



RELIGIOUS STUDIES NEWS

March 2006

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Annual Meeting News

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2006

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| | |
|---------|-------------|
| January | October 15 |
| March | December 15 |
| May | February 15 |
| October | July 15 |

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2006 Member Calendar

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

March

Religious Studies News March issue.

Journal of the American Academy of Religion March 2006 issue. For more information on AAR publications, see www.aarweb.org/publications or go directly to the JAAR home page hosted by Oxford University Press, www3.oup.co.uk/jaarell.

March 1. 2006 Annual Meeting proposals due to program unit chairs.

March 1–2. Humanities Advocacy Day. National Humanities Day is an advocacy event organized by the National Humanities Alliance and co-sponsored by the AAR and more than 20 organizations to promote support for the National Endowment for the Humanities. For more information, see www.nhalliance.org.

March 4. Religion and Disabilities Task Force meeting, Atlanta, GA.

March 4–5. Southwest regional meeting, Dallas, TX.

March 10–11. Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

March 10–12. Southeast regional meeting, Atlanta, GA.

March 11–13. Western regional meeting, Claremont, CA.

March 16–17. Mid-Atlantic regional meeting, Baltimore, MD.

March 18. Publications Committee meeting, New York, NY.

March 20. Nominations due for Awards for Excellence in the Study of Religion book awards. For details, see www.aarweb.org/awards/book/rules.asp

March 24. Executive Committee meeting, Washington, D.C.

March 24. Regional Secretaries meeting, Washington, D.C.

March 24–25. Rocky Mountain–Great Plains regional meeting, Colorado Springs, CO.

March 25–26. Spring Board of Directors meeting, Washington, D.C.

March 31–April 1. Midwest regional meeting, Chicago, IL.

March 31–April 1. Upper Midwest regional meeting, St. Paul, MN.

(For more information on regional meetings, see www.aarweb.org/regions/meetings.asp.)

April

April 1. Notification of acceptance of Annual Meeting paper proposals by program unit chairs.

(For more information on regional meetings, see www.aarweb.org/regions/meetings.asp.)

May

Religious Studies News May issue.

Spotlight on Teaching Spring 2006 issue.

Annual Meeting registration materials mailed with RSN.

May 1. Nominations (including self-nominations) for committee appointments requested. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/membership/volunteering.asp.

May 5–6. Eastern International regional meeting, Quebec City, QC, Canada.

May 5–7. Pacific Northwest regional meeting, Spokane, WA.

May 15. Annual Meeting registration & housing opens for 2006 Annual Meeting.

May 15. Registration for the Employment Information Services Center opens.

May 30. Annual Meeting Additional Meeting requests due for priority consideration.

(For more Annual Meeting information, see www.aarweb.org/annualmeet/2006/default.asp.)

June

Journal of the American Academy of Religion June 2006 issue.

June 15. Membership renewal deadline for 2006 Annual Meeting participants.

July

July 1. New fiscal year begins.

July 15. Submission deadline for the October issue of *Religious Studies News*. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn/default.asp.

July 31. Deadline for participants to request audiovisual equipment at the Annual Meeting.

August

Annual Meeting Program goes online.

August 1. Change of address due for priority receipt of the 2006 Annual Meeting Program Book.

August 1. Research Grant Applications due. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/grants/default.asp.

August 1. Regional development grant applications due to regional secretaries.

August 15. Membership renewal period for 2007 begins.

September

Journal of the American Academy of Religion September 2006 issue.

Annual Meeting Program Books mailed to members.

September 9. Executive Committee meeting, Cambridge, MA.

September 29–30. Regions Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

October

Religious Studies News October issue.

Spotlight on Teaching Fall 2006 issue.

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

October 15. January 2007 *Religious Studies News* submission deadline.

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

October 21. EIS preregistration closes.

TBA. Finance Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

November

November 1. Research grant awards announced.

November 16. Executive Committee meeting, Washington, D.C.

November 17. Fall Board of Directors meeting, Washington, D.C.

November 17. Chairs Workshop at the Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C.

November 18–21. Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C. Held concurrently with the Society of Biblical Literature, comprising some 9,500 registrants, 200 publishers, and 100 hiring departments.

November 20. Annual Business Meeting, Washington, D.C. See the Annual Meeting Program Book for exact time.

December

Journal of the American Academy of Religion December 2006 issue.

December 1. New program unit proposals due.

December 8–9. Program Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

December 15. Submissions for the March 2007 issue of *Religious Studies News* due. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn/default.asp.


December 31. Membership renewal for 2007 due. Renew online at www.aarweb.org/dues.

And keep in mind throughout the year...

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

Information about AAR publications can be found at www.aarweb.org/publications/default.asp.

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

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



Religious Studies News 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 and by libraries at colleges and universities across North America and abroad. *Religious Studies News* communicates the important events of the field and related areas. It provides a forum for members and others to examine critical issues in education, pedagogy (especially through the biannual *Spotlight on Teaching*), research, publishing, and the public understanding of religion. It also publishes news about the services and programs of the AAR and other organizations, including employment services and registration information for the AAR Annual Meeting.

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

Breaking Records in Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA hosted a record-breaking Annual Meeting last November. The 2005 AAR Annual Meeting was the largest ever in terms of attendance and programming. Responses to the post-Annual Meeting survey reflect positive experiences by the members in attendance. Survey results are posted online at www.aarweb.org/annualmeet/2005/surveys/AM/results/.

Attendance at the meeting approached 10,000, with a final count of 9,982 registrants. This number exceeds the previous attendance record by over 1,200 (Atlanta, 2003: 8,752) and reflects a 19 percent increase from the 2004 Annual Meeting (San Antonio: 8,366). Philadelphia's location in the Northeast and its travel accessibility played large roles in making this the largest Annual Meeting ever.

The 2005 Annual Meeting was also the largest in terms of programming. Over 1,000 AAR, SBL, or Additional Meetings sessions occurred during the five-day time period from Thursday, November 17 to Tuesday, November 22. AAR continued to expand its program and hosted 375 sessions, 56 more than at the San Antonio meeting (2004: 319). Satisfaction with this year's sessions was high; 93 percent of survey respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality. The opportu-

nity to network with other colleagues also received high marks; 96 percent reported satisfaction. Respondents rated Philadelphia as an Annual Meeting location very favorably, giving positive feedback about its exhibit facilities (94 percent), hotel accessibility (82 percent), hotel facilities (80 percent), and meeting room space (86 percent). These numbers reflect the 96 percent of survey respondents who thought the 2005 Annual Meeting was overall a satisfactory or very satisfactory experience.

The Annual Meeting attracted attendees from Argentina to Zimbabwe. Attendees came from 60 countries to the meeting. Canadians made up the largest international group with 480, followed by the United Kingdom (324), Germany (96), and the Netherlands (63). AAR's 2005 international focus was on Central and East Europe, and the Annual Meeting hosted 34 attendees from those countries. (Consequently, the 2006 international focus on Africa and African scholarship should encourage participants from that region.) California was the best-represented state in 2005 with 869 attendees, followed closely by Pennsylvania (867), New York (725), Massachusetts (545), and New Jersey (532).


Once again, Annual Meeting registration and housing was handled by Conferon. Satisfaction with the registration and hous-

ing process was very high; 98 percent of respondents rated the process positively. Use of the online registration and housing system continues to increase, with 64 percent of registrants using the system. Conferon plans to introduce a new upgraded online system in 2006 that will be even easier to navigate. The peak hotel night was Saturday, November 19, with almost 4,500 hotel rooms in use. Overall more than 16,500 room nights were used during the meeting.

The comments from survey respondents were generally positive. The most frequent comment was about the decision to no longer publish the meeting room locations in the *Program Book*. The Annual Meeting management teams of AAR and SBL decided to remove the room names in 2005. Due to the length of time between the *Program Book's* publication in early August and the meeting in November, quite a few schedule and room location changes occur, making the *Program Book* inaccurate and out of date by the meeting. The room locations were made available on both the AAR and SBL Web sites and then in the onsite *Program Book At-A-Glance*. This is the practice of most other ACLS organizations that host large meetings as it provides attendees with the most accurate information possible. Several comments said that this made speci-

fying locations to meet colleagues more difficult. To ease this problem for the 2006 meeting, AAR will publish information on locations that may make good meeting spots. We have also examined the process for alerting members to room location changes in the online system. One improvement is that individual program units will now have the opportunity to publish Web pages on the AAR Web site with updates.

The Annual Meeting Satisfaction Survey is sent via e-mail to all AAR members (over 10,000) at the conclusion of each meeting and is offered online at the AAR Web site. The number of responses this year was 928. Respondents did not answer each question, so the values were measured from the number of respondents who did. The survey is voluntary and open to all members.

The executive office staff would like to thank every member who participated in the post-Annual Meeting survey. It continues to be valuable to the Annual Meeting process, for it provides the AAR's Program Committee, Board of Directors, and executive office staff with an important measure of member satisfaction with the meeting. We value this opportunity to hear your comments and suggestions on how we can continue to meet your needs and to offer an excellent Annual Meeting experience. 

American Academy of Religion 2005 Annual Business Meeting Minutes

Philadelphia Marriott-Salon E/F
Philadelphia, PA
Monday, November 21, 2005
11:30 AM-12:45 PM

1. Call to Order: Hans Hillerbrand.
The president called the meeting to order at 11:36 AM.

2. Approval of the 2004 Business Meeting Minutes. It was moved, seconded, and passed to approve the 2004 Business Meeting Minutes.

3. Memorial List. The president read the Memorial List of members who died since November 1, 2004, and a moment of silence was observed.

4. President's Report: Hans Hillerbrand
President Hillerbrand entertained questions about the executive director search process and introduced Executive Director and Treasurer Barbara DeConcini to give her report.

5. Executive Director and Treasurer's Report: Barbara DeConcini

DeConcini reported that the entire annual report will be printed in the January issue of *Religious Studies News*. She noted that the Annual Meeting is growing and strengthening. Membership reached 10,050 and attendance this year is the largest in the history of the Annual Meeting. The establishment of the Graduate Student Task Force, spearheaded by Kimberly Bresler, has created burgeoning opportunities for graduate students at the Annual Meeting. The Theological Programs Initiative has

hosted six consultations with theological educators across the country.

AAR received a robust set of applications for research grants this year. DeConcini also reported on the Board of Directors' approval of a new category in the book award competition (Textual Studies), the online survey of undergraduate programs currently in the field, and the new *Career Guide for Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession*, which will be available online early in 2006. She reported that this year the workshop for department chairs enrolled 44 registrants, the largest attendance to date.

She applauded the work of Glenn Yocum, who is stepping down after 11 years as editor of *JAAR*. The new editor is Charles Mathewes, University of Virginia.

DeConcini reported on the excellent financial state of AAR and on the generous support from foundations and contributions from AAR members. The Independent Accounting Report gave the AAR a clean audit with assets of \$9.5 million as of June 30, 2005.

DeConcini also reported on the press release issued by AAR last week to coincide with the suit filed by the ACLU under the Freedom of Information Act, requesting information on use of Section 411 of the

Patriot Act used to exclude foreign scholars with whose views the U.S. government disagrees, with specific reference to Tariq Ramadan.

6. New Business

a. Change in State of Incorporation.
DeConcini presented a resolution approved by the Board of Directors at the Spring 2005 meeting to change AAR incorporation from State of California to State of Georgia, occasioned by permanent relocation of AAR offices to Atlanta, Georgia. She read the articles of incorporation to those present at the business meeting.

Jackie Pastis made a motion to accept the resolution. Sheila McGinn seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

b. Draft of AAR Statement on Academic Freedom.
The draft of a new AAR Statement on Academic Freedom in Teaching Religion was distributed to the members present and discussion followed. Comments included the need for more specificity of who the "other" is in the draft, addressing sources of tension at religiously sponsored institutions, not making judicial something that can be handled another way, the possibility that such a statement will highlight "hot button" issues, and the

need to avoid an antagonistic tone. Suggestions included publishing examples of what was discussed at this year's panel on academic freedom and having a plenary session in a panel form on this subject next year.

c. Request for a new committee.
Melissa Wilcox, the chair of Queer Theory and LGBT Studies in Religion Consultation, brought a request that AAR establish a task force on LGBT issues. DeConcini agreed to take the request to the Executive Committee for consideration.

7. 2005 Election Results:

Hans Hillerbrand announced election results for 2006.

President – Diana Eck
President-Elect – Jeffrey Stout
Vice President – Emilie Townes
Student Director – Davina Lopez

Hillerbrand turned the gavel over to the new president, Diana Eck, who called the meeting to a close.

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Micheline Pesantubbee,
Secretary 

Chairs Workshop Attracts Largest Attendance

THIRTY-EIGHT participants attended the Chairs Workshop at the Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, making it the largest such workshop for the AAR. The Friday workshop, "Enlarging the Pie: Strategies for Managing and Growing Departmental Resources," was led by Timothy Renick of Georgia State University and Richard Carp of Appalachian State University. Carp is also a member of the Academic Relations Committee, which sponsors the workshop.

Renick and Carp opened with an overview of the challenges departments face when finding, maintaining, and securing resources. Renick shared his experiences in successfully creating the new Religious Studies Department at Georgia State, where he serves as chair. Carp, chair of the Interdisciplinary Studies Department, followed with insight on institutional environmental factors that chairs will have to evaluate to successfully achieve their goals.

Tom Coburn, president and religious studies professor at Naropa University, and John Raines, religion professor at Temple University, led a discussion on growing funds and physical space. Coburn stimulated an interesting discussion on the contemplative dimensions of chairing a department.

"There were lots of brilliant suggestions from panelists and audience alike. I learned a lot, and I've been chairing and deaning for a long time," Coburn said. "Clearly this is a key service that AAR offers the academy."

Following lunch, Dianne Stewart, religion associate professor at Emory University, Zayn Kassam, chair of the Religious Studies Department at Pomona College, and Deanna Thompson, chair of the Religion Department at Hamline University, discussed how to nurture and grow faculty and students within the department.

Two breakout sessions followed: one group discussed budgeting and financial management with Carp, and the other discussed growing links to other departments with Tom Kasulis, religion professor at Ohio State University and past chair of its Comparative Studies Department. Renick followed with a brief wrap-up discussion and closed the workshop.

Throughout the workshop, the panelists and leaders exchanged personal narratives and strategies for addressing the challenges they

face. Topics ranged from fundraising to developing faculty and personnel to minority recruiting to budgeting and financial management to the value of assessing the credibility of their institutions.

"Our field is more diverse than most, with departments and programs situated in liberal arts colleges, large state schools, seminaries, and denominational schools," Renick said. "Still, the workshop showed how the issues we face as chairs are really very similar."

"The fact is that we all have experiences and ideas that are instructive to each other, and the job of being a chair is changing so rapidly that all of us had something we could learn."

Participants ranged from former and current department chairs to faculty members, from large and small, public and private institutions. This year, as in past workshops, the learning continues after the Annual Meeting.

"As a new chair, I found it extremely helpful to hear about both the best practices as well as the struggles that other chairs are experiencing," Thompson said. "I took lots of notes and am starting to bring some of the ideas back to our department to try and implement in the spring."

This workshop was the latest in a series of Annual Meeting chairs workshops that the Academy's Academic Relations Committee has developed. In past years the workshop topics have been: Being a Chair in Today's Consumer Culture: Navigating in the Knowledge Factory (San Antonio, 2004); Scholarship, Service, and Stress: The Tensions of Being a Chair (Atlanta, 2003); The Entrepreneurial Chair: Building & Managing Your Department in an Era of Shrinking Resources and Increasing Demands (Georgetown, Summer 2003); Running a Successful Faculty Search in the Religious Studies Department (Toronto, 2002); Evaluating and Advancing Teaching in the Religious Studies Department (Denver, 2001); and Assessing and Advancing the Religious Studies Department (Nashville, 2000).

