



The College of Arts and
Sciences and
The Department of
Religion at
Florida State University

proudly present the

John F. Priest Lecture

John F. Priest Lecture Series

Established by a generous gift from Gloria Priest, the John F. Priest Lecture Series honors the life and work of John Priest (1929-1998). Priest served as a professor in the Department of Religion at Florida State University from 1968 until his retirement in 1996, when he was named professor emeritus.

While at FSU, Priest also served as director of the graduate humanities program (1969-1976) and chair of the Department of Religion (1978-1984). Priest was a founding member of the American Academy of Religion, which he served as national secretary, vice president, president (1967), and executive director and treasurer (1976-1978).

Priest received his A.B. from Asbury College (1949) and his B.D. (1955) and Ph.D. (1960) from Drew University. From 1949 to 1952, he served as a missionary in India for the Methodist Church in Moradabad, Bareilly and Lucknow. Priest was also honored with a variety of fellowships, including the Kent, Fulbright, Dempster and Lilly. Prior to coming to FSU, Priest served as a faculty member at Ohio Wesleyan University and the Hartford Seminary Foundation, and was academic dean at Hartford from 1966 to 1968. He was a longtime member of the Society of Biblical Literature and the American Schools of Oriental Research.

For more information about the Department of Religion,
visit www.religion.fsu.edu or call (850) 644-1020.

John F. Priest Lecture

Welcome

Martin Kavka, Professor & Chair of Religion

Introduction of Speaker

Nicole Kelley

FSU Department of Religion

Lecture

“Cursing Christians”

by

Michael Penn

Teresa Hihn Moore Professor of Religious Studies
at Stanford University

Thursday, March 30th, 2023, 5:00 p.m.

2005 William Johnston Building

(Reception immediately following the lecture)

Michael Penn

Michael Penn, Teresa Hihn Moore Professor of Religious Studies at Stanford University is a specialist in the history of early Christianity, Professor Penn's research focuses on middle eastern Christians who wrote in the Aramaic dialect of Syriac.

Professor Penn's first book, *Kissing Christians: Ritual and Community in the Late Ancient Church*, was published in 2005 by the University of Pennsylvania Press. In 2015 he published two books on Christian-Muslim relations: *Envisioning Islam: Syriac Christians in the Early Muslim World* (University of Pennsylvania Press) and *When Christians First Met Muslims: A Source Book of the Earliest Syriac Writings on Islam* (University of California Press). For these projects Professor Penn has received awards from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the American Council for Learned Societies, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Humanities Center, the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, the British Academy, the American Philosophical Association, the American Academy of Religion, and the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning.

Professor Penn is currently working on an Andrew Mellon Foundation funded collaboration that uses recent advances in the computerized analysis of handwriting to help analyze ancient Aramaic manuscripts. In addition to this work in the digital humanities, Professor Penn has begun several related projects that focus on the history of Syriac Christianity and the manuscripts they produced.