Louis Venters, Ph.D. Historian & Public History Consultant

Francis Marion University P.O. Box 100547 Florence, SC 29502 USA Office: 843.661.1593 Email: LVenters@fmarion.edu

Website: www.louisventers.com
Social Media: @TheShreddedScholar

Education

2010 Ph.D. in History

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

- Intellectual focus on race, religion, and civil rights in 20th-century U.S. South
- Dissertation entitled, "'Most Great Reconstruction': The Bahá'í Faith in Jim Crow South Carolina, 1898-1965," directed by Dr. Patricia Sullivan
- Major field in United States History since 1789
- Minor fields in African American History and Public History
- Public history practicum on African American history of Camden, SC
- Historic preservation internship at SC Mayors' Institute for Community Design

1999-2001 M.A. coursework in Integrative Study of Religion

Landegg International University, Wienacht, Switzerland

- Intellectual focus on epistemology and historiography in Eastern and Western traditions
- Practicum on peacebuilding in post-war Balkan societies

1998 B.A. in History and Modern Languages

Winthrop University, Rock Hill, SC

- Intellectual focus on history and literature of imperialism, modern Africa, and African Diaspora
- Double major with language coursework in French and Mandarin
- Graduated cum laude

Languages

English - 5 (native)
French - 4 (full professional)
Mandarin - 1 (elementary)
Serbo-Croatian - 1 (elementary)
Spanish - 2 (limited working)
Portuguese - 1 (elementary)

Teaching Experience

2007- Adjunct Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor

Francis Marion University, Florence, SC

- African History
- History Internship
- History of Black America since 1865
- History of the New South since 1865
- Introduction to African & African American Studies
- Introduction to Public History
- South Carolina History
- U.S. History to 1877
- U.S. History since 1877 (standard and honors courses)

2003-2006 Teaching Assistant

University of South Carolina, Columbia

- European Civilization from Ancient Times to 1700
- European Civilization from 1700 to Present
- U.S. History since 1865

Public History & Cultural Resource Management Experience

2016-Present Member, Board of Directors

Preservation South Carolina

- Served as Board secretary
- Served as chair of the Nominating Committee
- Made site visits
- Assisted with social media
- Appeared in media interviews

2014-Present Consulting Historian

Louis G. Gregory Museum, Charleston, SC

- Assisted management committee in preparation of strategic plan
- Prepared new museum brochure
- Revised museum website
- Led training for museum tour guides

2022 Consultant, Green Book Project Work Session

NC African American Heritage Commission/WeGOJA Foundation, Rock Hill, SC

2014-2022 Member ex officio

South Carolina African American Heritage Commission

• Team member for preparation of *The Green Book of South Carolina*, the first mobile travel guide to African American cultural sites in South Carolina

2012-2016 Member, South Carolina State Board of Review

National Register of Historic Places

- Appointed to two two-year terms by State Historic Preservation Officer
- Reviewed nominations for the National Register and attended three public meetings of Board each year

2012 Consultant

Browntown Museum, Lake City, SC

2011 Researcher & Principal Author

Francis Marion Trail Commission, Florence, SC

- Researched and wrote text, titles, and captions and collaborated on selection of historical and contemporary images and maps for sixteen large wayside signs for self-guided driving tour
- Made site visits with other team members to decide on location and placement of each sign
- Wrote text for three tour booklets

2008-2010 Francis Marion Trail Commission Lecturer in History

Francis Marion University

- Wrote multi-party grant proposal to National Endowment for the Humanities for interpretive master plan
- Wrote historical narratives of episodes in Gen. Francis Marion's military career for use in future site interpretation
- Served on review committee for proposals for National Park Service battlefield archaeology grant
- Made numerous presentations to local community groups
- Collaborated with local, state, and federal agencies

2009 Researcher & Co-Author, "Florence Benson Elementary School"

National Register of Historic Places

• Supplement to multi-property listing, "Resources Associated with Segregation in Columbia, South Carolina, 1880-1960"

