

Olivia Stewart Lester

Loyola University Chicago
1032 West Sheridan Road
Chicago, IL 60660
ostewartlester@luc.edu

EMPLOYMENT

Assistant Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity, Loyola University Chicago (2018–present)

John Fell Postdoctoral Researcher, The Bible and the Humanities Project, Faculty of Theology and Religion, Oriel College, University of Oxford (2017–2018)

Lecturer, Elementary New Testament Greek, Yale Divinity School (Summer 2017)

Instructor, Elementary New Testament Greek, Yale Divinity School (2016–2017)

OTHER POSITIONS

Associate Editor, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* (2023–27)

Editorial Board Member, *Journal of Biblical Literature* (2022–24)

Centre for the Study of the Bible Fellow, Oriel College, University of Oxford (2020–present)

Visiting Scholar, Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies (2017–2018)

EDUCATION

Yale University, Doctor of Philosophy, New Testament (2017)

Dissertation Title: *Prophets and Their Rivals: Interpretation, Gender, and Economics in Revelation and Sibylline Oracles 4–5*

Yale Divinity School, Master of Sacred Theology, New Testament (2011)

Thesis: *Paul's Writings on Women and Spirit-Inspired Speech*

Yale Divinity School, Master of Divinity, Magna Cum Laude (2010)

Southeastern University, Bachelor of Arts, Interdisciplinary Studies and Music, Summa Cum Laude (2007)

PUBLICATIONS

Monographs

1 & 2 Thessalonians: A Commentary. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress Press (under contract).

Prophetic Rivalry, Gender, and Economics: A Study in Revelation and Sibylline Oracles 4–5. WUNT 2/466. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018.

Reviewed in:

- Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 41.5 (2019): 92–93
- Review of Biblical Literature* (May 2, 2019)
- Religious Studies Review* 45.3 (September 2019): 382–83
- Reading Religion* (October 30, 2019)
- Bulletin for Biblical Research* 30.2 (2020): 329–31

Journal Articles

“Both Jewish and Christian: The Production and Reception of the Sibylline Oracles.” *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* (invited; under review).

“Death, Demise, and the Decline of Prophecy.” *Religion & Theology* 29.1–2 (2022): 99–109.

“Ambivalent Appropriation: Engagement with Apollo in Jewish and Christian Texts and Material Culture.” *Journal of Early Christian History* 10.2 (2020; published 2021): 28–48.

“Revealed History as Prophetic Rivalry: John’s Apocalypse, the Sibylline Oracles, and the Prophecy of Apollo.” *Early Christianity* 10.4 (2019): 461–80.

Contributions to Edited Volumes

“Sibylline Oracles 1–2; 6–8,” in *Apocalyptic Literature*. Edited by John J. Collins, Tobias Nicklas, and Loren Stuckenbruck. New Haven: Yale University Press. (in preparation)

“Prophecy,” in *The Septuagint and Old Testament Apocrypha*. Edited by J. K. Aitken and Bruce Longenecker. *Ancient Literature and New Testament Studies* 1. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, forthcoming.

“The Sibylline Oracles: A Case Study in Ancient and Modern Anti-Judaism.” Pages 125–48 in *Protestant Bible Scholarship: Antisemitism, Philosemitism and Anti-Judaism*. Edited by Arjen Bakker, René Bloch, Yael Fisch, Paula Fredriksen, and Hindy Najman. Leiden: Brill, 2022.

“Views of the World to Come in the Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles.” Pages 261–82 in *Dreams, Visions, Imaginations: Jewish, Christian, and Gnostic Views of the World to Come*. Edited by Tobias Nicklas, Jens Schröter, and Armand Puig i Tàrrach. BZNW 247. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021.

“The Four Kingdoms Motif and Sibylline Temporality in Sibylline Oracles 4.” Pages 121–41 in *The Four Kingdoms Motif before and beyond the Book of Daniel*. Edited by Andrew Perrin and Loren Stuckenbruck. *Themes in Biblical Narrative* 28. Leiden: Brill, 2020.

“Jezebel: A Study in Prophecy, Divine Violence, and Gender.” Pages 509–22 in *New Perspectives on the Book of Revelation*. Edited by Adela Yarbro Collins. BETL 291. Leuven: Peeters, 2017.

“‘I Will Speak . . . With My Whole Person in Ecstasy’: Instrumentality and Independence in the Sibylline Oracles.” Pages 1232–46 in *Sibyls, Scriptures, and Scrolls: John Collins at Seventy*. Edited by Joel S. Baden, Hindy Najman, and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar. JSJ Supplements. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2017.

