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Christina Littlefield

Education

October 2007 — May 2012 University of Cambridge Cambridge, England
PhD, Faculty of Divinity

Chosen Nations: The Pursuit of the Kingdom of God and its Influence on Democratic Values in Late Nineteenth Century Britain and the United States.

January 2006 — September 2007 Fuller Theological Seminary, Southwest
Early Church History, Medieval Church History and American Church History
Paid for with a Lilly grant from the Religion Newswriters Association.

August 2002 — December 2003 Pepperdine University Malibu, California
Master of Arts degree in Religion interdisciplinary Communication
Served as teaching assistant for journalism and student newspaper. Master's thesis researched movie representations of God and how they influenced individual representations.

August 1998 — May 2002 Pepperdine University Malibu, California
Bachelor's degree in Journalism with a minor in Religion
Graduated Magna Cum Laude, spent one semester in London International Program.

Work Experience

August 2012 — Present Pepperdine University Malibu, California
Associate Professor of Journalism and Religion, tenured; Currents Magazine Adviser
Teach Jour 241, Introduction to Newswriting; Jour 251/351, Journalism Practicum; Com 400, Ethics; Jour 590, Investigative Reporting; Jour 595, internship; Rel 301, Christianity and Culture; Rel 330, History of Christianity; Rel 538, Religion in America.

July 2015 Los Angeles Times Los Angeles, California
Contractor, Real Time breaking news desk
Covered local and national breaking news, advanced daily stories in web format.

January 2008 — June 2012 Ridley Hall Cambridge, England
Adjunct instructor
Taught courses on diversity/world religions, and applied ethics for students in the Honours Degree in Youth and Community Work and Applied Theology at Ridley Hall's Centre for Youth Ministry. Lead workshops on working with the media and reading philosophy.

October 2003 — September 2007 *Las Vegas Sun* Las Vegas, Nevada
Higher education and religion reporter
Responsible for covering the Nevada System of Higher Education and, effective October 2005, responsible for covering all religious issues affecting the Las Vegas Valley for a 167,000 circulation daily magazine-style, multimedia newspaper and website, lasvegassun.com.

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- Journalist work included television and radio appearances; published 900-plus stories.
- Investigative reporting into construction corruption at the College of Southern Nevada in 2007 led to the conviction and jail sentence of the college's construction chief on felony theft charges, with three other employees accepting plea deals.

August 2002 — May 2003 *The Graphic*, Pepperdine Malibu, California
Graduate Assistant

Served as adviser to student newspaper, training staff members in reporting, writing, editing, lay-out design and photography skills while overseeing all production.

May 2002 – August 2002 *Las Vegas Sun* Las Vegas, Nevada
Staff Writer

Covered general assignment metro desk on afternoon daily, including breaking news, community, health, weather, government, crime, court and general interest news.

May 2001 – August 2001 *Ventura County Star* Ventura, California
Staff Writer

Covered general assignment metro desk on daily, six-county newspaper, including breaking news, community, health, weather, government, crime, court and general interest news.

August 1998 – May 2002 *The Graphic*, Pepperdine Malibu, California
Various positions – Editor in Chief, News Editor, A&E Editor

Editor duties include reporting, writing, editing, lay-out design and photography. Served as news editor and editor in chief the year “The Graphic” won the Associated Collegiate Press Pacemaker at Fall 2001 conference.

Books

Richard Hughes and Christina Littlefield. *Christian America and the Kingdom of God: White Christian Nationalism from the Puritans to Donald J. Trump*. University of Illinois Press, 2025.

Christina Littlefield. *Chosen Nations: Pursuit of the Kingdom of God and its Influence on Democratic Values in Late-Nineteenth Century Britain and the United States*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013.

Book Chapters

“Sowing Seeds: How Walter Rauschenbusch’s Failed Newspaper *For the Right* Germinated His Later Muckraking Work” in *In the Shadow of a Prophet: The Legacy of Walter Rauschenbusch*, edited by William Brackney and David Gushee, Mercer University Press, 2020.

