

AARON K. KETCHELL

Department of Religious Studies
Smith Hall
University of Kansas
Lawrence, KS 66045

2145 Learnard Ave.
Lawrence, KS 66046
(785)727-8488
aketch@ku.edu

EDUCATION

Ph.D. (Honors), American Studies, University of Kansas, 2004
Master of Arts (Honors), Religious Studies, University of Kansas, 1997
Bachelor of Arts (Magna cum Laude), Political Science, Boston University, 1992

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION: American religious history and life, sociology of religion, social theory, cultural studies

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Lecturer, Department of Religious Studies, University of Kansas, 2007-present
Subjects taught: American religious history and life; history of Christianity; popular culture; world religions

Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 2006-2007

Subjects taught: Religion; social theory; cultural studies

Lecturer, Humanities & Western Civilization Program, American Studies Program, and Department of Religious Studies, University of Kansas, 2004-2006

Subjects taught: History of western civilization; American religious history and life; cultural studies

Graduate Instructor, Humanities & Western Civilization Program, American Studies Program, and Department of Religious Studies, University of Kansas, 1994-2002

Subjects taught: History of western civilization; American religious history; cultural studies

PUBLICATIONS

Books:

Holy Hills of the Ozarks: Religion and Tourism in Branson, Missouri (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007)

Journal Articles:

"These Hills Will Give You Great Treasure': Ozark Tourism and the Collapse of Sacred and Secular." *The Council of Societies for the Study of Religion Bulletin* 32, no. 3 (2003): 73-80. (reprint with substantial revisions)

"Contesting Tradition and Combating Intolerance: A History of Freethought in Kansas." *Great Plains Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (2000): 281-295.

"The Precious Moments Chapel: Suffering, Salvation and the World's Most Popular Collectible." *Journal of American Culture* 22, no. 3 (1999): 27-33.

Book Chapters:

"Hillbilly Heaven: Tricksters and Tourism in the Southern Missouri Ozarks." In *Dixie Emporium: Consumerism, Tourism, and Memory in the American South*, ed. Anthony J. Stanonis, 120-147. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2008.

- “‘I Would Much Rather See a Sermon than Hear One’: Experiencing Faith at Silver Dollar City.” In *The Business of Tourism: Place, Faith, and History*, eds. Philip Scranton and Jan Davidson, 109-136. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006.
- “‘These Hills Will Give You Great Treasure’: Ozark Tourism and the Collapse of Sacred and Secular.” In *The Invention of Religion: Rethinking Belief in Politics and History*, eds. Derek Peterson and Darren Walhof, 156-175. Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002.

Book Reviews:

- Religion and the Culture of Print in Modern America*. Charles Cohen and Paul S. Boyer, eds. *American Studies* 49:4 (2008).
- Brands of Faith: Marketing Religion in a Commercial Age*. Mara Einstein. *American Studies* 50:2 (2009)

Encyclopedia Entries:

- “Harold B. Wright’s *The Shepherd of the Hills*” and “Branson, Missouri.” In *The American Midwest: An Interpretive Encyclopedia*, eds. Andrew R. L. Cayton, Richard Sisson, and Christian Zacher, 113-114, 117. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007.
- “Spirituality/Religion,” “Young Men’s Christian Association,” and “Nation of Islam.” In *The Encyclopedia of Men and Masculinity: A U.S. Social and Cultural History*, ed. Bret E. Carroll, 389-393, 511-513, 332-334. New York: The Moschovitis Group, Inc., 2003.
- “Liberalism.” In *The Encyclopedia of Fundamentalism*, ed. Brenda E. Brasher, 278-282. New York and London: Routledge, 2001.