2007 Team Member

Glendale Mill Village Historic Resources Survey, Glendale, SC

2006 Team Member & Co-Author

Camden African-American Heritage Project, Camden, SC

- Conducted oral interviews
- Co-wrote report, "The Camden African-American Heritage Project," on black Camden from colonial period to present, including recommendations for preservation and interpretation, for city Landmarks Commission
- Presented findings at large public meeting
- Report used by the Kershaw County legislative delegation to secure \$100,000 grant to establish local African-American cultural center and museum

2006 Summer Intern

South Carolina Mayors' Institute for Community Design, Columbia

- Researched, wrote, and designed interpretive panels for walking and biking trail,
 Willowbrook Park/West End Mill Village revitalization project, Newberry, SC
- Researched and wrote script for documentary film on pre-colonial to contemporary history, associated sites, and contemporary preservation and planning efforts, Pacolet. SC
- Attended community meetings and design sessions, Johnsonville, SC

2005 Editorial Researcher, Heyward Family Papers project

South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia

 Researched and wrote historical annotations for Twilight on the South Carolina Rice Fields: Letters of the Heyward Family, 1862-1871 (University of South Carolina Press, 2010)

2004 Co-Curator, "Evidence of Things Not Seen: Civil Rights Collections at USC"

South Caroliniana Library & Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia

• Researched and wrote exhibit text panels

2002 Horticulturist

Riverbanks Zoo & Botanical Garden, Columbia, SC

- Maintained collection of 3000+ cultivars on 70-acre property in all weather
- Researched, designed, and installed annual and perennial plantings, including garden sculpture
- · Led educational tours for garden visitors of all ages

Community Development Management Experience

2000-2001 Regional Coordinator

Education for Peace, Banja Luka, Bosnia & Herzegovina

- Worked closely with teachers, staff, students, and parents in primary and secondary schools
- Organized two training seminars for 180 teachers and staff
- Organized regional and national arts events and student/teacher exchanges with schools in other cities
- Wrote detailed reports of all activities and contributed to grant writing and evaluation
- Assisted external grant reviewer
- Developed excellent working relationships with diplomats, local and national government officials, non-governmental organizations, and media

1998-1999 Project Coordinator, Sustainable Agriculture Project

Louis G. Gregory Bahá'í Institute, Hemingway, SC

- Involved local children in garden maintenance
- Developed relationships with local gardeners and farmers
- Attended regional sustainable agriculture conference

1994-1995 National Coordinator

Vivian Wesson Bahá'í Institute, Lomé, Togo

- Taught French-language courses on moral leadership and education of children
- Compiled and edited supplemental course materials
- Conducted follow-up visits to course participants in their home villages
- Collaborated with Board of Directors and other teachers from Chad and Tunisia

Publications, Reports, Exhibits & Reviews

2022	Prepublication review Journal of Bahá'í Studies
2021	Prepublication exhibit review "Liberty and Resistance: Reconstruction and the African American Community at Brattonsville, 1865-1877," Culture and History Museums, York County, SC
2019	Prepublication review U.S. Bahá'í National Center
2019	A History of the Bahá'í Faith in South Carolina Monograph, The History Press
2019	"'Hand in Hand': Race, Identity, and Community Development among South Carolina's Bahá'ís, 1973-1979" Chapter in Bramson, ed. <i>The Bahá'í Faith and African American History: Creating Racial and Religious Diversity</i> , Lexington Books
2018	Prepublication review U.S. Bahá'í National Center
2017	The Green Book of South Carolina, www.greenbookofsc.com (co-author) Mobile travel guide published by SC African American Heritage Commission
2017	Prepublication review Journal of Bahá'í Studies
2017	Prepublication review U.S. Bahá'í National Center
2015	No Jim Crow Church: The Origins of South Carolina's Bahá'í Community Monograph, University Press of Florida
2015	Review of Chad E. Seales, <i>The Secular Spectacle: Performing Religion in a Southern Town</i> (Oxford, 2013) Journal of Southern History, vol. 81, no. 2 (May 2015)
2015	Prepublication review of Steven Hahn textbook, <i>Colonies, Nations, Empires</i> Bedford/St. Martins

