religiousstudies AAR EDITION NEWS

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Annual Meeting News

FEATURES

Spotlight on Teaching
Teaching with Site Visits

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Subscriptions for individuals and institutions are available. See *www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn* for more information.

Deadlines for submissions:

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March:	December 15
May:	February 15
October:	July 15

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2004 Member Calendar

Dates are subject to change. Check *www.aarweb.org* for the latest information.

October

Religious Studies News—AAR Edition October 2004 issue.

Spotlight on Teaching Fall 2004 issue.

October 1–31. AAR officer election period. Candidate profiles will be published in *RSN.*

October 15. Submissions for the January 2005 issue of *Religious Studies News—AAR Edition* due. For more information, see *www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn.*

October 15. Excellence in Teaching Award nominations due. For more information, see *www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching.asp.*

October 16. Third and final tier Annual Meeting registration rates go into effect.

October 21. EIS preregistration closes.

November

November 1. Research grant awards announced.

November 18. Executive Committee meeting, San Antonio, TX.

November 19. Board of Directors meeting, San Antonio, TX.

November 19. Chairs Workshop at the Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX. Free for departments enrolled in the Academic Relations Program. For more information, see *www.aarweb.org/department/acadrel.asp.*

November 20–23. Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX. Held concurrently with the Society of Biblical Literature, comprising some 8,500 registrants, 200 publishers, and 100 hiring departments.

November 22. Annual Business Meeting. See the *Annual Meeting Program Book* for time and place.

December

Journal of the American Academy of Religion December 2004 issue.

December 2. New program unit proposals due.

December 10–11. Program Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

December 15. Submissions for the March 2005 issue of *Religious Studies News—AAR Edition* due. For more information, see *www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn.*

December 31. Membership renewal for 2005 due. Renew online at *www.aarweb.org/dues.*

And keep in mind throughout the year...

Regional organizations have various deadlines throughout the fall for their Calls for Papers. See *www.aarweb.org/regions/default.asp.*

In the Field. News of events and opportunities for scholars of religion. *In the Field* is a members-only online publication that accepts brief announcements, including calls for papers, grant news, conference announcements, and other opportunities appropriate for scholars of religion. Submit text online at *www.aarweb.org/publications/inthefield/submit.asp*.

Openings: Employment Opportunities for Scholars of Religion. *Openings* is a members-only online publication listing job announcements in areas of interest to members; issues are viewable online from the first through the last day of each month. Submit announcements online, and review policies and pricing, at *www.aarweb.org/openings/submit.asp*.

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I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

Instructions to Publishers

1. Complete and file one copy of this form with your postmaster annually on or before October 1. Keep a copy of the completed form for your records.
2. In cases where the stockholder or security holder is a trustee, include in items 10 and 11 the name of the person or corporation for whom the trustee is acting. Also include the names and addresses of individuals who are stockholders who own or hold 1 percent or more of the total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities of the publishing corporation. In item 11, if none, check the box. Use blank sheets if more space is required.
3. Be sure to furnish all circulation information called for in item 15. Free circulation must be shown in items 15d, e, and f.
4. Item 15h., Copies not Distributed, must include (1) newsstand copies originally stated on Form 3541, and returned to the publisher, (2) estimated returns from news agents, and (3), copies for office use, leftovers, spoiled, and all other copies not distributed.
5. If the publication had Periodicals authorization as a general or requester publication, this Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation must be published; it must be printed in any issue in October or, if the publication is not published during October, the first issue printed after October.
6. In item 16, indicate the date of the issue in which this Statement of Ownership will be published.
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Failure to file or publish a statement of ownership may lead to suspension of Periodicals authorization.

PS Form 3526, October 1999 (Reverse)

religious*studies* AAR EDITION NEWS

Religious Studies News—AAR Edition is the newspaper of record for the field, especially designed to serve the professional needs of persons involved in teaching and scholarship in religion (broadly construed to include religious studies, theology, and sacred texts). Published quarterly by the American Academy of Religion, *RSN* is received by some 10,000 scholars, by departments enrolled in the Academic Relations Program, and by libraries at colleges and universities across North America and abroad. *Religious Studies News—AAR Edition* communicates the important events of the field and related areas. It provides a forum for members and others to examine critical issues in education, pedagogy (especially through the biannual *Spotlight on Teaching*), research, publishing, and the public understanding of religion. It also publishes news about the services and programs of the AAR and other organizations, including employment services and registration information for the AAR Annual Meeting.

For writing and advertising guidelines, please see *www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn.asp.*

Annual Meeting Countdown!

September
Mailing of the Annual Meeting badge materials to all preregistered attendees began in mid-September. Materials include your name badge and drink ticket. Put these in a safe place for use in November. Contact Conferon Registration & Housing at *aarsblreg@conferon.com* if you did not receive your materials.

October
Third-tier ("regular") registration rates go into effect on October 16, so register early to get the best rate!

November
November 8 is the pre-Annual Meeting registration deadline. All registrations after this date must take place onsite at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio. No badge mailings will occur after this date.

November 20–23 is the Annual Meeting in San Antonio! Check *www.aarweb.org/annualmeet/* for up-to-date information about the meeting.

Checklist for when you arrive at the Annual Meeting:

- If you received your name badge by mail, all you need to do is swing by the Registration area in the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center to pick up a name badge holder. Then you are ready to attend sessions and visit the Exhibit Hall!
- If you did not receive your badge materials or if you need to register for the Annual Meeting, visit the AAR & SBL Meeting Registration counter.
- Pick up a copy of the Annual Meetings *At-A-Glance*. This booklet shows the updated program and locations of all sessions. Updates or changes will be marked by gray shading. This is an invaluable addition to your Program Book!
- Interested in a certain session's topic? Want to learn more before heading to the session? Check out the *Book of Abstracts*, located in the bins near registration, for more information.
- Pick up your tote bag! Tote bag tickets were mailed with the name badge materials. Tote bags are available while supplies last.
- Visit the Find-a-Friend boards in the Registration area to find whether your colleagues are attending.
- Swing by the AAR Member Services desk if you have any other questions.
- Enjoy the meeting! ❧

Featured Speakers at the Annual Meeting

The AAR is proud to present a strong program of speakers during this year's Annual Meeting

TEXTureS, Gestures, Power: Orientation to Radical Excavation (A20–21)

Saturday,
11:30 AM–1:00 PM
Vincent L. Wimbush,
Claremont Graduate University

Vincent L. Wimbush is professor of religion and director of the recently established Institute for Signifying Scriptures (ISS) at Claremont Graduate University. (See the related article on page 15.) His teaching and research interests include the New Testament and Early Christianity as ancient and modern literary-rhetorical-ideological formations; the ideologies and politics of ancient and modern asceticisms and renunciations; and the practices and politics involving the making and engagement of "scriptures." For eight years Wimbush directed the New York City-based African Americans and the Bible Research Project. In Claremont he has expanded upon this project with the establishment of the ISS, whose agenda is to facilitate research into "scripturalizing" across communities worldwide, with focus upon historically dominated peoples. Recent publications include *The Bible and African Americans: A Brief History* (2003), editor, with the assistance of Rosamond Rodman; *African Americans and the Bible: Sacred Texts and Social Textures* (2000, 2001), co-editor with Richard Valantasis; and *Asceticism* (1995, 2003).

Islam in the West: The North American Context (A21–128)
Sunday,
7:15 PM–8:15 PM
Tariq Ramadan,
University of Notre Dame

Tariq Ramadan lives in Geneva, Switzerland, where he was born. He studied as imam in Cairo and, back in Switzerland, took an undergraduate degree in French literature and two doctorates, in Islamic studies and in the philosophical thought of Friedrich Nietzsche. He teaches at the University of Geneva and the University of Fribourg, and is the Luce Professor of Religion, Conflict, and Peace-building at the University of Notre Dame this year. Since 1993 he has dedicated himself with growing intensity to preaching in Switzerland, France, and Belgium, with frequent engagements in the United States. He is the author of over a dozen books; one, entitled *To Be a European Muslim*, published in 1999, has been translated into 14 languages. He is listened to as an expert at the European Parliament.

A God of Incredible Surprises (A22–127)
Monday,
7:15 PM–8:15 PM
Virgilio Elizondo,
University of Notre Dame

Father Virgilio Elizondo, a Mexican-American theologian from San Antonio, Texas, has had a worldwide impact upon Hispanic religion through his writings, lectures, and internationally televised bilingual worship. As rector of his city's San Fernando Cathedral for over 12 years, Elizondo became a leader in bringing Mexican religious customs and traditions into the Catholic service. Still, Elizondo struggled with the church's paternal attitude toward Mexican Americans and vowed to go beyond simply elevating cultural traditions in church services. His most influential and widely accepted book to date, *The Future of the Mestizo — Life Where Cultures Meet* (2000), discusses the outcome of the blend of Mexican, Spanish, indigenous, and Anglo cultures in the U.S. and its effect upon the Catholic Church. As a founder of the Mexican American Cultural Center in San Antonio, he has built a model for community-based religious education that extends worldwide. In 1997, Elizondo was honored with the highest honor a Catholic can receive in the United States, Notre Dame's Laetare Medal, becoming the first Latino given this honor. As the author of 12 books and the editor of many others, Elizondo has introduced new and creative ways to teach Americans the concepts of peace, acceptance, and faith through art and the teachings of the Bible.

Latinas' Experiences and Lives in Literature and Theology: A Reading by Sandra Cisneros (A20–100)
Saturday,
4:00 PM–6:30 PM

Latina women's lives and experiences are central to the work of Latina theologians and writers of novels and short stories. In this panel, we will first hear a reading by renowned novelist Sandra Cisneros, author of *Caramelo*. She will then engage Latinas who teach theology, ethics, literature, and biblical studies in a conversation about the use of Latinas' experience in her work and the work of Latina theologians. Latina culture is alive in the experiences of its women. Sharing these experiences is a perfect vehicle for teaching the broader society Latina values and way of life.

George Ellis, 2004 Templeton Prize Winner (A22–131)
Monday,
8:30 PM–9:30 PM

George F. R. Ellis, a leading theoretical cosmologist renowned for his bold and innovative contributions to the dialogue between science and religion, and whose social writings were condemned by government ministers in the former apartheid regime of his native South Africa, has won the 2004 Templeton Prize. Ellis, a professor of applied mathematics at the University of Cape Town, specializes in general relativity theory, an area first broadly investigated by Einstein. He is considered to be among a handful of the world's leading relativistic cosmologists, including luminaries such as Stephen Hawking and Malcolm MacCallum. His most recent investigations question whether or not there ever was a start to the universe and, indeed, if there is only one universe or many. ❧

New Program Units

Check out these new program units at the Annual Meeting!

Islamic Mysticism Group

Discourses of Early Sufism (A20–109)
Saturday, November 20
4:00 PM–6:30 PM

In Theory and in Practice: Sufi Thinkers on the Integration of Ontology and Ethics (A22–65)
(co-sponsored with the Mysticism Group)
Monday, November 22
1:00 PM–3:30 PM

Transformations of Islamic Mystical Traditions (A22–118)
Monday, November 22
4:00 PM–6:30 PM

Scriptural Reasoning Group

Poverty and Debt-Release: Scriptural and Social-Scientific Reasonings (A21–26)
Sunday, November 21
9:00 AM–11:30 AM

Learning and Teaching in the Abrahamic Traditions (A21–76)
Sunday, November 21
4:00 PM–6:30 PM

Foucault Consultation

Foucault in Contemporary Theological and Religious Studies (A20–73)
Saturday, November 20
1:00 PM–3:30 PM

Open and Relational Theologies Consultation

What It Means to Say That God Is Relational (A21–28)
Sunday, November 21
9:00 AM–11:30 AM

Sacred Space in Contemporary Asia Consultation

Siting Asian Identities (A21–29)
Sunday, November 21
9:00 AM–11:30 AM

Screening and Panel Discussion of the Documentary Film *Opening the Gates to Heaven: A Pilgrimage to Oyama by Barbara Ambros* (A22–21)
(co-sponsored with the Japanese Religions Group)
Monday, November 22
9:00 AM–11:30 AM ❧

AAR Officer Elections

A Message from the AAR Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee is pleased to place four excellent names on the ballot this year: two for Vice President and two for Secretary. We are grateful to each of them for their willingness to serve the Academy in this way.

Once again, AAR members will be able to vote by electronic ballot. A paper ballot will be mailed to members whose e-mail addresses are not on file. Please know that we guarantee the privacy of your vote.

We expect a large number of our members to vote in this election. Please be among them.

Peter J. Paris, Chair
Nominations Committee

Call for Nominations

The Nominations Committee will continue its practice of consultations during the Annual Meeting in San Antonio to begin the process for selecting nominees for vice president to take office in November 2005. The committee takes seriously all recommendations by AAR members.

The following characteristics regularly surface in discussions of candidates for vice president:

(a) Scholarship: "represents the mind of the Academy," "international reputation," "breadth of knowledge of the field," "widely known."

(b) Service to the Academy: "serves the Academy broadly conceived," "gives papers regularly," "leads sections," "chairs committees," "supports regional work."

(c) General: "electable," "one the average member of the Academy will look upon with respect," "one whose scholarship and manner is inclusive rather than narrow, sectarian, and/or exclusive."

Please send your recommendations of persons the committee should consider to the AAR Executive Office marked "Recommendations for Nominations Committee."

How to Vote

All members of the Academy are entitled to vote for all officers. The elected candidates will take office at the end of the 2004 Annual Meeting.

Please vote online at *www.aarweb.org*. Paper ballots are sent only to those without e-mail addresses on file or by special request (please call 404-727-3049). Vote by November 1, 2004, to exercise this important membership right.

Vice President

The Vice President serves on the Executive and Program Committees, as well as on the Board of Directors. He will be in line to be confirmed president-elect in 2005 and president in 2006. During his tenure, the Vice President will have the opportunity to affect AAR policy in powerful ways; in particular, during the presidential year, the incumbent makes all appointments of members to openings on committees.

Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for recording and verifying the official records of the meetings of the members, the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee. The Secretary serves a three-year term and is eligible for reelection to one additional three-year term. ❧

Candidates for Vice President

Francis X. Clooney

Francis X. Clooney, SJ, received his MDiv from Weston Jesuit School of Theology (1978) and his PhD from the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago (1984). He is Professor of Comparative Theology at Boston College, where he has been a member of the faculty since 1984. He was the first President of the Society for Hindu-Christian Studies, and has just completed a three-year term as Academic Director of the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies. His publications are in the fields of classical Hindu traditions, the Hindu-Christian encounter, and comparative theology, and include Theology after Vedanta *(1993),* Hindu God, Christian God *(2001), and* Divine Mother, Blessed Mother: Hindu Goddesses and the Virgin Mary *(2004). He joined the AAR in 1985, and is currently Chair of the Publications Committee and consequently a member of the Board. He is also a member of the* JAAR *Editorial Board.*

Statement on the AAR

AT ITS BEST, the American Academy of Religion has always mirrored the culture and cultures of its members, as we have endeavored to articulate and refine disciplinary ways to understand, interpret, and teach the ideas, images, and deeds of religious people ancient and modern. As North American life becomes more richly complex and multicultural, the AAR itself has been diversifying, and today is more global than ever before. Our postmodern age calls into question every hegemony and elite theorization of religion, and there is no easy consensus as to how religions are to be studied and interpreted; we therefore also keep multiplying approaches, out of necessity and not simply academic curiosity. By strategies of teaching, mentoring, research and publication, deliberations in AAR sections and groups, and in the specific choices of themes and panel participants each year, AAR members keep refashioning the scholarly study of religion and religions. We also keep bringing this study back into dialogue with broader religious discourses where correlate notions of faith, commitment, moral, and practice still command attention. The AAR prospers in these multiple particularities, as further religious possibilities are noticed, and as scholars from within multiple faith traditions are increasingly heard and recognized as the subjects, as well as objects, of study.

For another reason, too, the AAR is in a time of change. The recent decision to meet separately from the Society of Biblical Literature is one I, a current Board member, support as a substantively good one, even if, as a Board member, I agree with those convinced that the deliberations should have been more democratic from start to finish. For now, the matter is settled, and the decision frees us from the impression that the academic study of the Bible holds a position of privilege with respect to the wider scholarly deliberations of the AAR. This new situation is more a beginning than an end, for it will engender new ways of studying the Bible, and its correlate Jewish and Christian traditions, in conversation with other sacred texts and religious traditions of the world. As a Roman Catholic who takes seriously the categories of revelation, truth, and tradition, I believe that the newly charted direction of the AAR should enhance rather than hinder our appreciation of deep religious commitments, including Jewish and Christian identities rooted in the biblical heritage.

The current pluralization of possibilities would be overwhelming were the AAR not committed, by its history and our recurrent choices, to the professional study of religion instantiated by a rich set of historical, cultural, linguistic, and hermeneutical disciplines. Religions and theologies do, of course, flourish apart from the AAR. My own career-long study of some Hindu traditions (Mimamsa ritual theory, Vedanta exegesis and theology, certain Goddess texts, Tamil Vaisnava devotionalism), and of the historical and contemporary implications of the study of India for Christian theology, would surely have been possible even were I not a member of the AAR. But I also know that my research would have been cramped, diminished in acumen, imagination, and fruitfulness, had I not been engaged in what is now a 20-year conversation with AAR colleagues on how to study religious traditions in ways that keep

See **CLOONEY** p.5

Jeffrey Stout

Jeffrey Stout received his AB in Religious Studies from Brown University in 1972, entered the doctoral program in Religion at Princeton, and joined the Princeton faculty in 1975. He became Andrew Mellon Professor in the Humanities in 1989, and served as Chair of the Department of Religion throughout most of the 1990s. His scholarly interests include theories of religion, religious ethics, pragmatic philosophy, political theory, and film. His articles and reviews have appeared in such journals as the Monist, New Literary History, Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal, *and the* Journal of Religion. *He is a contributing editor to the* Journal of Religious Ethics, *a co-editor of the Cambridge Series on Religion and Critical Thought, and chair of the editorial board of Princeton University Press. His books include* Ethics after Babel *(Princeton, 2001) and* Democracy and Tradition *(Princeton, 2004), both of which explore connections among religious, ethical, and political aspects of culture. For the latter he received an "Award for Excellence" from the AAR. He is also co-editor of* Grammar and Grace: Reformulations of Aquinas and Wittgenstein *(SCM, 2004). His recent undergraduate courses include "Approaches to the Study of Religion," "Perspectives on Religious Ethics," "Philosophy and the Study of Religion," and "Religion and Cinema."*

Statement on the AAR

IT IS NO SECRET that members of our profession are interested in religion for different reasons. We do not define or delimit our subject matter in the same way. Accordingly, we do not all seek the same kinds of knowledge and understanding, employ the same methodological tools, or judge the effects of our scholarship and teaching from the same point of view. We are a contentious lot, and we need to work hard at keeping a conversation going that includes the full range of voices in the discipline.

The AAR is a framework we use for communicating with one another and acting on whatever common concerns we manage to identify. The organization has grown so big that many of us feel alienated from it. Bureaucratic arrangements are not suitable objects of love. Neither are large-scale meetings. But they are necessary, and they need tending to. Otherwise, the internal goods of the social practices they are meant to serve are bound to suffer, as are many of the people involved.

It is not clear that we have the means of communication we need: the meetings, Web sites, book series, and journals. Everyone recognizes that much thought will need to be given to the rapidly changing varieties of electronic communication. But it is becoming increasingly difficult for new authors to publish books with university presses. Many such presses have entered dark times, so the prospects are grim. What help can the AAR offer? And if there will soon be fewer books, what advice do we have for colleges and universities as to how tenure and promotion cases in our field are to be evaluated? Perhaps a formal statement from the AAR on this issue would prove helpful to departments with explaining to do.

As for journals, the *JAAR* is said to have a two-year queue of accepted articles. For many younger scholars with a tenure clock ticking away, that's too long to wait for publication. If the economic future of the university presses changes religious studies from a book-oriented discipline to an article-oriented discipline, like philosophy, we need to ask whether we have enough journals and the right kinds of journals. Even now, are the various subfields sufficiently well served by the journals already in existence? Are the extant journals keeping pace with the rapid evolution of the discipline?

We should also make every reasonable effort to expand the opportunities for presenting papers at our meetings. But the most important question to ask about the Annual Meeting is whether the process of job placement can be made more humane than it now is for the graduate students entering the market for the first time. How, and under what circumstances, do we want interviews to be conducted? We have made our hiring procedures much fairer than they used to be, but there is no reason the experience has to be dehumanizing.

See **STOUT** p.5

Candidates for Secretary

Carol B. Duncan

Carol B. Duncan is Associate Professor of Religion and Culture at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Canada. Duncan earned her BA in Sociology from the University of Toronto (1988) and her MA and PhD in Sociology from York University (1991 and 2000, respectively). Her areas of research interest include the sociology of religion, religion and culture of the African Diaspora, Caribbean religions in North America, and the intersections of religious studies and popular culture. An award-winning teacher, she is the author of scholarly articles on Caribbean women's religious lives, the Spiritual Baptist religion, and religion and popular culture. She is co-author of two forthcoming books with Abingdon Press: Black Church Studies: An Introduction *and a volume on black church culture and society. She will also serve as co-editor of other volumes in a series on black church studies to be published through Abingdon Press.*

Statement on the AAR

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY of Religion is the premier professional organization for religious studies scholars. As such, its importance is crucial in providing a meeting place for the exchange and sharing of scholarly research and the forging of professional associations and alliances for its members. The AAR is also about something else, as well, that bodes well for the success of these research-oriented tasks: community. As such, the AAR is instrumental in the building of scholarly community which extends well beyond the time frame of the annual AAR national and regional meetings, and in my case, beyond national borders, as well. As a Canadian, my perspective is informed by the significance that the organization has played in my professional life and development as an international member. Attendance and participation in annual national meetings is a crucial part of my professional life, allowing me to interact with scholars from not only across North America but internationally as well. The continued development of the AAR to include diverse scholarly perspectives on the study of religion from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds is an important task, as I see it. It is one for which my experience, thus far, has prepared me.

Participating in the AAR through making scholarly presentations of my work has enabled me to receive crucial feedback from colleagues who share specialized interests. Reflecting my diverse research interests, I have presented papers on panels in several areas: black theology, womanist theology, religion in North America, and teaching and learning. As well, attendance at other sections and groups in areas in which I do not conduct specialized research has enabled me to practice a kind of scholarly eclecticism which I have found to be particularly informative and nurturing of my scholarly development.

I have also participated in leadership roles in the AAR. At the regional level, I served as a member of the Eastern-International Steering Committee from 2000–2002. I have served on the steering committee of the Black Theology Group since 2002 and since 2003 on the Religion and Social Science Section. As well, since 2003, I have served as a member of the Executive Committee of the Black Religious Scholars Group (BRSG) of the AAR. Each year since 1997, in an effort to bring the black church, community, and scholars of black religion into conversation, the BRSG has organized a pre-annual conference consultation hosted at a local black church in the host city of the AAR meeting, which brings together AAR scholars of black religion with community activists and church members. I look forward to the opportunity to contribute to the growth and development of the national AAR organization through an elected office. ❧

Michelene E. Pesantubbee

Michelene E. Pesantubbee is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and American Indian and Native Studies at the University of Iowa. In 2001–2002 she was a research fellow in the Women's Studies in Religion Program, Harvard Divinity School. She also taught in Religious Studies at the University of Colorado, Boulder (1994–2003). Pesantubbee received her MA and PhD in Religious Studies from the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she specialized in American Indian religious traditions.

Pesantubbee is completing her second term as co-chair of Native Traditions in the Americas Group. Prior to co-chairing the group she also served on the steering committee, and is currently on the steering committee for the Women and Religion Session of the American Academy of Religion. She is also a member of the Society for the Study of Native American Religious Traditions.

Pesantubbee's most recent article examines the future of the study of Native American religious traditions in a chapter titled "Religious Studies on the Margins: Decolonizing Our Minds," in Native Voices: American Indian Identity and Resistance *(University of Kansas Press, 2003). Her research focuses primarily on native women and American Indian religious movements. She currently has a book manuscript under contract with the University of New Mexico Press,* Ohoyo Osh Chisba: The Legacy of Corn Woman*, which examines the impact of French colonization on Choctaw women's roles. She published a related article titled "Beyond Domesticity: Choctaw Women Negotiating the Tension between Choctaw Culture and Protestantism" (*JAAR*, June 1999). Her study of the causes for the rise of violence in the Lakota Spirit Dance in "From Vision to Violence: The Wounded Knee Massacre" was published in* Millennialism, Persecution, and Violence *(Syracuse University Press, 2000). Pesantubbee has presented numerous papers at Annual Meetings of the AAR on Choctaw and Cherokee women and religious traditions, as well as on the Lakota Spirit Dance.*

Statement on the AAR

AS AAR MEMBERS anticipate their first stand-alone meeting in 2008, they will have opportunities to consider the future direction of AAR meetings. I believe AAR should continue to encourage diverse and shared intellectual dialogues among its membership. I recall my first Annual Meeting in San Francisco in 1992 and the excitement and energy of choosing among the numerous sessions. The sessions I attended were lively and powerful for someone new to the field. My own development as a scholar is due in no small part to my participation in sessions with various groups, including the Women and Religion Section, Roman Catholic Studies Section, North American Religions Section, and New Religious Movements Group. As co-chair of the Native Traditions in the Americas Group, I facilitated joint sessions with other groups including Religion, Medicine, and Healing Consultation and Law, Religion, and Culture Consultation. Joint sessions such as these offer the benefits of conversations across disciplines, as well as deeper understanding of specific traditions. Our separation into a smaller annual meeting will not only afford members the opportunity to expand existing units, but also to expand in new areas of study and to consider new initiatives for the Annual Meeting. AAR members face the challenges of interpreting and expounding on the complexities of a global society that is unavoidably drawn into religious issues that affect everyone's social, political, and economic well-being. Innovation and shared conversations are more important than ever.

I believe the separation of AAR and SBL will be a great loss to many of us who have shared research and camaraderie with SBL members. AAR members will face the challenge of finding ways to continue to benefit from intellectual conversations with scholars in SBL. Special invitations or focused sessions, as suggested by the AAR Board (see "FAQ: AAR Board Makes Historic Decision" on the AAR Web site), can provide a forum for shared scholarship with SBL members. However, I believe it is important that we continue to envision alternative ways to maintain a working relationship with members of SBL. Many of us have benefited from the theories that have developed out of feminist and indigenous concerns in SBL. Although size and diversity have necessitated the separation of the two meetings, shared interests continue to inform scholarship in religious studies and theology.

I would like to see AAR establish a more effective role in the development of the field of religious studies within institutions of higher education. By this I mean more involvement in the development of standards for teaching and scholarship that reflect the diversity of the field, including those in traditional areas and those who are exploring new and innovative methods. Our membership consists of a significant number of graduate students and junior faculty as well as senior scholars, all of whom can benefit from AAR's advocacy of diversity and innovation.

