

Kristi Upson-Saia, PhD

Occidental College • 1600 Campus Rd, Fowler Hall • Los Angeles, CA 90041

TEL: (323) 259-2855 • FAX: (323) 259-2704

upsonsaia@oxy.edu

Education

Duke University	2006
Ph.D. Department of Religion, Christianity in Late Antiquity Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies/Gender Studies	
Princeton Theological Seminary	2000
M.Div. <i>magna cum laude</i>	
University of Washington	1996
B.A. Sociology major, History minor, <i>cum laude</i>	

Academic and professional positions

Occidental College, Full Professor of Religious Studies	2018-present
<i>Courses: History of Early Christianity; Magic, Miracle, and Medicine in the Ancient Mediterranean; "Good" Sex: History of Christian Sexual Ethics; Death, Dying, and Afterlife in the Ancient Mediterranean; Humans and the Environment in Antiquity; Banned Books: Introduction to the New Testament Apocrypha; Critical Approaches to the Study of Religion; Senior Seminar; Health & Humanity (team-taught with a Philosopher and an Economist); Turkey: Then & Now (on-campus course + 3-week field study in Turkey)</i>	
Occidental College, Chair of the Religious Studies Department	2015-present
Occidental College, Founding Director of the Center for Research & Scholarship	2017-present
Religion, Medicine, Disability, and Health in Late Antiquity (ReMedHe), co-Founder & co-Director	2014-present
Occidental College, Associate Professor of Religious Studies	2012-2018
Occidental College, Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence	2012-2017
Occidental College, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies	2006-2012
Duke University, Instructor in the Religion & Women's Studies Departments	2004-2006

Honors, Grants, Awards

- Study Group Initiative grant for ReMedHe First Book Workshop, North American Patristics Society, 2020 & 2021
- Brown Humanities Grant, 2019
- American Academy in Rome, Visiting Scholar, Fall 2018
- Occidental College Faculty Enrichment Grants, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2012-13, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-2020
- MacArthur International Travel grant, 2018
- Small project grant, "Politics, Pedagogy, and the Profession: Intellectually Responsible Approaches to Teaching Late Antique History and Religion Courses," Wabash Center, 2017-18
- Study Group Initiative grant "The Professor, Politics, and Curriculum of Late Antiquity," North American Patristics Society, 2017

- Occidental College Office of Institutional Assessment and Accreditation micro-grant, 2017 and 2019
- Mellon Faculty Fellow, Center for Digital Learning + Research, Fall 2014
- Arnold L. and Lois S. Graves Award in the Humanities, 2013-2014
- Tod and Linda White Teaching Prize, 2012
- Donald R. Loftsgordon Memorial Award for Outstanding Teaching, 2011
- Summer Research Fellowship, Wabash Center, Summer 2009
- Best First Article prize, North American Patristics Society, Spring 2008
- HOPE teaching award, Duke University, Spring 2006
- Franklin Humanities Institute Mellon Fellowship, 2005-2006
- Duke Graduate School Dissertation Research Fellowship, Summer 2005
- Duke Instructional Technology Fellowship (iPod initiative), Spring 2005
- Duke University Graduate School Fellowship, 2001-2006
- Princeton Theological Seminary Fellowship, 1997-2000
- Finalist for the Howard B. Woolston Award for Academic Excellence, Univ. of Washington, 1996
- Phi Beta Kappa, University of Washington, 1996

Publications

Books and edited volumes—

Medicine, Health, and Healing in the Ancient Mediterranean: 500 BCE to 500 CE. With Heidi Marx and Jared Secord. (under contract)

Dressing Judeans and Christians in Antiquity. Co-edited with Carly Daniel-Hughes and Alicia J. Batten. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2014.

Early Christian Dress: Gender, Virtue, and Authority. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Special Issues—

Guest editor, special issue on “Rethinking Medical Metaphors in Late Ancient Christianity,” *Studies in Late Antiquity* 2.4 (Winter 2018).

