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October
Spotlight on Teaching Fall 2004 issue.

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


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

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

October 21. EIS pre-registration 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. Chair Workshop at the Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX. Free for departments enrolled in the Academic Relations Program. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/departmental/caed.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

December 2. New program unit proposals due.

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


Featured Speakers at the Annual Meeting

The AAR is proud to present a strong program of speakers during this year’s Annual Meeting 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 Abraxos, 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!

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 aardreg@europe.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 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 a copy 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

October 2004 AAR RSN • 3
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 rest assured 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 nominating committee members. This year, the committee will meet in New York on November 15, 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.

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 1990, was elected Chair of the Department of Religion 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, Sounds and Grace. Reformulations of Aquinas and Wittgenstein (SCM, 2004). His recent undergraduate courses include "Approaches to the Study Religion," "Perspectives on Religious Ethics," "Politics and Social Ethics," "Religion and Culture."

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 contingent 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 commun-icating with one another and acting on whatever common concerns we manage to identity. 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 meet-ings. But they are necessary, and we need to-ward them. The interests of the social practices that we are meant to serve are bound to suffer, as are many of the peo-ple involved.

It is not clear that we have the means of communication we need: the meetings, Web sites, book series, and journals. Everyone rec-ognizes that much thought will need to be given to the rapidly changing varieties of electronic communication. But it is becom-ing increasingly difficult for new authors to publish books with university presses. Many new 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 uni-versities 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-three year queue of accepted articles. For many younger scholars with a tenure clock ticking away, that’s too long to wait for pub-lication. If the economic future of the uni-versity presses changes religious studies from a book-oriented discipline to an article-ori-ented discipline, like philosophy, we need to ask whether we have enough journals and the right kinds of journals. Even now, 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 impor-tant question to ask about the Annual Meeting is whether the process of job place-ment 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.

Candidates for Vice President

Francis X. Clooney

Francis X. Clooney, SJ, received his MDivs from Weston Jesuit School of Theology (1979) and PhD in Religions of South Asia 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 publica-tions 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.

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THE AMERICAN ACADEMY of Religion is the premier professional organization for religious studies scholars. As such, it is important to provide active discussion for the development of the field and for the success of these research-oriented tasks. As such, the AAR is instrumental in the building of a 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, at times from colleagues with specialized interests. Reflecting my diverse research interests, I have presented papers on panels in several areas: black theology and the history of African American religion, teaching and learning. As well, attendance at other sessions 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-anual conference consultation hosted at a local black church in the home 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.

One final point. Bureaucracies tend by their nature to insulate themselves from challenge. It is therefore always appropriate to ask whether the Board of Directors and the permanent staff of a profession- al organization are sufficiently sensitive 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 con- duct its deliberations on important issues against the backdrop of a broad open debate involving all members who wish to be heard. The tone set by the leadership should be completely free of intimidation.

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 benefit from the challenge of finding ways to continue to benefit from intellectual conversations with scholars in SBL. Special invitations or co-sponsorships, 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 some among us have indeed separated the two meetings, shared initiatives 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 alternative methods. Our membership consists of a significant number of graduate students and junior faculty as well as seniorscholars, 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 across 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 counterweight to innovative thought from all sectors of our academic society.

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The Academy is a research-oriented, interdisciplinary institution that has been a leader in the field of religious studies for many years. As such, it is important that the Academy is active in all areas of the field, including those that are of particular concern to women and girls. By this I mean that the Academy should be actively involved in all aspects of the field, including those that are of particular concern to women and girls. By this I mean that the Academy should be actively involved in all aspects of the field, including those that are of particular concern to women and girls.

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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.

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/2004/sanantonio and in the Annual Meeting Program Book, page 27.

Our panelists include:
- Carol S. Andon, 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, Abremsa 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 Kleinsma, Laurie L. Patton, Elizabeth A. Say, and Terrence W. Tilley

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

- **Checks** (payable to “AAR Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop”)
- **Credit Card** (Check one):
  - Visa
  - Mastercard
  - American Express
  - Discover
- Credit Card Number
- Expiration Date (MM/YY)
- **Card**
- 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
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. Luie 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 undergraduate courses in psychology and sociology of religion at Harvard University. She is a member of the editorial board of Religion, editorial advisor for Confrontation: International Review of Theology, and international editor for Gender and Society. She has served on the International Commission of the Committee for the Latin American Church of Religion and on the board of the Religion Consultation on Population, Reproductive Health, and Ethics. She is Secretary for International Affairs of the Permanent Board of Directors for the Asociacion Latinoamericana para el Estudio de las Religiones (ALER).

In Mexico, Marco is a research associate in Religion and Society with the Escuela Nacional de Antropologia e Historia (ENAH). She is also a founding member of the Permanent Seminar on Gender and Anthropology with the Instituto for Anthropological Research at Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (ITSON). As a member of the Mexican Academy of Sciences, she is a member of a project on professional and cultural role of the social actor in the Mexican society. She has also been a member of the Academic Research Group on Sexuality and Gender in the Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Morelos. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Centro de Derechos Humanos Don Sergio for indigenous women rights.

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

**Marcos:** The Asociacion Latinoamericana para el Estudio de las Religiones (ALER) 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 manifested by the influences proper to the different Latin American contexts.

We are committed to interdisciplinary 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 scholar, inviting participation from graduate students. Finally, there is a special category of speakers included in our congresses: “authors” — 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 Latin/o Hispanic scholars. As secretary for International Relations at ALER, I have been 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 at 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 an extraordinary experience. The seminar is relatively small in number but great in quality. Several of the professors known to me. I had made work of some of them, like Catherine Keller, Virginia Burrus, and S. Moore. I had shared academic spaces with some others, like Omar Madura (who worked out the invitation for me with the support of Dean Maxine Beach), Karen Brown, and Ada Isabel 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 scarcd. 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, J. W. Araujo, L. D. Kearns, and especially David Grayzel.

**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 or more every year or since 1996. It felt 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 Toftensen, 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. She was there 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 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, Religion y Género (Editorial Trotta, 2004). Can you tell us about the themes that run throughout these essays? And about your previous book Chispas al Factor Religioso?**

**Marcos:** 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 of my time and energy was of academic, interreligious, and intercontinental dialogue about religion.

