

## **ELENA V. KRAVCHENKO**

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Washington University in St. Louis  
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### **Professional Experience:**

#### **Washington University in St. Louis**

*Senior Lecturer*, Religious Studies Program

2023-present

*Lecturer*, Religious Studies Program

2017-2023

*Faculty Affiliate*, Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity & Equity

2021-present

### **Courses:**

- Thinking About Religion
- Religion in the Kitchen
- Global Christianities
- American Christianities
- Material Religion (Capstone)
- Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion
- Religion, Transnationalism, and Diaspora
- Whiteness and the Making of Religion in the U.S.
- Religion, Clothing, and Bodily Adornment
- Religion and Film in America

### **Research Interests:**

- Christianity in the United States
- Religion and Race in the United States
- Religion and Material Culture
- Religion, Immigration, Trans-Nationalism
- Ethnicity and Gender in Orthodox Christianity

### **Education:**

#### **University of Texas at Austin**

May 2017

Ph.D. Religious Studies

Dissertation – *Orthodox Women in America: The Making of a Liberal-Conservative Subject*

May 2014

M.A. Religious Studies

#### **Duke University**

May 2012

M.A. Religion

M.A. Report – *Relational Objects: Icons in Lives of Orthodox and Protestant Christians*

#### **West Virginia Wesleyan College**

August 2005

M.B.A. Business Administration

#### **University of Virginia**

May 2001

B.A. Religious Studies

### **Publications – Books:**

- *Becoming Orthodox: Women, Religion, and Ethnicity in the American South*  
Fordham University Press – In production, forthcoming Spring 2026

### **Publications – Peer-Reviewed Articles:**

- The Makings of Faith: Human Intentions and Material Influences in the Orthodox Christian Practice of Iconography. *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art, and Belief*. Vol. 19, No 1, 2023, pp. 55-78.
- The Matter of Race: Brotherhood of St. Moses the Black and the Retelling of African American History through Orthodox Christian Forms. *Journal of American Academy of Religion*. Vol. 89, No 1, 2021, pp. 298-333.
- Black Orthodox "Visual Piety": People, Saints, and Icons in the Pursuit of Reconciliation. *Journal of Africana Religions*. Vol 8, No 1, 2020, pp. 84-121.
- Becoming Eastern Orthodox in Diaspora: Materializing Orthodox Russia and Holy Rus'. *Religion*. Vol. 48, No. 1, 2018, pp. 37-63.

### **Publications – On-line Academic Platforms:**

- Icon of Mary. *An Online Journal of the Center for the Study of Material and Visual Cultures of Religion* 2014. <http://mavcor.yale.edu/conversations/object-narratives/icon-mary>

### **Book Reviews:**

- Review of Jodi Eichler-Levine, *Painted Pomegranates and Needlepoint Rabbis: How Jews Craft Resilience and Create Community* (ReadingReligion, 2021).
- Review of Wallace D. Best, *Langston's Salvation: American Religion and the Bard of Harlem* (Journal of African American History. Vol. 105, No. 1, 2020).
- Review of Helena Kupari, *Lifelong Religion as Habitus: Religious Practice among Displaced Karelian Orthodox Women in Finland* (ReadingReligion, 2019).
- Review of Timothy Carroll, *Orthodox Christian Material Culture: Of People and Things in the Making of Heaven* (AnthroCyBib, 2018).

### **Awards, Research Fellowships, and Grants:**

#### **Fordham University, Orthodox Christian Studies Center:**

*Orthodox Christian Studies NEH Faculty Fellowship*

2024-2025

#### **University of Texas at Austin:**

- Bruton Fellowship Fall 2016
- Graduate School Continuing Fellowship Fall 2013, Spring 2015, 2016 and 2017

### **Invited Talks:**

#### **• University of Pennsylvania**

Public talk and discussion for Dr. Reyhan Durmaz' *Orthodox America*. September 12, 2023

#### **• Florida State University**

Zoom talk and discussion for Dr. Sonia Hazard's *Christianity, Art, and Materiality*. November 19, 2022; November 2, 2023

