

VICKI LAINE BRENNAN

Curriculum Vitae

Associate Professor, Department of Religion
Director, Global & Regional Studies Program
Director, African Studies Program
University of Vermont
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EDUCATION

2007 Ph.D. Anthropology. University of Chicago.
1997 M.A. Music (Ethnomusicology). University of Washington
1994 B.A. Music, cum laude, with honors. Syracuse University

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

2013-present Associate Professor, Department of Religion, University of Vermont
2007-2013 Assistant Professor, Department of Religion, University of Vermont
2006-2007 Lecturer in Studies in Women & Gender and African and African-American Studies, University of Virginia.

PUBLICATIONS

Book

In preparation Brennan, Vicki L. *Yoruba Gospel Music: Listening and Everyday Pentecostalism in Nigeria*.
2018 Brennan, Vicki L. *Singing Yoruba Christianity: Music, Media, and Morality*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

- Finalist, 2020 Isaac Oluwole Delano Book Prize for Yoruba Studies

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

2023 **Brennan, Vicki L.**, Harrison Adeniyi, & Titilayo Tajudeen. "Listening for Religion in Lagos: Preliminary Reflections." *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 35:4, 373-391.
2020 Peterson, Marina and **Vicki L. Brennan**, "Sonic Ethnography: Listening to and with Climate Change." *Resonance: The Journal of Sound and Culture*.
2013 Brennan, Vicki L. "Up Above the River Jordan": Hymns and Historical Consciousness in the Cherubim and Seraphim Churches of Nigeria. *Studies in World Christianity* 19 (1): 31-49.
2012 Brennan, Vicki L. Take Control: The Labor of Immediacy in Yoruba Christian Music. *Journal of Popular Music Studies* 24 (4): 411-429.
2012 Brennan, Vicki L. "Truly we have a good heritage": Musical Mediations in a Yoruba Christian Diaspora. *Journal of Religion in Africa* 42 (1): 3-25.
2010 Brennan, Vicki L. Mediating "The Voice of the Spirit": Musical and Religious Transformations in Nigeria's Oil Boom. *American Ethnologist* 37 (2): 354-370.

- 1999 Brennan, Vicki L. "Chamber Music in the Barn: Tourism, Nostalgia and the Reproduction of Social Class" in *The World of Music* 41(3): 11-29.

Book Chapters

- 2022 "Seeing and Unseeing the Dark Goddess: Shanta Lee Gander's Oppositional Gaze." *In Dark Goddess: An Exploration of the Sacred Feminine* (exhibition catalogue), Shanta Lee Gander, Fleming Museum of Art.
- 2014 Brennan, Vicki L. "Senwele Jesu: Gospel Music and Religious Publics in Nigeria." *New Media and Religious Transformations in Africa*, Rosalind Hackett and Benjamin Soares, eds., Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 227-244.

Book Reviews

- 2026 Brennan, Vicki L. "*The Noise Silence Makes: Secularity and Ghana's Drum Wars* written by Miriam Goshadze." *Yale Journal of Music and Religion*. Vol 12: 1.
- 2024 Brennan, Vicki L. "Performing Power in Nigeria: Identity, Politics, and Pentecostalism & Powerful Devices: Prayer and the Political Praxis of Spiritual Warfare, written by Adelakun, Abimbola A.", *Journal of Religion in Africa*. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/15700666-12340311>
- 2023 Vicki L. Brennan. Review of *Women in Yoruba Religions*, by Oyèronké Oládémò, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*.
- 2021 Vicki L. Brennan. Review of Perman, Tony, *Signs of the Spirit: Music and the Experience of Meaning in Ndau Ceremonial Life*. H-Africa, H-Net Reviews. May.

EXHIBITIONS

- ongoing [*Sounds of Religion*](#). Co-curated with Amy DeRogatis, Isaac Weiner, Ely Lyonblum, Lauren Pond, & Alison Furlong for Smithsonian SITES. Poster exhibit distributed in 2023.
- 2024 *UVM Sacred Sounds*. Co-curated with students from "Sacred Sounds" course taught in Fall 2023. Billings Library Apse, University of Vermont. Poster & Sound exhibit installed September – December.
- 2022 *Religious Soundscapes*. Co-curated with Alison Furlong, Ely Lyonblum, & Lauren Pond for Urban Arts Space, Columbus, OH. Immersive exhibition, installed May-July.
- 2020 *Intervention: Toward an Anti-Racist, Anti-Imperialist, Anti-Colonialist Gallery of African & Ancient Egyptian Art*. Co-organized with Andrea Rosen (curator) and Alice Boone (curator). Fleming Museum, University of Vermont. October 1-December 15.
- 2017 *Spirited Things: Sacred Arts of the Black Atlantic*. Co-organized with J. Lorand Matory and Andrea Rosen (curator). Fleming Museum, University of Vermont. September 26 – December 15, 2017.

