2008 CALL FOR PAPERS

Annual Meeting Call for Papers

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Spotlight on Theological Education:
Teaching Critical Thinking and Praxis
2008 Member Calendar

January
Religious Studies News January issue, including the Annual Meeting Call for Papers, results of the officer elections, and the 2007 Annual Report.

January 1. Annual term of membership begins for the 11,000 members of the AAR, the largest and most inclusive association of religion scholars in the world.

January 10. Excellence in Teaching award nominations due. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/Programs/Awards/Teaching_Awards.

January 25. Martin E. Marty Public Understanding of Religion Award nominations due. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/Programs/Awards/Marty_Award.

January 26. Nominations Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

For more information on AAR committee meetings, see www.aarweb.org/Meetings/committee.asp.

February
February 1. Nominations due for First Book in the History of Religions award. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/Programs/Awards/Book_Awards/hudle-firstbook.asp.

February 1–2. Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

February 1–2. International Connections Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

February 1–2. Theological Education Steering Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

February 2–3. Academic Relations Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

February 8–9. Public Understanding of Religion Committee meeting, Boston, MA.

February 8–9. Status of Women in the Profession Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

February 9–10. Teaching and Learning Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

February 9–10. Status of LGBT Persons in the Profession Task Force meeting, Atlanta, GA.

February 9–10. Graduate Student Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

February 15. Submissions for the May 2008 issue of Religious Studies News due. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/Publications/RSN.

February 15. Job Placement Task Force meeting, Atlanta, GA.

February 16. Executive Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

February 25. 2008 Annual Meeting proposals due to program unit chairs.

February 29–March 1. Religion in the Schools Task Force meeting, Cambridge, MA.

(More information on AAR committee meetings can be found at www.aarweb.org/Meetings/committee.asp.)

March

Spotlight on Theological Education.


March 6. Humanities Advocacy Day, an event organized by the National Humanities Alliance and cosponsored by the AAR and more than 20 organizations to promote support for the National Endowment for the Humanities. For more information, see www.nhfaonline.org.

March 7–9. Southeast regional meeting, Atlanta, GA.

March 14–16. Southwest regional meeting, Dallas, TX.

March 15. Publications Committee meeting, New York, NY.


March 27–28. Mid-Atlantic regional meeting, New Brunswick, NJ.

March 28–29. Rocky Mountains–Great Plains regional meeting, Denver, CO.

March 28–29. Upper Midwest regional meeting, St. Paul, MN.

March 29–30. Governance Task Force meeting, Atlanta, GA.

March 29–31. Western regional meeting, Pasadena, CA.

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

April
April Meeting registration materials mailed.

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

April 4–5. Midwest regional meeting, River Forest, IL.

April 11. Regionally Elected Directors meeting, Atlanta, GA.

April 11. Executive Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

April 12–13. Spring Board of Directors meeting, Atlanta, GA.


April 21. Registration for the Employment Information Services Center opens.

April 25–26. History of Religions Jury meeting, Atlanta, GA.

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

May

May 1. Nominations (including self-nominations) for committee appointments requested.

May 1. Annual Meeting Additional Meeting requests due for priority consideration.

May 2–4. Northwest regional meeting, Newberg, OR.

May 15. Change of address for priority receipt of the Annual Meeting Program Planner. Program Planners will be mailed to members in late May.

(For more Annual Meeting information, see www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting/Current_Meeting/).

June

June 15. Membership renewal deadline for 2008 Annual Meeting participants.

June 15. Submission deadline for the October issue of Religious Studies News. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/Publications/RSN.

July
Annual Meeting program goes online.

July 1. New fiscal year begins.

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

August
August 1. Research Grant applications due. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/Programs/Grants/.

August 15. Membership renewal period for 2008 begins.

September
Spotlight on Teaching Fall issue.

October
Religious Studies News October issue.

October 15. Submissions for the January 2009 issue of Religious Studies News due. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/Publications/RSN.

October 30. Regionally Elected Directors meeting, Chicago, IL.

October 30. Executive Committee meeting, Chicago, IL.

October 31. Full Board of Directors meeting, Chicago, IL.

October 31. Chairs Workshop at the Annual Meeting, Chapel Hill, NC.

TBD. EIS preregistration closes.

November
November 1. Research Grant Awards announced.

November 1–3. Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL. The AAR Annual Meeting, the world’s largest gathering of scholars of religion, anticipates some 5,000 registrants, 200 publishers, and 125 hiring departments.

November 14. New program unit proposals due.

TBA. Annual Business Meeting at the Annual Meeting. See the Program Planner for day and time.

December

December 12–13. Program Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

December 15. Submissions for the March 2009 issue of Religious Studies News due. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/Publications/RSN.


And keep in mind throughout the year...

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

In the Field.

News of events and opportunities for scholars of religion. In the Field is a members-only 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/In_the_Field/submit1.asp.

Openings: Employment Opportunities for Scholars of Religion. Openings is a members-only publication listing job announcements in areas of interest to members. Issues are available online from the first through the last day of the month. Submit announcements online, and review policies and pricing, at www.aarweb.org/Publications/Openings/submitad1.asp.
Questions about the Call

The work of the program unit is coordinated by the chair(s) and a steering committee who design the sessions and make the decisions about which proposals will eventually be on the program. Each proposal is carefully refereed, usually in an anonymous procedure (i.e., without the name of the proposer being provided to the referee). All proposals, abstracts, and completed participant information (as well as any questions you may have) should be sent to the individual(s) named in this Call; this occurs automatically in the online system (OP3).

Please inquire with the appropriate unit chair about the amount of time granted for your presentation, and by what date the respondent (if any) must receive your completed paper.

Questions about the Annual Meeting

Concerns of a general nature may be sent to the AAR executive office to the attention of the Director of Meetings and Marketing, 825 Houston Mill Road NE, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30329, USA; W: 404-727-3049; F: 404-727-7959; annualmeeting@aarweb.org

Additional Meetings

Organizations, persons, or program units wishing to plan receptions and other meetings before, during, or after the Annual Meeting should go online to www.aarweb.org after January 15, 2008. This website will have information regarding guidelines, necessary forms, and costs to request Additional Meeting space at the Annual Meeting and/or how to announce your event in the Annual Meeting Program Planner.

Questions should be directed to Experient, Inc., at 314-997-1500 after January 15, 2008. Written requests can be sent to Experient, Inc., 4 Cirplacel Drive, Suite 480, St. Louis, MO 63141-7062, or aar@experient-inc.com.

The deadline for priority scheduling of Additional Meeting requests is May 1, 2008. Requests after that date will be accommodated as space allows.

Guidelines for Submitting Proposals

Step 1: Find a topic in the call that interests you. Determine which type of proposal you wish to submit.

- Individual paper proposal — a paper written by you that will present in response to a theme within a unit’s call.
- Individual panel proposal — a unit has placed a call for scholars willing to speak (not present a paper) about a certain theme and you wish to participate (this is rare).
- Prearranged papers session proposal — a proposal for a complete session of different papers on a theme, complete with a presider, paper presentations, and respondent.
- Prearranged panel session proposal — a proposal of a complete session, including a presider, list of panelists, and a respondent; all of whom will speak on a common theme.

Step 2: Write your proposal and 150-word abstract. You have 1,000 words to make the case for your proposal. Prearranged papers sessions require a separate 1,000-word proposal for each paper in the session. The abstract will be listed in the online Program Planner.

Step 3: Submit your proposal via the method request by the program unit no later than February 25, 2008. A participant form is required for any proposal submitted outside of the online system. Carefully note any audiovisual you require before you submit your proposal.

- OP3 — Go to www.aarweb.org and submit your 1,000-word proposal and 150-word abstract via the Online Paper/Panel Proposal (OP3) system.
- N.B. Do not place your name or other identifying remarks in the proposal field or abstract field in OP3; this may endanger the anonymous review process of the unit. Your identification is sent automatically with the proposal.
- E-mail — Send your 1,000-word proposal and 150-word abstract within the BODY of ONE single e-mail to the contacts listed in the unit’s call (usually the chairs). Include the “Participant Form for E-Mail Submission” available at www.aarweb.org.
- E-mail with attachments — Submit your 1,000-word proposal, 150-word abstract, and participant form as Microsoft Word attachments via one single e-mail and send it to the contacts listed in the unit’s call.
- For other submission formats, please visit www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting/Current_Meeting/Call_for_Papers/.

Step 4: Notification of your proposal’s acceptance status for the Annual Meeting program will be sent by April 1, 2008.

Participation Requirements at the Annual Meeting:

- Membership is not required to submit a proposal in response to the Call for Papers. However, all participants accepted to the program must be current (2008) AAR members and registered for the Annual Meeting by June 15, 2008.
- Participants may appear no more than two times in any capacity (e.g., paper presenter, panelist, presider, or respondent). The only exception is business meeting presiders.
- A person can have only one role in a session. You cannot preside and present a paper in the same session.
- People can submit no more than two proposals in response to the Call for Papers. This includes submitting the same proposal to two separate units or two different proposals to two different units.

Wildcard Sessions

Wildcard sessions are intended to be experimental, creative, or exploratory sessions that address an area of interest that does not naturally fall within the purview of an existing program unit. These sessions, in the third year of a three-year experiment, offer members direct access to the Annual Meeting program outside of the normal program unit structure.

Guidelines for Wildcards:

- All wildcard sessions are 90 minutes in length and will be scheduled for Sunday afternoon at the Annual Meeting.
- Wildcard sessions are accepted through OP3 only.

2008 Calendar of Deadlines

February 25, 2008
Deadline for proposals, participant forms, and abstracts to be received by program unit chairs.

April 1, 2008
Notification of acceptance (or not) of proposals by program unit chairs. All program participants must renew/establish 2008 AAR memberships in order to participate on the program.

April 1, 2008
Program unit chairs submit session request information (Program Planner copy, abstracts, participant forms) to AAR executive office online.

April 21, 2008
Annual Meeting and hotel registration opens. Forms available online and in the April mailing.

May 1, 2008
Deadline for submission of Additional Meeting request forms. Forms are available online at www.aarweb.org beginning January 15.

June 15, 2008
Deadline for participants to renew their AAR membership and be preregistered for the meeting. Names of participants not registered will be removed from the Program Planner.

July 1, 2008
Deadline for participants to request audiovisual equipment at the Annual Meeting.

November 1–3, 2008
AAR Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.
Christian Systematic Theology Section

Gerard Loughlin, Durham University, gerard.loughlin@durham.ac.uk; Joy McDouggall, Emory University, jmcdo112@emory.edu.

General Theme: Christian Doctrine and Judaism. We invite creative proposals (not merely descriptive or historical) on a wide range of approaches exploring the relationship between Christian doctrine and Judaism. We seek proposals for individual papers, entire sessions, or panels (e.g., on books, thinkers, or topics that relate to our general theme). Suggested topics include: Jewish and Christian conceptions of God and G–d; the relationship between the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, e.g., differing interpretations of Isaiah’s “suffering servant”; grace and covenant; Jesus as Messiah and/or the “messianic” in Western thought and culture; Jewish readings of the Christian Paul (e.g., Jacob Taubes) and Christian readings of the Jewish Paul; the church and Israel; election and “chosenness”; the Shohah as crisis for Jewish and Christian thought; and the relationships between Sophia, Shekinah, Ruach, and Holy Spirit. We also invite proposals on these or other topics for a co-sponsored session with the Scriptural Reasoning Group. These latter proposals should indicate the specific texts that will be addressed. Proposals from South Asian scholars, or scholars working on South Asian theology on this theme, are especially welcome. For planning purposes our general theme for 2009 will be “creation and destruction.”

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Ethics Section

Jane Hicks, Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, jhicks@crcds.edu; Miguel A. De La Torre, Iliff School of Theology, mdlazarro@iliff.edu.

The Ethics Section invites proposals providing ethical analyses from all religious traditions and diverse ethical methodologies in response to the following themes: 1) Ethics and the Vote 2008: electoral “dirty tricks,” voter responsibility, race and gender in the context of elections, campaign governance, etc.; 2) Political Action and Religious Ethics in South Asia: emerging patterns of intersection and political practice within and among religious traditions such as Jainism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam; 3) Celebrating the Work of Emilie Townson: Womanist Contributions to Christian and Social Ethics (co-sponsored with the Womanist Group); 4) The Politics of Immigration in Middle America: scapegoating, electoral manipulation, economic dislocation, intergroup tensions, responses by religious communities, etc.; 5) Post-Genomics: reproductive technologies, human genetic manipulation, commercially available access to one’s genetic medical applications, etc.; 6) Religion and Business Ethics: the role of religion in forming ethics in business, religious, and ethnic marketing, business ethics of religious organizations, corporate responsibility across cultures and religions; and 7) Papers of particular excellence on other topics and panel proposals are also invited. All proposals should identify the methodology used and contribution of the argument to current academic conversations. Online submissions only. Proposals for co-sponsored sessions should be sent to both sponsoring program units.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Comparative Studies in Religion Section

Tracy Pinchman, Loyola University, tpinchm@luc.edu; Selva J. Raj, Albion College, sraj@albion.edu.

We seek proposals that provide occasion for comparative inquiry, engaging two or more religious traditions around a common topic and reflecting critically on the conceptual tools employed in the inquiry. While we accept individual paper proposals, we strongly encourage group proposals in the form of thematic paper sessions (maximum four presenters, a presider and a respondent) or panel sessions (maximum six presenters). We reserve the right to add individuals to any group proposal. Themes proposed for the 2008 meeting, with organizers identified in parentheses, are below. Please contact the listed organizers if you wish to take part in any of the proposed sessions. Additional proposals for comparative panels and sessions are welcome: 1) Problematizing the language of religious violence (Jacob Knight, jknight@iliff.edu); 2) Comparative folklore (Corinne Dempsey, Corinne.Dempsey@ ucgp.org); 3) Globalization and religion (Selva Raj, sraj@albion.edu); 4) Religious processes (Anne Bullock, abullock@ lacrowd.com); 5) Religion and law (Jim Lewis, j.lewis@bethel.edu); 6) Childbirth and the conception of the fetus (L. Wilson, wilsonma@muhh.edu); 7) Visual images and religious imagination (George Pati, george.pati@walpo.edu); 8) New religious movements and science (Mark Macwilliams, mmacwilliams@stanford.edu); 9) Dreaming visions in comparative perspective (Robert Campany, campany@ucsc.edu); and 10) Clifford Geertz’s contributions to the study of religion (Tracy Pinchman, tpinchm@luc.edu).

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Buddhism Section

Janet Gyatso, Harvard University, jgyatso@hds.harvard.edu; Tim Ingles, University of Wisconsin, Madison, tingles@wisc.edu.

In response to the AAR’s international focus on South Asia for 2008, the Buddhism Section solicits fully formed panels as well as individual paper proposals that address the role of South Asian persons, practices, and institutions in Buddhism and/or Buddhist studies. Panels and individual papers on other topics are also invited. Proposals are especially sought that would make creative use of the special 90-minute sessions now available at the Annual Meeting. Proposals are also sought for sessions to review the significance and impact of a major book or figure in the field of Buddhist studies. Topics suggested in this year’s business meeting of the section included: communities of practice and discourse formation; food in Buddhism; Burmese Buddhist literary genres; Buddhist imaginations of other religions; theology, text, and law; restorations of Buddhist sites; critical engagements with Benedict Anderson’s Imagined Communities; Buddhism and racialization; preservation and restoration of Buddhist sites; and translation in the history of Buddhism.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

North American Religions Section

Kathleen Flake, Vanderbilt Divinity School, kflake@vanderbilt.edu; Philip Goff, Indiana University and Purdue University, Indianapolis, pgoff2@lafayette.edu.

