



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

MICHAEL R. FISHER JR.

Department of African American and African Studies
College of Arts and Sciences
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(Updated Autumn 2024)

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

The Ohio State University | Department of African American and African Studies
Assistant Professor, 2023–
Faculty Affiliate, Center for the Study of Religion, 2023–

San José State University | Department of African American Studies
Assistant Professor, 2020–2023
Coordinator of Undergraduate Studies, 2022–2023
Faculty Affiliate, Institute for Metropolitan Studies, 2021–2023
Faculty Affiliate, Department of Humanities, 2021–2023

American University | Department of Public Administration and Policy
Postdoctoral Fellow, 2020–21

The Smithsonian Institution | National Museum of African American History and Culture
Postdoctoral Fellow, 2019–2020

Wesley Theological Seminary | Community Engagement Institute
Visiting Assistant Professor of Religion and Society, 2018–2020

RESEARCH AFFILIATIONS

Case Western Reserve University | National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities
Research Affiliate, 2023–

Public Religion Research Institute
PRRI Public Fellow, 2023–24; 2024–25

University of Michigan | Poverty Solutions
Visiting Poverty Scholar, 2022–23

University of South Africa | Institute for Gender Studies
Research Fellow, 2022–

American University | Metropolitan Policy Center
Affiliate Scholar, 2020–

Seattle University | Center for Religious Wisdom and World Affairs
Center Scholar (Inaugural Cohort), 2017–2020

EDUCATION

- 2019 Ph.D., Vanderbilt University
- 2016 M.A., Vanderbilt University
- 2009 M.Div., Howard University
- 2006 B.S., Howard University

Graduate Certificates

- 2023 Certificate in Policy Analysis, Pardee RAND Graduate School
- 2021 Certificate in Course Design, Center for Faculty Development, San José State University
- 2019 Certificate in African American and Diaspora Studies (conferred jointly with Ph.D.), Department of African American and Diaspora Studies, Vanderbilt University
- 2016 Certificate in College Teaching, Center for Teaching, Vanderbilt University
- 2015 Certificate in Humanities Teaching and Learning (Formerly named the Mellon Certificate in Humanities Education), Center for Teaching, Vanderbilt University

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Race, public policy, and socio-economic inequality; housing and urban redevelopment; race and religion

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Black Studies: Afrofuturism; Afropessimism and Black optimism; Black politics and political thought in the 20th and 21st century; Black popular culture; Black religion and cultural studies; civil rights and Black activism; race and social theory; racial capitalism and the Black Radical Tradition; sociology of urban Black America.

Religious Studies: American pragmatism and religion; comparative religious ethics; ethics and public policy; religion and politics; religion and science; religion and social movements; the sociology of religion (classical tradition).

Urban Studies: Critical urban theory; neighborhood change and community-based development; public policy and administration; urban politics.

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Fisher, Michael R. Jr., ed., *Confronting Racism and White Supremacy in the US: Twenty-First-Century Theological Perspectives*. New York: Friendship Press, 2024.

Book Chapters

Fisher, Michael R. Jr., “Race, Violence, and the Fierce Urgency of Now” in **Fisher, Michael R., Jr.**, ed. *Confronting Racism and White Supremacy in the US: Twenty-First-Century Theological Perspectives*. New York: Friendship Press, 2024.

Fisher, Michael R. Jr., “Toward Chaos or Community in the Great World House?” in **Fisher, Michael R., Jr.**, ed. *Confronting Racism and White Supremacy in the US: Twenty-First-Century Theological Perspectives*. New York: Friendship Press, 2024.

Fisher, Michael R. Jr. “Disenfranchising the Unhoused: Urban Redevelopment, the Criminalization of Homelessness, and the Peril of Prosperity Theology in Dallas and Beyond” in Costoya, Manuel J. Mejido, ed., *Land of Stark Contrasts: Faith-Based Responses to Homelessness in the United States*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1hw3xh5.6>.

