

THEOPHUS "THEE" SMITH

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Emory University	Assoc. Professor, Dept. of Religion, 1987-current; tenured 1994
Harvard Divinity School	Visiting Professor, African American Studies Spring 1990, Fall 1993
Lexington Theological Seminary	Visiting Professor, Spring 1987 (Kentucky)
Kentucky State University	Asst. Professor, Whitney Young College, 1983-1987
Pacific School of Religion	Adjunct Instructor, 1981-1982 (Berkeley)

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Graduate Theological Union, 1987
Philosophical & Systematic Theology, and Philosophy of Religion
(Diss.) The Biblical Shape of Black Experience: An Essay in Philosophical Theology

M.T.S. Master of Theological Studies; Virginia Theological Seminary, 1977
Concentration: Biblical Languages and Literature

B.A. St. John's College, Annapolis, 1975
Humanities and Sciences; Western classics / "great books" curriculum

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

Book Award for Excellence, American Academy of Religion, for "Conjuring Culture," 1994*
www.aarweb.org/Programs/Awards/Book_Awards/default.asp

Senior Research Fellow, Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard Univ., Fall 1993
www.hds.harvard.edu/cswr/people/past/S-Z.html

Fellow, W.E.B. DuBois Institute for Afro-American Research, Harvard Univ., Summer 1990
<http://dubois.fas.harvard.edu/alumni-fellows>

Fellow, Fund for Theological Education (FTE) Dissertation Year, 1985-1986

Fellow, FTE Doctoral Study of Religion for Black North Americans, 1979-81
www.fteleaders.org/pages/alumni

BOOKS

Conjuring Culture: Biblical Formations of Black America
New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994; 304 pp.; 1994 AAR Book Award*
www.amazon.com/Conjuring-Culture-Biblical-Formations-Religion/dp/0195102819/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1287516010&sr=1-1

Curing Violence, Theophus H. Smith and Mark I. Wallace, eds.
 Sonoma, Ca.: Polebridge Press (Westar Institute), 1994
www.amazon.com/Curing-Violence-Essays-Rene-Girard/dp/0944344437/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1287516472&sr=1-1
 Introduction by Smith & Wallace, pp. xvii-xxvi;
 Chap.11 by Smith, "King & the Black Religious Quest to Cure Racism," pp. 230-51

ARTICLES & ESSAYS (selected)

- "Vengeance is Never Enough: Alternative Visions of Justice," in *Roads to Reconciliation: Conflict and Dialogue in the Twenty-First Century*; eds. Amy Benson Brown and Karen M. Poremski; Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2005; pp. 35-51. Proceedings of the 2001 Emory Year of Reconciliation Symposium.
- "Working the Spirits: The Will-to-Transformation in African American Vernacular Art," in *Souls Grown Deep: African American Vernacular Art*, Vol. 2; eds. William Arnett, Paul Arnett, Lowery Sims; Atlanta: Tinwood Books, 2001; pp. 46-63
- "Howard Thurman" in *A New Handbook of Christian Theologians*; eds. Donald Musser, Joseph Price; Nashville: Abingdon, 1996, pp. 440-48
- "Spirituality" in *Encyclopedia of African-American Culture & History*. Jack Salzman, David Smith, Cornel West, eds. NY: Simon & Schuster Macmillan, 1996, p. 2549
- "Ethnography-as-Theology: Inscribing the African American Sacred Story," in *Theology Without Foundations: Religious Practice and the Future of Theological Truth*; eds. Stanley Hauerwas, Nancey Murphy, Mark Nation; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994, pp. 117-139
- "After Teaching: Wisdom" in *Against the Grain: New Approaches to Professional Ethics*; ed. Michael Goldberg. Valley Forge, Penn., Trinity Press International, 1993: pp. 97-122
- "From Cure of Souls to Curing Culture: The Prospect for Ritual Leadership in the Black Religious Tradition." *Virginia Seminary Journal* XLV:1 (April 1993): 2-12
- "The Spirituality of Afro-American Traditions" in *Christian Spirituality: Post-Reformation and Modern*. Series: *World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest*, vol.18; eds. Louis Dupre & Don E. Saliers; NY: Crossroad, 1989: pp. 372-414
- "W/Riting Black Theology," *Forum* 5:4 (December 1989):41-70; journal of Westar Institute (Sonoma, Calif.)
- "A Phenomenological Note: Black Religion as Christian Conjunction," *Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center*, XI:I (Fall 1983):1-18
- "African Spirituality—Ecstasy and Freedom," *The Berkeley Graduate* (April 1981):1,6