The North American Religions Section seeks to advance the study of religions in the United States, Canada, and Mexico by promoting innovative scholarship across disciplinary and national boundaries. This year we especially seek proposals related to: Immigration and migration (especially the Great Migration); Catholicism; the World’s Parliament of Religion (particularly regarding South Asian religions); newer religious movements; the religious dimensions of class and ethnicity; and the relation of religion to violence. Also, we invite papers on the role of religion in the 2008 U.S. presidential election. In recognition of the locale of our next meeting, the section welcomes proposals on these topics as they relate to the greater Chicago region. As always, we seek proposals that consider the relation between history and ethnography in the study of North American religions or offer critical reflections on key words in the study of American religion. To spur interactive sessions, we seek proposals for round tables, focus panels, and musical performances, workshops, and other appropriate formats, as well as more traditional presentations. To that end, where complete panels are proposed, please note that we may accept only portions of the proposal and add to the panel independently submitted proposals.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

History of Christianity Section

Martha L. Finch, Missouri State University, martha Finch@missourisstate.edu; Nathan Rein, Ursinus College, nrein@ursinus.edu.

The History of Christianity Section seeks to present innovative and engaging research in the history, culture, and development of Christianity from its origins to the present, both local and global, while at the same time promoting interdisciplinary dialogue among the fields of religious studies, history, ritual studies, art history, anthropological, and historical theology. We seek proposals for individual papers or entire panels on the following topics: Christians and Christianity in South Asia; Christianity and the emergence of modern science; and practices of seeing in the history of Christianity. We will consider proposals on other topics as well. Papers should be conceived for an effective 15-minute presentation. We also solicit innovative proposals for participation in a workshop-style, interactive session on Designing and Teaching the History of Christianity Course: Practical Challenges, for which panelists should be prepared to present 10-minute rationales for their courses and submit manuscripts as syl- labi ahead of time. All proposals must be submitted online via OP3 and will be evaluated in anonymous peer review by the section steering committee.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:
Philosophy of Religion Section
Joseph Prabhu, California State University, Los Angeles, jprabhu@calstatela.edu. Ludger Viehues, Yale University, ludger.viehues@yale.edu.

This section invites proposals on the following topics: 1) Martha Nussbaum, The Clash Within; 2) John Clayton, Reasons, Reactions and Gods; 3) Mark C. Taylor, After God; 4) Human rights and global solidarity; 5) Thomist and neo-Thomist responses to the nature/grace distinction; 6) Challenges to religion from evolutionary biology; and 7) The work of Jean-Luc Nancy; and 8) Approaches to classical problems like normativity (do we need it?), ineffability (what can we say about it?), tragedy, and suffering.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Religion and Politics Section
Barbara A. McGraw, Saint Mary’s College of California, bcmcgraw90@mac.com. Andrew R. Murphy, Valparaiso University, andrew.murphy@valpo.edu.

In addition to receiving proposals on topics generally in the purview of this unit (which encompasses both domestic and international issues), this year we also are interested in: 1) U.S. religion(s) and the 2008 election(s); 2) Political theologies and religious pluralism; 3) Biblical and creative directions in U.S. church-state relations on cutting-edge issues (such as religion and the military; religion and government oversight of faith-related social service agencies; conscientious objection and healthcare providers, among other topics); and 4) Multifaith perspectives and globalization, generally, including as specific suggestions interfaith and multifaith organizing in a global context as a way of addressing social conflict (a possible co-sponsored session with the Religion, Social Conflict, and Peace Group), and liberalism and global human rights.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Religion in South Asia Section
John E. Cort, Denison University, corte@denison.edu. Robin Rinehart, Lafayette College, rinehart@lafayette.edu.

We invite proposals for fully developed paper or panel sessions on any aspect of religious studies in South Asia — textual, graphic, visual, historical, philosophical, pedagogical, comparative, etc. We also consider individual paper proposals, but strongly encourage those to submit complete paper or panel sessions whenever possible. Interdisciplinary approaches, multireligion perspectives, and creative formats are encouraged. Specific topics suggested by Religion in South Asia Section members include: God as child (Eliza Kent); karma and rebirth; modern interpretations (Kay Jodlans); image and text — wild men and boogeymen (Lorilai Bernacki); caste, Dalits, and Christianity (Selva Raj); globalization and religion in South Asia (Selva Raj); the Swaminarayan movement (Jack Hewley); yoga and women (Chris Chapple); South Asian religions in Chicago; religious buildings: changing uses and competing claims; sainthood and character in South Asian religions/visual culture; prosperity and the transformation of sacred space; South Asian religions through their art and architecture; reading novels religiously; and curatorial studies, artist-translation, and religion in South Asia. In addition, please consult the Religion in South Asia Section’s website, www.mountclair.edu/RISA, and list serve, RISA-L, for a continually evolving list of additional paper or panel session ideas.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Study of Islam Section
Nelly Van Doorn-Harder, Valparaiso University, nelly.vandoorn@valpo.edu. Omar Safi, University of North Carolina, omarsafi@email.unc.edu.

The Study of Islam Section encourages paper proposals in all areas of Islamic studies. Successful proposals will reflect theoretical and methodological sophistication, as well as innovative examinations of Islamic practices and texts. As always, we welcome submissions dealing with the Qur’an, Islamic law, philosophy, jurisprudence, Sufism, rituals, gender and sexuality constructions, engagement with modernity, teaching Islam, interfaith, and other areas of general interest. Furthermore we encourage proposals dealing with Shi‘ism within and across these areas. In addition, we also invite panels on the following particular themes: theory and method in the study of Islam; gender theories in the study of Islam; environmental and bioethical issues; and intersections of scholarship and community involvement and activism. In commemoration of Rumi’s 800th birthday anniversary we also solicit proposals representing the diversity of scholarship about the poet (for example, contemporary images of Rumi, his interpretation of the Qur’an). Since the AAR 2008 will be on South Asia and the Annual Meeting will take place in Chicago, topics related to South Asian Islam (for example, artistic expressions, relations with other parts of the Muslim world, and South Asian communities in the United States), and proposals on the Chicago Muslim community are particularly welcome.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Study of Judaism Section
Aryeh Cohen, American Jewish University, arge@ajuda.edu. Martin Kayka, Florida State University, mkaek@fsu.edu.

We invite proposals on the following topics: 1) Pedagogy (either in the context of an introductory class to Judaism or the Judaism segment of a “world religions” class); 2) Judaism in the history of “History of Religions;” 3) Literary approaches to the study of Judaism; 4) Prophesy; 5) Prayer; 6) The issue of authenticity in classical Jewish texts; 7) Modern interpretations of premodern Judaism, and their discontents; 8) Jews in and new religious movements; and 9) Judaism and science, wisdom, or other forms of “secular” knowledge. As always, the Study of Judaism Section at the AAR aims to present panels that showcase a wide array of methodological and historical subfields in the study of Judaism. And so we encourage the submission of papers and panels on topics other than those listed above; we especially encourage the submission of papers/papers that broaden the horizons of these subfields, as well as the submission of panels that treat a single topic from a variety of methodological approaches and/or historical periods.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Teaching Religion Section
Fran Grace, University of Redlands, fran_grace@redlands.edu. Joseph Favazza, Stonehill College, jfavazza@stonehill.edu.

The Teaching Religion Section critically examines pedagogical theory and practice. We welcome proposals that join teaching practice with the scholarship of teaching and learning, and model engaged teaching, in these areas: 1) Teaching the religions of South Asia; 2) Implications for teaching from the Spirituality in Higher Education report by UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute (2005); 3) Metaphors for teaching: what metaphor best captures you as a teacher, how do you embody it, and how might it inform the practice of teaching?; 4) Religious literacy: what should students know and how do they know when they know it?; 5) Teaching that creates “high-intensity dissonance” (Kiely, 2006) to shift the parameters of student thinking; and 6) For a possible co-sponsored panel with the Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Group, the challenges and opportunities of teaching Holocaust and/or genocide courses across religious studies disciplines. We also will co-sponsor a panel with the Death, Dying and Beyond Consultation to celebrate the publication of Teaching Death and Dying. Finally, we invite proposals on a range of teaching topics (e.g., teaching during an election year; teaching Eastern Orthodox Christianity; teaching outside the classroom) for a lunch-hour session to be co-sponsored with the Wabash Center.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Women and Religion Section
Lauri Zoloth, Northwestern University, zoloth@northwestern.edu. Michelene Pesantubbee, University of Iowa, micheleine-pesantubbee@uiowa.edu.

The Women and Religion Section invites papers and panels from a variety of religious traditions and of methodologies that explore women’s experiences in the following topics: 1) Women and scholarship (e.g., what drives women’s scholarship? what is an appropriate discussion for scholarship in women’s lives?); 2) The future of Pentecostalism and global Christianity (Christianity in the twenty-first century will be mostly in the global South and more likely to be Pentecostal. What does that mean for women?); 3) The relationship between women, faith, and reform in the city of Chicago (e.g., urban renewal, immigration, neighborhoods, and women’s leadership in faith communities, etc.). 4) Women and politics: the 2008 election; 5) South Asia (e.g., studies on intersectionality of religion/islam, women, regional politics, and local community issues will be especially welcome); and 6) Women in new religions (e.g., what categories of comparison are appropriate? Studies that reassess the following categories will be especially welcome: religious, interreligious, multireligious, and collaborative work among women across religious traditions in NGOs).

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

KEY TO SYMBOLS:

Surface mail
= OP3
= E-mail
= E-mail with attachment

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Call for Papers
African Religions Group

Laura S. Grillo, Pacifica Graduate Institute, lgrillo@pacificag.edu, Tapiwa Mucherera, Asbury Theological Seminary, tapiwa_mucherera@asburyseminary.edu.

The African Religions Group encourages critical inquiry about religions originating in Africa as well as those practiced there. Proposals should go beyond description, analyzing conceptual tools and methods employed. We invite individual papers and panels on: 1) Religion and media technologies; tensions between online/offline religion; 2) Crisis in education and the advance of faith-based universities; 3) Shari’a law and politics in Africa; 4) The Darfur crisis; 5) Myths and Gender; 6) Co-sponsored session with the Anthropology of Religion Group: Independent Church Movements (ICMs) in Africa and the African Diaspora: how do they compare, and what approaches promote fruitful interdisciplinary research; and 7) In honor of the AAR’s special focus on South Asia, the Presence of India in Africa (co-sponsored with the Hinduism Group): distinctive forms of Hinduism in Africa (especially countries with significant Indian populations), and possible mutual influences between African traditions and Hinduism on the continent, e.g., inclusive “pantheons” or religious iconography.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Anthropology of Religion Group

J. Shawn Landres, Synagogue 3000 and UCLA Center for Jewish Studies, shawn@landres.com, Rebecca Sachs Norris, Merrimack College, norrisr@merrimack.edu.

We invite proposals from across anthropology and religion, focusing this year on the following themes: 1) Risk and Religious ethnography of dangerous people or groups, risk in fieldwork, other aspects of anthropological and religion; and 2) Dilemmas of the Practicing Scholar: how has participant observation affected our own observance and participation in religious life?; 3) Independent Church Movements (ICMs) in Africa and the African Diaspora: co-sponsored with the African Religions Group: how are ICMs in Africa and its diaspora similar, different, or both, and what approaches might scholars employ to promote fruitful interdisciplinary research on this topic?; and 4) For the 2008 area focus on South Asia, we seek proposals related to minority religions and religious minorities, e.g., other than solely on Hinduism/Islam. We encourage submissions on other topics as well, from scholars using anthropological theory and methods—not only ethnography—to study diverse traditions, regions, and eras.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Group

Nami Kim, Spelman College, nkim@spelman.edu, Khyati Joshi, Fairleigh Dickinson University, khyati_joshi@fairleigh.edu.

We invite and welcome individual paper and panel proposals that address: 1) The diverse Asian North American religious experiences/traditions, e.g., Muslim, Hindu, and Judaism; 2) A panel review of a documentary of API communities and their religious practices; 3) Issues of religious xenophobia in the North American context; 4) Proposals addressing issues emerging from critical engagement with queer theory from API perspective, especially from the site in which queer theory, postcolonial, transnational, and feminist theories intersect; 5) Proposals examining various religious practices and religious identities as constructed within Asian North American communities; 6) Panels exploring issues of religious privilege; 7) With AAR focus on South Asia, proposals engaged with works of postcolonial, feminist, political, and religious scholars from South Asia; and 8) Any other critical aspects of Asian North American religion/s, culture, and society.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Augustine and Augustinianisms Group

Robert F. Kennedy, St. Francis Xavier University, rkennedy@sfu.ca, Kim Paffenroth, Iona College, kpaffenroth@iona.edu.

Papers are invited on the theme of Augustine and the Secular. Recent books by Peter Iver Kaufman and Robert Markus have reopened the question of the appropriation of Augustine’s political thought in modern democracies. There has also been attention to Augustine’s views on the place of “pagan” thought in Christian education. We welcome papers on these and other related issues, including papers that address a broader understanding of secularity; for example, in Augustine’s treatment of time or his spirituality.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Bioethics and Religion Group

Swasti Bhattacharyya, Buena Vista University, bhattacharyya@bvu.edu, Aline Kalbian, Florida State University, akalbian@mail.fsu.edu.

The Bioethics and Religion Group invites papers that explore and examine bioethical issues from a variety of religious perspectives. We encourage diverse methodological, textual, historical, and social approaches, as well as cross-cultural, class, and gender analysis. A second session, co-sponsored with the Childhood Studies Consultation, will focus on pediatric ethics and religious and ethical under-
standings of children, ethics, and modern medicine. This session will combine invited panelists and submitted papers.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

- Email
- OP3

Call for Papers

Black Theology Group

Stephen G. Ray, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, ray@ltsp.edu; Stacey Floyd-Thomas, Brite Divinity School, S.Floyd-Thomas@tcu.edu.

The Black Theology Group seeks panel and paper submissions that: 1) Explore black theological thought that troubles notions and dismantles myths about the religious and social commitments of Howard Thurman and Martin Luther King Jr.; 2) Interrogate the intersections of black religious thought and public policy (e.g., healthcare, war, global economy, and public discourse); and 3) For a joint session co-sponsored with the Womanist Approaches to Religion and Culture and Men’s Studies in Religion Groups, address the topic Gendered Conversations: Between Black Females and Males. These papers should deal with the following questions: how do we think of ourselves as “women” and “men” in the social context of ongoing sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, and heterosexism? how do black women and men hold a credible conversation on masculinity and womanhood with each other?

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

- Email
- OP3

Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis Group

Lisa Dahlh, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, llda@trinitylutheranseminary.edu; Lori Brandt Hale, Augsburg College, bale@augsburg.edu.

Bonhoeffer’s work and life were informed by his time in America (in 1930–31, 1939). We invite papers that examine this formative period for Bonhoeffer and his development of his later choices — and that consider not only his time in New York, but his travels across the continent, connections with Koinonia Farms (for example), and his important friendships. His concern with “Protestantism without Reformation” may be of particular interest, especially in the ways that it resonates with contemporary issues and the political climate, in correlation with the U.S. federal elections. Thus, we also welcome papers that put Bonhoeffer in conversation with issues such as ecology (global climate change), war (Iraq) and racism. Additionally, we are pleased to announce a joint session with the Religion and Culture and Men’s Studies in Religion Groups, collaborating with the Daoist Studies Group, attending to the OP3 system only. Thematic paper sessions: abstract and paper proposals; panel proposal: abstract and names.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

- Email
- OP3

Buddhist Critical-Constructive Reflection Group

Roger Jackson, Carleton College, rjack-son@carleton.edu; John J. Makowski, Boston College, makowski@bc.edu.

The Buddhist Critical-Constructive Reflection Group explores how the modern academic study of Buddhism may inform Buddhist understandings today, and how Buddhist understandings may help address contemporary problems in philosophy, religion, and society. We invite paper or panel proposals on the following: 1) New Buddhist reflections on religious diversity: either inter-religious (Buddhist and non-Buddhist) or intrareligious (among different Buddhist traditions); 2) Comparative theology in Buddhist form: how specific aspects of a non-Buddhist religion may shine new light on Buddhist self-understanding; 3) Buddhist academic scholars as resources for Buddhist communities: intellectual and cultural issues raised by particular examples; and 4) Buddhist ethics (as opposed to contemporary intellectual or social issue.

