

# religious studies

## AAR NEWS

### EDITION

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## Annual Meeting News

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2005  
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2005 Member Calendar

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**October**

*Religious Studies News—AAR Edition*  
October issue

*Spotlight on Teaching* October 2005 issue

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

**October 15.** January 2006 *Religious Studies News* submission deadline.

**October 15.** Excellence in Teaching award nominations due. For more information, see [www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching.asp).

**October 21.** EIS preregistration closes.

**November**

**November 1.** Research grant awards announced.

**November 17.** Executive Committee meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

**November 18.** Fall Board of Directors meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

**November 18.** Chairs Workshop at the Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA. For more information, see [www.aarweb.org/departments/workshops.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/departments/workshops.asp).

**November 19–22.** Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA. Held concurrently with the Society of Biblical Literature, comprising some 8,500 registrants, 200 publishers, and 100 hiring departments.

**November 21.** Annual Business Meeting. See the *Annual Meeting Program Book* for exact time and place.

**December**

*Journal of the American Academy of Religion*  
December 2005 issue

**December 1.** New program unit proposals due.

**December 9–10.** Program Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

**December 15.** Submissions for the March 2006 issue of *Religious Studies News* due. For more information, see [www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn/default.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn/default.asp).

**December 31.** Membership renewal for 2006 due. Renew online at [www.aarweb.org/dues](http://www.aarweb.org/dues).

**January**

*Religious Studies News—AAR Edition*  
January issue, including the Annual Meeting Call for Papers, results of the officer elections, and the 2005 Annual Report.

**January 1.** Annual term of membership begins for the AAR’s 9,500 members, the largest and most inclusive association of religion scholars in the world.

**January 10.** Excellence in Teaching Award nominations due. For more information, see [www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching.asp).

**January 26.** Martin E. Marty Public Understanding of Religion Award nominations due. For more information, see [www.aarweb.org/awards/marty/](http://www.aarweb.org/awards/marty/).

**January 28-29.** Academic Relations Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

And keep in mind throughout the year...

Regional organizations have various deadlines throughout the fall for their Calls for Papers. See [www.aarweb.org/regions/default.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/regions/default.asp).

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


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

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

For writing and advertising guidelines, please see [www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn.asp).



# Annual Meeting Countdown!



## Important Dates

- Mailing of the Annual Meeting badge materials to all preregistered attendees began in mid-September. Materials include your name badge and drink ticket. Contact Conferon Registration and Housing at [aarsblreg@conferon.com](mailto:aarsblreg@conferon.com) if you did not receive your materials.
- Third-tier ("regular") registration rates go into effect on October 16, so register early to get the best rate.
- November 8 is the pre-Annual Meeting registration deadline. All registrations after this date must take place onsite at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. No badge mailings will occur after this date.
- November 19–22 is the Annual Meeting in Philadelphia! Check [www.aarweb.org/annualmeet/](http://www.aarweb.org/annualmeet/) for up-to-date information about the meeting.

## Checklist for when you arrive at the Annual Meeting

- **Name Badge Holders.** If you received your name badge by mail, all you need to do is swing by the Registration area in the Pennsylvania Convention Center to pick up a name badge holder. Then you are ready to attend sessions and visit the Exhibit Hall.

- **Onsite Registration.** If you did not receive your badge materials or need to register, visit the AAR and SBL Meeting Registration counter.
- **Annual Meetings At-A-Glance.** Pick up a copy of the Annual Meetings *At-A-Glance* booklet. This booklet shows the updated program and room locations for all sessions. Updates or changes will be marked by gray shading. This is an invaluable addition to your *Program Book!*
- **Book of Abstracts.** Interested in a session's topic? Want to learn more before heading to the session? Check out the *Book of Abstracts*, located in the bins near registration.
- **Tote Bag.** Tote bag tickets were mailed with the name badge materials. Tote bags are available while supplies last.
- **Find-A-Friend.** Visit the Find-A-Friend boards in the Registration area to see whether your colleagues are attending.
- **AAR Member Services.** Visit the AAR Member Services desk if you have any other questions.
- **Enjoy the meeting!** 🍷

# Featured Annual Meeting Speakers

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



## A Life Biography: Wolfhart Pannenberg (A19–27)

Saturday, 11:30 AM–  
12:30 PM

Wolfhart  
Pannenberg,  
University of Munich

Born in 1928 in Stettin, Germany, Pannenberg began his theological studies at the University of Berlin after World War II and also studied at the University of Göttingen and the University of Basel. He completed his doctoral dissertation at the University of Heidelberg. Pannenberg, who studied under theologians Karl Barth and Edmund Schlink among others, has drawn together religion and science through much of his life. He published his magnum opus, the three-volume *Systematic Theology*, in the 1990s and has also contributed substantially to the philosophy of history and the philosophy of science. Pannenberg has been called an "eschatological realist" and a great interdisciplinary thinker.

1970, when he moved to the History Department of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. In 1981, he accepted the position of provost at Southern Methodist University, and in 1988 he joined the faculty of the Department of Religion at Duke University. A specialist in the Reformation, his publications include two bibliographies of Anabaptism, a monograph on religious dissenters in early modern Europe and the Protestant Reformation, as well as the editorship of both the *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation* and the *Encyclopedia of Protestantism*. Hillerbrand has served as president of the Society of Reformation Research and the American Society of Church History. He has been editor of the *Archive for Reformation History*, *Church History*, and the *Zeitschrift für Religions und Geistesgeschichte*. The faculty of Montclair State University conferred the honorary doctor of laws on him.



## Master Narratives and the Future of Christianity (A20–129)

Sunday, 7:15 PM–8:15  
PM

David Martin,  
London School of  
Economics

David Martin (born 1929) is Emeritus Professor of Sociology, London School of Economics, and past Professor of Human Values, Southern Methodist University, Dallas (1986–90), as well as International Fellow of the ISEC, Boston University. He is author of some 20 books, including *A General Theory of Secularisation* (1978), *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish* (2002), and *On Secularisation: Towards a Revised General Theory* (2005).



## Templeton Plenary: The Parallelism and Ultimate Convergence of Science and Religion (A20–130)

Sunday, 8:30 PM–9:30 PM

Charles H. Townes,  
University of  
California, Berkeley

Charles H. Townes is the 2005 Templeton Prize Laureate. He shared the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1964 for his investigations into the properties of microwaves, which resulted first in the maser, and later his co-invention of the laser. Townes has spent decades as a leading advocate for the convergence of science and religion. His 1966 article, "The Convergence of Science and Religion," established Townes as a unique voice — especially among scientists — that sought commonality between the two disciplines. Recently, Townes has been a champion of optical searches for extraterrestrial intelligence, using methods he first proposed in 1961 as a complement to searches for radio transmissions. Townes attended Furman University, Duke University, and the California Institute of Technology (PhD, 1939). After holding positions at the Bell Telephone Laboratories, Columbia University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he was appointed University Professor at the University of California at Berkeley in 1967.

## Tragedy as Cultural Unconscious of Western Religion and Philosophy (A21–101)

Monday, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM

David W. Tracy, University of Chicago

David Tracy is a Professor at the University of Chicago. He is the author of many books and articles, including

*Dialogue with the Other* (1990), *On Naming the Present* (1995), and the forthcoming book revising his Gifford Lectures, *This Side of God* (2006). This AAR lecture, by returning to the debate in German philosophy on tragedy and philosophy (especially Nietzsche) and in French thought on religion (especially Simone Weil and Emmanuel Levinas), will argue for an understanding of tragedy as related to necessity, suffering, and active response to both. It will suggest how such factors provide the unconscious to both Western philosophy and religion. Neither, it will be argued, are simply reducible to a tragic vision, but consciously or unconsciously need it. The recent recovery of a tragic vision in both Marxism (Eagleton) and feminism (Butler) are further suggestions of the import of this category for religious scholars.

## Plenary Panel: The Future of Religion in the West: Perspectives (A21–125)

Monday, 7:15 PM–8:15 PM

This panel will use David Martin's plenary address as the point of departure for reflections on the prospects of "organized" religion in the 21st century. The panel will engage in an appraisal of the current state of religions so as to propose conjectures for future developments. The appraisal will need to focus on such topics as globalization, inculturation, and secularization. The panelists reflect a variety of specializations and perspectives. Panelists include Sarah Coakley, Harvard University; Peter J. Paris, Princeton Theological Seminary; Julius Schoeps, Potsdam University; Teresa Berger, Duke University; and Vincent J. Cornell, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. 🍷



## On Book Burnings and Book Burners: Reflections on the Power (and Powerlessness) of Words and Ideas (A19–130)

Saturday, 7:00 PM–  
8:30 PM

Hans Hillerbrand, Duke University

A native of Germany, Hans J. Hillerbrand did his graduate work in theology and religion at the University of Erlangen Germany, with a focus on the Protestant Reformation. After briefly teaching at Goshen College, he received an appointment to the faculty of the Divinity School at Duke University in 1959, where he taught until



# AAR Officer Elections

## A Message from the AAR Nominations Committee

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

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

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

Peter J. Paris, Chair  
Nominations Committee

## Call for Nominations

The Nominations Committee will continue its practice of consultations during the Annual Meeting in Philadelphia to begin the process for selecting nominees for vice president to take office in November 2006. 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 2005 Annual Meeting.

Please vote online at [www.aarweb.org](http://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, 2005, to exercise this important membership right.

## Vice President

The Vice President serves on the Executive and Program Committees, as well as on the Board of Directors. She will be in line to be confirmed president-elect in 2006 and president in 2007. During her tenure, the Vice President will have the opportunity to affect AAR policy in powerful ways; in particular, during the presidential year, the incumbent makes all appointments of members to openings on committees.

## Student Director

In any given year, as many as 30 percent of AAR members are students. The AAR's student members are served by the Graduate Student Task Force, the Student Liaison Group (student representatives from PhD programs), and by the Student Director, who serves on the Board of Directors with full voice and vote. The Student Director chairs the Graduate Student Task Force and Student Liaison Group. S/he also facilitates conversation among and between students and various bodies of the AAR. ■

## Candidates for Vice President



### Diana L. Hayes

Diana L. Hayes is Professor of Systematic Theology at Georgetown University (D.C.) (1988). She holds a Juris Doctor degree (George Washington University, 1973) and served as an attorney for the U.S. Department of Labor, the State of New York, and the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. She earned a Baccalaureate (STB, 1983) and Licentiate (STL, 1985) in Sacred Theology from the Catholic University of America (D.C.) and a PhD in Religious Studies (1988) and the Doctor of Sacred Theology (STD) degree from the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Louvain, Belgium, 1988), becoming the first African-American woman to earn a Pontifical Doctorate.

Hayes has authored four books including *Hagar's Daughters: Womanist Ways of Being in the World* and *And Still We Rise: An Introduction to Black Liberation Theology*, two co-edited texts on black and contextual theologies, and numerous articles on black/womanist theologies, U.S. liberation theologies, religion and public life, and liturgical inculturation. Her current research involves black spirituality and the intersection of race, class, gender, and religion.

Honors include three honorary doctorates, the U.S. Catholic Award for Furthering the Cause of Women in the Church, the Elizabeth Seton Award for Outstanding Woman Theologian, and the Alexandrine Award (College of St. Catherine). Hayes has been a member of the AAR since 1989 and has presented with AAR's *Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group* and *Black Theology Group*.



### Emilie M. Townes

Emilie M. Townes is the Andrew W. Mellon Professor of African-American Religion and Theology at Yale Divinity School with an appointment in the African-American Studies Department. She received an AB from the University of Chicago (1977), AM (1979) and DMn (1982) from the University of Chicago Divinity School, and PhD from Northwestern University (1989).

Townes served as co-editor of the *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*. She is the editor of two anthologies including *A Troubling in My Soul: Womanist Perspectives on Evil and Suffering* and author of three books, including *In a Blaze of Glory: Womanist Spirituality as Social Witness*. She is finishing a manuscript

on the cultural production of evil and conducts ongoing research on women and health in the African diaspora in Brazil and the United States.

A member of AAR since 1989, she served on the *Status of Women in the Profession Committee* (chair), the *Independent Meeting Task Force*, and the *Ethics Section* (co-chair). She serves on the *Program Committee* and the steering committee of the *Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group*. Townes is a member of the *Society of Christian Ethics*, the *Society for the Study of Black Religion*, and the *Workgroup on Constructive Christian Theology*.

## Statement on the AAR

IN 2004, THE AAR adopted a new Strategic Plan in anticipation of the 2009 Centennial, and in relation to realizing its larger mission. As we all know, one of the related strategic objectives — fostering scholarly interaction among all approaches to the study of religion — led to the decision to hold stand-alone meetings. The person elected Vice President will preside over the first meeting in many years where we will not be meeting with the SBL. Much work, intellectual debate, and creative energy in the two intervening years will lead to that moment. This is a time of great possibilities, even as many of us mourn the coming loss of familiar collegial ties and intellectual conversation partners. As it is with possibilities, it is also a time of great excitement, affording an opportunity to develop new lines of scholarly inquiry as we continue conversations and configurations we have developed thus far as a professional body.

As lively, engrossing, and creative as our annual meetings can be, we must now think even larger about how we, as scholars of religion, think through and talk about the nature of religions and religiosity in the academic life. A rich panoply of program units currently provides a framework where we can learn from colleagues in different fields. The conceptual framework for the new meeting program invites us to think creatively and wisely about a format with more slots for more units, specialized sessions for constituencies of a program unit, and sessions designed to attract audiences from beyond the unit.

A key feature of our annual meetings is lively scholarly exchange. This must not be lost as we take up the invitation and opportunity to open

the doors in our various program units and units to be developed, and as we take seriously the various ways we learn and communicate learning to others. Promoting new intellectual conversations can be accomplished through our current program units as well as new ones. It is my hope that we do not rush to create new units without our current units rigorously evaluating their work. In all this potential intellectual ferment, it is crucial that we engage in solid appraisal and creative debate. These are two hallmarks of critical inquiry.

In this vein, it is increasingly imperative that we engage religious discourses in the public realm — both in the United States and in international contexts. In an increasingly polarized world and a larger academic environment that can often be hostile to things religious, we cannot, as a body of scholars, absent ourselves from the public conversations we now have about religion. Many of us shudder at the simplistic and cartoonish characterizations we see and hear about religious worlds we know to be complex and nuanced. Providing ongoing resources and support for our membership who comment on religious events of our day in the public sphere strengthens the AAR beyond our annual and regional meetings.

Mentoring and nurturing leadership are issues that we must continue to give attention to through the program units, special topics forums, and member-initiated sessions. Perhaps the most obvious foci are graduate students, new faculty, women, and members of racial and ethnic groups. However, there are also members working in smaller institutions who carry administrative responsibilities in addition to their teaching loads, as directors of new initiatives or programs with no working models to draw on.

## Statement on the AAR

CAME TO THE STUDY of religion and the AAR late in life as a convert to Roman Catholicism. My first experience of an Annual Meeting (1988) left me exhausted yet exhilarated as I attempted to test the waters of employment as a Catholic theologian who was older, black, and female.

Since then, I have both questioned some of AAR's practices while, at the same time, affirming many of its achievements. That this is the largest annual gathering of professionals in religious fields is known to all of us, as we have attempted to juggle competing interests in sessions being held simultaneously. Bi — if not tri — location has become an art for many of us, especially those who are persons of color and women, who find that our overlapping fields of interest seem too often to be placed in direct conflict with each other.

The growing numbers of Africans and African Americans, Asians and Asian Americans, Hispanics/Latinos/Latinas, Native Americans, as well as women of all races and ethnicities, and of gays/lesbians/bisexuals and transgendered persons, whose experiences of theology and religious studies have often seemed more like fields of combat rather than fields of study, bring challenges that are as yet far from being dealt with in holistic and viable ways. These groups cannot be seen simply as theologizing from marginal perspectives that are interesting but basically irrelevant to the real academic study of theology and religious studies. Additionally, as our interaction with the global societies around us reveals, persons of color are now in the forefront of those raising questions

about the way in which theology/religious studies is taught, studied, and lived in the world today. These questions and their answers are critical to our ongoing self-examination and self-understanding in the United States as a country which has, quite belatedly and still too often reluctantly, awakened to the fact that it is both an ethnically/racially diverse as well as religiously pluralistic nation, and that this has been true, contrary to opinion, from its earliest beginnings. At the same time, while engaging in critical dialogue and discovery of religions relatively new to the U.S., we must also engage in meaningful dialogue with those religious voices that have always been a part of the American religious fabric.

How do we as members of academia respond to the shifts taking place before our eyes in the makeup of our student bodies at the university and graduate level? They cannot be taught in the same tired ways nor can they be expected to accept traditions and methodologies that ignore their existence and their cultures. How do we broaden our dialogue to ensure that we are in contact with the real world(s) of the 21st century rather than continuing to present and impose world-views that have been long out of sync with reality, both within and outside our places of worship? While the questions concerning faith may, at their core, remain the same, those articulating those questions have changed and require answers relevant to their experiences of the sacred within their lives and people. We must respond with programs and sessions that bring these voices and questions into the heart of the AAR rather than the

See HAYES p.5

See TOWNES p.6



## Candidates for Student Director



### Nathan R. B. Loewen

Nathan R. B. Loewen is a doctoral candidate in the religion and culture program at the Faculty of Religious Studies, McGill University. Prior to studying at McGill, he completed a BTh at Canadian Mennonite University (1995), a BA in religious studies at the University of Winnipeg (1996), and then both a Masters of Theological Studies and Masters of Sacred Theology at St. Andrew's College, University of Saskatchewan (2001, 2002). For the final degree, Nathan combined his research on contemporary continental philosophy, feminist theory, and ethics. He described how Stanley Hauerwas's Christian pacifist ethic could self-critically achieve a nonviolent integration of concerns germane to feminist and gender studies.

Since arriving at the Faculty of Religious Studies at McGill University in 2002, Nathan has developed his academic, collegial, and administrative skills. He has functioned within the faculty as the AAR's student liaison and president of the Religious Studies Graduate Students' society. For example, he organized workshops on professional development, grant writing, and drafting AAR meeting proposals. Just this May, he was co-director of the AAR Eastern International Region's 2005 annual meeting. At present, he continues teaching "The Ethics of Violence and Nonviolence," and is working through "Evil According to Jacques Derrida" as his dissertation project.

### Statement on the AAR

THE AAR has provided graduate students many important avenues into the scholarship of religion at both the regional and corporate levels. The Student Liaison Group (SLG) has been instrumental in helping bring this about. While functioning as a liaison, I have developed an understanding of the relationships between the AAR, the SLG, and graduate students. The SLG (1) works to maximize graduate students' benefits from their involvements with the AAR; (2) encourages the AAR to further its constructive presence within student members' institutions; (3) seeks to represent the AAR as clearly as possible to its student member constituency; and (4) engenders an expanded sense of collegiality and academic responsibility beyond students' home institutions towards the larger religious studies academia. It is through these activities that the SLG fulfills its goal of expanding student involvement in the AAR.

To say "we live in changing times" is banal, but if I peruse halls of my present institution, I find that it has transformed from a Divinity Hall to a Faculty of Divinity to the present Faculty of Religious Studies. It is more than likely that in the near future my faculty will become a department subsumed within the Faculty of Arts. I take this as paradigmatic of religious studies' movement away from an "independence from-" to an "interdependence within-" relation to higher education institutions. Indicative of this is that graduated students are not necessarily seeking employment in areas whose title contains the word "religion," and that employment often takes an "adjunct" form. In the midst of this change, students are asking that the AAR focus its resources on the kind of advocacy that will help develop its mission "to promote excellence in scholarship and teaching in the field of religion."

I foresee the SLG collaborating with its graduate student constituency to ensure their sense of connection with the AAR's changes in its structure and vision. For example, it is imperative that the SLG build towards the 2008 Annual Meeting with innovative initiatives. Furthermore, in light of discussions circulated on the students' listserv, I believe that relationships need to be proactively sustained between biblical studies scholars and the remainder of the religious studies academy in North America. This is partly a result of the social context the AAR is situated within, and

partly to prevent the identification of differences in scholarly foci with political polarizations.

On the matter of upcoming meetings, it may be worthwhile for the SLG to continue rethinking graduate students' involvements at the annual and regional levels. While hosting the remotely placed "students' lounge" in San Antonio, I listened to several concerns raised about the nature of graduate students' attendance at annual meetings. Attendance is often due to either presenting a paper or being an SLG representative. This is understandable, since both these activities enhance the CV and are one of the few methods of garnering the institutional support to make attendance affordable. Yet perhaps this shows that other reasons to attend are obscured by students' financial realities. To be sure this is not a question of "free lunch" or "a student's proper place;" rather it is one of how to promote students' involvement in a major dimension of the AAR. How might students be better fiscally enabled to attend the meeting? Can more accommodations at budget hotels be negotiated by the meeting's committees? How might *healthy* low-cost food options be negotiated to exist *on site*?

As a Canadian member of the AAR, I think that the SLG should also pursue the sixth article of the Centennial Strategic Plan: to enhance the AAR's international dimensions. What tactics can forward this strategy? This is a pressing issue for non-U.S. citizen graduate students who study outside the U.S. At this present time, many cannot attend most of the AAR's annual and regional meetings.

Regional meetings do possess the capability to address some of the above issues. The Annual Meeting will always seem like an unwieldy and overbearing experience for many, and the smaller regional meetings can ameliorate this. The regional meetings also offer the space for new initiatives, the presentation of graduate research, and flexibility in geographical locations to enable attendance. I would like to see the SLG bring this into focus, and actively seek to collaborate with the regions to enhance student involvement in the AAR.

This is a brief sample of my understanding of the AAR, the SLG, and graduate students. While it may be subject to change as we work together, this is only because we share aspirations and commitments for the academy's well-being. ♣



### Davina C. Lopez

Davina C. Lopez is a doctoral candidate in New Testament Studies at Union Theological Seminary, New York. She received a BA in Religion from Emory University (1995), an MA in Christian Ethics from Union (1999), and has studied at the University of Amsterdam. Davina has served as AAR Student Liaison for the past two years, as a co-convenor of the Women's Caucus for Religious Studies (1999–2001), and on various school committees. She has held several research and teaching fellowships at Union, where she also has cultivated professional development programs for doctoral candidates and writing workshops for seminarians. An active member of the Society of Biblical Literature, she has presented papers at AAR and SBL regional and annual meetings. Davina has authored several articles and book reviews. She is currently co-editing for publication, with Brigitte Kahl and Hal Taussig, papers from "New Testament and Roman Empire: Shifting Paradigms for Interpretation," a national consultation convened by Union's New Testament Faculty in 2004. Lopez is writing a dissertation on Pauline literature, with attention to Roman imperial visual representation and gender constructs. Her research and teaching interests include Paul's letters, gender studies, Roman imperial art and literature, hermeneutics, and biblical imagery in contemporary culture.

### Statement on the AAR

I OFTEN DARE my students to open a newspaper, watch television, or walk around New York City and *not* see at least one reference to religion. Persistent media coverage alone shows what scholars of religion already know: there is no lack of attention to religious expression in myriad forms and agendas. The AAR, as the world's largest organization focused on myriad forms of scholarship and teaching agendas in religion, has a responsibility to translate, comment upon, and participate in religion's divergent articulations.

As students compose more than one-third of the AAR's membership, it is essential to cultivate student perspectives and contributions to its activities and formulation of its direction in a religiously pluralistic world. Student members are, after all, also (future) teachers, researchers, non-profit and community workers, clergy, publishers, and other professionals. I believe that students' professional formation is critical for the continued flourishing of both students' developing careers and the AAR's organizational success. During this period of transition to a stand-alone Annual Meeting, mindfulness concerning formation and direction is vital.

Having served as a student liaison for the past two years, I have appreciated the complexity of the AAR Student Director's role, including opening and maintaining multiple communication channels among students, and between students and AAR's Board of Directors; implementing programs that encourage student participation and empowerment; and providing networking opportunities for students and other AAR members. A Student Director's primary responsibility is recognizing and advocating for concerns and realities affecting students', and therefore the academy's, future. These include the cost of attending Annual Meetings, which is rising and will inevitably present special economic and professional issues for a variety of members when the stand-alone meeting model is inaugurated in 2008; job security, ranging from finding full-time work in an economically depressed market, to gaining alternate, often adjunct, employment when full-time tenure-track work is unavailable, to managing increasing educational debt and cost of living while employed in lower-paying jobs that often do not carry benefits like health insurance; contributing well-crafted responses to an increasing demand for public intellectual, yet headline-ready, responses to various "hot-button" religious issues; and the training of committed, technologically adept,

world-conscious teachers of religion for a variety of educational settings, including settings that are increasingly outside of traditional classrooms and institutions.

Previous Student Directors have valued communication and fairness while facilitating passionate conversations about a range of matters facing the AAR, from scheduling details to reflection on the organization's mission and direction. They have encouraged the Student Liaison Group's recent contributions to the academy. As Student Director I would continue to enable open dialogue and action around several issues expressed at recent Annual Meetings, some of which revolve around transitioning to a stand-alone meeting. Introducing more innovative programming, concerns about the job-search process, and collaboration with other professional societies are pressing. Economic concerns include the cost of attending multiple meetings, which often causes students to make choices based on what is affordable, and high costs of audiovisual equipment for presentations at Annual Meeting conference facilities, which are obstacles to students giving multimedia-based papers. This difficulty must be addressed in a context increasingly focused on media and technological literacy.

