

# Curriculum Vitae

## Christopher F. Silver

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[School Address]

Department of Psychology

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USA

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### **PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Born: October 15th, 1976 - Chattanooga Tennessee

Citizenship: United States of America

### **EDUCATION**

- 1 Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga; August 2001
- 2 Bachelor of Science in Psychology, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga; August 2001
- 3 Masters of Science in Psychology (Research), University of Tennessee at Chattanooga; August 2003 Thesis Title: *Training of Observers in risk rituals involving the Manasa sect of Hinduism and Serpent Handling Sects of Appalachia*
- 4 Masters of Arts in Religion and Culture at Wilfrid Laurier University Waterloo Ontario Canada
- 5 Doctorate of Education, Leadership and Education at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga – ABD Estimated Graduation Early 2012

### **HONORS AND AWARDS**

- 1 UTC Sigma Xi Graduate Student Researcher of the Year Award - Awarded April 2004
- 2 2001-2004 Research Director of Hood Psychology of Religion Laboratory (Honors Assistantship) – UT Chattanooga

### **ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS**

- 1 Society for the Scientific Study of Religion
- 2 American Academy of Religion
- 3 American Psychological Association
- 4 Psi Chi National Honors Society in Psychology
- 5 Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Music Fraternity

## **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

### **2009-Present Spirituality in Germany and U.S.A.: Analysis of the Semantics, Psychological and Sociological Correlates and Biographical Contexts of a Self-Attribution**

As research supervisor and methodologist, I oversee all aspects of an international study exploring self-identifications regarding spirituality and religiosity. While these terms are used in the common vernacular, ambiguity abounds in academic literature about the actual function and operation of such terms in self-identity in the United States and in Germany. This study seeks to clarify the fuzzy nature of the terms and their relationship between tradition and secular uses. Using advanced quantitative analysis, the study will explore personality traits, attachment, psychological well-being, religious schemata, pro-social attitudes, and social status in order to assess the socio-biographical and psychological correlates of spirituality. In addition to quantitative analysis it will explore case subjects with semi-structured interviewing to determine if participants vary theoretically from the overall paradigm. Estimated completion date is summer 2012 and will result in a variety of academic publications and a book.

### **2007-2009 A Quantitative Examination of Exceptional Experience**

As research supervisor and under the direction of Dr Niko Kohls at the University of Northampton in the United Kingdom the research team at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga explored experiences that give the perceiver a sense of awe and profound interpretation. While these experiences can fall within the realm of religious interpretation, this research is not limited solely to religiosity but rather explored all types of experiences considered meaningful for participants. By understanding the various levels of meaning these experiences create, this research helped to clarify the boundaries of exceptional versus religious experience in how humans compartmentalize meaning. The publication is forthcoming.

### **(2004-2009) Deconverts from Mainstream Religious Denominations in the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America (Phase Two).**

Through my role as research supervisor for the United States team, the US research team examined the life trajectories of deconverts from mainstream religious denominations. Deconverts are those who are forced or leave religious traditions thereby changing their religious identity. As part of a five year study this project employed a number of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, including the Fowler faith development interview, as well as a narrative exploration of the participant's life trajectory. The narrative provided a linear context in which to understand how one's experience and social context shapes their religious identity. In addition to the use of qualitative methods, the project also incorporated quantitative methods as well. Those included the fundamentalism scale, NEO-FFI, the authoritarianism scale as well as other sociological classifications in determining various manifestations of religious exit. My responsibilities included coordination of sampling and decision making for the United States research team, budgetary administration, observation, and hiring of new researchers, project management, and acting as a liaison between the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

and Universität Bielefeld in Germany. All quantitative analysis and reporting were overseen by me as the research supervisor. The result of this study is a book published in 2009.

Streib, H., Keller, B., Csöff, R., & Silver, C.F. (2009). *Deconversion, Faith Development and Fundamentalism, Qualitative and Quantitative Results from Cross-Cultural Research in Germany and the United States of America*. Oakville, CT: Vandenhoeck & Ruprect.