"One of the most lasting benefits of the workshop is the connections you develop with other chairs," Renick said. "In the weeks since the AAR, I've already had occasion to have follow-up conversations with several of the participants, comparing notes on recruitment strategies for our MA programs and discussing faculty fellowships." [RSN](#)

Theological Booksellers Announce Theologos Awards

EACH YEAR, the Association of Theological Booksellers honors academic authors and publishers with the Theologos Awards. The awards represent the unique, professional evaluations of people who sell academic religious books.

The 2005 winners in the five awards categories are:

Best General Interest Book

God's Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It
Jim Wallis
HarperCollins

Best Academic Book

Whose Bible Is It? A History of the Scriptures through the Ages
Jaroslav Pelikan
Penguin

Best Children's Book

Jesus, the Word
Mark Francisco Bozzuti-Jones
Illustrated by Shelly Hehenberger
Augsburg Books

Book of the Year

God's Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It
Jim Wallis
HarperCollins

Publisher of the Year

Westminster John Knox Press

The awards were presented at the annual Theologos Awards dinner meeting of the Association of Theological Booksellers on November 19, 2005, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Association of Theological Booksellers is a collaborative organization of diverse theological bookstores and publishers working together to both enhance the quality and ensure the future of theological bookselling. [RSN](#)

AAR would like to thank the following outgoing program unit chairs whose terms ended in 2005.

Gloria H. Albrecht, University of Detroit Mercy (Ethics Section)

Jason Bivins, North Carolina State University (Law, Religion, and Culture Group)

Beth Blissman, Oberlin College (Religion and Ecology Group)

Jeffrey Bloechl, College of the Holy Cross (Theology and Continental Philosophy Group)

Sidney Brown, University of the South (Academic Teaching and the Study of Religion Section)

Anthea Butler, Loyola Marymount University (Evangelical Theology Group)

José Cabezón, University of California, Santa Barbara (Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Group)

David S. Cunningham, Hope College (Christian Systematic Theology Section)

Natalie B. Dohrmann, University of Pennsylvania (Law, Religion, and Culture Group)

David Frankfurter, University of New Hampshire (Europe and the Mediterranean in Late Antiquity Group)

J. Liora Gubkin, California State University, Bakersfield (Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Group)

Gary Laderman, Emory University (Religion and Popular Culture Group)

Paul F. Lakeland, Fairfield University (Theology and Religious Reflection Section)

Mary N. MacDonald, Le Moyne College (Comparative Studies in Religion Section)

Eric Mazur, Bucknell University (Religion, Politics, and the State Group)

Tony S. L. Michael, University of Toronto (Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group)

Bonnie Miller-McElmore, Vanderbilt University (Childhood Studies and Religion Consultation)

Debra Mubashshir-Majeed, Beloit College (Afro-American Religious History Group)

Peter Ochs, University of Virginia (Scriptural Reasoning)

Sarah Pike, California State University, Chico (New Religious Movements Group)

Anthony B. Pinn, Rice University (Black Theology Group)

Randi Rashkover, York College of Pennsylvania (Study of Judaism Section)

Marcia C. Robinson, Syracuse University (Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Group)

Frederick J. Ruf, Georgetown University (Pragmatism and Empiricism in American Religious Thought Group)

Edward Slingerland, University of Southern California (Confucian Traditions Group)

Darryl Trimiew, The Park Church, Elmira, New York (Ethics Section)

Duncan Williams, University of California, Irvine (Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Group) [RSN](#)

2006 AAR CHAIRS WORKSHOP

9 AM – 4:30 PM
November 17, 2006
Washington, D.C.

"Personnel Issues: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly"

Sponsored by the Academic Relations Committee

Co-Leaders

Chester Gillis, Georgetown University
Betty DeBerg, University of Northern Iowa

Join your colleagues on the Friday before the 2006 Annual Meeting to:


- * Exchange Stories and Ideas
- * Share Concerns and Celebrations
- * Find Useable Solutions to Personnel Issues
- * Discuss Strategies for Navigating Individual, Departmental, and Administrative Matters

Make plans now to arrive at the Annual Meeting a day early. Register for the Chairs Workshop beginning May 15, the first day of Annual Meeting registration.

Details coming in the next *RSN*. [RSN](#)


30 Journalists Attend Annual Meeting

ABOUT 30 JOURNALISTS attended the 2005 Annual Meeting. As of early December, articles about the meeting had appeared in *Christianity Today*, the *Dallas Morning News*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Publishers Weekly Bookline*, and elsewhere. In addition to the above periodicals, other media outlets represented included

Beliefnet, the *Christian Century*, Minnesota Public Radio, the *Ottawa Citizen*, ReligionLink, and the *Washington Post*. The AAR hosted its third annual reception for journalists at the 2005 meeting, and about two dozen attended, including all three winners of the 2005 AAR Awards for Best In-Depth Reporting on Religion. 


Board Approves Award, Child-Care Services

THE AAR Board of Directors passed several actions at the Fall 2005 meeting in Philadelphia. It voted to create an award in Religion and Arts on the occasion of Executive Director Barbara DeConcini's retirement. The board

approved AAR's decision to continue child-care services at the Annual Meeting. Also, the board approved the addition of a new book award in the category of Textual Studies. 

2006 New Program Units

AAR's PROGRAM COMMITTEE approved the following new program units for the 2006 Annual Meeting.

- Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities
- Bible, Theology, and Postmodernity
- Biblical/Contextual Ethics
- Buddhist Critical–Constructive Reflection
- Buddhist Philosophy
- Christianity and Academia
- Comparative Theology
- Comparative Religious Ethics
- Contemporary Islam
- Coptic Christianity
- Ecclesiological Investigations
- Practical Theology
- Religion and Colonialism
- Religion in Europe
- Religion, Public Policy, and Political Change
- Religions in Chinese and Indian Cultures: A Comparative Perspective
- Rethinking the Field
- Science, Technology, and Religion (expansion of Religion and Science Group)
- Signifying (on) Scriptures
- Theology of Martin Luther King Jr.
- World Christianity
- Yoga in Theory and Practice 

The Committee on Teaching and Learning seeks nominations for the 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.

Future AAR Annual Meeting Dates and Sites

2006

November 18–21
Washington, D.C.

2009

November 7–10
Montreal, QC

2007

November 17–20
San Diego, CA

2010

October 30–
November 2
Atlanta, GA

2008

October 25–28
Chicago, IL

2011

November 18–21
San Francisco, CA

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AAR Sues to Prevent United States from Denying Foreigners Entry Based on Ideas, Viewpoints

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY of Religion has joined the American Association of University Professors and PEN American Center in a lawsuit to prevent U.S. government officials from barring foreign scholars from the United States solely because of views the scholars express. The suit, filed by the American Civil Liberties Union, contends that a provision of the Patriot Act has fostered a policy known as “ideological exclusion” and asks that the provision be declared unconstitutional.

“Scholars rely on in-person conversation to consider, challenge, and learn from one another’s points of view,” says AAR executive director Barbara DeConcini. “Barring foreign scholars from the U.S. thwarts this aspect of scholarly exchange that for centuries has, and continues to be, a vital way that scholars enhance their knowledge.”

The suit follows the continued exclusion of Professor Tariq Ramadan, a plaintiff to the suit, who is widely regarded as one of the leading scholars of Islam. He is a visiting professor at Oxford University and the author of more than 20 books and several hundred articles on topics such as democracy and Islam, the practice of Islam in Europe, and Islamic law. A Swiss national and a consistent critic of terrorism, Professor Ramadan has also been a frequent critic of U.S. policy toward the Muslim world.


Prior to July 2004, he often attended academic conferences held in the United States. But then the U.S. government revoked Professor Ramadan’s visa, forcing him to cancel his attendance at the AAR conference that November, where he was to be a plenary speaker. “Preventing foreign scholars like Professor Ramadan from visiting the U.S.,” DeConcini says, “limits not only the ability of scholars here to enhance their own knowledge, but also their ability to inform students, journalists, public policy makers, and other members of the public who rely on scholars’ work to acquire a better understanding of critical current issues involving religion.”

PEN has long played a leading role in challenging laws that bar foreign writers and scholars from visiting the United States. The organization was one of the most vocal critics of ideological exclusion during the Cold War under the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act, a law that was used to justify banning such writers as Julio Cortázar, Graham Greene, Farley Mowat, Pablo Neruda, Doris Lessing, and Gabriel García Márquez from visiting the United States.

“The exclusion of Professor Ramadan illustrates that the Patriot Act and other post-9/11 laws and policies may be serving to increase American isolation at a time when international dialogue is more critical than ever,” said Salman Rushdie, PEN president.

PEN executive director Michael Roberts underscored the concrete impact of the ideological exclusion provision, noting that PEN has invited Professor Ramadan to participate in its 2006 World Voices Literary Festival. “This spring, internationally recognized writers will meet in New York for five days of discussion and debate on the theme of ‘Faith and Reason,’” Roberts said. “Tariq Ramadan could be an important participant in this conversation, as he often is in the United Kingdom, where he now teaches, and throughout Europe. Instead, because of our government’s actions, Americans alone are deprived of the opportunity to engage directly with Professor Ramadan.”

The AAUP has affirmed many times that the free circulation of scholars is an integral part of academic and intellectual freedom, and that the unfettered search for knowledge is indispensable for the strengthening of a free and orderly world. The AAUP’s work to promote academic freedom has included constant attention to the global implications of these principles.

“Fearing another’s ideas enough to prohibit their expression is perplexing to scholars and troubling to citizens,” Roger Bowen, general secretary of the AAUP, said. “The freedom to teach and the freedom to learn are protected freedoms in this nation and the AAUP and its co-plaintiffs must insist that these two freedoms be respected. Now is the time when we should be listening to and learning from Muslim scholars, not trying to silence them.” 

AAR Conducts Consultations on Theological Programs

Carey J. Gifford, Director of Theological Programs

SINCE JUNE 2005 the AAR has conducted six regional consultations — in Atlanta, Berkley, Boston, Chicago, New York City, and Philadelphia — to solicit ideas regarding the Academy’s newest program, the Theological Programs Initiative. This spring, the seventh of these consultations was conducted at the Southwest Commission on Religious Studies meeting in Dallas. Prior to these formal consultations, Kathleen Talvacchia conducted personal interviews with more than 100 faculty to garner ideas regarding the initiative.

At these consultations the AAR has asked several questions of the 90 members who have attended:

- As a theological educator, what roles do the AAR and other scholarly guilds play for you? To what extent does the Theological Programs Initiative Statement of Need correspond to your experience?
- Regarding the scholarly vocation of the theological educator, if one assumes a very broad distinction between church and academe, where is the theology school placed vis-à-vis these two entities? To what extent do theology schools vary in this? How, ideally, should the theology school be placed? Where or how do you find yourself placed? What are the needs or possibilities that you experience?
- We also asked each participant to envision how the AAR can better serve the scholarly and professional needs of the theological educator.

The attendees responded with a plethora of ideas, suggestions, and comments, together with personal insights regarding the Academy, theological schools and programs, and what new programs, publications, workshops, and Annual Meeting programming we might offer.

At the broadest level, several all-encompassing comments kept coming up in nearly every context. Below are some of the most salient of these:

- Address the theory vs. praxis tension. One of the dichotomies that scholars in theolog-

ical education feel is that they are concerned with training their students for service in ecclesial settings, which pulls faculty in directions counter to their scholarly guild and professional needs.

- Fill the need for interdisciplinary conversations between and across several disciplines, institutional settings, theological perspectives, and approaches through the convening of seminars and workshops.
- Address the tension between religious studies and theology: the analytical vs. the confessional.
- Add new programming at the Annual Meeting to address the concerns of theological school faculty. These program units should promote the integration of critical academic reflection and faith commitments. Last fall the Annual Meeting Program Committee approved 19 new program units, which are listed on page 5.

On several occasions many said the AAR is more than just its Annual Meeting (as diffuse, large, impersonal, fascinating, and frustrating as it may be). By a variety of avenues, they said the AAR is:

- A convener of meetings (Annual Meeting and regional meetings) and networking opportunities (for purposes of research and friendship)
- Part of the process of professional “credentialing”
- A publisher of scholarship
- A meeting place across disciplines and with publishers
- A granter of research funds
- A validator of scholarship.

After having heard from these many and varied voices, we have formed a Theological Education Steering Committee composed of nine distinguished members of the Academy. They are:

- Daniel Aleshire, Association of Theological Schools
- Larry Golemon, Dominican University of California/Carnegie Foundation Clergy Study
- David H. Kelsey, Yale Divinity School

Theological Programs Initiative Statement of Need


How can the AAR find ways to address more adequately the professional needs of our members in theology schools?

Currently, the AAR’s Academic Relations Program is geared toward programs and services for members whose institutional context is the department of religion or theology within a college or university. But the AAR also wants to serve the professional needs of its members in theological education. These members’ professional needs are underserved in general by the scholarly guilds.


AAR provides programs, services, and resources to the chairs of (mostly undergraduate) departments and is advocating for religious studies in the liberal arts curriculum. But AAR does not offer comparable support to theological education and theological education faculty. Indeed, there is a general perception that the Academy (like other scholarly guilds): 1) undervalues, and even regards as suspect, the scholarly project of faculty in theological education; 2) considers confessionally based theology schools academically inferior to theology schools that are not so; and 3) claims a mission inclusive of “all disciplined reflection on religion, from both within and outside of communities of belief and practice,” but limits its professional development services to liberal education, excluding theological education.

A critical issue for theological education faculty is how to be good scholars and good educators of future clergy. Their educational task is different from the graduate school professor who is training future researchers and the undergraduate professor who is largely providing general liberal education. The Academy should include teaching for religious leadership within its understanding of the scholarly and professional vocation in the field of religion. Indeed, AAR could fill a helpful role by promoting the value of theological education at a time when many churches are calling into question the need for a classical theological education for all of their clergy. From this vantage, the theological research agenda is often perceived as less than important to the core mission of preparing parish clergy.

How can faculty in these theology schools be good theological educators in a guild where the graduate program is the model for education?

Medical education has an analogous situation: the need to embrace a rigorous research agenda and the need to teach the application of medical research to future physicians. Theology school faculty struggle with this tension between scholarship and teaching of significance to their students as future clergy, and scholarship of recognized importance within the guild of religious studies. 

- Paul Chang-Ha Lim, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
- Daisy Machado, Lexington Theological Seminary
- Glen Stassen, Fuller Theological Seminary
- Kathleen Talvacchia, New York City
- John Thatamanil, Vanderbilt Divinity School
- Barbara Brown Zikmund, Catholic University of America.

This committee met February 17–18 in Atlanta to review and evaluate the findings of these consultations and to begin giving concrete expression to the initiative. The outcome of their work will be new programs and initiatives that will become available in the near future. If you have questions or comments concerning the Theological Programs Initiative, please contact me at cgifford@aarweb.org. 

Scholars Meet with Congress, Textbook Committees


THE AAR CONTINUES to expand its government relations program. Over the past year, the AAR has advocated in Washington, D.C., for increased federal funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities, facilitated religion scholars' input on proposed public school textbooks in California, and informed FBI and prison chaplaincy program officials about religion as it relates to situations they may encounter.

In April 2005, several AAR staff, along with AAR board members Kimberly Bresler, Mary McGee, and Stacy Patty, met with staff members of Congress representing Georgia, New Jersey, New York, and Virginia to advocate increased funding of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The meetings were part of a larger effort called Humanities Advocacy Day, organized by the National Humanities Alliance and co-sponsored by the AAR and 34 other scholarly associations, who collectively visited the offices of more than 130 members of Congress in Washington, D.C. Subsequently, despite intense competition for federal budget dollars, the NEH budget for fiscal year 2006 was increased to about \$3 million more than that for 2005.