2011	"Welcome to Swamp Fox Country" Sixteen wayside signs and three tour booklets for Francis Marion Trail Commission's self-guided driving tour
2011	Prepublication review Bahá'í Studies Review
2009	"Florence Benson Elementary School" (co-author) Nomination document for listing on National Register of Historic Places
2006	"Camden African-American Heritage Project" (co-author) Community history and preservation recommendations for Landmarks Commission of City of Camden, SC
2004	"Evidence of Things Not Seen: Civil Rights Collections at USC" Text panels for exhibit at University of South Carolina libraries
Conference Presentations	
2023	Presenter, "The Bahá'í Faith and Reconstruction in South Carolina, Past and Future" Confederation of SC Local Historical Societies Landmark Conference, Francis Marion University
2023	Session chair, "Oral Histories and Tours of South Carolina's African American Past" Universities Studying Slavery SC Symposium, Francis Marion University
2022	Session chair, "Racism and Racial Justice: Midcentury South Carolina," presented by June Manning Thomas Association for Bahá'í Studies virtual conference
2021	Keynote speaker, "Private Troubles and Public Issues in South Carolina" South Carolina Sociological Association, Hickory Knob State Park, McCormick, SC
2019	Panelist, "Toward a 'New Southern Experience': African American History in The Green Book of South Carolina" National Council for Public History, Hartford, CT
2017	Plenary panelist, "Historic Landmark Designation" African American Tourism Conference, College of Charleston, SC
2017	Panelist, "The Louis G. Gregory Bahá'í Museum: Making Space for Interracial Unity in Charleston" Transforming Public History: From Charleston to the Atlantic World, College of Charleston, SC
2016	Panelist, "Toward an Understanding of Large-Scale Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in South Carolina, 1968-1986" American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, Texas

2015	Plenary panelist, "Oppression to Empowerment" Association for Bahá'í Studies, Orange County, California
2014	Panelist and moderator, "The Church & the Civil Rights Movement" Civil Rights Symposium, Penn Center, St. Helena Island, SC
2014	Moderator, "The Civil Rights Act of 1964" Symposium on the Civil Rights Act at 50, Francis Marion University
2014	Co-facilitator, Subject-Area Session on the Humanities Association for Bahá'í Studies, Toronto, Ontario
2014	Moderator, "The Photography of Richard S. Roberts" Poskito: South Carolina Film & Photography Conference, Francis Marion University
2013	Presenter, "An Introduction to the Bahá'í Faith" Part of a course on Religions in 21st-Century South Carolina sponsored by Interfaith Partners of South Carolina, Columbia College, Columbia, SC
2012	Plenary panelist, "'Abdu'l-Bahá, Louis Gregory, and Southern Interracialism in the Era of the Great War" Association for Bahá'í Studies, Montreal, Québec
2011	Presenter, "The Bahá'í Faith in Jim Crow South Carolina" Humanities & Social Sciences Symposium, Francis Marion University
2011	Panelist, "'Most Great Reconstruction': The South Carolina Bahá'í Movement in American History" Third International Conference on Modern Religions and Religious Movements, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
2004	Panelist, "The Bahá'í Faith in South Carolina, 1937-1963" Association for Bahá'í Studies, San Francisco, California
Other Presentations & Professional Service	
2023	Keynote speaker, "Building Bridges by Championing Diversity" Building Bridges Summit, Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce, Florence, SC
2022	Presenter, "Race, Religion, and the Future of America" Fort Collins Area Interfaith Council, Fort Collins, CO
2021	Moderator, "A Virtual Evening with Nikki Giovanni" Florence County Public Library, Florence, SC
2021	Co-presenter, "Slavery's Legacy, Past and Future" Cultural Conversations Series, Francis Marion University, Florence, SC
2021	Presenter, "The Bahá'í Faith in South Carolina and the Unfinished Business of Reconstruction"