In the post-9/11 era, AAR is an invaluable academic society whose membership is immersed in scholarship that enhances understanding of and interaction with diverse cultures and religious groups around the world. I believe that AAR can be an effective institution in our search to understand the many conflicts that are having a tremendous impact on our global society. AAR is and can continue to be an effective conduit for shared conversations within and outside the field of religious studies. ❧

STOUT, from p.4

Just as we need to take proper care of our newest members, we need to recognize the significance of the contribution made by the

generation now reaching retirement age. The field as we know it was largely created by that generation. The AAR has an obligation to record the history of this crucial stage in the formation of our discipline.

It is also an apt time to reflect on how the discipline is changing in the wake of these retirements. What is happening to the national profile of the various subfields as positions are redefined, department by department? Are some species of scholarship threatened with extinction? Are important emerging interests finding their niche? To what extent is the racial and gender makeup of the average department shifting in the direction of justice? How should the major graduate programs respond to these developments? It will be hard to respond properly to the changes that are occurring if we don't figure out what those changes are.

One final point. Bureaucracies tend by nature to insulate themselves from challenge. It is therefore always appropriate to ask whether the Board of Directors and the permanent staff of a professional organization are sufficiently responsive to the concerns of the rank and file. When major decisions are to be made, members ought to be properly informed and consulted. The Board needs to conduct its deliberations on important issues against the background of an open debate involving all members who wish to be heard. The tone set by the leadership should be completely free of intimidation. ❧

CLOONEY, from p.4

uncovering bias, expanding the relevant data, and challenging every narrowly defined research agenda. As an academy, the AAR aids scholars, religious believers included, in seeing to it that the myriad ideas and practices of religion are intelligently noticed, consistently interrogated, imaginatively interconnected, and inclusively drawn into the necessary, ongoing conversations among peers young and old — even while, for many among us, that research still mirrors faith seeking understanding. So, too, as we face the urgent intellectual and social issues related to religious identity in today's world, the AAR provides a forum for inquiries that in the longer term may transform how we act.

If elected Vice President, I will do what I can, in collaboration with the other officers, the Board, the Atlanta office, and the full range of AAR members, to ensure that our conversations remain rigorous, interactive, and religiously attentive in each old and new disciplinary area, and in the environs of the Academy as a whole, as we move forward into the AAR's new century. ❧

REEL RELIGION

Please see the *Annual Meeting Program Book* or the Program Highlights page at *www.aarweb.org* for more information.

What Do You Believe? American Teenagers, Spirituality, and Freedom of Religion (A19–102)
Friday, 7:00 PM–8:30 PM
In this engaging and poignant new documentary, a religiously diverse group of teens reveals their most personal struggles and beliefs about faith, morality, suffering and death, prayer, the purpose of life, and the divine. The director will preside over the showing of this film.

The Passion of the Christ (A20–129)
Saturday, 8:30 PM–11:00 PM
This film, released amid tremendous controversy, focuses on the last 12 hours of Jesus of Nazareth's life. One might consider the fervor surrounding the making of the film as more interesting than the film itself.

Santitos (Little Saints) (A20–130)
Saturday, 8:30 PM–10:30 PM
This is a magical film from Mexico that deals with religion, love, loss, and women's lives. Faith and love prevail in this wonderful story.

Alambrista (A21–129)
Sunday, 8:30 PM–10:30 PM
Robert M. Young's critically acclaimed 1977 film depicts the harsh realities of Mexican life on both sides of the border.

Luther (A21–130)
Sunday, 8:30 PM–10:30 PM
A film about Martin Luther, the 16th-century priest who led the Christian Reformation and opened up new possibilities in the exploration of faith.

Ilha da Magia: Nature, Spirit, and Belief on Santa Catarina Island, Brazil (A22–129)
Monday, 8:30 PM–10:00 PM
This film project documents the interaction between religion and nature at a variety of sites on Santa Catarina Island in southern Brazil. Three films from the project — one in its entirety and clips from the other two — will be screened. ❧

Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop

Being a Chair in Today's Consumer Culture: Navigating in the Knowledge Factory

THE ACADEMIC RELATIONS Task Force and the Academic Relations Program are pleased to offer a Chairs Workshop during the Annual Meetings of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature in San Antonio on Friday, November 19, 2004, from 9 AM to 4 PM.

The workshop will revolve around the themes in Richard Ohmann's influential book, *Politics of Knowledge: The Commercialization of the University, the Professions, and Print Culture* (Wesleyan University Press, 2003). The day-long workshop will deal with the increasing privatization of education and the increasing corporatism of colleges and universities. The increasing commercialization of the universities challenges the relative autonomy of all academic disciplines. This commodification of knowledge, and how chairs can administer and promote their departments within this culture, will be the focus of this workshop. A complimentary copy of Ohmann's book will be sent to every workshop registrant.

This workshop will provide a day of structured discussion where chairs can exchange personal narratives and strategies for navigating the pitfalls of life as a chair. The discussion leaders are experienced chairs. The workshop is formatted as a mix of presentations and small group discussions. During lunch we will break up into groups by institutional type and discuss issues that are unique to religion departments.

Colleagues in your institution, such as chairs, other members of the faculty, faculty being developed to assume leadership responsibilities, and deans, may be interested in attending this workshop. Chairs may want to bring a team of faculty or send a designated faculty person to the workshop.

Further information on the workshop can be found at: *www.aarweb.org/department/workshops/2004SanAntonio* and in the *Annual Meeting Program Book*, page 27.

Our panelists include:

- Carol S. Anderson, Kalamazoo College
- Steve Friesen, University of Missouri, Columbia
- William K. Mahony, Davidson College
- Robert C. Neville, Boston University
- Elizabeth A. Say, California State University, Northridge
- Gerald S. Vigna, Alvernia College

Chairs from departments enrolled in the **Academic Relations Program** receive a complimentary registration. For information on enrolling your department, see: *www.aarweb.org/department*.

We look forward to seeing you in San Antonio!

The Academic Relations Task Force: Warren G. Frisina, Chair, Fred Glennon, Kathryn Kleinhans, Laurie L. Patton, Elizabeth A. Say, and Terrence W. Tilley ❧

CHAIRS WORKSHOP
ANNUAL MEETING 2004

Being a Chair in Today's Consumer Culture: Navigating in the Knowledge Factory

AN ANNUAL MEETING CHAIRS WORKSHOP

Friday, November 19, 2004, San Antonio, Texas

HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER, ROOM 212B

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

9:00	Opening remarks: The Commercialization of the University	11:00	Reporting	2:30	Reporting
		11:30–1:00	Lunch	3:00–4:00	Closing remarks: The Commodification of Knowledge
		1:00	The Privitization of Education		
10:00	Roundtable discussions: Curriculum Development and Academic Freedom	1:30	Roundtable discussions: Marketing your Department in a Corporate Environment		

TO REGISTER

Complete the information below, arrange payment, and send via fax or surface mail.

Name

Department

Institution | Serving as Chair since | Number of faculty in department

DEPARTMENT ENROLLMENT

Please provide the following information if you are not a current AAR member.
(You may check your membership information at www.aarweb.org.*)*

Fax | E-mail

Surface Mailing Address

Registration is limited to the first 75 participants.
Send your registration form and payment of $75.00 *** before October 31, 2004 ($100.00 on site).

PAYMENT INFORMATION

❒ **Check:** (payable to "AAR Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop")

❒ **Credit Card** (Check one):
❒ Visa ❒ Mastercard ❒ American Express ❒ Discover

Credit Card Number | Expiration Date (MM/YY)

CID*

Cardholder Signature

Name on Card (Please Print)

* Card Identification Number (required for Discover cards): 4 digits on front of American Express; 3 digits on back of other cards

For more information, contact Carey J. Gifford, Director of Academic Relations, at *cgifford@ aarweb.org*, or by phone at 404-727-2270.

*** **Chairs from departments enrolled in the Academic Relations Program receive a complimentary registration. For information on enrolling your department, see *www.aarweb.org/department*.**

Subscribe to *chairs@aarweb.org*, the listserv for leaders in the field, for updates to the workshop program and other news for chairs. For the most up-to-date information on the workshop, see *www.aarweb.org/department/workshops*.

Register by Fax: 404-727-7959

Register by surface mail:
Chairs Workshop
American Academy of Religion
825 Houston Mill RD NE, Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30329

Annual Meeting Focus: Latin America

Latin American Scholarship

An Interview with Sylvia Marcos, Claremont Graduate University

Sylvia Marcos researches and writes on gender issues in ancient and contemporary Mexico. She has been awarded the H. W. Luce Visiting Professorship at Union Theological Seminary, New York City. Currently she is Visiting Professor of Mesoamerican Religions and Gender in the School of Religion at Claremont Graduate University. Her academic appointments have included teaching postgraduate-level courses in psychology and sociology of religion at Harvard University.

She is a member of the editorial board of Religion, *editorial advisor for* Concilium: International Review of Theology, *and international editor for* Gender and Society. *She has served on the International Connections Committee of the American Academy of Religion and on the board of the Religious Consultation on Population, Reproductive Health, and Ethics. She is Secretary for International Affairs of the Permanent Board of Directors for the Asociación Latinoamericana para el Estudio de las Religiones (ALER).*

In Mexico, Marcos is a research associate in Religion and Society with the Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia (ENAH). She is also a founding member of the Permanent Seminar on Gender and Anthropology with the Institute for Anthropological Research at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (IIA-UNAM). At the Colegio de México she is a member of the ongoing seminar on Reproductive Health and Society. Previous academic positions include professor of social and of sexual psychology at the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Centro de Derechos Humanos Don Sergio for indigenous women's rights.

RSN: Tell us something about the Latin American Association for the Study of Religions (ALER).

Marcos: The Asociacion Latinoamericana para el Estudio de las Religiones is interested in fostering interchange among scholars of religious studies on and in Latin America. Our main focus is the religious configurations as they emerge and are reconstructed by the influences proper to the different Latin American contexts.

We are committed to interdiciplinary research. ALER fosters studies encompassing existing perspectives and methodologies: historical, ethnological, psychological, sociological, theological, and hermeneutical. We also encourage the work of recent and nonestablished scholarship, inviting participation from graduate students. Finally, there is a special category of speakers included in our congresses: "actores" — the social actors we call them. Speakers from a faith-based perspective are fruitfully mingled in our programs with rigorous academic scholarship.

We are also reaching out to the work done by Latina/o Hispanic scholars. As secretary for International Relations at ALER, I am very interested in connecting with all the fine work done by AAR's groups on Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean, and on Indigenous peoples, as well as by others whose interests intersect with ours.

RSN: We understand that you recently spent a semester as the first Visiting International Scholar in the Theological School at Drew University, under the sponsorship of the Hispanic Institute of Theology. Can you tell us about this experience?

Marcos: It was quite an extraordinary experience. The seminar is relatively small in number but great in quality. Several of the professors were known to me. I had read the works of some of them, like Catherine Keller, Virginia Burrus, and S. Moore. I had shared academic spaces with some others, like Otto Maduro (who worked out the invitation for me with the support of Dean Maxine Beach), Karen Brown, and Ada Isasi Diaz. It was also extraordinary that I could really engage in conversations and dialogues with all of them. You know how scholars' time is generally so scarce! I had the chance of being so welcome that almost everyone went out of their way to have time for these academic encounters.

I also had the fortune of meeting other faculty I had not known previously who were equally interesting and stimulating intellectually. Among them were Traci West, S. W. Ariaraja, L. D. Kearns, and especially David Graybeal. The students were very committed and focused on their doctoral work so it was a pleasure teaching them. Since my themes of gender and religion in Mesoamerica are apparently removed from their daily academic-religious life in the U.S., their unrelenting interest deserves a special mention.

By the end of the semester, when I delivered the annual Hispanic/Latino/a Theology and Religion Lecture, I had the satisfaction that all the gifted, interesting, and rigorous scholars at Drew commented on my work.

RSN: Can you tell us about your work at Claremont Graduate University as a visiting professor, especially your course "Gender and Religion in Mesoamerica"?

Marcos: At Claremont I have been teaching a semester once every year or two since 1996. It feels like returning home. I have followed post-graduate students through their dissertations and exams, and have felt much a part of the permanent faculty. Karen Torjesen, dean of the School of Religion, is a kind of visionary. Back in 1995, she understood that my issues were a promising and much-needed perspective for religious studies. As a specialist in early Christianity, she — and other faculty with the same expertise — has also been a resource for my own growth and learning on early Christian thought. I have been especially fascinated by discovering the phenomenal women that, previous to recent feminist scholarship, had been hidden from history.

The students are also a very special lot. In the Women and Religion Program, there are frequently mature women who have had a previous successful career in the arts, and other academic fields, who are very interested in the issues. It is quite a challenge to bring all that diversity home to my "Gender in Mesoamerican Religions." The intensive seminar I teach in the spring is usually followed by a field trip to Mexico to foster experiences with some of the issues that I discussed academically. Practice and experience thus fuse with intellectual knowledge.

RSN: Your last book in Spanish is the third volume of the *Enciclopedia Iberoamericana de Religiones*, *Religión y Genero* (Editorial Trotta, 2004). Can you tell us about the themes that run throughout these essays? And about your previous book *Chiapas el Factor Religioso*?

See **MARCOS** p.18

The Study of Religion in Latin America Today

Nelson Maldonado-Torres, University of California, Berkeley

DURING JULY 5–9, 2004, more than 300 scholars from 18 different countries participated in the X Congress of Religion and Ethnicity in San Cristóbal de las Casas, México. The Congress of Religion and Ethnicity is organized by the Latin American Association for the Study of Religion (ALER, in Spanish), founded in 1987. During approximately the same dates, there was an encounter on intercultural feminist theology in Mexico City. Participants included Latin American and Latina/o theologians from the United States. It was organized by the Center for the Study of Latina/o Catholicism at the University of San Diego, and Missio Institute in Aachen, Germany. In the X Congress of Religion and Ethnicity, there were announcements of other conferences and meetings dedicated to the scholarly study of religion in the following months. And of course, many were already waiting for the meeting of the Association of Social Scientists of Religion in South America, which meets as an association approximately every two years, just like ALER. In the spirit of cooperation and collegiality, the associations meet in alternate years. Between one year and the other, there are symposia, journal publications, newsletters, and workshops organized by the two associations, and by the universities, colleges, and research institutes in which many of the members teach and do research. The scholarly study of religion in Latin America today is exciting and vibrant. In the last 15 years, Latin America has gradually become a site of academic, interreligious, and intercontinental dialogue about religion.

In addition to ALER and the Association of Social Scientists of Religion, there are important centers and institutes for the study of religion and journals in Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, Costa Rica, Colombia, and many other countries. The vibrancy of the study of religion in Latin America is evinced not only in the increasing publication of books on themes such as religion and globalization, postmodernity, Pentecostalism, popular religion, New Age, religion and ethnicity, and gender and family, among others, [see the newsletter of the Asociación de Cientistas Sociales de la Religión for reviews and a

See **MALDONADO-TORRES** p.26

Latin American Sessions

LATIN AMERICAN Scholars and Scholarship is the international focus of the 2004 AAR Annual Meeting. Listed below are some sessions with such a focus:

San Antonio Ritual Drama and Dance: Hispanic Roots and Contemporary Flowering (A20–53)

Spiritual Practice in Latino/a Art and Devotion (A20–60)

Looking for Justice in Latin America: Balancing the Demands of Justice and Peace (A20–75)

Latinas' Experiences and Lives in Literature and Theology: A Reading by Sandra Cisneros (A20–100)

Alambrista (A20–130)

Mujerista Theology, A Theology of Struggle and Liberation: The Work of Ada María Isasi-Díaz (A21–20)

Nos Iriamos o Nos Quedariamos: The Ethics of Border Crossings and Global Trade (A21–75)

Beyond the Borders: Religion and Ecology in Latin America (A21–68)

Transmodern Dialogues: A Panel in Celebration of Enrique Dussel's 70th Birthday (A21–69)

Latin American Liberation Theology: The Next Generation (A21–119)

Santitos (*Little Saints*) (A21–129)

Latino/a Religiosity: Public Ritual and American Catholicism (A22–22)

Gender and Geography in the Study of Indigenous Mexico and the Southwest United States (A22–24)

Latino Studies and Wesleyan Studies (A22–27)

Latin American Discourse: Contributions to the Study of Religion (A22–50)

Evangelicalism in Latino/a and Latin American Communities (A22–64)

Ekklesia and/as Koinonia: The Ecclesiological Influence of Latin American Theologies in North America (A22–114)

Reinventing America at the Borders (A22–117)

A God of Incredible Surprises (A22–127)

Ilha da Magia: Nature, Spirit, and Belief on Santa Catarina Island, Brazil (A22–128) ❧

Where to Eat in San Antonio

Eating

Pico de Gallo

111 S. Leona ST

Downtown San Antonio politicos and legal eagles prefer this bright, festive, and highly promoted restaurant, one of the few in central downtown that locals frequent. Pico is the place to go for cabrito (roast baby goat), a true Mexican specialty. You can't find a bad meal here.

Las Canarias

112 College ST

Hinting at San Antonio's Canary Island heritage, Las Canarias offers a variety of dishes in the Southwest style. Lobster with blue crab, sweet potato hash, and Scotch bonnet aioli hint at the exotic unions Chef Scott Cohen executes. A salad of organic greens mixed with blue cheese, lemon-basil dressing, pear tomatoes, smoked bacon, and garlic results in sweet and tart, creamy and crunchy taste combinations. The anise-spiced barbecue duck on flash-seared vegetables, served with sun-dried cranberry sauce and flour tortillas, tastes as good as it sounds strange.

The Fig Tree

515 Villita ST

Located in a bustling part of the Riverwalk, the relaxing Fig Tree is a treat. The dining area is split between a Victorian-style interior and a multilevel villa-style outdoor terrace. Chef Stephen Paprocki serves up an impressive array of delicate, highly composed dishes. The lobster bisque is rich, sweet, and subtle. Kobe beef carpaccio with truffles is a decadent treat. Menu highlights include traditional chateaubriand and beef Wellington.

The Guenther House

205 E. Guenther ST

History buffs are in for a treat; this building dates back one and one-half centuries. The food is prepared fresh daily. The taco soup isn't too spicy, and boasts plenty of vegetables with chips. The biscuits are light, not too doughy. The beef stew is thick and heavenly. The most popular dishes are champagne chicken enchiladas with tossed salad and the chicken salad plate with seasonal fruit. Portions are generous, especially the delicious pastries. The pecan spicy bun could feed two.

Dolores del Rio Ristorante

106 River Walk ST

A low, wood-beamed ceiling, heavy stone walls, and closely set tables do nothing to diminish the blithe atmosphere; in fact, the coziness makes the experience warmer and more convivial than anything else the Riverwalk has to offer. Dolores has an ardent love affair with garlic, so expect a heady dining experience. The roasted anchovies and sauteed mushrooms are delicious starters. For something different, try the bouillabaisse-style fresh seafood soup.

Lulu's Jailhouse Cafe

1126 W. Commerce ST

Have you ever seen a 3 $^1/_2$-pound cinnamon roll? What else would be a suitable dessert for a 1 $^1/_2$-pound chicken-fried steak? Lulu's Jailhouse Cafe, whose motto is "Never trust a skinny cook," serves up massive portions of some of the finest Texas-style food available in San Antonio. Chicken-fried chicken, chicken-fried steak, and award-winning redneck enchiladas are some of the famed dishes that keep regulars coming back. And even though Lulu's promises "There won't be an alfalfa sprout in sight," its large selection of salads and vegetarian meals is fresh, flavorful, and generous.

Hanatei

101 Bowie ST

Set in the Marriott Rivercenter's second-floor atrium, this cafe is intimate but modern. The maki, sushi, and sashimi served here by swift, efficient hands are delicately prepared and noticeably fresh. The array of colorful dishes focuses on seafood and vegetables. Anago (sea eel) and sake (salmon) sushi are well-proportioned and precise. Dinosaur maki, a combination of fresh fish served raw with fried soft-shell crab, and green tea ice cream are also recommended.

Drinking

The Davenport

200 E. Houston ST

The eight-page drink menu offers the first hint that tippling is serious business here. If the Flirtini originally created for Sarah Jessica Parker doesn't interest you, how about a Green Monkey Butt made with vodka and melon liqueur?

Swig

111 W. Crockett ST

You won't go thirsty or cigar-less at this lounge that features an awesome array of martinis and the largest humidor on the Riverwalk. The house drink is the Swig (Absolut vodka infused with seasonal fruit, shaken over ice, and served straight up). Favorites include the Goldfinger (Gordon's gin and Noilly Prat vermouth garnished with bocconcini and marinated olives, not stirred) and the St. Valentine (Absolut Peppar and the bar's Bloody Mary mix garnished with anchovy olives).

Club Cohiba

1015 Navarro ST

Most people are attracted by this club's intimate setting. The soft, piped-in jazz allows conversation at a reasonable decibel level. As for drinks, the bar is known for its chocolate martinis, mojitos, and an impressive selection of single-malt scotches. If you're hungry, the kitchen dishes up an array of tasty tapas, including garlic shrimp, beef chimichurri, and empanadas.

Joey's

2417 N. Saint Mary's ST

With 15 beers on tap, 50 bottled beers, and a full bar, drinkers have an abundance of options. It's a simple but reliable plan: reasonably priced drinks, better-than-average pub grub, plenty of pool tables, and friendly service. ❧

Things to Do in San Antonio

THE ALAMO may be the first thing people envision when thinking about San Antonio, but there is much more to this city. Take some time out from the Annual Meeting to visit some of these attractions.

Museums and art galleries make thought-provoking destinations in San Antonio. During the month of November, the San Antonio Museum of Art will be featuring an exhibition titled "Visions of a Vanishing Culture: Edward S. Curtis; The North American Indian, 1900–1930." The University of Texas Institute of Texan Culture is a museum dedicated to enhancing the understanding of cultural history, science, and technology, and their influence upon the people of Texas. During the Annual Meeting, two exhibits will be on offer: "Creation and Cosmos," focusing on the spirituality of the local Native Americans, and "El Día de los Muertos," about the traditions behind the Day of the Dead celebrations.

Other opportunities to learn about Día de los Muertos can be found throughout the city during the month of November. Altars, flowers, arts, poetry, and music are all part of this celebration. Observed on November 2, with exhibits and events continuing throughout the month, Día de los Muertos is a colorful flurry of traditional and contemporary festivities that celebrates ancestral remembrance and harvest season rituals from Central Mexico's indigenous cultures. Organized since 1978 by Centro Cultural Aztlan, with altars and exhibits on display all over the city, Día de los Muertos is a mainstay of San Antonio's folklore and cultural heritage.

Shopping is a favorite pastime in San Antonio. From the small boutique stores lining the Riverwalk to the Riverwalk Mall, connected to the Marriott Rivercenter Hotel, there are plenty of treasures to discover. The Riverwalk is by far the most popular shopping destination for visitors to San Antonio. Take a river taxi ride while you shop! The Alamo Plaza area is a pleasant place to shop as well — all within view of the historic Alamo. For one-of-a-kind items, visit the art galleries in La Villita or Artisan's Alley. Visit the Market, otherwise known as El Mercado, for further shopping opportunities. ❧

San Antonio Museum of Art
200 W. Jones AVE
www.sa-museum.org

Institute of Texan Culture
801 S. Bowie ST
www.texancultures.utsa.edu/public/

Centro Cultural Aztlan
www.sacalaveras.com/

Artisan's Alley
555 W. Bitters RD
www.artisansalley.com

El Mercado
514 W. Commerce ST
www.tavernini.com/mercado/

La Villita
418 La Villita
www.lavillita.com

Annual Meeting Performances and Exhibitions

The AAR is pleased to present the following performances and exhibitions during this year's Annual Meeting:

The Holy Artwork (A20–6)

German video-artist Christian Jankowski approaches a religious leader in the San Antonio area and poses the ultimate question: What makes a work of art holy? The video piece is formed by the ensuing dialogue between artist and minister, each bringing their expertise and experience to the conversation. Leaving room for poetics, humor, irony, and sincerity, the work addresses questions of spirituality and the divine. What may seem an unlikely topic for contemporary art in the 21st century generates a larger narrative about artistic inspiration and transformation.

Videotaped in the format of an evangelical television program, *The Holy Artwork* evokes the legacy of religious art while presenting a contemporary take on the religiosity of art (or perhaps the art of religiosity) in today's society.

SAVAE (San Antonio Vocal Arts Ensemble) and Mexican Folklorico Dance Performance (A21–132)

Efforts to recover the devotional music of the ancient Middle East have had several ground-breaking proponents, such as A. Z. Idelsohn and Suzanne Haik-Ventoura. Now to these we add Christopher Moroney and SAVAE. With "Ancient Echoes," Moroney and SAVAE attempt to recreate music of the Judeo-Christian-Muslim Mediterranean world. The texts that SAVAE sings come from the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Torah, the Peshitta, and the Qur'an — sung in ancient dialects of Hebrew, Arabic, and Aramaic. SAVAE also accompanies itself on reproductions of ancient instruments. Angela Mariani, producer of the nationally syndicated radio program Harmonia said, "In 'Ancient Echoes' we find one of those rare instances in which scholarly research, abundant creativity, and a high level of musicianship have been combined to create an important work of historical interest, sheer musical beauty, and great spiritual depth."

Mexican Folklorico Liturgical Dance

Mexican folklorico dance flourishes in San Antonio where the majority population is Hispanic. Examples of folklorico liturgical dance will be given with some explanations of how local Christian worship has been enriched by these traditions for over 25 years. There will also be examples of different dances peculiar to states of Mexico. ❧

Regional Meetings and Calls for Papers

Eastern International

Eastern International Regional Meeting
May 6–7, 2005
McGill University
Montreal, Canada

The Faculty of Religious Studies at McGill University announces the regional AAR-EIR conference May 6–7, 2005. The theme for this year's meeting is "Story, Myth, Ritual, and Art." Although the sessions are soliciting papers on this broad topic, we are also open to other topics. We are also interested in panels combining activism or performative dimensions with scholarly inquiry. Furthermore, we encourage interdisciplinary panels that maintain religion as a central theme. Scholars from any region may apply to participate. Please note that proposals, papers, and presentations may be given in either French or English.

Papers and panels are being solicited on the following issues:

- Religion and storytelling: the stories we tell and how we tell them.
- Critical analysis of religions and religious studies through story, myth, ritual, and art.
- Religious studies from across the disciplines that involve story, myth, ritual, and art. For example, comparative studies, ethics, history, theology, philosophy of religion, critical theory, social sciences, as well as the scholarship of teaching religion.

Abstracts

You must submit an abstract (maximum 150 words) of your proposed presentation in electronic format. Even if you are submitting your proposal via surface mail or fax, you must also send one copy of your abstract electronically in addition to the print copies. If possible, send the abstract in the body of an e-mail with the subject heading "Abstract for [supply your name]." Barring the body of the e-mail, you may also send it virus-free on disk, or via e-mail as an attachment in WordPerfect, MSWord, RTF, PDF, or ASCII text format. The abstract should have the exact same title as your paper, followed by your name and then the name of your institution. Also include, separately from the body of the abstract, four words describing the key themes and/or subject areas to which the proposal applies.

Prearranged Session [i.e., Panel] Proposals

A prearranged session may be submitted in its entirety, complete with a presider, respondent, and participants. Special considerations go into the submission of such a session. The coordinator of a prearranged session must submit a proposal that lists all the participants (presider, participants, and respondent [if desired]). Submissions for a prearranged session should include a single proposal detailing the focus of the session, one abstract explaining the whole session, and each presenter's original abstract. The organizers may accept the proposal in whole or in part.