In addition to ALER and the Association of Social Scientists of Religion, there are important religious communities in South America, who meet as an association approximated every two years, just like ALER. The work of cooperation and collegiality, the associations meet in alternate. 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 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-religious activity.
Where to Eat in San Antonio

Pico de Gallo
111 S. Leonia ST
Downtown San Antonio politicians 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 authentic (tost baby goat), a true Mexican specialty. You can’t find a bad meal here.

Las Canarias
112 College ST
Hunting at San Antonio’s Canary Island heritage, Las Canarias offers a variety of dishes in the Southwest style. Loboer with blue crab, sweet potato hash, and Scotch bonnet aioli hints at the exotic unions Chef Scott Cohen executes. A salad of organic greens mixed with blue cheese, lemon-basil vinaigrette, pear, dates, arugula, candied walnuts, and garlic 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 Paptrocks 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 was once Back one. In the 19th century, 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 heavy. The most popular dishes are champaign chicken enchiladas with toasted salad and the chicken salad plate with seasonal fruit. Portions are generous, especially the delicious pastries. The pecan spiced 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 ambiance of this historic property; 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 hearty dining experience. The roasted anchovies and sauteed mushrooms are delicious starters. For something different, try the bbq-baileaise-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 Tex-Mex 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 vegetable side dishes 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 sake (salmón) sushi are well-prepared and perfectly balanced. The array of colorful dishes focuses on seafood and vegetables. Anago (sea eel) and seared vegetables served here by swift, efficient hands are highly recommended. The maki, sushi, and sashimi floor atrium, this cafe is intimate but modern. The maki, sushi, and sashimi all require patience, a bit of time, and a very sharp knife. The Dinosaur maki, a combination of fresh fish served raw with fried soft-shell crab, and green tea ice cream are also recommended.

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 single-malt scotch-whisky. As for drinks, the bar is known for its collection of whiskies, butterscotch schnapps, and smoked bonnet aioli hint at the exotic unions Chef Paprocki serves up an impressive array of delicate, highly composed dishes. The lobster bisque, a true Mexican specialty. You can’t find a bad meal here.

Club Cohiba
1015 Navarro ST
Most people are attracted by this club’s intimate setting. The soft, piped-in music allows conversations at a leisurely pace. If for drinks, the bar is known for its chocolate martini, mojitos, and an impressive collection of single-malt Scotch whiskies. If you’re hungry, the kitchen dishes up an array of tasty tapas, including garlic shrimp, beef chipimchurri, and empanadas.

Joey’s
2417 N. Saint Mary 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: generous sized drinks, better-than-average pub grub, plenty of pool tables, and friendly service.

Things to Do in San Antonio

The Holy Artwork (A20–6)
German video-artist Christian Jankowski compares his role as a religious leader in San Antonio with the Holy Artwork, a form of art which he presents in his show at the San Antonio Museum of Art. The exhibition titled “Visions of a Vanishing Culture” explores the traditions behind the Day of the Dead celebrations.

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

Annual Meeting Performances and Exhibitions

The Holy Artwork (A20–6)
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San Antonio Museum of Art
200 W. Jones AVE
www.sua-museum.org

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

Centre Cultural Aztlán
www.sacalaveras.com

Artisan’s Alley
555 W. Bitter ST
www.artisanalley.com

El Mercado
514 W. Commerce ST
www.elmercado.com

La Villita
418 1st Ave.
www.lavillita.com

American Council of Learned Societies
1515 Massachusetts AVE
www.aclu.org

Religious Studies News
AAR Edition
www.utsa.edu/public/413/ReligiousStNews/ReligiousStNews.html

Pico de Gallo
111 S. Leonia ST
Downtown San Antonio politicians 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 authentic (tost baby goat), a true Mexican specialty. You can’t find a bad meal here.

Las Canarias
112 College ST
Hunting at San Antonio’s Canary Island heritage, Las Canarias offers a variety of dishes in the Southwest style. Loboer with blue crab, sweet potato hash, and Scotch bonnet aioli hints at the exotic unions Chef Scott Cohen executes. A salad of organic greens mixed with blue cheese, lemon-basil vinaigrette, pear, dates, arugula, candied walnuts, and garlic 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.

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CALL FOR PAPERS

Participate in the following issues:

Scholars from any region may apply to maintain religion as a central theme. We encourage interdisciplinary panels that involve story, myth, ritual, and art. For example, comparative and historical studies through story, myth, ritual, and art. Furthermore, we are interested in panels combining activism or performative dimensions with scholarly inquiry. We encourage interdisciplinary panels that maintain religion as a central theme. Students 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 form. 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 a CD. Electronic submissions must include full name of the 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 H3C 3J7. Electronic submissions for panel proposals (but not student paper competitions) are preferred. Please send all electronic submissions to Nathan R. B. Loewen, at nathan.kiewen@mail.mcgill.ca. 

Prearranged Session [i.e., Panel] Proposals

A prearranged session may be submitted in its entirety, complete with a presider, respondents, 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 outlining 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 competition. Please note that to be eligible for submission, the student must reside in the Eastern International Region. Furthermore, the paper must be presented 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 enroll the complete details of the session, 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 for 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 phone numbers 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 H3C 3J7. Electronic submissions for panel proposals (but not student paper competitions) are preferred. Please send all electronic submissions to Nathan R. B. Loewen, at nathan.kiewen@mail.mcgill.ca. 

The 2005 theme “Religion in the Public Sphere” is intended to solicit papers and panels exploring the varied interactions between religion and public life, largely but not exclusively in North America. Papers/presentations 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).

Prospects 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.

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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 the 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. At 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 Masters theses. He has published books and articles in dwarf black holes, black and white, rich and poor, and the role of religion in the modern world. His book, Constructive Descriptive Analytical Religious Studies, published by Oxford University Press, 2003.

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 AAR Web site, Virtual Teaching and Learning Center (www.aarweb.org/profession/vtlc/default.asp), and they will serve as the basis for Saturday's session.

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

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 Faiths 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, audio, or spoken word), so long as it is based on scholarship in religion.

