



Deborah L. Forger
Department of Middle East Studies
Frankel Center for Judaic Studies
202. S. Thayer St., 3167 STB
Ann Arbor, MI 48104 USA
dkforger@umich.edu
C: 734-649-6700

ACADEMIC POSITIONS:
Research and Teaching

Lecturer
Ancient Judaism and
Early Christianity

University of Michigan: Department of Middle East Studies, Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, Ann Arbor, MI

Affiliations: LSA Studying Religion, International Program of Ancient History. Research Fellow, August 2021–2022. Lecturer, August 2022–present

Visiting Research Scholar
Second Temple Judaism and
the New Testament

Dartmouth College: Jewish Studies Program, Hanover, NH
July 2021–present

Postdoctoral Fellow
Second Temple Judaism and
the New Testament

Dartmouth College: Jewish Studies Program, Hanover, NH
Affiliations: Religious Studies, Middle East Studies, July 2018–July 2021

Institute Fellow
Second Temple Judaism

University of Michigan: Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, Ann Arbor, MI
Themed Year: Second Temple Judaism: The Challenge of Diversity. July 2017–July 2018

EDUCATION:

University of Michigan

Doctor of Philosophy, 2017
Department of Middle East Studies; Second Temple Judaism and the New Testament

University of Michigan

Master of Arts, 2012
Department of Middle East Studies; Second Temple Judaism and the New Testament

Duke University

Master of Divinity, 2007
Duke Divinity School; Biblical Studies, with a focus in Hebrew Bible, summa cum laude

Calvin College

Bachelor of Science, 2003
Psychology (major); Biology (major); Religion (minor), summa cum laude

PUBLICATIONS:

Books

In Preparation

The Knowing Body: God's Forms in John and Ancient Judaism
Monograph. Slated for Delivery to Cambridge University Press: February 2025.

In Preparation

God's Body: Divine Embodiment in the Hebrew Bible, Ancient Judaism, and the New Testament. Co-Edited Volume with Brittany Wilson. Slated for Delivery to Press: December 2026.

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles

Under Review

"Reclaiming History, Confronting Antisemitism: The New Testament and in its Jewish Context." *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology.*

2022

"The Eye, the Sense of Sight, and Seeing God: Reflections on God's (In)Visibility considering Early Jewish-Christian Relations." *Ancient Jew Review*

2020

"Jesus as God's Word(s): Aurality, Epistemology, and Embodiment in the Gospel of John." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 42.3 (2020): 274–302

- 2020 “**God Made Manifest: Josephus, Idolatry, and Divine Images in Flavian Rome.**” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 51 (2020): 231-260
- 2018 “**Divine Embodiment in Philo of Alexandria.**” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 49.2 (2018): 223-262
- 2016 “**Interpreting the Syrophenician Woman to Construct Jewish-Christian Fault Lines: John Chrysostom and the Pseudo-Clementine Homilist in Chrono-Locational Perspective.**” *Journal of the Jesus Movement in its Jewish Setting* 3 (2016); 132–166

Book Chapters

- In Preparation “**Textual Issues and Specific Readings in John 7:1-8:59.**” Slated for delivery to *T & T Clark’s Handbook of Johannine Studies*.
- 2023 “**Christianity and Antisemitism,**” with Susannah Heschel. In *The Routledge History of Antisemitism*, eds. Mark Weitzman, Robert J. Williams, and James Wald. Routledge
- 2021 “**The Pharisees in Modern Scholarship,**” with Susannah Heschel. In *The Pharisees and Their History of Interpretation*, eds. Amy-Jill Levine and Joseph Sievers, Eerdmans
- 2018 “**Bodies.**” In *Jews and the Material in Antiquity*, eds. C. Mike Chin and Chaya Halberstam. Frankel Institute Annual. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (2018): 13–15
- 2013 “**Shifting Views of Heaven, Hell, and the Afterlife in the Second Century CE,**” in *Heaven, Hell, and Afterlife: Eternity in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam and Other Interesting Traditions*, vol. 2. Ed. J. Harold Ellens; Westport, CT: ABC-CLIO Praeger (2013): 61–81