LECTURES PRESENTED (selections)

- "Rescuing Our Faith from Sacred Violence: Interfaith Resources for Courses & Group Work,"
 Keynote, Teaching Religion, Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding: A Consultation
 of Educators in Religion. Boston University School of Theology. August 9 -11, 2010
- "Dark Night of Our Souls' Democratic Vistas," Plenary address, Association for Core Texts &
 Courses - ACTC Annual Meeting: Radisson Hotel, Plymouth, Mass.; April 5, 2008

- "From Ancient Agony to Contemporary Ecstasy: The Gospel at Colonus", Friday Evening Lecture, St. John's College, Annapolis, MD. January 18, 2008
- "Deconstructing the Victim-Perpetrator Paradigm: A Heuristic," "Vulnerability and Tolerance:" Annual Meeting of the Colloquium on Violence and Religion (COV&R 2007) hosted by the Blaise Pascal Instituut, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, Netherlands; July 4-8, 2007
- Keynote Address: "Toward a New 'Confederation of Honor,'" "Southern Exposure: A Summit on Racial Reconciliation:" hosted by the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation at the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss), Oxford, Mississippi; March 17-19, 2006
- "Sacred Lies/Sacred Violence Clinic I," "Mimesis, Creativity, and Reconciliation:" Annual Meeting of COV&R 2006 at St. Paul University, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada; June 1, 2006
- "Time Alchemy II: Healing History 'As If' Horror Never Happened Or: Nonviolent Time Consciousness: A Phenomenology," Northwestern Univ., Evanston, Ill.; Global Cultures conference: "At the Crossroads: Memory, Performance, Pedagogy," 6/23/05
- "Return to Divine Providence: Essaying a Theology of Providence Today;" 3-day annual Payton Lectures at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif., Feb. 22-25, 2005
- "Time Alchemy: Healing History 'As If' Horror Had Never Happened," Black History annual lecture at Denison University, Granville, Ohio, 2/18/05
- "Frontier Humanity: The End of Victimization," The 2003 Kenefick Chair Humanities Lecture, Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska, 3/25/03
- "After Violence I: 'Futuring' the End of Victimization" presented to the Interdisciplinary Studies Program of Virginia Technical Institute, Blacksburg, Va., 1/31/99
- "After Violence II: The End of Victimization Encoded in The Transformation of Time Consciousness" presented to the Person, Community and Religious Practices (PCRP) Department of the Emory Graduate Division of Religion (GDR), 11/30/98
- "'I Don't Read Such Small Stuff as Letters:' Phenomenology of African American Engagement with the Bible" presented to the Interdisciplinary Research Project: African Americans and the Bible conference at Union Theological Seminary, New York, 4/8/99
- "Convergences between African American Experiences and Gandhi" presented to the Indian Cultural Exchange (Emory student assoc.) on the occasion of the Gandhi Jayanti (birth anniversary), 11/12/97
- "How We Ended Racism: Futuring 'The Beloved Community,'" presented to the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta, Annual Council, Cathedral of St. Philip, 11/97
- "African Heritage Christianity': Transhistorical Breakthrough via Eastern Orthodoxy," presented to North American Religions section of the American Academy of Religion, San Francisco, 11/97
- "Violence Conversion as State Policy: A Religious Studies Approach to Amnesty Trials/Truth & Reconciliation Commissions," presented at the Carter Presidential Center, 4/16/97
- "Improvisational Black Studies: A Field Theory Approach" Marquette University conference: "Integrating Black Studies into the Core Curriculum of a Catholic University," 11/30/90
- "Great Books & Black Studies," Notre Dame Univ. Program of Liberal Studies, 3/14/89
- "En/Countering Violence: From Counter-Rituals to Counter-Reasoning in the Afro-American Ecstatic Tradition" Westar Institute, Sonoma, California, 3/4/89

"Emancipation Proclamations: Black Freedom Projects as Theological Improvising with Biblical Narrative" presented at the American Academy of Religion, Chicago, 11/18/88

WORKS-IN-PROGRESS

After Violence: Futuring Victim-Free Society. Book mss. of sample chapters and detailed outline. The book argues that deconstructing the phenomena of systemic violence and victimization is the decisive project of the postmodern era. The project requires, and this book will provide, a diagnostic exposé and prescriptive treatment of specifically religious violence as the malpractice, distortion, and cooptation of the benign orientations inherent in each religious tradition (cf. the 'elicitive' approach in conflict resolution and peacemaking).

MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

American Academy of Religion (AAR; occasional member)
Colloquium on Violence & Religion (COV&R; co-founding member)

RESEARCH & TRAINING PROGRAMS

National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI-International): Emory University campus chapter; an international consulting & training organization based in Washington, D.C. and specializing in diversity issues, prejudice reduction, and intergroup conflict resolution

Thurman Reconciliation Initiatives (TRI, Inc.): my research, consulting and facilitation practice that has provided "faith-based resources for conflict transformation and social change" since 1999

SERVICE & LEADERSHIP

Fall 2006-2008, co-organizer of the Atlanta Friends of the Liberian TRC (Truth & Reconciliation Commission). <http://liberiatrnc.mnadvocates.org/Atlanta4.html>

Fall 2006-2008, served as the Education & Outreach Coordinator of Emory's strategic initiative on Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding. www.gdr.emory.edu/ircp

Fall 2006-2008, participant in the University-wide Gustafson Faculty Seminar.

Co-founder in 2006 of the Alliance for Racial Reconciliation (ATRR), a regional coalition of scholars, activists, and community groups based at the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation at the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss), Oxford, Mississippi.
www.olemiss.edu/winterinstitute/atrr

Teacher in the Atlanta area of the International Reevaluation Counseling Communities (RC), a peer counseling community involving local classes, support groups, workshops, and consultations, headquartered in Seattle, Washington; www.rc.org.

Consultant to the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta since 1992 on intergroup reconciliation, diversity issues and interfaith coalition-building; former co-chair of the Atlanta Chapter of the Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE)

Co-founder, Board Chair, and member since Fall 2003 of Southern Truth & Reconciliation (STAR), Inc., a nonprofit consulting organization founded in Atlanta to help communities adapt the truth-and-reconciliation process to local human right issues. STAR responds specifically to groups struggling with the legacy of lynching and other communal forms of racial and ethnic violence. www.southerntruth.org

Principal organizer of the "Discovery School of Religion," a two-semester Evening At Emory class on world religions and interreligious dialogue offered by the Department of Religion since Fall 2004.

CONFERENCES & OTHER PRESENTATIONS

Panel presentation: *"Sacred Violence: A Concise Theory & Practice,"* for Panel theme: *"Reconstructing Self and Others"*, "Pictures Without Borders: Bosnia Revisited" by S. Horn: Jones Room, Woodruff Library, Emory Univ. campus .Sept. 30, 2008

"Higher Education Can't Go Too High", UGA SURP Awards Banquet: Continuing Education Center, University of Georgia, Athens; August 1, 2007

Workshop: "Sacred Lies / Sacred Violence Clinic," at the 7th International Conference on Diversity in Organizations, Communities and Nations, Vrije University, Amsterdam, Netherlands; July 3-6, 2007; <http://d07.cgpublisher.com/welcome.html>

Co-Convener: The Coalition to Remember the 1906 Atlanta Race Riot, Centennial Remembrance conference, September 21-24, 2006, Atlanta; awarded with other Coalition partners by Mayor Shirley Franklin with the city's highest civic honor, The Phoenix Award

'Becoming Beloved Community" workshop at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Columbus, Ga., Feb. 2, 2005; 30-40 participants

Presenter: "Theory & Practice in Violence Reduction: The Prejudice Reduction Workshop Model," presented at the Colloquium on Violence & Religion (COV&R) annual meeting, Loyola University at Chicago, 6/3/95

Faculty: NEH/Lilly/AAR Workshop on Teaching Religion in the South, Emory University, 6/11/97

Presenter: "The Search for Religion without Prejudice," Parts I & II, Emory, The Chaplain's Tea, 4/12/94, 4/19/94

Moderator: "Black Student Summit," Emory University, 4/11/94

Moderator: "Metaphysical Metaphors," a panel discussion by four artists of spirituality in their works on exhibit, Art at the Edge (contemporary), High Museum, Atlanta, 4/10/94

Presenter: "Improvisational Black Studies," Spelman College Curriculum Committee, 3/21/94

Lecture & Seminar: "Nonviolence Modeling and Religious Diversity: a research invitation," and addendum: "Detox from Violence: a search for prescriptive practices," Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University, Director's seminar, 10/18/93

Lecturer: "The Ritual Leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr.," Annual M.L. King Memorial Breakfast, Indiana University & Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI), 1/17/94

Lecturer: "From Cure of Souls to Curing Culture: The Prospect for Ritual Leadership in the Black Religious Tradition," American Academy of Religion, African American Religious History Group, Washington, D.C., 11/21/93

