

Curriculum vitae

Samuel P. Catlin

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Personal pronouns: he, him, his

Academic Appointments

2025–present Assistant Professor, Department of Religious Studies, Trinity College

2023–25 Irving M. and Marilyn C. Shuman Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Jewish Thought and Affiliated Faculty, Gender Institute, University at Buffalo, State University of New York

2022–23 Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow, Department of Comparative Literature, Division of the Humanities, and the College, and Affiliated Faculty, Joyce Z. and Jacob Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies, University of Chicago

Education

2022 Ph.D., Religion, University of Chicago Divinity School [*joint degree*]

2022 Ph.D., Comparative Literature, University of Chicago [*joint degree*]
 Dissertation: "The Rest is Literature: Midrash and the Institution of 'Theory'"
 Committee: Sarah Hammerschlag (co-chair for the Divinity School), Na'ama Rokem (co-chair for Comparative Literature), James A. Redfield (reader, St. Louis University)

2017 M.A., Comparative Literature, University of Chicago

2015 B.A., Program in Literary Studies, Middlebury College
 Summa cum laude, Highest Departmental Honors, Phi Beta Kappa

Research and Teaching Interests

religion and literature • modern Jewish thought and literature • US Jewish literature • secularism and the post-secular • Bible as/and literature • history of hermeneutics • rabbinic literature • literary theory and criticism • continental philosophy and critical theory • psychoanalysis • political theory and political theology • theories of gender and sexuality • theories of group identity • anti-Judaism and anti-semitism • Holocaust representation • history of US higher education • the US "culture wars" • critical university studies • canon, tradition, and authority • reception studies • Milton

Publications

Peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters

"Auerbach's Abraham(s): Hebrew Biblical Narrative and the Genesis of Critical Reading." *Prooftexts* (forthcoming).

"Text." In Sarah Hammerschlag, ed., *Critical Terms for Religious Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2025): 403–418.

"Milton's Terrorism: Literature and Religion After 9/11." In Sheera Talpaz and Anuradha Needham, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Cultural Text and the Nation* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2025): 223–235.

"Rabbinic Exegesis and Literary Theory." In Naomi Seidman, ed., *Oxford Bibliographies in Jewish Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023), online publication:
<https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/display/document/obo-9780199840731/obo-9780199840731-0226.xml?rskey=ntbAul&result=162>.

"'No Sin to Limp': Critique as Error in Geoffrey Hartman's Essays on Midrash." *Naharaim: Zeitschrift für deutsch-jüdische Literatur und Kulturgeschichte* 16.1 (June 2022): 53–77.

Book reviews

"Canceling the World." Review of Adrian Daub, *The Cancel Culture Panic: How an American Obsession Went Global* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2024). *The New Republic* (Dec. 2024 issue):
<https://newrepublic.com/article/188316/cancel-culture-panics-ate-world>.

Review of Aïcha Liviana Messina, *The Writing of Innocence: Blanchot and the Deconstruction of Christianity* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2022). *Reading Religion* (July 8, 2024):
<https://readingreligion.org/9781438488998/the-writing-of-innocence/>.

"Lee Edelman's Lesson." Review essay on Lee Edelman, *Bad Education: Why Queer Theory Teaches Us Nothing* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2022). *Parapraxis* 3 (Winter 2023–24):
<https://www.parapraxismagazine.com/articles/lee-edelmans-lesson>.

Review of Jonathan Freedman, *The Jewish Decadence: Jews and the Aesthetics of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021). *Reading Religion* (September 30, 2022):
<https://readingreligion.org/9780226580920/the-jewish-decadence/>.

Public humanities

"Seeing Without Guarantees." *Mid Theory Collective*, forum on "The Gaze" (February 5, 2025):
<https://mid-theory.com/2025/02/05/seeing-without-guarantees/>.

"Real Women." *Post 45: Contemporaries*, cluster on "Suspicion," edited by Eleanor Russell (July 30, 2024): <https://post45.org/2024/07/real-women/>.

"Sibboleth: A Reply to Zadie Smith." *Political Theology* (May 28, 2024):
<https://politicaltheology.com/sibboleth-a-reply-to-zadie-smith-on-the-war-in-gaza/>.