Pedagogy Essays, Public Scholarship

- 2020 “**Parchment Packages in the Digital Classroom,**” *Ancient Jew Review*. August 26, 2020
- 2014 “**Lessons Learned from the Search for Academic Funding.**” Guest Blog Post. Rackham Graduate Newsletter. University of Michigan

Book Reviews

- In Preparation Review of Jonathan Adler. *The Origins of Judaism: An Archaeological-Historical Reappraisal*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2022.
- 2018 Review of C.D. Elledge. *Resurrection of the Dead in Early Judaism*. 200 BCE–CE 200. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. *AJS Review*
- 2013 Review of Paula Fredriksen. *Sin: The Early History of an Idea*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012. 208 pp. *Reviews of the Enoch Seminar*
- 2012 Review of Yonder Moynihan Gillihan. *Civic Ideology, Organization, and Law in the Rule Scrolls: A Comparative Study of the Covenanters’ Sect and Contemporary Voluntary Associations*. Leiden: Brill, 2012. xxvii + 614 pp. *Henoah* 34 (2012): 178–80
- 2011 Review of Robert Alan Kraft. *Exploring the Scripturesque: Jewish Texts and their Christian Contexts*. Supplements to the Journal of the Study of Judaism, 137. Leiden: Brill, 2009. 288 pp. *Henoah* 33 (2011): 145–47

GLOBAL RESEARCH AWARDS

Biblical Archaeology Society

Best Book in New Testament Studies: 2023

Contributed the Chapter, “The Pharisees in Modern Scholarship,” co-written with Susannah Heschel. In *The Pharisees and Their History of Interpretation*, eds. Amy-Jill Levine and Joseph Sievers, Eerdmans

Zohrab Liebmann Fellowship \$85,500 **Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fellowship:** 2014–2017
 Dissertation Project, Divine Embodiment in Jewish Antiquity: Rediscovering the Jewishness of John's Incarnate Christ

RESEARCH AWARDS FROM DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

Jewish Studies Program \$174,600 **Postdoctoral Fellow:** 2018–2021
 Project: The Knowing Body, God's Forms in Ancient Jewish and Early Christian Traditions

Leslie Center for the Humanities \$1,000 **Faculty Fellowship:** 2020–2021
 Project: The Embodied God in Early Jewish Tradition

RESEARCH AWARDS FROM THE U OF MICHIGAN:

Department of Middle East Studies \$53,760 **Postdoctoral Fellowship:** 2021–2022
 Project: The Embodied God in Jewish and Christian Antiquity

LEO Professional Development \$2,000 **Faculty Fellowship:** 2022-2023
 Project: The Knowing Body, God's Form in the Ancient Jewish and Christian Imagination

Frankel Center for Judaic Studies \$45,000 **Frankel Institute Fellow:** 2017-2018
 Theme Year: Jews and the Material

Frankel Center for Judaic Studies \$2,000 **Stanley Frankel Center Summer Fellowship for Research:** 2016
 Project: Divine Knowing

Rackham Graduate School \$18,600 **Rackham Humanities Research Fellowship:** 2014–2015
 Project: God's Body in Jewish Antiquity

Rackham Graduate School \$8,500 **Lipschutz, Host, Smith Graduate Fellowship:** 2013–2014

Rackham Graduate School \$750 **Rackham Travel Grant:** 2013

Rackham Graduate School \$8,000 **Radcliffe/Ramsdell Fellowship:** 2012–2013

Frankel Center for Judaic Studies \$2,000 **Stanley Frankel Center for Judaic Studies Travel Fellowship:** 2013

Michigan Center (MCES) \$600 **Michigan Center for Early Christianity (MCECS) Graduate Student Award:** 2012–2013

Department of Near Eastern Studies, \$1,300 **Spring/Summer Fellowship:** 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010

Rackham Graduate School \$750 **Travel Grant:** 2012

RESEARCH AWARDS FROM DUKE UNIVERSITY

The Duke Grant \$13,090 **Merit Scholarship,** Duke University: 2006–2007

Cushman Memorial Scholarship \$13,827 **Cushman Memorial Scholarship,** Duke University: 2005–2006

Fred W. Bradshaw Scholarship **Merit Scholarship,** Duke University: 2004–2005

\$5,726

Divinity Student Council **International Travel Fellowship:** 2006
\$2,500

AWARDS FROM FOUNDATIONS

Lilly Foundation **Fund for Theological Education,** Residency in Ministry: 2007–2009
\$107,140