The CPUR enthusiastically solicits nominations from the membership for future recipients. Nominations 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/profession/vtlc/default.asp.

JAAR Focus Issue Call for Papers

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 responsibilities do scholars have for protecting the privacy of religious groups we study while accurately illuminating the phenomena and trends we seek to address?

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.

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/profession/vtlc/default.asp.
AAR Honors Journalists for Best In-depth Reporting

Laurie Goodstein

The understanding of religion, the most in its five-year history. The news outlets with less than 100,000 circulation were removed from submissions 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 sociology, not science. Social scientists, like other scientists, have no banished belief from academic study; they have quite rightly redeemed Stark’s Gods to escape the subjective blinders of a theology that demands them as foundational 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 animists say, in their own language. 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 sociology of Gods is that his “Gods” are supposed to make religions moral rather than mere ritual pastime.

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 evangelion Christianities in Ohio seeking to convert Muslims; the pervasiveness of the Catholic faith in Ohio seeking to convert Jews; and poor evidence for the claim that religion is all about ritual.

The judges said Goodstein’s articles show exceptional intellectual sophistication. This was “great newswriting, including possi- bly the most comprehensive piece written on the Catholic clergy scandal,” one wrote. “The Catholic abuse article was especially noteworthy for its effort to interpret statis- tal data for a general audience,” another judge said.

Dart submitted stories on faith in the movies; interfait efforts to send relief pack- ages to Iraq; the question of who belongs in Jesus’ 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 genreology.”

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 “Gods” in the Marketplace: Religion in the Public Square” and a column based on his experience visiting religious com- munities 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.”

Third place in writing for media outlets with less than 100,000 circulation was awarded to Julie Marshall of the Daily Camero 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 when 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 sec- ond 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 Tamnes of the Kansas City Star placed third in the opinion-writing category. Since the beginning of the AAR contests in 2000, Tamnes has consistently placed in the top three in this category; he won it two years ago. The judges said Tamnes 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 arti- cles 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 Pepperdine Institute and a former religion reporter; Mark Silk, the founding director of the Leonard E. Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in American 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.

Letter to the Editor

A Response to Stark

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

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

As an anthropologist who studies reli- gions across cultures, I could not agree more with Rodney Stark’s passionate call to do be done with the reductionist claim that “religion is all about ritual.” Most of my anthropologically trained intel- lectual forebears, trivially misled by Rodney Stark in his essay, would concur. Certainly Lévi-Strauss cannot be criti- cized for privileging ritual actions over symbolic classification through beliefs in myth. Evans-Pritchard demonstrated the unifying symbolism of Koori “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 matriarchal society. Not is “ritual” a belief-defining 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 theoretically bottomless pit where belief is only about God. If Gods are once again to be funda- mental to defining religion, what hap- pens 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 sociolo- gy, not science. Social scientists, like other scientists, have no banished belief from academic study; they have quite rightly redeemed Stark’s Gods to escape the subjective blinders of a theology that demands them as foundational to moral agency.

Sociologist Stark begins his argument by noting that most religious people say religion is about “God or the Gods.” The belief in many religions is that 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 judgement after death, the adora- tion of idols or the practice of sacrifice, or other partially-diffused doctrines or rites, no doubt many tribes may be excluded from the category of religious.” And how right he was. Religious Western travelers, and not just mission- aries, 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: ethnogra- phers 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 sociology of Gods is that his “Gods” are supposed to make religions moral rather than mere ritual pastime.

“...and when did we get it so wrong?” asks Stark about the relegation of God’s to the presumed Index of social science. In prosecuting his argu- ment, the primary witnesses are found- ing fathers of the modern study of reli- gion, notably Durkheim, Spencer, and Robertson Smith, but also a large number of anthropologists, including Ralph Linton, Ralph Borris, Mitchellitch, David Douglas, Reo Fortune, Clifford Geertz, Peter Lawrence, Bronislaw Malinowski, J. P. Mills, Rodney Needham, A. R. October 2004 AAR Review P.16

Read the award-winning articles at: www.aarweb.org/awards/journals/
**Religious Studies News — AAR Edition**

**In Memoriam**

Lonnie Kliewer, 1931–2004

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 as Lonnie. When I met him, on or off campus, he always knew him on a day-in and day-out basis far better than I. But from the moment we first met in late 1970s when he was a faculty member at Windsor University and came to Syracuse University, where I was then a faculty member at the Catholic University of America, Gabriel Vahanian, Professor Kliewer was a person to whom I was immediately attracted and with whom I felt a close affinity. That grew into a great 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, this very spiritual, this very familial, heart, mind, and spirit that Lonnie so distinguishedly possessed. A scholar of religion to explore and reflect touching and deeply reflected within the academic world his activities for on behalf of the American Association of University Professors and the National Civil Rights Movement. In addition, Lonnie gave extensive service to the American Academy of Religion, the American Philosophical Association, the National League of American Catholic Athletes. In addition, Lonnie was an extraordinary and uncommonly skilled writer and editor. I have, on occasion, had occasion to say that I feel as though I have one foot in the world of academia and the other foot in the world of the chambers of commerce and the world of the courts. In the case were complex. The book was a project of Lonnie’s. He was a wonderful storyteller and always a very engaged listener. He was a teacher-scholar, a community leader, and a friend; and the suffering he endured being 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 sustain and transforming our world with the very best features and values of the American Academy. And the people of the Academy who knew them, they knew them, we were certainly aware of their presence. I am certain others will. I will, however, attend briefly to his sense of humor as a manifestation of his character.

The narrative of Lonnie Kliever’s life and work is a profile in courage both personally and intellectually. He walked the lonely valley with grace, great humor, amazement, and wonder, 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 the loss of his life 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 Courtwright, Emory University, writes...

PEOPLE WHO KNEW and worked with Lonnie Kliever have enough Kliever stories to keep them going for a long enough 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 that religion was in both its genius and its goodness. He studied the margins: religious theory of the ‘60s, the Unification Church, Scienology, 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: 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 soldier, student, politician, churchman — a Texas mile away. There was an uncommon and unperturbed wisdom both in his words and his silences. Lonnie Kliever was a category of one. His last years were ones of unremarkable 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. Cooney, 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 being 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 sustain and transforming our world with the very best features and values of the American Academy. And the people of the Academy who knew them, they knew them, we were certainly aware of their presence. I am certain others will. I will, however, attend briefly to his sense of humor as a manifestation of his character.