"The Campus Does Not Exist." *Parapraxis* 4 (Summer 2024, published online April 22, 2024):
<https://www.parapraxismagazine.com/articles/the-campus-does-not-exist>.

- "Death of an Author." *Political Theology*, forum on Susan Taubes's *Divorcing* (June 9, 2023): <https://politicaltheology.com/death-of-an-author/>.
- "Who's Afraid of a Little Theory? A History of How One Term Became So Critical to American Conservatives." *Gawker* (July 14, 2022): <https://www.gawkerarchives.com/politics/whos-afraid-of-a-little-theory>.
- "The Will to Ignorance: #MeToo as Pedagogical Crisis." *Religion and Culture*, forum on "Religious Studies After #MeToo" (May 30, 2018): <https://voices.uchicago.edu/religionculture/2018/05/30/the-will-to-ignorance-metoo-as-pedagogical-crisis/>.
- "'A Minimalism of the Frame': Filming the Female Face in Todd Haynes's *Carol*." Invited essay for the Walker Art Center exhibition *Todd Haynes: 25 Years of Killer Films* (Jan. 19, 2016): <https://walkerart.org/magazine/a-minimalism-of-the-frame-filming-the-female-face-in-todd-haynes-carol-2015>.

Selected Grants, Fellowships, and Honors

2025	Summer Fellowship, Institute on the Holocaust and Jewish Civilization, Holocaust Educational Foundation, Northwestern University
2025	Faculty Research Grant, Gender Institute, University at Buffalo, SUNY
2023–24	Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship, Department of Comparative Literature, Division of the Humanities, and the College, University of Chicago [<i>declined</i>]
2023	Summer Fellowship, Institute for Critical Social Inquiry, The New School for Social Research [<i>declined</i>]
2022–24	Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship, University of Chicago Divinity School [<i>declined</i>]
2022	Dissertation awarded <i>Distinction</i> , Department of Comparative Literature and the Divinity School, University of Chicago
2021–22	Junior Fellowship, Martin Marty Center for the Public Understanding of Religion, University of Chicago Divinity School
2021–22	Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Joyce Z. and Jacob Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies, University of Chicago
2021–22	Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Division of the Humanities, University of Chicago [<i>declined</i>]
2021	Finalist, Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Association for Jewish Studies
2019	Conference funding grants from the following University of Chicago entities: Department of Comparative Literature, Divinity Students Association, France–Chicago Center, Franke Institute for the Humanities, Graduate Council, Scherer Center for the Study of American Culture
2015	The Phi Beta Kappa Prize, Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society, Middlebury College Chapter
2015	Theodore S. Woolsey Prize for Outstanding Work in the Study of Sacred Texts, Department of Religion, Middlebury College
2015	Paul Ward '25 Prize, Center for Teaching, Learning, and Research, Middlebury College

Presentations and Conference Activity

Invited presentations and papers

- Oct. 2025 [Title TBA], *New Directions in Religion and Education*, Trinity College
- May 2025 "S(h)ibboleth: Colonial Monolingualism and the Poetics of Cultural Identity," Department of Modern Languages and Cultures, University of Rochester
- March 2025 "Of Texts and Turns," *The Future of the Study of Religion*, Martin Marty Center for the Public Understanding of Religion, University of Chicago Divinity School
- March 2025 "Frames of Freedom," *Free Association: Free Speech*, Pulsion Institute for Psychoanalysis and Psychoanalytic Psychosomatics and the Foundation for Community Psychoanalysis, Brooklyn, NY
- Dec. 2024 "'Talmudic Desires,'" Department of Religious Studies, Trinity College
- Feb. 2024 "'Talmudic Desires,' or, How Not to Read in the Secularist Institution," Department of Religious Studies, University of Virginia
- Oct. 2023 "Disciplining the Talmud," book panel on Federico Dal Bo, *Deconstructing the Talmud: The Absolute Book* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), Department of Jewish Thought, University at Buffalo, SUNY
- March 2023 "Bad Examples: How (Not?) to Read the Hebrew Bible as Literature," Department of Jewish Thought, University at Buffalo, SUNY
- Sept. 2022 "Re-Circumcisions: Tradition and Identity in Handelman, Lacan, Yerushalmi, and Derrida," *Futures of Tradition*, Program in Jewish Studies, Cornell University
- April 2021 "'Strange Power of Speech,'" book panel on Adam Y. Stern, *Survival: A Theological-Political Genealogy* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021), Joyce Z. and Jacob Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies, University of Chicago and the Seminary Co-op Bookstores, Chicago, IL
- Nov. 2018 "Auerbach's Abraham," *Linguistic Homelands: German, Yiddish, Hebrew*, Joyce Z. and Jacob Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies and Franke Institute for the Humanities, University of Chicago