W.B. Small Trust **W.B. Small Trust Scholarship,** Duke University: 2004–2007
\$7,500

Center for Faith & Scholarship **Graduate Fellowship:** 2010-2012
\$1,000

Graduate Study Scholarship **Presbyterian Women Graduate Fellowship,** Presbyterian Church of America (PCUSA)
\$650 2009–2010

Lilly Foundation **Vocational Friendship Grant:** 2010–2011
\$500

Presbyterian Women **Presbyterian Women Graduate Study Scholarship:** 2009–2010
\$2,500

Collegeville Institute **Writer’s Workshop:** 2008
\$500

Dorot Foundation **Dorot Foundation Travel Grant:** 2006
\$2,500

PEDAGOGY AWARDS FROM THE U OF MICHIGAN:

Center for Research on Learning **Gilbert Whitaker Pedagogy Fund Grant:** 2022-2025
and Technology (CRLT) Project: Embodied Knowledge in the Post-Pandemic Humanities Classroom
\$6,000

Department of Middle East Studies **NCFDD Teaching Toolkit:** 2023
\$495 Project: Embodied Pedagogy

Sweetland Center for Writing **Gayle Morris Sweetland Center for Writing Junior Fellow:** 2014–2015
\$15,000 Project: Teaching Courses with an Upper-Level Writing Component

Center for Research on Learning **Intercampus Mentorship Program:** 2015
and Technology (CRLT) Mentor: Jocelyn McWhirter, Albion College

Middle East Studies **Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor:** 2012–2013
\$500

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

COURSES DEVELOPED AND TAUGHT (University of Michigan):

Gateway Courses **Intro to the New Testament:**
(25-50 enrolled) Winter 2024, Winter 2025

How Religions are Born: The Origins of Judaism & Christianity
Winter 2023, Fall 2023, Fall 2024, Fall 2025

The Jewish Jesus: Jesus in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam
Fall 2025

Undergraduate Seminars
(15-30 enrolled)

Jewish & Christian Women in the Ancient Mediterranean
Fall 2022, Fall 2024

The Bible as a Material Object
Winter 2023, Winter 2024, Winter 2025, Winter 2026

Jesus and the Gospels
Summer 2015

COURSES DEVELOPED AND TAUGHT (Dartmouth College):

Undergraduate Seminars
(15-20 enrolled)

The Jewish Jesus
Spring 2020, Summer 2021

COURSES TAUGHT AND DEVELOPED, RENK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, RENK, SUDAN

Language Seminars
(10-15 enrolled)

Intro to Koine Greek
Summer 2009

OTHER COURSES TAUGHT (Graduate Student Instructor, University of Michigan)

Gateway Courses
(50-75 enrolled)

The Land of Israel/Palestine Through the Ages
Spring 2014

Christianity after the New Testament
Winter 2013

Jesus and the Gospels
Fall 2012

Intro to the New Testament
Winter 2011, Winter 2012

INVITED TALKS

University of California Davis

“The Embodied God in Ancient Jewish Tradition.” New Directions in Jewish Studies Lecture Series. April 14, 2021

Boston University

“Aurality, Epistemology, and Embodiment in the Gospel of John.” Boston, MA, Nov. 4, 2019

University of Texas at Austin

“The Jewish Milieu of John’s Incarnate Christ.” Austin, TX. May 21, 2017.

McMaster University

“Divine Embodiment in Jewish Antiquity.” Hamilton, ON. December 13, 2016.

Georgia State University

“God’s Embodiment and the Gospel of John.” Atlanta, Georgia. May 4, 2015

Albion College

“The Gospel of John’s Paradoxical Relationship to Judaism.” Albion, MI. Nov. 6, 2015

CAMPUS TALKS

Jewish Studies Seminar Series

“The Body of God in Jewish Antiquity.” Jewish Studies Seminar Series. Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH. November 10, 2021