“Walter Rauschenbusch (1861-1918): Providing a Road Map for Social Critique” in *Words and Witnesses: Communication Studies in Christian Thought from Athanasius to Desmond Tutu*, edited by Robert H. Woods and Naaman K. Wood. Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2018.

“Harry Potter as a Metaphor for Struggling with God” in *World Wide Influence of Harry Potter*, edited by Diana Patterson. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009.

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Blind, Peer-Reviewed Journal articles

Christina Littlefield, "Christianizing America: School Board by School Board." *History of Science Journal (ISIS)* "Focus Section: The Culture Wars at 100," **forthcoming June 2025**, edited by Dr. Ed Larson, of Pepperdine University, Dr. Christopher White, of Vassar University, and Dr. Stephen Welden, of the University of Oklahoma.

Christina Littlefield. "Quizzes or Editing Exercises? In Teaching AP Style, Both Methods Work Equally." *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator* 77(1), 61-73. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077695821999281>. First published online March 17, 2021.

Christina Littlefield, Theresa de los Santos, Patrick J. Rear, and Savannah Janssen. "Patriotism and a Free Press: A Content Analysis of Civil Religion in Aaron Sorkin's *The West Wing* and *The Newsroom*." *Journal of Media and Religion*, 17, No. 2 (2018).

Christina Littlefield. "Upping the Ante at Small Colleges: Utilizing Class Websites as Journalism Teaching Clinics." *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator* 73, no. 3 (2018), 308-321. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077695817720761>. First Published online, July 27, 2017.

Christina Littlefield and Falon Opsahl. "Promulgating the Kingdom: Social Gospel Muckraker Josiah Strong." *American Journalism*, 34, no. 4 (2017), 289-312. DOI: 10.1080/08821127.2017.1344060.

Editorial Board Reviewed Articles

Forthcoming: Christina Littlefield. "Exploring Faith's Power to Corrupt or Uplift: The 2024 Journalism Awards of the American Academy of Religion." *Religious Studies Review*.

Christina Littlefield, "Historian Interview." *Historiography in Mass Communication*, Vol. 11 (2025), No. 2. https://history-jmc.com/Home_files/vol.%2011.2%20Historiography.pdf.

Bruce Evensen, John Ferré, Christina Littlefield, and Julie Williams. "How Faith Informs the Work of a Journalism and Mass Communication Historian." *Historiography in Mass Communication* 9(4) 2023. <https://jmc-history.com/Home.html>

Conferences, Papers and Presentations

- Aug. 8, 2025, "Live Streaming Christian Nationalism: How Charlie Kirk Launched Turning Point Faith," AEJMC national conference, Religion and Media Group
- June 5, 2025, Christian Scholars Conference, Abilene, Texas, ***Major Book Review on Christian America and the Kingdom of God***, with Dr. Robert Williams convening, and with panelists Dr. Kelly Elliott, of Abilene Christian University, Dr. James L. Gorman, of Johnson University, and Dr. Stanley Talbert, of Pepperdine University
- May 8, 2025: Harbor: Pepperdine Bible Lectures, "**How to Talk to Your Christian Nationalist Neighbor.**"

