

*Because the past informs the present*

## **Will Livingston**

**College: Arts and Sciences**

**Program: Religion**

**Degree: Doctorate**

### **Why FSU?**

The faculty in the [religion program](#) are among the world's best.

### **Motivation to pursue graduate degree**

I have an interest in teaching and other scholarly activities.

### **Importance and impact of research**

I am working on the intersections of religious ethics and philosophical accounts of collective responsibility. More often than not, the scholars crafting these accounts give due consideration to the Holocaust as the singular event underpinning an urgent need for some kind of group-based concern for harm. As we have noted in the loosely-knit field of "genocide studies," the Holocaust is a pretty high bar. Challenging, refining, and extending the ideas of theorists of collective responsibility to other cases is slow-going work. One of the more generative areas (I am not the first to realize) is American racism. I am trying to stitch together some kind of moral system that holds us in the present accountable for the past and for a more just future.

### **Career aspirations**

Stay in the academy forever, develop lifelong mentoring relationships with students, get a nice house with enough yard for the multiple dogs my boyfriend wants.

### **Advice for anyone considering graduate school**

Graduate school is not a deferral of work. Graduate school is work, as you will begin to suspect whether you like it or not within a matter of weeks. However, like any job, it is important to stick it out for a year. I know this goal is all contingent on finances and life's other uncontrollable elements. Nevertheless, you are thinking about entering a very old human institution. A far greater possibility than you changing the system from within is you being changed by the system. There is an incredible amount of tedium to any job, though. Graduate school's not really any different.