PUBLIC & DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP

- 2022 [*Singing Yoruba Christianity*](#), New Books in African Studies, Podcast Appearance, 8 March.
- 2020 [*Religion & Sound with Dr. Vicki Brennan*](#), Keeping it 101, Podcast Appearance, 8 July.

- 2020 [EP 161 Yoruba Christianity & Music with Dr. Vicki Brennan](#), Classical Ideas, Podcast Appearance, 27 May.
- 2015 [Rev. J.J. Ransome-Kuti and the History of Yoruba Gospel Music](#). Series on [Religion@UVM](#): Conversations, Ideas, and Impact at the University of Vermont and Beyond.

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2026 *Co-Principal Investigator*, Humanities Initiative Grant, National Endowment for the Humanities (with Dr. Thomas Borchert & Dr. Ilyse Morgenstein-Fuerst). Application submitted in 2025; awarded in February 2026.
- 2024 *Fellow*, Public Humanities Fellowship, UVM Humanities Center (with Dr. Thomas Borchert).
- 2022 *Principal Investigator*, UVM REACH Grant, Office of the Vice President of Research, University of Vermont.
- 2022 *Alternate Candidate*, Africa Regional Research Program, Fulbright Scholar Program.
- 2020 *Organizing Fellow*, Humanities Center Coor Collaborative Fellowship, “Materiality & Performance: Reimagining African Art at UVM’s Fleming Museum” Humanities Center, University of Vermont.
- 2019-2020 *Humanities Fellow*, Humanities Center, University of Vermont.
- 2019 *Fellow*, Public Scholarship Training, Sacred Writes, Northeastern University.
- 2019 *Principal Investigator*, Project Launch Grant, Global Religion Research Initiative, University of Notre Dame.
- 2018 *Dean’s Lecture Award*, College of Arts & Sciences, University of Vermont.
- 2018 *Principal Investigator*, Humanities Center Summer Research Award, for “Joyful Noise: The Politics and Poetics of Yoruba Gospel Music,” University of Vermont.
- 2015 *Fellow*, Humanities Center Coor Collaborative Fellowship, for “Visualizing Ideas in the Digital Humanities,” University of Vermont.
- 2014 *Principal Investigator*, UVM REACH Grant, The Graduate College, University of Vermont.
- 2010 *Principal Investigator*, Faculty Research Support Award, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Vermont
- 2008 *Principal Investigator*, International Travel Funds, Dean’s Fund for Faculty Development, University of Vermont.
- 2004-2006 *Fellow*, Predoctoral Residential Research Fellowship, Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies, University of Virginia.
- 2004-2006 *Major Grant Scholarship for Dissertation Write-Up*, Division of Social Science, University of Chicago.
- 2003-2004 *Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Grant*, US Department of Education.
- 2002-2004 *Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant*, National Science Foundation.
- 2002-2003 *Dissertation Field Work Grant*, Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research.

SELECTED LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS

Conference Presentations

- 2026 *Panel Organization & Presentation*, “Gospel Music Genres: Religion, Music, and Popular Culture in Nigeria.” Panel: Gospel Music and Popular Culture in Nigeria: Genre, Performance, and Power. Annual Meeting of the Lagos Studies Association, June 17-20.
- 2025 *Panel Presentation*, “Religion in the Streets: Listening, Encounter, Performance.” Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, 20 Nov 2025.
- 2024 *Panel Presentation*, “Dayo’s Studio: Artistic and Religious Constructions of Diasporic Community.” Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, 12 Dec 2024.
- 2024 *Panel Presentation*, “Listening and Ordinary Ethics in the Streets of Lagos.” Annual Meeting of the Lagos Studies Association, 25-29 June.
- 2024 *Discussant*, Author-Meets-Readers: *Crossing Religious Boundaries: Islam, Christianity, and ‘Yoruba Religion’ in Lagos, Nigeria*, by Marloes Janson, 25-29 June.
- 2023 *Discussant*, Author-Meets-Readers: *Engaging Pastoral Power, Clerical State: Pentecostalism, Gender, and Sexuality in Nigeria* by Ebenezer Obadare. University of Notre Dame Press, 20-24 June.
- 2023 *Discussant*, Author-Meets-Readers Panel: *Engaging Digital Spiritualities: Social Media and Nigerian Pentecostal Churches in Switzerland* by Peter Ayoola Oderinde. Lit Verlag, Annual Meeting of the Lagos Studies Association, 20-24 June.
- 2023 *Panelist*, Professional Literacy and Academic Citizenship Roundtable Discussion, Organized by the LSA Mentoring Program for Women Graduate Students in Nigeria, 19 June.
- 2022 *Panel Presentation*, “Tope Alabi and the ‘Oniduro’ Controversy: Celebrity, Entertainment, and Piety in Yoruba Gospel Music.” Annual Meeting of the Lagos Studies Association, 24 June.
- 2021 *Panel Presentation*, “Sound, Urban Space, and Religious Publics in Lagos, Nigeria.” Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Virtual Conference, 20 November.
- 2021 *Panel Presentation*, “Gospel Music, Celebrity, and Christian Publics in Emma OMG’s “Yoruba Hymn Series.” Annual Meeting of the Lagos Studies Association, Lagos, 21 June.
- 2020 *Panel Presentation*, “The American Religious Sounds Project.” Ohio Local History Alliance Annual Meeting, virtual conference, 2 October.
- 2020 *Panel Organizer & Conference Paper*, “Listening and Community Engagement in the American Religious Sounds Project.” Society for Cultural Anthropology, Distribute 2020, virtual conference, 7-9 May.
- 2017 *Panel Presentation*, “There Should be Sound: African Gods in the Western Museum.” Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, 3 December.
- 2017 *Panel Presentation*, “Emma OMG’s Sincere Parody.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Boston, 20 November.
- 2015 *Conference Paper*, Yoruba Acoustemologies. The Humanities and Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Africa and the Diaspora, Lagos State University, Lagos, July 20-23.
- 2013 *Conference Paper*, Sounding Surrender: Registers of Weakness and Strength in Nigerian Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity. Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Society, Chicago, 21 November.