As Student Director I would highlight and elaborate upon existing student-friendly opportunities through programming concentrated on aspects of professional development. I have had extensive experience planning and implementing educational workshops and conferences, and look forward to continuing such work in the AAR. Connecting with groups who currently offer programs especially for students, such as those concerning mentoring or "non-traditional" careers, would be an avenue for maximizing student engagement at regional and Annual Meetings without duplicating efforts. I will encourage investigation of enhanced student presentation in venues fitting various needs and professional aspirations. As an active Society of Biblical Literature member and a product of graduate theological education, I bring sensitivity to AAR student members whose concerns stem from dual membership, and I anticipate conversations between theological students and the AAR's new Director of Theological Programs to identify areas for long-term consideration. As the study of religion and theology, best practiced, is an inherently collaborative (ad)venture, I am convinced that a productive way forward will be forged by making connections in the service of creating the best possible future together. ♣

HAYES, from p.4

periphery where they have historically been. It is incumbent upon all of us to learn of and respond to these questions in ways that are inclusive of these different religious histories and stories, for these are the religious practitioners as well as the religious teachers of our future.

The planned separation of the AAR and SBL

meetings is also of great concern. While recognizing the logistical and other difficulties that prompted this move, I fear the loss of a critical connection, at least as an African-American scholar whose heritage is scripturally rooted. This separation does not really resolve these issues but creates greater problems for those of us whose work overlaps with that of the society in so many ways. I fear it will lead to the loss of a critical dialogue partner at a time when it is

most needed. It also inflicts undue financial and scheduling hardships on those whose work involves both societies. What will happen to the many co-sponsored dialogues that have been highlights of prior meetings?

It is my hope to (a) raise awareness of AAR members to the significant changes taking place in the world around us and in our own academic institutions and the challenges these changes bring to our work; (b) urge a revisiting

of the decision to split the annual meetings while also; (c) explore ways in which greater standing can be given to the sacred texts of other religions; and (d) encourage the exploration of new avenues of scholarship and forms of theological writing that relate to the real worlds in which we all must live. ♣

Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop

Enlarging the Pie: Strategies for Managing and Growing Departmental Resources

THE ACADEMIC Relations Committee and the Academic Relations Program is offering its popular Chairs Workshop for the sixth consecutive year at the AAR Annual Meeting. This year's topic, "Enlarging the Pie: Strategies for Managing and Growing Departmental Resources," will be led by Timothy Renick of Georgia State University and Richard Carp of Appalachian State University.

The workshop, from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM on Friday, November 18, will deal with the increasing demands on scarce resources facing departments today. The challenges of finding, maintaining, and securing resources — economic, physical, and human — make department chair duties even more strenuous. This interactive workshop, featuring breakout and question-and-answer sessions, will help participants identify and define resources and how to use them wisely.

TOWNES, from p.4

Additionally, growing numbers of our members work as adjunct faculty, with minimal job security. Others are contemplating retirement or are newly retired. We must continue to attend to the transitions our members encounter throughout their careers, as well as to their roles not only as scholars, but also as teachers. Our professional development sessions must be nimble enough to keep up with the ways in which members are living out their professional lives as lifelong vocations.

The AAR needs to continue to encourage the use of the regions to foster more agile and lively scholarly exchange than can be done at the national meeting. This, perhaps, is the greatest strength of the AAR. Regional gatherings are often the places where junior colleagues are nurtured and encouraged, where more seasoned colleagues can test new ideas and concepts, and where new initiatives are founded. The ongoing health of AAR requires effective communication between the Regions, the Board of Directors, and the executive office. As we continue to grow into our new incarnation, we must maintain those things we do well, even as we create a stronger and more intellectually vibrant professional society. ☛

Session leaders this year include Diane Stewart of Emory University, Deanna Thompson of Hamline University, Tom Coburn of Naropa University, Tom Kasulis of Ohio State University, and Zayn Kassam of Pomona College.

The workshop leaders will guide chairs and department members in exchanging personal narratives and strategies for addressing key challenges: fundraising, increasing a department's visibility, developing faculty and personnel, growing students, budgeting and financial management, growing links to other departments, and identifying, procuring, and utilizing physical space. Additionally, participants will be taught the value of assessing the credibility of their institutions, and how that knowledge can be used when targeting valuable resources.

All the discussion leaders are experienced chairs who have dealt with the demands of

heading religious studies departments. Lunch is included, and participants can choose afternoon sessions that will best benefit each individual.

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.

The topics for past Chairs Workshops include:

- 2004 Annual Meeting - Being a Chair in Today's Consumer Culture: Navigating in the Knowledge Factory
- 2003 Annual Meeting - Scholarship, Service, and Stress: The Tensions of Being a Chair

Summer 2003 - The Entrepreneurial Chair: Building and Managing Your Department in an Era of Shrinking Resources and Increasing Demands

2002 Annual Meeting - Running a Successful Faculty Search in the Religious Studies Department

2001 Annual Meeting - Evaluating and Advancing Teaching in the Religious Studies Department

2000 Annual Meeting - Assessing and Advancing the Religious Studies Department.

We look forward to seeing you in Philadelphia!

The Academic Relations Committee: Fred Glennon (Chair), Richard M. Carp, Chester Gillis, Laurie L. Patton, and Chung-Fang Yu. ☛



Enlarging the Pie: Strategies for Managing and Growing Departmental Resources  
AN ANNUAL MEETING CHAIRS WORKSHOP

Friday, November 18, 2005, Philadelphia, PA  
9:00 AM – 4:30 PM

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

WORKSHOP LEADERS:

Richard Carp, Appalachian State University  
Timothy Renick, Georgia State University

- Fundraising
- Faculty/personnel development
- Growing students
- Budgeting and financial management
- Growing links to other departments
- Increasing your department's visibility
- Institutional credibility

TO REGISTER

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

Name  
Department  
Institution  
Serving as Chair since  
Number of faculty in department

CONTACT INFORMATION

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

Fax  
E-mail  
Surface Mailing Address

Registration is limited to the first 75 participants.  
Send your registration form and payment of \$75.00 before October 31, 2005 (\$100.00 on site).

PAYMENT INFORMATION

- ☐ **Check:** (payable to "AAR Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop")
- ☐ **Credit Card** (Check one):  
☐ Visa    ☐ Mastercard    ☐ American Express    ☐ Discover

Credit Card Number  
Expiration Date (MM/YY)  
CID\*  
Cardholder Signature  
Name on Card (Please Print)

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

For more information, contact Kyle Cole, Director of College Programs, at [kcole@aarweb.org](mailto:kcole@aarweb.org), or by phone at 404-727-1489, or see [www.aarweb.org/department/workshops](http://www.aarweb.org/department/workshops).

- Register by Fax: 404-727-7959
- Register online: [www.aarweb.org/department/workshops/2005Philadelphia](http://www.aarweb.org/department/workshops/2005Philadelphia)
- Register by surface mail: Chairs Workshop, American Academy of Religion, 825 Houston Mill RD NE, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30329



# REEL RELIGION

Please see the *Annual Meeting Program Book* or the Program Highlights page at [www.aarweb.org](http://www.aarweb.org) for more information.

*Mana: Beyond Belief*  
(A18–100)

Friday, 7:30 PM–9:00 PM

The central idea behind this film is that the way people behave in the presence of power objects reveals a process of the human mind which is fundamental and universal: belief.

*Peaceable Kingdom*  
(A18–103)

Friday, 8:30 PM–10:00 PM

Hear the riveting stories of people struggling with their conscience around some of our society's most fundamental assumptions.

*Alambrista* (A19–50)

Saturday, 1:00 PM–2:30 PM

Robert M. Young's critically acclaimed 110-minute film *Alambrista* (1977) depicts the harsh realities of Mexican life on both sides of the border.

*Dogma* (A19–132)

Saturday, 8:30 PM–10:00 PM

In this controversial film, a woman who is the last living descendant of Jesus is called upon by the Voice of God to stop two renegade angels from entering a Catholic church in New Jersey, and thereby erasing all existence.

*Freaks* (A19–133)

Saturday, 8:30 PM–10:00 PM

Set in the environs of a circus sideshow, the film tells a tale of romance and revenge in which the characters with non-normative human bodies are the heroes and the characters with culturally normative human bodies are the villains.

*By the Dawn's Early Light: Chris Jackson's Journey to Islam* (A20–132)

Sunday, 8:30 PM–10:00 PM

This documentary film reexamines the controversy when NBA player Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf (formerly Chris Jackson) refused to stand during the national anthem because of his "Muslim conscience," the media (mis)representations, and the differing reactions of African-American Muslims and immigrant American Muslims. The film's director, Zareena Grewal, will preside.

*Transnational Savior: A Salvadoran Jesus Reunites with His People in the United States* (A20–132)

Sunday, 8:30 PM–10:00 PM

This 40-minute documentary film chronicles the Salvadoran celebration of La Bajada (the Lowering) and the Day of the Salvadoran in Los Angeles.

*What the Bleep Do We Know?* (A20–133)

Sunday, 8:30 PM–10:00 PM

The movie was a surprise indie hit, combining mysticism and quantum physics. Does matter exist? Does time flow in one direction? Is the universe a construct of the human mind?

*Left Behind: The Movie* (A21–126)

Monday, 8:30 PM–10:00 PM

This is the first of two movie adaptations of the bestselling *Left Behind* books (by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins), which offer a fictional account of what will happen to those who have been "left behind" on earth after the Rapture.

*The Magdalene Sisters* (A21–127)

Monday, 8:30 PM–10:00 PM

The film is a fact-based account of three young Irish women who were imprisoned in a Magdalene laundry in Dublin in 1964. ☹

# EIS Offers New Job Services, including Searchable Candidates' Vita Online

CANDIDATES and employers will find new offerings at this year's Employment Information Services Center at the Annual Meeting. The AAR is giving registered candidates the opportunity to upload a curriculum vitae to the EIS Web site, and beginning September 1, employers registered for the EIS Center will be able to view the online CVs, which will be organized by job classification. The CVs will also be placed in binders and made available in the EIS Center for employer review.

Also new this year, employers who are interviewing at the EIS Center will receive an "EIS" icon next to their ad in *Openings Online*. Candidates should start looking at *Openings* now to see which employers will be at the EIS Center and to begin applying for positions.

The 2005 EIS Center will be held in Franklin Hall at the Marriott Philadelphia Downtown Hotel, the headquarters hotel of this year's Annual Meeting. It will open at 7:00 PM Friday with a short orientation session. Come and receive your Annual Meetings special edition of *Openings*, and learn how you can best utilize EIS. Immediately after the orientation, the message center will open. EIS will be fully operational Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, and a half-day on Tuesday.

For more EIS Center information, including registration information and CV upload/review instructions, see [www.aarweb.org/eis](http://www.aarweb.org/eis) or call 404-727-3049.

The deadline for EIS registration and CV submission is October 21. ☹

# Annual Meeting to Focus on Central and Eastern Europe

DUE TO THE INITIATIVE of the International Connections Committee, each Annual Meeting includes a focus on a specific region of the world. The international focus for the 2005 Annual Meeting is Central and Eastern European Scholars and Scholarship. Listed below are some relevant sessions.

Quo Vadis Eastern Europe? (A19–9)

Neo-Pagan Religions in Central and Eastern Europe: Identity, Community, and Challenge (A19–70)

Russian Orthodoxy in Literature and Modern Life (A19–104)

Religion in Europe East and West (A20–4)

Eastern European Jewry: Culture, Thought, and Impact (A20–58)

20th-Century Eastern European Theologians (A20–63)

Voloshky Ukrainian Dance Ensemble (A20–131)

Religion and the Holocaust in Central and Eastern Europe (A21–35)

Methodism in Eastern Europe: Renewing the Heritage (A21–123) ☹

# New Program Units

Nine new program units will offer exciting sessions at this year's Annual Meeting

## Western Esotericism Group

**Western Esotericism** (A20–73)  
Sunday, 1:00 PM–3:30 PM

## Contemporary Pagan Studies Consultation

**Neo-Pagan Religions in Central and Eastern Europe: Identity, Community, and Challenge** (A19–70)  
Saturday, 1:00 PM–3:30 PM  
Co-sponsored with the New Religious Movements Group

**Boundaries and Paths to Authenticity** (A21–30)  
Monday, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM

## Daoist Studies Consultation

**Ritual, Temple, and Power in Later Daoism** (A19–115)  
Saturday, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM  
Co-sponsored with the Chinese Religions Group

**Daoist Studies: Problems and Prospects** (A20–27)  
Sunday, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM

## Death, Dying, and Beyond Consultation

**Continuities and Discontinuities: Contemporary Cross-Cultural Approaches to the Study of Death** (A20–28)  
Sunday, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM

## Liberal Theologies Consultation

**Liberal Theologies: Parameters and Prospectives** (A20–77)  
Sunday, 1:00 PM–3:30 PM

## Queer Theory and LGBT Studies in Religion Consultation

**Queering the Study of Religion** (A19–126)  
Saturday, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM

## Religion and Sexuality Consultation

**Regulating Desire: Christian and Buddhist Sexuality Debates in America and Beyond** (A19–26)  
Saturday, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM

## Signifying (on) Scriptures Consultation

**Theorizing Signifying Traditions and Practices** (A20–30)  
Sunday, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM

## Tantric Studies Consultation

**Sexuality and Gender in Tantric Traditions** (A20–127)  
Sunday, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM

**Visual Arts and Ritual in Tantric Traditions** (A21–7)  
Monday, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM  
Co-sponsored by the Arts, Literature, and Religion Section ☹

# Things to Do in Philadelphia

WHILE PHILADELPHIA is famous as the birthplace of American democracy and home of the Liberty Bell, the city has so much more to offer. Quaint shops, acclaimed museums and performing arts, and historical landmarks make Philadelphia a city to explore.

As a historical city, Philadelphia has many excellent museums. The Rodin Museum, devoted to the work of Auguste Rodin, encompasses the greatest collection of his sculpture outside of Paris. The celebrated showcase of works includes *The Burghers of Calais*, *The Gates of Hell*, and *The Thinker*, one of the most recognizable sculptures in the world. The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts is America's oldest art museum. Its renowned collection of American paintings and sculptures spans four centuries and includes works by the country's greatest artists. A trip to Independence National Historical Park will include many historical sites such as the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, and Congress Hall.

Many people come to Philadelphia for the history, but the city is also a shopper's paradise. The Gallery Mall is connected to the Pennsylvania Convention Center. It offers over 130 shops to browse. For more upscale shopping, Rittenhouse Row

is home to many premier shops such as Tiffany & Company and Nicole Miller. If antiques pique your interest, visit Antique Row, just six blocks away from the convention center on Pine Street. This collection of boutiques offers a fine selection of period furnishings, antiques, collectibles, estate jewelry, and vintage clothing from around the world.

- Antique Row**  
Pine Street between 9th and 17th Streets
- Gallery Mall**  
9th and Market Streets
- Independence National Historical Park**  
6th and Market Streets
- Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts**  
Broad and Cherry Streets  
Closed Monday
- Philadelphia Museum of Art**  
26th Street and Benjamin Franklin Pkwy  
Closed Monday
- Rittenhouse Row**  
Walnut Street and Broad Street
- Rodin Museum**  
22nd Street and Ben Franklin Parkway  
Closed Monday 🚶

# Where to Eat in Philadelphia



## Eating

\$	under \$10
\$\$	\$11–20
\$\$\$	\$21–30
\$\$\$\$	over \$30

**Alma de Cuba**  
*1623 Walnut Street*

Festive Cuban cocktails such as Mojitos and daiquiris perfectly complement the flavors, brilliant colors, and textures of the Cuban-inspired cuisine. \$\$\$

**The Bards**  
*2013 Walnut Street*

The art of conversation is facilitated by the absence of cable TV competing with jukeboxes. A warm and inviting restaurant that serves Irish food. \$\$

**Capriccio**  
*1701 Locust Street*

Capriccio offers a selection of sandwiches, salads, soups, coffee, freshly baked pastries, desserts, and ice cream. This European café is located in the heart of Rittenhouse Square. \$

**D'Angelo's Ristorante and Lounge Italiano**  
*256 S. 20th Street*

D'Angelo's is a private dining spot with award-winning cuisine and an extraordinary selection of Italian wine. \$\$

**Fox and Hound Smokehouse and Tavern**  
*1501 Spruce Street*

A casual restaurant where you can catch the game on TV. With more than 70 different varieties of beer, Fox and Hound prides itself on throwing the best cocktail party in town. \$

**Gallery at Market East**  
*9th and Market Streets*

There are over 20 fast food outlets in the Gallery Mall. \$

**Joseph Poon Asian Fusion Restaurant**  
*1002 Arch Street*

This Asian fusion restaurant, one block from the convention center, is bright and contemporary with a dash of adventure. \$\$

**Kingdom of Vegetarians**  
*129 North 11th Street*

This vegan kosher Chinese restaurant in Chinatown serves vegetarian dishes and dim sum, all freshly prepared. \$

**Le Castagne**  
*1920 Chestnut Street*

Le Castagne represents cutting-edge Northern Italian cooking by presenting classic fare in a contemporary fashion. \$\$\$

**Palm Restaurant**  
*200 South Broad Street*

For more than 60 years, the Palm has been serving classic American fare such as lobster, steak, lamb, and veal. \$\$\$

# Performances and Exhibitions to See at the Annual Meeting

*The AAR is showcasing the following performances and exhibitions during this year's Annual Meeting.*

## Sharon O'Brien — Readings from "The Family Silver" (A19–100)

Saturday, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM

Sharon O'Brien will give a talk and lead a workshop on the creative and spiritual meanings of memoir, including a reading from *The Family Silver: A Memoir of Depression and Inheritance*. Her memoir records the story of her struggle with depression ("a rude houseguest") and her search to understand her family's past. She uses biographers' methods to weave together the scattered pieces of the past — a mother's memo books, a father's reading journal, family photographs, hospital records, dance cards — into a narrative of redemption. She will go "backstage" about the craft of memoir, giving examples from her own creative process to show how writing can be a journey full of dead ends and side roads as well as open spaces. She will give suggestions for ways to begin writing life stories in a personal narrative workshop. Participants will work in small groups. No experience necessary; bring a pen and a notebook.

## Dennis and Dan Bielfeldt: An Evening of Jazz (A19–131)

Saturday, 8:30 PM–10:00 PM

In addition to being a philosophy and religion professor and a member of the AAR, Dennis Bielfeldt is a jazz pianist with a degree in piano performance. He has done club work throughout the Midwest, particularly in Iowa City and Des Moines, Iowa, Wichita, Kansas, and Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Dennis has played with scores of musicians, has taught jazz piano, and has worked as a clinician. He especially enjoys recreating the sounds of the great solo jazz pianists of the '30s and '40s. Dennis's 19-year-old son Dan is already an accomplished jazz saxophonist who has performed in various venues. Dan has been the first-chair all-state jazz sax player in South Dakota the last three years. Playing be-bop is his particular favorite.



## Voloshky Ukrainian Dance Ensemble (A20–131)

Sunday, 8:30 PM–10:00 PM

The Voloshky Ukrainian Dance Ensemble, founded in 1972, has earned renown for the vigor and resplendence of its performances. The Voloshky style is bold, powerful, and one of sparkling athleticism. The ensemble generates a dynamic blend of art and energy characterizing the vitality of the Ukrainian people. Voloshky achieves a delicate balance between authenticity and originality in style and composition. The dancers combine the strengths of classical ballet with the vigor of traditional Ukrainian dance. Voloshky's artistry and portrayal of Ukrainian dance is testament to a vibrant and enduring culture steeped in rich history. Under the artistic direction of Taras Lewyckyj, Voloshky accomplishes dance on a truly lofty scale.

## Farm Security Administration Photo Exhibit by Colleen McDannell (A21–100)

Monday, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM

Sponsored by AAR and Temple University

Following the special topics forum *Picturing Faith: Photography and the Great Depression* (A21–53) is a reception at curator Colleen McDannell's photography exhibit at the Mellon Society of Fellows, 10th Floor Gladfelter Hall (12th Street and Berks Mall) on the campus of Temple University. A bus will be provided following the session for attendees interested in viewing the photos. 🚶

## Reading Terminal Market 12th and Arch Streets

The best farmers' market in America features 80 merchants under one roof and lunch dishes of every imaginable variety. Closed on Sunday. \$–\$\$

## Sotto Varelli 231 South Broad Street

Sotto Varelli is located along the Avenue of the Arts and serves a menu featuring seafood, steaks, chops, and pasta. \$\$

## Zanzibar Blue 200 South Broad Street

A restaurant and jazz club, Zanzibar Blue provides an elegant experience that melds international jazz and fine dining. \$\$\$



## Drinking

## The Black Sheep Bar 2475 17th Street

A relaxed atmosphere, hearty Irish food, and a wide selection of drinks from around the world greet patrons.

## Tir Na Nog Bar and Grill 1600 Arch Street

Irish artisans have designed a warm Irish pub with sophisticated charm. New American food is on the menu. \$\$ 🚶



# AAR President Outlines Search Plan for Executive Director

Hans J. Hillerbrand, AAR President, Duke University

**W**HEN Barbara DeConcini, AAR Executive Director, informed the AAR Board at the April 2005 meeting that she would not serve another full term in office, her announcement put into bold relief how much the AAR has changed and what was accomplished during her 15 years in office. The size of the Annual Meeting, the annual budget, the activities of over a dozen standing committees, the publishing program — to cite but a few instances — all suggest a dramatic change from the time, back in 1991, when Barbara assumed the position of executive director. The AAR then only had a part-time executive director and a part-time office staff. Much of the development of the past 15 years would have been unthinkable without Barbara's involvement and her energetic and visionary leadership.

Barbara succeeded in reminding the Board again and again that the AAR is a volunteer organization: that the program of the annual meetings and the committees of the AAR are unthinkable without the committed and active involvement of AAR members. Many of you have met

Barbara at regional AAR/SBL meetings and have had a chance to hear her vision and her updates on what is happening in our field and on the challenges facing the Academy. I, for one, have been pleased to hear Barbara remind the Board that the AAR must serve both the scholarly and the professional dimension of its members. For example, we have a high-quality scholarly books program while at the same time we address such professional issues as childcare at the Annual Meeting and the support of departmental chairs, among many other things.

Now the AAR must move on and find a successor who will bring to the position the qualities needed for this important work at an important time in the history of the AAR. This task will not be easy.

At the AAR Board meeting in April, I informed the Board that I would appoint a search committee that would reflect both the diverse strengths of the AAR and its various constituencies. I am pleased that the following colleagues have agreed to serve with me on the search committee: Diana Eck, Gene Gallagher, Deanna Thompson, Rebecca Alpert, Stacy Patty, Linda Moody, Peter Paris, and Bill

Mahoney. These colleagues will bring to the table an impressive array of prior AAR involvement, including a former president, a president-elect, board members and former board members, and chairs of the regions and the status of women in the profession committees.

In searches such as ours, the temptation is to proceed as quickly as possible to the identification and even screening of candidates. Nonetheless, the professionals who make a lot of money advising institutions on searches have suggested that it behooves organizations to begin a search by taking an institutional inventory — the state of the organization; its particular challenges and needs — and then move on to establishing the traits and qualifications needed in the person to be sought. In line with this approach, the Search Committee will begin its work with a thorough discussion of the current challenges facing the AAR. This will need to include, *inter alia*, the decision about the Annual Meeting; the further implementation of the strategic plan adopted by the Board two years ago with its goals of further internationalization; new members; and emphasis on the work done by our

colleagues in the practical theological disciplines. Thus, the initial meeting of the Search Committee was devoted to a discussion of the criteria and qualifications of the position. This gave the committee a yardstick by which to evaluate the candidates.

The following advertisement announced the opening:

The American Academy of Religion is searching for a new Executive Director. Headquartered in Atlanta, with an international membership of some 10,000, the AAR is the premier association and professional society for scholars of religion. The Executive Director will be a gifted administrator, possess outstanding interpersonal skills, and will embrace the vision of the AAR (see [www.aarweb.org](http://www.aarweb.org)). The successful candidate must hold an advanced degree and be familiar with the academic study of religion. Letter of application and résumé to AAR Executive Director Search, Duke University, Box 90964, Durham, NC 27708, USA. The AAR is an EEO/AA employer. ♣

## Salute to Glenn Yocum, 11-Year Editor of JAAR

Terry Godlove, Hofstra University



Glenn Yocum, Whittier College

**W**ITH GLENN YOCUM'S 11-year tenure as editor of *JAAR* ending, his deep and lasting contributions to the journal, as well as the field, are evident: a stronger journal supported by his efforts at diversity and globalization in scholarship, guidance in transition from Scholars Press to Oxford University Press, and a collegial environment that invited thoughtful conversation and scholarship.

The AAR Board applauded Yocum's leadership in April, approving a formal resolution written by the AAR Publications Committee and brought to the Board by its chair, Frank Clooney. "His editorial work has been exemplary; the journal has flourished under his guidance; his relationship with authors and would-be authors, Scholars Press and OUP, and the AAR office has been a model for professional courtesy and collaboration; he has expanded the horizons of *JAAR*, helping to draw it into a new era of global conversation and exchange; he has been a faithful and collegial member of the Publications Committee, a wise observer with a long memory, and a good friend to all who have served on the committee; he

has courageously brought the wisdom of the West (coast) to the East (coast). For all of this, we are very grateful, and we shall very much miss his participation in our meetings."

