

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
CHARLOTTE

*COLLEGE OF
LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES
RELIGIOUS STUDIES*

Loy H. Witherspoon
Lecture Series

Faculty and friends of the Department of Religious Studies
established the Witherspoon Lectures
in 1984.

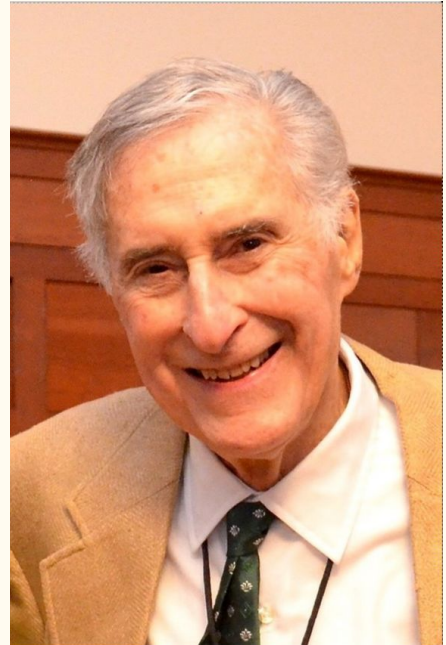
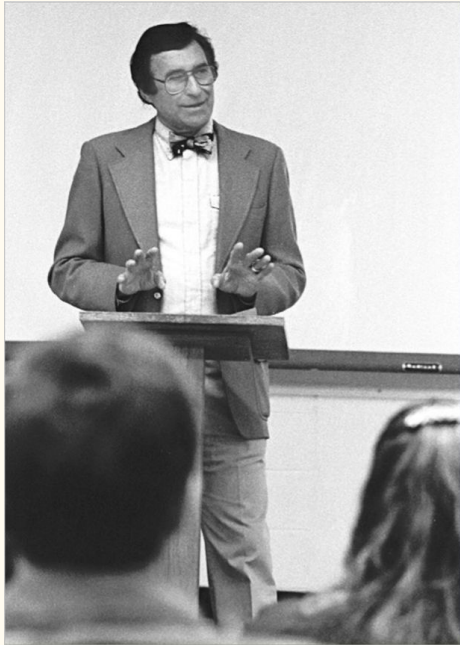
It is the oldest and most prestigious endowed lecture series
at UNC Charlotte.

Honoring Loy H. Witherspoon

Professor Emeritus

Philosophy and Religious Studies

January 17, 1930 - January 15, 2017





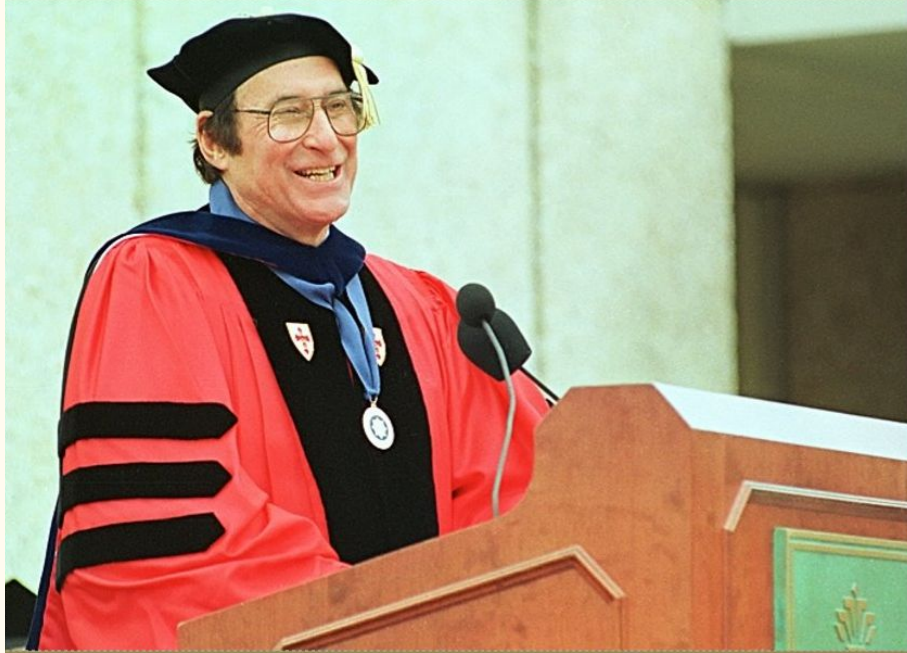
UNC Charlotte Founder Bonnie Cone recruited Dr. Witherspoon in 1964 to join the faculty of what was then Charlotte College, now UNC Charlotte.

As a recipient of the Bank of America Award for Teaching Excellence and a Distinguished Service Award, Loy was known as a great teacher, caring counselor, skilled ombudsman, patron, and troubleshooter.



“People who join an organization early define the culture of the organization. I don’t think there was anybody – other than Bonnie Cone – who contributed to the University so thoroughly.”

Former Chancellor James Woodward



Dr. Witherspoon
advocated for and was the first
Chair of the
Department of Philosophy
and Religion.

He was a champion of the
Department of Religious
Studies when it
became independent.



Witherspoon Hall, which opened in 1990, is now home to international students and the transfer student learning community.

Dr. Witherspoon was instrumental to bringing the Greek system to campus. He formed a special bond with Lambda Chi Alpha, which endowed a scholarship in his honor.