- 2012 *Conference Paper*, “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord”: Pentecostal Soundscapes and Public Christianity in Lagos, Nigeria. Pentecostal Politics of Space and Power: A global perspective. Padova, Italy, 7-9 June.
- 2012 *Conference Paper*, Take Control: The Labor of Immediacy in Yoruba Christian Music, American Ethnological Society, New York, New York, 19-21 April.
- 2010 *Panel Organizer & Introductory Comments*, “The Aesthetics of Civil Society,” Panel: Unequal Circulations: Art & Civil Society. Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Society, New Orleans, 19 November.
- 2010 *Conference Paper*, “To God be the Glory”: Gospel Music and Public Christianity in Lagos. Cadbury Conference ‘Tuning in to African Cities Popular Culture and Urban Experience in sub-Saharan Africa’ Centre of West African Studies, Birmingham, UK. 6-8 May.
- 2008 *Conference Paper*, “Straight to Heaven”: Music, Ritual and Performance in Yoruba Churches. Annual Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology, 25 Oct.
- 2008 *Conference Paper*, Mediating the “Voice of the Spirit”: Gospel Music and the Reproduction of Yoruba Christian Modernities. New Media and Religious Transformation in Africa, Abuja, Nigeria, 10-12 July.
- 2008 *Conference Paper and Panel Organizer*, Paper: Gospel Music, Corruption and the Crisis of Christianity in Nigeria. Panel: Perilous Positions: Performing Critical Perspectives on Late Capital. Ethics, Aesthetics, Politics. Society for Cultural Anthropology Biannual Meeting, Long Beach, CA, 10 May.

Invited Lectures & Workshops

- 2024 *Invited Lecture*, Yoruba Gospel Music: Media, Celebrity, & Everyday Pentecostalism in Contemporary Nigeria. Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, 3 July.
- 2020 *Panelist*, The Dayo Project: Life as a Work of Art. Humanities Fellows Research Salon. University of Vermont, 13 February.
- 2019 *Invited Lecture*, Singing Yoruba Christianity: Music, Media, Morality. Dean’s Lecture Series, Faculty of Arts, Lagos State University, July 2.
- 2019 *Invited Lecture*, Emma Ohmagod’s Sincere Parody of Yoruba Hymn-Singing. Symposium on Religion and Public Life in Africa and the Americas. Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, April 18.
- 2019 *Public Lecture*, Exhibiting the Sacred: An Ethnography of Spirited Things. College of Arts & Sciences Dean’s Lecture, University of Vermont, January 30.
- 2018 *Roundtable Discussion*, Author Meets Critics: Vicki Brennan’s *Singing Yoruba Christianity*. Annual Meeting of the Lagos Studies Association, Lagos, 22 June.
- 2015 *Keynote Address*, Living in the Spirit: Singing as a Bodily Discipline in the Cherubim and Seraphim Church. Christian Congregational Music: Local and Global Perspectives Conference, Ripon College Cuddesdon, Oxford, August 4-7.
- 2015 *Invited Lecture*, Listening to Lagos/Sonic Ethnography. Women’s Studies in Religion Program, Harvard Divinity School, March 9.
- 2012 *Invited Lecture*, “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord”: Christian Songs, Religious Publics, and Urban Space in Lagos, Nigeria. Transnational Studies Institute, Weatherhead Institute for International Affairs, Harvard University, 26 November.

