Mark Letteney

Assistant Professor of Religion, Princeton University

Appointments

Assistant Professor	Princeton University, Department of Religion. 2026– Affiliated faculty in Classics and the Program in the Ancient World
Assistant Professor	University of Washington, Department of History. 2023–26 Carol Thomas Endowed Professor of Ancient History
Visiting Professor	University of Copenhagen, Prison Project: Materiality of Incarceration in Mediterranean Antiquity. 2023–26
ACLS Postdoctoral Fellow	Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Literature Section. 2022–23
Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow	University of Southern California, Humanities in a Digital World Program. 2020–22
Visiting Scholar	Sapienza Università di Roma, Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Antichità. 2019–20

Education

Ph. D.	Princeton University. Department of Religion, Program in the Ancient World. 2014–20.
M.A.R.	Yale University. Divinity School. 2012–14. (Universität Heidelberg, 2013–14)
B.A.	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Religious Studies, Philosophy. 2008–12.

Books

- *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration*, with Matthew D. C. Larsen. University of California Press. August 2025. (Open Access, Hardcover and Paperback, Audiobook in production)
  - Reviews: *The New Yorker, Times Literary Supplement*
- *The Christianization of Knowledge in Late Antiquity: Intellectual and Material Transformations*. Cambridge University Press, 2023. (Open Access, Paperback 2025)
  - Reviews: *Antiquité Tardive*, *Augustiniana*, *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, *Church History*, *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, *Journal of Late Antiquity*, *Journal of Roman Studies*, *Plekos*, *Scripta Theologica*, *Sehepunkte*, *Textual Cultures, Times Literary Supplement*
  - Winner: 2024 Lautenschläger Award, Shortlist: 2024 SHARP Book History Book Prize, 2024 AAR Best First Book in the History of Religions Award
- *Rethinking 'Authority' in Late Antiquity: Authorship, Law, and Transmission in Jewish and Christian Tradition*, edited with AJ Berkovitz. Routledge, 2018. (Paperback 2020)

Articles

- "Afterword — the past, present, and future of ancient carceral studies" in *The Materiality of Incarceration: An Interdisciplinary Approach* edited by Niels Bargfeldt and Naomi Reiss. Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters. Forthcoming 2027.
- "The Birth of the Jail: Prisoner Taxonomies of the Roman Empire," *Modern Criminal Law Review* (2027), forthcoming.
- "Prisoner Letters in the Zenon Archive," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 63 (2026): 127–152.
- "Materiality of Incarceration in Mediterranean Antiquity: The Prison Project (2023–2026)," with Niels Bargfeldt, Hallvard Indgjerd, Evan Levine, Rebecca Levitan, Naomi Reiss, and Matthew D. C. Larsen. *Early Christianity* 15.4 (2024): 545–565.
- "Legal Pluralism as a Category of Analysis," with Jessica Marglin. *Law and History Review* 42.2 (2024): 143–153. (Open Access)
- "Widening the frame of ancient legal history," ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ 46 (2022): 345–349.
- "Reconsidering the Earliest Synagogue in Yemen," with Simcha Gross. *Studies in Late Antiquity* 6.4 (2022): 627–50.

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- "Iunius Saturninus: a New African Centenarian" with Brent D. Shaw. *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 220 (2021): 306–10.
- "A Roman military prison at Lambaesis" with Matthew D. C. Larsen. *Studies in Late Antiquity* 5.1 (2021): 65–102.
- "Christians and the Codex: Generic Materiality and Early Gospel Traditions" with Matthew D. C. Larsen. *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 27.3 (2019): 383–415.
- "Authority in Contemporary Historiography" with AJ Berkovitz in *Rethinking 'Authority' in Late Antiquity* eds. Berkovitz and Letteney. London: Routledge, 2018.
- "Authenticity and Authority: the case for dismantling a dubious correlation" in *Rethinking 'Authority' in Late Antiquity* eds. Berkovitz and Letteney. London: Routledge, 2018.
- "Toward a New Scribal Tendency: reciprocal corruptions and the text of 1 Corinthians 8:2-3" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 135.2 (2016): 389–402.