But many know that formal resolutions adopted by boards of directors are just foam on the wave. The real power and the energy lie hidden in the form of individual acts of professionalism, courtesy, and kindness. Yocum's colleagues attest to many of these.

Sheila Davaney, professor at Iliff School of Theology and *JAAR* Book Review Editor, first met Yocum when she was serving on the search committee that interviewed him. "Glenn promised to broaden the subdisciplines that would find *JAAR* as a natural home for scholarship related to these areas," she recalled. "He was particularly sensitive to the need to encourage previously underrepresented scholarly voices, geographical locales, and disciplines focused on other than Western religious traditions."

"Glenn announced the importance of attending to material culture and to popular religions as well as a continued interest in texts. He asserted perhaps most importantly that articles and reviews needed to not only make a contribution to their own scholarly subset but they had also to be intelligible across disciplinary lines; they needed to make a contribution to the study of religions as a whole, as a field."

Davaney said Glenn has accomplished all of these things and more.

"He revitalized *JAAR*'s Board, making it representative of multiple subfields, various kinds of institutions, and a variety of voices including international scholars," she said. "He encouraged vigorous debate and truly turned the Board into a working group responsible for the *Journal*."

Davaney said he represented the journal with wisdom and insight on the Board of the AAR, the Program Committee, and for a time the Executive Committee.

"He has been deeply respected by all who served with him," she said. "Glenn guided the *Journal* through the transition from Scholars Press to Oxford University Press. I will be among those who have treasured him as a colleague and a friend."

*JAAR* associate editor Joseph L. Price, Whittier College, said he would remember Yocum on a personal and professional level.

"Mostly, I will remember Glenn's tenure at *JAAR* for the breadth of his knowledge, for the keenness of his perception, and for the steadiness of his adherence to principles rather than convenience," Price said. "He's a colleague who has supported my venturing into uncharted territories (of sports and/as religion) while respecting the fundamental grounding of my concerns in a tradition and orientation that are not those of his current practice. That's an amazing gift."

Price said that those who have worked closely with Glenn over a range of projects know that they have been graced by being in the presence of someone who is profound, just, and genuine — all in the best sense of those words.

"Add to those qualities his incredible laughter and sense of humor, and you get a portrait of how remarkable a person, scholar, editor, colleague, and friend he truly is," Price said.

Price recalled Yocum's adventurousness, such as when he had completed a hiking trip through South Korea. "When he returned . . . he brought his trail food with him. Somehow, smoked, dried crickets made it past his vegetarian palate, and he brought them to share at a party spon-

sored by Whittier's dean of faculty. Although the dean refused the opportunity to crunch cricket meat with Glenn, my then-young son found the opportunity most charming and tasty, as did I."

Gary Laderman, Emory University, and a collaborator on one of Yocum's signature initiatives, the internationalization project, said working with him was a pleasure. "It's rare to find someone in academia who is so down-to-earth, friendly, open-minded, and direct," he said. "In the work we did with the planning committee on the internationalization project, Glenn's keen intellect and goodwill always made our meetings stimulating, productive, and very easy-going."

"Even though he did try to get us to meet in more rustic locations like his new hometown, Las Vegas (that's New Mexico, not Nevada!), our times together always turned out to be quite memorable. I feel fortunate to have had an opportunity to work with him on the journal generally and this project specifically. I am even more fortunate to now count him as a close friend."

Susan Henking, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, is a Publications Committee colleague of Yocum's. During her years of involvement with the AAR and on the committee, she came to know him. "His commitment to our field is expressed in his generous mentorship of those newer to the field than he, his kind and constructive criticism of all of us (often beginning with himself), and, most importantly — though I do not have a good word for it — his genuineness," she said. "I have learned an enormous amount from him over the years — about graceful listening and open dialogue, the value of friendship, and the importance of what we do."

# Theological Programs Initiative Consultations Underway

Carey J. Gifford, Director of Theological Programs

THE AAR is in the process of conducting six regional consultations about our newest major undertaking, the Theological Programs Initiative. The purpose of these gatherings is to solicit ideas for how we can contribute most effectively to the scholarly and professional lives of faculty in theological education. As we launch this new initiative, we are inviting groups of members in theological education to think with us about new services, programs, and resources that the AAR might offer the theological education community.

The first consultation took place on June 29, 2005 when faculty from four theological schools in the Southeast met in Atlanta, Georgia. Attendees included faculty and deans from Candler School of Theology, Duke Divinity School, the Interdenominational Theological Center, and Vanderbilt Divinity School. Five more consultations are planned for this fall in

Boston, Berkeley, Chicago, New York City, and Philadelphia, the last in conjunction with the Annual Meeting.

The daylong conversation in Atlanta centered on the topic of the scholarly vocation of the theological educator. As an introduction, each participant spoke about her/his theological vocation and work. We went on to discuss the varying loci of theological education, focusing on the commonalities and “family resemblances” in how the theological disciplines are practiced wherever they occur: free-standing, denominational and interdenominational seminaries; university divinity schools; theology departments in colleges and universities; and theological institutes.

The attendees addressed themselves to this question: If one assumes a clear distinction between church and academy, where is the theology school placed vis à vis these two? To what extent do theology schools vary in this? How, ideally, should

the theology school be placed? Where or how do theological educators find ourselves placed? What are the tensions, gaps, and possibilities that we experience in our scholarly and professional lives?

The theory/praxis relation emerged as a useful rubric under which much of the conversation could be gathered. Accountable to one’s institution, ecclesial body, and scholarly guild, with each posing unique and sometimes contradictory expectations, the theological educator must accomplish a balancing act that is peculiarly challenging and complex. Faculty in theological education are invariably placed at the intersection of theory and practice.

Scholarly guilds such as the AAR are an important component in scholarly and professional development. All too often, though, scholarly guilds undervalue the scholarly projects of theological educators by failing to acknowledge that theory/

praxis demands shape our lives and work. In light of the daylong common reflection, the group concluded by addressing the question of how the AAR could do a better job of serving the scholarly and professional needs of the theological educator.

As the Theological Programs Initiative develops, the AAR will continue to work closely with our members, as well as our colleagues in the Association of Theological Schools, to identify concrete ways in which we can support and contribute to the theological education enterprise — in our roles as convener, publisher, validator, and facilitator of scholarship and the professional life.

If you would like to participate in any of these consultations, please contact us at [cgifford@aarweb.org](mailto:cgifford@aarweb.org).

## AAR Honors Three Authors in its Annual Book Awards

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

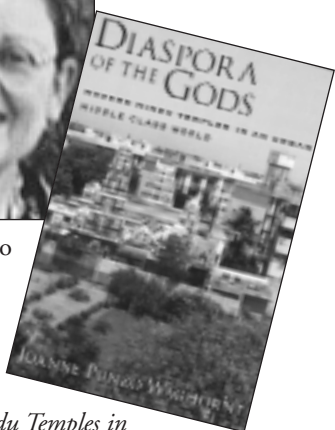
Awards for Excellence are given in three categories: Analytical–Descriptive, Constructive–Reflective, and Historical Studies. Not all awards are given every year. In addition, there is a separate competition and prize for the Best First Book in the History of Religions. For eligibility requirements,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

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

### Analytical–Descriptive



Joanne Punzo Waghorne, Syracuse University, *Diaspora of the Gods: Modern Hindu Temples in an Urban Middle-Class World*. Oxford University Press, 2004.



### Constructive–Reflective



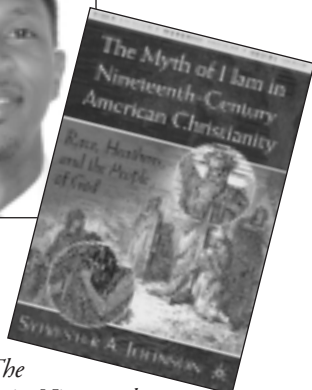
Robert A. Orsi, Harvard University, *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them*. Princeton University Press, 2004.



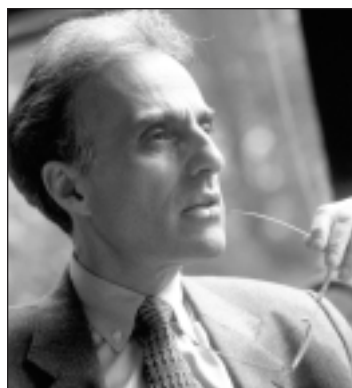
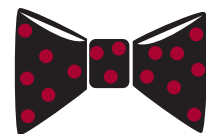
### Best First Book in the History of Religions



Sylvester Johnson, Florida A&M University, *The Myth of I am in Nineteenth-Century American Christianity: Race, Heathens, and the People of God*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.



## Public Understanding of Religion Committee Names John Esposito 2005 Recipient of Martin Marty Award



John Esposito, Georgetown University, Winner of the 2005 Martin Marty Award

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY professor and world-renowned Islamic scholar John Esposito will be honored at AAR’s November convention as the 2005 Marty Award recipient.

As winner of the award, Esposito will appear at the Marty Forum, from 1:00 PM to 3:30 PM on Sunday, November 20, where he will discuss his contributions to the public understanding of Islam. Pulitzer Prize-winning *Washington Post* reporter Caryle Murphy will interview Esposito as part of the forum, which includes an opportunity for the audience to ask questions.

The Committee on the Public Understanding of Religion selected Esposito from nominations submitted earlier this year. Awarded annually since 1996, the Martin 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 to the public as well.

Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, Esposito has been among the most fre-

quent commentators on Islam in the media. Millions of people have read or heard explanations of Islam from Esposito, who is also the author of more than 30 books on the topic.

Esposito is a Georgetown professor and founding director of the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding. He is editor-in-chief of *The Oxford History of Islam*, *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, and *The Islamic World: Past and Present*, and the four-volume *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*. Other books include *What Everyone Should Know about Islam: Questions and Answers*; *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam*; *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*; *Islam and Politics*; *Islam and Democracy* (with J. Voll); *Islam: The Straight Path*; *Women in Muslim Family Law*; *Geography of Religion: Where God Lives*; *Where Pilgrims Walk* (with S. Hitchcock); and *World Religions Today* (with D. Fasching and T. Lewis).

Esposito teaches classes on Islam and politics, Islam and the West, women in Islam, Islam and global terrorism, and religion in international affairs.

The first recipient of the Marty Award was Martin Marty himself; since then, awardees include Huston Smith (2004), Robert Wuthnow (2003), Diana Eck (2002), David Knipe (2001), and Eileen V. Barker (2000). The contribution can be through any medium (e.g., books, film, TV, public speaking) so long as it is based on scholarship in religion.

The Committee on the Public Understanding of Religion enthusiastically solicits nominations from the membership for future recipients. Nominees need not be AAR members or academics. A nomination form can be found on the AAR Web site at [www.aarweb.org/awards/marty/default.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/awards/marty/default.asp).



# Teaching and Learning Committee Honors Zayn Kassam with 2005 Excellence in Teaching Award

Eugene V. Gallagher, Connecticut College



Zayn Kassam, Pomona College, Winner of 2005 Excellence in Teaching Award

**Z**AYN KASSAM, chair of the department of religious studies at Pomona College, will receive the Excellence in Teaching Award at the 2005 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. A historian of religions, she teaches a variety of courses, including “Engendering and Experience: Women in the Islamic Tradition,” “Islamic Thought,” and “Muslim Literary Landscapes.”

In addition to her own scholarly work, Kassam

has written several essays on teaching, including “Engendering and Experience: Teaching a Course on Women in Islam” (in *Teaching Islam*, Brannon Wheeler, ed.); “Reflections on Teaching Islam at a Liberal Arts College” (in the *Bulletin of the Council of Societies for the Study of Religion*); and “Mindfield or Minefield: Teaching Religion in a Multicultural Classroom” (in *Spotlight on Teaching*). Extending her teaching beyond the college context, she has written a variety of articles intended for a lay audience. In addition, she is preparing *A Student’s Guide to the World Religions: Islam* for Greenwood Press.

Students have expressed profound appreciation for Kassam’s “never-ending commitment” to supporting her students emotionally and as scholars. They praise her teaching methods for striving to involve all students equally, and they appreciate her skillful and fluid use of various media and educational technologies to enhance her teaching.

Colleagues observe that Kassam is equally adept at leading discussions and delivering lectures. One colleague said “Zayn has an incredible ear for the students’ partial insights, their half-articulate reflections, and their struggles

with difficult material. She displays a sensitivity that genuinely respects the students without showing a trace of condescension, and she has the skill to show the larger implications of the issue under scrutiny.”

Another colleague praises Kassam’s ability to address volatile subjects with students in “an environment of candor and honesty.” Students and colleagues alike attest that she deeply deserved Pomona’s “Wig Distinguished Teaching Award,” which she received in 1998, her first year of eligibility, and then again in 2005.

At this year’s Annual Meeting, participants will again have the opportunity to engage in conversation with the Excellence in Teaching Award winner during a special session on Saturday, November 19, 1:00 PM – 3:30 PM (A19–53). 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 Kassam will post some of her teaching materials on the Web site of the AAR’s Virtual Teaching and Learning Center ([www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching/default.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching/default.asp)), and they will serve as the basis for the session.

Professor Kassam is an impressive example of dedication to the craft of teaching, especially for her careful and unflinching consideration of issues that often carry a heavy emotional charge for her students. Along with the previous winners of the AAR Excellence in Teaching Award — Tina Pippin, Eugene V. Gallagher, William Placher, Janet Walton, and Timothy Renick — she demonstrates the resourceful, creative, and fully engaged teaching found among so many members of the Academy. The Committee on Teaching and Learning greatly appreciates the opportunity to review and learn from the materials submitted by the candidates for consideration and acknowledges the commitment, ingenuity, and energy that they devote to teaching about religion.

The Committee on Teaching and Learning encourages colleagues to send letters of nomination for this significant award to Kyle Cole, Director of College Programs at the American Academy of Religion at [kcole@aarweb.org](mailto:kcole@aarweb.org). The guidelines for this award are on the AAR Web site at [www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching/default.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching/default.asp). 📖

## Judith Berling to Receive Ray L. Hart Service Award



Judith Berling, Graduate Theological Union, Winner of 2005 Hart Service Award

*Judith Berling will receive the Ray L. Hart Service Award at the 2005 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. Berling has been active in the AAR since 1978 and served as President in 1991. In 1996, she chaired the Long-Range Planning and Development Committee, which was then a standing committee of the AAR. Most recently she chaired the task force that produced the Report of the Task Force on the Independent Annual Meeting. “From the beginning of my academic career,” Berling notes, “the American Academy of Religion provided me with a rich context for professional growth. Serving on its various groups and committees, I not only met stimulating*

*colleagues, but I had a chance to collaborate with them to address issues facing the profession.”*

*Berling is a specialist in Chinese and Comparative Religions. She has been Professor of Chinese and Comparative Religions at Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California since 1996. She received the Sarlo Distinguished Teaching Award from the Graduate Theological Union in 2003 and the Herman Bachman Lieber Distinguished Teaching Award from Indiana University in 1986. Berling’s most recent publication, Understanding Other Religious Worlds: A Guide for Interreligious Education (Orbis, 2004)*

*was written through a Henry Luce Fellowship in Theology.*

*The Ray L. Hart Service Award, established by the Board of Directors in 1992, is given to persons whose dedication and service have made significant contributions to the AAR’s mission of fostering excellence in the field of religion. Ray L. Hart was the first recipient in 1993. Since then awardees have included Raymond Williams (1994), Austin Creel (1995), Robert Detweiler (1997), and Peter Paris (2001). In 2002, the award was given to Harry Buck and Robert V. Smith as a “Founders Award.” Nominations for future awardees should be sent to the AAR Executive Committee.*

**RSN:** You’ve been an AAR member since 1978. What are some of the most rewarding projects/initiatives you’ve worked on?

**Berling:** There have been many fascinating projects. One of my first AAR duties, as a rather junior faculty member, was to help facilitate conversations between two groups of faculty in Islamic studies who disagreed on how that subdiscipline should be represented in the AAR’s Annual Meeting program.

For many years, I co-chaired the Comparative Studies in Religion Section with Tom Hopkins, an Islamicist from Franklin & Marshall College. We worked very hard to encourage scholars from diverse sections and groups to engage in comparative conversations with their colleagues in other sections and groups. This section, at its best, worked against the tendency toward balkanization of the different groups and helped foster new conversations.

From 1988 to 1990, I served on the Committee for Education and the Study of Religion. That committee not only sponsored panels and special topic forums at the AAR, but it also helped launch the

AAR workshops on teaching that eventually led to the establishment of the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning.

While an elected officer of the AAR, I helped to promote conversations between religious studies and theology at the Annual Meeting; I served on the Long-Range Planning Committee; I served on a committee to rewrite the Academy’s mission and set five-year goals; I helped reconsider the tasks of all of the standing committees; and I helped move the ACLS Committee on the History of Religions into the AAR.

**RSN:** You were an officer of the AAR from 1988 to 1992, including a year as president in 1990–91. What was the AAR like in those years? What were some major challenges it faced?

**Berling:** During my years as an officer, the AAR was going through a number of significant transitions. Barbara DeConcini was in her first years in office. She was trying to clarify the mission, the practices, and the goals of the organization. Some of this had to do with articulating clear policies that reflected the best practices of the AAR. For instance, although there were

general policies about turnover in Board membership, there were a few members who had served on the Board well beyond established term limits. During my years as an officer, Barbara and a series of officers led the Board in being consistent in its own policies to ensure that more members of the AAR had opportunities for leadership positions. We also tried to clarify how our organization sought to represent voices of underrepresented constituencies. Although there was an established women’s caucus, there were demands for (and resistance in some quarters to) the establishment of other caucuses and committees for underrepresented constituencies. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, a number of new committees and caucuses were established.

Barbara focused the Board during those years on defining the mission and goals of the AAR, and developing a plan for providing the financial, program, and staff/committee support to meet those goals. Because of this work, the AAR moved forward on a number of fronts that had been discussed for years without much action. By the mid-1990s the AAR was a much more focused organization than it had been.

**RSN:** How do you interpret the AAR’s role in fostering excellence in the field of religion?

**Berling:** Beyond the obvious (the Annual Meeting provided for a discussion of major books or hearing from influential scholars, and a place for authors to meet with publishers and for everyone to examine the recently published books), I want to highlight the multiple ways in which the AAR provides opportunities for the professional growth and stimulation of young (and not-so-young) faculty, not only in the Annual Meeting programs, but in the regions, in the newsletter, and so forth.

**RSN:** When you look back at your distinguished academic career, what are some of the research projects you’re most proud of?

**Berling:** Although like most faculty I have written many “occasional” articles and lectures, I would define my research into three major phases: 1) Work on the interaction of religions in China, especially in urban culture, between the 12th and the 18th centuries. My first book

# AAR Honors Journalists for In-Depth Reporting

**K**IMBERLY WINSTON, a freelance journalist, Linda Leicht of *the News-Leader* in Springfield, Missouri, and Steven Waldman of *Beliefnet* have won the American Academy of Religion awards for Best In-Depth Reporting on Religion.

Winston, who submitted writing published on *Beliefnet*, won the contest for journalists at news outlets with more than 100,000 circulation or on the Web; Leicht for journalists at news outlets with less than 100,000 circulation; and Waldman for opinion writing.

Eighty-five journalists entered the contests, the most in its six-year history. The awards recognize “well-researched newswriting that enhances the public understanding of religion,” said Barbara DeConcini, AAR Executive Director. Each of the winners will be awarded \$1,000.

Winston, from Pinole, California, submitted articles on a number of topics: the mainstreaming of Wicca; whether the influence of the movie *The Passion of the Christ* was what was feared or hoped for; the campaigning politicians’ use of Puritan theology; the trend of modern pagans reviving ancient religions; and how non-Christians are fighting to save Christmas.

The judges said Winston “distinguishes herself by pursuing unfamiliar stories and angles, in the process casting unexpected light on the tapestry of religion in America today.” She did that in the five stories she submitted by creating a “wonderful mix of scholarly sources and interviews to tackle a range of timely issues,” the judges said. Additionally, the judges noted Winston’s stories on *The Passion* and the candidates’ use of the City on the Hill metaphor “managed to include new information.”

Leicht submitted stories on the divisive-ness of gay marriage, the debate over

teaching evolution in schools, the significance of language in expressions of faith, the slew of books responding to *The Da Vinci Code*, and the 2004 election. “Leicht’s articles do a wonderful job of combining expert insight and background context with local reporting on the views and behavior of ordinary people,” one judge said. “They are educational in the best sense of the word.”

Another judge said the topics “weren’t earth-shattering, but [Leicht] created just the right mix of scholarship and excellent interviews to come up with new insights and interesting angles.”

Waldman submitted opinion articles discussing the election and *The Passion of the Christ*. “Often contrarian and always provocative, these articles consistently helped shape the discussion of the important religion news of 2004,” one judge noted. Another said that although the stories were familiar, Waldman “succeeded in presenting a wealth of information and included a variety of sources, while remaining straightforward about his own response.”

Waldman placed second in the contest last year. In fact, three other writers who placed second or third were honored in last year’s contest as well: Bill Tammeus, John Dart, and Douglas Todd.

Tammeus, of the *Kansas City Star*, placed second this year in the contest for news outlets with more than 100,000 circulation. Last year, he placed third in the opinion-writing contest and won it three years ago. “The stories drew heavily on current scholarship, but the writing kept the reader interested and engaged,” one judge noted.

Dart, of the *Christian Century*, who won last year’s contest for news outlets with less than 100,000 circulation, placed third in this year’s contest for that category. “Dart’s solid grasp of the range and character of scholarly research and insight gives these

articles a rare degree of authority in religion reporting,” the judges said.

Todd, of the *Vancouver Sun*, placed third in the opinion-writing contest after winning it last year. “Todd’s articles range from the magisterial to the personal, resulting in a range of opinion that is consistently stimulating,” one judge said.

Burton Bollag, of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, placed second in the contest for news outlets with less than 100,000 circulation. Judges were impressed with the depth of Bollag’s writing — of how he explored the complexities of religion in higher education. “While focusing on university life, the journalist manages to look at issues as varied as Homeland Security policies, the funding of religious universities, as well as studies of Catholic pedophilia and evangelical debates over omniscience,” a judge commented.

Tracey O’Shaughnessy, of the *Sunday Republican*, in Waterbury, Connecticut, placed second in the opinion-writing contest. “O’Shaughnessy’s voice is distinctive, and she uses it to give the important religion news of the week the kind of turn that the best columnists do — combining attitude with personal reflection, local reporting, and insight drawn from religion scholarship,” one judge said.

David Van Biema, of *Time* magazine, placed third in the contest for news outlets with more than 100,000 circulation. “With cover stories and shorter takes, Van Biema gives *Time*’s readers the kind of reporting-with-assessment characteristic of the best of that journal’s traditions,” judges said.

Each contestant submitted five articles published in North America during 2004. Names of contestants and their news outlets were removed from submissions prior to judging.

The judges were Joyce Smith, a journalism professor at Ryerson University and a for-

mer journalist; Mark Silk, the founding director of the Leonard E. Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life at Trinity College and a former journalist; and Michael Barkun, a political science professor at Syracuse University and a member of the AAR’s Committee for the Public Understanding of Religion.

## 2005 AAR Newswriting Contest Winners

### News outlets with more than 100,000 circulation

- First Place: Kimberly Winston, freelance, Pinole, CA
- Second Place: Bill Tammeus, *Kansas City Star*
- Third Place: David Van Biema, *Time*

### News outlets with less than 100,000 circulation

- First Place: Linda Leicht, *the News-Leader*, Springfield, MO
- Second Place: Burton Bollag, *Chronicle of Higher Education*
- Third Place: John Dart, *Christian Century*

### Opinion Writing

- First Place: Steven Waldman, *Beliefnet*
- Second Place: Tracey O’Shaughnessy, *Sunday Republican*, Waterbury, CT
- Third Place: Douglas Todd, *Vancouver Sun*

Read some of the award-winning articles at [www.aarweb.org/awards/journalism](http://www.aarweb.org/awards/journalism). 📖

The Committee on Teaching and Learning seeks nominations for the 2006 AAR Award for Excellence in Teaching.

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

Procedures for the nomination process are outlined on the AAR Web site at [www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching.asp).

# Lilly Endowment Awards Three-Year Grant to AAR for Continued Funding of Religionsource Service

**L**ILLY ENDOWMENT INC. has awarded the AAR a three-year grant totaling \$150,000 to help support the continuation of Religionsource through September 2008. Religionsource is a free service for journalists, providing them with referrals to scholars who can provide expertise specific to the news stories the journalists are reporting.

The Endowment funding, along with that provided by The Pew Charitable Trusts, supports responding to journalists’ questions as well as the ongoing updating of the Religionsource database. The online database supplies journalists with information on more than 5,000 religion scholars, including their contact information and publications, with each scholar being identified as knowledgeable in one or more of some 1,500 specific areas of expertise.

“Journalists have repeatedly told us how greatly they appreciate Religionsource,” says AAR Executive Director Barbara DeConcini. “They say there’s no referral service near as useful to them for cover-

ing religion. So the AAR is thrilled that Lilly Endowment will help keep Religionsource going these next three years.”

The Endowment grant is one of several the foundation has awarded the AAR in recent years, including grants for collecting information on graduate and undergraduate religion programs, creating an online guide to the graduate study of religion, and conducting workshops for department chairs and teaching workshops for faculty. Lilly Endowment is an Indianapolis-based, private philanthropic foundation that funds religion, education, and community development. The Endowment also funds, for example, the PBS weekly broadcast *Religion & Ethics Newsweekly*.

