

Anya P. Foxen

(Prior to 2017: Anna Pokazanyeva)

Curriculum vitae

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California Polytechnic State University

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1 Grand Avenue
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

EDUCATION

Ph.D., University of California at Santa Barbara, Religious Studies, 2015

M.A., University of California at Santa Barbara, Religious Studies, 2011

B.A., Rutgers University, English, French, minors in Religion and South Asian Studies, 2008

TEACHING POSITIONS

2018– Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy (Religious Studies Program),
Department of Women's and Gender Studies, California Polytechnic State
University

2015–18 Lecturer, Department of Philosophy (Religious Studies Program), Department of
Women's and Gender Studies, California Polytechnic State University

PUBLICATIONS

Books

2021 *Is This Yoga?: Concepts, Histories, and the Complexities of Modern Practice*, co-authored with
Christa Kuberry (New York: Routledge Press).

2020 *Inhaling Spirit: Harmonialism, Orientalism, and the Western Roots of Modern Yoga* (New
York: Oxford University Press).

2017 *Biography of a Yogi: Paramahansa Yogananda and the Origins of Modern Yoga* (New York:
Oxford University Press).

Journal Articles

- 2017 “Yogi Calisthenics: What the ‘non-Yoga’ Yogic Practice of Paramahansa Yogananda Can Tell Us About Religion.” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 85.3: 494–526.
- 2016 “Mind Within Matter: Science, the Occult, and the (Meta)physics of Ether and Akasha.” *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* 51.2: 318–46.

Book Chapters

- 2017 “Supermen, Mystical Women, and Oriental Others: Dynamics of Race and Gender in Pop Cultural Yogis and the Universal Superhuman,” in *The Assimilation of Yogic Religions through Pop Culture*, edited by Paul Hackett. London: Lexington Books, 2017.

Encyclopedia Entries and Bibliographies

- 2017 “Self-Realization Fellowship.” *World Religions and Spirituality*.
<https://wrldrels.org/2017/08/04/self-realizationfellowship>.
- 2014 “Gender and Sexuality.” *Oxford Bibliographies* in “Hinduism,” edited by Alf Hiltebeitel. New York: Oxford University Press.
- 2014 “Akashic Records.” *Ghosts, Spirits, and Psychics: The Paranormal from Alchemy to Zombies*, edited by Matt Cardin. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO.

Book Reviews

- 2019 Review of Holly Folk, *The Religion of Chiropractic: Populist Healing from the American Heartland* in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 87.2: 543–46.
- 2017 Review of April D. DeConick, *The Gnostic New Age: How a Countercultural Spirituality Revolutionized Religion from Antiquity to Today* in AAR’s *Reading Religion*.
<http://readingreligion.org/books/gnostic-new-age>.
- 2017 Review of Karline McLain, *The Afterlife of Sai Baba: Competing Visions of a Global Saint* in AAR’s *Reading Religion*. <http://readingreligion.org/books/afterlife-sai-baba>.
- 2015 Review of Véronique Altglas, *From Yoga to Kabbalah: Religious Exoticism and the Logics of Bricolage* in *Religions of South Asia* 9.3: 365–67.
- 2015 Review of Geoffrey Samuel and Jay Johnston, eds., *Religion and the Subtle Body in Asia and the West: Between Mind and Body* in *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 19.3: 362–64.
- 2014 Review of Jarrod L. Whitaker, *Strong Arms and Drinking Strength: Masculinity, Violence, and the Body in Ancient India* in *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 18.3: 517–19.
- 2014 Review of Elizabeth de Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga: Patanjali and Western Esotericism* in *International Journal for the Study of New Religions* 5.1: 114–16.

- 2014 Review of Marion Goldman, *The American Soul Rush: Esalen and the Rise of Spiritual Privilege* in *International Journal for the Study of New Religions* 5.1: 117–19.

