

## Curriculum Vitae

Renee K. Harrison

Professor of African American and US Religious History

Howard University

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Renee K. Harrison, Professor of African American and US Religious History at Howard University, earned her Ph.D. from Emory University's Department of Religion with an interdisciplinary focus on history, religion, philosophy, Black feminist/womanist thought, and African American studies. Her latest publication, *Black Hands, White House: Slave Labor and the Making of America*, documents and appraises the roles enslaved women, men, and children played in building the US, namely the nation's capital, Washington, DC. She is presently working on a book project about Native Americans' contributions, tentatively titled *Smudging Our Way Through Broken Treaties: Native American Spirituality and American Genocide*. Her other works include *Enslaved Women and the Art of Resistance in Antebellum America* and *Engaged Teaching in Theology and Religion*, co-authored with Dr. Jennie Knight, University of Virginia. A native of Los Angeles, CA, Harrison is a former 11-year Los Angeles Police Officer and a former director of A Leap of Faith Productions, a non-profit community theatre company in Los Angeles. She is also an artist, poet, and playwright who enjoys teaching and leading healing workshops and rituals.

<b><u>EDUCATION:</u></b>	<b>Doctor of Philosophy</b> , Department of Religion, interdisciplinary studies in History, Religion, Philosophy, Feminist/Womanist Thought, and African American Studies 2000 - 2006                      Emory University                      Atlanta, GA
	<b>Master of Divinity &amp; Master of Religious Education Degrees with Honors</b> 1996 - 2000                      Interdenominational Theological Center                      Atlanta, GA
	<b>Bachelor of Arts, Journalism</b> , with a minor in African American Studies 1979 - 1984                      California State University Northridge                      Northridge, CA
<b><u>TEACHING &amp; RESEARCH:</u></b>	<b>Promoted/Professor, African American and US Religious History</b> 2025                      Howard University/School of Divinity                      Washington, DC
	<b>Associate Professor, African American and US Religious History</b> 2016 - 2025                      Howard University/School of Divinity
	<b>Tenured/Associate Professor, African American and US Religious History</b> 2016                      Howard University/School of Divinity                      Washington, DC
	<b>Assistant Professor, American and US Religious History</b> 2010 - 2016                      Howard University/School of Divinity                      Washington, DC
	<b>Assistant Professor, African American Religious Practices, Culture, and History</b> 2008 - 2010                      Payne Theological Seminary                      Wilberforce, OH
	<b>Assistant Professor, Senior Seminar Thesis Director</b> 2008 - 2010                      Payne Theological Seminary                      Wilberforce, OH

**Interim Director, Program of Black Church Studies & Visiting Assistant  
Professor of African American Religious Practices, Culture, and History**  
2007- 2008                      Emory University                      Atlanta, GA

**Fellow, Post-Doctoral Teaching & Research Fellowship**  
2006 - 2007                      Emory University                      Atlanta, GA

**RELATED  
HU COURSES  
TAUGHT:**

**African American Religious History** (survey of the Black Sacred Diasporic traditions in the United States)  
**History of the Black Church** (with a focus on the transatlantic slave trade and pre-colonial West African traditions and religions “transplanted” to the American colonies)  
**History, Religion, the Arts, and Social Change**  
**Global Black Feminists and Womanists, and Healing Rituals** (with a focus on Ifa, Dogon, Vodun, Santeria, Obeah, Kumina, Black Folk Tradition, Islam, Native American, Catholic, and Buddhist healing practices)  
**Sexuality and the Black Church**  
**Introductory Writing Seminar in Theology and Religion**  
**History, Religion, and the Slave Narratives**

**FACULTY  
COMMITTEES  
(within 8 years):**

**Chair, HUSD Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure**  
2025

**Chair, HUSD Curriculum Committee**  
2024 - Present

**Committee Member, HU Program Innovation Review Committee (PIRC)**  
Service with faculty members across the university tasked with reviewing new university-wide letters of intent and formal proposals for new academic programs.  
Provost Harvey, Director  
2022 - 2025, Howard University

