

# Caryn Tamber-Rosenau

## Education

*Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee* 2015  
Ph.D., Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel  
Minor in Ancient Near Eastern studies  
Graduate certificate in Women's and Gender Studies  
Dissertation: *Striking Women: Performance and Gender in the Hebrew Bible and Early Jewish Literature*

*Baltimore Hebrew Institute at Towson University, Towson, Maryland* 2010  
(known as Baltimore Hebrew University prior to July 2009)  
Master of Arts, Jewish Studies  
Concentration: Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Civilizations  
Thesis: *Evolution of a Narrative: The Story of Dinah in Genesis, Jubilees and The Testament of Levi*

*University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*  
Major: Communications, Minor: Women's Studies 2003  
*Magna Cum Laude*

## Professional Appointments

*University of Houston, Houston, Texas*  
Assistant professor, Jewish Studies and Religious Studies 2023-present  
Instructional associate professor 2022-present  
Instructional assistant professor 2016-2022

*Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee* 2015-16  
Lecturer, Jewish Studies and Religious Studies academic year

## Publications

### Books

2018 *Women in Drag: Gender and Performance in the Hebrew Bible and Early Jewish Literature*, Biblical Intersections series, Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias Press.

*In preparation: Queering History in Second Temple Jewish Literature*. Under contract with Oxford University Press.

## Articles and chapters

- 2022 “Esther and Agency: Gender, Ethnicity, and Power in the Book of Esther,” invited submission for special “Drag Queens” issue of *Hebrew Studies* 63 (2022): 99-118.
- “The Goddess in the Exodus: Nina Paley’s *Seder-Masochism* and Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminism,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 38 (2022): 111-130.
- “Contributing Voice,” in *Judith* (Wisdom Commentary Series), Jennifer L. Koosed and Robert Seesengood, Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2022.
- 2020 “No Future for Bethulia? Judith and Queer Time.” *Biblical Interpretation* 28 (2020): 451-465.
- “A Queer Critique of Looking for ‘Male’ and ‘Female’ Voices,” in *The Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Susanne Scholz), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- “Beyond Judeo-Christian,” in *The Social Studies Texan* 36 (2020): 59-62.
- 2017 “Biblical Bathing Beauties and the Manipulation of the Male Gaze: What Judith Can Tell Us about Bathsheba and Susanna,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 33 (2017): 55-72.
- “The ‘Mothers’ Who Were Not: Motherhood Imagery and Childless Women Warriors in Early Jewish Literature,” in *Mothers in the Jewish Cultural Imagination* (ed. Jane Kanarek, Marjorie Lehman, and Simon J. Bronner), Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2017.
- 2016 “Female Diplomats in Jewish Elephantine? A New Look at a Papyrus from the Yedaniah Archive.” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 40 (2016): 491-510.
- In press*: “‘He Changes Times and Seasons’: Daniel, *Sinthomosexuality*, and Queer Time,” for *Lee Edelman and the Queer Study of Religion* (eds. Rhiannon Graybill, Linn M. Tonstad, and Kent Brintnall), Routledge.
- Submitted*: “Decentering Whiteness without Erasing Jewishness: Considerations for Discussing Race and the Bible,” invited submission for *Decentering Whiteness in Biblical Studies* (ed. Wongi Park, SBL Press Semeia Studies).
- In preparation*: “Voyeurism,” invited submission for *T&T Clark Handbook of Sexualities in the Bible and Its Reception* (ed. Caroline Blyth and Christopher Greenough).

## Reference entries

- “Women Warriors in the Hebrew Bible,” *Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women*, 2021.

“Yael: Bible,” *Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women*, 2021. (Revision of existing entry)

“Deborah: Bible,” *Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women*, 2021. (Revision of existing entry)

“Jedaiah,” *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, 2016.

“Jediael,” *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, 2016.

*In preparation*: “Queer Reception of the Bible: Hebrew Bible/Old Testament,” *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*.