Guest editor (with Heidi Marx-Wolf), special issue on “Religion, Medicine, Health, and Disability,” *Journal of Late Antiquity* 8.2 (Fall 2015).

Guest editor, special issue on “Teaching and Religion,” *TransFORMATIONS: The Journal of Inclusive Scholarship and Pedagogy* 25.1 (Winter 2014–Spring 2015).

[“Transformational Teaching” interview nominated for the 2015 Sylvia Rivera Award in Transgender Studies](#)

Articles and Essays—

“(Re)theorizing Modesty: Religion, Gender, and Dress.” In *The Politics of Dress and Identity* (Studies in Textile and Costume History), edited by Tineke Rooijackers and Rosita D’Amora. Leiden: Brill, forthcoming.

Co-authored with Maria Doerfler. “Politics and the Pedagogue of Late Antiquity.” *The Wabash Center Journal on Teaching* 1.3 (August 2020): 9-21.

“Gregory of Nyssa on virginity, gardens, and the παράδεισος.” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 27.1 (Spring 2019): 99-131.

“Wounded by Divine Love.” In *Melania: Early Christianity through the Life of One Family*, edited by Catherine M. Chin and Caroline T. Schroeder, 86–105. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2017.

Co-authored with Heidi Marx-Wolf. “State of the Question: Religion, Medicine, Disability, and Health in Late Antiquity.” *Journal of Late Antiquity* 8.2 (Fall 2015): 257–72.

“Hairiness and Holiness in the Early Christian Desert.” In *Dressing Judeans and Christians in Antiquity*, edited by Kristi Upson-Saia, Carly Daniel-Hughes, and Alicia J. Batten, 155–72. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2014.

Co-authored with Alicia J. Batten and Carly Daniel-Hughes. “What shall we wear?” In *Dressing Judeans and Christians in Antiquity*, edited by Kristi Upson-Saia, Carly Daniel-Hughes, and Alicia J. Batten, 1–18. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2014.

Co-authored with Suzanne Scott. “Using iAnnotate to enhance feedback on written work.” *Journal of Teaching and Learning with Technology* 2.2 (Dec 2013): 43–59.

“Holy Child or Holy Terror? Understanding Jesus’ anger in the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*.” *Church History* 82.1 (Mar 2013): 1–39.

“The Capstone Experiences for Religious Studies Majors.” *Teaching Theology & Religion* 16.1 (Jan 2013): 3–17.

“Playing the Role of Religious Studies Researcher in the Senior Capstone.” *Teaching Theology & Religion* 15.1 (Jan 2012): 42–43.

“Resurrecting Deformity: Augustine on the Scarred, Marked, and Deformed Bodies of the Heavenly Realm.” In *Disability in Judaism, Christianity and Islam: Sacred Texts, Historical Traditions and Social Analysis*, edited by Darla Schumm and Michael Stoltzfus, 93–122. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

“Gender and Narrative Performance in Early Christian Cross-Dressing Saints’ Lives.” *Studia Patristica* XLV (2010): 43–48.

“Caught in a Compromising Position: The Biblical Exegesis and Characterization of Biblical Protagonists in the Syriac Dialogue Hymns.” *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 9.2 (July 2006).

[*Awarded “Best First Article Prize” by the North American Patristic Society*](#)

Entries in Reference Works—

“Gender Transgression: Early Church.” In *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Gender Studies*, volume 2, edited by Julia O’Brien, Rachel Havrelock, Davina C. Lopez, Todd Penner, Ken Stone, Ilona Zsolnay, 315–20. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

“Eustochium” and “Paula” in *Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*. Ed. Daniel Patte, 391–92, 931–32. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

“Communism” in *Encyclopedia of Protestantism*, volume I. Ed. Hans Hillerbrand, 485–86. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Book Reviews—

Review of Jennifer A. Rea, *Perpetua's Journey: Faith, Gender, and Power in the Roman Empire*. *Studies in Late Antiquity* 2.2 (Sum 2018): 252–55.