In recent years, Religionsource has responded to several thousand requests from journalists for referrals to scholars. These requests have come from most major national news media, including Associated Press, CBS, *Los Angeles Times*, *Newsweek*, *New York Times*, NBC, NPR,

PBS, Religion News Service, Reuters, *Slate*, *Time*, *US News & World Report*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Washington Post*, as well as from hundreds of metro news dailies and other local news outlets.

Religionsource is part of a broader AAR effort to enhance the public understanding of religion. Our services to the news media also include three annual journalism awards for Best In-Depth Reporting on Religion, as well as attracting journalists to the AAR Annual Meeting and providing guidance to those who come.

Another aspect of our Public Understanding of Religion initiatives is offering a range of resources and services aimed at enhancing the understanding of religion among public policy makers and government officials. We also work with directors of U.S. prison chaplaincy programs, connecting them with AAR members who have the scholarly expertise to respond to questions regarding the religious beliefs and practices represented among the prison population. 📖



# AAR to Publish Career Guide for Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession

*Miguel De La Torre, Iliff School of Theology*

IN 1999, I WAS completing my doctorate, and like most, was anxious to find a job. I also had two things going against me. First, I had no idea how to obtain a tenure-track position, and so spent a great deal of time trying to figure out how this process differed from the typical corporate job search. In fact, it all seemed rather highbrowed and mysterious: finding faculty search postings, preparing a dossier, writing an application letter, going through an interview, and negotiating a job contract. Since I didn't understand how faculty searches are really conducted, I therefore naively believed that academics functioned above and beyond any form of political dynamics. My second "problem" was that I was a person of color, and therefore on the margins of the "good ol' boy" system. As much as I wanted to believe that hires were chosen solely because of the scholastic rigor demonstrated by the applicant, the truth of the matter was that even within academic settings, race and ethnicity still matter.

Fortunately for me, I came across a book that was partly responsible in helping me reach my goal — the prized tenure-track position — *Survival Guide for Women in the Profession* published by the AAR. Even though I am male, the practical advice, elucidation of the politics involved in faculty searches, and step-by-step explanation of the hiring process all proved to be invaluable. The prevailing oppressive structures faced by women due to institutional sexism are the same structures faced by scholars of color. It was not too difficult to mentally adjust the book's advice to the situations I would probably be facing as a Hispanic male. Still, even though the *Survival Guide for Women in the Profession* is well written, and remains a must-read for any woman entering the profession, I wish there had been a text dealing with the unique and specific challenges faced by scholars of color — both male and female.

When the AAR Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession announced their intention of producing a career guide, I was thrilled. Knowledge is power, and the existence of a

manual that provides the scholar of color with the necessary information required to survive an academic career is crucial. This manual is specifically designed to be the product of a collective versus singular perspective. It will be a concerted effort of scholars representing a variety of races and ethnicities. The main chapter writers are: Rita Nakashima Brock, Mary Churchill, Kwok Pui Lan, Peter J. Paris, Anthony Pinn, John J. Thatamanil, Rosetta Ross, Andrea Smith, Lynn Westfield, and myself serving as editor. Each chapter is a composite of the collective wisdom of scholars of color from throughout the academy who provided us with a great deal of feedback, anecdotal stories, and thoughtful advice.

**Attend the unveiling of the "AAR Career Guide for Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession."**

*Storming the Ivory Tower: Conflict, Complicity, and Social Change* (A19-102)

Saturday, November 19,  
4:00 PM to 6:30 PM

The manual's usefulness is not limited to the task of obtaining a teaching position. Instead it covers the entire academic career, beginning with the consideration of graduate school and following through to retiring from the profession. Writing from the perspective of marginalized groups, the contributors explain situations normally faced by candidates of color that are due to institutionalized racism and ethnic discrimination. As you will read, their encounters differ greatly from those experienced by their Euroamerican counterparts.

The first chapter serves as an introduction, looking at who we are as scholars of colors, and explores balancing our academic careers with self-care. There is also the struggle to avoid the fracturing of who we are, as we deal with perceptions of our identity, as in being the first or only scholar of color within our families, communities, or institutions. The

See **CAREER GUIDE** p.19

## AAR Announces New Staff Members, Position Changes

THE AAR'S EXECUTIVE office recently made several new hires and promotions. This fall, Myesha Jenkins, currently AAR's Administrative Supervisor, will begin her transition to a new role as Associate Director of Theological Programs. In this capacity, Myesha will bring her theology school training and creative meeting-planning skills to assist Carey Gifford with the many upcoming Theological Programs Initiative projects.

Former administrative assistant Toby Director will now serve as Research Project Coordinator. She will apply her extensive business experience to assist with tasks surrounding the Annual Meeting and with general project management

support for the AAR office as a whole, and will report to Aislinn Jones in this capacity.

Lauren R. Frazier joined the AAR in August 2005 as a new administrative assistant. She succeeds Allya Macdonald, who recently relocated to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to study at Louisiana State University. Frazier is a 2005 graduate of the Interdenominational Theological Center, where she received a Master of Divinity degree. She also received a Master of Arts in English from Northeastern University in 1997. She has worked as a research assistant for the Howard Thurman Papers Project and as an instructor of English at Dillard University and Delgado Community College. ☛

## Grants & Fellowships

### 2005-2006 ATS Lilly Theological Research Grants Recipients Named

The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS) has announced that the following AAR members are recipients of Lilly Theological Research Grants for 2005-2006. There are three types of grants: Faculty Sabbatical Grants (grants up to \$25,000 each during a sabbatical or other leave), Theological Scholars Grants (grants up to \$10,000 each for research apart from formal research leave), and Research Expense Grants (grants up to \$5,000 for those engaged in research projects). A total of 25 grants were awarded among the three categories.

#### Faculty Sabbatical Grants

**John G. Stackhouse, Jr.**, Regent College

*Cultivating the Garden, Building the City: A Theology of Cultural Persistence*

#### Theological Scholars Grants

**Nancy L. Eiesland**, Candler School of Theology of Emory University

*Reverence and the Complex Human Condition: Theological Reflections on Living Disability*

**Samuel K. Elolia**, Emmanuel School of Religion

*African Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit and the African Indigenous Churches*

**Alyda A. Faber**, Atlantic School of Theology

*"The Conditions of Our Love": Virginia Woolf, Theology, and Autobiography*

**Tat-siong Benny Liew**, Chicago Theological Seminary

*Between Gentile Women and Jewish Nation: Re-membering Gender and National Politics in Matthew's Post-War Context*

#### Research Expense Grants

**Grace Ji-Sun Kim**, Moravian Theological Seminary and **Jean K. Kim**, Moravian Theological Seminary

*A Hybrid Theology: Shamanism, Postcolonialism, and Empire*

**Alan Ka Lun Lai**, Vancouver School of Theology and **Su Yon Pak**, Union Theological Seminary

*Practicing Religious Education in Asian North American Contexts*

**Lizette Larson-Miller**, Church Divinity School of the Pacific

*This Holy Place: The Theology of Sanctifying Space*

**Richard J. Perry, Jr.**, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

*To Heal the Wounded Body, Soul, and Spirit: Toward an African American Theological/Ethical Perspective on Biomedical Ethics*

**Loren L. Townsend**, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

*What Is "Pastoral" about Pastoral Counseling? A Grounded Theory Study*

### Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertations Fellowships, 2005

The following five AAR members are among the 28 recipients of this year's Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation doctoral dissertation fellowships. The fellowships are designed to encourage original and significant study of ethical or religious values in all fields of the humanities and social sciences.

**Jiun-Chyi (Jessey) Choo**, Princeton University

*Historicized Ritual and Ritualized History: Women's Life-Cycles in Medieval China (589-960 AD)*

**Gareth J. Fisher**, University of Virginia

*Universal Rescue: Re-making the Post-Mao China in a Beijing Temple*

**Alexander P. Gardner**, University of Michigan

*The Rimay Nonsectarian Movement on the Tibetan Chinese Frontier: Religious Doctrine and Sacred Geography in the Formation of National Identity*

**Sarah H. Jacoby**, University of Virginia

*The Autobiography of Sera Khandro (1891 to 1940) and Its Eastern Tibetan Treasure Revelation Context*

**Terrence L. Johnson**, Brown University

*Born of Struggle: Race, Religion, and the Redemption of Democracy* ☛

## New Director of Development



Cynthia Walsh,  
American Academy of Religion

IN LATE MARCH the AAR welcomed Cynthia Walsh as its new Director of Development. She comes to us with many years of experience in the academic world, both as an editor and as a humanities reference librarian and Japanese bibliographer. Walsh is a graduate of Mount Holyoke College and holds master's degrees from Duke University and Emory University.

"I'm eager to grow in this position," Walsh remarked. "It's a logical outgrowth of my previous work and one that promises to keep me close to the humanities. Most delightful," she said, "will be my first opportunity to meet the AAR membership face-to-face in Philadelphia." ☛

# GSU Establishes Religious Studies Department

Timothy M. Renick, Georgia State University

AS I'VE COME to appreciate in recent months, when a new department of religious studies is established in these days of university cut-backs and consolidations, people in the discipline take notice. Georgia State University has 28,000 students and more than 100 different majors. It is the second largest university in the state of Georgia, and, according to *Newsweek*, it is one of the three most diverse universities in the country. Until about a decade ago, it had no organized offerings in religious studies.

This year, Georgia State University officially establishes a Department of Religious Studies, only the second in the state system. At its birth, the department will have over 50 different courses, 70 undergraduate majors, a brand-new Masters program, two large endowments (including an endowed, senior chair), and seven full-time faculty.

How did this dramatic change come about? Significantly, it was not due to an institutional commitment to build such a department. I arrived at Georgia State in the late 1980s, fresh out of graduate school, as the only faculty member in religious studies. I was placed in the Department of Philosophy. The institutional "commitment" at the time was for one additional junior faculty member to be hired if the "numbers" (i.e., course enrollments) justified it. The dean was a biologist

and a secularized Egyptian who had little time — and sympathy — for religion. Several of my colleagues in Philosophy actively sought my quick exit. In a highly competitive funding environment, no resources would be offered that could not be justified by student and institutional demand.

So we set out to create such demand. When we hired, we made sure to recruit very good scholars (from Harvard, Princeton, Santa Barbara) who were also superb teachers. These faculty members — who have gone on to win a string of teaching awards — not only attracted students, they began to produce results that were uncommon at Georgia State: one student received an NEH Young Scholar's Grant, another a Fulbright. The major (established initially "on the cheap" with a two-person faculty) began to produce more honors theses per capita than any other discipline on campus, and, within a few years, we had sent students off to Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, Princeton, Brown, and Chicago for graduate work in the field. The emphasis on good teaching also led to a generous endowment being established by one of our graduating majors, a senior citizen who had come back to school to earn her degree and who fell in love with the study of religion and our faculty. At an ambitious institution working to establish its academic credentials (and its endowments), administrators noticed such accomplishments.

We also worked to establish connections with other programs on campus, cross-listing courses with ten different departments and, in the process, creating a host of faculty members who could speak to the benefits of the field. These allies proved invaluable when our proposals for new degrees and resources came before the faculty senate. (Believe me, it is far more effective to have the chair of Sociology stand up and argue for the need for the new Religious Studies MA than to do so oneself.)

We actively participated in new initiatives on campus: the creation of a Middle East Center, an initiative to globalize the core curriculum. And we worked to convince the upper-administration of the importance of the field, in some cases explicitly in face-to-face meetings, but more potentially by being good, active citizens of the campus and community. One dramatic — if atypical — instance occurred immediately after hiring our new scholar of Islam, John Iskander, in August 2001. Due to the events of September 11, reporters were calling within weeks of his arrival; in late September, John appeared on CNN. The biologist dean was probably swayed to appreciate the importance of the study of religion more by tuning into CNN that one evening and seeing his new religion hire being interviewed live than by years of our abstract arguments about the pertinence of the field.

Which speaks to another factor crucial to the growth of religious studies at Georgia State: dumb luck. We hired our tenure-track Islamist two weeks before the September 11 attacks. We elected to build a true comparative religions program in the 1980s only to find ourselves, especially after the 1996 Olympics, in a state with one of the fastest growing immigrant populations in the nation. The biologist dean moved on and a new dean from the social sciences was appointed. Soon thereafter, the program went through an external review that resulted in a strong report from the external team arguing for Georgia State to establish a department of religious studies. Good fortune can prove more important than careful planning.

Of course, not all scholars in the field of religion are so fortunate. When the AAR made brief mention of the decision to establish a department of religious studies at Georgia State in its April e-mail newsletter, I received many kind notes of congratulations and best wishes from colleagues. Within ten minutes of the posting of the AAR announcement, I also received three e-mail inquiries about employment opportunities from jobless PhDs (with dozens of additional job inquiries to follow in the subsequent days). As I said at the outset, when a new department of religion is established, people in the discipline take notice. ☛

## Transitions

Emeritus religion professor Raymond B. Williams has been named dean of Wabash College. Williams retired from a distinguished teaching career in 2002. In 1995, through a \$5 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., Williams founded the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion, where he served as director until his retirement.

Jeffrey H. Mahan, professor of ministry, media, and culture, and director of ministry studies, has been named academic vice president and dean of the faculty of Iliff School of Theology. Mahan has been at Iliff since 1995.

Richard Penaskovic, professor of religious studies, has recently been elected chair-elect of the University Senate at Auburn University. As chair, beginning in 2006, he will represent the more than 1,000 faculty members at Auburn.

Tim Muldoon has left Mount Aloysius College in Cresson, Pennsylvania, to become director of The Church in the 21st Century Center at Boston College.

Tobias Winright has moved from Walsh University in North Canton, Ohio, to Saint Louis University in St. Louis, Missouri, where he is assistant professor of theological studies.

## Public Radio Launches Web Site Focusing on the Work of Reinhold Niebuhr

**S**PEAKING OF FAITH, public radio's national conversation about belief, meaning, ethics, and ideas, has produced a program and Web site about one of the most influential boundary-crossing religious figures in the 20th century, theologian Reinhold Niebuhr. The program "Moral Man and Immoral Society: The Public Theology of Reinhold Niebuhr" explores his complex thought and asks how some of Niebuhr's enduring questions and ideas might inform current religious and political life.

"Reinhold Niebuhr has been cited as an influence by more of my guests than any other figure past or present, and on a vast and vivid range of topics — from war to politics to movies," *Speaking of Faith* host Krista Tippett said.

Each week, the program offers conversations with thinkers, writers, theologians, and many others on important questions that shape the news and the world we live in — from how we wage war, to how we raise our children.

The Niebuhr project features the voices of Christian ethicist Robin Lovin, political theorist Jean Bethke Elshtain, both AAR members, and historian and Niebuhr biographer Richard Wightman Fox.

"For me and all of my producers, this program became something of an odyssey — energizing, unpredictable, immensely thought-provoking, and personally exacting," Tippett said. "It has been an experience, in other words, marked by the essen-

*'Reinhold Niebuhr has been cited as an influence by more of my guests than any other figure past or present, and on a vast and vivid range of topics — from war to politics to movies,' Speaking of Faith host Krista Tippett said.*

tial qualities of Niebuhr's theology and worldview. But there is far too much in this man's ideas — and the way they resonate in 21st-century life — to convey in one hour of radio."

With special funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the *Speaking of Faith* production team was able to continue their coverage with a Web site that includes an interactive timeline illustrating Niebuhr's life and thought; an extensive collection of archival images, letters, and documents unearthed from the Library of Congress; Web-exclusive interviews with Niebuhr's daughter, Elisabeth Sifton, and Princeton ethicist and AAR member, Max Stackhouse; streaming audio of Niebuhr's selected sermons from United Theological and much more.

Posting the original material on the Web presents a unique opportunity to provide college teachers, church groups, book clubs, and others the chance to delve more deeply into the meaning of Niebuhr's life and work.

*Speaking of Faith* collaborated with scholars and AAR members Peter Williams and Charles Lippy to create a set of study questions and guides to discussion. The material created by Williams and Lippy focuses on selected topics, from Niebuhr's ministry in Detroit, to his views on war and peace, and his understanding of the American nation, among others. These questions may be used as part of college and seminary courses on American religion, ethics, American intellectual history, and cultural studies.

"Our hope is that you will find rich stimulation for reflecting with your students on Niebuhr and discover the ways in which his ideas and legacy can open new perspectives on problems and issues that engage our common life today," Tippett said.

The *Speaking of Faith* program, companion Web site, and Williams and Lippy college-level curriculum can be found at [www.speakingoffaith.org/programs/niebuhr/](http://www.speakingoffaith.org/programs/niebuhr/). *Speaking of Faith* appreciates scholars' and students' thoughts on these materials, and hearing about how they use them. Please send your comments to Jody Abramson at: [jabramson@americanpublicmedia.org](mailto:jabramson@americanpublicmedia.org). ☛



# University of Florida Opens Center to Study Hindu Traditions

Vasudha Narayanan, University of Florida

THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA recently created a Center for the Study of Hindu Traditions (CHiTra) to encourage research, teaching, and public understanding of Hindu traditions and culture. Housed in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the new center will encompass the fields of art, architecture, Asian languages and literature, philosophy, performing arts, healing, women's studies, the environment, and peace studies. It will bring together experts from across the university's diverse campus to collaborate on research, offer new courses, and host lectures, seminars, symposia, and conferences.

CHiTra (which is a Sanskrit word which means "excellence," "distinguished," or "a work of art") will focus on the globalization and the transnational aspects of the Hindu traditions and will encourage their study through interdisciplinary perspectives.

While the United States already boasts several centers for Jewish studies, and there are well-established centers for Buddhist studies at Stanford and the University of California's Los Angeles and Berkeley campuses, CHiTra is the first center for Hindu studies in the country. Like the terms "Jewish" and "Buddhist," the word "Hindu" is associated with a larger cultural matrix, and it made sense to have a multi/interdisciplinary center under one roof.

As part of the colonial legacy, Hinduism has largely been identified with the Indian subcontinent. The presence of Hindu traditions — sectarian, architectural, iconographic — in Southeast Asia for over 1,500 years, for instance, has been ignored by textbooks and is not even a blip on our research radars. However, since the 19th century, millions of Hindus have settled down in various parts of the world (there are almost 2 million in the United States alone), and it is important to study Hindu traditions in these new contexts. Within higher education, the study of Hindu traditions and cultures is usually conducted

in area studies programs. Given the demographic changes, it seems time to rethink the area studies templates in a more innovative way.

Some new forums — like the Harvard Pluralism Project — that focus on the presence of world religions and cultures in the United States are studying Hindu culture not in the context of South Asia, but rather in the neighborhoods of Philadelphia, Lexington, or Jacksonville. CHiTra will focus on the Hindu traditions in South and Southeast Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and North America, in addition to the Indian subcontinent.

Over the past several years, the academic atmosphere has become ideal for CHiTra. The fields of transnational religion and globalization have become extraordinarily important in academia. Several universities have established programmatic units focusing on these increasingly popular areas. For example the University of California, Santa Barbara's Center for Global and International Studies offers courses that have some of the highest enrollments in the university.

Additionally, the academy is seeing a rise in interdisciplinary studies. As the AAR annual meetings so clearly exemplify, it has become increasingly common to study religion through methods prevalent in the social sciences — cultural anthropology, literature, art history, psychology, etc. — in addition to the more traditional ways. Since interdisciplinary courses will be an important part of CHiTra, we did a quick survey with members of the AAR's Religion in South Asia listserv to find out what kinds of courses involving Hinduism were being taught in various parts of the country. I was deluged with information. Courses with significant Hinduism components were being taught and cross-listed with several fields and disciplines, including agriculture, anthropology, art, art history, Asian studies, dance/performing arts, environmental studies, film studies, global studies, history, law, philosophy, sociology, and women's studies.

We have found that there is particular interest in how religion relates to art, music, and dance. In the wake of post-colonial studies, there has been a shift to hearing the voices of people in other parts of the world and trying to understand what they mean by the term "religion," and frequently this has included studying art, music, and dance. Also, in the last ten years (and almost every semester), I have had students of Indian origin who have wanted to perform short pieces of classical or folk dance and theorize about it. A full-semester, interdisciplinary course involving the departments of religion and dance is taught at Emory University, and it has been very successful. In our first year, we are planning courses on dance and on introducing a segment on Hindu culture.

Through CHiTra, therefore, components of Hindu culture will eventually be taught in courses in several colleges within the University of Florida. Teaching across disciplines carries the excitement of cross-pollination and having students become aware of cultures, theoretical perspectives, and discourses that they may not have been exposed to otherwise. We are particularly encouraging students from the Business School and the College of Journalism to take an introductory course to Hindu culture. We are also planning to offer lectures connecting us with other fields such as Asian literature, environment, and health.

The beginnings of ChiTra are small; we, at the Department of Religion, have had connections with performing arts, the Center for Spirituality and Health, and the Harn Museum of Art for the last several years. For instance, last December, Dr Thierry Zephir, Chargé d'études at the Musée national des Arts asiatiques (Guimet-Paris) and a professor of South and Southeast Asian Art at l' Ecole du Louvre in Paris, gave a talk on iconography and bas-reliefs in Cambodia, connecting some of them with Sanskrit texts. We were able to collaborate with the France-Florida Research Institute at the University of Florida and the Harn Museum of Art to make this pos-

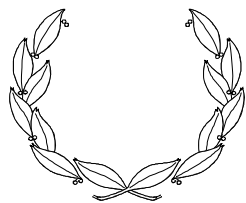
sible, and the audience was drawn from many constituencies.

About two years back, we started conversations about a possible center with our dean and a couple of enthusiastic members of the local community. Our dean visited the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies and met several professors there. We are also working on a formal connection with the Women's Studies (Narivada) section of the Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts, which is the premier institute for classical studies as well as folk traditions in India. Planning for the center included discussions with faculty members from other units — ecology, the Center for Health and Spirituality, Performing arts, etc.; we also have enthusiastic support from some faculty at the law school.

While most faculty saw this as an umbrella rubric, those used to the terms "South Asia" or "India" studies were initially concerned over the word "Hindu." However, it seemed important to retain the word, which best expresses what the center is about. In the creation of new centers anywhere, it is, of course, necessary to engage in discussion with faculty who worry if you are intruding on their turf. And finally, well before the final version of the proposal was written, our dean made sure that I discussed this center with all the several top administrators in the university who had to sign off on the proposal.

The proposal for CHiTra, written in a format prescribed by the state university system, had to be vetted at several levels — the deans of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the vice president for Research, the University Curriculum Committee, and the finally the provost and the president — before it was sent up to powers at even dizzy heights.

CHiTra is in the beginning stages now. We hope that eventually, with the changing population base and increasing interest in interdisciplinary and globalization studies, other universities will create similar units or rethink the "India" studies paradigm. ❧



## In Memoriam

*Laurence G. Thompson, 1920–2005*

*Laurence G. Thompson, professor emeritus of East Asian languages and cultures at the University of Southern California, died in Ventura, California, on July 10, 2005.*

*George A. Hayden, Gary Seaman, and John E. Wills, Jr., all of the University of Southern California, write . . .*

Larry Thompson was born in Shandong province, China, in 1920 and lived in China until 1934. During World War II he engaged in combat in the South Pacific as a Japanese-language interpreter for the

U.S. Marine Corps. He earned a BA from the University of California at Los Angeles in 1942 and an MA and PhD from Claremont Graduate School in 1947 and 1954. From 1951 to 1959 he served in the United States Foreign Service in Taipei, Tokyo, Manila, and Hong Kong and on the staff of the Asia Foundation in Seoul and Taipei. An accomplished classical violinist, he taught music at Taiwan Normal University from 1959 to 1962. He was on the faculty of Pomona College from 1962 to 1965 and of University of Southern California from 1965 to 1986. He served as chair of the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures from 1968 to 1970 and 1972 to 1976, and from 1972 to 1974 was the first director

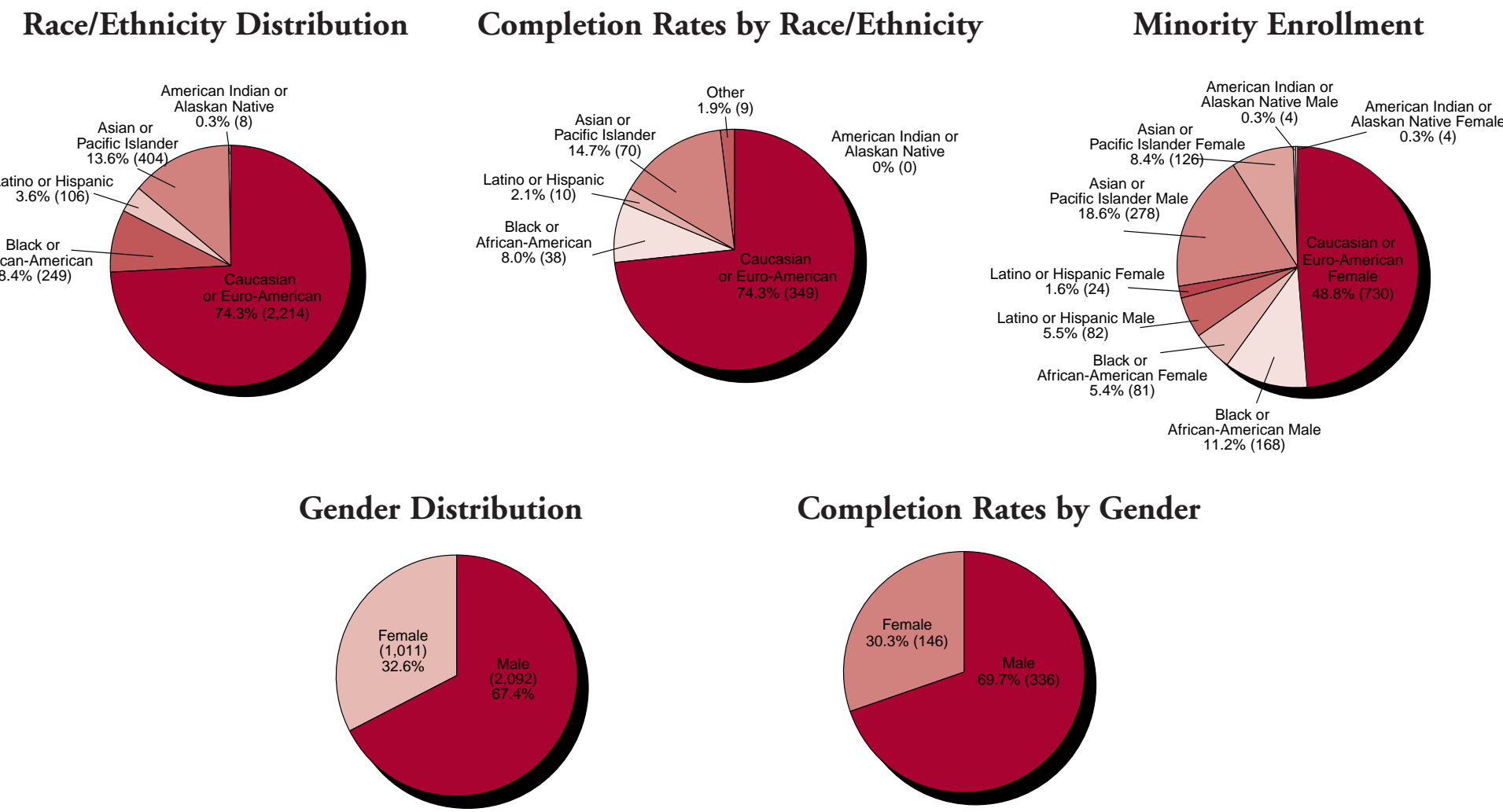
of the USC East Asian Studies Center as an interdepartmental organization.