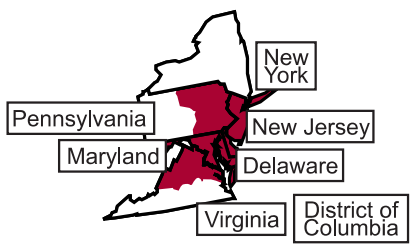
Student Paper Competition

Undergraduate and graduate students residing in the EIR region are invited to enter the student paper competitions. Please note that to be eligible for submission, the student *must* reside in the Eastern International Region. Furthermore, the paper must be accepted for reading in the conference to be eligible for the competition and must be presented at the conference by the student. The committee will give preference to work that is new at this conference. Two $100 awards are reserved for winning papers (although in some cases the committee can decide to award up to three). The awards will be formally presented at the business meeting on Saturday, May 1, during lunch, and all attendees who entered the competition are encouraged to attend the awards luncheon. To enter the competition, please send a letter of intent, along with the essay being presented, a full CV of the author, and four copies of the essay. We ask that submissions to this contest not be submitted by e-mail, but through regular mail to the address listed below.

NOTE: All presenters at the Spring 2005 regional conference must have active membership in the AAR. *All* participants must preregister for the conference. Deadline for conference registration is April 1, 2005.

Deadline for Proposals:

Deadline for paper and panel proposals is **December 15, 2004**, with notification of acceptance by late January. A complete proposal should include the names, addresses, and current CV's or resumes of all proposed participants, and a description of the proposed paper or panel, complete with working titles for all talks. Send all necessary information (if sending hard copy) to: Nathan R. B. Loewen, Faculty of Religious Studies, 3520 University ST, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2L 3L5. Electronic submissions for panel proposals (but *not* student paper competitions) are preferred. Please send *all* electronic submissions to Nathan R. B. Loewen, at *nathan.loewen@mail.mcgill.ca.* ❧



Mid-Atlantic

Mid-Atlantic Regional Meeting
(AAR/SBL)
March 3–4, 2005
Hyatt Regency
New Brunswick, New Jersey

We invite you to submit proposals for the 2005 AAR Mid-Atlantic Regional Meeting on March 3 and 4. Our location this year is the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Brunswick. We will jointly host this meeting with the regional SBL. We welcome your proposals for individual papers, panels, workshops, or other presentations. While open to solid proposals in any area, our planned MAR-AAR sections are: Academic Study of Religion; African Religions; African-American Religious Studies; Appropriation of Sacred Texts; Comparative and Historical Studies in Religion; Gay and Lesbian Studies in Religion; History of Christianity; Islamic Studies; Jewish-Christian Dialogue; Judaica; Latino/Latina Studies in Religion; Philosophy of Religion; Religion and Psychology; Religion and the Arts; Religion in America; Religion and Spirituality; Religions of Asia; Religious Ethics; Social Scientific Study of Religion; Theology; and Women and Religion.

Please e-mail your proposal as an attachment to Dr. Frank Connolly-Weinert at *fdcw@aol.com*. The deadline for proposals is **November 1, 2004**. All proposals should include full name, title, institution, phone number, fax number, e-mail, and mailing address. For individual papers we require an abstract (500 words) describing your projected work. If you have not presented a paper before a learned society, you must send your entire paper in advance by November 1, 2004. In your cover letter please add any other information that may help us weigh your submission. Proposals for panels should include abstracts and contact information for each individual participant. Proposals for an entire session should also list the name of the designated session head and individual participants. Ordinarily we expect presenters to supply their own audiovisual equipment, however we will consider requests for extraordinary a/v support on a case-by-case basis.

All presenters must preregister for the conference in order to appear in the program book. Please mail your preregistration form to Dr. Frank Connolly-Weinert, Department of Theology and Religious Studies, St. John's University, Jamaica, NY 11432, USA; 718-380-5723/-7143; Fax: 718-990-1907. Please note that we have negotiated a special AAR hotel room rate. You must make your reservations by February 15, 2005, to obtain this discounted rate, no exceptions! Please call the Hyatt Regency at 732-873-1234 to make your reservations as soon as possible.

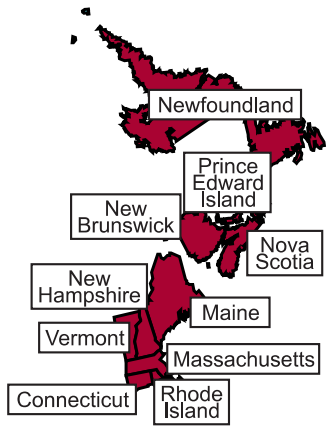
The MAR-AAR will once again award $200 to the most innovative proposal for a group session (or panel) dealing with peace issues or women's studies; the deadline for submission is November 1, 2004. To help foster graduate student participation, the Executive Committee of the MAR-AAR will again award the Robert F. Streetman Prize of $100 for the best student paper presented by an AAR regional member. Those interested in the Streetman prize should submit their full paper by November 1, 2004, and indicate they are submitting the paper for prize consideration.

Thanks for your interest in the Mid-Atlantic AAR and SBL annual meeting. We look forward to your participation in 2005! ❧

Midwest

Midwest Regional Meeting
April 8–9, 2005
DePaul Center
Chicago, Illinois

The 2005 theme "Religion in the Public Sphere" is intended to solicit papers and panels exploring the varied intersections between religion and public life, largely but not exclusively in North America. Papers/panels on other topics are also invited. The title of each proposed paper/panel, an abstract of not more than 250 words, and names and affiliations of presenters/panelists should be sent to the appropriate section chair (available on our Web page, *www.albion.edu/midwest-aar*). Proposals that do not fit under a current section should be sent to the program chair for possible inclusion in a special section(s). Submissions should be made as early as possible, but no later than **December 15, 2004**. Younger scholars and graduate students are especially encouraged to submit proposals and participate in the conference. Senior scholars are encouraged to serve as respondents or presiders for sections and panels. ❧



New England–Maritimes

The current members of the Regional Board of the New England-Maritimes Region of the AAR (NEMAAR) have reviewed the feedback to the regional survey conducted earlier this year. We have extrapolated projects that seem to be the areas of greatest interest to our members, and will base our work for the coming year on providing support for related member efforts in the region.

1. Co-Sponsoring Conferences: Instead of organizing an annual regional meeting, NEMAAR will function as a co-sponsor of conferences proposed by members around the region. NEMAAR's contribution will involve a) assistance in developing AAR regional grants to help with funding of such conferences; b) NEMAAR grants of up to $500 to help support conference-related costs; c) assistance with resources to facilitate conference planning, including best-practice planning schedules, and access to regional e-mailings to publicize the event; and d) inclusion in the regional Web site calendar. Proposals should

See **CALL FOR PAPERS** p.28

Book Awards

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY of Religion offers Awards for Excellence in order to recognize new scholarly publications that make significant contributions to the study of religion. These awards honor works of distinctive originality, intelligence, creativity, and importance — books that have a decisive effect on how religion is examined, understood, and interpreted.

Awards for Excellence are given in three categories (Analytical–Descriptive, Constructive–Reflective Studies, and Historical Studies). Not all awards are given every year. In addition, there is a separate competition and prize for the Best First Book in the History of Religions. For eligibility requirements, awards processes, and a list of current jurors, please see the Book Awards rules on the AAR Web page, *www.aarweb.org/awards/bookrules.asp*.

The AAR is pleased to announce this year's recipients of the Awards for Excellence in Religion and the Best First Book in the History of Religions:

Analytical–Descriptive

David H. Brown, Smithsonian Institute, *Santería Enthroned: Art, Ritual, and Innovation in an Afro-Cuban Religion*, University of Chicago Press, 2003

Constructive–Reflective

Jeffrey Stout, Princeton University, *Democracy and Tradition*, Princeton University Press, 2004

Historical

Alan Bray, *The Friend*, University of Chicago Press, 2003

Best First Book in the History of Religions

Edward Slingerland, University of Southern California, *Effortless Action: Wu-wei Conceptual Metaphor and Spiritual Ideal of Early China*, Oxford University Press, 2003. ❧

The Committee on Teaching and Learning seeks nominations for the 2005 AAR Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Nominations of winners of campus awards, or any other awards, are encouraged.

Procedures for the nomination process are outlined on the AAR Web site at *www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching.asp.*

Excellence in Teaching Award

TIMOTHY RENICK will receive the Excellence in Teaching Award at the 2004 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. Renick teaches at Georgia State University, where he offers courses in contemporary religious thought; religion and ethics; philosophy of religion; war, peace, and violence; and various special topics. As the first appointment in Religious Studies at Georgia State, he helped develop a thriving program that now offers both BA and MA degrees and includes some 80 undergraduate majors. Professor Renick is lauded by his colleagues for his tireless dedication to his students, perhaps most evident in his frequent supervision of independent studies, honors theses, and Master's theses; his ability "to speak eloquently to all the students in his classes — black and white, rich and poor, motivated and unmotivated"; and his ability to provide insightful and helpful responses to student writing. One colleague enthusiastically commends him as a "model for education in Religious Studies."

Students have praised the "uncommon clarity" of Renick's lectures, "the quality of his feedback on written work," and his dedication to students outside the classroom. They have consistently rated his teaching as outstanding. Among other honors, Professor Renick has received the Outstanding University Teacher Award for the State of Georgia in 2002, the Blue Key National Honor Society Outstanding Teacher Award and the Distinguished Honors Professor Award from Georgia State University in 1995, and the Georgia State University College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teacher Award in 1991.

Professor Renick has extended his teaching outside the classroom by organizing a course in the comparative study of world religions for Atlanta senior citizens and by making numerous public presentations on topics such as religion and war, abortion, cloning, and the Bible and homosexuality. He has also published *Aquinas for Armchair Theologians*.

At this year's Annual Meeting, for the first time, participants will have the opportunity to engage in conversation with the Excellence in Teaching Award–winner during a special session, scheduled for Saturday afternoon from 1:00–3:30 PM. The session is sponsored by the Committee on Teaching and Learning, and will be chaired by Eugene V. Gallagher. Prior to the Annual Meeting, Professor Renick will post some of his teaching materials on the Web site of the AAR's Virtual Teaching and Learning Center (*www.aarweb.org/profession/vtlc/default.asp*), and they will serve as the basis for Saturday's session.

Professor Renick is an outstanding example of dedication to the craft of teaching, both within the classroom and beyond it. Along with the previous winners of the AAR Excellence in Teaching Award — Tina Pippin, Eugene V. Gallagher, William Placher, and Janet Walton — he clearly demonstrates the creative and deeply engaged teaching found among so many members of the Academy. The Committee on Teaching and Learning has been impressed by the strong candidates who submitted materials for consideration and the commitment and energy that these candidates devote to teaching about religion.

The Committee on Teaching and Learning encourages chairs and colleagues to send letters of nomination for this significant award to Carey J. Gifford, Director of Academic Relations at the American Academy of Religion, *cgifford@aarweb.org*. The guidelines for this award are on the AAR Web site at *www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching.asp*. ❧

Huston Smith, 2004 Recipient of the Martin E. Marty Award

DURING THE 2004 Annual Meeting, the Committee on the Public Understanding of Religion will honor Huston Smith at the Marty Forum. Diane Connolly, former religion editor of the *Dallas Morning News*, will interview Smith and ask him to reflect on his contributions to the understanding of world religions. Questions from the audience will be welcome.

Huston Smith is Thomas J. Watson Professor of Religion and Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Philosophy emeritus at Syracuse University. He has also taught at Washington University in St. Louis and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His most recent teaching has been as Visiting Professor of Religious Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Smith is the author of over 70 articles in professional and popular journals, and his book *The World's Religions,* formerly *The Religions of Man*, (Harper San Francisco, 1958, rev. 1991) has sold several million copies and has been the most widely used textbook for courses in world religions for many years. In 1996 Bill Moyers devoted a five-part PBS special, "The Wisdom of Faith with Huston Smith," to his life and work.

Given annually since 1996, the Martin E. Marty Award recognizes extraordinary contributions to the public understanding of religion. The award goes to those whose work has a relevance and eloquence that speaks not just to scholars, but more broadly to the public as well. The first recipient was Martin Marty himself; since then, awardees have included Robert Wuthnow (2003), Diana Eck (2002), David Knipe (2001), and Eileen V. Barker (2000). The contribution can be through any medium (e.g., books, film, TV, public speaking), so long as it is based on scholarship in religion.

The CPUR enthusiastically solicits nominations from the membership for future recipients. Nominees need not be AAR members or academics. Nominations are reviewed by the AAR Committee on the Public Understanding of Religion. You will find a nomination form on the AAR Web site at *www.aarweb.org/awards/marty.asp.* ❧

JAAR Focus Issue Call for Papers

Religion and Secrecy: Political, Cultural, and Theological Issues

HISTORICALLY and at present, religious secrecy has simultaneously captivated and threatened religions and the cultures and states they inhabit. *The Journal of the American Academy of Religion* seeks papers on all aspects of religion and secrecy for a focus issue to be published in 2006. Some questions that might be considered are the following: How do all these complementary and conflicting tendencies intersect and affect both religions and the study of religions? How do states manage their interest in the "secrets" of religions? How do religions reconcile conflicting tendencies toward secrecy and publicity or transparency? How is the connection between religion and secrecy represented and confronted culturally? Furthermore, what responsibility do scholars have for protecting the privacy of religious groups we study while accurately illuminating the phenomena and trends we seek to address?

The papers chosen for this issue will discuss these and other issues related to the nature of secrecy in religions the world over, using diverse methodological approaches, and addressing the topic from theoretical and/or empirical perspectives.

Papers should be 6,000-8,000 words in length and should be received at the below address no later than Monday, March 15, 2005. Submissions should include three hard copies of the manuscript along with a copy on disc (using a standard word-processing program in either PC or Mac format). An abstract of not more than 150 words should accompany each manuscript. Please provide full contact information, including e-mail, with the submission. All manuscripts accepted are subject to editorial modification.

Please direct submissions to: Charles T. Mathewes, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Department of Religious Studies, University of Virginia, P.O. Box 400126, Charlottesville, VA 22904-4126, USA. ❧

AAR Honors Journalists for Best In-depth Reporting

LAURIE GOODSTEIN of the *New York Times*, John Dart of *Christian Century*, and Douglas Todd of the *Vancouver Sun* have won the 2004 American Academy of Religion awards for Best In-Depth Reporting on Religion.

Goodstein won the contest for journalists at news outlets with more than 100,000 circulation; Dart won for journalists at news outlets with less than 100,000 circulation; and Todd won for opinion writing.

Fifty-nine journalists entered the contest, the most in its five-year history. The awards recognize "well-researched newswriting that enhances the public understanding of religion," said Barbara DeConcini, AAR Executive Director.

Goodstein submitted articles on evangelical Christians in Ohio seeking to convert Muslims; the pervasiveness of the Catholic Church crisis; the selection of a gay Episcopalian bishop in New Hampshire and ramifications upon membership; and the movie *The Passion of the Christ.*

The judges said Goodstein's articles show exceptional intellectual sophistication. This was "great news reporting, including possibly the most comprehensive piece written on the Catholic clergy scandal," one wrote. "The Catholic abuse article was especially noteworthy for its effort to interpret statistical data for a general audience," another judge said.

Dart submitted stories on faith in the movies; interfaith efforts to send relief packages to Iraq; the question of who belongs in Jesus's family; how stress is a leading cause for pastors' leaving congregations; and the struggle of progressive Muslims.

The judges said his articles covered broad topics and were exceptional in using scholarly sources. "The writer offers provocative topics but makes them easy and accessible to the common reader," a judge wrote. Dart's stories, another said, show "how different forces combine — film and faith, Mormons and Evangelicals, and Jesus and genealogy."

Todd is the first Canadian journalist to top an AAR newswriting contest. (Last year, Sharon Boase of the *Hamilton Spectator* placed second.) Todd submitted stories from a series "God in the Marketplace: Religion in the Public Square" and a column based on his experience visiting religious communes in Canada. In his marketplace series, Todd explores ways to integrate religion, spirituality, and ethics into public life.

One judge said Todd's articles "display unusual intellectual breadth. While on the surface the articles appear to deal with the same subject, they expose within it an astonishing degree of diversity." Another wrote that Todd's reporting used a framework that "provides the publication with the chance to explore topics that are hard to get at in a meaningful way in a secular publication."

In writing for media outlets with more than 100,000 circulation, G. Jeffrey MacDonald of Religion News Service placed second for the second consecutive year. The judges were impressed with his skill in writing about a variety of subjects. "The writing was clean and concise," one said. "The story on death and memorials made me see monuments in a new light. And [while] it's hard to imagine an editor getting excited about the 300th birthday of a Puritan preacher, the story was enjoyable and informative."

Third place in writing for media outlets with more than 100,000 circulation went to Ron Grossman of the *Chicago Tribune*. Judges said his articles avoided being predicable and were well-written. "The stories in this package move up and down the ladder of abstraction, from the tale of a small-town police chaplain/preacher to demystifying Opus Dei to heresy," one judge wrote.

Second place in writing for media outlets with less than 100,000 circulation was awarded to Julie Marshall of the *Daily Camera* in Boulder, Colorado. Last year, Marshall placed third. The judges said her work was informative and engaging. "A lot of reporters wrote about the theology of *The Matrix*. This writer did it well," one said.

Third place for writing in media outlets with less than 100,000 circulation was awarded to Jane Lampman of the *Christian Science Monitor*. Lampman also placed third two years ago. Judges said she presented a sensitive exploration of moral dilemmas. The stories gave "big-picture views of important issues dominating the news — marriage, fear, and President Bush's crusade speech," one judge wrote. "These stories that spin off news events are difficult to do. This writer succeeded."

Steven Waldman of Beliefnet placed second in the opinion-writing contest. Waldman's writings, one judge said, were "lucid explorations of high-profile religious topics." Another said Waldman wrote with a "clear, solid voice, but he doesn't rely on just that. He does some good reporting to inform and support his opinion."

Bill Tammeus of the *Kansas City Star* placed third in the opinion-writing category. Since the beginning of the AAR contests in 2000, Tammeus has consistently placed in the top three in this category; he won it two years ago. The judges said Tammeus has strong views, but supports with "argument, rather than mere assertion." One judge said, "The columns work because they are written with authority, yet manage to ask a few questions along the way."

In each contest, the prize for first place is $500. Each contestant submitted five articles published in North America during 2003. Names of contestants and their news outlets were removed from submissions prior to judging.

The judges were Kelly McBride, an ethics faculty member at the Poynter Institute and a former religion reporter; Mark Silk, the founding director of the Leonard E. Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life at Trinity College and a former journalist; and Michael Barkun, a political science professor at Syracuse University and a member of the AAR's Committee for the Public Understanding of Religion. ❧

Read the award-winning articles at:
www.aarweb.org/awards/journalism/

Letter to the Editor

A Response to Stark

Daniel Martin Varisco, Chair of the Department of Anthropology, Hofstra University

Editor's Note:

This article is in response to an article published in the March 2004 issue of RSN, *"Why Gods Should Matter in Social Science," by Rodney Stark of the University of Washington.*

"So then, let us finally be done with the claim that religion is all about ritual. Gods are the fundamental features of religions." — Rodney Stark (*AAR Religious Studies News*, March 2004)

As an anthropologist who studies religions across cultures, I could not agree more with Rodney Stark's passionate call to be done with the reductionist claim that "religion is all about ritual." Most of my anthropologically inclined intellectual forebears, ritually misread by Rodney Stark in his essay, would concur. Certainly Lévi-Strauss cannot be criticized for privileging ritual actions over symbolic classification through beliefs in myth. Evans-Pritchard demonstrated the unifying symbolism of Kwoth ("Spirit") as a model for social organization among the Nuer of Sudan. In a widely read ethnography, Victor Turner showed that symbolism among the Ndembu of Zambia shaped morality in a matrilineal society. Nor is "ritual" a belief-defying reduction of religion in the eloquent summary of the issue by Roy Rappaport in his *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (Cambridge, 1999). The choice is not between ritual and belief, for one is meaningless without the other in any religion.

I hope social science is not to be seduced back into the theologically bottomless pit where belief is only about Gods. If Gods are once again to be fundamental to defining religion, what happens to the science that emerged through our collective social science after Robertson Smith, Tylor, and Durkheim? If Stark's goal is to theoretically stretch the meaning of "Gods" to represent any kind of superhuman or supernatural object of belief, this is the norm of much writing across disciplines. But if belief in God or Gods (the kind of belief Stark cites elsewhere as proof that the secularization thesis is dead) is promoted as a necessary marker of morality, then we are engaged in sociotheology, not science. Social scientists, like other scientists, have not banished belief from academic study; they have quite rightly redefined Stark's Gods to escape the subjective blinders of a theology that demands theism as fundamental to moral agency.

Sociologist Stark begins his argument by noting that most religious people say religion is about "God or the Gods" but most social scientists have ignored what people believe about Gods. Yet, as Edward Tylor (1881) pointed out well over a century ago, "By requiring in this definition the belief in a supreme deity or of judgment after death, the adoration of idols or the practice of sacrifice, or other partially-diffused doctrines or

> *"The fundamental problem I have with the sociotheology of Starks is that his "Gods" are supposed to make religions moral rather than mere ritual pastime."*

rites, no doubt many tribes may be excluded from the category of religious." And how right he was. Religious Western travelers, and not just missionaries, dismissed animists in many newly discovered cultures as lacking religion and thereby lacking morality. The reason we know this is because anthropologists from Malinowski on have done precisely what Stark says they have not: ethnographers record what people say they believe. In fact not all peoples say they believe in what we call God or Gods. There does appear to be a universal belief in some kind of soul, spirit, shadow, or spiritual essence, but looking for "Gods" is a very ethnocentric spin for what animists say, in their own languages, that they believe.

The fundamental problem I have with the sociotheology of Starks is that his "Gods" are supposed to make religions moral rather than mere ritual pastime. By convention, we members of AAR all capitalize God or Yahweh or Allah because the referent is to the one and only God, monotheistic hubris posits. If I write "god," I may easily pluralize and speak about gods. But the notion of "Gods" is a mischievous neologism that defies logic as well as convention. There is no current plural for "God," because if you are not a monotheist — or even if you are an atheist — you would never capitalize a singular exclusionary "God" in the first place. Many social scientists believe in the "God" their culture provides them, but I suggest that few of us believe the "gods" of others really exist. We should no more speak of Gods than we could of Allahs.

"When and why did we get it so wrong?" asks Stark about the relegation of God/s to the presumed Index of social science. In prosecuting his argument, the primary witnesses are founding fathers of the modern study of religion, notably Durkheim, Spencer, and Robertson Smith, but also a large number of anthropologists, including Ralph Barton, Ruth Benedict, Mary Douglas, Reo Fortune, Clifford Geertz, Peter Lawrence, Bronislaw Malinowski, J. P. Mills, Rodney Needham, A. R.

See **VARISCO** p.16

In Memoriam

Lonnie Kliever, 1931–2004

Professor Lonnie Kliever took his BA from Hardin Simmons University in Texas, his BD from Union Theological Seminary, and his PhD from Duke University. His first teaching position was at the University of Texas, El Paso, in the Philosophy Department from 1963–65. He then taught at Trinity University in San Antonio in the Religion Department from 1965–70. He moved to the Department of Religious Studies at Windsor University for five years and returned to Texas to SMU in 1975, where he remained until his death.

James B. Wiggins, Syracuse University, writes...

LONNIE KLIEVER and I never lived in close proximity, nor was I ever privileged to work in the same university setting with him, so many others knew him on a day-in and day-out basis far better than I. But from the moment we first met in the late 1970s when he was a faculty member at Windsor University and came to Syracuse University, where I was on the faculty, to visit my colleague Gabriel Vahanian, Professor Kliever was a person to whom I was immediately attracted and with whom I felt a close affinity. That grew into a cherished friendship in the years since. He died on July 6, 2004, at age 72.

My ability with language has rarely been more severely challenged than in attempting to write appropriately in celebrating this remarkable man. The generosity of heart, mind, and spirit that Lonnie so consistently displayed enabled him as a scholar of religion to explore and reflect upon matters that often are left unexamined by others too timid and fearful to go there. Familiar as he was with almost unimaginable physical challenges all his life, he developed his many other gifts in transcendent ways.

Another theologian from Texas, John Dunne, once posed the ultimate issue in this way: "If one day I must die, what can I do to live?" Lonnie Kliever was well acquainted with the reality of his mortality, and he overflowed with a determination to fully live. His extraordinary capacity to establish and maintain friendships was a defining quality of Lonnie's. I am sure there must have been someone who was not drawn to him from the moment of first meeting him, but I am unaware of whom that might have been. I had the great good fortune of being within that friendship circle for almost 30 years, and it was one of the greatest gifts I have ever received. He was a wonderful storyteller and purveyor of many jokes, some good and some awful. His sense of humor was another of his defining characteristics. My, what a joy that man's laughter was for everyone near him!

After Lonnie moved to Southern Methodist University and became the departmental chair, our paths crossed frequently in the 1980s and early '90s, primarily through the American Academy of Religion, in which we were both deeply involved. We spoke frequently on the phone in the pre-personal computer days and later exchanged regular e-mail messages. Since then, on my at-least annual trips to Texas, I never failed to spend some time with Lonnie.

He had a great interest in what was happening in the lives of all within the circle of his family and friends, and in the enormous circle of his intellectual interests and concerns. He was a fine scholar, a great teacher, and a very accomplished administrator and university politician. His talents in all those respects were repeatedly honored by his colleagues at SMU and the larger academic world. Professor Kliever was widely known and deeply respected within the academic world for his activities on behalf of the American Association of University Professors and the National Collegiate Athletic Association. In addition, Lonnie gave extensive service to the American Academy of Religion. He was on the Nominating Committee, the Program Committee, and was involved in leadership of several program units over the years. Within the field of the academic study of religion he was a very significant participant and important contributor in a number of arenas. He creatively and successfully bridged the field of theology and the broader study of religion, no small feat. He was masterfully accomplished in traditional areas such as theology, ethics, and philosophy of religion. One of his two most widely known books, published in 1981, is a magisterial analysis of the proliferation of new theologies in the 1960s and '70s entitled *The Shattered Spectrum: A Survey of Contemporary Theology*. That work indisputably cemented his stature and reputation in a traditional and conventional subject area.

But he became expert in less widely explored areas, such as that of the rise of new religious movements, cults, and sects. Many others kept arm's length from such groups as the Unification Church led by the Reverend Moon. Lonnie went exploring and helped us to better understand the dynamics of that new community and its underpinnings. He closely followed the siege of the Branch Davidian compound near Waco in 1993 and helped the nation better understand that the intervention by the federal government was disastrously misguided in many respects. Subsequently, he was often sought out for consultation by numerous police and governmental agencies as they confronted issues related to new and little-known religious communities.

Another arena in which he invested himself was that of religion and medicine, and particularly medical ethics. The second of his most widely known works is entitled *Dax's Case: Essays in Medical Ethics and Human Meaning* (1989). The issues in Dax's case were complex. The book was a companion to a movie on Dax's case for which Lonnie was the leader of a group of humanist advisors. Dax had suffered extensive third-degree burns over much of his body and suffered enormous pain and disfigurement. While his life still hung in the balance, he begged to be allowed to die. But the forces of medical technology and skill prevailed and Dax survived. However, the quality of life issues that were Dax's constant companions for the remainder of his life deeply concerned Professor Kliever.