In September, the AAR recruited religion scholars to review and submit written comments on middle school social studies textbooks proposed for use by the state of California. The states of California and Texas have such huge student populations that textbooks approved for adoption there tend to be used nationwide. Comments on how well the proposed textbooks met state standards for covering religion were submitted to the state curriculum commission by AAR members Paul Levesque and Sarah Pike. AAR member Jeffrey Brodd and a member of the AAR staff attended public hearings in Sacramento on the proposed adoptions.

In November, the AAR arranged five meetings between various religion scholars and three FBI officials, each meeting focusing on a different religion topic: Mormon fundamentalism, Islamic ethics, domestic terrorism and doomsday weapons, how religion news writing impacts crisis negotiation, and Islam in Europe. This was the eighth consecutive year of such meetings. The scholars participating were Michael Barkun, Martha Bradley, Jocelyn Cesari, Diane Connolly, Carl Ernst, Debra Mason, Ebrahim Moosa, Michael Quinn, and Jocelyn Cesari.

Also in November, the AAR arranged five meetings between religion scholars and directors of prison chaplaincy programs, each meeting focusing on a different religion topic: African-American Islam, contemporary Paganism, Native American religions, Congressional legislation affecting religion in prison, and Buddhism in America. The government officials attending included directors of prison chaplaincy programs for the states of Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Washington, and Wyoming; the national director of the prison chaplaincy program for the Federal Bureau of Prisons and two of her staff; and the president of the American Correctional Chaplains Association. Patrick McCollum, an AAR member and prison chaplain in California, helped organize the meetings. The scholars participating were Helen Berger, Dena Davis, Laura Donaldson, Lawrence Mamiya, Barbara McGraw, Michelene Pesantubbee, Richard Seager, Thomas Tweed, and Michael York.


This spring the AAR is again co-sponsoring Humanities Advocacy Day and facilitating religion scholars' meetings with congressional staff members. 

Call for AAR Series Editor

THE AAR SEEKS an editor for the Reflection and Theory in the Study of Religion Series, which is published in cooperation with Oxford University Press.

The Reflection and Theory in the Study of Religion Series is broadly concerned with theories of religion, the history and nature of religious studies, religious thought, theological investigation, and the philosophy of religion. Approaches to the study of religion or religious studies that tend to defy traditional disciplinary boundaries are welcome, as are more traditional studies of major thinkers and intellectual movements. The common thread among texts in this series is that they all engage in a critical reflection on either a religious way of thinking or a way of thinking about religion. A list of volumes published in the series can be found at www.aarweb.org/publications/books/reflectionandtheory.asp.

AAR series editors help set editorial policy, acquire manuscripts, and work with Oxford University Press in seeing projects through to publication. The required finalist interviews for the Reflection and Theory in the Study of Religion Series editorship will take place on November 18 at the 2006 Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. The new editor assumes office on January 1, 2007, for a three-year, renewable term, and is expected to attend both the Saturday morning Publications Committee meeting at the Annual Meeting, and also the AAR-OUP Publications Committee meeting in New York City, usually in mid-March.

Please e-mail inquiries, nominations (self-nominations also encouraged), and applications (a letter describing interests and qualifications, plus a current curriculum vita) by a Word or PDF attachment to Francis X. Clooney, S. J., Publications Committee Chair, at fclooney@hds.harvard.edu. Application deadline is September 1, 2006. 

Wabash Seeks New Director

THE WABASH CENTER for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion is seeking a new director following the January announcement that Lucinda Huffaker plans to step down from the position once a successor is in place. Huffaker has served for 10 years at the center.

She came to the center in 1997 as associate director, and was named director after a national search following founding director Raymond Williams's retirement in 2002. The center is supported by the Lilly Endowment.


The Wabash Center was recently awarded an \$8 million grant from Lilly (see story below) to support work during the next three years. In a letter posted on the center's Web site, Craig Dykstra, Lilly's senior vice president, religion, expressed "deep gratitude to Lucinda Huffaker for the hard work and gracious spirit she has brought to her ten years of service at the Wabash Center. My colleagues and I are deeply thankful for the superb contributions she has made and wish her well in her new endeavors."

Dykstra also confirmed the Lilly Endowment's ongoing commitment, noting that "In this time of transition at the Wabash Center, I also want to indicate the endowment's continued support of its work."

The center is seeking a new director to start sometime between Summer 2006 and Summer 2007. The center has a

staff of six as well as two interns. "The center's gifted and hard-working staff remains in place," said Andrew T. Ford, president of Wabash College, and William C. Placher, chair of the Wabash Center Advisory Committee, in their announcement. "We think that becoming director of the center at this point in its history offers truly exciting opportunities."

Ford and Placher noted the Wabash Center's achievements during Huffaker's tenure. "Under her leadership, the Wabash Center has established itself as the preeminent place for pedagogical reflection in our field and come to be widely recognized as a model for what other academic disciplines ought to be doing to improve their pedagogy," they said. "We spent a lot of time trying to talk Lucinda out of her decision, but we respect the fact that she wants in her career to try some new things still, and we extend to her all our best wishes."

AAR executive director Barbara DeConcini commented, "AAR's leadership joins in congratulating Lucinda Huffaker on her superb stewardship of the Wabash Center over the past four years. Everyone in the field of religion and theology is indebted to the generosity of the Lilly Endowment, to founding director Raymond Williams's vision, and to his and Lucinda's gifts of imaginative leadership." 

Wabash Center Receives \$8 Million Lilly Grant

THE WABASH CENTER for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion has received an \$8 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to further the work of the center, which was established on the Wabash College campus in 1996. It is the ninth such grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., whose grants now total \$27.2 million in support of the Wabash Center's work.


The Wabash Center seeks to support and enhance education in North American theological schools, colleges, and universities. The center builds enabling environments for good teaching and learning by offering studies, workshops, and conferences. It also issues grants to faculty and institutions, helps faculty use technology effectively, and publishes the international journal *Teaching Theology and Religion*.

Lucinda Huffaker, director of the Wabash Center, said the new grant comes at a perfect time in the center's life. "This comes on the heels of a commissioned external evaluation of the Wabash Center's programs," she said. "Now we have information and outcomes from past participants that demonstrate how influential our programs have been; we can see the significant impact the center has had on teaching and the development of pedagogical practices among religion faculty across the United States and Canada who have been involved with the Wabash Center."

The Wabash Center's funding comes through Lilly Endowment's Theological Teaching and Sustaining Pastoral Excellence initiatives. In 1990, founding director Raymond Williams led a series of workshops on teaching, funded by Lilly Endowment and sponsored by the American Academy of Religion, which led to the establishment of the Wabash Center in 1996. Since that time more than 300 different institutions have benefited from the work of the center and approximately 750 faculty members have taken part in programs on the Wabash College campus.

The Wabash Center has awarded 466 grants totaling more than \$6.5 million and has sponsored 200 different programs, activities, and conferences. In addition to programming, Lilly Endowment funding enables the Wabash Center to provide more than \$1 million annually in grants, ranging from \$2,000 to \$70,000.

"The \$8 million grant will fund program activities for the next three years," Huffaker said. "We will continue the good programs we've developed, add a few new ones, and provide resources that will extend the impact of all that we are learning from recent research and studies funded by the Endowment and others."

For more information, visit the center's Web site at www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu. 

Employment Information Services Center 2005


EACH YEAR at the Annual Meeting, the AAR and the SBL jointly host the Employment Information Services Center (EIS). The center is designed to ease the communication process between candidates for academic positions and employers seeking to fill available positions. EIS features job postings, candidate credentials for review, a message center, and an interview facility.

At the 2005 EIS Center, 126 institutions conducted interviews for a total of 148 positions. The total number of registered candidates was 513, and the ratio of positions to candidates was 1:3.47.

Each year, EIS gathers data about job positions and candidates registered with the center. Each employer and candidate is required to choose a primary classification from among the list shown at right. While they are also allowed to choose secondary

and tertiary classifications, only the primary choices are shown here. Therefore, when drawing conclusions from this data, it is important to note that many jobs fall under classifications that candidates are less likely to use to describe their primary field, but might well select as a secondary or tertiary specialization (World Religions, for example).

Over time, data collected at EIS will enable us to identify trends in the field. In fact, the AAR has collected such information since 1990; however, we changed the method of collection in 2003, meaning the information shown here is not comparable to the data before then.

Additional data, including secondary and tertiary classifications and job data from 1990–2005, are available upon request from Shelly Roberts at sroberts@aarweb.org. 

| EMPLOYERS | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|----------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Positions Registered | 121 | 140 | 148 |
| Total Institutions Registered | 98 | 115 | 126 |
| Preregistered | 76 | 89 | 133 |
| Registered On-site | 22 | 26 | 15 |
| Ratio of Positions to Candidates | 1:3.35 | 1:3.16 | 1:3.47 |
| CANDIDATES | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
| Total Registered | 405 | 442 | 513 |
| Preregistered | 331 | 368 | 419 |
| Registered On-site | 74 | 74 | 94 |
| Female Participants | 144 | 145 | 142 |
| Male Participants | 261 | 237 | 217 |
| Did Not Report Gender | 0 | 60 | 154 |
| Ratio of Female to Male | 1:1.8 | 1:1.6 | 1:1.5 |

AAR CAREER GUIDE FOR RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE PROFESSION

Now Available Online at:
www.aarweb.org/about/board/rem/qfu84isx/

Nine Chapters:

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Graduate School
- 3) Job Search
- 4) Working toward Tenure
- 5) Post-Tenure
- 6) Alternative Career Options
- 7) Dealing with Difficult Issues
- 8) Are You Considering the Hire of Racial/Ethnic Scholars
- 9) Suggested Resources

The guide provides essential information for scholars of color and for those who wish to make their institutions more inclusive.

Produced by the
AAR Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession

| Job Classifications | POSITIONS | | | CANDIDATES | | | POSITIONS TO CANDIDATES | | |
|--|-----------|------|------|------------|------|------|-------------------------|--------|--------|
| | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
| Administration (e.g., President, Dean, Director, Program Director, Coordinator) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1:0 | 1:0 | 1:0 |
| Ancient Near Eastern Languages | N/A | 0 | 0 | N/A | 0 | 2 | N/A | 0:0 | 0:2 |
| Archaeology – Ancient Near East | N/A | 0 | 0 | N/A | 1 | 1 | N/A | 0:1 | 0:1 |
| Archaeology – Greco-Roman | N/A | 0 | 0 | N/A | 0 | 0 | N/A | 0:0 | 0:0 |
| Arts, Literature & Religion | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 0:5 | 0:3 | 0:7 |
| Asian Religions (general or not listed separately) | 3 | 10 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 1:0.7 | 1:0.7 | 1:1.3 |
| Biblical Languages | N/A | 1 | 0 | N/A | 1 | 1 | N/A | 1:1 | 0:1 |
| Buddhism | 1 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 11 | 15 | 1:7 | 1:5.5 | 0:15 |
| Catholic Studies | 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1:2 | 3:0 | 1:0.5 |
| Catholic Theology (all areas) | 8 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 15 | 19 | 1:1 | 1:1.9 | 1:2.7 |
| Central and South American and Caribbean Religions | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1:1 | 1:0 | 0:0 |
| Christian Ethics | 5 | 5 | 6 | 25 | 28 | 26 | 1:5 | 1:5.6 | 1:4.3 |
| Christian Studies | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1:0.3 | 1:2 | 3:0 |
| Christian Theology (general or not listed separately) | 7 | 5 | 3 | 23 | 23 | 17 | 1:3.3 | 1:4.6 | 1:5.7 |
| Christian Theology: Practical/Praxis | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 0:8 | 0:8 | 0:5 |
| Christian Theology: Systematic/Constructive | 5 | 5 | 5 | 35 | 26 | 44 | 1:7 | 1:5.2 | 1:8.8 |
| Classics | N/A | 0 | 0 | N/A | 0 | 1 | N/A | 0:0 | 0:1 |
| Comparative Religions | 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 1:2 | 1:3.5 | 1:2 |
| Critical Studies/Theory/Methods in Religion | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 1:5 | 0:5 | 0:4 |
| Early Christianity/Church History | N/A | 0 | 3 | N/A | 12 | 25 | N/A | 0:12 | 1:8.3 |
| Early Judaism | N/A | 0 | 0 | N/A | 2 | 0 | N/A | 0:2 | 0:0 |
| East Asian Religions (general or not listed separately) | 4 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 1:0.8 | 1:1.7 | 1:0.6 |
| Editorial | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0:0 | 0:0 | 1:0 |
| Epigraphy | N/A | 0 | 0 | N/A | 0 | 0 | N/A | 0:0 | 0:0 |
| Gay/Lesbian Studies in Religion | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0:1 | 0:1 | 0:0 |
| Hebrew Bible/Old Testament | 13 | 10 | 12 | 57 | 65 | 69 | 1:4.4 | 1:6.5 | 1:5.8 |
| Hinduism | 1 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 1:6 | 0:6 | 0:4 |
| History of Christianity/Church History | 3 | 7 | 7 | 24 | 30 | 21 | 1:8 | 1:4.3 | 1:3 |
| History of Religion (general) | 0 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 0:5 | 1:1.3 | 1:1.3 |
| Indigenous/Native/Traditional Religions | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0:0 | 1:1 | 0:3 |
| Introduction to Religion | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0:2 | 0:1 | 1:0 |
| Islam | 7 | 9 | 13 | 8 | 7 | 25 | 1:1.1 | 1:0.8 | 1:1.9 |
| Judaism | 1 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 1:5 | 1:1 | 1:0.4 |
| Library | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0:0 | 0:0 | 0:0 |
| Missiology | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1:0 | 0:2 | 0:0 |
| New Religious Movements | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0:0 | 0:0 | 0:0 |
| New Testament | 13 | 12 | 13 | 40 | 56 | 71 | N/A | 1:4.7 | 1:5.5 |
| North American Religions | 3 | 4 | 7 | 15 | 21 | 23 | 1:5 | 1:5.3 | 1:3.3 |
| Pastoral Care | 1 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 1:4 | 1:0.5 | 0:5 |
| Philosophy of Religion | 1 | 1 | 1 | 16 | 11 | 10 | 1:16 | 1:11 | 1:10 |
| Preaching/Ministry | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2:0 | 3:0 | 0:1 |
| Rabbinic Judaism | N/A | 0 | 1 | N/A | 1 | 0 | N/A | 0:1 | 1:0 |
| Racial/Ethnic Minority Studies in Religion | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1:3 | 1:5 | 0:2 |
| Religions of Africa/Oceania | N/A | N/A | 1 | N/A | N/A | 0 | N/A | N/A | 1:0 |
| Religious Ethics | 3 | 3 | 3 | 10 | 14 | 8 | 1:3.3 | 1:4.7 | 1:2.7 |
| Religion/Theology: Two or More Subfields | 6 | 3 | 4 | 11 | 13 | 11 | 1:1.8 | 1:4.3 | 1:2.8 |
| Second Temple Judaism | N/A | 2 | 0 | N/A | 4 | 5 | N/A | 1:2 | 0:5 |
| Septuagint | N/A | 0 | 0 | N/A | 0 | 1 | N/A | 0:0 | 0:1 |
| Social Sciences and Religion (e.g., Religion & Society, Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 1:7 | 1:8 | 0:8 |
| South Asian Religions (general or not listed separately) | 6 | 10 | 4 | 5 | 14 | 8 | 1:0.8 | 1:1.4 | 1:2 |
| Women's Studies in Religion | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 1:4 | 0:1 | 1:6 |
| World Religions | 6 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 6:0 | 1:0.6 | 1:0.6 |
| Other | 8 | 9 | 15 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 1:0.5 | 1:0.6 | 1:0.5 |
| Not Reporting | 0 | 0 | 0 | 47 | 5 | 28 | 0:47 | 0:5 | 0:28 |
| Total | 121 | 140 | 148 | 405 | 442 | 513 | 1:3.35 | 1:3.16 | 1:3.47 |

AAR Launches Effort to Study Employment Trend Data

To get a more accurate picture of employment trends in the field, the AAR has expanded its data collection efforts. Employment Information Services (EIS) created a Web-based, anonymous survey to track hirings by specialization and to collect demographic information on job candidates.