Reviews

- Ellen Muehlbberger, *Things Unseen: Essays on Evidence, Knowledge, and the Late Ancient World*. Journal of Early Christian Studies, forthcoming 2026.
- Leslie Kelly, *Philosophers, Jews, and Christians in the Roman empire: authority, text, and tradition.* Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2025.
- Walter Ameling (ed.), *Centre and Periphery: Working with the Inscriptions of Iudaea/Palaestina*. Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2023.
- Brent Nongbri, *God's Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts*. Journal of Late Antiquity 12.2 (2019): 550–52.
- Uta Heil, Annette von Stockhausen (eds.), *Die Synoden im trinitarischen Streit: Über die Etablierung eines synodalen Verfahrens und die Probleme seiner Anwendung im 4. und 5. Jahrhundert*. Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2018.03.50.
- Noel Lenski, *Constantine and the Cities: Imperial Authority and Civic Politics.* Ancient Jew Review, October 2017.

Archaeological Reports

- "Six Seasons of Excavation at the Castra of Legio VI Ferrata, Israel," with Matthew J. Adams, Margaret Cohen, and Yotam Tepper. *Limes XXVI: Proceedings of the 26th International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies held in Batumi, Georgia (September 2024)*. Brepols. Forthcoming 2026.
- "A Roman Legionary Cemetery at Legio," with Wiesław Więckowski, Matthew J. Adams, and Yotam Tepper. *Limes XXVI: Proceedings of the 26th International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies held in Batumi, Georgia (September 2024)*. Brepols. Forthcoming 2026.
- "Legio — 2023," with Matthew J. Adams et al. *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 137 (2025).
- "Legio — 2022," with Matthew J. Adams et al. *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 137 (2025).
- "Survey and excavations at Solomon's Pools, Palestine: 2018 preliminary report" with Matthew J. Adams and Max T. B. Peers. *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 151.1 (2019): 15–35.

Awards

- Digital Humanities Summer Fellowship, Simpson Center for the Humanities (UW) 2025
- Summer Fellowship, Simpson Center for the Humanities (UW) 2024
- Manfred Lautenschläger Award for Theological Promise, *The Christianization of Knowledge in Late Antiquity* 2024
- Premi di merito alla ricerca, "Christianizing Knowledge" (Associazione Internazionale di Studi Tardoantichi) 2022

2020

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- Digitization Grant, *Incarceration in Mediterranean Antiquity* (Mellon Foundation/USC) 2019–20
- Oscar Broneer Traveling Fellowship (American School of Classical Studies in Athens) 2018–19
- Paul Mellon/Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Pre-Doctoral Rome Prize (American Academy in Rome) 2018
- XIV Collegio di Diritto Romano, borsa di studio (Università di Pavia) 2018
- JVRP Field Research Fellowship (Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, Jerusalem) 2017
- Departmental Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (Princeton) 2016
- Peter R. Brown Prize, Committee for the Study of Late Antiquity (Princeton) 2015–19
- Ronald O. Perelman Institute for Judaic Studies Research Grant (Princeton) 2015–19
- Program in the Ancient World Fellowship (Princeton) 2015–19
- Committee for the Study of Late Antiquity Fellowship (Princeton) 2014–15
- Stanley J. Seeger Hellenic Studies Prize (Princeton) 2014
- Two Brothers Fellowship (Yale) 2013–14
- Baden-Württemberg Stipendium (Universität Heidelberg) 2013
- Field Research Award (Yale) 2012–14
- Tuition Award (Yale) 2012
- Boyd Memorial Fellowship (UNC)