- 2012 *Invited Lecture*, Sensing the Spirit: Pentecostal Aesthetic Formations and the Distribution of the Senses in Lagos, Nigeria. African Studies Workshop, University of Chicago, 29 May.
- 2012 *Invited Lecture*, “Truly we have a good heritage”: Musical Mediations in a Yoruba Christian Diaspora. Wednesday Seminar in African Studies, Indiana University Bloomington, 1 February.
- 2011 *Invited Lecture*, The Politics of ‘Praise and Worship’ in Contemporary Nigeria. Walter Rodney Seminar Series, African Studies Center, Boston University, 24 October.
- 2011 *Invited Lecture*, The Politics of ‘Praise and Worship’ in Contemporary Nigeria, Carter G. Woodson Institute’s 30th Annual Symposium, University of Virginia, 8 April.
- 2008 *Public Lecture*, Mediating the “Voice of the Spirit”: Gospel Music, Fast Capital and the (Re)production of Yoruba Christian Modernities. Area and International Studies Program, University of Vermont, 15 October.

TEACHING

2007-present University of Vermont

Courses Taught: Religions in Africa; Honors College Freshman Seminar: The Pursuit of Knowledge; Acoustemologies: Sound/Audition/Knowledge; What is Sound?; Sacred Sounds; Exhibiting the Sacred; Mysticism, Shamanism, Possession; Afro-Atlantic Sacred Arts; Religion, Health & Healing; Religion and Media; Interpretation of Religion; Ethnographies of Religion; Drugs, Demons, & Dancing; Senior Seminar in Religion; Women and Religion in Africa; Sound/Space/Religion; African Gods/Western Museums; Religion, Gender, and Sexuality; Ethnographies of Religion.

2006-2007 University of Virginia

Courses Taught: Gender and Sexuality in Popular Culture; Women and Religion in Africa; Music, Performance and the Politics of Gender; Religion, Politics and the State in Africa; Weddings, Marriage and Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective.

SERVICE

Professional

- Member, Editorial Board, *Journal of Modern African Studies* (2023-2026)
- Conference Organizer, [Repatriation/Restitution/Reparation: Rethinking African Art at The Fleming Museum](#), University of Vermont, November 2021.
- Co-chair, Community Outreach Committee, American Religious Sounds Project, Ohio State U and Michigan State U (2018-2022)
- Member, Editorial Committee, *Yale Journal of Music & Religion* (2020-present)
- Member, Advisory Board, American Religious Sounds Project, <https://religioussounds.osu.edu/about-team> (2017-2022)
- Symposium Organizer, [Black Sacred Space: Materiality & Representation](#), University of Vermont, April 20, 2018.
- Lecture Series Organizer, [Religious Objects & Embodied Practices in the Black Atlantic](#), University of Vermont, Fall 2017.
- Co-chair, Ethnographic Studies Subsection, XXth Quinquennial World Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions (2009-2010).
- Council Member, Society for Ethnomusicology (2006-2009).

Program Committee, Midwest Chapter Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology. (2005-2006)

Manuscript Referee (ongoing), *Africa Today*, *American Ethnologist*, *Anthropological Quarterly*, *Anthropology and Humanism*, *Critical Study of Religion*, *Culture and Religion*, *Ethnomusicology Forum*, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, *Journal of Anthropological Research*, *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, *Material Religion*, *Numen*, *Journal of Religion in Africa*, *Journal of West African History*.

University of Vermont

Director, Global & Regional Studies, (2024-current)

Director, African Studies, (2015-current)

Member, Research, Scholarship, and Creative Arts Committee, Faculty Senate, (2019-current)

At-Large Member, Research Advisory Committee, Office of the Vice President of Research, (2020-2023)

Member, Global Citizenship General Education Committee (2020)

Member, President's Committee on Curricular Innovation in the Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences (2019)

Member, Humanities Center Advisory Board (2018-present)

Member, Search for Dean of Libraries (2018-2019)

Member, Diversity Curriculum Review Committee (2018-current)

Member, Library Advisory Committee (2016-current)

Member, Academic Studies Committee (2015-2018)

Member, Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate (2013-2014)

Representative, Faculty Senate (2009-2014)

Member, CAS Admissions Committee (2011)

Member, Search for TT faculty in Islam (2011)

Member, Undergraduate Research Advisory Committee (2009-2011)

Member, Religion Department Chair Review (2010)

Member, Search for TT faculty in Islam (2008)

Wrote and designed Religion Department newsletter (2007-2014)

Professional Memberships

African Studies Association, American Academy of Religion, American Anthropological Association, American Ethnological Society, Lagos Studies Association, Society for Cultural Anthropology, Society for Ethnomusicology, Society for the Anthropology of Religion