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SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

- Email
- OP3

Christian Spirituality Group

Arthur G. Holder, Graduate Theological Union, aholder@gtu.edu; Wendy Wright, Creighton University, wwwwright@creighton.edu.

We welcome proposals that explore the relationship between the academic study of Christian spirituality and its practice, as well as proposals that employ multidisciplinary perspectives. We particularly invite proposals on the following themes: 1) Esos and Christian spirituality; 2) The recovery of the monastic spirit in Christianity: old and “new” monasticism; 3) The spirituality of the Christian missionary encounter (especially in South Asia); 4) Christian pilgrimage in cross-cultural perspective; and 5) For a co-sponsored session with the Reformed Theology and History Group: Christian spiritual practices in the Reformed traditions, such as Scripture reading, expository preaching, pastoral prayer, public confession, Holy Communion and baptism, as well as mass social movements such as abortion and suffrage, and (in the nineteenth century) missionary societies for clergy and laity.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

- Email
- OP3

Comparative Religious Ethics Group

Aaron Stalnaker, Indiana University, astaln@indiana.edu.

We encourage submissions, both integrated sessions and individual proposals, that explicitly compare positions or themes from diverse religious thinkers or groups, and which also investigate broader methodological questions. This year we especially invite papers that analyze moral ethnography as a form of comparative religious ethics, for example in recent works on South Asian religions. We also solicit proposals on other topics, such as intersections between comparative religious ethics and political theology; moral outrage, zeal, and religious extremism in comparative perspective; the relations between comparative religious ethics, philosophico-religious, comparative theology, and interreligious dialogue, especially with regard to normativity, presuppositions, and scholarly stance; and linguistic issues in comparative ethics, including semantics, metaphor, and translation.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

- Email
- OP3

Comparative Spirituality Group

Roger Jackson and Mary Bosworth.

We invite proposals that explore the relationship between the academic study of Christian spirituality and its practice, as well as proposals that employ multidisciplinary perspectives. We particularly invite proposals on the following themes: 1) Esos and Christian spirituality; 2) The recovery of the monastic spirit in Christianity: old and “new” monasticism; 3) The spirituality of the Christian missionary encounter (especially in South Asia); 4) Christian pilgrimage in cross-cultural perspective; and 5) For a co-sponsored session with the Reformed Theology and History Group: Christian spiritual practices in the Reformed traditions, such as Scripture reading, expository preaching, pastoral prayer, public confession, Holy Communion and baptism, as well as mass social movements such as abortion and suffrage, and (in the nineteenth century) missionary societies for clergy and laity.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

- Email
- OP3

Comparative Theology Group

Deepak Sarma, Case Western Reserve University, deepak.sarma@case.edu; Kurt Anders Richardson, McMaster University, kurt@mcmaster.ca.

The Comparative Theology Group is currently theological, interreligious, and comparative. The group seeks proposals that combine specific, interreligious, comparative study with methodological reflection. Full, multiperson proposals are preferred. Suggested topics include: saba (verbal testimony) from multiple religious perspectives; the critical study of religious and comparative theology; European discourse on comparative theology; learning theologically from the religious “other”; power relations in comparative theological discourse; multiple religious belonging; comparative theology and theology of religions; “comparative theology” in traditions other than Christianity; debating truth claims; identity and conversion, religious education, etc. Online submission through the OP3 system only. Thematic paper sessions: abstract and paper proposals; panel proposal: abstract and names.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

- Email
- OP3

Confucian Traditions Group

Keith Knauff, Citadel, keith.knauff@citadel.edu; Michael Puett, Harvard University, puett@fas.harvard.edu.

We invite proposals concerning any aspect of Confucianism. Topics of particular interest this coming year are: empirical approaches (sociological or anthropological) to the study of Confucianism; the meaning of the word Ru; mass-market Confucianism; ritual theory in East Asia; the impact of text critical studies on Confucian practice; Confucian devotionalism across East Asia; and the effects of modern conceptions of Confucianism on our view of past Confucianism. In possible collaboration with the Daoist Studies Group.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

- Email
- OP3

Confucian Spirituality Group

Kathryn McClymond, Georgia State University, kmcclymond@gsu.edu; Yudit Greenberg, Rollins College, yggreenberg@rollins.edu.

This group seeks to bring together scholars of Hinduism and Judaism to generate a responsible and insightful comparative conversation with the intention of developing alternatives to the Christian-based paradigms that have tended to dominate the academic study of religion. Proposal papers on any theme will be considered for acceptance, but for the 2008 sessions we particularly invite papers on the following topics: Indic-Judaic studies: looking ahead; sacred objects; pilgrimage; and revisiting mysticism: is mysticism a useful way to characterize Hinduism and Kabbalah? Proposals for individual papers as well as full panels are encouraged. Presenters need not have expertise in both Hindu and Jewish traditions.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

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- OP3

Confucian Spirituality Group

Kathryn McClymond, Georgia State University, kmcclymond@gsu.edu; Yudit Greenberg, Rollins College, yggreenberg@rollins.edu.

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- Surface mail
- OP3
- E-mail
- E-mail with attachment

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Group, we would also like to solicit papers for a panel entitled “Western (Mis)conceptions of Confucianism and Daoism.” We also encourage applicants to propose panels in the new 90-minute format, which can take the form of a symposium on a particular text, pedagogy, or a specific author.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Contemporary Pagan Studies Group
Wendy Griffin, California State University, Long Beach, wgriffin@csulb.edu.

Traditional models see the historical movement from polytheism to monotheism as progress, a natural, linear evolution. Today, however, we find groups looking to their cultural heritages to recapture ancient polytheistic traditions, to reconstruct these to fit modern circumstances, and to create or discover new polytheistic spiritualities that address contemporary life. Thus Pagan Studies opens dialogue with Eastern and Afro-Latin diasporic traditions. We invite papers that explore the issue of the Polytheistic Challenge. In addition, we encourage both papers and alternate forms of presentation exploring Halloween/Samhain/Day of the Dead (e.g., ancestors, fear of death, popular culture’s cooption of Pagan practices, etc.). We also welcome papers on other themes dealing with contemporary pagan studies.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group
Kocku von Stuckrad, University of Amsterdam, c.k.vonstuckrad@uva.nl.

The Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group offers a forum for critical/theoretical work in conversation with specific cases of religious practices/beliefs/institutions and/or the scholarly study of these. This year’s themes: 1) The implications of intellectuals serving as willing and unwilling accomplices of power: the invasion of Iraq and the embedded scholar of religion; 2) Religion and the science wars (issues resonant with Alan Sokal and the “Social Text” Affair, Meera Nanda’s Prophet Facing Backward, and/or Edward Slingerland’s What Science Offers the Humanities); 3) Emerging themed/approaches in the study of religion in Europe (e.g., immigration, pluralism, and politics; cross-border religion and imagined communities; hybridity and inculturation; transnationalism); and 4) Religion and class (e.g., Sean McCloud’s Divine Hierarchies, or other critical/theoretical perspectives on this issue). We welcome individual submissions on any topic, not limited to those mentioned above; we are also very receptive to submissions for full sessions on any appropriate topic, ideally with three papers.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group
Tisa Wenger, Arizona State University, tisa.wenger@asu.edu. Richard King, Vanderbilt University, richard.king@vanderbilt.edu.

The Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group seeks papers concerned with historical inquiry into the construction of the category of “religion” in various social and cultural contexts, and their relationship to the academic study of religion. We strive for sessions that represent diverse cultural/geographic locations. This year we especially encourage proposals on the following themes: 1) Visual culture/material culture and the emergence of the category of religion; 2) The role of world expositions in the cultural production of religion; 3) Global antecedents: narrating the prehistory of the comparative study of religions (especially but not exclusively in relation to the South Asian emphasis of AAR 2008); and 4) The deployment of the category of religion in election campaign discourses.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Daoist Studies Group
Louis Komjathy, Pacific Lutheran University, komjathy@plu.edu. Jonathan Herman, Georgia State University, jherman2@gsu.edu.

The Daoist Studies Group invites panel and/or paper proposals on the following topics: Daoist sacred sites; translating Daoist texts; and Western (mis)conceptions of Confucianism and Daoism (co-sponsored with the Confucian Traditions Group). We also invite complete panel proposals dedicated to discussion of a recent important book in Daoist Studies (e.g., Schipper and Verellen’s The Tiantai Canon). Proposals on other topics may also be considered. Please submit panel and paper proposals via the OP3 system no later than February 25, 2008. If you have any questions or additional suggestions, please contact the co-chairs at the above E-mail addresses.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

PARTICIPANT FORM 2008
(PREARRANGED SESSION)

The session organizer or chair must fill out this form in its entirety. Names and institutions will appear in the Program Planner as indicated below (please include city name if more than one school or campus bears the name). If you are not affiliated with an institution, list city, state, or province. (PLEASE PRINT IN BLUE OR BLACK INK).

Session Organizer Contact Information

Name ____________________________________________
Institution _________________________________________
Mail Address _______________________________________
City __________________ State/Province ______ Postal Code __________ Country ______
Office Phone __________ Home Phone __________ E-mail _______________________________________

1. PROPOSED THEME OF SESSION: ____________________________

2. PROGRAM UNIT to which you are submitting this proposal: ____________________________

   2b. OTHER PROGRAM UNIT to which you are submitting this proposal, if any: ____________________________

   Please place a number in the order of your preference, if any, of program unit acceptance:

   3. PLANNED PARTICIPANTS for this session, in order of appearance:

   Presider: ____________________________________________
   Panelists: ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   Respondent: ____________________________________________

   NOTE: No individual may participate on the program more than two times.

   5. SCHEDULING NEEDS due to religious observance, if any:

   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

   Audiovisual requests must be submitted at the same time as your proposal. Late requests cannot be accommodated. The executive office makes every attempt to honor the AV requests of our members. Unsual requests should be cleared through the appropriate program unit chair; with the executive office to confirm the availability of the equipment or setup of space.

   4. AUDIOVISUAL REQUIREMENTS for the entire session (note number needed):

   Computer: _ Windows _ Macintosh _ Internet _
   LCD Projector w/Screen _

   Audiovisual requests must be submitted at the same time as your proposal. Late requests cannot be accommodated. The executive office makes every attempt to honor the AV requests of our members. Unsual requests should be cleared through the appropriate program unit chair; with the executive office to confirm the availability of the equipment or setup of space.

   (Completed participant form(s) must accompany each submission).

Also available at www.aarweb.org/meetings/Annual_meeting/Current_meeting for download
Call for Papers

Eastern Orthodox Studies Group

Paul Gavrilyuk, University of St. Thomas, pgavrilyuk@stthomas.edu; Eve Tibbs, Fuller Theological Seminary, etibbs@roadrunner.com.

The Eastern Orthodox Studies Group invites papers on the following three topics: 1) Origen and Origenisms, reflecting new research on all aspects of the life and work of Origen of Alexandria and his historical influence in patristic and later theology; 2) The perception of the “West” in Eastern Orthodoxy, including such questions as the problematic character of the “West” as a category; the “West” as “the other,” “West,” “Western,” and “Latin” used as theological foils; and the evaluations of Western theological thought by Florovsky, Yannaras, and other modern Orthodox thinkers; and 3) The spiritual senses in Eastern Christianity and other religious traditions. We welcome papers on all aspects of the phenomenon of spiritual perception and/or inner senses. This session will be held jointly with the Mysticism Group.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Ecclesiological Investigations Group

Michael A. Fahy, Boston College, michael.fahy@marquette.edu; Gerard Mannion, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, g.mannion@gmail.com.

Consensus Statements on the Church: What Remains Divisive? — A session exploring bilateral and multilateral documents that attempt to discern where churches dwell in common and to identify remaining causes of division. Historical, methodological, conceptual, and comparative treatments are invited. Particularly welcome are constructive explorations of ways to offset churches’ nonreception of consensus statements and of obstacles (theological and otherwise) to reception, as are specific treatments of key concepts (e.g., adiaphora, “hierarchy of truths”). Twenty-first Century Church — A general call to explore contemporary reality and future prospects for the church in general and ecclesiology in particular. Papers of broad thematic focus (e.g., on postmodernity) or more specific treatments (e.g., contemporary covenantal ecclesiology, varieties of liberation ecclesiology), ethnographic studies of developments at grass roots/regional level or more comparative and systematic surveys, and projections of where ecclesiology is presently “at” and in what directions it is likely to/should develop are all welcome.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Evangelical Theology Group

Wyndy Corbin Reuschling, Ashland Theological Seminary, acorbin@ashland.edu; John R. Franke, Biblical Theological Seminary, jfranke@biblical.edu.

We invite proposals for: 1) Common ground between Christianity and Islam in ‘A Common Word between Us and You’ (www.acommonword.com) and a Christian Response, “Loving God and Neighbor Together” (www.yale.edu/faith/abo- commonword.htm); proposals are invited which demonstrate constructive theological engagement with the documents; implications for interreligious dialogue, especially for evangelicals; opportunities and challenges to evangelical identity, practices and mission; and contributions to social ethical concerns in common between religious traditions; 2) LeRon Shults’s Reforming the Doctrine of God, constructive interaction with his theological method, sources, content, and implications for reforming evangelical doctrines of God; and 5) Ending Confirmation, a joint session with Biblical/Contextual Ethics Consultation. We invite proposals that utilize postcolonial interpretations of biblical texts on issues such as globalization, economic justice, racial, class, and gender constructions, social order, nationhood, and political power which constructively engages social ethical issues, popular uses of biblical texts, and religious rhetoric in public discourse.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

PARTICIPANT FORM 2008 (INDIVIDUAL PROPOSALS)

Each presenter, panelist, respondent, and presider must fill out a form in its entirety.

It is very important that the participant fill out this form. Name and institution will appear in the Program Book as indicated below (please include city name if more than one school or campus bears the name).

If you are not affiliated with an institution, list city, state, or province.

(PLEASE PRINT IN BLUE OR BLACK INK.)

Name
Institution
Mailing Address
City State/Province Postal Code Country
Office Phone Home Phone E-mail

1. TITLE OF YOUR PROPOSAL (if presenting a paper):

2. PROGRAM UNIT to which you are submitting this proposal:

2b. OTHER PROGRAM UNIT to which you are submitting this proposal, if any. Please place a number in the order of your preference, if any, of program unit acceptance:

4. AUDIOVISUAL REQUIREMENTS (note number needed)

Computer: Windows Macintosh Internet

LCD Projector w/Screen

Audiovisual requests must be submitted at the same time as your proposal. Late requests cannot be accommodated. The executive office makes every attempt to honor the AV requests of our members. Unusual requests should be cleared, through the appropriate program unit chair, with the executive office to confirm the availability of the equipment or set-up of space.

5. SCHEDULING NEEDS due to religious observance, if any:

[Completed participant form(s) must accompany each submission.]

3. YOUR ROLE in this session:

Presiding
Presenting (titled paper)
Responding
Panelist (unlisted presentation)
Presiding at a Business Meeting

NOTE: No individual may participate in the program more than two times.

Also available at www.aarweb.org/meetings/Annual_meeting/Current_meeting for download.

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Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Group

M. Gail Hamner, Syracuse University, mghamner@syr.edu. Kathleen Roberts Skerritt, Grinnell College, skerritt@grin.nell.edu.

Paper and panel proposals are invited that critically, practically, and constructively engage feminist theory and religious reflection. Preference is given to proposals with substantial feminist theoretical argument and with attention to cross-cultural perspectives, especially but not only the 2008 theme of South Asian studies. We solicit both paper and panel proposals on the following topics: 1) Feminisms/womanisms take on liberalism, e.g., issues of consent/choice in sexual ethics, in reproductive rights, in public/political life (such as political agency, electoral procedures, etc.); 2) Feminists theorizing ritual as a significant site for imagining/performing trans, i.e., transformation, transgression, transgender, transnational, transcultural, etc.; 3) Feminist theoretical engagements with violence and its aftermath: healing, hurt, harm, and suffering; and 4) Neither radical nor right: feminists negotiating “the middle” way in different religious contexts. Our group will explore the possibility of a co-sponsored session with the Religion and Sexuality Consultation regarding the first two topics.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: Mailing Address

Gay Men’s Issues in Religion Group

Peter Savastano, Seton Hall University, p.savastano@comcast.net. Paul J. Gorrell, Stockton, NJ, paulgorrell@atul.com.

