

## Christopher I. Lehrich

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Boston University College of Arts and Sciences  
Department of Religion  
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Boston, Massachusetts 02215  
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### EDUCATION

Ph.D. University of Chicago, Committee on the History of Culture.	2000
M.A. University of Chicago, Divinity School.	1994
B.A. University of Chicago, Tutorial Studies.	1992

### DISSERTATION

Hermetic Hermeneutics: Language, Magic, and Power in Cornelius Agrippa's *De occulta philosophia*

Advisers: Jonathan Z. Smith (supervisor), Allen G. Debus, Anthony C. Yu

### AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Publication Assistance Grant, Boston University Humanities Foundation, May 2006

Nominated, Boston University Metcalf Teaching Award, November 2005

Dissertation granted distinction, August 2000

Mrs. Giles Whiting Fellowship in the Humanities, 1998-99

University of Chicago Gift Aid Award Recipient, 1993-98

### BOOK PUBLICATIONS

*The Occult Mind: Magic in Theory and Practice*

Comparative essays on magic, relating occult thought and practice to contemporary and modern theoretical discourses in the history of religions, science, philosophy, and semiotics. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007.

*The Language of Demons and Angels: Cornelius Agrippa's Occult Philosophy*. Brill's Series in Intellectual History. Leiden: E. J. Brill Academic Publications, 2003.

### CURRENT POSITION

**Assistant Professor of Religion, Boston University**

2007–

## SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

### Articles:

“Finding One’s Place.” In Willi Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon, eds., *Introducing Religion: Essays in Honor of Jonathan Z. Smith*. London: Equinox Press, 2007 (forthcoming).

“Ritual and the Writing Class.” In Catherine M. Bell, ed., *Teaching Ritual*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006 (forthcoming).

“Rewriting Ritual.” For *Margins of Grammatology* (see Edited Volumes, below).

“Cornelius Agrippa.” In Richard M. Golden, ed. *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition*. 4 vols. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2004-2006.

“Hermeticism” and “Occult Philosophy.” In Jonathan Dewald et al., eds. *The Dictionary of Early Modern Europe*. 6 vols. New York: Scribner, 2003.

“Coded Magic: Semiotics and Cryptography in Trithemius and Agrippa.” In Patricia Brewerton and Stephen Clucas, eds. *Silent Languages*. (forthcoming).

### Edited Volumes:

#### *Margins of Grammatology*

Co-edited with Hajime Nakatani (McGill University). Contributors: Cornelius Borck, Christopher Kelty, Vicki Kirby, Thomas LaMarre, François Laruelle, Jean-Luc Nancy, Endo Tomomi. Under review, SUNY Press.

### Reviews:

Review of Robert Ford Campany, *To Live As Long as Heaven and Earth*. *History of Religions* (forthcoming).

Review of Györgi Szönyi, *John Dee’s Occultism*. *Renaissance Quarterly* 59 no.1 (Summer, 2006).

Review of Norman Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China*. *History of Religions* 45 no.1 (August, 2005), 82-84.

Review of Sylvain Matton, ed. *Documents oubliés sur l’alchimie, la Kabbale et Guillaume Postel*. *Sixteenth-Century Studies Journal* 34 no.4 (Winter, 2003), 1183-84.

Review of Rudolph Agricola, *Letters*, trans. and ed. Adrie van der Laan & Fokke Akkerman. *Renaissance Quarterly* 56 no.4 (Autumn, 2003), 1249.

Review of Martín del Río, *Investigations Into Magic*, ed. and trans. P. G. Maxwell-Stuart. *Renaissance Quarterly* 56 no.1 (Spring, 2003), 192-94.

Review of Peter Pesic, *Labyrinth: A Search for the Hidden Meaning of Science*. *Sixteenth-Century Studies Journal* 33 no.4 (Winter 2002), 1164-5.

Review of P.G. Maxwell-Stuart, *The Occult in Early Modern Europe: A Documentary History*. *Sixteenth-Century Studies Journal* 31 no.4 (Winter, 2000), 1213-15.

