, University of Pennsylvania Press). Invited contribution.

“From the Three Bodies of Christ to the King’s Two Bodies: The Theological Origins of Secularization Theory,” *Modern Intellectual History* (published online, forthcoming in print).

“Theology and the Politics of Christian Human Rights,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 79, no. 3 (July 2018): 445-460.

“Psychedelic Drugs and the Problem of Experience,” *Past and Present* 222, suppl 9 (2014): 187-206.

**Essays and Reviews**

“God of the Continental Philosophers,” *Commonweal* (February 28, 2020).

“Religion and the Divine: A Global History of Twentieth-Century Catholicism through the Eucharist,” *A Cultural History of Ideas in the Modern Age*, ed. Stefanos Geroulanos (Forthcoming, Bloomsbury Academic). Invited contribution.

“When Catholicism Embraced Modernity,” *Boston Review* (August 10, 2018).

“Lost in Translation: Religion and the Writing of History,” *Modern Intellectual History* 13, no. 1 (April 2016): 273-286.

“Bergson, Henri (1859-1941),” *Routledge Encyclopedia of Modernism*, ed. Stephen Ross (Routledge, 2017).

**Manuscripts in Progress**

“‘The Heart of Matter’: Science, Decolonization, and the Rise of Planetary Catholicism” (Revising for submission to the *Journal of Modern History*).

**Academic Blog Posts**

At *The Immanent Frame* (Social Science Research Council):

- “Conclusion,” forum on “Experience between the secular and the divine,” October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- “Beyond a Christian genealogy of the secular,” forum on “History and theorizing the secular,” September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017.
- “The Vatican Spring?” forum on the election of Pope Francis, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013.
- “The Vatican and the ‘war on women religious,’” May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012.
- “Of Saints, separatism, and secularization (Part 2),” January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011.
- “Of Saints, separatism, and secularization (Part 1),” November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010.
- “Belonging without believing,” August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010.
- “Impure thoughts,” July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

- “Sex, scandal, and the secular,” June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

### Commentary

On the Québec Charter of Values:

- “There’s more than one path to female empowerment,” *The Montreal Gazette*, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013.
- “Importing France’s model of laïcité is a mistake for the PQ,” *The Montreal Gazette*, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013.

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## SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

“The Weapons of the Spirit: Catholic Theology and the Resistance to Nazism in France,” Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association (panel held virtually due to Covid-19), February 2022.

Invited participant, Templeton Religion Trust and Templeton World Charity Foundation consultation on Progress in Theology, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, March 2020 (conducted remotely due to COVID-19).

“The Nouvelle Théologie and the Battle for the Soul of Existentialism in Postwar France,” invited paper, workshop on Phenomenology and Religion, Harvard University, October 2019.

“‘The World in a Wafer’: The Eucharist and the Global History of Catholicism,” conference on Global History and Catholicism, April 2019.

“Soldiers of God in a Secular World: The Politics of Catholic Theology in Twentieth-Century France,” Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Study, February 2019.

“The Weapons of the Spirit: Catholic Theology and the Resistance to Nazism in France,” Annual Meeting of the Society for French Historical Studies, Pittsburgh, March 2018.

“A Spiritual Front: Catholic Theology and the Resistance to Nazism in France,” Modern Religious History Seminar, Oxford University, May 2017.

“Exile Catholicism: Anticlericalism, Antimodernism, and the Birth of the ‘Nouvelle Théologie,’” invited paper, workshop on New Perspectives on Political Pluralism and Religious Conflict, University of Edinburgh, May 2017.

“The Theological Foundations of the Spiritual Resistance to Nazism in France,” History of Political Thought Seminar, Oxford University, February 2017.

“From Royalism to the Mystical Body of Christ: The Interwar Revolution in French Catholic Political Theology,” Cambridge Political Thought Seminar, Cambridge University, November 2016.

“Marxism, Decolonization, and the Rise of a Planetary Catholic Consciousness,” conference on Religious and Secular Internationalisms, University College, Oxford University, May 2016.

