

Curriculum Vitae
Benjamin J. Chicka

Education

Claremont Graduate University School of Religion, Claremont, CA.

Doctor of Philosophy in Religion. December 2017. *Full merit scholarship.* Dissertation: “God the Created: Philosophy, Science, and Pragmatic Constructive Realism.”

Boston University School of Theology, Boston, MA.

Master of Theological Studies. May 2008. *Full merit scholarship with living stipend. Magna Cum Laude.* Thesis: “The Process of Pragmatic Inquiry for Science and Theology.”

Texas Tech University Honors College, Lubbock, TX.

Bachelor of Arts in Religious History. Minor in Communication Studies. December 2005. *Partial merit scholarship. Magna Cum Laude.* Thesis: “Journeying from Hell to Heaven in Early Modern Europe.”

Experience

Associate Lecturer of Philosophy and Religion

Spring 2018

Curry College. Milton, MA.

Taught “Ethics” in the Department of the Humanities (Philosophy and Religion), primarily to Sophomore and Junior undergraduate students seeking to fulfill their general education requirements.

Communications Director and Podcast Host/Producer

Fall 2015 - Spring 2018

First Baptist Church. Newton, MA.

Worked with the Senior Minister to develop consistent messaging reflective of the church’s values. Maintained regular social media presence. Designed physical and digital promotional material using Microsoft Office and Adobe Creative Suite programs. Developed a regular online blog to which members of the congregation could contribute. Created, hosted, and produced the podcast Wide Eyed Christianity that featured local guests to further the church’s mission to strengthen the connection to its community.

Co-founder and Podcast Host/Producer

Fall 2015 –

TheNerd.com, the TheoNerd Podcast.

With Dr. Andrew Tripp co-founded www.TheoNerd.com, a website dedicated to academic philosophy and theology, and how they intersect with topics from the worlds of comics, superheroes, and video games. Host and produce the TheoNerd Podcast, a show that is primarily in interview format, asking professors to reflect on pop-culture and pop-culture creators to reflect upon the academic relevance of their art.

Visiting Professor of Systematic Philosophy

Spring 2011

Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth: Pontifical Institute of Philosophy and Religion. Pune, India.

Taught “The Scientific Study of Religion” to seminary students, with emphasis on comparative studies of religions in biological and neuroscientific research.

Subject Matter Expert

Fall 2010 – Spring 2011

Wadsworth | Cengage Learning.

Reviewed, edited, and revised publications in philosophy and ethics on a contractual basis through the Assistant Editor of Philosophy and Religion.

Research Assistant

Spring 2009 – Fall 2010

The Center for Neuroeconomic Studies. Claremont Graduate University. Claremont, CA.

Project lead in the creation of a matrix evaluating scientific research on the biological bases of human character strengths and virtues. Co-researcher on an experiment investigating neurotransmitters involved in reported states of transcendence in religious and group rituals.

Researcher

Fall 2008 – Spring 2010

Transforming Theology: Rekindling Theological Reflection. Claremont School of Theology. Claremont, CA.

Co-participant with progressive theologians, church leaders, and administrators from across the United States in a three-year series of conferences exploring resources in the Christian tradition for aiding society in times of crisis. Performed under a Ford Foundation grant led by Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki, Jeanyne Slettom, and Philip Clayton.

Research Associate

Summer 2007 & 2008

The Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations. Harvard University. Cambridge, MA.

Researched, compiled, and edited the center's annual "Guide to Nonprofit Courses at Harvard University and Beyond." Aided in transitioning from a print to online format.

Researcher

Fall 2007 – Spring 2008

Institute for Astrophysical Research. Boston University. Boston, MA.

Analyzed data from telescopes used by the Blazer Group at Boston University for use in research on black holes centered on the luminosity of quasars.

Publications

Edited Volumes

The Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations Guide to Nonprofit Courses: Harvard University and Beyond. Academic Year 2008-2009. Editor with oversight from Laura Ax. 2008, President and the Fellows of Harvard University. Academic Year 2009-2010. Editor with oversight from Laura Ax. 2009, President and the Fellows of Harvard University.