The Gay Men’s Issues in Religion Group seeks to deepen and expand its work at several critical intersections and welcomes both paper and panel proposals on any of these broad areas of interdisciplinary concern: 1) The construction of maleness and masculinity (we are planning a joint session with the Men’s Studies in Religion Group on this topic, as well as a discussion of how our two groups overlap and/or diverge in our work); 2) Economics/global capitalism (neocolonial exportation of and foreclosure on sexual and gender difference); and 3) Evolutionary biology/human sciences (religious contributions to and contestations of scientific discourse on gender, sex, and sexuality). In each of these areas we also wish to explore the construction of racial/ethnic and/or religious “others” and how these relate to the constructions of gay men and transgender bodies. We also welcome paper and panel proposals on topics not listed here and from all religious traditions.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: Mailing Address

Hinduism Group

Vijaya Nagarajan, University of San Francisco, vijayagn@usfca.edu; Timothy Lubin, Washington and Lee University, lubint@wlu.edu.

We invite panel proposals for the 2008 meeting on any aspect of Hinduism in any part of the world that cover a wide variety of topics. Interdisciplinary and comparative proposals are also welcome. Proposals must be made through the online system. Complete session proposals are highly encouraged through individual paper proposals may also be accepted. Please look closely at our mission statement to get a broad sense of our goals and objectives. Suggested topics are: 1) Media and Hinduism: news, TV, and Internet (Arti Dhand); 2) Films and Hinduism (Diana Dimmity); 3) Hinduism and arts in Cambodia (Vasudha Narayanan); 4) On-line Pujas (Phyllis Herman); 5) Spirit and separation in Hinduism (Dean Accardi); 6) Psychoanalysis and Hinduism (AI Collins and Travis Chilcott); 7) New temple constructions and globalization (Hindus (Jack Hawley); 8) Hindu temples in India and America (Diana Ekk); 9) Diaspora Hinduism in Africa (co-sponsored with the African Religions Group); 10) Hindu approaches to health and healing (co-sponsored with Religions, Medicine, and Healing Group); and 11) Women and caste in Hinduism (Ramasub Lamb).

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: Mailing Address

Japanese Religions Group

Paula K. Arai, Louisiana State University, panai@lsa.edu. James L. Ford, Wake Forest University, fordjf@wfu.edu.

We invite panel and individual proposals related to all aspects of Japanese religious practice and thought, both historical and contemporary. For 2008 we welcome proposals relating to the following topics: 1) Healing and divination in Japanese religion; 2) Religion and education in Japan; 3) Religion in Japanese television (serials, popular media, news coverage, etc.); 4) Meaning of “cult” in the post-Aum culture; 5) Buddhist philosophy in Japan; 6) Women and gender in Japanese religions; and 7) Esoteric thought and practice. Proposals that include explicit reflection on the relevance of Japanese religiosity to human religiosity and the study of religion more broadly are preferred. Creative formats (film, organized discussion, “workshop,” etc.) are encouraged.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: Mailing Address

Korean Religions Group

Jin Y. Park, American University, jpark@american.edu. Timothy S. Lee, Brite Divinity School, timlee@brite.com.

The Korean Religions Group invites paper proposals on the theme of religion and violence both in traditional and modern contexts. The variations of the topic include but are not limited to religion and militarism; religion and torture; post-Korean War and religions; religion and student movement in Korea; religion and authoritarianism; religion and military dictatorship; and religious militia. Interreligious dialogue or religion and science can also be subfields of the theme. Korean Religions Group also invites a panel proposal for a book review session on recent publications in Korean religions, a panel on a focused group discussion on Korean religions, or a panel on educating Korean religions.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: Mailing Address

Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Group

Carmen Marie Nanko-Fernandez, Catholic Theological Union, cnamkof@ctu.edu. Benjamin Valentin, Andover Newton Theological School, traditional@ants.edu.

The Latino/a Religion, Culture, and Society Group invites papers and panel proposals for the following two themes: 1) Blessed Rage or Sacred Resistance: Exploring the Intersections of Religion and Activism; the session will consist of papers recruited via this call and by way of invitation. Proposals are welcome that address manifestations of social activism in relationship to their religious dimensions, particularly as they impact U.S. Latino/a communities; and 2) Days of the Dead, Ways of the Living: Reflections on Religion and Death in Latin America: this session explores the manifold ways in which U.S. Latino/as and Latin American observers, ritualize, and make meaning of death. Proposals are desired that critically engage cultural and religious practices surrounding death and dying, including but not limited to: observances of the days of the dead; memorizations of the dead;
Men's Studies in Religion Group
Robert A. Atkins Jr., Grace United Methodist Church,
Bob.Atkins@alumnae.northeastern.edu. Garth
Kasimu Baker-Fletcher, Texas College,
G Fletcher@smu.edu.

The Men's Studies in Religion Group invites
paper submissions on: 1) The relationshi
between religion, politics, and masculi
nity especially as they may connect to
the presidential election; 2) Papers that
address the methodological foundations
for an analysis of Men's Studies in Religion
as a subdiscipline; 3) Gendered Conversations:
Between Black Females and Males: how do we
think of ourselves as "women" and "men"
in the social context of ongoing sex
isn, racism, classism, homophobia, and het
erosexism? how do black women and men
hold a credible conversation on masculinity
and womanhood with each other? (co-spon
sored with Womanist Approaches to the
Study of Religion and Black Theology Groups); and 4) Papers for a joint session
with the Gay Men's Issues in Religion
Group, specifically focused on the "who's
afraid of gay theology" discussion in the Fall
2007 issue of Theology and Sexuality.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Mysticism Group
June McDaniel, College of Charleston,
malanise@cofc.edu. Laura Weed, College
of St. Rose, weed@strose.edu.

We focus on the comparative, philosophi
cal, theoretical, cross-cultural, and
transnational nature of mysticism, reli
gious experience, and spiritual practice.
Creative, imaginative, and scholarly pro
posals with a clear methodology are invit
ed on: 1) Mystical love poetry; 2) The
spiritual senses in Eastern Christianity and
other religious traditions (proposals wel
come on all aspects of the phenomenon of
spiritual perception and/or the senses, e.g.,
sensus divinatus, "eyes of the
mind/heart"), to be co-sponsored with the
Eastern Orthodox Studies Group; 3) Stages of mystical development;
4) Mysticism and neuroscience/conscious
ness studies; and 5) Techniques of induc
tion of mystical states (trance, drugs, etc.).

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Native Traditions in the
Americas Group
Kenneth Mello, University of Vermont,
kenneth.mello@uvm.edu. Mary C.
Churchill, Sonoma State University,
marychurchill@gmail.com.

We invite individual papers and group
proposals on any aspect of Native
Traditions in the Americas. We encourage
proposals in the following areas:
1) Sovereignty and the environment, par
icularly in the Great Lakes region;
2) Religion and negotiations in the Old
Northwest; 3) Pontiac and Tecumseh in
the upper Midwest; 4) Urban Natives, ter
mination, and relocation (Chicago as a
center); 5) Removal and erasure;
6) African Americans and Natives; and
7) Chief Illiniwek, mascots, spirituality,
and representations. We also seek submis
sions for a joint session with the Animals
and Religion Consultation on Native
American spirituality and animals.
Proposals must be submitted electronical
ly, preferably via OP3, but may be sub
mitted via e-mail attachments to both co
chairs if necessary.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

New Religious Movements
Group
Douglas E. Cowan, University of
Waterloo, decowan@uwaterloo.ca.

We seek papers examining South Asian and
Indian new religious movements, either in
their original and/or their diasporic or immi
grant contexts. Presenters are encouraged
to submit proposals from a variety of method
ological and theoretical standpoint: sociologi
cal, anthropological, historical, literary and
artistic, or psychological. For a joint session
with the Study of Judaism Section, we are
seeking papers discussing new religious
movements in the Jewish context, movements
such as Kabbalah. Please note that new religious
movements are not limited to those groups
traditionally regarded as "cults," but also
include revitalization movements within
established traditions, the transplantation of
traditions between social contexts, and the
sectarian emergence of challenges to domi
nant traditions. As always, we also welcome
papers on any aspect of new religious study.
For further information about the New
Religious Movements Group, please contact
the chair.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

- Register for a half-day, pre-conference workshop at a regional meeting of the
  AAR, SBL, and other guilds
- Focused attention on course design & pedagogical strategies, faculty &
  student learning goals, assignments, assessment
- Hands-on, interactive, collaborative work on your own syllabus
- Based on research by Barbara Walvoord, Teaching and Learning in College
  Introductory Religion Courses (Blackwell, 2008)
- Led by faculty participants in the study
- No fee; lunch provided; advance registration required
- Participants will receive a free copy of Dr. Walvoord’s book
- Participants are eligible to apply for a non-competitive $2000 Introductory
  Course Developmental Grant to host a workshop at their school or region

Workshop Dates and Locations
- Teaching College Introductory Religion Courses - Regional Workshops
- Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion

Southwest Regional Meeting - AAR, SBL, ASOR
Atlanta, GA – March 7-9, 2008
SW Commission on Religious Studies Meeting
AAR, SBL, ASOR, ASR
Dallas, TX – March 14-16, 2008
Upper-Midwest Regional Meeting - AAR & SBL
Midwest Regional Meeting - AAR
Chicago, IL – April 4-5, 2008
Pacific NW Regional Meeting - AAR, SBL, ASOR
Newberg, OR – May 2-4, 2008
New England Conference at Holy Cross - AAR
TBA
AAR Annual Meeting, 2008
Chicago, IL – November 1-4, 2008
SBL National Meeting, 2008
Boston, MA - Nov 22-25, 2008

Registration at each location is limited. See the Wabash Center Website for
additional details.

www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu
Nineteenth-Century Theology Group
Lori K. Pearson, Carleton College, lpearson@carleton.edu.

The Nineteenth-Century Theology Group invites papers on the following topics:
1) Creation and design in nineteenth-century theology: theological treatments of teleology, evolution, Darwinism, and related topics in the work of American, European, and other thinkers during the long nineteenth century. This session is dedicated to the memory of Daniel W. Hardy. Organizer: Hans Schwarz, hans.schwarz@theologie.uni-regensburg.de.
2) Theology and war in the nineteenth century: explorations of theological reflection in the long nineteenth century on war in general and/or specific wars from the French Revolution to WWI. Proposals on European and non-European thinkers or topics are welcome. Organizers: Aimee Burant Chor, sabwuer@holycross.edu; and Russell Kleckley, kleckley@augsburg.edu.
3) Joint session with Société Internationale d’Etudes sur Alfred Loisy: responses to Jacques C. Leffert’s Religious Thought in the Victorian Age: Challenges and Reconceptualizations. Papers may respond to Leffert’s book or compare it to other works in the field. Organizers: Garrett G. Green, greener@wesleyu.edu; and Charles J. T. Talas, talas@ithum.edu.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Pragmatism and Empiricism in American Religious Thought Group
Eddie S. Glaude Jr., Princeton University, eglaude@princeton.edu.
We invite proposals on: 1) Roberto Unger’s The Self-Aware: Pragmatism Unbound and its relevance for the study of religion; 2) In light of the 2008 meeting site of Chicago, any topic related to the Chicago School pragmatism and empiricists (Mead, Dewey, Putnam, and Charles); and 3) For a possible joint session with the Study of Judaism Section on pragmatism and Judaism. We also welcome proposals on topics relevant to pragmatism and empiricism as well as panel proposals.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Platonism and Neoplatonism Group
Williemien Otten, University of Chicago Divinity School, wotten@uchicago.edu. Gregory New, Stonehill College, gshaw@stonehill.edu.
The Platonism/Neoplatonism Group invites papers on the following two topics: 1) The role of myth in Platonism/Pythagorean traditions. We invite papers proposing that myth has functioned within Platonian communities; to examine how myth has shaped the trajectories of Platonist thought and self-expression, allowing it to cross the borders of philosophy, literature, magic, and religion; and 2) Diverse traditions and receptions of Platonist/Neoplatonist thought. Although rooted in Neoplatonism, certain traditions and receptions have been widely divergent; we wish to explore these differences and ask if any expressions may still be considered Neoplatonist, and if not, on what grounds. Papers for both sessions will be made electronically available prior to the meeting. They will be presented in short (15-minute) presentations to allow for sustained discussion.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Psychology, Culture, and Religion Group
Kathleen Bishop, Drew University, kbleib@oulu.acm. Pamela Cooper-White, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, cooperp@ltsp.edu.
Proposals are invited on: self-psychological perspectives on religion; after September 11: psychological and religious reflections on terror and anxiety; and psychological and/or race, Psychology, Culture, and Religion Group also welcomes proposals on other themes dealing with psychology, culture, and religion. (Note: Psychology, Culture, and Religion is the Group formerly known as Person, Culture, and Religion). For more info: visit the Psychology, Culture, and Religion Group website www.pcr-aar.org.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Reformed Theology and History Group
Kang-Yup Na, Westminster College, na@westminster.edu. Katherine Sonntag, Virginia Theological Seminary, ksonntag@vts.edu.
The Reformed Theology and History Group, in co-sponsorship with the Christian Spirituality Group, welcomes papers on Christian spiritual practices in the Reformed tradition, such as Scripture reading, eschatological preaching, pastoral prayer, public confession, Holy Communion and baptism, as well as mass social movements such as abolition and suffrage, and (in the nineteenth century) missionary societies for clergy and laity. Confessions and the Reformed Tradition: The Reformed churches have been societies born of confession. John Leith lists 17 confessions prior to 1650 alone ( Creed of the Churches), from Zwingli’s confessions, to Westminster, Belgic and Dort, to Barmen, and now, the Belhar confession. Reformed churches have sought to set forth their doctrine in public, corporate, and varying witness to the Word. Why has confession been so central to the Reformed tradition? What social, material, and theological forces are at work in the Reformed practice of confession? The Reformed Theology and History Group invites paper that engage this rich historical and theological phenomenon.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Religion and Disability Studies Group
Deborah Creamer, Iliff School of Theology, dcramer@iliff.edu. Kerry H. Wynn, Southeast Missouri State University, kwynn@semo.edu.
The Religion and Disability Studies Group invites proposers to the following topics: 1) The Other Casualties of War: Much attention has been given to the role of violence in religion and terrorism and in the current wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Attention has been given to the role of medical advances in saving the lives of wounded soldiers and decreasing the death toll. Much less attention has been given to the reality that a reduction in loss of life is accompanied by an increase in the number of veterans who return home with disabilities. We invite paper proposals that address the relationship between war, disability, and religion. Topics need not be limited to the current conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq; 2) We invite paper proposals for a joint session with the Religions, Medicine, and Healing Group

for papers relating to the intersection of healing, wellness, disability; and 3) Finally, we invite paper proposals on any topic related to intersections of religion and disability.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Religion and Ecology Group
David Barnhill, University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, barnhill@uwosh.edu. John Grim, Yale University, john.grim@yale.edu.
The Religion and Ecology Group invites proposals exploring sustainable human-earth relations involving religion, culture, biodiversity, and environment. We encourage thematically coherent panels and individual papers related to the following themes: ritual and ecology (joint panel with Ritual Studies Group); women, religion, and ecology (joint panel with Women and Religion Section); sustainable urban communities; animals and animism; sustainable campuses and the greening of the curriculum; international dimensions of religion and ecology; religion, ecology, and the 2008 elections; religious dimensions of eco-restoration; geography, bioregionalism, and place; religious conflicts and the environment; sustainable agriculture and human food; gender issues in religion and ecology; a knowledge and naming in religion and ecology; self-critique of the field of religion and ecology; and re-viewing “shapers” of the field of religion and ecology. Proposals with reference to the Chicago area are encouraged. Visit Religion and Ecology’s AAR website, www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meetings/ Program Units/PCUs/WebsiteMain.asp?P U=Name=AARPUNITY, and www.religiononecology.org for more details and information for organizing sessions.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Member ID Number
You can find your membership ID number on any of the official paperwork that comes from the AAR. The top line of the address label has your ID number. It is a single letter followed by five (5) numbers (e.g., Z12345).