Thompson sometimes insisted on his unfashionable commitment to Sinology. His first major publication was a translation of Kang Youwei's *Da Tong Shu*, and his contributions to studies of Taiwan included several meticulous translations. His major intellectual commitment was to the study of Chinese religion, in which he was a pioneer. His *Chinese Religion: An Introduction* and *The Chinese Way in Religion* were models of many-sided and astute analysis. He translated several volumes of studies of religion by Wu Yaoyu. His bibliography of studies of Chinese religion in Western languages, which he continued to update in retirement, is a

basic resource to the field. He was the author of the article on Chinese religion for *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th edition. He served as president of the Society for the Study of Chinese Religions for nine years and was honored with a festschrift in the *Journal of Chinese Religion* in 1992.

Thompson had a gift for friendship and was a regular participant in regional and national scholarly meetings. He was a supportive mentor to students at all levels and to several junior colleagues. He is survived by Grace, his wife of 62 years, five children, eight grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren, and a host of devoted friends and colleagues. ❧

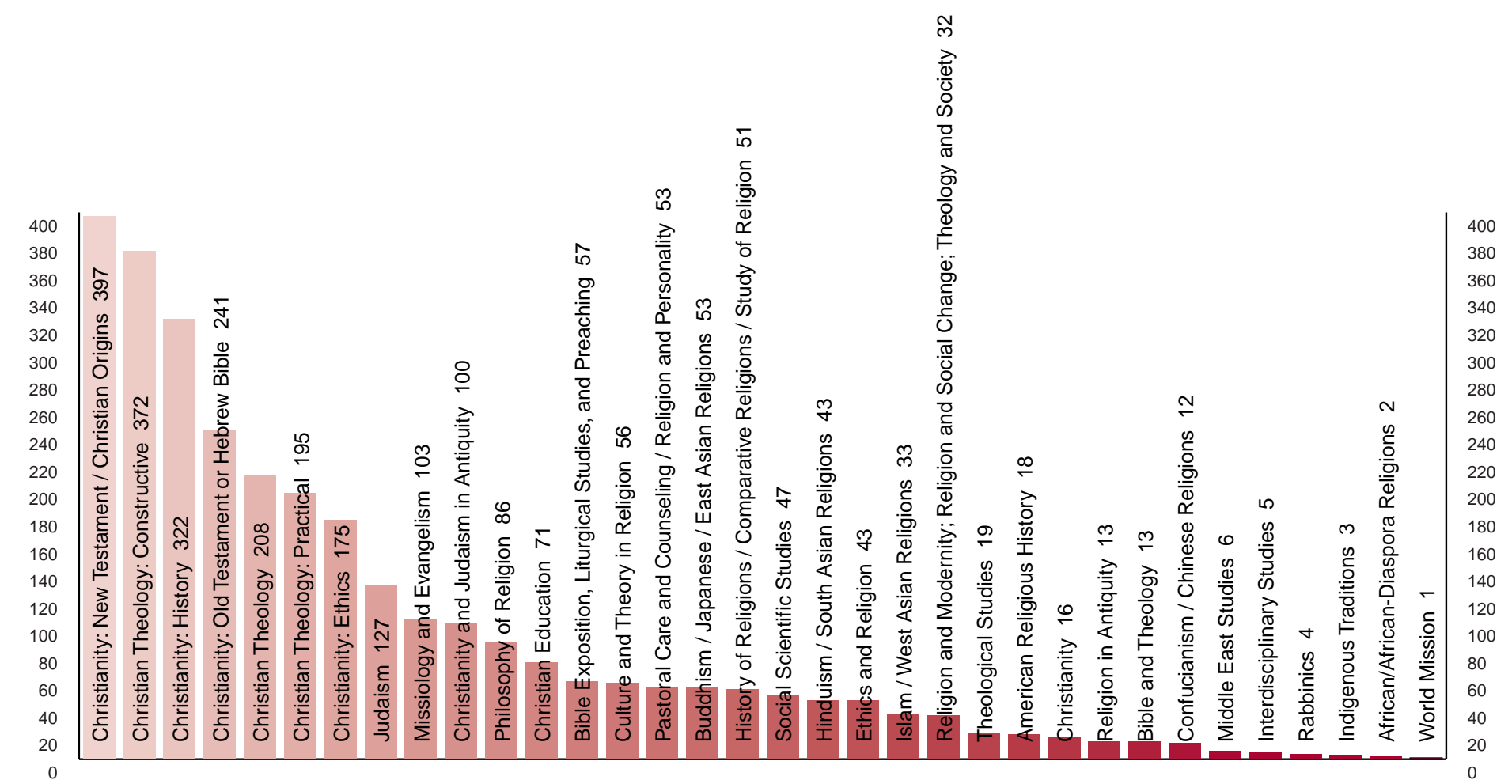
# Snapshot: Students in Academic Doctoral Programs in Religion and Theology in the United States



For a full explanation of the above charts, please see “Completion and Placement Results” at [www.aarweb.org/department/census/graduate/results/pdf](http://www.aarweb.org/department/census/graduate/results/pdf).

## Areas of Concentration

Note: Ordered by frequency, the distribution of primary areas of concentration is as follows:



Note: The survey collected information on 3,112 students from 49 academic doctoral programs.  
Source: AAR Survey of Graduate Programs in Religion and Theology, 2002. For full survey results and analysis see [www.aarweb.org/department/census/graduate](http://www.aarweb.org/department/census/graduate).



# Regional Meetings and Calls for Papers



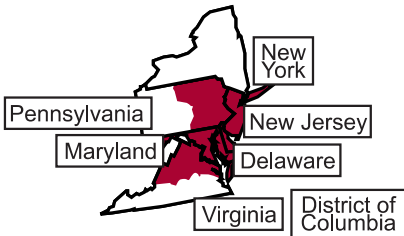
## Eastern International

**Eastern International Regional Meeting**  
May 5-6, 2006  
Quebec City, Quebec

The Eastern International Region of the American Academy of Religion announces its regional conference May 5 and 6, 2006 to be held in Quebec City, Quebec, with meeting spaces in historic monasteries and churches within the walls of the Old City. The theme for this year's conference is "Points of Contact," and although the sessions are soliciting papers on this broad topic, *we are also open to other topics*. We are also interested in panels combining activism or performative dimensions with scholarly inquiry. Furthermore, we encourage interdisciplinary panels that maintain religion as a central theme. Scholars from any region may apply to participate. Further details can be found on the AAR/EIR Web site at [www.aar-eir.mcgill.ca](http://www.aar-eir.mcgill.ca).

Deadline for paper and panel proposals is **January 15, 2006** with notification of acceptance by early February. Electronic submissions are required. Complete proposals include the names, addresses, and current CVs or résumés of all proposed participants, and a description of the proposed paper or panel, complete with working titles for all talks. Send all necessary information to *both* Professor Jonathan von Kodar, [jvonkodar@post.harvard.edu](mailto:jvonkodar@post.harvard.edu) and Dianne Cole, [dianne.cole.1@ulaval.ca](mailto:dianne.cole.1@ulaval.ca).

Note: All presenters at the Spring 2006 regional conference must have active membership in the AAR. All participants must pre-register for the conference. Deadline for conference registration is April 1, 2006.



## Mid-Atlantic

**Mid-Atlantic Regional Meeting**  
(AAR/SBL)  
March 16-17, 2006  
Baltimore, MD

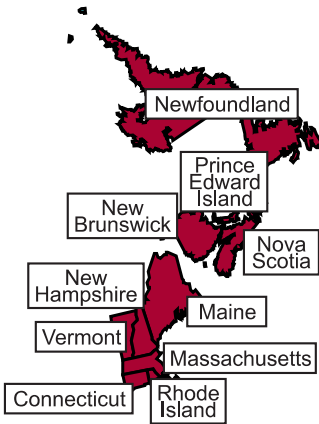
The call for papers for the 2006 Mid-Atlantic Regional Meeting can be found at [www.aarweb.org/regions/default.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/regions/default.asp).



## Midwest

**Midwest Regional Meeting**  
March 31-April 1, 2006  
Chicago, IL

The theme, "Religion and Violence," is intended to solicit papers and panels exploring religion and war, domestic or clerical abuse, corporal discipline, capital punishment, urban gangs, environmental destruction, sacrifice, or other intersections of religion and violence. Papers/panels on other topics are also invited. Follow instructions for online submission of paper and panel proposals at [www.aarweb.org/regions/region-mw.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/regions/region-mw.asp). Submissions should be made as early as possible, but before **December 15, 2005**. Younger scholars and students are especially encouraged to submit proposals and participate in the conference; senior scholars are encouraged to serve as session chairs and respondents. For further information contact the Program Chair, Martha L. Finch, at [mlf121f@smsu.edu](mailto:mlf121f@smsu.edu).



## New England-Maritimes

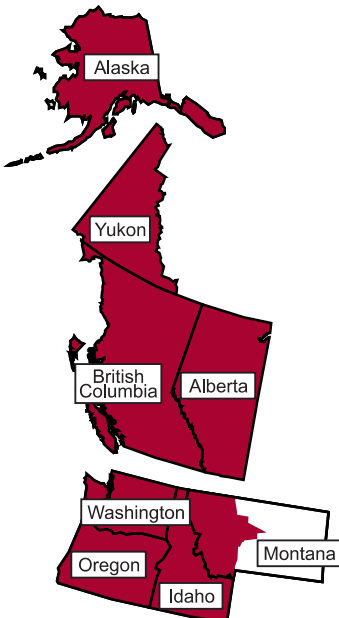
The New England-Maritimes Region of the AAR (NEMAAR) is continuing to extend advisory, promotional, and funding support for projects initiated by NEMAAR members. These include:

**Co-Sponsoring Conferences:** NEMAAR will function as a co-sponsor of conferences proposed by members around the region. NEMAAR's contribution will involve 1) assistance in developing AAR regional grants to help with funding of such conferences; 2) NEMAAR grants of up to \$500 to help support conference-related costs; 3) assistance with resources to facilitate conference planning, including best-practice planning schedules, access to regional e-mailings to publicize the event; and 4) inclusion in the regional Web site calendar. Proposals should be sent to Ann Wetherilt at [wetheri@emmanuel.edu](mailto:wetheri@emmanuel.edu) (copied to Linda Barnes at [linda.barnes@bmc.org](mailto:linda.barnes@bmc.org)), 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.

**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 1) assistance in developing regional grants to help with funding of such conferences; 2) NEMAAR grants of up to \$500 to help support conference-related costs; 3) assistance with resources to facilitate conference planning, including best-practice planning schedules, access to regional e-mailings to locate presenters and/or to publicize the event; and 4) inclusion in the regional Web site calendar. Proposals should be sent to Barbara Darling Smith at [bsmith@wheatonma.edu](mailto:bsmith@wheatonma.edu) (copied to Linda Barnes at [linda.barnes@bmc.org](mailto:linda.barnes@bmc.org)), 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.

**Salon Series:** Lunch and/or dinner series, held in different parts of the region, focusing on the work of regional authors (these can be works in progress), or other topics of interest to members. NEMAAR will provide 1) assistance in developing regional grants to help with funding of such series; 2) NEMAAR grants of up to \$250 to help support related costs; 3) access to regional e-mailings to publicize the series; and 4) inclusion in the regional Web site calendar. Proposals should be sent to Michael Hartwig at [portamjh@aol.com](mailto:portamjh@aol.com) (copied to Linda Barnes at [linda.barnes@bmc.org](mailto:linda.barnes@bmc.org)), and should include a title, abstract, list of authors and/or facilitators, schedule, contact person, and a budget that indicates how the NEMAAR grant will be used.

Proposals may be submitted on a rolling deadline. Funding will be disbursed based on the merits of proposals, as proposals are received, so it is advisable to submit sooner rather than later.



## Pacific Northwest

**Pacific Northwest Regional Meeting**  
May 5-7, 2006  
Gonzaga University  
Spokane, WA

Submit a 150-word abstract for each proposed paper by **January 18, 2006**, to the appropriate program unit chair(s) listed below. Participants in the 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 Douglas

McGaughey, Department of Religious Studies, Willamette University, Salem, OR 97301, USA; [dougmc@willamette.edu](mailto:dougmc@willamette.edu). Panels and special topics sessions are welcome!

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

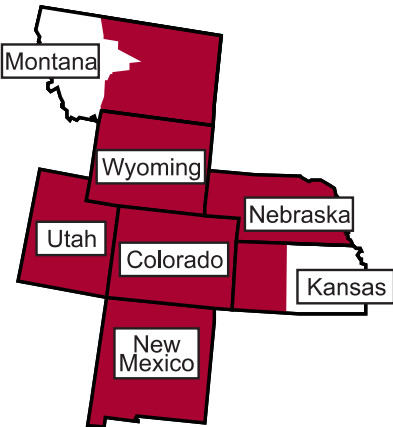
History of Christianity and North American Religions: Papers are welcomed in any area of History of Christianity and North American Religions. Robert Hauck, Religious Studies Department, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA 99258-0001, USA; [hauck@gonzaga.edu](mailto:hauck@gonzaga.edu).

Women and Religion: This section is co-chaired by Ardy Bass, Religious Studies Department, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA 99258-0001, USA; [bassa@gonzaga.edu](mailto:bassa@gonzaga.edu); and Kendra Irons, Religious Studies, George Fox University, 414 N. Meridian ST, Newberg, OR 97132, USA; [kiron@sgeorgefox.edu](mailto:kiron@sgeorgefox.edu).

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

Religion and Society: Gary Chamberlain, Department of Theology and Religious Studies, Seattle University, 910 12th AVE, P.O. Box 222000, Seattle, WA 98122-1090, USA; [gchamber@seattleu.edu](mailto:gchamber@seattleu.edu).

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



## Rocky Mountains-Great Plains

**Rocky Mountains-Great Plains Regional Meeting** (AAR/SBL)  
March 24-25, 2006  
Colorado College  
Colorado Springs, CO

The Regional Program Committee invites you to submit proposals for papers and



# Member-at-Large

Robin W. Lovin, Southern Methodist University



Robin Lovin joined the SMU faculty in July 1994, and served as Dean of Perkins School of Theology from 1994 to 2002. During 1991–94, he was Dean at the Theological School of Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. His teaching career includes service as an instructor at Candler School of Theology of Emory University and 13 years as a faculty member at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. He is a graduate of Northwestern University (BA) and Harvard University (BD and PhD), and he is an ordained minister of the United Methodist Church. His writings include two studies of 20th-century Christian social ethics: *Christian Faith and Public Choices: The Social Ethics of Barth, Brunner, and Bonhoeffer* (1984) and *Reinhold Niebuhr and Christian Realism* (1994). He has also written extensively on religion and law and on comparative religious ethics. His most recent book, *Christian Ethics: An Essential Guide* (2000), provides a general reader's introduction to Christian ethics.

**RSN:** Can you tell our readers something about your interest in Christian ethics? At what point in your life did you decide you wanted to become a scholar of religion, especially of religious ethics?

**Lovin:** Well, I've always been religious, in a Protestant Christian way, and I've always been interested in ideas. As a child in the 1950s, I assumed this meant that I wanted to be a scientist. Nobody talked about "creationism" at that point, and I learned to read the Bible seriously without taking it literally, so it never occurred to me to think of religion and science as things you had to choose between. By the time I got to college, however, it was concepts and ideas in general that held my attention, rather than science in particular. I was fortunate that the undergraduate philosophy sequence at Northwestern took medieval philosophy seriously, so I never thought of faith and philosophy as incompatible, either. What I didn't get was ethics, especially social ethics. My introduction to that came in a very concrete way, between my junior and senior years in college, when I worked with children in an inner-city ministry program that was run by the Presbyterian Church in Chicago. Racism, economics, demographics — social reality in general — came into focus for me that summer, and I guess I've spent 44 years since then trying to connect those realities to the larger ideas about human life and its purposes that drew me to philosophy and theology.

**RSN:** How has Reinhold Niebuhr influenced your intellectual life? How would he

be reacting to the end of the Cold War and America's world hegemony?

**Lovin:** I suppose that anybody who tries to relate social reality and moral ideals eventually has to come grips with Reinhold Niebuhr's way of doing that. I didn't come to it naturally. I began with a Wesleyan spirituality and a 1960s impatience with the pace of change that made me resist Niebuhr's realism. Over time, however, I began to see the point of his warnings about self-interest and power. Niebuhr understood that power keeps the existing structure of society in place, but he astutely warned us that there is self-interest at work for change, too. Realistic tactics know how to harness that self-interest to bring about change, but a realistic strategy understands that successful change movements become new centers of power. That's why "democracy matters," as Cornel West puts it. The only realistic strategy over the long run is strengthening real democracy to the point that people always have the capacity to raise questions about whatever forces are currently in power. Niebuhr put it most succinctly in *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* when he said, "Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible; but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary." It's the last part of that aphorism that seems most relevant for us today. Verbal commitments to freedom and democracy often yield to a Realpolitik that seeks to clamp Western and specifically American ideas in place during a moment of opportunity when we have the power to do so. Niebuhr never would have trusted any single power with the task of global transformation, and I think the possibilities for that transformation that are emerging in other parts of the world are rich and varied. Americans think they are being liberal and enlightened when they acknowledge that other parts of the world may create different forms of democracy that are relevant for them. What about the possibility that these experiences are relevant *for us*? Our civil rights movement inspired similar changes around the world, but perhaps we now need to enter a global discourse on human rights that seems to be developing without us. We've learned a great deal in the U.S. about how to incorporate a certain liberal understanding of justice into our politics, but we may have more to learn from the South African experience with the politics of truth and reconciliation.

**RSN:** Tell us something about the reception that your book *Christian Ethics: An Essential Guide* has received.

**Lovin:** I wrote the book with a lay audience in mind, for people who are trying to figure out what their Christian faith has to do with a search for the good life that they seem to share with a lot of their neighbors. I wanted to show them that this is not a new question and that the Christian answer isn't about ignoring all the other answers that people have given over the centuries, nor does it have to separate us from the answers that other people might be offering in our communities today.

The book has been read by some classes and study groups in churches, and I'm always interested to hear from the people who've used it that way. I'm pretty sure, however, that most of the readers have been students in undergraduate classes and schools of theology. I think I need to write a second volume

*"I'm afraid that in many cases, 'moral values' have become code for 'things that I don't want other people to do.'"*

for these readers that would include some cases or practical applications. I expected that lay groups in church would provide these out of their own experience. For classroom use, that material needs to be more structured. I know that a lot of my colleagues who have used the book in their classes have supplemented it that way.

**RSN:** In the most recent presidential election, moral values were a central issue. How do you see religious ethics influencing public life in general?

**Lovin:** I'm not sure that we've understood the role of values in the 2004 election. The polls that alerted people to the importance of "moral values" were pretty vague about what that means, and in any case, there's no good data from previous years to compare them to, so it's hard to know whether this was something really new. I'm afraid that in many cases, "moral values" have become code for "things that I don't want other people to do." That is, people who have no intention of having an abortion or marrying someone of the same gender see the moral purpose of politics as making sure that nobody else does that, either. Voting for "moral values" in that way isn't a moral influence on public life. It's part of the politics of fear.

**RSN:** How do you see ethical reflection influencing modern political life? Or does it?

**Lovin:** Real values enter into politics when people think sincerely about the kind of society they would like to live in and what it would cost them to make that society a reality, and then they vote to pay that price, instead of voting for simple economic self-interest, or regional advantages, or restrictions on other people's choices. It's not just conservative politics that falls short of genuine political values on that measure. The mantra of Democratic electoral strategists for more than a decade has been, "It's the economy, stupid!" Which means, "Don't talk about values. Talk about self-interest."

The lesson of 2004, I think, is not that conservative values triumph over liberal values, or that any values triumph over no values, but that when nobody is really talking about values, it's very hard to introduce them into the discussion at the last minute. If religious and moral leaders want politics in 2008 to be about the kind of society we desire by the middle of the 21st century, the time to begin that discussion is now. My guess is that if the kind of society we want became the subject of discussion, the coalition of social conservatives and economic individualists that has dominated politics for the last decade would dissolve. The results of that would be unpredictable, and so, for that matter, would be the vision of society that might emerge from the discussion. Perhaps the important task of ethical reflection now is to reintroduce that kind of unpredictability into our politics. Political leaders have become so knowledgeable about the connections between self-interest and electoral outcomes that they have no interest in shifting the focus of the discussion to less familiar territory. But our politics is being diminished by this kind of predictability.

It may seem odd for a Niebuhrian realist to talk about people being willing to pay a price for their political goals, but I'm not thinking of some kind of improbable political altruism in which people make sacrifices on behalf of other people's goals. I'm suggesting that citizens and political leaders start an honest discussion of what they would be prepared to contribute toward the achievement of their own goals for society.

The current disillusionment with politics reflects a conviction that the best we can hope for is to create a community of our own in which we can form our character according to our values. The problem with that "too consistent pessimism," to use Niebuhr's phrase for it, is that it is a self-fulfilling prophecy. If moralists and religious leaders tell people that all politics is good for is to impose constraints on others before they have an opportunity to impose them on you, that will soon be all that politics does. We need to avoid exaggerated expectations for the role of values in politics, but that is not the same thing as giving up on them altogether.

**RSN:** Can you tell our readers something about your current research, lecturing, or publishing plans?

**Lovin:** Right now, I'm working on another study of Christian realism. This one is less focused on Reinhold Niebuhr himself and more on a broader movement in Christian thought that Niebuhr understood himself to represent. For about 500 years, since the Reformation, that sort of Christian realism has been closely associated with Christian participation in the politics of the successful modern state. Niebuhr helped us to understand the triumph of that modern, democratic state over its totalitarian and revolutionary rivals, and he gave us an understanding of how democracy might be self-critical enough to remain democratic in spite of its own success. It seems to me now, however, that the modern state is being undone by its own successes. Business, culture, and religion have flourished so well under the protection of the modern state that they now escape government regulation in many ways, while the state itself seems to be losing its grip on its original task, which was to provide a secure environment for those so-called "private" activities. The state has so much power that keeping it under realistic self-restraint will always be an important political task, but the Christian realist now needs perhaps to ask how we extend that kind of self-criticism and self-restraint to other spheres of social life — business, culture, and religion, for example. Christian realism needs a more complex and probably more conflictual understanding of how modern society works, and it needs to rethink its historical relationship to the successful modern state in light of these new realities. ☛



# Passages: Life in Retirement

James C. Livingston, College of William and Mary



James C. Livingston, Walter G. Mason Professor Emeritus, College of William and Mary, received his BA from Kenyon College, his MDiv from Union Theological Seminary, New York, and his PhD from Columbia University. He served on the clergy staff of the Riverside Church in New York for three years. After teaching briefly at Union, Columbia, New York University, and Southern Methodist University (1963–68), he was appointed the founding Head of the new Department of Religion at William and Mary in 1968 — where he also served for five years as Dean of the Undergraduate Program. Among his nine books are *The Ethics of Belief: Matthew Arnold and Christianity*, *the two-volume Modern Christian Thought*, and *Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion*. He has published over 50 chapters and articles in books, journals, and encyclopedias. Livingston was a Fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and Clare Hall, Cambridge University. He was honored by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia with an Outstanding Faculty Award in 1989 and William and Mary's Thomas Jefferson Award in 1994.