### Book reviews

2023 Review of Kelly J. Murphy, *Rewriting Masculinity: Gideon, Men, and Might* for *Review of Biblical Literature*.

2021 Review of Lawrence M. Wills, *Judith (Hermeneia Commentary)* for *Encounter: A Journal of Theological Scholarship*.

Review of Sara M. Koenig, *Bathsheba Survives* for *Review of Biblical Literature*.

2019 Review of L. Juliana M. Claassens and Carolyn J. Sharp, eds., *Feminist Frameworks and the Bible: Power, Ambiguity, and Intersectionality* for *Bible & Critical Theory* 15 (2019): 155-158.

*In preparation*: Review of Shelley L. Birdsong, J. Cornelis De Vos, and Hyun Chul Paul Kim, eds., *Reading Gender in Judges: An Intertextual Approach* for *Review of Biblical Literature*.

### Popular press

2022 “Deborah, Yael, and Sisera’s Mother, Themech,” *TheTorah.com*, January 11, 2022

2019 “Talking Back to *The Red Tent* in the #MeToo Era,” introduction to student poems, *Lilith* blog, August 20, 2019

Book Note: “How to Get a Head in Ancient Israel: Women-Turned-Warriors and Queer Theory,” *Ancient Jew Review*, September 5, 2019

### Podcast episodes

2022 “Women Get a Head: Gender and Other Weapons,” *Women Who Went Before* podcast, November 2022

- 2019 “Wine in the Book of Judith,” Jewish Drinking podcast, December 2019
- 2017 “Teaching a Bible that Matters #6: Dr. Caryn Tamber-Rosenau (University of Houston),” The Maryville Seminar, May 2017

### **Awards, Scholarships, and Grants**

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| 50-in-5 Scholar<br><i>University of Houston</i>  | 2020 |
| Ross M. Lence Award for Teaching Excellence in the Humanities<br>College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences<br><i>University of Houston</i> | 2019 |
| Dean’s professional development award for NTT faculty<br>College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences<br><i>University of Houston</i>         | 2019 |
| Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Faculty Summer Fellowship<br><i>University of Houston</i>   | 2019 |
| New Faculty Research Program Grant<br><i>University of Houston</i>   | 2017 |
| Bettye R. Ford Graduate Student Service award,<br><i>Vanderbilt University</i>   | 2015 |
| Second place, Vanderbilt Graduate Student Council<br>3-Minute Thesis competition<br><i>Vanderbilt University</i>                             | 2014 |

### **Conference Papers**

- 2023 “Embracing the Jewess: Judith, Gender, and Ethnic Identity,” invited panel for a Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature/Pseudepigrapha joint session of the Society of Biblical Literature, November 2023 annual meeting (forthcoming)
- 2022 “Reproductive Futurism, Death, and Other People's Children: A Queer Jewish Ethics of Who Counts in the Book of Esther,” LGBT/Queer Hermeneutics section of the Society of Biblical Literature, November 2022 annual meeting
- “Reacting to the Past Together: Classroom Symposia and Pedagogical Collaboration in South Texas,” with Sara Ronis (St. Mary’s University), Teaching Biblical Studies in an

Undergraduate Liberal Arts Context / Academic Teaching and Biblical Studies sections of the Society of Biblical Literature, November 2022 annual meeting

“Decentering Whiteness without Erasing Jewishness: Considerations for Discussing Race and the Bible,” Multiracial Biblical Studies Symposium, June 2022

2020 “Canceling God’s Vow: Exodus Rabbah 43 and Gender-Play,” University of California-Riverside Conference on Queer and Transgender Studies in Religion, February 2020

2019 “The Goddess in the Exodus: Nina Paley’s *Seder-Masochism* and the Female Divine in Israel,” Bible and Film section of the Society of Biblical Literature, November 2019 annual meeting