- “The Weapons of the Spirit: Catholic Theology and the Resistance to Nazism in France,” History Department Research Seminar, Monash University, Australia, March 2016.
- “An Alternative History of Christian Human Rights,” invited presentation, Annual Symposium in the Humanities and the Social Sciences, Queen Mary University of London, January 2016.
- “The Heart of Matter: Marxism, Négritude, and the ‘Planetary’ Turn in Global Catholicism,” invited presentation, conference on Political Catholicism, The Remarque Institute, New York University, December 2015.
- “From the Three Bodies of Christ to the King’s Two Bodies: A Theological Genealogy of Secularization Discourse,” conference paper, conference on Theorizing Religion in Modern Europe, Harvard University, March 2014.
- “Secularizing Theologies,” invited panelist, conference on After Secularization, University of California Humanities Research Institute, University of California, Irvine, March 2013.
- “Separation Anxiety: Theological Anthropology and the Problem of Christian Democracy in France,” conference paper, conference on Transnational Christianity and the Problem of Democracy, Harvard University, February 2013.
- “Theology in Exile: Jersey and the Institutional Roots of the Nouvelle Théologie,” conference paper, Annual Meeting of the American Catholic Historical Association, held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, New Orleans, January 2013.
- “Henri de Lubac, Gaston Fessard, et les enjeux politiques de la théologie catholique française (1926-1950),” invited presentation, Atelier des Doctorants, Groupe Sociétés, Religions, Laïcités, École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris, April 2012.
- “Religion and Intellectual History,” invited panelist, The Remarque Institute Kandersteg Seminar, Kandersteg, Switzerland, March 2012.
- “Integrating Theology: Henri de Lubac and the Interwar Origins of the Critique of Neo-Scholasticism,” conference paper, Annual Meeting of the American Catholic Historical Association, held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, Chicago, January 2012.
- “An Atheism that is not Humanist Emerges in French Thought,” discussant, book discussion by Stefanos Geroulanos, Harvard University Colloquium for Intellectual History, Harvard University, March 2011.
- “Drugs and the Problem of Experience: The Case of the American Psychedelic Drug Culture, 1949-1969,” conference paper, conference on Intoxicants and Intoxication in Cultural and Historical Perspective, Cambridge University, July 2010.

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## AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Laurence Wylie Prize in French Cultural Studies	2020 - 2021
Giuseppe Alberigo Award (Junior category), European Academy of Religion	2021

College Theology Society Book Award	2021
First place, History category, Catholic Media Association Book Awards	2022
Harold K. Gross Dissertation Prize, Harvard University	2015
Sanderson Junior Research Fellowship, University College, Oxford	2015 - 2018
Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship	2014 - 2015
Charlotte W. Newcombe Dissertation Fellowship, Woodrow Wilson Foundation (Declined)	2014 - 2015
Krupp Completion Fellowship, Center for European Studies, Harvard University (Declined)	2014 - 2015
Dan David Prize Scholarship, Dan David Foundation (Israel)	2012 - 2013
History Department Prize Instructorship, Harvard University	2012 - 2013
Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Bok Center for Teaching, Harvard University	Spring 2011
Frederick Sheldon Traveling Research Fellowship, GSAS, Harvard University	2011 - 2012
Krupp Research Fellowship, Center for European Studies, Harvard University	2011 - 2012
Dissertation Proposal Development Fellowship, Social Science Research Council	Summer 2010
Graduate Society Summer Pre-dissertation Fellowship, GSAS, Harvard University	Summer 2010
Doctoral Fellowship, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada	2008 - 2012
Weatherhead Center for International Affairs Grant, Harvard University	2009 - 2010
Dean's Honour List, with Distinction (top 3% of graduating class), Queen's University	2006 - 2007
Arthur M. Keppel-Jones Essay Prize (best essay in History), Queen's University	2005 - 2006
Frank Carrel Merit Scholarship, Queen's University	2003 - 2007

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## TEACHING

### University of Notre Dame

- Catholicism and Empire Fall 2021
- Catholicism Confronts Modernity Spring 2022
- Spring 2020
- Spring 2019
- Modern European Thought from Rousseau to Foucault Spring 2022
- Spring 2020
- Spring 2019
- Perspectives on Religion and Politics (Graduate Seminar) Fall 2019
- Spring 2018
- Modern European Catholicism (Freshman Seminar) Spring 2018
- Fall 2017
- Modern France since the Revolution Fall 2021
- Fall 2019
- Fall 2018
- Fall 2017