Lonnie spoke frequently and wrote occasionally about euthanasia and assisted suicide. He profoundly explored the reality of human mortality. Nobody I have ever known more openly confronted and accepted death as a natural biological aspect of organic existence. No less, he recognized the powerful role that the reality of death and dying plays in individual lives, and in the creation of religious and cultural traditions as we all seek meaning in living. He was anything but morbid as he wrestled with the angels of disease, physical limitations, death, and dying, and demanded that they yield up insights to him and all the rest of us who inevitably will one day die.

The narrative of Lonnie Kliever's life and work is a profile in courage both personally and intellectually. He walked the lonesome valley with grace, great good humor, amazing vivacity, and a wondrous capacity to connect with and selflessly support and sustain the family members, friends, and colleagues who came into his magnetic field. We are simultaneously the poorer for his having left us physically, and the richer for all that he gave to us in so many ways. Words are inadequate to express the gratitude due to him. May he forever rest well.

Paul Courtright, Emory University, writes...

PEOPLE WHO KNEW and worked with Lonnie Kliever have enough Kliever stories to keep them going for a good long summer night under the Texas stars. Academic scholar, public scholar, mentor, colleague, administrator, expert witness for the courts, Kliever took on the study of religion with an exceptional skeptical appreciation. He understood religion in both its genius and its goofiness. He studied the margins: radical theology of the '60s, the Unification Church, Scientology, right-to-die, organ transplants; when other scholars got to the clearing in the woods, Kliever was already there and had set up camp. He took nothing for granted: not health, happiness, claims to certainty, academic or administrative authority. There was something quintessentially American about Lonnie Kliever. Child of the prairie, formed by home-grown evangelical Protestantism, schooled in modern skepticism of theological verities, natural-born teacher, he understood the crazy and profound mixture that is American culture. He could spot a phony — scholar, student, politician, churchman — a Texas mile away. There was an uncommon and unpretentious wisdom both in his words and his silences. Lonnie Kliever was a category of one. His last years were ones of unremitting pain from cancer and kidney failure. Even when he was tethered to a dialysis machine, he gave thanks for the gift of embodiment, the love of family, the power of analysis, and the mystery of belief. For those who were fortunate to know him and learn from him, as I was, his living and dying are written in our minds and inscribed on our hearts.

Paula M. Cooey, Macalester College, writes...

MUCH HAS ALREADY been written and spoken in honor of Lonnie Kliever's kindness, his greatness, his generosity of spirit, and his accomplishments; the importance of his life to so many of us as a family member, a teacher-scholar, a community leader, and a friend; and the suffering he endured with sustained grace, especially at the end of his life. For those in the Academy who did not know him, his leadership and his example as an excellent teacher and scholar helped cultivate some of the very best features and values of the American Academy of Religion, as we presently know it, a subject I am sure others will address at some length. I will, however, attend briefly to his sense of humor as a manifestation of his courage.

Lonnie made me laugh. Almost every time we got together, his dry, ironic, self-effacing, distinctive wit made me laugh. He saw the world through a lens that I associate with the Southern, rural Middle West, shared by Will Rogers, Molly Ivins, and Jim Hightower, just to name a few. Like them, he was particularly attuned to the comic quality of the grotesque. Without shrinking from the grimness of reality, a grimness with which he had a direct, intimate, and ongoing acquaintance, he figuratively gave it the finger by making us laugh — deeply, resonantly, powerfully. And he made us laugh not only with him but also, gently, at him and, more importantly, at ourselves — our shared pretensions, our silliness, our foibles.

One example will do. I borrow it from a friend. I have no doubt that it is authentic, for it is entirely consistent with my time spent with Lonnie over the years. As I understand it from Bill Walker, a mutual friend and co-conspirator, during the '60s when Lonnie taught at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas, a position I later held as well, he joined a peace vigil one Saturday afternoon at that most sacred of Texas sites, the Alamo. (It was a one-hour vigil, held weekly). For those of you who did not have the joy of knowing Lonnie, he stood less than five feet tall, thanks to a chronic congenital condition, a rare form of Ricketts that inhibits growth hormones. On this occasion, as Bill remembers it, Lonnie carried a sign. At one point, what he later described as a portly dowager confronted him. As he told it to Bill, she berated him relentlessly, culminating in an exasperated "You, you draft dodger, you!" Seeing as it was a silent vigil, Lonnie did not reply, but as he told Bill later, a bit mournfully I suspect, he wished he had thought to say, "Thank you, ma'am." Not long after that, he took a position at Windsor University in Canada. His colleagues never let him forget the irony of his new location in light of the dowager's excoriation.

It is easy to forget how difficult those times were. Though not subject to the draft because of his height, or rather lack of it, Lonnie remained vulnerable all the same. At the time, institutions of higher education sought to deny tenure to young faculty based on their political views, their appearance, their activism. Lonnie's limited height notwithstanding, he cast a long shadow as one who stood up for what he believed in from the '60s right on up to the present, when he requested the withholding of artificial life support. In his absence and in the midst of present political difficulties, we would all do well to seek to measure up. ❧

Is There a Place for "Scientific" Studies of Religion?

Robert Wuthnow, Princeton University

Editor's Note:

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Robert Wuthnow is a professor of sociology at Princeton University and director of its Center for the Study of Religion. His recent books include Loose Connections: Joining Together in America's Fragmented Communities *(Harvard University Press, 1998) and* After Heaven: Spirituality in America Since the 1950s *(University of California Press, 1998).*

THERE HAVE BEEN numerous calls recently for a better understanding of religion. Of course, many of those were heard after September 11, 2001, when it became clear how little most Americans know of Islam, and how much misunderstanding there is among Muslims, Christians, Jews, Hindus, and Buddhists. But even before the terrorist attacks, the Bush administration's efforts to promote faith-based service organizations challenged scholars to consider religion and its continuing place in American life. And the volatile border between religion and citizenship saw rhetorical skirmishes again over a court ruling on the mention of God in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Few would doubt that religious studies, theology, history, and even belles-lettres have much to offer in providing relevant information about religion and spirituality. A student interested in learning about Islam would do well to read the Koran and study the history of Muslim teachings. That student would also benefit from knowing something about the societies in which Islam is prominently located today. A good intellectual background for thinking about faith-based social services would require an understanding of religious teachings on charity and the history of religion's place in serving the common good. Some firsthand observations, perhaps vividly communicated by journalists, of soup kitchens and homeless shelters would prove useful as well.

But is there a place for scientific studies of religion? That is a harder question.

Isn't it a mismatch to impose scientific methods on religion? Haven't hermeneutics and phenomenology taught us to be skeptical of science? And, for that matter, what do we mean by "science"? I thought about these questions recently when I asked a graduate student if she thought of her research on Native American religion as scientific. Taken aback, she replied, "Well, no, it's just religious studies; definitely not science." She said science smacked of positivism, which, by all means, she wanted to avoid.

I'd like to be counted among those who see a place for a scientific approach toward the study of religion. However, in that context, I think we need to interpret the word "scientific" broadly.

In the now-famous Gifford lectures that he delivered 100 years ago, William James remarked, "I do not see why a critical Science of Religions might not eventually command as general a public adhesion as is commanded by a physical science." James had in mind that a science of this kind could do better at shedding light on religion than could philosophy. The trouble with philosophy, he said, was that it "lives in words" and thus fails to capture the depth, motion, and vitality of religion. Science could do that. Properly conceived, it would focus on the facts of religion, employing induction and deriving knowledge from the concreteness of spiritual experience. James gave few examples of what he had in mind, but I imagine he might have been intrigued by studies of prayer, religious experience, and healing.

History has been kind to James, but not to his point regarding a "Science of Religions." As generations of students tackle his *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, they discover in its pages interesting anecdotes about the saints and timeless musings about the differences between healthy-mindedness and the sick soul. But they seldom come away inspired by the idea of applying science to religion.

The reasons are not hard to find. Human behavior has proved more complex than early advocates of the human sciences imagined. Positivism has given up ground in the face of arguments about the inevitability of interpretation and perspective. The brave new world promised by science has turned out still to be dominated by war and injustice as much as by technological progress. If the choice C. P. Snow offered between two cultures — one scientific and one humanistic — has to be made, the spiritually inclined will reasonably opt for keeping religion in the realm of values and meaning, rather than reducing it to the dry world of scientific investigation.

In his book *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Blackwell, 1990), John Milbank, a professor of religious studies at the University of Virginia, wrote a powerful critique of the scientific impulse in the study of human behavior. Standing James's view on its head, Milbank argues that the human sciences are not about knowledge at all, but about power. It is a grab for dominance in discussions of values. It works only by creating an illusion of objectivity and by eliminating from consideration all that does not fit that illusion. If Milbank is right, it certainly makes more sense for people interested in religion to side with theology than to run amok in the social sciences.

Milbank's criticisms may be overly harsh, for the assumptions he attributes to social scientists scarcely resonate with how practicing social scientists actually think. In my experience, at least, social scientists usually make no pretense of explaining all of human nature, only a piece of it. And they are far less interested in metaphysical assumptions than Milbank suggests.

Yet the application of science to religion may still be judged folly because of the narrowness of the questions it seems able to explore. Take, for instance, the current interest in whether brain-imaging research, such as that of the Princeton psychologist Jonathan Cohen, can identify spots in the brain that "light up" when people make decisions about whether actions are morally correct. Or in brain activity when people show kindness to their neighbors, make love, or pray. While interesting as a description of neurological processes, such research fails to tell us much about which moral decisions are right, how kindness affects social relations, the meaning of love, or why people pray.

> *"The more scholars have applied scientific methods to the study of human behavior, the more they have learned that human behavior is indeed contextual and contingent, and that its meanings must be examined from multiple perspectives."*

In my own discipline, sociologists have, in recent years, been quite attracted to a theoretical perspective, advanced by such prominent scholars as the University of Washington sociologist Rodney Stark and the Pennsylvania State University sociologist Roger Finke, that helps make sense of such widely varying religious phenomena as the growth of Methodism in 19th-century America, the late-20th-century decline of mainstream Protestantism, the spread of early Christianity, and the superiority of monotheism among world religions. The argument, as I understand it, is that people make rational choices about religion, much like they do about buying cars (well, maybe not cars), and thus choose religions that give them the most gratification (such as certainty about their fate in the world to come).

Elegant in its simplicity, this is nevertheless an argument that, in the manner of science, cannot be easily proved or disproved. It is perhaps better to think of this perspective as an effort to bring sociological insights to bear on historical interpretation than as an application of scientific method.

But if there are reasons to be skeptical about science in the study of religion, there are also reasons to make the most of what science has to offer. Science teaches us the value of empirical rigor and the need for systematic investigation. The scientific method involves thinking of ways in which our cherished assumptions about the world may prove to be wrong. It involves the strategic use of rationality, not in the interest of doing away with all that is not rational (any more than the legal system is meant to replace literature and music), but to have reasons for conducting our research in one way rather than another. Science also involves the criterion of replicability, and that means candidly disclosing what we have done so others can track our mistakes.

Those aspects of science can be followed without claiming to be finding universal laws of human behavior, and they can be employed in the study of religion without "explaining away" the topic of inquiry. The more scholars have applied scientific methods to the study of human behavior, the more they have learned that human behavior is indeed contextual and contingent, and that its meanings must be examined from multiple perspectives. The recent critique by Alejandro Portes, the American Sociological Association's president, of simplistic models of economic and political development ("The Hidden Abode: Sociology as Analysis of the Unexpected," *American Sociological Review*, February 2000) illuminated that gap.

Science is no longer regarded by social scientists, as it was by the early positivists, as the grand search for great truths. Indeed, there has been a remarkable shift in how social scientists think about the role of science in their work over the past half-century. When there was little empirical evidence, science seemed an attractive beacon, but as empirical evidence accumulated, the hope of making sweeping generalizations about the human condition faded. In the study of religion, for example, scholars a half-century ago offered grand generalizations about its social functions, about its attractions to the dispossessed, and about the universality of religious experience. Today, all of those generalizations have been qualified.

For some, of course, "scientific method" suggests research that employs numbers. The phrase calls to mind the numerous polls and surveys we read about that include questions on religion, for instance polls by the Gallup Organization that tracked Americans' attendance at religious services after the 2001 terrorist attacks. By following rigorous methods of sampling, such surveys tell us about beliefs and behavior in ways that we would not be able to know from our limited personal experience. Among sociologists, the General Social Survey, conducted nationally by the University of Chicago every two years since 1972, has provided an impressive stock of information from which to draw conclusions about trends in religious beliefs, practices, and affiliations.

But scientific method can equally pertain to studies involving qualitative information drawn from participant observation, interviews, and archival materials. Carefully sifting through letters and diaries in an archive, or through artifacts at an archaeological dig, is ever as much science as computing regression equations or life-expectancy tables. For example, recent archaeological studies, such as those of the forensic anthropologist Douglas Owsley, of the Smithsonian Institution, are providing new insights into the lives and cultures of the first human inhabitants of the Pacific Northwest. If science is understood in this broader way, then we can identify more clearly some of the challenges in which it may usefully be employed.

One of the greatest challenges is understanding more clearly the vast diversity that characterizes our own religious culture and that of the wider world. We are once again, just as we were a century ago, a nation populated by a large number of recent immigrants from a wide array of ethnic and religious backgrounds. For the first time, the United States includes a sizable minority of members of its population who practice religions other than Christianity or Judaism (some estimates range as high as ten million, when Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus are included). The role of scientific studies should not be, in the first instance, to discover what is common among the various religious traditions, but to understand what is different and to gauge reactions to those differences. That task is especially important because of conflicts among religious traditions, on the one hand, and because of the superficial assumptions one still encounters among naive observers that "all religions are the same."

See **WUTHNOW** p.32

Online and in Person at the Library of Congress

Sarah M. Pike, California State University, Chico

I VISITED the Library of Congress when I was a high school student, but had not returned until a rainy February afternoon when I joined other members of the AAR's Public Understanding of Religion Committee for a tour. Like Washington, D.C.'s other imposing government buildings, the Library of Congress is somewhat intimidating to the first-time visitor. But once inside, though it is still grand, its interior spaces are beautiful and inviting. Established as a legislative library in 1800, it is now the largest library in the world, with approximately 119 million items in almost all formats and languages. One of the library's three buildings is named for Jefferson, whose personal library is at the core of the collections, and the others are named for James Madison and John Adams. The library shares its neighborhood with the Folger Library next door, and with the nearby Cannon House Office Building and the Supreme Court Building.

The Library of Congress is a treasure trove for religious studies scholars, and especially for scholars working with American history and culture. Cheryl Adams, the library's reference specialist in religion, guided us through the main reading room, the library's Web site, and its manuscript holdings, and her excitement about sharing the library's resources — and especially historical documents pertaining to religion — was infectious. She laid out a selection of items from the Manuscript Collection for our perusal and among the most memorable were different versions of Thomas Jefferson's original "wall of separation" letter delineating the separation of church and state, and the letter from a student that put into motion a landmark Pledge of Allegiance case.

"I will never forget walking into that room with all the documents on the table, and spotting what was obviously a child's letter. When I picked it up, I realized it was the letter from Billy Gobitis, 11 years old, to his school principal, explaining why he could not salute the flag. That case, of course, was decided (against Billy) in 1943, and overruled two years later. Holding and reading that letter gave me the shivers," recalled Dena Davis, chair of our committee and a specialist in religion and the law.

As a sample of the kinds of resources that might be useful to religious studies scholars, Cheryl also showed us, among other things, a Seventh-day Adventist tract called "Straightening Out Mrs. Perkins," proceedings from a Spiritualist convention, and a cowboy pictorial Bible. But what was most striking to me about these and the library's other sources for religious studies research was how many of them were available through its Web site.

The Library of Congress World Wide Web Site is visually engaging and easy to use. Its home page includes links for children and teachers, as well as for researchers. Major components of the library's resources available through the Internet are organized into several areas: American Memory (digitized historical collections, including maps, sound recordings, manuscripts, early motion pictures, and other primary source materials); THOMAS (legislative information including full-text legislation and the *Congressional Record* back to the 101st Congress, bill summaries and status back to the 93rd Congress, and committee information and links to other online government information); Global Gateway (international exhibits, global resources, and information about the Area Studies reading rooms); Exhibitions (online images and descriptions of exhibitions held at the library); and America's Library (an interactive journey through American history).

Many of the holdings accessed through these links are also useful for teaching religious studies courses. The library's staff has scanned historical materials so that letters, old maps, engravings, and other images can be examined online and shown to students in computer-mediated classrooms. American Memory is one of the best resources anywhere for teaching and researching American history and culture, and includes 7 million digital items from over 100 different historical collections. In many cases, the full texts of books, sermons, letters, and tracts are available online. For instance, searching American Memory for images and documents to show students in my seminar on religion and violence, I found texts and drawings for Indian captivity narratives and an execution sermon preached by Cotton Mather about the death sentence of Margaret Gaulacher, who murdered her illegitimate child in 1715. Many other similar resources for the study of American religious history and gender and religion are available though these electronic gateways. Instructors can project primary materials on large screens to give students a closer look at historical events. Online texts and images also make primary sources more accessible for student research.

Exterior of the Thomas Jefferson Building, built in 1897 (Photo courtesy of Levon Avdoyan).

As well as many kinds of images, cybercasts of interviews and lectures, as well as audio recordings of historical events, are also among the many resources available through the library's Web site that might be of use to scholars of religion. The audio recordings are diverse and include such topics as a collection of recordings of the 1941 Fort Valley State College Folk Festival, with such songs as "I Know I Got Religion." Recordings of lectures given at the library are also online, including a recent highlight: author Susan Weidman Schneider discussing her two decades of editing the Jewish women's magazine *Lilith*.

Our tour included a stroll through seemingly endless rows of manuscripts in the vast rooms of the Manuscript Division, which was established in 1897 and now contains more than 5 million items. I was not alone in feeling some amount of awe as we were led past hundreds of neatly labeled boxes containing the papers of famous people. Journalist Debra Mason told me how much she enjoyed "walking among the stacks of the official papers, walking past file after file of Supreme Court justices, presidents, and statesmen. I couldn't help but think of all the history we were walking past." Many of these resources pertain to religious studies scholars' research interests, especially law, religion, and politics. Presidential papers include Washington's first inaugural address and Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, as well as 23 groups of presidential papers ranging from Washington to Calvin Coolidge. Organizational archives are available for scholars researching African-American religious history and women's history; the archives of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National American Woman Suffrage Association are two of many examples. The Manuscript Division also holds papers from a wide range of famous historians, anthropologists, reformers, artists, and writers of interest to religious studies scholars: Walt Whitman, Margaret Mead, Frederick Douglass, Margaret Sanger, and Susan B. Anthony, to name a few. Professional reference librarians and a staff of historians are available for consultation in the Manuscript Division's Reading Room.

As might be expected, our nation's library's holdings on American history and culture are rich and diverse; however, two-thirds of its books and periodicals are in languages other than English. Maps, images, and sound recordings pertaining to many other parts of the world are also available online and include sources for scholars of religion and literature and history of religions, such as a 1324 map of Mali king Mansa Musa's trip to Mecca, and sound recordings of 80 authors reading their work in 17 different Asian languages as part of the South Asian Literary Recordings Project. Among the library's most impressive assets for scholars working outside the United States are the Jefferson Building's Area Studies reading rooms, such as the African and Middle Eastern Reading Room (includes Hebraic and Near East reference services), the

The Great Hall of the Thomas Jefferson Building (Photo courtesy of Levon Avdoyan).

Asian Reading Room (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and South Asian sections), and the Hispanic Division Reading Room. Scholars who want help planning a research visit to these reading rooms can find everything they need to know through the library's Web site, which has catalogs of the collections and a link to information about how to prepare for a visit to the library. Each reading room has its own online site, and the African Room even has an illustrated guide of its collections online.

For scholars interested in extended periods of study at the library, the Kluge Center awards a variety of fellowships each year. Kluge Chairs are chosen by the Librarian of Congress, in consultation with a council of scholars, and Kluge post-doctoral fellows are selected by international competition. Fellowships emphasize cross-cultural, multilingual, and interdisciplinary work. Information on these opportunities is available at *www.loc.gov/kluge*. Other fellowships and chairs at the library that might be of interest to religious studies scholars are the Rockefeller Fellows in Islamic Studies, the J. Franklin Jameson Fellowship for research in American History, the International Studies Fellow for research in non-English language collections or East and Southeast Asian regions and languages, and the Henry Alfred Kissinger Chair in Foreign Policy and International Relations. All fellowships offer stipends of varying amounts and tenures that run from a couple weeks to 12 months.

I walked away from the Library of Congress wishing that I did not live on the other side of the continent so that I could return soon to search its archives and enjoy the pleasure of looking through old documents in its comfortable reading rooms. I was most impressed by the scale, importance, and accessibility of its holdings, the welcoming attitude of the librarians, and the beauty of its interior spaces.

Resources

Library of Congress Web site: *www.loc.gov*. For those unable to visit, the library offers a photo-duplication service that provides copies of holdings from the various collections, be they in microfilm, digital, or photographic format. ❧

Theorizing Scriptures Conference

Velma Love, Claremont Graduate University

Greetings from the American Academy of Religion

To CGU'S Institute for Signifying Scriptures

February 27, 2004

I BRING TO YOU the greetings, good wishes, and good cheer of the American Academy of Religion on this splendid occasion. This inaugural conference of the Institute for Signifying Scriptures is a signal event in our field. And it is fitting that so imaginative and, indeed, so daring a scholarly initiative should find a home in the School of Religion at the Claremont Graduate University, since this young school itself is fast earning a reputation for enterprising new ventures in our field.

This institute envisions a new conversational space. It is a space in which a capacious understanding of "scriptures" becomes the basis for historical and comparative study, not only of "sacred texts," but of the communities that receive and shape them. For "scripture" is always both text and performance, always already embedded in communities of discourse and practice.

When Professor Wimbush locates the Institute's work — and I quote — "[in] the meaning of meaning-seeking in relationship to texts," he is, it seems to me, locating it in conversation with religion. For, whatever else it is, religion is the realm of meaning-mongering! This is a work of mapping, to be sure; but it is as well — Interrogation. Excavation. Unmasking. Religion scholars know that religion is not always good for one's health, and that the category of "religion" itself must be queried for power relations.

And so, we welcome this new institute with our arms outstretched. We are quickened by its promise. We are buoyed by the reach of its vision and by the largeness of its heart.

Prepared by Barbara DeConcini, AAR Executive Director

Presented by Professor Zayn Kassam, Pomona College ❧

> "Beginnings are beautiful things, celebrations of agency and originality and perhaps even some semblance of freedom. Yet they are also treacherous and delusional in their seductive promises."
>
> — Joe Parker, Pitzer College

THEORIZING SCRIPTURES, the inaugural conference of the Institute for Signifying Scriptures, was indeed a "beautiful thing." The conference opened with a dramatic drum ceremony in which students from Claremont Graduate University and Claremont School of Theology pronounced blessings of enlightenment, strength, transformation, and information, representing the spirits of the four cardinal directions, setting the stage for an intense and engaging weekend of transdisciplinary dialogue to launch the beginning of an ongoing conversation regarding scriptures.

According to the conference convener, Vincent L. Wimbush, Professor of Religion at Claremont Graduate University, this ongoing conversation will be facilitated through the newly established Institute for Signifying Scriptures. Among those congratulating Wimbush on the establishment of the institute were Claremont Graduate University president Steadman Upham, the academic deans, colleagues from the Claremont Colleges, and executives from several national organizations, including the Society for Biblical Literature, the American Academy of Religion, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Academy of Catholic Hispanic Theologians in the U.S.

In his opening address, Wimbush, the founding director, announced that the institute will seek to advance a different critical orientation for the study of religion, one that focuses not so much on "content meaning" of sacred texts, but on "*textures* — on the *signs, material products, practices, politics, and power issues* associated with the social-cultural phenomenon of the invention and engagement of 'scriptures.'" Wimbush has coined the phrase "signifying scriptures" to refer to this different orientation and the new facilitating research vehicle through which it will be advanced. With this "signifying" agenda in mind, the institute aims to bring together persons from different disciplines to work on "the development of an anthropology, psychology, sociology, a social historical, performative-expressive, and material culture criticism and critical politics of 'scriptures.'"

The conference served as a testing ground for the very idea of such a critical orientation. It was a forum for persons to respond to, reflect upon, and critique the ideas set forth by Wimbush in his previously distributed conference paper and reiterated in his opening address entitled "Scriptures: Fathoming a Complex Social-Cultural Phenomenon." Wimbush posits that "scriptures are and have always been about the dynamics of social scripting, social texturing, psycho-social dynamics, social exchanges, dreams, hopes, power relations ... [found in the] ... formation, deformation, and reformation of the social self." He suggested that the conference was designed to model some of the ways in which scriptures work in society and culture — "riffing, scoring, upbraiding, allowing wielders to get loud on someone or something."

Organized into seven panels and several special presentations, the more than 40 presenters raised questions, pronounced omens, and offered critical reflections from the perspective of various disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, English, philosophy, ethnomusicology, cultural studies, and history, as well as religion.

A sampling of the questions/comments registered is listed below:

Panel 1: Phenomenology/Origins

"How do we as stiff-suited academics begin to 'riff' and 'woof'?"

"How might we construe 'scriptures' without allowing them to divert our attention away from the long and bloody history of domination that brought us to our own social 'order'?" — Joe Parker, Pitzer College

Wande Abimbola, Special Advisor to the President, Cultural and Traditional Affairs, Nigeria, offered an answer by commenting on the origin of the "Odu," the sacred scriptures of Ifa from the literary tradition of the Yoruba of West Africa. By way of Cuba, such texts have been handed down from one generation to another and are now engaged by Africans throughout the Diaspora. Abimbola captivated the audience by chanting verses in his traditional language, which translated into English as a wish that everyone would have a life "as cool as or cooler than water." Abimbola demonstrated with power the performative aspects of sacred scriptures.

Panel 2: Settings/Situations/Practices

In her consideration of settings, situations, and practices, Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza of Harvard University, a well-known feminist biblical scholar, directed attention to the academy as the social-intellectual location of the signifying scriptures project, suggesting that this institutional location and its power dynamics and practices of knowledge production and socialization signify "both its historical possibility and its possible cooptation." On a cautionary note, she summarized the prevailing paradigms of biblical interpretation, offered a critique of phenomenology, and challenged the institute to move beyond phenomenological studies to embrace what she termed the "ethical-political-emancipatory paradigm" to investigate ways in which "scriptural texts and icons exercise influence and power in cultural, social, and religious life."

Panel 3: Practitioners and Practices

William Andrews, Professor of English at UNC–Chapel Hill, turned to African-American spiritual biography as a "signifying practice," directing attention to *The Confessions of Nat Turner*, a narrative recorded by Thomas R. Gray, a white lawyer and former slave owner, who interviewed the jailed Nat Turner about his leadership of a slave uprising resulting in the death of 55 white men, women, and children in 1831. Noting that this document may be "read as a kind of scripture in itself, the final testament of a holy man dedicated utterly to 'the Spirit' even unto death," Andrews suggested that "we must consider Turner's *Confessions* as a revision, a strong misreading, an act of signifying of and on biblical traditions, particularly the prophetic books of the Bible and the Book of Revelation."