**Committee Member, HUSD Executive Committee**  
2022 – Present

**Committee Member, HUSD Master of Arts (Religious Studies) Degree Program**  
2022 - Present

**Committee Member, HUSD Decanal Review Subcommittee**  
2018 – Present

**Committee Member, HUSD Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure**  
2018 – Present

**Committee Member, HUSD Honors and Awards Committee**  
2018 – Present (Committee Chair, 2014 – 2018)

**Committee Member, Lectures and Convocation**

2017 - 2019

**Committee Member, HUSD Master of Divinity Degree Program**

2016 - 2022

**Committee Member, Online Learning & Distance Education**

2016 - 2022

**Committee Member, HUSD PhD Program**

2016 - 2017

**Committee Member, University Search Committee**

Howard University Decanal Search Advisory Committee

President Wayne Frederick, Convener/Dr. Gina S. Brown, Chair

2016 - 2017

**HUSD Alternate Member, Faculty Senate**

Howard University

2014 – 2018

**PhD/EdD/MA**  
**COMMITTEES**  
**(within 8 years):**

**PhD Committee Member**, History Department, Howard University

“Attending the Crossing: The Spirituality of African American Midwives 1877-1955”

Kendra Woodfolk, student (Graduated May 2025)

Dr. Nikki Taylor, History Dept Chair

**PhD Committee Member**, History Department, Howard University

“Divided They Fall: Slavery, Separation, and Imperial Power Struggle in the Nineteenth Century”

Kerri Alexander, student (Graduated May 2025)

Dr. Nikki Taylor, Committee Chair

**EdD Committee Member, Education**

“A Narrative Examination of the Impacts of Virginia’s African American History and Studies Courses on African American Students”

Sean L. Miller, student (Graduated May 2025)

Dr. Gregory Hutchings, Committee Chair

**PhD Committee Member**, History Department, Howard University

Project focus: Reparations and the Black Manifesto

Ebonee Davis, student (ABD)

Dr. Ana-Lucia Araujo

**PhD Committee Member**, History Department, Howard University

“The Invisible Hands of War: A Historical Examination of the Origins of the Liberian Civil Conflicts from 1980-2003”

Elijah Zehyoue, student (Graduated May 2023)

Dr. Mohammed Camara, Committee Chair

**PhD Committee Member**, History Department, Howard University,  
A Third Wave of Revolution  
Aaron Treadwell, student (Graduated 2017)  
Dr. Edna Medford, Committee Chair

**PhD Committee Member**, School of Mass Communications and Media Studies  
Program, Howard University  
An Examination of Kendrick Lamar’s Lyrical Expressions of Black Masculinity,  
Christianity, and Black Liberation Theology  
Davia Crutchfield, student (Graduated 2017)  
Dr. Tia C. M. Tyree, Committee Chair

**MA Religious Studies Thesis Advisor**, “The Water Will Bring Us Home: The  
Formation of Community in 20<sup>th</sup> Century African American Women’s Literature as a  
Model for Healing,” Howard University School of Divinity  
Janan Graham-Russell, student (Graduated 2016)

**MA Religious Studies Thesis Advisor**, “Historical Syncopations: Coded Messages,  
Negro Spirituals, and Catholicism,” Catholic University/Washington Theological  
Union Seminary  
Stephen Sohe, student (Graduated 2015)

**MA Religious Studies Thesis Advisor**, “The Shaman Inside: An Exploration of  
the Role of Shamanism in Closing the Gender Gap,” Howard University School of  
Divinity LaToya Banks, student (Graduated 2015)

**NOTEWORTHY  
PUBLICATIONS:**  
(within 8 years):

*Smudging Our Way Out of Broken Treaties: Native American Spirituality and  
American Genocide* (forthcoming, 2027)

**“But Some of Us Are Brave: Honoring The Soul Work and Mentorship Of  
Randall C. Bailey”**

*Have Not Our Weary Feet: Essays in Honor of Randall C. Bailey*, Ericka Dunbar, Kimberly  
Russaw, Shively Smith, Cheryl Kirk-Duggan, and et. al. (forthcoming, 2025)