Teaching

- *Sacred Spaces in Mediterranean Antiquity* (REL 504, Princeton) Spring 2027
- *The Prison from Antiquity to Today* (REL 247/CLA 249, Princeton) Spring 2027
- *New Testament and Early Christianity* (REL 251, Princeton) Fall 2026
- *Carceral Studies* (HSTRY 600, UW) Spring 2026
- *The Ancient City of Rome* (HSTAM 290, UW Rome Center) Spring 2026
- *The Roman Empire* (HISTAM 313, UW) Winter and Autumn 2024, Winter 2026
- *Ancient Christianity: From Jesus to Muhammad* (HSTAM 209, UW) Winter 2025
- *Rome and Judaea: Empire, Religion, and Resistance* (HSTRY 388, UW) Autumn 2024
- *Writing Prison History* (HSTRY 498, UW) Spring 2024, Winter 2025
- *The Prison from Antiquity to Today* (HSTAM 221, UW) Spring 2024
- *New Testament in the Roman Empire* (21L.457, MIT) Spring 2023
- *From Jesus to Muhammad* (REL 339, USC) Spring 2022
- *Roman Religions from Classical to Late Antiquity* (REL 325g, USC) Spring 2021
- *What Was Truth?* (GSEM 120g, USC) Fall 2020
- *Advanced Archaeological Field Techniques* (JVRP Archaeological Field School) Summer 2017

Archaeological Field Research

- Assistant Director, Roman VIth Legion *Ferrata* (Legio, Israel, 2022–2023)
  - Director of amphitheater excavations, 2022–2023
  - Field archaeologist 2015–2019
- Field archaeologist, Mendes Excavations (Egypt, 2022)

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- Digital preservation specialist, Tel Abu Susha Excavations (Israel, 2020)
- Co-director (w/ Matthew J. Adams), Solomon's Pools Archaeological Project (Palestine, 2017–2020)

Service

- Society for Late Antiquity session organizer, Society for Classical Studies annual meeting (2027 with Young Richard Kim) — 2021, 2027
- Search committee chair, Costigan Distinguished Lectureship in Ancient or Medieval History (UW) — 2025
- European Association of Archaeologists, annual meeting session organizer (#1022) — 2024
- Archaeological Institute of America, Felicia A. Holton Book Award Committee — 2024–6
- Forum editor, *Law and History Review* 42.1 "Legal Pluralism in History and Practice" — 2024
  - Articles by Clifford Ando, Lauren Benton and Adam Clulow, Emanuele Conte, Tamar Herzog, Caroline Humfress, Jessica Marglin and Mark Letteney, Ido Shahar and Karin Carmit Yefet.
- American Academy in Rome Advisory Council (University of Washington) — 2023–
- Conference organizer, "Rethinking Legal Pluralism," University of Southern California School of Law — 2022
- North American Patristics Society, Digital Humanities Committee — 2017–2020
- *Marginalia Review of Books*, associate editor — 2017–18
- Princeton faculty/graduate student working group in comparative antiquity — 2016–18
- Conference organizer, "Beyond Authority: Composition and Transmission in Late Antiquity," Princeton University — 2016
- Committee for the Study of Late Antiquity Book Group, coordinator — 2015–18
- Princeton University ReMatch, undergraduate research advisor — 2015–16
- SBL On-Campus Student Representative — 2014–16
- Princeton University "What is?" Lecture Series, coordinator — 2014–15

Lectures

- Women's Incarceration in the Late Antique Documentary Record — September 2026
  - Princeton-Humboldt Strategic Partnership, Papyri and Early Christianity — Princeton, NJ
- Ancient Book History: what can we learn by studying material transmission and transformation in the ancient Mediterranean? — July 2026
  - Keynote address with Mark Lester, Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing
- The Birth of the Jail: Prisoner Taxonomies of the Roman Empire — June 2026
  - Ancient Criminal Law: A Global Perspective (*Modern Criminal Law Review*)
- Book talk: *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration* — February 2026
  - Center in Law, Society, and Culture, UC Irvine — Irvine, CA
- Roman Prisons and the Mirror of History — February 2026
  - History Lecture Series, University of Washington — Seattle, WA
- Scribes, scriptoria, and stylistic transfer in the fifth century — January 2026
  - Society for Classical Studies Annual Meeting — San Francisco, CA
- Late Ancient Studies Reading Group: *Ancient Mediterranean Incarceration* — December 2025
  - Duke University, Elizabeth A. Clark Center for Late Ancient Studies — Durham, NC
- The Roman Legion at "Armageddon" — November 2025
  - Vancouver Society of the Archaeological Institute of America — Vancouver, Canada

