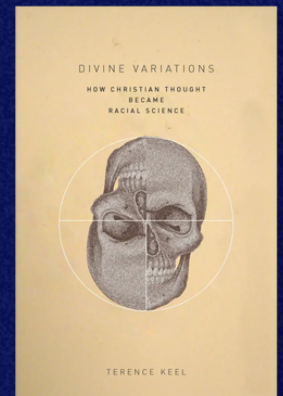
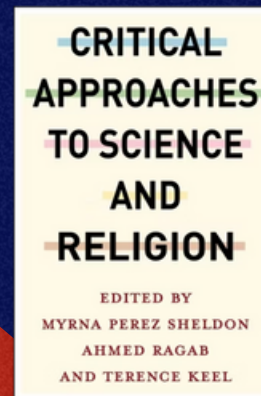
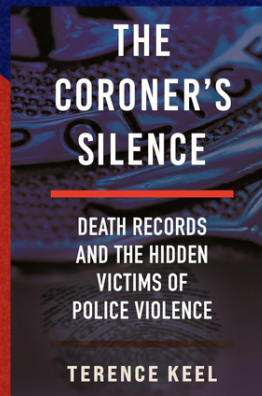


A portrait of Terence Keel, a Black man with a beard and glasses, wearing a black leather jacket over a white shirt and tie. He is sitting with his arms crossed, looking directly at the camera.

# TERENCE KEEL

PROFESSOR, AUTHOR, & DIRECTOR OF THE  
BIOCRITICAL STUDIES LAB



# MEDIA KIT

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# ABOUT DR. KEEL



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 Terence Keel

**Dr. Terence Keel** is a professor of human biology, society and African American studies at UCLA. His latest book is *The Coroner's Silence: Death Records and the Hidden Victims of Police Violence*.

# LONG BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Terence Keel is an award-winning scholar, the founding director of the BioCritical Studies Lab, and a professor of human biology, society, and African American studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. Keel has received fellowships from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Russell Sage Foundation, and the National Institutes of Health. He is the author of *Divine Variations: How Christian Thought Became Racial Science* and co-editor of *Critical Approaches to Science and Religion*. His latest book is *The Coroner's Silence: Death Records and the Hidden Victims of Police Violence*.

# THE CORONER'S SILENCE:

## DEATH RECORDS AND THE HIDDEN VICTIMS OF POLICE VIOLENCE

**Publisher:** Beacon Press

**Publication Date:** November 11, 2025

**Price:** Hardcover \$32.00 (224 pages)

**ISBN-13:** 978-0807017517

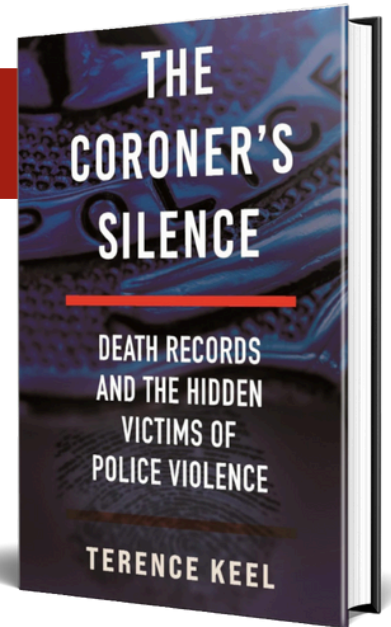
“Terence Keel meticulously exposes a bureaucratic machinery in which science and medicine are weaponized to disguise in-custody deaths as natural or unavoidable.” —**Ruha Benjamin**, author of *Viral Justice: How We Grow the World We Want*

“This courageous and essential book demands that we confront not only police violence but also the underlying inhumanity of a society that criminalizes and abandons those marginalized by profound inequality—and allows the state to kill them with impunity.” —**Dorothy Roberts**, author of *Killing the Black Body and Torn Apart*

“A stunning achievement. Reading this book changes how one sees this country and the people who bear the brunt of its contradictions. A must-read in these troubling times.” —**Eddie S. Glaude Jr.**, author of *Begin Again*

“Terence Keel deftly navigates a complicated maze of history, procedure, bureaucracy, reports, testimony, misdirection, and obfuscation to get at the real truth: the coroner, constrained by structural racism, politics, and moral panics, is part of the problem. *The Coroner's Silence* is a big part of the solution.” —**Robin D. G. Kelley**, author of *Freedom Dreams*