“Who Destroyed the Death Star? Teaching Source Criticism with Star Wars,” Teaching Biblical Studies in an Undergraduate Liberal Arts Context section of the Society of Biblical Literature, November 2019 annual meeting

2018 “The Torah on Trump: American Rabbinic Biblical Interpretation after the 2016 Election,” Jewish Interpretation of the Bible section of the Society of Biblical Literature, November 2018 annual meeting

2017 “‘Girls Would Seize His Spoil’: The Gendered Language in Pseudo-Philo’s Jael and Sisera Retelling,” Pseudepigrapha section of the Society of Biblical Literature, November 2017 annual meeting

2016 “No Future for Bethulia? Judith, Childlessness, and the Futurism Question,” LGBT/Queer Hermeneutics section of the Society of Biblical Literature, November 2016 annual meeting

2015 “Un-gendering Texts: A Queer Critique of Looking for ‘Male’ and ‘Female’ Voices,” Women in the Biblical World section of the Society of Biblical Literature, November 2015 annual meeting

“‘If We Do Not Entice Her, She Will Laugh at Us’: Reading the Book of Judith’s Holofernes Queerly,” Hebrew Bible/Old Testament section of the Southeastern Conference for the Study of Religion, March 2015 annual meeting

2014 “The Biblical Bathing Beauty Who Asked for It: Bathsheba, Susanna, Judith, and the Manipulation of the Male Gaze,” The Bible and Second Temple Literature section of the Association for Jewish Studies, December 2014 annual meeting, December 16, 2014

“Jewish Motherhood: Cultural Images and Practices from Antiquity to Modernity,” discussant in roundtable discussion, Association for Jewish Studies, December 2014 annual meeting, December 15, 2014

- “Why Does the Levite Cast Out His Concubine? Reading Judges 19 as a Story of Intimate-Partner Violence,” Hebrew Bible/Old Testament section of the Southeastern Conference for the Study of Religion, March 2014 annual meeting, March 8, 2014
- 2013 “Female Diplomats in Jewish Elephantine? A New Look at a Papyrus from the Jedaniah Archive,” Women in the Biblical World section of the Society of Biblical Literature, November 2013 annual meeting, November 26, 2013
- 2012 “The Case for a Persian Date for the Prohibition of Inter-marriage in Deuteronomy 7,” Deuteronomistic History section of the Society of Biblical Literature, November 2012 annual meeting, November 20, 2012
- “The Bare-Headed Adulteress: What a Gesture Might Tell Us about the *Sotah* Ritual (Numbers 5:18),” Hebrew Bible/Old Testament section of The Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion, March 2012 annual meeting, March 5, 2012

### **Invited and Community Presentations**

- 2023 February 2023: three-part lecture series for Museum of Fine Arts Houston’s “Judith & Holofernes” exhibit
- 2022 December 2022: speaker for Case Western Reserve University Siegal Lifelong Learning, “How to Get a Head in Ancient Israel: Exploring the Book of Judith”
- September 2022: speaker for Rice-ERJCC lecture series “The Afterlife of Biblical Figures in Ancient Judaism,” on “Dinah’s Long Shadow: Genesis 34 in Early Jewish Literature”
- April 2022: speaker for The Frick Pittsburgh’s “Judith & Holofernes” exhibit
- March 2022: invited panelist for Second Temple Judaism section of Southwest Commission for Religious Studies annual meeting panel on Molly Zahn’s *Genres of Rewriting in Second Temple Judaism*
- 2021 December 2021: speaker for “Strong Women of the Bible” series, Hebrew Union College
- April 2021: speaker for West End Synagogue, Nashville: “Biblical Bathing Beauties and the Manipulation of the Male Gaze”
- April 2021: speaker for University of Nebraska-Lincoln series “Neighbors”: “What Everyone Should Know about Judaism”
- April 2021: invited speaker for University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Classical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies’ series “New Approaches to the Ancient Mediterranean World”: “Woman in Drag: Queer Approaches to the Book of Judith”