Panel 4: Material and Expressive Representations

Many of those whose signifying practices we seek to know "have been silenced by history," says Colleen McDannell, University of Utah. She suggested that "one way to resurrect such people so that they can signify again is to look at their pictures," and she demonstrated her point through a captivating slide presentation drawn from an archival collection of photographs taken between 1935 and 1943 by the Historical Division of the Farm Society Administration. Pointing to the photographs of a "white Jesus" on the walls of black churches, she suggested that it was not the "white Jesus" but the meanings assigned to the "blood of Jesus" and the "cross of Jesus" that made these pictures appealing to black congregations. Her comments stimulated a lively and engaging discussion.

Panel 5: Psycho-Social (and Other) Needs and Consequences

Patrick Olivelle, University of Texas, presented on the Vedic Scriptures of India, focusing on "how social prestige and political power are related to the production, transmission, and preservation of scriptures in India within the priestly class of Brahmins." He suggested that this notion of social and political power in the context of the production and transmission of scriptures is one that is applicable across traditions, and one that fits well with the agenda of the Institute for Signifying Scriptures.

See **LOVE** p.19

Pomona College's Balinese Gamelan Ensemble (Photo courtesy of D. Charles Smith).

Religion and Humanities Doctorates Granted in 2002

Carey J. Gifford, American Academy of Religion

DOCTORATE RECIPIENTS from United States Universities: Summary Report 2002 has recently been published by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago under a contract from the National Science Foundation. The data reported provides a summary of statistics on research doctorate recipients who received their degrees in the 2002 academic year. Six federal agencies, including the National Science Foundation, the Department of Education, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, participated in this data source creation.

Across All Fields

During the academic year July 1, 2001, to June 30, 2002, 39,955 doctorate recipients received their degrees. This is the lowest number since 1993. While the number of doctorates earned in the physical sciences and engineering has fallen precipitously, the numbers within the humanities, the social sciences, and education have decreased only slightly. For the first time more American women (13,112) than American men (12,823) earned doctorates at U.S. universities.

Also of note is the fact that across all fields, the median age at conferral of the degree was 33.3. The median number of years from bachelor's to doctorate was 10.2, and the median number of years registered as a graduate student was 7.5.

Within the Humanities

The results within the humanities offer some helpful insights and reflect on the Academy's recent efforts to survey doctoral programs in the U.S. The number of humanities doctorates was 5,373, with the median age at conferral being 34.7 years. The distribution of males to females was virtually equal. The percentage of U.S. doctorate recipients who were white was 85%, second only to the physical sciences as the field with the highest concentration of white recipients. When it came to their postdoctoral plans, more humanities recipients intended to work within educational institutions (63.5%) than any other field.

The number of doctorates granted in the humanities decreased by 3.9% from the academic year 2001. Between 1972 and 2002 the number of doctorate recipients in the humanities decreased from 15.3% to 13.4% of all degrees awarded.

The age distribution of humanities recipients was as follows: 20% were between the ages of 21 and 30; 58% between the ages of 31 and 40; and 23% were 41 and older. Twenty percent of the recipients had cumulative debt levels (from undergraduate and graduate work) of $35,000 or more. However, 39.8% of the recipients had no cumulative debt levels. Seventy-one percent had no undergraduate debt and 54% had no graduate school debt.

The eleven institutions producing the highest number of humanities doctorates were, in order: UC–Berkeley, UCLA, NYU, Harvard, University of Chicago, University of Wisconsin–Madison, Indiana University–Bloomington, UT–Austin, Columbia, University of Michigan–Ann Arbor, and Yale.

In terms of race and ethnicity, 3,990 of the recipients were white, 664 were black, 309 were Hispanic, 98 were Asian, and 46 were American Indian. Twenty-eight percent of the recipients were first-generation college graduates.

Regarding placement, 65% had definite commitments for employment or study, while 35% were still seeking employment or further study.

The median number of years from their baccalaureate to doctorate awarded was 11.5, with 9 years the median number registered as a graduate student.

Within Religion

NORC prepared two special reports for the Academy. The first report profiled research doctorates in just the field of religion (as distinguished from theology/religious education) for the period 1962–2002. This report can be viewed on our Web site at: *www.aarweb.org/department.* Of the 348 doctorates granted in religion in 2002 (230 granted to males and 118 to females), 294 were granted to whites. Looking at longitudinal trends since 1972, the number of doctorates granted has risen dramatically since 1997. Between 1972 (the first year that NORC captured this figure in this category) and 1996, the average number of doctorates awarded in any one year was 192. During the period 1997–2001, the average number was 331 per year. Hence, since 1997 the average number of doctorates conferred each year has risen 72% over the previous 25-year average.

More than 66% of all religion doctorate recipients in 2002 were male. However, during the preceding 25 years, the number of females increased nearly fourfold. Over 80% of all recipients were U.S. citizens, with over 15% being non-U.S. citizens on either permanent or temporary visas. The racial/ethnic breakdown is as follows: over 85% were white, over 6% Asian/Pacific Islander, over 4% black, and over 1% Hispanic. If we compare these to the previous 25 years, however, the number of Asian/Pacific Islanders, blacks, and Hispanics has nearly doubled.

An interesting category, father's education, produced the following facts: over 37% of the recipients had fathers with less than a bachelor's degree, 23% had fathers with a bachelor's degree, and 39% had fathers with a master's degree or higher. The median age of the recipients was just over 37 years. In terms of their postdoctoral activity, over 66% intended to teach and over 13% listed professional services to individuals.

Within Theology/Religious Education

Within Theology/Religious Education, there were 173 recipients (118 men and 55 women), 121 of which were white, and 27 Asian/Pacific Islander. Over 64% were U.S. citizens, while nearly a third were non-U.S. citizens on either temporary or permanent visas. Regarding father's education, over 52% had fathers with less than a bachelor's degree. The median age at conferral of the degree was 42.9. Their postdoctoral employment intentions were as follows: over 61% intended to teach, 20% intended to go into professional services to individuals, and just under 11% intended to go into administration. This study can also be viewed on our Web site at: *www.aarweb.org/department.*

For further information regarding this exhaustive and tabular study, the complete results can be found at: *www.norc.uchicago.edu/issues/sed-2002.pdf*. Further analysis of the results can be seen in the December 12, 2003, issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, p. A10. ❧

VARISCO, from p.11

Radcliffe-Brown, and Dan Sperber. The reader of Stark's essay would think that anthropologists have claimed over and over again that there is no necessary link between religion and morality. Indeed, he claims that "a substantial body of anthropological and experimental evidence" has recently shown that ritual is morally meaningful only in relation to the supernatural agent invoked. Thus, the stage is set to present the main result of his sociological research study on morality and belief in Gods. For Stark, the data do not lie, especially when they are spread over 33 nations besides the United States: "That is, God matters; ritual doesn't," concludes Stark.

As an anthropologist I am, of course, grateful that Stark wants to correct all the wrong statements scholars in my discipline routinely make today because they have not understood their own literature. But I am left wondering how he gets it — "it" being the ongoing anthropological discussion about the role of ritual and belief in religion — so wrong. This starts with Edward Tylor, who is praised for having recognized (from Greek and Roman mythology, no less) that "not all religions support the moral order." Stark quotes Tylor woefully out of context, for the very next sentence made by the armchair anthropologist insists "It is not that these races have no moral sense or no moral standard, for both are strongly marked among them, if not in formal precept, at least in that traditional consensus of society which we call public opinion, according to which certain actions are held to be good or bad." Even for Tylor, animists may be moral without having developed to the "Gods" stage. Stark's sociological data set is said to prove otherwise, at least for the people who assume before they are queried that religion is fundamentally about belief in their Gods. Animists rarely get surveyed by Western sociologists out to define the relevance of religion.

Stark further stacks the deck by quoting ethnographic accounts from the 1920s and 1930s, including cultural relativist Ruth Benedict, to demonstrate that some societies have religions that do not carry morality. While it is true that some early ethnographers saw "primitive" others through a moralistic lens derived from their own theism-driven culture, few of those quoted by Stark thought that such "tribal" peoples were without morality. When Malinowski proposed looking at the function of religion as a moral charter for the Trobriand Islanders, he used his ethnographic data to show precisely how religious beliefs foster a locally shared moral order. The ethnographic evidence available today suggests that a system of morality is an established trait of all societies, no matter what the nature of their specific beliefs. The problem for anthropologists is how one defines religion in a cultural context, not an assumed ritualized absence of moral standards.

Stark himself has a one-sided view of how earlier scholars viewed religion. We are told that Durkheim dismissed Gods as "unimportant window dressing" and stressed instead "that rites and rituals are the fundamental stuff of religion." Stark suggests that Durkheim was misguided by being one of those "militantly secular Jews" whose goal was to deny the importance of belief. Dissing Durkheim for being an unabashed atheist is easy to do, but one need not profane the argument of this sociological founder by treating his own unbelief as sacred. In the long and nuanced excursis on preliminary questions before the start of his speculative account on the evolutionary origins of religion, Durkheim defined religion as "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things." Durkheim placed beliefs first in his definition and indeed examined elementary beliefs before he focused on ritual attitudes. The very idea of sacred vs. profane, no matter what its usefulness for analysis today, is predicated on the importance of shared beliefs to define a religious community. Readers of Durkheim may reduce his work to privileging ritual at the expense of belief, but it is not Durkheim who refuses to believe in beliefs; it seems sociotheologists like Stark cannot forgive Durkheim his own personal lack of belief in the established monotheisms of his day.

Let me go one step further and argue that what is fundamental to religion is less belief in Gods than a human penchant to cooperate, form social contracts, and define moral principles (even those which may not seem moral to an outsider). Those of us who subscribe to the evolutionary framework of our origins see evidence for morality among our closest relatives, the apes. "Are animals moral?" asks primatologist Frans de Waal in his *Good Natured: The Origins of Right and Wrong in Humans and Other Animals* (Harvard, 1996). "Let us simply conclude," he suggests, "that they occupy a number of floors of the tower of morality. Rejection of even this modest proposal can only result in an impoverished view of the structure as a whole." Would Stark have us return to the hierarchical Scala Natura, via a theistic diversion through Tower of Babel categorization of who has climbed closer to the Gods? As a scientist I argue that morality precedes belief in the Gods that contemporary survey-takers say they believe in. As a social scientist I suggest that we need to go beyond belief and certainly not take deritualized "Gods" at face value. Anthropologist Evans-Pritchard said it best at the end of his *Nuer Religion* (Oxford, 1956), when he reminded us that there is a point where the anthropologist gives way to the theologian. Stark's crusade to reduce religion to the Gods crosses that point. ❧

Department Meeting

University of Tennessee, Chattanooga, Department of Philosophy and Religion

William Harman, Chair

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga is a comprehensive metropolitan university, offering bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs. Founded in 1886 as a private Methodist institution, it became part of the University of Tennessee system of public higher education in 1969 and emphasizes a strong grounding in the liberal arts while offering applied professional programs. With about 6,000 students, the school offers degrees through the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Education and Applied Professional Studies, Engineering and Computer Sciences, and the UTC Graduate School. The Department of Philosophy and Religion has grown from three members in 1969 to eight members today. Faculty teach primarily undergraduates and occasionally master's of arts students. Further information can be found at www.utc.edu/Units/PhilosophyAndReligion/.

William Harman traces his academic lineage to his Oberlin College advisor, the late Clyde Holbrook, one of the founders of the American Academy of Religion. Harman lived, taught, and studied in India for two and a half years after college and then enrolled at the University of Chicago, where he received his MA and PhD, working primarily with Wendy Doniger. He taught for 20 years at DePauw University before moving to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He concentrates in comparative religions, with an emphasis on Hinduism in southern India. He has published two monographs on religion in Tamilnadu, and most recently has published several articles about the southern Deccan's goddess of fevers, Mariyamman. He is working currently on an edited volume that addresses the dynamics of religious vows among Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists in South Asia.

RSN: How long have you been in the religious studies department? How long have you been the chair?

Harman: I feel brand new to the department and to the University of Tennessee, but the calendar tells me it has been just over two years. I was hired in as department head and succeeded a man, Herb Burhenn, who left an extraordinary 25-year legacy of vision and even-handedness in building the department. Herb is now our dean, and so we're fortunate in having the benefit of his experience whenever we need to tap it. I'm lucky, for sure. I've inherited a department with a tradition of solid teaching, creative scholarship, and a respect-based collegiality among department members.

I arrived here after teaching for 23 years in a small, private, liberal arts institution, and the adjustments have been considerable. Aside from the extra layers of paperwork so common to state institutions, I have had some trouble adjusting to the fact that here the department head works from a base of genuine power and influence. Before my arrival here, I was more accustomed to a situation in which department chairs had nominal power, and what little they had could easily be trumped at any number of administrative levels.

RSN: How many full-time and adjunct faculty do you have in your department?

Harman: We have eight full-time tenure or tenure-track positions, though one of those positions involves teaching half-time in classics. Usually we have from one to three adjuncts teaching for us, according to our needs from one semester to the next. We're a department of philosophy and religion, and several department members "swing both ways," academically speaking, as the needs for various courses come up. The remarkable thing is that we're able to work rather closely together: our major can be taken in three ways, with a concentration either in philosophy, in religion, or in philosophy and religion. Students move back and forth between the two disciplines quite comfortably. We're also proud of the fact that our faculty cover a geographic and intellectual spread uncommon for a department our size: we have faculty publishing and teaching in Greek philosophy and religion, American religion, early and medieval Christian theology and philosophy, Judaism, French and German modern existentialism and postmodern thought, bioethics, Japanese and Chinese religions, and Hinduism and comparative religions.

RSN: Can you tell us a bit about the department's strengths?

Harman: We take pride in pedagogy, and tend to share with each other our successes and our failures. We value scholarship: two members of the department hold special chairs that allow them to teach fewer courses because they are expected to be productive as scholars. But the rest of us are involved in scholarship as well. We are convinced that scholarship is important not just because we like to do it — it also contributes to confident, even compassionate, teaching. To remain involved in scholarship means, at the very least, that you understand what it means to be a student with a deadline to meet.

RSN: What distinguishes your department from other departments on campus?

Harman: In the long run, we've been unusually free of petty battles and turf wars. When I first arrived I was impressed by how many people outside the department took me aside to tell me how much they admire this department for the comfortable working atmosphere it seems to have developed. At the same time, we're a department that insists on rigor. We're the only department on campus that requires a written senior thesis to be defended orally before select department members. We're among the most scholarly productive departments on campus. And we're proud of our graduates. Over the past five years, about 42 percent of our majors have gone on to graduate school — not necessarily in religion or philosophy, but at least they have departed with their appetites whetted for more academic training. And we've found over the years that when the university administers academic skills tests to graduating seniors, our majors score among the highest in the university. What's distinctive about us? Excellent faculty, strong majors, and an atmosphere generally free from rancor and resentment.

RSN: In what subfields or subdisciplines would you like to expand your department's competence?

Harman: Though we have someone who is teaching introductory Islam, it would be wonderful to have someone with specialist training in the area to offer upper-level courses. A dedicated analytic philosopher would also be ideal. In any given year, we usually have about 35–40 majors, so there is just so much we can ask for. But in a perfect world, I think I would add a Biblical scholar and a religious studies methodologist with training in philosophical phenomenology.

> *"Over the past five years, about 42 percent of our majors have gone on to graduate school. . . . And we've found over the years that when the university administers academic skills tests to graduating seniors, our majors score among the highest in the university."*

RSN: What is distinctive about the teaching that you and your colleagues do?

Harman: We laugh about doing our teaching in the buckle of the Bible Belt. But there's something to the claim: the Scopes Trial occurred just half an hour from where we sit. A half-hour trip south of here will put you into a snake-handling congregation. People in this part of the world take religion seriously. It was such a change for me when I arrived. I had been accustomed to spending the first week or two of my introductory classes trying to convince students that religion as a subject matter needs to be taken seriously, that it has an enormous role in human history. Here, there's no need to make that point. Students take our classes because they *know* religion is important, and while many come from fundamentalist backgrounds, I have found them to be quite open to discussing religion critically.

Another distinctive feature of students here is that an unusual proportion of them, upwards of 85 percent, are first-generation college students. They are here because they have made their own decisions about wanting an education, and in many cases they have had to fight financial or family battles to be here. They're very open to learning, not the least bit smug, self-satisfied, or filled with a sense of privileged entitlement. They are a joy to teach. The average age of the undergraduate here is 25 years old, and that sets up a wonderful dynamic, I find. Students with a bit of worldly experience under their belts ask better questions and bounce the theories we embroider off of what they know of the unembroidered "real" world. And there is a certain rapport you can have with older students you just can't have with the younger ones. Many are parents, have been in the military, and some even own companies of their own. They have things to teach, too.

Finally, our department is toying with the idea of adding a deliberately international accent to our curriculum. We're in the initial stages of constructing a summer school component abroad. I'll be kicking it off with a course I'll teach in India this summer to 12 students who will accompany me there for six weeks. Another of our colleagues, who just ran an NEH Summer Seminar for College Teachers at Oxford, is considering setting up a similar program at Oxford for our students during the summer. A philosopher with training in Germany is interested in taking a group of students to Germany for a summer course. And we have a colleague fluent in Japanese and Chinese who might be persuaded to join us in this effort. Much will depend on student interest, but we shall likely be pursuing it in the year to come.

RSN: What problems will your department be facing in the near future?

Harman: For the past several years, we have seen a good deal of faculty turnover, partly because our salaries need to be higher, but also because we have a penchant for hiring very good people for whom upward job mobility is important. When people move to more prestigious environments, that's a tribute to our judgment and to our mentoring skills. Still, we are growing tired of job searches, and will have to fight future temptations to want to hire someone not good enough to be hired away. That kind of compromise into mediocrity frightens me. The future of public education in Tennessee is of some concern. Only 16 percent of Tennessee residents have a college education, and this creates a mood not well disposed to spending money for higher education. In short, education is seriously underfunded in this state, and I worry where the cuts will come when we are measured against the technical and business lobbies for whom liberal arts education is seen as an effeminate excuse for real learning.

RSN: What gives you the greatest satisfaction as a chair?

Harman: I enjoy finding ways to make something possible for department members that they might not otherwise believe possible. Sometimes, for example, a person needs a bit of encouragement to go ahead and teach that course she has always wanted to teach but had feared might be a bit too "fringey" or eccentric. I like keeping my eyes peeled for various little pockets of money on campus that might enable colleagues to do such things as travel to Moscow for a conference. And I like being able to run interference for a student or a colleague who has run head-on into an administrative wall that comes between an earnest inquirer and serious academic pursuits. Getting the needless garbage out of people's paths is not always fun to do, but it's satisfying when it's done and the results speak for themselves. ❧

Beyond the Annual Meeting

Bringing Together Teaching and Scholarship: The AAR Teaching Religious Studies Series

Susan Henking, Hobart and William Smith Colleges

LIKE MANY ACADEMICS, when I want to learn something new I begin by looking it up in the library (or, now, on the Web). As a cook, I am interested in cookbooks and almost everything I can read about food; yet, I resist what I call a "cookie cutter" or "cookbook" approach to learning. I am fascinated by works that help me move beyond someone else's recipe to find my own version of a dish. So, when I first began to teach, I sought the same sort of help. I took acting classes to support the vocal public role that goes with teaching. I participated in an NEH seminar in Berkeley focused on teaching the introductory course in religious studies. And I went to the library. There I found a whole array of useful works that offered ethical reflection on the role of faculty members and the history of education, as well as more practical reflection on the rhythm of the semester (or trimester), creation of syllabi, and classroom techniques (ranging from how to run a discussion or give a good lecture to how to write and grade exams, and on to the need to avoid leaning against a chalk-filled blackboard when dressed in a dark suit). Of course, in that same library, I found an enormous amount of scholarship relevant to the topics beyond my specialty that were now part of my pedagogical responsibilities. Only rarely, though, did I find works that brought scholarship and teaching together. Where, I asked, was the material that brought scholarship and teaching together in religious studies and theology?

In the years that have passed since I first asked that question, the AAR has, of course, created and sustained a whole array of efforts to bring together scholarship and teaching in our field. We have done so on our Web site, in periodic publications such as *RSN* and *Spotlight on Teaching*, in teaching workshops, in the Annual Meeting program, and in the Teaching Religious Studies Series, published by Oxford University Press. These edited volumes, focused on a theme, theorist, tradition, or text, are aimed at faculty who are thinking about teaching. The books bring together the best of current scholarship with the best of current reflection on teaching. Each volume (and the series as a whole) tries to do it all — to be useful for both newer and more experienced teacher/scholars, to provide input for both specialists and those called to teach a text or topic beyond their own specialty, and, in doing so, to be responsible to the scholarship of our field as well as the scholarship of teaching. Teaching Religious Studies is shaped by — and shapes — the pedagogical concerns of the wider academic study of religion. Indeed, the series makes an effort to raise the visibility of our teaching beyond the limits of our own field, as witnessed, perhaps, by coverage of early volumes in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Series volumes also share a commitment to considering teacherly issues particular to their subject matters — the variety of institutional and sociocultural or historical settings within which a topic might be taught (seminary, graduate school, liberal arts college, or large state university), various types of courses within which the topic might arise (e.g., an introductory course, a specialized course), or ethical concerns relevant to teaching in particular areas or concerns raised by student demographics, for example. Thus, the series takes seriously the increasingly complex and useful literature on teaching within higher education that has emerged in recent decades.

What is currently available and what might we need to see in future volumes?

The volumes currently available and in the pipeline reflect some of the diversity of our field and the potential of the series: Brannon Wheeler (ed.), *Teaching Islam*; Diane Jonte Pace (ed.), *Teaching Freud*; and Hans Penner (ed.), *Teaching Levi Straus*. Future volumes, at various stages of preparation, widen the scope to include such topics as ritual, religion and healing, women and religion, and new religious movements; traditions such as the African-American religious experience; and thinkers such as Durkheim and Augustine. As it develops beyond these themes, the series will reflect the incredible diversity of the academic study of religion: texts from the Bhagadva Gita to the Torah; theorists and theologians from Schliermacher or Kierkegaard to Foucault or Eliade or Bourdieu and beyond; themes from sexuality to magic to fundamentalisms and from myth to politics to globalization; and traditions from Pentecostalism to Shinto to Yoruba religions. Indeed, the texts, traditions, themes, and thinkers that are examined by scholars across our field — and enter our classrooms — will become the focus of this series in the 21st century.

So, do you have an idea?

Volumes for the series usually begin with a preliminary conversation with the series editor. "What about a volume on this theme?" Formal proposals involve submitting, at minimum, the following materials to the series editor:

- A substantial narrative describing the proposed topic, attending to the potential audience for the volume, its relevance to the academic study of religion, the rationale for the volume's organization and choice of chapter authors, and a description of the range of teacherly and scholarly concerns raised by the topic. This is often accompanied by a bibliography of relevant material at the intersection of teaching and scholarship.
- A proposed table of contents, with abstracts for chapters and biographies of chapter authors.
- Writing samples (e.g., selected chapters, introduction, etc.).
- A proposed time line for completion of the edited volume.
- Curriculum vitae for the editor(s).

These proposals are then sent to readers for review. Readers are chosen to represent excellence in scholarship, as well as teacherly concerns. Their feedback is critical to the decision (made by the series editor) to request revision of the proposal, to reject the proposal, or to propose the volume formally to Oxford University Press. Should the volume be formally recommended to OUP for consideration, OUP's formal procedures are then central to their decision to issue a contract for the proposed volume. Such contracts, of course, require review of completed manuscripts. ❧

Have an idea? Please write to Susan Henking, Department of Religious Studies, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY 14456, USA; or E-MAIL *henking@hws.edu*.

MARCOS, from p.7

Marcos: As I was telling you earlier, I did not want to consider that "Iberoamerica" is bound by territorial limits only. I included work by very notable feminist theologians living in the U.S., such as Daisy Machado, who reviews the work of P. Aquino, A. Isasi Diaz, and other feminist theologians. It is also a volume that spans methodologies in an interdisciplinary spectrum. There are works of biblical hermeneutics, like Elsa Tamez's contribution, and feminist theology, like Ivone Gevara's and Rebeca Montemayor's works, but also sociological interpretations of gender within pentecostalisms in Brazil, like the work of Maria das Dores Machado and Cecilia Mariz. An anthropological and historical analysis of the religions of Mesoamerica is also included, as well as Afro-Brazilian Candomble and Afro-Cuban Santeria. It makes a fascinating read that obliges the reader to position her/himself in diverse points of reference and to get glimpses at the immense variability of gender reconstructions within all these diverse religious traditions.

With regards to *Chiapas el Factor Religioso*, I co-edited this publication with E. Masferrer. It includes my extensive interview with Don Samuel Ruiz, the now emeritus Bishop of San Cristobal de las Casas. At the time he was a very polemical political and religious figure. I focused on his concept of "Teologia India." It is conceived as the "incarnation" of the gospel (word of God) in the indigenous worlds. The issues of indigenous beliefs and practices and how they reconfigure other Protestant, Catholic, and even Islamic influences is a riveting account of decolonizing spiritualities at work in Chiapas. It could be a paradigm of what is happening all over the "indigenous" Americas, specifically with regards to religion. (I want to clarify here that I use the term "indigenous" following the usage of the originary peoples of Mexico themselves.)

RSN: I understand you have edited and published in English the book *Gender/Bodies/Religions*. What can you say about it? I also know that there is a forthcoming book from Palgrave. How do your themes on the study of religion in Mesoamerica appear in these publications?

Marcos: The first book is a selection of the presentations at the panels I organized at the XVIIth Congress of the IAHR in Mexico as Adjunct Proceedings, 2000. It is a study of the ways bodies are conceptualized, regulated, and infused with religious meanings with respect to gender mandates within diverse religious traditions. I included among others, for example, work by Rita Gross on Buddhism, Nancy Falk on Hinduism, T. Sakaranaho on the debate on the use of the veil in Turkey. The volume also contains works on Philippino indigenous women healers, the "Balaylanes," by Fe Mangahas and Milagros Guerrero, both historians from the Phillipines.

Implied by the selection of these articles is a comparison with the Mesoamerican epistemological and religious issues I develop in my own article. As you see, my interest has been to record as comprehensive a spectrum of beliefs and traditions as possible. Something will emerge from the sediments of that plural analysis that will make us deeply knowlegeable about gender constraints and/or privileges. How do religions construct and interpret bodies, physicality, carnality? These are the main questions posed by the authors.

RSN: What current trends in Latin-American scholarship interest you the most?

Marcos: I am very interested in the indigenous movements in the Americas. They are political movements that — contrary to other revolutionary movements — claim religion and spirituality at their core. At several key moments, I have been invested with consulting status for the Mexican indigenous women's movement. I speak amply of this in my forthcomming book which is also going to be published in English (Palgrave, March 2005). Indigenous movements in the Americas, as exemplified by the II Continental Indigenous Summit of the Americas (Quito, July 26–30, 2004), stressed the colonizing effects of feminism and Western gender concepts on the originary peoples of the Americas. The indigenous peoples claim that they have a different way of conceptualizing the gender divide.