- April 16, 2025, Student-run Seaver/Malibu Ecumenical Faith Panel on Christian Nationalism with Dr. Jeff Baker, Dr. Kevin Iga, and the Rev. Dr. Joyce Stickney, rector of St. Aidan's Episcopal Church
- April 4, 2025, Science and the Culture Wars, Vassar University conference, **"Religion and Science in Culture and the Courts,"** panelist with Dr. Ed Larson, Dr. Susan Trollinger, Dr. William Trollinger, Dr. Glenn Branch, speaking on "The Role of Right-Wing Media in Perpetuating the Culture Wars."
- March 19, 2025, Seaver Panel on Trump 2.0, presenting on **Christian Nationalism in Trump's Second Term**, with Dr. Robert Williams, Dr. Karie Riddle, Dr. Chris Soper
- Nov. 24, 2024, American Academy of Religion Evangelical Studies session, **"Dancing on the Knife's Edge: Violence in the Christian Nationalist Rhetoric of Turning Point Faith's Founder Charlie Kirk,"** with co-author Adian Imbrogno
- June 6, 2023, Christian Scholars Conference, Lanier Theological Library Convener and panelist for Christian Nationalism in Historical and Theoretical Perspective, **"How the Christian Left Paradoxically Spurred the Right's Christian Nationalism"**
- May 1 2024, Harbor: Pepperdine Bible Lectures, **"History of Christian Nationalism"**
- March 20, 2024, SEED 2.0, presented on **White Christian Nationalism**
- March 24, 2023, Symposium on the Culture Wars at 100, Pepperdine **"Christianizing America: School Board by School Board."**
- June 8-10, 2022, Christian Scholars Conference, Lipscomb University, **Panelist for 50-year retrospective of Sydney Ahlstrom's A Religious History of the American People**
- May 5, 2022, Harbor: Pepperdine Bible Lectures, **"Walter Rauschenbusch: From Evangelical Pietism to Social Justice Warrior"**
- Feb. 16, 2022, SEED 2.0, Presented on **White Evangelical Racism**
- Feb. 8, 2022, Houghton University Kindschi Faith and Justice Symposium on **"Church United or Divided? Fearless Conversations in an Age of Tribalism."** Invited guest speaker
- Nov. 4, 2021, Chaplain's Office Panel on **Kristin Du Mez' Jesus and John Wayne**, Panelist with Dr. Stewart Davenport and Associate Chaplain Zach Luben
- Aug. 4, 2021, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Virtual Conference, **Respondent on journalism history panel with religious themes**
- Aug. 9, 2020, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Virtual Conference, **"Quizzes or editing exercises? In teaching AP style, both methods work equally"**
- Aug. 8, 2020, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Virtual Conference, **Moderator for Religion and Media Panel: Religious Stereotypes and Conspiracy Theories**
- June 5, 2019, Christian Scholars Conference, Lubbock, Texas, Organized and moderated panel on **"Evangelicals and the News"**

- October 6, 2018, American Journalism Historians Association, Salt Lake City, Utah, **Presented Research in Progress on Social Gospel Muckrakers book project.**
- June 27, 2018, Community of Women Ministers Conference, Pepperdine University, Presented with Dr. Elizabeth Smith on "**Tips for God's Good Work of Writing, Editing, and Publishing**"
- April 10, 2018, "The Legacy of Walter Rauschenbusch," An International Scholarly Conference in Recognition of the Centenary of Professor Rauschenbusch's Death at Mercer University, Atlanta, **Presented paper "Sowing Seeds: How Walter Rauschenbusch's Failed Newspaper *For the Right* Germinated His Later Muckraking Work."**
- March 24, 2018, American Academy of Religion Western Region, Institute of Buddhist Studies, Berkeley, California, **Presented paper "F.D. Maurice and the Little Paper for Dockworkers that Inspired Future Social Gospel Muckrakers."**
- April 7, 2017, American Society of Church History, Berkeley, California, **Presented paper: *For the Right: Social Gospel leader Walter Rauschenbusch's failed newspaper for working men.***
- Aug. 7, 2014, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Montreal, Canada, **Presented peer-reviewed poster "Promulgating the Kingdom: Social Gospel Muckrakers Josiah Strong and Hugh Price Hughes."**
- April 1, 2015, Pepperdine University, Malibu, California
- **Moderator: Interfaith Panel on Immigration Reform,** With guest speakers Edina Lekovic of the Muslim Public Affairs Council and Rabbi Mark Diamond, with the American Jewish Committee. Co-sponsored by the Pepperdine Provost's Office and the Glazer Institute for Jewish Studies.
- Oct. 30, 2013, Pepperdine University, Malibu, California
- **Moderator/Participant: Interfaith Panel on Religion in the Public Sphere**
- With guest speakers Marium Mohiuddin of the Muslim Public Affairs Council and Zev Garber, professor emeritus for Jewish Studies at Los Angeles Valley College. Co-sponsored by the Pepperdine Provost's office and the Glazer Institute for Jewish Studies.
- Nov. 25, 2013, American Academy of Religion, Baltimore, Maryland, **Presented paper "Pragmatism and Nationalism in the Work of Josiah Strong"** for a joint session of the Liberal Theologies group and Pragmatism and Empiricism in American Religious Thought on the theme "New Approaches to Social Gospel Theology."
- March 10, 2012, American Academy of Religion Western Regional Conference, Arizona State University, Tempe, **Presented paper "Chosenness and Civic Patriotism in Late Nineteenth Century England and the United States."**
- March 13, 2009, Ecclesiastical History Conference Postgraduate Colloquium, University of Manchester, **Presented paper "Protestantism and National Identity in the Works of Congregationalists R.W. Dale and Josiah Strong."**
- November 11, 2009, McMenemy Seminar, Trinity Hall, Cambridge, **Presentation *How Would Jesus Vote? Understanding the Religious Right and the Religious Left in America.***