Refereed conference presentations

- Nov. 2025 Roundtable participant, Author-Meets-Critics session for Anthony Petro, *Provoking Religion: Sex, Art, and the Culture Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2025), American Academy of Religion, Boston, MA
- Nov. 2025 Roundtable participant, *The Idea of Children in Late-Stage Empire*, American Studies Association, San Juan, PR
- Jan. 2025 "Said's St. Paul," *Edward Said's Legacy Today*, Modern Language Association, New Orleans, LA

- Nov. 2024 "A Matter of Language," *What's the Matter?: Critical Perspectives on the Material Turn*, American Academy of Religion, San Diego, CA
- Nov. 2024 "Modern Jewish Thought and the Politics of Christianity," panel response, American Academy of Religion, San Diego, CA
- Feb. 2024 "Derrida's Loanwords," *Why 'Jewish American Literature' Matters*, Program in Jewish Studies, Vanderbilt University
- Jan. 2024 "Archive Failure: Fictionalizing the Paul de Man Affair," *Representing the Profession*, Modern Language Association, Philadelphia, PA
- Dec. 2023 "What Does a Student Want?: Notes on Jewish Studies and the 'Campus Culture Wars,'" *Jewish Studies in the Age of Ideological Reproduction*, Association for Jewish Studies, San Francisco, CA
- Nov. 2023 "Screwed Secular," *Philosophy of Religions With(out) Queer Theory*, American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, TX
- March 2023 "Gold Letters on Silver Tablets: Materiality Without Meaning," *Economic Theologies and Theological Economies*, American Comparative Literature Association, Chicago, IL
- Dec. 2022 "How I Learned to Stop Worrying About the Wartime Journalism and Read Paul de Man," *Fascist Intellectuals and the Canons of Jewish Studies*, Association for Jewish Studies, Boston, MA
- Dec. 2021 "Samson in Gaza: Re-Re-Reading Milton After 9/11," *Transmitting Nationalism with the Hebrew Bible*, Association for Jewish Studies, Chicago, IL
- Dec. 2021 "The Usual Suspects: Aesthetic Enchantment and the Judaizing of Theory," *The Use and Abuse of Judaism for Critique*, Association for Jewish Studies, Chicago, IL
- Dec. 2019 "How to Interpret with a Hammer: Talmud and Literary Theory in the Early Issues of *Prooftexts*," *Reconsidering Modern Perspectives on Ancient Judaism*, Association for Jewish Studies, San Diego, CA

Refereed workshop and seminar papers

- Jan. 2022 "Bad Examples: How Not to Read the Bible as Literature," Martin Marty Fellows' Seminar, University of Chicago Divinity School
- July 2021 "'No Sin to Limp': Critique as Error in Geoffrey Hartman's Essays on Midrash," *Jewish Studies Methodology Beyond Cultural Studies and Critical Theory*, American Academy for Jewish Research and Program in Jewish Studies, Cornell University [held remotely due to COVID-19]
- Nov. 2016 "Necromancy at Parnassus: A Renaissance of the Renaissance in Postwar French Thought," Comparative Literature Faculty–Graduate Colloquium, Department of Comparative Literature, University of Chicago

Other presentations

- April 2025 "Text." Open-access video lecture based on my chapter "Text" in Sarah Hammerschlag, ed., *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2025), 403–418, for the websites of the Martin Marty Center for the Public Understanding of Religion and the University of Chicago Press, link forthcoming.
- April 2025 Workshop leader with Ben Ratskoff, "Writing for Publics Beyond the Academy," Liberatory Jewish Studies Network [virtual]

Conference organization

- Oct. 2019 *Religion's Turn: Continental Philosophy of Religions in the 21st Century*, co-organized William Underwood and Matthew Peterson, University of Chicago Divinity School