In spring 2005, surveys were sent to all candidates and employers who had registered for the 2004 EIS Center. Discussed here are highlights of the data received. Complete results can be found at www.aarweb.org/eis. Additional information will be released in the spring and will appear online and in the May issue of *RSN*. This ongoing project will provide longitudinal data.

Employer Data

Out of 142 employer solicitations, 102 responses (72 percent) were received. Seventy-eight percent of those who responded filled the position for which they had utilized EIS. Notably, of the 80 positions filled, 76 percent of the appointees were interviewed at the EIS Center. A great majority of the positions filled were at the assistant professor level (84 percent) and

were tenure-track (79 percent). Fifty-seven percent of the appointees were male. The racial/ethnic distribution of the appointees was as follows: 79.2 percent Caucasian or Euro-American, 5.2 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 1.3 percent African-American or black, 1.3 percent Latino/a or Hispanic, and 13 percent reported "other." See Figure 1 for a breakdown of the appointees' degrees by year.

Candidate Qualifications

Out of 442 candidate solicitations, 210 responses (47.5 percent) were received. When asked to indicate employment status during the search, 50 percent reported being a graduate student, 31 percent reported part-time/adjunct faculty, and 20 percent reported full-time/non-tenure-track faculty [candidates could select more than one response]. Seventy percent held a PhD or planned to have completed theirs by August 2005, while 15 percent would be ABD going into fall 2005.

Job Offers

Of the 210 candidates who responded, 31 percent received one or more job offers. Of

those, 71 percent received one offer, 19 percent received two offers, and 9 percent received three offers. No one received more than three offers. Of those candidates who received an offer, 86 percent accepted. See Figure 2 for more information about candidates who received a job offer.

Of those candidates who did not receive or accept a new position, 59 percent would continue in the same employment status, the top four of which were: graduate student (46 percent), part-time/adjunct faculty (37 percent), full-time/non-tenure-track faculty (16 percent), and non-academic employment (12 percent) [candidates could select more than one response]. Sixteen percent did not know at the time of the survey what they would do the following academic year.

Position Data

Of the 57 candidates who accepted an offer, 54 percent will work as full-time/tenure-track faculty, 32 percent as full-time/non-tenure-track faculty, 7 percent as part-time/adjunct faculty, 2 percent in administration (e.g., dean, chair), and 5 percent reported "other." The rank of the positions is as follows: 67 percent assistant professor, 10 percent visiting professor, 10

percent lecturer, 4 percent associate professor, 2 percent instructor, and 7 percent "other." See Figure 3 for a breakdown of the appointees' salaries.

Of the 66 candidates who accepted positions, 49 percent report being thrilled with the new position, 46 percent report feeling satisfied with the position, and 5 percent report feeling unsatisfied. None reported feeling deeply unhappy about the position.

Candidate Demographics

Sixty-five percent of the candidates who registered for the 2004 EIS Center were male. See Figure 4 for registrants' age distribution. Eighty-eight percent of the registrants reported their race-ethnicity as Caucasian or Euro-American, 4 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 3.35 percent African-American or black, 1.44 percent Latino/a or Hispanic, with less than 1 percent choosing multiracial or "other." In terms of citizenship, 89 percent were U.S. citizens, 4 percent were non-citizen residents of the United States, 3 percent were Canadian citizens, 1 percent were non-citizen residents of Canada, and 3 percent reported their citizenship as "other." RSN

Figure 1

Year, or anticipated year, of the appointee's degree

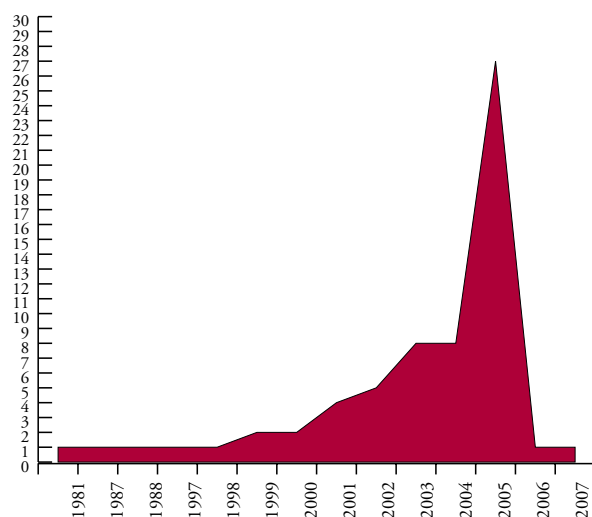


Figure 3

Salary of appointment

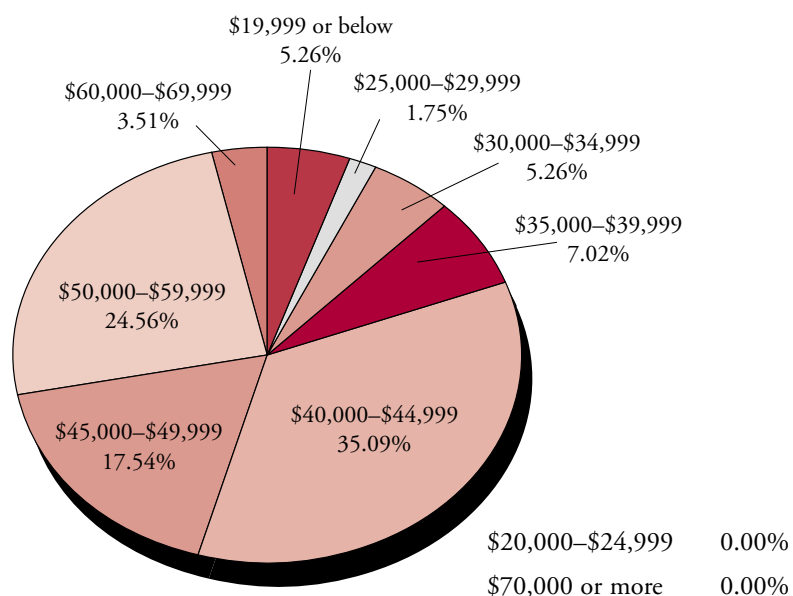


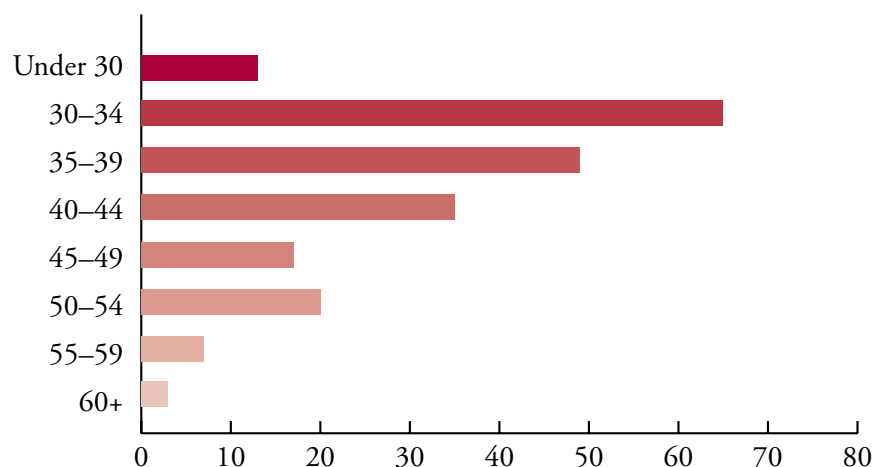
Figure 2

Of the 66 candidates who received one or more job offers:

| | |
|----------|---|
| 81.81 % | had a doctoral degree |
| 53.03 % | had article published/accepted for publication in peer-reviewed journal |
| 16.67 % | had book or monograph published/accepted for publication |
| 63.64 % | had presentation(s) at regional scholarly conference |
| 75.76 % | had presentation(s) at national scholarly conference |
| 100.00 % | had teaching experience |
| 37.88 % | had administrative experience |
| 28.79 % | had ministerial experience |
| 40.91 % | were using EIS for first time |
| 28.79 % | were using EIS for the second time |
| 10.61 % | were using EIS for the third time |
| 19.70 % | had used EIS more than three times |

Figure 4

Age Distribution of EIS Candidates



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Volunteering for Committee Service in the Academy

Much of the work of the Academy outside of the Annual Meeting is accomplished through its committees. These groups are composed of individuals who contribute their time and talents to the AAR's mission of fostering excellence in teaching and scholarship in religion. For the ongoing vitality of the Academy's work, it is important to continually welcome new voices into the conversation and to achieve a broad and diverse range of member participation in these leader-

ship positions. The Academy encourages letters of nomination for committee appointments, including self-nomination. These appointments are made by the president in consultation with the executive director. For more information about AAR's committees, task forces, and juries, visit this link from our Web site: www.aarweb.org/about/board.asp. Please send nominations, including a curriculum vitae or resume, to Stephanie Gray at sgray@aarweb.org.



Ronald F. Thiemann



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Conference Nurtures the Next Generation of Scholars

Myesha D. Jenkins, American Academy of Religion

THE FUND for Theological Education (FTE) hosted “Nurturing the Next Generation of Scholars: 2005 National Recruitment Conference” in October 2005. Candler School of Theology at Emory University was the host institution.

“This conference was designed to provide concrete information and nuts-and-bolts strategies on how to apply to graduate programs. In addition, the conference faculty highlighted the importance of the presence of racial ethnic voices in the academy,” said Sharon Fluker, conference administrator and director of Doctoral Programs and the Expanding Horizons Partnership at FTE.

American Academy of Religion (AAR), Hispanic Theological Initiative (HTI), Institute for Leadership Development and Study of Pacific and Asian North American Religion (PANA), and Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) partnered with FTE to provide support and planning. These conference partners, along with other institutions and related organizations, provided promotional materials for the attendees. The selection committee, comprised of representatives from the six partnering organizations, received 116 applications. They chose 36 students from 22 colleges, universities, seminaries, theological, and divinity schools.

The conference included sessions on networking, the admissions process, and financial aid. Dr. Francisco Lozada Jr., Thomas French Chair in Religious Studies at University of the Incarnate Word, spoke on the scholarly life. Dr. Marcia Y. Riggs, J. Erskine Love Professor of Christian Ethics at Columbia Theological Seminary, spoke about the importance of racial/ethnic voices in the academy.

Other conference faculty presented on the following topics: “Why Study Bible and Religion,” “The Bible Tells Me So . . . or Why Biblical Studies Is Not Bible Study,” “Theological and Religious Conversations



2006 National Recruitment Conference participants

and the Future of the Church,” “Discerning a Call to Teaching and Scholarship,” and “Rites of Passage and Rites of Way: Our Lives as Biblical Scholars.”

The conference was an overwhelming success. Conference coordinator and 1996 recruitment conference attendee Matthew Williams remarked, “All conference participants felt more informed about doctoral studies in bible, religion, and theology. Thus, there were very few questions remaining after the conference which were expressed before the conference.”

Fluker was very encouraged by the attendee response to the conference: “This group was engaged and excited to have an opportunity to ask questions and network - for many it was important to know that they were not alone in thinking about the vocation of teaching and scholarship.” Williams plans to send a 6- to 12-month follow-up questionnaire to conference attendees.

Ten conference participants were able to attend the AAR and SBL Annual Meeting.


“It was important to me that I was able to gain exposure to the processes of the guild — establishing and nurturing relationships as well as participating in the discourse,” said Terri Laws, a student from Interdenominational Theological Center. “I was able to hear papers related to emergence theory in science and religion, womanist interpretations of pedagogy and body, global biblical hermeneutics, disability theologies, and a dialogue between Kierkegaard and black theology. Attendance for me was a busy weekend filled with research and fellowship.”

Luke Lin, a student at Duke University Divinity School said, “For me, the best take-home value of the meeting was networking. I had a chance to connect with several schools to which I will be applying next year and gain insight from them regarding their admissions and application processes, and what I can do to strengthen my chances of admission.”

The idea of a recruitment conference was developed by Vincent Wimbush and Gale Yee after conversations among biblical

scholars about the lack of diversity in the field of biblical studies. In 1996 the SBL hosted a two-day conference at Union Theological Seminary, initiating the first of six conferences. Some 31 institutions, 8 scholarly presses, and other organizations provided support to this first effort. The following year the SBL Committee on Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession hosted a mini-recruitment conference just before the 1997 Annual Meeting in San Francisco.

In 1998, the AAR, ATS, Catholic Theological Society of America, FTE, and Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion joined the SBL to host another conference at Vanderbilt Divinity School. During this year, the targeted fields of study were expanded to include religious and theological studies.

The SBL hosted another mini-conference in 1999 at the Boston Annual Meeting. Again in 2000, the AAR, ATS, FTE, and SBL sponsored the conference at the Pacific School of Religion and Graduate Theological Union. 

A Decade of Giving Back

Cynthia Walsh, American Academy of Religion

LAST FALL marked the ten-year anniversary of the Academy Fund, which today is the core of the AAR's fundraising program. Heartened by the success of its 1989–1992 capital campaign, the AAR in 1994 introduced quiet opportunities for giving through membership renewals and Annual Meeting registrations. The modest rise in these gifts from the first year to the second emboldened the AAR to step up its call for support.

In 1996 the Academy Fund was formally launched when the AAR made a direct-mail appeal to its 9,200 members. From the fund's inception through the end of last year, total annual giving by members increased fourfold. Perhaps just as astonish-

ing is the fact that, over the course of this decade, the AAR's cost for raising funds plummeted 80 percent, adding appreciably to the value of each donation.

Just as the Academy Fund has expanded in size, so, too, has the scope of activities that it benefits. Prior to 1996, gifts were used strictly in one of two ways: to cover postage for full runs of books sent to underfunded academic libraries abroad or to underwrite attendance at the Annual Meeting by a few scholars from developing countries. Today the Academy Fund supports a broad array of people and programs — from the highly specialized religion scholar to the media-prone public, from collecting data about employment trends for religion PhDs to outreach sessions for prison chaplains.

Academy Fund largesse flowed to a host of programs in 2005. Among these are the grants to support individual and collaborative research; awards for outstanding publications and service to the Academy; and professional and departmental services. Looking ahead in 2006, we anticipate furthering the AAR's Theological Programs Initiative and dedicating resources to Web site redesign.

The indispensable beneficiary of Academy Fund support each year is the AAR's operating budget. Membership dues, which are determined on an income-based scale, cover between 25 and 30 percent of the Academy's expenses. Rather than raising rates and potentially excluding some constituencies, the AAR asks all its members to

consider how they can help sustain the community of religion scholars.

Since 2000, U.S. philanthropy has registered a steady rise. In 2004, the latest year for which data are available, U.S. donations rose by 5 percent to an unprecedented total of almost \$250 billion. AAR members and friends have kept pace with this trend, each year reaching deeper to give back to the profession through the Academy Fund.

As the Academy Fund enters its second decade, the American Academy of Religion thanks you for your generosity and urges your continued and ever-growing support.



A Conversation with the President

Diana L. Eck, Harvard University



Diana L. Eck is Professor of Comparative Religion and Indian Studies and Frederic Wertham Professor of Law and Psychiatry in Society at Harvard University. She serves on the Committee on the Study of Religion and in the Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. She is also a member of the Faculty of Divinity. She and her spouse, the Rev. Dr. Dorothy A. Austin, are Masters of Lowell House, one of Harvard's 12 undergraduate residential houses. She received her BA from Smith College (1967), her MA from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (1968), and her PhD from Harvard University (1976).