“The Question of Prophetic ‘Authenticity’: A Response to ‘Why Jeremiah? The Invention of a Prophetic Figure’.” Pages 222–24 in *Jeremiah’s Scriptures: Production, Reception, Interaction, and Transformation*. Edited by Hindy Najman and Konrad Schmid. JSJSup 173. Leiden: Brill, 2017.

Encyclopedia Entries

“Nanea.” *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception Online*. Edited by Constance M. Furey et al. Volume 20. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022.

“Sibylline Oracles 4–5.” *T & T Clark Companion to Second Temple Judaism*. Edited by Daniel M. Gurtner and Loren T. Stuckenbruck. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2019.

Book Reviews

Review of Gregg E. Gardner, *Wealth, Poverty, and Charity in Jewish Antiquity*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2022. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*. Forthcoming.

Review of Sarah Emanuel, *Humor, Resistance, and Jewish Cultural Persistence in the Book of Revelation: Roasting Rome*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. *Bible and Critical Theory* 17.1 (2021): 110–13.

Review of *Figures Who Shape Scriptures, Scriptures That Shape Figures*. Edited by Géza G. Xeravits and Greg Schmidt Goering. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018. *Dead Sea Discoveries* 27 (2020): 315–16.

Review of Susan Docherty, *The Jewish Pseudepigrapha: An Introduction to the Literature of the Second Temple Period*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015. *Review of Biblical Literature* (April 3, 2020).

Review of Paula Fredriksen, *Paul: The Pagans’ Apostle*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017. *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (June 29, 2018).

Other Contributions

Bibliography for “Sibylline Oracles.” *e-Clavis: Christian Apocrypha*. Produced January 2020. <https://www.nasscal.com/e-clavis-christian-apocrypha/sibylline-oracles/>.

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

- 2023 “Hellenistic Judaism and Scholarly Anti-Judaism: The Case of the Sibylline Oracles.” To be presented at an “Anti-Semitism and Biblical Scholarship” session at the European Association of Biblical Studies. Syracuse, Sicily. July 10–13, 2023.
“Transforming Traditions: Sibylline Oracles within Judaism and Christianity.” To be presented at “Listen to the Sibyl in all things’: Reconsidering the Sibylline Oracles.” Enoch Seminar. Naples, Italy. June 5–8, 2023.
- 2022 “Paraenesis and Prophecy in 1 Thessalonians: The Beginning of Pauline Pseudepigraphy?” To be presented in the Pauline Epistles Session at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Denver, CO. November 20, 2022.
“The Sibylline Oracles in Jewish and Christian Transformation.” To be presented at the Jewish Christianity/Christian Judaism Session at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Denver, CO. November 20, 2022.
“Christian Sibylline Oracles and the Making of Sacred Texts.” Presented at the Earliest Christian Writings Continuing Seminar, Catholic Biblical Association Annual Meeting. July 31, 2022.
Seminar co-convener, “Subjectivity, Scribal Practice, and the Role of the Textual

- Scholar.” Society for Textual Scholarship Conference, Loyola University Chicago. May 28, 2022.
- “Remapping Judaism and Christianity through the Sibylline Oracles.” Presented at the Society for Textual Scholarship Conference, Loyola University Chicago. May 27, 2022.
- “Ambivalent Appropriation: Apollo in Jewish Texts and Material Culture.” Public lecture, Carolina Center for Jewish Studies, University of North Carolina. April 13, 2022.
- “The Sibylline Oracles: A Case Study in Ancient and Modern Anti-Judaism.” Graduate seminar, Carolina Center for Jewish Studies, University of North Carolina. April 13, 2022.
- “‘I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand’: Pseudepigraphy as Commentary in 2 Thessalonians, and the Task of the New Testament Commentator.” Presented at the Ethical Reading Seminar. University of Oxford (virtual). February 23, 2022.
- 2021 “Death, Demise, and the Decline of Prophecy.” Presented in the Greco-Roman Religions Session at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. San Antonio, TX. November 20–23–2021.
- "Jewish and Christian Sibylline Discourse: Dynamic Pseudepigraphy in the Sibylline Oracles." Presented at the Biblical Studies Seminar. University of Aberdeen (virtual). October 13, 2021.
- “Can a Fictional Prophet Be an Author? Attribution and the Production of the Sibylline Oracles.” Presented at “Authorial Fictions and Attributions in the Ancient Mediterranean” Colloquium, Bible and Religions of the Ancient Near East Collective and North American Society for the Study of Christian Apocryphal Literature (virtual). October 5, 2021.
- Panelist, “Contemporary Developments in the Study of Apocalypticism.” Presented at the 11th Enoch Seminar/LMU Munich Congress on Apocalypticism in Antiquity. Munich (virtual). May 23, 2021.
- “‘For there are all sorts of seasons...’: Periodization, Eschatology, and Apocalyptic Uncertainty in the Sibylline Oracles.” Presented at “Apocalyptic Thinking Workshop.” Centre for the Study of the Bible, Oriel College, University of Oxford (virtual). February 14–15, 2021.
- 2020 Review of Olegs Andrejevs, *Apocalypticism in the Synoptic Sayings Source: A Reassessment of Q’s Stratigraphy*, WUNT II 499 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019). Presented at the Apocalyptic Session at the Midwest Region Society of Biblical Literature. South Bend, IN. February 8, 2020.
- 2019 “Prophetic Agency in Relation to Interpretation, Gender, and Economics.” Presented at the Hebrew Scriptures and Cognate Literatures Session at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. San Diego, CA. November 26, 2019.
- Response to Zachary Eberhart, Kathy Maxwell, and Kelly Iverson. Presented at “Word Became Flesh: The Question of Performance as Method in Biblical Studies.” Loyola University Chicago. October 4, 2019.
- “Second Temple Jewish Pseudepigraphy.” Presented at The Phenomenon of Pseudepigraphy Seminar at the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas Meeting. Marburg, July 31, 2019.
- “Judaism and Anti-Judaism in the Sibylline Oracles.” Presented at “Protestant Bible Scholarship: Antisemitism, Philosemitism, and Anti-Judaism.” University of Oxford. May 26–27, 2019.

