



Katie Hemphill receives 2021-22 LGBTQ Religious History Award

The LGBTQ Religious Archives Network (LGBTQ-RAN) honors Katie Hemphill, Ph.D. with the [2021-22 LGBTQ Religious History Award](#). The review jury selected Hemphill's "'Pastor Was Trapped': Queer Scandal and Contestations Over Christian Anti-Vice Reform" from among eight papers submitted for the award this year.

[Katie Hemphill](#) is an Associate Professor of History and faculty affiliate of the [Institute for LGBT Studies](#) at the University of Arizona, where she teaches courses on U.S. history, manhood and masculinity, the history of crime and punishment, and historical methods. Her work has been featured in the *Journal of the Early Republic*, the *Journal of Women's History*, and the edited collection *Capitalism by Gaslight: Illuminating the Economy of Nineteenth-Century America*. In 2020, Hemphill published her first monograph, [Bawdy City: Commercial Sex and Regulation in Baltimore, 1790-1915](#), with Cambridge University Press. The book chronicled the relationship between prostitution and the growth of Baltimore as a city and economic center over the course of the long nineteenth century. It won the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic's [2020 Mary Kelley Prize](#) for the best book on women, gender, and sexuality in the early republic.

It was in writing *Bawdy City* that Hemphill first encountered the Reverend Kenneth G. Murray, the subject of "'Pastor was Trapped': Queer Scandal and Contestations Overs Christian Anti-Vice Reform." Murray, a Methodist minister who was an outspoken opponent of tolerated prostitution in Progressive-era Baltimore, suddenly disappeared from the city and from public life in 1916, just as the anti-vice crusade was reaching its height. Hemphill's attempts to find out why uncovered a mostly forgotten scandal that erupted after Murray was exposed for engaging in sex with another man at Baltimore's Central Branch Y.M.C.A. "'Pastor was Trapped'" explores both Murray's activism and his downfall, with a focus on how Baltimore iconoclast H.L. Mencken and other critics of anti-vice reformers used the allegations of Murray's homosexuality to undermine reformist causes. For them, Murray's apparent queerness seemingly confirmed the sexualized and gendered pathologies of Christian progressives.

This essay will appear in the [Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era's](#) July 2022 issue. Hemphill is honored to receive this award and looks forward to continuing to engage in research that examines the intersection of religion and sexuality. Her new book project focuses on how the Edmunds-Tucker Act, an anti-polygamy law targeted at Mormons, was used to police the sexuality and sexual expression of diverse peoples in U.S. Territories.

Hemphill is the thirteenth 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 Joanne Carlson Brown, Ph.D., Gillian Frank, Ph.D. and Johari Jabir, Ph.D. described Hemphill's work as "beautifully written and brilliantly

researched. It explores the changing meanings of same-sex sexual expression, religious institutions/leadership, and moral crusaders in popular culture. Using a rich array of legal material (court records and transcripts), alongside popular culture and journalistic resources and correspondence, the author tells the story of Methodist minister Kenneth G. Murray and the early twentieth century sex scandal surrounding him. It carefully and methodically explicates the implications of this scandal and how Murray's queerness came to stand in for the hypocrisy of moral reform efforts in the Progressive era and beyond. A stunning piece of research and deserving of much recognition."

Submissions for next year's LGBTQ Religious History Award must be postmarked or received electronically by December 1, 2022. Complete information on submission guidelines for the award can be found at: <https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/history-award-guidelines>

The [LGBTQ Religious Archives Network](https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/) is a ground-breaking venture to preserve the history of LGBTQ religious movements around the world. It has three primary purposes: a) to assist LGBTQ religious leaders and groups in determining how best to preserve their records and papers; b) to provide an electronic information clearinghouse about LGBTQ religious history for the use of historians, researchers and other interested persons; and c) to encourage scholarship in LGBTQ religious history. Learn more about LGBTQ-RAN at its website: <https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/>

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