*Stones from the Jordan, The Dynamism of FTE From 1954 - 2024*  
(Forum for Theological Exploration, 2024)

*Black Hands, White House: Slave Labor and the Making of America*  
(Fortress Press, November 2021)

**“The D.C. Compensation Act as Precedent for Reparations”**

*Reparations and the Theological Disciplines*, Michael Barram, Drew G.I. Hart, et al. eds.,  
(Lexington Press, 2023)

**“Among the Cloud of Witnesses: Rosemary Radford Ruether”**

Lisa Isherwood, Megan Clay, eds  
(Journal of Feminist Theology, 2023)

**“Think Your Vote Doesn’t Count? Then Why Are People Trying to Suppress It?”** Washington Post, November 7, 2016

*Engaged Teaching in Theology and Religion*

(co-authored with Dr. Jennie S. Knight, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015)

**Enslaved Women in America: An Encyclopedia** Daina Berry and Deleso Alford Washington, eds., selected entries, (Greenwood Press, 2012)

*Enslaved Women and the Art of Resistance in Antebellum America*

(Palgrave Macmillan, 2009)

**NOTEWORTHY  
PUBLIC TALKS/  
PARTNERSHIPS**  
(within 8 years):

**Enslaved Laborers’ Stained Glass Memorial Dedication Service**

Keynote Speaker, First Congregational Church, Washington DC

2025, Sunday, September 14 @ 10:00

**Audio Guide/Voice Over, “MLK at Howard”**

Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, Washington DC

Ongoing Exhibit, 2022 – Present

**Consultant, *Sarah’s Oil*, film (Provided Feedback on Film for Eden Digital Group, Los Angeles, CA)**

2025, Amazon, MGM Studios, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Private Screening

**Consultant, *Nutopia*, a London-based television production company**

2025, London, England (virtual)

**Guest Speaker and Resident Historian,**

**“Building Up A New World: Where Do We Go From Here?”**

Join the Movement Toward Racial Justice

2025, Friday, January 10 @ 1:00 PM (recording)

**Workshop Leader/Facilitator, Black History Month Retreat**

“Songs of Freedom”

Bon Secours Retreat Center, Marriottsville, MD

2025, Saturday, February 15, @ 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

**Workshop Leader/Facilitator, Juneteenth Day Retreat**

Bon Secours Retreat Center, Marriottsville, MD

2024, Saturday, June 22, @ 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

**Podcast Interviewee, Black Hands, White House**

Beyond the Gatekeepers, Podcast/Virtual Event

Hosts Bishop Yvette Flunder and Bishop Vanessa Brown

2024, Wednesday, May 8, @ 8:00 PM

**Speaker, Celebrating Seventy Years, FTE’s 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE), Virtual Event

2024, Friday, April 29, @ 12:30 PM

**Interview, Monuments, and Enslaved Labor**

ABC NEWS Interview  
2024, Friday, March 1, @ 11:30 AM

**Speaker, Black History, Black Hands**  
Nurturing Justice, Black History Program  
2024, Friday, February 29, @ 7:00 PM

**Keynote Speaker, Dogon History & Cosmology: Benjamin Banneker as Seer**  
St Paul Community Baptist Church, Brooklyn, NY  
2024, Friday, January 12, @ 6:00 PM

**Workshop Leader, Canvas Training and Online Support for HUSD Faculty**  
Conducted several online workshops throughout the academic year  
Howard University School of Divinity  
2023-2024

**Keynote Speaker, “This Nation Under God? The Gettysburg Address 160th Years Later,”**  
Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. Gettysburg, PA  
2023, Saturday, Nov 4, @ 10:00 AM

**Panelist/Ritualist, Monuments of the FUTURE. “Our Role in Reshaping Public Monuments in Public Spaces,”** with artist and community facilitator Jessica Valoris  
GOETHE Institut DC 3-day gathering discussing monuments for the Future.  
2023, Thursday, Nov 2, @ 6:00 PM