Eck's work on India includes Banaras, City of Light and Darsan: Seeing the Divine Image in India. Her book Encountering God: A Spiritual Journey from Bozeman to Banaras addresses the question of religious pluralism in the context of Christian theology. It received the Louisville Grawemeyer Award in 1995. Her most recent book, A New Religious America, addresses religious pluralism in the United States, especially in the post-1965 period of renewed immigration.

Since 1991, Eck has been heading the Pluralism Project, mapping and interpreting the changing religious landscape of the United States, and involving students and professors in dozens of affiliate colleges and universities. The project has produced an interactive CD-ROM, On Common Ground: World Religions in America, and an award-winning Web site, www.pluralism.org.

In 1996 Diana L. Eck was appointed to the State Department Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom Abroad. In 1998, she received the National Humanities Medal from President Clinton and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and in 2003 she received the Governor's Humanities Award from the Montana Council for the Humanities in her home state of Montana.

RSN: In what kind of religious life, if any, did you participate in as a young woman?

Eck: I grew up in a social gospel, hymn-singing, Methodist bhakti tradition in Montana, devout but not dogmatic. I was active in the Methodist Youth Fellowship, both statewide and nationally. We had work camps on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana and a UNESCO-related development farm in Michoacán in Mexico. I went to the 1963 March on Washington with the MYF on the way to my freshman year at Smith College and lobbied for the Civil Rights Bill my first spring break. This is what religious commitment meant to me at that point. I still

have a complete collection of *Motive* magazines, right up to the last issue.

RSN: How did your parents or your extended family influence your career?

Eck: My father Hugo was an architect and builder, with a great sense of space. He was very creative and also down to earth. I'm sure my interest in the visual and in sacred space, architecture, and landscape is shaped by his sensibilities. I said as much when he and his colleagues in the Montana State University architecture department asked me to talk about my work on the city of Banaras. My mother Dorothy Eck is an activist and feminist. She has always been in public service and she served for more than 20 years as the state senator from Bozeman. She cares immensely about social issues, reads widely, and is very politically astute. She has been one of Montana's most influential public figures. My brother Laurence was a lawyer and deeply involved in church-state issues. When he died ten years ago, I inherited his passionate interest in these issues, along with many of his books.

RSN: At what point did you decide you wanted to become a scholar of religion?

Eck: When I went to Banaras on the University of Wisconsin Year in India program as a junior at Smith College, I found myself interested in just about everything — art, architecture, temples, philosophies, and people of all kinds, from Gandhian activists to village women. When I returned to Smith for my senior year, I switched my major from government to religion. I went to graduate school at SOAS in London, then Harvard. I was an energetic student, but didn't really think about whether I would be a scholar, or whether I would do something else with a PhD. A couple of years into graduate school, I was asked to be a student member of a professorial search committee and in the course of our deliberations, it dawned on me that I really *could* do this myself. I, too, could become a professor and do what I loved for a living, and so eventually I did.

RSN: Describe the period of your doctoral study. With whom did you study and what were your areas of greatest interest?

Eck: There were wonderful people at Harvard when I was a doctoral student there: Wilfred Cantwell Smith, John Carman, J. L. Mehta, Daniel Ingalls, Masatoshi Nagatomi, and Annemarie Schimmel. I think W. C. Smith was the greatest influence because he somehow taught me a way of thinking about "religion" and the language we use to explore it. He was out there excavating the terms of our study even before the deconstructionist turn, even before Said's *Orientalism* was published in the late 1970s. John Carman was the only one really teaching Hindu studies and was a wonderful guide and teacher; Ingalls taught all the Sanskrit courses, and Nagatomi taught the whole spectrum of Buddhism. Mehta was a philosopher and genius, and we had Banaras in common. Mehta was a Banarsi, born and raised not far from Ram Ghat, and he understood why I wanted to write my PhD thesis on the city as a whole. Everyone else thought it was too big a topic.

“A couple of years into graduate school, I was asked to be a student member of a professorial search committee and in the course of our deliberations, it dawned on me that I really could do this myself. I, too, could become a professor and do what I loved for a living, and so eventually I did.”

In those days, the Center for the Study of World Religions was really the epicenter of the comparative and historical study of religion. Many of us lived there as graduate students, along with the Smiths, the Carmans, the Mehtas, and visiting professors such as Charlotte Vaudeville. It had a very lively intellectual life and a wonderful sense of community.

RSN: What has given you the greatest satisfaction in the different roles in which you have served: university administrator, program director, professor, society leader, and scholar?

Eck: I love teaching — both inside and outside the university. I find it stimulating to move back and forth between different circles of discourse. For a number of years, I was moderator of the World Council of Churches commission on interreligious dialogue and found it challenging to communicate what I had learned as a scholar of religion to people in churches with a range of questions and views of "other faiths." I learned a great deal from this, discovered my own theological voice, and wrote a book, *Encountering God*, on my own changing theological perspectives as a Christian. I also developed a course, "World Religions: Diversity and Dialogue," that steers straight into the intellectual, political, and theological challenges of interreligious encounter in today's world — from five different religious perspectives.

Of course, leading the Pluralism Project has been immensely satisfying. It has enabled me to link my work in India to new contexts in America. It has enabled me to work with students, staff, and colleagues around the country in exciting and, I believe, important research. Over the past 15 years, many people have become interested in this work and made it their own, developing research and pedagogies that link the study of religion to the living communities and changing religious landscape of their own cities and towns. I loved the teamwork of the Pluralism Project during the very intense period when we were producing our CD-ROM, *On Common Ground*. I am continually amazed at the work my colleagues have produced, like Stuart Chandler's recent exhibit at Indiana University in Pennsylvania, "Eastern Religions Come to Western Pennsylvania." He presented it with multiple computers and projectors at the AAR in Philadelphia, and it was simply superb.

I have also worked with the U.S. State Department, and in the past few years I have lectured on America's new religious pluralism to audiences in Malaysia, Indonesia, and India. This is my civic work, so to speak, my work as an

American scholar-citizen. It takes time, but I think it is worthwhile because so few colleagues in Asia have any idea of the America I have been studying for the past 15 years. These academic encounters have also stimulated me to think comparatively about the challenges of multireligious democracies in, say, Indonesia, India, and the United States.

RSN: What is your favorite course to teach?

Eck: I love teaching "Hindu Myth, Image, and Pilgrimage," which is a Core Curriculum class at Harvard. It is about the gods of India, their myths and theologies as told in the Puranas and Epics, their images both elegant and plain, and their temples and pilgrimage places. I love it because it combines text, image, geography, and ritual, and because it takes me into the heartland of my big "India Project," a book on the sacred geography of India that I have been working on for many years, a book that is tentatively titled *Myth on Earth*. I also love it because these days more than half of the 100 or so students in the class are of South Asian origin. I love the energy of their engagement and I also love the spectacular learning curve of the other half, the students who come to the class with no idea whatsoever about Ganesha, Shiva, or the Ramayana, and leave with a much larger intellectual world. Finally, I love it because it's a great course in which to think about teaching on a week-to-week basis with a small cadre of teaching fellows. And the teaching fellows seem to love it, too.

RSN: In what ways is the vocation of teaching especially rewarding for you?

Eck: Teaching is a bridging vocation. It's about connection and communication, and reflecting on the ethics, the mutuality, and the dialogue that underlie connection and communication. When I'm doing fieldwork in shrines along the Narmada River or visiting in a gurdwara in Massachusetts, I'm thinking about teaching. Teaching is a way of introducing people to one another, enabling students in Cambridge to meet pilgrims in India, Sikh lawyers in New York, or Muslim thinkers in Indonesia. When I read a book, browse in the bookstore, or see a documentary film, I often find myself thinking about its potential uses in teaching. Teaching for me is a form of creativity. It is also a process of learning, because I'm constantly finding new books to try or new DVDs to use. This year, of the ten books students read in "World Religions: Diversity and Dialogue," five of them are new.

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In the Public Interest

Examining Our Role: Religion and the Academy

Douglas F. Challenger, Franklin Pierce College

Nancy L. Thomas, Society for Values in Higher Education



Douglas F. Challenger is professor of sociology at Franklin Pierce College in New Hampshire. A former Senior Fulbright Scholar in Slovenia, his reviews and articles cover social and political theory, religion, civic education, and democratic citizenship, and he is the author of the book *Durkheim through the Lens of Aristotle*.



Nancy Thomas, JD, EdD, directs the Democracy Project for the Society for Values in Higher Education and is a senior associate with Study Circles Resource Center and the Paul J. Aicher Foundation. She is the author of multiple book chapters and articles on deliberative dialogue on campus, educating for a diverse democracy, colleges and universities as institutional citizens, leadership, and legal issues in higher education.

IN RECENT YEARS, Americans are engaged in a new debate about the appropriate role of religion in public life. How can religious views be accommodated in the public sphere, if at all? When religious beliefs are at stake, the public square seems to be an increasingly hostile and polarized place, one where participants all too frequently lack civility, suppress dissent, and discourage compromise. How is the academy responding to these changing dynamics? What is the appropriate role of colleges and universities regarding matters of religion, faith, and spirituality on campus and in society at large?

These and related questions were the subject of a Wingspread (www.johnsonfdn.org) gathering this past July entitled "Religion and Public Life: Engaging Higher Education," sponsored by the Society for Values in Higher Education (www.svhe.org) and the Johnson Foundation. At Wingspread, scholars from diverse disciplines, institutions, and faith perspectives came together to discuss growing attention to and concern over the intersection between religion and public life, and to puzzle over how higher education should respond to these concerns. Participants represented institutions of many types, missions, sizes, and locations, including public research institutions (the Universities of Indiana and Michigan), private research (Princeton University), liberal arts (Trinity College and Franklin Pierce College), religiously affiliated (Calvin College), and state universities (South Dakota State University and Florida State University), as well as national organizations (Association of American Colleges and Universities and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching).

While achieving consensus among participants was difficult, several themes emerged as central to higher education's role in this larger cultural debate. Participants ultimately agreed that the

We can test ways to be open to religious insights without succumbing to pressure to chill academic freedom or advance specific religious views. We can address the changing role of faculty in this regard.

academy needs to address three key challenges in the coming years.

Challenge 1: Address widespread religious illiteracy.

One of the unforeseen consequences of a secularized public square is the continued exclusion of the study of religion in public schools. Schools avoid such controversial learning, in part in response to pressures from the outside (both religious and secular), in part because of the scarcity of appropriate course materials and of qualified teachers, and perhaps because keeping religion out of public education seemed to preserve if not foster some sense of social order or harmony.

Also during the last 50 years, there has occurred a burgeoning of religious study at colleges and universities, including public institutions. This growth in quantity and quality, though influential in liberal arts components of higher education, impacts relatively few students and has remained largely inconsequential to the greater university, particularly to professional education where most students are now being educated. This incomplete education, both in public schools and in colleges and universities, has cultivated a nation of citizens characterized by religious ignorance and an embarrassing

naiveté about the values and cultures of others.

The Wingspread participants found it easy to agree that there is a need for more study about religion across disciplines and at all levels of education. Currently, students are exposed to religion through comparative religion courses offered in religious studies programs or as components of cultural or area studies. These are both legitimate and useful in teaching students — generally a relatively small number — that their view might, indeed, be different from that of another. But these approaches have not proven to be adequate for teaching students to negotiate this diverse, complex, religion-infused local and global world. To achieve this level of understanding and competency, students need to be exposed to religion across a full range of disciplines, including the sciences, humanities, arts, social sciences, and the professions. The goals for student learning might be interdisciplinary knowledge, a high degree of understanding of and respect for the religious beliefs of others, an ability to critique one's own assumptions and beliefs, and an ability to engage in dialogue and to live with others across difference. This model has powerful implications for increasing the level of sophistication on religious matters among American citizens.

Challenge 2: Uphold standards of intellectual integrity, critical inquiry, and academic freedom, yet welcome a broader understanding of reason.

Do religiously based assertions threaten standards of intellectual inquiry? Do biblical interpretations compromise important tenets of science? How should academics preserve academic freedom and guard truth-seeking when faced with assertions grounded in religious beliefs? At Wingspread, the discussion included many worrisome accounts of religiously based challenges to academic freedom and critical inquiry — academic principles that were uniformly supported by Wingspread participants across disciplines and faith traditions.

Yet another perspective emerged at Wingspread: that the academy needs to broaden its notion of reason in ways that protect scientific, empirical, and instrumental rationality but also consider truth claims based in faith traditions as valid "other ways of knowing," at all times cognizant of academic standards and freedom.

Americans' abiding interest in religion suggests that the public is open to other ways of knowing in addition to conventional academic approaches. Public opinion expert Daniel Yankelovich recently captured this line of argument in an essay in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (November 25, 2005). He wrote, "However frustrating for science-minded Americans the popularity of the intelligent-design concept may be, it signals a trend that colleges must heed. . . . It concerns the nature of truth — how we arrive at it, and how we recognize it." Clearly, the last two centuries have brought enormous societal benefits as higher education, and our society at large, has grown more

scientific in its quest for knowledge. Yet Americans continue to embrace religion and express concern about moral truths. They are also more polarized in their views and less able to find political and interpersonal common ground. Beneficial as science is, it does not appear to meet a basic human need to find meaning and purpose in life, much less to find common meaning and purpose across difference.

The academy is faced with its own proverbial "teachable moment," one that calls for a reexamination of the scientific approach to knowledge and the empirically restrained version of rationality that has come to be celebrated in the academy. It calls for a revitalization of the humanities and, arguably, acceptance of broader notions of rationality. It calls for the design of new curricula that might consider multiple paths for inquiry and truth seeking. As Yankelovich warned, if higher education does not embrace these changes, it "could easily become more embattled, more isolated, and more politicized."

Challenge 3: Respond to students' search for purpose and spiritual meaning.

In April 2005, the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) of UCLA issued a report on the spiritual life of college students. The study revealed that three of every four college and university students say that they are "searching for meaning/purpose in life" and that they regularly discuss the meaning of life with friends (www.spirituality.ucla.edu). There was no consensus reached at Wingspread as to whether or how this interest should be met — through co-curricular initiatives or across the curriculum. Indeed, this emerged as a significant divide among participants. Some participants accepted the responsibility to educate students holistically, not only in a specific discipline. Others questioned whether the spiritual dimension to student learning was intellectually rigorous enough, whether faculty possess the skills to pursue this as a dimension to student learning, and whether this area is an unrealistic or inappropriate expectation of faculty in general.

Some Next Steps

In accepting these challenges, faculty across disciplines need to engage in some difficult conversations on a number of issues: nostalgia for a clear separation of church and state and a "secular university"; perceptions that faculties may be too "enlightened" to be concerned with matters of religion, faith, or spirituality; concerns that addressing the spiritual interests of students calls for faculty to take on "therapeutic" functions that are not intellectually rigorous or appropriate for serious disciplines; a recognition and acknowledgment of some of the critiques of secular culture as well as the assumptions and anxieties about conservative religious groups; establishing ground rules for critiquing another's faith, beliefs, and values, or calling attention to ways that religion is used to inflict harm, manipulate

See **CHALLENGER/THOMAS** p.22

Editor's Note:

Guhrun Bühnemann received an AAR Individual Research Grant in 2004. A report on her research is below.