**RSN:** Tell us how you've responded to retirement.

**Livingston:** Well, my observation is that many "retired" academics who have spent their careers teaching in the humanities don't "retire" when they are officially declared emerita or emeritus, and I'm one of them. The matters intrinsic to philosophy, history, literature, and religion are so crucial to what concerns our humanity that it strikes me as impossible to be immersed in these questions for decades and not continue to exercise one's professional knowledge and experience as long as one is able and enjoys putting them to some account.

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

**Livingston:** What has notably changed is the tempo and variety of my days. And this is a great joy. During my nearly 40 years of teaching I was always deeply involved in the institutions where I also voluntarily took on rather heavy teaching loads. And now, looking back on my career, I can see more clearly that my real goals were threefold — and all three were consistently important to me as well as time-consuming. One was a contribution to furthering the aims of undergraduate liberal education. I wrote a fair amount on the subject. And, on two occasions at different institutions, I assisted in efforts to substantially change the undergraduate curriculum. My other goals were, of course, teaching, research, and writing. Looking back, I feel confident that these competing goals were right for me — despite the frustrations I sometimes felt in attempting to do them justice. What is pleasing about retirement is that I can choose what and when I will undertake this or that project or avocation.

**RSN:** What makes for a satisfactory retirement?

**Livingston:** Many things. Though some may seem small, for me they were significant. One is spending leisurely time every morning reading the *New York Times* with my breakfast. W. G. Ward derived similar pleasure every morning reading the *London Times* — but along with a papal bull! Another pleasure is participating in two faculty luncheon groups. One is a fun chatter-fest about William and Mary or local goings-on; the other is more focused on one or two issues, usually education or political and social policy matters. I listen to more classical music, and take special pleasure in the Baroque period. I also derive satisfaction in physical workouts two or three times a week at the college's fitness center. But most of all, I enjoy pursuing my usual intellectual activities, but at a more unhurried pace.

*In working on these issues, the mentor whose wisdom has been most helpful to me is Reinhold Niebuhr. When the bumper stickers appeared shouting 'The Power of Pride,' I wrote a Niebuhrian op ed for the local newspaper pointing out — as we invaded Iraq — the dangerous implications of these two words.*

**RSN:** Tell us about those activities you have been involved in since you retired.

**Livingston:** I continue to do quite a lot of teaching, in fact. When I retired I decided to go "cold turkey" on the offer to teach the occasional undergraduate course. Luckily, William and Mary has a very successful Elderhostel-type program called the Christopher Wren Association. It serves the local adult population that really yearns for continuing higher education. I have taught numerous short courses in the program, e.g., on the current quest of the historical Jesus, on some of the similarities between Protestant and Islamic fundamentalism today, on recent Roman Catholic social teachings, on major 20th-century religious thinkers, and so on.

I've also increased considerably my involvement in our local community, assisting some organizations, but also speaking to local groups and churches. These talks tend to be on current affairs, e.g., the religious aspects of pluralism, religion in current global politics, and the church in the public square.

In working on these issues, the mentor whose wisdom has been most helpful to me is Reinhold Niebuhr. When the bumper stickers appeared shouting "The Power of Pride," I wrote a Niebuhrian op ed for the local newspaper pointing out — as we invaded Iraq — the dangerous implications of these two words. To crib a phrase, "Niebuhr, thou shouldst be living at this hour. The world hath need of thee. . . ."

**RSN:** Are you doing any research or writing in retirement?

**Livingston:** My wife Jackie would say, "Yes, too much!" The time given to research and writing has not slowed down appreciably, but I no longer attempt to do this at night or on most weekends. Usually, but not compulsively, I will spend three or four hours a day working in my study. Recently I completed three chapters for two volumes of the new *Cambridge History of Philosophy*. The chapters deal with selected philosophical critics and defenders of religion in the periods 1790–1870 and 1870–1914. During the first year of retirement I finished volume two of *Modern Christian Thought*, and a few months ago I completed the fifth edition of *Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion*. Currently I am revising a manuscript on "British Religious Thought: 1860–1914," that attempts to examine that period rather differently, and I have some other projects in mind. Despite this ongoing work in my field, I am firmly committed to doing (and am doing) much more reading outside my academic specialty, especially in the area of public affairs and policy.

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

*I think it would be fun to launch into the study of a new, appealing field of exploration, say, some phase of the work of an artist or a poet that I have long found fascinating.*

**Livingston:** I may lack imagination, but my present retirement comes close to my ideal. I believe I would have imagined it as enjoying with Jackie the presence, close by, of caring children and grandchildren; more time to read, reflect, and continue some teaching and writing; and to participate actively in the life of a relatively small but increasingly diverse and interesting community. We enjoy travel and go abroad for visits almost annually. But I have noticed that many American retirees, across the economic spectrum (except for the really poor), travel almost obsessively as if it were a requirement of aging, or a proof of their vigor and resolution. But I may be wrong about this.

There is one "ideal" retirement plan that I may yet pursue. I long have thought that in beginning a new phase of life it would be good to strike out on an entirely fresh but feasible venture. I remember learning that the philosopher Charles Hartshorne later in his life took up ornithology, loved it, and ended up becoming something of an authority on one aspect of the subject. I think it would be fun to launch into the study of a new, appealing field of exploration, say, some phase of the work of an artist or a poet that I have long found fascinating.

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

**Livingston:** I'm loath to give advice to colleagues who have entered undergraduate teaching in recent years. The issues and challenges they face are different and, I believe, more perplexing. But, from what I've observed, some cautious advice may be relevant to some. Professionally, it's important to reflect early and carefully, but flexibly, on goals that are truly close to your heart but also practically achievable. Then you can throw yourself more fully into these endeavors despite changing circumstances — and to both your own and your students' benefit. Otherwise, there likely will be ongoing frustration and increasing cynicism — with misery all around — if your real goal lies elsewhere, e.g., teaching a few graduate students, with substantial time for research and writing. ♣

## CAREER GUIDE, from p.13

second chapter will focus on graduate school: how to select the school, the major concentration of study, the advisor, the committee, and the dissertation topic, followed by a discussion of skills needed while navigating through the doctoral process.

The third chapter, on the faculty search, is a literal nuts-and-bolts on how to search, prepare, apply, and interview for job openings. The fourth chapter deals with the tenure process. This chapter explores teaching skills, institutional responsibilities, establishing relationships, choosing research projects, and

career paths to follow. The fifth chapter describes what usually happens post-tenure, and the challenges and stresses one might face. Additionally, it treats grant-writing, sabbaticals, and preparing for retirement. Chapter six looks at other career options outside tenure-track academic teaching positions, i.e., ministry, activism, administration, publishing, etc. The seventh chapter will concentrate on dealing with difficult issues, specifically harassment at the workplace. The last chapter will be geared to the institutional administrators wishing to diversify their campus community, providing predominantly white school administrators with valuable

information on how to recruit and retain scholars of color.

The manual, once completed, will be posted on the Internet as a service to AAR scholars of color. Because it will be an electronic manual, the information will be easily obtainable and constantly updated. It is our hope to also provide discussion boards linked to each topic to allow the reader to post comments, experiences, and wisdom gained. The "AAR Career Guide for Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession" moves away from the salient individualism of the dominant culture toward a communal format more indigenous to our

own cultures. It is a project we hope all scholars of color will have a hand in contributing to and forming.

A sneak preview of the guide will be available at the November AAR conference in Philadelphia. Please join us on Saturday, November 19 from 4:00 PM to 6:30 PM (see box). On behalf of the AAR Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession, we extend an invitation to you to be a part of this important and exciting project. ♣



## From the Student Desk

### *Are We There Already?*

Kimberly A. Bresler, Princeton Theological Seminary



Kimberly A. Bresler is a PhD student at Princeton Theological Seminary and is the Chair of the AAR Graduate Student Task Force.

THEY SAY TIME FLIES when you're having fun: I must be having a blast! My two-year term is almost over — it's time to welcome a new Student Director. What's happened in the last two years for students in the AAR? The biggest change is creation of the Graduate Student Task Force (GSTF), with the charge of promoting student members' professional development, which we have pursued in two primary ways: (1) developing new Annual Meeting programming, and (2) improving student resources on the AAR Web site ([www.aar-web.org](http://www.aar-web.org)).

The AAR Web site will undergo a major overhaul soon, so our work on that front will be folded into the larger plan. In approaching the Annual Meeting, we hoped to facilitate a greater variety of programming — not just in terms of topics, but especially the *settings* for programs. For instance, we are initiating a graduate student discussion series, "Exploring the Field," featuring informal discussions among senior and junior scholars in a particular field. This year focuses on two different fields: philosophy of religion and religion and literature.

Several other program units responded eagerly to the GSTF, seeking to join us in offering programs for students — this year, we have three. Annual Meeting program evaluations often express a wish for less formal programming allowing greater audience participation and interchange with panelists. Taking this feedback to heart, each co-sponsored session is intended to facilitate the kind of personal interchange impossible in a more formal, paper-presentation format — so come prepared with those burning questions you've always wanted to ask!

First, with the Committee on Teaching and Learning, the GSTF encourages students to attend the Excellence in Teaching Forum, offering an opportunity for conversation with this year's Teaching Award winner, Zayn Kassam, Professor of

Religious Studies at Pomona College (Claremont, California). As students well know, a good teacher makes all the difference in whether a class is stimulating and transformative or a boring waste of time. This session offers a rare opportunity to listen and learn from a real mentor — and to ask your own questions. Come reap the benefits of her experience for your own future teaching.

Second, together with the Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession, the GSTF is sponsoring a session to discuss a wide range of issues of concern to women (and, increasingly, to men) in the field, all of which are explored in the recently published book, *A Guide for Women in Religion: Making Your Way from A to Z* (Palgrave, 2004). Mary E. Hunt, editor of the guide and co-founder of WATER (Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual, online at [www.bers.com/water](http://www.bers.com/water)), joins us to answer questions and discuss some of the insights in the guide: In the 21st century, can we move beyond merely "surviving" as women in the field of religion to "thriving"? What does it take to thrive? What issues arise as one passes through the typical stages of a career in the field? Once again, this session offers a unique opportunity for students to speak first-hand with someone who has spent many years in the field and has much wisdom to share.

Third, the Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities (REM) is launching a project of great interest to students. In addition to publishing an online guide for racial and ethnic minority students in religion, REM also seeks to create a mentoring program linking students with AAR mentors. The GSTF is co-hosting a conversation and brainstorming session among members of REM, a panel of racial and ethnic minority students, and audience members about issues of concern to racial and ethnic minorities in the field of religion. This is an opportunity to voice your opinion as a student, so come speak your mind and contribute your thoughts!

These offerings only hint at the rich fruits available to students as a result of the hard work of the GSTF; and the GSTF represents only *part* of the AAR's work on behalf of students over the past two years. Check the program guide for other sessions of special interest to students. It has been my pleasure and privilege to serve as your Student Director and as chair of the GSTF. Please take a moment to thank all the dedicated GSTF members: Rich Amesbury, Melissa Johnston-Barrett, Maurice Lee, Brad Herling, and our staff liaison, Myesha Jenkins. I look forward to continuing to serve as chair of the GSTF. It's been a wild — and quick — ride! ♣

### *At Play in the Fields of the Load*

Brett R. Dewey, Baylor University



Brett Dewey is a PhD candidate in religion at Baylor University. When he isn't participating in play of many sorts, he likes watching the Los Angeles Dodgers play baseball and the Glasgow Celtics play soccer.

MY CURRICULUM VITAE recently took a turn toward credibility. After years of hard work I have earned three coveted letters — ABD. Much work remains, but I have reached an important guidepost on the way toward even grander letters. As I prepare for the stretch run to the doctorate, I have taken pause to reflect on lessons learned in the journey.

It is the strange truth about teaching that a professor's passing comments rather than lectured lessons remain with students long after a semester's load is lightened. My theology teacher, the late James McClendon, had a way of making such comments stick. He wrote and taught theology well, but the surprising bits of wis-

dom clothed in throw-away remarks have lasted. Not everything he said that I remember is a help. One poor student raised professorial ire when he asked an admittedly silly question that provoked the retort, "In my day, I'd go to the library and look that up." In an elderly state, Jim hardly had time to waste, and wanted students to prepare long and hard so that class time could be dedicated wholly to beneficial work. Jim did not believe in the myth that "there are no stupid questions." But some of Jim's comments stayed with me and have been of benefit.

Most surprising was the remark that a theologian can't be competent in their craft until "at least 50." Now in my 30s, I take a strange comfort in this notion. It provides permission not to have to know it all. The leisure world of academia ought to be encouraged by such conviction. Humility is implied; diligence is demanded, along with the notion that if theology is to be practiced, it must first be lived over the long run. However, it is a discomforting idea as well, especially in an information age when ready access to immense amounts of data implies a supposed immediate expertise. Theology, and religious reflection of all sorts, has never simply been about data sorting. It involves a form of living and requires real reflection on time-tested convictions, as well as the virtues of sorting data properly. Theology takes decades to master — if it ever can be mastered — not semesters.

Besides these comments, and many more, two other remarks by Jim stuck deep. The first was his advice on paper writing. I heard it so often it seemed his mantra.

"Get it down now," he would advise, and "get it right later." This command was hardly an invitation to sloppy work. Haphazard writing and research received stern rebuke. Instead, the advice was born of a humble spirit that recognizes that what we say will never be once-and-for-all, especially for those of us too young to master the craft — despite what our graduate degrees profess about us! Jim encouraged a humble spirit, which is the type of disposition that has taken me through doctoral coursework and helped me navigate the halls of the academy.

Jim also advised many of his students venturing off to doctoral programs to "do what you love, because doing a PhD will make you sad." Again, these are strange and even simplistic words. But he was right. There is much to be sad about in the process of doing a PhD. There is always the dilemma of juggling home, work, and school duties. Departmental or institutional politics sadden many of us. Heartbreaking politics were not strange facts of life to Jim, and are real issues in the life of graduate students. Be humble, he taught. Do what you love, he exhorted. These are the ways to get through, get done, and be human in the process.

In trying to foster a spirit of humility and in pursuing something I love, I have made my academic study almost like an occasion of play. Sure, I'm studying to try and get a research or teaching position. Yes, the debt I have incurred for my education must be paid off, and that requires a job. But my work has become play — a labor of fun and joy. Despite the chagrin of time-crunched living, I have found it

helpful to seek an attitude of play, knowing that I don't yet have to have all the answers. I love what I do and I seek to be more competent and more virtuous at it.

Jim's sayings only matter now because they were set in an even larger shape of life that he shared with his students. I learned more about hospitality from Jim than I did about theology — at least, I learned a lived theology rather than a stark scholasticism. Friendship, food, and libations guided our time together, and I'm the better for it. Vincent van Gogh once said that he painted, not for the sake of art, or to make a living, but for the association he had with artists — for friendship. I apprentice in theology for a similar reason. Jim McClendon enjoyed a martini; but even more, he enjoyed sharing one with a friend. And his friends were not only his colleagues, but also his students whom he invited to share a common life of scholarship and faith. Because of his tutelage, I have learned to experience the play amidst the fields of the daily load.

No matter the discipline, becoming a PhD involves wits and patience. But most of all, I am convinced, earning a doctorate requires fortitude and strength gained through scholarly trials and the cooperative play of a community of friends. With trials ahead and yet more friends to make, I look forward to earning my next three letters — PhD. I'm comforted in the idea that, as rigorously as I will write my dissertation, I can still work with the attitude that I will "get it down now," and "get it right later." Jim would recommend no other way. ♣



*Editor's Note:*

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# No Longer a Desperado

Jonathan Malesic, King's College, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania



*Jonathan Malesic earned his PhD in religious studies from the University of Virginia in 2004 and is currently in his first year as an Assistant Professor of Theology at King's College in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. He wrote a series of columns for the Chronicle of Higher Education about his time on the job market, and will be writing occasional columns about his first year on the tenure track.*

**F**RIENDS WHO WORK outside of academe think I'm telling a self-effacing joke when I say that I only ask two things of potential employers — that their campus not be located in one of the Dakotas and that their paychecks rarely bounce.

When architects, physicians, and electrical engineers tell me that I should be able to write my own ticket with a doctorate from the University of Virginia, I know that they are only trying to be supportive. I try hard not to play the victim too overtly when I tell them about how everyone else who applied for the jobs I did has a degree from an esteemed institution, how they also have advisers who write and speak enthusiastically about their qualifications, and how they also outnumber me 100 to one.

It's cute that those friends think the academic job search is anything at all like other job searches, in which you have a reasonable hope of living in a region you find desirable and getting work commensurate with your qualifications. They don't realize how someone intelligent, competent, and disciplined enough to earn a PhD can be utterly desperate, forced to apply for every job advertised and to take anything offered.

Staring down the possibility of spending another year making sushi or parking cars, I found it incongruous that the one college that invited me for an on-campus interview this winter did its best to make me feel wanted. It certainly didn't have to. I was the one with something to prove.

After I arrived at the college, the department head escorted me to the house where I would be staying. It was the president's house, vacant because the current president lives in a dorm with his students. I felt like I was being allowed an intimate look at the college and the town when I walked into the kitchen, leaky faucet and all. The Eisenhower-era yellow Formica countertops gave me hope that there would be a lot of cool, retro kitchens in apartments near the campus.

Despite that hospitality, however, I was on my guard for hidden tests of my suitability for the job. I supposed that even the contents of the refrigerator — three bottles of Molson, one Heineken, and three O'Doul's — were meant to assess my "fit" with the blue-collar nature of the town and college. (I drank the Molsons, not wanting to seem like either an elitist or a teetotaler, in case anyone was checking up on me.)

The more formal parts of the interview the next day seemed alternately like a receiving line and a gantlet. After meeting with the dean and then the president, with whom I spoke casually about teaching style and the mission of the college, I taught a class on the development of Christian theology through the fifth century. I tore through the lecture at a very fast pace, realizing that I had overprepared by about 50 percent and hoping that the students' (and faculty's) stone-faced impassivity was not a sign of boredom or incomprehension.

Afterward, the department head invited young, vibrant recent hires in other departments to have lunch with me. I surmised that this was a plot to convince me that I would have friends my age there. It worked. I liked all the people I met, and I was able to imagine many more conversations with them, intellectual and otherwise.

But someone could have handed me a coupon for two Big Bites and a Slurpee and sent me off to 7-Eleven on my own, and I would have found the job no less appealing.

When there's only one name on your dance card, you're a pretty cheap date.

I boasted after the campus tour that the search committee would have to try a lot harder if they were aiming to tire me out and see how I held up under pressure, and they delivered in a 90-minute session in which the department's entire faculty grilled me on my views of teaching and research, and my career goals.

The final stage of the interview was dinner at a seafood restaurant. Colleagues had warned me that I would be on trial even at meals,

unable to eat anything because I would either be answering a question or listening intently to long-winded senior professors' declamations about the college or the field, never breaking eye contact long enough to see if anything was on my fork.

But it became clear that the dinner was meant to be a social occasion more than it was another chance for me to be sized up. I relaxed, tried to seem collegial despite being exhausted, and enjoyed it.

The next morning, I drove the five hours back down the interstate — dodging 18-wheelers and, only four months removed from a reckless driving ticket, keeping a close eye on my speed — thinking that I did as well as I could have, and that I would get the job.

Even so, the offer came as a surprise. I was still in bed when the phone rang just four days after the interview, and, squinting at the caller I.D., I recognized the area code as that of the college. I didn't pick up.

I was too afraid. In part, I didn't want to embarrass myself by talking to a potential employer in a raspy voice at an hour when most decent people were already at work. (I'd made that mistake before, answering a call for a conference interview late in the morning, but after I'd gone to bed at 5 AM.) The job was offered to me, then, by voice mail.

I spent a week frantically calling friends, family, advisers, and the institutions where I thought (wrongly, it turned out) that I still had a chance of receiving another offer before I accepted the job.

In the weeks that followed, almost everyone I told about the job asked me, "Are you excited?"

I wasn't sure. An idealist at heart, I always have been more comfortable with possibility than with finality or certitude. Would I be teaching the same classes for the rest of my life? Is the dream of living in a seaside town and driving a golf cart to class now unrealizable? What if Miramax wanted to turn my dissertation into a movie — would I be able to get out of my contract?

Lately, though, as I have been reading the books I've assigned for my classes and shopping for tweed blazers (I dreamed of being a professor for a long time, and now I'm determined to look the part), I realize that I am excited. I'm both relieved that the search is over and satisfied in having reached a huge professional goal. I am also grateful, knowing how much of it all hinges on dumb luck and that many, if not most, people earning PhD's these days don't ever get a tenure-track offer.

My anxieties have not entirely left me, but they have been transformed into more tolerable forms: fear that the teaching load will keep me from becoming the darling of academic publishers I assumed I would someday be; uncertainty about which Flannery O'Connor stories best illustrate the relation between grace and free will; worry that rising interest rates will make student-loan repayment more burdensome.

Anxiety's antidote is confidence, and I am very confident that I'm joining a good department and college. From the moment I met my new colleagues, I liked them. They were warm and funny, and they showed none of the smugness I've detected in other search committees whose members in subtle ways suggested that I would always be the low man on the totem pole, as if they had never felt like supplicants themselves.

Even though I might always think in my insecure moments that my new colleagues did me a favor in hiring me, they never once made it seem that way. After years of trying to prove myself to professors, waiting for the pat on the head that suggests, "Good boy; keep it up, and maybe you can be one of us some day," it was good to be extended a hand of welcome. 🐾

*Jonathan Malesic was first interviewed by King's College at the AAR's 2004 Employment Information Services Center. To learn more about the EIS Center, please see [www.aarweb.org/eis/](http://www.aarweb.org/eis/).*

I pretended to be calm with the other job candidates in the EIS Center lounge in San Antonio last year. I jumped up when my name was called, like someone who was just named the winner of a door prize, but I felt inside as if I were being led to an abattoir. The latter feeling made me glance back at some friends, as if to say, "You alone will survive to tell my tale!"

I didn't get that job, but three interviews later, I was calm and confident, an old hand well familiar with Ballroom E. The conversation with the King's College faculty flowed easily, and I genuinely liked the people I met. The half-hour sped by.

Next time that department interviews candidates at the AAR meeting, I'll be the one asking the questions and, I hope, trying to set the candidate at ease.

## HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED US?

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## Research Briefing

### *Religion in Plain View: The Public Display of Religion in the United States*

Sally M. Promey, University of Maryland



*Sally M. Promey (PhD, History of Culture, University of Chicago) is Chair and Professor in the Department of Art History and Archaeology, and Faculty Affiliate in American Studies, at the University of Maryland. She teaches and publishes on American art and visual culture, with a research specialization in relations among images, objects, and religions.*

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY of Religion granted funds in 2003–2004 for research related to my project on the public display of religion in the United States. I welcome the opportunity provided by this brief essay in *Religious Studies News* to discuss the project and then to report on the progress made under the research award.

My interdisciplinary study of the public display of religion is, in large part, an interpretive survey of attitudes and practices beginning with the founding of the American republic. Having once made this material from the past accessible, however, my goal is also to invite history to illuminate the contemporary dynamics of public religious display at the beginning of the 21st century. As an art historian, I am interested in the visual articulation of the public religious landscape. As a historian of American culture, I am concerned with changing notions of plural religions in the United States, from the 18th century's competing sectarian Protestantisms to the 21st century's global migration of world faiths. The public display of religion, firmly lodged between the establish-

ment and free exercise clauses of the First Amendment, is not just something that many people do and see, it is also a constitutive, and frequently contested, practice of American democracy. My manuscript focuses attention on historical understandings of constitutional latitude and limits and the broader visual contexts within which a sense of what is appropriate is formed. In the years since I began this project, the public display of religion in the United States has become an especially volatile subject, a moving target difficult to bring into analytical and critical focus. Observers of American society, its behaviors, practices, and beliefs, cannot yet predict the degree to which — and in what ways — the events of September 11, 2001 (and the presidential campaigns of 2000 and 2004) marked permanent or fundamental shifts in American attitudes.

I have deliberately selected the word “display” in order to describe the widest possible range of experiences while still emphasizing the explicitly visual character of the phenomenon my enterprise engages. “Art,” for example, as one category of display, occupies an important and particular place in the public pictorial representation of religion. But, for this project's purposes, art is part of a larger whole constituted by numerous modes of visual communication, including such things as broadsides and signage; processions or parades; adornment of the body; film, television, and the Internet as well as pictures and paintings; architectural façades; statuary, monuments, shrines, and memorials. To be a bit more specific, my book explores the shape and impact of, for example, Cambodian-American Buddhist New Year's observances in the 21st century; the exterior architecture of a recently dedicated Hindu temple in Lanham, Maryland; Rosalie Pelby's mid-19th-century displays of life-scale wax figures representing biblical stories and civic virtues; the United States Capitol Rotunda murals; a Baltimore neighborhood's outdoor Purim decorations; the sculpted figure of Muhammad in the Supreme Court friezes; representations of Our Lady of Guadalupe on public murals in Los Angeles; the creation of “spontaneous” memorials mark-



"Sign from God" billboard, Pennsylvania Turnpike, June 2000. Photo: Sally M. Promey.

ing the aftermath of September 11, 2001; and the continuing controversy over display of the Ten Commandments in public places and on government property. I am writing, in other words, about religion in plain view. My interest in display goes beyond appearances, however, to consider the kinds of conversations that take place in the display's literal — and recollected — presence. Display generates social spaces where cultural negotiations about individual and collective identities take place. It is these negotiations, and their roles in shaping our visual and mental landscapes over time, that perhaps most fundamentally describe my subject.