Public Interest Work

- 2017 “5 Facts That Help Us Understand the World of Early American Yoga” in *OUPblog* <https://blog.oup.com/2017/11/5-facts-early-american-yoga/>.
- 2017 “Weird, Wacky, and Contradictory Yoga: 7 Questions with Anya P. Foxen” in *Sacred Matters*. <https://sacredmattersmagazine.com/weird-wacky-and-contradictory-yoga-7-questions-with-anya-p-foxen>.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & INVITED LECTURES

Conference Presentations

- 2020 “The Power of Context, Identity, and Capital: Three 2020 Books Interrogating Spirituality and Yoga,” author-meets-critic panel addressing my book, *Inbaling Spirit*, alongside two others, Virtual Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), (December 9).
- 2019 “Just How to Wake the Solar Plexus: Subtle Bodies and Pseudo-Yoga,” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), San Diego (November 25).
- 2019 “Rhizomes and Inosculation: Untangling Modern Postural Yoga,” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), San Diego (November 23).
- 2019 “Rivers into the Ocean: Location and Dislocation at the Paramarth Niketan International Yoga Festival,” paper presented at the Yogascapes in Japan Conference, Kyoto (July 11).
- 2018 “Whence Transnational Yoga?: An Initial Exploration of Modern Yoga’s Western Roots,” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), Denver (November 19).
- 2018 “In Modern Yoga a Magic Dwells,” paper presented at Annual Conference of the Dharma Academy of North America (DANAM), Denver (November 17).
- 2017 “Tangled Roots: What About Modern Yoga?” for “Perspectives on Mark Singleton and James Mallinson’s *Roots of Yoga* (Penguin Classics, 2017),” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), Boston (November 18).

- 2016 “The Other Father of Modern Yoga: The Ghosh Lineage in 'Bikram' and 'Barkan Method' Teacher Trainings,” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), San Antonio (November 20).
- 2016 “Forged Records?: The Theosophical Appropriation of Akasha,” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), San Antonio (November 20).
- 2015 “The Turbaned Superman: Popular Depictions of Yogi-figures and the Shift to a Scientific Universalism,” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), Atlanta (November 23).
- 2015 “Buying (into) Yoga: Perspectives on Andrea Jain’s *Selling Yoga: From Counterculture to Pop Culture* (Oxford University Press, 2014),” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), Atlanta (November 22).
- 2015 “Turbans and Love Cults: Race, Sex, and the Feminization of Early American Yoga,” paper presented at the Yoga (R)evolution: Interrogating Possibilities and Practices Conference, UC Berkeley (April 10).
- 2014 “Yoga Pants, Yoga Body: The Feminization, Sexualization, and Pornification of Yoga,” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), San Diego (November 24).
- 2013 “Masters of the God Particle: Vivekananda’s Science of Yoga and the Quantum Leap of Paramahansa Yogananda,” paper presented at Annual Conference of the Dharma Academy of North America (DANAM), Baltimore (November 22).
- 2013 “Astral *Siddhas* and Yogi-Christ: Bodily Immortality in *Autobiography of a Yogi*,” paper presented at the Conference on the Study of Religions of India (CSRI), Drew University (June 29).
- 2013 “The Disuse of Pleasure: Constructions of Feminine Subjectivity in Indian Devotional Traditions,” paper presented at Princeton Theological Seminary Koinonia Forum, Princeton (March 7).
- 2012 “Sexed Voices, Gendered Bodies: Constructions of the Feminine Subject in *Bhakti* Poetry,” paper presented at Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), Chicago (November 18).
- 2012 “Pundits and Moguls: Yogic Power in the Marketplace and the Lineage of Bikram Choudhury,” paper presented at Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, (AAR), Chicago (November 17).
- 2012 “Slender Waists and Severed Breasts: The Construction of Sexed Female Bodies in *Kṛṣṇa Bhakti* Poetry,” paper presented at Western Regional Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR/WR), Santa Clara University (March 26).

- 2011 “Faith on the Mat: Hindus, Protestants, and the Construction of Yoga,” paper presented at Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), San Francisco (November 20).
- 2011 “Women of Both Sexes: Construction, Alteration, and Transformation of Gender in Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti* Poetry,” paper presented at the Conference on the Study of Religions of India (CSRI), Loyola Marymount University (June 24).