Edited Journals

Fisher, Michael R. Jr. and Xavier Pickett, eds. Special Issue: “The Religious Situation of Black Studies: A Festschrift for Victor Anderson,” *Black Theology: An International Journal* 21 (1) (2023). <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/yblt20/21/1>.

Journal Articles

Fisher, Michael R. Jr., “The Religious Situation of Black Studies Then and Now.” *Black Theology* 21, no. 1 (2023): 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14769948.2023.2180132>.

Review Essays

Fisher, Michael R. Jr. Review of *Violent Utopia: Dispossession and Black Restoration in Tulsa* by Jovan Scott Lewis. *New Mexico Historical Review* 99, no. 1 (2024): . <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhr/vol99/iss1/5>.

Fisher, Michael R. Jr. Review of *The Altars Where We Worship: The Religious Significance of Popular Culture* by Juan M. Floyd-Thomas, Stacey M. Floyd-Thomas, and Mark G. Toulouse. *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 38, no. 2 (2018): 194–96. <https://doi.org/10.1353/sce.2018.0044>.

Publicly Engaged Writing and Podcast Interviews

Boaz, Danielle, **Michael R. Fisher Jr.**, Allyson Shortle, and Dheepa Sundaram, “How Race, Religion, and Democratic Values Shape Attitudes Toward Government Assistance.” *PRRI Spotlight Analysis* (blog), September 24, 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/25nr4v3k>.

Fisher, Michael R., Jr., “Understanding Differences between Black and White Christian Nationalism Adherents and Sympathizers.” *PRRI Spotlight Analysis* (blog), July 3, 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/2uxahud8>.

Fisher, Michael R. Jr. “Trump Flag Replaced Old Glory. Will Christian Nationalists Replace Faith for Politics?” *The Columbus Dispatch*. June 21, 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/4x8wkhwr>.

Fisher, Michael R. Jr. “San Francisco Board Must Adopt Reparations Recommendations.” *VISIBLE Magazine*. May 26, 2023. <https://tinyurl.com/mr3exes3>.

Fisher, Michael R. Jr. “The US Must Substantively Support UN Permanent Forum on People of African Descent.” *VISIBLE Magazine*. May 24, 2023. <https://tinyurl.com/48ddbd73>.

Fisher, Michael R. Jr. “Mayor Bass Must Become a Champion of Homelessness Decriminalization.” *Newsweek*. December 22, 2022. <https://tinyurl.com/dnn8nej4>.

Fisher, Michael R. Jr. “Social Housing Can Solve Bay Area’s Affordable Housing Crisis.” *The Mercury News*. October 1, 2022. <https://tinyurl.com/5n73zbus>.

Powe, F. Douglas, Jr. “Honest Talk about Race and Racism Featuring Michael R. Fisher Jr.” August 18, 2020. *Leading Ideas Talks* Podcast. Accessed August 20, 2020. <https://tinyurl.com/yc8f9y5s>.

Teaching Guide

Fisher, Michael R. Jr., and Joe Bandy. "Assessing Student Learning." Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching, 2019. <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/assessing-student-learning/>.

DOCUMENTARY FILMS

- 2022 *Barry Farm: Community, Land, and Justice in Washington, DC* (50 minutes)
<https://bfndocs.org/barry-farm>
 Director: Sabiyha Prince and Samuel George
 Executive Producer: Irene Braam and Parisa Norouzi
 Producer: Daniel del Pialago, **Michael R. Fisher Jr.**, Sarah Shoenfeld, and Amber Wiley
 *2023 Winner of the Paul E. Buchanan Award, Vernacular Architecture Forum

RESEARCH IN PROGRESSBooks

Fisher, Michael R. Jr. *Black Community Building: Public Housing Reform and the Promise of an Alternative Model to Mixed-Income Neighborhoods* (under contract with Georgetown University Press)

Fisher, Michael R. Jr. *Stony the Road We Trod: Poverty, Housing, and Black Activism Since Civil Rights*

