

Biography

Ever since I was twelve, I was instilled with a passion for historical studies, the result of my father bringing my family and I to live in Europe for seven months in 1979. Here Roman ruins and the history, culture, and religion of the people who left them behind began to fascinate me. Because of this experience, I decided to become a Professor of History. When I saw Indiana Jones in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* in 1981, I became fascinated with the idea of combining the study of History with that of both Religion and Archaeology. Of course, I discovered that making all three areas into a serious scholastic focus required much time and effort. In fact, it took a little over two decades to complete my university studies and degrees at CSUF, UCI, and Claremont Graduate University (from 1985 to 2006), but when you love what you do, all that time and training is worth it. Because I enjoy both researching in archives and actually going to where the events I study actually happen, I have travelled all about Europe and the Middle East, especially Turkey, studying the art, architecture, and archaeology of many forgotten civilizations. In a general sense, I view myself as a scholar of History, Religion, and Archaeology, focusing these studies on the Mediterranean world from the Paleolithic era all the way through the Late Middle Ages, with an emphasis on the Eastern Mediterranean, Greco-Roman Studies, and Asia Minor (Turkey).

On a personal level, because my studies are also my hobby, I actually enjoy doing research on many historical topics just for fun and then presenting public talks about my findings at locations all about Los Angeles and Orange County areas (often as much as four times a month). Additionally, I am an avid science fiction fan (I'm a big Star Trek geek), love watching Old Hollywood movies, and enjoy playing the guitar.

Degrees

I received my PhD from Claremont Graduate University School in 2006, combining Religion with the areas of History and Archaeology, focusing on the History of Christianity in the Early, Medieval, and Byzantine periods, New Testament Studies, and Greco-Roman Religions. While at Claremont, I also minored in Islam and Hinduism. I have both a Bachelor of Arts in History (1991) and a Masters of Arts in History (1998) from California State University Fullerton.

Publications

Over the years I published many articles and two books. In 2012, I published a mini-book on the London fire of 1666 entitled *London in Flames*, where I sought to decipher all the opinions concerning this cataclysmic event, limiting my frame of reference to within the immediate year of this occurrence. After this, I examined how various political and religious groups used this disaster as a rhetorical tool to achieve their respective goals.

In 2014, I published *Artemis of the Ephesians: Magic, Mysteries, and Sacred Landscapes*, an archaeological investigation focused upon deciphering local beliefs of the city of Ephesus in connection to their famous goddess. In this study, I provided a comprehensive examination of the cult statue of Artemis Ephesia, examining her representations throughout the ancient world and discovering that her image cannot be

confined to a limited set of explanations, but that Artemis Ephesia was a figure in constant flux, with interpretations dependent on the particular time period and audience viewing it. I also investigated Artemis Ephesia in relation to the city's geography, creating a more contextually discerning view of how her belief system permeated the daily lives of the Ephesians through examining what they left behind in the material culture.

Courses Taught

For the IGE Department at Cal Poly Pomona, I have taught "Demons, The Undead, & The Monstrous Other" (3300), which is an investigation of Fear & Horror as it interacts with the Humanities, and "UFOs, The Illuminati, and The Monstrous Other" (3600), which is an investigation of Conspiracy Theories as it relates to the Social Sciences. For the History Department at CSUF, I have taught 110A (World Civilizations to the 16th Century), 110B (World Civilizations Since the 16th Century), 170B (United States Since 1877), 300A (Historical Thinking), 300B (Historical Writing), and 412A (History of the Christian Church to the Reformation). I have also taught courses in the Religious Studies Department at CSUF, including The History & Development of Early Christian Thought, World Religions, Eastern Orthodoxy, and The Gospel of John.

Research Areas

My research involves a cross-disciplinary approach where I combine the areas of History, Religion, and Archaeology as focused upon the Eastern Mediterranean, especially Asia Minor (Turkey today) during the Greco-Roman and Byzantine eras. The city of Ephesus and the surrounding area is one of my focal points for research, for example, my Master Thesis from CSUF *Illustrious Ephesus: Portrait of the City of Artemis in the Imperial Age* (1998) and my PhD dissertation from Claremont *Universal Goddess on the Via Sacra: The Evolving Image of Artemis Ephesia* (2006). My recent book, *Artemis of the Ephesians: Magic, Mysteries, and Sacred Landscapes* (2014) continued my research in this general area. I am currently extending my research on Ephesus and Asia Minor in general in relation to Early Christianity that will result in two books: *Early Christianities: An Exploration of Diversity* and *Johannine Christianity: From the Beginning to Eastern Orthodoxy*. Furthermore, I am digging deeper into the Minoan, Luwian, and Mycenaean context of Asia Minor and the Aegean Sea, working very closely with the latest archaeological discoveries, and will be soon publishing on my findings here as well.