LOVE, from p.15

Panel 6: Power Issues

R. S. Sugirtharajah, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom, commented:

"The art of interpretation was inextricably intertwined with Western colonialism. . . . In the new imperium, the task of the hermeneut is to remind those who work out their hermeneutics within rigidly set boundaries and who undervalue other experiences that there are no predetermined meanings but only actual meanings determined by larger cultural and political contexts. . . . The least the interpreters can do is to assert that narratives are 'meanings in motion.'"

Panel 7: Themes

In commenting on the enduring themes and persistent patterns of scripturalization, Sze-kar Wan of Andover Newton Theological School told the intriguing story of how the Miao, an ethnic minority group in China's southwestern province of Yunnan, got their scripture. He recounted the legend of the lost books. According to this legend the Miao had a written language, but it was lost when they were driven from their homelands and forced to migrate south. As the legend goes, when they crossed the river, the books fell into the water and were swallowed by a fish. When the missionaries came and introduced the Christian Bible, the Miao embraced it as the sacred book that many years ago had been "lost to the fish." Enduring themes? Sze-kar Wan concludes that scripture becomes scripture only when it is filtered through the collective consciousness and experience of a people — in other words, when it becomes a "signifier."

The above sampling of comments can in no way convey the richness of the Theorizing Scriptures conference experience. In addition to the 35 major panel presentations, there were also a number of creative-expressive visual, performing arts, and multimedia presentations. Grey Gundaker's images of biblical themes in landscapes and Leslie King-Hammond's slides of sacred themes in African-American art both contributed to the sense of the phenomenon under discussion as something that is fluid, dynamic, multidimensional, textured, and deeply embedded in society and culture. The performing arts groups, including Pomona College's Balinese Gamelan Ensemble, the Claremont School of Theology Korean Students Choir, Rick Perkins's Jazz Quintet, and Quetzal, a Mexican folk music group, were vivid examples of interpretation of the sacred in dance, song, and music. The documentary film *Reading Darkness, Reading Scriptures*, directed by Velma Love, Claremont Graduate University, and produced by John L. Jackson, Duke University, representing research from the African Americans and Bible Project, dramatically demonstrated what it could mean to study how people shape and reshape worlds through the engagement of scriptures.

The conference concluded with a festive banquet, with Wande Abimbola pouring libations and chanting in traditional Yoruba style a blessing for the safety and well-being of the participants. He threw the cola nuts and announced "egife," the most positive sign one could get, for the future of the institute. The enthusiastic response from the nearly 200 conference participants suggested they wholeheartedly agreed that the Institute for Signifying Scriptures would indeed face a bright future. For a detailed list of conference presenters, and for more information on the institute, visit the Web site at *www.cgu.edu/inst/iss*. ❧

They speak of "complementarity" and "equilibrium" as their own way of interrelating genders. It is very paradoxical.

I remember that, following these indigenous claims, I sent a project proposal to Hunter College some ten years ago. I won the competition and was named Rockefeller Humanist in Residence for the year 1990-91. However, when I presented my work publicly, the feminists and gender theoreticians were reluctant to see it as a truthful rendering of alternative gender constructions done from the perspective of the indigenous women. Consequently, they rejected my position. They could only think of "complementarity" within the realm of Christian traditions that fill this word with misogynistic meanings. Of course, this kind of church-based interpretation of "complementarity" means that we women are the passive, the obedient, the silent sufferers. In this semantics of complementarity, the male is the active, leading, achieving part. There is even a recent letter from the Congregation of the Faith in the Vatican (7/31/2004) compelling women to conform to this model of behavior.

It is hard to give credit to such a backward interpretation of femininity!

But what do the indigenous peoples mean by complementarity? What I hear the indigenous women say is very different from the complementarity suscribed by the Vatican. I am working on a book to be published by Brill in the collection Religion in the Americas directed by Hector Avalos.

There are a lot of misconceptions stemming from the inappropriate adoption of Spanish words imposed on indigenous peoples by the colonizing friars.

For instance, by calling the tlatoani "rey," or the tonalli "alma," the Spaniards imported colonizing meanings into the indigenous worlds. These "translations" were approximate at best. So a careful interpretation of indigenous discourses — in my case of the indigenous women — reveal epistemological connections, interpretations of causalities, interconnections that have nothing to do with the semantic meanings Westerners ascribe to words. Imagine what the careful study of some basic terminology is beginning to reveal! That is my decolonizing effort and the deconstruction of captivities that I am immersed in now. ❧

Books by Sylvia Marcos

Dialogue and Difference: Feminisms Challenge Globalization, Marguerite Waller and Sylvia Marcos, eds. New York: Palgrave, forthcoming 2005.

Religion y Genero, Vol. 3, *Enciclopedia Iberoamericana de Religiones*. Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 2004.

Gender/Bodies/Religions, Adjunct Proceedings, XVII Congress for the History of Religions. Mexico: IAHR-ALER Publications, 2000.

Chiapas el Factor Religioso, S. Marcos and E. Masferrer, eds. Mexico: Publicaciones para el Estudio de las Religiones, 1998.

Studying Religion in an Age of Terror

Internet Death Threats and Scholarship as a Moral Practice

Paul Courtright, Emory University

In 2001 the Delhi-based Motilal Banarsidass Publishers rereleased Ganesa, Lord of Obstacles and Beginnings *by Paul Courtright, originally published by Oxford University Press in 1985. The reprint cover features the elephant god Ganesa as a toddler in a crawling position, sans clothing. That image, along with a brief, psychoanalytically informed reading of part of the myth that recounts Ganesa's beheading (by his divine father, who fails to recognize Ganesa as he guards his mother's bath), angered some Hindus in the United States. They claimed Courtright had "offended" their god. An Internet petition gathered over 4,000 signatures, threatened him personally, and pressured his publisher in India to withdraw the book.*

THESE ARE INCREASINGLY dangerous times for scholars who study India. Well-financed and organized groups on the political and religious right want to control the memory of India's past in ways that suit their own ideological agendas. Consequentially, scholars within or outside India who challenge those constructions become targets of attack.

My recent experience is not singular. Last December, another group in India vandalized an institute, stole ancient manuscripts, and physically assaulted a scholar who had worked with an American author whose book on a 17th-century king offended them. A couple of years before, a distinguished Indian historian was vilified for writing a meticulously documented study of meat consumption among Hindus in ancient India.

In one sense, this is an old story; scholars have been seen as suspect by orthodoxies of one sort or another in many cultures. Scholars, particularly those in the humanities, tend to engage in subversive activity. To write is to resist the sloth of the familiar forms of knowing and being in the world. And in one way or another — to someone or another — this kind of critical inquiry may give offense. These are the costs and consequences of free inquiry. Along with this subversive element, scholarship also carries an ascetic dimension, in that it sometimes requires a renunciation of comfort — for the scholar and the reader — in service to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding.

When the realm of inquiry is the academic study of religion, we commit transgression in ways that are both the same as and different from those of our colleagues in other fields. Some scholars of religion have a foot in both academic and religious traditions, and their forms of asceticism and subversion differ somewhat from mine, as a visitor to the religious tradition I study. I have a great respect for the tradition but am not responsible for defending its orthodoxies. I speak about, with, and to Hindus — but certainly not for or on behalf of Hindus. So when someone says — or circulates an Internet petition or complains to the president of my university — that "the things you have written, and the theories you apply, offend me; they offend my sentiment," the first thing I have to say is that I acknowledge that your experience is authentic for you. But as a scholar and interpreter, my intent is not to demean, dismantle, or offend. Rather, it is to explore, probe, and imagine, using whatever approaches the content of the religious tradition and the tradition of critical inquiry call upon — even drawing on forms of interpretation that may not be indigenous to that tradition itself but may be illuminating and novel. Religious stories and ideas are not private property. They belong to the public domain. The same is true for interpretation. In my case, my attackers have not engaged the argument of my book — its intellectual substance — but have attacked me personally and called for public censure of me by my university.

Today we find ourselves in an era when some readers will suspect anything we do, especially as foreign scholars who are "outsiders" to the tradition. Indian scholars, Hindu and non-Hindu, who are familiar with my work appreciate the necessity of free inquiry, not because they know me personally but because they know they could be the next targets of self-appointed guardians of sentiment. The integrity of what we do must be protected. As scholars we have to own that integrity and do our work with as much clarity, resolve, and compassion as we know how. When we are in error, we must own our mistakes; when we are attacked because some don't like our interpretation, we must rededicate ourselves to our vocation of critical inquiry.

Scholarly associations play a vital role here. Colleagues in my own association, the American Academy of Religion, have been extraordinarily supportive, in both the administrative leadership of the organization and also in the scholarly conversations specific to my area of inquiry. Universities rightly step in to protect their faculty from harassment.

What about students? Whenever scholars are attacked, we need to inform our students in useful and appropriate ways. It's a way of letting them know that the pursuit of knowledge matters, that scholarship may involve risks. Scholarship is a form of intellectual practice, but on another level, it is a form of moral practice. We have a duty to be accurate and put carefully thought-out ideas into the conversation for critical appraisal by our readers. Insofar as students can witness and participate in that process, it helps them own the work that they do and supports them in taking their own risks and engaging in critical inquiry.

When others try to silence us because they claim to take offense and insist that their sentiments trump our pursuit of knowledge, it reminds us that writing is often a practice of resistance. To write is to write back, against those forces that would take away power and agency from us. To retreat into silence is to give a victory to the vigilantes. To remain silent is to abandon our students and surrender ourselves to those who seek, through terror, to erase us. ❧

Editor's Note:

This article originally appeared in the April/May 2004 issue of Academic Exchange, *a journal of Emory University faculty work, life, and thought.*

Member-at-Large

Tomoko Masuzawa, University of Michigan

Tomoko Masuzawa was born and educated in Tokyo. She earned an MA in Philosophy of Religion from Yale, and a PhD in Religious Studies from the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she studied principally with Laurence Rickels (Literary Criticism) and the late Walter Capps. For many years she taught in the Department of Religious Studies and the Program in Cultural Studies at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Since 1999 she has been on the faculty of the University of Michigan, where she holds a joint appointment in History and Comparative Literature. She is the author of In Search of Dreamtime: The Quest for the Origin of Religion *(1993) and* The Invention of World Religions: European Universalism in the Language of Pluralism *(2005), both published by the University of Chicago Press, as well as articles such as "Troubles with Materiality: The Ghost of Fetishism in the 19th Century"* (Comparative Studies in Society and History)*, and "Our Master's Voice: F. Max Müller after a Hundred Years of Solitude"* (Method and Theory in the Study of Religion)*. In 1988 Masuzawa co-founded and subsequently chaired the Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group (initially a Consultation). She is also a member of the North American Association for the Study of Religion (NAASR) and International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR).*

RSN: You are a religion scholar and a longstanding member of the AAR. . . .

Masuzawa: Yes, since 1982. . . .

RSN: But you are not in a religion department at the moment, is that correct?

Masuzawa: Right. The University of Michigan doesn't have a religion department. My appointment is in history and in comparative literature.

RSN: Do you teach religion courses?

Masuzawa: At the moment, only occasionally. Every once in a while graduate students working on some religion-related topics come out of the woodwork. Usually, though, by the time it occurs to them that they should know something about the study of religion, they're already beyond their course work, so we end up doing a tutorial or something very informal, which isn't the most satisfying situation. But occasionally I offer a seminar, which I call "cultural history of the study of religion," almost entirely based on primary sources, mostly 19th- and early 20th-century material.

RSN: Is there much interest in such material among history and literature students?

Masuzawa: There seems to be a general perception lately, even among some faculty, that somehow religion is important. So there is definitely a potential there. But the institutional literacy in scholarship on religion is pretty low. I get the impression that here "religion" is generally thought of as something out there that you could know *about*. People don't seem to see it as a site, occasion, or strategic opportunity for some serious analytic work. In other words, very little recognition that there might be a *scholarship* on religion. Or that this scholarship isn't religious in origin, orientation, or goals. I'm talking about people here who are generally very smart, theoretically sophisticated, who wouldn't be caught saying something like, well, cultures are out there and anthropologists go out and learn about them. They certainly know better. But that theoretical acumen doesn't always extend to religion. I'm generalizing grossly here, of course, but that's my general impression at that gross level.

RSN: So, how do you reconcile your expertise in the study of religion with your current institutional setup?

Masuzawa: Well, I can't say it's reconciled. But since my interest area can be framed as a subfield in modern European intellectual history, it's not like I don't have a place to fit in. It's my profile as someone with something vaguely to do with religion — but not Buddhism, Islam, the Bible, monasticism, or anything like that — that's the problem, I think; that's where I get the institutional equivalent of a blank stare. But in terms of teaching, I can cover a lot of my own research topics in various courses. For example, I offer a graduate seminar called "Comparison and Hegemony." It's a historical look at the emergence of comparative studies, and we consider concertedly the disciplinary developments of comparative religion, comparative literature, and anthropology, and the vicissitudes of the so-called universals in that context. And I stress the significance of comparative philology in all these developments; it's the mother of all comparative studies, I would say. You see, I don't think it was comparative anatomy that instigated scientific comparativism. So far as I can tell, comparative philology took off on its own, fueled entirely by the excitement over the discovery of Sanskrit and the Indo-European language family. The analogizing with botany, zoology, and natural history came somewhat later, I think, when the problem of descent began to take on a whole new character.

RSN: And that's the area of your current research, history of comparative studies?

Masuzawa: Nineteenth-century philology has the leading role in my new book. Philology is the prima donna with a tiara of "perfect inflection" — though that's not to say it's a pretty sight. This complex of comparative philology and comparative religion has been so utterly interesting that the topic is finding its way into many of my courses. For instance, this winter we'll be teaching a seminar on the concept of "Aryan"; it begins with the discovery of Sanskrit and ends with the American neo-Nazis. I say "we" because I'll be co-teaching this with two of my colleagues. Tom Trautmann has written a book on the British Sanskrit studies — called *Aryans and British India* — and he's the editor of CSSH [*Comparative Studies in Society and History*]. And Gayle Rubin, many of your readers would know her, I'm sure, from those extremely influential works of feminist criticism she wrote in the late '70s and '80s, such as "Traffic in Women." She's at Michigan now, and she's been doing extensive research on various New Age movements and also on neo-Nazis. In fact, it was on Gayle's initiative that the idea of the course got started. I'm really looking forward to this.

RSN: Tell us something about your new book, *The Invention of World Religions*.

Masuzawa: The subtitle may be the briefest description I can give. It's called "How European Universalism Came to Be Expressed in the Language of Pluralism." But I should say, the book is not about the concept-formation of "religion," or about how individual world religions like "Hinduism," "Buddhism," and so forth were "constructed," in the sense of fabricated. Rather, it is about the logic of classification; it's about categories and taxonomy.

RSN: What are your main findings?

Masuzawa: And I suppose you want them in 25 words or less? Too hard. But I can say what the main *question* is. Here is the premise: for a long time, the standard European framework for mapping the world religiously, so to speak, had been something like this. First, there are those who know God and live accordingly and correctly. Then there are two groups of renegades, one small in number and the other very large and powerful; they also know the existence of the supreme god of the universe, so they have religion, to be sure, but they obviously got it seriously wrong; that's because they either refuse to recognize Jesus as the Savior, or worse, they follow a false prophet, thereby creating schisms. In addition, there are all those unfortunate others who have never known anything about God, and since they don't have religion, they worship sundry substitute objects. In short, according to this way of thinking, there are four kinds of people: Christians, Jews, "Mohammedans," and a vast number of godforsaken heathen idolaters; but at the same time, there is only one *religion*, ultimately. It sounds paradoxical at first, but it has its own logic. Questions like "how many religions are there in the world?" seem elemental to us but, to my knowledge, no one in the 17th or 18th century asked such a question. So, for centuries, this was a conventional formula for delineating the religious "diversity" of the world, and you find the same formula employed as late as the early 19th century. But during the 19th century, the system collapses. Then, in the early 20th century, there suddenly appears a list of 11 or so "world religions," together with this neologism itself. The list is the same as today's. So, this book asks, what happened in the 19th century to produce this result?

RSN: Well, what happened? And why is that important?

Masuzawa: It's important because if we don't examine what actually went on, and if instead we just speculate based on this set of "before" and "after" pictures, we might think that this was simply a result of the progress of knowledge. We might say something like, in contradistinction from those benighted premoderns, we now duly acknowledge the reality of other religions, we recognize them individually, in their own terms . . . which also makes it seem that our present state of knowledge is more tolerant and generous. A powerful self-congratulation on our part, and an easy celebration of pluralism all at once, isn't it?

RSN: Are you saying all this talk about increase in information and knowledge isn't true?

Masuzawa: I'm saying all this is thoroughly ideological. This scenario purports to explain something once and for all; but in fact it's the scenario, and its logic and its compelling power, that need to be accounted for. Of course there has been a tremendous increase in knowledge, progress in science if you will. But the question is how this progress occurred, and why in those particular directions, and with what particular results.

RSN: And you find answers to these questions in comparative philology?

Masuzawa: Let's say I'm prepared to claim that 19th-century philology — that is to say, roughly, from [Friedrich] Schlegel to [Ernest] Renan — is an immensely important nodal point in this history. I don't mean this in the sense of a unilateral causal explanation; but I privilege philology as a focal point of my analysis. You look at this nodal point long enough, close enough, you'll see that some other notable entities floating about got snagged on it, changed their course because of it, and with enormous consequences.

RSN: Including comparative religion. . . .

Masuzawa: Yes, especially comparative religion. And it was comparative religion that eventually became instrumental in authorizing today's world religions list, its pluralist logic.

RSN: How would you describe your scholarship — your theory or method?

Masuzawa: Read very closely.

RSN: Is that a method?

Masuzawa: Well, I can't call it a theory.

RSN: OK, method, then.

Masuzawa: I could say other things to elaborate, I suppose, but they all boil down to that. It's very elemental. This of course applies also to things other than "texts" in the narrow sense — any bundle of material that lies before you that you can make amenable for interpretation. I realize I'm sounding like a simple-minded positivist here — as if I were saying "the data will speak for itself," or something of the sort. Now, what can I say to persuade you that's not what I mean? I'm describing how I get to work. I can't initiate any good

See **MASUZAWA** p.22

In the Public Interest

Editor's Note:
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Dropping the Other Shoe: The Supreme Court Decision in Locke v. Davey

Dena S. Davis, Cleveland-Marshall College of Law

IN 2002 the Supreme Court decided, in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, that it was not unconstitutional under the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment for communities to use taxpayer money to send students to religiously affiliated schools as part of a voucher plan to offer educational alternatives to public school children. Ever since that decision, Court watchers have been wondering about the obverse of that question. Zelman tells communities that they *may* include parochial schools in voucher programs, but what about a community that wants to have a voucher-type program that excludes religiously affiliated schools? Can a community choose to make that distinction, or would that constitute an unconstitutional discrimination against some schools merely because of their religious character?

Less than two years after *Zelman*, the Court appears to have answered that question in *Locke v. Davey*, decided February 25, 2004. Although the facts in *Locke* are fairly narrow, most scholars believe that the decision is broad enough to encompass government voucher programs for elementary and secondary school students, and possibly for faith-based initiatives in which taxpayer funds are funneled to religious providers of social services.

Joshua Davey, a student in the state of Washington, was granted a state "Promise Scholarship" to provide financial assistance in college. Davey attended Northwest College and was a double major in pastoral studies and business management. He planned to enter the ministry. Promise Scholarship recipients must meet certain academic and income criteria and be enrolled in an eligible institution; in addition, students may not be pursing a degree in "theology." This exclusion is based on a clause in the constitution of the state of Washington that states "No public money or property shall be appropriated for or applied to any religious worship, exercise, or instruction." Therefore, Davey was told that he was not eligible for a Promise Scholarship.

For AAR members, of course, an issue of strong concern is what the state of Washington meant by the study of "theology." As Kent Greenwalt, husband of AAR scholar Elaine Pagels, pointed out in an article written before the Supreme Court's decision, what the state meant, and what judges in the appellate court thought, was far from clear. Was the state denying scholarships only to those students studying for the profession of the ministry, or to all students studying theology? And if the latter, is the study of theology the same or different than a "religion major," "religious studies," "the study of theology from a religious perspective," and other terms that judges used to characterize the state's position?

During the course of litigation, this question was sorted out. The state, in its brief, explained that its rule denies public funds for "instruction that inculcates belief (or disbelief) in God," but not for the "secular study of the topic of religion." Davey took this distinction and ran with it, complaining that students who majored in theology taught from a secular perspective may keep their scholarships, but students who major in theology from a religious perspective are out in the cold. Although one could fashion a free speech argument from these facts (charging "viewpoint discrimination" on the part of the state), the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit addressed only Davey's right to the free exercise of religion, and the U.S. Supreme Court followed suit. In his opinion upholding the state of Washington, Chief Justice Rehnquist employed the term "devotional theology" to distinguish Davey's chosen course of study from the academic study of theology and made it clear that what was at issue was Davey's study for the purpose of pursuing the ministry. As Rehnquist said, "Training someone to lead a congregation is an essentially religious endeavor."

The question presented by this case occupies an anomalous space in church/state jurisprudence, a space described as "room for play in the joints." According to *Zelman*, the state of Washington *may* include devotional theology in its Promise Scholarships — but does that mean it *must*? Or is there room here for each state to decide on its own, without violating constitutional principles? The Supreme Court decided that excluding students who major in "devotional theology" from Promise Scholarships did not evince hostility toward religion, but rather reflected the state's acknowledged interest in interpreting its own establishment clause.

The bottom line: a voucher-type program that chooses to exclude religious schools or religious instruction from participation may do so. This was certainly a relief to many separationists, who oppose public funding of religious activities. But the news was also sobering. Although *Zelman* had allowed public funds to flow to parochial elementary and secondary schools, the focus in *Zelman* was on academic education, and the pervasively religious nature of the schools at issue was played down. In *Locke v. Davey*, the Supreme Court explicitly stated that a state may use funds to support study for the ministry, "an essentially religious endeavor." Further, students who attend Northwest College, a Bible college that requires a minimum of four "devotional" courses, are eligible for Promise Scholarships as long as they are not majoring in "devotional theology." In *Zelman*, the parochial schools were required to accept Cleveland students irrespective of religious affiliation; Northwest College, according to application instructions available on its Web site, requires a letter of reference from the applicant's pastor and states that "the applicant must be of approved Christian character."

And what is the bottom line for Joshua Davey? He graduated from Northwest and is now enrolled in Harvard Law School. ❧

From the Student Desk

Affinity in the African Diaspora

Vanessa Lovelace, Chicago Theological Seminary

Vanessa Lovelace is a PhD student in Bible, Culture, and Hermeneutics at Chicago Theological Seminary and an adjunct professor at Elmhurst College. She can be contacted at sismin@sbcglobal.net.

I HAVE LONG HAD AN AFFINITY for the stories in the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible (I use the terms interchangeably to identify both the Christian canon that includes the books of the Hebrew Bible and the Hebrew-language scriptures I am studying). As an African-American woman, many of the stories in the Old Testament are a part of my "canon within a canon." The stories of Hagar and Sarah, the Exodus, Daniel in the lion's den, the three Hebrew boys, and Esther, to name a few, have helped shape my faith and have informed my theology. I have also felt that the Old Testament stories are the stories of human existence, with our dreams, hopes, fears, warts, disappointments, questions of identity, and so on. For me, the Old Testament tells it "like it is."

As much as I loved the Old Testament, however, even when I knew that graduate studies were in my future, Hebrew Bible as a concentration had not occurred to me until I encountered Renita J. Weems, assistant professor of Hebrew Bible at Vanderbilt University, in 1995. I first heard her lecture on the Song of Songs. Following the lecture, I purchased *I Asked for Intimacy and Just a Sister Away*. I believe it was a year later when I heard her preach on Leah and Rachel (Gen. 29:31–35). I was attracted to Weems's style of writing and preaching. The exegetical attention paid to her writing and preaching, especially from a womanist perspective, for me was new and exciting. She became my role model for my area of study. Like her, I, too, wanted to bring the Old Testament to the church and academy in a new way.

When I made that decision I was not aware of the dearth of African-Americans in general, and African-American women in particular, in the field of Hebrew Bible. The only Hebrew Bible scholars I was aware of besides Weems were Randall C. Bailey, Charles Copher, and Stephen B. Reid. My knowledge of New Testament scholars fared only a little better, with Cain Hope Felder, Clarice J. Martin, Abraham Smith, and Vincent Wimbush rounding out the field. By the time I entered the PhD program in Bible, Culture, and Hermeneutics (BCH) at Chicago Theological Seminary (CTS) in fall 2002, Cheryl Anderson had joined the faculty at nearby Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary as associate professor of Old Testament. So, including myself, I knew that the number of African-American women in Hebrew Bible had increased by at least two.

With this knowledge I should have been prepared for the absence of other African-American women in the BCH program at CTS. However, by the end of my first year I was feeling isolated. The sense of isolation was not the result of anything my professors or peers did or did not do; they have always been welcoming and supportive. In fact, one of the first people to reach out and offer me support and assistance was a white female. I also have established long-lasting relationships with students from other countries, ethnicities, and races. This sense of isolation was not a feeling of being left out, but rather a feeling of aloneness. The PhD program at CTS is small and the BCH program is even smaller. There were few people with whom I could discuss issues of race and racialization or gender in biblical studies, or womanist methods of interpretation.

See **LOVELACE** p.27

Passages: Life in Retirement

Letty M. Russell, Professor Emerita of Theology, Yale Divinity School

Letty M. Russell is Professor Emerita of Theology at Yale Divinity School and Co-Coordinator of the International Feminist DMin program at San Francisco Theological Seminary. She is currently working with the YDS Women's Initiative on Gender, Faith, and Responses to HIV/AIDS in Africa. Russell holds a ThD and a STM from Union Theological Seminary and a STB from Harvard Divinity School. She graduated from Wellesley College with a BA in 1951 and worked for 17 years in the East Harlem Protestant Parish in New York City as an educator and pastor, having been ordained as a Presbyterian minister in 1958. She taught at Manhattan College (1969–74) and Yale Divinity School (1974–2001). Russell has published 18 books, many of which are in translation. Her book Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church *and her co-edited work* Dictionary of Feminist Theologies *characterize her commitment to feminist studies and to the renewal of the church.*

RSN: Tell us about the types of activities that you have been involved in since you retired.

Russell: I do not think of myself as retired, but only as rewired! I have more choice about what I do, but I am just as busy as ever. I continue to be connected to my colleagues at Yale because I am active in the YDS Women's Initiative on Gender, Faith, and Responses to HIV/AIDS in Africa. I also teach a course each year in the area of feminist theologies in postcolonial perspective. A great deal of my time is devoted to teaching and co-coordinating the International Feminist DMin Program, which is sponsored by the World Council of Churches and San Francisco Theological Seminary.

RSN: Could you give us some examples of your most enjoyable activities?

Russell: I enjoy continuing to teach and lecture, both at YDS and in the many countries where our DMin course is taught. I find that teaching helps the continuing process of action/reflection and pushes me into new areas of feminist and liberation theologies. I also enjoy studying and writing, although my schedule makes it difficult to do as much of this as I would like. My favorite forms of recreation are still sailing and swimming, along with sharing long conversations with friends over dinner!

