

DR. NAAMLEELA FREE JONES

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Education

- 2025 Certificate in Editing, University of Washington, Seattle, WA (in progress)
- 2023 Ph.D. Religion, Rice University, Houston, Texas
Field: History of Religions; New Religious Movements; Asian Religions in America; Hinduism; Yoga and Tantra in America
Advisor: Dr. Jeffrey J. Kripal
- Dissertation Title: *The Zero-Point Paradigm: "Radical" Hermeneutics of Nonduality in the Work of Adi Da Samraj*
- 2020 M.A., Gnosticism, Esotericism, and Mysticism
Department of Religion, Rice University, Houston, Texas
- 2015 B.A., Religious Studies, *Phi Beta Kappa*, University of California at Berkeley
Advisor: Dr. Robert P. Goldman, South and Southeast Asian Studies
- Thesis Title: *From Gods to Gamers: The Manifestation of the Avatar Throughout Religious History and Postmodern Culture*

Academic Honors and Awards

- 2019 Gnosticism, Esotericism, and Mysticism Certificate Award Recipient –
Department of Religion, Rice University
- 2017 Andrew W. Mellon Graduate Research Seminar Participant and Grant Recipient –
Humanities Research Center, Rice University, 2017-2019
- 2015 Most Distinguished Graduate in Religious Studies – *Phi Beta Kappa*, University
of California at Berkeley

Publications

- 2024 "The Whole Body Gospel: Yogic Gnosticism in the Work of Adi Da Samraj,"
Gnosis: Journal of Gnostic Studies (Vol. 9, No. 1, Spring 2024)
- 2017 "The Avatar and its 'Incarnation' in a Postmodern World," *Journal of Vaishnava
Studies* (Vol. 26, No. 1, Fall 2017)

2015 “From Gods to Gamers: The Manifestation of the Avatar in Religious History and Postmodern Culture,” *Berkeley Undergraduate Journal* (Spring 2016)

Teaching Experience

Adjunct Faculty, Naropa University:
TRA-133E-A Yoga I. Spring 2024

Faculty, Holmes Institute of Consciousness Studies:
REL 621: World Religions, PSY 622: The Psychology of Meaning, WRS 620:
Graduate Research and Writing. Fall 2024.
PHI 621: Consciousness, REL 622: Religion and Society. Winter 2024.
REL 621: World Religions. Fall 2023.
Holmes Online Teaching Certification. Summer 2023.

Adjunct Faculty, Comparative Cultural Studies, University of Houston, 2020-2023.
RELS 3355: History and Philosophy of Yoga. Spring 2021, '22, '23.
RELS 3381: Global Hinduism. Fall 2022.
RELS 1301: Introduction to Religious Studies. Summer 2021.
RELS 2340: Introduction to Hinduism. Fall 2020, '21.

Faculty Fellow, Mind Body Spirit Institute, Jung Center of Houston:
“Revisiting the Garden of Eden: Esoteric Perspectives.” March 2024.
“Gnostic Spirituality: Then and Now.” November 2019, October 2021.
“Oneness in Theory and Practice.” November 2020.

Lecturer, “Intro to Hinduism: The Avatar in a Postmodern World.” Educator Professional Development Initiative, Boniuk Institute for Religious Tolerance, February 2019.

Lecturer, “Reading and Writing Scripture in New Religious Movements.” SMU Perkins School of Theology, Spring 2019.

Teaching Assistant and Lecturer, RELI 101: Introduction to the Study of Religion.
Professor Jeffrey J. Kripal, Undergraduate Course, Rice University, 2017.

Instructor, Summer youth programs, Vision of Mulund Institute:
“The Tradition of the *Aśvamedha* Horse-Sacrifice.” Maria Hoop, Holland 2016.
“The History and Mythology of the *Avatāra*.” Middletown, CA 2015.

Conference Papers

“Yogic Gnosticism In the Work of Adi Da Samraj.” Andrew J. Mellon Graduate Research Seminar Conference, Rice University, Houston, Texas, April 2019.

“Towards an Emergent Understanding of Charisma.” Emerging Religions Conference, Rice University, Houston, Texas, April 2017.

“John the Baptist as Ritual Innovator.” Gnosticism Conference, Rice University, Houston, Texas, April 2017.

Professional Experience

2021–present Correspondences: Journal of Esotericism – Book Review Editor
2019–2023 Gnosis: Journal of Gnostic Studies – Senior Managing Copyeditor
2017–2019 Gnosis: Journal of Gnostic Studies – Copyeditor and Team Manager

Languages

American English: Native
Sanskrit: Elementary
Italian: Elementary
French: Reading
German: Reading

Professional Affiliations

Phi Beta Kappa
National Society of Collegiate Scholars
The Society for Collegiate Leadership & Achievement
Association for the Study of Esotericism
American Academy of Religion

References

Dr. Jeffrey J. Kripal
J. Newton Rayzor Chair in Philosophy and Religious Thought
Rice University, Houston, Texas
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Dr. April D. DeConick
Isla Carroll and Percy E. Turner Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity
Rice University, Houston, Texas
adeconick@rice.edu

Dr. Mark Ryan
Former Professor and Dean of Jonathan Edwards College at Yale University
Coordinator – Jung Center Faculty Fellowship, Houston, Texas
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