*“The public display of religion, firmly lodged between the establishment and free exercise clauses of the First Amendment, is not just something that many people do and see, it is also a constitutive, and frequently contested, practice of American democracy.”*

My work on this project was already well underway when I applied for the AAR Research Award. At that point the project had already secured me a place at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in 2000–2001 and I was on my way to a year (2003–2004) as Ailsa Mellon Bruce Senior Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts. These residential fellowships offered congenial scholarly communities in which to work and write but did not provide funds for the extent of travel necessitated by my project's geographical and chronological scope (the United States from the 18th century to the present).

Over the course of my project, three factors have accounted for most research expenditures: travel, photography, and research assistance. My work's archival character and my concern with the reception of religious display have necessitated significant time in archives, libraries, and museums, viewing a wide range of materials in collections representing different regions of the United States. Of particular importance to me are images and texts that picture or describe religion's historical presence in the visible landscape, e.g., period diaries, works of art, broadsides and prints, public school literature, almanacs, trade catalogues, stereographs, postcards, newspapers, and periodicals. With respect to contemporary religious display, the visual and contextual nature of my study has also required travel, in this case to locate, see, and photograph display in situ.

AAR's generous research funds have allowed me to bring the research phase of my project close to completion. I say close to completion because, in the process of accomplishing research travel specified in my proposal, I discovered information that will take me in some new directions. In addition to travel already accomplished before the award, I had anticipated trips to New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and Chapel Hill to visit archives and to do on-site photography. In 2003–2004 I actually traveled to New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Boston, and Seattle. I have developed a dense slide archive of rich visual material. Since I cannot actually use all of these images in the book, I am investigating the possibility of a Web site to archive them. In 2005–2006 I plan additional travel to San Diego and Sedona (Arizona). In 2006–2007, with the support of a Guggenheim Fellowship, I will complete the manuscript.

I am immensely grateful to the AAR for its generosity; I offer my heartiest thanks for the opportunities provided by this research award. ■



"God Bless America" bus, New York City, November 2001. Photo: Sally M. Promey.



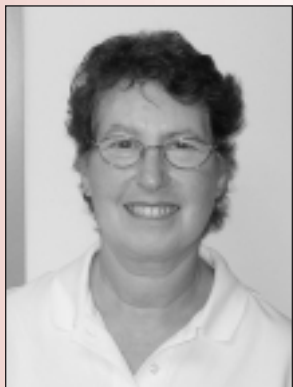
**Editor's Note:**

"In the Public Interest," a regular feature of Religious Studies News, is sponsored by the Academy's Public Understanding of Religion Committee.

## In the Public Interest

### Prisoners' Free Exercise Rights Upheld by Court

Dena S. Davis, Cleveland-Marshall College of Law



**T**HIS STORY begins 15 years ago. In 1990, the Supreme Court startled the nation by announcing that the Constitution did not inhibit enforcement of otherwise valid laws of general applicability that happened to burden religious practice. In the decades before this decision (*Employment Division v. Smith*), such laws were deemed constitutional only if they embodied the least restrictive alternative means of fulfilling a compelling state interest. To give an example: A public school has a rule that students cannot wear any sort of head covering in the gym. Sikhs, Muslims, Orthodox Jews, and others with a religious commitment to cover their heads, sue, claiming that this has burdened their religious freedom by forcing them to choose between their religious obligations and the benefits of gym class, intramural sports, etc. Before *Smith*, the school district could prevail only if it could show that the state's interest (e.g., safety on the gym floor) was compelling and that there was no less restrictive way of meeting that interest (e.g., requiring extra strong bobby pins). After *Smith*, the district could win simply by showing that it had any general purpose other than making difficulties for adherents of certain religions.

In the years since *Smith*, a number of broad-based coalitions have worked to get Congress to enact a law that would essentially return federal and state governments to the "compelling interest" standard. The Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), passed in 1993, was largely struck down by the Court in 1997. The Court ignored the argument that RFRA violated the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment by affording special privileges to religious practice. Rather, it struck down RFRA on grounds of federalism, that is, on the proper relation between Congress and the states. One of the Court's objections was that Congress had not shown any evidence that state or local governments were systematically burdening religious liberty; had that evidence been presented, it might have grounded an argument that a return to the compelling interest standard was necessary to protect religious freedom.

The RFRA coalition responded with a much more narrowly tailored piece of legislation, the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 (RLUIPA), which concentrated on two areas in which an empirical case could be made for the existence of widespread and systematic abuses of religious freedom. On May 31, 2005, RLUIPA won its first decisive battle, as the Supreme Court, in *Cutter v. Wilkinson*, unanimously upheld Section 3 of the Act, which states that "No government shall impose a substantial burden on the religious exercise of a person residing in or confined to an institution" unless the burden furthers "a compelling government interest" and does so "by the least restrictive means."

*Cutter* began in Ohio, where prisoners from unconventional faiths (Wicca, Satanism, Asutra) sued the state under RLUIPA on the grounds that their religious needs were not being met, whereas prisoners from main-

stream religions were being accommodated. The State of Ohio countered by arguing that RLUIPA was unconstitutional under the Establishment Clause, because it required the state to privilege religious reasons over other reasons and therefore would "encourage prisoners to become religious" in order to garner those privileges. For example, if two prisoners were in solitary confinement without reading material, an avowedly religious prisoner would be able to fight his boredom by successfully demanding a Bible, while another prisoner, wishing perhaps for poetry or a self-help book, would fail.

The Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit ruled in Ohio's favor, but the Supreme Court, in an opinion written by Ruth Bader Ginsburg, disagreed. The Court took official note of evidence that religious practice in prisons is often subjected to "frivolous or arbitrary barriers." Ginsburg found that Section 3 of RLUIPA does not impermissibly privilege religion, but simply "alleviates exceptional government-created burdens on private religious exercise." In a reference to last year's decision, in which the Court allowed the State of Washington to exclude people studying for the ministry from a state scholarship program, Ginsburg noted that there is a certain "play in the joints," a "corridor" for laws that are neither required by the Free Exercise Clause, nor forbidden by the Establishment Clause.

The Court was careful to point out that RLUIPA is hardly a "free pass" for religious practice in prison. It does not elevate the right to religious practice over the needs of prison security, and it requires lower courts adjudicating RLUIPA claims to take account of "the burdens a requested accommodation may impose on nonbeneficiaries." Given the paucity of resources in prisons, the latter is likely to be a serious check on which

RLUIPA claims will actually prevail. In fact, speculating on why Justice Stevens, usually a staunch supporter of nonestablishment at the expense of free exercise, was willing to go along with the majority, one commentator suggested that Stevens did not expect RLUIPA to have any real effect.

This decision has especial meaning for the AAR and the Committee for the Public Understanding of Religion. Last year the Committee began an outreach initiative to prison chaplains in state and federal systems (see "AAR Expanding Government Relations Program," *RSN*, March 2005, p. 10). Seven chaplains attended the 2004 Annual Meeting, including the directors of prison chaplaincy programs in Colorado, North Carolina, Nevada, Ohio, Texas, and Washington; the president of the American Correctional Chaplains Association; and the director of chaplaincy programs for the Federal Bureau of Prisons. AAR member Patrick McCollum and the AAR Director of External Relations, Steve Herrick, had arranged a day and a half of activities. Scholars who met with the chaplains included Edward Curtis, Fred Denny, Diana Eck, Barbara McGraw, Wendy Griffin, Michael McNally, Sarah Pike, and Ines Talamantez.

It is difficult to overstate how excited everyone — scholars and chaplains alike — is about this new initiative. Many of the AAR scholars commented that this was the most compelling AAR experience they had had in more than a decade of membership. The chaplains all voiced great enthusiasm and indicated their intention to return this year and to urge their colleagues to come. Given the recent Supreme Court decision, prison officials have an even greater need for the kind of access to academic expertise that the AAR provides. ♣

## Beyond the Annual Meeting

### Regions Committee

Stacy L. Patty, Lubbock Christian University



Stacy L. Patty is Professor of Religious Studies at Lubbock Christian University, where he teaches courses in world religions and ethics. He is a graduate of Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York (STM); and Baylor University (PhD). He currently serves as chair of the AAR's Regions Committee. Patty has been a leader in the development of the AAR's teaching workshops, and he speaks frequently in community settings on religious pluralism in North America.

**RSN:** Tell us, when did your committee begin and what kind of work does it do?

**Patty:** The AAR has a long history of interest in strong regional activities by its members. Since 1974 the regionally elected secretaries of the ten regions have served as members of the AAR Board of Directors, providing full board member responsibility for the AAR and also serving as a natural link between the regions and the board. In 1991 the board formed the Regions Committee as a standing committee to support further the work of the regions. Activities of the committee are monitored by the board in consultation with the AAR by-laws.

The Regions Committee works with regional secretaries, AAR staff, and the AAR board, to promote the work of the academy's regional groups. We research needs and activities of the regional groups, assist regional officers in meeting planning and professional development opportunities, administer the regional development grants program, and make official recommendations to the board regarding the regions. Our committee works through-

out the year via e-mail conversations and teleconferences, and we come together for meetings each spring and every other fall. Prior to each spring meeting, we bring together all of the regional secretaries for a retreat.

**RSN:** It seems so obvious, but let me ask, what makes the work of this committee important for the Academy?

**Patty:** All AAR members are also members of regions, but not all AAR members or many AAR objectives are regionally centered. The Regions Committee focuses specifically on ways to strengthen all AAR activities by making connections between regional activities and needs on the one hand and academy-wide initiatives and activities on the other. I give three examples. First, AAR teaching workshops, developed in coordination with the Regions and Teaching and Learning Committees, have been a major success in several regions. Second, the committee has been active in creating links between the AAR Student Liaison program and regional AAR student officers. Third, the

#### Regions Committee Members

Stacy L. Patty (Chair),  
Lubbock Christian University

Linda L. Barnes,  
Boston University

Jacqueline Z. Pastis,  
La Salle University

John Harrison,  
AAR Staff Liaison

Regions Committee most recently planned, in coordination with the director of college programs, two regional chairs workshops. In short, the Regions Committee helps to formulate and implement AAR strategies so that their effect on AAR members will be as widespread as possible.

**RSN:** What contributions have different members made?

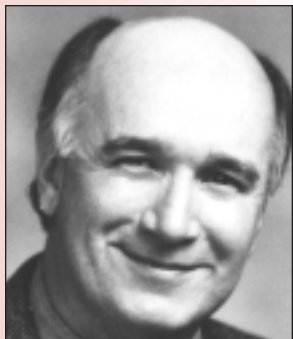
**Patty:** We are particularly blessed as a standing committee with a membership that changes often; rarely does the same person serve on the committee for more than three years, and a new member rotates onto the committee at least every two years. This turnover provides fresh perspectives from various geographical, institutional, and social locales, and it prevents us from overlooking serious concerns that may otherwise be missed. A Northwest region member brings a quite different perspective to discussions about Annual Meeting locations than



## Department Meeting

### *Boston College, Department of Theology*

*Kenneth R. Himes, Chair*



*Boston College was founded by the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in 1863. Though incorporated as a university since its beginning, it was not until its second half-century that the school began to fill out the dimensions of its charter. In addition to the College of Arts and Sciences, there is an evening college, a Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Law School, Graduate School of Social Work, and Schools of Business Management, Nursing, and Education. The student body of 14,400 (4,800 graduate and professional) represents all the states and territories of the U.S. as well as 94 foreign countries. The Department of Theology, located in the College of Arts and Sciences, offers an undergraduate major as well as MA and PhD degrees through the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. There is a strong, though not exclusive, emphasis on Christianity, especially as manifested in the Roman Catholic tradition.*

*Himes received his BA from Siena College in history (1971), an MA in moral theology from the Washington Theological Union (1975), and a PhD in religion and public policy from Duke University (1981). For 23 years he taught graduate courses at the Washington Theological Union in fundamental moral theology, Catholic social teaching, and Christian social ethics. The author of two books and editor of two others, he also served as editor of New Theology Review. He is a past President of the Catholic Theological Society of America. Himes moved to Boston College in January 2004 as the Chair of the department.*

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

**Himes:** This may seem hokey, but it is the opportunity to help others. There are, of course, the small things — granting a student an override to get into a closed course or hosting a dinner for a visiting scholar. But, more importantly, it is shaping budgets and policies so that resources go to the people and programs that really deserve them and that will use them well.

I try to highlight the faculty's work within the department and the university. When they recruited me, I stated that my first task would be to serve the faculty, trusting that if I make their lives easier, they will, in turn, be able to serve our students better. I do take pleasure in seeing the accomplishments of my colleagues.

Also I like creating an office environment where people enjoy coming to work.

**RSN:** Can you tell us something about the department's strengths?

**Himes:** Do you mean besides the chairman?

To my mind the biggest strengths are, first, the overall quality of the faculty and, second, the commitment that the university has to our department. We have some very distinguished faculty members, people who would be on just about anyone's short list of the best in a given field. A number of years ago, prior to my arrival, the administration singled out theology as one of the five flagship departments, and they have backed that up by being generous with institutional resources.

As a department we also have a good sense of our mission and our place in the university. Quite a number of years ago there was a deliberate decision by the faculty that this was going to be a department of theology, not religious studies or catechetics or Catholic studies.

Another plus for us is the Jesuit charism that marks the university. I think it is pretty hard for a student to attend BC and not come away with an understanding of the Jesuit tradition's emphasis on faith, learning, critical reflection, and social justice. Not every student will buy into the entire package, but they would have a hard time not knowing what matters to the Jesuits. There is an environment here at BC that takes faith and the quest for religious truth seriously.

**RSN:** Tell us a bit more about the faculty.

**Himes:** Well, we are a pretty big department: 38 full-time, about 20 part-time in any given semester, and approximately 7–10 teaching fellows. One of my concerns for future hires is to bring in younger people at the assistant level and not just recruit established scholars. Because we have a substantial graduate program, research and publication are strong expectations among us, but since we also do a lot of undergraduate instruction there is an emphasis on teaching performance as well. People have been hired with the expectation that they will teach at all different levels of instruction within the university.

Within the full-time faculty the biggest area of study is systematics — no surprise for a Catholic university — but we also have a strong group in ethics. Biblical studies, comparative theology, history, and pastoral theology are the other formally identified fields of study within the department. To some extent these designations are for organizational purposes in the division of departmental labor. Graduate students often cross the boundaries of the fields in pursuing their programs, and I notice that faculty interact pretty freely across the various fields. There is not a lot of isolation due to specialization.

One of the issues on the horizon, I think, is to determine the nature of our history field. Should we be focusing on the history of theology or doing the customary work of church history with its study of figures, institutions, and social context? Since BC has a large history department with several members of that department interested in religious history, it may be that our department ought to move more toward greater concentration on the history of theological ideas. That will be a topic for upcoming department meetings.

**RSN:** How is your undergraduate program structured?

**Himes:** All BC students are required to take one two-semester course sequence. There are five such courses from which to

choose: "Biblical Heritage," "Catholicism," "Christian Tradition," "Religious Quest" (a comparative study of at least two religious traditions), and "Perspectives on Western Culture" (a 12-credit course satisfying both theology and philosophy requirements). Students must stay with both semesters of the same course since the second semester presupposes and builds upon the first semester.

These courses vary in style of presentation and class size; however, in any given semester there are more than 2,000 students enrolled in core courses. Overall, the student response is quite positive, with the clearest demonstration being that most of our majors come to us after experiencing a core course. Very few students come to Boston College intending to major in theology. What they find out in the core courses is that theology asks precisely the questions that many of them are asking at this point in their lives.

We have about 175 majors, a larger number of minors, and a great many students who take additional electives in theology beyond the core. (We offer about 45 undergraduate electives each semester.) Majors must take two of the year-long intro courses, five electives chosen in consultation with the director of undergraduate studies in the department, and one majors' seminar in junior or senior year. Minors take four electives in addition to a core course.

One of the things we are currently working on is developing opportunities for our undergrads to work more closely with individual professors through research projects, study tours, lunch discussions, and other opportunities that bring faculty and students together outside the classroom.

**RSN:** What sorts of courses attract students?

**Himes:** This has been one of the surprises that I had upon coming to BC. Last year we had a very healthy enrollment for an elective course in John of the Cross, and that was a sequel to an earlier course that was an introduction to John's writings. If you had told me that a bunch of undergrads would want to spend one afternoon every week studying a 16th-century Spanish mystic I would have doubted your sense of young Americans. But they did; and the professor who taught the course told me there was a high level of discussion in the course. So, go figure.

Students often pick courses on the basis of the teacher and, since we have a generous number of excellent teachers in the department, our elective courses do very well. Ethics courses are popular; students are interested in issues of peace, human rights, social justice, and what faith has to say about these. Comparative theology is also popular since today's students are so aware of the religious pluralism that marks our global situation. What has surprised me a bit is the level of interest in spirituality and more straightforward doctrinal questions. But then again, I return to my point that an excellent teacher will attract students almost irrespective of the topic, and we are lucky to have so many outstanding teachers in the department.

**RSN:** What about the graduate program?

**Himes:** It is a program sized to our resources. We accept 12 doctoral students each year, the majority in ethics and systematics, though the interest in comparative the-

ology is growing. As a member of the Boston Theological Institute (BTI) Boston College provides our students with access to a tremendous number of faculty and courses throughout the Boston/Cambridge area.

So far our students have been finishing in a timely way and finding tenure-track positions. I may sound immodest but I do think that BC has been on a fast track in advancing the reputation of its doctoral program and the quality of our applicants; the placement of our graduates indicates as much.

The MA program deserves greater attention in the coming years. I think we need to look at how we fund the MA as well as review the curriculum and comprehensive exam process. Right now our MA program does not really serve as a "feeder" for the doctoral program here or at other schools. Our MA students often go into high school teaching or church-based work. That is perfectly fine, but we need to ask if the degree should be more intentionally aimed at preparation for doctoral studies. I don't have a firm opinion about this, but it is a topic that I want to raise with colleagues at a future date.

**RSN:** What problems do you foresee in the future?

**Himes:** I am hesitant to call this a problem, more a challenge with very promising consequences. Boston College is discussing with another member of the BTI the feasibility of a merger. It would result in the creation of a new Graduate School of Ministry here at BC. This would bring a healthy contingent of new faculty and grad students to campus.

An important item, therefore, is how that new school will be related to the Department of Theology in the College of Arts and Sciences. We have been very clear that our department wants to remain in A&S. After all, the Jesuit tradition sees theology as an integral element of a liberal arts education, and no one in the administration wishes to remove theology from the core curriculum of our undergraduates. At the graduate level, however, there will be considerable interest, I think, on the part of some faculty, to have dual appointments to the department and to the new school of ministry. That makes sense but we need to think it through and do it right.

A second item is to insure that we retain our identity as a theology department. A temptation may exist for some to start thinking the new school of ministry will perform the theological role at the university and that our department ought to morph into religious studies or some other alternative way of understanding ourselves. Instead, I believe we must maintain a role for theology within the liberal arts and to make the case for theology's place in a university education in addition to its essential role within the professional education of church ministers.

There will be a slew of practical matters to attend to as well. But, to my mind, getting the first two items right will allow the other pieces to fall into place.

**RSN:** Any advice for new chairs?

**Himes:** No, I am too new at this to be giving advice to others. I should be the one seeking guidance. ☛



**BERLING**, from p.11

introduced to Western audiences a syncretic religious leader who combined elements of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism into a “Religion of the Three Teachings” in 16th-century Fukien. Building on that work, I participated in a number of interdisciplinary conferences and conference volumes on religion and popular culture from the Sung through the Ming. 2) Work on ecumenical theological education, the relationship of theology and the university, and globalization and theological education. During this period I was dean of the Graduate Theological Union, participated in a multi-year Lilly-funded project on Theology and the University, and (briefly) served as a staff member on globalization and theological education for the Association of Theological Schools. I wrote extensively on all of these issues. Also in this period, I wrote rather extensively on why and how theological education should include rigorous study of other religions. 3) Work on inter-religious learning, that is to say, the process of learning a religion across lines of religious and cultural difference. This work builds on my entire background: in comparative religions, in critical teaching and learning theory, and in theological education and theological learning. Inter-religious learning is a well-developed field in Europe (particularly Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium), with strong representatives in other countries such as South Africa and Turkey. As we become increasingly aware of the significance of religious diversity in our society (and in our classrooms), inter-religious learning becomes ever more important. My recent book, *Understanding Other Religious Worlds: A Guide for Inter-religious Education* (Orbis, 2004), articulates the process of inter-religious learning and its implications for the classroom. The book was written primarily for the theological education audience, but I hope to extend the work to the religious studies classroom as well.

**RSN:** You’ve served on a variety of committees for the AAR and many other organizations and universities. What committee(s) do you feel have helped most to foster excellence in religion scholarship? How so?

**Berling:** I served for nine years on the ACLS History of Religions Committee, five of those as its chair. This committee gave an award for the Best First Book in the History of Religions, which was a way of recognizing and affirming excellence. It also arranged for a Lecturer in History of Religions, a senior scholar who offered a series of lectures (which will soon become a book) at a number of institutions across the U.S.

I also served on a number of fellowship selection committees (for the American Council of Learned Societies, Fulbright, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Association of Theological Schools); these committees quite literally supported the production of excellent scholarship and provided scholars with much-needed funds for research leaves or travel.

As a member of the AAR’s Program Committee I helped support the development of new program units that would foster promising fields of scholarship.

At the Graduate Theological Union we

established a faculty grants office to help faculty identify and apply for research funding; the office was so successful that it was moved to ATS, and from there served the full range of theological schools. The ATS office also offered workshops at the AAR Annual Meetings open to all faculty.

**RSN:** Recently, you chaired the Task Force on the Independent Annual Meeting. What did you learn from that process?

**Berling:** I agreed to chair the Task Force on condition that its members represent the various groups and voices most unhappy with the decision for the independent meeting. While it was outside the mandate of our group to revisit the decision, I was well aware (through heated conversations in a number of venues) that there were still many unhappy with the decision (as well as those happy about it). I had an excellent group that was very representative of all points of view. We even had a member who was so adamantly opposed to the split (he felt it left him without an academic home) that, when he learned we could not revisit the decision, he announced that he would not put his name on our report, even though he spent a day with us and provided us with considerable input and wisdom. Although the members of the task force had a broad range of opinions about the decision itself and were determined to acknowledge in the report that many would be adversely affected by the split, they worked together very constructively: a) to maximize the benefits of the independent meeting by creating the space for a number of new program units; b) to redress or ameliorate the negative impacts as far as possible; c) to recognize the deep differences of opinion in the AAR, the frustration many were feeling, and to make clear that the decision was not intended to exclude certain fields or groups from the AAR; and d) to set up a process for immediate feedback about our recommendations and for a thoroughgoing review of the independent meeting relatively early so that any problems could be identified and addressed early. It was a pleasure working with this group of committed and articulate scholars.

**RSN:** What are the biggest challenges facing religion scholars today?

**Berling:** There are a number of serious issues.

Despite the increasing religious diversity of our society (and classrooms) over the past 30 years, public discourse about religion is still woefully inadequate. The media still tend to represent only the most extreme and “simplistic” forms of religion rather than giving voice to a range of Christianities, Islams, Buddhisms, and the like.

We as scholars have not succeeded in modeling for the general public how to converse intelligently about religious difference, or what is at stake in understanding religions.

We are still too caught up in the (to my mind) false “insider/outsider” dichotomy, exaggerating and distorting both positions. Our tendency to exaggerate this dichotomy only exacerbates the public’s inability to understand how to discourse about religion/s and undermines our ability to make the case for the importance of the study of religion in colleges and universities in ways that would be more compelling. ❧

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Editor’s Note:

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

Sexual Harassment Policy

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

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

Sexual Harassment Policy for the American Academy of Religion

Introduction

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

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

Background

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

Having friendships with students is common for teachers. It is also possible that teachers will experience attraction to students and experience students’ sexual attraction to them.

This cuts across gender and sexual orientation. Because of the inherent power differential between teacher and student, it is imperative that members of the Academy maintain the integrity of an environment which is not coercive, intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

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

Descriptions

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

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

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

- 1. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used, implicitly or explicitly, as a basis for employment decisions or academic decisions affecting such individuals;
- or
- 2. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment.

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

For information on AAR’s Grievance and Complaint Procedure, please go to: [www.aarweb.org/about/board/resolutions/shg.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/about/board/resolutions/shg.asp).



YOCUM, from p.9

“He has been a model of how humor can leaven the seriousness of what we do, making us all more effective in ensuring critical and reflective study of religion and more effective as public intellectuals. Whether helping with practical suggestions — who might review a book proposal or what topic might be a good one for a volume in the Teaching Religious Studies Series or how a vote might go on the Board — or choosing a restaurant or a museum for an hour’s visit, Glenn made my involvement in the academic study of religion better.”

Kimberly Rae Connor, who first met

Yocum when she was an unaffiliated and discouraged independent scholar, said that as editor of *JAAR*, he accepted an article she had submitted to the journal. That led to future collaborations between the two.

“This act, which recognized the merits of my work without regard to my lack of status, rescued me from invisibility and gave me hope that I might find a place in our profession someday,” Connor said. “Not long after that, he accepted me as a not entirely qualified participant in his teaching workshop, again looking beyond my status and inviting me to join in this professional collaboration based on what I had written in my application and the promise of what I might be able to contribute.