Fort Collins Area Interfaith Council, Fort Collins, CO

2020-2021	Co-presenter, "The Bahá'í Faith in South Carolina" and "The Life and Times of Louis G. Gregory" Three-part virtual interview series, Bahai.chat
2020 2020	Presenter, "Equity and Inclusion as the Norm" Building Bridges Summit, Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce, Florence, SC Panelist, "Your Lives Matter, Students Speak Out" Student Government Association, Francis Marion University
2020	Presenter, "The Bahá'í Faith in South Carolina and the Unfinished Business of Reconstruction" Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, University of South Carolina, Beaufort, SC
2019	Panelist, "No Shame, No Blame: Conversations on Race" SC Collaborative for Race and Justice and SC Human Affairs Commission, Florence County Public Library, Florence, SC
2019	Presenter, "Countering the War on Civility: Towards a New Kind of Politics" Building Bridges Summit, Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce, Florence, SC
2018	Presenter, "Exploring the Civil Rights Movement via the <i>Green Book of South Carolina</i> " School Desegregation in South Carolina Summer Institute for Teachers, Coker College, Hartsville, SC
2018	Moderator, "Race and Education" Beyond Mother Emanuel and the Confederate Flag Symposium, Francis Marion University
2016	Keynote speaker, "The Gift of Diversity" Interfaith Partners of South Carolina annual conference, Florence, SC
2016	Presenter, "Black, White, and Shades of Gray: the 'New Diversity' and the Long Shadow of Jim Crow" Building Bridges Summit, Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce, Florence, SC
2015	Presenter, "The Jim Crow Era in South Carolina" Florence County Public Library, Florence, SC
2014	Presenter, "The Bahá'í Faith in Augusta and North Augusta" Centennial of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's "Tablet to Augusta," Augusta, GA
2014	Participant, Symposium on Race and Nation in the Age of Emancipations Rice University, Houston, TX
2012	Organizer, public lecture by Michael Bedenbaugh, Palmetto Trust for Historic Preservation Phi Alpha Theta & History Department, Francis Marion University
2012	Presenter, "Historic Preservation in Florence County" Florence County Heritage Day, Johnsonville, SC

2012	Presenter, "Historic Preservation in the Pee Dee" Three Rivers Historical Society, Hemingway, SC
2011	Panel Judge, Phi Alpha Theta Regional Conference Francis Marion University
2011	Presenter (with Alex Palkovic), "Revolutionary War Historic Sites, Public Art, and Heritage Tourism Development" Florence County Public Library, Johnsonville, SC
2011	Presenter, "Race, Religion, and Social Change: The Bahá'í Faith in South Carolina" Phi Alpha Theta History Lecture Series, Francis Marion University
2010	Presenter, "Louis Gregory and the Bahá'í Faith in the Segregated South" South Carolina Bahá'í Centennial Conference, College of Charleston, SC
2010	Panelist, "Engaging in the Discourse on Race: A Conversation" Louhelen Bahá'í School, Davidson, MI
2009	Moderator, book event for Stanley Lanzano, <i>True Places: A Lowcountry Preacher, His Church, and His People</i> (USC Press, 2009) Florence County Public Library, Florence, SC
2009	Panelist, "What Can You Do with a History Degree?" Phi Alpha Theta History Lecture Series, Francis Marion University
2009	Presenter, "Historic Preservation in Lower Florence County" 10 th Anniversary Picnic of the Pee Dee Land Trust, Johnsonville, SC
2009 2009	Participant, kayak trip to Hampton Plantation State Park Francis Marion Trail Commission and Pee Dee Land Trust, Berkeley County, SC Member, Review Committee for proposals to conduct archaeological and archival research on the Battle of Black Mingo Francis Marion Trail Commission
2009	Presenter, "The Francis Marion Trail Commission" Gen. Francis Marion Memorial Day observance, Rogers Library, Francis Marion University
2009	Presenter, "The Francis Marion Trail Commission" Three Rivers Historical Society, Hemingway, SC
2008	Participant, Wampee Retreat Francis Marion Trail Commission and its committees, Berkeley County, SC
2008	Participant, kayak trip to colonial settlement at Willtown Francis Marion Trail Commission and Pee Dee Land Trust, Williamsburg and Georgetown counties, SC
2008	Participant, 6 th Francis Marion Symposium Swamp Fox Murals Trail Society, Manning, SC