Lonnie made me laugh. Almost every time we met, I made me laugh. He saw the world through a lens that I associate with a Southern, rural Middle Eastern world for his activities on behalf of the American Association of University Professors and the National Civil Rights Movement. In addition, Lonnie gave extensive service to the American Academy of Religion, the American Philosophical Association, the National League of American Catholic Athletes. In addition, Lonnie was an extraordinary and uncommonly skilled writer and editor. I have, on occasion, had occasion to say that I feel as though I have one foot in the world of academia and the other foot in the world of the chambers of commerce and the world of the courts. In the case were complex. The book was a project of Lonnie’s. He was a wonderful storyteller and always a very engaged listener. He was a teacher-scholar, a community leader, and a friend; and the suffering he endured being 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 sustain and transforming our world with the very best features and values of the American Academy. And the people of the Academy who knew them, they knew them, we were certainly aware of their presence. I am certain others will. I will, however, attend briefly to his sense of humor as a manifestation of his character.

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Is There a Place for “Scientific” Studies of Religion?

Robert Wuthnow, Princeton University

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.


THERE HAVE BEEN numerous calls recently for a better understanding of religion. Of course, many of those who were heard after September 11, 2001, when it became clear how little most Americans knew of Islam, how little understanding there was 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 continuance in American public life. In that world of borders and citizenship, prayer and religious experience is a court ruling on the meaning of the God of 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 how Muslims understand 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 and 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 about 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 Andach volk of 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 admission as is commanded by a physical science.” James had in mind that a science of this kind “could do better at shading light on religion than could philosophy. The trouble with philosophy, he said, was that it “lives in words” and is “pure speculation.” While interesting as a description of neurological processes, such research fails to tell us much about which moral decisions are right, how kind one’s society is, religious beliefs, the meaning of love, or why people pray.

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, in order to 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, can 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 employing induction and deriving knowledge at all, but about power, knowledge from grounds. For the first time, the United States came away inspired by the idea of the wider world. We are once again, just as in the first human inhabitants of the world. The phrase calls to mind the numerous attempts to find a grander explanation of workings of the human mind. 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 religions 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 science of religious experience. Today, all of those generalizations have been qualified.

For the first time, the United States offers grand generalizations about its people. When there was little empirical evidence, science seemed an attractive beacon, but as empirical evidence accumulated, the hope of making generalizations about the human condition faded. In the study of religion, for example, scholars a half-century ago offered grudging observations about 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 a 20th-century creationist might tell us about beliefs and behavior in ways that we would not be able to know from our limited personal observations. Among sociologists, the General Social Survey, conducted nationally by the University of Chicago every two years since 1972, includes surveys of millions of people 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 sift ing through letters and diaries in an archive, through individual or small group interviews, such surveys tell us about beliefs and behavior in ways that we would not be able to know from our limited personal observations. Among sociologists, the General Social Survey, conducted nationally by the University of Chicago every two years since 1972, includes surveys of millions of people from which to draw conclusions about trends in religious beliefs, practices, and affiliations.

One of the greatest challenges is understanding more clearly the vast diversity in which we find science and its role in understanding human behavior. 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. That task is, beyond all doubt, essential. Positivism has given up ground in the face of arguments about the inevitability of interpretation and perspective as an effort to bring sociological insights to bear on historical interpretation than as an application of scientific method.

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 in the first human inhabitants of the world. The phrase calls to mind the numerous attempts to find a grander explanation of workings of the human mind. 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 religions 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.

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The science of religious experience. Today, all of those generalizations have been qualified.

For some, of course, “scientific method” suggests a 20th-century creationist might tell us about beliefs and behavior in ways that we would not be able to know from our limited personal observations. Among sociologists, the General Social Survey, conducted nationally by the University of Chicago every two years since 1972, includes surveys of millions of people from which to draw conclusions about trends in religious beliefs, practices, and affiliations.
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., 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 it is now the largest library in the world, Established as a legislative library in 1800, it is now the largest library in the world, its interior dating to the first-time visitor. But once inside, though it is still grand, its interior spaces are beautiful and inviting.

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 Division, 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 speaking that 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. The 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. Many of the holdings accessed through 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 American History 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. America’s 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 of a collection that shows 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 Goulacher, who murdered her illegitimate child in 1715. Many other similar resources for the study of American religious history and gender and religion are available through these electronic gateways. Instructors can project primary materials on large screens to give students a closer look at historical events. Online images and audio recordings of primary sources more accessible for student research.

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 walked past hundreds of nearly labeled boxes containing writings 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 these resources are available online and include sources 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. 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.

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In his opening address, Wimbush, the Catholic Hispanic Theologians in the U.S. Academy of Religion, the American Council for Signifying Scriptures, among those congratulating the stage for an intense and engaging conversation, and information, representing the dynamic of enlightenment, strength, transformation, and power relations.

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 previously distributed paper titled "The Beginnings of beauty are always both good and beautiful. But they are also teachable and delusional in their seductive promises."

— Joe Parker, Pomona College

PHORIZING 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 Graduate School of Theology pronounced blessings of Light and Strength through a invocation, 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 these congratulating Wimbush on the establishment of the institute were Claremont Graduate University president Stedman Upham, the academic dean, 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 address a different critical orientation for the study of religion, one that focuses not so much on "content meaning" of sacred texts, but on "texts — on the signs, material production, practice, 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 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: Furthering a Complex Social-Cultural Phenomenon. Wimbush points 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 — "trifling, scaring, 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 listed is below:

Panel 1: Phenomenology/Origins

"How do we as stuff-stuffed academics begin to 'off' and 'woof'?