Panelist: Review of James Hunter, Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America (Basic, 1991), National Association of State Universities & Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC) annual meeting, Washington, D.C., 11/13/93

Lecturer: "Cure of Souls/Curing Culture: The Prospect for Ritual Leadership in the Black Religious Tradition," W.E.B. Du Bois Institute, Harvard University, 11/10/93

Lecturer: "The Decline in the U.S. of Nonviolent Activism in the Gandhi-King Tradition, 1970-80," History class (Clayborn Carson), Stanford University, 5/25/93

Respondent: "Congress on Systematic Theology in the U.S. Today," Fuller Theological Seminary, May 21-22, 1993

Moderator: "Literature and the Sacred," Colloquium on Violence and Religion (COV&R), Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, April 23-24, 1993

Moderator: "Multiculturalism in the Curriculum," University Center in Georgia program, small group on "race" & ethnicity, Kennesaw College, 4/1/93

Moderator: "Martin and Malcolm: Did Their Messages Ever Merge?" Agnes Scott College, Panelists: Robert Franklin, Black Church Studies Program, Candler Theology School (Emory), and Calvin Morris, Interdenominational Theological Center (Atlanta), 1/20/93

Moderator: "Santeria Aesthetics in Contemporary Latino Art Symposium," a symposium co-sponsored by the Atlanta Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Spelman College, and Emory University, 8/6/92

Lecturer: "Cultural Diversity on Our Campuses"; presentation of my lecture, "Improvisational Black Studies: A Multicultural Curriculum Model" for the University Center in Georgia program at Kennesaw College, 4/2/92

Presenter: Great Books & Black Studies Seminar, Georgia State University Honors Program, 2/7/92 ("Gospel at Colonus"); 4/11/91, 4/18/91 (Zora Neale Hurston)

Lecturer: "Improvisational Black Studies," Georgia State University Honors Program and Recognition Banquet, 5/9/91

Presider: Southeastern Regional meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Annual Meeting, Atlanta; African American Religious History Section; 3/16/91

Convener: African and African American Academy; a black scholars forum of Atlanta area scholars in consultation with Clayborne Carson, National Director of the King Papers Project; Fall/Spring, 1990-91

Panelist: "Troubling Biblical Waters: The Impact of Biblical Hermeneutics upon the African American Faith Journey," at the Candler School of Theology, African American Heritage Week Forum, 2/20/91

Presenter: Black Theology Tutorial, Society of St. John the Evangelist, Cambridge, Mass.; 12/6/90

Presenter: Conference on Christianity and Industrial Culture, Campus Ministry, Oakland university, Rochester, Michigan; 11/4/89

Presenter: Black Theology Tutorial (4 weekly sessions), Central Presbyterian Church Adult Class, Atlanta; Fall 1987

Presenter: Black Theology Lecture and Discussion, Presbyterian Lay Center of the University of Georgia, Athens; Fall 1987

WORKSHOPS & TRAININGS

Since Fall 1987, I have provided dozens of workshop facilitations for Emory University and the greater metropolitan Atlanta area. From Fall 1991 to 1998 I served as director of the local Atlanta chapter of the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) International, based in Washington, D.C. NCBI-International trains teams of local associates who conduct workshops for participants seeking skills in prejudice reduction, intergroup conflict resolution, and leadership for diversity.

In addition to training opportunities with NCBI International I pursue ongoing training in the area of areas of human relations, group dynamics, and church leadership with the Commission on Consulting, the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta, and am also an alumnus of the Alban Institute (Washington, D.C.), a national organization providing human relations training for church leaders.

Presentations of the 1-day NCBI "Welcoming Diversity & Prejudice Reduction" workshop model at the local and regional academic institutions and community organizations, e.g., from Spring 1992 to Fall 2004 at Emory Univ., Agnes Scott College, Clayton State College, The Atlanta Friends School, The Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta (including conflict resolution), Georgia State University, Leadership Athens, The University of Georgia (Athens)

Co-Facilitations of the 3-day NCBI "Train-the-Trainer" workshop, and the 5-day "Leadership Institute" on prejudice reduction & conflict resolution, in the following cities: Athens, Ga. (May 13-15, 1993); Atlanta, Ga., (11/91, 10/92, 3/93); Washington, D.C. (August '93,'95)

Presentations on Black-Jewish alliance building, e.g., the workshop "Blacks & Jews: Welcoming Each Other as Allies," American Jewish Committee, Atlanta chapter, 4/24/94, 4/95

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APPENDIX 1: A Biographical Sketch

APPENDIX 2: 1-Page Photo Resumé

APPENDIX 1

A Biographical Sketch

Theophus "Thee" Smith was born in Atlanta and is now an associate professor in the Religion Department of Emory University. Raised black church (Baptist), he also serves as an Episcopal priest at the Cathedral of St. Philip in the Diocese of Atlanta. His first book, "Conjuring Culture: Biblical Formations of Black America," won the American Academy of Religion award for excellence in 1994.