RSN: Who have been your role models during retirement?

Russell: There are not many retired feminist theologians around to be role models. Yale was so unfamiliar with the idea that they put Emeritus Professor on my retirement certificate! I enjoy discussing issues of retirement with colleagues reaching that point, but I have to say my role models have been my mother and grandmother, who continued their active lives well into their 80s and 90s.

RSN: What has given you the greatest satisfaction in your retirement?

Russell: It gives me great satisfaction that I have the physical strength and means to go on working as an advocate for justice and liberation for women and for all people and for all creation. But the greatest satisfaction is seeing my many students and friends grow and blossom into their own vocations. It is a great gift to be able to retire as a professor. Unlike many people, we have an infinite variety of ways to continue to serve others through our writing, research, and teaching, and we usually have the pension and health care that make this possible. I continue to share a home close to Long Island Sound with my partner, Shannon Clarkson, and can enjoy quiet hours appreciating the natural world around me.

RSN: What type of reading or research are you doing in retirement?

Russell: Besides reading novels, the *New York Times*, and the Bible, I read material on social justice issues and on feminist, queer, and liberation theologies. I spend a great deal more time studying material written by women in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Part of my research involves international travel so that I can work directly with these women theologians. I am writing a book on *Theology of Hospitality in a World of Difference*, and also enjoy collaborative work with other scholars, such as a book on Hagar and Sarah that Phyllis Trible and I are editing.

> *"It is a great gift to be able to retire as a professor."*

RSN: If you could design your perfect retirement, what would it look like?

Russell: A perfect retirement for me would always have lots of people, books, and projects! The one I have is really quite perfect for me, except that I would like to have the full energy and health that I had when I began teaching at age 40!

RSN: Knowing what you know now, what might you have done differently during your academic career?

Russell: My academic career was built by going around road blocks to the full participation of women as clergy in the church and as professors in theological schools. I think my early work in East Harlem in New York taught me the importance of the struggle for justice and of partnership with others in that struggle. I, of course, am glad that some of those barriers have been removed and would like to see what it would be like to have an academic career when issues of class, race, gender, sexual orientation, and physical ability were eliminated. However, I can truly say that I would not have done it differently! I would still value the experience of working in a cross-cultural community before beginning to teach, along with a commitment to continue to struggle for justice, and to build community and networks of support through one's teaching and example.

RSN: What has been the most significant change in your life since you retired?

Russell: Probably the most significant change is that I can devote much more of my attention to building networks of support with women in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This has always been an interest of mine because of my participation in advocacy work for women through the World Council of Churches. Now it includes mentoring women theologians who come to YDS and the Yale Center for Interdisciplinary Research on HIV/AIDS. These "faith fellows," who are recommended by the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians, do postgraduate study for a year and return to their countries to work on projects that help transform attitudes and theologies regarding sex, stigma, and HIV/AIDS. This mentoring extends to many continents, as I focus more on teaching and co-coordinating the International Feminist DMin program. The other change is that my quality of life at home has improved, with more time to read the newspaper, work around the house, and participate in church and community activities.

RSN: If you could give advice to your younger colleagues who are still teaching, what would it be?

Russell: The most important thing is to teach and live at every stage of your life in a way that is faithful to what you value most in your religious, social, and personal life. It does no good to say that you will support your colleagues, speak out for needed changes, and believe in your own ability after you have tenure! Your way of life is learned by practice and not a reward when you "arrive." Then, whether or not you "arrive," you will enjoy living with yourself and working with others. You will have more courage to face the difficulties that every life, including the academic life, brings, and to find joy in your teaching. ❧

MASUZAWA, from p.20

thought process by directly engaging some large issue, or reacting to a big question. I always begin with particular things. But it's these particulars that often end up generating a pretty big argument, it's true. I suppose that's a consequence of my training in a certain school of literary criticism. At least it taught me to expect that sort of thing to happen.

RSN: Is that your method in your earlier book [*In Search of Dreamtime*] also?

Masuzawa: If you're referring to the point about dwelling on the minute rhetorical gestures of the text, yes. It was a centripetal reading in the extreme. It was a reading performed for the most part disengaged from other texts, from authors' lives, social contexts, and so on. But in that book I wasn't making a historical argument. My concern was essentially logical and conceptual. I think I was trying to unfurl — if that's the right metaphor — what seemed like a tremendously paradoxical logic of origination by following a few select writings of those three authors [Durkheim, Max Müller, Freud].

RSN: Have you always been interested in the origin of religion?

Masuzawa: No, never. I'm just interested in those people who happened to be interested in that question — or, I should say, people who chose to make that question *productive* in some way. In retrospect, I'm not sure if any of them were interested in such a question, really, as an end in itself. Müller had something to say about the origin of mythology, but not religion. Now that I've read a lot more of his work, I can say confidently that the origin of religion was just about the last thing he thought needed an explanation.

RSN: How was the *Dreamtime* book received?

Masuzawa: Initially, with the deepest suspicion. I think there were lots of flags up in that book warning of my "post-ism" of various kinds, which were all much dreaded then, and still actively despised by some people. To me, my leaning on poststructuralism meant a certain reading strategy, but some of those hostile to that strategy insisted that "deconstruction" always came with a particular ontology — basically, a very stupid sort of relativism. But it's been over a decade now. There are some modest indications that some people are still reading it, and hopefully not all readers are impeded by the echoes of the phantom menace of post-ism. For that, I feel cautiously, but very deeply, gratified. ❧

Expanding the Academy beyond the University

Editor's Note:

During the Annual Meeting there will be a Special Topics Forum entitled "Alternative Careers for Religion Doctoral Students" (A2—22).

Richard Amesbury, Valdosta State University

Richard Amesbury concluded a two-year term as Student Director on the AAR Board last November. He received his PhD from Claremont Graduate University in January 2003 and is now an assistant professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Valdosta State University. He can be contacted at ramesbur@valdosta.edu.

FINDING A FULL-TIME JOB is itself a full-time job, and, as many PhD graduates know, the effort doesn't always pay off as planned. According to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), 44.5 percent of all American faculty are employed on a part-time basis, and more than 60 percent of all faculty appointments are to non-tenure-track positions.

I recall that around the time I was elected student director in 2001, there was some discussion among the AAR's Board of Directors of a letter from a recent graduate who had been unable to find full-time employment, and who felt betrayed by a system of graduate education that he characterized as a kind of pyramid scheme. His point was that there simply are not enough teaching jobs to go around. Indeed, the same economic pressures that lead administrators to cut tenure-track appointments also drive increasing numbers of potential students into graduate programs — a process facilitated in the short run, but complicated in the long run, by student loans.

Such concerns are difficult to know how to address, given the structural nature of the problem. Nevertheless, they are too pressing to ignore. It seems to me that for such a multifaceted problem, a multilateral approach is required. To that end, I would like to offer two observations.

The first is that students are often the first to experience — in rather acute and direct ways — the pressures that shape this field for better or worse: what is bad for them usually turns out to be bad for everyone else. While the increasing use of adjunct faculty is of particular concern to those preparing to enter the job market, it has profound and disturbing implications for the academy as a whole. For instance, it narrows the scope of academic freedom, jeopardizes the quality of education, and takes a toll — difficult to quantify but real nonetheless — on faculty governance and collegiality. It also is telling that women are better represented in the adjunct ranks than they are among tenured faculty. The upshot is that, whether they realize it or not, students, professors, and administrators all share a common long-term interest in preventing the erosion of our collective profession.

Although non-tenure-track appointments are continuing to increase, it is encouraging to note that the implications of this trend are beginning to receive the attention they deserve. The governing council of the AAUP recently adopted a policy statement on "Contingent Appointments and the Academic Profession" (*www.aaup.org/statements/SpchState/contingent.htm*), which makes a number of recommendations and offers practical advice to institutions contemplating the conversion of contingent positions into tenure-track appointments. At some campuses and in some disciplines, adjuncts are beginning to unionize. Even if accrediting bodies fail to get involved, it may eventually come to the attention of administrators that a stable and tenured faculty is a competitive advantage when it comes to attracting students.

Moreover, it seems to me that the AAR has a constructive role to play here as the professional guild in our field. I'd like to suggest that this responsibility cannot simply be delegated to the level of individual institutions, and that it is in fact consistent with the strategic objectives outlined in our recently adopted Centennial Strategic Plan (*www.aarweb.org/about/strategicplan/2004.asp*). Among the academic trends the plan singles out for attention are "the increasing use of adjunct teachers, the erosion of tenure, [and] the growing corporate culture in college and university administration." The Regions Committee, under the guidance of Mark Lloyd Taylor, took an important step toward implementing the plan by sponsoring a Special Topics Forum on "The Use and Abuse of Adjunct Faculty in Religious Studies" at the Annual Meeting in Atlanta, and I would call on the Board and the Academy at large to support and continue such efforts.

My second observation has to do with the way in which the limits of the academy (with a small "a") tend to be conceived. Although at present there may not be enough teaching jobs for all of the qualified religion graduates who want to remain in the field, part of the solution may be to broaden students' understanding of the field beyond the university. This is an intellectual direction in which the AAR's Student Liaison Group has already begun moving.

At this past year's Annual Meeting, the SLG hosted a panel discussion entitled "Putting Your PhD to Work: Alternative Careers for Religion Graduates." Our aim was to showcase attractive possibilities for employment beyond academic teaching, by featuring religion scholars who are happily employed in a variety of fields outside the university, including government, medical ethics, business, publishing, the nonprofit sector, and library science.

Judging by the turnout and discussion, there is no shortage of interest among students. My hope is that this interest might also signal an increasing appreciation on the part of those of us whose e-mail addresses end with the letters "edu" of the contributions to our field made by those of us whose e-mail addresses end in "com," "gov," and "org."

An important point to note about these efforts is that they are not intended to encourage students to seek employment outside the field, rather they are intended to help students reimagine what it is to work "in the field" by reconceiving the field's borders. Thus, these efforts seem to me to be fully consistent with the AAR's commitment to promoting and advancing the field, and I hope that they will continue with the support of the Board.

Ours is an exciting time in the study of religion, and the task of reconfiguring the contours of our field will require input from all different quarters. In the long run, I think that what is good for the field will turn out to be good for each of us individually. ❧

Research Briefing

Editor's Note:

Recipients of AAR's research grants are asked to submit a brief report. Mary Jane Haemig was a 2002 recipient of an Individual Research Grant. Her report is below.

Advent/Christmas/Epiphany: Text, Message, and Seasonal Experience among Lutherans and Roman Catholics in 16th-century Germany

Mary Jane Haemig, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota

I RESEARCHED at the Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Wolfenbuettel, Germany, from September 13, 2002, until December 13, 2002. I also used the state library of Lower Saxony in Goettingen.

The primary focus of my research was printed Lutheran and Roman Catholic vernacular sermons. The breadth of the available material and the limited time led me to focus almost exclusively on Advent materials. I read many sermons, both Lutheran and Roman Catholic! I also spent considerable time seeking other "windows" into the Advent experience — printed prayers, liturgies, hymns, and ecclesiastical regulations. Through these I sought to address the questions in my grant proposal (abbreviated below).

Did differing theological perspectives result in discernible differences in preaching? Or do Lutheran and Roman Catholic sermons indicate more similarities at the "grass roots" than the dialogue and disputations between university theologians and church officials indicate?

For each of the four Sundays in Advent, I found significant similarities within each group's sermons for Advent, as well as significant differences between the groups. I developed a standard form by which to analyze and compare sermons. Differing theological perspectives did result in discernible differences in preaching and these differences are directly related to the classic 16th-century theological differences between Lutherans and Roman Catholics.

How did the listeners experience each season of the church year and how did their preachers want them to experience it? What practices were associated with each season? Did the preachers voice approval or disapproval of these? Again, are any observed differences related to theological differences or to something else?

Advent prayers became a major focus of my research. Many sermons had prayers printed at the end. Some prayer books for laity and ecclesiastical ordinances for clergy had prayers designated for the Advent season. Analyzing and comparing these prayers became important to my research on the faith experience of the audience. Clearly preachers intended one response to their sermons to be prayer and sought to shape the faith experience of their listeners by offering model prayers. One common perception among listeners was that prayer was an appropriate practice for Advent. I am drafting an article on the prayers of Advent. I presented a paper "Preparation or Something Else? Prayers for the Advent Season" at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, October 30–November 2, 2003, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Were Lutheran and Roman Catholic sermons in some way in conversation with each other? Does it appear that preachers took up concerns, arguments, or proposals in the other group's sermons and directly responded to them?

Particularly in the latter half of the 16th century, Lutheran and Roman Catholic preachers were reading each other's materials and sometimes explicitly but more often implicitly responding to them. Clearly, preachers assumed their listeners were hearing other interpretations of the text and other theological arguments. They sought to counter those and to give their listeners the tools to counter them. Lay listeners became the focus of intense theological debate between Lutheran and Roman Catholic preachers.

Future Plans: I have outlined a book on Advent in the 16th century and intend to continue work on it. ❧

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Sexual Harassment Policy

AT ITS NOVEMBER 1996 meeting, the AAR Board of Directors adopted a policy condemning sexual harassment in academic settings. Building upon the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's definition of sexual harassment, the statement is designed to elevate members' awareness of the range of behaviors that can be described as sexual harassment, and to articulate the AAR's own commitment to ensuring that its own activities and operations are free from the pernicious effects of such behavior.

The AAR's Status of Women in the Profession Committee drafted the statement which also draws from statements by a number of other learned societies that have established similar policies. When asked why it was important for the AAR to put forward such a statement, Emilie Townes, a former chair of the AAR's Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession, said, "It is important to match the high standards the American Academy of Religion has for scholarship and research with a policy that calls forth the best of each of us professionally and interpersonally. It is important for AAR to make a clear and unambiguous statement against sexual harassment and provide all of the membership of the Academy resources for understanding and combating such dehumanizing behavior."

Sexual Harassment Policy for the American Academy of Religion

Introduction

The American Academy of Religion is committed to fostering and maintaining an environment of rigorous learning, research, and teaching in the field of religion. This environment must be free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a discriminatory practice which is unethical, unprofessional, and threatening to intellectual freedom. It usually involves persons of unequal power, authority, or influence but can occur between persons of the same status.

Sexual harassment is illegal under Title VII of the 1980 Civil Rights Act and Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments. Sexual harassment is a gross violation of professional ethics comparable to plagiarism or falsification of research. It should be regarded and treated as such by members of the Academy. The policy of the American Academy of Religion is to condemn sexual harassment. Members of the Academy are encouraged to file complaints about sexual harassment with the appropriate administrative office of the institution where the harasser is employed or where he or she is enrolled, or with appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Editor's Note:

At the request of the Status of Women in the Profession Committee, RSN *publishes the AAR's Sexual Harassment Policy every year to ensure that each member has an opportunity to read it. This same statement is always available online at* www.aarweb.org/about/board/resolutions/sh.asp.

Background

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) of the United States government defines sexual harassment in the workplace or in the academic setting as "the use of one's authority or power, either explicitly or implicitly, to coerce another into unwanted sexual relations or to punish another for his or her refusal; or the creation of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment through verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature."

Having friendships with students is common for teachers. It is also possible that teachers will experience attraction to students and experience students' sexual attraction to them. This cuts across gender and sexual orientation. Because of the inherent power differential between teacher and student, it is imperative that members of the Academy maintain the integrity of an environment which is not coercive, intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

The work of the Academy is best carried out in an atmosphere that fosters collegiality and mentoring. Sexual harassment can destroy or undermine this relationship. The impact of this on the life and future of the Academy cannot be belittled or ignored. When our actions are in violation of the dignity and integrity of another person, these actions are a profound violation of professional and human relationships. These are violations because they are exploitative and abusive.

Descriptions

Sexual harassment includes all behavior that prevents or impairs an individual's full enjoyment of educational or workplace rights, benefits, environments, or opportunities. These behaviors include but are not limited to:

1. sexist remarks, jokes, or behavior
2. unwelcome sexual advances, including unwanted touching
3. requests for sexual favors
4. sexual assault, including attempted or completed physical sexual assault
5. the use of professional authority to inappropriately draw attention to the gender, sexuality, or sexual orientation of an employee, colleague, or student
6. insults, including lewd remarks or conduct
7. visual displays of degrading sexual images or pornography
8. pressure to accept unwelcome social invitations.

Sexual harassment occurs from these behaviors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when any or all of the following conditions apply:

1. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used, implicitly or explicitly, as a basis for employment decisions or academic decisions affecting such individuals;

   or

2. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment.

Such an atmosphere cannot and does not foster intellectual rigor or valuable, trusting human relationships. Both are necessary ingredients for good scholarship and professional excellence. The impact on the victim of sexual harassment can be profound. Studies on the effect of sexual harassment reveal disturbing consequences, such as loss of self-confidence, decline in academic performance, and inhibited forms of professional interaction. Sexual harassment has no place in the American Academy of Religion at any organizational level — formal or informal. It is behavior that we must seek to identify and eradicate.

For information on AAR's Grievance and Complaint Procedure, please go to: *www.aarweb.org/about/board/resolutions/shg.asp.* ❧

MALDONADO-TORRES, from p.7

list of recent publications: *www.providence.edu/las/NEWSle1.html*] but also in impressive multivolume collections such as the *Historia general de la Iglesia en América Latina* (*General History of the Church in Latin America*, published throughout the 1980s by CEHILA), and the more recent and still in process 40-volume *Enciclopedia iberoamericana de las religiones* (*Iberoamerican Encyclopedia of Religions*, published by Editorial Trotta, Madrid). Also relevant are the efforts of diverse scholars of religion to reach beyond the academic and the explicitly religious community to a larger audience. ALER does this magnificently through radio programs and through its journal, the *Revista Académica para el Estudio de las Religiones* (*Academic Journal for the Study of Religions*), which can be found in popular bookstores. The journal focuses on issues of importance and general interest such as the Zapatistas uprising in Mexico and the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Each issue provides introductions to the topics, interviews, and punctual academic analyses of religious ideas and movements that play a role in the events in which the journal focuses. In this and many other ways, scholars of religion in Latin America are not only pushing the boundaries of their disciplines, and contributing to the study of religion in Latin America and the world, but also taking the lead in reformulating the goals and character of the study of religion, not only for Latin America but for other places as well. ❧

LOVELACE, from p.21

Fortunately, my feelings of isolation eventually abated. Helping to diminish those feelings was the entrance of two more African-American women into the program. I was already acquainted with one and knew of the other. We bonded immediately and they became a great source of support. We met after class each week to study together and provided one another feedback on our papers. We also meet occasionally to brainstorm with each other on our areas of focus, and offer each other any other assistance needed.

Attending my first AAR/SBL Annual Meetings in Atlanta last year also tremendously helped to decrease the feeling of isolation. The opportunity to attend presentations in the African-American Biblical Hermeneutics section, Afro-American Religious History, Black Theology, and Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society groups, and to hear brilliant African diasporan scholars, male and female, was an awesome experience. I also attended the Black Presence reception and the Committee on Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession luncheon, where I had the opportunity to meet other African-American women who were either faculty members or graduate students in the Old and New Testaments. The impending separation of the Annual Meetings will most likely impact the ability of minority students like myself to meet fellow students and potential mentors since it will divide attendance of people from underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities between the two meetings.

I have also found that the Fund for Theological Education (FTE) Doctoral Fellows Program is another opportunity for African-Americans in theology and biblical studies to network with other students and faculty members in the field. In addition to receiving financial support, FTE fellows are able to participate in the Expanding Horizons Summer Conference, where they can reflect with their peers on contemporary issues confronting theological education, scholarship, and teaching.

I have been invigorated by the experiences of the past year, both within and without the classroom. I have benefited from the readings, class discussions, lectures, study sessions, panel discussions, networking, etc. Each of these experiences has helped me become more focused and more committed to my studies as I begin my second year. I have come a long way from just having an affinity for the stories in the Old Testament to reading the Hebrew texts and developing a deeper understanding of the world from which they come. I also have gained new insights about myself, as I went from feeling isolated to feeling a part of something bigger than myself in the African diasporan commitment to biblical studies from the experiences of African people. ❧

AAR
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RSN194

Future AAR Annual Meeting Dates and Sites

2004
November 20–23
San Antonio, TX

2005
November 19–22
Philadelphia, PA

2006
November 18–21
Washington, D.C.

2007
November 17–20
San Diego, CA

2008
October 25–28
Chicago, IL

2009
November 7–10
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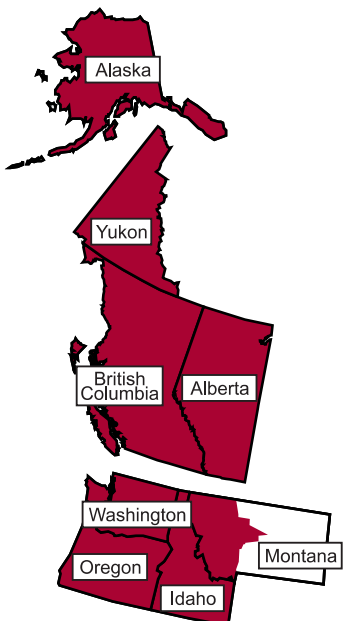
CALL FOR PAPERS, from p.9

be sent to Professor Ann Wetherilt at *wetheri@emmanuel.edu*, and should include a conference title, abstract, list of projected speakers, schedule, contact person, and a budget that indicates how the NEMAAR grant will be used. The deadline for AAR regional grants is each August; the deadlines for NEMAAR grants are October 15 and March 15. NEMAAR awards will be decided by November 15 and April 15, respectively.

2. Teaching Workshops: The topics of greatest interest to our members include course development and teaching skills. If you would like to organize a teaching workshop, NEMAAR will provide a) assistance in developing regional grants to help with funding of such conferences; b) NEMAAR grants of up to $500 to help support conference-related costs; c) assistance with resources to facilitate conference planning, including best-practice planning schedules, and access to regional e-mailings to locate presenters and/or to publicize the event; and d) inclusion in the regional Web site calendar. Proposals should be sent to Professor Barbara Darling Smith at *bsmith@wheatonma.edu*, and should include a workshop title, abstract, list of projected speakers and/or facilitators, schedule, contact person, and a budget that indicates how the NEMAAR grant will be used. The deadline for AAR regional grants is August 1; the deadlines for NEMAAR grants are October 15 and March 15. NEMAAR awards will be decided by November 15 and April 15, respectively.

3. Salon Series: Lunch and/or dinner series, held in different parts of the region, focusing on the work of regional authors (these can be works in progress). NEMAAR will provide a) assistance in developing regional grants to help with funding of such series; b) NEMAAR grants of up to $250 to help support related costs; c) access to regional e-mailings to publicize the series; and d) inclusion in the regional Web site calendar. Proposals should be sent to Professor Michael Hartwig at *PortaMJH@aol.com*, and should include a title, abstract, list of authors and/or facilitators, schedule, contact person, and a budget that indicates how the NEMAAR grant will be used. The deadline for AAR regional grants is August 1; the deadlines for NEMAAR grants are October 15 and March 15. NEMAAR awards will be decided by November 15 and April 15, respectively. ❧



Pacific Northwest

Pacific Northwest Regional Meeting
April 29–May 1, 2005
Seattle University
Seattle, Washington

Submit a 150-word abstract for each proposed paper by **January 18, 2005**, to the appropriate program unit chair listed below. Participants in the Pacific Northwest AAR Regional Meeting may present only one paper and must be registered for the meeting to participate. Papers not fitting into any of the categories below should be sent directly to Mark Lloyd Taylor, School of Theology and Ministry, Seattle University, 910 12th AVE, P.O. Box 222000, Seattle, WA 98122-1090, USA; *mltaylor@seattleu.edu*. Panels and special topics sessions are welcome!

Theology and Philosophy of Religion: Norm Metzler, Concordia University, 2811 NE Holman, Portland, OR 97211, USA; *nmetzler@cu-portland.edu*.

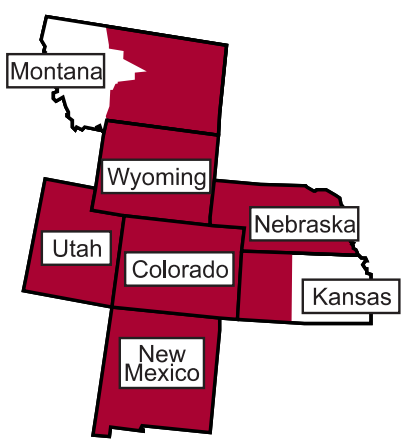
History of Christianity and North American Religions: Papers are welcomed in any area of History of Christianity and North American Religions. Robert Hauck, Religious Studies Department, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA 99258-0001, USA; *hauck@gonzaga.edu*.

Women and Religion: This section is co-chaired by Ardy Bass, Religious Studies Department, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA 99258-0001, USA; *bassa@gonzaga.edu*; and Kathlyn Breazeale, Department of Religion, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA 98447-0003, USA; *breazeka@plu.edu*.

Asian and Comparative Studies: Nicholas F. Gier, Philosophy Department, University of Idaho, Moscow, ID 83844-3016, USA; *ngier@uidaho.edu*.

Religion and Society: Gary Chamberlain, Department of Theology & Religious Studies, Seattle University, 910 12th AVE, P.O. Box 222000, Seattle, WA 98122-1090, USA; *GChamber@seattleu.edu*.

Interreligious Dialogue with the Natural Sciences: Papers for this section should focus on conceptual dialogue with the natural sciences from the perspective of the traditions normally included under the academic discipline "history of religions." Accordingly, papers written from Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Islamic, and Chinese religious perspectives in dialogue with the natural on such broad topics as cosmology, evolution, stem cell research, ecofeminism, the relation between mind and body, the problem of suffering in light of the theory of evolution, the anthropic principle, and the problem of consciousness are especially welcome. This section is co-chaired by Paul Ingram, Department of Religion, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA 98447-0003, USA; *ingrampo@plu.edu*; and Mark Unno, Department of Religious Studies, 1294 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403-1294, USA; *munno@darkwing.uoregon.edu*. ❧



Rocky Mountains–Great Plains

Rocky Mountains–Great Plains Regional Meeting
April 8–9, 2005
University of Denver
Denver, Colorado

The Regional Program Committee cordially invites you to submit proposals for papers and panels for the 2005 Regional Meeting. The deadline for submissions is **Monday, November 1, 2004**. Each proposal should consist of a one-page abstract describing the nature of the paper or panel. Proposals are welcome in all areas of religious and biblical studies. The Program Committee also is interested in panel proposals and thematic sessions in the following areas:

1) Religion in the American West

2) Religious Thought and Theories of Religion

3) Teaching Methods and Technologies

4) Specific Religious Traditions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Native American, etc.).

Only those proposals received by the deadline will be considered for inclusion in the program. Presentations are limited to 20 minutes.