**Keynote Speaker, “A Memorial to Enslaved Laborers in the District of Columbia,”** Special Service Honoring Black people who worked as enslaved laborers on the land on which the church now sits.  
First Congregational United Church of Christ, Washington, DC  
2023, Sunday, Oct 29 @ 10:30 AM

**Guest Speaker and Resident Historian, “Reflections on *How to Be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram Kendi”**  
Join the Movement Toward Racial Justice  
2023, Wednesday, Oct 25, @3:00 PM & @ 7:00 PM, virtual

**Speaker, Season 1; Episode 9, “Make it Make Sense for Teens – The Black Religious & Spiritual Experience in Christianity,”**  
BOON Podcast, The Black Next Gen Network with hosts Candice Austin Wynn and Robert Purvey, theBOONCommunity.com, virtual  
2023, Friday, October 23, @11:00 AM

**Roundtable Participant, “Artivism: The Political Mandate of Art”**  
GOETHE Center Roundtable Discussion with Nikita Dhawan, Maria do Mar Castro Varela, and DC artists  
2023, Oct 11, GOETHE Center, Washington, DC

**Keynote Speaker, Virtual Juneteenth Celebration.**

The Professionals National Society  
US Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC  
2023, June 21, 2:00 pm

**Speaker, Symposium: Rethink and Reload Monuments in 21st Century Democracies Between Iconoclasm and Revival. Sponsored by the Goethe-Institut, DC**

Center for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany  
2023, June 28 – July 1

**Moderator/Panelist, Juneteenth Commemoration Webinar. UCC, Join the Movement Toward Racial Justice**

2023, June 15, 3:30 pm

**Consultant, Join the Movement Toward Racial Justice Campaign**

Rev Velda Love, United Church of Christ National and International Organization  
2022, June - present

**Working-Group Participant Queering Pedagogy**

Round table conversation centered on queering pedagogy and self-care  
2023, May 24 -26, Wabash Center, Chicago, IL

**“Historical Context: Journeying Toward Racial Justice with Ibram X. Kendi.”**

Video Lecture Series  
Join the Movement Toward Racial Justice, UCC All Church Read—*How to Be An Anti-Racist*--in Preparation for General Synod  
April 2023 – May 2023

**Panelist, C-Span Book TV**

**Southern Festival of Books**

*Black Hands, White House: Slave Labor and the Making of America*  
Nashville, TN  
2022, October 15, 10:00 am – 11:00 am

**Lecturer, “Legitimizing Black and Brown Trauma: Land, Labor, and Death”**

Washington State Office of the Attorney General, Annual Continuing Legal Education on Diversity, Olympia, WA  
2022, September 14, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

**Moderator, “Revealing Hidden Histories”**

UCC Church National, Inaugural Juneteenth Event, New York, NY 2022, June 17, 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

**Inaugural Keynote Speaker, “What to the Descendants of the Formerly Enslaved is Juneteenth?”: Revisiting Stolen Labor, Economic Injustice and Racialized Violence**

Department of the Treasury, Inaugural Juneteenth Event, Washington, DC  
2022, June 16, 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

**Podcast Interviewee, The Law in Black and White, Juneteenth Book Talk**

Legal Innovators by Greenblatt and Parker, Inc.