- “Both Jewish and Christian: The Production and Reception of the Sibylline Oracles.” Presented at “At What Point is a ‘Jewish’ (Apocryphal) Text Considered as ‘Christian’?” Roundtable discussion. Humboldt-Universität, Berlin. May 17–18, 2019.
- “The Future—or the Lack Thereof—in the Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles.” Presented at “Figuring the Future.” Yale University. April 27–28, 2019.
- “Murderous Deities: Revelation 2 within a Discourse of Divine Violence.” Presented at the Apocalyptic Session at the Midwest Region Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature. Notre Dame, IN. February 9, 2019.
- 2018
- “Prophecy, Pseudepigraphy, and Collection: The Making of the Sibylline Oracles.” Presented at the Book History and Biblical Literatures Session at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Denver, CO. November 19, 2018.
- “Apollo in Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity.” Presented at the Greco-Roman Religions Session at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Denver, CO. November 17, 2018.
- “The Bible, the Humanities, and the History of the Sibylline Oracles.” Presented at “The Bible and the Humanities.” University of Oxford. October 16–18, 2018.
- Response to Mark Edwards, “Early Christians and Proverbial Literature.” Presented at “Wisdom and Ethics.” University of Oxford. June 4, 2018.
- Response to Helen van Noorden, “Apocalyptic Literature Between Greece and Rome: The Sibylline Oracles.” Presented at the Early Biblical Interpretation Seminar. University of Oxford, April 26, 2018.
- “Prophecy and History in the Jewish Sibylline Oracles.” Presented at the Lunchtime Seminar in Jewish Studies at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies. University of Oxford. March 8, 2018.
- “The Sibyl as Inspired Interpreter: Prophecy, Pseudepigraphy, and Reworked Traditions in the Sibylline Oracles.” Presented at the Early Biblical Interpretation Seminar. University of Oxford. March 1, 2018.
- 2017
- “Revelation’s Combat Myth and Delphic Ambivalence.” Presented at the Bible, Myth, and Myth Theory Session at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Boston, MA. November 20, 2017.
- “Revealed History as Prophetic Rivalry: John’s Apocalypse and Apollo’s Shrine at Delphi.” Presented at “The Sense(s) of History. Apocalyptic Literature and Their Temporalities.” Harvard Divinity School—Enoch Colloquium. Cambridge, MA. November 16–18, 2017.
- “Instrumentality Overshadows Independence: Gender in Sibylline Oracles 4–5.” Presented at “Between Heaven and Earth: Divination, Prophecy, and Oracles in the Ancient World.” Yale University. April 21, 2017.
- “Prophecy, Violence, Delphic Ambivalence: Readings in Lucan’s Civil War and John’s Apocalypse.” Presented at Greco-Roman Lunch. Yale University. February 27, 2017.
- 2016
- “Divine Violence in Sibylline Oracles 4 and 5.” Presented at the Pseudepigrapha Session at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. San Antonio, TX. November 20, 2016.
- “Writing Jewish Prophecy in Egypt: The Production of Sibylline Oracles 5.” Presented at the Yale Interdisciplinary Working Group for the Study of Antiquity. Yale University. January 21, 2016.