Panel and roundtable organization

- Jan. 2024 *Representing the Profession*, Modern Language Association, Philadelphia, PA
- Dec. 2023 *Jewish Studies in the Age of Ideological Reproduction*, co-organized with Benjamin Schreier and Kirsten Collins, Association for Jewish Studies, San Francisco, CA
- Nov. 2023 *Philosophy of Religions With(out) Queer Theory*, co-organized with Larisa Reznik, American Academy of Religion, San Diego, CA
- Dec. 2022 *Fascist Intellectuals and the Canons of Jewish Studies*, co-organized with Kirsten Collins, Association for Jewish Studies, Boston, MA
- Dec. 2021 *The Use and Abuse of Judaism for Critique*, co-organized with Kirsten Collins, Association for Jewish Studies, Chicago, IL

As chair/moderator

- Nov. 2019 Panel chair, "Boundaries of Jewishness," *Jewish Difference Under Empire: Identity and Alterity Across France, the Maghreb, and Israel/Palestine*, Joyce Z. and Jacob Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies and the Divinity School, University of Chicago
- Oct. 2019 Panel chair, "Inheritances of Jacques Derrida," *Religion's Turn: Continental Philosophy of Religions in the 21st Century*, University of Chicago Divinity School

Teaching Experience

Trinity College

- RELG 109: Jews and Judaism (Fall 2025)
- RELG 224: American Jewish Literature (Spring 2026)
- RELG 276: Parables in Religion and Literature (Fall 2025)
- RELG 329: Modern Jewish Thought (Spring 2026)

University at Buffalo, SUNY

JDS 103: Introduction to Judaism (Fall 2023, Fall 2024)
JDS 199: First-Year Seminar: Myth and Law (Fall 2024)
JDS 199: First-Year Seminar: Violence and Religion (Fall 2023)
JDS 240: Scripture and Interpretation (Spring 2025)
JDS 313: World Religions (Spring 2024)
JDS 389: The American Jewish Experience (Spring 2024, Spring 2025)

University of Chicago

CMLT 23336: Religion, Nation, Race (Winter 2023)
CMLT 26212: Moses and Modernity (Fall 2022)
CMLT 28881: Secrecy and Exemplarity: Parables and Their Interpretation (Winter 2020)
CMLT 29801: B.A. Thesis Workshop in Comparative Literature I (Fall 2018)
CMLT 29802: B.A. Thesis Workshop in Comparative Literature II (Winter 2019)
CMLT 29803: B.A. Thesis Workshop in Comparative Literature III (Spring 2019)
HUMA 12300: Humanities Core: Human Being and Citizen I (Fall 2017 [TA])
JWST 12000: Jewish Civilization I: Ancient Beginnings to the Medieval Period (Fall 2019 [TA], Fall 2022)
JWST 12001: Jewish Civilization II: The Early Modern Period to the 21st Century (Winter 2023)

Service to the Profession

Current professional affiliations

American Academy of Religion
American Comparative Literature Association
American Studies Association
Association for Jewish Studies

Reader reports

Critical Times
Modern Philology
Studies in American Jewish Literature

Service to Institutions and Departments

University of Chicago

2019–20	Graduate Student Co-Coordinator, Jewish Studies Workshop
2018–21	Financial Manager, Grounds of Being: The Divinity School Coffee Shop

Department of Comparative Literature, University of Chicago

- 2019–20 Graduate Student Representative, Committee on Pedagogical Training
- 2016–17 Co-Founder and Graduate Student Coordinator, Comparative Literature Faculty–
Graduate Colloquium

Selected Media Appearances

- Nov. 2024 Interviewed on *Pod45*, podcast of the journal *Post45*. Episode 20 on the *Post45: Contemporaries* cluster “Suspicion.”
- May 2024 Interviewed on *In Bed with the Right*, podcast of the Clayman Institute for Gender Research at Stanford University, hosted by Moira Donegan and Adrian Daub. Episode 21, “The Campus in the American Imagination.”

Academic Publishing Experience

- 2020–21 Research Assistant to Prof. Michael Fishbane, University of Chicago Divinity School
Duties included: MS typesetting and copyediting, indexing, and publisher liaison for
Biblical Text and Exegetical Culture: Collected Essays of Michael Fishbane, Vol. 1
(Leiden: Brill 2022)

Research Languages

German
French
Hebrew

Professional References

Available upon request.