Articles in Refereed Journals

"Indeterminacy, Ultimacy, and the World: the Self-Creation of Religious Pluralism through Community and Creation." *Sophia* Vol. 49, no. 1 (April 2010): 49-63.

Ritaban Chatterjee, Alan P. Marscher, Svetlana G. Jorstad... Benjamin Chicka, et al. "Disk-Jet Connection in the Radio Galaxy 3C 120." *The Astrophysical Journal* 704 (2009): 1689-1703.

Kevin Marshall, Wesley T. Ryle, H. Richard Miller, Alan P. Marscher, Svetlana G. Jorstad, Benjamin Chicka, and Ian M. McHardy. "Multi-wavelength Variability of the Broad Line Radio Galaxy 3C 120." *The Astrophysical Journal* 696 (2009): 601-607.

Book Reviews

Wallace, B. Alan. *Hidden Dimensions: The Unification of Physics and Consciousness*. Reviewed in *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 32 (2012): 161-164.

Bricklin, Jonathan, ed. *Sciousness*; Jiang, Tao. *Contexts and Dialogue: Yogācāra Buddhism and Modern Psychology on the Subliminal Mind*. Reviewed in *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 30 (2010): 201-205.

Haught, John F. *Making Sense of Evolution: Darwin, God, and the Drama of Life*. Reviewed for the online journal *Patheos* (June 2010).

Spong, John Shelby. *Eternal Life: A New Vision: Beyond Religion, Beyond Theism, Beyond Heaven and Hell*. Reviewed for the online journal *Patheos* (February 2010).

Connolly, William E. *Pluralism*. Reviewed in *The Pluralist* Vol. 4, No. 2 (Summer 2009): 125- 127.

Other Publications

"Immigrants are Texas Tech." Op-Ed. *Lubbock Avalanche Journal*. July 8th, 2018.

"If Religion is Dying, Claremont is a Skilled Physician." *Newsletter of the School of Religion, Claremont Graduate University* (Fall 2010): 10-11.

"A Transforming Society Transforms Theology." A review of the Transforming Theology Conference within the series Rekindling Theological Reflection: Transformative Thought for Progressive Action. Reviewed in *Process Perspectives* Vol. 32, no. 1 (Spring 2009): 8-9.

Weekly column on religion and science for the online journal *Patheos*. Spring 2010 – Fall 2012.

Presentations

"How to be Inclusive." Arisia 2018: New England's Largest, Most Diverse Sci-Fi & Fantasy Convention. Boston, MA. January 14th, 2018.

"Dealing with Day-to-Day Isms in Game Culture." Arisia 2018: New England's Largest, Most Diverse Sci-Fi & Fantasy Convention. Boston, MA. January 14th, 2018.

"I Hear You: Moving Beyond Platitudes." Arisia 2018: New England's Largest, Most Diverse Sci-Fi & Fantasy Convention. Boston, MA. January 12th, 2018.

"Nontraditional Video Games and the Other." Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. Video Gaming and Religion Seminar. November 18th, 2017.
Presider. "The Influence of Paul Tillich on Robert Neville's Philosophical Theology." Annual Meeting of the North American Paul Tillich Society. November 17th, 2017.

“Lévinas, Video Games, and the Other.” Women in Games Boston. Boston, MA. July 10th, 2017.

“‘Don’t Feed the Trolls’ Doesn’t Work.” Arisia 2017: New England’s Largest, Most Diverse Sci-Fi & Fantasy Convention. Boston, MA. January 14th, 2017.

“Technological Advances and Martin Luther’s Reformation.” Game Jam: 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. MIT Game Lab in Collaboration with the Goethe Insitut Boston. Cambridge, MA. September 11th, 2016.

“Oh My God! Getting Religion Right and Wrong in Games.” Boston GameLoop 2016. Boston, MA. August 27th, 2016.