Review of Kate Wilkinson, *Women and Modesty in Late Antiquity*. *Journal of Late Antiquity* 10.2 (2018): 524–26.

Review of Crystal Lynn Lubinsky, *Removing Masculine Layers to Reveal a Holy Womanhood: The Female Transvestite Monks of Late Antique Eastern Christianity*. *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 23.5 (Win 2015): 631–32.

Review of Stephen J. Davis, *Christ Child: Cultural Memories of a Young Jesus*. *Church History* 84.3 (Sept 2015): 646–48.

Review of Christian Laes, C.F. Goodey, and M. Lynn Rose, eds., *Disability in Roman Antiquity: Disparate Bodies A Capite ad Calcem*. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 88.3 (2014): 570–72.

Review of Martha Nussbaum, *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*. *Teaching Theology & Religion* 15.4 (Oct 2012): 397–98.

Review of Robin Darling Young and Monica Blanchard, eds., *To Train His Soul in Books: Syriac Asceticism in Early Christianity*. *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2.44 (2012).

Review of Robert Garland, *Eye of the Beholder: Deformity and Disability in the Graeco-Roman World*. Second edition. *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 4.47 (2011).

Review of Benjamin H. Dunning, *Aliens and Sojourners: Self as Other in Early Christianity*. *Bible & Critical Theory* 7.1 (2011): 117–19.

Review of David Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy, and Heresy in Ancient Christianity: The Jovinianist Controversy*. *Church History* 77.3 (Sept 2008): 700–703.

Review of Elaine Wainwright, *Women Healing/Healing Women: The Genderization of Healing in Early Christianity*. *Bible & Critical Theory* 4.1 (Feb 2008): 19:1–19:4.

Review of Nicole Kelley, *Knowledge and Religious Authority in the Pseudo-Clementines*. *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 15.4 (Winter 2007): 576–77.

Review of Cheryl A. Kirk-Duggan, ed., *Pregnant Passion: Gender, Sex, and Violence in the Bible*. *Bible & Critical Theory* 1.3 (Aug 2005): 28.1–28.3.

Professional participation, invited lectures, conference papers

Co-Founder and co-Director (with Heidi Marx) of ReMedHe, the Religion, Medicine, Disability, and Health in Late Antiquity international working group—200+ members (2013-present)

- Organized and chaired ReMedHe paper panels at the North American Patristics Society (Chicago, May 2014, May 2016, May 2017, May 2018) and the International Conference on Patristic Studies (Oxford, August 2015 and 2019)
- Organized ReMedHe first book workshops & pre-conference workshops at the North American Patristics Society (Chicago, May 2014, May 2016, May 2017, May 2018, May 2020), the American Academy of Religion (Nov 2014), and the International Conference on Patristic Studies (Oxford, Aug 2015 and 2019)
- Moderator for the ReMedHe listserv and Facebook page

North American Patristic Society, Nominating Committee member (2016-2020)

“Why study the history of medicine, health, and healing? A case study of patient-centered medicine in the ancient Mediterranean.” Invited speaker for the Health Humanities Research Cluster at the University of Manitoba. November 2020.

Organized the “Politics, Pedagogy, and the Profession” two-day workshop for 50 scholars of late antique religion. November 2018

“Departmental and Institutional Conditions.” Ethical Engagement and the Study of Antiquity conference. University of Southern California. April 2017.

“(Re)theorizing Modesty: Gender, Religion, and Dress.” Politics of Dress and Identity in Eastern Mediterranean Societies: Past and Present. Allard Pierson Museum, Amsterdam. March 2016.

“Sexuality in the Garden: Priapus and the Christian Virgin Policing the Boundaries of the Good Life.” XVII International Conference on Patristic Studies. Oxford, UK. August 2015.

Organized and chaired the wildcard session: “Religious Dress in the Ancient Mediterranean” session, American Academy of Religion. Chicago, IL. November 2012.