University & Departmental Service

2019-	Co-coordinator (with Dr. Chris Barton), History Department Public History & Archaeology Track
2018-	Co-coordinator (with Dr. Chris Barton), History Internship
2016-	Member, African & African American Studies Advisory Committee
2011-	Member, African American Collection Committee, Rogers Library
2011-	History Department Student Adviser
2018-2019	Chair, History Department Search Committee (U.S./Secondary Education)
2016-2018	Member, College of Liberal Arts Tenure & Promotion Committee
2016-2017	Chair, History Department Search Committee (Archaeology)
2016	History Department new course development HIST 210—Intro to Archaeology, HIST 220—Intro to Public History, HIST 480— Archaeology in South Carolina
2015	Member, Diversity Award Committee African American Faculty & Staff Coalition
2014-2015	Faculty Supervisor, History Department Internships
2013-2015	Member, Provost's workgroup for African American Studies
2013	Member, Diversity Award Committee African American Faculty & Staff Coalition
2012-2018	Member, Professional Development Committee
2012-2015	Member, Patriot Bookstore Advisory Committee
2012	Honors course HIST 202—US History since 1877
2012	History Department new course development HIST 370—African History
2012	Member, Diversity Award Committee African American Faculty & Staff Coalition
2010-2011	Faculty Supervisor, inaugural History Department Internship
2011	Panelist, program for scholarship candidates and parents Office of Admissions
2010	Honors course HIST 202—US History since 1877

2008-2009 Member, History Department Search Committee (U.S. History)

Grants, Awards & Honors

2022	REAL grant (with Dr. Erica Edwards) for Georgetown Rice Culture Field Trip Francis Marion University
2021	Promotion to Full Professor Francis Marion University
2020	ENACT Faculty Fellowship Brandeis University International Center for Ethics, Justice, and Civic Life
2018	Sabbatical Francis Marion University
2017	Shining Example Award for Green Book of South Carolina Southeast Tourism Society
2017	Palmetto Award of Excellence for <i>Green Book of South Carolina</i> SC Chapter of International Association of Business Communicators
2017	Summer Research Stipend (tenured faculty) Francis Marion University
2015	Promotion to Associate Professor Francis Marion University
2014	Tenure Francis Marion University
2012	Graduate Thesis Prize Association for Bahá'í Studies
2012	Featured Local Author, Soul of the Pee Dee: Our African-American Heritage Florence Convention & Visitors Bureau, Florence, SC
2011	Diversity Award African-American Faculty & Staff Coalition, Francis Marion University
2011	Quality Enhancement Plan grants for inaugural History Department Internship at Francis Marion Trail Commission Francis Marion University
2010	Summer Research Stipend (untenured faculty) Francis Marion University
2007	Project Award for Camden African-American Heritage Project South Carolina African-American Heritage Commission

Press & Digital Media

"This Religious Radio Station in SC is One of a Kind," Myrtle Beach (SC) Sun News, March 25, 2023

"Personal and Societal Revolution with Louis Venters, Ph.D.," Where Do You Get Your Protein?, episode 7, January 2023

"Pee Dee Author Expo," Florence (SC) Morning News, December 7, 2022

"Charissa Owens Receives Award for 'If These Walls Could Talk' Documentary, *The College Today*, today.cofc.edu, April 19, 2022

"Turnover at SC African American Heritage Commission Raises Concerns," *Charleston (SC) Post and Courier*, October 15, 2021

"Dismissal from Black History Board Is 'Strange Injustice,' Say Ex-Members," *Charleston (SC) City Paper*, October 12, 2021

"The Life and Times of Louis G. Gregory," Bahai.chat, March 30, 2021

"The Bahá'í Faith and America's Unfinished Business of Reconstruction," parts 1 and 2, Bahai.chat, December 12, 2020 and January 9, 2021

Interview on the Baha'i Faith in South Carolina, "Bahá'í Blogcast with Rainn Wilson," November 3, 2020