“Keel’s unflinching autopsy of the embodied realities of US deaths due to police and carceral violence exposes how long-standing systemic legal, medical, and carceral ‘failures,’ in fact, successfully operate to entrench injustice. The antidotes? Transparency and transformative justice.” —**Nancy Krieger**, professor of social epidemiology, Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health



**For readers of *His Name Is George Floyd* and *Under the Skin***

**A landmark investigation into forensic medicine that exposes the systematic concealment of state-sanctioned violence through death investigations**

Each year, police officers kill over 1,000 people they’ve sworn to protect and serve. While some cases, like George Floyd’s and Sandra Bland’s, capture national attention, most victims remain nameless, their stories untold. *The Coroner’s Silence* reveals a disturbing truth about these cases: coroners and other death investigators are often complicit in obscuring the violent circumstances of in-custody deaths.

Through rigorous research—including critical records analysis, public health studies, and interviews with victims’ families—this book unmask the systemic failures within forensic medicine. Terence Keel shows how incomplete autopsy reports, mishandled medical documents, and strategically lost evidence effectively shield law enforcement from accountability.

*The Coroner’s Silence* uncovers how the current system of death investigation operates as a mechanism of institutional safeguarding. By highlighting the structural powerlessness of coroners and their disconnection from the communities most affected by police violence, Keel demonstrates how bureaucratic processes can render human suffering invisible.

True accountability requires more than procedural reform. It demands a fundamental reimagining of how we investigate, document, and understand deaths at the hands of state institutions. *The Coroner’s Silence* is a crucial intervention that challenges us to confront the deeply ingrained mechanisms that perpetuate systemic violence.

**TERENCEKEEL.COM**

# SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

1. It's an unsettling reality that more than 1,000 people are killed by police each year in the US. What compelled you to focus specifically on the role of coroners and death investigators in these cases?
2. You note that you were inspired to write this book by the death of John Horton III, a young Black man whose autopsy gave the impression he took his own life. How did his mother's questions lead you to found the Biocritical Studies Lab?
3. You detail how incomplete autopsy reports, mishandled medical records, and missing evidence can obscure the true circumstances of in-custody deaths. Can you walk us through how these failures typically unfold in practice?
4. During your investigation, what were some of the most striking truths that the families of victims of police violence brought forward that official records missed?
5. Could you walk us through the shortcomings of the Death in Custody Reporting Act (DCRA) of 2000? How would you address them?
6. In *The Coroner's Silence* you compare the reporting requirements and investigating requirements for deaths in custody by state. Could you tell us about the states that are ahead of the curve versus the ones that lag behind?
7. You write that the current system operates as a mechanism of institutional safeguarding. What aspects of the structure or incentives keep the system functioning this way?
8. How do you see forensic medicine contributing to problems in the justice system?
9. What does a fundamental reimagining of death investigation look like to you?
10. What concrete steps, whether that be individual, community, or institutional, can help move us toward transparency and transformative justice?

# OTHER PUBLISHED BOOKS

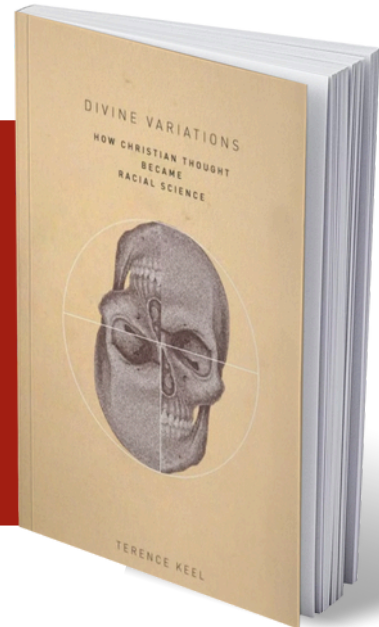
**Book Title:** Divine Variations: How Christian Thought Became Racial Science

**Publisher Name:** Stanford University Press

**Publication Year:** 2019

**Price:** Hardcover \$60.24  
Paperback \$28.00

**ISBN:** 978-0804795401  
978-1503610095



**Book Title:** Critical Approaches to Science and Religion

**Publisher Name:** Columbia University Press

**Publication Year:** 2023

**Price:** Hardcover \$118.99  
Paperback \$35.00

**ISBN:** 978-0231206563  
978-0231206570