If you are a 2007 or 2008 member, the label on this Call for Papers has your ID number on it. If it is not there, please go to www.aarweb.org/ membership and you can request that your ID number be e-mailed to you immediately.

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Religious Studies News
films related to South Asian religion, in accordance with this year’s international focus. We also welcome panel proposals on topics or recent books in the field, as well as co-sponsorship with other units.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:  

Religion, Psychology, and Medicine Group
Laura S. Levitt, Temple University, llevitt@temple.edu; Katharina von Kellenbach, St. Mary’s College of Maryland, kvonkelend@smcm.edu.

We invite individual papers and/or complete panel proposals from any methodological perspective, on the following topics: 1) The rhetorical uses of the Holocaust in public protests (against genocide, abortion, political action, Darfur massacres, etc.) by religiously affiliated individuals and organizations; 2) The moral complexities of militaryual actions in genocide (how can “we” prevent, resist, stop genocidal campaigns, and who are the “we” in these enactments?); and 3) For an excellent co-sponsored session with the Academic Teaching and the Study of Religion Section, on the pedagogical challenges and opportunities of teaching Holocaust and/or genocide courses in different institutional contexts (seminaries, religion departments, private colleges, large research universities) and/or disciplines (history, theology, ethics, philosophy, political science, literature, media studies, feminism, and critical theory). We are especially interested in innovative presentation formats and alternative panel proposals that feature comparative, constructive, critical, case study, and/or reflective approaches.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Religion in South Asia Section
Selvidge, University of Central Missouri, selvidge@ucmo.edu.

We encourage the use of multimedia and/or PowerPoint presentations. We invite individual and panel proposals on all topics related to religion, social conflict, and peace, but will be especially interested in the following topics: 1) Nonviolence and peacemaking within Islam (e.g., the Gleen movement); 2) Civil rights, race, religion, and Chicago; 3) Socially engaged Buddhisms; 4) Economic influence of faith organizations and lobbying on local communities; and 5) Pedagogies of religious peace-making (e.g., peace institutes, peace studies programs; infusing peacemaking across religious studies curricula). Other topics we invite include: arts and peacemaking; ecology, war, and peace; implementing religious critiques of globalization on the ground in South mobilization making; American imperialism, democracy and religion; and multifaith perspectives and globalization, including interfaith organizing in global contexts as a way of addressing social conflicts. We are willing to work with other groups to co-sponsor a session. Please contact the co-chairs.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Roman Catholic Studies Group
Vincent J. Miller, Georgetown University, millerv@georgetown.edu; Daniel Speed Thompson, Saint Mary’s University, dthompson1@smu.edu.
The group welcomes proposals for papers or sessions on any topic concerning theological, historical, and cultural studies of Catholicism. Session proposals may be edited. Particular interests include: urban and suburban Catholicism; parish and parishes, particularly in the Midwest and Chicago; the legacy of the following watershed events of 1968: the Medellin conference and the advent of Latin American liberation theology, the appearance of the encyclical Humanitatis Vita, and the deaths of Thomas Merton; historical and generational periodization of Catholicism; violence and the Catholic tradition (possibly offered with North American Religious Sections); Catholicism, immigration, and Mexican-American experience; Catholicism in the public sphere, particularly in reference to U.S. electoral politics; and possible sessions on sociologist Melissa Wilke’s Vatican II.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Sacred Space in Asia Group
Steven Heine, Florida International University, heine@fiu.edu; Pamela D. Winfield, Meredith College, winfield@meredith.edu.
In keeping with the geographical focus on South Asia in 2008, the Sacred Space in Asia Group solicits papers from a wide variety of historical and methodological perspectives especially on the following topics: sites contested between religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam); Buddhist pilgrimage sites in India; sacred spaces associated with the disembodied goddess; and the influence of South Asian sacred spaces on neighboring regions such as Southeast Asia. In addition, we welcome proposals on other topics, including (continued on next page)
Science, Technology, and Religion Group
Lisa Stenmark, San Jose State University, lstenmark@earthlink.net; James Haag, Graduate Theological Union, jameshaag@hplbxml.org.

The Science, Technology, and Religion Group is seeking panel and paper proposals that engage the natural sciences from religious perspectives and consider the impact of developments in science and technology for religion. We encourage submissions in the following areas especially: 1) Reflections on physical and biological understandings of evil; 2) The impact that an emphasis on technological development, material prosperity, problem solving, and/or dualism with such prosperity have had on religious attitude and spirituality; and 3) Dennet, Dawkins, and “the New Atheists,” along with general explorations of the relationship between science, theology, and atheism.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: E-mail

Scriptural Reasoning Group
Randi Rashkovet, George Mason University, rashkovet@gmu.edu; Scott Bader-Saye, University of Scranton, badersayes2@scranton.edu.

The Scriptural Reasoning Group gathers Jewish, Christian, and Muslim thinkers for the study of scriptural texts that speak to themes of contemporary importance. Papers should examine brief scriptural passages (drawing on both textual scholarship and reception history) and suggest how they address contemporary readers’ concerns. Participants will be asked to circulate drafts in advance and revise their papers in conversation with each other. At least one session will include text study in small groups. We invite paper or panel proposals in the following areas: figurative reading in Christian, Jewish, and Islamic biblical reasoning; the work of the late Daniel Hardy; and encounters between Christian doctrine and Judaism analytically viewed for its co-sponsored session with Christian Systematic Theology. Suggested topics include law and gospel; shekinah and theologies of God; corporeality and/or Being of the Christian Paul or Christian readings of the Jewish Paul. Other creative proposals engaging the three textual traditions are welcome.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: E-mail

Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Group
Karra Schaeffer, University of Virginia, kds4b@virginia.edu; Frances Garrett, University of Toronto, frances.garrett@utoronto.ca.

The Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Group promotes conversation between different approaches to the study of Tibetan and Himalayan religions. For 2008, we invite papers on mythic images of Tibet in South Asia; Tibetan pilgrimage to South Asia; connections between Southeast Asia and Tibet; Islam in Tibet; or Bhutan in light of the 2008 Annual Meeting’s international focus. We are particularly interested in papers that focus on South Asia. We also seek papers for panels that may be co-sponsored with the Buddhist Philosophy Group, the Buddhism Section, or other groups or sections as relevant.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: E-mail

Tantric Studies Group
Paul Muller-Ortega, University of Rochester, pmull@mail.rochester.edu; Glen A. Hayes, Bloomfield College, Glen_Hayes@bloomfield.edu.

The Tantric Studies Group invites paper and preformed panels dealing with recent research in Tantric studies, including but not limited to the following topics: 1) Reading Tantric imagery; 2) The categories of “Yoga” and “Tantra”; 3) Tantra and magical powers; Siddhas as metaphors and actualities; (2 and 3 possibly co-sponsored with the Yoga Consultation); 4) Tantric law and legal proscription and transgression; 5) Tantric ethics; 6) Initiation and authorization in Tantras; 7) Public faces of Tantra; 8) Tantra in (and as) virtual worlds; 9) Reading Tantric texts in contemporary contexts; 10) Tantra and popular science; and 11) “Real” Tantrikas: ethnography, history. The Tantric Studies Group supports the collaboration of scholars in Tantric studies across the traditional boundaries of research based on geographic regions, specific traditions, and academic disciplines.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: E-mail

We have invited paper or panel proposals that bring contemporary philosophy to bear on the following topics: 1) The opposition between theology and religious studies; 2) Feminist scholarship from/to minority and diasporic contexts; 3) Neighbor love; 4) The work of Eric Sanner; 5) Theology and materialism (including intersections with the category of “nature,” responses to new atheism); 6) Religious import in emergent (in the United States) voices in continental thought (e.g., Pierre Hadot, Quentin Megillllas); and 7) Other issues of interest.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: E-mail

Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Group
Rachel Sophia Baard (Villanova University, 250 East Wynnewood RD, Apt. A-17, Wynnewood, PA 19096, USA; rmbaard@villanova.edu), Russell Manning, University of Cambridge, Faculty of Divinity, Cambridge CB2 3BS, UK; rmm24@cam.ac.uk.

Possible themes for proposals: 1) Writers influenced by/using Tillich (Langdon Gilkey, Bellah, Cone, Mary Daly, others); 2) Why evangelical could/should engage Tillich (final revelation, missionary theory, New Being’s Pauline provenance, etc.); 3) How the recently published German texts of the pre-1933 Tillich clarify the American Tillich; 4) Tillich, Buber, Levinas, and Phenomenology (questions about theological life; Jean Luc Marion: love, idolatry, being/beyond being); 6) Current psychoanalytic theory and models of healing (Lacan, Kristeva, etc.); 7) The political theologian (conversations with Agamben, Laclau, Taubes, Vattimo, Zizek, others); 8) Black theology (e.g., on method); and 9) Further discussion of J. Smith’s 1990 and 2006 theses that Tillich is the unacknowledged theoretician of the AAR’s entire enterprise (ultimate concern, quasi-religions, etc., mini-bibliography upon request). Other Tillich-related proposals will be seriously considered. We usually find a place for strong papers; themes for sessions determined by the merit of proposals received; winning student papers receive $300 annual Tillich Prize.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: E-mail

Schleiermacher Group
Brent Sockness, Stanford University, ssockness@stanford.edu.

This year’s session will consist of a panel of invited German scholars reflecting on recent trends in Schleiermacher scholarship in Europe. How has our understanding of Schleiermacher as theologian, philosopher, and humanist changed as a result of the Schleiermacher Critical Edition and the renaissance in Schleiermacher studies since roughly the late 1960s? What sort of concerns, approaches, and theoretical paradigms are framing German scholarship on Schleiermacher? How might they compare to those of North American scholarship? Panels will be asked to assess the state of scholarship in various regions of Schleiermacher’s oeuvre. This session will be an oen to an international confer- ence on “Schleiermacher, the Study of Religion, and the Future of Theology,” supported with the Yoga Consultation; and preformed panels dealing with recent research in Tantric studies, including but not limited to the following topics: 1) Reading Tantric imagery; 2) The cate- gories of “Yoga” and “Tantra”; 3) Tantra and magical powers; Siddhas as metaphors and actualities; (2 and 3 possibly co-sponsored with the Yoga Consultation); 4) Tantric law and legal proscription and transgression; 5) Tantric ethics; 6) Initiation and authorization in Tantras; 7) Public faces of Tantra; 8) Tantra in (and as) virtual worlds; 9) Reading Tantric texts in contem- porary contexts; 10) Tantra and popular science; and 11) “Real” Tantrikas: ethnography, history. The Tantric Studies Group supports the collaboration of scholars in Tantric studies across the traditional boundaries of research based on geographic regions, specific traditions, and academic disciplines.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: E-mail

We have invited paper or panel proposals that bring contemporary philosophy to bear on the following topics: 1) The opposition between theology and religious studies; 2) Feminist scholarship from/to minority and diasporic contexts; 3) Neighbor love; 4) The work of Eric Sanner; 5) Theology and materialism (including intersections with the category of “nature,” responses to new atheism); 6) Religious import in emergent (in the United States) voices in continental thought (e.g., Pierre Hadot, Quentin Megillllas); and 7) Other issues of interest.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: E-mail

The Wesleyan Study Group is open to any proposals providing historical or con- structive engagement with the Wesleys or Wesleyan/Methodist traditions. This year we particularly encourage papers in these areas: 1) Wesleys and sexuality: paper topics could include Wesley’s intimacy with women, erotic language in accounts of religious experience, or the relationship between sexuality and spirituality, or denominational understandings of sexuality; and 2) For a joint session with the Open and Relational Theologies Consultation, the Wesleyan Study Group seeks paper proposals focused on issues of atomism theory; preference will be given to papers offering new interpretations of classic theories of atomism or innovative atomism theories arising from Wesleyan, open, or relational perspectives. Please direct all atomism theory session queries to Prof. Jay Oord at jay.ood@emory.edu. Other Tillich-related proposals will be seriously considered. We usually find a place for strong papers; themes for sessions determined by the merit of proposals received; winning student papers receive $300 annual Tillich Prize.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: E-mail

Western Esotericism Group
Allison P. Coudert, University of California, Davis, apcoudert@ucdavis.edu; Wouter Hanegraaff, University of Amsterdam, w.hanegraaff@uva.nl.

The Western Esotericism Group invites paper proposals from various epistemological perspectives dealing with Western esoteric currents and their cultural ramifications. The theme of preference for 2008 is Esotericism and the Visual Imagination. Western esoteric movements, currents, and ideas are frequently depicted in visual images and constructions (in painting, sculpture, literature, architecture, film, etc.). These images are often rooted in past traditions while at the same time reflecting current cultural preoccupations. Which forms do these imaginations take on, and what reasons may account for their use and significance? Proposals will be welcome that address the topic

(submitted from page 13)
either from a theoretical point of view or by studying specific historical cases from earliest times to the present. The Western Esotericism Group is also co-sponsoring a panel with the Islamic Mysticism Group. Papers dealing with the influence of Islam and particularly Sufism on Western Esotericism are therefore welcome.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

**Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group**

Evelyn Parker, Southern Methodist University, eparker@smu.edu, Linda Thomas, Lutheran School of Theology, lthomas@lstc.edu.

The Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group invites critically developed paper and panel proposals:

1) Celebrating the Work of Emilie Townes: Womanist Contributions to Christian and Social Ethics (co-sponsor, Ethics Section); 2) Gendered Conversations: Between Black Females and Males: how do we think of ourselves as “women” and “men” in the social context of ongoing sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, and heterosexism? how do Black women and men hold a credible conversation on masculinity and womanhood with each other? (co-sponsor, Black Theology Group and Men’s Studies in Religion Group); 3) Womanist/Feminist Sexual Ethics: overcoming the legacy of slavery in the lives of women and girls; religious/spiritual methods of resistance to oppression; celebration of 200 years since the end of the slave trade; 4) Spirituality of youths from a Womanist perspective; and 5) Womanist scholarship and culture. Send proposals for co-sponsored sessions to all sponsors.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

**SEMINARS**

*New Program Unit*

**Comparative Philosophy and Religion Seminar**

Mornoy Joy, University of Calgary, mjjoy@ucalgary.ca, Vincent Shen, University of Toronto, vincent.shen@utoronto.ca.

The theme is Comparative Philosophy and Religion, Beyond Incorporation: Alternative approaches to non-Western philosophical systems, categories, and ideas. Seminar members are invited to submit proposals relating to the theme. Suggested topics are rethinking Western philosophical-religious categories in the light of ones from non-Western philosophical-religious traditions, and revisiting definitions and descriptions where non-Western categories have been assimilated or made to conform to Western ones. All accepted papers will be circulated prior to the conference. Papers will not be read at the conference.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

*New Program Unit*

**Religion, Food, and Eating Seminar**

Benjamin Zeller, Brevard College, zellerbe@brevard.edu.

The seminar brings together a diverse group of scholars to collaborate in our analyses of how, what, and why religious individuals and groups in the United States and Canada eat. In addition to stimulating our shared research agenda, we aim to create an anthology appropriate for a wide academic audience of scholars interested in the study of religion in America, religion and food, and the embeddedness of religion within society. The seminar focuses on creating an internally cohesive project that incorporates our diverse research topics but shares a set of common themes and questions. Scholars interested in joining the seminar are encouraged to contact the chair, Benjamin Zeller, zellerbe@brevard.edu. Auditors are welcome to attend the session at the Annual Meeting.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

*New Program Unit*

**Religion in the American West Seminar**

James B. Bennett, Santa Clara University, jbennett@scu.edu, Quincy D. Newell, University of Wyoming, qnewell@uwyo.edu.