Invited Lectures and Talks

- 2019 Penn State Symposium on Yoga, Ethics, and Neoliberalism (April 26)
Panels: “Old Beginnings: On the Past, Present, and Future of Yoga”; “Responsibility without Responsibilization: On the Ethics of Yoga in a Neoliberal Age”; “Yoga as Training to be a Citizen of the World”
- 2019 “Charging the Body Battery: The Energization Exercises of Genevieve Stebbins and Paramahansa Yogananda,” presentation given for Loyola Marymount University’s Yoga Studies MA Program (January 30).
- 2017 “Turbans, Certain to Charm!: South Asian Men, White Women, and the Gendering of Early American Yoga,” presentation given to UCSB South Asians Religions and Cultures Research Focus Group (May 24).
- 2015 “From Turbans to Yoga Pants: Race, Sex, and the Feminization of American Yoga,” presentation given for Cal Poly Theisms Club and Religious Studies Program (May 26).
- 2014 “The Man with Superpowers: A Yogi in the American Imagination and the Case of Paramahansa Yogananda,” presentation given to UCSB South Asians Religions and Cultures Research Focus Group (February 21).

AWARDS & HONORS

- 2015 W. Richard Comstock Award for achievement in the study of Religion and Culture, UC Santa Barbara
- 2009–14 Humanities Special Fellowship, UC Santa Barbara
- 2008 Highest Honors in French Literature, Rutgers University
- 2008 High Honors in English Literature, Rutgers University
- 2008 Jordan Lee Flyer Honors Award for best undergraduate thesis in English, Rutgers University
- 2008 Jamima Dingus Qualls Prize for best undergraduate essay on women writers or feminist issues, Rutgers University
- 2007 Jaroslav M. Burian and Grayce Susan Burian Achievement Award in English, Rutgers University

COURSES TAUGHT

- 2015– **California Polytechnic State University (Department of Philosophy; Religious Studies Program; Department of Women’s and Gender Studies)**
Hinduism
Religions of Asia
Indian Philosophy
Religion, Dialogue, and Society
Religion, Gender, and Society
Religion, Science, and Technology
Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies in the United States
- 2013–5 **University of California, Santa Barbara (Religious Studies Department; Writing Program)**
Academic Writing, Fall 2014, Winter 2015, Spring 2015
Introduction to the Study of Religion, Summer 2014
Indic Civilization, Summer 2013

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Service to the Discipline

- 2019–24 AAR Yoga in Theory and Practice Unit Co-Chair
2019–21 *Journal of the American Academy of Religion (JAAR)* Editorial Board Member
2016–18 AAR Yoga in Theory and Practice Unit Steering Committee
2016–18 AAR North American Hinduism Unit Co-Chair
2013–16 AAR North American Hinduism Unit Steering Committee

University Service (Cal Poly)

College-level

- 2020– College of Liberal Arts Technology Committee (WGS representative)

Department-level

- 2020– Religious Studies Program Director
2019–20 Philosophy TT Search Committee (Computing Ethics Search)
2019–20 Philosophy TT Screening Committee (Computing Ethics Search)
2019–20 Philosophy TT Search Committee (Metaphysics Search)
2018–19 Philosophy TT Search Committee (Computing Ethics Search)
2018–19 Philosophy TT Screening Committee (Computing Ethics Search)
2018– Employment Equity Facilitator
2018– Religious Studies Part-time Lecturer Pool Committee
2018– Religious Studies Minor Advisor
2017– Philosophy Department Committee for Diversity and Inclusion

2017– Religious Studies Club Faculty Co-Advisor

Reviewer

State University of New York Press
Journal of the American Academy of Religion
Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft
Social Compass
Journal of Dharma Studies
Method and Theory in the Study of Religion
Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion

Other Service

Yoga Alliance Curriculum Task Force Consultant (2019)

Professional Memberships

American Academy of Religion (2010-present)

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Written: Sanskrit, Hindi, Russian, French
Spoken: Russian, French