- March 2021: respondent for panel on my book *Women in Drag*, Hebrew Bible section of the Southwest Commission for Religious Studies annual meeting
- 2020 November 2020: invited panelist for Society of Biblical Literature panel, Religions of Israel in Their West Asian Environment section, on Phyllis Bird's *Harlot or Holy Woman? A Study of Hebrew Qedešah*
- June and July 2020: speaker for Boniuk Institute for the Study and Advancement of Religious Tolerance at Rice University summer program for K-12 teachers, "Beyond 'Judeo-Christian': Inclusion in Schools"
- February 2020: speaker for Congregation Beth Yeshurun adult education program, "Gender and Violence in the Ancient Jewish Book of Judith"
- February 2020: speaker for National Council of Jewish Women Houston chapter, "Jewish-Muslim Relationships: How Our Intertwined Historical Narratives Can Inform Our Dialogues Today"
- 2019 June 2019: Temple Sinai, Delray Beach, Florida, Shavuot Scholar-in-Residence, "'The Lord has brought me back empty: (Un)welcoming the Stranger in the Book of Ruth'"
- May 2019: speaker at iftar sponsored by Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston/Friends of Iman 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Interfaith Event
- March 2019: moderator for "Chapter and Verse" book event at Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center
- February-March 2019: speaker for Congregation Beth Yeshurun adult education program, "Deborah, Delilah, and Beyond: Women in the Book of Judges"
- February 2019: Yom Limmud, Houston, Texas, "Teaching Jewish Studies at U of H: Where the Global Becomes the Local" (with Mark Goldberg)
- 2018 October 2018: Congregation Brith Shalom, Houston, Texas, speaker for series on 1<sup>st</sup> century Judaism, "The Formation of the Jewish Canon"
- May 2018: Congregation Brith Shalom, Houston, Texas, Tikkun Leil Shavuot Speaker, "Untold Tales of Sinai"
- February 2018: Yom Limmud, Houston, Texas, "Women and the Ten Commandments"
- 2017 December 2017: Temple Sinai, Delray Beach, Florida, Scholar-in-Residence, "Scandalous Tales of the Maccabees" and "How to Get a Head: Woman Warriors in Early Jewish Literature"

December 2017: YESPrep charter school administrative offices, Houston, Texas, presentation on themes of religious inclusion in schools for Diversity Dialogues series

February 2017: Yom Limmud, Houston, Texas, “Biblical Bathing Beauties and the Manipulation of the Male Gaze”

2016 June 2016: West End Synagogue, Nashville, Tennessee, Tikkun Leil Shavuot speaker, “The Lord has brought me back empty: (Un)welcoming the Stranger in the Book of Ruth”

2014 June 2014: West End Synagogue, Nashville, Tennessee, Tikkun Leil Shavuot speaker, “Untold Tales of Sinai”

2013 August 2013: West End Synagogue, Nashville, Tennessee, Sisterhood speaker, “How to Get a Head: Woman Warriors in Early Jewish Literature”

2011 October 2011: West End United Methodist Church, Nashville, Tennessee, speaker about Judaism for youth group world religions unit

June 2011: West End Synagogue, Nashville, Tennessee, Tikkun Leil Shavuot speaker, “Asherah in the Desert”

## **Campus Talks**

2018 April 2018: Jewish Studies talk, University of Houston, “The Torah on Trump”

2016 September 2016: Comparative Cultural Studies lecture series, University of Houston, “Biblical Bathing Beauties and the Manipulation of the Male Gaze: What Judith Can Tell Us about Bathsheba and Susanna”

2015 February 2015: Vanderbilt University Jewish Studies department, speaker for *Drink. Prey. Lust. Sexual Violence & The Book of Esther: A Teach-In*