Leon Black Lecture Series	“Was Jesus Really Jewish? Notes from the Front Lines of Scholarship.” Dartmouth College. Hanover, NH. July 30, 2019
Kelsey Museum of Archeology	“Vespasian.” Frankel Center for Judaic Studies & Kelsey Museum of Archeology. University of Michigan. Ann Arbor, MI. November 28, 2018
Frankel Institute for Judaic Studies	““The Embodied Nature of Jesus’s λόγος in the Gospel of John.” University of Michigan. Ann Arbor, MI. November 15, 2018
University of Michigan Musical Society	“Bach’s St. John’s Passion in Historical Perspective: How Bach Underscores Differences between the Gospel of John and the Synoptics in his Music.” Pre-performance. University of Michigan. Ann Arbor, MI. March 15, 2016.
Judaic Studies Graduate Student Seminar Series	“The De-Gendering of Divine <i>Sophia</i>.” Seminar Series in Judaic Studies. Ann Arbor, MI. April 15, 2016
Near Eastern Studies Graduate Student Colloquium	“Was Philo of Alexandria <i>Really</i> a Monotheist? A Test Case of the ‘So-Called’ Monotheism of Second Temple Judaism.” Near Eastern Studies Graduate Student Colloquium. Ann Arbor, MI. February 23, 2014.

CONFERENCE ACTIVITY

Conferences Organized

Nangeroni Meeting	“God’s Body in the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, and Early Christianity.” Nangeroni Meeting. Enoch Seminar. Italy. June. In preparation, June 2025
Michigan Center for Early	“Christianity and Science Fiction.” On-line Conference. October 11–12, 2021
Nangeroni Meeting	“John the Jew: Reading the Gospel of John’s Christology as a Form of Jewish Messianism.” Nangeroni Meeting. Camaldoli, Italy. June 19–24, 2016

Colloquium Organized

Enoch Seminar Pre-SBL Colloquium	“The Gospel of John: Anti-Jewish or Radical Jewish Sectarianism?” Enoch Seminar. San Diego, CA. Nov. 22, 2019.
-------------------------------------	---

Papers Presented

2025	“What <i>Kind</i> of Body? God’s Forms in John and Jewish Antiquity.” Nangeroni Meeting. Enoch Seminar. Italy. June. In preparation, June 2025
2023	“The Johannine Jesus and God’s Fluid Body.” Society of Biblical Literature Annual meeting. San Antonio, TX. Nov. 19.
2022	“God Gazing: Reflections on the Relationship between God’s (In)Visibility an (In)Corporeality.” Seminar on Visuality in Jewish Greek Literature. University of Cambridge. Cambridge, UK. July 14-15.
2022	“The Luminous-Bodies of God.” Studies in Second Temple Judaism: A Global Enterprise. Enoch Seminar. International Online Conference. Jan. 10-13.
2021	“The Eye, the Sense of Sight, and Seeing God: Reflections on God’s (In)Visibility in Light of Early Jewish-Christian Relations.” Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. San Antonio, TX. Nov. 20-23.
2021	“Jesus-oriented Judaism: Jesus’ Speech and the Logos-Concept as a Test Case.” Society of Biblical Literature Annual meeting. San Antonio, TX. Nov. 20-23, <i>postponed to 2022, due to Covid-19.</i>
2021	“God’s Fiery Body. Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies.” Frankel Fellows Seminar. Ann Arbor, MI. Oct. 20.