The Religion in the American West Seminar is a community of scholars focusing on the understanding, researching, and teaching issues related to the role of religion in the American West. Contact the chairs for more information.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

**90-MINUTE SESSIONS**

Sunday afternoons will be scheduled with three 90-minute time slots to allow for more intense scholarly explorations on a topic. See page three for more information.

**World Christianity Group**

Dale T. Irvin, New York Theological Seminary, dirvin@sat.net, Peter C. Phan, Georgetown University, pcp5@georgetown.edu.

The World Christianity Group seeks to explore intercultural, interconfessional, and interreligious dynamics of Christianity as a world religion, bringing into conversation scholars in the disciplines of history, mission studies, theology, sociology of religion, and religious studies. For 2008 the group welcomes proposals on: 1) Globalization, empire and world Christianity, with attention to the interplay between or among social, political, economic, cultural, and religious forces; 2) Methodologies in world Christianity, especially as they pertain to questions of contextuality and intercontextuality; and 3) Hybridity as a theme in world Christianity: what are its promises, what are its problems?

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

The AAR solicits nominations for the Ray L. Hart Service Award.

This award is given to persons whose dedication and service have made significant contributions to the AAR’s mission of fostering excellence in the field of religion.

For more information, please see www.aarweb.org/awards/hart.asp.

Seminars are highly specific projects driven by a collaborative research agenda leading toward publication. They are expected to eventuate in publication(s). They are strictly limited in duration (five years) and membership (20). Members agree to continue the work of the seminar between Annual Meetings through correspondence, exchange of papers and bibliographies, and on listservs, etc. The single session at the Annual Meeting is devoted to consideration of previously distributed papers and to foster collaborations in a public setting that allows auditors to gain insight into the project, the process, and the people involved. While no new papers are presented at the session, auditors are welcome to attend.

**Religions in Chinese and Indian Cultures: A Comparative Perspective Seminar**

Tao Jiang, Rutgers University, tjiang@rci.rutgers.edu, Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad, Lancaster University, c.ram-prasad@lancaster.ac.uk.

This panel seeks contemporary scholarly perspectives on the many distinct if overlapping conceptions of the body in Indian and Chinese thought and practice which can inform the theoretical resources for the study of the body available today. In particular, we would like to approach these issues through the lens of “medicine,” recognizing that the anthropology of medical traditions offers a sharp disciplinary focus on the body in philosophy and religion. Possible topics are: 1) Knowledge systems and knowledge of the body in treatment; 2) Possession, its bodily manifestations and social implications; 3) Disciplining the body: practices of purification and cultivation and their purposes; 4) The body in relation to vegetable and animal medical products; and 5) The body-mind relationship in the medical and/or meditative contexts. We are also open to other suggestions.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

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Consultations are exploratory opportunities to test the degree and breadth of interest among members of the Academy in areas and topics of academic interest not currently included in the concerns of existing sections, groups, or seminars.

Death, Dying, and Beyond Consultation
Christopher M. Moreman, St. Francis Xavier University, cmoreman@ualberta.ca.
Kathleen Garcia-Foley, Marymount University, Kathleen.Garcia-Foley@marymount.edu.

The Death, Dying, and Beyond Consultation invites proposals addressing all aspects of dying, death, and the dead, from any theoretical or methodological approach. Our theme for the 2008 meeting is the Commodification of Death. This theme should be considered broadly, and might include papers examining rituals of death and dying, including such issues as the green burial movement, but we encourage submissions relating to other aspects of the commodification and commercialization of death as well. Further, as always, all proposals are encouraged even if they do not fall squarely within the parameters of the themes above. Please include in your proposal a description of your presentation style, as it is our hope to have dynamic, engaging presentations paired with conversation among audience and presenters.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: }

Liberal Theologies Consultation
Christine Helmer, Northwestern University, christine.helmer@northwestern.edu.
M. Sani Umar, Northwestern University, mumar@northwestern.edu.

Papers are welcome that address the nature and use of concepts implemented in the study of liberalism in global religions (Islam, Judaism, Christianity, and others). Especially welcome are papers addressing the way "liberal" is identified in the study of a religious tradition, the history and/or implications of such a method of identification, or constructive proposals for developing concepts or theories furthering the analysis of "liberal" in the study of a particular religion. Of interest are papers that work through the implications of terms and theories for the comparison of religious traditions. Papers are also invited that connect liberalism in religion to human rights; they can include historical, theological, political, legal, and religious dimensions.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: }

Animals and Religion Consultation
Paul Waldau, Tufts University, paul.waldau@tufts.edu, Laura Hobgood-Oster, Northwestern University, lhober@northwestern.edu.

Papers and panels considering: 1) Pedagogy; bringing animal studies into the religion classroom, course design, observation pedagogy; 2) Animals in Asian religious traditions; 3) Food, vegetarianism, animals as sacrifice, farming; 4) Presence and absence, relevance of experience with other animals, who has the authority to speak on behalf of or about animals; 5) Animals as divinities/divine; 6) Animals and Native traditions in the Americas (for a joint session with that program unit), particularly focused on animals as divinities; 7) Animals and eco-sustainability practices; 8) Methodological and disciplinary diversity of animals and religion studies; 9) Working with ethnologists and evolutionary biologists; and 10) Animals in spirituality and theology, addressing any religious tradition.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: }

Biblical/Contextual Ethics Consultation
David Gasheer, Mercer University, gasheer_dp@mercer.edu.

The last decade has seen an upturn in scholarly treatment of the moral teachings of Jesus, especially but not exclusively in the field of Christian ethics. Works by Allen Verhey, Obery Hendricks, William Spohn, Dallas Willard, Glen Stassen and David Gasheer, Daniel Harrington and James Keenan, Lee Camp, and Amy Jill Levine are among those that signal the trend. The Biblical/Contextual Ethics Consultation invites papers on the moral teachings of Jesus, on one or more of the recent works reflecting the turn toward the study of Jesus, or on the significance of the broader trend. Papers should highlight one text from the Gospels as a primary example.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: }

Christianity and Academia Consultation
David S. Cunningham, Hope College, cunninghamh@hope.edu.

This consultation explores issues at the intersection of Christian theology and higher education. Papers are invited on such topics as: the (declining?) role of denominations in church-related institutions; issues surrounding institutionally sponsored worship and worship spaces; the challenges for non-Christian faculty at church-related institutions, and the converse; fundamentalism(s) on campus; the postmodern student (visual culture, personal spiritualities, “incredulity toward metanarratives”); the perception of theology among other academic disciplines; the formativie role of external funding sources; and the idea of a “theology of administration.” We also invite responses to Beatty and Henry, eds., The Schooled Heart: Moral Formation in American Higher Education, for a possible session on this book. We prefer papers that move beyond mere description and that endeavor to analyze issues from a theological perspective.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: }

Coptic Christianity Consultation
Lois Farag, Luther Seminary, lfarag@luthersem.edu.

Martyrdom: the Coptic Christian Consultation invites interdisciplinary proposals on the theme of martyrdom. The session will investigate martyrdom in its plurality of expressions, especially as it relates to topics such as suffering, death, asceticism, and the role of confessors and martyrs. Discussions may include comparative perspectives related to different methodologies and media. Proposals could also address Coptic martyrdom in comparative studies with various language groupings. We encourage presentations in the form of papers on the theme of Coptic theology. Proposals could be on theological themes in Greek, Coptic, Arabic, or other language groupings. Proposals may include comparative studies and different methodologies. Innovative research work is welcomed.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: }

Cognitive Science of Religion Consultation
Edward Slingerland, University of British Columbia, edward.slingerland@ubc.ca, Ann Taves, University of California, Santa Barbara, taves@religion.ucsb.edu.
The group often a forum for bringing together cognitive scientists and scholars of religion to explore applications of cognitive science to religious phenomena from a variety of methodological standpoints. Themes include: 1) The role that cognitive science plays in providing scientific grounding for the study of religion; 2) Cognitive approaches to religious phenomena that might create grounds for a scientific phenomenology of religion; 3) The role and historical and ethnographic data in falsifying theories of religion; 4) Folk dualism in a cross-cultural and historical perspective; 5) The application of literature on extended mind to the study of religion; and 6) Submissions from researchers who have a project design that they would like to precirculate for discussion by a panel of discussants and the general audience.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA: }

Death, Dying, and Beyond Consultation
Christopher M. Moreman, St. Francis Xavier University, cmoreman@ualberta.ca.
Kathleen Garcia-Foley, Marymount University, Kathleen.Garcia-Foley@marymount.edu.

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Lois Farag, Luther Seminary, lfarag@luthersem.edu.

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Consultations are exploratory opportunities to test the degree and breadth of interest among members of the Academy in areas and topics of academic interest not currently included in the concerns of existing sections, groups, or seminars.

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Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Consultation

Deanna Thompson, Hamline University, dthompson@hamline.edu. Hans Hillerbrand, Duke University, hfh@duke.edu.

The Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Consultation seeks proposals of papers on two topics: assessments of Martin Luther, and global Lutheran traditions and “empire.” The former topic welcomes contributions on topics that relate Martin Luther to issues, individuals, etc., of early modern Europe, while the latter invites proposals that relate the Lutheran tradition to social or political issues in the contemporary world. Proposals should be submitted to either of the two co-conveners.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Mormon Studies Consultation

James M. McLachlan, Western Carolina University, jmclachlan@email.wcu.edu. Grant Underwood, Brigham Young University, gwa20@byu.edu.

Proposals are solicited on the following topics: 1) Mormonism, politics, and the media. What has Mitt Romney’s presidential candidacy demonstrated about religious pluralism and the public sphere and about media coverage of religious generalities? What has been the Mormon reaction, both institutional and individual, to the heightened media attention surrounding the campaign? 2) The past 30 years’ experience worldwide of Latter-day Saints of African ancestry. 2008 marks the 30th anniversary of the official establishment of the Mormon Church in sub-Saharan Africa and its rescission of restrictions placed upon church members of African ancestry; 3) Analysis of the “Mormon” Jesus using various lenses from formal theology to popular culture; and 4) Global Mormonism(ism), with particular interest in Latin America.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Music and Religion Consultation

Theodore Troup, University of Alabama, tsucaloosa, mhaburt@uak.edu. Philip Stoevelaar, University of St. Thomas, stoevelf@stthomas.edu.

We invite papers on the religious and theologically dimensions of music. In particular, we seek proposals that bring theoretical, methodological, or philosophical approaches to the study of musical phenomena, in relation to one or more of the following themes: 1) Music as an expression of myth, ritual, or religious experiences; 2) Religious or theological themes in popular music; 3) Theologies of music (using historical, systematic, constructivist, or liberationist material(s)); 4) The role of music in theologies of art or “theological aesthetics.”

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

North American Hinduism Consultation

Chad Bauman, Butler University, chbauman@butler.edu. Lola Williamson, Millikaps College, willil@millikaps.edu.

We invite paper or panel proposals on any aspect of Hinduism in North America. Individual paper proposals will be considered, but fully formed paper or panel sessions will be given preference. Diverse methodologies are welcome and interdisciplinary approaches are encouraged. Specific topics suggested by consultation members (with contact person’s name and E-mail address in parentheses) are: representing and misrepresenting North American Hindus (Yamirira Madachandran, ramachet@yahoo.com); historical approaches to Hinduism in North America (J. Gordon Melton, gord@online.com); and fashioning the self-performance as/as North American landscape (Corinne Dempsey, CorinneDempsey@uwsp.edu).

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Open and Relational Theologies Consultation

Thomas Jay Oord, Northwest Nazarene University, tjoord@nmu.edu.

Open and relational theologies often engage questions about the person, role, and significance of Jesus the Christ. For our stand-alone session, we invite papers that explore Christianity from an open and relational perspective. Papers may address Jesus’ relation to God, incarnation, miracles and message, role as prophet-king, ministry, engagement with political forces, etc. For a joint session with the Wesleyan Studies Group, we invite papers that specifically address issues of allegiance. Preference will be given to papers with fresh interpretations of classic theories of allegiance or innovative allegiance theories that emerge from Wesleyan, open, or relational perspectives. Potential presenters should identify for which session they would like their proposals considered.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements Consultation

James K. A. Smith, Calvin College, jksmth@calvin.edu. Amos Yong, Regent University, ayong@regent.edu.

We invite proposals for individual papers or fully developed panels on the following themes: 1) Pentecostalism, politics, and social engagement; 2) Pentecostalism in the urban north, with particular attention to Chicago and the Midwest; 3) Prospective and holistic theology in the global Pentecostal and charismatic renewal movements; 4) Pentecostal and charismatic churches as well as Pentecostal and charismatic ecclesiological, from the storefront to the megachurch in America and the global south; and 5) Constructive Afro-pentecostal or black Pentecostal theology and its interface with black liberation theologies. Papers/panels should feature new methods and theoretical approaches to the scholarly examination of Pentecostal and charismatic movements past and present. The consultation welcomes both descriptive (historical, social scientific) and constructive (theological) approaches.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Queer Theory and LGBT Studies in Religion Consultation

Melissa M. Wilcox, Whitman College, walasvem@whitman.edu. Claudia Schippert, University of Central Florida, cwchippe@mail.ucf.edu.

The Queer Theory and LGBT Studies in Religion Consultation welcomes proposals for individual papers or panels on all topics related to queer theory and LGBT studies in religion, in particular those focused on bisexuality and/or transgender studies and on religions other than Christianity. We are especially interested this year in proposals in the following areas: intersections of religion, sexuality, class, and capitalism; trans- gender/queer performance and performativity (for a possible co-sponsored session with the Ritual Studies Group); sexuality and gender in film and television, U.S. or international; “What difference does queer make?” applying queer theory to research, teaching, and conference presentation style (innovative presentation formats encouraging and queer issues and religion in sport.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Religion and Cities Consultation

Katie Day, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, kday@ltsp.edu. Lawrence Mamiya, Vassar College, mamiya@vassar.edu.

The Religion and Cities Consultation seeks papers that explore religion as a factor in urban dynamics. How does faith function in the changing cultures, economies, and political dynamics of city life? In what ways is it a factor in the definition of urban space? Does the diversity of coexisting religious traditions build social solidarity or exacerbate balkanization of city space? This year, the consultation invites papers with particular focus on urban centers in the United States, including but not limited to contemporary Chicago. Likewise, papers that address the urban school of sociology known as the “Chicago School” and the place of religion within it (or lack thereof) would be particularly welcome.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Religion and Colonialism Consultation

Caleb Elfenbein, University of California, Santa Barbara, celfe@law.ucsb.edu. Mark Elmøre, University of California, Davis, mkeelmore@ucdavis.edu.

Recent years have seen the publication of a number of important works in the study of religion that have sought to problematize the category of religion as an historical and cultural universal. What material, social, and ideological conditions have made it possible to denaturalize the category of religion (and with it the study of religions)? How does this denaturalization relate to anticolonial narratives that have long articulated the provincial character of the concept of religion? What enables us to see the contingency of “religion” at this point in history in a way that was not nearly so obvious before? Additionally, with the Law, Religion, and Culture Group, we encourage proposals treating these questions with particular reference to law in colonial and postcolonial settings.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Religion and Humanism Consultation

W. David Hall, Centre College, wodavid.hall@centre.edu. Glenn Whitehouse, Florida Gulf Coast University, gwhiteho@fgcu.edu.