## **University Teaching Experience**

### *University of Houston, Houston, Texas*

Courses: Religion and Film; Jewish and Christian Texts and Traditions (co-instructor); Bible and Western Culture I; Introduction to Jewish Studies; Goddesses and Other Divine Women; Jews in the Ancient World; Women in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament; Jewish-Muslim Relations (co-instructor); Bible and Modern Pop Culture; Introduction to Religious Studies

### *Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee*

Courses: Themes in the Hebrew Bible; Classical Judaism; Introduction to Judaism; Gender, Sexuality, and Desire in Ancient Jewish Literature, Elementary Biblical Hebrew I and II,

## Elementary Modern Hebrew I

### **Student Research Mentor**

Mentor to undergraduate student Audrey Gale Hall on two projects: “Daughter of Breaking: Sexual Violence as Political Economy in Judges 19,” for *FrameWorks* program and journal, and “Diagnosing Deviance: Lepers and ‘Transsexuals’ in Leviticus and the DSM” for a Senior Honors thesis. Mentored student through presenting the latter project at the 2022 Southwest Commission on Religious Studies conference.

Mentor to undergraduate student Chloe Levy on PURS project “Two Fawns and the Figure of Desire: A Look Into Female Sexuality and Narrative in the Song of Songs,” Spring 2022.

Mentor to undergraduate student Petra Anazonwu for Mellon project on deities in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East, Spring and Summer 2023.

### **Languages**

Reading knowledge of French, German, Modern Hebrew, Biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, Koine Greek, Classical Greek, and Latin

### **Professional Affiliations and Service**

#### *Institutional and departmental service*

August 2022-present: Modern and Classical Languages representative to CLASS Communications, University of Houston

Fall 2017-present: Program-building activities for Jewish Studies, University of Houston

Spring 2023: Faculty Evaluation Committee, Department of Modern and Classical Languages, University of Houston

December 2019-Spring 2023: Faculty Senate, University of Houston

Fall 2021-Spring 2022: Hiring committee for NTT position in South Asian religions, Religious Studies program, University of Houston

Spring 2020: Ross M. Lence Teaching Award selection committee, University of Houston College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

Ad hoc: Adjunct hiring committee, Religious Studies program, University of Houston

2010-2014: On-campus student liaison for Society of Biblical Literature, Vanderbilt University

*Service to the field*

Regular: peer reviewer for presses and journals including Cambridge University Press, Lexington Books, Routledge, *Biblical Interpretation*, *Journal of Ancient Judaism*, *Journal of Anthropological Research*, *Religion Compass*

Spring 2021-present: book review editor, *Bible & Critical Theory*

Summer 2022-present: editorial board member, *Journal of Theta Alpha Kappa*

February 2019-present: Steering committee, LGBTI/Queer Hermeneutics section of Society of Biblical Literature

Member, Society of Biblical Literature, Association for Jewish Studies, Texas Jewish Studies Triangle

2011-2015: Hebrew Bible Bibliographer, Vanderbilt University Divinity Library

## Writing Experience

Reporter	2003-2010
Legal Affairs Writer at <i>The Daily Record</i> , Baltimore, Maryland	2005-2010
Reporter at <i>The York Dispatch</i> , York, Pennsylvania	2003-2005
Reporting and writing intern during college years at <i>Worth</i> , <i>The New Republic</i> , <i>Lilith</i> , <i>Forward</i>	2000-2002

## Writing Awards

Won 17 awards for writing and reporting from national and regional press organizations, including 2010 2<sup>nd</sup> place in investigative/in-depth reporting, National Newspaper Association and 2<sup>nd</sup> place in series, Maryland-Delaware-D.C. Press Association, both for “Fighting for Doc,” an investigation into the circumstances of an elderly man’s association with a group of criminals; and 2007 1<sup>st</sup> place in feature reporting, Sammy award (Dolan Media) and 1<sup>st</sup> place in feature reporting, National Newspaper Association, both for “Unexpected Impact,” about the anti-death penalty activism of a woman whose husband was murdered