Research Briefing

Tantric Iconology of Nepal

Guhrun Bühnemann, University of Wisconsin–Madison



*Guhrun Bühnemann received her PhD in Classical Indian and Buddhist Studies from the University of Vienna in 1980. She is a Professor in the Department of Languages and Cultures of Asia at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Her recent publications include *The Iconography of Hindu Tantric Deities* (2 volumes, Groningen: E. Forsten, 2000–2001) and *Mandalas and Yantras in the Hindu Traditions* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2003).*

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, while examining a large number of manuscripts on microfilm at the National Archives of Nepal in Kathmandu, I came across a hitherto unpublished set of more than 100 line drawings of Hindu deities possibly dating from the nineteenth century. This set of drawings falls broadly into the category of an artist's model-book or sketchbook — an important source for students of Nepalese iconography. A closer examination then showed that most drawings portray Tantric deities. The identification of the deities, whose names are not

inscribed in the manuscript, is difficult because many come from esoteric traditions which are not easily accessible. Since Tantric deities are more frequently worshipped in aniconic forms, I immediately realized the importance of the iconographic representations in this manuscript.

In the course of my studies I began to notice similarities in the iconography of some deities represented in the line drawings and sculptures in the so-called Royal Bath (Tusahiti), a sunken stepped fountain located in Sundarichowk, Patan [illustration 1]. An unmistakable feature of Nepalese architecture, fountains play a key role in religious affairs and form a connecting link between domestic shrines and public temples. Fountains are major sources for the study of Nepalese stone sculpture, since the walls and the areas around the spouts are usually embellished with representations of deities. Among these are many sculptures and reliefs of great religious and artistic value.

On a recent trip to Nepal I was able to photograph the 78 sculptures in Tusahiti (which has been closed to the public for more than a decade) after obtaining permission from the Department of Archaeology. A detailed comparison of the line drawings in the manuscript and the sculptures in Tusahiti revealed a large number of common iconographic types, but sometimes also subtle differences in the representation of details. Many times line drawings aid our understanding of the sculptures in the sunken fountains by supplying details when the sculptures are damaged or features cannot be distinguished clearly. This can be seen from a comparison of the line drawing of one goddess [illustration 2] and the photograph of the corresponding sculpture in Tusahiti [illustration 3, see page



Illustration 2: The goddess Ugratara (line drawing). Drawing courtesy of National Archives, Kathmandu.

22]. The line drawing portrays the goddess as holding a sword and lotus in her upper hands, along with part of an elephant hide stretched out behind her back. Her lower hands hold a chopper and skull-cup. On her headdress a miniature of a seated deity is visible. The goddess's attributes and the miniature on her headdress (which can be identified as her presiding Tathagata, Akshobhya) allow for an identification as Ugratara, the fierce Tara. As I have shown in an article in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1996), the goddess originally belonged to the Buddhist pantheon but was adopted by Hindus, who later incorporated her into the group of Mahavidya goddesses. The corresponding sculpture in Tusahiti is severely damaged; three of its arms are largely destroyed, and the face is completely so. I could identify some of the iconographic types shared by the sculptures in Tusahiti and the line drawings by studying paintings, line drawings, and sculptures which I discovered in various other collections, and which belong roughly to the same time period. This suggests that these deities represent important members of the Tantric pantheon.

Further study showed that many sculptures in Tusahiti have their counterparts among the sculptures in the sunken fountain in Mohan(kali)chowk of the Hanumandhoka Palace in Kathmandu. Both of these fountains were declared world heritage sites by UNESCO. Some of their sculptures may have had counterparts in sculptures of a third royal fountain, Thanthu Darbar Hiti in the Royal Palace of Bhaktapur. However, this can no longer be ascertained because the sculptures in that fountain were stolen and no old photographs are extant. These three important royal fountains date from the later Malla period. Tusahiti was built under King Siddhinarasimhamalla in 1647, Mohankalichowk Hiti under King Pratapamalla in 1652 and Thanthu Darbar Hiti under King Jitamiramalla in 1678. Tusahiti features 78 sculptures (including several panels), while Mohankalichowk Hiti reportedly has between 34 and 40. From the number of

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“*Since Tantric deities are more frequently worshipped in aniconic forms, I immediately realized the importance of the iconographic representations in this manuscript.*”



Illustration 1: Tusahiti, the so-called Royal Bath, in Patan. Photo by Guhrun Bühnemann.

“*Fountains are major sources for the study of Nepalese stone sculpture, since the walls and the areas around the spouts are usually embellished with representations of deities. Among these are many sculptures and reliefs of great religious and artistic value.*”

Passages: Life in Retirement

John B. Cobb Jr., Claremont School of Theology



John B. Cobb Jr. was educated chiefly at the University of Chicago Divinity School. He taught at Young Harris College and Emory University before going to Claremont School of Theology in California in 1958. He retired in 1990. He is ordained in the United Methodist Church. Among his books are A Christian Natural Theology, The Structure of Christian Existence, Christ in a Pluralistic Age, Beyond Dialogue, and Transforming Christianity and the World. He has co-authored (with David Griffin) Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition, (with Charles Birch) The Liberation of Life, (with Herman Daly) For the Common Good, (with Joseph Hough) Christian Identity and Theological Education, and (with David Lull) Romans. Cobb now lives with his wife in Pilgrim Place, a retirement community in Claremont, California.

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

Cobb: Retirement was easy for me since Jean and I simply moved across town to Pilgrim Place, a wonderful retirement community for church workers. Participation in the life of this community has many dimensions, and I often wish that I could give myself to it more fully.

For some years I continued to do a little teaching and to work with doctoral students who had begun their dissertations years earlier. I continue to enjoy writing and so have published a lot of articles and a few books. Participating in conferences and speaking are often enjoyable breaks in the usual routine.

Together with David Griffin, I organized the Center for Process Studies in 1973 especially to promote the use of Whitehead's conceptuality in a variety of fields. It grew in its range of activities over the years and has continued growing after my retirement from the Claremont School of Theology in 1990. Working with its administration and publications, participating in its seminars and conferences, talking with its visiting scholars, and strategizing for the future of process thought have been a significant part of my work since retirement, as they were before. The center has several projects now: Process & Faith, the China Project, and a new Korea Project. I try to be supportive of all of them. I helped to organize the International Process Network and have tried to encourage and support international Whitehead conferences, the sixth of which will be held in Salzburg this summer. Currently I chair a committee raising

funds to endow a chair in process theology at the Claremont School of Theology.

Since retirement I helped organize, and continue to work with, what is now called Progressive Christians Uniting, our local response to the dominance of the religious right in the public view of Protestantism. We try to let people know that there is another kind of Protestantism, both by speaking for it and by embodying it in our activities.

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

Cobb: Most of what I do is enjoyable. Watching the development and achievements of former students is a source of special joy. Many of them are doing great work in the academic world. I am happy that some of them are also engaging in public issues in other ways. I particularly admire the work of David Griffin in exposing the truth about 9/11, which is so different from the official account, and I try to support him in small ways. I admire the entrepreneurship of Rita Brock in using the Web to advance causes in which we both believe, although that technology is still for me an alien world.

I rejoice in opportunities to collaborate with kindred spirits. An example is writing a commentary on Romans with David Lull, published last November by Chalice Press. This is something I could never have even considered doing on my own, since I lack the skills and knowledge of New Testament scholarship. But working with David was a wonderfully informative and enriching experience. We felt that together we came to a fresh understanding of Paul. Needless to say, we show that he anticipated some main themes of process theology!

I have also greatly enjoyed playing a small role in the astounding growth of interest in process thought in other parts of the world: Europe, Africa, Korea, and, most impressively, China, where there are now ten centers for process thought in major universities. Some of my writing, which caused barely a ripple when it was published in the United States in past decades, has turned out to have importance in other contexts. I have an altogether surprised, but certainly pleasing, sense of having done the right thing without knowing how or why. The international connections have brought about new friendships and associations. I have been to China three times in the past five years, and on each occasion, opportunities there seem greater than ever. What is particularly enjoyable is that, unlike most academics elsewhere, many in China are genuinely seeking guidance as to the way ahead for their country. The gap between theory and practice is far smaller there.

Then there are the opportunities to be with children and grandchildren. Thus far, Christmas has been an occasion for the family to come to us. Occasionally we have traveled with some family members or had other opportunities for extended visits. I will have the joyful opportunity of marrying a grandson next June.

RSN: What makes for a satisfactory retirement? Alternatively, what has given you the greatest satisfaction in your retirement?

Cobb: Important for me was avoiding

“ I have been to China three times in the past five years, and on each occasion, opportunities there seem greater than ever. ”

any abrupt change. We continued living in the same community, and I could continue some of the activities in which I was already involved. I live with people I admire and who provide stimulus. Most of us in Pilgrim Place are involved in the wider community and even in global issues. We support one another.

Another positive feature of living in this community is that we become friends with death. Half of those who were here when Jean and I moved in 15 years ago have since died. Occasionally death has come too soon, and we experience it again as “enemy,” but often we are ready and glad for it. This helps us to welcome our own deaths as the time comes.

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

Cobb: My reading and research are mostly related to writing. I have all too many opportunities and projects. The “too many” comes from accepting invitations with too little regard to the time involved. I have still not learned to say no as often as I should. Sometimes I feel more pressure than I enjoy. And it seems foolish in retirement years to let this happen. Nevertheless, this drawback is just the other side of my enjoyment.

I mentioned working on Paul's Romans. That directed my reading and research for a while. Currently my project is to complete a book that has grown out of a conference that I organized for the Center for Process Studies on evolution and religion. There were some excellent papers, and I think that we collectively have a significant contribution to make to the current discussion. But turning the papers into a book that will make that contribution has required some additional writing and a good deal of thought. It has been an education for me.

Some of my books have not required a lot of new research, but others have. Two of the latter type were, respectively, on John Wesley and on the World Bank. Obviously the fields of research were quite different in the two cases.

I chair the Reflection Committee of Progressive Christians Uniting. We have produced more than 30 position papers, about half of which were published by Westminster John Knox as Progressive Christians Speak. I am only one of many contributors, and thus this work guides reading and research along a wide variety of lines. Two papers we are just now completing are on Islam and on consumerism. It will be my job soon to edit the more theological of our papers for publication.

RSN: Do you do any teaching?

Cobb: I ended regular teaching nearly ten years ago. Since then I have taught regular courses only twice. I do more frequent short-term teaching here and elsewhere. I'm glad to teach, but it makes me wonder how I ever found time and energy to teach several courses at the same time

and do all the other things a professor does. I have no desire to go back to such a schedule.

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

Cobb: Just like mine with a bit more realism about saying no. Then I would ask for a few more years of health on my wife's part. However, since we had 80 good years, 58 of them together, we should not complain about health problems now.

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


Cobb: I remember individual incidents in which I did things or said things that I afterwards deeply regretted — and failed to do things and say things that I could and should have said and done. And I'm sure that if I really had my career to live over again, it would all come out very differently. Some things that I learned through time, perhaps I would have done better to know from the beginning. But I do not especially regret my earlier ignorance. Naiveté also has its advantages. So the basic answer is that I am grateful for the opportunities that I had and happy about the overall outcome.

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

Cobb: Even though I stay busy, I enjoy having more control over my schedule. I still stay connected with the school where I taught for 32 years, and I care about its crises and successes. But it is a relief not to feel responsible to help solve institutional and personnel problems. When I am tired, I can usually quit working. As a result I actually felt better in my 70s than I did in my 50s and especially my early 60s.

In a very different vein, as I mentioned before, in a retirement community we all live with and toward death in a way that was not true before. I attended more memorial services in my first year here than in my whole life before. Life is rich and full, but dying and death belong to that life.

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

Cobb: I wish they would worry less about their status in their disciplines and more about how whatever it is they are teaching might help the church recover its health and the world survive its crises. I have long been troubled by academia's isolation and self-involvement. My awareness of the ecological crisis helped me shake free of that, but my sense is that, overall, the academic disciplines still do more to separate professors from the real problems of church and world than to involve them. Of course, I realize that this is easier to say and enact when one has job security. 

From the Student Desk

A Juggling Act

Matthew P. Cadwell, Trinity College, University of Toronto



Matthew P. Cadwell is a doctoral student in systematic theology at Trinity College in the University of Toronto and the Toronto School of Theology. He is the student editor for RSN. Contact Matthew at matthew.cadwell@utoronto.ca if you are interested in contributing an article to "From the Student Desk."

MANY DOCTORAL students in religious/theological studies are also active in ministries of various sorts: parish clergy, youth and education ministers, social justice workers, etc. In some ways, the academic study of religion/theology finds a natural partner in

ministry among those who turn to religion for comfort, strength, and challenge. Yet the balance and integration of study and ministry is surprisingly challenging. It's a shame there aren't more courses or seminars offered in vocational juggling.

I was ordained into the ministry of the Episcopal Church following my first year of doctoral study. Advanced study and ordination had been goals since I was an undergraduate religion major. I knew I would face significant challenges in both the church and the university, but I didn't expect the real difficulty of maintaining a fruitful and creative balance between the two. Often I find myself racing between the university and the parish, never fully in one place or the other. Many of my colleagues share that experience. Taking on ministerial responsibilities is, of course, a helpful way to pay the rent. But more significantly, it is integral to who we are.

In my experience, there seems to be skepticism from both the church and academy. Those with both feet firmly planted in academia can question a priest's or pastor's dedication to the spirit of free inquiry required in academic disciplines, while many active in religious communities wonder why one would want to go through the hassle of doctoral studies. How many times have I tried to explain

my academic work to parishioners, only to have their eyes glaze over or, alternatively, to tell my school colleagues that I have to run home to write a sermon while they order a second or third beer at the pub. Even so, I am convinced that religious groups and the academy must find a creative interaction if each is to fulfill its calling. I see my role as facilitating that interaction in my small corner of the church and university.

I recently surveyed several colleagues pursuing ministry and doctoral studies for their perspectives on these matters. In many cases they were too busy trying to juggle successfully to be very introspective about it all. But among the respondents there was a sense that bringing the insights of academia to the church can be difficult, just as bringing the faith commitments of our religious traditions to the theological/religious enterprise is never easy. Ministry and academic study require essentially different approaches to knowledge, which often present unforeseen challenges. One colleague notes: "A significant tension centers for me around the comprehensiveness of criticizability. In the academic world, it is expected that one's most basic assumptions and principles be subject to continual critical and radical (i.e., pertaining to the roots) review. In the church, while it is possible, and desirable,

“Often I find myself racing between the university and the parish, never fully in one place or the other. Many of my colleagues share that experience.”

to engage in critical review of basic assumptions at particular moments in the life of a person or community of faith, it is also important to live and work as an adherent to a world view. The resultant being of a split mind often ends up being unresolved.” He notes as well that the ministry side of things can often be alluring, because the rewards of that work are more immediate and obvious. In the inevitable dry periods in academic creativity, the call to full-time ministry is strong. Alternatively, there are times when the “ivory tower” of the university is comforting.

See CADWELL p.21

ECK, from p.13

RSN: Can you update us a bit about the Pluralism Project and your current research?

Eck: The Pluralism Project has four research initiatives these days. The Civic Initiative studies religious pluralism in American public life, looking especially at the new kinds of advocacy groups developed by Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs in the United States. Through case studies, we are also exploring the ways in which mayors and city officials handle the new American “cosmopolis.” For example, our senior researcher, Ellie Pierce, is working on a case study of the Chicago suburb of Palos Heights and the controversy involving the city council, the mayor, Christian clergy, and the Muslim community that attempted to buy property there. This kind of case study will be a great teaching tool — for professors, religious leaders, and civic leaders alike.

The Interfaith Initiative is studying and developing case studies of this amorphous but growing “interfaith” phenomenon. All over the country and, indeed, all over the world, we see the intentional creation of new instruments of relationship like the Ford Motor Company Interfaith Network, the Louisville Festival of Faiths, Women Transcending Boundaries in Syracuse, New York, the Interfaith Youth Core in Chicago. This phenomenon in all its diversity is worth academic attention. Why would we not study this?