"How might we construe 'scriptures' with-out allowing them to direct our attention away from the long and bloody history of domination that brought us to our own social order?" — Joe Parker, Pomona College

Wande Abimbola, Special Advisor to the President, Cultural and Traditional Affairs, Nigeria, offered an answer by commenting on the origin of the "Oda," the sacred scriptures of Ifa from the literary tradition of the Yoruba of West Africa. By way of Ifa, such texts have been handed down from one generation to another and are now engaged by Africans throughout the Diaspora. Abimbola captured 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 Schuster 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 cooperation." 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-empowering paradigm" to investigate ways in which "scriptural texts and icon-exercise influence and power in cultural, social, and religious life."

Panel 3: Activators 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 record-ed 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 testa-ment of a holy man dedicated utterly to 'the Spirit' even unto death," Andrews sug-gested that "we must consider Turner's Confessions as a revision, a strong misread-ing, an act of signifying and of 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 congergetations. 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
DOCTORATE RECIPIENTS from the United States
University Summaries Report 2002 has recently been pub-
lished 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 United States in the 2002-2003 academic
year. Six federal agencies, including the National Science Foundation, the
Department of Education, and the National Opinion Research Center (NORC),
participated in this data source creation.

Across All Fields
During the academic year July 1, 2000, to June 30, 2002, 39,955 doctoral recipi-
ents received their degree. This is the lowest number since 1993. While the
number of doctorates earned in the physical sciences and engineering has fallen pre-
cipitously, the numbers within the humanities, the social sciences, and educa-
tion have decreased only slightly. For the first time more American women (12,823)
were awarded doctoral degrees than American men (12,283) earned doc-

torates at U.S. universities.

Also of note is the fact that across all fields, the median age at conferral of the
degree was 33. These data do not reflect the degree of underrepresented ethnic
minorities or Asian/Pacific Islanders, over 4% black, and 2% Asian/Pacific Islander.
Over 80% of all recipients were U.S. citizens, while nearly a third were non-U.S.
citizens on either temporary or permanent visas. Regarding father's educa-
tion, over 64% were U.S. citizens; while nearly a third were non-U.S. citizens with
fathers less than a bachelor's degree. While the recipients had fathers with less
than a bachelor's degree, 25% had fathers with a bachelor's degree, and 38% 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 60% 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. According to father’s education, over 52% had fathers with less
than a bachelor's degree. The median age at con-
ferral of the degree was 42.9. Their post-
doctoral employment intentions were as follows: over 61% intended to teach, 20%
tended 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/depart-
ment.

For further information regarding this exhaustive and tabular study, the complete
results can be found at: www.norc.uchica-
go.edu/unsur/paper-2002.pdf. Further analysis of the results can be seen in the December

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about belief per se and more about the ability to chant cooperate, form social con-
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outsider). Those of us who subscribe to the evolutionary framework of our ori-
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moral?” asks primatologist Frans de Waal in his Good Natured: The Origins of Right
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to the “sensible” inclusion of humankind into the “classical” Divine hierarchy. As
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surveys-men state they believe in. As
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Gods crosses that point.
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga is a comprehensive metropoli- tan university offering baccalaureate, 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 and sciences, with a focus on professional programs. With about 6,800 stu- dents, the school offers degree through the College of Arts and Science, 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 undergradu- ates and occasionally masters of arts stu- dents. Further information can be found at www.utc.edu/Units/PhilosophyAndReligion/WilliamHarman traces his academic line- age to his Oberlin College advisor, the late Clyde Holdbrook, 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, work- ing primarily with Wendt Doniger. He taught for 20 years at DePaul 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 Tamil Nadu, and, among other things, pub- lished several articles about the southern Deccan goddess of flowers, Marthamanam. He is working currently on an edited vol- ume that addresses the dynamics of religious values among Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jews, and Buddhists in South Asia.

Harman: I feel brand new to the department and to the University of Tennessee, but the calendar tells me that 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-handed- ness in building the department. Herb is now our dean, and so we are fortunate in having the benefit of his experience when- ever we need to tap it. I’m lucky, for sure. I’ve inherited a department with a tradi- tion 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, I was made to feel that I was in a situation in which department chairs had nominal power, and what little they had could be tramped on at any number of administrative levels.

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 philos- ophy and religion, and several department members have a Biblical studies “accent,” 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 broad- uncommon for a department our size: we have faculty publishing and teaching in Greek philosophy and religious and American, religion, early and medieval Christian the- ology and philosophy, Judaism, French and German modern existentialism and postmodern thought, Buddhism, Hinduism, Japanese and Chinese religions, and Hinduism and comparative religions.

RSN: What is distinctive about the department’s strengths?

Harman: We take pride in pedagogy, and tend to share with each other our suc- cesses and our failures. We value scholar- ship, and still have a large group of faculty members that are proud of their committees 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 — although we do — but as a way to expand our own compassion, 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 depart- ment 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 depart- ment took the time to tell me that they admire this department for the com- fortable 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 by the student. This makes us one of the most scholarly produc- tive departments on campus. And we’re proud of our graduates. Over the past five years, about two-thirds of our majors have gone on to graduate school — not neces- sarily in religion or philosophy, but at least they have pursued their appetites whetted for more academic training. And we’ve found over the years that when the university administrators academic skills teaching to graduating seniors, our majors score above the highest in the university. What’s distinctive about our students is that they develop strong personalities, and they have the ability to communicate that in a very powerful way to their audience.

RSN: In what subfields or subdisciplines would you like to expand your depart- ment’s competence?

Harman: Our department head, Herb, has been a student of introductory Islam, it was wonderful to have someone with such 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 lot more to our faculty. We have a large selection of religious studies methodologist with teaching in philosophical phenomenology.

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

Harman: We enjoy 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 that some- thing possible for department members to do such things as travel to Germany for our students during the summer. A philosopher with training in Germany is interested in taking groups 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 on a trip to Japan. We may also depend on student interest, but we shall likely be pursuing it in the year to come.

RSN: What problems will your depart- ment 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. 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 compulsion into mediocre is a big problem. And if the state 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 our state, which will continue to be the case when we are measured against the technical and business lobbies for whom liberal arts education is seen as an elitist excuse for real learning.

RSN: What gives you the greatest satis- faction as a chair?