“Not Quite the Usual Suspects.” Review of Graham Cunningham, *Religion and Magic: Approaches and Theories*. H-Ideas, H-Net Reviews, September, 1999. URL: <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=22056938548205>.

**Conference Papers and Sessions:**

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| “Discipline and Interdiscipline: Magical Comparison”<br>American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Washington, DC  | November, 2006 |
| “Ritual Mathemagic: John Dee’s <i>Monas hieroglyphica</i> ”<br>North American Council for British Studies, Boston, MA  | November, 2006 |
| “Magic, Comparison, Classification, Difference”<br>Association for Esoteric Studies Conference, Davis, CA  | June, 2006     |
| “The Humanist as Collector: Athanasius Kircher in China and Egypt”<br>Sixteenth Century Society Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON  | October, 2004  |
| “Rewriting Ritual Magic”<br>Association for the Study of Esotericism Annual Meeting, Lansing, MI   | June, 2004     |
| “Grammatologies of Chinese Script: Japanese, European,<br>and Chinese Perspectives”<br>Chair and Presenter; paper entitled “Athanasius Kircher and the Hieroglyphs of China”<br>Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting, New York, NY | March, 2003    |
| “Words of Power: Magical Semiotics and Foreign Language in Cornelius<br>Agrippa and Athanasius Kircher”<br>History of Science Society Annual Meeting, Milwaukee, WI  | November, 2002 |
| “Signs of Power: Magic Squares and Sigils in Cornelius Agrippa”<br>Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting, Florence, Italy  | March, 2000    |
| “High Magic I: Theories of Magic”<br>Session Organizer and Presenter, paper entitled “Agrippa’s Magical Language”  | October, 1999  |
| “High Magic II: Astrology”<br>Session Organizer and Chair<br>Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, St. Louis, MO   |                |

- “Reading the World in Triplicate: Reuchlin and Agrippa” March, 1999  
Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA
- “Cryptography and Magic: The Case of Trithemius and Agrippa” October, 1998  
Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON
- “Toward an Interdisciplinary Model of Study” April, 1998  
University of Chicago workshop “Histories of Culture/Cultural Histories”

**Invited Lectures:**

- “The Long Research Paper in Little Time” March, 2005 & 2006  
HI 301: Critical Reading in History, Boston University
- “Teaching Thesis and Argument” October, 2005  
Boston University College of Arts and Sciences Writing Program
- “Teaching Research Writing” August, 2003  
Boston University College of Arts and Sciences Writing Program
- “The Choice between Science and the Occult” September, 2001  
Core Curriculum in the Sciences, Boston University
- “Come, Mephistopheles, let us dispute again” March, 2001  
Religion Department, University of California, Santa Barbara
- “Signs of Power: Cornelius Agrippa’s Magical Semiotics” October, 2000  
Seminar on Medieval and Renaissance Magic, Newberry Library, Chicago

**RESEARCH INTERESTS**

Method and Theory in the History of Religions  
Theory and Practice of Magic in the Renaissance  
Critical Theory and Textuality  
Musical Semiology  
Comparative and Theoretical Approaches to Magic, Science, and Religion  
Magico-Religious Thought in Ancient China

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

**Visiting Assistant Professor in Religion and Writing**, Boston University 2006-07  
Both undergraduate and graduate courses in the Department of Religion, School of Theology, and Writing Program.

**Instructor** (full-time), Boston University, College of Arts and Sciences, Writing Program  
Taught three writing seminars of my own design: “Comparing Religions,” an introduction to classic texts in the study of religion; “The Great Witch Hunt,” a historical survey of early modern witch hunts; and “Magic and the Occult in Literature” (below). 2002-2006. Full responsibility for syllabi, instruction, and grading.

**Instructor** (adjunct), Boston University, College of Arts and Sciences, Writing Program  
Designed and taught a course entitled “Magic and the Occult in Literature,” a writing-oriented seminar using such texts as Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus* and Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, Autumn 2001. Full responsibility for all syllabi, instruction, and grading.