Articles

Fisher, Michael R. Jr. "Poverty, Housing, and the Racial and Economic Justice Imperative" (In Press)

Fisher, Michael R. Jr. "At the Intersection of Community and Capital(ism): Rethinking 'Beloved Community' in Black Religious and Political Thought"

PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE PAPERS

- 2022 "Purging the Poor: The Redevelopment of Barry Farm and the Peril of Public Housing Reform." 48th Annual DC History Conference, Washington, DC, April.
- 2019 "Give Us Your White and Your Working Masses: Donald J. Trump, Merit, and Racial Representation in the Immigration Debate." The Transatlantic Roundtable on Religion and Race, Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations Nairobi, Kenya, July.
- 2018 "Excluded from the Beginning: Neoliberalism, White Supremacy, and Modern Discourse." 22nd Annual Comparative Literature Intra-Student Faculty Forum (CLIFF Conference), University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, March.
- 2017 "Resident Evil: The Structural Violence of Neoliberal Urban Redevelopment in the United States." *Societas Ethica* (The European Society for Research in Ethics) Annual Meeting, Volos, Greece, August.
- 2017 "The Religious Significance of the Black Lives Matter Movement in the Fight for Freedom and Survival in Urban Space." Urban Affairs Association Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, April.

- 2017 “Criminalizing Blackness: Racial Justice, Black Religious Activism, and the Contestation of State Violence.” Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion (SECSOR), Raleigh, NC, March.
- 2016 “Being While Black: Racial Criminalization in the Neoliberal City and a Public Theology of Resistance.” The Transatlantic Roundtable on Religion and Race, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Port of Spain, Trinidad, August.
- 2015 “To Catch a Criminal: The Illegality of Homelessness in the Neoliberal City and the Politics of Theological Legitimation.” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, November. (Revised for publication)
- 2009 “On Alan Gewirth’s *On the Basis and Content of Human Rights*.” The Annual Research Symposium, Howard University, Washington, DC, April.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

- 2024 “Reorienting the Debate on Mixed-Income Housing as Urban Social Policy.” Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH, February.
- 2023 “Black Precarity: The Necropolitics of Capitalist Urbanism.” Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, March.
- 2022 “Centering an Intersectional and Human Rights Framework in the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” The United Nations’ First Session of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent, Geneva, Switzerland, December.
- 2022 “Black No More: Public Housing Reform and the Demise of Barry Farm.” Metropolitan Policy Center Urban Speaker Series, American University, Washington, DC, March.
- 2022 “An American Way of Death: The Evolution of US Cities at the Expense of Black Poor Communities.” Society of Christian Ethics Annual Meeting, (virtual), January.
- 2020 “Economic Development in Place: The Creative Destruction of Black Geographies in Twenty-First Century US Cities.” Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, January.
- 2019 “Urban Redevelopment and E-race-ure: Race, Class, and the Politics of Place in Washington, DC” Northeastern University, Boston, MA, January.
- 2018 “This is America!: Mixed-Income Development, the Racialization of Urban Poverty, and the Legacy of Chattel Slavery in the United States.” Council for World Mission, Birmingham, AL, June.
- 2017 “Cities Set on Hills: Soteriology and the Spatial Cleansing of the Black Urban Poor.” Seattle University, Seattle, WA, April.
- 2016 “Toward a Public Theology for the Right to the City: Affordable Housing and Gentrification in Contested Urban Space.” Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, OH, December.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TALKS/WORKSHOPS

- 2017 “Knowing Right from Wrong: Research Ethics in the Humanities.” The Graduate Department of Religion, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, September.
- 2017 “Thinking Developmentally about Teaching Assistants.” The Graduate Department of Religion, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, August.
- 2017 “Implicit Bias and the Impact on Student Learning and Assessment,” with Alexis McBride. The Department of Biological Sciences, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, August.

FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

- 2023 Public Religion Research Institute | PRRI Public Fellow (Also awarded in 2024)
- 2023 Pardee RAND Graduate School | Faculty Leaders Fellow in Policy Research & Analysis
- 2022 Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin | Visiting Poverty Scholar (Visiting at Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor)
- 2022 The OpEd Project | Public Voices Fellowship
- 2022 San José State University, College of Social Sciences | Summer Research Fellowship
- 2021 Humanities DC | DC Community Heritage Project Grant (DC Legacy Project)
- 2020 American University, Department of Public Administration and Policy | Postdoctoral Fellowship
- 2019 The Smithsonian Institution | National Museum of African American History and Culture Postdoctoral Research Fellowship
- 2017 Vanderbilt University, The Graduate Department of Religion | Master Teaching Fellow
- 2016 The UCC | The Adrienne M. & Charles Shelby Rooks Fellowship (through May/2019)
- 2016 Vanderbilt University, The Center for Teaching | Graduate Teaching Fellowship
- 2015 Vanderbilt University, The Graduate School | Research Travel Grant (2017 and 2018)
- 2015 Lilly Endowment, Inc./The Forum for Theological Exploration | Doctoral Fellowship
- 2013 Lilly Endowment, Inc./Vanderbilt University | Theology and Practice Fellowship (through June/2019)
- 2013 Vanderbilt University | The Provost’s Graduate Fellowship (through June/2018)

HONORS AND AWARDS

- 2022 District of Columbia Awards for Excellence in Historic Preservation: Community Outreach and Education Award
- 2015 The UCC | Make A Difference! Doctoral Studies Award
- 2009 Howard University | School of Divinity Dean’s Top Student Award
- 2008 Howard University | The Mordecai Wyatt Johnson Memorial Scholarship
- 2008 Howard University | The Ivan Earle Taylor Distinguished Humanities Scholar Award
- 2007 Howard University | Board of Trustees Scholarship
- 2007 Howard University | The L.B. Mightly Scholar Award

COURSES TAUGHT^{UG=Undergrad/G=Grad | IS=Independent Study}

The Ohio State University

Theorizing Race^(UG)

Race and Public Policy in the United States^(UG/G)

San José State University

African Americans and the Development of America's History and Government_(UG)
American Racism and Black Women's Experience_(UG/IS)
Gentrification and the City_(UG/IS)
Race, Policy, and Urban Politics_(UG)
Theories and Methods in Black Studies_(UG/IS)

American University

Politics and Policy in Washington, DC_(UG)
Topics in Policy Analysis/Management: DC Policy and Politics_(G)

Wesley Theological Seminary

Community Engagement Fellows Seminar, with Lorena Parrish_(G)
Field Education Colloquy, with Michael Armstrong_(G)
From the Black Social Gospel to Black Lives Matter_(G)
Public Theology in the 20th and 21st Century_(G/IS)
Religion and Urban Change in 21st Century Cities_(G)

Vanderbilt University

Certificate in College Teaching Seminar (at the Center for Teaching)_(G)
Field Education Seminar_(G)
Practicum in the Teaching of Religion_(G)
Teaching, Difference, and Social Class Seminar (at the Center for Teaching), with Joe Bandy_(G)

Courses as Teaching Associate (TA)

Ethics in Theological Perspectives_(G), with Victor Anderson
Methods in Ethics_(G), with Victor Anderson
The Political Economy of Misery_(G), with Emilie M. Townes

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

The Ohio State University

Department of African American and African Studies
Mellon Events Ad Hoc Committee, 2024–25
Faculty Advisory Council, 2023–24; 2024–25
Graduate Studies and Curriculum Committee, 2023–24; 2024–25

San José State University

Undergraduate Thesis Directed

Justise Wattree (McNair Scholar), “The Red Ribbon and the Black Cross: A Qualitative Study of the Relationship between Social Activism and Contemporary Black Church Responses to HIV in Oakland, CA” (2023)

<https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/mcnair/vol19/iss1/8/>

Admitted in Johns Hopkins University's Master of Health Science program

Department of African American Studies

Coordinator of Undergraduate Studies, 2022–23
Chair, AFAM Speaks! Faculty Talk Series, 2021–22
Assistant Professor Recruitment Committee, 2021–22; 2022–23