Harman: I enjoy finding ways to make some people or some ideas palatable to people that they might not otherwise believe possible. Sometimes, for example, a person needs encouragement to push a group and teach that course she has always want- ed to teach but had feared might be a bit too “fringy” or eccentric. I like keeping my fingers crossed that someone with a decent amount of money on campus that might enable coll- eges to do such things as travel to Moscow, or that some people aren’t about to be able to run interference for a student or a colleague who has run head-on into an administrative wall that comes between an early Spring enrollment and a summer pro- suits. 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.

Department Meeting

University of Tennessee, Chattanooga, Department of Philosophy and Religion

William Harman, Chair

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MARCOs from p. 7

Marcos: As I was telling you earlier, I did not want to consider that “Itenosamérica” is bound by territorial limits. 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 approach to the study of works of biblical hermeneutics, like Elsa Tame’s contribution, and feminist theology, like Ivone Gevaria’s and Rebecca Monteayou’s works.

I like to think that I bring scholarship and teaching together. Where, I asked, was the material that brought scholarship and teaching together?

With regards to Chiapas y el Foro Religioso, I co-edited this publication with E. Maffett. It includes my extensive interview with Don Samuel Ruiz, the now emeritus Bishop of San Cristóbal 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 the term “indigenous” represents the usage of the originary peoples of Mexico themselves.)

Marcos: The first book I selected 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 movements that stressed the colonizing effects of feminism – and not just in Latin America –, but rather global feminisms. They are political movements that claim religion and spirituality at their core. At several key moments, I have been invested with consulting status for the Mexican indigenous movements. I speak of this in my forthcoming 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 concepts on the indigenous peoples of the Americas. The indigenous peoples claim that they have a different way of conceptualizing the gender divide.

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 Religious Teaching Studies Series, published by Oxford University Press. These edited volumes, focused on a theme, a method, 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 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 Sara Green, Teaching Spirituality. Future volumes, at various stages of preparation, widen the scope to include such topics as ritual, religion and healing, and the use of the veil in Turkey. The volume is a reading of 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 of this in my forthcoming 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 concepts on the indigenous peoples of the Americas. The indigenous peoples claim that they have a different way of conceptualizing the gender divide.

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The above sampling of comments can in no way capture the richness of the Thursday Scriptures conference experience. In addition to the 35 major panel presentations, there were also a number of creative-expressive, performance, and multimedia presentations. Grey Gundaker’s images of biblical themes in landscapes and Leslie King-Hammond’s slide show of sacred themes in African-American painting 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 Pumona College’s Balinese Gamelan Ensemble, the Claremont College Madrigal Ensemble of the Engo-Kotonan Students Choir, Rick Perkins’s Jazz Quintet, and Quetral, a Mexican folk music group, were vivid examples of interpretation of the sacred in dance, song, and music. The documentary film Reading Darkhouse, 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 ban- quet, with Wande Abimbola pouring libations and chanting in traditional Yoruba style a blessing for the safety and survival of the participants. He threw the cola nuts and announced “ege,” the most positive sign one could get, for the future of the institute. The enthusiastic response from the nearly 200 con- ference participants suggested they wholeheart- edly 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.cnsl.edainstitutexx

They speak of “complementarity” and “equivalences” as their own way of interrepre- tating 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. In this case, I endeavored to see that Native gender constructions done from the perspective of the indigenous women. Consequently, they rejected my position. They could only think in terms 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 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 con- form to this model of behavior.

It had to give credit to such a backward interpretation of femininity!

But what do the indigenous peoples mean by complementarity? What I hear from the complementarity subscribed is how it sometimes requires a renunciation of the administrative leadership of the organ- ization and also in the scholarly conversa- tions specific to my area of 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 organ- ization and also in the scholarly conversa- tion. And in one way or another

FEATURES

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 Mental

Bansdari Publishers reprinted Ganesa,

Lord of Obstacles and Beginnings by Paul

Courtright, originally published by Oxford

University Press in 1996. The new,进口
cover features the elephant god Ganesa as a
toddler in a crawling position, same clothing.
That image, along with a brief, prosaically

lytically informed reading of part of the myth

that recounts Ganesa’s beheading (by his
divine father, who fails to recognize Ganesa as he
his grands mother’s husband), 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
caused his publisher in India to with-
draw the book.

To these are increasingly dan-
gerous 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 aims. Consequently, scholars in India or outside India who challenge those con- structions become targets of attack.

My recent experience is not singular. Last
December, another group in India vandalized an institute, stole ancient manuscripts, and
physically assailed a scholar who had worked with an American author whose book on a 17th-century king offended them. A number of years before, a distinguished Indian historian was vilified for writing a meticulously documented study of meat con- sumption 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 India for years. Scholars, particularly those in the humani-
ties, tend to engage in subversive activity. To write is to resist the slope of the bull- iar forms of knowing and being in the world. And in one way or another — to someone or another — this kind of criti-
cal work may give offense. To write about the costs and consequences of free inquiry. Among with this subversive element, scholar- ship 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 subver- sion differ somewhat from mine, as a visi-
tor to the religious tradition I study. I have a great respect for the tradition but am not responsible for defending its orthodoxies. I speak out, with, and to Hindus, but certainly not for or on behalf of Hindus. So when someone says — or circulates an Internet petition or complaints to the presi-
dent of my university — “that your ideas you have written, and the theories you apply, offend me; they offend my senti-
ments,” 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, dis- maralte or offend. Rather, it is to probe, to imagine, to engage without- ever approaches the content of the religious tradition and the tradition of critical inquiry, as well as the forms of interpretation that may not be indigenous to that tradition itself but may be illuminating and novel. Religious stories and ideas are reinterpreted when they belong to the public domain. The same is true for interpretation. In my case, my attainments have contributed to the assessment 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 to extract the negative connotations, “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 per- sonally but because they know they could be the next targets of self-appointed guardians of sentiment. We remain silent at the risk of being attacked. As scholars we have to own that integrity and do our work with as much care, respect, and dedication 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 restate 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 organ- ization and also in the scholarly conversa- tion. And in one way or another

What about students? Whenever scholars are attacked, we need to inform our stu- dents in useful and appropriate ways. It’s a way of letting them know the nature of the game of knowledge, that scholarship may involve risks. Scholarship is a form of intel- lectual 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 own students. 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 foreign and indigenous “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 per- personally but because they know they could be the next targets of self-appointed guardians of sentiment. We remain silent at the risk of being attacked. As scholars we have to own that integrity and do our work with as much care, respect, and dedication 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 restate ourselves to our vocation of critical inquiry.