INVITED LECTURES

- “‘I Would Much Rather See a Sermon than Hear One’: Experiencing Faith at Silver Dollar City,” Public Lecture, Missouri State University, March 2006
- “Jesus is ‘the Greatest Star’: Contemporary Tourism and the Branson Sound,” Department of Religious Studies, Southwest Missouri State University, May 2005

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- “Religion and Popular Culture in the Ozarks” (respondent)—Midwest American Academy of Religion Conference, March, 2007, Dominican University, River Forest, IL
- “Las Vegas without the Sin: Values, Aesthetics, and Tourism in Branson, Missouri”—Far West Popular and American Culture Associations Conference, January, 2007, Las Vegas, NV
- “‘Near Heaven’: The Dynamics of Sacred Space in Branson, Missouri”—Interdisciplinary Scholars Initiative Conference, September 2005, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS
- “Theaters as Churches, Churches as Theaters: Religion and Recreation in Contemporary Branson, Missouri Tourism”—Missouri Conference on History, April, 2005, Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville, MO
- “‘I Would Much Rather See a Sermon than Hear One’: Consuming Faith at Silver Dollar City—“Consuming Experiences: The Business and Technologies of Tourism” conference, November, 2004, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE
- “A Case Study of United Methodist Concepts of Health and Well-being”—Religious Research Association National Conference, October, 2004, Kansas City, MO
- “‘Spinnin’ a Windy’: Ozark Tourism and the Hillbilly Trickster”—Popular and American Culture Associations National Conference, April, 2003, New Orleans, LA
- “Utopia, Tourism, and the Novels of Harold Bell Wright”—Rocky Mountain American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature Conference, April, 2002, Omaha, NE
- “‘These Hills Will Bring You Great Treasure’: Ozark Tourism and the Collapse of ‘Sacred’ and ‘Secular’”—American Studies Association National Conference, October, 2000, Detroit, MI

- "The Sacred, the Profane, and the Study of Popular Religion"—"After Secularism/Religion: Interpretation, History and Politics" conference, May, 2000, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN
- "The Functions of Ambiguity and the Ozark Hillbilly"—Mid-America American Studies Association Conference, April, 2000, University of Missouri-Kansas City, Kansas City, MO
- "The Precious Moments Chapel: Suffering, Salvation and the World's Most Popular Collectible"—Mid-America American Studies Association Conference, April, 1999, Creighton University, Omaha, NE
- "God, Amusement, and Profit: Religion and Popular Culture in the Ozarks"—American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature National Conference, November, 1998, Orlando, FL
- "Hope for the Hopeless: The Healing Powers of 'Sweet Daddy' Grace"—Rocky Mountain Region American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature Conference, April, 1996, Iliff Theological Seminary, Denver, CO

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Academic:

- Clinton H. Gates Faculty Enrichment Grant, The Barstow School, 2010
- Yetman Dissertation Prize in American Studies, University of Kansas, 2005
- Louisville Institute Dissertation Fellowship, 2003-2004
- American Culture Association Rollins-Shoenecke Travel Grant, 2003
- State Historical Society of Missouri Richard S. Brownlee Research Award, 2002
- University of Kansas Travel Grant, 1999, 2000
- University of Kansas Lewis Applied Christianity Award, 1996
- Kansas School of Religion Scholarship, 1994-1995

Teaching:

- University of Kansas Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award (*university-wide*), 1998
- Contributions to Undergraduate Education Award, University of Kansas Honors Program, 1998

SERVICE

College and Professional:

- Manuscript Reviewer, *City & Society*, 2010-present
- Manuscript Reviewer, *American Studies*, 2004-present
- Manuscript Reviewer, *Great Plains Quarterly*, 2002-present
- Humanities/Western Civilization Program Committee, University of Kansas, 2004-2006
- Humanities/Western Civilization Hiring Committee, University of Kansas, 2000
- Humanities/Western Civilization Orientation Leader, University of Kansas, 1998
- American Studies Steering Committee, University of Kansas, 1997-1998

Community:

- Outdoor Education and Ropes Course Instructor, Wildwood Outdoor Education Center, LaCygne, KS, 1993-2000