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- The Roman Prison in its Mediterranean Context — November 2025
  - University of British Columbia, Ancient Mediterranean & Near Eastern Studies seminar — Vancouver, Canada
- The Roman prison and its Adjuncts — October 2025
  - Cornell University, Department of Classics — Ithaca, NY
- Histories of Incarceration: New Scholarship and Insights for Today — September 2025
  - Union Theological Seminary — New York, NY
- Christianizing Landscapes: Sacral Pollution and the Mechanics of Space in Late Antiquity — May 2025
  - Universität Tübingen, Seminar für Alte Geschichte — Tübingen, Germany
- Prisoner Letters in the Zeno Archive — May 2025
  - Materiality of Incarceration in Mediterranean Antiquity — Copenhagen, Denmark
- "They assembled themselves at a place called in Hebrew Armageddon" — May 2025
  - Secrets and Revelations: Celebrating the Career of Elaine Pagels — Princeton, NJ
- Prison Abolition, Ancient Incarceration, and the Mirror of the Past — January 2025
  - Archaeological Institute of America, Puget Sound Faculty Lecture — Seattle, WA
- Six Seasons of Excavation at the Castra of Legio VI Ferrata, Israel — September 2024
  - XXVI Limes Congress — Batumi, Georgia
- The Prison Project: new research on ancient incarceration at the University of Copenhagen — September 2024
  - Danish Institute at Athens — Athens, Greece
- The Civic Prison of Sufetula? — August 2024
  - European Association of Archaeologists Annual Meeting — Rome, Italy
- Travel and incarceration: evidence from the papyri — May 2024
  - Manfred Lautenschläger Award Colloquium — Heidelberg, Germany
- 3D modeling for historical research — May 2024
  - Digital Humanities Colloquium, University of Washington — Seattle, WA
- The Late Antiquity Reading Group: *Christianization of Knowledge in Late Antiquity* — March 2024
  - Yale University, Program for the Study of Global Antiquity (Hybrid) — New Haven, CT
- The Ancient Prison: Documents, Spaces, and Implications — February 2024
  - Whitman College, Judd D. Kimball Lecture in Classics — Walla Walla, WA
- The Prison Project: Reframing Roman Incarceration — December 2023
  - University of Copenhagen, School of Archaeology and Faculty of Theology — Copenhagen, Denmark
- Travel, Prison, and the Zeno Archive — December 2023
  - Travel and Religion in the Ancient Mediterranean — Århus, Denmark
- Featured speaker, Immersive Technologies and Cultural Heritage Symposium — September 2023
  - University of Southern California, Humanities in a Digital World Program — Los Angeles, CA
- Past as mirror: prison culture and prison reform in the Roman world — April 2023
  - Visualizing Premodern Abolition, University of California Santa Cruz — Santa Cruz, CA
- Reframing Roman Incarceration — February 2023
  - Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Ancient and Medieval Studies — Cambridge, MA
- Scholar in Residence, Humanities in a Digital World Symposium 2022 — December 2022
  - University of Southern California, Humanities in a Digital World Program — Los Angeles, CA
  - Keynote lecture: "Old questions, new tools: 3D modeling, aerial survey, and humanistic research"
- Review Panel, *Hell Hath No Fury: Gender, Disability, and the Invention of Damned Bodies in Early Christian Literature* by Meghan R. Henning — November 2022
  - Society of Biblical Literature — Denver, CO
- The archaeology of incarceration in Roman antiquity — October 2022
  - Columbia University, Department of Classics — New York, NY