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Tomoko Masuzawa was born and educat-
ed in Tokyo. She earned an MA in Philosophy of Religion from Yake, and a PhD in Religious Studies from the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she studied principally with Lawrence Riehle (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 appoint-
ment 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 Muller after a Hundred Years of Silenced” (Method and Theory in the Study of Religion). In 1988 Masuzawa co-founded and subsequently chaired the Critical Theory and Comparative Literature Group (initially a Consultation). She is also a member of the North American Association for the Study of Religion (NAASR) and the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR).

RSN: You are a religious scholar and a long-standing member of the AAR. . .

Masuzawa: Yes, since 1982. . .

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

Masuzawa: Right. The University of Michigan doesn’t have a religion depart-
ment. 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 gradu-
ate students working on some religion-
related topics come out of the woodwork.
Usually, though, by the time it occurs to them that I should know something about the study of religion, they’re already beyond their course work, so we end up doing a seminar or something very infor-
al, which isn’t the most satisfying situa-
tion. But occasionally I offer a seminar, which I call “cultural history of the study of religion,” almost entirely based on pri-
mary 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 gen-
eral perception lately, even among some faculty, that somehow religion is impor-
tant. 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 gen-
erally thought of as something out there that you could know about. People don’t seem to see it as a site, occasion, or strate-
gic opportunity for some anything like that. In other words, very little recogni-
tion that there might be a scholarship on religion. Or that this scholarship isn’t in-
trinsic in origin, orientation, or goals. I’m talking about people here who are general-
ly 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 theo-
retical in your current institutional setup?

Masuzawa: Well, I can’t say it’s re-
conciled. 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 frame it. It’s my position as someone with something vaguely to do with religion — but not Buddhism, Islam, the Bible or any of the sacred texts — that — that’s the problem, I think; that’s where I get the institutional equivalent of a blank slate. But in terms of teaching, I can pull a lot of my own research topics in various courses. For example, I offer a graduate seminar called “Comparison and Hegemony.” It’s the emergence of comparative studies, and we consider concurrently the disciplinary development of different areas of religion, comparative literature, and anthropology, and the vicissitudes of the so-called uni-
versals in that context. And I stress the significance of cultural history, the anatomy that instigated scientific compar-
ativism. So far as I can tell, comparative philology took off on its own, fueled entirely by the excitement over the discov-
ery of Sanskrit and the Indo-European language family. The analogizing with botany, zoology, and natural history came somewhat later, I think, when the prob-
lem 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 inference” — though that’s not to say it’s a pretty sight. This complex of comparative philology and comparative religion has been so inter-
estingly that the topic is finding its way into many of my courses. For instance, this semester we’ll be teaching a seminar on the concep-
t of “Aryan,” it begins with the discovery of Sanskrit and ends with the American neo-Aryan. I say “we” because I’ll be co-teaching this with two of my col-
leagues. 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]. 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, something like “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 fabricat-
ed. Rather, it is about the logic of classifi-
cation; 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 do the best that the data will speak for itself, or something of that sort. The book is the premise: for a long time, the standard European framework for mapping the world religiously, so to speak, hasn’t 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 theological books, but, they obviously got it seriously wrong; that’s because they either refuse to recognize Jesus as the Saviour, or they follow a false prophet, thereby creat-
ing schisms. 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 me, this was a convenotional for-
mula for delineating the “diversi-
ty” 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 12 “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 contradiction from those benighted premoderns, we now duly acknowledge the reality of other reli-
gions, 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 pur-
ports 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 occurs, and why in those particular directions, and with what particular results.

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

Masuzawa: Let’s say I’m prepared to claim that 19th-century philology — that is to say, roughly, from [Friedrich] Schlegel to [Ernst] Renan — is an important nodal point in this history. I don’t mean this in the sense of a unilateral causal explanation; but I privilege philolo-
gy 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 floats about got snagged on it, changed their course because of it, and with enormous consequences.

RSN: Including comparative religion. . .

Masuzawa: Yes, especially compara-
tive religion. And it was comparative reli-
gion that eventually became instrumented 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 “text,” that includes description 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
In the Public Interest

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 all voucher programs for elementary and secondary school students, with 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 pursuing 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 religious 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 stake is Davey’s study for the purpose of pursuing the ministry. At 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 infer a 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 preventing 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 opposed 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.

Editor’s Note: “In the Public Interest,” a regular feature of Religious Studies News, is sponsored by the Academy’s Public Understanding of Religion Committee.

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 vannia33@bigblue.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, my studies in the Hebrew language, with our dreams, hopes, fears, wars, dis- appointments, 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 Renata 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-American women 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 know 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

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Russell: 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 prompts 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.

Russell: Who have been your role models during your retirement?

Russell: There are not many retired feminist theologians around to be role models. Yale was so unfamiliar with that 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. 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 made 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 feminism, 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.

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 “fellow elders,” 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, walk 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.

Russell: Actually, with the deepening suspicion. I think there were lots of flags up in that book warning of my “post-structuralist” approach which I hoped would all the more gratefully, both due to the echoes of the phantom menace of post-ism. For that, I feel cautiously, but very deeply, gratified.
Expanding the Academy beyond the University

Richard Amesbury, Valdosta State University

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 multifaceted 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 is also telling that women are far more likely to be 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/statement/SpContingent.html), which makes a number of recommendations and offers practical advice to institutions concerning 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 profession’s advocacy organization. How did the listeners experience 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 particularly in the latter half of the 16th century, and the task of reconfiguring the core 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

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

During the Annual Meeting there will be a Special Topis Forum entitled “Alternative Careers for Religious Doctoral Students” (A2–22).

Editor’s Note:


Wore 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, Lutherans 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 interest in the relationship 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.
Sexual Harassment Policy

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/cha.asp.

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 harassment is employed or where he or she is enrolled, or with appropriate law enforcement authorities.

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;
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/cha.asp.