- 2015 “Jezebel: A Study in Prophecy, Divine Violence, and Gender.” Presented at the Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense. KU Leuven. July 24, 2015.
 “Rethinking Prophecy: Consolidating Authority in Acts, *Sibylline Oracles* 4, Revelation, and *Sibylline Oracles* 5.” Presented at the Ancient Judaism Regional Seminar. Columbia University, NY, March 15, 2015.
- 2014 Response to Reinhardt Kratz’s “Why Jeremiah? The Invention of a Prophetic Figure.” Presented at “Jeremiah’s Scriptures: Production, Reception, Interaction, Transformation.” Ascona, Switzerland. June 24, 2014.
- 2013 “I will speak...with my whole person in ecstasy”: Controlling Divine Inspiration in the Sibylline Oracles.” Presented at the Speech and Talk: Discourses and Social Practices in the Ancient Mediterranean World Consultation at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Baltimore, MD. November 23, 2013.
- 2012 “Listen to the Sibyl...as she pours forth true speech”: Speech and Hearing in Sibylline Oracles 4.” Presented at the Speech and Talk: Discourses and Social Practices in the Ancient Mediterranean World Consultation at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL. November 17, 2012.

COURSES TAUGHT

Graduate

Hellenistic Judaism (Fall 2022)
 Tutorial in Biblical Studies: Greek and the Septuagint (Spring 2022)
 Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion, Loyola University Chicago (Spring 2021)
 Directed Readings in Performance Criticism, Loyola University Chicago (Spring 2021)
 Acts of the Apostles, Loyola University Chicago (Fall 2019)
 Tutorial in Biblical Studies: New Testament Greek, Loyola University Chicago (2019–20; Spring 2022)
 Elementary New Testament Greek, Yale Divinity School (2016–2017)

Undergraduate

Introduction to Religious Studies (Fall 2022)
 Religion and Gender: Prophecy and Gender in Ancient Judaism and Ancient Christianity, Loyola University Chicago (Spring 2020; J-Term 2022; 2023)
 Introduction to New Testament, Loyola University Chicago (Fall 2018–present)
 Introduction to Christian Theology, Loyola University Chicago (Fall 2018)

OTHER TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Guest Instructor, The New Testament, Trinity University, San Antonio, TX (November 5, 2020)
 Convener, Greek Hour, Loyola University Chicago (Spring 2019–Fall 2019, Spring 2022)
 Teaching Fellow, Sex in the Bible, Yale University (Spring 2015, for Dale B. Martin)
 Teaching Fellow, New Testament Interpretation, Yale Divinity School (Fall 2013–Fall 2014, for Harold Attridge and Michal Beth Dinkler)
 Guest Instructor, Feminist Theology, Yale Divinity School (April 22, 2014)

PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING

Online Teaching Course: Design, Loyola University Chicago (Fall 2019)

All Things Ignatian: Catholic Intellectual Life and the Common Good, Faculty Seminar, Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage, Loyola University Chicago (Fall 2018)

Certificate of College Teaching Preparation, Yale Center for Teaching and Learning (2017)

ACADEMIC HONORS

Centro Stefano Franscini Award, “Jeremiah’s Scriptures” Conference; Ascona, Switzerland (2014)

Summer Language Institute Fellowship, Yale University (2012)

Two Brothers Fellowship, Yale Divinity School (2011)

Abraham Malherbe Scholarship, Yale Divinity School (2011)

Harry Baker Adams Scholarship, Yale Divinity School (2008–2010)

Frank A. and Ruth C. Mullen Scholarship, Yale Divinity School (2007–2008)

President’s Award, Southeastern University (2007)

Religion Department Award, Southeastern University (2007)

President’s Academic Scholarship, Southeastern University (2003–2007)

WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES ORGANIZED

“‘Listen to the Sibyl in all things’: Reconsidering the Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles.” Enoch Nangeroni Meeting, Naples, Italy. June 5–8, 2023. Co-organizer with Gabriele Boccaccini and Hindy Najman.

“The Bible and the Humanities.” University of Oxford. October 16–18, 2018. Postdoctoral Fellow Co-Organizer with Hindy Najman, Arjen Bakker, and Yael Fisch.

“Between Heaven and Earth: Divination, Prophecy, and Oracles in the Ancient World.” Yale University. April 20–21, 2017. Co-Organizer with Maria Gutierrez.

Greco-Roman Lunch. Yale University. Spring 2015–Spring 2016. Graduate Student Co-Coordinator with Niek Janssen and Noreen Sit.