“Hair and holiness in the early Christian desert.” Canadian Society of Biblical Literature. Waterloo, ON. May 2012.

“The angry young Jesus of the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*.” XVI International Conference on Patristic Studies. Oxford, UK. August 2011.

“Paul’s Use of Bodily Stigmata and Social Stigmatization in his Letter to the Galatians.” Society of Biblical Literature (Disability Studies and Healthcare in the Bible and Near East session). Atlanta, GA. November 2010.

“Resurrecting Deformities in Early Christian Writers.” North American Patristic Society. Chicago, IL. May 2010.

Reimagining Pauline Legacies: Works beyond Laws, Theories after Theologies, Paths toward Transformations (invited workshop participant). Center for Jewish Studies at Baylor University. April 2010.

“The Capstone Experience for the Religious Studies Major.” American Academy of Religion (Teaching Religion Section). Montreal, QC. November 2009.

“Scars, Marks, and Deformities in Augustine’s Earthly and Resurrected Bodies.” American Historical Association/American Society of Church History. New York City, NY. January 2009.

“Disabilities and Deformities in Augustine of Hippo.” American Academy of Religion (Religion and Disability Studies Group). Chicago, IL. November 2008.

Steering committee member of American Academy of Religion “Sex, Gender, and Sexuality in Pre-Modern Christianity” session. 2007-2010.

Organized and chaired the wildcard session: “The Holy Child: Traditions of the Infant and Child Jesus.” American Academy of Religion. San Diego, CA. November 2007.

Roseanne L. Hoefel Scholar-in-Residence. Alma College Women’s Studies Program. Alma, MI. October 2007.

- “Gender Performance and Cross-Dressing in Early Christian Saints’ *Lives*.” XV International Conference on Patristic Studies. Oxford, UK. August 2007.
- “*Enfant Terrible: Reading Infancy Thomas with Ancient Rhetorical Practice*.” American Society of Church History (Reading Strategies for Early Christian Apocryphal Gospels section). Salt Lake City, UT. April 2007.
- “Performativity and Text in Late Antiquity: Historiographical Considerations.” Western Commission for the Study of Religion (History of Christianity section). Berkeley, CA. March 2007.
- “Making an Appearance: Religious and Gender Performance in the Attire of Ancient Female Christian Ascetics.” North American Patristic Society (Women’s Studies and Patristic Studies section). Chicago, IL. May 2006.
- “Performance Anxiety: Religious and Gender Performance in the Attire of Ancient Female Christian Ascetics.” American Academy of Religion (Women and Religion section). Philadelphia, PA. November 2005.
- “Desiring Monasticism: A Response to Naomi Koltun-Fromm and Derek Krueger.” Issues of Sexuality in Late Antiquity symposium. Duke University, Durham, NC. March 2005.
- “Changing Garb, Changing Gender: Gender Resistance or Re-inscription Among Early Christian Ascetics?” Second Annual Christina Conference in Women's Studies. University of Helsinki, Finland. March 2005.
- “Re-writing the Bible: ‘Orthodox’ Theology in the Syriac Dialogue Hymns.” Society of Biblical Literature (History of Interpretation section). San Antonio, TX. November 2004.
- “Ancient *Bling*: Pagan and Early Christian Attitudes toward Female Adornment.” UCLA Graduate Late Antiquity Conference. Los Angeles, CA. May 2004.
- “Local Edessene memories as a critique of Empire.” The North Carolina Colloquium in Medieval and Renaissance Studies. Chapel Hill, NC. February 2004.
- “Imagining Magic: Jesus as Magician in Ancient Christian Art and Text.” Social Scientific Study of Religion Annual Conference. Norfolk, VA. Oct. 2003.

Reading language proficiencies

Ancient: Greek, Latin, Syriac, Hebrew

Modern: French, German, Spanish

Professional Associations

- Religion, Medicine, Disability, and Health in Late Antiquity international working group
- North American Patristics Society
- American Academy of Religion
- Disability History Association
- American Society of Church History