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 America 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. Also relevant are the efforts of diverse scholars of religion to reach beyond the academic and the explicitly religious community to a larger audience. Also relevant are the efforts of diverse scholars of religion to reach beyond the academic and the explicitly religious community to a larger audience. Also relevant are the efforts of diverse scholars of religion to reach beyond the academic and the explicitly religious community to a larger audience.
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 met occasionally to brainstorm with each other and to discuss the academic texts and developing a deeper understanding of the world from which they come. 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 have also 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.

**LOVELACE, from p.21**

**Features**

**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
Montreal, QC

Please renew your membership now, and consider making an additional contribution to the AAR’s Academy Fund. Membership dues cover less than 30 percent of programs and services. Renew online at www.aarweb.org/renewal. Or contact us at TEL: 404-727-3049 E-MAIL: membership@aarweb.org. Please see the Membership page, www.aarweb.org/membership.
CALL FOR PAPERS, from p.9
be sent to Professor Ann Wetherilt at wetheril@wheatonma.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 barbara@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 by regional authors or by authors from other regions). The deadline for submission of topic proposals is 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, PO. Box 222000, Seattle, WA 98112-1090, USA; rle21@uw.edu. Panels and special topics sessions are welcome!

Religious Studies News — AAR Edition

October 2004 AAR

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 Americans, etc.).

Only those proposals received by the deadline will be considered for inclusion in the program. Limitations are set 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. There are special awards for papers presented during the lunch/business meeting on Saturday, carry a stipend of $100 each. To be considered for this award, students must 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 cunmetz@etu.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 “Thetis Alpha Kappa National Honor Society 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 cunmetz@etu.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 9–11:15 (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 and via 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
CALL FOR PAPERS

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 SECTOR Web site (www.utc.edu/sector). 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 displayed 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 teaching religion and/or theology. Chair: Jennifer Manlove, jmanlove@wesga.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, martinsd@end wesga.edu.


(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 Manlove, jmanlove@wesga.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, martinsd@end wesga.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 at the discretion of the Chair. (3) Joint session with Women and Religion: Black Women film-makers. (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, Department of Religion, Department of Religion, 206 Peabody Hall, 1322 Gaskins Rd, 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 the introductions and the challenges faced. (2) An invited panel will review the introductory texts to the authors of the previous panel. (3) And (4) Open sessions. Please send proposals (or completed papers if you have never presented) to Alice W.Hunter, Vanderbilt University Divinity School, Nashville, TN 37240, USA; Alice W.Hunter@vanderbilt.edu; and Bryan Bibb, Department of Religion, Furman University, 3000 Drexel Pines Hvy., 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 Conciliarism, Manichaeism, Jansenism, Docetism, the medieval understanding of the corpus Christi, the total body of Christ, prayer and meditation, mysticism, and those that employ audiovisual equipment and special interest. Papers related to religious art in Asia and those that employ audiovisual equipment are also of interest. Panels will be constructed from submitted abstracts among 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 need special equipment or media services. Send proposals to: Katherine Brown Downey School of Arts and Humanities University of Texas at Dallas PO. Box 830688, MS J031 Richardson, TX 75083-0688, USA (972) 883-9579 (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 of interest. Papers will be placed in one of the sections 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 PowerPoint presentation, please make your own arrangement for a data projector). Send proposals to: M. Alejandro Chaul Department of Religious Studies, M.S. 15 Rice University 6100 S. Main St Houston, TX 77005, USA E-MAIL: aclau@rice.edu.

See CALL FOR PAPERS p.30

October 2004 AAR RSV • 29

Southwest Regional Meeting March 12–13, 2005

Harvey Hotel, DFW Airport

Dallas, Texas

The following is a listing of the chairs of the general overview of the paper and some specific information about its presentation, and please indicate if you will need special equipment or media services. Send proposals to:

Katherine Brown Downey School of Arts and Humanities University of Texas at Dallas PO. Box 830688, MS J031 Richardson, TX 75083-0688, USA (972) 883-9579 (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 of interest. Papers will be placed in one of the sections 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 PowerPoint presentation, please make your own arrangement for a data projector). Send proposals to:

M. Alejandro Chaul Department of Religious Studies, M.S. 15 Rice University 6100 S. Main St Houston, TX 77005, USA E-MAIL: aclau@rice.edu.
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, 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 predicaments of global terrorism. Send proposals for this joint session to the chair 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:
Tracy Mark Stout
Bluefield College
3000 College DR
Box 53
Bluefield, VA 24605, USA
E-MAIL: ttstout@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 predicaments of global terrorism. Send proposals for this joint session to the chair 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 UMBH Station
900 College ST
Belton, TX 76513, USA

524-295-4171 (OFFICE)
E-MAIL: ssoldham@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.

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/proposals.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 session seeks papers that address theology and religion from diverse racial, sexual, ethnic, and demographic perspectives.
Debra Mudashiru Majeed
Beloit College
Beloit, WI
E-MAIL: Philip Rolnick and Paul Wyda
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 methodologies 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 Hardwood
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 Keys
College of St. Scholastica
Duluth, MN

Philosophy of Religion
Systematic Theology: Tara Wileyx, 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
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 Avenue, 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 rsn@earthlink.net.

N E W S

"Positioning Mormonism in Religious Studies & American History"

October 24–26, 2004
School of Religion
Claremont Graduate University

including presentations by

Philip Barlow, Hanover College

Peter J. Blodgett, Curator of Western American Manuscripts, The Huntington Library, CA

Kathryn Daynes, Brigham Young University

Kathleen Flake, Vanderbilt University

Terryl Givens, University of Richmond

Ann Taves, Claremont Graduate University & the Claremont School of Theology

Grant Underwood, Brigham Young University

For a complete schedule, including lecture titles and participants, please visit http://religion.cgu.edu/positioningmormonism.htm or contact us at religionculture@cgu.edu, or 909-607-9592.
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 Saltman 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 ideas 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 articulating 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 J. Byron Johnson, or the team of scholars at the State University of New York at Albany under the direction of Richard Nather — to compare the effectiveness of faith-based and nongovernmental 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 locales in which we live with the locales in which we do not. This quest for comparison and generalization probably inspired the modernizations 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.
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.