Oral history interview on Reconstruction, South Carolina, and the Bahá'í Faith in the U.S., raceunity.us, July 7, 2019

Interview on A History of the Bahá'í Faith in South Carolina, bahaiblog.net, May 17, 2019

"Most in SC Identify as Christians; Guess Which Religion Is the Second Most Popular, *Rock Hill* (SC) Herald, November 18, 2017

"Florence Members of Bahá'í Faith Prepare for Religion's 200th Anniversary," *Florence (SC) Morning News*, June 16, 2017

"Historic Florence County Plantation Hits the Market," WMBF TV news, June 1, 2017

Interview on *The Green Book of South Carolina*, "In Black America," KUT 90.5 FM, Austin, TX, May 25, 2017

"New Mobile Guide Highlights 'Hidden Gems' of SC's African-American History," (Columbia, SC) State, April 30, 2017

Web talk on No Jim Crow Church, Wilmette Institute, December 4, 2016

"A Beautiful Symbol for Florence," Florence (SC) Morning News, August 12, 2016

Interview on *No Jim Crow Church*, "Bahá'í Perspectives," WXOJ-LP 103.3 FM, Northampton, MA, April 3, 2016

"11 Books to Help Us Explore the Peace-Loving Bahá'í Faith," *Huffpost Religion*, November 30, 2015

"A Balm to Their Souls," Anderson (SC) Independent-Mail, November 6, 2015

"Black History Month Program Offers Florence a Glimpse of Its Past," *Florence (SC) Morning News*, February 19, 2015

"These Maps Show the Most Common Religion, Christian and Non-Christian, in Your State," *The Week*, January 8, 2015

"150 Mark Centenary of Tablet for Augusta," American Bahá'í, Sept.-Oct. 2014

"Bahá'í Faith is Second Most Prevalent Religion in South Carolina," Florence (SC) Morning News, July 19, 2014

"The Runner-Up Religions of America," Protojournalist blog, National Public Radio, June 22, 2014

"How the Bahá'í Faith Became South Carolina's Second-Largest Religion," *Charleston (SC) Post and Courier*, June 21, 2014

"How a 19th-Century Persian Faith Became the Second-Most Common Religion in Our State," Charleston (SC) City Paper, June 17, 2014

"Patriotism, Statue on Display at First Heritage Day in Johnsonville," *Florence (SC) Morning News*, August 18, 2012

"Dr. Venters Presents at Conference in Israel," Patriot (Francis Marion University), April 14, 2011

"FMU's Venters Wins Diversity Award," Florence (SC) Morning News, February 7, 2011

"A Time for Reflection: Students, Adults, Educators Ponder the Lessons Left by Martin Luther King, Jr.," *Lake City (SC) News & Post*, January 19, 2011

"Stories Highlight Historic Francis Marion Tours," Florence (SC) Morning News, September 22, 2010

Online Commentary

"Truth in Hollywood?: Justin Baldoni on Body Dysmorphia," goodmenproject.com, July 9, 2017

"Dear United (For the Time Being) Kingdom," goodmenproject.com, June 28, 2016

"Lasting Change: South Carolina's Bahá'ís and Race in America," medium.com, June 17, 2016

"I Love You for Sentimental Reasons': Musical Lessons of Black Men's Abounding Love," goodmenproject.com, February 23, 2016

"From Bosnia to Chapel Hill, Hostility to Islamic Religion Remains in Our Fearful World," goodmenproject.com, September 4, 2015

"Jim Crow Is Still America's National Religion...But It Doesn't Have to Be," goodmenproject.com, March 28, 2015

"The Burning of Columbia and the Persistence of Confederate Memory," goodmenproject.com, March 13, 2015

"How a Good Man Battled Racism and Died for It...And Why We Have to Keep Fighting a Hundred Years Later," goodmenproject.com, October 24, 2014

Professional Affiliations

Association for Bahá'í Studies Association for the Study of African American Life and Culture National Council for Public History Organization of American Historians South Carolina Historical Association Southern Historical Association

Community Affiliations

Carolina Farm Stewardship Association Pee Dee Land Trust Preservation South Carolina