College of Social Sciences

Advising Council, 2022–23

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (RSCA) Advisory Committee, 2021–22

University

Black Scholars Community Advisory Council, 2021–22

Faculty Advisor, McNair Scholars Program, 2022–23

Faculty Mentor, The Sankofa Black Spartan Professional Mentorship Program, 2021–22

Faculty Mentor, Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program, 2021–22; 2022–23

Harvard University

Peer Reviewer, “Ways of Knowing” Conference on Science and Religion, 2016–18

Vanderbilt University

Graduate Student Diversity and Inclusion Committee, 2016–18

Co-Chair, Ethics and Society Colloquy, Graduate Department of Religion, 2016–18

Academic Panels Organized:

“Tired and Torn: Mending Ourselves, Mending Our Children,” Fall 2017 (A panel discussion on racism, mental health, and the school to prison pipeline)

“Nightmare on Elm Our Street: A Teach-in on Racialized Violence in America,” Fall 2014 (A panel discussion on racism and police violence)

REVIEWER

Black Theology: An International Journal

Housing Studies

Journal of Law and Religion

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Academy of Religion (AAR)

Steering Committee, Religion and Cities Unit, 2016–19

Steering Committee, Pragmatism and Empiricism in American Religious Thought Unit, 2018–23

Co-Chair, Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy Unit, 2019–24

Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM)

Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASAALH)

DC Legacy Project

Steering Committee, 2021–

National Council of Black Studies

Societas Ethica (The European Society for Research in Ethics)

Society for the Study of Black Religion (SSBR)

Transatlantic Roundtable on Religion and Race (TRRR)

Coordinating Committee, 2020–

Urban Affairs Association (UAA)

Emerging Activist Scholar Award Committee, 2022–24

BOARD AFFILIATIONS

Advisory Board, Amistad Redevelopment Corporation, 2023–
 Board of Directors, Church Building and Loan Fund, 2016–2022
 Board of Directors, The Wesley Foundation at Howard University, 2020–24

PUBLIC POLICY BACKGROUND

Director of Advocacy (Inaugural Director), Miriam’s Kitchen, Washington, DC

Key Accomplishments: Developed the public policy and advocacy agenda, which advanced Miriam’s Kitchen’s core objectives and goals for ending homelessness in the nation’s capital. Promoted client-led advocacy efforts and partnered with the client-led advocacy group in ways that built the skill set and capacity of its membership and advanced its policy agenda. Increased the organization’s presence in DC policy-making environments through testimony at city council hearings, meetings with policymakers and other local government officials, and active leadership in policy working groups and city-wide coalitions.

Chair, Fair Budget Coalition, Washington, DC

Key Accomplishments: Led a coalition of approximately 75-member organizations in advancing the cause of a just and inclusive District of Columbia through public policy advocacy and community mobilization. Guided the coalition’s steering committee in a 5-year strategic planning process, which included an organizational restructure, for the purpose of redefining its goals and strategic objectives. Developed a direct-action campaign strategy geared toward increasing funding to critical safety net programs, which resulted in major funding allocations by the DC Council’s budget for important human service programs.

Public Policy Advocate, The UCC, Washington, DC

Key Accomplishments: Served as the UCC liaison to the White House Office of Public Engagement and the White House Office of Faith-Based Partnerships and Neighborhood Initiatives forging a more consistent partnership with the UCC and the Obama Administration to develop a domestic policy agenda benefiting poor and low-income individuals and families. Tracked and analyzed federal economic and anti-poverty legislation and championed initiatives to effectively expand the scope of social welfare programs for those living in poverty, working with US House and Senate Congressional Staff in the process.

Direct-Action Organizing Training

“Organizing for Social Change Training”

Midwest Academy, Chicago, IL

“Washington Interfaith Network (WIN) [Organizer] Leadership Training”

(Affiliate of the Industrial Areas Foundation), Washington, DC