Past Witherspoon Lectures

1984 Seyyed Hossein Nasr, George Washington University

“Religion and Religions:
The Problem of Living in a Multi-religious World”

1985 David L. Miller, Syracuse University

“The Question of the Book: Religion as Texture”

1986 Michael J. Cook, Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion

“Evolving Jewish Views of Jesus”

1987 Martin E. Marty, University of Chicago

“In the Combat Zone Over American Values:
The Vision of One American
versus the Vision of Many Americans”

Past Witherspoon Lectures

1988 William H. Poteat, Duke University

“The Banality of Evil: The Darkness at the Center”

1989 Wendy Doniger, University of Chicago

“Sexual Masquerades in the Hebrew Bible: Rachel and Tamar”

1990 Harvey G. Cox, Harvard University

“Religiopolis: Beyond the Secular City”

1991 Rosemary Radford Ruether, Garrett-Evangelical Seminary

“Ecofeminism and Christian Theology:
Symbolic and Social Connections
between the Domination of Women and of Nature”

Past Witherspoon Lectures

- 1992 James H. Cone, Union Theological Seminary
Martin & Malcolm & America: A Dream or a Nightmare”
- 1993 Elaine Pagels, Princeton University
“Satan in the New Testament Gospels”
- 1994 Thomas Keneally, University of California Irvine
“Schindler’s List”
- 1995 Vine Deloria, University of Colorado at Boulder
“Re-Viewing Religious Knowledge”

Past Witherspoon Lectures

1996 Katie G. Cannon, Temple University

“Translating Womenism into Pedagogical Praxis”

1997 James H. Charlesworth, Princeton Theological Seminary

“Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls:
What Do We Know After Fifty Years?”

1998 Francis E. Peters, New York University

“Jerusalem: The Contested Inheritance”

1999 Donald S. Lopez, University of Michigan

“Searching for Shangri-La”

Past Witherspoon Lectures

2000 Max Oelschlaeger, Northern Arizona University

“Caring for Creation:
Religious Faith and the Challenge of Building a Sustainable World”

2001 John Williams, College of William and Mary

“Can the State be Virtuous?
Muslim Political Philosophy, Old and New”

2002 Barbara Newman, Northwestern University

“What Does It Mean to Say I Saw?:
On the Varieties of Visionary Experiences”

2003 Stanley Hauerwas, Duke Divinity School

“Christians and the So-called State (We Are In):
A Meditation on Loyalty after September 11, 2001”

Past Witherspoon Lectures

2004 Jack Sasson, Vanderbilt University

“Wooing Rebekah: How Isaac Got a Wife”

2005 Bart Ehrman, UNC Chapel Hill

“Misquoting Jesus: Do We Have the Original New Testament?”

2006 Brian Blount, Union Theological Seminary

“No Free Pass:
An Apocalyptic Call for Prophetic Witness in the Book of Revelation”

2007 Shimon Gibson, W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research

“Jesus in Jerusalem:
New Archaeological Discoveries”

Past Witherspoon Lectures

2008 Jonathan Z. Smith, University of Chicago

“Things Said/Things Done:
The Relations of Myth and Ritual”

2009 Elizabeth A. Clark, Duke University

“What’s the Matter with Marriage?
Some Early Christian Answers”

2010 Michael E. Stone, Hebrew University

“Secret Books and Secret Traditions of Ancient Judaism”

2011 Frans B. M. de Waal, Emory University

“Morality Without Religion:
Empathy, Fairness and Prosocial Primates”

Past Witherspoon Lectures

2012 April DeConick, Rice University

“The Ancient New Age:
How Gnostic Spirituality
Revolutionized Religion in Antiquity”

2013 Robert A. Orsi, Northwestern University

“Secrets of the Confessional:
Children, the Sacrament of Penance,
and the Making of 20th Century U.S. Catholicism”

2014 Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, Indiana University

“The Impossibility of Religious Freedom”

2015 Jeffrey Kripal, Rice University

“Biological Gods:
Science (Fiction) and Some Emergent Mythologies”

Past Witherspoon Lectures

2016 David Nirenberg, University of Chicago

“Neighboring Faiths:
Judaism, Christianity, and Islam”

2018 John Stratton Hawley, Columbia University

“Paradise Lost?
Krishna’s Forest Playground Confronts the 21st Century”

2019 Tanya Luhrmann, Stanford University

“Shamans and Schizophrenia:
How Religious Practice May Change Psychotic Experience”

2020 Mark Jordan, Harvard Divinity School

“The Very Idea of Queer Religion”

2022 Judith Weisenfeld, Princeton University

“Spiritual Madness:
American Psychiatry, Race and Black Religion”



2023

Dr. Carolyn Chen

“Work Pray Code: When
Work Becomes Religion
in Silicon Valley”

Carolyn Chen received her doctorate in Sociology from UC Berkeley in 2002. At UC Berkeley, Professor Chen is Co-Director of the Berkeley Center for the Study of Religion, a member of the Center for Chinese Studies, and the Religious Diversity Cluster at the Othering and Belonging Institute, and an affiliate in the Department of Sociology. Prior to teaching at Berkeley, she was Associate Professor of Sociology and Asian American Studies at Northwestern University, where she served as Director of the Asian American Studies Program. Professor Chen's research focuses on two areas: work and religion in contemporary America, and religion, race, and ethnicity, especially among Asian Americans. She is author of *Getting Saved in America: Taiwanese Immigration and Religious Experience* (Princeton 2008) and co-editor of *Sustaining Faith Traditions: Race, Ethnicity and Religion among the Latino and Asian-American Second Generation* (NYU 2012). Her new book is *Work Pray Code: When Work Becomes Religion in Silicon Valley* (Princeton 2022).

Thank you for joining
us this evening.