### University College, Oxford University

- Disciplines of History:
  - Religion and History Hilary Term 2016
  - The Linguistic Turn Hilary Term 2016
- Trinity Term 2017

### Harvard University

- History 721: "Religion and Modernity in Transatlantic Perspective" Spring 2013  
*Undergraduate seminar I designed and taught as the recipient of a competitive instructorship.*

## ACADEMIC SERVICE

### *Referee*

- Harvard University Press
- *Modern Intellectual History*; *Social History of Medicine*; *Journal of the History of Ideas*; *Catholic Historical Review*; *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*; *RES - Anthropology and Aesthetics*
- Henry Luce Foundation

*Catholic Re-Visions, Advisory Committee* 2021– present

*Research Cluster Co-Chair (Nanovic Institute, University of Notre Dame)* 2020 – present

- Co-chair of the interdisciplinary research cluster on “Transnational France.”

### *Department Service (University of Notre Dame)*

- Advisory Committee to the Chair (elected) 2019 – 2020  
2021 – 2022
- Graduate Studies Committee 2021 – 2023
- External Review Committee 2018 – 2019
- Works in Progress Colloquium Organizing Committee 2017 – 2018

*Global History and Catholicism Conference, Planning Committee* April 2019

- Member of planning committee for a three-day conference on global history and Catholicism held at Notre Dame in April 2019.

*Religious and Secular Internationalisms, Conference Co-Organizer* May 2016

- Co-organized an international workshop on internationalism at Oxford University. Participants included both the leading and emerging scholars in the field.

*Undergraduate Admissions for History (University College, Oxford)* 2015 – 2017

- Conducted undergraduate interviews, graded admissions exams, and selected successful candidates for admission to the B.A. in History at University College.

*Theorizing Religion in Modern Europe, Conference Co-Organizer* 2013 – 2014

- Co-organized a major interdisciplinary conference on the role of religion in modern Europe at Harvard University in March 2014.

*Society for French Historical Studies Annual Conference, Organizing Committee* 2012 – 2013

- Member of seven-person committee charged with organizing a major three-day, 500-person academic conference jointly hosted at Harvard and MIT.

*Center for European Studies Graduate Workshop, Chair (Harvard University)* 2010 – 2011

- Revived, organized, and chaired a yearlong workshop for Ph.D. candidates to present and receive feedback on dissertation chapters and articles.

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## LANGUAGES

French (native-level proficiency in writing, reading, and speaking)

Italian (advanced reading; intermediate speaking)  
Spanish (advanced reading; intermediate speaking)  
German (intermediate reading; beginner speaking)  
Brazilian Portuguese (intermediate reading; beginner speaking)

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## **AFFILIATIONS**

Nanovic Institute for European Studies (University of Notre Dame)  
Kellogg Institute for International Studies (University of Notre Dame)  
Ansari Institute for Global Engagement with Religion (University of Notre Dame)  
Groupe Sociétés, Religions, Laïcités (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris)  
European Academy of Religion  
American Historical Association  
American Catholic Historical Association  
American Society of Church History  
College Theology Society

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## **REFERENCES**

### **Peter E. Gordon**

Amabel B. James Professor of History  
Harvard University  
Center for European Studies, Room 305  
27 Kirkland Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
pgordon@fas.harvard.edu

### **Judith Surkis**

Associate Professor, Department of History  
Rutgers University, New Brunswick  
101C Van Dyck Hall  
16 Seminary Place  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
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### **Jonathan Sheehan**

Professor of History  
Director, Berkeley Center for the Study of Religion  
University of California, Berkeley  
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### **Udi Greenberg**

Associate Professor, Department of History  
Dartmouth College  
306 Carson Hall  
Hanover, NH 03755  
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**Ann Blair**

Henry Charles Lea Professor of History  
Harvard University  
Center for Government and International Studies  
South Building, Room S437  
1730 Cambridge Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
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**Francis Schüssler Fiorenza**

Charles Chauncey Stillman Professor of Roman Catholic Theological Studies  
Harvard University, Divinity School  
Divinity Hall, Room 301  
14 Divinity Ave.  
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**David Armitage**

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