(2003-2004) Abortion Attitudes and Legality, An Examination of Legal Opinions on Abortion Resistance.

I directed a research team that examined how participants would perceive various types of abortion resistance actions and if they should be illegal or considered terrorism. We examined if belief characteristics can determine, if any, how a participant will respond to hypothetical short stories of protest situations ranging from non-violent actions to violent actions against abortion clinics. Analysis constituted replications of previous successful studies using abortion resistance themes. Additionally various scales were used including the fundamentalism scale, questions on political beliefs, and vignettes of a fictitious individual who attempt to disrupt abortions clinics. Research participants were asked to respond to the vignettes indicating whether they believed the abortion resistance action should be illegal and punished. Finally they were asked to classify if such resistance was consider a standard illegal action or if such action could be considered terrorism. The results of the study were presented to the Southeastern Psychological Association in Atlanta Georgia in 2004.

(2004) Perceptions of Religious Conversion Effectiveness Within the Hare Krishna Movement in the Southeast United States.

As the primary researcher, I examined the International Society for Krishna Consciousness' perceptions of religious conversion strategy effectiveness. This included interviews with first and second generation devotees regarding their perceptions of conversion strategies within the ISKCON movement before and after the US Supreme Court ruling on proselytizing in airports. From the initial interviews conducted, a questionnaire was constructed from the common themes found in the interviews. The results of this study were presented at the Regional Conference of American Academy of Religion in Atlanta Georgia in 2004.

(2004) Understanding Unconscious Transference and Improving Lineup Identification Accuracy in Adult and Elderly Witnesses.

Under the direction of forensic psychologist David Ross, I assisted as a research technology consultant and statistician for the forensic psychology research project. I provided technological consulting on project design, implementation, and analysis. This venture examined how unconscious transference occurs when an eyewitness misidentifies a familiar but innocent person from a police lineup, specifically in people over the age of forty. Through my advisement, we are able to incorporate specific research technologies

which provide efficiency and accuracy. The project resulted in an academic paper published in a cognitive psychology journal.

(2002-2004) An Examination of Blood-n-Fire Ministries

Under the direction of sociologist of religion Margaret Poloma and Ralph Hood this project examined Blood-n-Fire, an inner city homeless and drug addiction ministry in inner city Atlanta GA. It also included quantitative surveying of Blood-n-Fire staff and residents. Responsibilities included administering questionnaires and conducting semi-structured interviews with the staff of Blood-n-Fire and open-ended interviews with the homeless of Blood-n-Fire, assisting professors with research and sampling decisions. This project resulted in the publication of a book by Poloma and Hood.

Poloma, M. M. & Hood, R. W. (2008). *Blood and fire, Godly love in a Pentecostal emerging church*. New York: New York University Press.

(2002-2004) Deconverts from Fundamentalist New Religious Groups in the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America (phase one).

Under the direction of Heinz Strieb, Ralph Hood, and James Fowler this project examined the life trajectories of deconverts from new fundamentalist religions. This project employed qualitative and quantitative methodologies including the Fowler faith development interview, narrative exploration and fundamentalism, and authoritarianism scales. I was given the title of graduate research fellow at Emory University. As a research fellow, my responsibilities included seeking research participants in the greater Atlanta area, conducting faith development interviews based on the work of James Fowler, conducting narrative interviews, and administering questionnaires. Concluding phase one of the project, I analyzed all data (qualitative and quantitative) for the US portion of the project and presented my result to the German research team.

(2001-2002) A study of the relationship between right-wing authoritarianism, fundamentalism, and the big five personality dimensions.

Directed by Heinz Strieb and Ralph Hood, data from Fundamentalism scale, Right-Wing Authoritarianism scale and Five Personality Dimensions scale were examined and compared (U.S.A. and Germany). Responsibilities included data collection and statistical analyses for the U.S.A and Germany samples and written presentation of results. This research resulted in an academic publication in the *Archive for the Psychology or Religion* published in 2006.