“From that experience he continued to champion me, personally and professionally, eventually encouraging me (and no doubt persuading others) to become an editor for the AAR Academy Series. The work has been gratifying to me for the opportunities I have had to be of service to others, to help them as Glenn helped me, but also because it meant I got to see Glenn twice a year.”

She said Yocum is unique among scholars, and his editorship at *JAAR* will have an impact on the journal that will be felt for many years.

“I have never encountered a senior faculty member of such renown who is more hum-

ble, generous, or kind than Glenn,” she said. “He uses his talents and his influence to help others, not for his own aggrandizement. Glenn possesses a gentle passion that both soothes and inspires. . . . His great legacy is his participation in the opening up of the AAR to include many voices.

“Although his own voice is powerful and compelling and merited its own attention, Glenn’s great gift was to find ways to let others be heard and to take sincere satisfaction in simply listening.”

It’s left for me to state the obvious, that his search committee chose well and wisely. From all of us, Glenn, thanks! And from me: See you at the Bluebird. ♣



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION

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**ROCKY MOUNTAINS**, from p.17

panels to be presented at the 2006 regional meeting. The deadline for submissions is **November 1, 2005**. Each proposal should consist of a one-page abstract describing the nature of the paper or panel and should be sent as an e-mail attachment in MS Word format to [dweddle@coloradocollege.edu](mailto:dweddle@coloradocollege.edu). If you require technological support for your presentation (such as Internet connection, or audio and projection equipment), you must request it with your proposal. Proposals are welcome in all areas of religious and biblical studies. The committee also welcomes proposals for panels and thematic sessions in the following areas:

- Religion in the Public Square: Case Studies in Religion and Government
- Role of Religious Discourse in Talk about Terrorism
- Biblical Issues or Exegesis of Biblical Texts
- Studies in Specific Religious Traditions
- Theory and Method of Comparative Religious Studies
- Teaching Methods and Technologies

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

Student Paper Awards: Graduate students are encouraged to submit proposals. There will be awards for the best AAR and SBL student papers. The awards are presented during the luncheon on Saturday and carry a stipend of \$100 each. To be considered for the award a student should submit a copy of the completed paper, along with an abstract, by **October 15, 2005**. (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. The paper should be 12–15 pages double-spaced (for a 20-minute presentation). Please submit the paper as an e-mail attachment to [dweddle@coloradocollege.edu](mailto:dweddle@coloradocollege.edu). In addition, please submit a hard copy of your proposal by fax or regular mail.

The region also invites undergraduate papers for the "Theta Alpha Kappa National Honor Society Undergraduate Panel." There will be an award for the best paper in the panel. Please submit a completed paper as an e-mail attachment to [dweddle@coloradocollege.edu](mailto:dweddle@coloradocollege.edu) by **October 15, 2005**.

Program Committee Meeting: We will meet during the AAR/SBL Annual Meetings in Philadelphia on Saturday, November 19, 2005, from 9:00 PM to 11:00 PM to determine the final program. All members of the AAR/SBL Rocky Mountains–Great Plains Region who are willing to serve on the Program Committee and review proposals are asked to notify David Weddle, Regional Vice-President and Program Chair, by **November 1, 2005**. Proposals and student papers will be sent as e-mail attachments to Program Committee members for their evaluation in early November. We hope that at least one faculty person from each of the participating schools in the region will serve on the Program Committee.

Please send all proposals and inquiries to:

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## Southeastern

**Southeastern Regional Meeting**  
(AAR/SBL/ASOR/SE)  
March 10–12, 2006  
Marriott Century Center  
Atlanta, GA

The following sections and program units invite members who wish to present a paper or coordinate a session to submit proposals (1–2 pages) or completed manuscripts to the appropriate section chairs by the call deadline, **October 1, 2005**. Each member is limited to one proposal. Please use the proposal submission form available on the SECSOR Web site at [www.uts.edu/~secsor](http://www.uts.edu/~secsor). Proposals for joint sessions should be sent to all chairs.

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

Suggestions for new program units or special speakers should be sent to SECSOR's executive director or to the vice president/program chair of the respective society.

(AAR) Academic Study of Religion and Pedagogy (3–4 sessions): (1) Open call. (2) Joint session with Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament, New Testament, and American Biblical Hermeneutics: Teaching the Bible in the Bible Belt. (3) Joint session with Religion, Ethics, and Society and Women and Religion: Teaching Feminism in the South. Chair: Margaret Aymmer, Interdenominational Theological Seminary, [margaret@mpaymer.net](mailto:margaret@mpaymer.net).

(AAR) African-American Religion: Any topics related to African-American religion or the religion of African peoples. Chair: Sandy Dwayne Martin, University of Georgia, [martin@uga.edu](mailto:martin@uga.edu).

(AAR/SBL) American Biblical Hermeneutics (1 joint and 1 open session): (1) Joint session with Academic Study of Religion and Pedagogy, Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament, and New Testament: Teaching the Bible in the Bible Belt. (2) Open session: The Bible in Southern Culture. Any papers on the Bible in American culture or academy welcomed. Chair: N. Samuel Murrell, Philosophy/Religion, UNC Wilmington,

601 S. College RD, Wilmington, NC 28403-5601; [murrells@uncw.edu](mailto:murrells@uncw.edu).

(SBL/ASOR) Archaeology and the Ancient World (4 sessions): (1) Joint session with Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament: Goddess Traditions and Ancient Israel. Papers are invited on a wide range of topics related to goddesses in the Ancient Near East and feminine images of God in the Bible. (2) Joint session with History of Religions and Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament: Teaching Archaeology in the Classroom. (3) Open session: Archaeology and the Biblical World. The material culture of the biblical world, including (but not limited to) reports from the field, interpretations of finds, archaeologically informed readings of texts, and historical analyses. (4) Presidential Address: Byron McCane, Wofford College. Respondents will be invited. Send title and abstract (150 words) or complete paper (required of first-time presenters) to Chair: Milton Moreland, Rhodes College, 2000 North PKWY, Memphis, TN 38112; [morelandm@rhodes.edu](mailto:morelandm@rhodes.edu).

(AAR) Arts, Literature, and Religion (5 sessions): (1) Ethics in Reading and Translation. (2) Joint session with Women and Religion: Masking and Maintaining the Indigenous. (3) Ancient and Modern Representations of War. (4) Staging Reality. (5) Open call on arts and religion, religion and film, and/or religion and literature. Chair: Carolyn Medine, University of Georgia, Department of Religion, 206 Peabody Hall, Athens, GA 30602-1625; [medine@uga.edu](mailto:medine@uga.edu).

(SBL) Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament (4 or 5 sessions): (1) An invited panel discussion of James L. Crenshaw's *Defending God*. (2) Two open sessions. (3) Joint session with Archaeology and the Ancient World: The Feminine Images of God in the Hebrew Bible. (4) Joint session with Archaeology and the Ancient World and History of Religions: Teaching Archaeology in the Classroom. (5) Joint session with American Biblical Hermeneutics, New Testament, and Academic Study of Religion and Pedagogy: Teaching the Bible in the Bible Belt. Chair: Don Polaski, University of Virginia, [dep4n@virginia.edu](mailto:dep4n@virginia.edu).

(AAR) History of Christianity (2 sessions): (1) Open call. (2) Techniques and Strategies for Teaching the History of Christianity. Chair: Richard Penaskovic, Department of Philosophy, 6080 Haley Center, Auburn University, AL 36849-5210; [penasri@auburn.edu](mailto:penasri@auburn.edu).

(AAR) History of Judaism (2 sessions): (1) Open call. (2) Joint session with History of Religions: Jewish Communities and Educational Institutions in the Southeast. Chair: Gilya Gerda Schmidt, Department of Religious Studies, University of Tennessee, Knoxville 37996; [ggschmidt@utk.edu](mailto:ggschmidt@utk.edu).

(AAR) History of Religions (3–5 sessions): (1) Teaching World Religions in the Southern Seminary. (2) Joint session with History of Judaism: Jewish Communities and Educational Institutions in the Southeast. (3) Joint session with Archaeology and the Ancient World and Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament: Teaching Archaeology in the Classroom. (4) Islam: Text and Practice. (5) Creating and Re-creating Religious Traditions. (6) Other topics, especially proposals related to teaching in the particular regional contexts of the Southeast. Chairs: Brian K. Pennington, Maryville College, [brian.pennington@maryvillecollege.edu](mailto:brian.pennington@maryvillecollege.edu); and Steven

Ramey, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, [steven.ramey@uncp.edu](mailto:steven.ramey@uncp.edu).

(SBL) New Testament (4–6 sessions): (1) Invited panel discussion. (2) Open sessions, with special interest in issues of race and ethnicity in the study of early Christianity, apocalypse, and ethics, utilizing postcolonial theory in New Testament studies. (3) Joint sessions with Academic Study of Religion and Pedagogy, American Biblical Hermeneutics, and Old Testament/Hebrew Scriptures: Teaching the Bible in the Bible Belt. Chair: Shelly Matthews, Furman University, [shelly.matthews@furman.edu](mailto:shelly.matthews@furman.edu).

(AAR) Philosophy of Religion and Theology (4 sessions): (1) Open call. (2) Issues in Science and Religion. (3) Historical Issues in Systematic Theology and Philosophy of Religion. (4) Teaching Philosophy of Religion and Theology in the South. Chair: George Shields, Kentucky State University, [gshields@gwmail.kysu.edu](mailto:gshields@gwmail.kysu.edu).

(AAR) Religion, Ethics, and Society (2 sessions and 2 joint sessions): (1) Open call. (2) Joint session with Academic Study of Religion and Pedagogy and Women and Religion: Teaching Feminism in the South. (3) Disability. (4) Ethics and Theory. Chairs: Laura Stivers, Pfeiffer University, [lstivers@pfeiffer.edu](mailto:lstivers@pfeiffer.edu); and Toddie Peters, Elon University, [rpeters@elon.edu](mailto:rpeters@elon.edu).

(AAR) Religion in America (3 sessions): (1) Open call. (2) Religion and Popular Culture. (3) Theological Education in the South. (4) Pentecostalism. Chair: James P. Byrd, Vanderbilt Divinity School, [james.p.byrd@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:james.p.byrd@vanderbilt.edu).

(AAR) Women and Religion: (1) Joint session with Arts, Literature, and Religion: Women in (Masking and Maintaining) Indigenous Religions. (2) Joint session with Academic Study of Religion and Pedagogy and Religion, Ethics, and Society: Teaching Feminism/Womanism in the South. (3) Women in Religion Writing: Academic and Nonacademic. (4) Open call. Chair: Monica A. Coleman, Bennett College for Women, [revmonica@att.net](mailto:revmonica@att.net).

### Session for Undergraduate Students

Undergraduate students at institutions in the Southeast Region are invited to submit papers for a special session. Open to all topics, the session will be composed of the papers considered the best submissions by an interdisciplinary committee. Students should submit completed papers that reflect original student research of an appropriate length for presentation (approximately 12 d.s. pages). Please include on a coverpage contact information for the student and the faculty sponsor. Electronic submission preferred. Send submissions by **December 15, 2005**, to Bernadette McNary-Zak, Rhodes College, [mcnary\\_zak@rhodes.edu](mailto:mcnary_zak@rhodes.edu). Note: Undergraduates may still submit proposals to other sections as well.

(continued on next page)





## Southwest

### Southwest Regional Meeting

March 4–5, 2006  
Harvey Hotel, DFW Airport  
Dallas, TX

The following is a listing of the chairs of the various societies and a description of program specifics. Submit proposals to the person designated in each section. Indicate if the proposal is being submitted to more than one section. The deadline for all paper proposals is **November 1, 2005**.

Arts, Literature, and Religion: The premise of our program (“Beyond Plot, Allusion, and Authorial Intent”) is that genre bears meaning, that the medium is the message, and that analysis of form is inextricable from a consideration of content. Academic rhetoric about the virtues of interdisciplinarity recognizes that the discourses of Religious Studies and of the Arts and Literature have been parochialized by the persistent separation of these as independent disciplines, and affirms that this is an artificial division. Yet, calls for interdisciplinary studies have not resolved the problem of borrowing material from one discipline for the purposes of another, nor of appropriating that material without that discipline’s accompanying analytical apparatus. Our program will address this problem.

Because the separation of religious studies and the arts and literature as disciplines is largely a contemporary phenomenon, while works of art continue to express religious thought and experience, paper proposals that focus on contemporary media, especially in popular culture, are invited. Papers that address the problem of interdisciplinary practice between religious studies and the arts and literature, especially as that applies to teaching, are also invited. Session panels may be organized around a single medium/genre, a particular religious theme, or theoretical engagement of religious studies’ use of art or art and literature’s use of religion. Paper proposals should be sent electronically (abstract in Word attached) to *katherine-downey@sbcglobal.net* or by postal carrier to:

Katherine Downey, Section Chair  
University of Texas at Dallas  
9811 Windy Terrace DR  
Dallas, TX 75231, USA

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 “Illness and Healing in Asian Religions” and “Islam in the Global Community” are of special interest. Papers related to material culture in the study of Asian religions and compara-

tive religions are also welcome. Some overhead projectors and slide projectors may be available; if using a Power Point presentation, please make your own arrangement for a data projector. Proposals should not exceed 500 words and should include title, brief description, and an indication of the main arguments of the presentation (Word attachment via e-mail preferable). Please send proposals to:

Julius N. Tsai  
Department of Religion  
TCU BOX 298100  
Texas Christian University  
Fort Worth, Texas 76129, USA  
W: 817-257-6442  
E-MAIL: *j.tsai@tcu.edu*

Ethics, Society, and Cultural Analysis: Proposals for papers or panel discussions are invited on any topic in ethics or cultural analysis, including: social ethics, biomedical ethics, environmental ethics, theological ethics, the history of ethics, ethical issues in church-state relations, the use of scripture or tradition in ethics. Also of interest are reflection on capitalism and globalization, comparative religious ethics, and constructive treatments of contemporary ethical issues. Send proposals to:

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

History of Christianity: The History of Christianity Section has an open call for papers. All submissions in the field of history of Christianity will be considered, but papers in the following areas are of special interest: the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement, issues in 90th-century Christianity, African-American Christianity, panel discussion regarding the teaching of Christian history, historical methodology, and historiography. Send proposals to:

Mark A. Gstohl  
3725 Tall Pines Drive  
New Orleans, LA 70131  
W: 504-520-5456  
F: 504-520-7947  
E-MAIL: *mgstohl@xula.edu* or  
*mark.gstohl@gmail.com*

Philosophy of Religion and Theology: Proposals are invited in all areas in philosophy of religion or in theology. Proposals involving multiple presentations or panel discussions (no more than three participants) focused upon a single topic, figure, or publication will be especially welcome (either have each panelist provide an abstract, which is preferred, or supply credentials of panelists). Proposals that feature interdisciplinary or interinstitutional participation, and that promise to stimulate productive discussion, will be favored. Proposals should be no more than two pages, with the title of presentation and some sense of the argument. Include a return address, contact number, and e-mail address. Please do not submit proposals as e-mail attachments; paste them into the body of the e-mail. Submit proposals to:

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

Reflections on the Teaching of Religion: Proposals are invited for presentations during a Sunday morning session on the topic of teaching religious studies to the general education or nonmajor student. Proposals should reflect on the different experiences of teaching majors and nonmajors, propose strategies for capturing the interest of general education students, and suggest innovative ways to seize the opportunity to impart religious studies methods and knowledge to students who will not continue on to other religious studies classes. Especially welcome are proposals that consider the place of religious studies in the liberal arts or general education curriculum, contextualize religious studies within the public university or nonsectarian college, and advocate for particular approaches to introductory, core, or general education courses that will enrich the education of students with a wide range of disciplinary interests and specialties. Submit proposals to:

Donna Bowman  
Honors College  
University of Central Arkansas  
P.O. Box 5024  
Conway, AR 72035, USA  
W: 501-450-3631  
F: 501-450-3284  
E-MAIL: *donnadb@gmail.com*

### Theta Alpha Kappa

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

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



## Upper Midwest

### Upper Midwest Regional Meeting (AAR/SBL)

March 31–April 1, 2006  
Luther Seminary  
Saint Paul, MN

The program committee invites members of the societies to submit proposals for papers to be read at the regional meeting. Please see the call for papers at *umw-aars-bl.org/call2006.htm*. The deadline for proposals is **December 15, 2005**. Questions about the upcoming meeting or the appropriate section for proposals should be directed to Deanna A. Thompson, Hamline University, 1536 Hewitt AVE, St. Paul, MN 55104, USA; *dthompson@gw.hamline.edu*.

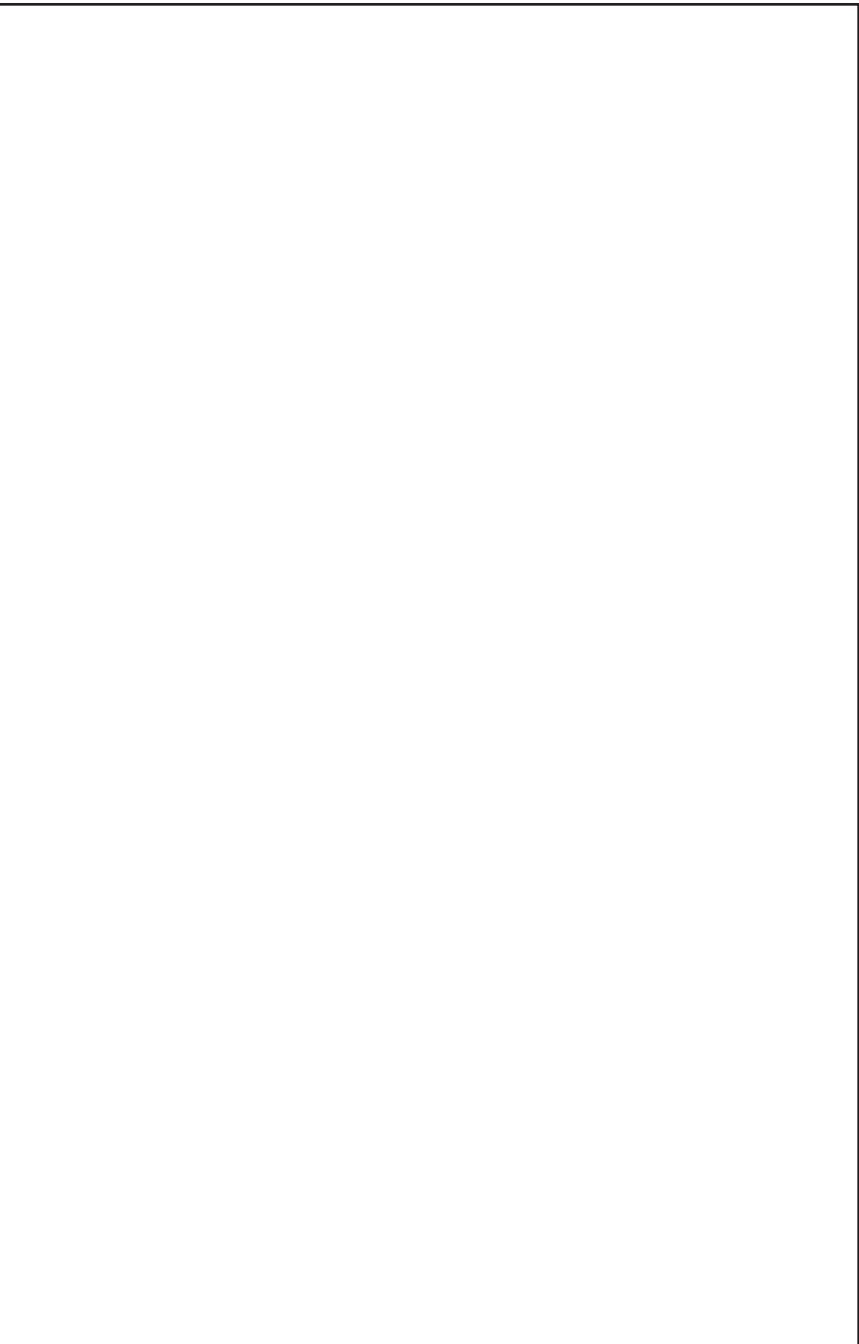


## Western

### Western Regional Meeting

March 11–13, 2006  
Claremont Graduate University  
Claremont, CA

The theme of the 2006 AAR Western Region Conference is “Religious Encounters with Modernities.” The intention of this theme is to foster scholarship on how religious thinkers and communities have adapted to, or rejected, visions of modernity. As fundamentalisms and traditionalist approaches world-wide reject key components of modern ideologies, while making full use of new technologies, this tension becomes increasingly fraught with contradictions. As religious studies scholars, we can promote a more nuanced public understanding of the dynamics behind religious attitudes to modernity, including the legacies of colonialism, the confluence of missionizing and modernizing, the changing material conditions, social perceptions, and resulting contestations around gender and sexuality, and the debates concerning science and religion. Members are invited, within the given sections of the AAR–WR, to submit proposals that deal with the historical, practical, and theoretical ramifications of religions and modernities. Subtopics could include, but are not limited to, issues of 1) how modern technologies have transformed life-and-death situations (e.g., warfare, modern medicine, contraception), and the resulting impact on religious thought and practice; 2) how changes in communication have made religious pluralism more evident, and thus created more religious options; 3) creation of religious utopias in the past to contrast with the confusions of the present; 4) the imagining of religious futures in speculative fictions and individually created religions; 5) how relevant are wholesale critiques of religion (i.e., Marx, Weber, and Freud) in today’s world; and 6) how fundamentalisms seek to alter the modern ethos. The AAR–WR program committee invites members of the AAR to submit proposals to their various sections dealing with the theme. The deadline for submissions is **October 1, 2005**. For details on submission procedures and dates, please visit the WECSOR Web site *www2.sjsu.edu/wecorl*.



**PATTY**, from p.23

members in some Eastern regions, for example. A committee dominated by theologians might read regional development grant applications differently than a committee with more balance of disciplines.

**RSN:** What have been some of the major initiatives of the committee? What major initiatives do they plan on accomplishing in the future?

**Patty:** In recent years the committee has worked with the board to increase significantly annual regional funding, both in the area of regional subventions for regular/meeting expenses and in the area of regional development grants. We plan to fund up to \$10,000 in regional development grants this year alone. The grants program has improved the perception of what happens in the regions, as well. In addition to annual regional meetings, AAR-funded activities within the regions include various seminars, workshops, colloquia, and research projects with impact on the regions.

Currently we are beginning work on a major review of the structure and activities of regional groups. We are researching whether current geographic configurations of the regions best serve membership needs for regional meetings and other regional workshops. Also, we are rethinking ways that regional meetings might be improved or even replaced with alternative structures of services for members. Whereas regional meetings tend to mirror the Annual Meeting, impending changes in the Annual Meeting will likely have consequences for the regions.

**RSN:** How do these initiatives fit with the goals of the Academy?

**Patty:** Several goals of the AAR's Strategic Plan relate closely to regional activities and to our current committee work. The Academy seeks to continue nurturing volunteer leadership, and regional service historically is an entry point for many members into Academy service. Thinking "beyond the regional meetings" will allow regions to include more members in leadership roles and foster stronger AAR allegiance at both regional and Academy-wide levels. The regions also are well poised to encourage the "scholarly interaction among all approaches to the study of religion, including ethical and theological perspectives." Because of regional variations with regard to religious populations and institutional affiliations with specific religions, strong regional activity virtually guarantees that the Academy will hear a multiplicity of voices in AAR publications and annual meetings.

**RSN:** Committee work can be demanding. What makes you willing to give so freely of your time and talent?

**Patty:** I look forward to the Academy's Annual Meeting for most of the year, and in many ways for me the AAR is its Annual Meeting. However, I live and work as an AAR member within a region. My colleagues with whom I dialogue, and those institutions most like mine, are within the region. Both my teaching and my scholarship are improved by having strong regional ties. I believe my own experience is not unique, and I find it quite fulfilling in helping other members similarly. I think the AAR is stronger as a whole when its regional group activities are strong. Serving on this committee, and as a regional secretary, then, is truly rewarding. 🌱

## AAR

### Don't Let Time Get Away from You!

Register for the Employment Information Services Center by October 21. The EIS Center at the Annual Meeting is an efficient way for candidates and employers to communicate and participate in job interviews. Those who register by the deadline will receive the following benefits.

#### EMPLOYERS

- Unlimited use of the interview hall
- Placement of job advertisement in the Annual Meeting edition of *Openings*
- Four months of online access to candidate CVs organized by specialization
- Ability to use the message center to communicate with registered candidates

#### CANDIDATES

- Icon next to online CV so employers know you will be at the EIS Center
- Personal copy of registered job advertisements and employers' interview plans
- Ability to use the message center to communicate with employers
- For more information about the Employment Information Services Center, and to register, see [www.aarweb.org/eis](http://www.aarweb.org/eis).

## WATCH FOR THE INTERNATIONAL FOCUS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

- 2002 Canadian
- 2003 Japanese
- 2004 Latin American
- 2005 Eastern and Central European
- 2006 African
- 2007 Chinese

... contributions to the  
study of religion

Special Topics Forum, Distinguished  
Visitors, Panels, Films, and more ...

For more information:  
International Connections Committee  
[www.aarweb.org/about/board/intconn](http://www.aarweb.org/about/board/intconn)





