

Dr. K. Mohrman Receives LGBTQ Religious History Award

The LGBTQ Religious Archives Network (LGBTQ-RAN) honors Dr. K. Mohrman with the [2018-19 LGBTQ Religious History Award](#). The review jury selected Dr. Mohrman's "Becoming White: Theologizing Heteronormativity in Mormonism, 1890-1945" from among eight papers submitted for the award this year.

Dr. K. Mohrman is currently an instructor at the University of Colorado Denver where she teaches courses in Ethnic Studies, English, and Interdisciplinary Studies as well as History and Religious Studies. She was the 2017-2018 Postdoctoral Fellow in Mormon Studies at the University of Virginia and was the recipient of the University of Minnesota's Steven J. Schochet Endowment's 2016-2017 Interdisciplinary Dissertation Fellowship in Queer, Trans, and Sexuality Studies. She received her doctorate from the University of Minnesota in American Studies with a minor in Feminist and Critical Sexuality Studies, her master's degree from New York University in Humanities and Social Thought, and her bachelor's degree in the Study of Women and Gender from Smith College. Her areas of specialty include critical gender and sexuality studies; feminist and queer theory; critical race theory; American and critical Mormon studies; US history; and popular and visual culture.

Mohrman's award-winner paper is part of her book project *Exceptionally Queer: Mormon Peculiarity and US Exceptionalism*, which argues that contestations over Mormonism in popular and political culture have played a central role in shaping national identity and ideology, particularly through the production of sexual normativity and racial hierarchy. More specifically, the project highlights how Mormonism has been used as a foil against which "Americanness" has been defined as white, heteronormative, capitalist, and Protestant, thereby justifying and facilitating many of the exclusionary and imperialist policies and practices of the US nation-state. The "Becoming White: Theologizing Heteronormativity in Mormonism, 1890-1945" paper is the basis for her book's fourth chapter, "Mormonism in Transition: Biopolitics and the Resignification of Mormon Peculiarity, 1890-1945." Original research for this paper drew on both official and unofficial publications of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, including the journals *Woman's Exponent*, *Young Woman's Journal*, *Improvement Era*, and *The Contributor*.

Mohrman is the tenth recipient of the LGBTQ Religious History Award that was initiated by the LGBTQ Religious Archives Network in 2005. It is the only award given for outstanding scholarship in this field of study. Jury members Dr. Joanne Carlson Brown, Dr. Heather Rachelle White and Dr. Bernard Schlager described Mohrman's work as offering a "detailed, nuanced analysis of a self-defined religious group--the LDS church--with attention to how dominant discourses about religion as a cultural category inflected the church's changing social and political status. The author also insightfully analyzes interlocking dynamics of race and racialization with normative sexuality and religious/moral authority. The author uses sources well and constructs a very convincing argument of how Mormonism gained entry into the

American religious mainstream in an entwined process of becoming racially white and sexually normal. This process, in short, is the invention of Mormon heteronormativity, a process that secured both religious toleration and white racial status.”

Submissions for next year’s LGBTQ Religious History Award must be postmarked or received electronically by December 1, 2019. Complete information on submission guidelines for the award can be found at: <https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/history-award-guidelines>

The LGBTQ Religious Archives Network, a project of the [Center for LGBTQ & Gender Studies in Religion](#) at [Pacific School of Religion](#), is a ground-breaking venture to preserve the history of LGBTQ religious movements around the world. It has two primary purposes: a) to assist LGBTQ religious groups and leaders in preserving their records in appropriate repositories; and b) providing an electronic information clearinghouse on LGBTQ religious collections and other historical source materials on its web site: <https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/>

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