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- July 25-28, 2008, Accio 2008, Magdalen College, Oxford, **Presented paper *Harry Potter as a Metaphor for Struggling with God*. Accio is a peer-reviewed academic conference on all things Harry Potter.**

Popular Writings

- “100 years ago, the Social Gospel movement pushed to improve workers’ lives – but also to promote its vision of Christian America,” *The Conversation* and affiliated outlets, June 10, 2025.
- “Truth, Having Nothing to Fear From Investigation, Should Be Pursued Relentlessly in all Disciplines.” *Spiritual Life Blog Post*, Feb. 15, 2019.
- “The Fallacy of Christian Nationalism.” *Patheos Blog: Rhetoric, Race and Religion*, June 7, 2020.

Media Coverage & Requests

- Anders Anders Joergensen, *Politiken*, interviewed July 15, about research on TPUSA’s Charlie Kirk
- Carolina Lumetta, *World*, interviewed April 21, 2025 on President Trump and Associated Press and other steps taken against national media
- Matthew Boedy, *Seven Mountains Podcast*, Episode 6, April 21, 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Uq7KOZ9j0M&t=1s>.
- B.T. Irwin, “Christian nationalism and the Churches of Christ (Dr. Christina Littlefield), *The Christian Chronicle Podcast*, Episode 121, April 17, 2025, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/episode-121-christian-nationalism-and-the-churches/id1663997645?i=1000703872615>.
- Richie Steadman, Christian Nationalism with Dr. Christina Littlefield, *The Cultural Hall*, episode 909, March 28, 2025, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-cultural-hall-podcast/id459622595>.
- Laura Harbert Allen, Appalachia 100, Report 4 America, interviewed Feb. 13, 2025, background for “Mid-Ohio Valley Group Blends Religion, Politics to Affect Policy in Ohio and West Virginia.”
- Cathy Lynn Grossman, Religion Scholars Share Books—and Worries—at Annual Meeting, Nov. 27, 2024, <https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/religion/article/96606-religion-scholars-share-books-and-worries-at-annual-meeting.html>
- Lisa Hagen, *NPR*, on Charlie Kirk, interviewed June 18, 2024
- Ken Armstrong, *Propublica*, on right-wing takeovers of school boards, interviewed April 12, 2024
- Bobby Ross Jr, “‘Overhyped’ Christian Nationalism Label Draws Political Backlash,” *Religion Unplugged*, April 12, 2024
- Sara Weissman, “Christian Colleges Navigate Abortion Debates in a Post-Roe World,” *Inside Higher Ed*, January 19, 2024.
- Sara Weissman, “The Aftershocks of the Asbury Revival.” *Inside Higher Ed*, March 1, 2023
- Dawn Megli, *Thousand Oaks Acorn*, on Christian Nationalism and Godspoke’s Rob McCoy, interviewed in February 2022, story never published
- Dawn Megli and Isaiah Murtaugh, *Ventura County Star* on Christian Nationalism and Godspoke’s Rob McCoy, interviewed multiple times in 2022 for background on series on McCoy