Student Paper Awards: Graduate students are encouraged to submit proposals. There will be awards for the best AAR and SBL student papers. The awards, which are presented during the luncheon/business meeting on Saturday, carry a stipend of $100 each. To be considered for this award, students should submit a copy of the completed paper, along with an abstract, by **October 15, 2004** (papers not chosen for an award will be considered for the program). A student's name should appear only on the cover page of the paper; student papers will be judged anonymously. Completed papers should be no longer than 12–15 pages double-spaced (for a 20-minute presentation). *Please submit the paper as an e-mail attachment* in MS Word format to *craschke@du.edu*. In addition, please submit a backup copy of your proposal by fax or regular mail. Finally, if you require any technology (Internet, projection equipment, overhead projectors, etc.) to support your presentation, you MUST request it with your proposal or it will not be provided.

The Program Committee is also pleased to invite undergraduate papers for a "Theta Alpha Kappa National Honor Society Undergraduate Panel" on one of the topics listed above or on a topic of interest to students. There will also be an award for the best paper in the panel. Please submit completed papers, as in the graduate competition, to *craschke@du.edu* by **October 15, 2004.**

Program Committee Meeting: The Program Committee will meet during the AAR/SBL Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas, on Saturday, November 20, 2004, from 9–11 PM (place TBA) to determine the final program. All regular members of the AAR/SBL Rocky Mountain–Great Plains Region who are willing to serve on the Program Committee and review proposals are asked to notify Carl Raschke, Regional Vice President and Program Chair, by November 1, 2004. Proposals and student papers will be e-mailed as attachments to Program Committee members for their evaluation in early November. It is hoped that at least one faculty person from each of the participating schools in the region will serve on the Program Committee.

NB: Please send all proposals [by *both* e-mail MS Word attachment *and* by fax or U.S. mail (in case the e-mail is deleted by anti-spam software)] and inquiries to:

Carl A. Raschke
Department of Religious Studies

Sturm Hall 166
University of Denver
Denver, CO 80208, USA
TEL 303-871-3206; FAX 720-528-7718
craschke@du.edu.

Southeastern

Southeastern Regional Meeting
(AAR/SBL/ASOR/SE)
March 11–13, 2005
Adam's Mark Hotel
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

The following sections and program units invite members who wish to present a paper or coordinate a session to submit proposals (one to two pages) or completed manuscripts to the appropriate section chairs by the call deadline, **October 1, 2004**. Each member is limited to one proposal. *Please use the proposal submission form available on the SECSOR Web site* (*www.utc.edu/~secsor*). Proposals for joint sessions should be sent to all chairs.

Please note that, unless otherwise indicated, papers must be of such a length as can be presented and discussed within 45 minutes. *Needs for audiovisual equipment must be noted on the submission form*. Because of the very high cost of renting digital video projection equipment, presenters who wish to use such equipment must provide it themselves. The copying of handouts is also the responsibility of the presenter. *All program participants must be preregistered for the meeting.*

Suggestions for new program units or special speakers should be sent to SECSOR's Executive Director or to the Vice President/Program Chair of the respective society (see list of regional officers below).

(AAR) Academic Study of Religion and Pedagogy (2 sessions; 1 joint session): (1) Joint session with Religion, Ethics, and Society and American Biblical Hermeneutics: Teaching Environmental Ethics. (2) Teaching World Religions in the Southern United States. (3) Best practices in teaching religion and/or theology. Chair: Jennifer Manlowe, *jmanlowe@westga.edu*.

(AAR) African-American Religion (2 sessions; 1 joint session): Any topics relating to the African-American Religious Experience. Proposals regarding the religion of Blacks or African peoples outside the United States will also be considered. See description of joint session under Arts, Literature, and Religion. Chair: Sandy Dwayne Martin, *martin@uga.edu*.

(AAR/SBL) American Biblical Hermeneutics (1–2 sessions; 1 joint session): (1) Joint Session with Religion, Ethics, and Society and Academic Study of Religion and Pedagogy: Teaching Environmental Ethics. (2) Open session: Bodies That Matter in Public Discourse and Religion. Papers are invited on a wide range of topics related to the body and religion. Chair: N. Samuel Murrell, Philosophy/Religion, UNC–Wilmington, 601 S. College RD, Wilmington, NC 28403-5601, USA; (910) 962-3411; *Murrells@uncw.edu*.

(SBL/ASOR) Archaeology and the Ancient World (4 sessions): (1) Scribes and Writing in the Ancient World. Joint session with New Testament and Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament. Participation will be by invitation. (2) Presidential Address: Jim Pace (Elon College) will speak on the ceramic typology of the Kerak Resources Project. Respondents will be invited. (3) Death and Burial in the Ancient World. Open session. The ritual process of death and burial in antiquity, including (but not limited to) reports from the field, interpretations of finds, archaeologically informed readings of texts, and historical analyses. (4) Archaeology and the Biblical World. Open session. The material culture of the biblical world, including (but not limited to) reports from the field, interpretations of finds, archaeologically informed readings of texts, and historical analyses. Chair: Byron R. McCane, Wofford College, 429 North Church ST, Spartanburg, SC 29303, USA; *mccanebr@wofford.edu*.

(AAR) Arts, Literature, and Religion (5 sessions, including 2 joint sessions): (1) Open call on topics on religion and literature, film, and visual art. (2) Joint session with Women and Religion: Black women filmmakers. (3) Joint session with African-American Religion: The Body in African-American Culture and Literature. (4) Erotic poetry and the sacred and/or sexual body. (5) Catholic writers and filmmakers and the depiction of the body. Chair: Carolyn Medine, University of Georgia, Department of Religion, 206 Peabody Hall, Athens, GA 30602-1625, USA; *medine@uga.edu.*

(SBL) Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament (3 or 4 sessions): (1) An invited panel of authors of recent introductions to the Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament will discuss the process of constructing an introduction and the challenges faced. (2) An invited panel will review the introductory texts by the authors on the above panel. (3) and (4) Open sessions. Please send proposals (or completed papers if you have never presented) to Alice W. Hunt, Vanderbilt University Divinity School, Nashville, TN 37240, USA; *Alice.W.Hunt@vanderbilt.edu*; and Bryan Bibb, Department of Religion, Furman University, 3300 Poinsett HWY, Greenville, SC 29613, USA; *bryan.bibb@furman.edu*.

(AAR) History of Christianity (2 sessions): (1) Open Topics. Any area dealing with the history of Christianity. (2) Body, Matter, Place. Possible topics include Gnosticism, Manichaeism, Jansenism, Docetism, the medieval understanding of the corpus Christianum, the total Christian society, the feast of Corpus Christi, the world as God's body, material culture, religious bodies in historical perspective, places such as Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and women and their bodies. Chair: Richard Penaskovic, Department of Philosophy, 6080 Haley Center, Auburn University, Auburn, AL 36849-5210, USA; *penasri@auburn.edu*. Please send a hard copy of proposals.

(AAR) History of Judaism (2 sessions): (1) Open call: Second-Temple Judaism and Beyond. (2) Open call: Any topic. Chair: Gilya Gerda Schmidt, Department of Religious Studies, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996, USA; *gschmidt@utk.edu*.

(AAR) History of Religions (5 sessions, including 2 joint sessions): (1) All proposals related to the conference theme "Body, Matter, Place" will be considered. (2) Joint session with ASOR on Death and Burial. (3) Religion in Nepal. (4) Joint session with Women and Religion: New Religious Configurations in the South. (5) Open call. Chair: Brian K. Pennington, Maryville College, *brian.pennington@maryvillecollege.edu*.

(SBL) New Testament (4–6 sessions): (1) Invited panel discussion. (2) Possible joint session. (3) Open topics for multiple sessions in New Testament and Christian origins. Send title and abstract (150 words) or complete paper (required of first-time presenters) to F. Scott Spencer, Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, 3400 Brook RD, Richmond, VA 23227, USA; *spencer@btsr.edu*.

(AAR) Philosophy of Religion and Theology (3 sessions): (1) Issues in Science and Religion. (2) Feminist Theological Discourse. (3) Open Call. Chair: George Shields, Kentucky State University, *gshields@gwmail.kysu.edu.*

(AAR) Religion, Ethics, and Society (2 sessions; 1 joint session): Papers on all topics will be considered, but the following themes are especially invited: (1) Hate, (2) Body, Matter, and Place, (3) Joint session with American Biblical Hermeneutics and Academic Study of Religion and Pedagogy: Teaching Environmental Ethics. Submit two copies of proposal to Toddie Peters, Elon University, Campus Box 2260, Elon, NC 27244, USA; or e-mail proposal to *rpeters@elon.edu* and *lstivers@pfeiffer.edu* (Laura Stivers, Pfeiffer University).

(AAR) Religion in America (2 sessions): Open call with special interest in pietist and holiness movements, Judaism in the South, and the public role of religion in American life and law. Chair: Kathleen Flake, The Divinity School, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37240-2701, USA; FAX: 615-343-9957; *kathleen.flake@vanderbilt.edu*.

(AAR) Women and Religion (2 planned sessions; 1 open session): (1) Open call for papers on any topic on women and religion. (2) Joint session with Arts, Literature, and Religion on Black women filmmakers. (3) Joint session with History of Religions on "New Religious Configurations in the South." Send proposals to members of the interim steering committee: Heather Nicholson (*han03@fsu.edu*) and Monica Coleman (*revmonica@att.net*).

Session for Undergraduate Students

Undergraduate students at institutions in the Southeast Region are invited to submit papers for a special session. Open to all topics, the session will be composed of the papers considered the best submissions by an interdisciplinary committee. Students should submit completed papers that reflect original student research of an appropriate length for presentation (approximately 12 double-spaced pages). Please include on a cover page contact information for the student and the faculty sponsor. Electronic submission preferred. Send submissions by December 15, 2004, to Bernadette McNary-Zak, Rhodes College (*mcnary_zak@rhodes.edu*). Note: Undergraduates may still submit proposals to other sections as well.

Southwest

Southwest Regional Meeting
March 12–13, 2005
Harvey Hotel, DFW Airport
Dallas, Texas

The following is a listing of the chairs of the various societies and a description of program specifics. Submit proposals to the person designated in each section. Indicate if the proposal is being submitted to more than one section. The deadline for proposals is **November 1, 2004**.

Arts, Literature, and Religion: This year our section will reflect on the intersection of traditional religious themes and contemporary culture. These themes might include, for instance, suffering, sacrifice, sin and redemption, apocalypse, biblical narrative, evangelism, charity, forgiveness, prayer and meditation, mysticism, and spiritual desire, as expressed in such contemporary media as anime, hip hop, Broadway, Hollywood, fiction, TV evangelism, talk radio, the Internet, kitsch, the stage, and dance. Papers that consider the reverse phenomenon, the incorporation of popular media into worship, are also of interest. Panels will be constructed from submitted abstracts around similar media or themes. Alternatives to the standard reading of papers are strongly preferred. Please submit abstracts that provide both a general overview of the paper and some specific information about its presentation, and please indicate if you will require special equipment or media services. Send proposals to:

Katherine Brown Downey
School of Arts and Humanities
University of Texas at Dallas
P.O. Box 830688, MS JO31
Richardson, TX 75083-0688, USA
(972) 883-2073 (OFFICE)
E-MAIL: *Katherine.Downey@utdallas.edu.*

Comparative and Asian Studies in Religion: The Comparative and Asian Studies in Religion section has an open call for papers. Papers and proposals in relation to all aspects of Asian religious practice and thought, both historical and contemporary, are invited. However, papers in the areas of "Healing Traditions of Asia in the Classroom" and "Jihad and progressive Islam" are of special interest. Papers related to religious art in Asia and those that employ audiovisual equipment are also welcome. These papers will be placed in one of the sessions on Asian Religions or in a joint program with the Arts, Literature, and Religion section. (Some overhead projectors and slide projectors *may* be available; if using a Power Point presentation, please make your own arrangement for a data projector). Send proposals to:

M. Alejandro Chaoul
Department of Religious Studies, M.S. 15
Rice University
6100 S. Main ST
Houston, TX 77005, USA
E-MAIL: *alec@rice.edu.*

See **CALL FOR PAPERS** p.30

CALL FOR PAPERS, from p.29

Ethics, Society, and Cultural Analysis: Proposals for papers or panel discussions are invited on any topic in ethics and social analysis. Possible areas include, but are not limited to, social ethics, bioethics, theological ethics, topics in the history of ethics, ethical issues in church-state relations, and comparative ethics. For a joint session with the Philosophy of Religion and Theology section, we invite submissions on recent challenges to and modifications of just-war theory brought on by the predicament of global terrorism. Send proposals for this joint session to the chairs of both sections. Other special topics of interest are reflection on retrieving tradition in ethics, teaching ethics, and the *Evangelium Vitae* after ten years. Send proposals to:

Tracey Mark Stout
Bluefield College
3000 College DR
Box 53
Bluefield, VA 24605, USA
E-MAIL: *tstout@bluefield.edu.*

History of Christianity: The History of Christianity section has an open call for papers. All submissions in the field of History of Christianity will be considered, but papers in the following areas are of special interest: Roman Catholicism, especially the papacy, Pentecostalism (in honor of the 100th anniversary of the Azusa Street Revival), and the Baptist World Alliance (in honor of the 100th anniversary of the BWA). Send proposals to:

Jerry L. Faught II
Department of Religion
Oklahoma Baptist University
Box 61261
500 W. University
Shawnee, OK 74804, USA
405-878-2218 (OFFICE)
E-MAIL: *Jerry.Faught@okbu.edu.*

Philosophy of Religion and Theology**:** Proposals are invited in all areas in philosophy of religion or in theology. Possible topics include (but are not limited to) the following: tradition as a theological resource, the interaction between philosophy of religion and philosophy of science, and issues in race and ethnicity. To mark the 150th anniversary of Soren Kierkegaard's death (1813–1855), we invite papers exploring his theological significance for the 21st century. For a joint session with the Ethics, Society, and Cultural Analysis section, we invite submissions on recent challenges to and modifications of just-war theory brought on by the predicament of global terrorism. Send proposals for this joint session to the chairs of both sections. Proposals involving multiple presentations or panel discussions (no more than three participants) focused upon a single topic, figure, or publication will be especially welcome (either have each panelist provide an abstract, which is preferred, or supply credentials of panelists). Proposals that feature interdisciplinary or interinstitutional participation, and that promise to stimulate productive discussion, will be favored. Proposals should be no more than two pages, with the title of presentation and some sense of the argument. Include a return address, contact number, and e-mail address. Please do not submit proposals as e-mail attachments; paste them into the body of the e-mail. Submit proposals to:

Steve Oldham
University of Mary Hardin-Baylor
Box 8422 UMHB Station
900 College ST
Belton, TX 76513, USA
254-295-4171 (OFFICE)
E-MAIL: *soldham@umhb.edu.*

Reflections on the Teaching of Religion: Proposals are invited for presentations during a Sunday morning session on the topic of pedagogical innovations and strategies for incorporating the study of women, gender, and/or sexuality into religious studies classrooms. Especially welcome are proposals concerning creative classroom exercises/assignments, effective curriculum design, negotiating student resistance, and navigating relationships between advocacy and objectivity in the classroom. Submit proposals to:

Claire L. Sahlin
Texas Woman's University
P.O. Box 425557
Denton, TX 76204-5557, USA
940-898-2255 (OFFICE)
940-898-2101 (FAX)
E-MAIL: *csahlin@mail.twu.edu.*

Theta Alpha Kappa

Student members of Theta Alpha Kappa chapters in the Southwest Region are invited to submit papers for presentation at the regional meeting. Open to all topics. One session will be devoted to the best papers. Submissions must come from the chapter advisor and include the presenter's name and contact information, the entire paper (preferred) or an abstract of the paper (acceptable), and name of the school. In the event that there are more proposals than can fit in one session, local chapter advisors may be asked to select the one best submission from their schools. Submissions must be made electronically to:

Dr. Nadia Lahutsky
Texas Christian University
E-MAIL: *n.lahutsky@tcu.edu.*

Upper Midwest

Upper Midwest Regional Meeting
(AAR/SBL)
April 1–2, 2005
Luther Seminary
Saint Paul, Minnesota

The program committee invites members of the AAR and the SBL to submit proposals for papers to be read at the regional meeting. To submit a proposal, please complete the Web-based form at *umw-aarsbl.org/proposal.htm* by **December 15, 2004**. Proposals of undergraduate papers are made by members of the societies on behalf of their students by completing the form at *umw-aarsbl.org/proposal/undergrad.htm*.

AAR Sessions:

Multicultural Perspectives on Theology and Religion (revised section): This section seeks papers that address theology and religion from diverse racial, sexual, ethnic, and demographic perspectives.

Debra Mubashshir Majeed
Beloit College
Beloit, WI

Ethics: Phillip Rolnick and Paul Wojda
University of Saint Thomas
Saint Paul, MN

Historical Perspectives on Religion: This section seeks papers dealing with the social, cultural, intellectual, and institutional history of all religious traditions. Submissions using traditional historical or interdisciplinary methods are equally welcome.

Sherry Jordon
University of Saint Thomas
Saint Paul, MN

Religions in North America: This section seeks proposals analyzing religious traditions, practices, and communities in North America from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives.

Mary Sawyer
Iowa State University
Ames, IA

Religion and Science: Greg Peterson
South Dakota State University
Brookings, SD

Religion and Ecology (new section): Submissions are welcome on any aspect of religion and ecology study, including the role of politics, globalization, war, or legal decisions in the creation of, and/or resistance to, environmental degradation. Other topics within the field are encouraged.

John Baumann
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh
Oshkosh, WI

Religion, Art, and Culture (revised section): Submissions are welcome on all topics that examine the relationships between religion and cultural ideas, including, but not limited to, music, literature, and all forms of art, as well as the ways in which religion shapes and is shaped by culture.

Larry Harwood
Viterbo University, La Crosse
WI

Religion, Gender, and Sexuality (revised section): Submissions are welcome on all topics that explore the intersections between religious ideas and constructions of gender and/or sexuality. This section consolidates the Women & Religion and Religion & Sexuality sections.

C. Neal Keye
College of St. Scholastica
Duluth, MN

Philosophy of Religion
Systematic Theology: Tatha Wiley, Saint Paul, MN

World Religions: James Robinson
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, IA

SBL Sessions:

Old Testament/Hebrew Bible: Exegetical studies of specific texts, theological or thematic examinations, and methodological proposals are welcome.

Rolf Jacobson
Luther Seminary
Saint Paul, MN

New Testament: Exegetical studies of specific texts, theological or thematic examinations, and methodological proposals are welcome.

Jeannine Brown
Bethel Seminary
Saint Paul, MN

Jesus in Galilee (trial section): Application of recent archaeological data to the interpretation of texts and traditions about Jesus in Galilee.

Mark Schuler
Concordia University
Saint Paul, MN

Biblibal Interpretation from Liberation and Multicultural Perspectives (revised section): Paper proposals should bring liberation or multicultural perspectives — for example, Latin American, Palestinian, Asian, black, feminist — to bear on the exegesis of specific biblical texts (Hebrew Bible or New Testament); papers on noncanonical texts will also be considered.

Elizabeth G. Burr
University of Saint Thomas
Saint Paul, MN

Religion in the Ancient World: General or specific studies of the practice of religion in the Levant from Canaanite through the Byzantine periods.

Glen Menzies
North Central University
Minneapolis, MN

Graeco-Roman Religion (new section): Proposals for papers on any aspect of the history of religions in Greek and Roman antiquity are welcome.

Philip Sellew
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, MN

Early Judiasm and Judaic Studies:
Michael Wise
Northwestern College
Saint Paul, MN

Archaeology and Excavation Reports (sessions co-sponsored by ASOR): All topics pertaining to the archaeology of the ancient Near East.

Mark W. Chavalas
University of Wisconsin–La Crosse
La Crosse, WI

Undergraduate Research (Joint AAR/SBL)

The Upper Midwest regional meeting includes undergraduate papers, reflecting the preponderance of undergraduate institutions in the region. Members nominate outstanding papers (maximum of two from each institution).

Tom Reynolds
St. Norbert College
De Pere, WI

Revision of Sections

In an attempt to reflect trends in the modern scholarship of religion, the regional officers have revised a number of the titles for sections. The officers intend to welcome a broader range of papers through this revision. Member comments are welcome.

Multiple Submissions

It is the policy of the region that no member presents more than one paper at a given meeting. Should a member submit more than one proposal, it is the responsibility of the member to so inform the conveners.

Questions and Other Topics

Questions about the upcoming meeting or the appropriate section for proposals should be directed to Deanna A. Thompson, Hamline University, 1536 Hewitt AVE, St. Paul, MN 55104, USA; *dthompson@gw.hamline.edu*. Proposals for papers or topics not listed in the call for papers are to be brought to her attention. ❧

Western

Western Regional Meeting
March 12–14, 2005
Arizona State University
Tempe, Arizona

The theme of the 2005 AAR/WR Conference is "Justice and Love."

The program committee of the AAR/WR invites members of the AAR to submit proposals to their various section chairs, possibly dealing with the intersection of justice and love. With the rise of interest in religion and the public expression of religious beliefs as a justification for behavior (national, regional, communal, and individual), members are invited to submit proposals that deal with the practical as well as theoretical notions of justice and love. Examples include, but are not limited to, 1) a discussion of the different understandings of justice and love; 2) the tensions between fundamentalist and progressive notions; 3) historical/figures cases; 4) interfaith dialogue; and 5) educational endeavors of peace and justice, sacred writings, etc. The intention of the 2005 theme is to stimulate scholarship and dialogue among faith traditions and to promote the examination of the theme in each area of religious studies in order to better understand how religious perceptions of justice and love become operative in a rapidly changing world.

Please send proposals to specific sections listed on the AAR/WR Web site. For more information and updates, visit the Western Regional Web site at *www2.sjsu.edu/wescor/* and click on the Call for Papers. If you have questions about the program, please e-mail *ssmaloney@earthlink.net*. ❧

WUTHNOW, from p.13

To their credit, social scientists who study religion today are much more likely to insist on in-depth analysis of specific traditions than to settle for superficial generalizations. Investigations of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism have all moved in this direction, paying closer attention to distinct practices and illuminating the internal diversity of each tradition. For instance, in the series of books on religious practices being edited by the University of Michigan Buddhism scholar Donald Lopez, the emphasis has shifted decidedly toward the variability of religious experience and away from seeking grand generalizations.

In sociology, the concern for detail is evident in in-depth studies of the beliefs and practices of new immigrant religious communities. In Houston, Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Miami, and several other cities, research is now being conducted on how such communities are adapting religiously and culturally to their urban environments. For instance, the University of Houston sociologists Helen Rose Ebaugh and Janet Saltzman Chafetz have edited an illuminating collection of essays (*Religion and the New Immigrants*, AltaMira Press, 2000) that describes in detail how Asian Christians, Hispanic Christians, Hindus, and other groups are coming to terms with life in suburban Houston.

To be sure, the boundary here between social science and investigative journalism is sometimes blurred. But scholars have opportunities that journalists don't, both in asking questions about topics that may not be newsworthy and in taking the months and years that may be required to conduct in-depth research. I think especially of the book *Terror in the Mind of God* (University of California Press, 2000), by Mark Juergensmeyer, a sociologist at the University of California at Santa Barbara. It is a masterful study of the relationship between religion and violence that became an instant sensation after September 11, 2001, but which was based on nearly a decade of research with accused and convicted terrorists, survivalists, and vigilante groups.

Another challenge is to harness the vast resources currently available to scholars interested in religion (especially from private foundations, and from colleges and universities) for studies having strong normative concerns. I've worked for many years with students in various disciplines who are interested in religion. My biggest complaint about these students isn't that their studies lack rigor, but that they lack purpose. All too often studies are initiated because data are there, or because nobody has looked at a particular topic before, rather than because the research explores a larger concern. That is the fault of faculty members more than of students. We have done a better job of teaching methods than we have of instilling purpose.

We need studies that investigate more pointedly the great human concerns that redound in special ways to each generation, whether those are framed in terms of such problems as violence and injustice or in the language of virtue and hope. Certainly, the possible connections between terrorism and particular interpretations of religious teachings have come to be of concern, as the response to Juergensmeyer's research shows. Recent research examining the role of religion in encouraging forgiveness, or in promoting acts of unconditional love, also fits the bill.

If the study of religion were more consistently deliberate in bringing together the realm of facts with the world of values, then it would be harder to imagine where the objections to scientific studies would lie. Of course, humanistically oriented scholars and many in the social sciences would probably be put off by studies seeking to reduce religious impulses to hard-wired biological or economic concerns. But such studies differ from the looser and more practical ways in which most social scientists currently approach scholarship on religion.

It is in relating fact and values that scientific studies of religion can illuminate issues such as Islamist terrorist attacks, or the relative merits of faith-based service organizations. Besides reading religious texts, students should explore research on Americans' responses to September 11, 2001, examining the roots of religious prejudice or the extent of contact between Christians and Muslims.

Beyond discussing the separation between church and state, students should do more — as exemplified by the work of the University of Pennsylvania sociologist Byron Johnson, or the team of scholars at the State University of New York at Albany under the direction of Richard Nathan — to compare the effectiveness of faith-based and nonsectarian service organizations.

There is also a continuing role for the kind of science that William James had in mind if we consider a point that is often neglected in discussions of his argument. James recognized that we have a natural tendency to concentrate on the "local" and the "accidental," and that these should be the starting point for any scientific inquiries. In the same spirit as James, Clifford Geertz has observed that "local knowledge" is of particular value, both in daily life and to the enterprise of the human sciences. We know ourselves only by comparing the locale in which we live with the locales in which we do not. This quest for comparison and generalization probably inspired the first generations of social scientists. In the process of comparative investigation, the familiar does not become general; it becomes strange, and thus is experienced in new ways.

Scientific studies of religion need to be guided both by hubris (to venture hypotheses at all) and humility (to acknowledge when they are wrong). William James said it well: "The science of religions would forever have to confess, as every science confesses, that the subtlety of nature flies beyond it, and that its formulas are but approximations." Those approximations, nevertheless, are valuable guides to understanding what it means to be human. And properly conceived, scientific studies of religion can contribute significantly to those approximations. ❧

POSTMODERNISM, CULTURE, AND RELIGION 1

Saint Paul AMONG THE PHILOSOPHERS

Subjectivity, Universality, and the Event

The conference will bring together Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, and Slavoj Žižek with a distinguished body of internationally recognized Pauline scholars, historians of early Christianity and religious theorists to explore the question of whether St. Paul, one of the west's great anti-philosophers, is also in fact a rich resource for a philosophical conception of the engaged subject, political action, the universality of truth and the singularity of the event.

Giorgio Agamben
University Institute of Architecture of Venice

Alain Badiou
École Normale Supérieure, Paris

Slavoj Žižek
Institute for Social Studies, Ljubljana, Slovenia

with

Karen Armstrong
Independent Author

Daniel Boyarin
University of California at Berkeley

Paula Fredriksen
Boston University

Dale B. Martin
Yale University

E. P. Sanders
Duke University

Syracuse University

APRIL 14–16, 2005

Coordinators

Linda Martín Alcoff
Professor of Philosophy

John D. Caputo
Thomas J. Watson
Professor of Religion
and Humanities

Registration Information
Registration Fee: $125
Students: $60
Preregistration is advised.

Accommodations and all sessions at the Sheraton Syracuse University Hotel and Conference Center. For more information and on-line registration visit our website at http://thecollege.syr.edu/admin/pcr-conference/.

Contact
Ms. Sherry Hayes
Department of Religion

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