The International Initiative is developing liaisons with projects and research centers in Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Jordan,

“When I'm doing fieldwork in shrines along the Narmada River or visiting in a gurdwara in Massachusetts, I'm thinking about teaching. Teaching is a way of introducing people to one another, enabling students in Cambridge to meet pilgrims in India, Sikh lawyers in New York, or Muslim thinkers in Indonesia.”


Israel, and Western Europe that are also concerned with the problems and issues of multireligious societies and studying them in their own contexts. We just don't know enough about what scholars elsewhere in the world are doing.

Finally, the Women's Initiative studies women's religious organizations and their issues and agendas — from the Women of Reform Judaism, to the United Methodist Women and the Muslim Women's League. Knowing more about the ways in which women are organized religiously reshapes more conventional understandings of tradition and leadership. One of our researchers,

Rachel Antell, recently produced a film, *Acting on Faith*, with portraits of three American women who work on social issues — a Muslim, a Hindu, and a Buddhist.

RSN: And what about Lowell House? What is it and what do you do there?

Eck: It's a multigenerational academic community, really. In the big brick quadrangles of Lowell House there are 450 undergraduates and 25 resident graduate student tutors in different fields of study. There are also about 70 faculty affiliated with the house. Dorothy Austin and I live in the masters' residence and are deeply involved in shaping the community — from hiring tutors, to hosting events, concerts, and discussions. It keeps us talking with students in every area of study and thinking about the critical issues of the world and of today's universities. It is also a multiethnic and multireligious community where Diwali and Ramadan are just part of the calendar.

Our big long-term issue as house masters has been working slowly to return the 17 Russian bells in our bell tower to the Danilov Monastery in Moscow from which they came 75 years ago. Learning about liturgical bells, bell-ringing, bell-casting, and the history of these particular bells is a big project on the horizon as we think about the exchange of these old bells for newly cast ones. So the job ranges from dinner with students in the dining hall to international relations. It is a wonderful community where the tree of learning and the tree of life grow together. 



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The Conference is devoted to the question of the interrelation between theology, aesthetic experience, and the arts. It brings together, for a seminar-style conversation, leading scholars from North America and Europe in such areas as theological aesthetics (within systematic theology), liturgical aesthetics, and religious environments. A variety of Christian traditions is covered, including Franciscan themes in theology.

Department Meeting

Missouri State University, Department of Religious Studies

James C. Moyer, Chair



Missouri State University (Missouri State) in Springfield, Missouri, is a multicampus metropolitan university system with a statewide mission in public affairs. The Springfield campus is the main campus and second largest university in the state, with over 19,000 students from 49 states and 80 foreign countries. A Masters Level I institution, it has become a selective institution in recent years and celebrated its centennial last year. A Bible course was first taught in 1937 with 186 students by a local minister. In 1950, after a local challenge, all religion courses were terminated as

unconstitutional. Campus ministers then began to teach religion courses with credit offered by their denominational schools; credits were transferred back to Missouri State. After receiving a favorable opinion from the state attorney general, the administration hired its first chair and began the Department of Religious Studies in 1969.

Moyer received his BA from Wheaton College (IL) in Mathematics (1963), MDiv from Gordon Divinity School (1966), MA and PhD from Brandeis University with specialization in Hebrew Bible and Hittite Studies

(1968, 1969), and he studied archaeology at the Hebrew Union College Biblical and Archaeological School in Jerusalem as a post-doctoral student. He has taught at Missouri State University for the past 36 years in ancient history and Hebrew Bible. He has co-authored two books, including a beginning college textbook on the Hebrew Bible, and served as book review editor for Biblical Archaeologist (now Near Eastern Archaeology). His current research interest is the general topic of death and afterlife in ancient Israel.

RSN: How long have you been in the Religious Studies Department, and how long have you been the chair?

Moyer: I joined the History Department at Missouri State in 1970, moved to the Religious Studies Department in 1978, and have served as head/chair since 1985.

The department was the first in a public university in the state of Missouri to offer a religion minor in 1972, first to offer a major in 1982, and first to offer an MA in 1994.

RSN: Tell us about the history of the department.

Moyer: Sure, especially since it is so fascinating. When the first chair, Gerrit tenZythoff, (PhD, Chicago), was hired in 1969 there were no faculty except for five unpaid part-time religious professionals. There was strong support for this new department on campus and a huge demand for courses, but great suspicion in the community, especially the religious community. Gerrit "rehired" all the qualified religious professionals to continue to teach, and went everywhere he could in the community explaining the academic study of religion and how it complemented the confessional study of religion. Both of these actions were very well received by the local religious community, and we have continued these practices ever since. Gerrit used his wonderful people skills, excellent service to students, and "shrewdness" to find additional teaching faculty wherever he could. I was occasionally reassigned from the history department to teach religious studies courses beginning in 1971 and moved to the Religious Studies Department full-time in 1978. The first two full-time faculty were hired in 1973 sharing one with Anthropology. By 1981, when health forced Gerrit to step down as chair, the department had grown to 11 faculty. It was marvelous to see him at work; he trained me very well. The results speak for themselves. The department was the first in a public university in the state of Missouri to offer a

religion minor in 1972, first to offer a major in 1982, and first to offer an MA in 1994. Total enrollment today is over 4,000 annually, with about 75 majors, about 130 minors, and about 25 MA students. This makes it the largest department of religious studies in Missouri and one of the largest in the Midwest.

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

Moyer: We have 12 tenured and tenure-track faculty, all with doctorates from a variety of institutions including Boston University, Brandeis, Chicago, Claremont, North Carolina, Princeton University, Princeton Theological Seminary, Santa Barbara, Southern Seminary, and Union Seminary (VA). Two are also administrators: one is assistant to the president, and the second is associate dean. We also have four lecturers and eleven part-time faculty. Four of these hold doctorates and four more are writing dissertations.

RSN: Can you tell us about the current full-time faculty?

Moyer: Our faculty specialties include biblical studies, Buddhism, Hinduism, Reformation studies, religion in America, and religion and education. Two years ago we added our first endowed chair in Protestant studies with a specialty in sociology of religion. One retired faculty member holds the title "distinguished professor."

RSN: How would you like to expand the department?

Moyer: Always the dreamer, our first chair envisioned a department of 42 full-time faculty. A more realistic goal would be to compliment our strengths, increase diversity, and add specialties in psychology and religion, Judaism, Islam, and Catholic studies. Some of these may come as endowed chairs.

RSN: What are your core or introductory courses, the courses that year after year seem to attract the most students?

Moyer: Five religious studies courses are options, and a maximum of two can be used, for General Education Humanities credit. The "Introduction to Religion" course is the most popular and serves about 700 students each semester. The two Bible courses together serve about 500 students, followed by "World Religions" and "Religion in America" courses serving over 200 students each.

RSN: How many students take introductory courses? How many masters or doctoral students do you have?

I promote the department 24/7, and see myself as a team player in the larger university, trying to be visible and supportive of good things happening on campus. I promise, and faculty deliver, excellent teaching and outstanding service to each of our students.

Moyer: Over 1,800 students take our courses each semester. About 85 percent of this enrollment is in General Education courses, about 12 percent is in advanced undergraduate courses, and about 3 percent is in our graduate courses. We have about 25 masters' students and no doctoral program.

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

Moyer: 1) Our goal is to give all students a quality education with the best possible educational experience. The result is that our best students have earned sizable (in excess of six figures) fellowships at graduate institutions such as Duke, Emory, Santa Barbara, and the University of Pennsylvania. 2) The faculty are known across campus for their publication record, global perspective, and collegiality. This includes the publication of eleven books in the last six years, service on editorial boards, participation in international, national, and regional conferences, and awards that include a Fulbright-Hayes and Fulbright Fellowships, Young Scholars in American Religion awards, Wabash Center grants, and postdoctoral awards. In the 1990s departmental faculty and students participated in The Baniyas, Israel excavations annually. Most importantly the faculty members work together to bring out the very best in each other and our students. This is a department where it is "fun" to come to work.

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

Moyer: We work very hard to be effective teachers of undergraduate students, engaging in a continuing dialogue about improving our teaching pedagogy. We use the latest technology in the best equipped classroom building on campus. We take students' faith, or lack thereof, very seriously and treat students sensitively in order to develop their full potential. All of this has earned us numerous university teaching and research awards and an excellent reputation across campus.

RSN: Would you say something about the way your department structures the undergraduate major? What types of courses do students take to fulfill the requirements for an undergraduate religion major?

Moyer: Our BA major requires 33 hours and includes the five 3-hour introductory courses noted above, plus a capstone variable topic seminar course. Five additional advanced courses are required and must be distributed with at least one from each of these four areas: history of religions, biblical studies, history of Christianity and Judaism, and religion, self, and society. This allows for a good deal of flexibility but also requires good advising. We are currently adding a one-hour course dealing with careers.

RSN: Would you say more about the organization of knowledge in your department? What role does it play, if any, in attracting undergraduate students to your program?

Moyer: The four areas noted in the previous answer provide a broad array of course options. Special strengths in biblical studies, religion in America, and South Asian religions, along with popular individual courses such as "Judaism, Women, and Religion," "New Religious Movements," and "Native American Religions" all attract students.

RSN: What about religion departments in other institutions? How are you alike or different?

Moyer: I think we are mostly similar with two exceptions. 1) I believe the faculty have successfully combined excellent teaching with strong research. 2) I have worked hard to educate our many excellent campus ministers on the differences in their work (confessional study of religion) and ours (academic study of

Member-At-Large

Dawn DeVries, Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education



Dawn DeVries received her education at the University of Chicago (BA, MA, PhD). Since 1995 she has served on the faculty of Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia, and she was named the John Newton Thomas Professor of Systematic Theology there in 1999. Before that, she taught at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago and San Francisco Theological Seminary and the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. She is the editor and translator of *Servant of the Word: Selected Sermons of Friedrich Schleiermacher and the author of Jesus Christ in the Preaching of Calvin and Schleiermacher*. Her many articles and contributions to symposia and books focus on historical theology from the Reformation to the twentieth century and constructive theology.

RSN: At what point in your life did you decide you wanted to become a theologian?

DeVries: This is a difficult question to answer. The simple response is that I entered into this field almost by accident after completing an undergraduate degree in mediaeval studies at the University of Chicago. During my last year as an undergraduate, I worked intensively with Bernard McGinn, and I began taking some courses in the divinity school. I knew that I wanted to go on for graduate work, and I finally decided that my interests centered around religion and theology. At the University of Chicago Divinity School, at least in my student days, there was not a sharp distinction between church history (as it was then called) and theology, so I did not really need to choose at that time whether I was a historian or a constructive theologian.

The more complicated response to this question, however, is undoubtedly the more interesting one. I was probably already a “theologian” of some sort by the time I was in middle school. I was brought up in a small Dutch Reformed denomination that

put a premium on theological education of the laity. I began instruction in the Heidelberg Catechism in third grade and continued with it until my last year of high school — eventually memorizing the entire text. But studying the catechism raised many new questions for me. I remember having serious problems with the notion of substitutionary atonement already in about seventh grade. And in those days I often lay in bed at night thinking about life after death, and finding myself simply terrified at the thought that it could go on *forever* — an idea I found to be not at all comforting. These tendencies toward theological reflection were strengthened during my teen years when I struggled with a life-threatening illness. By then, the idea of divine providence and the problem of evil had also become major theological concerns for me. The copy of Calvin’s *Institutes* that I still use I bought when I was 13. So in another way, it is not at all surprising that I decided to become a theologian.

RSN: What caused you to focus your scholarship on the history of doctrine and Reformed theology?

DeVries: I certainly had wonderful teachers at the divinity school who brought the history of doctrine alive for me as an exciting field of inquiry. But there were other reasons for pursuing this particular path. I found myself, as a young adult, disaffected from the conservative Calvinist theology of my youth, but still driven to discover a new way of understanding the Christian faith. I remember being simply riveted when I first read Ernst Troeltsch’s argument that Reformation theology belonged more to the mediaeval than to the modern world. This seemed correct to me from my own experience. So the big question for me became “Is it possible to affirm the best insights of Reformed theology while still embracing one’s location in the modern world?” It was only when I discovered the possibilities of liberal Reformed theology in Friedrich Schleiermacher’s *Glaubenslehre* that I began to see how one could hold together the interests of faith and modern science. From Schleiermacher and other modern theologians like F. C. Baur, D. F. Strauss, Adolf von Harnack, and Ernst Troeltsch, I learned that a critical understanding of the history of doctrine was propaedeutic to creative theological construction — at least if one wished to maintain some form of continuity with earlier tradition. So it seemed natural to me to combine work in historical theology with my interest in constructive theology. As for my commitment to the Reformed tradition, by now that is more than an accident of birth. I find that Reformed theology at

“Most students come into the course with strong convictions about a lot of theological topics. But few of them have considered how one belief relates to another, or whether as a whole their beliefs about God, human beings, and the world are well grounded and can be held together coherently. It is exciting simply to witness those ‘aha’ moments, when students discover the connections between, for example, anthropology and soteriology.”

its best provides a compelling and persuasive account of the Christian faith that is eminently able to take account of the insights and challenges presented to belief by the modern (and postmodern) world.

RSN: What individual or movement has been the most influential in your intellectual life?

DeVries: There are so many! I came to the University of Chicago as a junior in college — a transfer student from Calvin College. The core curriculum at Chicago, which goes back to Robert Maynard Hutchins and Mortimer Adler, revolves around the “Great Books.” For the first time in my life, instead of reading textbooks about great thinkers, I was reading the thinkers themselves. During those last two years of college, I was exposed to so many wonderful and challenging texts in so many different fields! It opened my eyes to a whole universe that I had never before encountered within the narrow confines of my Dutch Reformed subculture. Whether I was reading classical literature and philosophy, or modern sociology and psychology, it didn’t matter. All of it felt like a guilty pleasure for me — like the “good stuff” that had been hidden from me for years. In my experiences at the University of Chicago, both as an undergraduate and as a graduate student in the divinity school, I learned to value the humanistic ideal of a broad-based education that enabled one to be an informed participant in, and a productive contributor to, a cultivated civil society. I will always be grateful for the profound transformation in my intellectual life that this education enabled.

RSN: What are your current research interests?

DeVries: I am trying very hard to finish a book that I have been working on for years — an overall interpretation of Schleiermacher’s dogmatic theology. I would like to finish this book for many reasons, not the least of which is the fact that the new critical edition of Schleiermacher’s works is inspiring dozens of new books every year. Just keeping up with the literature these days is a challenge! I am also in the beginning stages of editing (together with my husband) *The New Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*. Beyond that, I am contemplating several projects in the area of constructive theology: one on the theology of prayer, and another on the

question “What does it mean to be saved?” I think these projects will be enough to keep me busy for the next several years.

RSN: What is your favorite course to teach?

DeVries: It is surprising even to me, but I would have to say the “Introduction to Theology” course. At Union-PSCE, this course runs over two semesters and is organized systematically, so that all the major doctrines are treated in their interconnections. I like this course for many reasons, even though it is often difficult to teach. It is usually the first opportunity most students will have to think critically about their beliefs. Most students come into the course with strong convictions about a lot of theological topics. But few of them have considered how one belief relates to another, or whether as a whole their beliefs about God, human beings, and the world are well grounded and can be held together coherently. It is exciting simply to witness those “aha” moments, when students discover the connections between, for example, anthropology and soteriology. Since we teach this course through the reading of great systematic theologians, I am lucky enough to be able to read and reread the masters of my discipline (e.g., Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, Schleiermacher, Barth) on a regular basis. This helps me in my own work. At the same time, it is thrilling to be able to help students read and appreciate the writing of great theologians. Finally, this course is one that consistently enables me to work on my own theology. In my lectures on each doctrine, I try to end with my own constructive position. So it is a course that forces me to be not just a historian of doctrine but also a theologian.