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Book Reviews

- Michael Gryboski, *Christian Post*, June 2019, on presidential politics
- Michael Gryboski, *Christian Post*, May 2018 on Billy Graham's legacy
- ***Forthcoming: How to End Christian Nationalism.*** Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE), volume 1, forthcoming Summer 2025.
- **"America's Religious History: Faith, Politics, and the Shaping of a Nation."** Stone Campbell Journal, *Volume 24*: Issue 2, Fall 2021 edition.
- **"Religious Intolerance, America, and the World: A History of Forgetting and Remembering."** *Reading Religion*, April 2022.
- **"White Evangelical Racism: The Politics of Morality in America."** *Reading Religion*, July 2021.
- **"America's Religious Wars: The Embattled Heart of Our Public Life."** *Reading Religion*, August 2020.
- **"Cub Reporters: American Children's Literature and Journalism in the Gilded Age."** *American Journalism*, 37 (1), March 2020.
- **"The Black Newspaper and the Chosen Nation."** *Reading Religion*, September 2016.
- **"'And No One Will Keep that Light from Shining': Civil Religion After September 11 in Speeches of George W. Bush."** *Review of Religious Research*, November 2011 (53:2), p. 254.

Scholarships, Grants and Awards

- Dean's Research Grant, Charlie Kirk Turning Point USA Research, \$1,500, Spring 2025
- Pepperdine's Academic Year Undergraduate Research Award, Fall 2021, Spring 2022, Spring and Fall 2023, Spring 2024
- Scripps Howard Foundation Visiting Professors in Social Media Program 2019, \$4,500 total grant to visit Post and Courier in Charleston, South Carolina and to bring Pulitzer Prize winning reporter Jennifer Berry Hawes to campus.
- American Journalism Historian Association 2017 Rising Scholar Award, \$2,000 grant for research assistance
- Dean's Research Grants, Seaver Research Grant, and Seaver Fellowship, totaling \$7880 for research assistance August 2016 through July 2017.
- Dean's Research Grant, \$1,420 for weeklong bootcamp in Computer-Assisted Reporting at the University of Missouri, January 2015.
- Seaver Mentor Grants, \$500 to fund a student working on class website.
- Pepperdine Technology and Learning grant: \$9,871 for web development, web training, a new PC for Access training, and the Poynter Teachapalooza conference for myself and two other professors, 2015.
- Seaver Research Council grant winner, 2014-2015, \$2,700 for archive work on Josiah Strong.
- Named as one of the Seaver Fellows for Pepperdine in 2014-2015, includes \$2,500 travel grant