### **Conference Presentations:**

- American Academy of Religion (Afro-American Religious History Unit) November 2023  
Paper: *The Sound of “Sorrowful Joy”: African American Practices of Orthodox Liturgical Forms*
- Midwest AAR, Missouri State University March 2023  
Paper: *African American Practices of Orthodox Liturgy: Spatial Approach to the Study of Christian Sounds*
- AAIHS, University of Nevada, Las Vegas March 2022  
Paper: *Remembering Saints: Orthodox Materiality, Sacred Space, and a Quest for Racial Equality*
- CSRC, AAAD, Quarles Conference, Morgan State University October 2021  
Paper: *Materializing Equality: African American Orthodox Christian Visions of Racial Justice*
- Society for the Anthropology of Religion (Orthodoxy, Alterity, Worldmaking) May 2021  
Paper: *African American Engagements with the Theotokos: Cultivating Religious and Political Commitments through Orthodox Practice*
- American Academy of Religion Midwest (Gender and Religion Unit) April 2021  
Paper: *Women and Pandemic: The Effects of Gendering Religious and Academic Labor*
- American Academy of Religion (Religion, Memory, History Unit) November 2019  
Paper: *Sacred Fight against Racism: Remembering African American History through Orthodox Christian Forms*
- American Academy of Religion (Eastern Orthodox Studies Unit) November 2018  
Paper: *Protestants and Iconography in the United States: Of Commodities and Social Reform*
- American Academy of Religion (Afro-American Religious History Unit) November 2018  
Paper: *“To be Black and Orthodox:” African Saints and Reconfiguration of Religion and Race*
- Midwest American Academy of Religion (Material/Sensory Cultures Unit) March 2018  
Paper: *“Flowers in God’s Garden”: Icon Veneration as a Material Practice of “Religio-Racial” Identities*
- Graduate Student Conference at the University of Florida January 2017  
Paper: *The Affect of the Nation: Forming Russian Orthodox Womanhood*
- American Academy of Religion (Ritual Studies Unit) November 2015  
Paper: *Becoming a Russian Orthodox Woman in America: Engaging Pre- and Modern Subjectivities*
- American Academy of Religion (Eastern Orthodox Studies Unit) November 2014  
Paper: *Protestant Converts and the Veneration of Orthodox Saints: Utilizing Multiple Subjectivities*
- International Graduate Conference at the UTexas at Arlington September 2014  
Paper: *Bringing Orthodox Russia and Holy Rus’ into Existence in Austin, Texas*
- American Academy of Religion (Eastern Orthodox Studies Unit) November 2013  
Paper: *Building a Sacred Relationship: Female Bloggers’ Affective Attachment to Orthodox Icons*
- Graduate Student Conference at the University of Texas at Austin March 2013  
Paper: *Making Secular Sacred: Icon Veneration in a Church and a Museum*

### **Conference Panel Participation:**

#### **Panelist:**

- American Academy of Religion November 2021  
Childhood Studies and Religion Unit Session: *Living and Growing Prayers: Children, Time, and the Study of Religion*
- American Academy of Religion November 2017  
Exploratory Session: *Religion, Diaspora, and the Homeland: Theorizing the Religious in Diaspora and the Diasporic in Religion*

#### **Respondent/Moderator:**

- American Academy of Religion Midwest, *Religion and American Culture Section*
  - Panel: *Spirituality and Consumerism* March 2024
  - Panel: *Religion and National Belonging* (organized/did not moderate) March 2024
  - Panel: *Imagining and Imaging Religion in America* March 2023
  - Panel: *Practicing and Authorizing Religious "Mixture"* March 2022
  - Panel: *Surveillance of Religion, Gender, and Race* March 2022
  - Panel: *Regulations of Accessibility at the Intersection of Religion and American Culture* March 2021
- Graduate Student Conference at the University of Texas at Austin April 2017  
Panel: *Authority, Responsibility and the Body in Society*

#### **Languages:**

- Russian – Native Language
- Belarusian – 2nd Native Language (good reading proficiency)
- Polish – 2-year work-stay in Poland (good reading and speaking proficiency)
- German – 5 college-level semester courses (fair reading proficiency)

#### **Works in Progress:**

- *Recovering Orthodox Christianity: Material Productions of Religion and Race in the American Midwest.* (Book manuscript: under review with NYU press.)
- *Pandemic and the Labor of Care: How do Orthodox Women's Experiences Help Scholars Better Understand those of Women in Academia?* (Article: in revision for *Religion and Gender*.)

#### **Service:**

##### **Washington University in St. Louis**

- *Faculty Mentor*, Naomi Kim, Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity & Equity 2023-24
- *Faculty Advisor* to students minoring in Religious Studies spring 2022-present
- *Faculty Sponsor*, IRB for Kaysie Wachs' Capstone Research Paper spring 2021
- *Faculty Advisor*, Theta Alpha Kappa, the Religious Studies Honor Society 2017-present
- *Faculty Advisor*, RS Capstone Seminar Writing Workshop/Supervision 2017-present
- *Religious Studies Program Representative* for Mentor Connections November 2017, 2018
- *Religious Studies Program Representative* for Freshmen SOAR Summer 2018

##### **American Academy of Religion**

- AAR Mid-West Region Section Chair: *Religion and American Culture* 2020-2024

### **Service (Continued):**

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## Publication Service

- *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art, and Belief*  
Manuscript Reviewer 2018, 2020/2021, 2021/2023
- *Religions*  
Manuscript Reviewer 2021
- *Journal of Orthodox Christian Studies*  
Manuscript Reviewer 2022

### **Professional Memberships:**

- American Academy of Religion 2011, 2013-present
- Graduate Committee for the Study of Religion at the UTexas at Austin 2012-2017
  - Position: Director of Professionalization Colloquium Committee 2012-2014
- Society for the Academic Study of Religion at Duke 2010-2012

### **Work and Teaching Experience:**

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**University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX**

- Assistant Instructor/Instructor of Record (Introduction to the Study of Religion) Fall 2016
- Mentor to Student-Athletes Fall 2015
- Teaching Assistant (Chad Seales: Introduction to the Study of Religion) Fall 2015
- Teaching Assistant (Chad Seales: Evangelical Christianity) Fall 2014
- Teaching Assistant (Jennifer Graber: History of Religion in the US) Spring 2014
- Research Assistant (Thomas Tweed) Fall 2012-Summer 2013

## **Colonial Beach High School, Colonial Beach, VA**

## Business/Technology Instructor

## **Oak Hill Academy, Mouth of Wilson, VA**

### Accounting Instructor, Librarian