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- Advanced archaeological field techniques: aerial survey and 3D modeling — July 2022
  - University of Southern California, Humanities in a Digital World Program — Los Angeles, CA
- The archaeology of incarceration in Roman antiquity — April 2022
  - University of California Los Angeles, Friends of Ancient History — Los Angeles, CA
- The deep history of incarceration (with Matthew D. C. Larsen) — March 2022
  - Barnard College, Natalie Boymel Kampen Memorial Lecture in Feminist Criticism and History — New York, NY
- Introduction to 3D Modeling for Archaeological Preservation — February 2022
  - University of Copenhagen — Copenhagen, Denmark
- Digital papyrology in action: writing the history of incarceration from lockdown — January 2022
  - University of Southern California — Los Angeles, CA
- Toward a typology of the Roman prison — November 2021
  - Department of Ancient Greek and Roman Studies (University of California, Berkeley) — Berkeley, CA
- Incarceration, enslavement, and the slippery archaeology of unfreedom — November 2021
  - American Society of Overseas Research — Chicago, IL
- Documents, places, and practices of women's incarceration in antiquity (with Matthew D. C. Larsen) — October 2021
  - Philadelphia Seminar on Christian Origins (University of Pennsylvania) — Philadelphia, PA
- Seeing incarceration in antiquity: two case studies (with Matthew D. C. Larsen) — October 2021
  - University of Birmingham, Department of Theology and Religion and the Department of Classics, Ancient History, and Archeology — Birmingham, UK
- Roman Law in Late Antiquity: Christianization and Codification — February 2021
  - University of Southern California, Center for Law, History, and Culture — Los Angeles, CA
- Water to *Aelia Capitolina*: The Pools of Solomon from Hadrian to the British Mandate — May 2020
  - American School of Classical Studies at Athens — Athens, Greece
- Water to *Aelia Capitolina*: New Excavations at the Pools of Solomon — January 2020
  - Archaeological Institute of America — Washington, D.C.
- The "Gospel of Truth" and Nicene Textual Fetishism — November 2019
  - Society of Biblical Literature — San Diego, CA
- Albright Institute Excavations at Solomon's Pools and the Water Supply to Jerusalem (with Matthew J. Adams) — November 2019
  - American Society of Overseas Research — San Diego, CA
- How is Truth: The Christianization of Roman Knowledge — February 2019
  - American Academy in Rome — Rome, Italy
- Reading Law in the Theodosian Court: Scholarship in a Christian Empire — January 2019
  - Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, Leibnizprojekt Seminar: Polyphonie des spätantiken Christentums — Frankfurt, Germany
- The Theodosian Code in its Christian Conceptual Frame — January 2019
  - Society for Classical Studies — San Diego, CA
- Solomon's Pools: A Preliminary Report on the First Excavations (with Matthew J. Adams) — November 2018
  - Society of Biblical Literature — Denver, CO
- Sacrality, Pollution, and Christian Space in Late Antiquity — November 2018
  - Centro Interuniversitario per Studi Classici — Rome, Italy
- The Rise of Christianity and the Rise of the Universal Code — November 2018
  - University of Basel, Institute of Ancient History — Basel, Switzerland
- The Christian Tradition of *lex generalis* — September 2018
  - University of Pavia, Centro di studi e ricerche sui diritti antichi — Pavia, Italy
- Nicene Creed to *Theodosian Code*: Christian Epistemology in Theodosian Book Culture — May 2018
  - North American Patristics Society — Chicago, IL

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- Authoritative Forgeries and Authentic Apocrypha in Late Antiquity — November 2017
  - Society of Biblical Literature — Chicago, IL
- The Theodosian Talmud — June 2017
  - Tel Aviv University, Department of Talmud and Ancient Jewish Literature — Tel Aviv, Israel
- The Roman VIth Legion 'Ferrata': New Excavations at Legio, Israel — November 2016
  - Princeton University, Program in the Ancient World — Princeton, NJ
- How on earth could spaces remain profane? Locative profanity and Christian topography — January 2016
  - Princeton University, Program in the Ancient World — Princeton, NJ
- *Acta conciliorum non leguntur*: negotiating authority at the Council of Chalcedon — September 2015
  - Princeton University, Princeton Workshop on Book History and Religious Studies — Princeton, NJ
- Concerning the utility of Zosimus' Ἱστορία Νέα as a source for the Augustan *Ludi Saeculares* — January 2015
  - Oxford University, Program in the Ancient World — Oxford, UK
- Earthly Clientage and Divine Benefaction in Clement of Alexandria's *Protrepticus* — May 2013
  - North American Patristics Society — Chicago, IL

Updated August 2026

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