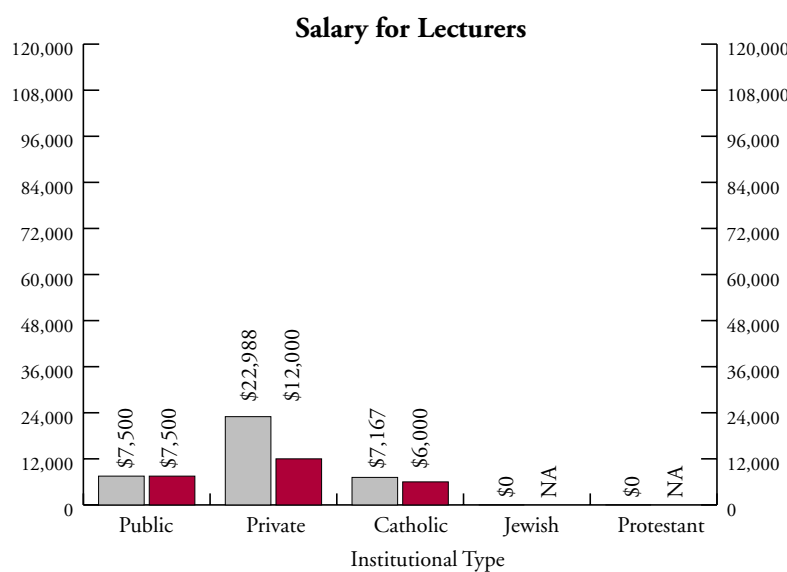
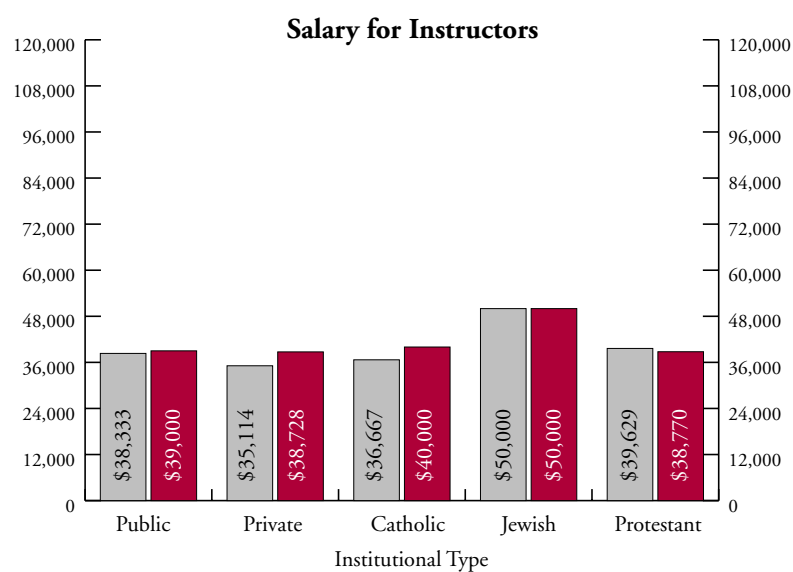
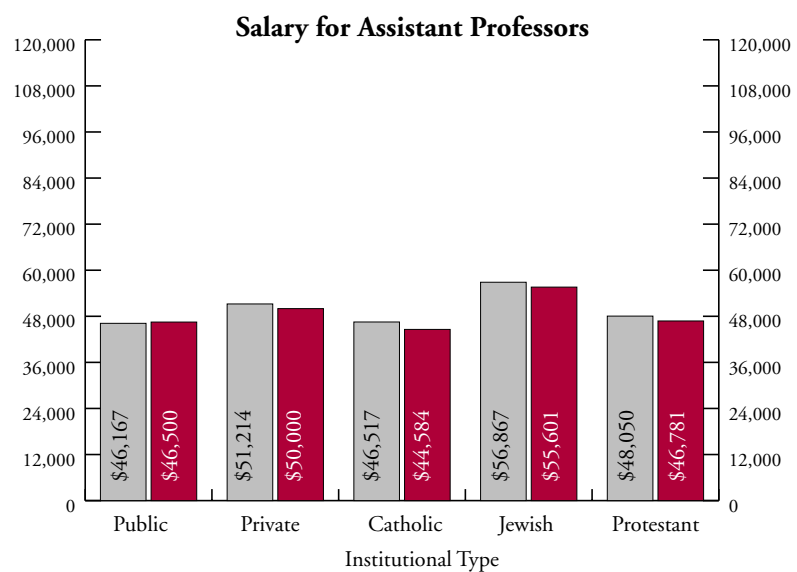
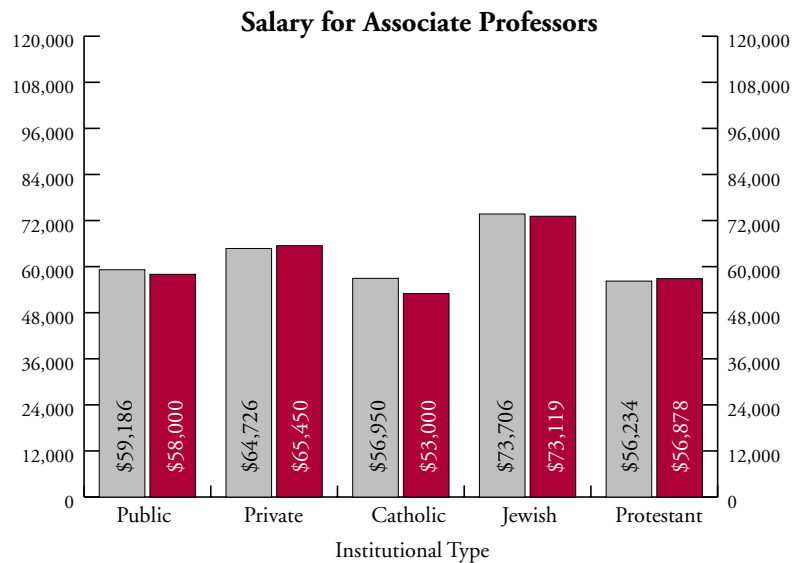
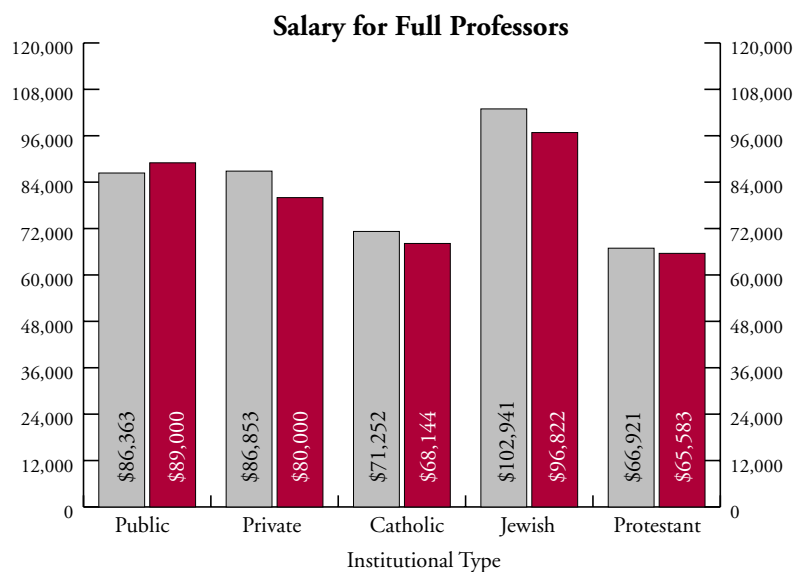
RSN: Can you tell us something about your interest in ecumenical theology?

DeVries: I have been privileged to represent my denomination (Presbyterian Church USA) in several different ecumenical endeavors: the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order in Santiago de Compostela in 1993, the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Zimbabwe in 1998, and for over a decade as one of the delegates of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches’ international dialogue with the Eastern Orthodox

See **DEVRIES** p.21

“I learned that a critical understanding of the history of doctrine was propaedeutic to creative theological construction — at least if one wished to maintain some form of continuity with earlier tradition.”

Faculty Salaries in Academic Doctoral Programs in Religion and Theology in the United States



Mean
 Median

Note: The survey collected salary information on 1,414 faculty in 53 programs.

Source: AAR Survey of Graduate Programs in Religion and Theology, 2002. For full survey results and analysis see www.aarweb.org/departments/census/graduate.

DEVRIES, from p.19

Church. There is certainly something wonderful about meeting Christian leaders and theologians from all over the world! But that alone would not justify the investment of time and money that the churches have put into this work in the last century. I am completely convinced that if the churches are to play a significant role in public life it will be as the result of broad ecumenical coalitions. The ecumenical goal of fostering the churches' common work toward peace and justice has achieved a measure of success; similar-

ly, the goal of church union has also moved forward, as witnessed by the uniting church movements in various countries, and documents like Faith and Order's "Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry."

Nonetheless, I think we cannot be nearly as optimistic about the possibility of reuniting the churches as the founders of the World Council of Churches were in the early twentieth century. Certain seemingly intractable differences in theology and practice stand in the way. It may seem strange, then, for a body like the World Alliance of Reformed Churches to invest

so much in bilateral dialogues with other world communions. The "convergence" or "consensus" statements on various doctrines that these dialogues produce do not seem to exert great influence over the member churches. (Perhaps with the exception of the 1999 joint declaration on justification of the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church, which certainly has been much discussed.) So why bother?

My own answer to this is something I learned from Schleiermacher. He argued that a theological understanding of contemporary Christian faith required both

dogmatics and church statistics. What he meant by "statistics" is not as boring as that sounds. He thought that church theologians needed to understand the relationship between their own churches and the larger reality of Christianity in the world. It is this big picture of Christianity as a global religion that is meant by the term "statistics." Only when we see ourselves as a part in relation to the larger whole can we have a proper understanding of our own particular identity. I completely agree! If you are a Presbyterian in Virginia or North Carolina, it may seem as if the Christian church stands or falls with a particular theological question currently up for consideration in the presbyteries or the general assembly. But when one considers the place of Presbyterians in relation to the larger Reformed world communion, even more to world-wide Christianity, a different perspective emerges. It has been invaluable to my own theological formation to spend significant periods of time over the last decade with Eastern Orthodox theologians, bishops, and metropolitans whose way of expressing the Christian faith is at times utterly alien to me (as is my own theology to them, I'm sure!). It helps me to appreciate what could be the unique Reformed contribution to contemporary Christian theology, and it helps me to remember that the majority of the world's Christians do not think about the faith in the way that I do.

If I may add one other thought: I have become increasingly convinced that ecumenical theology in the future must move beyond intramural discussions among Christians toward a deep engagement of Christianity with the world's other living faiths.

RSN: If you could spend an afternoon with John Calvin, what would you like to discuss with him?

DeVries: Certainly not double predestination! I guess since he, unlike Luther, was not inclined to talk about himself, I would probably try to find out more about his experiences — his conversion and his own life of faith. I would want to know what kinds of things kept him awake at night, what theological puzzles challenged him, that sort of thing. I'd also love to hear his thoughts on *Qohelet* — a book on which he did not write a commentary. RSN

CADWELL, from p.17

So, how do we find success, juggling commitments of time, knowledge, vocation, and faith? Obviously time management is important — something at which neither academics nor pastors seem very good. More importantly, I believe that we need to better learn a "bridge language" that will help those of us engaged in this juggling act to communicate effectively with those we encounter both in religious and university settings. We need to find a way to express more clearly why we are here and there, what we hope to accomplish, and what sort of effect we intend to have on the academy and in our religious communities. Of course the answer will be different for everyone, but ultimately we may just help people think differently about all manner of things religious and theological, whether academic or spiritual, which seems to me to be the point of it all in the first place. RSN



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RSN212

MOYER, from p.18

religion). As a result, instead of an adversarial or competitive relationship, we complement each other to benefit many of those students who are religious.

RSN: How do you attract student majors?

Moyer: I promote the department 24/7, and see myself as a team player in the larger university, trying to be visible and supportive of good things happening on campus. I promise, and faculty deliver, excellent teaching and outstanding service to each of our students. They then become our best recruiters of other students. In addition, I attend monthly advisor forums and work closely with professional advisors in the Advisement Center who counsel undecided students. Finally, we consciously maintain good connections with both campus religious organizations and community religious groups. Ultimately, the more students we attract to our introductory courses the greater will be the number of students who decide to major and minor with us.

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

Moyer: 1) Five senior faculty have retired in the last dozen years, including two in the past two years. The department is evolving and the challenge is to harness youthful idealism and experienced realism in order to move ahead together. 2) Our budgets have not recovered from the recent difficult economic times experienced in the

State of Missouri. 3) Our previous president of 12 years retired in June; he had been a strong supporter of religious studies. We are hopeful the new president will be just as supportive.

RSN: What advice would you give to faculty members as they deal with a chair?

Moyer: Even though I consider myself first and always a faculty member, I often say that I serve students, faculty, the administration, and the taxpayers. Faculty sometimes forget that chairs answer to all these constituencies, but that chairs always have faculty interests and concerns in mind. Faculty often tend to think and act as individuals developing themselves and their own record. Chairs tend to emphasize the department as a whole, trying to develop a consensus and build a team where everyone benefits by contributing to the team effort. If faculty could appreciate how hard chairs work behind the scenes to develop that team and could give an occasional word of appreciation, our job would be much easier and more rewarding.

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

Moyer: As a teacher and chair I have always loved to see students blossom and grow. As chair my greatest satisfaction is to see new faculty improve their teaching pedagogy, increase student learning, and develop themselves as both teachers and scholars. Ultimately, I try to make this an enjoyable place to teach, learn, and work. RSN



Illustration 3: The goddess Ugratara (sculpture in Tusahiti). Photo by Gudrun Bühnemann.

BÜHNEMANN, from p.15

empty niches, we can infer that Thanthu Darbar Hiti may have once accommodated 26 sculptures.

Although some research has been done on the sculptures of Tusahiti, most of them remain unidentified. The sculptures in the sunken fountain in Mohankalichowk of the Hanumandhoka Palace have not been documented at all because the fountain is located in a section of the palace which is strictly off-limits to visitors.

Although I have not been given permission to photograph Mohankalichowk Hiti myself, I was able to obtain photographs from the palace authorities. Based on these materials, I am now working on a book project on the Tantric iconography of the later Malla period. This period is characterized by many iconographic innovations not found in Indian iconography. These include new forms of bisexual and composite deities which have not yet been studied. RSN

CHALLENGER/THOMAS, from p.14

political power, and promote propaganda based on a literalistic interpretation of the Bible.

A Call to a Broader Agenda

What is called for is a renewed examination of higher education's relationship with matters of religion, faith, and spirituality. We might start by recognizing and acknowledging some of the critiques of secular culture, as well as the assumptions and anxieties about conservative religious practices and politics. Religious conservatives criticize the academy for its "values-neutral" stance, yet most faculty members see themselves as principled individuals who care deeply about the personal and social development of their students. What many faculty have disciplined themselves to do, however, is bracket their own beliefs and assumptions so that their research and teaching is unfet-

tered. We can explore interdisciplinary ways to study and discuss religion on campus and to promote learning within and across disciplines about issues that have religious implications. We can test ways to be open to religious insights without succumbing to pressure to chill academic freedom or advance specific religious views. We can address the changing role of faculty in this regard. And we can make a genuine commitment to deliberative democracy, which means developing models of democratic discourse that work on our campuses and in this changing society. Without some model of democratic discourse, the relationship between those motivated by religious beliefs and those motivated by other values will be defined by who is in the majority, who is in power — a rule that applies both in public life and on campus. What is becoming clear is that this impasse is unacceptable to both the nation and the academy. RSN

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