“Philo’s Readers: Affinities, Reception, Transmission and Influence.” Yale University. March 30–April 1, 2014. Graduate Student Conference Organizer with Hindy Najman.

ADVISING AND EXAMINING

Doctoral Dissertation Co-Director with Christopher Skinner, Loyola University Chicago.
Megan Wines, ongoing. “Apocalyptic Masculinity.”

Scott Harris, ongoing. “Artapanus and Greek Colonial Poetics.”

Doctoral Dissertation Committee Member, Loyola University Chicago.

Paul Adaja, Scott Brevard, Zechariah Eberhart, Shane Gormley, Joshua King.

Doctoral Comprehensive Exams Committee Member, Loyola University Chicago.

Scott Harris, Megan Wines.

MA Comprehensive Exams Committee Chair, Loyola University Chicago.

Bethany Rogers.

MA Comprehensive Exams Committee Member, Loyola University Chicago.

Katherine Simion, Julia Rotondi.

MSt and MPhil Marker, Faculty of Theology and Religion, University of Oxford (Spring/Trinity 2018).

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Society of Biblical Literature Service

Steering Committee Co-Chair, John's Apocalypse and Cultural Contexts Ancient and Modern Section, Society of Biblical Literature. 2019–25. Steering Committee Member, 2018–19.

Steering Committee Member, Greco-Roman Religions Section, Society of Biblical Literature. 2020–23. Section Co-Chair, Second Temple Judaism Section, Midwest Region Society of Biblical Literature. 2022–.

Session Chair. John's Apocalypse and Cultural Contexts Ancient and Modern. Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. November 22, 2021.

Session Chair. John's Apocalypse and Cultural Contexts Ancient and Modern. Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. San Diego, CA. November 25, 2019.

Session Chair. Speech and Talk in the Ancient Mediterranean World. Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Boston, MA. November 19, 2017.

University Service, Loyola University Chicago

Co-founder and Organizer, Premodern Working Group. 2021–present.

Member, Assistant Professor of New Testament Search Committee. 2021–22.

Member, Society for Textual Scholarship Conference Committee. 2021–22.

Member, Undergraduate Learning Committee. Spring 2022.

Member, Crown Fellowships Committee. Spring 2021.

Co-coordinator, Theology Department Newsletter. Spring 2021.

Reading Group Organizer, Theories of Language. Spring 2020.

Member, Theology Department Advisory Committee. 2019–20.

Member, Theology Department Development Identity Mission Committee. 2019–2020.

Member, Edward J. Surtz, S.J. Memorial Lecture in the Humanities Committee. 2019–present.

Convener, Applying for an Academic Job. Graduate Professionalization Session, Theology Department. August 23, 2019.

Founder and Organizer, New Testament Colloquium. New Testament/Early Christianity Section, Theology Department. 2018–present.

Convener, Annual SBL/AAR Mock Session. Graduate Professionalization Session, Theology Department. 2018–present.

Member, Theology Department Undergraduate Programming Committee. 2018–19.

University Service, University of Oxford

Postdoctoral Fellow Co-Convener. “How to Write Conference Abstracts.” Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Postgraduate Professionalization Session. University of Oxford. February 8, 2018.

Postdoctoral Fellow Co-Convener. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Postgraduate Writers' Workshop. University of Oxford. Spring 2018.

Postdoctoral Fellow Co-Convener. “Presenting at SBL/AAR.” Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Postgraduate Professionalization Session. University of Oxford. November 6, 2017.

OTHER PRESENTATIONS (SELECTED)

“Women and Spirit-Inspired Speech in Luke’s Infancy Narrative.” Invited lecture (delivered as a Bible study), All Saints Episcopal Church. Chicago, IL. December 19, 2019.

“The Work of the Graduate Student.” Loyola-Marquette Graduate Theology Colloquium. February 23, 2019.

Homilies. St. John’s Episcopal Church. New Haven, CT. September 2012; July 2013; August and October 2016; July 2017.

OTHER EDITORIAL AND REVIEW ACTIVITY

Manuscript Review for *Library of New Testament Studies*, T & T Clark; *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*; *Hermathena*.

Editorial Assistant

Marginality, Canonicity, Passion. Edited by Marco Formisano and Christina Shuttleworth Kraus. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Sibyls, Scriptures, and Scrolls: John Collins at Seventy. Edited by Joel S. Baden, Hindy Najman, and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar. JSJSup 175. Leiden: Brill, 2017.

SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Catholic Biblical Association
Chicago Society of Biblical Research
Society of Biblical Literature