**RESEARCH INTERESTS**

While my graduate education spans three areas of specialization in psychology, religion and culture, and in education, my interest is in research theory and application in qualitative and quantitative methodologies. I am interested in various manifestations of social theory within sociology, psychology, and education. My studies in social theory include philosophy of education, sociology of learning, philosophy, and psychology of

religion. Additionally my research interest is beginning to explore religious education within new religious movements. This includes groups such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and new movements in Christianity. In addition to research and theory, my professional life also includes six years' experience in developing corporate education within online technology. I have experience in developing corporate educational design and curricula. In this genre of interest I apply my experience with teaching, technology, and research to create both synchronous and asynchronous delivery methodologies in education for companies. I have a variety of evaluative methodologies which ensure information delivery and reception is effective for students.

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

#### *Part-time Psychology Professor – Miller Motte Technical College*

- Introductory Psychology, 2006-2007

#### *Part-time Psychology Instructor – University of Tennessee at Chattanooga*

- Introductory Psychology, 2006-2008
- Social Psychology, Fall 2006 - Present
- Tests and Measurements in Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies Spring 2007 to Present
- Statistics, 2007

#### *Graduate Instructor- Wilfrid Laurier University*

- Religions of the Americas 2004-2005
- Eastern Religions 2004-2005

#### *Adjunct Assistant Professor - Chattanooga State Technical Community College*

- Psychology of Learning 2003-2004
- Religions of the World Spring 2004 (Team teaching with Chattanooga State President Catanzaro with a web based WebCT and classroom course)

#### *Graduate Instructor- UT Chattanooga*

- Social Science Statistics Laboratory 2001-2003
- Distance Scholar and Research Coordinator 2004-2006

#### *Instructional training*

- WebCT - e-learning online system for educational institutions
- Blackboard – Online academic suite, course development and evaluation
- Advanced Statistics using SPSS and Systat
- Teaching and Instruction in qualitative analysis using Nvivo 2.0
- Corporate Training for small and medium sized businesses
- Online course development theory and evaluation
- Learning administration leadership and evaluation

I am qualified to teach the following courses:

### *In Psychology*

- Introductory Psychology
- Social Psychology
- Introduction to Statistics and SPSS
- Research Methods in Psychology
- Qualitative Methods using Nvivo 2.0
- Theory and Systems of Psychology
- Psychology of Religion

### *In Religious Studies*

- Introduction to World Religions
- Theories of Religion
- New Religious Movements in the postmodern era
- American Religious Diversity: A historical reconstruction of American religious pluralism.
- Religious Conversion Motifs in Modern Society
- Mysticism East & West
- Psychology of Religion: Theory and Method
- Southern Culture meets Eastern Religion

### *In Education*

- Cultural Studies in Education
- Education in Business Applications and Approaches
- Organizational Theories in Leadership
- Research Theories in Application
- Qualitative Methods
- Social Theory and Philosophy of Education
- Adult Education Applications and Approaches
- Theories and Systems of Education

## **PUBLICATIONS**

Silver, C. F. (2011). Psychology of Religion, explorations in paradigm, theory, and method. In Weathington, B., Biderman M., Cunningham C., & O'Leary B. (Ed.), *Applied Psychology in Everyday Life*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge

- Scholars Publishing. (In Press).
- Silver, C.F. (2011). Book review: In the presence of Sai Baba; body, city, and memory in a global religious movement by Smriti Srinivas. *Nova Religio*. (In Press).
- Silver, C. F. (2010). Psychology of Religion. In C. H. Lippy & P. W. Williams (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religion in America*. Washington DC: CQ Press
- Streib, H., Keller, B., Csöff, R., & Silver, C.F. (2009). *Deconversion, Faith Development and Fundamentalism, Qualitative and Quantitative Results from Cross-Cultural Research in Germany and the United States of America*. Oakville, CT: Vandenhoeck & Ruprect.
- Ross, D., Benton, T., McDonnell, S., Metzger, R., & Silver, C. F. (2007). When accurate and inaccurate eyewitnesses look the same: A limitation of the 'pop-out' effect and the 10- to 12-second rule. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 21(5), 677-690
- Krauss, S.W., Hood, Ralph W., Streib, H., Keller, B., Morris, R.J., & Silver, C.F., (2006). The distinction between authoritarianism and fundamentalism in three cultures: factor analysis and personality correlates. *Archive for the Psychology of Religion*. 28(1), pp. 341-348.
- Silver, C.F. (2004). Book Review: Buddhism is not what you think: finding freedom beyond beliefs. By Steve Hagen. *Nova Religio* Vol. 9, No. (2).
- Silver, C. F. (2003). The Relationship between Religious Knowledge, and Dogmatism in College Students. *Modern Psychological Studies Journal*, 9 pp. 26-35