**Instructor** (adjunct), Boston University, College of Arts and Sciences, Core Curriculum Taught a series of classic texts, from *Gilgamesh* to Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, in the Core Curriculum program, 2000-2001. Full responsibility for all section instruction within the program’s framework, including designing and grading papers.

**Instructor**, University of Chicago, Graham School of General Studies Designed and taught a two-quarter course entitled “Renaissance Civilization I & II,” Autumn-Winter 1997-98. Joint responsibility for all instruction.

**Instructor**, University of Chicago, Graham School of General Studies Designed and taught a course entitled “Magic: Medieval to Modern,” Summer 1996. Full responsibility for all instruction.

## TEACHING INTERESTS

Theory of Religion  
Comparative History of Religions  
Early Modern/Renaissance Intellectual History  
Scientific Revolution  
History, Philosophy, and Theory of Writing and Language  
Theoretical Approaches to History  
Writing

## SERVICE

Associate Director for Student Progress, Division of Religious and Theological Studies, Boston University September 2006–

Chairman, Committee on Academic Policy, Division of Religious and Theological Studies, Boston University September 2006–

Member, Executive Committee, Division of Religious and Theological Studies, Boston University September 2006–

Adviser, Literary Metis Guild Spring 2005–  
The Guild advises and supports non-academic professional writers and publishers in esotericism, seeking to raise the factual and analytical quality and rigor of such writing. I was invited to serve as an adviser on academic perspectives, methods, and approaches.

Curriculum Committee, Boston University CAS Writing Program Spring 2005  
Evaluated placement examinations and methods. Second-year review of adopted writing textbooks, and consideration of new texts.

Board Member, Association for the Study of Esotericism Elected August 2004  
The ASE is a scholarly organization devoted to academic study of esotericism within the history of religions. The board oversees development and the biennial conference.

Curriculum Committee, Boston University CAS Writing Program Autumn 2002–Spring 2003  
Central to the Committee's purpose was to review a wide range of writing textbooks, and advise on their future adoption. We also discussed revisions to the required assignment sequences, with an eye toward guiding new instructors.

Prize Essay Committee, Boston University CAS Writing Program Autumn 2002–Spring 2003  
Read all 47 prize essay submissions for the WR150 (research) papers, and with a colleague selected 3 nominees. The whole committee then read the nominees from each section (WR98, 99, 100, and 150) and selected winners.

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Academy of Religion, American Historical Association, Association for the Study of Esotericism, History of Science Society, Renaissance Society of America, Sixteenth Century Society

## LANGUAGES

French and Mandarin speaking capabilities. Excellent French reading capability. Mandarin and Literary Chinese, German, Italian, and Latin reading knowledge. Some Classical Hebrew reading ability.

## REFERENCES

Catherine M. Bell, Bernard J. Hanley Professor, Religious Studies Department Chair, Santa Clara University

Allison P. Coudert, Paul and Marie Castelfranco Chair in the History of Religion, University of California at Davis

Allen G. Debus, Morris Fishbein Professor Emeritus, Department of History and Morris Fishbein Center for the Study of the History of Science and Medicine; Research Fellow, Division of Social Sciences, University of Chicago

Richard J. Parmentier, Professor and Chair of the Department of Anthropology, Brandeis University

Michael Prince, Professor of English, Assistant Dean, Director of the Writing Program, College of Arts and Sciences, Boston University

Frank E. Reynolds, Professor Emeritus, Divinity School and Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago

Jonathan Z. Smith, Robert O. Anderson Distinguished Service Professor in the Humanities in the College; Program Coordinator, Religion and the Humanities, University of Chicago

Györgyi Szönyi, Professor and Director, Institute for English and American Studies, University of Szeged, Hungary

Anthony C. Yu, Carl Darling Buck Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus in the Humanities; Professor, The Divinity School, Departments of East Asian Languages and Literatures, English Language and Literature and Comparative Literature, Committee on Social Thought, University of Chicago

## ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Brian Jorgensen, Professor in the Core Curriculum, Assistant Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Boston University