“Neuroscience, Online Harassment, and Videogames.” Boston GameLoop 2015. August 15th, 2015.

“The Science of Online Bullying: A Lesson in Diversity.” PAX East. Boston, MA. March 8th, 2015.

“Pragmatic Constructive Realism: Peirce on Theology and Science.” The 2014 Charles S. Peirce International Centennial Congress. University of Massachusetts Lowell. July 18th, 2014.

Respondent. “Falsifiability and Traction in Theories of Divine Action” by Kile Jones and “Al-Ghazali’s Account of Causality and Its Implications to Contemporary Science and Religion Discussion” by Ozgur Koca. Live Options in the Study of Religion. Religion and Science session. Claremont Graduate University. March 25th, 2011.

Panelist. “The Contributions of Western Philosophy to the World Cultures and the Future of Philosophy.” De Smet-de Marneffe Memorial Annual Lectures, Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth: Pontifical Institute of Philosophy and Religion. Pune, India. January 21st, 2011.

Respondent. “Putting God Under the Microscope: Can There Be a Science of Spirituality?” by Eric Kyle and “Why We Fight: Evolutionary Reconceptualizations of Pierre Bourdieu’s Political Economy of Symbolic Power” by Kevin McGinnis. Live Options in the Study of Religion. Religion and Science session. Claremont Graduate University. March 25th, 2010.

“Pragmatic Constructive Realism: Religious Commitment amid Change.” Western Regional American Academy of Religion. Pragmatism, Truth, and Reading Religion in the 21st Century session. Arizona State University. March 14th, 2010.

Panelist. “Discussion of *Buddhist-Christian Dialogue in an Age of Science* by Paul O. Ingram.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. Society of Buddhist-Christian Studies session. Montréal, QC. November 7th, 2009.

“The Indeterminate Ground of Impermanent Symbols: A Constructive Comparison of Buddhist and Christian Mysticism.” Western Regional American Academy of Religion. Buddhist Studies Mahayana session. Santa Clara University. March 23rd, 2009.

Courses Taught

“Ethics.” Spring 2018. Curry College. This introductory course for undergraduates introduces the standard normative theories of philosophical ethics.

“The Scientific Study of Religion.” Spring 2011. Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth: Pontifical Institute of Philosophy and Religion. This advanced seminar for seminary students explored new explanations of religious beliefs being offered by evolutionary biologists, neuroscientists, and biological psychologists. Emphasis was placed on studies of Christians and Buddhists and the debate as to whether religious beliefs are evolutionary adaptations or byproducts.

Academic Awards

Luncinda Beebe Bidwell Fellowship awarded by Boston University for the academic year 2010 – 2011.

Frank D. and Bertha Howard Fellowship awarded by Boston University for the academic year 2009 – 2010.

David H. Tribou Fellowship awarded by Boston University for the academic year 2008 – 2009.

Certificate in Science and Religion awarded by the Boston Theological Institute. May 2008.

Involvement

Board of Directors, North American Paul Tillich Society. 2018 – 2020.

Board of Directors, International Faith and Science Exchange (InterFASE). Spring 2012 – Spring 2013.

Member, American Academy of Religion. 2008 –

President, Society for Philosophy and Religion at Claremont (SPARC). May 2009 – May 2010.

Chair and founder, annual student conference “Live Options in the Study of Religion” sponsored by the Society for Philosophy and Religion at Claremont.

Progressive Christians Uniting, Member of sub-group led by Dr. John B. Cobb, Jr. and Dr. Ward M. McAfee which published a textbook on religious diversity, *The Dialogue Comes of Age: Christian Encounters with Other Traditions* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010). January 2009 – May 2010.

Boston University Alpha Theta Xi chapter of Theta Alpha Kappa, national academic honor society in religious studies and theology.

Sacred Worth, Boston University School of Theology group supporting LGBTQ students. September 2006 – May 2008.

Languages: French and German for scholarly use