### **Video Production**

- Silver, C.F. (Writer, Producer, and Editor). (2000) *Dharma in the south, an exploration of Tibetan Buddhism in the Southeast United States* [Documentary] Chattanooga, Tennessee: University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

### **PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS**

- Chen, Z. & Silver, C. F. (2010). *Transformation, traditionalism and spirituality in different cultural contexts*. Presented at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Baltimore, Maryland.
- Silver, C. F. (2005). *The undiscovered country: Jagadguru Kripalu Parishat as a redefinition of North American Hinduism*. Presented at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Rochester, New York.
- Silver, C. F. & Ross, C. F. J. (2005). *Tibetan Buddhism in a new key: an exploration of New Kadampa Buddhism's appeal to non-Asian North Americans*. Presented at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Rochester,

- New York.
- Silver, C. F. (2005). *A variety of deconversion trajectories construction of a typology: the examination of two case studies from the United States*. Presented at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Rochester, New York.
- Ross, C. F. J. & Silver, C. F. (2005). *Personality, religious, and spiritual experiences within the New Kadampa Tradition of Buddhism*. Presented at the annual meeting of American Psychological Association, Washington DC.
- Silver, C. F. (2004). *Critic on the book review panel of Margaret M. Poloma's Main Street mystics: The Toronto blessing and reviving Pentecostalism* (AltaMira Press). Presented at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Kansas City, Missouri.
- Silver, C. F. (2004). "To be or not to be": *ISKCON, African Americans, and the role of initiation in the identity of Gaudiya-Vaishnava Believers in the Southeastern United States*. Presented at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Kansas City, Missouri
- Silver, C. F. & Swanson, R. (2004). *Case studies of deconverts from new religious fundamentalism in the United States*. Presented at the annual meeting of American Psychological Association, Honolulu, HI
- Hood, R. W. & Silver, C. F. (2004). *Quantitative comparison of religious deconverts and members in new religious movements*. Presented at the annual meeting of American Psychological Association, Honolulu, HI
- Silver, C. F., Thorpe, H. & Hood, R. W. (2004) *Participant Perceptions of Abortion Resistance and Terrorism*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Southeastern Psychological Association, Atlanta, GA
- Silver, C. F. (2004). *Atlanta Hare Krishna devotee perceptions of proselytizing and religious conversion effectiveness*. Presented at the annual meeting of Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion, Atlanta, GA
- Silver, C. F. (2003). "Blood-n-Fire" *as a facilitator of spiritual transformation*. Presented at the annual meeting of The Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Norfolk, VA
- Silver, C. F. & Hood, R. W. (2003). *Religious ritual, serpents and recall; an examination of religious ritual recall and recognition*. Presented at the annual meeting of The Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Norfolk, VA
- Hood, R. W., Strieb, H., Morris, R., & Silver, C. F. (2002). *Fundamentalism, right-wing authoritarianism reconsidered in light of an intra-textual model of*

*fundamentalism*. Presented at the annual meeting of The Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Salt Lake City, UT

Silver, C. F. (2001). *The relationship between religious Knowledge, and Dogmatism in College Students*. Presented at the annual meeting of Southeastern Psychological Association. Orlando, FL

## **REFERENCES**

Dr. Ralph Hood, Professor of Psychology  
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga  
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Dr. David Ross, Assistant Professor of Psychology  
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Dr. Heinz Streib, Professor for Religious Education and Ecumenical Theology  
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Additional references available upon request.