Paper proposals are sought on the topic: critical humanism and neo-humanism responses. Papers will address critiques of Enlightenment humanism, including post-colonial and postmodern critiques, and “neohumanisms,” a term encompassing those recent reformulations of humanist themes that attempt to respond to such critiques (including humanities of the other, theological humanism, etc., and encompassing thinkers such as Todorov, Said, Ferry, Levinas, Taylor, and others). Papers that can relate the two sides of this debate, and papers that can tie the debate to current discussions in the study of religion, are especially sought.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

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January 2008 RSN • 17
Religion and Migration Consultation
Marie Marquardt, Agnes Scott College, marquardt@agnesscott.edu, Jennifer B. Saunders, Denison University, saunders@denison.edu.
The Religion and Migration Consultation seeks to explore the religious contexts of a world inhabited by persons on the move. We aim to bring into conversation scholars examining internal and international migrations from theological, ethical, historical, and social scientific perspectives. For 2008, we are open to various themes, but we encourage submissions that focus around migration, religion, and the ethics of encounter. Papers may examine the encounter between generations of migrants, between migrants and native-born citizens of their destination, or between migrants and those who remain in their place of origin. We also seek submissions that explore the role of media in the formation of transnational religious networks, and the role such media play in shaping migrants’ sense of identity, community, space, and time.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Religion in Europe Consultation
Robert E. Alvis, Saint Meinrad School of Theology, salvis@st Meinrad.edu, Andrei Krawchuk, University of Sudbury, akrnow- chuk@sympatico.ca.
The Religion in Europe Consultation is devoted to the interdisciplinary study of religion and the cultural, social, and political evolution of Europe. We welcome papers on any religion in any historical period, and we encourage submissions from a wide variety of disciplines. This year we especially seek proposals related to the following themes: 1) Migration of religious groups in and out of Europe and the dynamics of identity/integration; 2) Religion, values, and educational policy; 3) Secularization and the secular character of contemporary society/culture; 4) The impact of the natural environment in European religious thought/practice; 5) Assessing Philip Jenkins’ God’s Continent and 6) Religion in European cinema. We welcome proposals that do not correspond to these themes, as well as proposals for complete sessions on European topics.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Religion in Southeast Asia Consultation
SortChing Low, Muhlenberg College, sort- ching@muhlenberg.edu. Jason Car(Date, Whittier College, jarot.Role, C. We are calling for papers that address the local and translocal ways in which “religion” has been constructed and constructed in Southeast Asia. We seek papers that critically engage Southeast Asian categories of religion, and are especially interested in papers that do so in relation to topics such as ritual, art, politics, cultural hybridization, and shifting religious identities. Papers that address religion in any Southeast Asian cultural setting (e.g., Thailand, Burma, Laos, Singapore, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines) will be welcome.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Religion, Public Policy, and Political Change Consultation
Joe Pettit, Morgan State University, morgan- prop@yahoo.com, Melissa Rogers, Wake Forest University, roger005@wfu.edu.
We seek papers and panel proposals that promote interdisciplinary research and analysis between religious studies and fields such as public policy, sociology, political science, and economics. This year, we are especially interested in proposals that consider the role of the “prophetic” in political discourse; the participation of religious scholars and theologians to reflect on the function of religious space and/or place as a socializing setting; the relationship between religion and the political; and the role of religious education in society curricula and policy-making; and the theoretical, pedagogical, and political linkages between religion education and citizenship education in diverse national settings.

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SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Rethinking the Field Consultation
Bradley L. Herlimg, Mount Royal College, bherling@mcmuan.ca.
The Rethinking the Field Consultation invites proposals (especially from graduate students) for panels and papers that examine the connections and emerging subfields within the study of religion. Past sessions have investigated philosophy of religion, religion and literature, and the arts, religion and scientific and liberal theology. This year we wish to solicit panels on the study of specific religious traditions (Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, etc.), sociology or anthropology of religion, or the history of religions, though all proposals are welcome. The consultation is committed to innovative and interactive forms of programming; we privilege panel proposals that justify the choice of the selected discipline, already include a core group of participants, and outline a plan for the panel that varies from the standard paper-response format.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Theology and the Political Consultation
Corey D. B. Walker, Brown University, cdwalker@brown.edu.
The consultation provides a forum for religious scholars and theologians to reflect on different forms of “the political” and draw out their significance for the task of theology. We invite paper proposals that address the theme “The Politics of Theology.” The Theory of Politics. We are interested in papers that engage the epistemic, social, cultural, and economic politics that in form the discourse of theology as well as the “theology” that underwrites historic and contemporary forms of politics and political discourses. The question we seek to answer is “How and in what ways do contemporary forms of political theology support, undermine, and/or transform the justifications and practice of war?” We are particularly interested in proposals that approach this year’s theme from an interdisciplinary and international perspective.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Theology of Martin Luther King Jr. Consultation
Johnny B. Hill, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, jhill@lpt.edu.
On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, as he led protests in support of black sanitation workers. King recognized the interconnectedness of militarism, imperialism, and poverty. He was becoming aware of the role and political forces that considered it necessary to suppress social movements domestically to advance empire in world affairs. Here, we invite papers that treat the relationship between the assassina- tion of King, surrounding events related to the Vietnam War, and King’s precipitous cri- tique of America as Empire in global perspec- tive. We also solicit papers that bring King’s thought and the historical situations leading to his assassination into conversation with contemporary issues concerning the 2008 presidential election, economic globalization, and the war in Iraq.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED VIA:

Religious Studies News
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION

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Have You Renewed Your Membership for 2008?

Call for Papers

THE AAR PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF RELIGION COMMITTEE INVITES NOMINATIONS AND SELF-NOMINATIONS FOR THE MARTIN E. MARTY AWARD FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF RELIGION.

The award is intended to bring greater recognition to scholars whose relevance and eloquence speak not just to scholars, but more broadly to the public as well. Nominees for this award do not have to be AAR members. For nomination details, see www.aarweb.org/programs/Awards/Marty_Award, or mail the name of the nominee, his or her affiliation, and any supporting information by January 25, 2008, to Marty Award, AAR, 825 Houston Mill Road NE, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30329.

New Program Unit

Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy Consultation
Shannon Craigo-Snell, Yale University, shannon.craigo-snell@yale.edu.

Chapter consultation offers a forum for developing transformative strategies for integrating activism and scholarship in academic institutions. The consultation has two main goals: to develop models of transformational pedagogy that assist educators to combine social analysis, social action, and academic vocations of teaching, administration, and research; and to learn in conversation with activist communities, allowing our understandings of religious traditions, culture, and knowledge itself to be shaped by such engagement. We welcome presentations that focus on religion, scholarship, and activism in various geographical, cultural, or methodological locales. Specifically, we invite proposals for mini-clases that demonstrate particular teaching strategies, panel proposals that engage religiously affiliated activism in Chicago, and papers that explore recent trends in “educational” tourism centered on poverty, ecology, or service.

New Program Unit

Transhumanism and Religion Consultation
Calvin Mercer, East Carolina University, mercer@ecu.edu.

The Transhumanism and Religion Consultation welcomes papers on any aspect of transhumanism and religion. We particularly welcome papers that identify and evaluate the implicit religious beliefs underlying key transhumanist claims and assumptions. For example, what are the operative notions of anthropology, soteriology, and exegesis that are at play in the transhumanist quest for enhancement, including extreme longevity? Also, rather than depending on biotechnology, some transhumanists place greater confidence in nanotechnology, robotics, and information technology to achieve virtual immortality and create a superior posthuman species. We welcome critical and constructive assessments of this envisioned future.

Yoga in Theory and Practice Consultation
Christopher Key Chapple, Loyola Marymount University, cchapple@lmu.edu; Snarr Ray Barisbarke, Northwestern University, sbarisbarke@northwestern.edu.

The Yoga in Theory and Practice Consultation seeks paper and session proposals on the topic of yoga in theory and practice from a variety of perspectives, including sociology, anthropology, history of religions, philosophy, theology, and cultural studies. Submissions should be made through OP3. Suggested topics for 2008 include:

• Translating Yoga Texts
• Women and Yoga
• Yoga Powers (with the Mysticism Group)
• Living Yoga Masters
• Yoga and Tantra (with the Tantric Studies Group)
• Sri Aurobindo on Yoga
• Siddha Yoga

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The public understanding of religion committee invites nominations and self-nominations for the Martin E. Marty Award for Contributions to the Public Understanding of Religion.

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January 2008 RSN • 19
Margaret Jenkins joined the American Academy of Religion in October 2007 as the Director of Development. Margaret is responsible for the identification, cultivation, and solicitation of funding prospects for the programs and initiatives of the AAR. Prior to working with the AAR, Margaret was part of the development team for EARTH University Foundation for six years. Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, EARTH University Foundation is the support organization for EARTH University in Costa Rica, a private, international, nonprofit university dedicated to educating leaders in the agricultural sciences and conservation of natural resources. Margaret served as the Director of Development Services and was responsible for prospect management, donor relations, and the annual fund program. In addition, she coordinated donor visits to campus and oversaw the development database. Preceding her work with EARTH, Margaret worked in retail marketing with the Coca-Cola Company in Atlanta, and in state government relations for a trade association in Washington, D.C. Margaret earned a BBA in finance from the University of Georgia.

The AAR invites nominations for the Religion and the Arts Award

At the Annual Business Meeting in San Diego the membership unanimously approved a change in the AAR’s bylaws. In keeping with current best practices for non-profit organizations, the change formally separated the Academy’s Treasurer’s duties from those of its Executive Director. In light of this change, the AAR’s Board of Directors has elected a new Treasurer, David Thibodeau. David earned his BA and MBA from Emory University and spent most of his career working for SunTrust Bank in Nashville, Tennessee, David remains active on several local boards. The Housing Fund, whose sole purpose is to assist low-to-moderate-income households in becoming homeowners, has been a particular interest of his since its formation over 13 years ago. In addition, David serves on the board of Citizens Bank, the oldest continuously operating African-American bank in the United States. David has served for the past year as an outside advisor to the AAR’s Finance Committee. In his expanded role as AAR’s Treasurer, he brings to us outstanding skill and experience in finance, budgeting, financial planning, and strategic thinking. Please join the Board and Executive Staff in welcoming David to the American Academy of Religion.

AAR Elects a New Treasurer

The AAR Elects a New Treasurer

T he AAR’s Board of Directors has continuously operated the AAR’s treasury. In light of this change, the AAR’s Board of Directors has elected a new Treasurer, David Thibodeau. David earned his BA and MBA from Emory University and spent most of his career working for SunTrust Bank in Nashville, Tennessee. David remains active on several local boards. The Housing Fund, whose sole purpose is to assist low-to-moderate-income households in becoming homeowners, has been a particular interest of his since its formation over 13 years ago. In addition, David serves on the board of Citizens Bank, the oldest continuously operating African-American bank in the United States. David has served for the past year as an outside advisor to the AAR’s Finance Committee. In his expanded role as AAR’s Treasurer, he brings to us outstanding skill and experience in finance, budgeting, financial planning, and strategic thinking. Please join the Board and Executive Staff in welcoming David to the American Academy of Religion.

New Online Magazine: ReligionDispatches

A ccording to recent studies, only half of American adults can name even one of the four Gospels while ten percent believe that Joan of Arc was Noah’s wife. A 2007 study by Media Matters for America revealed that when associated with Islam, for example, we see religious fundamentalism, dangers to the modern secular West. This will involve bringing a wider spectrum of perspectives into the conversation, including especially those racial, ethnic, and religious voices that have been marginalized in the public imagination of religion and values in relation to domestic and international affairs. This will involve bringing a wider spectrum of perspectives into the conversation, including especially those racial, ethnic, and religious voices that have been marginalized in the public imagination of religion and values in relation to domestic and international affairs.

Through well-organized and funded institutional structures, including think tanks, foundations, and news organizations, these conservative, often Christian-based groups have dictated the terms of the public debate on religion. Unfortunately, media that utilize the resources of the field most directly concerned with religion are few and less effective. ReligionDispatches is a web-based effort to raise the level of national debate about religion and values in relation to domestic and international affairs. This will involve bringing a wider spectrum of perspectives into the conversation, including especially those racial, ethnic, and religious voices that have been marginalized in the public imagination of religion and values in relation to domestic and international affairs. The goal of ReligionDispatches is to inform public debate by analyzing and critically engaging the role of religion and values on the most vital issues of our time. It seeks to produce more effective and progressive public policies on a broad range of issues, from the national to the global. It aims to foster thoughtful, informed, and engaged reflection on religion that too often misses from the public debate. Now more than ever it is vitally important to gain greater understanding and critical purchase on the power and politics of religion in the twenty-first century. In its opening years, ReligionDispatches will focus its attention on a range of urgent matters, including the relationship between religion and violence; new realities associated with religious pluralism; issues tied to democracy, religion, and immigration; and explorations of religion, HIV/AIDS, and sexuality.

We have also begun to establish partnerships with universities across the country and a number of like-minded organizations such as People for the American Way and the Center for American Progress, and have secured professional from a wide spectrum of fields to serve on our Advisory Council. Evan Derkacz has been hired as the managing editor, and will soon be joined by a full-time assistant, both working out of a San Francisco office. Evan previously worked as a journalist and editor at AlterNet.com, and brings extensive experience with web-based media.

The magazine will feature regular contributors, including Jeff Sharlet, a nationally recognized essayist on religion who writes regularly for Harper’s and Rolling Stone. It will also include a regular “Dispatches from” column, a rotating series of essays by writers commenting from inside the workplace, at the borderlands, and on international issues, among other topics. “Religion 101” will feature a short summary of a key word in the news that changes daily and is part of an expanding archive. In addition, ReligionDispatches will carry op-eds, news stories, interviews, book excerpts and reviews, public lectures, serialized investigative stories, and an array of blogs.

We invite members of the American Academy of Religion to consider submitting work for this new publication. The nature and length of the pieces can vary, from 500-word op-eds, to longer essays ranging from 750 to 3,000 words in length. We seek to publish work from scholars who want to translate their own research and views on religion and public life into an accessible format that can inform and engage the general public. Please send your inquiries to Evan Derkacz at events@religiondispatches.org.
Signs, Sighs & Significance

PENTECOSTAL & WESLEYAN EXPLORATIONS OF SCIENCE & RELIGION

Duke University
Divinity School

Thomas Jay Oord & Amos Yong, Meeting Co-Chairs

Moltmann  Koenig  Maddox  Leclerc  Cross  Smith

PAPER SESSIONS IN:

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http://wesley.nnu.edu/wts  www.sps-usa.org
GREAT IDEAS

PETER J. PARIS

MY BOOK

A collaborative effort by myself and fellow scholars John W. Cook, James Hudnut-Beumler, Lawrence Mamiya, Leonora Tisdale, and Judith Weisenfeld, *The History of the Riverside Church in the City of New York* offers a critical history of this unique institution on Manhattan’s Upper West Side. It considers its cultural impact on New York City and beyond, its outstanding preachers, and its architecture, and assesses the shifting fortunes of religious progressivism in the twentieth century. For seven decades the church has served as the premier model of Protestant liberalism in the United States. Its history represents the movement from white Protestant pre-eminence to a multiracial and multiethnic church that has been at the vanguard of social justice advocacy, liberation theologies, gay and lesbian ministries, peace studies, ethnic and racial dialogue, and Jewish-Christian relations.

MY BOOK SERIES

I am currently the general editor for the NYU Press book series *Religion, Race, and Ethnicity*. This series advances our understanding of religion as a determinative dynamic in the lives of different racial and ethnic communities. It addresses such questions as how the categories of religion, race, and ethnicity have intersected historically, influenced social movements, impacted historical processes, informed the development of group identity, and acted as a hegemonic impetus for social functions. Recent books in the series include: *Deeper Shades of Purple: Womansmin in Religion and Society* edited by Stacey Floyd-Thomas; *Righteous Content: Black Women's Perspectives of Church and Faith* by Daphne C. Wiggins; *Creole Religions of the Caribbean: An Introduction from Vodou and Santería to obeah and Espiritismo* by Margarite Fernández Olmos and Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert; and *God in Chinatown: Religion and Survival in New York’s Evolving Immigrant Community* by Kenneth J. Guest.

