

**From:** Jaime Matthews  
**Sent:** 6/7/2021 8:29:22 AM  
**To:** "Marcus Harvey" <mharvey1@unca.edu>  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** bio and picture for program

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Dr. Harvey,  
Is this headshot and bio the correct one to use for the program on Thursday?



Dr. Marcus Harvey

Dr. Harvey joined the religious studies faculty at the University of North Carolina Asheville in 2013, where he teaches courses on African indigenous and diaspora religions, cultural theorist Zora Neale Hurston, black religion and literature, religion and the paranormal, and religion in American film.

Informed by fieldwork conducted in various areas of Ghana such as Accra, Kumasi, Larteh, Kwahu, Ananse Village, Koforidua, Asikuma, Mampong, and Cape Coast, as well as in the Nigerian cities of Lagos, Ilé-Ife, and Modakeke, Dr. Harvey's research specialization explores processes of knowledge construction among the Akan of southern Ghana and the Yorùbá of southwestern Nigeria, looking specifically at cosmologies and ritual practices in each context. He places this work in conversation with black religion and literature in the United States as a means of challenging the common assumption that black religious experience is best situated theoretically along the spectrum of Anglophone Christian hermeneutics in the Western Hemisphere.

Dr. Harvey's dissertation, entitled "'Life is War:' African Grammars of Knowing and the Interpretation of Black Religious Experience," examines Akan and Yorùbá structures of meaning in conjunction with Zora Neale Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, culminating in the identification of fresh cross-cultural trajectories for the interpretation of black spirituality. Emory University's Graduate Division of Religion awarded the dissertation the 2013 John Fenton Prize in the Comparative Study of Religions.

Some of Dr. Harvey's most recent scholarly publications include the following: "Gnostic and Epistemological Themes in African Traditional Religion," in *The Palgrave Handbook of African Traditional Religion* (Forthcoming); "From the Sacred Sound of the Conch Shell to the Cemetery Dance: Reimagining an Africana Festival Created in a Southern Appalachian City" (2017); "'Hard Skies' and Bottomless Questions: Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and Epistemological 'Opacity' in Black Religious Experience" (2016); "Deity from a Python, Earth from a Hen, Humankind from Mystery: Narrative and Knowledge in Yorùbá Cosmology" ("Divindade de uma Píton, Terra de uma Galinha, Humanidade do Mistério: Narrativa e Conhecimento na Cosmologia Iorubá") (2015); and "Medial Deities and Relational Meanings: Tracing Elements of an Akan Grammar of Knowing" (2015). In addition, he is currently developing a related book manuscript.

Dr. Harvey's intellectual work also engages the broader public sphere. He is co-creator and co-host with Dr. Darin Waters of [The Waters and Harvey Show](#), a radio show and podcast offering listeners informed conversations about the impact of history and culture on current affairs while also taking an in-depth look at the realities, obstacles, and possibilities of life in our democratically organized society. The show airs Fridays at 9:00am and Saturdays at 3:00pm on Blue Ridge Public Radio (WCQS, NPR for Western North Carolina), and is also accessible through on-demand listening at BPR.org as well as via podcast on the BPR and NPR mobile apps, Apple Podcasts, and Google Play.

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