2022, June 14, 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

**Speaker, Faculty Major Publication Lecture**

Howard University, School of Divinity

2022, Feb 7, 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

**Book Lectures, Signings, and Events (Various Venues)**

*Black Hands, White House: Slave Labor and the Making of America*

Locations Throughout the US

2021, Nov – present

**Tour Guide, DC Enslaved Labor Walking Tours**

DC Iconic Buildings

2022 - Summer

**Consultant, *Colin in Black and White*, film (Provided Feedback on Film for Eden Digital Group, Los Angeles, CA)**

2021, Netflix Private Screening

**Consultant, *Respect*, film (Provided Feedback on Film for Eden Digital Group, Los Angeles, CA)**

2021, Netflix Private Screening

**Lecturer, Spirituality & Social Justice Activism in African Amer Traditions**

2021, June 3, Meadville Lombard Theological School, Chicago, IL

**Speaker, “Invisible Wounds: The Church & Slavery in the Nation’s Capital”**

2020, December 6 and 13, Georgetown Presbyterian Church, Washington, DC

**Panelist, Religion, Race, and Democracy Lab**

2020, October 24, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

**“From Rods to Snakes: Black Magic in the Era of Trump”**

2020, February 9, Calvary Baptist Church, Washington, DC

**“Your Name is Written: The Historical Case for Excellence”**

2019, September 11, School of Divinity Pinning Ceremony, Washington, DC

**Consultant, *Harriet*, film (Provided Feedback on Film for Eden Digital Group, Los Angeles, CA)**

2019, DC Press Screening and Walking Tour, Washington, DC

**Consultant, *Waves*, film (Provided Feedback on Film for Eden Digital Group, Los Angeles, CA)**

2019, November 10, Screening, African American History Museum, Washington, DC

**Research Leave in Europe for Black Hands Publication(Fall 2018 – Spring 2019)**



Visited Capital cities of key European countries involved in the Transatlantic Slave Trade – Portugal, Spain, Great Britain, France, The Netherlands, and Denmark. Also, conducted research in Berlin, Germany, at the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe*.

**Planner/Convener, HUSD Open Mic Nights**

Howard University School of Divinity  
Fall 2019

**Judge, HU Research Day**

2017, April 13, Howard University, Blackburn Center, Washington, DC

**Speaker, Operation Understanding DC: Leading Change, Strengthening Identity, Exploring History. Working Towards Eradicating Racism, Anti-Semitism, and All Forms of Discrimination**

2017, March 12, Temple Micah, Washington, DC

**Speaker, “DMV Interfaith Youth Summit on Racial Justice”**

2016, April 30, Youth Summit, St. John’s Baptist Church, Columbia, MD

**Co-Facilitator, “Engaged Teaching Workshop” with Jennie Knight UVA**

2016, April 29, WTC Consortium Faculty, Howard University, Washington, DC

**Faculty Exemplar, HU Board Trustee Dinner**

2016, April 14, Smithsonian National Portrait Museum, Washington, DC

**Judge, HU Research Day**

2016, April 14, Howard University, Blackburn Center, Washington, DC

**Lecturer, “Black Hands: Hidden Histories and Cultural Responsibility”**

**Nannie Helen Burroughs Annual Lecture**

2016, March 7, Howard University, School of Divinity, Washington, DC

**Speaker, Women’s Healing Workshop**

2016, March 5, Covenant Baptist Church, Washington, DC

**Speaker, The School for Ethics and Global Leadership**

2016, March 2, The School for Ethics and Global Leadership, Washington, DC

**Planner/Convener, Faculty-Student Colloquium Series**

Convened scholars, community practitioners, and student respondents across the university and DMV area

Howard University School of Divinity

2015 - 2017

**Panelist, “History, Rebellion and Reconciliation: Communities Mobilized for Social Change”**

Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

2015, April 25, Smithsonian National Museum of American Indian, Washington, DC

**Plenary Speaker, “Hidden Histories: Honoring Those Who Helped in Building A Just and Loving Community”**

Lecture presented in observance of its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
2015, March 11, First Congregational Church (FCC), Washington, DC

**Keynote Speaker, “Ancestral Ingenuity: Freedom in the Improv”**

Lecture presented, Women’s History Month  
2015, March 11, Community Center, Guilford College, NC

**INDUCTIONS:**

Morehouse College Collegium of Scholars  
2022, Oct 13, King Chapel, Morehouse College, Atlanta, GA

**CREATIVE**

**WORKS:**

(within 8 years):

*A Requiem for Black Bodies* – Theatre Production

Producer, Director, Creator (2020 - 2024)

Various locations, Washington, DC

*God’s Trombones Revisited* - Theatre Production

Producer, Director, Adapter (2013 - 2015)

Various locations, Washington, DC

**REFERENCES:**

Available upon request