His scholarship spans the fields of religion, theological studies, African American spirituality, and violence studies—co-editing in 1994, "Curing Violence: Essays on Rene Girard." From Atlanta he consults and facilitates forums and workshops on reconciliation and is a founding member of Southern Truth and Reconciliation (www.southerntruth.org). Thee is a former martial artist (of the Afro-Brazilian art form, capoeira, a continuing canoeist, and in 2010 married Vida Osei Smith of Ghana, West Africa.

APPENDIX 2: 1-Page Photo Resumé

**THEOPHUS "THEE" SMITH**

Consultant ✕ Facilitator

*Conjuring
Culture**Curing
Violence*

Author ✕ Speaker

Academic Life & Teaching

Professor Smith was educated at Phillips Exeter Academy (NH), St. John's College (Annapolis), Virginia Theological Seminary (Alexandria), and the Graduate Theological Union (Berkeley). His academic and teaching specialties include philosophy of religion, African American religious studies, Christian theology, and religion and violence. Since 1987 he has lived and worked in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, teaching in [Emory University's](#) undergraduate [Department of Religion](#) and [Graduate Division of Religion](#). He is the author of *Conjuring Culture: Biblical Formations of Black America* (Oxford, 1994), and co-editor with Mark Wallace (Swarthmore) of *Curing Violence: Essays on René Girard*, (Polebridge, 1994). Since Fall 2006 Prof. Smith has been active in Emory's strategic initiative on Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding (www.gdr.emory.edu/ircp).

Research & Memberships

Prof. Smith is an occasional member of the [American Academy of Religion](#) (AAR), and a founding member of the [Colloquium on Violence and Religion](#). COV&R is an international scholarly society dedicated to exploring the relationship between religion and violence in the generation and maintenance of culture. For its [1999 annual meeting](#) at Emory Univ. he organized the conference: "Violence Reduction in Theory & Practice: From Primates to Nations" (see www.religion.emory.edu/affiliate/COVR/COVR99meeting.html). He is also affiliated with Emory's pioneering Law & Religion Program in which he has presented on "[A Normative Practice of Truth and Reconciliation](#)" as informed by South Africa's Truth & Reconciliation Commission.

Service & Religious Vocation

From 1991-98 Thee Smith was the founding director of the Atlanta Chapter of the [National Coalition Building Institute](#) (see www.NCBI.org). NCBI is an international consulting and training organization based in Washington, D.C. that specializes in diversity training, prejudice reduction, and intergroup conflict resolution. In addition he is an active leader in the [International Reevaluation Counseling Communities](#) (see www.RC.org for "Co-Counseling"), a worldwide and grassroots peer counseling and activist movement. In addition Rev'd Smith is a priest in the [Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta](#) at the Cathedral of St. Philip, a member of the Atlanta Chapter of the [Union of Black Episcopalians](#) (UBE), and a member of the international [Community of the Cross of Nails](#) (see www.ccn-northamerica.org/index.html).

Public Scholarship & Social Change

Thee Smith's consulting expertise, workshop facilitation, and speaking engagements are available through [Thurman Reconciliation Initiatives](#) (TRI) Inc., a research and educational consultancy that provides "faith-based resources for conflict transformation and social change." From 2003-2010 he was a founding director of [Southern Truth and Reconciliation](#) (STAR) Inc. STAR is a university-community partnership and consulting organization that assists local communities to address their legacy of racial violence through the application of truth and reconciliation practices (www.southerntruth.org) and regional alliances (www.olemiss.edu/winterinstitute/atr). Samples of Thee Smith's work as a public scholar available online at www.emory.edu/COLLEGE/RELIGION/faculty/smith.html include:

- ["Becoming 'Beloved Community'—or—Beyond Targeting Each Other"](#)
- ["Rescuing Our Faith From Sacred Violence" \(Parts 1 & 4\)](#)
- ["Rescuing Our Faith From Sacred Violence" \(Parts 2-4\)](#)
- ["Religions Transforming Religions / Religions Transforming Worlds"](#)
- ["Eucharistic Social Change: A Concise Theology and Practice"](#)
- ["After Violence: Towards A Normative Practice of Truth & Reconciliation."](#)