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- Harris Manchester College, Oxford, Fellow for July 2014 for archive work on Henry Scott Holland.
- Pepperdine's Academic Year Undergraduate Research Award, \$1,000 to study civil religion in Aaron Sorkin's television shows with two undergraduates, Spring and Fall 2014
- Crosse Studentship, Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge, full tuition and rent stipend, 2008-2010
- Research grants, University of Cambridge Faculty of Divinity and Trinity Hall, totaling £2,500 for summer 2009 archive trip to Boston, New York, Atlanta
- German Language Grant, University of Cambridge Faculty of Divinity, £500
- Second Place, Investigative Reporting, 2007 Associated Press California-Nevada Newswriting and Photo contest
- First Place, Freedom of Information Award, 2007 Nevada Press Association
- Second Place, Best News Feature, 2006 Nevada Press Association
- Part of reporting team which won First Place, Breaking News Coverage, 2005 National Society of Professional Journalists
- Pepperdine University Graduate Assistantship, full tuition and maintenance stipend, 2002-2003
- Scripps Howard Internship Winner – Ventura County Star
- Pepperdine Communication Division "Outstanding Graduate" 2002
- Pepperdine Graphic "Outstanding Journalism Graduate" 2002
- Pepperdine Graphic "Best All-Around Writer" 2002
- Pepperdine Currents "Best All-Around Contributor" 2002
- Pepperdine Graphic "Best All-Around Contributor" 2001
- Pepperdine Graphic "Best Editorial Leadership" 2001
- Pepperdine Graphic "Rookie Writer of the Year" 1999
- Gamma Ghkkkket Sigma Songfest 2002 Director's Award
- Journalism scholarships, ranging between \$1,100 - \$4,500 a semester, 1998-2002
- Seaver College Dean's List, 1998-2002
- Pepperdine Dean's Scholarship, \$10,000 annual scholarship, 1998-2002
- Nevada Association of Student Councils Dale Hawley National Leadership Award, \$1,000 scholarship, 1998
- Coca-Cola Scholar, \$1,000 scholarship each year, 1998-2002
- Target All-Around Scholarship, \$1,500 scholarship, 1998
- Las Vegas High School Valedictorian

Memberships and Activities

- Conejo Valley Church of Christ, member since October 2012, serve on adult education committee, proofread newsletter, Communion meditations
- American Journalism Historians Association, member since 2015, web editor, March 2022 through present, board member, 2023-2025
- Investigative Reporters and Editors, member since 2014, underwent Computer-Assisted Reporting bootcamp in January 2015
- Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, member since 2014
- American Academy of Religion, member since 2008, Western Region Nineteenth Century Chair, 2013-2020
- American Society of Church History, member since 2015
- Ecclesiastical History Society, member 2008-2012
- Trinity Hall MCR, 2007 -2012

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Volunteer experience

- Trinity Hall Boat Club, rower October 2008- June 2009
- Society of Professional Journalists, member 1998-2007
- Golden Key National Honor Society, member since 1998
- Raising Hope charity for foster youth, volunteer
- Pepperdine Center for Faith and Learning Book Club Leader: Jennifer Berry Hawes, “Grace Will Lead Us Home,” Spring 2020; Richard Hughes, “Myths America Lives By,” Spring 2019; Miroslav Volf, “Flourishing,” Spring 2017.
- Pepperdine Convocation/Chapel, RISE chapel leader, Fall 2024, first-year chapel breakout group leader, Spring 2024; sophomore chapel breakout group, Fall 2023; small group book club, two sections, Jennifer Berry Hawes, “Grace Will Lead Us Home,” Spring 2020; small group for Pepperdine Graphic Media, 2014-2015; small group on C.S. Lewis *Out of the Silent Planet*, Fall 2013; Spiritual Mentoring, Fall 2012-Fall 2018
- Pepperdine Step Forward Day, numerous years
- Fundraising for Cancer Research UK, 2011
- Cambridge Graduate Union Ball, 2011
- Las Vegas High School Class of 1998 Reunion, organizer 2008, 2018
- Mission work with orphans, street kids in Romania, Summer 2005 and 2008
- Nevada Division of Child and Family Services, Oasis Center, 2003-2007, organized and led bimonthly activities for emotionally disturbed children
- Project Serve: church and home building in San Felipe, Mexico, 1998-2002
- Habitat for Humanity, construction work volunteer, 1998-2002
- Omaha Woodmen Summer Camp Counselor, supervised activities, including swimming, archery and arts and craft and evening entertainment for entire camp; personal counsellor for 12-15 females each year, 1996-2000
- Make a Wish Foundation, 1995-1998, founded ongoing fundraiser with rival high school that raises several thousand dollars each year