MY STORY

I am Princeton Theological Seminary’s Elmer G. Homrighausen Professor of Christian Social Ethics and Liaison with the Princeton University African American Studies Program. My courses cover various subjects in African American social ethics, Aristotle’s ethics and politics, and the theology and ethics of Reinhold and H. Richard Niebuhr. I am the past president of the Society for the Study of Black Religion, the American Academy of Religion, and the Society of Christian Ethics. I am also a member of the board of trustees of New York Theological Seminary and the Princeton Young Achievers, an after-school program for children of low-income families. In addition to *The History of Riverside Church in the City of New York*, I have published *The Spirituality of African Peoples: The Search for a Common Moral Discourse* (Augsburg/Fortress) and recently completed directing a four-year Pan-African Seminar on Religion and Poverty which met annually in Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Jamaica and the United States. I have lectured widely in various countries in Africa, Brazil, Canada and the United States.

MY PUBLISHER

NYU Press

NYU Press
CHAMPION OF GREAT IDEAS SINCE 1916
A Message from the President

When I took office, no one really knew how AAR members felt about these various considerations, so it was not clear how much weight the Board should give to each consideration when making decisions about the future. To remedy this, we decided last spring to conduct a survey of our members — a survey, not a referendum, because the issues are too complicated to be reduced to a single question. The Board will always have to make decisions on behalf of the membership. Our hope is that the most important of those decisions will take the concerns of our members more fully into account.

With this hope in mind, I have also appointed a task force on governance, which I will co-chair with Emilie Towner. The idea is to determine how the Board might best fulfill its role of representing AAR members when making decisions on their behalf. We will consider proposing changes in the structure of the Board itself. I am much less concerned about where we come down on this or that particular question than I am about how democratically the AAR behaves. We on the Board need to earn our entitlement to represent our members. That means doing a better job of communicating with our members as well as looking closely at how the Board is structured.

There are many other issues that demand the Academy's attention, but I have space here to highlight only two, both of which have led to the appointment of task forces. First, we need to ask what our responsibilities are in the area of environmental impact. How might the AAR best conduct its meetings and its day-to-day business so as to promote the value of sustaining our human and natural environment into the future? And how can we address sustainability questions in the curricula of religion departments, seminaries, and divinity schools? I have asked Sarah McFarland Taylor to chair a task force charged with answering such questions.

Second, we need to ask how we might best address the myriad difficulties that our student members face when they enter the job market. How can we safeguard them from the miscarriage all too many of them complain about? How should our graduate programs address the evident mismatch between the production of PhDs in some areas of religious studies and the availability of jobs in those areas? What is the best way for graduate programs to make public their job-placement records? I have asked Deanna A. Thompson to chair a task force charged with answering these and related questions.

In closing, let me thank everyone who gives their time and energy to make the AAR what it is: the members of the committees, program units, editorial boards, and juries that attend to the organization's business; all the members who contribute to the success of our regional and international meetings; and the members of our staff in Atlanta who provide us with so much help and leadership. I want to offer a special thank you to Jack Fitzmier, our new Executive Director, who has stepped into this pivotal role at a crucial moment in the organization's history and done much to inspire confidence and heal wounds.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey L. Stout
President

2007 Board of Directors

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About Us

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Growth of the AAR

Membership Trends
Our membership has grown steadily over the last five years, with 2006 membership approximately 20% higher than 2002 membership. In 2006, membership reached another landmark by surpassing the 11,000-member mark, as it did in 2005 when membership exceeded the 10,000-member mark. During this five-year period, we gained 8,269 new members. Students accounted for 64% of this new member growth.

AAR Membership Trends, 1996–2006

International Connections
In an effort to enhance the awareness of the international context for the study of religion, the AAR reaches out to scholars and teachers from around the globe. These efforts have been fruitful, as international membership has increased 38% from 2001 to 2006. The international focus of our Annual Meeting — China in 2007 and South Asia in 2008 — as well as other international partnerships, will continue to expand our global scope.

Grants and Awards
Research Grant Awards 2007–2008
Since 1992 the AAR has awarded over $500,000 to members for individual and collaborative research projects. The winners of the 2007–2008 grants are:

Collaborative
Adelle Reinhartz, University of Ottawa
Heart (Transplant) and Soul: How Movies Mediate Meaning
Collaborator: Sam Shemie, University of Ottawa

Individual
Julius Bailey, University of Redlands
Making a Homeland: Race, Religion, and the Meaning of Africa in the Nineteenth-Century African Methodist Episcopal Church

Jennifer Eichman, Seton Hall University
Buddhist-Inspired Contemporary Art: Zhu Ming and His Network

William P. Hartman, University of Tennessee, Chattanooga
Suicide Bombers Become Goddesses: Women, Apostacism, and Sacrificial Violence in South Asia

Steven Heine, Florida International University
Sacred High City, Sacred Low City: A Tale of Religious Sites in Two Tokyo Neighborhoods

Jennifer G. Jesse, Truman State University
There’s a Methodism to His Madness: William Blake as a Religious Moderate

Greg Johnson, University of Colorado at Boulder
Religion in the Moment: Contemporary Lives of Indigenous Traditions

Frank J. Korom, Boston University
From Guru to Shaykh: Bawa Muhayyaddeen and the Making of a Transnational Sufi “Family”

Leela Prasad, Duke University
Annotating Pastimes: Oral Narrative and Religion in Colonial India

Miranda Eberle Shaw, University of Richmond
Buddhista Goddesses of Tibet and Nepal: Final Phase of Fieldwork

Excellence in Teaching Award
This year’s winner was Stacey Floyd-Thomas, Brite Divinity School, Texas Christian University.

Martin E. Marty Public Understanding of Religion Award
This year’s winner was Robert N. Bellah, Elliot Professor of Sociology, Emeritus, University of California at Berkeley.

Religion and the Arts Award
A new award for the Academy is the Religion and the Arts Award, given to an individual who has made a significant achievement in the field of Religion and the Arts. The AAR thanks S. Brent Plate, Texas Christian University, chair of the Religion and Arts Award Jury, and jury members for their contributions. This year the inaugural award goes to Bill Viola of Long Beach, California.
AAR Annual Report

Book Awards

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

Awards for Excellence

Analytical-Descriptive
David Frankfurter, University of New Hampshire
Evil Incarnate: Rumors of Demonic Conspiracy and Satanic Abuse in History Princeton University Press, 2006

Constructive-Reflective
John D. Caputo, Syracuse University

New Programs

Sustainability Initiatives

In Spring 2007, the Board of Directors approved a Sustainability Task Force to establish sustainable practices as the standard for the Academy and its meetings, and to influence members to include sustainability-themed issues in undergraduate and graduate curricula. The task force has several goals:

- To craft a Sustainability Statement to be posted prominently upon Board approval.
- To produce summer and regional workshops on Sustainability and Teaching Religion/Theology.
- To explore grant/endowment possibilities for establishing sustainability into the curriculum, purchasing technologies, allowing for greener meetings, and supporting workshops and other initiatives.
- To craft a resolution to support the Education for Sustainable Future, drafted by the Disciplinary Associations for Sustainability.
- For AAR offices to model greening in its building and move to carbon neutral in operations and conferences, including asking conference vendors to use green operations.

The task force convened at the Annual Meeting in San Diego. All subsequent meetings of the group, except for at each Annual Meeting, will be virtual, as the task force explores ways to meet with limited impact on the environment. Also at the Annual Meeting, the Theological Education Steering Committee, the Academic Relations Committee, and the Society of Biblical Literature offered a Special Topics Forum on the Greening of Theological Education. The Academic Relations Committee has decided to use a summer workshop in 2009 to examine sustainability issues, which will be planned along with the task force. This practical workshop will train participants to infuse curriculum in textbooks and courses, educate them about greening their buildings and campuses, and create future leaders for AAR regional and campus-wide workshops.

The Religion Major and Liberal Education Funded by Teagle Foundation Grant

With the rapid growth of the major in religion, with the unique place it occupies in the modern academy, and with significant changes in the national and global context in which Americans view religion, there is a need for the field to reassess the relationship between the goals of the concentration and those of liberal education. A grant from the Teagle Foundation is allowing us to promote a dialogue that will help shape the religious and cultural literacy of the next generation of Americans.

There is perhaps no academic field more centrally involved in addressing essential learning outcomes involving not only intellectual and practical skills, but also the areas of personal and social responsibility, than the field of religion. There also are few academic fields that are more diverse, with undergraduate programs of religion variously situated in liberal arts colleges, religiously affiliated colleges, research universities, and theological schools.

A working group to guide the process was formed and met in Spring 2007. Their goal was to determine not merely what outcomes teachers seek for their students, but what outcomes are civically and professionally required if our students are to be equipped to deal with a diverse and changing world. Ten seed grants of $500 each were given to member institutions to encourage a structured dialogue about the religion major in the local context. Each department will hold a series of meetings among faculty, administrators, and stakeholders in their local context and will produce a written report on the state of its major and recommendations for revisions. In October, a special Focus section of Religious Studies News was dedicated to the topic, and in November at the Annual Meeting, the working group sponsored a Leadership workshop, which provided an opportunity for dozens of departmental chairs/leaders to take new ideas about the role of the major back to their home institutions. Additionally, a special wildcard session on the Religion Major and Liberal Education was offered.

The working group will reconvene in Atlanta to finalize a White Paper on the major that will then be distributed to the full membership of the AAR.

Media Awards

Annually the AAR honors the best in-depth reporting on topics related to religion. There are three contests. We offer our congratulations to this year's winners.

News Outlets with more than 100,000 Circulation
First Place Jennifer Green, Ottawa Citizen
Second Place Jennifer Garza, The Sacramento Bee
Third Place Omar Sacirbey, Freelancer, Boston, Massachusetts

News Outlets under 100,000 Circulation
First Place Jason Byassee, The Christian Century
Second Place G. Jeffrey MacDonald, The Christian Science Monitor
Third Place Adam Parket, The Post and Courier, Charleston, South Carolina

Opinion Writing
First Place Robert Sibley, Ottawa Citizen
Second Place Aya Q. Nomani, Freelancer, Morgantown, West Virginia
Third Place Kevin Eigelbach, The Cincinnati Post

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New Programs

Governance Task Force

The Governance Task Force, with Jeffrey L. Stout, AAR President, and Emile M. Towner, AAR President-Elect as co-chairs, is studying the adequacy of the current AAR By-laws and internal administrative practices and will make recommendations to the Board concerning how the AAR and its regions might organize and govern themselves so as to best serve their members.

The objective of the task force is to achieve the ideal balance among the following values: representation of the membership as a whole, representation and protection of women and minorities within the profession, representation of the regions, the expertise required to fulfill the fiduciary responsibilities of the Board, the ability of the Board to conduct its business efficiently, and the need to give members of the AAR ample opportunity to influence and contest important decisions made by the AAR Board and executive office staff.

Job Placement Task Force

At their Spring 2007 meeting, the Board of Directors approved the creation of a new task force that will focus on job placement. Deanna Thompson of Hamline University will serve as chair. The charge of the new task force is as follows: In consultation with the relevant standing committees, this task force is charged: 1) To review the full experience of the placement process for candidates and to recommend improvements in EIS and other aspects of the process; 2) To review current graduate program reporting on graduates and to create guidelines for best practices regarding public disclosure of placement records; 3) To create a list of recommendations for how graduate programs in religion can realign their curricula to respond to current (and future) job placement realities; and 4) To investigate how the AAR might best assist people being trained in religious studies to prepare for and find jobs outside of religion and theology departments, seminaries, and divinity schools.

Continuing Programs

Undergraduate Survey

We are in the midst of an ongoing research project — the Survey of Undergraduate Religion and Theology Programs — that will have enormous import for our field. This follow-up study to one we conducted five years ago is allowing us to identify changes in the field and gives us vital data in making a case for our field on our campuses. Preliminary results indicate healthy growth in enrollments, majors, courses, and faculty.

The online questionnaire made it easy to capture critically needed data on the academic study of religion at the undergraduate level. By conducting the survey online, we were able to tabulate the entries accurately as they were typed in, substantially limiting errors introduced by recoding answers given on a paper questionnaire. Data about the curriculum, faculty, and enrollments in undergraduate departments and programs in religion at fully accredited colleges and universities in the United States and Canada were collected.

Theological Programs Initiative

The Theological Programs Initiative is directed by the Theological Education Steering Committee. Its charge is to meet the scholarly and professional needs of theological educators by creating programs and services that bring theological studies into the wider conversation of the Academy and enrich the work of theological educators. The initiative’s goals are:

- To advance the scholarly body of knowledge (research, scholarship, and publication) in theological studies and theological education.
- To advance the professional development (retention/promotion/tenure and service) of our members in theological education and theological studies.
- To provide a forum for dialogue (by means of programming, participation, and scholarly communication) among theology education faculty, especially between and among biblical/historical/systematic theology and practical theology.
- Create a variety of low-cost initiatives, programs, and services that can be easily implemented.
- Create a variety of high-value initiatives, programs, and services requiring external funding.

One of the first public efforts of the initiative was the publication of Spotlight on Theological Education in March. The committee also offered a Special Topics Forum on Teaching the Introductory Theology Course in Theological Schools at the Annual Meeting. The committee is also planning summer seminars dealing with theologies of religious pluralism/comparative theology.

The Job Market in Religion

The AAR administers the Employment Information Services (EIS) for the field, providing opportunities for communication between employing institutions and candidates through Openings and the EIS Center at the Annual Meeting. Openings appears monthly, offering the most comprehensive listing available of faculty and administrative positions for religion scholars. Held each year at the Annual Meeting, the EIS Center serves hundreds of interested scholars and employers by centralizing information about position announcements and candidate qualifications and providing interview space.

A total of 747 candidates registered for the 2006 EIS Center, far surpassing the previous year’s 513. Although job position registrations rose 18 percent from the previous year to 175, there were still more than four candidates for each position. Explanations for the candidate surge include the convenient location of Washington, D.C., increased publicity of EIS, and an easier registration process. Still, it is unlikely that those factors alone explain the 66 percent increase.

Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop

The Academic Relations Committee and the Status of Racial & Ethnic Minorities in the Profession Committee co-sponsored a daylong workshop, “Best Practices: Diversifying Your Faculty — Honest Conversations,” during the Annual Meeting in San Diego. The workshop dealt with issues of recruiting majors and recruiting and retaining faculty of color, and featured several breakout sessions. Miguel A. De La Torre, Iliff School of Theology, led the workshop, and participants were given a newly published copy of the AAR Career Guide for Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession, which can be seen at www.aarweb.org/Publications/Online_Publications/REM_Career_Guide.

Federal Bureau of Investigation

As in previous years, the AAR conducted several educational sessions for agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The November 2006 Annual Meeting sessions ranged from religion in American prisons to religious fundamentalism and violence. A special forum on militant religious rhetoric was also held at FBI headquarters. More FBI sessions were offered during the Annual Meeting in November 2007.

Religionsource

Religionsource, funded in part by the Lilly Endowment Inc. and The Pew Charitable Trusts, is the AAR’s free referral service for journalists. During the year, Religionsource responded to more than 1,500 queries from some 200 media outlets throughout North America and abroad, including ABC, Associated Press, BBC, Religion News Service, Reuters, Slate, Time, Toronto Star, Wall Street Journal, and Washington Post.

Directors of Prison Chaplaincy Programs

In November 2006, for the third straight year, officials from prison chaplaincy programs from across the country participated in several AAR sessions on topics related to the religious beliefs and practices of inmates. The AAR also responded to individual requests from participants for referrals to scholars with specific areas of expertise. Sessions at the November 2007 Annual Meeting were also offered.

Annual Meeting
The American Academy of Religion deeply appreciates our loyal and generous contributors.

The Academy expresses our gratitude to the foundations that have supported our work during the last several years. Special appreciation goes to the boards and executive staffs of the following.

The Ford Foundation, Inc.
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The following list reflects individual donations received from July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007. Please notify the AAR office of any incorrect listings, as we strive for accuracy in our records.

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