- 2021 “**The Luminous-Bodied Divinity Tradition.**” Divine Bodies Conference. University of Glasgow. April.
- 2020 “**John within Judaism.**” Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Boston, MA. Nov, *postponed to 2021, due to Covid-19.*
- 2019 “**Review of Christoph Marksches’ *Gottes Körper (God’s Body)*.**” Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. San Diego, CA. Nov. 23–26.
- 2018 “**John 9, the Sense of Hearing, and Belief in Jesus as the Unique Embodiment of God.**” Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Denver, CO. Nov. 17–20.
- 2018 “**God Made Manifest: The Jewish High Priest as Visible Counterpoint to Deified Emperors in the Greco-Roman World?**” Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Denver, CO. Nov. 17–20.
- 2018 “**The Jewish High Priest as Materializing Israel’s God?**” Materializing Ancient Judaism Colloquium. Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies. University of Michigan. Ann Arbor, MI. Apr. 9–10.
- 2016 “**Jewish-Christian Relations in Fourth Century Roman Syria/Palestine: Could Oral Remembrances of Jesus’s Words Link the PsCI *Homilies* to Rabbinic Judaism?**” Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. San Antonio, TX. Nov. 19–22.
- 2016 “**The Central Role of Jesus’ λόγοι in the Gospel of John.**” Nangeroni Meeting. Camaldoli, Italy. June 19–24.
- 2015 “**The Jewish-Christian Nature of the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies*.**” Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Atlanta, Georgia. Nov. 21–24.
- 2015 “**Mystical Ascent in Philo of Alexandria. Enoch Seminar.**” Milan, Italy. June 21–26.
- 2014 “**The Jewish High Priest: Mediator of the Divine. Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting.**” San Diego, CA. November 22–25.
- 2014 “**The Jewish High Priest: Human or Divine Mediator?**” Graduate Enoch Seminar. Montreal, Canada. May 19–22.
- 2013 “**Divine Embodiment in the Gospel of John and Philo’s *De Opificio Mundi* 135.**” Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Baltimore, MD. Nov 23–26.
- 2013 “**The Jewish Roots of Ignatius’ Paradoxical Incarnational Language.**” North American Patristics Society. Chicago, IL. May 23–25.
- 2013 “**A Godly Gentile Woman & the Marginalization of Judaism: Mark 7 and its Early Interpretive History.**” Society of Biblical Literature Midwest Regional Conference. Bourbonnais, IL. February 8–10.
- 2012 “**The ‘Shaping’ of Jesus’s Encounter with the Gentile Woman in Mark 7:24-30/Matthew 15:21-8.**” Graduate Enoch Seminar. Notre Dame, IN. June 18–20.
- 2012 “**Hermeneutical Skepticism & an Incarnational Claim in Justin Martyr’s *Dialogue with Trypho*.**” North American Patristics Society. Chicago, IL, May 24-26.

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION – MANUSCRIPT REVIEWS

Manuscript Reviewer

Cambridge University Press

Article Reviewer

**Journal of Ancient Judaism
Journal for Interdisciplinary Biblical Studies (JIBS)**

Religion Compass

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

Society of Biblical Literature **Steering Committee**, Early-Jewish Christian Relationship Program Unit, 2024-*present*
Steering Committee, John within Judaism, Subcommittee of the Johannine Literature Program Unit, 2022-*present*

Enoch Seminar **Board Member**, 2020-*present*

4 Enoch **Editorial Board**, 2015-*present*

SERVICE TO UNIVERSITY/DEPARTMENT

2024-2025 **U-M DEI 2.0 Cross-Campus Steering Committee**. Focus: Enhancing Religious, Spiritual, and Interfaith (SSR&I) Diversity on Campus. Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ODEI). Division of Student Life

2021-2024 **Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program Mentor**
2023-2024 (Alexander Valdes); 2022-2023 (Henry Sealey); 2021-2022(Atom Chetcuti); 2022, summer (Atom Chetcuti)

SERVICE TO THE DEPARTMENT

2024-2025 **Organized the Freedman Lectures**, Department of Middle East Studies
Fall 2024: Hugo Mendez; Winter 2025: Laura Nasrallah

2024 **Frankel Center Themed Year. "Legalities: Law and Legal Thinking in Jewish Histories and Cultures."** Organized an Academic Talk. Frankel Center for Judaic Studies
Fall 2024: Paula Fredriksen

2024 **Context for Classics (CFC) Competition**, Reader of Biblical Hebrew Language Submission

2023-*present* **Doctoral Committee Member**: Ronald Ruark

2022-2023 **DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) Committee**, Department of Middle East Studies, University of Michigan

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

2017 **Graduate Teaching Certificate**, Rackham School of Graduate Studies, Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan.

2017 **Graduate Certificate in Judaic Studies**, Frankel Center for Judaic Studies.

MEDIA COVERAGE

2021 **On Biblical Scholarship Podcast Interview**. Hosted by Eric Roseberry.

2017 **God's Embodiment in Jewish Antiquity**. Frankely Judaic Podcast. Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies. University of Michigan. Ann Arbor, MI.

LANGUAGES

Ancient
Greek (Koine): Research Language
Hebrew (Biblical and Rabbinic): Research Language
Syriac, including Aramaic scripts: novice
Coptic: novice

Modern
German: Research Language
Modern Hebrew: Research Language
Spanish: Research Language

